

A CHRONICLE OF THE LANDIS / LANDEIS FAMILY

The story of the Landis/Landeis Family
From their origins in Switzerland,
their Exodus to Alsace, the Palatinate,
the Ukraine, and to the U.S.A.

by

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A Personal Introduction: the Story Behind the Research

My mother, Anna Marie Wagner (born Landeis) was a natural story teller. She had an excellent memory, which she retained up to her final year. She loved to reflect about her childhood and the flow of her life. Her stories were intriguing when we were young because they dealt with a period of our history that is long past. She told about how her father Alexander and her grandparents, Heinrich and Louisa (Meier) Landeis, came across the sea from Tsarist Russia and they homesteaded on the plains of North Dakota and Montana. All her stories were turned into dramatic adventures which she loved to repeat, each time embellishing the details and the punch lines for greatest effect. By her telling, her father Alex ran down and roped coyotes from horseback, and he was so proficient with a six-shooter that he could punch the same hole repeatedly in a target. Like Paul Bunyan, he rerouted the Musselshell river near their farm in Montana, using a team of horses, dynamite, and his bare hands. Her grandmother told of huge snakes in the Ukraine that gripped their tails and rolled like hoops across the steppes, then cracked like a whip at their prey. She also told hair-raising religious prophecies handed down to her as a child from a mysterious *Sibylla Buch* that foretold the impending Battle of Armageddon and the End of the World, the signs of which she always thought were just around the corner.

Alex and Ida Landeis were the only grandparents that I personally knew when I was young – my father's parents (also Germans from Tsarist Russia) passed away long before I was born. We visited my mother's parents on their farm near Ryegate, Montana, and Ida lived with us for awhile in Portland after she was widowed, so I was able to form first-hand impressions and memories. Grandpa was short, barrel-chested, quiet and oddly shy, with a no-nonsense attitude so we all knew not to cross him. Grandma was a large, strong woman, forthright in her opinions and not at all shy. She was quick to hold her own against grandpa. One of my early memories is of her powerful arms vigorously kneading a sack of cottage-cheese curds, which my brothers and I ate like ice-cream. She wasted nothing. Old flour sacks were transformed into something useful, such as underwear. She often exclaimed in her heavy German accent, "People today, dey vant tings too fancy! Children today dey are schooled!"

One question that puzzled me as a youth was how it came to be that my mother's Landeis and Meier families (and also the Wagner, Reis, and other families on my father's side) immigrated from Russia and yet they were ethnically German. They always said they weren't "Rooshians," and they spoke German dialect in the home. My grandfather did not believe in talking about the "old days." We all complained about how uncommunicative he was.

Fortunately, my grandfather's brother, Ambrose Landeis, was more talkative and on the occasions when he visited he shared his considerable knowledge of the past. He confirmed that the Landeis family had come from the Ukraine, and he remembered that their home village was "Karlsruhe," named after the city on the east bank of the Rhine. Ambrose was the first to explain to us the outlines of the history of Germans in Russia. He knew that the first German colonists were invited by the Empress Catherine the Great in 1763, and they had settled along the Volga river; later groups, including the Landeis family, settled north of the Black Sea, where they established the colony of Karlsruhe.

Years later, two historical societies came into being devoted to preserving the story of the Germans in Tsarist Russia -- the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the Germans from Russia Heritage Society in Bismarck, North Dakota. Publications began to appear on the history of this ethnic group. They were an ethnic group with an almost forgotten past, yet there remained widespread curiosity among many of us

descendants about our history. As these publications appeared, the news quickly traveled through the extended family networks across the nation. Dr. Karl Stumpp, a well-known scholar of German-Russian history and culture, made the early immigration records in Tsarist Russia available and it was possible to determine the original ancestors who settled in each of the colonies in the Black Sea region, along with their points of origin. I was able to reconstruct the broad outlines of Landeis family history going back to 1809, when Jacob Landeis emigrated from Hördt in the Rhine Pfalz area to the colony of Karlsruhe. At that stage of research it appeared that the point of origin of the Landeis family was the Pfalz, an area from which many other families also originated that immigrated to Russia and to America.

In 1991 I decided to explore the microfilmed church book for Hördt available through the LDS church, which has the largest database on family history in the world. Without much difficulty (other than learning to decipher antiquated German and Latin hand-writing) I was able to locate the marriage entry for Jacob Landeis and the birth entries for all of his children. This information matched that available in the Russian census records, so the link was reliable. Interestingly, in Jacob Landeis' marriage entry it indicated that he came from the village of Neckarburken, above Mosbach, in modern Baden-Württemberg. This meant, then, that the Landeis family did not originate in Rhineland Pfalz as I had thought. Unfortunately the microfilm records of the Catholic church book in Neckarburken do not go back into the 1700s, so I was stopped at that point.

In the summer of 1992 I traveled to Germany and visited Neckarburken. It is a very small village, consisting of about 20 houses, with one Lutheran church. The village smelled strongly of hay and manure -- a typical farming village in the outback of Baden. I spoke with several of the old-timers in the local *Bierstube* (tavern), and they all assured me that they had never heard the surname Landeis in Neckarburken. Also, as far as they knew, the village had always been Lutheran. At that point I was even more puzzled. There was not only the mystery of how the Landeis family was connected with Neckarburken, but also the mystery of their religious background, since my family had always been Catholic as far as I knew.

The break-through came as I was browsing through the records of the Institute for History and Ethnic Research of the Pfalz (*Institut für Pfälzische Geschichte und Volkskunde*) in Kaiserslautern, an institute devoted to tracking the migrations of people into and out of the Rhineland Pfalz (including the territories once historically part of the Palatinate on the east bank of the Rhine, which included most of the Neckar valley). I noted that they had a record referring to Hans "Landeiss" from Horgen, Switzerland, who was married in Neckarburken in 1678. This fact, coupled with the occurrence of this unusual surname in that specific tiny village, provided the missing clue.

The other intriguing detail was that Hans Landeiss was listed as being "originally Mennonite," and a descendant of the "Anabaptist martyr, Hans Landis." This led me to the discovery that the family descended from a well-known person in the early history of the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland. This showed that there is indeed a connection between our "Landeis" family and the branches in the USA that spell the name as "Landis." My research had become a fascinating excursion into history with some unexpected detours and surprising discoveries.

Some important sources utilized in this study should be acknowledged. A considerable amount of research has been done on the ramification of the family lines since the first members arrived in Pennsylvania in the early 1700s. Landis family reunions were held periodically from 1911 until 1967, almost all of them at Perkasio Park near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. A standing genealogy committee was organized, reports were presented at each reunion, and the

proceedings were published by the Landis Family Reunion Committee. The group operated for several years under the able leadership of Ira D. Landis, a respected Mennonite minister in Lancaster county. The complete set of proceedings is available at the Mennonite Historical Society, in Lancaster. These reports contain valuable genealogical information, especially on the later history of the Landis family in the USA. Over the years descendants of the Landis family have published various attempts at comprehensive genealogical tables, summarizing what was known about the early history of the family in Switzerland. One of the earliest is the "Hirzel Chart" prepared in 1913 by the Director of the Archives of the Canton of Zürich. Jane Evans Best¹ updated the Hirzel Chart with research in the Zürich archives and study of the microfilmed church books. In the mid 1990s Michael Wilcox and I discovered that we were both struggling with the antiquated handwriting from the 1500s in the microfilmed church books of Horgen and Hirzel. We benefited greatly from our mutual correspondence, which is reflected in the articles we each published in the journal, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*.² The latest attempt to integrate all this research on the early history of the Landis family has been published by Samuel Wenger.³

For my branch of the Landis family, the crucial link was provided by Rev. Heinz Schuchmann, an historian and genealogist from Karlsruhe, Germany. He was the first to demonstrate a direct line of descent from Hans Landis the martyr, through four generations to the Hans "Landeiss" who emigrated to Neckarburken in Baden.⁴ For the chapters on Tsarist Russia, descendants from the German colonies in the Ukraine owe a debt of gratitude to the monumental research of Karl Stumpp⁵ and those of us with roots in the German Catholic colonies in the Beresan valley are especially fortunate to have available the two books by Fr. Konrad Keller, published in Odessa after the turn of the 19th century.⁶

Before we launch onto this journey, I should say a few words about my own orientations. I have been accumulating bits and pieces of the family history for about 40 years; fortunately, I began the process while my parents and several of the older generation were still alive and they could recall details as told by their parents. Personally, I have always found great inspiration from our family's saga – and indeed it is a real saga, involving challenges faced by our ancestors that vastly overweigh anything that we are likely to face today. I hope that you too will derive some inspiration from this narrative, and perhaps a sense of a larger identity that you can carry with you throughout your own life.

As I write these words, I am now retired, after 32 years as a university professor. I received my doctorate in Anthropology. As you might guess, given my background and the natural bent of my interests, I like to view events in their cultural and historical context. Bear with me when I lapse into detailed (sometimes overly detailed) side excursions on various topics– such as the history and background of the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland, the impact of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars on the German villagers along the Rhine, and daily life in the German colonies in Tsarist Russia. I have made a distinction between those

¹ Best 1990. See the references chapter at the end of this family history for full citations of all sources utilized.

² Wilcox 1995. Three of the chapters in this present chronicle appeared earlier as articles in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*: Wagner 1995a, Wagner & Wilcox 1995, Wagner 1995b.

³ Wenger 2005.

⁴ Schuchmann 1963, 1966, Schuchmann & Diefenbacher 1983.

⁵ Stumpp 1971, 1973.

⁶ Keller 1910, 1914.

chapters which provide broad historical background, and those which provide direct information on the Landeis family. Readers who wish to skip the detailed history discussions can jump ahead as they wish. During my career in academia I became accustomed to documentation and footnotes; it has become my natural style of writing and it is too late to change now! The majority of the documentation in this study was derived from my own study of the microfilms of the records and church books of Switzerland, Alsace, and Germany, available through the Genealogical Society of Utah, under the auspices of the L.D.S. church, or personally obtained during my trips to the archives in Europe. Citations of the specific microfilm call-numbers for the source documentation are made whenever appropriate.

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Chapter 2

Historical Background: Swiss Origins of the Surname Landis

The surname Landis has become widespread in the USA. Unfortunately, some unreliable ideas have been offered about the origins of the name, which have been repeated on internet sources. In this chapter I will summarize these speculations and present evidence showing that the real origins derive from early settlers along the shores of Lake Zürich, in Switzerland.

Swiss historians recognize that the earliest form of the surname was "Landös," a Middle High German spelling that first appeared in 13th century records in Switzerland and the upper Rhine valley. An alternative spelling at that time was "Landoes," which was an equivalent since "oe" was simply an archaic way to write the o-umlaut. The common form "Landis" had developed by the 1500s in the vicinity of Hirzel, in Switzerland. Branches of the family later emigrated to Alsace and Baden in the 17th century, where other variant forms of the name appeared, such as "Landes," "Landas," "Landeis," and "Landaiss."

The etymological roots of the surname cannot be traced back reliably much further than the 13th century since this takes us into that twilight period when surnames were being invented, spellings were very fluid, and records were scarce for those who weren't members of the nobility. There are tantalizing hints of possible precursor forms, such as "Landizo," which may extend back as far as the year 600 A.D.

Some Misleading Guesses Based on Linguistic Coincidences

The first members of the Landis family that immigrated to the USA were Mennonites, who settled in Pennsylvania. Their descendants began holding family reunions in the late 19th century, which over time became well organized. Some members of the Landis Family Reunion Committee printed pamphlets containing sketches of the early history of the family and conjectures about the meaning of the Landis surname. At that time they were casting about for any possible clues or linguistic associations. For example, one pamphlet noted that there was a *Landesmuseum* in Zürich and a *Landes Zentralbank* in Heilbronn, and the author speculated that this might somehow allude to the surname. Unfortunately, these terms do not refer to a Landis family museum, nor to a family owned bank! The word *Land* in German simply means a locality or "region" and the "-es" suffix is a grammatical ending. The terms can be translated as "regional museum" and "regional central bank."

Another speculation based on linguistic coincidence was the possible "French Connection," which was proffered in the 1888 Landis Family Reunion Report. This conjecture was repeated in various later reports and Ira Landis, the leading family genealogist in the 1950s, also toyed with this idea. He noted in his European travelogue¹ that there is a region in southwestern France known as "the *Landes*," along the Atlantic coast near Spain's Pyrenees mountains. The surname "Landes" crops up occasionally in modern Alsace, so he wondered if the family may have originated in the *Landes Departement* in France. On the surface this might appear to be a plausible theory; however, the name of that region in southwestern France is simply a geographic term, which means literally "the wastelands" or "the marshlands," and

¹ Landis 1954, pp. 14, 162

there is no record that it was ever used as a patronymic. The *Landes Departement* is a large, sparsely populated area of grasslands and marshes, bordered on the west by vast coastal sand dunes. Originally it was virtually uninhabited. The few peasants in the area grazed small sheep herds, and the ground was so loose that they were reported to have traversed it on stilts! Drainage efforts by the French government have reclaimed some of the marshes, but much of the area remains empty and useless.

While there is a remote possibility that the Landis surname could have derived from this region in southwestern France, the likelihood is very slim. One obvious discrepancy to this theory is that there are no historical records showing that the surname Landis (or its variations) was associated with this area, nor that it ever occurred there. As Ira Landis himself pointed out, most of the historical occurrences of the surname in France are in Alsace. As we shall see, historical documents show that members of the family emigrated from Switzerland into the Rhine valley in the mid 1600s, and from there into the neighboring areas of Baden and the Palatinate (*Pfalz*) in Germany. The occurrences of the Landis surname in Alsace and Baden are best explained by demonstrable historical linkages such as these, rather than by simple coincidences in the sound of a word.

The So-Called "Charlemagne Connection"

Another more intriguing speculation was made by Landers,² who stated that equivalent forms of the surname are found "in Saxony, Bavaria, Bohemia, Prussia, and the British Isles, [where] we find it spelled Lander, Landers, Launder...[and] in parts of France and French-speaking areas of Canada and New Orleans we find the form Landry used." She also stated that the equivalent forms of Landuno, Landon, and Landen are found in the Netherlands and Belgium. All these surnames, she speculates, derived from the descendants of "Pippin of Landen" (died in the year 640; some sources spell his name as "Peppin," and his estate as "Landes" or "Landis").

There is a village in Belgium called Landen, which was originally an estate owned by the Frankish nobleman, Peppin, in the year 600. At that time the Merovingian dynasty was in power, originally established by Clovis ("Chlodwig"), the leader of the Germanic Franks who first conquered northern Gaul in the 5th century. Peppin served as the Mayor of the Palace (prime minister) under Dagobert I. Peppin had great wealth and political power in the eastern portion of the empire, known as "Austrasia," which was centered in the Rhinelands and included the modern Palatinate and Alsace. After the death of King Dagobert in 638, Pippin's family grew increasingly prominent. His grandson, Peppin II, mobilized an army and seized total control of the Frankish kingdom in 687. Peppin II's son was the famous Charles Martel (Charles "the Hammer," ca. 686 - 741), who fought great battles against the Moors and expanded the empire of the Franks. Charles' son, Peppin III (Peppin "the short," 714 - 768), formally assumed the kingship of the Frankish empire in 751 and established the new Carolingian dynasty. His son was none other than the illustrious Charlemagne (*Karl der Grosse*, ca. 742-814), who became king in 768 and was crowned Emperor of the West in the year 800. In summary, the Carolingian dynasty sprang from a line of ambitious prime ministers who eventually replaced their overlords, all of whom descended from the original Peppin who owned the estate at Landen.³

² Landers 1985, pp. 91-83.

³ James 1982

Landers noted that Charlemagne traveled frequently, and that he usually took along a large entourage of family members. One of his castles was located in Münster, Switzerland, which she said is “not far from Hirzel” where the earliest records for our Landis family are found. She speculated that one of Charlemagne's “Landen” cousins may have come along and this may explain how the family came to be established in Switzerland.

I was intrigued by this theory so in 1993 I corresponded with Landers to see if she had any documentation for the so-called Charlemagne connection. She acknowledged that there is no evidence to support this theory. The castle at Münster is in fact not even all that close to Hirzel. It is located in Valais canton, in southwest Switzerland, at the opposite end of the country from Hirzel. As tempting as it may be to claim a link with illustrious ancestors such as Charlemagne (indeed, this was the popular goal of much genealogical research in the past), there is simply no basis for these speculations.

There is also no demonstrable link between the surname Landis and other allegedly equivalent forms in Belgium, including Landen, Landuno, and Landry. The surnames Landers, Landor, and so on are found primarily in the British isles. One source cites them as descendants of Almaric de Landres from Lorraine, who settled in Buckinghamshire in the 13th century.⁴ Eshleman⁵ speculates that “Landuno” may have been the Dutch form of “Landis,” and there may be a relationship to John de Landuno who lived about 1350 in Ghent. Again, there is no basis for these claims, nor any evidence that John de Landuno's family had any connection with Switzerland. We should note that when names are stated to be linguistically “equivalent,” this does not necessarily mean that they were genealogically linked. The “Smiths” in England are not necessarily related to the “Schmidts” in German speaking countries, even though these names are equivalent trade names.

The “Robbers,” the “Land Destroyers,” the “Landless,” and Other Guesses

Two of the standard references⁶ on Germanic surnames offer loose conjectures on the origin of the surname based on early occurrences of compound words which contain *Land* in various forms – for example, *Landsmann* (native resident), *Landvogt* (district judge), *Landverwüster* (destroyer of the land), and *Landschäder* (robber). Brechenmacher notes that the Middle High German word *oesen* means “to empty,” or “to take away;” hence, *landoesen* would refer to robbery. Historical records in Germany from about the 13th century indeed refer to robbers and other law-breakers, those who committed serious offenses warranting the death penalty, as *Landschädliche Leute*, or in the archaic spelling as *schedeliche lute*, the Latin equivalent of which was *nocivi terrae*.⁷ Brechenmacher and Bahlow do not specifically derive the surname Landis from these old compound words, but they do cite them as possible historical precedents. They also mention early occurrences of the surname “Landös,” without establishing any clear causal connection. Their logic is not stated and there is no supporting historical documentation showing that these labels became passed down in the form of patronymics, so these ideas remain simple guesswork. Unfortunately, this “robber” etymology has been repeated on some internet sources as if it were the undisputed origin of the Landis surname.

⁴ <http://www.houseofnames.com/landis-family-crest>

⁵ Eshleman 1917.

⁶ Brechenmacher 1935. See also Bahlow 1967.

⁷ Sellert 1990.

It's also possible that *Landschäder* may have referred to a tax collector. In Württemberg in the 15th century a special tax was levied in times of great need to repay the ruler for his financial outlays on behalf of the people. This developed into a regular annual tax in the 16th century, known as the "*Landschaden Steuer*" (i.e., funds to allay damages to the countryside), with a fixed amount levied to each district and collected from each individual taxpayer.⁸

Joseph Height offered yet another guess, suggesting that the early form was "*Landlos*," meaning "landless."⁹ This implies that at some remote point in history the ancestors were peasants without land holdings, which was a very common circumstance in Germanic society during the Middle Ages. His model requires that the second letter "l" was dropped over time. Height doesn't provide a source for this derivation. I am familiar with his other writings and we may assume that his derivation for the surname was just speculation.

Early Occurrences of "Landoes" in Alsace and Nearby Areas

Moving from these speculations based on linguistic coincidences or compound words that contain *Land* in some form, we are on firmer ground when we look at the earliest records for persons who had demonstrable precursor forms of the surname. A venerable old genealogical source by von Knobloch has summarized the early occurrences of the surname "Landoes" or "Landös" in Alsace and in nearby Baden. He describes it as a family or lineage (*Geschlecht*) near the headwaters of the Rhine river. A census of Strasburg in the year 1266 reports "Helfferic Landoese," who was the director of coinage.¹⁰ In 1281 the sale of the estate of the deceased nobleman, Lord Peter Landöse in Innenheim (near Strasburg) was reported. He was a knighted gentleman (*militis*) and a city banker. The estate had been inherited from his father, Ludwig Landoese. Lord Walter Landoese, a wine merchant in Morsweiler and Kaselthal in Alsace, rose in prominence and became a member of the city council and eventually the mayor¹¹ of Colmar. Lord Walter also was a knighted gentleman and a great benefactor to charity. He died in Colmar on March 16, 1360 and was buried with his wife, Hedwig, in the crypt of an abby in Paris. Brechenmacher¹² refers to Eberdictus Landose, who resided in Möhringen (northwest of Constance, near the Bodensee) in 1280. He also refers to a tax collector (*Zinsmann*) named Landöss who resided in Weingarten near Ravensburg (east of Constance) in 1295. Bahlow adds that there was an occurrence of the surname Landöse in Württemberg in the year 1295, but he doesn't provide any further information.¹³

The Swiss Origins -- "Ländisch Leute"

Swiss genealogical sources¹⁴ do not mention the "robber," "tax collector," or "landless" theories for the origin of the surname. Instead, they offer an alternative explanation, which

⁸ Fryde 1964, p. 248.

⁹ Height 1972.

¹⁰ Von Knobloch 1905 uses the term *Hausgenosse* for Helfferic Landoese's title. Ernest Thode's standard reference work reports this as an archaic word for the *Münzer*, the minter or director of coinage, sometimes also translated as "treasurer."

¹¹ *Scultetus* is a Latin equivalent for "*Schultheiss*" or mayor.

¹² Brechenmacher 1957.

¹³ Bahlow 1967.

¹⁴ Türler, Attinger & Godot 1927. See also Zwicky von Gauen 1947, pp. 335-344.

seems to have become generally accepted by Swiss family historians. They derive the surname from early references to dwellers on the boat-landings (shown as *dem Lander*, or “on the landings,” on old maps,) in the village of Uerikon in the parish of Stäfa on the eastern shore of Lake Zürich. What makes this theory reliable and credible is that they have been able to identify documented cases of persons with the early form of the surname, not only in Uerikon but in other communities near Hirzel where demonstrable lineages of the Landis family first appear in the churchbooks.

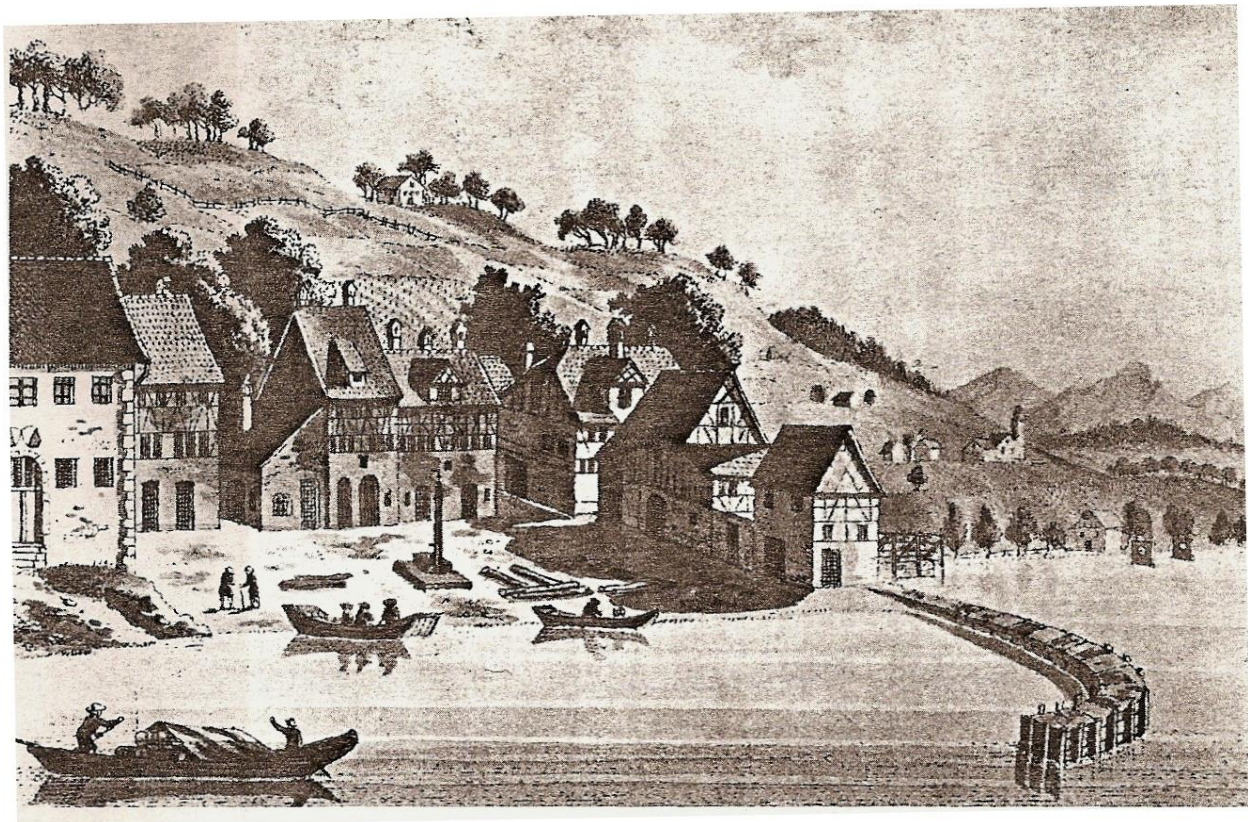


Map of Stäfa and Uerickon (Üricken), 1600s (looking south)
(Note the boat landings, referred to as “dem Lander,” above “Üricken” on the map)

Hans Georg Wirz, a Zürich historian who studied the families in Uerikon, found several early references to the “*Ländisch Leute*,” the “landings-people.” An entry in the archives of

Einsiedeln in 1372 refers to three tenant farmers, “Hansen Schmalbrot, Ueli Brun, and Hansen Landös,” who were given feudal use-rights to an estate in Uerikon by the Abbot.¹⁵ They were dwellers along the banks of a stream that flows into Lake Zürich at that location.

The Landös family, along with others along the southern shores of Lake Zürich, were *Gotteshausleute*, that is, tenants on lands owned by the cloister at Einsiedeln. St. Meinrad had originally built a hermit’s shack there around 828 A.D. After he was martyred, a chapel was built on the spot, and other hermits and mendicants were drawn there. By 948 it had grown into a cloister. A beautiful basilica was eventually erected, containing the renowned statue of the Black Madonna. Miraculous cures were attributed to the spring flowing from a fountain in front of the church. Einsiedeln became the principal pilgrimage shrine of southern Germany and Switzerland, an honor which it retains today. Einsiedeln also became the major administrative center south of Lake Zürich, with feudal territories extending up to Uerikon and Stäfa.



Dwellings on the Boat Landings

¹⁵Zwicky von Gauen (1947, p. 336) provides a detailed summary of the research by Wirz. Johann Frick, a former Archivist at the Zürich State Archive who is cited in Türlér et. al (1927), may be the first scholar to note the early occurrence of the surname Landös in Uerikon. Bodmer-Gessner et. al., p. 112, also summarize the early records for Uerikon and Stäfa. See: Bodmer-Gessner, Verena, Kläui, Paul, Frey, Hans, & Bodmer, Albert. (1968). *Stäfa, von den Anfängen bis zur Revolutionszeit*. Stäfa: Lesengesellschaft Stäfa



View from the boat landings at Uerikon, Lake Zürich

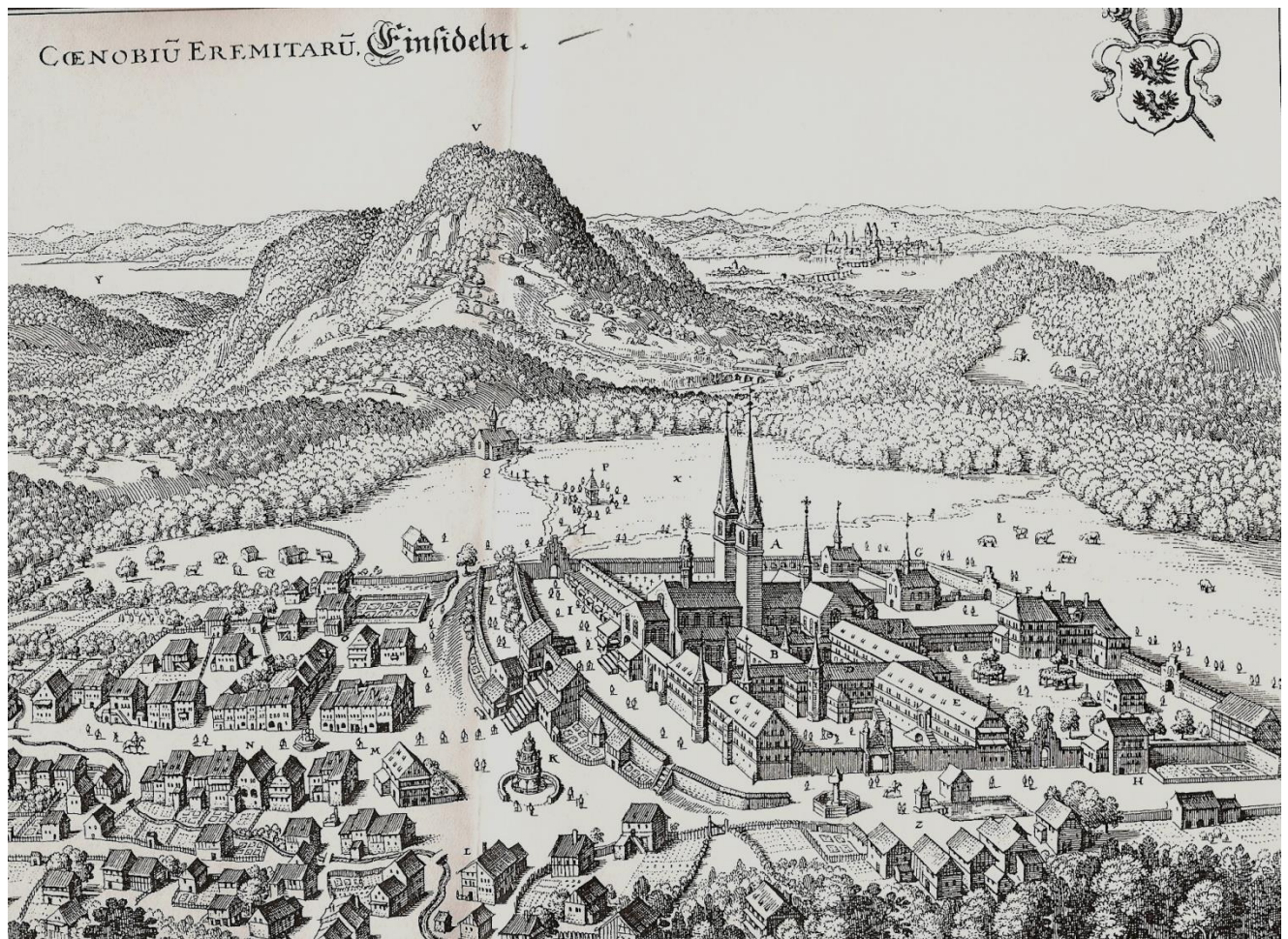
As the city of Zürich expanded its influence down the lake, Stäfa and Uerikon eventually were placed under its jurisdiction and its residents were declared to be “outside-citizens.” The early census records in 1412 show Heini Landös, a fishermen at Uerikon.¹⁶ The oldest *Jahrzeitbuch* of the village of Ufenau also mentions Rudi Landös at Uerikon in the year 1415.¹⁷

Does this theory concerning the Swiss origins of the surname conflict with the early records for persons named “Landoes” or “Landös” in Alsace and other nearby areas? In my opinion, these findings do not necessarily negate each other. All these early instances of the surname “Landös” or “Landoes” occurred close together, both chronologically and geographically - they were clustered near the headwaters of the Rhine, from Lake Zürich to Lake Constance, and in towns along both shores of the Rhine in Alsace and Baden. This strongly suggests that they may have derived from a common source. Populations were mobile, even at these early times, especially along the Rhine which was the major avenue for commerce and transportation. Zürich is only about 15 miles south of the Rhine. The Limmat river flows northward out of Lake Zürich through the heart of the city, where it joins the Aar and thence flows into the Rhine. Strasburg is only 78 miles from Basel, and the average travel time there by boat, following the direction of the current, is only about 32 hours.¹⁸

¹⁶ Bodmer-Gessner et. al. 1968, p. 70.

¹⁷ Zwicky von Gauen 1947.

¹⁸ Haller 1993, p. 242



Cloister of Einsiedeln

The legend known as “the journey of the Züricher porridge kettle” illustrates the high degree of communication that was characteristic of towns along the Rhine and its headwaters during these early years.¹⁹ The city council of Zürich once sent an offer to form an alliance with Strasburg, but they were politely turned down on the grounds that their cities were too far apart, and neither could send reinforcements to the other in the event of emergency. The youngest member of the city council in Zürich had a bright idea, and he announced that he could elicit a warmer reply from Strasburg. He ran home, told his wife to set the water boiling in their largest kettle, and to make a large batch of porridge. When the porridge was ready, he hired ten men to accompany him on a boat, moving as fast as possible down the Limmat, through the Aar, onto the Rhine, and thence to Strasburg. They carried the kettle into the *Rathaus*, where the council was in session. He placed the still-steaming kettle on the table, and said, “*Meine Herren*, you haven’t accepted the alliance with Zürich because you believe that our cities are too far apart, and that we couldn’t assist each other quickly enough; that will best be clarified for you by this porridge kettle.” When they saw that the porridge was till warm enough to eat, and that it was still steaming, they became ashamed of their rather cold reply.

¹⁹ The story has been set to verse by the poet Langbein, and appears in Guerber & Myers 1916.

They agreed to the alliance, and celebrated by jointly sharing the meal. The kettle is supposedly still preserved in the *Rathaus* of Strasburg, as a memorial to the alliance between the two cities.

In the final analysis, all that can be said with certainty is that the ancient roots of the Landis family are near the headwaters of the Rhine. The surname most likely originated as a reference to residents near the boat-landings at Uerikon on the eastern shore of Lake Zürich sometime in the 12th century. Members of the family probably filtered northward at an early date to towns along Lake Constance, and then to Strasburg, Colmar, and other major cities in the Rhine valley. Despite the antiquity of the Landis family in Baden and Alsace, this surname (or any of its variations) did not occur there in appreciably large numbers. It remains a relatively uncommon surname in Germany today. Historically the surname Landis (and precursor forms) has occurred with greatest frequency in the canton of Zürich, and most (perhaps all) occurrences of the surname in Germany appear to have derived from Swiss emigrants. These considerations strongly support the notion of a Swiss origin in the canton of Zürich, which has been broadly accepted by Swiss family historians.

Chapter 3

The Landis Family at Hirzel

By the 15th century members of the family had moved from Uerikon to various places on the western shore of Lake Zürich. "Hanns Landöse" is documented in Neuenburg, canton Zürich, by 1360.¹ The surname also appeared in the village records of Pfäffikon by 1417, in Hirzel by 1438, in Horgen, Richterswil, Wädenswil, Klingnau, Schönenberg, Kilchberg, Urdorf, as well as in the city of Zürich itself. By 1454 the family had settled even further inland toward the canton of Zug, near the mountain community of Menzingen, south of Hirzel. The oldest chronicle (*Jahrzeitbuch*) of the village of Neuheim reported that members of the family resided at *Hofe Oelegg*, which was a small farmstead in this same general area, about one mile east of the village.² Their settlement farther to the west in Zug was limited, and the family was never particularly numerous in that area. The branch of the family in the village of Neuheim died out in the mid 15th century with pastor Karl Peter Landis, who had no children (being a Catholic cleric).



Horgen ca. 1780

The major focus of their settlement came to be a few miles further north on the hillside above the coastal town of Horgen, on various farmsteads near Hirzel, which is about 12 miles

¹ von Knobloch 1905

² The word *Hof* today denotes a farmstead, but it was originally derived from an earlier form, *Hufe*, which referred to a "hide" of land, equivalent to 25 acres, which was about the maximum amount that could be encircled when a hide was cut into thin strips of cord. See Luck 1985.

southwest of Zürich. Although Horgen is often cited in historical sources as the “ancestral village” for the Landis family, this is actually somewhat misleading. Horgen was the closest larger town and it was a regional administrative center (*Obervogtei*) for canton Zürich. The town of Horgen is located on the west shore of Lake Zürich, hemmed by a low range of hills known as the Zimmerberg which parallel the lake. The Sihl river flows along the western edge of these hills, where it joins the Limmat at Zürich. This broad hillside is called “Horgenberg” or “Horgenberg” (lit. “Horgen mountain”). A road from Horgen climbs steeply up this hillside for about two miles to Hirzel, which is located near the summit, overlooking the lake on the east and the Sihl valley to the west. Hirzel itself is scarcely a “village” in the true sense of the term; it would be more accurate to describe it as a collection of farmsteads, with a church in the center.³ When the old records reported that a person came from “Horgenberg,” the term did not indicate the city of Horgen itself, but rather this adjacent hilly region, encompassing Hirzel and the numerous scattered farmsteads that dot the hillside, including nearby villages such as Neuheim.

Early records sometimes failed to distinguish Hirzel and Horgen due to their close proximity. Hirzel was a satellite of the parish of Horgen until 1617, when their own church building was consecrated. Until that date, births and marriages were recorded in the church book of Horgen, with the annotation that they resided on the hillside. Similarly, those in or near the town of Wädenswil were sometimes interchangeably referred to as residents of “Wädenswilberg.”

Members of the Landis family and those related by marriage resided on the farms which dot the crest of the Horgenberg. The farmsteads were located on clearings that were laboriously carved from the heavy forests that blanketed the hillside. Although most of the forest has been removed by this date, the terrain is not suitable for the large-scale cultivation of grains, which was done in the flatter valleys. As is common in many parts of Switzerland, the families in this area were “hill-farmers,” that is, pastoralists raising cattle and sheep, supplemented by gardening for family produce.

Ira Landis visited Hirzel in 1954 and reported that a house still stands there that was built between 1482 and 1488 by one of the earliest ancestors of the Landis family.

I came to Hirzel, mostly a rustic hostelry and started climbing up the hill, first to the Howard Landis Bakery, and then almost to the top of the mountain. When I left the road to climb more, there was only a path ahead...Alwin Landis is 65 and Berta Baumann, his wife is 52. They have two boys, Alwin, 28, and Eric 26,...His farm consists of 27 “Yoke acres,” depending most on ten head of cows and five head of heifers, and bulls, two hogs, and no chickens nor anything else...We learn that the Alwin Landis home had been a Landis homestead at least since the 15th century.⁴

In the summer of 1994 I too visited Hirzel and met Lydia Landis, the wife of Alwin Landis jr. (both of them elderly at the time). The house that they were residing in was across the road from the Reformed church in Hirzel, and it was of recent construction. The original Landis farmstead was known simply as *Siten* (shown as *an der Syten* on the 1667 map). Today there are

³ The name Hirzel originally derived from “deer-wallow;” there are many marshlands on the Horgenberg. See Winkler 1974, p. 42.

⁴ Landis 1954, p. 134.

two structures, *Untere Siten* and a smaller farmhouse known as *Obere Siten* a few hundred feet farther up the hillside. The original farmstead may have been established by “Heini Landös” who supposedly settled in Hirzel by 1467. According to Hans Frick the Zürich archivist, Heinrich Landis purchased a homestead in Hirzel in 1488.⁵ Winkler⁶ dates the two current buildings on that site from the 1700s (not from 1488, as Ira Landis stated), but they are nevertheless wonderful structures and lovingly preserved, as are most of the ancient farm houses in the area.



Untere Siten (side view), with *Obere Siten* in Background

⁵ Cited in the Landis Family Reunion Report, 1930. A minor contradiction should be noted -- the 1933 report cites Frick as stating that the name was Wilhelm Landis instead of Heinrich. One of the 16 casualties from the parish of Horgen who died at the Battle of Kappel on Oct. 11, 1531 was Heini Landis, who was likely related to this original Heinrich. See Kläui 1952, p. 175.

⁶ Winkler 1974.



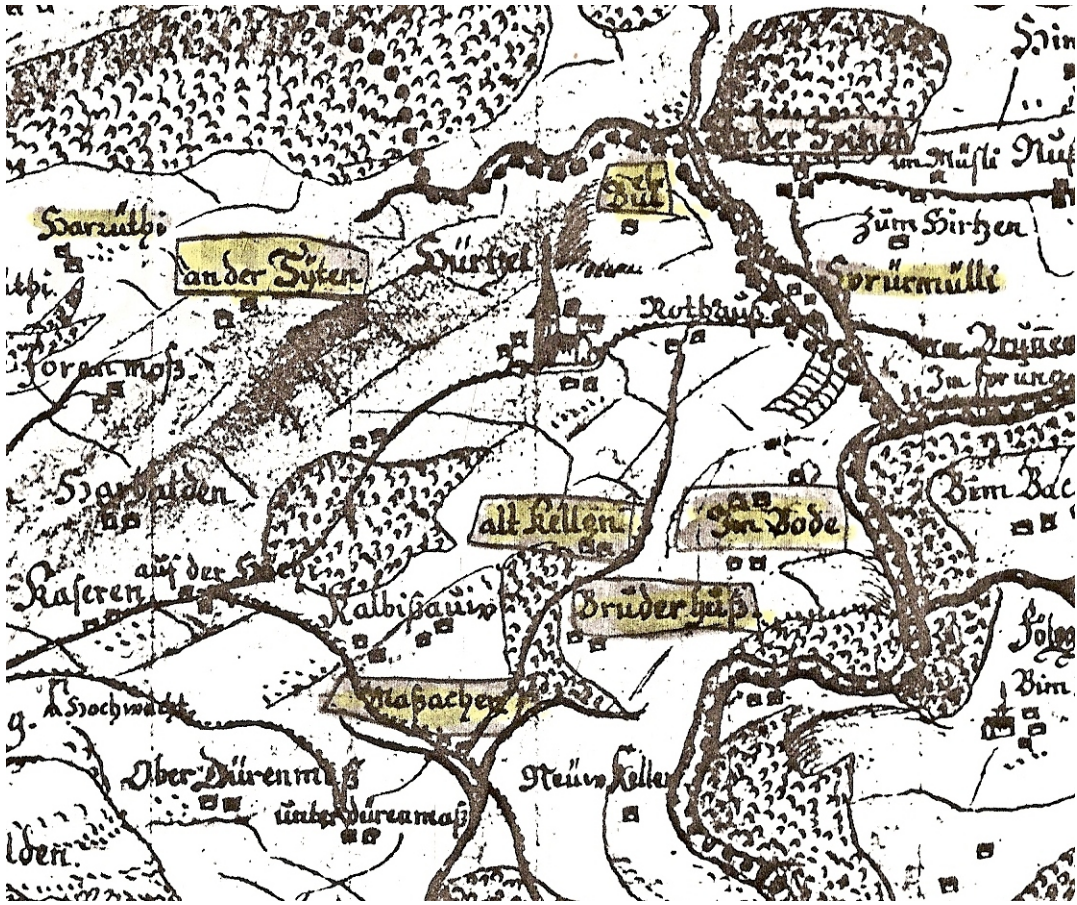
Untere Siten (front view)

The earliest records in the church book of Horgen⁷ begin in 1545. Unfortunately the first 20 pages are fragmentary and badly water stained. The surname Landis first clearly appears in 1546, when a child (the name is missing) of "Hans Landis" was baptized. In August of that year another child, Ulrich, was baptized whose father is referred to as "Hanson Landis"-- the suffix indicating that Hans' father was also named Hans. Other members of the family whose children appear in the baptismal records at that time are Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar Landis, quite possibly siblings.

Of these, Hanson (born about 1521) is the earliest direct ancestor of the family that can be determined on the *Horgerberg*. He was married to Katherina Schinz (this surname is also spelled as "Schintz" and "Schinss" in the Horgen churchbook, not to be confused with the "Schmid" family that resided in Hirzel at that time). It is interesting to note that the first occurrence of the surname in the churchbook in 1546 is in the form "Landis," and that the spelling changed to "Landös" in July of 1551 when a different minister took over the records. In 1553 the original minister resumed his duties and the spelling reverted to "Landis" once again. This shows that the spellings were still in flux at that point, and that ministers took liberty to render the names as they felt appropriate.

Hanson Landis had a son, likewise named Hans, who was destined to play an important role in the struggle of the Anabaptists for religious freedom in the canton of Zürich. This son, Hans, was the first member of the Landis family to clearly and distinctly stand out in history during the turbulent period of the Reformation. His involvement with the Anabaptists affected not only his life but also that of all his descendants for generations.

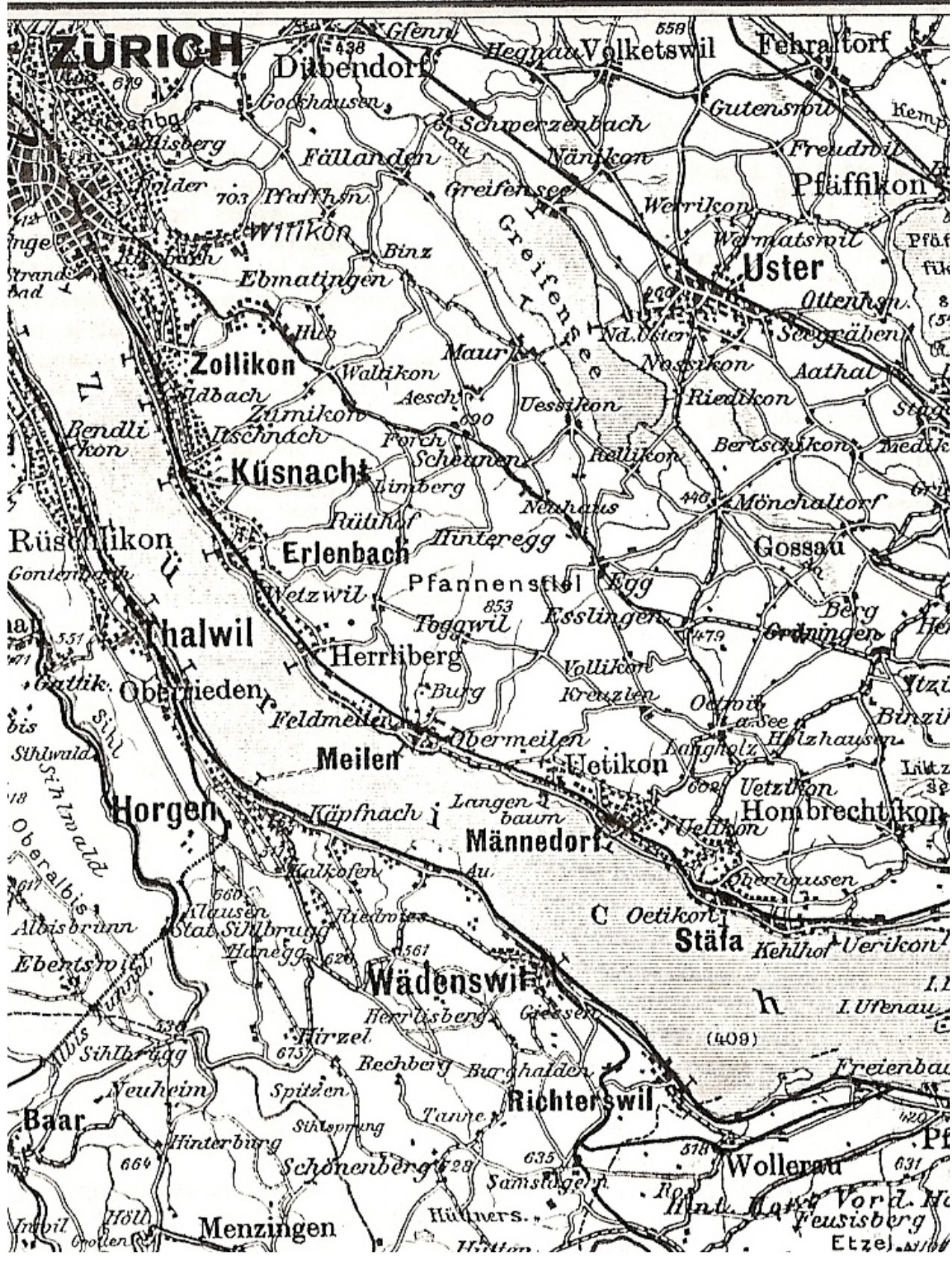
⁷ LDS microfilm #0996932



Hirzel and surrounding farmsteads, 1667⁸

⁸ Map source: Winkler 1974. The original map was drawn in 1667 by Hans Conrad Gyger





Chapter 4

Historical Background: The Anabaptist Movement in Switzerland

The 16th century marks one of the fundamental turning points in the history of Western civilization. Although there had been localized religious reform movements before this time (e.g. the Lollards in England, the Hussites in Bohemia), the reform movements of the 16th century converged with the broader groundswell of socioeconomic protest that had been building among the common people. When the two movements converged they created a tidal wave of upheaval that swept across central Europe.

Some historians have spoken of the crises of late feudalism which peaked at the dawn of the 16th century.¹ The commoners were increasingly being squeezed in a pincers of demands by the feudal nobility and the oligarchic city councils, which were tightening their control over the local populations.² Officials at all levels were raising taxes, rents, feudal tithes, and tolls, and they were passing ordinances to create exclusive monopolies on trade.³ Throughout southern Germany and Switzerland, in cities such as Freiburg, Augsburg, Constance, Bern and Zürich, the city councils were reaching out to control the economies of the surrounding rural villagers. In order to establish zones of economic domination, the city councils stamped out rural guilds and manipulated the growing economies outside their walls. They declared that the small landowners and tenant farmers in the surrounding villages were “out-burgers,” or non-residential citizens, which made them subject to new taxes and commercial regulations.⁴ Small farmers were forced to take out loans to pay these increased liabilities, and many were being reduced to poverty.⁵ Although serfdom had been abolished in some areas in the late 15th century, most notably Franconia, Thuringia, Tyrolia, and particularly in the Swiss cantons, these landless peasants comprised a growing under-class who lacked formal citizenship in the cities.⁶ Many of these displaced people gravitated to the cities in hopes of becoming craftsmen, but the majority simply became day-laborers, beggars, or vagabonds, always a potentially explosive element. Even these non-citizens (the *Beisassen* or *Hintersassen*) were squeezed for their meager resources. The city councils adopted the policy that non-citizens who resided in their jurisdictions for more one year and one day were subject to payment of an annual tax as a mark of their subservience, which was tantamount to creating a quasi-serf status.⁷

As the polarization in wealth and social privilege intensified, conditions were ripe for the outbreak of civil unrest.⁸ The nobility and the local governments were on permanent alert against revolts which began to flare everywhere. Initially the grievances were sparked by abusive taxation and interest rates, but these soon grew broader in scope and escalated into demands for the abolition of serfdom and class privilege everywhere. The legal basis for these claims to social

¹ See Scott 1986, Laube 1985.

² Scribner 1981.

³ For example, after 1471 the margraves of Baden began creating artificial scarcities by imposing high tariffs on imports and forbidding their subjects to sell products on foreign markets. Scott 1986; Laube 1987.

⁴ Scott (1986).

⁵ Laube (1987).

⁶ Midelfort 1978.

⁷ Scott 1986.

⁸ Laube 1987.

justice lay in old Germanic Common Law (*altes Recht*), which was based on ancient traditions of local autonomy and communal liberty in the German speaking regions.⁹ In the past the commoners had legal protections, rights to pasturage, use of the forest, and compensation for property loss, but over time these had been supplanted by seigniorial rights (*Herrschaftsrecht*). As the protests escalated, peasant leaders also appealed to the moral principles of Christianity (*göttliches Recht*), from which they derived the notion that there should be less monopoly of wealth and greater sharing of goods and resources. This appeal to Christian justice was especially timely because the forces of Reformation had been building, and there was a growing coalition between radical clergy and the peasantry.

Spark was set to this tinder by the chronic hostility that had prevailed for almost two centuries between the Swiss cantons and the imperial Habsburgs, who claimed feudal title to much of this region. The Swiss cantons had largely succeeded in breaking away from the Holy Roman Empire by the beginning of the 16th century, after a protracted period of struggle against the armies of the Habsburgs, but they were still nominally under the umbrella of the empire.¹⁰ The military campaigns against the Swiss were costly and these demands began to unravel the social fabric in the southern German realms. Discontent was especially intense in Alsace and the Breisgau, on both sides of the Rhine, which were being drained of manpower and resources in the futile effort to subjugate the Swiss. The neighboring Swiss cantons also were under great stress as the civil authorities intensified their demands for taxes and military levies for self-defense.

In 1460 at Hegau, west of Lake Constance, the peasants seized the local Austrian officials and attacked several surrounding towns. This incident may have been triggered by the Swiss, who encouraged peasant unrest in Hapsburg territories just across their border. One of the most famous peasant uprisings was the *Bundschuh*, which broke out in Alsace near Selestat in 1493. Dissident peasants adopted a banner displaying the image of a commoner's shoe with long laces streaming from it, depicting the "bound shoe" worn by the peasants at that time, in contrast to the elegant "*Stiefel*" boots of the nobility. The peasant leaders planned to capture several cities in Alsace, then form an alliance with Swiss peasants in Zürich and Bern. The conspiracy was short-lived and most of the leaders were executed, but the *Bundschuh* message was not extinguished.

These rebellions targeted not just the secular authorities, but also the monasteries and the wealthy bishoprics. Religious visionaries fed the unrest by challenging both the church and the state. In one village, for example, the peasants desecrated the Eucharist on the altar and cut off the fingers of the parish priest when he tried to stop them.¹¹ In 1476 in the archbishopric of Würzburg, Hans Böhm preached that the apocalypse was at hand and he tried to incite a revolution, but he was burned as a heretic. Each spark led to another, all of which were precursors to the greatest conflagration of all, the Peasant War of 1525, which engulfed most of southern Germany.

The peasant rebellions were largely squelched by the authorities throughout the Holy Roman Empire, but they achieved greater success in Switzerland. Swiss peasantry shared similar grievances against the wealthy families who controlled city governments, monopolized resources and were trying to extend their control into the hinterlands of the cantons. The wealthy landowners were expanding the land-use fees paid by the farmers in the outlying villages. The canton governments were also increasing taxation and imposing annoying restrictions on

⁹ Swiss independence was finally recognized in 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years' War. See Robisheaux 1984.

¹⁰ Martin 1971; Luck 1985.

¹¹ Scott 1986.

hunting, fishing, and use of the forests. The city council in Zürich had forbidden the formation of rural guilds and discouraged all enterprises outside their control, such as the planting of new vineyards, the construction of oil-presses, and bath-houses.¹² The rural peasantry fought back. Bern was rocked in 1470 by the *Zwingherrenschafft* movement, which seized control of the the local government and invested it in an elected city council. As with the *Bundschuh* uprisings to the north, which proudly displayed the commoner's shoe as a symbol of unity, the Swiss peasantry also passed a series of ordinances prohibiting the wearing of ostentatious clothing, including shoes with buckles.¹³ Zürich too was rocked by an uprising in 1489, which forced the city council to make concessions to the rural peasantry.

The Swiss city-states were never able to exert the same degree of control over their hinterlands as was typical in other parts of southern Germany, where more people were kept in abject serfdom on large princely estates. The Swiss peasants in their high valley strongholds stoutly resisted these attempts at domination. The institution of serfdom was weakened even further by the ongoing struggle against the Habsburgs which required the support of the rural Swiss population. Serfdom was abolished earliest in the forest cantons after a series of local rebellions, and by 1485 it was abolished in most Swiss territories.¹⁴

The Anabaptist Message

The success of the Swiss in preserving independence from the Holy Roman Empire also allowed them to become a safe harbor for religious reformers. Although the forest cantons had provided the original nucleus for the Swiss confederation, the guiding forces were the major city-states -- Zürich, Bern, Basel, Luzern and Fribourg. Of these, Zürich was especially dominant due to its strategic location near the head-waters of the Rhine. Zürich was a major center for commerce as well as for new ideas, and the Reformation found its natural roots in such a place. Zürich also had convenient access to the talent from nearby Basel, which was a free imperial city state with a renowned university and several resident humanist scholars, most notably Erasmus.

In 1519 the city council of Zürich commissioned Ulrich Zwingli to be a "People's Priest" at the *Grossmünster* cathedral, and under his guidance Zürich became a center for reform. Zwingli sought to restore the church to the moral purity of the past and, in addition, to simplify the complex religious liturgy that had grown during the Middle Ages, most of which he rejected as not being biblically based. Eventually he advocated that the entire "idolatrous" ritual of the Mass should be abolished, along with all the sacraments, the veneration of saints, clerical vestments, chalices, crucifixes, religious art and even the singing of hymns. Zwingli - like Martin Luther - was a careful, methodical reformer who sought to bring about these changes from the top down, under the "magisterial" guidance of the city council. All citizens of the canton were expected to belong to the Reformed church of Zürich, regardless of whether they be sinners or saints.

There were many proselytizers during these early years of the Reformation throughout the German speaking regions, each promoting his own vision of a biblically correct Christianity. Although they differed in their creeds, the more radical reformers have been grouped by historians under the label of "Anabaptist." The term derives from their shared rejection of infant baptism and their belief in the "rebaptizing" of adults. The equivalent German term used by civil and religious authorities was *Wiedertäufer*, which literally means "rebaptizers." Anabaptism has

¹² Scott 1986.

¹³ Luck 1985.

¹⁴ Luck 1985.

been described as the “Radical Reformation” to distinguish it from mainstream magisterial reformers like Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli whose goals were to reform the state churches.¹⁵ It has also been characterized as the “Protestantism of the Poor,” to emphasize its roots among the less privileged classes of society.¹⁶

Current opinions differ about how the movement can best be characterized. The lineal descendants today -- the Amish, the Hutterites, and the conservative branches of the Mennonites (the latter being a broad umbrella of affiliated groups) -- have to varying degrees preserved an emphasis on being “plain folk,” leading a simple, Gospel-based lifestyle, and practicing an ethic of non-violence, non-participation in politics, and passive separatism from the corruptions of modern society. However, the early founders of Anabaptism were much more zealous, and their fiery speeches stirred the masses during the revolutionary movements that swept southern Germany and Switzerland at that time. The recognition of this fact continues to stir some controversy in the ranks of church historians. An earlier generation of Mennonite historians tended to select those antecedents who most closely matched the characteristics of the Amish and conservative Mennonites today.¹⁷ Any historical ties with the peasant rebellions and the apocalyptic preachers like Thomas Müntzer were disparaged. Conrad Grebel (1498-1526), a proselytizer in Zürich, is usually singled out as the major precursor since he more clearly matched the desired image of a pacifist and an advocate for the establishment of a sectarian separatist religion. At the other extreme, Marxist historians embraced all evidence for linkages with the peasant upheavals. They regarded Thomas Müntzer, not Grebel, as the central figure of early Anabaptism, and they viewed the later pacifistic sectarian stage, ushered in by preachers such as Michael Sattler, as a futile attempt to continue the lost peasant revolution of 1525 through spiritual means.¹⁸

A synthesis has emerged in historical research since the 1970s.¹⁹ The diversity of the early Anabaptist movement is now commonly acknowledged. Anabaptism evolved during a period of ideological ferment and social upheaval and there was a broad spectrum of creeds circulating in the German speaking areas. Novel ideas spread rapidly through published tracts that were hotly debated in the universities. Out of this ideological seed-bed, variations on some common themes emerged from reformers in diverse areas. Heinrich Büllinger, Zwingli’s colleague and successor in the Reformed church in Switzerland, published the first systematic study of Anabaptism in 1560.²⁰ This work is flawed by bias, but it remains one of the most thorough descriptions of the movement at that time. He distinguished at least 13 groups, named after their founding ministers or their key doctrinal concerns. By 1589, over 40 groups were known, showing that there was ongoing diversification of creeds. Their critics among the Reformed clergy charged that one could never be sure precisely what each advocated since they varied so much in their beliefs.

¹⁵ Williams 1962.

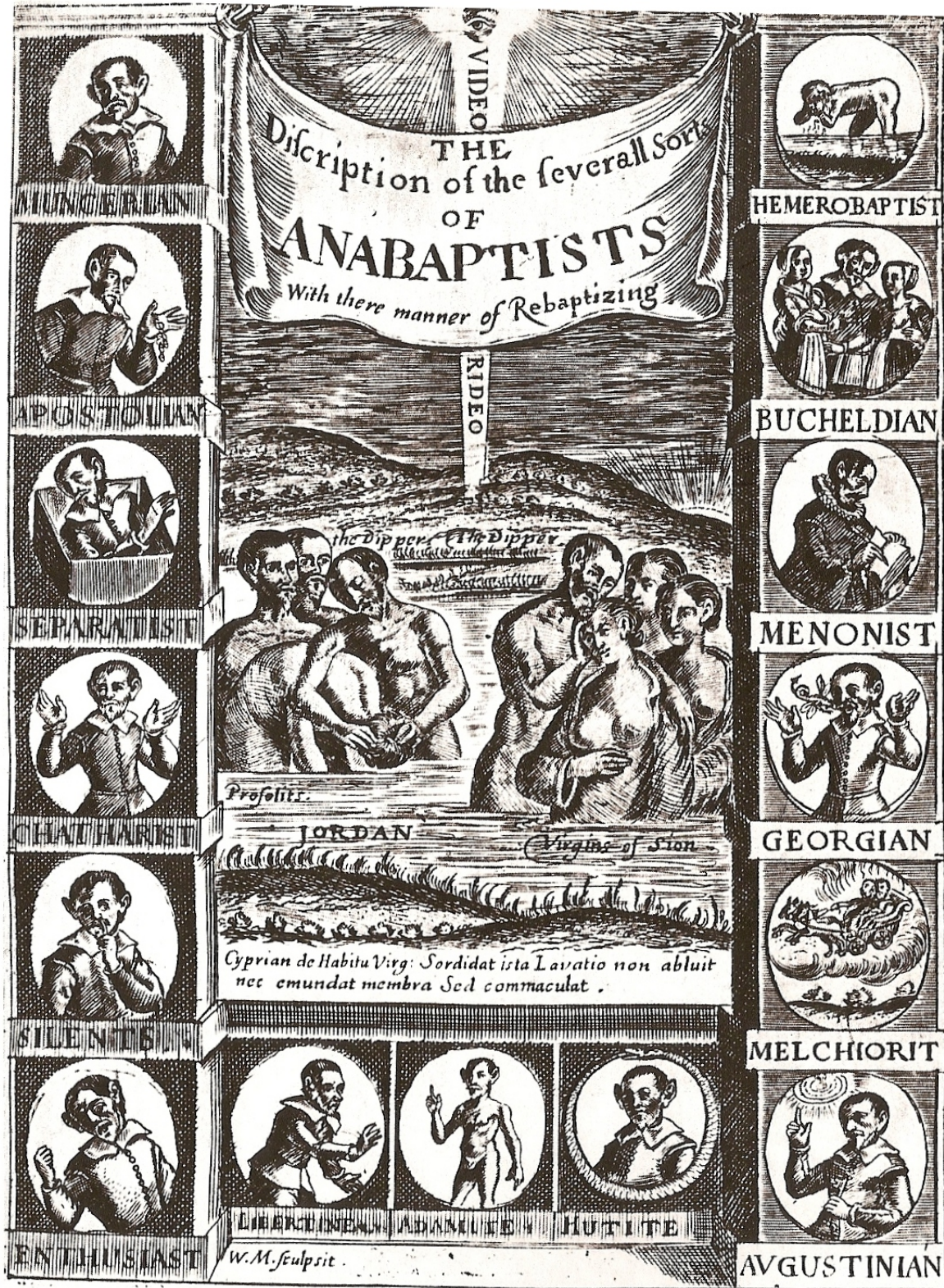
¹⁶ Stayer 1982.

¹⁷ Bender 1950.

¹⁸ Brady 1981.

¹⁹ Two more recent scholars who have written about the early Anabaptist movement are Packull 1977 and Stayer 1976.

²⁰ Büllinger 1560.



98 The proliferation of Anabaptist sects became at last a subject for ridicule: title-page of Daniel Featley's Description of 1645, known also as 'The Dippers Dipt'

The Anabaptists shared a profound belief in biblical literalism, which paradoxically became one of their major sources of diversity. The Bible (particularly the New Testament) was used as an inflexible moral guide. Great importance was placed on each turn of phrase and every nuance of meaning. One extreme example were the "Apostolics," who supposedly wandered about without staff, girdle, shoes or money, in obedience to Matthew 10:9, and some preached from the roof tops, following the dictates of Matthew 10:27. Others took to heart the remark by Jesus that children should be their guides, and supposedly "played, babbled, or whimpered like infants."²¹ The "Holy, Sinless, Baptists" omitted the phrase "forgive our sins" from the Lord's prayer because they felt they were beyond sinning after their rebaptism experience.²² Anabaptists of all persuasions were intensely devoted to the study and memorization of long passages from the Bible, which they mustered for offense or defense during debates. Most Reformed ministers and Catholic priests found themselves ill-prepared against the encyclopedic knowledge of these fervent adversaries.

The Swiss brethren were initially followers of Ulrich Zwingli, who was the prime mover of the religious reform movement in canton Zürich. One of the core members was Conrad Grebel (1498-1526), who became part of Zwingli's circle by 1521. Zwingli developed a special bond with Grebel, and he seems to have been grooming him for an appointment in the new theological school that was to be founded in Zürich. During the next three years several priests were also drawn into this loose-knit circle, most of them having recently left the Church because of their religious convictions. These included Johannes Brötli, Wilhelm Reublin (Röubli), Simon Stumpf, Georg Blaurock, Ludwig Haetzer, and Michael Sattler. All of them played leading roles in the further development of the Anabaptist movement.

Zwingli's followers were eager to carry out his reform principles, but Zwingli fell behind the pace of change. They grew impatient with him and wanted to introduce more radical changes at a faster pace than what he was prepared to accept. Reublin, for example, had been expelled from the priesthood at Basel after he began protesting the Mass, the Catholic liturgy, the veneration of relics, and the Eucharist enshrined in the monstrance, which he felt should not be esteemed above the Bible itself. On Corpus Christi day, June 13, 1522, he marched in front of the traditional procession, carrying a Bible and shouting, "this is your Venerable -- this is your Sanctuary -- all else is dust and ashes."²³ Some of the brethren refused to fast during Lent and they began disrupting Catholic worship services.²⁴ The Zürich city council was disturbed by the fury of the ongoing verbal attacks against the monks and they held a public hearing on the issue on July 21, 1522. This was an ominous foreboding of ill will against Zwingli's more radical followers. During the hearing, the exchanges became quite heated. One of the councilors, referring to Grebel, remarked that "the Devil sits in the Council chamber." Grebel responded, "the Devil not only sits in the chambers, but he also sits among my Lords; for one...[of you] has said, 'the Gospel should [not] be preached in a cow's ass.' And in so far as my Lords do not allow the Gospel to progress further, they will be destroyed."²⁵ It is not clear whether Grebel meant that the councilors would be destroyed by God's wrath or by social upheaval, but either way his thinly veiled threat reveals the extremist mood of the brethren at this early stage of the Zürich Reformation.

²¹ Williams 1962, p. 830.

²² Smith 1950, p. 79.

²³ Eshleman 1917, p. 14.

²⁴ Gäbler 1986.

²⁵ Walton 1967, p. 65.

The Swiss brethren were clearly not just a passive, apolitical, separatistic and voluntary sect, as is best modeled by the Amish today.²⁶ They were convinced that all civil authority was soon to be toppled by the impending Second Coming of Christ, and they felt that they were harbingers of this transformation. As events spiraled out of control in the 1520s with the peasant rebellions in southern Germany, the brethren debated intensely the appropriate methods for change. At this stage they had not yet rejected the hope of total societal transformation, but most of them clearly rejected violence as a means for obtaining their goals. Zwingli's model of reformation was predicated on a theocratic union of church and state, so in the beginning it was natural for the brethren to think in terms of instituting their reforms within the framework of the regional government and church. They grappled with the issue of worldly power (*weltliche Obrigkeit*), which they debated under the symbolic name of taking up the "Sword" (*Schwert*). The *Schwertlers*, such as Balthasar Hubmaier, felt that the seizure of power was justified. Extremists, such as Simon Stumpf, advocated the use of violence. Zwingli accused him of urging the execution of priests and all others who stood in the way of change. Stumpf appears to have been in the minority and he was expelled quite early from the brethren in Zürich. Conrad Grebel had clearly set his mind against the Sword by 1524 when the peasant rebellions erupted.²⁷ The brethren were in contact with radical reformers in southern Germany, such as Andreas Karlstadt, whose treatises they had read with great interest. Karlstadt's rejection of infant baptism and the sacraments and his belief in simplification of the liturgy won their approval, as did his commitment to non-violent reformation. By late 1524 they also were in communication with Thomas Müntzer, the most notorious of the religious revolutionaries. The brethren agreed with Müntzer that the world was in the "Fourth Kingdom of Jerome" and that the "idol with clay feet" would soon be smashed. However, they rejected his message of violent purification and seizure of the governments. Grebel and his colleagues even co-signed a letter to Müntzer in 1525 stating their position that such means were not in accordance with Christian principles.

In summary, despite their differences in beliefs about the use of the "Sword," there were several points of theological similarity that justify including these proselytizers under the label of Anabaptist. All shared a deep commitment to the Bible as the ultimate validation for belief (although they differed in interpretations). They emphatically rejected the Vatican, the "Whore of Babylon," as well as the Reformed state churches established by Luther and Zwingli. They were fiercely anti-clerical, a sentiment which was widely popular among the rebellious peasantry. The clergy were regarded as "immoral, false prophets, Pharisees, hypocrites and tearing wolves."²⁸ Reacting against hierarchical authority, they sought to restore the simplicity of early Christianity which was based on local congregations of believers. Religious rituals and liturgy were severely simplified, and religious art was rejected as idolatrous and in many cases destroyed. Infant baptism was rejected and replaced with adult "believer" baptism, which was a cathartic experience of being born again and cleansed of sin (they differed in minor details such as the degree of submersion in water, or indeed whether a baptismal ritual of any kind was necessary, some preferring just an inner experience). Another central creed in Anabaptism was its strong emphasis on proselytizing and recruitment, which brought them into direct conflict with the established state churches. They were willing to accept suffering, or even martyrdom, in this pursuit. Salvation was not to be achieved through individualistic mystical experience, but within a communal context. The congregation (*Gemeinde*) of like-minded believers was central to the

²⁶ Stayer 1982.

²⁷ Stayer 1976.

²⁸ Packull 1992, p. 12.

creed. In accordance with the biblical injunction, Anabaptists believed in greater sharing of worldly goods and rejection of profit making. Generally the creed was most popular among the lower echelons of society, although as the creed spread into the Netherlands where the Mennonite sects developed, some Anabaptists became wealthy citizens. Even there, however, it was unfashionable to display overt wealth. The Anabaptist ambivalency about wealth was usually shown in their plain modes of dress and by extensive charity funds in most congregations. In a few cases -- most notoriously the Münsterites -- there were experiments in communal ownership of property, which has persisted today with the Hutterites.²⁹ Finally, the belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ seems to have been virtually universal among the early Anabaptists, a point which has been denied until quite recently.³⁰

²⁹ Williams 1962.

³⁰ Friedmann 1973.

Chapter 5

The Landis Family and the Anabaptist Movement

The Landis family played a leading role in the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland in the early 17th century; however, it is unclear how far back before this their religious activism extended. The most prominent figure was Hans Landis, whose place in history is marked by his being the last Anabaptist to be martyred in the canton of Zürich in 1614. It is possible that members of the family were involved with religious reform movements well before this time, although the evidence remains sketchy.

One problem in assessing some of the statements made in earlier Landis family histories in the USA – all of whom were Mennonites at that early stage -- is that there is a clear pride in portraying our family as being descendants of religious free-thinkers, which has led to unsupported generalizations. Ira Landis, for example, states that Heini Landis, the first member of the family who settled in Hirzel, “fled” from Pfäffikon (on the south shore of Lake Zürich), then settled in Menzingen, and shortly afterward settled in Hirzel by 1467. Ira notes that “the coat of arms in Zug for the Landises shows a man rowing a boat across the lake (as though escaping...)” Although the reason for Heini Landis’s alleged flight isn’t stated, the implication is that it was to escape religious persecution since (so Ira asserts) members of the family were involved in the Anabaptist movement “from its earliest days.”¹ This appears to be sheer speculation. If Heini Landis was fleeing religious persecution already by 1424, this was a century before Conrad Grebel and the birth of the Anabaptist movement. We might also note that the image of a man rowing a boat would be an appropriate coat of arms for a family which, according to Swiss historians, originated on the boat-landings of Lake Zürich, and it does not necessarily reflect a flight for religious freedom!

Another example is the statement by Eshleman² about John de Landuno of Ghent, whose name he speculates may have been a Dutch form of Landis – “around 1350 John de Landuno, a learned man, broke from the Catholic Church, embraced Anabaptism,” and was tortured to death by the authorities. Again, we should note that Anabaptism did not exist as a movement in 1350, it came into being almost two centuries later. There is no evidence that John de Landuno was an ancestor for the Landis family in Switzerland. We do not need to cast about for speculative ties with religious martyrs such as John de Landuno, since we have a *bona fide* martyr in our family tree, Hans Landis of Hirzel, Switzerland.

A final example is the statement by Ezra Eby,³ who claimed that his Eby family, along with other families such as Landis, Herr, Graaf, Myli, Schank, and Witmer, had joined Waldensian congregations that were established on the southwest shore of Lake Zürich in the early days of the Reformation. The implication is that the Anabaptist congregation in the Hirzel area had ancient roots since there were points of similarity between the two creeds. This assertion merits in-depth exploration.

¹ Landis 1954, p. 134.

² Eshleman 1917.

³ Eby 1889.

The Waldensian Connection?

The origin of the Waldensians is somewhat unclear. It is usually traced back to a fundamentalist movement founded by Peter Waldo in Lyon, France, around the year 1173. Waldo was a successful silk merchant, but he decided to follow the example of Christ and he gave away all his possessions to the poor and adopted the life of a mendicant, wandering about preaching the Gospels. His followers were known as the "Poor Men of Lyon." A similar movement developed about the same time in northern Italy (the "Poor Men of Lombardy"). As these names imply, they embraced a creed of asceticism, dressed simply and practiced a lifestyle of poverty. Waldo translated parts of the Bible and he emphasized biblical fundamentalism as a moral guide, especially Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. They severely simplified church liturgy and ritualism and rejected all external symbols, such as sacraments, religious images, the altar and the crucifix, priestly vestments, veneration of saints, indulgences, and prayers for the dead. Although the Waldensians nominally remained within the Catholic Church and some even continued to attend Mass, they naturally aroused strong clerical opposition. Their advocacy of lay preaching undermined the priestly hierarchy. Waldensian preachers were notorious for their memorization of long passages from the Bible. Other points of similarity with Anabaptism included their rejection of the swearing of oaths, the bearing of arms, and their doubts about the validity of infant baptism. Their belief that the Eucharist should be interpreted only as a symbolic reenactment of the Last Supper presaged Zwingli by at least three centuries. At the Third Lateran Council (1179) the church denied their right to preach, and when they persisted doing so they were branded as heretics in 1184. Waldo then established his own church, with himself as a bishop, and he began to ordain ministers. After its members (the "*Vaudois*") were exiled from France, they spread into Württemberg, Bavaria, Austria, down the Rhine into the low countries, and eventually as far east as Poland. In an attempt to prevent their continued growth, the Pope placed the entire valley of Lucerne and much of northern Italy under a religious interdict in 1453. Finally, in 1487 Pope Innocent VIII launched a pogrom of extermination against the Waldensians. By that point they were estimated to have had between 300 and 400 congregations and about 200,000 adherents.⁴

The number of Waldensians had already dwindled by that point and many of them later converted to Zwingli's Reformed Church in 1532 after an accord was reached at Cianforan. A few congregations survived in the Alpine valleys of the Piedmont, west of Turin, where some persist to the present day. One estimate is that by about 1560 Waldensian congregations also existed in the rural areas of the cantons of Zürich, Bern, Luzern, and Schwyz, attracting Swiss converts.⁵ It is difficult to determine how much credence should be given to this claim. It was a popular theory from the 17th through the 19th century that Waldensianism was the direct precursor to Anabaptism. The idea should be taken seriously since it was asserted by such prominent early chroniclers as Sebastian Frank and Thielman van Braght.⁶ Certainly the general spirit of

⁴ Seibt 1972.

⁵ Eby 1889.

⁶ Thielman van Braght 1660.

Waldensianism, as well as several of its specific beliefs, paralleled Anabaptism. Neff,⁷ however, rejects the theory, and he suggests that Frank may have invented it in order to forge a more reputable ancestry for Anabaptism and to oppose the disparaging label of radical Münsterite at that time. Neff also notes that most Waldensian congregations had died out in Switzerland about 100 years before the birth of Anabaptism in 1525, and that by the 17th century the surviving Waldensians had reinstated the swearing of oaths and even resorted to using weapons to defend themselves. None of the early Anabaptists among Conrad Grebel's followers were reported to have been Waldensians.

The assertion that the Landis family had been early members of a Waldensian congregation is intriguing, but the evidence for it unfortunately remains unknown. Eby does not cite sources for this notion, and it is probably best regarded as speculation reflecting a popular idea in the 19th century, as well as a desire to amplify the family's early involvement in the Reformation. The time frame he implies for this conversion is rather late, since the number of Waldensians in Switzerland had greatly declined by the late 16th century. There is no mention in the early Swiss records of a Waldensian congregation on the hillside above Horgen.

The Point of Conversion by the Landis Family to Anabaptism

The assertion that some members of the Landis family converted to Anabaptism in the earliest years of the movement merits critical scrutiny. In the 1937 Landis Family Reunion Report, Ira Landis states, "very early in the Anabaptist movement thru the preaching and martyrdom of the first and later leaders, the Landises with their neighbors... formed a congregation nearby called *Horgerberg*. In faith and practice the Landis family was a leader from the first." Again, in the 1959 report, Ira Landis states that "in January 1526 already, the name Landis was associated with the Anabaptist movement...one year after its start."

Although the references for this assertion are not given, there is an early document in the Zürich state archive that refers to the Landis family. It is a commentary on Heinrich Aberli, one of the more radical associates of Conrad Grebel, dated January 13, 1526:

He [Aberli] was also for a time in the house of Landös [in Zürich] and read to him out of a small book. Adelheit Schnorffin was there, who is now deceased. After preaching, he left. A while later he returned to her, since she lay in bed and was sick. He comforted her, and then left once again. A while later Landös sent for him and he returned to Schnorffin. Then she requested the sign of God's will, with much weeping. He baptized her, and the Landös he alone was in the room.⁸

This may be the document to which Ira Landis referred in his 1959 report. This document clearly shows that an early member of the Landis family, living in Zürich (near the village of Zollikon, where the first Anabaptist congregation came into being), was sympathetic to the Anabaptist creed of Heinrich Aberli, but it does not suggest that he was "a leader from the first."

⁷ Neff 1959.

⁸ Cited in von Muralt and Schmid 1952, p. 162, my own literal translation

Another early reference, probably to this same Hans Landös, is found in the transcripts of the trial of Jacob Grebel (father of Conrad, one of the Anabaptist leaders), held in October, 1526. Jacob Grebel was a wealthy iron merchant and he had risen to become one of the most prominent citizens in Zürich. He served as magistrate (*Vogt*) of Grüningen, and as representative of the canton of Zürich to the Swiss Confederacy. He had arranged scholarships for his son at Vienna and Paris, but withdrew funds in exasperation when Conrad began to lead a dissolute, carefree lifestyle. Jacob was again dismayed after Conrad returned to Zürich in 1519 and became involved with the circle of early Anabaptists. In a sad twist of fate, both father and son died a few months apart. Conrad died while in hiding from the authorities in 1526; a few months later, Jacob was charged with having illegally appropriated pension funds and he was executed in disgrace. The transcript of Jacob Grebel's trial contains the following passage:

Hans Landös, shoemaker, testified that when Conrad Grebel was his neighbor, he [Grebel] at one time spoke and complained how poor he was, that his father was giving him nothing, and if an occasional poor man came to his door, he had nothing to give him. He pitied them, and if his father would only give what he owed him and had accepted for him! It amounted to about 1,000 Crowns, for which he wanted to sue his father as for his own property. The witness advised against this: "He ought not to bring shame on his father."⁹

This passage does not indicate that the relationship between Landös and the Anabaptists was particularly strong. In fact, all it states is that Hans Landös was a neighbor to Conrad Grebel, and that Hans disapproved of Conrad's actions. Ira Landis reports that Conrad Grebel lived at 5 Neumarkt street in Zürich.¹⁰ On the basis of this information, we may assume that Hans Landös lived next door, and it is likely that when Heinrich Aberli visited him (as discussed above), it was at this residence.

Other than these two references, there is no clear evidence to indicate that any member the Landis family was involved with Anabaptism from its beginnings, let alone with the earlier Waldensian movement. It is perhaps relevant to note that the families in the Horgen and Hirzel area comprised one of the largest contingents in Zwingli's army at the battle of Kappel on October 11, 1531, when Zürich's army was defeated by a combined force from the Catholic cantons. Zwingli himself was killed in this battle, along with 16 others from the parish of Horgen, including Heini Landis.¹¹ This clearly shows that most of the families on the Horgenberg, including at least one member of the Landis family, were still willing to take up arms at that time.

Although members of the Landis family may have converted to Anabaptism during its early years, the baptisms, marriages, and deaths of their loved ones were still routinely recorded in the Reformed Church book of Horgen. The church books begin in 1545, and the first baptismal records for the family appear in 1546. No mention was made in these early records about the Landis family being *Täufer*, as ministers commonly noted back then. We would expect infant

⁹ Cited in Harder 1985, p. 466.

¹⁰ Landis 1954, p. 96.

¹¹ Kläui 1952, p. 175.

baptism to be a sensitive issue, yet surprisingly these baptisms continued to take place and even the names of godparents are recorded. This shows that during these early years the Landis family on the Horgenberg didn't completely avoid the Reformed Church.

It's true that during these earliest days the Anabaptists may have continued to register births and baptisms with the local pastor because it was customary, or because of official pressure. The Anabaptists were forced to hold their services in great secrecy because of the relentless persecution by the authorities, which intensified after 1528. In Canton Bern the officials initiated house-to-house surveys twice each year to ascertain the names of those who were attending Reformed Church services and receiving the sacraments, as was mandated. They kept strict baptismal and marriage registers to aid in the detection of those who declined these rituals. The children of those who weren't married in the Reformed Church were declared illegitimate, and therefore not legal heirs. Those who refused to have their children baptized were called "soul killers" since they were supposedly risking eternal damnation for their children. In order to ferret out the Anabaptists in the remotest areas of the canton, the authorities enlisted the services of bounty-hunters, known as "Anabaptist hunters" (*Täufer Jäger*). In response, the Anabaptists may have just supplemented the services of the Reformed minister with their private communion services and adult baptisms in the evening. Over time, as the congregation became more organized, they developed their own leaders who superceded the Reformed minister.

The approximate date for the emergence of an Anabaptist congregation on the Horgenberg is not clearly documented. Kläui¹² notes the absence of reported Anabaptists in the Horgen area in the 1520s, although he acknowledges that they may have existed. He states that, in contrast to some other areas in canton Zürich and Bern, there was an apparent absence of religious strife in Horgen during these early years and even some carefully guarded sympathy for the traditional Catholic faith. The minister assigned to the parish, as well as the parishioners, preferred to keep an even hand in deciding spiritual matters.

The evidence suggests that the majority of the Landis family in the parish of Horgen converted to Anabaptism later, between 1570 and 1580. Clasen¹³ surveyed the archives in Switzerland and southern Germany in an attempt to quantify the number of Anabaptist converts by time period. He states that the names and dates shown in his study mark when they first appeared in historical records, typically corresponding to the point when they converted to the creed. In *Horgenberg* the earliest Anabaptist convert cited is Hans Kleger in 1534. The first recorded Anabaptist in the Landis family that he shows is Hans Rudolf Landis, whose daughter, Barbali and wife, Annali "Bruppbarer," were listed as "Täufer" in Horgen on August 25, 1570. On September 5, 1575, there is an entry in the Horgen churchbook for the baptism of his son, Hans, which states "*das Kind ist ein Täufer Kind.*"¹⁴ Rudolf eventually converted his parents, Hanson Landis and Katherine Schinz, to Anabaptist beliefs and he also appears in the records at nearby Richterswil. His brother and sister-in-law, Hans Landis and his wife Barbara

¹² Kläui 1952, p. 172.

¹³ Clasen 1978.

¹⁴ Literally, "the child is a baptist child." In German, the Anabaptists were called "Täufer" (baptists) or "Wiedertäufer" (rebaptizers), referring to their belief in adult baptism.

Hochstrasser, also seem to have converted about this time. On May 29, 1580, their daughter Margaret was baptized in the Reformed Church, but Hans was listed as an Anabaptist.

Another clue to when Hans Landis joined Anabaptism is found in the hymn dedicated to him in the Amish song book, the *Ausbund* (the hymn will be translated later in this chronology). In verse 20 Hans is quoted as saying that he, like the prodigal son, had “returned 30 years ago.” This could be interpreted as a poetic way of saying that he converted 30 years ago and returned to God’s ways. This verse probably was based on the remark Hans made when he was interrogated in 1614, shortly before his execution -- “[I]n all of thirty years I have never wanted to attend your [church] services because you do not lead a better life and [path].”¹⁵ Hans may not have been giving a precise date for his conversion, but since this remark was made in 1614, it indicates that it was around 1584.

Hans Landis the Martyr, and the Later History of Anabaptism in Canton Zürich

By 1540 the numbers of Anabaptists in the reports of the Swiss authorities had plummeted drastically as a result of the policies to systematically suppress the congregations. However, some persisted in the remote parts of canton Zürich and further east in Grüningen into the 17th century. The Zürich officials passed another edict against Anabaptism in 1585. Anabaptists were threatened with heavy financial penalties unless they joined the Reformed Church. In the face of growing popular discontent, the officials vacillated between levying fines against known Anabaptists and calling for vigorous reform of the clergy. The amount of the fine was based on the frequency with which a person attended Anabaptist services. As an added check, they levied a fine whenever a person failed to attend Reformed Church services. They also attempted to isolate the Anabaptists by prohibiting any economic transactions with them. Others in the community could be fined if they did business with a convicted Anabaptist, or even if they extended hospitality to them. As the confrontation accelerated, the government tried to induce the Anabaptists to either give up their practices or to emigrate. Some chose to leave, many going to Moravia where the Hutterites had settled earlier in 1530s. Other refused and thus it developed into a test to see which side had the largest following.

The most active center in the 1580s was on the western shore of Lake Zürich, near Horgen and Wädenswil, in the outlying villages secluded on the hillsides. The Landis family played a central role in the struggle for religious freedom of the Anabaptists during this final chapter of the religion in Switzerland. They drew the attention of officials and several documents are available in the Zürich state archive about specific members of the Landis family.¹⁶ Their story has been enshrined in the collective memory and traditions of the Mennonite and Amish religion as representing a hallmark of oppression. Most of them suffered tragic fates, unusually horrible even for those turbulent times when tragedy was commonplace.

¹⁵ Document 14, September 29, 1614, in Lowry 2003, p. 143.

¹⁶ I was able to photocopy and translate some of these documents in 1993. Later, after corresponding with James Lowry, he translated and published several of these documents pertaining to Hans Landis (see Lowry 2003).

The most famous member of the family in the Horgen area was Hans Landis (1544 - 1614), who became a leading spokesman and representative for the Anabaptist congregations in their confrontations with the civil and religious authorities during these twilight years of the movement. He has been memorialized in Mennonite and Amish traditions as the last Anabaptist martyr executed in the canton of Zürich. Two well-known near contemporary sources preserve stories of Hans Landis and his children. The most famous is *The Bloody Theater, or Martyrs Mirror*, a chronicle of the sufferings of the early martyrs of Anabaptism, which appeared in various versions by the Mennonites in Holland. The earliest version appeared in 1615, one year after the execution of Landis, and the 1660 version by Thielman van Braght remains in print today as a classic reference work on this period of history. Another source is the *Ausbund*, the oldest surviving hymnbook of the Swiss brethren, which is still in use today by Amish congregations. It is regarded as the oldest hymnbook in continuous use by any Christian sect. Some of the hymns date back to 1537, and it is claimed that several were composed by martyrs as they lay imprisoned. Additions were made to the book as it was reprinted in various editions over time. Hymn number 132 commemorates Hans Landis. The later editions of the *Ausbund* contain an appendix which reprints the report presented to the Dutch Mennonite church in the 17th century, entitled "A true account of the hardships which the brethren around Zurich had to suffer for their faith's sake between 1635 and 1645." This account contains details on several members of the Landis family.

The precise birthdate for Hans the martyr is unknown, but the records available indicate around 1544. Hans was reportedly "in his 70th year" at the time of his execution in 1614.¹⁷ The church book of Horgen records the baptism of his brother, Hans Heinrich Landis, on April 19, 1553. A census of Hirzel in 1589 lists both of them, so they should not be confused, as seems to have been done in those cases where Hans' birth year is listed as 1553.

Hans was the son of Johann "Landös" and Catherine Schinz from the village of Hirzel, located on a forested hill (the *Horgenberg*) west of Horgen. This village was incorporated as part of the parish of Horgen until 1697, which explains why many of the older records cite Horgen as the point of origin for the family. Hans married Margaret Hochstrasser (her surname is reported in some sources as "Hochstretter"), and they had at least four children: Verena (a form of Veronica), Felix, Rudolf, and Hans (jr.).¹⁸

Hans Landis and his brother Heini first emerge in the official records in October, 1589, when 15 Anabaptists were arrested for holding religious services and held in custody at Horgen. They included Hans Sommerauer, Uli Suter, Jacob Hochstrasser, Uli Ertzinger, Walti and Hans Pfister, and the brothers Hans and Heini Landis who were the center of the congregation on the

¹⁷ Kläui 1948. Rev. Heinz Schuchmann's notes and publications give the birth year as 1544, and possibly as early as 1539 (his source for this speculation is not cited). Best 1990 cites the birth year of 1553. Wilcox 1995 and I agreed that Hans' birth year was 1544, based on the early statement that Hans was in his 70th year when he was executed. Samuel Wenger 2005 cites a date of 1543.

¹⁸ My line of descent in the family stems from Hans Landis the martyr, through his son, whom I will refer to as Hans II, and grandson Caspar. Caspar Landis will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Horgenberg. Hans Landis was the most prominent leader. He was both a preacher (*Prediger*), and also a congregational representative (*Vorsteher*).¹⁹ Hans usually held the gatherings in the privacy of his house or barn, but he also preached further south to the farmsteads on the Wädenswilberg, below Horgen on the shore of Lake Zürich. There were about 40 persons in the congregation, but undoubtedly there was a much larger number of sympathizers. Heini stated that he “never preached” to the people, but that they “simply prayed together,” and that “they had done nothing to anyone.” He added that he was “not ready to listen to the church,” that it was “against his conscience,” and that they would “stay with the New Testament, which they understood.” Hans Landis remarked that “they alone [the Scriptures] are the signs for his soul...[that] he searched for the well-being of his soul [and] he will not turn away from it, but stay with it, to take another stand is against his beliefs.” Jacob Hochstrasser and Uli Ertzinger likewise stated that they had done nothing but pray, that they hoped they had done good works, and that they also were not ready to return to church.

The report of October 5, 1589, described Hans Landis as follows:

Much has been found out about the *Wiedertäufer*s from Jacob Stauben and Hansen Schächli, bakers who live on the *Horgenberg*. They do gather on *Horgenberg* as many as 40 people, or even more. The leader is Hanns Landis in whose house they meet. He is an evil, treacherous, and dangerous wolf, who leads many people astray. (Cited in Clasen 1989; Kläui 1948, 1952).

It was increasingly apparent to the authorities that the Anabaptists could not be fined out of existence, and their numbers would not dwindle by threats. They were especially concerned to identify those persons within the congregation who served as caretakers for the charity funds, which buffered the people from the power of the government. The congregation on the hillside above Horgen seems to have mobilized considerable resources for this purpose. In addition to an annual tithe paid by each member, the fund was supplemented by legacies, such as 100 Pounds from the estate of Felix Staub and an additional 100 Pounds from the wife of Hans Staub. The fund was invested partially in grain and it was managed by Jacob Isler *auf dem Bodenhof* (a farmstead near Hirzel), who was described by the authorities as formerly being a “worldly man.”

¹⁹ See Loserth 1956. In the earliest years, Anabaptist congregations had minimal hierarchy, they were organized around persons with knowledge of the Bible and oratorical skills who could demonstrate moral leadership. By the 17th century, some role distinctions had developed, especially in communal groups such as the Hutterites. A deacon might advance to ordination as a full minister (*voller Diener*). He could become a *Prediger*, sometimes referred to as *Diener am Wort*, who taught the word of God and ministered to the spiritual needs of the people, officiating at adult baptism, the group communion ritual, or other services such as marriages. A *Diener der Notdurft* was in charge of more pragmatic affairs, such as managing the charity fund and congregational property. The more influential ministers were the Elders (*Aeltester*), sometimes also referred to as bishops, who might serve as representatives for the congregations in a region. These *Vorsteher* would attend disputations and other important meetings in which matters of belief would be determined.

Later the congregation owned the *Hallauergütli* near Sihlbrugg, a farm valued at about 700 Pounds. The proceeds of the farm were used for charity purposes, which the authorities alleged was a temptation for others to join the congregation. They were particularly concerned about the secrecy of the congregation, since “many things take place among them which one cannot discover.”²⁰

It should be noted that members of the Landis family were among the more economically secure families in the area.²¹ These small farmers, who owned their own houses and farmsteads, bore the brunt of the government’s fiscal and civil policies and they had provided the core of the opposition to the civil authorities during the previous century, rather than the landless day laborers who had little income. They also were the major source of support for the Anabaptist congregation’s charity funds, which helped bolster the resolve of the poorer members of the congregation to deal with the fines levied by the authorities. It was customary in Swiss villages at that time to assist families in need. For example, in the village of Birmensdorf, northwest of Hirzel, the records show that a paralysed woman was given one loaf of bread weekly and one pound of pork monthly from the community alms fund. Another family in the village, which earned its living from spinning silk and making wooden clogs, received a weekly allowance of two loaves of bread weekly and a monthly allowance of 15 *Batzen* (about 1/10th of a *Frank*, or 1/3rd of a *Thaler*). The tradition of the charity fund was consonant with their communal values, and it became an important practice in the Anabaptist congregations (Guth 1988).

A report by Hans Jacob Biber, the magistrate of Horgen, dated September 29, 1608, confirmed the identity of the principal persons in the congregation. Eight major Anabaptist families were named, including “Hans Landis and his entire household,” and “his brother [Heini] and his household.” Also listed were Jacob Hochstrasser from Wetzswyl,²² and Uli Ertzinger from Guldinen. Biber mentioned that there were many other families involved with the Anabaptists, either publicly or privately, whom he could not name.

After this report, both Hans Landis and Jacob Isler, the treasurer, were arrested and jailed in the Wellenberg, a fortified structure in the mouth of the Limmat river in Zürich. They were questioned extensively on their beliefs and a report was filed on Oct. 5, 1608.²³ An attempt was made to convince them to recant and to join the Reformed Church. Landis professed his faith in the Trinity and stated that if one truly believed in the Gospels, this should be reflected in one's behavior. He felt that it was necessary to be baptized anew, as stated by Christ when he said “He who believes and is baptized, the same shall be saved.” He argued that this biblical quotation implied that children should not be baptized until they had reached an age when they could understand and have faith. He rejected attendance at the state church services because “in such an ungodly world no preaching and admonishing will do any good,” and he should not be required “to attend the preaching of such ungodly people.” Landis also rejected participation in

²⁰ Kläui 1948, p. 204.

²¹ Exact values of their estates when their property became confiscated are available in *Reichsthalers*, which will be cited later.

²² Wetzswyl is near Stallikon, not to be confused with Wädenswil, which was sometimes referred to at that time as “Wädenschwyl.”

²³ See Document 1 in Lowry 2003, dated Oct. 5, 1608.

the Communion ritual unless the ungodly people were excluded. When he was accused of civil disobedience, Landis replied that he would recognize the government only when it protected the righteous, punished evil, and was guided by God-fearing persons. He refused to divulge the names of others in the congregation or their meeting places.

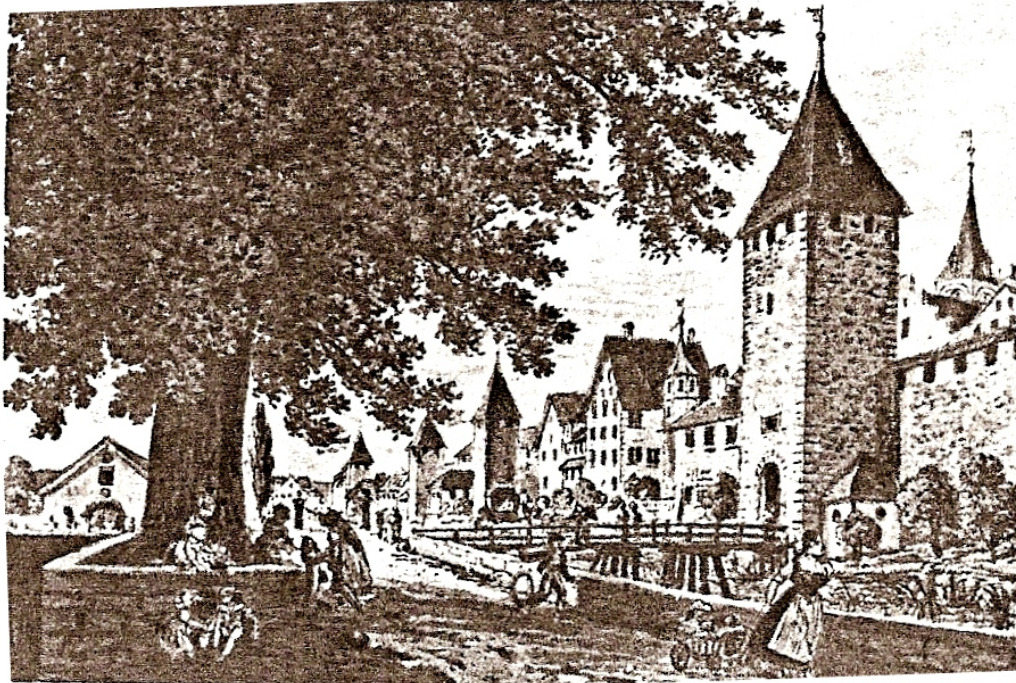
Landis persisted in his “stubborn ideas and spiritual pride,” but because it was winter the authorities decided on December 22, 1608 that he should “lie in irons in a warm room” in the Zürich hospital until they determined what to do with him. The rather humane punishment of being confined to a “warm room” in the hospital in the cold season indicates that the authorities were tempering their actions at that point, perhaps in an effort to avoid arousing the citizenry. Hans was provided with food and drink by sympathizers, and reportedly they also secretly smuggled him a tool which enabled him to escape on December 31, 1608.²⁴



The Wellenberg

²⁴ Kläui 1948, p. 205; 1952, p. 187 describes it as a *Näpper*. Lowry 2003 pp. 17-19 states that the word may be more accurately translated as a drill or an auger, rather than a file.

Heini Landis and Jacob Hochstrasser were also arrested and confined in the Katzentor.²⁵ Uli Ertzinger from Guldinen was reportedly imprisoned in the Wellenberg. Jacob Isler was held for several months in 1609. He denied that he was the treasurer for the congregation in Horgenberg, and he refused to divulge information about those who made financial contributions to the fund. One morning the door to Jacob's cell was left open and he too managed to escape.²⁶ He was arrested again later after tarrying to make purchases for his pregnant wife, and was imprisoned in the Wellenberg. Isler was eventually released and he returned to live in the vicinity of Wädenswil.



The Katzentor

After his escape, Hans Landis, managed to return to Horgen and Wädenswil, where he resumed his religious activities. The sympathy of the masses was so strong for the Anabaptists in these areas that it was difficult for local authorities to arrest them or to impose penalties. The magistrate (*Vogt*) of Wädenswil reported on October 8, 1612, "they have such a large following that no one wants to lay hands on them." Occasionally it was reported that bailiffs who came to arrest the *Täufer* were surrounded and roughed up by mobs of sympathetic townspeople.²⁷ In

²⁵ The Katzentor (the "Cat-Gate," also referred to as the *Wollishofer Tor* in older records) was one of the nine major fortified gates in the wall surrounding the old city of Zurich. Herrmann Trachslers 1969 provides a description of the gates. The name derives from the point where the *Katzenbach*, a small stream, intersected with the old city wall.

²⁶ Document 2 in Lowry 2003, dated Sept., July, 1609.

²⁷ Bender 1955, p. 1044.

other parts of Switzerland the Anabaptist congregations were rather small, but in the Horgen area their numbers were reaching a critical mass which caused growing concern to the authorities.

The stage was set for the final act of this showdown with the Anabaptists, pitting Hans Landis against Johann Jacob Breitingner (1575-1645). Breitingner was a minister who had been promoted to the head of the Zürich Reformed Church in 1613, a position which he held until his death. Breitingner was an astute politician and he was dedicated to bringing about fundamental change within the Reformed Church in order to keep it intact. When he took office he recognized that both the civil and religious structures had deteriorated in the canton. Inevitably Breitingner was drawn into confrontation with the Anabaptists.

In January 1613 a new mandate was issued by the Great and Small City Councils of Zürich against Anabaptism, which largely repeated the system of fines that had been instituted in 1585. They also commissioned a disputation with the Anabaptists to give them the chance to explain their beliefs. The first disputation was held at Wädenswil castle on January 26, 1613, summoned by *Bürgermeister* Rahn and prelate Breitingner.²⁸ Fifteen Anabaptists appeared under promise of safe conduct from the authorities, including Hans Landis and Rudolf Bachmann, two “elders” who represented the congregations. The pastors of the Reformed Church at Horgen, Wädenswil and Richterswil were in attendance. Landis spoke first and thanked them for the opportunity to speak, and reminded them that they were already familiar with his religious beliefs. He declared that he was willing to accept civil authority in all matters except those which violated their conscience, and they were willing to pay taxes and fines. Breitingner stated that since the Anabaptist beliefs were so diverse, it was impossible to understand the basic tenets of their faith. Landis then introduced Gallus Fuchs of Richterswil, who stated that he had been converted by a brother from Moravia, and then delivered a lengthy exposition on Anabaptist beliefs. Landis questioned why sinful people were allowed to participate in the Communion ritual in the Reformed Church. Breitingner responded that it would be presumptuous for them to exclude people, since only God could judge the unworthy. Near the end of the disputation, Gallus Fuchs brazenly stated that the Reformed Churches in Hirzel and Hütten should be turned over to the people and then the popularity of the two faiths could be determined by the number of people who attended their services or those of the pastor! The authorities burst into laughter at such “insolence.”²⁹

This meeting, of course, ended in failure. Hans Landis and Breitingner had reached a stalemate in their duel of biblical verses, and Gallus Fuchs had thrown down a public gauntlet to the authorities.

A second disputation was held at Grüningen, with a report filed on March 3, 1613.³⁰ Sixteen Anabaptists attended, again under guarantee of safe conduct. About 40 Anabaptists and their places of residence were mentioned in this report. Hans Landis was not mentioned, so it is possible that this second meeting was intended for the Anabaptist congregations on the eastern side of Lake Zürich, which were outside of Hans’ usual areas of ministration.

²⁸ See Document 3 in Lowry 2003, dated Jan. 26, 1613. See also the summary by Kläui 1948, p. 206, and Delbert Gratz’s serialized translation Jan. & Apr. 1969, Apr. 1970.

²⁹ Clasen 1972, p. 68

³⁰ Document 4, March 3, 1613 in Lowry 2003.

After these two disputations, the authorities felt they had no recourse but to enforce with full severity the mandate forbidding Anabaptism, which included penalties of fines, confiscation of property, forced emigration, and even the possibility of execution (Bender 1955b, p. 1045).

On May 10, 1613 officials at Wädenswil reported that they had arrested Hans Landis and Gallus Fuchs, but the other Anabaptists had gone into hiding.³¹ Four others -- Jacob Isler and Hans Meili from Wädenswil, Paul Degia (also named Galatz, born in Milan, who lived in Wädenswil), and Stefan Zehnder (or Zeender) of Birmensdorf were also eventually arrested and imprisoned in the Wellenberg in Zürich. They were interrogated for several weeks in an attempt to force them to recant their beliefs and to accept the state Reformed Church. None of them wanted to listen to the authorities. Throughout the interrogations, Hans Landis remained "stiff-necked" and a "wretched, constant talker."³² He admitted that he had baptized and married several members of his congregation. Jacob Isler and Hans Meili stated that they recognized the government, but doubted that it was "truly Christian." Landis cited scripture to the effect that Christians should not participate in government, nor should they help to defend the canton against enemies in the event of an emergency since Jesus had admonished his followers to turn the other cheek. The authorities again offered to let the Anabaptists emigrate, and even allowed them to sell their estates and take their possessions with them. Landis commented that the earth belonged to the Lord, and no one had authority to compel them to leave the country. Some of the brethren seemed to vacillate, and they asked for one year's time to depart, but also for freedom to return if they wished. Finally, in exasperation, the authorities threatened to make an example of them by condemning them to a term of hard labor at galley service (as oarsmen on boats). They emphasized that this punishment was not only because of their disobedience to the Reformed Church, but also because of their challenge to sovereign civil authority, which if left unchecked could "snatch away the obedience of the subjects," which "no government can tolerate."

On August 25, 1613, all six brethren were taken to the Fish Market,³³ where their sentence of six years galley service was publically announced. They were to be delivered to the French ambassador at Solothurn.³⁴ At Altstetten they were given a final chance to emigrate. Landis replied that they had had 14 weeks to think it over, and they would persevere to the end. He was "now over 70 years old and anyway cannot live much longer." In any event, the value of his estate would not allow him enough money to emigrate and to relocate his family. Zehnder, with a touch of bravado, added that they would not fear a life on the seas since these also were created by God. Three of the brethren (Isler, Meili, and Degia), however, wavered in their resolve and despite being repeatedly shoved by Landis, they finally consented to leave. The other three,

³¹ Document 5, May 10, 1613 in Lowry 2003.

³² See Document 8, Aug. 5 and 28, 1613 in Lowry 2003. *Kybigler Hartneckigkeit* was a common phrase used to describe Anabaptist "stiff-neckedness" at that time.

³³ The Fish Market (*Fischmarkt*) was the major street paralleling the Limmat River in Zürich where the sentences of those who were condemned to death were proclaimed. Later, Hans Landis had his death sentence read there.

³⁴ Solothurn is some 55 miles to the west of Zürich. Solothurn tower was built in 1548 and it was destroyed many years ago. Ira Landis 1954, p. 136.

Landis, Fuchs, and Zehnder, remained firm in their convictions and they were taken to Solothurn to await transportation.

Being sentenced to serve on the galleys was an extremely harsh punishment, even by the standards of those days. At Hans Landis's age it amounted to a sure death sentence. There was considerable public outcry against "selling people to galley slavery with the French Papists," and vigorous protests were sent by Mennonite congregations in Holland. Even some of the Reformed clergy had misgivings about the penalty. The government of the canton of Bern eventually abolished the punishment in 1616, then reinstated it for the "best" (i.e. the most recalcitrant) *Täufer*s, but finally abolished it permanently in 1617. The sentence against Hans Landis and his compatriots was not carried out. On the way to Solothurn some sympathetic Bernese Anabaptists had offered to pay ransom of about 300 *Gulden* to the French ambassador. Soon after their arrival at Solothurn, food and a "file" were smuggled in to them which allowed the three men to cut through their chains and escape. Once again, Hans Landis had managed to escape -- in the same manner as before in 1608. Hans returned to his home and resumed his ministerial activities, baptizing some new converts and performing a marriage ceremony.³⁵

Soon after, on Sept. 9, 1613, Hans Landis was recaptured. The record of his interrogation contains some bizarre passages, which may reveal the fears of the authorities about an outbreak of war.³⁶ Hans was accused of proclaiming that an angel had left the door open for him to escape from the prison at Solothurn. The interrogators also made odd remarks about huge armies being mobilized in the cantons and fireballs being seen in the sky above the "city hall of the Raetians," between which a man was seen stretching out a bloody arm. These were undoubtedly allusions to their fears that Hans' religious disobedience (which they regarded as naïve and "vacuous") would lead to turmoil and bloodshed.³⁷ As always, Landis remained clear and focused in his responses and he mustered a skillful defense. He replied that he had escaped not by the act of an angel, but by means of tools that were smuggled to him. Landis refused to betray those who had helped him. He also elaborated on the charity funds of the Anabaptist congregation. After the grain had been harvested at Hirzel, about 15 bushels had been stored in

³⁵ For the original reports pertaining to the arrest and sentencing of the six Anabaptists to galley slavery and the later interrogation of Hans Landis, see Lowry 2003 Document 6, May-Aug., 1613; Document 7, June-Aug., 1613; Document 8, Aug. 5 and 28, 1613; Document 11, Sept. 13, 1614; and Document 12, September 1614.

³⁶ Lowry 2003, p. 103, also notes that these passages in Latin are unclear.

³⁷ Raetia was an old Roman province, encompassing the Upper Rhine to Lake Constance, Upper Swabia, southern Bavaria and Tirol. These were the areas that had been wracked by the Peasant Wars in 1525, which might well explain the comment about fireballs in the skies above the Raetians and other portents of bloody warfare. Document 25, March 14, 1669 in Lowry 200 addresses this point. It notes that in 1613 the authorities were greatly concerned about impending war (the Thirty Years War broke out in 1618), which they feared would spill over into the Swiss cantons. They were making preparations for these dangers at their borders, including mobilizing the citizenry for military duty. The Anabaptists aroused their concerns because they refused to participate in the military and stated that they would not defend the Fatherland.

the house of Rudolf Staub, and most of this was distributed to the poor. Hans' brother had been impoverished some 20 years before and had to rely on charity, so out of gratitude his brother later was able to donate the grain to repay this debt. The congregation had no store of wine and no financial reserves since they had loaned all the treasury to the poor, free of interest, and they had no formal treasurer. When he was asked if he considered their government to be Christian, he replied that he did not wish to judge them and they were Christians if they carried out what God commands. Jesus said that the authorities may exercise dominion over others, but Christians should not. One should obey God more than men (Acts 4). Hans repeated that he would not belong to the Reformed Church if sinful people were not banned from it. When they asked him who was blameless, he replied "Those to whom God gives grace and whom God has cleansed." It was not enough to hear the Word of God, but one has to follow it as well. The interrogations revealed him to be a man who was very firm in his faith, knowledgeable enough to avoid being confused by biblical arguments against him, and prepared to accept whatever fate would bring. While he was in prison Landis' courage and strength of conviction aroused admiration among many people

On September 26, 1614 the magistrates and clergy escalated their threats to Landis, ostensibly not because of his religious beliefs but rather on the basis of his civil disobedience and rebellion. He was again offered the opportunity to emigrate, but he responded as before that "the earth is the Lord's and not man's" and that God had granted it to him as well as to others. They judged him to be a rebel who "wanted to be his own lord and master regardless of the honorable authorities," and this could not be tolerated since it would lead to "the destruction of all governmental authority established by God, and the end of all obedience of subjects" (Kläui, 1948, p. 210).

The city council was torn over the appropriate penalty to administer – some wanted him to be outlawed with his ear cut off, but finally they agreed on the death penalty by the sword, to be carried out the next day on September 29, 1614. Hans was led to the Fish Market where his sentence was read aloud. He then asked how far it was to the place of execution, and the executioner told him not far. On the way, Hans told the weeping people along the way, "do not weep for me, for I hope to make a steadfast journey." The clergymen who accompanied him commented that Hans showed no signs of repentance, to which Hans replied that he did not consider the accusations against him to be a sin. He also did not want to save his confessions to the end, lest he be like the foolish virgins (Matthew 25:2) who were unprepared for the coming of Christ.³⁸ When they reached the designated place, the executioner was emotionally moved and said, "Well, my grandfather Hans, is it not true that you have been looking forward for a long time with joy to this hour?" Hans replied, "Yes, indeed, I have long awaited joyously this hour," for in this hour he would see his God and Father with his own eyes. The executioner offered him a final chance to speak what was in his heart. Landis answered, "I know not what more I should say, other than that I wish all men to realize their sins and repent, that they might be saved, and it is my sincere hope that all mankind should find their salvation and be blessed." He had forgiven all men, including the executioner. He then knelt and was beheaded. He died "willingly and

³⁸ These speeches by Hans Landis are also quoted in the *Ausbund*, which is likely based on Document 14, Sept. 29, 1614, in Lowry 2003.

gladly." Afterwards the executioner announced, "with tears in his eyes," that God knows he was not guilty of this man's blood.³⁹

The original narrative on Hans Landis first appeared in *The Bloody Theater, or Martyr's Mirror*, compiled by Thieleman J. van Braght in about 1660. The entire passage is as follows:

...In the year 1614, at Zurich, in Switzerland,...a pious witness of the divine truth, named Hans Landis, a teacher and minister of the Gospel of Christ, who had gone up the river Rhine, where he had his place of residence, to feed and refresh with the Word of the Lord some souls that were hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

When the council at Zurich learned of this, they, instigated by the disposition of the envious scribes and Pharisees, could not tolerate this, but instantly caused it to be forbidden him, as though they had thought thereby to hinder the true progress of the word of the Gospel. But he, who knew with Peter, that we must obey God's commands more than the commandments of men, had such love to the truth, and to the young sucklings on Zion's breasts, that no human threats could induce him to forbear feeding them with the true food of the soul. Hence the enviers of the same apprehended him, and sent him ironed from Zurich to Solothurn, to the papists, expecting that he should forthwith be sent to sea or upon the galleys; but through the help of good-hearted people he was there released; but subsequently apprehended again and taken to Zurich, where he was rigorously examined concerning his doctrine, and when he would in no wise desist from his godly purpose or from his faith, they showed in him, that their decree of eighty-four years previous was not yet forgotten, neither had the spirit of it died of old age; for, according to the import of the same, they sentenced him from life to death, and hence, in the month of September of the aforesaid year, 1614, for the sake of the truth he was beheaded as a true follower of Christ. Which they nevertheless would not acknowledge, but pretended, and persuaded the common people, to deceive them, that he was not punished and put to death for his religion, but for his obstinacy and disobedience to the authorities...

Having through our good friends B. Louwr and H. Vlaming come into possession of a certain extract from a letter dated, A.D. 1659, July 19-29, from one of the preachers at Zurich, who witnessed the death of the afore-mentioned martyr, we have deemed it well to add it here, that is, as much of it as is necessary to be given here for fuller information.

"Further you remember," he writes, "that Hattavier Salr. witnessed the beheading of Hans Landis, which I also still remember well, having seen it myself in the Wolfsstadt, the whole transaction being as fresh in my recollection, as though it had happened but a few weeks ago."

Continuing, he speaks of his personal appearance and the manner of his death, saying: "Hans Landis was a tall, stately person, with a long black and gray

³⁹ Document 10, Jan.-Sept., 1614 in Lowry (2003).

beard, and a manful voice. When he, cheerful and of good courage, was led out, by a rope, to the Wolfsstadt (being the place made ready for his execution), the executioner, Mr. Paull [sic] Volmar dropped the rope, and lifting up both of his hands to heaven, spoke these words:

'O that God, to whom I make my complaint, might have compassion; that you, Hans, have come into my hands in this manner; forgive me, for God's sake, that which I must do to you'.

"Hans Landis comforted the executioner, saying that he had already forgiven him: God would forgive him, too; he well knew that he had to execute the order of the authorities; he should not be afraid, and see that there was no hindrance in his way.

"Thereupon he was beheaded. After his head had been struck off, the executioner asked: 'Lord bailiff of the Empire, have I executed this man rightly according to imperial law and sentence?' Otherwise it was customary to say: 'This poor fellow', etc. As though he believed that he died saved and rich.

"The people were of the opinion, that the executioner by dropping the rope meant to indicate to Hans that he should run away, it was also generally said: that if he had run away, no one would have followed him, to stop him." So far the aforementioned extract.

Further Statement. -- It is also appropriate to give here what has been stated to us through credible testimony, namely, that when the afore-mentioned Hans Landis was standing in the place of execution, to be put to death, his dear wife and children came to him with mournful crying and lamentation, to take a last and final adieu and leave from him. But when he saw them, he requested them to go away from him, in order that his good resolution and tranquillity of heart for the death awaiting him might not be disturbed or taken away by their weeping and grief; which having been done, and he having commended his soul into the hands of God, the quickly descending stroke of the sword put an end to his life.⁴⁰

Another famous account on Hans Landis is given in the *Ausbund*, the collection of religious hymns which survives from the days of the Swiss brethren, still in use today by the Amish. Hymn number 132 commemorates the story of Hans. It was composed within one year after his death.⁴¹ It consists of 46 lyrics, which I have translated below.⁴² I have focused on being as faithful as possible to the original wording rather than attempting to render it into English verse. The dialect is archaic Swiss, and the composer switches between third person and first person with alacrity in the middle of some verses:

⁴⁰ Thielmann van Braght 1660, pp. 1103 -1105

⁴¹ Document 18, May 22, 1615, refers to the *Ausbund* and the hymn to Hans Landis (see Lowry 2003, p. 159).

⁴² I did this translation independently in 1994. Since then, it has also been translated by Lowry 2003, and other translations have also appeared .

The 132nd Song

A beautiful new spiritual hymn, about an early Christian, Hans Landis, who lived by the Zürich sea, about how he was executed at Zürich, and his journey brought to a noble end. -- It happened on St. Michael's Day, in the year 1614. To be sung in the style of "*Kommt her zu mir, spricht Gottes Sohn.*"

*Ich hab ein schön neu Lied gemacht,
Und mich geflissen Tag und Nacht,
Dasselb von neuem g'sungen,
Von einem frommen Christen gut,
Hans Landis man ihn nennen thut,
Ich hoff es sey mir g'lungen.*

*In tausend und sechs hundert Jahr,
Vierzehne darzu offenbahr,
Zu Zürich ist geschehen,
Dass er mit seinem Tod und Blut,
Christum sein Wort, das ewig Gut,
Bekennet und verjähren.*

*Nun merk ein jeder frommer Christ,
Wie er der G'mein vorg'standen ist,
Thät Gottes Wort verkünden,
Da er sein Lauf vollendet hat,
Sein Glauben bezeugt mit der That,
Thät sie gleich überwinden.*

*Doch möcht ich vor auch melden das,
Wie vor ein'm Jahr er g'fangen was,
In Zürich hart versperret:
Zween ander Brüder mit ihm b'hend
Die sind vorm Rath aufs Meer erkennt,
An Ketten hin geführet.*

*Gen Solothurn sind sie geführt,
Ins Königs G'walt gar hart versehrt,
An Ketten hart verwahret.
Doch sind sie b'hend durch gottes G'walt
Gleich wiederum erlöset bald,
Das hat man wohl erfahren.*

Nun merket weiter und fürbass,

I have made a beautiful new hymn,
And I devoted myself day and night,
In order to sing this new story,
About a pious, good Christian,
Hans Landis he was called,
I hope I may succeed.

In the 1,000 and 600th year
With 14 added thereto,
In Zurich it happened,
That he with his death and blood,
Christ his Word, the eternal Treasure,
Confessed and affirmed.

Now let each saintly Christian note,
How he stood before his congregation,
Preaching God's word,
As he finished his life's course,
His faith was confirmed by the deed,
By doing which he triumphed.

Yet I want to announce to you,
How he was imprisoned a year before,
In Zurich, harshly locked up:
Two other brethren held with him,
They were condemned before the Council
To service on the sea, taken in chains.

To Solothurn they were led,
In the king's jail harshly constrained,
Locked securely in chains,
Yet through God's power,
They were soon released
That became verily known.

Now note more and further,

Wie er jetzt wieder g'fangen was,
Bey seinem Weib und Kinden:
Die Mutter und die Kinder sein,
gaben ihm Trost der Liebe fein,
Liessen sich willig finden,

Und hond ihn g'fangen hingeführt,
Zu Zürich in Wellenberg versperret,
Und ihn da streng verhöret:
Von seiner Lehr und auch vom Tauf,
vom Estand und vom Nachtmahl auch,

War bitterlich probiret.
Und dräuten ihm gar hart darben,
Wie dass er nicht mehr werth thät seyn,
Lebendig aufs Meer z'verkaufen,
Sondern er müsse mit dem Schwerdt
Gericht werd'n und zum Tod geführt,
Das ist bald g'schehen draufe.

Als man ihn aus der G'fängniss hat
Geführt also ein Lämmlein zur Schlacht,
Thät viel volk um ihn weinen:
Hans Landis sprach mit seinem Mund,
Weint nicht um mich zu dieser Stund,
Gott thuts gut mit mir meinen.

Merk was die Predicanten thon,
Hant das g'mein Volk vermahnen thun,
Sie solten für ihn bitten:
Er sey verstockt und gar verirrt,
Damit er wird in Kenntniss g'führt,
All seiner Süd und fehlen.

Hans Landis sprach mit Worten g'schwind:
Ich achte das für keine Süd,
Das ihr mir für Süd halten.
Ich hab gelehret Gottes Wort,
Darzu g'wandelt in grosser Sorg,
Gott woll nun darob walten.

Weiter hand sie ihn g'sprochen an,
Er soll sein Süd bekennen thun,

That he once again was arrested,
by his wife and children:
The mother and his children,
Gave him the solace of pure love,
which they willingly gave.

And they led him away under arrest,
To Zürich in Wellenberg enchained,
And interrogated him harshly:
About his teachings and about baptism,
Marriage and also about communion,

He was cruelly examined.
And they threatened him severely,
That he wasn't worthy even,
To be sold to a life on the seas.
But he must with the sword,
Be dispatched and led to death,
Which happened soon thereafter.

When he was taken from the prison,
Led as a lamb to slaughter,
The people around him wept:
Hans Landis spoke with these words,
Weep not for me in this hour,
God intends good with me.

Note what the clergymen did,
They warned the common folk,
That they should pray for him:
For He was hardened and erring,
So that he would be led to the recognition,
Of all his sins and mistakes.

Hans Landis spoke with swift reply:
I do not acknowledge that as sin,
Even though you hold me as a sinner.
I have taught God's word,
Walked thereby with great care,
May God accordingly judge.

They spoke further to him,
That he should confess his sins,

*Dass er erlang die Gnade.
Er antwort ihnen also b'hend:
Ich hab mein Sünd vorlängst bekennt,
Fürcht es wär jetzt zu spate.*

*Doch schlag ichs Reich Gott's niemand ab,
Dass ich der G'schrift auch glauben mag,
Sond Besserung nicht sparen:
Damit es uns nicht auch ergieng,
Wies den thörichten Jungfrau'n gieng,
Das hat man wohl erfahren.*

*Merk wie so far mit manchem List,
Sie ihn versuchten zu der Frist,
Und Thäten ihm fürhalten
Den Schächer an dem Creutz behend,
Der Gnad erlangest an sein'm End.
Er thät sich nicht dran halten,*

*Sondern gab ihnen Antwort bald:
Hat mit dem Schächer ein andre G'stalt,
'S Wort sey ihm nicht verkündet;
Es wird uns zeitlich g'nug geseit,
Darum sind zu der Buss bereit,
Dass wir die Gnade finden.*

*Noch weiter er wird angereedt,
Warum er von ihn'n ausgehn thät
Von ihrer G'mein und Lehre?
Hans Landis antwort ihnen g'schwind,
Drum dass ihr nicht unsträfllich sind,
Und euch zu Gott nicht kehret.*

*Dann ich glaube gar festiglich
Wer Gott vertraut, dem manglet nicht,
Dem wird sein Lehr und Leben*

So That he may obtain grace.
He answered swiftly:
I have confessed my sins long ago,
I fear it's too late now.

I wish no one kept from God's kingdom,
For I also believe the Scriptures,
Spare no effort at conversion:
So that it will not also happen to us,
As happened to the foolish virgins,⁴³
This we indeed know about.

Note that with much cunning,
They tempted him with a reprieve,
And offered to him,
As with the thief on the cross,
Who received mercy at the end.
This did not distract him.

But he promptly answered them:
That it is not the same as with the thief,
Who was not taught the Word,
It has been taught to us soon enough,
For us to be prepared for repentance,
So that we can find grace.

Yet further he was quizzed,
About why he left
Their congegation and ministry?
Hans Landis answered quickly,
Because you are not sinless,
And you do not turn to God.

For I believe firmly that,
Whoever trusts God lacks nothing,
To him his teaching and life will

⁴³ The reference to the “foolish virgins” is from Matthew 25:2, the story of the five virgins who came to meet the bridegroom to attend an evening wedding but who forgot to bring lamp oil. This parable was commonly used in Anabaptist sermons as an allegory, with the intended meaning that people should be prepared for the imminent Second Coming of Christ.)

*Viel guter Frücht und Nutzbarkeit,
Bringen allhie in dieser Zeit,
Das wird ihnen Gott geben.*

*Gottes Reich nicht in Worten staht,
Darum greifends an mit der That,
Wend ihr ewig Freud haben:
Wend ihr sprechen: o Vater mein,
Müsst ihr aus Gott geboren seyn,
Und seinen Worten glauben.*

*Nach der Lehr und Gebrauch Christi,
Desgleichen sein'r Aposteln Schein,
Thäten wandlen und laben:
So dörfte es weder Zwang noch Noth,
Sondern ich wolt gern früh und spat
Mein G'meinschaft mit euch haben.*

*Sie wend ihn noch nicht bleiben lon,
Hielten ihm für den verlohrnen Sohn,
Lasst ihnen Antwort fahren:
Wie er in guter Hoffnung stuhnd,
Dass er mit dem verlohrnen Sohn,
Umkehrt vor dreysig Jahren.*

*Darzu auch seine Sünd erkennt,
Gott bitten um Verzeihung b'hend,
Und auch zu allen Zeiten:
Auch jetzt in dieser G'fangenschaft,
In deren ich jetzt bin behaft,
Dass er mir helfe streiten.*

*Da hat man ihm zu trinken bracht,
Und also er nun getrunken hat,
Danksaget er Gott eben,
Und saft: ich glaub auch vestiglich,
Gott hab mir meine Sünd verzeicht,
Hing'nommen und vergeben.*

*Da trank er noch zum andermal,
Darum ich auch das sagen soll,
Und wolt da nimmer trinken:
Dann ich hoff und glaube gewiss,*

Bear fruit and be productive,
Abundantly in this time,
Such will be given to him by God.

God's kingdom does not stand on words,
Therefore seize it with deeds,
If you want eternal joy:
When you say: Oh, my Father,
You must be born of God,
And believe in his Words.

According to the teachings and practices of Christ,
And the examples of his apostles,
They walked and lived:
So there should not be either force or deprivation,
Otherwise I would gladly day and night
Have my fellowship with you.

They still didn't leave him alone,
And considered him to be the prodigal son,
He gave them this answer:
How he stood in good faith,
That he, as the prodigal son,
Had returned (converted) thirty years ago.

And he also confessed his sins,
And asked god for forgiveness,
At all times:
Also now in this imprisonment,
Which I am now experiencing,
Pray that He will help me struggle.

They brought him something to drink,
And after he drank,
He gave thanks to God,
And said: I believe steadfastly,
God has pardoned me my sins,
Taken them away and forgiven them.

And then he drank once more,
And about that he also wanted to say,
And I will never again drink:
For I hope and truly believe,

*Dass mich Gott hienach im Paradiess
Wohl werd speisen und tränken.*

*Nun lasst uns weiter merken dass,
Wie ihn die G'lehrten fragen das,
Ob er nicht Glauben gebe,
Dass er sich da versündet hab,
Dass er viel weidertaufet hab?
O nein, gar nicht, thät sagen.*

*Und sprach darzu noch weiter drauf,
Dann er hab sonst niemand getauft,
Sey dann von Süd abg'standen:
Und habe wahre Buss gethan,
Den wahr'n Gott's Glauben g'nommen an,
Mit Christo auferstanden.*

*Diess ist der recht Vefehl Christi,
Und Brauch seiner Aposteln frey,
Thut uns die G'schrift auch lehren:
Darbey man billig bleiben soll,
Und Gottes Wort lahn gelten wohl,
Das begehrt ich vom Herren.*

*Die Predicanten fragten mehr,
Wer ihn hab b'ruft zu seiner Lehr?
Thät ihnen Antwort geben:
Der ewig Gott im Himmelreich,
Das glaube ich ganz vestiglich,
Der hat mir den G'walt geben.*

*Ein G'lehrter sprach zu ihm mit List,
Du weist dass du überzeuget bist
Mit dem göttlichen Worte:
Gar nicht, gar nicht, sprach er zu hand,
So ihr mir G'schrift nicht gelten land,
Meint ihr dass ich mich fürchte.*

*So ihr aber G'schrift gelten lond,
Thun ich bey meinem Glauben b'ston,
Bin gar nicht überwiesen:
Dess ich in guter Hoffnung stand,
Und kaget mich do gar nichts an,*

That God will provide me in paradise,
With all food and drink.

Now let us also note that,
The learned ones asked him,
If he didn't believe,
That he had sinned,
Because he had rebaptized many people?
Oh, no, not at all he said.

And he said thereto further that,
He has baptized no one other,
Then when they confessed their sins:
And did true repentance,
And believed in the true God,
Resurrected with Christ.

This is the true command of Christ
And the practice of his willing apostles,
This the scriptures also teach:
Whereby one may remain righteous,
And hold confirm God's Word,
This I desire from the Lord.

The clergymen asked further,
Who has summoned him to his teachings?
He gave them the answer:
The eternal God in the kingdom of heaven,
I believe this firmly,
He has given me this mission.

A learned man said to him cunningly,
You know that you can be convinced
By the words of God:
Not at all, not at all, he answered him,
Since you have no scriptures to convince me,
You think that I am fearful.

If you can produce scriptures,
I stand firm in my belief,
I am not at all deceived:
I stand in good faith,
You can accuse me of nothing,

In allem meinem G'wissen.

*Darum ihr Predicanten schon,
Ob schon ihrs Evangelion
Lehren und auch verkünden:
Laben und wandlen nicht darnach,
So bringt es feine Frücht darnach,
Das solt ihr billig finden.*

*Da hand die Predicanten g'seit,
Er hab wider die Oberkeit
Gehandelt und gelebet:
Er solle hie bekennen thon,
Dass er im selben unrecht thun,
Thut ihnen Antwort geben:*

*Er hab wider die Oberkeit
Nichts g'handelt das die G'schrift verbeut,
Bey der G'schrift soll man bleiben:
Dann es ist uns nicht g'nug darbey,
Allein in Christum z'glauben hie,
Sondern auch um ihn z'leiden.*

*Die G'lehrten fragten weiter an:
Hans Landis, hast due jedermann
Verzeihen and vergeben?
Er sprach, he ja zu aller Stund,
Und auch euch mit lachendem Mund,
Hab er gänzlich vergeben.*

*Ich will hie weiter melden fort,
Da er ist kommen au das Ort,
Zu seiner letzten Stunde:
Hat Bekanntniss seins Glaubens than
Am selben Ort vor jedermann,
Sprach er mit seinem Munde:*

*Ich glaube das ganz vestiglich,
Gott hab mir meine Sünd verzeicht,
Hing'nommen und vergeben:
Durchs bitter Leiden Jesu Christ,
Und nicht um meiner Werken ist
Geschehen, das merkt eben.*

I am in good conscience.

Therefore you clergymen,
Profess to teach and spread
Your evangelical doctrines:
You do not live and act accordingly,
So it will not bear fruit,
You will eventually find that out.

Then the clergymen declared,
That he contradicted the authorities
By his actions and life:
He should confess here,
That he had done wrong,
And he gave them this answer:

He has not done against the authorities
Anything which the scriptures forbade,
One should hold to the scriptures:
And it is not enough
To only believe in Christ,
But we must also suffer with Him.

The learned ones asked him further:
Hans Landis, have you
Forgiven and pardoned everyone?
He said, yes, at all times,
And also you, with a smiling face,
He has completely forgiven.

I want to report further,
That when he came to the place,
Of his final hour:
He confessed his beliefs
At this same place before everyone,
He spoke these words:

I believe firmly,
God has shown me that my sins,
Are absolved and forgiven:
Through the bitter sufferings of Jesus Christ,
And not through my deeds
Has it happened, remember that.

*Der Nachrichten mit seinem Mund,
Fraget Hans Landis zu der Stund,
Ob es ihn thäte freuen?
Er sprach: ja g'wiss mit seinem Mund,
Er hat mich lang auf diese Stund
Verlanget und thun freuen.*

*Und sprach darzu noch alles das,
Warum solt mich nicht freuen das,
Ich glaub in meinem Herzen:
Ich werd jetzt in dieser Stund schon,
Mein Gott Vater ins Himmels Thron,
Mit meinen Augen sehen.*

*Da man ihn an die Richtstatt g'führt,
Fröhlich war er in seinem G'müth,
Thät sein Gebät verrichten
Zu unserm Gott ins Himmels Thron,
Der wölle uns auch nicht verlohnen,
Und b'wahren ewiglichen.*

*Der Nachrichten thät als ein Freund,
Da er ihn wolt richten, als verkündt,
Thät ihm Erlaubniss geben:
Zu reden hie nach seinem Muth,
Und nach sein'm Lust und Willen gut,
Zuletzt in seinem Leben.*

*Zu reden weiss ich nicht viel mehr,
Dann ich möht allen Menschen sehr
Wünschen und von Herzen gönnen:
Dass sie ihr Lebens Aenderung
Thäten, und wahre Besserung,
Dass sie zum Laben kämen.*

*Hierauf ist er fröhlich und bald,
Niederkniet als ein fromm Held,
Und liess sich willig finden:
Und ist gerichtet mit dem Schwerdt,
Mannlich abg'schieden von der Erd,
Thät sie gleich überwinden.*

The executioner with these words,
Asked Hans Landis at that hour,
If he was joyous?
He said: yes, surely, with his own words,
He has long awaited this hour
And he rejoices in it.

And he also added,
Why should I not rejoice,
I believe in my heart:
That I will within this hour,
My God Father on the throne of heaven,
See with my eyes.

When they led him to the execution place,
Happy was he in his courage,
As his prayer demonstrated
To our God on heaven's throne,
Who will not desert us,
And watch over us forever.

The executioner acted as a friend,
Since he had to execute him, as ordered,
And gave him permission:
To speak forth from his heart,
According to his desire and will,
For the last time in his life.

I don't know much more to say,
Than that I would wish for all persons
From my heart's desire:
That they change their lives
Deeds, and truly improve,
That they might attain eternal life.

After that he joyfully and without hesitation,
Knelt down as a pious hero,
And willingly resigned himself:
And was beheaded by the sword,
Valiantly left the earth,
And by that act he triumphed.

*Der Nachrichten sprach mit sein'm Mund,
Und weinet auch von Herzens Grund,
Also gar inniglichen:
Ich bin unschuldig an diesem Blut,
Das glaub ich fest in meinem Muth,
Ob schon ich hab müss'n richten.*

*Es thät ihm in dem Herzen weh,
Ihme und seinem Söhne zwee,
Thun bitterlichen weinen:
Dass man also ein frommen Christ
Vom Leben zum Tod hat gericht.
Sie thäten es gut meinen.*

*Also erlanget er die Kron,
Bey gott die ewig Ruh und Wonn,
Thut sie gleich überwinden:
Und ist gedultig in der Noth,
Und trägt das Creutz bis in den Tod,
Und liess sich willig finden.*

*Mit seinem Hausg'sind hand sie gethon,
Wie Esdre am letzten thut g'schrieben ston,
All's aus dem Haus thun jagen:
Haus und Hoff zu ihren Händen g'non.
Ist das g'mäss dem Evangelion?
Thu mir, o Singer, sagen.*

*Also will ichs hie bleiben lan,
Und die Sach Gott befohlen han,
Der wö sich unser erbarmen:
Und geben uns die ewig Kron,
Mit Landis unserm Bruder schon,
Durch Jesum Christum, Amen.*

The executioner spoke these words,
And wept from the bottom of his heart,
Very fervently:
I am innocent of this blood,
This I believe firmly in my soul,
Although I had to execute him.

It pained him in his heart,
He and his two sons,
They wept bitterly:
That a pious Christian
Was dispatched from life to death.
Though they meant to do well.

Therefore he achieved the crown,
The eternal rest and reward with God,
May you likewise overcome:
And be patient in suffering,
And carry the Cross until death,
And be resigned to this willingly.

With his household they did,
As Esdras wrote at the end,
All was seized in the house:
House and farm were taken into their hands.
Is this in accordance with the scriptures?
Tell me, oh singer, tell me.

So I want to let it remain here,
And leave the matter to God's commands,
May He have mercy on us:
And give us the eternal crown,
With Landis our brother,
Through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Where was Hans Landis Executed?

Before we leave these moving accounts of the fate of Hans Landis the martyr, one final detail needs to be explored. Where exactly did the execution take place in old Zürich? This merits clarification because many people today claim to be descendants of Hans Landis (including myself), and some may wish to visit Zürich to see where our ancestor so nobly met his death. The hymn in the *Ausbund* states that the execution took place at the *Richtstatt*, meaning

simply “the place of execution.” Kläui⁴⁴ adds a further detail when he states that the death sentence was read and the execution took place at the *Richtstatt am Fischmarkt*, referring to a street known as the Fish Market along the shore of the Limmat. However, the *Martyrs Mirror* account adds further details, that the death sentence was “read” at the *Fischmarkt* and then Landis was taken to the *Wolfsstatt* where his execution took place. The specific statement is as follows, taken from a letter received in 1659 “...from one of the preachers at Zurich, who witnessed the death of the afore-mentioned martyr... ‘Further you remember,’ he writes, ‘that Hattavier Salr. witnessed the beheading of Hans Landis, which I also still remember well, having seen it myself in the Wolfsstadt.’”⁴⁵

Lowry⁴⁶ regards *Wolfsstatt* as a misnomer, a mistaken form for *Walstatt*, which is an archaic term meaning “the place of judgment, decision, or execution,” an alternate form for *Richtstatt*. The caption to the photo in Lowry on p. 135 states that the beheading of Hans Landis “...took place several hundred yards downstream” from the Wellenberg prison, which was located at the mouth of the Limmat river. Apparently, then, Lowry agrees with Kläui’s notion that the execution took place along the river bank, perhaps in front of the City Hall (*Rathaus*) which was on the *Fischmarkt*.

Can these contradictions be resolved? It’s true that handwriting can be easily mistaken in old German script, especially with older spellings, which might have led to confusion between *Walstatt* and *Wolfsstatt*. However, there are statements in two documents in Lowry that clearly point us in a different direction -- toward the main moat outside the old city walls. Document 10 (Jan.-Sept., 1614, p. 108) states that Hans Landis was supposed to be executed “at the gravel” (*auf dem Grien*), but he preferred the “main moat” (*Hauptgrub*) because that lay further away. When they reached there, he was prepared for the sword “in the little house” (*in dem Häußlin*). Document 14 (Sept. 29, 1614, p. 146) likewise states that he was led “to the little house at the main moat” (*in das hauptgruoben hüßli*), and in fact this phrase is repeated twice. Surely this wasn’t due simply to mistaken handwriting, since the documents were translated by Lowry himself.

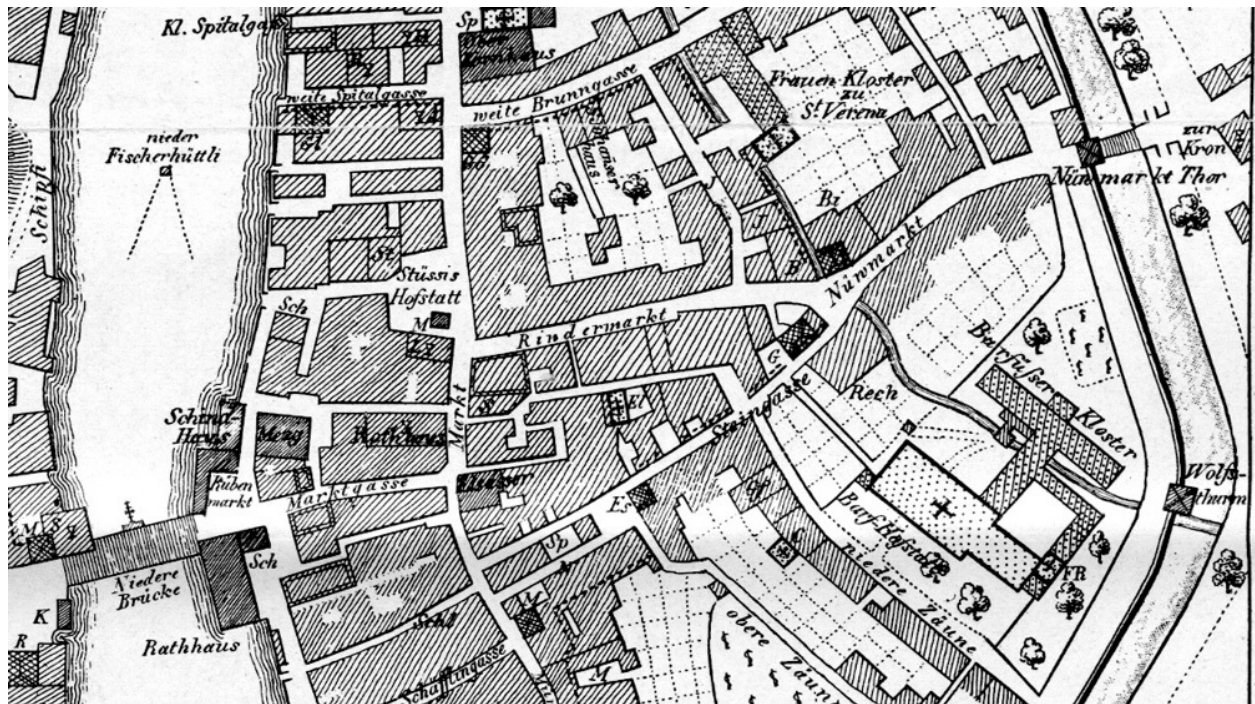
Some of the mystery of Hans Landis’ place of execution may be resolved if we study old maps that are available for Zürich. At that time Zürich was surrounded by a wall, outside of which was a deep ditch or moat (referred to as the *Graben* or *Gruben*). There were nine major gates (*Thor*) leading into the city, each with a fortified tower (*Thurm*) and a bridge over the moat. There were also several smaller towers at various points with narrower crossing foot paths.

One of these fortified gates in the eastern wall was the *Katzentor*, where Heini Landis and Jacob Hochstrasser were imprisoned in 1609. The “Market Alley” (*Marktgasse*) angles toward the old wall from the City Hall, intersecting with “Cattle Market” (*Rindermarkt*) and “New Market” (*Neumarkt*) streets, then it passes through the main gate at the *Neumarkt Thurm*, which was south of the *Katzentor*. The *Wolffs Thurm* (Wolfs Tower) was a smaller tower further south of the main gate, where the wall was adjoined by a stream known as the *Wolfbach*, which flowed into the

⁴⁴ Kläui 1948, p. 209; 1952, p. 191

⁴⁵ Thielmann van Braght 1660, p. 1104

⁴⁶ Lowry 2003, p. 108

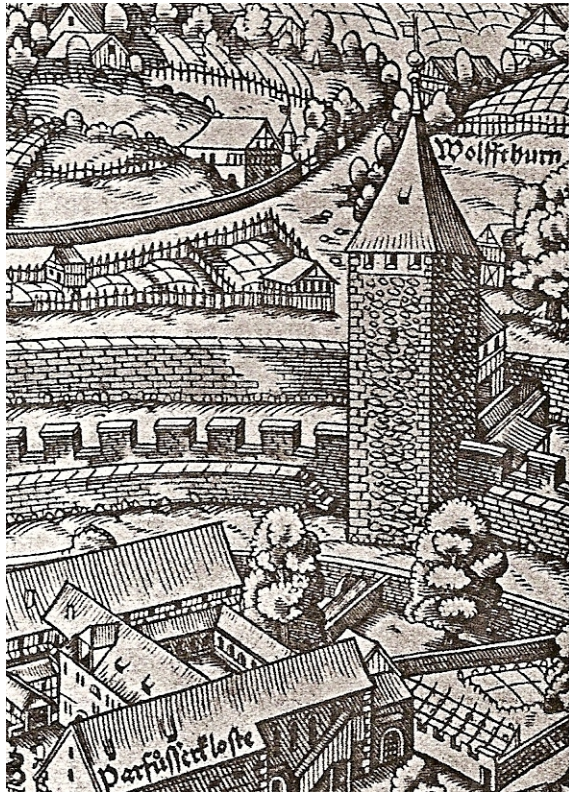


The City Hall (*Rathaus*) at the foot of the Lower Bridge (*Niedere Brücke*), with streets leading through *Markt-gasse*, *Rindermarkt*, and *Neumarkt* with path to the *Wolfsturm*.

moat. The *Wolfsturm* is shown on old maps directly behind the “Bare-feet Cloister” (*Barfüsserkloster*), which is known today as the *Obmannamt*. There was apparently a foot path angling south from the *Neumarkt*, past the Cloister, to the *Wolfsturm*.

Piecing all this together, the reference to Hans Landis’ execution taking place at the *Wolfstatt* may not have been due to a simple misreading of old handwriting. It is an easier assumption that *Wolfstatt* may have been an alternative reference to the *Wolfsturm*. We can reasonably assume that the death sentence was read at the City Hall, which is on the Fish Market at the base of the main bridge crossing the Limmat river. This was a highly public place and it would have been appropriate to make judicial announcements there. After his sentence was read, Hans asked “How far is it to the place of execution?” He was told that he had but “a little piece of earth still to walk.” Indeed, this seems to have been the case. The documents in Lowry do not mention that the execution took place on the shores of the Limmat river, rather they specify “the little house at the main moat.” Old woodcuts of the *Wolfsturm* indeed show a small structure attached to a foot bridge crossing the moat, which in fact looks very much like a “little house.”

The old city wall with the *Wolfsturm* and *Katzentor* have long since been torn down. Where the city wall once stood, there now is a major traffic thoroughfare which rings the old town. This is typical of most old European cities today – the old moats outside the original city walls usually have been filled in and turned into *Ringstrassen*. The spot where the *Wolfsturm* once stood is today on the edge of the street known as *Seiler Graben* (the name harkens back to the old moat), across from the canton government courthouse. In the summer of 1994, I visited Zürich



and stood near this spot. It bears no marker, yet there was an oddly compelling quality to the place. The street sign had a red smear of paint on it, as if it were a reminder of the violence that had taken place there. Where such a man once stood and looked death in the face for his unshakeable convictions, there now flows the din and congestion of modern traffic. The sheer incongruity of this experience made me ponder deeply all that had transpired there. It also made me feel that Hans had indeed triumphed over death because one of his descendants had returned and stood witness there 400 year later.

Close up view of the *Wolfsturm*, showing the “Little House at the Main Moat” behind the tower (from an old illustration ca. 1576)

The Fate of Hans Landis' Immediate Family

As is stated in the *Martyrs Mirror*, Hans Landis was the last Anabaptist to be executed in the canton of Zürich. However, this does not mean that deaths caused by the government ceased after this incident. Several others, including members of the family, died during the following years as a result of the inhumane suffering while imprisoned.

Hans Landis' wife, Margaret Hochstrasser, was at least 60 years old when Hans was executed (making her born in about 1554). After his death the Zürich city council confiscated the property left behind by the Anabaptist families that had fled the country without reaching accommodation with the authorities. Hans' estate was confiscated because they feared that if the family remained in their house it would become a "new nest and hiding-place of Anabaptist teaching."⁴⁷ The family was summoned to Zürich on February 23, 1615 and told that they could keep their property if they would join the Reformed Church within two weeks, otherwise they would be arrested and fined. If they chose to emigrate, they would be allowed to take their possessions with them. Margaret refused, stating that she was past 60 years of age and she soon expected to reach her natural end. On May 22, 1615 she was interrogated by the *Bürgermeister* of Horgen, *Herr Holtzhalb*. His report stated that although he and his counselors "spoke kindly and gently with her" and urged her to abandon her beliefs and return to the church, "she would not reconsider." Due to her advanced age she was confined in the hospital. On May 24 he wrote:

It is being considered what to do. She cannot be [swayed by being] talked to or interrogated. She will not be converted, and it would not be good to let her stay alone. That is why she shall be taken to the *Spital* [hospital], held in the death room, bound, and given only the most basic care. No one will be allowed to speak to her or to enter the room, in hope that she may in this wise listen and be converted.

Kläui speculates that the authorities hoped that the sermons delivered to the sick in the hospital would eventually soften her attitude. She was interrogated periodically by the Reformed minister in an attempt to win her conversion. It is not known how long she was held and her fate is not recorded

The death of Hans Landis was the climax of the confrontation of the Anabaptists with the civil authorities and the Reformed Church. Johann Breitingger, who became the head of the Reformed Church of Zürich in 1613, found that many people were disturbed by the execution and he had to justify this rash action. He realized that the only way to keep the Church intact was to institute reforms and to eliminate some of the root causes that were driving people to the Anabaptist faith. In his early years in office, Breitingger was a well-meaning reformer and his actions succeeded in defusing the situation for the next twenty years. He improved charity programs for the poor as well as the quality of parochial education for the children. A new Reformed hymnal was introduced in 1615, symbolizing his openness to change. The following year he succeeded in abolishing the punishment of galley slavery, which was regarded as

⁴⁷ Kläui, 1948, p. 210

barbaric by most other countries at that time. The death penalty was restricted to persons who were extreme social agitators. He also established a set of regulations for the clergy governing their conduct, along with a tribunal to enforce them. In 1630 he issued a memorandum discussing the methods for dealing with the Anabaptists. He recommended that clergy use debate to point out the errors of their beliefs, and that great patience be shown otherwise the clergy would have "bad conscience on our side, and the sectarians will only become more hardened." Breitingen's major concern was that the Anabaptists attend the Reformed Church services, even if they did not believe in the church structure. His methods appear to have had success. In 1633 he ordered a census of the canton of Zurich to determine the number of Anabaptists. Detailed reports were filed by the pastors of each parish over the next two years, and the results showed a total of only 182 Anabaptists in the canton. Although clearly an undercount, this suggested a drastic reduction in their numbers, and many had undoubtedly emigrated by that time.

The majority of these census reports simply give the bare facts about the residents, including the names of each married couple and their children, their ages, the farmsteads on which they dwelled, and their religious status. Occasionally, a pastor added comments and evaluations about the residents, which are very revealing of attitudes at that time. One of the most interesting is the census of the village of Birmensdorf. In 1633 the pastor reported that Stefan Zeender, "an honorable preacher of the Anabaptist brethren," was living in the village with his wife. He added, "this Anabaptist is, due to his incessant instigation and running to and fro, a highly detrimental poison and weed. This is not only within the parish but also in the whole free office. He does have a fine house, some arable land and vineyard, and about two stacks of hay, but is considerably in debt."⁴⁸ The pastor also recorded that Barbara Meyli, the widow of Felix Lambrecht, was residing on a farmstead in the hills outside the village. He comments:

This Anabaptist woman occasionally sells wine and cider during the year. So on the holy day of Christmas in the year 1634, young people were sitting with her till two o'clock in the night. In religious matters, she is so ignorant that she sent me to Stephan Zeender when I wished to talk with her. She announced: "What he believes, she believes, too." On the other hand, she has seven children who go to church and are well at home.⁴⁹

Nearby was another resident named Andreas Graad, who was described as "a very coarse, ignorant man, whose faith is also founded on Master Stephan." The pastor continued, "when this Graad was imprisoned together with Hans Landis in 1614, he had promised to go to church. Because of this vow, (which he never did fulfill for even one hour nor did he wish to do this) he is actually excluded from the Anabaptists about 23 years and so a free one without divine service." Concerning another resident, Hans Hochstrasser, he adds "some years ago Hans Hochstrasser was cited before an honorable marriage court for lewd cohabitation with

⁴⁸ Guth 1988, p. 139.

⁴⁹ Guth 1988, p. 139.

honest people's wives with the promise of great gifts. At that time, he had promised to attend church, but he has not kept that promise. He and his wife were banished from the Anabaptists ten years ago." Concerning Jagli Hochstrasser, the son of Hans: "this young Hochstrasser is a real devil's child, who does not shudder about anything, except at the sermon of God's word. He spends his time day and night with young boozers. Where wine is purchased or a boozing takes place, he is sure to be present. Consequently, the Anabaptists did not really wish to accept him in 1627, and excluded him again. God have mercy upon him."⁵⁰

These annotations by the pastor are quite revealing of life in small Swiss villages at that time. The Anabaptist preacher, Stefan Zeender, we might recall, was imprisoned with Hans Landis in 1614, sentenced to galley slavery, and escaped with him at Solothurn. Unlike Landis, Zeender was able to avoid execution. After returning to his home village he apparently resumed his proselytizing activities with undiminished vigor. Although the Reformed pastor calls him a "poison and weed," it is interesting that he also refers to him as an "honorable preacher"! The report on Andreas Graad, who apparently was also imprisoned with Landis and Zeender, indicates that imprisonment did indeed have a deterrent effect on some of the Anabaptists.

The Renewal of the Campaign Against Anabaptism in Canton Zürich, 1635-1645

Johann Breitinger's relatively milder policies toward the Anabaptists during his early years in office changed in the mid-1630s. The underlying factor in the renewed campaign against the Anabaptists was the heightened military belligerence of the authorities in Zürich and Bern, which peaked at that time during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). Although the Swiss Confederation had managed to avoid the conflagration raging north of their border, Breitinger led a war faction in the Zürich council arguing hotly for intervention on the side of the Protestant Swedish forces. In his tirades, Breitinger charged that Swiss neutrality was a disgrace, they should join the crusade against the Catholic forces of the Holy Roman Empire. He warned that war was inevitable, the Catholic Swiss cantons were preparing to invade Zürich on all sides, and there was the additional looming threat of French expansionism.⁵¹ Hirzel was of special concern because it was near the border with the Catholic cantons in inner Switzerland, and it was on that spot that Zwingli's forces had been defeated in the previous century.⁵² In anticipation of these threats, both Zürich and Bern were building their military strength. Despite Breitinger's best efforts to lure Zürich and the other Protestant cantons into the conflict, cooler heads prevailed in the Swiss Diet, bolstered by the severe defeat of the Swedish army at Nordlingen in 1634.

The pacifist Anabaptists were a thorn in their side. The proud military spirit of the patrician families had always led them to despise the mentality of these "Christians lacking in self-defense and vengeance," which could also serve as a broader role model for non-compliance with the authorities.⁵³ They smarted at the perceived arrogance of the Anabaptists, who constantly complained of their corruption and who refused to attend the Reformed Church. As

⁵⁰ Guth 1988, p. 139-140.

⁵¹ Luck 1985, p. 195.

⁵² Winkler 1974, p. 71.

⁵³ "Christen ohne Verteidigung und Rache."

the Zürich authorities strengthened their military reserves, they kept a watchful eye on any sign of internal discontent. They quickly lashed out in 1646 when a rebellion flared briefly in neighboring Wädenswil against a new one-percent property tax that was levied to strengthen the military forces in the canton. The rebellion drew sympathetic responses throughout the canton, in Knonau west of Hirzel and in other places, including Horgen. The authorities responded with a massive display of military might. A dual pronged sea and land force swept the entire west bank of Lake Zürich. Although the residents in Horgen and its hillside were not major instigators of the rebellion, soldiers occupied the area and they thoroughly combed the neighboring villages for dissidents.⁵⁴

The Anabaptists were the chief scapegoats for this policy of suppressing any form of dissent in the canton. There had been 20 years of relative calm since the death of Hans Landis, but the census reports of 1633 provided the authorities with a list of names which proved to be an irresistible temptation for them to stamp out the sect once and for all.

The Amish hymnal, the *Ausbund*, contains a supplementary report ("*Wahrhaftiger Bericht*") written by the Dutch Mennonite, Hans Müller, which describes the events between 1635 to 1645. This information, supplemented by that in *The Martyrs Mirror*, provides us with the sad details of the fate of the Anabaptist families in Horgen, Hirzel, Wädenswil, and other nearby villages in canton Zürich.

The first sign of trouble was in 1635 when four Anabaptist preachers -- Rudolf Egli of Zürich, Ulli Schmidt and Felix Urnne from Klonau, and Hans Müller from Uetickon -- were arrested and held for several months. Urnne was freed, but the other three were kept for 22 weeks and subjected to intense interrogations. In 1636 several disputations were conducted by authorities in various parts of the canton to induce the Anabaptists to attend the Reformed Church. The first two were held on March 17 and August 17 at Wädenswil, Knonau, and Groeningen. Large numbers were summoned to appear. The authorities and church officials vascillated between entreating them to cooperate, belittling them, and threatening them, all without success. An underlying motive for these meetings appears to have been to confirm the names of every practicing Anabaptist in the canton, to determine their leadership, and the extent of their resources. A third meeting was held on September 8 at Zürich. At a fourth meeting later that year the authorities required the brethren to provide an inventory of their estates, including both "movable and immovable property," with a rather lame promise that "not one sliver should be taken therefrom." Eight Anabaptists from Horgen and Hirzel were involved in these proceedings in 1636, three of whom belonged to the Landis family. One of them, Jacob Suner (sometimes called Rudi in other records), was a Dutch Anabaptist who had married one of Hans Landis' daughters (the wedding had been performed by Hans). The final meeting was held in May of 1637. Although the brethren were given letters of safe conduct as an inducement to attend, Breitinger lost his patience and announced "either you attend the State Church or you go to jail and die there." A total of about 170 adults and 300 children were involved in these proceedings. They were retained in prison for about 20 weeks, during which time they remained in contact with their brethren through letters, who encouraged them to remain steadfast. Realizing the hopelessness of their situation, the brethren repeatedly asked permission to sell

⁵⁴ Kägi 1867, pp. 99-126.

their property and to leave the canton, but the authorities refused. Eventually the Anabaptists were released, but the authorities then launched a campaign of ruthless harrassment. The *Ausbund* recounts how over the following eight years, each of these families was systematically dealt with, one by one.

In addition to the towers along Zürich's city wall, such as the Kazentor, there were two major structures which were used to imprison larger groups of Anbaptists at various times. The Oetenbach was a small cluster of buildings, located near the west bank of the Limmat river. The *Martyrs Mirror* (p. 1119) refers to it as a "convent." Old maps of Zürich also label it as "*Oetenbacher Kloster*" (cloister).⁵⁵ The Dominican nuns who resided there served as nurses in the hospital on the premises.⁵⁶ In the 1520s, during the contentious early days of the Reformation, most of the nuns and the monks left the cloister. In 1525 the Zürich city council closed the monasteries and convents throughout the canton. Since the *Oetenbach* contained a hospital, some of the nuns were allowed to remain to staff the facility. Cloisters tended to be relatively fortified structures, which made the *Oetenbach* appropriate for use as a prison. At that time it probably had many vacant rooms. The major prison in Zürich was the *Wellenberg*, located in the middle of the Limmat near its mouth at lake Zürich. The beginnings of this structure date back to the Romans, and it was used in Zürich over the centuries as a prison for the worst criminals.⁵⁷ The *Wellenberg* was a much worse place in which to be incarcerated due to its location in the river, which made it susceptible to extreme cold and damp. Contemporary reports show that the prisoners complained of mold growing on their clothing, causing it to fall from their bodies in shreds after a few weeks! The dungeons were usually dark and vermin infested. The prisoners were constantly shackled and plagued by insects.

Until the mid 17th century, the most commonly mentioned place of incarceration for the Anabaptists was the *Wellenberg*, along with the common criminals. The guards tormented them at night to prevent them from sleeping. They were interrogated to determine the exact size of their estates in order to confiscate their property with ruthless efficiency. The authorities were particularly interested in determining who had custody of the various charity funds that the congregations had established. While they were imprisoned the brethren were systematically starved to weaken their resistance. Although none were formally executed, several succumbed to illness while in bondage due to the inhumane treatment, or soon after their release. Soldiers and bounty hunters entered the homes of the brethren at will, took whatever they could lay their hands on, and terrorized their relatives. "Even as ravening wolves among a flock of sheep...[the *Täufer Jäger*] raged and stormed, broke open doors and windows, ran with bare swords through the houses, and afterwards drank and rioted worse than solders."⁵⁸ A curious detail in many of these accounts is that the brethren often "escaped" from imprisonment – as happened twice with Hans Landis. This suggests that the prisons were poorly guarded, or more likely that the guards

⁵⁵ The Oetenbach is labeled as a cloiser on Johann Ludwig Gottfried's map of Zürich, dated 1638.

⁵⁶ Gäbler 1986, p. 59

⁵⁷ The *Wellenberg* burned in 1799 during the French occupation, and it was finally torn down in the 19th century.

⁵⁸ Thielmann van Braght, *Martyrs Mirror*, p. 1110

were susceptible to bribes. Several times their fellow prisoners and the local people (non-Anabaptist sympathisers) brought them food. It is also possible that after the authorities had extracted all the information they desired from a prisoner, they may have deliberately left the cell door unlocked to tempt him to escape, which would give them legal cause for recapture and even more harsh treatment. In spite of what appears to us as a rather callous disregard for due process, the authorities were usually careful to justify their actions and record the interrogations, the transcripts of which are still preserved in the Zürich archives.

Twelve brethren were arrested in 1637 and confined in the Oetenbach, some for 22 weeks, others for the duration of the year. One of the group, Rudolf Egli, was the deacon in charge of the congregation's charity funds. Egli (who had also been arrested earlier in 1635) was released, but his house and estate were confiscated and sold for 6,000 Guilders. The authorities summoned him once again for information on the charity fund, but he had meanwhile fled into hiding. Enraged, the authorities arrested his wife and threatened her, and even "placed a hangman by her side to cause her great anguish." She finally revealed where the charity fund was kept, and they expropriated the entire sum.⁵⁹

Hans Landis II and Elizabeth Erzinger

The next lineal ancestors in this chronology are Hans Landis II and his wife Elizabeth Erzinger. Hans II followed in the footsteps of his father and also became an Anabaptist preacher (*Prediger*) for the congregation in the Horgenberg area. Elizabeth (born about 1591), was the daughter of Uli Ertzinger from the village of Guldens in the parish of Egg (sometimes also referred to as "Guldinen" or "Eggersberg" in old records). Uli Ertzinger, we recall, was among the group of Anabaptists arrested in 1589, which included Hans and Heini Landis. Hans and Elizabeth had a large number of children, fourteen in all, six sons and eight daughters. The children were Caspar (born in 1614), Hans (born 1615, the inheritor of the family estate in Hirzel), Margaret (born 1617), Elsbeth (born about 1620), Hans Heinrich (born 1621), Rudolf (born 1623), Anna (born 1626), Jacob (born 1628), Verena (born 1629), Barbara (born 1632), Maria (born 1633), Hans Rudolf (born 1635), Elsbeth (born 1636), and Margaret (born 1638).

On May 3, 1637, the governor (*Landvogt*) at Wädenswil invited three brethren, Hans Landis II, Peter Brubacher, and Jacob Rusterholz to the castle for interrogation, with the guarantee that they would suffer no harm. After arriving at the castle, they participated in a choir service, which apparently was misperceived by the authorities as a signal that they were ready to cooperate. The three men were asked if they would also be willing to attend church services. When they declined, they were imprisoned, despite the initial assurances that this wouldn't happen. Landis and Rusterholz were soon released. Brubacher, however, was retained and subjected to intense interrogation. He was sent to the *Oetenbach*, where he remained for 40 weeks, suffering greatly from harrassment by the guards and deprivation of food and water. Finally he was released, along with 12 other prisoners. In July, 1640, the authorities again pursued Brubacher, and "acted with much tyranny that one would have thought that the stones

⁵⁹ Worth 1,000 Guilders according to the *Ausbund*, whereas the *Martyrs Mirror* specifies 2,000 *Reichsthaler*.

would have cried out.” His house was confiscated, his family evicted, and all his possessions, including farm and livestock, were sold for 9,000 Guilders. Despite the fact that his three children attended state church services, they also were briefly imprisoned.

After being released from imprisonment at Wädenswil in May, 1637, Hans Landis II was again imprisoned that same year at *Oetenbach*, this time for 20 weeks. Although his wife and children attended church services, they also were treated ruthlessly. His daughter, Margaret, was imprisoned for 60 weeks. Hans wrote his wife, testifying to the earnestness of his faith. Fortunately his original letter has been preserved in the Zürich State Archive. In the summer of 1994 I had the opportunity to read this document.⁶⁰ The ink is faded and the paper is soiled, as one might expect of something written in these circumstances:

1. **I wish you my friendly greetings, my dear wife, and also**
2. **all of you, above all through Jesus Christ our Lord and**
3. **saviour, amen.**
4. **I am, furthermore, letting you know what my circumstances are, that I**
5. **am well and healthy, and completely consoled by God’s grace,**
6. **may the almighty God watch over me and preserve everyone in His truth**
7. **until then, amen. I want to let you know that the men have come to us twice**
8. **since I have been imprisoned here, and they will return to us some more;**
9. **therefore, pray to God earnestly for us that He may give us the will**
10. **to speak and to be silent when it is necessary.**
11. **Furthermore, I ask you, my dear house-mother that you diligently watch**
12. **over the children, and admonish them to pray and to**
13. **sleep and to be God-fearing, as you well know what I spoke with**
14. **you about when I was still with you. And you, children,**
15. **I exhort you to be very obedient; if**
16. **the Lord makes me free again I will be able to show you further**
17. **how to be a true steward of His commands throughout the land, with your**
18. **whole will, and with Christ’s will; nothing else should be heeded than**
19. **God and the word of His blessed commands, and this should be**
20. **truly praised by all of us, and pray to God earnestly**
21. **for us that we are also of a mind to do this for you all, amen.**
22. **Heinrich, when you are out herding, take very good care of the cattle**
23. **and let them graze on straw, but with Hirzi and Brandi**
24. **and Bruni it doesn’t matter, and have them butchered into mixed wieners,**
25. **if their bellies are thick in weight I will be well**
26. **satisfied, and also send us sausage and meat; you should make**
27. **the meat well-cooked so that it is good to eat cold,**
28. **and do it as I discussed with you, as I**

⁶⁰ The Zürich State Archive identification number for this letter is EI,7.6, Nr. 2. I wish to thank Michael Wilcox for initially calling this letter to my attention. I translated both of these letters in my article – see Wagner and Wilcox 1995.

29. did it when I was butchering.

1637

30. (Back of page:) written by me, Hans Landis, imprisoned in the Oettenbach

31. to my married sister in the Siten, residing in the lower house.

A photograph of a handwritten document in German. The text is written in a cursive script and reads: "Geschrieben von mir Hans Landis gefangen im Ottenbach". The paper is aged and has some staining.

"Geschrieben von mir, Hans Landis, gefangen im Ottenbach"
Written by me, Hans Landis, imprisoned in the Ottenbach

In the final passage Hans was apparently instructing his son, Heinrich, to take three of their cattle, "Hirzi," "Brandi," and "Bruni" to the butcher for slaughter and to have them turned into cooked sausage. Some of this should be sent to him, which he could eat cold. Such attentiveness to mundane details of managing the farm was not unusual in correspondence at that time, especially considering that families had to support members who were imprisoned, and they were presented with a bill by the authorities.

There is also a second letter in the Zürich State Archive which until now has been mistakenly regarded as being written by Hans Landis the martyr.⁶¹ Neff (1955b) cites this letter as such in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, and the index in the Archive also repeats this mistake. However, it is apparent from both the handwriting and the contents that it was written by Hans II, not by his father. At the bottom of the first page of the document the date "1614?" has been scrawled by an archivist, but on the second page the date "1637" clearly appears at the end. The contents are as follows:

1. I, Hans Landis, wish friendly greetings to my entire
2. household, above all I am also letting you know that I am alive and
3. healthy, and completely consoled by God's grace, may God grant it
4. truly, amen
5. I am letting you know by this letter the timing of the household tasks, so

⁶¹ The second letter is in this same file of documents, EI 7.6

6. take good care of the cattle and keep the hay very clean,
7. and if you put the threshed straw in the pit to use for fodder
8. it would be bad beforehand to stir manure beneath the reed-
9. straw; it is not good to lay it first on the ground when you cut
10. the reeds by hand, it is much better to use it in the summer, and also
11. better, if you fodder the straw in the pit, to (let the cattle) eat half of it .
12. It would be good enough to use the rear (piece of land?) for this half
13. portion, and this reed-straw, as I have instructed; but
14. if you place the cattle there beforehand for grazing it will stir up the dirt.
15. I know that the household cannot take on too much. I must entrust
16. myself and you to the will of the loving God, in His protection and shelter;
17. pray to God for us so that we may also be of a mind to help one another
18. since we ourselves are very imperfect with each other.
19. I don't know whether or not I will be coming to you, I entrust myself
20. to the commands of the loving God, in His shelter and protection, truly, amen.
21. Concerning my beloved children, it is my heartfelt desire
22. for you that you behave yourselves very quietly, that you now by yourselves
23. pray to God truly, and be obedient to your mother.
24. It is a great obligation and also a great reward for those who are obedient
25. to their father and mother. I would like you to come together again for eternal life,
26. if we diligently live and abide by His will.
27. For this, my children, be very desirous
28. and have much love for each other, I ask you truly
29. to do this with your entire will. If you do so, it would bring you
30. a great treasure after this time in eternal life.
31. Further, my Elsy, I am letting you know that you should take very good care,
32. be nurturing, and if they don't follow (obey) then (you) the mother (will)
33. need to be stern, because they are young; and concerning this, my dear Elsy
34. I exhort you, if you have milk, give it to Caspar's child with
35. good will. It is a good charity, and he should then also be of assistance
36. to you, I think. There is nothing else that I need to encharge you with,
37. other than to be mindful of the love He shows
38. towards this earthly realm, I resign myself to what the Lord has sent me.
39. It would please me now very much if you would all love each other
40. equally, and take good care of the house and
41. be very, very diligent with the chores as much as you are able, as I
42. would do if I were there.
43. Nothing else should be heeded but God's commands (and trust) in His protection and shelter,
44. Who is truly praised by all of us, pray to God for us that we do this,
45. and also for yourselves, through Jesus Christ, amen amen.
46. I would like very much, my dear Elsy -- you asked about to whom

47. I loaned the Doms BÜchli,⁶² which I received from Hans Uli
48. Hürlimann; I would like you to send a copy to me
49. as soon as you can; ask around (to see) if there is another (copy),
50. I don't know to whom I gave it, the innkeeper probably
51. knows who has it; and if you can get one to me
52. send it so that I can write to pass the time. It will soon become
53. warm again outside and the days long; I would greatly prefer to be doing (things) outside for
54. a long time, rather than this useless sitting.

The account in the *Martyrs Mirror* (p. 1110) states that while Hans was imprisoned, the authorities sold his farm, "realizing 7,000 Guilders from it, which they kept for themselves." Another source states that the authorities sold his farm to Jägli Treichler in Horgen for 7,200 Pounds. Four thousand Pounds were confiscated by the state as a penalty.⁶³ Hans apparently owned other property in addition to this farm. Kläui states that he owned the farm, a house, another "half house," two barns, and eight cattle, which had been acquired as a settlement after his father's estate was confiscated around 1614. The total value of this property (including the farm, valued at 7,200 Pounds) was about 11,000 Pounds. This indicates that Hans Landis II was one of the wealthier Anabaptists in the community. We might recall that in August, 1614, when his father, Hans Landis the martyr, was being interrogated about the charity fund in his congregation, he mentioned that his brother (Heini?) had been poor some 20 years before and he had to rely on charity, so in gratitude Hans' son, who was reportedly well-off at that time, had donated grain to the congregation to repay his uncle's debt. It seems likely that Hans II was the son that was referred to in this anecdote.

The "true account" (*Wahrhaftiger Bericht*) which appears as an appendix in the *Ausbund*, contains two references to Hans II. My freely rendered translation of page 849 is as follows:

Hans Landis, an ordained minister in Horgenberg, was arrested in 1637 and taken to Zürich, placed in Oetenbach in a dungeon, and imprisoned for about 20 weeks, and was released with 15 of his compatriots in 1638 through God's help. After his release he was continually pursued and driven from one place to another. As one source said, he often didn't have a house to stay in, so strictly was it forbidden by the authorities for us to house or shelter him, and also neither food nor drink, nor charity in any fashion could be shown; and he and his wife and children and children's children were all reduced to poverty; yes, also them [the family], who had given in so much to the [state] church and who recognized the cross. His daughter Margaret Landis was also imprisoned and taken to Zürich, placed in Oetenbach, and was imprisoned there for 60 weeks, then she was released with God's help. Then they took his house, farm, and all other possessions that they could, sold them and kept the proceeds, so he lost 500 Gulden.

⁶² The *Doms-Büchli* to which Hans refers in line 47 is the *Confessio* of the martyr Thomas von Imbroich (1558), who opposed infant baptism, has been reprinted in the *Ausbund*.

⁶³ Kläui, 1948, p. 211.

It should be noted that the financial details differ in the *Ausbund*, the *Martyrs Mirror*, and Kläui's account. In one account his farm was sold for "7,000 Guilders," whereas according to Kläui it was sold for 7,200 Pounds, and the *Ausbund* says he lost "500 *Gulden*."⁶⁴ The figure "500 *Gulden*" is cited in various places in the *Ausbund* as the value for other confiscated estates, so this may have been simply a standard phrase, a rough estimate, and the details in the accounts may be somewhat loose.⁶⁵

Fortunately the original records for the confiscated estate of Hans Landis and Elizabeth Erzinger have been preserved in the Zürich State Archive,⁶⁶ as well as for the the estates of over 40 other Anabaptists throughout the canton. The descriptions of events in the *Martyrs Mirror* and the *Ausbund* are quite graphic, but they fail to mention the fact that after the estates were sold, the authorities did not simply expropriate all the money for their own purposes. Rather, they became trustees for the estates and strict accounts were kept each year listing all income (*Annemen*) credited to the accounts and expenditures (*Ausgeben*). When Anabaptists were imprisoned in the Wellenberg or the Oetenbach, their estates were charged with the cost of their support. Their children were usually boarded with other families in the community, who received a fee for this

⁶⁴ Guilders and *Gulden* are, of course, equivalent terms (the former is Dutch, the latter German).

⁶⁵ Some of the differences in the accounts seem to stem from different currency standards in use at that time in the Holy Roman Empire. Each principality or city-state issued its own variety (including the *Kurpfalz*, Baden, Trier, Hesse-Darmstadt, France, Bavaria, Nassau, and so on), and the values fluctuated. Modern historians also differ in the equivalencies cited for these currencies. Hans Schmocker, a specialist in the interpretation of Swiss manuscripts, has presented what may be the most reliable classification for this region of the empire. There were three major currency systems in use in Switzerland during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Pound (*Pfund*) system was most common, based on units of *Pfund*, *Schilling*, *Pfennig*, and *Heller* (so named after the city of Halle in Swabia, where it was first coined). One *Pfund* equaled 20 *Schillings*, one *Schilling* equaled 12 *Pfennigs*, and one *Pfennig* equalled two *Heller*. The second system of currency was based on the *Krone* which equaled 25 *Batzen*, and one *Batzen* equaled four *Kreuzer*. The third system was based on the *Schweizerfrank* (equivalent to the *Livre Suisse* in French), which equaled 20 *sols*, and one *sol* equaled 12 *deniers*. As if this weren't complex enough, the imperial currency was also in use. One *Reichsthaler* (from which our word "dollar" is derived) was generally worth three Franks, or 3.5 Pounds, or two *Gulden*. The Rhenish *Goldgulden* (gold Guilder) became a popular standard in the 13th century; one *Gulden* was equivalent to one *florin* (so named because it was first coined in Florence). Various silver coins also were in circulation, such as the *Groschen* or the *Weisspfennig*. One *Goldgulden* was equivalent to 20 *Weisspfennigs*, or 240 *Heller*. To achieve some semblance of order in this chaos, several currency unions (*Münzvereine*) came into being to set uniform standards and to control for counterfeiting and fraudulent devaluation. One way to conceptualize the currency is in terms of the average daily wage earned by a skilled worker, such as a stone mason -- about 38 *Pfennigs*, or slightly more than three *Schillings*. Unskilled workers received about half this amount (see Schmocker 1988, and Reinhardt 1961).

⁶⁶ Zürich State Archive (*Täuferamt, Wiedertäuferen Gut*, FIII, 36b.1)

service. They were compensated for providing clothing to the children, and the village schoolmaster was paid for providing them with an education. As we shall also see, children who rejoined the Reformed Church could claim a share of the account when they reached adulthood.

Annual financial records exist for the estate of Hans Landis and Elizabeth Erzinger from 1640 (report Nr. 1) through 1679 (Nr. 40). In March, 1640, the estate (*Hof und Gütern*) was confiscated and sold to Hans Jagli "Treickler" (Treichler) of Horgerberg for the sum of 3,400 Pounds, plus 300 Pounds and 15 Schillings tax. The Treichler family didn't pay the full amount in one lump sum. The cost was amortized over several years and credited to the account of Hans and Elizabeth. Various members of the Treichler family made payments. For example, Martin, Rudolf, and Caspar Treichler jointly paid 180 Pounds to the estate in 1641, and Martin Jagli Treichler paid 130 Pounds. Other members of the Landis family continued to use the farm lands, perhaps for grazing and other purposes. Heinrich Landis the cow-herder (*der Kueher*), stated to be the son of Hans and Elizabeth, paid five Pounds per year to the estate from 1647 through 1651. He is undoubtedly the same Heinrich who was addressed in the letter written by Hans Landis while imprisoned in 1637. Ulrich Landis, a weaver, also paid into the account from 1649 through 1651. Eight Pounds were deducted from the account in 1641 to pay for a *Sägerlohn* which Hans Landis owed to Hans Rudolf Stocker, a miller (perhaps a fee for cutting wood).

Of special importance for the researcher, the expenditures from the account of Hans and Elizabeth contain details pertaining to their children who were boarded with other families. Caspar, Margaret, Elisabeth, Barbali, Heinrich, Verenli, Rudolf, and Maria are all mentioned by name. The youngest child, Margaret (stated to be two years old in 1640) initially stayed with Heinrich Herster, but she spent most of the following 10 years with Ludi and Barbara Staubli, who received from 25 to 60 Pounds per year for her keep. Verenli boarded with Regula Egli for several years, who received 40 Pounds annual fee. Barbali stayed with Johann and Regula Schärer, who also received a 40 Pound annual fee. Maria, said to "16 or 17 years old" in 1649, stayed with Anna Leitsli

Payments were debited to the family account in 1645 for Susanna Pfister, wife of Caspar Landis. She was in Oetenbach prison at the time, and the caretaker received one Pound, 16 Schillings, and eight heller for her keep. Payments were also made at this time for Caspar and Susanna's two older children. Their daughter Barbali boarded with Jagli Rusterholz from Wädenswil, and their son Hans Rudli boarded with Heinrich Rusterholz, of the same town. The annual fees for their care ranged between 25 to 50 Pounds per year. Grätz,⁶⁷ citing Fritz Landis of Mosbach, Baden, states that the property eventually reverted to the sons of Hans II, although the documentary evidence for this statement is not clear.

Hans II was eventually released from prison, along with 15 other brethren, but he was hounded by the authorities, who watched his every move. No one in the community was allowed to provide him with food or shelter. A report filed in 1657 (to be discussed in the following chapter) suggests that Hans Landis II and his wife were both deceased by that time.

⁶⁷ Grätz 1970.

Verena Landis

Verena, the daughter of Hans Landis the martyr, was married to Jacob Suner, an Anabaptist weaver from Holland. Hans Suner, probably their son, became a middleman with the Dutch Mennonites and on several occasions he arranged for relief to be supplied to the Swiss congregations. In 1643 Verena was placed under house arrest in her home near Zürich. She was reported to be “elderly” and too ill to be transported to prison (born in 1587, she would have been 56 years old at that time). The shock soon caused her death within that year.

...[A]n old sister, named Verena Landis, was surprised in the night in her own house, with dreadful raging and storming; in consequence of which she was so frightened that she fainted, yea, became sick, and hence could not go with the thief-catchers. When they could not get her away, she had to promise to remain a prisoner in her house, which promise she kept. But as they treated her very harshly, and provided her with very bad food, certain death ensued a short time afterwards.⁶⁸

Felix Landis and Adelheid Egli

Hans' son Felix and his wife Adelheid (Heidi) Egli were also members of the congregation in Hirzel. Adelheid seems to have converted later than other members of her husband's family. In 1633, at the age of 40, she was said to have been a convert for seven years. They had three children, Hans, Heinrich, and Maria. Around 1642 Felix and Adelheid were imprisoned in Oetenbach tower in Zürich. Felix died, but Adelheid escaped four years later. The account in the *Ausbund* is virtually identical with that in the *Martyrs Mirror*:

He was treated most unmercifully; for he was not given anything to eat for many days, so that even some criminals that were confined near him in another place, took pity on him, and with difficulty, managed to get some food to him, through an opening between them. But when the doorkeeper perceived this, he was put into another prison. Finally, however, they gave him some food; but he was so impaired in his body (through shinking of his bowels, as it seems, on account of having suffered hunger so long), that he could not bear food any more, but prepared himself for death.

Yet in his greatest distress he was carried to church, during the sermon, where he, O dreadful inhumanity! was thrown under a bench; but he soon after gave up the ghost, which he had commended into the hands of God.

His wife Adelheid Egli, who was also imprisoned in Othenbach, was kept there almost four years.

In that time she was treated not only unmercifully, but also shamefully; they threw her into many a stinking corner, stripped her twice in her bonds, and

⁶⁸ Thielmann van Braght 1660, p. 1121

for a time took away her clothes from her every night; however, she afterwards, with a good conscience, escaped from her bonds.

But in the meantime the authorities had broken up their family, put out the children among strangers, and then sold house and furniture, realizing from it 5,000 guilders, all of which they kept for themselves.⁶⁹

Kläui varies slightly from this account in that he reports that Felix's property brought more than 6,000 Pounds when it was sold.⁷⁰ The financial archives in Zürich contain records for the confiscated estate of Felix Landis and his wife, including entries for payments to the families with whom their children were boarded.⁷¹

Rudolf Landis

Rudolf, the remaining son of Hans the martyr, was an enigmatic person about whom only a few tantalizing scraps of information have been preserved. Unfortunately, some of the information is contradictory.⁷² He and his wife, Anna Baumann, resided on the farmstead of Untere Seiten. The Hirzel churchbook shows that they had eleven children: Ulrich (born 1621), Klein Verenli (born 1623), Joseph (1624), Jacob (1625), Bartholomeus (Bartli, 1627), Hans Rudolf (1629), Judith (1631), Catharina (1633), Margaret (1635), Hans Jacob (1637), and Cathri (1639).

According to Kläui, Rudolf's property was confiscated by the state in 1638, along with other members of the family. He and his wife recanted their faith, and Schuchmann indicates that they were expelled from the Anabaptist congregation because of "bad morals."⁷³ The financial archives in Zürich do not contain a specific file on Rudolf Landis and Anna Baumann.

Oswald Landis

Oswald Landis, another prominent member of the family who converted to Anabaptism, is also discussed in the commentaries of the *Ausbund*. He was the son of Rudolf Landis and Anna Bruppacher, and the nephew of Hans Landis the martyr. Oswald is described as an old man in the account (born in 1577, he was 63 years old in 1640, the date cited). The language in the commentaries concerning Oswald is archaic and not totally clear. The entire passage is given below (in my very literal translation).

⁶⁹ Thielmann van Braght 1660, p. 1120.

⁷⁰ Kläui 1948, p. 211

⁷¹ Zürich State Archives FIII 36b.18

⁷² The Hirzel Chart states that Rudolf was born in 1590; however, his name was included on the 1633 list of *Täufer* in Hirzel and he was stated to be 30 years of age at the time (yielding a birthdate of 1603). His wife, Anna Baumann of Durzen, was included on the 1633 list, also stated to be 30 years of age and an Anabaptist convert for eight years. Wenger (2005) shows Rudolf as born Aug. 1583 in Horgen, and died in 1639.

⁷³ "...wird wegen Sitte Verfehlung aus der Täufergemeinde ausgeschlossen."

This elderly brother was imprisoned by the servants of the authorities together with his elderly wife, his two sons and their wives and two innocent suckling babies. They were taken to Zürich and imprisoned in the Oetenbach. When this happened they suffered great anxiety, pain and heartache, especially concerning the little innocent children. Within one evening the two sons with the two innocent children escaped from the enemy's hands with a clear conscience. The old man and his wife were then freed, but his son and son's wife were reduced to poverty. Their possessions and their children were given to a godless, poor servant [of the state], so the children also experienced anxiety and need as a result. Further, the above reported man [Oswald] had four other sons who attended the [state] church, and [despite this] the authorities confiscated their house and farm, and 1,000 Guilders that were legally earned from it, all of which came into their hands [of the authorities].

The narrative concerning Oswald Landis in the *Martyrs Mirror* is virtually identical to that in the *Ausbund* and adds no additional details.

The Zürich State Archive⁷⁴ contains the financial records for the estate of Oswald and Anna Schächli, from its initial confiscation in 1640 through 1668. Three of their sons, Hans Heinrich, Rudolf, and Oswald Landis (jr.), utilized the estate in 1640 and paid 140 Pounds fee to the authorities. This same fee was routinely recorded from them each year thereafter. In 1640 expenses were also debited to the account for Susanna Biber, described as Oswald Landis (junior's) widow, aged 47, and her two children -- Bertheli 18 and Annali 14. Expenses were also paid for the support of the wives and children of Hans Jagli and Hans Heinrich, the sons of Oswald (sr.), apparently while they were imprisoned. In comparison with some of the other accounts, there is little detail in the financial records for Oswald and Anna's account.

Other Anabaptists in Canton Zürich

By 1639 the authorities in Zürich began to receive protests from various quarters regarding their heavy-handed treatment of the Anabaptists. The city council in Amsterdam sent a letter supplicating them to be more moderate in their actions. This prompted the Zürich magistrates to issue a manifesto that year justifying their actions. They repeated their standard charges that the Anabaptists had separated themselves from the state church, refused to obey the city council, and that it was their duty to compel these people by force of arms to do what was right. The Anabaptists issued their own response, restating their standard defense that they had not separated from the church, but rather returned to the earlier, proper Christian faith. The persecution continued unabated.

Stefan Zeender in Birmensdorf, imprisoned several years earlier with Hans Landis the martyr, resumed his proselytizing activities afterwards and he was finally arrested again on September 23, 1639 at Klonau. He was placed in irons at Oetenbach for about one year. Stefan was elderly by this time and became ill from the dampness in prison. Finally, he "fell asleep in

⁷⁴ Zürich State Archive FIII 36b.6

Jesus." Other members of the Landis family were also imprisoned and had their property confiscated at this time. Caspar Landis, the son of Hans II, and Hans Jacob Landis were imprisoned in the Wellenberg in 1640, along with Felix Landis, Conrad Strickler-Landis, Hans Rudolph Baumann-Landis, Oswald Landis-Schappy, and some other persons who may have been in-laws -- Jacob Rusterholz, Uli Furrer Hofmann, Hans Huber Syfrig, Hans Jägli Asper, Elisabeth Hofstetter, the widow of Heinrich Ritter, Barbara Bruppacher, and Michael Bruppacher's widow, Verena. Conrad Strickler-Landis was elderly at that time, and in 1644, after the authorities extracted a tax of 400 *Gulden*, his estate was given to his son. Most of the others had their properties confiscated, each bringing only a few hundred "Pounds" in value. Hans Jacob's estate was worth 2,931 Pounds.⁷⁵

By around 1640 over 40 Anabaptist families were deprived of their homes and estates in the canton of Zürich. The records of these confiscations have been meticulously preserved in the Zürich State Archives.⁷⁶ The incomes from these sales were used to pay the expenses of their trials and the cost of their imprisonment, with the remainder being set aside for any heir who was willing to join the state church.

⁷⁵ Hans Jacob Landis who was imprisoned with Caspar Landis in 1640 was probably the son of Oswald Landis.

⁷⁶ In addition to Hans, Hans Jacob, Felix, and Oswald Landis, the files for other Anabaptists that I found in the Zürich State Archive include the following: Jakob Rusterholz (Zürich State Archive file number FIII, 36b.2), Conrad Strickler (b.3), Hans Rudolf Baumann (b.4), Uli Furrer and Barbel Hofmann (b.5), Hans Huber (b.7), Jaggli Asper (b.8), Elsbeth Hofstetter (b.9), Barbara Bruppacher (b.10), Michael Bruppacher (b.11a), the Hallauer Gütli (b.11b), Jakob Schneider of Richterswilerberg (b.12), Uli Schneider of Richterswilerberg (b.13), Rudolf Bachmann of Richterswilerberg (b.14), Barbara Frey of Richterswilerberg (b.15), Werner Pfister of Wädenswilerberg (b.16), Peter Bruppacher of Wädenswilerberg (b. 17), Ulrich Hasler of Männedorf (b.20), Uli Oetiker of Männedorf (b.20), Burkart Ammann and wife Eva Rüdlinger of Männedorf (b.21), Heinrich Meyer of Männedorf and Bühlenkung (b.22), Hans Müller of Uitikon (b.23), Rudolf Egli der Wannenmacher and wife Martha Pfänninger of Zürich (b.24), Hans Kuntz, a butcher, residing on the Kuttelgasse in Zürich (b. 25), Katarina Frey, and Thoman Schnebeli, millers from Affoltern and "a. A. selig Witwe" (b. 26), Adelheid Gut of Zwillikon (b. 27), Jakob Isler of Stallikertal (b. 28), Felix Urmi of Baregg (b. 29), Hans Merili of Dägerst (b. 30), Müller, of Maschwanden (b. 31), Heinrich Frick of Buch bei Knonau (b. 32), Anna Schewlin of Aeugst (b. 32a), Jaggeli Gachnauer, a. d. Fischental and Margaret Peter (b. 33), Jacob Baumgartner of Ettenhausen (b. 34), Joggeli Egli of Bäretswil and Lisabeth Leutenegger (b. 35), Hans Spörri hinter der Burg Greifenberg, and Anna Kägi (b. 36), Jorg Weber on the Mühlikram in Bäretswil (b.37), Hans Müller of Edikon (b.38), Jagli Müller im Breitacker, Bäretswil (b.38a), Jörg Peter of Strahlegg (b.39), Joggli Hess and Elsbeth Bachmann of Bäretswil (b.40), Anna Frei of Schalchen, parish of Wildberg (b. 41), Uli Müller i.d. Au., parish of Zell (b.42), and Anna Thumysen (b.36b).

Landis Family in Hirzel, Switzerland, earliest records to ca. 1650⁷⁷

- 1 Johannes Landös (Landis)**, b. ca. 1521, marr. **Katharina Schinz**, b. ca. 1524. In 1547 lived in Hirzel.
- 11 Hans Landis**, b. 1544, “the martyr” executed in Zürich 1614. First marriage to **Barbara Hochstrasser**, b. ca. 1550, d. by 1580. Second marriage to **Margaretha Hochstrasser**, b. ca. 1554. The family resided at *Untere Seiten* in Hirzel.
- 111 Hans Landis**, bap. Dec. 31, 1581 Horgen, marr. **Elsbeth Erzinger**, bap. Oct. 16, 1593 in Egg. In 1633 they lived at *Obere Seiten*, Hirzel.
- 1111 Caspar Landis**, b. ca. 1614, the surgeon (*Schärer*). In 1649 he lived at Sprürmüllli in Hirzel. Recorded as one of the emigrants in 1657 to Jepsheim, Alsace. First marriage to **Susanna Pfister**, b. ca. 1613, canton Zürich, d. before 1661 in Alsace. Second marriage to **Catherine Danherr** from Herzogenbuch in Canton Bern; she died in 1687 in Durrenenzen, Alsace. (The children of Caspar Landis will be shown on the summary table at the end of the following chapter).
- 1112 Hans Landis**, bap. Mar. 3, 1615 Hirzel, d. Aug. 5, 1629 in *Rote Ruhr*. He inherited the family estate in Hirzel.
- 1113 Margaretha Landis**, b. Oct. 12, 1617 Hirzel. Remained unmarried and lived with her brother Caspar in 1643; imprisoned in the Oetenbach.
- 1114 Elsbeth Landis**, b. Mar. 1620, lived with her brother Caspar at Hirzel in 1643.
- 1115 Hans Heinrich Landis**, b. Nov. 1621 Hirzel, died before 1670 Alsace. Married **Barbara Buehler** on Feb. 1643 Hirzel, living next to Caspar Landis at *Kalbisel*, Hirzel in 1643; emigrated with Caspar his brother to Heildesheim, Alsace. Seven children (shown on genealogy chart in chapter on Alsace)
- 1116 Rudolf Landis**, bap. Nov. 23, 1623 Hirzel; marr. Christina Mettler, bap. Jan. 27, 1622 Hirzel. (Rudolf’s children will be shown on the summary table at the end of the following chapter).
- 1117 Anna Landis**, bap. Mar. 12, 1626 Hirzel.
- 1118 Hans Jakob Landis**, bap. Mar. 11, 1628 Hirzel, d. May 21, 1699. His first marr. to Elisabeth Hotz, second marr. to Verena Bürgisser. Jakob was a linen weaver from Frosdchweiler.
- 1119 Verena Landis**, b. Aug. 1629 Hirzel.
- 11110 Barbara Landis**, b. Apr. 1632 Hirzel.
- 11111 Hans Rudolf Landis**, b. Feb. 1635 Hirzel, d. July 4, 1637 Hirzel.
- 11112 Elizabeth Landis**, b. Nov. 1636 Hirzel, d. July 4, 1637.

⁷⁷ This summary table focuses on the siblings and immediate descendants of Hans Landis “the martyr” in Hirzel and nearby farmsteads, especially those who are mentioned in this chronicle. For a detailed summary of all Landis descendants see Samuel E. Wenger 2005. For the sake of consistency, I am following his genealogical numbering system. My lineal ancestors in this chronicle are underlined.

- 11113 Margaret Landis**, bap. Dec. 16, 1638 Hirzel; removed from foster care by her bro. Rudolf, moved to Alsace, marr. Joseph Casson on June 23, 1664 Markirch.
- 11114 Maria Landis**, b. ca. 1641, bapt. Reformed at Markirch on Aug. 25, 1658, "age 16 or 17."
- 112 Rudolf Landis**, b. aug. 1583 Horgen, d. 1639; marr. Anna Baumann. Resided at Untere Seiten. Renounced Anabaptism and joined Reformed Church.
- 113 Heinrich Landis**, b. Jan. 1585 Hirzel.
- 114 Verena Landis**, bap. Feb. 12, 1587 Horgen, marr. Jakob Suners, a weaver from Holland.
- 115 Adeli Landis**, b. May 1588 Horgen.
- 116 Felix Landis**, b. May 1589 Horgen, d. ca. 1642. Married three times: marr.(1) Margaret Strehler, marr. (2) Magdalena Haas, marr. (3) Adelheid Egli.
- 117 Jakob (Jagli) Landis**, b. feb. 1591 Horgen, d. Jan. 16, 1636 Hirzel. Marr. (1) Barbara Schäppi, marr. (2) Elsbeth Trinckler. An Anabaptist in Hirzel.
- 118 Margaret Landis**, b. Nov. 1594 Horgen. Marr. (1) Ulrich Bruppacher in Wädenswil; marr. (2) Hans Rudolph Baumann. They were Anabaptists.
- 12 Ulrich Landis**, bap. Nov. 18, 1546 Hirzel. Brother to Hans the martyr.
- 13 Rudolph Landis**, bap. Sept. 17, 1548 Horgen, marr. Anna Bruggbacher ca. 1570, both Anabaptists.
- 131 Heinrich Landis**, bap. Mar. 25, 1571 Horgen.
- 132 Caspar Landis**, bap. Apr. 5, 1573, d. Ca. 1602 Horgen.
- 133 Hans Landis**, b. Aug. 1575 Horgen, d. 1612, widower in Hirzel 1640.
- 1331 Hans Landis**, b. Nov. 12, 1598
- 1332 Caspar Landis**, b. 1600, d. Sept. 5, 1629 Rote Ruhr, a table and furniture maker.
- 1333 Rudolf Landis**, b. Feb. 1603, marr. Barbara Ritter, moved to Richterswil, then Markirch 1709 with son Heinrich, Anabaptist, listed as widower.
- 134 Oswald Landis**, bap. Mar. 31, 1577 Horgen, d. Mar. 4, 1650 Hirzel. Marr. (1) Margaret Schneveli, marr. (2) Anna Schappi, marr. (3) Catharina Bruppacher; Anabaptists, jailed at Oetenbach 1640.
- 1341 Hans Jacob Landis**, bap. Aug. 10, 1600 Horgen, d. Mar. 20, 1656 Weiler, Germany, his wife Verena Pfister attended the Steinsfurt meeting in 1661.
- 13416 Hans Rudolf Landis**, bap. Jan. 6, 1637 Hirzel, d. before 1701; attended the Steinsfurt meeting.
- 1348 Hans Heinrich Landis**, bap. July 21, 1611 Horgen, attended Steinsfurt meeting.
- 13410 Rudolph Landis**, bap. Feb. 11, 1616 Horgen, marr. Barbara Scharer, Anabaptists.
- 13413 Oswald Landis jr.**, bap. May 10, 1626, d. Aug. 28, 1671 Hirzel.
- 14 Anna Landis**, bap. Feb. 13, 1550 Horgen, d. at birth.
- 15 Anna Landis**, bap. July 28, 1551, died before Feb. 1562.

- 16 **Hans Heinrich (Heini) Landis**, bap. Apr. 19, 1553 Horgen, d. July 1, 1662 Hirzel; marr.
Verena Bertschinger, Anabaptists.
- 17 **Agatha Landis**, bap. Mar. 28, 1555 Horgen.
- 18 **Ludi Landis**, bap. May 6, 1560 Horgen.
- 19 **Anna Landis**, bap. Feb. 5, 1562 Horgen.

Chapter 6

The Exodus to Alsace¹

The story of Hans Landis, the “last Anabaptist martyr” in canton Zürich, is well known in Mennonite historiography. Less well known is what befell the grandchildren and later descendants of the martyr. This chapter will clarify the sequence of events that took place when the Landis family emigrated from canton Zürich in the mid-17th century and settled in Alsace, with special focus on Caspar Landis, my next lineal ancestor in this chronicle.

As we have seen, the Zürich authorities had ratcheted up their pressure on the Anabaptists after the census of 1633 provided them with a list of names of those who remained religiously non-compliant. They imposed an economic quarantine over the next 15 years which systematically deprived the Anabaptists of their livelihood. Other villagers were forbidden to engage in economic transactions with them. They were fined and imprisoned. The charity fund (the *Hallauer Gütli*) of the congregation on the Horgenberg was confiscated. The authorities also confiscated many of their farms, which were then sold or leased to others in the community. By mid-century most of the resources of the Anabaptists, both private and collective, had been seized. Their leaders were either dead or imprisoned. Emigration was the only recourse, and it soon began on a massive scale. It has been estimated that at least 1,661 Anabaptists fled Zürich after 1649, and most were gone by 1660. They made up almost half of the known emigrants from the canton in this time period.²

The revenue from the confiscated estates was held in trust by the Zürich authorities to pay the cost of the trials and imprisonment of the Anabaptists, as well as the education, clothing, board and room of their children. After deducting for these expenses, plus taxes, the remaining proceeds were set aside for the heirs of each family when they reached marriageable age, *if* they were willing to join the state church. The ledgers for each of these estates are available in the Zürich State Archive.³ The entries are an invaluable source of information about the eventual fate of the grandchildren because they record, by name and date, each time that they filed a claim to their share of the family estate. Several of these entries show that after the Anabaptists emigrated to Alsace and nearby areas, some returned to canton Zürich as refugees from the devastations of the “Dutch War” (1672-1678), during which much of the Rhine valley was laid waste by military campaigns and bands of marauding soldiers.

The Fate of the Grandchildren of Hans the Martyr

As far as can be determined, none of the children of Hans Landis managed to leave Switzerland. Felix, we have seen, died in prison. Hans II was incarcerated in 1637, as were his wife Elizabeth and their daughter Margaret. After their release they continued to be harassed

¹ An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* – see Wagner 1995b.

² Kläui 1948; Zbinden 1981, p. 191-192.

³ Zürich State Archive, Files FIII (*Täufer Amt* series).

by the authorities. By 1657, perhaps even earlier, both Hans and Elizabeth were deceased. Verena also died from "shock" shortly after her arrest in 1643. Rudolf may be the only child of Hans the martyr who was able to avoid these conditions. Assuming that Schuchmann's report is accurate that Rudolf was shunned by the Anabaptist congregation, he may have collaborated with the authorities.

We have seen that most of the grandchildren were boarded with various families in the Horgenberg and Wädenswil area while their parents were imprisoned. Confirming this, the *Martyrs Mirror* and the *Wahrhafter Bericht* in the *Ausbund* both state that Felix's children were placed with "strangers." The financial records of the confiscated estates of Hans Landis II and Felix also contain numerous entries for the board and care of their children, as well as for the children of Oswald and his son Hans Jagli Landis. When these grandchildren became old enough, several of them emigrated to Alsace.

In 1651 the pastor of the Reformed Church in Hirzel, Hans Jacob Heitz, filed an emigration report⁴ with the authorities in Zürich which listed all those persons who had left the community between 1649 and 1651 to the Alsatian *Breisgau* (the plains of Alsace by Colmar, also referred to as *Ried*), the Palatinate (*Kurpfalz*), and other adjoining areas, some of whom left with their entire household, and others for service (*Dienst*, or wage labor). Of special interest is the first portion of the list, which mentions those who left with their families:

1. Hans Jagli Landis, a *Wiedertäufer*, moved away with wife and three children. Supposedly they are staying at "Heidlezen" [Heidelsheim] two hours from Colmar. While they resided in the community, the children were sent to the church and the school, the first child is 11, the other 8, and the third is 5 years of age.
2. Caspar Landis, the surgeon [*Schärer*], and Hans Heinrich Landis, the weaver, brothers, moved away, the first with wife and four children [*selbst sechs*], the other with wife and three children [*selbst fünf*], partly because of overwhelming debts, partly because there wasn't much for them to earn. They are supposedly at "Jepsen" [Jepsheim] near Colmar. The ordinances of our honorable rulers ["G.H.," i.e. *gnädigen Herrschaft*], especially those concerning Anabaptist business [*Täufergeschäft*], had much to do with [the departure of] both of them.

Slightly different information was provided by pastor Heitz in a later report filed in July, 1657,⁵ which stated that the following persons had emigrated between 1649 and 1657 to "Alsass, Breisgau:"

1. Heinrich Landis left with wife and child because he couldn't keep himself out of debt. They are residing at "Heidlezen" [modern Heidelberg], two hours from "Shletstatt" [Selestat].
2. Caspar Landis, his occupation a surgeon [*Schärer*], left with wife and three children. They are staying in "Jepsen" [Jepsheim], not far from Colmar.

⁴ Zürich State Archive A103, Nr. 30.

⁵ Zürich State Archive EII 700.139, p. 112; available on LDS microfilm #1185179.

3. Rudolf Landis, his occupation a carpenter [*Zimmermann*], left with wife and child, concerning where little is known. While he lived here he did indeed attend the sermons but there is reason for concern that he may have taken up the sect of his parents, who are deceased, but who were *Täufer*. [Rudolf is] living at "Dären Enzigen" [Durrenenzen] two hours from "Brisach" [Breisach].

Emigration reports were also filed by other parishes in the canton of Zürich in 1657. The town of Horgen reported that 12 families left that year, but no members of the Landis family were included.

Who precisely were these four members of the Landis family? The emigration reports contain significant clues -- such as that Hans Heinrich and Caspar were brothers, it also gives their professions, and the number and the ages of their children. As will be shown, the evidence supports the conclusion that Caspar, Hans Heinrich, and Rudolf were the sons of Hans Landis II, and that Hans Jacob was the son of Oswald Landis. As we have seen in the previous chapter, these men had ample motive to emigrate. They were imprisoned and severely harassed by the authorities. The comment by pastor Heitz that Caspar had "overwhelming debts," and that there wasn't "much left for them to earn," is a blatant example of evasion beneath a bureaucratic smokescreen of understatement. It is a tactful way of saying that they had to pay crippling fines, their possessions were confiscated, and that they had no further means of earning a living since others in Hirzel area were prohibited from conducting business with them.

Hans Jacob (Jagli) Landis

Schuchmann⁶ states that Hans Jagli, who is mentioned in the 1651 emigration report, was the brother to Caspar, Hans Heinrich, and Rudolf (i.e. their brother Jacob born March 11, 1628). Best,⁷ however, feels that he was their cousin, Hans Jacob, the son of Oswald. The evidence seems to clearly support the latter interpretation. The fact that the 1651 report mentions Caspar and Hans Heinrich together in the same paragraph as brothers (*Gebrüder*) but refers to Hans Jagli separately in the next paragraph, gives greater credibility to his being their cousin. Another piece of evidence that supports this conclusion is the stated ages of the three children. In 1651 the three youngest children of Hans Jacob, the son of Oswald Landis, were Barbara (born 1645, age 6), Caspar (born 1643, age 8), and Georg (born 1640, age 11). The fit is almost exact with the ages given in the 1651 report (which were, we recall, 5, 8, and 11 years). Yet another piece of evidence supporting this identification for Hans Jacob is the *Martyrs Mirror* account which states that "Jacob Landis, the son of Oswald [emphasis mine], as also his entire family, were exiled into misery."⁸

A final source of evidence on the identity of Hans Jagli is in the records of the confiscated Anabaptist estates in the Zürich archive. The file for the estate of Hans Jagli Landis and "both of his wives, Verena Pfister and Verena Schächli" indicates at various points (e.g. in 1640) that he

⁶ Schuchmann 1963, 1966.

⁷ Best 1990.

⁸ Thielmann van Braght 1660, p. 1119.

was the son of Oswald Landis.⁹ Stucki¹⁰ has summarized some of this information. The estate was confiscated in 1640 and held in trusteeship by the government until 1679. Expenses were deducted from the account each year for the cost of boarding Hans Jagli's children and for keeping the parents in prison.¹¹ In 1647, a fee was paid to the schoolmaster in Hirzel as tuition for teaching Hans Jagli's children. In the previous year, 1646, a fee was paid for legal counsel to represent Hans Jagli's daughter in a divorce court suit against Caspar Koradi. In 1647 the prison keeper at the Oetenbach was paid a fee for keeping Hans Jagli's daughter, Elizabeth, in custody. In 1651 an entry states that one of Oswald's sons, residing at Moosacher in Hirzel, paid back taxes owed the state.¹² After this date the records in Oswald's estate taper off, which seems to confirm the conclusion that Hans Jagli and his immediate family emigrated sometime in 1651.

A final comment should be made about the reference to Hans Jagli's "two wives." Verena Pfister is listed as his wife in the account each year until 1667, when the name changes to Verena Schächli. The likely conclusion is that his first wife died, and he remarried about that time. It is unknown whether his first wife was the sister to Susanna Pfister, wife to Caspar Landis. The authorities in Zürich kept informed as best they could of the changing marital statuses of the persons whose estates they held in trust.

Rudolf Landis

Rudolf Landis was one of the sons of Hans II. In the 1649 census of Hirzel, Rudolf and his wife, Christine Metler, are shown residing on the farmstead known as Kellen, with one small child, Hans Heinrich, one year of age. The emigration report of 1657, we recall, stated that he left with "one child." This couple does not appear in later censuses of 1654 and 1656, which supports the conclusion that they emigrated.

A 1646 entry in the ledger for the confiscated estate of Hans Landis II provides some interesting background on this couple. It states that his son, Rudolf, had been involved in an illicit relationship with Christine, the foster-daughter¹³ of Hans Metler, a carpenter in Hirzel. Hans Metler was stated to be an honorable man, but Christine, who resided in his "house and home," had committed fornication (*Hürrethat*). A fee of 50 Pounds was paid from the family estate of Hans Landis to pastor Heitz to "cover" this situation. Rudy was stated to be 23 years old at the time (which matches his known birth date). The Hirzel churchbook reports that their marriage took place two months later on September 1, 1646. It should be noted that pastors sometimes accused Anabaptists of such faults, despite the fact that they may have been previously married by their own minister. Only those ceremonies performed by the Reformed minister were regarded as "legitimate."

⁹ Zürich State Archive, File FIII 36b.11

¹⁰ Stucki 1988.

¹¹ "*für sy selbst über ihrer gefangen*"

¹² Zürich State Archive, Oswald Landis, FIII 36b.6

¹³ The phrase used is *Zige Tochter*. It also occurs in the Hirzel census records for various households. The phrase may be derived from *in die Ziehe geben*, which indicated that a child was placed with foster parents.

Another entry in the ledger states that in 1648 Rudy Landis took his younger sister, Margaretli, away from the home where she had been boarding. The reason for this action was not stated, but it was dutifully recorded that the Staublis would receive only 17 Pounds that year instead of their normal 30 Pounds for her room and board. This is an intriguing entry. Does this incident indicate that Rudy and his brothers were already preparing for emigration? Finally, an entry in 1650 states that Rudy, the son of Hans Landis, wanted to leave the canton and he was given 10 Pounds out of the family estate. The authorities gave him this money with some reluctance. They requested that "he should see if he couldn't support himself here" (in canton Zürich).

The eventual fate of Rudolf Landis and his family after they departed for Durrenenzen in Alsace is unclear. Rudolf and his wife Christine seem to have remained in Alsace. The Hirzel Chart reports that their son, Christian, was born there in Markirch in 1659. An entry in the Evangelical churchbook of Mützenheim¹⁴ reports that on Oct. 31, 1670 Christian Landis, an "orphaned boy of about 11 or 12 years of age," of Anabaptist parentage at nearby Durrenenzen, was instructed in the principles of the Christian faith, after which he was baptized. His stated age yields an approximate birth date of 1659, which matches that shown in the Hirzel Chart. Rudolf died sometime before 1670, as indicated by the use of the term "orphaned" (*hinterlassener*) in the entry.

Further details on the fate of Christian and his mother are found in the ledger of Hans Landis' estate. In 1675 it was reported that Christian, the son of "Rudolf Landis the carpenter," had been residing in Durrenenzen with a legal guardian since the death of his father. That year Christian, a 16 year old boy, appeared in canton Zürich "naked and bare," a refugee from "the sad events of the war" in Alsace -- a reference to the "Dutch War" (1672-1678), during which much of the Rhine valley was laid waste by military campaigns. Christian was placed under the care of his cousin, Hans Landis, in Hirzel. In 1676 he was apprenticed to Rudolf Korrodi to learn the tailor-trade. However, the following year Christian was pensioned to a hospital in Zürich, at a cost of 1,416 Pounds to the family estate. The entry states that he was "completely simple (*einfalt*) and produced nothing, so no matter what the effort, he could only make half progress" in his apprenticeship.

Concerning Christian's mother, Christine Metler, a ledger entry in 1678 credited the family estate with net proceeds from a payment clearing the remaining debts on the land and house of the "deceased Rudolf Landis the carpenter." This evidence shows that after Rudolf's death, his wife placed Christian under the care of a guardian in Durrenenzen. She returned to Zürich to press a claim to her husband's share of the estate, and she likely also returned to the Reformed Church at some point during the intervening years.

Hans Heinrich Landis

In 1637 Hans Landis II wrote a letter to his family from his prison cell in the Oetenbach, giving instructions to his son, Heinrich, about the proper care of the cattle. References to Heinrich also occur at various points in the ledger for the family's confiscated estate. In 1647 and 1651 "Hans' son, Heinrich the cow-herder" paid 5 Pounds for using the lands, probably as a grazing

¹⁴ LDS microfilm 715515.

fee. He most likely married Barbara Buehler in 1643. They had at least three children, some of whom may have been born later in Alsace – Jacob, Barbara, and Hans Heinrich. By 1651, when Hans Heinrich and his family emigrated, he was deeply impoverished. An entry in 1645 in the ledger states that a payment of 72 Pounds was made to Hans Hottinger on behalf of “Hans Landis’ sons, namely Caspar and Hans Heinrich,” and it adds that their “entire household is bankrupt.” In 1646, a penalty of 6 Pounds was paid because of the “disloyal piety” of Hans Heinrich’s wife. The 1651 emigration report also comments that Hans Heinrich “couldn’t keep himself out of debt.” He departed for Jepsheim that year with wife and three children.

Little else is available on Hans Heinrich’s fate after he settled in Alsace. An entry in the ledger in 1670 states that he was deceased. The following year, 225 Pounds were deducted from the family estate, with the comment that “Heinrich Landis had been out of the canton for many years without leaving anything behind, and no one knew his whereabouts, therefore the outstanding postings [debts] were written off.”

On Sept. 28, 1670 his daughter, Barbara, married Hans Jacob Stocker in Markkirch, a weaver from Wädenswil. The marriage entry states that they left Switzerland because of the “false Reformation” (a pejorative reference to Anabaptism) and that the young couple accepted the Reformed Church. Three months later, Stocker was given 20 Pounds from his wife’s family estate to purchase a weaving-mill in Alsace. Later, in 1674, Stocker returned to Wädenswilerberg with his wife and child, fleeing from the war in Alsace. They testified that “they had never at any time approved of Anabaptism.”

Hans Heinrich’s son, Jacob, also fled Alsace at this time. In 1675 Jacob was sent 30 Pounds, the entry noting that he was residing in “Fortschweier,” in the district of Montbeliard (*Mümpelgard*) where his property was plundered by soldiers. In 1676 he was in Colmar with his brother, Hans Heinrich. Later that year he showed up in Zürich “with his pregnant wife and sick child, very miserably clothed and maltreated by the soldiers.” He provided written testimony that they had been good members of the Reformed Church in Alsace, and additional funds were given to them. A final reference notes that Jacob was given money in 1678 because his wife had become seriously ill in Alsace. He had suffered an injury which required surgery, and he also had the misfortune of losing his linen-weaving mill.

His son, Hans Heinrich jr., also fled to Zürich in 1675. He had been staying until that point in Obernai, “five hours from Strassburg,” and he also was driven out by the soldiers. For the next two years he wandered about Switzerland, seeking a livelihood as a linen-weaver. In 1676 it was reported that he couldn’t find work in Zürich, so he was planning to travel to “Württemberg or to Kempten.” Later that year he was taken seriously ill in Altstetten, and had to send for money from the family estate to pay his room and keep. In 1677 he found little work in Basel, and asked for enough funds to move to Bern. His whereabouts after this are unknown.

Finally, his daughter Elizabeth also showed up in Zürich in 1677. She had been staying in Selestatt in Alsace, but she arrived “sick, and her belongings were plundered.” Later, in 1678, Elizabeth was again taken seriously ill and was given funds from the family estate. She supported herself afterward through service.

Caspar Landis

Caspar Landis the surgeon (*Schärer*), who emigrated with his brothers, Hans Heinrich and Rudolf, is my next lineal ancestor in this chronicle, and the bulk of the remaining discussion will focus on him and his children. The 1649 census for Hirzel shows that Caspar Landis, the son of Hans II, and his wife, Susanna Pfister, were residing on the farmstead known as “Sprürmüllli” with three of their children -- Barbali age 16, Hans age 3, and Jagli (Jacob) age ½.

This family does not appear in the following censuses of 1654 and 1656, which supports the conclusion that they emigrated. The 1657 report states that they took three children, matching what was shown in the 1649 census. The 1651 report mentions four children, which is a minor inconsistency probably explained by the six year gap between the reports. Caspar's daughter, Anna (born 1650) was too young to appear on the census of 1649, and he undoubtedly took her with them as well.

Caspar and Susanna Pfister had been pressed very hard by the authorities. In September, 1640, Caspar was imprisoned in the Wellenberg tower in Zurich. By 1643, perhaps earlier, Caspar's children were boarded with other families in the area. From 1646 to 1648 payments were made for their daughter, Barbali, who boarded with Jagli Rusterholz, and their son Rudy, who boarded with Heinrich Rusterholz, both in Wädenswil. A payment was made in 1645 from the estate of Hans Landis II to a person at the Oetenbach in Zurich for Caspar's wife, Susanna, which suggests that she also was imprisoned at that time.

That same year a payment was made from the family estate to cover the debts of Caspar and his brother Hans Heinrich, who were described as “bankrupt.” The reference to Caspar's “overwhelming debts” in the 1651 emigration report is graphic testimony to his dire straits at this juncture. The deductions for the support of his children in the estate records cease after 1651, which again indicates that he had left the canton with his family.

Caspar Landis' Profession – Barbers, Doctors and Surgeons in the 17th Century

Before we begin our detailed discussion of Caspar Landis, the nature of his profession needs to be addressed. In the emigration reports he was referred to as a *Schärer*, which has occasionally been mistranslated as a “shearer.” In the marriage records for his children he is referred to as a *Chirurgui* or a *Wund Artzt*, and in the family estate records in the Zürich Archive he is sometimes stated to be a *Balbierer* (an alternate spelling for *Barbierer*). In French the word *Chirurgie* denotes a surgeon, and it has the same meaning in German (the archaic term *Schärer* is of related linguistic etymology since all these professions involve the act of cutting, or *scheren*). A *Wundartzt*, literally a “wound doctor,” obviously has a similar meaning. The word *Schärer* is also sometimes translated as “barber,” but this can be misleading because the role of the barber was quite different from today. What were the differences in these professions?

Wehrli¹⁵ sheds light on this question in his study of *Bader*, *Barbiere*, and *Wundärtzte* in old Zürich. In the Middle Ages people congregated at the public bathhouses to relax and to attend to their personal hygiene. Attendants known as *Bader* washed and trimmed their hair, treated skin rashes, abrasions, and minor wounds. Over time the role of the health attendant diversified into various specializations. The bathing-attendant (*Bader*) was often a woman (referred to as *Wöscherin* in Switzerland). Barbers (*Barbieren*) practiced their craft in private rooms (*Badestuben*)

¹⁵ Wehrli 1927.

which they rented in the bath-houses. They not only shaved and cut the hair of their clients, they also performed rudimentary medical procedures such as lancing boils, excising cysts, and doing the periodic blood-letting (“cupping”) which was regarded at that time as essential for good health. Indeed, until as late as the 19th century it was commonly believed that a person should be bled twice a year or more, in accordance with the ancient Greek theory that bleeding would release the “bad humours” which caused illness. The dates were recorded on the calendars with red or blue strokes (a practice which has survived as the red and blue stripes on today's barber poles). The color, wateriness, and “bile” content of the blood was carefully noted as an indicator of various ailments. “Dropsy,” for example, was a common symptom which accompanied infections, characterized by the accumulation of fluids under the skin. The obvious treatment was to release the “excess water” in the blood.

The *Schärer*, *Chirurg*, or *Wundarzt* not only was a blood-letter, but he also had greater expertise in treating wounds and ailments, using herbs, purgatives, salves, bandaging, plastering, and setting broken bones. When diagnosing the blood, he typically also dabbled in numerology and astrology.¹⁶ The *Artzt* could perform more skilled treatments, such as surgery on the eyes (*Starstechen*, or cataracts), gall-bladder, kidney-stones (*Steinschneider*), and hernias (*Bruchschneider*). Drawings from that time clearly show that abdominal surgery was performed (without anesthetic, other than alcohol or elixirs extracted from the poppy). A *Blatternarzt*, who claimed to treat syphilis, was known to practice at the Oetenbach hospital in Zürich. *Pestchirurgen* specialized in treating plagues and other infectious diseases, which involved lancing the pox on the skin. Others were specialists in removing tumors (*Krebs*). Military doctors or field surgeons accompanied armies to treat gun-shot wounds and to extract bullets and arrows. *Zahnbrechern*, or “tooth-breakers,” were the prototype to today’s dentists. Veterinarians (*Vieharzten*) also practiced in canton Zürich. Each community usually had one or more surgeons. Wädenswil had three practitioners by 1768, and Horgen had four. A few doctors, such as Paracelsus, became renowned throughout the Germanic realms.

By the 16th century the professions of bather, barber, and surgeon were well-established and distinguishable, but there was overlap in their practice. The fact that they had historically diverged from the profession of a hygiene attendant at the bathhouses was reflected in their common membership in the same guild. Apprentice *Schärer* or *Wundärzte* began their training as barbers, by cutting and washing hair, trimming nails, and gradually they acquired the skills of the surgeon. Their overlapping practices sometimes led to economic competition. It was not uncommon to find petitions filed on behalf of one group or the other to protect its privileges (for example, that bathers should be restricted to practicing only in the bathhouses). Indeed, even the smiths joined the fray and attempted to prevent the surgeons from sharpening their own implements! Despite this wrangling, there seems to have been little standardized training for these related health and hygiene professions. Perhaps out of despair, the authorities in Zürich declared in 1527 that these were “free trades” (*freie Kunst*), which meant that anyone could practice these skills, even out of charity. However, prompted by the many examples of charlatans and botched cures, by the 17th century there was a trend throughout the Germanic areas to institute examinations and greater standardization to the trade. In 1730 *Kurfürst* Karl Philip appointed a commission (*Consilium Medicum*) to supervise the “*Medicos, Apotheker, Chirurgos*,

¹⁶ Wehrli 1927.

Oculisten, Bruch- und Steinschneider [hernia and stone surgeons], Barbierer, Baader, Hebammen [midwives], und der gleichen Leuthe."¹⁷

In the Middle Ages there were several professions that were regarded as dishonorable, including that of innkeeper, prostitute, alchemist, magician, cook, laundryman, textile worker, and dyer. They were held in contempt by dint of their morals or by the sweat of their brow that was expended to earn their living. The various health and hygiene attendant professions were also generally regarded as "dishonorable." The bathers, usually women, were low in prestige



¹⁷ März 1985, p. 434.

because they often acted as procuresses for prostitutes, and sometimes they served in this capacity themselves. Somewhat surprising by modern standards, the *Wundarzt* or *Chirurg* also had little of the prestige that the surgeon has today! He worked with wounds, which was regarded as a “disgusting and servile business.”¹⁸ All professions that sullied one’s hands with blood were dishonorable -- including butchers, soldiers, executioners, as well as surgeons.

As a result of this blood taboo, a split developed over time within the medical profession. Doctors (*Ärzte*) enjoyed higher prestige than the surgeons. Their craft required more book-learning and they did not have to dirty their hands performing operations. However, both professions were often criticized in Medieval literature because they profited from other people’s misfortunes.¹⁹ In Nördlingen, a Free Imperial City, there was a clear hierarchy of practitioners during the 17th and 18th centuries. At the top of this “juristically arranged and controlled system” were two city physicians. The barbers were next highest in prestige, and they enjoyed the right to be referred to by the title of *Herr*. Below them came the surgeons, who treated external wounds. Then came the bath house operators who had licensed bathing rooms and, finally, at the bottom, the *Stüblinsbader*, the bathing attendants.²⁰

A final point concerning the profession of Caspar Landis should be noted. Some medical practitioners had no home-base, especially those who practiced outside the larger cities. They wandered about as *Land Schärern*, widely practicing their trade. These itinerant barber-surgeons briefly set up shop in a village, or in the privacy of a client’s home. *Land Schärern* practiced a “free trade,” with little restriction by political boundaries or from the local guilds. *Wundärzte* from Swabia were quite common in canton Zürich at that time, and we may assume that this was true throughout the Rhine area. This tradition of itinerancy undoubtedly facilitated Caspar’s move with his family to neighboring Alsace and it likely explains why he was reported in so many villages.

Their Destinations in Alsace

The names of several villages where the Landis family settled in Alsace were identified in the emigration reports. Both Hans Heinrich and Hans Jacob went to “Heidlezen” (Heidelsheim). The 1651 report states that it is “two hours from Colmar,” whereas the 1657 reports specifies that it is “two hours from Selestat.”²¹ This is not a contradiction. Heidelberg is indeed located between these two cities, about 10 kilometers southeast of Selestat and about 15 kilometers northeast of Colmar. Caspar Landis went to “Jepsen” (Jebsheim, sometimes referred to as “Jepsenheim” in old records), located 12 kilometers northeast of Colmar, very close to

¹⁸ Walker 1971, p. 104.

¹⁹ Jones 1956, p. 168.

²⁰ Schenda 1986, p. 143.

²¹ Concerning the stated distances, it was common practice at that time to measure distances by the number of hours (*Stunden*), or fractions of an hour, that it took to reach a destination (these old stone markers can often still be found at country crossroads across southern Germany). One German *Meile* was equivalent to 7.5 kilometers, or 4.7 U.S. statute miles. A public transport or postal carriage could cover at least one *Meile* in about one hour, and horses were usually changed every five *Meilen*. See Haller 1993.

Heidelsheim. Rudolf settled in "Dären Enzigen" near "Brisach," which is almost certainly Durrenenzen (sometimes also referred to as "Duerrsanzenheim," the suffix "heim" being very common in Alsace place-names), about four kilometers below Jepsheim.

These villages are all but a short distance from each other, located east of Selestat and Colmar in the Alsatian plain paralleling the Rhine on the west bank. This narrow plain (only about 15 miles wide), hemmed in on the west by the Vosges (*Wasgau* in German) mountains, has always been the agricultural heartland of Alsace throughout history. It is also a natural land corridor and commercial avenue of transportation along the river. It is not clear why the members of the Landis family dispersed to separate villages rather than staying together. They undoubtedly left with few belongings and little means of sustenance. It is likely that they, along with the other Swiss emigres, turned to the Anabaptist congregations in Alsace for hospice, who may have dispersed them to nearby villages in order to equalize the burden of support. All these villages were mentioned in a mid-17th century report of the Alsatian authorities as having Anabaptist congregations.²² Robert Baecher has published a series of articles exploring each village in detail, and these are extensively utilized in the following discussion.²³

Alsace had been attracting Anabaptists for well over a century by that time. The nobles were eager to lease their land to the Anabaptists because they made such excellent tenant farmers, and they began to entice them by offering lower rents than were charged to other farmers. Strasburg was the center of religious and cultural developments north of the Alps, and it had already developed an active Anabaptist congregation by 1525. Members of the major faiths and creeds of Europe mingled there -- Roman Catholic, Anabaptist, Zwinglian, Calvinist, Lutheran, spiritualist, and humanist.

At that time Alsace was still part of the Holy Roman Empire, and Anabaptism was illegal throughout the realm, as declared by the Edict of Speyer in 1529. However, enforcement varied by local whim. Emperor Charles V, and his successor Ferdinand, were often irritated that their decrees were ignored. Each principality, imperial city state, and nobleman on his estate chose to enforce the edict with different degrees of strictness. The most rigid enforcement occurred in Switzerland, in the Catholic Hapsburg territories of Upper Alsace and the Breisgau, and in Bavaria. Since the early 15th century the Hapsburgs had maintained a seat of government for Outer Austria (*Vorderösterreich*) at Ensisheim in Alsace.²⁴ The imperial government at Ensisheim was rarely able to impinge upon the jurisdiction of the local lords outside its territories. The religious authorities in Strasburg succeeded in influencing the city council to issue its own edict against Anabaptism in 1534, but this also was not strictly enforced. Anabaptists were generally tolerated as long as they kept a low profile and didn't publicly practise their religion. To avoid drawing the attention of the authorities, they held their services in private home or in the forests, as they had previously done in Switzerland.

Initially the Anabaptists were clustered in the Alsatian plain on the larger estates of the local nobility, working as tenant farmers and operators of their grain mills. A network of small congregations was established, stretching from the border with the Pfalz on the north, westward

²² Grandidier 1867b.

²³ Baecher 1988,1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1991.

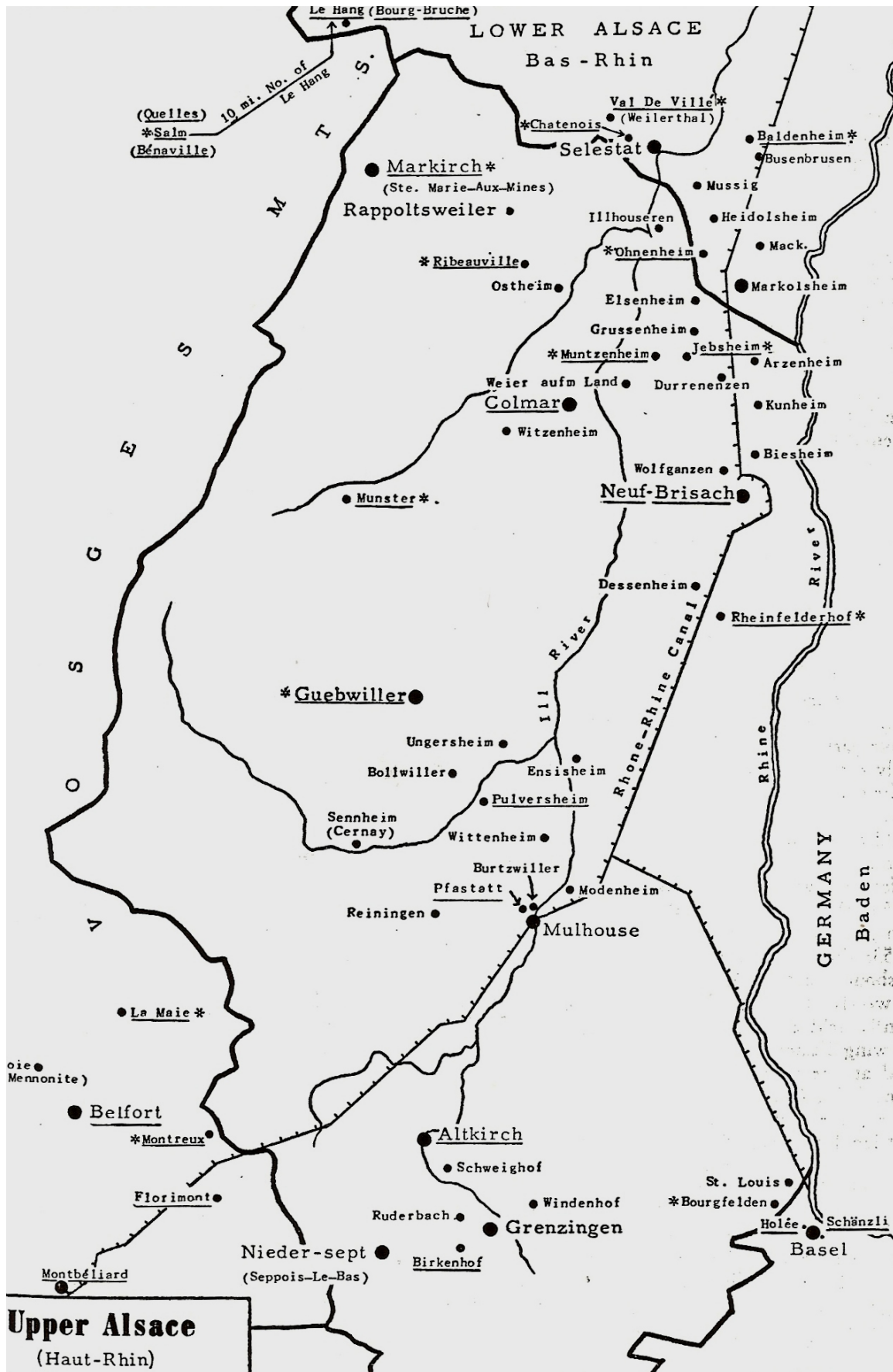
²⁴ Scott 1986.

to the Vosges mountains, and south to Colmar.²⁵ A report by the Alsatian authorities in about 1660 stated that Anabaptists had settled in 16 villages in the diocese of Strasburg, comprising a total of 62 families, 496 persons in all of Alsace.²⁶ The major centers were at the mining town of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (Markirch) and in nearby villages in the plains of Alsace, at Heidelsheim, Ohnenheim, and Jepsheim. The number of Anabaptist families in each village was as follows (the original spelling for each location is retained):

Baltenheim	5
Jepsheimb	7
Ste. Marie aux Mines	10
Mussig	4
Heidelsheim	4
Bessenbiessen	2
Ohnenheim	9
Maggenheim	2
Elsenheim	1
Groussenheimb	1
Artzheimb	1
Kuennenheimb	4
Irrenensheimb	4
Wirr	3
Osteheimb	1
Illheusseren	1
Total Anabaptist Families	62
Total Anabaptists	496

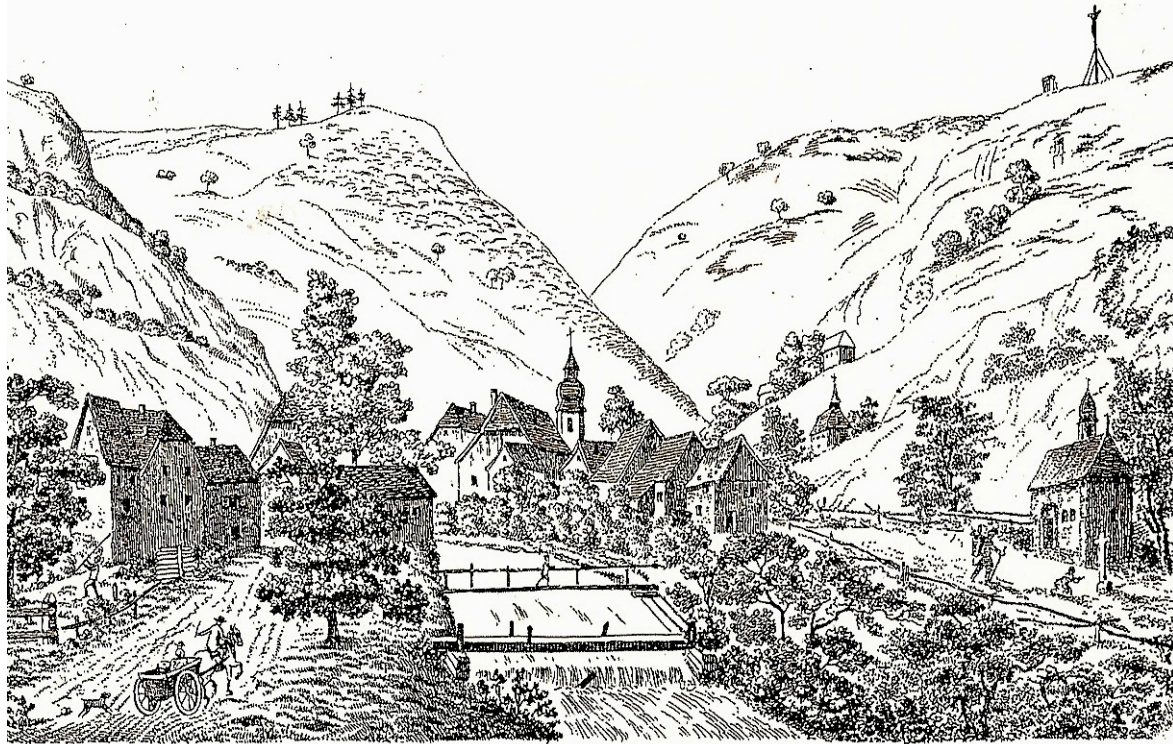
²⁵ Baecher 1986.

²⁶ Grandidier 1867b.



The Anabaptist Enclave in Markirch

In the mid-17th century the mining town of Markirch became a magnet for the Anabaptists from Zürich, and it played a major role in this next stage of the Landis family history. Anabaptists were drawn there not only by its isolated location, high in the Vosges mountains, but also by its unique combination of great economic opportunities and a tolerant nobility. Over time their numbers in Markirch became quite large, both in the town itself and on the numerous small farmsteads nearby. The major economic activity at Markirch centered on its lucrative silver mines, which had been in operation since the Middle Ages. In addition, the Anabaptists pursued weaving, cattle raising, and some farming. Although the hilly country was not well-suited for agriculture, the valley where Markirch is located was made quite productive through their perseverance and exceptional skills. Swiss farmers had become highly adept at tilling marginally productive hillside lands, a skill which served them well in this new environment.



Markirch anno 1785. — Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines en 1785.

Nach einer Gravüre von M. Walter. (Aus dem Werke von Herrn Abbé Grandbier.)

D'après une gravure de M. Walter. (Vues pittoresques de l'Alsace, par M. l'abbé Granddier.)

The full name of the town was *Maria Kirche* (Mary's church), and after the French took control it became known as *Sainte Marie-aux-Mines*. The town is located some 22 kilometers west of Selestat, nestled in a long and narrow valley known as the Lebertal (*Val du Liepvre*). The valley is hemmed in by mountains and cut through the middle by the Liepvrette river which flows eastward to the Rhine. Since the river flows through the heart of the town, it became a dividing line between two political jurisdictions. The territory on the north bank was owned by the royal

family of Lorraine, which strongly favored the Catholic faith. The south bank of the river was

owned by the Rappoltstein family.

The Rappoltsteins (known today by the French equivalent of "Ribeaupierre") were the major royal family in Alsace. Their holdings comprised the largest and most important territorial unit in Upper Alsace. These included over 30 villages, which were divided into nine jurisdictions, with centers at Bergheim, Guemar, Heiteren, Jepsheim, Orbey, Ribeauville, Markkirch, Wihr-au-Val, and Zellenberg.²⁷ The silver mines at Markkirch were their most valuable possession. The Ribeaupierres had supported the principles of the Reformation from its very beginning. They adhered to a Lutheran creed, with a strong bent toward Pietism, which likely predisposed them to sympathy for the



Anabaptists.²⁸

Markkirch also offered a refuge for the Anabaptists during the Thirty Years War. Most had initially settled in various lowland villages, such as Ohnenheim and Heidsheim, but many families fled into the mountains. In 1633 a Swedish army had passed through Alsace, pillaging settlements along the way. All of central Alsace was struck especially hard during this period. The total loss of population is estimated to range from 30% to 60%, many of whom likely fled to other regions for safety. The Leber valley was almost totally abandoned between 1635-1636. The farms were left desolate and operations at the silvermines ceased. There had been a small

²⁷ Baecher 1987.

²⁸ Seguy 1977.

Anabaptist congregation there before this date, but by 1643 they had begun filtering in in larger numbers.²⁹

Over time, the Anabaptist immigrants did quite well economically, and they became integrated into the religiously pluralistic community in Markirch. Some even acquired houses and became relatively wealthy. One example was Rudolf Hauser, the head a local Anabaptist congregation, who became a wealthy mill-master. Some were accepted as citizens in Markirch (an extremely rare occurrence in the history of their faith). A few apparently were even willing to serve in the *Heimburg*, a citizen's governance committee. The *Heimburg* not only oversaw the collection of taxes, but it also served as the village militia, patrolling the streets and preserving order. The prohibition against such civic functions, especially those pertaining to the carrying of arms, had been a central tenet of Anabaptism since its origin, and this was a significant departure from religious tradition.³⁰ Baecher aptly characterizes Hauser's congregation as the "*Anabaptistes Bourgeois*."³¹

Caspar Landis, His Siblings and Children in Alsace

Caspar Landis's younger sister, Marie, was perhaps the first member of the family who settled in Markirch. On August 25, 1658, the Reformed Church book in Markirch reported that Marie Landis, a "native of Switzerland" born of Anabaptist parents, renounced Anabaptism and accepted the Reformed faith.³² In 1662 she served as a godmother in Markirch and the baptismal entry referred to her as a "young woman from Zürich." The finance archives for the estate of Hans Landis and Elizabeth Erzinger in Zürich contain an entry which adds further information: "1661 Marie Landis, their daughter [of Hans and Elizabeth] is residing in Markirch where she became married, and was given 200 Pounds out of their estate." The entry adds that she and her husband "attended church diligently."³³ It was customary for the Zürich authorities to release portions of the confiscated estates to the children when they reached adulthood, if they returned to the Reformed faith.

Caspar's other sister, Margaret (born 1638) also eventually settled in Markirch, where she wed Joseph Casson on June 23, 1664, as recorded in the Reformed Churchbook.³⁴ She was stated to be the daughter of the deceased "*Joan [Johann] Landis du Horgerberg Terre de Zurich*." That same year her husband, stated to be a bailiff in Markirch, returned to Zürich and received 250 Pounds as his wife's share of the Landis estate. In 1668 they received an additional 200 Pounds, after providing testimony that they were attending church. In 1670 they received yet another 144 Pounds, with the wry notation that this was done "in the final analysis out of respect" for the fact that Margaret was "the old Hans' daughter." This comment may hint that they were over-drawing their rightful share of the estate. No further information is available on Margaret in the civil or ecclesiastical records.

²⁹ Legin 1986.

³⁰ Meyers 1993.

³¹ Baecher 1987.

³² LDS microfilm #747602. In this record she is clearly stated to be "*natif du pais de Suisse*"

³³ Zürich State Archive FIII 36b.1

³⁴ LDS microfilm #747603

On September 28, 1670 Barbara Landis, daughter of [Caspar's brother] "*Heynri Landis, Terre de Zürich*," married Hans Jacob Stocker, in Markirch.³⁵ The final portion of the entry is difficult to decipher, but it appears to say that she (perhaps both of them) left Switzerland because of the "false Reformation," a common reference for Anabaptism.

Caspar Landis, being an itinerant barber-surgeon (*Schärer*), seems to have moved about to various locales before he settled in Markirch. His wife, Susanna Pfister, died sometime before 1661. The church book for Durrenenzen records the second marriage of Caspar Landis "from Hirzel" with Catherine Danherr "from Herzogenbuch, Canton Bern," on June 2, 1661.³⁶ Caspar was reported to be a "non-citizen"³⁷ in Durrenenzen at the time, which is indicative that he didn't have a stable residence. The following year, in 1662, his daughter, Barbara, became married in Jepsheim to Heinrich Dreikler from Wädenswil, as recorded in the Catholic church book.³⁸ She was reported to be "the legitimate daughter of Caspar Landis, the *Schärer*," and at that time he was stated to be residing in Grussenheim," which is only two kilometers from Jepsheim.³⁹

Caspar and his son, Rudolf, had moved to Markirch by 1668. The Reformed Church book in Markirch shows a significant influx of Swiss settlers between 1667 and 1670, which matches the time of arrival for Caspar. That year Rudolf presented a request to the Zürich authorities for money from the family estate. The entry in the ledger reads: "Rudolf Landis, weaver, grandson of Hans Landis, who also ended up in Markirch and who is obedient to the Church, received 300 Pounds inheritance on July 13, 1668." The following year another entry reports: "Caspar Landis, *Balbieter*, son of the deceased Hans Landis, along with his son, Rudolf Landis, who are householders in Markirch, presented a testimonial from the *Herr* Minister in Markirch [affirming that they were attending the Reformed Church], along with a request for some money to be paid to him out of the Landis estate for the purchase of a house in Markirch. 25 Pounds were allotted to him."

It's clear from these entries in the ledger books in Zürich that there was some competition among the heirs for their shares of Hans Landis's estate. Caspar's daughter Barbara and her husband remained in the Jepsheim and Grussenheim area, where they had gotten married eight years before. In 1670 an entry in the ledger reads: "Barbara Landis, daughter of Caspar Landis and granddaughter of Hans Landis, married to Heinrich Treichler (son of Jagli), who had originally bought Hans Landis's farmstead but which then fell into disrepair, received on April 29, 1670, at her request, 12 Pounds as an allowance. She is living in Grussenheim in Alsace, under the French, and has three children. She also said that the authorities should give no more money to her brother, Rudolf, a weaver, who twice already has received a sizeable amount, since he and her own father were housed poorly, and also that no more money should be given to her father's brother-in-law, a bailiff (Josef Cassant)." Barbara's comment about how Rudolf and Caspar were

³⁵ LDS microfilm #747603

³⁶ LDS microfilm #715515

³⁷ The word used is *Hindersäss*. Throughout the German realms a distinction was made between residents who were legal citizens, with voting rights, obligations, and welfare protections, and those who were temporary residents. The latter were referred to in various ways, usually as *Hintersetzer* or *Brinksitzer*, literally persons sitting on the sidelines.

³⁸ LDS microfilm #1676754

³⁹ LDS microfilm #1676754

“housed poorly” is ambiguous.⁴⁰ She was clearly chiding them for their requests for money, but it’s unclear if she was also blaming them somehow for their housing problems. Caspar received a small allowance in 1669 to purchase a house in Markkirch, which perhaps needed extensive repairs. She also may have been reacting defensively because the authorities perhaps reprimanded her and her husband for allowing Hans Landis’s property in Hirzel to fall to ruin.

Despite Barbara’s urging that no more money should be given to her brother, her father, or her uncle, two weeks later in 1670 Josef Cassant in Markkirch was given an additional 144 Pounds from the estate, “in the final analysis as a recognition that his wife is Maria Landis, daughter of the old Hans Landis, as specified in the decree of the authorities.” Soon after that, another allowance was given to Caspar from the family estate. The entry reads: “Ulrich Stenz from Markkirch received 36 Pounds on June 3, 1670 for Caspar Landis, son of Hans Landis, he is residing in Markkirch, at his request and the intercession of the *Herr* Minister and the authorities at Markkirch, out of their grace and for the last time, once and for all, since he had already received more than his share [of the estate].”

However, that was not to be the last time that the Zürich authorities had to deal with requests for funds from members of the Landis family. During the “Dutch War” (1672-1678) most members of the Landis family in Alsace, almost without exception, seem to have been reduced to abject poverty. Their property was looted and destroyed and they were lucky to have escaped with their lives. The ledgers for the Landis estate in Zürich contain several entries reporting how various members of the family returned to Zürich as desperate refugees, their lives shattered, pleading for assistance from the authorities.

The so-called Dutch War was sparked when Louis XIV invaded the Dutch Republic in 1672. With England as their ally, the French achieved easy victories at first. Most of the conflict centered in Holland itself, or in massive naval battles off the coast. However, the situation soon changed when the German states and the Holy Roman Emperor became concerned that France would emerge as the single dominating power in Europe. France had recently annexed Alsace at the end of the Thirty Years War, and there seemed to be no limit to Louis XIV’s ambitions. By 1673 a quadruple alliance had formed against France, consisting of the Dutch Republic, the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, and the Duke of Lorraine. That year, despite Louis’s capture of the fortress of Maastricht, allied German troops outmaneuvered the French and forced them onto the defensive. With supply lines to the Dutch Republic disrupted, Louis was obliged to evacuate all his troops from Dutch territory in 1674. His armies retreated through the Palatinate into Alsace, leaving a trail of ruin in their wake. The population in the Rhine valley had scarcely begun to recover from the devastation of the Thirty Years’ War when this new war, following so soon upon its heels, once again caused widespread economic collapse. There was massive displacement of the population, and they fled wherever they could for safety.

The estate ledgers in Zürich report only the barest of details about how this political turmoil affected those in Landis family who had emigrated to Alsace. In 1675 four of the

⁴⁰ The phrase used is *hause schlecht*. The verb *haussen* (with a double-s) means “to increase,” or “to prosper.” It is possible that Barbara was accusing her brother, Rudolf, and father Caspar of mishandling their finances. However, given the spelling *hause*, plus the broader context of other references to Caspar’s housing problems, the phrase is probably best translated as “housed poorly.”

children of Hans Heinrich (Caspar's brother), returned to Zürich, their lives in total disarray. Barbara and her husband Hans Jacob Stocker were given 30 Pounds from the Zürich authorities: "...due to the Alsatian war disturbances he had to return to this land, in consideration of his wife and child, and to establish their household in Wädenswilerberg, and [they testified] that they had never at any time approved of Anabaptism." In 1675 Barbara's other siblings, Hans Heinrich, Jacob, and Elizabeth, also returned to Zürich, destitute refugees from the war in Alsace, their belongings looted, badly mistreated and driven out by the soldiers. At that same time, we recall the pathetic story of Christian Landis, the 16 year old simple-minded son of the deceased Rudolf (Caspar's brother), who returned to Zürich "penniless and naked," harassed by the soldiers, a broken victim of the war.

Caspar resided in Markirch from 1668 to about 1674, then for a time he too may have fled to Zürich to escape the war, as did his other relatives. On Nov. 20, 1674, Caspar was given 4 Pounds for living expenses. On Jan. 15, 1675 he received another 20 Pounds, "upon his humble request, in order to arrange the household affairs with his wife a little better." It's unclear if Caspar and his wife, Catherine, were living in Zürich at that point, or if they had remained in Alsace. On May 29, 1676 a person in Hirzel was given 9 Pounds from the estate as repayment for money he had loaned Caspar "for bread." This shows that Caspar's living circumstances remained destitute at that time, which was still late in the war.

At some point, Caspar returned to Durrenenzen, in the valley of Alsace. Catherine Danherr died there on February 15, 1687. The Reformed Churchbook at Durrenenzen reported that she was 70 years old at the time of her death, of the Calvinist faith, and originally from Zürich.⁴¹ After her death, Caspar spent his final days in Markirch, close to his family. The last record we have for him is in the German Reformed Church book in Markirch, where it was reported that "Caspar Landiss, from Horgerberg, in the district of Zürich, received communion for the first time on Christmas day, 1691."⁴² Since he was born in 1614, he was already 77 years old at that point. We may assume that Caspar had been compliant with the Reformed ministers well before this date, since he had provided testimonials to the Zürich authorities as far back as 1668 that he was attending church services, if for no other reason than to get his share of the family estate. If he indeed converted to the Reformed faith in his old age and received communion "for the first time," he may have been influenced by the fact that his children, Rudolf and Barbara, had already converted to the Reformed faith, as well as other members of the family in Markirch. If Caspar remained Anabaptist before this point, it would explain why he does not appear in earlier civil or ecclesiastical records. No further records have been found to indicate where or when he died.

Assimilation of Caspar Landis' Family in Markirch: Rudolf and his Descendants

⁴¹ LDS microfilm #715515. Note that their marriage entry 26 years earlier had stated that Catherine Danherr was from Canton Bern, not Zürich. Her death record also mistakenly states that she was the wife of the "deceased" Caspar Landis. As an itinerant *Schärer*, Caspar may not have been resident in Durrenenzen at the time of her death. There is also the possibility that they lived apart.

⁴² LDS microfilm #747600

Of the various members of Caspar Landis' family who settled in Markirch, Rudolf and his descendants appeared most frequently in the later civil and church records. Rudolf was a linen-weaver by profession. He settled in Markirch about 1668, apparently along with his father. The French Reformed Churchbook reports that on May 6, 1668, Rudolf, the son of Caspar Landis *Chirurgui de Zurich*, married Elizabeth Grandhomme.⁴³ She was the daughter of Jean Grandhomme, whose family had deep roots in Markirch. Two months later, in July, 1668, Rudolf traveled to Zürich where he received 300 Pounds as his share of the Landis estate. He seems to have suffered financial setbacks. On Nov. 30, 1672 Rudolf returned to Zürich where he was given 10 Pounds for his humble support and for his travel expenses, as concession from the authorities "due to his conspicuous misfortune." As we recall, his sister, Barbara, told the Zürich authorities to not dispense any more money to Rudolf because he, and their father Caspar, had "poor housing." Rudolf may have remained in Markirch during the war years, when many other residents fled for their safety. He served as a baptismal godfather in 1669, and again in 1673.⁴⁴

Other documentation of Rudolf's presence during this period was fortuitously discovered while perusing the Ribeaupierre archives.⁴⁵ In 1784 Rudolf's grandson, Karl Landis, petitioned for citizenship in Markirch, stating that his father had been a loyal citizen there, and that his grandfather Rudolf had also been granted citizenship. Karl stated that he was old and infirm at this point, that he had little money, that he was living with his wife, and that he was no longer able to be employed. He had never requested money from the government, and the fact that his forefathers were citizens of Markirch should qualify him for citizenship without fee. The records accompanying Karl's request confirmed that his grandfather, Rudolf, was granted citizenship on January 23, 1669. Another accompanying document states that Rudolf Landis, citizen at Markirch, became married a second time on April 21, 1678 to Anna Götz. From his second marriage Rudolf produced ten children, born between 1679 and 1692.⁴⁶ His first-born child, Rudolf (born 1679), was named after Rudolf Hauser, who served as his godfather. It is possible that this was the same Rudolf Hauser who was the wealthy head of the local Anabaptist congregation (apparently no religious conflict was perceived for him to agree to be a baptismal sponsor!).

The church records show that Caspar's siblings and his descendants through his son Rudolf not only assimilated to the Reformed faith, but also with the French residents in Markirch. This is shown by the surnames of their spouses. Caspar's sister Margaret married a "Casson," his son Rudolf married into the "Grandhomme" family, Rudolf's son Jacob married a "Jemil," and his daughter Elizabeth married a "Gosart." It is true that these families may originally have been of German extraction, as was the case for most people in Alsace at that time (perhaps the surnames were originally "Grossmann," "Gamel," and "Gosser"), but the French spelling of their surnames was used throughout in the French Reformed Church book.

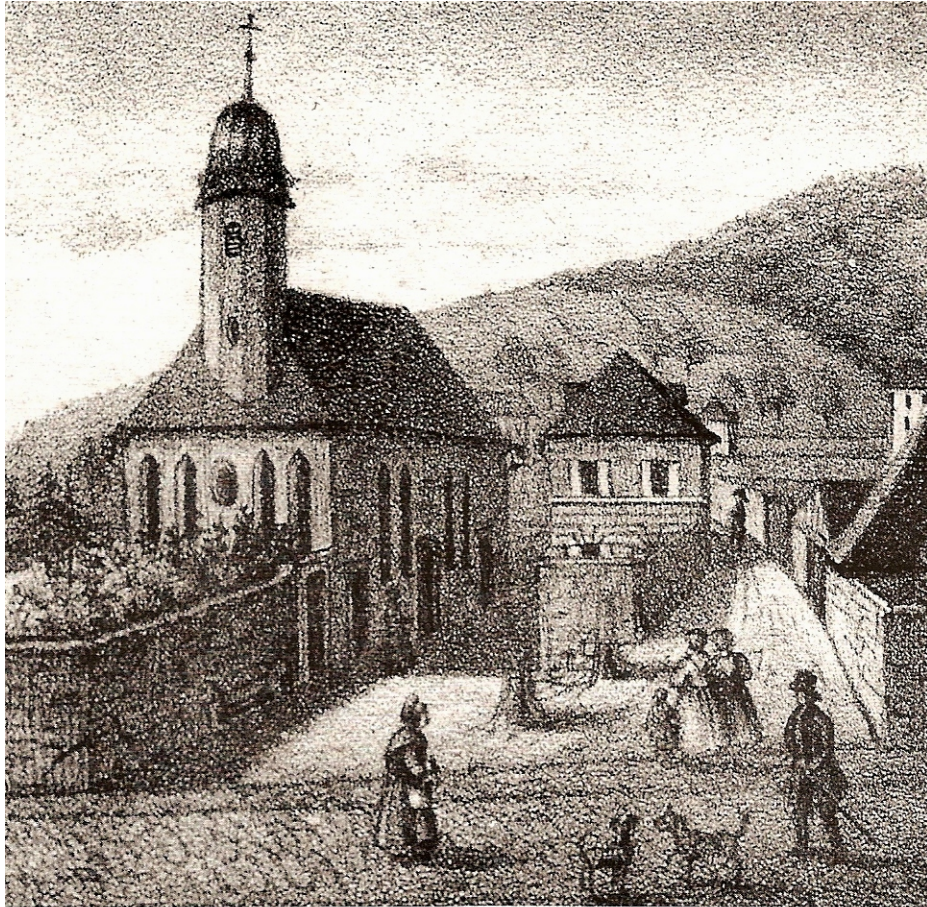
⁴³ French Reformed Churchbook, LDS microfilm #747602

⁴⁴ LDS microfilm #747602

⁴⁵ LDS microfilm #1069938

⁴⁶ The births of the first children of Rudolf Landis and Anna Götz are recorded in the French Reformed Churchbook, LDS microfilm #747602, and the later children are in the German Reformed Churchbook, microfilm #747600

This does not mean that they abandoned their German-Swiss identity. For at least two generations the Landis family seems to have maintained an awkward balancing act between the French and the German-Swiss elements in Markirch. Initially the Swiss immigrants (those who were non-Anabaptist) had attended church services with the French Reformed congregation, but



TEMPLE REFORMÉ.
Reformed Church in Markirch

by 1687 they had formed their own separate German Reformed congregation. Toward the end of the century the French Reformed Church book began to refer to the existence of a German congregation (*comunion allemande*). The two Reformed congregations coexisted rather uneasily in Markirch, sharing the same church building, and by 1698 they were forced to negotiate elaborate agreements to resolve their frequent disputes. Intermarriages such as those with the Landis family probably created some strain since the couples may have been divided in their loyalties. The baptismal entries for Rudolf's first children are recorded in the French churchbook, but later, after the German congregation formed, the entries for his younger children are recorded only in the German church book. An unusual transition point occurred in 1689 when Rudolf had twins, Marie and Phillippe. The baptism of Marie is reported only in the German church book, but

Phillipe's baptism is reported on the same date only in the French church book! This suggests a very deliberate attempt by Jacob and his French wife to maintain ties with both congregations, which must indeed have been an awkward balancing act! Subtle clues such as these indicate that the Landis family attempted to avoid being caught up in the chronic factional disputes between the two Reformed congregations in Markirch. When Rudolf's children reached maturity and married, some of them also preserved this pattern. Jacob, who married into the Jemil family, had his first-born son baptized in the German Reformed congregation, and the next three children in the French. Johann Landis, who became a well-known chief-forester for the Ribeaupierres, also achieved fame by being married "three times in five years." He appears to have been primarily affiliated with the German congregation. All three of his wives were of German-Swiss origin (their surnames were Schenk, Flogertz, and Karl, all stated to be from Canton Bern), and both his children were baptized in the German congregation.

Changes in Religious Affiliation in Markirch and the "Amish Division"

The assimilation of the Landis family in Markirch was also happening with other Swiss Anabaptist immigrants. During the earlier years of Anabaptism in Zürich, participation in the religious services of other denominations had been discouraged as a source of moral contamination. However, in the isolated mining town of Markirch, these social boundaries became quite permeable over time. An extraordinarily high level of interchange seems to have occurred between the local Anabaptist congregation, under the leadership of Rudolf Hauser, and the Reformed congregation. Indeed, it might be speculated that a process of fusion was occurring between the two groups, which triggered the religious reaction conflict when Jacob Ammann and his congregation of Anabaptists from Canton Bern arrived on the scene in 1695. Ammann described some of the practices he had observed in Markirch in a letter written on November 22, 1693.⁴⁷ Some Anabaptists, he states, were lax in observing dress codes, with "shaved beards, long hair, and haughty clothes." These earlier Anabaptists were attending Reformed Church services, as well as more socially oriented events such as weddings and funerals for "true-hearted" (*Treuherzigen*) non-Anabaptist acquaintances. Their dead were reportedly being buried in church cemeteries, with a Reformed minister officiating at the ceremony. The name of Rudolf Hauser occurs several times as a godfather for baptisms performed in the Reformed Church, including for children of Rudolf Landis. If this is the same person who headed the local Anabaptist congregation, it shows a remarkable willingness to participate in a ceremony that was anathema in the early history of the religion. Some of the young people in Anabaptist families were supposedly loose in their morals and courtship behavior. This probably referred to the fact that inter-denominational marriages, as between the Landis family and the members of the Reformed congregation, were common and this led many Anabaptists to eventually drop out of the faith.

Changes such as these were widespread at that time, not only in Alsace but also in Switzerland, the Palatinate, and even in Holland. When the separate German-Swiss Reformed congregation finally came into being around 1687 in Markirch, it attracted a large influx of new members, including some of the Anabaptists. The German church book records a total of 378 new Swiss communicants (men and women) from 1687 to 1694, most of whom are cited by name and

⁴⁷ Roth 1993; McGrath 1989; Hostetler 1993.

place of origin. The majority (225 of them) originated in canton Bern (including some from Erlenbach, the home village of Jacob Ammann). The second most common place of origin was canton Zürich, for 60 of the new members (including Caspar Landis from "Horgerberg"). This wave of conversions began shortly before the arrival of Jacob Ammann from canton Bern, and it may well shed light on his motivation for introducing a revival of a more fundamentalist form of Anabaptism in the Markirch area.

None of the Landis family appear to have joined the Luthern church. A list of members of the Evangelical congregation in Markirch is available in the churchbook for 1699,⁴⁸ which includes those families that were "totally" Lutheran and those that were "mixed." A total of 31 families is given, along with widows, widowers, and single members of the congregation. The surname Landis does not occur on this list, nor on the general index to the Evangelical churchbooks.⁴⁹

The Expulsion of the Anabaptists from Markirch

The safe harbor that the Anabaptists had found in Alsace became threatened after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which led to the total annexation of Alsace by France. The intrusion of the Bourbons into Alsace sounded an ominous note for the survival of Protestantism, and eventually it culminated in a disaster for the Anabaptists. Despite the fact that French forces had fought against the Catholic emperor during the Thirty Years War, Louis XIV remained strongly pro-Catholic (although clearly not pro-papacy). He was firmly resolved that France should not be a decentralized and religiously pluralistic realm, as was the Holy Roman Empire. His policies of political centralization of France went hand-in-hand with religious centralization under the control of his monarchy. Louis was especially prejudiced against the Anabaptists, whom he contemptuously dismissed as rebels and Münsterites.

The first indication of impending trouble occurred in 1685 when Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had guaranteed Protestants in France their freedom of belief since 1598. Louis decided that they should be forcefully converted to Catholicism. He ordered that troops be quartered in their homes until they recanted their beliefs. Many tales circulated of the violent atrocities committed by these soldiers. Although the Protestant minorities were forbidden to leave France, a mass exodus began, most notably of the Huguenots (French Calvinists), to the Netherlands, Switzerland, and to the German territories.

Alsace was shielded at first from Louis XIV's actions by the terms of the Treaty of Westphalia, which guaranteed the right of each prince to determine the religion in his territory. Initially Louis was preoccupied with consolidating his hold on Alsace and the enforcement of religious uniformity was not a priority. As a result, although the French imposed a rigid grip on the reins of local government, the Alsatian territories remained virtually autonomous in their internal religious and cultural affairs for decades after the Treaty of Westphalia. French forces commanded all fortified positions and controlled diplomatic relations, but the city-states were allowed to continue their policy of toleration of the Protestant religions.

Louis had also inherited a wasteland in Alsace. The lowlands were in ruins at that time, requiring several decades for economic recovery. During the years of warfare the fields had been

⁴⁸ LDS microfilm #1069943

⁴⁹ LDS microfilm #747605

left fallow and they were overgrown with thickets. Most villages had suffered great damage. The few peasants who remained had virtually no farming implements, seed, or cattle, and no capital to restore the land to productivity.

Alsace was a complex thorn in the side of Louis XIV. The Alsatians were ethnically German, they spoke a German dialect, and they refused to sever their cultural and economic ties with the German territories across the Rhine and north in the Palatinate. Their economy was integrated into the lucrative trade of the Rhine valley, and not with the heartland of France west of the Vosges. As late as 1691 contemporary chronicles reported that only about 0.1% of the population of Strassburg spoke French. In Alsace, Louis' campaign against Protestantism became embroiled in his plan to enforce the linguistic and cultural integration of his newly conquered territories into France. The chronicle in the church book of Jepsheim records that in 1684 the two oldest Reformed Churches in Colmar were forced to become Catholic and to adopt the French language.⁵⁰

In 1673 Louis XIV toured his new acquisitions in Alsace. When he visited Markkirch he authorized the construction of a second Catholic church, named in honor of his patron saint, St. Louis. This new church was not necessary since it is located only about three city blocks away from the original Catholic church in Markkirch (*La Madelaine*), and the number of Catholic adherents in the town at that time was very small. The real political significance of the construction of St. Louis is that it is located on the south bank of the river, in the political jurisdiction of the Ribeaupierres, who had favored Protestantism (the north bank, we recall, was in the political jurisdiction of Lorraine, which favored Catholicism). Louis was making a clear statement that he wanted to integrate the two halves of the town under himself and the Catholic church. During his visit Louis pointedly ignored the other Reformed and Lutheran congregations in town, which had larger by far numbers of adherents. He expressed the desire that no new settlers should be allowed to enter Alsace unless they were Catholic.

Up to that point, the Anabaptist congregations in Markkirch had flourished under the tolerance of Christian II, the lord of Ribeaupierre, but they had potential enemies in the Catholic clergy, the provincial officials, the town council and the local citizenry. One major politically sensitive issue was the obligation of all males to serve in the *Heimburg* and in the village militia. The Ribeaupierres had granted the Anabaptists a dispensation from this obligation in exchange for the payment of a fee, but this aroused resentment among the citizenry.⁵¹

The precarious balance was upset when Jacob Ammann and his congregation of Anabaptists from Canton Bern arrived on the scene in 1695, after which tensions with the non-Anabaptist community began to escalate. Ammann had fiery public confrontations with the local Catholic priest, who felt entitled to a fee from the Anabaptists.⁵² In 1701 one of Ammann's members became involved in a mixed-faith marriage, which triggered a conflict over legal guardianship of the children. The town clerk attempted to name a non-Amish family as the guardian, and Ammann took his protest directly to the prince. The grand bailiff sided with

⁵⁰ LDS microfilm #1676754

⁵¹ Baecher 1987.

⁵² Baecher 1993, pp. 5-6.

Ammann and issued an order that the Amish (“the so-called new Anabaptist congregation in Ste. Marie”) should be allowed to handle these family affairs according to their own rules.⁵³

Ammann also stood firm on the issue of the citizens’ obligation to participate in the militia and in the *Heimburg*. This matter came to dominate the political affairs of the Anabaptists through the latter half of the century, and eventually it was the source of their undoing in Markirch. Ammann was outraged when he found that some in Rudolf Hauser’s congregation were willing to participate in this quasi military citizens group. In 1696 Ammann submitted a petition, in the name of all members of his Anabaptist congregation, stating that it was “no longer possible,” according to their beliefs, for them to serve in the *Heimburg* or to participate in other public affairs as had been requested by the *Bürgermeister*. In order to mollify the authorities, Ammann offered to make an appropriate payment to discharge their duties. The officials accepted the offer, but later abused the arrangement by demanding higher payments. The Ribeaupierres again sided with the Amish, but the local officials side-stepped them and appealed to the Superintendent of Alsace and the Grand Vicar of the diocese of Strassburg, asserting that the dispensation placed an undue burden on the other townspeople. Due to its lack of clarity, nothing came from this appeal.

The issue surfaced again in 1708 when the Anabaptists submitted a request to the Ribeaupierres for the renewal of their exemption from military service. Once again, the citizens of Markirch protested this exemption. Their petition was signed by 17 citizens, one of whom was Pierre Götz, the brother-in-law to Rudolf Landis, and the father-in-law to the French Reformed pastor. The matter was submitted to the French administration of *Bas-Alsace*, who then queried the presidium of Alsatian nobility about their tolerance of the Anabaptists. The Alsatian nobles responded that they were satisfied with the conduct of the Swiss refugees, “commonly called Mennonites,” who had settled in this *Departement* and who lived under the protection of king Louis. However, the wheels were set in motion for a final resolution of the Anabaptist issue by the civil and clerical officials.

Four years later, in 1712, the Superintendent of Alsace requested Louis XIV’s general secretary for instructions on what policy he should adopt concerning the Anabaptists. The royal court had become impatient by this time with the entire issue. The king saw no point in allowing the Anabaptists to remain in Alsace, and he issued an order for their expulsion. When it was pointed out that this would cause grave concern to the other Protestant religious groups in Alsace, who were already tense since the Edict of Nantes had been recently repealed in 1685, the king’s general secretary replied that there was no point in discussing these prior treaties, since Anabaptism was not one of the protected religions specified in the treaty of Westphalia in 1648.⁵⁴

With no other alternative remaining, Christian II reluctantly complied with the order to expel the Anabaptists in all his territories in Alsace on September 9, 1712, including not only the recent arrivals but also those in Rudolf Hauser’s congregation that had long lived there. Many of the families suffered great financial loss as they were forced to sell their belongings as quickly as possible. After selling his estate, Rudolf Hauser fell dead the next day, probably from the stress.⁵⁵

⁵³ Baecher 1993, p. 6.

⁵⁴ Mathiot 1922, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Sommer 1957, McGrath 1989.

The expulsion order was not carried out with equal rigor throughout Alsace, and as a result not all of the Anabaptists had to leave. Undoubtedly they kept a very low profile during these trying times, and possibly they compromised with the Reformed Church in order to survive.

Those who left Alsace went to various places, some deeper into the Vosges and eventually across the mountains to Lorraine, which was not under French control at that time. Many went northward to the Principality of Salm, which retained its autonomy from France until 1793.⁵⁶ Amish-Mennonite congregations still exist in modern times in the upper Bruche (Breusch) Valley in the district of Salm, and on both sides of the border between Alsace and the Pfalz.⁵⁷ Some went even further north into the Palatinate and into the Duchy of Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld. Others went south to the neighboring principality of Montbeliard (Mömpelgard), owned by the royal family of Württemberg, which was sympathetic to the Anabaptists. Many Anabaptists crossed the Rhine to the Breisgau and to the lands of Karl Wilhelm, Margrave of Baden-Durlach, who was promising religious freedom at that time. This was also the period in which a major emigration began to America.

The Landis Family from Richterswil in Markkirch

Before we close this chapter on the history of the Landis family in Alsace, note should be made that toward the end of the 17th century yet another branch of the Landis family (other than that of Caspar and his siblings) came to reside in Markkirch. "Jean" Landis appears several times in the records. In 1696 he is shown on a list of Anabaptists in Markkirch, and he also served as a legal witness on documents dated 1706, 1708, and 1716. Further information is provided in a 1709 entry in the Ribeaupierre archives, which states: "Hans Landis, a widower, and also his son, Heinrich, who is married, both weapons-smiths by profession, from Richterswil, Zürich district, according to current reports have been baptized as Johannes in 1708 after coming to Markkirch, where they are established and practicing their trade."⁵⁸ This record occurs as one of several on a two page list of persons, each of whom was stated to be "baptized" - e.g., "*bapt. alls Johannes,*" "*bapt. alls Martinus,*" and so on, sometimes the baptismal name matches their original name, and other times it is different. The phrasing is ambiguous, but it likely referred to those who had been baptized in the local Anabaptist congregation and it clarified what their current names were. An annotation in the margin states that "they likewise should pay from the reported time." This payment refers to a special tax, a "protection fee," levied by the authorities on the Anabaptists in 1708 and 1709.

Baecher⁵⁹ also notes the presence of this Hans Landis and his son from Richterswil, who were members of the local Anabaptist congregation. They had no listed household estate or livestock, which suggests that they were not farmers. The fact that he and his son Heinrich were armorers (*Waffenschmid*) by trade is striking, since this was a very unusual profession for an Anabaptist!

⁵⁶ Diener 1983.

⁵⁷ Guth 1983.

⁵⁸ LDS microfilm #1069942.

⁵⁹ Baecher 1987.

Hans (Jean) Landis was stated to have come from Richterswil. The best candidates for his parents were Hans Rudolf (born 1603, died 1666) and his wife Barbara Ritter, who moved from Hirzel to Richterswil. They had a son Johannes (born 1641), who according to the data on the Hirzel Chart “moved to Markirch to the Baptists” with his son Hans Heinrich. Best⁶⁰ adds that this was in “about 1700.” This seems like a good match with the Hans (Jean) who first appears in the Markirch records close to that time. Johann was married to Angelika Trümpler in Richterswil in 1677, and they had seven children, one of whom was Hans Heinrich (born 1683). Their last child was Verena, born in Richterswil in 1686. When “Jean” first appears on the *Wiedertäufer* list in Markirch in 1696, Johann from Richterswil would have been about 55 years old, and he may well have been a widower at that time. The Hirzel Chart also states that his son, Heinrich, married Elizabeth Hirt in Markirch in 1709, that he was a Mennonite, and that he emigrated to Pennsylvania sometime after 1719.

It is notable that “Jean” Landis is the only person with this surname shown on the 1696 list of Anabaptists in Markirch, as well as on the later lists compiled in 1703, 1704, and 1708. None of the siblings and descendants of Caspar Landis are listed. This indicates that they had already joined the Reformed congregations by the time Johann Landis and Heinrich from Richterswil arrived about 1696 and became baptized into the local Anabaptist congregation.

⁶⁰ Best 1990.

Members of the Landis Family in Alsace, 1650-1730⁶¹

Descendants of Hans Landis (111) and Elizabeth Erzinger

- 1111** Caspar Landis b. ca. 1614; m.(1) July 22, 1634, Hirzel, Susanna Pfister. Emigrated to Jepsheim, Alsace, ca. 1651, a "surgeon," with Hans Heinrich and Rudolf, his brothers. M.(2) June 2, 1661, **Catherine Dannherr** in Dürrenentzen, Alsace. Referred to as a surgeon in nearby Grussenheim in 1662 marriage entry for da. Barbara in Jepsheim. Possibly moved to Markkirch 1668-1672 with son, Rudolf. Catherine Dannherr d. in Dürrenenzen, Feb. 15, 1687, age 70. "Caspar Landis from Horgerberg" was listed as a new communicant in the German Reformed congregation in Markkirch, 1691.
- 11111** **Barbara Landis**, bp. Nov. 1, 1635, Hirzel; m. Aril 21, 1662, Jepsheim, **Heinrich Dreichler** from Wädenswil. They possibly had a two year old son who died in 1664 in Jepsheim.
- 11112** **Ursula Landis**, bap. Mar. 24, 1637 Hirzel.
- 11113** **Rudolf Landis**, bap. Oct. 7, 1638, Hirzel; m.(1) May 6, 1668, **Elizabeth Grandhomme** (bap. Dec. 9, 1627, da. of **Jean Grandhomme**, Markkirch, Eliz. d. after 1671). Linen-weaver; citizen of Markich on Jan. 28, 1669. No children. M.(2) april 21, 1678, **Anne Götz**, da. **Johann Götz**, Markich.
- 111131** **Rudolf Landis**, bap. April 9, 1679; d. April 24, 1690, "age 11."
- 111132** **Johann Landis**, bap. Aug. 4, 1680; chief forester and game-warden for the Ribeaupierres in Markkirch; d. May 1, 1738.
M.(1) May 11, 1722, **Elisabeth Schenk** (widow of Joseph Caugy).
M.(2) Nov. 16, 1723, **Anne Flogertz**, from Bern, widow of Peter Pieris; Anne d. Sept. 18, 1726.
- 1111321** **Johann Landis**, bap. Oct. 15, 1724, d. Nov. 2, 1727, Markkirch.
M.(3) April 22, 1727, **Elizabeth Carlin**.
- 1111322** **Susanna Landis**, bap. March 14, 1728; d. March 31, 1728, Markkirch.
- 1111323** **Elisabeth Landis**, bap. Dec. 21, 1730, Markkirch.
- 111133** **Anne Marie Landis**, bap. Dec. 21, 1681; m. **Jacob Haldimann**. Two children.
- 111134** **Ulrich Landis**, bap. Jan. 20, 1683; d. May 4, 1688, "age 6."
- 111135** **Elisabeth Landis**, bap. Oct. 19, 1684; m. Aug. 17, 1684, **Jean Gosart**, two children.
- 111136** **Jacob Landis**, b. March 7, 1687; bap. March 9, 1687 "Jacques;" d. April 11, 1765, "age 78." Linen-weaver. Witnessed documents in 1716 and 1722, marr. **Anne Marguerite Jemil**.
- 1111361** **Johann Jacob Landis**, bap. May 14, 1719.
- 1111362** **Anne Marguerite Landis**, bap. April 3, 1721.

⁶¹ For the sake of consistency, I am using the genealogical numbers assigned by Samuel E. Wenger (2005), continuing from the summary table for Hirzel in the previous chapter. Only those who appear in the records of Markkirch and other villages in Alsace are shown. The direct line of my ancestry is underlined.

- 1111363 **Marie Elisabeth**, bap. Aug. 25, 1722.
- 1111364 **Karl Landis**, bap. Nov. 30, 1724; requested citizenship in Markkirch, April 8, 1784.
- 111137 **Marie Elisabeth Landis**, bap. Feb. 27, 1689. Twin. One d. next day, Feb. 28, 1689. Another child d. Oct. 4, 1690, prob. the other twin, although it may have been Barbara.
- 111138 **Phillippe Landis**, bap. Feb. 27, 1689; twin.
- 111139 **Barbara Landis**, bap. Feb. 5, 1690.
- 111110 **Rudolf Landis**, bap. July 27, 1692; d. Sept. 11, 1702, "age 10."
- 11114 **Hans Landis**, b. ca. 1646; "age 3" in 1649 census of Hirzel; presumably emigrated with parents to Alsace in 1651; m. Jan. 29, 1678, **Rosina Catharina Bender** in Neckarburken, Baden, stated to be the "son of Caspar Landis, surgeon from Horgen."
- 11115 **Jacob Landis**, bp. Aug. 1, 1647, Hirzel; presumably emigrated with parents to Alsace; m. Nov. 26, 1678, **Anne Barbara Lauer**, Neckargerach, Baden.
- 1115 **Hans Heinrich Landis**, bap. Nov. 13, 1621, marr. **Barbara Buehler** Feb. 14, 1643 in Hirzel. Emigrated ca. 1651 to Heidelsehim, Alsace, with wife and three children, and bro. Caspar; d. by 1670.
- 11151 **Jakob Landis**, b. Feb. 1643 Hirzel, died in childhood.
- 11152 **Jakob Landis**, b. Dec. 1644 Hirzel, d. Mar. 20, 1646 Hirzel.
- 11153 **Catherine Landis**, b. Feb. 1646 Hirzel.
- 11154 **Hans Heinrich Landis**, b. ca. 1649 Hirzel, a weaver in Strassburg and Colmar, Alsace, lived in various places.
- 11155 **Barbara Landis**, b. ca. 1651 Hirzel, marr. Hans Jakob Stocker on Sept. 28, 1670 Markkirch. Converted to Reformed faith away from "fau" Reformation.
- 11156 **Jakob Landis**, b. ca. 1654 Alsace.
- 11157 **Elizabeth Landis**, b. ca. 1656 in Selestat, Alsace, returned to Zurich in 1675.
- 1116 **Rudolf Landis**, bap. Nov. 23, 1623; m. Sept. 1, 1646, **Christine Metler**. Emigrated ca. 1651 to Dürrenentzen, Alsace, with bros. Caspar and Hans Heinrich; Rudolf d. by 1670; Christine alive in 1678.
- 111261 **Hans Heinrich Landis**, bp. June 4, 1648; presumably taken as a child to Alsace.
- 111262 **Christian Landis**, b. ca. 1659, Markkirch?; bp. Oct. 31, 1670 Dürrenenzen, "age 11 or 12," an orphan. Parents stated to be Anabaptist.
- (The following six children of Hans Landis and Elizabeth Erzinger apparently did not leave Canton Zürich, there are no records for them in Alsace: 1117 Anna; 1118 Hans Jakob; 1119 Verena; 11110 Barbara; 11111 Hans Rudolf; 11112 Elsbeth)
- 11113 **Margaret Landis**, bap. Dec. 16, 1638, Hirzel; 1649 entry in Zurich refers to her as da. of Hans Landis and Eliz. Erzinger, "age 16 or 17;" marr. June 23, 1664, **Joseph Casson**, Markkirch.
- 11114 **Marie Landis**, b. ca. 1641. Converted to Reformed faith in Markkirch, Aug. 25, 1658, an "Anabaptist from Zurich." 1661 entry in Zurich states she resided in Markkirch and became married. Referred to in Markkirch 1662 a "young woman from Zurich."

Descendants of Hans Rudolf Landis (1333) and Barbara Ritter from Richterswil

13339 Hans Landis, b. ca. 1641, Richterswil. In 1709 listed in Markkirch as "a widower from Richterswil," with son Heinrich, both stated to be weapons-smiths, apparently Anabaptist. "Jean" Landis appears as witness in documents in Markkirch, 1696-1716.

133394 Heinrich Landis, bap. Feb. 26 1683; 1709 weapon-smith in Markkirch; Hirzel Chart shows Hans m. 1709 **Elizabeth Hirt**, Markkirch, emigrated 1718-1719 to Pennsylvania.

Chapter 7

Across the Rhine into the Kraichgau

The lands of the *Kurpfalz* along the Neckar valley and below it in a region known as the Kraichgau, were a magnet for Anabaptist settlers at various points in the 17th century. This area had been periodically decimated during a string of wars -- from the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), the Dutch War (1672-1678), and the Nine Years' War (1688-97). As marauding armies passed through the area, the local people fled for safety and many never returned. Those who were fortunate enough to avoid death from starvation and disease may have found safer niches elsewhere. In the aftermath, new settlers from other regions, such as Switzerland, repopulated the vacated villages.

Switzerland was spared these wars and it had experienced steady population growth for more than two centuries. The Swiss cantons altogether included a population as large as that of the British isles, contained within a much smaller area.¹ Their available land and economic resources had reached a saturation point. Adding to this burden of population pressure, the canton governments attempted to tighten their control during the Thirty Years War and the class structure had become more rigid and polarized. Young families increasingly were driven to emigrate.

From 1646 to 1651, some 1,277 persons, mainly non-Anabaptists, left the canton of Zürich. About 1,700 Anabaptists were expelled after 1649.² A surge of emigration occurred after 1653 when another peasant's rebellion in Switzerland was crushed, followed by a ruthless purge. Political refugees and their families fled to the north, along with impoverished farmers and young men seeking economic advancement. The Anabaptists in particular fled in great numbers at this time, and it is apparent that once again they had been targeted by the authorities during a period of political unrest. Most left by 1660. By 1700 it is estimated that virtually all the Anabaptists had been driven from Zürich. Most of these emigrants went to Alsace, the Rhine Pflaz, or across the Rhine to the Kraichgau in northern Baden.

The lower Neckar valley was owned by the *Kurfürst* of the Palatinate, whose landholdings (the *Kurpfalz*) straddled both sides of the Rhine. His realm had been decimated during the Thirty Years War from warfare, starvation, disease, and predatory looting by the soldiers, and it remained so for decades afterward. The *Kurpfalz* and Baden had been the center of fighting at virtually every stage of the war. General estimates are that about 40% of the population throughout the region was lost. The average loss of population in the major river valleys, such as the Rhine and Neckar, was especially high, at least 70%, and by some estimates as high as 85%.³ Before the war the Palatinate had a population of 500,000, but afterward only 43,000 people remained. Most villages near the Neckar between Wimpfen and Wiesloch had less than 20 residents, and some were completely depopulated.

¹ Lunn 1952, p. 151.

² Zbinden 1981.

³ Benecke 1979; Fenske 1980.

The Dutch War (1672-1678) simply added to the misery. After Louis XIV's attempt to invade the Low Countries failed in 1674, his armies retreated through the Palatinate into Alsace, leaving a trail of ruin in their wake. The military campaigns spilled across the Rhine into the Neckar. Sinsheim, in the heart of the Kraichgau, about 20 kilometers from the Neckar, was burned in 1674.⁴ There was massive displacement of the population, and they fled wherever they could for safety.

Although Louis XIV did not succeed in holding the Low Countries during the Dutch War, he had emerged as the major monarch in Europe, and the ambitions of the so-called "Sun King" were boundless. The Nine Years' War (1688-97) soon followed, triggered by Louis's reckless actions - notably the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which caused a mass flight of Huguenots into the Pfalz, and his extension of territorial claims into the German Rhinelands, including strategic cities on the east shore of the Rhine. France was confronted with a strong coalition of forces from England, Holland, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire. During the war, French forces assaulted Mannheim, then pushed into the Neckar valley to Heidelberg, wreaking havoc eastward at Neckargerach, Mosbach, and other wine villages in their path. A report from 1689 detailed the damage, stating that French troops cut down nearby trees and orchards to turn houses into defensive bulwarks.⁵ In the archbishopric of Speyer it was reported that French soldiers broke open the consecrated graves in the cathedral and there, before all the people, amused themselves by playing bowling with the skulls of the German emperors. They then set fire to the city and much of it was reduced to rubble. They also attempted to destroy the cathedral by tearing down the ornaments and firing the tapestries on the walls, but that structure alone withstood their devastation. Eventually, after all the parties to the conflict were financially exhausted, a treaty was negotiated in 1697. Louis's control of Alsace was affirmed, but he was forced to abandon all claims to the east bank of the Rhine and to return Lorraine to its original owner.

Anabaptists in the Kraichgau

The Kraichgau⁶ was a patchwork of independent estates, each a few square miles in size, containing one or more small villages. The major political power in the region was the *Kurfürst*⁷ of the Palatinate, but other royal families included those of Baden-Baden, Baden-Durlach, and about a dozen other petty nobility. The conditions there in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War were as deplorable as in the Rhine valley. Schuchmann⁸ reports that in the Neckar valley, the area between Wimpfen and Wiesloch had suffered greatly from the various armies that had passed back and forth, looting and confiscating whatever they found. Near the end of the war villages such as Steinsfurt, Reichen, and Richen typically had fewer than 20 residents.

⁴ Schuchmann 1963.

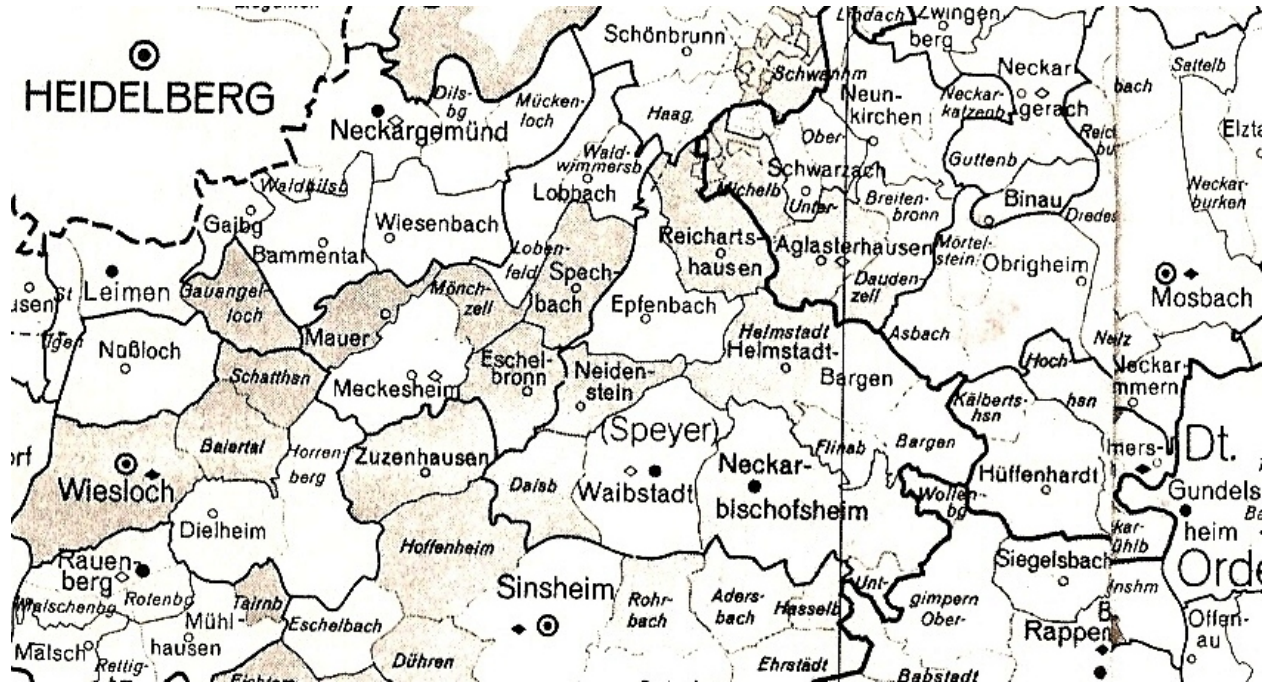
⁵ von Raumer 1930, p. 304.

⁶ The Kraichgau region derives its name from a small stream known as the "Kraich."

⁷ The title *Kurfürst* denoted the special status of being one of the royal Electors for the Holy Roman Emperor, who was based in Vienna. The territories owned by the Elector of the Palatinate on both sides of the Rhine were referred to as the *Kurpfalz*.

⁸ Schuchmann 1963.

The nobility in the Kraichgau had been left without sufficient tenant farmers to till their estates, so they welcomed the influx of Swiss immigrants. The first immigrants began to appear in Kraichgau village records by 1650. Schuchmann has provided a list of 1,500 Swiss immigrants to the Kraichgau. He estimates that by the late 17th century they comprised 35% to 45% of the population. The influx of Swiss immigrants was so strong that it has been estimated that about one-third of the modern population in the former *Kurpfalz* territories as a whole may ultimately stem from Swiss immigrants during this period.⁹



Territories in the Kraichgau

An important indicator of the scale of the Swiss influx into the Kraichgau is shown by the fact that many of the churches there had Swiss Reformed pastors, especially of the Zwinglian rather than of the harsher Calvinist persuasion. By the year 1600 there were already an estimated 350 Swiss pastors in the territories of the *Kurfürst* of the Palatinate. Many left during the war, but returned when peace was restored. From the canton of Zürich alone, an estimated 140 pastors left for the *Kurpfalz*. The Kraichgau in particular had the greatest concentration of Swiss pastors and congregations.¹⁰

Many of the petty nobility in the Kraichgau were in desperate straits. Their estates had suffered economic devastation and depopulation during the recent war and they were eager to attract industrious settlers. Generally the nobility in the Kraichgau were free to set their own

⁹ Guth 1983.

¹⁰ Schuchmann 1963; Zbinden 1981.

policies regarding religious toleration. Although there had been an imperial decree in force against Anabaptism since 1529, the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 reconfirmed the right of the nobility to dictate the religion to be tolerated in their territories. Technically only three religions were specified: Catholicism, Lutheranism (Evangelical), and Reformed, but most nobility tended to be liberal in the matter.

After the war, the new Palatine Elector, Karl Ludwig, introduced changes in religious policies in his territories. His family, the Wittelsbachs, had alternated between Lutheranism and the Reformed faith since the middle of the previous century. Karl Ludwig was of the Reformed faith, but he adopted a liberal policy by which all three of the major religions -- Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Reformed -- would henceforth be tolerated throughout his territories. His liberalism was somewhat tempered concerning Anabaptism, but he consented to them as tenant farmers in the territories of the *Kurpfalz*, although they weren't allowed to hold church services. Each time they were caught doing so, they were fined 50 *Reichsthalter*.

The area around Sinsheim in the Kraichgau drew especially large numbers of Anabaptists. Sinsheim was owned by the *Kurfürst*, as was the nearby village of Steinsfurt. The villages of Weiler, Rohrbach, Gicklersheim, and Dühren, adjacent to Sinsheim, were owned by the von Venningen family, which had played an influential role in protecting Lutheranism during the early years of the Reformation. Guth¹¹ reports that representatives of the von Gemmingen, von Venningen, and other noble families actually traveled to Alsace around 1652, recruiting Anabaptists to come and live as tenants on their estates, which at that time were largely deserted.

The Landis Family in the Kraichgau

Such were the conditions that prevailed in the Kraichgau when the Landis family and other Anabaptists departed from Switzerland about 1651. We have seen that Hans Jacob (the son of Oswald Landis) emigrated to Alsace where he initially settled in Heildesheim. He appears to have remained in Alsace for only four years. By 1655 he and other Anabaptist families moved across the Rhine to the Kraichgau, settling in Weiler, Rohrbach, and Steinsfurt which was in the parish of Sinsheim. Schuchmann¹² cites an unidentified report in the Zürich archives filed by the pastor at Hirzel which states that "Jacob Landes and children are residing at Eichlersheim, Venningen, apparently a district in the Kraichgau." Eichlersheim (modern Eichelberg) is located near Hilsbach, and these villages were owned at that time by the von Venningen family.

Schuchmann's data indicate that Hans Jacob died in Weiler not long after his arrival on March 20, 1656 "*ohne geläut*." This latter phrase likely means that Hans Jacob was buried "without the tolling of the bells," suggesting that his funeral was held without church service -- an allusion to his Anabaptist beliefs. The following year his son, Hans Caspar, died in Weiler on June 26, 1657, at the age of 13. His wife Verena was reported to have been born in 1602, and to have died in Weiler on December 2, 1672.

In addition to Hans Jacob, his brother Hans Heinrich (born 1611) also emigrated with him to the Kraichgau. We can date the approximate time of their arrival because several members of the family were arrested by the authorities in Hilsbach on March 2, 1661. Their report states that

¹¹ Guth 1983.

¹² Schuchmann 1963.

Hans Heinrich Landis “of Rohrbach,” Rudolf Landis “of Weiler” (this was likely Hans Jacob’s son), Rudolf’s mother (Verena), and his sister (probably Barbara), all were arrested at Steinsfurt at an Anabaptist church service. Hans Jacob Landis was not included on this list because he was already deceased by this time. Those arrested were part of a congregation of 53 persons, residing in the nearby villages of Rohrbach, Reihen, Ittlingen, Streichenberg, Weiler, Steinsfurt, and Dühren.¹³ On this occasion they had met privately in the home of a widow without receiving prior official permission. The meeting began at 9:00 in the evening, but it was disbanded by the authorities after they heard them singing a hymn, which betrayed their presence. Five of the participants were taken as security for the others, all of whose names were taken, and they had to present themselves for punishment. They were interrogated by the authorities at Hilsbach on March 29, 1661. On April 4, 1661, a report was filed by Johann Baptista Parandin to *Kurfürst* Karl Ludwig:¹⁴

In response to the official order by the noble and worthy Elector concerning the Anabaptists of this region, relative to their night-time meeting at Steinfurth on March 2 when they were arrested, I have most humbly and faithfully the following to report about those of Steinfurth and Immelhausen, whom we ordered to be examined by the church warden on March 29 near Leöheim collectively and individually as follows:

That some five or six years ago they began to come into this land, that through two of your agents they made themselves known to your Highness the Elector, and requested that one might most considerably tolerate them, and that they might be permitted to conduct their worship activities.

Then they were given from your Lordship the oral resolution that no one had been given the order to oppose them, and that no person would do anything against them. Now and then they were rated as citizens.

They say also that some time ago a distinguished merchant of the same faith came to Frankenthal on behalf of a friend and spoke most courteously to Your Highness the Elector, and was thought to be one of their assembly.

Because neither once or twice any order was given, they lived in the hope that they would be permitted to worship quietly, and that they might be permitted to do good without many knowing of it.

A large number are also some of the other side of the Rhein, particularly some who hold their services in houses and barns, and their migration to your kingdom was tolerated.

We are announcing that on numerous occasions they were visited by your observer at Süntheim and warned concerning indoctrinating their children, but he usually received no answer, and he is asking if he should permit them to have their meetings or if he is to forbid them.

They are unreachable and they freely admit that for two winters in succession they met frequently in the home of widow Meuthen at home at Steinfurth, another time

¹³ The complete list of names of those arrested is presented in Good & Guth 1983.

¹⁴ From the *Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe* 77/4336, translated by Good and Guth 1983.

Seichshoff house at Rohrbach, and in the house of one Sommers in the Steinfurther forest, very quietly and conducted without people knowing about it.

They declare that they do not mislead anyone, or advise anyone to join them, and, moreover, that all those who have come to them are all Swiss people of this faith before, but that they are not allowed to increase in numbers.

We most urgently request that one most strictly forbid them to meet in houses in one place or another, confiscate the house in which they meet, for rather than give up their meetings they would leave the land.

The remainder of the report lists the names of the arrested participants with the estimated value of each person's assets. One point that stands out in this report is that they stated that they began settling in the Kraichgau "five or six years ago," which would date their earliest arrival around 1655. They confirmed that they had originated in Switzerland and had lived for a time across the Rhine.

On July 6, 1661 a decision was handed down by *Kurfürst* Karl Ludwig that the Anabaptists which were arrested should be fined 100 *Gulden* for having the unauthorized church service. Since they were "unreachable" in their convictions, this fine did not deter them and they continued to meet every Sunday. The Inspector in Sinsheim, Peter Grill, again contacted Karl Ludwig for instructions. He was informed on January 4, 1662, that the Mennonites should no longer be forbidden to meet -- to the great dismay of the local Reformed church authorities. Karl Ludwig stipulated that no more than 20 persons were allowed to attend a given meeting, and they had to pay a fee each time. Finally, Karl Ludwig issued the *Generalkonzession* on August 4, 1664 which granted the Anabaptists throughout the Palatinate the privilege to hold church services and an exemption from statute labor and military service. However, strict conditions were laid down. Villages with five or more Mennonite families were allowed to conduct religious services, but no more than 20 persons were allowed to attend at any one time. They were not allowed to "rebaptize" new members. Non-Mennonites were forbidden to attend their religious services or to become converts. Mennonites could not proselytize, engage in religiously seditious activities, or speak against the government. The attendance tax was modified into an annual fee of six *Gulden* per family as "Mennonite Recognition Money." Karl Ludwig eluded the legal technicality of the imperial edict of 1529 against the *Wiedertäufer* by granting his concession instead to the *Mennonisten*. The term *Wiedertäufer* had always been regarded as derogatory, and his edict was the first official recognition of the new term "Mennonite" to designate this religious sect.¹⁵

Despite the strict terms of the Concession of 1664, it was viewed favorably by the Mennonites. A very positive report was filed on the Mennonites in the Kraichgau in 1666. It stated that they were continuing to clear forests, drain marshes, and pay their debts, and also that they were aiding the poorer members of the congregation in paying their dues. Indeed, it stated that the estates would lie desolate if these families moved away.¹⁶ All these improvements directly benefited the nobility. The Mennonites remained tenant farmers since they had little if

¹⁵ Hertzler, Lichti, and Lichti 1983

¹⁶ Hege 1955, p. 676; Hoffman 1959, p. 110

any opportunity to purchase land. Their congregations were difficult to maintain since they were widely scattered on various estates.

After a reign of 32 years, during which the Mennonites enjoyed relative freedom of religion in the Palatinate, the Elector Karl Ludwig died in 1680. During the reigns of the following Electors, this toleration of Anabaptism began to be rescinded once again. The Mennonite Recognition fee was increased, special taxes were levied, and the purchase and sale of their property was subject to special restrictions.

Coinciding with this withdrawal of legal toleration for the Mennonites, the general conditions of life also collapsed for the entire population of the Pfalz during the so-called Dutch War (1672 - 1679) and the Palatine War (1688 - 1697). During both wars the French armies invaded the Palatinate, spilled across the Rhine into the Neckar valley, and caused widespread devastation.

Members of the Landis family (most likely the descendants of Hans Jacob and his brother Hans Heinrich) remained in the Sinsheim area through the 18th century, and their descendants reside there to this very day, several of whom have remained Mennonites.¹⁷

¹⁷ There are several sources on the Mennonites in the Kraichgau. See Ira Landis 1954, p. 76; Schuchmann 1966; Hacker 1983; Burgert 1983; and Guth, Lemar, and Mast 1987.

Landis family in the Kraichgau, reported at the Steinsfurt Meeting in 1661

Descendants of Oswald Landis (134) and Anna Schappi

1341 Hans Jacob Landis, bap. Aug. 10, 1600, Hirzel; m. **Verena Pfister**, emigrated ca. 1651 to Heidelberg, Alsace with wife and three children. Settled in the Kraichgau, near Sinsheim, Baden; buried March 20, 1656 in Weiler. Widow Verena attended the Anabaptist service at Steinsfurt in 1661.

13416 Hans Rudolf Landis, bap. Jan. 6, 1639, Hirzel; attended the Steinsfurt meeting.

13418 Hans Caspar Landis, bap. Nov. 28, 1643; d. 1657 in Weiler, Baden, age 13.

13419 Barbara Landis, bap. April 14, 1645, Hirzel; probably attended the Steinsfurt meeting with mother Verena and brother Hans Rudolf.

1348 Hans Heinrich Landis, bap. July 21, 1611 Horgen, marr. Magdalena Bollier, emigrated ca. 1650 to Heidlezen near Colmar, attended the Steinsfurt meeting in 1661.

13486 Hans Heinrich Landis (jr.), bap. Jan. 10, 1641 Hirzel.

Chapter 8

The Grain Mill in Neckarburken¹

The next chapter in this chronicle tells the story of Hans, the son of Caspar Landis, who settled in the small village of Neckarburken in northern Baden in the late 17th century. There he acquired ownership of the local grain-mill, anchoring the family in that locale for several generations, well into the 19th century. A change in religious affiliation took place among some of his descendants, and the very spelling of the surname changed under the influence of local dialects.

Most of the Anabaptist emigres from Switzerland had followed the natural corridor of the Rhine valley to the north. They left the canton in small family groups, usually siblings with their wives and children, but they soon drifted apart to pursue whatever opportunities for livelihood were available. Some went across the Rhine to the Kraichgau in Baden and others went further north into the Palatinate. The years between 1650 and 1700 are a grey period in the histories of most of these families. Their appearances are spotty and often missing altogether in the official records of the regions where they relocated.

The 1651 emigration report for Caspar Landis states that he left canton Zürich with his wife, Susanna Pfister, and three children -- most likely their youngest, Hans age 5, Jagli (Jacob) age 2, and Anna, age 1. As an itinerant doctor/surgeon by trade, Caspar wandered from town to town in Alsace, unfettered by the restrictions of a guild. By 1668 he and his older son, Rudolf, moved to the mining town of Markirch (Ste-Marie-aux-Mines), located high in the Vosges mountains above Ribeauville. There Caspar spent his final years, and Rudolf established a line of the family that persisted for several generations.

No documentary evidence has been found concerning Caspar's other sons, Hans and Jacob, during these early years. Because they were young children when he left Switzerland, we may assume that they grew up in various villages in the lowlands of Alsace. Their first appearance in the records occurs after they reached maturity and settled in the Neckar river valley, where they both became married in 1678.

An entry in the Reformed churchbook of Neckarburken states: "January 29, 1678, Hans Landeiss, a journeyman carpenter from Horgen [*Horch*] in Switzerland, district of Zürich, the legitimate son of Caspar Landeiss, a citizen and *Wundarzt*, married the *Jungfrau* Rosina Catharina, the legitimate daughter of the deceased Hans Bender."² Hans was 32 years old at the time of his marriage. By profession he was a *Zimmergesell*, which may be more accurately translated as a framer or a joiner of the large beams out of which half-timbered houses were constructed in those days.

¹ I published an earlier version of this chapter in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* -- see Wagner 1995a.

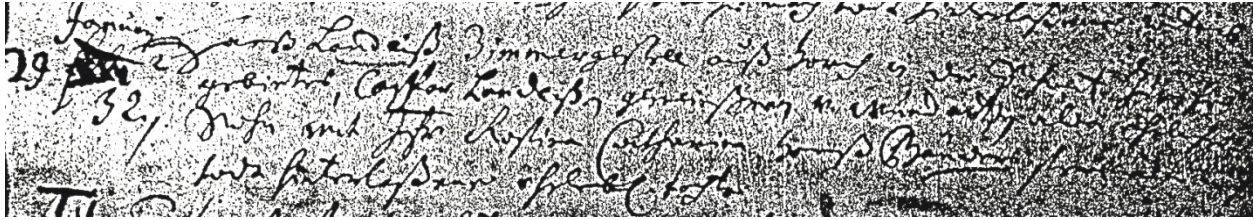
² LDS microfilm #1189215 (see photocopy)

Der Zimmermann.



Ich Zimmermann / mach starck gebew/
In Schloffer/Heusser/alt vnd neuw/
Ich mach auch mancherley Mülwerck/
Auch Windmülñ oben auff die Berg/
Über die Wasser starcke Brückñ/
Auch Schiff vnd Floß/von freyen stückñ/
Blockheusser zu der gegenwehr/
Dedalus gab mir diese Lehr.

I the carpenter/ make strong structures/
In castles/houses/old and new/
I also make many types of mill-works/
Also windmills atop the hills/
Over the water strong bridges/
Also ships and rafts/from diverse pieces/
Block houses for defense/
Dedalus gave me this profession



Marriage of Hans Landeiss, son of Caspar - Jan. 29, 1678

A few months later his brother Jacob was married in the nearby village of Neckargerach on November 26, 1678. The Reformed churchbook there reports: "Jacob Landeyss, a journeyman carpenter, of single status, the legitimate son of Caspar from Horgen ["Horchen"] in the district of Zürich, married the *Jungfrau* Anna Barbara Lauer, the legitimate daughter of Philipp Lauer, a lawyer at Reichenbuch."³ Not much is known of Jacob after this marriage record. He seems to have remained in Reichenbuch for the remainder of his life. He died there on February 22, 1728, and his stated age was 80 years and "several months."⁴ This matches his known birthdate in the Swiss records (born in 1647, he would have been 80 years and seven months at his death). The death entry also states that he was a master carpenter (*Zimmermeister*) indicating that he had succeeded in gaining local citizenship and establishing himself in his profession over the years.

Judging from the fact that Hans and Jacob were married in nearby villages -- Neckargerach is only about 3.5 miles west of Neckarburken -- we may assume that the two brothers had remained in contact after leaving Alsace sometime before 1678. Both, we note, also shared the same profession (journeymen carpenters).

One interesting point in these marriage records is that Hans and Jacob were married within a few months of each other in 1678, and their brother Rudolf in Markirch also became married (for the second time) that same year to Anna Götz. Was it a coincidence that these three brothers married at the same time? Adding to the unusual timing of events, the ledger for the estate of Hans Landis II in Zürich does not record any further expenditures after 1678. At that point the account still had 7,944 Pounds remaining, which was a considerable amount of money. There are no reports of payments to the three brothers, but they may well have made claims to the Zürich government, which could explain how they found the resources for marriage in 1678.

The Spelling of the Surname "Landeis"

Another interesting point in these marriage entries, especially for our branch of the family, is the spellings of their surname -- "Landeiss" ("Landeyss" is an equivalent form since "i" and "y" were interchangeable at that time). The spelling "Landeis" (sometimes with a double "-ss" at the end) was retained for over 200 years, it was still used by my grandparents when they immigrated to the USA.⁵

³ LDS microfilm #1189214

⁴ "*eth. Monats*," which apparently is a contraction for *etliche*, meaning "several."

⁵ After my Landeis grandparents immigrated to the USA in 1889, the spelling of the surname diversified among the second generation to Landize and Landice. The endings "-ize" and "-ice"

Spelling conventions were not rigid at that time, but some standardization was developing as a result of Martin Luther's edition of the Bible. Swiss publishers resisted these changes at first because they were Calvinist or Zwinglian, not Lutheran, but by the late 17th century they too began adopting High German spelling conventions. One common change was to replace the old long vowel "i" with the diphthong "ei" or "ey."⁶ This undoubtedly also reflected the influence of regional dialects. One defining characteristic of the Alemannic dialects spoken in Switzerland is the tendency to pronounce the High German diphthong "ei" as a long vowel "i." For example, the suffix "lein" is rendered in Alemannic as "li," as shown in many Swiss surnames like Egli and Warffelli, and in nicknames like Barbali and Jagli. Geographically this dialect extends from Switzerland in the south to the Lauter river in Alsace, then due east to Karlsruhe and Heilbronn. In the Swabian transition zone (northern Alemannic), the long vowel "i" is typically pronounced as a diphthong, "ei." This tendency toward diphthongization is continued in the Frankish dialect, north of the Swabian zone, which is closer to standard High German. In Frankish the long vowel "i" is typically pronounced as "ai." The Neckar valley is a transition zone, marking an ancient ethnic boundary between the tribes of the Franks and the Alemanni, and these linguistic differences were reinforced in following centuries due to the numerous political boundaries that marked the region.⁷ This spelling shift to the diphthong "ei" is also found in other words in the churchbooks. For example, in one entry the Neckarburken pastor referred to the Swiss town of Rapperswil as "Rappersweil." Similarly, in the church book of Jebnheim, where the Frankish dialect is more prominent, the pastor referred to the Swiss town of Wädenswil as "Wättensweil."

Reasons for their settlement in the Neckar valley

What drew Hans and Jakob Landeis into the Neckar valley at that time? Assuming that they grew up in Alsace, they may have been drawn across the Rhine by the presence of Landis relatives and other Anabaptists in the Kraichgau, just a few kilometers south of Neckarburken and Reichenbuch. Hans Jacob Landis, their cousin, had settled near Sinsheim in the Kraichgau about 1655 and several of his descendants remained in the area. It is also possible that there was a link between the pastors in Neckarburken and Switzerland. In 1678 the Neckarburken church book referred to the pastor as *Helvetium Ligura*, which probably indicated that he had been ordained in the Swiss Reformed Church. Several other persons in the church book were also stated as originating in Switzerland.

Probably the most important factor that explains their appearance in the Neckar valley in 1678 is that this was at the end of the Dutch War (1672-1678). There was an opening for new

were their attempts to Anglocize the sound and spelling of "-eis" in German. The spelling "Landeis" was the original form used by my grandparents, and that it is the way it was spelled on my mother's baptismal certificate. "Landeis" also continues to be used by recent emigrants from the former Soviet Union to Germany. A later development among my two uncles, Henry and Al in Seattle was to spell the surname as "Landis." My mother said that this resulted from their meeting persons from Pennsylvania, where the Landis surname is common among Mennonites.

⁶ Waterman 1966.

⁷ Bohnenberger 1953, p. 76.

immigrants at that point, just as there had been a window of opportunity for the previous generation of Swiss emigrants at the end of the Thirty Years War when their father, Caspar, and his siblings moved into the Rhine valley.

Kurfürst Karl Ludwig (1648-1680) was faced with the daunting task of restoring the population and the economy in his territories. To facilitate this, he declared a moratorium on taxes.⁸ By 1652 representatives of the von Gemmingen, von Venningen, and other noble families in the Kraichgau had also begun recruiting Anabaptists as tenants on their estates, which at that time were largely deserted.⁹ These areas became magnets for new settlers throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century. There was great opportunity for young men seeking to establish themselves in their trade, gain local citizenship and become married. Not only Anabaptists, but many other young Swiss families flocked east of the Rhine. After the Dutch War ended with the Treaty of Nymwegen in 1678, the pace of resettlement quickened. The influx of Swiss immigrants to the Palatinate, including the Kraichgau and the lower Neckar valley, was so strong that they came to comprise about one-third of the population. This wave of immigration was so large that it has been compared to the implantation of Scots in northern Ireland.¹⁰

The Landeis family in Neckarburken

The village of Neckarburken is about one mile north of Mosbach on the Eltz river, which flows into the Neckar. It is a picturesque area, located on the old Roman *Limes*, the boundary which marked the northernmost extension of the Roman empire into ancient Germania. Medieval records often referred to the village simply as “Burken” or “Burkheim,” a name derived from the Roman fortification or *Burg* that was constructed there, the foundations of which are still visible on the northern edge of the village. The administrative center (*Oberamt*) for the district was Mosbach, which was the nearest town of any appreciable size. The tax district (*Kellerei*) was Lohrbach, a neighboring village to the north. Some sense of what life was like in Neckarburken in the late 17th century can be gleaned from the entries in the parish chronicle, the *Ältesten Chronik*, which extends back to 1661. In 1663 the pastor recorded the names of the parishioners, and the list shows only 36 persons. This probably included most of the adult men in the village. As late as 1774 Neckarburken had only 50 families, with 190 people.¹¹ It remains an extremely small village to this day.

Hans Landeis first appears in the *Chronik* in 1678, which was the year of his marriage, and his name appears regularly thereafter in various parish roles. This suggests that he did not settle in the village before this date. Hans Bender, his father-in-law, was born in 1591 and he died in 1673 at the ripe old age of 82, five years before Hans arrived as a *Zimmergesell* in Neckarburken. Since the management of the grain-mill was vacant after Hans Bender’s death, Hans Landeis acquired the mill upon his marriage and thereafter was referred to as the new village mill-master. Bolstered by his status as a married citizen and *Müllermeister*, Hans soon became a person of

⁸ Hacker 1983.

⁹ Guth & Guth 1983a.

¹⁰ Wust 1993.

¹¹ Hacker 1983.

influence. At various times Hans was listed as the administrator of parish finances and the charity fund (*Allmosenpfleger*) and a member of the town council (*aus dem Gericht*).¹²

The grain-mill proved to be a very significant resource for the family through the following generations. In German villages the miller was usually one of the wealthier and more influential citizens. Mills were of great economic importance and the local authorities carefully regulated and licensed their operation. Although the mill buildings and machinery could be legally owned as private property, in the larger towns they were owned by the ruling nobility and the right to operate the facility was subject to their permission. The mill-license, stating the rights and duties of the miller, was elaborately festooned with seals and ribbons and it was bestowed with much pomp and ceremony. He enjoyed special privileges and securities. The community paid the miller's wages (the *Mahllohn*) for his services with a measure of grain referred to as the *Malter*. He was supplied with free wood (the miller's *Beholzigungsrecht*). He was also exempt from paying gate-fees when he entered or exited a city, nor did he have to perform community service (*Frondiensten*). Frequently he was exempt from paying taxes (*Beeth* or *Steuer*), or had them greatly reduced. Perhaps most importantly, the miller was exempt from competition since local families were not free to use the grain-mill of their choice, but rather they had to use the mill that was assigned to them in their area.¹³ This often was a matter of contention among the local farmers. For example, the peasants of Stühlingen in 1525 filed a complaint that they were forced to grind their grain in "distant and inconveniently located mills." Although there were several closer mills available, they had to take their grain to a more distant mill in the feudal lord's domain to ensure that he would collect his due.¹⁴

¹² In smaller villages there was no separation of legislative and judicial functions in local government. Today the word *Gerichtsmann* has the more specialized connotation of a judge, but it had a broader meaning in the 18th century. Members of the Town Council played the roles of legal officials, jurymen, legislators, and city managers all in one. When the council convened to serve as a local court, usually to adjudicate for minor offenses, it was referred to as the *Vogtei* (the magistracy) or more commonly as the *Gericht* (the court) or the *Dorfgericht* (village court). More serious criminal cases were referred to the higher regional court, the *Amtsgericht*" which was in Mosbach. Since their legislative and judicial functions overlapped, members of the Town Council were commonly referred to as *Gerichtsmänner* or *Gerichtsverwandten* – see Smith 1993.

¹³ Opel 1983

¹⁴ Franz 1971

Der Müller.



Wer Korn vnd Weis zu malen hat/
Der bring mirs in die Mül herab/
Denn schütt ichs zwischen den Mülstein
Vnd mal es sauber rein vnd klein/
Die Kleyen gib ich treuwlich zu/
Hirsch/Erbeiß /ich auch neuwen thu/
Dergleich thu ich auch Stockfisch bleuwn,
Würß stoß ich auch mit ganzn treuwen .

Whoever has grain and wheat to mill/
He brings it to me in the mill/
Then I pour it between the mill stones
And grind it cleanly pure and small/
The bran I provide truly too/
Millet/nuts/I also do/
Likewise I also grind dried cod fish,
I also pound spices reliably.



The Grain Mill in Neckarburken, 1994

The Fissioning of the Family in Neckarburken

Hans and Rosina Landeis had five recorded children.¹⁵ Nicolaus, born in 1679, died shortly after birth. The second, also named Nicolaus,¹⁶ was born in 1680, and he became the next lineal ancestor in this chronicle. It was a common practice that when a child died, the next child born of the same sex would be given the deceased sibling's name as a way to make up for the loss. Nicolaus, their first surviving son, became the major progenitor in that generation and he inherited the grain-mill. Over the course of three marriages he produced many offspring. In 1705 he married Anna Barbara, the daughter of Veit Bacher, a tailor and member of the town council in Neckarburken. Anna was the widow of Hans Peter Heinrich, from the neighboring village of Trienz to the north. She already had four children by him when he died in 1704 at the age of 35. After Nicolaus and Anna Barbara married, they had three additional children of their own. In 1714 Anna Barbara died at the age of 38, and two years later Nicolaus remarried to Anna Eva, the daughter of Hans Peter Loeber in Neckarburken. Nicolaus and Anna Eva produced nine children, born between 1710 and 1729. Unfortunately tragedy struck him again when Anna Eva died in 1730, at the age of 34. Nicolaus married yet a third time to a woman named Appollonia. This third marriage was undoubtedly necessary considering the large number of young children

¹⁵ See the detailed summary table at the end of this chapter for Landeis family members in Neckarburken.

¹⁶ See **N12** on the family history summary chart on the end of this chapter.

that Nicolaus was left to care for. He lived a long and fruitful life as citizen, millmaster, and member of the town council, as did his father before him. Nicolaus died in Neckarburken in 1751, at the age of 71. He left behind 12 children and four step-children.

Nicolaus' brother, Hans Caspar (N13), and his wife Anna Maria Hauer also produced a large family of nine children, giving rise to a second branch of the Landeis lineage that remained in Neckarburken for the following two generations. Although Hans Caspar initially worked as a miller, he shifted over to being a carpenter after his older brother Nicolaus married and assumed formal title of the mill.

Inheritance patterns varied in different regions of Germany. In Thuringia it was customary for the youngest brother to inherit the farm and the family estate; in other areas the oldest brother was the heir. In some towns the council restricted citizenship (*Bürger* status) to the first born sons.¹⁷

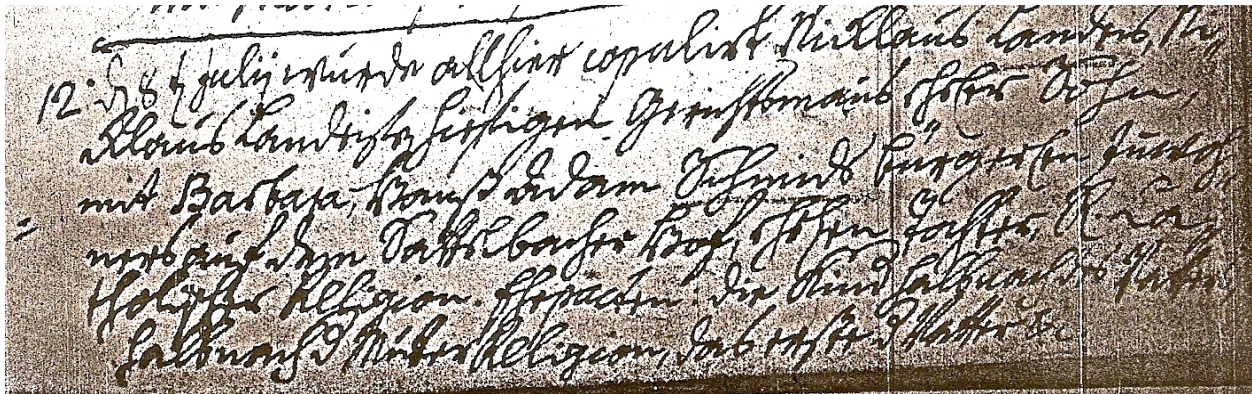
In southwestern Germany the custom of partible inheritance was common, which divided the estate among all the siblings. Over time this created problems because farm lands became fragmented into numerous small holdings. In those regions where one sibling was the heir, typically the others were paid a share as their inheritance (daughters usually received dowries). The male siblings could remain as hired hands, or more commonly strike out on their own seeking opportunity elsewhere. Perhaps they could marry into another family with resources, as Hans Landeis did when he initially settled in Neckarburken. There was always a sizable class of young men who were disinherited by virtue of birth-order who had to join the ranks of migrant laborers seeking an economic niche outside their home villages.

Such was the case with the Landeis family in Neckarburken. As the generations unfolded, a pivotal decision determining each person's fate revolved around the inheritance of the grain-mill. Although the mill had provided general economic security for the family in the early years, by the third generation the chance factor of birth order began to remove certain members of the family further away from this resource. The core members of the family who remained in the village were the eldest sons who inherited the mill and who had large families. The baptisms of their younger siblings were recorded in the churchbook, but they often disappeared afterward from the records. They had to join the nomadic work-force, along with thousands of other young men in similar circumstances throughout southwestern Germany.

Religion in the Kurpfalz during the Eighteenth Century

At this point our narrative will shift to one of these collateral lines of the Landeis family that left Neckarburken and eventually gave rise to those persons bearing this surname in the USA, which is our line of the family. Johann Nicolaus Landeis (N127), the son of Nicolaus (N12) and Anna Eva, is the progenitor of this line. In 1748 he married Anna Maria Barbara Schmidt (more commonly referred to simply as "Barbara Schmitt" in the records), from the neighboring village of Sattelbach. His marriage entry in the Reformed church book is particularly important because it marks the point when the transition from the Reformed faith to Roman Catholicism took place in our Landeis family, which has been passed down ever since in our family lines.

¹⁷ Hochstadt 1983.



"Ehepact" specifying religious affiliations - Nicolaus Landeis and Barbara Schmidt

Rarely is it possible to pin-point with this degree of accuracy such a major transition in a family's history. Johann Nicolaus' children were probably the first persons in the family to be baptized as Catholics since the conversion to Anabaptism some 200 years earlier.

"1748, the 8th of July, were married here Nicolaus Landeiss, legitimate son of Nicolaus who is a member of the town council here in Neckarburken, and Barbara Schmid, legitimate daughter of Hans Adam Schmid, a citizen on the Sattelbach estate, Roman Catholic religion. Nuptial agreement: the children half of the father's and half of the mother's religion, the first of the father."¹⁸

True to their agreement, since Nicolaus was of the Reformed faith, their first-born child, Rosina Barbara (N1271) was baptized by the Reformed minister (as recorded in the Reformed churchbook), and their second child, Maria Magdalena, (N1272), was baptized by the Catholic priest (as recorded in the Roman Catholic churchbook of Dallau). In Maria's baptismal entry the priest repeated the terms of the original nuptial agreement, and emphasized that the children baptized as Catholics would also be raised (*educanda*) as Catholic, and would continue as such after the death of the mother.¹⁹ This pattern of religious alternation in the baptismal ritual was adhered to for all of their children.

¹⁸ „1748, den 8ten July wurde allhier copuliert Nicllaus Landeis, Nicllaus Landeisses hiesiger Gerichtsmans eheler Sohn, mit Barbara, Hanss Adam Schmid's burgerl[ich]en Einwohners auf dem Sattelbacher Hof, ehell[ich]en Tochter, R. Catholischer Religion. Ehepacten: der Kind halb auf der Vatter halb auf d. Mutter Religion, das erst d. Vatters.“

¹⁹ “NB: vi pactoru[m] matrimonialium in religione Catholica educanda, et post mortem matris Catholica in religione Catholica etiam relinquenda. Vide pact. matrim. in act. paroch. de apud praetorem Nicroburckae et similiter in cellaria Lohrbacensis protocollo.” The word “relinquenda” is usually translated as “left behind,” or “remaining,” which suggests that they would continue to be raised Catholic after the death of their mother. The final sentence in the entry refers to the matrimonial pact being recorded in Neckarburken and in the neighboring district (*Kellerei*) of Lohrbach.

Their marriage contract in the Reformed church book of Neckarburken is a classic example of the complexity of the religious situation in Germany at that point in history. The *Ehepact*, which stipulated details such as the religious denomination of the minister officiating at the baptism of the children and the faith in which they would be raised, may seem particularly alien to the sensibilities of the modern reader. We are the beneficiaries of centuries of struggle for freedom of religion, which most of us now take for granted. Our modern prenuptial agreements are more likely to focus on property rights (no doubt reflecting a fundamental shift in our values). However, such extreme concern with the balance of religious denominations was not unusual in the 18th century. The religious wars that had been unleashed during the Reformation had been fought to a stalemate by that point, but it remained a period of awkward adjustment to religious coexistence. Intense political competition between the denominations was the basic order of the day. After 1648 towns became divided legally into separate micro-communities based on religious denomination. Catholics and Protestants often did not buy from each other. In southern Germany the Lutherans began to consolidate resources connected to trade and wealth, while the Catholics maintained patronage ties with local Catholic rulers. Each religious denomination often operated its own orphanages and other charitable institutions.²⁰ Bureaucratic jockeying for religious denominational power was especially characteristic of the larger cities, like Augsburg. Smaller villages tended to be religiously homogenous, but even there it was not always possible to maintain segregation.

Despite efforts to stabilize the balance of power, changes in religious affiliation were common. Several instances are recorded in the Neckarburken church book; for example, there is a reference in 1755 to Johann Burgein, originally from the district of Zürich, who changed from the Reformed to the Catholic faith. Although the parish was nominally Reformed, some Catholic rituals (such as confirmations) are also recorded in the Neckarburken church book (evidently performed by a visiting priest). Reformed church books in the Kraichgau sometimes contained the names of Catholics and Lutherans in neighboring villages who also attended Reformed church services.²¹

The church books from that era reflect the peculiar jostling for religious preeminence that had occurred in the *Kurpfalz* for well over a century. With each change of reign, there was a dizzying switch in the denomination that was favored throughout the realm by the new *Kurfürst* - from Catholic, to Lutheran, to Reformed. Catholicism was paramount from 1508 to 1556, then Lutheranism briefly until 1559. Until that point, the other religions were tolerated. Friedrich III (1559-1576), however, was Reformed and he forbade Catholicism. His successor, Ludwig VI (1576-1583) was Lutheran, and he in turn forbade both the Reformed and the Catholic faiths. The Reformed became paramount again during the reign of Friedrich V (1610-1623), who died in exile during the Thirty Years War. During the interregnum, Catholicism resurfaced while the Pfalz was alternately under the rule of the Emperor, the Spanish, or the French. Karl Ludwig (1649-1680), who was of the Reformed faith, brought the jockeying temporarily to a halt when he announced that all three of the major confessions stipulated in the Treaty of Westphalia would be tolerated throughout the *Kurpfalz*, and he further announced in 1662 that religious minorities such

²⁰ Safley, 1997.

²¹ Schuchmann 1963.

as the Anabaptists and the Jews would no longer be persecuted.²² Such was the situation when Hans Landeis initially settled in Neckarburken in 1678.

The religious situation in the *Kurpfalz* did not remain stable for long. After the Zweibrücken-Neuburg line inherited the Palatine electorship, Johann Wilhelm (1690-1716) began to re-Catholicize the *Kurpfalz*. In 1698 he declared that the *Simultaneum* would be practiced throughout his realm, which meant that one church building would be shared by both Catholic and Reformed congregations. Karl Philip (1716-1742), who more strictly favored Catholicism, proclaimed that only Catholic priests were allowed to perform baptisms, marriages or burials. He also began confiscating Protestant church properties, especially targeting those of the Lutherans. In accordance with the "Palatine Church Division," the properties were reallocated to each denomination according to a rigorous formula -- 5/7 of the parishes would be Reformed, 2/7 would be Catholic, and none were reserved for the Lutherans. In order to achieve this quota, 27 congregations on the east bank of the Rhine had to become Catholic. In some churches the Protestants circumvented the *Simultaneum* by reserving the main body of the building for use by the Protestants and relegating the Catholics to the choir loft! This practice was eventually abolished, and in response the Lutherans usually built another separate church or chapel. The Lutherans were the major target during these years and a few congregations managed to survive with difficulty. It wasn't until the 19th century that the Lutheran and Reformed churches eventually united to form the "Evangelical Protestant" denomination.²³

Even during those periods when all the denominations were tolerated, local officials often bent the rules to favor the one they preferred. A case is recorded in which the fee for the remission of a man's serfdom status (*Manumission* from *Leibeigenschaft*) was reduced by 40%, and in gratitude he expressed the desire to raise his children as Catholic. In another more blatant case, a man was appointed *Schultheiss* of the village after submitting to the Catholic faith.²⁴

The rules were especially awkward in those cases involving interdominational marriage. In 1757, *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor decreed that the pastor officiating at marriages had to be of the husband's religious creed. In order to oversee this process, pastors were not allowed to perform marriages without official permission, under threat of having their salary withheld. In the event of a mixed marriage, the male offspring were to be baptized in the father's creed and the females in the mother's creed (Nicolaus Landeis' marriage contract, which alternated baptisms, was a variation on this pattern). These arrangements were complicated, however, if any of the spouses was Lutheran. That same year it was "clarified" that in the event of a mixed marriage, not all the children could be raised in the Lutheran faith (presumably this could have happened if all the children were of the same gender); however, it was possible for all the children to be raised Catholic. At Lohrbach, north of Neckarburken, a marriage contract was approved in 1762 in accordance with which the groom promised to raise his children as Reformed, but to have them baptized, married, and buried by Catholic priests. If any of his children went to a Lutheran minister for these services, they were to be punished.

Children's religious affiliations were literally being determined by lottery, based on gender or birth order. King Friedrich II of Prussia reproached the *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor in 1770 because all the Lutherans who had emigrated to Prussia had been forcefully converted to

²² Hacker 1983.

²³ Burgert 1983; Hacker 1987.

²⁴ Hacker 1983.

Catholicism. Friedrich protested that religious membership had been manipulated by use of selective taxation and citizenship fees, by rules regarding how children could be raised, and by marriage regulations.²⁵

Emigration Fever in the *Kurpfalz*

A fascinating nugget of information about the life of Nicolaus Landeis was found by Werner Hacker,²⁶ who combed the archives in Karlsruhe and Heidelberg for the names of persons who emigrated from the *Kurpfalz* in the 18th century. He reports that “Nikol Landeys” (N127) from “Burken” attempted to emigrate to “Cayenne,” but he returned and swore that the necessary citizenship papers were withheld from him. The date given for this incident was April 23, 1766. The bare facts of this report do not reveal the immense turmoil that this incident must have had on Nicolaus Landeis and his family.

The abortive attempt by thousands of people to emigrate to Cayenne (the capital today of French Guyana) is one of the lesser known waves of emigration fever which gripped the German peoples in the latter half of the 18th century. In 1763 at the conclusion of the French and Indian war, France ceded to England all its holdings east of the Mississippi river, amounting to about one-half of the so-called “Louisiana territory.” France attempted to compensate for this loss by expanding colonial settlements in South America, most notably in its coastal settlement known as Cayenne. This was referred to in contemporary historical sources as “the new French island.” It was customary at that time for all territories in North America to be referred to as “islands,” including Canada as well as the Missouri-Mississippi territory. In this case it was basically true, because Guyana consisted of dense, impenetrable, mosquito infested forests and the few small settlements that had been established there were largely on islands off the coast, where the temperature was more moderate and the mosquito problem somewhat less severe.

The French government commissioned recruiters to lure German settlers to its new colony. The center of the recruiting effort was Landau, which at that time was a small but highly fortified patch of French territory in the middle of the *Rheinpfalz*, one of the few remaining relics of French imperialistic expansionism into the German areas during the previous century. From Landau recruiters were commissioned to lure German settlers to the new colony. They circulated posters in French and German describing the fantastic opportunities that awaited those willing to undertake such a venture. Each family was promised 50 *livres* travel money, free passage across the ocean, and an allowance for at least two years upon their arrival, including tools, weapons, house and farm, and two full wardrobes of clothing. As much acreage as any person desired would be available, including the fishing and hunting rights. They had permission to sell their land holdings and return to Europe after five years if they wished. The posters of course did not mention the primitive living conditions or the murderous climate in South America and extremely high death rate of colonists from malaria and other diseases.

Soon thousands of people converged on Landau. The French government found itself totally unprepared for the volume of the response. The local nobility in southwestern Germany reacted sharply against these recruiting efforts and tried to stem the outflow. They forbade their subjects to leave for Cayenne and they issued a warning that any who later attempted to return

²⁵ Hacker 1983, 1987.

²⁶ Hacker 1983.

would be treated as emigres and expelled. The people continued arriving, most without permission, and they simply crossed into Landau wherever they could. Very few made it to their destination. The French government sent *gendarmes* to stem the influx, driving the would-be immigrants back out of the city. On the *Pfalz* side of the border, however, 100 dragoons had been dispatched to prevent people from crossing in either direction. Thousands of people were encamped around the city, hungry, confused, and not knowing where to turn. *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor (1724-1799) was finally persuaded to relax his decree and to allow the unfortunate people to resettle in his territory, or to pass through to settle in Prussia, Hungary and Russia. He had little choice, otherwise the people would have become vagabonds and beggars, increasing problems throughout the realm. Persons with “good reputations” were allowed to return to their home villages and to repurchase their citizenship rights (*Bürgerrecht*), if they were financially able. Those who resided in the smaller villages could do so for 400 *florins*, and those who resided in the cities had to pay 800 *florins* (to gauge the size of these sums, a day-laborer at that time earned just over one *florin* per day, so this was equivalent to well over one year's wages). Those who were single when they left but who had married outside the village had to pay a double fee to purchase citizenship rights for themselves and for their spouses. Those who were single but unable to pay and who were physically capable of serving in the military were conscripted. Those unable to serve were placed in a work-house and most likely became indentured with serfdom (*Leibeigenschaft*) status.²⁷

It was fortunate that this emigration wave to French Guyana was aborted because most attempts to colonize this “green hell,” as it later became known in Europe in the 19th century, were doomed to failure. The toll on the new immigrants from disease, mosquitos, malaria, the constant heat and humidity was extremely high, 40% in many cases. Later in the 19th century Guyana became used largely as a penal colony by the French, a dumping ground for what they regarded as the refuse of their society. The infamous “Devil’s Island” off the coast typified this policy.

The Cayenne incident was but one of a series of waves of emigration (or attempted emigration) that gripped southwestern Germany in the 18th century. North America drew the most emigrants, especially Pennsylvania. Other areas included Hungary, Galicia (in Poland), Schleswig-Holstein and the Jutland peninsula in Denmark. In 1763 Tsarina Catherine II issued her famous invitation for German settlers to Russia. Many responded to her call, and numerous German colonies were established along the Volga river and in the Crimea.²⁸

²⁷ The term *Leibeigenschaft* is usually translated as “serfdom,” but this is not a totally accurate description of the status. Medieval serfs were property, part of the estate of a Lord. They had to labor a set number of days per year for the master, gain his permission for marriage, and they had no freedom for travel or emigration. By the 17th century the obligations and restrictions were milder than before. *Leibeigenschaft* had become more a form of indentureship, a mark of second-class status usually imposed for failure to pay debts to the government. The *Leibeigenen* could own property, marry whom they chose, and they were entitled to due-process of law. The primary disadvantage was that they owed fees for certain legal transactions and they couldn’t leave the political jurisdiction in which they were indentured without purchasing *Manumission* from the status. See Werner Hacker 1983.

²⁸ Hacker 1983.

The emigration fever which gripped the German population in the 18th century was due to several factors. Probably the single most important factor was the on-going series of wars which continued to plague southern Germany. The devastation of the Thirty Years War was followed by the Dutch War (1672-1678), the Palatinate War (1688-1697), the Spanish War of Succession (1701-1714), the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748), and the Seven Years War (1756-1763). The *Kurpfalz* was a central theater for several of these military clashes.

It was also plagued by periodic crop failures and famines. The winters of 1708 and 1709 were very harsh, and crop failures in those years sent a flood of impoverished people out of the Pfalz to Rotterdam, then on to England and America. The entire *Oberamt* of Mosbach was economically devastated in 1740 and 1741 from bad weather. The disaster was repeated in 1767, and also in the nearby Kraichgau. The years 1770-1771, 1776 and 1789 were recorded as major "hunger years" from crop failures throughout southern Germany. Some areas were so severely affected that the people were reduced to begging, going from village to village for whatever scraps they could find. When the charity funds were exhausted, the local nobility allowed the people to strip tree bark and to grind it into meal for bread.

The impact of these famines was amplified by the fact that much of southern Germany experienced a prolonged agricultural depression during the 18th century. Agricultural techniques had not improved sufficiently to provide adequate food for the growing population. In some regions all the available land had been taken and farms couldn't be subdivided to accomodate all the sons. In the middle of the 16th century about half of the peasants owned land large enough to support a family, but by 1750 this had fallen to about 25 per cent.²⁹ A report from 1751 stated that "Mosbach is full of people without means" (*unvermögenden Leuten*), that is, landless people without livelihood.³⁰

The Final Chapter of the Landeis Family in Neckarburken

A central fact that shaped Nicolaus' life was the accident of birth order, he was a younger son (N127) of Nicolaus (N12) and Anna Eva Loeber and he had not inherited the grain mill in Neckarburken. The mill was inherited by his older brother, Johann Jacob (N124), who became the major progenitor for the next generation in Neckarburken. Consequently, Nicolaus attempted to seek opportunity elsewhere, as did thousands of other young men in similar circumstances throughout southwestern Germany. He had little to lose.

After his unsuccessful attempt to leave for Cayenne, Nicolaus returned to Neckarburken in 1766 and "swore" that the necessary citizenship papers had been withheld from him. This probably means that he was among the thousands of people who were blocked entry into Landau by the French soldiers. He claimed that he never gave up his citizenship rights in Neckarburken in order to avoid having to pay the 400 *florins* fee, which was a staggering amount of money for most of the common people. Nicolaus was 45 years old at this time. The records of other emigrants usually contain details of the family members who departed with them. Since there is no reference to other members of his family in the record, it appears that Nicolaus departed by himself. It is unknown whether he abandoned his family, or more likely whether he planned to send for them after he had established himself in the new land.

²⁹ Sagarra 1977.

³⁰ Hacker 1983.

An important clue concerning the economic status of Nicolaus Landeis and his family is found in the records concerning his daughter, Maria Magdalena (N1272). On March 7, 1781 the fee was paid to release her from indentureship (*Leibeigenschaft*), after which she departed from Neckarburken.³¹ No further official information is available in the church or state archives, but her eventual fate was recorded in an ancient family Bible that was passed down through the generations in Germany.³² This Bible records that on April 24, 1781 Maria Magdalena Landeis married Josef Anton Kirschgessner, a blacksmith in Hettingen, a few kilometers north of Neckarburken. Comparing the dates of these two records, we note that her marriage occurred 48 days after she purchased her *Leibfrei* status. It is likely that Josef provided the money so that she could leave the village for marriage.

The fact that Nicolaus Landeis' daughter had fallen into *Leibeigenschaft* status shows the dire financial straits of his family. He may have incurred this indentured status when he returned to Neckarburken after his failed attempt to emigrate to Cayenne. Little additional information is available on his circumstances in Neckarburken. Nicolaus' occupation is not stated in any of the birth records of his children, nor is he referred to as a *Gerichtsmann* or member of the town council. It is quite likely that he was a day-laborer. He remained in Neckarburken for the remainder of his life and died there in 1780, at the age of 58, from dropsy (*Wassersucht*).³³ In his death entry Nicolaus was referred to as a *Gemeindsmann*. This suggests that he may have succeeded in reclaiming his citizenship before his demise.

Johann Peter Landeis in Mannheim

The Evangelical Protestant churchbook in Mannheim reports the marriage of Johann Peter Landeis and Johanna Maria Ursula Zipff on April 23, 1749. They had six children, all born between 1750 and 1760 in Mannheim (see the family summary table at the end of this chapter for details on the children).

Who was this Johann Peter? There is only one person in the Landeis genealogy who fits this window of time -- Johann Peter Landeis (LN129), born Feb. 8, 1724 in Neckarburken, the twin son of Nicolaus (LN12) and Anna Barbara Bacher. The churchbook in Neckarburken records his birth, but no further information is available, which suggests that he left the village. His father Nicolaus was the mill-master, but Johann Peter was his ninth child and he did not inherit the grainmill. Like other siblings in the family, he had to seek his fortune elsewhere. As we have seen, his brother Johann Nicolaus (LN127), the seventh child, also did not inherit the mill and he

³¹ Hacker 1983.

³² LDS microfilm 0884956

³³ "Dropsy" is an archaic medical term denoting an accumulation of fluids in various parts of the body. In those days (indeed, until the late nineteenth century) it was believed that dropsy was caused by an excess of water in the bloodstream, which resulted in "stagnant" blood. The water could accumulate in various places -- in the heart ("heart dropsy"), the skin ("skin dropsy," which is marked by swelling of portions of the body), the thorax, the bowels, and so on. Dropsy often accompanied diseases, such as scarlet fever, so it undoubtedly was a symptom of infection during the terminal stages of illness, when the kidneys and other organs began to shut down. When the symptoms of dropsy appeared, the attending physician knew that death was soon to occur.

too left Neckarburken and made an unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to Cayenne, but had to return to his home village where he passed his remaining days in *Leibeigenschaft*. Johann Peter (LN129) did have a twin brother Johann Georg (LN128), and both of them apparently left Neckarburken in adulthood. Where they settled remains unknown, but Mannheim would have been a likely destination.



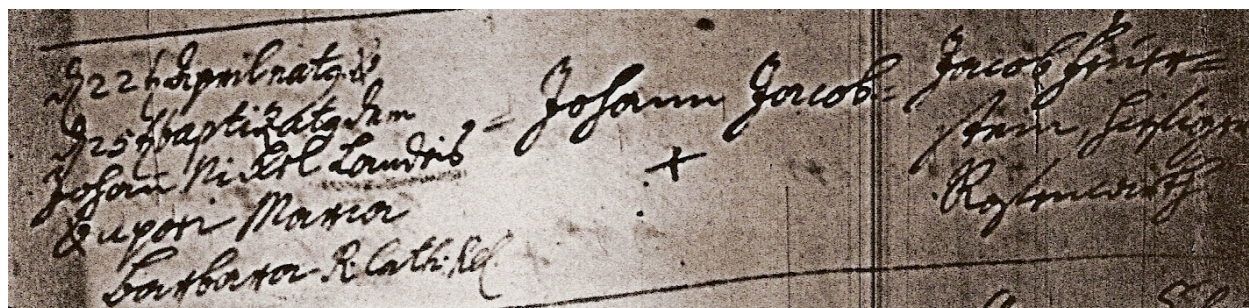
Mannheim at the Confluence of the Rhine and Neckar, 1758

Mannheim was a major economic center at that time, a fortress city sandwiched between the confluence of the Neckar river and the Rhine. It was also a royal residence city for the Elector of the Pfalz. As such it was a natural magnet drawing persons from throughout the *Kurfürst's* realms. Young men from villages like Neckarburken would have converged there for jobs and to access the crossing point over the Rhine into the many small villages in the western side of the Pfalz.

The identity of Johann Peter Landeis in Mannheim as **LN129** remains tentative because his 1749 marriage record with Maria Johanna Zipff states that he was the son of Johann Georg Landeiss, rather than of Nicolaus in Neckarburken. Johann Nicolaus had transitioned to Catholicism when he married Anna Maria Schmidt who was from a Catholic family. In Mannheim Johann Peter's marriage and the births of his children were all recorded in the Evangelical Protestant churchbook, which indicates that he was not Catholic. Johann Peter in Mannheim also had two sons named Johann Georg (the first one died in 1757). All of this hints that he may have been the same person as **LN129** in Neckarburken, but his identity is unclear.

Johann Jacob Landeis in the Rhine Pfalz

The next chapter in this chronicle deals with Johann Jacob Landeis (**N1274**), born in 1756, the only recorded son of Johann Nicolaus Landeis (**LN127**). He bore the same name as his uncle, Johann Jacob (**N124**), the *Müllermeister* in Neckarburken. Jacob was born into poverty, given his father's *Leibeigenschaft* status. After Jacob's birth entry, he too left Neckarburken and his next appearance is on the west bank of the Rhine in 1789, nine years after his father's death, and perhaps three years after his mother's death. With the departure of Jacob, the Neckarburken chapter for our branch of this family chronicle draws to a close. Neckarburken had been the home of the Landeis family for over a century.



Birth of Johann Jacob Landeis - April 22, 1756 Our Ancestor Who Later Emigrated to Tsarist Russia

The more fortunate members of the family continued to enjoy economic security through ownership of the grain-mill. Johann Jacob (**N124**) the *Müllermeister* married Maria Elizabeth Bartholomae, and they had seven children. The mill was passed down to his son, Johann David (**N1245**), and then finally to David's son, Georg Ludwig Landeis (**N12455**). Georg was the last male in the Landeis family to own the grain-mill. He had only three recorded children, two of whom died in childhood, and the surviving one was a daughter, Carolina (**N124551**). After being in the Landeis family for 150 years, the mill finally passed out of their hands in 1829 when Carolina married Georg Andreas Ludwig (**N124711**).³⁴ In the marriage entry Carolina's father is

³⁴ It should be noted that the mother of Georg Andreas Ludwig was a Landeis, and that he was the third cousin to his wife, Carolina Landeis, so in that sense the mill stayed "within the family."

referred to as the *Müllermeister*. Two years later, in the birth entry of the first child from this marriage, Georg Andreas Ludwig is referred to as mill-master, and he carries this title from that point onward. Within a few years, the Landeis surname disappeared from Neckarburken. Other names, such as Bacher, Bender, Heinrich, and Ludwig, which married into the Landeis family at various points, continue well into the 1830s until the records cease. Their descendants remain in the village to this day.

In the summer of 1992 I visited Neckarburken. It was disappointing to discover that none of the old-timers in the local *Gaststätte* had heard of the name "Landeis" and they didn't recall that anyone with that surname had ever lived in the village. However, on a return trip to Neckarburken in 1994 I did locate the old grain-mill (at the end of *Mühlegasse*, just off the main road which runs through the village). The mill has remained in the hands of the Ludwig family since 1829. Three generations of the family resided in the building in 1992 and they graciously provided a tour of the old structure. The water-wheel is still intact, although it is no longer used. Emma Ludwig, 94 years old, resided on the second floor, and her nephew and his family resided on the upper floor. She was revered as the oldest resident in Neckarburken. Although her memory of the details had faded, Emma recalled hearing of the Landeis family in her youth in old family stories, and she stated emphatically that they were indeed related to the Ludwigs and the Kellenbergers. Her testimony for this family, once so important in Neckarburken, is the sole remaining faint echo from the past, carrying down from a chapter in the story that began in 1678.

**The Landeis Family in Neckarburken, Baden
and Nearby Villages³⁵**

N1 Hans Landeis, b. ca. 1646; age 3 in 1649 census of Hirzel, Canton Zurich, Switzerland.

Emigrated ca. 1651 with his parents Caspar Landis and Susanna Pfister to Jebsheim, Alsace, then to Neckar valley with younger brother Hans Jacob (**N2** below). Carpenter, s. of "Caspar Landeis the *Wundartzt* from Horgen, district of Zurich in Switzerland." Marr. **Rosina Catharina Bender**, Jan. 29, 1678 in Neckarburken. Rosina b. Dec. 5, 1654, d. Dec. 20, 1707 in Neckarburken; da. of **Hans Bender** and **Anna** (Hans B. was mill-master in Neckarburken, b. ca. 1591, d. Feb. 1673; he was referred to in one record as "Hans Bender the second," which suggests that his father was also named Hans).

N11 Nicolaus Landeis, b. Jan. 12, 1679; d. soon after birth.

N12 Nicolaus Landeis, b. Mar. 28, 1680; d. Jan 14, 1751. Mill-master.

m.(1) Feb. 10, 1705, **Anna Barbara Bacher**, b. Oct. 3, 1675, da. of **Veit Bacher** (he was b. ca. 1643, d. July 19, 1711, "age 68," prob. son of **Hans Bacher**). Anna was the widow of **Hans Peter Heinrich** from Trienz (he was b. ca. 1669, d. June 14, 1704 "age 35"), with whom she had four children prior to her marriage to Nicolaus. Anna d. July 5, 1714. Nicolaus m.(2) Sept. 1, 1716, **Anna Eva Loeber**, b. ca. 1696, da. of **Hans Peter Loeber** (son of **Hans Peter Loeber**) and **Margaret Bacher** (b. April 4, 1669, d. Nov. 8, 1730, "age 61," da. of **Hans Bacher** and **Barbara**).

m.(3) to **Appollonia**, b. ca. 1682, d. Jan 17, 1746, "age 61." No children from m.(3).

Children of m.(1) of **LN12**:

N121 Rosina Catharina Landeis, b. Feb. 16, 1706.

m. **Johann Jacob Degroot** May 7, 1726.

N122 Eva Catharina Landeis, b. July 14, 1709.

m. **Christian Ille**, Nov. 8, 1729.

N123 Johann Caspar Landeis, b. Sept. 20, 1713.

Children of m.(2) of **LN12**:

N124 Johann Jacob Landeis, b. Dec. 6, 1716, d. Jan 16, 1772. Mill-master.

m. **Maria Eliz. Bartholomae**, July 14, 1739, da. of **Matthias Bartholomae** from Unterschefflenz. Maria b. ca. 1714, d. Jan 11, 1787.

N1241 Maria Eliz. Landeis, b. May 8, 1742; d. May 30, 1743.

N1242 Johann Jacob Landeis, b. April 12, 1744; d. March 4, 1800.

N1243 Johann Georg Landeis, b. Jan 6, 1746.

N1244 Catherine Eliz. Landeis, b. Jan 24, 1748.; d. Dec. 17, 1772.

N1245 Johann David Landeis, b. Jan 28, 1750; d. Nov. 19, 1824; mill-master.

m. June 6, 1784 in Neckargerarch, **Eva Catherine Neuer** (b. Oct. 16, 1763; d. July 7, 1823; da. of **Wilhelm Neuer** from Neckargerach).

N12451 Catherine Eliz. Landeis, b. Aug. 7, 1785; d. Oct. 7, 1786.

N12452 Catherine Eliz. Landeis, b. Nov. 20, 1786.

³⁵ In order to avoid overly long numerical identifications, I am using a new system for Neckarburken, starting with **N1** for Hans Landeis, the stem ancestor. Hans was shown as **11114** in the family chart for Switzerland and Alsace. My lineal ancestors are underlined.

N12453 Johann Peter Landeis, b. Nov. 22, 1787; d. Sept. 8, 1788.
N12454 Anna Catherine Landeis, b. Jan 24, 1790; d. Dec. 12, 1805.
N12455 Georg Ludwig Landeis, b. July 19, 1794. Alive in 1829.
 m.(1) March 27, 1814, **Anna Margaret Kellenberger**, d. Jan. 13, 1818,
 m. (2) April 30, 1818, **Maria Eliz. Kellenberger**, b. 1791, sister to **Anna Margaret Kellenberger**.
 Children from m.(1) of LN12455:
 N124551 Carolina Landeis, b. July 19, 1812.
 m. Aug. 1, 1829, her cousin, **Georg Andreas Ludwig (N124711)**, son of **Johann Georg Ludwig** and **Catherine Eliz. Landeis (N12471)**. J. Georg Ludwig then became mill-master. Progenitor of mill-owners in Neckarburken today.
 N124552 Johann Ludwig Landeis, b. June, 1815; d. Sept. 22, 1815.
 Children from m. (2) of LN12455:
 N124553 Louisa Landeis, b. Feb. 18, 1819; d. Sept. 22, 1825.
N12456 Maria Eliz. Landeis, b. March 17, 1797; d. April 11, 1797.
N12457 Johann Georg Landeis, b. Oct. 1, 1798; d. Oct. 7, 1798
N1246 Maria Eva Landeis, b. March 17, 1752.
N1247 Johann Peter Landeis, b. March 13, 1755; d. Feb. 17, 1819.
 m. July 6, 1784, **Catherine Eliz. Wolf**, d. March 11, 1827.
N12471 Catherine Eliz. Landeis, b. July 4, 1781; d. July 1, 1826.
 m. **Johann Georg Ludwig**.
 N124711 Georg Andreas Ludwig, b. Aug. 25, 1803.
 m. **Carolina Landeis (LN124551)**, became mill-master.
N12472 Christine Barbara Landeis, b. May 14, 1786; d. March 30, 1787.
N12473 Christine Barbara Landeis, b. March 6, 1788; d. Sept. 4, 1846.
N12474 Peter Landeis, b. Sept. 1791; d. Nov. 12, 1799.
N125 Johann David Landeis, b. Jan. 2, 1719.
N126 Anna Eva Landeis, b. Sept. 2, 1720.
N127 Johann Nicolaus Landeis, b. Aug. 1, 1721; d. Aug. 29, 1780 "age 58." Tried unsuccessfully to emigrate to "Cayenne" (French Guyana). m. **Anna Maria Barbara Schmidt**, July 8, 1748, Catholic da. of **Hans Adam Schmidt** (from Sattelbach, b. ca. 1681, d. April 15, 1765, "age 84") and **Maria Magdalena Catherine Schmidt** (b. ca. 1683, d. March 2, 1754, "age 71").
 N1271 Rosina Barbara Landeis, b. Dec. 15, 1748; d. Sept. 26, 1749.
 N1272 Maria Magdalena Landeis, b. Aug. 19, 1750.
 m. April 24, 1781, **Josef Anton Kirschgessner** in Hettingen.
N1273 Eva Catherine Landeis, b. March 29, 1753.
N1274 Johann Jacob Landeis, b. April 22, 1756. Emigrated to the Pfalz ca. 1788, then in 1809 to Karlsruhe, Ukraine, with family; d. there before 1816. m. Nov. 4, 1789 **Anna Maria Catherine Messmann**, illeg. da. of **Margaret Heid** adopted by her step-fa. **Joseph Messmann** in Leimersheim, Pfalz. Jacob was chief administrator of grain harvest and storage in Hördt. Progenitors of the German-from-Russia Landeis family in USA.
 N12741 Maria Elizabeth Petronilla Landeis, b. April 15, 1790, Hördt.

- N12742 Maria Appollonia Landeis**, b. July 12, 1791, Hördt.
- N12743 Adam Franz Georg Landeis**, b. April 19, 1793, Hördt.
m. ca. 1818 **Maria Antonia Ihly** (b. ca. 1791, da. of **Jakob Ihly** from Malsch, Baden) in Karlsruhe, Ukraine. Both died in Karlsruhe, Ukraine.
- N12744 Anton Landeis**, b. Oct. 5, 1794, Hördt, d. before 1840 in Karlsruhe, Ukraine.
m. ca. 1821 **Magdalena Humel** (da. of **Franz Humel** and **Barbara Meckler** from Birkenau, Baden), in Karlsruhe, Ukraine.
- N12745 Maria Catherine Landeis**, b. April 13, 1796, d. May 26, 1797, Hördt.
- N12746 Franziska Landeis**, b. Oct. 10, 1798, Hördt.
- N12747 Daniel Landeis**, b. ca. 1801/2, probably Hördt, d. Karlsruhe, Ukraine.
m. ca. 1829 **Katharina Jungmann** (b. ca. 1816, da. of **George Adam Jungmann** from Spechbach, Baden). Possibly Daniel's second marriage.
- N12748 Margaretha Landeis**, b. Aug. 2, 1804, Hördt.
- N1275 Maria Eliz. Landeis**, b. Nov. 29, 1762; d. Feb. 10, 1769.
- N128 Johann Georg Landeis**, b. Feb. 8, 1724, a twin with Johann Peter.
- N129 Johann Peter Landeis**, b. Feb. 8, 1724, a twin. He isn't shown in any further records in Neckarburken. He may be the same person as **Johann Peter Landeis** reported in the Evangelical Protestant churchbook in Mannheim, married to **Maria Johanna Ursula Zipff** on April 23, 1749, d. Jan. 24, 1764. She was the da. of **Johann Valentin Zipff**. This identity remains tentative because the marriage record states that Johann Peter was the son of Johann Georg Landeis rather than of Nicolaus. Johann Peter and Johanna Ursula Zipff had six children, all born in Mannheim. I have assigned identity numbers based on the assumption that Johann Peter may have been the same person as **N129**:
- N1291 Anna Katharina Landeis**, b. Jan. 19, 1750, bapt. Jan. 22, 1750.
- N1292 Maria Magdalena Landeis**, b. Aug. 8, 1752, bapt. Aug. 10, 1752.
- N1293 Benedict Landeis**, b. Apr. 19, 1754, bapt. Apr. 20, 1754.
- N1294 Johann Georg Landeis**, b. Dec. 20, 1756, bapt. Dec. 21, 1756, d. Mar. 6, 1757.
- N1295 Johann Georg Landeis**, b. June 14, 1759, bapt. June 15, 1759, d. July 17, 1759.
- N1296 Anna Margaret Landeis**, b. June 29, 1760, bapt. June 30, 1760.
- N130 Rosina Barbara Landeis**, b. Dec. 5, 1727.
m. **Johann Jacob Frey**, June 14, 1746.
- N131 Ann Barbara Landeis**, b. Dec. 5, 1728.
- N132 Hans Georg Landeis**, b. Dec. 2, 1729; d. June 24, 1737.
- N13 Hans Caspar Landeis**, b. March 30, 1682.
m.(1) Sept. 14, 1700 **Anna Maria Hauser** (d. 1720-1723), da. of **Hans Hauser** from Mittelschefflenz,
m.(2) Sept. 14, 1724, **Catherine Bender**, a widow. No off-spring.
Children from m.(1) of **LN13**:
- N131 Matheus Landeis**, b. Dec. 8, 1700; d. after birth.

- N132 Johann Caspar Landeis**, b. June 1, 1703; d. Aug. 19, 1710.
- N133 Johann Heinrich Landeis**, b. Sept. 22, 1705; d. May 21, 1709.
- N134 Johann Jacob Landeis**, b. July 6, 1708; d. March 27, 1709.
- N135 Nicolaus Landeis**, b. Feb. 12, 1710, d. Nov. 30, 1767.
 m. **Anna Catherine**, b. ca. 1719, d. Dec. 23, 1786, "of frost and snow, age 67."
N1351 Anna Eliz. Landeis, b. May 20, 1742.
N1352 Eva Catherine Landeis, b. March 12, 1745.
N1353 Eva Eliz. Landeis, b. May 15, 1748
 [?**N1354 Anna Maria Landeis**, b. ca. 1751, d. March 30, 1788, "age 37, da. of Nicolaus Landeis," probably an error in the churchbook, da. of **Johann Nicolaus Kellenberger**, not Landeis].
N1355 Maria Catherine Landeis, b. June 28, 1752; d. June 9, 1759.
N1356 Christina Barbara Landeis, b. Nov. 16, 1756; d. Aug. 7, 1759.
N1357 Philippina Landeis, b. May 21, 1759; d. May 14, 1770.
N135x Maria Eliz. Landeis, "da. of Nicolaus," perhaps same as **LN1353**.
 m. Feb. 28, 1767, **Sebastian Kavist**
- N136 Johann Caspar Landeis**, b. Oct. 13, 1712, d. Aug. 2, 1713.
- N137 Anna Elizabeth Landeis**, b. June 23, 1714.
- N138 Johann Caspar Landeis**, b. Jan. 3, 1717.
- N139 Johann Jacob**, b. Feb. 25, 1720; d. Oct. 24, 1720.
- N14 Johann Jacob Landeis**, b. Aug. 6, 1683; d. Aug. 12, 1683.
- N15 Anna Barbara Landeis**, b. May 9, 1687; confirmed 1701.
 m. Feb. 14, 1714, **Joseph Stamler**.

N2 Jacob Landeis (LS1215), bap. Aug. 1, 1647 in Hirzel, Switzerland, son of **Caspar Landis** and **Susanna Pfister**; emigrated ca. 1651 to Jepsheim with parents and elder brother **Hans Landis** (**N1** above).
 m. Nov. 26, 1678, **Anna Barbara Lauer**, da. of **Philipp Lauer**, lawyer in Neckargerach. Marriage entry states that he was an apprentice carpenter, the son of "Caspar Landeis from Horgen in the district of Zurich." No known children from this union. Jacob d. Feb. 22, 1728, Reichenbuch, "age 80 (?) years."

Chapter 9

Jacob Landeis in the Rhineland Pfalz

Jacob Landeis (**N1274**) is the next pivotal person in the family chronicle. Two major transitions occurred in his lifetime that were of fundamental importance in determining the life-course of the following generations: his move away from Neckarburken, and his later emigration to Tsarist Russia.

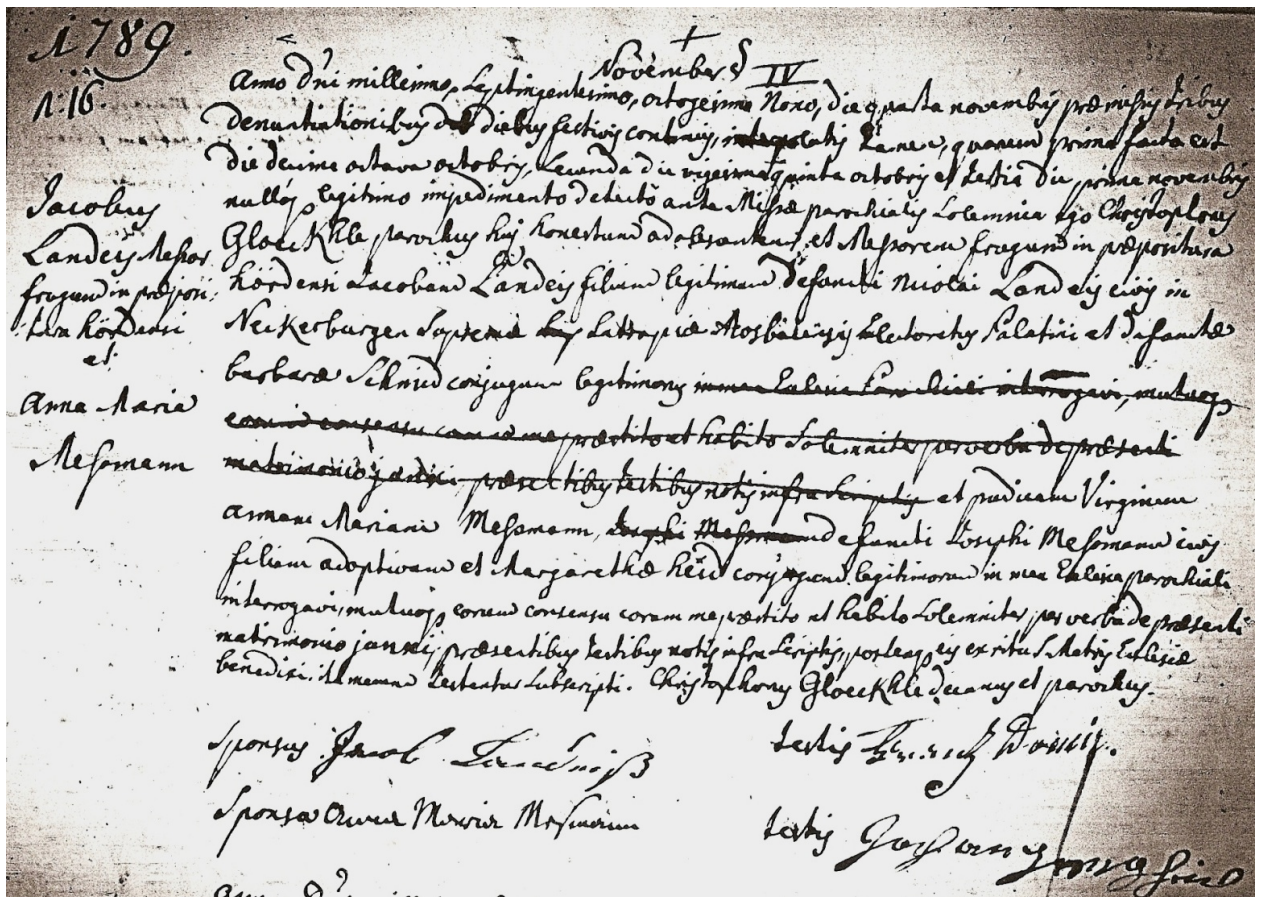
In 1789, nine years after the death of his father Nicolaus, Jacob appeared in the church records of the village of Leimersheim, on the west bank of the Rhine in the Palatinate. His decision to leave Neckarburken is understandable since the economic circumstances of his branch of the family seem to have been abysmal. Nicolaus had attempted unsuccessfully to emigrate to the French colony of "Cayenne," and as a consequence he and his family may have been reduced to the indentured status of *Leibeigenschaft*. When Jacob came of age, he faced the same situation as his father. He was a younger son in a junior collateral line within the Landeis family, removed from ownership of the grain mill. Others before him in the family had also left Neckarburken -- young men whose baptismal entries appeared in the church book, but who then disappeared from the records, with no death entries to indicate their fate.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, members of the Landeis family left Neckarburken and settled in Mannheim, the royal residence city of *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor on the east bank of the Rhine. Johann Peter Landeis was married in Mannheim to Johanna Maria Zipff on April 23, 1749. They had several children and Johann Peter died there in January 1764. His identity is tentative. He was probably **LN129** the son of Nicolaus Landeis and Anna Barbara Bacher; however his marriage record shows him as the son of Johann Georg Landeis. If his identity in Neckarburken is correct, Johann Peter was the ninth child of Nicolaus, the mill-master, and he did not inherit the grainmill. Like other siblings in the family, he had to seek his fortune elsewhere. As we have seen, his brother Johann Nicolaus (**LN127**), the seventh child, also did not inherit the mill and he too left Neckarburken and made an unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to Cayenne, but had to return to his home village where he passed his remaining days in *Leibeigenschaft*. Johann Peter (**LN129**) had a twin brother Johann Georg (**LN128**), and both of them apparently left Neckarburken in adulthood.

Jacob would likely have been drawn to Mannheim by the earlier presence of Johann Peter. The territories of the Palatinate (*Kurpfalz*) encompassed large areas on both sides of the river, not only the Rhine Pfalz proper, but also the Neckar valley, including the district (*Oberamt*) of Mosbach in which Neckarburken was located. This meant that an avenue was open for Jacob to travel across the Rhine without leaving the royal jurisdiction in which he had been born.¹

¹ The *Kurfürst* at that time was Karl Theodor (1724-1799), head of the Pfalz-Neuburg branch of the Wittelsbach family, who maintained his royal residence at Mannheim on the east bank of the Rhine. During his reign the Wittelsbach holdings had indeed grown quite large, and in 1777 they included not only the *Kurpfalz* on both sides of the Rhine, but Bavaria as well. Bavaria was owned by Maximilian III, titular head of a separate branch of the Wittelsbach family. After his death in 1777, Bavarian territories were inherited by Karl Theodor. After unification, the territories along the Rhine were referred to as the "Lower Pfalz" (*Unteren Pfalz*) to distinguish it

Another factor which may have played some role in Jacob's departure from Neckarburken is that the Neckar and Rhine valleys had been afflicted by periodic bad weather, which may have affected their livelihoods. The archives report that the winters of 1788 and 1789 were especially harsh, so bad in fact that the streams froze and the mills were without water, resulting in a shortage of flour.² The fact that the mills couldn't operate during those winters must have had an especially hard impact on the Landeis family. The governments in the Pfalz had begun stockpiling grain reserves already in 1771 to prepare for such eventualities. In 1789 state granaries were established in the wheat growing area of the Pfalz to address the critical shortages that had resulted from bad harvests.³



Marriage of Jacob Landeis and Anna Maria Messmann, Nov. 4, 1789⁴

from territories in the northern part of Bavaria, which were referred to as the "Upper Pfalz" (Oberpfalz). Karl Theodor strongly championed the Catholic faith. He died in 1799.

² Hacker 1987.

³ Blanning 1983.

⁴ The line in the marriage entry that was crossed out by the priest is repeated after he added the information on Joseph Messmann and Margaret Heid. Source: LDS microfilm #0367703.

The first evidence for Jacob's presence in the Pfalz is his marriage in 1789, recorded in the Catholic church book of Leimersheim, a small village below Germersheim near the Rhine. This is my translation of the Latin record:

1789 Record 16 -- Jacob Landeis crop measurer in the administrative center of Hördt, and Anna Maria Messmann.

In the year of our Lord one thousand seventeen hundred eighty-nine, the 4th day of November, after the banns [of marriage] were announced at Leimersheim on these days, the first on the 18th of October, the second on the 25th of October, and the third on the 1st of November, with no legitimate impediment detected, before a solemn Mass of the parish, I Christopher Gloeckhle pastor [united in marriage] this honorable young man and Crop Measurer in Hördt, Jacob Landeis, the legitimate son of the deceased Nicolas Landeis, citizen of Neckarburgen above [north of] Mosbach, the Satropy of the Elector of the Palatinate, with the chaste virgin Anna Maria Messmann, the adopted daughter of the deceased citizen Joseph Messmann and Margaretha Heid, a legally married couple in my parish church, when publicly asked [they] gave public consent in my presence, and I solemnly pronounced the words of matrimonial union, in the presence of the notable witnesses signed below, in accordance with the rites of the Blessed Holy Mother Church.

Thus testified by my hand below.

Spouse: Jacob Landeiss

Spouse: Anna Maria Messmann

Christopher Gloeckhle, Deacon and Pastor

Witness: Friedrich Domis

Witness: Johan Konigs

Anna Maria Messmann was referred to as a chaste virgin (*pudicam virginam*), which means that she had not been married before. We also note that she was the "adopted" daughter of the deceased citizen Joseph Messmann and his wife Margaret Heid. There is a gap in the church book for Leimersheim between 1729 and 1785, so there was no direct way to determine Anna Maria's full parentage. However, the mystery of why Annia Maria was "adopted" was solved by correspondence with a modern resident in Leimersheim. He reported that the proper spelling for the surname of her adopted father was "Messmang," which appears in the archives for Leimersheim.⁵ Anna Maria was an illegitimate child of Margaret Heid, born Sept. 19, 1758 in Leimersheim. Joseph Messmang's first wife died, after which he remarried to Margaret Heid on May 7, 1764 and adopted her daughter Anna. Her biological father is unknown.⁶ The Heid family had deep roots in Leimersheim and Margaret Heid's ancestors can be traced in the church book back into the 1600s.

As was customary, Jacob Landeis and Anna Maria Heid-Messman were married in her home village, but they settled in nearby Hördt where Jacob was a citizen in residence pursuing his profession. Hördt is set back slightly from the west bank of the Rhine river to avoid the periodic flooding of the river. Germersheim on the Rhine was the major administrative center for

⁵ The surname Messmann denoted someone who transported or sold dung, it was a variant of Mistmann, from Middle High German *Mist*, Middle Low German, Dutch *Mest* 'dung', 'cesspool'.

⁶ The person I corresponded with in Dec., 2000, was Franz Pfadt, who provided the background for the Messman(g) family and Anna Maria Heid.

that area. It was also a fortified site because it was a strategic ferry crossing point on the Rhine. The lowland area, stretching from Germersheim toward Landau, was a major wheat growing region at that time, and it remains so today. These villages were just below the southern border of the territory owned by the Archbishopric of Speyer -- an extremely large diocese stretching from the *Pfälzerwald* on the west to the Neckar valley on the east, encompassing over 300 parishes, 80 villages, and about 30,000 people. These villages, extending south into Alsace, were strongly Catholic, and they remain so today.



Jacob Landeis' Profession in Historical Context

The Latin marriage entry states that Jacob Landeis was a *Messor Frugum in Praepositura Hördensi*. The latter part of the phrase refers to Hördt as an administrative center of the tax district, and there was a warehouse there where Jacob was probably employed. *Messor frugum* is ambiguous. In the opinion of the staff with whom I spoke at the Institute for History and Ethnic Research of the Pfalz in Kaiserslautern, the Latin phrase *messor frugum* is a Latin rendering of the German *Frucht Messer*, which means "crop measurer" or "crop tester."

This interpretation is supported by the later baptismal entry for Jacob's fourth child, Anton, in 1794 which describes his profession in slightly different terms, this time in German: *Jacob Landeiss Administrations Mültterer in der Schatsserei Hördt*. The reference to the "treasury" (*Schatsserei*) of Hördt reinforces the previous Latin reference to it as an administrative center in the tax district. The word *Mültterer* is also ambiguous, but in the context of the marriage record in which Jacob was referred to as a "crop measurer" its meaning can be determined with some reliability. One simple translation is that *Mültterer* is an alternate term for "miller," but that can be misleading because Jacob's responsibility does not seem to have been restricted to the traditional grinding of grain.⁷

Another administrative title, which may be closer to Jacob's actual role, is *Mittlerer*, which could be loosely translated as "middleman." In the 18th century the ministry in charge of the royal treasury for the *Kurpfalz* had responsibility for the collection of taxes (both in money and in produce). Each local tax district (*Kellerei*) was headed by the *Keller*, who oversaw the collection of produce and issued payments to all workers in money, wine, grain, wood, etc. After state expenses were met, any remaining produce was auctioned off and the proceeds were turned over to the state ministry. The *Mittlerer* was the special assistant who supervised the delivery of produce by the farmers, certified the quality and amounts that were placed in storage in the warehouse, and likely also conducted the auctions of surplus.⁸

In my opinion, then, Jacob Landeis was the official middleman at the state warehouse in Hördt, with the responsibility of measuring, certifying, and recording the amounts of produce delivered by the local farmers. All these possible interpretations (*Mülterer*, *Müller*, *Mittlerer*) obviously have closely related meanings. Jacob seems to have found employment at one of the new state granaries established in 1789 in the Pfalz, the same year when he became married. It is reasonable to assume that he had some familiarity with mill operations while working for his uncle, Johann Jacob (N124) in Neckarburken, and he may have been able to parlay these skills in the Pfalz. His connection with the state treasury facility in Hördt also seems to have carried some prestige, as shown by the baptismal sponsors for some of his children.

The Family of Jacob and Anna Maria Landeis

Jacob and Anna Maria had eight children, all born in Hördt between 1790 and 1804. The baptismal entries in the Catholic churchbook are signed by the fathers and the godparents, and their various titles are stated. It is notable that many of the signatures are crude, as we might expect, but Jacob's signature is quite calligraphic, which indicates that he had received some education.

Their first child, Maria Elisabeth Petronilla, was born on April 15, 1790.⁹ Her rather extravagant name was derived from her baptismal sponsor, "the noble young lady, Maria Elisabeth Petronilla Breunig, [daughter?] of the legate in charge of the domestic economy." The use of three names in baptismal entries was an unusual practice, two names were more typical.

⁷ Linnartz 1958 states that the term for "miller" has several alternate forms in old records -- *Mülterer*, *Müller*, *Müldner*, *Miltner*, and so on.

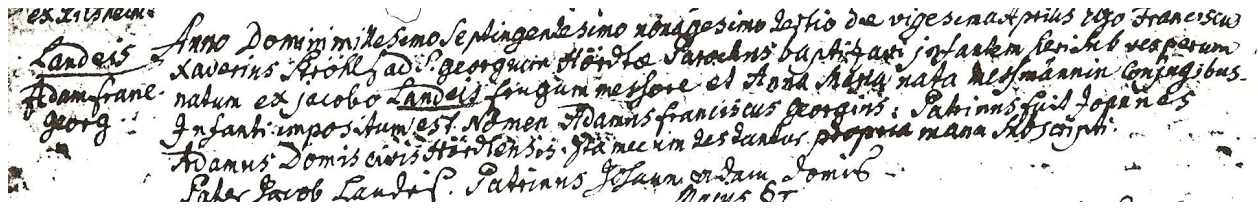
⁸ Mörz 1986, p. 461.

⁹ LDS microfilm #0247717.

Noble families tended to use three, or even more names, as a mark of prestige and the priest was usually careful to include all their titles. In this case, since a woman of status consented to be the godmother, it may be indicative of Jacob's rank with the regional authorities in the *Kellerei* at Hördt.

Their second child, Maria Appollonia, was born on July 12, 1791. The godmother was Maria Appollonia Klein, wife of Anton Klein, "tax collector" and citizen of Hördt. This again indicates Jacob's tie with the local civic administration.

The third child (who is the next lineal ancestor in this chronicle), was Adam Franz (Francis) Georg, born on April 19, 1793. The godfather was Johann Adam Domis, a citizen of Hördt. The baby's second name, Francis, was probably given in honor of the priest, Fr. Francis Kröhl. The third name, Georg, was perhaps given in honor of the patron saint of the parish. The later census records in Russia refer to him simply as Adam, which was the main name he used.



Birth of Adam Franz Georg Landeis, April 19, 1793¹⁰

"In the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred ninety three, day twenty of April, I Franciscis Xavier Kröhl at Saint George Hördt parish, have baptized an infant, born yesterday just before evening, to Jacob Landeis, crop measurer, and Anna Maria, born Messmann, a married couple. The infant was given the name Adam Francis Georg. The godfather was Johann Adam Domis, citizen of the city of Hördt. This is attested by my hand, written below. Father Jacob Landeis. Godfather Johann Adam Domis."

The fourth child, Anton was born on Oct. 5, 1794. The parish priest who wrote all previous entries, Fr. Francis Xavier Kröhl, disappeared in 1794 and a new pastor took over at Hördt. This was likely due to the law that had been passed in 1793, which made all priests who refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the French Constitution subject to the death penalty. Many priests fled across the Rhine, and as a result there are gaps in the church book records around that time. In the interim, Anton's birth was recorded by a priest who wrote in an extremely florid German Gothic script. This entry describes Jacob's profession as the *Administrations Mültterer*, which has been discussed above. Although the title of Georg Anton Klein is not stated, he was the local "tax collector" and husband to Maria Appollonia Klein, who had served as godmother to Jacob Landeis' daughter in 1791:

¹⁰ LDS microfilm 0247613.

Am 5ten 8ber 1794. hat dem Jacob Landeiß Administrations Müllter
in der Hofmannshördt, sein Weib Anna Maria Landeiß
ein gebornes Mässmann von Leimersheim, im Vöhrungsbuch
morgens um 5 Uhr, und ist getauft. A worden Georg Anton, der Pöhrer
ist Georg Anton Klein Bürger von hier.

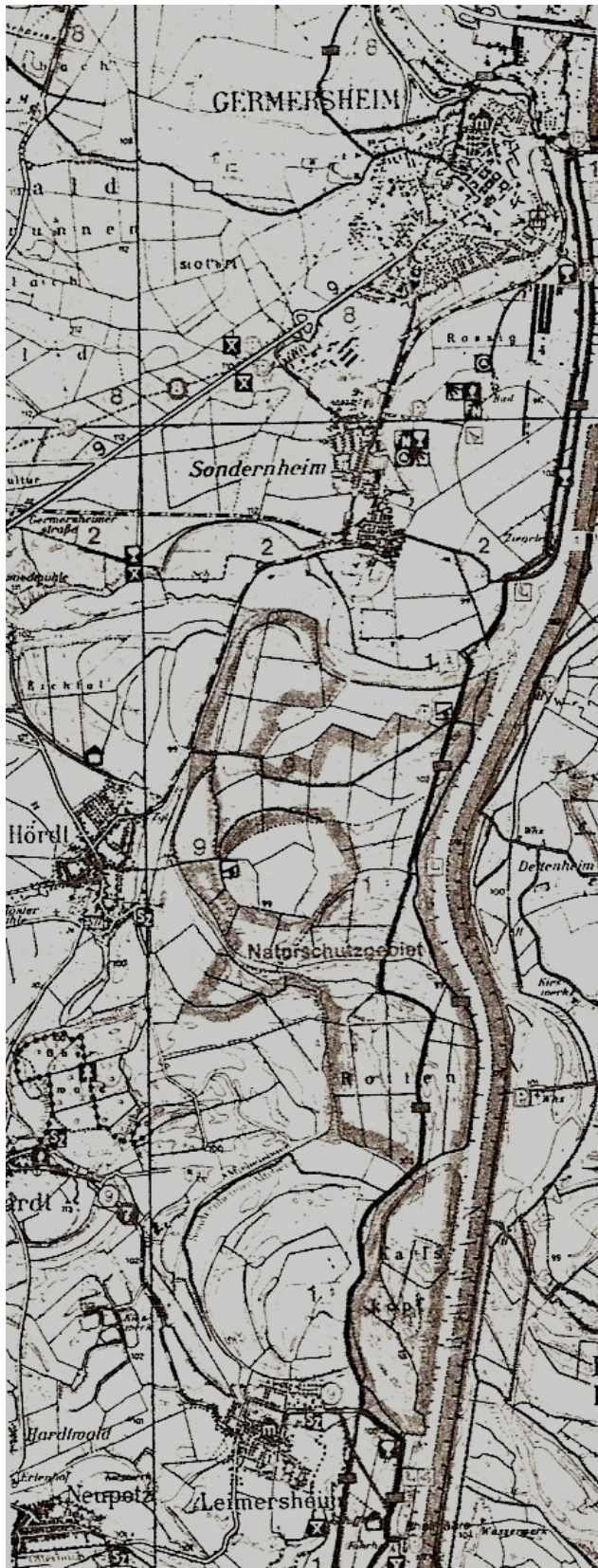
Birth of Anton Landeis, Oct. 5, 1794 in Hördt

"On the 5th of October ["8ber"] 1794 at 5 A.M. a little son was born to Jacob Landeiss, Administrations Mültterer in the Treasury Hördt, and his wife Anna Maria Landeiss, born Mässmänn of Leimersheim, and was baptized. Georg Anton Klein, a citizen here, is the godfather."

Jacob and Anna had eight children in total. Their fifth child, Maria Catherina, was born on April 14, 1796. She died the following year on May 26, 1797, scarcely one year old. On October 11, 1798 their next daughter Francisca was born. Another son Daniel was born in 1800, although he doesn't appear in the Hördt church book (he is listed among their children later in the Russian census records, after the family emigrated in 1809). Their eighth and final child Margaret was born on August 2, 1804. Her godmother was listed as Margaret Messmann, "a married woman from Leimersheim." This probably was Anna Maria's married sister. The church book of Hördt also reports that on July 9, 1804 the four oldest children (Adam, Anton, Elisabeth, and Appollonia) were confirmed, along with 36 other boys and 35 girls in the parish

Jacob's position as crop measurer for the Administration at Hördt is not mentioned after the 1794 baptismal record, so it unknown if he managed to retain this position after this date.

Jacob Landeiß



Germersheim and Hördt
on the West Bank of the Rhine

Chapter 10

Historical Background: Under the Domination of the French

Jacob and Anna Landeis' hopes and dreams for an undisturbed family life, as well as those of thousands of other German families along the Rhine, were unalterably changed after a French mob stormed the Bastille on July 14, 1789 and unleashed the forces of the French Revolution on the continent. By 1792 the *Rheinpfalz* had once again fallen under the grip of the French, but this time they intended to make the occupation permanent. The German villagers were subjected to ruinous taxation, their local government and economy was disrupted, their crops were confiscated to support the occupying French army, and perhaps worst of all their sons were conscripted to serve Napoleon's grandiose military ambitions. This chapter will explore these events in detail to provide a background for understanding the next wave of emigration fever that swept the Rhinelands.

The French Revolutionary Era

After the fall of the Bastille in 1789, control of the country passed to the French National Assembly, which imposed sweeping political, economic, religious, and cultural changes. In the ensuing two years all "feudal regimes" in France were abolished. The hereditary titles of the various princes were eliminated, their land holdings were confiscated. The Catholic Church was made subordinate to the state, monasteries were closed, and ecclesiastical lands were nationalized.

The governments of Europe were alarmed, rightly fearing that the Revolutionary turmoil might spread across the Rhine, and that another wave of French expansionism would be unleashed. As a precautionary measure, Prussia and Austria formed a defensive alliance in 1792. The French National Assembly, obsessed with conspiracy theories, was convinced that forces everywhere were mobilizing against them. As a result, in 1792 the National Assembly declared war on Prussia and Austria, claiming that their coalition was evidence of a plan to invade and to restore the old regime.

Seizing the initiative, the National Assembly mobilized the national guard and marched into Belgium, which at that time was owned by the Austrian Habsburgs. The hastily assembled French army was deluded by the hyperbole and rhetoric of the Revolution and ill-equipped for the realities of war. The French soldiers expected that they would be welcomed as liberators when they marched across the Belgian border. Their morale quickly collapsed at the first signs of resistance by the professional Austrian army. As the French troops retreated they cried treason and turned against their own officers. The Austrian army, joined by the Prussians in the Rhinelands, confidently pursued them into France and won a series of victories.

These setbacks triggered another period of mob violence in Paris. After the Austrians and Prussians were turned back at Valmy in September, 1792 the reinvigorated French army renewed the offensive. Launching a dual attack, they conquered Belgium and -- despite the efforts of *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor to remain neutral -- they pushed northward out of Alsace into the Pfalz and seized his territory along the Rhine up to Frankfurt.

In the flush of victory in 1793 the French Assembly proclaimed that the country was a Republic and beheaded Louis XVI. Their ambitions soon waxed out of control.

The Assembly declared war on England and Holland and announced that they were going to export the Revolution throughout Europe.

Europe was appalled by these excesses and shocked at the unexpected French victories. In 1793 the First Coalition formed, consisting of Austria, Prussia, England, Spain, Holland, Portugal, Sardinia, Naples, and various states of the Holy Roman Empire. Renewed by these expanded forces, the allies soon pushed the French back out of Belgium and the Rhinelands, all the way to Strasburg. As the French armies retreated they plundered villages in their path, leaving ruination in their wake. The allies were too fragmented to take advantage of their victories and they could not keep on the offensive. Later that year, having conscripted a massive army of 300,000, the French counter-attacked and pushed the allies back north of the Weisseburg line, forcing them to withdraw across the Rhine in December, 1793. The entire west side of the Rhine was a theater for war throughout 1794 as the French military remained on the offensive. They reconquered Belgium, pushed on to take all of the Low Countries, and also began launching attacks eastward across the Rhine.

Prussia, Spain and Holland made peace in 1795. Holland was transformed into a puppet government of the French, named the Batavian Republic. Prussia was still preoccupied with the partition of Poland, and thus decided to follow a neutralist course, abandoning all claims to its territories on the west bank of the Rhine at the treaty of Basel in April, 1795.

This left Austria alone to shoulder the burden of defending the German states, which it was ill-prepared to do. In September, 1795 the French attacked across the river at Mannheim. *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor, who had tried in vain to remain neutral, surrendered the city without resistance. The French proceeded to attack the Neckar valley toward Heidelberg, but they were finally turned back by the Austrian army under Würmser. The Austrians took the lead and spearheaded attacks across the river, which caused the French to temporarily withdraw from most of the Pfalz. However, the victories of the young Napoleon in Italy forced the Austrians to withdraw in 1796, and the Pfalz once again was in the hands of the French. Thus began a protracted, painful, and unchallenged period of military hegemony and exploitation of the Rhinelands by the French that didn't end until 1814.¹

The Palatinate Under French Occupation

The people of the Rhine Pfalz were quickly swept up in the opening act of these dramatic events. By 1792 they once again witnessed the spectacle of great armies passing back and forth through their territories, confiscating their grain, horses, and other supplies. This was just one more chapter in a depressingly familiar story of invasion and exploitation.²

An even grimmer second act soon followed, known as the Reign of Terror. In 1793 the Revolutionary government took a deadly turn under Robespierre and began lashing out at its own citizens, seeking revenge against suspected collaborators. The Committee of Public Safety announced that all "royalists and reactionaries" were to be killed. Revolutionary tribunals were installed throughout the country to weed out so-

¹ Sheehan 1989.

² Applegate 1990, p. 22.

called enemies of the state. During the Terror, from late 1793 through 1794, about 3,000 executions occurred in Paris, and 14,000 in the provinces. Trivial acts were considered treasonous. The victims included not only protestors, but also many farmers who were accused of crimes such as "food hoarding." Relatives of the condemned were targeted, and also those who spoke out against the executions. Young girls were beheaded for having danced with Prussian soldiers. One man was executed for shouting "*Vive le Roi.*" Merchants who sold materials of poor quality were considered to "lack faith" in the Revolutionary regime. A shop-keeper was beheaded for selling sour wine. A cobbler was executed for selling to the government "two pairs of shoes of poor quality, the soles of which were stuffed with old leather." A candle maker was guillotined for supplying the navy with candles made of turpentine and grease instead of wax, which only burned for 21 minutes instead of the prescribed 24 hours. Refusal to accept the "*assignats*" (revolutionary currency) at face value was punishable by death. Efforts to avoid conscription into the military were treasonous. A father was executed for trying to smuggle his 14 year old son out of the country to avoid military service. There were cases of prisoners being executed mistakenly because of clerical errors. Most of the executed were not nobles (they had already fled the country). About 85% of the victims came from the "Third Estate," that is, commoners and peasants.³

The Revolutionary tribunal hauled the guillotine from village to village in Alsace and the people watched helplessly as their leading citizens were publicly executed. As the slaughter accelerated, the revolutionaries declared their intention to kill all the "cowards and traitors" in Alsace who had supposedly collaborated with the allied armies. The loyalty of the Alsatians was suspect because of their German ethnicity. A representative of the government proposed that one-fourth of the population be guillotined and that the remainder should be driven out of the country and replaced by native French.⁴ This led to a mass panic, known as *La Grande Fuite* (the Great Flight) of 1793. Thousands of people throughout Alsace fled for safety across the Rhine, following the retreating armies of the German allies. This was one contemporary report:

Everybody fled, forsaking father, wife, children, and all their belongings. People fled without their clothes, the rich without their money, the mother without the baby to whom she had recently given birth. Entire villages became empty and deserted; the shops had no workers; the plows had no farm hands. All the roads leading to the Rhine were crowded with swarms of wretched, confused, and terror-stricken humanity. The Rhine crossing at Lauterburg was jammed by the mounting flood of refugees. Some women, in despair of reaching the other side, threw themselves with their infants into the river, so as not to fall into the hands of the ferocious revolutionaries.⁵

At least 40,000 people fled from Alsace during this period, mostly from the northern areas near Weissenbourg and Hagenau. Although the Pfalz was not yet formally annexed by France and its citizens could not be considered "treasonous," an

³ Hibbert 1980, p. 227; Greer 1935, p. 78.

⁴ Height 1972, p. 26.

⁵ Height 1972, p. 26.

estimated 30,000 people there also fled for safety and to avoid the pillaging of the French soldiers.

At first the refugees fled to the unoccupied regions of the Pfalz, but as the French armies advanced more people fled across the Rhine. Many were camped around Mannheim, where the authorities created emergency food kitchens and a hospital to help care for them. Refugees were scattered all the way from Heidelberg to Freiburg in the Black Forest. For the next few years bands of homeless people wandered about, attempting to filter across the river in any way possible to their homes. In 1794 about 10,000 people were reported to be waiting across the river from the crossing point at Germersheim to return to the Pfalz, and the number of Alsatians was much larger.

This mass evacuation of farms and estates, which in most cases was only a temporary safety measure by the people, presented the authorities with the opportunity to confiscate their property and to put it at the disposal of the State. The refugees were labeled as “emigres,” and detailed lists were drawn up of their property. Many farms and houses, including furniture and even clothing, were auctioned off by French officials at ridiculously low prices, sometimes given outright to supporters of the regime and to carpetbaggers who moved in to take advantage of the situation.

However, the huge number of refugees soon created a problem for the French. Over 75% of them were farmers and craftsmen, and the authorities had to devise a solution to provide for the needs of their army and to support the local economy. A partial amnesty was declared in January, 1795, for refugees who would return by March of that year. However, the amnesty applied only to those who “worked with their hands,” and they had to pay double taxes, as well as any costs incurred if their property had been confiscated or leased out by the authorities during their absence.⁶

In response, a flood of refugees attempted to cross the Rhine to reclaim their homes. The local bureaucrats and usurpers didn't wish to return their property, so they arranged to have the boats turned back at most crossing points. This deplorable situation wasn't finally resolved until 1799 under the Triumvirate, when all refugees were allowed to return.⁷ They were treated with hostility by the new landowners who had taken over their farms. To prevent mass starvation, the government allowed them to enter the lands after the harvest to glean whatever meager grain had been left behind.

The worst period for the *Pfälzers* was the “plunder winter” of 1793-94, memories of which still live in local tales about the horrors of those times. After the allies withdrew from the west bank late in 1793, the French formed a *Commission d'évacuation du Palatinat*, which implemented local “seizure commissions” (*Commissaires de Grippe*) to completely plunder the Pfalz. They carried this out so systematically and thoroughly that the word *gripsen* is still used in the local dialect to denote thievery.

The atrocities committed by the French soldiers during these early years of military occupation have been described in graphic detail by Blanning.⁸ French propaganda portrayed its armies as “liberators,” and they expected the German people to pay for this privilege. The officers demanded instant levies from the people under their control, and the amounts were often staggering. If the townspeople couldn't pay, the army simply confiscated what it wished. On one occasion when the villagers

⁶ Martin 1978, p. 77.

⁷ Height 1972, p. 29.

⁸ Blanning 1983.

protested, a Jacobine official responded, “everything belongs to us; all that will be left for you are eyes for weeping.”⁹ This was a contemporary report from Neustadt:

By decree of the welfare committee, the conquered lands must support the military. The superintendants wanted hostages selected among the wealthy and privileged and the aristocracy and the church officials, for the payment of war taxes. Horses, cattle, food supplies, fodder, linen, shirts, and anything else that wasn't necessary for the support of the army, should be sent to France. [The citizens of Neustadt were ordered to provide] ... 10,000 pairs of shoes, new or otherwise in good condition, 10,000 pairs of pants of any color, 20,000 shirts and 10,000 jackets or coats. In addition to these natural products, they also had to provide 4,000,000 *livres* in hard currency within one week.¹⁰

Another report from Speyer in 1794 states that 3,000 wagons were required to haul away the booty from their city. In order to discover any valuables that may have been buried in cellars and gardens, the *Sansculottes* poured water onto the ground and wherever it soaked in the fastest, they dug it up.

They broke open and emptied all the municipal funds, they forced the citizens to deliver on the spot requisitions of every kind, they looted, they vandalized a number of private houses, they imposed a levy of 400,000 *livres* in cash on pain of drastic penalties.

However crushing a demand of this kind, we strove to meet it, asking even our poorest citizens to give their all and to forgo all their necessities. We hoped to earn the goodwill of the Republic by the most docile observance of its orders.

Vain hopes! We were cruelly disillusioned by the sight of barbarious episodes, which soon followed...

[They] arranged for the emptying of all cellars, all granaries, and the seizing of all basic foodstuffs. Far from respecting at least the homes of the poor and the orphaned, they took all they possessed, right down to the bread in their mouths and the straw on their beds. They took all the bells, without exception; even those which sounded the hours were thrown down from the bell-towers. They took by force horses, livestock in general, goods lodged at the customs house, and from the shops: cloth, linen, groceries, leather, bedsteads, tin, copper, brass, tools of every kind, furniture, clothing. The windows of all the churches were broken on the order of the commissars; the interiors were vandalized; the organs dismantled; the lead from the steeples, the slates from the roofs, the wrought-iron work from the windows, doors, and staircases -- it was all torn out and taken away.¹¹

⁹ Height 1972, p. 27.

¹⁰ Cited in Thalmann 1981, p. 159.

¹¹ Cited in Blanning 1983, p. 117.

The Attack on the Roman Catholic Church

The Catholic Church, to which the majority of the French people belonged, had enjoyed a special status as the official state religion under previous French regimes. During the Revolution the Church therefore was subject to special attack. The first step by the Assembly was to terminate Catholicism as the religion of the State and to establish freedom of worship. In 1789, Protestants were declared eligible to serve in all offices and any of their possessions that had been seized were restored. In August, 1789, the Assembly decreed that the taxing power of the Church was terminated, all Church property in France was confiscated, and it began to be sold at public auctions. In July of 1790, the clergy were pronounced to be employees of the state, elected by their parish or bishopric, and the number of bishoprics was to be reduced. All priests and bishops were required to swear an oath of fidelity to the new government, or face dismissal, deportation or death. This law was made even more stringent in 1793, when it was ordained that all priests who refused to swear an oath of allegiance were subject to death on sight, as well as any persons who harboured them. In the occupied Pfalz, The French officials were also enforcing similar oaths of allegiance on the local people, under threat that if they refused they would be "treated as a conquered people." Catholic priests were outspoken critics of these enforced oaths, as well as vigorous protestors against the confiscation and sale of Church property. The Archbishop of Speyer threatened excommunication of anyone who purchased confiscated Church property. Supposedly, some priests even encouraged their parishioners to flee across the Rhine, although the comparative numbers available for Catholic emigres are not conclusive.¹²

Of all classes of persons victimized during the French Revolution -- aristocrats, peasants accused of hoarding, and so on -- the clergy of the Catholic Church suffered proportionately the greatest losses. Hundreds of clergy were murdered during periodic outbursts of violence that erupted. In 1792, during the September Massacres, three bishops and more than 200 priests were massacred by angry mobs. Priests were drowned, and at Lyon there were mass executions of priests and nuns. Hundreds more priests were imprisoned and kept in miserable conditions.

During the years of the Terror under Robespierre, a bizarre "Cult of the Supreme Being" was instituted by the State. It was touted as a "Cult of Reason," a rational belief system intended to replace all other religions, especially Catholicism, which was regarded as a relic of Medieval superstition. In 1793 all Catholic churches were closed and worship services were prohibited. In their place, a great celebration of the Goddess of Reason was held in Notre Dame Cathedral.

Rampant looting of churches and monasteries took place throughout France and in the occupied Pfalz in the early years of the Revolution. Statues, crucifixes, bells, and other overt signs of religious worship were destroyed. Religious practices were targets of ridicule and malicious behavior by the soldiers. There are many surviving first-hand descriptions of these times. In the Archbishopric of Speyer, the French used the cathedral as an ammunition magazine and storage warehouse, and they almost auctioned off the entire cathedral for a few thousand *francs*. They disrupted church services and where the organ had played *Te Deums*, the French frolicked to the tune of

¹² Martin 1978, p. 50.

the *Marseillaise*.¹³ Soldiers ridiculed the people when they celebrated religious feast days. They lit their pipes from the sacred candles, drank the communion wine, defecated into tabernacles, mutilated crucifixes, emptied the *ciborium* and trampled the Communion wafers on the ground, sometimes pinning them on their hats as decorations or feeding them to their horses. Statues of the Virgin were desecrated and sexually profaned. Some soldiers copulated with prostitutes inside the churches. The following is typical:

On the 12th of March 1794 a donkey was led through the streets in a kind of procession; on its head was placed a mitre bearing the motto: 'The ass is mightier than the Pope.' Dressed up in priestly vestments, the French waved incense over the rear quarters of the donkey (also clad in clerical robes), while shouting the most hair-raising blasphemies and abuse of the clergy. They even pretended -- oh, what a disgusting crime! -- to stuff the consecrated host into the donkey's anus. While this was going on, they kept up a frightful wailing from their hymn-books. First the procession went through the town, then out of the town through the *Kuhtor* [cattle gate] to the Rhine, where the donkey and his mitre were thrown into the river.¹⁴

By 1795 a return to church services was beginning to be tolerated. A law was passed in February, 1795, which legalized religious ceremonies inside churches, but all public processions and pilgrimages, the display of the cross, and the ringing of church bells were prohibited. Civil marriage was compulsory. All births, deaths, and marriages were officially recorded in the town halls by civil servants, rather than by priests. A new calendar was introduced, which omitted religious holidays and divided the week into ten day periods (*decades*). Sundays were replaced by secular days of rest, which occurred on the tenth day rather than on the seventh, stirring considerable resentment among the people.

By 1801 most of the property of the Catholic Church had been secularized and auctioned off to the highest bidders. Napoleon eventually agreed, in a Concordat with the Pope, to pay some restitution for lost church properties and local bishops were again allowed to celebrate the Mass in those churches that had not already been disposed of.

Napoleon's Grand Design for Europe

The early excesses of the Revolution and the Reign of Terror had largely run their course by 1795, and some semblance of order was restored under the Directorate. In 1799 the Triumvirate headed by Napoleon came to power. He officially pronounced that the Revolution was over, revolutionary laws were abolished and a new constitution was drafted.

The French National Assembly regarded the Rhine as the "natural boundary" for France to the east and it had no intention of ever abdicating control of this region. In 1797 Napoleon's armies defeated the Austrians near Vienna. At the Treaty of Campo

¹³ Stieler 1898.

¹⁴ Cited in Blanning 1983, p. 222.

Formio, in October, 1797, the Austrian Habsburgs ceded control of all the Rhinelands to France. That same year the Paris government took the first step toward wholesale annexation of the conquered territories. Four new *departements*, or administrative units, were created, the southernmost one being Mont-Tonnerre (Donnersberg), which included the Pfalz and areas around Mainz. At the peace of Luneville in February, 1801, all the new *departements* on the west bank were declared part of France, and they officially constituted the new border with the Holy Roman Empire. In 1802 the French constitution was extended to the region, an independent judiciary system was established in each town, and a new set of rights was proclaimed for the residents. Existing civil and criminal law codes were abolished, along with the old aristocracy, the town constitutions, and the guilds.

In 1804, with great pomp and splendor, Napoleon was crowned Emperor of the French and proclaimed the new Charlemagne. The Holy Roman Empire was formally dissolved on 6 August 1806 following a military defeat by the French. Napoleon reorganised much of the empire into the Confederation of the Rhine, a French satellite. He toyed with the notion of formally assuming the title of Holy Roman Emperor, but settled for the abdication of this title by Franz II in 1806, thus closing the final chapter on an institution that had survived for over one thousand years, since the time of Charlemagne.

Current historical research has unveiled the true extent of the exploitation of Europe that occurred during these years. Given the benefit of historical hindsight, it seems odd that there has been ongoing scholarly debate on this issue, which continues even today. The arrogant exploitation by the French during these years has often been obscured by an idealistic fascination with the “grandeur” of Napoleon. His deeds have been reinterpreted periodically by French historians to suit varying political climates.¹⁵ For a few decades after his fall, Napoleon was idolized and romanticized as a nostalgic symbol of France’s lost power. Bonapartism fell into disfavor in the 1850s and 1860s in reaction to the semi-dictatorial regime of Napoleon III. The tarnish was again removed from Napoleon's image after France’s defeat by the Prussians in 1870, when Bonaparte became a symbol of the French desire for revenge. Since the 1930s, with the work of historians such as George Lefebvre, a more objective view began to emerge of Napoleon's domination of the continent.

Even today, however, some historians -- and not all of them French -- diminish the gravity of this military hegemony by claiming that Napoleon did central Europe “a favor,” that he ushered in a new era of “democracy” and “modernized” Germany by eliminating the old feudal regimes. It has been argued that France was so politically advanced over the rest of Europe that it was the “duty” of Frenchmen to speed the evolution of the continent by their “benevolent” rule.¹⁶ The Holy Roman Empire is depicted as corrupt, inept, and long overdue for its demise. The mood of the German masses under French domination is often distorted and the so-called popular enthusiasm for “liberation” is exaggerated. The skeptic will note that there are striking parallels with the arguments once used by the Soviets to justify the excesses during the Russian Revolution and their ensuing domination of Eastern Europe. In both cases we find that a bloody revolution occurred, the nobility were obliterated, the leading farmers

¹⁵ Geyl 1949.

¹⁶ Wright 1974, p. 80.

were executed for “food hoarding,” the same mystique of world conquest disguised as “liberation” was promulgated, a similar power struggle developed between the “Red” Terror under Robespierre followed by a “White” Terror under the Directorate, and exploitative dictatorial rule was imposed on Europe.

The French historian Lefebvre challenged the popular imagery and offered a revisionist assessment. Napoleon’s blind ambition had betrayed the French people and the ideals of the Revolution, and he led the country on a collective path of mass destruction. Lefebvre pointed out that the much vaunted Napoleonic Code, which supposedly ushered in an era of legal equality, was a hypocrisy because it was applied differently in the subjugated territories. After Napoleon seized the estates of the clergy and the nobility he was irresistibly tempted to continue levying feudal tithes on the peasants, since these tithes were the primary reason why the estates had value. Feudal lords were simply replaced with Napoleon’s own appointees, or in many cases he continued to use the same nobility to administer the subjugated realms in his name. After Napoleon conquered Lombardy, Milan, Parma, Tuscany, and the Papal States in 1796, he turned Italy into his personal plaything. Napoleon and his key generals emerged as wealthy men from the Italian campaign due to the vast sums that they expropriated and extorted from the various regional governments. In both Italy and in the Rhineland art treasures were systematically looted from churches, museums, and private estates and sent back to Paris for display in the Louvre. He installed his brother Jerome as ruler of Westphalia, and urged him to use ruthless punishment if the people objected to his rule. In short, Napoleon’s empire has been denounced as a vast “criminal enterprise” headed by a man who in his character and methods was a great “*capo mafioso*.”¹⁷

A Revised View of the Holy Roman Empire

Along with the revision of Napoleon’s hegemony over Europe, some historians have also challenged the common view that the Holy Roman Empire was a backward, obsolete and socially stunted social institution, which was mercifully laid to rest by the hand of Napoleon, the great “modernizer.” Research since the 1960s has reevaluated this stereotype, and in the process new ground was broken in our understanding of the nature of the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁸

Blanning¹⁹ has done a thorough job of exploding the myth that the people in the Rhineland were “liberated” under French rule. He also challenges the stereotype that the Holy Roman Empire was a dysfunctional and anachronistic remnant of feudalism. Within the territories in the Empire the lifestyles of the people had changed markedly by the 1700s. Serfdom had been abolished in most areas and replaced by a system of tenant farming and limited contracts of indentureship (the *Leibeigenen* were being replaced by *Heuerlinge*). With the growth of cities as commercial centers, organized labor had become extremely powerful through the guild system. Social welfare institutions and charities were well developed in the late 1700s -- orphanages, geriatric homes, hospitals, poor houses, asylums, more humane prisons, state granaries for periods of famine, and

¹⁷ Schroeder 1990, p. 343.

¹⁸ Wilson 1993, Strauss 1978.

¹⁹ Blanning 1982.

so on. The nobility regularly gave alms and the monasteries had a traditional obligation to feed the poor. States such as the Pfalz were considerably more tolerant of religious diversity by that point than was France, which had promoted a monolithic state Catholicism during the old regime, and which was openly anti-religious during the Revolutionary years.²⁰

Wegert²¹ attacks “old clichés” that the people of the Holy Roman Empire in the late 18th century were locked in the grip of “mute obedience, popular quietude, and inflexible authority.” He documents that it would be more accurate to characterize western Germany, especially the Rhineland, as being in a dynamic and protracted period of jostling for power at the local level. There were numerous instances of civil unrest by the lower middle-class urban *Bürgerschaft*. Guild members vigorously protected their rights and trade monopolies (e.g., the *Knoten-Revolution* in Mainz in 1790). Such conflicts were so common that the 18th century has been referred to as the “age of the journeymen’s rebellion.” There were also numerous instances of protest by local peasantry against corrupt and unjust local officials, unfair taxes, and so on. More often than not the ruling elites were forced to negotiate to preserve order, and this civil unrest resulted in constitutional improvements for the citizenry.

In sum, Wegert proposes that once we are “freed from the hypnotic effect of Jacobin ideals,” it becomes possible to recognize the German *ancien régime* in a more positive light. The Holy Roman Empire had survived since the days of Charlemagne not as a fossilized anachronism, but rather it had evolved into a loose, regionally diverse framework with an elaborate set of checks and balances which prevented any party, including the Emperor, from gaining too much power. In contrast to other countries, such as France and England, which had become more rigidly centralized, the broad social fabric of the Holy Roman Empire tolerated a multitude of “home town” governments which had great autonomy and latitude to resolve local issues, and they jealously guarded their prerogatives. If left alone, the local traditions of communalism and pluralism that were so much a part of German society would have evolved into a system similar to the Swiss model.²²

Wegert characterizes the French as “spoilers” of this long and dynamic social evolution that was taking place in German territories in the 18th century. Despite Jacobin propaganda about liberation, after the arrival of French troops in 1792 they forcibly stifled any expressions of civil discontent. The collapse of the Holy Roman Empire and the ensuing incorporation of the many small towns and territories into larger political units under French control effectively short-circuited the ability to resolve issues at the local level.²³

Viewed in this light, it should be no surprise that the great majority of Germans did not greet the march of the French armies with enthusiasm. Rather than feeling oppressed by the Holy Roman Empire, as some historians alleged, the great majority of the German people under French domination yearned for its reinstatement. Jacobin political clubs had formed in some German cities, primarily Mainz, Worms, and Speyer, spearheaded by “a very small number of enthusiastic German reformers” and

²⁰ Wilson 1993.

²¹ Wegert 1981.

²² Walker 1971; Strauss 1978.

²³ Wegert, 1981, p. 462.

intellectuals who were initially dazzled by the mystique of the Revolution.²⁴ Once the realities of military hegemony became apparent, many were disillusioned and they became a focal point for nationalist resistance.

The regime of *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor, who died in 1799, was regarded with nostalgia by many *Pfälzers*. As one contemporary observer noted:

The trans-Rhine people seem to have the opinion that the lumpen-fighters of the French Republic impose much harder demands than the [former] Pfalz officials.²⁵

The French systematically proceeded to annex the entire west bank of the Rhine. In 1793 they issued annexation decrees that unilaterally severed 32 villages in the south Pfalz from the Holy Roman Empire. They also tried to engineer consent among the occupied peoples for further annexations. Elections were ordered for new municipal governments throughout the west bank of the Rhine, in preparation for a national convention to be held in Mainz to rubber-stamp their acceptance of French rule. Male citizens could not vote unless they swore an oath of loyalty to Jacobine principles of "freedom and equality." There was enthusiasm among some Jacobine intellectuals for a "Mainz Republic," but to their utter dismay and that of the French, most Rhinelanders refused:

Brow-beating, threats of heavy taxation and of village burnings did little to motivate Mainz citizens or Palatinate townsmen to accept the proffered ideals. In the countryside the people occasionally tried to bribe the soldiers sent in to administer the oath, as in Edesheim where this strategy cost the town twenty *Louis d'or* daily. In Winnweiler the electoral commissioner was captured and his escort of forty *Chasseurs* sent fleeing to choruses of 'Long live the Emperor, to Hell with the French!' A petition submitted to the French by Speyer citizens in which they emphasized that they were quite content to retain their present constitution and their 'popularly elected authority' summarized the prevailing sentiment nicely.²⁶

²⁴ Wegert, 1981, p. 460.

²⁵ Cited in Hartkopf 1989.

²⁶ Citation from Wegert 1981, p. 461. Thalman 1981, p. 158 tries to put a positive gloss on these forced elections by characterizing them as "the first modern elections on German soil." This, however, ignores the fact that municipal elections for members of the city councils were a widespread practice throughout the Holy Roman Empire long before the French conquest. Wegert 1981 notes that in Mainz, which was a center of Jacobine enthusiasm, only about 375 out of an eligible population of 10,000 swore the oath. Landau was the sole major exception at that time. This city, located in the heart of the Pfalz, had been occupied and formally annexed by the French in the late 17th century. The French wanted to hold it as a strategic bastion near the doorstep of the Alsatian border. Louis XIV commissioned his architects to redesign the city, and it was fortified with elaborate walls and moats. Over time the Landauers came to think of themselves as citizens of France rather than of the Empire. When the Revolution occurred in 1789, many citizens enthusiastically joined the local Jacobine club.

In some villages, such as Insheim, the citizens did indeed vote to accept the French Constitution in 1799, but the proclamation that was read by officials before the election made the consequences of a negative vote very clear:

The French regime, in the spirit of the great and noble principles of the Republican Constitution, has the fervent desire that the conquered lands, whose territories are proclaimed to be eternally united with the Republic, should be allowed, as soon as possible, to participate in all the advantages of this Constitution. In order to be allowed to participate, the residents themselves must first solemnly and firmly express their common desire for the final unification with the great Nation. In the event that this doesn't happen, the regime can only, with the best of will, regard and treat the blessed slopes of the Rhine, the Maas and the Mosel, as conquered lands...²⁷

The Economic Impact of the French Occupation

Beneath the smoke-screen of "liberation" the true nature of the conquest was soon revealed to the Rhinelanders. The National Assembly decreed that France would forcibly liberate all of Europe and the masses had to pay for this privilege by supporting the occupation armies. The Jacobins regarded this as a "modest price for liberty."²⁸ This rhetoric was a thin disguise for massive expropriation of resources and exploitation of the people. These deprivations were claimed to be only temporary due to the demands of the wars; however, the wars simply accelerated under Napoleon.

Some historians have claimed that Europe benefited economically from the forcible integration of the continent under Napoleon, and that trade blossomed from the removal of tariff barriers. This could potentially have happened, as when the states of southern Germany were united into the Confederation of the Rhine. In reality, such an economic boom didn't occur because the French government instituted a new structure of trade barriers and tariffs to transform Europe into their economic colony, to reduce it to a passive market for the export of French manufactured goods. This program ostensibly began as an attempt to blockade France against England, which at that time was the world's premier industrial power. The National Assembly threatened to imprison anyone caught owning or using British goods, or even wearing clothing made in England. In 1806 trade embargos were expanded by Napoleon into the "Continental System," which included all of Europe. This grandiose scheme was designed to transform Europe into a vast sealed market, with France replacing England as dominator of the trade. Napoleon clearly stated his policy:

My fundamental principle is, France first and foremost (*la France avant tout*). You must never lose sight of the fact that if English trade triumphs on the seas it is because the English are the strongest there. It is reasonable, therefore, that as France is the strongest on land, French trade should also triumph there.²⁹

²⁷ Cited in Fritz 1982.

²⁸ Wegert, 1981, p. 462.

²⁹ Cited in Heckscher, 1964, p. 297.

Schroeder³⁰ has described the Continental System as “anti-economic” from the ground up, little more than a “vast experiment in colonialism.” The effect of the trade restrictions imposed by the Continental System was destructive for the industry and commerce of most countries in Europe. The port cities of Hamburg, Bremen, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, as well as all of the Hanseatic cities on the Baltic, were entirely dependent on foreign trade and they suffered greatly. The chief industrial regions such as the Grand Duchy of Berg (the Ruhr valley in Germany) and Switzerland experienced major economic depressions. Even agricultural areas were hard hit by loss of their overseas markets.

Beneath the protectionist umbrella, certain French industries blossomed during these years. The chemicals industry expanded to compensate for the shortages of products such as dyes and indigo. The scarcity of sugar in Europe stimulated a rapid growth of sugar beet farming in France. A huge network of commercial spies was maintained throughout southern Germany to ensure that these countries did not erect tariff barriers or otherwise prevent the transport of French goods throughout Europe. To facilitate the intrusion of French goods into the European market, the centuries-old commercial ties of Switzerland and southern Germany with Italy were cut, and Italy was reduced to economic dependency. Economic barriers were created to prevent Italy from buying manufactured goods from any country but France, and most of its raw materials (such as raw silk) could be exported only to France. In this fashion France developed monopolies to strengthen its industries at the expense of other countries which were supposed to benefit from the Continental System.

It was impossible to police such a vast area and smuggling became rampant. Napoleon realized that he could not maintain an airtight embargo and that customs revenue was simply being lost to the smugglers. Therefore in 1809 he began revising the policies in an attempt to regain an advantage for France. At first he simply coerced corrupt customs officials to pay large sums to his personal account -- boasting that he would be able to build a handsome estate out of these revenues at no personal expense.³¹ Then he decided that stolen British goods could be resold openly in France if a tariff of 40% of their value was paid. Finally, by the end of 1810 certain British goods were allowed to enter France under the condition that they were traded equally for French goods (no deficit would result) and also the transport had to be done on French ships.

In this fashion, France became a middleman for British goods on the continent.³² The charade of maintaining a continental embargo was dropped and the true nature of the French trade policy was exposed as an effort to supplant British domination of the European market with a captive consumer outlet for French industry. In order to achieve this goal, internal markets on the continent were disrupted and external competition was blocked as much as possible -- or at least regulated so that France could reap the benefits from the unquenchable demand for British goods.

What impact did French occupation have on the Rhinelands? This region had been annexed by France in 1797, so theoretically the Pfalz should have enjoyed great economic growth under protectionist French policies at the expense of the other

³⁰ Schroeder 1990, pp. 385-393.

³¹ Heckscher 1964, p. 204.

³² Heckscher 1964.

subjugated countries. Some historians have in fact alleged that the period from 1792 to 1814 was an economic success in the Rhinelands. Blanning,³³ however, concludes that throughout the region the negative effects far outweighed the positive. The only major exception was Strasbourg, which was the French administrative center along the Rhine and it benefited from the Continental System. Strasbourg stands out in stark contrast with other communities on the west bank.³⁴

All communities on the west bank of the Rhine, both urban and rural, were used as a source of revenue to support the faltering government in Paris, and the Rhinelands bore the brunt of military occupation longer than any other area of Europe. Until 1798 all of the old Imperial tithes and taxations were left intact and simply taken over by the French generals and to fill their own coffers and support their armies. After this they instituted a new taxation system which was greatly more exploitative than it had ever been under the Holy Roman Empire. In addition the population had to bear other burdens, such as being forcibly conscripted for labor duty to construct roads and military fortifications.

The economy on the west bank was also undermined by the nearly worthless paper currency (*assignats*) issued in great quantity by the National Assembly, which the people were forced to accept at par as payment for expropriated goods and supplies. This was essentially a form of legalized looting. *Assignats* were initially worth only 8% of their face value and by 1795 they had shrunk to 1/1000 in value. Then, in an effort to stabilize the currency, a new form was introduced that year known as *mandats territoriaux*, which also depreciated rapidly to only 1% of face value. The people would accept only metal coins in their daily transactions with each other. Even beggars, it was reported, refused to accept paper currency.³⁵ Although the occupation armies paid for the supplies they requisitioned with paper notes, the populace had to pay their taxes in hard currency (coinage) or in-kind (such as grain or supplies). In this fashion the wealth was eventually siphoned off into the Republic's coffers. After persistent protest, the people were allowed to pay their tax levies partly in currency and partly in-kind. The currency remained unstable until 1803, when Napoleon introduced the *franc*.

Often the villagers protested that they didn't have enough money or supplies to meet the amounts demanded. If a village fell into arrears, 50 French troops would be billeted there and the families had to support them until the debt was paid. The practice of billeting soldiers in private homes was common in the Rhinelands. French officers often brought their wives and families, with a complete entourage of servants, all of whom had to be supported by the host villages. During the 1790s the Rhinelands had to support an occupying force that, together with its dependents, totalled at least a quarter of a million people.³⁶ Throughout the lengthy period of military campaigns, the Rhinelands were the major supplier of the French armies, more so than any other area under French jurisdiction. Since the army was irregularly paid by Paris, soldiers frequently resorted to looting to take what they needed.

The disruption of the ancient trade routes in the Rhine valley led to collapse of the markets for cattle, grain and other food products in the Pfalz, as well as outlets for

³³ Blanning 1982, p. 150.

³⁴ Silverman 1972, p. 10.

³⁵ Herold, 1963.

³⁶ Sheehan 1989, p. 55.

manufactured goods. After the west bank was annexed in 1797 the protective market barrier surrounding the borders of France was extended to the Rhine, and all commercial contacts with communities on the east bank of the river were cut off. In addition, all down-river trade with the Netherlands was rigorously controlled to cut off their markets with England. This, of course, brought the economy to a virtual stand still. Rather than being a “natural boundary” of France, as had been argued by French philosophes of the 18th century, the Rhine was in reality the place where trade networks converged. The Rhine was (and is) the major artery for western Germany and Alsace, linking the lowlands countries with markets throughout the Holy Roman Empire. The French intended to replace these ancient market networks with new markets oriented to the interior of France. The difficulty was that, rhetoric to the contrary, the real geographic boundaries lay to the west, with the Vosges mountains which cut Alsace and the Pfalz off from France, and which had marked the natural linguistic frontier for over a thousand years. The majority of the population in Alsace has always been clustered in a rather narrow plain, on the average only about 12 miles wide, separating the foothills of the Vosges from the left bank of the Rhine. At that time few roads cut across this natural barrier, and no rivers flowed in that direction to conduct commercial traffic.

The cities were hit especially hard since their economies focused on the production of exports, textiles, and luxury goods, and most of these markets were disrupted. By 1799 the number of beggars in the Pfalz skyrocketed and there was no way to meet their needs. The thousands of French soldiers in permanent occupation also led to rampant prostitution.³⁷ The rural villages were also devastated economically, although perhaps not as severely as the cities since they could still function at a reduced subsistence level. In Frankenthal, just south of Worms in the Pfalz, farmers had to be restrained by military force to prevent them from trading their potato crop with communities on the east bank of the Rhine in 1800. They had already plowed under their onion crop due to the prohibition of trade across the Rhine, and the potato crop was their last hope to avoid being reduced to complete poverty. In 1802 both the cattle and the grain markets collapsed in the Pfalz, with two-thirds of the harvest left unsold due to the loss of outlets. As late as 1810 the French governor of the Pfalz was complaining that the trade with the interior of France was “zero.”³⁸ The only remaining major outlet for the once thriving *Pfälzer* communities was to meet the needs of the military, but this outlet was exploitative since the military conscripted what it required and compensated for it at low rates. There were a few scattered pockets of economic growth in cities to the north, which resulted from the cut in iron ore from the Ruhr and the textile imports from the east side of the Rhine.³⁹ The Pfalz, being an agricultural area, did not share in those benefits. These few pockets of growth in the Rhinelands were also soon eclipsed by a major economic depression from 1810 to 1812, which began in France and was felt even more strongly in the occupied satellite areas.

An additional assault on the social fabric of the German towns occurred when the traditional guilds came under attack. The French authorities issued a flood of trade licenses to virtually anyone who applied to open shop in a town, in defiance of old guild

³⁷ Blanning 1983.

³⁸ Blanning 1983, p. 141.

³⁹ Heckscher 1964.

regulations.⁴⁰ In some areas the guilds were abolished outright. The rationale was that the guilds were fossils of feudalism that propped up class privileges, they were as outmoded as the Holy Roman Empire, and they hampered economic growth. For centuries, however, the guilds had played an essential role in the carefully managed system of controlled competition in the local economies. At that point when the markets were depressed, the removal of guild protectionism was simply another source of misery for many of the people.

Military Conscription

Still another form of oppression during the Napoleonic years, one which proved to be beyond endurance for many families, was the conscription of their young men. Under Napoleon the military campaigns in the east escalated, and his appetite for new troops was insatiable. In 1805 he waged war against Austria (the War of the Third Coalition), in 1806-1807 against Prussia and Russia, again in 1809 against Austria, and in 1812 he began a fruitless invasion of Russia that soon involved all the countries in Europe, eventuating in Napoleon's downfall in 1814.

By the late 18th century warfare had become highly formalized and its aims were limited. Most armies were fairly small, composed primarily of highly trained and well disciplined professional soldiers. Military engagements were conducted like chess maneuvers, with the goal of placing one's regiments in an advantageous position. When one side eventually recognized its unfavorable position, it typically disengaged and negotiated a withdrawal to avoid a mass slaughter.⁴¹

In order to defeat these battle-tested opponents, in 1793 the French ushered in an entirely new style of warfare for which the other nations of Europe were not prepared. The French National Assembly formed a vast civilian army, declaring a "*levee en masse*." All unmarried men from the ages of 18 to 40 were eligible for conscription, excluding widowers with children. Between 1800 and 1815 a total of 2,543,357 men were mobilized, the majority through conscription. Although the conscripts were supposed to serve five year terms of duty, in practice their discharges were delayed due to the seemingly endless military campaigns. The massive size and the high morale of the French army largely accounted for their victories in the early years because their tactics were not yet well organized. Under Napoleon their battle tactics became refined, but their morale began to drop due to the staggering casualty rates suffered in Napoleon's campaigns. Desertions increased and thousands mutilated themselves to avoid conscription. Marriages also skyrocketed in order to gain exemption from duty. The entire family, village, or community was held responsible if a conscript escaped.⁴²

Napoleon's battle tactics also took a high toll from the local populations that were within a theater of conflict. He used a strategy of rapid deployment, force-marching his armies over great distances and launching attacks before the enemy was prepared. This meant that the vast French armies were often poorly supplied since they could not always be encumbered by baggage trains. It was a matter of military policy

⁴⁰ Walker 1971.

⁴¹ Rothenberg 1978.

⁴² Koch, 1985 p. 58.

that they should live off the land, taking whatever supplies they needed from the local population. Each corps was allocated a specific “foraging sector” in order to efficiently confiscate supplies. In contrast, the armies of the Austrians and Prussians had well developed supply trains, so they had less need to exploit the lands through which they moved. The Austrian armies also paid for the supplies that they conscripted, in glaring contrast to the French, who often simply took what they needed, or paid with worthless currency.⁴³

The conquered peoples had to pay part of the burden of their own “liberation” by providing young men to slake the unquenchable thirst of the French military for manpower. France had instituted a *levee en masse* in 1793, and this obligation was extended to the newly annexed *departements* in the Rhinlands and Belgium in 1802. Each *departement* was levied a quota of soldiers that had to be selected from their ranks and equipped at the expense of the local communities. These soldiers were merged directly into the French regiments and they constituted about one-fourth of the French army.⁴⁴ As the numbers topped out in 1808, exemptions were granted for married men, sons of widows and brothers of those already conscripted. Wealthier persons could hire a replacement for themselves or for their own eligible sons. Napoleon’s wars had become never ending by 1813, so these exemptions were eliminated and even those with physical disabilities were drafted. The Prussians, Austrians, and vassal German states which had been welded into the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806 each provided separate regiments of their conscripts under their own commanders and flags (Herold, 1963). Napoleon's *Grand Armee* that marched against Russia in 1812 consisted of about 500,000 soldiers. Only about one-third of the army was French.⁴⁵ The remainder consisted of various German contingents, as well as tributary soldiers from all the multitude of conquest states within Napoleon's new world order -- Italy, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Dalmatia, Illyria, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and so on.⁴⁶ The French forces had dwindled to about 100,000 men by September, 1812, when they reached Moscow. After enduring a vicious winter and constant guerrilla attacks, the *Grande Armee* struggled back out of Russia with only 10,000 men. By 1813 there was a high rate of desertion among the draftees from the Pfalz because they didn’t want to fight other Germans, and when the armies of the allies (Prussian and Russian) pushed the French back across the Rhine many *Pfälzer* soldiers joined their ranks.⁴⁷

⁴³ Rothenberg 1978.

⁴⁴ Rothenberg 1978, p. 135.

⁴⁵ Herold 1963, p. 168.

⁴⁶ Thompson 1963; Rothenberg 1978.

⁴⁷ Thalmann 1981.

Chapter 11

The Emigration to Tsarist Russia

Hördt and neighboring villages under the French occupation

What effect did these turbulent events of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic years have on Jacob Landeis and his family in Hördt? The bare facts recorded in the church books and civil registries reveal little of the impact that all this chaos had on the daily lives of the people. The villagers were at great risk during the battles in the early years of the Revolutionary era and they suffered enormous privations as armies swept through their area. One account was recorded of a major, bloody battle between the French and the allied German forces at nearby Leimersheim on April 3, 1793, during which the French lost 300 soldiers. As the French army retreated, they hastily buried their dead and tore down the cross atop the church in Leimersheim. According to local lore, so much blood covered the ground that when a passing farmer saw it, he shouted in horror, "with my soul," and that area today is still known as the *Seelhof* (place of the dead souls).

Jacob and Anna Marie were married in 1789, the same year when the French Revolution erupted. One positive indicator that he was able to provide for his young family is the ongoing record, from his marriage in Leimersheim through the birth of all eight of his children in Hördt from 1790 to 1804. This suggests that the family was not dislocated in the first years of turmoil, nor during the Great Flight of 1793, which affected Alsace and the neighboring Pfalz. The fact that Jacob continued having children at roughly two year intervals indicates that he was able to maintain some domestic security. The baptismal records for his children from 1790 to 1794 refer to him as the crop measurer for the Administration in Hördt. After that date, the baptismal records refer to him simply as a "citizen" of the town. This may hint that he lost his position at the warehouse, perhaps as part of a purge of local officials by the French Revolutionaries, and it may also hint at the adoption of the jargon of the Revolutionary era, with its emphasis on "citizens." A more likely conclusion is that it reflects differences in the formulaic phrases of the parish priests. Fr. Kröhl was the pastor until 1793, after which he probably fled across the Rhine to escape the anti-clerical pogrom by the French military, which targeted local priests and monasteries. Several of the church books in the Pfalz report that their pastors left at that time. After Fr. Kröhl's departure, there was a rapid turn-over of three different priests at Hördt, each of whom used slightly different phrasing in the church records. It should also be noted that after the French take-over, births were recorded in a civil registry and baptisms were recorded in the church book.

Most of the local villagers were conscripted to build fortifications for the French military. In order to anchor their new conquests in the Pfalz, the French created a massively fortified line of defense, extending from the strategic crossing on the Rhine at Germersheim, to their fortress at Landau, Saarlouis, then all the way to Luxembourg. To support all this construction, they imposed heavy demands on the local villagers for conscripted laborers.

Documents from this period also show that the residents in Hördt, Leimersheim, and nearby Germersheim suffered greatly from the tax levies, the requisitioning of supplies, and billeting French troops. The citizens of Germersheim complained that 84,999 *Guilders* worth of

supplies were taken from them in 1792-93. In addition 1,300 laborers from Germersheim were conscripted for the construction of fortifications.¹

The chronicles of Leimersheim report that at least eight young men lost their lives serving in the French armies during the Napoleonic wars. Jacob Landeis was apparently able to avoid being conscripted into the military because married men were exempt from the draft; indeed, there was an explosion of marriages in France and in the occupied territories during those years as young men sought to avoid conscription. His two sons, Adam and Anton, were of course too young to be affected by these measures.

It is also known that Leimersheim and other villages along the Rhine became centers for smuggling across the river. A customs station was established at the ferry site there in 1801. The local citizens were well acquainted with the back-waters of the Rhine, so they became engaged in a lively illegal trade back and forth across the river. The major commodities that were smuggled included wine, tobacco, oil, cast-iron goods, and madder-roots, which were used for red dye. The trade was dangerous, but lucrative. The mayor of Leimersheim at that time, named Horn, and the local clergyman, Pastor Bolz, requested that this illegal trade be halted, but to no avail. A customs patrol was stationed there to police the banks of the Rhine, but they were unable to stem the tide of goods. In 1810 a contingent of French troops was added to the patrol. That year a group of 12 smugglers was caught with a large quantity of linseed oil. A fire-fight erupted, one of the border-guards was shot, and the smugglers escaped. In gratitude for their narrow escape, they planned to erect a cross in secrecy in the cemetery at Leimersheim. However, one of the smugglers told his girlfriend about the incident and she later betrayed him to the French. All 12 men were arrested and imprisoned in Strasbourg. One of them, Johann Schardt, was tortured and died afterward in prison on January 18, 1812. Johann Ziemer wanted to take responsibility for the venture in order to spare his comrades. Ziemer was guillotined in Strasbourg on October 20, 1812. The others were imprisoned in chains for several years. They lived to tell their story, which was preserved for posterity after German troops marched into the city and freed all prisoners in 1814. The cross was later erected in the cemetery, as they had planned, and it bears the names of the 12 men with the date 1811. It is locally known as the "smugglers' cross."²

Emigration fever sweeps the Rhinelands: the lure of Russia

During these troubled times another wave of emigration fever soon developed, fueled by religious speculations that the chaos of these times might indeed be portents of the impending Biblical Apocalypse. German farmers and townspeople were intensely religious and the millenarian theme was part of their folk Christian beliefs. The prophetic books of the Bible and other apocryphal Sibylline works had circulated for centuries, and this undercurrent of apocalyptic speculation often surfaced during periods of warfare and upheaval. Some identified Napoleon with the Anti-Christ.³ In Württemberg the prophet Jung Stilling foretold

¹ Blanning 1983, p. 114, 123.

² Schmitz 1993.

³ In an earlier article (Wagner 1999) I discussed the Sibylline prophecies that were popular in German regions, which were taken with them to Tsarist Russia where they circulated widely in

that the last days were at hand and that believers should emigrate to South Russia, which would be their refuge when the Second Coming of Christ happened.

Russian monarchs fueled this emigration fever because they sought to attract foreigners to establish colonies along their frontiers, especially along the Volga and the Black Sea coast. In 1763 Catherine II of Russia (reigned 1762-1796), herself of German origin, issued her famous invitation to German immigrants to settle along the Volga river, near Saratov. Catherine had several motives for her decree. It was hoped that the German colonists would provide strategic food materials for her eastern army, as well as stimulate the general agricultural development of her country. The Volga colonies were also intended to be a buffer zone, following the same strategy of Austria-Hungary a century earlier when it had established the so-called *Donau Schwaben* settlements in the Banat region. Catherine wanted to anchor the eastern fringe of her empire against the raids by the Cossacks and other nomadic tribesmen from the steppes of central Asia, which had plagued the empire for centuries. By turning steppeland into productive farms, the Germans would remove much of the open grazing land that was essential for the nomadic lifestyle.

Within four years of Catherine's invitation, 27,000 Germans had settled in the Volga region, founding 104 villages on both sides of the river. Many Mennonites also emigrated to Russia at this time from the Danzig region, accompanied by Lutherans who established villages in adjacent areas in the Jekaterinoslav (modern Dniepropetrovsk) and Taurida districts near the Sea of Azov. The early years were difficult for the German settlers. Besides freezing Russian winters, they had to endure the frequent raids of the Cossacks.

The peace treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardschi with the Ottoman Turks in 1774 allowed Russia to acquire the territory between the Bug and Dnieper rivers and the right for commercial navigation on the Black Sea. The Crimea was incorporated into the Russian empire in 1783. In 1789 the area along the north shore of the Black Sea was absorbed, including Odessa. Wide stretches of the steppelands along the north shore were virtually uninhabited and it was imperative that it be settled as quickly as possible in order to solidify Russia's claim to the area. The use of Russian peasants was not feasible because most of them were serfs at that period of history, bound to the estates of the nobility. In 1789 Catherine extended an invitation once again for German colonists, attracting large numbers of Mennonites, who settled in the Chortitza, near Jekaterinoslav.

In 1804 Catherine's grandson, Tsar Alexander I, continued her policies and planned the creation of a broad fan of German colonies along the north shore of the Black Sea. As before, the intention was that this would serve as a stable buffer zone on the lower fringe of his empire and an anchor for his claim to the Black Sea trade. Alexander issued a Manifesto inviting settlers to the Ukraine, offering them several privileges:

1. Freedom of religion in all ways.
2. Ten years freedom from taxes and other such encumbrances.

the German colonies. Tsar Alexander I, who was noted for his deep piety, was greatly impressed by these apocalyptic notions, especially those which assigned a central role to Russia. When Tsar Alexander defeated Napoleon in 1812, local preachers proclaimed that he was the "white eagle," prophesied in the Book of Revelations, who would defeat the "black angel," the Antichrist, identified as Napoleon.

3. After the ten free years, colonists will be equally subjected, as the other Russians of the Empire, with the exception that they are not subject to provide quarters for soldiers, except when they are marching through.

4. Freedom from recruitment as well as civil service; however, they are at liberty to enter services for the Highest Crown, but it will not free them from having to repay the debt to the Crown.

5. Each settler will receive an advance and they are to repay it within 10 years after the ten free years expire.

6. Each family can bring their goods (furniture) free of toll, and in addition can bring with them goods for resale, total value not to exceed 300 Rubels.

7. Tradesmen can enter legal contracts and guilds. They can practice their trades throughout the Russian Empire.

8. All the suffering has ended in the Russian Empire due to the generosity of His Majesty, the Russian Emperor.

9. Each family will receive usable acreage of 30 to 80 *Dessjatines* free for its use from the Highest Crown. Each family can use the land without payment to the Highest Crown. The tax which each family must pay after the ten free years is, next to police affairs, the basic tax, a yearly amount of 15 to 20 *Kopeks* per *Dessjatine*.

10. Those who want to leave the Russian Empire to return to their homeland have to pay the debts to the Crown and a three year tax for the use of the land.

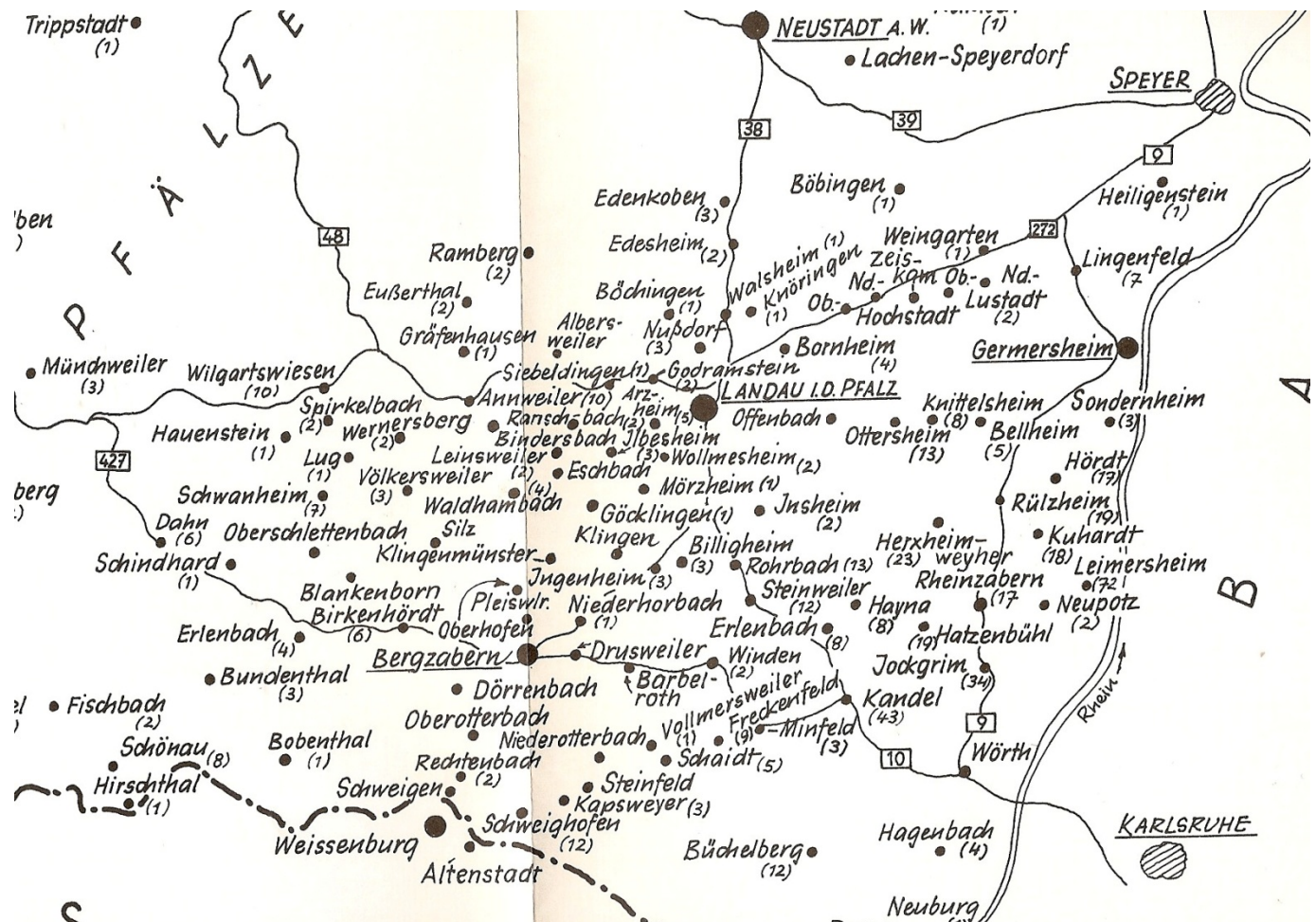
The Manifesto was published by the Russian Empire Colony Transportation Department in Lauingen, on April 20, 1804. Tsar Alexander was on friendly terms with Napoleon at that point, so the French allowed his agents to recruit emigrants in Germany. The invitation was first announced from three Russian embassies -- in Ulm, Frankfurt, and Regensburg. Initially the Tsar had planned to pay the expenses for only 200 families per year. However, word of the immigration offer spread quickly and another mass emigration fever soon gripped the populace throughout the Palatinate, Baden, Württemberg and Alsace. Many families from Alsace and the neighboring Pfalz were refugees who had fled during the "Great Flight" of the French Revolution, and who had been displaced from their farms. During that first year, at least 800 families responded to the offer.

The first wave of emigrants in 1804 converged at Ulm, and they were transported down the Danube on river barges, known as *Ulmer Schachtel*, to Vienna. There they were organized into wagon trains for the journey to the Russian border town of Brody/Radzivilov. After a stay for quarantine, they continued south to Odessa. The first colonies were founded in 1804 near Odessa, in an area which came to be known as the Liebenthal enclave.

French officials became alarmed by the size of the exodus from Alsace and tried to stem the outflow. Emigration was temporarily halted when the alliance between Tsar Alexander I and Napoleon collapsed. In 1805 the French waged a series of military campaigns against the Russians and Austrians. After Alexander's defeat, he once again signed a treaty with Napoleon, then resumed his plans for luring immigrants. In 1808 he issued another official invitation for colonists, and expanded his recruiting efforts by commissioning his agents to issue passports from his embassies in Karlsruhe and Vienna. The emigration wave of 1809 drew people primarily from the same areas as before -- the Palatinate, Alsace, Baden, Württemberg, and

Hesse -- the areas that were hardest hit by the turmoil and the military occupation of the French armies.

By 1810 Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I were enemies once again, and emigration to the Black Sea area was effectively halted. However, Germans continued settling in other parts of eastern Europe. In 1814 the colonization of Bessarabia began, which came into Russia's possession in 1812. Between 1817 and 1820 a wave of colonists were drawn to the Trans-Caucasus area, near Tiflis, inspired by a belief in the impending millennium. The goal of these religious "Chiliasts" was to be as close to Palestine as possible, but many ended up settling north of Odessa. Another wave came in the 1860s when German settlements were established in Volhynia (currently in eastern Poland). A final influx of colonists came as late as the 1870s from Alsace and Lorraine, when the French began conscripting men for the war with Prussia.



The Pfalz, showing numbers of emigrants in 1809⁴

⁴ This map was compiled by Karl Stumpp (1973) at some point after World War Two, using the information that was available at the time. The number of emigrants shown for each village is a conservative estimate.

In total, it is estimated that at least 100,000 Germans emigrated to Russia from 1763 through the 1860s. They founded 300 “mother” colonies, and over time they branched out into at least 3,000 “daughter” colonies. By the 1870s there were approximately 450,000 ethnic Germans in various portions of the Russian empire. By the end of the 19th century their numbers had climbed to about 1,800,000 and they were one of the largest ethnic groups in Tsarist Russia.

The journey to South Russia in 1809

The lure of free farmland in the Black Sea region, fueled by rumors of the extravagant harvests yielded from its virgin soil, sparked major waves of emigration throughout southwestern Germany. In some villages the chronicles report that half of the residents packed up for departure, and in a few cases villages were left virtually empty. In the latter part of May, 1809, it was recorded that 110 residents of Leimersheim left for Bessarabia and the Ukraine, including virtually all members of the families with the surnames of Gehrlein, Heid, Heintz, Kuhn, Lösch, Müller, Pfadt, Schaaf, Schardt, Schwab, Weschler, and Wolf.⁵ Karl Stumpp’s map (above) shows 17 emigrants from Hördt and 72 from Leimersheim. Jacob Landeis’ family, including his mother-in-law, Margaret Messmann, were in the emigrant party of 1809.

The Russian consul at Frankfurt am Main, named von Bethmann, issued passports (*Reisepassen*) to the immigrants in 1809. More than 250 passports have survived -- fortunately including that of Jacob Landeis. Jacob’s passport states that he brought his wife (Anna Maria), his mother-in-law, and six of his children. His mother-in-law Margaret was a widow at that time, her husband Josef Messmann(g) had died on Feb. 12, 1769. All three of their sons – Adam, Anton, and Daniel – accompanied them to Russia and they appear on later Tsarist census records. One of their daughters, Maria Catherine, had died in infancy. Maria Petronilla doesn’t appear in later Russian censuses, so she may have been married by 1809 and chose to remain behind with her husband – or perhaps she too emigrated but had a new married surname. Franzisca is also not mentioned in the Russia census, and there is no apparent explanation for this since she would have been too young for marriage at the time of their departure.

The second page of Jacob’s passport shows the complete itinerary of his journey to the Ukraine, recorded by the seals and the dates for the various towns through which he passed. Some of the dates on the passport are given in two forms -- the “old style” Julian calendar, which was in use by the Russian government until 1918, and the “new style” date which is based on the Gregorian calendar. In the 19th century the Julian calendar was 12 days behind the Gregorian.

Von Bethmann issued hundreds of passports in the early summer of 1809. Each week a new wagon train of emigrants embarked on the journey to the east. About 1,100 families departed between May and late November. When Jacob’s group departed, the Danube river route was unsafe for transit because Napoleon was conducting a military campaign in the

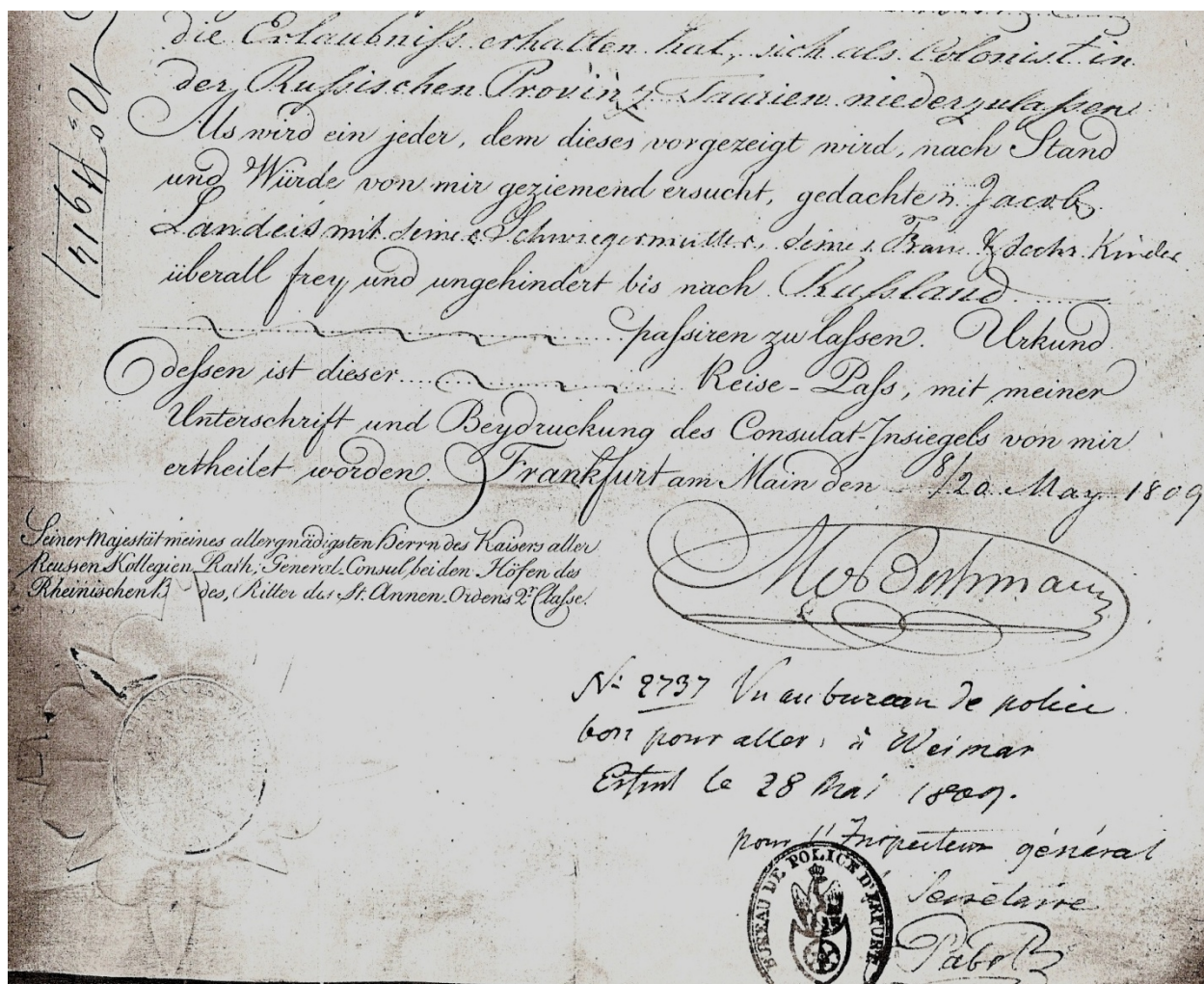
⁵ Cited in Hodapp, no date.



Jacob Landeis Passport 1809 (top half)

"By Command
of His Majesty the Emperor
Alexander Pavlovich
Autocrat of all the Russias, etc. etc. etc.

I herewith make known to all concerned, that the bearer of this, Jacob Landeiss from Hördt
(continued on bottom)



Jacob Landeis Passport 1809 (bottom half)

... has received permission to settle as colonist in the Russian Province Taurida. Everyone to whom this is shown, according to rank and office, is requested by me as is proper to allow the aforesaid Jacob Landeis with his mother-in-law, his wife and six children, to pass everywhere free and unhindered to Russia. In witness thereof this passport is issued by me with my signature and imprint of the Consular Seal, Frankfurt am Main, 8/20, May 1809. (The small script on the lower left states:) Collegiate Consul of His Majesty, my most noble Lord the Emperor of all the Russias, Consul General at the courts of the Rhine Federation, Knight of St. Anne, second class. (Signature) M. Bettmann. (The handwritten note at bottom states:) No. 2737, Inspected at the Bureau of Police. Good for traveling to Weimar. Effective May 28, 1809, the Inspector General Secretary, Pabetz (seal of the Bureau of Police of Erfurt)."

upper Danube valley against Austria in 1809, and a series of engagements took place in the spring and summer of the year (the battles of Abensberg, Landshut, and Wagram); therefore, a longer, more circuitous overland route was adopted, which took the emigrants through the German states of Saxony and Silesia, the Polish province of Galicia which was under Austrian sovereignty, then down to Odessa. The overland route to the Russian frontier was 1,600 miles and it took about 45 days travel time (not including the time spent in quarantine at Radzivilov, plus additional time going from the Russian border to Odessa). Each family usually had its own wagon, drawn by two horses. The wagons were similar in style to the Conestoga wagons used in America, which were also developed by wainwrights from the Palatinate.⁶

Jacob Landeis' group included 71 families total. They departed from Frankfurt am Mein on May 20, 1809 ("new style" date). Their route initially took them to Erfurt in Saxony, from which they departed on May 28 to Weimar; on June 1 they departed from Leipzig toward Breslau and Brody in Silesia; on June 22 from Babice (Poland); on June 25 from Myslenice through Bochnia (Galicia); on June 26 from Bochnia to Tarnow; on July 3 from Przemyśl to Lemberg (known today as Lvov); on July 5 from Lemberg through Brody to Radzivilov, which was just across the Galician border in Russia. At Radzivilov they spent about 24 days in quarantine, rested, and waited for further instructions. Height⁷ estimates that it took another three or four weeks to travel southward from the Russian border through the Dniester steppes (yielding a total of between 93 and 99 days for the entire journey).

When the families finally arrived in the vicinity of Odessa it was too late in the year to proceed to the location where their colony was to be founded. The new immigrants were led to the enclave of colonies in the Liebenthal and Kutschurgan districts, which had been founded a few years previously. There they spent the first winter in Russia in the homes of their fellow countrymen. To their great surprise, they found that the earlier colonists were still living huddled together in primitive dwellings with reed roofs, extracting a living from the soil with great toil. This was the first indication that their dream of a lush paradise in the Ukraine was a fantasy.

Many of the immigrants had brought some cash with them, as well as clothing and other personal effects, and a few owned their own wagons. Most of the cash was spent during the long, difficult journey. Johann Friedrich Grosshans, a contemporary chronicler from the colony of Worms in the Black Sea region, reported that the immigrants spent most of their cash reserves rather quickly because they "...didn't understand the Russian money and the rate of exchange," and they became "victims of the Jewish moneychangers and traders. As a consequence, many of them were forced to sell their clothes. Since they were not yet established and went into winter quarters in 1809, their expenditures increased all the more until some spent all the money which they had brought with them."⁸

⁶ Height 1979, p. 36.

⁷ Height 1979, p. 37.

⁸ Cited in Griess 1968, p. 157.

Chapter 12

The Landeis Family in Karlsruhe and Neu-Karlsruhe

The new colonists arrived late in 1809, so they had to spend the winter huddled in cramped quarters with other families in the German colonies that had been established earlier in the Liebenthal and Kutschurgan enclaves. In the spring, 1810, they reassembled in Odessa where under the leadership of Franz Brittner, head-mayor of the colony of Liebental, they were led to the location where the new colony of Karlsruhe¹ was to be founded, about 130 kilometers (78 miles) northeast of Odessa, in a valley known as *Lisitzkaja Balka*, or “Fox Valley,” which joins into the Beresan river valley. They were confronted with an empty rolling steppe, overgrown with high grass and weeds. There were two shade trees, which were the only sign that other peoples had resided there at some point in the remote past. Their only companions were numerous snakes and wolf packs.

Of the 71 founding families, 42 originated in Baden, 26 from the Pfalz, and five from Alsace. The colony received the name “Karlsruhe” from the Liebental mayor, Franz Brittner, because most of the colonists came from the Grand Duchy of Baden, whose royal residence city is Karlsruhe. Each family was allotted 60 *dessiatines* of land (about 162 acres) by the Crown, and given an advance loan, repayable after 10 years at a low interest rate. Height² reports that the amount was 135 *rubles*. Keller³ confirms that when the immigrants reached the Russian border they received a daily allowance of 10 *kopecks* per person, and each family received 100 *rubles* for the purchase of a wagon and draft-animal, and an additional 35 *rubles* for a cow. Some colonists also received various household implements, such as rakes, shovels, scythes, sharpening tools and three or four spinning wheels. Keller also states that each family received wood and reeds for building crude waddle-and-daub huts, known as “crown houses.” The houses were constructed following the models of the already established colonists from the Liebental district. Most of these houses collapsed after a few years and were replaced by brick structures.

Slightly different figures for their financial resources have been cited⁴ which may not be reliable, or perhaps they were based on figures known for German colonies in other parts of the Black Sea region. Hodapp states that each family was given 335 *rubles*, and they had to repay 175 *rubles* to the colonial officials for the crown houses, which he states were constructed prior to their arrival by the Russian army. The remaining balance (135 or 160 *rubles*, depending on the source) was hardly sufficient to enable them to purchase a cow, seed-grain, and the necessary farming implements. They were given free lumber to reinforce the roofs of the homes, but Hodapp adds that they had use their own resources to provide for doors, windows and fireplaces. These crown houses proved to be totally inadequate for the winters, and the first task that the settlers faced was to replace them with more permanent structures.

The colonists survived severe hardship during the early years. One of their first tasks was to break the virgin sod of the Ukraine. The thick layer of black earth was 1 – 2 feet deep,

¹ Later in the century the Tsarist authorities assigned Russianized names to each of the German colonies. Karlsruhe today is known as *Stepovoye*, or *Stepove* as shown on Google maps.

² Height 1972, p. 74.

³ Keller 1914.

⁴ Hodapp, n.d.

quite fertile, but it was packed hard and overgrown with a tangle of wild grass that had never before been plowed. Although it was ideal for raising wheat and corn, the primitive Russian plow (the “*socha*”) was not suitable for the tough sod without great effort. The first breaking of the sod required six oxen or four horses per plow. The problem was eventually solved by the introduction of the so-called “German” plow, which had hardened steel blades and a curved plate to turn the sod over after the cut was made. The soil was very fertile in the beginning, but from 1820 – 1840 the yields began to decline noticeably and good harvests were rare. Another unforeseen problem was the periodic plagues of grasshoppers, which swept north from Egypt.

They also had to contend with the harsher Russian climate and the restricted growing seasons. The harvests yielded summer-wheat, oats, and potatoes, but the winter-wheat had difficulty surviving. Usually there was a strong frost at the end of April and the beginning of May, which hindered the growth, and then in the middle of May it got very hot with little rain, which ruined the harvest. Attempts to plant fruit orchards failed because the soil in the summer was too hard and dry.⁵

Many colonists died during the early years from the hardship, exposure to the harsh living conditions, and disease. Some documents attribute the epidemics to typhoid fever.⁶ If a colonist died, his wife and children lost their rights to his estate, and it was reallocated to someone else. She retained rights only if she remarried, or if one of her sons was of legal age and could take over the farm. Life was an elemental struggle in those early years. The colonial administration governed the people with great rigor. Discipline for legal violations was strict, involving use of the whip, with only pregnant women being exempt from such treatment. Even swearing was forbidden and it could be punished by five days imprisonment. Escape was virtually impossible since the colonies were many days journey from the Russian border, and it was guarded by Cossacks.

The harsh conditions were reported in a letter written by Johann Peter Lösch after he returned in 1809 to his home village of Leimersheim in the Pfalz. A colonist in Strassburg had interceded on Lösch’s behalf, so he was issued legal papers by Richelieu, the governor of Cherson, dated Sept. 30, 1809 -- but the papers were issued under false pretenses because Lösch had promised that he intended to retrieve other relatives residing in Germany. Lösch had to leave behind a bond of 300 *Gulden* as security for his return. He gladly forfeited this amount as the price for his freedom in order to escape a land in which he was bitterly disappointed.⁷

⁵ Keller 1910.

⁶ The colonists believed that the epidemic was due to stagnant water. Typhoid fever is passed only through human waste, there are no known animal carriers. Rivers are usually the villain when a typhoid carrier passes germ-laden water downstream which pollutes water for drinking or swimming. Cholera can be passed through water contaminated by humans or animals. A third source of disease is typhus, which is passed from person to person via body lice, fleas, or chiggers. Typhus is associated with overcrowding, underwashing, and lowered standard of living. The colonists would have been vulnerable to any of these diseases in their first years. The standard preventive treatments back then involved fumigation of houses and washing items in vinegar.

⁷ Height 1972, p. 50 summarizes Lösch’s letter, and it is also discussed in Hodapp n.d., p. 145-156.

The "Revision List" and Crop Reports of 1811 to 1816 for the Beresan Colonies

Soon after the German colonies were established, the Tsarist statistical department commissioned the 6th "standard" (empire-wide) census, which was initiated in 1811. These censuses, known as "Revision Lists" (*reviskie skazki*), were conducted at various times between 1719 and 1858 to provide a national registry of tax-payers. In addition, a detailed report was commissioned to itemize their livestock and crops planted and harvested.⁸ The report included the amounts of rye, wheat, buckwheat, oats, barley, millet, potatoes, peas, beans, lentils, flax, and hay produced in each colony. In 1811 the colonists in Karlsruhe owned a total of 72 horses, 69 wagons, 215 cattle, and 782 loads of hay. The colony had been originally apportioned 5,450 *dessiatin* of land (about 14,715 acres), which was planned to be enough for 90 families. By 1817 the colonists had increased their holdings to 309 horses and 51 plows.

More importantly, the Revision List of 1816 reported each family residing in the Beresan colonies at that time, showing their names, ages, and those who were deceased since the colony was founded.

Name	Age
Adam	17
Anton	16
Daniel	9
Elisabeth	21
Apollonia	20
Margaretha	6

1816 Revision List for "Jac[ob] Landeiss's widow" Family Unit in Karlsruhe⁹

The 1816 census shows that the household head for the family was "**Jacob Landeiss widow**," a woman age 51, and sons **Adam** age 17, **Anton** 16, **Daniel** 9, and daughters **Elizabeth** 21, **Apollonia**, 20 and **Margaretha** 6. The notation *Wwe* (the abbreviation for *Witwe* or widow) is made after Jacob's name and her age is shown in the female column, which confirms that the record referred to Anna Maria, his widow.

Assuming that Jacob died in about 1811, he probably was among the victims of epidemics that devastated the colonies in those early years. An epidemic (perhaps typhoid) swept the colonies in the Beresan region in October, 1811. In 1812 an epidemic broke out in the city of Odessa, which took 2,656 victims before it ran its course in 1813. The German colonies were placed under quarantine. Victims were confined to their houses and primitive methods of decontamination were used, such as fumigating houses with "wormwood, vinegar, sulfur, and gunpowder."¹⁰ Many families suffered the loss of a parent, leaving the survivors in dire straits.

⁸ The 1811 Revision List is File 134-1-319 in the Archive at Dnepropetrovsk. It surveyed all the German colonies in the Beresan region, including Rastadt, München, and Karlsruhe. The farm and livestock report is File 134-1-320.

⁹ File 134-3-319 Karlsruhe 1811, Dnepropetrovsk Archive

¹⁰ Height 1972, p. 108.

One of my other ancestors, Franz Wagner in nearby Rastadt, is also known to have died at that same time in 1811.

The Secondary Sources on the Catholic Colonies in the Beresan Region -- Fr. Konrad Keller and Karl Stumpp

Fr. Konrad Keller was a Catholic priest who was born in the German colonies in the Black Sea region. In a brief article on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Catholic Beresan colonies written in 1910,¹¹ he was the first to publish the census records for 1816, which show the original settlers for Karlsruhe in 1816. In Karlsruhe he reported the following:

Anna Maria, age 51, born Mösmann, widow of Jakob Landeis from Leimersheim. Sons: **Franz-Adam** 17, **Anton** 16, **Daniel** 12. Jakob's daughters: **Elisabeth** 20, **Apollonia** 18, **Margaretha** 7.

Later, Fr. Keller expanded his brief article in a two volume set, published in 1914. Ever since their publication, Fr. Keller's books have been an invaluable source of information about the Catholic colonies in the Beresan region – and indeed, almost the only source available for about 100 years. Since then, in 2011 the Germans from Russia Historical Society in Bismarck, N.D. negotiated to obtain photocopies of the original Revision Lists of 1811 and 1816. The information shown for the Landeis family in Karlsruhe matches what is shown (above) in the photocopies from the original census records.

The other important secondary source for early records on the German colonies is Dr. Karl Stumpp's massive 1,018 page volume which presents records compiled by his staff during the occupation of the Ukraine by the German *Wehrmacht* during World War Two.¹² Stumpp was born in the German colonies and he managed to escape to Germany during the Bolshevik years prior to the war. There he earned a Ph.D. and devoted his academic career to the study of the colonists in Russia. He was generally acknowledged as the dean of German-Russian studies. After Germany attacked Russia in 1941, Stalin branded the German colonists as traitors and began arresting them enmasse and sending them to labor camps in Siberia. The Volga colonists could not be saved, but the rapid push of the *Wehrmacht* into the Ukraine saved many in the Black Sea region. Stumpp was in charge of a Special Command with the assignment of coordinating the remaining ethnic Germans, assessing their current living conditions and tracking down and compiling all records available on them in the Russian archives (this included not only historical records, but also records of their farm lands which had been seized by the Soviets). Stumpp and his staff extracted massive amounts of data, primarily from the archives in Odessa, Kherson and Dnepropetrovsk. Stumpp incorporated records from the original Russian censuses, as well as new information that his staff had found in the archives, such as the passports for the immigrant colonists. After the war he published all this material in a volume which was eventually translated and released in the USA by the

¹¹ Keller 1910.

¹² Karl Stumpp, *The Emigration From Germany to Russia in the Years 1762 to 1862*. Lincoln, Nebraska: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1973.

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. It has been the single, indispensable handbook for German-Russian studies.

Stumpp was the first to publish the Revision List of 1816 for Karlsruhe. This later census shows the Landeis family in Karlsruhe, with their ages adjusted 3-4 years -- Maria Landeis age 56, from Hördt, and her children Apollonia 24, Adam 21, Anton 20, Daniel 13, and Margaretha 10. The other daughter, Elisabeth, had married Michael Pfoh in Rastadt by that date and she had moved out. A detailed comparison shows that Stumpp's data pertaining to our Landeis family matches all the original archival records, which is a testimony to the dedication, precision and accuracy of his staff during very trying wartime conditions.¹³

Baptismal and Marriage Records 1816-1840 Referring to the Children and Grandchildren of Jacob Landeis

Since 2020 we have been fortunate to receive copies of the baptismal records for several colonies, including Karlsruhe 1827 to 1840, which were preserved in the Tiraspol Catholic Archbishop's Consistory in Saratov. Jacob Landeis's children in the 1816 R.L. and their children appear in several records.

Elisabeth Landeis married Michael Pfoh (also mistakenly translated as "Pfau") in Rastadt and she relocated to his colony of residence. They had two children:

1. **Christina Pfoh**, bapt. in Rastadt in Jan. 17, 1816. Elisabeth Landeis served as godmother for Anton Wilhelm on Aug. 10, 1816 in Rastadt.

2. **Georg Michael Pfoh**, bapt. Oct. 29, 1829 in Rastadt.

After marrying into Rastadt, Elisabeth does not occur in any other records in Karlsruhe.

Apollonia Landeis, served as godmother for Maria Apollonia Fitterer in Karlsruhe on Aug. 13, 1816. At that time she was stated to be unmarried.

Margaret Landeis marr. Franz Jonas on Sept. 16, 1831 in Landau and she relocated to his colony of residence. They had two children:

1. **Magdalena Jonas**, b. and bapt. Aug. 26, 1834 Landau, godmother was Maria Antonia Landeis (she was the wife of Adam Landeis).

2. **Katharina Jonas**, b. and bapt. Sept. 7, 1835 Landau.

After marrying into Landau, Margaret does not appear in the records of Karlsruhe.

Anton Landeis married Magdalena Hummel. They had several children:

1. **Katharina Landeis**, b. Feb. 18, 1825, marr. Michael Wanner on May 29, 1839 in Karlsruhe. She died March 29, 1842, stated to be the dau. of Anton Landeis. Her age at death was 16, which yields a birth year of ca. 1826 which approximates her birth record.

2. **Maria Landeis**, bapt. Aug. 7, 1827, godparents were Daniel Landeis and Maria Landeis. The godmother Maria was the child's grandmother, Jacob's widow, shown in the earlier records from Hördt.

3. **Marianna Landeis**, b. Dec. 28, 1833, bapt. Jan. 2, 1834.

¹³ The 1816 Revision List for Karlsruhe is found in File 134-1-477, Dnepropetrovsk Archive.

4. **Raphael Landeis**, b. Oct. 23, 1836, bapt. Oct. 25, 1836.

5. **Karl Landeis**, b. Jan. 31, 1839, bapt. Feb. 2, 1839, godmother was Katharina Landeis, probably the wife of Daniel.

Anton Landeis died Oct. 24, 1838 in Karlsruhe. His death record states that he was the son of Jacob, he left behind a pregnant wife, two sons and four daughters. His age at death was 40, which yields a birth year of ca. 1798. This matches the 1816 R.L. which shows Anton, son of Jacob, as age 16, yielding a birth year of ca. 1798.

Daniel Landeis married Katharina Jungmann. Their children:

1. **Pius Landeis**, born May 4, 1836, bapt. May 6, 1836, godmother was Katharina Landeis. He married Helena Hatzenbühler.

2. **Apollonia Landeis**, b. Oct. 31, 1839, bapt. Nov. 1, 1839

Daniel also served as godfather for Martha Jungmann, July 30, 1839.

Katharina Landeis served as godmother for several children:

-- Katharina Wander, Feb. 17, 1837.

-- Katharina Jungmann, Dec. 29, 1837.

-- Katharina Schoch, May 21, 1838.

-- Karl Landeis, Feb. 2, 1839.

Adam Landeis is of special interest because he was my direct ancestor. His original baptismal record in Hördt in 1793 showed that he had a compound name, Adam Franz Georg. He later appeared in the records of Karlsruhe with the name Franz, but most commonly as Adam. Presumably Franz and Adam were the same person because there were no other persons with those names in the family records during those early years.

As will be shown below, Adam Landeis and his family appear in the 1839-1840 R.L.

The Petition from the Beresan Colonies in 1828

Some indication of the difficulties faced by the colonists during these early years can be gleaned from a request which they filed in 1828 for an extension in the repayment of debts due to the Crown.¹⁴ They were granted a two year extension, until 1830. In accordance with the elaborate bureaucratic protocol typical at that time, the "Comptoir" of the Beresan colonies in Odessa conveyed the royal decree to the district officials, who in turn conveyed it to the mayors of the eight "old colonies" of the Beresan district (Landau, Speier, Karlsruhe, Sulz, Rohrbach, Worms, Rastadt, and München) colonies. The mayors convened general meetings in each of their villages and the decree was read aloud. Each mayor then signed a document and affixed his seal of office attesting that the decree had been transmitted to the residents.

The documents for this petition are of special interest because they contain a list of the family heads in each of the eight colonies, including the number of males and females resident in their households, the amount of original debt owed to the crown, the amount that had been paid from 1820 to 1828, the cost of building materials that had been applied to the debt during that time period, and the remaining amount of debt owed in 1828.

¹⁴ The documentation is contained in Fond 252, Inventory 1, File 666 at the Odessa Archive.

Anton Landeis is listed in the 1828 report, residing in Karlsruhe at the time. His total family size was eight persons, consisting of four males (including himself) and four females. The amount of his original debt was 1,080 *rubles* and 54 $\frac{1}{4}$ *kopecks* (the same figure is cited for all the colonists), the amount he had repaid was 27 *rubles* and 24 *kopecks* (most of the colonists had repaid nothing at that point), 5 *rubles* and 52 *kopecks* had been added to his debt due to building materials (the same amount was added for all residents of Karlsruhe), and the remaining debt owed was 1,047 *rubles* and 78 $\frac{1}{4}$ *kopecks*. We may conclude that Anton was in a marginally better position than the majority of the other residents because he had managed to repay a small amount of his crown debts.

Interestingly, Anton Landeis was the only family head with this surname listed in the eight Beresan colonies in the 1828 report. There is no explanation for why Anton's brothers Adam and Daniel were not shown. They were apparently not residing in Anton's household since the number of residents shown matches the number of his children shown in the next Revision List of 1839/40.

The Tsarist Revision List of 1839/40

The next records available on the family are the Revision Lists compiled in 1839-40. Fr. Conrad Keller reprinted this data in his two volume history of the Catholic colonies in the Beresan region, thereby preserving another crucial link with their past for many families of Black Sea German descent.¹⁵ The census reported two households for the Landeis family in Karlsruhe. The first household consisted of:

1. **Magdalena Landeis**, age 40, widow of Anton, and daughter of Franz Hummel from Birkenau, Baden. Her children: **Philipp** age 9, **Raphael** age 7, **Karl** age 2, **Elisabeth** age 18, **Barbara** age 17, **Katharina** age 14, and **Marianna** age 5.
2. Magdalena's sister, Franziska Hummel age 35, with her husband Karl Schuh age 38, and their four children: Katharina age 13, Elisabeth age 8, Franziska age 2, and Marianna age 1.

Philipp Landeis later had a son, **Thomas**, born in Karlsruhe in 1851. Presumably he was Philipp the son of Anton Landeis and Magdalena, born ca. 1830.

The second household consisted of:

1. **Adam Landeis** age 46, from Hördt, Rhinepalatinate, his wife Maria Antonia Ihly, and their son **Peter** age 15.
2. Jacob Pfaff age 18, son of Anton Pfaff, and his wife **Katherine Landeis** age 19, daughter of Adam.
3. **Daniel Landeis** age 38 [Adam's brother], son of **Jakob**, and his wife Katharine Jungmann age 24, daughter of Adam Jungmann from Spechbach, Baden.

The mother of Anton, Adam, and Daniel (Jacob's widow Anna Maria Messmann), was not listed in the 1839/40 census, which indicates that she was deceased by that point. She

¹⁵ Keller 1914.

would have been 80 years old and most colonists didn't live that long in those early years of hardship. Anton Landeis was also dead by 1839/40, since his wife, Magdalena, was stated to be a widow.

Adam Landeis and his son **Peter**, age 15 (born about 1825), were my next lineal ancestors in this chronicle. Adam's stated age of 46 yields a birth year of ca. 1793-1794, which matches his birth record in Hördt. **Maria Antonia Ihly** (also misspelled "Hely" in some records) the wife of Adam and the mother of Peter, was from Malsch, Baden. The 1839/49 R.L. shows three Ihly families living together in the same household in Karlsruhe – Joseph age 53, his sons Jakob age 27 and Johann Philipp age 23. They were undoubtedly close kin with Maria Antonia Landeis.

Adam Landeis served as godfather for Barbara Anton on March 29, 1825, and for Barbara Hatzenbühler on Feb. 27, 1827 in Karlsruhe, his name was shown as Franz Landeis. Presumably he was the same person as Adam Franz Georg Landeis born in Hördt. All other records refer to him only as Adam. His wife Maria Antonia served as godmother for Magdalena Landeis bapt. Aug. 26, 1834 in Landau, dau. of Margaret Landeis and Franz Jonas. Adam Landeis also served as a witness for the marriage of Johann Rösle on Aug. 15, 1826 in the colony of Katharinental. This colony was near Karlsruhe, about 2 miles on the north, and it was part of Karlsruhe parish. Probably Adam had become friends with Johann and had agreed to serve as marriage witness.

The Revision List of 1858

The Revision List for Karlsruhe, dated March 1, 1858,¹⁶ shows only two Landeis households. The first consisted of the family of the deceased Anton Landeis:

1. **Philip Landeis**, age 29, his wife Elizabeth, age 24, and their two daughters -- Margaretha, age 5, and Catharina, age 3. Presumably he was Philip who had a son **Thomas** born 1851.
2. Philip's two brothers also resided in the house -- **Raphael** age 22, and **Karl** age 19. His sister, **Marianna**, was reported to be "married and absent" (Marianna Landeis and her husband, Caspar Friess, had a son Anton Friess baptized in Karlsruhe July 17, 1865.

The second household consisted of Anton's brother, Daniel Landeis, and his family:

1. **Daniel Landeis**, age 55, and his wife Catharina, age 58. A note indicates that Daniel "came to Russia in 1809," and that he was the uncle to Philip Landeis (above).
2. Daniel's son, **Philip** age 31, Philip's wife Barbara (Reisenauer) age 28, and their son **Josef**, age 1/4 year.
3. Daniel's son, **Jakob** age 26, Jakob's wife Catharina age 23, and their daughter Theresia, age 1.
4. Daniel's son **Pius**, age 22.
5. Daniel's son **Michael**, age 13.
6. Daniel's daughter, **Catharina**, was "married and absent."

¹⁶ This 1858 Revision List of Karlsruhe has been retrieved by the GRHS from the Archive in Dnepropetrovsk.

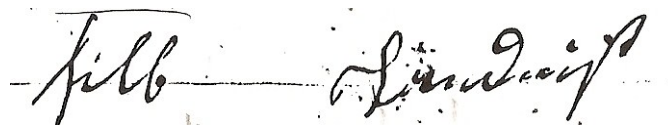
Adam Landeis, and his son Peter, are not shown in the 1858 census. They may have left Karlsruhe, perhaps relocating to one of the private *Khutors* that were beginning to form in the mid-19th century, or working in the city of Nikolaiev. There were growing German neighborhoods by that time in both Odessa and Nikolaiev. The first daughter colony of Karlsruhe was Neu-Karlsruhe, formed in 1867 and there are records showing that members of the Landeis family settled there. Those remaining in Karlsruhe were the offspring of Anton and Daniel, the two brothers of Adam.

The Petitions of 1852, 1856, and 1861 for a Separate Parish of Karlsruhe: Pius, Philipp, and "Pl" Landeis

The colonists in Karlsruhe had begun construction of a stone church in 1820, which was completed in 1830. Since they lacked a resident priest, Karlsruhe remained an affiliate of the mother church at Landau until 1861.¹⁷ Landau was the largest German colony in the Beresan valley, so it served as the administrative center as well as the mother parish for neighboring colonies. The colony of Speier was allowed to separate from the parish of Landau in 1857 and to form its own parish, with its own resident priest and church. At about this same time, Karlsruhe and Katharinenthal got together and reached a decision to do the same.¹⁸ They sent a representative to the diocesan bishop, who granted permission, after which they were also given approval in 1861 by the Colonist Welfare Committee in Odessa. Fond 6-3-14709 contains the documentation, including the correspondence of the Mayor's Offices of Karlsruhe and Katharinenthal with the District Office in Landau and the Colonist Welfare Committee in Odessa. Of particular interest, it also includes signatures of all the family heads in Karlsruhe, indicating their willingness to support the financial obligations involved - for the support for a resident priest and the construction of a church.

There are four sets of signatures for Karlsruhe. The earliest is dated 1852 which is when the process for the separation of the parishes began. The latest is dated 1861, when the new parish was finally approved. The secretary referred to the signators as *Wirten*, a German term referring to them as household heads. It is possible that unmarried adult sons still residing with their parents may not have been included, so the lists may not be a complete inventory of all adult males in Karlsruhe.

The first list in 1852 shows three members of the Landeis family - **Daniel, Philipp**, and an ambiguous third signature that looks like "**Pill**" or perhaps "**Filb**."

The image shows two handwritten signatures in cursive script. The first signature is 'Pill' and the second is 'Landeis'. They are written in dark ink on a light background.

"Pill" Landeis 1852

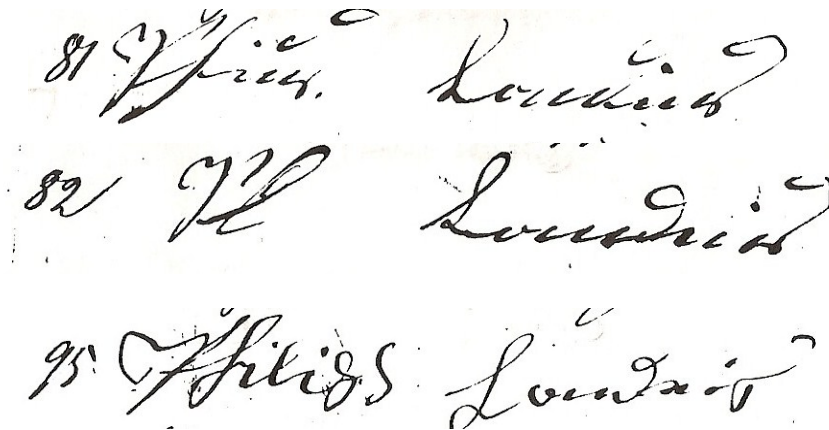
¹⁷ Height 1972.

¹⁸ See Fr. Konrad Keller 1914, p. 188 in A. Becker's English edition for a summary of the history of the parish of Karlsruhe.

The next list, 1856, seems to be partial because it contains only Daniel's signature.

The third list, also dated 1856, contains the signatures for Daniel, Philipp, and the ambiguous person, who spelled his name this time as "Pli."

The fourth list, dated 1861, contains signatures for Philipp, Jacob, Rafael, Pius (spelled as "Phius"), and the ambiguous person, who spelled his name this time as "Pl."



**"Phius," "Pl," and Philipp Landeis (top to bottom)
Signatures on 1861 Petition from Karlsruhe**

The identities of these members of the Landeis family can be determined by referring back to the census of 1858. At that time there were two family households in Karlsruhe -- the offspring of the deceased Anton (Raphael, Philipp, and Karl) and the offspring of Daniel (Philipp, Jacob, Pius, and Michael). The identities of those whose signatures appear on the petitions are clear, with the exception of "Pill" or "Filb" (1852), "Pli" (1856), and "Pl" (1861).

"Phius," "Philipp," and "Pl" were separate persons since those three names appear on the 1861 petition, the scribe assigned them separate numbers, and he counted them separately in the total 156 household heads (*Wirten*) in the colony of Karlsruhe. An important clue is that there were two Philipps in that generation, one the son of Daniel and the other the son of Anton. Both of them were about the same age (born 1827-1830). We note that Philipp had a son, Thomas, born in 1851 in Karlsruhe. This Philipp could be either one. The most likely solution seems to be that one signed his name as "Philipp," and the other signed it as "Pli" or "Pill," perhaps as a way to distinguish themselves. The three signatures in 1861 look like they were written by the same hand, perhaps by Pius or Philipp who signed on behalf of the other two.

A Russian researcher, Igor Pleve, who I hired to extract Landeis records stated that Pius was written as "Pii" or "Piy," which was simply a variant form of "the pope's name" -- that is, "Pius" minus the Latin ending. Once again, we should not confuse "Pii(us)" with "Pli"(ipp) - Pius had a brother named Philipp, and also a cousin Philipp (the son of Anton).

The Baptismal Records for Karlsruhe (1855-1866)

The original church books for Karlsruhe are not available, but copies of all the baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funerals are available in the Tiraspol Archbishop's Consistory, which is currently stored in the Russian State Archive at Saratov. The GRHS has been able to retrieve the records for the colony of Landau, which was the district capital for the colonies and the mother parish for neighboring Karlsruhe. Karlsruhe formed its own separate parish and its first priest arrived on December 15, 1861 and entries for Karlsruhe residents cease at that point in Landau's church book.

There are several entries referring to the Landeis family in Karlsruhe (again, keeping in mind here that all dates cited are in Julian format and that 12 days should be added to convert to Gregorian or "modern" format):

1. **Jacob Landeis** (son of Daniel, brother to Pius and Philipp) and his wife Katharina Reisenauer had a daughter **Theresia Landeis** born March 16, 1855 in Karlsruhe. Jacob Landeis's wife Katharina served as baptismal sponsor for the daughter of Andreas Schmidt in 1860. Jacob Landeis served as a baptismal sponsor for the son of Josef Reisenauer in 1861. MyHeritage.com reports that **Theresia Landeis**, b. Mar. 16, 1855 married an unknown person named **Meier**. After his death she remarried apparently **Valentin Schaaf (Schaff)**, he was b. 1842 in Speier, his first marriage was in 1870 and he remarried Theresia after his wife died. Theresia died 1921 in Speier, and Valentin died 1928 in Speier. They had at least 10 children with surname Schaaf. It is unknown where Theresia's first Meier husband was born, or what his name was. MyHeritage.com shows that Theresia Landeis was the sister to my great-grandfather, Heinrich Landeis, although there is no documentation for this. That contradicts the information showing that Heinrich's father was Peter Landeis.
2. **Pius Landeis** ("Pii" or "Piy," the son of Daniel) and his wife, Helena Hatzenbühler, had a son, **Philipp Landeis**, born on Jan. 17, 1861 and baptized the next day. The godparents were Philipp Landeis (Pius' brother) and his wife Barbara Reisenauer. Barbara Reisenauer-Landeis also served as a godmother for the daughter of Oswald Lochbaum in 1861. Barbara (Reisenauer), wife of Philipp Landeis, served as godmother for the daughter of Oswald Sprung in July, 1861. Philipp Landeis served as godfather for the daughter of Franz Ruf in Nov. 1861. We may assume that Barbara Reisenauer, wife of Philipp Landeis, was a close relative of Katharina Reisenauer, wife of Philipp's brother Jacob Landeis.
3. **Katharina Landeis**, married to Jacob Pfaff had a son, Johann Pfaff, on March 11, 1861. The godfather was Valentin Meier. The entry doesn't state Katherine's father, but the 1839/40 census shows that she was the daughter of Adam Landeis and that she was already married to Jacob Pfaff at that point.
4. **Raphael Landeis** (son of Anton) and his wife, Franziska Forster, had a daughter, **Elizabetha Landeis**, born on Dec. 3, 1861, and baptized the next day. The godfather was Philipp Landeis.
5. **Jacob Landeis** and his wife, Katharine Reisenauer, had a son **Jacob Landeis** born Jan. 5, 1862.

6. Kajetan¹⁹ Friess and his wife, **Anna Maria Landeis**, had a daughter Anna Maria Friess born and baptized in Landau on Dec. 30, 1862. Kajetan Friess (stated to be the son of Franz) and his wife, Maria Anna Landeis (stated to be the daughter of Anton Landeis), also had a son Anton Friess born in Landau on July 14, 1865. Anna Maria Landeis may be the same person as **Mariana Landeis** married to Caspar Friess, or perhaps there was a double marriage between the Landeis and Friess families.
7. **Jacob Landeis** and his wife, Katharine Reisenauer, had a daughter, **Magdalena Landeis**, born April 12, 1864 in Karlsruhe.
8. **Karl Landeis** and his wife, Marianna Blumenstiel, had a daughter, **Carolina Landeis**, born Aug. 21, 1864 in Karlsruhe.
9. **Raphael Landeis** and his wife, Fraziska Forster, had a daughter, **Helena Landeis**, born June 12, 1864.
10. **Pius Landeis** and Helena Hatzenbühler had at least four later children born in Karlsruhe: **Barbara** (born 1859, died Sept. 22, 1860), **Brigitta** (born Aug. 12, 1862), **Elizabeth** (born Oct. 3, 1863), and **Katherine** (born Oct. 21, 1866), in addition to their son **Philipp**, born in January, 1861.
11. **Jacob Landeis** and Katharina Reisenauer had a son, **Andrew Landeis**, born Feb. 31, 1866 in Karlsruhe.

The Death Records for Karlsruhe (1860 -1880) and Other Colonies

Some researchers briefly got around the restrictions of the Saratov Archive staff when they visited the archive in 2017 and used their cell-phone cameras to take photos of the death records of several of the German colonies. When this was discovered, the archive staff forbid them from taking any further photos. Since then the death records have been paid for by GRHS and legally retrieved from the archive.

The death records for Karlsruhe cover 1860 to 1880, although they are incomplete. These are the records available for the Landeis family:

1. **Barbara Landeis**, age one year, died on September 22, 1860 in Karlsruhe. Her parents were **Pius Landeis** and Helena Hatzenbühler. She was the only member of the Landeis family shown in the Landau death records. Three other children died in Karlsruhe on that same day, and another one five days later. This hints of an epidemic, a common danger in the colonies in those years. There is an error in translation for this record because it states that Barbara was the dau. of Paul Landeis and Helena Hatzenbühler. These death records were in Cyrillic, which I didn't translate. There are several records from various sources that show Helena Hatzenbühler married to Pius Landeis.
2. **Magdalena Landeis**, daughter of **Pius Landeis** and Helena Hatzenbühler, d. Nov. 16, 1871, age 2.
3. Valentin Steckler, son of Joseph Steckler and **Margaret nee Landeis**, d. Dec. 21, 1879, age 4 months. This Margaret is unknown in the Landeis genealogy, presumably she

¹⁹ St. Gaetano (1480-1547). The German form of the name is Kajetan or Cajetan.

was b. ca. 1852. Jacob Landeis had a daughter, Margaret, shown in the 1816 R.L. age 6 (= b. ca. 1810) but she was clearly earlier than Joseph Steckler's wife.

4. **Johann Landeis**, son of **Karl Landeis**, son of Anton, and Maria Anna nee Blumenstein, daughter of Joseph, d. June 11, 1878, age 3 months.
5. Joseph Steckler (b. ca. 1852), husband of **Margaret nee Landeis**, d. March 14, 1880, age 28, children: Martin, Barbara.
6. **Michael Landeis**, husband of Rosalia, d. May 13, 1873, age 28, children: Jacob, Elisabeth, Apollonia, Katherina.

In addition, there are two records from the nearby colony of Speier:

1. Stephan Stockert, son of Martin Stockert and **Katherina nee Landeis**, d. April 23, 1873, age 1 year and 3 months.
2. **Katherina Landeis**, d. April 6, 1878, age 76, children: Philipp, Jacob, Pius, Katherina. This Katherina Landeis was born ca. 1802, she apparently was Katharina nee Jungmann, wife of Daniel Landeis, who was born ca. 1806. It is likely that Daniel Landeis was deceased by 1878 since Katharina was residing outside Karlsruhe.

There were no death records with the Landeis surname in the colonies of Heidelberg, Katherinenthal, Kostheim, Krasna (Bessarabia), Liebenthal (Kleinliebenthal, Josephstal, Mariental, Franzfeld), Mannheim, Selz, or Strassburg.

The Voter Registries for the Beresan Colonies in 1862

We also have available the voter registries for the Beresan colonies in 1862, which record the results of elections for members of the village council in each of the colonies. All of the major colonies in the Beresan enclave are shown, including Karlsruhe, Rastadt, München, Speier, Landau, and Katharinenthal. These records are important because they show the names and signatures for all males who were old enough to vote. As we have seen, the petitions for a separate parish of Karlsruhe, from 1852 to 1861, contained the signatures of the household heads (*Wirten*) in the colony, which may not have included all those who had reached legal voting age.

There are only two members of the Landeis family shown on the 1862 voter registry for Karlsruhe – Philipp and Jacob, who were apparently sons of Daniel. Other members of the family, such as Daniel's brother Anton and Anton's sons Raphael, Karl, and "Pill," were adults at that time and they would have been eligible to vote if they were present in the colony, but they are not listed, nor are they shown as "absent" (*abwesend*) which was customary at that time for voters who were temporarily away from the village. The Landeis family was also not shown in the voter registries for any other Beresan colony.

The Branching of the Landeis Family -- Neu-Karlsruhe, Halbstadt, and Klosterdorf

By way of review, we have seen that **Jacob Landeis** (b. 1756) and his wife **Anna Maria Messmann** (b. 1758) immigrated to Karlsruhe in 1810, when it first was established as a colony. The 1816 R.L. shows that they had six children: **Elisabeth** (b. 1790), **Apollonia** (b. 1791), **Adam**

Franz (b. 1793), **Anton** (b. 1794), **Daniel** (b. 1802), and **Margaret** (b. 1804). Jacob died ca. 1811, and Anna Maria died later by 1839.

Of these children, there are only two lineages shown in the 1860s and later in Karlsruhe. One lineage was **Anton** married to Magdalena Hummel and their sons **Raphael**, **Karl**, and **Philipp** (it's possible that there was another son "PI"). The second lineage was **Daniel** married to Katharina Jungmann and their sons **Pius**, **Philipp**, and **Jacob**.

There are no records for Jacob's third son, **Adam Franz** married to Maria Antonia Ihly, and their son **Peter**, who are shown in the 1839 R.L. They do not appear in the petition of 1861 for a separate parish church, nor in the voter registry of 1862. Adam's wife Maria Antonia served as godmother for Magdalena Jonas, dau. of Margaret Landeis and Franz Jonas, on Aug. 26, 1834 in Landau. Adam's dau. **Katharina**, married to Jacob Pfaff, had a son Johann Pfaff b. 1861 in Karlsruhe.

Nor are there later records for the three daughters of Jacob Landeis and Anna Maria Messmann. **Elisabeth** married Michael Pfoh and they settled in his home colony, Rastadt. **Apollonia** appeared as a godmother in one record in 1816, but not after that. The whereabouts of the third daughter, **Margaret**, is also unknown after 1816.

This indicates that members of the family began to leave Karlsruhe during those years. The daughters likely left the colony through marriage with outsiders. The sons likely left to seek opportunities elsewhere, at least temporarily, or permanently if they managed to purchase or lease lands elsewhere. This was common at that time, not only in Karlsruhe but also in the other German colonies. The colonies had experienced a growth in population and by mid-century they were facing chronic shortage of land for the younger generations. By 1860 the population of the 11 mother colonies in the Beresan region had risen from about 4,000 to 13,000. Younger families began leaving the colonies as early as the 1840s. In 1853, for example, 10 families left Rohrbach, and 28 families left Johannestal and Waterloo.²⁰

In the German colonies in the Black Sea region the farm lands were inherited by the youngest son in order to avoid over-fragmentation of the land holdings. The other siblings were given cash as their share of the inheritance, or if possible the father purchased land for them elsewhere. We note that Adam Franz was the oldest son of Jacob Landeis, and Daniel was the youngest. This suggests that Adam Franz sought lands outside the colony.

Each colony had set aside communal funds to provide for the younger generations. After the available land near the mother colonies was purchased, daughter colonies began blossoming everywhere in the 1860s, purchased by the pooled resources of the citizens of a village. Typically the daughter colonies had "Neu-" added as a prefix to the new colony's name -- Neu-Rohrbach, Neu-Rastadt, Neu-München, Neu-Worms, Neu-Danzig and so on. Because these new colonies were established using communal funds, we may assume that most of the settlers stemmed from the corresponding mother colonies, since they had a legal right to claim land there. There were also isolated estates (*Khutors*) purchased by private families, if they could afford to do so.

Some of the younger colonists settled in larger cities such as Nikolaiev or Odessa. Due to the proximity of the German colonies, both these cities had growing German neighborhoods. It was common for younger men and their families, especially those without land holdings in the colonies, to move into the city for employment. The *Nord Dakota Herold*, a German language

²⁰ Giesinger 1974, p. 114.

newspaper published in Dickinson, North Dakota, regularly contained letters written by relatives of ethnic Germans who had remained behind in the Ukraine -- in several of the letters Nikolaiev was stated as their place of residence.

An internet source²¹ provides the following description of the growing German neighborhoods in Odessa:

"A reporter of the *Odessa Zeitung* wrote in 1863: "Everywhere you look you see elegant signs of German carriage builders, shoe makers, wood turners, tailors, confectioners, carpenters, bakers, watch makers, journalists, photographers, book and stone printers."

"One particularity was the *Lutherische Hof*, the intellectual center of the Germans in Odessa. The *Lutherische Hof* was a designated district. It included an Evangelical church with 1,200 seats, two parsonages, the *St.-Pauli-Realschule* (secondary school), an orphanage and additional charities and nursing homes. Furthermore, the district included a hospital with German doctors that was very popular among the Germans as well as the Russian community. Next to the evangelical-Lutheran church in *Lutherischer Hof*, Odessa had a Catholic, an Evangelical-Reformed and a Baptist church."

"The German periodicals were *Odessaer Zeitung* (1863-1914), the *Neue Hauswirtschaftskalender* and the *Odessaer Kalender* (1863-1915)."

Rev. Joseph Kessler in his history of the Diocese of Tiraspol²² (1930) provided information for the various parish churches and their filiales. It is unknown what percentage of the membership were ethnic Germans, nor what the date was for the statistics:

Kessler states that Odessa had two Catholic churches -- Assumption of the Virgin Mary, with membership of 14,986, built in 1844-1853, and St. Clement, with membership of 17,773, built in 1906, founded to serve the largely Polish residents in Odessa. A filiale church, St. Peter the Apostle, was consecrated in 1913.

Nikolayev had membership of 8,555. Its filiale churches were Neu-Karlsruhe, Laryevka, and Dobraya Kerniza. Karlsruhe had a parish church membership of 1,933, with a filiale of Antonovka.

A. Neu-Karlsruhe

The colonists in Karlsruhe at first leased the land of the neighboring Russian nobility, then purchased it when they had the opportunity. The land reforms which accompanied the abolition of serfdom gave the colonists, for the first time, the right to purchase land wherever they found it. The land was mostly owned by absentee nobles and St. Petersburg elites, who no longer had the ability to farm the land after the serfs no longer wished to work like slaves. Because the land parcels were fairly large, in most cases several families had to combine assets to purchase the land, so the colonists moved around in clusters. They eventually owned all the land on the eastern side of Karlsruhe, including Katzk, Bapelhut, Kyrijakow, Kowaljowk, Katschowk, Solonichy, and other estates. They also began purchasing land more distantly

²¹ <https://www.russlanddeutsche.de/en/russian-germans/history/the-history-of-russian-germans.html>

²² Rev. Joseph Aloysius Kessler, *Geschichte der Diözese Tyraspol*, privately published by Rev. George P. Aberle, Dickinson, N.D. 1930. The entire book was translated and published in the GRHS *Heritage Review* in 15 parts beginning March 2017 to December 2020.

removed from the colony. The Kotschinsky land was rented by Karlsruhe farmers until World War One. From there they branched out to the Antonowka estate, located 18 kilometers northeast of Karlsruhe on the Bug River, and to Gradowka (the Schardt estate) near Rastadt, located across the Bug River 12 miles northeast of Nikolaiev. In total, the Karlsruhe colonists purchased about 50,000 hectares of land outside the original mother colony.

The first daughter colony of Karlsruhe was known as “Neu-Karlsruhe,” it was a Catholic colony founded in 1867. Another daughter colony, known as Klein-Karlsruhe (Little Karlsruhe) was established in 1869, north of Odessa.²³ Neu-Karlsruhe was located at Baschlanka, about 48 miles east of Karlsruhe, on the east side of the Ingul river, and 42 miles (70 kilometers) north of Nikolaiev. On the map below it is shown as the eastern-most colony, a red dot north of Neu-Danzig. Today Neu-Karlsruhe is known as Tschervona Sirka (*Червона Зірка*). The *Deutscher Volkskalendar* of 1913, published in Odessa, listed all the colonies in the Black Sea region at that time. Neu-Karlsruhe was in the *Gouvernement* of Cherson, the *Kreis* (District) of Odessa, the *Volost* (administrative unit) of Poltawka, and its closest post-station was Poltawka. It owned 2,307 dessiatines of land. The land was acquired from two Russian nobles, Butovich and Cherkas. Interestingly, the village mayor (*Dorfschulz*) in 1913 was named Landeis. Neu-Karlsruhe was an affiliate of the Catholic mother church (*Pfarrei*) at Nikolaiev, along with the two small villages of Larejeffka and Dobrja kerniza. These outlying villages were served by a priest from Nikolaiev who periodically travelled there to hold church services and to serve their needs. The mother colony of Karlsruhe had a *Gymnasium* (post elementary school) established by Fr. Scherr, which was a well-known cultural light in the Beresan colonies. Neu-Karlsruhe had an elementary school (*Volksschule*), and the EWZ records from World War Two (see discussion below) report that some residents attended at least four grades in the school there. It remained a small village in 1907, its population was only 190, and in 1913 it was 199 (although several families had emigrated to the USA). A letter written by Johann Renner in 1922 to his uncle Joseph, who had emigrated to North Dakota, mentions that Neu-Karlsruhe had 33 homes at that time.

Philipp Landeis, a relative of the family, wrote a detailed history of Neu-Karlsruhe, published by the *Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland*.²⁴ He stated that his grandfather, **Jakob Landeis**, was one of the founders of the daughter-colony in 1867. This most likely was Jakob, the son of Daniel Landeis and Katharine Jungmann.

Paul Landeis (unknown father) was born in 1868 in Neu-Karlsruhe, shortly after it was founded. He married Isabella Riedinger, who was born in 1870 in Dobrinka. They had a son, **Peter Landeis**, born in Neu-Karlsruhe in 1898. It’s possible that our Peter Landeis (son of Adam, b. ca. 1839) served as his godfather and passed on his name. The younger Peter and his wife, Mariana, remained in Neu-Karlsruhe until 1929, when he was arrested by the Soviets and sent to his likely death in a labor camp in Siberia. His father, Paul, also remained in Neu-Karlsruhe and he was reported dead between 1920-1925. Peter and Mariana had three children (see the details in the genealogical summary chapter at the end of this narrative: **K17471**).

In 1900 **Jakob Landeis (K1452)**, born 1866) and his family emigrated to North Dakota. He was the son of **Raphael Landeis**, and the grandson of **Anton Landeis**. Their point of origin on the ship’s registry was stated to be Neu-Karlsruhe.

²³ Giesinger 1974, p. 116.

²⁴ Landeis 1962.

In the German language newspaper, *Nord Dakota Herold*, a letter was printed on April 30, 1926 sent from Karlsruhe. Interestingly, the writer gave his location as “Old Karlsruhe” (*Alt-Karlsruhe*), which shows the distinction made at that time between the original mother colony and the daughter colony.

B. Halbstadt

In addition to the first daughter colony of Neu-Karlsruhe in 1867, another daughter colony was Halbstadt, founded in 1869 by Beresaners, it was a Catholic colony about 10 miles southeast from Karlsruhe, in the parish of Schönfeld.²⁵ It owned 3,076 dessiatines of land, its population in 1905 was 317. There were several settlements in Russia with the name Halbstadt and it shouldn't be confused with the larger Mennonite colony also known as Halbstadt in the Molotschna district. The EWZ records indicate that some members of the Landeis family had married spouses from Halbstadt. **Peter Landeis** (see **K1748** in the family summary chart at the end of this chronicle) is shown in the EWZ records with various birth information – one record states that he was born in 1870 in Halbstadt; however, another more likely true record states he was born in 1878 in Karlsruhe. He married Eugenie Matz from Karlsruhe or Landau. Another member of the family, **Josef Landeis (K1733)** married Anna Bruechner, who was born in 1865 in Halbstadt. **Ottilia Landeis (K1746)**, born in 1874 in Karlsruhe, married Johannes Renner from Halbstadt. These records confirm that members of the family had become mobile by the 1870s. Some had relocated to the daughter colony of Neu-Karlsruhe north from Nikolaiev on the Ingul River, and some of their spouses came from Halbstadt.

C. Klosterdorf

There are also baptismal records for members of the Landeis family much farther away in Klosterdorf, a German Catholic colony located about 70 miles east of Nikolaiev on the west bank of the Dnieper river.²⁶ Klosterdorf was established in 1804, on the northern edge of Alt-

²⁵ Today the former daughter colony of Halbstadt is shown as Novoselovka, also shown as Katyushino, the Google map shows it as latitude 47.1307, longitude 31.6892, judging by the map scale it is about 10 miles southeast from Karlsruhe (today known as Stepove), Google shows it as founded in 1869 by Catholics Beresaners, population today is shown as 286.

²⁶ Today Klosterdorf is known as Kostyrka, not to be confused with the mother village of the same name now subsumed into Zmiivka. Klosterdorf was named after an Orthodox monastery about 20 miles to the north. It was a Catholic colony, affiliated with the parish of Nikolaiev; the other two neighboring German colonies, Mühlhausendorf and Schlangendorf, were Lutheran. These three colonies and the older Alt-Schwedendorf were located on the west bank of the Dnieper river, about 53.5 miles upriver from Kherson, which was 42.7 miles southeast from Nikolaiev. Wikipedia describes them as being in the Beryslav district (Ukrainian, *Beryslavs'kyi raion*) of Kherson province (Ukrainian, *Khersons'ka oblast*), Ukraine, some 12 kilometers (or 7 Versts under the old Tsarist system of measurement) east-north-east (16.6 km by car, and 16.4 km by approved footpaths of the town of Beryslav on the same side of the river. Wikipedia states that Klosterdorf was a filial chapelry served by priests from the city parish of St Pius and St Nicholas in Kherson, part of the Odessa deanery of the Tiraspol Roman Catholic diocese. By

Schwedendorf (*Gammalsvenkby*), an earlier Swedish colony established in 1782. Two other German Lutheran colonies, Mühlhausendorf and Schlangendorf, were also established nearby. In 1859 there were 35 families residing in each of the three colonies. and by 1887 Klosterdorf had grown to 70 families. In 1886 it had 773 inhabitants with 52 houses and one Roman Catholic chapel. Rev. Kessler, in his history of the Diocese of Tiraspol, states that Klosterdorf had a membership 1,237 persons, presumably around the turn of the 19th century.²⁷

Barbara Landeis & Johann Mengel had children born there 1884 to 1901, and also **Jakob Landeis** & Magdalena Deutsch had three children born there in 1904, 1910, and 1912. Jakob was the grandson of Daniel Landeis & Katharina Jungmann in Karlsruhe.

There are also records for Maier families in Klosterdorf, several of whom later emigrated to Saskatchewan. There is no clear link between these families and Louisa Meier.²⁸

D. Konrad, near Alexandrowka in the Crimea

Finally, there are additional records for **Jakob Landeis** from Karlsruhe and his wife, Magdalena Deutsch from Landau, they were the same couple who had prior resided in Klosterdorf. The records indicate that they later settled in Konrad, a German *Khutor* in central Crimea in the parish of Alexandrowka. Their son, **Michael Landeis**, was baptized there on Feb. 21, 1910 and their daughter Mathilda Landeis was bapt. on Oct. 14, 1912, both in Tasch-Kasan-Konrad.²⁹ The German colony of Alexandrowka was founded in 1863 by immigrants from the Austrian Empire, the parish church was established ca. 1912. It was primarily a Roman-Catholic colony, but there were also Lutheran settlers. The baptismal records show that other families from farther north in the Beresan region migrated south into the Crima. Besides Landeis, some of the surnames that occur in the baptismal records of Alexandrowka include Fitterer, Deutsch, Heck, Roller, and Bast. Jakob Landeis and Magdalena Deutsch were the only Landeis family from Karlsruhe which appear in the records of Alexandrowka. There is overlap

1864, however, the local German Catholic community had raised enough funds to pay for a village chapel dedicated to St Vincent, which eventually became an independent parish church.²⁷ Rev. Joseph Aloysius Kessler, *History of the Diocese Tiraspol*, orig. in German, privately published by Rev. George P. Aberle, 1930, trans. and pub. in GRHS *Heritage Review* 2019-2020. It is unknown what the date was for Kessler's statistics about the various churches in the Black Sea region, presumably near the turn of the 19th century.

²⁸ Peter Maier (1817-1868) & Elisabeth Fahlmann (1826-1868) had a daughter Katharina Maier who married Wilhelm Ehmann (1847-1918) and they had 13 children surnamed Ehmann, from 1886 and later in Klosterdorf. In 1890-1891 several families with the surname Mayer emigrated from Klosterdorf to Canada, where they were among the founders of Rastadt in Saskatchewan. The records for the St. Peter's parish in Saskatchewan show these families from Klosterdorf: (1) Johann Mayer, wife Margaret Sperling, children Michael 17, Marianna 13, Katharina 11, Josephina 9; (2) Jacob Meyer, wife Margaret Ehmann, children Adam 10, Katharina 8, Joseph 6, Maria 2; (3) Christian Mayer, wife Elisabeth Rieberger, children Maria 4, Alex 2; (4) Johann Mayer, wife Dorothea Keller.

²⁹ A map of German colonies in Crimea shows Konrad or T'Konrat, about 20 miles southeast of Alexandrowka. It is also known as Tashli-Konrat (45°20' N34°15' E), 40 km northwest of Theodosia. <https://www.grhs.org/chapters/krim/Crimean%20Village%20Map.pdf>

in the records with Klosterdorf, they reportedly had three children born in Klosterdorf 1904 to 1912, and two in 1910 and 1912 in Alexandrowka.



Map showing Halbstadt 1869, east of Karlsruhe, and Neu-Karlsruhe on the Ingul River, Klosterdorf east of Nikolaiev is not shown

The German Immigration Records (EWZ) from World War Two

Some of the gaps in the Landeis family history in the latter decades of the 19th century can be filled by the records of the Immigrant Central Office (*Einwandererzentralstelle*, or EWZ) which were compiled during World War Two. During the war the German *Wehrmacht* invaded the Ukraine and moved rapidly eastward to block the Soviet forces, which were in the process of arresting all the ethnic German colonists and deporting them to work camps in Siberia. The *Wehrmacht* authorities managed to rescue many of the ethnic Germans and relocate them to temporary safety in the *Wartegau* in western Poland. The Immigrant Central Office (EWZ) interviewed each person to determine their family backgrounds, and fortunately most of these records survived the war. Also known as the Berlin Document Center collection, it is made up of biographic records of more than 2.1million ethnic Germans who went through the immigration and naturalization offices in German territory in 1939-45. There are at least 100 references in these files for members of the Landeis family.³⁰

The family had greatly expanded by the end of the 19th century. By the 1920s some intermarriages had even taken place between the third generation descendants of Daniel Landeis and his brothers. One branch of the family stemmed from Daniel's son, **Pius Landeis** (born 1836) and Helena Hatzenbühler. Pius's son, **Peter Landeis** (born 1870s Karlsruhe) and his wife Eugenia Matz had a son and a daughter, who married the daughter and son of **Paul Landeis** (born 1868 in Neu-Karlsruhe) and **Isabella Riedinger**. This Paul Landeis was likely the grandson of Anton, but not of Daniel, otherwise the relationships would have been too close to allow intermarriages in the 1920s. In the April 3, 1925 issue of the *Nord Dakota Herold*, a German language newspaper published in Dickinson, North Dakota, there is a letter from Neu-Karlsruhe, written by Joseph Röther and Adam Schmidt. The letter mentions that within the past five years (1920-25), several people had died in the colony. Among the names listed were **Martin** and **Paul Landeis**. This reference to Paul Landeis also appears in the EWZ records, so he may be the one mentioned who had died. There is an error in the translation of the death record of Barbara Landeis, age 1, who died in 1860, she was stated to be the dau. of Paul Landeis and Helena Hatzenbühler, but her father should be Pius Landeis. There is no other information about who Martin Landeis may have been.

The EWZ records also refer to **Karl Landeis** (born 1867 in Karlsruhe or 1868 Neu-Karlsruhe), also married to Isabella Riedinger (born 1870 in Dobrinka). This couple had a daughter Rosa born Sept. 1905 in Neu-Karlsruhe. Since Paul and Karl Landeis had wives with the same name, this indicates that they were the same person. It is easy to make mistakes when reading old German Gothic or Cyrillic handwriting, and since Paul/Karl are both four letters long and both end in "l" it would have been an easy mistake to make. There is an earlier reference in the family history to Anton's son, Karl, born ca. 1839, who may have served as the godfather for Karl/Paul born in the 1860s.

This information confirms that several members of the Landeis family had relocated to Neu-Karlsruhe when it was founded in 1867. **Paul/Karl Landeis** may have been born there, as the EWZ records indicate, and at least three of the children from the marriage with Isabella Riedinger were also born in Neu-Karlsruhe near the end of the century. We also know that my ancestors, Peter Landeis, and his son Heinrich, settled in Neu-Karlsruhe at some point.

Peter Landeis and Barbara Hoffmann-Meier

³⁰ See the summary of the family history in the final chapter.

My ancestor, **Peter Landeis** (born 1824/25), was the son of **Adam**, who had come to Tsarist Russia with his father, **Jacob**, in 1809. Other than the reference to Adam and Peter in the census of 1839/40, no further records are available. As we have seen, neither of them appears in the 1858 census, the petitions of 1852–1861, or the 1862 voter list for Karlsruhe. Adam's daughter, Catherine, married to Jacob Pfaff, had a son in Karlsruhe in 1861 (recorded in the Landau baptismal records), but there are no records on her brother, Peter.

Adam Landeis was probably deceased by 1858. He would have been 64 years old and given the shorter life spans at that time people often did not make it into their 60s. Peter most likely had left Karlsruhe and sought his opportunities elsewhere, as did many other young colonists. It is not known where Peter Landeis lived during his early years after he left Karlsruhe, but it was probably in one of the several *Khutors* or community lands owned or leased by the families in Karlsruhe for their younger generation. It's possible that he settled in Klosterdorf, near Nikolaiev, where Jakob Landeis & Magdalena Deutsch resided then moved to Neu-Karlsruhe after it was established in 1867.

Family memories, passed down to my mother, help fill the gaps in the chronicle. According to stories told by her grandmother (Louisa Meier, dau. of Alois Meier) Peter Landeis was married twice. His first wife is unknown, but supposedly he had four children from this first marriage, two boys and two girls. Of these, only two are known:

1. **Heinrich Landeis**, my mother's grandfather, born Nov. 25, 1864; he married Louisa Meier.
2. **Katherine Landeis**, born Nov. 12, 1866, married Jacob Scheeler in Dickinson, North Dakota.

At some point Peter and his family moved to the daughter colony of Neu-Karlsruhe which was founded in 1867. According to family lore, Peter's first wife died when their son, Heinrich, was between 5 to 9 years of age (i.e., 1869-1873). Peter remarried the widow of Alois Meier, her surname was Barbara Hoffmann.³¹ The Hoffmann family stemmed from Karlsruhe. She was born 1828-1929, and Alois Meier was born in 1829. Barbara Hoffmann-Meier had five children from her first marriage with Alois Meier from 1850 to 1862, the first two were born in München, the later three in Rastadt. Barbara and Alois apparently had three more, including Louisa who was born two months before his death in 1864:

1. **Friedrich Meier**, born Nov. 29, 1856.
2. **Jakob Meier**, born Aug. 23, 1860.³²
3. **Louisa Meier**, my mother's grandmother, born Dec. 10, 1864.

³¹ The details of the parents' names, Peter Landeis, Barbara Hoffmann and Alois Meier, are derived from the death certificates for Friedrich Maier and Katherine (Katy) Landeis-Scheeler. The surname Meier is spelled in various ways, including Maier and Meyer. Katy Landeis-Scheeler's death record confirms that her father was Peter Landeis, her mother's name was unknown.

³² Jakob may have been their first-cousin (*Halb Bruder* in German).

It is likely that Peter Landeis and his first wife were among the founders of Neu-Karlsruhe, along with Jakob Landeis, as well as Alois Meier and his wife, Barbara Hoffmann. It is a reasonable speculation that the widow Barbara Hoffmann-Meier and the widower Peter Landeis came to know each other and got remarried there in the daughter colony Neu-Karlsruhe. His relative, Paul Landeis (born 1868 in Neu-Karlsruhe) married to Isabella Riedinger, also resided there and they had a son, Peter Landeis, born in 1898. It's possible that our older Peter served as his godfather and passed on his name.

Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier, my great-grandparents

After Peter Landeis remarried the widow Barbara Hoffmann-Meier, they had sizeable land holdings between the two of them – probably lands located in the daughter colony, Neu-Karlsruhe, which came into being only three years after the birth of Louise Meier. They decided that they wanted to keep their combined estates within the family, so they arranged a marriage between his son, Heinrich, and her daughter, Louisa Meier. Arranged marriages were common among European farming families at that time, a custom known in their German dialect as *Kuppola*.³³ Louisa told my mother that she and Heinrich did not like each other and although she was opposed to the marriage, they had little choice. They had a difficult relationship, compounded by the fact that they were step-siblings. Judging from the birth date of their first child, Philip, we can assume that the marriage took place about 1882 when Heinrich was 18 and Louisa was 17.

Heinrich and Louisa's first three children were born in Russia: Phillip (born 1883), Katherina (born 1886), and Alexander (my grandfather, born March 2, 1889). I hired a Russian researcher³⁴ to search the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory records for 1888 and 1889 in the colony of Neu-Karlsruhe. He stated that there were no records for anyone with the surname Landeis during those two years in that daughter colony. However, I am somewhat skeptical of this because I haven't had confirmation that the records for Neu-Karlsruhe are available in the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory. My grandfather Alex always said that he was born in "Nikolae, Russia," which matches the information provided by his mother, Louisa. When Heinrich Landeis and his family emigrated to the USA, along with Louisa's brother Friederich Meier, the Hamburg ship records (shown in the next chapter) list their point of origin, their home village, as Neu-Karlsruhe, and their occupations as "farmer." This clearly anchors both the Landeis and the Meier families as being in the daughter colony at some point by 1889, but it is possible that Heinrich and Louisa went to the city of Nikolaiev at the time of Alex's birth for medical assistance.³⁵

Heinrich and Louisa emigrated to the USA in 1889. It is possible that Peter Landeis died about that time (he was born in 1825, so he would have been 64 years old). Heinrich may have

³³ This dialect term derives from the German verb *koppeln*, to couple or join together.

³⁴ Igor Plevé

³⁵ The *Nord Dakota Herold* in Dickinson, N.D. reprinted some of Fr. Konrad Keller's book on the German colonies in 1922. They added a list of some of the early settlers in the Dickinson area, with their colonies of origin. Philipp Landeis (my grandfather's brother) is shown as coming from Karlsruhe, but it is not certain how literally this should be taken. The families were listed by their original mother colonies.

inherited the estate in Neu-Karlsruhe, which provided him with sufficient money to start a new life in North Dakota.

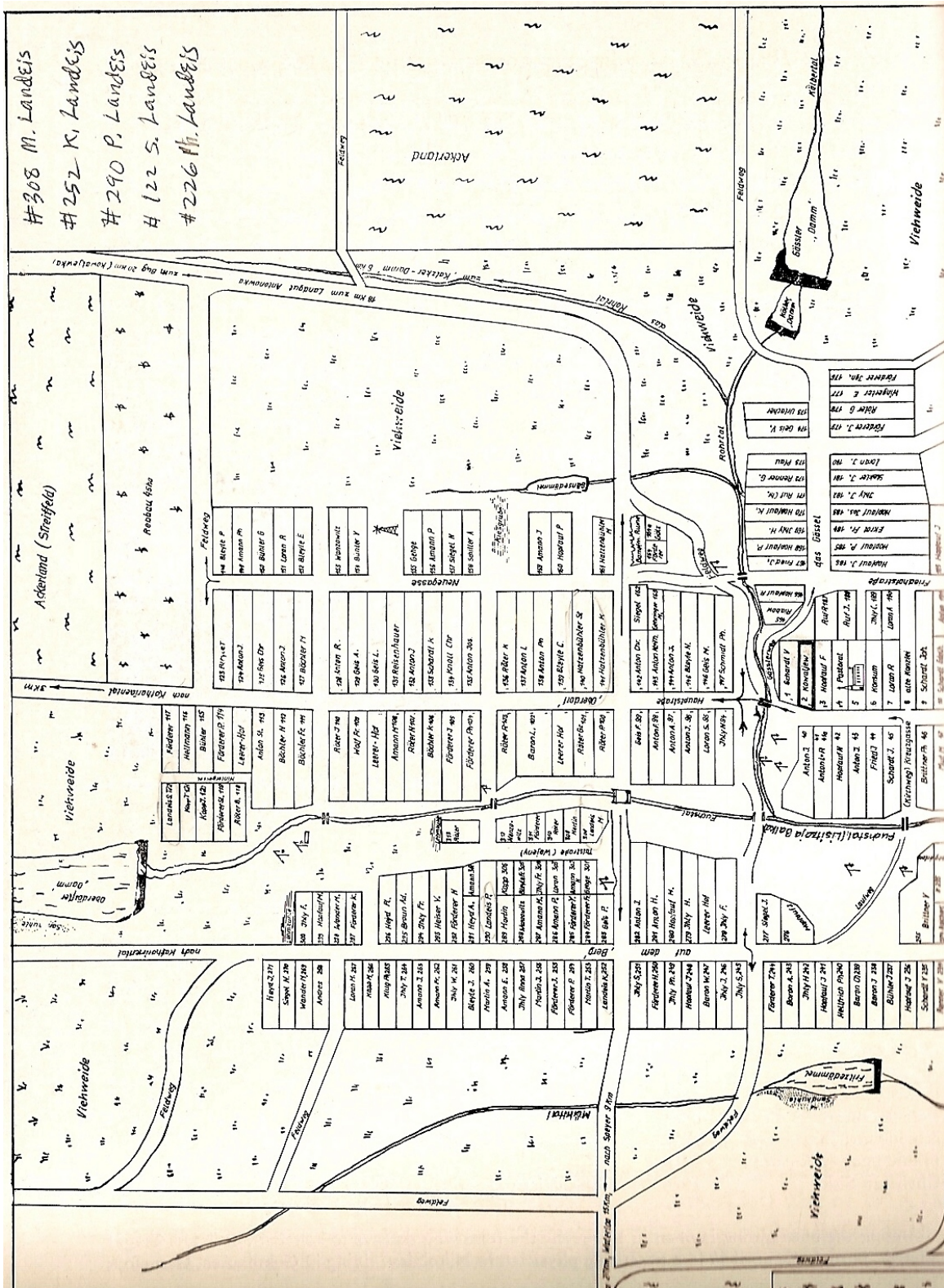
My separate narrative explores the history of the Meier family and the related Hoffmann family. Louisa Meier's parents were Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann. Alois Meier was born ca. 1829, presumably in München, and Barbara was born presumably about the same time in Karlsruhe. Baptismal records show that they had five children born from 1850 to 1862, the first two were born in München and the next three were born in Rastadt. Their final three children, Friedrich, Jakob, and Louisa Meier were born from 1856 to 1864. Louisa was born only two months before the death of Alois Meier in 1864, she was apparently named in commemoration of her father, "Louisa" is a feminine form of Alois. Barbara Hoffmann Meier was left in dire straits after the death of Alois, since none of her sons were old enough to legally inherit the family estate. Barbara remarried to Peter Landeis, who also was a widower, this enabled them to consolidate the two family estates. We don't have a baptismal record for my grandfather, Alex Landeis, born in 1889, presumably in Neu-Karlsruhe, so the origin of his first name is unclear. However, baptismal records for the Meier family in München show that Louisa had a young uncle, Alex Meier (brother of Alois) who was born Sept. 4, 1858. It is chronologically possible that this uncle Alex Meier was the godfather for Louisa's son, Alex Landeis, my grandfather, thereby passing down his name. He was the only contemporary person with the name Alex in the Meier or Landeis families. In the German colonies babies usually were given the names of their godparent and it was common practice to have uncles or cousins serve as godparents.



Karlsruhe 1910



St. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Karlsruhe 1885 to present (steeple removed during Soviet era)



Karlsruhe - map 1944 (top half)

Chapter 13

Historical Background: The Gathering Storm in Tsarist Russia

In this chapter we will explore the factors that explain why so many of the descendants of the German colonists chose to leave Tsarist Russia in the late 19th century, which by that point had been their family's homeland for 80 years or more.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn once quoted an old Russian saying from Tsarist times: "The German is like a willow. No matter which way you bend him, he will always take root again." That is an apt description of the German colonists in the first decades of the 19th century. They had many obstacles to overcome, but through sheer persistence, hard work and sacrifice they slowly transformed their mud huts on the steppe into prosperous villages.

The colonists came from different regions of Germany and Alsace, but over the years their regional differences melded together through intermarriage and shared hardships. Instead of being *Pfälzern* and *Schwaben* (Swabians), they became *Russland-Deutschen* (German-Russians). Each of the small, isolated farming colonies became a cultural island, where life was centered around the family and the parish church (Catholic, Lutheran, or Mennonite), which was the heart of village social life. Unique dialects formed, reflecting the regional mix from which the original settlers had derived. Together, these local dialects were referred to as "Colonist German" (*Kolonistendeutsch*). These were the dialects and the customs which we older descendants experienced in our childhood.

Over the course of the 19th century, the colonists remained a distinct ethnic group within the Tsarist empire. The census records show that by and large they intermarried among themselves, preserving their own language, religion, and customs. To a large extent this was the result of Tsarist policies, which from the beginning regarded them as ethnically separate and guaranteed their rights to preserve their religious and ethnic identity. Tsarist Russia was a pluralistic empire, and little pressure was placed on ethnic minorities to assimilate into the mainstream until late in the 19th century. The Colonist Welfare Committee monitored the internal affairs of the colonists and strictly limited their freedom to settle outside the colonies. Their dealings with the indigenous population – many of whom were still serfs -- were effectively controlled to preserve the self-interests of the regime and the Russian nobility, as well as to assuage the concerns of the Russian Orthodox Church about these large numbers of Catholic and Lutheran foreigners.

It is estimated that at least 100,000 Germans immigrated to Tsarist Russia from 1763 through the 1860s. By 1820 they had founded 300 "mother" colonies along the northern fringe of the Black Sea and the Volga river region. The colonists soon outgrew their original land allotments, so in 1842 they were granted the right to lease and purchase new land to provide for their young families. The colonies used their reserve capital funds to acquire farm land from the nearby Russian nobility, who were happy to do business with these productive entrepreneurs. Land was relatively cheap at that time, it rented for 30-60 *kopecks* per *dessiatin* and it could be purchased for about 5 *rubles* per *dessiatin*.¹ Soon they had branched out into at least 3,000 "daughter" colonies and

¹ Height 1972, p. 238.

privately owned “*khutors*,” spreading to the east above Nikolaiev and as far away as the Caucasus mountains.² By the 1870s there were approximately 450,000 ethnic Germans in various portions of the Russian empire. By the end of the century their numbers had blossomed to about 1,800,000.³



Concentrations of German Settlers, South Russia 1905⁴

However, storm clouds were gathering on the horizon. As the German colonies were reaching their apex of prosperity, larger forces were taking shape in Tzarist Russia which eventually proved to be their undoing. Russia had added vast new territories through conquest and annexation, but this heritage of conquest was not without a price.

² The Black Sea colonists ended up owning a large percentage of the arable land, an estimated 11 percent in Bessarabia, 20 percent in Cherson, 38 percent in Taurida (Crimea), and 25 percent in Jekaterinoslaw (Karl Stumpp 1971, p. 25).

³ The 1897 census figures showed 1,790,489 German-speaking subjects in the Russian empire, 1.3 million of whom lived in agricultural colonies. By the onset of the Soviet era the number of ethnic Germans had grown to about 2,000,000, and they had established more than 10,000 villages (Fleischhauer and Pinkus 1986, p. 13). They were the 14th largest among the approximately 125 ethnic groups in the Soviet Union (Gerd Stricker, p. xxv in Samuel Sinner 2000).

⁴ Map source: Langhans (ed.) 1905, p. 228.

As Russia expanded, it had annexed enormous blocks of Ukrainians, Poles, Balts, Armenians and other “national minorities,” who were about 40 percent of the population overall and who comprised the great majority in the border regions. The regime had to wrestle with the thorny problem of controlling all these ethnic minorities, who had become increasingly restive as they strove to preserve some degree of autonomy and identity. Russia’s expanding sphere of influence also came into competition with Austria-Hungary and the Ottomans in the Balkans, then later with the newly unified German empire.

Adding to the growing internal crisis of trying to hold together this sprawling, multi-ethnic and polyglot state, Russia still had an antiquated medieval social structure, with most of its indigenous Slavic population still locked into serfdom. The rest of Western Europe had long abandoned serfdom and their countries were developing constitutional monarchies and forging ahead into the Industrial Revolution. Russia remained deeply fragmented by class and ethnicity, loosely held together by the Tsarist autocracy. The Orthodox clergy, the townsmen, the nobility, the Cossacks, Tartars, Baltic Germans, and other groups each had their own laws, legal rights, privileges and courts that had been granted by various Tsars. The German colonists were simply another group added to the list. They were exempt from the laws of the provinces in which they lived, and they were administered by a special Welfare Committee for the Foreign Colonies, headed by Tsarist appointees.

By the mid-19th century these internal fissions in Russian civil society led to a rising “anti-foreigner” backlash among Russia’s intellectuals, which took on a decidedly anti-German flavor. Reactionary anti-Germanism first took root among the educated classes during the reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855). When Nicholas assumed the throne he was confronted with the so-called Decembrist revolt in 1825, led by a group of reformist military officers who tried to force the adoption of a constitutional monarchy. Tsar Nicholas crushed the revolt and imposed political repression throughout the empire. Western European influences and the press were censored, since they were blamed as the source of the discontent. The Western press in turn appropriately branded Tsar Nicholas as the “gendarme of Russia.”

The Tsar had the enthusiastic support of the Slavophiles, an influential group of Russian intellectuals whose ideology reflected the nationalist sentiments of the time. The Slavophiles felt that Russia should be purged of the Western influences that had predominated since Peter the Great. They advocated a return to an idealized and simpler Slavic past, when Mother Russia had one folk and one language, with land owned communally (the so-called proto-Communist *Mir* system) and everyone believed in the Orthodox Church, which was headed by the Tsar. They especially disliked Germans because they were emblematic of Western influence which predominated in the upper echelons of Russian society. The University of Dorpat, with its German educational system, was the center of intellectual life in the Baltic region at that time and Germans were leaders in the arts and technology. The Slavophiles particularly targeted the wealthy and influential Baltic German nobility, many of whom had received key administrative and advisory posts in the tsarist regime. By the 1850s the Slavophiles had grown into an influential national party; however, their ambitions were held in check by Tsar Nicholas, who was wary of their fervor and distrustful their contradictory ideas, which mixed freedom of conscience, egalitarianism, and traditional loyalty to Tsar and the Orthodox faith, with the proviso that the state should not interfere in local

affairs.⁵ When the head of the Orthodox Church tried to take advantage of the anti-foreigner backlash to supplant Lutheranism, the Baltic Germans made a direct appeal to the Tsar, who rebuffed the Slavophiles for having gone too far (Martin 1991; Williams 1975, pp. 161-173).

The colonists had been spared the brunt of the anti-German rhetoric up to that point, which was largely directed against the Baltic Germans. The colonists were still generally admired as role models of diligence and loyal supporters of the Tsar. The Russian peasantry had always viewed the German colonists with a mix of resentment, dislike, and admiration, as was noted in early reports by travelers like J.G. Kohl in 1838 – “The Russian, it is said, hates the Germans,” but the Russians nevertheless adopted their methods, saying ‘*Tak I Niemetzi sdälajut*’ (that’s the way the Germans do it).”

However, the colonists too were soon caught up in the unfolding of broader events. Great national discontent was triggered by the disaster of the Crimean war (1854-56), when Russia was defeated by Britain and France. In the wake of the defeat, there were renewed ambitions for independence among the ethnic minorities in the border regions. Lashing out at the ethnic minorities, the Slavophiles focused their blame on the Baltic Germans, accusing them of having profited from the military expenditures. At that juncture, Tsar Nicholas died in 1855, leaving all these problems to be solved by his successor Alexander II (reigned 1855-1881).

As a result of the humiliating defeat, the new Tsar embarked on a great campaign to transform and modernize Russian society. He scaled back Russia’s foreign policy objectives, refraining from expansionism and concentrating instead on strengthening the borders. He is most remembered for abolishing serfdom in 1861 and for his administrative reforms in 1864. He established independent local judiciaries throughout the empire and created uniform self-government through rural assemblies, known as *zemstvos*, which consisted of elected representatives of all the classes.

The German colonists were alarmed by these changes because it meant that they were no longer protected by the Tsarist regime and they had lost their guarantees of cultural freedom. In 1871 the Chancellery for the Guardianship of Foreign Colonies was dissolved and their special “colonist” status was abolished. In its place, they became treated as legally equivalent to the newly freed Russians serfs (*muzhiks*), and they were made subject to local *zemstvo* administrations which had control of all aspects of their lives. Their German-language schools, churches, land purchases, taxation, and the courts they could appeal to for redress, all were in the hands of predominantly Russian district councils that were not sympathetic to their interests. The German names of the villages were Russianized and every village was given two names, an official Russian name and the German name that the people continued to use. The judiciary reforms of 1876 eliminated the colonists’ own courts and judges, which had been promised to them by earlier Tsars, and replaced them with Russian magistrates. Complaints soon began to surface about how the laws were being laxly enforced by Russian police and judges, many of whom were corrupt and resentful of the German colonists. They levied fines for concocted infractions, such as smoking in the presence of a police officer, having a muddy street after a rain storm, or when young people were boisterous after 9:00 in the evening. On the other hand, petty thefts and more serious crimes by Russian *muzhiks* were overlooked or dismissed with ridiculous leniency. This ushered in a period of

⁵ Dmytryshyn 1974 , p. 229; Pipes 1974, pp. 266-274

rampant thievery against the colonists, as organized gangs of bandits began operating in the Black Sea and Volga region. The colonists resorted to posting guard-dogs and armed men in the barns over-night, to protect their property.⁶

The next especially heavy blow to the German colonists came in 1873, when they lost their exemption from military service and universal service was implemented in 1874. By 1876, several thousand German colonists had to serve in the Russian military. Exemption from military duty had been one of the original promises made to the German colonists by Catherine II ("the Great") in her Ukase of 1763, which drew the first wave of colonists to the Volga region. Her grandson, Alexander I, repeated this promise in decrees that he issued in 1801, 1804, and 1813 which invited settlers into south Russia.

It is important to understand that the exemption from military service had powerful and special symbolic significance to the German colonists. When the colonists first came to Russia, they were a war-weary people. They had fled conscription in Napoleon's army, or in the armies of his satellite allies, all of which suffered enormous casualties during Napoleon's grandiose wars of imperial expansionism. When the colonists lost their exemption from military service in 1874, it was a severe blow, which they perceived as a "broken promise" by the Tsarist government. They also correctly realized that it was a harbinger of the eventual undermining of their cultural autonomy. Military duty presented an especially serious religious challenge for the Mennonite colonists -- it is no coincidence that they began planning large-scale emigration from Russia at this point

Exemption from military conscription had more than just symbolic significance. Military duty was a notoriously frightening experience at that time. Traditionally the armies of Europe had been filled by mercenaries soldiers, or by allotments of young men drawn from the lower classes. The ranks of the military in Russia were filled with former serfs and convicted criminals, since the courts at that time viewed the military as a penal institution. Fearful stories circulated about the arduous living conditions in the military and the brutal discipline.

There was a long history behind this dread. Peter the Great, in an effort to create a large standing army, had expanded the term of duty to "life." Conscripts had to leave everything behind - wife, family, and careers. The masses of the Russian people viewed military service with horror. Men who were conscripted had to leave wife and family behind, often never to see them again. "When a man was taken for the army his family bewailed him as though he were already dead, for few of them returned to their homes. If the man was married, his wife, who had little chance of seeing her husband again, was usually doomed to a life of bitter poverty."⁷ After spending decades in the military, men were physically and spiritually broken. Catherine II reduced the term to 25 years in 1793, Tsar Nicholas reduced it to 20 years in 1834, and finally Alexander II reduced it to 6 years. At that point, the tour of duty in most cases varied from 3 to 5 years, depending on the level of education of the conscript and the branch of service to which he was assigned. Young men had to register for the draft between the ages of 16-20, and at age

⁶ Numerous sources comment on the corruption of the local Russian government officials and judiciary, and the rampant thievery unleashed against the German colonies. Williams 1975 provides an excellent legal summary. Joachim 1939 provides several graphic anecdotes, as does Aberle 1963, p. 63.

⁷ Curtiss 1968, p. 110.

21 they participated in a lottery until the quotas for their districts were filled (usually about 1/3 of those registered). Those who were the sole providers for disabled parents, or for orphaned siblings, were exempt from military service. However, in one reported case, a young man served his term of duty, then had to serve a second term for his brother, who was lame.⁸ After serving active duty, they had 9 additional years of reserve duty, subject to recall in the event that Russia mobilized for warfare, and 5 years service in the militia until age 40.⁹

Despite Tsar Alexander II's attempts to reform and humanize the military, the aura of fear had not lifted. Living conditions in the Russian army remained notoriously brutal and discipline was harsh. Self-mutilation by young men was common as a means of avoiding service. Joachim Boehm, who was a neighbor of the Wagner family in North Dakota, served two years in the Russian army before emigrating to the USA. He told stories about how terrible their living conditions were. The soldiers didn't have enough meat in their diet, they were usually given frozen fat to eat, which they ate with disgust. He remarked that in the USA, that kind of food was fed to the dogs. Russian junior officers practiced ruthless hazing, often singling out the German colonists and other ethnic minorities, such as the Jews, whose knowledge of Russian was rudimentary. Discipline involved merciless beatings, often for minor offenses.

Many family histories of Germans from Russia contain stories of how their grandfathers or their great-uncles left Russia to avoid having to serve in the military. Those who completed their tour of duty often left soon afterward in order to avoid being recalled into duty for short periods of time. This was a common practice, although it was illegal because the government wouldn't allow young men to emigrate if they were still eligible for military duty, which included the mandatory period of time that they had to spend in the reserves after they had completed active duty.

Matters took an even worse turn when Alexander II was assassinated in 1881 during a growing "nihilistic" revolutionary movement. The reign of his successor, Alexander III (1881-1894), was marked by a resurgence of Russian nationalism, which became pervasive at the highest levels of government. Within five years after coming to power, the new Tsar had quickly reasserted autocratic control and established a network of secret police agents and informers. The empire was effectively reduced to a police state.¹⁰

Anti-German rhetoric heated up in the 1880s during the so-called Pan-Slavism movement, which built upon the romanticized themes of Slavophilism and combined it with fervent and messianic Russian nationalism. Russia, it was asserted, was the direct heir of the Byzantine Empire and it had a predestined role to be the champion and protector of Russia's "little brethren" Slavic peoples throughout Eastern Europe.¹¹ This rhetoric signaled a rebirth of an aggressive foreign policy, which was a direct challenge to the empires in the West.

⁸ Private note, internet, April 9, 1995.

⁹ Koprince 1981, pp. 3 - 12. There are also several internet sources on military service in Tsarist Russia—see, for example, www.roots-saknes.lv/Army/military_service.htm. See also Aberle 1963, p. 67 and 1966, vol. 2, p. 265.

¹⁰ Pipes 1974. See chapter 11, "Towards the Police State."

¹¹ Crankshaw 1976. See chapter 14, "How Great is Russia!"

In 1882 the “May Laws” were passed, targeting in particular the Jews. Strict quotas were placed on the number of Jews allowed to enter universities, and some professions were declared off-limits. Jews were forbidden to purchase land in rural areas, their Pale of Settlement was reduced in size, and pogroms broke out in Kiev, Odessa, and elsewhere.¹² Soon a massive emigration was under way, with more than two million Jews leaving Tsarist Russia from 1881 to 1920.

The ramifications were clear for other ethnic minorities in the empire, as they too soon became targeted. “Russification” efforts intensified to promote the Russian language, the Orthodox faith, and Russian autocracy throughout the empire among all its subject peoples.¹³ Roman Catholics in Poland, Lutherans in the Baltic region, and Moslems in the east were subject to rigorous restrictions, while Eastern Orthodoxy – under the nominal head of the Tsar -- was fostered at their expense.

Despite Bismarck’s adroit diplomatic efforts, relationships between Russia and Germany continued to deteriorate, especially after Russia’s ambitions for greater control in the Balkans ended in disappointment at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. The turning point came in 1887 when Bulgarian nationalists managed to shake off their dependency on Russia, with tacit support from Germany and Austria-Hungary. The “Three Emperors League” collapsed and Russian foreign policy took a decidedly anti-German turn towards alliance with France.¹⁴

The fate of the German colonists soon became mired in this rising tide of anti-Germanism. They had been resident in the Black Sea region for about three generations by that point, and even longer in the Volga region. As a group, they had become extraordinarily successful in their farming ventures and their acquisition of farmlands from local Russian gentry was skyrocketing. They had generally been valued as loyal subjects and highly productive citizens. But step-by-step, they were becoming a vulnerable target.

During the reign of Alexander II their legal protections had been stripped away, and now under the autocratic reign of his successor Russification measures ratcheted upwards. State-run schools were introduced with mandatory instruction in the Russian language, which undermined their Church-run schools that used German as the language of instruction. In some colonies the private schools were closed and locks were placed on their doors. Non-Orthodox churches were required to obtain special permission to build or expand structures, which was no longer easy to obtain. The military was ordered to be self-supportive by taking whatever it needed, so Russian officers began casing the German colonies, making inventories of their resources and their young men who could be called for military service.¹⁵

More ominously, state restrictions soon ratcheted upwards on allowable land purchases by the German colonists. Their economic success and their ethnic distinctiveness had made them high profile targets. Concerns about growing German land ownership initially centered on the western border provinces of Volhynia, Kiev, and Podolia where Russian officials had become alarmed by a massive influx of German

¹² Charques 1972, p. 44.

¹³ An excellent discussion of Russification policies is provided by Weeks 1996.

¹⁴ Charques 1972, p. 46.

¹⁵ Brumley 1986, p. 73.

settlers since the 1860s.¹⁶ In 1863 there was an abortive Polish insurrection, which also aroused concerns for the security of this western periphery of the empire. Although the new German settlers didn't have the legal status of the earlier "colonists" in the Volga and Black Sea regions, German farmers everywhere had become viewed as alike by that point.¹⁷ As the rhetoric about protection of the western provinces heated up, it began to color perceptions of ethnic Germans throughout the empire. Despite the fact that the older colonist settlements in the Volga and the Black Sea posed no credible threat to national security, policy debates came to center on their ethnic and linguistic traits.

This was an ominous portent of even worse things to come. As Neutatz¹⁸ points out, conditions were ripe for turning the German colonists -- now unfortunately associated in Russia's national consciousness with a powerful foreign competitor -- into scapegoats for the unresolved problems of Russia's agrarian policies. Alexander II had emancipated the serfs, but he didn't make adequate provision of farmland to meet their needs. This made ethnic Germans targets of envy and resentment. Rather than being regarded as a successful experiment in economic development of the border regions of the empire, as the Tsars had originally planned, the colonists now were viewed as "privileged foreign intruders" in Russia. In the 1880s anti-German rhetoric reached near hysterical levels in the nationalist Russian press. Articles dwelled on the "problem" of controlling the land acquisitions of the German colonists. These loyal and staunch supporters of the Tsars now became subject to suspicion and slander. These "foreigners," it was charged, were taking over lands that had been "sanctified by Russian blood" and they were displacing "native Russian people." More ominously, wild assertions were made that the colonies had been strategically planned by Germany as an advance wave of "conquest by foreigners of Russian soil," and they were the "spearhead" of an impending assault by Bismarck's armies.¹⁹

Legislative efforts to curtail the growth of land ownership by ethnic Germans soon followed, undercutting their ability to provide for their growing families. The colonists were excluded from access to the Peasant Land Bank, which had been established in 1882 to provide long-term, low-interest loans for the transfer of gentry and state lands to the Russian peasantry. The Germans argued -- without success -- that they should be treated equally because their special "colonist" legal status had been taken away from them by Alexander II in 1871 and they had become subject to local *zemstvo* administration, along with the general Russian peasantry. They hoped that lawmakers would reject the widespread stereotype that all the colonists were wealthy. They pointed out that many of them were also suffering from the growing problem of landlessness. German farmers were especially distraught when lands that they had leased and developed at their own expense were taken over by the Land Bank, then resold to Russian peasants. With very few exceptions, Germans remained excluded from the Land Bank until the end of the Tsarist regime. As one historian noted, "[a]lthough they were technically excluded on the grounds of being 'settler proprietors' rather than 'peasants,' the exclusion in truth resulted from the

¹⁶ Fleischhauer 1986, p. 343.

¹⁷ Martin 1991, p. 408.

¹⁸ Neutatz 1993, p. 436.

¹⁹ Neutatz 1993, p. 142.

rising xenophobia, particularly the anti-German feeling fueled by the press, the rampant nationalism, and the Russification policies of the government of Alexander III.”²⁰

The Tsarist regime turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the former colonists and offered them two alternatives – they could either accept the mandated restrictions, or leave the country. A stark option was also offered– they could relocate to Siberia if they wished.²¹

In 1887 foreign settlers lacking Russian citizenship were forbidden to acquire land outside urban areas in Volhynia, Kiev, and Podolia. The primary intent of this legislation was to stem the tide of German settlers and to restrict investments by German companies, although diplomatic expediency prevented them from being singled out as an ethnic group.²² By the end of 1889 the vast majority of applications for citizenship by ethnic German immigrants remained turned down. In 1892 a stricter version of this law was enacted, forbidding persons of foreign ancestry – even if they were Russian citizens – from acquiring land outside urban areas in Volhynia and the other western provinces. Persons of Russian ethnic origin and those who had embraced the Orthodox faith were exempt from these restrictions.²³

Such efforts to stem the growing German presence soon began to backfire when Russian gentry realized that the law imposed restrictions on their own best customers, thereby reducing their property values.²⁴ It also became evident that investments by German enterprises in the region were economically crucial and that numerous exceptions had to be made.²⁵ As is always the case, the Russian government ran up against the problem that discrimination is difficult to implement when it affects the business interests of persons other than the targeted minority. This economic reality continued to plague efforts to erect bureaucratic barriers against the German minority over the next quarter century.

On the opposite side of the empire in the Volga region, restrictions were also imposed on land acquisitions by the colonists, despite the fact that they posed not even the remotest risk to national security. As their population steadily increased, the Volga colonists also suffered from chronic land shortages. As late as 1905 their petitions to access the Peasant Land Bank continued to be turned down by the Ministry of Finance, which “...lamely justified its decision on the grounds that approval would set a precedent that would encourage petitions from other [German] colonists.” In 1906 the Volga colonists were dealt a crushing setback when they were forbidden to purchase or settle on state lands in Samara, Orenburg, and Ufa provinces, which until that point had been their major means for augmenting the lands available for their tillage.²⁶

Nicholas II (1894-1918), the ill-fated last Tsar, haphazardly continued some of these policies, although not with the persistency of his predecessor. During the revolutionary outbreaks of 1905 the pent-up resentment of non-Russian minorities

²⁰ Long 1988, p. 126.

²¹ Aberle 1963, p. 70.

²² Neutatz 1993, p. 75-77.

²³ Neutatz 1993, p. 120-121.

²⁴ Neutatz 1993, p. 92.

²⁵ Fleischhauer 1986, p. 349; Neutatz 1993, p. 125-127.

²⁶ Long 1988, pp. 126-128.

erupted. To restore order, Nicholas agreed to convene a parliament (*Duma*) and he made promises of religious and cultural freedom. The brief period of quasi-parliamentary rule from 1905–1906 brought large blocks of minorities into national political life for the first time. A broad spectrum of parties began to vie for their support. These included the leftist Social Democrats (both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks), the Socialist Revolutionaries, and the centrist “liberal bourgeoisie” parties, the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets) and Progressives.²⁷

Although most German colonists didn’t actively participate in the revolution of 1905,²⁸ they were encouraged by the prospect that the Duma would restore and enhance their ethnic rights. For a brief period the nationalistic Right withheld attacks against the Germans in recognition of their loyalty to the Crown. However, after 1907 the tsarist government reasserted power against the Duma and renewed the old policies of suppression of the national minorities.²⁹ Debate soon resumed about enacting further legislation to restrict land ownership by Germans in the western provinces.³⁰ A “Neo-Slavic” movement sprang up in the newspapers. The Germans were again charged with disloyalty for preserving their ethnic language and folkways, and their Duma representatives were accused of being “against the national Russian people and the interests of the state.”³¹

In 1910 Stolypin, the Minister of Internal Affairs, attempted to revive the law of 1892 prohibiting citizens of foreign ancestry from owning land in the three western provinces of Volhynia, Podolia, and Kiev.³² The Polish delegate was reassured that the specific intention of the law was not directed against Poles, but rather against the German “*Drang nach Osten*.” A group of German Octobrists, headed by Karl Lindemann, managed to defeat the measure in 1911.³³ After Stolypin’s assassination that year, his successor, Makarov, introduced a reworked version of the law in 1912. The proposed legislation was expanded to include Bessarabia, with exclusions for ethnic Poles, Czechs, and persons of the Orthodox faith. The Black Sea Germans became greatly alarmed when they realized that legislation no longer targeted just Volhynia and the western provinces. Karl Lindemann’s “German group” again managed to defeat the initiative when it reached the Duma in 1914, with support from Russian banking interests and others concerned about the economic and political impact of the proposed law.³⁴ At that point the issue became moot when events were overtaken by the First World War.

Most of this summary above of the rising tide against the German colonists is taken from a longer essay which I wrote as a supplement to my translation of the works

²⁷ Riasanovsky 1969, pp. 457-58.

²⁸ In the Saratov region some Volga Germans participated in the broad-based liberation movement that swept the area (Long, pp. 139-159 in Wage & S. J. Seregny, eds. 1989).

²⁹ Seton-Watson 1986, p. 23.

³⁰ Pinkus, & I. Fleischhauer 1987, p. 49.

³¹ Neutatz 1993, p. 155-157.

³² Neutatz 1993, p. 162.

³³ Neutatz, 1993, p. 175; see also Rempel 1932, p. 51.

³⁴ Rempel 1932 provides a detailed summary of the sequence of events around the proposed legislations of 1910 and 1912.

of Hermann Bachmann, in 2002.³⁵ The reader is invited to continue the story of the tragedy of the German colonists in that publication, in which I trace the history up through the Soviet era. We are fortunate indeed that members of our Landeis family (and other related families) left Russia in 1889, before the rising tide led to a Holocaust against the German-Russians during World War One, and in the following Bolshevik period. Not all members of our family emigrated, some remained behind and were executed. The names that are available are listed in the final chapter of this family history. Descendants of Germans from Russia owe it to their ancestors to remember this history.

Other Precipitating Factors for Emigration

As we have seen, Tsarist Russia had provided a safe haven for the German colonists in the early decades of the 19th century, but the climate of tolerance began to deteriorate in the 1870s, and eventually the guarantees and freedoms which they had been granted when they first immigrated to Russia were revoked. The German colonists had become regarded as dangerous “enemy aliens.” The cruelest and most decisive blow was that their opportunities for purchasing new farmlands were blocked by discriminatory laws. They had experienced rapid population growth, but their ability to create daughter colonies for the younger generation was effectively sealed. They had to turn elsewhere to meet the needs of their growing families.

The Mennonites were the first to emigrate on a massive scale in the 1870s. They were especially concerned by the loss of exemption from the Russian military, which conflicted with their religious pacifist values. The regime became concerned about the loss of these highly productive farmers, so it offered them a compromise, allowing them to serve in the medical corps or the forestry service. However, once the first trickle of emigrants began to leave for greener pastures in the USA and Canada, the outflow could not be stopped. About one-third of the Mennonites left Russia by 1880. Emigrants sent word back to their home villages reporting the opportunities available in the New World, and the pace of emigration continued to grow. By the 1890s a full-scale exodus was underway from all the former German colonies, continuing unabated until World War One, which resulted in the collapse of the Tsarist empire. Those who had not left by that point were trapped, the borders were sealed and conditions were virtually impossible for the safe passage of families.

Another factor, which is rarely mentioned in the histories of the emigration movement, was the great Russian famine and agrarian crisis of 1891-1892. This famine was centered in the Volga region and it affected 17 provinces in the Black Earth zone of Russia, an area equivalent in size to the entire American Midwest. It quickly turned into a national catastrophe, one of the most important crises in Russian history from 1861 to 1905. The rains did not come for several weeks during the spring of 1891, resulting in a complete crop failure, compounded by failure of garden vegetables. By August, 1891, most of the village storehouses had been emptied and people began to beg for food. By the fall of 1891, over 1,500 people in the German villages were dying of hunger. Malnutrition made the people vulnerable to epidemic diseases. Typhus broke out late that summer, followed by cholera in the summer of 1892. Riots broke out in the cities

³⁵ Wagner 2002.

along the Volga and spread into the countryside. The death rate was running into the thousands and the orphanages were soon overflowing with children. Russian newspapers were full of stories about the scope of the disaster, some predicting that it would take generations for the country to recover.

At that point, word of this national disaster began to attract world attention. The Tsarist government took the drastic step of closing the grain export markets from the fall of 1891 to the spring of 1892, and diverted emergency stores of food to the stricken areas. Livestock in the famine areas were butchered on a massive scale. In Saratov only one-third of the horses and one-eighth of the cattle remained alive.³⁶ In March, 1892, relief shipments of grain began to arrive, funded by charity organizations in America. This timely aid prevented the crisis of 1891-92 from becoming an even worse disaster.³⁷ Statistics showed that Russia had the poorest harvest in 10 years, the harvest of all cereals was down by 25% and the death toll was as high as 650,000. The economic repercussions affected the entire country.

While the colonies in the Black Sea region were spared the brunt of the crop failure and famine of 1891-92, they were greatly concerned about the devastation of their compatriots in the German colonies in the Volga region. Word of the crisis spread throughout the country and it was undoubtedly a factor which led to the decision of many young German-Russians, such as Adam Wagner, to emigrate in 1891.

Coincident with these "stick" factors that promoted emigration, there were also important "carrot" factors that lured immigrants – most importantly, the availability of free homestead lands. In 1862 the USA passed the Homestead Act and Canada passed the Dominions Land Act in 1872. Both Acts provided the opportunity for a homestead consisting of a quarter section, or 160 acres, to the head of a family, widows and single men over 18 years of age living with their parents. They also had the option of buying another quarter of land at a reasonable price on easy terms.

Word about these new opportunities spread quickly. The *Odessaer Zeitung*, the major German newspaper in the Black Sea region, published numerous stories and letters sent back to the home colonies about the free land and cultural freedoms in the New World. Husbands often went in advance, and after they had earned enough money they sent money back to Russia to purchase tickets for their families. Families tended to emigrate as groups from the same colony, following a pattern of "chain migration," as happened with other ethnic groups coming to the USA.

³⁶ Simms 1982, pp. 63-74.

³⁷ Eichstedt 1995, pp. 13-15.

Chapter 14

The Landeis Family in America

Germans from Russia had begun to filter into the Midwest by 1873, at first targeting Kansas and Nebraska, then later the Dakotas and Saskatchewan and nearby states. The pace of immigration reached its peak in the 1890s and it continued unabated until it finally was brought to a halt by World War One and the Bolshevik era. By 1920 the U.S. national census showed that there were 303,532 first and second generation persons of German-Russian descent in this country. The number was undoubtedly greater since many were simply listed as "Russians," based on their prior nationality and not on their ethnicity.

The Dakotas were the major target for emigres from the Black Sea colonies. The first "Great Dakota Land Boom" occurred from 1879 to 1886. During those years the state's population blossomed from 16,000 to 191,000.¹ Free homestead land lured them, plus the Sioux wars were over and the great buffalo herds were gone, leaving this vast stretch of land open for cultivation. The Germans from Russia were preadapted to survival on the steppes of the Ukraine, and they brought those skills with them to meet the challenges of the harsh conditions in the American Midwest. They also brought with them red spring wheat, which was highly adapted to conditions in Russia as well as in the Midwest. There was great demand for this grain in the flour mills in Minneapolis. Railroads were also expanding westward through the Dakotas and they were offering cheap land for purchase. In 1881 the Northern Pacific Railroad completed the extension of its line westward from Mandan through Dickinson and Belfield. The company launched an active recruitment campaign through its European Bureau of Colonization to lure immigrants.

The largest concentration of Germans from the Black Sea region was in the southwestern portion of North Dakota -- west of the Missouri river, an area known today as the "German triangle." The first colonists from Speier, in the Beresan valley, arrived in the Spring of 1885 -- four bachelors who left Russia to avoid the Russian military service. In 1887 colonists from Neu-Karlsruhe (the daughter colony of Karlsruhe) began to settle on land south of Antelope (in Stark county, just east of Richardton). By 1891 colonists from Karlsruhe, Rastadt, München, Speier and Landau began to settle in Richardton and Dickinson, and within the next two years they had blanketed the area.²

The Journey to America

The great majority of German-Russian emigrants traveled by train to Hamburg, Germany, which was the major embarkation point for ships traveling across the Atlantic to the New World. Major steamship lines were operating a lucrative business transporting the massive numbers of emigrants at that time. Their fast ships crossed the North Atlantic at a fraction of the cost and the time required by a sea voyage from Odessa. Direct sea passage from Odessa or Crimea through the Mediterranean was possible, but it was slower, more expensive, and there were still lingering political problems between Russia and Turkey.

¹ Severson 1985.

² Sallet 1974, p. 39.

Most German-Russian emigrants used the services of a Jewish travel agent named Mistler. He had opened a branch office in Odessa to provide prospective emigrants with information, travel papers, and tickets. Copies of his advertisements circulated widely in the German colonies.³ There was another travel agent in Odessa named Stickler or Sticklely whose services were seemingly less dependable and therefore less commonly used. Mistler had a well established route via train from Odessa through Warsaw to Berlin and from there to the seaport at Hamburg, or secondarily at Bremerhaven. His agents along the way were well trained to assist and take care of his clients' needs. Art Flegel⁴ has done extensive research on these travel arrangements. He reported that he had never heard of any of Mistler's clients being stranded. However, on occasion the travelers did have problems with border authorities, or after they reached their seaport destination in Germany some chose for one reason or another to remain there for a period of time before continuing on to the USA. Usually it was because they had run low on funds and decided to earn some money before continuing to their final destination.

According to Karl Baedeker's 1914 travel book on Russia, the express train journey from Odessa to Berlin took 37 hours, with the fares being 105 Marks, 70 Marks economy class, seat-ticket 1 ½ Rubles extra. The route went via Podwolicyaka, Lemberg, Kracow, and Oderberg, a distance of 1,744 kilometers (1,084 miles). The train journey via Brest-Litovsk, Warsaw, and Alexandrovo (or Kalisz) took 42 hours -- fares 102 Marks 45, 68 Marks 15 pfennig; seat-ticket 1 1/2 Ruble 70 kopek extra. There were cheaper fares for lower class tickets, which were purchased by most emigrants. From Berlin it was only a few hours by rail to Hamburg.

Further details about the costs are available in letters and receipts which have been saved by descendants of the emigrants. These figures were probably typical for the latter two decades of the nineteenth century. One such receipt shows that the fare for one adult from Dönhof, Russia to Lincoln, Nebraska in 1912 was \$84.65 US currency⁵ Another letter⁶ sent by a German-Russian emigrant from Bremen, Germany, before his departure in 1912, provides the following details. The exchange rate at the time was \$50.94 for 100 rubles:

“Bremen 3 Apr 1912

“I am sending you herewith travel costs for the trip to America . . . The travel costs per person for adults and for children, age 1 - 12:

New York:

With a Kaiser ship	\$43.50	\$21.75
With fast mail steamer	\$41.00	\$20.50

Baltimore:

With fast mail steamer	\$38.50	\$19.25
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Galveston:

With fast mail steamer	\$36.50	\$18.25
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For children under one year, fare is \$2.50

³ Metzger 1930, p. 10.

⁴ Cited on GR-Genealogy an internet discussion group, August 29, 2001.

⁵ Ron Greenwald posted to the Beresan email list, May 22, 2001.

⁶ Information provided by Martin Schock, GR-Genealogy e-mail list, Jan. 31, 2001. The letter was written by his grandfather.

"In addition to the passage fare for third class (between decks) passengers to New York, Baltimore and Galveston, an American head tax payment is required. This is the same for each person, identical, whether an adult, child or youngster and is \$4.00 -- and it must be paid with (at the same time) the passage fare.

The railroad trip costs for adults:

New York to Turtle Lake, N. Dak. \$ 35.25

Baltimore to Turtle Lake, N. Dak. \$ 33.70

For each child aged from 5 to 12 years, it is half the adult rate; children under 5 years are free.

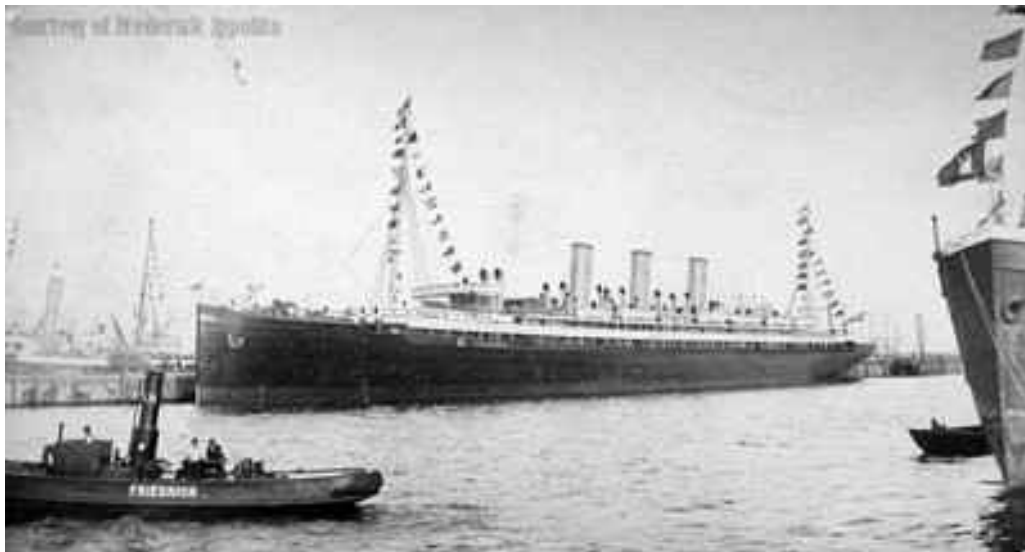
"...[I]t is necessary that in addition to the money for the ocean trip, they also be sent money for the living quarters in Bremen:

\$ 1.50 for each adult

\$ 0.75 for each child 1 to 12 years of age.

For this money, ... [they] will receive quarters and meals until their departure of the steamer, so ... to travel through (from) Russia and Germany, I indicate to you that the trip from Bessarabia to Bremen is \$9.00 for adults, for children aged 4 to 10 years it is half the adult fare, children under 4 years are free."

The Commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration in Hamburg commented on the high volume of traffic in his annual report for 1901: "In the past year, 1,000 German-speaking colonists of German descent travelled from the Russian Gouvernements of Cherson, Bessarabia, and Tauria to the state of South Dakota with the intent to settle there permanently as farmers. These German colonists always travelled in groups of 20 - 30 families and usually took the fast steamers..."⁷



Augusta Victoria

⁷ Private communication from Detelf D. Hollatz, via Internet, Jan. 13, 1996

It should be noted that a growing number of families in Germany also joined the emigrant trek to America. An article in a German newspaper in 1888 noted:

“A large number of emigrants, adults and children, most from Baden and Württemberg, arrived yesterday through our city, on their way to their new homeland in America. Lately several south German families who sought their fortune there have returned after expending all their savings, completely penniless: they were lucky to have been back on German soil.”⁸

According to stories told to my mother by her grandmother, Louisa Landeis, they took a train from Odessa to Hamburg and boarded a steamship there to cross to America. The Hamburg ship records show that they boarded the *Augusta Victoria*, on Oct. 3, 1889. The *Augusta Victoria* was a new ship -- it had been constructed in 1888 by the Vulkan Shipbuilding Co. in Stettin Germany. It had a total tonnage of 7,661, a length of 461 ft., a width of 56 ft., three funnels, and it was steam-driven by twin-screws to a speed of 18.5 knots. The ship was operated by the Hamburg-American Line and it actively plowed a round-trip back and forth from Europe to the USA for the next 15 years, until it was sold to the Russians in 1904. They renamed it the *Kuban*, and it saw service briefly during the Russo-Japanese war, after which it was finally scrapped in 1907.

The Hamburg ship register⁹ shows the following information for Heinrich and Louisa Landeis: their home village was listed as Neu-Karlsruhe, his occupation was “farmer,” both were 25 years of age, and their children were Philip age 6, Katharine age 2, and “Elise” a female infant age 6 months. This “Elise” is almost certainly an error – it should read “Alex,” who was my grandfather. Louisa sometimes said jokingly that Alex had “no country” because he was born in Russia shortly before their departure and he came across as a baby. Alex was their third child, born in March of 1889. If the months are rounded off, he would in fact have been about 6 months of age at the time of their departure from Russia, which matches the baby shown on the ship’s register. “Alex” pronounced in German sounds similar to “Elise” and it would have been an easy mistake to make by the person writing names in the ship register – especially when he was dealing with a long queue of passengers, most of whom did not speak English. There were more than 1,000 names recorded for that voyage of the *Augusta Victoria*. After he misheard the name of the baby as “Elise,” he checked the gender column as female. “Elise” was not a typical German name -- the most common German diminutive form for Elizabeth would have been “Lisbeth,” or perhaps “Lisl,” but not “Elise.”

In the adjacent berth on the steamship were Louisa Meier-Landeis’ brother, Friedrich Meier, his wife Magdalene Landeis and their family. Friedrich was age 31, his wife Magdalene was 22, and their children were Andreas age 5, and Josef 11 months. Correspondence with descendants indicates that Magdalene’s surname was Landeis, which shows that there was a double marriage between the Landeis and Meier families. Friedrich was also listed as a farmer. Both the Meier and Landeis families were listed as originating in Neu-Karlsruhe (they are the only two families on the ship from this colony). There was one other family with the surname Meier listed on the *Augusta Victoria* (Jacob and Katherine Meier, with seven children); however, they had a different point of origin -- Neuburg, Russia, which was a Lutheran colony located in the Grossliebental district near Odessa – and they did not have a nearby berth on the ship. On this basis, it seems unlikely that this Meier family was related to Louisa and Friedrich.

⁸ *Siegburger Kreisblatt*, Sept. 19, 1888.

⁹ LDS Microfilm 0472934

The *Augusta Victoria* had a total of 1,240 passengers. The majority of them (707, including all the Germans from Russia) traveled steerage class -- which meant that they had the cheapest fare in the section of the ship below sea level where the steering mechanism was located. The steerage section was crowded, dark and damp, with little fresh air. Typically there were no walls separating their berths (blankets were usually hung up for privacy). The remaining passengers (including all the U.S. citizens, and most of those from Austria, Prussia, Saxony, and other parts of the Reich) traveled in private cabins (first and second class). The Germans from Russia came from a variety of colonies -- besides our Landeis and Maier families from Neu-Karlsruhe, others came from Neuburg, Alexanderfeld, Neukandel, Odessa, Rosenfeld, Schonfeld, Bergdorf, Liebenthal, Freudenthal, Petersthal, and Glucksthal. The ship departed from Hamburg on Oct. 3rd and stopped to pick up additional passengers in Southampton, England.

My mother was quite close to Louisa, her grandmother. Louisa told many stories about the old days, including their passage across the ocean to the USA. Because they traveled steerage class there were only blankets hanging from the ceiling to separate each family and there was little privacy or security. Louisa said that she and Heinrich took turns sleeping in order to keep watch over their possessions. They sold their land in Neu-Karlsruhe and brought a considerable amount of money with them -- according to my mother's estimate about \$2,000 in cash (about 4,000 *rubles*), which Louisa carried in a money-belt tied around her waist beneath her blouse. She complained about how uncomfortable it was, it rubbed sores on her waist. Making matters even worse, sanitary conditions were inadequate and most of the steerage class passengers on the ship contracted lice. It was difficult to scratch beneath the money belt. One evening Heinrich apparently fell asleep while he was supposed to be on watch and Louisa was awakened by someone fumbling with the buttons on her blouse. The person quickly bolted away before she could determine who it was. She thought that the person was after her money belt -- probably well aware that most of the passengers were carrying cash hidden somewhere on their bodies.

Information about the provisions for travel across the Atlantic is provided in a contract for one German-Russian family, dated 8 April, 1893.¹⁰ They were in steerage on the Allan Line, enroute from Hamburg to Halifax. The second page gives specifics about the food that was supplied:

Morning: coffee or tea; butter and white bread

Noon: an appropriately prepared warm meal alternating between beef or salted herring with the appropriate vegetables or fruits, wheat foods or rice

Evening: coffee or tea, butter and white bread.

The amounts that provided for each passenger were:

Beef - 840 Gm

Salted herring - 5 pieces

White bread - 1800 Gm

Butter - 150 Gm

Potatoes - 3000 Gm

White flour - 360 Gm

¹⁰ Information provided by Elaine Becker Morrison, 3 Sep 2000, GR-Heritage@listserv.nodak.edu

Peas and beans - 200 Gm each
Barley groats ("*Graupen*") and rice - 200 Gm each
Coffee - 50 Gm
Tea - 10 Gm
Salt - 60 Gm
For children between the ages of one and six:
Oatmeal - 300 Gm
Sugar - 250 Gm
For every child under one year, 250 Gm condensed milk

Water was to be provided for each passenger:
distilled water - 2 Liters
non-distilled water - 4 Liters

After a relatively fast trip across the Atlantic, which took only 5 days and 17 hours, the *Augusta Victoria* docked at New York harbor around midnight on Oct. 11, 1889. The ship records in New York¹¹ also list the third child in the Landeis family as an infant "Elise," six months of age. The New York passenger ledger undoubtedly just copied the information from the ship ledger at the point of embarkation, and thus repeated the same mistake.

Ellis Island did not open until January, 1892, so we may assume that they did not have to remain in quarantine. They may have initially stayed in a reception and processing complex on Manhattan Island. The Statue of Liberty had quickly become a symbol of the USA, and immigrants arriving in New York harbor after 1886 often competed to be the first ones on deck to spot this landmark. Louisa spoke about how excited she was to see the Statue of Liberty. She also stated that they traveled by boat up the St. Lawrence river to proceed on the next step of their journey by train to North Dakota. Records show that earlier generations of immigrants from Germany had traveled by boat from New York harbor all the way up the Erie Canal to Buffalo, from whence they departed by train or wagon to points farther west. For example, several shiploads of immigrants from Brandenburg Prussia followed this water route westward in 1838, and in 1839 other groups of immigrants from Germany also followed the Erie Canal to Buffalo, then through the Great Lakes to Milwaukee.

Heinrich and Louisa Landeis in Richardton, North Dakota

Immigrants from Neu-Karlsruhe had already begun settling just east of Richardton two years before, in 1887, and they had sent word back to family and friends about land availability and the weather conditions. Heinrich and Louisa were drawn to this area by those earlier reports. The town of Richardton was founded in 1881 and its population was still quite small when Germans from the Beresan region of the Ukraine began arriving. Large numbers settled there after 1890. During the last decade of the century the Northern Pacific Railroad operated an immigration house at Richardton for the new settlers where they could stay for a few days after their arrival, until they selected a homestead. From there they spread out into nearby Stark, Hettinger, Adams, Dunn and Bowman counties.

¹¹ LDS Microfilm 1027775

The Jan. 26, 1884 issue of the Dickinson Press printed an ad that appeared in German newspapers urging German immigrants to colonize in North Dakota. The ad stated that a family needed about \$750 to get started on a homestead. This would cover a dwelling, a stable, a team and a cow, some implements and seed for potatoes and vegetables for the first year. 160 acres could be taken with an additional acreage under the Timber Culture Act.

Fr. Vincent Wehrle O.S.B., of St. Gall's Priory at Devil's Lake, was assigned Richardton as part of his mission route. He founded St. Mary's church in 1893. This parish was the nucleus for what later expanded into Assumption Abbey (the current church was built in 1908). St. Mary's school at the Abbey (later known as St. Mary's College) opened in 1900, and it didn't become an organized grammar school until 1905. My mother recalls that Philip, Catherine, and Alex attended school there for at least two years, perhaps as many as four years, although their names do not appear in the school's records. When I wrote the Abbey for information, the response was that many of the early records of the student body are unfortunately incomplete or missing. The city of Richardton published a 75th anniversary history in 1958, the names of the early settlers are summarized, including those influential in founding St. Mary's and Assumption Abbey.¹² In 1893 there were 40 Catholic families in Richardton (including German-Russians, Irish, and Bavarians), but the surname Landeis isn't mentioned. This may indicate that Heinrich wasn't involved in local business or church activities in Richardton. A clue may be found in the anniversary publication which states that there was trouble in the local Catholic congregation of St. Mary's in the 1890s when the parishioners refused to attend religious services with Fr. John Handtmann and they began to attend their own Sunday services in private homes. This priest eventually left Richardton and the congregation was without a pastor until 1899 when the bishop asked Fr. Vincent Wehrle to return to Richardton to restore peace in the divided congregation. He laid the foundations for the formation of Assumption Abbey and school.

The census and land records show that Heinrich and Louisa resided near Richardton for at least 20 years after their arrival, although the precise location is unclear. They had nine more children in North Dakota, for a total of twelve in their marriage. The births and baptisms for Anna and Magdalena are listed in the records of St. Mary's church, but the information for the others is based on family records¹³:

1. Philipp (born April 28, 1883; 1900 census shows 1884)
2. Katherine (born May 14, 1886)
3. Alex (born March 12, 1889; 1900 census shows 1888).
4. Barbara (born Feb. 18, 1891)
5. Gusta (died at birth, 1893).
6. Ambrose (born Oct. 21, 1895 Richardton, N.D., died Sept. 22, 1966 Butte, Montana).
7. Anna Fredrika (born June 6, 1897, bapt. June 10).
8. John (born May 25, 1900; 1900 census shows 1899, 1940 census shows 1904)
9. Magdalena (born Oct. 13, 1901, died 1907 North Dakota).

¹² <https://digitalhorizonsonline.org/digital/collection/ndsl-books/id/39840>

¹³ Ambrose Landeis visited us in Portland, Oregon in the 1950s. He had a list of all his siblings, with their birthdates. These are mostly the same as shown in the 1900 census.

10. Andrew (died at birth, 1903).
11. Jacob (Jack) (born Dec. 28, 1904).
12. Joseph (died at birth, 1906).

Little is known of those early years near Richardton, but there is some hint that Heinrich and Louisa struggled to make ends meet economically. The early 1890s were marked by drought and an economic depression in the Midwest. This temporarily slowed the initial settlement boom in North Dakota. Many of the early settlers failed to earn a living and sold their homestead claims. Wheat prices steadily declined from 80 cents to 60 cents per bushel.

On Oct. 13, 1897, Heinrich became a naturalized U.S. citizen at the Stark County courthouse in Dickinson. He signed his citizenship papers as "Heinr. Landeis," using a German *Fraktur* script, which shows that he had received some education when growing up in Russia. The 1930 census shows that neither Heinrich nor Louisa had attended school, Louisa stated that she couldn't read or write, although Heinrich stated that he could. It's possible that they meant they hadn't received education in English in the USA. In order to receive citizenship, a person had to abjure his allegiance to the Tsar of Russia, he had to have resided in the U.S. for five years, and at least one year in the state of North Dakota. The two witnesses who signed on behalf of Heinrich were Ed R. Bonny and Fred A. Freeman

The following year, on May 23, 1898, Heinrich was granted title to a 160 acre homestead, located in the "northwest quarter of Section 28 in Township 138, north of Range 92, west of the Fifth Principal Meridian." This land is located nine miles directly south of Richardton, near the Heart river (about where highway 8 south to Mott crosses the river). Heinrich likely filed for this land about 1893, since the claimant normally had to reside on a homestead for at least five years before final title would be awarded. His son, Ambrose, was born Oct. 21, 1895. His draft registration in 1917 states that he was born in "Hart River, N.D." There is no such town, so he was probably referring to the homestead land along the Heart River. There is a small town of Hart, west of Bowman, near where Heinrich later settled in about 1910, but at this early date in 1895 available records show that he lived south of Richardton.

Two years later it appears that Heinrich had also purchased additional land, adjoining Richardton on the north, to supplement his original homestead claim south of town. The U.S. National Census for 1900¹⁴ shows that "Henry Landias," Louisa, and seven children (Philip, Katherine, Alexander, Barbara, Ambrose, Anna, and John) were residing in "Richardton Voting Precinct, Township 140, Range 92W." This location borders Richardton on the north, above Assumption Abbey. The precise location is unknown -- it could have been anywhere within the six mile square (per side) of T140, northeast of the monastery. They probably were not residing in the town limits of Richardton itself (a small portion of which projects up into T140), because the census lists them as "farmers," owning the land on which they resided.

Additional information on the 1900 census confirms that their first three children were born in Russia and the others in North Dakota (the fact that Alexander is shown as born in Russia confirms Louisa's report, and again indicates that the ship records erroneously reported his name as "Elise"). No one in the family reportedly could speak English at that time, and Heinrich and Louisa could read and write only in German. None of the children were reported to have any education.

¹⁴ LDS Microfilm 1241232.

Louisa's brother, Friedrich Meier, and his family were also listed in the 1900 census, residing in the same township 140 and range 92W as the Landeis family, northeast of Richardton. They had five sons at that time: Andreas, Joseph, Victor, Henry, and Thomas. Neither Friedrich nor Magdalene could speak English, but their two oldest boys could, which probably indicates that they had learned it in school. All could read and write, except for Magdalene

The Homestead Act

Heinrich was ambitious in his acquisitions of land during these early years in North Dakota. Germans from Russia were a land hungry people. Wherever they settled, their first priority was usually to acquire as much land as they could for farming, grazing, mining of coal, as well as for investment purposes.

The Homestead Act stipulated that anyone who was at least 21 years of age could apply for a claim (there was no minimum age if the person was married and the "head of a family"). The applicant had to have filed for citizenship, and had to testify that he had never taken up arms against the U.S. government. Initially the person had to file an application of intent at the courthouse of jurisdiction in order to "enter" the homestead land, and pay a filing fee of only 10 cents per acre. He had to establish residence on the land within six months, then had to reside there for another four and one-half years (without leaving it for more than six months at a time). Certain improvement had to be made on the property (known as "proving up" on the homestead) -- the soil had to be cultivated, a dwelling at least 10' X 12' had to be built (typically a small "claim shack"), a well had to be dug, and a portion of the land fenced. After these conditions were met, a petition for award of title (known as the "patent") was filed, which required the testamentary signatures of two witnesses. The person had to have become a U.S. citizen by that point, and the land couldn't be attached by lien for debts. In addition to the 160 acres that could be claimed for farming, another quarter section could be claimed for coal mining, and 320 acres could be claimed for grazing. These were known as "preemption claims," which cost \$1.25 per acre.

Although the Homestead Act had several clear requirements, in reality people often bent the rules. The law stipulated that the land had to be occupied for five years in order to finally claim patent title, but many settlers did not stay for the full term. The claim could be sold to someone else after a person had done the initial "proving up" on the homestead. Although a person had to reside on the claim for at least six months each year, it was common for people to reside in town during the Winter, and to move out onto their homesteads during cultivation season, in the Spring, Summer, and early Fall. One story in *Dawn in Golden Valley* (p. 298) states that it was necessary for a person to simply "sleep" on the land to "prove up" on it. The terms of the Homestead Act of 1862 allowed a claimant to purchase additional land after six months at \$1.25 per acre (the going rate for purchasing railroad land at that time was at least \$2.50 per acre). Some homesteaders used this as a legal loophole to purchase more desirable land for below market rates, and then they abandoned their original claim. It was also possible to take out a "tree claim" of additional land for timber, but this method was repealed in 1890 because of fraud and abuse.¹⁵

¹⁵ Severson 1985, p. 19.

Around the turn of the century the economic conditions in North Dakota began to improve. Prices and crops increased, railroad shipping rates fell, and the expansion of the Great Northern Railroad ushered in the "Second Land Boom." The state and the railroads actively promoted land sales and advertised for settlers. Homesteads blossomed once again. The peak year in homestead claims was in 1908, when 14,287 claims were finalized. The Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 allowed for 320 acre claims, and the residency requirement was reduced from five to three years. Many speculators flocked in to take out claims, then converted them into cash after land values increased. Only about half of the second boomers actually had farming experience. More than 70 percent of the population in North Dakota at that time was foreign-born.¹⁶

Dickinson, North Dakota

By 1906 it appears that the Landeis family sold their original land acquisitions near the Heart River south of Richardton and moved to Dickinson. That year, on July 17, "Henry Landize" purchased Lot 5 in Block F of "Stow's Addition to the town of Dickinson, now city of Dickinson." He purchased the lot from Matthias Werhoff and his wife, "Abilonia" (Apollonia), - obviously another German family, for the price of \$408. It is unknown how long they remained in Dickinson. Heinrich's obituary states only that "he lived for some time at Dickinson, N.D." It seems likely that they were there for about two years, then moved southwest towards Bowman.

Their oldest son, Philip, also took out a homestead near Bowman, but his livelihood was focused on various business in Dickinson. There he married Barbara Schultz, a German woman who had immigrated from the Banat region of Hungary with her son Paul. There were many German-Hungarians in the Dickinson area, second in numbers only to the Germans from Russia. Philip posted several ads in the local newspapers showing his economic activities in Dickinson. In 1901 he posted an ad in the *The Dickinson Press* stating that he was the general manager for a wholesale grocery business and that he should be contacted for prices. Later, in 1920 he operated a tire repair shop and ads for new automobiles appeared in the German language newspaper, *Nord Dakota Herold*, which was published in Dickinson.

Bowman, North Dakota

Another German language newspaper published in Dickinson, *Die Deutsche Zukunft*, provides a clue about the next move for Heinrich and Louisa. The issue dated July 3, 1908, states (my translation): "Henry Landeis from Midway was in the city on Wednesday to take care of various business matters." The small settlement of Midway was located about 25 miles north of Bowman, below Amidon. This area opened for homesteading around 1907 and several of its early settlers were Germans from Russia.¹⁷ It is likely that Heinrich was in Dickinson in 1908 to handle the details for the sale of his property. The *Dickinson Press* (April

¹⁶ Severson 1985, p. 27.

¹⁷ In 2009 I spoke with Dorothy Pearson, associated with the Bowman County Historical Society, who was quite familiar with the now extinct town of Midway below Amidon. She said that most of the early families there were Germans from Russia.

11, 1908) reported that "Henry Landize from Midway sold his building to Nick Swan for \$200. Mr. Landize intends to move away soon."

At some point in 1910 Heinrich and Louisa also homesteaded a sheep-ranch in Bowman county, near the South Dakota border (about 12 miles west of Bowman and 13 miles below Rhame). My mother recalled that this land was taken as a second homestead, although the legal papers for this land cannot be found in the courthouse records. It was near Amor, which today is a ghost town. In 1974 we visited Bowman and spoke with Claude White, an elderly man who had homesteaded near the Landeis family. He recalled that Heinrich's land was in the adjacent section just south of his, and east of where their son Alex later took out a homestead. We may assume, then, that Heinrich and Louisa resided in Section 5, about one mile east.¹⁸ Claude didn't know Heinrich and Louisa well because they left the area about 3 years after he took out his own homestead. He said that back in those days you didn't socialize with another man's wife, they were "more private and stuck to the house;" furthermore, Louisa couldn't speak English, and Heinrich's English skills were very limited. Claude remembered their son Alex and Ida (my grandparents) and especially her sister, Mary Fuchs, who remained in Bowman after she married Ben Jerome. He escorted us into the countryside and showed us where Heinrich and Louisa's sod house used to stand. He said that in those days the settlers would go into Rhame a couple times each year for supplies. Everyone had to dig coal for fuel and haul it to their homes in wagons. Sometimes the coal was buried under as much as 15 feet of clay and it required considerable work to dig it out.

¹⁸ The earliest atlas available for this area is the 1917 Bowman County Atlas. Claude White's lands are shown as the southern one-eighth of Section 26 and the northeast one-fourth of Section 35, Township 130N, Range 105W. No members of the Landeis family are shown at that time since they had all moved out by 1917.



Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier, sod House near Amor, North Dakota (note Heinrich's long-stemmed German style ceramic pipe; he is proudly wearing badges probably for various Catholic men's sodality groups)

A photo has survived of Heinrich and Louisa standing before their sod-house. Heinrich is holding a long-stemmed German style porcelein pipe. Louisa is at his side, her hand resting on his shoulder, and she is dressed in typical German from Russia fashion -- a long sleeved black dress, modestly buttoned fully up the neck. They appear to be middle-aged in the photo. My mother thought that this photo was taken at their homestead near Amor, west of Bowman. Louisa said that when they built the sod house they excavated soil three to four feet deep, and layered it on the roof for insulation.

The 1910 U.S. National Census¹⁹ shows Heinrich and Louisa and their children residing in Richardton, Stark County, but it also shows that "Henry Landis" and Louisa were living in Bowman County, Township 129, Range 104, which gives us a precise date for when they settled there. They are shown with their sons, Alex "age 24," Ambrose 13, Annie 12, John 10, and Jacob 5. The census was dated May 9, 1910, so in fact Alex was only 21 -- there is no apparent explanation for why his age was off by three years. The census reports that Heinrich and Louisa could not speak English, nor could they read or write (which contradicts the 1900 census! -- such conflicting reports were common at that time, and probably were explained by the fact that persons who were literate only in German sometimes said that they were illiterate in English). The census reports that they came to the USA from Russia in 1888 (also an error, by one year). Heinrich was reported to be a "sheep rancher" and he owned his land free and clear, with no mortgage on it. Alex and Ambrose both could speak English, and both could also read and write -- confirming that they had spent time at the Assumption Abbey boarding school by that date. Both of the sons were reported to be "laborers" on the ranch. There is no information recorded on the education or English ability of the youngest children, Annie, John, and Jacob (Jack). Heinrich, Alex, and Ambrose were each reported as owning 93 livestock.

The area around Rhame and Amor tends to have less precipitation than other parts of North Dakota, which makes farming more difficult. This is reflected in the statement in the 1900 census that Heinrich was a "sheep rancher." Many of the homesteaders there eventually sold out and moved to more favorable locales. Claude White recalled that Heinrich and Louisa sold their land to a couple of bachelor sheep herders around 1913. The two tore down the sod house and built a three-room shack on the site which is still standing today, although it has been abandoned for many years.

The Dickinson Press reported on July 25, 1916 that there was much damage in Rhame from a storm. "Wind, hail, rain hit south of Rhame, numerous farm buildings were destroyed, entire grain crops were lost. Philip Landeis 150 acres, Jacob Landeis 300 acres hail damage, partial, Henry Landeis hail damage as large as chicken eggs."

My Grandfather Alex's Early Years

According to family stories, Alex, their son, attended school at Assumption Abbey in Richardton for about four years. He received his First Holy Communion and was confirmed there. Because the 1900 census indicated that he and his siblings had no education at the time, we may assume that Alex's schooling took place between about 1901 to 1905 (between the ages of 12 to 17), while the family was residing near Richardton. Although his education was very limited, my mother did recall that he had beautiful, almost calligraphic handwriting which

¹⁹ LDS microfilm 1375152.

indicates that he had some training. His brother, Ambrose, also attended some schooling at Richardton Abbey and he knew how to write in a beautiful German *Fraktur* script. Classes at the Abbey school may have been conducted in German, since most of the families were immigrants, and there was likely some basic training in English.

Alex spent his early years herding sheep. He was the second oldest son, so much of that burden fell upon him. During the Spring and Summer he was left alone out with the herds, with his horse, dog, and rifle as his sole companions. Heinrich would ride out to bring him food and clean clothes. Alex had much time to practice with his rifle and he became an expert marksman. He was very shy and withdrawn and he found it difficult to speak to strangers, which my mother attributed to his extreme isolation as a boy. She also said that he had a speech impediment -- he stammered when nervous -- which exaggerated his problem. A neighbor in the area "felt sorry for him" and advised Alex to leave home during his early teenage years. My mother felt that the isolation on the farm was not good for him, so he needed to get away and experience the broader world. The approximate date was 1906, after Heinrich and Louisa sold their land near Richardton and moved to Dickinson. Alex was 17 years old at that point and it would have been a natural juncture for him to leave home. Recalling that the 1900 census had stated that Alex couldn't speak English (he was 11 years old at that time), and that he received only about four years of schooling, we may assume that his English skills were limited when he left.

Alex hopped a freight-train loaded with cattle to Chicago, where he earned his living doing odd jobs. There he met an older woman who ran a boarding-house. They reportedly had a romantic affair and "she wanted to marry him." Her name is unknown, but she had reddish hair (this may be a significant detail since Alex always had a "soft spot" for women with reddish hair -- Alex's mother, Louisa, also had reddish blond hair). Alex remained in Chicago for about two years, then decided to return to his parents in North Dakota. The woman gave him a ruby-ring to remember her by -- a ring which he kept all his life, to the great annoyance of Ida, his later wife, my grandmother.

After Alex left Chicago he worked at various jobs -- coal mining, sheep herding, farm labor and ranching in North Dakota. When Alex later met my father, after my parents were married, he said that he recalled working for a while for Adam Wagner, my other grandfather, at his coal mine near Dickinson. Alex returned to his parents' sheep ranch near Bowman by early Spring, 1910. According to my mother, he loved his parents very dearly -- especially his mother, Louisa -- and he wanted to check on them to see how they were getting along on the sheep ranch near Bowman. As an older son, he had a sense of responsibility for his parents and he took care of them all of his life -- more so than did Philip, Ambrose, or the other sons.

Another likely motive for Alex's return to the Bowman area was that he had turned 21 years of age in March, 1910, and he was eligible to claim a homestead. My mother said that he became a naturalized American citizen at the courthouse in Amor, North Dakota.²⁰ On Oct. 12,

²⁰ The Amor courthouse was closed down at some point and all records were moved to Bowman, the county seat. I checked to see what information was available, but the clerk said they didn't have the naturalization records.

1911 Alex filed an affidavit of intent to take out a homestead, adjacent to Heinrich's land.²¹ A person named John "Landis" also took out a homestead near Rhame. It's not clear whether this was Alex's brother, John, since my mother claims that neither John nor Jack owned homesteads.

The Marriage of Alex Landeis and Ida Fuchs

Ida²² Fuchs was born near Chokio, Minnesota, on Aug. 8, 1887. She was of German-Swiss descent. Her father was Caspar Fuchs, born Nov. 12, 1850 in Studen, Canton Schwyz in Switzerland and he immigrated to Minnesota on July 10, 1872. There he married Theresia Molitor on March 5, 1878. Theresia was born in Mainz, Germany on March 10, 1855 and she immigrated to the USA in 1876 at the age of 21.²³ In 1883 they took out a homestead in Everglades, an unincorporated area of farmlands northwest of Chokio, Minnesota. The 1900 census in Minnesota shows Caspar Fuchs, Theresia, and their family.

The precise year when Ida and her sister Mary moved to Bowman, North Dakota, is not clear. She had already left home by 1908 and resided for a time in Breckenridge, Minnesota, as shown by postcards that she sent that year to her family in Chokio. On one postcard, addressed to her brother Joseph Fuchs, she asked, "how is Papa and Mamma getting along?" According to Ida's memories, Caspar Fuchs had three brothers who came from Switzerland with him. They homesteaded for a while near Bowman when land in that area became available, then moved on to Kalispell, Montana.²⁴ It is quite likely, then, that Ida and Mary were lured to Bowman around 1908, following the lead of their uncles. They initially worked at a hotel in town -- one as a house-maid, and the other worked in the kitchen. Neither Ida nor Mary appear in the 1910 census for "Bowman Village" (as it was referred to at the time) so they were probably already living in the rural area west of town.

Ida's obituary states that she took out a homestead near Bowman in 1908, and 5 years later she was granted title (patent) to it on December 17, 1913. It was located below the tiny town of Rhame, very close to Heinrich and Louisa's ranch.²⁵ The title was granted in her

²¹ Alex's homestead application described it as "160 acres, in Township 129, North of Range 104, Section 6, south half of Northeast quarter and north half of the Southeast quarter," dated Oct. 12, 1911. This was just west of Heinrich and Louisa's homestead.

²² Grandmother initially spelled and pronounced her name as "Eda," which is a German form. In some of the early records (e.g. postcards sent to her by her siblings) her name is spelled "Eda." There is no copy available of her birth record in Minnesota. As an adult she used "Ida" most commonly, so I will use that spelling. Ida is the English form.

²³ Theresia Molitor's birth record states that she was born in Mainz, Germany, on March 20, 1855. Molitor is a Latinized form of the surname Müller. Her parents were **Caspar Molitor** and **Elizabeth Rheinberger**. There are records available from the civil registry of Mainz which enable us to trace the Molitor family there back for three generations.

²⁴ Details of the Fuchs family are provided in a separate family history. Casper's brothers that homesteaded near Bowman later moved on to Kalispell, Montana. Casper's obituary refers to his brothers Paul and Anton Fuchs, who resided in Kalispell at the time of his death in 1938.

²⁵ The patent title to Eda's homestead is recorded at Bowman courthouse on Dec. 17, 1913. The legal description was "156.49 acres in Township 130, Range 104, section 31, lots 1 and 2." The township was described as DuVal. DuVal was a rural post office established February 17, 1911.

maiden name, Ida Theresia Fuchs (although by 1913 she and my grandfather were married for two years already).



Ben Jerome and Mary Fuchs

Claude White, the elderly homesteader in Bowman with whom we spoke in 1974, remembered Ida and Mary. He told us that they were known as “the two Dutch girls” because they spoke German. The record should be set straight about this nickname. Some of my cousins thought that Ida was known as “the Dutchess,” which they speculated was an allusion to her loose sexual behavior during those early years. When I mentioned that to Claude, he was surprised and firmly rejected it, and said he didn’t know where that “silly idea” came from. He then explained that they were known as “the Dutch girls.”

Claude described them as rugged gals with an independent spirit, and he had great respect for them. He would pick them up in his wagon on his way into town, so they could get their supplies. They resided in Bowman most of the year, and out on the homestead during the Spring and Summer months. According to family stories, Mary did not take out a homestead

It was located in the southeast quarter of section 33-130-104, Nebo Township 13 miles south-southwest of Rhame. The post office closed December 15, 1911 with mail going to Amor, which still exists.

herself, but the two sisters had each built a small shack, across the road from each other. This suggests that Mary was intending to take out that land as a homestead, but then she met Ben Jerome who had his own homestead some two miles north, closer toward Rhame. Ben and Mary got married on May 8, 1911.²⁶

Ida's quarter of land directly adjoined Alex's land on the north. Although she was a stout, strong woman, the job of single-handedly proving up on the homestead was beyond her sole ability, so she hired Alex to help her. Their relationship soon took a serious turn when she became pregnant from Alex. Ida supposedly had another male friend in whom she was interested at the time, but after discovering her condition she decided to settle for Alex. They applied for marriage at Bowman on April 15, 1911, and the ceremony took place at the Catholic church in Rhame on May 10th. Both were stated to be residing in Du Val, in Bowman county. Alex was stated to be 24 and Ida was 23. Note that the surname was spelled "Landice," which was how it literally sounded to the clerk.²⁷

²⁶ The marriage certificate for Ben Jerome and Mary Fuchs in 1911 states that he was living in Bowman, and she was living in Du Val, which indicates that she was residing with Ida on the homestead. Ben does not appear in the 1910 census in Bowman.

²⁷ This marriage record is shown on Ancestry.com as "Alex Laudin," which was due to ambivalent reading of the spelling.

Marriage License

State of North Dakota,
County of Bowman

In County Court,

Bowman, North Dakota, April 15th 1901

To Any Person Authorized by Law to Perform the Marriage Ceremony, Greeting:

You are hereby authorized to join in marriage

Alex Landice

of De Val Bowman Co. N.D., aged 24, and

Ida Fuchs

of De Val Bowman Co. N.D., aged 23, and

of this County and your Certificate you will make due return to my office within thirty days.

[SEAL] CO. NORTH DAKOTA

Wm. H. Sawyer
Judge of the County Court.

Certificate of Marriage.

I hereby Certify, That the persons named in the foregoing License were by me joined in marriage at Rhame County of Bowman, State of North Dakota, on the 10 day of May, A. D. 1901.

In Presence of

John O'Brien)
Wm. H. Sawyer)
Witnesses.)

Returned and filed for record the 12th day of May, A. D. 1901

Wm. H. Sawyer
Judge of the County Court



Alex Landeis and Ida Fuchs, Marriage Photo 1911

Their first child, Clara, was born seven months later on the homestead on Nov. 16, 1911. Their second child, Pauline, was also born there in 1913. On Aug. 28, 1913, Alex's sister, Katie, sent them a postcard, addressed to Amor, North Dakota, which was their closest postal delivery

station at that time. The postcard apparently is a reply to the announcement of Pauline's birth. It begins "*Lieber Bruder u. Eda u. babys,*" and she mentions the two children by name: "Elinor and Pauline" (Eleanor is Clara's middle name). Katie remarks that Pauline "aut to be a boy, well the next time be a big boy, I send the stork ride back to you." That year they also received a postcard from Alex's sister, Barbara, married to Nick Mosbrucker in Haley, N.D.

The Move to Montana

In the first two decades of the Twentieth century Montana and Saskatchewan became magnets drawing many people from the Dakotas and Minnesota. Large numbers of Germans from Russia had initially settled near Richardton and Dickinson, where the soil is fertile, there is adequate rainfall, and many of their descendants remain there to this day. Their numbers were considerably smaller in the western edge of the state, in the area known as the "Badlands," which is drier with sandy soil not well suited to agriculture. The area near Bowman, in the southwestern portion of the state, had opened for homesteading around 1907, and many people flocked in to take advantage of these opportunities. However, while the 1910 census for Bowman County shows Norwegians, Anglos, and a few Germans, there were very few other Germans from Russia in the townships adjoining Heinrich Landeis' sheep ranch. Many of the German-Russian homesteaders in those areas moved on, looking for better opportunity elsewhere.

As the railroads expanded in Montana during the first two decades of the Twentieth century, the fertile river valley lands became available for purchase. The U.S. government was eager to develop the Midwest and to improve communication, so in many states it made generous land-grants to the railroad companies. In some cases they were given ownership of the land extending out 20 miles on either side of the tracks. The railroad companies sold these lands for about \$2.50 to \$7.50 per acre to land companies and to private farmers. This was an important means for financing the extension of the railroads throughout the country.

The German-Russians were attracted by the new opportunities to the west. One of the family histories in the local history book, *Dawn in Golden Valley*, mentions that a train full of emigrants left Rhame in the summer of 1915, heading to Montana. This shows that there was great interest in Montana at that time among the residents near Rhame, who were displeased with their homesteads in the scrub-lands in southwestern North Dakota. They settled in large numbers in the eastern part of Montana, in an area forming a triangle between Miles City, Baker and Glendive, encompassing four different counties -- Custer, Fallon, Prairie and Dawson. Many found employment in the rapidly growing railroad towns (Glendive, Miles City, Billings, Laurel, Missoula). Others also found seasonal employment with the Great Western Sugar Beet Factory in Billings. The sugar beet industry became an important specialized economic niche for many German-Russians in Montana, as it also was in other states as well, such as Kansas, Colorado, as far east as Michigan, and up into Canada. There has been some discussion (via Internet) that the Germans from Russia played a pioneering role in the sugar beet industry since they were willing to do this back-breaking labor (they have largely been replaced at this time by Mexican laborers).

The valley of the Musselshell river in Montana (just north of Billings) opened for farming about 1909. Before this date, the Musselshell valley had been used primarily for

ranching. There were several very large spreads in the area, such as the 79 Ranch, established in 1879 at Big Coulee, and Two Dot near Harlowton to the west.

A new era dawned when the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad (usually shortened to "the Milwaukee") extended a track through the Musselshell valley in 1907-1908, following the shore of the river. The C.M.& S.P. railroad did not own all the land, since it received only the direct right of way for its track (the government granted them land in other states as compensation). Soon after the C.M.& S.P. railroad came through the Lavina and Ryegate area, the land companies began purchasing lots and launching a vigorous sales campaign. The railroad and the land companies placed ads in local newspapers trumpeting exaggerated claims about the Musselshell valley -- for example, that it was so fertile that "the soil could be bagged and sold as fertilizer." The railroad offered special low-fares on certain days to entice settlers. Small groups of scouts began exploring the area, and they sent word back to their families that the situation looked favorable. Clusters of families moved west from North Dakota and Minnesota, quickly taking advantage of the homestead availability. The railroad was quite busy during these years. Four major trains went through Ryegate each day, and several smaller freight trains in addition.

Ryegate was officially founded in 1910, and it was the County Seat for Golden Valley County. The first school opened in 1911. There was also a general store, a train depot with a postal drop, and a saloon. Supposedly the town was given its name by a railroad official who suggested it because of the fine fields of rye planted there. An early settler purchased land on the East Bench, the plateau southeast of town, where he planted fields of rye on each side of the road as it descended into the valley.

Victor Schaff, born in the German colony of Speier in Russia on Feb. 27, 1858, was married to Elisabeth Hegel (1857-1943) from Landau. They emigrated to the USA in 1889 and settled near Lead, South Dakota, where he found work in the gold mines. About 1900 he took out a homestead near Roosevelt National Park, in western North Dakota. This was on the fringe of the "badlands," and the land was suitable mainly for ranching. When he heard of the land available in the Musselshell valley, Victor sold his homestead, formed a family corporation with his two sons, Michael and Harry, and moved west to Ryegate on March 1, 1910. They bought 5 acres from a land syndicate known as Wheelock and Wheelock, about two miles east of town. Victor Schaff was the first German from North Dakota to settle in the Ryegate area. He sent word back to his relatives about the suitability of the valley for farming, and they soon followed him to Montana. The Schaff family remained on their land east of Ryegate until 1920, when Victor died. Harry Henton (the sheriff) and Verne Johnson bought the Schaff ranch in 1924.²⁸

²⁸ The Schaaf and Schaff families from the colony of Speier were related, although apparently distant in time. Both branches stemmed from Johann Schaaf b. 1718 in Leimersheim, Rheinpfalz, whose two sons spelled the surname differently (see www.rollroots.com/schaff.htm). Victor Schaff (b. March 6, 1855) was the son of Philipp (or Dominick?) Schaff and Katherine Dilschneider in Speier. Victor Schaff married Elisabeth Hegel (b. March 5, 1857 in Landau), they immigrated to North Dakota then relocated to Ryegate, Montana where Victor died Nov. 3, 1920 and Elisabeth died Jan. 28, 1943. Valentin Schaaf was b. 1843 in Speier, the son of Georg Schaaf (b. 1817) and Magdalena Rieger. Valentin's first marriage was in 1870 with Katharina Heck, his second marriage was 1890 with Theresia

Victor Schaff and his sons bought land in the Big Coulee area, 7 miles south of the Musselshell river. Soon after Victor lured other members of the Schaaf and Schanz families to purchase land there. The cost at that time was \$25 per Acre. This is one account of those early years²⁹:

My uncle [Anton Schaff] came out of Russia when he was about 16 so he was able to remember quite a bit. Victor and his sons Mike and Harry were the first Schaffs that went to the Big Coulee (also called the 79 Ranch because it was previously a sheep ranch with 79,000 sheep...). The Schaffs were quite wealthy in Russia and able to bring quite a bit of money when they came over – reportedly one of them brought over \$90,000.

After Victor Schaff left North Dakota in 1910 Heinrich and Louisa decided to pull up stakes and follow him to Ryegate, Montana. There was a tie between the Schaff and Landeis families. Theresia Landeis (b. 1855 Karlsruhe), married Valentin Schaaf (b. 1843 Speier) in ca. 1890. Valentin Schaaf and Theresia both died in Speier.

Theresia's father was Jacob Landeis, the son of Daniel. This meant that Theresia Landeis was Heinrich's cousin, she was 9 years older than him. Heinrich was in close contact with Victor Schaff in North Dakota and in Montana. According to my mother, when Heinrich and Louisa first moved to Ryegate, they initially stayed with Victor Schaff for a few weeks until they arranged to purchase their own land. This detail was confirmed by Elisabeth Schaaf-Hecker, who was a young girl at the time, and she recalled her parents speaking of Mr. and Mrs. Landeis who had stayed with them.

There is conflicting information on the precise year when Heinrich and Louisa moved to Ryegate, but it likely was in 1912. There are no records showing when Heinrich sold his land west of Bowman. The records in the Golden Valley courthouse, in Ryegate, show that on July 16, 1912, they purchased 160 acres.³⁰ This land was located about three miles south and four miles west of Ryegate. The date matches fairly well with that provided by Ambrose Landeis, who stated that his parents lived in the "Richardton, Amar and Bowman areas for 24 years before coming to Ryegate in 1913." Heinrich's obituary states that they settled near Ryegate in 1915, and Louisa's obituary states 1916. Both of these dates are divergent from the 1912 date shown on the land purchase, and they are both certainly in error. The obituaries probably reflect faulty estimated dates provided to the newspaper by Heinrich and Louisa's sons, Alex and Jacob (Jack).

Heinrich sent a brief letter on Oct. 11, 1912 to the German newspaper in Dickinson, *Nord Dakota Herald*, to inform the readers of how he was doing. He sent another letter on Oct. 17, 1913 (my translation as follows): "Worthy Herold: we are still well here in Montana. Enclosed is payment for the newspaper. This year I have harvested 2,300 bushels of winter wheat from 120 acres, and 500 bushels of oats from 25 acres. We have 72 sacks of potatoes, and we also

Landeis, they had a son, likewise named Valentin, who married Victor Schaff's daughter Barbara Schaff in 1919 in Ryegate. The families in the Ryegate area spell the surname as Schaff.

²⁹ Information provided by Paul Antone, private communication Nov. 9, 1998.

³⁰ Heinrich's land purchase near Ryegate in 1912 was described as "N. one-half, N.W. one-fourth, S.E. one-fourth, N.W. one-fourth; N.E. one-fourth, S.W. one-fourth in Section 22, Township 6N, Range 19E."

have enough from our vegetable garden. Presently we have a foot high of snow. It is going well for all of us in Montana. Please send us a calendar for 1914. With greetings to all my friends, Henry Landeis."

There is discrepancy in the dates for Heinrich's move to Montana. The Dickinson Press reported on July 25, 1916 that Henry, Philip, and Jacob Landeis had suffered severe crop damage from a powerful wind, hail, and rain storm that hit south of Rhame, entire grain crops were lost. Henry Landeis reported hail "as large as chicken eggs." It's likely that Heinrich still farmed his land near Bowman after his purchase of land in Montana, perhaps he returned to harvest the crops.

Alex and his new wife, Ida, didn't remain behind in North Dakota for long. Alex sold the claim to his homestead west of Bowman to Alex Meng for \$1,500 on Nov. 29, 1913. Although the five years needed to have final title of the homestead hadn't yet elapsed (he had filed for it only two years before), it was possible to sell his claim since he had made the required improvements.³¹ Shortly afterward, on April 4, 1914 they also sold Ida's original homestead to the Farmer's Land Company in Montana, for "\$1 and other valuable considerations." My mother thought that it was sold for "\$1 per acre," although this cannot be determined with certainty. The "other valuable considerations" that they received for Ida's homestead probably consisted of land that they had purchased in the Ryegate area. She and Alex also owed a mortgage of \$600 on their lands in North Dakota. The document of sale shows that they were already residing in Montana by that date (the document was notarized in Ryegate on April 4, 1914).

The records show, then, that Alex and Ida had sold both their homesteads and moved to Ryegate by the Spring of 1914, about two years after Heinrich and Louisa.³² According to my mother, when Alex and Ida arrived in the Ryegate area they stayed at first with his parents. Joint living arrangements were common among the settlers in those early years. Newcomers stayed for a few weeks with relatives or friends until they could establish themselves in a residence and locate appropriate land to purchase. The Landeis living arrangement collapsed, however, because Ida and Louisa couldn't get along with each other. After a major argument, Louisa supposedly ordered Ida out of the house, and she had to stay in the barn with the children. Alex was gone at the time to North Dakota, earning extra money at sheep-shearing time, so Ida sent him a telegram to return home to help resolve the matter. For a brief while, Alex rented a small yellow frame house in Ryegate while he constructed their own residence.

Alex built a small three room white wooden frame house on the edge of town for himself, Ida, and their two small children. The house had a kitchen, a front room, and one bedroom. Later, on Jan. 24, 1917 they purchased land about one mile east of town on the south side of the Musselshell River, just west of Victor Schaff.³³ Two years later on March 24, 1919

³¹ Although the sale of Alex's claim to the homestead to Alex Meng happened in 1913, the actual transfer of title didn't happen until March 29, 1916, after the required five years had elapsed.

³² Ida's obituary also states that they moved to Ryegate in 1914.

³³ Alex and Ida's land, south of the Musselshell River, was described as "N.E. one-fourth N.W. one-fourth; W. one-half, N.W. one-fourth, W. one-half, S.W. one-fourth, of Section 10, Township 6N, Range 20E."

Alex sold some of this land and purchased land on the north side of the river.³⁴ He decided to settle there because the south shore is the river's major flood plain and there is considerable land erosion caused by the river's meandering course and seasonal flooding. Much of the south shore is marsh land and Alex complained that portions of his land there were being washed away. The Musselshell flooded once in 1916 so severely that local residents by the river had to use boats to go into town. This was a fresh memory for Alex in 1917 and it was apparent to him that the north side of the river, which is higher in elevation, was more suitable for a residence. Alex moved his small house in town to this new location about 1919-1920 (my mother recalls that as a young child she watched Alex move the house from town, using a large team of horses). He situated the house about one-half block on the north side of the highway. Later, as more children were born, he added two more bedrooms on the rear of the structure, built log cabin style. The small white-frame house and the log-cabin bedrooms still stand on the property today, although they have been detached, and are used for storage. The house now faces east, whereas originally it was oriented with the kitchen door facing south toward the highway.

My mother stated that Alex and Ida owned 250 acres of land on the north side of the highway, and 80 acres of the original land on the south side which he used for cattle grazing. In addition, Alex bought land about 20 miles north of Ryegate, where he dug a coal mine. This was near a mine owned by the McDonald family. He mined coal there for fuel in the Winter months, and also to sell in town.

Alex and Ida's third child, Anna (my mother) was born in Ryegate the following year after their arrival from North Dakota. They had a total of eight children in their marriage:

1. Clara Eleanor (born Nov. 16, 1911, near Rhame, N.D.)
2. Pauline Ida (born Aug. 5, 1913, near Rhame, N.D.)
3. Anna Marie (born Aug. 26, 1915, Ryegate, MT)
4. Alexander (born Aug. 23, 1917, Ryegate, MT)
5. Frances Katie (born Dec. 13, 1919, Ryegate, MT)
6. Josephine Martha (born April 20, 1922, Ryegate, MT)
7. Henry Casper (born June 27, 1925, Ryegate, MT)
8. Dorothy Louisa (born July 4, 1930, Ryegate, MT)

Heinrich and Louisa didn't remain long on the 160 acres that they initially purchased southwest of Ryegate in 1912. On January 9, 1919, they sold this land. This is the only land transaction recorded for them in the county records in Ryegate. My mother claims that after they sold this land, they purchased land southeast of Ryegate on the East Bench, a plateau overlooking the Musselshell, bounded on the south by Big Coulee creek. Members of the Schaff and Schanz families also owned land along the Big Coulee creek, so it appears that Heinrich and Louisa once again were drawn by the proximity of this family. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly where Heinrich and Louisa resided on the East Bench. My mother states that it was about seven miles southeast of Ryegate -- you went one mile east from town to Alex's land, then another mile east along the highway to Mike Schaff's land, then about one-half mile beyond that

³⁴ North of the highway, in Section 3, T6N, R20E. This is where the farmhouse was located that we all remembered from our youth, which still stands today.

they followed a road angling southeast across the Musselshell for about three or four miles to the top of the rimrocks. The Broder family also lived nearby. This appears to have been somewhere in T6N, R21E.

My mother claims that Heinrich and Louisa lost their savings when the banks closed during the Great Depression. The family histories in *Dawn in Golden Valley* recount several instances of farmers who went bankrupt during those years and who sold their land and moved away.

When the Musselshell Valley first opened to farming, the crop yield was plentiful. Many farmers assumed that this trend would continue indefinitely, and they borrowed money to purchase additional land. A long dry spell set in during the 1920s, which continued into the 1930s. This, combined with the grasshopper plagues, brought many of them to ruin. Others couldn't make it financially because 160 acres wasn't enough land to produce sufficient income. In some cases they simply didn't know enough about farming. Some people from city backgrounds had rushed into Montana during the homestead years to take advantage of the free land, or to buy cheap land from the railroads, and they often found themselves ill-prepared for the grueling labor.

Victor Schaaf's land was foreclosed in 1923 and the Federal Land Bank of Spokane sold it at public auction for \$11,521. The buyer rented it to two men who later bought it for \$1. The Schaafs survived by renting land near Lavina, they began leasing state land and buying land for as little as 50 cents per acre from tax sales. They survived by living frugally, providing their own food and clothing. Adding to the hardships, later that decade their wells ran dry and crops failed due to inadequate rainfall. The Schaafs survived by working at an irrigation project in Deadman's Basin, and harvesting sugar beets near Laurel. They endured these trials and eventually came out with a large fruitful spread in the Musselshell Valley.

Heinrich and Louisa Landeis, Some Personal Details

This section is intended for my cousins and our descendants, it should be removed from the version that is sent to the Germans from Russia Historical Society and other relevant organizations.

Physically Heinrich was rather short, about 5' 6" in height, with dark hair and a sun-tanned complexion. Louisa was about an inch shorter, with a light complexion and blond hair.

Heinrich and Louisa's marriage was deeply conflicted, they argued a lot and he was a heavy drinker. The marriage was not based on love, it was an arranged union (known as *Kuppola* in German dialect) by his father (Peter Landeis, a widower) and Louisa's mother (Barbara Hoffmann-Meier, a widow) in order to keep their lands and money within the family. The fact that they were step-brother and step-sister certainly complicated this relationship. Arranged marriages were common at that time among Germans from Russia, as well as among other ethnic groups in Europe. Many of those relationships eventually matured into deep love; however, this was not the case for Heinrich and Louisa. She supposedly did not like Heinrich - she once commented to the grandchildren, "I didn't like him the minute I laid my eyes on him, and I still don't!" They argued a lot, but in spite of what seemed like an intolerable relationship, they stayed together for 57 years, they had 12 children, and died at ripe old ages! Divorce was uncommon in those days, especially for the very traditional Catholic Germans from Russia.

Louisa did most of the work around the household and in the garden, with the help of the children, while Heinrich did the farm-labor. After his chores were finished, Heinrich supposedly “didn’t lift a finger” to help Louisa. Later in life, my mother described him as follows: “Old man Landeis used to sit in a chair on the front porch and jiggle his leg all day long, smoking his pipe and drinking whiskey while the old lady and the kids did all the work on the farm” (when I was a teenager I too had the habit of jiggling my leg, and my mother used to get after me for doing this, saying that I was “like her grandpa Heinrich”).

While they lived in Dickinson, Heinrich reportedly used to “chase around with women.” He would be gone for weeks at a time, leaving Louisa and the children to take care of the farm. My mother and aunt Clara both stated that he had an affair with a woman named Mrs. Dienst, who owned a hotel in Dickinson -- Louisa referred to her as “Mrs. Dienschön, which may have been a term of aspersion if she was Heinrich’s mistress.³⁵ Supposedly Heinrich wanted to have his oldest daughter, Katie, “adopted” by Mrs. Dienst in exchange for a team of horses. She needed help in the hotel and Katie was used as a maid and general clean-up girl. She had to work very hard as a child and when she became a teenager she quit working with Mrs. Dienst and eventually got married. Supposedly Heinrich wanted to adopt out all his children, or to sell them, despite Louisa’s objections. The townspeople in Dickinson finally “got after him” and pressured him to stop.

This story is probably exaggerated because my mother and aunt Clara heard it from Louisa, and they likely embellished the details when relating it to each other over the years. These stories were passed down to the grandchildren, and we accepted them as literal truth. Another example of how stories become distorted is about how Ida was called “the Dutchess,” which my cousins interpreted to mean that she was a prostitute, when in fact she and her sister were referred to as “the Dutch girls” by people in Bowman, North Dakota. There were many such negative stories about my grandparents in our family.

The available documents pertaining to Katie’s supposed adoption tell a slightly different story. There is a court docket dated Dec. 20, 1892 (shown on Ancestry.com) pertaining to the requested adoption of “Katherine Landis, a minor girl” by Mr. and Mrs Dienst. It is only one paragraph:

“Dec. 20 papers filed showing consent of both parents of the minor and the minor herself consenting to the adoption of said minor by Ambrose Dienst and his wife also consenting and agreement of said Dienst to legally provide for said minor as above entered that said Dienst have the said minor as his own daughter by adoption and the name of said minor changed to Dienst.”

Katie was born in 1886 so she was only 6 years old when this court paper was filed. She wouldn’t have been much help for Mrs. Dienst in the hotel. Also, we note that it states both Heinrich and Louisa, as well as Ambrose Dienst and his wife, and Katie herself, gave their consent for the adoption. No adoption actually happened because Katie and all her siblings were shown residing with Heinrich and Louisa in the 1900 census in Richardton, N.D., Katie was 14 years old at that time and she retained her surname Landeis, rather than Dienst,

³⁵ *Dienen* means “to serve” and *Schön* means “pretty” or “beautiful” in German – hence, Mrs. “Pretty Serve”?

Such stories of adoptions of children may be outrageous by our standards today, but it was fairly common in Europe and in the USA at that time for families to place some of their children with relatives or to hire them out as domestics or farm workers. Families were large and in some cases the parents couldn't adequately provide for them. Children were often placed with grandparents who were elderly or infirm and needed help with household tasks. Throughout European history, young sons were often apprenticed with craftsmen to learn the skills of a trade. Children placed with non-relatives were known as hirelings (*Heurlinge*), and there were formal contracts spelling out the terms of service and the obligations of the hiring family. Typically the family had to agree to care for the child, provide food and shelter, as well as religious and educational instruction. The experiences reported varied, some were positive and they were treated by the families as their own children, while others had very negative experiences, some were treated as servants.³⁶

An interesting addition to the Landeis household was made about that time. According to my mother, Louisa said, "since you adopted out Katie I'll get another girl." They adopted an Indian girl, Pauline, from an orphanage in Great Falls, Montana. The Indian girl stayed with Heinrich and Louisa until she was about 12 years old. This girl was not mistreated or made to do any unusual amount of work, but she was not accustomed to being away from the orphanage. She was quite rebellious and often lured Alex's children into committing various pranks. For example, once she took the lard bucket and smeared it all over Clara's hair. Aside from the mess she made by this cruel joke, lard was a valuable by-product of butchering in those days, so Louisa was furious to have it wasted. This Indian girl also tried to convince Alex's Pauline to help her "drown" Clara in the irrigation ditch. They supposedly were in the process of holding Clara's head under the water when Ida discovered them. One time when Louisa punished the adopted girl for one of her numerous "pranks," she trampled all of Louisa's tomato plants in revenge. They could not control her, and after she ran away a few times they eventually decided to return her to the orphanage. Supposedly this Pauline remained at the orphanage, where she later became a teacher. The only known photo of her is found on p. 304 in *Dawn in Golden Valley*, where she is shown among the 1919-1920 grade-school students in Ryegate. Heinrich's son Jack (Jacob) is also shown (he was 15 years old then); standing next to him is "Pauline Landick (adopted)" -- the last name obviously is a typographic error.

There was much tension between Louisa and Heinrich. She used to get furious, but she kept much of it inside. Louisa on occasion resorted to little schemes to get even with Heinrich -- she would perk a fresh pot of coffee for herself, and reperk the used grounds for him! My aunt Pauline recalled that when she visited her grandparents, she heard a loud, angry voice inside the house from several hundred feet away -- yet when she went inside, Louisa would be there alone, venting her anger to herself. She also apparently directed some of her frustration at the children. After Alex left home, his younger brother Ambrose had to take care of the sheep herd. Supposedly on one occasion he lost two of them and Louisa, in a fit of rage, knocked him down and kicked him in the abdomen. The story goes that this caused a double hernia and Ambrose

³⁶ It should be noted that the 1900 census shows Elizabeth Sticka, age 11, residing with the family of my other grandfather, Adam Wagner, near Dickinson, N.D. Elizabeth was a cousin to my grandmother, Katherine Wagner. Other German from Russia families have also reported examples of younger children boarding with relatives or being hired out to other families.

wore a hernia belt for the rest of life due to this incident. This story must be taken with a grain of salt because the source for it was probably Ida, and she and Louisa disliked each other. Ambrose was a rodeo rider for many years, and it seems quite likely that this was the cause of his hernias. It seems unlikely that he would have been riding bronco horses and wild bulls if he had suffered from a double hernia since childhood.

Several of Heinrich and Louisa's children eventually came to reside with them near Ryegate. Alex's brothers Jacob (Jack), Ambrose, and John, and his sister Annie resided with them at various times. Since they were the younger siblings, they most likely moved to the Ryegate area with their parents in 1912. Neither Ambrose nor Jack ever got married. John and Ambrose were rodeo riders, and they traveled most of the time. Ambrose earned several awards as a champion bull rider. He suffered an injury from this, his draft registration in 1917 when he was 22 years old states that two fingers and the thumb on his right hand were partly cut off, probably from the rope burn. I have a postcard sent by Ambrose to Heinrich, showing the giant smokestack of the copper smelter in Anaconda, Montana. This suggests that he left the farm and worked there for a time. Most of his life Ambrose earned his living herding livestock, working for large ranches such as the Colby Sheep Co. in Great Falls, MT .

They were not much help to Heinrich and Louisa. During the winter months Ambrose, John, and perhaps Jack moved back in with Heinrich and Louisa, but didn't contribute much to the chores. The oldest son, Philip, had remained in Dickinson, where he had his own large family. Ambrose once brought a "prostitute with reddish hair" to live with him. When Spring arrived, Alex would have an explosive argument with his brothers and tell them to get out of their parents' house and to quit mooching off them. The sheriff in Ryegate recalled that Alex and Ambrose didn't like each other, they used to fight a lot, coming to blows and threatening each other with shotguns. Ambrose actually liked to stay in the Ryegate jail because he said the food was better than what he got at home. The sheriff's family had a budget to feed prisoners and Ambrose gladly ate whatever the sheriff's wife fixed. Whenever Ambrose was released to visit his family, he always willingly returned to jail. At the time of Louisa's death in 1938, her obituary states that both Jack and John resided in Fort Peck.

Heinrich and Louisa raised wheat, some cattle, chickens, and turkeys. Louisa also had a large melon garden and she raised many huge sunflowers. Every Fall, Heinrich took a heaping wagon load of watermelons, canteloupes, and musk melons into town to sell. They stopped off at Alex's farm on the way, and the grandchildren enjoyed a melon feast. Ida didn't have the knack for raising melons, so she was always a bit jealous. Louisa saved old tin-cans, punched holes in them, sometimes filled them with manure, and planted them in her garden. She also believed in planting by the phrases of the moon. Louisa undoubtedly brought her taste for melons and sunflowers and her gardening tips from Russia. The large melon gardens, known by the Russian term *Bashitan*, were hallmarks of pride in most German villages. The German colonists also adopted the Ukrainian taste for sunflowers -- many accounts of life in the villages mention that wherever Germans congregated, the floors were soon littered with husks. They filled their cheeks with seeds, skillfully separated the seeds with their tongues, and spit the husks out. My mother remarked that this same pattern was typical of the Germans in North Dakota and Montana.

Mom remembered her grandmother with great affection. Louisa would always bring gifts for her grandchildren at Christmas, although usually it didn't amount to much because she rarely had money. She would rock the younger grandkids, sing them German songs, and tell

them stories. Mom remembered her quaint habits, such as how she would chew her food for her grandchildren, then feed it to them. Those were the days before commercial babyfood was available, but mom recalled watching this in disgust when she was a little girl. Louisa would fold her laundry neatly on a chair, then sit on top of the pile for an hour or so to crease them, while she read her German Bible. She used to tell stories of the Bolschevik revolution in Russia and of the terrible things that happened to the German colonists, which Louisa apparently had read in the newspaper. Heinrich had a subscription to the *Nord Dakota Herold*. The German newspapers in North Dakota at that time contained many letters written by those who had remained behind in Russia, reporting the massacres and atrocities that were committed. Letters usually contained lists of the names of relatives and friends that had been killed. Louisa would read these letters and cry. She brought a book of prophecies (*das Sibylla Buch*) with her from Russia, which foretold about the end of the world and the coming Anti-Christ, which she interpreted to be the Bolsheviks. She would read these stories by the hour to the grandchildren, frightening them with dire predictions about how fire some day would come out of the sky.

Louisa was also a healer (*Brauche*) in Russia, North Dakota and in the Ryegate area. The German custom of *Braucherei* was a form of folk-healing involving the use of herbs, poultices, prayers, religious medals, and charms written on small pieces of paper. I have one small metal container that belonged to Louisa, which my mother preserved. It contains a tiny, carefully rolled scroll of paper with the initials of the Three Magi (C+M+B) surrounded by three crosses (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, you see this charm even today in the Catholic regions of Germany, chalked above doorways on the feast of the Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day). Louisa would put this tiny metal charm beneath the pillow of anyone in the family who was sick. Prayer slips like this were also tucked over the doorways and windows to ward off evil and witchcraft. As the local *Brauche*, Louisa had usually helped deliver the babies born in the area, especially back in the early years when hospitals and doctors were not easily accessible. The births of Ida's first two children, Clara and Pauline, were registered at Bowman, but they were delivered at home on the homestead. Louisa probably helped deliver them.

Throughout his life Alex remained emotionally close with his mother, Louisa, and he took upon himself the major responsibility for looking after his parents. He stopped by their place usually every week to do whatever work they needed to have done. He regarded his father, Heinrich, as rather worthless. Heinrich wasn't a workaholic, like Alex. He had been an ambitious land speculator, and possibly somewhat of a ladies man when younger, but he supposedly lost his money during the Great Depression years. After this, he was too old to start over and he just gave up and drank. Alex tilled Heinrich's land, and he seems to have also taken care of their joint herds (their brand was an X on top an H, which I assume stood for "Alex and Heinrich;" it is still visible today on the old chicken coop behind the farmhouse). He took care of his parents on their ranch until they became old and infirm. Aunt Clara said that later in his life Heinrich spent most of his time drinking. Sometimes he would be gone at the saloon in Ryegate for days at a time. Louisa would eventually arrange for him to be hauled home in a wagon.

Eventually Heinrich and Louisa sold their land and moved into a small house in Ryegate, then after Louisa became ill they stayed with Alex and Ida for a couple of years. Both Louisa and Heinrich were becoming incapacitated, and Heinrich was drinking heavily. Alex took

care of Louisa during her final year. She developed a brain tumor and began to drift away in her mind, convinced that she was still living in Russia. She used to wander off into the root cellar by herself, dreaming about the old country. Ida regarded her as “crazy,” and told the kids to ignore her, but they felt close to their grandmother. Louisa had frequent splitting headaches, sometimes crying from the pain. There was nothing they could do for her. They finally placed her in a home for the elderly in Billings, where she died from her tumor within about one month on Feb. 16, 1938, at the age of 74. After Louisa’s death there was no one left to hold Heinrich’s drinking in check so he basically drank himself to death, which happened nine months later. Jack moved Heinrich in with him in the converted boxcar (put onto a foundation) which he was using as a residence in Ryegate, while he was working for the railroad. Heinrich remained with Jack until his death from a heart attack at home on Nov. 11, 1938, at the age of 75. He was given a Catholic burial. Alex dug their graves with his own hands in Resurrection Cemetery, located behind the farmhouse. He constructed simple white-painted wooden crosses that still stand on their graves today, with zinc name-plates that say “Heinrichs Landeis” and “Louisa Landeis.” Although Alex spelled his surname as “Landice” later in life, he preserved the original spelling on his parents’ grave markers. He had deep respect for Louisa, and he cried at her death. Louisa was the pillar who held their family together over the years.



**Grave marker Resurrection Cemetery, Ryegate, MT
Heinrichs Landeis, Died Nov. 11, 1938**



Heinrich and Louisa Landeis, Ryegate Montana

Alex and Ida Landeis, Some Personal Details

This section of the family history contains very personal details about my grandparents, which are intended for the eyes of my cousins and our descendants. Alex and Ida were tough, rugged homesteaders and we all admired their no-nonsense attitudes, hard work and survival skills. However, they too had a conflicted marriage, Alex had an even more serious drinking problem than his father, Ida was a strict disciplinarian, and they were dirt poor. All of this negatively affected my mother and echos of it carried down in our family. My mother, Anna, was a very sensitive person and she did not fit well with such strong, harsh parents whose lives were shaped by the hardships of homesteading. Over the years she often replayed these vivid stories about her childhood. I don't know if these stories were totally true because she had a

tendency to embellish the details, and as I've grown older I have come to recognize that all of us have deeply subjective memories of our parents. However, it was clear to all of us that mom had a very difficult childhood and she carried those scars throughout her life.

Mom had a close, loving relationship with her grandmother, Louisa. However, Ida and Louisa did not get along, they argued over many trivial things, and mom became a surrogate in their conflicts. Ida and Louisa spoke slightly different dialects of German, so they argued about which words were correct – for example, Ida (being of German-Swiss background) said the standard *Hochdeutsch* word *Kartoffel* for potato, whereas Louisa used the Rhineland dialect word *Grundbeera* as spoken in the colonies. Louisa, in frustration, used to say, *Du verdohlde*³⁷ *Schweitz!* (“you scatter-brained Swiss!”). Late in Louisa's life, as she began to lose touch with reality due to her brain tumor, Ida told the children to ignore her, “she's crazy!” Ida took it out on Anna because she knew that they were fond of each other. She criticized mom because she resembled Louisa – she said that mom had a “ball on the end her nose, just like Louisa.” My mother always wondered how this mutual dislike between Louisa and Ida got started. She noted that Louisa probably had served as the midwife for Ida when she had her first child in the Bowman area, as well as for Ida's sister Mary. My mother suspected that this made Ida feel defensive because Louisa likely knew that both of the sisters had gotten pregnant before being married, and perhaps Louisa had even advised Alex not to marry Ida. She wondered if this “shameful secret” may have complicated their relationship, since Ida was always worried about gossip.

Grandma Ida was not the type of mother who believed in “schpoiling” her children. She expected them to obey her orders immediately and to shoulder their burden of chores. Ida was the one that did most of the beatings of the children, more so than Alex, and she could be very harsh. She would tell them to do something just once, and if they didn't do it they would be whipped. She had a whip braided out of horse tail-hairs which she always had hanging in the kitchen within convenient reach. I recall one story about how she told mom to go outside and chop the head off a chicken for dinner. This was horrifying to my mother. She closed her eyes before she swung the hatchet and managed to cut only half the chicken's neck, so it ran around the farmyard with its head flopping and blood squirting. She ran inside the house screaming, which only exasperated my grandmother. Ida told her to stop blubbering and to go outside and finish chopping the head off!

Grandpa Alex was very close with his mother, so he sided with her in these internecine quarrels – and Louisa always backed him in his periodic explosions with Ida. However, he could not stand up to Ida's blistering verbal assaults. He was withdrawn and taciturn, whereas Ida was critical and aggressively forthright in her opinions. Alex was about 5' 8" in height, quite husky, with blue eyes, dark hair and a sun-tanned complexion. Ida was about the same height, with blond hair and blue eyes. She was a stout woman and she easily held her own with grandpa. They too often argued about trivial issues, such as their ages and birthdates, which were modified at times to suit their whims. Alex was born March 12, 1889, although his tombstone says March 14, 1887, and his draft registration in 1917 says March 14, 1890. The 1900 census, for some inexplicable reason, just adds to the confusion because it lists Alex's birthdate as March 12, 1888. According to my mother, his birth-year was moved back two years to make it the same as Ida's in order to avoid family arguments! Ida used to taunt him about how she

³⁷ *Verdohlde* seems to be a dialect expression, probably derived from *Dohle*, which means “jackdaw,” an old-fashioned term for “scatter-brained.”

was “schmarter” than him because she was older, so they resolved it by changing his birth year. Their marriage license states that Alex’s age was 24, and she was 23. Probably this too was done to make things more propitious. Aunt Clara, the first-born child, told a humorous story about how grandma always kept their framed wedding certificate hanging on the wall, and one day Clara noticed the date. She counted the months to her birthday, and she mentioned to grandma that the total didn’t come out to nine months. Grandma got angry, took the certificate down, licked the pencil eraser, and rubbed out the date.

As usual, my mother blamed Ida for many of the family problems. She said that Alex actually enjoyed socializing more than Ida. He liked the Schaff family, who were his relatives, and he wanted to visit them but Ida said no, all they wanted to do was “*retsch, retsch, retsch*”³⁸ about other people. She suspected that everyone gossiped about her. Ida looked down on Alex’s side of the family and she felt that her Fuchs family was better. She said that her family had more education and more money, although Heinrich and Louisa had a good amount of money that they brought with them from Russia. Ida was not the type of person to easily forgive and forget when she got upset. She would “pick-pick-pick” and nag about it for hours and days. She had a bad habit of back-biting Alex and Louisa and sometimes she flatly lied and distorted things about them. She always told the children that Alex was “poor as a church-mouse” when they met near Bowman, emphasizing how much money her father, Caspar Fuchs had, and that Alex married her only for her money. Supposedly Caspar gave them a wedding gift of \$1,000 and another \$500 later, plus some farm equipment. However, he quit helping them when he found out how “worthless” Alex was, and that he was already drinking and gambling away money at a young age. Ida claimed that only she had a homestead near Bowman, and that Alex didn’t have one. Mom checked the courthouse records at Bowman and found that Alex indeed had his own homestead – in fact, he had slightly more acreage than Ida. When mom confronted her with this evidence in 1974, Ida became quite angry.

While grandma’s harsh and critical nature caused problems within the family, grandpa Alex’s drinking binges were much more serious because when he drank, he was unpredictable, terrifying, and violent! Alex would get angry at Ida because of her attitudes, then go off on a long drinking binge. When he returned, he had been stewing over things for a few days, he was furious and “all hell would break loose.” On those occasions, everyone in the family avoided him, including Ida, who knew enough to keep her mouth shut because he might lash out in an explosive outburst. Alex never physically beat Ida, but he threatened violence when he was blindly drunk. I have always wondered if perhaps Ida’s critical nature didn’t trigger some of his drinking bouts. She was as tall as him, stouter and verbally more caustic, and perhaps he could stand his ground against her only when he had enough liquor in him. Aunt Pauline said that she remembered only once in her entire life when Alex openly talked about this, and all he said was, “your mother is a hard person to get along with.”

Despite Alex’s bluster, he didn’t often beat the kids, he left that task up to Ida. Pauline said he didn’t have to actually beat the kids because they were so afraid of him that they rarely crossed him. She recalled that one time he told her to do something and she said, “wait a minute.” He hit her so hard that she bounced off the opposite door jamb. After that, she said she jumped whenever he told her to do something.

³⁸ Probably a dialect expression, derived from *rezensieren*, “to criticize.”

My mother felt that Alex was a very sensitive person, she thought he loved Ida, but she wasn't sure that Ida loved him in return -- she thought that Ida resented him and felt that she had become trapped into the marriage because she became pregnant with Clara. Alex was sometimes irrationally jealous of Ida. He accused her of having men over when he was gone during the day, which my mother said was silly because their little house was always full of kids. When Henry was a baby he got chicken pox, so Ida took him to bed with her to comfort him. Alex fumed about this and accused her of using the baby as an excuse to avoid sex.

Alex clearly had some deeper, underlying problems, other than just having an abrasive, nagging wife. He kept things bottled up within him, then when he drank his frustrations would erupt and threaten to destroy his entire family. He had spent his childhood as a sheep-herder and he was alone much of the time on the prairie with his dog, a horse, and a rifle. He was extremely shy as a boy and his knowledge of English was limited. My mother claimed that Alex stuttered, which perhaps also accounted for him being taciturn as an adult -- that plus the fact that he never learned English well, he had very little education, and throughout his life he spoke with a heavy German accent.³⁹

Alex was wild and rowdy as a young man. After he returned from Chicago, he hung out with a gang in Bowman (my mother and aunt Clara said that they were known as the "Six Shooter Slim" gang). They would drink, get rowdy, and shoot the lights out in the saloons. One time they broke up a dance because they weren't invited. Supposedly they fired guns at the floor and threatened to shoot the heels off women's shoes. The sheriff wouldn't do anything about it because he was afraid of them. Alex was quite good with a revolver and he was dangerous when drunk.

Considering the amount of whiskey that Heinrich drank, they should have had a still to make their own. During the Prohibition era Alex tried to make whiskey to sell in Ryegate for a while. He had a large copper tub for a boiler and coiled tubing for distilling, but it was too difficult to produce anything of salable quality. Also, Alex supposedly preferred beer to whiskey, so he shifted to brewing beer in a hidden cellar that he dug under the chicken coop. The whole family became involved in that enterprise. Ida was in charge of the brewing operations and the kids cleaned all the bottles. Alex sold beer to the speak-easies in the area. The sheriff knew that Alex was selling beer, but he didn't make much effort to stop it. They came out to the farm once, but never did locate the secret trap door. The chicken coop was built of railroad ties, it was a heavy structure so it couldn't easily be moved (it stands to this day, behind the farmhouse near the irrigation ditch). After the Prohibition era, Alex continued to manufacture beer. He would haul it into town in his truck, with piles of hay surrounding the bottles. He would park behind the tavern, go inside and drink, then when it was dark he would unload the beer, and bring the empty bottles back home to be refilled. By the time he came home at night, he would usually be drunk. He managed to produce enough beer to sell at two

³⁹ My brother, Kenny, also had a severe stammering and stuttering problem all his life. It is possible that there was a genetic link for this stemming from our grandfather Alex. My cousin Robert Deichl said that Clara, his mother, also was born with a speech impediment. She had great difficulty in school until the third grade when a nurse noticed that her tongue had more skin attached on the underside. After it was slit and removed, she was withdrawn for a while until she had healed and did tongue exercises. She then continued school into the seventh grade.

taverns in town, and it became a significant way to earn extra money. Mom felt that this period marked the time when Alex's drinking problem became more serious and habitual. He didn't drink regularly in his youth, but he developed a taste for alcohol as a result of his business of selling beer in town.

Alex didn't drink alcohol daily like Heinrich, he was more of a binge drinker. When sober, Alex was a dependable, hard worker; however, when he drank, he usually didn't stop until he passed out. Normally quiet and taciturn, his personality changed when he was drunk. He would then lurch into the farmhouse, ready to vent his anger and frustration on anyone near him. Sometimes he would punch the walls and shout. Whenever he entered the house, all talk usually ceased ("you could hear a pin drop"). Ida and the children carefully watched him to see what his mood was. Mom claimed that he would drink to the point where he had delirium tremens and would "fight snakes that were crawling out of the walls" – although that may be one of her embellishments based on imagery in the popular media.

One of the most horrific stories centered on an incident during World War One. Alex registered for the draft on June 5, 1917, he was shown as a naturalized citizen, age 27, born March 14, 1890, he had a wife and three children, and his surname was spelled "Landice." He was brooding at that time and despondent because he feared that if he were drafted the family would be left with no one to support them. He drank heavily at that time and came into the house waving his revolver and shouting that it would be better if he just killed everyone! He went outside and began fumbling around with lumber, raving that he was going to build a scaffold to hang them all! Ida hustled the children outside and they hid in the barn. She somehow managed to convince him that it wasn't necessary to kill anyone, he could remain out of the military if he shot himself in the right hand. He went up into the rimrocks, they heard a loud gun shot, after which he came running down with blood spurting, and dunked his hand into a bucket of cold water. My mother and aunt Clara claim that he had a scar on his hand (a lump) for the rest of his life. I am tempted to think that this may be family folklore because similar stories (often untrue) about self-mutilation to avoid the draft circulated widely during World War One – and such stories were even more common in Russia, where there was extreme fear of serving in the Russian military. My mother would have been only three years old at the time; however, my aunts Clara and Pauline also told this same story. Alex's brother, Jack, served during World War Two, where he was severely wounded. He told people in Ryegate that he had enlisted to prevent Alex and the boys from being drafted. Alex would have been 55 years old by the time of World War Two, so although the logic of Jack's story was flawed, it does reinforce the notion that Alex was afraid of serving in the military.

When Alex's binges became violent toward the family, Ida sought help from the sheriff and also from the Catholic priest in town. Both of them advised her to take the children and leave Alex for their own safety. She never did so. She would have had no means of support for them and her only other recourse would have been to go back to Chokio, Minnesota. My mother said that conditions got so bad at home that the priest tried to arrange for the county welfare department to place the children in foster homes, or in the orphanage at Great Falls. Ida didn't want to break up the family, so when the welfare worker showed up to assess the situation Ida made sure that all the kids were nicely bathed and wore clean clothes. Also, the kids cried and begged not to be taken away.

After the Prohibition era, Alex continued selling beer in town and most of his drinking binges took place there. Sometimes he didn't return for several days. One time they found him

passed out over the steering wheel of his pickup, which he had driven into the irrigation ditch behind the house. There were times when he passed out in the back of his pickup in the Winter, when it would be below zero at night, with great danger of him freezing to death. The sheriff would put him in jail and bring him home the next morning after he had sobered up. Stories about Alex's erratic behavior were legendary in Ryegate. An elderly local once told me the story about how Alex's pickup stalled on the railroad tracks. He couldn't get it started, and when he saw that a train was coming he just cursed, got out and slammed the door shut. The train struck the pickup and dragged pieces of metal all the way into Ryegate, strewing parts all over the tracks. He supposedly just walked into town to buy another vehicle.

My mother recalled that the transition to speaking English happened sometime after World War One. Ida said that during the war years a vigilante gang went around harassing the German speaking settlers in the area. Supposedly they visited the Landeis households, and others such as the Schaff and Schanz, searching for "pro-Kaiser literature." Ida mentioned that they weren't allowed to buy white flour or sugar and spot checks were conducted on their houses to see if they had illegally purchased these commodities. There was probably general rationing of flour and sugar for everyone during the war, but it is likely that the German-speaking families were especially targeted for compliance during this period of anti-German hysteria. According to my mother, there was a local Ku-Klux-Klan group who burned crosses on the rimrocks outside town. Researchers have noted that there was a revival of the Klan during and after the war years, when they touted themselves as "100% Americans." The Klan targeted not only African-Americans, but also recent immigrants. Germans throughout the Midwest were harassed. Before the war there were hundreds of local German language newspapers throughout the country, but almost all of these were forced out of business during those years of the hyper-patriotism. German farmers reported that vigilante gangs visited their homes and demanded to see how many war bonds they had purchased, as proof of their loyalty to the USA.

The older children in the family (Clara and Pauline) were having problems in school because they couldn't speak English. They both recalled that they couldn't answer the teacher's questions in English, and Pauline had to repeat a grade because of her language difficulties. At that point the teacher visited Alex and Ida to convince them to quit using German at home, "for the sake of the children." Alex decided that they should begin making the transition to English. This decision may also have been prompted partially by the differences in German dialects spoken by Ida and Louisa, which had become a source of arguments. Nevertheless, the family continued using German for several years. Both Alex and Ida spoke German better than English. Heinrich and Louisa were literate only in German, she never learned English, and Heinrich spoke it very poorly. My mom had to act as Louisa's interpreter. Louisa dictated her letters in German to my mother, who would write it down for her in English. Despite his problems in speaking English, Alex doggedly persisted in trying to use that language. I recall once when I was in college I was studying German, and I tried to strike up a conversation with grandpa. He just replied, "vy do you vant to shtudy dat? Ve live in America, ve should speak English."

It was a common issue for the German from Russia immigrants to begin sorting out their ethnic identity after they settled in the USA. Typically they admitted that they came from Tsarist Russia and sometimes the locals called them "Rooshians," but almost always they insisted that they weren't "Rooshians," they were "*Deutsch*." That ethnic distinction had been

strictly and legally adhered to even by the Russian authorities during the century or more that the German colonists had resided in Tsarist Russia. After coming to the USA, the issue of ethnic identity became even more complicated by anti-Germanism during the war years. My guess is that grandpa Alex didn't want the family to be targeted, and he obviously wanted to fit in with his drinking buddies in town, so he began saying that they were "Russian." Some of the other younger immigrants also adopted that label at that time; however, Alex's brother, Ambrose, always persisted in labeling himself as "*Deutsch*," as did my father's family in North Dakota. Vigilante activism may have been more of a problem in Montana, where there were local gangs of cowboy rowdies. A much larger percentage of farmers in North Dakota were of foreign origin, especially Germans from Russia, so they might not have been targeted there to the same extent. However, even in North Dakota most of the German language newspapers were shut down by local authorities during the war years.

Grandpa didn't have much education, and he didn't value education for his children. Most of the children attended grade school in Ryegate, but none of them attended highschool. Clara, the oldest girl, attended up through the seventh grade, but she had a heavy burden at home helping Ida with household chores. My mother was a smart, gifted child, she loved school and she completed the eighth grade. Her teacher urged Alex and Ida to allow her to attend highschool. She attended three months in her freshman year, but after Alex found out that girls wore shorts in their P.E. classes he forbid her to go. He said that all they wanted to do was to chase boys. Mom spent her teenage years at home helping her mother with chores, and she always regretted that she couldn't continue her education.

Alex and Ida were always afraid that the girls would get pregnant before marriage (and their youngest, Dorothy, actually did). Their solution was to try to impose arranged marriages (*Kuppola*), just as had been done with Heinrich and Louisa. They tried to arrange a marriage between Pauline and one of the Schaff boys, but she left home to avoid this. Alex rarely allowed the children to attend dances in town when they reached their teenage years. He would go along as a chaperone, and stand in the sidelines glaring. If any of the boys held one of his girls too closely he would walk out into the middle of the dance-floor to separate them. After a while the boys in Ryegate became so frightened of Alex that they hesitated to ask any of the Landeis girls for a dance.

Sex was a forbidden topic in the family and grandma's pregnancies were always kept secret. She was big and stout and wore baggy dresses, so no one knew when she was pregnant. When Ida was about to deliver, she and Clara would just disappear into her bedroom, shut the door, and then they would eventually hear a baby cry. Their reaction was, "oh, no, more diapers to wash!" Alex would go into Ryegate to fetch the doctor, but usually the baby was born before the doctor arrived. Louisa nicknamed Henry the *Erdbebbüble* ("earthquake baby") because a quake struck just as he was being born, they heard the baby cry while the house was shaking. He was a big 9.5 pound baby, and they joked that he made the house shake. When they asked Ida where babies came from, she said that she found them under cabbage leaves in the garden. Mom went outside one day to look, but couldn't find any. As the girls became teens and got interested in boys, their curiosity grew. Mom was a very pretty young girl and one day at school she bent over to get a drink at the drinking fountain, and a boy kissed her on the back of her neck. She ran home crying, and told her mom that she was going to have a baby. When Ida asked her what had happened, she told about the kissing incident. Ida told her, "don't be so schtupid, that's not how babies are born!" - but she still wouldn't explain the

facts of life to her girls. Whenever they asked, she would dismiss their questions, saying "You'll find out soon enough."



Pauline, Anna (standing in front of Pauline), Frances (in high chair), Clara, Al (standing before Clara)



**Anna (under the X) and her siblings, ca. 1930
Clara (on left), Frances, Josephine, Anna, Henry, Pauline, Al (on right)**



Ida, with youngest daughter Dorothy on the way



Grandpa Alex and Uncle Henry at the Coal Mine

My uncle Al (he was always called Al to distinguish him from grandpa Alex) was the oldest son and grandpa decided that he should help in the coal mine rather than go to school. After working all day long, grandpa would often stop at the tavern in Ryegate, leaving Al to wait for him outside in the wagon. The townspeople felt sorry for Al and sneaked him soda pops and candy. Grandpa would get angry over this because he didn't believe in "schpoiling" the children. Sometimes Al would get tired of waiting, so he just walked the one mile back home. Al also had some health problems, which eventually made it impossible for him to continue helping in the coal mine. On one occasion he had "convulsions and turned blue" (asthma?). This annoyed grandpa, who said that Al was a "worthless" sissy. The story is told that one day he grabbed Al and threw him head first into the rain barrel in front of the house, then stormed off. Supposedly Al would have drowned if Ida hadn't rushed outside to rescue him!

After Al left home at about age 18, uncle Henry had to take over helping grandpa. Henry was a tall, stout boy and he didn't have health problems like Al. Henry was also big enough to defend himself, so grandpa tended to treat him with a bit more caution. However, Henry told an incredible story of how he too once became the target of grandpa's rage. One time after Henry helped unload the wagon load of coal in Ryegate, he was paid \$3.00 - which he secretly decided to keep because he felt he was entitled to it as wages. When grandpa found out, he went into a rage, took his revolver and fired at Henry, barely missing him, blowing a hole in the back of the chair. Mom said that grandpa deliberately missed, but wanted "to teach Henry a lesson"! Henry worked in the coal mine until age 17, when he left home. Years later, when the kids cleared out the furniture from the old farmhouse, the grandparents still had that chair with the bullet hole in it.

Mom said that the worst times were when she was about 14 years old (about 1929). Whatever the trigger may have been is unknown, but things reached a major crisis point in the family at that time. One incident was that Alex came home raving that he was going to kill Ida. Anna warned her mother, who managed to flee outside and hide in the barn. When Alex found that she wasn't in the house, he threw his loaded revolver against the wall, and it bounced off behind the old record player (which I still have). While Alex was outside searching for Ida, Anna grabbed the gun and hid it. Uncle Al had meanwhile run into town to fetch the sheriff. When the sheriff showed up Alex tried to pretend that he had just arrived home and found Ida missing, and he didn't know why. Anna blurted out, "that's not true!" and told the whole story to the sheriff. Alex was going to punch her, but the sheriff stood between them. He arrested Alex and he was charged with attempted homicide. My mother claims that he would have been sentenced to time at the state prison; however, Alex apologized to Ida and asked her to forgive him, so she dropped the charges. They confiscated his guns, he was confined to house arrest for six months and was not allowed to enter Ryegate. After this incident, both he and Ida became like prisoners in the house.

The kids were all in crisis mode during those years and they agreed to watch out for each other. Anna's task was to warn Ida and to keep an eye out for the younger siblings. Al's task was to run one mile into town to get the sheriff if necessary. Grandpa knew that they were watching him, so my mother and Al became the target of his special anger. On one occasion he threatened to kill Al. He took him down to the swamp south of the highway, and told him to stand there with his hands hanging by his side so that when he got shot his body would flop into the water. Of course it was a bluff to terrify Al, and he deliberately missed. My mother said she and the kids were chronically frightened during those years. She would stay awake at night watching Alex to see what mood he was in, she prayed a lot, sometimes pretending to do homework. Alex would watch her without talking, with his fingers spread over his face, then finally he would go to bed. Only then would she allow herself to go to sleep. Mom claimed that she was a nervous wreck during her teen years. She didn't eat much, she became very skinny, her posture was poor and she hunched over a lot. They got a shoulder brace for her to help hold her shoulders back and the doctor fed her lots of vitamin D. Mom thought that her diet was so deficient that she wasn't developing normal bone structure. One time she dropped a cup of grease which was intended for the hogs, and Ida got so furious that she whipped her until she fainted. Ida then rolled her out the door to revive her. Mom said that all the kids were nervous, over-wrought, frightened and timid during those years.

Mom left home promptly on her 18th birthday – they made her leave, and she was desperately eager to get away from there. She said that on that last day they still made her do her chores and milk five cows. Alex then drove her to Billings and arranged for her to stay with one of Friedrich Meier’s sons (their cousin Henry Meier and his wife who lived in Billings at that time). After that she moved in with Clara, who bought her \$6.00 worth of groceries and rented her a tiny room with a bare mattress on the floor, no furnishings, no bed linens. After three weeks, mom managed to find a job at the cannery, then when she was 19 she got a job for two summers at Yellowstone Park. Al stayed at home for only about five months after Anna left, and all that time she worried for his safety.



Grandpa Alex age 57



Grandma Ida age 59

When Alex and Ida became elderly, they continued to have periodic blow-ups. Ida left Alex for short periods about three times, but she always returned to him. On one of those occasions (around 1960) she took the train to stay with us in Portland. After a couple weeks, Alex couldn’t stand being apart from her so he quit eating for several days. He called her, then took the train to Portland to be with her. He was so weak from lack of food that he had to be carried off the train. We all marvelled that they were affectionate with each other afterwards

and held hands like two young lovers. Later, they went up to Seattle to stay awhile with my uncles. Things fell apart during their visit there. Al got into an argument with grandpa at dinner time, grandpa refused to eat and walked out of the house. Al, being a butcher, always took pride in serving the best cut of steaks to his guests. Al drove around in the neighborhood until he found grandpa, then grabbed him by his suspendors, dragged him into the car and took him back home. As Al told the story, he said, "you old son-of-a-bitch, get back home and eat the steak I fixed for you, you're not too good for it!"

These stories may seem unbelievable and my mother did love to tell a whopping good yarn, but when she and my aunts and uncles got together they would always reminisce about their early years. There was much deep anger, especially by my mom and Al, who perhaps were greater targets than the other siblings. Clara apparently had a somewhat closer relationship with Ida, probably because she was the oldest child, she was also mellower in her personality, and was treated with more respect. Once when I was repeating one of the old family horror stories, Clara commented, "oh, that's just Anna." That surprised me, and it reminded me that family dynamics are always deeply subjective and the truth always depends on the perspective of the person telling the story. Clara said that Anna was the feistiest of the children and she argued the most with Ida when she got old enough to stand up for herself. The youngest child, Dorothy, was treated more gently by my grandparents, since she was their baby and the older girls bore more of the brunt of household chores. In later years grandma once commented that by the time they had Dorothy they were older and "too tired" to be very strict. Dorothy acknowledged this, and she felt that this was one reason why she got into trouble in her youth with various boyfriends. Interestingly, neither Al nor Henry drank much alcohol in their adult years - nor, to my knowledge, did any of the other siblings. My mother always said that they were all sick of alcohol, since it had made such a mess of their home life as children.

Their reminiscences about Alex and Ida were not all negative. There were also some mixed feelings, some ambivalence, which is common in children from such borderline families. When uncle Henry told the story about how grandpa had fired the revolver at him for withholding \$3.00, Henry chuckled and commented (bizarrely!), "Dad was right, it taught me not to steal"! When Henry died, his last wish was that his ashes be buried between the graves of Alex and Ida in Ryegate, which shows that he still had some nostalgia for them.

Grandma Ida was a stout, strong woman and a great cook. I always remember that she had such large, strong arms. We looked forward to our visits to Ryegate. We explored the farmyard, climbed the rim-rocks, and cranked the handle of her cream separator. She made delicious, rich cottage cheese, which we ate with great gusto like home-made ice cream. She appreciated us as grandchildren, occasionally even smiled at us, but she easily slipped into abrasive and critical remarks. On a couple occasions she tried to lapse into being a strict disciplinarian - always on guard that we might become "schpoiled" -- but my mother always defended us. I recall once that grandma offered to give my mother the whip braided out of horse tail hairs, which she had used to beat her children when they were young. My mom refused to take the whip and she said that she would never use such a thing on us.

Grandpa Alex was a complex person, given his mix of hard work, taciturnity, limited English skills, stuttering, binge drinking, and violent outbursts. My mother, as usual, was very ambivalent about him. While she was terrified of him as a child, she always tended to blame Ida for many of their problems. She said that beneath his reserved surface Alex was very tender

hearted, he could cry when emotional, and “he had a heart of gold” (but then she said that about almost everyone!). He was only truly happy when he was out on the prairie with his dogs, his horse, and the livestock. He loved the little lambs in the herd. If any lambs were abandoned, he bottle fed them with great devotion. Incredibly, she also claimed that he loved little babies, he liked to hold them. But he didn’t have much tender hearted devotion to his kids when they got older.

He was not an affectionate grandfather, although he was never cruel to my brothers or me, and he never made disparaging remarks to us, like grandma would do occasionally. I recall that when we climbed around on the rim-rocks behind the farm house grandpa always cautioned us about rattlesnakes. He had a fruit-jar filled with rattles from all the snakes that he had shot, and he gave us a few rattles as souvenirs. My mother recalls that one time a bull-snake crawled inside their house at night and curled up around the central support post in the front room. They found it hanging there the next morning. Alex’s proficiency with guns took on mythical qualities in our family. My mother had great fear of him when she was a child, but she also admired his marksmanship, claiming that he could shoot repeatedly in the same hole on a target. He too took pride in his skill and would ask them to choose a target, which he would then invariably hit. One evening we heard coyotes howling down near the highway, and grandpa was concerned that they were after his livestock. He performed an amazing feat of marksmanship in the almost total darkness – he took his rifle outside, aimed it, fired, making a blinding flash and a deafening explosion. In the distance we heard coyotes yelping in fear and their nails actually left a trail of sparks as they dashed away along the pavement! Grandpa had no love for coyotes and like most other ranchers at that time he could be very cruel to them. My mother recalls that he sometimes chased them down on horseback, roped them around the neck, and dragged them to death. In those days ranchers would drape dead coyotes over their fences as a display of their prowess. Despite being a crack shot, grandpa didn’t hunt. He couldn’t stand to shoot a deer – he thought they were too “cute” – and neither he nor grandma liked venison because they thought it tasted too gamey.

All my aunts and uncles agreed that grandpa was an extremely hard worker. He worked constantly. He would be awake by 4 A.M. daily to do the farm chores and he would work until late at night. Despite the dramatic stories about his drinking binges, my mother acknowledged that he was the hardest worker among all his siblings, more so than his father Heinrich, who tended to be lazy in his later years. Grandpa always managed to provide basic subsistence for his large family, they were never without food to eat, although they didn’t have much else. He also helped care for Heinrich and Louisa in their old age. Mom loved to recount the story about how Alex single-handedly rerouted the Musselshell River. He noticed that the river was eroding part of his land across the railroad tracks, so he tried to get the railroad company to cooperate with him in rerouting it because their track beds were endangered as well. They wouldn’t help, so Alex rerouted the Musselshell River (which is a good 20’ across) by himself, using dynamite, pick-ax, and a team of horses. This anecdote took on the mythical quality in our family of how grandpa was like Paul Bunyan. Another anecdote is that Alex spearheaded the repair and expansion of the the irrigation ditch which flowed behind his farm house into Ryegate. Before this, the land on both the east and west sides of Ryegate lacked sufficient irrigation. Irrigation ditches in those days were regarded as a community endeavor, but each farmer helped Alex only on the stretch passing through their own property, then they quit. Because Alex was at the end of the line before the ditch passed into town, he helped

everyone, then had to take the initiative to complete the final stretch by himself. The local history of Golden Valley County does not give him credit for this project. It refers to it as the "Simm's Irrigation Ditch," which is probably named after the settler who put in the original smaller ditch.

Alex and Ida were very poor. Their farm house was a small shanty, with a front-room, two bedrooms, and a kitchen. Grandpa originally bought the house in town and hauled it to his farm with a team of horses. I don't know how they managed to fit nine children there! All of them left home as soon as they were able, and usually my grandparents shooed them out the door by age 18. He had an attached log room in the early years which he built on the back of the house. My mother recalls that during the bitter winters in Montana she could feel icy wind blowing in between the logs in the wall. She told stories about how they were so poor that they would search the town dump for anything of use. Once she found a pair of shoes that were too large for her, but she stuffed newspaper inside them to make them fit. The kids were embarrassed when they went to school because of their old clothes. At Christmas time each child received one gift. My mother recalls that one year she got a rubber ball and some jacks, which she loved and played with constantly. Once they got a box of oranges for the entire family, which they all ate with great relish - including the orange peelings.

On two occasions Alex and Ida took a trip to Minnesota to visit the Fuchs side of the family. On those occasions they left my mother in charge, to run the farm, milk six cows, feed the livestock, and take care of the younger children. She did a good job of it because "she knew they would whip her if things were not perfect when they got back." After they returned, they paid her 25 cents for her services! She took all the kids into Ryegate and bought them ice-cream cones with the quarter.

Despite their poverty, Alex was very responsible about repaying his debts. He didn't believe in contracts, and usually a handshake was sufficient to cement a deal (partially because he and most other people didn't want to pay a lawyer!). He owed no debts to anyone in Ryegate at the time of his death. Uncle Al asked people in town if his father owed any of them money, and some of them were annoyed that he would even ask such a question. They said Alex was too proud to owe money and he always repaid his debts. Generally most Germans from Russia were very responsible about debts, and he was no exception in this regard. With his own family, however, he was a bit laxer because he felt that children owed financial support to their parents. My father recalled that Alex wanted to borrow \$1,200 from him in 1942 to buy land behind the farm house near where the Catholic Resurrection cemetery now stands. Alex didn't want to borrow the money from the bank because the interest payments were too high; he preferred to have my father withdraw it from his savings (and lose interest!). My father refused, so Alex finally took out a loan and used his farm as collateral. On another occasion grandpa borrowed \$150 from my father and only repaid it almost two years later after a bit of nagging, and after his cows had calves which he could sell for cash.

My grandparents were raised strict Catholic. Louisa and grandma were devout throughout their lives, and they regularly attended the local St. Mathias church in Ryegate. Grandpa attended church occasionally in his early years and he was even willing to make contributions to the priest, but the demands became more than what he could afford. He provided free coal to the church, but the priest also wanted some cash donations. This priest also apparently was having an affair with his housekeeper ("a Schanz girl"), they got married and he was expelled from the priesthood. Alex eventually became disgruntled with religion

and dismissed it all as a “racket.” He always said “when you’re dead, you’re dead. Look at the dead cattle, do you tink they live again?” He became disgusted with his sister, Annie Paridaen, when she converted to Jehovah’s Witness. She would visit and try to preach to the family, but grandpa finally told her to leave, he dumped all her literature outside the door and told her not to return. Mom claimed that Alex donated the land for Resurrection Cemetery, which is sandwiched between the rim-rocks and the irrigation ditch behind Alex’s farm house. However, the Schaff family also took credit for this cemetery. The family history for Victor Schaff in *Dawn in Golden Valley* states that he (Victor) donated the land in 1918, after his oldest daughter, Geneveve died during the great flu epidemic. Since the cemetery is directly behind Alex’s land, it seems likely that Alex may have donated a portion.

There was always a touch of admiration for the dogged strength and hard work of my grandparents. Their folksy and rugged qualities were a source of jokes in our family. We all laughed about how grandma never wasted anything. She turned old flour sacks into aprons and underwear. Her chicken soup included the gizzards, hearts, and other parts that we didn’t want to know about. She always commented, “peeble today they are too schooled!” Grandpa always castrated the rams in his herd with his teeth, then spit the testacles into a bucket. He would bring the testacles into the kitchen and ask grandma to fry them up. She refused to do so because they smelled so bad, so he had to do that himself (Rocky Mountain Oysters! Ryegate had an annual “Testacle Festival” to celebrate this so-called delicacy).

The story is also told that when electricity lines were finally extended out from Ryegate to the rural area, Alex agreed to have their farm house hooked up, but only on the condition that they would never have two light bulbs on at the same time. They had two bare bulbs, one in the kitchen and one in the living room. Eventually Alex did find both lights on, so he took wire cutters and snipped the line leading to the house. From that day until they retired and moved into Ryegate, they supposedly used only kerosene lamps for light. He used an ice house to store block ice during the Summer, but they didn’t have an electric refrigerator.

Once when grandpa visited us in Portland, he looked at all the green lawns in front of the houses and snorted in derision. He said, “It costs money to plant grass, doesn’t it? You have to spend money watering it, don’t you? Can you eat grass? Hell no! Why don’t you plow it all up and plant corn and potatoes?” I recall that he would sit in a chair for long periods without speaking, with his fingers spread apart over his face, sometimes just staring at us. He snorted Copenhagen tobacco (*Schnoos*) and he carried a coffee can with him inside the house to dribble saliva into. He covered his mouth when doing that.

Grandma always sent us a Christmas package each year, and she would include a small gift for my brothers and me. It typically included one size 13 pair of Argyle socks and a quarter. We always thought this was hilarious and we had fun arguing over how we would divide up the quarter three ways! My mom would chuckle, and say, “Well, she means well!” We also enjoyed reading grandma’s letters. She spoke English with a heavy German accent, and she spelled her words the way she pronounced them. We always remembered one letter in which she announced, “Ve are feeling good. Ve sure got some bad vetter. Ve got a lot of schnow. And the cows they got the schitts.”

Grandma and grandpa sold their farm and retired to a small house in Ryegate in about 1965. They were true to their complex relationship to the very end. He had a stroke in their kitchen at home in 1967. One of the Schaffs had been contacted, and he called Clara to tell her that Alex was laying on the floor, Ida was “kicking him and telling him to get up, you old fool!”

She probably thought that he had fallen because he was drunk. He lingered for three months in St. Vincent hospital in Billings. During his final days, as Alex lay in the hospital, she would hold his hand; however, as he was dying he reached out for her hand once more and she just said, "oh, what for!" Clara was outraged by this. Alex died on Dec. 9, 1967 at the age of 78. After his death, Sheriff Dolby in Ryegate told the children that they shouldn't leave Ida there by herself. Ida insisted that she should be left alone and that she could handle everything. The children insisted that she move in with Clara, the oldest daughter in nearby Billings, who seems to have had the best relationship with her. They sorted out Ida's belongings, and supposedly built a fire in the backyard, burning much of what they regarded as "junk," which caused Ida to become very upset. As they cleaned out the farmhouse they found small bags of silver dollars taped to the bottom of the kitchen table and under some chairs. Like many of the old farmers who lost their life savings "when Hoover closed the banks during the Great Depression," Alex and Ida didn't trust banks and they preferred to keep their savings in hard currency stashed in various places around the house. She stayed with Clara in Billings for several months, then with Pauline, then with my mother in Portland, then with Al in Seattle. Ida was too much of a burden for her children, she was too difficult to get along with. She finally moved back in with Clara, who was the most patient of the children, and grandma remained with her the longest. They moved her into a rest home in Billings in 1973.

My final memory of grandma was in 1973, when I was between jobs so I drove to Montana and visited her at the rest home. I gave her a kiss, reminded her that I was Annie's boy, and asked her how she was doing. She was not warm or welcoming. She asked me what I was doing there. I told her that I was seeking a teaching position at a university, and thought that I would stop by to visit her. She didn't smile. She just responded, "vell, vhy did you lose your other job? They didn't like you, huh? That's vhat happens when they don't like you." That was typical of grandma. She was always ready to give you a double shotgun blast of criticism. Those, unfortunately, were the last words we ever spoke.

Grandma had been a strong, independent woman all her life and she was unwilling to sink gracefully into old age and disability. Clara said that she lapsed into despair in her final months and prayed to die. Grandma finally died of a stroke on Nov. 29, 1975.

It is very difficult for me to give any final assessments of my grandparents. Mom struggled with this all her life. She vascillated between resentment, anger, sometimes even tears when she talked about her childhood, and at times romanticized idealization of her stout, strong parents. The old expression is that you shouldn't judge anyone until you have walked a mile in their shoes. In the case of grandma and grandpa, we all walked in their shoes for many years after they were gone.



Grandpa Alex on his tractor



Grandpa Alex age 44



Grandpa and Grandma as I remember them



Ida Fuchs and Alex Landeis



Alex age 65 Ida age 66



Dorothy (left), Ida, Barbara Webb, Josephine, Clara, Henry (right)



Anna (standing), Pauline (left), Clara (right)

Alex's Siblings: An Overview

1. Philip⁴⁰ -- The oldest of Heinrich and Louisa's children, was born April 28, 1883 in Russia (probably Neu-Karlsruhe). Philip was quite entrepreneurial, he tried his hand at various things over the years, including working on the railroad, ranching cattle west of Bowman, and operating businesses in Dickinson. In 1901 Philip posted an ad in the Dickinson Press stating that he was the general manager for a wholesale grocery business. In 1908 the Dickinson Press reported that "Mr. and Mrs. Philip Landize of Midway were in Dickinson the first of the week. Mr. Landize formerly resided in this city and railroaded on the N.P. [Northern Pacific Railroad]. He is now the owner of 300 cattle which are ranged in the hills of Bowman County." Midway was a small town north of Bowman which had opened for homesteading around 1907 and several of its early settlers were Germans from Russia. Heinrich and Louisa probably moved to that area at about that same time. In 1916 the newspapers reported that farmers and ranchers south of Rhame, west of Bowman, had suffered severe damage from a heavy storm, numerous farm buildings were destroyed and entire grain crops were lost. Philip Landeis suffered damage to 150 acres.

Philip didn't abandon his ties with Dickinson. In 1909 the Dickinson Press reported that "Philip Landize of Midway is making headquarters in Dickinson," and that year he posted an ad: "I am local manager for a wholesale grocery house. See me for prices."

Philip tried his hand at selling cars in 1917 (see the ad). He also operated a tire repair business in Dickinson in 1920. The German language newspaper, the *Nord Dakota Herold*, contains ads for his "automobile tire improvement shop on the southside of Dickinson" (*Automobilreifen Ausbesterung Shop auf der Südseite Dickinson*). The ad states that he is an "agent of the Mellinger Extra Ply Tire Co," and "whoever has old automobile tires, bring them to me, or send them here. I will make them as good as new at a cheap price." Retreading tires was a common practice at that time.

Philip had a couple run-ins with the law. The Bismarck Daily Tribune and the Dickinson Press reported a bizarre incident on Jan. 14, 1908. "The Herald at Medora criticizes Judge Winchester for issuing an order for the arrest of Philip Landize. From the Herald it is inferred that the defendant was not getting along pleasantly with his neighbors and now he languishes in jail. The local paper admits, however, that the merits of the case are unknown." Four days later The Dickinson Press added these details: "The people of this locality are somewhat worked up over an article that appeared in the Billings County Herald last week in regard to the arrest of one Philip Landize. The article stated that he was deprived of his liberty under a statute which was a relic of barbarism, and the people of this locality know that any such statement is false, as there was every reason in the world to have this gentleman placed in custody. The editor stated that he had only heard one side of the case; if this be so, we do not see how he can be so astonished at Judge Winchester for signing an order of that kind, as well believe that the judge understands his business about as well as an editor of a small county paper. Innocent people are entitled to some protection even if it does cost the country something."

In 1914 the Dickinson Press reported that "Mrs. Philip Landize" owed delinquent taxes on their land in Stow's Addition to Dickinson.

⁴⁰ Note that it was traditional in German to spell the name "Philipp" with a double-p at the end.

Automobilreifen Ausbesserung Shop
Dickinson, auf der Südseite

Wer alte Automobilreifen (Tires) hat, der bringe sie zu mir, oder schicke sie her. Ich mache dieselben so gut wie neu zu den billigsten Preisen. Auch wenn ihr solche Tires habt, die andere zurückgewiesen haben, dann bringe sie zu mir, denn ich nehme sie an und setze sie in guten Stand.

Wenn sich einer für gute neue Tires interessiert, der komme auch zu mir, denn ich bin der Agent von den Mellinger Extra Ply Tire Co. Jeder, der bei mir von diesen Tires gekauft hat, hat sich sehr zufrieden darüber ausgedrückt.

Philipp Landeis,
Süd Dickinson, N. D.

"Automobile Tire Repair Shop, Southside Dickinson" 1920

FOR SALE BRAND NEW

Regal Hi-Power Thirty Two
Touring Car Latest model,
 equipped with
 electric starter and lights, one-man mo-
 hair top, extra rim, tire holder and com-
 plete set of tools including jack, pump,
 etc. Fully equipped.

\$795 f.o.b. P. H. Landize, Dickinson, N. D.

Car for sale by P.H. Landize 1917

Philip married Barbara Schulz who was born in the German colonies in the Banat region of Yugoslavia. She had been married before and had a son, Paulie, who Philip adopted. They had 11 children in addition. They lived in Dickinson most of his life, then in their later years they moved to Deer Lodge, MT (where the state prison is located), in order to be close to two of their daughters. My mother was always dismissive of her uncle Philip. She said that all he wanted to do was play music and drink. She described him as sitting in his rocking chair, drinking whiskey, playing his violin, and having "too many children which he couldn't take

proper care of." Philip had his own whiskey still. My mother tells the story that once during the Prohibition era, revenue agents visited his house and his wife, Barbara, hid the whiskey jug between her legs under her dress so they wouldn't see it. Philip died in Missoula, MT, July 8, 1947, at age 64.⁴¹ Barbara also died in Missoula. Philip's oldest daughter, Barbara Ann, became a nun, and died in Bismarck, N.D. See the genealogical summary tables for Philipp's children. Philipp spelled his surname in the original fashion as "Landeis" up through the 1920s, but toward the end of that decade he changed the spelling of his surname to "Landize," which has been retained since by his descendants. The German pronunciation of "-eis" can be closely rendered in English as "-ize," which likely explains the shift in spelling.



Philip Landeis and family

Philip's step-son, Paul (known as "Pauley" born 1904) from the previous marriage of Barbara Schulz, attained notoriety at the age of 17. The *Nord Dakota Herald* reported on July 8, 1921 that Paul Landeis received a gold watch with his name inscribed on it as recognition for his

⁴¹ Philipp's death certificate states that he died of a stroke, and that he also had terminal stomach cancer. He was stated to be a "retired businessman," and he did not receive Social Security. His death certificate contains several errors. It states that he was born in Dickinson, rather than in Russia. His parents are listed as "Henry Landize" and Louise Meyer, both of whom were born in "Germany." Oddly, the informant was his wife, Barbara. This suggests that they rarely discussed his family background.

saving three persons from drowning. The newspaper reported: "Dickinson, Paul Landize, 17, saved all three when Mrs. C.H. Starke, who had plunged into the Heart River in an effort to save her two young daughters, found herself helpless in the swift current."



**Barbara Schultz (on left) and two younger sisters
Photo taken in Hungary**

2. Katherine ("Katie")-- born May 14, 1886 in Russia (probably Neu-Karlsruhe). As a child she worked for a woman named Mrs. Dietz, who owned a hotel in Dickinson; Heinrich

apparently wanted to adopt her out to Mrs. Dietz. Katie left home as a teenager, married a man named Johnson, and they settled in Everett, WA. Their children were Bill Johnson and Eleanore Schwartz. Bill had one boy from his marriage. Katie got killed at about the age of 50 while she was working at a hotel in Everett - she was shaking out a rug from the second floor, the banister railing gave way as she leaned against it.



Katie Landeis

3. Alexander -- born March 12, 1889, probably in Neu-Karlsruhe, shortly before the family left Russia. (He was my grandfather, see discussions above for more details). His draft registration on June 5, 1917 states that he was born March 14, 1890, a naturalized citizen, age 27, he had a wife and 3 children at that time.

4. Barbara -- born Feb. 18, 1891 on the farm near Richardton, North Dakota. She didn't move to Ryegate with the rest of the family, since Heinrich and Louisa had arranged a marriage

(*Kupola*) for her at a young age (about age 17) to Nick Mosbrucker, a man who was considerably older than her, but who had large land and cattle holdings in Haley (Harlow?), N.D. Barbara didn't like him on sight, but the marriage was forced upon her. On her wedding day, after saying the marriage vows, Barbara supposedly ran from the church and hid for two days. Nick was authoritarian and mean to her, and beat her on occasion. He wanted to have a child with her, but Barbara couldn't tolerate him. On one occasion she did become pregnant, but she induced a miscarriage and almost died from it. Nick threatened to kill her and himself on several occasions. Finally he "killed himself" by running his car into a ditch, with the steering-wheel piercing his chest. She sent Alex a postcard in Ryegate on Jan. 29, 1915. After Nick's death, Barbara moved to Ryegate, bought a small house in town. There she met and married Arthur Webb, and had a son with him named Arthur (jr.). Arthur sr. committed a crime and spent time in prison. After he was released, they got together again and resided in Ryegate. She became pregnant with their second child, Frances Webb (later to become a burlesque dancer in Portland). Arthur left her again, and Barbara then moved to Everett, WA, where she resided with her sister, Katie. In Everett, Barbara met and married various men -- my mother claims she was married about five times during her lifetime. She at one point married a man who had about six children. The details about each of these marriages is unclear. Barbara eventually died in San Jose, California, where she is buried. She was a heavy smoker and diabetic. Arthur Webb jr. was still alive as of 1995, residing in Seattle, WA. He resided for a time in San Jose, where he resided in a mobile home and took care of his elderly mother. After her death, he returned to his wife, Vergie, in Seattle. His sister, Frances Webb, was a dancer (burlesque) in Portland, quite voluptuous, we still have an old pinup photo of her. Later in life Frances Webb converted to a Fundamentalist religion, she married several times, and died in the San Francisco Bay area. She also resided in the same mobile home court in San Jose as her brother.



Barbara Landeis and son Arthur Webb

5. Gusta -- died at birth, 1893.

6. Ambrose -- born Oct. 21, 1895 on the farm near Richardton, N.D. Ambrose shared Alex's childhood lifestyle, spending much of his time alone on the prairie herding sheep. He became a drifter, working as a farm-hand, cowboy, and rodeo rider. His World War One draft registration dated June 5, 1917 states that he resided in Ryegate, he was age 22, he was a farm laborer for Harry Schaff. Two fingers and the thumb on his right hand were reportedly partly cut off, probably from the rope burn when he was a rodeo rider. The clerk wrote his name as "Ambrose Landice," but his signature was "Ambros Landeis." His birth date was Oct. 21, 1896 (other records show 1895) in "Hart River, North Dakota." Ambrose was probably referring to the Heart River area near Richardton, where Heinrich had a homestead. There is a small town of Hart west of Bowman, N.D. between Bowman and Rhame, but the family didn't move there until about 1910. On the later 1942 draft registration the clerk wrote his name as "Ambrose Mike Landise" but that was a mistake, at the bottom Ambrose signed his name as "Ambrose Maiher [Meier] Landise." Ambrose spoke with a heavy German accent his entire life. He never married, although my mother tells the story that he once had a romantic relationship with a

woman and that he was heart-broken after they split up. He spent his final years in rooming houses and hotels. In 1942 he was residing in the Great Falls Hotel, Montana, and he was employed with the Colby Sheep Co. in Cascade, Montana. His Montana death record states his first name as "Ambrose M," which again refers to his mother's surname Meier. He died on Sept. 22, 1966 at age 70 in Butte, MT of cardiac failure. His death record states that he had never served in the military, but there is an article in The Bismarck Tribune (May 10, 1920) stating that several former soldiers, one of whom was Ambrose Landeis, had letters returned unopened containing a \$60 bonus and a certificate of honorable discharge. Ambrose had lawfully registered for the military draft in 1917 but he apparently did not have to serve because of the loss of fingers on his right hand and this honorable discharge entitled him to a bonus. Ambrose had resided in Butte for four years at the time of his death, he was employed as a ranch worker. His parents were "Harry Landeis and Louisa Meyer," the informant was his sister, Anna Paradaen, resident of Billings. Either Anna was mistaken, or more likely the clerk mistakenly understood her.

Ambrose cut a more dashing figure than Alex. He was a colorful old cowboy. He wore a red Levis neck-scarf, a cowboy hat, and he rolled his own cigarettes. He visited us in Portland when I was about 12 years old, and stayed for about a week. He loved telling us about his adventures as a bronco-rider, spiced with German dialect words, and punctuated every few minutes by a spurt of tobacco into the coffee-can that he carried with him everywhere. Besides his great story-telling skills, Ambrose also managed somewhere along the way (probably at the Abbey school in Richardton) to learn how to write German in a beautiful, nearly calligraphic *Fraktur* script. Most of his tales were humorous anecdotes about life on the farm in his youth, but he did recall that the Landeis family came from the colony of Karlsruhe, near the Black Sea, and he was aware of the early history of the German colonies in Russia. Over the years he had met people from Germany who recognized his dialect - he noted that they called it *Schwäbisch*, which is in fact accurate because most of the original colonists of Karlsruhe in the Ukraine spoke Swabian dialects of German, or dialects close to it.



Uncle Ambrose



Ambrose Landeis

7. Anna -- ("Annie Paridaen" as she was referred to by everyone) was born July 2, 1897 near Richardton, N.D. In July, 1920 in Roundup, MT she married August ("Gus") Paridaen, a Belgian who spoke Dutch. They bought a farm southeast of Ryegate, in the Big Coulee area, and later retired and moved into town. Anna worked for a while in the town laundry. They had four children: Katie, Adolf (in Edmonton, Alberta), Pauline, and Hilda. August died in 1954, after which Annie moved into the Western Manor retirement home in Billings. At some

point she joined the Christian Science faith, which scandalized the other members of the family. Her third child, Pauline, died from blood-poisoning after she cut herself on a rusty barbed-wire fence and Annie refused to take her to a doctor for treatment. Annie and her husband did not get along with Alex and Ida. Annie occasionally visited them, she would bring her briefcase full of Watchtower literature, then launch into preaching. Alex and Ida were always annoyed by this and said that her religion was "stupid." On one occasion Alex took her briefcase and dumped all the literature on floor, and told her to leave and never return. My mother speculated that Annie got all of Louisa Landeis' personal effects after her death, including the prophetic *Sibylla Buch* and the family Bible, which she may have burned. When Alex and Ida first moved to Ryegate they had briefly rented a small yellow house in town, close by where Annie Paridaen and her husband lived. In later years, after they were all dead, this house was moved and attached to the house where Annie lived. My mother said that they were finally "joined together in death."

Anna's obituary on Nov. 16, 1973 in the Billings Gazette states that she was 76 years old, a widow. Her two surviving daughters [Katie and Hilda] were Mrs. Merle Fought of Miles City and Mrs. Don L. Smith of 1901 Robin Ave. She had two grandchildren. Her funeral services were conducted with the Jehovah's Witness.



Anna Landeis-Paridaen and Katie Landeis-Johnson

8. John -- born May 25, 1899 on the farm near Richardton, N.D. He supposedly never took out a homestead and he traveled around on the rodeo circuit in his youth, like his brother Ambrose. He had several different jobs, and once while working at a lumber mill he lost an eye from a splinter, and wore a glass eye for the rest of his life. At the time of Louisa's death in 1938 John and Jack both resided in Fort Peck, MT, probably they had settled there to work on the Fort Peck dam which was built in 1934. According to my mother's memories (likely based on Louisa), John was married twice. There is an old photo showing John seated with a tall, blond woman standing behind him, her name is unknown. She was most likely his first wife, because that was a typical wedding photo arrangement. John married Helen Bureau in 1933 (she was born Oct. 5, 1910). His wedding application states that he was divorced. About 6 months after

their marriage they adopted a baby boy, Richard Daniel Landeis (born June 5, 1934 in Great Falls; his mother was a teenage girl surnamed Jenkins). John and Helen later had a daughter of their own, Donna Landeis, born March 5, 1936 in Glasgow, MT. John and Helen moved to Spokane, WA in 1941 where he worked as a barber. He died of cancer on March 21, 1950 at Takoma, WA. There is conflicting info on John's birth date. MyHeritage.com shows him born in 1899, which is apparently coirrect. However, the 1940 U.S. Census shows John D. Landeis, son of Heinrich and Louisa, age 46 (b. ca. 1904), residing in Kalispell, MT. 4th grade education, wife Helen M., son Richard D. age 5, dau. Donna M. age 4. The Find a Grave web site shows John Richard Landeis born May 25, 1902 in Richardton, N.D., and died Mar. 21, 1950 in Alabama and was buried in Tacoma, WA, age 47. He had a baby daughter born in 1943, who died that year, parents were John Landeis and Helen Bureau. This web site has a photo of his grave marker which shows the dates 1902-1950. This was provided by Kathy Stroope Veasey, who apparently was not a relative. There is no explanation for the conflicting info about John's birth year.



John Landeis



John Landeis



9. Magdalena -- born Oct. 13, 1901, near Richardton, N.D., died of diphtheria in 1907.

10. Andrew -- died at birth, 1903.

11. Jacob ("Jack") -- born Dec. 28, 1904 in Dickinson (the date shown on his tombstone is incorrect; it states Dec. 28, 1901). Jack too shared the life of his brothers, Alex and Ambrose, on the prairies of North Dakota in his youth. He never got married, and never took out a homestead. At the time of Louisa's death in 1938 her obituary states that he resided in Fort Peck, MT, where he likely worked at the dam along with his brother, John. His military discharge papers show that he was inducted into the army on April 16, 1942 at Missoula. He is described as 5' 5" tall, with blue eyes and brown hair (rather short, as was Heinrich and all the others). He served in the 804th Military Police Battalion for two years. He was sent to England on July 13, 1942, then to North Africa on Dec. 6, where he stayed until Nov. 27, 1943, when he

disembarked back to the USA. He was not involved in any battles during this first tour of duty and he had not yet received any wounds. He was given the Middle Eastern Campaign Medal. His military number was 39605534, and he attained the rank of Private First Class. His character and behavior were described as "excellent." He was honorably discharged on Dec. 5, 1944, and was given \$300 to return to Ryegate. He was single at the time.

Jack apparently reenlisted in the military and was severely wounded during this second tour of duty. The family lost touch with him for many years and the rumor was that he had been killed during World War Two. However, my parents found him still alive in 1978, living at the small hotel in Ryegate. He told them that he had joined the military during the war and that he had served in the campaign in North Africa and Sicily, where he was shot through the chest and lost one of his lungs. Severely wounded and suffering from combat fatigue, he spent the next few years in and out of hospitals. He spent about 20 years under the care of the Veterans Administration (Walter Reed hospital), and lived off a disability pension. He apparently became married at some point, but the details are not clear. When he returned to Ryegate he was dismayed to discover that his parents were deceased at that time and no other members of the family remained there. He spent the remainder of his days at the little hotel in Ryegate. The people in Ryegate liked him, he was regarded as a harmless old man with a good sense of humor. My parents said he rambled a lot as he told the story of his life. He mentioned something about once having a wife. He also asked my father to buy him a holster for his gun. Sheriff Dolby liked old Jack and looked after him. He regularly took Jack to the local restaurant for a meal and made sure he was warm in the winter.

During one of my visits to Ryegate I spoke with someone who knew Jack. He recalled that Jack said that he had enlisted during the war to help keep his brother Alex, and my uncles Al and Henry from being drafted - although that probably was based on Jack's misunderstanding of the draft system.

Jack died on Nov. 6, 1983. He is buried next to Heinrich and Louisa in the Resurrection Cemetery, where he requested to be laid to rest.



Jack Landeis



Jack Landeis in his final years, Ryegate hotel

12. Joseph -- died at birth, 1906.

Katherine Landeis

Heinrich Landeis had only one known sibling in the USA -- his sister, Kathrine (Katie), born Nov. 12, 1866, died Dec. 16, 1939 in Dickinson. Her death certificate states only that she was born in Russia, and it lists her father's name as Peter Landeis, and her mother as unknown. It is not known when she came to this country. Katherine married Jacob Scheeler, born May 6, 1857, the son of Johann Scheeler and Katherine Lenhart in Karlsruhe (they were related to the Schaffs and to the Hoffmanns).

Jacob and Katie owned a store in Dickinson. They supposedly did well financially. After Jacob's death on Jan 26, 1912, age 54, Nicholas Scheeler took over the store. An article in the *Nord Dakota Herold* in 1913 (one year after Jacob's death) states that the Scheeler family had recently installed electrical wiring in their house, and that they were the first to do so in the entire south side of Dickinson. Ads for the Scheeler store appear in almost every issue of the *Herold*. The following is typical, dated Oct. 17, 1913: "In the N. Scheeler and Co. store the annual sale begins next Thursday. There are winter clothing, shoes, eating utensils and almost everything at lowered prices, many even below cost. Quilts and blankets are included in this sale, which will delight every housewife; come and take a look. The eating utensils are of leading quality; you will make no mistake if you purchase your preparations for the winter at the Scheeler store. Because of the closeness (of the sale), read the posted announcements (for further information)."

The Meier (Maier, Meyer) Family in Montana

The parents of Louisa, Friedrich, and Jakob Meier were Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann, originally from the colony of München. Louisa Meier-Landeis' brother, Friedrich Meier (born Nov. 29, 1856) and his family came across to the USA with Heinrich and Louisa, and settled with them near Richardton. They are shown on the 1900 U.S. census. At that time they had five children: Andreas (age 15, born June, 1885, later known as Anton Fred), Joseph (age 11, born August 1888), Victor (age 7, born June 1893), Henry (age 3, born March 1897), and Thomas (age 1, born 1899).

At some point, Friedrich and his family moved to Billings, Montana where they are shown in the 1910 Census. The only other information available is a brief notice from Billings, printed in the *Nord Dakota Herold* on March 23, 1914. My translation: "Dear Herold: my husband, Friedrich Meier, departed from this life on March 17 and left behind eight children: one son is married, two are in the army and five are still at home. My husband had a brother, by the name of Jakob Meier, who lived at Mott, N. Dak., and he also had a sister, whom Heinrich Landeis married, and who lives in Montana. This serves as a notice to you. Mrs. Henry Meyer, Billings, Mont." The editors added that they offered "their sincere sympathy, on behalf of the readers." The notice appears to have been written by Friedrich's widow, and it was forwarded by his daughter-in-law. Since it states that Friedrich had only one married son, we may assume that the woman who sent the notice to the Herold was the wife of their son, Henry. However, it should be noted that their son Henry was only 17 years old in 1914, which creates some uncertainty about her identity. We might also note that their surnames were spelled differently, although this was not uncommon in those days, even within the same family. Friedrich's death certificate, for example, shows his name as "Frederick Meyers." The certificate states that he died in Billings, he was a retired carpenter, and it confirms the dates in the obituary. Friedrich was only 56 years old, and he died of "uremia due to retention of urine probably from enlarged prostate." Puzzlingly, it also states that he was "single" at the time of his death -- which raises the question of whether Friedrich was separated from his wife at the time of his death. The informant for the data on the death certificate was A. F. Meyers, probably his son Andreas.

The obituary refers to eight children. The 1900 national census shows that their five oldest children were boys. My mother recalled at least three of them. She mentioned that Alex had three cousins who resided in Billings during the 1930s, and their names were Joseph, Henry, and Andrew (Andreas). In addition, she also recalled that there was a fourth cousin named Victor, who was apparently one of those referred to as being in the military. On March 16, 1912, "V.W. Meyer" sent Alex a postcard from an army base in Vancouver, Washington, where V.W. was stationed at the time. Victor requested that Alex write him back soon. Although they were cousins, Victor signed the card "your friend." The card was addressed to Alex at Amor, N.D. The names of the three siblings in the Meier family, born after the 1900 census, are unknown.

Friedrich's obituary states that he had a sister, Louisa Landeis, and a brother, Jakob "Meyer," who resided in Mott, North Dakota, in 1914. Rather than emigrating to North Dakota, as did his siblings, Jakob and his family first went to Rio Cocal in Laguna, in the state of Sta. Katherina, in southern Brazil, in 1887, where they resided for 16 years. Sta. Katherina was heavily

settled by German immigrants, as well as Germans from Russia, and it remains an economically and socially thriving region today. In Brazil, they had two more sons: Innocenz in 1893 and George in 1896. In 1904 they emigrated to the USA, at the urging of his brother, Friedrich, who was residing in Mott, N.D. area at the time. Jakob's grandson (likewise named Jake) recalled that the brother (Friedrich) who lured them to North Dakota later moved to Billings, MT. He also recalled that Jakob used to talk frequently about the Landeis family and about the colonies of Rastadt and München. Jakob and his family arrived in New York on July 3, 1904 on the S.S. Capri. They settled for awhile near Richardton, N.D., then later homesteaded 18 miles northeast of Mott, N.D. Barbara Boehm-Meier preceded Jakob in death by several years, dying in 1928. He died on July 24, 1943 at the age of 82. Both are buried at St. Placidius cemetery, near Mott, N.D. Jakob's son, Thomas, immigrated on April 1, 1904, and settled near Burt, N.D. He applied for U.S. citizenship in 1913. Thomas's petition for citizenship states that he was born in Rastadt, March 1, 1885, lived in Rio Cocal in Laguna, Brazil, before emigrating to the USA, and that he had never become a citizen of Brazil. Thomas married Beata Fitterer in 1912 at the St. Placius church, north of Burt. They retired in the small town of Lemmon, N.D. Thomas's obituary provides different information about his place of birth, stating that he was born in München.

The Schaffs and the Schanz families near Ryegate

Victor Schaff and his wife Elizabeth were the first German from Russia family to settle in the Musselshell River valley. He brought a considerable sum of money with him from North Dakota and he played an important role in the early years of the community. Victor bought land about two miles east of town, where he established a large spread. During the first three years religious services were held at Victor's house, and he was credited with building St. Mathias church in Ryegate in 1914. He is also credited with donating land to the church for the cemetery on the other side of the irrigation ditch, behind Alex Landeis' farmhouse. They comprised a large extended group of relatives – his son, Michael Schaff lived in the Ryegate area; his brother Mathias Schaff lived in Glen Ullin, N.D.; Frank Schaff lived in the Bowman area; Jacob Schaff was in Belfield, N.D.; and Valentin Schaff was in New England, N.D.⁴²

Alex and Ida stayed with Victor Schaff when they first moved to the Ryegate area. Victor Schaff was related to the Landeis family, and Alex always felt a bond with them. Valentin Schaff (probably Victor's brother, born 1842 in Speier) was married to Theresia Landeis in Karlsruhe, and their son Valentin and wife Barbara (also maiden name Schaff) resided in Ryegate area.

There was a marriage between Eva Schaff and Frank Schanz, and they too lived in the Ryegate area. My mother told vivid stories of the Schaff and Schanz families, probably the result of gossip by grandma Ida. Supposedly, they were "very proud" and they preferred to intermarry among themselves – to quote my mother, "they regarded their own blood as too good to mix with that of other families." She claimed that as a result of this intermarriage some of their children had severe birth defects. Mom led the choir in the Catholic church in Ryegate and she recalled that on Sunday mornings, while she sat in the choir loft overlooking the congregation, she watched them marching in for Mass. The Schaff and Schanz clan always

⁴² Details of Victor Schaff are found in his lengthy obituary in the *Nord Dakota Herald*, Nov. 19, 1920.

arrived together in front of the church in a large caravan of automobiles and paraded proudly into the church, where they sat together as a large group. Some of their children walked in twitching with palsy, and one girl she claimed had a “water bag” on her head (apparently hydrocephalic). One of the Schanz boys was born with a “third leg, that had a hoof on it, and hair like that of a goat.” This child didn’t live long. Supposedly the Ryegate Catholic cemetery is “full of the graves of tiny babies from the Schaff and Schanz clan” that died as a result of birth defects. Ida, and perhaps Louisa, regarded this as a curse from God due to the intermarriages between cousins (the “goat’s foot,” mom pointed out, was a “mark of Satan”). Eventually the Catholic priest “put a stop to those cousin marriages” because they were a violation of the laws of God and nature. She pointed out that farmers knew full well that inbreeding was harmful, and that they had to change the roosters and the bulls every three years or so to prevent weakening of the stock.

I have always regarded these stories as exaggerations, but they do reflect common cultural beliefs and taboos among the Germans from Russia. “Intermarriage” was always the subject of gossip. The Schaff genealogy shows that one family line spelled its surname as “Schaff” and the other line spelled it as “Schaaf.” It’s not clear that they were in fact related. Surnames were spelled rather loosely in those days, and it is possible that the two spellings reflected some sensitivity on the matter by descendants of the Schaff family.

Victor Schaff’s son, Mike, had four children. After Victor died in 1920, Mike took over the farm in 1924. Mike took his children into Ryegate to attend school in a large buggy, with benches on each side, pulled by a gentle horse named Fanny. He used to stop at Alex’s farm to pick up their children on the way.⁴³

When aunt Pauline was a teenager, she used to work for the Schaff family, doing various house and farm work. She had very fond memories of them. She described them as a large, happy family. She recalled that at butchering time the Schaff and Schanz families would all come together at one farm and divide up into men and women groups to do the work. They butchered the hogs, strung the carcasses up to drain the blood, cleaned the intestines for sausage casings, ground the meat and stuffed the casings. Afterward, they had a big feast, the men would drink, and they would have a dance.

Alex and Ida’s Children (my aunts and uncles)

Since my cousins are all alive and in my same generation, I will leave the task to them of writing about their parents. I am presenting a brief summary below.

1. Clara Eleanor

Aunt Clara was born Nov. 16, 1911, on the homestead near Rhame, N.D. Her husband, Frank Deichl, was killed in a tragic railroad accident. She spent the remainder of her days living in their home in Billings. She died May 16, 2003 in Billings, age 91 years and 6 months.

⁴³ See *Dawn in Golden Valley*, p. 328



Clara age 22



Frank Deichl



Clara age 19 and Pauline age 17

2. Pauline Ida

Aunt Pauline was born Aug. 5, 1913, near Rhame, N.D. She married Russell Mees. For many years they earned their living by being caretakers of a ranch in Wyoming. They had one child, Kenny Mees. She died March 7, 2000, Powell WY.



Pauline Landeis and Russell Mees

3. Anna Marie

My mother was born Aug. 26, 1915, Ryegate, MT. She married John M. Wagner in Billings, MT. They had their first two sons, Larry and Kenny, in Billings, then after moving to Portland during World War Two they had their third son, Ron (Roland, myself). After my father died in 1982, she lived in various places - Clackamas Oregon, Billings MT, San Jose California. She had strokes in her later years, which required home care. She spent her final two years living with my nephew, Michael Wagner, in Salem OR. She died Jan. 3, 2000 there in Salem, OR, age 84.



Anna age 18

4. Alexander

Uncle Al (he was always referred to as "Al" to distinguish him from grandpa, Alex), was born Aug. 23, 1917, Ryegate, MT. He married Graycie, they had one child, Carolyn Kaye. After Al left Ryegate about age 18, he managed to be a successful butcher and manager of a meat market in Seattle. He died March, 1992 of heart attack in Seattle.



Al age 29



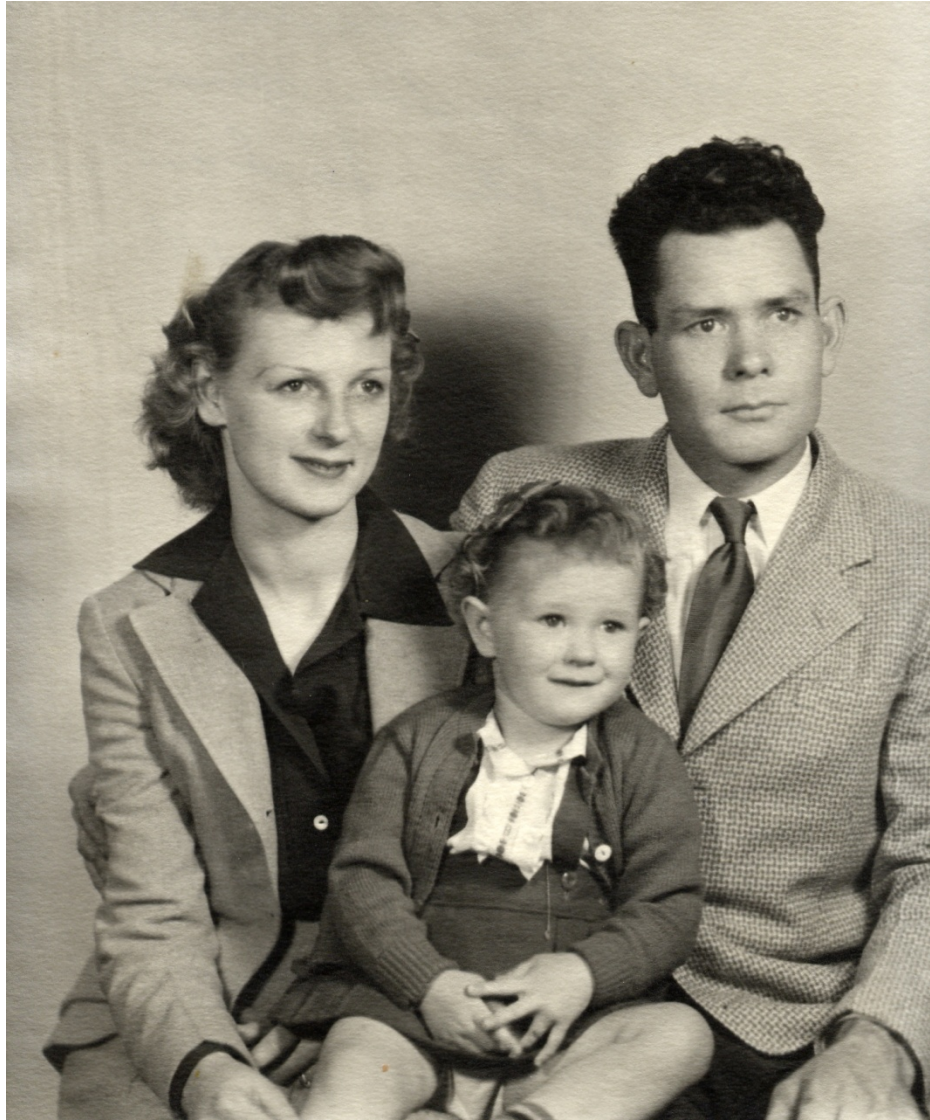
Al, Grayce, and Carolyn Kay

5. Frances Katie

Aunt Frances was born Dec. 13, 1919, Ryegate, MT; died Oct. 24, 1986, Boise, ID.

6. Josephine Martha

Aunt Josephine was born April 20, 1922, Ryegate, MT. She married Glen Guard (sp. ?), they had one child, Sandra. She died Oct. 14, 1960 of breast cancer, Seattle. My parents used to drive up to Seattle frequently to visit Al, Henry, Josephine, as well as my dad's brother Mike. Josephine was an exotic woman, she wore her hair with 1950s style curls and used bright red lipstick. She smoked almost constantly and as a result she had chronic deep smoker's cough. Their one child, Sandra, was about my age and we enjoyed visiting with them.



Josephine, Sandra, and Glen Guard



Josephine, Seattle in the 1950s

7. Henry Casper

Uncle Henry was born June 27, 1925, Ryegate, MT. He was a tall, stout boy and Alex kept him at home to help out at the coal mine. He treated Henry very strictly, and sometimes violently if Alex was on one of his bouts of binge drinking. Henry left home at an early age (about age 17) to escape grandpa. He joined the Army but was discharged 4F because he had an injury due to a cow stepping on his foot in childhood, which prevented him from being able to march. Despite his deprived childhood, Henry managed to do well financially as an adult. He owned businesses in Seattle (his last was an equipment rental business). We found out in later years that Henry was functionally illiterate and he had been hiding this fact from everyone in the family – he did know how to write his signature in his checkbook. He died Sept. 21, 1994, Seattle, was cremated and buried at Ryegate between Alex and Ida's graves.



Henry

8. Dorothy Louisa

Aunt Dorothy was born July 4, 1930, Ryegate, MT. She was the youngest child and was treated less harshly than her older siblings. She had a closer relationship with grandma. She became pregnant from a boyfriend in Billings when she was about 15 years old, after which she was sent to stay with Al in Seattle to have the baby, then she returned to Ryegate. Alex and Ida tried to convince Al and Grayce to adopt the baby, and even offered them \$400, but they refused. The baby boy grew up to be Gregory Vine. Her first marriage was with Eddie Berreth (sp.?), with whom she had these children: Debra Shrader (married to Bill Shrader; they lived in Oklahoma in 2001); Linda Gillott (lived in Seattle); Gary Berreth (lived in Washington); Pamela. Her second marriage was with Joe Yure (sp.?). Joe had chronic back pain, he became addicted

to pain medications, and was deeply depressed. Tragically, at midnight, on Dec. 29, 1997, he shot Dorothy in her sleep, then committed suicide.



Dorothy

Other Branches of the Landeis Family in the USA

George Rath, in his book on the North Dakota Germans, mentions a Jacob Landeis who settled in North Dakota. The records at Richardton Abbey indicate that a Jacob Landeis enrolled his son Paul in the school there in 1914. Jakob was almost certainly the son of Raphael, and the grandson of Anton Landeis (see K14 in genealogy summary).

Members of the Landeis Family in Russia and Germany

The *Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland*, published in Stuttgart in 1962, contains a detailed history of Karlsruhe, written by Philipp Landeis. He mentions that his grandfather, Jakob Landeis, was one of the founders of Neu-Karlsruhe, the daughter colony of Karlsruhe, which was founded in 1867. No further information is available on either Philipp or his grandfather. Philipp returned to Germany at some point -- he probably was evacuated by the German army when they pulled out of the Ukraine in 1943, and he was one of the fortunate *Volksdeutsche* who were able to remain in Germany. He was a member of the *Landsmannschaft*

der Deutschen aus Russland, an organization in Stuttgart for emigres from the Soviet Union, when he contributed the article to the *Heimatsbuch*. I wrote the *Landsmannschaft* inquiring whether an obituary or family history for Philipp was available, but they simply responded that their organization does not maintain materials on family history. Philipp Landeis is now deceased.

The March 6, 1914 issue of the *Nord Dakota Herald*, the German language newspaper published in Dickinson, contains a letter written by Karl Johann Sprung from Karlsruhe, South Russia. He makes the following wry remark: "I also lost my place with the big boys, Kajetan Landeis took it over. That is not nice of him; I had the place already for five years and took good care of it. So that you know what kind of boys these are, I will explain it to you: they are the munchers (*Mummeln*) that I fodder."

The letter is curious, and raises some interesting points. The reference to "the big boys" has a satirical double-meaning, referring both to the cattle as well as to the "big shots" in the village. This is reflected in Sprung's use of the word *Mummeln*, which can be translated to mean either "munchers" or "mumblers." Apparently Kajetan Landeis was one of the "big shots" in Karlsruhe, and he seems to have taken over Sprung's land or livestock, perhaps due to unpaid debts. The name "Kajetan" is unusual to English speakers, but it is simply the German form for "Gaetano." It is not a very common name, but it does have historic roots in Germany. The most famous person bearing this name was Cardinal Thomas Kajetan (1469 - 1534), the papal delegate to Wittenberg in 1518, who dealt with Martin Luther and the crisis of the Reformation. There was also a Holy Cajetan (Gaetano da Tiene, 1480 - 1547), who founded the order of the "Theatines" (*Ordo Clericorum Regularium Vulgo Theatinorum*, a.k.a. Cajetans). We may assume that the name Kajetan was in use primarily in Catholic families.

A clue to the social status of the Landeis family is found in the 1913 *Deutscher Volkskalender* for Odessa, which lists all the colonies in South Russia, with their mayors (*Dorfschulz*). The mayor for the colony of Neu-Karlsruhe in 1913 was named Landeis (first name not given). This is clear evidence that members of the Landeis family had positions of political influence, at least in the daughter colony of Neu-Karlsruhe. Philipp Landeis, we recall, who wrote the article on the history of Karlsruhe, mentioned that his grandfather, Jakob Landeis, was one of the founders of Neu-Karlsruhe.

The German language newspaper, *Der Staats Anzeiger*, reported an interesting anecdote about Joseph Landeis in Neu-Karlsruhe on Dec. 22, 1910:

"Nikolajew, 9 Nov. 9, 1910, on 2 Nov. there was an unusual case in Neu-Karlsruhe, which is seldom reported for us Germans. The estate owner Joseh Landeis was in his living room as usual, he had gone home as usual at 9:00 P.M. where he drank water which was in the front room, then he went to bed and began to say his prayers. While praying he began to experience sharp pains in his body. His wife, Anna, who was already in bed, took him to bed. The pains began to spread. That same night his wife began to have the same symptoms. The next day Herr Landeis was taken to a doctor in Nowopoltawka, who confirmed that it was poisoning, but he couldn't specify what type. The doctor prescribed a laxative which led to an improvement, but his mouth became sore so he couldn't eat anything hard. On Nov. 8 both went to Nikolajew to see Dr. Rattner, who diagnosed the poisoning. Dr. Rattner gave a remedy and told him to eat only mild foods. The poisoning could have been contracted only from the water, since the other family members ate the same things and weren't sick. The question was, who did this and why? The solution to this question is not easy. Simple people don't

understand anything about “Sublimat” (antiseptic tablets?). These people don’t have particular enemies. This leads to some speculations. Briefly put, the matter at this time is unknown and no one can be guilty, time will clarify things, but this may take as long as until the world will have turned to ash. Are there really such people who would do this?”

This article refers to a substance known as “Sublimat,” which is unclear in its meaning. “Sublimate” at that time referred to mercuric chloride, also called “corrosive sublimate,” which was an ingredient in antiseptic tablets. The mercury ingredient is highly poisonous. People sprinkled salts of mercuric chloride in their drawers to protect paper and cloth from damage by insects, and it was powerful enough to be a common preservative for railroad ties. At that time there were cases of accidental poisoning by over-doses of bichloride of mercury in antiseptic tablets. “Sublimat” may have been a common chemical name at that time for remedies available in pharmacies.

In the April 3, 1925 issue of the *North Dakota Herald* a letter was published from Neu-Karlsruhe, written by Joseph Röther and Adam Schmidt. They mention that within the past five years, several people had died in the village. Among the names listed, were Martin and Paul Landeis.

The April 16, 1926 issue of the *North Dakota Herald* contains a brief notice placed by Katie (Landeis) Scheeler, Heinrich Landeis’ sister: “Mrs. Katherine Scheeler sends the *Herold*, with friendly greetings, to Peter Landeis in Karlsruhe, South Russia.” We may assume that Katie purchased a gift subscription for Peter. It is tempting to assume that this referred to her father, Peter Landeis; however, since he was born in 1825, he would have been 101 years old in 1926, and it seems unlikely that he was still alive at that time. Katie was most likely referring to some other relative named Peter who remained behind in Russia. The best candidate is Peter Landeis (b: 1898) from the village of Neu-Karlsruhe who was arrested in 1929 and sentenced to 10 years in a labor camp (see discussion below). Given their age difference, he may well have been her nephew or a younger cousin.

John Philipps⁴⁴ shows that at least one member of the Landeis family moved from Karlsruhe to Speyer. The time period is not stated, but it appears that Philipps’ list of families in Speyer covers the 1930s through about 1945. He lists a Franziska Landeis, born 1870, and her daughter Eva, born 1920, husband unknown. Children: Anna Maria, born 1924. There is no apparent match for who Franziska’s husband may have been.

Those Who Remained Behind, and Their Fate Under the Soviets

Despite the great wave of emigration in the late 19th century, the majority of the ethnic Germans remained behind in Tsarist Russia. Bishop Kessler provided a graphic portrait of their fate in an address he delivered in 1922 in Ellis County, Kansas.⁴⁵ According to Kessler, the Tsar had revived the notion of expelling the German colonists during the First World War. On Feb. 26, 1917 he issued an order for the expulsion of all the ethnic Germans (estimated at that time to be about 2,000,000) and for the confiscation of their property. In Saratov, 1,800 mounted Cossacks were held in readiness to swoop down upon the Volga colonies to murder, plunder,

⁴⁴ Philipps 1996.

⁴⁵ Printed in the *Ellis County News*, Feb. 9, 1922.

and scatter the inhabitants. The orders were already in the hands of the army, awaiting execution. Bishop Kessler told his seminarians to pray for a miracle to save them from extinction. On that same day, he reported, the Bolshevik Revolution broke out in Petrograd and the Czarist regime collapsed.

The German colonists longed for peace and at first they regarded the Bolsheviks as their saviors. Soon, however, mass expropriations of their property commenced under Lenin, continuing the process that had begun under the Tsar. Lenin announced that all farmers who had estates worth at least 25,000 rubles would have the entire amount confiscated.

Later, after the Revolution in 1918, the Bolsheviks expropriated most of the crops and tools of the German colonists. A terrible famine occurred in 1922-23, during which hundreds of thousands of the Germans starved to death.

This translated letter was posted on internet by Al Berger in 1997. It describes in graphic detail what happened to Neu-Karlsruhe in 1922. The letter was from John Renner to his uncle Joseph Renner:

January 1, 1922

Dear Uncle Joseph,

Received your letter Dec. 17, it made us very happy, also shared it with my mother and sisters and brothers. First I want to thank you for being so friendly towards us. The money you are going to send me is almost worthless here, no matter from where it is. So your good will is holy to me. Russia has more paper money than the whole world, so there is no shortage. But of bread there is the greatest of need.

This winter millions will die of hunger, our village has 85 homes, and it is one of the more productive ones, and now more than 400 are without bread. I, with my family and sister, five persons, have bread for about 3 months, and then we will live till spring. The hand of the hungry is like a shadow, all day with us begging for bread, it is impossible to say no.

Yes, dear uncle, Russia is an area where one catastrophe follows another; first it was the war, then the revolution, the murders, then the dry spell and hunger deaths. I could write a lot more, but you will see in the news how things are going in Russia.

And now I will try to fulfill your wish in a few lines to describe the murder of my father.

October 27 (1900), 1:00 p.m., the village of Neu-Karlsruhe with 33 homes was surrounded by about 500 bandits on horse and foot. The shooting and hollering brought great fear to the people, at first they thought it was just a robber band going by. The people thought they were more intent on goods than killing, therefore the people didn't flee but hid in their houses. But they soon found out that this hellish brood did not come to rob, but to organize the people against the army of Dinikins, so they should not fear. And all the men should go to school right away, and as always our father was the leader

and first in the schoolhouse, and trusted the devilish band. By and by almost all the men came to the school, then the hellish work started. First they demanded that all the money be brought in, the demand was obeyed. When the robbers had the money, they made the men undress to the underwear, locked them in the schoolroom and locked it from the outside, and shot them through the windows. To this number of unlucky ones belonged also our dear father and two of my brothers. The second oldest and the youngest were to be shot, but through God's intervention they both lived. The oldest was saved by a small favor of his wife. The youngest was saved in a wonderful way by the death of his father and that happened in this way; before the beginning of the shooting, father stood in the corner of the room between the door and window. My young brother and uncle Frank Joseph Lanz kneeled behind the stove and prepared to die. But when the shooting began, father wanted to join the two behind the stove. He got barely to the corner of the stove as a bullet went through his head and silently he fell on the other two kneeling ones, and covered them as a blanket with his lifeless body. The shooting finally ceased, the robbers looked the place over and all lay in a bloodbath, looked dead to them so they left the school and went to rob the homes. Meanwhile the two under the dead body of father took the opportunity to flee, seventeen men were shot that day in Neu-Karlsruhe. Our mother with two of my sisters, and six children of my formerly murdered brother Jakob, sat all afternoon between two straw stacks soaked from rain that came down like in buckets. In the evening she fled to the vinyard hill about 300 meters from the village, where they hid in a night hut. Finally the noise of the robbers in the village ended. Mother found courage and went back to the village, where the poorest but good people kept her overnight.

Next morning she started on foot with the children for the nearest village where she stayed for a week. Then she made it to the Jewish colony, Tesingar, where she stayed a month. My sister Margaretha went on foot to the town Nikolayev to get transportation to Karlsruhe. By and by, my sisters and brothers gathered there from the villages of Halbstadt, Schonfeld and Steinberg. Mother lives now in Steinberg with my youngest brother Theobald, who is still single and is village secretary.

And so my dear Uncle, this is what my mother, brothers and sisters told me. And now best wishes to all your family.

With love, John Renner and family.

In the 1930s Stalin introduced collectivization of agriculture (the Kolkhoz farms), which further depressed agricultural output in Russia. Soon another mass famine occurred, which also drastically affected the German colonies. Having barely recovered from this misery, most of the German colonists (aproximately 1.05 million) were accused by Stalin of being traitors during World War Two, and they were sent to Siberia and Central Asia (no comprehensive records of their relocation points are yet available, but many Volga deportees were taken to labor camps near Chelyabinsk and Norilsk).

The German *Wehrmacht's* rapid push into the southern Ukraine during World War Two prevented the Russians from arresting most of the Germans in the Black Sea colonies. A special

command was created, headed by Dr. Karl Stumpp, for the purpose of gathering all information available on the ethnic German colonists. He and his staff drew plot maps of each of the German colonies in 1944, showing the names of property owners at that time. The map of Karlsruhe shows five families with the surname Landeis – plot 122 (S. Landeis), 226 (Ph. Landeis), 252 (K. Landeis), 290 (P. Landeis), and 308 (M. Landeis).

When the *Wehrmacht* pulled out of the Ukraine they evacuated most of the ethnic Germans and relocated them to the *Wartegau* region in western Poland, where they were granted German citizenship. After the war, however, the Soviets asserted jurisdiction over these former Soviet citizens, and sent them to gulags in Siberia where they shared the fate of their ethnic compatriots from the Volga region. The Soviets finally declared amnesty for the surviving ethnic Germans in 1964, but they weren't allowed to return to their former homes, nor to be compensated for loss of property. The ethnic Germans were relocated primarily in the east Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, the largest number in Kazakhstan where they comprised 4.6% of the total population. Significant numbers also were in Kirghizstan where they comprised 7% of the population, in Tadzhikistan, and in Siberia where they comprised 6% of the population. Altogether there were about two million ethnic Germans living in the former USSR before its collapse, and since then large numbers have been repatriated to Germany.

Lists of ethnic Germans who were "repressed" (i.e. arrested and/or executed) and later "rehabilitated" (i.e. retroactively pardoned) by the Soviets have been published in the *GRHS Heritage Review* (2002-2003). Included are the following:

"Landeis Petro [Peter] Pavlovich [son of Paul] b: 1898 in the village of Neuekarlsruhe [Neu-Karlsruhe], Bashtansky district, a peasant, educated, primary education, lived in the village of Karlsruhe [Karlsruhe], Bashtansky district. An individual peasant. Was arrested on 1 November 1929. Was sentenced to 10 years at a labor camp by the Decision of the Ukrainian People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs on 28 March 1930. Fate unknown. Rehabilitated in 1990."⁴⁶

It is quite likely that this Peter Landeis is the person referred to in the letter by Katie Landeis above, to whom she sent greetings in 1926. Since he was born in 1898, he was likely a nephew or younger cousin.

"Landes Ganna [Hannah] Andriivna [Andreas] was born in 1903 in the town of Mikolayiv, German, a peasant, educated, lived in the village of Veselinove, Veselinivsky district. A worker on a collective farm. Was arrested on 31 August 1945. Sentenced to 5 years at a labor camp by the the Special Committee of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR on 27 March 1946. Served a sentence at Chernogortab Camp of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR. Was rehabilitated in 1990 (page 50)."⁴⁷

This Hannah Landes may not be a relative because of the spelling of her surname. There was a separate (although very distantly related) family with the surname "Landes" who emigrated from Switzerland to the village of Zurichtal in the Crimea. It is likely that Hannah

⁴⁶ *Heritage Review* 33:1, 2003.

⁴⁷ *Heritage Review* 32:4, 2002

Landes was from that family, although her link with Nikolaiev makes her a possible member of the Landeis family.

One file⁴⁸ retrieved from the archive in Nikolaiev contains a list of all households in the colony of Speier (one of the former German colonies in the Beresan region) that had been allotted land in 1922. One Landeis family is shown, which indicates that at some point this family had settled there from Karlsruhe:

Thomas Landeis, the son of Karl. In his household was a woman named Franziska, the daughter of Anton (presumably Thomas' wife). They had 5 daughters residing with them: Ermentina, Rosa, Anna, Viktoria, and Elisabetha, all listed as the daughters of Thomas. It is possible that Thomas also had sons, who were not residing with them as of 1922.

Another branch of the Landeis family settled south on the Crimean peninsula. In 2012 I made contact (via Facebook on internet) with Alexander Landeis, who resided in Kiel Germany at the time. He and his family were emigres from Russia, allowed to return to Germany after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Alexander didn't know much about his family history, but his grandfather (likewise named Alexander Landeis) was still alive and also residing in Kiel. Like most ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union, he knew that the first colonists came to Tsarist Russia in the reign of Empress Katharine the Great, but not much beyond that. The young Alex said his grandfather didn't talk much about their experiences in Russia, understandably so since he had been forcibly relocated to a labor camp in Siberia in 1941. The grandfather confirmed that his grandparents were Jakob Landeis and Katherine Deutsch. So, this long lost branch of the Landeis family was successfully integrated into our family tree. Interestingly, the name Alexander also recurred in their family, although it is unknown when it first entered – Jakob's son, Alexander, may have been born in Karlsruhe, or in Rosenfeld. Their place in the genealogical summary table (at the end of this chronicle) is as follows:

K1751 Jakob Landeis, b. May 1863, Karlsruhe, m. **Magdalena Deutsch**. They moved to the Crimea ca. 1900, he d. in Rosenfeld, Crimea 1935.

K17512 Alexander Landeis, b. ?, m. **Irma Eisenbraun**.

K175121 Alexander Landeis, b. 1928 Crimea, evacuated to North Caucasus by Soviets in 1941; m. **Bertha Frank** (she b. 1931, d. 2008 Kiel, Germany); he was still alive in 2012.

K1751211 Tamara Landeis, b. 1956 Russia, m. surname **Grib**.

K17512111 Alexander Landeis, b. 1973, m. to Natalia Haas (Gaas in Russian), resided in Kiel, Germany as of 2012. He confirmed the line of descent from K1751.

K17512111 Alena Landeis, b. 1997 Tscheljabinsk (Cheliabinsk).

K17512112 Sophie Landeis, b. 2007 Kiel, Germany.

K175122 Valentin Landeis, b. ?

⁴⁸ File 66-2-110b

Chapter 15

Landeis Families in Karlsruhe, Ukraine and in the USA

This summary table uses the “Henry System” for numbering. In this system, the progenitor is assigned the number 1, his oldest child becomes 11, his next child is 12, and so on. This table continues from the previous genealogical table for Neckarburken, Baden, which prefixes everyone by the letter N. In order to keep the numbers reasonably short, this table starts with **Johann Jacob Landeis** (the same person as **N1274** in the Neckarburken table), who was the stem ancestor who emigrated to the colony of Karlsruhe in the Ukraine in 1809. The initial letter **K** (for Karlsruhe) is used as the prefix for all members of the Landeis family who are descendants of Johann Jacob Landeis. My lineal ancestors are underlined. The dates shown for those in Tsarist Russia are in “old style” which is 12 days earlier than modern Gregorian calendar.

K1 Johann Jacob Landeis, b. April 22, 1756 in Neckarburken, Baden. Emigrated to the Pfalz ca. 1788, m. Nov. 4, 1789 **Anna Maria Katherine Messmann** in Leimersheim), she was the illegitimate da. of **Margaret Heid**, b. Dec. 10, 1758 in Leimersheim, Pfalz. Margaret Heid was b. Feb. 5, 1730 and she married the widower **Joseph Messmann** on May 7, 1764 in Leimersheim, after which he adopted Anna Maria. Joseph died in Leimersheim on Feb. 12, 1769. Jacob Landeis was an official at the grain and produce warehouse in Hördt. He emigrated to the new colony of Karlsruhe, Ukraine, in 1809 with wife, mother-in-law, and six children (one daughter died in childhood, and the other may not have emigrated to the Ukraine with the family); Jacob d. in Karlsruhe in 1811. He was the progenitor of the German-from-Russia Landeis family in North Dakota.

K11 (N12741) Maria Elizabeth Petronilla Landeis, b. April 15, 1790, Hördt. She is shown in the 1816 Revision List for Karlsruhe. There is a baptismal record showing that Michael Pfoh and Elisabeth Landeis had a child, Christina Pfoh, born in Rastadt in Jan. 17, 1816. Elisabeth Landeis also served as godmother for Anton Wilhelm on Aug. 10, 1816 in Rastadt. She may have married Michael Pfoh around 1816 and relocated to his colony of residence.

K12 (N12742) Maria Apollonia Landeis, b. July 12, 1791, Hördt. She served as godmother for Maria Apollonia Fitterer on Aug. 13, 1816 in Karlsruhe, she was stated to be unmarried. Maria Landeis also was godmother for Karl Rössler Nov. 1, 1826 in Karlsruhe.

K13 (N12743) Adam Franz Georg Landeis, b. April 19, 1793, Hördt, Pfalz, son of Jakob Landeis and Anna Maria Katherine Messmann, he appears most commonly in Karlsruhe as **Adam Landeis**. He m. ca. 1818 **Maria Antonia Ihly** in Karlsruhe, Ukraine. She was b. ca. 1791, dau. of **Jakob Ihly** from Malsch, Baden (surname sometimes misspelled as “Hely”). Ancestry.com shows her as Anna Maria Ihly b. July 30, 1793 Dogern, Waldshut, Baden. Adam died in Karlsruhe, Maria Antonia died in Neu-Karlsruhe according to the family tree of Thomas Scheeler on Ancestry.com. This tree also shows Jakob Ihly’s wife as

Elisabeth Bachmaier, b. Dec. 22, 1745 in Malsch, Baden, and d. Oct. 8, 1898 in Ettlingen, Karlsruhe, Baden. Jakob Ihly and Elisabeth also had a son Cyriak Ihly. **Franz Landeis** served as godfather for Albin Mareinkievicz on Feb. 27, 1827. He apparently was the same person as Adam Franz Georg, there is no other Franz or Adam Landeis in the family tree.

K131 Catherine Landeis, b. ca. 1820, m. **Jakob Pfaff**, son of **Anton Pfaff** (his surname is also mistakenly shown as "Pfau"). 1 child: Johann Pfaff, b. March 12, 1861, Karlsruhe, godfather was **Valentin Meier**. The 1839/40 census of Karlsruhe shows Catherine, married to Jacob Pfaff, as the da. of Adam Landeis.

K132 Peter Landeis, b. ca. 1825, first marriage (m1) unknown, after her death he remarried (m2) ca. 1869 with **Barbara Hoffmann** (b. 1830 Karlsruhe, the widow of **Alois Meier** b. 1829 presumably in München).

MyHeritage.com shows Peter as b. 1824, d. ca. 1885, age 61, mistakenly as married to Louisa Mayers and they had a dau. Theresa who marr. a Schaaf. Sources are not stated.¹

No known children from m2. **Peter Landeis** appears in the census of Karlsruhe in 1839/40, where he is listed as the 15 year old son of Adam Landeis. Records for Karlsruhe in 1862 do not show Peter or Adam, so they may have relocated to a daughter colony. Supposedly there were four children from Peter's first marriage, two boys and two girls. The only two known for sure are Heinrich Landeis and Catherine Landeis, who married Jakob Scheeler. Catherine Landeis-Scheeler's death certificate states her father was Peter Landeis, mother unknown:

K1321 Heinrich Landeis, b. Nov. 25, 1864 Karlsruhe?, his father Peter and step-mother Barbara Hoffmann arranged a marriage with his step-sister **Louisa Meier** (b. 1864), da. of **Barbara Hoffmann** (b. 1830) and **Alois Meier** (b. 1829). **Louisa Meier** b. Dec. 10, 1864, supposedly in München or another nearby colony; d. Feb. 16, 1938, Billings, Montana. **Heinrich Landeis** d. Nov. 2, 1938, Ryegate, Montana. Both buried in the Catholic Resurrection Cemetery at Ryegate, MT. Heinrich and Louisa were my great-grandparents.

K13211 Philip Landeis, b. April 21, 1883, prob. Neu-Karlsruhe, Ukraine. According to info from his brother Ambrose he was born on that date in 1882, but according to his death certificate he was born in 1883. The 1883 date is presumably correct because it matches the ship records, which show that he was age 6 when they immigrated in 1889. His draft registration in 1917 shows April 28, 1883. He marr. **Barbara Schultz** (born 1883 in one of the German colonies in Hungary, she immigrated in July, 1905 with son Paul to Dickinson) on Nov. 20, 1906 in Stark Co., ND. Sometime after 1920 Philip changed the spelling of

¹ The statement that Peter Landeis marr. Louisa Mayer is wrong, our family records clearly show that Peter's son, Heinrich Landeis, marr. Louisa Meier, they were my great-grandparents. The source for MyHeritage.com has confused **Jakob Landeis (K173)** b. ca. 1834 marr. to Katharina Reisenauer, they had a dau. **Theresa Landeis** b. Mar. 16, 1855, marr. (1) to a Meier?, marr. (2) to Valentin Schaaf b. 1843 Speier.

his name to "Landize," which has been preserved by his descendants (a newspaper ad for the tire business he operated in Dickinson in 1920 shows his name in the original form, "Landeis"). Philip died July 8, 1947 in Missoula, MT, age 64, buried at St. Anthony's cemetery. Barbara Schultz was buried on Oct. 4, 1968. Philip adopted Paul, and he had 11 more children:

K132111 Paul Landize, b. Aug. 11, 1904 Hungary, son from Barbara Schultz's first marriage in Hungary, adopted by Philip Landeis. My mother remembered that he was referred to as "Pauly." For a while he resided in Bayside, California, he died there Jan. 11, 1988.

K132112 Barbara Anna Landize, later became a nun known as Sister Phileta, at a convent in Bismarck, N.D.

K132113 Katherine ("Mickey") Landize, b. Jan. 18, 1910 Dickinson, N.D., m. **Edward C. Lahmann** (1902-1977) in Sweetgrass MT, she d. Aug. 13, 2001, they resided in Deer Lodge, MT.

K1321131 Barbara Lehmann, m. Varca.

K132114 Mary Landize, b. Sept. 24, 1011, d. Oct. 17, 1997 in Douglas, Oregon. She marr. **Adam Younger**, b. July 8, 1917 Beulah, N.D., he d. July 19, 1982 in Spokane, WA. They resided for awhile in Deer Lodge, MT, in Dickinson N.D. in 1915.

K132115 Leo (Leonard) Landize, b. Nov. 18, 1914, drowned in the Colville River in Washington, Oct. 30, 1950.

K132116 Rose Mary Landize, b: Aug. 28, 1917 in Dickinson, ND; d. Oct. 31, 1995 in Bozeman, MT, marr. **Bror Verner Johnson** (1915-?), on Sept. 7, 1940 in Garrison, MT.

K1321161 Ellen Katherine Johnson, m: Oct. 26, 1941 in Garrison, MT, md. Floyd Richard Strickland

Marie Strickland, m. John Cornelison

K132117 Anna Landize, b. June 1919 Dickinson, d. age 25 of scarlet fever on Jan. 3, 1944 Deer Lodge, MT; never married.

K132118 Amelia Ave Landize, b. March 21, 1925 Dickinson, d. Feb. 13, 2005 Pleasant Hill, CA; she m. **Ed Gordon Gerdts** (1919-1999), they resided in Pleasant Hill, California.

K1321181 Linda Gerdts, m. Williams (current surname)

K1321182 Michael Gerdts, m. Katherine Bode (?).

K13211821 Megan Gerdts

K13211822 Erin Gerdts

K1321183 Joyce Gerdts, m. Travers Voris

K13211831 Kristin

K13211832 Philip

K13212 Catherine (Katie) Landeis, b. May 14, 1886, probably Neu-Karlsruhe. She worked for Mrs. Dienst (Dietz as my mother recalled) at a hotel in Dickinson as a child. On Dec. 20, 1892 papers were filed by Mr. and Mrs. Dienst to adopt Katherine, she was only 6 years old at the time, but apparently it didn't go through because she is shown residing with Heinrich and Louisa in the 1900 U.S. Census and she retained her surname of Landeis. Katherine left as a teenager and

married a man named Johnson. They moved to Everett, WA, where she was killed in an accident around the age of 50. Two children:

K13212 1 Bill Johnson

K132121 Eleanore Schwartz

K13213 Alexander Landeis, b. March 12, 1889 shortly before his parents emigrated from Neu-Karlsruhe to North Dakota; he m. **Eda (Ida) Fuchs** on May 10, 1911 Amor, N.D., he d. Dec. 9, 1968 of stroke, buried Ryegate, MT. They were my grandparents. My grandfather possibly was named after Louisa's young uncle, Alex Meier, who may have served as the godfather. Alex Meier resided in the colony of München, which is where his parents Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann resided. My grandfather Alex changed the spelling of his surname to "Landice" later in life in Montana, which reflected English spelling. Eda was the daughter of **Caspar Fuchs** b. Nov. 12, 1850 in Studen, Switzerland, and **Theresia Molitor** b. March 10, 1855 in Mainz, Germany. They were married in St. Cloud, Minnesota and homesteaded in Chokio, Minnesota. Eda was born there on b. Aug. 8, 1887. Grandma Eda died of a stroke on Nov. 29, 1975 at a rest home in Billings, Mt. Both are buried at the Catholic cemetery in Ryegate, MT.

8 Children:

K132131 Clara Eleanor Landeis, b. Nov. 16, 1911, near Rhame, N.D.; d. May 16, 2003 in Billings, age 91.5; marr. Frank Deichl, Billings, MT. Seven children, all born in Billings:

K1321311 Arnold Deichl, b. Feb. 1937.

K1321312 Eleanore, b. Aug. 7, 1938.

K1321313 Juanita Blee, Apr. 17, 1941, marr. Richard Blee.

K1321314 Andrew Deichl, b. July 31, 1942, died Apr. 4, 1968 in a plane crash on Bachelors Mountain Summit, Oregon.

K1321315 Leo Deichl, b. Feb. 27, 1944.

K1321316 Veronica, Apr. 4, 1948.

K1321317 Robert Deichl, June 15, 1954.

K132132 Pauline Ida Landeis, b. Aug. 5, 1913, near Rhame, N.D. Her first marr. was with Earl Eagon at age 16, with whom she had her first baby Jerrold. Second marr. to Russell Mees on Mar. 24, 1934, from whom Kenny Mees was born. Pauline d. March 7, 2000, Powell WY.

K1321321 Jerrold Frederick, died at 1 month.

K1321322 Kenneth G. Mees, b. Mar. 30, 1943.

K132133 Anna Marie Landeis (my mother), b. Aug. 26, 1915, Ryegate, MT. She marr. **John M. Wagner** in Billings. She d. Jan. 3, 2000 Salem, OR. Three children:

K1321331 Lawrence John Wagner, b. Aug. 21, 1937 Billings, MT; marr. Dorothy Allen, one son Michael. Larry d. Feb. 11, 2000 Oregon, kidney failure, congestive heart failure.

K13213311 Michael John Wagner, b. Oct. 18, 1964

K1321332 Kenneth Wayne Wagner, b. Sept. 3, 1940 Billings, MT; d. Sept. 30, 1994 Portland, OR, cerebral hemorrhage.

K1321333 Roland Marshall Wagner, b. May 1, 1944 Oregon City, OR; m. **Donice Anne Prophet** (b. March 7, 1943 Putnam, OK). One child:

K13213331 Daniel L. Wagner, b. July 6, 1972 San Jose, CA; m. Rene Munoz.

K132133311 David Wagner, b. Nov. 6, 2008 Albuquerque, NM.

K132134 Alexander Landeis, b. Aug. 23, 1917, Ryegate, Mt.; marr. Grayce James June 1937; he d. March 14, 1992 of heart attack. Uncle Al changed his name to Landis in Seattle.

K1321341 Carolyn Kay Landis, b. Apr. 9, 1943; marr. Philip Garner jr. Dec. 31, 1962.

K13213411 John Jahant, b. 1962.

K132135 Frances Kathryn (Katie) Landeis, b. Dec. 13, 1919, Ryegate, MT.; marr. 1939 Ralph Lundquist he b. Dec. 29, 1915 Newton Cache, Utah, he d. March 28, 1991, they resided Pocatello, ID. She d. Oct. 24, 1986, Boise, ID.

K1321351 Carolyn Lundquist

K1321352 Marie

K1321323 Sonia

K1321324 Margo

K1321325 Lenny

K1321326 An adopted Indian boy.

K132136 Josephine Martha Landeis, b. April 20, 1922, Ryegate, MT; d. Oct. 14, 1960 of cancer, Seattle, WA; marr. Glen Guard, he d. 1968.

K1321361 Sandra Guard.

K132137 Henry Casper Landeis, b. June 27, 1925, Ryegate, MT; d. Sept. 21, 1994, Renton, WA, diabetes and prostate cancer, he was cremated and buried at Ryegate. Uncle Henry changed spelling of surname to Landis in Seattle. First marr. to Evelyn Fellows from Roundup, MT, no children. Second marr. to Frances S. Webb (his cousin) in 1950 in Montana, no children. Third marr. to Leora (Lee) Martin. Fourth marr. to Sharon Elaine Scott (maiden name Jacobs), b. Aug. 13, 1946 Seattle; one child:

K1321371 Russell Jon Landis, b. Dec. 25, 1966 Seattle, nicknamed "Rusty" when young. First marr. to Tamara Fast. Second marr. to Tina Manley. Two children from marr. (1):

K13213711 Danielle, b. Apr. 24, 1990, Renton, WA, marr. Travis Moon.

K132137111 Kloe Renee Moon, b. Nov. 25, 2011.

K13213712 Alexander, b. Oct. 21, 1992, Renton, WA.

K132138 Dorothy Louise Landeis, b. July 4, 1930, Ryegate, MT. Her first marriage was with R.E. (Eddie) Barreth in Roundup, MT, July 4, 1929, she was age 18. Second marriage with Joe Ure. She died on Dec. 29, 1997, Seattle, WA, she was shot by Joe in her

sleep. He was despondent, had chronic back pain, addicted to pain medications. 4 children from Eddie:

K1321381 Gregory Vine (b. Seattle, from first relationship).

K1321382 Linda Gillot.

K1321383 Debra (Debbie) Schröder, m. Bill Schraeder.

K1321384 Pamela Rochelle, b. July 20, 1954 Butte, MT, marr. Bob McSpadden, she d. Feb. 28, 2018 Stanfield.

K1321385 Gary Barreth.

K13214 Barbara Landeis, b. Feb. 18, 1891 Richardton, N.D., m. **Arthur Webb**, Seattle, WA.

K13215 Gusta Landeis, died at birth, 1893, Richardton, N.D.

K13216 Ambrose Landeis, b. Oct. 21, 1895, Richardton, N.D.

K13217 Anna Frederica Landeis, b. June 6, 1897, Richardton, N.D., m. **August Paridaen**, Ryegate, Montana.

K13218 John Richard Landeis, born May 25, 1899, Richardton, N.D. , d. 1950. He may have had a first marriage, although this is unknown. In 1933 John marr. **Helen Bureau** (b. Oct. 5, 1910 White Tail, MT). Two children (first one adopted):

K132181 Richard Daniel Landeis, b. June 5, 1934 in Great Falls, MT, illeg. son of a teenage girl named Jenkins, adopted in 1934 by John and Helen 6 months after their marriage, Richard m. Etsuko, he d. 1972.

K132182 Donna Landeis, b. Mar. 5, 1936 Glasgow, MT; first marr. to Herman Childers May 1, 1954, two children; second marr. to James Bledsoe, Sept. 7, 1956; third marr. to Charles Greene May 16, 1992.

K1321821 Brian Daniel Childers, b. Feb. 16, 1955, Ft. Lewis, WA.

K1321822 Kaelyn Childers/Boyd. b. Mar. 5, 1956, died Mar. 31, 2000, age 44.

K1321823 Sherry LeAnne, b. May 3, 1943, died premature.

K13219 Magdalena Landeis, b. Oct. 13, 1901, Richardton, N.D; d. of diptheria at age 6.

K13210 Andrew Landeis, died at birth, 1903.

K13210a Jacob (Jack) Landeis, b. Dec. 28, 1904, Dickinson, N.D. Jack changed the spelling of his surname to "Landise" later in life, that's how it's listed on his military discharge papers.

K13210b Joseph Landeis, died at birth, 1906

K1322 Katherine Landeis, b. Nov. 12, 1866 perhaps in Karlsruhe, m. **Jacob Scheeler** in Dickinson, N. D. in 1885, they immigrated in 1891, the 1900 census shows them residing in Lead City, Lawrence, South Dakota, she d. Dec. 16, 1939 in Dickinson. Many descendants in the USA. Katherine (**K1322**) wrote a letter in 1926 sending greetings to "Peter Landeis in Karlsruhe." Since her father, Peter (b. ca. 1825), was almost certainly dead by that time, this Peter was probably a cousin (there were two younger cousins named Peter Landeis - see **K1748**, and **Unknown 2a**).

K14 (previously **N12744**) **Anton Landeis**, b. Oct. 5, 1794, Hördt, d. Oct. 24, 1838 in Karlsruhe, Ukraine, stated to be the son of Jacob, his age at death was 40, which yields a birth year of ca. 1798. His death record states that he left a pregnant wife, 2 sons and 4 daughters. Anton m. ca. 1821 **Magdalena Hummel** (da. of **Franz Hummel**, b.1776/99 in Birkenau, Baden and Barbara Krämer, b. ca. 1795; Franz Hummel also emigrated to Karlsruhe, he was married twice, one wife was Barbara Meckler b. 1795, perhaps marr. 1833 in Karlsruhe, the other was apparently Barbara Krämer; note however that Franz's wife is also referred to as "Maria"). Magdalena Hummel had 4 siblings, including Franziska Hummel.

K141 Elisabeth Landeis, b. ca. 1822, Karlsruhe, Ukraine.

K142 Barbara Landeis, b. ca. 1823, Karlsruhe.

K143 Catherine Landeis, b. Feb. 18, 1825, Karlsruhe, godparents were Friedrich Renner and Katharina Loran. She marr. **Michael Wander** on May 29, 1839, stated to be a virgin age 19. She died March 29, 1842, stated to be the dau. of Anton Landeis, her age at death was 16 which yields a birth year of 1826, matching her birth record.

K144 Maria Landeis, bapt. Aug. 7, 1827, godfather was Daniel Landeis and Maria Landeis.

K145 Philipp Landeis, b. ca. 1830, Karlsruhe, m. **Elisabeth** (b. ca. 1834).

K1451 Thomas Landeis, b. 1851 in Karlsruhe. Note that there is ambiguity about which Philipp was his father, it could be **K171**.

K1452 Margaretha Landeis, b. 1853, Karlsruhe.

K1453 Katherine Landeis, b. ca. 1855, Karlsruhe.

K146 Raphael Landeis, b. Oct. 23, 1833, bapt. Oct. 25, 1835?, Karlsruhe; m. **Franziska Förster** b. 1839, Sulz, Ukraine, internet shows her as b. 1833. Raphael d. 1890 in Karlsruhe. Franziska and her son Jacob emigrated to North Dakota in 1900, where she d. Feb. 4, 1906 St. Vincent, N.D.

K1461 Elisabeth Landeis, b. Dec. 4, 1861 Karlsruhe. Philipp Landeis (probably her uncle K144 or K171?) was the godfather.

K1462 Helena Landeis, b. June 12, 1864 Karlsruhe. She m. Franz Berger in Speier - see EWZ 0588. They had a son **Philipp Berger** b. Jan. 6, 1887 in Speier. Helena Landeis served as godmother for Helena Kuhn Jan. 4, 1885, the illegitimate daughter of Elis. Kuhn in Speier.

K1463 Jacob Landeis, b. Nov. 1, 1866 Karlsruhe, m. ca. 1889

Christina Zentner (she b. Oct. 1, 1868 Katharinenthal), emigrated to North Dakota on May 15, 1900 and arrived in New York on June 14, 1900 (ship registry date looks like June 5, 1900), his departure point was Neu-Karlsruhe, they were traveling to meet Jacob's brother Philipp in Mandan. Jacob d. May 22, 1940

Mandan, N.D., Christina d. Dec. 31, 1935 Mandan, N.D. Children:
K14631 Henry (Heinrich) Landeis, b. April 2, 1891 Karlsruhe; d. Dec. 9, 1956 Mandan, N.D. ; marr. **Rose Yantzer**, b. Aug. 14, 1892 Katharinenthal, Russia, d. Nov. 6, 1952 Mandan, N.D.

K14632 Paul Landeis, b. Jan. 9, 1893 Karlsruhe, enrolled at Richardton Abby school in 1914; m. **Veronica Meuchel** on Feb. 10, 1919, Paul d. May 12, 1961 Mandan, N.D., Veronica d. in 1978. In 1921 Paul received a gold watch as recognition for his saving three persons from drowning.

K146321 Leo Landeis, b. Jan 31, 1919 Crown Butte, N.D.

K146322 Anton Landeis, b. Aug. 31, 1923 Crown Butte, m. Rose **Katrina Aman** on Oct. 19, 1948 in Mandan, N.D., Rose was b. Oct. 13, 1930, she d. Jan. 18, 2011, Anton d. Nov. 20, 2015. 5 children.

K146323 Otilia (Tillie) b. Nov. 11, 1925 Crown Butte, m. **Florian Brown**.

K146324 Pauline Landeis, b. Nov. 5, 1928 Crown Butte, m. **John Miller** b. Aug. 16, 1921, they resided west of Mandan, N.D.

K14633 Brigitta ("Beata", also "Bertha") Landeis, b. July 15, 1895 Karlsruhe, m. June 30, 1919 **Peter Bender** (b. Aug. 28, 1896, s. of **Bender** and **Magdalena Froehlich**, sister to **Margaretha Froehlich**, the wife of **K1454**). Brigitta d. Feb. 14, 1946, Mandan, N.D. (See also her aunt Brigitta **K1453**).

K14634 Theresia Landeis, b. May 29, 1897 Karlsruhe, m. **Robert Fichter**, d. Dec. 19, 1964 Estevan, Saskatchewan.

K14635 Ludwig (Louie) Philip Landeis, b. Aug. 7, 1899 Karlsruhe, m. **Eliz. Thomas** June 25, 1924, d. May 17, 1959, Mandan, N.D.

K14636 Raphael Landeis, b. Sept. 12, 1901 Crown Butte, N.D., marr. **Flora Veitenheimer**, resided in Mandan, N.D.

K14637 Helena Landeis, b. June 6, 1903 Crown Butte, marr. **Joseph Steiner**, resided in Mandan, N.D.

K14638 Margaretha Landeis, b. March 25, 1905 Crown Butte, single, d. Dec. 1, 1973, resided Mandan, N.D.

K14639 Eva Landeis, no info.

K1464 Brigitta ("Bertha") Landeis, b. Nov. 2, 1868 Karlsruhe, m. **Franz Zentner** (he b. ca. 1850), she d. Oct. 4, 1933, resided Mandan, N.D. They had 10 children.

K1465 Philip Raphael Henry Landeis ("Jack"), b. Jan 15, 1870 (also shown as Jan. 5, 1871) Karlsruhe, emigrated to Crown Butte, N.D. in 1891, m. **Margaretha Froehlich** in 1892 (Margaretha, also known as "Maggie", was b. June 2, 1873 Speier, Ukraine, da. of **Georg A. Froehlich** and **Catherine Helbling**, d. April 27, 1940 Glendive, MT). Philip died Aug. 25, 1945, buried at Glendive, MT.² The ship record in New York shows that Philip's brother Jacob and his family travelled from Neu-Karlsruhe to join Philip in Mandan in 1900.

K14651 Peter Philipp Landeis, b. Aug. 3, 1893 Crown Butte, N.D., d. Aug. 7, 1966 Mandan, N.D. He m. **Perpetua Siegel**, b. Feb.15, 1896, d. June 16, 1972, age 76, dau. of Wilhelm Siegel and Magd. Anton.

² Source for Philip Landeis and Margaret Froehlich is David Kilwein, on internet.

- K146511 Peter Landeis**, b. May 5, 1927 Flasher N.D., d. June 1, 2003 Bismark, ND; m. Tillie Braun. Possibly had a dau. Julie Landeis Tuntland.
- K14652 Wendelin Landeis**, b. June 14, 1895 Karlsruhe, d. Aug. 23, 1897 Crown Butte, N.D.
- K14653 Frederick Landeis**, b. May 23, 1897/8 St. Vincent N.D., m. **Philomena Broxmeier**, he d. Feb. 1984.
- K14654 Julianna Landeis**, b. June 10, 1899 Crown Butte N.D., m. **Andrew Froehlich** Jan. 1920; she d. Mar. 7, 1943 Glendive MT.
- K14655 Henry Landeis**, b. May 1, 1901; m. **Theresia Steiner**, d. July 24, 1928.
- K146551 Henry Landeis**, resides in Bismarck, N.D.
- K146552-7** six daughters (names unknown).
- K14656 Georg Landeis**, b. April 3, 1903 St. Vincent N.D., m. **Emma Kodlec**, he d. Nov. 11, 1983 Tacoma WA.
- K14657 Philip Landeis**, b. and d. 1903/5 St. Vincent (twin).
- K14658 Adam Landeis**, b. and d. 1903/5 St. Vincent (twin).
- K14659 Jacob (Jack) Landeis**, b. Nov. 5, 1905, m. **Angeline Kodlec**, he d. Oct. 12, 1985.
- K1466 Ludwig (Louis) Landeis**, b. ca. 1878 Neu-Karlsruhe, m. **Maria Eva Schaff** 1902 in North Dakota. She was b. ca. 1879 the dau. of Mathias Schaff and Barbara Donhauer or Schmaltz in Speier, she and her parents came to USA in 1899, Maria Eva d. Dec. 9, 1956 (Myheritage.com shows she d. 1953 age 74), Washington, they resided at Crown Butte and Flasher, N.D. The Grand Forks Herald reported on Aug. 14, 1922, that "L. Landise, Flasher, estimated 23 bushels of wheat from header box gleanings, oats on his farm threshed 40 to the acre." The *Nord Dakota Herold* reported that in 1925 Ludwig sent greetings to his "godfather," Paul Böhm, in Yakima. Ludwig and Maria Eva had 10 children:
- K14661 Margaret Landeis**, b. Nov., 1902 Crown Butte, m. **Buehler**.
- K14662 Jacob Landeis**, b. Dec. 11, 1904 Crown Butte, m. **Catherine Stengle**.
- K14664 Elizabeth Landeis**, m. **Kreis**.
- K14665 Magdalena Landeis**, b. March 18, 1907, m. **Christ Beehler**.
- K14666 Matthias Landeis**, b. May 1909, d. Sept. 15, 1909
- K14667 Raphael Landeis**, b. May, 1909, d. Jan. 26, 1910.
- K14668 Rosella Landeis**, b. May 17, 1910, m. **Walter Van Sickle**.
- K14669 Beatrice Landeis**, b. Nov. 25, 1911; m. **Julian Hanson**.
- K145610 Matthias Landeis**
- K145611 Ada Landeis**, m. **Geger**.
- K1467 Magdalena Landeis**, b. June 12, 1879 Odessa, d. Feb. 24, 1953 Pasco, WA, she m1. May 21, 1900 to **Jacob Klug** b. Oct. 1874 München, he committed suicide in Wisconsin, she m2. **Peter Vogt** on July 25, 1912 in Odense, N.D. Peter was b. Aug. 16, 1886 München, d. Dec. 19, 1963 Spokane WA, Peter is also shown as **Vocht** or **Volk**.
- K1468 Barbara Landeis**, b. ? Karlsruhe, didn't emigrate to U.S.A.

K1469 Carolina Landeis, b. 1862 Karlsruhe, m. **Schwindhammer**, didn't emigrate to U.S.A.

K147 Marianna Landeis, b. and bapt. Dec. 28, 1833, Karlsruhe, godmother was Marianna Landeis, m. by 1858 to **Caspar Friess (Kajetan?** mistakenly trans. as "**Kasten**"). She is also shown as **Anna Maria Landeis**. Known children:

K1471 Anna Maria Friess, b. Dec. 10, 1862.

K1472 Anton Friess, b. July 17, 1865 Landau.

K148 Karl Landeis, b. and bapt. Feb. 2, 1839, Karlsruhe; m. **Marianna Blumenstein**, da. of Joseph Blumenstein.

K1481 Carolina Landeis, b. Aug. 21, 1864 Karlsruhe, m. Schwindhammer, did not come to USA.

K1482 Johann Landeis, b. June 22, 1866, Karlsruhe, d. June 11, 1878, age 3 months. His age doesn't match the birth year 1866 so he may have been a later son of Karl and Maria Anna.

K1483 Thomas Landeis, b. 1870, Karlsruhe, m. **Franziska Rambur**, b. June 17, 1871, Speyer, da. of **Anton Rambur**. Several files have been retrieved from the archive in Nikolaiev pertaining to the German colonies in the early Bolshevik period. One of these files (66-2-110b) lists the families that had been allotted land in the colony of Speier (a former Catholic colony in the Beresan region) in 1922. Only one Landeis family household was shown in Speier -- Thomas Landeis, his wife Franziska, and their 5 daughters. We note that the children were all daughters, so he may have had some older sons who had already left home. The 5 daughters were:

K14831 Ermentina Landeis, b. Jan. 12, 1918, Speyer, m. **Nikolaus Kunz**. 3 Children. Ermentine was a widow and her children took the surname Landeis.

K148311 Josef Landeis, b. Nov. 28, 1942, Friedenthal.

K148312 Lydia Landeis, b. Nov. 24, 1940, Waterloo.

K148313 Nikolaus Landeis, b. Jan 5, 1939, Speyer.

K14832 Rosa.

K14833 Anna.

K14834 Viktoria.

K14835 Elisabetha.

K149 Michael Johannes Landeis. This is uncertain, he is referred to as a younger son of Anton Landeis in a family tree on www.myheritage.com.

K1410 Johann Landeis, b. March 1878, d. June 11, 1878, age 3 months. His parents are stated to be Karl Landeis, son of Anton, and Maria Anna Blumenstein, daughter of Joseph. He is shown in the death records of Karlsruhe. He is apparently not the same as Johann K1482.

K15 (previously N12745) Maria Catherine Landeis, b. April 13, 1796, d. May 26, 1797, Hördt.

K16 (N12746) Franziska Landeis, b. Oct. 10, 1798, Hördt.

K17 (N12747) Daniel Landeis, b. ca. 1802/3, probably Hördt.
m. ca. 1829 **Katharina Jungmann** (b. ca. 1816, da. of **George Adam Jungmann** from Spechbach, Baden, she is shown as **Carolina Jungmann** in the birth record of her son Pius Landeis in 1836, which is a mistranslation, because other records show her as Katharina. Possibly Daniel's second marriage. Daniel died in Karlsruhe, Ukraine and Katharina Landeis died April 6, 1878 in Speier, age 76 of „decrepitude.“ Her derived birth year was 1802 which doesn't match the 1816 date above, although 1802 is probably correct given Daniel's birth year and the birth year of son Philipp; she was stated to have children Philipp, Jacob, Pius, and Katherine. Katharina Landeis served as godmother for several children in Karlsruhe:

- Katharina Wander, Feb. 17, 1837.
- Katharina Jungmann, Dec. 29, 1837.
- Katharina Schoch, May 21, 1838.
- Martha Jungmann, July 30, 1839.

K171 Philip Landeis, b. ca. 1829 Karlsruhe; m. **Barbara Reisenauer** (b. ca. 1830, prob. dau. of **Andreas Reisenauer** and **Annamaria Nebel** in Karlsruhe). Ancestry.com shows Philip b. ca. 1837 and Barbara b. ca. 1845, although those dates may be too late. Philip served as godfather for Elisabeth, dau. of Rafael Landeis and Franciska Förster, Dec. 4, 1861, Karlsruhe. Barbara, wife of Philipp Landeis, served as godmother for Barbara Sprung July 18, 1861 in Karlsruhe.

K1711 Josef Landeis, b. 1857

K1712 Rosa Landeis, b. Oct. 5, 1862.

K1713 Magdalena (“Lena”) Landeis, b. Oct. 1866 (1900 U.S. Census). She m. **Friedrich Meier** (b. July 1856, d. 1914), the brother of my great-grandmother **Louisa Meier**. They had 13 children surname Meier, although Ancestry.com shows 8 children. Magdalene and Friedrich Meier came across on the same ship with Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier in 1889. After Friedrich Meier's death in 1914, she remarried to Paul Messer on Sept. 13, 1915 in Fromberg, MT, Paul was b. May 5, 1870 in Karlsruhe, he d. 1930, Lena died Nov. 12, 1939 Glendive, MT.

K17131 Andreas (also Anton) Frederick Meier, b. June 21, 1884 Neu-Karlsruhe, d. 1914.

K17132 Joseph William Meier, b. July 10, 1888 Neu-Karlsruhe, d. 1964.

K17133 Victor William Meier, b. June 20, 1892, d. 1960 Glen Ullin, MT.

K17134 Henry Joseph Meier, b. March 10, 1896, d. 1979 Belt, MT.

K17135 Thomas Meier, b. March 1899.

K17136 Vincent Meier, b. March 16, 1905.

K17137 John Meier, b. 1908.

K17138 Elisabeth Meier, b. 1909, d. 1998.

K172 Katherine Landeis, b. ca. 1831 Karlsruhe; m. by 1858, she was stated to be the dau. of Daniel Landeis and Katharina Jungmann. She marr. Martin Stockert in Speier. There are 4 baptisms recorded in the Speier churchbook, all with surname Stockert: Martin b. Jan. 20, 1858; Johann b. Jan. 26, 1860; Eva b. Oct. 6, 1862, Stephan b. Jan. 7, 1872.

K173 Jakob Landeis, b. ca. 1834, Karlsruhe; m. **Katharine Reisenauer** (b. 1839 Karlsruhe). Note: EWZ 959321 shows Theresia Landeis as the da. of "**Georg**" Landeis and **Katharine**. Katharina was godmother to Katharina Schmidt in 1860 in Karlsruhe. Jakob was godfather to Jakob Nachbauer in 1861 in Karlsruhe.

K1731 Theresia Landeis, b. March 16, 1855 Karlsruhe, source is Tiraspol baptismal records. Her marr. 1 is unknown, apparently to a Meier, widowed and m2. ca. 1890 to **Valentin Schaaf** b. 1843, Speier, Ukraine, the son of Georg Schaaf (b. 1817 Speier) and Magdalena Rieger. Valentin's m1 was in ca. 1870 with Katharina Heck, he was a widower, m2 Theresia Landeis, he d. Oct. 31, 1928, Speier, Theresia d. after 1921 in Speier, Ukraine (source: MyHeritage.com; see K132 for the confusion about Theresia Landeis). Valentin had ca. 11 children from his two marriages, perhaps more:³

1. **Mathias Schaaf** 1871-1873.

2 **Alexander Schaaf**, b. Feb. 23, 1873 "Odessa", d. July 14, 1944 New England, ND, m. Elis. Schmidt in 1892, they had 13 children surname Schaaf.

3 **Gottfried Schaaf**, b. June 15, 1892 Speier (EWZ 959321).

4 **Valentin Schaaf**, b. Nov. 22, 1894, Speier, Ukraine; m. **Barbara Schaff** (da. of **Victor Schaff** and **Eliz. Hegel**) on Feb. 10, 1919, Ryegate, Montana, Valentin d. 1969.

5 **Magdalena Schaaf**, b. July 18, 1898 Speier (perhaps Ryegate, MT?).

6 **Otto Schaaf**, marr. **Bertha Schanz**

7 **Johann Schaaf**, marr. **Celestina**

8 **Katherina Schaaf**

9 **Martha Schaaf**, marr. **Hatzenbühler**

10 **Christina Schaaf**

Familysearch.Org also shows a **Barbara, Elisabeth** and **Juliana Schaaf**, children of Valentin Schaaf.

K1732 Jacob Landeis, b. Jan. 5, 1862 Karlsruhe.

K1733 Josef Landeis, b. Jan. 5, 1863, Karlsruhe, m. **Anna**

Bruechner/Bruedner, b. July 24, 1865, Halbstadt.

K1734 Magdalena Landeis, b. April 12, 1864

K1735 Andreas Landeis, b. Feb. 6, 1866.

K174 Pius Landeis, born May 4, 1836, bapt. May 6, 1836 Karlsruhe, Pius was stated to be the son of Daniel Landeis and Katharina Jungmann, his godmother was Katharina Landeis, he m. **Helena Hatzenbühler**. His signature appears clearly in the available records, written in his own handwriting as "Phius." The Tiraspol baptismal records for K1742 - K1744 list the parents as "**Pii**" or "**Piy**" Landeis and **Helena Hatzenbühler**. Igor Pleve (researcher at Saratov) claims this is another form of "the pope's

³ The info for Valentin Schaaf and his second wife, Theresia Landeis, and their children is from Elisabeth Schaaf Hecker and Vicki Helbling/Seeman. They also cite: "Descendants of Michael Schaf" received from Delores Schrage, 76797 Swan Lake Route, Big Rock, MT 59911 by Valerie Renner Ingram.

name" (i.e. Pius). EWZ form 2064 also lists Pius and Helena as a couple. EWZ form 1940 states that Pius and Helena resided and died in Karlsruhe. The translations of the death record for Barbara below mistakenly lists her parents as "Paul" Landeis and Helena Hatzenbühler.

K1741 Barbara Landeis, b. 1859, Karlsruhe, died Sept. 22, 1860, "age 1yr."

K1742 Philipp Landeis, b. Jan. 18, 1861, Karlsruhe. Philipp Landeis (K171) and Barbara were the godparents.

K1743 Brigitta Landeis, b. Aug. 12, 1862, Karlsruhe.

K1744 Elizabeth Landeis, b. Oct. 3, 1863, Karlsruhe.

K1745 Katherine Landeis, b. Oct. 21, 1866, Karlsruhe.

K1746 Ottilia Landeis, b. 1874 Karlsruhe, m. Johannes Renner, b. 1871, Halbstadt. Shown on EWZ forms.

K1747 Barbara Landeis, b. Jan. 1, 1879, Karlsruhe, m. In 1901 **Matthias Reisenhauer**, b. Aug. 27, 1874, Karlsruhe. Supposedly they lived in Schönmädel, Altbugund in 1944. This is based on EWZ form 762670. Son: **Martin Reisenhauer**, b. Feb. 15, 1918, Karlsruhe.

K1748 Peter Landeis, different birthdates shown in the EWZ forms⁴: 1870 Halbstadt or Karlsruhe, or Feb. 24, 1878 Neu-Karlsruhe, d. 1934 Karlsruhe. Halbstadt was a small daughter colony about 10 miles east of Karlsruhe. Peter married **Eugenie Matz** who also has various birthdates shown in the EWZ forms: 1874 Karlsruhe, 1878 Landau, and Jan 12, 1879 Landau. She was the da. of Anton Matz and Anna Marie Rüdinger, possibly from Dobrinka. 3 children:

K17481 Marianna Landeis, b. Nov. 2, 1901 Blumenfeld, district of Nikolajev, m. **Peter Landeis**, b. Feb. 24, 1898, Neu-Karlsruhe, the son of **Paul Landeis**.⁵

3 children:

K174811 Pauline Landeis, b. Sept. 17, 1925, Neu-Karlsruhe.

K174812 Waldemar Landeis, b. May 11, 1937, Kriwoj-Rog, Dnepropetrovsk region.

K174813 Johann Landeis, b. Mar. 17, 1939, Karlsruhe.

K17482 Josef Landeis, b. Apr. 15, 1907, Karlsruhe, m. **Rosa Landeis**, b. Sept. 5, 1905 or 1908, Neu-Karlsruhe (she was the da. of **Karl Landeis** and **Isabella Riedinger/Rüdinger**, see discussion of Paul/Karl in #2 below in the "Unknown" section; the EWZ form does show that both Josef's and Rosa's fathers' surnames were Landeis). 6 children all born in Karlsruhe:

K174821 Eugenie Landeis, b. Mar. 9, 1930.

K174822 Arkadius Landeis, b. July 2, 1931.

K174823 Thomas Landeis, b. Dec. 10, 1932

K174824 Isabella Landeis, b. Mar. 30, 1935

K174825 Rosa Landeis, b. June 16, 1940

K174826 Elwire Landeis, b. Nov. 8, 1943.

K17483 Johann Landeis, b. Jan 12, 1919, Karlsruhe, m. **Magdalena Roeder**, b. Sept. 15, 1918, Karlsruhe. Son:

⁴ EWZ 50-E, family #144585 - 89.

⁵ Note that Peter's daughter Marianna K17471 also married a Peter Landeis, born Feb. 24, 1898, which matches her father K1747 exactly, with a 20 year difference. See the discussion of Paul/Karl Landeis in #2 below, in the "Unknown" section.

K174831 Johann Landeis, b. Nov. 22, 1939, Karlsruhe.

K1749 Magdalena Landeis, b. ca. 1869, d. Nov. 16, 1871 Karlsruhe, stated to be the 2 year old da. Of **Pius Landeis** and **Helena Hatzenbühler**.

K175 Apollonia Landeis, b. Oct. 31, 1839, bapt. Nov. 1, 1839, stated to be the dau. of Daniel Landeis and Katharina Jungmann.

K176 Michael Landeis, b. ca. 1845, Karlsruhe. He may be the Michael Landeis, marr. to Rosalia, he died May 13, 1873 age 23 (= b. ca. 1850) in Karlsruhe, children: Jacob, Elisabeth, Apollonia, and Katharina.

K1761 Jakob Landeis, b. May 1863, Karlsruhe, m. **Magdalena Deutsch** from Landau. They moved to Klosterdorf (northeast of Nikolaiev on the Dnieper river) in ca. 1900, then in ca. 1910 he and Magdalena moved to Alexandrowka in north-central Crima. They had two children in the village of Konrad, parish of Alexandrowka:

K17611 Michael Landeis, b. Feb. 21, 1910.

K17612 Mathilda Landeis, b. Nov. 14, 1912

Jakob d. in Rosenfeld, Crimea 1935. Three of their children are shown in baptismal records of Klosterdorf in 1904, 1910, and 1912.

K17613 Alexander Landeis, b. ?, m. **Irma Eisenbraun**.

K176131 Alexander Landeis, b. 1928 Crimea, evacuated to North Caucasus by Soviets in 1941; m. **Bertha Frank** (she b. 1931, d. 2008 Kiel, Germany); he was still alive in 2012.

K1761311 Tamara Landeis, b. 1956 Russia, m. surname **Grib**.

K17613111 Alexander Landeis, b. 1973, m. to Natalia Haas (Gaas in Russian), reside in Kiel, Germany as of 2012. He confirmed the line of descent from K1751.

K176131111 Alena Landeis, b. 1997 Tscheljabinsk (Cheliabinsk).

K176131112 Sophie Landeis, b. 2007 Kiel, Germany.

K176132 Valentin Landeis, b. ?

K18 (N12748) Margaretha Landeis, b. Aug. 2, 1804, Hördt, dau. of Jakob Landeis and Anna Maria Katharina Messmann, m. Franz Jonas in Landau. They had two children:

K181 Magdalena Jonas, b. and bapt. Aug. 26, 1834, Landau, her godmother was **Maria Antonia Landeis** (wife of Adam Landeis).

K 182 Katharina Jonas, b. and bapt. Sept. 7, 1835 Landau.

Landeis in other colonies

The death records in the colony of Speier, another colony in the Beresan region, refer to:

Katherine Landeis, died April 6, 1878, age 76. Her children were: **Philipp, Jacob, Pius**, and **Katherine**. She would have been born ca. 1802, before Speier was founded. Her husband isn't stated so we don't know if Landeis was her maiden name or marriage name. There is no clear link for her in the Landeis genealogy.

The Landau baptismal records refer to **Katharina**, wife of **Jacob Landeis**, who served as godmother for Katharina Schmidt Dec. 25, 1860, they were from Karlsruhe. There is no clear link for this Jacob, the best match is Jacob (above), son of Katherine Landeis, he could have been born in the 1840s. Jacob served as godfather for Jacob Nachbauer Jan. 8, 1861 and for Margaret Ruff Nov. 12, 1861 both in Karlsruhe.

The Speier churchbook refers to Katherine Landeis who marr. **Martin Stockert**, they had 4 children, all with surname Stockert: Martin b. Jan. 20, 1858; Johann b. Jan. 26, 1860; Eva b. Oct. 6, 1862, Stephan b. Jan. 7, 1872. Katherine Landeis b. ca. 1802 would have been too old, the best match is **K172 Katherine Landeis**, b. ca. 1831 Karlsruhe; m. by 1858.

The death records for Karlsruhe are available for 1827 to 1839, and 1865 to 1880. There are 11 death records 1827 to 1839, but none in 1865 or later. This indicates that the family had moved out into other colonies.

Barbara Landeis & Johann Mengel had children baptised in the colony of Klosterdorf 1884 to 1901. This was an early Catholic colony established in 1804, an affiliate of the parish of Nikolaiev.

Unknown members of the Landeis family, shown in the Soviet arrest records and German Immigration Center (EWZ) records (arranged in rough order of birth year of oldest member)

1. Philip Steckler, b. Oct. 29, 1900 in Karlsruhe, s. of **Martin Steckler** and **Mathilda Bernhard**. **Martin Steckler** was the son of **Steckler** (father) and **Landeis** (mother). EWZ form 819133, date 1944. His parents were probably **Joseph Steckler** and **Margaret Landeis**, as indicated by the death record below. Margaret was probably **K144**, b. ca. 1853.

The death records for Karlsruhe show that Joseph Steckler and his wife Margaret nee Landeis had two children:

- **Valentin Steckler**, b. ca. Aug. 1879, d. Dec. 21, 1879, age 4 months.
- **Joseph Steckler**, b. ca. 1852, marr. to **Margaret** nee **Landeis**, he d. March 14, 1880, age 28, children: **Martin Steckler** and **Barbara Steckler**.

2. Paul/ Karl Landeis, b. ca. 1867-1869 Neu-Karlsruhe. Various EWZ records show Paul Landeis and Karl Landeis, both marr. to **Isabella Riedinger**, she was b. May 4, 1870-71, Dobrinka/Dobraja. One EWZ (for Peter below) shows his parents as Paul Landeis b. 1868 Neu-Karlsruhe, m. to Isabella Ruedinger and the EWZ for Rosa Landeis (apparently Peter's sister), shows her parents as Karl Landeis and Isabella Riedinger. Isabella has the same birth year and birth place in these EWZ records, so we may assume that she is the same person and that her husband is shown differently, as either Paul or Karl.

It is unlikely that they were brothers because the birthdates of their children intermesh. Rosa Landeis below, the da. of Karl, was born between her siblings Anton and Veronika, children of Paul. Probably Paul and Karl are the same person and there was a mistake in reading the Cyrillic records (the names Paul and Karl are 4 letters long, the initial P and K could easily be misread, the second letter is "a", and both names end in "l"). They are shown with various birthdates in the EWZ records: Paul in 1867 at Neu-Karlsruhe, in 1868 at Neu-Karlsruhe, and in 1869 at München; Karl 1866 and 1868 Karlsruhe.

There is no clear line of descent for Paul/Karl. In the April 3, 1925 issue of the *Nord Dakota Herald* a letter was published from Neu-Karlsruhe, which mentions that within the past five years, several people had died in the village. Among the names listed, were Martin and Paul Landeis. This is the only other reference to a Paul Landeis, so this is a good indication that he may be the one indicated in 1925. Paul and Isabella Riedinger had 3 children (Peter, Anton, and Veronika; Karl and Isabella Riedinger had 1 child Rosa).

Note too that there were some marriages between persons who had the surname Landeis. This indicates that the family had become so diversified that persons could marry their distant cousins. We can identify Peter Landeis who married Marianna Landeis, Rosa Landeis who married Josef Landeis, and Veronica Landeis who married Michael Landeis.

- a. **Peter Landeis**, b. Feb. 24, 1898, Neu-Karlsruhe, son of **Paul Landeis** and **Isabella Ruedinger** (source: EWZ). Peter m. **Marianna Landeis** b. 02 Nov. 1901 Blumenfeld, Nikolaiev (source: EWZ; also see **K17461** above, the da. of **Peter Landeis**). Note that

this Peter has the same birthdate as **K17461**, but there is a difference of 20 years; it seems likely that that **K17461** was the godfather). The *Heritage Review* 33:1, 2003 states the following information about **Peter Landeis**: "Landeis Petro [Peter] Pavlovich [son of Paul] b: 1898 in the village of Neuekarlsruhe [Neu Karlsruhe], Bashtansky district, a peasant, educated, primary education, lived in the village of Karlsruhe [Karlsruhe], Bashtansky district. An individual peasant. Was arrested on 1 November 1929. Was sentenced to 10 years at a labor camp by the Decision of the Ukrainian People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs on 28 March 1930. Fate unknown. Rehabilitated in 1990." This Peter Landeis was clearly related to our family, based not only on his surname but also on his link with Neu-Karlsruhe. It is quite likely that he is the person referred to in the letter by Katie Landeis (**K1322**), to whom she sent greetings in 1926. Since he was born in 1898, he was likely a nephew or younger cousin.

Peter and Marianna had 3 children:

- **Pauline Landeis**, b. Sept. 17, 1925, Neu-Karlsruhe.
- **Waldemar Landeis**, b. May 11, 1937, Kriwoj-Rog, district of Nikolaiev.
- **Johann Landeis**, b. Mar. 17, 1939, Karlsruhe.

b. Anton Landeis, b. 1899 or Nov. 11/18, 1900, Neu-Karlsruhe. Parents are shown as Paul Landeis and Isabella Riedinger (source: EWZ). He m. **Barbara Stockert**, b. May 25, 1905, Friedensdorf or June 2, 1905 Speyer. 1 Son:

Johann Landeis, b. Dec. 8, 1926, Friedensdorf or Neudorf, Odessa.

c. Rosa Landeis, b. Sept. 5, 1905, Neu-Karlsruhe. Parents are shown as Karl Landeis, mo. is Isabella Riedinger. Apparently there was an internal marriage within the Landeis family because the EWZ records shows Rosa as m. **Josef Landeis (K17462)**, b. Apr. 15, 1907, Karlsruhe. Children:

- **Eugenie Landeis**, b. 09 March 1930 Neu-Karlsruhe.
- **Arkadius Landeis**, b. 02 July 1931 Karlsruhe.
- **Thomas Landeis**, b. Dec. 10, 1932, Karlsruhe.
- **Rosa Landeis**, b. Dec 1932 Karlsruhe.
- **Elwire Landeis**, b. 08 Nov. 1943 Karlsruhe.

d. Veronika Landeis, b. Feb. 28, 1909, Neu-Karlsruhe, da. of Paul Landeis b. 1869 München and Isabella Duedinger, b. 1878 Dobraja. Children:

- **Michael Landeis**, b. Jan. 28, 1907 Horodfrunski, son of **Josef Landeis** and **Elizabeth**. Son:
 - **Paul Landeis**, b. Nov. 2, 1939, Nikolaiev.

3. Hannah Landes. The GRHS *Heritage Review* 32:4 (2002) states the following information: "Landes Ganna [Hannah] Andriivna [Andreas] was born in 1903 in the town of Mikolayiv, German, a peasant, educated, lived in the village of Veselinove, Veselinivsky district. A worker on a collective farm. Was arrested on 31 August 1945. Sentenced to 5 years at a labor camp by the the Special Committee of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR on 27 March 1946. Served a sentence at Chernogortab Camp of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR. Was rehabilitated in 1990 (page 50)." This Hannah Landes may not be a relative because of the spelling of her surname. There was a separate (although very distantly related) family with the surname "Landes" who emigrated from Switzerland to the village of Zurichthal in the Crimea. It is likely that Hannah Landes was from that

family, although her link with Nikolaiev (spelled Mykolaiev in Ukrainian) makes her a possible member of the Landeis family.

4. Kajetan Landeis, m. Susanna Lochbaum. Son:

- a. **Johann Landeis**, b. Feb. 17, 1905, Karlsruhe, m. **Regina Lochbaum**, b. April 12, 1907, Landau. 4 children, all born in Karlsruhe:
 - **Ludmilla Landeis**, b. Dec. 25, 1926.
 - **Andeline Landeis**, b. Dec. 31, 1927.
 - **Rudolf Landeis**, b. Oct. 20, 1930.
 - **Regina Landeis**, b. Oct. 16, 1938.

The March 6, 1914 issue of *Nord Dakota Herald*, published in Dickinson, contains a letter written by Karl Johann Sprung, from Karlsruhe, South Russia. He makes the following wry remark: "I also lost my place with the big boys, Kajetan Landeis took it over. That is not nice of him; I had the place already for five years and took good care of it. So that you know what kind of boys these are, I will explain it to you: they are the munchers (*Mummeln*) that I fodder." The letter is curious, and raises some interesting points. The reference to "the big boys" has a satirical double-meaning, referring both to the cattle as well as to the "big shots" in the village. This is reflected in Sprung's use of the word *Mummeln*, which can be translated to mean either "munchers" or "mumblers." Apparently Kajetan Landeis was one of the "big shots" in Karlsruhe, and he seems to have taken over Sprung's land or livestock, probably due to unpaid debts. The Landau church book refers to a Kajetan Friess and his wife Anna Maria Landeis in 1862 and 1865 (see below). It is very likely that he served as a baptismal sponsor for Kajetan Landeis, thus passing this unusual saint's name (the German form of saint Gaetano) into the Landeis family.

5. Anna Maria Landeis (K146), m. Kajetan (mistranslated as Caspar?) Friess.

- a. **Anna Maria Friess**, b. Dec. 30, 1862 Landau.
- b. **Anton Friess**, b. July 17, 1865 Landau.

6. Thomas Landeis, born Karlsruhe, m. Margaret Gerhardt, born Speier, 2 children:

- a. **Anna Maria Landeis**, b. Aug. 23, 1900 Speyer, marr. **Eustachius Jundt**, he b. Mar. 10, 1900 speyer. 5 children surnamed Jundt:
 - Magdalena, Karl, Thomas, Johann, and Friedrich Jundt.
- b. **Viktoria Landeis**, b. Aug. 13, 1902, Speyer.

7. Valentin Landeis, m. Cecilia, b. Sept. 1, 1888, Karlsruhe. Valentin died sometime after 1909 and Cecilia remarried to Martin Wander, b. May 3, 1897. There were 2 children from the first marriage with Valentin Landeis:

- a. **Klemens Landeis**, b. Jan. 2, 1906, Karlsruhe.
- b. **Veronika Landeis**, b. Feb. 28, 1909, Neu-Karlsruhe, m. **Michael Landeis** (son of **Josef 9.** below), b. Jan. 28, 1907, Horodfrunski (both had same surname). 1 son:
 - **Paul Landeis**, Nov. 2, 1939, Nikolajew.

8. Josef Landeis, m. Elizabeth. Son:

- a. **Michael Landeis**, b. Jan. 28, 1907, Horodfrunski, m. **Veronika Landeis** (7b. above),
- b. Feb. 28, 1909, Neu-Karlsruhe. Son:

- **Paul Landeis**, b. Nov. 2, 1939, Nikolajew.
9. **Maria Anna Landeis**, b. April 8, 1890, Landau, m1 to Blumenschein; m2 to **Nikodemas Foerderer**, b. 1895, Karlsruhe. Children:
a. **Franz Foerderer**, b. Mar. 11, 1918, Karlsruhe.
b. **Johann Foerderer**, b. 1922 Karlsruhe
c. **Martin Foerderer**, b. March 31, 1925
d. **Dominic Foerderer**, b. Dec. 25, 1928, Karlsruhe.
10. **Henry Landeis**, b. April 2, 1891 Karlsruhe, marr. **Rose Yantzer**, da. of Georg Yantzer and Anna Maria Renner in Katharinental. (source: Gress.org)
6 children:
a. **Beata Landeis**.
b. **Edward Landeis**.
c. **Joseph Landeis**.
d. **Henry Landeis**.
e. **Georg Landeis**, marr. **Irene Boehm**.
f. **Katharina Landeis**, marr. **Peter Knoll**.
11. **Georg Landeis**, m. **Marianna Moritz**. 2 children:
a. **Monica Landeis**, b. July 21, 1897, Karlsruhe, m. **Mathias Milius**. 7 children, surname **Milius**, all b. Nikolajewka.
b. **Magdalena Landeis**, b. July 22, 1907, m. **Georg Milius**. 4 children Milius surname all born in Nikolajewka.
12. **Karl Landeis**, m. **Marianne**. Son:
a. **Franz Landeis**, b. Oct. 28, 1903, Speyer, m. **Marianne Freudich**, b. May 5, 1889, Eigengut, district of Nikolajev. See EWZ 250-E, person 144587.
13. **Josef Landeis**, m. **Veronika**. Son:
Christian Landeis, b. May 10, 1909, m. **Katharina Tilschneider**, b. June 14, 1901, Speyer.
14. **Christian Landeis**, b. 1911. The Katharinenthal Village Executive Report on residents in 1923 shows Christian Landeis, age 12, the foster child of Stephan Sebastian Butsch age 62 and wife Barbara 57 (File 264-1-53 Nikolaiev Archive). Christian Landeis married **Frida Engelhardt**, they were deported to Novosibirsk during W.W.2, this was her second marriage.
15. **Katherine Landeis**, b. July 26, 1902, Landau, m. **Georg Roesch**, b. 1904, Rastadt. 6 children with surname Roesch, all born in N.Koleyewka and Karlsruhe.
16. **Johann Landeis**, b. Feb. 17, 1905, Karlsruhe, m. **Regina Lochbaum**, b. Apr. 12, 1907, Landau. 3 children:
a. **Andeline Landeis**, b. Dec. 31, 1927, Karlsruhe.
b. **Rudolf Landeis**, b. Oct. 20, 1930.
c. **Regina Landeis**, Oct. 16, 1938, Karlsruhe.

17. **Wilhelm Landeis**, Son:
a. **Rudolf Landeis**, m. Ida Fritz, b. April 3, 1918, Eigengut, Beresovka district, Odessa. Da:
- **Eva Fritz**, b. Sept. 29, 1943, Karlsruhe (she took her mother's surname).
18. **Alexander Landeis**, m. **Eva**. 3 children:
a. **Franziska Landeis**, b. July 21, 1919, Karlsruhe, m. **Vincens Ruff**, b. 1918, Karlsruhe. EWZ form 2016, date 1944.
b. **Johann Landeis**, b. 1922, Karlsruhe.
c. **Josef Landeis**, b. Dec. 18, 1924, Karlsruhe.
19. (First name unknown), **Landeis** m. **Barbara Ihly**, b. July 19, 1910, Karlsruhe. 4 children:
a. **Edmund Landeis**, b. Nov. 14, 1934, Karlsruhe.
b. **Johann Landeis**, b. Dec. 6, 1936, Karlsruhe, m. **Elizabeth Ferderer**, b. July 15, 1920, Karlsruhe. Da:
- **Eva**, b. Feb. 6, 1938, Karlsruhe.
c. **Hilarius Landeis**, b. Mar. 10, 1940, Karlsruhe.
d. **Raphael Landeis**, b. Aug. 2, 1942, Karlsruhe.
20. **Margaret Landeis**, b. June 28, 1911, Speyer, m. **Jakob Heidt**, b. Jan. 13, 1911, Katharinental.
4 children, surname **Heidt**, all b. Katharinental.
21. **Rosine Landeis**, b. Aug. 14, 1914, Speyer, m. **Georg Schuh**, b. Mar. 27, 1914, Waterloo, 4 children, all with Schuh surname, b. in Johannestal.
22. **Rudolf Landeis**, m. **Florentine Roeder**, b. June 6, 1917, Karlsruhe. Son:
a. **Rudolf Roeder**, b. Nov. 30, 1943, Karlsruhe (he took his mother's surname).
23. **Franziska Landeis**, b. July 21, 1919, Karlsruhe, m. **Vinzent Ruff**, b. 1918 Karlsruhe.
24. **U. (Ulrich?) Landeis**, m. **V. Federer**. One living person is linked to this couple, no further info is available.
25. **E. Landeis**, m. **G.M. Fleck**, she was born in the 1940s.
26. **K.M. Landeis**, m. **E.J. Harsche**. 3 children, surname Harsche, one of which was born in 1969, a recent immigrant family.
27. **Peter Landeis**, b. ca. 1900s ? in N.D., marr. **Tillie**, they resided in Linton and Selfridge, N.D. in the 1920s. They are referred to in a local history of Selfridge.

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