

Meier Family History
Louisa Meier-Landeis, her family in the Colony of München,
and her mother's Hoffmann family

By

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2021

The surname Meier is one of the most common family names in German speaking regions. It is thought to be derived from the headman or "mayor" of a town, as well as the steward, overseer, or farmer of an estate. After the 12th century this title became a surname and it occurred with various spellings, most commonly as Meier, but also as Maier, Mayer, or Meyer, as well as in compound forms, such as Meyerhofer and Grünemeyer. These spellings were used interchangeably, sometimes even within the same family. Genealogical distinctions should not be imputed to these minor differences in early spelling conventions in the German language.

My branch of the Meier family are descendants of German colonists who settled in Tsarist Russia in the first decade of the 19th century. They were part of a massive wave of emigration from the Rhine Pfalz, Alsace, and southwestern Germany by those seeking to escape the chaos of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. Tsar Alexander I. issued an invitation for foreign colonists, and his administration established several clusters of colonies in the Black Sea region between Odessa and Nikolaiev, in "South Russia" as the Ukraine was known at that time. The colonies in the Beresan river valley in 1809 were named after the major cities in the regions of Germany from which the settlers came, such as Speier, Rastadt, Karlsruhe, Worms, München (Munich), and Landau. The earliest Tsarist census records for these colonies are available in the publications of Fr. Konrad Keller,¹ Karl Stumpp,² and in the church records in the Roman Catholic Archbishop's Consistory in Saratov.

My mother's grandmother was Louisa Meier, born in 1864, her obituary states in the region of Nikolaiev. Louisa had two brothers, Friedrich and Jakob, who also came to the USA and their obituaries provide us with information about their family backgrounds. Louisa and her husband, Heinrich Landeis, immigrated to the USA in 1889 with their oldest children, including my grandfather, Alexander, who was an infant

¹ Fr. Konrad Keller

(a) 1910. *Die Beresaner katholischen deutschen Kolonien, zum hundertjährigen Jubiläum ihres Bestehens, 1809-1810 - 1909-1910,* published in the *Odessaer Volkskalender*, 1910. Translated by myself, English title "The Beresan Catholic German Colonies, the 100 Year Jubilee of their Creation, 1809-1810 - 1909-1910."

(b) 1914. *Die deutschen Kolonien in Südrussland*, vols. 1 and 2. Originally published by Jakob Zenter, Odessa, Ukraine in 1914. Translated and privately reprinted in 1973 by A. Becker, Saskatchewan, Canada. English title: The German Colonies in South Russia, vols. 1 and 2.

² Karl Stumpp, 1973. The Emigration From Germany to Russia in the Years 1762 to 1862. Lincoln, Nebraska: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

at the time. Louisa's brother, Friedrich Meier and his family, immigrated together with them on the same ship. Heinrich homesteaded at first near Richardton, North Dakota, then eventually moved to Montana where he bought land near Ryegate. My mother, Anna Landeis, was born there on the farm in 1915. She had a very close and loving relationship with her grandmother Louisa during her childhood. The family always said that mom resembled her in hair color (blond) and facial features. Louisa never learned much English, so my mother served as her interpreter and translated all of her mail; consequently, mom had the opportunity to hear stories about the family's past in Russia, some of which she passed down to me.

When Heinrich and Louisa Landeis came across to the USA in 1889, the ship records showed that their place of origin was Neu-Karlsruhe (New Karlsruhe). This was a daughter colony of Karlsruhe, established in 1867. It was located at Baschlanka, about 48 miles east of Karlsruhe, on the east side of the Ingul river, and 42 miles north of the main administrative city of Nikolaiev. The *Deutscher Volkskalendar* of 1913, published in Odessa, shows that Neu-Karlsruhe remained a small village – at that date its population was only 199 people (although several people had emigrated to the USA by then). It was described as being in the Province (*Gouvernement*) of Cherson, the District (*Kreis*) of Odessa, the administrative center (*Volost*) of Poltawka, and the closest post-station was Poltawka. Interestingly, the village mayor (*Dorfschulz*) in 1913 was named Landeis. Neu-Karlsruhe was an affiliate of the Catholic mother-church 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.

A descendant by the name of Philipp Landeis wrote a detailed history of Neu-Karlsruhe, published by the *Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland* (Society of Germans from Russia) in 1962. He stated that his grandfather, Jakob Landeis, was one of the founders of the daughter-colony in 1867. This was most likely the first-cousin to Peter Landeis, Heinrich's father. Peter Landeis was shown in the census of Karlsruhe in 1840 as a young lad of 15 years of age. Peter doesn't appear in the census of 1858 or in any of the later records for the colony. By the mid 19th century the German colonists had begun spreading out from the mother colonies and establishing new daughter colonies or leasing land. There were also growing German neighborhoods in both Odessa and Nikolaiev where some had settled as tradesmen. It's likely that Peter Landeis left Karlsruhe, perhaps settling for awhile in the nearby colony of München. The surname Landeis also occurred in the German daughter colony of Halbstadt, east of Karlsruhe, and at least one member of the family settled farther south in Crimea. At some point, Peter and his first wife (her name is unknown) and their two children -- Heinrich (born 1864) and Katherine (born 1866) -- moved to Neu-Karlsruhe after it was established in 1867, they may have been among its original founders, along with a cousin Jakob Landeis.

Louisa Meier and at least one of her siblings, Friedrich, moved to Neu-Karlsruhe. According to family stories, after her father (Alois Meier) died Louisa's mother (Barbara Hoffmann) remarried to a widower, Peter Landeis. Peter Landeis and Barbara Hoffmann-Meier owned a considerable amount of land in Neu-Karlsruhe from their joint family holdings, which they wanted to keep intact, so they decided to arrange a marriage between their two step-children, Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier. Arranged marriage was not an unusual practice in the German colonies, and it was also

common throughout Europe at that time. In the dialects spoken in the colonies it was known as "*koppela*" (from the German verb "*koppelen*," to couple or join together; the match-maker was known as the "*Koppelsmann*"). Louisa didn't want to marry her step-brother, but her wishes were over-ridden and the arranged marriage took place in about 1881, when she was 17 years old. According to my mother, Heinrich and Louisa did not have a close relationship; nevertheless, they were good Catholics so they remained married throughout their lives and had 12 children.

According to Louisa, she and Heinrich Landeis sold their land in Neu-Karlsruhe and brought at least \$2,000 or more with them on the journey to the USA -- a sizeable amount of money in those times. They took a train from Odessa to Hamburg and boarded the steamship *Augusta Victoria* on Oct. 3, 1889.



Augusta Victoria

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 driven by twin-screws to a speed of 18.5 knots. The steamship 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 registry³ shows the following information for Heinrich and Louise Landeis: their point of origin was listed as Neu-Karlsruhe, his occupation was a farmer, both were 25 years of age, and their children were Philip age 6, Catharine age 2, and "Elise" a female infant age 6 months. This entry for "Elise" was an error, it referred

³ LDS microfilm 0472934

to "Alex," their third child (my grandfather), born in March of 1889 (if the months are rounded off, Alex would in fact have been about 6 months of age at that time, which matches the age shown for "Elise"). Louisa always said that Alex was born in Russia shortly before their departure and that he came across as a baby. "Alex" as pronounced in their German dialect sounds similar to "Elise" and it would have been an easy mistake to make by the person writing names in the ship register, while facing a long queue of passengers. Louisa teased Alex later in life by saying that he was "a man without a country."

In the adjacent berth on the ship was Louisa's brother, Friedrich Maier (that's how his surname was written by the clerk), and his family. Friedrich was age 31, his wife Magdalena was 22, and their children were Andreas age 5, and Josef 11 months. Friedrich was also listed as a farmer. From information provided by their descendants, we know that Magdalena's maiden name was Landeis, which indicates that there was a double marriage between the two families. Magdalena Landeis was the daughter of Philipp Landeis and Barbara Reisenauer. The ship registry shows that both the Meier and Landeis families originated in Neu-Karlsruhe (indeed, they are the only two families on the registry listed as being from this colony).

The Augusta Victoria departed from Hamburg on Oct. 3rd and stopped to pick up additional passengers in Southampton, England. After a journey of ten days across the Atlantic, it docked at New York on Oct. 12, 1889. Louisa said that she carried their cash in a money belt beneath her dress, and after a few days it began to rub sores on her belly. The ship was infested with lice, which got beneath her belt, adding to her misery. In the middle of the night, she was awakened by someone fumbling with the buttons on her blouse, but he fled after she stirred. It was common practice for people to carry their money concealed beneath their clothing, so Louisa believed that this person was trying to steal her cash. She described how joyful they were when they saw the Statue of Liberty as they approached New York harbor, and they knew their sea voyage was finally over. The immigration center at Ellis Island hadn't been opened yet by 1889, so the family went through immigration clearance on the mainland. Louisa also mentioned that they took a boat on the St. Lawrence river, although most immigrants boarded a train to North Dakota, so their exact route is not clear.

Heinrich and Louisa homesteaded at first near Richardton, N.D., east of Dickinson. This area was settled by several families from the German colonies in the Beresan region, most of whom came to the USA in groups of relatives and friends. They had nine more children in North Dakota, for a total of 12 in their marriage (see summary table at end). After a few years, Heinrich and Louisa sold their homestead and moved south near Amar, west of Bowman, N.D. There is an old photo which shows them standing in front of a sod house. My mother and her sisters believed that this was taken at the homestead near Amar. This land was too arid for fruitful farming, so they lived mainly from raising sheep. Alex, my grandfather, also took out a neighboring homestead when he became old enough, and there he met and married my grandmother, Ida (Eda) Fuchs, who had also taken out a homestead nearby. Victor Schaff, who was related to the Landeis family, sold his homestead in North Dakota and moved to the area east of Ryegate, Montana, where he bought land in the Musselshell river valley. Victor sent word back to Heinrich that the land there was fertile and well-watered. Heinrich sold his homestead in about 1912 and also bought land east of Ryegate. Heinrich's son, Alex and his wife Ida soon followed and purchased land

nearby. Heinrich and Louisa remained there for the rest of their lives. Both died at a rest home in Billings, she on Feb. 16, 1938.

The obituary for Louisa appeared on Feb. 17, 1938:

“Former Ryegate Resident Dies, Brain Tumor Fatal to Mrs. Henry Landeis.

A brain tumor proved fatal here Wednesday morning to Mrs. Louise Landeis, 73, wife of Henry Landeis and resident of Ryegate for the last 22 years. She died at the Montana Home for the Aged, 804 North Broadway, following an extended illness.

She and her husband came to the Montana Home for the Aged from Ryegate February 1.

She was born in Nikolof [Nikolaiev], Russia, Dec. 10, 1864, was married there and came to the United States 50 years ago. The family lived in North Dakota for several years before moving to Ryegate in 1916.

Surviving besides her widower are five sons, Alex and Ambrose Landeis, both of Ryegate; Jack and John Landeis, both of Fort Peck, and Phillip Landeis of Dickinson, N.D.; two daughters, Mrs. Gus Paridaen of Ryegate [Anna], and Mrs. Barbara Webb of Seattle, and 10 grandchildren, among them Alex Landeis, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Deichl [Clara], Mrs. John Wagner [Anna], Mrs. R.H. Mees [Pauline], and Miss Frances Landeis, all of Billings.

The body is at Settergren’s funeral home and will be taken to Ryegate for services in the Catholic church there at 9 a.m. Saturday. Burial will be in the Ryegate cemetery.”



**Louisa Meier and Heinrich Landeis
Sod-House in North Dakota**



Louisa Meier-Landeis in Ryegate, MT



Heinrich Landeis in Ryegate, MT

The Origins of Our Branch of the Meier Family

The German colonies in the Beresan river region, north of the Black Sea, were established in 1809 and settled in 1810. Soon after, the Tsarist administration commissioned a census (known as a "Revision List"), which listed all the settlers in each colony and their places of origin. This census took place at different times, starting in 1809 and continuing through 1817, with a later census of Karlsruhe and Speier in 1858. There were several families with the surname Meier (spelled in various ways) in the Catholic colonies. Because it is a relatively common surname, and because they came from different regions of Germany or Alsace, they obviously weren't all related to each other. We have some important clues which help us narrow down the candidates for the family's home colony and their point of origin. We know that Louisa Meier-Landeis had two brothers, Friedrich and Jakob, both of whom also immigrated to the USA. I was able to contact a descendant of Friedrich and a grandson of Jakob, who provided me with some helpful information. That, plus additional information in the obituaries and death certificates of Jakob and Friedrich, and the existing records in the Roman Catholic Archbishop's Consistory in Saratov, Russia, help fill in the gaps in the family history. I will summarize this below, organized under the headings of what we know about each of the siblings -- Louisa, Friedrich, and Jakob.

A. Louisa Meier

Louisa Meier was born on Dec. 10, 1864. She told my mother that she was born in "Mukolaf, Russia," and this was what was written on her death certificate in Billings, Montana in 1938. Her parents were not shown. There were two obituaries for Louisa published in newspapers in the Ryegate, Montana area. One stated her place of birth as "Nekolof" and the other as "Nikolof." These are just dialect variations in pronunciation of the city of Nikolaiev, which is located east of Odessa near the Black Sea coast. In the German dialects spoken in the colonies, Nikolaiev was pronounced in various ways, such as "Nikolae" or "Nikolaf." In Ukrainian, the city is known as Mykolaiev, which was pronounced in the German dialects as "Mukolaf." Louisa's sons, Alex (my grandfather) and Ambrose both also adopted Louisa's general statement and said that they too were born in "Nikolae, Russia."

Unfortunately we can't assume that Louisa or her sons literally meant that they were born in that city. It was common practice for the older German immigrants from the colonies to state their place of origin simply as either "Odessa" or "Nikolaiev." Those were the two largest administrative cities along the Black Sea coast. Their assumption was that the younger generations in the USA didn't know Russian geography, so the elders simply generalized that they came from the region of these two major Russian cities. Many German-Russian descendants have reported that their grandparents followed this same practice of saying that they were born in Odessa or Nikolaiev, although the documentation may have shown that they were actually born in one of the German colonies to the north. When speaking among themselves, the older immigrants were usually more specific and identified themselves by their home colony -- e.g., "I'm a Rastadter," a "Landauer," and so on.

There is a possibility that Louisa's statement could be literally true! By the mid 19th century there were growing German communities and parishes in Nikolaiev and Odessa as younger families began leaving the home colonies seeking employment opportunities in these two larger cities. It's also quite possible that Louisa Meier's parents may have gone to Nikolaiev for medical services when Louisa was born, although the great majority of babies were delivered at home in the colonies by a midwife.

So, leaving aside the specific question of where Louisa Meier was born, we should rephrase the question in broader terms – what was the home colony for her Meier family? If we could determine that, then we can link the family with the earliest census records for the colonies 1811-1818, which show the original immigrants and their home villages in Germany.

We know with certainty that Heinrich Landeis' family stemmed from the colony of Karlsruhe. Heinrich's ancestors were among the original founders of Karlsruhe in 1809, and I have been able to trace their history back to Hördt on the west bank of the Rhine, and even long before that. The entry on the ship registry for Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier, and her brother Friedrich Meier and Magdalena Landeis, when they came across to the USA in 1889 lists their point of origin as Neu-Karlsruhe. This was a daughter colony of Karlsruhe, established in 1867, north of Nikolaiev. However, we again have a problem because Louisa was born in 1864, three years before the daughter colony was established, and her two older brothers were born a few years before that. So the question then becomes, which was the home colony for Louisa's parents before they settled in Neu-Karlsruhe?

There are baptismal records for members of the Landeis family in Halbstadt, a small daughter colony about 10 miles east of Karlsruhe, and also in Klosterdorf, a German colony located about 70 miles east of Nikolaiev on the Dnieper river.⁴

Barbara Landeis & Johann Mengel had children born in Klosterdorf 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. 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, born 1886 and later in Klosterdorf. In 1890-1891 several families with the surname Mayer

⁴ Halbstadt was established in 1869, it was a Catholic daughter colony known as Michailowka. Klosterdorf was established in 1804, on the northern edge of Alt-Schwedendorf (*Gammalsvenkby*), an earlier Swedish colony established in 1782. Two other German colonies, Mühlhausendorf and Schlangendorf, were also established. In 1859 there were 35 families residing in each of the three colonies. and by 1887 Klosterdorf had increased to 70 families. Klosterdorf was named after an Orthodox monastery about 20 miles to the north. It was a Catholic colony, affiliated with the parish of Nikolaiev, and the other two German colonies, Mühlhausendorf and Schlangendorf, were Lutheran. These three colonies and the older Alt-Schwedendorf were located on the Dnieper river, about 53.5 miles upriver from Kherson, which was 42.7 miles southeast from Nikolaiev.

emigrated from Klosterdorf to Canada, where they were among the founders of Rastadt in Saskatchewan.⁵

There is no clear link for Louisa with these Maier families; however, it's possible that Peter Landeis and perhaps even his first wife settled for a while in Halbstadt, or in one of the nearby mother colonies, or even farther away in Klosterdorf, then relocated to Neu-Karlsruhe after it was established in 1867.

My mother recalled some stories about Louisa's parents, but she couldn't recall their names, and unfortunately they were not listed on her death certificate or in her obituaries. The baptismal and death records for Rastadt and München give us tangible clues, along with information on the death records of Friedrich and Jakob, indicating that her parents were Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann. Louisa was born two months after Alois's death in 1864, and his widow Barbara Hoffmann then remarried to Peter Landeis and they settled in Neu-Karlsruhe after it was founded in 1867. Note the similarity between Louisa's name and Alois (the feminine form is Aloisa). This was an unusual name among the German colonists, and it seems quite likely that she was named in commemoration of her father.

B. Friedrich Meier

Friedrich was the oldest sibling who came to the USA with Louisa and Heinrich. He was born Nov. 29, 1856 (the 1900 U.S. Census shows July 1856). One family tree on Ancestry.com indicates that his middle name was "Wilhelm," but this is not shown in any records. He immigrated in 1889 with his wife Magdalena and their children in the adjacent berth on the same ship with Louisa Meier and her husband, Heinrich Landeis. Magdalena's death record and her descendants state that she was Anna Magdalena Landeis, daughter of Philipp Landeis and Barbara Reisenauer. This indicates that there was a double marriage between the Meier and Landeis families.⁶ Both families listed their point of origin as Neu-Karlsruhe. Friedrich became a U.S. citizen on Oct. 27, 1898. Friedrich and his family are shown in Richardton, N.D. in the 1900 U.S. Census. After homesteading near the Landeis family outside Richardton, N.D., Friedrich moved to Billings, Montana, where he earned his living as a carpenter. His family are shown in Billings in the 1910 U.S. Census. My mother remembered that when she was young Louisa told her that she had cousins in Billings, some of whom were in the Army. She recalled the names of Henry, Andreas (later known as Anton Fred), Joseph, and Victor (see the summary at the end of this narrative for specific names and dates). My

⁵ The records for the St. Peter's parish in Saskatchewan show these Meier families from Klosterdorf: (1) Johann Mayer, wife Margaret Sperling, children Michael 17, Marianna 13, Katharina 11, Josephina 9; (2) Jacob Meyer, wife Margaret Ehmman, 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.

⁶ The marriage certificate for their son, Anton Friedrich Meier, lists his mother as Magdalena "Landise," and his death certificate lists her as Anna Landise. Her grandchildren referred to her as "Lena." (Info from Steve Meyers). The surname Landeis underwent changes in spelling in the USA, to Landise, Landice, and Landis, as did the Meier, Maier, Meyer family.

grandfather, Alex, took my mother to Billings when she was 18 where she stayed with Henry Meier, one of her cousins, until she arranged to move in with her sister, Clara.

Friedrich's wife Magdalena wrote a brief notice of his death, which was forwarded by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Henry Meyer, to the N.D. Herold (a German language newspaper in Dickinson, N.D.) on March 23, 1914, which I have translated below:

"Dear Herold: my husband, Friedrich Meier, departed from this world on March 17, 1914 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 named Jakob Meier, residing near Mott, N.Dak., and he also had a sister married to Heinrich Landeis who resides in Montana. This serves as a notice to you. Mrs. Henry Meyer, Billings, Mont."

It should be noted that she spelled the family name two different ways in this notice (Meier and Meyer), and the death certificate spells it as Meyers. This again shows that little significance should be given to differences in the spelling of family surnames.

A brief obituary also appeared in the Billings Gazette, March 19, 1914:

"Carpenter dies - Frederick Meyer 206 South 27th St., a retired carpenter, died at his home yesterday at the age of 58 years.⁷ He is survived by his wife and several children, including two sons in the army stationed at the Vancouver barracks. Funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon at the Catholic church."

Friedrich's death certificate in 1914 in Billings states only that he was born in Russia and it doesn't provide a location (as was common for the first generation of immigrants). However, it does provide us with an important piece of information that was missing for Louisa - it states that his parents were "**Alex Meyers and Barbara Hoffmann.**"

C. Jakob Meier

The other brother, Jakob Meier, had a more varied history and the documentation available on him unfortunately complicates our quest for the Meier family origins. His mother's surname and his father's name do not match that for Friedrich. The information we have was provided by his grandson (likewise named Jake shown as **M1223** in the tables at the end of this document), and also by his great-grandson, Tony, and his wife Pam.

The birth dates for Jacob vary from Aug. 23, 1860 to March 2, 1861. The latter is based on his death certificate.⁸ There is no clear explanation for the variation. His death

⁷ It should also be noted that Friedrich's death certificate indicates that he died of uremia, probably due to an enlarged prostate.

⁸ Jacob's petition for naturalized citizenship (granted July 10, 1911) states that he was born Aug. 23, 1861 in Rastadt. Jacob Meyer, son of Alois, is not shown in the baptismal records for Rastadt and München in 1861. The 1910 census states that he was 51 born in "Russia," which yields a birth year of about 1859. His death certificate states that he was born on March 2, 1861 in "Odessa, Russia," and he died July 24, 1943 at the age of 82. His tombstone shows 1861 - 1943. It should be noted that some family histories

certificate states that his parents were “**Aloysius Meier**” (**Alois**) and “**Barbara?**” (maiden name unknown).

Jakob married **Barbara Boehm**, whose name is written as “Bahm” by some of the descendants. This spelling is apparently based on how it was pronounced in dialect. For example, there was a double marriage of the Boehm family with my Wagner family. My father pronounced their surname as “Baym” (spelled “Boehm”) when he spoke English, but as “Bahm” in German – e.g., my uncle John Boehm was referred to as “*d’ Bahma Johann.*” Barbara Boehm, Jakob’s wife, was born in the colony of Katherinental most likely in 1856.⁹ She may have had a son from a prior relationship. Jakob and Barbara resided in Rastadt or München early in their marriage, where their first two children were born: Barbara in 1885 and Thomas in 1887. Barbara married Alex Zentner.

Rather than immigrating to North Dakota, as did Louisa and Friedrich, Jakob and his family first went to Brazil in 1887 where they remained for 16 years. Their oldest child, Barbara Ann, was 2 years old at the time (born 1885), and son, Thomas, was a baby (born 1887). They had two more sons in Brazil, Innocenz in 1892 and Georg in 1896.

Jacob and his family resided in Cocal do Sul (also shown as Rio Cocal) in Laguna, a municipality in the state of Santa Catherina, in the southern part of Brazil. This is located on the Atlantic coast and it is a popular resort region today. Santa Catharina and the neighboring states of Parana and Rio Grande do Sul, have a large number of immigrants from Europe, especially from Germany. These are some extracts from Wikipedia:

“German Brazilians live mostly in the country's South Region, with lesser but still significant degree in the Southeast Region. German dialects together make up the second most spoken first language in Brazil after Portuguese....The most influenced state by the German immigration was Santa Catarina, the only state where Germans were the main nationality among immigrants. Germans and Austrians were about 50% of all immigrants settled in Santa Catarina, and between 15-20% in Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná. In the rest of the country, Germans accounted for less than 5% of immigrants.”

“Santa Catarina was one of the few states in Brazil that actually were mostly populated by a settlement program with colonists coming from almost every European nation; their heritage can be seen in the architecture and the customs of the population of the state. ... The state's social indicators are the best in Latin America, besides being the Brazilian state with the highest levels of income, education and public health, and one of the lowest rates of illiteracy. Santa Catarina boasts Brazil's highest average life expectancy and lowest homicide rate in addition to lower levels of corruption. The cities of the state are also considered some of the most livable in the country, enjoying a reputation of being ‘clean, safe and organized’.”

Michael Miller, director of the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection at North Dakota State University, gave this description of his visit:

mistakenly show Jacob as born in Rastatt, Baden, rather than in the colony of Rastadt in Russia.

⁹ Barbara Boehm’s death certificate says she was b. 1856, her tombstone says 1858, the ship manifest says age 54 (= b. 1850), which seems unlikely because this would be 10 years older than Jakob. The 1910 census shows her as age 54, which yields a birth year of ca. 1856. This would still make her 5 years older than Jakob.

“At Santa Rosa, state of Rio Grande do Sul, near the borders of Argentina and Paraguay, there is a large community of Volhynian German families. For many of these families, German is first language, even today. ... I was impressed how I could communicate in the German language especially at Mondai for these interviews with Bessarabian Germans with ancestral roots to the villages of Krasna and Teplitz. These families emigrated to Santa Catarina in the 1930s. ... With the community of Mennonite Germans at Colonia Witmarusm, state of Parana, I could easily communicate with their German Platt Deutsch. ... The states of Parana, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul have large agricultural production with two growing seasons for crops mostly of soybeans and corn.”

Jacob and Barbara had two more sons in Brazil: Innocenz in 1892 and George in 1896. Harvey Eberle (my correspondent on internet) has extracted available records in the churchbooks in Brazil and Argentina. He reported the following birth record for Jakob's son, Innocenz Meier:

Name Innocenz Meyer
Christening Date 11 Dec 1892
Birth Date 08 Sep 1892
Birthplace Nossa Senhora da Piedade, Tubarão, Santa Catarina, Brazil
Father's Name Jacob Meyer
Mother's Name Barbara Bohm [Boehm]
Paternal Grandfather's Name Luiz Meyer [Alois]
Paternal Grandmother's Name Barbara Rambur [Romburg]
Maternal Grandfather's Name Rosemus Bohm [Erasmus Boehm]
Maternal Grandmother's Name Catharina Mischel.

This record provides some missing links for the family. Innocenz's grandparents (Jakob's parents) were shown as “**Luiz**” **Meier** and **Barbara** “**Rambur**.” The name “Luiz” was not “Louis,” but rather it was a rendering by the priest for the German name “**Alois**” (**Aloysius**). This is confirmed in Jakob's death certificate in North Dakota which lists his father as Aloysius. Concerning the “Rambur” surname mentioned in Innocenz Meyer's baptismal record, the original German form is “Romburg” which also appears in some early records in Russia.

In 1904 Jakob Meier and his family immigrated to the USA. They boarded the S.S. Capri, departing from Santo, a harbor at Buenos Aires, Argentina, on June 11, 1904, and arriving at New York on July 3, 1904. They came with three children, Thomas, Innocenz, and Georg. Barbara Ann, who was 19, came across separately with her husband, Alex Zentner. The ship registry shows the following information:

Jacob Meyer 44, wife Barbara Meyer 54, and sons Thomas 18, Innocenz 11, and Georg 8.
Occupation: “labromer” [laborer].
Read and write? No [this probably means not in English].
Nationality: Odessa [in pencil this is corrected to “Russia”].
Race: Russian [in pencil this is corrected to “German”].

Last Residence: Rio Cocal (Laguna) [Brazil].
Final Destination: New York [in pencil this is corrected to "Dickinson, N.D."]
Paid by: Self.
Possession of \$50 or more? Yes.
Resided before in U.S.? No.
Joining a relative or friend? Rel.
Ever imprisoned? No.
Polygamist or Anarchist? No.
Health, deformed or crippled? No.

The age of Barbara Boehm-Meier shown on the ship registry is an error, she was not 10 years older than Jacob, but rather about 3 years, as shown on their tombstone and other documents in North Dakota.

According to memories of their grandson, Jake, a young member of the family died while enroute on the ship; however, if this is true he wasn't either of the three sons because they are all shown on the ship register when it landed at New York and they all died in the USA.

Jake also recalled that they were lured to North Dakota at the urging of Jakob's "brother," who would have been Friedrich, residing in Mott, N.D. area at the time. Friedrich later moved to Billings, MT. Jake also recalled that his grandparents used to talk frequently about the Landeis family and about the colonies of Rastadt and München. The wives in the family didn't like the climate in North Dakota and Montana because they were accustomed to the warmth in Brazil. They would have returned to South America, if it weren't for the resistance of their husbands.

Jakob and Barbara settled for a while near Richardton, N.D., where many of the immigrants from the Beresan colonies initially homesteaded, then later they homesteaded 18 miles northeast of Mott, in Hettinger County, N.D. The land ownership atlas for Hettinger County in 1917 shows that Jakob owned 160 Acres in the northwest portion of section 33 in Township 135. His son Thomas owned 160 Acres in the adjacent section to the north. 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. Placidus cemetery, near Mott, N.D.

Jakob's son, Thomas, 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. He lived in Laguna, Rio Gogal, Brazil before immigrating to the USA, and he had never become a citizen of Brazil. Thomas married Beata Fitterer [Fütterer] in 1912 at the St. Placidus church, north of Burt. They retired in the small town of Lemmon, N.D. However, Thomas's obituary provides different information about his place of birth, stating that he was born in the colony of München.

The Fütterer family history, written in German which I translated, provides a brief summary of Thomas' family:

"Beate Meier, born Fütterer, born June 4, 1895 in Katharinental, died in the USA in the 1960s. She married Dec. 19, 1912 with Thomas Meier born March 1, 1887 in München district of Odessa, died in the 1960s in South Dakota. Their children:

Josef born July 31, 1913.

Peter born Sept. 21, 1914.

Johann born April 16, 1916.

Kaspar born May 3, 1918.

Barbara born June 20, 1920.

Thomas born July 12, 1922.

Anna born August 31, 1926.

Paul born April 2, 1932.

Viola born Dec. 4, 1935.

Genoveva born Dec. 20, 1939.

All the children were born in South Dakota.

Beate had a hard life in her younger years. She had to support herself from the age of 13. In 1911 she was sent to live with her brothers in the USA, where she worked very hard. She married Thomas Meier in 1912 and had 10 children, which was also a burden to care for. Her husband was 12 years older than her [note the differences in age from Thomas's other records]. She had 10 children, 42 grandchildren, a total of 52 descendants in 1959."

Friedrich, Jakob, and Louisa's Parents

In summary, we have some inconsistencies in the information available for the parents of Jakob, Friedrich, and Louisa Meier. We know that they were siblings, but the names of their parents don't match.

(1) There is an inconsistency with the father's names. Jakob's death certificate lists his father as "**Aloysius Meier**," and his son Innocenz's birth record in Brazil lists his grandfather as "**Luiz**" Meyer. Luiz was a rendering by the priest for the German form, **Alois (Aloysius)**. There are also five baptismal records in München that refer to the father as **Alois Meier**, plus the name Alois occurs in the EWZ records from World War 2, so this name is certain. This will be summarized later.

Friedrich's death certificate lists his father as "**Alex**" Meyers. Louisa's death certificate unfortunately does not list her parents' names. How can we explain the differing names of Friedrich's father, **Alex**, and Jacob's father, **Alois**, which appears in all the other records for the family? Both were married to the same woman, **Barbara Hoffmann**, which indicates that they were likely the same person. All the baptismal records for their children refer to Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann, none to Alex Meier.

In my opinion, the simplest explanation is that there was a mistake on Friedrich's death certificate. The names Alex and Alois sound similar in the German dialect spoken in our family and it is quite possible that the two names were confused by the undertaker. Recall that my grandfather, Alex, was mistakenly listed as "Elise" on the ship record in 1889, which shows that the two names were spoken similarly with emphasis on the last syllable of the name. The person who wrote the information on Friedrich's death certificate in 1914 in Billings, MT was a native English speaker, G.B. Balsam, and he may have misunderstood the name provided.

The other likely explanation for confusion in details on Friedrich's death certificate is that the informant was not reliable. The certificate shows him as A.F. Meyers, who was Anton Fred, the son of Friedrich. Anton Fred was uncertain about some details of his own family background. When Friedrich came to the USA in 1889 the ship record shows that he had a son, Andreas, age 5. Andreas is also shown as their son in the 1900 U.S. Census, but he is not shown in 1910 when he would have been 26. At some point Andreas changed his name to Anton Fred. I have a copy of a 1940 letter from the clerk's office in Billings, MT

responding to his inquiry about his actual birthdate and whether he was in fact a U.S. citizen. The clerk replied that he had no information. Anton Fred's newspaper obituary in the Billings Gazette on Oct. 18, 1959 garbled his information with that of his father, Friedrich. The obituary correctly states that Anton Fred was the son of Friedrich Meier and Anna Magdalena Landeis, however it mistakenly states that Anton Fred was born in 1874 (rather than 1884) and that he came to the USA with his parents in 1877 (rather than 1889). The names of his children are also confused with his siblings. The obituary states that he had sons Thomas, Victor, and Fred, who were "with the Army" in 1959. This repeats the information for the sons of Friedrich in his obituary in 1914. My hunch is that when Anton Fred died in 1959 his widow gave the undertaker the German obituary for Friedrich and he mistook the information for the two families (both had the same name, Friedrich and Fred). The undertaker probably couldn't read German, nor could Anton Fred's widow (she was his third wife, Maude Sumter).

Given this confusion of details in Anton Fred's family, it is perhaps not surprising that we have one idiosyncratic piece of information showing his grandfather as "Alex," rather than Alois. As we will see, there is a clear line of descent for the names Alois Meier and his wife Barbara Hoffmann for all their children born in München from 1850 to 1862, also in Alois's death record in 1864, and in the EWZ records from World War 2. In contrast, the name Alex Meier occurs only once in all the family records, which was on Friedrich's death certificate, recorded by an English speaking clerk.

If this scenario is correct, Louisa's father almost certainly was also Alois Meier. Alois died only 2 months before Louisa's birth and it is highly likely that she was named in commemoration of her father. The feminine form of the name is "Aloisa."

The death of Alois Meier must have left his widow, Barbara Hoffmann, in dire straits. Barbara was pregnant at the time and he died just two months before Louisa's birth. According to Russian law, title to land in the colonies could only be in the husband's name, or after his death in the name of a son who was of legal age. Widows without a son often remarried quickly to avoid losing their land holdings. Barbara had no adult sons to pick up the burden of supporting the family, or to qualify as legal owners for the family property. Friedrich was only 8 years old, and Jacob was 4 years old. Louisa said that after her father died, her widowed mother remarried to Peter Landeis who was also a widower, so it made sense for the two to remarry quickly. There are no records showing that Alois's widow, Barbara Hoffmann, was ever married to an "Alex" Meier, but all the other records consistently show her husband as "Alois."

I also wondered about the source for my grandfather's first name, **Alex Landeis**. Was it perhaps derived from someone in the Meier family? In the German colonies babies usually were given the name of their godparent. As the baptismal records summarized below will show, our stem ancestor, Johann Meier, had a son Alex, born Sept. 4, 1858. Supposedly this Alex and Alois were brothers, although there was a 29 year difference in their birthdates (Alois 1829, Alex 1858). Since Friedrich, Jakob and Louisa were born between 1856 to 1864 this Alex couldn't have been their father, nor was he Barbara's husband, but the records show that he was their young uncle and he was in their same generation. 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. It was common practice to have uncles or cousins serve as godparents.

(2) There is also an inconsistency in their mother's surnames shown on the death certificates. Jakob's death certificate lists his mother only as **Barbara** (maiden name unknown). His son Innocenz's birth record in Brazil states his grandmother as **Barbara "Rambur."** Friedrich's death certificate shows his mother as **Barbara Hoffmann**. The baptismal records for the first four children of Alois Meier in München all show his wife as **Barbara Hoffmann**, but his youngest child, Maria Josepha (born 1862 in Rastadt) is shown as the daughter of Alois Meier and **Barbara Romburg**.

Fortunately, there is a clear and simple explanation for this difference. Barbara Hoffmann's father, **Jacob Hoffmann**, died before 1839 in Karlsruhe and his widow, **Magdalena Bär**, remarried to Kaspar Rambur (Romburg) in Speier. Barbara Hoffmann was 11 years old at the time, and she was the step-daughter of Kaspar Rambur. In the baptismal records she usually used her biological surname Hoffmann, but on a few occasions she used her step-father's surname. When children were baptised in the colonies it was customary for the priest to ask for both parents' birth surnames to confirm that the child was legitimate. If the child was illegitimate, the priest almost always made special note of that. Details will be discussed later in the history of the Hoffmann and Rambur (Romburg) families below.

The home colony for the Meier family

The records show that the Hoffmann family came from Karlsruhe, and the Rambur/Romburg family came from Speier. Which was the home colony for our Meier family? If we know the colony in which the family first settled when they immigrated to Tsarist Russia in 1809, we can trace the roots of the family back to its stem ancestor and to its home village in Germany or Alsace, which was shown in the Revision Lists.

There were separate and unrelated Meier families that settled in the Catholic colonies in the Beresan valley, plus in most of the other colonies in the broader Black Sea region. Over time each of these colonies developed its own separate and unrelated Meier/Meyer/Mayer lineages, which adds to the complexity of tracing persons with this surname in the available records.

Karlsruhe had an early founder named Johann Adam Meier, he was born 1781 in Dahn, Pirmasens, Rhine Pfalz, and he died in 1814 age 33. His son Heinrich b. ca. 1812 married Katharine Deibig on Oct. 26, 1831 in Karlsruhe. She was the daughter of Philipp Deibig from Leimersheim, Pfalz. Phillip died Oct. 11, 1841, age 61, in Karlsruhe. Heinrich had two daughters but no son named Johann. Heinrich Meier died March 18, 1844 in Karlsruhe, age 32, survived by wife, 3 sons, and 3 daughters. Martin Majer and Magdalena Kopp in Karlsruhe had a daughter, Elisabeth, a widow, who married Dominick Hörner, a widower, in Speier on May 6, 1834. Georg Maier had a son Alois, born 1852. He was born too late in time to be a candidate for my ancestor Alois who was b. ca. 1829 in München.. Jacob Meier had a son, Joseph, born 1854. The 1858 census shows no Meier households in Karlsruhe. Barbara Meier married Jakob Schüler on Nov. 6, 1827 in Karlsruhe. Presumably she was born in the 1810s, there is no clue about her family origins. Valentin Meier and Magdalena had a daughter Elisabeth who died in Karlsruhe on Jan. 3, 1861, age 12. Meier families were in Karlsruhe until about 1869, after which there were no further references to this surname in the colony.

Katharinental had a founder named Simon Meier, b. 1780 in Plankstadt, Mannheim, Baden, he had no sons named Johann. Franz Maier had children Apollonia b. 1851, Barbara

b. 1852, and Johann b. 1854 in Katharinental. Joseph Meier had dau. Karolina in 1854. Georg Meier had dau. Mariana in 1854.

Landau had a later settler named Franz Meier b. ca. 1841, he had a son Wilhelm b. 1854 in Landau, but he had no son named Johann.

Speier had a founder Johann Meier b. Feb. 6, 1792 from Bietigheim, Baden, son of Johann Andreas Meier and Maria Barbara Strum. He was probably related to Mathias Mayer in Rastadt since they both came from Bietigheim. Johann settled in Speier on June 17, 1809, where he married Anna Maria Holz. He had a son Johann b. ca. 1838. His birth year doesn't match that of our early ancestor, Johann Meier in München, who was born ca. 1819. Mathias Maier had a daughter Elisabeth b. in 1850 in Speier.

Sulz had a founder Philipp Meier b. ca. 1792, age 70, he was a widower shown in 1862, he had no son Johann.

The two colonies that remain as best candidates for the origins of our Meier family are Rastadt and München. They both had numerous records referring to settlers with this surname and it persisted there late into the 19th century. Both of these colonies are mentioned in Jakob Meier's family. The petitions for citizenship in the USA by Jakob and his son Thomas list their place of birth as Rastadt, but Thomas' obituary states München. The first mention of Alois is in the death record of his father, **Johann Meier**, who died in München in 1872, age 53 (= b. ca. 1819), he was stated to have a son, **Aloisius**. Alois Meier is first mentioned in München, but he settled in Rastadt later in life and he died there.

The colonies of Rastadt and München were only one-half mile apart, located north of Karlsruhe in the Tchichekleya river valley. For a time they shared the same parish church and recorded births and deaths in the same churchbook. Today the two settlements have grown together and München is a suburb of Rastadt. Our immigrant ancestors pronounced it in German dialect as "Minicha," this literal spelling is shown in some records in the USA.

In order to narrow down the choice of colony of origin, we need to look at the early records for the Meier family in those two colonies to see which one had a Johann Meier as a child in or about 1819.

The Meier Family in the Colony of Rastadt

In neighboring Rastadt there were three families with the surname Meier who were the earliest settlers in 1809-1810.

1. **Mathias Mayer**, b. ca. 1771, emigrated from Bietigheim district of Rastatt, Baden to Russia in 1809 and settled in Rastadt with wife and 3 children. The emigration records in Baden, Germany, confirm that at that time Mathias Meier was a citizen of Bietigheim, age 38, his wife was age 36, and they had 3 children (unnamed).

The records in Baden, Germany also report that **Andreas Meier** and Maria Eva Diebolt had a son, **Johann Meier**, b. March 2, 1781, Johann marr. Anna Maria Voltz on Nov. 2, 1805. **Johann Mayer**, age 28 (b. ca. 1781), his wife and one daughter emigrated in 1809 from Bietigheim to "Russian Poland" (as South Russia was sometimes referred to at that time). We may assume that he was related to Mathias (likely a brother since there was about 10 years difference in their ages).

2. **Simon Mayer**, born ca. 1791, Stumpp lists possible origins as Bietigheim/Rastatt, Baden or Breitenbach/ Selestat, Alsace; Keller lists Birlenbach, Bas Rhin, Alsace. Simon was married to Angelika Jost, b. ca. 1782. They settled in Rastadt in

1810, and Angelika died soon after. On Dec. 28, 1816 Simon Meier a widower in Rastadt married Johanna Gebe (Hebe), step-daughter of a colonist surnamed Bretzer in Rastadt.¹⁰ They had a daughter, Agnes, bapt. Feb. 18, 1826, but no son Johann. Simon died Nov. 5, 1831, age 38, in Rastadt.

3. **Balthasar Mayer**, b. ca. 1767, from Breitenau, district of Selestat, Alsace (according to Stumpp), married to Mariana who was b. ca. 1771. One record retrieved from the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory reports that Mariana, the wife of Balthasar Maier in Rastadt, died in April, 1811. Balthasar remarried to a woman whose surname was Kopf (or Kopp), since he had a step-son with this name. He had four children from his first marriage and one step-son:

- a. **Magdalena Mayer**, b. ca. 1790
- b. **Marianna Mayer**, b. ca. 1802 (“from his first marriage”).
- c. **Johann Mayer**, b. ca. 1796, m. Elisabetha, b. ca. 1796
- d. **Margaretha Mayer**, b. ca. 1806.
- e. **Franz Kopf**, b. ca. 1809, (“step-son from Bellheim/Germersheim, Pfalz”).

The places of origin of Mathias, Simon and Balthasar Meyer differ between Bietigheim, Baden and Breitenau or Breitenbach, Bas-Rhin in Alsace. These two towns are a long distance apart, on opposite sides of the Rhine. The handwriting of the clerks in the early revision lists was sometimes ambiguous. Stumpp was uncertain about Simon’s place of origin because he states it as “either Breitenbach, Alsace, or Bietigheim, Baden.” Simon's birth date (ca. 1791) is close to Balthasar's children, so he may have been Balthasar's older son. Mathias doesn't appear in later records for this first generation, so his identity in Rastadt is uncertain.

Of these early settlers in Rastadt, there is only one candidate who could be the parent of Alois Meier. **Johann Meier**, son of **Balthasar**, born ca. 1796 was married to Elisabeth Schall on Oct. 26, 1815. They had three children in Rastadt 1825-1831. This fits the time frame for Alois’ birth in ca. 1829, however, the marriage date in 1815 is too close to the baptismal dates of their children. This Johann Meier was born in 1796, about 20 years earlier than Alois’ father, Johann Meier, who was born ca. 1819, as shown on his death record in München.

Presumably this Johann Meier, married to **Elisabeth**, is the same couple who had a daughter **Margaret**, married to Heinrich Ehli on Oct. 6, 1836 in Rastadt.

Joseph Meier & Tekla Ell had a dau. **Katherina** b. March 16, 1849. Their dau. **Sophia Meier** age 18 (= b. 1856) marr. Matheus Bockenmeier on Feb. 3, 1864 in Rastadt.

Barbara Meier dau of Johann Meier & Elisabeth, married Johann Stiebich on Oct. 6, 1836 in Rastadt. There is contradictory info because Barbara Meier is also shown as marr. Heinrich Ell on this date. There is also an unknown Barbara Meier who married Adam Odenbach on Sept. 12, 1816 in Rastadt.

Joseph Meier and Anna Maria Heil had a son, **Theodore Meier**, Nov. 1, 1864 and a dau. **Magdalena Meier** on Dec. 29, 1866 in Rastadt. Joseph’s tie with earlier members of the Meier family is unknown.

Michael Meier age 21 (= b. 1844) marr. Maria Josepha Kessel Nov. 16, 1865, they had children **Lukas Meier** Dec. 16, 1866, **Pius** Feb. 25, 1866, and **Margaret** Sept. 6, 1869 in Rastadt.

¹⁰ Fond 252, Inv. 1, File 9.

Johann Meier was b. 1871 in Rastadt, he was illegitimate and no parents were shown.

There is no good candidate for Johann Meier, Alois' father, in the colony of Rastadt, nor in the other Catholic colonies, which leaves us with the single best remaining candidate, München.

The Meier Family in München

Fortunately, we can narrow down the choice of home colony by the baptismal records for the children of Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann, and by the available death records. The preponderance of these records indicate that our Meier family originally settled in München, although Alois may have resided in nearby Rastadt for a while later in his life, and then perhaps in other daughter colonies.

The records below include the baptismal, marriage, and death records from the Tiraspol Roman Catholic Archbishop's Consistory, the Tsarist Revision Lists, and the *Einwandererzentralstelle* (Immigration Center, EWZ) records from World War 2, in rough chronological order. Of these, the EWZ records are least reliable because they were based on testimonials provided by the German colonists when they were being evacuated and repatriated by the German army and they were most prone to errors in names and birth dates.

A. The earliest Revision Lists for München

In the summaries below, the lineal ancestors for my branch of the family are **highlighted and underlined**.

The earliest founding family with this surname in München was **Philipp Mayer** and his wife **Franziska**, who came from Kuhardt, near Germersheim in the Rhine Pfalz. In the nearby colony of Rastadt there were two other families, **Matheus Meier** from Bietigheim in Baden, and **Balthasar Meier** from Brietenau, Bas-Rhin. Kuhardt and Bietigheim are many miles apart, on opposite sides of the Rhine, which indicates that the Meier families in Rastadt and München were unrelated.

The 1811 R.L. for München (in Fr. Keller's book) shows:

Philipp Mayer 21 (= b. 1790), from Kuhardt, near Germersheim, Pfalz, wife **Franziska** 23 (= b. 1788), and their dau. **Elisabeth** 1 (= b. 1810).

The 1816 R.L. (in Stumpp) provides slightly updated information, with a different child:

Philipp Meyer 25 (= b. 1791), from Kuhardt, Germersheim, wife **Franziska** 25 (= b. 1791), their son **Johann** ¼ yr (= b. 1816).

The baptismal records show that **Philipp Mayer**, b. ca. 1790, from Kuhardt, near Germersheim, Pfalz, and his wife **Franziska** b. ca. 1791, had 5 children:

1. **Elizabeth Mayer**, the 1811 R.L. shows her b. 1811. Michael Haag, my correspondent in Germany, forwarded info showing her as b. April 1811 and she died June 3, 1865 in München, age 59 (= b. ca. 1806), leaving behind a husband and children.

2. **Johann Mayer**, b. ca. 1816 (source: 1816 R.L.)
3. **Johann Adam Mayer**, b. July 27, 1822. The baptismal record shows him as the son of Philipp Mayer and **Franziska Maria** (no surname, but it is likely that it is **Martin**), godparents Adam Odenbach and **Barbara Mayer**, in München. (source: baptismal records for München). She was probably the same Barbara Meyer marr. to Adam Odenbach in Rastadt on Sept. 12, 1816. Barbara Meyer's relationship to Philipp Mayer is unknown, she was born ca. 1800.
4. **Katharina Barbara Maier**, bapt. Aug. 17, 1824 in München. This record shows the father as Maier (no first name), mother **Franziska "Marcesin."**
5. **Anna Maria Maier**, b. June 29, 1826 München, dau. of Philipp Maier and **Franziska Martin** (Rastadt bapt. records), Anna d. Jan. 5, 1835, age 8 (= b. ca. 1827).

Philipp's wife was consistently named **Franziska** in these records, which matches the R.L.s. The baptismal records provide some clues about her surname, although they are inconsistent. Johann Adam baptized in 1822 shows his mother as **Franziska "Maria."** Katharina Barbara baptized in 1824 shows her mother as **Franziska "Marcesin."** Anna Maria baptized in 1826 shows her mother as **Franziska "Martin."**

So what was Franziska's maiden name? There was a Matz family in München, but no Martz. One record clearly shows her surname as **Martin**, which was found in Rastadt and Karlsruhe, usually spelled as **Martian** or **Merdian**. "Maria," shown as the mother's middle name in one birth record, is almost certainly an error in translation from the Cyrillic.

There is a death record in München for **Andreas Maier** who died on Jan. 9, 1816, age 2 years. No further information is provided about his parents, although they were probably Philipp and Franziska. There is no death record for Philipp or Franziska Meier, although they were still alive by 1827 judging from the birth years of their children.

Johann Meier in München died Aug. 30, 1872, age 53 (=b. ca. 1819). His death record, which will be discussed in detail below, shows that he had a son, **Aloisius Meier**. He clearly couldn't be Johann, born ca. 1796, son of Balthasar in Rastadt. The closest candidate is **Johann, son of Philipp Meier and Franziska, who was born ca. 1816 in München. There is about 3 years difference in their birth years in the 1816 R.L. and that shown in Johann's death record, but that was within a margin of error in the early records.**

B. The growth of our Meier family in München

From this relatively modest beginning when München was first settled in 1810, the Meier family underwent surprising growth by mid-century. There were more persons with this surname in München than in any other colony, and more importantly the names especially indicative of our family occurred only in this colony.

Johann Adam Meier (son of Philipp and Franziska), marr. **Katharina Giesser**, their children:

1. **Gottlieb Meier**, b. Feb. 27, 1845 München.
2. **Anna Maria Meier**, b. Oct. 17, 1846 in München.
3. **Maria Josepha Meier**, b. Jan. 24, 1858 München.
4. **Franz Meier**, b. Nov. 21, 1859 München.

Maria Anna Meier (dau. of Philipp and Franziska) marr. **Gottlieb Giesser** in München.

1. **Sophia Giesser** d. Aug. 21, 1872 age 1 year in München, parents Gottlieb Giesser and Maria Anna nee Meier.

2. **Elisabeth Giesser** d. Jan. 28, 1879 age 1 year in München.

Katharine Meier (probably Johann Adam's wife) served as godmother for Joseph Gelsing on August 26, 1846 in München. "Gelsing" probably should be "**Giesser**" because the priest sometimes guessed as the spelling of surnames, and our Cyrillic translator made errors. Katharina Giesser was also godmother for Mathias Giesser, b. April 20, 1857 München.

Johann Meier, son of Philipp and Franziska, shown in the 1816 R.L. of München as born ca. 1816, married **Katherina Ferner** in München. She was presumably the dau. of **Michael Ferner** from Annweiler, near Bergzabern in the Pfalz, who settled in München in 1809.¹¹ Johann died Aug. 30, 1872, age 53 (=b. ca. 1819) München. His death record shows him marr. to **Katharina** with 7 children named: Philipina, Marianna, Johann, Veronika, Karl, **Aloisius**, and Margaret. The baptismal and EWZ records are more inclusive, they show that Johann had 12 children (born 1845 to 1871), possibly 13 if Johann jr. was listed (Johann Meier jr. is shown in the 1862 voter registry for München):

1. **Aloisius Meier**. There is no baptismal record for Aloisius, he d. Oct. 12, 1864, age 35 (= b. ca. 1829), of a tumor in Rastadt, leaving a wife and 5 children. His derived birth year is inconsistent with Johann's birth (ca. 1816) and the later dates for his other siblings. The EWZ records from W.W.2 show his birth year as 1828 and his death year as 1864. Alois is shown as the son of Johann, but perhaps he was Johann's younger brother? As noted above, Georg Maier had a son Alois born in Karlsruhe in 1852. The difference in birth year is too large for him to be the same person as Alois born ca. 1829 in München.

2. **Konrad Meier**, b. April 10, 1845 München (also shown as b. June 12, 1845); he d. Feb. 2, 1866 age 20 (= b. ca. 1846), parents stated to be Johann Meier and Katharina. Konrad served as godfather for Christina Stiebich, b. Aug. 5, 1862 München.

3. **Joseph Meier**, b. March 30, 1847 München, godparents Joseph Wandler and Margaret Ferner. Joseph died Jan. 22, 1850 age 3, in München, he was buried in Rastadt.

4. **Karl Meier**, b. 1849, marr. **Susanna Kessel**, b. 1854 München. (See Below)

5. **Jakobina Meier**, b. Aug. 26, 1850 München.

6. **Maria Anna Meier**, b. Sept. 4, 1852 München. Her godfather was **Alois Meier**. Probably she marr. **Michael Götzfried**, son of Jakob, they had two children surname Götzfried in the 1880s.

¹¹ **Michael Ferner** is shown in Karl Stumpp as one of the founders of München in 1809, although he doesn't appear in the R.L.s. Michael Ferner was the only family with this surname shown in the colonies. The baptismal records show he was marr. to **Katharina Bengert**, they had children Conrad b. Sept. 7, 1824 in Rastadt, Mariana b. Dec. 5, 1826 München, and Georg Michael b. Oct. 17, 1831 München. Annweiler is in southern Pfalz, near the French border of Alsace.

7. **Anna Meier**, b. Sept. 30, 1856, München.
8. **Alexy Meier**, b. Sept. 4, 1858 München.¹²
9. **Philipina Meier**, b. ca. 1859-1860?, marr. Johann Scherger.
 - a. **Franz Scherger**, d. Sept. 19, 1879 München, age 2 years, diphtheria.
10. **Veronica Meier** b. July 22, 1860 in München, godparents Andreas Schwann and Veronica Bengert.
11. **Margaret Meier**, b. April 28, 1862 München.
 Johann Meier served as godfather for:
 - Johann Ferner, illegitimate son of Margaret Ferner, June 24, 1847. Presumably she was the daughter of Johann Meier and Katharina.
 - Maria Anna Ferner, b. June 25, 1850 München.
 - Johann Schwann, b. Dec. 26, 1852 München.
12. **Joseph Meier**, b. 1871 München.

Karl Maier (no. 4 above) b. 1849 München, m. **Susanna Kessel** b. 1854 München (source: EWZ, the 1920 landowner list for München shows Karl was b. ca. 1854 and Susanna b. 1856). Karl was the son of **Johann Meier** and **Katharina Ferner**, his name is mentioned in Johann's death record. Karl Meier served as godfather for Celestina Bulinger, dau. of Michael Bulinger and Maria Eva Fried on Feb. 8, 1891 in München. Karl & Susanna Kessel's children were:

1. **Martin Maier** b. 21 Sept. 1888 München, m. **Elis. Glasser** b. 01 Oct. 1894 Landau. The 1920 landowner list for München shows Martin Maier, son of Karl, marr. to **Caecilia** b. ca. 1893. Three known children:
 - a. **Albert Maier** b. ca. 1914.
 - b. **Karl Maier**, b. ca. 1919.
 - c. **Anton Maier** b. 27 Feb. 1927 München.
2. **Karl Maier** b. ca. 1889.
 - a. **Joseph Maier**, son of Karl, marr. **Elisabeth**, the 1920 landowner list for München shows 3 children: **Joseph, Magdalena, Julia**.

The following records are especially significant.

Aloisius Meier, stated to be son of Johann Meier, and his wife Barbara born Hoffmann had 5 children 1850 to 1862 shown in the baptismal records of München, and 3 additional if Friedrich, Jakob, and Louisa are included:

1. **Franziska Meier**, b. May 18, 1850, München. In this first record the father's name is translated as "**Lucien**" Meier marr. to **Barbara Hoffmann**. This almost certainly is an error (our Cyrillic translator often struggled with names), and this name should be

¹² Alexy Meier, born 1858 in München, son of Johann Meier and Katharina Ferner, was named after his godfather, Aleksy Drawitsch, the son of Alexander Drawitsch. The name Alexander (shown as Aleksy in the Cyrillic records) was unusual among the German colonists, and it likely was introduced through a Russian acquaintance who agreed to serve as a godfather. Alexy Meier was contemporary with my great-grandmother Louisa Meier-Landeis, he was her young uncle and her contemporary. Possibly he was the godfather for my grandfather, **Alex Landeis** in 1889.

Alois or **Aloysius**. His wife's name is clearly translated as Barbara Hoffmann, godparents were Johann Garrecht and Franziska Scherger.

2. **Maria Anna Meier**, b. April 6, 1852, München, parents Alois and Barbara Hoffmann, godparents **Johann Meier** and Maria Anna Wandler.

3. **Johann Meyer** b. Sept. 20, 1853, Rastadt, parents Alois Meyer and Barbara Hoffmann, the godparents were Johann Kropin? and Katharina Meyer. Johann is also shown in the EWZ records as b. Oct. 2, 1853, bapt. Oct. 3, 1853 Rastadt (dates adjusted to the Gregorian calendar). In the EWZ records he is shown as marr. to **Katharina Odenbach**, both b. in Rastadt, they died in Niederdorf, district of Schemetowo, Rayon of Janowka, Odessa.¹³ They had two children, Sebastian b. 18 Feb., 1891 in Khutor Kriwopishchewka, and Anna b. 2 Oct. 1898 in Neiderdorf, marr. to Martin Vogt.

4. **Friedrich Meier**, b. Nov. 29, 1856. His death certificate shows him as the son of "Alex" and Barbara Hoffmann, probably mistaken, should be Alois.

5. **Margaret Meier**, b. Feb. 15, 1859 Rastadt, parents Alois and Barbara Hoffmann, godparents were Johann Meier and Margaret Schwamm (Schwann?).

6. **Jakob Meier**, b. Aug. 23, 1861, son of Alois Meier and Barbara "Rambur".

7. **Maria Josepha Meier**, b. June 14, 1862 Rastadt. Parents shown as Alois Meier and Barbara, but the translator was uncertain about her surname, he translated it as "Trambur?" which almost certainly is "Rambur" as shown in the Brazilian records. Godparents Konrad Ell and Maria Josepha Kropin. Barbara Hoffmann was the step-daughter of Kasper Rambur.

8. **Louisa Meier**, b. Dec. 10, 1864, two months after the death of Alois.

Johann Meier, his death record in 1872 stated that one of his sons was **Aloisius**. Aloisius and Johann had a close relationship. Alois Meier served as godfather for Maria Anna Meier, daughter of Johnn Meier and Katharina Ferner, b. Sept. 4, 1852 München, and Johann served as godfather for Alois's daughter Maria Anna in 1852. The closest candidate for his identity is Johann, the son of Philipp Meier and Franziska, born ca. 1816, died 1872 age 53 in München, married to **Katharina Ferner**.

Aloisius Meier died from a tumor on Oct. 12, 1864 age 35 (= b. ca. 1829), leaving a wife and 5 children. Their names are not given in the death record, but the number matches the above 5 children in the baptismal records (plus Friedrich, Jakob, and Louisa, making 8 children). Alois's death record states that he was a Rastadt colonist, but his first two children were stated to have been born in München and the last three were born in Rastadt. His parents were **Johann Meier** and **Katherine Ferner**.

C. Meier families in München with unknown ties to our family

There were two family heads in München named **Johann Meier**, one married to **Katherine Ferner** (parents of Alois) and the other married to **Katherine Nikolaus**. The birth years of two of their children overlap in 1859 and 1862, which indicates that they were separate couples and these two Johanns were not father and son.

¹³ It is not certain where Niederdorf was located. The best candidate is *Khutor* Blonskoje, also known as Niederdorf, northwest of Odessa in the Kutschurgan colony group, lat. 46.8645, longitude 30.4415. It was a Catholic colony founded 1887.

The parents of Johann Meier and Katharina Nikolaus are unknown. Fr. Aberle in N.D. shows him as the son of Balthasar Meier in Rastadt, but this seems to be a guess. He presumably was born in the 1830s. Their children:

1. **Johann Meier**, b. April 8, 1858 München.
2. **Mathias Meier**, b. Dec. 29, 1859 München, d. June 6, 1863 age 3 yrs.
3. **Margaret Meier**, died Dec. 12, 1863 München, age 18 mos.
4. **Franz Meier**, b. March 21, 1862 München.
5. **Magdalena Meier**, b. July 21, 1864 München.
6. **Wilhelm Meier** born July 29, 1866 in München.
7. **Joseph Meier** d. Nov. 17, 1872 München, age 1 ½ years (=b. 1870), parents stated to be Johann Meier and Katharina.
8. **Maria Anna Meier**, b. 1878, d. Jan. 25, 1880 age 1 yr 9 mos.

Andreas Maier, b. 1823 in München, m. **Maria Anna Ackermann** b. 16 July 1826 München (source: EWZ), they had 9 children. Note that Johann Meier served as godfather for two, which may indicate a relationship with Johann above:

1. **Johann Meier**, b. Sept. 7, 1852 München, godfather Johann Meier.
2. **Karl Meier**, b. April 16, 1852 München (same year?).
3. **Martin Meier**, b. 1851, died March 3 (April?), 1853, age 1 year and 9 months in München.
4. **Anna Meier**, b. Dec. 16, 1857 München, godfather Johann Meier.
5. **Katharina Meier**, b. Jan. 7, 1862 München.
6. **Gabriel Meier**, b. March 17, 1864 München.
7. **Margaret Meier**, born Oct. 31, 1866 in Rastadt.
8. **Georg Maier**, b. 20 Oct. 1869 München, m **Amalie Scherger** b. 14 Feb. 1874 München (source: EWZ).
 - a. **Rosa Meier**, b. 16 Feb. 1898 München.
 - b. **Edward Meier**, b. 1904 München, m. **Margaret Kowis**, b. 25 March 1913 München. Children:
 - 1) **Amalie Meier**, b. 10 Nov. 1932 München.
 - 2) **Anna Meier**, b. 21 Dec. 1936 München.
 - 3) **Edward Meier**, b. 23 Nov. 1941 München.
 - a) **Katherine Meier**, b. 06 Dec. 1930 München.

9. **Johann Meier**, d. Oct. 13, 1872, age 1 year (=b. 1871), München, parents Andreas Meier and Anna.

Andreas was godfather for:

- Elisabeth Dietz, b. Nov. 16, 1855 München.

Andreas was probably related to Martin Meier marr. to Sophia Metz, he served as godfather for two of their children. He may have been Andreas b. 1827 son of Franz Christopher Meier.

Andreas Meier marr. **Maria Anna Wollbaum**. Child:

1. **Barbara Meier**, b. Nov. 22, 1859 München.

This Andreas is probably the same as Andreas above married to Maria Anna Ackermann.

Stumpp refers to **Franz Meier** in the 1816 R.L. Franz was 14 (b. ca. 1802), foster-child of **Franz Scherger**, b. ca. 1784, and wife Eva, b. ca. 1774, from Hockenheim/Mannheim, Baden who settled in München. There is an uncertain overlap in his wives' names, Elisabeth. They may all be same couple, although there are 13 years difference in birthdates of their first child (1824 versus 1846).

The following baptismal records refer to him:

Franz Christopher Meier (also **Franz**, or **Christopher Franz**) married **Elisabeth Steiff** in Rasadt on Jan. 13, 1820. This couple seems to have resided primarily in München, although there are records in Rastadt. There was a large gap in the births of their children:

1. **Maria Katharina Maier**, bapt. May 27, 1824, da. of Franz Maier and Elisabeth probably Steiff. The birth year fits the context of the other records.
2. **Matheus Maier** b. May 13, 1825 München.
3. **Andreas Maier**, b. Oct. 16, 1827 München, he marr. **Marianna Ackermann** on Oct. 29, 1851, stated to be München colonists.
4. **Georg Maier**, b. March 21, 1840 München.
5. **Johann Meier** age 23 (= b. 1834) marr. **Katharine Nikolaus** on Feb. 5, 1857 in München.
6. **Peter Meier**, b. June 23, 1849 München.

Franz Meier, son of **Heinrich**, marr. **Elisabeth**, da. of **Heinrich**. Their children:

1. **Johann Meier**, b. May 3, 1833 München.
2. **Elisabeth Meier**, b. Nov. 4, 1835. The mother isn't stated.

Franz Meier married **Elisabeth Heil** in München. Their child:

1. **Anna Theresia Meier** on August 23, 1846.

Franz Meier age 64 (= b. 1801) son of **Christopher Meier** & Geneve Peter, m. Katharina Hipper July 12, 1865 in München, both were widowed.

The above records indicate that Franz Meier was widowed more than once. Note that his wives were consistently shown as Elisabeth, although their surnames differ. On July 12, 1865 in München he married Katharina Hübner, at that time he was a widower age 64 (= b. 1801) and she was a widow age 52 (= b. 1813). There are no clear links for Franz or his descendants with other members of our Meier family.

Elisabeth Meyer served as godmother for Franz Scherger, b. August 20, 1840 München.

Matheus Meier b. 1825 above probably was the son of **Franz Meier**. Matheus married **Sofia Metz**, their children were:

1. **Anna Maria Meier**, b. Sept. 5, 1851 München, godfather was **Andreas Meier**. His dau. **Joanna Maria** had an illeg. dau. Katharina, died Nov. 12, 1878 age 7 mos, München.
2. **Andreas Meier**, b. May 23, 1853 in München, d. March 2, 1856, age 3.
3. **Katharina Meier**, b. Jan. 8, 1855 München, godfather Johann Meier.

4. **Anna Maria Meier**, b. Oct. 18, 1856 München (dupl. name?). Anna Maria Meier, dau. of **Matheus**, had an illegitimate dau. **Katharina Meier**, who d. Nov. 12, 1878, age 7 months, in München.
5. **Georg Michael Meier**, b. July 31, 1858 München, marr. Elisabeth Hübner. See below for their children.
6. **Barbara Meier**, b. April 1, 1860 in München, godparents **Andreas Meier** and Barbara Metz.
7. **Maximilian Meier**, b. Feb. 17, 1862 München, d. June 23, 1863 age 18 mos..
8. **Dorothea Meier**, b. Mar. 10, 1864 München.
9. **Johann Meier**, b. August 1, 1866, München.
10. **Franz Meier**, b. 1872, son of Mathias Meier in München.
 - Matheus Meier was godfather for Matheus Giesser, April 20, 1847 München. The godmother was Katharina Giesser, who presumably was married to Adam Meier. This suggests that Matheus and Adam Meyer may have been related.
 - Matheus was godfather for Susanna Kessel, b. May 18, 1850 München.

Georg Michael Meier (No. 5 above, also shown as **Michael**) marr. **Elisabeth Hübner**.

1. **Bernard Meier**, b. July 22, 1867 Kuschnerowo.
2. **Margaret Meier**, b. Aug. 25, 1869 München., godfather Mathias Meier.
3. **Michael Meier** also had twins, **Johann** and **Julianna**, b. 1871 in München. Julianna died in 1872.
4. **Julianna Meier**, d. Jan. 21, 1872, age ½ year, München, parents stated to be Georg Michael Meier and Elisabeth.
5. **Katharina Meier**, b. 1878, d. Jan. 31, 1879 München, age 1 year, parents stated to be Georg Michael Meier and Elisabeth Hübner.
Margaret Meier was marr. to Franz Busch, they had a son Adam Busch b. Oct. 1, 1891 in Khutor Strukowa, her identity is uncertain.

Katharina Meyer married **Johann Wagner** in München (related to my Wagner family) around 1840, after which she appeared in the records of both Rastadt and München. Their children:

1. **Johann Wagner**, b. Sept. 9, 1840 in Rastadt; the godfather was **Johann Meyer**.
2. **Margaret Wagner**, b. Sept. 26, 1850, München.
3. **Martina Wagner**, b. Nov. 30, 1853 in München; the godfather was **Johann Meyer**, likely Katharina's brother in Rastadt. Her birth record refers to her parents as "München colonists."

Katharina Meyer served as godmother for Franz Scherger born June 21, 1840 in Rastadt, son of Georg Scherger and Franziska, and for Johann Meyer b. Sept. 20, 1853, Rastadt. The problem for her identity is that there were several Katharina Meiers in these generations.

Katherina Meier married **Philipp Krug**, child:

1. **Georg Michael Krug**, b. Aug. 20, 1847 in München.

Friederika Meier married **Cyriak Seifert**, 9 children surnamed Seifert.

Andreas Meier married **Barbara Thome** in München.

They had a son **Johann** b. 1871 in München.

Andreas and Barbara also served as godparents for:

- Katharina Schropp, b. Feb. 13, 1851 München.
- Margaret Nuss, born Sept. 19, 1866 in München.
- Barbara Kowitz, born Srpt. 19, 1866, in München.

Magdalena Meyer marr. **Joseph Eberle**, their child:

1. **Anna Eberle** b. 11 Aug. 1860 in München.

Peter Meier, b. 1863 München, m. **Anysie** ? b. 1871 Charkov (source: EWZ).

1. **Waldemar Meier**, b. 05 May 1902 Charkov.

Katharina Meier, marr. **Franz Bullinger**, their son Gottlieb Bullinger d. Jan. 16, 1880 in München, age 3 years.

The 1862 Voter Registry for München and Rastadt

The 1862 voter registry shows five adult Meier family heads in München, including a Johann and Johann junior. Presumably this Johann was the father of Alois, his death record in 1872 mentions that he had a son Johann who was likely the Johann jr. shown in the 1862 registry. Alois Meier is not shown in the 1862 voter registry, nor is he shown in any other colonies. This indicates that he probably was residing in a daughter-colony.

I have preserved the names in München as literally spelled in the voter registry:

Franz Mayer
Mathias Mayer
Andreas Mayer
Johann Mayer
Johann Mayer junior

The 1862 voter registry in Rastadt shows only one family with this surname -- **Martin Meier**, married to Katharina Heck. They had 12 children in Rastadt, with dates ranging from 1832 to 1869. They had a dau. Juliana who marr. Adam Melinger on Feb. 13, 1862; there contradictory info because she is also shown as born May 2, 1864. The range of birth years is too broad. The identity of Martin is unknown and there are no records indicating a relationship with our Meier family in München.

There were no families with the surname Meier shown in the voter registry of Karlsruhe in 1862.

Landowners in München in 1920

The Meier family continued to grow in München through the end of the century, and even during the turmoil of the ensuing Bolshevik era. The list of landowners in

München in 1920 shows several members of the family, some of whom were shown in 1862 above (spelling of surnames preserved):

Georg Maier, son of **Andreas**, and wife **Amalia**. Children:

1. **Matheus**
2. **Joseph**.
3. **Eduard**.
4. **Raphael**.
5. **Rosa**.
6. **Elisabetha**.
7. **Flora**.

Rosa Maier, daughter of **Johann**. No husband was shown so she was likely a widow. Rosa's children:

1. **Jakob**.
2. **Franz**.
3. **Engelbert**.
4. **Nikodemus**.
5. **Rosa**.
6. **Magdalena**.
7. **Eva**.

Anna Maria Meier, marr. **Max Stroh**.

1. **Katharina Stroh**, d. Nov. 23, 1879 München, age 3 months from gout.

Anna Maria Meyer, b. 1876 München, marr. **Paul Stroh**, b. 1876 München.

1. **Rosa Stroh**, b. 1897 München, m. **Georg Obenloch**, b. 03 Jan. 1927 München.

Johann Maier 43 (=b. ca. 1877), son of **Karl**, wife **Katharina** 40 (=b. ca. 1880).

Children:

1. **Dominik** 17.
2. **Konrad**, 5.

Michael Maier, son of **Karl**. No wife is listed.

Children:

1. **Gregor**.
2. **Alfons**.
3. **Eugenia**.
4. **Rosa Ottilia**
5. **Caecilia**.

Michael Maier, son of **Anansius?**, wife **Antonina**. Son:

1. **Anasarius?**

Georg Maier 63 (=b. ca. 1857), son of **Mattheus**, wife **Magdalena** 58 (= b. ca. 1862). Children:

1. **Maxim** 27 (= b. ca. 1893).

2. **Aquilinus** 23 (= b. ca. 1897).
3. **Hieronymous** 16 (= b. ca. 1904).
4. **Theresia** 19 (= b. ca. 1901).

Georg Meier served as godfather for Georg Giesser, son of Jacob Giesser & Maria Eva Heck on Jan. 13, 1891 in München. Georg was described as a "youth" at that time, so his identity is uncertain.

The *Einwanderer Zentralstelle* Records, Immigrant Center Office (EWZ)

During W.W.2 the German army of occupation in the Ukraine evacuated the ethnic German population in 1942 to save them from genocide by the Soviet army. All the evacuees were interviewed to determine their family backgrounds and the records were kept in the Immigrants Center (*Einwanderer Zentralstelle*).

There are several records that pertain to the Meier family, including some that refer to grandparents as Alois Meier and Barbara Hoffmann.

Johann Meier, born Oct. 2, 1853 in Rastadt, bapt. Oct. 3 in Rastadt, and he died in Niederdorf in 1926, district of Schemetowo, Rayon of Janowka, Odessa. Johann's parents were **Alois Meier** and **Barbara Hoffmann**. Johann married **Katharina Odenbach** (also shown as Ottenbach), she was b. in Rastadt, they were married in ca. 1877, both died in Niederdorf. She was probably Katharina Odenbach, b. 1856, dau. of Adam & Victoria Odenbach in Rastadt. Johann & Katharina had two children shown in the EWZ records.

1. **Sebastian Meier**, b. Feb. 18, 1891 in Khutor Kriwopishchewka, he was bapt. Feb. 21, 1891 in Rastadt, his godparents were Sebastian Schwindt in Rastadt & Maria Eva Kunz nee Weinberger in Katharinenthal.

2. **Anna Meier**, b. Oct. 2, 1898 in Niederdorf, her parents were stated to be Johann Meier & Katharina Ottenbach, she marr. on Aug. 22, 1918 in Niederdorf to **Martin Vogt** (b. Dec. 24, 1896 -), son of Franz Vogt in Rastadt & Antonia Tomme in München; Martin's grandparents were Franz Vogt & Maria Eva Müller. Anna's grandparents were stated to be **Alois Meier** and **Barbara Hoffmann**. (source: EWZ 1001497, recorded in Kreis Kosten in the Wartheland). Anna Meier & Martin Vogt had two children:

- a. **Regina Vogt**, b. May 2, 1931.
- b. **Franz Vogt**, b. June? 22, 1936.

Celestina Maier b. 07 Sept. 1895 München, m. **Herbert Vogt** b. 24 Mar. 1893 München (source: EWZ).

Gabriel Maier b. 28 April 1862 München, m. **Rosa Makelke** b. 11 Sept. 1873 Landau. (Source: EWZ). Note that Rosa Makelke b. 1873 in Landau is also shown as married to Franz Maier, b. 1841 Landau. Note also that the birth years of Nikodemus and Eva overlap, although there is gap of 11 months. Three children:

1. **Engelbert Maier** b. 25 Apr. 1906 München.
2. **Eva Maier** b. 06 Jan. 1910 München.
3. **Nikodemus Maier** b. 27 Dec. 1910 München.

Georg Maier b. 1856 München, m. **Magdalena Daum** b. 1862 Landau (source: EWZ). Two children:

1. **Anna Maria Maier**, b. 16 Oct. 1881 München, marr. **Anton Philipp Nicolaus Emter**, she d. 19 Nov. 1959 Macklin, Saskatchewan. Children: **Georg Emter**, **Mary Emter** (source: *Verein fuer Computergenealogie*, internet).

2. **Max Maier** b. 23 Mar. 1893 München, m. **Margaret Kessel** b. 22 June 1893 München. Son:

a. **Max Maier**, b. 09 March 1929 München (EWZ).

Michael Meier, b. 1879 München, m. **Margaret** b. 1881 Katharinental (source: EWZ).

1. **Otilie Meier**, b. 30 June 1909 München.

Johann Maier, son of **Matheus**, lives in Siberia, no other info available (source: EWZ).

Alansin (translation error, **Aloysius?**) **Maier**, son of **Johann**, wife **Salomea** 24. Child:

1. **Katharina Maier**.

Martin Meier, b. 1888 München (source: EWZ).

1. **Karl Meier** b. 17 March 1919 München, m. **Anna Oster** b. 22 April 1922 Speyer.

a. **Erika Meier** b. 04 Dec. 1942 Neu-Speyer.

b. **Adolf Meier** b. 20 April 1944 Gnesen.

Franz Maier b. 20 Feb. 1897 München, m. **Katharina Schwamm (Schwann?)** b. 08 May 1903 München (source: EWZ).

1. **Margaret Maier** b. 17 Feb. 1924 München.

2. **Matthias Maier** b. 30 Nov. 1928 Neu-München.

3. **Eva Maier** b. 30 Nov. 1930 Neu-München.

4. **Anna Marie Maier** b. 06 Dec. 1935 Neu-München.

Albert Maier b. 01 Sept. 1914 München, m. **Rosa Hirsch** b. 05 Feb. 1919 München (source: EWZ).

1. **Celestina Maier** b. 05 Mar. 1942 Neu-München.

2. **Johann Maier** b. 12 March 1943 Neu-München.

Plot Maps of München in 1941

Karl Stumpp drew a plot map of München in 1941, which shows 11 households with this surname. It was the largest family in München, and more Meiers were shown there in 1941 than in other nearby colonies:

Alois Mayer [Aloysius]

Edward Mayer

Al. Mayer [Alois? Albert? Alex?]

Gr. Mayer [Gregor]

Rafael Mayer

Lucia Mayer
N. Mayer [Nicholas?]
J. Mayer [Johann? Josef?]
Mayer [no first name]
Alois Mayer
Joseph Mayer

There was also a daughter colony called Neu-München, which was created in 1924. It was a small colony consisting of 64 families, located south of München on lands that had been originally allocated to the mother colony. Usually these daughter colonies were settled by families with ties to the mother colony. A plot map was drawn of the colony in 1941, which shows five households with the surname Maier. The EWZ records indicate that Franz Maier was the father of Mathias:¹⁴

Karl Maier
Martin Maier
Martin Maier [junior?]
Franz Maier
Albert Maier

Alois Mayer is shown in München in 1941, and his name appears on two estates. In addition, there is an “**Al. Mayer**” in 1941, which could be a third estate owned by Alois, or perhaps by an Alois junior. There was an **Albert Maier** in the daughter colony of Neu-München, so perhaps “Al.” referred to another member of the family with this name.

There was a later **Alois Maier** in München who was married to **Juliana Seel**. They had a daughter **Celestina Maier** b. Sept. 7, 1895 in München, she d. Aug. 8, 1944. Celestina marr. **Herbert Vocht (Vogt)**, he was b. March 24, 1893 München and he d. Aug. 8, 1944.¹⁵

Lucia Meier is shown in München in 1941. She was most likely the god-daughter, or perhaps a grand-niece, of Lucia/Luzia/Lucianna Meier (b. ca. 1838) in Karlsruhe, the daughter of Heinrich Meyer, and around 1861 she moved to Landau, where she had two illegitimate children. Her name crops up again in 1920 in Rastadt as Luzia Martian (Merdian), the wife of Peter Maier, then again in 1941 as Luzia Meyer in München. It's quite possible that Luzia Meyer in Karlsruhe passed her name down in these later generations by serving as a godmother. Luzia perhaps never married, and her story remains hidden to us. Although she shared the same surname, there is no indication that she was related to the Meier family in München.

Summary for the Meier family in München

The preponderance of records show that the original home colony for our Meier family was **München**. The obituary for Jacob's son, Thomas, states that he was born in

¹⁴ Christian Merdian, *Ortschronik der Tochterkolonie Neu-München, Volk auf dem Weg*, Sept. 1960, no. 9, published by *Die Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland*, Stuttgart.

¹⁵ The source for Celestine Maier and her husband Herbert Vocht (Vogt) is family pedigrees posted on www.blackseagr.org.

München. This colony had the largest number of residents with the surname Meier in the Beresan region, and their numbers grew throughout the century. There were five adult men there with this surname on the voter registry in 1862 (**Franz, Andreas, Matheus, Johann** and **Johann jr.**). The name **Alois Meier** appears in the early records only in München, although at some point he settled in Rastadt. He is not shown in the 1862 voter registries for München or Rastadt, so he was probably residing in a daughter colony, perhaps in Niederdorf northwest of Odessa, where his son Johann and Katharina Odenbach were reported to have died.

The neighboring colony of Rastadt had three original settlers, **Matheus, Balthasar** and **Simon Meier**. They came from Bietigheim, Baden, and Balthasar from Breitenau, Alsace. They had no apparent tie with the Meier family in München who came from Kuhardt in the Pfalz. **Balthasar** had a son, Johann, born ca. 1796, who couldn't be the same person as Alois' father, Johann, who was born ca. 1816 in München. **Balthasar Meier** died June 10, 1832 age 74 (= b. 1758) in Rastadt, and **Simon Meier** died Nov. 5, 1831 age 38 (=b. 1793) in Rastadt. The 1862 voter registry shows only one family with this surname in Rastadt -- **Martin Meier**, married to Katharina Heck or Haag. The Meier family in Rastadt persisted later into the 19th century than in Karlsruhe. However, there are no clues in those records showing links with Philipp, Johann or Alois Meier, with Louisa or her brothers, nor are there any marriages shown with the Hoffmann or Landeis families in Karlsruhe.

The Meier family in Karlsruhe had disappeared by mid-19th century. There were no families with this surname shown in Karlsruhe in the voter registry of 1862, nor were any Meier families shown on the residential map of Karlsruhe drawn by Karl Stumpp during the military occupation in W.W.2.

In comparison, the Meier family in München had blossomed through the century, more so than in Rastadt. **Philipp Meier** and **Franziska Maria** from Kuhardt in the Pfalz, district of Germersheim, settled in München in 1810. We note that Barbara Hoffmann's mother, **Magdalena Bär**, also came from Kuhardt. Franziska Meier's surname is uncertain but it was shown as **Martin** or **Martian**. Their son **Johann Meier** was shown as an infant in the 1816 R.L.. His death record Aug. 30, 1872 in München shows him as age 53 (= b. ca. 1819), which is reasonably close to the birth year shown in the R.L.. The baptismal records in München show that **Johann's** wife was **Katharina Ferner** and they had 9 children, one of whom was **Alois**.

Alois Meier married **Barbara Hoffmann**, their names occur repeatedly in the baptismal records of München and in the later EWZ records, which show a clear link with our Meier family. Barbara Hoffmann is shown as a step-daughter of Kaspar Romburg (Rambur) in Speier, she was age 11 (= b. 1828-29). Alois's death record shows that he died from a tumor on Oct. 12, 1864 in Rastadt, he was age 35 (= b. 1829, which matches Barbara Hoffmann's birth year, but it is inconsistently close to the birthdate of his father **Johann** in 1819). Alois left a wife and 5 children. The number of children matches what is shown in the baptismal records from 1850 to 1862. Alois's first two children were born in München, but his last three were born in Rastadt. He apparently settled in Rastadt in the final years of his life, the two colonies were only about one-half mile apart. We note that Alois was not shown in the 1862 voter registry of München. Alois had a close relationship with Johann in München, they served as godfathers for each other's children, both had daughters born 5 months apart in 1852. Alois was stated to be Johann's son, but it's possible that the priest made a mistake and Alois could have been Johann's younger brother.

The Hoffmann Family

There were several families with the surname Hoffmann who immigrated to Russia, but there were only two in the early records of the Beresan colonies, both were in Karlsruhe. They came from Mörlheim (modern Mörzheim, which is ca. 9 km. southwest of Landau in the Rhine Pfalz).

Georg Hoffmann (b. ca. 1764-1766) and his wife **Margareta Schüler** [also **Katherina**] were among the founders of Karlsruhe in 1810. He was from Mörlheim in the Rhine Pfalz, also shown as nearby Offenbach an der Queich river, which is about 3.5 miles directly east of Landau, Offenbach and Mörlheim are about 5.5 miles from each other. Georg Hoffmann's passport to Russia dated 1809 shows him with wife and four children, they left Mörlheim in 1809, along with unmarried Thomas Martin. The 1816 census in Karlsruhe shows Georg Hoffmann, his wife, two sons, a married daughter (Elizabeth), and a son-in-law (Jakob Fried). The 1839-40 and 1858 R.L.s show only the family of Jakob Fried and Elisabeth Hoffmann, Georg Hoffmann (b. 1764-1766) was probably deceased by that time, he would have been ca. 75 years old. Georg Hoffmann and Margareta's children were:

1. **Maria Elisabeth Hoffmann** (b. 1792), marr. **Jakob Fried** (b. 1790 he died in 1853). Their children surnamed Fried were:

- a. **Heinrich Fried** (b. 1815), marr. **Elisabetha** (b.1820).
- b. **Peter Fried** (b. 1825), marr. **Theresia**. Three children in 1858.
- c. **Franz Fried** (b. Oct. 11, 1825, shown in Landau baptismal registry), three children in 1858.
- d. **Ludwig Fried** (b. 1829), marr. **Barbara** (b. 1831). Two children in 1858.
- e. **Anna Maria Fried** (b. 1831).

2. **Johann Hoffmann** (b. 1793).

3. **Franz Hoffmann** (b. 1794).

Johann Hoffmann (b. ca. 1780) was the second family in Karlsruhe. The information concerning Johann Hoffmann and his descendants is derived from the R.L.s of 1816, 1839-40, and 1858 for Karlsruhe, the passport for Johann Hoffmann in 1809, and the EWZ forms. The 1816 census states that he came from Mörlheim near Landau, and the 1839-40 census states he came from Offenbach. As noted above, these two villages are only about 5.5 miles apart in the Pfalz.

Johann was stated in 1816 to be the son of **Heinrich Hoffmann** in Mörlheim. He was obviously related to Georg (above), but he should not be confused with Georg's son, Johann (b. 1793). This family has a complex tree because, as the 1858 census noted, Johann was married three times. His first wife's name was **Anna Maria Trillmann**. Their daughter Susanna Hoffmann married Gertrum (name uncertain) Roth, a widower, on Nov. 27, 1833 in Karlsruhe. Johann Hoffmann's second wife in 1839 was **Apollonia Ekrott**, and most of his children resulted from that marriage. His third wife was **Theresia**, who died in 1854 (he was 78 at that time). Due to their ages, there were no children from this third marriage. Theresia had an illegitimate son, Dominick Heid, residing with them from a previous relationship.

Stumpp shows him in Karlsruhe in 1816:

Johann Hoffmann 36 (= b. 1780).

Wife **Maria** 37 (= b. 1779), **Anna Maria Trillmann**

Jacob 9 (= b. 1807 from first marriage)

Susanna 7 (= b. 1809), marr. Gertrum Roth on Nov. 27, 1833 Karlsruhe.

Elisabeth 3 (= b. 1813)

Johann ½ (= b. 1816)

Johann Hoffmann is also shown in the 1839-1840 R.L. of Karlsruhe. He was 58 (= b. 1781, Ancestry.com shows him born ca. 1777, d. 1868). His wife in 1839 was **Apollonia Ekrott** 37 (= b. 1802), dau. of **Adam** from Waldürn, Pfalz.

Their children at that time were:

1. **Johann** 12 (= b. 1827)
2. **Heinrich** 10 (= b. 1829)
3. **Adam** 2 (= b. 1837)
4. **Franziska** 6 (= b. 1833)
5. **Gertrud** 4 (= b. 1835)

Jacob Hoffmann 35 (= b. 1804, is shown as a third household in the 1839-40 R.L. of Karlsruhe, he is stated to be the son of **Johann** from Offenbach. His father presumably was Johann above (b. 1780, son of Heinrich Hoffmann) and his mother was presumably Anna Maria Trillmann. Jacob married **Anna Maria Frank** (also shown as **Mariana**, she was b. 1808) on Nov. 8, 1826, she was the daughter of Martin from Kappsweyer, Pfalz. They had 7 children:

1. **Ludwig** 7 (= b. 1832)
2. **Johann Georg** 5 (= b. 1834)
3. **Paul** 3 (= b. 1836)
4. **Ferdinand** 1 (= b. 1838)
5. **Anna Maria** 12 (= b. 1827)
6. **Marianna** 10 (= b. 1829)
7. **Margaret** 1 (= b. 1838)

Jacob Hoffmann, son of Johann, died in Karlsruhe Nov. 29, 1844, he was age 38 (= b. 1806). He left a wife, 5 sons and 3 daughters. This birth date of 1806 approximates what is shown in the 1839-40 R.L. above.

Johann Hoffmann had a daughter Anna born in 1851 in Karlsruhe. His identity is uncertain, presumably he was born in the 1830s.

The next lineal ancestors in our family were **Jacob Hoffmann** (b. ca. 1793) and his wife **Magdalena Bär** (b. 1802), who resided in Speier. The identity of this Jacob Hoffmann is uncertain. Jacob is not shown in the 1816 R.L. for Speier, but his wife Magdalena is shown, she was the dau. of **Johann Philipp Bär** 62 (= b. 1754) and **Margaret Krüger** 42 (= b. 1774) from Kuhardt, Pfalz who were among the original settlers in Speier in 1809. Magdalena's original baptismal record shows her as bapt. April 30, 1802 in Kuhardt, in the Rhine Pfalz, her godmother was Magdalena Bolz. Her sister was Margaret Bär (b. Oct. 25, 1804), married to Anton Hutmacher. In the 1816 R.L. Magdalena is shown as 10 years old (= b. 1806), which yields an extrapolated birth year about 4 years different from her known baptismal record in Kuhardt.¹⁶ Differences of that magnitude are not uncommon in the Revision Lists.

¹⁶ The original baptismal records of Magdalena Bär in Kuhardt and Jacob Hoffmann in Mörlheim, Rhine Pfalz, were provided by Harvey Eberle, Feb. 11, 2021.

Jacob died some time before 1839, he was 46 years old or less. His widow, Magdalena Bär, and their oldest children were residing with **Kaspar Rambur** in Speier by 1839-40. Who was this Jacob Hoffmann? He should not be confused with Jacob (b. 1804) the son of Johann (b. 1781). They resided in different colonies and their wives had different names (Magdalena Bär versus Anna Maria Frank). Jacob and Magdalena Bär had children in Speier from ca. 1820 to at least 1828 (probably later), whereas Jacob and Anna Maria Frank had children in Karlsruhe from 1832 to 1838.

There is a suggestive baptismal record in Mörlheim, Pfalz which perhaps gives us a clue to identify this Jacob Hoffmann.

Jacob Hoffmann was baptized on Oct. 9, 1792, legitimate son of Johann Georg Hoffmann, citizen of Mörlheim, and Katharina Schüler, he was given the name Jacob, the godfather was Jacob Hoffmann a citizen in Insheim, Pfalz.

In the margin the infant's name was written as Georg Hoffmann, but it was crossed out and replaced by Jacob, which appears in the body of the baptismal record and which matches the name of his godfather. The priest initially made the mistake of writing the infant's name in the margin as Georg, which was his father's name.

When we review the R.L.s for Karlsruhe Georg's children are shown, Maria Elisabeth (b. ca. 1791, marr. to Jacob Fried), Johann (b. ca. 1793), and Franz (b. ca. 1794).

We note that the extrapolated birth year for Johann (1793) closely matches the baptismal record in Mörlheim for Jacob (1792). My conclusion is that Johann Hoffmann in Karlsruhe, the son of Georg and Margaret Schüler, was probably known as Johann Jacob, and he likely was the husband of Magdalena Bär. He should not be confused with Johann (b. 1780), the son of Heinrich, who also had a son, Jacob (b. 1804).

Men often had a compound name, such as Johann Georg, Johann Jacob, etc, and women likewise were often named Anna Maria, Anna Barbara, and so on. It's possible that Johann Jacob was known initially only as Johann in Karlsruhe to avoid confusing him with Jacob (b. 1804). I noticed that his father, Georg Hoffmann, was stated to be "Johann Georg" in the 1792 baptismal record in Mörlheim.

There is an early document in 1828 in Speier concerning recovery of land taxes from the Beresan colonists. It refers to a Jacob Hoffmann, whose family consisted of 4 males (including himself) and 5 females (including his wife). Based on the fact that they resided in Speier, it is likely that he was Jacob Hoffmann married to Magdalena Bär, Barbara Hoffmann's father.

The Rambur (Romburg) Family

As we have seen, the birth record in Brazil for Jacob Meier's son, **Innocenz**, states that his grandparents were Luiz (**Alois**) **Meyer** and **Barbara Rambur**. The baptismal records in Russia show that Alois Meyer and Barbara "Trambur" (surely Rambur) had a child, Maria Josepha, 1862 in Rastadt.

The confusion in surnames for Barbara Hoffmann is due to the fact that after her father, Jacob Hoffmann, died her mother Magdalena Bär remarried to **Kaspar Romburg (Rambur)** in Speier. Barbara, age 11 (= b. 1828-29) is shown in the 1839-40 R.L. as resident in Kaspar's household, he was her step-father and occasionally in later records she used his surname.

The 1839-40 R.L. in Speier shows Magdalena Bär as the wife of **Kaspar Romburg (Rambur)** (he was b. 1811) in Speier. She is stated to be the dau. of Philipp Bär from Kuhardt, and it shows several step-children in Kaspar Romburg's household #47, the oldest ones were from the marriage of **Jacob Hoffmann** and **Magdalena Bär**. Note that the widow Magdalena (b. 1802) was about 10 years older than Kaspar, the oldest child Christina was only 8 years younger than Kaspar, Magdalena was 12 years younger, Mathias was 14 years younger, and Barbara was 17 years younger. Their ages confirm that they were step-children, plus their surnames Hoffmann are stated. 14 children were shown in Kaspar's household over the years, some of them likely from earlier marriages. Information is supplemented in the R.L. of 1858:

1. Christina Hoffmann, 20 (=b. ca. 1820), marr. Jacob Lochbaum. In the 1839/40 R.L. she was stated to be the dau. of Jakob Hoffmann. They resided in Kaspar Romburg's household in 1839/40 and they had a son Adam Lochbaum, 1 (=b. ca. 1839).

2. Magdalena Hoffmann 16 (= b. 1823).

3. Matheus Hoffmann 15 (=b. March 19, 1825), shown in the 1839/40 R.L., and in 1858 R.L. he is stated to be the step-son of Kaspar Romburg in Speier, he died 1857 age 33. Matheus marr. Anna Maria (Mariana) Metz on Sept. 19, 1849, he was stated to be a colonist of Speier, she was the dau. of Marcus Metz & Katharina Schmidt in München.

4. **Barbara Hoffmann** 11 (= b. 1828-29), she marr. **Alois Meier** in München.

5. Margaret 9 (= b. 1830), married by 1858.

6. Katharina 6 (= b. 1834), married by 1858.

7. Maria Eva 3 (= b. 1837).

8. Martin 2 (= b. 1838), died 1853 age 15.

9. Anton 1 (= b. 1839).

10. Theresa (b. 1845).

11. Michael (b. 1849, d. 1851 age 2).

12. Katharina (b. 1852).

13. Franz (b. 1856).

14. Joseph (1858, age ¼ year).

Kaspar Rambur was the son of Joseph Rambur and Margaret Streifel (b. ca. 1780), The Rambur family originated in Surburg, Alsace (also shown in Tom Hoffman's data as Salmbach, Alsace). The Rambur surname was an alternate French spelling for the original German form, which was **Romburg**. Joseph and Margaret had three children, Joseph (b. ca. 1809), Casapar (b. 1811), and Michael. The brothers, Joseph and Kaspar Rambur were shown in the R.L.s of 1839-40 and 1858. They were both stated to have arrived in Speier in 1819. Kaspar died in Speier on Aug. 3, 1873, age 62 (= b. 1811), leaving wife Magdalena Bär and child Theresia.

Kaspar's brother, **Joseph Rambur**, was married to Katharina, their 4 year old daughter Gertrud died and was buried in Speier on Dec. 21, 1827.

The 1858 R.L. in Speier shows **Joseph Rambur** 51 (b. 1807), his wife: Katharina 45 (b. 1813). Their children were:

Johann Rambur 29, wife Anna Maria 25, they had a daughter Theresia 1.

Adam Rambur 25, his wife Caecilia 20

Anton Rambur 9

Daughter Margaretha, married

Katharina 17

Joseph's brother: Michael Rambur died 1851 age 37
Mother-in-law: Margaretha **Bechtel** died 1851

Old Family Stories

My mother served as a translator for her grandmother, Louisa, when she was a child. Louisa told her stories about life in the colonies, some of which my mother passed down to me. She told about hoop snakes, which would grip their tails in their mouth and roll across the steppes, then snap at their prey. This was a common folklore in the Ukraine. Other tales were predictions about the end of the world, how there would be a great war between the followers of Christ and the followers of Satan. These tales were recorded in a mysterious *Sibylle Buch* which circulated widely among the colonies. I was always fascinated by these tales. I was finally able to locate a condensed version of it, which I translated and published in the Journal of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.¹⁷

Louisa also passed down a distant memory about the origins of our family. She said that the family was related to a "Kaiser." It's unknown if she meant a family surnamed Kaiser, or literally the German royal Kaiser. I haven't been able to locate any records for a family with this surname. My mother seemed to interpret this as a distant relationship to royalty. The closest I have found is that our ancestor, Jacob Landeis, was a bureaucrat for the Elector of the Rhine Pfalz, he was the crop measurer in the administrative center of Hördt. He held that title when he emigrated to Russia in 1809.

Louisa also said that the family originated in a region of Germany that was very close to the border with France, people could walk back and forth across the border.

If Louisa was sharing old memories from her mother, she may have been talking about where Barbara Hoffmann's family originated. Early Russian census records indicate that the Hoffmann family in the colony of Karlsruhe came from Offenbach an der Queich. The Queich river flows across southern Pfalz, passing through the city of Landau, which was under French control at that time (1809), then it flows finally to Germersheim on the Rhine. In 1680 Louis XIV asserted a claim to all territory in the southern Pfalz extending from Landau and along the Queich river to Germersheim. The boundary eventually became established farther south at the Lauter river (which today marks the border with Alsace). At the time when our German ancestors were making their exodus from the Pfalz to Russia in 1809, it would indeed have been possible to walk to the Queich river, and to cross into French held territory.

The Rambur/Romburg family, Barbara's step-father, came from Surburg, Alsace. This village is in Bas-Rhin, not within easy walking distance of the German border.

If Louisa was perhaps speaking about her Meier family, this would fit better with the historical and geographic parameters. Philip Meier in München came from Kuhardt, which is on the south side of Hördt, in the district of Germersheim in the Pfalz. Making a rough estimate from the map scale, it looks like Kuhardt is about 15 miles from the current border with Alsace. This was indeed close to the border, as well as to Landau, which was an administrative city under French control at that time.

¹⁷ Roland M. Wagner, "The Sibylline Prophecies as a Source of German-Russian Apocalyptic Traditions," AHSGR Journal, Vol. 22, No. 2, Summer 1999.

The Meier families in the other colonies originated from places much farther away from France. The Meiers in Karlsruhe came from Ehrstädt, in Baden, which was several days journey from France on the opposite shore of the Rhine. Balthasar Meier's family in Rastadt came from Bietigheim, Baden, east of the Rhine, which also is distant from the border. Neither of those places are close enough to allow people to “walk back and forth” between France and Germany.

This is certainly not conclusive evidence of origins for our Meier family, but it does point us in the right direction. It matches the existing records which indicate that our Meier family stemmed from Kuhardt and our Hoffmann family from Offenbach, both in the Rhine Pfalz.

Summary Tables

I am presenting summary tables showing all the known relatives in my branch of the Meier family (including all variant spellings) in the Catholic colony of München. The tables show records from the Revision Lists in Karl Stumpp's and Fr. Konrad Keller's books, the *EinwandererZentralstelle* (Immigrant Center, EWZ) records compiled during World War Two, and the records from the Tiraspol Roman Catholic Consistory which is stored today in the Russian State Archive in Saratov.

We have four early photos which were preserved in the family of Tony Meier, shared with me by his wife Pamela. Tony is the great-grandson of Jacob Meier and Barbara Boehm, and the grandson of Innocenz Meier and Regina Dietz. The identities of the persons in the photos are uncertain. Tony remembered that these photos hung above the bed of his grandparents. Tony's first-cousin Evan (Yvonne, daughter of Eva Meier-Schaff) also recalled that these four photos hung above her grandparents' bed. No names were written on the back, except for the younger woman (smiling) with headscarf who was Barbara Boehm, wife of Jakob Meier. Since Innocenz was the son of Jacob Meier and Barbara Boehm, it's possible that the photos are of his family - the older man perhaps was his father Jacob. The identity of the younger man is uncertain. Jake told Tony and Pam that the younger man in the photo (he had a hat on the table before I cropped the photo) supposedly died en route to the USA (this would have been in 1904). However, the ship registry shows only the three sons of Jacob and Barbara (Thomas age 18, Innocenz age 11, and Georg age 8), and we know that all 3 sons died later in North Dakota. If the young man in the photo died en route he couldn't be either of them. Barbara Boehm supposedly had a son from an earlier marriage, so he might be that person. It's possible that the photos were of Barbara Boehm's family, or the family of Innocenz's wife Regina Dietz. The older woman could be Barbara Hoffmann-Meier. Unfortunately there is no way to answer these questions.

(See photos below)



Barbara Hoffmann-Meier?



**Jacob
Meier?, son
of Alois
Meier and
Barbara
Hoffmann?**



Unknown



Barbara Boehm-Meier, wife of Jakob Meier. Her name was written on the back of the photo.

Relatives of our Meier family:

The ancestors for our branch of the family were **Philip Meier** (b. ca. 1790) and his wife, **Franziska**, her middle name was apparently **Maria**, and her surname is shown in one baptismal record as **Martin**, a family which also is shown in records as **Martian** and **Merdian**. They came from Kuhardt in the Rhine Pfalz and were among the founders of München in 1809. Two known children:

1. **Elisabeth**, b. ca. 1810.
2. **Johann**, b. ca. 1816 shown in the R.L. of München as 3 mos. old.

Johann Meier, presumably the son of Philipp in München, Johann d. Aug. 30, 1872, age 53, (= b. date of ca. 1819), his death record in München shows 7 children – Philipina, Marianna, Johann, Veronika, Karl, **Aloisius**, and Margaret. Johann marr. **Katharina Ferner**, the baptismal records of München show a total of 10 children. Alois was the oldest b. 1829:

1. **Alois**, b. ca. 1829, d. Oct. 12, 1864, marr. **Barbara Hoffmann**, she was b. ca. 1830.
2. **Conrad**, b. April 10, 1845.
3. **Joseph**, b. Mar. 30, 1847.
4. **Karl**, b. 1849 in München, he marr. Susanna Kessel b. 1854 in München.
5. **Jakobina**, b. Aug. 26, 1850.
6. **Maria Anna**, b. Sept. 4, 1852 godfa. **Alois Meier**.
7. **Anna**, b. Sept. 30, 1856.
8. **Alexy**, b. Sept. 4, 1858, godfa. Aleksey, son of Alexander Drawitsch. Note Alexy Meier could have been the godfa. for Louisa's son, **Alexander**, my grandfather.
9. **Veronika**, b. July 22, 1860.
10. **Margaret**, b. April 28, 1862.

There is no baptismal record for **Alois**, but he was born ca. 1829 and he d. Oct. 12, 1864, age 35 (= b. ca. 1829), which is 16 years different from the other oldest known child of Johann (Conrad b. 1845). Perhaps he was a younger brother of Johann? Aloisius' death record states that he was a Rastadt colonist, but he had a close relationship with Johann in München because they served as godfathers for each others daughters in 1852. If Alois was a younger brother of Johann, it would make sense for them to serve as mutual godfathers; typically someone wouldn't be godparent for his own sibling.

Alois Meier (b. ca. 1829, presumably in München) marr. to **Barbara Hoffmann** (b. ca. 1827 Karlsruhe, also shown with her step-father's surname **Rambur**). Barbara was the dau. of **Jacob Hoffmann** (b. 1792 in Mörlheim, Pfalz) and **Magdalena Bär** (b. 1802 Kuhardt, Pfalz). Alois Meier and Barbara had 8 known children. The obituaries state that Jakob, Friedrich and Lousia were siblings.

1. **Franziska Meier**, b. May 18, 1850, München, godparents were Johann Garrecht and Franziska Scherger.
2. **Maria Anna Meier**, b. April 6, 1852, München, godparents **Johann Meier** and Maria Anna Wandler.
3. **Johann Meyer** b. Sept. 20, 1853, Rastadt, godparents were Johann Kropin? and Katharina Meyer. In the EWZ records he is shown as marr. to **Katharina Odenbach**, both b. in Rastadt, they died in Niederdorf, district of Schemetowo, *Rayon* of Janowka, Odessa.
4. **Friedrich Meier**, b. Nov. 29, 1856.

5. **Margaret Meier**, b. Feb. 15, 1859 Rastadt, Johann Meier and Margaret Schwamm (Schwann?).
6. **Jakob Meier**, b. March 2, 1860 (or Aug. 23).
7. **Maria Josepha Meier**, b. June 14, 1862 Rastadt, godparents Konrad Ell and Maria Josepha Kropin.
8. **Louisa (Aloisa) Meier**, b. Dec. 10, 1864, two months after the death of Alois.

M1 **Alois Meier** (b. 1829), m. **Barbara Hoffmann** (b. 1827); he died Oct. 12, 1864 age 35 (= b. ca. 1829), they had 8 children, including Friedrich, Jacob, and Louisa. After his death Barbara remarried to **Peter Landeis**, from Karlsruhe.

M11 **Friedrich Meier**, b. Nov. 29, 1856 (the 1900 U.S. Census shows July 1856), emigrated with sister **Louisa** and her husband, **Heinrich Landeis**, to North Dakota Oct. 3, 1889, d. March 17, 1914 Billings, MT. He marr. **Anna Magdalena Landeis** (daughter of **Philipp Landeis** and **Barbara Reisenauer**; she was known as "Lena" to her grandchildren), she was b. Oct. 1867 (1900 U.S. Census says Oct. 1886, 1910 Census says "about 1887") probably in Neu-Karlsruhe, after Friedrich's death she remarried Paul Pavel Messer in 1915, she d. Glendive, MT 1939. The 1900 U.S. Census shows Friedrich and his family as residing in Richardton, N.D., and the 1910 Census shows them in Billings, MT. The 1910 census shows children: Victor 19, Henry 15, Thomas 12, Vincent 6, John 1 ½, and Liza 2/6. Data on Ancestry.com shows Friedrich's middle name as "**Wilhelm**" although there are no records confirming this. Friedrich's death certificate states that his parents were "**Alex Meyers** and **Barbara Hoffmann**." The father's name was likely due to a mistake, it should be **Alois**. His obituary states that five children were living at home, two were in the Army, and one was married (prob. Henry); also states that his sister, Louisa, was married to Heinrich Landeis, and that he had a brother, Jakob Meier, living in Mott, N.D. Friedrich and Lena had 13 children (Ancestry.com shows only 8:

M111 **Anton Frederick Meyers**. His name was originally shown as "**Andreas Maier**" in the ship records of 1889 and the 1900 census. Later, by 1940 for some unknown reason he went by "Anton Fred Meyers." He was b. June 21, 1884, probably Neu-Karlsruhe, d. Oct. 16, 1959, Glendive, MT. His death certificate states his parents were Friedrich Meier and Anna Landise. He lived with his parents in N.D. then came to Montana as a young man, worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad 45 years, retired in 1954. Marr. #1 in Nov. 16, 1910 to **Anna Lue**, she b. Jan. 10, 1894 (or Mar. 14?), she d. June 1, 1927, Yellowstone, MT. Marr. #2 Sept. 7, 1929 to **Anna P. Hooper**, she was divorced, he a widower. Marr. #3 June 19, 1931 to **Maude Ethel Sumpter** (her surname is shown as Grauman in Anton Fred's obituary; she had a daughter Jessica Cross from her previous marriage). Anton Fred was uncertain about his own birthdate and his obituary in the Billings Gazette (Oct. 18, 1959) gives some erroneous information. It states that he was born June 21, 1874 in Russia, and came to the USA with his parents in 1877. Those dates are clearly wrong and about 20 years too early. The ship records show that Friedrich Maier and Magdalena came to North Dakota in 1889, their oldest son "Andreas" was age 5 at the time. The 1900 U.S. census shows his parents and their children Andreas, Joseph, Victor, Henry, and Thomas.

Andreas' birthdate is shown as June, 1885. Andreas is not shown in the 1910 census, so he had moved away from home by that date. There is also confusion between his father Friedrich's children and Anton Fred's children in his 1959 obituary. Anton Fred wrote a letter in 1940 to the Clerk of the District Court in Great Falls, stating that he was the son of Friedrich Mayer, and asking if there was any information about his own birthdate. The court noted that in his father's citizenship papers of 1898 the surname was "Maier," and that Anton Fred now spelled it "Meyers." Apparently Anton Fred hadn't applied for citizenship, but the court stated that he could file for derivative citizenship through his father. Anton Fred's known children were:

M1111 Theresa L. Meyers, b. Oct. 21, 1911 MT, marr. Jacob Groscop, Feb. 22, 1930 Billings, MT.

M1112 Frances Anna Meyers, b. Mar. 10, 1913, MT; d. Aug. 12, 1997, Billings, MT, marr. Philip Reitz.

M1113 Joseph Meyers, b. June 27, 1915 MT; d. 1942, Billings; marr. Rose Smith, Laurel MT.

M1114 Thomas Lee Meyers ("Lee"), b. Aug. 13, 1918, Billings, d. Nov. 14, 2001 Wheeling, IL; marr. Agnes Skrzypczak, she b. Mar. 16, 1922.

M1115 Virginia Irene Meyers, b. Aug. 6, 1920 MT, d. Apr. 28, 1939 IL., marr. Robert Stuffelbeam, he b. May 30, 1917 Plainfield, Iowa.

M1116 Anton John Meyers, b. Sept. 14, 1922, d. 1925 "poisoning from lunch."

M1117 Frederick this name is mentioned as a son in Anton Fred's obituary. This probably is a mistaken repeat from Friedrich's obituary.

M1118 Victor Meyers, this also is based on a mistake in the obituary for Anton Fred, which states that he was survived by three sons, Thomas, Fred, and Victor. These were sons of Friedrich.

M11181 Steven Meyers. His lineage on Ancestry.com shows his father as Victor Meyers, grandfather as Anton Fred. This Victor should be the son of Friedrich, or perhaps **M1153** below. Steven has a DNA link with my son, Daniel, showing a cousin relationship.

M112 Joseph William Meyer, b. Aug. 1888 (Ancestry.com shows July 10, 1888), probably Neu-Karlsruhe; 1900 U.S. Census shows him age 11, lived in Stockton, CA, d. 1964, marr. Theresa Lue from Hungary July 1914.

M113 Unknown infant, b. 1889, d. Oct. 1889.

M114 Barbara Meyer, b. after 1890 Hebron, N.D., died after falling in a well.

M115 Victor William Meyer, b. June 20, 1892, Glen Ullin, N.D. (1900 U.S. Census shows June 1893), d. July 9, 1960 Baltimore, MD; marr. Barbara Anna Haber (b. Nov. 29, 1896 Baltimore, d. Jan. 11, 1971 Baltimore). Children:

M1151 Genevieve Catherine Meyers, b. Nov. 2, 1923 Baltimore.

M1152 Frances A. Meyers, b. 1924 Baltimore.

M1153 Victor Meyers, b. 1926 Baltimore.

M1154 Barbara Ann Meyers, b. July 23, 1928 Baltimore.

M1155 Victoria "Vickie" Meyers, b. 1932 Baltimore.

M1156 Chistine "Chris" Ann Meyers, b. Dec. 18, 1933 Baltimore.

M116 Peter Meyer, b. after 1891, Belt MT, d. 1894.

- M117 Henry Joseph Meyer**, b. March 10, 1896 Belt, MT, d. Sept. 13, 1979 Billings MT; marr. May 22, 1917 Billings to Gertrude Mossman (she b. April 14, 1896 Dagott, Russia, she d. July 5, 1977 Billings).
- M1171 Irene Agnes** b. ca. 1921 Billings, d. July 6, 1978 Billings; marr. Oct. 7, 1939 in Columbus, MT.
- M1172 William Meyer**, b. ca. 1921, d. MT.
- M1172 Hazel Marie**, b. Jan. 1, 1923, Billings, d. Feb. 11, 1990 Wasco County, OR; marr. Sept. 1, 1941 to Raymond Rehfeldt, Columbus, OR.
- M1173 Alice Virginia**, b. Sept. 16, 1924 Billings, d. Apr. 1991, MT; marr. Nov. 7, 1942 Laurel, MT.
- M1174 Louise H.**, b. Apr. 28, 1926 Billings; marr. Anthony Schaff jr., he b. Mar. 6, 1926, he d. July 8, 1990 Anchorage, Alaska.
- M1175 Delores Gertrude**, b. Oct. 17, 1929 Billings, d. Jan. 3, 1995 The Dalles, OR.; marr. Elmo Pizzola.
- M1176 Henry J. Meyer**, b. Jan. 13, 1931, Billings; d. July 17, 2003 Billings.
- M1177 George Frederick Meyer**, b. ca. 1934 MT.
- M118 Thomas Meyer**, b. March 1899, Richardton ND (1900 U.S. Census shows Mar. 1899).
- M119 Vinzent Meyer**, b. March 16, 1905 Wasta, SD. On Feb. 8, 1944 he was employed as a laborer by U.S., Chicago and Northwestern Railroad in Wasta, S.D., stated to be born March 16, 1905, parents Fred Meyers and Lena Landice.
- M110 Regina Meyer**, b. after 1905 Dickinson, d. before 1910 Dickinson.
- M110a Regina II**, b. ca. 1907 Dickinson, d. as a baby before 1910 Dickinson.
- M110b John Meyer**, b. May 1908, d. Glendive MT; marr. Rena May Meyers, b. ca. 1901 Kansas.
- M110c Elizabeth ("Liza") Meyer**, b. Oct. 1909 Edgar MT, d. 1998.

Frederick Meyer married **Lida Hawk/Hauk** on Dec. 17, 1908, age 22 (= b. ca. 1886), in Mott, N.D. It's unknown who this Fred Meyer was, possibly an earlier marriage of Anton Fred, although the birth years don't match, nor the names of his wives.

M12 Jakob Meier, his petition for citizenship and his death certificate show his birth date as Aug. 23, 1861. He died July 24, 1943 Burt, N.D., stated to be a widower. His parents on the death certificate were listed as **Aloysius Meier** and **Barbara** (maiden name not given). One family history on internet shows Jakob as born in "Rastatt, Baden, the son of Alexander Georg Meier and Barbara Hoffmann," but the reference to Rastatt, Baden is a confusion with the colony of Rastadt, Russia. Jakob emigrated to Brazil in 1887, then later to Burt, in Hettinger county, North Dakota where they resided for 23 years or more. His son Innocenz's birth certificate in Brazil states that his grandparents were **Luiz (Alois) Meier** and **Barbara Rambur** (her step-father was Caspar Rambur). The records show that Alois Meier and Barbara "Trambur" (Rambur) had a child Maria Josepha in 1862 in Rastadt. Jacob's petition for citizenship in North Dakota says he was b. in Rastadt; his obituary says he was born on this same date in München; his tombstone says he was born in 1861, and his death certificate says he was born March 2, 1861 in "Odessa." He marr. **Barbara "Bahm" (Boehm)**. There are conflicting dates for her birthdate, ranging from 1850 to

1858. The ship registry when they landed in the USA in 1904 shows her as age 54, 10 years older than Jakob. However, their tombstone shows Jakob 1861-1943, Barbara 1858-1943. Her death certificate states that Barbara Boehm Meier was born 1856 in Russia, died Oct. 8, 1928, age 72, her father was Rosimus Boehm, mother unknown. The 1910 U.S. Census also indicates that she was born ca. 1856. This would make her about 5 years older than Jakob (however, her tombstone states 1858). Their son Innocenz's birth record in Brazil shows his maternal grandparents as Rosemus Bohm (**Erasmus Boehm**) and **Katherine Mischel**. Katherine Mischel was born 1837-38 in Katherinental, the da. of **Adam Mischel** and **Marianna Schwebel**. Jakob resided in Rastadt after his marriage, where their first children were born. They emigrated to Brazil in 1887, then later to the USA on July 3, 1904 aboard the S.S. Capri, at the urging of his brother Friedrich residing in Mott, N.D. area (see **Friedrich M11** above). Jakob was naturalized on July 10, 1911 (application states his place of birth as Rastadt). He died on July 24, 1943 at the age of 82. Barbara Boehm-Meier died in 1928. Both buried at St. Placidius cemetery, near Mott. Barbara may have had a son from an earlier marriage.

Children of Jakob Meier and Barbara Boehm:

M121 Barbara Ann Meier, b. April 3, 1885, Rastadt; d. Dec. 26, 1928; marr. **Alex Zentner**. 6 children (Zentner surname):

M1211 Jacob, marr. Grace.

M1212 Eva.

M1213 Anton, marr. Haaz.

M1214 John, marr. Martha.

M1215 Innocenz, marr. Eva Roll, resided in Burt, N.D.

M1216 Martin.

M122 Thomas Meier, b. March 1, 1887, Rastadt; d. May 20, 1966; marr. **Beata Fitterer** from Katharinenthal, Feb. 19, 1912 at Burt, N.D. His declaration of intent to become a citizen, filed Oct. 8, 1913 states that he was born in Rastadt, but his obituary says München. Came from Laguna, Brazil and landed in N.Y. in July, 1904. Thomas and Beata had 10 children:

M1221 Joseph Meier, b. July 31, 1913 at Burt, N.D.; d. April 23, 1981; marr.

Anna Mary Zent; he died in Montrose, Colorado. They had 13 children.

M1222 Peter Meier, b. Sept. 21, 1914; marr. **Josephine Keller**. They had 8 children.

M1223 Jacob Meier, b. April 16, 1916 Burt, N.D., d. Feb. 3, 2008 age 91. Jacob served as an Army medic during World War 2 in the Pacific. His reminiscences about his war experiences are posted (as of 2014) on internet: www.24thida.com/stories/.../Meier_jacob_lucky_dogfoot_book_3a_opt.pdf. I visited with Jacob and we corresponded briefly about Meier family history. He marr. **Mathilda A. Friez** on June 3, 1947. He notes that they were married by the same priest who baptized both of them, at St. Placidius church north of Mott, N.D. His brother Thomas Meier served as best man, and Mattie's uncle was Joe Schantz. They had 5 children:

M12231 Paul Dennis Meier, resides in Seattle; helped edit the memoirs.

M12232 David Emanuel Meier.

M12233 Cheryl Ann Meier.

M12234 Torrance James Meier.

- M12235 John Steven Meier.**
- M1224 Kaspar Meier**, b. 1918; marr. **Florene Rourdink**. 3 children.
- M1225 Barbara**, b. 1920; marr. Jerome Hoerner, resided Bismarck, N.D. 4 children.
- M1226 Thomas Meier jr.**, b. July 12, 1922, d. Mar. 31, 1958; marr. **Ramona Rouza**. 4 children?
- M1227 Anna**, b. 1926; marr. **Frank Roll**, resided Dickinson, N.D. 6 children.
- M1228 Paul Meier**, b. 1932; marr. Ellguevene Maychrzak. 5 children.
- M1229 Vyola Meier**, b. Oct. 4, 1935, marr. **Jerome Schaff**, resided Mandan, N.D. They have 2 children.
- M1220 Genevieve**, b. 1939; marr. Charles Schwahn, resided DeSmet. 1 child.
- M123 Innocenz Meier**, b. Sept. 8, 1892, Nossa Senhora de Piedade, Tubarao, Santa Catarina, Brazil, d. Feb. 9, 1952, buried at St. Placius, N.D. He marr. **Regina Dietz**, b. Dec. 25, 1891, d. Feb. 4, 1974 buried at Hettinger, N.D., St. Placidius cemetery. 5 children:
- M1231 George**, b. March 9, 1914, d. July 19, 1993, marr. **Della Braun**, children:
- M12311 Francis J.** 1938-1959.
- M12312 Joseph Georg** 1939-
- M12313 Trudy.**
- M12314 Rita.**
- M12315 Anna May.**
- M1232 Eva**, b. July 10, 1914, d. Nov. 13, 1996, marr. **Nick Schaff**, resided in Mott, N.D.
- M1233 Innocenz** (infant), b. April 10, 1917, d. Aug. 19, 1917.
- M1234 Helen**, b. July 7, 1920 Mott, N.D., d. Sept. 5, 2007 Missoula, MT, marr. **Marcus Wolff**.
- M1235 Barbara**, b. Aug. 1, 1926, Mott, N.D., d. July 17, 2016 Missoula, MT, marr. **Anthony F. Zarnik** 1921-1977.
- M1236 Elmer A. Meier sr.** (orig. **Anton Elmer Meier**), marr. 3 times: (1) **Theresa Fettig**, after her death to (2) **Marge** (divorced), and (3) **Josephine**. He had 7 children from marr. (1).
- M12361 Elmer A. (Anton) Meier junior (Tony)**, b. April 8, 1958, marr. **Pamela**.
- M1236 Barbara**, marr. **Zarnik**, resided in Missoula, MT.
- M124 George Meier**, b. Dec. 31, 1896, Brazil, d: Jan. 24, 1972, buried at Elgin, N.D.; marr. Margaret Erhardt. 7 children:
- M1241 Regina**, marr. **Alphons Schmitt**.
- M1242 Vincent**, marr. **Katherine Fix**.
- M1243 Tony**, marr. **Aggie Mosbrucker**, resided Mott, N.D.
- M1244 Frank**, marr. surname **Otto**, resided Burt, N.D.
- M1245 Emilia**, marr. **Ed Klinner**.
- M1246 Caroline**, marr. **Reisenauer**.
- M1247 Joseph**, marr. **Mosbrucker**, sister of Aggie (M1243).

M13 Louisa (Aloisa) Meier, b. Dec. 10, 1864 in the "district of Nikolaiev"). Her parents were not stated on her death certificate. Her father was **Alois Meier**, he died 2

months before her birth and presumably she was named in commemoration of him. She marr. her step-bro. **Heinrich Landeis** in ca. 1881 in Neu-Karlsruhe, they immigrated to North Dakota in 1889, d. Feb. 16, 1938 Billings, MT, buried. in Ryegate, MT. 12 Children:

M131 Philip James Landeis, b. April 21, 1883, prob. Neu-Karlsruhe, Ukraine.

M132 Catherine (Katy) Landeis, b. May 14, 1886, prob. Neu-Karlsruhe, marr. Jacob Scheeler in Dickinson, N.D..

M133 Alexander Landeis¹⁸, b. March 12, 1889 prob. Neu-Karlsruhe, shortly before his parents emigrated to North Dakota; m. **Ida (Eda) Fuchs** May 10, 1911 Amar, N.D., he d. Dec. 9, 1967, Billings, MT, buried Ryegate, MT. Ida was the daughter of **Caspar Fuchs** from Studen, Switzerland, and **Theresia Molitor** from Mainz, Germany. Alex and Ida had 8 Children:

M1331 Clara Eleanor Landeis (born Nov. 16, 1911, near Rhame, N.D.; died May 16, 2003 in Billings, age 91.5); marr. Frank Deichl, Billings, MT

M1332 Pauline Ida Landeis (born Aug. 5, 1913, near Rhame, N.D.; died March 7, 2000, Powell WY); marr. Russell Mees.

M1333 Anna Marie Landeis (born Aug. 26, 1915, Ryegate, Mt.; died Jan. 3, 2000 Salem, OR); marr. **John Wagner**. My parents.

M1334 Alexander Landeis (born Aug. 23, 1917, Ryegate, Mt.; died March, 1992 of heart attack); marr. Graycie.

M1335 Frances Katie Landeis (born Dec. 13, 1919, Ryegate, Mt.; died Oct. 24, 1986, Boise, ID).

M1336 Josephine Martha Landeis (born April 20, 1922, Ryegate, Mt.; died Oct. 14, 1960 of cancer, Seattle); marr. Glen Gaard.

M1337 Henry Casper Landeis (born June 27, 1925, Ryegate, Mt.; died Sept. 21, 1994, Seattle, cremated and buried at Ryegate).

M1338 Dorothy Louise Landeis (born July 4, 1930, Ryegate, Mt.; murdered by her husband).

M134 Barbara Landeis, b. Feb. 18, 1891 Richardton, N.D., m. **Webb**, Seattle, WA.

M135 Gusta Landeis, died at birth, 1893, Richardton, N.D.

M136 Ambrose Landeis, b. Oct. 21, 1895, Richardton, N.D., unmarried

M137 Anna Landeis, b. July 2, 1897, Richardton, N.D., m. **August Paridaen**, Ryegate, Montana. My mother.

M138 John Landeis, born May 25, 1899, Richardton, N.D.

M139 Magdalena Landeis, b. Oct. 13, 1901, Richardton, N.D; d. of diptheria at age 6.

M130a Andrew Landeis, died at birth, 1903.

¹⁸ Alexy Meier, born 1858 in München, son of Johann Meier and Katharina Ferner, was named after his godfather, Aleksy Drawitsch, the son of Alexander Drawitsch. Alexy Meier was contemporary with my great-grandmother Louisa Meier-Landeis, they were cousins or he was her young uncle. Possibly he was the godfather for my grandfather, **Alex Landeis** in 1889. He was the only contemporary person with the name Alex in the Meier or Landeis families.

M130b Jacob (Jack) Landeis, b. Dec. 28, 1904, Dickinson, N.D., d. Nov. 1983, buried Ryegate, MT.

M130c Joseph Landeis, died at birth, 1906.

M14 Johann Meyer, b. Sept. 21, 1853 in Rastadt, parents stated to be **Alois Meyer** and **Barbara Hoffmann**, godparents **Johann Kropin** and **Katharina Meyer**.

Fr. Aberle's Family History: John J. Meier from München to North Dakota

Volume 1 of Fr. Aberle's Pioneers and Their Sons contains the history of John J. Meyer, born Dec. 10, 1891 in München.¹⁹ His father, Franz Meyer, born 1861 in München, immigrated to Richardton, N.D. on May 13, 1892, when John was 1 year old. Franz homesteaded near Richardton for 3 years then finally moved to Dickinson in 1897, where he built a house east of St. Joseph's church. Franz later bought land outside Dickinson, where he farmed and raised a large family of 11 children. His son John J. operated a dairy farm there and raised an even larger family of 13 children.

Fr. Aberle shows their stem ancestor as Balthasar Meyer from Rastadt. Balthasar was b. ca. 1766, his wife Marianna was b. ca. 1771, and their oldest son Johann sr. was b. ca. 1795. Fr. Aberle shows the next generation as Johann Meyer & Katharina Nikolaus who had eight children born in München from 1858 to 1864. Presumably this Johann and Katharina Nikolaus were born ca. 1835.

Below is the family tree for John J. Meyer shown in Fr. Aberle's book, with details supplemented by the U.S. Censuses:

Balthasar Meyer, wife **Marian**, from Breital, Alsace, district of Schlettstadt (Selestat), who immigrated to Rastadt in 1809, among the founders shown in 1810, along with **Simon Meyer**. Children of Balthasar (all born before coming to Russia):

1. **Margaret**

2. **Magdalena**

3. **Johann Meyer**, married to **Katharina Nikolaus**, according to Fr. Aberle he was the son of Balthasar. Children of Johann (all born in München):

a. **Johann Meyer**, b. April 9, 1858.

b. **Magdalena**, b. July 23, 1864, m. **Joseph Eberts**.

c. **Wilhelm Meyer**, b. Sept. 2, 1868.

d. **Maria Eva**, m. **Nickolaus Wolbaum**. Her second marriage was with Philipp Mosbrucker in Rastadt, with whom she had a daughter Margaret Mosbrucker, b. Apr. 14, 1896. Maria Eva Meier served as godmother for Rosa Koffler, dau. of Meinrad Koffler in Rohrbach on Jan. 29, 1891. Maria's identity is uncertain.

e. **Elizabeth**, m. **Jacob Reiss**.

f. **Marian**, m. **Franz Roth**. There was also Maria Anna who died in childhood, on Jan. 25, 1880, age 1 yr 9 mos.

g. **Franz (Frank) J. Meyer**, b. Mar. 20, 1861, marr. **Anna Maria Hoffer**, b. Oct. 2, 1863 München, da. of Joseph Hoffer who came to München at age 18; Franz and his family

¹⁹ Fr. Aberle, 1966, Vol. 1, pp. 38-41. John J.'s draft registration confirms his birthdate and also that he was born in "Mineha," which is German dialect pronunciation for München.

came to the USA on May 13, 1892, and homesteaded near Richardton and Dickinson, N.D. Anna Maria Hoffer died on July 15, 1924, Dickinson, N.D., after which Franz remarried Mrs. Minnie Thomas. Franz died Dec. 17, 1942. Franz and Anna Maria had 11 children:

- 1) **Mary Margaret ("Maggie")**, b. Jan. 16, 1887 München, marr. **Ralph Huck**.
- 2) **John J. Meyer**, b. Dec. 10, 1891 München, d. July 23, 1971; marr. **Margaret** (shown as Martha in 1930 U.S. Census) **Emineth** on Nov. 24, 1914 at Rosebud, N.D.; she was b. June 20, 1896 München, da. of Fred Emineth of Rastadt, she d. May 4, 1963. They had 13 children.

There are problems with this history above as presented by Fr. Aberle. We note that Balthasar Meier was b. ca. 1766, while his supposed son Johann and wife Katharina Nikolaus were likely born about 1835 or later, judging from the births of their eight children from 1858-1878. The gap in time between Balthasar and Johann is too large, they differed in age by about 70 years. The baptismal records in Rastadt show that Balthasar did have a son, Johann, married to Elisabeth Schall on Oct. 26, 1815, they had three children in Rastadt from 1825-1831, which was a full generation earlier than what Fr. Aberle shows for Johann and Katharina Nikolaus in München. It is apparent that Fr. Aberle confused Johann Meier, married to Elisabeth Schall in Rastadt, with Johann Meier married to Katharina Nikolaus in München.

So what was the origin for Fr. Aberle's history, which shows a direct link between Balthasar Meier in Rastadt and Johann Meier & Katharina Nikolaus in München? Unfortunately it was simply a guess. I corresponded with Fr. Aberle before his death and inquired about his sources for the earliest stem ancestors stated in his histories. He confirmed that he supplemented his histories by referring to Fr. Conrad Keller's book, which reprinted the earliest R.L.s in the colonies. The problem was that while most families knew the names of their grandparents, they didn't know the original stem ancestor who immigrated to the colonies in 1809. Unfortunately Fr. Aberle loosely supplemented his histories by choosing a stem ancestor based solely on their surname. If there were more than one person with this surname, Aberle sometimes chose the wrong colony of origin and the wrong stem ancestor.

My conclusion is that Fr. Aberle's history for John J. Meier in North Dakota is probably accurate for his parents, Franz J. Meier and Anna Maria Hofer, and for his grandparents, Johann J. Meier and Katharina Nikolaus. Beyond that we just simply have no reliable information.

As we have seen, there apparently were two separate Meyer lineages in München - Johann marr. to Katharina Nikolaus, and Johann marr. to Katharina Ferner. Our Meier lineage has links extending back to Philipp Meier in München. We don't know the origins of the lineage of Johann & Katharina Nikolaus. There is no Nikolaus family shown in Rastadt, but there was one among the founders of München. Johann Meier and Kath. Nicholas had children from 1858 until 1878, the births of their children overlap in the 1850s-1860s with those of Alois, one of them was born in 1864, which overlaps with Louisa Meier born in 1864. This shows that Johann Meier and Katharina Nikolaus were a separate couple.

The Tangle of Information on Ancestry.com

There are several pieces of information posted on internet family history sites pertaining to our Meier family, but unfortunately some of these are mistaken guesses. Ancestry.com, for example, offers suggestions which it calls possible "leaves on your family tree." These are sometimes adopted as *de facto* truth and are then passed back and forth.

Jacob Meier's mother, Barbara Hoffmann (shown by her step-father's surname "Rambur" in Brazilian records) has been confused with Jacob's wife, Barbara Boehm. There is confusion between Alois and Alexander Meier, for which I may be partially responsible because I noted years ago that Friedrich's death certificate listed his father as "Alex." One internet site shows "Alex" Meier as married to Barbara "Boehm" and her mother is stated to be "Kathy Boehm." As is documented in this family history, Alois Meier's wife was Barbara Hoffmann, not Boehm. Jacob Meier, son of Alois, was married to Barbara "Bahm/Bohm." Barbara Bahm's mother was Katherine Mischel-Bahm, who may be the Kathy Boehm shown on Ancestry.com. There apparently was a confusion of generations.

Another leaf on Ancestry.com states that Jacob, Friedrich, and Louisa Meier had a "half-sister" named Katharine Landeis. This is based on a misunderstanding of the admittedly confusing relationships between the two families. Katherine Landeis (known as Katie) was born in 1866, she was the sister of Heinrich Landeis, and Katie was the daughter of Peter Landeis. As far as we know, the Landeis family was not biologically related to the Meier family. This enabled the marriage of Friedrich Meier and Anna Magdalena Landeis (Heinrich's relative), as well as the arranged marriage of Heinrich Landeis and Louisa Meier (they were step-siblings). Katie Landeis later married Jakob Scheeler, they owned a store in Dickinson, N.D. The complex relationships of the Meier and Landeis families have confused their descendants ever since.