

**A History of the Reis Family
from Rastadt, Ukraine to Dickinson, North Dakota**

by

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The Etymology of the Surname

The surname "Reis" occurs primarily in the German speaking regions of Europe. In earlier records it is usually spelled as "Reiss" or "Reisz," sometimes also as "Reiß" which denotes the "estset" or double-ss on the end. In German the double-ss is pronounced like English "s," whereas a single "s" in German is pronounced like English "z."

There are various speculations about its origins. It may have derived from the Middle High German *ris* or *risle*, meaning a "branch," "twig," "undergrowth" or "brushwood." This perhaps denoted someone who gathered firewood, or who trimmed vineyards. There was also a Middle High German word *riuze*, which was a name for a cobbler. Surnames were also often derived from place names. There is a town in Bavaria named "Reisen," and there is also a "Reissen" in Thuringia; hence, the surname could have referred to persons from these towns including "Reissner" and "Reysner." Some of the earliest persons recorded with this surname include Klaus Reis ("Clesse Reyse") in Mainz in 1444, and Leonhardt Reiser in Nuremberg in 1443.

In the USA the old German spelling of "Reiss" has been simplified to "Reis." One branch of our family has Anglicized the name to "Rice." This may lead to the mistaken assumption that the family name is somehow related to the food grain. However, this is unlikely because Internet sources state that rice was brought originally to Spain by the Moors, it spread into Italy sometime in the 16th century, then north into the German regions. Rice usage north of the Alps was relatively late in history and the surname was already in use there by that point.

If you search for the geographical occurrences of the surname Reiss in Germany today, the overwhelming majority is in northwestern Baden along the Rhine river, centered on Mannheim. As we will see below, this matches what is known about the historical origins of our Reis family.

The Reis Family in Wollmesheim, Pfalz

The earliest documented roots of our branch of the Reis family are in Wollmesheim, a small village suburb of about 395 people southwest of Landau in the Rhine Pfalz. There are several sources that facilitate research into these earlier times. The old church books of Wollmesheim are available on microfilm, and they can be viewed at local LDS Family History centers. In addition, in 2007 the village of Wollmesheim celebrated its 1000 year history by publishing a new local history chronicle, updating the earlier village history published in 1957.



Wollmesheim b. Landau (Pfalz)



Handlung v. Jakob Theobald



Straßenpartie

The earliest record is for Mathis (Mathias) Reiss who resided in Wollmesheim in 1682. Johann Thomas Reiss, apparently the son of Mathis, was born in Wollmesheim on Nov. 23, 1706. He married Anna Maria Tillger from Göcklingen.

Johann Thomas had a son, Johann Jacob (1724 - 1775), who married Anna Barbara Schwartz. Their son, Johann Georg (b. May 6, 1753) married Katharina Deibel (also shown in German as Deublin), and they had at least nine children.

Johann Georg's story marks a pivotal turning point for our family. He and his wife and youngest children emigrated to Tsarist Russia in 1809 where he was among the original settlers of the new German colony of Landau. One of his sons, Michael Reiss, moved to nearby Rastadt where he married Katharina Oswald around 1822. My great-grandfather, Ignatz Reiss, was born there in 1846 and he and his family emigrated to Dickinson, North Dakota in 1892. He was the progenitor for our branch of the Reiss family today in the USA. His daughter, Katharina Reiss married Adam Wagner in Dickinson, they were my grandparents.

In order to understand Johann Georg Reiss's decision to emigrate to Tsarist Russia, I will summarize the historical circumstances that he faced.

Historical Context: the Napoleonic Era in the Rhine Pfalz

In 1789 the French Revolution rocked Europe. Their forces stormed into neighboring countries, intent on exporting the Revolution throughout Europe. *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor of the Pfalz, on the northern border of Alsace, attempted to remain neutral because France was not yet officially at war with the smaller principalities of the Holy Roman Empire, other than Austria and Prussia. In 1792 the French army launched a dual attack, conquering Belgium and pushing northward out of Alsace into the Pfalz, and seizing territory along the Rhine up to Frankfurt.

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

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

This left Austria alone to shoulder the burden of defending the German states, which it was ill-prepared to do. In September, 1795 the French attacked across the river at Mannheim. *Kurfürst* Karl Theodor, who had tried in vain to remain neutral, surrendered the city without resistance. The French proceeded to attack the Neckar valley toward Heidelberg, but they were finally turned back by the Austrian army under Würmser. The Austrians took the lead and spearheaded attacks across the river, which caused the French to temporarily withdraw from most of the Pfalz. However, the victories of the young Napoleon in Italy forced the Austrians to withdraw in 1796, and the Pfalz remained in the hands of the French.

For 20 years, from 1794 until 1814, the French occupied most of the Pfalz and annexed it as part of France. Throughout this period they also dominated the other German states of the Holy Roman Empire. After the defeat of Austria in 1806 at the battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon dissolved the Holy Roman Empire and created the puppet Confederation of the Rhine.

These years were marked by a protracted, painful, and unchallenged period of military hegemony and exploitation of the Rhinelands by the French that didn't end

until 1814.¹ The noise of war had no sooner silenced, when it was followed by the systematic looting of the districts occupied by the French. The Paris terrorist regime ordered the creation of a so-called "confiscation committee" to completely "empty" the occupied districts. The churches were looted everywhere, the bells were hurled out of the towers, and the silver utensils of the churches were made off with. All houses of those who fled across the Rhine were pillaged. Anything that the French needed was taken from the peaceful citizens who remained behind. At the beginning of 1794, 3,000 wagons were required to haul away the booty from Speyer alone. In order to discover any valuables that may have been buried in cellars and gardens, the *Sansculottes* poured water onto the ground and wherever it soaked in the fastest, they dug it up. Pleas for consideration were met with scorn: "we will leave you with nothing but eyes to cry with. You should be happy that we at least leave you with your plundered houses and don't burn them to the ground," was the speech given by the plunderers.²

The Revolutionary government under Robespierre took a deadly turn and lashed out, seeking revenge against those who had collaborated with the allies. The Committee of Public Safety announced that all "royalists and reactionaries" were to be killed. Revolutionary tribunals were installed to weed out so-called enemies of the state throughout the country. This period from late 1793 through 1794 is known as the "Terror." About 14,000 executions were carried out. Trivial acts were regarded as treasonous. The victims included not only political protestors, but also many farmers who were accused of crimes such as "food hoarding." The guillotine was hauled from village to village and the people watched helplessly as their leading citizens were executed. As the slaughter escalated, the revolutionaries declared their intention to kill all the "cowards and traitors" in Alsace who had supposedly collaborated with the allied armies. The loyalty of the Alsatians was especially suspect because of their German history, language and ethnicity. A representative of the government proposed that one-fourth of the population in Alsace be guillotined and that the remainder be driven out of the country, replaced by native French.³ This, of course, led to a mass panic and thousands of peasants and city dwellers throughout Alsace fled for safety across the Rhine, following the retreating armies of the Holy Roman Empire.

This period is denoted as "*La Grande Fuite*" (the Great Flight) of 1793. At least 40,000 people fled from Alsace, mostly from the northern areas near Weissenbourg and Hagenau. They were labeled as "emigres," and their farms and houses were auctioned off by French officials at ridiculously low prices, sometimes given outright to supporters of the regime and to carpetbaggers who moved in to take advantage of the situation. French soldiers were stationed at the crossing points on the Rhine and sometimes they prevented people from returning to their home villages to reclaim their property. Although the Pfalz was not yet annexed into France (other than the fortress

¹ Sheehan 1989.

² Joseph Height, *Paradise on the Steppes* Bismarck, N.D.: North Dakota Historical Society of Germans from Russia 1972, p. 27

³ Height 1972, p. 26.

of Landau, and nearby Germersheim) and its citizens could not be considered "treasonous," a conservative estimate is that 30,000 people fled across the Rhine to avoid the French. Another source states that there was "a wave of dispossessed people and broken families estimated to eventually number in excess of 130,000 people that fled the invading French army."⁴

During this Great Flight of 1793 to 1794, refugees were scattered all the way from Heidelberg to Freiburg in the Black Forest. A partial amnesty was declared in 1795, and a flood of refugees attempted to cross the Rhine to reclaim their homes. However, local bureaucrats and usurpers didn't wish to return their property, so they ordered that the boats be turned back at most crossing points. For the next few years bands of refugees wandered about, attempting to filter across the river any way possible to their homes. In 1794 about 10,000 people were reported to be waiting across the river from Germersheim to return to the Pfalz, and the number of Alsatians was much larger. A break in this deplorable situation didn't come until 1797 when the Directorate declared a six-month amnesty. In 1799 under the Triumvirate, refugees were finally allowed to return, but they were treated with hostility by the new landowners who had seized their property. To prevent mass starvation, the government allowed them to enter the fields after the harvest to glean whatever meager grain had been left behind.⁵

The local people in the Rhinelands had to endure atrocities of many kinds committed by the French soldiers, described in graphic detail by Blanning.⁶ French propaganda portrayed its armies as "liberators" and they expected the German people to pay for this privilege. The generals of the occupation forces demanded instant levies from the people under their control, and the amounts were often staggering. If the townspeople couldn't pay, the army simply confiscated whatever it wanted. In Insheim, near Wollmesheim, it was 2,000 *Franks*. Hostages were seized and imprisoned in Landau or in Alsace until the barely affordable sums were paid. Meanwhile the "victors" were not powerful enough to keep the "emptying" under control. A Landau citizen with falsified papers extorted *Assignats* and 34,000 *Franks* in hard cash from the surrounding villages. Another Landauer by the name of Bergert swindled the winegrowers into opening their cellars and their wine was sold at the canteens.⁷

In addition to the rampant looting by the soldiers, religious institutions were also a target of their malicious behavior. The propagandists of the French Revolution were strongly anti-clerical. Several thousand priests were slaughtered during these years. There are often gaps in the records in local churchbooks because priests fled across the Rhine for safety. Many instances of harassment by the French armies were reported in Alsace and the Pfalz. Soldiers disrupted church services and forced organists to play

⁴ Charles Reis:

[Http://web.archive.org/web/20090829055541/http://geocities.com/reisfamilyaustralia/Reis_history_Wollmesheim.html?1178458782613](http://web.archive.org/web/20090829055541/http://geocities.com/reisfamilyaustralia/Reis_history_Wollmesheim.html?1178458782613)

⁵ Height 1972, p. 29

⁶ T.C.W. Blanning, *The French Revolution in Germany*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

⁷ Ney, p. 14 and 15. [Trans. Note:] presumably this means to sell the wine to the soldiers.

revolutionary songs. They lit their pipes from the sacred candles, drank the communion wine, emptied the *ciborium*s of hosts and trampled the wafers beneath their feet, they pinned the hosts on their hats as decorations, and fed them to their horses. Crucifixes and statues of the Virgin Mary were desecrated and sexually profaned. They copulated with prostitutes in the churches and defecated inside the tabernacles,



Fortress Landau in 1793

This map, which dates from 1793, shows French occupied Landau, with its circular walls and fortifications. Note that the directions are rotated (south is on the left side of the map). Wollmesheim is southwest of Landau where the road branches in three directions.

There was some guerrilla resistance against the French. Perhaps the most notorious was the small group of smugglers and robbers led by Johannes Bückler (known as "*Schinderhannes*"), who attacked the garrisons of French soldiers stationed along the Rhine and carried out robberies on both sides of the river. *Schinderhannes* was

eventually captured and executed in 1804, but his story is preserved in Pfalz lore to this day. The locals celebrated anyone who flouted the French authorities and he had a reputation for his wiley escapes. He is portrayed as the “prince of rogues,” a character like Robin Hood who shared his booty with the local villagers. However, with the defeat of the armies of the Holy Roman Empire there was no way for the villagers to mount any sort of organized resistance. In most cases they simply fled across the Rhine when battles erupted in the proximity to their villages.

The Reis Family During the French Occupation of the Pfalz

We are fortunate that the early history of the Reis family in Wollmesheim has been researched by Heinz Reis in Germany. Charles Reis in Australia has corresponded with Heinz, and he has summarized this material. This is available on Internet and I will rely on their efforts.

According to the Wollmesheim Chronicle, Johann Georg and his family were among the many thousands in the Pfalz who fled across the Rhine for safety in 1793. The French administration declared that unless Johann Georg Reis and his family returned they would be declared “fighters against the French Revolution” and they would be “banned citizens without rights.” On May 13, 1793 Johann Georg, his wife Katharina Deibel, and children Bernhard, Georg, David, Katharina, Maria Eva, and Konrad, left Wollmesheim and made the 4 or 5 day trek to the village of Käfertal, a suburb of Mannheim. This was a royal residence city, an administrative capital for the *Kurfürst* of the Pfalz. At the time Mannheim was free from occupation by the French army, although not for long. Johann Georg’s son, Balthasar, remained behind and he was conscripted to serve in the French army.

Charles Reis gives this portrait of events that transpired at this time:⁸

“Mannheim at the time was the jewel in the crown of provincial Germany, with its beautiful palace and rich farming country along the Rhine River. The Reis family, along with other refugees were welcomed and quickly settled into a new life. Back in Wollmesheim, the family’s farmhouse, land, winter provisions and private possessions left behind were seized by the French. Johannes [Georg] Reis and his family were ordered by the French Military to return to Wollmesheim or their possessions would be permanently confiscated and disposed of by public auction, and the proceeds remitted to the French Government. The family refused, and their property and life’s possessions except those few things they managed to carry with them, were sold at auction to Mr. J. A. Wagelein, a citizen of Landau. Wagelein went on to purchase all the property from the French that belonged to absent villagers, including the local Catholic Church when

⁸ As of 2014 the source on internet is:

http://web.archive.org/web/20090829055541/http://geocities.com/reisfamilyaustralia/Reis_history_Wollmesheim.html?1178458782613

presumably even the priest decided it was safer not to return.”

“After finding suitable farming land in Käfertal, on the outskirts of Mannheim, the family once again resumed farming. Unfortunately the safety and relative comfort of Mannheim was short-lived. The French Army likewise followed the same route as the Reis family as it fanned out across the various independent states that made up Germany at the time. With promises of social reform for all, their entry into Mannheim was never challenged and soon the French had control of what was then considered one of Europe’s most beautiful cities.”

“Not long after the arrival of the French, Johannes Georg and his eldest son David lost their civil rights. They were to be known until they died as ‘Exiled Citizens’ or ‘Citizens without Rights’. This label was to shame them for J. Georg's role in fighting the French. Meanwhile, Balthasar Reis having reached the age of 20 years and had served in the French Army, was spared similar humiliation. The story might have ended there, but the Reis family had a very German robustness and with no shortage of experience and resourcefulness, turned their minds to think about what was next. It was a turning point that was to irrevocably fragment the family and set each down quite different paths over successive generations - through Germany, Russia, Australia and the USA. Today, only a small handful of branches belonging to these forebears are known to still flourish in Mannheim Germany, the eastern states of Australia, and in North America.”

It is unclear if Johann Georg Reis was actually a “fighter” against the French. My speculation is that he was simply among the many thousands who fled with their families and were subsequently declared by default to be “resistors of the Constitution” and whose property was confiscated.

In order to create a legal smokescreen to justify their annexation of the Pfalz, the French staged mock elections throughout the occupied region, requiring each villager to sign his name testifying that he accepted the Revolutionary Constitution. If he refused to sign, or more commonly if he was a refugee and was not present, he was proclaimed to be an “opponent of the Constitution” and therefore by default he “lacked civil rights.” Several records of these mock elections exist today in archives, the one below is for the village of Insheim, near Wollmesheim:

“Proclamation to the residents of the Canton of Edenkoben.

The French regime, in the spirit of the great and noble principles of the Republican Constitution, has the fervent desire that the conquered lands, whose territories are proclaimed to be eternally united with the Republic, should be allowed, as soon as possible, to participate in all the advantages of this Constitution. In order to be allowed to participate, the residents themselves must first solemnly and firmly express their common desire for the final unification with the great Nation. In the event

that this doesn't happen, the regime can only, with the best of will, regard and treat the blessed slopes of the Rhine, the Maas and the Mosel, as conquered lands..."⁹

In the case of Insheim, and probably in most other villages in the Pfalz, the majority of the villagers signed their names, since they had little alternative. My ancestor, Franz Wagner who was a resident of Insheim at that time, signed his name, although he and my other ancestor, Johann Georg Reis, soon emigrated to Tsarist Russia when they had the opportunity to escape from the clutches of the "fervent desire of the noble Great Nation."

As is noted above, not all members of the Reis family were resisters. One of Johann Georg's sons, Balthasar, remained in Wollmesheim and he served under Napoleon's flag in 1806, later he became a forest ranger. However, we cannot assume that all young men who served in the French army were volunteers. The French National Assembly formed a vast civilian army, declaring a "*levee en masse*" in 1793. All unmarried men from the ages of 18 to 40 were eligible for conscription, excluding widowers with children. Between 1800 and 1815 a total of 2,543,357 men were mobilized, the majority through conscription. After the west bank of the Rhine was annexed into France, the young men there were conscripted into French garrisons. They usually didn't have any choice in the matter. The conquered peoples had to pay part of the burden of their own "liberation" by providing young men to slake the unquenchable thirst of the French military for manpower. Each *departement* was levied a quota of soldiers that had to be selected from their ranks and equipped at the expense of the local communities. These soldiers were merged directly into the French regiments and they constituted about one-fourth of the French army.¹⁰

The Reis Family in Tsarist Russia

In 1809, after living in Käfertal for 16 years, Johann Georg Reis and his immediate family emigrated to the new German colonies that were established by Tsar Alexander I. along the north shore of the Black Sea. Tsarist Russia had fought a war earlier with Ottoman Turkey and had succeeded in annexing these territories, which became known as "New Russia," or "South Russia." In order to stabilize his claim to this region, Tsar Alexander issued an invitation in the first decade of the 19th century for skilled farmers and craftsmen to settle in colonies along the Black Sea coast and in the Crimea. A steady stream of German farmers and craftsmen headed east in response to the Tsar's invitation. These families were fleeing the turmoil in the aftermath of the French Revolution, the annexation of the Rhinelands, and the Napoleonic wars. In order to immigrate, they needed an official passport signed by the Russian ambassador, one of which was stationed in Mannheim. Most of the emigrants from the Pfalz in 1809 settled in a cluster of colonies in the Beresan and Tschichekliya river valleys. Their

⁹ Stadtarchiv Edenkob, Kopialbuch CI.

¹⁰ Rothenberg 1978, p. 135.

colonies were named after major cities in southern and western Germany, such as Rastadt, München, Landau, and Speier. Each colony was settled in accordance with the religious denomination (Catholic or Lutheran) of the immigrants.

Johann Georg Reis left Käfertal in 1809 with his wife Katherine Deibel, and his four youngest children, Konrad, Michael, Maria Katharina and Maria Eva. His three oldest children, Johann David, Johann George and Balthasar remained in Käfertal. As we have seen above, Balthasar may have remained in Wollmesheim, where he served in the French army in 1806. Johann David's son, J. Georg later immigrated to Australia.

The 1811 Agricultural Report and the 1816 Russian Census ("Revision List")

Soon after the colonies in the Beresan river region were settled in 1810, the Tsarist Welfare Committee for Foreign Settlers commissioned a census of the residents and their basic economic circumstances. The 1811 report shows Georg Reis as a weaver, in the colony of Landau:¹¹

Georg Reis, age 57 (= birth ca. 1754)

Katharina [Deibel], age 51 (= ca. 1760)

Konrad, age 9 (should be 19, = ca. 1792)

Michael, age 9 (= ca. 1802)

The ages shown for Georg, Katharina and Michael are within 2 years of their birthdates in the records of Wollmesheim, so we can be certain of their identities. Michael was born on Feb. 15, 1801 in Käfertal. As we will see in the following census of 1816, the information shown for their son Konrad is erroneous. They had a son Georg Konrad (b. ca. 1793), who would have been ca. 19 years old in 1811. The clerk obviously made a mistake and left one digit off Konrad's age, which should have been 19 rather than 9. This would explain why the two sons, Konrad and Michael, were shown with the same age.

The 1811 report also shows a different Reis family residing in the nearby colony of Speier:

Konrad Reis, age 49 (=ca. 1762 birth year)

Katharina, age 35 (= ca. 1776)

Martin, age 9 (= ca. 1802)

Friedrich, age 3 (= ca. 1808)

This Konrad Reis and his family were also shown as coming from Wollmesheim in the Pfalz. Konrad's age differs by about 8 years from Georg Reis in Landau, and the two sons, Martin and Friedrich, don't appear in the German records for the children of J. Georg. It seems likely that this Konrad was a younger brother, or perhaps a younger cousin, and he may have served as a baptismal godfather for J. Georg's son, Konrad, thus passing on his name.

Martin Reis, b. ca. 1802, married Margaret Bär in March 1823 in Speier.

¹¹ File 134-1-319 in the Odessa State Archive, retrieved by the Germans from Russia Historical Society in Bismarck, N.D.

The next record available for the Reis family is in the census ("Revision List") for Landau conducted in 1816. Karl Stumpp's compendium¹² of records for the German colonies in Russia provides us with this information, and we also have copies of the original R.L. records. There we see the following:

Georg Reiss, age 61 from "Wolxheim, Alsace" (= ca. 1755)

Katharina [Deibel] age 56 (= ca. 1760)

Konrad 23 (= ca. 1793)

Michael 13 (= ca. 1803)

The names and birth years in this 1816 census match those in the earlier 1811 report, with the exception of the young Konrad. His age shown in 1816 confirms that the clerk had made a mistake in reporting the younger Konrad's age in 1811. The clerks also made guesses about the spelling for places of origin, which likely explains why Wollmesheim (in the Pfalz) was written as "Wolxheim." Karl Stumpp's staff compounded the error when they guessed that it was a village in Alsace.

Konrad Reiss, the other family head reported in Speier in 1811, is not shown in the 1816 census. **Konrad Reiss** served as a witness for the marriage of Jacob Jahner and the widow Francisca Hoff on Nov. 16, 1824 in Landau. He and his family are shown in the 1839/40 R.L. Konrad also served as wedding witness for Johann Reinhard and Christina Daratha on Nov. 15, 1843 in Rasadt and for the wedding of Jacob Stein and Margaret Marsall on Nov. 7, 1838 in Landau.

Anna Maria Deibel died Dec. 1, 1854 in Rastadt age 88 (= b. ca. 1766), she had 1 daughter and 1 son. She may have been Georg Reiss's wife, perhaps Anna Katherina.

Landau Revision List 1839/40

The next source is the Revision List for Landau in 1839/40. Konrad is shown with six children as of 1839, but several more children later:

Konrad Reis, age 45 (= b. ca. 1794), son of **Georg Reis** and **Katharina Deibel**, from Wollmesheim, Pfalz and his wife **Katharina [Eichenlaub]**, age 39 (= b. ca. 1800), da. of **Franz Eichenlaub**.¹³ They had six Children:

Daniel, age 18 (=ca. 1821).

Peter, age 16 (= ca. 1823).

Jakob, age 2 (= ca. 1838).

Margaretha, age 13 (= b. 1826).

Katharina, age 10 (= ca. 1829).¹⁴

¹² Karl Stumpp, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862*, published by The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Lincoln, NB, 1973.

¹³ The family tree of Jörg Erdmann on Myheritage.com shows Georg Konrad Reis and wife Anna Katharina Eichenlaub who had dau. Margaret Reiss b. June 12, 1827 in Biblis and son Peter Reis b. Jan. 26, 1831 in Landau. Margaret was clearly born in Landau, Ukraine.

Barbara, age 5 (= ca. 1834; the baptismal records show her b. May 18, 1834). This information matches the earlier Revision List of 1816 which shows the family of Konrad Reis, the son of Georg, married to Katharina Eichenlaub.

The Baptismal and Death Registry for Landau, 1860 - 1870

The next records available are the baptisms and deaths reported in the church-books of Landau. The birth records extend between 1860-1866, and the death records from 1861-1870. There is a gap of 20 or more years between these records and the Revision List of 1839/40, so some records refer to grown children as well as grandchildren in the Reis family.

We don't know when **Konrad Reis** died, I can't find it in available Landau death records (Ancestry.com shows 1857 in Landau, the source is unstated). His wife **Katherina (Eichenlaub) Reiss**, died on Dec. 10, 1867, she was stated to be age 68 and the widow of Konrad Reis. This yields a birth year of ca. 1799-1800, which matches what is shown in 1839/40 R.L. for Landau.¹⁵ **Katherina Reiss** served as godmother for Katherina Bösherz on Dec. 16, 1826 in Landau. She may have been Georg Reiss's wife, there was no other Katherina Reiss in that generation, also in Landau.

The records referring to the children of **Konrad Reis** and **Katharina Eichenlaub** in Landau are as follows:

1. **Margaret Reiss** is shown in the baptismal records as b. Feb. 8, 1826, dau. of Konrad Reiss and Katharina Eichenlaub in Landau. Margaret Reiss, daughter of Konrad Reiss ("**Conradovna**,"¹⁶ married **Michael Walliser** on Oct. 2, 1844, they had a sons Josef Walliser, born on Sept. 27, 1861, Georg Walliser b. May 29, 1863 whose godfather was **Georg Reiss** (Margaret's nephew), and a son Michael Walliser who died Dec. 20, 1866 at age 1 year 9 months. Her husband **Michael Walliser** d. Oct. 26, 1864 at age 40, she was stated to be his widow. Margaret remarried to **Michael Voltz** (son of Jacob), and they had a son, Michael Voltz on May 18, 1865 in Sulz.
2. **Georg Reiss**, b. April 7, 1837, bapt. April 9, 1837 Landau. **Georg Jakob Reiss** (he is shown in the records sometimes as **Georg** or **Jacob**) married **Christina Moser** (daughter of Joseph), they had a son, **Konrad Reiss**, born Nov. 11, 1862 who d. Feb. 14, 1866 at age 3 ¼, and a son **Johann Reiss** born May 13, 1865 both in Landau. Georg served as godfather for the Heidt family in 1861, for the son of

¹⁴ Private correspondence with Orpha (Ricky) Anderson indicates that Katherine Reiss was born ca. 1832, she married Carl Reichert ca. 1849 in Rastadt or München, they emigrated to North Dakota in 1892, where she died in 1893. See the summary table at the end of this chronicle.

¹⁵ MyHeritage.com shows her as born 1794 in Landau, which surely is erroneous since the colony of Landau wasn't founded until 1809. Katharina Eichenlaub was probably born in the Pfalz and came to the colony of Landau in 1809.

¹⁶ The later records in the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory were in Russian Cyrillic. The convention was to add the suffix "-ovna" after surnames to indicate being a son or daughter of the father.

Magdalena Reiss-Makelki in 1862, the Weisgerber family in 1863, for the son of **Margaret Reiss-Walliser** in 1863, and for the Hirsch family in 1866. Christina served as godmother for the Zimmermann and Erhardt families in 1863, the Hirsch family in 1864, and the Moser family in 1865. All these families were in Landau.

3. **Katharina Reiss** (“**Conradovna**,” which means daughter of **Konrad Reiss**) married **Conrad Erhardt**, they had a son Adam Erhardt on Nov. 1, 1861, a daughter Christina Erhardt on April 15, 1863, and son Anton Erhard on Oct. 13, 1865 all in Landau. The godmother for Christina was **Christina Reis** (presumably the wife of **Georg Jacob Reis**).

4. **Peter Reiss** married **Franziska Schöner**.

MyHeritage.com shows Peter Reis as b. Jan. 26, 1821 in Landau, the source is not stated, the 1839/40 R.L. shows him as b. ca. 1823. He served as a godfather for the Bösherz, Heckel, and Erhardt families in 1861, for the Michel family in 1862, and for the Fischer family in 1864. All of these families were in Landau. His wife **Franziska** served as godmother for the Heckel family in 1861, the Hirsch family in 1862 and 1863, the Philipp family in 1863, and the Walisa and Schöner families in 1865. All of those families were also in Landau. Peter died at age 48 (= b. ca. 1823), on June 4, 1870, his widow was stated to be Franziska. Their children’s birth years vary as shown on MyHeritage.com and other internet sites:

a. **Franziska Reis**, b. 1849, marr. **Michael Fischer II**. They had a son, Jacob Fischer, who d. Aug. 16, 1870 at age 9 mos. She served as godmother for the Schöner family in 1865, she was referred to as “maiden” at that time, so this was probably before she married Michael Fischer.

b. **Joseph Reis**, b. Jan. 18, 1846.

c. **Jakob Reis**, b. Feb. 25, 1852.

d. **Daniel Reis**, b. 1856.

e. **Maria Eva Reis**, b. June 18, 1862, marr. Koch.

f. **Apollonia Reis**, b. Dec. 2, 1863, she d. Feb. 8, 1864, at age 2.

g. **Maria Anna Reis**, b. Sept. 21, 1868.

h. **Barbara Reis**.

5. **Daniel Reiss**, b. ca. 1821?, served as godfather for the Stark family 1863, and the Stolz family in 1864.

6. **Barbara Reiss**, b. May 18, 1834, she married **Josef Sattler**, they had a son Valetin Sattler on July 27, 1861, a daughter Marianna Sattler on July 9, 1864, and a daughter Regina Sattler on June 19, 1866 all in Sulz.

7. **Jacob Reiss**, b. ca. 1838?, was godfather for the Fischer family in 1866.

8. **Johann Reiss** served as godfather for the Köhler family in 1864 in Blumenfeld. Other sources show him as a son of Konrad, b. April 30, 1820.

Finally, there are records that cannot be clearly identified. Some may have been grandchildren of Konrad Reiss born during the 20 year gap after the 1839/40 Revision List, others may not be related since they were shown in Sulz and Speier:

1. **Magdalena Reiss** married **Augustin Makelki**, their son Georg Makelki was born Nov. 7, 1862. **Georg Jakob Reiss** married to Christina Moser was the godfather. Presumably Magdalena was the daughter of Jakob as well.
2. **Martin Reis** born in Landau in 1870, presumably the grandson of Konrad and Katharina Eichenlaub, married **Margaret Bauer**. He should not be confused with **Martin Reiss** (b. ca. 1802), son of **Konrad** and **Katharina** in Speier, who married **Margaret Bär** in March 1823 in Speier.
3. **Margaret Reis** ("**Martinovna**," daughter of **Martin Reiss**) and **Margaret Bauer** married **Josef Brachsmeier (Braxmeier**, son of Joseph) on Jan. 24, 1844 in Landau, she was age 20, which yields her birthdate as 1824. They had a son Jacob Brachsmeier in colony Sulz on May 30, 1861, and a daughter Genoveva Brachsmeier on Oct. 1, 1863, and a son (name unclear) on Jan. 2, 1866 in Sulz. Their daughter, Genoveva, d. Oct. 7, 1863 at age 7 days. This is too early to match the other records for the Reis family so presumably there was a different Martin Reis who was an adult by the 1860s.¹⁷
4. **Edward Reiss** married **Wilhelmina Lewin**, they had a daughter, **Josefina Emilia Reiss**, who died July 31, 1861 age 5.
5. **Christina Reiss** married **Philipp Godin (Gotting)**, they had four known children, all born in Speier:
 - a. Pius Gotting, b. Sept. 14, 1859.
 - b. Marianna Gotting, b. May 24, 1864.
 - c. Anna Gotting, b. Oct. 8, 1866.
 - d. Pius Gotting, b. Aug. 8, 1871.
6. **Christina Reiss** marr. **Philipp Janzer**, they had a dau. **Elisabeth Janzer**, b. Feb. 12, 1862 in Speier. Since this birth year overlaps with those of Christina Reis and Philipp Gotting we may assume that they were separate couples.
7. **Josef Reiss** served as godfather for the Michel family in 1861, the Scherer family in 1863 in Sulz, the Badinger family in 1864, and the Hirsch family in 1865.

The Reis Family in Rastadt

What do we know about the roots of the Reis family in Rastadt? They are especially important in this chronicle. We know that the Reis family in Dickinson,

¹⁷ **Margaret Reis**, daughter of Martin, was born ca. 1823 in Landau, and she died Oct. 28, 1905, age 82. Her husband, Joseph Braxmeier was born ca. 1814, and he died June 23, 1889 age 75. Source for Margaret Reis-Braxmeier is from her descendant, Erasmus Braxmeier, as reported in the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection in North Dakota. Note that the 1839/40 Revision List shows a different Margaret, daughter of Konrad, who was born ca. 1826.

North Dakota stemmed from my great-grandparents, **Ignatz Reis** and **Christina Sticka**, who emigrated from the colony of Rastadt in 1892 with all 10 of their children. Ignatz was born on July 8, 1846 in Rastadt and his parents were **Karl Reis** and **Katharina Kroll**. This is confirmed in Fr. Aberle's histories for families in St. Joseph's parish in Dickinson, N.D., and my father also remembered those names for his great-grandparents.

In 2018 the Germans from Russia Heritage Society was fortunate to be able to purchase the birth/baptismal, death, and marriage records for Rastadt, covering the years 1826 to 1870, which were stored in the Tiraspol Roman Catholic Consistory in the Russian State Archive at Saratov.

The Reis family is not shown among the original founders of Rastadt in 1809-1810, and the Revision Lists summarized above indicate that they had settled at first in Landau. The records indicate that Georg Reiss's son, Michael, moved to Rastadt at a later date, probably when he married a local girl, Katharina Oswald.

A. **Konrad Reiss** and **Katharina Eichenlaub**

Konrad Reiss was the son of **Johann Georg Reiss** and **Katharina Deibel**. **Konrad Reiss** and his wife **Katharina Eichenlaub** were residents in Landau and that is where their children appear in the baptismal records.

Konrad served as godfather for Konrad Ell, Oct. 3, 1832 in Rastadt. He also served as a witness for the marriage of Ignatz Lenosyus (surname unclear) and Barbara Odenbach on May 30, 1833 in Rastadt. Konrad's surname was written by the priest in these first two records as "Ryß" which seems unique enough to not be confused with "Resch" (Rösch) which was a different family in Rastadt. My speculation is that he is the same person as Konrad Reiss (born ca. 1793) married to Katharina Eichenlaub, shown in the 1816 and 1839 R.L.s for Landau. Since he appeared in the 1839 R.L. of Landau, he apparently didn't relocate to Rastadt, although he may have been willing to serve as a godfather and marriage witness there due to the presence of his brother Michael. Konrad Reis served as witness for the marriage of Jacob Stein and Margaret Marsel in Landau on Nov. 7, 1838.

B. **Michael Reiss** and **Katharina Oswald**

Konrad Reiss in Landau had a younger brother, **Michael** (b. ca. 1803). He was almost certainly the same person as Michael Reiss born Feb. 15, 1801 in Käfertal, who immigrated with his father, **Johann Georg Reis** and mother **Katharina Deibel** to Landau. He is the only person with this name in the early records for the colonies in the Beresan region. Michael is shown in the R.L. of 1811 and 1816 in Landau with the birth year of ca. 1802, which closely matches his birthdate in Germany. Interestingly, Michael's brother, Konrad Reis (b. ca. 1792), is shown with his family (wife Katharina Eichenlaub) in Landau in the 1839 R.L. and in later death records, but Michael Reis is not shown. This suggests that Michael was residing elsewhere by that date -- probably

in Rastadt. My speculation is that **Michael Reiss** relocated to Rastadt sometime around 1822, when he married a local girl, **Katharina Oswald**.

Some family trees on internet show that Michael was the son of Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub in Landau, but this isn't possible because Konrad (b. ca. 1793) would have been only ca. 8 years old when Michael was born in 1801. Michael is clearly shown in the 1816 R.L. as Konrad's younger brother, not his son.

Anna Maria Deibel died in Rastadt on Dec. 1, 1854, age 88 (= b. ca. 1766), she had 1 son and 1 daughter. She may have been the same person as Anna Katharina Deibel, perhaps she relocated to Rastadt with her son Michael.

The Oswald family stemmed from **Cyriak Oswald** who was one of the founders of Rastadt in 1809. He is shown in the 1816 R.L. as "Kiriak" Oswald 37 (=b. ca. 1779), wife **Maria** 44 (=b. 1772), with daughter **Katharina** 9 (=b. ca. 1807), from Bischweiler, Alsace. Later baptismal records in Rastadt show Katharina Oswald was married to Anton Gelsinger. This suggests that Michael Reis may have died and Katherina Oswald remarried, or perhaps she was their younger niece. The records in Rastadt show that many of the marriages were between widows and widowers because the death rate was very high in those early years.

Michael Reiss and **Katharina Oswald** had three known children in Rastadt. Note that the same godparents served for the three, which indicates a close relationship:

1. **Karl Reiss**, bapt. Aug. 17, 1822.
2. **Maria Katherina Reiss**, bapt. July 19, 1825, godparents were Karl Wandler and Maria Anna Maier (see below).
3. **Anna Maria Reiss** (also shown as **Maria Anna** or **Mariana**) bapt. Dec. 26, 1827, godparents were Karl Wandler and Maria Anna Maier.¹⁸ **Maria Anna Reiss** married **Ignatz Ell**, they had one known child:
 - a. **Thomas Ell**, born Aug. 13, 1858, godparents were Jacob Reis and Margaret Ell.

The identity of Jacob Reis is unknown.

Maria Katharina Reis (above, also shown as **Anna Katharina Reis**), b. July 19, 1825, married **Karl Reichert**, they had nine children between 1845-1867:

- a. **Karl Reichert**, born May 6, 1845, godparents Karl Reis (Maria Katharina's brother) and Katharina Kroll.
- b. **Anna Maria Reichert**, born Dec. 8, 1850, godparents Paul Jordan and Anna Maria Reichert.
- c. **Jacob Reichert**, born Feb. 9, 1853, godparents Jacob Garecht and Elisabeth Obrigewitsch.
- d. **Adam Reichert**, born March 1, 1857, godparents Adam Reichert and Katharina Garecht.
- e. **Friedrich Reichert**, born May 31, 1858, godparents Jacob Garecht and Elisabeth Obrigewitsch.

¹⁸ Marianna Reiss served as godmother for Pius Fleck in Speier on Jan. 13, 1863. It is possible that she was the same person.

- f. **Elisabeth Reichert**, born March 11, 1860, godparents Jacob and Katharina Garecht.
- g. **Agnes Reichert**, born June 21, 1862, godparents Johann Kropin and Katharina Garecht.
- h. **Rosalia Reichert**, born June 19, 1864, godparents Johann Kropin and Katharina Garecht.
- i. **Ambrose Reichert**, born Feb. 17, 1867, godparents Jacob Garecht and Karolina Reis.

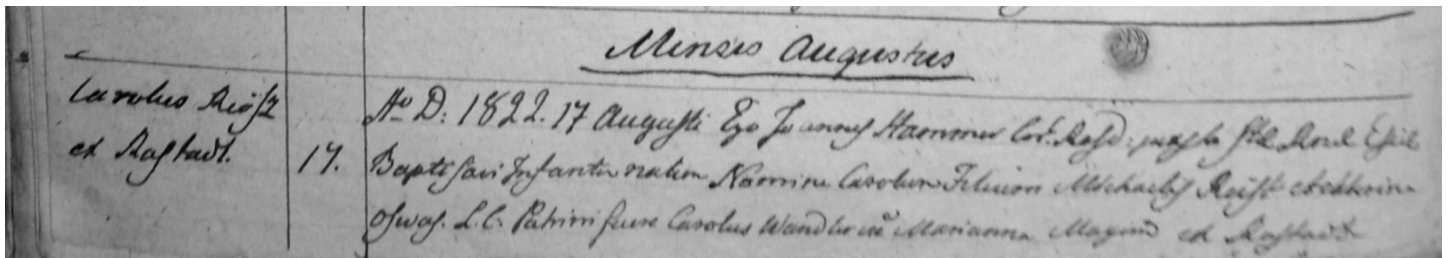
Maria Katharina Reis served as godmother for:

- Joseph Ren...?, Nov. 24, 1834.
- Anna Maria Krämer, Sept. 29, 1834. There is ambiguity in her surname, it may be "Benz,"
- Johann Kilwein, Feb. 5, 1841.
- Katharina Roesch, March 26, 1860.

C. Karl Reiss and Katharina Kroll

My great-grandfather, **Ignatz Reis**, was born in Rastadt on July 8, 1846, his parents were **Karl Reiss** and **Katharina Kroll** and Ignatz married **Christina Sticka**. The records in the USA match the available records in Russia.

The baptismal records in Rastadt show that **Michael Reiss** and **Katharina Oswald** had a son, **Karl Reiss**, bapt. on Aug. 17, 1822, his godparents were Karl Wandler and Maria Anna Maier, the priest was Fr. Johann Hammer.



Baptismal Record of Karl Reiss, son of Michael Reiss & Katharina Oswald, Aug. 17, 1822 (in Latin)

Some family trees on internet show that Karl Reis was born in 1824, he died in 1887, he was the brother to **Peter Reis**, and both of them are shown as sons of **Konrad Reis** and **Katherina Eichenlaub** in Landau.¹⁹ This scenario doesn't match the baptismal

¹⁹ The sources for the statement that Karl Reis was the son of Konrad are various family trees on Ancestry.com. They repeat each other's information, but no one states a source. There are other problems as well, such as the statement that Karl Reis was from "Mothern, Alsace" (a rehash of Fr. Aberle's mistake) and that Karl emigrated to North Dakota (there is no evidence that Karl Reis, my great-great grandfather, ever left Russia).

records above in Rastadt, which show that Karl's parents were Michael Reis and Katharina Oswald in 1822. The 1839 R.L. in Landau shows Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub, their children had birth years ranging from 1821 to 1834, but there was no son named Karl. Michael Reis is also not shown in the 1839 R.L. of Landau, which supports my speculation that he had moved to Rastadt by that date where he married Katharina Oswald.

Both Michael and Karl Reis had godfather ties with children in the Wandler family in Rastadt, which is a strong indication that they were somehow related. Karl Wandler had served as a godfather for the first two children of Michael Reis.

This is the known information for **Karl Reiss** and **Katharina Kroll** in Rastadt. Their known children were:

1. **Ignatz Reis**, born July 8, 1846, godparents were Ignatz and Veronica Urlacher. Ignatz married **Christina Sticka** in Rastadt. They were my great-grandparents. They had 13 children (see detailed discussions below).

Ignatz and Christina served as godparents for:

- Ignatz Schmidt.

- Ignatz Sticka, June 7-11, 1870.

2. **Maria Josepha Reiss**, b. 1848, died June 17, 1852, age 4, buried in Rastadt, stated to be the dau. of Karl and Katharina Reis.

3. **Agnes Reis**, born Nov. 12, 1850, parents stated to be Karl Reiss and Katharina Kroll, godparents Georg Daratha and Agnes Wandler. Agnes married Maximilian Heck in München.

4. **Anna Reis**, born Aug. 10, 1853, parents stated to be Karl Reiss and Katharina Kroll, godparents Meinrad Lerner and Anna Daratha.

5. **Maria Eva Reiss**, d. May 11, 1854 age 9 months in Rastadt. This places her birthdate as ca. Aug. 1853 so she may have been a twin to Anna. Her parents were stated to be Karl and Katharina Reiss.

Karl and/or Katharina served as godparents for:

- Agnes Kessel, Dec. 6, 1835 in Rastadt

- Karl Reichert, May 6, 1845.

- Katharina Urlacher, Nov. 17, 1846.

- Adam Immel, Sept. 24, 1849.

- Katharina Ell, April 28, 1870.

Katharina Kroll died on March 5, 1854, she left behind a husband and 3 children (baptismal records show 5 children). She was age 26 (=b. ca. 1828), which approximates Karl's birth in 1822. There is no current record which confirms Karl's death in 1887, which is stated on some internet sites.

D. Karl Reis and Carolina Anton

The available records show that Karl was married a second time after Katharina Kroll died in 1854.

There is a marriage record for **Karl Reis** and **Carolina Anton** on Nov. 23, 1854, both stated to be widowed, his parents were Michael Reiss and Katharina Oswald and her parents were Johann Schmidt and Katharina Troper (probably Traub). Karl was age 33 (= b. ca. 1821) and Carolina was age 35 (=b. ca. 1819). Carolina's husband, **Peter Anton**, died on April 5, 1854, he was age 37 (=b. ca. 1817), and his death record states that he left behind a wife Carolina and 5 children. The names of Karl's parents and his stated age match the birth record for Karl in 1822, confirming that he was the widower of Katharina Kroll.

Karl Reis and his first wife Katharina Kroll had children born from 1846 to 1854, including my great-grandfather **Ignatz**. Katharina died on March 5, 1854. Karl and his second wife Carolina Anton were married Nov. 23, 1854. They had an infant named **Karl** in 1859 who died in 1860. Another of their sons was **Georg Reis**, shown in the records as the son of **Karl**. Georg and his wife Maria Josepha Heck, daughter of Michael, had a son, **Jacob Reis** who died July 11, 1878, age 11 days. Presumably this Georg Reis was born in the 1850s which fits the time period for being a son of Karl Reis and Carolina Anton. Georg Reis's wife Maria Josepha Heck served several times as a godmother until 1870. Georg Reiss served as the godfa. for Adam Melinger, son of Anton Melinger and Agatha Moritz, b. Feb. 14, 1891 in Rastadt.

This sequence seems clear and it matches all the available records, except for an anomalous marriage record showing **Konrad Reis** the son of **Karl Reis** and **Carolina Hoffmann** who was married to Anastasia Gustin on Sept. 11, 1851, she was the dau. of Michael Gustin and Anna Maria Sticka. The problem is that the ages and Carolina Hoffmann's name don't match the above records. Konrad was age 22 (=b. ca. 1829), which indicates that his father Karl was born ca. 1809, clearly not the same person as Karl Reis b. 1822.

The solution to this anomaly is that there was a mistranslation of the surname in this 1851 Cyrillic record. There is an earlier Latin record in Rastadt which shows that **Konrad**, son of **Karl "Resz"** (lacking the mid-letter "i") and **Carolina Hoffmann**, had a son Karl b. Aug. 25, 1824. Karl Resz would have been b. ca. 1809, and his wife's name matches that in the previous record, which shows that they were the same person. I translated this surname as Reis initially, although I noted that "Resz" may have been "Rösch," a family which was contemporary with Reis during that time period in Rastadt. This will be discussed below.

E. "Resch" (Rösch) a different family in Rastadt

There was another family in the records in Rastadt with the surname "Resch." The original German form was "Rösch," but the Slavic priests often guessed about the spelling of the German surnames. Unfortunately, given their idiosyncratic spelling, the

surname "Resch" is difficult to distinguish from "Reiss" especially with the *estset* at the ending. Karl "Resz" who married Carolina Hoffmann should be translated as Resch, not as Reis.

Stumpp and Fr. Keller show that Michael Rösch (Resch) from Ottersheim near Germersheim was one of the founders of Rastadt in 1809, along with his wife, Barbara, and their children Karl, Konrad, Sebastian, Katharina, and Margaret. We note that the names Michael, Karl, and Konrad overlap with the Reiss family, who were not among the original founders of Rastadt, they came in later during the 1820s. The similarity in names creates problems for distinguishing the two families.

One clue to distinguish the families is the absence of the mid-letter "i" in Resch. Also, the wives' names in the baptismal records were different. Michael Resch was married to Barbara "Hildengeden,"²⁰ and his grandson Konrad Resch to Apollonia Merdian. These names are clearly different from Michael Reiss's wife Katharina Oswald or from Konrad Reiss's wife Katharina Eichenlaub in Landau. Konrad Resch, son of Karl, was married to Anastasia Gustin in 1851 and they had one known child -- Franz Karl Resch, born Dec. 7, 1861.

F. Other members of the Reiss family in Rastadt

Later in the 19th century the Reiss family in Rastadt began to grow and branch, which makes it difficult to identify the various names that appear in the records. Some names appear only once, and others probably moved out of the colony and never did appear in local records. The early records are in Latin and I was able to translate the originals. The later records are in Cyrillic and I don't have copies of the originals, nor can I easily read Russian Cyrillic. I have found some errors in the translations of the Cyrillic, confusing Reiss with Resch.

The marriage records in Rastadt show that Johann Adam Wagner, son of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Miller, married Margaret Rössler on Nov. 18, 1852. She was the daughter of Paul Rössler and **Maria Josepha Reis**. It is unknown how Maria Josepha fits into the Reis family.

Eva Metz (1820-1887) shown on Ancestry.com, sister of **Karl Reis**. This may not be reliable.

Gottlieb Reis served as a witness for the marriage of Simon Rapp and Franziska Masser on January 17, 1826 in Rastadt. **Gottlieb Reis** is unknown, this is the only record referring to this name. The surname is written clearly in Latin.

²⁰ There probably is a mistake in the translation of her surname. The surname "Hilzendegen" occurs in Offenbach an der Queich in the southern Rhine Pfalz.

Michael Reis married **Sophia Heil**. He is probably not the same person as Michael married to Katharina Oswald, there is about a 40 year gap in their apparent ages. Their record is in Cyrillic. Michael and Sophia's child was:
1. Julianna Reis, born Feb. 10, 1861, godparents Jacob Resch and Julianna Wandler.

Sophia Reis was godmother for:
- Valentina Resch, July 24, 1863.

Bernard Reis, married **Geneveve Heck**. Children:

1. Gregory Reis, born March 10, 1851, godparents Franz Sander and Maria Katharina Eberle.

Bernard Reis is also shown as marr. to **Apollonia Meier**, their daughter Agnes Reiss marr. Joseph Kessel on Oct. 29, 1857 in Rastadt.

Apollonia Reis, married **Bernard Pfoh**. There was also an Apollonia Merdian married to Konrad Resch, so it's possible that she was in the Resch family.

Children:

1. Bernard Pfoh, born March 3, 1859, godparents Bernard Reisenauer and Anna Maria Kerner.

Franz Reiss married **Barbara Weinberger**, referred to as Speier colonists.

Children:

1. Adam Reiss, born Oct. 1, 1864 in Gaidamtzka, godparents Adam Mildenberger and Christina Blech. Perhaps not related to the Reis family in Rastadt, although Adam was baptized there.

Theresia Gertner-Reiss marr. a Reiss, she served as godmo. for Jacob Brinster, son of Matthew Brinster and Emilia Ehrmantraut, b. June 16, 1891 in Khutor Semenowka. Her identity is uncertain.

Katharina Kroll

Ignatz Reis's mother, **Katharina Kroll**, was almost certainly Margaret Katharina Kroll born Feb. 24, 1827, the dau. of **Christian**²¹ **Kroll** and **Elisabeth Wilhelm**. This birth record approximates her husband Karl Reis who was born there in 1822.

The Kroll family stemmed from **Michael Kroll** from Böchingen in the Pfalz who was one of the founders of Rastadt in 1809.²² The 1816 Revision List for Rastadt shows:

Michael Kroll and his wife, **Agnes** 31 (b. ca. 1780), and four children:

1. Wilhelm Kroll 17 (b. ca. 1794).

²¹ Christian Kroll is also shown as "Chrisostin" and "Christopher" ("Christophi" in one record).

²² Note, however, that Stumpp refers to the Kroll family from either Böchingen, Pfalz or Spöck, Baden.

2. **Heinrich Kroll** 13 (b. ca. 1798).
3. **August Kroll** 9 (b. ca. 1802).
4. **Sophia Kroll** 10 (b. ca. 1801) marr. Valentin Jordan.

Like so many other colonists, Michael Kroll died from typhus or cholera during his first year in Russia in 1810. The R.L. does not show his age but we may assume that Michael Kroll was born ca. 1780, as was his wife. The Oct. 1811 agricultural report for Rastadt shows Agnes Kroll, the widow of Michael Kroll, who remarried to **Jacob Sutter**. She had 3 sons and 1 daughter with Michael. The 1816 Revision List for Rastadt shows Agnes 35 and her second husband, Jakob, with her children Wilhelm 21, Heinrich 17, August 13, and Sophia 15.

Friedrich Kroll, son of **Michael**, and his wife **Katharina Wandler** (she is also shown as **Christina Wandler**) daughter of Anton, had daughters **Magdalena Kroll** b. Aug. 22, 1826, and **Elisabeth Kroll**, born Nov. 29, 1833 in Rastadt.

One family tree on internet²³ shows **Katharina**, born ca. 1824, the “daughter” of Michael Kroll and Agnes. However, Michael Kroll was already dead by that date so this is an error.

There was also a second Kroll family in Rastadt:

Christian Kroll (b. 1801, d. 1836 age 35), son of **Michael Kroll**, was married to **Elisabeth Wilhelm**, daughter of **Johann Wilhelm**. At his untimely death in 1836 they had 2 sons and 5 daughters. Those shown in the baptismal records of Rastadt are:

1. **Anna Maria Kroll** (b. Oct. 30, 1824). His daughter Anna Maria is likely the same person as Maria Anna Kroll married to **Johann Frei** who had a son in 1853 in Rastadt.
2. **Margaret Katharina Kroll** (b. Feb. 24, 1827).
3. **Johann Heinrich Kroll** (b. Dec. 8, 1832).
4. **Paul Kroll**, (b. Sept. 25, 1836).
5. **Magdalena Kroll** (b. Nov. 4, 1834).

So, by process of elimination there is only one candidate for the identity of Katharina Kroll, married to Karl Reis, who had a son Ignatz born in 1846. **Margaret Katharina Kroll** born 1827 the daughter of Christian Kroll was the granddaughter of Michael Kroll and Agnes. She was the only woman with this name born in the 1820s in the German colonies in the Beresan river region with the surname Kroll.

Other records that refer to the Kroll family include the following. Barbara Kroll, daughter of Georg Peter Kroll, died Nov. 11, 1820 in München. There is no other record referring to Georg Peter Kroll so his identity is uncertain. The surname is written in Latin and is a bit unclear. It should be noted that our Kroll family lived in Rastadt, whereas this death record refers to München, which may indicate that they were not the same family. On June 30, 1831, Augustin Kroll and his wife, Florentine, received a

²³ Katharina Wacker’s family tree shows Katharina “Krell” (1824-1899) the daughter of Michael “Krell” and Agnes, who married Karl Reis. The problem is that Michael Kroll died in 1810 and Agnes remarried to Jacob Sutter. Katharina, born 1827, was Michael’s granddaughter, she d. March 5, 1854.

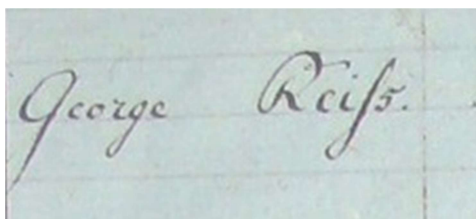
passport to travel outside their home colony of Rastadt to Cherson province. Sophia Kroll married Valentin Jordan in Rastadt, where she had a daughter Agnes in 1826. Christian (Christopher) Kroll served as a baptismal sponsor for Elisabeth Jordan, daughter of Adam Jordan, in Rastadt in 1826. Julianna Kroll was born Aug. 27, 1853 in Rastadt, the daughter of Martin Kroll and Katherina Fischer. Martin Kroll served as godfather for Katherina Wandler on April 23, 1866 in Rastadt.

The 1862 Voter Registry for Rastadt

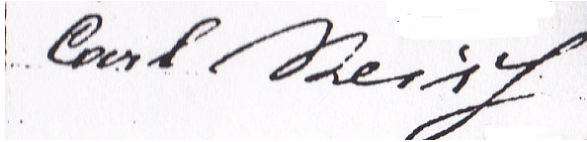
In 1862 elections were held for *Bürgermeister* and *Dorfschulz* in each of the Beresan colonies. A voter registry was compiled, showing all the eligible voters in each colony, and in most cases their actual signatures were also given. Eligibility was determined by being a household head in the colony. Three persons with the surname Reiss were shown in Landau: Georg, Peter, and Jacob. As we have seen, Georg was the grandson of Konrad Reis (son of Jacob), and Peter and Jacob were Konrad's sons.

In nearby Rastadt, a household head named **Karl Reiss** was shown. Karl is the only person with this surname shown on the voter registry of Rastadt in 1862. **Georg, Peter, and Jacob Reiss** were shown on the voter registry in Landau, but the surname isn't shown in any other of the Beresan colonies in 1862.

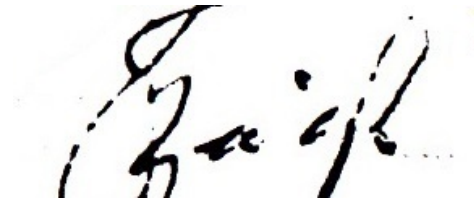
It is interesting to note that in the 1811 agricultural report the clerk spelled the surname for Karl Reis with an elongated "-h" followed by a standard short-form of "-s" at the end (see below). In 1862 it looks like the final letters were reversed "-sh". Karl's surname in the final column looks very close to that of the clerk, so the clerk probably signed for him. That was a common practice, either for those who were functionally illiterate or perhaps absent at the time. We also note that the clerk used a Latin script, whereas Peter and Jakob in Landau used standard Gothic script with a "*scharfes-s*" or "*eszett*" (ß) at the end of their surname. The letters "s" and "h" were sometimes reversed in these early records; for example, I once saw the surname "Weiss" written as "Weihs." This error may have been more common in those cases where the scribe was not a native German speaker. The letters "s" and "h" look similar in German script so it would be a common mistake by the clerk. It should also be noted that there was a "Resch" family in Rastadt and the idiosyncratic spelling of the early priests sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish their surname from "Reiss." However, those early records all included a letter "-i" in the Reiss family surname, but not in Resch.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in Latin script. The signature reads "George Reiss". The letters are written in a cursive style with some elongation, particularly the 'h' in 'Reiss'. The paper appears aged and slightly yellowed.

**Clerk's spelling of George "Reihs" (Reiss)
(Landau agricultural report in 1811)**



Clerk's spelling of Carl "Reish" (Rastadt voter registry in 1862)



Peter Reiss signature with ß (Landau in 1862)



Jakob Reiss signature with ß (Landau 1862)

Ignatz Reis and Christina Sticka

The Tiraspol Catholic Consistory baptismal record shows that **Ignatz Reis** was born on July 8, 1846 in Rastadt. His parents are stated to be Karl Reis and Katharina Kroll.

This date is in the old Julian format, which was in use in Russia at that time and later replaced by the Gregorian. In the USA our family records show that Ignatz was born on June 24, 1846 (Julian?), which equals July 6 Gregorian. My suspicion is that the immigrants from Russia became aware of the differences in the date format and they did rough approximations.

On July 14, 1846 in the Roman Catholic Church of Rastadt a child was baptized with the name Ignatz , by Fr. Hironemus Swenzizki	Son of the legally married couple Rastadt colonists Karl Reis and Katharina , born Kroll , born in the colony of Rastadt, on July 8, 1846	The godparents were colonists Ignatz Urlacher and Veronika Urlacher
--	--	---

My great-grandparents, Ignatz Reis and Christina Sticka, were married in about 1866. They served as godparents for Ignatz Schmidt, born Sept. 16, 1866 in Rastadt. Ignatz also served as the godfather for Ignatz Sticka on June 7, 1870 in Rastadt.

They had 10 children, plus a daughter who apparently died in childhood. Their first child, Peter Reis, was born in 1867.

They immigrated to North Dakota in 1892 with all their children, where they took out a homestead north of Dickinson. **Georg Reis** and his family accompanied **Ignatz Reis**. The records for Rastadt indicate that Georg was his brother, he was

married to Maria Josepha Heck. The ship registry for the Gellert shows **Georg Reis** (age 34, =b. ca. 1858) and his wife **Marie** (age 33, =b. ca. 1859), and four children: **Georg** (9, = b. ca. 1883), **Eva** (7, =b. ca. 1881), **Hieronymus** (5, =b. ca. 1883), and **Mathias** (3, =b. ca. 1889). They were all shown together with Ignatz and his family as number 750 on the ship registry.

My grandfather, Adam Wagner, immigrated to North Dakota one year earlier as a young man in 1891. He worked for Ignatz, then married Ignatz's daughter, Katherine Reis, and took out a homestead nearby.

Several sources confirm that Ignatz and his family came from the German colony of Rastadt in the Ukraine. The older members of my family, including my dad, all referred to them as "Rastadters." In 1922 the German language newspaper in Dickinson, the *Nord Dakota Herold*, published lists of families who were the pioneers in the area along with their colony of origin. Ignatz Reis and all his sons were shown as coming from Rastadt. This was also confirmed in Fr. Aberle's two volumes of histories that he compiled for the families in St. Joseph's parish in Dickinson, based on statements provided by each family.²⁴ There he stated that Ignatz and his family came from Rastadt.

As we have seen, Ignatz Reis was born in Rastadt on July 8, 1846 (Julian date), son of Karl Reis and Katharina Kroll. His death certificate in 1925, filed in Dickinson, lists his father as Karl Reiss but his mother is not shown. Fr. Aberle's family histories provide that missing piece of information, stating that Ignatz's parents were Karl Reis and Katherina Kroll. My father also recalled that Ignatz's mother was Katharina Kroll (which he pronounced in dialect as "Groll.") This is all confirmed by Ignatz' baptismal record in 1846 which I recently found in the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory.

The focus of this narrative is on the Reis family, so I will provide only basic details on the Sticka family into which our Reis ancestors married (this will be covered in a separate Sticka family history).

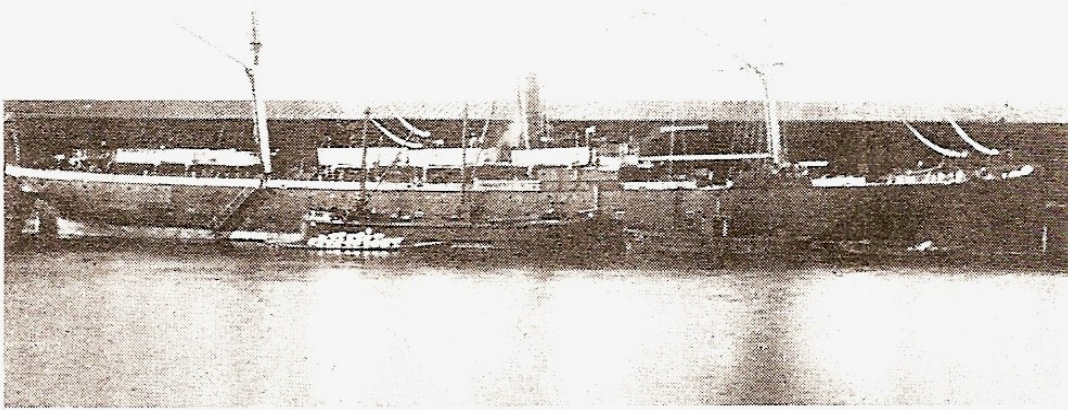
According to records in the USA, Ignatz Reis's wife, **Christina Sticka**, was born in Rastadt on Jan. 1, 1848. Her grandfather, **Ludwig Sticka** (also spelled Stücker and Stik) had settled there with his family in 1813 and there is a straight line of descent that can be shown from Ludwig to his youngest son, Gregor, to Christina and her other siblings. However, her birthdate of Jan. 1st seems questionable, I suspect that it is a rough estimate. The Tiraspol Catholic Consistory records show that **Gregor Sticka** and **Elisabeth Eberle** had twins, **Leonard** and **Christina**, born Nov. 5, 1846 (Julian date) in Rastadt. This date is about one year older than Christina Sticka Reis's supposed birth. It's possible that the older Christina died in childhood and her parents named the next-born daughter Christina in 1848 to compensate for the death. That was common practice among the highly religious German colonists.

Ignatz Reis and Christina's first child was Peter (born April 6, 1867 Rastadt), named after his godfather Peter Jordan. All of their 10 children were born in Rastadt.

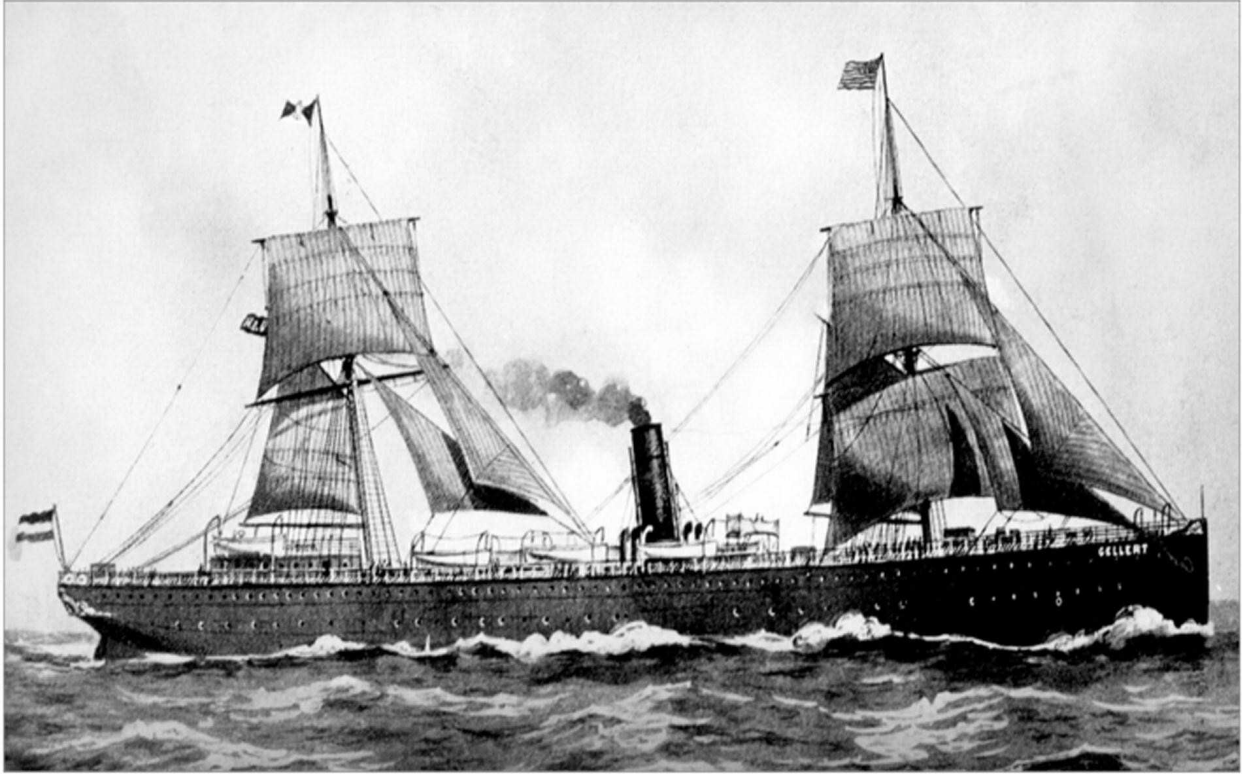
²⁴ Msgr. George P. Aberle, *Pioneers and their Sons* vols. 1 and 2, published by the North Dakota Herold, Dickinson, N.D., 1966.

They had one young daughter, Maria Eva Reis, born Aug. 31, 1869, who apparently died in childhood because she was not mentioned in any of the later documents in the USA.

Ignatz and Christina were already middle-aged when they immigrated to the Dickinson area (he was 46, and she 44 years old). They boarded the steamship Gellert in Hamburg on May 22, 1892, which docked in New York 12 days later. There was a large group of families leaving together from Rastadt. All of Ignatz and Christina's children came with them, including their 6 unmarried children, their married son Peter Reis and his wife Sophia Ehrmantraut (they had no children yet), their son-in-law Ludwig Metz (married to their daughter Elisabeth), Adam Ehrmantraut and his wife Eva and 8 children (in-laws of Peter and Sophia), and Dominik Wandler and his family, who had godparent ties with Karl Reis, also from Rastadt.

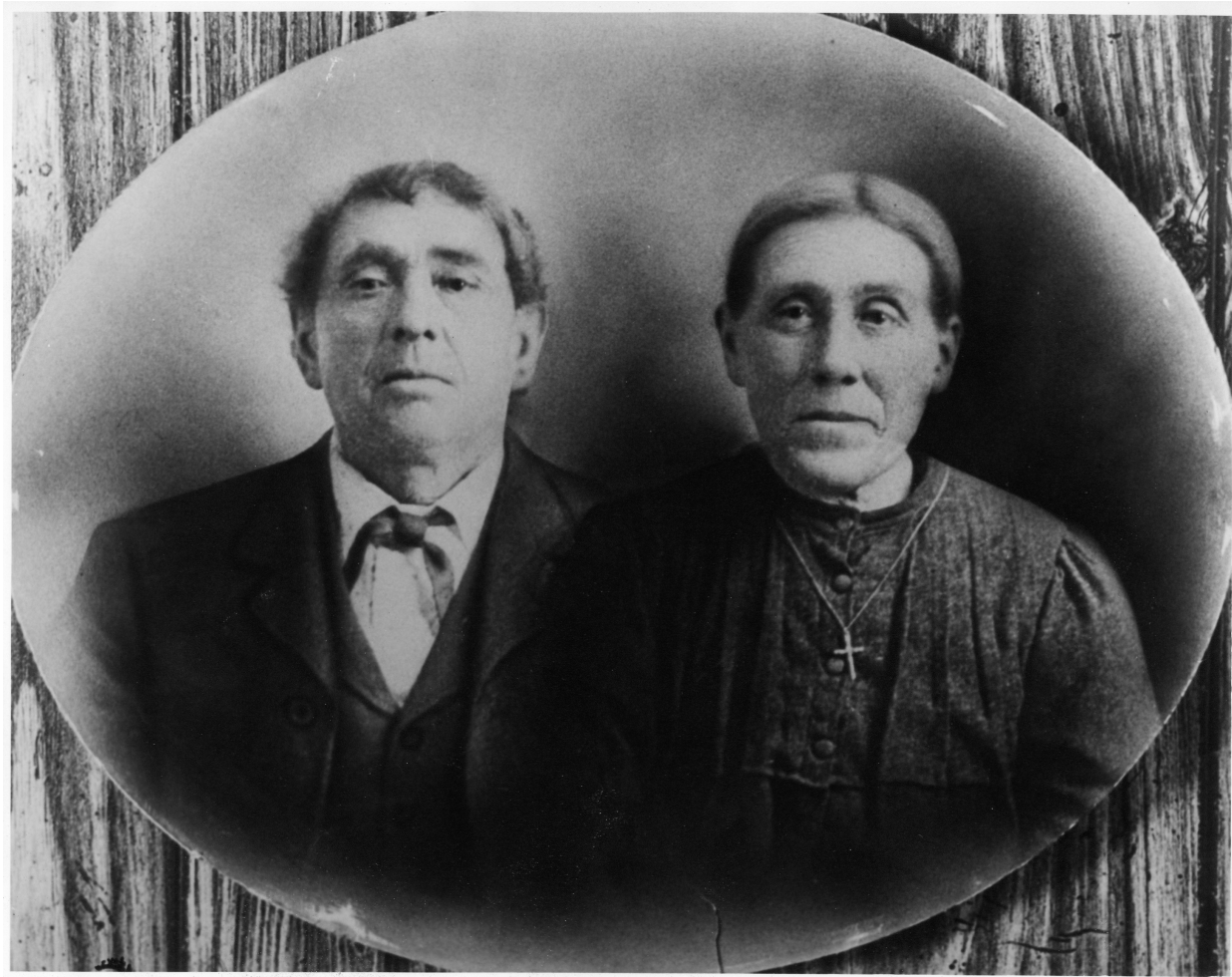


S.S. GELLERT, 1874 Hamburg American Line
Courtesy The Peabody Museum of Salem



S.S. Gellert with Sails Spread

Ignatz's younger brother, Georg Reis and his wife Marie and four children (Georg, Eva, Hieronymus, and Mathias) also traveled with them. Georg was shown as age 34 (= b. ca. 1858), and Ignatz was born in 1846.



Ignatz Reis and Christina Sticka²⁵
Parents of Katherine Reis-Wagner

Ignatz and Christina had 13 children in their marriage. Twins Franz and Joseph born in 1871 may have died in childhood, plus Maria Eva, who may also have died in childhood. See the summary table at the end of this study:

1. Peter Reis, born April 6, 1867.
2. Maria Eva Reis, born Aug. 31, 1869.
- 3 & 4 Franz and Joseph Reis, twins born 1871 Rastadt.
5. Johann Reis, born Aug. 27, 1872, Rastadt..
6. Elizabeth Reis, born July 12, 1875.
7. Katherina Reis, born July 18, 1876 (my grandmother).

²⁵ On the back of this old photo is written: "Ignatz Reiss born 1846 Rastatt, Russia," "Christina (Sticka) Reiss born 1848 in Rastatt." This was probably written by Tim Reis, from whom my parents got this photo.

8. Jacob Reis (Jack), born Mar. 24, 1878.
9. Joseph Reis, born April 1881.
10. Ottilia Reis (Tilly), born April 1882.
11. Anna Reis, born Jan. 1884.
12. Anna Maria Reis (Mary), born Nov. 1885.
13. Thomas Reis, born Dec. 1887.

According to family stories, Ignatz sold his land in Russia and had about 18,000 rubles in cash when they came to North Dakota, worth about \$9,000 – a considerable sum of money at that time! A person was supposed to reside in the USA for 2 years before applying for citizenship, but Ignatz apparently did not want to wait. He filed for citizenship on July 11, 1892 – about 2 months after his arrival. The stated date of arrival on the application was correct, so it is unclear why the clerk allowed him to file so early. Other sources state that the residency requirement was not strictly enforced. His son, Peter, also applied early, on August 1, 1892, while his other son John applied on Nov. 2, 1894. Ignatz received citizenship on Nov. 14, 1898.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, }
County of Stark. } ss. Ignatz Reis personally appeared

before the subscriber, the Clerk of the District Court of Stark County, State of North Dakota, being a Court of Record, and made oath that he was born in Russia

on or about the year eighteen hundred and Forty six,

that he emigrated to the United States, and landed at the port of New York

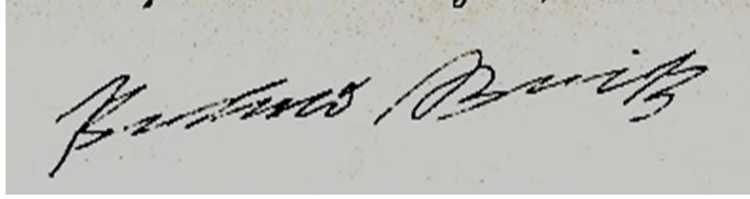
on or about the month of June in the year eighteen hundred and Ninety two;

that it is his bona fide intention to become a citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to the Russian Empire whereof he is a subject, and that he will support the Constitution and Government of the United States.

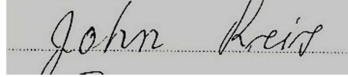
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 11th day of July A. D. 1892

Jacob Reis
Edw. Bonney
Clerk of said District Court

Ignatz Reis application for citizenship July 11, 1892



Peter Reiss signature (Ignatz's son)



John Reiss printed signature (Ignatz's son)

An interesting feature on their applications is that their signatures were written in old style German Gothic script which they had learned in the colonies. Ignatz signed his name in script as "Ignatz Reis," but the clerk (Ed Bonney) wrote it as "Raes." Bonney apparently couldn't understand German and he transcribed the surname literally as Ignatz pronounced the letters - "er," "eh," "ih", "es." Peter Reis, the oldest son, also signed his name in German Gothic script with an *estset* (ß) which was convention for terminal double "s" and Bonney transcribed the surname literally as it was pronounced "Raes." John Reis had a different clerk two years later, who managed to write the surname correctly. Interestingly, John didn't sign it, he carefully printed his name in English style.

One reason why Ignatz filed early for citizenship was that he was in a rush to file for a homestead, which he did two weeks later on Aug. 13, 1892.²⁶ The Homestead Act of 1862 stipulated that a claim to land could be filed by anyone (male or female) who was at least 21 years of age (there was no minimum age if the person was married and the "head of a family"). The applicant had to be a citizen, or have filed for citizenship, and had to testify that he had never taken up arms against the U.S. government. He also had to declare that he did not already own more than 160 acres of land and that the homestead was for his exclusive benefit and for actual settlement and cultivation. Initially the person had to file an affidavit of intent with the Registrar of the Land Office in order to "enter" the homestead land, and pay commission and filing fees of \$22 for 160 acres. He had to establish residence on the land within six months. After 14 months he had the option to purchase the land (as a "preemption claim") for \$1.25 per acre, or he could reside there for five years (without leaving it for more than six months at a time) and then take title to it as a homestead. Certain improvement had to be made to the property -- the soil had to be cultivated, a dwelling had to be built (homesteaders typically built a small "claim shack"), a well had to be dug, and a portion of the land

²⁶ Township 140, Range 96, Section 18, southwest quarter. This homestead was patented to Ignatz on July 29, 1899. Ignatz, Christina, Jacob, Joseph, Ottilia, Anna, Anna Maria, and Thomas are shown in the June 21, 1900 census residing in Township 140, R. 96.

had to be fenced. After five years and not later than seven years, if these conditions were met, a petition for title was filed, known as a "patent," which required the testamentary signatures of two witnesses and the payment of a final fee of \$12 for 160 acres. The person had to have become a U.S. citizen by that point, and the land couldn't be attached by lien for debts.

There were limits on the amount of public land that could be claimed. One person could not acquire more than one tract of land by homesteading. However, the amount depended on whether it was designated for farming or grazing or mineral development. One-quarter section (160 acres) could be claimed for farming. The "Desert Land Law" of 1877 had expanded homesteading to include arid regions, which were not suitable for farming but which could be used for grazing. This law allowed a single person to claim 320 acres (640 acres for a married couple) of designated arid land for grazing, a portion of it had to be irrigated within 3 years, a fee of \$1.25 per acre had to be paid, and it did not have a residency requirement. Should a person fail to find a suitable homestead he could purchase a "relinquishment" from someone willing to give up his claim. Typically persons filed for a 160 acre homestead and purchased an additional half section.

Ignatz's land was located one mile from Adam Wagner and Joachim Boehm, about eight miles northwest of Dickinson. He also purchased the adjoining quarter to the west (the 1914 Atlas shows that he owned both those quarters). He built a substantial stone house and barn, which are still standing today.²⁷ Ignatz also took out a homestead in the coal fields northwest of Dickinson (the same area as Adam Wagner). Harry Boehm remarked that Ignatz's house didn't leave any air space inside the walls, so in the winter water would condense on the inside. He recalled that in the kitchen the exposed stone walls would sweat and water would run down the walls, which froze into a layer of ice overnight.

The *Nord Dakota Herald* had routine reports about various members of the family. On July 30, 1920 it reported that "in the family of Peter Reiss, four miles from Dickinson, drilling was finally installed" (not clear if this was for water or oil). On Oct. 14, 1921 Tom Reis was having an auction at his place, six miles from Dickinson. On Jan. 9, 1925, "Peter Reis from Belfield visited his old father, Ignaz Reis, and his two daughters, Mrs. Rosa Ehli and Mrs. Peter Hecker; he returned home early on Saturday." On Aug. 28, 1925 "Joe Reis from New England was here on Monday and Tuesday to visit friends and acquaintances. Joe has finished threshing, he received 3 bushels per acre." Fr. Aberle also reported that the "Reiss brothers" were very successful in sheep and cattle raising in the county neighboring Stark. He doesn't mention their names, but it was likely Joe and Jacob residing near New England.²⁸

When their last daughter, Mary, became married and moved away from home, Ignatz and Christina were elderly by this point, and they decided that it was time to make other living arrangements. Tom Reis's son, Timmy, was described as being rather

²⁷ The house today stands on the southeast quarter of sec. 13-140-97.

²⁸ Fr. George P. Aberle, *From the Steppes to the Prairies*, Dickinson, N.D., 1963, p. 162.

rambunctious, which caused tensions between the elders and Tom's wife. Ignatz sold the stone farm house to Joe Metz and they moved in with Adam Wagner and Katherine for about 5 years. My father recalled that Ignatz gave Adam enough money to add two rooms onto the house for them. Christina then went blind, and developed cancer, which required that much of her colon be removed. After that she was basically an invalid. When Adam Wagner became ill with cancer, Katherine couldn't take care of her parents, so Ignatz and Christina bought a small house in Dickinson where they spent the remainder of their years. Both lived to a ripe old age. Ignatz died on Nov. 18, 1925 at the age of 79 from complications of a hernia. A brief note in the *Nord Dakota Herold*²⁹ reported his death: "He was troubled with a long standing illness, but old age is given as the main cause of death. He entered the hospital for an operation the first of the week, but his condition was far beyond aid, and he lingered on for but a day." Apparently his hernia had created an intestinal obstruction, which caused an embolism. One week later, his obituary³⁰ appeared:

"As we briefly reported last week, on the 18th of November Ignatz Reis died totally unexpectedly at the age of 79 years. Other than a hernia injury, which caused his death, he was reportedly always healthy and vigorous, in contrast to his tragic wife who is blind and who by herself couldn't be much help to her beloved husband who is now deceased. For almost 60 years Frau Christina Reis, born Sticka, was married to him, and this marriage was blessed with 10 children, eight of whom are still living and reside in this area: [names of children follow]. The elderly couple came from Russia to this country in 1892 and soon after homesteaded close by Dickinson. The funeral occurred on Friday at St. Joseph's church, with many people in attendance. May the departed rest in peace."

Ignatz was also noted to be a devout church member and he belonged to the men's clubs in the parish. A notice in the next column after the obituary informs the members of the St. Anthony's Society that in accordance with their statutes, all should pay "the death-dollar within 30 days to Jacob Mack, secretary." One of the functions of the church sodalities back then was to provide death insurance, with all members contributing \$1 for funeral expenses. Ignatz is buried in the St. Joseph's church cemetery in Dickinson. His family erected an impressively large tombstone monument, one of the largest in the entire cemetery.

After his death, Christina was cared for by her granddaughter, Mrs. Jacob Reisenauer. Christina died on Nov. 7, 1934 at the age of 86. The next day her death was reported on the front page of the newspaper: "Aged woman died after living 40 years as invalid." The obituary³¹ notes that she died at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Jacob Reisenauer, on the South Side of Dickinson. Death resulted from "complications

²⁹ The Dickinson Press, Nov. 20, 1925.

³⁰ *Nord Dakota Herold*, Nov. 27, 1925.

³¹ The Dickinson Press and Dickinson Recorder Post, Nov. 8, 1934.

attendant upon old age." Christina is buried next to Ignatz, along with several other members of the Reis family.

Katherine Reis-Wagner, my grandmother, was a healer (known as a "*Brauche*" in the German dialect), and she often helped other families in need. *Braucherei* is an ancient form of folk-healing in the German speaking regions in Europe, combining prayers, blessings, religious medals, and herbal remedies taken either as an infusion or applied as poultices on various parts of the body. My father recalled that people brought their sick children to her for healing, and she baptized many sick babies that were at risk of death. According to custom, parents would sometimes leave their sick children over-night, or sometimes for a few days, so the *Brauche* could provide ritual care. My Aunt Barbara had a prayer book that belonged to Katherine, which she showed me. It was in German, printed in 1873 in Russia. The title page was: "The Great Golden Key of Heaven, or, a very Powerful, Useful, and Comforting Prayer Book for the Release of Beloved Souls in Purgatory, Containing all Available Powerful Morning, Evening, Mass, Vespers, Confession, and Communion Prayers." While she was helping another sick person in the community, Katherine contracted spinal meningitis. Because this is a contagious disease, they didn't allow family members to visit her in the hospital. At first they let my father help hold her down while they gave painful shots in her spine, but after awhile they didn't allow this for fear that he too would contract the disease. She died on Feb. 27, 1930, at the age of 53. She was buried next to Adam in St. Joseph's Cemetery, southwest of Dickinson about 2 miles.³²

Unfortunately the 1922 issues of the *Nord Dakota Herold*, the German language newspaper in Dickinson, have not been preserved in the state archives, so we don't have the obituary for Adam Wagner. We do have the obituary in 1930 for Katherine, which I have translated below:³³

"Mrs. Katharina Wagner Dies.

Last Thursday, the 27th February, at 15 minutes before 8:00 in the evening in St. Joseph's hospital, after receiving the Last Rites of the Church, Mrs. Katharina Wagner died from the contagious disease spinal meningitis (*Hirn-und Rückenentzündung*) at the age of 53 years, 7 months, and 8 days. Her death recalled so stirringly the Words of Holy Scripture: It is but a step between life and death. At the beginning of the month she was still healthy and in good spirits, and within the short span of 17 days she was already a corpse.

The deceased was the daughter of the deceased Ignatz and Christina Reis. She was born in Rastadt, South Russia, on July 19, 1876. On June 3, 1892 she came with her

³² We visited the cemetery in 1991. Adam purchased 8 plots for the family. Adam and Katherine are buried in space 4; their graves are unmarked (no headstone), due to the cost at that time. Frank and Elizabeth's first-born were twins, who died in infancy. They were named Adam and Eve, and buried at the foot of Adam's grave. Caroline Wagner (one of Frank's daughters who died of diphtheria in childhood) is in space 2. Joseph is in space 8 (with headstone), and Frank is in space 7 (with headstone).

³³ Obituary for Katherina Wagner, *Nord Dakota Herold*, March 7, 1930, p. 8.

parents to America, where they settled on a farm 7 miles northwest of Dickinson. Two years later, on January 30, she married Adam Wagner. From this union they had 10 children. They lived with their family on the farm for 33 years, 5 miles northwest from the city, where her husband preceded her in death on April 2, 1922. In the Fall she left the farm and moved into the city.

She was a capable and good mother and is now mourned by her old, sick and blind mother, Mrs. Christina Reis, and her 10 children: Franz Wagner, [Barbara] Mrs. John Boehm in Dickinson, [Ottilia] Mrs. Frank Schlosser in Mott, N.D., [Anna] Mrs. Alexander Roll in Burt, N.D., [Margaret] Mrs. Philip Bosch in Laurel, MT, Joseph Wagner in Belfield, N.D., Mike Wagner, [Marie] Mrs. Anton Kilwein, John and James Wagner in Dickinson, as well as by her siblings, friends and acquaintances.

The funeral was on Saturday morning at 8:00 in St. Joseph's church, where a Requiem Mass was held with the relatives and society-sisters. In the previous evening a large number of her society-sisters in the St. Anna Altar Society assembled in St. Joseph's Church and prayed the rosary for the deceased. Her body could unfortunately not be taken into the church, because of the contagious disease. At 2:00 in the afternoon she was taken to the cemetery and laid to rest next to her spouse. The pall-bearers were Mike Schoch, John Fischer, Joseph Koffler, Peter Matz, Dinius Olheiser and Victor Weisgerber. May she rest in the Peace of the Lord."



Ignatz Reis



Christina Sticka



Katherine Reis and Adam Wagner
(my grandparents, she was the daughter of Ignatz Reis & Christina)



**Leonard Hecker's wedding, Dickinson N.D. June 17, 1913
(from left to right:) Frank Hecker, Ignatz Reis, Joseph Raether,
Unknown (with hat), John Reis (with cigarette), John Wock.**

**The women (from left to right) are:
Mrs. Reisgarber, Ignatz Sticka's wife, Annie Marie Hecker**

Frank (Franz) Hecker immigrated to North Dakota with my grandfather, Adam Wagner, in 1891. Joseph Raether was Mrs. Leonard Hecker's grandfather. John Reis was Ignatz's son. John Wock was Mrs. Hecker's mother's sister's husband. Annie Marie was Leonard Hecker's sister.



Mike Schoch and Anna Reis (Katherine's sister)



**(from left:) Anna, John (my father), Barbara, Frank, Margaret
(children of Katherine Reis and Adam Wagner)**



John Reis age 22
(my father's uncle, son of Ignatz Reis & Christina)



Barbara Schlosser age 16
(wife of John Reis)



Louis F. Rice

**(son of John Reis and Barbara
Schlosser, my father's first-cousin
and close friend)**



Catherine Reis (my father's first-cousin, da. of John) and husband Leonard Mack



Beata, Louis and Elisabeth Reis

**Children of John Reis & Barbara
Schlosser (my father's first-
cousins)**



**Joseph Reis, son of
Jacob, grandson of
Peter Reis, wife Amelia
Bosch**



**Rafael Reis, son of
Joseph, and wife
Eugenia Kautzman**

Some Personal Anecdotes About Ignatz and Christina Reis and their Children

Ignatz Reis was a stout old family patriarch. He lived on his homestead northwest of Dickinson, surrounded by his married children, sons-in-law, and numerous grandchildren. As my father, John Wagner, and his siblings grew up, most of their family contacts were with their grandparents, uncles, and aunts on the Reis side, who were the only family they knew. Their father, Adam Wagner, came over as a young single man with no other relatives. Ignatz and Christina moved in with Adam Wagner and their daughter, Katherine, for about 5 years after they sold their farm.

Late in her life, Christina Reis became blind. My dad recalled a ritual that the grandchildren in the family did every morning after Christina's eyesight failed her – they all had to stand in a row and she would go down the line and feel their faces, then announce their names (“*oh, Du bist Jimmy, Du bist Johnny,*” and so on). Dad would duck his head because he didn't like her touching his face, so Katherine would stand behind him to make him put up with it out of respect for the old woman. Another anecdote was that Christina used to snort “*schnoose*” tobacco. One time she used it all up and Adam sent my dad into Dickinson to buy some for her. He found an old can along the road with some left in it, so he brought it back for her. He probably figured that since she was blind she wouldn't notice the difference and he could keep the spending money. She scraped some of the pungent stale tobacco out of the can, snorted it, then had a major spasm of sneezing! Dad obviously got into trouble for that.

Harry Boehm and his sister, Edith (who married Mike Widolski) were born and raised north of Dickinson, near the farms of Ignatz Reis and Adam Wagner. I interviewed them in the early 1970s and they provided a rich description of the foibles of these two families. They had close contacts with the Reis and Wagner families, they lived only one mile apart and the kids were often at each other's houses.

According to Harry Boehm, Ignatz was rather short and husky – not really fat, just “built that way” (heavy of frame). He always smoked a large curved pipe. Unlike Adam Wagner, Joachim Boehm, and many others in that generation, Ignatz didn't have a whiskey still and he didn't enjoy having a daily “*Schnäpple*” for his good health in the mornings.

Christina Reis once became ill and she thought she was on the verge of death. She had her daughters Anna, Tilly and Mary make her a “death robe” (a burial robe) out of white cloth. When she got better she didn't want to throw the robe away and she didn't know what to do with it, so one of the girls used it for a nightgown. This was in 1910 or 1911, before Ignatz and Christina moved into town. The Boehms always recalled this as a funny incident about the Reis family. In those days, nothing was wasted!

Harry and Edith both felt that Adam Wagner and the older members of the Reis family were *kribbelig*, a dialect term meaning “crabby.” As Harry said, “If something happened, or someone said some little thing they didn't like, they didn't forget it, it would eat at them, they would pick and pick at it for months to come.” If the Reis men didn't like something, “they never forgot it. The worst of it was when they had been

drinking a little, like at a wedding. They always got in an argument.” These comments should be taken with a large grain of salt since Harry and Edith were somewhat rowdy teenagers at the time and they did things that annoyed the older folks.

Peter Reis, the oldest of Ignatz’s sons, homesteaded about 2 miles from Ignatz, on the quarter east of Adam Wagner. He farmed there for 28 years and he had a huge family. He had seven children by his first wife, Sophie Ehrmantraut, who died in 1910. He then had six more children from his second wife, Magdalene Mertian, the last three being triplets. His second wife died in childbirth in 1920 while giving birth to the triplets, all of whom survived. Edith said her parents went over to help him out. They found Peter distraught, pacing the floor and shaking his head, saying over and over that he should “lose all three of them,” it would be better if God took all the babies since his wife was dead and there was no one to take care of them. Edith commented, “Peter, you know, he was kind of odd.” Joachim Boehm scolded him and told him to trust God and be thankful that the babies were healthy. People from town brought food and clothing for the babies when they heard of the tragedy. Peter’s oldest daughters were married at that time so they couldn’t be much help. About one year later Peter married a woman who had three children, so they ended up with many children and they were very poor.

John Reis also homesteaded near his father, Ignatz. My father, John Wagner, received his name from his uncle John Reis, who served as his baptismal godfather. He and his wife had 10 children, and they too were quite poor. John Reis died in 1913 at the age of 41. His youngest child was only two months old at his death, and the oldest, Louis, was 15. Louis shouldered the burden of running the farm until he could hand it over to his next oldest brother. After Louis became married, he farmed the land of his uncle, Ludwig Metz.

The two brothers, Jacob (Jack) and Joseph Reis, moved to the town of New England, about 20 miles south of Dickinson, where new homestead lands had become available. They both became very successful cattle and sheep ranchers, as Fr. Aberle noted in one of his books.³⁴

Tom Reis, the youngest son, didn’t leave home until he was older, when he married Katie Fried, a cousin of the Boehms. Tom’s wife, Katie, couldn’t have children so they adopted a boy, Timmy. Timmy Reis didn’t know he was adopted until adulthood, when my father told him; Timmy was quite surprised. Tom, they recalled, would get upset if he lost at card games, he would hold grudges over it, and Katie was high-strung. One time Edith and Harry went to visit and when they found no-one at home they decided to go inside. Just for a joke, they stood the ironing-board up against the wall in the kitchen and draped a pair of Tom’s overalls on it. When it got dark, they left. Tom and his wife drove up in his buggy, and Katie went inside the house while Tom was putting the team of horses away in the barn. When she turned on the light she saw the overalls standing against the wall and she became so frightened that she ran

³⁴ Fr. Geo. P. Aberle, From the Steppes to the Prairies, Bismarck, N.D., Bismarck Tribune Co., 1963, p. 162.

back outside and, scarcely able to talk, gasped out “there’s a man in there!” Tom became very angry over this prank, he went to the Boehm house and bawled the children out. They had to hear about that incident from Tom for a long time afterward.

On Christmas Eve Louis Reis (Peter’s son) sometimes played *Belzenägel* and Anna Reis played *Christkindl* (Christ-child).³⁵ Louis would dress in a heavy fur coat, with a chain wrapped around his waist, then come stomping onto their porch, jangling his chains. The children would become so frightened that they would “shake.” They were afraid that he would come inside and loop the chain around their necks and drag them outside. After *Belzenägel* left, the *Christkindl* arrived (the kids believed that the Christ child scared away the demon). Anna or Mary Reis would dress up with lots of lace and a veil over her face, and she carried a switch in her hand. She brought gifts for the children, but before giving them out each child had to kiss the switch, she would give them a light swat on the hand and say “*Mutter, Vatter fröhliche*” (make your mom and dad happy). If a child had been notoriously rowdy or bad that year, she would give him a harder swat on the hands.

Elizabeth Reis’s husband, Ludwig Metz, had a reputation for enjoying his liquor. My father recalled that once on Christmas eve Ludwig played *Belzenägel* and he staggered up onto the porch dead drunk. They heard a loud crash on the porch, which frightened all the children. When Adam looked outside, Ludwig was passed out on the porch. Adam had to bring him inside to sober him up, so he wouldn’t freeze to death.

Below is a brief history of Elizabeth Reis and her husband, Ludwig Metz³⁶:

“Ludwig Metz and Elizabeth Reiss were married in Rastadt, Russia. They along with Elizabeth's parents, sisters, and brothers traveled to the United States together. Elizabeth was pregnant when they started the journey to America. The trip by boat took 3 weeks, and she became sick and miscarried. The baby was buried at sea. They arrived in New York by ship (the S.S. Gellert on Jun. 3, 1892 at Ellis Island. They came by train to Dickinson in the fall of 1892. They stayed in Dickinson during the winter while the men scouted for land to homestead. At that time you could get 160 acres to homestead. After you built a house and lived on it for 5 years, the land was yours. They had the opportunity to acquire another 160 acres if they tilled it, planted some trees, and worked it for 5 years. In order to encourage settlement the Northern Pacific R.R., which was moving west, would sell land for a few cents an acre.

While working for the Northern Pacific Railroad, Ludwig Metz staked out his homestead (S. 14, T. 140, R. 97), and bought a horse, an oxen, a plow,

³⁵ The custom of having a demon-like figure, known as *Belzenägel*, visit the home on Christmas eve dates back to pre-Christian times in Europe. The name is derived from “*Pelz-Nickl*,” or “Nicholas in fur,” the origin for the figure of St. Nicholas. *Christkindl* means “Christ-child,” which is pronounced as “*Grischkinl*” in dialect.

³⁶ This history of Ludwig Metz and Elisabeth was written by their great-grandson, Robert Kooren (forwarded to me in 2017).

and other homesteading necessities. Elizabeth and her younger brother Tom built a sod house, and started working the farmstead. Ludwig would come home once a month or so. Ludwig worked for the railroad for several years. Elizabeth's parents had a homestead 1 mile southeast of them (S. 13, T. 140, R. 97), so they were close. Ignatz Ries was an only child and had considerable money when coming to the United States, whereas Ludwig Metz was penniless.

Elizabeth tells of the first winters. They were ill prepared for the cold, snow, blizzards, and prairie fires. The native prairie grasses were 3 feet tall when they arrived. Elizabeth told of having a one room long sod cabin. They kept the cows, chickens, and livestock in the cabin during the winter to keep them from freezing or getting covered with snow. There were very few trees in that part of the country, but there was a lot of coal which was used for fuel.

Years later, Ludwig bought another 180 acres for a total of 500 acres. Ludwig loved partying with his neighbors and homemade liquor. When he passed away in 1919, he was in debt. Elizabeth stayed for two years and farmed with her daughters, but could not reduce the debt. She then moved with her daughters into her parents' house, the Ignatz Ries home, and took care of her mother and father for several years. She later bought a home of her own, with the help of her 4 younger daughters."

The last of Ignatz and Christine Reis's children, Mary, had very poor eyesight. She didn't get married until she was about 30, somewhat late by German-Russian standards. She married a man directly from Germany, named Bill Bahn.

A Summary of Relationships in the Reis Family

At the time of this writing, several descendants have done research on various branches of the Reis family. The ones that I have primarily relied upon include Heinz Reis in Germany, Vernon Reis, Shirley N. Dennis (her husband was a descendant of John Reis), Bernie "Ries" (granddaughter of Jacob "Ries" from Weyburn, Saskatchewan), and Charles Reis (descendant of the branch that emigrated to Australia). These sources trace the roots of the family back to Wollmesheim in the Rhine Pfalz, then to Käfertal near Mannheim, to the colony of Landau in Tsarist Russia in 1809, to the colony of Rastadt, then finally to North Dakota. Bernie's tree shows that some distant relatives had settled in "Biblis/Darmstadt, Hessen," which is north of Käfertal. Other sources for the Reis family history (e.g. Heinz Reis in Germany and Charles in Australia) do not refer to Biblis. It should also be noted that the Reis/Federer tree on internet shows Karl Reis as stemming from "Mothern, Alsace," which is an error.

The reference to Mothern, Alsace as the point of origin for the Reis family has been repeated in a few family histories on internet. The source for this error is a statement made by Fr. Aberle in his brief histories of the families in St. Joseph's parish in Dickinson, North Dakota. In his history for Louis F. "Rice" (my father's first-cousin), Fr. Aberle notes that Louis's paternal grandparents were Ignatz Reis and Christina Sticka, and his maternal grandparents were Johann Schlosser and Marianna Kuntz who emigrated to the colony of Speier in 1809 from "Mothern, Alsace." In this brief sentence Fr. Aberle refers only to the Schlosser family as originating in Mothern, and not to the Reis family. However, in his family history for John Boehm, who married my aunt Barbara Wagner, Aberle states that Barbara's "great grandparents [were] Carl and Catherine Kroll-Reiss, who came there ... from Mothern, Elsace, Germany."³⁷

Why did Fr. Aberle refer to the Reis family as originating in Mothern, Alsace in Barbara Wagner's history, but not in her cousin Louis Rice's history? The answer is, quite simply, that he got his references confused between the Schlosser and the Reis families. In the early 1970s I corresponded with Fr. Aberle and he admitted that he had supplemented his histories by providing origins for each family in Germany by referring to Fr. Konrad Keller's books, which reprinted the earliest census records for the German colonies. When we check Fr. Keller, we find that the Schlosser family (Johann and Michael) are indeed shown as originating in Mothern, Alsace and they were among the founders of Speier. However, the two Reis families in Speier and Landau are both shown in the 1811 and 1816 Revision Lists as coming from Wollmesheim in the Pfalz.

The Kroll family is shown in Rastadt, but they stemmed from Böchingen in the Pfalz, not from Mothern.

Other people have also noted that Fr. Aberle sometimes made mistakes in his brief family histories, usually when he was trying to extrapolate the earliest origins for

³⁷ Msgr. George P. Aberle, *Pioneers and their Sons* vol. 2, 1966, p. 286.

the families by referring to Fr. Keller. Unfortunately, his mistaken comment about the Reis family originating in Mothern, Alsace, has been incorporated in some family histories on internet. We should also clarify that Mothern is not in "Elsace, Germany," rather it is a town on the west bank of the Rhine in Alsace, France, and Wollmesheim is a small village suburb southwest of Landau in the Rhine Pfalz.

The Reis family is shown on Ancestry.com, but it should be noted that some of the dates shown differ from the records in Tsarist Russia. As usual, these internet web sites don't provide sources so we don't know how reliable they are. I will refer to these alternate dates in parentheses below.

The Origins of the Reis family in Wollmesheim, Rhine Pfalz

The earliest reliable records for our Reiss family are in Wollmesheim, which is a small village southwest of Landau in the Rhine Pfalz. The surname was spelled "Rhyss" in some of the oldest records, then later as "Reiss" or "Reisz" (the "-sz" suffix was commonly used to denote a double "-ss" or the "scharfes-s" ß). There are also references to this surname in Mörzheim and Göcklingen which are slightly farther southwest from Wollmesheim - all three villages are suburbs of Landau.

In the summary tables below, my lineal ancestors are underlined.

I. **Mathias Reiss**. The earliest reference is 1682 in Wollmesheim, Pfalz. His son was:

II. **Johann Thomas Reiss**³⁸ born Nov. 23, 1706 in Wollmesheim, died 1775; he marr. **Anna Maria Tillger** from Göcklingen, b. 1682 (? year too early?). Their children:

1. **Matthaeus Reis**, b. Sept. 6, 1717 (? year too early?).
2. **Johann Jacob Reis**, b. Sept. 8, 1724 Göcklingen, d.1775 (see below for his descendants).
3. **Johann Georg Reis**, b. July 13, 1728, in Göcklingen, d. April 17, 1801.
4. **Maria Katharina Reis**, b. April 7, 1723.
5. **Maria Jacobaea Reis**, b. Jan 5, 1727.

III. **Johann Jakob Reis**, born Sept. 8, 1724 in Göcklingen, son of Johann Thomas (II. above); he marr. **Anna Barbara Schwartz** from Eschbach; he died Nov. 12, 1775 in Wollmesheim. His son was **Johann Georg Reis** (below), b. May 6, 1753 Wollmesheim.

³⁸ The info for J. Thomas, showing him as the son of Mathis in Wollmesheim, is from the family tree of Bernie "Ries." Vernon Reis in Washington and Charles Reis in Australia do not show J. Thomas (II.), they cite J. Jakob (III.) as the son of Mathis Reis. However, the difference in birth years between Mathis and Jakob indicates that there was a generation between them. Bernie cites one of her sources as Indexing Project C98512-2 Source Film Number 400483.

Reis family in Tsarist Russia

IV. **Johann Georg Reis**, b. May 6, 1753 Wollmesheim, son of Johann Jakob (III. above), he d. Dec. 16, 1855 in Landau, Russia. He marr. **Anna Katharine Deibel** (Ancestry.com states Anna Maria Deibel) on Nov. 4, 1776 in Wollmesheim; she was born July 19, 1758 the da. of **Franz Michael Deibel** (1736–1776) and **Anna Maria Eva Rang** in Wollmesheim. On May 13, 1793 J. Georg, his wife Katharine, and their youngest children J. Bernhard, J. Georg, J. David, Maria Katharine, Maria Eva, and Konrad relocated to Käfertal, suburb of Mannheim in Baden. Then, in 1809, they emigrated to Landau in Tsarist Russia. J. Georg went with his four youngest children: Konrad, **Michael**, Maria Katharina, and Maria Eva. Fourteen children are shown in various family trees, the oldest of whom remained in Käfertal, Baden, the youngest emigrated to Landau, Russia, and one emigrated to Australia.

Anna Maria Deibel died in Rastadt on Dec. 1, 1854, age 88 (= b. ca. 1766), stated to have 1 son and 1 daughter. It is possible that she was the same person as Anna Katherine Deibel, wife of J. Georg Reis, and perhaps she moved to Rastadt later if Michael Reis was her son.

Children of Johann Georg Reis and Anna Katharina Deibel

The Reis family in Russia stemmed from two main lineages descending from J. Georg and Katharina Deibel: (1) **Konrad Reis**, (b. ca. 1793) and **Katharina Eichenlaub**, who remained in the colony of Landau, and (2) **Michael Reis** and **Katharina Oswald**, who resided in Rastadt. There is probably some confusion between these lines because both had wives named Katharina.

1. **Johann Bernhard Reis**, b. Aug. 11, 1777 Wollmesheim, moved to Käfertal, where he d. after 1793.
2. **Johann Georg Reis**, b. Dec. 11, 1779, Wollmesheim, marr. **Eliz. Frank**, Feb. 6, 1803, in Ladenburg, near Mannheim (she was b. Ladenburg/Mannheim); remained in Germany, he d. Feb. 1, 1858 Oggersheim/Ludwigshafen, Pfalz.
 - a. **Eva Reis**, b. Dec. 6, 1805 Ladenburg, d. June 10, 1804 Ladenburg.
 - b. **David Johann Reis**, b. Nov. 16, 1809 Viernheim, Hessen, d. Sept. 5, 1884.
3. **Johann David Reis**, b. May 7, 1782, Wollmesheim, a day-worker, marr. **Eva Hermann** May 21, 1811, he d. Mar. 4, 1843 Oggersheim. Children:
 - a. **Johann Reis** b. April 4, 1812 Käfertal, marr. (1) **Eliz. Kath. Weih** in 1835, then (2) **Eva Rosina Schäfer** 1859; sponsored the debt of J. Georg so he could emigrate to Australia. Johann d. Jan. 1, 1889 Käfertal.
 - b. **Johann Georg Reis** b. Dec. 30, 1813 Käfertal, marr. **Barbara Katherine Dallinger**, in 1852 emigrated to Albury, New South Wales, Australia, he d. 1883 Albury (see info below, "Reis in Australia").

c. **Maria Praxedes Reis**, b. Sept. 24, 1815 Käfertal, marr. **Peter Mohr** Jan. 24, 1839, she d. 1872 Käfertal; they had 11 children surnamed Mohr.

d. **Johann Kasper Reis**, b. Sept. 17, 1817 Käfertal, marr. **Eva Katherine Weih**. 7 children:

1) **Konrad Peter Reis**, 1844-1852.

2) **Philipp Georg Reis**, 1845-?. There is a Philip Reis married to Margaret Froehlich shown on Ancestry.com, although no source is provided.

3) **Katherine**, 1848-1878.

4) **Susanna**, 1854-1887.

5) **Peter Reis**, 1858.

6) **Anton Reis**, 1862-1893.

7) **Anna Maria**, 1864-?.

e. **Susanna Reis**, b. Aug. 8, 1819 Käfertal, marr.(1) **Georg Gleisner** (he b. 1815 Käfertal, d. 1845), then m. 2 **Jos. Herrwerth**.

4. **Maria Katherine Reis**, b. May 23, 1784 Wollmesheim, marr. **Geiger** (he b. 1781 Baden) in 1811 in Sulz, Russia. One child:

1) **Johann Geiger**, b. 1812

5. **Balthasar Reis**, b. Oct. 28, 1786 Wollmesheim, he remained in Wollmesheim or Käfertal, he d. Dec. 16, 1855, he marr. **Praxedes Schnellbach**, she b. Nov. 29, 1790 Käfertal, d. Apr. 7, 1843. Balthasar was a forest ranger, he served in Napoleon's army in 1806 - most likely a conscript. Descendants in Käfertal:

a. **Anna Katharina Reis**, b. July 10, 1815 Käfertal, d. April 7, 1843.

b. **Peter Reis**, b. July 10, 1817 Käfertal, d. April 28, 1883 Käfertal marr. **Elisabeth Leonhardt** Nov. 16, 1845. One child:

1) **Mathias Reis**, b. Oct. 12, 1847, marr. **Elisabeth Reuter** (1853-1924), he d. Nov. 7, 1902 Käfertal.

a) **Nicholas Reis**, 1873-1928 (son of Mathias), marr. **Marg. Hildenbeutel**. Children:

- **Margareta** 1898-1903.

- **Peter** 1900-1968.

- **Johann** 1902-1990.

- **Adam** 1904-1944.

- **Karl** 1912-1942.

c. **Eva Katharina Reis**, b. Sept. 9, 1819 Mannheim, d. April 8, 1847 Mannheim.

d. **Elizabeth Reis**, b. June 23, 1821 Mannheim, d. June 15, 1896 Mannheim.

e. **Johann Reis**, b. Aug. 25, 1823 Käfertal, d. Dec. 22, 1889; marr. (1) **Eliz. Fries** Mar. 14, 1848, marr. (2) **Eliz. Schmittey**. According to the Reis/Federer tree, he emigrated to St. Louis, MO in 1850-1852, but then was in Käfertal where he d. 1889. 13 children from first marr., and 2 from

second, all born in Käfertal except 3 in Missouri. This info seems unreliable.

g. Anna Maria Reis, b. April 20, 1825, d. Apr. 18, 1884 Käfertal.

f. Praxedes Reis, b. May 16, 1828, d. Feb. 7, 1886 Mannheim (note: this is a woman).

h. Balthasar Reis, b. Aug. 30, 1832, d. Sept. 14, 1832 Mannheim.

6. Maria Eva Reis b. Nov. 4, 1789 Wollmesheim, emigrated to Landau, Russia, she marr. **Daniel Bösherz** in 1812 (he b. 1788 in Schleithal, Alsace), they had 6 children with surname Bösherz:

a. Frances Bösherz, b. 1788.

b. Konrad Bösherz, b. 1813 Landau.

c. Kaspar Bösherz, b. 1816 Schleithal, Alsace (?), he marr. Anna Maria Himmelpach in Landau on Nov. 21, 1838.

d. Franziska Bösherz, b. 1817 Landau, d. 1858 Landau, marr. Jacob Peter Berger, they had a daughter Anna Maria Berger.

e. Katharina Bösherz, b. 1827 Landau.

f. Clara Bösherz, b. 1829 Landau.

7. Maria Anna Reis, b. Aug. 26, 1792, d. 1792 in infancy, Wollmesheim.

8. Georg Konrad Reis (in Russian records he is shown as **Konrad**), shown in the 1811 and 1816 Revision Lists as b. ca. 1793, Wollmesheim, emigrated to Russia in 1809 with his parents, Johann Georg Reis and Anna Katherina Deibel, d. ca. 1857 in Landau. Georg Konrad marr. April 24, 1820 to **Katharina Eichenlaub**, she was the da. of **Franz Eichenlaub**, he was b. 1766 in Neeweiler, near Weissenburg, Alsace, and **Maria Eva Daum**, she was b. 1767 Neeweiler, Alsace, d. 1838. Konrad and Katharina both died in Landau, Russia, Katharina d. Dec. 10, 1867 Landau, age 68, stated to be a widow. Her siblings were: Franziska Eichenlaub Jahner (b. 1806 in Herxheim), and Georg Eichenlaub (b. 1802-d. 1868). See below for further info on the children of Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub.

9. Michael Reis, b. Feb. 15, 1801 in Wollmesheim or Käfertal, son of **Johann Georg Reis** and **Anna Katherina Deibel**. Some internet sources show Michael as the son of Georg Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub, but this isn't possible because Georg Konrad was born ca. 1793, he would have been only ca. 8 years old when Michael was born. Michael immigrated to Landau in 1809 with parents Johann Georg and Anna Katherina, they are shown in the 1811 and 1816 Revision Lists of Landau, where Michael is clearly shown as the brother of Konrad. Michael marr. ca. 1822 to **Katharina Oswald** b. ca. 1807 in Rastadt, they are the parents of Karl Reis in Rastadt. The Oswald family stemmed from **Cyriak Oswald** who settled in Rastadt in 1809. He is shown in the 1816 R.L. as "Kiriak" Oswald 37 (=b. ca. 1779), wife **Maria** 44 (=b. 1772), with daughter **Katharina** 9 (=b. ca. 1807), from Bischweiler, Alsace. Michael Reis probably settled in Rastadt when he married Katharina Oswald sometime ca. 1822. Children:

a. **Karl Reis**, b. Aug. 17, 1822, Rastadt. All other records refer only to the name Karl. Karl married **Katharina Kroll** (see below for detailed discussion).

b. **Maria Katherine Reis**, b. July 19, 1825. She was probably Katherine Reis, Karl's sister, who died March 5, 1854 age 26 (=b. 1828), had a husband and 3 children.

c. **Maria Anna Reis**, bapt. Oct. 26, 1827 in Rastadt.

10. **Johann Reis**, b. 1812, d. 1889.

11. **Johannes George Reis**, b. 1813, d. 1883.

12. **Maria Praxedes Reis**, b. 1815, d. 1872, marr. **Mohr**.

13. **Johannes Kaspar Reis** b. 1817, d. 1884.

14. **Susanne Reiss**, b. 1819, d. 1877, marr. **Gleissner**.

Karl Reis and Katharina Kroll – discussion

The family history websites are unclear about Karl Reis, some show him as the son of Johann Georg Reis and Katharina Deibel, others show him as the son of Georg Konrad Reiss and Katharina Eichenlaub. The records summarized above show that he was the son of Michael Reis, b. 1801, who was the son of Johann Georg.

Karl Reiss served as a witness in 1833 for the marriage of Boniface Miller in Rastadt, and he served as godfather in 1834 and 1835 in Rastadt.

Karl marr. **Katharina Kroll** in Rastadt. Karl is shown in the 1862 voter registry in Rastadt. His wife, Katharina Kroll, was probably **Margaret Katherine Kroll**, b. Feb. 24, 1827 in Rastadt, the daughter of **Christian Kroll** (b. 1801, d. 1836 age 35) and **Elisabeth Wilhelm**. Karl probably died in Rastadt, internet shows ca. 1887 (1889 shown in Kath. Wacker's family tree). The reference to Karl as born in Mothern, Alsace is mistaken (stemming from Fr. Aberle's error), as is the reference to him dying in N.D. Their known children were:

1) **Ignatz Reis**, b. July 8, 1846 in Rastadt, d. 1925 in Dickinson, N.D.; marr. **Christina Sticka**. They were my great grandparents. They had 10 children (see details below).

2) **Maria Josepha Reiss**, b. 1848, died June 17, 1852, buried in Rastadt.

3) **Agnes Reis**, born Nov. 12, 1850 Rastadt, marr. **Maximilian Heck** in München, son of **Siegried Heck**.

a) **Hieronymus Heck**. His granddaughter was **Therese Heck-Cacek** (the source for this info. about her family).

4) **Anna Reis**, b. Aug. 10, 1853 Rastadt.

5) **Georg Reis**, b. ca. 1850s. The death records for Rastadt show **Georg Reis**, son of **Karl**, Georg was married to **Maria Josepha Heck** daughter of Michael Heck. They had a son, **Jacob Reis** who died July 11, 1878, age 11 days.

V. Descendants of Georg Konrad Reis (#8 above) and Katharina Eichenlaub, son of Johann Georg Reis and Katharina Deibel in Landau

Various family trees on internet show Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub as having 12 children in Russia, however there is some confusion in the trees.

Myheritage.com shows the family tree of Jörg Erdmann, which has the following information – Georg Konrad Reis b. Oct. 23, 1792 Biblis, near Starkenburg, Hessen, he d. May 5, 1868 in Biblis. His parents were Georg Konrad Reis and Apollonia Deutsch. His siblings were Martin, Johann, Georg, Elisabeth, Lorenz, Apollonia, and Katharina. He marr. Anna Katherine Eichenlaub, they had 15 children: Anna Katharine Kunigunda, Johann, Anna Maria, Peter, Valentin, Katharine, Konrad, Margaret, Eva, Maria Sophia, Katherine, Karl, Daniel, Barbara, and Georg Jacob. According to this family tree, Georg Konrad Reis didn't emigrate to Russia, and he died in Biblis, Hessen.

However, the 1839 R.L. in Landau clearly shows Georg Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub, they had children Daniel, Peter, Jacob, Margaret, Katharina, Barbara, and Johann. Other records show:

a. **Anna Maria Reis**, b. April 30, 1820 Landau, marr. May 10, 1842 to **Valentin Schmitt** (he b. Oct. 5, 1815 – d. 1903), she d. Feb. 23, 1890 Landau. They had 5 children surname Schmitt (all born in Landau between 1842 to 1855).

b. **Johann Reis**, b. April 30, 1820 (same birth year above, was he a twin to Anna Maria above?) in Landau; marr. **Anna Margaret Koppel** (b. Feb. 14, 1815-1869); he d. Aug. 28, 1887 Biblis (?). The Reis/Federer tree also shows him as arriving in New York June 1, 1848. This also conflicts with the Biblis location. Three Children:

1) **Adam Reis**, b. Feb. 16, 1851. D. Jan 26, 1852 Biblis (?).

2) **Konrad Reis**, b. June 26, 1856.

3) **Margaret Reis**, b. Nov. 20, 1852, d. Apr. 9, 1905 (Biblis?); marr. Platz.

c. **Daniel Reiss**, b. ca. 1821 (the Reis/Federer tree shows ca. 1822 in Landau). He was godfather for the Jahner family in 1861, the Stark family in 1863, and the Stolz family in 1864 in Landau. He had one known daughter:

- **Franziska Reis**, b. Aug. 23, 1880. The Reis/Federer tree shows her arriving in USA in 1902, in the 1910 census in Oliver, N.D., and she d. there April 5, 1936. She marr. Frank Metz (he b. Nov. 15, 1877 Russia, d. Jan 2, 1954 N.D. They had 8 children, surname Metz/Matz.

d. **Valentin Reis**, b. Sept. 24, 1822 Landau, d. June 21 1853 Landau.

e. **Peter Reis**, b. ca. 1823 Landau, d. June 4, 1870 age 48. MyHeritage.com shows Peter as b. Jan. 26, 1821. He marr. **Franziska Schöner** (she b. 1823 Landau, d. 1891 Landau, da. of **Anton Schöner** 1803 and **Katharina Walter** 1805). 7 children:

1) **Jakob Reis**, b. Feb. 02, 1854 (MyHeritage.com shows he as b. Feb. 25, 1852, the Reis/Federer tree him as b. 1849), he d. Nov. 24, 1918 Weyburn, Sask.; marr. 1881 **Theresa Schwartz** (she b. 1862 Odessa, d. Weyburn). They emig. to Weyburn, Saskatchewan June 15, 1912 with 6 children (note that Vernon Reis and Bernie Ries give different info for the number of children):

a) **Theresa Reis**, b. ca. 1862.

b) **Joseph Reis**, b. ca. 1876.

c) **Wilhelmina Reis**, b. ca. 1882, d. Weyburn.

d) **Peter James Reis**, b. Mar. 1, 1884 Landau, d. Dec. 8, 1957 Silverton, Oregon; marr. (1) **Rose Burghardt** b. 1887 Russia, marr. (2) **Emma Emerentia Andreas** (b. Feb. 14, 1891 Odessa, d. May 23, 1979 Portland, OR). First two children from marr. (1):

- **Christopher Peter Reis**, b. Jan. 17, 1910 Russia, d. May 1972 Gervais, OR.

- **Ralph Reis**, b. Feb. 5, 1916 Weyburn, d. Feb. 13, 2008 Salem, OR.

- **Leo Reis**, b. ca. 1917 Sask., d. Apr. 1, 1940 Gervais, OR.

- **Christina Reis**, b. ca. 1921 OR, resided Shaw, OR, d. Apr. 1, 1940 Gervais.

- **Joe Reis**, b. ca. 1921 Sask., resided Gervais, Or.

- **Rose Marie Reis**, b. ca. 1928, resided Gervais.

e) **Katharina Reis**, b. ca. 1886.

f) **Emilia Reis**, b. ca. 1890.

g) **Christian "Ries"**, b. March 10, 1893, marr. Nov. 10, 1919 in Mandan N.D. **Monica Federer** (b. 1896 da. of Karl Ferderer and Magd. Martian), resided in Glen Ullin, North Dakota, changed spelling of his surname. Children:

- **Frank P. Ries**, b. July 7, 1920 Mandan.

- **Joseph Jacob Carl Ries**, b. May 8, 1922. Da:

- **Bernie Ries**.

- **Anna Maria Ries**, Nov. 27, 1923 Morton county, d. Sept. 28, 1925.

h) **Rosa Reis**, b. ca. 1894

i) **Johann Reis**, b. ca. 1899

j) **Katharine Reis**, b. ca. 1900.

2) **Joseph Reis**, b. Jan. 18, 1846 Landau, d. 1870 in Landau in 1869, son of Peter Reis and Franziska Schöner. He marr. **Magdalena (Helen) Kary** (she b. June 10, 1849, d. Jan. 11, 1929 in Jamestown, N.D.).

a) **Raphael Reis**, b. July 8, 1877, d. July 20, 1943 Tacoma WA; marr. **Audenia (Ida) Kautzmann** (b. Jan. 12, 1878, d. 1958

Tacoma); emigrated to USA in 1912. In 1878 he and a group of Landauers traveled ca. 700 miles to Alexyva, which was about 70 miles southeast of the capital city of Stavropol in the north Caucasus where land was available. He lived in the village of Blagodarnolje near Alexjewka. These villages were within ca. 40 mile radius of Stavropol. They left via the port of Bremen and arrived in the USA on Dec. 14, 1912, and settled in Wells County, N.D., where they were wheat farmers. By 1913 most of the German families had left Alexyvka for the USA, Canada, and South America. In Russia they were teamsters and had a government mail route. They were known for their expertise with horses. (Info from Vernon Reis).

Raphael and Audenia (Ida) had 7 children:

- **Joseph** Reis, b. July 8, 1890 Blagodarnyj/Stavropol Russia, d. Oct. 1965 Oakland, CA. He marr. Agatha Berger 1921.
- **John**, b. Feb. 2, 1902 Alexjewka, d. May 26, 1989 Tacoma, WA.
- **Margaret** b. April 18, 1905 Alexjewka, d. Jan 10, 1960 Cross Lake, MN.
- **Marcus T.** b. July 29, 1908 alexjewka, d. Sept. 30, 1990 Vancouver, WA.
- **Jacob** b. July 1, 1910 Alexjewka, d. Portland OR.
- **Rosemary** b. May 14, 1916 Heaton ND, d. June 25, 1980 Riverside, CA.
- **Anthony** b. July 29, 1918 Harvey N.D., d. June 4, 1991 Tacoma, WA.

b) Katharina Reis, b. April 4, 1878 Landau, d. Nov. 16, 1935 Harvey N.D., daughter of Joseph Reis and Magdalena Kary; she marr. (1) **Emil Wolf** b. 1879-; marr. (2) **Conrad Wagner** b. Dec. 12, 1870 Landau, d. June 9, 1930 Harvey, N.D. One child:

- **John Wagner**, b. Sept. 21, 1893 Russia, d. Dec. 1965 N.D. (note: he is not my relative).

c) Veronica Reis, b. Nov. 8, 1879 Landau, d. Oct. 21, 1931 Mandan, ND; marr. **Ralph Fleck** (b. 1878-). 8 Children surname Fleck.

d) Joseph Reis, b. July 6, 1882 Landau, d. Landau.

e) Joseph Reis, b. April 27, 1885 Landau, d. Jan. 12, 1938 Yakima, WA. (This second Joseph Reis is shown in the Reis/Ferderer tree?).

f) **Emilia Reis.** No info.

(Children of Peter Reis and Franziska Schöner, cont.)

3) **Maria Eva Reis**, b. July 6, 1859 Landau (MyHeritage.com shows her as b. June 18, 1862), d. Jan 13, 1943 Mandan, N.D., daughter of Peter Reis and Franziska Schöner. She marr. **Jacob Koch** (he b. 1858, d. 1928) in Landau. In N.D. in 1914. 7 children with surname Koch all b. in Russia.

4) **Appollonia Reis**, b. Dec. 2, 1863, d. Feb. 8, 1864, age 2 mos, Landau.

5) **Daniel Reis**, b. 1856 Landau, d. before 1891. Two known children:

a) **Franziska Reis**, b. Aug. 23, 1880 Russia, to USA 1902-03, resided Oliver, N.D. 1910; marr. **Frank J. Matz** (he b. 1877, d. Jan. 2, 1954 N.D.). 8 children with surname Matz.

b) **Eleanore Reis**, b. 1883.

6) **Maria Anna Reis**, b. Sept. 1, 1868 (MyHeritage.com shows her as b. Sept. 21, 1868), d. May 3, 1945.

7) **Franziska (Frances) Reis**, b. 1849 Landau, marr. **Michael Fischer** (b. 1848 Landau), 6 children surname Fischer.

- **Jakob Fischer**, d. in Landau Aug. 16, 1870. age 9 mos; he is shown in the Landau records.

(Children of Georg Konrad Reis and Katharina Eichenlaub, cont.)

f. **Konrad Reiss**, b. Dec. 6, 1827 Landau, d. Dec. 14, 1886; his place in the family is tentative, likely some confusion with his father. Internet sources show him marr. to **Appollonia Bruckman** (she b. Dec. 10, 1835 in Bürstadt/Bergstrasse/Hessen, d. May 29, 1895 in Biblis?). The children of Konrad Reiss and Appollonia:

1) **Eva Reis**, b. Dec. 2, 1857 Biblis (?), to Baltimore May 1866 (?).

2) **Heinrich Reis**, b. Aug. 16, 1859 Biblis (?), d. Jan. 8, 1890 Biblis (?), marr. 1880 **Nina Ries** (b. 1860 Germany). 2 children:

a) **Gertie Ries**, b. Sept 1882.

b) **William Ries**, b. Aug. 1884 Germany.

3) **Anna Maria Reis**, b. June 28, 1861 Biblis (?), marr. **Josef Kappel** (b. Oct. 23, 1884 Biblis), d. Apr. 12, 1936 Biblis (?). One child:

a) **Heinrich Kappel** 1885.

4) **Valentin Reis**, b. Nov. 29, 1863 Biblis, marr. Feb. 14, 1892 **Clara Wentzel** in Biblis. 5 children:

a) **Barbara Reis**, Jan. 14, 1893.

b) **Karl Theodor Reis**, b. July 30, 1894 Biblis, d. April 26, 1963 Mannheim.

c) **Heinrich Reis**, b. Nov. 14, 1895 Biblis, d. Feb. 23, 1897
Biblis.

d) **Franz Peter Reis**, b. Jan. 27, 1900 Biblis, d. July 27, 1900
Biblis.

e) **Josef Reis**, b. Feb. 9, 1902 Brzezany, Lvov, Ukraine [why
would Valentin Reis move to Ukraine in 1902?].

5) **Franz Peter Reis**, b. Jan. 9, 1866.

6) **Apollonia Reis**, b. July 7, 1868.

g. **Margaret Reis**, b. Dec. 6, 1827 Landau (same birthdate, twin to Konrad
above?, shown on MyHeritage.com as b. June 12, 1827 in Biblis, dau. of
Georg Konrad Reiss and Anna Katherina Eichenlaub, she is stated in the
Landau records to be the da. of Konrad Reiss. She marr. **Michael
Walliser**, b. ca. 1826, he d. Oct. 20, 1866 age 40. Three known children, all
born in Landau:

1) **Josef Walliser**, b. Sept. 27, 1861. Josef Reis was godfather.

2) **Georg Walliser**, b. June 29, 1863. **Georg Reiss** was godfather.

3) **Michael Walliser**, b. 1864, d. Dec. 20, 1866 at age 1 year 9
months.

Margaret remarried to **Michael Voltz**, they had one son:

4) **Michael Voltz** b. May 18, 1865 in Sulz.

h. **Katharina Reiss**, b. ca. 1829, she is shown in the 1839/40 census for
Landau and she is also stated in the Landau records to be the da. of
Konrad Reiss, she d. 1877 Landau. She marr. **Konrad Ehrhardt** (b. Dec. 15,
1826 Landau), at least 4 children with surname Ehrhardt:

1) **Josef Ehrhardt**, b. 1850

2) **Adam Ehrhardt**, b. Nov. 1, 1861.

3) **Christina Ehrhardt**, b. April 15, 1863.

4) **Anton Ehrhardt**, b. Oct. 13, 1865.

i. **Eva Reiss**, b. Sept. 28, 1830 Landau (Biblis ?), d. Dec. 3, 1887 (Biblis ?),
marr. April 30, 1831 **Johann Metz** (he b. April 11, 1831, d. Nov. 11, 1891
Biblis?, 1870 resided in Cinncinatti?). 7 Children surname Metz. The first,
Anna b. 1856 Pennsylvania, all others b. in Pennsylvania until Anna Maria
Metz b. 1865 Biblis, then Emma b. 1869 Pennsylvania. These seems like
automatic matches generated by Ancestry.com:

j. **Barbara Reiss**, b. and bapt. May 18, 1834 in Landau, she, marr. **Josef
Sutter** (shown in the Landau records, residing in Sulz). Three known
children:

1) **Valentin Reiss**, b. July 27, 1861.

2) **Marianna Reiss**, b. June 9, 1864.

3) **Regina Reiss**, b. June 19, 1866.

k. **Georg Jacob Reiss**, b. April 7, 1837 and bapt. April 9, 1837 in Landau. There is also a record showing b. May 17, 1837. Georg is shown in the 1839/40 Revision List as **Jacob** b. ca. 1838, son of **Konrad Reis** and **Katharina Eichenlaub**. The baptismal records in Landau in 1862 refer him as Georg Jacob Reiss and his wife, **Christina Moser**, then a later record in 1862 refers to him as "Georg Jacovlev" and his wife Christina Moser. The "-lev" suffix means "son of," but in this context it was referring to "the son of Georg Jacob," and not to "Jacob son of Georg." There are 8 children of Georg and Christina shown in the various trees:³⁹

- 1) **Margaret Reis**, b. ca. 1859 Landau, d. Hegowka, Russia.
- 2) **Konrad Reis**, b. Nov. 11, 1862 Landau, d. Feb. 14, 1866 Landau, age 3 yrs 3 mos.
- 3) **Johann Reis** b. May 18, 1865, d. Nov. 10, 1944 Landau.
- 4) **Magdalena Reiss**, marr. **Augustin Makelki**. They had one son, **Georg Jacob Makelki** Nov. 8, 1862, **Jacob Reis** was the godfather.
- 5) **Martin Reis**, b. Jan. 9, 1870, d. Aug. 13, 1944. He marr. **Karoline Morschel** b. 1870 Speier, d. 1944 Landau.). Children of Martin:
 - **Anna Reis**, b. Nov. 21, 1900. The *Einwanderungs Zentrum* (EWZ, or Immigration Center) Form 967 302 in 1944 reports **Anna Reis**, born Nov. 21, 1900 in Landau. Her parents were **Martin Reis**, b. 1870 in Landau and **Karoline Morschel**, b. 1870 in Speier. Anna's husband, **Johann Weinberger**, born Feb. 27, 1899 in Pschinana, had been transported to a work camp by the Soviets ("*Verschleppt*"). She had a son, **Adolf**, from a previous marriage, and two children, **Klementine** and **Johann Weinberger**, from her current marriage.
 - **Eugenie Reis**, b. Aug. 17, 1892, d. 1968 St. Louis, MO (?).
 - **Nicodemus Reis**, b. Dec. 29, 1894 Landau, to Canada Mar. 7, 1913, resided in Dickinson, N.D. (?).
 - **Franz Reis**, b. Aug. 10, 1896 Friedensdorf, Russia, d. Mar. 15, 1933; marr. **Franziska Messer** 1897-1982. Son of **Franz Andreas Reis**, b. Oct. 22, 1932, d. Oct. 30, 2003.
 - **Klemens Reis**, b. June 10, 1903 Ljubjanka/Odessa.
- 6) **Appolonia Reis**, b. 1872 Landau.
- 7) **Nikodemus Reis**, b. June 18, 1878; marr. **Monica Fichtner**.

³⁹ Family information found at: www.gress.org/home/FamilyTree/GressAttempt1/NameIndex.

- 8) **Johann Reis**, b. Sept. 21, 1882 Landau, d. before Nov. 10, 1944 Landau; marr. Mathilda Dietrich. Children:
- **Mathilda Reis.**
 - **Paula Reis.**
 - **Rafael Reis.**

Unknown Persons with Reis Surname in Landau, Speier, and Rastadt

The Rastadt death records show that **Katherina Reiss** died March 5, 1854, age 26 (= b. 1828), she had a husband and 3 children. There is no certain match for her, but the closest is Maria Katherine Reis b. July 19, 1825, daughter of Michael Reis. Michael's wife, Katharina Oswald, was b. ca. 1807 so she wasn't as close a match in birth year.

Konrad Reis is shown in the 1811 Russian census of Speier, he was age 49 (=born ca. 1762), marr. to **Katherine** age 35 (=b. ca. 1776), with sons:

1. **Martin Reis** age 9 (=b. ca. 1802/3).
2. **Friedrich Reis** age 3 (=b. ca. 1808/09).

This family also came from Wollmesheim, Pfalz. This Konrad differs by only ca. 8 years from **J. Georg**, so probably he was a brother who had served as a godfather for J. Georg's son, Konrad, thereby imparting his name. Konrad Reis is not shown in any of the later records for Speier, nor is there any other occurrence of the surname Reis in Speier. **Martin Reiss**, presumably born in the early 1800s, married **Margaret Bär** in March 1823 in Speier.

It is possible that Konrad's son, **Martin Reis**, moved to Landau. The Landau records in the 1860s refer to **Margaret Reis**, stated to be the da. of **Martin Reiss** (not to be confused with Margaret Reis the da. of **Konrad and Katharina Eichenlaub**). She was b. ca. 1823, died Oct. 28, 1905, age 82. Her husband, **Joseph Braxmeier** was born ca. 1814, and he died June 23, 1889 age 75. Resided in Sulz. Their children:

1. **Jacob Braxmeier** b. May 30, 1866.
2. **Genoveve Braxmeier**, b. Oct. 1, 1863, d. Oct. 7, 1863, age 7 days.

Martin Reiss b. ca. 1802 shown in Speier in 1811 is the only person in the records who could have been the father to Margaret in the 1820s. If this is a real link, it indicates that there were two related lineages of the Reiss family in Landau, both stemming from Wollmesheim, Pfalz.

Christina Reiss married to **Philipp Godin (Gotting?)** is shown in the Landau records. They had a daughter Anna Godin born Oct. 8, 1866 in Speier.

Edward Reiss and **Wilhelmina Lewin** are shown in the Landau records. They had a daughter, **Josefina Emilia Reiss**, who died age 5, on July 31, 1861. It is unknown how Edward Reiss fits into the family tree. The surname Lewin is Jewish, so it is possible that Edward and/or his wife came from outside the Landau community.

Josef Reis is mentioned in the death records for Rastadt in 1920. His daughter **Elisabeth**, born Aug. 6, 1919 died Nov. 27, 1920, 1 year old.

There are two early marriage records for members of the Reis family in Selz (source: Odessa State Archive 628-1-2):

Sebastian Reis from Selz married Katharine Layer from the colony of Elsass on January 29, 1817. One of the witnesses was Balthasar Eichenlaub.

Johann Philipp Reis from Selz married Katherine Schiffmacher from Elsass on January 27, 1819.

There is also a record for **Maria Reis** who was born in the colony Selz in 1908, the daughter of **Karl Reis**. On March 21, 1945 she was sentenced to 5 years of "corrective labor," and later she was noted to be "rehabilitated."

Since she was born in 1908 her father Karl Reis was likely born in the 1880s and he was probably not related to Ignatz Reis's father, Karl, born in the 1820s. The colony Selz was located in the Kutschurgan district.

Reis family in North Dakota, Descendants of Ignatz Reis - my branch of the Reis family

My branch of the family stems from **Karl Reis** who married **Katherina Kroll** in Rastadt. Karl's name appears on the voter registry for Rastadt in 1862, and he is shown in the baptismal records as the father of **Ignatz Reis**, as well as in Fr. Aberle's *Pioneers and Their Sons*. Some family trees on Ancestry.com refer to Karl Reis as born 1824, son of Konrad Reis and Katherine Eichenlaub, who married Katharine "Krell," and he died in 1887. As we have seen above, the baptismal records show that Karl Reis was b. Aug. 17, 1822, son of Michael Reis and Katharina Oswald. There is also erroneous information about Karl's birthplace on internet trees - he is stated to be born in "Mothern, Alsace." As was discussed earlier in this chronicle, the link with Mothern is a mistake derived from Fr. Aberle's misreading of Fr. Konrad Keller's book. It also shows Karl Reis as dying in 1887 in North Dakota, which is highly unlikely because there is no record showing Karl's immigration to the USA and Ignatz surely would have had some contact with his father.

Ignatz Reis was born July 8, 1846 (Julian date) in Rastadt, the son of **Karl Reis** and **Katherine Kroll**. Her surname is misspelled in some family trees on Ancestry.com as "Krell," and one source spells it as "Groll." These variant spellings are based on how the surname was pronounced in German dialect. Katherine Kroll may have been Margaret Katherine Kroll, born Feb. 24, 1827, the daughter of **Christian or Christopher**

Kroll, he b. 1801, d. 1836 age 35, married to **Elisabeth Wilhelm** in Rastadt.⁴⁰ Ignatz died on Nov. 18, 1925, Dickinson, N.D., his death record states "strangulation" from hernia. He marr. c. 1865 **Christina Sticka**, born Jan. 1, 1848 in Rastadt, she d. Nov. 7, 1934 Dickinson of colon cancer, her fa. was **Gregor Sticka**, the son of **Ludwig Stück** (Stückar/Sticka), who settled in Rastadt in 1813. Ignatz and Christina apparently had 11 children, although one of them (Maria Eva, born Aug. 31, 1869) apparently died in childhood.

All of their children were born in Rastadt and came with them to North Dakota. **Georg Reis**, son of **Karl**, presumably Ignatz's brother, also accompanied him on the same ship. Georg Reis marr. **Maria Josepha Heck**, da. of Ignatz Heck, their son **Jacob** d. July 11, 1878, age 6 months.

Ignatz and Katharina's children were:

1. **Peter Reis**, born Apr. 6, 1867, baptized April 11, Rastadt, d: Aug. 10 or 19, 1934 Belfield, ND; marr.1 Sept. 6, 1891 to **Sophie Ehrmentraut** she born Dec. 24, 1871 (1872?) in Rastadt, she d: June 8, 1910. In 1892, Peter and his wife emigrated to North Dakota, with his parents.⁴¹ Peter's marr.2 June 8, 1910 in Dickinson to **Magdalena Martian/Merdian**, the widow of **Franz Frank**, she was born Mar. 29, 1881 Rastadt, d: Feb. 10, 1970 Belfield, N.D. 7 children from marr.1 (all born in North Dakota):

a. **Florentine**, born July 6, 1894, marr. **Adam Jordan**.

b. **Philomena**, born May 17, 1898, marr. **Nick Reiss** (no relative). There was a Nick Reis marr. to **Wilhelmina** ("Minna") who lived near Richardton, N.D., they may be the same couple. The Richardton churchbook reports the following:

1) **Rosemary Reis**, b. Jan. 8, 1918.

2) **Erwin Joseph Reis**, b. April 21, 1923.

3) **Bernell Nickodemus Reis**, b. Oct. 7, 1925.

4) **Archibald Reis**, b. Nov. 2, 1934.

5) **Elmer Frederick Reis**, b. April 5, 1931.

c. **Rose**, born July 27, 1900, m.1 **Carl Ehli**, then m.2 **Edwin Hanson**.

d. **Frank**, born April 25, 1902.

e. **Emilia**, born Sept. 7, 1903, marr. **Peter Hecker**.

f. **Anton (Tony)**, born Nov. 9, 1905, Dickinson; marr. **Rose Frank**.

g. **Harry**, born Oct. 10, 1907.

Peter had 6 children from marr. 2:

h. **Louis Anton "Ries"**, born Aug. 3, 1911, Dickinson; d. Aug. 21, 1982

Yakima, WA; marr. July 28, 1936 Belfield, N.D., marr. Anna Marie Hecker,

⁴⁰ Christian Kroll's birth and death dates are derived from Tiraspol Consistory records, as is the birth date for his daughter Margaret Katherina.

⁴¹ Peter Reis's homestead was Sec. 20-140-96, and he also bought additional land. Peter, Sophie, Florentina, and Philomena are shown in the 1900 U.S. census residing in Township 140, R. 96.

b. Mar. 9, 1915 Belfield, N.D. Louis was close friends with my father, John Reis-Wagner; they were first-cousins, both born in 1911, and raised near each other outside Dickinson. Daughter:

1) **Marilyn Kay Ries**, b. July 20, 1943 Yakima, WA; marr. **Walter R. Hunt**, May 11, 1963 Yakima. She died 1989/1990. Three children:

a) **Dennis Hunt**.

b) **Christina Hunt**.

c) **Michele Hunt**.

i. **Catherine**, born May 9, 1916, marr. **Martin Klein**.

j. **Nick**, born Jan. 8, 1918.

k. **Thomas**, born July 20, 1920 (triplets).

l. **Leona**, born July 20, 1920 (triplets), m1: **Philip Obrigewitsch**, then m2: **Kasper Ott**.

m. **Eleanor**, born July 20, 1920 (triplets), marr. **Kaspar Ott**.

2. **Maria Eva Reis**, born Aug. 31, 1869 in Rastadt. She is shown in the baptismal records but apparently she died in childhood, there is no other reference to her. Her godparents were Franz and Maria Eva Sticka.

3.& 4. **Franz** and **Joseph Reis**, twins born 1871 in Rastadt.

5. **John Reis**, born Aug. 20, 1872 in Rastadt (note: Ancestry.com shows John as born in both Rastadt and Speier, the latter is likely a mistake from Fr. Aberle's family history, and also a confusion with Barbara Schlosser his wife), John came to North Dakota with his parents in 1892,⁴² d: Nov. 30, 1913 Dickinson, marr. Nov. 16, 1896 Glen Ullin, N.D. to **Barbara Schlosser**, b: Feb. 29, 1876 Speier, d. 1961 Dickinson. They had 10 children:

a. **Catharine**, born Oct. 8, 1897 Dickinson, marr. **Leonard Mack**, Dickinson.

b. **Louis F. "Rice"**, born Dec. 28, 1898, marr. **Monica Hecker**, Dickinson Jan. 16, 1923, d. Sept. 2, 1985 Dickinson.

1) **Walter**, b. Nov. 11, 1923, marr. Carol Jensen, in Kildeer.

2) **Dorothy**, b. Feb. 25, 1925, marr. Delmont Gaylen, near Dunn Center.

c. **M. Beatrice (Beata)**, born Feb. 25, 1900 Dickinson, marr. **John Boespflug**, Glendive, MT.

d. **Elizabeth**, born Dec. 29, 1901, marr. **Peter "Groll" (Kroll)**, Laurel, MT.

e. **Leo**, born May 11, 1903 Dickinson, marr. **Katie Boehm**, at Yakima, WA.

f. **Rose Mary**, born Jan. 29, 1905, marr. **Louis Nichols**, Glendive, MT, she d. Sept. 25, 1968 Glendive.

g. **Joseph**, born Mar. 19, 1907 Dickinson, marr. **Mary Metz**; he d. Oct. 5, 1955 motorscooter accident Yakima, WA.

⁴² John Reiss's homestead was Sec. 18-140-96.

h. Pauline, born Sept. 10, 1909 Dickinson, marr. **Christ Butsch**, Dickinson, she d. Aug. 1, 1986 Dickinson.

i. Christine, born July 26, 1911 Dickinson, marr. **Emil Palm**, Yakima, WA, (he was b. Nov. 2, 1902 in "Bann," Germany; she d. april 22, 2002 Yakima. They had 5 children, surname Palm.

1) **Shirley N. Dennis** is a daughter.

j. Edward, born Oct. 2, 1913 Dickinson, d. 1974 Dunn Center.

6. Elizabeth Reis, b. July 12, 1875 Rastadt, she died June, 1952; marr. in 1892 **Ludwig Metz** b. Sept. 28, 1866 Rastadt, d. Jan. 26, 1919 Dickinson. They had 10 children:

a. Mary Josepha Metz, b. May 14, 1893, d. 1894.

b. John Metz, b. March 9, 1895, d. 1968; marr. **Margaret**.

c. Christina Metz, b. Jan. 17, 1897, d. 1977.

d. Anna Metz (sister Ruth), b. Feb. 15, 1899, d. 1996.

e. Catherine Metz, b. Dec. 19, 1900, d. 1984.

f. Barbara Metz, b. July 3, 1902, d. 1982.

g. Rose Metz, b. Oct. 23, 1903, d. 1984.

h. Elizabeth Metz, b. April 1, 1907, d. 1943.

i. Mary Ann Metz, b. July 23, 1905, d. 1983.

j. Henry Metz, b. Oct. 16, 1908, d. 1920.

7. Katherina Reis, born July 19, 1875 Rastadt, died Feb. 27, 1930 Dickinson spinal meningitis; marr. **Adam Wagner** Jan. 22, 1894 (my grandparents).

Ten children:

a. Franz (Frank) Wagner, born Jan. 7, 1895 (or Jan. 1?), Dickinson, N.D.; died July 8, 1969 of heart attack, Laurel, MT. He worked at the railroad. Marr. **Elizabeth Boehm**, sister of John Boehm. 15 Children (not in birth order):

1) **Adam** and **Eve**, twins who died at birth.

2) **Caroline**, in childhood of diptheria.

3) **Edward G.**, born Dec. 6, 1919; resided in Dickinson, died April 15, 1982.

a) **James**, born Aug. 10, 1956, died aug. 22, 1972 car accident.

4) **Clara ("Penny")**.

5) **Katherine ("Kay")**. Died Sept. 19, 1985, age 60. Marr.

Richard Scribner. 5 boys:

a) **Richard (Ricky)**, born Dec. 30, 1945

b) **Kenny**

c) **James**

d) **Patrick**

e) **Douglas**

6) **George**, marr. JoAnne, resided Laurel, MT.

7) **Herman**, resided Boise, ID.

- 8) **Marie ("Cody")**, marr. **Lenny Jones**, resided San Mateo, CA.
- 9) **Angeline**
- 10) **Rita**
- 11) **Lorraine**
- 12) **Virginia**
- 13) **Martha**, resided **Daytona Beach, FL.**
- 14) **Leo**

b. Ottilia (Tillie) Wagner, born Nov. 1896; died May 9, 1944 of heart attack (shortly after my birth). Marr. **Frank Schlosser**, Mott, N.D.
7 children:

- 1) **Albert**
- 2) **Clifford**

c. Barbara Wagner, born Oct. 2, 1898; died Aug. 21, 1985 in Dickinson, N.D., age 87. Marr. **John Boehm**. They lived on a farm outside Dickinson and John worked on the railroad. 4 children:

- 1) **Florence**, born May 29, 1919, marr. to Lloyd Suther.
- 2) **Theodore ("Teddy")**, born Dec. 10, 1920.
- 3) **Leona**, born Sept. 7, 1924, marr. to Herman Harding. Died of cancer.
- 4) **Ervin**, born Nov. 12, 1930.

d. Anna Wagner, born Aug. 28, 1900, Dickinson, N.D.; died Dec. 13, 1971 of heart attack, Mandan, N.D.; buried in St. Vincent's cemetery, Mott, N.D., age 71. Marr (1) Nov. 6, 1920 to **Alex Roll**. Had about 7 children, resided New Leipzig, ND. He was blind from injuries in World War II; he died of "dropsy" Sept. 30, 1948 in Mott, N.D. Anna remarried to **John Roll**, his cousin, Oct. 6, 1949. No children from M(2).

e. Margaret K. Wagner, born Sept. 2, 1902 (or Sept. 13, 1902?); died Nov. 8, 1962 of cancer, age 60. Marr. **Philip Bosch**, resided in Laurel, MT.
Children:

- 1) **Raymond**
- 2) **Frederick ("Freddy")**.

e. Joseph Wagner, born Sept. 12, 1904; died Nov. 1931 of ruptured stomach ulcer at age 27, was working in the fields and it turned into peritonitis. Marr. **Helen Martian** (also spelled "Martjan"). 3 children:

- 1) **Eileen.**
- 2) **Timmy**
- 3) **Margie**

f. Michael Wagner, born Oct. 22, 1906; died Nov. 27, 1960 heart attack. Marr. **Betty Koch** from Dickinson, N.D. Mike was a tire salesman. They had 2 children:

- 1) boy, died infancy.
- 2) **Dolores**. Marr. **Joe Lewis** in Seattle, airplane mechanic. 2 boys.

- g. **Marian ("Marie") Wagner**, born Mar. 3, 1909; died 1980. Marr. **Anton (Tony) Kilwein**, lived in Portland, OR. Two children:
- 1) **Clarence Kilwein**, marr. **Rosa Gaspari**.
 - 2) **Richard Kilwein**, marr. **Bonnie Pettit**.
- h. **John Michael Wagner** born Dec. 16, 1911 Dickinson, N.D.; died May 17, 1983, Portland, OR, age 71. Marr. Dec. 16, 1936, Billings, MT to **Anna Landeis**, born Aug. 26, 1915, Ryegate, MT; she died Jan. 3, 2000 Salem, OR, age 84.
- 3 children:
- 1) **Lawrence Wagner**, born Aug. 21, 1937, Billings, MT; marr. Dorothy Allen; he died Feb. 11, 2000, age 62. 1 child:
 - a) **Michael John**, born Oct. 18, 1964.
 - 2) **Kenneth Wagner**, born Sept. 3, 1940 Billings, MT; died Sept. 30, 1994, Portland, OR, age 54. No children.
 - 3) **Roland Wagner** (the author of this study), born May 1, 1944, Oregon City, OR. Marr. Donice Anne Prophet. One child:
 - a) **Daniel Wagner**, July 7, 1972; marr. **Rene Munoz**. One child:
 - **David Mathew Wagner**, born Nov. 6, 2008.
- i. **James (Jimmy) Wagner**, born Feb. 3, 1917; died July 27, 1949 auto accident. Marr. Helen Heinrich. 2 children:
- 1) **Joanne**. Married about 4 times.
 - 2) **Jerry**. Born Nov. 13, 1937. Marr. **Marlene Fitterer** from North Dakota. He was a realtor in Billings, MT.
8. **Jacob (Jack) Reis**, born Mar. 24, 1878 Rastadt, died 1964-65; marr. Oct. 28, 1900 **Elizabeth Meyer**, b. 1881 München; homesteaded near New England, N.D. in 1901, then Great Falls, MT.
- a. **John**, b. Feb. 24, 1902 Stark City, N.D., m1. **Magdalena Emter**, then m2. **Barbara Grensteiner**; he d. Aug. 1963.
 - b. **Nicolaus**, b. Sept. 30, 1903, Dickinson, N.D., marr. **Margaret Ehlis**, d. Jan. 4, 1969, Burleigh City, N.D.
 - c. **Joseph**, b. 1905 North Dakota, marr. **Lena Hoffman**, died 1967 Dickinson.
 - d. **Frank**, b. Nov. 1910, d. before Jan. 1920; a child died young.
 - e. **Anton (Tony)**, b. July 30, 1912, marr. **Christine Flatt**, d. Oct. 1994 Ontario, OR.
 - f. **Jacob**, b. Aug. 31, 1914 Hettinger City, N.D., m1. **Frances Messer**, and m2. **Luzia Mohr**, d. Mar. 1977, Great Falls, Mt.
 - g. **Frank**, born Sept. 6, 1919 North Dakota, marr. **Emma Paul**, d. Aug. 1971.
 - h. child, died young.
9. **Joseph Reis**, born Apr. 1881 Rastadt; lived in New England, N.D.

10. Otilia (Tillie) Reis, born Apr. 1882 Rastadt; marr. **Adam Schlosser**, then later by 1934 she was married a man surnamed **Fleckenstein** and moved to Dodge, N.D.

11. Anna Reis, born Jan. 1884 Rastadt, d. 1918; marr. **Mike Schoch**.

12. Anna Maria (Mary) Reis, born Nov. 1885 Rastadt; marr. **William Bahn**.

13. Thomas James Reis, born Dec. 25, 1887 Rastadt; marr. Jan. 31, 1911 to **Katherine Fried** (da. of Philip Fried and Katherine Schmidt), a cousin to Joachim Boehm; they resided in Mandan, N.D. They couldn't have children so they adopted a son.

a. **Tim**, their adopted son, in Kamiah, Idaho.

There was also one Reis family in the colony of München, shown on the 1920 list of landholders:

Joseph Reis 23 (=b. ca. 1897), son of **Anton**, wife **Salomea** 24 (=b. ca. 1896), daughter: **Elisabeth** 1. His relationship is uncertain.

The Reis family in Australia⁴³

The unstable years of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars were followed by the Revolution of 1848 in Germany, and also by a series of poor harvests in the following years. Consequently, there were various waves of emigration fever that gripped the population of southwestern Germany. In the first decade of the 19th century the main target of the emigrees was to new German colonies that were established by Tsar Alexander I. in 1809 along the north shore of the Black Sea. Others who remained in Käfertal later emigrated to Australia in 1852. That year the number of emigrants from Baden rose to 14,366, 118 of them from Käfertal.

The story of the emigration of the Reis family to Australia has been told in detail by a descendent, Charles Reis, and his narrative is available on internet.⁴⁴ I will provide only a brief summary, with the names, dates, and descendancies that he shows.

Johann Georg Reis (1813-1883), the son of J. David (1782-1843), left Käfertal with wife Barbara Katherine Dallinger and younger children in July, 1852 and sailed from Hamburg to Sydney, Australia. There was a steady stream of emigrants to Melbourne and Sydney at this time, lured by rumours of the phenomenal riches that had been discovered in the gold-fields. As Charles Reis states:

“The emigration of Georg Reis was sponsored by his brother Johann, who remained behind in Germany. The family arrived in Australia in October 1852, carrying 3,076 Gulden, equivalent to 256 pounds. With these savings, they

⁴³ The source for the Reis family in Australia is by Charles Reis, “Simplified Reis Family Tree (1682-1920s).”

⁴⁴ http://geocities.com/reisfamilyaustralia/reis_genealogy_australia

purchased a horse and dray, and preserved the remainder of their capital for the purchase of land in Albury."

"From these beginnings, the family subsequently branched out into vineyards, retailing, shipping and local construction."

IV.3.b. Johann Georg Reis b. Dec. 30, 1813 Käfertal, the son of **J. David** 1782-1843, sailed from Hamburg to Sydney, Australia with wife **Barbara Katherine Dallinger** and younger children Oct. 25, 1852, he d. 1883 Albury, New South Wales.

1. **Johanna Reis**, 1844-1845.

2. **Katherine Margaret Reis**, b. 1846, marr. **Christopher Gehrig** in 1866.

3. **Conrad Reis**, 1848-1912; marr. in 1886 **Theresa Godde**, b. Ebersberg, Germany, arrived Australia 1870s, he became a successful merchant.

a. **Christina**, marr. Tim Horan.

b. **Barbara C. (Kit)**, marr. Robert Hamilton.

c. **Charles C.** 1880-1929, marr. Susan Parer.

d. **Theresia**, marr. Jim Hannan.

e. **Georg Christopher** 1884-1943, marr. Annie R. Loughry.

1) **Edward Loughry Reis**, d. Oct. 27, 1941.

4. **Barbara Reis**, 1857 (a twin), marr. **Wendelin Strauss** in 1878, she d. 1939.

5. **Katherine Reis**, 1857 (a twin), marr. **Christopher Gehrig** after death of her sister.

6. **Georg Reis**, 1855-1896, marr. **Lena Godde**, they died 10 weeks apart in 1876, leaving children orphans. Lena's sister, Theresa Godde, raises the children.

a. **Mary** 1880.

b. **Caroline** 1882-1885.

c. **Conrad** 1884-1886.

d. **Lawrence** 1886-1954.

e. **William** 1888-

f. **Joseph** 1890-

g. **Gertrude (Triss)** 1893-

h. **Georg Albert** 1895-