



# Hoffnungstal Odessa Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 2

October 1993

## First Issue is a Hit!



Many kind words have returned to us about the first issue. We have copied a little over 200 copies, and still have a few left.

We sent out well over 100 copies to those folks who sent in their stamp. We handed out a few copies at both the AHSGR convention in Denver and the GRHS convention in Fargo.

Just before this issue is put in the mail, we will send a post card to those who ordered the first issue but so far have not ordered the other two for the year. This is not a pitch to try to sell more copies but to remind those who may have the interest but forgot to send in their \$2.

We have some folks starting to show up who will be giving us some help as we go along developing this great effort. If you or someone in your family would like to be involved in this newsletter or represent one of your families as a Family Historian, please contact your editor.

And please, as we develop this newsletter, don't be bashful about telling us what you like or dislike, or would want to see us try to go do. As time goes on, we will be able to better share pictures we have. Hopefully, we will be able to work a couple in this issue.

## What are we going to do about the St Petersburg records?

On page 2 of the first issue, we discussed the records the LDS (Mormon) folks are filming in Russia.

Information now indicates that the Lutheran records that they are filming in St Petersburg will cover the time frame from 1833 through 1900.

It seems the churches around Russia were required to submit the data concerning the births/baptisms, marriages and deaths from each church.

This data was then recorded each year. So, it would appear that we will be seeing the data come to us by the year, rather than parish or village registers.

This all means that it will take us quite some time to receive all of the records.

As soon as more is known, we will share it here in the newsletter.

If you have special desires to be involved with the sorting of this data for the village of Hoffnungstal, please let us know.

**Dale Lee Wahl**  
7370 Grevena Ave NE  
Bremerton WA 9831- (phone 206/692-8052)

## Records of Marily (nee Bamesberger ) Blessing

Until your editor stumbled across Marilyn Blessing's files in the back room of GRHS headquarters building in Bismarck in July of this year, he was unaware of her and her wonderful family research efforts.

A little background is probably in order.

About 1989, a cousin to Paul Reeb provided your editor a suitcase full of material Paul was using to put together the second publishing of his ROB family's book. Paul had died before he could complete the second publishing.

While in Bismarck during the 1990 trip, we were allowed to go through some other materials held in the back room at GRHS headquarters. Paul had some information in these files also.

Since 1990, we have cleaned up and published Paul's second book the best we could.

So this year, your editor wanted to re-look at some of the files held in the back room to see if he could better see any data that was not recognizable the first time.

It was during this effort that we found two large boxes and one smaller box marked with Marilyn's name on them.

What a wonderful surprise to find that her maiden name was BAMESBERGER.

Let us take up a little space here and see if we can reflect

some of the names in her lineage. (*We will only provide name and year of birth*)

### parents

Carl Gerhard Bamesberger  
1897

Alma Matilda Magdalena  
Troster 1902

### grandparents

Henry Bamesgerger 1844

Maria Wall 1858

Abraham Troester 1861

Matilda Wagner 1867

*Lots of familiar names here,  
like Bambesberger, Mayer,  
Tröster, Wagner, and Wall*

### great-grandparents

Philip Mercy Bamesberger  
1805

Luise Mayer 1808

Christof Wall 1828

Katrina Troester 1832

Jacob Friedrich Troester 1822

Elizabeth Bihlmajer 1823

Frederick Wagner 1821

Margaretha Troester 1824

*(We only have so much space, so let us track her Bamesberger male line from this point)*

GGGF

Gottlieb Bamesberger 1766

GGGGF

Leopold Bamesberger 1740

GGGGGF

Abraham Bamesberger 1702

GGGGGGF

Abraham Bamesberger 1667

GGGGGGGF

Abraham Bamesberger 1635

*There is an enormous amount of data in this big collection of Marilyn's. If anyone would care to help in the organizing of this data, please contact your editor.*

## Picture in Masthead Identified

In the first issue, we asked what you thought about the picture as a masthead. Most inputs that were received that mentioned the masthead, reported they liked it.

We also told you that we would report more about the picture when we found the information. Well we can now tell you that this view in Hoffnungstal, is **on the right side (the hillside) of Hexagassle Street looking north**. The High School is to the left of the team and sled. We have not yet identified the fellow in the picture. The picture is thought to be circa 1943, and many of us had thought it was earlier didn't we!

If someone can come up with another candidate masthead, please forward it to your editor and we will see what we can do with it and what the readers think about it. Until we can find a replacement, we will have to use this one.

## The Ehrmann Family — by Harold M Ehrman



*Fallman*

Eureka S. Dak.

Friedrich Jakob and Johanna (Schlichenmaier) Ehrmann  
With Sons Friedrich, Christian and August  
Photo taken about 1898 in Eureka, SD

Friedrich Jakob Ehrmann and Johanna Schlichenmaier were married about 1863, presumably in Hoffnungstal, Odessa. Friedrich Jakob was born February 13, 1841 in Hoffnungstal and Johanna was born December 24, 1843 in Hoffnungstal. They and their younger children - David, Johann, Friedrich, August and Christian - immigrated to America in 1885. It is believed that their oldest children, Rosine and Jakob, immigrated in 1884 so that Jakob (age 19 at the time) could avoid being drafted into the Russian army.

The family's first stop was at Yankton, SD. The oldest son, Jakob, was sent out to scout for land to the north in what was then still Dakota Territory. The first area of inspection was near Groton, where the land was fertile and relatively free of rocks. This land was available for \$2 per acre but Friedrich Jakob, a thrifty man, chose to settle farther north where the land was free. The family purchased two oxen, a wagon, a plow, a pig and a few necessities for the home and then headed north. They settled in Campbell County, SD seven miles west of what later became Eureka, SD.

The first home was a hole in the ground with the wagon tipped upside down over the hole. This was the family's shelter until a two bedroom sod house could be built.

The land, although free, turned out to be very rocky. It required many hours of labor to remove the rocks so that land could become tillable. A monument to the family's sweat and toil is what became known as the "rock garden". This was an acre of ground enclosed by a rock fence about five feet high.

The first two years the family lived a very isolated life. With the railroad extending only as far as Ipswich, the supply of sugar, coffee, flour, etc., had to be picked up there. The oldest son, Jakob, spoke of having to carry 50 pounds of flour on his back from Ipswich to the homestead, a distance of fifty miles.

Johanna died on June 26, 1903. On the day of her funeral, Johanna was carried from the homestead farm to Hoffnunastal cemetery, a distance of about one mile. The funeral procession would walk a short distance and then the casket would be placed on some chairs that were brought along. The party would then sing a hymn before moving on another distance to repeat the process.

Friedrich Jakob eventually retired to Eureka and died on September 1, 1909. At the time of his death, he owned about 1000 acres of land.

Rosine Ehrmann, the oldest child, married Ludwig Knodel and then later John Schlaht. The Schlaht family emigrated to Irvine, Alberta, Canada in 1910.

Jakob Ehrmann' the oldest son, married

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

Katherine Kuebler in 1888. They bought the Zeller homestead one mile west of the Ehrmann homestead. Katherine died in 1911. Jakob then married his brother's widow, Katherine (Schlecht) Ehrmann.

David Ehrmann married Magdalena Leno in 1892. This family emigrated to Canada in 1903. The couple spent their later years in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada.

Johann Ehrmann married Rosina Schlaht in 1894. This family also emigrated to Canada in 1903 and they too later moved to Medicine Hat.

Friedrich Ehrmann married Katherine Schlecht in 1901. Katherine Schlecht was born 1881 in Hoffnungstal, Odessa and immigrated to America in 1899. Friedrich returned to Russia in 1910 to bring his mother-in-law Dorothea (Schlichenmaier) Schlecht and his sister-in-law Barbara Schlecht to America.

August Ehrmann married Elizabeth Rau in 1903. They spent most of their life near Linton, ND.

Christian Ehrmann, who was one year old at the time of immigration, died in 1904 at age 19.

Margaret Ehrmann was the only child born in America. She died at a young age and was the first person buried in the Hoffnungstal cemetery in Campbell County, SD.

(you will note that this story was provided by the family historian, Harold Ehrman . . . do you have stories on your Hoffnungstal ancestors you would like to share here in our newsletter.?)

# H E L P

We need interested folks to pitch in and help with this newsletter effort.

There are a multitude of ways we can help make this an effort that will invite participation.

In the "Line-up" on the right, you will see a few things that have been defined so far. As you can see there are many empty slots, and with a little thought from a few folks we can go forward and define many other things we can work together on in order to make this the best newsletter we can.

**WANTED**  
**People willing to participate in the development of this newsletter**

Hopefully, the family historians list will continue to grow and perhaps some day reflect all of the families of Hoffnungstal.

## Line-up for Newsletter

Editor	Dale Lee Wahl
Assistant	_____
Assistant	_____

### **Technical Advisors:**

German Language	Tony Kienzle
Newsletter Layout	Henry Eisemann
Computer	Harold M
Ehrman	_____
Photography	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### **Archives:**

Maps	Herb Poppke
Village Pictures	_____
Pedigree Charts	Dale Lee Wahl
Family Group Charts	_____
German History	_____
Russian History	_____
USA History	Dale Lee Wahl
_____	_____
_____	_____

### **Family Historians:**

(\* - temporary)

Bamesberger*	Dale Lee Wahl
Ehrmann	Harold M
Ehrman	_____
Fiechtner*	Dale Lee Wahl
Rüb*	Dale Lee Wahl
Wall	Dale Lee Wahl
_____	_____
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## Visit to My Roots

Harold Ehrman -1992

*Happy the man who fondly thinks of his forebears,  
Who likes to tell the willing listener the tale  
Of their achievements and greatness, and is glad  
To see himself a link in the beautiful chain. -Goethe*

While planning an extended trip to Europe, I decided to visit the German villages from which my ancestors had emigrated to South Russia (Ukraine) in the early 1800s. In 1979, my sister Irene and I published a family history book to commemorate our parents 50th wedding anniversary. In this book we had identified the origin villages of nine sets of great-great-grandparents. So, armed with this book, a 15 day Eurail Pass, and two small bags

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## Visit to my Roots *(continued from page 4)*



I headed for Stuttgart Germany from Paris.

**14 July 1992 -Paris -Bastille Day**

I went to Charles de Gaulle airport with the group of people I had been traveling with the past three weeks. Checked my large bag at the airport for the next two weeks and then went to the train station. Arrived in Stuttgart at about 11 :30PM with no hotel reservation. Checked into InterCity Hotel at the Stuttgart Hauptbahnhof.

*(Harold has provided us a copy of his complete trip, but we will use it in an edited form to only reflect the Hoffnungstal Odessa information.)*

**17 July Bonlanden -Schlecht**

*My great-great-great grandfather Adam Schlecht, his wife Anna Barbara and all of their children emigrated from Bonlanden/ Esslingen, Wurttemberg to Hoffnungstal/Odessa, Ukraine in 1817.*

I took Bus #77 to Bonlanden; approximately 50 minutes. It was a warm sunny day. Walked to outskirts of town and took pictures. Town may have about 5000 people. Asked a man walking his dog where the old part of Bonlanden was. He directed me to the "altes tell". Old town has been restored. Took many pictures. Church and Heimat Museum were locked. When I was taking a picture of a haunted house a

lady asked why. We talked for a bit and she directed me back to the Pfarramt (church office).. Didn't quite understand the directions. A lady shop keeper directed me to the church secretary's house but I got no answer when I rang the bell.

Went to a restaurant. People greet each other with "Gruss Gott". Was given a free "Alkoholfrie" beer. Had fish and French fries for lunch. After lunch I discovered I had rung the wrong doorbell for the church secretary, but it was now too late. Went back to Stuttgart on Bus #76. On the way back noted that the Stuttgart airport and a US Army base were close by.

**19 July Cottenweiler -Schlichenmaier**

*My great-great-great grandfather Samuel Schlichen-maier, his third wife Anna Maria and six children from his second wife left Cottenweiler on 14 June 1817 to go to the Caucasus region. Samuel never reached his intend destination; he died during this journey in Ismail, Bessarabia on his 65th birthday. The rest of the family went on to settle in Hoffnungstal/Odessa, Ukraine.*

It was a hot, sunny day. Took the S-bahn to Backnang. Waited for bus a little bit than took a taxi to Cottenweiler. Taxi driver's ancestors (Mennonite) had emigrated to

Russia but had returned. I asked to be let out at the Cottenweiler Evangelical church but no one seemed to know where it was. I was let out at the Rathaus; paid 17.5 DM fare. Walked to southern edge of town where there was supposed to be a cemetery. Couldn't see it. Took pictures walking the other way. Met a lady and asked if any Schlichenmaiers lived in town. She said to go to the last house on the right.

When I got there I told two men who I was and that Samuel Schlichenmaier had emigrated from Cottenweiler to Russia. The older man was Willy Schlichenmaier and the younger his son-in-law, Adolph Rossler. Willy's wife's name is Ruth and their daughter is Doris. Doris has 2 children, Jergen and Corina. Did an impromptu family tree for them. Took quite a few pictures. Willy is retired (age 68) but has 2 hobbies; wood carving with an electrical burning tool and doing copper etchings. Willy was a POW in Italy until 1945. His two brothers were also POWs, one of them in Odessa. Had lunch of bratwurst, potato salad, gurken (cucumber) salad and tomatoes.

The Schlichenmaiers told me that Perot had thrown in the towel.

There is no Evangelical church in

*(continued page 6)*

## Visit to my Roots *(continued from page 5)*

Cottenweiler. Willy and I went to Unterweissach just a kilometer away to a church and museum. The church looked fairly new but was of the same architecture as the one in Bonlanden. Later determined it was first built in 1553 or 1555. At the museum I took a picture of a gunny sack with Willy's great grandfathers name (Gottlieb Schlichenmaier) and the date 1884 on it. Can now add another name to their tree.

We went back to Willy's place and while waiting for kuchen and coffee, we reviewed an Unterweissach history book. Found a reference to Hoffnungstal and Leibbrandt and others who had emigrated to South Russia. Willy promised to send me a copy of this book. I will send them a copy of the family history book. The printer of the above book is also a Schlichenmaier. The Wappen (coat of arms) for Cottenweiler has a fish on it. This is because an inland sea existed next to it at one time. Cottenweiler was established in 1231. Willy and Ruth took me to the bahnhof in Backnang. I told them I might return next year. These people made me feel very welcome.

*(since returning from this trip, I have determined that Willy is my fourth cousin)*

### **21 July - Bonfeld - Ehrmann**

*My great-great-great-grandmother Margareta Elisabeth (Haug) Ehrmann and all of her*

*children, except Regina, emigrated from Bonfeld/Heilbronn, Wurttemberg to Hoffnungstal/ Odessa, Ukraine in 1819. Regina followed in 1820.*

There was a thunder shower this morning so it was cooler. I went to Bonfeld on bus and headed for the only church in sight, on Martin Luther Strasse. A stone over the doorway has the inscription "MDCCLXXIV" (1774). No Ehrmanns were listed among the local fallen during WWI and WWII.

*we reviewed an Unterweissach history book. Found a reference to Hoffnungstal and Leibbrandt and others who had emigrated to South Russia.*

An elderly lady leaned out of a second story window and asked what I was photographing. I told her I was from America and that my ancestors had emigrated from Bonfeld to Russia. She said there were no Ehrmanns in town and directed me towards the Pfarramt.

Started walking in the general direction of the Pharramt and came upon a Gasthaus. I stopped to ask for directions and also decided to eat. These people also did not know Ehrmanns. Bonfeld has about 1600 people and is surrounded by wheat, corn and barley fields in rolling countryside. Listening to

people talk, I felt like

I was in my home town, Eureka, SD. After lunch I found the Pfarramt but it appeared to be closed (at 12:45). I went on to cemetery but found not a single marker with the name Ehrmann. Went back to the Pfarramt and checked bus schedule on the way. One of two bus stops in town was only steps away from the Pfarramt. This time I decided to ring the bell.

An elderly lady answered and I explained my mission and also told her I wanted to catch the bus in 15 minutes (the next bus was 2.5 hours later). She dug out the church books and immediately found page 71 that records the Ehrmann family about 1800. This page (updated as late as 1862) records that the head of the family, Johann Melchoir Ehrmann, had died on 2 March 1812. It also records that on 23 June 1819, Margaretha Elisabeth Ehrmann (Johann Melchoir Ehrmann's widow) had emigrated to Odessa with all her children except Christina Regina and that Christina Regina followed in Dec. 1820. I took a picture of this page.

We looked for earlier birth records in kirchenbucher starting in 1607. But the earlier ones are less organized and the church secretary and I agreed it would take more time than I was allowing for myself. *(continued on page 7)*

## and more Roots *(continued from page 6)*

Took bus back to Heilbronn.

### 24 July - Bonn

I took a morning train to Bonn. The purpose of my visit to Bonn was to try to get a copy of "*Hoffnungstal und Seine Schwabien*" by Leibbrandt. I allowed a young woman at the Tourist Info counter near the Bonn Hauptbahnhof to make a reservation at a hotel within walking distance. The hotel was Hotel Friedrich on Friedrich Strasse. On the way I passed a statue of Ludvig van Beethoven who was born in Bonn. Finally found the hotel and checked in. First surprise was that there was a shower as I had specified and a wash basin but the toilet was down the hall. I decided to stay.

I walked to the address I had for the Hans Georg Leibbrandt which was close by. No answer when I rang the bell. Tried Leibbrandt again after lunch; no answer. I visited the birthplace of Beethoven which was within half a block of hotel. Bought a color chart showing Beethoven's Stammbaum and Ahnentafel charts. Learned that he was nearly deaf during the later part of his life. Spent the rest of the afternoon walking around.

At about 6:30PM I tried Leibbrandt again. No answer. I asked a lady who was just entering the apartment building if she knew Leibbrandt. She said yes but

that his mail had not been picked up and he was probably away. I went back to my hotel. Looked in phone book for Leibbrandt. Found a number for the address I had visited and a number for Dr. Leibbrandt. I called Dr. Leibbrandt. A lady answered and I told her what I wanted. She said there were no more copies of the book. She wished me "Alles Gut".

*The purpose of my visit to Bonn was to try to get a copy of "Hoffnungstal und Seine Schwabien" by Leibbrandt.*

I decided to have dinner at restaurant by the hotel because it looked like it was going to rain. Good choice because it rained hard. After dinner the rain had stopped and I went for another walk. When I returned to the Hotel I found the front door locked. Earlier in the day I had removed my room key but not the front door key from the large key holder I had gotten because I didn't want to carry the key holder. I was locked out of the hotel. Waited hopefully for another guest to enter but no one showed up. Decided to check into another hotel that accepted my Visa card.

The next morning I returned to the Friedrich hotel to retrieve my bags and told the proprietor my sad story. He reduced the price of the hotel room from 85 DM to 60 DM.

*Harold has another trip this summer to report on also. We owe him a thanks for sharing these experiences with us.*

*Are there others among us who have been or are writing down the tales of chasing for their Hoffnungstal Roots around either Germany or Russia? If you are willing to do so, please consider sharing your experiences with us.*

**(Letter** from page 8) a report from friends. Hopefully you can still write in German? So many Swabians from Hoffnungstal are in America, but many of them too lazy to write, except Johann Schaffert of Bartley, Nebraska, whose reports are much enjoyed here. Greetings to him.

Greetings to Mr. Brandt and his staff from

*Elisabetha Bamesberger nee Harsch*

---

1 Scherbenski ??

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Lester Harsh's

### 'Grandfather Stories'

We have received permission to use Lester's Grandfather Stories. We will share them in the future.

# Letters from Hoffnungstal

Letter from:

Elisabeth Bamesberger (nee Harsch)

(provided by Malvin Miller, Golden Valley ND)

*translated by Gisela Stuehrk Mead of Reno NV*

Hoffnungstal, the 31 st of

January 1928

Dear Editor Brandt!

At the beginning of my writing I have to be the bearer of sad tidings. Namely, it has pleased the Lord over life and death to take home to Himself the local resident Jakob Alber at age 75 years and some months, who had been ailing for some time.

The family of Gottlieb Bauer lost through death a little daughter of 3 years old, who died of brain fever.

Further, a girl of Gottlieb Fiechtner died at the hospital at Odessa, who had been operated on twice. By means of the electrical apparatus it was established that a small nail had lodged in the right lung and caused pneumonia, against which the doctors could do nothing. The little one died on January 29th and today, February 2nd, the funeral took place. The father brought the coffin, via wagon from Odessa, because of which it took so long. It's age was 1 year and 10 months. Alas, a hard blow for the heart of a parent. Then one has to call out:

"Where is a pain like my pain!". But is as the poet says: "Lord, Thou thus decided, who

can endure against Thee?"

-This serve as notification for his two brothers-in-law, Friedrich Scherbensli<sup>1</sup> and Christian Kienzle, in case they are readers of the Staats-Anzeiger. (No, the fat Christian is not signed-up reader yet, but wants to become one soon. His neighbor Wilhelm Fiechtner will inform him of the death. -Ed.)

Today we are having a snowstorm, so that one cannot open ones eyes outdoors. Because of that nobody will show up for the funeral. But the snow will bring moisture. God be merciful and give us a harvest, because we are in a very grievous situation. What will become (of us), nobody knows. The health condition is generally satisfactory. Now and then there is a child sick with measles. A daughter of Johann Bauer of Eigenfeld is in the local hospital gravely ill. Her recovery is in doubt.

The following couples were married today by Pastor W. Frank of Kassel: Wilhelm Schlecht, son of the late Johannes Schlecht and Katharina Zweygart, daughter of Wilhelm Zweygart of Jeronowka; Gottlieb Gerber, son of Heinrich Gerber, and Ernestine Bauer, daughter of Johann Bauer, both of Eigenfeld; Gustav Rath, son of the late Johann Georg Rath, and Emma Zweygart, daughter of Jakob Zweygart of Durbailowska; Johann

Bauer, son of the late Johann Bauer of Rosenfeld, and Katharina Rath, daughter of the late Jakob Rath. Proclaimed (intention of marriage posted) were Christian Mauser and widow Katharina Roth nee Rath of Marzianoska. Joy changes with sorrow here.

Greetings for Johannes Wagner, son of Gottfried Wagner. I read in the Staats-Anzeiger that you have the paper sent to your uncle Jakob Wagner in Perekrestowo. I am therefore assuming that you yourself are a reader of the Staats-Anzeiger. I have a request for you from Mrs. Wilhelm Wohlgenut, who would like to know the whereabouts of Wilhelm Wall, son of Michael. Greetings also to my cousin Wilhelm Wall and his wife in Brighton, Colo. Do send some news now and then. I am not receiving letters anymore either from my brother-in-law in Gustav Bamesberger in Merna, Nebraska. Aren't they readers of the StaatsAnzeiger? (The Staats-Anzeiger is being read in Merna. -Ed.) It is an invaluable good newspaper that brings us news from all over the world, because of which I so enjoy reading it. But, it seems, the Swabians have already forgotten their homeland. Or did their ink dry up? That would be deplorable sight. Look alive, you old compatriots. A letter is half a reunion and so is the newspaper with *(continued on page 7)*



# Margaretha Ackermann Thurn

13 Aug 1863 — 14 Dec 1956

*The last of my mothers family passed away in 1988 and this prompted me to put in writing some of the facts of which I found in my family research and some verbal recollections from my mother and grandmother Margaretha Ackermann Thurn. Please bear with me through some documented background before going into the rest of the family history.*

In loving memory,

**Adeline Margaretha Perrman Weston,**

***(Adeline has authorized us to use this work in an edited form in the Hoffnungstal Odessa newsletter.)***

Granddaughter -17 March 1989

The earliest records of the Ackermann family, known at this time, were found in the books of the Evangelical Kirchengreinde of Welzheim, in the State of Württemberg, now West Germany.

**Leonhard** Ackermann, first generation, was born in 1627 in Kaisersbach. He was a farmer and was married to a woman by the name of Anna. He died 26 March 1677 at the age of 50. The records show that they had six children, the fifth child was also named Leonhard, second generation, born 5 January 1665. Leonhard was married twice. I don't know if there were any children from the first marriage, but from the second marriage with Anna Katharina Eisenmann. they had six children, their fifth child was

**Georg Johann**, third generation, born 8 July 1707. He married Anna Rosina Hudelmaier on August 1730 in Welzheim and was a farmer, Mayor and restaurant owner. He died on 5th of April 1783 at age 76. They had five children, **Georg Friedrich**, fourth generation, was born on the 23rd of December 1743. He was the youngest in the family. Georg Friedrich married Friderica Luasti on the 3rd of June 1777 and they had four children of which **Jakob Georg**, fifth generation, was the only son. Georg the father died on the 4th of February 1823 at the age of eighty. Jakob, the son, was also born in Kaisersbach on the 5th of September 1782, he married Rosina Katharine Hinderer on the 25th of November 1805. They had ten children all born in Eulenhof/Unterweissach, Ode. Kaisersbach, OA Welzheim, in what we may call the County Seat of Backnang. Jacob and Rosina did not leave their ancestral home of 200 years until after Georg died.

The records of Georg Leibbrandt's book Hoffnungstal Und Seine Schwaben shows that Jakob Georg left Eulenhof/Unterweissach in 1831 with his wife and seven children, to go to South Russia. In Karl Stumpp's book The Emigration from Germany to Russia 1763 to 1862, page 89 reference number 5 shows that they went by the way, Ulm, Vienna, Ofen, Galatz Odessa to

Hoffnungstal. The reasons they left are unknown to be but most left because of poverty shortage of land and for religious reasons. Jakob Georg and family were among the founding families' of the village or dorf of Hoffnungstal which they called "Zibriko" in the Swabian dialect The village of Hoffnungstal is located in the Ukraine, 50 versts (1 verst = 2/3 miles - 1.06 kilometers) from Tiraspol. It is near Odessa on the Black Sea. They were known as Black Sea Germans.

The church in the center of the village played a great part in grandmothers life. Grandmother told me that her father Daniel Ackermann, sixth generation, was eight years old when his family left Eulenhof in Wilttemberg. This gave me the clue I needed to eventually trace the rest of the Ackermann ancestors. In Karl Stumpp's book, I was able to locate the following information from he census record of 1858 on page 684. It gives the following:

"No. 73

*Ackermann, Jakob, aus: Unterweissach/Backnang-Wu, Rest. (died) et age 74, Seine Frau(wife) Rosine 71, Seine Sohne (his son) Daniel 35, dessert Frau Rosine 33, dessen Tochtors (their daughters) Rosine 7, Barbara 1/2"*

To obtain Daniel's age subtract 35 from the census of 1858.

*(continued on page 10)*

## Margaretha Thurn

*(continued from page 9)*

His actual birthday was 25th of November 1822.

Grandmother was not born until 1863 so she could not have been in the 1858 census report of Hoffnungstal, however she is listed as Maria Magdalena born 13.8.1863 on page 180 in Hoffnungstal Und Seine Schwaben. This should have been Margaretha Magdalena Ackermann. Her confirmation certificate of 3 April 1877, in my possession, lists her name as Margaretha. Grandma told me that her mother's name was Rosina Eisenmann, born 17th of March 1827 and that she had many sisters and one brother Friedrich, all born in Hoffnungstal. She spoke about her sister Barbara who married William Bamesberger and about her brother Friedrich. When I visited in Germany, I spent a few days with some of the children from these families. Grandma had a Birthday Remembrance Book that was given to her by Pastor Gustav Becker and in it she recorded the birthdays of many of her family. Rev. Becker confirmed her in Hoffnungstal. I have the little book.

On the 16th of April 1885, there was a wedding (Hochzeit). Young, petite Margaretha was to be married to Fredrich Thurn, a suitor from the neighboring village of Neudorf. There was a lively rivalry between the young men of the villages. The young men of Hoffnungstal did not want the girls from their village to marry

someone from another village without putting up a fight so grandpa Thurn had to physically fight for her and had a scar on his head to prove it. It was the custom for the bride to go and live with her in-laws. I don't know if grandma had a dowry because she never talked about one. I sort of doubt it because she did not live at home but with Rev Gustav Becker and his wife Emma and children. She called them her foster parents. I asked her once why she didn't live at home and she told me her mother wanted her to have a good education and that the village pastor could give her one. Her own mother was not healthy and died while she was young. I've heard it said that her mother died under mysterious circumstances. My mother asked her many times what those were but Grandmother would never tell. I suspect, because she kept it a secret, it could not have been anything very good.

Grandma said she had a way with children and helped take care of the Becker children, even though they had a governess. Sometimes the governess could not stop the baby from crying so Pastor Becker would tell Gretchen (Grandma) to put the baby to sleep so he could get some rest. In those days there were no pacifiers so she made one for the baby, as no doubt she had seen other mothers do. She took a clean white linen handkerchief, tied a little sugar into a knot in a corner, dipped it in water and gave to the baby to suck. I often say my Aunt Tillie do the same with her

babies. The governess did not approve of her methods and resented her.

While Grandma lived with the Beckers, a man came to visit her and gave her a beautiful white lace shawl which she wore at her confirmation. He was a soldier who came on horseback and one day he had been shot. She wouldn't tell us why or who he was but requested that when she died that this lace shawl would be placed over her face. She brought the shawl with her from Hoffnungstal to America in 1893 and kept it all the while she lived in the sod house on the prairie and took it with her wherever she went and finally in her old age she brought it with her when she came to live with my mother in Sacramento. Grandma lived with my parents for some time and died in 1956 at age 94. After Grandma passed away, mother couldn't find the shawl to fulfill her last request. It was a very traumatic time for my mother. Sometime later, after my Dad became ill, he moved into grandmas bedroom. After he passed away in 1982, Mother was cleaning the bedroom closet when she found an old light blue, much handled chocolate box, which had been stacked together with other things. Inside the box was grandmas shawl! It had turned yellow with age and was somewhat mended.

As children, we got to know our grandparents. I can't remember when I first got to know grandma. It seems I'd always known her.

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## Margaretha Thurn

*(continued from page 10)*

She never changed the way in which she looked. She was a little heavier when she was younger and turned gray when she was older, otherwise she always looked the same. She always wore a white apron with a bib on it, which had many uses such as gathering eggs etc. The only time I saw her without an apron was when she went to church. She always braided her hair and wrapped the braid into a knot at the base of her neck. Whenever she went outside she wore a scarf (Kppituch) on her head. She told me that when she was still at home - her brother pierced her ears for her. To keep the hole open, he put a thread through which she pulled back and forth. I never say her wear earrings or a wedding band.

One day as I was doing some research, I ran across a book Die Kirchen und das Reliouse Leben der Russlanddeutschen and it was a picture of Pastor Becker, also some information about him. He was born Peter Gustav D. Becker, 2 March 1835 in Elberfeld (Germany) and served Hoffnungstal Odessa 1863-1875.

The Lutheran church was the focal point of all village activities. It was located close to the school. The villagers took pride in the sound of their church bell (Gloke). It had a beautiful sound. The bells had many meanings. If someone in the village died, the bell would toll the age of the deceased, in a slow and mournful manner. It would call them to church services on Sundays and ring

for warnings such as fire. "Every morning at 7 A.M., Pastor Becker rang this bell and everyone that heard it stopped work, stood still and said a silent prayer".<sup>2</sup> These customs were brought to America and I remember our church tolling the bell in Java. At that time the men sat on one side in the church and the women on the other side. During the German occupation of Hoffnungstal, the bell tower had been removed by the Russians in 1942. Nellie Bamesberger Jurgens had pictures that were taken in 1944 of the Hoffnungstal church and school.

In 1882, grandma's foster mother suddenly passed away. Then Pastor Becker took his children and went back to Germany and grandma went home to live with her family who also lived in Hoffnungstal. She said she had to work very hard for her brother in the fields. Her own mother had passed away about this time.

Grandma Thurn could write in the beautiful Old German Gothic script. She wrote some news articles for the local German newspaper in South Dakota. She never did learn to speak or write English, mostly because she lived among other Ethnic German people. She never drove a car but she did enjoy watching TV.

She told me once how hard and lonely it was when they first came to this country. She and grandpa came to this country with four small children and lived in a sod house for seven years. They burned flax straw to heat the house and thin river logs which

they hauled from the Missouri River. They also burned Buffalc chips in the early years. One day when they went into town, she brought home an old table that a saloon threw out and another time she brought home a stray dog that she and the children called Chester. Chester was to be company for the children and to warn them when rattle snakes were around.

Grandma was perhaps about five feet tall. She and grandpa made a handsome couple. About 1897 they had a family portrait made, perhaps to send to relatives in Russia. Grandmother never went back to visit Russia but grandfather did in 1910.

The family grew up and were educated in the local schools. Then World War I broke out and two of their sons joined the US Army. As the children were leaving home or getting married, grandparents would record their dowries in a journal.

As time went on, they became grandparents to many children and great-grand-parents. Grandma was a delightful person and she looked forward to the little ones when they came to visit. She always had a jar with candy for them and gave them a loving pat on the head.

After they retired from farming, they moved to Bowdle, then to a warmer climate in Lodi, CA and after grandpa had a stroke back to Bowdle where he had a series of strokes that finally took his life in 1934. Grandma stayed for

*(Continued on page 12)*



(map from Stumpp map #2,  
by permission of AHSGR)

### Hoffnungstal Parish

Your editor, Dale Lee Wahl, has signed up (with the GRHS) to be the Village Coordinator for several of the other daughter colonies and parish villages and chutors in what appears to have been the Hoffnungstal parish.

These **additional** chutors and villages are;

- Chutor Metzker
- Chutor Rath
- Eigenfeld
- Freiberg
- Hoffnungs(e)
- Irenenfeld
- Klein Hoffnungstal
- Neu Beresina
- Neu Berlin
- Neu Gluckstal

(Continued from page 11)

awhile in the little house in Bowdle before she returned to California to live with my folks in Sacramento. Her wish was to die at home in her own bed. Her wish was granted when the Lord took her to His heavenly home at age 94 in 1956.

1 Hoffnungstal was "founded" in 1819, and this family did not come until 1831. This has been a point of confusion, as to how these later families could be considered as founding families. It appears that the original list prepared for the Leibbrandt book was to be a listing of the original founding families, but as time went on, and the list was worked on that it was found that to name the list as the founding families ("Gruderfamilien") was erroneous, and Paul Reeb tried to suggest another title for the list (such as original families) would be more correct, but it was published with the "founder" title, and so we will always have a question as to what the real "founding family" list would really look like. (comment provided by Dale Lee Wahl)

2 Java Herald 31 July 1981

## The Hoffnungstal Odessa Newsletter



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### Inside This Issue

- Bamesberger family history collection
- letters from Elisabeth nee **Harsch**
- Margaretha Thurn (nee **Ackermann**)