

MARIENTAL

DAYS OF YORE

JANUARY 2004

ISSUE ONE



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German Russian Proverb:

I could hit myself
one on the roof.

This year I plan on publishing a newsletter on my villages. Some of you do not have access to computers and therefore, you may not know about the stories and information that I want to include in these newsletters. Others may have seen some of the information on my web pages.

Since newsletters are continually in need of news stories, I will be interested in any stories, diary accounts, interviews, and trips to the villages in Russia, or Germany, that you might wish to contribute.

This story of Lilia, in this issue, is one of my “pride and joy” stories. And the Refugee article is a follow up of Lilia’s family immigrating to Canada. The Passenger List is where my grandfather came to America, when her grandfather decided to stay in Mariental, Russia

LILIA

This is a true story of my relative. Lilia, now living in Germany, but was born in Mariental. When I found her, with the help of Lauren Wilhelm, she was desperately searching for her relatives who had left Mariental, and were now (she hoped) living in Canada. She had a letter her father (Aloiyus Kinderknecht), had received from his sister, Elizabeth Kessler, almost 17 years ago. The address was lost and her father had passed away in Siberia in 1986. She longed to find them to tell them about their grandparents, Hans & Amelia Kinderknecht.

When I put this information out over the Germans From Russia Listserv’s, I almost immediately received an e-mail, from a Don Wack of Canada, telling me that he thought I might be searching for his relatives. I immediately sent Lilia’s address to him so that he might reach her. He informed me that there was a postal strike on in Canada at that time, and he would not be able to send a letter. I told him that I would write to her, which I did, sending Don’s address to her. I so much wanted her to be able to get in touch with her family before Christmas. It was a very joyous Christmas for her, and the next year she did travel to Canada to visit. Her relative died not too long after her visit, so she was so grateful to have seen her after all those years.

According to her father, there were three brothers living in Mariental, one was her great grandfather, Michael, one was named Joseph, and one was my great grandfather, Anton. Michael’s son, Hans, was born in Mariental on 2/2/1868, and died on 3/25/1945 in Siberia. Lilia’s grandparents had six children die in Mariental. Three sons killed in the

Revolution; and three were living. They were, Elisabeth, Katharina, and Aloiyus. Elisabeth, and Katharina, with their families immigrated to Canada about 1917- 1921.

Lilia's mothers family (being wealthy business owners) were all taken away, or murdered, or in prison, or just went away due to fear. The grandfather, Adam Brungardt, left for work one day and was not seen again. Lilia's maternal grandmother, Elizabet, nee Robert, was arrested in 1938, sentenced to ten years, and deported to Siberia – into the Gulag. For those ten years, no one knew where she was. Then in 1948, she was set free, and died in March of stomach cancer.

Lilia wrote, "We had a nice big house and garden. Hans and Amelia lived with us. Then, in the year of 1940, my grandmother, and so my mother had to quit her job in the grocery store. My parents had so terribly much suffering. First, my mother's father disappeared; then the arrest of my mother's mother; then the death of my father's mother; then into the abyss of 1941, being thrown out of their house and exiled to Siberia. I only saw everyone running here and there and how they cried."

"From the 'Order Out Of Homes' dismissal, to prepare for exile, was allowed 24 hours. So they packed warm clothing, food, bed- clothes, and eating utensils. On the evening of 8/28/1941, came a wagon with two horses, and two policemen. My parents loaded the things they were allowed to take. My grandfather wanted to die in the yard. He could not say farewell to the house, garden, cows, goats, pigs, and chickens. The whole day before, he was lying in the cemetery saying farewell to his parents, to all those who had died, those murdered during the Revolution, and his recently deceased wife. My mother and father had to carry him to the wagon, all were crying."

"At the train station we were loaded into cattle cars. There was straw on the floor, and each family, had a pail for their toilet. During the two months to Siberia, father would search for warm food, while mother would empty the pail whenever the train stopped. The boxcar had a stove of steel in the middle; this was heated with coal and wood. There were many deaths buried at train stations, with the papers to be sent to relatives later."

"In October we arrived in such terrible cold, in Siberia. The Russians were waiting for us. They were commanded to take us into their homes. There were eight children and two adults in the small house. We had to share our clothing, or they simply took it. They hated us because we Germans had started the war. We couldn't speak Russian, and they couldn't speak German."

"My father was recruited into forced labor (Trudarmee), and mother had to work in the Kolchase (Collective) with cattle. My grandfather, my brother Jurgen, and I, had to stay there. In August of 1942 we got a little house (my parents had to enter on their hands and knees through the door). In 1943, they took mother into forced labor in the Tiaga, to fell trees and push them into the river. Jurgen and I had to go to the Russian school. In 1945, grandfather died of starvation, as he would give the allotted food to us children. Our mother came home t, without permission, to bury grandfather. She was arrested, and sent to prison for ten years. Jurgen and I were sent to an orphanage. My father, upon his release in 1947, came looking for us, and took us to live with a women and her small

daughter, as no one knew if mother was alive or dead. There had been no word from her.”

“At 19 years of age I left home to a small city in Kazakstan. There I learned to work as a bookkeeper, and there I met my husband, Kurt. About a wedding, there was no mention. Therefore, no wedding, no food, no drink to our health. There simply was nothing. Kurt took me into his parent’s home, and there we lived.”

“In 1992, we were permitted to immigrate to Germany with the whole family (also, with three more children father had with our stepmother). Again we left everything behind. There was never anything to leave to children, as we always had to leave anything we had accumulated. Only with our suitcases did we go to Germany”.

“My mother came back from prison in 1955, and came to me, to my family in Kazakstan. She never re-married, and died in Germany in 1996. My father had died in Siberia in 1986. We are happy here in Germany, the government is good to us, but we wonder when we will be welcomed as Germans instead of Russians.

NOTE: My grandfather, Joseph Kinderknecht, with his family, decided to come to America, but Lilia’s grandfather decided to stay in Mariental. The full story with pictures, documents, maps, etc. are on my web page - <http://www.mariental-louis.com/>

THE REFUGEE’S

A list of Volga German Refugees who arrived at Frankfurt On The Oder from Minsk, on December 9, 1922

In the winter of 1921-1922 Many Volga Germans fled westward from their famine stricken home, hoping to reach Western Europe and eventually the America’s. Nearly 900 refugees reached Frankfurt On The Oder on December 9, 1922. The list appeared in the spring issue, 1982, and this issue.

FROM LOUIS, RUSSIA - CATHOLIC

NAME - FATHER’S NAME - DATE OF BIRTH - RELATIVES IN AMERICA

Terrei, Johannes	Johannes	20.08.00
Terrei, Brosina (Gassmann)	Peter	23.02.00

Grunewald, Pankratius	Matthias	03.05.77	Peter Quint, Hays, Ks
Grunewald, Scholastika (Reisch)	Matthias	15.08.77	
Grunewald, Alfons	Pankratius	15.06.11	
Grunewald, Klara	Pankratius	06.05.17	
Stressler, Johannes	Peter	01.03.89	Johannes Stressler, Hays, Ks
Stressler, Elizabeth (Gassmann)	Simon	02.12.90	
Stressler, Angelina	Johannes	02.03.15	
Stressler, Anton	Peter	22.09.92	
Stressler, Elisabeth (Lackmann)	Christian	08.02.98	
Stressler, Edwuard	Anton	01.10.13	

FROM MARIENTAL - CATHOLIC

Hunger, Adolf	Jakob	22.10.95	
Gerber, Klara	Johannes	16.07.01	
Gerber, Emma	Johannes	25.12.02	
Obholz, Joseph	Heinrich	26.08.71	Georg Meringer, Prov. Buenos Aires, Argentina
Obholz, Emilie (Hetke)	Christof	25.07.92	
Merker, Anna (adopted dau.)	Michael	23.06.11	
Husch, Peter	Joseph	23.11.84	Nik. Husch, St. Walburg, Sask – Nik. Kinderknecht, Kansas
Husch, Katharina (Kinderknecht)	Johann	20.07.91	
Husch, Peter	Peter	28.02.10	
Husch, Anna	Peter	01.03.12	
Pfannenstiel, Alexander	Alexander	29.10.12	
Schamne, Leo	Simon	1.10.91	Franz Schamne, Col. Valle Marie, Argentina
Schamne, Leo	Leo	15.08.12	
Rohr, Leo	Joseph	17.07.95	Joh. Rohr, Moreland, Ks
Rohr, Klara (Sander)	Jakob	02.11.94	
Rische, Phillip	Johannes	20.08.94	Nik. Husch, St. Walburg, Sask
Rische, Katharina (Husch)	Joseph	01.11.97	
Rische, Alexander	Phillip	25.11.18	
Rische, Emma	Phillip	01.11.21	
Kessler, Phillip	Peter	07.05.86	Phil. Mais. Anton Kinderknecht, Hays, Ks
Kessler, Elis. (Kinderknecht)	Johannes	12.03.89	
Kessler, Berta	Phillip	19.02.08	
Kessler, Leo	Phillip	30.01.10	
Kessler, Maria	Phillip	27.01.12	
Kessler, Johannes	Phillip	09.10.12	

Gassmann, Georg	Johannes	23.08.87	Bros. Joh Gassmann,
Lemmon, S Dak., and Jakob Gassmann, Col. Valle, Maria, Argentina			
Gassmann, Paulene (Gerber)	Jakob	23.08.93	
Gassmann, Peter	Georg	11.09.14	
Gassmann, Rudolph	Georg	23.03.15	
Gassmann, Maria	Georg	29.06.18	
Asselborn, Joseph	Michael	01.07.79	Peter & Joh. Asselborn, Col.
Valle Maria, Argentina			
Asselborn, Margaretta (Weigel)	Bartholomew	06.09.82	
Asselborn, Joseph	Joseph	10.07.08	
Asselborn, Michael	Joseph	10.11.10	
Asselborn, Angelina	Joseph	03.03.12	
Rohr, Adolf	Joseph	06.10.00	Joh. Rohr, Matthias & Peter
Rohr, Moreland, Ks			
Rohr, Amalia	Joseph	29.06.02	
Rohr, Berta	Joseph	13.06.09	
Bernhard, Adam	Matthias	07.03.95	
Bernhard, Rosa (Rohr)	Joseph	20.10.97	
Bernhard, Emma	Adam	06.10.14	
Merker, Peter	Matthias	07.02.93	Peter Rohr, Moreland, Ks
Merker, Elis. (Schuler)	Peter	27.07.95	
Merker, Alexander	Peter	25.12.18	
Merker, Maria	Matthias	30.01.95	
Merker, Klara	Matthias	30.01.06	
Merker, Emilie	Matthias	03.03.10	

NOTE: Lilia's families she was searching for were among these refugees. They were the Phillip Kessler (Elizabeth) Family, and the Leo Schamne (Katharina) Family.

The Passenger List below, has my grandfather and family listed (note spelling of Kinderknecht). He came to Canada at that time from Mariental, Russia. I have been trying to find the passenger list of Lilia's relatives, but have been unable to. (I decided to list the other names on this passenger list as these came over at the same time that mine did.)

NAME	AGE	DESTINATION
Kindsnecht, Joseph	43	Battleford, SK
Rose	35	Battleford, SK
Clementine	15	Battleford, SK
Anton	08	Battleford, SK
Josef	06	Battleford, SK
Alois	9 months	Battleford, SK
Schneider, Phillip	70	Lemberg, SK
Charlotte	70	Lemberg, SK
Siben, Peter	20	Battleford, SK
Emanuel	15	Battleford, SK
Hengel, Wilhelm	08	Lemberg, SK
Otilie	(??)	Lemberg, SK
Johann	27	Lemberg, SK
Ellie	22	Lemberg, SK

S.S.Monfort – Antwerp to St. John, NB – 18 Nov. 1908

Steinmann, Minnie	40	Fargo, ND
Hanna	04	Fargo, ND
Meyer	02	Fargo, ND

A LETTER FROM GERMANY

Dear Mrs. Mills:

A long time ago, I got a letter from you with many valuable materials. Finally, we learned from your letter how our great grandmother was called. My grandfather was called Johannes Schamne (b. 1863) and great grandmother Elisabeth Seitz (b. 1867). I am very grateful to you for your information about the first Schamne (Chamine, Nicholaus, b. 1736), who came to Russia, to Louis (Ostrogovka) 1767. Now I can conclude that all Schamne's in the whole world came from a Nicholaus Chamine from Trier. Our family name was deformed in Russia. The French name Chamine became Schamne already after 2 – 3 generations. I personally belong to the 8th generation.

This summer I was 2 weeks in Russia. A cousin of mine lives in Louis (today Stepnoe). On one day, we traveled to Mariental (Sowetskoe). There I made many photos. Unfortunately not the photos that my parents expected to be made. There is nearly nothing left from the old houses. There is only one single German gravestone in the cemetery with the name "SIMON HERRMANN – 1910, and BARBARA KESSLER – 1907". This is only the inscription written in German Letters. It exists also a big wooden cross, with plots, which indicate the names of the first people living in Mariental (Pfannenstieler). All is written in Russian and with many mistakes. I was especially excited about the church. I never thought it would be so large. In the Soviet period, the church was made a club. In April of this year (2002), It burned down. But the walls and columns are still standing firm inspire of all. A woman was chopping bricks. She told me that there will be constructed an Orthodox Church in the village.

The famous 'Gardens Of Mariental' (Marienthaler Garten) are still called as before. They are bewildered, but they still exist. This summer it was very hot at the Wolga. The harvest was good, but there were also fires. The "Gardens Of Matiental" suffered from these fires.

In the Archives of the town, Engels, I applied for information about children of Nicholas Chamine, about Michael (1833-34). They are still working on this. I regret that I couldn't get any information about the Schamne's in the village of Graf.

I had a friend translate this for you. I also called Lilia Kimmerle., after receiving her name from you. I sent you seven photos.

I thank you all and wish you the best.
Yours Sincerely, Maria Schamne

Photo's sent to me, were:

- 1) The remains of the Mariental Church
- 2) A view of Mariental
- 3) Another View of Mariental
- 4) Also another of the village
- 5) Inside the Church
- 6) The gravestone that she has referred to in her letter. It contains a beautiful iron cross.
- 7) Country side view with a small river

I will try to put these photos on my web page in the near future, and I will send copies to those of you who do not have computers. These photo's are in color and are interesting to see. I do not know if the scenes of the village contain the "Mariental Gartens". I have sent Maria another letter, but have not heard back from her.

