

Remembering the Wilhelm Family

By Heinrich Haberling in March 1978, born September 24, 1894, Dudnikowo, Ukraine

Translated into English in 2002, by Leokadia Haberling Schwengler, born December 2, 1926, Dudnikowo, Ukraine.

Adapted, updated and edited by Katharina Schwengler, 2019.

The Wilhelm family lived in the village of Dudnikowo (originally Georgsburg), in the district of Saporoschje (Alexandrowsk) on the east side of the Dnepr River in the Ukraine. Georgsburg and eleven other daughter villages were built on land that was purchased from Count Kankrin who owned vast tracts of land in the area. Those who settled Georgsburg were young married couples originating from Melitopol District in Prischib County.

Information on the founding date of Georgsburg is not available, but birth records of the Wilhelms in the village indicate that people who already living in in the 1890s.

In the early 20th century, the name Georgsburg was changed to Dudknikowo, village #9 (after the land manager of the area, Dudnik). The building where the manager lived was called a Hornitza. It had nine rooms, two of which were very large. One of the large rooms was used as a school class and the other was a prayer room. When a priest was obtained, it became the church and all the villagers came to Dudnikowo to attend church services. In 1902, the villagers built a new church, which was finished in 1904. The cost of construction was 47,000 rubels. Much of this money was obtained through donations by land owners Rempel, Tiesen, Sawatsky, Epp, Aman and many others. Bishop Josef Kessler blessed the church. He came from Saratow where there was a Catholic seminary where men could obtain education to become priests. Once the church was blessed and they obtained a priest, Father Kuhn, Heinrich Haberling, Friedrich Wilhelm, Alexander Haberling and Eugenius Futterer become altar boys. Father Kuhn was well liked and a very good speaker who gave big sermons every Sunday. In 1932, he was arrested and deported to Uralsk in Siberia. Sadly, in 1918 during the German occupation of Ukraine, an ambassador from Germany offered him a transfer to Turkey, but Father Kuhn turned it down because he said he liked it in Dudnikowo and wished to die there.

All the people who managed to survive the expulsions and murders of the years from 1917 to 1930s were deported to Siberia in 1941. First they took the men and boys of 16 years and older and sent them to camps, then the women and children were sent. Most of them were sent to Nowosibirisk and Aktubinsk in the Ural mountains.

Two Wilhelm families came to live in Georgsburg. They both moved to Georgsburg from Leitershausen, Ukraine. First came older brother Joseph, then Johann.

Joseph Wilhelm and his wife Getrudene Darscht had 7 children and owned 135 desjateen land (143 hectares):

1. Johann, born 1880 married Magdalena Zeiser from Kostheim
2. Georg, born 1882, married Emilia Fuchs from Jeporowka. Georg was killed by bandits in 1919.
3. Joseph born in 1892, killed by bandits in 1919.
4. Wendelin, born in 1898, killed in WW1 in 1919 on the front
5. Emilia, born 1884, married by Bobb Paulus from ?
6. Elizabeth, born ?, died, never married
7. Leontina, born 1897, married ? Schweigert, they lived in Toronto, Canada

Johann Wilhelm was born in Leitershausen in 1855 (County Prischib, District Melitopol). He married Regina Walter, born 1857, from Waldorf. He died in 1919, killed by bandits who raided the village. They came to his house and took him to the corn field and shot him. They told Regina that she was not to move his body, but in the night, one of the Ukrainian workers helped her to bring him back for burial. Regina died in 1922 of typhoid. She had nursed a family who were sick and got infected.

They had 8 children:

1. **Johann, born 1879, married Eugenia Kammerlacher** from Heidelberg, Ukr. They had 8 children: Theobald, Johann, Joseph, Valeria, Linda, Katharina, Eugenia, Rosa. In 1937, Johann Sr. was arrested and disappeared. His boys were all deported to Siberian camps. In 1941, the rest of the family was deported.
(Later, we found out from relatives that Johann Sr. had been shot the day after he was arrested).
2. Valentine, born 1881, married Mathilda Trenkenshu from Blumental. They had 8 children: Valentin, Donatus, Aloisius, Leo, Paulus, Matilda, Rosa. Rosa married Bill Herasimenko and moved to Alberta, Canada. All the boys were deported to Siberia, followed by the women in 1941, except Rosa who married a Ukrainian.
3. Wendelin, born 1883, married Katharina Herba from Hochheim. They had 6 or 7 children: Victor, Johann, Emanuel, Leo, Katharina, Klara?, Elfriede. In 1929, the entire family was deported to Siberia. They were sent to Cheljabinsk?

4. Jacob, born 1887, married Pauline Kretz.
They had 3 children: Elwira, Engelbert, Eddi. They were also deported to Siberia in 1941. (Jacob was educated in St. Petersburg and was teaching French and English there. He moved by to Saporoschje and got work in a steel factory to avoid being killed by Stalin as many educated persons were during the Great Purge. In 1942, he died in a Siberian camp.
5. Joseph emigrated to North Dakota USA in 1912. Josef lived in Linton, North Dakota where he had 14 kids, including Katharina, Regina, Theresa.
6. Friedrich emigrated to North Dakota, USA in 1913. Friedrich lived in Bismarck, ND where he and his wife had 3 children - Delores, Donatus and Wilhelm?
7. Eugenia married ? Back. He was arrested in 1937 and deported. She was deported in 1941 with their children.
8. **Katharina, born 1896, married Heinrich Haberling on May 10, 1921. They had 4 children. :**
 1. Roland (1924 - 1990) married Magdalena Volk in Germany and had two children Heinrich and Martin. Heinrich married and has one daughter Ruth. He and his wife and their daughter and her partner live in Germany. Martin has never married, lives in Germany.
 2. Dora (1922 - 20, married Johann Meier in Karaganda, Kazakhstan. They had 7 children: Lena (died at 9 months) and Victor (twins), Roland, Valentin, Heinrich, Johann (drowned in Kazakhstan), Leokadia (still in Russia somewhere?). Victor, Heinrich, Valentin and Roland all moved to Germany but have all passed away.
 3. Leokadia (1926), married Adam Schwengler in Germany. They moved to Canada in 1954 with their first two children Paul and Roswitha and had 5 more - Roland, Ernest, Monika, Walter and Katharina.
 4. Klara, married Martin Eisenmenger in the USA and they had 4 children who all live in Wisconsin - Harry, Eddie, Linda and Johnny.

Katharina Wilhelm and Heinrich Haberling built a house in Dudnikowo and lived there until 1940 when they sold the house and moved to Orechowo (30 km) away. In 1941, I was sent to to a camp in Uralsk in Siberia. Katharina and the children were not deported because the German army arrived in our village in 1941 with orders to remove the German villagers. Katharina and her children were saved.

In 1905, Dudnikowo had 16 farms:
 Johann Hardock - 270 hectares
 Heinrich Haberling - 90 hectares

Emanuel Haberling - 60 hectares
Anton Anhalt - 60 hectares
Johann Back - 90 hectares
Christofer Anhalt - 0.6 hectares
Michael Schweigert - 90 hectares
Franz Futterer - 120 hectares
Michael Walter - 120 hectares
Josef Helmel - 0.9 hectares
Johann Walter - 0.6 hectares
Johann Haberling - 120 hectares
Peter Zeiser - 60 hectares
Franz Graf - 120 hectares
Johann Wilhelm - 165 hectares
Josef Wilhelm - 135 hectares

In 1905, the combined ownership of the village was 1800 desjatin (1 desjatin is 1.09 hectares)

They had a lot of pasture land for cows and horses. Some of the farmers had between 20 to 24 horses and 15 to 20 cows. In the fall, most farmers butchered pigs and an older cow. The meat was mostly salted in barrels and bacon was smoked. They also made a lot of sausage.

In the year 1905, they built 3 dams, so there were 3 large ponds created. The horses and cows were taken to the ponds to drink water. The ponds were stocked with fish but villagers were only allowed to catch the fish with rods/reels, not nets. The government used nets. One part was given to the farmers, two parts divided through the county.

A lot of young men went on to higher education. Seven were studying at Saratow Seminar, some learned at Technical school, and at Commerce. During that time, there were only 15 boys at home during the summer holidays to help with the crops. During the Revolution from 1918 to 1920, so many men were murdered by roving bandits. Three men were shot in 1918, 10 men in 1919 and 4 men died in WW1 from our village.

In 1919, there were a lot of roving bandits. One of the bandits who led a gang to our village was named Machno. His big gang was heavily armed. Later, the Red Army confiscated their weapons and many of them ran off to Romania. There too, they had their weapons confiscated.

Other information about the Wilhelm Family:

In 1810, Ludwig Wilhelm (35 years old) and his wife Maria (35 years old) and their 4 year old son Ludwig, moved from Mannheim, Baden Wurtemberg, Germany, to the

village of Leitershausen in Ukraine. The village was in the district called Molotschna (after the river which looked like milk - milk is moloko in Ukrainian). Leitershausen was one of the Catholic mother colonies as were Blumenthal, Hochheim, Heidelberg, Waldorf, Kostheim, Marienheim, and Alexanderheim). Georgsburg was a daughter colony.

Now this is all that I can remember. If you have any questions, please let me know.

With best greetings to you all!

Written by Heinrich Haberling, March, 1978.

Note: Heinrich was 85 years old when he wrote this information down for his family in German. It was translated by his daughter Leokadia Schwengler into English and adapted/edited by her daughter Katharina Schwengler.