

Folklore Collection of Maraslienfeld Resettlers

Source: DAI Microfilm T-81; Roll #606; Serial 824; Group 1035
Item 1394; Frames 5396429-5396450
Translated/Transcribed by Allen E. Konrad - January, 2007
PO Box 157 Rowley, IA 52329
<onamission@lbt.org>

Note: The symbol [] indicates a comment by the translator.

[Begin Translation]

Folklore Collection about the Bessarabian Resettlers from Maraslienfeld/Ackermann in Camp No. 69 in Tannwald (conveyed by Wenzel Fritsch, Buergerschuldir. i. R. Tannwald)

- 1. Settlement and Environment:** The resettlers of Camp 69 in Tannwald all come from the village of Maraslienfeld, 45 km [ca. 28 miles] distant from the District city of Ackermann by the Black Sea. The village was established in 1880 (the mother colony is the village of Arzis, located about 40 km [ca. 25 miles] westward) and got its name from the old Russian General Marasli, who, during that time, lived there. To document the German character of the village, the inhabitants added the word "feld" thus Maraslienfeld. It is 100 hectares [ca. 240 acres] in size in addition to 139 hectares [ca. 343 acres] of pasture land, 2000 hectares [ca. 4942 acres] of farm land, numbers 1080 souls, of which 180 are school children in 4 grades. The farm yards are situated, as the enclosed plan sketch shows, on both sides of the main street, which, as in all Bessarabian German villages, run north to south. This street is straight as a string in all villages, very wide (over 20 meters [ca. 65 feet]) and has besides that another 3 meters [ca. 10 feet] path on both sides for a foot path, so that the street remains free for the wagons. Trees are planted on both sides of the street. Street and paths are packed with clay and then, annually, covered with coarse sand, a fine sea sand. Maraslienfeld has only one main street with two rows of yards which is standard; however, there are villages with 4, even with 6 rows of yards. Along both paths, by the side of the yard, is a wall made out of stone or wood, whitened with lime. Every yard is about 65 a.[?] in size, with half containing structures (a house with 2-3 rooms and a kitchen, with floors always flush with the ground; a wine-shed, horse-shed, chicken-shed, cow-shed, pig-shed, sheep-shed, stall for geese and ducks, wagon-shed, manure-shed, chaff-stall, granary oven and canopy), and the rest of the yard is open space, orchard and vegetable garden. A well is in the middle of the yard (from 10-30 meters [ca. 32-98 feet] deep). However, the water, though salty, unpalatable for humans, is very good drinking water suitable for the animals. Drinking water for humans is hauled from a well from a nearby brook. This is good water. In the middle of the village was the community yard. On it one finds the prayer house (in Maraslienfeld there is no church, but only a prayer house with a bell tower), the school, a community building, in which, in earlier days a school class was conducted, and a barn for the community stallions and bulls. The teacher's residence was in the other village row. On the cross roads to Tatarbunar, one comes across a General Store where the inhabitants can

purchase everything that they need, and also a mill. All buildings were, as already noted, constructed with floors flush with the ground, out of clay, stone or fired bricks and covered with straw, reeds or tile. Straw was used for heating (there was no wood or coal), oil for lighting, made of canola (*Raps*) or mustard.

2. **Soil Conditions and Climate:** The land is totally level, without hills, trees or forest (only first in the earlier days was a wooded area of acacia trees planted north of the village, by the brook (see sketch), measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ hectares [ca. 1.8 acres], but very fruitful. The dark soil beyond the village, in the steppe, measures nearly 1 meter [ca. 3 feet] deep. The winter is cold, the spring raw and damp, the summer very hot, for that reason often severe thunderstorms, cloudburst rain, hail and lightning strikes now and then; the fall is also damp, often rain until winter.
3. **Animals and Plants:** Domestic animals are just like ours and the wild animals are pretty much like unto ours here. Deer (*Hirsche*) and roe (*Rehe*) are absent so there are a lot of rabbits. Fox live there in stone piles, wolves sometimes stray from the Carpathian Mountains. There are a lot of ground squirrels (*Ziesel*) and vole/meadow mice (*Wuehlmaus*). There are no frogs and vipers, and for that reason many toads, which cause great damage to the grain. Also the red wheat worm (*Weizenkaefer*), a snout worm (*Ruesselkaefer*), damages the grain, while the potato worm hollows out the potatoes. Butterflies and birds are as we have them, only that more storks are prominent here (in any case, this then contributes to the large number of children). Cultivated plants are: Wheat (varieties with and without beards, *Wechselweizen*, *Hasmann*, *Ukle*), barley (varieties with 2, 4 and 6 rows), Maize (red, white, yellow and golden-maize), corn, oats, millet, flax, canola [rape-seed], mustard, yellow, red and sugar beets, but especially also wine grapes of various types, the wine being the chief drink. The farmers sang: "We drink the wine, and for that reason we sing: Beautiful is the time of youth, it doesn't come anymore, it is with the military." There are also other fruits similar to what we have, however, everything dries up quickly.

As for domestic animals there are specifically horses, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, pigeons, geese and ducks, as mentioned before, whereof the various kinds in the different species are represented. One farmer has as many as 18 horses, many sheep and pigs, these last ones supplying their meat as the main articles of food, countless pigeons, chickens, geese and ducks.

4. **Neighbors:** Ethnic stranger neighbors are Romanians and Russians. The Germans don't want to know too much about the Romanians, but the relationship with the Russians was very good, especially in commerce. The Russian trusted the Germans. What the German said was sacred to him. The German word, the handshake was enough for him. The Russians also gladly worked with the Germans (German domestic servants were very few) for they knew that they would eat good with the Germans and have opportunity for a good rest and receive their pay on time.
5. **Nourishment:** For the most part the nourishment was like ours, with other things added now and then, but always with lots of pork, beef or *Speck* [fat or bacon]; for example, mashed potatoes (known to us as *Brei*) with sauerkraut and *Speck*, or potato-strudels with pork, or

knoepfla (potato-noodles) with kraut and *Speck*, or raised and baked *kuechla* (for us in fat, with them baked in oil) with sauerkraut and *Speck*, or bean soup with pork bones (we call it pork trotters or knuckle of pork) and also in the morning add to that tea, liver sausage and semolina grits, *Ribelsuppe* (clumps of dough in soup) with meat sausage (*Fleischwurst*); in the evenings: cold *Speck* with sour pickles, pickled tomatoes (*Paradeisaepfeln*) or pickled watermelon (*Harbusen*). Then came the wine. Wine was drunk a lot, summer and winter. Every farmer had his own wine from his many vines which he possessed (up to 1000 stocks). They ate 5 times: early, around 9 o'clock, mid-day, late afternoon and in the evening. The bell was rung at mid-day and in the evening. There was only white bread which each family baked according to their need, a loaf weighing as much as 3 kg [ca. 6 ½ pounds] or more. Much was baked during holidays, as for example for Christmas, New Year, Easter, namely, pastry (*Kuchen*), gingerbread (*Lebkuchen*), sweetbread (*Suessbrot*), nut-pastry (*Nusskuchen*), tarts (*Torten*). The farmer was of the opinion: Work a lot, eat a lot, drink a lot.

6. **Clothing:** As with us, so with the Bessarabian Germans, except that the women could not wear hats because the wind, which there is a lot of there, would have blown them away; therefore, they had big shawls, for example with up to 3 *Kasaner* shawls with silk tassels. Every woman, at the very least, had to have 1 large wrap-around shawl. A young woman received one as part of the dowry when she got married.

7. **Life on the Farm and in the Village Community:** The man of the house is number one on the farm and in the family. Wife, children and domestic servants listen to him. It is his duty to keep the property in order, that nothing spoils or goes missing, to assign the duties in a timely fashion and, of course, also be the first one to put his hand to the task.. He not only directs the supervision over work and workers, but he oversees the seeding, the harvesting, all the same, whether it will be done with or without machines. The wife, the representative of the father, has special concerns for the arrangements in the house, not only just to cook, seeing to it that proper meals are served in a timely fashion, but also in good detailing, seeing to it that the clothing of family members are in desirable condition, every person clothed, patched and presentable. In the early part of the year, she had to have special foresight that her spring seeds got into the garden, such as onions, garlic, beans, peas, pumpkins, carrots, etc. If the woman did not busy herself in the springtime, her family would have to be in want in the winter. If the wife was out in the field, she delegated her house work to the children. The children were fully engaged, not only that the older ones cared for the smaller ones, but they had to, in proportion to their strength, also work in the field and in the barn so that the sweat ran from their face...as the word from the Bible says: "By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread." Although it must be stressed that the nourishment of the children was not only bread, but encountered also milk, *Ribelsuppe* (which they gladly ate), milk-rice, noodles and a smaller portion of meat and sausage. If the children were well-behaved and industrious, the older ones received a little pocket money. Domestic servants were chiefly Russians, a few Romanian, but even fewer Germans. Servants were hired for 1 year, but, if they were not satisfied with the type of work or the demands of the head of the household did not suit them, they could depart at any time without prior notice, without waiting for a termination date. As long as they worked, they were paid. They were not obligated, were considered as part of the family, and could attend church. Husband and wife slept in the bedroom (*Schlafstube*) and the children were all put into one room, even the servants. Meals

were eaten in the kitchen. In the summer, when 16-18 hours of work was put in, all were tired and gladly went to bed in the evening. However, in the winter, when all were able to rest more, the men gladly went for a chat at a friend's place, talked, drank one or more glasses of wine, so, many a time, they stayed together for a long time. Even the women would attend small-talk sessions with their stocking to be knitted or some other handiwork. It was the same with the youth. The children likewise had their time for playing together. The boys usually played *Hutscherles*, that is, horsey. The girls sewed doll clothes, cooked, in short doing everything which a housewife busied herself with. At such a gathering, especially of the youth and the women, there was singing. Not only folk songs (as in the enclosed sheet of music), but also church hymns sung in unison or in part harmony. Dancing took place in a big living room Sunday afternoon and evening.

At the head of the village was situated the village senior or *Schulze* (called *Kurator* after World War I). It was his obligation to keep order in the community, to summon the community or the *Zehntelmaenner* (these are 10 representatives elected from the community and changed every year) to discuss with them the business of the village and church and money manage expenses (tax assessments). The *Schulze* also had the privilege to issue a money or arrest penalty upon unruly members of the community. However, after World War I, when the populous was very embittered and obstinate, this privilege was turned over totally to the government installed *Sotzke*, or delegates. For the *Schulze*, there remained only the matters of the church and the privilege to initiate a gathering in cases of emergency.

In order for the owner to recognize his property, most cattle and sheep had a gap cut in the ears. The horses received a brand marking, of either the first letters of the family name or the village, on the right or left rear leg. Farm implements were marked either with a brand or with oil paint.

8. **Religion:** Almost all are evangelical [Lutheran]. There is a worship service in the church or the prayer house on Sundays and holidays. Sermons were preached there and songs sung. If the village has a pastor, he preaches. Maraslienfeld has no pastor (he comes to Maraslienfeld from a neighboring village 6-7 times a year or on special occasions such as a wedding, a funeral and such events). At other times, the sexton conducts worship service, reads a sermon and provides hymns to be sung. Everyone goes to church. If one happens to miss, then the feeling is that it was not Sunday. Another society is the Brethren Community (*Bruedergemeinde*). They do not meet in the church, but rather come together in a private house (at a "brother's" or a "sister's" place). There the Word of God is read, expounded and songs sung. A third sect is composed of Baptists, or those who re-baptize (*Wiedertaeufer*). These do not belong to the Evangelical Church. There is always conflict between these and the evangelicals because they use every means to convert the evangelicals to their fellowship. There are also secular people who do not pray and do not attend church. Their number is quite substantial. Psalms and other spiritual hymns are sung in the Evangelical Church.
9. **Societies:** There were no proper societies. There was a Youth Society. The youth gathered in the room of a home where books were read, recitations were made or even dancing took place. For that reason, either a house was rented or a fee was assessed in order to come up with their own building. There was also a political German *Oganisation der Volksgruppe*

with 12 block leaders. They walked or drove around the village, carrying out orders, received money for the ethnic contributions of the administrative district (*Gau*) and made inquiries in regard to poor people in need of assistance, which they then distributed. The young boys marched out also, learned the ways of the German Commando and sang military training songs. The girls did likewise, but more so in the house or in the shed. To be sure, everything happened only in the period when there was available free time.

10. Practice and Custom:

(a) **Birth.** The stork brings the children from the land of children. After the birth of the child, the mother who gave birth must be confined to her bed for 9 days and was not allowed to leave the house for 5-6 weeks. Her first outing was to the church where she was blessed and only then could she go wherever she so desired. Usually, the newborn child was baptized after 8-14 days. The god-parents, from 2-4 of them, had the obligation to assist the parents, by word and deed, so that the child does not turn out bad and is brought up in the fear of God and in the Evangelical Lutheran confession. A feast followed the baptism. There one would find good noodle soup or soup with chicken meat, then roasted meat. Wine was the drink of choice...often too much. Then there was cabbage and potato salad, cold slices of ham, sausage and *Speck* and finally pure coffee (*Bohnenkaffee*) with exquisite baked goods, cakes or gingerbread and schnapps. Also, now and then, a little dance was added. Baptism gifts were given only at Easter and Christmas time such as a little dress, a shirt or various play-things. Birthdays were seldom celebrated. Sometimes, on a birthday, the favorite food of the birthday child was cooked, or the child received a gift now and again. If the child is small, a gift from the god-parents, if more grown up, one from the parents.

(b) **Confirmation.** At the age of 15, the child was confirmed. Confirmation was usually held in the church on Palm Sunday. Before this occasion, during the previous 14 days, they received the appropriate instruction, after which they were examined on the day before the festival day. The ones to be confirmed assembled themselves at the home of the sexton on the day of celebration and departed from there in couples...first the girls and then the boys. Down the street they went, the center of which a path of yellow sand was spread 1 ½ meters [ca. 5 feet] wide and carpeted with green grass on the left and the right, all the time singing while being led to the church by the pastor and sexton. They stood in front of the altar, spoke with the pastor the confession of faith and took an oath in front of the congregation that they would remain true to the Evangelical Lutheran Church and not turn away from it. Then they sang a verse from the hymn book, knelt down before the altar, were blessed and received Holy Communion along with the parents and the god-parents. Then off to the house where a good meal took place, much like that portrayed above for the baptism. The god-parents and a few other good friends participated in the celebration. A few days before the event, the one to be confirmed would extend a personal invitation to the god-parents. He would go to the god-parents, making the request for forgiveness and spoke this saying: "Tomorrow I will be confirmed and then led to the Savior. Is there something unpleasant that I have done to you, I am now asking for forgiveness." Usually, the god-parents gave the child a Bible or a hymn book as a gift.

(c) **Courtship and Wedding.** The young fellows, eager to marry, went either to the church and waited there, or, after the worship service, looked over the young girls or sought to strike up connections with those on the dance floor or from their society. If unable to strike it lucky in one village, they would gather some good friends together, hitch up a wagon and drive into a neighboring area for a visit. If a relationship was established, the person received a small gift (handkerchief, stockings, picture postcard, chocolates, candy, apple or something like that) and the relationship was further established. For the purpose of further developing the relationship toward marriage, the young fellow turned to a match-maker and sent the person to the young lady and raised the question as to whether a visit would be permitted. If the answer was in the affirmative, then both the prospective bridegroom and the match-makers would first go to the young lady and then to her parents and, if all are in agreement, immediately solemnize the engagement. The bride-to-be received an engagement ring and then the date for the wedding would be set and they would eat and drink. After this, the parents of both sides got together, discussed how the wedding should be, who would be invited and what things would be coming from the parents toward the dowry. Then the marriage agreement was sealed. Now the wedding, by means of 3 public notices, on 3 separate Sundays to follow, was announced and a testimony given to the *Schulze* [mayor] that both parties were still single. On the pastor's part, he now undertakes the so-called investigation (examination) and through him, [in church] for the next 3 weeks, similar to how also the *Schulze* made public the testimony, so that during this period of time no obstacle to the marriage shows up. However, during those three weeks, the preparations for the wedding go forward full-swing; pigs and chickens are butchered, cakes and gingerbread baked, drinks to be prepared. Of course, the major work goes into action the week of the wedding. Naturally, things are not good if in the meantime something to hinder the wedding shows up. Then there is quarreling and arguing, to the point that sometimes the matter ends up in court. Now [in the days before the wedding] is when invitations are written out (invitation notes) and delivered by the friends of the bridegroom, groom's-men, or friends of the bride, bride's-maids. However, if no invitation notes are drawn up, in earlier days it was the custom that the oldest of the groom's-men took care of the inviting by word of mouth. He would go to the dwelling of the invited guests and say the following: "Here is the reason why I have come, and this is why I am here, that you should attend the wedding, and so everyone should say they will attend." On the day of the wedding, the groom's-men must gather together the tables and chairs. Wagons and horses are decorated with silk ribbons and colored paper, pistols were also fired. The oldest bride's-maids carried the collected kitchen utensils in decorated hand-baskets. The sexton and the *Schulze* showed up on the day before the wedding and undertook the task of drawing up the marriage contract and, if necessary, the written promise. The evening before the wedding is also the evening of the wedding party (*Polterabend*) where fine things were eaten, some good drinking and hearty dancing. Wishes of good fortune were expressed in the formal and informal conversation, such as: "Should the stork show up in the course of the year, perhaps bringing along a little one, and you will then become three." Beautiful, but somewhat lengthy, is the wish of good fortune from the herb lady (*Gruenzeugfrau*): "I am an herb lady and you have known me for quite some time, coming to bring my good wishes to the dear young couple. And here I am also bringing the goods which I call upon you to accept; so beautiful and fresh as these here you alone are becoming to me. Look at the beets, large and fat, 15 pieces for one *groschen* [penny]; believe you me they are very sugar sweet. Moreover, take note and consider this young

bride: Should you happen to have an argument with your husband, and he fails to keep his silence even if he sees that you are correct, quickly shove a little beet in his direction and then immediately he will take heart, become quiet as a mouse and will do now what the little woman desires. I also have celery and lettuce, beautiful, like you have never seen before, and chives, water-cress, soup greens, like no one knows how to grow. Vegetables, let me tell you, just look at how soft and tasty they are, so much so that the hurt (*verwuehte*) husband himself cannot find anything wrong with them. Then a supply of white and red cabbage, radishes and also good onions...take a bite and you will see how your eyes will fill with tears, and all trouble and irritation of head and heart must quickly retreat. Now let me be your client, it would make me happy in my old age; every morning at 6 sharp you would find at your door, both of you for all time the greatest contentment. Well now, I do not want to disturb you any longer, especially if I am allowed to return, so I will see to it that I do not wear out my welcome. So, live well, God be with you and bless you richly with safety and prosperity, and may happiness always blossom as it does here in my basket of green things."

The bride's dress was white and modern, a veil with a crown on top and a bouquet of flowers in the hand. The bridegroom wore a black suit, a white shirt with a black necktie. He also had a bouquet with a white silk ribbon and a slip-knot which he wore on the right side. (see the picture). On the day of the wedding, after breakfast, one of the brothers, that is, a member in good standing of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation, stepped forward, located a text from the Bible, spoke some words about it, everyone then sang a verse from the hymn book, then he knelt down with all of those associated with the wedding and prayed, admonished the bridal pair, commended them to God and spoke the benediction. Just before getting on the wagon, the wedding party approached the parents and begged their forgiveness; whereupon, they blessed the couple and spoke other words for the path in life that they were about to embark upon. Then it was time to get to the church for the wedding. The wagon and the horses were smartly decorated. A variety of wagons were necessary for the groom's-men and bride's-maids, as well as those men and women commissioned with a role in the event. In the lead, in the best decorated wagon, rode the couple to be married, followed by the other couples (young men and women). No one was allowed to pass. The same procedure was followed once the pastor spoke the blessing and they drove back. Sometimes the trip back to the house ended up in a race due to earlier visits to the local inn and sometimes too much had already been drunk. Now the attendants to the wedding banquet served up the food. They wore a white apron and a white towel was placed over the shoulder. The meal consisted of chicken soup, roasted meat, milk rice with raisins and plums, potato salad, cold cuts, and at the end good pure coffee or tea with *Kuchen* or pastries. At the same time, various songs were sung (as shown in the enclosed sheet of music and folk songs also familiar to us). The singing of a round was also injected or a beautiful spiritual song from the church hymnal. Words were spoken, similar to the one mentioned earlier, and finally came the dancing...not only German dances, but also Russian (like the *Krakowjak*) and Romanian (like the *Oira* and *Sirba*). The accompanying musical instrument was usually the concertina, but in Romanian times often gypsies played. Now and again, a man or a woman would masquerade as a doctor, a dentist or a gynecologist and play out the part and the baby factory and the stork were themes put forward, everyone gathering and stepping forward to make their delivery to the married couple. Frequently, the groom's-men would contribute some money, conceal it and request that the one in charge of the money should

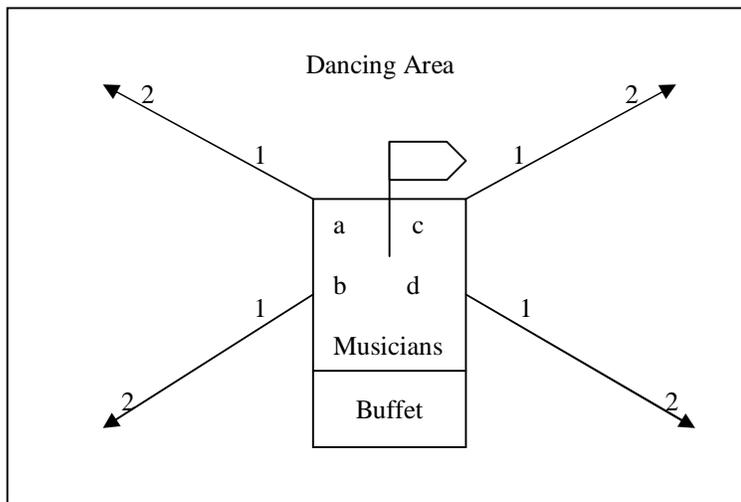
double it. In such circumstances, the bride's shoe would not be stolen. Generally, the stealing of the bride's shoe was the favorite and customary episode of the wedding. Usually, the bride's shoe was stolen by an attendant at a moment of carelessness of the watchful eye of the groom's-men trying to prevent this very thing from happening. The guests become aware of the theft when, with the bride behind the table, she is called upon to a dance by a man who passes himself off as a shoe-maker, claiming that he had made the shoe and was now bringing it here to be auctioned off. The highest bidder has the privilege to put the shoe on the bride. In similar fashion, like the groom's-men and the bride's shoe, so bride's-maids have the duty to watch over the garland wreath of the bride, that, during the evening, it does not get stolen, which usually ends up being put on after payment is made. All money realized from these events, as also from a number of dances with the bride, are turned over to the newly-weds. There it was also believed that, during the wedding celebration, for example, a glass, a plate or a bottle had to be dashed to pieces to imply good fortune. On the next day came the Old Women's Dance, then the wagons and horses were cleaned up once again and tables, chairs and dishes returned. Wedding presents consisted of various things, primarily equipment for the kitchen, but also rarities surfaced, such as a brooding hen with little chicks, a chamber-pot, and so forth. Two days after the wedding, the dishes were decorated and the dowry taken over to the bride. This consisted of 2 furnished beds, clothes cupboard, kitchen cupboard, one large table with 6-8 chairs, a kitchen table, then a stew-pot, kettle, pans, kneading-trough, in short, everything belonging to the workings of a kitchen. Besides that, 2-3 cows, 5-10 sheep and chickens. The son received some horses, a wagon, plow, harrow, horse harness, cows, sheep, a house, yard and land (up to 25 hectares [ca. 62 acres]), bread and seed until the new year or until the next harvest. The first Sunday after the wedding celebration is the celebration after the event (*Nachfeier*); one says, the wedding is buried. At this time, the leftovers are eaten and drunk and some more hearty dancing.

(d) **Death and Burial.** When someone dies, the leaders of the village are informed of the death by messengers (that is if they were not already aware of things like during an illness grappling with death), but the relatives away from home were informed through a rider, a vehicle or by telegram. The rest of the inhabitants of the village got their news of the death by means of the ringing of the bell. It was rung on the same day of the death if the sun had not yet set; otherwise, the next morning. If the deceased was at least 15 years old, the little bell was first rung 3 times and then 3 times with both bells. If the deceased was over 15 years old, the big bell was rung first and then both bells rung together. The time for the burial was provided by the sexton by means of a poster. The deceased was placed on a bier in a particular room in which the mirrors were covered and the windows opened and yellow sand put on the ground. On the day of the burial, the participants gather in the farmyard. Upon the arrival of the pastor or the sexton, the coffin was closed and placed on a bier in front of the house. The sexton spoke the blessing, indicated a hymn from the hymnbook which everyone sang (sometimes a different funeral song was sung which was not in the hymnal) and then the funeral procession headed for the cemetery. Having been provided with the information, the sexton gave the name and the illness of the deceased, spoke about the significant events in the life of the deceased, comforted the relatives, read from the Word of God and explained it, prayed, spoke a word of blessing and pointed out another hymn from the hymnbook. All mourners walked behind the coffin all the way to the cemetery. Clothing worn by the mourners were: Black clothing or, at the very least, a black band

around the arm. After the burial, the house of the bereaved had a small funeral ceremony where some good pure coffee was served with sweet bread. Sometimes, also one or more glasses of wine.

11. Customs throughout the Year: Lots of baking took place during Christmas and New Year, such as gingerbread, *Kuchen*, sweet bread, tarts, variety of small baked things, even as it is with us today. It was also the custom to gather together with next of kin. Above all, at Christmas time and also at the new year, the children would go to families they were friends with, to wish them good fortune, most often done with a little verse, such as: "Since the New Year has arrived, I have taken it upon myself to wish you peace in this time, good fortune and happiness," or "May God Almighty give you many flakes when it snows, many drops when it rains," or "Pray every week, pray me into the kingdom of God, what I receive that I will eat right now," or a common verse which we also say, "I am a little king, do not give me too little, don't let me stand here too long, I still have a little house further to go." On these occasions, grown-ups were treated to schnapps and gingerbread, the children received various little things.

During Shrovetide [day before Ash Wednesday], here and there, but not often, masks were worn.



Lots of things were again baked at Easter time. Special, however, was the boiling of eggs and painting them with different colors. Also at Easter, mutual good wishes were exchanged. The egg game remained universal which was carried out in a meadow by the single folks. A place was marked off in the meadow and in the middle a quite tall pole was decorated with a banner. (See the drawing). On one side

is the area for dancing, opposite a place for the musicians and beyond that a buffet with an assortment of pleasant things for the stomach. The eggs were placed in 4 straight lines and on each line 9 white raw eggs (at intervals of 20-25 cm [ca. 8-10 inches] and then one cooked and dyed egg, and so there were 10 [sets down a line?], one after the other. In each row of eggs (in all 4) there was a young man, called the appointed runner. At each point (a, b, c, and d) stood a young lady (one for each runner) with an apron and a hand-basket. Each runner had the assignment to toss the 9 white eggs, one at a time, into the apron of his young lady. The young lady would then place the gathered egg into the hand-basket at her side. It is quite obvious that some eggs broke open and splattered the young lady. The runner had to throw the tenth egg over the pole. This game was replayed by each runner 10 times and at an ever greater distance. The tossing of the tenth dyed egg is the decisive one. The young man (the runner) who, according to the rules, [was the first to] threw the last dyed egg over the pole,

won the game. Sometimes things got so heated that even bets were made. It is quite clear that it was no simple or easy thing to gather and toss 100 eggs.

12. Entertainment. Stories. Fairy-tales. Legends: When the farmers came together, they usually talked about things pertaining to farming such as plowing, sowing, mowing, threshing and about good and bad harvests. Then the thoughts would go back to the time of settlement and they recalled how the farmers then had to do their work. No machines like today; plowed with a wooden plow, mowed with a sickle or a scythe. The whole family was always busy in the field, their food very meager. When the bell for prayer time rang, the men, wherever they stood or were going, took off their caps and prayed the Lord's Prayer. They knew nothing about petroleum lamps, but illuminated the place with tallow or oil lamps. The clothing they made themselves out of flax or hemp, products which they grew. The children walked around with one long white shirt made of flax or linen until they were 13 or 14 years old. If someone borrowed money, or something else, he did not have to sign a statement of liability. His word was good enough. As the people said: "One man, one word" (*Ein Mann, ein Wort*). In their gatherings, the men also spoke about war, especially about World War 1 and also the present war. One joke in particular got a lot of attention; for example, 10 wagon drivers drove to a neighboring village for some wine. Once they had loaded up, they rested and drank a bit until they were tipsy. Then the journey back started. The road led over a hill on top of which was a dip. The first driver went over it, but lost his wine barrel, which the hill soaked up. The second driver asked the one ahead, "How's the trip?" The first fellow answered, "It's easy and now even easier." Then the second driver crossed over and experienced the same thing. All the others experienced the same fate. In time their heads cleared again, turned around, went back and loaded up new barrels and then drove back home.

The women spoke about their activities in the house, talked about happenings in the village or sang songs. (See song sheet).

The children were told fairy-tales, as it was with us, such as Snow White, Little Red Riding-Hood, the 7 Dwarfs, and others.

Elves are also familiar to the resettlers. The following ghost story was told: Once there lived in Village K. a wealthy farmer who had a big family. When the oldest son got married, the father bought a farmyard and gave it as a gift to the son; however, without a house. The son was supposed to build that himself. He worked real good at putting up the house, but, when it was completed, it lacked windows and doors. The young man became so irritated that he was at a loss as to what to do. He quarreled with his brothers and sisters, left his wife at his father's place, took a little parlor dog and went to sleep in his new house. During the night, between 11 and 12, the dog started to bark. A man without a head appeared and demanded that the farmer accompany him. This took up the whole night and the young man became very annoyed and really swore. The man vanished with a great noise and never returned. However, the house has been haunted for a long time. Every time, when that hour approached, the clothes cupboard began to rattle, the kitchen utensils on the wall knocked against each other, and things like that.

13. Superstition: When the rooster crows, visitors will come, or in similar manner, when the cat is cleaning itself, visitors will be coming from the left or the right direction, according to whether it cleans itself with the left or the right paw. When the dog scratches in the ground or lies on its back, a storm is coming. If someone is unable to sleep, it is said, he is being plagued by witches. As a remedy, it is recommended that an evening be set aside to remove everything from the bedroom, clean everything and then put it all back into the room again. Another remedy is also mentioned: Tear a toad in two and place both pieces under the pillow. In the same context as this remedy another story is told, namely: A young girl disappeared from a neighbor's house. They said that she turned herself into a toad, which was torn in two in this manner.

If a child has difficulty with teeth the remedy is: Catch a sparrow. Tear off its head. Apply the warm blood to the gums by the tooth and say 3 times: "God the Father help you, God the Son and Holy Spirit."

If a child has tuberculosis (*Auszehrung*) and is getting weak (*Abnehmen*). The remedy: On a Friday, before sunset, go to an apple tree, without saying a word, or under a plum tree and say: "I lay my complaint on you. My child has tuberculosis and is weak. The first bird that flies away from you should carry it away." Then again 3 times: "In the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." Each time these words are spoken, the one with the illness must shake the tree, or, at the very least, a branch of it.

If a child is wasting away, the child is placed on the floor and measured. Then you take the stem (*Schilfrohr*) of a feather (*Fahne*), burn it and give the ashes to the child to eat.

For a cough: Cut up onions, tie them to the sole of the foot and then say: "*Nuetzt es nichts, so schadet es nicht, es waere besser, es waere nicht.*" "Good for nothing, so never mind, it would be better if it did not exist at all."

Should a horse get entangled, one pours some cold water into the ears or brews it some tea.

There are no amulets for the Germans on the evangelical side; however, there are for the Russians.

Conjuring is left to the gypsies, of which, to be sure, there are many there, just passing through.

14. Songs: Folk songs, songs for children and also other songs are demonstrated in the enclosed music sheet. I myself have led the singing of various songs for women, on the spot put down the notes and proofed them to be correct by having them sung again. Therefore, I want to especially make note of a song from England which a Bessarabian farmer has put to poetry. Only one verse is shown on the sheet music while the remaining 7 are in an enclosure. Bessarabian German Resettlers do not have student songs, since there were no students among them. They were all farmers.

15. Riddles and Proverbs:

(1) *Kommt was von Heck und Beck, hat ein' Mantel von tausend Fleck.* It comes from Heck or Beck, has a mantle with a thousand spots. (the rooster)

(2) *Es liegt was im Keller drunten und ziehen sieben Paar Ochsen nicht herauf.* There is something lying down there in the cellar which seven pair of oxen are not able to pull out. (fuzz-ball, *der Wollenballen*)

(3) *Ich geh in dir, ich geh auf dir, ich werd' dich bomponelen (kneten), dass dir der Bauch aufgeht.* I go into you, I go on you, I will punch you so that your stomach disappears. (bread dough)

(4) *Wann ist der Mann ohne Kopf zu hause?* When is a man at home without a head? (When he is looking out of a window.)

(5) *Es hockt was im Eckle und sacht wie a Boeckle.* Something is sitting in a corner and looks like a ram. (curd or trash, *Quark*)

(6) *Aussen haarig, innen haarig, 7 m in den....noch haarig.* Hairy on the outside, hairy on the inside, and 7 meters within....still hairy. (a straw pile)

16. Proverbs:

(1) *Annamareile, koch' dei Breile, sitz auf'm Stuehle, melk dei Kuehle, geh aufs Gras, lock den Has', gurgele, gurgele, lange Nas'.* Little Anna Marie, cook the mashed potatoes, sit on the little chair, milk the little cow, go on the grass, coax the rabbit, throat, throat, a long nose.

(2) *Lidja, Lidja, Pfeffermuehle, deine Kinder fressen viele, alle Tag ein Laiblein Brot, nimm den Hammer, schlag' sie tot.* Lydia, Lydia, pepper-mill, your children devour too much, every day a little loaf of bread, take a hammer and strike them dead.

(3) *Bauer bind' dein' Pudel an, dass er mich nicht beissen kann. Beisst er mich, so straf' ich dich mit eine Mark dreissig. Eine Mark dreissig ist kein Geld, wenn der Pudel noch so bellt.* Farmer, tie up your poodle so that he cannot bit me. If he bites me, I will fine you one Mark thirty. One Mark thirty is nothing if the poodle continues to bark.

17. Number Verses:

(1) *Eins, zwei, drei, vier, fuenf, sechs, sieben, uns're Mutter, die kocht Rueben, unser Vater, der kocht Speck, wen er will, den jagt er weg.* One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, our mother cooks turnips, our father cooks fat, whom he wants, he chases away.

(2) *Johannes hat ein' Garten klein, in dem Garten war ein Baum, in dem Baume war ein Nest, in dem Nest war ein Ei, in dem Ei was ein Dotter, in dem Dotter was eine Maus, sonst Johannes, du bist raus.* John has a little garden, in the garden was a tree, in the tree was a

nest, in the nest was an egg, in the egg was a yoke, in the yoke was a mouse, moreover, John you are out of here.

(3) *Enna, denna, Tintenfass, geh' in die Schul' und lerne was, kommst du heim und kannst du's nicht, nehm' ich die Rut' und kitzle dich.* Enna, denna, ink-well, go to school and learn something. If you come home and do not know anything, I will take the rod and tickle you.

18. Folk Games: The Egg Game has already been mentioned earlier and now to mention the Key Game.

The Key Game: There are different ways of playing this game. Anyone, usually a young boy, takes a key. Someone from among the players steps forward and sings. The others, two by two, go around him in a circle. (always one boy and one girl, but not holding hands). Then the person, without the group knowing just when, lets the key fall, and everyone has to suddenly stop and stand still. The one inside the circle has to quickly rush to find a female or male partner from among those standing. The one left without a partner, or who moves, has to go into the middle and then the game starts again.

19. Dance: There was dancing on Sunday afternoon and evening. The dances are by and large the same as we have here, only simpler and faster. As mentioned earlier, there were also folk dances of the strangers (Russian and Romanian) which were inserted.

Nicknames come to mind, but they are rare; occasionally they ended up with legal consequences.

[End of Document & Translation]