

Friedrich Strohmaier

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Translated by: Allen E. Konrad
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[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

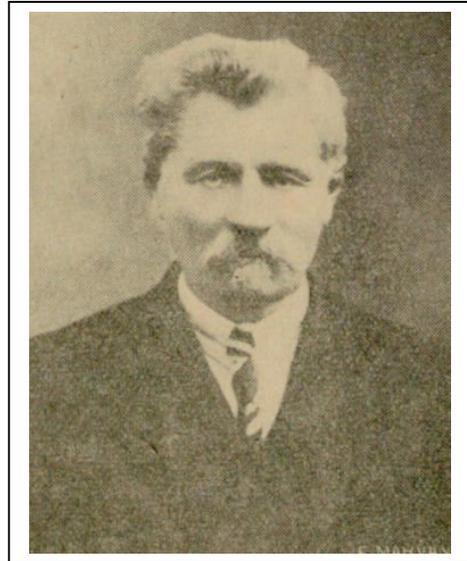
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[Translation Begins]

Friedrich Strohmaier †
(Obituary notice 1863-1937)

Possessions pass away, relatives die,
You yourself will pass away just like they;
One thing I know that lives eternally:
The inevitability of death

In the cemetery of the German community in Cetatea-Alba [Akkerman], a widely spread out area by the loamy yellow water of the Dniester [Estuary], the one who has fallen asleep found his final resting place on 05 June, 1937. On 29 April, 1863, he saw the light of day in Schirajewo, in the former Kherson *Gouvernement* in southern Russia. He lost his father at the age of 4. A short time later, his mother married for the second time with a certain Erdmann. The upbringing of little Fritz was a very strict one. He had to work in the field already as a small boy, he was already behind the plow at the age of 12 and mowed together in rank and file with the other workers. Since there was no school where he was born, and Fritz had to be confirmed, he came to Großliebental at the age of 15. It was only now that he started to learn the alphabet. Thanks to his extraordinary talent and his unusual diligence, he learned reading and writing in a very short time. Because he had to carry out the fieldwork during the day, he sat late into the night over his books. In order to keep from falling asleep, he put his feet, as Schiller of old, in cold water. He finally succeeded in entering the first class of the Großliebental Central School where he could quench his thirst for knowledge. His first school days were pure agony for the 16 year-old: firstly, he was much older and bigger than his classmates, also he spoke only simple Russian (*das Kleinrussische*), which brought him a lot of ridicule from his classmates and forced him into the decision to flee the school. Thanks to the efforts of his Russian language teacher Snakowski, he returned to school again and was soon one of the best students of this institution. But there too more blows were waiting for him. He was punished once by the mathematics teacher with seven lashes on the back because of the “*Fus*” (a Russian measurement). “Now, how many did you get?” asked the teacher. “One *Faden*,” was the prompt response; because seven *Fuss* make

one *Faden*. On 10 June, 1883 he finished the Central School, passed the State examination with good success and qualified as a Russian teacher. From 1884 to 1887, he was active as a teacher in Josefstal, and from 1887 to 1890 in Alexanderhilf. After he gave up the teaching profession, he became a clerk in the area administration (*Wolost*), namely: from 1890 to 1892 in Lustdorf, near Odessa, from 1892 to 1895 in Freudental, and from 1895 to 1904 in Schabo. Then, he moved to Cetatea Alba, where he was appointed as the main cashier of the “Small Credit Office” of the *zemstvo* [local self-government unit]. He held this office until the outbreak of the World War in 1914, when, because he was a German, he had to give it up. During the war, he lived in the German villages. He was employed temporarily at the Mannsburg Bank and later as administrator in the Gentner Mill in Lichtental.



For five months he was in the Kishinev prison because of his newspaper correspondence. The revolution brought about his release. The Romanian authorities repeatedly offered him various important positions, which, however, he declined because of a poor knowledge of the national language.

The deceased was our German colonist who came into the city and was involved in land purchases, legal proceedings or anything else that had to do with the official position, a well informed reliable adviser. Having served as a district clerk, he had excellent legal knowledge which had prepared him as a professionally trained attorney that brought him much honor. However, his main employment was in the literary field, which he worked at tirelessly from 1888 until his death in 1937. In his articles, there was always a play of the imagination, an abundance of witty ideas, a lively portrayal; a poetic tinge, he sought sustenance (*Nahrung*) by the finest German poets and philosophers. In the pre-war period, he was one of the most ardent employees of the *Odessa Newspaper* (*Odessa Zeitung*) and the *Dakota Free Press* (*Dakota Freien Presse*). After the war, he was next the editor of the news sheet *New Life* (*Neues Leben*) issued in German by the *Uprawa*. He took an active interest as a colleague for the *German Newspaper for Bessarabians* (*Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens*), and the *German Ethnic Calendar for Bessarabia* (*Deutschen Volkskalender fuer Bessarabian*). For 28 years straight, the deceased served the American-German *State Gazette* (*Staatsanzeiger*) in Bismarck. His more recent expressed desire to live until he had delivered his one-thousandth report would remain sadly unfulfilled, but he did submit 958—a sign of his diligence. Already some years ago, he suffered a stroke which paralyzed his right arm. For this reason, he could no longer control the pen, so he dictated his essays. In the last three months of his life, a stomach cancer caused him intensive pain, from which death released him on 03 June, 1937, at 9 o'clock in the evening. His last words were: “*Macht Licht—Make Light!*” As the deceased was a genuine German-minded man, so was he also a loving husband and father. He married twice: from his first marriage in 1883 to Karoline Käberle, came 4 daughters, from his second in 1893 to Pauline Jundt from Schabo, came 7 sons, who are all alive and doing well, namely: Friedrich Wilhelm—chemist and factory inspector in Constanze; Alexander—domestic economist; Artur—lawyer in Cetatea-Alba; Gottfried—justice of the peace in Tatareschti; Albert—restaurateur in Belgium; Otto—state

elementary school teacher in Tarutino; Woldemar—trade academic and official of the company “*Distributia*” in Cernautzi. Four of these sons have a high school education (*Hochschulbildung*) and two a secondary school education (*Mittelschulbildung*). The one now fallen asleep, in providing for himself, purchased a modest residence in Cetatea-Alba in which he spent his senior days. His family members weep with deep sorrow over the death of their beloved father. No less we, his former friends and readers. We will miss his work a lot, but with the poet, we are able to say rightly about Friedrich Strohmeier: “He who did enough good in his time, he has lived for all times...”

Now then a final salute from the pen of the departed:

You, you sleeping in graves,
You will wake up again!
And dear lovely songs
Guide the dream for me upward.
Now, good night, my little village!
Eventually, youth gets old,

Once so full of warm life,
Now, you are still and cold.
Good night! And rest in peace!
I'm going the same path,
And under the same covering
When once I lay down in sleep!

O.E.

[Translation Ends]