

The Germans in Dobrudscha (Part 5)

The book listed below, containing 248 pages of information, is being translated chapter by chapter and posted as each chapter is completed. Part 1 gives you a summary of each of the 15 chapters in the “Contents” section. The words in the [square brackets] are those of the translator and are not found in the original text.

Translator: Allen E. Konrad
02 May, 2017

The Germans in Dobrudscha

**along with a contribution
to the history of the German
migration in Eastern Europe**

**by
Paul Traeger**

**With 73 illustrations in the text and tables
Stuttgart 1922
Foreign and Home Publishing Company
(*Ausland und Heimat Verlags=Aktiengesellschaft*)**

5.

The Second Period of German Immigration 1873-1883

1871 brought the South Russian colonies a drastic change in their circumstances. The Welfare Committee, established in 1818 as an independent and supreme authority for the settlement of colonies in the jurisdictions (*Gouvernements*) of Bessarabia, Kherson, Jekaterinoslav and Taurida, was abolished and the colonists were placed under the general authorities just like the other subjects of the Empire. The duties of the Committee, according to the provisions of the regulations, not only dealt with the administration of the settlements, but also explicitly with the protection of the rights, freedoms, and privileges which belonged to the colonists. With a stroke, they were now deprived of all the privileges that were to last for all times, which, as an enticement, were promised to the German immigrants and their descendants. It is not so much the immediately established harsh manner in which the farmers suffered the consequences of the regulation in relation to the administration of municipalities and their church and school relationships. More significantly was the loss of a special privilege that deeply disturbed the German villagers: the end to their exemption from military service. In 1873, they were subject to conscription, and the first recruitments started in the next few years in the German settlements. This gave the impetus for a new migration movement, a vastly greater one than the earlier ones. In the colonies of Dobrudscha which emerged in the following years, the farmers informed me unanimously, again and again, that the reason for their departure from Russia was “because they were supposed to become a soldier.”

This time, the paths of departure took way different directions. Some immediately migrated into Dobrudscha. Others, probably the most numerous, sought again a new home in Moldavia and Wallachia, as the first emigrants had 30 years earlier. Again, various German settlements emerged here for shorter or longer periods of time, without any information about them available to us. One of them, completely disappeared today as the others, had a longer existence and played a similar role for the development of the Germanness of Dobrudscha as did the Jacobsonsthal Colony in the first immigration period. This was a settlement on the Bugzu, about 30 km [18.6 miles] from Braila, named Neu-Plotzke by its founder after the name of their Russian village of Plotzk, one of the Bessarabian colonies in the Akkerman District. Here, a group leased land from a big landowner in 1874. They must not have experienced misfortune for a while, since this settlement achieved quite an expansion and lasted into the mid-1880s. Most of its members finally made it to Dobrudscha. Jacobsonsthal also received some immigration from Russia in those years. Furthermore, I met several settlers in Dobrudscha who belonged to a group that had even moved to Palestine, to Rama near Jaffa, in 1874. After one and a half years, they came back again because the climate was too hot for them there.

During this second period of German colony formation, there emerged a series of settlements flourishing today. Immigration from Russia, with or without stopovers, ceased after a full uninterrupted decade.

In the summer of 1872, emissaries from the Bessarabian colonies spent some time in Dobrudscha, looking for suitable land. Their presence is mentioned in an Atmagea document of 29 July and it noted that the German nation, since they in their farming abilities far surpassed the

local nationalities, were always preferred by the Turkish authorities. The scouts apparently encountered friendly willingness to oblige and returned with good news. The first procession of immigrants themselves then arrived in the summer of the next year.

As we have seen, the older colonies are all in the northern part of the country. The new arrivals migrated farther south. Whether directed there by the Turkish authorities or by their own choice, is not clear. The settlements founded by them are like almost all later ones, taking place in the wide, treeless steppe country of middle and southern Dobrudscha. They were spared the hard work of clearing the forest so they could immediately insert the plow and live immediately from the yield of the crop. The terms of the settlement remained quite favorable. As long as the Turks were still masters of the country, you could plow as much as you wanted to or were able to and paid a tenth.

The first three colonies began nearly at the same time. The various oral information which I received about the arrival time of the founding families did not always agree, and written documents were somehow more available. The memory of farmers is usually uncertain when it comes to specific numbers or data, and even to specify dates of important events of their own lives when they are not connected with a fixed external task or circumstance. So you cannot with absolute certainty give the exact age in the priority in which these colonies came into existence.

Cogealac Colony, right in the middle between Constanta and Babadag, 3 km [1.8 miles] west of the great military road, is probably the largest and most magnificent of all German settlements in Dobrudscha. In 1873, maybe first in the following year, the first 15 families arrived after having stopped over for some time in Kataloi. They came from the Bessarabian colonies of Mannsburg, Kulm, Katzbach, Beresina, Alt-Elft. Soon thereafter, a larger influx must have followed including those from settlements of the Kherson *Gouvernement*. So a Württemberg family was established which originated from *Oberamt* Marbach and recently from Neuburg Colony. The Fix, Klaus and Bachmann families belonged to the founders of Franzfeld, Klein-Liebenthal and Josephsthal. Already a dozen years later, Cogealac numbered 486 souls. As to their German origin, the immigrants were mixed. The majority from Swabia, then Poland and Prussia, and some from Mecklenburg, a relationship about equal to the composition of the Beresina colony at its founding.¹ Today, Cogealac is regarded as a Swabian village. Schwäbisch is spoken and all residents should or want to be Swabian, except for a few Platte folks.

This manifests itself in the counterbalancing development which apparently took place gradually by the third generation in the mixed colonies, and we can observe it in the same way here in all more recent settlements of Dobrudscha. The South German element proved to be the stronger, the Kaschubian children learned to speak in the Swabian dialect. Upon closer examination, the today dominant Swabian character by no means matches the real conditions of descendency. This is already evidenced by the fact that we come across a number of family names also in Cogealac, that we already met up with in the older platt-dialect colonies of Atmagea and Ciucurova or of detectable North German or Polish origin such as Martin, Brandenburg, Alumhagen, Look, Buchholz, Kraus, Ruf, Roth, Siebert, Ponto, Nusku, Lück, Wolff, Wolschinski, Woloschko. In contrast, there are also a lot of families which show proof of or are

¹ 81 Württemberg Families, 55 Polish, 15 Prussian and 11 Mecklenburg. (St. Petersburgische Zeitschrift 1823, S. 57 ff.)

accepted as being of South German origin: Burgemeister (originating from Kaltenwesten), Hauser, Rauser, Straub, Stehr, Fix, Käfer, Stach, Hoffmann, Romming, Sülzle, Heim, and others.

The Russo-Turkish War brought terror and misery of the young settlement. The returning withdrawn Turks and Circassians plundered every one of the farmers and many houses were destroyed. From 1878, three free years were granted to the completely impoverished village. They were allowed to farm as much land as they wanted without any tax and lease payment. However, the Romanian authorities increased the taxes severely after this time. When Bernhard Schwarz briefly visited Cogealac in the spring of 1886, he encountered the farmers in hopeless despair. But then they experienced an unexpected pleasant surprise. The Romanian land survey of this year was curiously incomparably more advantageous for them than we came to know them in the older colonies. Probably simply for no other reason than that here an abundance of unclaimed land was available. Then, the Turkish ownership titles were recognized, in as far as they were in order. Then the possession for a family of merely 10 hectares [24.7 acres], as in Atmagea, was not enforced, but 10 hectares per head were allocated, only with the restriction that no family be awarded more than 50 hectares [124 acres]. Of these 10 hectares, 8 were always designated for agriculture and 2 for pasture. Also, each received a farmyard, at first 4,000 square meters [43,030 square feet], later 2,000 square meters [21,420 square feet]. In the village, the 10 hectares was, and is still today, “the land of the soul” (*Seelenland*). Throughout a period of 25 years, an annual payment of 48 lei 75 bani was made. During this time, the owner had no right to sell it. The land was returned to the State if one did not pay the taxes for three years, even if emigrating. In this way, the government, in the course of time, recovered over 1,000 hectares [2,471 acres], which they distributed to their veterans, so that, eventually, they moved in about 65 Romanian families in a village which was previously almost pure German. Whoever was born after 1886 could not received any more land, but there was still the opportunity to buy land. So that is the reason for favorable ownership in Cogealac than in most of the other settlements. Individual farmers have up to 100 hectares [247 acres], and the number of landless people is not substantial. Over 100 hectares were previously planted with vineyards until, about 8 years ago, the phylloxera infestation showed up.



Market Area in Cogealac

Cogealac has evolved into a thriving German settlement and is likely to be the most prosperous in Dobrudscha. It is the station for mail, telegraph and telephone. At the huge marketplace it

gives an almost urban impression with the respectable buildings of the Mayoral Office (*Primarie*) and the Court. Before the war, a large market took place here every Tuesday which was attended by all from villages both near and in the outlying neighborhood. Several large and beautiful streets start from here, among them especially the long and very wide, bordered by walls and shaded by tall trees, Toxof Street which exhibits the typical image of the German village street as we are seeing in all subsequent German settlements. In the middle of the market square stands the beautiful church, surrounded by a garden, which, with its high square steeple and light blue paint, shines forth out of the green mass of farms from far off. It was constructed according to a design of an old 1880 prayer house in Germany and dedicated in 1908. Even the Baptists, of which there are about 15 families, have their own prayer house in Cogealac. German school, prior to the construction of the Romanian one, was held in the parish hall, and now it was also opened again during our occupation. An efficient teacher originating from the village had to teach no less than 190 children. Also before of the war, German schooling in Cogealac was somewhat better off, other than here seldom achieved, that three hours a day were set aside for every 1½ year old child to receive instructions in the mother tongue; even a small municipal library was created which ended up with nearly 200 volumes. Since 1884, Cogealac, as well as the neighboring municipality of Tariverde, celebrates a special day of repentance and prayer on 31 May to commemorate the deliverance from a long drought.

The village currently consists of 173 German families with 839 souls, including three families of Jewish descent that converted to Catholicism. Through emigration, the colony has lost about 40 families of which a couple went to Germany, the rest to North Dakota and South Dakota. They were in part young people who wanted to avoid the Romanian military. In addition, there are 70 Romanian families, 8 Turkish, and 3 Bulgarian in the village.

2½ km [1.5 miles] east of Cogelac, next to the main highway, is the **Tariverde Colony**, whose formation and destiny presents a very similar picture. According to the testimony of some, some of the older ones, the first settlers already arrived here in 1873; according to others, first in the next year. The earliest existing church record on a single loose page shows the first entry as 7 January, 1879. But that proves nothing over against the various oral information which varied only between those years and were always with reference to the introduction of military duty in Russia. 44 families came at the same time: 12 from Klöstitz, the others from Kulm, Leipzig, Neu-Arzs, Beresina, Tarutino, Borodino. The elements which formed the basis for Cogealac were also about the same for them. Klöstitz was made up of a mixed settlement of people from Württemberg, Prussia and Poland; in Borodino, people from Bavaria; in Leipzig and Tarutino, the Württemberg people made up only a small minority.² Enterprising folks (*Gründungen*). Also the younger Bessarabian Lichtenthal Colony, founded in 1834 by Württemberg people from the Sarata area,³ was also mentioned to me.

Despite these original mixtures, Tariverde has also currently evolved into a Swabian colony, and only a few families are considered to be Platt. But here, as in Cogealac, a whole range of names coincide with those of the older, purely Platt colonies, or they do not indicate Swabian origin, such as Kant, Adam, Fischer, Ardnt, Kinz, Kraus, Martin, Fechner, Büttner, Krüger,

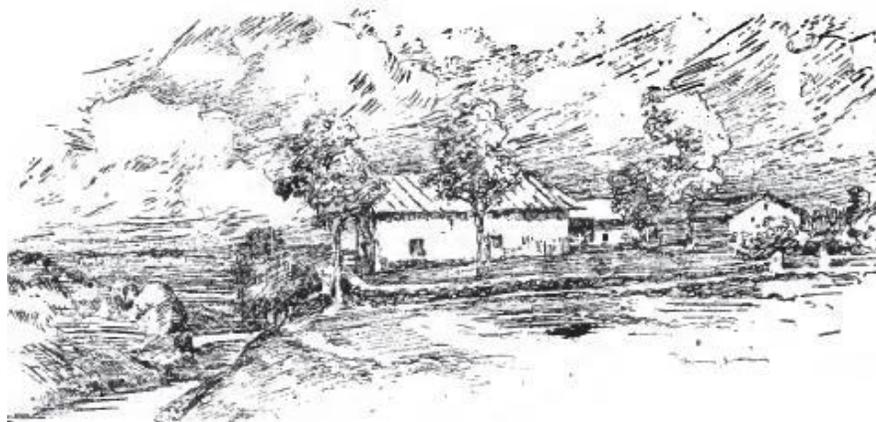
² Leipzig: 72 Polish Families, 60 Prussian, 17 Württemberg; Tarutino: 68 Prussian, 54 Polish, 8 Württemberg. (St. Petersburg. Zeitschr. 1823, S. 57 ff.

³ Archiv für wissenschaftliche Kunde von Rußland, 1853, S. 454.

Sommerfeld, Kudschinski, Schigurski, and others. From Swabian may be mentioned: Nagel, Ritter, Geckle, Stach, Heim, Speitel, Albrecht, Pfeifer, Meyer, Ehret and Baumstark (Alsatian). In particular are confirmed the Württemberg hometowns of Ofterdinnen, Boppweiler, and Weilstein. One of these Swabian families took the path through Poland, several belonged to the unfortunate emigration from Galicia, including the Ofterdinger family Speitel, of which one of the three brothers remained there. Who eventually came to Tariverde after having previously joined with the movement to Palestine, then again to Beresina. One must recall these large migrations by individual cases in order to retain a lively idea of the up-and-down fates and impressions which were experienced by some of these farming families. Tariverde also exhibits an example of isolated cases of emigration from Germany to South Russia in recent times. The Ritter family first left Weilstein in the *Oberamt* Marbach for Crimea in 1862, after a brief period of ten years went back to Germany again so as not to lose their citizenship, then returned again to Crimea, and finally settled in Dobrudscha.

The Romanian land distribution was experienced in the same way as in Cogealac. In time, there were about a dozen families who did not own their own property. Since 1890, a significant number, around 30, migrated to Canada and Dakota, even to Argentina.

Whoever had land, for him things went good: “We were gentlemen. The mayor was German, we were respected.” Beautiful farmyards lining the long, immensely wide main street indicated successful prosperity and high culture: clean whitewashed street walls and houses with painted facade; high, massive gate archways. In the center, a feel-at-home, picturesque church, half concealed by the green of the trees, modest, a farmhouse with a reed roof, a wide bell tower set up next to it. This old building is to have been replaced by a new one in 1886. Already since 1910, some of the landlords each set aside a hectare of land with the purpose of putting the profit of its yield into the building fund.⁴ Next to the church, in contrast to the colonist houses with the long side facing the street, stood an inn that was operated by an Armenian. For many years, the community refused to allow a tavern to exist in order to prevent an immoral lifestyle. A small stream flows on the west side of the village, which retains its water even in the summer. 2 steam mills are operated by German colonists.



Mill in Tariverde, Sketch by R. Canisius

⁴ Bericht des Lehrers Fischer im Jahrbuch des Deutschen Volksbildungsvereins in Rumänien, Bukarest 1911, Seite 171.

Romanian school was imposed upon the municipality in 1890, but half the instructions were in German until 1902, then it also shrank here from the usual 2 hours a day for each child to an hour. Of course, the community had to bear the cost for the Romanian school building. The government had promised a grant of 4,000 lei, however, it never showed up. In the fall of 1917, the school, at this time, of course again took place purely in German, which was attended by 160 children. An excellent old teacher, whose grandparents once had moved to Bessarabia from the area from Dirschau, had not merely earned great merit from the German education system, but also the whole other cultural life of the community. A warmhearted, conscientious German. In a brief report for the Bucharest Yearbook, two years before the war, he put down with simple, beautiful words his commitment to the German ethnicity.⁵ "Germany remains Germany, but we Germans abroad, whether here or elsewhere, should also think and act German, in spite of loyal allegiance to the country which we now count ourselves part of." The merits of the brave farmer teacher in Dobrudscha were recognized, in this case, at least by the homeland. He received the Hohenzollern Royal Order in 1909.

In 122 German houses, Tariverde has 133 families with 761 souls. Under the family names, besides those already mentioned, a number of quite unusual ones, maybe limited to certain districts in Germany, such as Jilius, Unterschütz, Raugust, Orning, Klatt, Buttau, Kling, Neitz, Schlenker, Auhorn, Possert, Weintz, Freimuth, Diete, Holzwart, Hirschkorn, Bender, Wallewein, Grieb, Bordt, and others,

The first settlers of **Fachria Colony**, about 12 km [7.5 miles] north of the railway station of Mircea Boda, arrived before the German Christmas of 1873. Their Russian home was the Bessarabian colony of Paris, founded in 1816 by families coming almost exclusively from Poland and Prussia. They had stopped over for a couple of months in Kataloi. In the next few years, another increase in population followed out of Kulm, Katzbach and Plotzk. A larger number of farmers at first migrated to the more than once mentioned settlement of Neu-Plotzki on the Buzau and stayed there for a length of time, up to 6 years.

What has been said about Cogevalac and Tariverde also holds true for Fachria: the Swabian element among the immigrants proved to be the stronger and gave its character to the place. Originally, the South Germans were only slightly more numerous than the Kaschubians. We have already encountered some of the family names in the former colonies (Dörmann, Kraus, Buchholz, Heim, Zottnick, Bruniski, Schmidt, Klatt, Nagel, Schollmeyer, Stiller, Koch, Pohl, Sept), the larger portion are new, which indicates that most of the people of Fachria came from other Bessarabian villages like the settlers of Atmagea, Kataloi, Cogevalac, etc. We find the names: Knodel, Görke, Habermann, Neubauer, Hopp, Brenner, Neimann, Führer, Werner, Fein, Ernst, Seidler, Kercher, Fruck, Wiedner, Horst, Sommer, Mauck, Jausch, Hentschel, Rödsner, Ellert, Furchert, Fiedler, Burlack. The grandfather of colonist Buchholz came to Bessarabia from Ludz, whose grandfather came from Berlin. The family Brenner specified Bavaria as its homeland, and also mentioned to me was Kirchberg in Württemberg.

Fachria experienced an interesting population increase, like several other German Dobrudscha villages, with exceptional occasion in recent times. As recalled, the Russian warship of the Black Sea fleet "Potemkin" revolted for a number of years and eventually fled to Constanta.

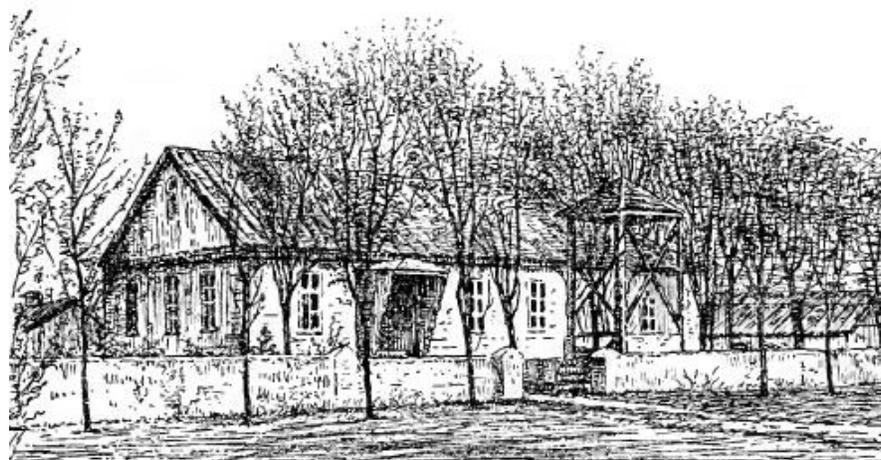
⁵ Jahrg. 1913, S. 140.

Among its crew were 22 Germans who sought out German settlements after arrival in the Dobrudscha and stayed. Several of their Russian comrades joined them, and one of them, after his marriage to a German girl, even took on her family name. Three of these German Potemkin people settled in Fachria and got married. Two of them came from the Volga colonies and one from Crimea.

The narrow winding of the settlement received a painful setback by the Russo-Turkish War. After the Danube crossing of the Russians at Harsova under General Carpenter, it ended up in the middle of the war, and a large part of the colonists left it. They sought refuge in the northern colonies, mainly in Cogealac, and returned only in 1884.

Fachria has also evolved into a beautiful, thriving village. It is close on the edge of the steep hill that separates it from the marshy ground of Karasu to the north. Aside from a Bulgarian, who married a German girl, it consists of only German residents: 67 families with 330 souls. About 25 families emigrated to Canada. Along the wide main street are 60 clean farmyards, whose residential buildings are painted white and blue, usually with fixed roof, and the gable peak decorated with a horse's head or a three dimensional carving. Although only 28 families own real estate besides the farmyard, an imposing prosperity reigned, and things went good for everyone. It dealt primarily with dairy farming, whose production found a worthwhile market in Cernavoda and Medgidia. "A centrifuge hums from every house," a colonist assured me. Even a motor driven threshing machine has been brought to the village.

As for the school, it was so well taken care of as the situation allowed. The community retained a German teacher, and the first hour in the morning and afternoon were reserved for the German lessons. The Romanian government had also introduced a school for little children, but I've noticed no trace of its influence on the blond youth of the village. The World War has affected the colony quite severely. First, it was occupied by the Romanians, who drafted into the military or dragged off nearly all male persons, starting off with the boys even to people in old age. Then came our Bulgarian and Turkish allies, who behaved hardly less hostile. Of the flocks and



Church in Fachria

livestock they left virtually nothing, and they did not even spare the simple prayer house. The organ from Germany was chopped up and burned. The farmers had buried the candlestick,

crucifix, and also the church records and municipality books; however, they were nevertheless found and stolen or destroyed.

In the spring of 1876, about 25-30 families from the Bessarabian colony of Krasna arrived in Dobrudscha, to which they had previously sent out scouts. Krasna had been established in 1815 by Catholic immigrants of different origins. There were among them 35 families from Württemberg, 54 Polish, 53 Prussian, 15 Bohemian, 7 French (i.e., Alsatians, Rhinelander), 3 Hungarian, 2 Bavarian and even a family from Courland and Pomerania. Among the emigrants were both South Germans and North Germans. Upon their arrival in Dobrudscha, they separated from each other. 7 families settled in Caramurat, the majority about 10 km [6.2 miles] northeast of there in the locality of **Tasaul** on the northern tip of the lake by that same name. No information exists any longer about their settlement here. With the breaking out of the war in the following year, they were driven off again, and they took refuge in the village of **Caraibil** near Sarinasuf, about 3 km [1.8 miles] removed from the north bank of Lake Razelm. Here they joined families in turn with those from Caramurat who were also affected by the events of the war, so that a pretty sizable German colony came together. But already after 2-3 years they split up for some unknown reasons, and once again it led to a separation. Some of the people returned to Caramurat, the others moved back north again and settled in **Possta**, approximately 15 km [9.3 miles] southwest of Tulcea. But even here their stay did not last long. It was woodland and, as it seems, very unhealthy. They had to suffer from fever and the work of clearing may also not have appealed to them. They moved again and finally found a place of permanent residence in Culelia.

Caramurat Colony is located in the next, smooth plain 8 km [4.9 miles] west of Lake Tasaul, 18 km [11.1 miles] from the railway station of Medgidia, 25 km [15.5 miles] from Constanta. It was a large Tatar village that should have numbered around 300 families when the first newcomers arrived from Krasna. The war also forced the Tatars to flee and only a part of them, 70 families, came back after the conclusion of peace. The German farmers, however, returned at the beginning of the 1880s in increased number from Caraibil. There was no shortage of free land, and also the Romanian government was quite generous in 1883-1884 during the land distribution. Whoever took large allotments of more than 10 hectares [24.7 acres], had to pay 5 lei per hectare annually, for the small allotments of 10 hectares, 30 lei annually for a period of 30 years. Whoever fell behind for 3 years in a row in paying the rent, forfeited his land. At first, farmyards of 4,000 square meters [43,030 square feet] were given, then 2,000 square meters [21,420 square feet].

A fresh influx soon arrived every year from Bessarabia, which stopped by the end of the decade. Those coming after 1884, however, did not receive any land. If they found no opportunity to purchase some, rented land was their only recourse. So it is that some of the older colonists ended up without any personal property. But all went very well economically. They advanced more and more from year to year. They cultivated wheat, corn, oats, and barley. Over 600 cows moved about on the community pasture before the war, and greater still was the ownership of horses. The German farmers established a Farmers Bank Association. Even a brickyard with machines from Germany, which made bricks, well troughs, grain rollers ("threshing stones") and cemetery stones.

The colonist stemming from Krasna received over the years, directly or indirectly, a considerable influx from the Catholic colonies in the Kherson *Gouvernement*. Under the current family names there are a whole series which we have already come to know in Malcoci, all originating from South Germany, mainly from Alsace, Baden and the Palatinate. Such names as: Wiedemann, Hoffarth, Tuchscheerer, Aspenleiter, Drescher, Baumstark, Schröder, Kunzler, Türk and Gugert. A larger number reveal themselves to be both of Russian origin and of South German homeland origin. From the Palatinate came the families Paul (from Kapsweyer, and settled in the colonies of Landau and Karlsruhe), Schäfer (from Völkersweiler and Gelnhausen in Hesse, settling in München Colony, and from Bietigheim in Baden, in Speyer Colony), Hirsch (Herzheim, in Landau Colony), Eberle (Blankerborn, in Rastatt Colony), Wagner (Hatzenbühl and Siegen in Alsace, in Speyer Colony), Dillmann (Schönau and Eschbach, in the colonies of Landau and Speyer). Coming from Alsace: Moser (Reimesweiler, in Landau Colony), Senn (Berseebach, in Speyer Colony), Wolf (Schweighofen, in Landau Colony), Marthaler (Leimersheim, in Speyer Colony), Schnell (Hüttenheim, in Landau Colony). The Haag family from Rastatt Colony originated from Flehingen in Baden. Families Götz, Moser, Wagner and Wolf were the first settlers of Kleinliebenthal Colony; and Schäfer, Bachmeier, Hirsch and Kunz of the founders of Josephsthal.⁶ Also from the other Caramurat families, a goodly number of them resided in South Germany: Ternes, Kreiß, Speicher, Fürch, Menges, Streile, Barsch, Heidrich.

On the other hand, evidently there were a number of Kashubians among the Caramurat settlers. As far as details can be determined, almost all of these were residents in Russian Poland, and undoubtedly there were also genuine Polish people among them. Surviving colonist Christian Fenrich belongs to one of the seven founding families. The wife of his grandfather was a Polish woman. The grandparents of the Müller family spoke Polish. Certainly having belonged to the Kashubians are Nitsche, Ziebert, Kedak, Sarimbe, Rusch, and a number of names leave no doubt as to Polish origin: Politschki, Ruscheinski, Bogolowski, Wisosinski, Ploski, Rolowski. The Polish-ness in some of these families has still not completely disappeared up to today.

Caramurat impressed me as the most beautiful of all German Dobrudscha villages. The image that its main street offers on an early summer day is of an unforgettable attractiveness. A 25 meter [82 feet] wide street, straight and flat like a table, cleaned of all embarrassing dirt and weeds. About 1½ meter [5 feet] high walls, dazzling whitewashed, close off the farmyards and form two long, gleaming lines, over which the fresh crowns of the placed Acacia trees bend. Leading into the inside of the yards are monumental archways crowning pairs of large light blue spherical columns. The bright buildings, all in equal distance, face the street with red and brown and purple triangular gables, green or blue window arches and house corners. The roofs are often fitted with different colored tiles. On the other side of the yards, massive summer kitchens and tall, also painted white or colored, superstructures of the cellar. A nicely shaped and also brightly painted pigeon house peeks out between the branches of a tree. The stables and farm buildings in the background are also usually massive and “whitened”. Everywhere order and cleanliness and pleasant colors. A picture that not only testifies to the prosperity and joy of life of the residents, but also of a cultural longing like you certainly would not be looking for among farmers in Dobrudscha.

⁶ Keller, Band I, S. 215.

In the mid-1880s, a large number of Transylvanian Romanians were brought into the village by the government, splitting up with their houses the free Tartar land which the Germans possessed, so that since then the Romanian section is separated from the Germans only by a diagonal street. Whoever comes here on the road from Constansa to Caramurat, now passes through the settlements of three Nations without subsequent space between the one from the other, but contrasting and operating from each other like different worlds.⁷ At the beginning, the road still remains as it previously ran through the steppe. No tree, no footpath indicates its limits. Close by or far off, to the right and the left lie the randomly scattered miserable cabins with low, gray mud walls and tattered reed roofs. All in decline and bare, without a tree or fence. Sitting in front of the doors are colorfully clad Tatar women and children. Then, often by the road, stand

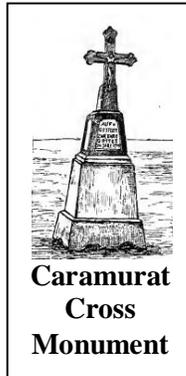


Caramurat Village Plat Map

fine-looking houses, close together, with far protruding roofs supported by posts, in many cases only the front side being painted. In between are modern buildings of urban character, the Romanian Bank and one of those large stately churches which the Romanians love to put in their poorest villages. The road shows trees separating the walkways from the roadway in irregular intervals. But everywhere there are piles of dirt and growing weeds. All of a sudden, the road becomes very wide and spotlessly maintained. We have arrived in the German village, and every glance reveals planned grounds and highest order and cleanliness.

⁷ Compare the photographic images.

The German section has three streets. In the open field on the farmers erected a cross in silver plated metal with a representation of the Savior. The figure has received a thrusts. Furthermore, the German but in the autumn of 1917, 108 men soldiers or were dragged off took 9 men, including the pastor, as



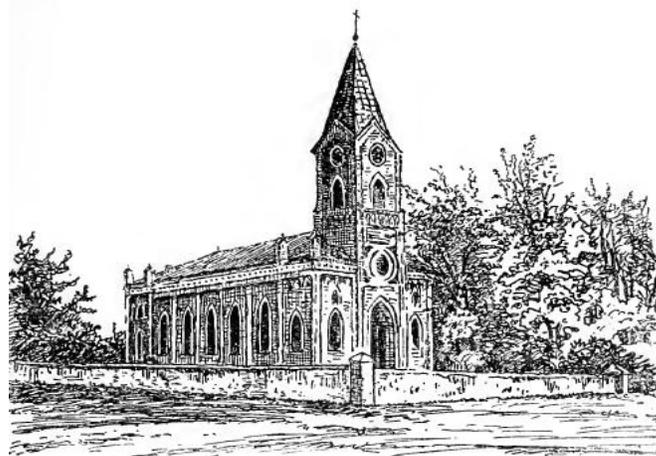
parallel streets on either side of the main northern end of the village, the pious plated metal with a representation of the few holes in this war, probably by sword village has been spared major destruction, are still missing who were conscripted as (*verschleppt*). In addition, the Romanians hostages.

Caramurat also has the most villages. It was built in 1897-1898

magnificent church of all German on the place where a prayer house already

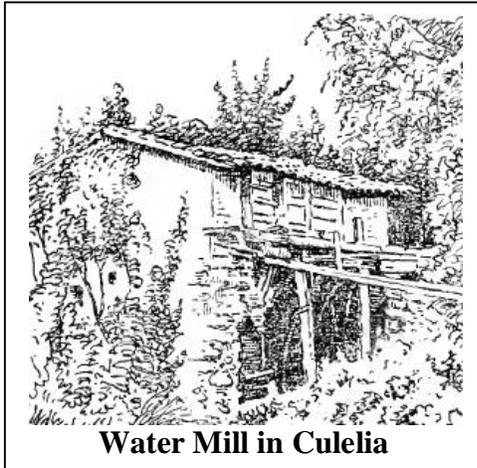
stood in 1881 and was dedicated and opened on 6 December, 1898. The community came up with 85,000 lei, excluding the bricks made by them and the volunteer labor of the farmers. It is a beautiful building of light yellow brick facing, of which white window arches, edges and lines effectively contrast themselves. The spacious and richly appointed interior has three valuable altars with a lot of figurative decoration, the work of Tyrolean sculptor Ferdinand Stuflesser in St. Ulrich. The spacious church yard also encloses the charming parsonage and the old German school. The school was closed in 1902. The German children were now dependent on attending the Romanian school and German classes were limited to 2 hours, which were conducted by the pastor. In recent times, several farmer sons have attended the school in Bucharest, so that we can see in Caramurat the beginnings of the development of German intelligence in Dobrudscha. One of those young people, Emanuel Kreis, who further studied in Switzerland, is to have collected the folk songs of his homeland and has himself tried to be a poet.

The village has a population of around 1,800. Just under half of them are Germans: 155 Families with 867 souls. The Romanians number about 110 families with 540 souls, the Tatars approx. 70 families with 400 souls. Despite their prosperity, this flourishing German colony also has had losses through emigration. For the younger generation, it has become difficult to get their own land through purchase, along with this came the often hostile behavior of the Romanian authorities. About 16 families have moved to Dakota, some to Argentina. Here they settled in Suárez Colony, where many Volga Germans are also residing.



Church in Caramurat

The already mentioned Catholic **Culelia Colony**, approximately 28 km [17.3 miles] north of Caramurat, offers a more dreary picture,. At the beginning of the 1880s, the first 8 German families arrives of which 6 came from Mannheim Colony in the Kherson *Gouvernement*. As already reported, also some of the families from Krasna, living in Caraibil, came to settle here, and a further influx came from Malcoci. This combination reveals that of the names of 57 families, with 283 souls, that make up the German colony, all also came from Malcoci and Caramurat except 7 (Friedrich, Wüst, Weichelt, Johnert, Pfeifer, Hörner, Kosolowski). Previously, the place was inhabited by Tartars, who had fled as a result of the war and had returned. Currently, there are still 13 Romanian families in the village who settled later on. The area of Culelia is very hilly, and also the long typical village street crosses very undulating terrain. A small brook, which also does not dry up in the summer, at one time drove 3 mills.



Water Mill in Culelia

Now only one very picturesque, but also quite primitive mill is in operation. No pleasant fate has held sway on this German settlement. The soil is poor and overgrown by weeds. Crop failures due to drought happen regularly in this area every few years. In addition, taking into consideration that the sale market is only in distant Constanta, butter and eggs are also not easily turned into cash. The land ownership is relatively large, 10-40 hectares [24.7-98.8 acres], one farmer even has 129 hectares [318.7 acres], but many are landless and work on rented land. 15 families emigrated to America, two of them to Argentina. But despite these adverse conditions, even here the Germans have prepared for themselves a

magnificent and clean house and yard, and the good impression of the village is, as the Bucharest Archbishop Raymond Netzhammer testified, only through specific misfortune, from another (that is to say, Romanian) nationality, affected by the country



Church in Culelia with Parsonage Burned Out in the War

houses at the northern end.⁸ However, at the time when I was there, things looked sad everywhere. None of the other German villages had suffered through the war such as Culelia. A number of houses were completely burned down, not one left undamaged. The parsonage was

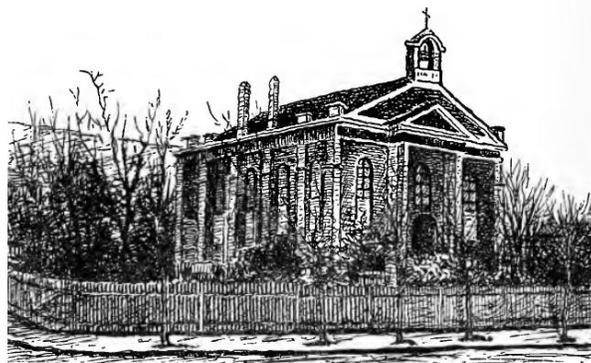
⁸ Netzhammer, Raymund, Aus Rumänien. 2 Aufl. Einsiedeln o. J. Seite 380.

also in ruin. Russians, Turks and Bulgarians, one by one, had brought desolation here, and a German girl was also raped and abducted.

A few years after the war, in 1880, perhaps even first in 1881, Lutheran (*evangelische*) families from the older colonies in the north, particularly from Atmagea and Ciucurova, settled in **Anadolchioi**, about 2 km [1.2 miles] north of Constanta. Among them were 4 grandsons and 3 married granddaughters of the father Adam Kühn. With few exceptions, we find even now the same names occurring in those villages. They were also altogether Platte families, joined later also by one immigrating from Switzerland (Flicker) and one Transylvanian-Saxon (Stroß). Anadolchioi is an inhabited area of widely scattered, colorful mixture of Romanians, Turks, Tatars, Greeks, Bulgarians and gypsies. The German element is no longer particularly emerging, although the existing 33 German families with 134 souls have, for the most part, still kept together in one street. Through constant dialogue with the large neighboring town, the conservative German rural character, that has otherwise remained everywhere so true to itself, has weakened in some respects. This also manifests the situation that here, unlike all other colonies, a whole lot of mixed marriages have taken place. Out of the 33 pure German families, 9 half-German were specified to me, where the mother was a German. It is interesting that a noticeable strong migration back to Germany has taken place from Anadolchioi over the last 15 years. No less than 11 families have settled in the province of Posen again, from where their ancestors had once moved to Russia. Only one has gone to America.

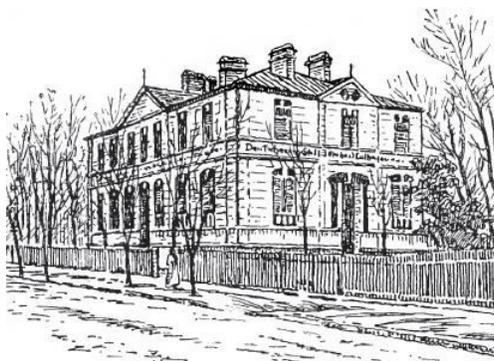
The first decade after the settlement brought the colonists many difficulties and frustrations. The land survey was greatly delayed by the Romanian authorities and then handled to the detriment of the German farmers. And it also appears here, perhaps due to close proximity with the headquarters of the new administration, to have been exposed to all kinds of extortion. In the autumn of 1887, 14 families, also joined by half a dozen from Cogealac, migrated to the region of Brussa under the leadership of a teacher. A report among the church documents of Atmagea indicates the great injustice of officials as the main reason. But destiny was not favorable to them even in Asia Minor. With an abundance of bitter experiences, they came back three years later.

In 1883, the colonists of Anadolchioi joined together with the Lutheran (*evangelischen*) fellow countrymen from **Constanta** to form a congregation. Even here, immediately after the end of



German Lutheran (*evangelische*) Church in Constanta

the war, little by little, a small band of Germans had gathered: craftsmen, engineers, officials at the railway, a band master. Imperial Germans, Austrians and Swiss. There were about 15 families in 1882. In the service of the young congregation were in particular a person from Aachen, H.W. Pastor, Depot Chief of the Romanian railways, and a person from Brunswick, Franz Pleuß, Director of the new, English built Hotel Carol I. Worship services were held in the laundry building of this hotel, a breezy corrugated iron construction. In 1887, the congregation numbered 210 souls. To be sure, it was served only a few times in the year, first by the pastor in Galati, then by the one in Atmagea. In 1892, they received their own clergy, and this year the construction of a church was started with a plan drawn up by Maximilian Wegener, an engineer from Pomerania and employed in Constanta. The great difficulty of raising money was fortunately overcome through the tireless work of Pastor Jancke and the beautiful house was dedicated in 1875. Even King Carl I and the queen demonstrated their interest in this German church through personal contributions. The beginnings of a German school in Constanta also



German School in Constanta

goes back to the year 1892. In 1901, a stately home was put up right next to the church, thanks to a generous endowment from Mrs Sophie E. Luther, owner of the well-known large brewery in Bucharest, who with this “Ehrhard Luther School” established a worthy memorial to her deceased husband.

Naturally, the Lutheran congregation comprised only a part, and to be sure the smaller, of the Germans in Constanta. With the flourishing of the city in the decades before the war, their number increased significantly. But that keeps fluctuating due to the employment in the industry and trade. In 1917, there were about 260 German ethnic people, before the war there may have been somewhat more.

Horoslar Colony is located approximately 13 km [8 miles] northwest of Constanta. In 1880, the first Germans arrived in this village abandoned by the Tatars, some coming directly from Bessarabia, others, after staying in Jacobsonsthal and Neu-Plotzki for a few years. In the Bachmann family, the memory of the Württemberg homeland origin is still alive; Haefle, Schultheß, Metz and maybe also a few others were of Swabian origin; however, certainly some are of North German heritage. Except for 4 Tatar families, the little colony of 23 families with 120 souls is pure German and makes a very favorable impression, although only four of the farmers own their own land, all others work only rented land. However, one of them has achieved exceptional prosperity and raised himself up to that of gentry. His land holdings are

estimated to be 1,700 hectares [4,200 acres] and he is considered to be the richest German in all of Dobrudscha. The little community can also boast of having maintained their German school, along with a teacher from Germany, until the war.

In 1881, the first Germans arrived in **Cogeala**, 15 km [9.3 miles] north of Constanta, a village then inhabited by Tatars. A larger troop followed them in the next few years. They were Swabian families from the colonies of Worms, Neudorf, Neusatz and others in the Kherson *Gouvernement*. Later, a larger number of colonists came from the northern villages of Dobrudscha, who were of South German origin, some of whom came from Poland. Of the existing family names, we have already met up with about half in Cogealac and Tariverde. New to Dobrudscha, and almost all of South German descent are Waldbauer, Breckel, Geres, Ammon, Leyer, Bauer, Hüter, Mel, Faeser, Strom, Gabert, Ebel, Serr, Morhart. Family Krieg from Senßheim in Baden and Family Höpfer from Neubulach in Württemberg, were found among the colonists from Gyldendorf near Odessa.⁹ Today, the German community numbers 60 families with 306 souls. Over 20 were lost through the emigration, of which 8 returned to Germany, to the area of Pillau and Kamin in West Prussia. In 1905, about 30 families of Romanian veterans were moved into the southern end of the village of the Germans, and at the other end, in the distance, lies the old Tatar settlement of approximately 60-65 families. So you have a wide cultural gap of two foreign nations at the entrance as well as at the exit.

Cogeala is one of the most flourishing German settlements in Dobrudscha. On the beautiful, wide street, which forms the German village, behind the white walls and small gardens are over 50 farmyards in which everything points to prosperity and order. The houses have mostly sheet metal or tiled roofs and give the friendliest impression with their fresh paint, the wood-beamed colored gables and white window projections.

It was not always like that. The beginning years were a time of bitter disappointments and severe suffering for the colonists, not as a result of adverse natural conditions, but only as a result of the jealousy and underhand dealing of the Romanian officials. When the Bucharest German priest Teutschländer visited them in the autumn of 1883, he found them in deepest misery. The promised land was not granted to them. Almost half of their homes was not yet ready, without doors and windows, even without a roof, because the mayor had forbidden the German immigrants from cutting reeds, as well as the plotting of vegetable gardens and vineyards and the planting of trees. Many colonists were laid low, defenseless and helpless due to typhoid fever. As mentioned above, Teutschländer issued a call for help in the "*Bukarester Zeitung*," which was carried again by the Frankfurt on the Main "*Deutschen Kolonialzeitung*".¹⁰ Immediately, remittances to support the colonists were received from Germany, among others, 300 Mark from the Prince of Neuwied. Then the land distribution took place in the following years, in large and small lots, for which the ownership titles were issued after 20, actually 30 years. Now the colony progressed quickly. The soil was good and the proximity of Constanta offered a favorable market opportunity. Those who arrived first now all own their land, many 30-60 hectares [74-148 acres], only about 10 families are landless. There is no absence in the village of mowing machines and other agricultural machines, and almost every farmer has his centrifuge. The community put up a church already in 1890-1891. It was enlarged in 1903, and

⁹ Stach, S. 162 und 166.

¹⁰ 1. Jahrgang, 2. Heft.

on the occasion of the dedication, Queen Elisabeth of Romania donated a magnificent Bible with the beautiful handwritten dedicatory entry: “God is standing especially close to the small congregation.” The colony has also always provided for a German teacher.

Around 1883, a German settlement arose again in the mountainous and wooded part of Dobrudscha, 7 km [4.3 miles] north of Atmagea: **Ortachioi**. The settlers came mostly from the Bessarabian colonies of Paris, Arzis, Friedensthal and Teplitz, some of them had been previously established in Cogealac, Kataloi and Atmagea. The former Turkish inhabitants of the village in a wide, fertile valley had left it so as to give it a little rest and the German farmers were initially almost entirely there alone. A document extract specifies their number in 1892 as being 171 souls. Each family had received 10 hectares [24.7 acres] of land and were allowed to buy even more for themselves. However, their situation changed and finally became unbearable as the government brought into the village a large number of veterans, so gradually the Romanians made up the majority. It seems that the Germans were totally discouraged from staying by means of all kinds of vexation and harassment. Again, they decided to emigrate. Most went to America, some back to Russia. Their land went back to the government without compensation, and the beautiful houses of the once German Main Street are now possessed or ruined by the Romanians. Until about 10 years ago, there were still 60 German families in the village, during my visit, there were only 5 with 39 souls and a few women married to Romanians and Bulgarians.

In the following years up to the end of the decade, no new settlements are identified. Conditions had so changed in Dobrudscha that they were not suitable to lure further immigration from the South Russian villages.

The circumstances of the German colonists, if they were in general also economically moving forward, had become less pleasant from year to year after the transfer of Dobrudscha into Romanian hands. The Turkish authorities collected the taxes from the German settlers, but otherwise paid little attention to them and left it up to them to govern and administer themselves however they liked, and they found this to be just fine with them. The “Schulze” [mayor] elected from their midst directed and regulated the affairs of the village. No one had demanded of them that their children should learn Turkish. The Romanian Regiment stepped in with completely new and unusual requirements, restrictions and regulations, and the time of the Turks hereafter became the good, old [days] for the German farmers. A “Primar” [mayor] was placed in the village by the administration of the community without having asked whether he was right to them and had their confidence. A man who did not understand their language, who was a stranger to them as to their feelings and thinking, who in quite a few cases was only focused on his personal advantage and made life difficult for the less savvy, business-illiterate farmers. Their mayors had only a little agricultural authorization. Before, they simply went into the forest to provide for themselves whatever wood they needed; now, they had to request each load and pay for it. Romanian schools and teachers were forced upon them.

A deep discontent overcame them, constantly nourished and worsened due to actual experience or alleged wrongful treatment and economic damage. In 1883, an “impartial observer” from Dobrudscha writes: “I think from the position of the German colonists, if they are left to their own, without backing from Berlin, things are extremely bleak. Unfamiliar with the new

language and therefore all the more exposed to the arbitrariness in respect to the injustices of the Romanian officials (a true rabble, that came over here from the former Moldovan Bessarabia).”¹¹ And everywhere where Bernhard Schwarz showed up in 1886, he heard the same complaints and grievances: “We are betrayed and sold out. We do not have the slightest freedom anymore.”¹² I have already mentioned in Atmagea how the colonists, in their plight, sought help directly from King Carol and from the Legation of the old fatherland. On account of the Romanians taking over possession, they had already ceased to be members of the German Empire. But in Berlin there was a cool reception with the information that the previous Turkish Rajah had now become a Romanian subject.¹³

In many instances, the thing that stirred up the greatest animosity were the new rules of real estate ownership and often the hard and ruthless approach of applying them. The government asked for documentary proof of the lawful acquisition of the individual cultivated and ownership taken land. Up to now, it was not exactly taken through titles of ownership, and we saw in the example of Atmagea, how hardly anyone possessed a title (*Taypzettel*) concerning all his land. Some farmers, who occupied their farmyards for decades and had cultivated their fields as a secure possession, were suddenly expelled, because they had no documents, or only because they had failed to have their own name rewrite on it if they had acquired it by purchase from a previous, no doubt, legitimate owner. Wealthy farmers were suddenly impoverished in this way. Following the processes, the means and also the confidence was absent for a proper way out.

As a result of these circumstances, as mentioned, already at the beginning of the 1880s, a movement started up again in various colonies to leave Dobrudscha, of which I will get back to later.

It is clear that the news of the complaints and grievances of those departing Dobrudscha also spread in the Russian settlement districts and there did its work of deterring the people. In fact, after the founding of Cogeala and Ortachioi, apart from isolated cases, the immigration from Russia came to a standstill for years.

=====

¹¹ Weltpost. 3. Bd. Leipzig 1883. S. 190.

¹² Vom deutschen Exil, S. 87.

¹³ Weltpost, 1883, S. 189.