

Sarata

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[Note: A brief summary of Sarata history as it prepares to celebrate its Centennial in 1922. Square brackets indicate translator's comments.]

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[Begin Translation]

At the time of its founding, Sarata was identified as Number 15 of the Old Bessarabian Colonies. If the calendar man is to present Sarata to his readers in word and image, he does so for a specific reason: In 1922, it can be a look back to its 100 year existence, also an indication of the anniversary. While the 14 colonies prior to Sarata were prevented from organizing centennial celebrations due to the unrest from war, Sarata is in a fortunate position to be able to do such a thing. Without a doubt, the municipality, arriving at this important milestone in its history, will celebrate its centennial in one way or another. We take it for granted that a printed history of the colony will find its way into our hands.

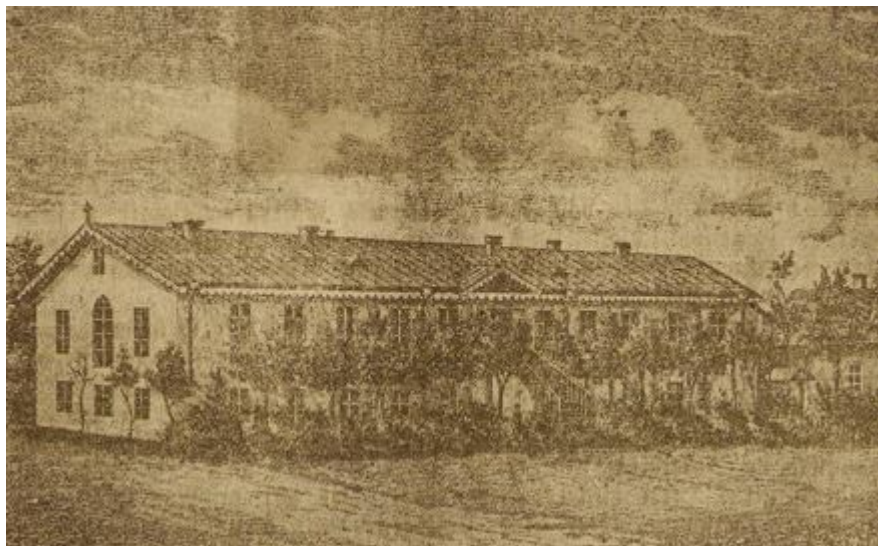


Sarata Church

The calendar will provide only a brief summary, which should be primarily the circumstances under which the colony was created.

The Catholic priest Ignaz Lindl, from Bavaria, and Lutheran merchant Chr. Fr. Werner, from Württemberg, played a most important role in the founding of Sarata. It was around the year 1812, Lindl, a man of enchanting eloquence, initially in the spirit of the Enlightenment, but then, influenced by Joh. Gossner, worked in an evangelical manner, with power and fire, among his parish children. The rousing effect of his sermons, often held outdoors, on a crowd of thousands in his audience, was amazing. Every Sunday, 8,000 to 10,000 people flocked together to hear Lindl's lively testimony of Christ. But the fiery, rousing preacher, a strong adherent to Haug, soon drew the masses to enthusiasm/pietism (*Schwärmerei*); ever increasingly advocating the teaching of the 1000 Year Kingdom. And he found appeal, for Bengel's writings and Jung-Stilling's *Homesick* ("*Heimweh*") and *History of Victory* ("*Siegesgeschichte*") had penetrated the people deeply and had prepared the ground for these new ideas in the hearts of many believers. After *Samarkand* [the gathering place of the future citizens of Solyma], according to Jung-Stilling's interpretation, the place where the transport is to take place, in the realm of *Prince of Solyma* ("*Fürsten von Solyma*"), the glorified saints should wait there for the Dawn of the Kingdom of Peace. Emigration to the East—that was also Lindl's watchword, as he referred to Stilling's *Bannkreis*.

Persecution, pursuits, and eventually a longer sentence were the consequences of Lindl's outspoken sermons. When he was freed from prison in Augsburg through the intercession of the Baron of Berckheim, the son-in-law of the wife of Krüdener, he rushed to Munich, where, by way of the Russian Ambassador, he became aware of the call of Alexander I. and sought the protection and security of the Bavarian government to emigrate to Russia. After a touching farewell of his Gundremingen congregation, Lindl took up the arduous journey to distant Russia and arrived in Petersburg on 15 November, 1819. He preached before an audience of the highest aristocracy in the Malteser Church.



Alexander Asylum

After Lindl's departure, his followers in Bavaria and Württemberg felt like they had been orphaned. "On to Russia!" was the call now. A "Fraternal Harmony of Emigration" from the Separatist circles of Württemberg arrived in Odessa in 1820; their goal was Georgia [in the Caucasus]. But when Lindl came to Odessa in July 1820, they gave up their plan and, in 1822, moved to Bessarabia, where they founded Sarata along with Lindl's Bavarian followers that arrived in the meantime. 40 families belonged to the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church and as many families to the Catholic Church. Having been appointed provost of the Catholic congregations in South Russia, Lindl set up his headquarters in Odessa. His preaching style and, last but not least, his getting married in Petersburg—he had quietly trusted in Gossner—gained him hatred and persecution, whereby he felt compelled to relocate to Sarata. On 20 March, 1822, he was received by the young community with much joy.

Here the spirit-anointed preacher also exerted an amazing attraction; people from the upper colonies also came in large numbers to the Sunday sermons of Lindl, so much so that they felt compelled to talk, under the open sky, about a house of prayer. But Lindl's effectiveness did not endure long in Sarata—only 1½ years. At the end of 1823, after many charges were brought, Alexander I. dropped his favorite: Lindl was expelled from the country. The community he founded crumbled; all families joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the municipality got its first Lutheran pastor in the person of von Lesedows from Tbilisi in 1824.



Sarata Central School

Since the time of its founding, Sarata has a pleasant destiny in a man who was a great blessing not only for his community, but also for the other communities of the Lutheran Confession. It is the above already mentioned merchant Chr. Fr. Werner from Singen, Württemberg. During the time of the emigration, he oversaw the movement and first followed his brethren in July of 1823, when they had set themselves up in their new home. He only had 2 months to live among his fellow believers and followers. Dying, he bequeathed to the municipality his entire fortune for charitable purposes on 6 September, 1823. From the interest of the legacy—25,000 Rbl.—the church was built in 1841 and, in 1844, the "Werner School," named after him, was founded. These two endeavors still speak loudly today about the noble, unselfish tendency of the inestimable benefactor.

Lindl—gone, Werner dead; who would step forward now to guide the little community ship? There still lived a friend of the two, a man with a lot of energy, tact, diligence and zeal. This was Gottl. Veygel, formerly Werner's business assistant, then an independent businessman and fellow-traveler of the latter. As local mayor (*Schulz*) and district mayor (*Oberschulz*), he untiringly and unselfishly served his community and district for 23 years. He wrote with his own

hand hundreds of papers in matters of the church building and the creation of the Werner school, and, as executor, enforced the will of Werner despite the protests of Werner's only, married, stayed behind in Germany daughter who kept demanding verification. Appointed as lifelong welfare workers of the Werner School, he dedicated his last strength to it and died on 9 January, 1847, in the 3rd year of the school's existence. For as deserving a man that Gottl. Veygel was, it would be fitting if a well-deserved modest monument also stood by his grave!

What applies to the location and the layout of Sarata, is more or less how things stand out for the other colonies. Two straight long streets running from north to south were intersected at right angles by four streets; at three intersections on the western street were circular-shaped spaces. Within the middle circular intersection rises the church. In the squares formed in this way, the wedge-shaped court spaces converge in the center. One can easily imagine how impractical such an layout plan for a farm economy is, how all businesses must feel so confined and constricted.



Public School

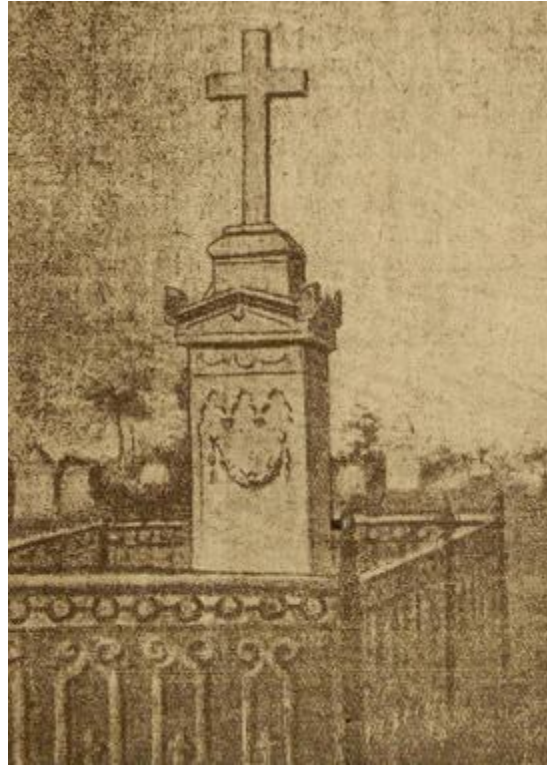
The fairly wide, often-drying winding brook of the same name, in the west, measuring barely 150 feet and, in the east, the gently sloping wave-like elevation confined valley do not offer any fascination to the eye of the beholder. For that reason, the village makes a friendly impression when viewed from the heights, especially in May, when the houses seem to swim in the green of the trees and only the roofs can be seen through the leaves.

With reference to church matters, Sarata is the pastor's residence of the parish, with the colonies of Gnadental and Lichtental added to the list when they were established; several villages in the vicinity, sometime founded as private (*eigenem*) villages, sometimes set up on leased land (*Pachtland*), were also served by the pastor from Sarata.

As for public buildings, we have a number of them to mention. Located near the church parsonage, also founded in 1867, the *Alexander Asylum*, referred to as the *Institution*; on the Institution grounds the *Hospital*; annexed to that the *Hospital for Ambulatory Patients*; further down the village the two-story *Elim* building, a home for the senile and infirmed. Off from the parsonage is the village school, a stately building with bright, attractive classrooms.

Opposite the Village Office (*Dorfkanzlei*) is the District Building (*Wolostgebäude*), occupied by the Mayor's Office (*Primarie*), the Orphan Fund (*Waisenkasse*), and Fire Fund (*Brandkasse*). The village is also not without a pharmacy, a post office, and a telegraph station. The famous Werner School is located almost at the end of the village and on the school grounds is the teacher's residence, built in 1890, one of the most beautiful buildings of the area. The cemetery

(*Kirchhof*) deserves special attention as the eyes of the visitor takes note of its well organized, decorated grave enclosures, the borders of the graves themselves and the multitude of dazzling white tombstones, for the most part, bedecked with contributions from former Werner students, and to a lesser degree the Werner monument put up with funds from the municipality. Each village can take the Sarata cemetery as a pattern.



Werner Memorial

Larger commercial enterprises are: the foundry of *Bayher*, 2 steam-mills, a spinning-mill and a fabric weaving-mill. In addition to some private stalls (*Privatbuden*), there is the Co-operative Association which existed already on the beginning years in its own house. It is also worth mentioning that a market is held every 2 weeks.

Generally speaking, Sarata has become a prosperous village, prosperous through diligence and frugality. But as rich and poor must always be together, so here among the well-to-do homes there are the poor, in debt or out of debt, fixed abodes that sprang up.

The pages of Sarata's history will have many difficulties to mention in the course of time; however, if the community is to remember all what is good, all physical, mental and spiritual blessings, it will celebrate her centennial with unmixed soaring joy and joyful thanks.

W.M.

[End Translation]