

Wilhelm Mutschall

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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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Wilhelm Mutschall, Teacher of His People †

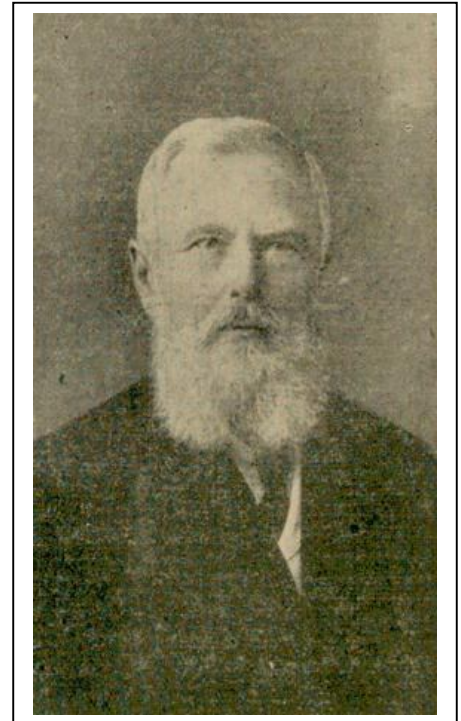
As around Christmas time, in 1936, our custom of mourning moved through our Bessarabian communities when informed that the teacher of our German colonist folks and old master of the German Bessarabian teaching staff, Wilhelm Mutschall, had been recalled into eternity, so our feelings and thoughts found eloquent poetic expression in the verses of Friedrich Reinöhols:

Now, they have carried the man to the grave,
The one who lived a model life before us.
His heart always sought after pure heights
And beat so warmly for his German people.

Yes, he will forever live in us like that
And always be so viewed in our mind's eye,
Even as the years vanish and pass
His image will always surround us as a reminder.

He was the father of many great sons,
And all of them wore his banner courageously
As forward advancing fighters in some hot conflict
And co-founders of big times to come
Yes, these are wreaths that never wither here,
Pure, blossoming and green to him in eternal beauty.

On 18 December, William Mutschall, according to God's purpose, was summoned from our midst and on 23 December, was laid to rest in the cemetery of his hometown of Tarutino. He lived to be eighty-five years old. Three generations attended school under his instruction. The fathers and sons grew up under his pioneering word and become men, and even



the grandchildren have also been sitting at his feet. Great is the number of his former students, great and even greater is the blessing which was transferred by him on them. They will always remember him in grateful love, and, along with them, all of our German people. Also over the grave, all of us will grant to him the faithfulness that, in his long life, he always demonstrated in superabundant measure to us. He was a choice good Sower who took his profession seriously and solemnly and skillfully understood his business. His work was successful, the Lord God obviously blessed him. His seed sprouted and has produced beautiful and ample fruit. "You shall know them by their fruits," so said the Lord. We will be always indebted to our Sower.

William Mutschall was born on 5 November, 1851, according to the old style calendar, in Tarutino. He spent his youth in his hometown, where, after his confirmation, he was also a clerk's apprentice in the village office. Then, from 1869 onward, came his apprenticeship at the Sarata Werner School, then with Provost Faltin in Kishinev, and then at the Mission Institute of Neuendettelsau, Bavaria. On 1 May, 1876, he began his teaching at the Training Class of the Tarutino Church School. On 1 January, 1884, after passing his home tutoring exam in Cetatea-Alba and his Russian State teacher's exam in Tighina, he joined the faculty of the Sarata Werner School where he worked for 25 years, the last two years as director of the institution. Honored by the State with high order awards and retired with the statutory pension, Wilhelm Mutschall returned to Tarutino in 1909 and worked there for 15 years as a teacher of German at the girls' school. During this time and beyond—until 1927—was also the time of his exemplary work as President of the Bessarabian Consistory and member of the Executive Committee of the German People's Council. The leisure hours of Wilhelm Mutschall were filled by literary work. He was a devoted and valued colleague for the *Odessa Newspaper (Odessa Zeitung)*, the *Dakota Free Press (Dakota Freien Presse)*, and the *Bessarabian German Newspaper (Deutschen Zeitung Bessarabiens)*. Major works that he authored: *Memorial to the 50th Anniversary of the Werner School (Denkschrift zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum der Wernerschule)*; *History of the Tarutino Girls' Secondary School (Geschichte des Tarutinoer Mädchenlyzeums)*; and the *History of the Tarutino Community (Geschichte der Gemeinde Tarutino)*. The last work mentioned was actually already completed in 1914, on the one-hundredth anniversary, but was not released until some time later due to World War I. It is a form and content masterpiece of German historiography in Bessarabia. With these historical writings, William Mutschall established a memorial for his people that will endure for time to come.

But William Muschall was not only a tireless worker and fighter in the areas of school, church and the people, he was also a model host and father in the home. In 1877, during his work at the Tarutino Training School, he married Elisabeth, née Widmer, who was to him an understanding, loyal and devoted life's companion for all these years and surrounded him, until his death, with loving care. Twelve children were born out of this marriage covenant, 5 sons and 7 daughters, of which 3 sons and 6 daughters have preceded their father in death. With tenacious diligence, Wilhelm Mutschall always devoted himself to his economic venture, but especially during the last 25 years in his home village. From early morning to late evening, he was busy in the house and on the yard, in the field and in the vineyard and stopped only a few weeks before his death, when illness confined him to the bed.

On Wednesday, 23 December, 1936, we laid him to rest in the Tarutino cemetery. Extremely great were the number of mourners who showed up from Tarutino itself and from many other

communities of our homeland, to accompany the honored and dearly loved deceased on his last journey and to bring their sincere condolences to the grieving relatives. Even the sky sent one of its best days of December. A bright winter sun was shining over the whole village; playing its friendly golden rays on the silver hair of the old man, promising transfiguration for his face and glowing on him also at the taking leave by the open grave. William Mutschall is separated from us. The holy ground of the homeland, which he loved so much and that he served so faithfully, received his mortal remains into its lap. But his spirit and his works are alive and linger on in his community and his people, who are indebted for his strongest cultural and spiritual promotion works. And he did not depart from us without first conscientiously putting in order his field and his house and faithfully and honestly ensuring a capable rising generation that walks in the footsteps of the master and continues his work. The future generations were also at the back of William Mutschall's mind, much of his work was directed toward them. William Mutschall was one of the best that came out of the German Bessarabian people. His life was a blessing for us all; we will always remember him in gratitude and warm affection.

K.L.

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