

History of Alexanderfeld

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[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

Conversion Rates Encountered in this Document

1 Arschin = 28 inches (in) / 71.11 centimeters (cm)
1 Dessjatine = 2.7 acres (a) / 1.09 hectares (ha)
1 Faden = 7 feet (ft) / 2.1 meters (m)
1 Hektar = hectar (ha) = 2.471 acres (a)
1 Kilometer (km) = 0.6214 miles (mi)
1 Pfund = 0.2122 pounds (lbs) / 0.4677 kilograms (kg)
1 Pud = 36 pounds (lbs) / 16.38 kilograms (kg)
1 Werst = 0.67 mile (mi) or 1.06 kilometers (km)

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[Translation Begins]

History of the Alexanderfeld Community Kahul District by Teacher Wilhelm Chr. Wagner

Alexanderfeld was founded in 1908 by settlers from the following mother communities: Dennewitz, I Fere-Champenoise [also known as Alt-Elft], Paris, among others, who, in 1907, had purchased an unoccupied steppe area of 2,683 *dessjatinen* [7,244 a / 2,924.5 ha] from the noblewoman Elisabetha Nikolaewna Garting. As a result, the estate, which was heavily burdened with debts, escaped a public foreclosure auction. Alexanderfeld is located in the Kahul District and is 20 km [12.4 mi] in a southeasterly direction from Kahul and 20 km in a northwesterly direction from Bolgrad. It is bordered to the north by the Parushowka and Pelinei

estates, to the west by the Vladimirowka estate, to the south by the Gawanosy and Wulkaneschti estates, and to the east by the Wulkaneschti, Atanasulis, Musait and Gokolow estates.

The purchase price was 160 rubles per *dessjatine*, with the following payment dates being granted: 50 rubles at the time of purchase; 10 rubles after a year; 20 rubles after 6 years and the rest at the end of 32 years.

The following names are found in the letter of purchase: 1. Friedrich Schill, 2. Andreas Schill, 3. Johannes Schill, 4. Jakob Schill, 5. Karl Schulz, 6. Johann Seitz, 7. Michael Schöttle, 8. Gottfried Schlauch, 9. Georg Schlauch, 10. Georg Schiwe, 11. August Broßt, 12. Heinrich Broßt, 13. Christoph Bädke, 14. Ludwig Bädke, 15. Heinrich Scherer, 16. Johann Scherer and 17. Friedrich Müller from Dennewitz; 18. Johann Schulz, 19. Samuel Gehring, 20. August Stach, 21. Immanuel Stach, 22. Christlieb Ziehmann, 23. Gottlieb Habelmann and 24. Michael Steinke from I Fere-Champenoise; 25. Gottfried Stelter, 26. Wilhelm Kujath, 27. Samuel Kern and 28. Ephraim Kison from Paris; 29. Jakob Tobler, 30. Friedrich Tobler, 31. Johann Brenner and 32. Christian Schaible from II Fere-Champenoise [also known as Neu-Elft]; 33. Andreas Blum, 34. Johannes Blum and 35. Andreas Friedrich from Plotzk; 36. Gottlob Willging and 37. Georg Böpple from Teplitz; 38. Christina Schramm and 39. Johann Schramm from Kulm; 40. Adolf Brenner and 41. Adolf März from Lichtental; 42. Johann Keck and 43. Philipp Allmendinger from Sarata; 44. Johannes Paul from Hoffnungsfeld; 45. Georg Silcher from Gnadental; 46. Johann Weiß from Postal; 47. Reinhold Bogner from Tarutino and 48. Ludwig Jose from Alexanderhilf (Kherson). Those authorized to make the land purchase were: 1. Johann Weiß, 2. Johann Keck and 3. Philipp Allmendinger.



One of the first reed huts in which the founders of Alexanderfeld lived

On 17 and 18 February, 1908, the first founders arrived here to establish a new homeland. The founders of the village were: 1. Gottfried Schlauch, 2. Gottlob Willging, 3. Ephraim Kison, 4. Johann Keck, 5. Michael Schöttle, 6. Christlieb Ziehmann, 7. Johann Schramm, 8. Friedrich

Müller, 9. Jakob Schill, 10. Andreas Schill, 11. Johann Scherer, 12. August Stach, 13. Immanuel Stach, 14. Ludwig Bädke, 15. Georg Silcher, 16. Friedrich Richter, 17. Georg Schiwe, 18. Michael Steinke, 19. Adolf Brenner, 20. Jakob Tobler, 21. Friedrich Tobler, 22. Gottlieb Habelmann, 23. Samuel Kern, 24. Christian Schaible, 25. Friedrich Schill, 26. Johann Brenner, 27. Johann Schulz, 28. Karl Schulz, 29. Christoph Bädke, 30. Wilhelm Kujath, 31. Samuel Gehring, 32. Andreas Blum, 33. Adolf Bädke, 34. Daniel Broßt, 35. Georg Böppe, 36. Johannes Schill and 37. Heinrich Broßt. In addition came 38. Michael Klein, Paris, 39. Christian Knodel, II. Fere-Champenoise, 40. Michael Reiß, Leipzig, 41. Johannes Falk, Paris and 42. Johann Rittlinger, Großliebental. The last five did not belong to the initial purchasers, but only to the founders.

It was, of course, a very difficult beginning to settle down on the barren steppe with an empty hand. In addition, it was cold that spring. Even more snow was falling. The first concern was to make a dug-out (*Unterschlupf*). Some obtained wood from Bolgrad and reeds from Kirchani and built simple reed huts. Others leased a residence in Gawanosy, 4 km [2.5 mi] away, during the seeding period. As soon as the seed was put into the ground, the construction of better or one's own dwelling began to take place. Because the stones were difficult to get hold of, they began to make unfired bricks (*Ziegel/Batzen*). In the first years, all buildings were built with unfired bricks. The wood was purchased in Bolgrad. The roofs were mostly made of reed, which a person got in Kirchani.

Under similar circumstances, wells were also dug that are 3-9 *faden* [21-63 ft / 6.3-18.9 m] deep. The water is drinkable. Unfortunately, almost the entire western row of the village has no water. Therefore, the water is very scarce in dry years, so that some folks of Alexanderfeld on the street of those wells which are often shut down, many a resident has purchased a water wagon, because he almost always has to haul the water as needed. Over time, however, it has been ensured that



Mill in Alexanderfeld

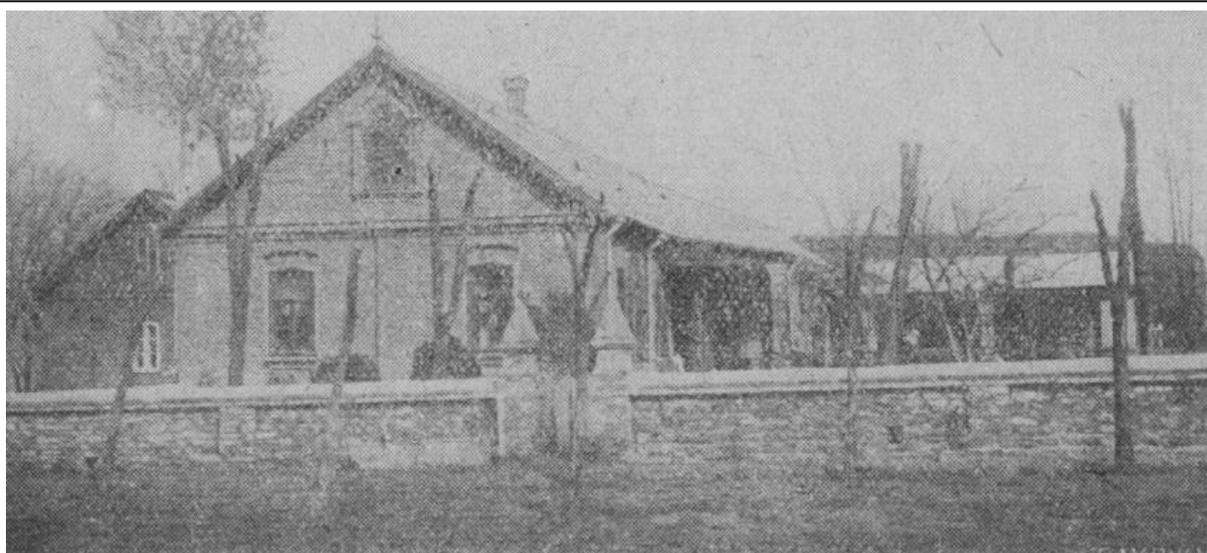
better facilities for water are produced. Some residents have cisterns on their farmyards. At the

northern end of the village, there is an artesian well on the street which was drilled in 1928 by a society consisting of 11 members. The community donated 30,000 lei to this well. It cost over 100,000 lei and is very expensive because the cement casings (*Zementringe*) were obtained from Buzeu. Delivery was more expensive than the rings themselves. It is 16 *faden* [112 ft / 33.6 m] deep. Alexanderfeld has neither a flowing nor a standing body of water.

The first head of the municipality was Friedrich Müller. He handled the account of municipal funds and was also secretary in the first year and had to carry out the distribution of shepherds and other matters in the interest of the community. Since there was no room where the members of the municipality could meet, this took place in a cellar that was only flat and whitewashed. The office of guard was held by the men who took their turns. The sermon was usually read by Michael Steinke, alternating in reed huts.

In the same year, when everyone began to build for themselves, a master builder was also brought in jointly, who built a prayer house, which was finished late in the same year. It also served as a schoolhouse. Also, in the same year, a small bell was purchased, which cost 100 rubles; the following year, 1909, a slightly larger one. The small one weighs 4 *pud* [144 lbs / 65.5 kg] 6 *pfund* [1.27 lbs / 2.806 kg] and the large one 6 *pud* [216 lbs / 98.2 kg] 5½ *pfund* [1.16 lbs / 2.572 kg].

Some of the buyers as well as those who had already built sold again. In the years 1908-1930, the following sold and emigrated: 1. Johann Weiß, 2. Philipp Allmendinger, 3. Johann Keck, 4. Adolf März, 5. Reinhold Bogner, 6. Johann Seitz, 7. Gottfried Schlauch, 8. Georg Schlauch, 9. Georg Schiwe, 10. Heinrich Scherer, 11. Gottfried Stelter, 12. Samuel Kern, 13. Georg Böppler, 14. Georg Silcher, 15. Adolf Brenner, 16. Johann Brenner, 17. Christian Schaible and 18. Johann Rittlinger.



Farmyard of A. Bädke in Alexanderfeld

In their place, the following bought and migrated [to Alexanderfeld] in the years 1908-1930: 1. Imanuel Vetter, 2. David Schill, 3. Karl Tiede and 4. Heinrich Weber from Dennewitz; 5. Johannes Blum from Plotzk; 6. Gottlieb Gehring, 7. Johannes Habelmann, 8. August Schabert, 9.

Johannes Ziehmman, 10. Samuel Rast and 11. Gustav Quast from I Fere-Champenoise; 12. Andreas Jaßmann, 13. Ferdinand Flöther and 14. Artur Siegmund from Paris; 15. Gottholf Raab, 16. Jakob Raab and 17. Gustav Kern from Pomasani; 18; Andreas Knodel from Hoffnungsfeld; 19. Ludwig Kautz, from Tarutino; 20. Gottlieb Göhner from I Malojarslawetz [also known as Wittenberg]; 21. Andreas Scherbinsky from II Fere-Champenoise and 22. Johannes Schneider from Pelinei.

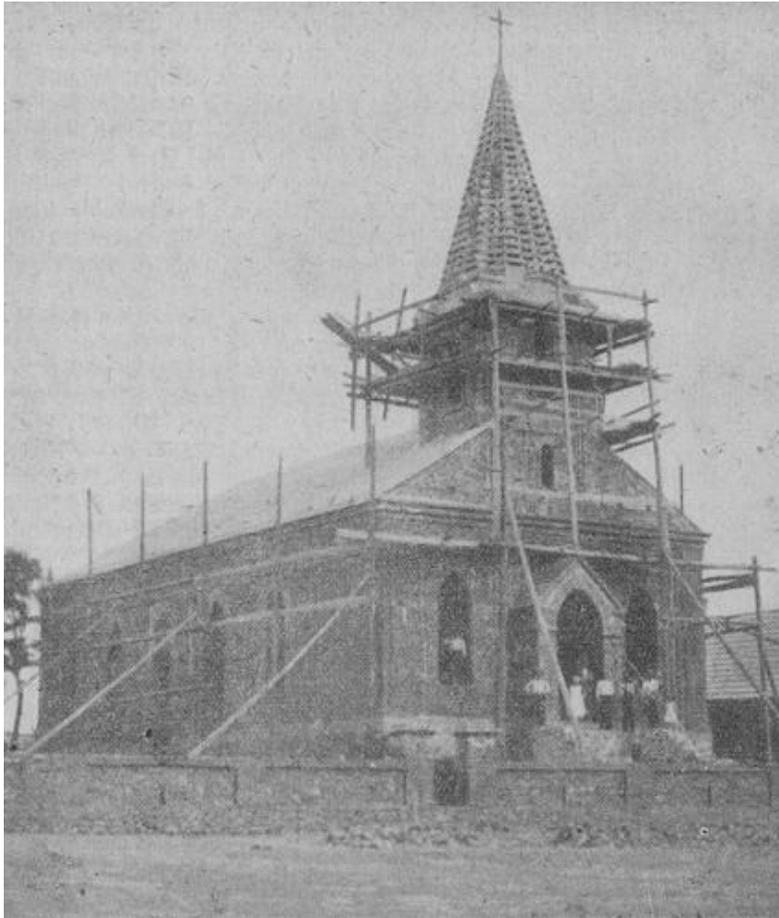
The village is located in the northeast corner of the purchased estate. It stretches somewhat from northeast to southwest. The street is a *werst* [.67 mi / 1.06 km] long and 15 *faden* [105 ft / 31.5 m] wide. A whole yard is 20 *faden* [140 ft / 42 m] wide and 120 *faden* [840 ft / 252 m] long, so that with half the street it takes up a *deßjatine* [2.7 a / 1.09 ha] of land. In 1928, at the northern end of the village, several farmsteads were plotted. Some of them are already built on. The 2,683 *deßjatinen* [7,255 a / 2,924.5 ha] are divided into 49½ farms. The country is quite hilly. The black soil makes up a thick layer and is very acceptable. After the black layer comes clay and after that sand, which in some places is 8 *faden* [56 ft / 16.8 m] and deeper, while in other places it can be found on the surface. In the southwesterly direction towards Gawanosy there are whole sand hills. Stones are rare; they are only found in the small, narrow, steep V-shaped valleys on the way to Gawanosy.

Some of the inhabitants of Alexanderfeld bought land from landowners near the Alexanderfeld estate. 400 hectares [988 a] was bought from the heirs of Esimov, 100 hectares [247 a] from the Sokolov estate, 100 hectares [247 a] from the Atanasulis estate, and 30 hectares [74 a] from the Netusche estate; all together 630 hectares [1,556.7 a].



Prayer House and School House in Alexanderfeld

Total crop failures happened in Alexanderfeld in 1908 and 1918; quite weak harvests in 1909, 1912, 1914, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1924, 1925 and 1928; better and good harvests in 1910, 1911, 1913, 1919, 1923, 1926 and 1929. In the latter it was an excellent harvest, apart from the winter wheat, which froze due to a dry frost. Little was sown in the years 1915-1918 because of the war, so that much land was not worked.



The church at Alexanderfeld
(under construction)

The people of Alexanderfeld suffered a lot in the wartime. Right at the beginning, 40 men were mobilized. Due to the war and weak harvests, as little was sown, it was no longer possible to pay for the land in the Kherson Land Bank which held the mortgage for the land. Thus, the estate was to be auctioned off, which was announced to the municipality for the second time. Adolf Bädke and Michael Schöttle were commissioned by the municipality to go to Odessa and see in the bank what to do. The men stated their case to the director of the bank about the difficulty; they established adjustment and a postponement of the payments was

granted. Therefore, Alexanderfeld was in a better position in relation to many other villages that were in a similar situation and whose land had already been liquidated by the farmers' bank. Then the revolution broke out and with it came a dangerous time for Alexanderfeld. In 1917, Russian military was stationed in the village. It made itself the owner over any food, slaughtered animals according to desire and their pleasure and took wine from the cellar; and all this without even asking, let alone paying anything for it. Later, the Russians wanted to take over the houses and assets of the people of Alexanderfeld and in the neighboring villages and even expel them; but in the early part of 1918, the Romanians came and put an end to these dangers.

In 1919, by a royal decree, the land was returned to the Alexanderfeld people, except for 131 hectares [323.7 a] expropriated from those who had a hundred *deßjatinen* [270 a / 109 ha] or more.

In 1921, envoys from the Kherson Bank of Odessa came to Kischinew, where the payment of the land was completely paid up. As a result of the war, money lost its value, and since there was a lot of money in circulation and almost all people had a lot of money, even those who had the hardest time could pay off their land debt. That was the only good side to the war.



During the 1914-1918 war, the following were killed or died: 1. Daniel Broßt and 2. Johannes Bädke. Missing in action are: 1. David Bädke, 2. Michael Göhner, 3. Christoph König, 4. Heinrich Tobler and 5. Bernhard Richter. Returning and died at home is Otto Müller.

The following persons were taken away by accidents: 1. 1908—Johann Rittlinger, 39 years old, fell from the wagon; 2. 1917—Katharina Bädke, née Scherer, 28 years old, burned; 3. 1925—Alfred Habelmann, 5 years old, by rabies and 4. 1919—Salomine Steinke, 2 years old, by burns.

Two foreign soldiers rest in the cemetery: Eduard Hoffmann, 37 years old, from Germany, the name and the home of the second are forgotten. A three step base, built of brick and cement and a black-painted wooden cross on top of it, was erected by the church leaders in 1929 for each of the soldiers. Similar to this, only larger and four steps high, one stands as a landmark in the middle of the cemetery. The cemetery is located in the middle on the eastern side above the village. It is surrounded by a ditch and has an area of $\frac{1}{4}$ *defjatine* [0.67 a / 0.27 ha].

In 1910, smallpox prevailed in Alexanderfeld, as a result of which several people died.

There have been no particularly devastating animal diseases since the foundation of the village.

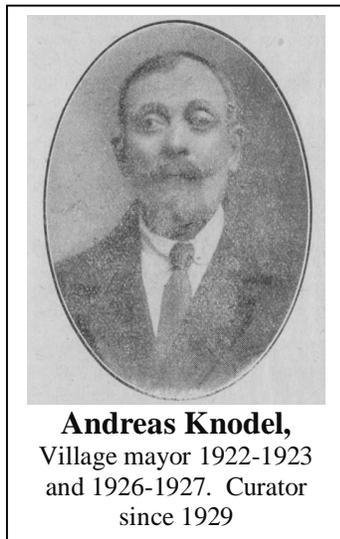
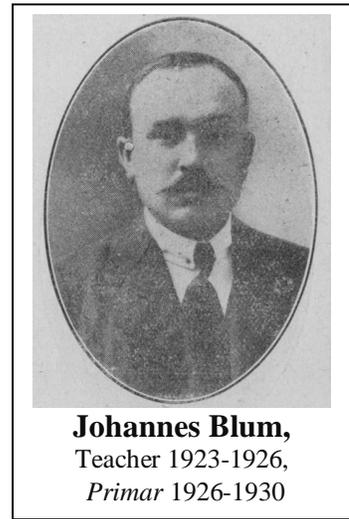
Almost all the inhabitants of the village are farmers. Besides these, there are two blacksmiths, two carpenters, a tailor and a cobbler. There are only a few landless in the village.

The community leaders were almost always elected for one year; their names are: 1. Friedrich Müller (1908), 2. Wilhelm Kujath (1909), 3. Johann Schulz (1910), 4. Michael Schöttle (1911), 5. Christoph Bädke (1912), 6. Friedrich Schill (1913), 7. Gottlieb Gehring (1914), 8. Karl Schulz (1915), 9. Adolf Bädke (1916 and 1917), 10. Karl Schulz (1918), 11. Andreas Blum (1919), 12. Samuel Gehring (1920), 13. Friedrich Schill (1921), 14. Andreas Knodel (1922), 15. Johannes Ziehmann (1923), 16. Friedrich Schill (1924), 17. Johann Schramm (1925), and 18. Andreas Knodel (1926). From 1927, curators were elected according to the new church law. The first curators were: 1. Johannes Ziehmann (1927 and 1928) and 2. Andreas Knodel (1929 until now).

From 1910-1914 and from 1922-1924 Alexanderfeld had a community brick kiln. This brick kiln supplied bricks for many houses in the village, especially at the southern end. Today, most

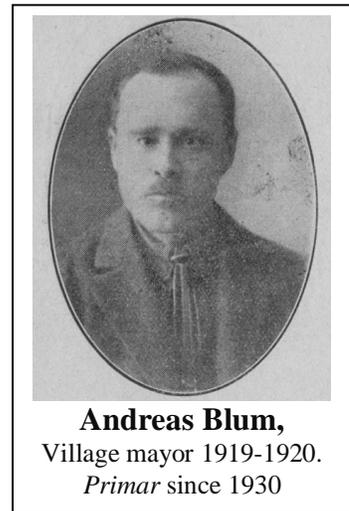
of the buildings are roofed with cement tiles. Also, several street walls have been built in the last two years, so that the village makes a good impression.

Through that brickyard, bricks were also made for a new prayer house. As said earlier, the prayer house was erected immediately after the foundation of the village. But because there were no stones, it was built from unfired bricks (*Batzen*). Rain from a strong thunderstorm poured down on the building before it was under a roof. As a result, the walls have warped, and for some years now it has been necessary to attach supports from the inside and outside. There is also no longer enough space in it. It stands in the middle of the village on the western side and with it under one roof, consisting of 5 narrow rooms, is the residence of the teacher. At that time it cost 2,590 rubles. As early as 1923, the community saw the need to build a new prayer house, but there was no agreement at that time. Now, in 1930, it was decided to build a church and it was started on 1 April. The foundation stone was laid by Pastor Koch on 6 April. The church is built opposite the old prayer house by master builder Chr. Jörke and costs 1,700,000 lei with the steeple and street wall, not including all the compulsory labor (*Fronarbeiten*). It is 5 *faden* [35 ft / 10.5 m] and 2 *arschin* [56 in / 142.2 cm] wide; 12 *faden* [84 ft / 25.2 m] long and, including the steeple, about 10 *faden* [70 ft / 21 m] high. It is to be completed by 20 October, 1930.



As a space for school, the old must serve perhaps another year or two until the municipality has the opportunity to build such a school. In addition to this old prayer house, a small room in a small house on the municipal courtyard serves as a schoolhouse (called a small school). Already from 1922 on, the community has difficulties with the school, since the same is still not a state school, but a denominational church school. The authorization on the part of the Russians, which was kept in the town hall of Gawanosy, was burned by a Romanian secretary (*Notar*) with many other Russian documents. In recent years, the municipality has already petitioned three times and has also made a lot of effort to obtain an authorization, but so far without success. There were a few

times when they wanted to close the school. The fact that this could not yet be carried out to this day is thanks to the Senior Pastor (*Oberpastor*), who has always taken care of the church schools. Since 1922, two teachers have been working in the school. Employed as sexton teacher and at the same time community clerk were: 1. Christian Unterseher, (from late 1908-1910); 2. Johannes Flemmer (from 1910-1911); 3. Rudolf Tobler (1911-1915). The school was closed due to the war from 1915-1917. During this time,



the church had no teacher. The service of the sexton was carried out by the church head. 4. Otto Lehmann (1917-1927). The same was a teacher here for 10 years and works prosperously in the church. He will remain unforgettable to his students as well as to many members of the congregation; 5. Artur Schaupp (1927-1928) and 6. the author of this history (1928 until now). Employed as teachers in second position were: 1. Wilhelm Im. Wagner (1922); 2. Johannes Blum (1923-1926); 3. Rudolf Reinöhl (1926); 4. Otto Lehmann (1927); 5. Johannes Müller (1928) and 6. Samuel Rast (1929-1930). The number of schoolchildren from the first year can no longer be determined. In this year, 1930, 82 students attend school. Going on to further education: 1. Imanuel Schöttle, 2. Samuel Rast, 3. Eduard Kison and 4. Alwin Blum.

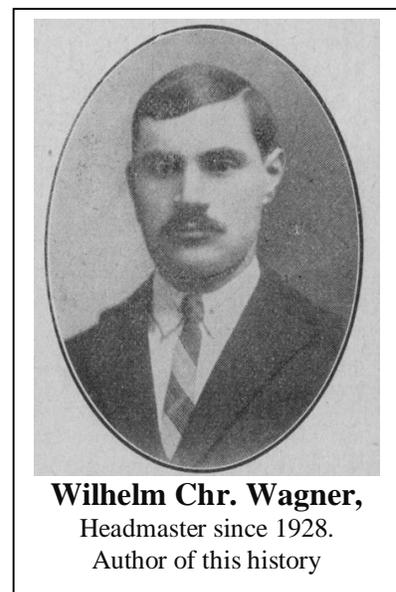
There is a mill at the southern end of the village. It was built in 1913. Ownership has alternated between several owners. Since 1929, it has belonged to a Jew by the name of Glückmann. He thoroughly restored it, installed a new engine and got it fully running again. Also, at the northern end of the village, there is an oil mill driven by a small engine; its owners are Johannes Falk and Reinhold Siegmund. There are other machines in the village: a tractor and a car.

In 1921, 54 community members founded a shop in the village by the name of *Aurora*. It is located toward the southern end of the village, on the west side.

Alexanderfeld had a Women's Society in 1924-1925.

Earlier, before the war and also after the same until 1926, the town hall (*Dorfkanzlei*) for Alexanderfeld, was located in Gawanosy. That is why many people think Alexanderfeld is Gawanosy. The representative of the community in the town hall in Gawanosy, before the war as well as after, was Adolf Bädke. Of course, it was very cumbersome to go to the town hall at Gawanosy for every little thing. In 1926, at its request, Alexanderfeld received its own town hall. It is in a rented residence. Mayors (*Primare*) were: 1. Johannes Blum (1926-1930) and 2. Andreas Blum (1930 up to now). The first clerk (*Notar*) was Daniel Stoitschin (1926-1930), followed by Alwin Blum as secretary (*Sekretär*) in 1930.

From 1908-1912, Alexanderfeld belonged to the I Fere-Champenoise Parish. In 1913, several German communities from the Kahul District founded a parish in Albota, to which Alexanderfeld has belonged since then. Alexanderfeld was served by the following pastors (*Seelsorgern*): 1. Pastor Hansen, Arzis, (1908-1911); 2. Pastor Haase, Tarutino, (1911-1912); 3. Pastor Wollendt (1912-1916); 4. Pastor Haase, Tarutino, (1916-1922) and 5. Pastor Koch (1922 up to now). Since 1924, Alexanderfeld has been celebrating the highly esteemed Day of Penance and Day of Prayer every year on 19 May (new calendar). The Days of the Apostles were celebrated until 1926. Today, only the Day of St. John (on 24 June) is celebrated. All inhabitants belong to the Evangelical Lutheran confession. Also, nearly all the people of Alexanderfeld are diligent churchgoers.



There is also a Brotherhood Fellowship in Alexanderfeld, the leader is Michael Schöttle.

The following papers are read in Alexanderfeld: 23 copies of *Deutsche Zeitung Bessarabiens* [German Newspaper of Bessarabia], 4 copies of *Arader Zeitung* [Arader Newspaper], 15 copies of *Banater Tagblatt* [Banat Daily Newspaper], and 23 copies of *Lichter der Heimat* [Lights of the Homeland].

In 1926, a Library Association was founded. It contains 400 volumes. However, there is no longer diligent reading as at the beginning.

As far as musical instruments are concerned, there are 9 foot pedal organs (*Fußharmoniums*) in Alexanderfeld.

The people of Alexanderfeld are mostly efficient farmers, and when the field work begins, everyone strives to be the first to finish.

The nearest railway station for Alexanderfeld is Gretscheni. It is located 9 km [5.6 mi] from the village. The Alexanderfeld people usually haul their remaining grain there. Often it is also hauled to Reni, because there the prices are better.

Once again, I would like to come back to two men who have already performed important things for the community: 1. Friedrich Müller, 57 years old, who was the first community leader and notice director (*Notizführer*). During the war, from the year 1915-1917, when the congregation had no teacher, as church leader, he carried out the task of sexton service with the permission of the pastor. To this day, he still represents the position of sexton in the pastor's absence. So far, he has baptized 26 children in Alexanderfeld and buried 36 who died. Alternating with others, he has been to this day the church leader in Alexanderfeld for 13 years. Today, he is sickly and weak, but still faithfully holds office. 2. Johannes Blum, 48 years old, who was employed as a teacher at the local village school from 1923-1926. He knew very well how to do his job in school and will be unforgettable to his students. He was mayor (*Primar*) from 1926-1930. Here, too, he has helped the community to do a lot of good things, as for example, a telephone station. So, Alexanderfeld is connected with Albota, 20 km [12.4 mi] away, which, besides Poruschowka, is the next German municipality.

In 1929, Alexanderfeld experienced a very severe winter, with a coldness that no one can remember from previous years. A large part of the vine stocks, as well as acacia trees, nut trees and mulberry trees, froze. Likewise, the whole sown winter wheat.

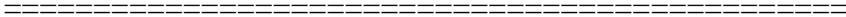
At the founding of the village, Alexanderfeld had 42 families. Now, in 1930, it has 100.

The number of souls during the first years can no longer be determined. This year, Alexanderfeld numbers 264 male and 281 female, together 545 souls. According to the church register, 490 people were born in these 22 years and 223 people died.

Alexanderfeld has 430 horses and 315 cows.

According to the current state of the municipality, it can rightly be said that the people of Alexanderfeld have progressed in the course of 22 years. Their work has been blessed, and success and progress have been visibly expressed in both the individual economy and the community economy. May it remain so in the future!

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Karte deutscher Siedlungen in Bessarabien
Stand 1940 Nach Vorlage von Dr. Karl Stumpff
Vektorisiert und überarbeitet von Rolf Jethon