

Paris, Bessarabia – Part 5

Paris in Bessarabien:
Chronik der Gemeinden Paris und Neu-Paris in Bessarabien,
Arthur Suckut, self-published, 1986, 321 pages.

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Information in square brackets [] is that provided by the translator. This book has 321 pages of information. So as to not overload a digitized copy of this book, the translation will be made in parts. The translation below is from pages 189-218 of Arthur Suckut's book.

[Translation Begins]

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Our Resettlement to Germany

Our ancestors had already experienced some wars, at home and on the front lines. It was especially hard and difficult back then. Now there was war again—the Second World War had broken out. How worried we were about what was to happen to us. The terrible memories of the expropriation of the land were still there, also being very close to the banishment to Siberia, which we were threatened with in 1917. God had intervened at that time—heavy snowstorms prevented the removal in February of 1917, and add to that the February Revolution. (This is not referring to the so-called “October Revolution 1917;” which, by the way, began in October, according to the old calendar style, according to the old date numeration {*Zeitrechnung*} in the Tsarist Empire, which only later was switched to the internationally current date numeration also here in Bessarabia. In *November of 1919, the date numeration was rewritten*; 18 November did not come after 17 November, but one counted 13 days ahead and wrote it as 1 December. It is for that reason that the “October Revolution” is celebrated in November.) But the “old style” continued to be used for many years, especially with church festivals such as Easter or Pentecost. The Russian ruble was also valid for many years in the Romanian period.

But now we were back at it again as we heard the “war thunder” and worried about what was to come. One rumor chased the other. We knew nothing about the real plans of the German Reich and the Russian Empire. Eventually, we also learned that it was already in the summer of 1940 that all Germans from Bessarabia would be resettled to Germany. There was a breath of fresh air through our ranks, however uncertain the further fate was.

An expert of that era, Richard Baumgärtner, described this fateful segment in our ethnic group very well in the *Heimatkalender 1976* (p. 28-36). He has more to say from his knowledge than I could offer. For that reason, here is his contribution.

Resettlement of the Bessarabian Germans

The ultimatum of the Soviet Union to Romania on 26 June, 1940: evacuation of Bessarabian soil by the Romanian troops over the course of three days brought disaster over our heads. The Romanians gave in to the pressure from the east, because during the 24 hours of reflection the German Reich had strongly advised to give in peacefully. This marked the beginning of the tragedy for the Romanian defense force on the western bank of the Dnjester River, which meant a complete collapse of the evacuation measures and led to almost irreplaceable losses of war materials and supplies. One could feel sorry for the poor Romanian soldiers who, in those days, often let down by their leadership, besides all other humiliations, had to endure the ridicule and mockery of former fellow citizens heaped upon them. I am thinking, for example, of that unforgettable image when a train of completely exhausted Romanian infantrymen was chased through the main street of Tarutino by a group of young Jews with the red flag under mockery, jeering and spitting. The Red Army soldiers squatting on their tanks on the side of the road took real pleasure in it.

Nothing happened to us in those days by way of the Red Army, and yet our hearts were full of restlessness and sorrow when we thought of what could or had to come.

The Reich's German Broadcasting (*Rundfunk*), on whose joyful information we had all placed our hopes, initially brought only brief factual reports, but then remained silent on the subject of Bessarabia and its Germans. The borders to the west were sealed airtight.

We knew nothing of what had happened in the back stages of world politics before and during the Soviet ultimatum. If we had known, we would have had a quieter night's sleep.

The Soviet Union had never given up its claims to Bessarabia. When Germany was busy winning the western campaign against France, the Soviet strike came out of the blue like a lightning bolt. Molotov, then Soviet Foreign Minister, asked German Ambassador Schulenburg to come to him and informed him of the impending move of the Soviet Union against Romania concerning the cession of Bessarabia. A "no" from Romania would have meant war. On 26 June, 1940, the Reich government agreed, whether anyone wanted or liked it or not (*nolens, volens*), with the inclusion of Bessarabia and North Bukovina in the Soviet sphere of interest.

Previously, Molotov had given the assurance that the ethnic Germans would be placed under the protection of the Red Army until they were resettled. The ethnic leaders should be informed of this situation by the competent consulates in Galatz [for Bessarabia] or Chernowitz [for North Bukovina]. (Ambassador Fabricius from Bucharest on the announcement (AA) of 28 June, 1940.) As far as I know, this did not happen for our ethnic group, because access to the consul in Galatz, which was responsible for us, was interrupted. So our Region Chairman, Dr. Otto Broneske, made the risky trip to Akkerman to greet the new powers in authority and assure them of the loyalty of the German ethnic group. Some time later, on behalf of the Region Authority, fellow-countryman Paul Rivinius made an adventurous drive to the Reich German consul in Chernowitz and from there brought the instruction of the consul: stay calm, work inconspicuously and above all wait patiently until the resettlement comes!

Although resettlement agreements had already been negotiated between the Soviet Union and the German Reich in 1939 for the Germans from the Baltic states and the former eastern Polish territories, very tough negotiations arose for the resettlement of the German people in Bessarabia and the Germans from the northern Bukovina, which were initiated in Moscow on 22 July, 1940, but could not be concluded until 5 September, 1940 by the signing of the Resettlement Agreement. The greatest difficulties had arisen in the field of asset valuation. Since the Soviets did not recognize private property, they did not want to compensate the resettlers for it. Despite a negotiated special arrangement, as we know, there were violent disputes, some of which led to the interruption of work, and ever-widening differences on the evaluation sheets, which we will read about in detail later.

The Resettlement Agreement

The Resettlement Agreement, drawn up in German and Russian, is divided into four sections:

- I. General
- II. The Resettlement Commission
- III. The Organization of the Resettlement

IV. Final Provisions

The Agreement also includes a protocol explaining the various paragraphs of the Agreement and specifying more detailed provisions, minutes of the final meeting in which further provisions are adopted, instruction on rail transport and one on the implementation of sanitary measures.

In the study of this Agreement, it will soon be discovered that the Soviets, by means of the many provisions, have built in a whole series of conditions which gave them the opportunity to interpret them.

In the General section, it was stipulated that everyone of German heritage, with their voluntary expressed wish, would be relocated to the Reich, taking with them a part of the personal belongings (clothing, footwear, underclothing/linen {*Wäsche*}) and some necessary food. On the railway, passengers were allowed to carry hand luggage and personal small luggage up to 50kg [110 lbs] per person, while otherwise only 35kg [77 lbs] was allowed for adults and only 15kg [33 lbs] for children. On the wagons, on the other hand, up to 250kg [551 lbs] could be taken, including agricultural products (food, fodder), along with two horses or two oxen, a cow, a pig, five sheep or goats and ten feathered animals of any kind.

Certificates and documents of a personal nature were allowed to be carried.

Forbidden to take with them were:

- a) Cash (paper, gold, silver) with the exception of 2,000 lei per person. Anyone who was able to show evidence of goods from sold property (except nationalized assets) had the right to take these sums fully with him in lei.
- b) Gold, silver, platinum in ingots, dust or broken up pieces.
- c) Items of silver over 500g [0.0353 oz], gold and silver watches with chains, wedding rings, silver cigarette cases more than one piece per person.
- d) Items of gemstones or pearls over one carat per person.
- e) Gemstones in unprocessed form.

In addition, art objects, weapons, binoculars, carrier pigeons, church books, plans, documents (other than those of a personal nature), bonds, bills of exchange, motor vehicles, motorcycles, and so forth were not allowed to be taken with them.

Wealth lists of assets left behind by the resettlers were to be compiled, recorded and valued according to quantity and quality. (With the exception of assets that cannot be the property of private individuals in the Soviet Union!) The value of the assets left behind by the resettlers is to be included in the mutual settlement between the USSR and the German Reich in accordance with the Agreement on Trade in Goods and Payments of 31 December, 1939 and transferred in ten annual installments.

In the Resettlement Commission section, only general agreements were made, while in Section III, "The Organization of Resettlement," the most meticulously detailed provisions were dealt with.

SS-Standartenführer [Nazi Party paramilitary rank] Horst Hoffmeyer was appointed as the Chief Authorized Agent (*Hauptbevollmächtigter*) for the German Reich along with two deputies and 28 persons of auxiliary personnel. Tarutino was chosen as the base for the Chief Authorized Agent. His counterpart was Major Weretenikov, head of the Soviet Resettlement Command.

The entire resettlement area was divided into five districts: Albota, Beresina, Mannsburg, Kischinev and Chernowitz in Bukovina.

Each District Chief Authorized Agent (*Gebietsbevollmächtigte*) had a deputy and 21 persons auxiliary personnel. The Local Chief Authorized Agents (*Ortsbevollmächtigten*) with a deputy and two persons auxiliary personnel were regarded as truly performing agencies.

In the Additional Protocol, the locations of the Local Chief Authorized Agents were specified in Article 11:

1. Albota District:
Albota, Eichendorf, Wischniowka, Kulm, Posttal, Neu-Elft, Alexanderfeld
2. Beresina District:
Beresina, Borodino, Hoffnungstal, Klöstitz, Neu-Klöstitz, Paris, Arzis, Teplitz, Katzbach, Krasna
3. Mannsburg District:
Mannsberg, Sofiental, Basyrjamka, Maraslienfeld, Gnadental, Sarata, Friedenstal, Lichtental, Eigenfeld, Annowka, Seimeny
4. Kischinew District:
Kischinew, Jekaterinowka, Neu-Sarata, Fürstenfeld II, Alt-Oneschti, Neu-Strymba, Mariewka, Mathildendorf, Kurudschika

The entire German staff for Bessarabia and for Bukovina could not exceed the number of 599 employees, in which number the medical personnel and the transport personnel had to be included.

In addition to railway trains, which the Soviet side provided for payment, a total column of no more than 250 official cars (*PKW=Personnenkraftwagen*), medical vehicles (*Sankra*) and transport trucks (*LKW=Landkraftwagen*) from the German side was provided for transport and approved by the Soviets. PKW vehicles from 60 to 68, LKW trucks 165 to 167, medical vehicles 15.

The extent to which these figures have been complied with cannot be said in retrospect. After the precise numerical definition and the literal interpretation of the agreements by the Soviets, it can be assumed that the figures mentioned in the Agreement were not exceeded.

The Implementation of the Resettlement

Shortly after the conclusion of the Resettlement Agreement, the members of the German Resettlement Commission, which was already concentrated in Galatz, arrived in Bessarabia on 15 September. How friendly the relationship between the two partners was at that time is clearly shown in two episodes, which are to be described here briefly:

1. The Soviets' welcome of the German Commission.

On 15 September, 1940, the two German ships docked with the Resettlement Commission in the port of Reni. Major Waretanikov, head of the Soviet command, came on the ship with two companions; his deputy, Captain Dobkin, refused to enter the German ship. The welcome ceremony was correspondingly frosty. It took a full hour of tough negotiations to clarify how the baggage checks of the German Commissioners should be carried out.

2. The work-related accommodation of the main staff.

This was to take place in the Tarutino German boys' high school. The Soviets demanded that a Soviet officer of the relevant section be accommodated in every working space in which a German worked. The Germans demanded a cross-division of the building and separate work rooms. These different views and ideas took place at the first and only meeting of the German-Soviet Resettlement delegation. After five and a half hours of hard discussion and tough negotiations, the Germans had prevailed: the building was divided in half by a board wall and each side went about its work for itself.

The District Chief Authorized Agents were appointed: In Mannsburg Mr. Kraus, in Beresina Prof. Karasek, in Albota Mr. Weißhaupt and in Kischinev Mr. Milz. The Local Chief Authorized Agents were mostly old employees of the VDA [**V**olksbund für das **D**eutschtum im **A**usland; a Nazi Youth Organization]. The tax assessors had been trained by the German Resettlement Trust (DUT) and provided with tax forms. In the Additional Protocol to Article 10 of the Resettlement Agreement, the German side had been allowed to choose additional auxiliary personal from among the resettlers.

And now the work could begin, after it had been prepared for the best by our ethnic organization. The fact that the first transport with a medical vehicle (*Sankra*) was able to leave on 16 September shows what brilliant preparatory work had been done.

First, the sick, the elderly and single women with children were taken to the designated border crossings at Reni or Kilia by medical vehicles. Then, either in truck transport (*LKW*) or by rail, all those who did not have their own horse-drawn wagons, and finally trek after trek passed through the country, on predetermined routes, according to a finely elaborated plan with all the necessities for a journey lasting several days.

But what had happened to this abandonment of the homeland? Almost every one of our fellow-countrymen, between 28 June and 15 September, had realized the disturbing and radical form in which our situation had changed:

a) All schools were closed, hospitals confiscated, free movement constricted on the roads, rail travel prohibited for the private sector.

b) Taxes for 1940, even if they had been paid in full or in part, had to be paid in full again. Since the lei was invalidated overnight by the Soviets, it was to be paid for in kind, that is, with grain.

c) From the 1940 harvest, a target, usually arbitrarily fixed, had to be delivered. If it was not possible to deliver this target in one type of grain, it had to be delivered in an assortment of other grain. Due to alleged pollution, high additional deliveries were often commanded. The levies had to be handed over at certain times at certain collection points, which had often been chosen, that is, determined unfavorably,.

d) After the Soviet decree of nationalization of 15 August, 1940, the properties were considered nationalized and were expropriated from the owners (but before that they had to pay their taxes in full for 1940!):

1. All banks, state loan banks and savings banks

2. All industrial enterprises with a number of more than 20 workers or a number of workers not under 10 in the presence of an engine power not less than 10 horse power.

3. All enterprises in the book and printing industries, all electricity plants and buses, all liquor distilleries, wine distilleries and petroleum stations, as well as trading enterprises with an annual turnover of more than 600,000 lei. In addition, all hospitals, pharmacies, drug stores, sanatoriums, all elementary and middle schools, along with cinemas, theatres, museums; large hotels as well as houses rented in return for interest.

e) Numerous political arrests took place in the non-German municipalities. Many of the Bessarabia Germans were also summoned for interrogation, but only a few were arrested. Among these, Boris Hoffmann, landowner from Klöstitz, was taken to Moscow and only released in 1941.

All these circumstances helped to arouse the hot desire in the Bessarabia Germans “Just get out of here, go soon!”

When the Resettlement Commission arrived and had begun its work, a certain calm returned to the frightened hearts, and everyone began to save from their possessions what was still to be saved. What was allowed to be taken was packed, everything else, linens, clothing, household goods, furniture, agricultural equipment and machines were sold or given away to the population living around us. After registration by the German Commission, it was time to deposit the sums

of money which were not allowed to be exported. The necessary documents, papers, certificates, and so forth had been procured—and the journey could get started. Everything took off straight as a string: a wheel mechanism had started to roll, which could hardly be surpassed in perfection. The Resettlement had to be completed on 16 November, but already on 13 November the last transport rolled across the Soviet-Romanian border.

In the short time of less than two months, some 93,000 people had left their homes, and it all seemed so simple and so easy. But only those who were affected by it know what has happened in terms of pain and suffering.

Difficulties were made by the Soviet side because one parent was not German. There a Russian servant, who had grown up with his farmer family and belonged to the family, wanted to also resettle, although he could not prove his Germanness, even if he spoke the village Swabian like a German. In another case, a girl had married a Russian and wanted to resettle with him.

The Resettlement Command had to certify such and similar cases, doing what was humanly possible and always thought, made decisions and acted humanely.

In order to correctly characterize the situation of those weeks, I have to report briefly that many foreigners, Russians Ukrainians, Moldovans, Bulgarians, even Jews, appeared in the private quarters of the Local Chief Authorized Agents in the night and fog, falling to their knees, weeping, begging for them to be taken to Germany. They wanted to give all their possessions to the German Empire. In such cases, no one could help!

Great difficulties soon arose in estimating the remaining possessions. Even the first few days showed that it would hardly be possible to draw up joint German and Russian estimate lists. The Soviet tax assessors often used quantities and prices that were up to ten times lower than those of the German tax assessors.

Here are two examples:

a) A durable farmhouse is valued by the Germans at 10,000 lei, while the Russians only valued it at 500 lei.

b) A barley reserve is estimated by the Germans at 3,000kg, by the Russians at 500kg.

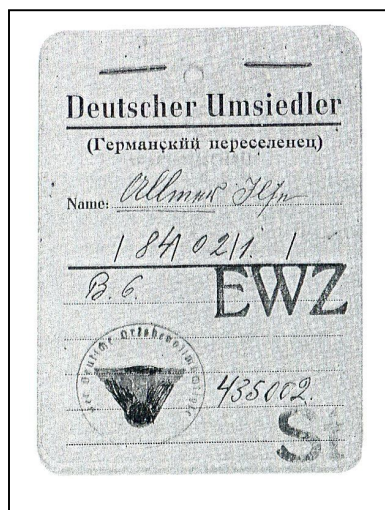
Since an agreement was rarely reached even after hours of negotiations, even at the higher and highest level, the German tax assessors eventually compiled their own estimation lists in which Reich Marks were entered for the values of what was being left behind.

Consequently, the Soviets came to realize that, firstly, their trying to win over the Germans in Bessarabia to stay behind fell on deaf ears and, secondly, as the fixed date for the completion of the resettlement operation was met, the greater the difficulties they made. Karl Knauert, a teacher in Mariewka, reported that the Soviets did not tolerate any asset valuation (assessment) for the municipality of Jakobstal.. In other communities, they tried to make it difficult in the attempts to prepare the treks. It was definitely stated in Article 3, paragraph 3 of the

Resettlement Agreement that persons who move on the trek route were allowed to have two horses...per farmyard. There were repeated inconsistencies in the final interpretation of this provision and in its practical implementation. The Soviets did not allow anyone who had a farmyard to resettle with horse and wagon, but only the one who had worked with his horses in his farming business. In many cases, they simply did not admit that the sons of farmers, who had only married after 28 June, were trekking with horse and wagon. Horses were also not allowed to be taken if they had previously worked in a non-agricultural business. So around 80 teams were lost in Arzis and around 40 in Tarutino.

Each registered person received his resettled card and was thus protected by the Reich. On each resettlement card was the resettlement number, which was to be noted on his luggage and on all lists concerning him.

The transport to the transit camp in Galatz (former airfield for 20,000 to 25,000 persons!) or to one of the shipping ports took different routes for the resettlers. Some were taken by medical vehicles or trucks to Kilia or Reni, and from there immediately brought onboard ships, the others as far as Galatz, from where, depending on the location, the Danube ships continued to Prahovo or Semlin, where once again transit camps were set up, which were looked after by the Germans of Yugoslavia. Others took these routes by train, in as far as they did not live too far from a railway station, and the last ones finally trekked by horse and wagon via Reni to Galatz.



According to a preliminary statistic of the Reich Commission for the Consolidation of German People, 30,461 people were resettled from Bessarabia: 30,461 people by medical vehicles and trucks, 22,337 people by train, 15,273 by wagons, while 20,301 came to Galatz on their 11,600 trek wagons with 22,922 horses. Up to the time of the statistics, this came to a total of 88,372 resettlers. (From *Der Menscheninsatz*, December 1940, page 144.) According to the *Kleiner Umsiedlungsspiegel* of January 1944, 93,329 people are said to have been resettled from Bessarabia, 2,580 are said to have been left behind.

From the camps of Galatz, Prahovo or Semlin, the journey on German trains continued into the Reich, where accommodation was provided in the camps of the Ethnic German Transit Department (*Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle = Vomi*). Of the approximately 1,000 resettlement camps of the Vomi, those designated for the Bessarabia Germans were mainly in the Regions of Austria, Bavaria, Franconia, Saxony and the Sudetenland.

Due to the various but necessary transport routes, not only the village communities, but often also the families had been torn apart and often lived in widely scattered camps. In some camps, for example, only women with their children were present, while their men, who had chosen the trek route, were housed far away in other camps.

The responsible German authorities of the Vomi tried to do their utmost to make the situation of the resettlers bearable, although this was often quite difficult because of the war. In many cases, it was human error when in this or that camp there were impossible situations.

In many areas, the camp occupants found work and had the opportunity to earn some money to increase their meager pocket money. In the Franken Region, for example, an attempt was made to organize emergency classes for school-aged children using the German teachers. In other camps, the resettlers were treated like second-class people.

But they had been promised that they would return to farms, and they had been told that the kinship and the village communities would not be torn apart. So they waited patiently.

During this period of waiting for naturalization and settlement, they underwent training in many camps to prepare them for the future tasks of building up the East. In other camps, little was done in this sense. The camp life, which lasted for many months, even years, worn down so many that in the end they did not care: Utmost goal was to get out of the camp!

Before this could happen, the process of naturalization had to be carried out. In this procedure, all resettlers were subjected to a health and racial-political examination by the Immigrant Center of the SD [Sicherheitsdienst = Nazi Security Service] and classified according to the result.

Only those who were classified as “healthy” by the medical commission and by the racial-political experts (who were often fellow-countrymen of ours!) as “racially valuable—politically reliable” could be settled in the East (Osten) (O-cases = Eastern cases!). All other German resettlers should be located in the Old Kingdom (Altreich) (therefore A-cases), while those classified as foreign or otherwise considered undesirable and unreliable should be deported to the General Government or to their old homeland as special cases (Sonderfälle) (S-cases).

Until 1 October, 1942, these classifications for the Bessarabia Germans looked like this:

Resettled	O-cases	A-cases	S-cases
92,352	86,702	4,645	1,005

After the pouring through the gap situation on 31 December, 1941, we even had 10,668 Bessarabia Germans who had been classified as A-cases. Many complaints and submissions, as well as the recognition that the racial-political assessment had in many cases been carried out unilaterally, led to the reclassification of around 6,000 A cases from within O-cases. The S-cases have also been reduced to 252! (From *Report on the Status of Relocation and Settlement* on 1 October, 1942, Table 3a, Federal Archives File. R35/24 p.21.) —We should not fail at this point to also point out that we have all been classified with the evaluation rates I to IV in the racial-political assessment. According to that, only 1.2% of Bessarabia Germans received Category (*Note*) I; 34.5% Category II; 54.4% Category III; and 9.9% Category IV. (According to the final reports of the EWZ [Einwandererzentralstelle = Immigration Center] Ed72/1-20.)

At this point it should also be expressly pointed out that it had been made impossible for the old ethnic group leadership of the Bessarabia Germans. to influence the fate of their fellow-

countrymen in any way! The leading men were also not consulted about the settlement to the east, and none of them were appointed as members of any working group for passing through the gap or settlement. With the arrival of the last resettlers in the camp, the ethnic group leadership ceased to exist and was prevented from carrying out some kind of ethnic group work in the camps or in the settlement area. How could it be otherwise, as the “Human Mission” (*Menscheneinsatz*) 1940, page VI, said:

“With the entry of the ethnic group into the Reich, the former people’s organization ceases to exist, because the Reich now stands above the ethnic group. It cannot and must not be the case that, for example, in the German East there is a Baltic German ethnic group next to a Volhynian German- population. The notions of Baltic German, Volhynia German and Bessarabia German must rather be eradicated in the shortest possible time.”

This clearly put on the pressure that the break-up of the former Bessarabia German village communities was full intentional and only to some small extend necessary.

Now, that is a statement that is no longer part of the Resettlement itself. It is to be said again and again that the members of the Resettlement Commission have done more than what was in their power and their obligation. They soon recognized, and expressed this verbally as well as in many writings, that it was a pleasure for them to be able to work to save valuable German folklore. This is how Rolf Bongs confesses in his booklet *A Village Resettles (Ein Dorf siedelt um)*: “The men of the commando shared bread and salt with the farmers, day and night, the joy of a quiet summer evening and the heavy testing on the paths of the trek: they learned to love the ethnic Germans in their wordless fidelity, in the trustworthiness and matter of course of their attitude.”

This trustworthiness and matter of course had come to the Bessarabia Germans ever since they had to experience a completely different world after 28 June. It was not their world.

And so everyone felt it was fortunate that he was helped out of this, even if with the abandonment of almost all earthly possessions.

Although our dreams and hopes soon were dashed, even if much bitter suffering had to be endured in the “new” homeland, even if the fate of many families became a tragedy, the great mass of the ethnic group persevered . And although the future of the sons and daughters was not assured, the grandchildren should be allowed to live carefree in the land of their fathers. The Resettlement alone has saved us from having to suffer the fate that the Russian Germans had to endure after 1945, from which many of them still must suffer today in subjugation of the East which has been forced upon them.

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5. *Werner Mayer: The Resettlement of German Ethnic Groups from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and Their Settlement from 1939 to 1944. Type-written scientific examination paper for the examination for the higher teaching position in the spring of 1965. (Werner Mayer: Die Umsiedlung deutscher Volksgruppen aus Ost- und Südosteuropa und ihre Ansiedlung 1939 bis 1944. Maschinengeschriebene wissenschaftliche Prüfungsarbeit für die Prüfung zum höheren Lehramt im Frühjahr 1965.)*

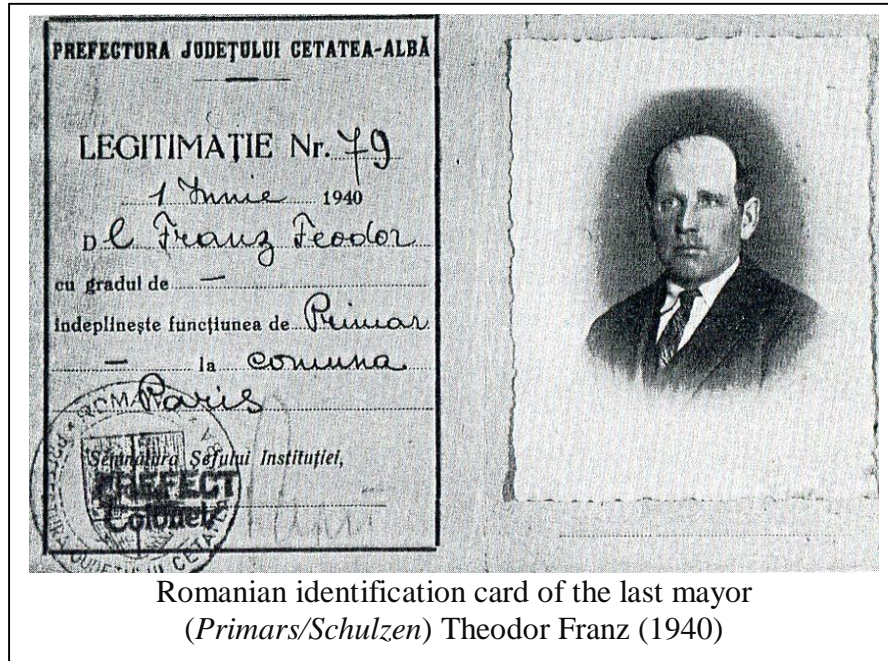
I owe a special debt to Werner Mayer, Ludwigsburg, for the provision of his examination work with the source material he collected in a second volume with 110 images of documents.

Resettlement of Paris People

Teacher Albert Eckert, who was the last resettler to leave our home village, reported at our first Homeland Gathering on 3 July, 1976, in Stuttgart—160th year Paris—about the course of the resettlement from his point of view, from his experience—especially the events there in the final days. None of us had any idea during his lecture that he would go home [die] a few weeks later (which he already suspected and said there). Now his report, recorded on tape, which is to be reproduced here somewhat shortened and fragmented (*gerafft*).

We belonged to the Beresina District and were designated with the Number B-6 (Alt-Paris and Neu-Paris together). In mid-September of 1940, the Resettlement Commissions, coming from Beresina, arrived in the village. It happened to be a Sunday. The German Commission consisted of three gentlemen: *Ludwig Brudermann, Leonhard Oberascher and H. Kretschmar*. The Russian gentlemen were *Lieutenant Golubiev and his secretary*, who was a Jew who could speak our language very well. Immediately after their arrival, the community was gathered, and from the steps of the town hall they greeted us and delivered greetings from their governments. Everyone could decide voluntarily whether he wanted to stay here or move to Germany. The decision had already been made—in favor of the trip to Germany!

The Germans were housed in the home of teacher Emil Heer. He was gone as a soldier, his wife Flora née Walter, moved with their young child to her parents in the Lower Village. The Russians were housed in the courtyard next to the town hall, near Johanna Allmer. They were taken care of in the house of Johannes Keller, where our teacher Miss Emma Kehrer was responsible for this. Together with other women, who took turns, the duties were carried out. A



Romanian identification card of the last mayor (Primars/Schulzen) Theodor Franz (1940)

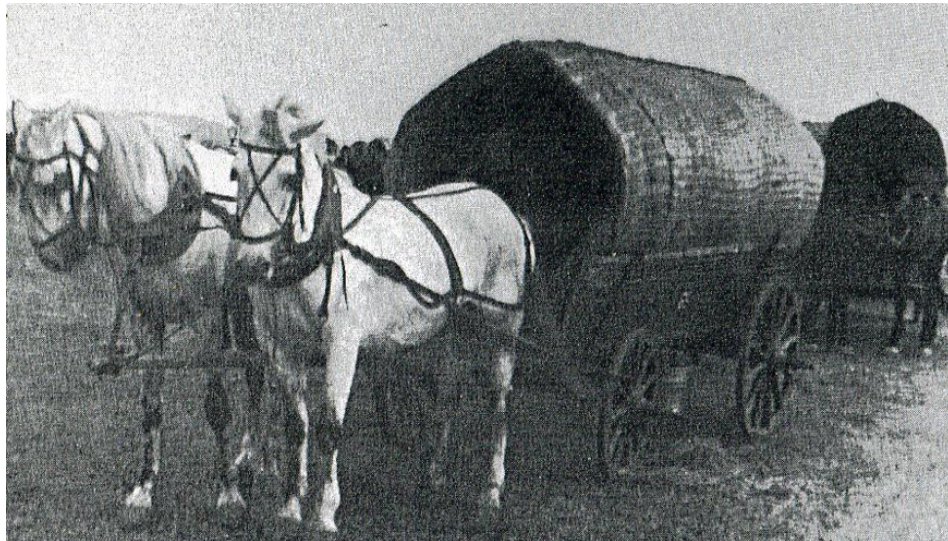
number of interpreters were needed as helpers for the commissions. They were Mrs. Lydia Heer, Mr. Eduard and Mr. Michael Borck. Teacher Albert Eckert and the members of the “Comradeship” (see Appendix No. 6), who had already been working, had to go from farmyard to farmyard with Mr. Kretschmar and the Jew and estimate everything and immediately enter it in lists, in German and Russian. In the town

hall, all family fathers or also mothers had to show up, declare their willingness to resettle, were entered in lists and then they received the papers for all family members. The Resettlement Passport, with name and number, had to be hung around the neck as an identification card. We mockingly interpreted the large printed EWZ as “Eternal Wandering Gypsies (*Ewiger Wander Zigeuner*).” Unfortunately, it would come true later.

The vehicles were quickly arranged everywhere, equipped with canopies, with the necessary food and drink, pastries and the like. It was not known how long the whole journey could take. As the treks were put together, who would be going with whom, then it finally started.

Already at the end of September, the sick, the elderly, the heavily pregnant women or mothers with several young children were taken away by buses and trucks to the port of Kilia on the Danube, where they boarded the waiting ships and sailed up the Danube to Semlin near Belgrade, which took about four days.

On 2 October, the first wagon trek took off. All of Neu-Paris, from our Lower Village up to Eduard Suckut, also traveled by wagons. This trek went to Galatz, where the large reception camp was for most of them. While the families continued by ship, also to Semlin, the men had to stay behind in Galatz and assemble the delivered wagons and the large baggage. Horses had to be delivered in exchange for a certificate. Likewise, food products, so that they should not spoil. Wagons and horses were never seen by most; some were to have been distributed after the settlement in the Warthe Region (*Warthegau*).



The trek leaves its home village (Picture Archive Heimatmuseum)



Parked trek wagons in the Galatz collection camp



By ship, sailing up the Danube in October of 1940—to Germany!



On the ship *Johann Strauss*, on which many of the Paris people sailed. Among the personnel belonged also Irma Borck (on the far right with pigtails), the daughter of our Clerk Michael Borck, who travelled back forth several times.

The next wagon trek from Paris was on *Sunday, 6 October*. It was just the *Harvest Thanksgiving Day, as it was inaugurated by the church in 1905!* But here things were going in haste and confusion (*drunter und driüber*), there was no time to conduct a worship service of thanks. Everyone had to gather, from the school to way down in the Lower Village. At midnight, the bells started ringing, then the trek started. The first wagons drove beyond Alt-Elft over the hill towards Neu-Elft (you could see it because of the wagon lanterns), the last ones drove from Paris, and still we could hear our bells ringing, pain and joy at the same time filled our hearts—one cannot describe it! The next day, after a stop-over in a Bulgarian village, the trek arrived in Kilia. There it was checked again whether everything was in accordance with the regulation, then we boarded the ship. The empty wagons returned to Paris to get the last large baggage, which then had to go back to Galatz. When everyone was gone, only teachers Eckert and Else Pfahl (Johannes) remained in the village, and after completing all the formalities, drove to Beresina with the staff. Before that, there were two major earthquakes in the village that destroyed many things, even the bells began to strike—a horrible farewell!

Onward Journey to Germany

The Commissions had finished their work, they were really fatigued, they had to accompany every trek, and everyone was happy to finally leave behind the abandoned steppe. Albert Eckert also reported on the plight of the animals gathered on the large farmyards, which all had to be taken care of by Bulgarians. How these animals, whether dog, cat, cow or other, often cried out, out of hunger and thirst, or because, for example, with the cows the udders were full and they were not being milked in time. The few Bulgarians did not show up, because they had to work in the field, because corn and grape harvest were not yet completely finished, field preparation for the winter seed hardly started. How it pained him to have to experience all this! He told all this at the gathering in 1976.

Before leaving the village, he went to his yard again, got a lump of earth and took it with him, then went to the church and got the altar picture, which was put up in 1905, wrapped it and took it with him. A silent prayer while gazing at the organ he had played so often at worship services—that was his farewell to Paris!

A story is still to be briefly mentioned. The Russian officer had “borrowed” a gelding (*Wallach*) from Immanuel Franz in the Upper Village as a riding horse, which he had not returned, but had sold it at the herb gardens behind the railway. That was his misfortune, he had gambled away his authority. Wherever there was a difficulty, he was reminded—and he had to give in. This was to the advantage of a Bulgarian family from Alt-Elft, which was allowed to resettle with our community because in the list drawn up for the village there were some people who had died—four dead ones in exchange for four living ones! When they were supposed to respond with “Here” (*Hier*) when they checked before boarding the ship, they could not really do it, because the Russians, who do not have an H, say G for it, so they shouted “*Gier*.” He wanted to intervene, but Mr. Brudermann was right there and just said “Gelding!”—so he allowed them to board the ship. Our much used proverb was confirmed here again: “Ill-gotten gain never thrives!” Moreover, the gelding was eventually found and came back to its owner.

From the intermediate camps, transport continued by rail, after a few days of rest and recovery and thorough investigation, so in *Galatz* (men), in *Prachowo* and *Semlin*, both in Yugoslavia. In Semlin, the example of the Parisian names described elsewhere happened – all French!

The oldest settler from Paris was Euphrosine Suckut (Maria) at the age of 91. She, like with other old or sick people, was transported on the way in an ambulance; some of them have never reached the Resettlement camps in the Reich. So also this Mrs. Suckut; she already died in Transylvania in a home or hospital.

This is what happened to several elderly, sick or young children. They were separated from their families in order to be better cared for. For almost all of them, this was still death—somewhere on the way! If some of them died, others were given life! The first “Reich German” citizen from Paris was the child of Elfriede Ölke née Dallmann. She gave birth to her son Erich in a hospital in Vienna on 18 October, 1940. Both live today in their own home in Bockenem on the Harz, where the “Dallmanns” have all found each other. All other people from Paris travelled by train in several transports via Vienna—Prague—to Saxony. For most of them, the first train ride of their lives! All people from Paris (including our folks from Neu-Paris) were divided into eight Resettlement Camps, all in *Dresden and the surrounding area*, arriving there in mid-October of 1940. After the men from Galatz had arrived, they were finally divided among the assigned camps, some from one camp to another. As far as is known from oral and written reports, the Resettlement Camps were:

Camp Nr. 87—Seifersdorf near Langebrück/Dresden

Camp Nr. 88—Langebrück near Dresden

Camp Nr. 89—Radenbeul near Dresden

Camp Nr. 90—Dresden-Löbtau

Camp Nr. 91—Dresden-Freital

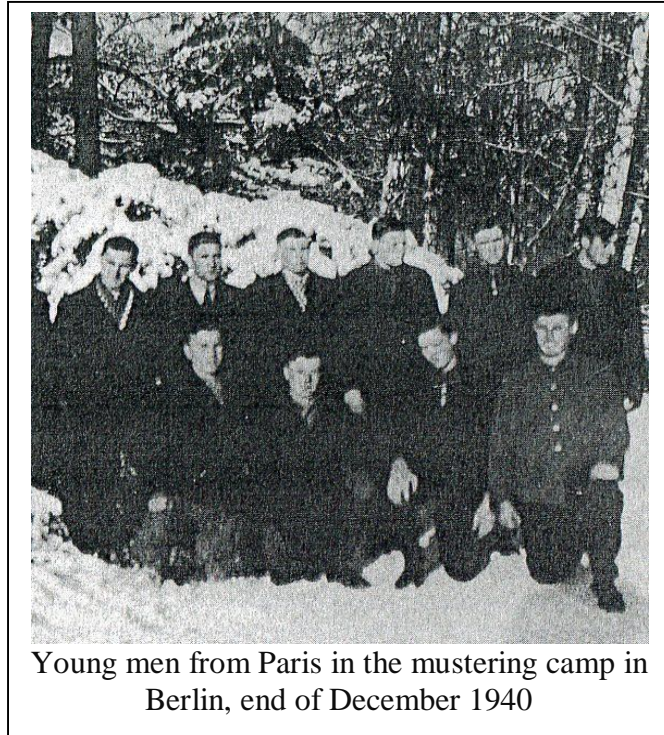
Camp Nr. 92—Dresden-Central

Camp Nr. 93—Dresden-Bühlau (Weißer Hirsch)

Camp Nr. 94—Dresden-Neustadt

In almost all camps there were always some folks from Neu-Paris, but most of them in Freital. In Camp 90, in Wallwitz Street (as it was then called), an illegal resettler suddenly appeared, who came through all the controls without being noticed—it was “Flocki,” the little dog of Herbert and Klara Steinke. Here he had to be surrendered because he did not have a “right of resettlement.” At the request of a woman in Dresden, she was allowed to take it to her home. It is not known whatever happened to it after that.

Many of the young men from Paris, who had to stay in Galatz until the end of 1940, until everything was done there, especially sorting and removing the large baggage, which came by train to a large warehouse in Vienna, and after clean-up work in Galatz after the great earthquake, did not come from there to their relatives, but immediately to a mustering camp in Berlin. There they wanted to take them all into the SS. But they refused and wanted to go to their parents. But some (the names we have) were not allowed home and immediately came to the training, mainly to Stralsund, where the SS had a training barracks. Some of these “Berlin Boys” (*Berliner Jungs*) are admitted at the end of December 1940.



Albert Suckut (Eduard) reports on the resettlement to Germany from his point of view and experience and writes the following in a few sentences:

On 2 October, 1940, the first Resettlement Trek departed in the early morning from the hometown of Paris/Bessarabia. The so reliable church bells rang. It was an emotional moment. My father Eduard Suckut and I were the last wagon to be there with a canopy, two good horses and 50kg [110 lbs.] of baggage per family member. The destination of the wagon column was the Galatz/Romania Resettlement Camp. The camp was in the area of the airport. After prior welcome by representatives of the Resettlement Commission at the border, the trek was directed to a large vacant space on the site. We had beforehand loaded the large baggage onto a ship.

All resettlement wagons had to be arranged side by side and one after the other. The horses were taken over by the Transylvanian Germans, the wagons stayed parked. All other food had to be delivered to the storage kitchen. Many fellow-countrymen were in tears as they had to say goodbye to their horses and wagons.

Then we came to the Resettlement Camp in an airplane hanger or to a tent for living and stayed overnight. Through the camp kitchen a person got to eat well and abundantly. There was much new to see, hear and process.

After a few days in the camp, my father and many others from our old homeland were loaded onto a ship. It sailed up the Danube to Germany—home to the Reich, as it was called at that time. About 300 young men from Bessarabia—including me—had to stay in the Resettlement Camp to carry out various tasks until the resettlement was completed. At the end of December, 1940, we took the train to Berlin during severe frost. After halting a few days and mustering, I

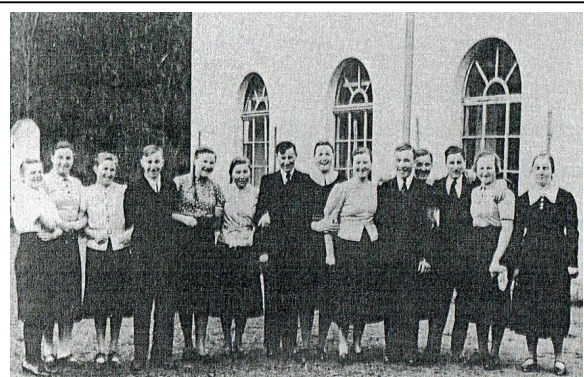
was allowed to go to my parents and siblings in Resettlement Camp 92 in Dresden. Joyful greetings took place there.

The Time in Camp

For the independent farmers, it was like a prison. Of course, it was not the same in all camps, but the close living together in large spaces—several families together and from the infant to the elder, in densely packed beds, placed on top of each other—was a completely alien world that they could not understand. And furthermore, the food was different, for a long time all without work, without being able to go out, one could not go shopping, neither to church or to a meeting. In the camp, it was forbidden, so one spent this time in political training lectures, film screenings, services in the SA [*Sturmabteilung*—Storm Detachment—Nazi paramilitary] and HJ [Hitler Youth] among others. Guards were set up to let out only people with an identification card. Only in later times were men allowed/had to go to work, sometimes in columns, with escort, as if “convicts.” There was only pocket money, the other was put on account—never get anything from it! Compared to these camps, today’s asylum camps are luxury hotels! The craftsmen among us had it easier, they were sought after, needed, because many men had already been drafted. They could have stayed with our continuing move, they had work, merit, they could have gotten housing. In the camp, one met secretly here and there in the rooms for Bible study, sometimes a worship service was also allowed in the dining hall.



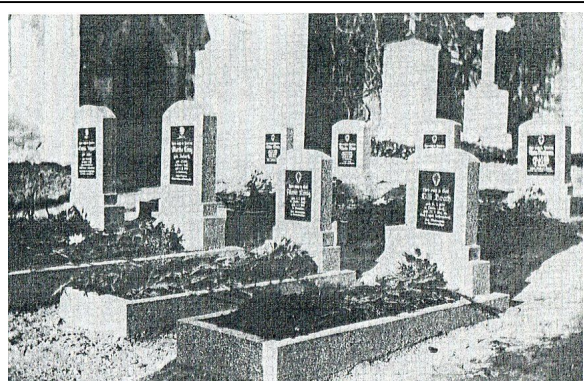
Fellow countrymen from Paris in Camp 87 in Seifersdorf near Dresden



Youth group in Camp 87 in Seifersdorf



Wedding of Albert Franz and Adele Pfahl 1941 in Camp 87 in Seifersdorf



Deceased folks from Paris at the cemetery in Seifersdorf near Dresden



Farewell worship service in Seifersdorf, October 1941, before the departure to the Warthe Region in the Settlement Camp Waldhorst near Lodz (Litzmannstadt)

Here one sat around for more than a year, crammed together, condemned to inaction. As a consequence, diseases arose, and there were probably deaths in all the camps. There is even a picture of Seifersdorf, where you can read names of people from Paris on tombstones.

Then we were used to praying before the meal as well as afterwards. Here it was in exceptional cases. And when someone once awkwardly expressed himself and prayed, “Whoever goes to the table without prayer and rises up without prayer, he is like the ox and the donkey, and has no part in the kingdom of heaven!”, then it had the consequence that no more prayer was allowed at all.

Many men and women were sent to training camps to turn them into good German Christians, some to the Sonthofen Castle. But they remained what they were. And when even there the “Brethren” requested to be allowed to do their prayers, it was recognized that they were made of different wood! Our parents were hit very hard when their daughters—including some young men—had to go to training camps near Kassel, fearing for their children, who were wanted to win over Hitler’s cause.

Other young men went to Vienna as “volunteers” to the mentioned large baggage camp. There they had to sort the baggage by municipalities, then it was loaded and taken to another camp in Lodz, from where the people got it after their settlement in the Warthe Region or in West Prussia.

After the so-called “naturalization” in the spring of 1941, we had become “Reich Germans,” now subject to all rights and duties of the “German Reich.” As a result, our youth, if they were old enough, could also be drafted. In the summer of 1941, for example, many people from Paris came to a large training camp in Vienna, so they were trained for their service in Ukraine, as so-called “Front Farmers” (*Frontbauern*).



Wedding Woldemar Bork and Else Pfahl in
Camp Dresden 1941



Wedding Emil Ziebart and Irma Pfahl 1941
in Camp 88 in Langebrück/Dresden



Christmas celebration 1940 in Camp 90 in
Dresden; in the foreground teacher Albert
Eckert



Neu-Paris folks singing songs in the
courtyard of Camp 93 in Dresden-Freital.
The conductor is Heinrich Frieske



A room in Camp 92; bunk beds, sparse furniture, bare walls, all
window sills as storage areas, darkened windows, hygienically very
questionable! From left to right: Irma Pfahl, Klara Sülzle, Hilde
Breitkreutz, Erna Ott-Allmer, Ilse Allmer, Klara Breitkreutz, Adeline
Broneske (in the winter of 1940/1941)



Washing day at Camp 94 in Dresden-Neustadt (spring 1941)



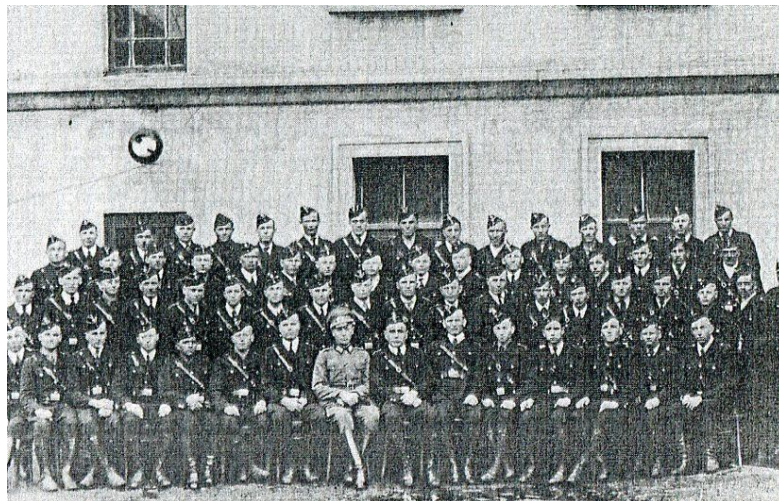
Paris Girls' Group, 1941 in the training camp Landau (Hessen)



Paris Girls' Group, 1941 in the training camp Witzenhausen (Hessen)



Young men from Paris and Neu-Paris in large baggage Camp Vienna (spring 1941)



“Front farmers” 1941 in Kiev—almost all are from Paris and Neu-Paris; before that they did a course of several weeks in Vienna

They came together as far as to Kiev (see picture!), then they were divided up. At that time they saw maps on which Ukraine was already marked as “German Ostmark,” with German place names, with street names of the then Reich important folks, and so forth—it has come to nothing! And what they had promised these people after the grand final victory!

Albert Suckut (Eduard) reports in a few lines how, after the invasion of Russia in June 1941, many men were used as “Front Farmers” for the conquered territories, especially in the Ukraine. Among other Bessarabia fellow-countrymen, it was here again mainly the folks from Paris who were brought in and trained for it. Here is his brief report:

“At the beginning of August 1941, a whole number of younger and older men from our camp were suddenly summoned, collected and taken with other men from the other Resettlement Camps by train transport to *Vienna-Lobau*.

Here we were supposed to be trained with many others on agricultural machinery in order to then come to Ukraine for agricultural insertion. We were under the cover of the *Agricultural Society of Ukraine m.b.H.* After the training, we were loaded into freight train cars and transported east. Passing various cities and landscapes, a number of younger and older men arrived from their hometown of Paris in the *city of Kiev*.

At first we spent some time in a *collection camp in the city*. Then we were distributed in the city of Kiev or along the highways in the district and got different assignments. I myself remained in Kiev until the withdrawal of the German troops from the East, until the beginning of 1944.

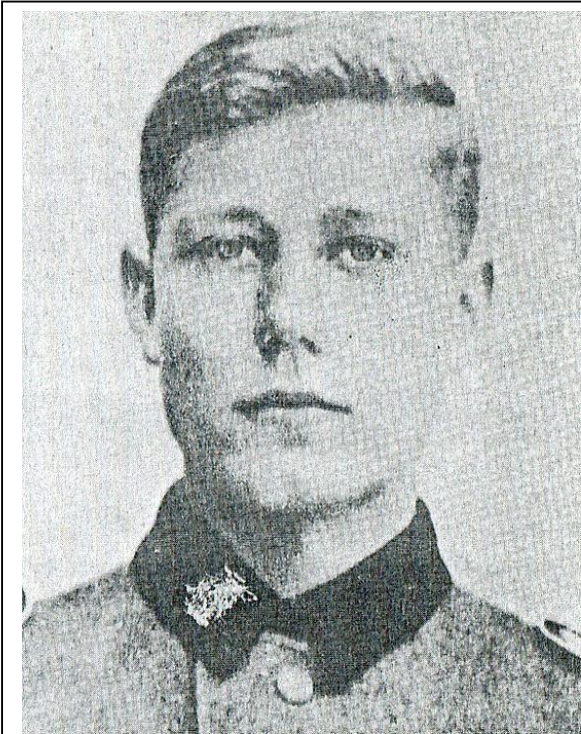
I was released as a Front Farmer. After a short holiday home, I was drafted into the Armed Forces (*Wehrmacht*). I was a soldier until the end of the war, then until the end of 1945 in Russian captivity, because of severe wounding mainly in the hospital. Christmas 1945, I was back with my parents.”

The end of the Front Farmers was that some of them perished there, the others were dismissed and drafted as real soldiers, often to the SS. We—especially our ethnic group—had a loss of deaths, missing, and abducted of just over 10% of our former inhabitants. What a high, pointless sacrifice!

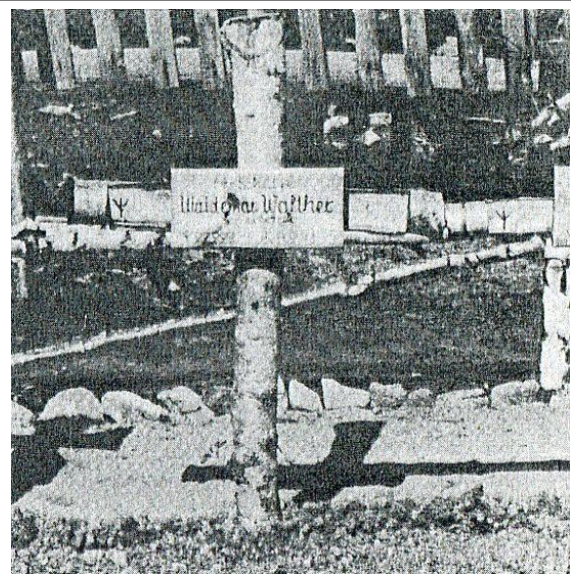
We were still in the camp in Dresden when the news came about the first war dead from our village. It was Woldemar Walter (see picture), not yet 18 years old! There was also a “Hero Memorial!” How his father stirred up in anger against a Reich that had promised us so much freedom. A shock, a shock went through our ranks! After this “first” there were many others; the “last,” as far as we know, was Willi Franz (Alexander), long after the collapse near Berlin, killed in a forest together with other participating youths. Who can still imagine this today, even understand it?!

Even in Dresden, the rumor suddenly arose that all people from Paris would come to Alsace-Lorraine because of their French ancestry. Did that stir things up! But then suddenly it was said again that we were all coming to the German East. But it was also sifted: those “unworthy” for

the “Aryan East,” became an A-case, that is, Altreich. They were later taken to a collection camp in Leipzig, in the “Rock Cellar” (*Felsenkeller*); some were then even settled.



Woldemar Walter (born 27 September, 1923, died 3 September, 1941)—the first one killed in action from our homeland, not yet 18 years old!



Woldemar's grave, with a simple country cross, in a military cemetery near Leningrad

Settlement

From Dresden we went near Lodz. We from Paris all came to Camp Waldhorst near Lask/Pabianitze. Genuine wooden villas in the middle of the forest. It was said that these were the villas of former rich Jews from Lodz (Litzmannstadt). Arrival there was at the end of October of 1941. Most were settled from out of here. Still others, the so-called “rich” (special cases), came to a special camp, where they had to wait until they had found a suitable property for them. That was in Opalenitz near Posen [Poznan]. There were still many from Paris—and others—almost all of them not settling until 1942, including our family in February of 1942.

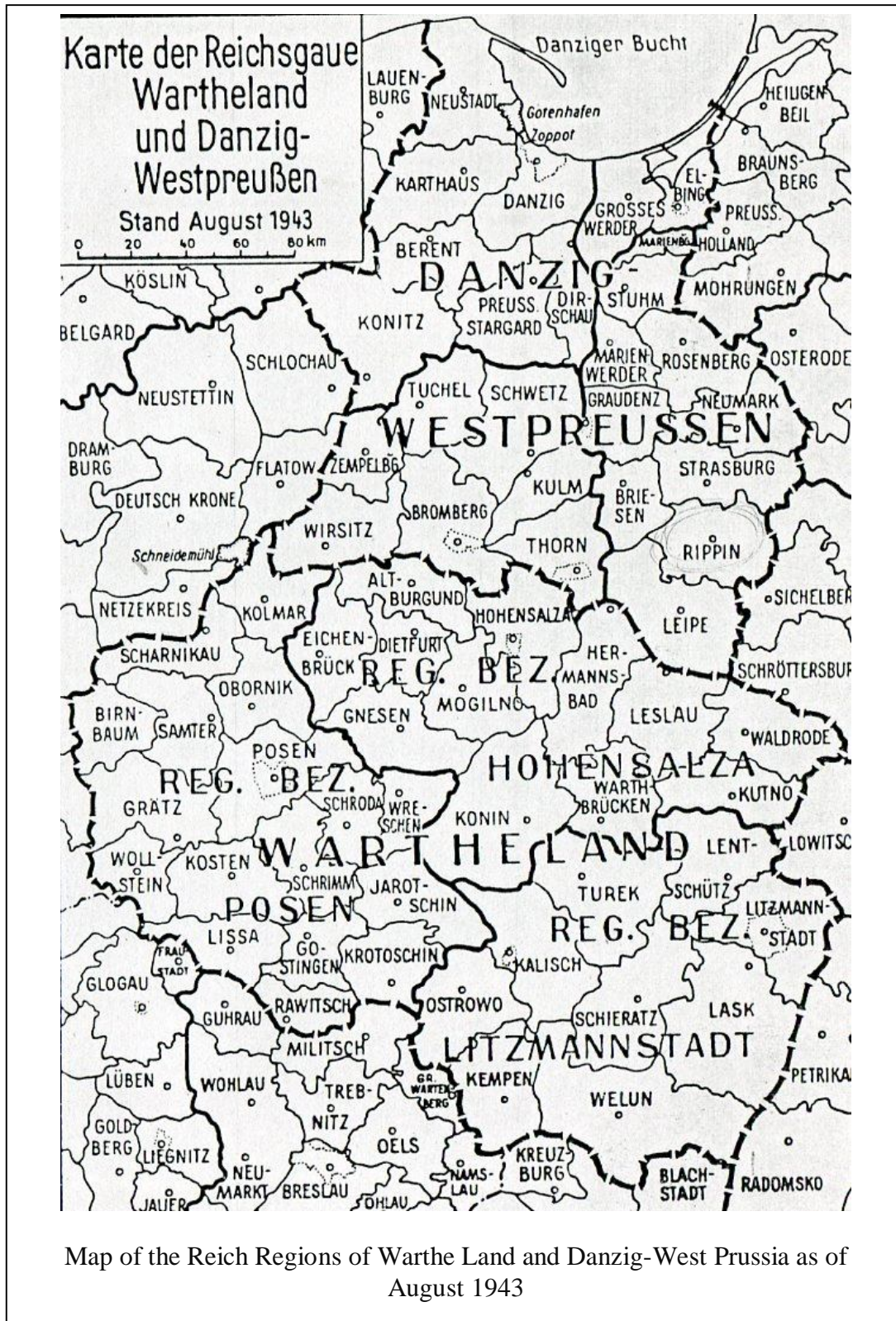
Today we know that no village has been scattered as much as our Paris—all well-considered intention! They wanted to separate and put into cold storage (*kaltstellen*) the leadership people of the Community Movement (*Gemeinschaftsbewegung*). While the people of Neu-Paris almost invariably came to the district of Konin on the Warthe [River], to the people from Klöstitz, the others were scattered over half of the Warthegau, sometimes only one or a few families in a district. Most of them came to the districts of Jarotshin, Kosten, Scharnikau, Eichenbrüch, Grätz, also more in the western part of the country, including Krotoshin, Lissa, and so forth. Young

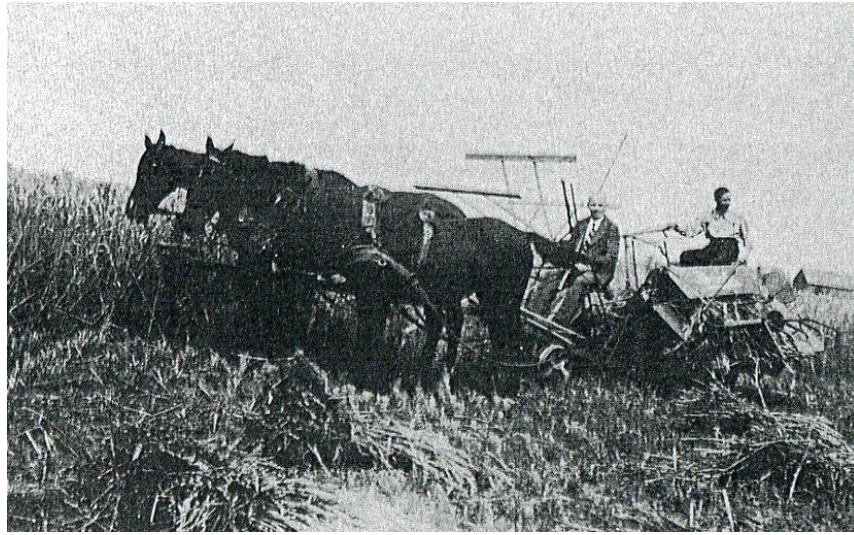
women, who had married in Dresden and the surrounding area, because they would then get a farm with their husbands, moved to their parents quite soon after the settlement, because the men moved in and they were alone. In general—and so it is said!—our people felt that this settlement matter was an injustice to the political people who would take revenge. They also often refused the order to eat with strangers at the same table. They also gave the Polish people, who had lived in those houses before (often they saw, when they arrived, how one took away these things from them) all the useful things they needed, such as bed linen, clothes, tableware and cutlery, and also offered them help wherever they needed these things.

How good this turned out to be when, after a few years, there was a departure from there, during the Flight, into an uncertain future. The Polish people, who had experienced love and understanding, also returned such a thing.



Family Albert Pfahl, 1942 in the Grätz District near Poznan





Ottomar Eichelberg 1943 in the Wollstein District on his self-binder (on the back)

Men who refused to serve in the SA Sunday Detail during the settlement period were drafted even if they were already older. Today we do not want to be right and judge—so let us put an end to this!

But let me also mention this: despite prohibitions, our people could not be deterred from having meetings here and there, little ones and big ones, to gather in communion and under the Word God. They found a lot of support among the German locals, although the fear was bypassed everywhere. An example from that time of tribulation and probation is shown in the account written by retired Pastor Emil Hommel in the “Brethren Messenger” (*Brüderboten*) in 1974 (see Lit. 45) [Appendix #1—Bibliography].

Also in those lands (in the years 1941 to 1945), several of our villagers have found their end there and are buried somewhere where they can no longer be visited or maintain their grave. In addition, the many killed in action and missing on the various Fronts of that time.

A woman from Paris (Else Jans) has collected several obituaries from that time and pasted them into her album. We also give two examples in our book (see appendix). It is also clear from this that our people did not bow to the will of that time to use the “formal training” of the time. This was not only the case with us, the Christian imprint held for the most part among the Bessarabian people; they were “Christian rebels,” as one district leader once called it!

Pages yet to be Translated

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