

Chapter 7

The Wagner Family in the Colonies of Rastadt and München

In this chapter we will explore the documents that are available on the 80 year sojourn of our Wagner family in Tsarist Russia. This was one of the crucial episodes in the story of our family. The background in Bavaria and Rhineland Pfalz is too far removed in time at this point to have been passed down through family memories and stories, but Tsarist Russia was the immediate place from which my grandparents came and their stories about life there begin to play an important role in reconstructing the family's past.

Sources Available on the German Catholic Colonies in the Beresan Region During the Nineteenth Century

There are several major sources available about the German Catholic colonies in the Beresan river region, from their beginning dates when they were established in 1809-1810 through the nineteenth century.

The first source consists of the censuses by the Tsarist statistical department, conducted at various times until 1858 to provide a national registry of tax-payers. These censuses, known as "Revision Lists" (*reviskie skazki*), showed all the families in residence in a colony, the ages of each person, their professions, and an itemization of their livestock and farm equipment. Censuses of the German colonists in Russia began with the earlier arrival of those into the Volga area. Soon after the new colonies were established in the Black Sea region, the Tsarist administration commissioned the 6th "standard" (empire-wide) R.L. in 1811. An even more detailed follow up census was conducted in 1816, which provided additional updated records about the colonists.

The original R.L.s, which are stored today in the archive at Dnepropetrovsk in the Ukraine, were not available to us during the Soviet years until quite recently. We are fortunate that Fr. Konrad Keller, a descendant of the colonists, had reprinted them in his early publications. Fr. Keller wrote a brief summary of the history of each Catholic colony in 1910 on the 100th year anniversary of the founding of the colonies in the Beresan River valley.¹ He later expanded these brief histories in a two volume set, published in 1914, which included information on the founding families from the Revision Lists of 1811 and 1816.² Ever since their publication, Fr. Keller's books have been an

¹ Fr. Konrad Keller, "The Beresan Catholic German Colonies, the 100 Year Jubilee of their Creation, 1809-1810 - 1909-1910," published in the *Odessaer Volkskalendar* in 1910.

² Fr. Keller's later two volume set, *Die deutschen Kolonien in Südrussland*, vols. 1 and 2, was originally published by Jakob Zenter, Odessa, Ukraine in 1914. The English translation was privately published in 1973 by A. Becker, Saskatchewan, Canada, under

invaluable source on the Catholic colonies in the Beresan region. Since 2011 - 2013, the Germans from Russia Heritage Society in Bismarck, North Dakota, has been able to obtain digital copies of the original Revision Lists for the German colonies in the Beresan region. This has enabled us to cross-check the reliability of earlier translations of those records in Fr. Keller's books.

A special survey was commissioned, dated Dec. 1, 1811, to determine the economic conditions in the new foreign colonies.³ Each household at that time was listed, showing the names of the members, their ages, their livestock, farming equipment, and profession of the household head.

Another important source for early records on the German colonies is Prof. Karl Stumpp's massive 1,018 page volume which reprints all the records compiled by his staff when the German *Wehrmacht* occupied the Ukraine during World War Two.⁴ Stumpp was born in the German colonies and he managed to escape to Germany during the Bolshevik years prior to the war. There he earned a Ph.D. and devoted his academic career to the study of the colonists in Russia. He was generally acknowledged as the dean of German-Russian studies. After Germany attacked Russia in 1941, Stalin branded the German colonists as traitors and targeted them for execution or mass evacuation to Siberian labor camps under genocidal conditions. The Volga colonists, much farther to the east, could not be saved from Stalin's reprisals, but the rapid push of the *Wehrmacht* into the Ukraine saved many in the Black Sea region. They were granted German citizenship and relocated to western Poland near the Warta River, within the newly expanded German *Reich*. Stumpp was in charge of a Special Command with the assignment of tracking down all available historical and genealogical information about the ethnic German relocatees and compiling all the records available in the Russian archives. Stumpp and his staff extracted massive amounts of data, primarily from the archives in Odessa, Kherson and Dnepropetrovsk. He recorded the original Russian R.L.s, as well as new information that his staff had found in the archives, such as the passports for the immigrant colonists in the early 1800s. All of this was carefully recorded on file cards. When the *Wehrmacht* withdrew from Russia, Stumpp managed to evacuate this massive collection of file cards. It was truly a labor of love for Stumpp, as well as a testimony to the dedication, precision and accuracy of his staff during very trying wartime conditions. After the war he published all this material in a volume which was eventually translated and released in the USA

the English title: *The German Colonies in South Russia*, vols. 1 and 2. An updated German version, correcting for some errors in the earlier edition, was published by the *Historischer Forschungs Verein der Deutschen aus Russland e. V.*, Nürnberg, 2000.

³ This report covers all the colonies in the Beresan region, including Rastadt, München, and Karlsruhe. The date shown on the title page is Dec. 1, 1811. File 134-1-320 in the Archive at Dnepropetrovsk.

⁴ Karl Stumpp, *The Emigration From Germany to Russia in the Years 1762 to 1862*. Lincoln, Nebraska: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1973.

by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. It has been the single, indispensable handbook for German-Russian studies.

One special body of records gathered during the war years were those of the German Immigrant Center (*Einwandererzentralstelle*, or EWZ). Also known as the Berlin Document Center collection, it is made up of biographic records of more than 2.1 million ethnic Germans who were processed by the immigration and naturalization offices in Germany in 1939-45. All of the adult German relocatees from Eastern Europe were interviewed and their family histories were recorded going back for three generations, to determine their eligibility for German citizenship. These EWZ records are useful and readily available to us today, although the birthdates for the older generations are not always reliable because they were based on the respondent's memory.

Finally, the single most important sources for the families in the Beresan colonies are the original church books, which recorded all baptisms, marriages, and deaths within the parish. Unfortunately, the original church books for Rastadt and München, and for most other colonies, are not available. They probably were destroyed at some point during the chaotic years of later Russian history. The only church books that have been located at this time are for Landau, which was an important administrative center in the Beresan colonies. However, we can fill in many of the gaps by referring to the copies of the original baptismal, marriage and death records for the Catholic colonies which were forwarded periodically by the parish priest to the central Archbishop's archive. This combined Mogilev and Tiraspol Consistory was relocated at various points and today it is stored in the State Archive at Saratov, Russia. In about 1995 I paid a Russian researcher to extract records for a few strategic years for the Wagner family in their home colony of München, from 1867-1869. Finally, in 2018 the GRHS was allowed to purchase digitized copies of all the baptismal, death and marriage records for the colony of Rastadt and München from 1830 through 1870. The death records are available up to 1880.

In sum, the German colonies in South Russia (Ukraine) may seem like an isolated backwater of Europe (which, indeed they were and remain so today), but given the penchant for detailed record keeping at that time, there is a surprisingly large body information available. We can focus our lens of history down to an amazing level of detail on the various families in the colonies. Much of this information is available to us today, and new records continue to emerge from the archives. The Tiraspol and Mogilev Roman Catholic Consistories will eventually be retrieved in their entirety, which will enable us to trace families in the colonies from their earliest years through the later years of the 19th century, when their descendants began emigrating to the USA.

The Colonies in the Beresan River Region: the Early Years

In the first decade of the 19th century thousands of ethnic German farmers and tradesmen fled the chaos of the Napoleonic wars and sought a better, safer life for their families in Tsarist Russia. The Tsarist regime regarded the German colonies as an economic experiment which it hoped would yield rich rewards. Clusters of colonies were planned along the northern tier of the Black Sea and in the Crimea, scattered throughout the territories that had been recently acquired from the Ottoman Empire. A specially commissioned Welfare Committee for Foreign Colonists was created to oversee all their internal affairs. As each immigrant wagon train arrived at Odessa, it was directed to a location on the steppes where a new colony had been planned. They were provided with seed grain and other basic farming supplies to sustain them until they could become self-supporting. The liabilities of each family to the Crown, as well as their freedom to move outside the colony, were strictly monitored. Some colonists were discouraged by the extreme hardships they faced in the early years and a few tried to return to their home countries, but they were not allowed to leave Russia unless they could repay the Crown loans that had been advanced to them. Leaving the country illegally was extremely difficult because Russia was in a high state of military preparedness during those early years, and the borders were heavily guarded.

A letter written by two former colonists who managed to return to Germany in 1818 commented:

“It is virtually impossible to escape, for the colonies are several days’ march from the frontier, and it is very closely guarded by Cossacks...More serious offenses, including attempts to escape, are punished by five days of the knout, an ordeal which only one man in ten survives. He is then chained to a cart for two years of hard labor.”⁵

In 1809, when the immigrant parties from the Rhine Pfalz arrived, no additional land was available in the Beresan River valley because several German colonies had already been established there. After spending the winter in colonies near Odessa, these new arrivals were taken to the Tschitschekleja valley, about 40 kilometers north of the Beresan, where they established two new colonies in the spring of 1810. The Tschitschekleja River flows east into the Bug, which then meanders south past the city of Nikolaiev into the Black Sea. The colony of Rastadt was named after the old imperial city of “Rastatt” in Baden, the state from which several of the families had originated. Most of the families (40 of them) came from the Pfalz, followed by Baden (37), Alsace (20), and the

⁵ Joseph Height, 1975, p. 54. A “knout” is a whip with the leather thongs twisted with wire; used for flogging prisoners.

remainder (6) from other areas. In nearby München (about 1 km. to the west) the *Pfälzers* comprised an even higher portion (29), compared with those from Baden (15), Alsace (12), and other areas (6).⁶

Fr. Keller provides us with a useful glimpse of life during the earliest years.⁷ Below is my translation of his narratives on Rastadt and München, the two colonies in which our Wagner family resided:

The Colony Rastadt⁸

“The colony Rastadt was settled in the spring of 1810 along the steppe-river Tschitschekleja. The Tschitschekleja River still had a lot of water at that time and it was full of fish. On both banks many reeds grew and burian [grass] as high as a man, in which many wolves and other wild animals dwelled. On the right bank of the river there was a long, elevated terrace, beneath a high, jagged, rocky hill, on which the two German colonies, Rastadt and München, were built. The new colonists were led to the location of their settlement by Franz Brittner, the chief mayor [*Oberschulz*] of the Liebental district, and under his direction the colony was established. Until the construction of the Crown-houses, the colonists had to live in reed-huts, which was very detrimental to their health.⁹ Because of these circumstances, and because of the foul-smelling overflow from the river, the colonists had many illnesses which took many to the cool grave. There was scarcely a family that didn’t suffer the inevitable death of a father or a mother, which turned the poor children into orphans. The first years were hard and bitter for all the settlers and the poor people were sustained only by the hope for help from the all-merciful Father in Heaven. The Russian government also actively supported the new settlers with money for food, supplies and the required farming implements. Each three families together received three pairs of oxen, a plow and a harrow so they could jointly plow the fields and sow the seeds. All the provisions for construction of houses and for agriculture were delivered to the new colonists by a person named Hermann from Odessa.

⁶ Karl Stumpp, 1973, pp. 780 and 783.

⁷ Fr. Konrad Keller, “The Beresan Catholic German Colonies, the 100 Year Jubilee of their Creation, 1809-1810 – 1909-1910,” published in the *Odessaer Volkskalendar* in 1910.

⁸ The 1811 census showed that there were 100 families in Rastadt with 421 souls; by 1817 there were 93 families with 415 souls. Rastadt was known pre-1941 as “Mostovoje-Rastadt.” Mostovoje was the closest postal and telegraph station, located about 5 kilometers west of Rastadt. Today Rastadt is known as “Poretschye-Bolshoye,” which roughly translates as “at a river – big.”

⁹ In some colonies the Russian military had constructed temporary wattle-and-daub homes (lattice walls covered with mud) for each family. See the letter by Anton Marius, written in 1809, cited in the previous chapter, which comments on the inadequacy of these huts. The first task of the colonists was to replace these with adobe *semeljanka*, then later with the more substantial houses for which the colonies became renowned.

The lands of the colony Rastadt are not very efficiently laid out, scarcely two *werst*¹⁰ in width and stretching out 12 *werst* in length, which consumes a lot of time during cultivation. The soil is mostly black earth with an under-layer of marl, sand and gravel. The soil is rather fertile when it is well tended and the weather is favorable.

The water in the wells is 1½ *faden*¹¹ deep and it is much better and healthier in the middle of the village than the water in the wells of the upper and lower village, which results in more sickness in those parts. There are large quantities of quarry stone available for the village, but not of good quality. In 1820 fruit orchards and vineyards were planted at the direction of the welfare committee, but with limited success. In 1842 fruit orchards, vineyards and also a forest were once again planted, and because the rules were strongly enforced this time, and because the colonial inspector directed the operation, the success was better.

In 1811 their own parish church was built in the colony Rastadt, and the Jesuit Father Johannes Koerwers was installed as the first pastor. He built a small church, which served as the parish church until 1872. In 1824 the colonist Johannes Koch constructed a chapel on the south side of the mountain, at his own expense, dedicated to the All-Holy Virgin, which is visited by many pilgrims throughout the area.

The colony Rastadt encompasses 5,428 *dessjatines* and is distributed among 91 farmsteads [*Wirtschaften*].¹² Presently [i.e., 1910] there are 278 residences in Rastadt with 3,691 inhabitants, all Catholics, 1 parish church, 1 chapel, 1 pastor's residence, 2 schools with 4 teachers and 305 school children, 1 district office [*Wolostkanzlei*], 1 meteorological station, 1 co-op [*Konsumverein*], 8 retail shops [*Kramläden*], 1 steam-powered mill, an inn, 1 drugstore, a charitable society and a small credit-union."¹³

¹⁰ *Werst*: old Russian unit = 1.067 km.

¹¹ *Faden*: a "fathom" = 6 ft.

¹² The Crown had originally appropriated 15,369 acres to Rastadt. Height, 1972, p. 76.

¹³ As an interesting side note, each colony developed its own nicknames for each other. Emma Herauf, who was born in Russia, told me that Rastadters were known as *Schlitzkitteln* (split-tails) This referred to their custom in the old days of wearing long coats with a slit in the bottom of the tail, as was the style in the 18th century.



St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Rastadt, 1872



Seal of the Catholic Church in Rastadt

The Colony München¹⁴

“The colony München was established at the same time and under the same unfavorable circumstances as Rastadt, and only one *werst* away to the

¹⁴ München is located about 1 kilometer west from Rastadt, in the direction of Mostovoje. München, which was always smaller than its neighbor, had 51 families with a population of 210 in the 1811 census. Today München is known as “Poretschye-Malaya,” which roughly translates as “at a river - little.” It is spelled in various ways, including “Maloje Poretchje,” “Poritschtschja,” “Porricja,” and also “Gradowka.” According to modern reports by those who have visited the colonies, München is a semi-deserted suburb of Rastadt, which may explain the “big” versus “little” designation. Both colonies are located on the same Tschitschekleja river (which is also spelled in various ways when transliterated into German or English; photos show that it is little more than a stream flowing through a broad, grassy valley). They are roughly 85 miles (140 kilometers) northeast of Odessa, and about 50 miles (80 kilometers) northwest of Nikolaev. Both colonies were in the old Tsarist province of Kherson, a capitol city which is about 140 kilometers away. Sr. Reinhardt Hecker was born in München in 1901. She was interviewed by Michael M. Miller at Annunciation Priory, Bismarck, N.D. on Nov. 8, 1993. She stated that when she was young all the residents of München were German Catholics, “there were no Lutherans with us and no Russians were allowed to live in that village.” There was a Russian settlement on the other side of the Tschitschekleja river. The khutors Bogdanovka, Domanevka, Dvoryanka, Gardegay, Grisa, Heck, Kapitanovka, Karlevka, Kavkas, Khristoforovka, Klandovo, Kratovka, Lerisk, Lubo-Alexandrovka, Novo-Nikola(y)evka, Novoselevka, Selingera, Slepukha and Volkov were part of this parish since 1890.

northwest. This colony also had a less favorable location because the lower village is in the valley of the Tschitschekleja, which is very flat and it often overflows its banks. Consequently, they were forced to tear down 19 houses and move them up to higher ground. The layout of the community land is in the shape of a long rectangle, one *werst* in width and 13 *werst* in length. The soil consists for the most part of good black earth and it is therefore suitable for most grains. In 1820 both vineyards and fruit orchards were established in München. Some growers devoted themselves diligently to this cultivation, so they had better success than in Rastadt and the Rastadters often had to buy their fruit from the Münchener. In 1842 forest and plantation gardens were also planted.

Aside from the hard blows of fate in the first years of the settlement, the new settlers of München and Rastadt and the other Beresan colonies also suffered from other travails. In 1812 the plague struck and many settlers became ill, but they became well again through medicines. In 1824 vast swarms of locusts appeared which soon devoured all grass and all fruits of the field, resulting in a total crop failure. The Crown had to provide all the colonists with money for food and seed grain. In 1825 and 1839 a dreadful cattle epidemic raged through the colonies. Then in 1833 and 1834 there were total crop failures, which reduced most colonists to complete beggary. Groups of colonists went into the nearby cities and to the neighboring nobility, begging for bread and for pieces of clothing. Many nobility in the area let the poor colonists bake their daily bread from acorn meal and other meager sources, so that they wouldn't starve.



München.

But the most profound impression was made on our forefathers on the evening of January 11, 1838, at 9:00, when an earthquake took place. The first waves came from the west and shook in a horizontal direction, the following waves were far stronger and shook vertically. The whole thing lasted about 5 minutes and it was accompanied by a frightful deafening subterranean roar, like the rolling of many thousands of wagons. Those who were in the open saw how the

trees shook, light objects were knocked over, liquids were trembling, the wall-clocks stopped, tables, benches, cupboards, beds and other objects were moving here and there, the balconies and walls creaked at their joints and the grounds threatened to sink. That was a terrifying event, both for the people and also for the poor animals. The people cried, shouted and prayed and tried to get outside to avoid being buried beneath the rubble of the houses. The animals, especially the horses, shrieked and became frenzied, the cows bellowed in terror and sought to get free of their tethers. Everything living shook and trembled in fear and anxiety. But the five minutes were soon over and all those who thought themselves already lost came back to their senses and thanked the Almighty for salvation from the great danger.

In 1816 the first chapel was built in München. The present parish church was built in 1872. The colony lands of München consist of 2,940 *dessjatines*, divided among 48 farmsteads.¹⁵ Presently there are 152 residences in München with 1,928 Catholics residents, 1 parish church, 1 pastor's house, 2 schools with 2 teachers and 150 school-children, 1 co-op, 4 shops, 1 steam-powered mill and 1 inn."

Uli Mertens (2010) reports that there were 80 houses in München in 1859, the population was 713, and by 1905 it had grown to 1,928.¹⁶

¹⁵ The Crown had originally apportioned 7,938 acres to München (Height 1972, p. 77).

¹⁶ Ulrich Mertens, *German-Russian Handbook*, trans. by Brigitte von Budden and Alex Herzog, Edited by Allyn Brosz, Alex Herzog and Thomas Stangl, Fargo, N.D.: Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, 2010.

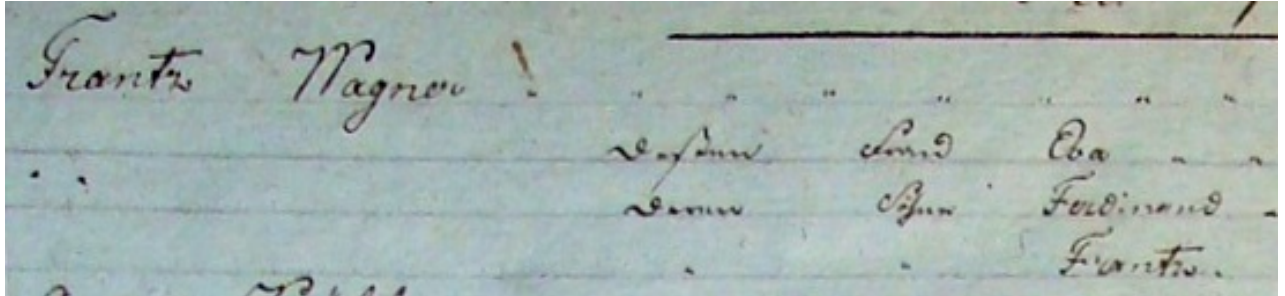


Kirche in München.

St. Nicholas Catholic Church, 1872

Franz Wagner (senior) and His Family in Rastadt: the First Years

Franz Wagner, his wife Eva, and their sons Ferdinand and Franz jr. are shown residing in Rastadt in the Revision List of 1811, along with their ages.



**1811 Revision List for Rastadt --
Franz Wagner (age 46), Eva (47), Ferdinand (17), Frantz jr. (12)¹⁷**

However, tragedy soon struck the Wagner family, as it did many other colonist families during those early years. Franz died within two years after his arrival in Russia, soon after the 1811 Revision List was compiled. This information was reported in the 7th Standard R.L., which was commissioned in 1816 and which was carried out over the following two years in the German colonies – for Rastadt, the specific date shown is March, 1816.

This new census was written in Russian Cyrillic, it repeated the information from the earlier 1811 census, but it updated it with additional notes that had become available since the prior census. It reports that Franz arrived in Russia on Aug. 15, 1809, he died in 1811, his wife Eva had remarried to Johann Schirner from nearby München, after which she and her two sons relocated there.

¹⁷ 1811 Revision List for Rastadt, File 134-1-477, Dnepropetrovsk Archive.

№	Колонисты	Возраст	Когда и куда переехали	Место
	Прибыли 15 августа 1809.			
—	Франц Вагнер	46.	1811. Умер.	---
	Франца Сын Фердинанд	17.	1812. Переехал через Бреславль в колонию Мюнхена в Министерство.	---
	Франц	12.		---

<u>Male Colonists</u>	<u>Age [at Last R.L. 1811]</u>	<u>Note</u>	<u>[Apparent] Age</u>
Arrived 15 August 1809			
Franz Wagner	46	1811 died	---
His sons: Ferdinand	17	1812 moved to the	---
Franz	12	colony of München	---

—	Франца Вагнера жена Ева	Ее.	1812. Переехал через Бреславль в колонию Мюнхена.	---

<u>Female Colonists</u>	<u>Note</u>
Franz Wagner's wife Eva	1812 after [re]marriage moved to the colony of München

Revision List (in Cyrillic) for Rastadt, March, 1816¹⁸

The information about Johann Schirner and his new step-family is also provided for the colony of München:

¹⁸ Revision List 1816, Rastadt, record group 134, inventory 1, item 477, Dnepropetrovsk Archive.

Иоганн Ширнеръ	37.		41.
Иоганна Павловна: фердинандъ вагнеръ	17		21
Братъ его Францъ	12.		16.

<u>Male Colonists</u>	<u>Age [at Last R.L. 1811]</u>	<u>[Apparent] Age</u>
Johann Schirner	37	41
His stepsons: Ferdinand	17	21
Franz	12	16

15. Иоганна Ширнера жена Ева		51.
Фердинанда Вагнера жена Елизавета		21.

<u>Family #</u>	<u>Female Colonists</u>	<u>Note [When]</u>	<u>[Apparent] Age</u>
15	Johann Schirner's wife Eva	---	51
	Ferdinand Wagner's wife Elisabetha	---	21

Revision List (in Cyrillic) for München, 1816¹⁹

There were many deaths during those initial years due to epidemics, limited medical resources, and primitive living conditions. Both Rastadt and München had been laid out on a low terrace along the Tschitschkleja River, which was subject to seasonal flooding. A typhoid epidemic broke out in October, 1811 and over 150 people died. They attributed it to the overflow of stagnant water from the nearby river.²⁰ Rastadt had one physician resident in

¹⁹ Revision List 1816, München, inventory 1, record group 134, items 475 and 510, Dnepropetrovsk Archive.

²⁰ Typhoid fever is passed only through human waste, there are no known animal carriers. Rivers are usually the villain when a typhoid carrier passes germ-laden water downstream which pollutes water for drinking or swimming. Cholera can be passed through water contaminated by humans or animals. A third source of disease is typhus, which is passed from person to person via body lice, fleas, or chiggers. Typhus is associated with overcrowding, underwashing, and lowered standard of living. The colonists would have been vulnerable to any of these diseases in their first years. The

the colony to treat all these cases, but he himself contracted the disease and succumbed that year.²¹ Franz Wagner likely was also a victim of that epidemic which swept Rastadt in October of 1811.

Epidemics continued to devastate the region at various points in the early history of the colonies. In 1812 an epidemic broke out in the city of Odessa, which took 2,656 victims before it ran its course in 1813. The German colonies were placed under quarantine and they were spared the brunt of the deaths. Victims were confined to their houses and primitive methods of decontamination were used, such as fumigating houses with "wormwood, vinegar, sulfur, and gunpowder."²²

After Franz's death, Eva and her two sons were left in dire straits in a foreign land. There were many other widows and widowers in similar circumstances. The death of the father presented a major crisis to a colonist family because according to Russian law women could not inherit the land, it could be inherited only by their adult sons, or by their new husband if they remarried. Given these restrictions, remarriages took place rather quickly -- not only to restabilize the families, but also to preserve their land allotments, especially if the male heirs were too young to inherit. The early records for the colonies show that a lack of match in ages between the new spouses was not uncommon. A letter written in 1809 by a former colonist who managed to return to Alsace elaborated on this point:

"Of this wretched soil the Russian government allots to each colonist a certain portion, which can, however, be inherited only by a married son or by the man who marries the widow of a deceased colonist. Most of the marriages in the colonies are, therefore, between widowers and young girls, between widows and young men, and between widowers and widows. The government exerts every effort to keep the number of land-owning families complete. Despite this precaution, however, the population of the colonies would decline rather than increase if new settlers did not continue to arrive, for the children who are born here seldom reach the age of several months, and many die at birth. Indeed, most of the children who come here with the colonists die after a short time, since they cannot get used to the raw climate and the primitive living conditions."²³

Another letter, written in 1818, added:

standard preventive treatments back then involved fumigation of houses and washing items in vinegar.

²¹ Height, 1972, p. 76.

²² Height, 1972, p. 108.

²³ Joseph S. Height, 1975, p. 52.

“Indeed, if a man perishes from want and misery, his wife and children lose all their property, unless the widow is able to find a man who will marry her, provided she has a grown son who can take over the management of the property. Otherwise the government official assigns the property to a new homesteader. The bereaved widow and children cannot even obtain compensation, although they can prove that the parents have constructed some of the buildings with their own money and improved the property by their own labor. The death of the father deprives them of all rights to his property in land, livestock and farm equipment.”²⁴

Given these legal exigencies, it is little wonder that Eva Wagner remarried soon after the death of Franz in 1811. Neither Ferdinand nor Franz jr. were old enough to inherit the estate in Rastadt, so new arrangements had to be made quickly. Her new husband, Johann Schirner from nearby München, was also a widower. His passport,²⁵ dated June 14, 1809, describes Schirner as a “carpenter apprentice (*Zimmergeselle*) from Karlsbad, Bohemia, who wanted to move to another locale, with his wife.” The 1811 Revision List, produced while Franz Wagner was still alive in Rastadt, shows that Schirner was residing in München at that time and his family unit consisted of himself “Schürner” and his wife “Maria.” They had no children or step-children. We may assume that Maria died, perhaps during the typhoid epidemic in October, 1811 which also took the life of Franz Wagner.

After Eva Wagner remarried to Johann Schirner, the Wagner family sold their original land allotment in Rastadt in 1817. From 1812 and afterward their home colony was München. Both Ferdinand and Franz married and raised their families there. They resided there until some of their grandchildren, including my grandfather, Adam Wagner, emigrated in the 1890s.

The Disparity in Ages Shown in the Revision Lists

The ages shown for Franz and Eva Wagner in the Revision List are confusing. The 1811 R.L. for Rastadt shows Franz Wagner as 46 and Eva as 47. The 1816 census repeated these ages (reported as “age at the last Revision”) and added 4 years to update their current (“apparent”) age. The problem is that when we compare this information with their birth records in the church books in Germany, the ages for Franz and Eva were quite different. Franz, who was born in 1754 in Kronach, would actually have been about 57 at his death in 1811,

²⁴ Joseph Height, 1975, p. 54.

²⁵ Schirner’s passport showed that he and his wife came from the city of Gross Gorna (modern day Pilawa Gorna in southwestern Poland, near the Czech border). Karlsbad is in the border region that had been heavily settled by Germans throughout history. The passport is summarized in Karl Stumpp, 1973, p. 988.

and Eva, born in 1755, would have been about 56 at that time. In both cases their ages are understated by about 10 years. There is no obvious explanation for this puzzling disparity between their actual ages and their ages as reported in the Russian censuses.

Interestingly, there is also a 10 year gap between the ages shown for Johann Schirner and both of his wives. The 1811 R.L. shows him as age 37 and his first wife Maria as 47. The 1816 R.L. (which adjusted ages by 4 years) reported him as age 41, and his new wife Eva as 51. The ages of Maria Schirner and Eva Wagner overlap (both were reportedly 47 in 1811), so there is a strong likelihood that the census taker confused the two women in 1816 (we should remember here that Eva's full name was Eva Katherine, not Maria).

Adding to the puzzle, Eva Wagner was born in 1755, so she would actually have been about 56 when she remarried to Schirner. How might we explain this surprising difference in their ages? As we have seen, there were many widows during those early years and they didn't always have the luxury of matching the ages of their new husbands. A difference of 10 years, or perhaps even 20 years as between Johann Schirner and Eva, may seem extreme, but the most likely conclusion is that theirs was a remarriage of legal convenience. Eva was able to preserve title to the original land in Rastadt for her sons, and Johann Schirner served as the legal trustee.

Although the ages of Franz and Eva were both understated by about 10 years in the 1816 census, the ages of Ferdinand and Franz jr. were both accurate and they match their German birth records quite closely. In the 1811 census Ferdinand is shown as 17, and since he was born in 1793 that is a close match with his real age; Franz jr. is shown as 12, and since he was born in 1798 this too is a close match.

How is this to be explained? It is possible that Franz and Eva deliberately understated their ages when they took out their passports in 1809, perhaps out of fear that they might not qualify to meet the higher standards for allowing immigrants to New Russia in 1809. The average ages of married men and women among the immigrants at that time were 33 and 31, respectively,²⁶ so even given the fact that the ages of Franz and Eva were understated by about 10 years, they were still considerably older than most. Others in the German from Russia discussion groups on internet have also reported similar understatements of ages in their families in the 1811 and 1816 R.L.s, which suggests that it was not simply due to sloppy record keeping, but rather it was done deliberately.

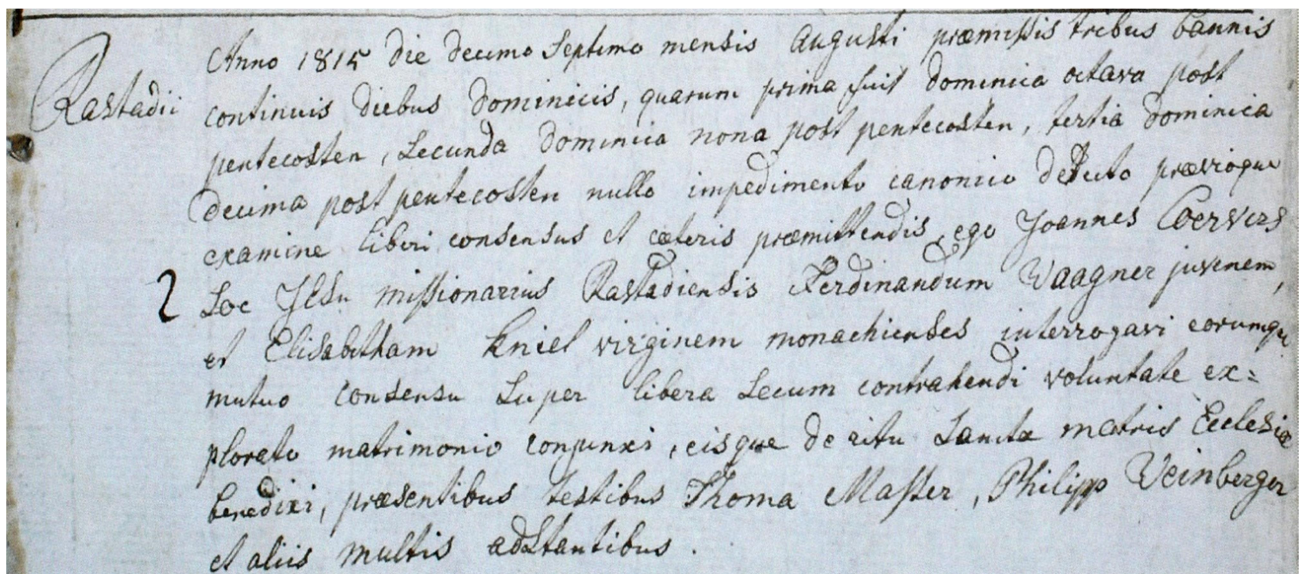
Marriage of Ferdinand and Elisabeth Kniel in 1815

The Tiraspol Roman Catholic Consistory records for the colony of Rastadt show the marriage of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Kniel on August 17, 1815.

²⁶ Height, 1972, p. 58.

This was their first marriage. Ferdinand was stated to be an unmarried youth (*juvenem*) and Elisabeth was a *virginem*. The priest was Fr. Johannes Courvers and the witnesses were Thomas Masser, Philipp Weinberger, and several others present in the colony of Rastadt.

The marriage record does not state their ages or the names of their parents, but this can be deduced from other records. The 1811 Revision List for München shows Elisabeth living with her parents, Anselm Kniel age 43 from Tiefenbach, Baden and his wife Elisabeth age 42. At that time they had three children: Georg 15, Elisabeth 17, and Marianna 7. At the time of their marriage Ferdinand was ca. 22 years and Elisabeth was ca. 21 (she was born ca. 1794). The 1816 R.L. for München shows Ferdinand Wagner age 21, and his wife Elisabeth age 21, residing in the same household with Johann Schirner and Eva.



Rastadii Anno 1815 Die Decimo Septimo mensis Augusti praesentibus tribus Sannis
continuis diebus Dominicis, quarum prima fuit Dominica octava post
pentecosten, Secunda Dominica nona post pentecosten, tertia Dominica
Decima post pentecosten nullo impedimento canonico de Sudo pariter
examine Liberi condensus et ceteris praemittendis ego Joannes Courvers
2 Loc. Scl. missionarius Rastadiensis Ferdinandum Waagner juvenem,
et Elisabetham Kniel virginem monachicis interrogari corumque
nullo condensa Super Libera Secum contrahendi voluntate ex-
ploro matrimonio conjunxi, eisque de ritu Sanctae matris Ecclesiae
benedixi, praesentibus testibus Thoma Masser, Philippo Weinberger
et aliis multis adstantibus.

**Marriage of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Kniel
(in Latin) Rastadt August 17, 1815**

Ferdinand Sells the Family Estate in Rastadt in 1817

The next record available for the family documents the transfer of Franz Wagner's original land holdings in Rastadt in 1817. This record confirms that Franz Wagner was deceased and that his lands in Rastadt had been inherited by his oldest son, Ferdinand, who sold them to Adam Thaler. Johann Schirner, his step-father, gave his consent as the new family head. Ferdinand Wagner was recently married at that time.²⁷

[Rastadt 11 February, 1817]

²⁷ Fond 252, File 29a, page 60, Odessa Archive, my translation from the original.

“We the undersigned colonists, Johannes Gustin, Johann Fischer, and Jacob Seelinger, hereby testify that the colonist Adam Thaler desires to take over the Crown debts of the colonist, the deceased Franz Wagner, [which were inherited by] his older son Ferdinand [Wagner], with the consent of his [Ferdinand’s] step-father, Johann Schirner, including the farmlands and estate, and that he [Thaler] is a person of good behavior, a good farmer [Wirth], and that in the event that he should ever lapse in his payments on the Crown debts and on the assets that he has taken over, or should he not be able to pay when it is required, we the undersigned obligate ourselves to pay whatever is due for the colonist Adam Thaler, without holding back even the slightest, in default of which we submit ourselves to all strictness of the law, which we hereby sign of our personal free will.

Johannes Gustin his mark XXX Metz as witness

Johannes Fischer his mark XXX Metz as witness

Jacob Seelinger as *Bürger* [*Bürgermeister*, an assistant to the *Schulz*]

“The mayor’s office [*Schultzen Amt*] hereby confirms that the colonists, Johannes Gustin, Johann Fischer, and Jacob Seelinger made themselves liable for the colonist Adam Thaler, according to a legal deposition, to stand good for all Crown debts and property, [and] in the event that he should not pay, they will pay for him, that they are legal citizens [*rechtschaften Bürger*] and that they jointly own as much property as Adam Thaler, so the Crown debts of the estate of Ferdinand Wagner can be taken over in addition to their own Crown debts, to which we hereby sign below.

Rastadt 11 February, 1817

Mayor [*Schultz*] Kofler

Metz clerk [*Geschreiber*], representing the *Bürgermeister*”

A later record in the Odessa Archive issued by the Inspector of the Beresan Colonies to the Director of the Colonies of the Odessa District, dated April 2, 1817, stated the following:

“Moved from the colony of Rastadt by marriage to the colony of München: Johannes Schirner, who has a farm he wishes to transfer to Johann Thaler, stepson of colonist Johannes Fischer in Rastadt.”²⁸

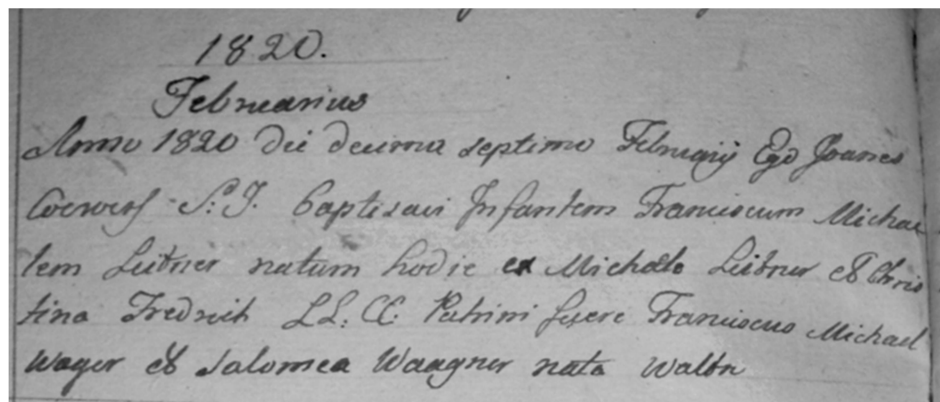
A final brief entry in another document, dated April 21, 1817, officially approved the sale of Schirner’s property.

Franz Wagner (junior) Married to Salomea Walter in 1820

²⁸ Fond 252, File 29a, page 59.

We don't have the marriage record for Ferdinand's younger brother, Franz junior, but he and his wife Salomea "born Walter" were shown as godparents for Franz Michael Leitner, baptized on Feb. 17, 1820 in München. The infant was the son of Michael Leitner and Christina Fredrich, whose family is found in both Rastadt and München. The 1816 R.L. shows that Salomea Walter was the daughter of Christian and Magdalena Walter in Landau. Christian, age 53 and his wife, Magdalena 43, came from Schönau in the district of Pirmasens in the Pfalz, and they settled in Landau when it was founded in 1810, with children Johann 20, Salomea 13, Margareta 11, and Katharina 10. In 1820 Salomea would have been 17 years old, so presumably that was about the year when she and Franz Wagner jr. were married. There is a baptismal record for Michael "Pleker" in München on May 9, 1822 which states that his godparents were Michael Gottselig and Salomea Wagner. On Feb. 25, 1841 Franz and Salomea Wagner from München served as godparents for Franz Kowitz, son of Adam and Jakobina Kowitz in München. Later in the century there was a marriage between Rochus Wagner and Katherine Kowitz, who emigrated to Canada.

We note that the 1820 record shows Franz jr.'s middle name as Michael; however, neither his birth record in Germany nor any other records in the colonies show his middle name. The child's father was Michael, so this makes me wonder if perhaps the priest simply made a mistake. He was careless in his spelling of the surname - he spelled Wagner both as "Wager" and "Wangner," and he was also inconsistent in his spelling of surnames in other records. Fr. Johann Coervers was a Jesuit priest from Belgium, so German was likely not his native language and he may also have been elderly at the time. Salomea is an unusual name, it recurs later in the Wagner family, which indicates that she passed it down by serving as a godmother. The reliability of Salomea's maiden name as Walter is confirmed in later marriage records for her sons, which will be discussed below.



**Franz Michael Wagner & Salomea Wagner "nata Walter"
(in Latin) shown as Godparents, Feb. 17, 1820**

Franz Wagner (junior) Co-Signs a Promissory Note in 1826

The Odessa Archive contains several passports that were issued to German colonists in the Odessa region between 1826 to 1828, allowing them to temporarily travel outside the Russian Empire to their original homelands to claim family inheritances.²⁹ Typical destinations included the Rhineland Pfalz, Alsace, Bavaria, and Württemberg. In accordance with the elaborate protocol typical of those times, any departure from the country required bureaucratic permission, complete with the official signatures and seals of the appropriate officials, and a guarantee by two other members of the community that they would be responsible for his Crown debts if the person failed to return within the one-year time period that was granted. One of the documents is for Joseph Karch in München in 1826. His fellow colonists, "Frantz" Wagner and Joseph Stroh, co-signed a guarantee on his behalf. One interesting feature is that Karch was returning to the village of Insheim, Pfalz (owned at that time by the Kingdom of Bavaria), which was also the home village for the Wagner family. Joseph Karch had traveled to Russia with Franz Wagner (senior) in 1809 and both their families had settled in München. In 1826, Franz (jr.) was 28 years old:

"To the Odessa *Comptoir* of the Foreign Colonies, from the District Office of the Beresan Colonies

The Mayor's Office of the colony München, in its report to the District Office dated the 4th of July this current year, No. 99, that the colonist there, Joseph Karg, requested that they assist him to receive a destination pass ["*Termin Paß*"] outside the country for the term of one year, so that he can take possession of his property in the Kingdom of Bavaria, in the village of Insheim [in the Rhineland Pfalz].

Since there was no objection to the release of the above mentioned colonist, Joseph Karg, from the community of München, and also because he has obtained the proper guarantees for his absence, the District Office obediently presents the petition of this colonist, Joseph Karg, and requests that the destination pass kindly be granted, the legal fee for the pass was made with a ruble, which is transmitted to the Comptoir in total obedience, along with the guarantees of this colonist.

As Head Mayor Imel
As District Official Riedinger
District Clerk Waldenmeyer

No. 868

The 16th July 1826

²⁹ Fond 252, file 527.

Colonie Landau

Guarantee [*Bürgschaft*]

We the undersigned colonists of the colony München, Joseph Stroh and Frantz Wagner, guarantee and oblige ourselves here with on behalf of the colonist, Joseph Karg [Karch], who is also from here, who has the intention to travel outside the country to the Kingdom of Bavaria in order to take possession of the property that is coming to him, under the terms that we are liable until his return for all his known and unknown Crown debts and payments that will be levied on him and ourselves, and we submit ourselves to all penalties of the law, for which we voluntarily sign ourselves below, with our own hands --- so done in the colony München, the 4th of July, 1826.

Joseff Stroh

Frantz Wagner

That the above guarantee by the München colonists, Joseph Stroh and Frantz Wagner, was carried out voluntarily, without force, and intentionally before the colonist, Joseph Karg, and in the presence of the Mayor's Office, also that they are legal property owners, and that each owns enough property to be able to cover for the intended colonist, Joseph Karg, is herewith attested by signatures and by the impression of the Crown seal. München the day and year as above -

Schulz Pfaff

Bürger M. [Bürgermeister] Riebe

Bürger M. Marquardt

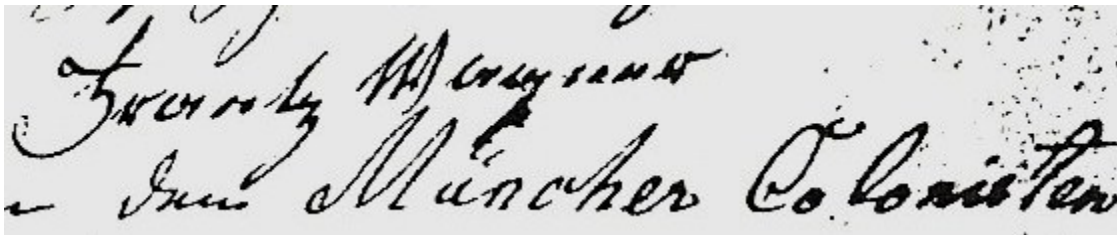
That this guarantee by the above-named colonists München colonists, Joseph Stroh and Franz Wagner, was carried out voluntarily before the Beresan District Office, is attested by signatures and impression of the Crown seal -

Landau - 16 July 1826

As Head Mayor Imel

As District Official Riedinger


District Clerk Waldenmeyer"



Handwritten signature: Franz Wagner
- der München Colonisten

1826 Signature of "Frantz Wagner"
 "München Colonist"

Leinwand



Ich bin fiedel kühner, sibirischer Colonisten der
 Colonie München Joseph Stroh, und Frantz Wagner,
 Herbinger und Herbinder und ferner für die Colonisten Joseph
 Berg welcher zusammen ist von hier nach dem Obelrud in der
 Leinwand Leinwand zu kaufen in der Obelrud im Allenthor
 gegen ihre nach gutem Willen Herangehen abzugeben Ingefallig.
 Und wie vor dem, allen bei zu seiner zuweilen, alle
 sowohl, wie auch alle auf unverständliche Schuld, ferner
 und Abzugeben auf und nehmen und vor dem selben anbringe
 werden, und diejenige falls wir und aller Stange der Ge
 unterworfen, worauf wir und frey willig, nicht anständig
 kühner, sibirischer. Ingefallig in der Colonie München
 den 4. July 1826.

Joseph Stroh
 Frantz Wagner
 München Colonist

Petition by Joseph Karch, 1826 (top portion)
 Franz Wagner and Josef Stroh Co-Signers

The Petition from the Beresan Colonies in 1828

Some indication of the difficulties faced by the colonists during the early years can be gleaned from a request which they filed in 1828 for an extension in the repayment of debts due to the Russian Crown. When the colonies were established in 1809, we recall, the Tsarist regime had loaned them money until

they could become self-sufficient – a term deemed to take about 20 years. In 1828 they were granted a two year extension. In accordance with the elaborate bureaucratic protocol typical at that time, the *Comptoir* in Odessa of the Welfare Committee for Foreign Colonists conveyed the royal decree to the Beresan district officials, who in turn conveyed it to the mayors of the eight “old colonies” (Landau, Speier, Karlsruhe, Sulz, Rohrbach, Worms, Rastadt, and München). They in turn convened general meetings in their villages at which the decree was read aloud, and each mayor signed the document and affixed his seal of office confirming that the decree had been transmitted to the residents.³⁰

The documents for this petition are of special interest because they contain a list of the family heads in each of the eight colonies, including the number of males and females resident in their households, the amount of original debt owed to the Crown, how much had been repaid from 1820 to 1828, the cost of building materials that had been applied to the debt during that time period, and the remaining amount of debt owed in 1828.

Ferdinand and his brother Franz Wagner are listed in the 1828 report. Both are shown as married and residing in München. Ferdinand’s total family size was shown as 8 persons, 6 males (including himself) and 2 females (including his wife). The amount of his original debt was 1,080 *rubles* and 54 $\frac{1}{4}$ *kopecks* (the same figure is cited for all the colonists), he had not yet repaid any of this debt (nor had most of the other colonists at that point), an additional 5 *rubles* and 52 $\frac{1}{16}$ *kopecks* had been loaned to him for building materials (the same amount for all residents in München), and the remaining debt owed was 1,075 *rubles* and 2 $\frac{3}{16}$ *kopecks*. Franz’s family also consisted of 8 persons, 3 males (including self) and 5 females (including wife). His financial liabilities were identical to those of his brother Ferdinand.

The Families of Ferdinand and Franz jr.

The death records for the parish of Rastadt show that Ferdinand Wagner died on May 19, 1855 in München, he was stated to have a wife and 6 children, and he was 60 years old. This yields a birth year of 1795, which approximates the other known records. Ferdinand’s third wife, Elisabeth Miller, was apparently still alive when he died in 1855.

We know that Ferdinand was married to Elisabeth Kniel in 1815, and his brother Franz jr. was married to Salomea Walter by 1820. The 1828 petition by the colonists in München shows that both families had several children. What do we know about their names, ages, and birthdates? A Revision List was conducted in 1839-40 and it is available for most of the Beresan colonies, but unfortunately not for Rastadt or München. However, after years of frustrating

³⁰ The documentation for the 1828 report is contained in Fond 252, Inventory 1, File 666 at the Odessa State Archive.

delays and barriers with the State Archive at Saratov in Russia, we have finally been able to retrieve the baptismal records for Rastadt and München, covering 1815 to 1871, in the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory.

The immediate families of Ferdinand and Franz jr. are shown below. Information for the third generation and beyond is shown in Chapter 11, Summary Tables.

A. Ferdinand Wagner and his wives named Elisabeth (...Kniel, Kroll, and Miller)

The records show that Ferdinand was apparently married three times, his wives' surnames were **Kniel**, **Kroll**, and **Miller**. This will be discussed in detail in a later section.

Most of Ferdinand's children were with his first wife, Elisabeth Kniel. They were married on August 17, 1815, they had three children between 1816 and 1823, and possibly a fourth in 1827. By 1831 Ferdinand was married to Elisabeth Miller. The baptismal and marriage records in the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory show the following:

1. **Johann Ignatz Wagner**, born July 31, 1816, bapt. Aug. 1, 1816, stated to be the son of Ferdinand Wagner and **Elisabeth Kniel**, they resided in Rastadt at that time. As we have seen, Ferdinand sold the family estate in Rastadt the following year, in 1817 and resided in München.

2. **Johann Jacob Wagner**, born and bapt. Aug. 29, 1821, stated to be the son of Ferdinand Wagner and **Elisabeth Kniel**, they resided in München at that time. Godparents were Johann Jacob Helfrich and Mariana Kniel.

3. **Michael Wagner**, bapt. May 9, 1823, son of Ferdinand Wagner and **Elisabeth Kniel**, godparents Johann Helfrich and Mariana Kniel, in München.

4. **Johann Georg Wagner**, bapt. May 26, 1827 München, his baptismal record shows his parents as Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth, but her surname is written ambiguously. It looks like "**Gnil**," which would likely be **Kniel**, or it could be "**Gril**" which would be **Kroll**. The godparents were Georg "Maz" (Martz?) and Regina "Bessan" (Bast?). Georg's marriage record on Nov. 10, 1850 (written in Cyrillic) states: **Georg Wagner**, age 22 (=b. 1828, which approximates his baptismal record) from München, the son of Ferdinand and **Elisabeth Kroll**, he married **Margaret Bast** (also shown as **Katherina Bast**), age 19 [birth year ca. 1831], daughter of Philip Bast and Anna Maria Philip from Speyer. Georg died 27 April 1869, age 40, in München, his wife stated to be Margaretha. For the descendants of Georg Wagner and Margaretha Bast see the summary tables, Chapter 13.

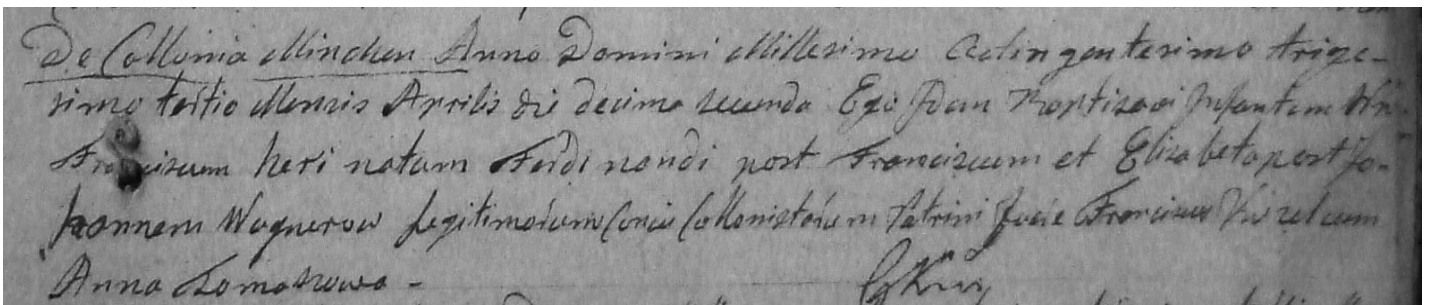
5. **Adam Wagner**, b. ca. 1831, on Nov. 18, 1852 he married **Margaret Rössler** on Nov. 18, 1852. Adam was age 21, unmarried, stated to be son of Ferdinand Wagner and **Elisabeth Miller**. She was age 19 (= b. ca. 1833), the daughter of Paul Rössler and Maria Josepha Reiss. The witness was Adam's

uncle, Franz Wagner. Adam was resident in München and Margaret was resident in Rastadt. They had a son, Johann b. ca. 1856, he d. Sept. 17, 1872 age 16. They also had a son Peter Wagner, b. ca. 1867, who died of diphtheria on Aug. 20, 1879 in München. They had a daughter Salomea b. Nov. 18, 1871 in München, she marr. Michael Wormsbecher b. Sept. 20, 1869 in Rastadt, they emigrated to Sedley, Saskatchewan in 1899 where they remained until their deaths. They also had a son Nikolaus Wagner, b. ca. 1873, who d. in München on Aug. 30, 1878. Adam Wagner in Rastadt had a son Michael b. 1871 in Rastadt, he may have been separate from Adam in München.

6. **Franz Wagner**, born April 11, 1833, München (my great-grandfather). He married **Anna Maria Stübich** on Nov. 6, 1856 in München. Franz's father was stated to be **Ferdinand** son of **Franz** and his mother was **Elisabeth**, daughter of **Johann Miller**. Anna Maria Stübich was born Nov. 25, 1841 in München, her father was **Simon Stübich** (born ca. 1815), the son of **Andreas Stübich** (b. ca. 1787) and **Katharine Volltrauer** (born ca. 1791). Anna Maria Stübich's mother was **Anna Maria Giesser** (probably born ca. 1815). Anna Maria Stübich-Wagner died about 1873 and Franz Wagner died about 1882.

7. **Peter Wagner**, born May 26, 1838 München, his parents were Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth daughter of Johann [her surname was not shown, but Peter's marriage record shows it as Müller], his godparents were Franz Wagner and Elisabeth Kniel. On Nov. 23, 1864, **Peter Wagner**, age 25 [= b. ca. 1839], the son of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth **Müller** daughter of Johann, married **Anna Maria Kessel**, age 19 [birth ca. 1845], the daughter of Anton Kessel and Maria Patrizka [possibly a middle name, Patricia?]. The wedding witnesses were Franz Wagner and Bernard Flick.³¹

We note that Ferdinand and his brother, Franz jr., both had sons born in 1833 – one was Franz (my great-grandfather) and the other was Peter Franz. Franz's birth record is shown below.



**Birth and Baptism of Franz Wagner, April 11, 1833 (my great-grandfather)
Son of Ferdinand and Elisabetha dau. of Johannes [Miller]**

³¹ The source for Peter Wagner's marriage record in 1864 was Michael Haag in Germany. He forwarded to me a scan of the Cyrillic original record and a German translation. It clearly shows Ferdinand as married to Elisabeth Müller.

“In the colony of München, 1833 April 12, I the pastor above [Fr. David Powrog] baptised the infant boy, Franz, born here yesterday to the legitimately married colonist couple, Ferdinand son of Franz Wagner, and Elisabetha daughter of Johann. The godparents were Franz Kessel and Anna Thomas [Thomä].”³²

This baptismal record for Franz shows his mother only as Elisabeth, “daughter of Johann.” Ferdinand had apparently married Elisabeth Miller by 1832.

My great-grandfather **Franz Wagner** married **Anna Maria Stübich** on Nov. 6, 1856 he was age 23 [birth ca. 1833] from München, the son of Ferdinand Wagner and Elizabeth “Mille-” [Müller], **Anna Maria Stübich** was age 18 [birth ca. 1838], the daughter of Simon Stübich and Anna Maria Giesser, witnesses were Franz Kessel and Paul Emler.

Their children were:

1. **Anna Wagner**, born Sept. 30, 1857 in München. She was the first child of Franz and Anna Maria and the oldest sibling of my grandfather. Godparents were Peter Wagner and Anna Stiebich.

2. **Maria Katharina Wagner**, born Feb. 15, 1859 München, godparents Leonard Thomä and Maria Eva Theresia Wagner (also shown as Maria Katharina).

3. **Franz Wagner**, born Sept. 4, 1862 München, godparents Franz Kessel and Sophia Zweifel.

4. **Adam Wagner**, born Feb. 17, 1867 in Kuschnerowo, baptized on Feb. 21, 1867 my grandfather.

5. **Joseph Wagner**, born July 3, 1869 in Kuschnerowo, bapt. July 25, 1869, godparents were Josef Mildberger and Katharina Zweifel.

6. **Johann Wagner**, born ca. 1870, never married, he died in Fox Valley, Saskatchewan on Feb. 6, 1943 (see the narrative, The Search for Great-Uncle John in Chapter 10).

7. **Franziska Wagner**, born 1871 in Kuschnerowo, died March 16, 1879 of diphtheria, age 7 years in München,

8. **Vinzent (“Vikenti”) Wagner**, b. 1871 München (a twin of Franziska?).

³² Original Latin text: “De Collonia Minchen Anno Domini millesimo octingentesimo trigesimo tertio mensis Aprilis die decimo secundo, ego idem baptisavi infantem hn (juvenus) Franciscum heri natum Ferdinandi post Franciscum et Elisabetha post Johannem Wagnerow legitimum conju collonisteium patrini fueren Franciscus Kessel cum Anna Thomesowa.” The Latin word “post” means “after,” or in this case “son or daughter of,” and the suffix “-ow” is also a genitive form in Polish or Russian. The Latin record for the baptism of Peter Franz uses the same wording.

B. Franz Michael Wagner jr. and Salomea Walter

Franz jr.'s wife is shown in the records as **Salomea**, daughter of **Christopher Walter**, they were married in 1820. Her first name may have been Katharina, but she used primarily Salomea, which was shown in the 1816 Revision List for her Walter family in Landau and which was passed down in the family.³³ Franz Michael appears in most records in München only under the name Franz.

Franz Wagner and Salomea served as godparents for several children:

On Feb. 17, 1820 Franz Michael Wagner and Salomea nee Walter served as godparents for Franz Michael Leitner in München.

Salomea Wagner served as godmother for Michael Prelker (?) on May 9, 1822 in München, and for Salomea Schmidt Aug. 2, 1825 Rastadt.

On Feb. 25, 1841 Franz and Salomea Wagner from München served as godparents for Franz Kowitz, son of Adam and Jakobina Kowitz in München.

Franz also served as witness for several marriages:

1837 Andreas Herauf and Salomea Wollbaum.

1839 Andreas Selinger and Marianna Rott.

1839 Anton Eberle and Katharina Herauf.

1840 Jakob Thome and Katharina Helfrich.

1841 Karl Giesser and Barbara Schmidt.

1854 Anton Dietz and Helena Tierey (?).

1856 Franz Heck and Kunigunda Hecker.

1856 Franz Fröhlich and Salomea Helfrich.

1857 Johann Heck and Anna Maria Bullinger.

1859 Georg Martz and Katharina Thoma.

1859 Johann Schäffer and Salomea Heck.

1860 Franz Herrmann and Katharina Herauf.

1860 Peter Scherger and Franziska Kowitz.

1862 Andreas Schropp and Anna Maria Ackermann.

1863 Franz Thoma and Julianna Herauf.

1864 Peter Wagner and Anna Maria Kessel.

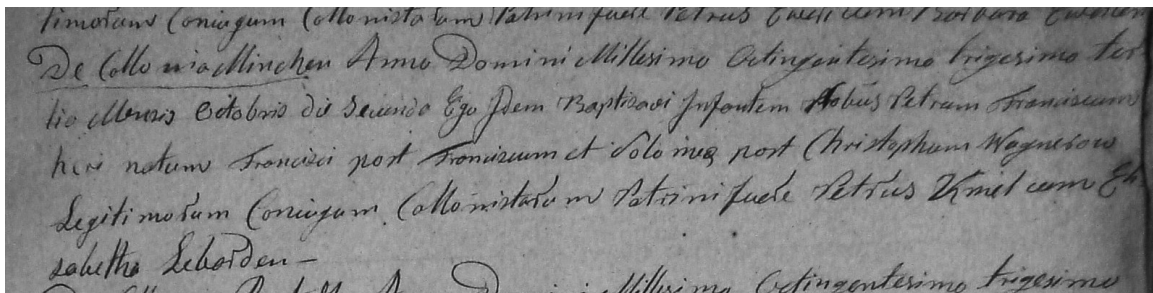
1862 Franz Herauf and Margaret Hübner.

The children of Franz Wagner jr. and Salomea Walter were:

1. **Marianna Wagner**, bapt. May 23, 1821 München, godparents were Johann Schmidt and Maria Wohlbaum, in München.

³³ Salomea's name recured later in the Wagner history, when Salomea Wagner born 1871 and her husband Michael Wormsbecher emigrated to Canada in 1899. Franz jr.'s wife had undoubtedly served as a godmother and her name was thus passed down in the Wagner family.

2. **Bernard Wagner**, bapt. June 12, 1823 München, godparents were Rudolf Schmidt and Theresa Leitner.
3. **Maria Katherina Wagner**, bapt. March 8, 1825 München, godparents were Johann Schmidt and Maria Katharina Anton.
4. **Franz Wagner**, bapt. Feb. 28, 1827 München, his godparents were Bernard Schmidt and Katharina Anton. His baptismal record clearly reports his parents as Franz Wagner and Salomea Walter. This child may have died in infancy.
5. **Anna Maria Wagner**, born Oct. 15, 1831 München.
6. **Peter Franz Wagner**, born Oct. 2, 1833, München. See his baptismal record below.
7. **Magdalena Wagner**, born Jan. 8, 1836, München.



Birth of Peter Franz Wagner, Oct. 1, 1833
Son of Franz (jr.) and Salomea

“In the colony of München, 1833 October 2nd, I the pastor above [Fr. David Powrog] baptised the infant boy, Peter Franz, born here yesterday, to the legitimately married colonist couple, Franz son of Franz Wagner, and Salomea daughter of Christoph. The godparents were Peter Kniel and Elisabeth Lebard.”³⁴

We know from Franz and Salomea’s 1820 marriage record that she was the daughter of “Christian” Walter. In Peter Franz’s baptismal record in 1833 he is referred to as “Christoph” but the two names are sufficiently close and the difference is likely due to a lapse by the priest.

The marriage records for the children of Franz and Salomea are below:

Marianna Wagner, age 19 (= b. 1821) daughter of Franz and Solomea, married **Georg Kowitz** on Oct. 15, 1840, he was the son of Adam and Philipina Kowitz. They had a daughter, **Maria Josepha Kowitz**, who married Michael

³⁴ It should be noted that these dates shown in the records are in the “old style” Julian calendar, which can be adjusted to the “new style” Gregorian format by adding 12 days.

Bullinger on Oct. 6, 1859, witness was Franz Wagner. Their daughter, **Katharina Kowitz**, age 18 (= b. ca. 1841) married Johann Wirtmiller.

Anna Maria Wagner, age 19 (= b. 1830) daughter of Franz and Salomea Wagner, married **Johann Kniel** on Nov. 22, 1849, he was son of Peter Kniel and Elisabeth Leipold. On Jan. 15, 1861 Anna Maria, a widow, age 29 (= b. ca. 1832) married Jakob Thoma, she was stated to be daughter of Franz and Salomea.

There was a double-wedding of two siblings, **Franz and Magdalena Wagner**, on Oct. 25, 1855, their parents were stated to be Franz and Salomea. This son Franz was stated to be age 23 [birth ca. 1832] from München, he married **Katharina Ehrmantraut**, age 18 [birth year ca. 1837], she was the daughter of Johann Ehrmantraut and Margaret Giesser, witnesses were Johann Wirtmüller and Johann Kniel. He was apparently the same person as Peter Franz who was born on Oct. 1, 1833, the record shows that he went simply by the name Franz later in his life. Ferdinand also had a son, Peter, born in 1839 and they perhaps used different names to avoid confusion of references. The children of Peter Franz Wagner and Magdalena are shown in the summery tables in Chapter 11.

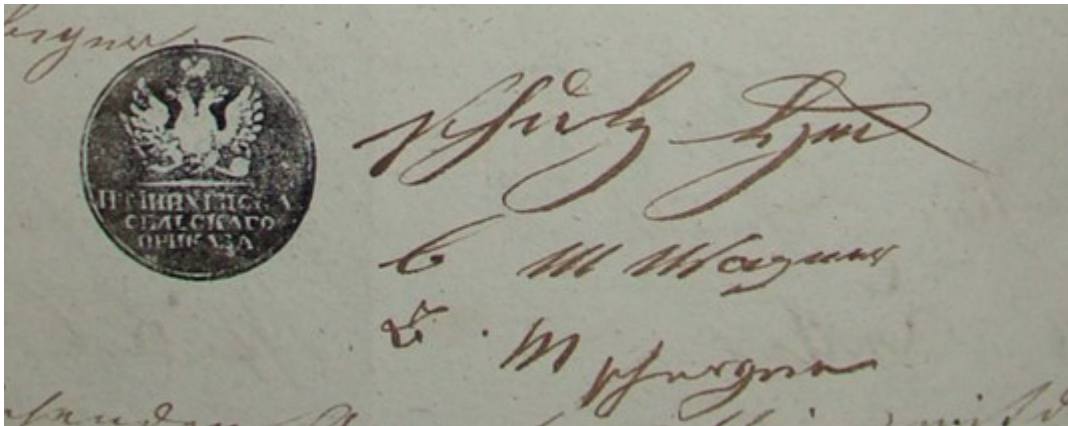
On Oct. 25, 1855 **Magdalena Wagner**, age 20 [= birth ca. 1835] from München, the daughter of Franz Wagner and Salomea Walter, married **Leonard Thomä**, age 23 [birth year ca. 1832] from München, his parents were Jacob and Margaretha Thomä, the witnesses were Daniel Fischer and Johann Wirtmüller. Magdalena Wagner and Leonard Thomä had a son, Ignatz Thomä, born Aug. 1, 1864 in Kuschnerowo, which was apparently leased land or a *Khutor*.

Wagner as a *Bürgermeister* in 1843

During the first half of the 19th century the residence of a colonist was strictly controlled by the Tsarist Colonist Welfare Committee, which had the responsibility to monitor ownership of land, taxes due, and amounts owed in the repayment of loans from Crown debts. It was possible for colonists to relocate, but it had to be approved by the various colonial administrations as well as by the local citizenry. On Feb. 1, 1843 the residents of München signed a document certifying that they had agreed to allow Georg Michael Heid and his family, from Rohrbach, to become legal residents.³⁵ Thirty citizens signed the document, plus at the bottom there were the signatures of the *Schulz* (mayor) Iym (probably Immel), and two *Bürgermeisters*, Wagner and Scherger. In the colonies the *Schulz* usually had at least two assistants, known as *Bürgermeisters*, sometimes more depending on the size of the colony. They had special duties, such as overseeing the local militia, organizing road and bridge repair, and so on. In this document the first names of the officials are not given. The initials "B.M." are used as short forms for *Bürgermeister*, which was a common practice on other documents during this time period.

³⁵ Odessa Archive, Fond 6, Akte 6964.

It is not known which member of the Wagner family served as a *Bürgermeister* in 1843, but we may assume that it was either Ferdinand or Franz jr.



Seal of München, 1843

Schulz Iym (Immel), B.M. (Bürgermeister) Wagner, B.M. Scherger

The Voter List of 1862: Franz, Johann, and Georg Wagner

Elections were held in the German colonies every three years for the village mayor (*Schulz*) and his two assistants (*Beisitzer*, sometimes also called *Bürgermeister* in the German colonies). Adult males were entitled to vote at the village assembly and they had to sign the voter roster. The election reports for 1862 are available for most of the Beresan colonies, including Rastadt and München. All legal voters in the village are shown, including those who were temporarily absent (marked as *abwesend*). If a voter had recently died, his vote was taken over by his widow (in that case, she was listed as a “widow” on the voter list). If she was also deceased and their male heir had not yet reached legal age (21), his “orphan” was listed, with the vote cast on his behalf by his appointed legal guardian. As a result, these documents are a reliable list of adult males at that time in a colony.

There were no adult males with the surname Wagner shown on the voter registry of Rastadt in 1862, which indicates that members of the family had not returned to that colony after the death of Franz (senior) in 1811, when the family moved to nearby München. The voter list of München shows only three adult male Wagners in 1862: Franz, Johann, and Georg. Their identities will be discussed later in this chapter.

Wahlliste

Ueber die Wahl eines neuen *Schulzenamts* des *Müncher*
Schulzenamtes an Stelle des entlassenen *Schulzenamtes* *Franz Marz*
 geschehen bei versammelter Gemeinde im Beisein des *Müncher*
zur *Ordnung* den 25. October 1862.

No.	Namen der Wähler.	Name des Gewählten.	Eigenhändige Unterschriften der Wähler.
5	<i>Wagner</i> Franz Wagner	Michael Bengert	<i>Franz Wagner</i>
41	<i>Wagner</i> Johann Wagner <i>Wolbass</i>	Johann Thomas	<i>Johann Wagner</i>
46	<i>Wagner</i> Georg Wagner <i>Adersmann</i>	Absent	

Voter List³⁶

Concerning the election for a new Bürgermeister of the München Mayor's Office, for the position of the released Bürgermeister Franz Marz, carried out by the assembled community in the presence of the München Mayor's Office, the 25th October 1862

No.	Name of the Voter	Name voted for	Signature of the Voter
5	Franz Wagner	Michael Bengert	Franz Wagner
41	Johann Wagner	Johann Thomas	Wagner
46	Georg Wagner	Absent	

³⁶ The source is Fond 6, Inventory 1, File 20877, Odessa State Archive. There were 77 eligible voters in München in 1862, of these 73 voted for the new *Bürgermeister*, and 4 were absent (one of whom was Georg Wagner). Michael Bengert jr. was elected. The officials in the local mayor's offices (*Schulzenamt*) in the Beresan colonies included the *Dorfschulz* (village mayor) and his two assistants (*Beisitzer*, literally, "by-sitters"). In the German colonies in Russia, the term *Bürgermeister* was used as an alternative term for *Beisitzer*.

The German Immigration Center (EWZ) Records of World War II

Adding to these Catholic Consistory records and the voter registry, there are records derived from the German Immigrants Center (*Einwandererzentralstelle* or EWZ) compiled during World War Two for ethnic German refugees. At that time the German colonists in the Ukraine were evacuated to the *Wartegau* region in Poland, where they were granted German citizenship. These families are also shown on the 1920 landowner list for Rastadt:

- 1) **Ferdinand Wagner**, this relationship is speculative.³⁷ Son:
 - a. **Franz Wagner**, born Aug. 2, 1857 Rastadt, marr. **Magdalena Braunbeck**, born in Katharinenthal, da. of Johannes Braunbeck. One known son:
 - 1) **Josef Wagner**, born Apr. 19, 1892 (the 1920 landowner list for Rastadt shows him born ca. 1897, son of Franz); married **Rosa Müller**, born Dec. 22, 1893, Rastadt, da. of Michael Müller. Three children:
 - a) **Magdalena**, born May 5, 1925 Rastadt.
 - b) **Emma**, born Mar. 3, 1928, Rastadt.
 - c) **Rudolf**, deported to Siberia 1940.

- 2) **Franz Wagner**,³⁸ born Oct. 1, 1829 in München, marr. to **Katharina Eva Ehrmantraut** in 1855 and he died May 31, 1920 in Rastadt of "old age." Their known children:³⁹
 - a. **Katharina Wagner** born ca. 1859/60 in München, died ca. 1920 in München, married **Johannes Ackermann**, 6 known children. There were also two other marriages with the Ackermann family shown in the church records of Colonia Monte La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina. **Leonard Wagner** married **Catalina Ackermann** in 1882, and **Andreas Ackermann** b. ca. 1851 in München married to **Isabel Heck**.
 - b. **Anne Maria Wagner**⁴⁰ born ca. 1863 in München, d. 1931 in Rastadt, 1st marriage to **Gabriel Vocht (Vogt)**, 5 known children, including

³⁷ The information for Ferdinand Wagner and his descendants is derived from EWZ forms 50-1079 Frames 2528-2529 for Josef Wagner. Ferdinand was likely Josef's great-grandfather. Note that Ferdinand had a grandson, Franz, born April 3, 1856, which is reasonably close to Josef's father born 1857.

³⁸ Probably the same person as Peter Franz, son of Franz and Salomea, born Oct. 1, 1833. The years differ, but the birth day is the same.

³⁹ The information for the descendants of Franz Wagner, married to Katharina Eva Ehrmantraut, is derived from EWZ forms 50-1079, frames 1444 and 1460, and also from Katharine Wacker in Germany. This family is also shown on the 1920 landowner list for Rastadt.

Julianne Vogt, born München, who marr. Nov. 1, 1912 **Geo. Daratha**, Rastadt; Anna Maria's second marriage to **Ignatz Daratha**, 3 known children.

c. **Franz Wagner** born ca. 1868 München, d. in München, married **Katharina Vogt**, born 1869 München. Franz provided the death information for his father, Franz, in 1920. One known son:

1) **Max Wagner**,⁴¹ born Feb. 7 or 19, 1897 in München; marr. Oct. 10, 1919 to **Genoveva Heck**, born Dec. 4, 1900 München, da. of Siegfried Heck (b. 1856 München) and Franziska Kojis (b. 1862 München). Max was sent to Siberia by the Soviets in 1939. Five known children:

a) **Peter**, born Jan. 11, 1920 München, on Sept. 23, 1923 in München marr. Rosa Nikolaus, she was born Sept. 15, 1923 Bondarewska, Rastadt district. Peter was drafted into the German army Mar. 29, 1942. One known son:

1a) **Johannes**, born May 21, 1942 München.

b) **Katharina**, born Jan. 23, 1926

c) **Rosa**, born Mar. 24, 1927

d) **Franziska**, born June 3, 1928

e) **Genovesa**, born Jan. 20, 1931

d. **Elisabeth**, bapt. April 5, 1869 (see Tiraspol Consistory #5 above).

e. **Julianne Wagner** b. 22 Aug 1877 in München, d. before 1911 in Siberia, marr. **Erasmus Ackermann**, 2 known children.

3) **Georg Wagner** [son of Ferdinand], born ca. 1828 in München, married **Margaretha Bast** born ca. 1829 in Speyer, da. of Joseph Bast & Anna Maria Philipp. Known children:

a. **Anna Maria**, b. ca. 1851, d. Oct. 12, 1852, age 1, parents stated to be Georg and Margaret Wagner.

b. **Maria Anna**, marr. to Joseph Hoppner, their daughter Katherine Hoppner d. Dec. 17, 1878 and their daughter Susanna Hoppner died Dec. 30, 1878, in München.

c. **Catharina** born 1862 in München, married Jan. 29, 1880 in Rastadt to **Philipp Eberle** (son of Karl Eberle & Katharina Heck).⁴²

d. **Margaret**, born on August 20, 1867.

⁴⁰ The data for Anna Marie Wagner is taken from EWZ form 938545 for Leonhard Daratha, her son.

⁴¹ The information for Max Wagner, married to Genoveva Heck, and their descendants is derived from EWZ forms 50-1080, frames 1850 and 1860.

⁴² Source: marriage records in Saratov Archive, from Harvey Eberle.

Margaret Wagner marr. a Metz, she served as godmo. for Rafael Feibiger, son of Ludwig Feibiger and Kath. Gsell on Jan. 23, 1891 in München. Her identity is uncertain.

Maria Anna Wagner marr. to Georg Kobius (Kowis), they had a dau. Katharine Kobius, age 18 (=b. 1846) who marr. Johann Wirtmuller on Feb. 3, 1864 in München. The identity of this Maria Anna Wagner is uncertain, presumably she was b. ca. 1820s.

Discussion of the Records: The Growth of the Wagner Family

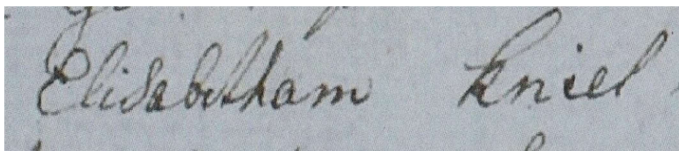
The Wagner family grew significantly after Ferdinand and Franz jr. settled in München in 1811. The 1828 report showed that both of them were married and by that date Ferdinand had 5 sons and Franz jr. had 2 sons. They both later had more children, so the surname proliferated. Given all these sons, two large and convoluted lineages had developed by the middle decades of the 19th century. The 1862 Voter List for München shows only three names – Franz, Johann, and Georg. No Wagners were shown in Rastadt. It's possible that some males had settled in their wives' home colonies elsewhere, and thus didn't have voting rights in München at that time. I will discuss these records by their various first names, starting with Ferdinand.

A. Ferdinand Wagner and his three wives named Elisabeth.

Ferdinand and his wives are of special interest for me because he was my direct ancestor. The records show Ferdinand's wives with the same first name, Elisabeth, but with three different surnames. This seems highly unusual and it raises questions about the accuracy of the records, or at least of the accuracy of their translations. All the priests were non-native German speakers and often they took very loose guesses at the spelling of surnames. Adding to the complexity, the earliest records are in Latin and the later are in Russian Cyrillic.

(1) Kniel

Shortly after Ferdinand moved to München in 1811, he married **Elisabeth Kniel** in 1815. The record states that this was the first marriage for both of them. Her name is clearly written in Latin script, which was in use in the Roman Catholic Consistory during the earliest years.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in Latin script, which reads "Elisabeth Kniel". The ink is dark and the handwriting is cursive.

Elisabeth Kniel
(Shown in Ferdinand's marriage record 1815)

All of the records for the Kniel family in the colonies show them as resident in München. The Revision List in 1811 shows **Anselm Kniel** 43 from Tiefenbach, Baden, his wife Elisabeth 42 and their three children: Georg 15, Elisabeth 17 (Ferdinand's future wife, b. ca. 1794), and Marianna 7. The Revision List of 1816 for München shows that Elisabeth Kniel was no longer living with her parents. She and her husband Ferdinand Wagner, both 21 years old at that time, were residing in the household of Ferdinand's step-father Johann Schirner.

There is a death record for Elisabeth Kniel, she was buried in the cemetery at Rastadt. on Sept. 26, 1820. She was most likely Anselm Kniel's wife, who was named Elisabeth. The Latin inscription is unclear, but it seems to say "*annorum quinque inta viduam et filium reliquit.*" The priest usually stated the age first, so in this record "*quinque inta*" probably means "*quinqueginta*" (50). Given this interpretation, the record apparently states: "50 years old she left behind a widower and a son." Anselm Kniel's wife, Elisabeth b. ca. 1769, would have been ca. 51 years old in 1820, which is a close match with this death record.

There are later records referring to Ferdinand's wife, Elisabeth. They had sons, Johann Ignatz in 1816, Johann Jacob in 1821 and Michael in 1823.

There is an ambiguous baptismal record on Oct. 30, 1820 in München for Elisabeth Fuchs, which shows that her godparents were "Fridericus Wagler" and Elisabeth "Nll." There was no person named Friedrich in the Wagner family so it is likely that this referred to Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Kniel. Elisabeth Kniel also served as godmother for Georg Peter Stübich on Sept. 27, 1822, although if she was Ferdinand's wife her surname should have been Wagner.

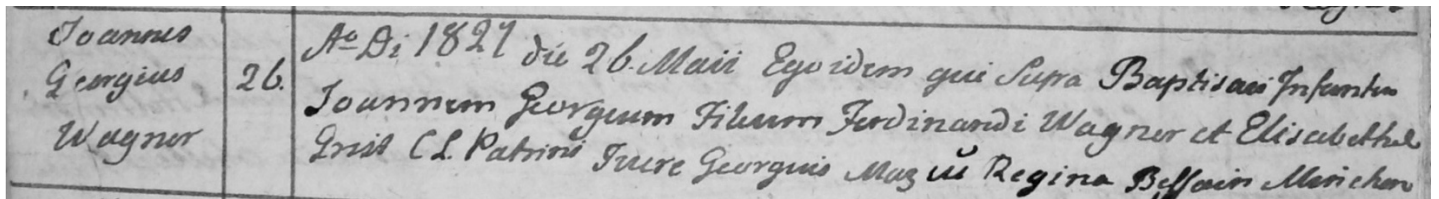
The relationship with the Kniel family is also shown in various later records. In 1833 the godfather for Peter Wagner (son of Franz jr.) was Peter Kniel, most likely his maternal uncle. In 1838 Elisabeth Kniel was godmother for Peter Wagner (son of Ferdinand and Elisabeth Müller at that time), she was probably a younger niece of Ferdinand's first wife. In 1853 Johann Kniel was godfather for Margaret Dorothea Schäfer, daughter of Anna Maria Stiebich, born Dec. 20, 1853 in München; in 1855 Johann Kniel was a witness at the marriage of Franz Wagner and Katharina Ehrmantraut; and eventually Johann Kniel married Anna Maria Wagner, they had a son August Kniel b. 1848-1854 and a daughter Salomea Kniel born July 2, 1860 in München.

There is also a death record for Barbara Kniel, daughter of Peter Kniel, no age shown, who died on March 6, 1822 in München. There is no clear relationship with Peter Kniel and the Wagner family.

(2) Kroll

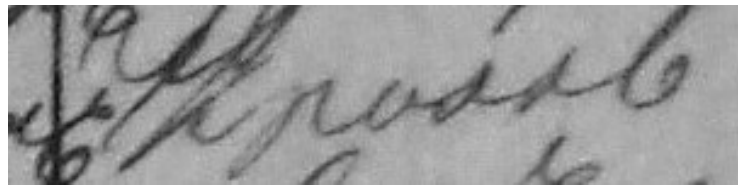
Ferdinand's fourth child was Johann Georg Wagner, born in 1827. His records are problematic because they raise questions about his mother's surname. Johann Georg Wagner's baptismal record on May 26, 1827 shows his parents as

Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth, but her surname is unclear. It may be "Gnil" (dialect for Kniel) or "Gril" (dialect for Kroll?).



Johann Georg Wagner baptism May 26, 1827 (Latin)
Parents Ferdinand Wagner and Elis. "Gnil" (Kniel?) or "Gril" (Kroll?)

My inclination is to translate her surname as Kniel, however Georg Wagner's later wedding record with Margaret Bast in 1850 shows his mother's surname in Cyrillic as "Kroll."



Elisabeth "Kroll" (in Cyrillic)
(Shown in Georg Wagner's marriage record 1850)

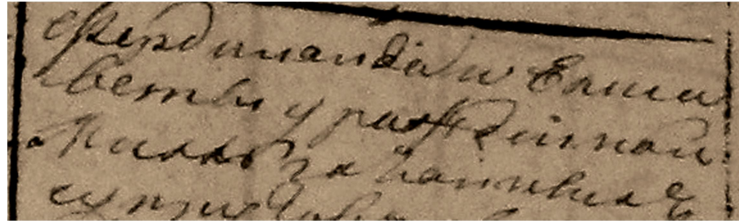
The second letter appears like an open letter "p" which is how "r" is written in Cyrillic. The priest wrote the double letter "l" in a distinctive way (derivative from the Greek letter lambda "λ" used in Cyrillic) which appears consistently in all his records. The mark at the end, which resembles a capital letter "C" with a loop at the bottom, was used by the priest in Cyrillic records to denote the end of surnames, sometimes also after first names. Admittedly the evidence is limited, but based on this one Cyrillic marriage record it looks like her surname was Kroll, which also suggests that Georg's mother's surname in his baptismal record was "Gril" and not "Gnil." Elisabeth Kniel may have died sometime before 1827 and Ferdinand had remarried to Elisabeth Kroll.

(3) Miller (Müller)

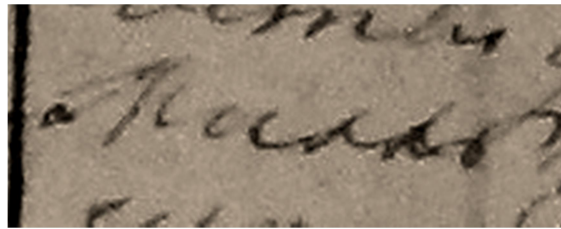
Ferdinand's third (and presumably final) wife between 1831 and 1839 was **Elisabeth Müller**, daughter of **Johann Müller**.

Ferdinand's son, Adam, married Margaret Rössler on Nov. 18, 1852. Adam was stated to be age 21 (=b. ca. 1831), the son of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Miller, resident in München. Margaret was age 19 (= b. ca. 1833), the daughter of Paul Rössler and Maria Josepha "N," resident in Rastadt.

The baptismal record for Franz Wagner in 1833 shows his parents as Ferdinand and “Elisabeth daughter of Johann” (surname not stated) and his godfather (after whom he was named) was Franz Kessel. Franz’s later marriage record in 1856 shows his age as 23 (which yields a matching birth year of 1833) and his parents are shown as Ferdinand Wagner and “Elisabeth, daughter of Mille- Johannes.” This means that his mother, Elisabeth, was stated to be the daughter of Johann in both records.



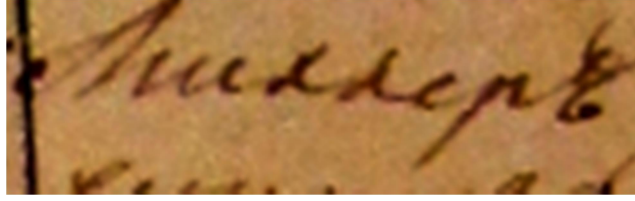
(Cyrillic) Ferdinand & Elisa-betha
Daughter of “Mille Johannes”
(Shown in Franz Wagner’s marriage record 1856)



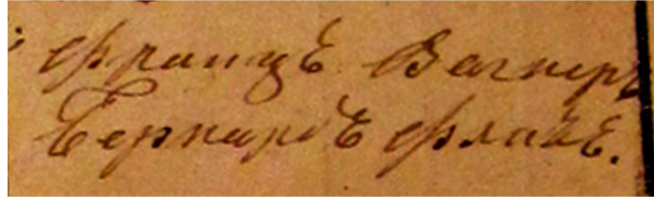
(Cyrillic) Close up of “Mille-” (1856)

I had a native Russian speaker translate this surname. Katharina Wacker in Germany read it as “**Mille.**” In my opinion, she is correct, it is a Cyrillic form of “**Miller,**” with the final “r” missing.⁴³

⁴³ In this 1856 record the first letter is identical to the capital “M” (as shown in “München” and “Maria”); the second letter is “i” because the loop at the top is open, whereas the letter “a” in Cyrillic is a closed loop; the double letters are identical to the double “l” in the surname Kroll shown above, they are clearly not “It”; and the last letter is an “e” with a partial swirl added which was his marker for the end of a surname. The priest left out the final “r” in his concluding swirl in 1856, but he later clearly added it in 1864. It’s possible that he was transcribing the surname literally as it sounded to him in German dialect which typically drops the final “r” – that is, “Müllah.” It should be noted that one of my German correspondents translated the surname as “Matts,” which is unlikely because the terminal letter “r” is clearly shown in the 1864 record.



**Elisabeth "Miller" showing the terminal letter "r" (in Cyrillic)
(Peter Wagner's mother, shown in his marriage record 1864)**



**Examples of "E" marker at the end of first and last names
Franz Wagner and Bernard Flik,
Witnesses at Peter Wagner's 1864 wedding**

This interpretation is confirmed in the next records for Peter Wagner, the son of Ferdinand. Peter was born in 1838 and his birth record shows his parents as Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth; his godparents were Franz Wagner and Elisabeth Kniel. This Elisabeth Kniel was probably the niece of Ferdinand's first wife, likewise named Elisabeth Kniel. Peter was married on Nov. 23, 1864, stated to be age 25, which yields a birth year of 1838-39. Peter's marriage record shows his parents as Ferdinand Wagner and – most importantly – it shows his mother as "Elisabeth daughter of **Miller** Johannes." Katharina Wacker in Germany once again confirmed the translation of the surname. There was only an eight year difference between these two marriage records (1856–1864), they were written by the same priest (Fr. Hieronymus Zwenitsky), his Cyrillic handwriting in the two records is identical, except that in 1864 he more carefully added the final letter "r" (which looks like an open letter "p") with the large "E" added to denote the end of the surname.

(4) Summary about Ferdinand's wives

In sum, the available records suggest that Ferdinand was married three times -- first to Elisabeth Kniel (daughter of Anselm Kniel) in 1815, then to Elisabeth Kroll by 1828, and finally to Elisabeth Müller daughter of Johann by 1833. This sequence is not entirely satisfying because we are left with the awkward conclusion that all three of Ferdinand's wives had the same name, Elisabeth!

Serial remarriages were not uncommon at that time because of deaths due to illness and childbirth. When spouses died, remarriages were imperative because there was much work that needed to be done, more than what could be handled by a single parent, and often there were under-age children that needed care. Widowed mothers also had to remarry quickly in order to retain their land allotment in the colony.

Adding to the complexity, the EWZ record for Josef Wagner from World War II shows that his father, Franz, was born in 1857, the son of Ferdinand (mother's name not stated). It is reasonable speculation that this Ferdinand was born in the 1830s, since the original Ferdinand (born 1793) would not likely have had a son born in 1857. In other words, there may have been a "Ferdinand jr." However, the EWZ records were based on informants' memory, which leaves much room for error. The original Ferdinand's death record shows that he died May 19, 1855 age 60 in München, which yields a birth year of 1795, which approximates his known birth year of 1793.

B. Georg Wagner

Georg Wagner, born May 26, 1827 in München, married in 1850 to Margaret Bast. Margaret was born ca. 1830 in Speier, the daughter of Johann Joseph Bast (b. ca. 1805). Georg's Cyrillic marriage record states that he was the son of Ferdinand and Elisabeth "Kroll." He is also mentioned in the EWZ records and he appears in the baptismal record for two daughters in 1862 and 1867. There is only one occurrence of the name Georg in all these records, so we may assume that they all refer to the same person. In the 1862 voter registry he was stated to be "absent," indicating that he was likely doing wage labor elsewhere. It should be noted that in the Cyrillic records he is referred to as "Egor" (the Russian equivalent of Georg). This was mistranslated as "Edgar" in one record that was forwarded to me from Russia. To my knowledge, the name Edgar did not occur in the Beresan colonies. Georg's wife Margaret and "Edgar's" wife Katherine both had the same surname, Bast, which also suggests that they were the same person.

Georg Wagner and Margaret Bast had three daughters 1) Maria Anna, (b. Sept. 22, 1853) in Rastadt, 2) Katharina (b. 1862 in München) who married Philip Eberle on Feb. 10, 1880 in Rastadt⁴⁴ and 3) Maria Anna Wagner, marr. to Joseph Heptner, son of Georg Heptner, they had a daughter Katherine Heptner who died in München on Dec. 17, 1878, age 2 years, and a dau. Susanna who died Dec. 30, 1878 age 3 years, apparently a contagious disease.

There was also a Georg Wagner born illegitimate in 1871 in Kuschnerowno. No parents were stated.

⁴⁴ The info about Catharina Wagner, married to Philip Eberle, was forwarded to me by Harvey Eberle in 2014.

C. Franz Wagner

The records are more problematic when we try to sort out the occurrences of the name Franz in the Wagner family. The name proliferated from the original Franz who settled in Rastadt in 1810, from his son Franz jr. married to Salomea Walter, and it carried all the way down to my father's oldest brother Franz (Frank) Wagner in North Dakota.

In the 1860s there was Franz Wagner (son of Ferdinand) married to Anna Maria Stübich, and there was Peter Franz Wagner (son of Franz jr.) married to Katharina Eva Ehrmantraut. They were cousins and contemporaries, both born in 1833, and they both had children between 1867-1872. There was also a Franz b. 1846, the son of Bernard Wagner and grandson of Franz jr. (see below) whose younger age distinguishes him from the previous two.

There seems to be no doubt about the identity of Franz, the son of Ferdinand and Elisabeth Müller, who married Anna Maria Stübich. He was the same person shown in the birth/baptismal record on April 11, 1833. His marriage record in 1856 states that he was age of 23 (b. ca. 1833, matching his birth record) and his parents were shown as Ferdinand and Elisabeth Müller. Franz served as godfather for Franz Englert on June 28, 1853 in München, whose mother was Margaret Stiebich. This suggests an early relationship with the Stübich/Stiebich family in München. Franz and Anna Maria Stübich are of special interest to me because they were the grandparents of my grandfather, Adam Wagner.

His cousin Franz who married Katharina Ehrmantraut on Oct. 25, 1855, was probably Peter Franz, born Oct. 1, 1833. His marriage record states that he was age 23 (yields birth year ca. 1832), and both were stated to be the son of Franz Wagner (jr.) and Salomea Walter. His marriage date was only three weeks after his 23rd birthday. The 1920 landowner list for Rastadt, the EWZ forms, and info from Katherine Wacker in Germany refer to Franz Wagner married to Katharina Eva Ehrmantraut as born Oct. 1, 1829. Although there is a difference of 4 years (1829 versus 1833) between the birth years of this Franz in the EWZ records and Peter Franz, we note that their birthdates are the same (Oct. 1), and the wives were both Katharina Ehrmantraut. They could be brothers, but the overall similarities are significant enough to indicate that they were most likely the same person. If this is true, it indicates that Peter Franz dropped his first name Peter and he appeared in the later records only as "Franz." He may have done this to avoid confusion with his cousin, Peter Wagner (below).

D. Bernard Wagner

Bernard Wagner was the son of Franz jr. and Salomea Walter, he was b. June 12, 1823 in München and he marr. Susanna Giesser. They had two known children:

1) Franz Wagner born Nov. 12, 1846 in München, godmother was Christina Wagner, and 2) Georg Wagner b. ca. 1850, he d. Nov. 28, 1852 age 2, in München. Bernard occurs in other records as a godfather. He was godfather for Bernard Thome on Aug. 18, 1847 in München and for Bernard Lanz on Feb. 14, 1853 in München. His wife Susanna was godmother for Leonard Zenter born Feb. 10, 1853 in München. Christina Wagner was married to Franz Michael Herauf and they had a daughter Anna Katherine Herauf on Aug. 18, 1847 and a son, Franz Herauf. Bernard Wagner died sometime before 1859. Christina Wagner, Bernard's wife, remarried to Anton Riele on Feb. 23, 1859; she was stated to be age 32, a widow, she was the daughter of Karl Giesser and Barbara Ackermann.

E. Peter Wagner

In the early decades of the 19th century there were four Wagners with this name:

(1) Peter Franz Wagner, born in 1833, son of Franz jr. and Salomea Walter. He may have used the name Franz in his later years to avoid confusion with his two cousins named Peter (below).

(2) Peter, born May 26, 1838, the son of Ferdinand and Elisabeth [Müller], married Anna Maria Kessel on Nov. 23, 1864. The marriage sponsors were Franz Wagner and Bernhard Flick. This Peter was the brother to Franz, who was my great grandfather [born 1833].

(3) Peter Wagner born 1862 in München, married to Maria Eva Bengert in 1885, she was born ca. 1869 in München. They emigrated in 1900 to Argentina and resided in the Coronel Suarez area, Buenos Aires province, Quemu Quemu area, La Pampa province. They were part of a large emigration of families from München around the turn of the 19th century. Michael Bengert, who may have been her father, was a candidate shown on the 1862 voter registry for München.

(4) Peter Wagner, son of Adam Wagner and Margaret Rössler. b. March 2, 1867, died in München on Aug. 20, 1879 of diptheria, age 12 (= b. 1867). It seems likely that he is the same person as Peter Wagner, born Mar. 14, 1867, the son of Adam Wagner and Margaret "Kessel." There is no known record of him other than this birth record. The surname Kessel was mistranslated in another record instead of Rössler. Note that their birthdates differ by only 12 days.

The early baptismal records in Rastadt refer to "Pater Agner" who served as godfather for Walburga Belitzer on July 24, 1825 in Rastadt. These early records usually had the spelling of surnames somewhat scrambled, so it's uncertain if this referred to a Peter "Wagner." If so, there is no clear identity for a member of the Wagner family who was an adult in 1825, so it may be a different surname.

Peter Wagner and Maria Eva Boehm had a dau. Rosa Maria Wagner, b. Jan. 31, 1891 in München. Peter's identity is uncertain.

F. Johann Wagner.

The name Johann was probably the most common German first name at that time, yet oddly there are few occurrences in the records for the Wagner family. The earliest record is for Johann Wagner born Sept. 8, 1840 in Rastadt, the son of Johann Wagner and Katherina Meyer, referred to as "München colonists." This same couple had a daughter Martina Wagner born Nov. 23, 1853 in München. Johann Meyer, probably the brother of Katherina, was the godfather for both children. There is no clear link for this couple.

Paulina Wagner died Dec. 6, 1865 in München, age 3 (= b. ca. 1862), her parents were stated to be Johann and Magdalena Wagner. This Johann was probably born in the 1840s. His wife Magdalena is unknown.

The 1862 voter registry shows a Johann Wagner. He does not appear in other records and we have no clues about how he fits into the family. Fr. Keller notes that Johannes Wagner was a sexton (*Küster*) in München, which likely refers to this same person. My grandfather's brother, Johann, born in München in 1870, may have derived his name from this older Johann Wagner.

Johann Wagner had a dau. Elisabeth b. 1871 in Kuschnerowo.

The church records in La Pampa, Argentina, show Johann Wagner born 1858–1866 in München, married to Barbara Meier in München, she died before 1915.

G. Adam Wagner, my grandfather

None of the founders of München in 1811 had the name Adam, but four of the founders in Rastadt were named Adam (with various surnames), any of whom could have introduced this name into the colony. In the 1860s there were four Wagners in München with the name Adam:

(1) My grandfather Adam, born 1867, son of Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich.

(2) Adam Wagner, married to Margaret Rössler (also mistakenly transcribed from Cyrillic as "Kessel"), they were married on Nov. 18, 1852, he was stated to be age 21 (= b. ca. 1831), the son of Ferdinand Wagner and Elisabeth Miller. They had children Franz 1853, Johann 1856, Margaret 1860, Peter 1867, Rochus 1864, Salomea 1871, and Nikolaus 1878 in München (see summary tables for the Wagner family).⁴⁵

(3) Adam Wagner and Katherine Wagner served as godparents for Adam Rössler on Feb. 21, 1860. They may not have been a married couple. This Adam was probably Adam married to Margaret Rössler.

⁴⁵ Some of the information about Adam Wagner and Margaret Rössler was forwarded to me by June McDonald, a correspondent friend from Australia.

(4) Adam Wagner, married to Elisabeth Flick, he died April 14, 1872 in Kuschnerowo, age 26 (= b. ca. 1846). He had two daughters: Maria Josefa (b. Aug. 16, 1868) and Margaret (b. Nov. 4, 1869). He was likely closely related related to our family because he was my grandfather's godfather, after whom he received his name.

The Tiraspol Consistory records show that my grandfather, Adam Wagner, was born on Feb. 17, 1867 (Julian date, modern Gregorian date = Feb. 28) in Kushnerowo, baptized 5 days later in Rastadt, his parents (shown in column 2) were Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich, and his godparents (column 3) were Adam Wagner and Elisabeth Flick. The baptism was performed by Fr. Hieronymus.

ЧАСТЬ ПЕРВАЯ О КРЕЩЕННЫХЪ.

Прозваніе крещаемыхъ.	№	Число.		Когда? гдѣ? кто? и къмъ? одною-ли водою или со всѣми обрядами таинства окрещень.	Какихъ родителей, когда и гдѣ? т. е. въ какомъ приходѣ родился крещаемый.	Кто были по имени прозванію воспріемники при Св. крещеніи и кто присутствовалъ.	Рукоприкладство свидѣтели по жванію.
		Рожденія.	Крещенія.				
Adam Wagner	19.	17.	21.	1867 года февраля 21. в Кухнерово-и-мѣстечкѣ, прихода св. Анны в Кухнерово-и-мѣстечкѣ, прихода св. Анны в Кухнерово-и-мѣстечкѣ, прихода св. Анны в Кухнерово-и-мѣстечкѣ.	Родители: Францъ и Анна Мария Стубичъ.	Восприемники: Адамъ и Елизавета Фликъ.	

**Birth and Baptismal Record (in Cyrillic) for my grandfather Adam Wagner
Born Feb. 17, bapt. Feb. 21, 1867 (Julian dates, equals Feb. 28 Gregorian),
in Kuschnerowo
Parents Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich
Godparents Adam Wagner and Elisabeth Flick⁴⁶**

Kuschnerowo, a "Khutor"?

Several families had children born in Kushnerowo. This does not appear in the available literature on the German colonies so apparently there wasn't a permanent settlement there. "Kushner" is a family name found in Ukraine and nearby areas, and "owo" is a common Slavic suffix designating a town. I located "Blizhne-Kushnerovo" by a search on Google Maps, the Russian word "blizhne"

⁴⁶ Tiraspol Catholic Consistory, record group 365, inventory 1, item 274, p. 815.

means “in the vicinity of,” it is 2.2 km northwest of Stryukov located on the Tiligul (Tylihul) river which flows into the Black Sea.⁴⁷ East from there is an area shown as “*Dal’ne Kushnerova*,” which means “distant Kushnerova.” Google Maps shows that Rastadt (known as *Porichya* today) is 25 miles east of Stryukov. It seems likely that during the 1860s Kushnerowo was irrigated farm lands on the Tiligul river, perhaps a large private estate known as a “*Khutor*” owned by the Kushner family which was leased to the colonists. It was common at that time for families to lease land outside their home colony because most of the nearby land was no longer available for purchase. The land reforms which accompanied the abolition of serfdom in 1861 made land available. Much of it was owned by absentee nobles and elites in St. Petersburg, who no longer had the ability to farm the land after the serfs no longer wished to work like slaves. The Germans lost their legal status as “colonists” in 1871 and they were able to purchase or lease land wherever it was available. Because the land parcels were fairly large, several families combined assets to acquire land, so the colonists moved around in clusters. Families would sometimes build a temporary home on their leased land and if they had children born there they waited until a return visit to their home colony to have them baptized.

There were many families from Rastadt and München shown in Kuscherowo in the baptismal registries, including at least two from Landau and Katharinental. The earliest references are in 1864, when 11 families from Rastadt and Munchen were shown as having babies born there. That may have been the year when land at Kushnerowo began to be farmed. The peak year was 1867 when 23 families had babies born there, followed in 1869 with 20 families. The numbers abated after that to 12 families in 1870 and 17 families in 1871, after which there is a gap in the baptismal registry. The next available year is 1891, when no references to Kuschnerowo were reported.

There were several children born to the Wagner family in Kuschnerowo. The full names of the parents are not stated in 1871-1872, the translation available to me for that year is just a partial index:

Adam, b. 1867, son of Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich.

Joseph, b. 1869, son of Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich.

Franziska, b. 1871, dau. of Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich.

Elisabeth, b. 1871, dau. of Johann Wagner.

Martin, b. 1871, son of Martin Wagner.

Michael, b. 1871, son of Adam Wagner.

Georg Wagner, b. 1871, was illegitimate, his parents were not named.

Franz, b. 1871, son of Joseph Stiebich (related to Anna Maria Stübich).

⁴⁷ *Blichne-Kushnerova*'s coordinates shown on internet are 47°22' 58.8 N, 30°34' 01.2 E. in Odessa Oblast. There is also a *Kushnerov* 159 miles east of Kiev; however, *Blichne/Dal'ne-Kushnerova* in Odessa Oblast is the more likely location because it is closer to Rastast and München.

Katharina, b. 1872, dau. of Martin Wagner in Kushnerowo.

The baptismal records for Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich show that their first three children were born in München – Anna (b. 1857), Maria Katherina (b. 1860), and Franz (b. 1862). Their next three children, Adam (b. 1867), Joseph (b. 1869), and Franziska (b. 1871) were born in Kushnerowo, but their parents were still referred to as München colonists. It would appear, then, that Franz and Anna Maria resided in Kushnerowo sometime around 1867, as part of a group of 23 families that year, but they did not abandon their status as München colonists. Their probably youngest child, Franziska, died in 1879, age 7, in München.

The baptismal record above for my grandfather, Adam, is the only one for a baby with this name born of München colonists during 1867–1871. We know from two other sources (Fr. Aberle’s data in North Dakota, and the later death record for my grandfather’s brother, Johann, in Saskatchewan) that his father was indeed named Franz, so the reliability of this information seems beyond dispute.

Conflicting Information on my Grandfather Adam

As we have seen, the baptismal records show that Adam, my grandfather, was born Feb. 17, 1867. However, different birth dates have been stated in later sources in North Dakota. Fr. Aberle, the pastor of St. Joseph’s church in Dickinson, North Dakota, published two volumes of family histories for the parish in 1966.⁴⁸ In his brief biography of my aunt Barbara Wagner and her husband, John Boehm, he states that Adam’s father was named Franz, that Adam was born on “March 1, 1868” in the colony of “Speier,” and that his “grandparents” were Franz and Eva Wagner who immigrated to “Speier” in the beginning of the 19th century. As usual, Fr. Aberle was a bit careless with the details. He performed a valuable service for the families in St. Joseph’s parish by recording the histories that were forwarded to him, but errors were made when he attempted to supplement this information by guesses, as has been noted by others in German-Russian internet discussion groups. I corresponded with Fr. Aberle shortly before his death and asked him to clarify the inconsistencies in the Wagner history. He responded that he had relied on brief statements provided by the families who were members of the parish; however, these documents no longer exist, they were thrown away by his successor (who perhaps couldn’t read German and didn’t know what they were). He acknowledged that he had filled in the gaps by referring to Fr. Keller’s books containing the earliest Revision Lists for the Catholic colonies. He made the assumption that Franz and Eva Wagner (shown in Fr. Keller’s book as founders

⁴⁸ Mgrs. George P. Aberle, *Pioneers and Their Sons, One Hundred Twenty Family Histories*, Dickinson, N.D.: N.D. Herold Press, vol. 2, 1966, p. 286

of Rastadt in 1809) were Adam's grandparents, when in fact they were the great-grandparents. He also chose the wrong colony (Speier) for Adam's birth place. The birth date he cited (March 1, 1868) was approximately close in month and day, but it was off by one year.⁴⁹

Another source of information on Adam Wagner is the 1900 U.S. Census for Stark County, N.D., where his birth date is shown as "April, 1867." Again, this date is near the bull's-eye, but off by one month! In the early homesteading days many families used primitive record-keeping systems. Typically family records were preserved in the family Bible, or on slips of paper kept in the trunk, or even worse - faulty memories. My personal hunch is that when the census taker visited the Wagner homestead in 1900, the family knew that there was a difference between "old style" Julian dating, which was still in use in Russia until 1918, and Gregorian dating (adding 12 additional days) which was used in the USA; they provided an on-the-spot adjustment for the census taker by simply rounding it up one extra month.

As noted above, according to the Tiraspol Catholic Consistory records my grandfather Adam Wagner was born on Feb. 17, 1867 (March 1 adjusted modern Gregorian date). It seems prudent to accept this date since it is the original birth record, and to regard the birth dates stated by Fr. Aberle and in the 1900 census as close approximations.

Based on my aunt Barbara's memories and Adam's concise summary of his early years in Russia (to be discussed later), his mother died when Adam was about 6 years old, and his father died when he was 15 years old. That would place the time of death for his mother, Anna Maria Stübich, at about 1873, and the death of his father, Franz, at 1882.

Families into which our Wagner family married:

Kroll

Elisabeth Kroll, the second wife of Ferdinand Wagner, was probably born around his birth year of 1793, but her link with the Kroll family is uncertain. They were married by 1828, after the death of Ferdinand's first wife, Elisabeth Kniel, and

⁴⁹ Fr. Aberle was born in the German colonies in Russia. He was a competent scholar, having written an earlier book on the history of the Tiraspol Consistory, and a general book on the immigration to North Dakota. However, he was elderly at the time when he compiled his two books of family histories, and sadly prone to mistakes. Clearly, he had confused references to families with the same surname in different colonies. In 1973 when I wrote him, he replied that Fr. Keller's book shows that Franz Wagner settled in Rastadt in 1809, but then a couple paragraphs later he stated that the book shows that Franz Wagner settled in "Speier." Fr. Aberle confused Andreas Wagner in Speier (from Siegen, Alsace) with Franz Wagner in Rastadt (from Insheim). These two founders were unrelated and they derived from different regions.

Elisabeth Kroll died by 1833.⁵⁰ Her link with the Kroll family in Rastadt is unknown. Since Ferdinand was a widower when they married, she too may have been a widow and perhaps Kroll was her previous married name.

The Kroll family resided in Rastadt, and there was also a later marriage with my Reis family as well as with Ferdinand Wagner.⁵¹ The R.L. of 1811 in Rastadt shows that Michael Kroll from Bechningen/Alsace (according to K. Stumpp, although this is more likely Böchingen/Pfalz) resided there with his wife Agnes (b. ca. 1780) and children: Wilhelm (b. ca. 1794), Heinrich (b. ca. 1798), August (b. ca. 1802), and Sophia (b. ca. 1801). Michael's age is not stated, but it was most likely around Agnes's birth year of 1780. The R.L. of 1816 indicates that Michael had died, his widow Agnes had remarried to Jakob Sutter, and all of Michael Kroll's children resided in the Sutter household in Rastadt. Heinrich Kroll had a son Raymond Kroll in Rastadt in 1870

Miller/Müller

Müller is a very common German surname and this unfortunately creates problems when trying to trace the family. Karl Stumpp shows almost four pages of Müllers in his compilations on the colonies, plus about one-half page of "Miller" variations.

No Müller family is shown in the available records for München, but there were families with this surname in the 1811 and 1816 Revision Lists in Rastadt, Speier and Landau in the Beresan region. **Elisabeth Müller**, the third wife of Ferdinand Wagner, likely came from one of those families. These Müller families might have been related since they all originated from nearby towns in the Rhine Pfalz. The birth record for Franz Wagner in 1833 and the marriage records for Franz in 1856 and Peter in 1864 all state that their mother was "**Elisabeth, daughter of Johann Miller.**"

Jacob Müller had a son **Mathias**, b. 1872 in Rastadt.

In Rastadt in 1816 Bonifaz Müller is shown, age 30 (b. ca. 1786) from Rheinzabern, near Germersheim in the Pfalz, with wife Katharina 29 and daughter Margaretha 2.

In Speier there were three Miller/Müller founding families: (1) **Johann Müller** age 54 (born ca. 1762) and his wife Eva 56 (b. ca. 1760) from Leimersheim, Pfalz; (2) Katharina Müller 49 and her children Phillip, Margaret, and Eva from Weinheim, near Mannheim; and (3) Peter Müller 39 and his wife Katharina 39

⁵⁰ Elisabeth Kroll, married to Ferdinand Wagner, is based on Georg Wagner's marriage record. Harvey Eberle also had her listed as a wife of Ferdinand and he forwarded to me info that Elisabeth Kroll was born ca. 1795. His source for her birth year is unknown. This too was probably based on a guess that it approximated Ferdinand's birth year of 1793. Michael Haag in Germany forwarded info about Christian/Christopher Kroll, b. ca. 1801 and d. 1836 age 35. His wife was Elisabeth Wilhelm.

⁵¹ My father's great-grandparents were Karl Reis and Katharina Kroll from Rastadt.

from Kapsweyer near Germersheim. However, none of these records show a Johann Müller who had a daughter Elisabeth.

The other possible match for a colony of origin was Landau. In the 1816 R.L. Michael Müller was 53 (born ca. 1763), his wife Maria 41, they had several children, one of whom was **Elisabeth** (age 21, born ca. 1795 which closely matches Ferdinand's birth year 1793). We also have an R.L. for Landau in 1839-40 and later records in the 1850s and 1860s that show a large cluster of Müller families there in the latter decades of the century. However, none of these records show a Johann who had a daughter Elisabeth born during this window of time. Her identity remains unknown.

Stübich/Stiebich

Anna Maria Stübich, Adam Wagner's mother, also had roots in München going back to the original founders in 1809. Anna born Nov. 25, 1841 in München was the daughter of **Simon Stübich** and **Anna Maria Giesser**.⁵² This is ca. 3 years different from her age shown in her marriage record with Franz Wagner on Nov. 6, 1856, when she was shown as age 18 [birth year ca. 1838], the daughter of **Simon Stübich** and **Anna Maria Giesser**.

Anna's father, Simon Stübich, was born Dec. 29, 1815, baptized Dec. 30, in München. His parents are shown in the baptismal record as **Andreas Stübich** and Katharina "**Volltrauer**," also spelled "**Foldrausz**" and "**Folbranin**" in other records (1815, 1820, 1822, 1825 and 1828).

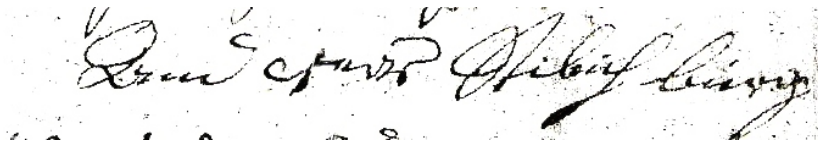
Katharina's maiden-name **Volltrauer** is correct, although it is unusual and it conflicts with the 1816 Revision List in the colony of Rastadt which shows **Andreas Stübich** and his wife **Katharina Bast**, and his mother-in-law **Maria Bast**. The records in Germany show that Andreas Stübich and Maria Katharina Volltrauer were married on February 14, 1808 in Hördt near Germersheim in the Rhine Pfalz. Katharina's parents were probably Jacob Volltrauer and Maria Anna Bast. The census taker apparently confused the mother-in-law's maiden-name with Katharina's maiden-name.

The 1816 R.L. shows: Andreas Stübich 29 [birth year ca. 1787], with his wife Katharina Bast 25 [birth year ca. 1791], his children, Heinrich 5, Maria 2, Simon 3 months [birth year ca. 1815], and his mother-in-law Maria Bast 55. Fr. Keller's data, which uses 1812 as a baseline year, shows: Andreas Stübich, age 25, and his wife Katharina, age 21. Keller shows only one child, Heinrich, age 1. Maria Bast is shown as age 51. Stumpp's records state they came from the district of Speyer in the Pfalz, whereas Fr. Keller states they came from Hördt (which is also in the district of Speyer).

In these early documents the surname "Stübich" is spelled in various ways. Stiebich is probably the translated form from Cyrillic records, which lack

⁵² Anna Stübich/Stiebich birth record Rastadt birth/baptisms 1841.

an umlaut, whereas in German it would be Stübich. Andreas "Stübig" was the only person shown in the Beresan colonies with this surname in the 1828 petition for the extension of repayment of crown debts. At that time his family had grown to nine persons -- six males (including himself) and three females (including his wife). One of his sons was Simon, shown in the 1816 R.L. as age 3 months, which yields a birth date of ca. 1815. This **Simon Stübich** was clearly the father of Anna Maria Stübich.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andreas Stübich, Bürger". The ink is dark and the background is light, with some faint markings around the signature.

Signature of "Andreas Stübich, Bürger," 1817

Andreas Stübich, the father of Simon, served as godfather for Andreas Schäffer Nov. 22, 1816 and for Andreas Prur (?) on June 19, 1824 in München. Maria Katharina Stübich was godmother for Maria Katharina Maier on My 27, 1824 München. Andreas was also one of the assistants (*Beisitzer*, or *Bürgermeister*) to the first mayor (*Dorfschulz*) of München.⁵³ An early document, dated March 29, 1817, shows that "M. Stübich, *Bürgermeister*," co-signed a loan on behalf of Rudolph Martz, who purchased the farm of colonist Joseph Carl.⁵⁴ Andreas and two other citizens of München - Philipp Hermann and Joseph Stroh - all signed a testimonial on March 27, 1817 certifying that Rudolph Martz was a reliable farmer.

The baptismal records show the following children for Andreas Stübich and Katharina Volltrauer:

1. **Simon Stübich**, b. Dec. 29, 1815, bapt. Dec. 30, in München.
2. **Franziska Stübich**, b. and bapt. May 30, 1820 München.
3. **Georg Peter Stübich**, b. and bapt. Sept. 27, 1822 München.
4. **Joseph Stübich**, bapt. April 14, 1825 München.
5. **Margaret Stübich**, bapt. April 8, 1828, München.

Simon Stübich (#1 above) marr. **Anna Maria Giesser**.

1. **Anna Maria Stübich**, their da., was b. Nov. 25, 1841 München, she marr. Franz Wagner, parents of Adam Wagner.
2. The death records of München also show that they had a daughter, **Anna Maria Stübich**, b. ca. 1847, who died Nov. 2, 1851, age 5. There is no explanation for the duplicate names.
3. **Margaret Stübich**, b. 1850, died Oct. 26, 1852, age 2.

⁵³ Height, 1972, p. 77.

⁵⁴ Odessa Archives, Fond 252, File 29a, page 81.

There was also a younger **Simon Stübich** marr. to Margaret Nuss, they had a daughter Franziska who d. 1879, age 2. This Simon was probably b. in the 1850s.

Georg Peter Stübich (#3 above shown as **Peter** in the later records) married to Barbara Riebe had 5 known children, all born in München:

1. **Maria Anna Stübich**, born Oct. 3, 1847. She marr. Bernard Rössler, son of Paul Rössler.

2. **Jakob Stübich**, d. Oct. 7, 1852 age 2 (= b. ca. 1850) in München.

3. **Veronica Stübich**, d. Oct. 17, 1852, age 9 months in München.

4. **Bartholomeus Stübich**, d. Oct. 17, 1852, age 9 months, apparently a twin of Veronica.

5. **Franz Stübich**, born Dec. 5, 1853, marr. Franziska Kowitz, they had a son **Franz Stübich** marr. to Franziska Illner, they had a son **Ignatius Stübich**.

6. **Martin Stübich**, born July 2, 1860 in Rastadt, godparents Martin Bullinger and Barbara Thome.

There were at least four records for **Joseph Stübich**, some of which probably refer to #4 above, son of Andreas. Their wives were **Anastasia Rössler**, **Anna Maria Rössler**, and **Margaret**. It's possible that they were the same couple, perhaps there were errors in translation. **Joseph Stiebich** had a son, **Franz**, b. in 1871 in Kuschnerowo. This record was reported in the baptismal registry of Rastadt. The information is limited. Joseph was probably married to Margaret.

A. Joseph Stübich marr. **Anastasia Rössler**, daughter of Paul. **Anastasia Rössler-Stübich** served as godmother for Martin Rössler, born Aug. 2, 1860 in Rastadt. Their children were:

1. **Maria Anna Stübich**, she marr. Adam Riebe. They had a dau. Maria Eva Riebe b. Jan. 6, 1891 in the town of Tschernowa, the record shows the parents as Adam Rieber and Maria Eva Stiebich.

2. **Margaret Stübich**, born 1850, died Oct. 24, 1850, age 3 months.

3. **Andreas Stübich** died Jan. 16, 1878 in München, age 1 year 9 months.

The difference in birth years (1850 versus c. 1876) between the latter two siblings indicates that they were probably from different couples.

B. Joseph Stübich married to **Anna Maria Rössler**. They had one known child: **Paul Stiebich**, born Jan. 11, 1860, godparents Paul Englert and Susanna Rössler. Joseph and Katherina Stübich were godparents for Hironemus (or possibly Katherina) Rössler in 1866 in Rastadt.

C. Joseph Stübich marr. to **Margaret**, they had a daughter **Elisabeth** who died Sept. 11, 1872, age 2. This Joseph was probably b. in the 1850s.

D. Joseph Stiewich (Stübig) and **Maria Eva Fett** had a son **Martin**, b. Nov. 11, 1885 in Speier. They were referred to as a couple from Rastadt.

Margaret Stübich (daughter of Andreas #5 above) married to Paul Englert had a son Franz Englert born June 28, 1853 in Rastadt, **Franz Wagner** served as godfather. Margaret and Paul also had a daughter, Maria Anna, on Oct. 30, 1860 who marr. Jacob Wünschel..

Johann Stübich, son of **Andreas**, marr. Barbara Martz, da. of Rudolf. They had a dau. **Susanna Stübich**, b. 1859 who d. in 1878. The identity of this Johann is ambiguous because there is a marriage record for Johann Stiebich who married Barbara "Meier" in Rastadt on Oct. 6, 1836, he was stated to be the son of Andreas Stiebich and Katharina "Volltraw." Presumably he was their oldest son. There also is a translation error in the surname of his wife, Barbara, because she is shown both as Meier and Martz, the original record is in Cyrillic.

Anna Maria Stübich, dau. of **Johann**, was b. in 1872 in München. Presumably she was the dau. of Johann above.

An earlier **Anna Maria Stübich** married to Karl Schäfer had a son born in München Oct. 29, 1846, **Joseph Stübich** served as the godfather. Anna Maria and Karl Schäfer also had a daughter Margaret Dorothea born Dec. 20, 1853, Johann Kniel served as godfather.

Gottlieb Stübich was married to Maria Josepha Gandermann and they had a son, **Leonard Stübich**, born Jan. 2, 1847 and who d. Nov. 9, 1852 in München age 6. The godmother was Margaret Stübich. Gottlieb also served as godfather for Theresia Traub, born April 26, 1841 in Rastadt.

Joseph Franz "Stüber" was bapt. Feb. 20, 1825, child of **Gottlieb Stüber** and Anna Maria Balweber in München. It is uncertain if his surname was Stübich.

The list of landowners in München in 1920 shows only one household with this family name:

Paul Stübich, 58 (= b. ca. 1862), son of **Joseph**, and his wife **Margaret** 43 (= b. ca. 1877). Children: **Wilhelmina** 20, **Adelheid** 5.

Johann Stübich (b. ca. 1840s) marr. to **Franziska** they had a daughter Anna Maria Stübich who died in München Sept. 16, 1872 age 2 days. Franziska died Sept. 18, 1872, age 23 (= b. 1849).

Sophia Stiebich nee Reinhardt served as a godmother for Julia Anna Kuntz, dau. of Adam Kuntz and Sophia Kessel, b. Feb. 6, 1891 in Khutor Erdeli.

Giesser

Anna Maria Stübich, Adam Wagner's mother, was the daughter of Simon Stübich and **Anna Maria Giesser**. The 1816 R.L. for München shows: **Johann Giesser** age 53 (b. ca. 1762) from Kusel in the Pfalz, emigrated to München in

1809, with wife Maria 53 (b. ca. 1762) and sons Johann 16 (b. ca. 1800) and Karl 13 (b. ca. 1803). Anna Maria Giesser's husband Simon Stübich was born in 1815, so this was probably also her approximate birth year. She was likely the daughter of Johann Giesser (senior), although there isn't a baptismal record for her. This Giesser family in München is the only one with this surname in all the colonies in the Beresan region.

The earliest baptismal record is for Maria Katharina Giesser, bapt. Aug. 31, 1822 München, stated to be the daughter of Johann Giesser and Barbara Becht. This Johann was likely the son of Johann Giesser (senior) and Anna Maria shown in the 1816 R.L. Johann Giesser (presumably junior) served as godfather for Johann Thome Jan. 23, 1826, for Eva Christina Braun Oct. 12, 1820, and for Franziska Schmidt Jan. 15, 1823. Johann Giesser and Barbara Becht had a daughter Maria Katharina bapt. Aug. 31, 1822 München. Karl Giesser (likely the son of Johann shown in the 1816 R.L.) and Barbara Herrmann had a daughter Salomea Emerentiana bapt. Feb. 16, 1830.

The surname is also shown in some Cyrillic records as "Gisser." A second independent transcription of the 1856 marriage record for Franz Wagner and Anna Maria Stübich was done by Michael Haag's cousin in Germany. She guessed that the surname of Anna Maria's mother could be "**Häuser**." However, when I double-checked the Cyrillic spelling of the surname it clearly shows it (even to my untrained eye) as "Gisser." In Cyrillic there is no clear distinction between "G" and "H." The spelling of the surname can be established with certainty by looking at the original signatures of four members of the family shown in the elections for *Bürgermeister* in München in 1862. There we see Johann, Karl, Max, and Jakob, all of whom signed their names as "Giesser." Households with this surname were also shown in baptismal records in the 1840s - e.g., Bernard Wagner married to Susanna Giesser had a son, Franz Wagner, on Nov. 12, 1846, Max Giesser served as a godfather for the Förderer family in München on May 4, 1846, and the Giesser family is shown on the map of München as late as 1941.