

The German Colonies
In South Russia
1804 to 1904

Volume I

The German Colonies
in
South Russia

1804 to 1904

by

Rev. Conrad Keller

Translated from the German edition

by Anthony Becker

Second Edition

with some revisions by Adam Giesinger

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
Lincoln, Nebraska

Copyright in Canada 1968 by A. Becker.

This second edition published with his permission in 1980 by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

Copyright in U.S.A. in 1980 by American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

All Rights Reserved.

International Standard Book Number: 0-914222-04-x

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 80-66312

Die Deutschen Kolonien

in

Südrussland

Ein Ueberblick der Culturentwicklung derselben im Verlaufe von 100 Jahren, nebst den Chroniken der katholischen Kolonien: Kleinliebenthal, Josephstal, Marienthal und Franzfeld, als Jubiläumsgabe zum 100 jährigen Bestehen derselben.

(Mit 20 Porträts)

von

P Conrad Keller,

freireisigiertem Pfarrer.

I. Bändchen.

Preis 1 Rbl. 20 Kop.

Verlag von Stadelmeier in Odessa.

Deribasstraße № 13.

ОДЕССА.

Типографія, А. Шульце, Банжероноуекая ул., № 30.

1905

This is a reproduction of the original title page of Die Deutschen Kolonien by P. Conrad Keller, published in Odessa, Russia in 1905.

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword to the Second Edition	ix
Foreword to the First Edition	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Author's Preface	xiii
<i>Part One: General Survey of the German Colonies in South Russia</i>	
Early Inhabitants of South Russia	1
Scythians, later Peoples, Zaporozhian Cossacks, Nagaians	
Conquest by the Russians	10
Political Administration after the Conquest	12
Seas, Rivers, Soil and Climate	13
Original Homes of the German Colonists	20
The Invitation to South Russia	22
Difficulties of the First Immigrants	26
Statistical Table of the Colonies in South Russia and Bessarabia	30
Supervisory Authorities over the Colonies	37
Biographies of the Leading Supervisors	41
Samuel Kantenius, Duke Richelieu, General Inzov, Eugen von Hahn	
Extracts from the Regulations for Local Administration	50
Spiritual Administration of the Catholic Colonies	59
The Jesuits 1804-1820, Father Charles Nicolle, Father Ignaz Lindl, Prelate Johannes Schytt, Canon Raphael Musnizsky, Prelate Georg Rosutowitsch	
Education in the German Colonies	77
Platzer School Project, Hahn School Project, Central Schools, Rules for School Attendance, Keller School Project	
The Colonist Press	87
Agriculture in the Colonies	89
Trades, Industry and Commerce	94
The Agricultural Association	95
Ethnography of the German Colonists	96
Character, Appearance, Clothing, Dwellings, Foodstuffs	

Colonist Contributions in Time of War	99	List of Names of Settlers	192
Russo-Turkish war of 1828, Crimean War 1853-56		Present Economic Situation	194
Names of Colonists Honored for Services	103	Church Buildings	195
Colonist Deputies at the Coronation of Alexander II	105	The Parish School	196
Part Two: <i>The Liebenthal District</i>		Diary of Events and Conditions	197
The Liebenthal District Land	109	Chronicle of Franzfeld	201
Map showing the Liebenthal Colonies	110	Map of Colony	202
The Liebenthal Colonies as at 1858-59	111	List of Names of Settlers	203
Lands, Taxes, Revenue from Rents, Orphan Guardianship		Present Economic Situation	205
Funds, Savings Bank, Religious Census, Schools, House		History of Parish	206
Construction, Accidents, Community Granaries, Medical		Succession of Parish Priests	208
Services, Crops, General Economic Situation, Breeding of		Church Buildings	212
Cattle and Sheep, Forestry and Horticulture, Litigation		The Parish School	214
Chronicle of Kleinliebenthal	127	Priests out of Franzfeld	215
List of Names of Settlers	129	Includes biography of Bishop Anton Zerr	
Present Economic Situation	131	Diary of Events and Conditions	223
History of the Parish	133	Table of Weights and Measures	239
Succession of Parish Priests	137	Map of Migration Routes from Germany to Russia	240
Church Buildings	142		
Parish Finances and Vital Statistics	149		
The Parish School and Names of Teachers	151		
Priests out of Kleinliebenthal	153		
Diary of Events and Conditions	156		
Chronicle of Josephstal	167		
Map of the Colony	169		
List of Names of Settlers	170		
Present Economic Situation	172		
History of Parish	173		
Succession of the Parish Priests	176		
Church Buildings	183		
The Parish School	184		
Priests out of Josephstal	184		
Diary of Events and Conditions	186		
Chronicle of Mariental	191		

Foreword to the Second Edition

Dr. Becker's translation of the first volume of Keller has now been out of print for some time, but inquiries for it are still frequent. In view of this, but mainly because of the basic importance of this work, the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, with Dr. Becker's permission, decided to re-print this translation. We offer it herewith to the many members of our Society who are interested in this pioneer work on the Black Sea Germans.

Although it was written primarily for the people of the Liebental district, near Odessa, who were celebrating their centennial in 1904, Father Keller's first volume has information of interest to all Black Sea Germans. It provides a description of the geographical features of the region; quotes a lengthy extract from Tsar Alexander's decree of 1804 regarding foreign immigration to the region; gives a list of *all* the German mother colonies, Lutheran, Catholic, Mennonite and Separatist, founded there from 1787 to 1852; describes the administrative arrangements made for their government; gives biographies of some of the leading personalities among the early administrators appointed by the Tsar; and outlines the regulations issued by the central government for the guidance of both administrators and colonists. It describes as well the progress in education, agriculture, industry and trade, and the part played by the Black Sea colonists (in a non-combatant capacity) in the Russo-Turkish War of 1828 and the Crimean War of 1853-56. Of special interest to descendants of Catholic colonists is a section on the spiritual administration of Black Sea Catholics before the formation of the Diocese of Tiraspol in 1856.

For the Liebental district specifically there is a section on all the colonies of the district, Lutheran and Catholic, with interesting statistics for the year 1858. Finally, for the four Catholic colonies of this district, Kleinliebental, Josephstal, Mariental and Franzfeld, there is an account of their hundred-year history, including for each village a list of the founding families, biographies of the parish priests who served them, and a year-by-year chronicle of events through the century.

The many descendants of Black Sea Germans in the United States and Canada owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Becker for making this translation available to us. He translated and published this work as a labor of love, at a time (in 1968) when it was still far from clear that our people were really interested in the history of their forefathers in Russia. As the growth of our Society clearly demonstrates, interest in this history is growing at an accelerating

rate. There is therefore no doubt that Dr. Becker's pioneer work will receive increasing attention and appreciation in the years to come.

We have taken advantage of this reprinting of the translation to correct typographical and other errors that have been found in the first edition. We have also revised the wording of a number of passages that readers have found somewhat obscure.

Adam Giesinger
President, American Historical
Society of Germans from Russia

Foreword to the First Edition

In translating and publishing *German Colonies In South Russia*, Anthony Becker has performed a valuable service not only to descendants of German migrants to Western Canada but to the history of this country as a whole. The original book was written by Rev. Conrad Keller, and published in Odessa, Russia in 1904. It outlines the culture of those early migrants during the period 1804 to 1904 as well as detailed chronicles of the colonies of Kleinliebenthal, Josephstal, Marienthal and Franzfeld, along with names of the original settlers. Many German migrants to Western Canada, particularly Saskatchewan, came from these colonies.

The book is extremely rare. Indeed, one academic microfilm company searched the University of Michigan catalogues, the United States Library of Congress catalogues, the Cumulative Book Index, the British Museum and the Keyser Bücher Lexikon, for a copy or even a trace of 'German Colonies in South Russia,' with no success. It was by chance that Dr. Becker, while carrying out literary and historic research for an article on his own colony, St. Josephs, located 18 miles east of Regina, came upon Mr. John Bichel of Macklin, Sask. who had an old copy of the book. Mr. Bichel was good enough to lend the copy to Dr. Becker who, with the help of his friends, spent over 2 years of spare time translating it into English. This extremely rare book has now been made available through Dr. Becker's industry and generosity to the children and grandchildren and to generations to come who trace their origins back to the Russian colonies.

The place names, weights and measures have been left in the original spelling. The reader can find the approximate equivalents indexed at the end of the book. The wording of the translation, has been left as close to the original as possible.

It is indeed a valuable contribution to the story of a fine and sturdy race whose contribution to the advancement of Canada has been quite significant.

R. H. Macdonald,
Executive Editor,
The Western Producer,
Saskatoon, Sask.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This translation would not have been possible without the help received from my many friends. I wish to thank Dr. E. Fieguth, Mr. R. P. Penner, and particularly Professor C. P. Brockett for his unstinting assistance. I also wish to thank Mrs. H. Reimer for her help with the many Germanised-Russian words. A special thanks is due the typists, Delores Hedlund and Monica Mollan for their patience and endurance, and to my wife for her help in proof reading.

The two maps in this book have been reproduced, with the kind permission of Dr. Karl Stumpp. The map showing the migration routes is from Dr. Stumpp's book "Die Russland Deutschen" ["The Russian Germans"]. This book is now available in English. The map showing the location of the colonies in South Russia is from Dr. Stumpp's personal file. Professor J. S. Height has kindly provided the plans for the colonies of Josephstal and Franzfeld.

A.B.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The purpose of this little book is to inform succeeding generations in a general way about the circumstances and the events of the founding of the first German settlements in South Russia and their gradual development since. Although no world-shaking events are recounted, there is, I believe, much of interest to all colonists in South Russia. The book gives them a historical-geographical survey of their new homeland, now grown so dear to them, from misty antiquity to the time of their forefathers' settlement in this region. It gives them information regarding the sad conditions under which their forefathers settled here, about the first accommodations provided for the settlers, about their relations with officialdom in the early years, and about persons who took an active and sympathetic interest in their weal and woe. In a word, the book gives a brief survey of the development of the German colonists in South Russia in the last 100 years. Detailed reports about the various aspects of the development I have reserved for future volumes.

To the Catholics of the Liebental district the appended chronicles bring more exact information about the life of their ancestors, especially in the first years of the settlements. If not everything described here is praiseworthy and exemplary, it is not my fault, for the sources in the archives force me to tell it as it was.

I have not included in this book the German colonies on the Volga and in other provinces of the Russian Empire, because it is my intention, when circumstances are more favorable and God restores me to health, to write separately about these. Nor have I included here the new colonies founded on bought land, because I do not have adequate information about them.

The circumstances under which this book was written, I must state openly, could not have been more unfavorable. Persons from whom I could have expected, according to accepted standards of behavior, obliging kindness, provided the greatest obstacles for me. As a result I was obliged to make many abridgements in the book and let it go out into the world with many defects. The most distressing features of the book are the many disfiguring typographical errors, which my kind readers can ascribe to the unfavorable conditions of this time. The frequent workers' strikes while the printing was in progress in Odessa and the shortage of experienced German typesetters exonerate the printer to some degree.

I must not fail on this occasion to express my warm thanks to all persons who helped to make this work possible. I am grateful above

all to Actual State Councillor Somow, who most graciously placed at my disposal for my work the Archive of the former Colonist Welfare Committee, and the Ministerial Councillor Müller, who gave me access to the Archive of the former South Russian General-Gouvernement. I also thank Professor von Stern and University Librarian Brun, the first of whom permitted me to use the library of the Society for History and Antiquities, and the latter the library of the New Russian University. Nor must I forget to give recognition to the services rendered to me by the community of Kleinliebental.

That this little book has many deficiencies and errors is well known to me. I therefore beg friends of the truth to point out to me without reservations and without diffidence any errors that they find and to give me their individual opinions of this work. It is only by united striving for truth and clarity that we shall succeed in presenting the history of the German colonists in Russia in its proper light. So, out you go, little book! out into the wide world. Tell the people that you are indeed a deficient creation, which saw the light of day in a difficult period, but that you can tell them many things about the old days and that you can announce to all Germans in the great and mighty (?) Russian Empire the memorable news: that they have now become a free people, enjoying equal rights with the natives, that they now have the right to develop their abilities, as bearers of civilization, in all directions, and as such to struggle and to strive in the new era for the first prize in the cultural development of the new Russia.

God grant that this may come about!

Odessa, November 23, 1905, on the feast of St. Clement.

The Author

The German Colonies in South Russia

1804 to 1904