

MY GREAT GRAND PARENTS

By Shirley A Pfeiferv

This story won honorable mention at the 2022 AHSGR annual convention.

My great grandfather, Johannes was born in the mid 1800s in Herzog Russia. In 1876, Johannes, his wife Susanna, and their children, along with his parents and their children departed from Saratov Russia on the SS MOSEL. They first arrived in New York and a month later settled in Herzog Kansas. In time, Johannes, his family, and his parents homesteaded northeast of Herzog. That homestead is still lived and farmed by the seventh generation.

Johannes was better known by his nickname-“Darhallaba”. He was given this name when he was a teenager. It was harvest time and all the manpower was needed in harvest the crops. Johannes only being a husky teenager was too strong to lie around the house. He was taken along as a harvest hand Bring equivalent to one half of a man, this is how the nickname came about.

In 1910, four years after Susanna past away, Johannes accompanied a good friend to Russia. The man was called a “kuppelmann” (German) or a matchmaker. A kuppelmann is someone who finds a suitable marriage partner for other people, or who arranges marriages for others. Here in Russia Johannes met and married Catherine. They returned to America with her son from a previous marriage. Catherine was know to say this about her husbands- first one was always sick, the second was poor, and the third, Johannes was wealthy, but stingy.