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The Bukovina Germans in Kansas: A 200 Year History of the Lutheran Swabians

Irmgard Hein Ellingson
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Fort Hays State University

Ethnic Heritage Studies

***The Bukovina Germans in Kansas:
A 200 Year History
of the Lutheran Swabians
by
Irmgard Hein Ellingson***

DECEMBER 1987

No. 6

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Irmgard Hein Ellingson

THE BUKOVINA GERMANS IN KANSAS:

A 200 YEAR HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN SWABIANS

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PREFACE

Since its inception nearly a decade ago, the Ethnic Heritage Studies Project at Fort Hays State University has been instrumental in a variety of activities directed towards preserving the ethnic heritage of the various immigrant groups who settled the Great Plains. While earlier publications in this series concentrated on memoirs of individual pioneers or on studies of numerically larger groups, Irmgard Hein Ellingson's account focuses on a relatively unknown group of settlers in the area around Ellis, Kansas. These settlers, frequently (and mistakenly) labelled "Austrians," were in fact German colonists from Bukovina, a region of present-day Romania.

Ellingson's account is written from the perspective of her role as a Lutheran pastor's wife. In that role she developed an interest in the cultural and ethnic background of her husband's parishioners as well as in the development of the Lutheran churches in the area. Obviously, the author spent a considerable amount of time and effort in compiling the data and the information which form the basis of her account. While her work was principally written for the Bukovina-Germans of the Ellis area, her observations, especially her utilization of oral interviews with the descendants of Bukovina colonists, should be appreciated by anyone with an interest in the history of this region.

As with all other issues of this series, the Department of History provided typing services and other clerical assistance. The editors offered suggestions and comments but kept editorial changes to a minimum.

Helmut J. Schmeller, Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.	.vi
I. BUKOVINA: ITS HISTORY AND ITS GERMAN SETTLERS . .	1
II. THE GERMANS IN BUKOVINA	7
III. 100 YEARS IN KANSAS.	.19
IV. LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN THE ELLIS, KANSAS AREA. . .	.56
V. WHAT HAPPENED TO BUKOVINA?	.79
Appendices A-G.	88
Illustrations and Maps.	.100
Bibliography.	.105

INTRODUCTION

The term "Bukovina-Germans" refers to German Swabian, Bohemian, and Zipser emigrants who settled in Bukovina, a southeastern region of Austria-Hungary two hundred years ago. After a century of farming in Bukovina, Swabian Lutherans from Illischestie and Tereblestie and Catholic Bohemians from Fürstenthal and Buchenhain (Poiana-Mikuli) found new land and new opportunity in northwestern Ellis, eastern Trego, and southwestern Rooks counties in western Kansas.

The Bukovina-Germans in Kansas share a consciousness of kind, or a sense of common origin. Their group- and self-identification is based on their roots in southwestern Germany and has been strongly impacted by the generations spent in Bukovina and Kansas, making them a unique people in contemporary society.

The study's intention is to share the 200 year story of Kansas' Bukovina-Germans, providing a basis upon which today's Bukovina-Germans can come to understand and appreciate a heritage that has remained largely ignored. Although available information indicates that nationality continues to be extremely important in American social structure, no time or money has been spent upon the study of the Bukovina Germans of Kansas. Although they have been able to preserve their unique identity to date, their story has not been recorded and is in danger of being lost. The heritage and history of this group needs to be preserved.

Such preservation work requires more than genealogy. In an important sense, what a person is, is his or her history. This is also true of groups of people within a society. It is important to ask who the Bukovina-Germans were and who they are. Where and how did they once live? What is their present situation? Why did they emigrate from Germany two hundred

years ago and why was there another emigration one hundred years later from Bukovina? What is their relationship to Bukovina-Germans in other nations, and what is their role in contemporary American society?

The religion of the Lutheran German emigrants from Bukovina to Kansas on whom this study focuses, has been an important factor in binding together the community of immigrants and descendants of immigrants as they adjusted to life in a new and strange land. By maintaining close social and family ties through the two Lutheran churches in the Ellis area, the assimilation of the people into American society has been slowed, while within their churches, the people have found and continue to find a means of self-definition and an understanding of their position within a large and diverse society. Religion serves an ethnic as well as a spiritual purpose for these people; thus the word "ethnic" cannot be limited to the sharing of a nation or place of origin but must also recognize differences in religious affiliation. Therefore, the stories of Swabian Lutherans and of Bohemian Catholics, who each left Bukovina in the late 1800s, have developed separately and the St. John and Christ Lutheran Churches of the Ellis area were and remain a unique Christian presence in predominately Volga-German, Catholic, Ellis County.

Martin Marty, a professor of the history of modern Christianity at the University of Chicago and associate editor of The Christian Century, has said that "history is locating present-day people in their flow of past lives."* It is urgent that the Bukovina-Germans of Kansas become aware of their history and its impact upon their daily lives by preserving personal memories as well as the oral traditions of parents and grandparents. They need to recognize that their unique tradition has been shaped by their ancestors and transmitted through the generations, and that this tradition continues to be a part of them today. In learning about the past, absorbing its spirit, and preserving its messages, their lives can be enriched in a manner which cannot be recreated artificially or found by searching for it in our own world.

In learning about our ancestors, a deeper awareness of self and society begins to grow and develop. I present my work as a tool towards those goals.

Since much of my work has been based upon interviews and unpublished materials (all of which are listed in the bibliography), the opinions and perspectives presented in this book are my own and I accept responsibility for them.

June 1987

Irmgard Hein Ellingson

*Joan Chittister and Martin Marty, Faith and Ferment: An Interdisciplinary Study of Christian Beliefs and Practices (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983), 168.

CHAPTER I

BUKOVINA: ITS HISTORY AND ITS GERMAN SETTLERS

The land Bukovina, once an autonomous dukedom in the Hapsburgs' Austrian Empire, lies on the outer eastern curve of the Carpathian mountains in southeastern Europe. Without any natural geographic boundaries, it therefore lacks any of the prerequisites necessary for an independent national existence. Its history is one of war, of changing governmental allegiances, of shifting political alignments, but also of coexisting and cooperating ethnic groups.

The early recorded history of the region begins when the Cuman Tatar empire disintegrated during the thirteenth century. After 1514, this area formed the strategically important border of the principality of Moldavia, a vassal state of the Turkish Empire. Austria annexed the region by the Convention of Constantinople in 1775 and planned to use the territory as a bridge linking its provinces of Transylvania and Galicia, the latter having been acquired in 1772 during the Partition of Poland. Austria's Major General Baron von Spleny, who led the forces which occupied this portion of Moldavia, was the first military governor (1774-1778) of what was called "Austrian Moldavia." His successor, General Karl Baron von Enzenberg, renamed the land "Bukovina," which means "Beech-land."¹

At the time of its incorporation into the Austrian Empire, Bukovina was inhabited by only about six persons per square mile. For the most part, these people were poor peasants and shepherds. But the population of Bukovina grew rapidly during the five years following its annexation by Austria. Poles, Ukrainians, Romanians, and Jews came voluntarily and at no cost to the government in Vienna, attracted to Bukovina by its religious toleration and its relaxed feudal obligations. Early during this period of history, Bukovina acquired a multinational

character, which later earned it the title "Europe in miniature."²

Maria Theresa, the Austrian empress, began active recruitment of colonists whom she expected to facilitate economic development and to aid in defending the area from any external aggressors. German farmers, as well as Serbs, Romanians, Croatians, and Slovaks, were invited by her to settle in Bukovina, and Maria Theresa's son and successor, Joseph II, extended this colonization program. They sent their agents to the German states of the Holy Roman Empire to recruit able-bodied, middle-aged, healthy farmers who could prove the possession of at least 100 guilders and to offer benefits to potential colonists.³ Joseph II published the Patent of Toleration in 1780 and the Patent of Settlement in 1782, promising to eligible immigrants such benefits as free transportation from Vienna to a point of destination in the Hapsburg Empire, a house which had a garden, fields and draft animals with it, exemption from taxation for the first ten years of residence in the empire, exemption from military service for the eldest son of each immigrant family, and complete freedom of conscience and of religion.

These emigrants were peasants who owned no land, had to share their crops with aristocratic landholders, and had to pay heavy taxes to the absolutist monarchs whose personal property they literally were; at any time there was the real possibility that their prince might sell them into bondage or military service. The Holy Roman Empire had been devastated by war and famine, and the exhausted soil could not feed the growing population. The ongoing struggle between Catholics and Protestants confused the pious peasants, whose religious affiliations were not determined by their own beliefs but rather by the whims of their monarchs. By emigrating, the peasants hoped to escape these troubles.⁴

They could not simply walk away from their homes, however. In one place, Birkenfeld, where serfdom continued until 1793, a person desiring to emigrate had to pay ten percent of his assessed value, plus an additional two percent fee to his

ruler as compensation for the loss of the monarch's tax revenue.⁵ An emigrant also had to finance his journey, and that of his family if he had one, from his place of departure to Vienna, and he had to be able to pay for any incidental expenses during the fifty- to sixty-day trip.

The Germans who went to Bukovina came from a wide area, spreading from Lake Constance in Southern Germany to Holland. There were three distinct regions from which immigration to Bukovina took place: (1) southwestern Germany, which includes the Swabian regions of the Palatinate and Württemberg as well as the Rhineland; (2) German Bohemia; and (3) the Zips district in upper Hungary, which is now identified as Spis in Slovakia. These people are described as being primarily poor farm folk, craftsmen, and laborers who tended to settle in groups with others from their own homelands.⁶

The emigration routes used by the German colonists as they moved from Western to Eastern Europe were varied. Some went down the Danube river to Vienna on boats or large rafts which held as many as five hundred passengers and their baggage while others traveled overland beside the Danube.⁷ Still others traveled through Frankfurt on the Main and Prague on a route which bypassed Vienna. Lists of all immigrants were prepared in Vienna and at various points along the routes; these lists were then forwarded to Lemberg in Galicia, where persons wishing to go to Bukovina were registered.

The first German arrivals in Bukovina traveled from Lemberg to Czernowitz and eventually to Fratautz.⁸ Here they received directions to the already existing Romanian or Ukrainian communities in which they were to live. Each immigrant farmer received about twelve hectares of farm ground (a hectare equals approximately 2.4 acres) at a fixed permanent rate which was extended to future generations. Each family received wooden homes with the necessary outbuildings, livestock, farm implements, and advances on seed grain. In spite of these considerations, the farm families faced many difficulties. Homesteading in small numbers within existing communities hindered their progress; due to their meager numbers, the Germans were unable to establish German-language schools

and churches as they would have wished. Romanians allowed their cattle to wander freely upon the German farmers' winter wheat crop, thereby damaging and destroying the crops.

Johann Christian Dressler, a long-time teacher in Illischestie, wrote in his book, Chronik der Bukowiner Landgemeinde Illischestie, that 128 colonists were originally expected in Illischestie. The town's mayor issued an order on December 2, 1787, that wood and other building materials be gathered and brought to the village throughout the winter so that construction of homes for the colonists could begin in the spring of 1788. On July 4, 1788, the mayor received the news that the neighboring community, Itzkany, was not ready for the twenty families who were to arrive there; therefore ten of those twenty families were to be sent to Illischestie, where preparations for the colonists were more advanced. Ten families, consisting of a total of 29 men and 32 women, were therefore sent from Lipoveni to Illischestie on July 14 to be joined three weeks later by two more families. These twelve families occupied farms which for the next 150 years lined the "Zwölfergasse," or the "Street of the Twelve," in Illischestie, forming the nucleus of a closely-knit German community, which amicably coexisted with Romanian, Ukrainian, and Jewish neighbors.⁹

Recruitment of settlers from outside the Austrian Empire ceased by 1787 and before his death in 1790, Joseph II had rescinded his colonization programs for Bukovina and Galicia. Those who emigrated from German states after that time received no state sponsorship, no special privileges, and were totally dependent upon their own resources during all parts of their voyage.

It is estimated that a total of 1,750 to 2,080 persons came to Bukovina from German areas: 350 to 400 persons from Swabian regions, 300 to 350 from the Zips district, and 1,100 to 1,300 from Bohemia. Germans from within the Austrian Empire also immigrated to Bukovina; this raises the total estimated German population to between 3,000 - 4,000, about ten percent of the total number of immigrants.¹⁰



Die Zwölfergasse, or "Street of the 12", the main road of Illischestie, lined by the homes of Swabian-German farm families. (Photo by Max Zelgin, courtesy of Dr. Paula Tiefenthaler of the Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen, e. V.)

These immigrant groups remained distinct in Austria-Hungary in general and in Bukovina in particular, as the Hapsburg government expected its subjects, who were of a dozen nations and who spoke sixteen different languages, to live in mutual tolerance.

Notes

¹Rudolf Wagner, "Die Bukowina und ihre Völkergruppen," Kaindl Archiv 4: 18.

²Sophie A. Welisch, "The Bukovina-Germans during the Habsburg Period: Settlement, Interaction, Contributions," Immigrants and Minorities 5 (March 1986): 76.

³Michael Bresser, The Danube Swabians: Biography of a People from Inception to Dispersal (Philadelphia: Danube Swabian Association, n.d.), 4.

⁴Ibid., 6.

⁵Welisch, Immigrants and Minorities 5: 77.

⁶Carl Peterson and others, Handwörterbuch des Grenz- und Auslandsdeutschtums (Breslau: Ferdinand Hirt, 1933), 612-22.

⁷Bresser, The Danube Swabians, 4.

⁸Welisch, Immigrants and Minorities 5: 74. Spellings of place names which have been revised twice during the 20th century are those found in official sources during Austrian rule of Bukovina.

⁹The families who settled in Illischestie, Tereblestie, Fratautz, Satulmare, Milleschoutz-Badeutz, St. Onufry, Arbora, and Neu-Itzkany were mostly Germans from Swabia (see Appendix A). Their names, places of origin in Germany, places of settlement in Bukovina, and other detailed pieces of information have been preserved through the work of Dr. Franz Adolf Wickenhauser of the Hofkammer-Archiv in Vienna. The books are Quellen zur deutschen Siedlungsgeschichte in Südeuropa by Dr. Josef Kallbrunner and Dr. Franz Wilhelm (München: Verlag von Ernst Reinhardt, n.d.), Das Kolonisationswerk Josefs II in Galizien by Ludwig Schneider (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1939) and Chronik der Bukowiner Landgemeinde Illischestie by Johann Christian Dressler (Freilassing, Bavaria: Pannonia Verlag, 1960).

¹⁰Welisch, Immigrants and Minorities 5: 85.

¹¹Bresser, The Danube Swabians, 10.

CHAPTER II

THE GERMANS IN BUKOVINA

Because the German settlers arrived in Bukovina over a period of time and because there was no systematic plan for their settlement, their towns lacked the organizational arrangements of colonist villages in other parts of the Austrian empire. The German families settled along the winding roads of existing communities, beside Romanian, Ukrainian, and other ethnic neighbors; these diverse groups began to function together within their communities.

German farmers brought new concepts and improved techniques, such as iron plows, crop rotation, field drainage, and fertilization of fields with animal manure, to Bukovina. The German farmers' cooperatives for harvesting and for fruit pressing were new to their neighbors, as were the grain storage silos and the well-lit, well-ventilated barns.

The form of the earliest Swabian farmers' homes was determined in 1787 by the civil authorities, who adopted a form being used in southern Hungary. These were three-part homes, built with the gable facing the road (see diagrams of Illischestie and Tereblestie homes in Appendix H). Each house contained a living room, which included sleeping quarters, a kitchen with chimney and fireplace, and one additional room. The barn or stable was in some instances originally built directly onto the end of the house that was away from the road, but more frequently, the stable and the barn would share a roof. Due to Romanian influence some homes had supported porches for use as arbors and passageways. The farm yard contained a well equipped with a pulley or a pump, a corn crib for drying corn, but there were variations found in the different villages.

From birth until death, a Swabian's life was ordered by religious tradition, as well as by superstition, folklore, legends and proverbs. A folk legend told children that baby girls came from linden trees and baby boys from oak trees. A newborn's name was often selected from the Bible's Old Testament by the godmother and godfather. Spirits, fire, and such creatures as storks, swallows, and toads were respected; for example, no matter where a stork or swallow built its nest, the nest could not be destroyed or moved, and so most homes had stork nests at the top of their chimneys. A person who threatened the life of a frog was considered to be threatening the life of his or her own mother as well, in the spirit of Americans' "step on a crack, break your mother's back." Other creatures, such as bats, were considered to be evil. Farmers studied the phases of the moon when planning their work, planting crops and constructing homes at the time of the month when the new moon began to wax. Illnesses were often treated by an older woman who was well-versed in the use of medicinal herbs such as linden leaves, camomile, and wormwood. Such was the respect accorded to these women that their services, rather than those of doctors, were requested and rewarded.

A child generally attended school within his or her own village. Having received some formal schooling and having been instructed and confirmed in the Lutheran faith at the church school, Swabian boys and girls entered community life as adults. The next step for a young man was that he completed his military service to the Austrian empire. Then his relatives supervised his courtship process and eventually assisted his parents in arranging the terms of his marriage, which marked the young man's complete passage into adulthood, as no unmarried man, regardless of age, could hold any office or receive any special honors.

Weddings were generally scheduled for a Saturday or a Sunday, and the groomsmen and bridesmaids assisted with the necessary preparations, such as visiting the homes of relatives and friends to extend wedding invitations. On the wedding day, the bridal couple went to their parents' homes to ask for the parents' blessings upon the marriage, and from

their parental homes the bridal couple, their attendants, relatives and friends went to the church for the ceremony. A wedding dinner, which included haluschken (galusky) and apple strudel, was usually hosted by the bride's family.

Death was surrounded with respect, symbolisms, and portents. Black was considered to be the appropriate color for the deceased person's clothing but Swabians often placed a white cap or bonnet upon the head of a dead girl. Relatives and friends gathered at the home of the deceased to participate in the Todeswacht (literally translated as "death watch" or "wake") from the time of death until the funeral, which was held on the third day following death. Attendance at the Todeswacht took precedence over any and all other activities, as a token of respect to the deceased and his/her family. On the day of the funeral, family and friends accompanied the body of the deceased to the church and from there to the cemetery, singing hymns as they walked.

The villages of Illischestie, Deutsch Alt-Fratautz, Neuitzkany, Arbora, Milleschouz-Badeutz, Satulmare, Tereblestie, and Rosch, located on the plains east of the Carpathian mountains, received evangelical (hereafter referred to as Lutheran) German populations which eventually numbered three times the original population. Almost all Swabians who emigrated to Bukovina were Lutheran, as were two-thirds of the Zipsers, but as a whole, only about a third of Bukovina's Germans were Lutheran.

The majority, or two-thirds, of Bukovina's German population was Roman Catholic. The total Roman Catholic community in the region included Poles and Hungarians as well as Germans, and as a whole, Roman Catholics were about ten per cent of the population. Catholics lived throughout Bukovina, but in villages colonized by the German Bohemians, nearly everyone was Catholic. The priests were usually Polish and unfamiliar with German language and traditions, and they attempted to bring Polish influence into the German Catholics' lives. According to some sources, since the German Catholics were more threatened by German Protestants than by Polish priests, marriages

of Catholics who were of different ethnic backgrounds frequently occurred. "Mixed marriages" happened only when the religion was the same as "it involved less inner conflict for a simple (German) farm hand to marry a Catholic Pole than a Protestant German."¹

Josef II had promised freedom of religion to colonists in the 1781 Patent of Toleration, but the Catholic Church was supported by the government, which built the churches, furnished them, endowed them with land, and made tithing mandatory. The church, in turn, was responsible for the schooling of children.²

Protestants were granted the "private exercise" of their religion by the terms of the 1781 Patent of Toleration. Groups of 100 families or 500 persons were permitted to erect churches without spires and school houses at their expense and could call their own pastors and teachers, but the government stipulated that all official acts of such groups had to be reported and payment made to the Catholic priest of the parish.³ Since Protestant churches and related church schools did not receive any state assistance as did the Catholics, the impoverished Protestant Swabians were dependent upon their own limited resources for the payment of teachers' and pastors' salaries, for the construction and maintenance of buildings, for the purchase of school supplies, library materials, heating fuels, and other necessities. The Gustavus Adolphus Foundation (1832) and the Evangelical Society of Gustavus Adolphus Foundation (1841), founded in Leipzig, financially assisted the church work in places like Bukovina, where Lutherans lived among people of other confessions.⁴

Religious liberty had been granted by Emperor Franz Joseph in an 1861 edict and the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of Austria was formed. It was administered by the Imperial-Royal Church Government, appointed by the emperor and located in Vienna, which divided the Lutheran parishes into conferences and districts under the supervision of seniors and superintendents.⁵ The regional superintendent for Bukovina and Galicia was stationed in Biala, Galicia, and under this

person's jurisdiction eventually were the eleven parishes, twenty-six affiliated communities, and missionary stations, sixteen schools, and 21,395 parishioners of Bukovina (see Appendix B). After Bukovina was ceded to Romania, the Lutheran parishes passed to the supervision of the Siebenbürgen Synod, which was located in Transylvania.

Many religions did in fact co-exist with no serious difficulty in multinational Bukovina. While the Catholic church was a privileged institution, no one was hindered from worshipping as he or she chose. The Protestants did manage to build and to maintain their churches and schools, as described above, while needs of the Orthodox people were met by their church's financially sound religious foundation. Sects within Orthodoxy and Protestantism were accorded freedom of religion, as were Jews of various nations. Each person's religious preference was respected, and no church attempted to convert a person of another faith.

In 1774, when Austria obtained Bukovina, there were only two schools in the entire region. Empress Maria Theresa immediately decreed school reform measures for her entire empire, so that the number of elementary schools began to increase. As stated above, the Catholic church was responsible for the schooling of children, although Protestant churches could operate schools if there were students and adequate funding. But a school law providing for compulsory religious instruction in all schools regardless of the pupil's religious affiliation) was adopted in 1869 and adversely affected the Protestant minority in the Catholic country although it was not uniformly enforced.⁶

Because of the number of ethnic groups within the Austrian Empire which used their own languages, the state provided instruction of all courses in one's native tongue, if a minimum of forty students of that nationality attended a school for three consecutive years.⁷ Illischestie, for example, offered parallel instruction of all courses in the Romanian and German languages. Since the Greek Orthodox schools were operated under the sole jurisdiction of that

church, they were exempted from the requirements to provide parallel instruction in the students' various native tongues.

To obtain an education beyond one's village school was difficult. For the fifty years, from 1808 until 1858, there was only one secondary school, similar to a U.S. high school, in all of Bukovina. As the school system grew and developed, many teachers from Germany went to Bukovina and virtually dominated higher education. Bukovina's first and only university, the Franz Joseph University in Czernowitz, opened in 1874 and offered instruction in its schools of law, philosophy, and theology. Primarily a German language institution it furthered the Westernization of Bukovina by raising the people's material and cultural standards and offering higher education to students who would not have been able to attend universities elsewhere.⁸



The family of Adam and Marie (Hofmann) Schönthaler as photographed in 1896. Standing (left to right) are Louise, Johanna (Jennie), Wendell, Joseph, Frederick, Adam (Ed). Seated are Marie, who is holding John, and Adam. Standing next to her father is Carolina (Carrie). Carrie and John were born in the United States; other family members were all born in Illisches-tie. (Photo courtesy of Elvira Dubach and August and Edna Schonthaler).



Peter Hofmann with his wife and daughter Christina in a pre-World War I photo taken in Illischestie. The Hofmanns were the parents of Mrs. Adam (Marie) Schönthaler, Mrs. Wendell (Louise) Zachman, and Friedrich Hofmann. (Photo courtesy of August and Edna Schonthaler).

The typical Swabian farm family in Bukovina was sustained in daily life by two social institutions: the extended family and the church to which the family belonged. These two institutions shaped moral values, maintained tradition, and provided entertainment and recreation. Emma Ast Hoffman was born in Illischestie in 1898, and when she was fourteen years old, she came to the Ellis, Kansas, area. Her memories of Illischestie are memories of family, church, and school.

In a 1985 interview, she recalled that the land was level around Illischestie, with trees and flowers. When one

went north to Brasca, it got hillier. "But we didn't visit much outside of our town," she added, "since most of our relatives and friends were right there in Illischestie."

Six children were in Emma's family; five were born in Illischestie and one in Kansas. Her parents, Jakob and Anna (Keller) Ast, and her Ast grandparents shared a home, as she explained. "We lived in one part of the house, and we lived in the other, so we were with them a lot. My grandmother was wonderful. They were all strict, though -- parents, grandparents, all -- we were raised strict, there was no question about it. My father was a shoe maker who had three or four men working for him, and my mother cooked all of their meals for all of them."

As the oldest child in her family, Emma had chores to do at home. "We swept our yards every day, and I helped with the milking," she said. "But before we milked a cow, we had to get a bucket of water and wash everything on the cow's udder before we ever set the pail for the milk under there."

Emma's grandfather had an orchard. After the family had used as much of the fruit as they needed, a contractor was hired to come in and pick the remaining fruit, which was then sold. The Asts had their own bees and honey, chickens, and pigs.

Potatoes were used in many different ways, and so lots of potatoes were planted, according to Emma. "We had a lot of potatoes, and we children would help to dig them. Then they would make a big pile of potatoes, dig a big ditch around them, and fill the ditch with straw. Then the potatoes were covered with straw as a protection against the winter weather. The reason they made the ditch was to let the air in, they said, and then when bad weather came, it couldn't get to the potatoes. My folks had a big cooker, which was a great big thing that held three or four bushels or more. Under it, a big fire would be lit, and that would cook the pot's contents. Potatoes were cooked in it, but they had to be so clean before being put in there. The shorts would be taken out and made into a slop, and that's what our pigs were

fed. But those potatoes had to be clean! I remember Mother used to say, 'Die müssen sauber sein!' ('They have got to be clean!')."

Emma also described the procedure by which her grandmother and mother made pear jelly. "The jelly was made in a big kettle with long sticks fixed so that you could stir the stuff. That jelly would cook all night with a fire underneath it, and when it was stiff, we would take it outside to cool it. Then we made it into little cakes, dried them in the sun, and stored them in the Speicher, upstairs where we kept our winter foods. Of course, we had plum jelly and other things too, because of all that was grown in Grandfather's orchard."

Emma remembered that the Romanian (Orthodox), Catholic, and Lutheran churches in Illischestie were all on the west side of town, close to one another. When asked how the Lutheran worship services in Illischestie compared to those in Ellis, she replied, "Our service at Lutheran church was about as long as it is here, about an hour, but the pastor wore a robe that was all black, with some kind of white around the neck. I don't recall that we had Sunday School or evening services or a youth group. I didn't belong to anything like that."



The "Romanian," or Orthodox, church in Illischestie. (Photo by Max Zelgin, courtesy of Dr. Paula Tiefenthaler of the Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen, e. V.)



The Evangelical (Lutheran) School and Church in Illischestie. (Photo by Max Zelgin, courtesy of Dr. Paula Tiefenthaler of the Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen, e.V.)

A significant difference between the Lutheran churches which Emma attended in Illischestie and in Ellis was the fact that, unlike the Ellis churches, the Illischestie church had its own school.

"Our day-to-day school was operated by our Lutheran church," said Emma, "and our teacher, the school leader, lived right beside the school and the church. I don't know if that

was part of the pay, but that was the way that they had it. When we got older, we always went for half a day to the confirmation school at church. We had about sixty of us that went to the same class. Our minister, Immanuel Gorgon, was very strict, and we had to memorize everything - Bible verses, hymns, everything. And was he strict! One day in confirmation school, the boys were naughty and didn't know their lesson. He was so angry that he took the Bible and threw it down and sent us home. 'Geht nach Hause!' ('Go home!'), he said. The folks didn't like it that he threw the Bible though. That wasn't the proper way."

Emma was confirmed in the Illischestie Lutheran church shortly before her fourteenth birthday, in March, 1912. "On the day of our confirmation we were asked questions in front of the church members," she reminisced. "We students sat on one side of the church and the members on the other, and the minister stood in front of the church and asked the questions, just like they used to do over here for confirmation. Of course, there were so many of us - they just asked those that did real good, so that no one would get embarrassed." In the class with her were John Armbruster and Joe Sauer, both of whom also came to the Ellis area.

The German people who lived in Bukovina were not wealthy by any means, nor were they a privileged part of society. As families grew larger and as farms were distributed between family members over the generations, less and less land was available to support the farm families. The average German farmer owned very little land, and although the average farmer supplemented his family's income by engaging in some kind of craft or trade, the typical family lived in what contemporary people would certainly consider to be poverty. Economic prospects had deteriorated so much that by 1880 resettlement and emigration were necessary for many families. Whether they immigrated to other countries or remained in Bukovina, family and church continued to be the foundations of the Swabian Lutherans' lives.

Notes

¹Bresser, The Danube Swabians, 11; Welisch, Immigrants and Minorities 5: 94.

²Bresser, 8.

³The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, 1965 ed., vol. 1, 156.

⁴Ibid., 700-701.

⁵Ibid., 156.

⁶Ibid.; Welisch, 88.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., 90.

CHAPTER III

100 YEARS IN KANSAS

The Immigrants

Swabians began to move to different parts of Bukovina, to neighboring Bessarabia, Romania, or Hungary, and to the South and North American nations of Brazil, Canada, and the United States, in the 1880s in search of farm land. Most of the Protestant Bukovina-Germans who came to the Ellis, Kansas, area were from the villages of Illischestie and Tereblestie. Johann Christian Dressler, an Illischestie schoolteacher, maintained a list of families and/or persons who emigrated from the village and, where possible, noted the destinations of the people. Based upon Dressler's work, St. John Lutheran Church (rural Ellis, Kansas) records, and private documents, a partial list of Illischestie family groups or individuals who settled in Kansas has been prepared (see Appendix C).

In a June 1985 interview, Minnie Zachman recalled that in preparation for immigration to the United States, her mother, Marie Wendling Keller, had a great deal of work to do. She spun yarn and then bleached it in the sun; she cleaned clothing on washboards and sewed new clothes. The clothing was then packed in mattress tickings. Adamine Keller added that her grandmother, Karoline Glass Zerfass, and other women had to bake bread and prepare all the food which the family would need during their journey. To immigrate to the United States required forethought and careful preparation.

An emigrant family boarded a train in their own or in a neighboring village and traveled to Berlin, Germany, and from there to an ocean port in northern Germany, where they

boarded ship for the trans-Atlantic journey. After arriving in an American port such as New York City or Galveston, Texas, the Bukovina-German emigrants boarded trains and traveled by rail directly to Ellis, a major depot on the Union Pacific line. There they would be met by friends or relatives who were prepared to share their own homes with the new arrivals until homes could be located or constructed.

Karoline Zerfass's daughter, Barbara Schönthaler, later said that Karoline had been quite ill during the trans-Atlantic trip. In fact, the family expected that she would die because she was unable to eat but they later thought that her survival was due to the beer which her husband Philipp had obtained for her on the upper deck. Family members were infested with lice during the trip, Barbara told her daughter, Adamine Keller, and were dirty when they finally left the boat.¹

Traveling on the same boat from Germany to Galveston, Texas, were Adam and Marie (Hofmann) Schönthaler and their children. From Galveston, the immigrants traveled north to St. Louis, Missouri, where they changed trains and went west to Ellis, Kansas. The Schönthalers' journey was interrupted in St. Joseph, Missouri, where another daughter, Karoline, was born.

Emma Ast Hoffman describes the journey which she experienced with her grandfather, Franz Keller, in 1911. "We were on the ship for ten days. It wasn't too bad: five days of wind and five days were nice! Oh, it was terrible! We went to New York and we had trouble there because I was a young foreigner without my parents, just with my Grossvater. They put us in what was called a Kessegarten, which was just like the holding places that they showed in the (1985) television movie about Ellis Island. That's just the way it was. We were drove in there, and they said, 'Macht euch weg,' which means 'Get out of the way.' And when they had us in there, they fed us spaghetti. My grandpa called it 'Fleurschier,' because you could blow through them. He didn't care for the stuff.

"Then our trouble started, because I was too young and because my grandpa wasn't my father. They said that they had to see proof that Grandpa would take care of me and that he would support me. Well, lo and behold, Grandpa had the deed to his property in his pocket, and he showed that. Then they let us go. See, Grandpa had been here before, bought land, and went back out to Bukovina to see his kids. One son, Michael, was still there then, as was my mother, Anna.

"Then we went by train to Ellis, and we were met at the depot by Otto and Pauline (Huber) Reich. They took us to Grandpa's farm where Grandma, Uncle John, and Aunt Minnie were waiting for us."²

Many stories have survived concerning the Bukovina-Germans' arrival in Ellis. Most families can say that one or more ancestors were so unfavorably impressed with the brown windswept Kansas land that if adequate funds had been in their possession, those ancestors would have immediately returned to the green, forested, hilly plains of Bukovina. Often a woman was so overwrought upon stepping from the train in Ellis and seeing the local landscape that she fell to the ground and wept with fear and frustration. Karoline Zerfass, whose illness on the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was described above, was one such woman. As the Zerfass family arrived in Ellis in June 1893, they saw that the land was so dry that there were no leaves on the trees. In a March 1987 interview, Adamine Keller said that her grandmother Karoline "rolled on the ground and cried and cried and cried. 'Why did we leave our good home?' she wept. 'What are we going to do here? We're going to starve!'"

The arriving emigrants' possessions, such as they might have been, were loaded into their hosts' wagon, and the entire party climbed into the wagon for the ride to the host family's home. After spending as much as a month traveling by rail and by boat, the travelers were weary but more new experiences and sights challenged their senses as they jolted across as many as twenty miles of uneven prairie in the Ellis area, winding through ravines and canyons, and fording creeks or

the Saline River, as they made their way toward sod dugouts or tiny houses on the Kansas farmsteads.

Sod dugouts were homes scraped out of hillsides or embankments near a ready source of water. They contained no more than two or three rooms, one or two windows, and a door and were frequently invaded by rodents and reptiles. As the Bukovina-Germans became settled in their new situation in Kansas, they abandoned the soddies and moved into rock or wood frame homes. Homes which were built from native rock were popular choices at the beginning of the twentieth century. Under the direction of local artisans such as the Armbrister brothers, Christian and Henry, and Henry Schutte, rock was chopped and shaped and then laid into trenches outlining the house's perimeter. The rocks were then plastered into position with mud, and on the interior the rocks would be covered with a lime plaster as well, before being white-washed.

Some rock homes were single story houses, as was the three-room rock house on Franz and Marie Keller's homestead, which once stood just south of the Ellis-Rooks county line. The Kellers' daughter, Minnie Zachman, recalled in a 1985 interview that the rooms of the house were fairly large but that there were no closets. Boards with projecting nails were fastened to the walls and upon these nails, clothing was hung. Heat for the home came from burning cattle chips which were gathered by the younger children. Other rock homes were two-story, four-room structures, such as the one occupied by John and Emma Hoffman after their marriage in 1915. Emma commented that she never would have needed a modern freezer in that home, as it was so cold on winter mornings that their bread was always frozen.

A few rock homes which were built in the early 1900s are still standing but are falling into disrepair. The Wilhelm and Klara Homburg home was built in 1904 when they had moved to his farm from her homestead; it was later occupied by their son August and his family before being abandoned. Across the Ellis-Palco blacktop road from the Homburgs' home

is the rock home of the William and Christine Wendling family. About a mile north is Carl and Louise Kroeger's rock house, most recently occupied by the Elzie Shubert family. Carl cut the rock for his home and it was erected by August Schutte. One mile north and about a half mile east of the Kroeger house is John and Jacobina Zachman's rock home. Adam and Barbara Schönthaler's rock home in southern Rooks county, built in the first decade of this century, was later the home of William and Erma Tomasheck; although still in existence, it has been remodeled for use as a garage.

For some, the transition from sod dugout to a permanent home took a decade or longer. Philipp and Karoline Zerfass first lived in a dugout home south of the Saline River and later moved to Wilhelm and Ernst Homburg's soddy, one and a half miles north of St. John Lutheran Church. Wilhelm had married Katharina Huber and joined her upon her homestead northwest of the church, leaving brother Ernst to "batch" it alone in the soddy while farming with a cow and a blind mule or horse. Ernst decided to move into Ellis and work on the railroad section line, and the Zerfass family took over the place.

Philipp and Karoline moved their possessions in a spring wagon to the Homburg soddy. They drove along the creek bed as night fell, and all at once Karoline saw strange things, which appeared to be on fire, flying in the air. Her daughter Barbara later said that in fright, Karoline had cried out, "See, that's the devil! There it is! What are we doing in this country?" Apparently this was the family's first sighting of fireflies. The next morning, the family went outdoors and were amazed to see a great number of snakes slithering around the yard. Thankfully none had gotten into the house during the previous evening's unloading. Karoline then faced the challenge of preparing meals upon an old cookstove which had been left in the house. The stove had a hole in it and was supposedly unusable, but Karoline plastered the hole with wet clay so that she would be able to bake bread in the stove.

The immigrants were very poor and were without any cash resources. When the Zerfass family lived at the Homburg place, their neighbors just to the west were the William Wendling family and the two families frequently went to Ellis together. Drunken railroaders staying at the Ellis Hotel would throw their shoes and clothing out of the windows and the impoverished families went to the hotel to see if any repairable shoes could be found, as Adamine Keller explained in a March 1987 interview.

In spite of their poverty, there were still some things which certain people refused to sacrifice. For example, Marie Hoffman Schönthal^{er} was one who insisted that family portraits be periodically taken at a photographer's studio. At one time, Marie's son Adam and daughter-in-law Barbara came from their Rooks county farm to help with the harvest on a field just two or three miles from Ellis. Marie had previously told Barbara to make a new dress for the latter's baby girl, Adamine, and then, without telling anyone of their plans, Marie, Barbara, and Adamine went from the harvest field to Pearson's Studio in Ellis to have Adamine photographed in the new dress. Partially because of Marie Schönthal^{er}'s insistence, a number of pictures of her family and of her children's families were taken, and many are still in existence.

The Lutheran immigrants could not afford to have a church-affiliated school, as they had had in Bukovina, and so the children walked to whatever schools were in their neighborhoods. The Folscher school on the Rooks-Ellis county line was attended by Franz Keller's children and grandchildren, for example. The Armbrister and Aust children passed through the Günther ranch, on which three or four hundred head of cattle grazed, on their daily three or four mile walk to and from a school near the Wales post office on the Saline River, in Township 11 South, Range XIX West of Ellis county. The Star school four miles east of St. John Lutheran Church, the Goodscheck school near the Ellis-Trego county line, the Adair school in Trego County, seven miles east and a mile north of



Adam and Marie (Hofmann) Schönthaler (Photo
courtesy of Carolyn Keller Armbrister and August
and Edna Schonthaler)



The family of Adam and Marie (Hofmann) Schönthaler at about the time of World War I³

St. John were all attended by immigrant or first-generation Bukovina-German children until they reached their early teen years.

Thirteen or fourteen year old boys and girls left the rural public schools to attend the church's confirmation school. Because of the geographic distances which separated the Lutheran immigrants, it was virtually impossible for children to make a daily trip to the confirmation school at St. John, or later in Ellis. Some children boarded during the week with relatives or friends who lived in the church's neighborhood, and for a short period of time at the beginning of the century, Rev. F. W. Mensing traveled twice weekly to northern Ellis county, where he held classes in an abandoned farmhouse.

Confirmation school was not entirely religious in nature. By withdrawing children from the public schools, their common identity as German Lutherans was reinforced by teaching them to read and write the German language. The religious education classes, using the German language Bible, Luther's Small Catechism, Bible history book and hymnbook as texts, were conducted exclusively in the German language until World War I, when anti-German feeling necessitated the use of English for a few years. Unfortunately, their history and heritage as Bukovina-Germans was not part of their education, and gradually their particular identification as such was changed to a less accurate one, namely that of being "Österreichers," or Austrians, just as the Russian-Germans who had emigrated from the Volga River region became known locally as "Rooshians," or Russians.

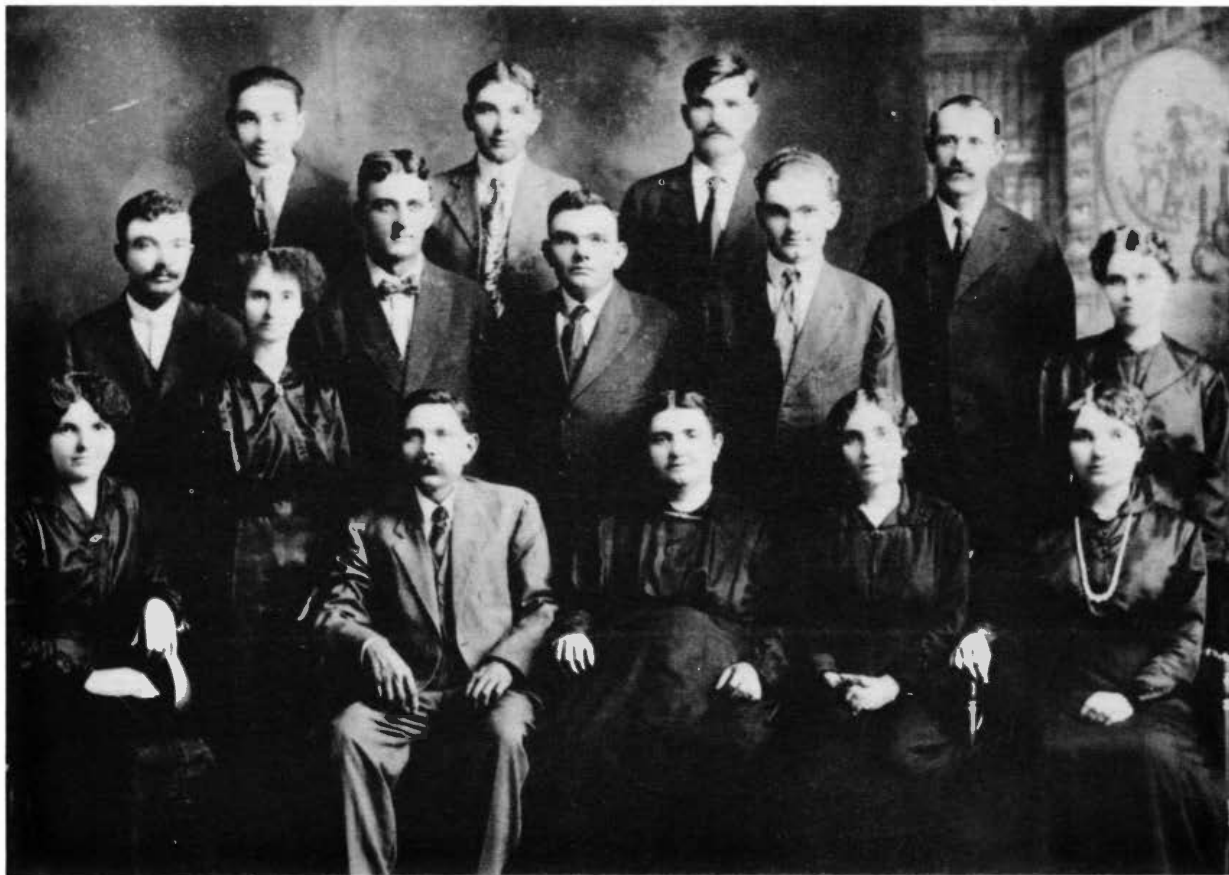
When a Lutheran child had completed his or her term in the confirmation school and had participated in the Rite of Confirmation, he or she rarely returned to the country school, much less to the high school of the district. After confirmation, the teenager worked at home or "worked out" for several years for people who needed help with domestic or farm chores. Life was not all work, however. Entire

families assembled to exchange news, to play games, or to sing and dance on Sunday afternoons and evenings and on holidays.

There are many people who remember the times when large extended families gathered for such purposes. Adamine Keller recalled in a 1987 interview that her grandparents, Philipp and Karoline Zerfas, had moved in the first decade of the twentieth century from the Homburg place to a farm on the north side of the Saline River. Children who visited overnight slept in what was called the "Kemmschen" (in standard German Kämmerchen, or little room). When Pelzenickel came to the Zerfases one Christmas season, some boys hid under the bed in his room, where Pelzenickel found them. He stuck his cane under there and poked one boy in the eye. "They got out of there in a hurry!" recalled Adamine.⁴

A favorite gathering place was the home of Wilhelm and Katharina Homburg who enjoyed entertaining guests. In the long summer afternoons, children could play ball in the Homburg's pasture, and in the evenings they played games in one room while their elders visited with one another in the next room. People who recall going to the Homburgs wonder how their parents and grandparents were able to carry on their own conversations over the young people's noises.

Sometimes dances would be held in the Homburg's barn, and here many courtships which resulted in the marriages of Lutheran boys and girls were conducted. Today's great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, people like John and Maria Homburg Aust, Minnie Keller Zachman, Emma Ast Hoffman, and Erma Wendling Tomashek, say that they "got together" with their respective spouses while attending family gatherings or dances at "the old Homburgs' place."



The family of Wilhelm and Katharina (Huber) Homburg at about the time of World War I.⁵

In the 1880s, Lutheran immigrants from German states came from Illinois to the Ellis area. The young Lutheran German men and women from the Kroeger, Hagen, Homburg, Huck, and other families married Lutheran men and women of Bukovina-German families and together the two immigrant groups established St. John Lutheran Church in 1897 and organized Ellis (later Christ) Lutheran Church in 1907.⁶

The German-speaking Lutherans of the Ellis-Palco-Zurich area were isolated, having little contact with the Volga-German Lutherans who lived in the WaKeeney and Russell areas until the mid-1900s. Socialization across confessional lines of Catholics and Lutherans from the same place of origin was limited to casual acquaintance.

The place where family and social ties received the most support was the church, where "the old language could be spoken without embarrassment. More importantly, old traditions and patterns of family life were upheld there, and the values of the old culture, as well as of the faith, were taught....The church became for many the guardian of those things from the old world which were still held dear."⁷ Many of the Lutheran immigrants from Bukovina and their descendants were regular in their worship attendance and made the weekly trip to church in a horse-drawn buggy or wagon regardless of adverse weather or poor roads.

Adamine Schonthaler Keller recalled in a 1987 interview that in her childhood, her family always attended Sunday and special services, even at night, although there were no lights on the buggy. "Now when I go out there (to St. John) and see all that dark, I say, 'How in the world did we drive out there with the horse and buggy in the night?'" On the way to or from church, her father would first wade across the Saline River by himself to see if there were any holes, and then wade back to lead the horses and the buggy with its occupants across the river, and Adamine noted that in the beginning years of this century, the Saline was in places a half mile or more wide, much wider than it is now.

Getting to church was a major undertaking, as Adamine Keller indicated above. During the winter, the Schonthalers and their neighbors who traveled to St. John heated bricks and put them in their buggies and then covered their bodies with feather tickings or, in more affluent times, with fur lap robes.

The Sunday trips were not dull, as apparently many settlers liked to reach high speeds on their rides to or from church. Adam and Barbara Schonthaler got to church fast after Adam purchased two fast western ponies. Later, when automobiles became available, some families still preferred horse-drawn buggies. Riding in a buggy, the Fred Wendling family, for example, could reach Christ Lutheran Church before Fred's brother, John Wendling, and family, who lived nearby and had an automobile. But the automobile proved to be irresistible, and the immigrants, including Adam Schonthaler and Franz Keller, bought cars as soon as they could afford them, as early as 1910-1915.

Adamine Schonthaler Keller tells about one of her family's early experiences with an automobile. "We always had to go to Grandma (Marie) Schonthaler's for dinner after church. We had to drive over there, and you know those big hills? It was as deep as the dam west of (St. John) church, and the track curved around to the top with two of those deep gullies back there. Well, we drove up there to Grandma's once, and then we started home. There were just ruts; there was no road....We were supposed to go through this field, because it was supposed to be shorter. We got out there a-ways, and the wheel grabbed and laid the car over....We had to get out, and Dad set the car down. [After that], then he went and took that car back."⁸

Weddings were an exciting event in the monotony of rural life. In a 1985 interview, Minnie Keller Zachman told about her wedding to Joseph Zachman. "It was April 10, 1913. It was snowing the day before or even that day! In the night, it was a blizzard! It was held where Joe lived, right across

the road from St. John church, and Pastor Mensing came over. There was a bunch of people; I guess, not too much. You know, it was bad weather even the next day. Some of my brothers, I think, didn't come. I went over there the day before in a buggy. Joe always said that it was Charley Kroeger, Kate's husband, that took us. Fred Fries and his wife, who was Joe's sister, stood up with us, and I think my sister Anna (Mrs. Jakob Ast) did too. I made my own dress, and my brother Fred's second wife helped me a little bit. There was no honeymoon or no nothing. We lived in the same house as Joe's mother and sister, but we was alone -- we had our own two rooms and they had two rooms."⁹

Thursdays were popular days for weddings, since if a couple was married on a Thursday, their silver anniversary would fall on a Sunday. On his birthday, Thursday, November 18, 1915, John Hoffman and his bride Emma Ast rode in an automobile owned by John's cousin, Adam Schonthalder, to St. John Lutheran Church for their wedding, were married by Rev. Kolb in an 11:00 a.m. ceremony, and then returned to Adam and Barbara Schonthalder's home for a wedding dinner attended by 100 to 150 guests.

Adamine Schonthalder Keller recalls that preparations for the Hoffmans' wedding dinner began on the Monday before the wedding. Zweibach, sei-ohre, and masurka were made for a Zubeis, or appetizer, to be served with a drink to the guests as they arrived for the dinner.¹⁰ Beef, and maybe pork, were butchered and then fried down or cooked in the oven, and galusky were cooked for the dinner. None of the guests were expected to bring food. In the evening a dance was held in the barn, and then, with no honeymoon or wedding trip, John and Emma went to an unheated home a few miles away and began to farm.

Emma's cousin, Emma Keller, was introduced to a German immigrant, Paul Holzhauer, by Emma Hoffman's parents. Emma Keller and Paul Holzhauer planned to be married at the home of her parents, Michael and Anna Keller, on a Thursday in February, 1916, but snow began to fall, and the wedding was

then postponed until Saturday. Guests had to drive their wagons over the fence-high snowbanks to attend, and the bride's cousin, John Aust, made the trip to St. John church to get Rev. Kolb, who entertained guests throughout the night by telling stories. Paul and Emma Holzhauer had no wedding trip or honeymoon, either, and Emma saw Paul's Rooks county home for the first time when she entered it as his bride after their wedding.

Some young people did not follow conventional paths into marriage. Two young men, for example, once came to St. John's annual Mission Festival in their buggies. Their girlfriends, who were daughters of Philipp and Karoline Zerfas, climbed into the buggies with them, and the couples eloped without anyone's knowledge. In the words of Karoline's granddaughter, "And you think Grandma didn't have headaches?"

Besides raising their own children, families often "took in" or adopted children whose parents had died. The children might be nieces, nephews, grandchildren, or just friends and usually remained until adulthood with the adopting families. Following the death of the Zerfases' daughter and son-in-law, Marie and Peter Tomasheck, one of their sons, Edgar, was raised by the Zerfas grandparents, and the other, William, grew up in the home of a maternal aunt and uncle, Adam and Barbara Schonthaler. Orphaned by the death of their parents, the Mai children, Kate, Caroline, Ed, and Bill were separated and raised in the home of friends and relatives. Kate was with the Günther family for a time, and later with the Shubert family; Caroline lived with a Müller family southeast of St. John Lutheran Church; Ed was raised by William and Christine Wendling; Bill was adopted by Otto and Pauline Reich. Sometimes an older brother or sister raised a sibling. John and Minnie Schaus, for example, shared their home with John's younger brother Joe. Although families were poor, they did not hesitate to share with these orphaned children.

Elderly parents and grandparents were not left alone, either. Charles and Louise Kroeger remained in their home as they grew older, and their sons and daughters-in-law, Lou,

Minnie, Charley, and Kate, lived with them. Franz and Marie Keller moved a house onto their son Fred's farm, and they ate meals with Fred's family. As already related, Joseph and Minnie Zachman occupied part of a house, and his widowed mother and sister lived in the other part.

When death came, it usually occurred at home, and the deceased was "laid out" on his or her own bed or in a coffin set up in the living room. People came to the home of the deceased to participate in the Todeswacht, when the body was viewed and condolences were extended to the family. The pastor came to the home to conduct a prayer service on the evening prior to the church funeral. To be asked to be a pall bearer meant that one was to help dig the grave for the burial. For example, when Johann Armbrister died in January, 1918, he was washed, dressed for burial, and placed in his coffin by his friends and neighbors, Jakob Ast, John Hoffman, and Johann Knieling. The Todeswacht was held in the Armbrister home prior to the funeral and burial at St. John Lutheran Church, and as pallbearers, John Hoffman and Johann Knieling dug Armbrister's grave.

No matter how long some of the immigrants lived in the United States, they maintained their ties to Bukovina by writing letters to friends and relatives who still lived there. The immigrants saved what money they could and sent it to those who wanted to emigrate but were even poorer than were those in Kansas. Packages with food stuffs, clothing, and fabric were sent to Bukovina whenever possible, from the time that the settlers arrived until the 1950s or 1960s, according to some people. That these items were needed and appreciated is evidenced by the fact that one young emigrant arrived in Ellis wearing a suit which Philipp Zerfas had sent in a package to Illischestie.

Some immigrants never became citizens of the United States. They did not know where to go to apply or what they would have to do in the process, and some who had made initial inquiries were so confused that they never completed their papers. Others, like Adam Schönthaler Sr., applied for their

naturalization papers soon after arriving, as one needed to have applied for U.S. citizenship in order to homestead.

The First Generation

The immigrants had originally homesteaded or rented land in locations where good water was readily available, and their children and grandchildren remained on these farm sites. Although the farm of John Zerfas is now abandoned, the well still produces water. The farm of Rudolph and Bernice Keller, which is presently occupied by a grandson and granddaughter-in-law, Danny and Kelley Keller, was the only farm in its neighborhood which had an adequate supply of water, supplied by a 100 foot pipe, 20 feet deep in the ground.

The farms of the first-generation Bukovina-Germans were about 160 acres or a quarter section per family in the 1920s and early 1930s. Crops raised included wheat, oats, barley and even corn, although the corn did not get to be any more than three or four feet tall. No one summer-fallowed their wheat ground. After harvest, if the ground was wet enough, farmers worked the soil with gang plows until the dirt was too dry to till and then went over the fields again with single or double disks. If a farmer did not finish working the ground, he planted wheat in the stubble of the previous crop. The man also tended the livestock, which would typically include six to eight horses, nine or ten cows, some chickens, at least one sow, and flocks of turkeys, ducks and geese.

Women and children were responsible for household chores, planting and tilling gardens, and preparing and serving meals. Women might take their children into the field when wheat was being cut, and while a man drove the team that was hitched onto the header box, a woman used the header to scratch wheat into the box.¹¹ An older child had the task of guiding the team, and younger children sat in corners of the box by the water jugs. For "leisure activities," the Bukovina-Germans

women raised flowers, sewed and mended clothing, crocheted and knitted.

A woman could expect to have at least four to six children, who were born with the assistance of female relatives unless an emergency called for a doctor to be present. Parents avoided discussion of pregnancy or childbirth when children were present, according to Bernie Zerfas. "When my youngest sister (Eileen) was born, I can remember Mother being large, but nothing was ever said about it....We had company that night and she sat there all evening and watched them play cards. After midnight, why, then it happened. We were just kind of naive about it....After Eileen was born, Dad and Aunt Louise talked at the table, that 'Well, that would have to be the last one.' But we weren't supposed to know what was going on."¹² For other women, childbirth was so easy that of them it was said, "they would have 'em, then get up and cook dinner for a crew of men."

The children who grew up in the 1920s and early 1930s walked to school in all kinds of weather, and when snow fell, they would have to remove their long underwear, cotton stockings, and overalls upon arrival at school, hanging those clothing items to dry near the big pot belly stove. Jelly bread, molasses bread, fried egg sandwiches, or sidemeat sandwiches, packed in molasses or syrup pails, were common school lunches in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Apples were a treat. "When we were fortunate enough to take an apple to school, and if there was snow on the ground, we'd save the apple until the way home," said Bernie Zerfas, "and then we'd eat snow with the apple to make it kind of like ice cream." Arriving home from school, the children would receive a snack of homemade "butter bread" and pickles to eat - one food in each hand.

"We would have starved to death if we wouldn't have had cows to milk and chickens," said Bernie Zerfas. "You'd take a can of cream and some eggs to town, and that's what you bought your groceries with." People bought cabbage to make into sauerkraut, and they made pickles in barrels or crocks.

Gardens produced beans, beets, cucumbers, carrots, parsnips, peas and potatoes. The housewives spent many hours in preserving fruits and vegetables, processing glass jars with glass caps and rubber rings in kettles of boiling water on woodburning or kerosene stoves.

Lutherans who were born in Bukovina and immigrated to Kansas as small children and those born in Kansas after their families had emigrated from Bukovina had few, if any, recollections of life in Europe. As they reached adulthood and married, their lives were similar to those of other Kansas farmers. However, as a group they remained isolated from their neighbors of other ethnic groups or of other religious faiths and they tended to marry other Lutheran Bukovina-Germans. The lives of Frank and Carrie Keller, Albert and Adamine Keller, and John and Maria Aust were similar to the lives of others of their background.

Carrie Wendling and Frank Keller were married in 1915. Their first home was four miles west of the farm where Carrie had been born. On this place, their oldest son Oscar was born, and then they moved to Trego County, just east of the Adair School, where six more children (one of whom died in infancy) were born. The Keller farmstead included locust and mulberry trees, a barn, chicken house, granary, brooder house, fruit and storm cellars, and a house with two screened porches. Meals were cooked on a woodburning stove which also heated the house's five rooms: kitchen, living room, and three bedrooms, all on one floor.

On the Keller farm, cream was separated from the milk by using an old crank separator, and then the cream was stored in a cellar or in a barrel within a well. They also had an ice cellar. "They'd go to the creek or to a pond, cut chunks of ice in the wintertime, put it in the cellar and fill the cellar with straw," said Irene Keller, and "then we took chunks of ice and put them in the wooden ice box to keep things cold, but what a mess if you let the pan under the ice box overflow from the melting ice."¹³ Bernie Zervas added that "it was a treat to go to the homes of people who had ice boxes."¹⁴

Adamine Schonthaler and Albert Keller (brother of Frank who is mentioned above) were married in 1924. "I wonder how we ever made it," she said. "We had two or three cows but not during the first years. We got married just before harvest - that was a dumb thing to do, [but] we wanted to get married in June. We moved in with my brother-in-law and sister-in-law, John A. and Anna B. Keller. We worked, and, gosh, we worked. Anna and I had lines of clothes to hang, and we used to rub on washboards til our fingers were raw. The water froze in the bucket in the winter. We all drank out of the same dipper. Now you think the world would come to an end if you drank out of someone else's cup. We got into our own place on the first of August, but before we moved in, one day I was over there cleaning. I looked out the window and saw big rats out there drinking from the tank," Adamine recalled in a 1987 interview. In spite of the dirt and the rats, Adamine, Albert, their daughter Esther, and their son Raymond lived on this farm, which was located three miles north and a mile east of St. John Lutheran Church, for ten years. After Albert's death in 1934, Adamine and her children moved to a home in Ellis, and the farm was occupied by Adamine's sister and brother-in-law, Mathilda and Edgar Zachman.

Jakob and Anna Keller Aust, who had immigrated to Kansas from Bukovina in 1912, moved from their farm on the Rooks-Ellis county line to Dr. Teale's farm four miles south of Palco, and from there into Palco. Jakob, who was a cobbler as well as a farmer, had purchased a shoe shop, which was located east of the city hall, from a relative. The Austs' son John took over the Teale farm from his parents when he married Maria Homburg, daughter of Wilhelm and Klara Homburg, in 1925, and that year, John's one-third share of the wheat crop produced on 150 acres at Teale's was 300 bushels.

Maria's parents offered to help John and Maria purchase three quarter-sections of ground and build a house on it. They accepted this offer, and the house was built in 1927. Because John was working on the house, he did not get his

fields worked in time, just managing to disk the fields prior to seeding wheat. They milked Jersey cows on this farm, and eventually had ten to twelve head of cattle. For a five-gallon can of cream taken to Ellis in the mid- to late 1920s, John might receive six dollars, and the eggs which the Austs sold averaged about ten cents per dozen. Maria worked in the house and in the garden and occasionally assisted John with such work as shocking feed. They remained on this farm until they retired in 1948, turning the farm over to their daughter and son-in-law, Adabelle and Ernest Zachman.

Although bumper crops of wheat were being produced in Kansas during the 1920s, these Bukovina-German farm families were poor. Elsewhere bathtub gin was being made, flappers were dancing the Charleston, and fortunes were being made on the stock market, but a Bukovina-German family in the Ellis area was fortunate if they could afford to receive the Capper's Weekly, said Bernie Zerfas. "The biggest thrill was when we got a phone and they'd give a line ring," he recalled in a 1987 interview. "You'd break a leg to get to the phone to hear what was going on."

Church attendance was important not only because it fulfilled the people's spiritual needs, but because it also provided opportunities to visit with friends and relatives. The people dressed in their best clothing, which was usually black, and included veils for women. Worship was a serious, sober experience, a time to reflect upon the death of God's only Son, Jesus Christ. In the words of Adamine Keller, "it was the sad time, the mourning time."¹⁵

After church, family ties were maintained by sharing Sunday dinners of potatoes, gravy, pork or beefs, puddings (frequently rice), and apple pastries such as hemetschwengers, pie or strudel.¹⁶ For years, Bernie Zerfas's parents and siblings brought their Sunday dinner to Ellis and ate at the home of the Zerfas grandparents, across the street from Christ Lutheran Church, after worship services. The home of Joseph and Minnie Zachman, across the road from St. John Lutheran Church, was where Zachman, Keller, Hoffman and other relatives

gathered for Sunday dinner. The families of Michael Irion and Charles Kroeger were connected by marriage and enjoyed socializing with one another. Minnie Irion Kroeger frequently prepared and served a noon meal of fried chicken, hot German potato salad, cream gravy, cabbage slaw, strudel and cake, after which the Irions would bring out their musical instruments and play for hours on end without any written music.

People found mutual support by frequently gathering in homes, at church, or at school box suppers or socials. "We'd always go visiting a lot," wrote Martha Armbrister in a 1985 letter, adding that "It sure is different now." Minnie Zachman agreed in a 1985 interview. "People visited around more then than they do now. We'd even go and stay overnight with friends or relatives."

The Second Generation

In the "Parish Notes" section of the first record book in existence at St. John Lutheran Church, Rev. Daniel Scholl described the "Dirty Thirties" as experienced by the children and grandchildren of Bukovina-German immigrants.

Great droughts, lack of moisture for the grain, and the Depression during the past years have caused great poverty among many members. In 1934, everything dried up, so that there wasn't even enough feed for the cattle. In the fall of 1934, the farmers were compelled to sell most of their cattle. The government bought most of these, and paid \$17 per head, young and old. In February, March, April, and May, 1935, we were plagued with severe sandstorms, which had never been seen by us during our lifetime. This caused us to call upon God and to place ourselves under his mighty hand.

At last the longed-for rain came in the middle of May. O, how we rejoiced! We thanked God from the bottom of our hearts at church services. It rained so much that fields and pastures and gardens were pleasantly dressed in green within a short period of time. In spite of this we did not have a wheat harvest since the dust had choked everything. In July we again had great heat which lasted the whole month so that much was again dried out, and in consequence, little feed was on hand for the cattle....In August 1935 we had enough moisture so that feed was on hand for the cattle....Also in September we had lots of rain, so that the seeded wheat was soon green, and cattle found pasture....The year 1936 was begun with worship services and a more hopeful outlook in the future and a firmer trust in the goodness of

God....Since it rained in May and June, everything in field and garden was again green. The outlooks were for a bountiful harvest. Then, in the middle of June we experienced great heat and this burnt all our crops. The harvest had to be completed earlier and yet God gave us a good harvest, in that we could average 16 bushels to the acre. For this we are thankful to God....The unusual heat (it usually stayed at around or over 110 degrees) lasted through the months of July and August, with the exception of a few days. Pastures and gardens were burnt and besides we had a plague of grasshoppers. Many of the old folks said that they had never seen anything like it in all their lives....As a result of this, we had little feed for our cattle. On the 25th of October, we had our annual Mission Festival [and] it rained practically all day but we rejoiced nevertheless....

...since during the winter and spring [of 1937] we did not have any rain or snow, it was again very dry. Only at the end of May did we receive our rain, but it was too late for the harvest; therefore, we had little to harvest, averaging only 5 to 6 bushels per acre. It was dry also during the summer, so that we had little feed for the cattle....

...during May and June [of 1938] we enjoyed much moisture so that the harvest was pretty good, though not as good as we had expected. In September it was again very dry and barren so that we had little feed for the cattle....

...since we had no rain or snow in the winter and early spring [of 1939], it shall be hard for many members of our church to have necessary food and products. In June, we had several rain showers so that we had at least some feed for cattle. However, we had a great abundance of grasshoppers....In the beginning of August we had several rain showers, yet toward the end of the month and in September it was very dry and windy so that little feed was raised for the cattle. Toward the end of September, wheat was sown although the ground was very dry. The farmers sowed with good hope and prayed 'May the faithful God add his blessing.'...It was very dry again in the fall and we received our first snow on September 23, which made us all very happy.¹⁷

The dust storms made a fearful impression upon those who experienced them. Cribs of small children had to be covered with sheets during the dirt storm, and buckets of milk or of water and tables set for meals had to be covered to keep the dust off. But even though covered, the milk in the bucket would be black by the time that it was carried into the house. Martha Keller Armbrister remembered that "to see the dark wall of dirt moving in was rather frightening. We sat many times in the closet with wet rags over our faces to keep from breathing

the dust. We'd have to keep our water bucket covered with wet cloth so we were able to drink the water. Mom took all the curtains down, and on the next day after the storm, we took the scoop shovel in place of the dust pan to carry out the dirt that we'd sweep up."¹⁸

"I can still see that one great big black cloud comin' a'rollin' out of the northwest," said Minnie Keller in a March 1987 interview. "And everything else -- the birds and the weeds and everything else -- was a'comin' up ahead of that dark cloud. You couldn't see anything; it was just dark." And then the dirt storm stuck. "We thought the world was coming to an end. We were so glad when it got cool and that stuff would just lift, like you'd just throw a big cloud over, and it'd clear up, just as clear as could be, when the air got cold," Adamine Keller said in a March 1987 interview.

Rudolph and Bernice Keller had three children who came down with measles during the dirt storms. She still recalls the static electricity in the air, the wind which blew at forty to fifty miles per hour for two or three days, and the one to two feet of dust which lay in the upstairs attic after a storm. A cow which Rudolph had purchased for his son, Wilbert, suffocated in a dirt storm, and Wilbert stated that the cow which his dad bought then cost \$3, a tremendous amount of money at that time.¹⁹

Cleaning up after a dust storm was a monumental, and often wasted, effort, but people learned to cope with the situation. "This one morning we got up and we started taking out all the bedding, to shake it out, and Dad said, 'There's no use. Look what's coming.' And here'd be another one, generally out of the northwest," Bernie Zerfas recalled.²⁰

Adamine Keller describes how the Bukovina-Germans got through the dust storms and accompanying problems. "We scooped dirt out of our upstairs with a wheat shovel after dirt storms. After the first storm, we used water, and that was a mistake. We had little but...we never went hungry. We baked our bread, we churned our own butter, we made our cottage cheese."²¹ No one went hungry, agreed Fern Zerfas

Keller in a March 1987 interview, because people raised enough hogs, beef, and poultry for their own needs; they had gardens and tried new foods such as lambs' quarters, a spinach-like weed. Bernice Reich Keller noted that relatives living in western states sent food to people in the Ellis area by railroad.²²

Sunday dinners continued to be important events even though the menus were somewhat reduced in those years. At the home of John Zachman, Sunday dinner in the 1930s always included chicken noodle soup and angel cake, said Zachman's granddaughter Edna Mae Homburg, because making noodles required egg yolks and angel cake contained egg whites, thereby using the entire egg.²³

The people may not have had enough money to purchase a postage stamp, in John Aust's words, but they still did not feel that it was right to take government assistance. Somehow they "got by," "managed," and survived. Adamine Keller, John Aust, Wilbert Keller, Arnold Homburg, and others said that the Bukovina Germans "had a pride." People borrowed money from one another rather than to take government aid or participate in government farm programs. Since they only raised enough livestock for their own butchering, they were generally unaffected by government buyouts of hogs or beef, although they were aware of the programs. Wilbert Keller recalled that a government program of the 1930s paid fifty cents per hog for animals which were then destroyed and buried. Bernie Zerfas's father did decide to sell some of his Short-horn-Hereford cows for \$19 to a government program, but at the last minute he kept a few head of cattle and purchased feed for them. John Aust had to sell some of his Jersey cows because the rains did not come to replenish the pasture for the cattle.

Some Bukovina-Germans decided to leave the Ellis area when the agricultural economy declined in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Branches of the Armbrister/Armbruster, Ast, Fries, Huber, Kerth, Kroeger, Reiss, Sessin, Schonthaler/Schoenthaler, Tomasheck and Wendling families went to Arizona,

California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Colorado, as well as to Hutchinson and Wichita, Kansas, in search of more inviting prospects. When the rains returned to this part of Kansas in 1936-1937, a few of these families returned to the Ellis area, but others did not.

There were people who began to farm in the mid- to late 1930s, and in spite of the odds against them, they succeeded. The Armbrister brothers, Bill and Joe, began to farm together in the mid-1930s, using innovations such as tractors and adopting the soil conservation techniques which were then being introduced.

The 1930s drew to a close as the farmers recovered from the devastations of the dust storms. Intent upon restoring their land, many did not notice that war was looming upon the horizon in Europe.

The Third Generation

Most middle-aged and elderly Bukovina-Germans in the Ellis area scarcely noticed the political maneuverings and military mobilizations leading up to the outbreak of World War II. "We had folks over there, and they was poor and didn't have things. We'd pack boxes and send things over to them," said Adamine Keller in a March 1987 interview, indicating that awareness of the European situation was limited to family concerns. But the young men who were drafted after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had a different perspective, feeling that military service would be their responsibility in the event that the United States made a declaration of war, according to Bernie Zerfas. Throughout World War II, there was no doubt that the Bukovina-Germans were patriotic and loyal to the United States. A list of Bukovina-German men who belonged to St. John Lutheran Church and who served in the U.S. military is included in the chapter concerning church history.

During the war, though there was strong anti-German feeling in the United States, descendants of the Bukovina-German immigrants continued to speak the German language in their homes. The English language was mixed with German

when children began to attend school and was replacing German altogether in some families.

The Bukovina-Germans still did not associate with the Russian-Germans or other ethnic groups who lived in the Ellis area, preferring to "stay within their own group," in the words of Arnold Homburg in a March 1987 interview. The relationship between the Volga-Germans and the Bukovina-Germans was fairly good, although there were some prejudices and misconceptions which persisted. For example, when Bernie Zervas married Martha Meisner, her Lutheran Volga-German relatives who lived in the Wakeeney area assumed that Bernie was Catholic, since they "just knew that anyone from Ellis was Catholic," Bernie recalled in a March 1987 interview. Also, the Bukovina-Germans were labelled as Oest'reichers, or Austrians, and the Volga-Germans as "Rooshians."

By the time that World War II ended, many of the family heads who had emigrated from Bukovina had died, and their children, who had been born in the "old country" or in Kansas during the early years of settlement, were now grandparents. The young men who had returned safely from the war began to farm in the Ellis-Trego-Rooks county area, and many married women who were also Bukovina-German, thereby maintaining their close-knit community, but other factors undermined the group's cohesiveness. Changes brought about by World War II had greatly impacted daily life. Men and women alike left the farms, searching for jobs in larger towns such as Hays, Salina, and Wichita, which did not seem so far away since cars were faster and more powerful.

Young people continued to meet at the homes of friends and relatives, but more frequently, young men and women "got together" or began their courtships at places like Mulvey Hall in Ellis. They could travel to Ellis, Hays, or Wakeeney for evening entertainments such as movies and dances because of the freedom and mobility which automobiles brought to their social circles. When a couple decided to marry, the custom of having the wedding take place on a Thursday was still followed, but the ceremonies took place in the afternoons. Geese and

chickens were butchered, strudel was baked, and generous amounts of food were cooked for the suppers hosted in the brides' parents' homes after the ceremonies. Sometimes a dance was held at Mulvey Hall after the supper, or on the next night, but if a couple had no wedding dance, they could expect to be shivareed by friends, neighbors, and relatives.²⁴

A dance was held in honor of Joe and Martha (Keller) Armbrister's marriage in November, 1945. As recalled in a June 1985 interview of Erwin (Shorty) and Shirley Kroeger, who were in attendance, the dance was held in the Armbrister barn which had been emptied and cleaned for the occasion. The floor was somewhat hard to dance upon, and so someone sprinkled Duz soap flakes on the floor. The floor was much easier to dance upon, but the soap flakes raised a fog or cloud which made it difficult to see the others who were on the floor.

Erwin Kroeger and Shirley Massier were married in a Thursday afternoon ceremony held at Christ Lutheran Church, Ellis. The wedding supper, which had been prepared by Katy (Gaschler) Kroeger and was served by Kate's daughter-in-law Mary, was served in the Massier home, and there was a dance that night. Shorty and Shirley spent their wedding night in their farm home, which had been her Massier grandparents' homestead. When they got up the next morning and went out to milk the cows, they found an anonymous gift, a bottle of wine, on the back steps of their house.

Honeymoons and wedding trips were still a rarity in the post-war years. Couples either spent their wedding night in the home of parents or in their own farm house; some couples lived with one or the other set of parents for some time after their marriage. Minnie Keller said in a March 1987 interview that she and her husband Gerhardt "just went home to the folks and went to bed" after their wedding dance.

On the day after the marriage, the many newlyweds returned to their farm work. New brides shucked corn and shocked wheat, prepared meals on the same kind of woodburning stoves which their mothers had used, and bathed in tubs set upon the kitchen floor. But farm and home improvements and

innovations were being adopted by the Bukovina-Germans and technological progress lightened the load of physical work that needed to be done on their farms. Windchargers ran battery-operated lights in some homes; electricity, introduced in the late 1940s and early 1950s, was used to provide light to homes and to heat electric irons. Minnie Keller (and probably many other farm women) remarked that "I thought I was so smart when I got an electric iron."²⁵

The Kansas weather remained a force with which no farmer could bargain. Rev. Luther Wachholz described some storms in the St. John Lutheran Church parish notes: "On June 18, 1956, a violent wind and rain storm did considerable damage to the church steeple, windmill and other buildings.... Our financial picture steadily improved...despite the fact of poor crops and drought....Another disaster struck the city of Ellis on June 16, 1957. An extreme heavy rain fall caused a major flooding of Big Creek and many homes of the members in Ellis were damaged extensively....Memorial Day services... on May 30, 1959 [were well-attended] in spite of a tornado which struck many of the members' farms on the evening prior to this service."

In spite of technological progress and change, the people of the Bukovina-German community clung to two social institutions: the church, where Sunday schools and worship services were well-attended and supported, and the extended family. Grandparents, parents, children, uncles, aunts, and cousins, young and old, gathered frequently to share Sunday dinners and to celebrate events such as birthdays and anniversaries. Elderly parents or grandparents continued to remain in their homes or those of their children until their deaths, although the nursing home which was built in Ellis in 1959 provided an alternative form of care for those with special needs. In the early 1950s, funeral customs changed so that the Todeswacht, or wake, was no longer held in the home of the deceased but rather in a funeral chapel or home. Relatives and friends still brought food and offered assistance to the bereaved family.

Daily life on the farms had also changed. The immigrants and their sons had been conservative farmers who never had to face the large financial investments and risks encountered by the immigrants' grandsons. The immigrants and their immediate successors had raised wheat on half of their tillable ground and summer-fallowed the other half. After the dust storms of the 1930s, the third and fourth generations adopted a three-year crop rotation for their farm ground and began to lease the land's mineral rights, introducing a new element into the agricultural economy of this part of Kansas.

Upon graduating from the rural elementary schools in the years after World War II, larger numbers of farm children attended high school in Ellis. Bus service was limited, and farmers who lived in the northern portions of Ellis County had to take their children to a school bus stop such as St. John Lutheran Church, or drive their children all the way to Ellis. Because of this problem, those families began to move from their farms to ones further south, closer to Ellis. As a result, the northern tier of Townships 11 and 12 South, Ranges XIX and XX West gradually were emptied of residents. Some farmers continued to work their lands in these townships and others rented or sold their land to neighbors who wished to expand their own farms.

Land, fuel, and equipment prices began to rise in the early 1970s, peaking by the end of the decade when the oil and agricultural economies of the area were thriving. The mid-1980s have brought a recession in these economies, which in 1987 are beginning to recover due to stabilized oil and land prices and due to grain subsidies. The Kansas farmers, descendants of Bukovina German immigrants who could not bring themselves to accept government assistance during the Great Depression, now participate in government-sponsored farm programs. Many farmers dislike the programs, feeling that the government's involvement has eliminated a free market for commodities and has fostered an economic dependence upon farm programs in the agricultural sector. The prices of certain agricultural commodities in 1973 and in 1987 illustrate this

dependence. Wheat was \$5.27 per bushel and a John Deere 4620 tractor sold for \$20,000 in 1973 but the March 1987 wheat price was a little over \$2.00 per bushel while the price of a John Deere 4450 (which has the same horsepower as the earlier 4620) is approximately \$50,000. Without the government's price supports for wheat, the farmers could not continue to produce grain. Many are asking, however, if the government is in fact seeking to eliminate family farms and if so, what can be done to preserve the farms which were settled one hundred years ago by their ancestors, the emigrants from Bukovina.

Summary

The Bukovina-German emigrants who came to Kansas were not financially well-to-do; in fact, most were poor and could afford only the cheapest accommodations on their journey to the United States. The Swabian Germans from Bukovina brought with them a respect for the religions and traditions of other ethnic groups; neither the Bukovina emigrants nor the Russian-Germans who preceded them to Ellis County had experienced the developing sense of German nationalism during the 1800s, but rather had experienced the toleration of diverse ethnic societies in Austria-Hungary and in Russia.

Upon arrival in the Ellis area, they homesteaded upon available lands in northwestern Ellis, northeastern Trego, and southern Rooks counties without the assistance of the railroad, which had been enjoyed by the Volga-Germans.²⁷ They were unable to organize their own schools as they had in Bukovina (with the exception of the church's winter confirmation school), and so children attended the various rural elementary schools. The children left elementary schools to attend their church's confirmation school. There the German language continued to be taught, and religious education was given primarily in German. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, very few, if indeed any, of the Swabian Lutherans were educated beyond their confirmation at the age of 13 or 14 years; higher education did not become a priority until recent years.

In Kansas, the Bukovina-German Lutherans were isolated. They lived at some distance from Lutheran communities near Russell and WaKeeney, which had been established by Germans from the Volga River region in Russia. As had been the case in Bukovina, the Swabian Lutherans did not identify with the Bohemian Catholics, despite their shared language and place of origin, so that the two groups formed separate communities in the Ellis area. The Swabian Lutherans who immigrated to Kansas shared neither language nor religion with the Irish Catholics who farmed along the Saline river or the French Catholics of Damar and Zurich or the English people who worshipped in Methodist, Church of God, or Nazarene congregations. Social contact between the Swabians and neighbors of other ethnic or religious backgrounds was minimal until recent years.

The Lutheran faith, Swabian German dialect and closely inter-woven family ties bound together the immigrant community from Illischestie and Tereblestie, although they were not able to live in concentrated settlements as they had in Bukovina. Scattered as they were throughout three counties, sometimes living fifty or more miles from one another, they were unable to form a collective force within any one community.

The Lutheran faith distinguished the Swabian Germans from other immigrant groups in Ellis county. Their Lutheran faith is a simple, pious faith which emphasizes the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed or Glaube, and the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. In the words of Emma Hoffman: "... [there's] one way to get to heaven -- in your belief. Do right toward your neighbor and family....Honesty and love, they go a long ways."²⁸ Many believe that whatever happens, whether good or bad, is the will of God, who totally controls this world, but some do not believe that all of life is pre-determined by God. "Because we are sinful people, we'll have hardship, pain and suffering....On account of our sins, we'll have those crosses to bear."²⁹

Older members of the community, who were instructed in the German-language parochial schools, are still apt to speak German with certain friends and relatives, and they prefer to use the German-language Lord's Prayer and Apostles Creed in their personal devotions.

Although the Lutheran churches are not the center for social and family gatherings that they once were, the churches' members still feel a strong sense of community. "Faith in God gets you through the bad times. St. John is a family-type church. Everyone is like family - in a lot of cases, they are - and when you have a death or are in trouble, they all pull for you," said Shirley Kroeger in a 1985 interview. The people continue to remain faithful in their worship life to communicate with God, to receive forgiveness and peace from God, and to join in fellowship with one another.

The St. John church building has had fewer exterior and interior changes than has Christ Lutheran Church in Ellis. St. John's altar, pews, windows and sanctuary pictures -- one of Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, another of Christ crucified upon the Cross, and a print of the Last Supper--have not changed in the past thirty years. The picture of Christ crucified has been the center of some discussion; to some it depicts the true meaning of Christian life, and to others, it is portraying a dead Christ rather than a resurrected, living Lord. This maintenance of the sanctuary suggests not a lack of desire or ability to effect improvements on the part of the congregation's members, but rather indicates a desire to keep things as they are, shielding the worshipping community from the passage of time and attempting to limit changes.

The descendants of Swabian immigrants to the Ellis-Trego-Rooks county area value their families, their businesses or farms, their church, and their heritage, but perhaps not to the same degree as did their ancestors. They have been raised to have Stolz a German word which in this context refers to pride and independence, including a degree of emotional reserve balanced by friendliness and hospitality.

As a group they are hard-working and unassuming, as shown in a 1985 interview with Minnie Zachman. "I don't think my life was out of the ordinary....Maybe some had more fun than we did, or some went [traveled] more...but I never felt bad about it....I've been at home, and we had chores. I sewed a lot of quilts and did a lot of crocheting. I was busy; I was busy."³⁰

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the Bukovina-Germans to the society in which they live has been their tenacity and determination. The first immigrants might have wanted to leave the area but were economically unable to do so. They and their descendants have invested their resources and their lives into their farms, businesses, and churches. While other settlers drifted on to other counties or states, many Bukovina-Germans have withstood heat, drought, grasshopper plagues, and financial reverses, choosing to remain in the part of Kansas to which their grandparents came one hundred years ago.

Notes

¹Adamine Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

²Emma Hoffman, interview by author, June 1985.

³Front row (left to right): Adam (Ed) Schonthal, his wife Barbara Zerfas, Adam and Marie Schönthaler, Amelia Deutscher (Mrs. Joe Schoenthaler), Martha Homburg (Mrs. Wendell Schonthal).

Second row: Fred Schoenthaler and his wife Emma Deutscher, Johanna (Jennie) Schonthal and her husband Jake Deutscher, Wendell Schonthal, Joe Schoenthaler, Carolina (Carrie) Schonthal (Mrs. Carl Keller).

Back row: Minnie King (Mrs. John Schoenthaler), John Schoenthaler, Carl Keller, Edith Aust (Mrs. Ernest Schonthal), Ernest Schonthal, Richard Schoenthaler and his wife Henrietta (Yetta) Deutscher.

Photo courtesy of August and Edna Schonthal.

⁴Christmas customs among ethnic Germans who lived in Eastern Europe or Russia differed somewhat according to the religious affiliation and the region of origin in Germany, but gift giving to children almost everywhere occurred on Christmas Eve and involved Pelzenickel. A man was dressed in a fur coat under which material was stuffed to make him look larger than he was and he carried a hefty switch and sometimes a cow chain for his role. He went to homes in which there were children, sometimes receiving the children's gifts from their parents before entering the house and bringing the gifts with him into the house. He questioned the children and asked them to say their prayers for him and to read for him. If a child could not do so, Pelzenickel threatened to take his or her gifts. Pelzenickel and the American "Santa Claus" are remote imitators of a gift giving St. Nicholas of Christian antiquity.

⁵Front row (left to right): Anna Homburg (Mrs. Fred Zerfas), Wilhelm and Katharina Homburg, Minnie Homburg (Mrs. Adam Massier), Maria.

Second row: Henry Homburg, Martha Homburg (Mrs. Wendell Schonthal), Fred Zerfas, William Homburg, Fred Hamburg, Minnie Spilker (Mrs. Henry Homburg).

Back row: August Homburg, Ernest Hamburg, Wendell Schonthal, Adam Massier.

Photo courtesy of August and Edna Schonthal.

⁶Family surnames often underwent spelling changes after a few years in America. Non-German neighbors had difficulty understanding the correct spelling and pronunciation of the immigrant's names. In an attempt to compensate for unlauted vowels, some Armbrüsters became Armbristers

and others Armbrusters; Schönthaler is now spelled "Schoenthaler" or "Schonthaler." Ast, which is pronounced "ahst", was mispronounced as "Asst" so that families adopted the spelling "Aust." The new spelling was occasionally mispronounced as "Owst," however. The family name of descendants of Wilhelm and Ernst Homburg, German immigrants who married Bukovina-German sisters, is now spelled either as "Homburg" or "Hamburg." A variation of the spelling of "Wendling" is "Wentling," and there are several spellings for Schäfer": Schaffer, Schafer, and Schaefer. Members of the König family simply translated the name into English and now use the name "King." "Bosowicki" became "Boschowitzki," and "Tomaszyck" became "Tomashek." Names such as "Deutscher," "Fries," "Glass," "Huber," "Irion," "Keller," "Kerth," "Massier," "Sauer," and "Wagg," which are pronounced more in accord with English phonetical rules, have remained unchanged. Some names have only been altered by the addition or deletion of consonants, as in Hofmann/Hoffman, Schauss/Schaus, Zachmann/Zachman, and Zerfass/Zerfas.

⁷Dennis Ormseth, Our Congregation's Heritage: Towards Growth in Our Ministry (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979), 24.

⁸Adamine Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

⁹Minnie Zachman, interview by author, June 1985.

¹⁰Masurka are bar-like cookies, and zweibach is a quick-rising bread similar to banana or pumpkin bread. Recipes for these are available on pp. 157,158 of the Christ Lutheran Church 75th Anniversary Cookbook, printed in 1982 by Christ Lutheran Church, Ellis, Kansas. In a March 1987 interview, Adamine Keller described sei-ohre as cookies formed on a tin cone-shaped funnel which had a handle. The dough was released from the funnel, dropped into hot grease, and fried.

¹¹A header is a form of harvester used in regions where grain is well-dried before harvesting. It cuts the grain just below the heads and carries them to a storage box on the machine or to a wagon drawn beside it. The heads are stacked until dry enough to thresh.

¹²Bernie Zerfas, interview by author, March 1987.

¹³Irene Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

¹⁴Bernie Zerfas, interview by author, March 1987.

¹⁵Adamine Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

¹⁶Hemetschwengers are apple tarts. Pastry is rolled thin and cut into three-inch squares which are filled with chopped apples and seasonings. The corners are brought to the centers of the squares and the pastries are baked, then rolled in sugar and cinnamon. For the recipe see Christ Lutheran 75th Anniversary Cookbook, p.153 mentioned above.)

¹⁷St. John Lutheran Church Parish Records, vol. I, pp. 398-400.

¹⁸Martha Armbrister, undated letter to author.

¹⁹Wilbert Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

²⁰Bernie Zerfas, interview by author, March 1987.

²¹Adamine Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

²²Bernice Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

²³Edna Mae Homburg, interview by author, June 1985.

²⁴A shivaree is a noisy mock serenade to a newly married couple who are expected to furnish refreshments to silence the serenaders.

²⁵Minnie Keller, interview by author, March 1987.

²⁶St. John Lutheran Church Parish Records, vol. II, n.p.

²⁷Norman E. Saul, "The Migration of the Russian Germans to Kansas," The Kansas Historical Quarterly 40 (Spring 1974): 55-57.

²⁸Emma Hoffman, interview by author, March 1987.

²⁹Bernie Zerfas, interview by author, March 1987.

³⁰Minnie Zachman, interview by author, June 1985.

CHAPTER IV

Lutheran Churches in the Ellis, Kansas Area

The Lutheran Churches: 1894-1923

Although the Swabians who emigrated from Bukovina to the Ellis, Kansas, area in the 1880s and 1890s were virtually all Lutherans, they had no pastor or organized congregation until the mid-1890s. In April 1894 John Huber of rural Ellis, Kansas, received a letter from Rev. E. Gentner of Russell, Kansas. In the letter, Rev. Gentner inquired about the German-speaking settlers in the Ellis area and offered to come to Ellis as his schedule permitted to begin the work of organizing a Lutheran congregation.

A congregational meeting was held on August 8, 1897, to organize the St. Johannes evangelisch-lutherische Kirche (see Appendix D for a listing of the charter members, and Appendix F for a 1910 membership roster). At a second congregational meeting, held on August 15 of that year, the building of a church and a parsonage was discussed. The members decided that these buildings should be erected in a place that was centrally located for the congregation, and so a site was selected six miles north and a mile east of Ellis, in the northeast quarter of Section 9, Township 12, Range XX of Ellis County. Three acres of land, costing \$59, were then purchased from the Union Pacific Railroad.

Rev. Theodore Maier was installed as the first resident pastor on October 24, 1897 (see Appendix G for a table of the clergy who served the Ellis area Lutheran Churches). On June 12, 1898, the cornerstone of the first St. John Lutheran Church building was laid, and following construction of the church, dedication services were held in the



St. John Lutheran Church, rural Ellis, Kansas, in 1904. (See note 11, p.78)

autumn of 1898. This first church was situated just south-east of the present structure.

Minnie Keller Zachman worshipped in the first St. John Lutheran Church and recalls that men and women sat on opposite sides of the church during worship services. Major festivals such as Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost were celebrated for two days, and minor festivals such as Ascension Thursday, which now passes relatively unnoticed in many Protestant churches, were also observed. Minnie's family abstained from eating meat on days when they received Holy Communion.¹ For two weeks prior to her confirmation on Palm Sunday, 1909, Minnie stayed with Rev. Mensing and his family to complete her religious education by attending the church school; prior to that she had attended confirmation classes twice weekly in an abandoned house near the Rooks-Ellis county line.

Rev. Maier resigned after the building was completed, and Rev. Bruno Huhn, his successor, began his ministry at St. John on January 1, 1899. During his three years of leadership, the first St. John parsonage, a four-room rock house, was built by Mr. Gross, a contractor, in 1900; the total cost of the house was \$290. The cemetery, located south of the church, was enclosed with a fence in 1902, and at the end of the year, Rev. Huhn resigned from his call at St. John.

Rev. F. W. Mensing was the third resident pastor. In 1904 the congregation decided that on the fourth Sunday of every month, worship services would be held in the Episcopal Church located at 725 North Washington Street in Ellis. This was for the benefit of parishioners who lived west and south of Ellis. Rev. Mensing resigned in 1905, and Rev. G. A. Doering began his work in November 1905, serving the congregation for the next two years.

Upon Pastor Doering's resignation in 1907, the two worship centers in Ellis and in the country evolved into two congregations. Those who worshipped in the country recalled Rev. F. W. Mensing as the pastor of St. John, and people who attended worship services in Ellis met to issue a call to Rev.

Johannes Holzberger of the Nebraska Synod. When Rev. Holzberger arrived in Ellis in 1907 after accepting the call, he organized what was then called the Ellis Lutheran Church. The old Congregational Church and four adjacent lots, located at the south end of the present Christ Lutheran Church, were purchased for \$1,000 by the Ellis Lutheran congregation in December 1910.

Upon the conclusion of Rev. Holzberger's ministry in Ellis in 1912, Rev. Johann Hiltner, the pastor who was serving St. John, was asked to also serve Ellis Lutheran Church. Rev. Hiltner had been called to St. John following the 1909 resignation of Rev. Mensing, and from 1912 until 1914, Rev. Hiltner was pastor of both congregations (a St. John's membership list prepared by Rev. Hiltner appears in Appendix F). During Hiltner's tenure, a new parsonage costing \$1490 was built at St. John. The rocks from the first parsonage were used in the building of a school house on the east side of the church in 1915. In the rock school house, which is now the parsonage garage, Christian education classes were conducted for forty years.

Sometime in 1915 both congregations agreed to call Rev. Gottfried Kolb. World War I was taking place in Europe, and in reaction to Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm, some hostility began to be shown toward the German-speaking Lutherans in the United States. Confirmation classes, which had been conducted in the German language since St. John's organization, had to be temporarily suspended, according to Bernice Reich Keller, who was a student at that time, and Rev. Kolb took the St. John class to Ellis to have instruction with the English-language class being conducted there. St. John's parish records for the latter years of World War I do not show any confirmations, but these young people's names and dates of confirmation were all entered into the records of Christ Lutheran Church, where they were instructed.

Vacation Bible School was already a part of congregational life at this time, but those who attended were usually older students who were approaching the age for confirmation.

Adamine Schonthalder Keller attended V.B.S. at St. Johns during the latter part of World War I, and according to her, the school was taught entirely by the pastor on a daily basis for six weeks. When Adamine was confirmed on Palm Sunday, she and her classmates were dressed in white, but when they received their first Communion on the following Good Friday, they were dressed completely in black, as was the tradition.

On September 28, 1919, the St. John building was damaged by lightning, and although the building could still be used, the congregation voted to build a new church at a projected cost of \$20,000. Julius Kaatz of Kaatz Manufacturing was contacted, and he signed a contract with the congregation on September 29, 1920. The terms of this agreement were that the church was to be built upon the present site for \$18,000 and that members of the congregation would dig the basement prior to construction. Signing the contract with Kaatz were building committee members Rev. Kolb, Otto Reich, Philipp Zerfas, William Homburg, Sr., Ernest Hamburg, John Deutscher, and Adam Schonthalder. Mr. Kaatz offered to donate \$800 toward the purchase of a pipe organ; this kind offer was gratefully accepted and a Himners pipe organ was purchased for \$1,125.

The hitching post at St. John was located on the north-east side of the church, beside a fence. Minnie Keller recalled in a March 1987 interview that in her childhood an old man, Mr. Gaube, used to come to church in a beautiful surrey pulled by a team of horses, and "it used to be something to see him coming."

Before the church was dedicated, ill health forced Rev. Kolb to ask the two churches for a release from his call. This being granted, Rev. John Bunge was called to serve the joint parish, and he was installed on June 1, 1921.

The original St. John building was moved to 1403 Madison Street in Ellis some time in 1921. It has been extensively remodeled for use as a private residence; for many years it was the home of Charlie and Katy Kroeger, who are now deceased but were members of St. John before their deaths.

With great ceremony, the new St. John building was dedicated to the glory of God on July 21, 1921. Speakers for the occasion were Rev. Johann Hiltner, Eustis, Nebraska; Rev. Loeffler, WaKeeney, Kansas; and Rev. Bunge. A noon meal was served in the church's basement on that day by the women of the church.

On January 3, 1923, the Christ Lutheran Church voted to become incorporated, to join the Iowa Synod, and to introduce the use of the English language during worship services (English had been used for some confirmation classes already). The issue of worshipping in the English language caused a great deal of controversy; for this and other reasons, the two churches discontinued the practice of sharing pastoral services. Rev. Bunge resigned from his duties at St. John, and in April 1923, he and his family moved to a rented home in Ellis, where he continued to serve as Christ Lutheran Church's pastor for three more years.

At this time, twenty or more families withdrew from St. John's membership and most joined Christ Lutheran. Later in 1923 Rev. Ernest Bruegel was called to serve as St. John's pastor. According to parish history notes prepared by Rev. Daniel Scholl and the church council during the 1930s, there was a great deal of conflict and tension between Pastors Bunge and Bruegel, and between the two congregations. The issues included Rev. Bunge's first marriage which had ended in divorce prior to his being called to the Ellis churches, the use of the English language at church functions, and differing theological positions, according to letters sent and received by St. John church officials of that time. Several investigations into the situation were made by synod officials, who had been contacted for advice and guidance.

Since 1923 the two churches have remained separate entities which are affiliated with two separate church bodies.

The Keller Church

A group of German-speaking Lutherans who lived near the Ellis-Rooks county line, about fourteen miles northeast of

Ellis, decided to form their own congregation and build a church in their immediate neighborhood. The location of the "Keller church," which was in existence for only a few years during the 1920s, was in the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 4, Township 11, Range XX of Ellis County; this is on the east side of the present Ellis-Palco blacktop road as it reaches the county line and turns to the west. Various sources report that a pastor from Stuttgart, Kansas, served the congregation as his time allowed, but to date, no records from this rural Ellis county church have been located.

Families who attended the "Keller church" either possessed the Keller name or were related in some way to Keller families. The families of Franz and Marie (Wendling) Keller, John Keller, Fred Keller, Charley and Karoline (Schonthaler) Keller, Jacob and Minnie (Huber) Keller, Minnie (Keller) Nelson, Fred and Katherine (Knieling) Wendling, John and Emma (Aust) Hoffman, Paul and Emma (Keller) Holzhauer, and the Yantz family are some who were affiliated with the "Keller church."

The cemetery which was located next to the church contained only one grave, that of Fred and Katherine Wendling's infant daughter Alberta, who died in 1921. Her grave was moved to Mt. Hope cemetery in Ellis when the church was closed. The church building was moved to 301 East Eleventh Street in Ellis, remodeled, and then used as a private residence. Members of the "Keller church" rejoined the St. John or Christ Lutheran Churches in the mid- to late 1920s.

Christ Lutheran Church: 1923-1987

Christ Lutheran Church met several challenges in the 1920s. First, beginning in 1923, the congregation no longer shared pastoral services with St. John, and so they had to assume full responsibility for their pastor's salary and housing. Then, in September 1923, the old Lutheran church building in Ellis was struck by lightning, and due to the resulting fire, the building was considered irreparable. A

temporary worship site was arranged in Mulvey Hall, the former Keller's Furniture Store at 818 North Washington Street. The congregation soon voted to construct a parsonage so that the basement would be suitable for a worship site, and work began quickly. Parishioners were able to gather in the basement for Christmas Eve services in 1923. Rev. Bunge and his family moved into the parsonage by February 1, 1924. However, people soon realized that the basement was inadequate for use as a worship setting, and in November 1924, a contract for erection of the present church was awarded to Mont J. Green Construction Company of Manhattan, Kansas, with the total cost projected to be \$19,000. The building committee members were Ludwig Deutscher, Jacob Deutscher, John Huber, William Sauer, Martin King, Fred King, Sr., William Hagen, Sr., and Ernest F. Hamburg.

Rev. Bunge resigned in 1926. At that time, the congregation voted to leave the Iowa Synod with which St. John was affiliated, and to join the German Nebraska Synod, the predecessor of the Midwest Synod, Lutheran Church in America (L.C.A.). Rev. Rudolph Moehring was called to serve the church. In 1929 the congregation voted to have English-language worship services on every third Sunday and to have confirmation classes taught in the German language one year and in English the next. The worship practice was altered in 1932 when English-language services began to alternate on a weekly basis with those held in German.

Rev. Moehring's resignation was accepted in 1932, and from 1933 until 1935, Rev. Victor Pietzko was the pastor. He was succeeded by Rev. Otto Heick, whose ministry there lasted for eleven years, from 1936 until 1947. The events of World War II occurred during Heick's residence in Ellis, and Rev. Heick and the congregation found an opportunity to conduct a unique ministry during the war. At the congregation's 1944 annual meeting, members voted to invite to their German-language worship services the German prisoners-of-war who were being held at the Walker (Kansas) Air Force Base; this was carried out in accordance with U.S. Army regulations. Also,

the Women's Missionary Society was organized in 1944 and continues to exist as the Lutheran Church Women today.

Use of the German language for worship or for instruction was completely discontinued by action of the 1946 annual meeting, which also adopted a new constitution for the congregation.

Following Rev. Heick's resignation in 1947, Rev. Warren Churchill was called to Christ Lutheran Church. The men's organization, called the Lutheran Brotherhood, was formed in 1947, and in October of the same year an electronic organ was ordered. It replaced the old pipe organ in April 1948. Another significant change in worship practice was instituted in 1949 when the congregation voted to have offerings received during the worship service. Before this, the offerings had been collected in the narthex as parishioners departed.

Rev. William Goede served the parish next, from 1950 until 1955. After he was granted a release from his call, Rev. J. Franklin Shirck was called. Christ Lutheran Church members voted in 1956 to build a parish school building, and it was completed at a minimum cost of \$24,300. Rev. W. O. Zahlis, a retired clergyman who lived in Ellis, translated the church's German-language parish records into English in that year.

Work on a new parsonage, which was to cost approximately \$27,000, was begun in 1968. Before it was completed, Rev. Shirck resigned, and Rev. William Jones came to Christ Lutheran Church. The parsonage was dedicated on June 15, 1969. Later in the year, a set of individual communion glasses was used for the first time during the Sacrament of Holy Communion. A chalice, or common cup, had been used for the distribution of wine until this time.

Rev. Jones resigned in 1970, and Rev. Melvin Peterson began his ministry in Ellis in 1971. The first electronic organ was replaced by a Conn electronic organ in 1974. In the American bicentennial year, 1976, new pews with upholstered seats were installed and dedicated; the sanctuary was redecorated and new carpeting was laid.

Rev. W. Joseph Bullock came to Ellis following Rev. Peterson's departure, and Rev. Bullock continues to serve Christ Lutheran Church in 1987, the church's eightieth anniversary year.

Persons who are interested in a more detailed history of Christ Lutheran Church are encouraged to read 75 Years of History, which was prepared for the congregation's seventy-fifth anniversary celebration in 1982

St. John Lutheran Church: 1923-1987

In 1923 Rev. Ernest and Annie Bruegel came to St. John Lutheran Church, which was then part of the Iowa Synod, and remained until 1927, when Rev. Bruegel asked to be released from his duties due to ill health. He retired to a farm home one mile west of the church, where he died in April 1928. Rev. Ernest and Annie Bruegel, a son Emmanuel, and a daughter Aethal (Mrs. Fred Homburg) were buried in the St. John church cemetery.

The St. John congregation called Rev. Daniel Scholl of Litchville, North Dakota, as their next pastor. Besides Rev. Scholl, the family included Mrs. Scholl (Elizabeth) and sons Ludwig, Karl, Bill and Paul; a daughter, Erna, was born while the family lived at St. John.

At this time the church still paid their pastor by means of Barregehalt or Pfarregehalt, a system in which parishioners shared the cost of the pastor's salary according to their family size, age of family head, and family income. When the Scholl family came to St. John and into the 1930s, Rev. Scholl's Gehalt was \$1000 for one year; congregational members also furnished a cow to the parsonage family and provided them with meat, butter, and foodstuffs when the pastor came to call. The Scholl family also had their own chickens and sold eggs to supplement their income. It was customary for parishioners to give the pastor a gift of money or of food when one's child was baptized, confirmed, or married.

During his tenure, Rev. Scholl maintained a fairly extensive record of parish events. He wrote of cabinets being

built in the church sacristy in 1929, of the church's exterior and interior being painted in September, 1929, of a barn and chicken house being built for the pastor's livestock, and of the reshingling of the parsonage in 1935. He wrote that: "During the (first) eight years of my ministry here, the congregation enjoyed a calm and peaceful existence, growing outwardly and inwardly, for which we heartily thank God. I have laid to their rest a great number of the old fathers, mothers, and charter members of this congregation. Their frail bodies rest in the cemetery and await the blessed resurrection."²

Rev. Scholl is recalled as being a man of short stature, who was more at ease when he spoke German than when he spoke English. Many of the boys and girls who received confirmation instruction from him are the present adult members of St. John Lutheran Church, and each can tell anecdotes concerning Rev. Scholl. The iron lead-filled pencil which Rev. Scholl used in the classroom is a part of most recollections. When he was upset by his students' ignorance or disobedience, he shouted "Ihr Schlingel!" (literally translated as "You rascals!") and rapped the miscreants' heads with that heavy pencil.

Until the 1950s, students were expected to leave the "English," or public, school to attend confirmation school for three or four months, from January until Palm Sunday, on a daily basis. If the student did not know the German language at the beginning of instruction, some knowledge of that language soon was drilled into him or her. Large sections of the Bible and Martin Luther's Small Catechism (in German), Die Biblische Geschichte (a Bible history textbook), and the hymnal were memorized and recited in confirmation. Persons who were educated forty or fifty years later might question the value of so much rote memorization, especially when it was conducted in a language unfamiliar to the child. However, many of Rev. Scholl's former students can still recite treasured Bible verses and hymns as well as the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed in German and these people deeply appreciate what they learned from Rev. Scholl.

Of course, confirmation school was more than just classroom work. Rev. Scholl's first confirmation class at St. John was composed of more than a dozen young people, mostly boys, one of whom later recalled how the boys liked to "skip out" during recess and go to the dam located about a quarter of a mile west of church. This boy, Joe Armbrister, later told of how the group would hear Rev. Scholl calling for them to return, but they just ignored him. When they did return to the rock school house to face their angry pastor, they usually told him that they had not heard him calling.

On another occasion, the boys of the same class were to help Rev. Scholl plant potatoes in the garden. Rev. Scholl painstakingly explained the procedure whereby he, Rev. Scholl, would dig the holes for the potatoes, one boy then would place a potato in the hole, and another boy would fill the hole with dirt, and a third was to stamp down the dirt. And so, Rev. Scholl went ahead of them, digging the holes for neat rows of potatoes. He did not observe that the boys did not put potatoes into the holes which he had dug; instead, they quickly scraped out dirt on either side of the designated row and stuck potatoes into those spots. Joe Armbrister said that Rev. Scholl stood looking at his garden for some time when the potatoes came up, and he was clearly puzzled that his potatoes grew all over the garden rather than in the rows which he had prepared.

Vacation Bible School continued to be part of the children's religious education, as the pastor taught all-day sessions for two weeks, without any other teachers or assistants. In V. B. S., students had basically the same curriculum as that which has been described for confirmation school. Rev. Scholl joined his pupils during recess in playing his favorite game, "pom-pom-pull-a-way" and running about the church yard.³ Minnie Keller said in a March 1987 interview that in one game, Rev. Scholl ran around the school house and slipped on some coals. "Out his feet went. 'I guess I was going too fast,'

he said." V. B. S. always concluded with Children's Day, a Sunday on which a congregational potluck noon meal followed worship services and a program was presented in the afternoon by the students.

Worship life was very important to the members of St. John, and the church was the center for family, social, and religious activities. One special annual event was Mission Festival, when people from far and wide came to spend the day at church, to hear the guest speakers preach, to share a dinner of fried chicken, German potatoes and galusky, and to visit with their relatives, friends, and neighbors.⁴ Mission Festival was usually held in late October, when the wheat had been seeded. Some of the speakers listed in parish notes by Rev. Scholl were C. Weber, W. Lynd, H. Imbrock, J. Brinkman, G. Kolb, P. E. Stoltz, G. Streetz, A. Finkbeiner, K. Schettler, D. Meyer, L. Scholl, A. Eggerling, and Dr. Johannes Lehmann, who was the president for that district of the American Lutheran Church.

The Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion continued to be very important to parishioners. They had their infants baptized at very early ages. After being confirmed, one made a point of receiving Holy Communion when it was offered. As Erwin Kroeger said in a 1985 interview, "We were taught to go to church and to take Communion to get to heaven and be saved." To prepare for receiving Holy Communion, which was a solemn, moving event, one stayed at home on the previous evening, presumably to spend time in prayer and meditation. Some families fasted prior to attending services, and others abstained from meat. Many still say that Holy Communion was more meaningful in their lives then, when it was offered three or four times annually, than it is now, when it is offered on the first Sunday of each month. Holy Communion was a major event in the congregation's life.

Finances could not be disregarded. Maintenance and improvement of church property was an on-going task. In 1937, the congregation was able to gather about \$600. Of that sum, about a third was spent to purchase insurance for the church

property, another third was designated for painting the buildings, and the remainder was spent upon the installation of a furnace in the church basement.

The congregation celebrated with the Scholl family when Ludwig Scholl was ordained to the Lutheran ministry by his father and Dr. Johannes Lehmann. This event took place on July 2, 1939, at St. John. Rev. Scholl wrote: "Since this is the first time in the life of this church that a young man from our midst was ordained to the holy ministry, it was a great joy, not only for this congregation, but it was also a great festival day which brought many guests from the Ellis and WaKeeney congregations. The congregation served a meal for the occasion...[to] the members and guests. During the afternoon, the young pastor and his wife were showered with many gifts."⁵

In 1940 the congregation's members voted to have English-language worship services on every fourth Sunday. According to Rev. Scholl, the first English service was held on March 3, 1940, and was well-received.⁶ For some, this change was devastating, since they understood German better than they understood English, but others welcomed the change as they were finally able to understand what was taking place during the services.

Later that year, Rev. and Mrs. Scholl celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary on July 7. "The congregation did not let the day pass unnoticed. A festive meal in the basement of the church was prepared, with appropriate decorations. The jubilee pair were invited to be present by the church council, and the entire congregation took part in the celebration. In the afternoon, neighboring pastors Gottfried, Kolb and Raumm came with their families, and a service was held in the church, at which Rev. Raumm delivered the festival sermon. After the service, the congregation through its council member Adam Massier presented the jubilee pair with a silver plate and a purse of money. It was a very fine celebration, and especially will be held in long memory by the jubilee pair."⁷

As World War II began in 1939, Rev. Scholl commented on it in his "Parish Notes," and as St. John's young men entered military service, their names were listed in the parish record. Jake Armbrister, William Armbrister, Albert Kerth, George Knieling, and William Scholl were in the army at the time that Pearl Harbor was attacked. Following the United States' declaration of war, the following men enlisted:

Reinhard Keller	Albert Keller	Arnold Schonthalder
Walter Trarbach	Edward Keller	Wesley Kroeger
Ernest Zachman	Frank Zachman	Clarence Zerfas
Joseph Armbrister	Reinhard Schonthalder	Henry Keller
Ernest Massier	August Kroeger	Raymond Kroeger

Fred Hoffman, Paul Scholl, and Karl Scholl were called into service in 1943; Elmer Kroeger and Arthur Kroger were called in 1944 according to parish records. In 1945, after Rev. Scholl had left St. John, Harold Homburg and Wilbert Keller entered the armed forces.

During World War II the St. John ladies organized a Women's Missionary Society (W.M.S.), known today as the American Lutheran Church Women (A.L.C.W.). According to a report presented at an April 1981 A.L.C.W. meeting by a W.M.S. charter member, Frieda Spreen, the group originally was formed because of sugar rationing. As time approached for the Mission Festival one year during World War II, no one had sugar available to prepare the baked goods for the festival dinner. Someone learned that non-profit organizations were not subject to any rationing of sugar, and so to get a supply for the Mission Festival, the Women's Missionary Society came into existence.

On the Sunday before Christmas 1944, Rev. Scholl announced that he was resigning in order to accept a call to Eaton, Colorado. He preached his final sermon at St. John on December 31, 1944, and confirmed a class of fourteen young people on that day.

Next to serve the church was Rev. Werner Heuer, who came to St. John with his wife Rose and three daughters. People often remember Rev. Heuer's ministry as lacking in ecumenical spirit, because of a sermon in which he expressed strong

anti-Catholic sentiments. This was Adam Schoenthaler's funeral, when many Catholic friends of the deceased's family from the Palco-Zurich area were present. But some remember Rev. and Mrs. Heuer for their kindness and compassion, shown, for example, when they brought supper to the home of Bill Homburg, Jr. on the evening following his wife Minnie's funeral. The Heuers were at St. John from 1945 until 1947.

Rev. Claus and Elizabeth Meyn were the next residents of the St. John parsonage. The Meyns appreciated music, and perhaps because of their interest and support, a choir became an important part of church worship services. Mrs. Meyn served as choir director and as organist and was a tireless, dedicated church worker, according to those who knew her.

The Himners pipe organ, operated by a hand-pumped bellows, was still in use at St. John when Mrs. Meyn began to play for church events. The responsibility of pumping was usually assigned to an older boy of the congregation, occasionally with comical results. One youth stopped pumping to watch a bridal party enter the church sanctuary, and this caused the organ to lose air, pitch, and volume as it whined to a halt during the processional march. Some time in the late 1940s, the pipe organ was replaced by an electronic organ.

The Meyns began the custom of entertaining the congregation at a smorgasbord following the pre-Christmas "Carols and Candles" service. Their daughter, Helen Meyn Allen, told an Ellis Review reporter in 1982 that her mother prepared such personal favorites as Pfeffernusse, Lebkuchen, Springerle, anise cookies, cinnamon stars, and Hemetschwengers.⁸ Other foods which have become part of the "Carols and Candles" tradition are Zweiback (described in Chapter III), pretzels, and Kuchen, a coffee cake made with fruit or brown sugar topping.

Rev. Meyn retired in 1955, and he and his wife moved to Ellis. He died in 1958 and is buried in Ellis' Mount Hope Cemetery. Mrs. Meyn continued to be an active member of St. John until her death in 1978.

A call was extended to a Wartburg Seminary senior, Luther G. Wachholz, in March 1955, and upon accepting the call, he was installed at St. John on July 10, 1955. From that time, all worship services at St. John have been conducted in English. As part of this transition, Rev. Wachholz asked his father, Rev. Arthur Wachholz, to translate the German-language parish records into English. Also, Rev. Luther Wachholz continued the parish historical record which had been started by Rev. Scholl.

The congregation approved the use of offering envelopes in 1955, and over 95 per cent of the members signed commitment cards by which they pledged a certain amount of money to the church for the next year. This plan, called "pledging," or variations of it, has continued to be used. The men's Brotherhood was organized at a November 10, 1955, meeting, and later in that week, on November 14, the congregation hosted the Wartburg College Choir of Waverly, Iowa.

On June 18, 1956, a violent wind and rain storm damaged the church steeple, windmill, and other buildings. Insurance covered the cost of repairs to the buildings, but the windmill was damaged beyond repair. At a special congregational meeting held on July 15, 1956, installation of a new electric water pump and pressure tank was approved, and this was soon accomplished by the donated labors of the men. During September 1956, the church windows and sills were redone, and weather stripping and insulation were installed.

At the annual meeting in January 1957, the Honor Roll Plan for "every-home subscription" to the Lutheran Standard or to the Kirchenblatt, the synodical church news publications, was adopted to be introduced during the following year. Items authorized for purchase in 1957 included a drinking fountain, three tables, thirty-six chairs, and a mimeograph machine. With the purchase of a copying machine, the congregation began to enjoy printed Sunday worship folders or bulletins, effective September 20. Later, in November 1957, the recommendation to purchase a 135,000 B.T.U. furnace and a 500 gallon

propane tank for the church was presented to and approved by the congregation. Installation of these was effected by the church council within a month.

Constitution changes adopted at the 1958 annual meeting gave to all female and to all male members who were eighteen years of age or older the right to participate actively in and vote at meetings of the church. However, females were not to be permitted to hold office, and men could not hold office unless they had attained the age of 21 years. One hundred and sixty-five copies of the new Service Book and Hymnal were dedicated to the glory of God later in 1958.

Rev. Wachholz wrote that "the congregation showed their graciousness and goodness once again to their pastor by granting him time for his wedding and wedding trip. He married Miss Geraldine Van Dyke in Omaha on September 20, 1958. Upon their return, they were given a most wonderful reception on the evening on October 5."⁹

The congregation voted in 1959 to re-side the church building, and this work was done from April 6-22 by members giving of their time, talents, and tools. With this, the two west windows on either side of the altar were closed, as was the round window in the steeple. The first Memorial Day service held at St. John was on May 30, 1959, and was well-attended in spite of the fact that a tornado had struck the farms of many congregation members on the previous evening. This Memorial Day service was instituted to honor those who had died for their country and those who had died in the Christian faith, and as such, it continues to be an annual event.

The rock school house was converted into a garage in 1960. To cover the cost of the remodeling, the barn was offered for sale by sealed bids and sold for \$178. The insurance coverage on the church property was increased that year, and, also, a refrigerator was purchased for the church kitchen. The Women's Missionary Society purchased a vacuum cleaner, so that members need not bring their own equipment to the church when they did the weekly cleaning.

In July 1960, Rev. Wachholz received a call to a congregation in Enid, Oklahoma, and he preached his farewell sermon on September 11, 1960. He and his family reside in Kalispell, Montana.

Later in 1960, Rev. Elmer and Floraine Sprecher and their children Paulette, Doran, Glen, and Jonathan came to St. John. Rev. Sprecher continued the work which Rev. Wachholz had begun in preparing the church for a nationwide merger of Lutheran synods, and beginning in 1961, St. John became a part of the new American Lutheran Church (A.L.C.). Weekly bulletins and periodic newsletters were prepared by Rev. Sprecher with the assistance of the Luther League. Church members remember that on the evening of the Sprechers' farewell reception on November 22, 1963, word came that President Kennedy had died in Dallas, Texas, of gunshot wounds. Rev. Sprecher left the ministry in the early 1970s but continued to preach occasionally at worship services. He and Floraine were both killed instantly on April 26, 1981, near Cedar Park, Texas, as they were enroute to a bakery which they operated; they are buried in a rural church cemetery near Walburg, Texas.

A senior seminary student, Norman K. Nelson, was Rev. Sprecher's successor. He came in 1964 as the first non-German and the first Scandinavian to serve as St. John's pastor. He was well received, remaining with the congregation for fifteen years. During his ministry at St. John, the communion rail was placed in the sanctuary's altar area, and the parsonage was extensively remodeled and redecorated.

In September and October 1970, Rev. Roger Fjeld, the assistant to the Central District President, met with the council and the congregation to discuss the feasibility of sharing pastoral services with Immanuel Lutheran Church, an American Lutheran congregation in WaKeeney, Kansas. The St. John members approved this proposal at the January 10, 1971, annual meeting, and this working relationship continues until the present.

The church observed its seventy-fifth anniversary on October 7 and 8, 1972, with 280 people present to hear Sunday's guest speaker, Rev. Luther Wachholz, of Blue Island, Illinois. The congregation also rejoiced that Rev. Nelson, who had been seriously ill, was able to be present with them for this milestone event.

Rev. Nelson accepted a call to rural Minden and Norman, Nebraska, in 1979, preaching his farwell sermon and confirming five people on December 30, 1979. At this time, the Central District of the American Lutheran Church recommended that the congregation change its communion practice. The Sacrament of Holy Communion had been offered three or four times annually until this time, but the district staff's recommendation was that communion be scheduled for the first Sunday of every month. Both the individual glasses and the common cup continued to be used for communion wine, and church members assisted their pastor with the distribution of the Sacrament.

Rev. Wayne Ellingson of Elkhorn, Nebraska, was the first pastor to be jointly called by the St. John and Immanuel congregations. He, his wife Irmgard, and son Gregg were officially welcomed to the parish at worship and installation services and a reception on June 1, 1980. Later in that year, central air conditioning was installed in the parsonage.

In 1981, the annual meeting approved a resolution which made women eligible to hold elected congregational office and another which stipulated that men or women could hold office if they were eighteen years of age or older. A new jet pump was installed in the church/parsonage well in 1981, and this greatly improved water pressure and reduced the water's sand content.

The church choir was reorganized in March 1981, with Irmgard Ellingson as director/accompanist. The practice of providing special music at worship during the months of September through December, and February through May, was adopted. About twenty-four people were present at the first

rehearsal, and the choir's membership has remained faithful and dedicated.

The Ellingsons' daughter Tina was born in March 1981, and as the first baby since Erna Scholl to be born to a pastor and his spouse, she was very lovingly welcomed by the congregation. And even as new life was celebrated, the congregation rejoiced in its older members. In April 1981, the church honored a dozen of its members who had attained the age of 80 years or more. These people were Christ Armbrister, John Armbruster, John and Maria (Homburg) Aust, Carrie (Wendling) Keller, Ernest and Minnie (Irion) Kroeger, Katy (Gaschler) Kroeger, William Kroeger, and Joseph and Minnie (Keller) Zachman. In an afternoon A.L.C.W. program, Martha (Homburg) Schonthalder, who had died on March 7, was also recognized.

1982 was a year of planning, decision-making, working, and rejoicing. A long-range planning committee had been previously organized, and this group studied the feasibility of installing bathrooms in the church. At the annual meeting, a plan to build an addition on the southwest side of the church was approved. The plans called for men's and women's restrooms, a pastor's office, and a meeting room to be built by members of the congregation, with Gilbert Deutscher of Ellis overseeing the work. Ground was broken for the addition on Palm Sunday, April 4. This was the first step in construction of the 20 by 38 foot facility which cost about \$15,000. Money for this project was donated by individuals, by families, and by the Luther League. Later in the year, the church kitchen's cabinets were remodeled, and a new stove was purchased. The addition and remodeled kitchen have been appreciated by the congregation.

The eighty-fifth anniversary of St. John Lutheran Church was celebrated on Sunday, September 5, 1982, with the dedication of the addition. Over 330 people were in attendance to worship and to hear guest preachers Rev. Norman Nelson, Minden, Nebraska, and Rev. Ludwig Scholl, Cedaredge, Colorado.

St. John welcomed the newly-installed Central District Bishop, Rev. Wayne Weissenbuehler, to its pulpit on Sunday, October 4, 1982. He also preached at St. John's sister congregation, Immanuel Lutheran in WaKeeney, and visited with parishioners at a noon meal served at St. John. During the afternoon, while an A.L.C.W. meeting was being held, many people, including Bishop Weissenbuehler, played softball, and at the conclusion of meeting and game, the Luther League hosted an ice cream social.

At the 1983 annual meeting, discussion concerned the necessity of reroofing the church. Most agreed that the work needed to be done and asked the council to seek more information and estimates. Rev. Ellingson accepted a call to rural Sumner and Waucoma, Iowa, in May, preaching his farwell sermon on June 26, 1983.

Wartburg Seminary graduates George and Susan Candea-Kromm were called by Immanuel and St. John churches in October 1983, and began their ministry as the first ordained husband and wife pastoral team for either church after their October 23 installation. Prior to the arrival of the Candea-Kromms and their sons, Nathan and Jon David, siding was installed on the parsonage exterior and some interior remodeling was done. Bill Dietz of Ellis assumed the duties of choir director, replacing Irmgard Ellingson, and later organized a choir of high school students as well.

Ceiling fans were installed in the church and a new road side sign with lighting was built by members of the congregation in 1984. The roof was repaired and re-shingled in 1985. Bell tower repairs were made in 1986, and the cemetery's south fence was removed for expansion. The congregation rejoiced with the pastors in October 1986 at the birth of their third child, Bryan, and the two parishes joined in celebrating Bryan's baptism on the first Sunday of Advent at St. John.

In 1987 the membership of St. John Lutheran Church includes 208 baptized persons, and of that total, 43 are children who are enrolled in the Sunday School.¹⁰ As one

reads the list of family names in the membership list, it is apparent that the fourth and fifth generation descendants of the Bukovina-German immigrants are part of this community of faith. There are also new surnames, as people of other backgrounds have moved to the area and have been welcomed into the fellowship.

With the merger of the American Lutheran Church (A.L.C.), the Lutheran Church in America (L.C.A.), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (A.E.L.C.), effective on January 1, 1988, St. John and Christ Lutheran Churches will be once again members of the same nationwide church body. The body formed by this merger will be called the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (E.L.C.A.).

Notes

¹From the time that St. John Lutheran Church was founded until 1980, the Sacrament of Holy Communion was offered to parishioners three or four times annually: on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and one other time which was determined by the pastor. Parishioners met with the pastor prior to the communion service to assure that they were prepared to receive the Sacrament worthily in keeping with Biblical teaching in I Corinthians 11: 27-29.

²St. John Lutheran Church Parish Records, vol. 1, 398.

³"Pom-pom-pull-a-way" is a children's game. It is similar to the game of "tag" but in "Pom-pom-pull-a-way" the players make a dash for a goal when the person who is leading the game calls "Pom-pom, pull away! Come or I'll pull you away!"

⁴German potatoes, or hot potato salads, are made by cooking peeled and sliced potatoes in a gravy of ham juice, flour, water, chopped onions, sour cream, vinegar, and seasonings.

⁵St. John Lutheran Church Parish Records, vol. 1, 400.

⁶Ibid., 401.

⁷Ibid. ⁸Ellis Review, 9 December, 1982.

⁹St. John Lutheran Church Parish Records, vol. 2, n.p.

¹⁰Kathryn W. Bearwald, The American Lutheran Church 1987 Yearbook (Minneapolis, MN : Augsburg Publishing House, 1986), 299.

¹¹This is the first church which was built in 1898, struck by lightning in 1919, and moved to 1403 Monroe Street in Ellis when the present church was built in 1921. (Photo courtesy of Adamine Schonthalder Keller and Aug. and Edna Schonthalder).

CHAPTER V

WHAT HAPPENED TO BUKOVINA ?

Emigration from Bukovina to the Ellis County, Kansas, area began in 1866 and ceased by the time that World War I began in 1914. For the next twenty years there was still contact between the people of Kansas and their friends and relatives in Bukovina, but as the years passed, these contacts dwindled. A few people, such as Franz Keller (see Chapter III), did travel to Bukovina to visit, and some, Karoline Glass Zerfass's father Jakob Glass, for example, and Michael and Anna Keller, abandoned Kansas farmsteads to re-establish homes in Bukovina. Such cases, however, were the exception rather than the rule.¹ The Kansas settlers lacked the time and the financial resources for trips halfway around the world.

A number of Kansas families did send money and/or clothing to people in Bukovina to help them emigrate to the United States or to assist them in their need. By the time that World War II began, these contacts diminished as well. The developing farms, growing families, church, and school occupied the Bukovina-Germans who lived in Kansas.

Several generations have now passed, and it is not surprising that much concerning Bukovina has been forgotten. Due to the changing political alliances and boundaries of Europe during the past seventy-five years, it is difficult to find a map which shows Bukovina. People speak of traveling to Austria in hopes of visiting it but are unable to find it upon arriving in Vienna. Where, then, is Bukovina? How could one find it and the villages from which one's ancestors emigrated? Are there still German relatives living there? This chapter will attempt to describe the events of the twentieth century

in that region and, in so doing, will answer some of these questions.

The population growth and resulting economic hardships which faced the residents of Bukovina during the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s has been discussed as has the emigration to other parts of Europe and North and South America. From some villages, as many as one-half of all inhabitants emigrated between 1898 and 1914.² But as bad as conditions were, they soon deteriorated. The province of Bukovina was located along the southern end of the eastern front during World War I and was occupied on three different occasions by the Russian army.

Russian troops began to leave Illischestie on February 1, 1918, to be replaced by Romanian forces. The Romanians left on March 3, and Austrian soldiers once more occupied the village. Upon the signing of a peace treaty in Bucharest, Romania, on April 24, the residents of Illischestie hoped for more peaceful times. Although their barns, houses, and cupboards were virtually empty, the people still had roofs over their heads and they had means with which to resume daily life. Of course, there was grief and sorrow in many homes: 170 men from Illischestie had died during the war and as many as 50 men returned as invalids. Others had spent time in Russia or in Italy as prisoners of war.³ Many able-bodied men were therefore casualties of war and as such were unable to participate in the post-war rebuilding work.

In the wake of the war the government and monarchy of Austria-Hungary collapsed during the autumn of 1918. Ukrainian and Romanian nationalists each attempted to gain control of Bukovina, with support for the former coming from Ukrainian nationalists who lived across the northern border, and with support for the latter coming from the Romanians who were across Bukovina's southern border. The Ukrainians wished to divide Bukovina in half at the Sereth river, but the Romanians claimed the entire region and sent their Eighth Division into the province. By November 11, the day on which the Austrian

emperor abdicated, a Romanian army division had occupied Bukovina's capital, Czernowitz, and the provisional government of the Kingdom of Romania assumed control of Bukovina.

Land was still scarce in Bukovina, and a new surge of emigration began in 1920. In an attempt to deal with this problem, the government carried out a land reform program from 1921 to 1924. The government seized private landholdings and reallocated them, generally to the benefit of ethnic Romanians. Since ethnic Germans had little land to seize and received no land in this reform, they were not really affected by it.

A more serious problem for the Bukovina-Germans was that of protecting their right to use the German language. Since their ancestors had first come to the area, they had been assured of their continuing right to use their native language in school, in church, in publications, in business and in the arts. But the Romanian government interfered with this practice. The German-language newspapers were closed or submitted to close censorship. The Bukovina-Germans had a publicly supported school system from the primary through the university levels, which in 1913 included seventy-three public and fourteen private elementary schools, two teacher training institutes, and the Franz-Joseph University in Czernowitz as well as about sixty elementary schools which offered parallel classes in German as described in Chap. III.⁴ Only one of the seventy-three German public schools remained open in 1928. The Hungarian, Polish, and Ukrainian schools met a similar fate. Although the majority of the country was non-Romanian, according to a 1930 census, they had to comply with the new school laws passed in 1924 and 1925. Teachers had to pass a Romanian language examination even if they taught in a minority language; instruction in Romanian literature, geography, and history was required in all schools.⁵ Increasingly difficult requirements were made of German or other minority students who sought to continue their education beyond the village school in a high school, or perhaps at the university; financial aid was not available to

these minority students after 1936. Only in 1938, when the Romanian government was attempting to make concessions to Germany, were plans made to reopen the German-language schools, but the plans never came to fruition.⁶

The economic conditions of the Bukovina-Germans worsened in these years. A 1937 visitor to the area wrote that "the earning in normal times suffices neither to live nor to die. The arable land, on the average about a half hectare per family, is hardly enough to supply their nutritional needs. Children and adults are therefore more or less all undernourished. The village leaders say that if this continues another ten years, the village is doomed."⁷ Life was full of economic hardships and political uncertainty.

The "Confidential Protocol" attached to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 forever changed the lives of the ethnic Germans of Bukovina by providing for the transfer to the Reich of the German population from the territories annexed by the Soviet Union in the fall of 1939. Under the terms of a further German-Soviet agreement on September 5, 1940, anyone who had at least one German grandparent could apply to a joint Soviet-German commission for relocation to Germany.⁸ This included the Germans of northern Bukovina.

Soviet military forces occupied northern Bukovina in June 1940. They effected confiscations, arrests, and deportations and joined local looters in ransacking homes and businesses abandoned in the chaos and panic. The stores were reopened as Soviet state-owned shops but food was in short supply and citizens had to stand in long lines to receive whatever might be available. Forty-three thousand ethnic Germans from northern Bukovina registered with the Soviet-German Commission for relocation to Germany at about this time. Each was able to take only fifty kilograms of luggage, and each migrant's remaining belongings were assessed for later compensation by a German government resettlement trusteeship fund. These Bukovina Germans left the area by November 1940, traveling by railroad from Czernowitz to Cracow and then to camps in Silesia.

The German and Romanian governments agreed in October 1940 to allow Germans to emigrate voluntarily from southern Bukovina. These Bukovina-Germans began their preparations for resettlement knowing how near the Soviet forces were and seeing that the future held no promise for a return to the freedom and civil liberties which had been a part of the past. With only four exceptions, the entire village of Illischestie registered for resettlement by November 23, 1940.⁹ Johann Christian Dressler wrote that during the subsequent packing process, so many wooden boxes were nailed together in Illischestie that there was a shortage of boards and nails in the surrounding area. Only six railroad cars carried the possessions which over two thousand Illischestie Germans were allowed to take with them, and between November 28 and December 12, six other trains, each carrying an average of over four hundred people, departed from the Illischestie depot. This brought to an end the 150 year history of German settlement in Bukovina.¹⁰

Until homes could be found for them, the immigrants were quartered in all kinds of camp buildings in Austria or in Germany. Some waited for months before they were able to leave the relocation camps in which they had to endure winter cold, hunger, confusion, and lack of privacy.

The Bukovina-Germans were declared to be citizens of Germany in May 1941 and were relocated in Germany. Others were settled in the cities of Bielitz and Biala, in Teschen, as well as in the Warthegau.¹¹ Those in Germany generally worked in factories or in industry, while those settled in Polish territory were placed upon farms which the German government had confiscated from Polish owners. Often this confiscation took place without any prior notification and the Bukovina-Germans had to witness the immediate eviction of the farms' rightful owners and begin to work the dispossessed farms. A further complication came when able-bodied men were drafted into the army beginning in late 1941 and women and children were left to carry on as best they could.

The resettlement of these Bukovina-Germans, as well as that of ethnic Germans from provinces located further to the

east, placed them near the war's eastern front during the closing months of World War II. Eventually they were caught between the advancing Soviet and the retreating German armies. If possible, German-speaking people sought to flee to the west with the German army rather than to remain on the Polish farms to await Soviet occupation under which they would face arrest, deportation to Siberia, or execution as traitors to the U.S.S.R. The German-speaking settlers, including the Bukovina-Germans, left eastern Poland in horse drawn wagons; some pushed baby carriages or wheelbarrows loaded with provisions, and many walked almost 800 miles to reach American or British forces while in constant danger of attacks from hostile Poles. They also ran risks of being caught in infantry cross-fire, of being run over by tanks, and of being strafed by aircraft. During the first five months of 1945, as the war in Europe drew to a close, over twenty per cent of the Bukovina-Germans died or were killed on the flight to the west before the Soviet army.¹²

At the end of World War II families had been separated in the chaos and people wandered throughout Europe in search of missing spouses, children, or parents. Those who did indeed reach the American or British zones were fortunate; some Bukovina-Germans who were captured by Soviet troops on the banks of the Oder River were deported or executed. Soviet officials refused to acknowledge the German citizenship papers which were carried by ethnic Germans from northern Bukovina, and treated them as traitors and deserters of the U.S.S.R., shipping them to forced labor camps.¹³ One group of Bukovina-Germans did manage to return to the Romanian part of Bukovina, located south of the Sereth river, but upon their arrival the Romanian government stripped them of their civil rights and put them to work as laborers and field hands in their native villages.¹⁴

The end of the war brought economic crisis and poverty to Germany. Twelve million refugees and displaced persons had come to Austria and Germany from throughout eastern Europe and Soviet-occupied provinces, creating shortages of jobs, housing,

food and other necessities.¹⁵ The ensuing economic collapse forced the formation of a new monetary system which wiped out any meager savings which might have been accumulated. The Bukovina-Germans who had survived the war faced poverty and deprivation with everyone else.

The German-speaking refugees who came to the Federal Republic of Germany formed various associations of people sharing the same province of origin in an effort to meet such basic needs as food, clothing, and shelter. Representing one-fifth of the total West German population, the refugees became and have remained a significant political force in these associations or Landsmannschaften.¹⁶ The Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen (Association of Bukovina-Germans) is one of twenty similar organizations which speak for the refugees and displaced persons in West Germany. These twenty Landsmannschaften have joined in supporting the Heimatrecht, a people's right to a homeland, and in supporting a reunified Germany. Both goals are to be attained without violence, revenge or hatred. They have also joined in endorsing the Charta der deutschen Heimatvertriebenen or "Charter of Germans Expelled from their Homelands," in which the undersigned agree to "support all forces which are directed to the creation of a unified Europe in which all people can live without fear or coercion."¹⁷

Are there still Germans in Bukovina? Yes, but only about two thousand remain there. Northern Bukovina is still occupied by the U.S.S.R. and the south is under Romanian administration. Germans who live in Romania can apply for exit visas and one thousand per month are allowed to emigrate to West Germany.¹⁸

Do any visible signs remain of the Germans' 150 year settlement in Bukovina? The German schools, churches, theaters, clubs, and homes may still be in existence in some cases, but even if they have not been destroyed, they have been converted to other uses.¹⁹

Letters written in June 1948, by Illischestie's school director, Georg Pascan, and his wife, describe the community

as it existed in the post-war years. The village no longer bears any resemblance to its appearance during the years of German settlement. "When I arrived in Illischestie and saw it all," Mrs. Pascan wrote, "what shall I tell you, it is not to be believed. Where once there were carefully tended gardens and picturesque homes, there are now thistles and thorns, ruins and ashes."²⁰

"In May I visited the German cemetery in Illischestie," wrote George Pascan. "The cross has vanished from your wife's grave, apparently stolen by some unreligious person. That which I saw there revolted me to the depths of my soul. I asked myself, what wrongs were committed by those who rest here in the Lord, and why were their graves profaned? I believe, however, the Almighty God will reward each according to his deeds."²¹

These observations are confirmed by a recent visitor to Illischestie who noted that the German settlers' cemetery was neglected and forgotten except by Romanian farmers who were busy cutting hay there.²²



The Kipper family monument in the German cemetery of Illischestie. (Photo by Max Zelgin, courtesy of Dr. Paula Tiefenthaler of the Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen, e.V.)

Notes

- ¹Michael and Anna Keller eventually returned to and remained in Kansas. Michael was a son of Franz Keller who is mentioned above.
- ²Welisch, "The Second World War Resettlement of the Bukovina Germans," Immigrants and Minorities 3 (March 1984): 50.
- ³Dressler, Chronik, 168-169.
- ⁴Welisch, "The Bukovina-Germans in the Interwar Period," East European Quarterly 14 (Winter 1980): 431.
- ⁵Ibid., 432.
- ⁶Ibid., 431-433.
- ⁷Welisch, "The Second World War Resettlement," 50.
- ⁸Welisch, "The Bukovina-Germans in the Interwar Period," 433.
- ⁹Dressler, Chronik, 479.
- ¹⁰Ibid., 480-483.
- ¹¹Welisch, "The Second World War Resettlement," 55-56; Dressler, Chronik, 509.
- ¹²Welisch, "The Second World War Resettlement," 57.
- ¹³Ibid., 57.
- ¹⁴Ibid.; Dressler, Chronik, 532-546.
- ¹⁵Welisch, "The Second World War Resettlement," 58.
- ¹⁶Ibid., 60.
- ¹⁷Ibid., 63.
- ¹⁸Ibid.
- ¹⁹The book Bukowina: Landschaften -- Bauten -- Denkmäler (Bukovina: Landscapes -- Buildings -- Monuments) Muenchen: Landsmannschaft der Buchenlanddeutschen, n.d.) has been prepared by Irma Bornemann and Dr. Paula Tiefenthaler to show the historical and the present-day Bukovina with photographs of landscapes, settlements, and towns.
- ²⁰Dressler, Chronik, 551.
- ²¹Ibid., 551-552.
- ²²Emma Hoffman, interview by author, June 1985.

APPENDIX A

The first German families immigrated to Galicia, in what was then eastern Austria, early in the 1780s and arrived in Bukovina in 1787.

Listed below are the villages in Bukovina which received German settlers, with the family names of the settlers and their village and Kreis (county) of origin in Germany.

More detailed information is available in Johann Christian Dressler's book, Chronik der Bukowiner Landgemeinde Illischestie, in Ludwig Schneider's Das Kolonisationswerk Josefs II in Galizien, and in a book prepared by Dr. Josef Kallbrunner and Dr. Franz Wilhelm, Quellen zur deutschen Siedlungsgeschichte in Südeuropa. All three books are part of the archives of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 631 'D' Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68202.

Village	Family	Place of Origin
Alt-Fratautz	Böhmer, Behmer Borger, Lorger Brucker Emich Fritz Ganter Kissinger Kühle Kurtz Radmacher Reh Rein Schäfer Schneeberger Taub, Daub Wagner	Schönborn, Kreis Rockenhaus Esch, Kr. Untertaunus Lindenschied, Kr. Bernkastel Ilbesheim, Kr. Kirchheim- bolanden Kröftel, Kr. Untertaunus Oberriexingen, Kr. Vaihingen Steinbach, Kr. Rockenhausen Limbach, Kr. Kreuznach Volklingen, Kr. Saarbrücken Dalsheim, Kr. Worms Ötisheim, Kr. Vaihingen Bosen, Kr. Birkenfeld Gündelsbach, Kr. Maulbronn Simmern, Kr. Kreuznach Mariantal, Kr. Rockenhausen Volklingen, Kr. Saarbrücken

Satulmare	Mang	Trippstadt, Kr. Kaiser- slautern
	Nunweiler	Mörschied Kr. Birkenfeld
	Schmidt	Mühlheim, Kr. Frankenthal
	Schmidt	Durlach, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Schneider	Remmingsheim, Kr. Tübingen
	Staudt	Seesbach, Kr. Kreuznach
	Weber	Mörschied, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Hubich	see listing for Tereblestie
Milleschoutz -	Becher	Guntersblum, Kr. Mainz
Badeutz	Glass	Gechingen, Kr. Calw
	Glass	Gechingen, Kr. Calw
	Haas	Medard, Kr. Kreuznach
	Haas	Medard, Kr. Kreuznach
	Hamann	Kleinkarlbach, Kr. Franken- thal
	Meyer	Bad Münster, Kr. Kreuznach
	Rohrmann	Guntersblum, Kr. Mainz
	Stressle	Lamm, Kr. Ludwigsburg
	Walther	Holbornerhof, Kr. Kaiser- slautern
St. Onufry	Taub, Daub	Alsenz, Kr. Rockenhausen
	Taub, Daub	Alsenz, Kr. Rockenhausen
	Fuchs	Haibach, Kr. Aschaffenburg
	Fuchs	Haibach, Kr. Aschaffenburg
	Gruber	Haag, Kr. Bernkastel
	Kohler, Koller	Schura, Kr. Tuttlingen
	Schmidt	Gundersheim, Kr. Worms
	Schmidt	Ellwangen, Kr. Aalen
	Weber	Kerbersdorf, Kr. Schlüchtern
Arbora	Burghard	Morbach, Kr. Kaiserslautern
	Leib	Sötern, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Leib	Sötern, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Nähr, Nehr, Neher	Dürrwangen, Kr. Dinkelsbühl or Dewanger, Kr. Aalen
	Mathes, Matheis	Altweiler, Kr. Elsass
	Neu	Siegelbach, Kr. Kaiser- slautern
	Schlotter	Renfritzhausen, Kr. Horb
	Schlotter	Leidringen, Kr. Balingen
	Wagner	Oberlinxweiler, Kr. St. Wendel
	Würth, Wirth	Jettenbach, Kr. Kusel
Neu-Itzkany	Arend	Schwarzenbach, Kr. Birken- feld
	Engel	Rinzenberg, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Gehrmann	Baumholder, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Hodel	Wartenburg, Kr. Rockenhausen
	Kornelson	Holstein
	Rau	Zeilhard, Kr. Dieburg
	Rau	Zeilhard, Kr. Dieburg
	Hermann	Heidesheim, Kr. Frankenthal
	Seitz	"Warbaden in the Palatinate"

Illischestie	Bock	Löhnberg, Oberlandkreis
	Brenner	Brücken, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Friedge, Fricke	Wallertheim, Kr. Alzey
	Hassel	Badenheim, Kr. Bingen
	Haupt	Reipoltskirchen, Kr. Kusel
	Hunker, Hunger	Vöhringen, Kr. Horb
	Irion	Talheim, Kr. Tuttlingen
	Kerth	Waldgrehweiler, Kr. Rocken- hausen
	Klemens	Wurmberg, Kr. Vaihingen
	Pelz	Hahn, Kr. Untertaunus
Tereblestie	Theilmann	Wurmberg, Kr. Vaihingen
	Welker	Saarbrücken, St. Johann
	Zachmann	Kieselbronn, Kr. Pforzheim
	Dirr, Dörr, Dür	Simmozheim, Kr. Calw
	Hubich	Völklingen, Kr. Saarbrücken
	Pfeifer	Rinzenberg, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Sauer	Hattgenstein, Kr. Birkenfeld
	Scherle	Zillhausen, Kr. Balingen
	Schrey	Schröck, Leopoldshafen, Kr. Karlsruhe
	Teuscher	Eggenstein, Kr. Karlsruhe
	Deutscher	
	Weber	Herborn, Kr. Birkenfeld

APPENDIX B

The Lutheran Church in Bukovina was organized into eleven parishes by 1933 and included 21,395 parishioners according to Handwörterbuch des Grenz- und Auslanddeutschtums, 634-635.

<u>Parish & Date</u> <u>of Establishment</u>	<u>Affiliated Communities &</u> <u>Missionary Stations</u>
Radautz, 1791	Satulmare Badeutz Milleschoutz Arbora
Czernowitz, 1791	Unter-Stanestie
Jakobeni, 1852	Dorna Watra Kirlibaba
Illischestie, 1858	Gurahumora Korlata Mazanaesti Stupca Dragoesti Lucacesti Balaceana Brasca
Neu-Itzkany, 1902	Mitoka-Dragomirna Suczawa
Adancata, 1902	Taraseni
Tereblestie, 1905	Sereth
Alt-Fratautz, 1908	Neu-Fratautz
Storozynetz, 1923	Jadova Nikolausdorf Katharinendorf Alexanderdorf
Eisenau, 1925	Frasin, Freudental
Pojoritta, 1925	Luisental, Kimpolung

APPENDIX C

Bukovina-Germans began to emigrate to Kansas in 1886. A partial compilation of the names, birthdates, and fathers' names of emigrant family heads is given here, with the year of departure. Every family listed here originated in Illischestie.

For additional information see Dressler, Chronik der Bukowiner Landgemeinde Illischestie, pp. 356-362. Additional sources for this list include the 1905 Standard Atlas of Ellis County, Kansas; Buried Ties to the "Old Country," by Eileen Langley, and interviews with Emma Ast Hoffman, Erma Wendling Tomasheck, and Adamine Schonthaler Keller.

<u>Year of Departure</u>	<u>Family Head</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Father of Family Head</u>
1886	Ast, Philipp	11-30-1865	
1886	Ast, Jakob	05-08-1862	
1886	Huber, Johann		
1887	Zachmann, Johann		
1887	Wendling, Wilhelm	03-09-1860	Wilhelm
1888	Ast, Jakob	04-18-1827	
1888	Huber, Georg	12-08-1850	
1889	Keller, Jakob	12-21-1871	Michael
1892	König, Anna	08-11-1841	Friedrich
1892	König, Christian	01-31-1854	Friedrich
1892	König, Henriette	03-20-1863	Friedrich
1892	König, Martin	03-03-1871	Friedrich
1893	Kerth, Johann	11-24-1858	Christian
1893	Schonthaler, Adam	09-25-1854	Johann
1893	Zachmann, Wendel	06-23-1851	
1893	Zerfass, Philipp	01-01-1858	Friedrich
1894	Keller, Michael	09-27-1857	Michael
1894	Schonthaler, Jakob	01-28-1850	Johann
1898	Fries Frank		

1899	Keller, Franz	06-11-1846	
1899	Irion, Michael	09-28-1871	Jakob
1902	Mai, Friedrich	04-16-1863	
1902	Sauer, Adam		
1902	Sauer, Jakob		
1902	Sauer, Johann		
1902	Sauer, Franz		
1902	Rumpel, Heinrich	08-02-1860	
1905	Armbrüster, Johann	06-24-1862	Johann
1905	Armbrüster, Phillip	05-17-1849	
1911	Ast, Emma	03-30-1898	Jakob
1911	Hofmann, Johann	11-18-1887	Friedrich
1912	Keller, Michael	07-17-1850	Franz
1912	Ast. Jakob		
1913	Wendling, Friedrich	04-13-1886	Jakob

APPENDIX D

The 1897 membership list for St. John Lutheran Church, Ellis, Kansas

* indicates that the head of the household was a charter member.

Ast, Adam and Karoline (Schönthal^uer)
Ast, Friedrich and Anna
*Ast, Jakob and Katharina (Wendling)
Ast, Joseph
Dietrich, W.
Egger, Alfred and Aurelie (Schönthal^uer)
Gerken, Mrs. J.
Heitmann, Hermann
*Hamburg, Ernest and Luise (Huber)
*Homburg, Wilhelm and Katharina (Huber)
*Huber, Georg and Elisabeth (Knieling)
*Huber, John and Klara (Zachman)
*Joswakowsky, Gustav and Augusta (Sitz)
*Kerth, Johan and Katharina (Ast)
*Keller, Michael and Barbara (Glass)
König, Anton
König, Martin
*König, W. and Caroline
Krumpfuss, Mrs. Bine (Ast)
Mülheim, A. and Clara (Fritz)
Schauss, Anton and Henriette (König Ast)
Schauss, Henry and Katharina (Schaffer)
*Schönthal^uer, Adam and Maria (Hofman)
*Schönthal^uer, Jakob and Karolina (Kerth)
Sessin, Hermann and Louise (Glass)
*Sitz, Gustav
*Wendling, Wilhelm and Christine (Werb)
*Zachmann, Wendell and Louisa (Hoffman)
*Zerfass, Philipp and Karolina (Glass)

APPENDIX E

The 1907 charter members of Ellis Lutheran Church, Ellis, Kansas

Armbriester, Christ and Maria (Krumpfus)
Armbriester, Jacob and Eva (Wendling)
Deutscher, Mrs. Carolina (Massier) and family
Huber, John
Joswakowsky, Carl and Gustaf
Kelsch, John and Katharina (Armbriester)
Kerth, John and Katherine (Ast)
Koenig, Mrs. Karolina, and family
Koenig, Martin and Karolina (Sweitzer)
Krumpfus, Mrs. Bena (Ast)
Kuppetz, John and Ludowicka (Massier)
Loser, John and Maria (Rohlfs)
Manz, Philip and Adamina (Schafer)
Massier, Samuel and Susanna (Schaeffer), and family
Mohr, Martin, and wife
Muhlheim, Arnold Sr. and family
Nimijean, Adam
Reiss, George
Sauer, Adam
Sauer, Friedrich and Elisabeth (Wallner)
Sauer, John and Barbara (Rumpel), and family
Sauer, Karl
Sauer, Wilhelm and Maria (Geyer)
Schaus, Heinrich and Katharina (Schafer)
Scheske, Hulda (Hesse) and family
Schafer, John and Marie (Wendling)
Sitz, Gustaf and family
Spreen, Wilhelm and Louise (Zerfas)
Wagg, Mrs. Leon (Barbara Rathmacher)
Walz, Ernest and Johanna (King) and family
Wendling, Jacob
Wendling, John and Minnie (Krumpfus)

APPENDIX F

The 1910 membership list of St. John Lutheran Church, Ellis, Kansas

Armbrüster, Adam and Maria; Johann, Franz, Heinrich, Adamina

Armbrüster, Johan and Anna (Haas); Heinrich, Jakob, Christian, Maria, Franz, Louise, Fritz, Anna, Karolina, Adam, Wilhelm

Armbrüster, Johan and Susanna (Armbrüster); John, Friedrich, Ernst Heinrich, Richard

Armbrüster, Philipp and Annie (Kroeger); Anna, Oskar

Armbrüster, Philipp and Karoline; Jennie

Deutscher, John and Klara (Huber); Johann, Karl, Helene

Egger, Fred and Aurelie (Schönthaler); John, Ernst, Bertha

Fries, John and Minnie (Dietrich); Theresa

Fries, Frank (widower, spouse was Theresia Werb); Rudolf, Barbara, Franz, Carrie

Fries, Fred and Louise (Zachmann); Joseph, Walter, Agnes Richard

Hamburg, Ernst and Louise (Huber); Fritz, Elisabeth, Klara, Herrmann, Eduard, Wilhelmine, Adna

Homburg, Wilhelm and Katharina (Huber); Heinrich, Wilhelm, Anna, Martha, Ernst, Maria, Fritz, August

Huber, Frank and Jette; Martha, Minnie, Mary, Franz, Fritz, Ida

Huber, Frank G. and Louise (Keller); Oskar, Else

Huber, Georg and Elisabeth (Knieling); Marie, Walter

Huber, John and Jennie (Huber); Otto, Lizzie, Viola, Anna, Frieda

Huber, Mrs. John (Klara Zachman)

Huber, Wilhelm and Jacobine (König); Christ, Willy, Mary, Oskar, Klara, Louise, Johann

Huck, Christ and Susanna (Huber); Willy, Mary, Minnie, Lydia, Walter, Christ, Carry, John, Klara, Joseph

Irion, Michael and Katharina (Fries); Mina, Fritz,
Klara, Jakob, Else, Oskar

Janz, Joseph and Louise (König); Mina, John, Carrie,
Fritz, Ida, Ella, Martha

Keller, Franz and Marie (Wendling); Karl, John, Minnie

Keller, Fritz and Louise (Schönthaler); Willy, Frieda

Keller, Heinrich and Jennie (Zachman); Wendell, Gerhard

Keller, Jacob and Anna (Kerth); Carrie, John, Rudolph,
Michael, Ida, Mary, Katharina, Ernst, Anna, Wilhelm

Keller, Jacob and Minnie (Huber); Oskar

Keller, Michael and Anna (Wendling); Emma, Richard,
Ernst, Caroline, Jennie, Frieda

Keller, Michael (widower of Barbara Glass) and Henriette
(König, widow of Philipp Ast and of Anton Schaus); Carrie,
Franz, Valentin (Faldin), John, Albert, Ella

Kerth, Johann and Eva (Armbrüster); Fritz, Jacob,
Christian, Michael, Ernst

Kroeger, Charl. and Louise (Denker); Heinrich, Karl,
Lydia, Sophie

Kroeger, Fritz and Johanna (Werb)

Kroeger, Louis and Minnie (Armbrüster); Henry, Frieda

Mai, Fred and Minnie (Armbrüster); Anna, Maria

Massier, Adam and Minnie (Homburg)

Reich, Otto and Pauline (Huber); Bernice, Willy Mai
(adopted)

Sauer, Ferdinand (widower of Anna Huber) and Julie;
Georg

Sauer, Franz and Susanna (König); Kate, Ernst, Walter,
Heinrich, Wilhelm, Marie

Sauer, John and Barbara (Rumpel); Eva, Johanna, Aurelia,
Louise, Maria

Schauss, John and Mina (Wendling); Edgar, Adna, Frieda,
Joseph (John's brother)

Schönthaler, A. J. and Elisabeth (Schauss); Ida Maria

Schönthaler, Adam Sr. and Marie (Hoffman); Wendell,
Fritz, Carrie, John, Ernst, Richard

Schönthaler, E. A. and Barbara (Zerfas); Mina, Mathilda,
Willy Tomasheck (adopted)

Schonthaler, Jacob J. and Maria (Schauss-Ast, daughter
of Philipp Ast, stepdaughter of Anton Schaus); Ella, Martin,
Wilhelm, Ernst, Martha, Gerhardt

Schönthaler, Jacob Sr. and Karolina (Kerth); John,
Franz, Louise, Henrietta, Fritz

Adam Schönthal^{er}, Joseph and Amalia (Deutscher); Willy, Ida
 Spilker, Louis and Maria (Welking); Minnie, Ida, Marie,
 Anna, Lizzie, Martha, Johanna, Karoline, Luise
 Wendling, Wilhelm and Christine (Werb); Lora, Carrie,
 Willy, Edgar Mai (adopted)
 Zachman, Fred and Marie (Keller); Ernst, Richard, Ida,
 Wilhelm, Frieda, Martha
 Zachman, John and Jacobine (Kerth); Minna, Wendell,
 Else, Oskar, Adna, Margaret
 Zachman, Mrs. Wendell (Louise Hoffman); Joseph, Eva
 Zerfas, John and Marie (Schönthal^{er}); John, Frank,
 Fritz, Ernst, Johanna Schumm (adopted)
 Zerfas, Philipp and Karoline (Glass); Fritz, Heinrich,
 Rosa, Willy, Richard, Anna, Edgar Tomasheck (a grandson),
 Maria Schumm (adopted)

Undated Additions to the 1910 Membership List

Ast, Adam and Emma (Kroeger); Ludwig, Karl
 Ast, Adam and Karoline (Schönthal^{er}); Mina, Bertha,
 Jacob, John, Adolf
 Bosowicki, Joseph and Luise (Werb)
 Gassner, Fritz and Johanna
 Gassner, John and Maria
 Knieling, John Sr; John Jr., Fritz
 Kön^{ig}, Fritz and Bertha (Schönthal^{er}); Ernst, Fritz,
 Henrietta, Clarence

Other Family Names Appearing in Early Church Records

Berschauer	Kressin
Blöhm	Metzler
Brink	Mueller
Brockmann	Naasz
Cahoon	Niebuhr
Cordell	Roos
Ehrichs	Rühling
Enselmann	Scherle
Gallison	Schauber
Geyer	Shubert
Graham	Tegtmeyer
Heneke	Tetzlaff
Hillmann	Tomasheck
Kieper	Wallner
Kirckheck	Wolff

APPENDIX G

Clergy Who Have Served St. John and Christ Lutheran Churches

Ellis, Kansas

St. John Lutheran Church and Ellis Lutheran Church (later Christ Lutheran Church) shared pastoral services during two separate periods of time, 1894-1907 and 1912-1923. Since 1923, the two churches have been members of different Lutheran synods, and have functioned independently of one another.

St. John and Ellis Lutheran Churches

E. Gentner	1894-1897
Theodore Maier	1897-1898
Bruno Huhn	1899-1902
F. W. Mensing	1902-1905
G. A. Doering	1905-1907

St. John

F. W. Mensing	1907-1909
Johann Hiltner	1909-1912

Ellis/Christ

Johann Holzberger	1907-1912
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St. John and Ellis Lutheran Churches

Johann Hiltner	1912-1914
Gottfried Kolb	1915-1921
John Bunge	1921-1923

St. John

Ernest Bruegel	1923-1927
Daniel Scholl	1927-1944
Werner Heuer	1945-1947
Claus Meyn	1947-1955
Luther Wachholz	1955-1960
Elmer Sprecher	1960-1963
Norman Nelson	1964-1979
Wayne Ellingson	1980-1983
George Candea-Kromm	1983-
Susan Candea-Kromm	1983-

Christ

John Bunge	1923-1927
Rudolph Moehring	1928-1932
Victor Pietzko	1933-1935
Otto Heick	1936-1947
Warren Churchill	1947-1950
William Goede	1950-1955
J. Franklin Schirck	1955-1968
William Jones	1968-1970
Melvin Peterson	1971-1978
W. Joseph Bullock	1978-

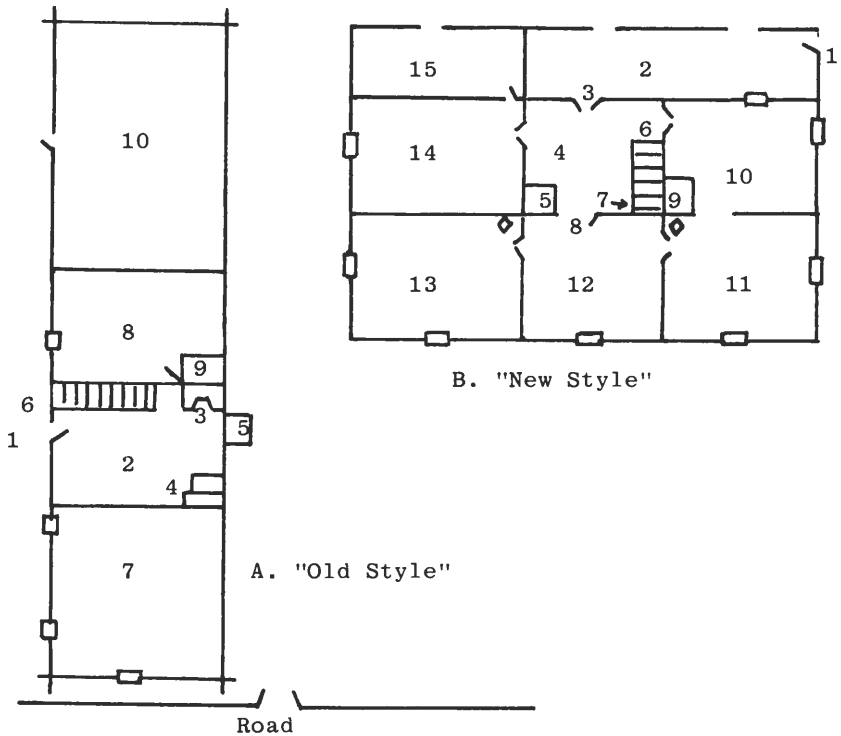


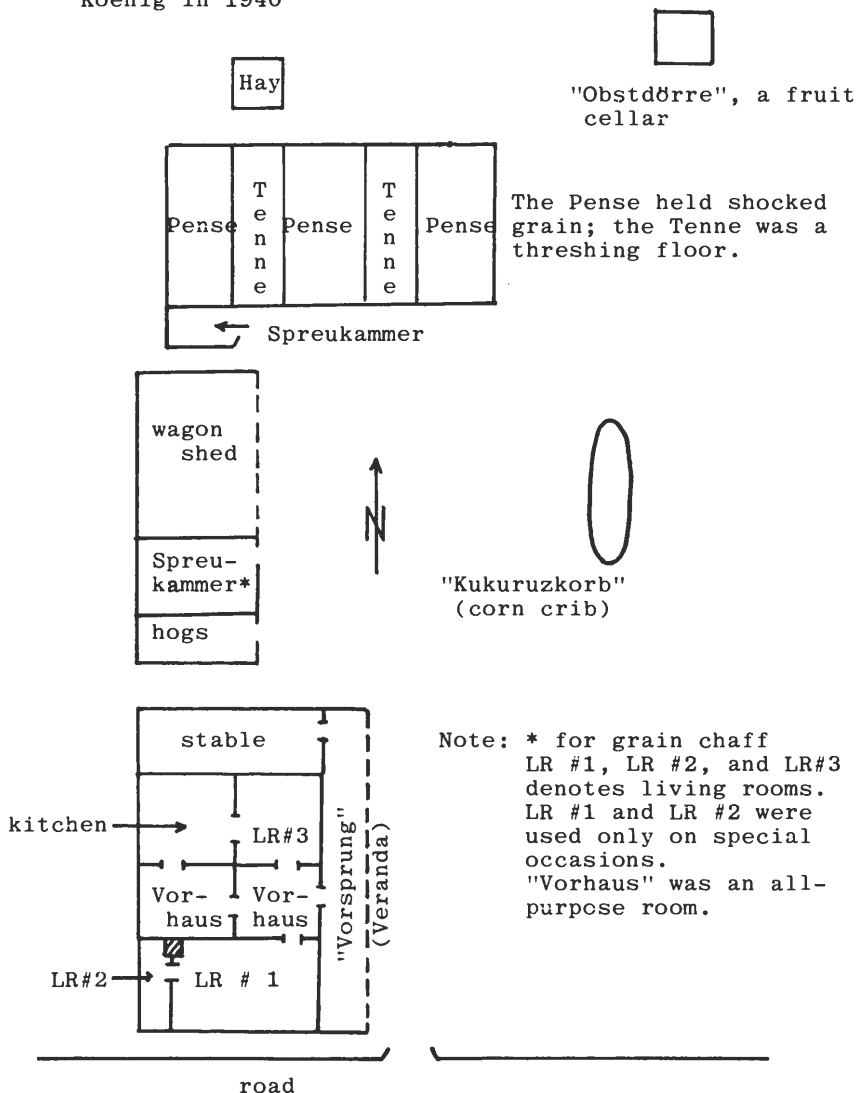
Figure "A" is of the "old style" house which was built at the time of German settlement in Bukovina. 1. is the entry, 2. the "middle room" with kitchen, 3. chimney, 4. cooking stove, 5. baking oven, 6. stairway, 7. living room, 8. another living room, 9. winter heating stove, 10. stable.

Figure "B" is of the "new style" which later came into use. 1. is the entry, 2. the veranda, 3. an entry of double doors, 4. front room, 5. summer stove, 6. cellar stairway, 7. cellar door, 8. passage way, 9. winter heating stove, 10-14. living- and bedrooms (11, 13, 14 heated by stoves), 15. Speisekammer, or pantry.

When the term "living room" is used, it often included the room serving as a bedroom.

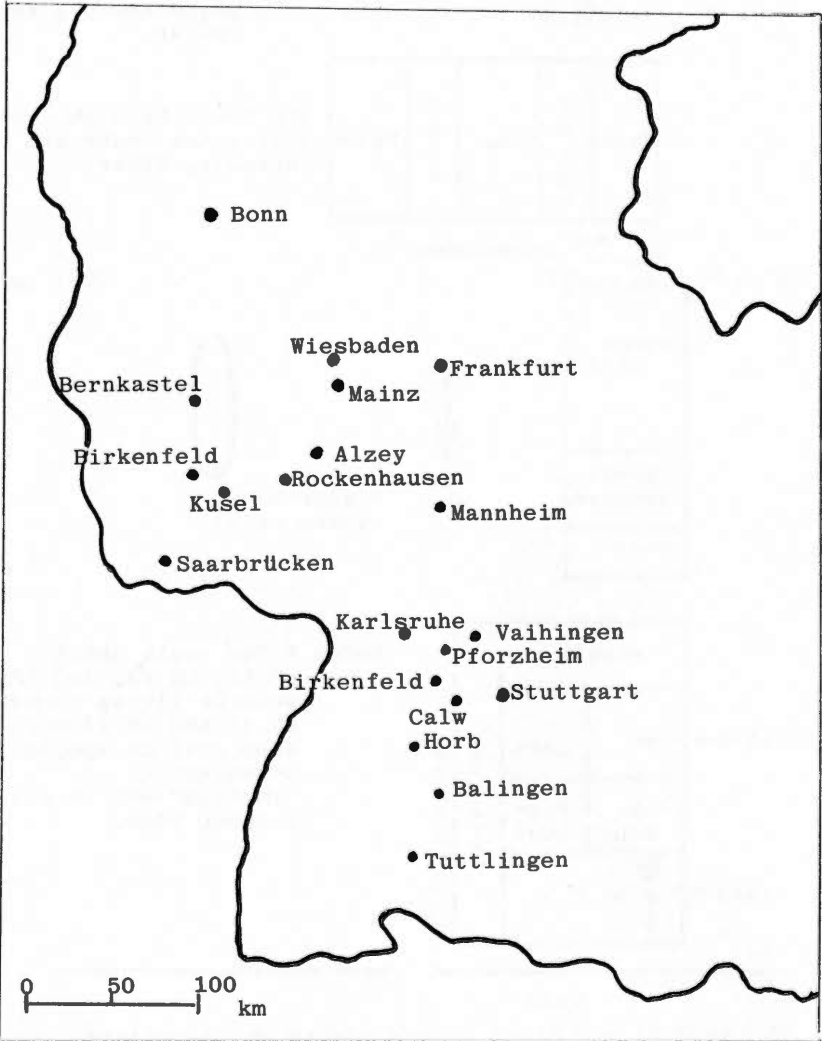
(Adapted from Peterson, Handwörterbuch des Grenz- und Auslandsdeutschtums, 627.)

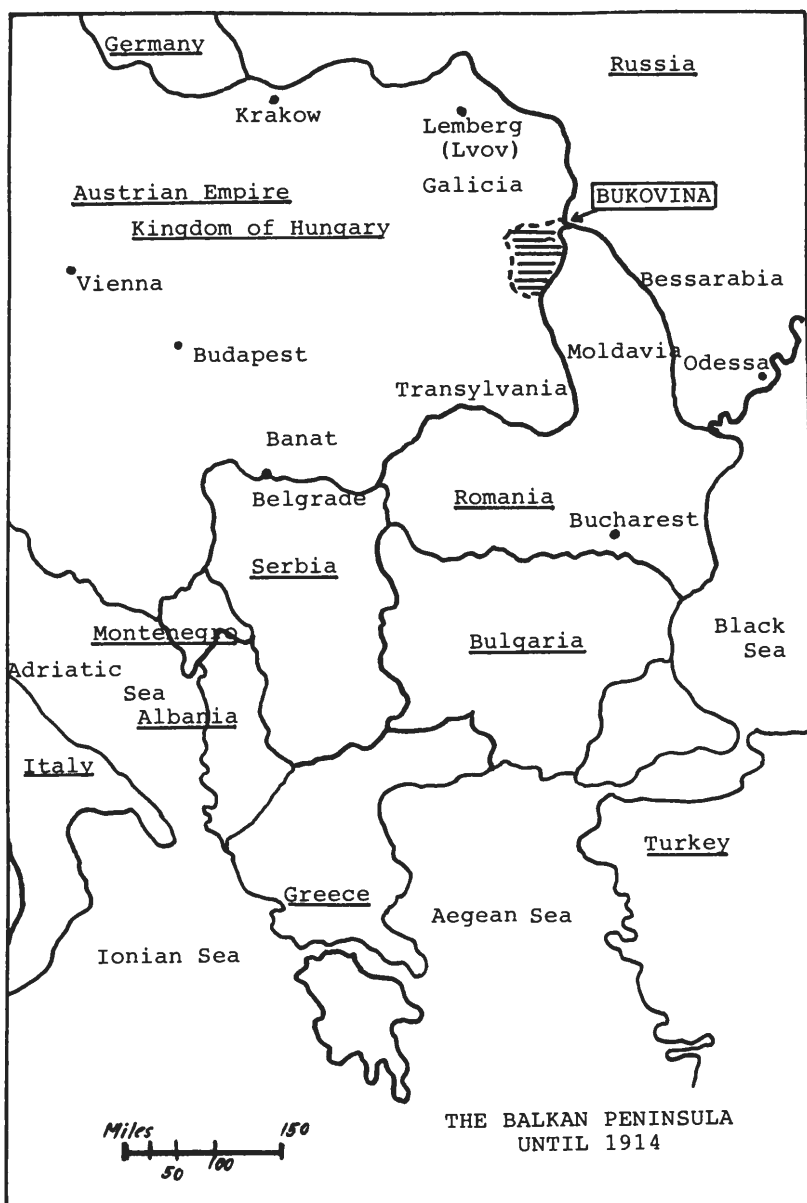
ILLISCHESTIE # 120, last owned by heirs of Joseph Koenig in 1940

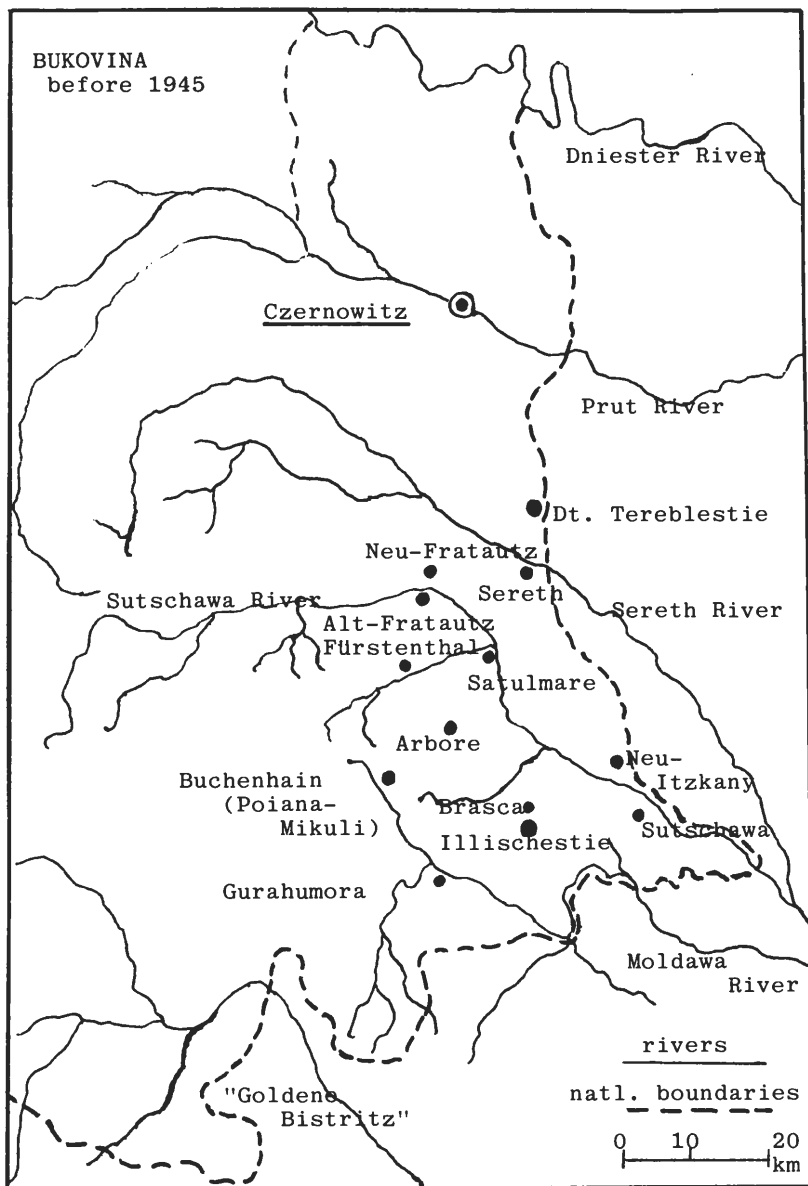


(Adapted from Dressler, Chronik der Bukowiner Landgemeinde Illischestie, 85.)

SOUTHWESTERN GERMANY
from where Swabians emigrated to Bukovina







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