

Citizens of HOFFNUNGSTAL Odessa/Cherson

*Ackermann	Eider	*Knöll	*Schaffert
Aikele	*Eise(n)mann	Konrad	*Schick
*Alber	Ensinger	Kübler	*Schlecht
Aldinger	*Erlenbusch	Kunz(i)	*Schlichenmayer
Attinger	*Fiechtner	*Lachenmeier	*Schmied
*Bahn Müller	*Fischer	*Leibbrandt	*Schock
*Bamesberger	*Fritz	*Lutz	Schuh
*Bauder	Föhl	*Mauch	*Schwaderer
*Bauer	Gall	*Maus(s)er	*Siegle
*Baumann	Gandel	*Metzger	Stepper
*Beck	*Georg	*Meyer/Mayer	Steinbach
Beutel	Hagenloch	Müller	*Stöcker/Stecker
Binder	Haid	*Murschel	*Tröster
*Bitsch	*Harsch	*Näher	*Wagner
*Birkle/Bürkle	Heer	Of(f)	Wahlenmayer
Blumhardt	Heiser/Häuser	*Ormann	*Wall
*Bollinger	*Hilt	Ottenbacher	*Weiss
Bonekemper	*Hof(f)man	*Raff	Weller
Breisch	*Holzwarth	Rall	Winterrot
Breit	*Kaup(p)	*Reuer	*Wohlgemuth
*Brose	*Kienzle	*Rosin	*Zweigardt
Dobler	Klöpfer	*Rüb	Zick
*Diegel/Dägele	*Klotz	Ruess	
*E(h)rmann	*Knecht	*Sauer	

* - ."founding" families

"Of the Württemberg Separatists who arrived in Russia in the fall and winter of 1817-18 intending to go to the South Caucasus, 64 families were prevailed upon to found a colony in the Odessa area. They were given 4,300 dissiatines of land in a valley about 100 verst northwest of Odessa, where they founded Hoffnungstal in 1818.¹ It remained an isolated community for many years, being far away from other German villages, as well as religiously separate from the other German Protestants of the Odessa region. Not till late in the century had its Separatism waned sufficiently to make possible its incorporation into the Lutheran church organization."²

¹ the Gemeindebericht for Hoffnungstal is Leibbrandt, PP 114-119

² from Catherine to Khrushchev, *The Story of Russia's Germans*, by Adam Giesinger.

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"³The chief reason that induced so many people from Württemberg to leave their blessed fatherland at the beginning of our century are attributed partly to the dire poverty and the grievous burden of taxation, partly to the proliferating new doctrine and the resultant changes in churches and schools. Among our colonists these innovations aroused the apprehension that their children might in time be deprived of the pure teaching of the Gospel.

Particular views among many of these people had given rise to the desire to be as close as possible to the Promised Land, and so their attention was directed above all to the southern part of the Russian Empire, especially since they hoped to be able to lead there a peaceful life in complete religious freedom, without fear of coercion or restraint of conscience.

Several heads of families therefore approached Baron von Stackelberg, who was then residing in Stuttgart, with a petition that they be permitted to settle in South Russia. Through this man's mediating efforts, His Most Gracious Majesty Czar Alexander sent the Russian ambassador a ukase in which the free exercise of religion was accorded to the applicants.

Accordingly a considerable number of inhabitants of various villages in the districts of Waiblingen, Backnang, Marbach, Kirchheim, Esslingen, and others organized two principal groups: the Unterweissach contingent, which was led by Johann Leibbrandt; and the Oethinger, which was led by Biechlingmayer and Jakob Lutz.

In May and June 1817 these two groups traveled to Ulm, from where they continued down the Danube through Vienna, Ofen, Orsowa and Galatz, and reached Izmail after manifold hardships. During the quarantine in Izmail, hundreds of them were wiped out through fatal illnesses, and many succumbed to a frightful epidemic after they arrived in Odessa, so that in many families only widows and orphans survived, whereas in some cases entire families perished.

Most of these immigrants continued their journey to Grusinia, despite the well-meant protestations of the Russian colonial authorities and, indeed, of the Czar himself. Only a minority decided to settle in this colony. Our colonists were allotted 4306 dosjatins of agricultural land in the Maloi-Kujalnik valley, 50 versts east of the Dniester and the town of Tiraspol, and 220 versts from Cherson. Here they found a small village named Tsebrik (Zebrik), consisting of 17 dilapidated cottages which had neither roof or interior furnishings, and some building stone and lumber for 15 additional dwellings. The Russian Crown had planned these unfinished buildings for Bulgarian settlers.

Most of the newly-arrived settlers were given winter quarters in the neighboring villages of earlier German settlers, whereas the others braved the winter amid great hardship in these wretched buildings. The year 1818 was spent in preparing suitable dwellings. At last, in 1819, the settlers were able to begin with the very strenuous task of establishing their colony.

The first settlement was composed of 64 families including several craftsmen, all of whom received a Crown loan of 500 rubles for building materials, livestock, and agricultural equipment. Subsequently 30 families received a further loan of 3000 rubles. In addition, our settlers had at their disposal about 10,000 of their own money.

Thus, in 1819 -- the actual year of settlement -- 15 houses were constructed, and after another five years all of the colonists had their homes completed.

In a general meeting it was decided that the new colony be named Hoffnungsthal, in token of the immigrants' hopes for a happy future. The ministry gave its confirmation on December 2, 1819.

³ part of the Chronicle of Hoffnungstal - 1848 (as read by Paul Reeb)