

## Murder of Pastor Paul Christian Baumann

Source: DAI Microfilm T-81; Roll #599; Serial 817; Group 1035;  
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[Translator's Note: An account of how a pastor and his family were murdered in the area of Prischib, Molotschna/Taurida just prior to the Russian Revolution in 1905.]

[Begin Translation]

### Notice in the *Schwäbischen Merkur* concerning the murder of Prischib's Pastor Paul Christian Baumann.

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The *Schwäbischen Merkur* carried the following article in it's 27 November (09 November) 1904 issue:

From out of Russia comes the sad news that Christian Baumann, born in Münklingen/Württemberg in 1833, first a provincial pastor in Podolia [Province to the north of Bessarabia] and, since 1881, the Lutheran pastor in Prischib, Molotschna/Taurida, was murdered during the night of 08-09 November, along with his wife and daughter. According to a private letter which was printed in the St. Petersburg newspaper, the 72 year old clergyman, his 68 year old wife and 25 year old daughter were apparently the victims of a robbery-murder. All three had their skulls crushed (*zerachmettert*). The pastor's wife was found still faintly breathing (*röchelnd*). She also gave up her spirit after an hour. The pastor was lying in his bed, face, upper body and his feather pillow covered with his blood. In the bedroom of the pastor's wife, she was lying on her back with two big wounds on her forehead. Not far from her was her daughter, in a large pool of blood, also with her skull crushed. The murderers entered through a broken window in the porch, broke the door into the pastor's office (*Schreibzimmer*) and apparently slew him in his bed in the adjoining bedroom. The pastor's wife and daughter probably heard the commotion and, trying to escape, were both bludgeoned. Nothing seems to have been stolen. The golden watches were still lying near the beds of each of them and in the dresser drawer in the pastor's bedroom, in which the key was still inserted, all seemed to be in order: cash and important papers and a sum of money amounting to 12,000 rubles (cash-box for the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb). Money which the owner of the house, in charge of the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, was going to make a payment with. But the one to be paid was not home. So then the pastor wanted to deposit it in the bank, but it had already closed. Why the murderers did not take the money can be explained by the fact that they had to quickly escape because their fourth victim, the maid, managed to escape and was shouting for help on the street. Great is the commotion that has gripped the people in Prischib and the surrounding area. Never has such a thing ever happened in this place as long as it has existed over the last 100 years. At two in the morning, everyone, large and small, was on their feet. People streamed out from

every direction. Many Germans considered leaving the area. Considering the underground activity that has shown itself in recent times, the vicious deed may just be a consequence of that.

So far the message in the *Schwäbischen Merkur*. The writer of the article in the *Schwäbischen Merkur* was right on if he believed that the deed was probably politically motivated because soon after, in similar manner, raids were carried out on the landowners so that, whoever was able to make it happen, leases his land the moved into one of the cities or into a colony. The authorities quickly investigated to discover the perpetrators of this act and also found them. They were shipped off to Siberia. Absolutely involved with Pastor Baumann death was a Russian coachman who had been dismissed due to drunkenness, traveling down the road, a total stranger from some market town (*Kreisstadt*), who had never seen Pastor Baumann or his family. The seeds of the revolution were stifled at that time in the south by the authorities. Exactly a year later, in the Spring of 1905, it broke out in the Baltic Sea Provinces.

[End of Translation]