

Theodor Alfred Hoffmann

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[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

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[Translation Begins]

Theodor Alfred Hoffmann †

On 30 April, 1938, a man from our midst suddenly departed, who has well earned it that we remember him beyond just over his grave. He was the well-known and popular Alfred Hoffmann, who was so quickly torn away from this life by an heart attack. A person who never insisted on publicity, to be seen or heard by the people. In modest seclusion, he lived his occupation as a farmer and—a real Christian. He lived for many years on his “Lambrowka” estate, 4 km [1 km = 0.6214 miles] east of Borodino, where he had set up a real model establishment, both in working his land and especially in the area of domesticated animal breeding and poultry farming. Interested folks came from far and wide and learned from him. In a willing and unselfish manner, he gave good advice which was generally paid attention to and, when practiced, had great productive effect for our agricultural sector



He was a reserve cavalry officer in the Russian army and, as such, took part in the world war. For several years, he held the position of delegate to the Tighina Agricultural Chamber—Bender Local Government (*Semstwo/zemstvo*). As a member of our district consistory, he showed for years great interest for the good of our Evangelical Lutheran Church. The now so commonly used phrase: “General welfare goes before personal welfare” was not just something he spoke about; it was indelibly written in his heart; his actions proved that. He lovingly took on several poor, orphan children, gave them a secondary education and, in a fatherly manner, was concerned about their success in the world. He proved his finest achievements in social, Christian charity in the village of Borodino. It should not fail to be pointed out here what individual good he has done, where the left hand should not know what the right one does, especially, what he showed to the community in general, mainly to their children. Every year in December, 2-3 days before Christmas, a fully loaded ox-wagon came to

Borodino from the east side. “It’s the Christ-child for the school children by Alfred Iwanowitsch” they whispered to the one another. And the content? Over 400 (according to the number of pupils) packages of nuts, gingerbread, candies and others delicacies; for each student in Class 4, a big sized tract with wonderful stories of religious moral content; for each student in Class 3, a similar tract but smaller in size; for Class 2, also a small tract; for Class 1, each one received a beautiful picture of biblical content. For all students, each—one to four books, each—a pen-holder with some feathers, each—a pencil, each—a slate pencil (*Griffel*), etc. In short, students of Borodino were so richly gifted at Christmas by our generally beloved Alfred Iwanowitsch, which probably rarely happened in any other German community of Bessarabia. Of course, through a collection, the community also donated a portion toward this. How many soldiers’ wives and war widows were supported by him during the war? Of course, not all benefits can be enumerated here which he did for others; it was always a quiet hidden work of which no resounding words were printed in the newspapers. And the thanks for all these benefits? –It’s despicable. “Ingratitude is the world’s payment;” This expression can be verified in the starkest manner when it comes to this noble man. In the years of the revolution, immediately after the war, his venture (estate), as with most landowners, was plundered. How many valuable things came crashing to the ground?! Then came the expropriation of the land; from about 3,000 hectares [1 ha = 2.471 acres], he was able to retain 100, and before the war, he was able to acquire by purchase the estate of his deceased brother Adolf, 7 km south of Klöstitz. So, in short order, came blow after blow, one harder than the other. On the question of how he could endure it so calmly, he answered: “As I have enjoyed the good, should I now not also be able to endure evil? Many thousands are experiencing worse things than I am?!”

Yes, with what fresh heroic spirit he endured his fateful blows! Justice: With what clear consciousness, unwaveringly solid trust in God he endured the trials of his heavenly father: “He whom the Lord loves, he chastises, and the gold will be confirmed by the furnace for the Christian in many a need.” What was for him a difficult time of testing, in which he as a Christian matured for eternal life. May he have entered into the joy of his Lord!

Johann Kräenbring, teacher in retirement

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