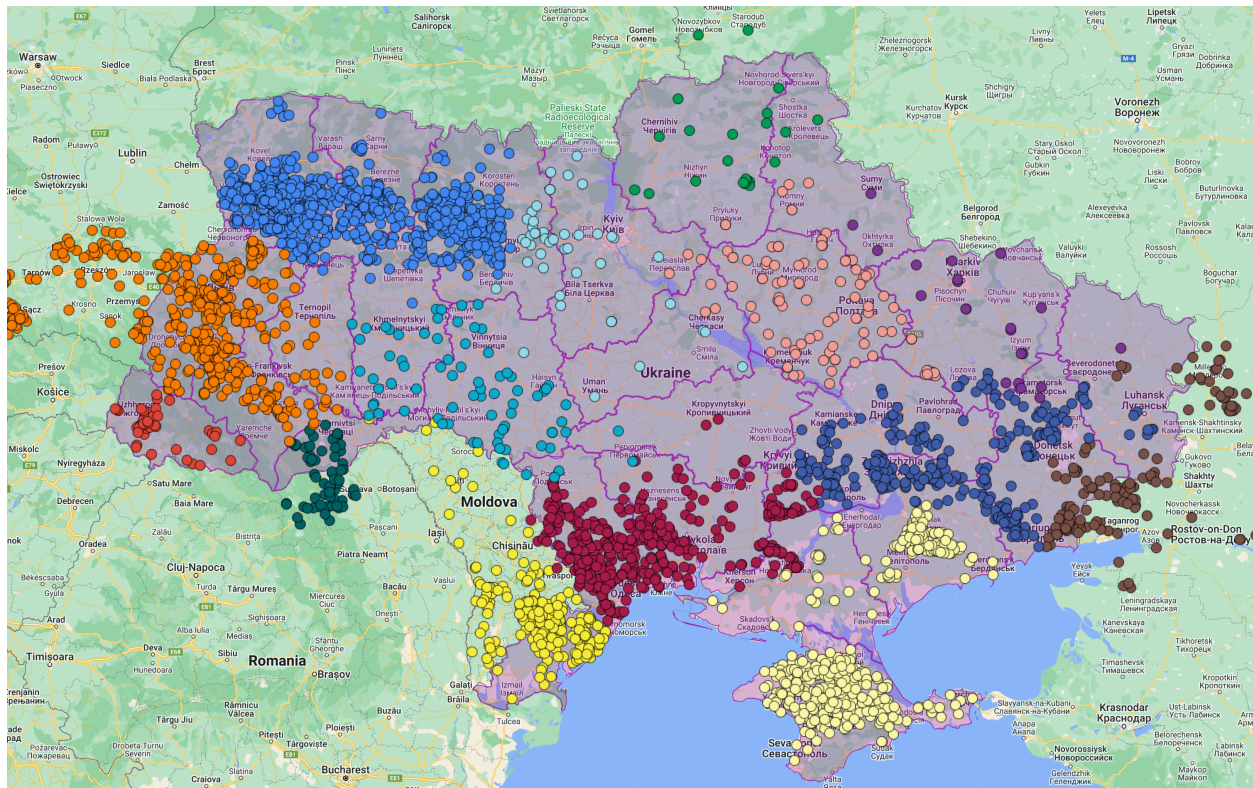


Black Sea Germans & Other German Colonists in Ukraine

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Germans were a minority population in parts of the former Austrian, Hungarian, and Russian empires between the mid-18th and mid-20th centuries. The push and pull factors that brought them to their new homes varied. Many came as colonists to whom incentives were given and eventually taken away. Through sample records, you will learn about their immigration stories, where they lived, and how they lived. You will learn about their voluntary movements between colonies, their migrations and expansions as their populations grew, and about their immigrations after their rights as colonists were revoked. You will also learn about their involuntary movements, including the forced deportations and resettlements during both world wars that took them east, deeper into Imperial and Soviet Russia, and west, into German-occupied Europe during WWII.



Known German settlement areas of the former Austrian, Hungarian, and Russian empires grouped by historical province mapped over current Ukrainian jurisdictions. Illustration by Sandy Schilling Payne.

Agenda

1. Meet and Greet the German Colonists
2. Brief History and Geography of the Germans in Ukraine
3. Considerations when Researching Germans in Ukraine
4. Survey of German Settlements
5. German Diaspora and Identity

Who were the Black Sea Germans?

The definition of a Black Sea German varies depending on who you ask and how long you give them to answer. For the purpose of this class, a Black Sea German was one of a group of ethnic Germans who immigrated to the Russian Empire from German-speaking principalities in Europe at the invitation of Tsar Alexander I in 1804. They were colonists with special privileges that included freedom of religion, freedom from military service, and freedom from taxes. Their purpose was to be model farmers and artisans and came with experience in those fields. Initially they settled in enclaves of colonies comprised exclusively of Germans of the same religion (Catholic, Mennonite, Protestant) in the four southern provinces along the Black Sea: Bessarabia, Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, and Taurida. They moved to wherever there was land and opportunity, both in and out of the Russian Empire.

Who were the other German colonists in Ukraine?

Belowesh colonists settled as a result of Catherine the Great's manifesto of 1763, which invited Christian foreigners to her empire. A group of six colonies in Chernigov province were established in 1766, around the same time other German colonists did along the Volga River. Instead of going to the Volga River, they stopped short and remained isolated colonies. No other German colonists joined them.

Poltava province was home to German colonists that were recruited to develop its textile industry. By 1803, the Napoleonic Wars had begun, pitting the the French Empire against its allies until 1815. The cloth Russia used to buy from England was no longer available due to broken trade ties with France. In 1808, Tsar Alexander I invited German artisans to Poltava, offering them their own set of special privileges.

The Galizien and Bukovina regions in the Austrian Empire, were part of a colonization effort by the Habsburg Monarchy to populate lands taken from the First Partition of Poland. The Patent of Toleration issued by Emperor Joseph II in 1781 extended religious freedom to non-Catholic Christians living in Habsburg lands. Most of the German settlements in Galizien were exclusively Protestant or Roman Catholic, but some were mixed. In Bukovina, the Crown region furthest to the east, Germans settled colonies and also joined many villages that already existed, some of which became more German in character.

As You Begin Your Research, Keep in Mind...

- You are not alone. Make use of research communities, organizations, and historical societies who have been obtaining, translating, and indexing documents for decades. They know the “neighborhoods” and the names of those who lived there.
- You must find out the name of the ancestral colony in which your subject lived along with the area. Many colonies had the same name.
- Germans moved...a lot. Sometimes voluntarily. Sometimes not.
- Many of the records and documents will be in German and handwritten in *Kurrentschrift*, old German cursive. Some will be a mix of German and Russian. Some 20th century records may be typewritten in German on forms with Fraktur field labels.
- Take note of naming conventions. You will find clusters of similar surnames within enclaves by religion. Mennonite and Hutterite surnames do not vary much. Naming of children mostly followed that which was practiced in Germany, but there were some variations.
- Regarding dates, the Russian Empire was still using the Julian calendar until 1918.

Documents That Might Help Fill in the Holes

In addition to vital records, revision lists, and repression documents, there are other documents regarding the German colonists that were generated by the Welfare Committee for Foreign Settlers in Southern Russia, a committee that existed to oversee the colonists. Also, archival documents of genealogical use include passports, transport lists, quarantine lists, household inventories, debt lists, voter lists, crop reports, colony histories, persons living outside their colonies, inheritances from abroad, auction lists, conscription lists, resettlement requests and questionnaires, plat maps, and the German captured documents collection.

German Settlement Groups

Below is a list of groups of German settlements in Ukraine. Most of these had Daughter colonies, some of which are listed. This is a long list, but consider it a cheat sheet for research.

1. Belowesch

1766. Chernigov province. Catholic and Protestant. Under the manifesto of Catherine the Great, 147 families arrived, traveling with German colonists headed for the Volga region. They stopped near Borzna. Mother colonies: Belowesh, Gorodok, Großwerder [Grosswerder], Kaltschinowka, Klein-Werder, and Rundewiese. The first colonists were craftsmen, including shoemakers, tailors, locksmiths, carpenters, masons, saddlers, cloth weavers, millers and bakers. The colonies were located on good, fertile land, but they were isolated from other German colonies and commerce. Daughter colonies established in 1802 in the same area and more would form in Maruipol, North Caucasus, Crimea, and Orenburg.

2. Berdyansk

1822. Taurida province. Protestant. Founded by Württemberg Separatists. Like those who settled in Hoffnungstal near Glückstal, they wanted to go on to the South Caucasus, but they were not permitted to do so. Mother colonies: Neu-Hoffnungstal, Neu-Hoffnung, Rosenfeld and Neu-Stuttgart.

3. Beresan

1809. Kherson province. Catholic and Protestant. During a heavy influx of German settlers to South Russia, 600 families were sent to the Beresan river valley. Another 200 families were sent there between 1817-19. Mother colonies: Johannestal, Karlsruhe, Katharinental, Landau, München [Muenchen], Rastatt, Rohrbach, Speyer, Sulz, Waterloo, and Worms.

4. Bessarabia

1814. Bessarabia province. Catholic and Protestant. Initially settled by 1,500 families who had immigrated to South Prussia after the Third Partition of Poland. Tsar Alexander I sent recruiters to convince them to immigrate to southern Bessarabia. Mother colonies: Alt-Arzis, Alt-Elft, Alt-Posttal, Beresina, Borodino, Brienne, Dennewitz, Friedenstal, Gnadental, Hoffnungstal, Katzbach, Klöstitz [Kloestitz], Krasna, Kulm, Leipzig, Lichtental, Neu-Arzis, Neu-Elft, Paris, Plotzk, Sarata, Schabo-Kolonie, Tarutino, Teplitz, and Wittenberg. Numerous Daughter colonies were founded in Bessarabia and elsewhere in the Russian Empire. In 1918, Bessarabia was ceded to Romania. In 1940, the Germans were trekked back to German-controlled Europe.

5. Bukovina

1772. Catholic, Protestant. Part of a colonization effort by the Habsburg Monarchy of Austria to populate lands taken from the First Partition of Poland. The Patent of Toleration issued by Emperor Joseph II in 1781 extended religious freedom to non-Catholic Christians living in Habsburg lands. Bukovina was sparsely populated and forested. Germans settled in colonies as farmers and artisans and in villages with other ethnicities. A shortage of land a few generations later prompted many to immigrate to North America. Those who stayed became a part of Romania in 1919 and were trekked back to German-controlled Europe in 1940. In 1947, the northern region became a part of the Ukrainian S.S.R. Early colonies: Alt-Fratautz, Alt-Zuczka, Althütte, Arbora, Badeutz, Czernowitz, Franzthal, Illischestie, Jacobeny, Kaczyka, Karlsberg, Kirlibaba, Ludwigsdorf, Molodia, Rosch, and Satulmare.

6. Chortitza (also Khortitza)

1789. Ekaterinoslav province. Mennonite. Mennonite leaders in Prussian Poland responded to recruiters and negotiated a special agreement to settle near Melitopol. Because of continued unrest with Turkey in the area where they were to settle, they founded eight colonies on land adjacent to Insel Chortitza at the confluence of the Chortitza and Dnieper rivers. Mother colonies: Alt-Kronsweide, Blumengart, Burwalde, Chortitza, Einlage, Insel Chortitza, Krongarten, Kronstal, Neuenburg, Neuendorf, Neuhorst, Nieder Chortitz, Osterwick, Rosengart, Rosental, Schöneberg [Schoenberg], Schönhorst [Schoenhorst] and Schönwiese [Schoenwiese]. Daughter colonies in Ekaterinoslav

province: Baratov Colony (1871), Bergthal (1836), Borissovo (1892), Fürstenland [Fuerstenland] (1864), Ignatyev (1888), Jakowlewo (1876), Markuslandt (1863), Nepluyevka (1885), New Rosengart (1878), Schlachtin (1874), Tchernoglas (1860), and Yazykovo (1869).

7. Crimea

1804. Taurida province. Catholic, Mennonite, Protestant. Germans were initially settled primarily in the northern part of Crimea. The German colonists had considerable experience with viniculture, so Russian authorities put them where the climate and conditions were favorable for growing grapes and the production of wine. Mother colonies: Friedental, Heilbrunn, Herzenberg, Kronental, Neusatz, Odus, Rosental, Stary Krym, Sudak, and Zürichthal [Zuerichtal]. Molotschna Mennonites moved to Crimea in the 1860s and established Daughter colonies.

8. Galizien

1772. Catholic, Mennonite, Protestant. Part of a colonization effort by the Habsburg Monarchy of Austria to populate lands taken from the First Partition of Poland. The Patent of Toleration issued by Emperor Joseph II in 1781 extended religious freedom to non-Catholic Christians living in Habsburg lands. Early colonies: Alt-Sandetz, Bogdanówka, Brody, Dobromil, Lemberg, Lewandówka, Maleniska, Miłatycze, Niepołomice, Ranischau, Sambor, Smolno-Gut, Winniki, Zimna-Woda, Żeldec, and Śniatyn. Colonies with some Mennonite (Klempol) residents: Dobrowlany, Ehrenfeld, Einsiedel, Falkenstein, Kiernica-Kolonia, Lipowiec, Moloszkowice, Neu-Horozanna, Neuhof, Ostrów, Podsadki, Podusilna-Kolonia, Rosenberg, Rudno, Szczercz, Troscianiec-Kolonia, and Wiszenka.

9. Glückstal

1808. Kherson province. Protestant. The 70 Glückstal [Glueckstal] families were among the early arrivals in South Russia before land was ready for them. They were originally settled in Grigoripol in 1804 and resettled to the Moldovan village of Glinnoi in 1809. The colony was renamed Glückstal. Mother colonies: Bergdorf, Glückstal, Kassel and Neudorf. In the winter of 1817, Separatists arrived in South Russia intending to go to the South Caucasus. Asked to stay and settle, they founded the colony of Hoffnugstal about 35 kilometers from the Glückstal colonies in 1818. It remained an isolated colony for several years until the population grew and Daughter colonies were founded.

10. Hutterite

1770. Chernigov and Taurida provinces. Hutterite. Nearly martyred to extinction, 60 people found refuge on land east of Chernihiv owned by a Russian count and military general under Catherine the Great. Few in number, they migrated as a whole from colony to colony. There was some expansion in Taurida, but they didn't flourish in numbers until they immigrated to the United States and Canada. Colonies in Chernigov: Wischenka and Radichev. Colonies in Taurida: Huttortal, Hutterdorf, Johannesruh, Neu-Huttortal, and Sheromet.

11. Jewish Agriculture Colonies

1846. Bessarabia, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson, and Podolia provinces. Jewish, Mennonite, Protestant. The German colonists, particularly the Mennonites, served as model farmers in Jewish agricultural colonies in Ekaterinoslav. Jewish colonies reported to have used model German farmers: Blumenfeld, Bobrov, Kut, Dobrinka, Freifeld, Freileben, Freileben, Grosser, Ingulets, Izluchistoye, Judendorf, Kalinindorf, Kamenka, Klein-Seidemenukha, Krassindorf, Lvova, Mendeldorf, Neu-Kowno, Neuweg, Novo Berislav, Novo Poltavka, Novo Vitebsk, Nowo-Podolsk, Nowyj-Shitomir, Ratendorf, Roitdorf, Roter Stern, and Waissbriken.

12. Kharkov

1888 (but likely before this). Kharkov province. Mennonite (probably others). There were scattered places where Germans settled in existing villages and in administrative cities. Samoylovka Colony, a Molotschna Daughter colony, was established in 1888. Colonies: Samoylovka, Schestokowo, Nowo Stepnoje, and Ryskovo.

13. Kiev

1829 (but likely before this). Kiev province. Protestant. There were scattered places where Germans settled in existing villages and in administrative cities.

14. Kutschurgan

1808. Kherson province. Catholic. Founded by 450 families from primarily Alsace, Baden, Palatinate, and Württemberg. They were located along and east of the Kutschurgan river. By 1820, the combined population had grown to 2,243. By 1859 the area had grown to 7,272, after which daughter colonies began to be established. Mother colonies: Baden, Elsaß [Elsass], Kandel, Mannheim, Straßburg [Strassburg], and Selz. This was the only enclave made up of solely Catholic colonists.

15. Liebental (also Großliebental)

1804. Kherson province. Catholic and Protestant. Liebental colonists were recruited from the southwest Germanic principalities, Alsace, and Hungary. Most went to the city of Odessa while they waited for land to be assigned to them southwest of the city. Those who were artisans were given half the land as other colonists because they were expected to practice their trades rather than farm. Daughter colonies would be important to this group due to a large class of landless families that would develop. Mother colonies: Alexanderhilf, Franzfeld, Freudental, Großliebental [Grossliebental], Güldendorf [Gueldendorf], Josefstal, Kleinliebental, Lustdorf, Mariental, Neuburg, and Peterstal.

16. Mariupol (also Grunau and Planer)

1823. Ekaterinoslav and Don Host provinces. Catholic and Protestant. The Germans who settled colonies here arrived from West Prussia in small groups in 1818 and 1819 and lived and worked in the Molotschna Colony until land was found for them in 1822. Mother colonies: Darmstadt, Eichwald, Elisabethdorf, Göttland [Goettland], Grunau, Kaiserdorf, Kampenau, Kirschwald, Kronsdorf,

Ludwigstal, Marienfeld, Mirau, Neu-Jamburg, Neuhof, Reichenberg, Rosenberg, Rosengart, Schönbaum [Schoenbaum], Tiegenhof, Tiegenort, Tiergart, and Wickerau.

17. Molotschna

1804. Taurida province. Mennonite. A large tract of land east of the Molotschna River was assigned to create additional Mennonite colonies that the Chortitza area could not accommodate. By the 1860s, the population had grown to 4,000 families, many of whom were landless, prompting the purchase of land for Daughter colonies and migrations elsewhere in the Russian Empire. Mother colonies: Alexandertal, Alexanderwohl, Altonau, Blumenort, Blumstein, Elisabeththal, Fischau, Franztal, Friedensdorf, Fürstenau [Fuerstenau], Fürstenwerder [Fuerstenwerder], Gnadenfeld, Gnadenheim, Großweide [Grossweide], Halbstadt, Konteniusfeld, Ladekopp, Lichtenau, Lichtfelde, Liebenau, Lindenau, Margenau, Mariental, Münsterberg [Muensterberg], Muntau, Neukirch, Orloff, Pastwa, Petershagen, Pordenau, Prangenau, Rosenort, Rückenau [Rueckenau], Rudnerweide, Schardau, Schönau [Schoenau], Schönsee [Schoensee], Sparrau, Tiege, Tiegenhagen, Tiegerweide, Waldheim, and Wernersdorf. Daughter colonies in Ukraine: Borozenko (1865, Ekaterinoslav), Crimea (1860s, Taurida), Memrik (1885, Ekaterinoslav), Samoylovka (1888, Kaharkov), Schönfeld [Schoenfeld] (1874, Ekaterinoslav), and Zagradovka (Kherson, 1872).

18. Podolia

Circa 1800. Podolia province. Protestant, also possibly Catholic. There were scattered places where Germans settled in existing villages and in administrative cities. Parish records note connections (marriages) to Bessarabia, Volhynia, and Galizien.

19. Poltava

1808. Poltava province. Catholic and Protestant. German farmers arrived in the mid-1700s on their own accord. In 1808, at the invitation of Tsar Alexander II, Germans with experience in weaving and knitting were invited to settle the cities of Poltava, Kremenchug, and Kostyantynohrad. They made significant contributions in textile industries until the Industrial Revolution came to Russia in the 1880s. Germans made up a small percentage of the population, and as artisans, they founded no colonies but still had the rights of colonists granted to them upon immigration.

20. Prischib

1804. Ekaterinoslav province. Catholic and Protestant. The Prischib colonies were founded in response to an influx of new German immigrants just after Tsar Alexander I opened South Russia for settlement. Between 750 and 800 families founded 23 Mother colonies: Alt-Montal, Alt-Nassau, Blumental, Durlach, Friedrichsfeld, Grüntal [Gruental], Heidelberg, Hochstädt [Hochstaedt], Hoffental, Karlsruhe, Kostheim, Kronsfield, Leitershausen, Neu-Montal, Neu-Nassau, Neudorf, Prischib, Reichenfeld, Rosental, Tiefenbrunn, Walldorf, Wasserau, and Weinau. Numerous Prischib Daughter colonies were established in Ukraine and elsewhere in the Russian Empire. A notable Daughter settlement was the Kronau enclave (1870 in Ekaterinoslav and Kherson).

21. Transcarpathia

12th century. Catholic and Protestant. German colonization in Transcarpathia dates back to the 12th century under Hungarian rule. Several colonies were founded by Germans (Levoča, Bardejov, Košice) who then resettled elsewhere (Berehove, Dovhe Pole, Khust, Mukachevo, Prešov, Tiachiv, Uzhhorod, and Vyshkove). In 1723 when the village of Pausching was founded, more Germans arrived. Other Germans arrived in 1765 and into the early 1800s, joining villages that already existed.

22. Schwedenkolonien (also Schwedengebiet)

1804. Kherson province. Catholic and Protestant. The Schwedengebiet was a tract of land above the Dnieper River east of Berislav, originally given to 200 Swedish families. Their settlements failed repeatedly, so the land was given to German immigrants, who also failed at their first attempt to settle this area in 1786. Their second attempt between 1804-1805 was more successful. Mother colonies: Alt-Schwedendorf, Klosterdorf, Mühhausendorf [Muelhausendorf], and Schlangendorf.

23. Volhynia

1787. Volhynia province. Mennonite and Protestant. The Germans in Volhynia did not go there at the invitation of the Russian crown and did not receive any privileges or settlement help like the German colonists did. They went at the invitation of wealthy landowners, or they leased land, worked it, made it fertile, and then either bought it or moved on. Mennonites were the first to arrive in 1787. The first two permanent settlements, Annette and Josephine were founded in 1815 and 1816. The heaviest migration into the province began in 1831, followed by a second wave beginning in 1863. Because of their wandering lifestyle, there are more recorded places where Germans lived in Volhynia than in any other province.

Resources

American Historical Society of Germans From Russia (AHSGR). English. <https://www.ahsgr.org>
Membership. Organization's focus is on the Volga Germans, but it has some Black Sea village files and partners with Black Sea German Research (see below). Journal published quarterly. Annual convention.

Bessarabiendeutscher Verein e.V. German. <https://www.bessarabien.de>
Membership. Focus is on the lives of Bessarabia and Dobrudscha Germans. Newsletter archive with well-researched articles and images going back to 2008. Rich collection of archival material related to the Germans in Bessarabia. Newsletter published monthly.

Black Sea German Research. English. <https://www.blackseagr.org/>
A repository of everything related to Black Sea Germans. The website contains a wealth of translated material from border crossing documents, to church record indexes to border to repression records. Materials are all sourced so a researcher could go back to the original document for informant that was not included in the extract. It's an ideal starting place for

anyone who wants a lot of information in English. A searchable pedigree database includes many donated GEDCOMs, church extracts, revision lists, family lists, town book extracts, repression records, including EWZ indexes, etc. A large map collection includes many colony plat maps that have the names of German colonists on the farmsteads.

Bukovina Society of America. English. <https://bukovinasociety.org/>
Membership. Focus Bukovina Germans and their migrations to the United States. Searchable pedigree database available to members. Articles on history, immigration, culture, colonies, and an excellent bibliography of publications related to Bukovina and its people. Museum and library is in Ellis, Kansas.

Captured German Records Microfilmed in Berlin, Germany, SS-Rasse-und-Siedlungs-Hauptamt (RuSHA) [SS Race and Settlement Main Office]. German. <https://www.archives.gov/research/captured-german-records/foreign-records-seized.html>

If you find that an ancestor was in the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), these records will have detailed family trees for both the soldier and his wife, even if the soldier was a recent conscript. These documents were used to prove racial purity. Documents are not online. You must research in person at the Microfilm Reading Room, NARA, Archives II, College Park, MD.

Die Deutschen Russlands Siedlungen und Siedlungsgebiete Lexikon [The Germans of Russia Settlements and Settlement Areas Encyclopedia]. Russian and some German. <https://wolgadeutsche.net/diesendorf/Ortslexikon.pdf>

Annotated gazetteer of all known German colonies and settlements, Imperial through Soviet era, including some special settlements, state farms, and khutors. For a non-Russian or German speaker, it is a challenge to work with, but it is worth the effort.

The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862. Karl Stumpp. <http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/881444049>

Called “the Stumpp book” by Germans from Russia researchers. This book lists German colonists who emigrated from Germany to Russia. It includes some Revision Lists that includes families, German origins (not always correct), passport lists that indicate the route the colonist took to Russia, and lists of Mother colonies. It focuses on Black Sea German Catholics and Protestants. Stumpp refers to the 1955 work of Benjamin Heinrich Unruh’s research on Mennonite migration to Russia 1787-1895 for names of immigrants, colonies, and revision lists. That material is included in Mennonite Genealogical Resources <https://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/>.

Galizien German Descendants. English. <https://galiziengerm descendants.org/>
Membership. Focused on Galizien German genealogy. Family books, GEDCOMs, plat maps, resettlement records, etc. Quarterly newsletter. Newsletter archive going back to 1995.

German-Russian Handbook: A Reference Book for Russian German and German Russian History and Culture with Place Listings of Former German Settlement Areas. English. <https://hdl.handle.net/10365/32028>

English translation of the German publication made available as a free PDF by the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection at the North Dakota State Libraries. An indispensable volume of information of Germans from Russia history, culture, place names, timelines, photos, etc.

German Captured Documents Collection, Reports from Ethnic German Communities in Ukraine 1940-44. German. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/979490>

German names transcribed and indexed on Odessa3, <http://odessa3.org/collections/war/>. Films include surveys, sketches of regions, plat maps with names of Germans labeled on farmsteads, statistics, some handwritten accounts from people living in the villages, Nazi propaganda, reports about some of the former colonies. Includes information about Kronau, Zagradovka, Chortitza, Early Black Sea, Kherson, Jewish Agricultural Colonies, Yekaterinoslav, and parts of Volhynia. Location names and regions are the Soviet era names. Not indexed.

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection (GRHC). English. <https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/>

The focus of the collection is the Black Sea Germans of Bessarabia, the Odessa region, Crimea, Dobrudscha and Volhynia and their descendants in North Dakota and the Northern Plains. Substantial collection of books and periodicals in English and German. Many family history books are available as well as the town books of North Dakota and South Dakota that tell family histories in both the old and new countries. Oral histories and textile collections are also a part of this archive.

Germans from Russia Heritage Society (GRHS). English. <https://www.grhs.org>

Membership. Focused on the Black Sea German colonies, mostly on the Catholic and Lutheran colonies and the migrations to the Dakotas. Significant amount of research material available online, especially to members. Regional interest groups focus on specific areas of South Russia. Forums for each chapter can also be a good source of information and networking. Some translated and indexed church records (Lutheran and Catholic) as well as a variety of documents obtained from archives in Russian and Ukraine. Library/museum in Bismarck contains a wealth of family histories. Journal published quarterly. Annual convention.

Germans from Russia Settlement Locations. English. <https://www.germansfromrussiasettlementlocations.org/>

A project with interactive GoogleMy maps of ancestral German colonies in the Russian Empire. Each location includes its GPS coordinates along with historical information and current place name with a list of sources at the end. The project's goal "is to bring the past into the present, to follow the humans and record where they lived, and to plot where they lived by coordinates on modern online maps."

Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO). English. <https://gameo.org>
Online and updated version of the five-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia: A Comprehensive Reference Work on the Anabaptist-Mennonite Movement* published in the 1950s. An online version of the volumes is available on the Internet Archive <https://archive.org/search?query=The+Mennonite+Encyclopedia>

Glückstal Colonies Research Association (GCRA). English. <https://www.glueckstal.net>
Membership. Focused on research of the four Mother Glückstal colonies: Bergdorf, Glückstal, Kassel, and Neudorf. Website has many research guides and timelines as well as a bibliography for the website itself. Several volumes of information available in print covering the lives of Glückstalers in Russia, the Soviet Union, and North America. Books include CDs and DVDs. Digital offerings include a “Data Drive” with indexes and images of original archival documents including passports, crop reports, family lists, MVD file extractions, and locations of special settlements. The Points-of-Origin is highly annotated with confirmed German origins of the pioneers of the Glückstal colonies and their connections elsewhere in South Russia. Newsletter published twice a year.

GRanDMA Online: Prussian/Russian Mennonite Genealogy. English. <https://grandmaonline.org/>
Subscription. Searchable pedigree database of “genealogical information on Mennonite and Hutterite individuals, most of whose ancestral lines can be traced to Mennonite and Hutterite communities in Prussia and South Russia. It is the product of collecting and merging data from thousands of family histories, church records, obituaries, government records and other contributions.” A person’s GRanDMA number in the database is referenced throughout other Mennonite sites, so make note of it.

Mennonite Genealogical Resources. English. <https://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/>
The resources on this site under each country are chronological and relate to the history of Mennonite and Hutterite history. Those under Russia relate to both Imperial and Soviet Russia. Some of the extracts have links to the original documents or even images of them.

Odessa Digital Library. <http://odessa3.org/>
Odessa3 was one of the first large repositories of Germans from Russia genealogical and historical material. “Odessa is a digital library dedicated to the cultural and family history of the millions of Germans who emigrated to Russia in the 1800s and their descendants, who are now scattered throughout the world. The Odessa document collection consists primarily of digitized books and records plus indexes of microfilms and research aids that enable users to trace individual and family migrations since the early 1800s.”

Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe (SGGEE). English. <https://sggee.org>
Membership. “...devoted to the study of those people with German ancestry (most often of the Lutheran, Baptist, or Moravian Brethren faiths) who lived in present-day Poland and

northwestern Ukraine. Special emphasis is placed on those who lived in the pre-WW I province of Volhynia (generally from the city of Kiev on the east to the present-day Polish border on the west) and on the pre-WW I region of central and eastern modern Poland known as Russian Poland or Congress Poland.” Site includes several databases of extracted material, and a searchable pedigree database. An excellent collection of gazetteers are available. Quarterly journal published. Annual convention open to all.

Taurien e.V. Familienforschungsverein. German. <https://taurienev.de/>

This group focuses on obtaining and translating archival records related to the German settlements in Taurida. “The association aims to research the history of these colonies on the basis of church records and other materials (historical or family-related sources) and to make it accessible to those interested in genealogy. We see our further tasks and goals in the publication of books written by the descendants of the colonists and our own contributions on this topic, as well as in the compilation of the genealogies of individual families and their possible combination in a family tree and the creation of a local family register.” Very active private Facebook group.

The Years of Great Silence: The Deportation, Special Settlement, and Mobilization into the Labor Army of Ethnic Germans in the USSR, 1941-1955 by J. Otto Pohl. <https://search.worldcat.org/en/title/1288194214>

This book discusses the development of Soviet repression of ethnic Germans during its peak years between 1941 and 1955, “the Years of Great Silence.” Until the late 1980s, “the events that defined these years for the Soviet Germans could not be legally research, written about, or even publicly spoken about, with the USSR.” This is a scholarly work that tells an important part of the history of Germans in the Ukrainian S.S.R.