

(1805) Bernhard Eisenbeiß Family moves to Russia (a:3.1.5.3.7-4)

by Clyde Eisenbeis (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.8.2.1.3-7.1), 1 May 1988

In 1805, Bernhard Eisenbeiß (a:3.1.5.3.7-4) and his family moved from Dornhan, Germany, to Glückstal/ Odessa/ Cherson in South Russia. Cherson is a huge area of land in the Ukraine on the northwest shore of the Black Sea. Odessa, a major seaport city, is located on the northwest shore of the Black Sea. Glückstal was located about 80 miles northwest of Odessa.

A census of Glückstal taken in 1815 and printed in 1816 lists the names of the seven surviving Eisenbeiß children (one died in Germany) but lists no parents. Perhaps the parents died on the way, or died after arriving, or the census is in error.

In 1842, the seventh child, Christian (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.7), moved with his family to Hoffnungstal/ Bessarabia when the new colony was formed. Bessarabia is a huge area of land located west of Cherson. The Dnjestr River, which flows into the Black Sea, separates these land masses.

Other Eisenbeiß'es, not direct descendants of Christian, may have also moved to Hoffnungstal. If so, it is almost certain that these are descendants of Christian's brothers. It is not known if some of these brothers also moved to Hoffnungstal or if just their children moved there. (There was also a Hoffnungstal in Cherson.)

Some people believe that with Russian law in the 1800's, the youngest son inherited the land. The other sons had to find new land. Consequently, Georg (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.8), should have inherited the land. This jibes with the information that his two sons, Jakob (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.8.1) and David (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.8.2), were both born in Glückstal.

However, if the father Bernhard (a:3.1.5.3.7-4) did die early, as the census indicates, it is quite likely that his eldest son, Bernhard (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.3) took over the land and family duties. It is possible that Bernhard (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.3) did not have to give up the land to his youngest brother Georg (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.3) when Georg became of age. It is not clear how Russian law handled this.

The first Eisenbeiß families moved from Glückstal/ Odessa/ Cherson/ South Russia to Freeman, South Dakota, in the early 1890's. It is not known why they chose this area, but speculation is that Christian Buechler, a prominent businessman living in Freeman, was a brother to Barbara Buechler Eisenbeiß.

Most of these families later relocated from the Freeman, South Dakota, to other Glückstal communities in North Dakota and South Dakota. A large majority of them relocated to the Bowdle and Hosmer, South Dakota area. The Eisenbeiß families that arrived in the late 1890's immigrated directly to the Bowdle and Hosmer area presumably because of the large number of relatives already living there.

While a large majority of these Eisenbeiß families relocated to the Bowdle and Hosmer, South Dakota, area, others moved to Eureka, South Dakota (a Glückstal community); to Wishek, Ashley, and Beulah, North Dakota (Glückstal communities); to Lodi, California (a Germans from Russia from North Dakota and South Dakota community); and to Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada (other Germans from Russia communities).

The Eisenbeiß families from the Hoffnungstal/ Bessarabia area came in the early 1900's. These families moved to Java, South Dakota (near Bowdle and Hosmer); Streeter, North Dakota (near Wishek); and Martin, North Dakota.

The Eisenbeiß families typically immigrated to where other Eisenbeiß families were living or where other Glückstal families were living.

The largest concentrations of Germans from Russia Eisenbeiß families are still located in the Aberdeen, Bowdle, and Hosmer areas of South Dakota.