MARY M. FORBES

MILLER ANCESTORS
BEGINNINGS
From Reichenbach/Karlsruhe - Baden Germany
to
Mannheim, Kutschurgan Region
Russia

One of the Original Founders -
Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather

CHRISTOPH MULLER (about 1765)/Katherina

Ignatius 1798  Katherina 1807  Anton 1808  Christoph 1809  Margaretha 1812  Joseph 1814

Nativity of St. Joseph, Mannheim
**Reichenbach, Karlsruhe, Baden, Germany**

**Baden** is a historical state on the east bank of the Rhine in the southwest of Germany, now the western part of the Baden-Württemberg (state) of Germany.

It came into existence in the 12th century as the Margraviate of Baden and subsequently split into different lines, which were unified in 1771. It became the much-enlarged Grand Duchy of Baden through the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1803–06 and remained a sovereign country until it joined the German Empire in 1871, remaining a Grand Duchy until 1918 when it became part of the Weimar Republic as the Republic of Baden. Baden was bounded to the north by the Kingdom of Bavaria and the Grand Duchy of Hessen-Darmstadt; to the west and practically throughout its whole length by the River Rhine, which separated it from the Bavarian Rhenish Palatinate and Alsace in modern France; to the south by Switzerland, and to the east by the Kingdom of Württemberg, the Principality of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen and partly by Bavaria.

![Map of Germany showing Baden and Karlsruhe](image)

**Karlsruhe** (formerly **Carlsruhe**) is a city in the southwest of Germany, in the Bundesland Baden-Württemberg, located near the French-German border.

Karlsruhe was founded in 1715 as Karlsruhe Palace, when Germany was a series of principalities and city states. The town surrounding the Palace became the seat of two of the highest courts in Germany, the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany whose decisions have the force of a law in many cases, and the Federal Court of Justice of Germany the highest court of appeals in matters of civil law and criminal law. It therefore considers itself the home of justice in Germany, a role taken over from Leipzig after 1945.
The city was planned with the palace tower (Schloss) at the center and 32 streets radiating out from it like the spokes of a wheel, or the ribs of a folding fan, so that one nickname for Karlsruhe in German is the "fan city". Almost all of these streets survive today. The city center is the oldest part of town.

The marketplace lies on the street running south from the palace to Ettlingen. The marketplace has the town hall to the west, the main Protestant church to the east, and the tomb of Margrave Karl Wilhelm in a pyramid in the center. Building ensembles exist in the Neoclassical style.

The area north of the palace is a park and forest. Originally the area to the east of the palace consisted of gardens and forests.

The Grand Duchy had an area of 15,823 sq miles and consisted of a considerable portion of the eastern half of the fertile valley of the Rhine and of the mountains which form its boundary.

The mountainous part was by far the most extensive, forming, indeed, nearly 80% of the whole area. From Lake Constance in the south to the river Neckar in the north is a portion of the Black Forest which is divided by the valley of the Kinzig. To the north of the Neckar is the Odenwald Range, and in the Katzenbuckel. Lying between the Rhine and the Dreisam is the Kaiserstuhl, an independent volcanic group. The greater part of Baden belongs to the basin of the Rhine, which receives upwards of twenty tributaries from the highlands; the north-eastern portion of the territory is also watered by the Main and the Neckar. A part, however, of the eastern slope of the Black Forest belongs to the basin of the Danube, which there takes its rise in a number of mountain streams.

Owing to its physical configuration Baden presents great extremes of heat and cold. The Rhine valley is the warmest district in Germany, but the higher elevations of the Black Forest record the greatest degrees of cold experienced in the South. The mean temperature of the Rhine valley is approximately 10°C and that, of the high table-land, 6°C. July is the hottest and January the coldest month.

In the valleys the soil is particularly fertile, yielding luxuriant crops of wheat, maize, barley, spelt, rye, beans, potatoes, flax, hemp, hops, beetroot, and tobacco; and even in the more
mountainous part, rye, wheat and oats are extensively cultivated. There is a considerable extent of pasture-land, and the rearing of cattle, sheep, pigs, and goats is extensively practiced.

Of game, deer, boar, snipe and wild partridges are fairly abundant, while the mountain streams yield trout of excellent quality. Viticulture is increasing, and the wines continue to sell well. The Baden wine region is Germany's third largest in terms of vineyard surface. The gardens and the orchards supply an abundance of fruit, especially cherries, plums, apples and walnuts, Bee-keeping is practiced throughout the country. A greater proportion of Baden than any other south German state is occupied by forests. In these the predominant trees are European Beech and Silver Fir, but many others, such as Sweet Chestnut, Scots Pine, Norway Spruce and the exotic Coast Douglas-fir, are well-represented. A third, at least, of the annual timber production is exported.

Black Forest Region, BADEN - The beautiful and legendary Black Forest is in the southwest corner of BADEN-WURTTEMBERG, just south of Karlsruhe.

Waldbronn (Busenbach & Reichenbach combined) is located at the border of the Alb-Pfinz-Plateau in the valley of the river Alb.

History  Waldbronn was founded in 1972 as a result of a municipal restructuring, when the communities Busenbach and Reichenbach merged. A year earlier the community of Etzenrot had been merged with Reichenbach already.

The three communities are first mentioned in documents in 1292.
The history of Baden as a state began in the 12th century, as a fief of the Holy Roman Empire. A fairly inconsequential margraviate that was divided between various branches of its ruling family for much of its history, it gained both status and territory during the Napoleonic era, when it was also raised to a grand duchy. In 1871 it became one of the founder states of the German Empire. The monarchy came to an end with the end of the First World War, but Baden itself continued in existence as a state of Germany until the end of the Second World War.

Its territory now forms part of the German state of Baden-Württemberg.

The Grand Duchy of Baden within Germany at the time of the German Empire

12th - 14th centuries

Margrave of Baden

During the Middle Ages, various counts ruled the country that now forms Baden. The counts and duchy of Zähringen figure prominently among these. In 1112 Hermann, son of Hermann, Margrave of Verona (d. 1074) and grandson of Berthold, duke of Carinthia and count of Zähringen, having inherited some of the German estates of his family, called himself Margrave of Baden, and from this time the separate history of Baden dates. Hermann appears to have called himself margrave rather than count, because of the family connection to the margrave of Verona. His son and grandson, both called Hermann, added to their territories, which were then divided, and the lines of Baden-Baden and Baden-Hochberg were founded, the latter of which divided about a century later into Baden-Hochberg and Baden-Sausenberg. The family of Baden-Baden was very successful in increasing the area of its holdings, which after several divisions were united by the margrave Bernard I in 1391. Bernard, a soldier of some renown, continued
the work of his predecessors, and obtained other districts, including Baden-Hochberg, the ruling family of which died out in 1418.

15th - 17th centuries

During the 15th century, a war with the count palatine of the Rhine deprived the Margrave Charles I (died 1475) of a part of his territories, but these losses were more than repaired by his son and successor, Christophe I of Baden. In 1503 the family Baden-Sausenberg became extinct, and the whole of Baden was united by Christophe, who divided it, however, before his death in 1527 among his three sons. One of these died childless in 1533, and in 1535 his remaining sons, Bernard and Ernest, having shared their brother's territories, made a fresh division and founded the lines of Baden-Baden and Baden-Pforzheim, called after 1565 Baden-Durlach. Further divisions followed, and the weakness caused by these partitions was accentuated by a rivalry between the two main branches of the family. This culminated in open warfare, and from 1584 to 1622 Baden-Baden was in the possession of one of the princes of Baden-Durlach.

Religious differences increased the family's rivalry. During the period of the Reformation some of the rulers of Baden remained Catholic and some became Protestants, and the house was similarly divided during the Thirty Years' War. Baden suffered severely during this struggle, and both branches of the family were exiled in turn. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 restored the status quo, and the family rivalry gradually died out.

18th century

During the wars of the reign of Louis XIV of France the margravate was ravaged by French troops, and the towns of Pforzheim, Durlach, and Baden were destroyed. The margrave of Baden-Baden, Louis William (died 1707), figured prominently among the soldiers who resisted the aggressions of France.

It was the life's work of Charles Frederick of Baden-Durlach to give territorial unity to his country. Beginning to reign in 1738 and coming of age in 1746, this prince is the most notable of the rulers of Baden. He was interested in the development of agriculture and commerce, sought to improve education and the administration of justice, and proved in general a wise and liberal ruler of the Enlightenment.

In 1771 Augustus George of Baden-Baden died without sons, and his territories passed to Charles Frederick, who thus finally became ruler of the whole of Baden. Although Baden was united under a single ruler, the territory was not united in its customs and tolls, tax structure, laws or government. Baden did not even form a compact territory, consisting of a number of separated districts lying on either bank of the upper Rhine.
The French Revolution and Napoleon

Grand Duchy of Baden

When the French Revolution threatened to be exported throughout Europe in 1792, Baden joined forces against France, and its countryside was devastated once more. In 1796 the margrave was compelled to pay an indemnity, and to cede his territories on the left bank of the Rhine to France. Fortune, however, soon returned to his side. In 1803, largely owing to the good offices of Alexander I, emperor of Russia, he received the bishopric of Konstanz, part of the Rhenish Palatinate, and other smaller districts, together with the dignity of a prince-elector. Changing sides in 1805, he fought for Napoleon, with the result that by the peace of Pressburg in that year he obtained the Breisgau and other territories at the expense of the Habsburgs (Austria). In 1806 he joined the Confederation of the Rhine, declared himself a sovereign prince, became a grand-duke, and received other additions of territory.

The Baden contingent continued to assist France, and by the Peace of Vienna in 1809 the grand-duke was rewarded with accessions of territory at the expense of the kingdom of Württemberg. Having quadrupled the area of Baden, Charles Frederick died in June 1811, and was succeeded by his grandson, Charles, Grand Duke of Baden, who was married to Stéphanie de Beauharnais (1789-1860), a cousin of Empress Josephine’s first husband who had been adopted by Napoleon I.

***Our ancestors left this area in the early 1800’s (Mannheim, Kutchurgan, Russia founded in 1806.) It was a three month journey to Russia and the group wintered near Odessa before building their villages. Our ancestors were Roman Catholic as were the Habsburgs who lost lands to Baden.

"The German is like a willow. No matter which way you bend him, he will always take root again."
- Alexander Solzhenitsyn –

Baden in the German Confederation

In 1815 Baden became a member of the German Confederation established by the Act of the 8th of June, annexed to the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna of June 9. In the haste of the winding-up of the Congress, however, the vexed question of the succession to the grand-duchy had not been settled. This was soon to become acute.
The Rhine River, whose name comes from the Celtic word *renos*, meaning *raging flow*, begins at the *Rheinwaldhorn Glacier* in the Swiss Alps and flows north and east approximately 820 miles. The glacier is located northeast across the mountains from the town of Andermatt in the
Uri canton (state/province). The Rhine begins as a tumultuous Alpine stream churning through deep gorges, and although the river's flow is moderated somewhat as it passes through the Lake of Constance. The river remains a torrent westward to Basel. Just south of Chur, Switzerland, the Hinter Rhine, flowing northwesterly from the glacier, joins the Voder Rhine streaming from Lake Tuma, to form the Rhine proper at Reichenau. The river then flows north to Lake Constance and west through Schaffhausen to Basel, Switzerland. Near Schaffhausen it plunges 75 ft over a spectacular waterfall, the Rheinfall. At Basel the river turns north and enters the Rhine Graben, a flat-floored rift valley lying between the Vosges Mountains on the west and the Black Forest on the east. Strasbourg, France, a focal point for merging water routes from the Paris Basin, is located at the valley's northern extremity. With the junction of the Main River at Mainz, in Germany, the Rhine's seasonal regime becomes more stabilized. Along its course from Bingen to Bonn is a beautiful stretch of the Rhine Valley.

The river has cut the deep, steep sided Rhine Gorge through the Rhineland Plateau and the Rhenish Slate Mountains. This picturesque gorge, with terraced vineyards and castle-lined cliffs, has often been called the "heroic Rhine," renowned in history and romantic literature. It is complete with fairy tale castles and vineyards snuggled in the overhanging rock face, known as the Mittelrhein. Eighty percent of its’ ship-carrying waters pass through Germany.

**Historical Data**
During early historic times, Germanic tribes settled on either side of the lower Rhine and Celts alongside its upper sides. Julius Caesar bridged and crossed it in 53 and 55 BC. The Germans were formed on the north and the Roman empire to the south and east. When the Western Roman Empire disintegrated around 400 AD, the Rhine was crossed along its entire length by Germanic tribes and formed the central backbone first of the Kingdom of the Franks and then of the Carolingian Empire.

In 870, the Rhine again became the central axis of a political unit; the Holy Roman Empire. Over time, fighting and political events disintegrated this empire along the Rhine. Even with the fighting and changing hands of frontiers, a goal to connect the North Sea to the Black Sea had existed. It was first put into action by Charlemagne in 793, but it was never a success. The Thirty Years’ War, 1618 through 1648, ended with the final separation of the Rhine headwaters and delta area from Germany. This territory would later become Holland. Louis XIV acquired Alsace for France along the eastern border, and in 1660, the European continent was at peace for a while. The borders of countries along the Rhine were just about formed as we know them today, but not exactly, and not permanently. The French Revolution, in the late 1700's through the early 1800's, shows borders were still changing.

**Vineyard Agriculture**
Most of Germany's vineyards owe their existence to the Rhine River. It flows past a wide fertile valley past the Baden vineyards.
The Castles

The castles are an unmistakable feature of the Rhine landscape. Their founders were feudal overlords, who built them to protect their lands from marauders. They were far from thinking of any romantic notions as we do today. Besides the warlike function for which they were built, think about the back-breaking labor of the feudal serfs, whom must have been forcibly employed to quarry the huge stone blocks and dragging them up the mountain slopes. The mid-Rhine is also known for its German legends. One of the best known is the story of the Lorelei.

As the story goes, a nymph lived in the Lorelei rock high above the Rhine. She is said to have lured fishermen to their destruction with her singing until she was overcome with love and plunged to her own death. A bronze statue of the nymph overlooks the river.

Another famous landmark is the "Drachenfels" castle where Siegfried is reputed to have slain a dragon. The former masters of the castle, the Counts of Drachenfels, had a winged, fire-spitting dragon in there coat of arms. The view from the castle tower is considered one of the most famous on the Rhine.

Along the Rhine, particularly in the narrow gorge connecting Bingen and Koblenz, which has a length of only thirty-five miles, there are more castles than in any other river valley in the world. Many are ruins, but some have been restored as hotels and are open for tours. They stand like sentinels on the cliffs above river side villages, and others stand alone surrounded by vineyards.
"Mannenheim"

("Home of Manno") is first mentioned in connection with a legal transaction in the year 766, in the "Codex Laureshamensis" from Lorsch Abbey. Mannheim remained a mere village until Frederick IV, Elector Palatine started building the fortress of Friedrichsburg and the adjacent city center (die Stadt) in 1606 – with its grid of streets and avenues. On January 24, 1607, Frederick IV gave Mannheim the status of a "city", whether it really was one by then or not.

Mannheim was mostly leveled during the Thirty Years War in about 1622 by Johan Tilly's troops, and once again during the Nine Years War in 1689 by the French Army.

After the rebuilding of Mannheim that began in 1698, the capital of the Electoral Palatinate was moved from Heidelberg to Mannheim in 1720. This was when Karl III Philip, Elector Palatine began the construction of the Mannheim Palace and the Jesuit Church. These were completed in the year 1760.

During the 18th century, Mannheim was the home of the "Mannheim School" of classical music composers. Mannheim was said to have one of the best court orchestras in Europe under the leadership of the conductor Carlo Grua. The royal court of the Palatinate left Mannheim in 1778, and just over two decades later, Mannheim was removed from the Palatinate and given to the Grand Duchy of Baden (in 1802).
The journey from Germany to Russia included taking a ship from Lavingen down the Danube River to Vienna. They then crossed lands through Austria, Mohren (Moravia) and Galica to Radzivilov (Russia). They spent the winter in Liebenthaler. The village of Mannheim was started in 1808.
Second stage of the journey.

Most traveled from Ulm down the Danube before finishing the journey over land. Many died along the way of disease.

Final destination
Catherine II of Russia

Catherine the Great, Russian Empress

(1762-1796)

Catherine (a princess from Germany) married Czar Peter III. After his death Catherine wanted to build a prosperous, modern Russia. Her 'manifesto' of 1762 created thousands to German farmers to migrate to the Ukraine Steppes by the Black Sea, Volga River areas including our ancestors, the Millers. The manifesto promised and included - religious freedom, exemption from military service and thirty years without taxation.

Our ancestors came to and were part of the founders of two of the Catholic Villages in the Kutschurgan, Black Sea Region near Odessa. They built the villages and created thriving communities including churches, schools and flourishing farms. Although the Germans became citizens of Russia they kept to themselves, maintaining their customs and language. They were an ambitious, hardworking group. The Ukraine Steppes were occupied previously by nomadic tribes so the lands were barren and untouched until they settled it.

An interesting side-note: - although there is much in books about the church and leaders suppressing the 'peasants' and farmers from reading and writing - our ancestors, even as far back as Germany, could read and write. Schools and churches were two buildings that they built first. The villages of Elsass and Mannheim were founded in 1808 and by 1809 they were organized and set up. Another interesting point is the farmers lived in their villages and went out to farm their lands. I would imagine it was for protection and help in times of little law enforcement in such an isolated area and to help each other with no modern conveniences available.

Potemkin’s stairs in Odessa present day
The Steppes of the Ukraine (Russia)

Ivan Aivazovsky’s – 19th century painting of Odessa harbor

Ukraine is mostly a broad, flat plain of 233,090 square miles. Ukraine is slightly smaller than Texas. Mountains are found only in the west (the Carpathians) and in the Crimean Peninsula in the extreme south. Deer, beaver, marten, vultures and the steppe eagle are among the wildlife.

The fertile soil of the central and the southern region makes ideal farming land for grains. Odessa and Sevastopol are the largest ports on the Black Sea.

In the Russian Empire ethnic Germans were strongly represented among royalty, large landowners and military officers. The Germans did not necessarily speak Russian; they spoke German while French was often the language of the high aristocracy.

The lands and climate were similar to the plains and prairies of North America. The lands were not developed until the Germans migrated to Russia in the late 1700’s and early 1800’s.

Richelieu Street and the Opera Theater – 1890
GREAT, GREAT, GREAT GRANDFATHER

IGNATIUS MULLER (About 1798)/Louisa Schmidt

Johannes Anna Ignatz Peter Joseph

About 1821 1825 1829 1831 1835
The Kutschurgan enclave or district is named after the Kutschurgan River which is a tributary of the Dniester River. The Kutschurgan River flows along some of the villages of the Kutschurgan district. The six colonies in the Kutschurgan district are Baden, Elsass, Kandel, Mannheim, Selz, and Strassburg. All six colonies were Catholic colonies. The colonies were founded in 1808. The colonists came from Elsass, Rhein Pfalz, Germany; Wuerttemberg, Rhein Pfalz, Germany; and Baden, Germany. They were under the guidance of Russian travel agents who were in Germany recruiting the settlers. All of the colonists were given funds to sustain themselves until their arrival in the Kutschurgan district.

The colonists had copies of an agreement signed by the German and Russian governments that outlined their rights and obligations. This agreement contained six guarantees:

- Every family was to receive 60 dessiatins, approximately 162 acres.
- They would be allowed to settle in their own colonies, founded by themselves, and to maintain their own churches, schools, and institutions.
- The Russian government would not interfere in their religious practice.
- They would elect and maintain their own local government. Each Head of Family or single adult could cast one vote. After the first year of settlement, the Russian government reserved the right to tax the colonists. However, at no time would the tax levied on the colonists be greater than or smaller than the tax levied on other Russians.
- The German colonists, although full citizens of the Russian Empire, would never be conscripted into the Russian Military Service.
- They could move from their colonies, enjoy all the rights of a Russian citizen, attend universities and trade schools, and hold any political office in Russia.

Baden is situated south of Strassburg and north of Selz and is 4 kms. from the Kutschurgan rail station and 65 kms. northwest of Odessa.

Elsass is located 50 kms. north of Odessa and 8 kms. from the Teremejewka railway station.

Kandel is located south of Selz and is located 64 kms. northwest of Odessa and 10 kms. from the Kutschurgan rail station.

Mannheim is located 45 kms. north of Odessa and 9 kms. southeast of Elsass. It was first named Maria Helf but changed to Mannheim in 1810.
Selz is located 63 kms. northwest of Odessa and 7 kms. from the Kutschurgan railway station.

Strassburg is located on the main route to Odessa from Tiraspol.

Kandel and Elsass are located on relatively level land. The other villages have to contend with rolling hills. The entire Kutschurgan district has excellent black soil and four of the villages have a mixture of black soil and light sand.
Mannheim Village Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region: Black Sea</th>
<th>Founded: 1808</th>
<th>German Name: Mannheim</th>
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<tr>
<td>Area: Bessarabia</td>
<td>Religion: Catholic</td>
<td>Russian Name: Baraboi/Kamenka</td>
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<td>District: Kutschurgan</td>
<td>Location: See Map</td>
<td>Ukrainian Name:</td>
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<td>Rayon: Fr. Engels</td>
<td>Parish:</td>
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Village Coordinator: Bob Schuh

Remarks: from the Stumpp book/page 89, note 3 (lower page); “These 10 families had gone to Poland in 1804, then migrated to Mannheim in 1809. Itinerary: Lauingen-Vienna-Moravia-Galacia-Radzivilov. (Here 1 month rest)

Founding Families: Paradise on the Steppe by Joseph S. Height (page 69)

Plat Map: Paradise on the Steppe by Joseph S. Height (page 284)

Books
From Catherine to Khruschev by Dr. Adam Giesinger (page 112)
Paradise on the Steppe by Joseph S. Height (pages 69-70, 282-286)
The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 – 1862 by Karl Stumpp (pages 642-647)

Village History: Paradise on the Steppe by Joseph S. Height (pages 276-279)

Census Records
Black Sea German Russian Census Volume 1 by GRHS
1816 Revisionsliste - The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 – 1862 (pages 642-647)
1811 Census - Heritage Review Vol. 11 No. 4, December 1981
1852 Family Listing - Please contact Bob Schuh at rpschuh@teleport.com for more details.

Church Records
Mannheim Catholic Births 1819-1835
1814-1835 Church Records
Mannheim Catholic Marriages 1814-1847 & 1876-1878

Supplemental Information
1821 Voters List
1828 Debt List
Nativity of St. Joseph, Mannheim, Russia – present day

This church was used by Elsass Village for many years as well.

School in Elsass, Kutschurgan Villages in Russia
GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER

JOHANNES MULLER (about 1821)/Christina Giesinger

Priska (about 1843)  Alphonse (about 1844)  Petronella (about 1845)  Franz (about 1848)  Gustav (About 1849)
Petronella married Jacob Loier; Katherina married Johannes Kurtz; Balzar married Regina Schiele;
Dominic married Barbara Schiele; Lambert married Katherina Volk;
Most of the children moved to North Dakota including grandfather Lambert in 1899. Some married with children born in Mannheim and some married in North Dakota including my grandfather;
Agnetta (Agnes) their mother moved to North Dakota in 1906 but there is no record of Alphonse ever leaving Mannheim.
In Russia the start of political strife, persecution and religious intolerance caused our ancestors to look elsewhere for peace and freedom. They crossed the Atlantic Ocean crammed into holds of ships like animals for a period of two weeks to a month in hopes of a better life. But this was preferable to watching all they had built be burned and destroyed or being shipped to Siberia just for their nationality or beliefs. They came over in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. In Russia the socialists were gaining ground and demanding that all, including lands and farms built from the ground, be shared with them. The Germans were resented for ‘having too much’ in Russia. Our ancestors were persecuted for their faith by the same people for believing and trusting in God.

Once again after being herded onto trains from the ships that took them west to bald, untamed prairies they were expected to build from nothing. Meeting the challenge they built prosperous farms and communities with churches and schools and in return they could keep their small plots of land – and their traditions or so they were promised. But promises can be broken – a lesson my ancestors learned over and over again. World War I and World War II changed the attitudes of people everywhere including the USA.

The Millers came to North Dakota including my grandfather, his siblings and his mother – Agnetta (Agnes). Lambert came over with his eldest, married brother Balzar in 1899. Lambert was 18 years old. He is on the 1900 North Dakota census as brother to Balzar in Stutsman County outside Bismarck. He wouldn’t have been able to file for land grants until he was 21 years old. A 21 year old man could get 160 acres (1/4 section) of land provided he built a house, dug a well and tilled the land within five years.
Lambert married Katherine Folk (Volk) in 1900. He is listed with his wife Kate on the 1910 census with five of their eleven children including my father, Wilhelm (William).

Their determination and back-breaking work has no comprehension in today’s ‘immigration’ requirements. Imagine no towns, villages or cities and barren tightly bound ‘prairie wool’ land with no machinery other than a plow pulled by a horse or oxen to break it and no modern conveniences such as hydro, running water or furnaces. They often built one room sod huts to house their numerous children since there were no trees in many areas. The children all worked from an early age in what would be considered ‘child abuse’ or ‘slave labor’ by today’s standards. They would wash clothes using a scrub-board and gathering wood and kindling then putting it into a stove to make the oven temperature ‘just right’. My ancestors were fabulous cooks. I will never understand the talent it would require to be so. From cookies that melted in your mouth to strudels and kuchen and ‘home-made’ sausage I can honestly say that the food from my grandmother, my aunts and my mother was the tastiest food I ever had in my life.

The livestock had to be fed daily – in the darkness or the freezing temperatures of winter. To neglect them was not an option if you wanted to eat. There were no grocery stores and you had to live on whatever food you raised or grew.
Grazing horses on North Dakota prairies

Now many people ‘idealize’ this way of life – thinking it both simple and ‘romantic’. It is my belief there are very, very few people today that wouldn’t starve to death and fail. They wouldn’t have a clue of where to start from absolutely ‘nothing’. Yet our ancestors not only managed to survive – but they built their homes, churches and schools. They created prosperous crops and clean towns in barren lands. I hope and pray that their morals, principals and knowledge will continue into the future.
MULLER STORY (pronounced Miller in the English Language).

This is my ancestor’s story of hardships,

Discrimination, persecution and adventures too.

They suffered and did much to create the wonderful, easy

Life we all have in North America today.

With no conveniences, isolation, little or no support from governments

and extremely hard work, this is my thanks to them.

Acknowledgements to: Various websites; Wikipedia; Germans from Russia Historical Society (GRHS) in Bismarck, North Dakota; My mother’s information I had written down and Nola, my sister. A special thanks for all your help in compiling this information.