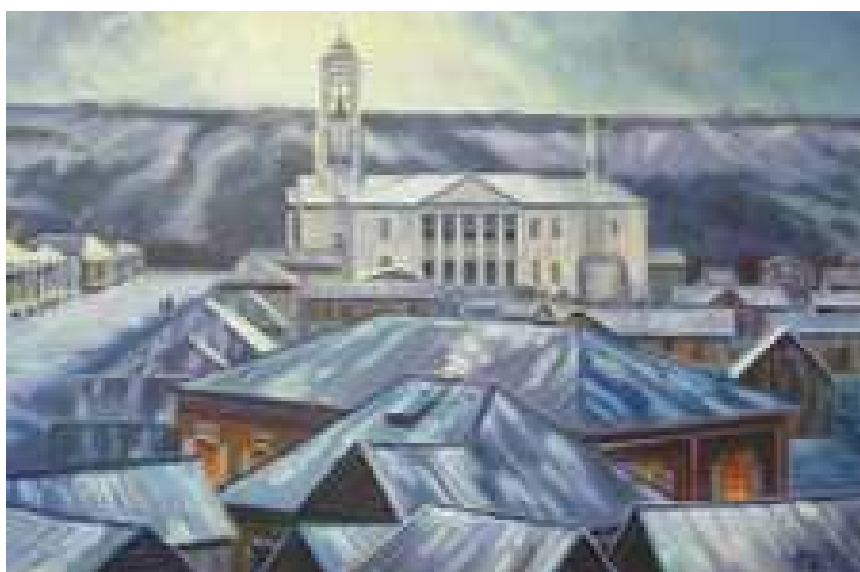


MARIENTAL CHASSELOIS LOUIS DAYS OF YORE

SEPT 2009

ISSUE TWENTY-FOUR



**Mariental, Russia by Michael Boss
Oil on Linen – 20" x 30"
From the Collection of Signature Associates**

Topics:

Editor's Comments

Feature Stories -

So We Will Know Them -

Sister Mary Elise Leiker:

A Conversation with August & Elizabeth Exner -

A Search for Exner Ancestors, by Adolf Exner -

Arrest Records -

Whisper -

GR Proverb:

**A short visit is best
and that – not too often**

Happy Autumn to all: We will be starting back to Arizona in the near future. Hopefully the weather will cool off somewhat when we get there, although we are not counting on it. Our summer here in Kansas was busier than I had hoped, and the work on my parents book kind of took a siesta. Well, there is always time this winter to try to finish it. What a lovely summer, weather wise, it was here in Kansas – only a couple tornado scares, one where we had to head for the cellar, which my son-in-law calls “the mother-in-law-room” (grin)

A Sad Note: Michael Boss lost his brother Richard the 22nd of June, 2009 and also, on May 30th, lost his faithful companion, Buckwheat, the little dog that appears somewhere in most all of Michael’s paintings.

Letters to the Editor:

Hi Thelma,

Thanks for persevering to find out my correct email address and sending your newsletter my way. As you can see I did receive it, and appreciate your dedication to its creation throughout the year. I will be attending the Herman family reunion and look forward to meeting many new relatives. Even though my grandmother, Mary Herman, came to Canada as a baby with her grandfather John Herman and grew up in St. Walburg I have never been there . I and am looking forward to seeing all the places she has been telling me about; she is now 101 years old.

Warmly,
Kathy Jones

Dear Thelma,

Greetings from Wisconsin. It took me several weeks to read the Newsletter in installments. Much information contained in the Newsletter is new for me and has enlightened my understanding about the people who are our German ancestors.

The story of the Kirghis Raiders and other enemies was most interesting to me because I had never read such a full account of the raids and the suffering and devastation of life and property that was inflicted on the Volga colonists.

Thank you for the informative Newsletter. It struck me that the events taking place in the Volga Region in Russia were happening during the same historical time frame as the events happening during the Revolution in the American colonies.

Blessings.
Sister Mary Elise

Check out this web page – it’s very nice. <http://www.celce.net>
He is a freelance photographer, and these are views of the Volga and Russian children.

**A Conversation with August and Elizabeth Exner
by
Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer, C.S.A.
Submitted to the Hays Daily News by Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer in 1996**



Sister Mary Elise Leiker with August Exner and the women, Elizabeth Leiker, who were born in Obermonjou on the Volga. They also were married there before their exile in 1929. August is 85 and Elizabeth is 83. They live in Korkimo, about 40 kilometers south of Chelyabinsk. (May 1995) Sister Mary Elise told me that she can still feel in her bones and her heart, their genuine, loving hospitality. they are now, sadly, gone to their eternal rest.

(NOTE: The following account is based on the notes by Sister Mary Elise Leiker, C.S.A., when she traveled to Korkina to interview the Exners in early January 1996. The conversation was in German. "While in Russia", she said, "I established a special relationship with Elizabeth Leiker Exner because her maiden family name is the same as mine. Questioning her I tried to find out if we were blood related. Of course, I did not succeed. However, in my heart I believe that we are blood related because Elizabeth's mannerisms so much resembled my father's sister, Lidwina. I also met other Leikers in Siberia which was a great experience for me." Best wishes, Sister Mary Elise Leiker)

He is 86 years old and she is 82, and they hardly believe they are still married after all these years. In fact, they can hardly believe they are still alive.

August Exner was born on September 10, 1909, in Obermonjou – at that time a very large Volga German village of perhaps a thousand families. His parents were August Exner, Sr. and Rosa Klaus. Elizabeth Exner was also born in Obermonjou, four years later, into the family of Joseph and Clara Leiker. Elizabeth never knew her father because one year after her birth, he was drafted into the Russian army and never returned from action in the First World War. An unusual set of circumstances eventually brought together in marriage, August Exner and Elizabeth Leiker – but that is getting ahead of their story.

August grew up the son of a humble farmer and gardener, too poor to be considered a “kulak” when that designation later became important in Russian history. August had three brothers and two sisters, and he received the kind of education that was typical for Volga villagers of modest means. He studied four subjects for four years in the local school. His father could not afford further schooling for him, which meant going away either to Katherinastadt or to Saratov. As things turned out, August needed to grow up fast, anyway.

When August was eleven, his father died from a stomach ailment. Soon after that, in 1921, famine gripped the entire Volga region. To survive, people needed to be imaginative. The family of a friend for example, survived through the resourcefulness of their grandfather and the generosity of the American Red Cross. The friend was Joseph Leiker, an elder brother of Elizabeth. The grandfather was Carl Leiker who wrote to the Red Cross requesting food. In return, the family received several bags of rice and several bags of flour. “This saved our lives” Elizabeth firmly asserts 75 years later, making it clear that she will always be grateful to America for this timely help.

When August was 19, his mother followed his father in death. Then, in 1929, famine again reared its hungry head in the Volga region – largely because of oppressive policies. Throughout that year, kulaks, and priests were rounded up and shipped out of the villages, property was seized, and crops were destroyed. By the end of the year, one Catholic priest was left in the region. His name was Father Alexander Staab and he lived in Katherinastadt. August cannot remember the priest’s surname, but he recalls that Father Alexander was a Russian who could speak German very well. Word went out among all of the Catholic young people that they should quickly visit this priest and become married within the Church while they had the chance. At that time, August asked Elizabeth to marry him. She balked. Up to then, she had known him only as a friend of her

brother. Besides, she thought that she was too young to marry. Then her mother had a word with her: "Marry him!" was her urgent advice. And so, as the fateful events of 1929 continued to unfold, August Exner and Elizabeth Leiker entered into a marriage that was to last through difficulties and tests more trying than most men and women are ever asked to endure.

In 1932, when another famine struck Obermonjou, August and Elizebeth, decided to leave the town of their birth. They had no bread, and they had already consumed the meat of camels and of other animals that only hungry and desperate people would consider eating. With only a few belongings to their name, they headed north to Penza. Today Penza is a medium-sized city halfway between Nizhniy Novgorod in the north and Saratov in the south of European Russia. The couple stayed in Penza one and a half years, working on the Kolkhoz: milking cows and tending horses.

Their lives didn't really settle down, however, until they moved to the Caucasus and lived in a village near the present day city of Baku. They remember their 10 years in Azerbaijan as a relatively peaceful time. They were welcomed and helped by the villagers, and somehow they were able to bear the loss of three children who never survived infancy. It probably was a blessing that the couple was childless when war with Germany broke out in 1941. Suddenly that year became for all Russians of German extraction what 1929 had been for all Russians labeled "kulaks" (Kulak's so named, were considered well-to-do) – a year of boundless sorrows.

Along with other German Russians then living in the Caucasuses, the Exners were arrested and placed on a boat that took them on a 10-day trip across the Caspian Sea. Upon reaching land, they were sent by train to Dzhusaly, Kazakhstan. During their entire journey by sea and by land, they ate only what they had been able to carry with them from their village. They were not given any additional food. At their destination in Kazakhstan, locals met them at the train and transported them to their "new" living quarters on a nearby kolkhoz-unoccupied pig sty's. The couple was in that place only two months when August and his brothers, Christian and Paul, were shipped north to the Urals, to live and work as prisoners of the Trudarmy in the village of Korkina. Authorities never told Elizabeth and her sister-in-law where their husbands were sent. The women were simply expected to continue working obediently and quietly on the kolkhoz, and this they did – pressing hay for use by the military on the front lines. At the time August left, Elizabeth was pregnant, but this child lived only to the age of three, and August never saw him. In the meantime, the wife of August's brother Paul, died, and Elizabeth took this woman's children and along with another sister-in-law, paid to secretly transport them to Tashkent. There they worked on another kolkhoz as the

war with Germany continued to grind on. Meanwhile in Korkina, a Urals village near the industrial city of Chelyabinsk, August lived in a poorly heated dugout, endured regular beatings and did strenuous work of railroad repair, which involved much heavy lifting without the aid of machines. He worked 12 hours a day and at night slept on boards using rags and other discarded materials for bedding. Somehow he managed to survive on the single kilo of bread that each man was given to eat each day, plus whatever other scraps he could find.

In 1945, the war ended, but that didn't mean liberation for the prisoners of the Trudarmy. Elizabeth still did not know where August was, and August couldn't have known that Elizabeth had moved from Dzhuzely to Zhambyl. The following year, a woman told Elizabeth and her sister-in-law that she knew the location of their husbands and could supply the men's mailing address. Elizabeth did not know how to write but found an educated man to write a letter for her, and she sent this letter to August at the address the woman had given her. To Elizabeth's surprise, a letter from him arrived by return mail.



Existing laws required August to continue living at the work camp in Korkina. but the commandant at least granted permission for August's wife to come join him. Their reunion was happy beyond description, a real dream-come-true. But for 10 years, until 1956, the life they shared was life in a prison camp. At first, they occupied dugouts with other prisoners and later barracks, but they never enjoyed the

privacy of a single-family dwelling. In Korkina were born all of their children who lived into adulthood and are still alive today. Anna, Emma, Adolph, Rosa, and Clara. The once-childless couple now have 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The five Exner children grew up in a different Russia from the one August and Elizabeth had known as young people – a Russia mostly at peace with itself and with the world and, in many ways, a Russia with a kinder face. When August and Elizabeth speak of their lives in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, they get the feeling that their children simply do not believe them.

Looking back over their experiences, August and Elizabeth do not know how they survived, but they are thankful that they did. They are among

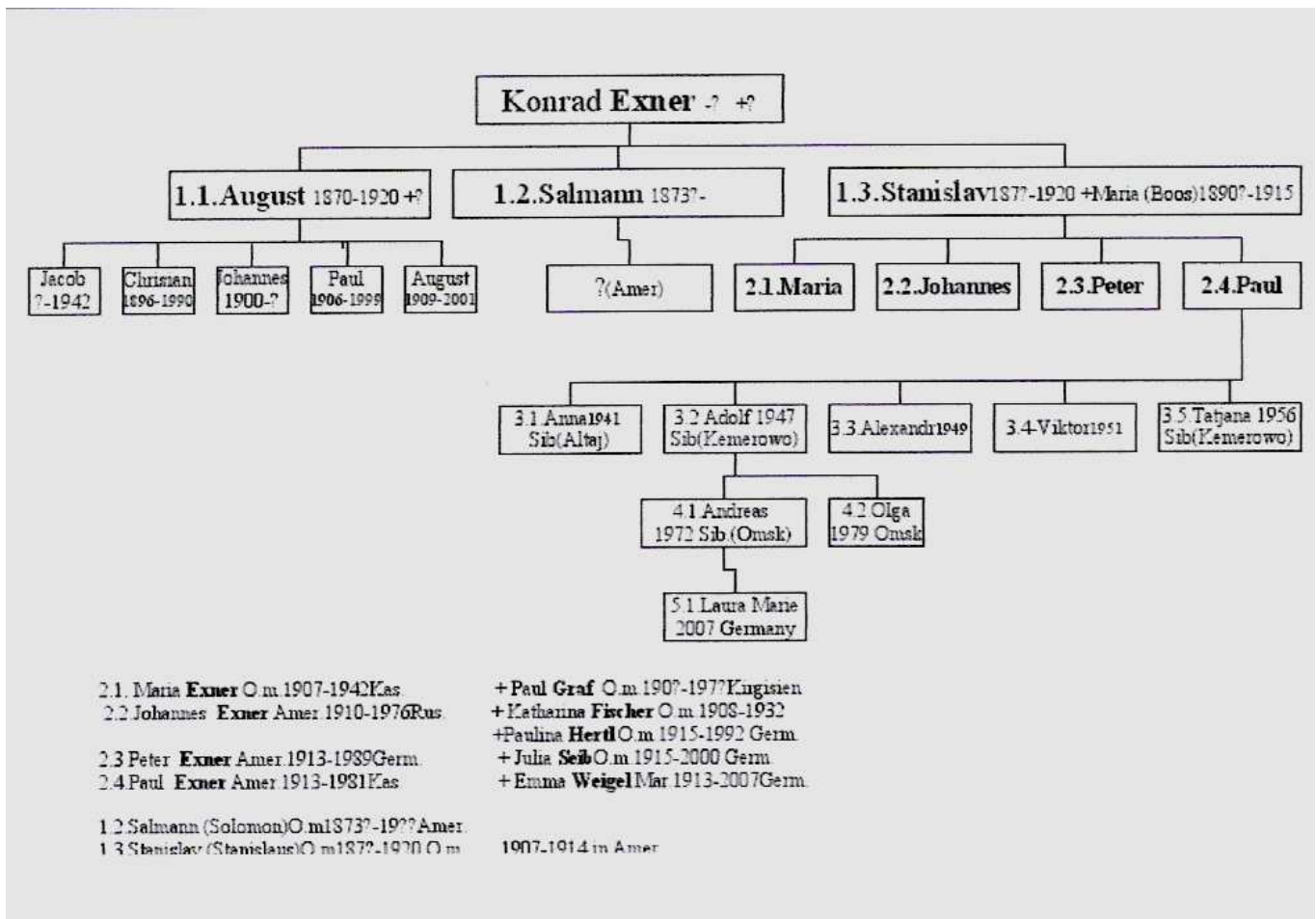
the regulars who attend Mass whenever a priest from Chelyabinsk visits Korkina. Elizabeth says she got through the difficult times by being grateful to God for whatever she had – even when she wasn't sure of what the next day would bring. And August simply says, "My faith was my strength".

I received this search below from Adolf Exner in Bavaria. He is searching for ancestors. He stated that his father was born in Obermonjou and that he was born in Siberia in 1947. He has been living in Bavaria since 1994.

He writes:

My grandfather Exner (Ecksner) Stanislav who was born in 187? emigrated to his brother Solomon (Salman) in America in 1907. In America (perhaps South America) 3 boys were born: Johannes 1910, Peter 1913 and my father Paul 1913 (Peter and Paul were twins). In 1914 they returned to Obermonjou. In 1915 the mother died, 1920 the father. I want to find out where the birthplace where the children of Stanislav and Maria (Boos) were born was. After Maria's death my Grandfather re-married. His second wife emigrated to 1921 to America with her own children.

Adolf Exner



If you have any information, please get in touch with me. Thank you, Thelma



Hello Thelma.
 Am Grab meiner Mutter Exner Emma, geborene Weigel 1913:
 von links- Elvira Kipke geborene Weigel mit ihrem Vater Weigel Emanuil (1914) und ich-
 Exner Adolf.
 Foto 2: ich und meine Frau Maria.
 Mit freundlichen Grüßen
 Adolf



Adolf - 2006



August – 1995 – at 85 yrs. old

I believe there is a family resemblance! - Although there are many years difference in ages.

Arrest records – submitted by Darrell Brungardt

These are the arrest records found by Darrell Brungardt. Joseph Pfannenstiel appears on my web page in the “Story of Joseph Pfannenstiel”.

The Kinderknecht’s are some of my ancestors.

Elizabetha Brungardt is my cousin Lilia’s mother. You will find her in the “Story of Lilia” on my web page. <http://mariental-louis.com/>

Pfanenshtil Joseph I.

Born in 1919, pp. Mariental.; German, b / c, a teacher ..

Arrested Jan. 12, 1942

Sentenced: A special meeting of the NKVD in the Soviet Union June 6, 1942, VBOs.: Article. 58-10.

Sentence: 10 years old ITL. Rehabilitated 20 February, 1992 Samara oblprokuraturyoy

Source: The book of memory of Samara Region.

Elizabeth Brungardt Filippovna

Born in 1888, ASSR Volga Germans, the city Marksshtadta; worked in a school cupboard.
Lived: in Engels.

Arrested on February 16, 1938

Sentenced: OS when NKVD 5 August, 1938, VBOs.: The a / c agitation.

Sentence: 10 years' imprisonment in the ITL Rehabilitated July 31, 1989 Saratov Oblast
Prosecutor's Office

Source: Book your Saratov region. - Preparatory work

#

From a site in Russia from Johannes Brungardt.
Part of 39 names.

Kinderkneht Adolf M.

Born in 1907

Sentence: repressir. on nationalism. recognize. Rehabilitated 19 Nov., 1996

Source: Center ATC Saratov region.

#

Kinderkneht Albert A.

Born in 1915, ASSR Volga Germans, pp. Marida, German, lived: ASSR Volga
Germans ..

Arrested Feb. 28, 1935

Sentenced: 1 Apr., 1935, VBOs.: Art. KRD.

Sentence: 5 liters. l / St. Vorkuta. Select. 11.06.1938. w / e.

Source: Book of Memory of the Komi Republic

#

Kinderkneht Alma Hristianovna

Born in 1910, Ukraine, Donetsk region., Pp. Koptevka; farmer. Lived: Ukraine,
Donetsk region., Pp. Koptevka.

Sentenced: in 1941, VBOs.: On the basis of nationality.

The verdict: first evicted in the Pavlodar region of Kazakhstan, as in 1942 - in the
Ulyanovsk region, where up to 23.05.53 Year used to physical work and was under
the supervision of commandant of spetsposeleny.

Source: The book of memory, Ulyanovsk region.

#

Kinderkneht Amalya-Tamara

(names of options: Bekreneva) Born in 1918, d.Maydorf Mergentalsky rn
Saratovskaya obl.; German; lived: Leningrad.
Sentence: spetsposelenie - Surgut district of Tyumen Region, SALT. 31.01.1956
Rehabilitated 9 March, 1995 IC GUV D Tyumen Region.

Source: IC GUV D of Tyumen Region.
#

Kinderkneht Vladimir Aleksandrovich

Born in 1951, lived: Krasnodarsky cr ..
Sentenced: 22 October 1941, VBOs.: On nats.priznaku (Germans).
Sentence: forced to c / p in Djambul region.

Source: Information GUV D of Krasnodar Region
#

Kinderkneht Vladimir Ivanovich

Born in 1949
Sentence: spetsposelenie Rehabilitated January 25, 1995

Source: Center ATC Saratov region.
#

Kinderkneht Curtains Klimentevna

Born in 1940, Krasnoarmeysk Stalingrad region.; German, lived: s.Drayshpits
Dobrinskaya rn P / Region ..
Sentenced: 13 Feb, 1950
Sentence: spetsposelenie - Armizonsky district of Tyumen Region, SALT. 18.01.1956
Rehabilitated February 15, 1996 IC GUV D Tyumen Region.

Source: IC GUV D of Tyumen Region.

WHISPER: (Meaning “A little bit”) It has been told to me that every community evolved into “haves” and “have-nots” – De Oberhof und de Unterhalf (upper and lower class sections). I didn’t know this and was surprised that this may have been true way back when! Makes me wonder what my ancestors were – upper or lower? (grin)

I also found the date when the Volga German Colonies all received Russian names was 1893. I had thought it was earlier than that.