

Johann HALLER was born on 27 May 1887 (JC), 8 June 1887 (GC), in Bergdorf/Glueckstal, Odessa District, Russia. He was the great-great-grandson of the original settler, Georg HALLER who, according to Dr. Stumpp's Immigration Book, came from Kleeburg/Weissenburg, Elsass (Cleebourg, Alsace) in 1809. (Since there are four generations of Georg HALLERS, numbers "I, II, III, IV" have been assigned to these.) The data in Dr. Stumpp's book gives the birthyears as follows: Georg I, 1755, Georg II, 1796 or 1798, Georg III, 1822, and Georg IV, 1856. The latter year checks with family data of birthdate: 25 April 1856. The church records from Cleebourg, Alsace were in very poor condition and gave only limited data about the Georg HALLER family.

Johann HALLER was the son of Georg IV and Magdalena (nee, WOLF) HALLER. The Georg HALLER IV family had moved to Sofiental, a daughter colony of Bergdorf, where they owned a home and farmed on rented land. Sofiental belonged to the Bergdorf parish. Johann's mother died in 1902 and, sometime later, Georg married a widow from Kassel, Mrs. Philipp (nee, Christina MEHLHAFF) DOERR, who had several children by her first husband, but none by Georg Haller IV.

Luisa SCHMIDT was born on 21 March 1886 (JC), 2 April 1886 (GC). Her recollection is that she was born in Gortomanov, but this village is unknown by any knowledgable contact and Dr. Stumpp surmised that she could have been born in Neudorf/Glueckstal, Odessa District (Russian name: Karamanova). Her father was Christian SCHMIDT, born about 1860 in Neuburg, Odessa; her mother was Maria GRAMINSKE, born in Akkerman in 1862. Her mother died in 1909, her father in 1913. The SCHMIDT family had no "Crown-Wirtschaft" so they moved several times during her youth, always in or near the Glueckstal area, and they came to live in Sofiental in 1906.

On 22 January 1909 (JC), Johann HALLER and Luisa SCHMIDT were married in the Bergdorf Lutheran Church. In May 1911, the entire Georg HALLER IV family immigrated to the United States, arriving on the ship "HANNOVER" at Philadelphia on 17 May. The family consisted of Georg IV, his children, Johan with wife Luisa, Peter age 20, Lydia age 12, his second wife Christina and four daughters: 1. Justine with husband Jakob Hohenecker, 2. Maria, 3. Magdalena, and 4. Lydia.

The first summer was spent working in the Eureka, South Dakota area. Then several years were spent farming on rented land at various locations, accumulating some ready cash, farming equipment, and household necessities. During those years, John (Johnny) was born on 1 January 1912 near Ashley, ND and Lydia near Eureka, SD on 4 October 1913. During World War I, Mr. Haller, caught up in the excitement of excellent crops and high wheat prices, bought a 300-acre farm five miles west of Ashley, ND. Here the family prospered by frugal living and hard work (remembered with special aversion is the clearing of rocks from the land and walking in the dust behind the harrow). Oscar was born here on 19 June 1925.

They stayed here until some time after Lydia married Herman Wildermuth in 1935, eventually moving to California. Johnny married Adeline Spitzer, also in 1935, and they moved to Eureka where he started learning the grocery business. Oscar's interest lay in auto repair, working at Ashley and later in Bismarck. In 1943, he went to California with the Wildermuths. The drought years in the "dirty-thirties" wrought their havoc on the rock-infested land of the farm, and Mr. Haller finally bowed to the inevitable. He and Mrs. Haller moved to Ashley where they worked in town or on vicinity farms.

In 1944, they came to live in Whittier, California with their daughter, Lydia, whose husband had just been sent to the WWII European Theatre of Operations. He found work in a defense plant in Whittier and Mrs. Haller took care of Lydia's two daughters while Lydia worked in a defense plant (McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft).

Late in 1944, Mrs. Wildermuth was able to buy a small home south of Whittier and, in his spare time, Mr. Haller was able to return to his first love; making things grow. With the help of his wife, he planted trees, lawn and garden at the new home. Mr. Wildermuth returned in 1945, back to his job with the Los Angeles Corps of Engineers. In 1951, they bought a new, larger home in east Whittier and again, Mr. Haller did the major work of putting in trees, a lawn, and a garden. But in the fall, he became ill and passed away in a Los Angeles hospital on 14 December 1951. His remains were taken to Ashley ND where interment was made in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery just before one of the most severe Dakota snowstorms ever to hit the area. Mrs. Luisa Haller lived with her daughter, Lydia and husband who, after retirement, have moved to Yucca Valley in High Desert Country. (E1. 3,333 ft. above M.S.L.) After a series of strokes in 1982 and 1983, she became completely incapacitated and passed away peacefully on 16 December 1983.