

## Memories of life in the Glueckstal and Freudenthal

Electronic mail message from Coleen Mielke

My grandparents came from Glueckstal and Freudenthal in 1884 as young children. One hundred years later, their elderly daughter, my Aunt Welentina Walker Brandner Eszlinger of Ashley sent me the following story:

"My folks farmed all their life, seeding wheat, barley, oats, flax, corn and gardens of all kinds of vegetables and big batches of potatoes and sunflowers. I remember helping to beat out the seeds from the sunflower heads with sticks and Dad would fill many large wheat sacks with the sunflower seeds and then he sold them. A lot of corn was beaten out the same way. The folks raised livestock, horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens, ducks and geese. I can remember as a small girl when we had a lot of pigeons and we butchered and roasted them. We also used ducks and geese for meat. Once a year, Ma would catch all the geese and ducks, one at a time, and pluck their breast feathers and then let them run (new feathers would grow back in), then she used the feathers to make quilts, some of them we sold. The sheep were shorn and the wool sold. My grandparents and my Ma cleaned the wool and had a spinning wheel and made yarn out of it. They knitted many a garment.

Dad and Ma spoke only German although they could understand English. My dad could count to 10 in Russian. I still remember "dras, dwa, dri, jaderu, be, at, jest, sam, vassem, divvit, desset. Dad had to work someplace when he was young and they were English, so he picked up a few words. I remember him saying that the guys he worked with used to say "More rain, More rest, for in Niger in the West". He also could sing a chorus of "At the Cross" in English from memory. He sung it in very broken English, but we asked him to sing it all the time. I don't remember the folks having hobbies, but dad played hymns on the organ with two fingers and Dad and Ma sang harmony. They read the Bible a lot. "