

# In Touch with Prairie Living

March 2017

By Michael M. Miller

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection  
North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA  
**GRHC**  
HERITAGE COLLECTION

Our Germans from Russia community lost Beulah (Dufloth) White (May 5, 1908 – October 12, 2016) at the age 108. Beulah was a dear colleague. We often corresponded by email as she shared her poetry writing. Beulah was a charter member of the Glückstal Colonies Research Association – [www.gluckstal.net](http://www.gluckstal.net). The life story of Beulah White appears in the April 2016 *In Touch With Prairie Living* column – <https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/articles/newspapers/intouch/2016/intouch0416.html>.

Dr. William Bosch, Spearfish, SD, a native of Linton, ND, has written an outstanding and unique book entitled *Russian Agriculture in the 1880s*. The book relates to agriculture on the steppes of Russia, the prairies of the central and northern plains of the USA, western Canadian Prairie Provinces, Argentina, and Brazil, all which progressed in tandem in the late 1800s.

Bosch writes: “My primary interest is how people lived and worked in southern Russia in the late 1800s. Of course, people living in southern parts of Russia influenced and were influenced by people, conditions, politics and events in other parts of European Russia. European Russia is the part of Russia west of the Ural Mountains.”

Thousands of German from Russia families engaged in farming in Russia, emigrated to the United States, Canada and South America where they brought their experience and expertise to bear on the development of agricultural industries. Many of these families settled in the Dakotas.

This book contains refurbished maps and diagrams, which first appeared in a book published in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1893. These reworked maps contain information such as the crops grown in European Russia in the

1880s, the yields of various crops such as spring wheat and rye, the mix of animals on their farms and much more. Anyone with an interest in the history of agriculture in the plains of America and Russia will find this book as a valuable resource.

The World’s Fair was held in Chicago in 1893. The Russian Government brought a large amount of material to this fair including a book titled, *The Industries of Russia: Agriculture and Forestry with Coloured Maps*. Bosch uses data from this book in his research and publication.

Bosch’s book is packed with information about the rural industries of Russia in the 1880s of which agriculture was paramount. Thirty-seven colorful maps and ten diagrams, also in color, paint an interesting picture of the state of agriculture in southern Russia at that time. Yields of crops, crops favored in certain areas, animals raised, prices of commodities and prices of land are all illustrated by these maps and diagrams. The text part of the book adds a wealth of additional information about agriculture and rural industries.

Bosch covers wheat, oats, barley, millet, buckwheat, Indian corn or Spelt, rye, spring wheat, oats, potatoes, flax, hemp, gardening, horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs.

Bosch has reconstructed all of the maps and diagrams in full color, added highlights from the original text, and supplemented those highlights with his own remarks. He has also corrected some of the more obvious errors or oversights in the original text. His book, *Russian Agriculture in the 1880s*, can be used by itself or as a supplement to one of the reprints.

Many of the people living in southern Russia in the 1880s were German colonists who started coming

to the Americas during the time covered by this book. They brought their knowledge and experience with them and helped develop agriculture on the plains of North and South America. *Russian Agriculture in the 1880s* puts their lives and livelihood into a broad and interesting context. The book is available for purchase at <https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/agriculture.html>.

William Bosch is also the author of the popular book, *The German-Russians: In Words and Pictures* – <https://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/wordspics.html>.

Bosch grew up on a farm east of Linton, Emmons County, ND. Both sides of his family had German-Russian backgrounds. His mother’s family (Dockter) came from Neudorf and Kassel, Glueckstal District, South Russia, and his father’s family (Bosch) from Rosental (today Aromatne) in Crimea.

Bosch received his bachelor and master degrees in mathematics at North Dakota State University and his PhD in 1970 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He was a professor of mathematics at the University of Northern Colorado.

If you would like more information about the 22nd Journey to the Homeland Tour to Germany and Ukraine (May 2018); or would like donate to the GRHC (family histories and photographs), contact Michael M. Miller, NDSU Libraries, PO Box 6050, Dept. 2080, Fargo, ND 58108-6050. (Tel: 701-231-8416); Email: [Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu](mailto:Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu); website: [www.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://www.ndsu.edu/grhc).

*March column for North Dakota and South Dakota weekly newspapers.*