

# **The classified past of the Ukrainian village of Oleksandrivka (Herzenberg Colony)**

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**This village was once known as Herzenberg Colony. That is what the descendants of Mennonites, whose ancestors once lived there, call it to this day. The official name of the settlement from the very beginning was Oleksandrivka, and during the years of occupation in 1941–1943 it was Landmann, after the name of the collective farm that existed here since 1929. From the German language, the word "Landmann" is translated as "rural worker". Even after the war, for some time its name was written as "Oleksandrivka Colony".**

**For many residents of the Petropavlovsk region, this village is still associated with a "German colony", although first the Russian imperial, and then the Bolshevik-Soviet authorities made incredible efforts to turn from a once wealthy Mennonite settlement, and during the years of collectivization, into the most successful and showy German collective farm not only of the district, but also of the region - there was absolutely nothing left. And even the cemetery, where more than one generation of Oleksandrians (and not only Germans, but also Ukrainians and Russians who also lived there) were laid to rest, was destroyed.**

The lands where the village of Oleksandrivka is located began to be developed in 1778, when they were given to the governor of Novorossiysk, Mykola Danylovyh Yazikov, as part of his rank dacha. In 1787, he sold them to Ivan Ivanovych Hertsenvyts, a customs officer (supervisor of collecting customs payments) of the Taganrog Port Customs. This area on the banks of the Samara River, which had little forestation, was quite attractive. From generation to generation, the descendants of Ivan Ivanovich inherited these lands: first by his only son Peter, after his death by his children Ivan and Grigory, and from them by their descendants. So, from generation to generation, the once large plot of land became smaller and became the hereditary possession of more and more new owners...

The right part of the Herzenvytsiv lands - from Petrivskyi and higher towards Petropavlivka - after the death of Peter Ivanovich, his son Ivan, who had four sons, became the owner. On February 24, 1844, Eugene was born as the second in the family. He studied at the Mykolaiv Cavalry School, on June 12, 1863, he was transferred from

cadets to cornets in the Life Guards Cavalry Regiment. In the rank of chief of staff, he was released from military duties and after the death of his father in 1868, after acquiring inherited property, he returned to his father's estate.

On October 16, 1875, November 9, 1877, May 19, 1881, and February 21, 1884, he was approved as an honorary justice of the peace of Pavlograd County. In 1875–1878, Yevhen Ivanovich Hertsenvyts was the speaker of the Katerynoslav provincial zemstvo assembly from the Pavlograd district.

But he spent most of his time in Kharkiv, where he also inherited the house on Dvoryanska Naberezhnaya at No. 5. Actually, he got everything that was once connected with his father's "shepherding" business - and part of the land outside Mykolaivka (present-day Malomykolaivka) , where since the beginning of the 1830s, the well-known breeder Hnat Kotoni first leased land from his father, the landowner Hertsenvyts, for the breeding of breeding flocks of sheep, and then Ivan Petrovych hired him to breed (do a comprehensive assessment of the productivity of each animal in the selection process with for the purpose of selecting the best animals to replenish the main flocks of breeding rams and ewes) of the flock of sheep purchased by him.

Thanks to Hnat Kotoni, Ivan Petrovich managed this business so well that soon he became a seller of the best wool, for which manufacturers competed at fairs. In the village He kept 9,000 in Petrivskiyi, and in the village Rozhdestvensky - 3,000 merinos. Ivan Petrovich Hertsenvyts became a shareholder of the Kharkiv Wool Trading Joint Stock Company, and in June 1859 he was elected chairman of the board of this company.

After his father's death, Yevgeny Ivanovich first tried to continue the business of Ivan Petrovich, because he got exactly those lands where flocks of sheep were kept. But after 12 years, he still decided to get rid of them. In 1880, Yevgeny Ivanovich Hertsenvyts sold his 2,983-acre plot of land to the Mennonites of the Molochnaya Colony, located near Melitopol, Tavria Governorate (now Zaporizhia Oblast), which got its name from its location on the Molochnaya River.

This transaction of purchase and sale was beneficial to both parties. Just then the problem of small land among the colonists became acute, because the law of inheritance that existed in the Mennonite settlements prohibited the division of land allotments, and the heir who received the right to the land allotment paid other members of the family their share as monetary compensation. This situation pushed the colonists to look for new settlements, because the other members of the family, except for one,

remained landless and had to look for opportunities to acquire land in other places. Evgeny Ivanovich Hertsenvyts lived most of the time in Kharkiv, owned a relatively small plot of land, and obviously did not possess the entrepreneurial flair and passion like his father, so he decided to use, like most landowners in the times after the abolition of serfdom, the opportunity to sell this land. Thus, the interests of buyers from Mennonite colonies and the owner of the land allotment coincided.

Five Mennonite families of Germans - von Born (von Born) from the settlement of Waldheim (Waldheim), now (before the Russian occupation) - village. Vladivka; Roth from Gnadenfeld, two Janzen families and the Nickel family from Prangenau (Prangenau, this settlement no longer exists) moved to new lands and formed their own settlement here, which was first named using the first parts of the surname of the former landowner - Herzenberg. Actually, this name of the settlement was commonly used in the Mennonite community itself and later, although it was officially named Oleksandrivka. It is quite likely that the farm with this name (and it could have come from the name of Yevhen Ivanovych's wife - Sofia Oleksandrivna) arose even before the sale of the land plot, because in order to care for flocks of sheep, there should have been at least a farm where shepherds lived.

So, the name "Oleksandrivka colony" existed from the beginning of settlement by Mennonites, but they called their settlement Herzenberg. In this study, we will use the name Herzenberg in the description of the first thirty-year "development" period, because most of the testimonies and documents of that time mostly contain this name, and in the years of pressure and repression on the inhabitants of the village, we will use Oleksandrivka, because this name occurs in official documents of the Soviet authorities

It was not possible to find information about all the first settlers of Herzenberg. But at least we know something about two families representing two generations.

So, one of the first was the Janzen family: Heinrich Janzen (Heinrich Janzen), born on March 29, 1856 in the settlement of Neukirch (Neukirch) of the Molochan colony (now the village of Udarnyk), his wife Anna Derksen (born on August 2, 1856 born in Berdyansk), daughter Anna (1878), another daughter, Elizabeth, was born in Herzenberg on August 2, 1880. Probably, Elizabeth Janzen can be considered the first indigenous resident of Oleksandrivka, born here.

Another founder of Herzenberg, Gerhard Born, moved here with his entire large family. Gerhard (born on October 9, 1821 in the Lichtenauk settlement of the Molochan colony, now the village of Svitlodolinske) was married to Helene Goertzen

(born on January 6, 1824 in the settlement of Shenzeye, now the village of Snigurivka). They had ten children: Katarina (1848), Gerhard (January 15, 1849), Helena (May 29, 1851–1909), Wilhelm (1852), Heinrich (1857–1919), Anna (1847), Maria (1947), Jacob (February 2, 1856–1931), Elizabeth (January 19, 1862–1919), Agnes (1865). Helen died in 1884, and Gerhard rested in Herzenberg in 1910 at the age of 89 years, 1 month and 23 days.... From the entire large family of the first settlers, only Jacob Born remained to live in Oleksandrivka, fate scattered all the others to different corners of the empire - to Samara, Ufa, Siberia.

Those villages from where the Mennonites moved to new lands already had a history of 45-55 years, at least two generations of Mennonites were born here (the settlement of Waldheim was founded in 1836, Gnadelfeld in 1835, and Prangenau even earlier - in 1824. ). These villages were part of the so-called Molochan colonist district, which was formed north and northwest of Melitopol in 1804, and in 1871 the district as an administrative unit was liquidated and instead the colonists' settlements were distributed between two parishes. So, according to the description of the time, there were 1197 farms in the colonial settlements and there were 248 landless families (1857). For example, in Waldheim and Gnadenfeld in 1860, 34 families each owned more than 43 acres of land each and were considered "full farmers", another 12 families owned up to 43 acres, so they were considered "semi-farmers." But there were 56 landless families in Wallheim, and 38 in Gnadenheim. In Prangenau there were 16 families of "full farmers", 8 - "semi-farmers" and 33 landless families. At the time of the purchase of land from Herzenvytsia, the number of landless families was even greater. Accordingly, these families inherited monetary compensation from their paternal-grandfather's allotments, which they invested in the purchase of a new plot elsewhere.

At that time, the family settlements of the Mennonites were quite well equipped, they were located in the Berdyansk district of the Tavrya province. For example, in Gnadenfeld there were 80 yards, 730 inhabitants. It was a parish center located 70 versts from the district center - the city of Berdyansk. There was a prayer house, two schools, a zemstvo doctor, a post office, a dyer's shop, three benches, a wood warehouse, and a brick factory worked nearby. Waldheim near the Begim-Chokrak stream had 103 yards and 772 inhabitants, its own school; in Pronengau on the banks of the Jumanle River, there were 58 yards, 447 Mennonites lived there, and there was its own school.

The land at the new location was bought from Yevhen Ivanovich Hertsenyvs at a price of 31 rubles per tenth. It is most likely that the purchase was made by the Born family, because later, during the delimitation of the lands of the so-called dacha No. 35 (this was the name of these lands in the land management documents), 2,268 dehiscent of land in the Oleksandrivske settlement, as of May 1, 1896, were recorded as the property of one settler Benjamin Born, other owners were not included in the documents of the time (or he could buy back the shares of others after the purchase).

Herzenberg became the so-called "daughter colony" of the Milk Colony. At that time, all such colonies had their unique Mennonite appearance, which made them very similar to the mother ones. In 1898, H. Van der Smissen in the magazine "Petermann's Mitteilungen" described the Mennonite settlement as follows: "... We saw a prosperous village, which was organized exactly according to the example of the mother colony, and this was felt in everything - dialect, habits and religion. Although the administration was often Russian, Mennonite villages remained undeniably German in behavior, language, and way of life. The pioneers of culture demonstrated that German perseverance, thrift and efficient work could transform the desolate steppes and the once uncultivated land."

Hard-working German colonists took up farming, focusing first on sheep breeding, because these places were known due to the industrial breeding of sheep by the father of Yevhen Ivanovich, Ivan Petrovich Hertsenyvs. At the same time, they also engaged in agriculture. Although the harvests were poor in the first years of farming, over time everything improved. All the same, the Herzenberg colonists first achieved special success in sheep breeding.

The new settlement immediately attracted the attention of other Mennonites, who gradually began to move to Herzenberg. From the publication in the newspaper "Mennonitische Rundschau" for November 18, 1881, we learn that 30 families already lived there. For almost five years (according to the publication of April 15, 1885), the number of families did not increase significantly - up to 35 families. It is worth noting that the Mennonites belonged to the so-called Flemish and Frisian communities, into which they were divided even in their homeland. Each community existed independently of the others, chose its own spiritual mentors and preachers, and a spiritual elder stood at the head of the community. He preached, baptized, broke bread, approved preachers and deacons, presided over general meetings, and was concerned about church discipline. The colony, like other settlements of that time, had self-government. Decisions were made at general meetings, the headman was elected for

three years, and his deputy - for two years. Desyatskyi (at that time, in rural communities, one person was elected from every 10 yards, who performed police and other public duties) were changed almost every month.

About a third of the first settlers belonged to the Mennonite Church, which was first a congregation (1881–1895), and since 1895 a subsidiary branch of the Orloff Mennonite Church - Orloff-Halbstadt-Neukirch (the Orloff Mennonite Church - Orloff Mennonite Church), which was the oldest community in the settlement of Molochna, then known as the congregation Orloff-Petershagen (Flemish Mother-Church, Ohrloff–Peterghagen–Halbstadt), and was founded back in 1804. The first minister in Herzenberg was Kornelius Siemens, ordained in 1881. Johann Woelk, ordained in 1882, was a priest from 1892. The group was organized in 1881 and had 31 members then, and by 1905 had grown to 80 people.

Another Mennonite Brethren Church was a branch of the Rückenau Mennonite Brethren Church (Mennonite Brethren Church in Rückenau). Its first leader was Jakob Dirksen, who moved from Münsterberg to Herzenberg. In 1892 he was succeeded as leader by Dietrich Friesen, a former elementary school teacher, and Jacob Dirkesen became an itinerant preacher throughout the Mennonite Brethren Conference. Deacon Johann Kliewer (Johann Kliewer) was also an extraordinary person in the church, a pious and serious Christian, in 1901 he left the service in Herzenberg and in secular life later became a quite successful entrepreneur - the owner of a wagon factory and a farmer. This congregation, which was organized in 1880, then had 79 members, grew to 180 people in 1905. Wilhelm Baerg served the community for several years, and in 1894 he moved to the Orenburg province with many other Mennonites of the colony. In 1913, H. T. Cleaver was the chief minister.

The Mennonite community around the world was pretty well united. At that time, the Mennonite newspaper "Mennonitische Rundschau" served as one of such instruments of unity, where many letters from all colonies were printed, with which the contributors often addressed their relatives with whom they had lost contact. These private letters often described community life, which serves as a fairly good source for reproducing life in Mennonite colonies. What is interesting - the newspaper also printed lists of subscribers in each of the colonies so that the Mennonites knew from whom they could borrow a newspaper to read. So, in Herzenberg in 1885 Peter Penner, Johann Kliewer and teacher Peter Rogalsky received the newspaper.

Mennonites took care of children's education. At that time there were almost no illiterates among the Mennonites. Schools, as a rule, were opened as soon as a new

colony was founded (then there was a principle: one colony - one school). Classes with children were organized even before the formal registration of the school, so several years usually passed between the date of the official opening and the start of school classes in the colonies. And in Herzenberg, the actual premises for the school were built as early as 1885, although classes with children were held as soon as the families moved to a new place. It was a one-class school (German pragmatism was based on the understanding of sufficiency: one school with one teacher is enough to obtain basic knowledge). A place for her was set aside in the center of the colony, so that it would be more convenient for children to come to her. In the first year (1885), 37 students studied at the school, and Petro Rogalskyi was the teacher. In different years, different teachers worked at the school, from those names that have been found, Katharina Siemens (in the early 1900s) and Johann Hubert (1908) are mentioned.

Children aged 7 to 14 attended the school. The academic year lasted from September 1 to May 1 or 15. There were five lessons every day. Two-thirds of the time was devoted to arithmetic, history and geography, and the Russian language. A third is for the study of the Law of God and the German language.

This school, like other schools in the German colonies, was maintained at the expense of the Mennonite community itself, the zemstvo did not allocate funds for it. In 1912, an extension appeared, which made the school premises even more attractive.

Mennonite girls were required to attend school. And if, according to the one-day census of elementary schools of the empire, conducted on January 18, 1911, in the Pavlograd district, among the 6,614 boys of the Orthodox faith, there were 1,836 girls, then among the Mennonites, 27 boys and 29 girls attended school (more likely, we are talking about the Mennonite school in Herzenberg ), similarly, there were 189 girls for 187 Lutheran boys.

At the end of the century, sometime in 1898-1899, in Herzenberg, according to the Mennonites themselves, "revival broke out" and many young people "found Christ as their Savior", were baptized and accepted into the Mennonite brothers of Herzenberg. The young women's society then became interested in missionary work and began to sew and knit clothes for poor children in India.

In general, the Mennonites made a good impression on the local authorities, because they were hardworking, took care of creating prosperous farms, loved order, showed themselves to be humane, and most importantly, they were sober.

The structure of the Methonite settlement in Herzerberg did not differ from the mother colony - from the very beginning there was one central street with two-sided buildings. Neat houses always had an exemplary appearance, behind them were orchards. According to the census of orchards, 378 fruit trees grew in 47 estates. But the relationship between different trees among the Mennonites was different than in the surrounding villages. 236 plums (62%), 95 apple trees (25%), 39 cherries and 17 pears grew in Oleksandrivka. For example, in the village Petrivka in 54 estates there were 199 cherries (75%), 43 plums (13%), 17 apple trees and 7 pears.

All houses were built according to the same plan, as in other Mennonite villages. Each house had a summer room, a middle room, a living room and a corridor. The summer room was called because the heat from the brick stove in the kitchen did not reach it, so the room remained cool in the summer.

Both schools and prayer houses, as well as grain stores (special warehouses for grain storage in case of crop failure) were built at the common expense of the community. A school teacher, a paramedic, and a midwife were supported by community funds. There were also "sanitary custodians" who monitored cleanliness in the settlement, notified the doctor about the appearance of acute infectious diseases (and there were as many as 186 of them at the time!!!) and took measures to isolate houses where diseases appeared; a black flag was hung on the gates of such estates.

However, neither the neatness of the Metonites, nor the efforts of the "sanitary custodians" saved Herzenberg from the terrible epidemic disease that raged at the end of the 19th century. - in 1889, as many as 95 children died here from diphtheria. Practically, it was a disaster for such a settlement as Herzenberg, because almost all the children died... Diphtheria and scarlet fever were raging all over the Ekaterinoslav region at that time; these diseases prevailed among the mortality of the population, especially of young children.

Migration in the colony was carried out constantly in accordance with established traditions of heredity. At the beginning of the 1890s, many residents of Herzenberg (Oleksandrivka colony) took advantage of the migration movement common among Mennonites and, together with the Molochan Germans, moved to the Orenburg province, where the Germans were given 40-60 acres of land for farming on very favorable terms. u). In 1894, residents of Oleksandrivka, Abram Yakovych Neifeld, Wilhelm Wilhelmovich Berg, and Abram and Jacob Henrikovich Val, together with two other Mennonites, even bought the Gurchakiv farms in the Kazangulov Volost,

which had previously belonged to Prince Gorchakov, and moved there, where they began to grow wheat varieties brought by them from Tavia province.

In 1894, Germans from the Melitopol District of the Khortytsk Volost of the Ekaterinoslav region also began to follow the Molochan Mennonites; they bought about 30,000 acres of land and formed new settlements in the Orenburg region. In May 1907, the villagers of Oleksandrivka Hergard Herhardovich Born and Dietrich Petrovich Friesen bought from the Omsk burgher Oleksiy Feofilaktovich Galushchyna land in the village. Dmytrivka, Tatar Volost, Kainsky District, Tomsk Governorate: the first - 707 desiatins, and the second - 202 desiatins.

Many German Mennonites who lived in the Oleksandrivka colony also bought former "Herzenvintsivka" lands for farming. Thus, according to the "Alphabetical list of land holdings and land accounting of the Pavlograd district of the Katerynoslav province", individual landowners in 1908 were Herzen Herman Yakovych (437.68 des.), Dick Yohan Petrovych (139 des.), Pauls Cornelius Corneliusovich (139, 68 des.), Jantzen Henrikh Yakovych (139 des.), descendants of Mykola Yakovych Mertens (1597.73 des.).

In the neighboring Khoroshiv Volost, German colonists owned land around the Nikonivka farm: Berg Abram Vilhelmovich (100 desyats), Varkentin Gerhard Ditrikhovych (100 desyats), Vilms Petro Martynovych (470 desyats), and Varkentyn Yakiv Abramovich owned 603.5 desyats land on the Fedorivsky farm.

The lands that were bought privately and, say, as early as May 1, 1896, were listed as the property of one villager, Benjamin Born, and as of 1915 belonged to the Oleksandriv village community, which then had 29 members. The land area was 2181 decytans and 2323 square fathoms.

Thanks to the "List of persons who have the right to participate in the district and preliminary congress of landowners of the Pavlograd District to elect voters to the provincial election meetings that will elect members to the State Duma", we have the opportunity to reproduce the list of landowners in Oleksandrivka and the size of their land plots in 1906. So, the first list (of those who have the right to participate in the county congress to elect voters directly) included, in particular, Dick Henrikh Petrovych (680 des.), Leven Petro Vilheimovich (208 des.), Maier Henrikh Kasperovych (315 des.), Pauls Cornelius Korneliusovich (175 des.), Fast Gerhard Bernardovych (198 des.), Epp Yohan Korneliusovich (334 des.), Epp Petro Korneliusovich (236 des.), Jantzen Henrikh Yakovych (175 des.). Petro Henrikhovich

Fast had the right to participate in the meeting "on the basis of other immovable property", which was estimated at 40,000 rubles.

The second part of the list contains a list of those landowners who owned smaller allotments and therefore had the right to participate in the "preliminary convention to elect commissioners to the county convention that will elect voters." So, here, in particular, the following ethnic Germans are listed: Born Gerhard Gergardovich (100 des.), Yakiv Hergardovich Born (100 des.), Velk Johan Yakovych (100 des.), Vince David Davidovych (50 des.), Herzen Herman Yakobovych (25 dec.), Herzen Yakiv Yakovych (20 dec.), Herzen David Yakovych (50 dec.), Hibert Dietrich Mykolayovych (50 dec.), Mykola Dietrichovich Hibert (100 dec.), Dick Johann Petrovych (125 des.), another Dik Yohan Petrovych (139 des.), Dik Henrikh Petrovych (20 des.), Dik Petro Petrovych (50 des.), Leven Petro Yakovych (125 des.), Lorenz Yohan Yohanovych (50 des. ), Meyer Friedrich Friedrichovich (98 des.), Pauls Cornelius Corneliusovich (139 des.), Rempel Petro Yohanovych (48 des.), Thyssen Gerhard Henrikhovich (146 des.), Thyssen Abram Henrikhovich (80 des.), Fast Peter Henrikhovich (10 dec.), Friesen Dietrich Petrovich (50 dec.), Friesen Yohan Johanovych (50 dec.), Friesen Johan Petrovych (50 dec.), Jantzen Henrikh Yakovych (119 dec.).

As a rule, German settlers used loans provided by the Peasant Bank to buy land. Moreover, this began to gain a mass character in the Ekaterinoslav region, so the peasants of the meetings of the Ekaterinoslav Zemstvo expressed their dissatisfaction that with the help of the Peasant Bank, "mainly German colonists are buying up large tracts of land, and the peasants as such can only "dissolve" in the German sea or escape by resettlement", described this situation in the Yuzhny Kray newspaper in 1891.

So, some of the inhabitants of Herzenberg moved to other lands, and some joined the local Mennonite community. Actually, during the first almost 20 years of the colony's existence, the number of its inhabitants increased from five families, for example, in 1898, according to the first all-Russian population census, to 100 male persons.

And another 10 years later, in 1908, according to the evaluation and statistics department of the Katerynoslav provincial zemstria administration, there were 27 farms in the Oleksandrivske settlement and 188 people lived there: 97 were male and 91 were female. According to the statistical survey of 1908, the settlement had 2,268 decytas of purchased land, and according to the data of the Treasury Chamber, as of January 1, 1911, it was 2,183.90 decytas.

On January 1, 1911, according to family lists, the population of the colony consisted of 113 males (of which 54 were adults and 59 were minors, i.e. up to 21 years old) and 121 females (of which 67 were adults and 54 were minors) . That is, there were only 234 residents. This is stated in the publication of the Yekaterinoslav Provincial Land Administration "The number of the rural population of the Yekaterinoslav Province".

In 1914, according to the records of the Zemsky Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there were 23 householders in the Oleksandrivka colony, the total number of residents was 229 people. They paid 1,497 rubles that year. 10 kopecks village meetings.

Agriculture became the main occupation of the inhabitants of the colony. Sheep farming, which Mennonites traditionally started in the first years of settlement, was reduced in volume, pastures were plowed and used for wheat crops. In general, the Mennonites managed carefully. Colonists showed high standards in land cultivation. Mykola Yakovyx Mertens, who owned 1,207 desyats of land in the village. Katerynivka, was listed as an outstanding business owner in the directory "All Russia: Russian Industry, Trade, Agricultural Industry and Administration: Business Address-Calendar of the Russian Empire" (1899).

In general, the Mennonites were good businessmen and could easily move to new settlements if they saw economic benefit in doing so. That is why their migration was relatively active, accordingly each of them had plenty of livestock and grain for farming. For example, Yakiv Andriyovych Fast had 120 acres of land, 12 working horses and 4 young horses, eight cows and 12 calves. Agricultural equipment includes an engine, a mechanical thresher, two seed drills, a snow packer, a plow (a horse-drawn harvester used for harvesting grain and other crops), six carriages and other small equipment. He employed 4 permanent workers, hired 3 more for seasonal work and 8 for day work.

Landowners of the colony arranged so-called model fields of the agricultural department of the Pavlograd district zemstvo on their lands. According to the report of the agricultural department for 1915, in Oleksandrivka they were kept, for example, by Johan Friesen, Heinrich Teichrib, and Heinrich Fast.

A windmill for grinding grain into flour worked in the colony. It was owned by the villager Gerhard Wall.

On November 16, 1913, residents of Oleksandrivka Mykola Yakovych Ens and Petro Karlovych Unrau registered the "Ens and Unrau" Trading House, which was engaged in trade in agricultural machinery and equipment and grain products, in Pavlograd with its place of business in Petropavlivka. The two of them were also managers (directors) of the company.

The landowners of Oleksandrivka cultivated their land not only with their own efforts, but also hired peasants from the village itself (and at that time not only German-Mennonites lived there, but also Little and Great Russians - for example, according to gendarme documents, Stepan lived on the outskirts of the colony Kalantay, the police guard of the colony was Kyrylo Zozulya), and also from Petrivka, Mykolaivka, Katerynivka. Mennonites were hospitable and demanding people. Perhaps that is why they sometimes had animosity with hired peasants. One of these cases went down in history as a criminal case about setting fire to a haystack in Johann Dick in the winter of 1908 (the case is stored in the fund of the Katerynoslav Gendarmerie Department of the State Archives of the Dnipropetrovsk Region).

Mennonites fought poverty collectively. Landless fellow villagers were provided with leased and reserve lands, helped with crops. Therefore, Mennonite settlements had almost no class stratification, and therefore no socio-economic conflicts within the community.

However, political unrest in the country began to affect the life of the Mennonite colony. In 1905, a big fire broke out in the colony precisely on this political ground, which destroyed the buildings of several households.

Like all Mennonites in the empire, the men of Oleksandrivka were no exception and performed alternative service in peacetime in forestry. And with the beginning of the First World War, they began to be mobilized mainly as orderlies. For example, Wilhelm Born, who was born in 1897 in Herzenberg, was called up for military service in 1916 and appointed as an orderly on a mobile hospital train.

At the same time, anti-German hysteria intensified in Russia. A ban was introduced on the use of the German language in public places, the Katerynoslav province began to rename German settlements and parishes. Oleksandrivka got away with it - she was not affected by the wave of renamings. Searches and seizure of weapons (hunting rifles, rifles, revolvers) began. In the Katerynoslav region, rifles and 347 revolvers were seized from 792 settlers among the Mennonites of the

Katerynoslav, Bakhmut, Verkhnyodniprovsky, Oleksandriv, and Pavlograd counties. Entire collections of firearms were seized from many Mennonites.

A number of so-called "liquidation laws" of German lands were issued, which did not escape the Herzenbergs either. The "Liquidation Laws" of February 2 and December 13, 1915 and September 8, 1916 forbade Austrian, Hungarian, and German nationals who were in Russian citizenship from owning real estate. Lists of landowners whose lands are to be alienated were printed in the columns of the newspaper "Ekaterinoslavskiy gubernskiye vedomosti" in many issues, starting from April 1915. In No. 68 of August 27, 1916, we find a list of German landowners of Pavlograd County.

Here under number 7341, for example, the need to alienate land from Johann Peter Dyck, Heinrich Jakob Janzen and Hermann Jakob Görzen is mentioned. In their total possession were 427 dehsences and 1,641 square fathoms of land, three houses with outbuildings in the village of Oleksandrivka. And the worst thing: under No. 7342, it was reported about the need to expropriate land in general in the Oleksandrivska rural community, which was used by 29 German families. The area of land to be expropriated was 2,181 decytans and 2,323 square fathoms. The same sanctions were applied to German landowners, in particular, in Mykolaiv and Khoroshiv parishes, as well as throughout the empire in general.

Although the Mennonite organizations appealed to the government of the empire with a request to cancel these laws, even having the deputy of the III and VI State Duma G. A. Bergman as the official representative of the interests of the Katerynoslav Mennonite community, all petitions turned out to be in vain. Anti-German hysteria gained momentum.

At the same time, government officials realized the threat posed by the mass expropriation of land from Mennonites and Germans in general, as it threatened large under-sowing, therefore, grain crop failures. Only in the three southern gubernias (Kherson, Tavri, and Katerynoslav) would have remained unsown two million acres of land. Then the Council of Ministers nevertheless decided to postpone the liquidation of the Mennonite-colonist properties, which were supposed to make winter crops in the summer of 1916; liquidation was supposed to be carried out already after the harvest in 1917. With the overthrow of the autocracy, this issue was automatically removed from the agenda of the new government, although by that time many settlers managed to get rid of their possessions for practically nothing.

The hysteria surrounding the Mennonite communities did not slow down, destroying the settled life of the colonists, bringing their farms to complete exhaustion and destruction. Both the White Guards and the Red Army saw the peaceful Mennonite peasants as potential "enemy guides."

And their successful, educated, culturally isolated colonies caused not only envy, but also sometimes hatred of the surrounding peasants. A special "dislike" arose from the fact that many peasants became hired workers or domestic servants for the Mennonites.

And if in Herzenberg in 1908 this "dislike" resulted only in the burning of haystacks, then for another Mennonite worker of the same name in the Oleksandrovsky district of Katerynoslav region, who was called Nester Makhno, it turned into an unbearable desire for revenge, because his work in the Mennonite he remembered his family all his life with "anger, indignation and even hatred." Therefore, all Mennonite settlements where Makhnovites appeared experienced incredible suffering, which "swept away the remnants of exploitation and slavery like a huge broom." Oleksandrivka did not miss this sad fate either.

During 1918–1919, the village was looted more than once. From time to time, the Makhnov squads stopped by Oleksandrivka and, as a rule, demanded vodka, chickens, and lard. On September 28, 1918, the newspaper "Friedensstimme" reported on the murder of 12 Herzenberg villagers. On September 29, 1918, the Makhnovites killed three more German families. In one family, a teenager disappeared that day and was found under the bed with his nose and ears cut off... In another house, the Makhnovists raped women, while all other family members stood under the wall and watched. According to the memories of the Mennonites, Makhnov bandits often burned houses and sheds to the ground, only a few managed to escape from their village. There was no way to run into the field and hide - the crops were harvested and the fields became bare.

October 1918 brought grief, for example, to the Hanswind family - during another raid by rebel units, the head of the family, Oleksandr Martynovych, was killed. On March 7, 1919, the Lepp family was killed in their house: 52-year-old Nikolos with his wife Katarina and his father Daniel.

In the files of the Pavlograd regional military commissar, there are several reports about the attempt to capture the insurgent units, in particular, in Oleksandrivka. One of them says: "On February 26, the Brova gang appeared in the Oleksandrivka colony

with 300 sabers and 6 weapons. The combat brigade of the 2nd squadron, which is located in the village of Mykolayivka, sent 25 people to investigate, and in Oleksandrivka they were surrounded by a gang, disarmed, their documents were taken from them and they were released."

Three days later, Wrangel's army attacked Pavlograd and the White Guards released all those arrested by the Bolsheviks. Johann returned home and was happy that everything was over. But everything turned out differently.

A few days later, the Bolsheviks returned and began to ask about Yohann. Motherly love hid her child, but they began to search the basement and found him there. None of the mother's pleas helped, she was pushed aside and the killers pounced on Johann.

Johann, like Jacob, also prayed a lot in the last days of his life and read the Bible, as if he felt that his last hour was coming... We never saw Johann again. Then they found out that he had been killed. <...>

A year later, typhus came to our village. Mrs. Bourne died, and her mother had to take care of her, and soon became ill herself. On the new year of 1920, our little children went to congratulate her, but the grandmother was already very ill. The children then said that their grandmother cried when she heard their New Year's wishes. The next day I came to her apartment and felt a stab in my heart, because I noticed that the shadow of death was already hanging over my mother's face...

Mother died on January 9, 1920. My dear Peter (Lorenz) closed her eyes. Three weeks later he also died, because he too fell ill with typhus. I cannot describe this separation. Four deaths in a row. When I went out into the church yard, I didn't hear a single word from my loved ones... Only memories flashed before me. I stood helpless with seven children. But the main thing is that we wanted and had to live.

After some time, the Lord gave me support. Peter Unrau from Petropavlivka, whose wife also recently died of an illness, joined me with his three children.

Our daughter-in-law Anna also died of typhus in Reinfeld. My brother Cornelius also fell ill after the death of his wife. He, a sick man, was killed by bandits in his bed. 80 people were killed in Reinfeld that night.

Cornelius' six children were with Hubert in Münsterberg. It was very difficult for Greta. Our father-in-law Lorenz died last winter. Jacob Born's wife weakened due to nervous tension. Aunt Frize also fell to her feet due to her feelings.

Life is very difficult, but we are happy now because we are healthy. <...> This is what is happening now in Russia..."

Alexander Mennonites, like the residents of other colonies, did not take part in either white or red formations, unless someone was mobilized by force, there were no volunteers among them to fight for any government. Likewise, they did not take any part in political life, they did not even create self-defense units (although they had a fire brigade).

Yes, those terrible years for the Mennonites of Herzenberg were filled not only with many robbery losses, but also with numerous deaths from typhoid fever - during 1919-1920, 18 adults died from this disease here.

At that time, a fairly mixed population lived in Oleksandrivka - more and more non-ethnic Germans settled in the colony, because the lands belonging to the Mennonite owners were expropriated and, as noted in the aforementioned survey of the Bragyniv village council on January 27, 1924, it was in Oleksandrivka - the only settlement of the village council - land management was carried out. According to the analysis of surnames, many residents moved there from Petropavlivka and nearby villages. But there are many surnames that are purely Russian; their number grew from year to year. According to archival information preserved in the fund of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR (Central State Archive of the Higher Authorities of Ukraine), in 1922, 314 people lived in Oleksandrivka, and the following year - 367 people. According to the directory of the Central Statistical Office "National minorities in Ukraine (registry of villages)" in 1925, 365 people lived in 43 households of the village. By sex, the residents were divided as follows: there were 189 men and 176 women. The residents of Oleksandrivka farmed 983 dehescents of land. The village had 49 wells, a windmill, and a forge. In the village there was a cooperative bench of a consumer association and a four-grade school. At that time, the inhabitants of the colony were mainly engaged in horse and cattle breeding.

As the Bolsheviks gained power, the Mennonites began to fear that their religious freedom and other privileges would soon end. However, the religious beliefs of not only Mennonites, but also believers of other cults, were under pressure from the authorities. A religious tax was introduced. Only in 1923 was a lease agreement concluded for the house of prayer, which belonged to the Mennonite community and was confiscated by the new authorities. The charter of the Mennonite religious community itself was registered on January 31, 1925. At that time, the Mennonite community had 124 members in the Oleksandrivka colony. Considering the total

number of residents (365 people in Oleksandrivka), Mennonites made up only a third of the population.

The difficult economic situation, robber attacks on Mennonites, conflict situations with the local Bolshevik authorities caused not only indignation, but also the desire to leave their native places and emigrate. On September 8, 1921, Franz I. Dirksen's family managed to escape to the USA. At the same time, a significant wave of emigration to America and Canada began. The archive file "Lists of Mennonite refugees who have permission to leave for America from the Katerynoslav and Zaporizhia provinces" in the fund of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVS), dated 1922, consists of 375 sheets. In the first wave, about eight thousand Mennonites left. Another 20,000 of the 56,000 who lived in Ukraine declared their intention to emigrate. The Hubert and Friesen families were among the first to leave Oleksandrivka for Canada in 1925, and the families of Frank and Helena Dirksen (Frank and Helena Dirksen) - for the USA, in New Jersey). In 1926, William Born's family emigrated. And they were not alone. Such a course of events did not fit into the doctrine of the Bolshevik Communist Party, which proclaimed the "liberation of nations" on the way to socialist construction. In order to reduce the outflow of Mennonite emigrants, it was necessary to take urgent measures, ensuring not only the national and cultural interests of the German community, but also socio-economic ones.

Education in the German school resumed in Oleksandrivka, and the idea of collectivization began to be actively imposed - first, the creation of societies for joint cultivation of the land, and then a collective farm. Thus began the uprooting of the socio-economic foundations of the ethnic identity of the Germans.

Intensive socialization of land, cattle and livestock, the formation of cooperatives for joint cultivation of the land, forced grain collection, arbitrariness with the spread of loans, and the introduction of a system of self-taxation caused concern among Mennonites. Mennonites always sought to live in harmony with others, so those who had not yet emigrated began to pretend that they were adapting to the demands of the authorities.

In Oleksandrivka, the collective farm was formed most likely in 1929. It was called the Landman Agricultural Grain Artillery. Unfortunately, we can learn not so much about life at that time based on individual tangential sources. The rich archive of artillery (114 cases for 1930–1934), which was kept in the State Archives of the Dnipropetrovsk region, was lost during the Second World War. From the investigative files of the NKVD, we learn that in 1930, the head of the collective farm "Landman"

was Yakiv Yakovych Frank, born in 1895, he came from the Marienfeld colony of the Synelnyk district of the Dnipropetrovsk region, a German, a peasant, non-party member, illiterate. Then he lived in the village. Komyshuvakha in Donetsk region, from where he moved to Oleksandrivka and headed a collective farm.

1930 saw one of the most powerful anti-Soviet uprisings of the peasants as proof of their staunch resistance to collectivization, decentralization, and grain procurement. Although, in fact, one of the epicenters of this uprising was the settlement adjacent to Oleksandrivka - the village of Sontsevo, from where a group of peasants who sought to unite with the Bohdanov insurgents came forward, the Mennonite community refrained from mass participation, although some of the residents of Oleksandrivka joined the insurgent movement. In particular, Vince Ivan Davydovych and Fast Yakiv Andriyovych.

Mainly, the Mennonites took a wait-and-see position, because it was then that the former pastors Unru Petro Karpovich, Jantzen Abram Abramovych and Jantzen Yakiv Henrikovich held talks with the German consul in Moscow about going abroad with the entire colony, and it was then that the Mennonites quietly "liquidated" their farms, preparing before departure. At that time, Fast Abram Andriyovych, mother of Vins Ivan Davydovych, managed to leave. But this way of emigration was quickly eliminated by the Bolshevik authorities. Another emigrants, Ivan Friesen and David Herzen, were detained in Moscow and returned to Oleksandrivka.

Soon the repression against the Ukrainian peasantry spread to Oleksandrivka. Since Mennonite families were generally relatively self-sufficient and, in the eyes of the Bolshevik authorities, wealthy, the disenfranchisement affected almost every family that had not yet sold off their property, secretly preparing for emigration. Thus, in 1930, Fast Andrii, who had 100 dehsences of his own land, Born Petr Yakovych (he sued) and many others were dispossessed.

The "bleeding" farms of the Mennonite community of Alexandria entered the famine years. According to the analysis of the documents of the regional prosecutor's office of the regional department of health care, the regional party committee, the State Archive of the Dnipropetrovsk region compiled a list of settlements affected by the famine. Oleksandrivka of the Petropavlovsk district is also included in that list. In other sources, it is recorded that no less than 134 inhabitants of the village suffered from hunger at that time, that is, approximately every third resident of Alexandria.

Mennonites were helped to survive the famine by their relatives who already lived abroad, and by the so-called "home relief committees" - "German Mennonite Aid", "Dutch General Commission", "Canadian Mennonite Organization", which sent parcels and remittances. Although the food parcels were not so generous (they included, for example, a kilogram of some cereal, 5 kilograms of flour, half a kilogram of sugar and a can of canned food), they allowed poor Mennonite families not to die of hunger. Later, after the condemnation of this aid by the Bolshevik leadership as "Hitler's aid to starving Germans", it would become the basis for various accusations by many villagers. For those who received it, additional taxes were first introduced, and the authorities in general began to believe that this assistance was provided for the creation of an agent network of counter-revolutionary cadres, and accordingly the flywheel of repression gained even faster momentum.

Until recently, self-sufficient farmers ("in the past kulaks", as they were often called in court cases) became collective farm workers - grooms, carpenters... One by one, Mennonites were prosecuted. From archival files it becomes known that in 1933 "former kulkul" Kin Gustav Ivanovich was convicted for embezzlement in the collective farm. In 1934, the head of the collective farm, Frank Yakov Yakovych, was removed from his post, accused of harmful actions that led to the destruction of livestock in the collective farm. The visiting panel of the regional court held an open trial against him and several other collective farm workers. Yakov Yakovych was sentenced to five years of correctional labor in a correctional labor camp with impairment of his rights for two years. Together with him, the storekeeper of the collective farm Epp Hergard Hergardovych and the farmer Herzen Ivan Davydovych were sentenced to the same terms of imprisonment.

In 1934, the "Landman" collective farm was headed by Henrikh Fridrikhovich Majevsky, a non-party illiterate German born in 1908 in the village of Ilyashivka, Gorodnytsky district, Kyiv region. In that village, he first joined the artillery, but in 1931 he declared that he would "live without the artillery." Probably, the troubles in the Kyiv region, in particular the persecution, forced him to move with his family to Oleksandrivka, where he showed his loyalty, he was elected the head of the agricultural party.

Evidently, the Oleksandrivka colony had something special for ethnic Germans, in the 1930s whole German families began to move here again. In 1929–1930, the Kleins - Fridrich Ivanovich and Ivan Ivanovich and their families, and later Petro Ivanovich - moved from the Nesteliivka colony of the Loziv district of the Kharkiv

region. There they had a good farm of their own - eight horses, two cows, four calves, 50 acres of land, all the most modern equipment needed for its cultivation at that time; and what was not expropriated from them had to be sold. Petro Ivanovych also had his own farm and 70 acres of his own land. The status of "former kulaks" remained with them because, as stated in the court case, "when they arrived in Oleksandrivka, they bought nice houses and orchards."

In 1934, the family of Enchel Reingold moved to Oleksandrivka together with the family of Henrikh Fridrikhovich Majeovsky. Soon - the Birger brothers: Gustav Andriyovych headed the collective farm brigade, and Vasyl Andriyovych began to manage the farm. Paul Rengold moved with his family from the Kursk region.

Since then, in the publications of the Petropavlovsk district newspaper "For the Soviet collective farm", the "Landman" artel has been mentioned more and more frequently as the "national German collective farm", which has become a model for other farms. That is why, for example, in 1935, Henrikh Fridrikhovich Majeovsky was entrusted with the task of opening the regional take-off of advanced collective farms of the Petropavlovsk Region.

On the initiative of the head of the "Landman" collective farm, Henrikh Majeovskyi, many measures useful for the peasants were carried out. Thus, the elders of the colony under the guidance of O. Schmidt and the help of collective farm gardener Iv. Klein was sent from Oleksandrivka to the village. Brahynivka (now the village of Bohynivka) 1325 poplar. The neat four-kilometer landing was turned into a flowerbed - dug up and barred with a rake. "The old men of the Landman and Komunar artillery will, on their own initiative, lead their collective farms into cultural, clean, green collective farms," noted the district newspaper "For Bolshevik Collective Farms."

The Mennonite collective farm was always listed among the leaders - both in terms of plowing rates, and was the first among farms that sowed their fields. Therefore, it is not surprising that in 1935 the collective farm "Landman" harvested the fastest grain harvest, sold 1,000 quintals of bread, and bought a car.

The head of the collective farm, Henrikh Fridrikhovich Majeovsky, was elected a deputy of the Brahyniv village council. In the report of the village council "On the fulfillment of the conditions of the entire complex of sectoral contests-competitor councils in 1935" there is a mention that he managed to properly organize the work of the deputy group and "pulled" 32 activists into the group. In general, according to this report, the collective farm "Landman" is the leading one in the region, received the

transitional flag of the district executive committee and the district party committee, was listed on the regional marble board of honor as one of the 60 best collective farms in the region. Among other collective farm workers, the report mentions the foreman of the agricultural brigade of the artillery, Adam Mykhailovych Shrader, who with his brigade collected 15 quintals of grain from a hectare and completed threshing in 20 days.

Since the mid-1930s, the Germans of Oleksandrivka came under harsher surveillance by the Soviet authorities. The bodies of the DPU-NKVS began to be quite scrupulous about every fact of receiving aid from Germany, the receipt of which began during the famine. They also began to recruit their informants from among the German peasants. A resident of Oleksandrivka, Otto Danylovykh Zelykh, who worked as a veterinary nurse at the collective farm "Landman" (accordingly, he was given the pseudonym "Sprys"), was recruited as a secret employee of the UDB of the NKVD. He was given a rather specific task: "To cover the activities of Germans who maintain ties with Germany, namely: to provide information about the inhabitants of the village who during 1933-1934 received "Hitler aid", contacted the German consulate and applied to petition for departure abroad, were pro-fascist."

However, he did not live up to the hopes placed on him by the NKVD and "did not give anything significant" for the entire time of his agent activity, and therefore it was decided to punish him "as a disinformant double". On December 20, 1935, O.D. Zelykh was arrested and charged under Art. 206-17 p. "a" of the Criminal Code of the USSR "for underreporting" ("did not inform about counter-revolutionary persons known to him").

On January 27, 1936, the Dnipropetrovsk branch of the Military Tribunal of the Border and Internal Guard of the USSR sentenced O. D. Zelykh to three years of imprisonment in correctional labor camps. However, the convict filed a cassation appeal, the sentence was overturned, and the case was sent back for further investigation. And, of course, the Petropavlovsk Regional Department of the NKVD had no intention of letting this matter go, and charged him with a new charge of "counter-revolutionary agitation." The rationale was that O. D. Zelykh, allegedly, while under a stay-at-home bond, campaigned among collective farm workers against the measures of the party and the Soviet government, praised the fascist regime in Germany, incited the residents of Oleksandrivka not to join the collective farm, thereby trying to destroy the collective farm. Testimony of "witnesses" was used to confirm

this. O. D. Zelykh himself did not plead guilty again. On July 16, 1936, a special meeting of the NKVD of the USSR sentenced him again to three years in labor camps.

The punishment for the father's disobedience caught up with his sons, Vasyl (born in 1922) and Eduard (born in 1923), when they were sent to the east of the country before the German occupation of Dnipropetrovsk region. The first was arrested on July 11, 1942 on charges of counter-revolutionary agitation, and the second on October 14, 1942 as a socially dangerous element. By resolution of a special meeting of the NKVD of the USSR, Vasyl was sentenced to 10 years, Eduard to eight years in labor camps. After their liberation in 1954, they were sent "as persons of German nationality" to special settlements in remote villages of the Samipalatin region of Kazakhstan. All three Zelykhs were later rehabilitated.

In 1936, the NKVD's hysteria about ethnic Germans and their general accusations of counter-revolutionary activities, which was the basis for an anti-German propaganda campaign, flared up with new force. On November 22, 1936, Shmid Oleksandr Martynovych, a collective farm worker, was arrested on charges of anti-Soviet agitation, and on July 17, 1937, Leven Herman Petrovych was arrested.

Order No. 00439 of the NKVD of the USSR dated July 25, 1937 initiated the so-called "German operation", in particular, among ethnic Germans, who ranked third in terms of the total number of repressed people after Ukrainians and Poles. The NKVD clearly formed the image of the enemy among the German colonists.

In Oleksandrivka, one of the first victims of this order was the head of the "Landman" collective farm, Henrikh Fridrikhovich Majevskiy. For his reluctance to "divide the peasants into the poor and the kulaks" (it was about singling out a group of ethnic Germans from the village residents for their demonstrative eviction outside Ukraine as kulaks), as well as for the fact that "he nominated the wealthiest part of the peasants for managerial work in the collective farm", he was arrested on September 8, 1937, accused of counter-revolutionary agitation and sentenced to 6 years of correctional labor in a correctional labor camp.

The arrests continued one after the other: on August 17, 1936, NKVD officers arrested Yakov Henrikhovich Jantsen, on October 25 – the carpenter of the collective farm Unrau Pyotr Karpovich, two days later, on October 27, another collective farm worker – Lorenz Henrikh Ivanovich

But the most massive arrests of the people of Alexandria took place in 1938. As if in agony, NKVD officers arrested ethnic Germans one by one, accusing them of

participation in a German counter-revolutionary organization that was conducting anti-Soviet activities in the Petropavlovsk region on behalf of German intelligence. On March 14, 1938, the arrests of the first suspects began, in particular, Born Isaak Yakovych (born in 1899), Born Dmytro Hergardovych (1915), Herzen Davyd Davidovych (1892), Leven Andrian Petrovych (1910). And then Epp Gerhard Gerhardovych (1898), Yantsen Abram Abramovych (1914), Yantsen Yakiv Abramovych (1913) got into the millstones of the NKVD officers. Then Yehor Yakovych Born (1891), Ivan Davydovich Vins (1904), Peter Davydovich Herzen (1894), Ivan Mykolayovych Hebert (1918), Ivan Augustovych Hrube (1902), Ikkes Kindrat Karlovych (1893), Kina Gustav Ivanovich (1895) were arrested. , Teodor Matviyovych Klots (1909), Mykola Petrovych Leven (1917), Pyotr Abramovich Martens (1912), Volodymyr Mykolayovych Petyuk (1908), Pol Vasyl Karlovych (1905), Pyotr Hergardovich's Photo (1902); Grube by Volodymyr Petrovych (1917), Pflug by Danylo Ivanovich (1917), Photo by Ivan Yakovych (1917); Berger Gustav Henrikhovich (1909), Born Pyotr Yakovych (1895), Genshel Eduard Mykhailovych (1910), Herzen Andriy Ivanovich (1913), Kliver Ivan Andreyovich (1900), Klein Ivan Ivanovich (1914), Pflug Fyodor Ivanovich (1915), Fota Kornia Herhardovych (1904).

When comparing similar cases of that time, you are convinced that the testimony of the detainees was "extorted" by force, each of them signed a similar interrogation protocol with the confession that, yes, he was a member of a German counter-revolutionary organization, which conducted anti-Soviet activities in the Petropavlovsk district on behalf of German intelligence. By resolution of the NKVD Troika in the Dnipropetrovsk Region, 31 people from Aleksandrivets were charged under Art. 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR and 54-11 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, on September 20, 1938, he was sentenced to the highest penalty - execution. Judging by the references in the case documents, the sentence was carried out on September 27, 1938. All members of the "German counter-revolutionary organization" were collective farm workers of the "Landman" artillery: grooms, weighmen, chauffeur, zoo technician, accountant of the tractor brigade, veterinary nurse, most were just ordinary collective farm workers.

But one anti-Soviet organization was not enough. They found an opportunity and "caught" the participants of another one - on April 19, 1938, they arrested for the second time the former head of the "Landman" collective farm Franko Yakov Yakovych (1895), who had already served his sentence according to the court verdict of 1934 and returned to Oleksandrivka early and worked as the head of a carpentry workshop collective farm Peter Ivanovych Klein (1904), who worked as a combine

harvester's assistant, was arrested together with him for the same. They were joined by father and son Fasty - Yakov Andriyovych (1887) and Andriy Yakovych (1914), as well as Unra Yakov Petrovych (1910). An investigation was conducted quite quickly, and on May 5, 1938, he was charged with anti-Soviet activities and transported to the Dnipropetrovsk prison for detention. On October 10, 1938, at a meeting of the special troika of the UNKVS for the Dnipropetrovsk region, the standard sentence was passed - execution... It was carried out on October 28, 1938.

But even two fictional anti-Soviet organizations turned out to be not enough. New and new cases were opened against ethnic Germans. On February 2, 1938, Daniel Yohannovich Velka, conductor of the Mennonite choir, was arrested. On March 27, 1938, Vince Davyd Davydovych and Alert Ivan Henrikhovich were arrested, and on April 20, 1938, Fot Petr Gerhardovich was arrested.

"The accusation of the convicts," says the protest of the military prosecutor of the Kyiv Military District (KVO), Major General Justice Klymov, dated September 24, 1960, to the Military Tribunal of the KVO, "was based on the recognition of their guilt, and no other evidence was confirmed... Testimony... about belonging to the German counter-revolutionary organization and their conduct of anti-Soviet activities cannot serve as indisputable evidence of their guilt, since these testimonies were not properly verified, contain erasures, and their veracity is doubtful." On November 25, 1960, all convicted and shot citizens of Alexandria (31 people) were rehabilitated by the Military Tribunal of the Central Military District. In 1989, other innocently convicted ethnic Germans from Oleksandrivka were similarly rehabilitated.

And almost every case of the accused and executed citizens of Alexandria contains a decision to rehabilitate them as innocently convicted. "By the decision of the Troika of the UNKVS of the USSR in the Dnipropetrovsk region of October 10, 1938, Frank Ya.Ya. unjustly accused of allegedly being a member of a defunct counter-revolutionary insurgent organization and allegedly carrying out nationalist activities on its behalf, for which he was sentenced to be shot. The basis of the accusation was the personal confession of the arrested person. On October 28, 1938, the sentence was carried out. The measures taken to search for the place of death and burial of the body of Franko Ya.Ya. it was not possible to establish," says, for example, in the letter of the KGB Office of the Ukrainian SSR for the Dnipropetrovsk region.

The Soviet authorities perceived all ethnic Germans as unreliable, and therefore as their enemies. Therefore, after the arrest of Majeovsky, people with German family roots were no longer appointed as the head of the German collective farm "Landman".

Then Prokhor Petrovych Poklonskyi, a native of Petropavlivka, was "elected" (i.e. appointed) as the head of the collective farm. In 1941, he was the head of the Brahyniv Village Council.

When the German army invaded the territory of the Soviet Union in June 1941, some Mennonite communities saw the Germans as liberators from the communist regime they had suffered from. Accordingly, the Soviet authorities suspected all ethnic Germans of disloyalty, so they began to use such a measure of collective punishment against them as mass deportation. On July 4, 1941, the directive of the NKVD and the NKGB "On measures to evict socially dangerous elements from territories where martial law has been declared" was issued. According to her, all families were subject to eviction, with the exception of men and women over 60 who were unable to work. This meant the separation of families, so the elderly who were unable to work were left to fend for themselves, they actually vowed to beg.

One by one, resolutions regarding the general policy towards the German population began to be adopted. On August 31, 1941, the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Communist Party of Ukraine (b) adopted a special resolution "On Germans living on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR", according to which "1) Germans registered as anti-Soviet elements should be arrested; 2) to mobilize part of the able-bodied male population aged 16 to 60 of the NKO into construction battalions and hand them over to the NKVD for use in the eastern regions of the USSR."

And even among the ethnic Germans from Oleksandrivka, who had previously been mobilized into the army (for example, on May 15, 1941, Hrubye Leontii Petrovych, Lemke Peter Yakovych, Kuzhel Gustaf Fridrihovich were mobilized into the army, and on June 23, 1941, the day after the invasion of Hitler's troops , - Levin Hryhoriy Petrovych, Bonn Oleksandr Oleksandrovych), "weapons were taken".

From the documents of the Ministry of Defense, we learn that Born Hergard Gerhardovich (1920), Born Pyotr Andriyovych (1920), Hibert Dmytro Mykolayovych (1921), Grube Leontii Petrovych (1921), Levin Hryhoriy Petrovych (1920), Lemke Peter Yakovych (1918) were originally sent to the 38th construction battalion, and then to the 13th reserve rifle brigade. The first platoon of the third company of the 29th battalion during August 4-14, 1941 was completely formed from ethnic Germans, Greeks and Poles, apparently, they were being prepared to be sent to the front.

But instead of the front, these guys were sent to the so-called "Trust 58", located in Ulyanovsk. The local unit "Trest 58" was unique and consisted of 634 fighters,

among whom 45.4% were Germans, 40% were Ukrainian-Westerners, 10% were Poles and Czechs, the remaining 5% were of other nationalities. They did not dare to entrust weapons to these people, and therefore they were sent to the so-called "labor front". Their names were preserved in military documents almost by chance, although they were apparently specially removed from the lists of those mobilized by the Petropavlovsk military commander. All other men - ethnic Germans from Oleksandrivka - were already mobilized by the NKVD authorities of the USSR into the "labor army" after the mentioned resolution, so their names remain unknown.

Dozens of other Alexandrians were also sent there to the units of the "labor army". The first wave of arrests in all German colonies of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast was organized on August 25–27, 1941. As Mykola Pavlovich Fedchun recalled, "trucks were sent to the Landman collective farm then, and the police came with them." They brought the sanctions of the prosecutor that they [Germans] are subject to deportation from Ukraine across the Volga. They were allowed to take clothes, shoes and food with them and took them to the station. They put them in wagons and took them away."

Arrested ethnic Germans from various colonies were escorted in the direction of Petropavlivka. On August 27, 1941, more than 3,000 arrested Germans were already there. Taking advantage of a convenient moment, despite strict security, 39 men managed to escape. The rest of the arrested were sent in the direction of Kharkiv. However, on October 4, one of the echelons with evacuees was bombed by German aircraft near Kupiansk. Some of the fugitives were arrested, but some managed to hide and stay in the territory, which was soon occupied by units of the Wehrmacht.

Oleksandrivka has changed in a short period of time. Everything that the collective farm had was evacuated to the east of the country: tractors, collective farm livestock. Depopulated Methonite houses began to be looted by local residents. Mykola Fedchun, a 15-year-old boy at the time, later recalled: "We went to the village from where the Germans were taken, and brought various equipment, tserbki, cauldrons." Even during the occupation, the so-called money changers used to travel around the villages of the district - they brought clothes, shoes, valuables and exchanged them for grain. Most of that store was gathered from Mennonite huts...

Most of the deportees still got to the interior of the country - first to the Altai Territory (now the territory of the Russian Federation) and to the Kustanai Region. (Kazakhstan), and then they began to be resettled in other regions. In exile, former Alexandrians were captured and sent "to the labor army." On January 23, 1942, the three Gossen brothers were convicted and sent to a correctional labor camp that was

being organized. They were involved in the construction of a metallurgical and coke-chemical plant in Nizhny Tagil. Ivan Isakovich Gossen (born in 1894) died there on February 7, 1943, Petro (born in 1898) on March 19, 1943, and Yakov (born in 1901) was killed on August 28, 1944. Another former resident of Oleksandr was sent there to "Tagilbud" by the sentence of July 4, 1942 - Oleksandr Danylovych the Great (born in 1914). Leven Abram Abramovych (born in 1905) was also "mobilized" from the Semipalatinsk region to the Balakbud-Chelyabinskmetallobud correctional labor camp, and on December 4, 1942, Kliver Bernhard Ivanovich (born in 1906) from the Molotov region. ). Yantsen Ivan Abramovicha (1899) - to the Korkinvugilya trust. On October 7, 1942, Ivan Petrovich Unrau (born in 1925) was also sentenced to eight years of correctional labor as a socially dangerous element.

Even after serving their sentence, Germans were sent to special settlements. The same Cleaver, for example, - to the Omsk region, Born Yakov Yakovych (born in 1924) - to the Amur region, Mertens Teodor Vasyliovych (born in 1911) - to the Akmola region. The sentence stated: "evicted on the basis of nationality." And none of them ever returned to Oleksandrivka...

During the German occupation, the Oleksandrivka colony was renamed Landmann, which means "Rural Worker" in German. At the beginning of 1943, there were 131 residents here, apparently, this figure applies not only to Mennonites, but also to residents of the village of other ethnic groups.

Before the offensive of the Red Army in September-October 1943, the occupation administration organized and carried out a mass evacuation of the German population living in the German-occupied lands of Ukraine to Germany. In the card file of the German Central Immigration Office (EWZ), which between 1943 and 1945 processed about 110,000 applications from Germans from the Soviet Union who claimed German citizenship, it was possible to find many emigration cards born in Oleksandrivka (Herzenberg): Haede (née Schmidt ) Maria (born May 15, 1892), Born Franz (March 1, 1886), Born (née Vinz) Katarina (June 2, 1892), Born Sophie (August 26, 1921), Born Victor (January 1, 1920), Bosnak (née Teichgreb) Katarina (October 23, 1910), Bosnak Tina (October 12, 1910), Dike (née Neufeld) Elisabeth (July 27, 1891), Epp Elisabeth (August 18, 1900), Epp Maria (September 30, 1906), Espenberg Anna (May 9, 1898), Heida (née Schmidt) Maria (May 15, 1892), Giesbrecht (née Schmidt) Katharina (September 9, 1876), Siebert (née Teichgreb) Susanna (April 24, 1909), Frieda Klein (February 12, 1938 ), Klein (née Lorenz) Kaise (February 25, 1920), Löwen Heinrich (November 12, 1922), Löwen Heinrich (October 15, 1889), Löwen

Peter (December 6, 1907), Löwen Willi (January 25, 1924), Lorenz Heinrich (1 April 1891), Lorenz Heinrich (December 26, 1918), Lorenz Helena (October 25, 1925), Lorenz Clara (June 24, 1923), Lorenz Louise (June 29, 1921), Lorenz (nee Vinz) Louise (November 24, 1891), Peters ( née Schmidt) Helen (September 18, 1898), Rempel Harry (November 22, 1928), Teichgreb (née Jantzen) Elisabeth (August 2, 1880), Teichgreb Hermann (November 5, 1915), Thiessen (née Welk) Anna (December 13, 1890), Thiessen Heinrich (January 25, 1886), Wilms Hans (February 27, 1903), Fast Anna (September 21, 1921), Fast Anna (June 24, 1885), Fast Harry (November 19, 1938), Fast Hernig (October 17, 1914), Fast Kayse (October 15, 1916), Fast (nee Vinz) Catharine (June 2, 1892), Willie Fast (March 2, 1936).

It is impossible to investigate in detail the fate of the residents born in Oleksandrivka after leaving for Germany, we can only assume with some probability that some of the evacuees settled in West German lands, perhaps some of them got into the Soviet occupation authorities in Germany, they were forcibly deported back to the USSR , in camps and special settlements in Siberia and the Urals. But all of them were motivated to leave their homeland by the horror of bullying by the Bolshevik authorities during the last two decades.

On the territory of the Oleksandrivka colony, after its liberation by the Red Army on September 16, 1943, a collective farm was restored, which was then named after Khrushchev. The settlement of new residents in the houses of deported German families began immediately. By the end of 1943, at least 37 new families, mostly ethnic Russians, had moved here. This was almost half of the inhabitants of the village - at least 158 new people moved in, according to the records in the household books of the village council.

The year 1945 in the history of Oleksandrivka was again marked by forced deportation. However, this time, instead of the ethnic Germans forcibly removed from the village in 1941, Ukrainians deported from Poland were brought to their houses in accordance with the "Agreement between the Government of the Ukrainian SSR and the Polish Committee of National Liberation on the evacuation of the Ukrainian population from the territory of Poland and Polish citizens from the territory of the Ukrainian SSR." . In fact, it was a deportation carried out by the communist governments of both countries, which was called "voluntary resettlement" and promised "equivalent restitution of property."

In the fall of 1945, 41 families of ethnic Ukrainians from Poland were resettled in Petropavlovsk Region. However, as of February 10, 1946, only 17 families, consisting

of 52 people, remained here. "24 farms arbitrarily moved to the western regions of Ukraine, motivated by the bad climatic conditions of the region, and took with them 24 cows and domestic chickens," - stated in the report of the Petropavlovsk District Committee of the Party to the Regional Committee. In fact, people were mostly afraid of collective farm slavery - when evicting from Poland, the local authorities gave so-called "evacuation letters" with a list of lost property and its value, but in fact no one paid attention to them. Here, in Ukraine, as one of the reports of the Petropavlovsk district committee of the party says, "they were not provided with products and goods, as promised." On October 1, 1946, only five families of immigrants from Poland remained in Oleksandrivka, in the collective farm named after Khrushchev.

Meanwhile, the Soviet authorities did everything possible to eradicate the ethnic past of this small settlement. For some time after the war, the name "Oleksandrivka colony" was still used in official documents, but over time the word "village" began to be used. But the gravestones with German surnames carved on the stone were the most "stirring" of the eyes... As a result, the village cemetery was razed to the ground and turned into a field... And the village itself was deprived of its historical memory...

So, with this publication, we are reviving the forcibly erased pages of the glorious past of such a small settlement of ethnic German-Mennonites as Oleksandrivka. Time to pay back debts...

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