

East European Emigration and the EWZ

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When Gottlieb Scheffler left his home in East Prussia, heading south and east toward Volhynia, he was hardly heading off alone into the vast unknown. Several of his neighbors, friends and relatives went with him. And when his descendants realized it was time to leave Volhynia, a few generations later, they were not alone, either. They left the area in the company of friends and relatives, in many cases the descendants of the people who had traveled into the region with Gottlieb Scheffler. This man was hardly unique among the people who sought a better life in Russian territory. While a few people traveled alone, the vast majority moved with acquaintances from one area to another. This simple fact is a key that has the potential to unlock many doors in a family history research project.

A researcher should look for groups, rather than individuals, when going through documents. That means collecting information on every family in a village, when possible. It means, for example, checking passenger lists for anyone of interest, and not being satisfied with finding the specific family of interest. Other people on board might be from the same village. And if they were traveling together, there might be a connection between the families. That connection could be a clue to further research. By looking into an entire village, a family historian might be able to find previously unknown relatives.

There is also the chance that information about other unrelated people may point to previously unconsidered sources. In putting together information on entire villages in former Soviet Union areas, one of the best sources is the collection of *Einwandererzentrale* (EWZ) records from the Berlin Document Center. These became available on microfilm through the United States National Archives and the Family History Library a few years ago. This collection offers great rewards to researchers who choose to look beyond the obvious family lines. Gottlieb Scheffler and the tens of thousands of other Germans who went to Russia all have one thing in common: They looked east, and saw a land of opportunity. They thought of Russia, and dreamed of a place where they would be free and prosperous. Much has been written on the group of people that came to be known as the Germans from Russia. They have been the subject of countless books as well as television documentaries. Many genealogists have put together family information showing the movement of families in and out of Russian territory. Histories have been done on villages, churches and individuals.

With the release of the EWZ microfilms, it has become possible to pull together all of the elements (the social, political and family histories) into one project that will be much more than just a sum of its parts. Consider the case of Gottlieb Scheffler. He was born in Albrechtsdorf, East Prussia, where his family had lived for at least four

generations, in the 1830s. In the early 1860s, he made two decisions that would have a major impact on his family and his descendants: He joined the Baptist church, and he moved to Volhynia.

His reasons for making these decisions can only be guessed, but it is safe to say that he was hardly alone in making either one. In just a couple of years, the new Baptist church in Albrechtsdorf had proven to be popular, and had lured Scheffler and many other people from the established Lutheran church in the village. And at the same time, reports got back to East Prussia from the Germans who had gone to Volhynia to check things out.

Several new Baptist churches were being established in Volhynia; it would have been clear to many of the Albrechtsdorf Baptists that they could make a fresh start in Volhynia, on land made available as a result of the freeing of the serfs. As a bonus, they could live in a village surrounded by people who shared their newfound faith. The arguments for making the move would have been powerful.

So Gottlieb Scheffler packed up his family and hit the road to the Zhitomir area. The Schefflers made their journey along with several other families, all friends from the Albrechtsdorf area who had recently joined the Baptist church. At least a dozen of the Baptist families that settled in the Solodyri area, about 20 miles northwest of Zhitomir, had roots in the East Prussian *Kreis* of Preussisch Eylau, including Albrechtsdorf. These families included some that became prominent and influential in Solodyri, families named Hartmann and Tiedtke and Langhans and Boehnert. So in their new home, the Schefflers already knew their neighbors. They had been their neighbors back in Albrechtsdorf, or in the nearby villages.

The same type of thing happened in dozens of other areas of Prussia and Poland. Friends and relatives chose to head east together, and settled in villages where everyone knew everyone else's name. Take the parish of Dabie, in Poland. Check the Lutheran parish registers for Dabie in the 1850s, then compare those registers to the St. Petersburg records, and the lists of land owners in the Solodyri area. Many Dabie families, such as Freigang, Spletzer and Tiede moved to Volhynia together.

Throughout the German areas of Europe, friends and relatives considered what the future held for them where they were, and what it held if they chose to move elsewhere. And then, several people from several families decided to make the move.

In genealogical research, the most important dates and places generally have to do with three types of events: births, deaths and marriages. But researchers should consider another type of event, one that is possibly more significant to the family history. That event is migration. And, since people don't move from one country to another without

Fig. 1 -A Stammbblätter record of the EWZ

EWZ Durchschl.-Nr.: UdSSR 798 293		Umsiedl.-Nr.:		Domi.-Kenn.-Nr. 346 474	
Name: H A N T M A N N			geborene:		Vorname: Friedrich
fam.-Stand		Geburts- Tag Mon. Jahr		Ort: Solodyri	Kreis: Ray. Wolodarsk- Wolynski
verh.		15 10 71		Gemeinde:	Staat: Shitomir II
Ehe geschlossen am: 17.10.03		in: Solodyri		Beruf: Landwirt	
Herkunftsland: UdSSR		Letzter Heimatort: Solodyri		Kreis: Shitomir II	
Staatsangehörigkeit:			nachgewiesen durch:		
a) blutige: UdSSR			b) lehige:		
Eltern Name:		geb. am:		in:	
Vater: Friedrich		21.5.43		Reddenau bapt.	
Mutter: Vorname geborene:		geb. am:		in:	
Justine Friedke		22.11.40		Albrechtsdorf "	
Ehefrau (bezw. Ehemann):		geb. am:		in:	
Vorname: Lydia		geborene: Eggert		berw.-gesch.: ..	
geb. nm: 1.1.04		in: Marjanowka		Kreis: Shitomir II	
Vater: August		geb. am: 7.5.78		in: Katlinow	
Mutter: Vorname geborene:		geb. am:		in:	
Wilhelmine Domreis		1858		Bresowa "	
Kinder, bezw. Herdangehörige Vor- u. Juname		Geburts- Tag Mon. Jahr		Ort: (Kreis)	
Der Herdvorstand liegt z.Zt. im Lager Flinsberg krank.				Derzeitige Anschrift bei fehlenden Herdmitgliedern	
Enkelkind:				Durchschl.-Nr. (falls eigene Karte)	
Englitta KANEZ		9 11 34		Regowka	
Eltern im Januar 1935 verschleppt.					
Der Sohn Eugen geb. am 12.7.10 in Solodyri wurde im August 1936 verschleppt.					
Der Sohn Assaph geb am 22.11.08 in Solodyri befindet sich bei der deutschen Wehrmacht, Po.Nr. 08-871.					
Vermögensausgleich bleibt vorbehalten!					
Aufenthaltsort:		Nummer des Herdvorstandes: eigene			
Isargeb.					
Durchgeschleust am: 4.4.44		in: Tauban/Schlesien			

community influences of one form or another, migration should not be viewed in isolation. It should be seen in the context of the history of the towns or villages of origin and destination.

There are several reasons to keep this in mind. One is that if two families knew each other, there is a good chance of a connection, in one community or another. These families were in close contact for two or three generations, working and playing together, and going to church together. The odds of some of the children getting together in marriage would be high.

Another reason to do research on a village-wide scale is basically just an extension of one of the basic rules of genealogy: if you get stuck on one line, move to one side and try again. If you can't find the roots of one man, for example, research his brother instead. The same theory can be applied to many of the German villages in Russian territory.

The people in those villages would have had roots in a limited number of villages back in Germany or Poland. There may be no record of where a direct ancestor was from, but the information might be available for the other families in the village. There is no guarantee this will lead to the proper spot of origin, but it can certainly narrow the search. The leading contenders for an ancestor's place of origin will be the communities where his or her friends and relatives were from.

And how can you find out more about all the families in a village? For many people researching Germans from Russia, the best starting point is the Berlin Document Center series of microfilms. This series includes personal information on more than 2.1 million individuals processed

by the *Einwandererzentrale* (EWZ, literally Immigration Center), a central German authority for the immigration and naturalization of qualified ethnic Germans for Reich citizenship during the period 1939-1945.

These people, nominally citizens of Poland, the Baltic states, the Soviet Union, France, and the countries of southeastern Europe, became part of the National Socialist plans for Germanizing the frontiers of the future *Reich*. *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler created the EWZ in October 1939, a few weeks after Germany invaded Poland, as a way to ease the resettlement to German territory of ethnic Germans living in Eastern Europe. The Nazis believed all ethnic Germans should be united in one state, just as they believed that non-Germans were to be removed from German soil. The more Germans in Germany, the theory went, the stronger the nation would be.

The first immigration office started operations in October 1939 in Poland. It had to process about 70,000 Baltic Germans repatriated from Estonia and Latvia. This was followed by a major movement of ethnic Germans from Galicia and western Volhynia, in a series of treks that were romanticized by German writers in a string of Nazi-friendly novels. These books, which stressed that the Germans were answering the call of the *Führer*, often contained photographs of the people on the trek. In the first year, the immigration headquarters was moved several times before being located on Holzstrasse in Litzmannstadt (Lodz) for the duration of the war. There were several sub-offices located close to the camps where the new arrivals were held while they were processed.

Much of the trek from the east was often accomplished on foot, although some people had help from the German troops. The first part of the great trek into German territory ended for most people at one of the temporary camps. For the most part, new arrivals were assigned to camps in groups; since these people had been traveling together from their villages in Russia, the result was that people who had been neighbors in Russia were once again neighbors in the refugee areas. And those people often went to the local EWZ office, to take care of the necessary paperwork, within days of each other.

There were, of course, exceptions to the rule. Not everyone from one village ended up in the same camp; it could have been because of which camps had free space, or which camps housed relatives who had arrived earlier. In any event, the bulk of the people who left Russian areas together ended up in a temporary camp together.

These camps were widely scattered throughout German territory. Several were in the Lodz area; one of the largest was apparently in Kirschberg (now Wisniowa Gora), a few miles southeast of Lodz. Others were in Silesia; some were as far west as Bavaria. EWZ branch offices, as mentioned, were set up close to the camps.

As the Germans arrived in EWZ offices, they were registered and photographed. Entire families were generally processed together, with separate forms for every person aged 15 years or older. An inventory was taken of their

Fig. 2 - Several Nazi friendly novels about the relocation of Germans in Volhynia and Galicia



**Einwandererzentralstelle
Haarkommission**

St/Ko: Litzmannstadt, den 26. Sept. 1944

An:
Frau Linda S. D. M. i. d. t., geb. Weiss
in: Grabina-Wola
AB Tuschin, Kr. Litzmannstadt

Betr.: Durchschleusung

Sie werden gebeten, aus Zwecke Ihrer Arfassung als Umsiedler zusammen mit allen von Ihrer Familie noch nicht erfassten Personen am 1. Oktober 1944 um 7 Uhr in der Dienststelle der - Einwandererzentralstelle - in Litzmannstadt, Holzstr. 83, (Schleusenamt) zu erscheinen. (Kinder unter 4 Jahren brauchen nicht mitkommen). Mitzubringen sind (soweit vorhanden): 1. blaue Umsiedlerkarte der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle der bereits erfassten Personen, 2. Volksausweis der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle, 3. bisher oder vorher Ausweis der Deutschen Volksliste Ukraine, 4. braune Karte für deutsche Volksgenossen, 5. Seife, 6. Heiratsurkunde, Geburts- u. Taufschaine, Scheidungsurkunde und sonstige Familiendokumente. Die Durchschleusung dauert etwa 6 Stunden. Es ist jedoch unumgänglich, für etwa unverhergessene Fälle sich mit Lebensmitteln für 2 Tage einzudecken. Sollten Sie bereits durch die Einwandererzentralstelle in Litzmannstadt, oder durch eine Kommission der EPZ als Umsiedler erfasst worden sein, dann ist Ihr Erscheinen hier nicht mehr erforderlich. In diesem Falle genügt die schriftliche Mitteilung der Durchschleusenungsstelle die sich auf der blauen Umsiedlerkarte, die Sie von der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle, oder auf der Karte der EPZ nach Ihrer Durchschleusung schliesslich Urkunde oder Bescheinigung bzw. auf dem Umsiedlerpassata befindet. Ist pünktliches Erscheinen nicht möglich, können Sie zu Abend vorher kommen und im Litzmannstadt in der Lager der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle Hurst Wesselstr. 44 oder Bescheinigung 60 übersenden. Dieser Aufforderung ist unbedingt Folge zu leisten; diese Vorladung ist zur Durchschleusung mitzubringen.

Fig. 3 - Invitation to the Litzmannstadt office

property, and compensation was often granted for non-portable items that had to be left behind. In some cases, this would have come as a shock to the refugees, who had been told by the German authorities that their move out of their Russian home was only temporary.

The screening process for eligible ethnic Germans initially took three to four hours, with examinations by six to nine people. Later, the time needed stretched to six hours, then two days. Each arrival aged six or older was given a basic health test, accompanied by an SS racial examination, which resulted in an assessment of the overall racial quality of both the individual and the family. These racial examinations were key to the decisions regarding German citizenship. The authorities then looked into the political activities and professions of the new arrivals who had qualified as German.

The arrivals were generally assigned to new homes in German territory, although there was some personal choice. Some of Gottlieb Scheffler's descendants, for example, were allowed to go to East Prussia, at the invitation of other members of the Scheffler family. The forms completed by the new arrivals at the EWZ offices are of tremendous value to today's family historians. They contain basic information on the individuals who completed the forms, including dates of birth and marriage, as well as the names and vital information, where known, of parents and grandparents.

The paperwork reveals, in many cases, much more pre-war migration than would be expected. Some people moved between the various areas of Ukraine, such as between Bessarabia and Volhynia. Some people were born in England, or Canada or the United States. Apparently, their parents had tried life outside of Russia, didn't like it, and returned. Sometimes, these moves were not voluntary. In the

First World War, Germans were forced to head east, away from the front. They were not able to return until after the hostilities ended. And between 1939 and 1941, when the Soviet Union entered what became known there as the Great Patriotic War, thousands of ethnic Germans within 100 kilometers of the border with Germany were forced to move east, in some cases, a journey of only 10 kilometers was all that was needed to satisfy the authorities.

The EWZ forms record the dates and places on these forced migrations that were triggered by wars. Many of the people who arrived in German territory during the Second World War found themselves in Poland or the eastern part of Germany at the war's end. Since they had been born in the Soviet Union, they were captured and shipped to Russia, then often Kazakhstan. The survivors were not allowed to return to Germany (with their children and grandchildren) in

Abwandererzentralstelle
Abwandererzentralstelle

von Geburt bis 1926 in Florowka, Uzb. Strömung

11.11.43	11.11.43	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
17.11.43	19.11.43	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
3.1.44	3.1.44	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
26.4.44	26.4.44	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
8.8.44	8.8.44	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
18.8.44	18.8.44	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung
neue	neue	Wawrowitzki, Uzb. Strömung

von Geburt bis heute in Hozia, Kr. Andropol, Kr. L. Kiedl

Sheffler u. Kinder leben in Hozia, noch nicht geblieben.

Verwandte im Reich:
Frau Onkel Schaffner Haus.
Friedrichstal Ostpre. v. Wetzlar.

Ich versichere an Eides Statt, daß meine sämtlichen Angaben über mich und meine Familienangehörigen der Wahrheit entsprechen und erkläre insbesondere eidesstattlich, daß mir keine Tatsachen bekannt sind, die einen Zweifel an meiner und meiner Familienangehörigen deutschblütigen Abstammung begründen, insbesondere auf einen jüdischen Blutsinneschlag hinweisen. Es ist mir ausdrücklich eröffnet worden, daß meine Einbürgerung für nichtig erklärt und meine Einbürgerungskarte wieder zurückgezogen werden kann, falls ich unrichtige oder unvollständige Angaben über meine Person — und meine Familienangehörigen — oder über etwaige Vorstrafen und anhängige Strafverfahren gemacht habe. Die Feststellungen im Personalblatt sind Teil meines Einbürgerungsantrages.

Benedikt Barnhard
(Eigentliche Unterschrift des Antragstellers)

Fig. 4 - Listing of previous residences

the 1990s.

For those who did not live long enough to get out of the Soviet Union, the EWZ documents represent a remarkable collection. For many of these people, family historians will never be able to find any documentation other than what appears in the Berlin Document Center files. The EWZ office processed about one million ethnic Germans during the five years of its existence. Most came from areas which later became part of the Soviet Union.

In 1945, most of these records were seized by the Allied Forces. About 80,000 files were lost or burned before capture. Those that survived are available on 8,000 rolls of microfilm, through the U.S. National Archives II in College

3. *Stammbblätter*, family forms. There are about one million forms here on 742 rolls. The documents provide name, date and place of birth, citizenship, country of origin, religion, marital status, number of children, their names and dates of birth, as well as the names and dates of birth of parents. A photograph of each applicant is generally included. These forms have more information than is found in the big card index, but less than the individual files. These files are organized by number, rather than alphabetically, so this set can't be tackled first. If a person is listed in the basic card index, but not the applications, check the family forms to get a bit of extra information. The greatest value of this set is that it enables researchers to quickly find neighbors of their people of interest and those neighbors will often offer clues that will help research the families in the direct line. That's because people from one village were often processed at roughly the same time, so their numbers would be close to each other. Once numbers are found for some relevant people, a researcher can find out who went through the system with them. This series is also available through the Family History Library.

There are two ways to access the EWZ records by starting with films from either the *Anträge* or E/G *Kartei* series. Given that one series (the E/G *Kartei*) is more accessible than the other, thanks to the Family History Library, the choice will usually be easy. Both of the series are in alphabetical order, but there is a knack to using the E/G *Kartei*. Names are not filed in strict alphabetical order; sometimes, all names with the same basic pronunciation are grouped together. If you're looking for Dalke, for example, be sure to try Dahlke instead.

The file cards in the E/G *Kartei* series aren't the most valuable, in terms of offering information to genealogists, but be sure to check the back of the cards (the second page on the film) for the names of the person's siblings. This is not generally recorded in the other EWZ documentation, and offers evidence for the reconstruction of family groups. If possible, a researcher should start with the *Anträge* series. It offers far more information than the other series, simply because it has copies of all of the forms that had to be filled out by the ethnic Germans who were desperately trying to prove their ancestry.

On the other hand, the *Anträge* series does not cover as many people. So a researcher is less likely to find a person in the series, but if that person is there, it's a home run. Both of these two series will offer a critical bit of information: the EWZ number, which is used to access the files in the *Stammbblätter*.

The EWZ numbers were assigned to arrivals aged 15 years or older as the arrivals were being processed by the EWZ teams. Since most people in one village went through the system at the same general time, the EWZ numbers they received are generally close to each other. So it's a simple matter, once a few EWZ numbers are known, to get the *Stammbblätter* films that include those numbers. And those films will include a large number of people of interest to your family, if not all of the people from the village.

Searching for everyone from a village will yield many benefits. It will be fairly easy to sort the people into family groups, and determine which families were tied to other ones. Odds are, there will be clearly identifiable groups, possibly based on social or religious grounds. Families within each group inter-marry, but would not marry into the other groups.

Checking all of the families from a village will probably reveal a variety of missing or unknown relatives. Most of these will be women with new surnames as a result of marriage. In many families, it's more important to search for

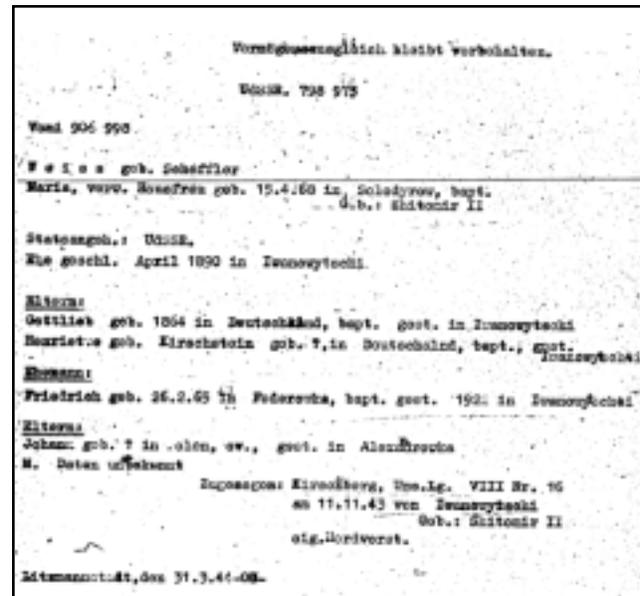


Fig. 6 - Improper form used in processing

women than for men. The reason is simple: Josef Stalin. These forms were filled out a few years after Stalin's infamous purges of the 1930s, which saw many males arrested and either murdered or sent to forced labor camps. A search of the records based strictly on known surnames may fail to find much new information. The people with that surname are often people who married into the family; they couldn't give a lot of information to the authorities, because they didn't know it. The women who would know the details are the women who married into other families, and who appear in the records under their new surnames. Put it another way: To get back to Gottlieb Scheffler, for example, look for his female descendants, not his male ones. That means you'll have to research a variety of surnames, not just Scheffler. If you don't know those other surnames? The numerical files offer you the most potential for results, because they list people by number rather than by name.

The information on the forms is remarkably accurate, most of the time. That is probably because the people providing the information were well aware what fate might await them if they provided the wrong answers. Also, given the uncompromising nature of the German government during the time of war, the people providing the information

had plenty of reason to have fear. That's why it's possible to find full information on illegitimate children, and on common-law marriages. The people involved did not want to take the chance of covering these things up. You will also find references to past involvement in the Russian army, and to relatives who were serving in the Russian army or living in North America at the time the forms were being filled out.

The autobiographies of the arrivals, called *Lebenslauf*, found in the *Anträge* files vary considerably in quality and quantity of content. In some cases, the autobiographies simply repeat the basic vital information provided in other forms. In other cases, the autobiographies provide fascinating accounts of what life was like in the colonies. These stories may not have been provided by the direct ancestors of a researcher, but if they were done by people who lived in the same village, it is likely the same conditions were faced by the direct ancestor. These stories can certainly add color and drama to any researcher's family history project.

While the EWZ forms offer many benefits, they are not perfect. There were plenty of people who had things they were desperate to hide. There was no point, for example, in admitting to Jewish ancestry; that would only mean a trip to the gas chamber. So, in some cases, family information has been altered.

With some of the forms, crucial lines are blank. One must assume that the subject did not know the answer to the question being asked, or could not remember. In some cases, it's likely the arrivals chose not to remember. There are times when the family history information for two people is almost a perfect match. It's quite possible that the second person did not know the information, so the authorities pulled the information from the file of a person identified as a relative. It's no guarantee that the information is coming from two strictly independent sources.

There are also forms that have errors that can be clearly identified as such. People did their best to be accurate, but it's no different than getting birth information from a death certificate today. The people were relying on what they had been told, and what had been passed down through the years.

Some of the errors are in the spelling of village names. It could be that the person providing the information had no idea how to spell the name of the community where he or she had lived as a child, and it could be that the person filling out the form didn't know either, and couldn't read Cyrillic. So many, many village names are to be taken with a grain of salt. Sometimes, obvious errors were missed by the German authorities. The EWZ files identify one woman who was born in 1891. Her father had died in 1881. That 10-year discrepancy is repeated in a couple of places in the file, but nobody noticed.

Another file took a family back to 1810, one of the earliest dates possible in a three-generation chart done in the 1940s. The only problem was that the woman born in 1810 had a son in 1886. Again, there was an obvious error in the information provided, but the German authorities did not catch it.

The image shows two German immigration forms (Stammblätter) from the EWZ collection. The top form is for a family with the name SCHMIDT. The father is Biernert, born in Solodzyri, USSR, in 1920. The mother is Hulda, born in 1890. The form lists their parents: Biernert Ludwig and Biernette geb. Kaufmann. The bottom form is for a family with the name SCHMIDT. The father is Johann, born in Lublin, USSR, in 1934. The mother is Juliane, born in 1855. The form lists their parents: Johann and Juliane. Both forms have handwritten notes and stamps, including 'deutsch' and '100'.

Fig. 7 - Stammblätter record showing a ten year credibility gap in information

Another word of caution with the forms: Sometimes, documents have been misfiled. This is especially a concern when dealing with the *Anträge* series, which often has large files, and a greater likelihood of an error in handling. When you find a file referring to a person of interest, always take a moment to scan through the adjacent files on the microfilm.

But even with these words of caution, the value of the EWZ collection far outweighs any concerns about errors. For many people doing research into the Germans from Russia, this series is the most important source yet available. And while it helps to know German, it's not essential. It's possible to sort out the basic family units easily, because a researcher is dealing with standardized forms, basic names and simple German words.

The EWZ collection will provide solid information needed in building comprehensive histories of individual German villages in Russia. For many villages, it will be the best source, but that does not mean it is the only one. To find distant roots, a researcher should contact distant cousins, and learn what they know. The EWZ files provide a lot of clues for distant relatives; the challenge today can be tracking them down. Looking at the big picture, the village rather than just the family, actually can make it easier to compile a family history.

It pays to remember that there were many different groups of Germans that moved into Russia. There were areas that were primarily Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite, Jewish and Baptist. There were some communities with a mix of

different religions, but little intermarriage between the two groups. Religion was an important part of the lives of our ancestors. It's likely it also played a strong factor in any move by our distant cousins, either within Germany in the post-war years, or to others areas. There are clearly identifiable areas in Germany, for example, where Volhynian Baptists clustered, just as there are similar areas in North America. One of the daughters of Gottlieb Scheffler was in her 80s when she walked out of Volhynia, first to the holding camp near Lodz, then to East Prussia, then to what was to become the German Democratic Republic. When the Russians took control of that area, she walked across the border, late one night, to reach the western half of Germany. She is buried in a small village in Hesse. It's worth noting that at least five other graves there are of Volhynians, people she knew long before the trek out of Russia.

Many of the Germans from Russia included in the EWZ documents made their way to North America. They have been coming here to join other relatives, who came between the war years, or even earlier. There are many documents that may help a researcher find the people who arrived in North America before the Second World War.

The major starting point will be immigration records, including passenger lists and naturalization documents. Few people set out for a solo journey to North America; they went in the company of family or friends. Their travel together reflected ties that had been in place for decades, and can provide clues to researchers today. In general, American passenger lists are better than Canadian ones. They simply have more information, many of them are indexed, and they cover a later period. Many are available through the FHL system.

A major resource is the Ellis Island web site, which provides an index to arrivals in the years 1892 to 1924, thanks to efforts by volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Caution should be used when dealing with European names, however, because the handwriting sometimes made it difficult for the volunteers to determine the proper name. On one page, for example, the indexers read Ittermann as Hermann, Tiede as Diede, and Timm as Jimm.

Ellis Island was the most important port of entry, so should be checked first. But it must be remembered that new arrivals had several other ports to choose from.

Canadian passenger lists are generally available at public libraries through inter-library loan, with some early ones available through the FHL system. These films cover arrivals from 1865 to 1935. An index, on the Canadian National Archives web site, covers 1925 through 1935, but should be used with caution, because it is not as complete as it claims to be. The port of Quebec was the busiest in Canada, although many Germans from Russia came through Halifax, Nova Scotia or Saint John, New Brunswick. It's possible to find common threads in passenger arrivals, based to a certain extent on which shipping companies had agents in various areas of eastern Europe.

In the 1926-28 rush out of Volhynia, for example, the vast majority of arrivals in Canada came on Canadian Pacific or Holland American ships. The Holland American liners came to Halifax; the CP ones came to Quebec or, in winter, Saint John.

American naturalization records after 1906 provide a lot of information for family historians. They are scattered around the country; many are to be found at the Family History Library, with others in the appropriate regional branches of the National Archives. There are a couple of guidebooks that will help researchers find the right ones, and the national archives book on genealogical research will also provide some clues. Canadian naturalization records are not as well known as the American ones. The indexes to these records are, however, quite easy to find. They appeared on a regular basis in the government publication *Canada Gazette* from 1915 through 1951. The publication may be found in the libraries at large universities.

Many people heading for the United States went through Canada, and vice versa. Researchers should always look for arrival records from both countries. If they came through Canada, the Detroit and St. Albans border crossing indexes may record their arrival into the United States. Both of these series are at the Family History Library.

One other resource for Canadians is the registration program set up by the federal government during the Second World War. All Canadian residents were required to register. For \$45, you can get a copy of a registration. There are dozens of sources on the Web that will help you find people. Check the Social Security Death Index, Rootsweb, and local obituary and death indexes for deaths. This can lead you to their descendants, who may have a lot of information on the family background.

Websites of organizations such as FEEFHS are helping to provide vehicles to spread the word about the interests of individuals, so should be used whenever possible.

Churches have been a great source of information. Membership records in North American Baptist churches, for example, may reveal people baptized in Volhynia. This can be determined by the place of baptism, or by the name of the pastor.

Researchers should not forget to look at the microfilmed records from the *Deutsches Ausland Institut*, one of the groups that kept track of where ethnic Germans were living. This series has been available at the Family History Library for many years, and is sorted by region.

One thing to watch for is a list of people deported to the east during the First World War. It provides clues to fathers, as well as to the likely wealth of the families involved. One such list is available for the Zhitomir area. It was published in the local newspaper 85 years ago; a copy of that newspaper list, found in the local archives, was brought to North America soon after the fall of Communism. It has been indexed by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

There is a lot of information in the regional archives in Ukraine. If possible, find a researcher there who can do work

for you. It may seem expensive, but it's cheaper and easier than going there yourself. To find a researcher, put a query on one of the mailing lists, or check the Jewish genealogy pages.

The goal in this research should be simple: To find as many people as possible who came from the same village in Russia. These people, or their descendants, may be able to provide more information on the people in the village, the village itself, and the surrounding area.

We do not have access to directories, community maps, telephone books or voters' lists from Russian villages; in most cases, these things so common in North American research do not even exist. But we can create substitutes, using the information provided by other people from the villages.

For a start, compile a list of all residents of the community. As more information comes available, flesh out the list with the names of spouses, with the religions of the people, with any details on where they were from, or where they went to.

When possible, find out where they lived in relation to other families. Try to put the information together in the form

Name	Abgeliefertes Kartowans	gegen- wert RM	zur anzu- suehlen RM	Quittung 202 RM	So- der- konto
Keine, Eduard	210,--	21,--	21,--		
Knake, Ferdinand	4810,--	481,--	481,--		
Kangwisch, Wilhelmine	6200,--	620,--	100,--	580,--	
Knee, Walda	25450,--	2545,--	100,--	1900,--	545,--
Knefsch, Herbert	350,--	35,--	35,--		
Kischens, Herta	2700,--	270,--	270,--		
Veget, Lydia	7885,--	788,50	300,50	488,--	
Jahn, Wanda	3000,--	300,--	300,--		
Knee, Reinhold	18050,--	1805,--	100,--	1705,--	
Grünke, Alwine	4000,--	400,--	400,--		
Schröder, Elisabeth	210,--	21,--	21,--		
Krüger, Rudolf	40000,--	4000,--	300,--	1700,--	2000,--
Konki, Theodor	3920,--	392,--	392,--		
Knee, Ida	5360,--	536,--	536,--		
Knee, Olga	2200,--	220,--	220,--		
Schmidt, Pauline	5035,--	503,50	100,50	403,--	
Kell, Herta	7500,--	750,--	100,--	650,--	
Filat, Arnold	7440,--	744,--	400,--	344,--	
Lipke, Friedrich	1535,--	153,50	153,50		
Knee, Gustav	450,--	45,--	45,--		
Karflisch, Reinhold	6315,--	631,50	631,50		
Otroshenko, Michael	2345,--	234,50	234,50		
Lipke, Olga	2400,--	240,--	240,--		
Kalemitz, Fede	1600,--	160,--	160,--		
Sison, Eduard	1650,--	165,--	165,--		
Jäger, Paul	7035,--	703,50	703,50		
Kappelt, Robert	710,--	71,--	71,--		
Kinner, Adina	2550,--	255,--	255,--		
Keller, Elisabeth	1540,--	154,--	154,--		
Kielke, Erich	505,--	50,50	50,50		
Krüger, Adeline	650,--	65,--	65,--		
Knee, Hana	21400,--	2140,--	400,--	1600,--	140,--
Kline, Martha	5000,--	500,--	100,--	400,--	
Schmidt, Erna	30145,--	3014,50	300,--	1700,--	1014,--

Fig. 8 - Currency exchange record from a camp at Gemuenden, Bavaria

of a map. This should be done even if a map has already been done by another researcher. Why? Because things change. Just as a five-year-old map of a North American community is not the same as an up-to-date one, a five-year difference between two Russian maps might provide a key to a research project.

Bear in mind also that different sources for maps might result in different maps. People are generally more knowledgeable about their immediate areas, and less certain about who lived where on the other side of town. In all of this research, it is important to remember the goal: to find people from the same village, not simply to find people from the same family. People who are not related may lead a researcher to a family of interest.

It may still be possible to find people who lived in these villages before the Second World War, when the Germans were basically expelled from the vast majority of German colonies in the Soviet Union. Many of these people, who most of the time, went through the EWZ process and found new homes in Germany, the United States and Canada immediately after the war, or in recent years as a result of the fall of Communism. These people are, however, getting older every day. When they die, the information they can share will be lost, so it is important to find them as soon as possible.

The descendants of Gottlieb Scheffler can be found in at least a dozen countries, yet only a few of them knew the basic family history. Those few could not be found until there had been extensive research into the family, and all of its cousins, second cousins and beyond. And some of the key family information came from people who were not related at all, but remembered what had been told to them by their parents, or by members of Scheffler's family. And since many Germans from Russia have little paperwork to back up family stories, memories are very important. That's what makes the EWZ microfilms such a tremendous resource. They provide material compiled more than half a century ago, and give hard evidence of a family's history. They can also be used to research the genealogies of entire villages, which can bring even greater benefits.

To use the EWZ microfilms:

1. Two of the three basic series are available through the Family History Library (of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and its branches.
2. Researchers in the Washington area can check the films in the archives on your behalf.
3. The microfilms are available for purchase. The cost is \$34 US if you are in the States, and \$39 US if you're in Canada. The Canadian price works out to about \$60 in Canadian funds.

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