

The Ancestors of Erna Penner and her Siblings

By

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(Translated from German into English by Wulf T. Doerry)

The Ancestors of Erna Doerry, née Penner

Whoever wants to tackle the job of writing about the ancestors of a member of the Mennonite faith, will do well to explain who these Mennonites really are. Erna Doerry, née Penner was a member of the Mennonite community.

Johan Sjouke Postma of Emmen in the Netherlands wrote in his inaugural dissertation about "The Netherland Heritage of the Prussian – Russian Mennonites in Europe, Asia, and America." He indicated in Chapter #1 of his treatise that during the era of Reformation the Mennonite community had a stronger belief in the importance of baptism than generally believed. Postma submitted this dissertation in 1959 to the theological faculty of the Philipps-University in Marburg on the Lahn River (Germany) in partial fulfillment of requirements for his *Doctor of Theology*. He points out that the faith of the Anabaptists spread quickly and extensively, especially in Middle and Upper Germany and in Switzerland. This religious custom also quickly established itself in the Netherlands and in the bordering regions of Lower Germany. Numerous persecutions by groups of different persuasions and concurrent setbacks, especially after the catastrophe for Anabaptists in Münster (1534/35), threatened this movement with extinction. The custom of adult baptism was blamed, with some justification, for these events. The credit for saving this movement belongs solely to Menno Simons (1492-1559) in the Netherlands. He started to unite all the different groups and individual followers of this faith into one single unit, but with less than 100% success. Even though many of the various groups of Anabaptists joined Menno Simons' movement and started to call themselves *Mennonites*, many different groups preserved, until today, their own unique customs. But it would go too far to discuss this in detail in this introduction. The book by Postma, as cited above, provides adequate information about this.

Even though many people believe that all the Mennonites came from the Netherlands, this is not the case. This can easily be recognized by the names of many true Mennonite families. For instance, the name *Enß* (Enss) is without doubt a shortened version of *Anselm* and originated in Upper Germany. Even the name *Penner* is derived from the old first name *Pen* and indicates an Upper German origin. On the other hand, the family names Dyck (or Dück) and Tgarth and many more are without doubt of Low German origin, like also the name *Eydße*, which appears in the family tree of Erna Penner. When now and then non-Mennonite names appear, in most cases one will find a marriage between Mennonites and non-Mennonites and the non-Mennonite member, with few exceptions, has converted to the Mennonite faith. The opposite happened mostly in more recent times, especially since the expulsion of the Mennonites

from their homeland in West Prussia after World War II (1945), which caused them to lose their traditional close contact to each other.

One more thing must be mentioned before we get to the main subject. Because of the difficulties with the study of source material, there was no attempt made to go back to before 1700. Despite of this, we talk about a time period of 250 years, or 8 generations, without including the children and grandchildren of Erna (Penner) Doerry. The author would be happy, if there would be somebody in the future who is willing and capable of adding to the content of this writing and to expand its time frame. Perhaps, good luck will help this person. Luck is always a major factor in genealogical research.

The area where the ancestors of the Penner and Enß (Erna Penner's mother came from an Enß family) families lived is roughly described as the *Kleine Werder*, i.e. the area south of Elbing (now Elbląg) in West Prussia. But the area of the *Große Werder* east of Danzig (now Gdansk), too, played an important role in the lives of the Penner/Enß ancestors. Mennonite refugees from the Netherlands came here already in the second half of the 16th century to escape their total loss of civil rights. In 1530 they were not included in an association for mutual defense of similar religious groups and the Augsburger Religionsfriede (Peace of Religions in September 1555) did not provide them with protection against persecution by the Counter-Reformation under the Duke of Alba. Attempts of the Mennonites to find a new home near the Netherlands failed because of pressure from the Emperor. Thus, they had no other choice than to grab the walking stick and to move east to the delta of the Weichsel (Vistula River or Wista), which was then under Polish rule. Here, the fighting between the Teutonic Order of Knights (Deutscher Ritterorden) and its opponents in the cities on one hand and the forces of the Polish king on the other hand had created many deserted areas, which waited for new settlers. There also were vast areas in the Weichsel/Nogat River Delta, which until then were unsuitable for intensive farming. There had been no settlers with the necessary skills for farming this type of land. Thus, this region offered an opportunity to the religious refugees from the Netherlands who gladly took advantage of the new living space (*Lebensraum*). These refugees were Mennonites from all walks of life. Personal wealth made no difference. They came on trading ships from the Dutch ports of Antwerp, Amsterdam, Enkhuizen, and Vere, as well as from Emden and other places in Germany. They made the journey to the eastern lands to find a new homeland (*Heimat*). The first emigrants, however, went to the area that had remained part of the Prussian dukedom. But they had a difficult time with farming on the totally different soil (relative to the land they had farmed in their former home in the Netherlands or Lower Germany). They found the Weichsel/Nogat delta (*Grosse Werder*) to be much more suitable, because the soil conditions in this area were more like the land they had farmed in the Netherlands. Thus, the triangular area between Danzig (now Gdansk), Marienburg (now Malbork) and Elbing (now Elbląg) became the new homeland for the Mennonites or the Dutch, as they were initially called, already during the

end of the 4th decade in the 16th century. It remained this way until all the Mennonites were expelled from that region in 1945.

New difficulties appeared only after the first division of Poland in 1772, when this land came under Prussian rule. The Mennonites refused to serve in the military and the Prussian King Frederic the Great wanted to have *Wehrbauern* (a militia consisting of local farmers) settled in his newly acquired territories. Such farmers, i.e. *Wehrbauern*, were willing, if necessary, to defend their homes and land with a weapon in their hand. Since the Mennonites were conscientious objectors to bearing arms, the king prohibited them from acquiring new farms for their second and third sons. At least, he made this very difficult for them. This caused many young Mennonites to follow the call from Katharina the Great to establish new settlements in southern Russia. Mennonite emigrants also moved to other countries, such as the U.S.A. and Canada. However, they all remained in contact with their West Prussian homeland and often had other members of their family follow them to their new settlements. This also included religious contacts with Mennonite communities in Prussia. In return, the Mennonites in America supported their brethren in the Old World after WW II with packages of clothing and food and by assisting them with their emigration to North America. One could add much more to this subject, but this would go beyond the intent of this writing. Karl-Heinz Ludwig writes about this in "*Besiedlung des Weichseldeltas durch die Mennoniten*" (Settlement of the Vistula River Delta by the Mennonites). This treatise was published in 1961 as paperback (*Heft*) #57 in Marburg on the Lahn River. It offers valuable pointers with respect to scientific papers written about the history of Eastern Middle-Europe. Karl-Heinz Ludwig discusses in this booklet "The Settlement of the Vistula River Delta by Mennonites."

After this extensive, but necessary introduction, let's return to the actual subject. The author decided to start with the ancestors of Erna's mother, i.e. with the Enß family. It was easier for him to trace back the members of this family than of the Penner family. Credible documentation for the Penner family became available at a later time. Both families merged in 1897 with the marriage of Elise Enß (#3) and Heinrich Penner (#2) in Rapendorf (now Rogowo). For the purpose of improved clarity in the following discussion of the family trees, every member is identified with a number. These numbers signify to which generation each ancestor belongs. Starting with the number #1 for Erna Penner, her parents are identified by the numbers #2 and #3. These numbers double with every prior generation. Therefore, Erna's grandparents have the numbers #4 and #5 or #6 and #7 respectively. Of course, what is true for Erna Penner (#1) (married Doerry), naturally also applies to her siblings Käthe Penner (married Wiehler), Hermine Penner (Verch), Oskar Penner, Olga Penner (Gaerths), Heinz Penner, and Reinhold Penner and their surviving descendants. Descendants of these siblings are identified by the number of the last common ancestor (i.e. the sibling) and the sequence number for this descendant in the respective family. For example, Oskar Penner was the fifth child in his family (generation) and he is,

therefore, given the ancestor number (#2-5). His older sister Hermine was the third child in his family and has thus the ancestor number (#2-3). The common ancestor is their father Heinrich Penner (#2). The children of Oskar Penner are identified with an additional generation number. Thus, Oskar Penner's oldest daughter Regina has the ancestor number (#2-5-1).

The **ancestry of the Enß family** (Entz) starts with the name of Jacob Dück (ancestor #196). Much of the information about him and his family was taken from Volume #133 of the *Deutsches Geschlechterbuch* (Book of German Families). Helmut Strehlau authored this reference book. Also, a few years ago, Miss Anna Andres in Harxheim-Zell (Rheinpfalz, Germany) submitted some information to this author. According to both of these sources, the name Dück (also Dyck, Dueck, von Dyck, van Dyck) became well known through the great Dutch painter van Dyck. This name was not only quite common among the West Prussian Mennonites, but was also well represented among the Anabaptist communities, which established themselves in Southern Russia in response to an invitation by Catharina II. Following a treaty concluded between Germany and Russia, many of them returned to Germany after the defeat of Poland in September 1939, only to be sent back to Russia, again, in 1945, mainly because of false promises by the Soviet Union (USSR).

The origin of the name Dück (Dyck and others) is not obvious. Some people claim to recognize in this name the former first name *Dike*, while others (*Deutsches Geschlechterbuch*, Volume #126) want to relate this name to the word "dike" (levee). This latter derivation has a greater probability for being correct. The Mennonites had primarily been farmers in their former homes in the Netherlands and depended on dikes to protect their land from flooding. Since much of their land was below sea level, dikes played a very important role in their lives.

The oldest member in the Dück family and of importance for the ancestors of the Enß family is Jacob Dück (#196). According to calculations, he was born in about 1693 and lived in Altendorf. He died there at the age of 54 and was buried on June 2, 1747. His spouse, Maria Albrecht (#197), was born in Walldorf (now Orliniec) and had 9 children. Their names were Jacob (#196-1), Simon (#196-2), Johann (#196-3), Peter (#196-4), Gerhard (#196-5), Diedrich (#98 and #196-6), Margaretha (#196-7), Maria (196-8), and Heinrich (#196-9). As a widow, she wedded in her second marriage the village magistrate (*Schulze*, an elected position responsible for the proper maintenance of communal property and to enforce local law and order) and levee supervisor Jahn Penner. He had been married twice before, but had children only with his first wife, Margarethe Kroecker.

Of the children from Jacob Dück (#196) and his wife Maria Albrecht (#197), we are only interested in Diedrich Dück (#98 and #196-6) for the Enß ancestry. Presumably, he was born in Altendorf near Tiegenhagen (now Zelichowo) in the

Grosse Werder (delta formed by the Vistula and Nogat Rivers) at about 1732/33. He lived in the *Hakenbude* (most likely a small general store) in Krebsfelde (now Rakowiska) near the locks for the river dam. This implies that he most likely was a small businessman who *hökerte* (sold) his wares to the people living around him. He died here at the age of 39 years and was buried on January 21, 1772. His marriage with Maria Penner (#99), born in about 1730, produced four children: Catharina Dück (#49 and #98-1) was born in 1757, Maria (#98-2) was born in about 1760, Peter (#98-3), and Diedrich Dück (#98-4) (deceased at the age of 53 on October 20, 1824). Maria (née Penner) (#99) remarried after her first husband passed away. Her second husband was Peter Kroecker, born in 1750 in Einlage (now Jazowa) on the Nogat River. He was the son of the *Mitnachbar* Jacob Kroecker and his wife Catharina Wiebe, who passed away on October 30, 1805, in Krebsfelde. (A *Mitnachbar* is presumably one who farms property in a small community, such as a hamlet.) Maria Penner (#99) survived her second husband and passed away in Marienau (now Marynowy) at the age of 80 years on February 8, 1810. As far as the family tree is concerned, only her first-born daughter Catharina Dück (#49 and #98-1), born in 1757, is of importance. She later married Jacob Entz (#48). We will talk about him later on. At this point, we only want to mention that she became the mother of Peter Enß (#24) (the letter “-ß” = “-ss”, therefore “Enß” = “Enss”), who brought home Marie Hamm (#25) as his spouse. We will discuss her ancestors first in order not to disrupt later the coherence of the Enß family history. The great-grandparents of Marie Hamm belong to the same generation as Jacob Dück (#196) and his wife Maria Albrecht (#197) and have the ancestral numbers of #200 and #201. The following discussion is about them and their descendants.

There are different opinions about the origin of the family name *Hamm*. Postma sees in his already mentioned dissertation an old first name. However, Brechenmacher expresses his opinion in his “Etymological Dictionary for German Family Names” that this name points to a description of a locality. *Hamm* means an elevated river bank or a sand bank. In North-Germany, especially in Friesland, a *hamm* is a piece of land that is surrounded by ditches. A Heinrich von dem Hamme near Werl in Westphalia was mentioned already in 1294. This explanation of the name may be preferable. It fits better to the Low-German origin of the Mennonite family Hamm, who migrated from the Netherlands to the East. Perhaps, one is also able to make a connection between the name of the town Hamm in Westphalia and the family name Hamm, especially since Hamm is located not very far from Werl, where we encountered the first person with this name.

The members of the Hamm family of interest to us with respect to the Enß family belong to the Mennonites who migrated to the East at a later time. They did not come directly from the Netherlands, but took a detour through “Sweden.” But it seems that it was not the kingdom of Sweden, but the German territory acquired by Sweden by the Westphalian Peace Treaty in 1648. This territory comprised West-Pomerania along the Baltic Sea, the cities of Stettin (now Szczecin) and

Wismar, the Rügen peninsula, and the bishopries of Bremen and Verden. Presumably, one of these latter two territories was the starting point for the move east of the Hamm family. Bremen and Verden are located near the eastern border of the Netherlands. Until now, it was assumed that the Mennonites came through West-Pomerania. It is not known that the Mennonites ever settled in that area, not even on a temporary basis. But it is easy to understand that the first member of the Hamm family started his move to the East by taking a ship from Bremen to Danzig, where we find him at the beginning of the 18th century. It was Martin Hamm (#200), who had his first residence in St. Albrecht near Danzig (now Gdansk). The port of Danzig was a popular gateway for the Mennonites, who wanted to settle in that area. Martin Hamm moved later to the "Three Hogheads" (Drei Schweinsköpfe) near St. Albrecht. From there he moved on to Orloff (now Orlowo) and founded a brewery for beer vinegar. This business was owned and operated by the Hamm family until 1945, when the family was expelled from that area. The ownership of this business had been recorded on sheet #12 at the district court in Tiegenhof (now Nowy Dwor Gdanski). The birthday of Martin Hamm was calculated from his age at the time of his death as July 23, 1690. Its accuracy, however, cannot be vouched for. His day of death in Orloff is certified as August 30, 1750.

Before Martin Hamm moved to the river delta of the Wistula, he married Anna Bergen (#201). She was allegedly born on July 22, 1693 and she died in Orloff on May 28, 1764 (certified). This marriage produced three children (certified):

1.) Jacob Hamm (#200-1), born in Orloff on October 19, 1719, and deceased on October 22, 1781 in Petershagen (now Piotrowo) near Tiegenhof, where he owned a farm. Before he moved there, he farmed in Neudorf near Tiegenhof. He was married to Margaretha Dück, who was born in Haberhorst near Tiegenhof on February 13, 1720 and passed away on August 29, 1801 at an unknown location, but probably at the home of one of her children. According to records, she had eight surviving children. Her daughter Anna (#200-1-4) was her fourth child. She was born in Petershagen on September 18, 1749 and married Heinrich Esau from Schönsee (Jeziernik) near Tiegenhof. Anna died in February 1813.

2.) Michael Hamm (#100 and #200-2), whom we will discuss later in more detail, represents his generation in the ancestry of the Hamm family, which finally merges with the Enß family.

3.) Anna Hamm (#200-3), born at about 1724 and deceased on January 25, 1783 in Neumünsterberg, married an Isbrand Diek. He was born at about 1720 and his death on January 25, 1797 in Neumünsterberg (now Nw. Koscielnica) is certified.

Of the children of Martin Hamm (#200) and his spouse Anna Bergen (#201) and with respect to the ancestry of the Enß family, we are only interested in the aforementioned son Michael Hamm Sr. (#100). He was born in Orloff on February 4, 1723. According to the Mennonite church register in Tiegenhof, he passed away on November 17, 1787 and was buried in Orloff. Michael Hamm

had taken over his father's brewery for beer vinegar and had founded a second brewery in Tiegenhof. He married Helena von Bergen (#101) in Orloff, who was 22 years old at the time of her wedding. Her birthday was on January 30, 1729, and according to the Mennonite Church registry, she passed away in Orloff on December 15, 1778. The marriage between Michael Hamm Sr. (#100) and Helena von Bergen (#101) produced 8 children: Isaak (#100-1) (born in 1752), Anna (#100-2) (born in 1754), Martin (#100-3) (born in 1756), Michael (#100-4) (born in 1758), Helene (#100-5) (born in 1760), Jacob (#100-6) (born in 1762), Isaak (#100-7) (born in 1764), and Helena (#100-8) (born in 1769). The double appearance of the same name in one family generation was not unusual at that time. It mostly happened when one child died and was replaced with another child who was named after the deceased brother or sister. There was no attempt made to research the accuracy of this assumption, since it would only lead to confusion. Of interest to us in the group of the above mentioned children is only Michael Hamm Jr. (#50 and #100-4), who was born in Orloff on October 19, 1758. He inherited from his father the family beer vinegar brewery and was thus the third generation in this business. He died of old age (decrepitude) in Orloff on November 28, 1831. He married Helene Esau (#51) on October 23, 1779 in Orloff and was able to celebrate with her their 50th wedding anniversary on October 23, 1829. Their children with spouses and grandchildren were present during this celebration. Helene Esau was born in Ladekopp (now Lubieszewo) near Tiegenhof on August 19, 1759 and she passed away in Orloff on April 21, 1834. The couple had a total of seven children: Michael (#50-1) (born in 1780 and deceased), Michael (#50-2) (born in 1783, deceased in 1788), Maria (#25 and #50-3) (born in 1785, we will come back to her later), Jacob (#50-4) (born in 1788), Michael (#50-5) (born in 1790), Helena (#50-6) (born in 1792, deceased in 1840), and Anna (#50-7) (born in 1794). Here we find the same first name Michael three times in the same generation of this family, just like we saw the first names Isaak and Helene twice in the previous generation. The daughter Maria became the wife of Peter Enß (#24) and thus we lose interest in the following generations of the Hamm family. According to records of the Mennonite church in Orloff, Maria Hamm (#25) was born in Orloff on March 31, 1785 and she also died there on May 6, 1860. According to church records in Orloff, she married Peter Enß (#24) in Orloff on February 28, 1809. He was born on August 15, 1787 in Marienau (now Marynowy) near Tiegenhof. With this event the real story of the Enß family moved to the foreground. The ancestry of this family will no longer be disrupted by the addition of women, who married into the family. To avoid this, we discussed the Dück and Hamm families in advance.

Peter Enß (#24), who married Maria Hamm (#25) was not the beginning of the Enß ancestry, but his father Jacob Entz (#48) was. He had married Catharina Dück (#49). The spelling of the name changes now and then from Enß to Entz and back. Such differences were quite common at that time and depended on the liberal attitude towards spelling of names by individual record clerks. Sometimes it went so far that entries in the church records of the same person show five or more orthographic variations in the name.

As we pointed out before and as far as the history of the Enß (Entz) family is concerned, the oldest member whose existence can be documented was the father of Peter Enß (#24). Jacob Entz (#48) was married to Catharina Dück (#49). The death certificate of Jacob Entz indicates that he was 65 years, 6 months and 19 days old when he passed away in Mierau (now Mirowo) on June 19, 1826. According to this information, he must have been born on December 19, 1760. The records also indicate that he lived in Klein Mausdorf (now Myszewko) as a *Mitnachbar* (probably shared or rented property in the hamlet) before he became a *Freiköllner* (also: free Cöllmer or Kulmer. This is a person who owned a farm property in a community established by the Teutonic Order under the *Kulmer Recht* {a set of regulations like a bylaw} in the 14th century. The owner purchased the farm outright and was “free” of obligations towards a landowner. He paid a tax {Zins} and was only responsible for the maintenance of a section of dike, road, ditch, and canal in his neighborhood) in Mierau. He moved to Marienau in 1809 and lived there as a *Mitnachbar* and a *Hakenbüdner* (a rural shopkeeper). Jacob Entz’s (#48) previously mentioned wife Catharina Dück (#49) was born in about 1757 and was about three years older than he was. It was her second marriage. Her first husband, an Andres, must have passed away after a relatively short marriage. The date of her second marriage is not known, but is assumed to have taken place around 1783/4, because their oldest son Jacob Entz (#48-1) was born in 1785. He remained unmarried and passed away on September 30, 1841, in Marienau. The next child was probably Peter Enß (#24 and #48-2) in 1786. His birth certificate, prepared by the Mennonite church in Ladekopp–Orlofffelde on May 13, 1938, however, gives November 30, 1774, as his birth date. This birth date must be in error, since his father was then only 14 years old and could not have been married. A daughter Catharina (#48-3) was named as the third child. She was born in about 1791 and passed away on October 4, 1880. Her followed another son. His name was Dietrich (#48-4). He was born in Klein Mausdorf on September 25, 1796, and died on August 4, 1880. The mother of these four children, Catharina Dück (#49), a married Entz and a widowed Andres, survived her spouse by about six years. She closed her eyes forever on August 2, 1832 in Orloff (?).

The second son of Jacob Entz (#48) is of importance for the next generation of the Enß family. He was named Peter. In official records, his name is written as Peter Enß (#24 and #48-2). As already mentioned, he was born in about 1786, supposedly in the month of August. Unfortunately, very little is known for sure about his life. Only his wedding to Maria Hamm (#25) on February 28, 1809 in Orloff is documented. This marriage produced two sons: Jacob (#12), who later continued the family line and will be discussed in more detail, and Peter Enß Jr. (#24-2). After living in Orloff like his parents, the younger Peter Enß (#24-2) moved to Tiegenhof in 1868. From there he emigrated one year later with his family to live with the South Russian Mennonites, supposedly in the tract colony (a drawn-out settlement built along a road or tract) near Saratow on the Wolga River. Here lived already since 1857 a nephew of the younger Peter Enß's wife Barbara Froese (born on March 10, 1804 in Orloff). Barbara Froese was the daughter of Cornelius Froese and Elisabeth Siemens, widowed Suckau). This

nephew's name was Heinrich Froese. A brother of Barbara Froese joined him in 1872. It can, therefore, be assumed that Peter Enß Jr., too, moved to this same tract colony. His father, Peter Enß (#24), may have accompanied him, because his oldest son Jacob (#12) had already passed away in 1855 in Orloff and his own wife, Maria Hamm (# 25), had died on May 5, 1860. It is assumed that the older Peter Enß (#24) died in Russia. There are no known written records of when and where he passed away. Only oral reports within the family tell about the last years of his life. According to these oral reports, Peter Enß Sr. (#24) visited a Mennonite community in South Russia at a very advanced age and lived there for the remainder of his life. A still existing photograph shows him as an old man. It probably was taken shortly before he left for South Russia. This picture was most likely a remembrance for his relatives who remained behind in West Prussia. At that time, he was already over 80 years old. No matter what, it is an interesting fact that the connections between the Mennonite communities in West Prussia and other places and their brethren in Russia remained intact, as long as political conditions did not prevent their communication with each other, as is the case today (in 1974) in the USSR.

Whoever has the opportunity to compare the picture of the old Peter Enß Sr. (#24) with that of his oldest son Jacob Enß (#12 and #24-1)) would have a hard time believing that he looks at pictures of a father and his son. The father is tall and lean and the son is considerably shorter and sickeningly obese. As the story goes and which the author is unable to document, Jacob's belly was so big that he had cut out a semicircle from his dining table to make it easier for him to reach the food and the drinks on the table. The viewer of his picture will be inclined to believe this rumor.

Jacob Enß (#12 and #24-1) was born in Orloff on April 18, 1810 and died there on May 8, 1855, when he was only 45 years old. Some kind of organic illness, which also caused his extreme obesity, was supposed to have been the cause for his early death. This certainly is credible. He married Maria Kätler (#13) at the age of 19 years. The wedding was on March 24, 1829, supposedly in Orloff. Maria was born on December 21, 1809, in Orloff and died there on February 26, 1857. She was the daughter of the *Nachbar* (neighbor, probably a person who owns property in a hamlet?) and village magistrate (Schulze) Clas Kätler Jr. (#26). He was born on June 24, 1784 in Orloff and died on June 3, 1817 in Grunau (now Gronowo Elb.), near Elbing. His wife Anna Schroeder (#27), widowed Sperling, was born in Orloff on October 22, 1783, and died at an unknown location on August 15, 1813. The early death of both parents of Maria Kätler could be surprising. But it finds its explanation in the respective church register, which states consumption (tuberculosis of the lung) as the cause of their death. At that time, this disease still claimed a large number of victims. Today, this is no longer the case. As recently as 50 years ago, only 5% of all people infected with tuberculosis survived, while 95% of them succumbed to this disease. Today, the opposite is the case. With that, this awful contagious disease has lost most of the public's fear.

The grandparents of Maria Kätler were Clas Kätler Sr. (#52) on her father's side, who lived in Preußisch Königsdorf (now Olesno) as *Mitnachbar* (probably a person who owns, shares, or rents property in a community or hamlet) with his unknown spouse, and Heinrich Schröder (#54) on her mother's side. Heinrich Schröder died in Orloff on May 24, 1827 at the age of 75 years, 6 months, and 22 days. His wife Anna Pauls (#55) passed away in Orloff on February 22, 1808 at the age of 48 years, 10 months, and 11 days.

One can only guess if Maria Kätler (#13) infected at least some of her children with the tuberculosis bacillus. It cannot be proven at this time. But of the 10 children she had with her husband, not less than five of them passed away at a tender child's age. It is not known, which illness led to their demise. It could have been the lung epidemic or consumption, which caused their death, or it could have been scarlet fever or diphtheria, which at that time still caused many children to die every year. This was still the case at the beginning of the 20th century, when at times entire schools were closed to reduce somewhat the danger of infections.

The oldest child of the five surviving children of Jacob Enß (#12) and Maria Kätler (#13) was Peter Enß (#12-1) (born in Orloff on November 19, 1831). He was followed by Maria Enß (#12-2) (born in Orloff on May 2, 1837). Maria was married twice: Once with Peter Friesen from Walldorf (now Orliniec) and the second time with a Fast. It is not known who was her first husband and who was the second. The third surviving child was named Anna (#12-3) (born in Orloff on October 16, 1838). By her marriage to Abraham Regier on August 16, 1860, she became an ancestress of Ulrich Kämmer, a son-in-law of Oskar Penner (#2-5), who is a brother of Erna Penner (#1 and #2-4). In fourth place was Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-4), whom we will talk more about at a later time. Helene Enß (#12-5) was the youngest surviving child. She was born in Orloff on May 29, 1848 and became the wife of Abraham Unger on January 22, 1868. (Please note, in the case of incomplete information, i.e. missing names and data, the sequence numbers for the generation of children are limited to only the surviving children. The not-mentioned non-surviving children are disregarded).

Before we finish talking about the husband of Maria Kätler (#13), the early deceased Jacob Enß (#12), we like to briefly talk about the newly appearing family names Kätler, Schröder, and Pauls! The name Kätler allows for two interpretations: This name either originated in Upper (South) Germany and means as much as coppersmith (boilermaker) or a chain-maker, or the name is derived from the Upper German first name *Cadelhoh*, a very popular name in the 12th and 13th centuries. The name Schröder was originally a profession and was equivalent to *tailor*. In middle German, *schroder* means "to cut with scissors." (See also the English word *shredder*) The name Pauls, which is not unusual among the Mennonites, is without doubt derived from the first name *Paul*. So much for the discussion of the generation of Jacob Enß (#12)! When he closed his eyes forever at the age of 45, his oldest surviving son was only 23 years old, while his son Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2), who was to merge the Enß ancestry

with the Penner family, was just 12 years old. His younger sister Helene (#12-3) who later became Mrs. Abraham Unger was only 7 years old. When two years later their mother Maria Kätler, too, closed her eyes forever, the surviving children were hit quite hard. There was no other choice but to divide the under-aged orphans among relatives. There they grew up as *Ziehbrüder* and *Ziehschwestern* (orphans or foster children who were raised with and like their own children) until they came of age. This minimized their needs, but was no substitute for their own parents' home, even though Mennonite families tried awfully hard to raise these orphaned children like children of their own and according to their religious beliefs.

Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2), born on April 1, 1843 in Orloff, was in 1858 raised as a *Ziehsohn* (orphan raised like a son) in the home of his uncle Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B) in Marienau, after both of his parents were deceased. He reported this himself on February 12, 1881 in a letter to Dück, the elder of the Mennonite community in Ellerwald (now Janowo). The elder of the community Rosenort (now Rakowe Pole), a Mr. N. Fast, baptized him and his future spouse, Emilie Wieler (#7), together in 1860, and with this he became a member of that Mennonite congregation. A year later, he moved to Koczelitzki (now Koscielczki) in the Heubuden (now Stogi) community to earn money or to add to his agricultural training.

Cornelius Enß (48-4-1B), who had raised him, was not a direct uncle of Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2). His grandfather Peter Enß (#24 and #48-2), who had emigrated to South Russia with his younger son Peter Jr., had a brother Dietrich (48-2). Dietrich Enß was born on September 25, 1796, in Klein Mausdorf (deceased on August 4, 1880, probably in Marienau). Dietrich Enß (#48-2) was a *Mitnachbar* and a *Hakenbüdner* (lived in the community and operated a small country store) in Marienau. He also was for many years an elder in the Mennonite Congregation (*Gemeinde*) of Rosenort. Dietrich Enß married Anna Hamm (#50-2) on July 31, 1817, in Orloff. She was the younger sister of Maria Hamm (#25 and #50-1), who was also the wife of Dietrich's brother Peter Enß (#24); (i.e. two sisters were married to two brothers). Dietrich Enß and Anna Hamm had together at least 5 surviving children. Among them were the twin brothers Peter Enß (#48-4-1A) and Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B), who were born on April 8, 1828 in Marienau. It was the twin brother Cornelius, who took the orphaned Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2), son of his cousin Jacob Enß (#12), into his home. He raised him with his own two sons: Dietrich Enß (#48-4-1B-1) (born on September 28, 1854 in Marienau and deceased on August 18, 1930 in Schönhorst [now Gniazdowo] on the Weichsel River. Dietrich Enß was married to Helene Wölke) and Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B-2) (born on October 19, 1856, in Marienau). When the author and his bride and future wife Erna (#1 and #2-4), née Penner, followed an invitation from the author's friend Hermann Froese in Schönhorst in early 1924, they learned to their surprise that Mrs. Froese and Erna were related. Mrs. Maria Froese's maiden name was Enß (#48-4-1B-1-1), born on December 8, 1883, in Schönsee (now Jeziernik). In her first marriage

she was married to a Bruno Enß (born on July 12, 1882 in Marienau and deceased on November 8, 1917 in Schönhorst). Both were grandchildren of the twin brothers: Bruno Enß (#48-4-1A-1-1) from Peter Enß and Maria (Enß) Froese (#48-4-1B-1-1) from Cornelius Enß, who raised Erna's grandfather Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2) as his *Ziehsohn* (foster son). The old Dietrich Enß (#48-4-1B-1) (son of the twin Cornelius Enß and born in 1854) had been a *Ziehbruder* of Heinrich Enß (#6) and could still remember him. All of this was discovered when we looked at the picture album of the Enß family in Schönhorst (now Gniazdowo) on the Weichsel River. In the album was also the picture of the old Peter Enß (#24), who had emigrated to Russia and was the grandfather of Heinrich Enß (#6). But let us return to him!

After leaving Marienau to work for five years in Koczelitzki (later Warnau and now Koscielczki), Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-2) married Emilie Henriette Wieler (#7) on March 15, 1866. Heinrich's granduncle Dietrich Enß blessed their marriage in the Mennonite church in Rosenort. The young bride was born on July 23, 1843, in Klein Mausdorf and died as a widow shortly after her 69th birthday on July 27, 1912 at the home of her son-in-law Heinrich Penner in Christburg (now Dzierzgon). There are at least a few dates available of her parents and grandparents. Even the name of her great-grandfather is known. But there was nothing to be found out about her grandparents Reimer. Thus, we only know that her father Dietrich Wieler (#14) was born on November 3, 1822, in Ellerwald, 1st Trift (there are a total of five *Triften* in Ellerwald. A Trift is apparently a stabilized road with homes and farms located on both sides of the road. A Trift can be compared to a "mile-road" in the US Mid-West). There is nothing known about the date of his death. He married Catharina Reimer (#15), who was born on May 15, 1818, and passed away on March 18, 1872 in Zeiskendorf near Tiegenhof. The parents of Dietrich Wieler (#14) were Cornelius Wieler (#28) (born on February 26, 1768 in Ellerwald 1st Trift with unknown date of his death) and Elisabeth Fast (#29). There is little known about her except that she was the daughter of Johannes Fast (#58), who passed away in Leske (now Laski). Cornelius Wieler (#28) and Elisabeth Fast (#29) were married on October 28, 1813. A Hans Fast is mentioned in a special published survey (Consignation or census) that enumerated all Mennonite families having lived in West Prussia in 1776. This Johannes Fast lived in Leske and he had two sons and three daughters. He may have been the above mentioned Johannes Fast (#58). In the same publication we also find the great-grandfather Hans Wieler (#56). He is listed as the father of three sons and one daughter. Even though these pointers appear initially to be quite flimsy, they may be very valuable in places where there are no other sources of information available.

But now back to the young couple of Heinrich Enß (#6) and Emilie Wieler (#7)! They started their first home in Krebsfelde, where their first son Heinrich (#6-1) was born on January 5, 1867. He was followed by two sisters. Elise Entz (#3 and #6-2) was born on August 20, 1872 and Hermine Enß (#6-3) was born on November 22, 1876. Like their brother, both sisters were born in Krebsfelde

(now Rakowiska). Of these three children, only Elise Entz (#3), as her name is written in all official documents, is of importance to us. She married Heinrich Penner (#2) from Thiergart (now Zwierzno). With this marriage the ancestral line of the Enß family merges with that of the Penner family and loses its status as an independent ancestral line. But despite of this, we added a rough outline of the siblings of Elise Entz and their dependents in an annex. This will enable later generations of descendants from Heinrich Enß (#6) to more easily recognize their relationships to other descendants.

Heinrich Enß (#6) and Emilie Wieler (#7) gave up farming relatively early and moved in with their son-in-law Böttcher, the husband of their youngest daughter Hermine. After the untimely death of Hermine, the life of Heinrich Enß, too, came soon to an end (1908?). When the son-in-law Böttcher remarried, the widow Emilie Wieler (#7) moved from Grünlinde (now Zboce) to her other son-in-law, Heinrich Penner (#2), in whose home in Christburg (now Dzierzgon), West Prussia, she lived for the remainder of her life. Only two of her three children were still alive at that time. These were her son Heinrich Enß (#6-1) and her daughter Elise Penner, née Entz (#3 and #6-2), who became the mother of Erna Penner (#1) and her siblings. To avoid any possible confusion, a brief overview of Erna and her siblings will be presented with their children as an addendum to this report. A third daughter of the Enß couple, the previously mentioned Hermine Böttcher, née Enß (#6-3), born on November 22, 1875 in Krebsfelde and deceased on February 18, 1907 in Thiergart will be presented later in an addendum, together with her husband Gottlieb Böttcher and their children. At the time of her mother's death, Hermine rested already for five years under the green lawn.

Elise Entz (#3 and #6-2), as her name shall be spelled (see above), was just 25 years old when she gave her hand in marriage to the owner of a farm in Thiergart, Heinrich Penner (#2). Their wedding was on September 17, 1897 in Rapendorf (now Rogowo) near Preußisch Holland (now Paslek). Her further life was not always smooth and simple. The author of this report does not consider it to be his responsibility to probe for the reasons. He is afraid that here and there other members of the family will see things with different eyes than the still living direct descendants. He will limit himself to briefly touch on some of the most obvious problems, which he either observed himself or which became known to him after his marriage with the third daughter of this couple, Erna Doerry, née Penner (#1 and #2-4).

Heinrich Penner still lived according to the traditional concept of many Mennonites. Only the man was responsible for everything what happened in and to the family. In his mind, this gave him the right, if not the responsibility, to rule his family as an authoritarian. This position was enhanced when he found gravel on one of his fields in Güldenfelde and he started a small business to manufacture cement products. He moved this business to Christburg in 1910, where it continued to thrive. This raised his self-esteem and the value of his

property continued to increase. Heinrich Penner now belonged to the wealthiest men in town. As his status improved, the influence of his spouse decreased. She, who had eight children with him, had to remain a housemother, who was limited to taking care of the household. When the economic conditions deteriorated in later years, she had a hard time to make ends meet with the means available to her. Even though the purchase of the *Schloßvorstadt* (a residential property near the old manor) in Christburg, West Prussia, during World War I provided for the most basic needs in their life, this was all! Of her four daughters, only the oldest, Käthe (#2-1) (born in 1898) was of any help to her. Hermine (#2-3), born in 1901 in Thiergart, had always been a sickly child and nobody predicted that she would live a long life. Everybody showed Hermine much consideration. Olga (#2-6), the daughter after Erna (#1 and #2-4), did not feel like doing much in the household, especially when she noticed that after her oldest sister Käthe had married, she was condemned to assist her mother all by herself. Hermine went to Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) and later to Berlin to follow her artistic tendencies. Erna, too, did not care much for housework. She went to a boarding school for daughters of well-to-do families in Kassel and then to a private business school in Königsberg, so that she would be able to assist her father with the bookkeeping in his business. This way, "Muttchen" (the West Prussian endearment form for "Mother," like "Mom") had only the help of one maid, who was efficient and conscientious, but unable to do all the work in the house, yard, and barn by herself. When this maid was let go for economic reasons, then Olga was no adequate replacement for this maid. Consequently, "Muttchen" (#3) had to do much of the work herself, despite of her steadily increasing back pain caused by an undiagnosed kidney disease. It became too much for her and it was no wonder that she finally collapsed and died of kidney failure on February 17, 1931 in the Catholic Hospital in Marienburg. She found her final resting-place on the cemetery in Gölldenfelde (south of now Rozgart) near Thiergart, where she had lived for 13 years of her married life. According to old tradition, her former neighbors lowered her coffin into the grave. A tombstone manufactured in the plant her son had recently taken over from his father adorned – at least until 1945 – her final resting-place. Only after their mother had passed away did it dawn on the survivors, how much they had to thank her for and what they had lost with her.

There arises the question, why "Vatchen" (the German endearment form for *father*, like "Dad") Heinrich Penner (#2), who kept his wife very short in money, was very generous to some of his children. There is a simple explanation for this, too. Because of her health, Hermine was unsuitable to do housework. Erna was mentally too developed (i.e. intellectual) and had no interest in housework. She knew how to convince her father that she could be more useful by helping him with bookkeeping than by helping *Muttchen* with house and kitchen work. Heinz and Reinhard were sent to a high school. *Vatchen* had correctly recognized that times had changed and that a simple elementary school (8 years) education was no longer adequate for an advanced position in life. Oskar, too, was supposed to attend the Agriculture School (agricultural high school) in

Marienburg. But this did not materialize, because Oskar loved farming with a passion and he did not see the need for a better formal education. Considering his age at that time, this attitude was understandable. Only later, when it became necessary for him to save his father's industrial business, did he recognize what he had missed. He had to catch up with what he could have learned in his younger years with very little effort. But it is quite common that people recognize only in their later years what kinds of mistakes they had made while they were young.

These remarks shall in no way criticize this or that member of the Penner family. They are only an attempt to explain the reasons for what happened at a later time. Perhaps, one must reach an advanced age to really see and understand what happened in the past. Where there is light, there are also shadows! There is also the fact that in the course of time, spouses do not always keep pace with each other and only after the departure of one or the other do they recognize how much they had to thank their partner for and what they had missed. This does not have to be this way. But it happens frequently and it must be considered in the case of the marriage of Elise Entz (#3) and Heinrich Penner (#2), or better said, of *Muttchen* and *Vatchen*.

Before we continue to discuss the latter, let us look at the Penner ancestors, just like we did with the Enß family. This will help with the clarity of this report.

The ancestors of the Enß family lived primarily in the *Große Werder* (area between the Weichsel and Nogat rivers). The community Orloff (west of Tiegenhof) appears again and again. The farmers in this area belonged almost exclusively to the stricter Flemish branch of the Mennonite church. The Penner family we are interested in came from the *Kleine Werder*. This area is located east of the Nogat River and south of Elbing. Here, the Mennonites belonged to the Frisian branch of the church, which was not quite as strict in their beliefs as the Flemish branch of the Mennonite church.

Thanks to the many children in the Mennonite families, the name "Penner" appears so frequently that it is very difficult, often even impossible, to explain if and how the various Penner families are related to each other. In addition to this, the Mennonite farmers in the *Kleine Werder*, in contrast to the farmers in the *Große Werder*, generally had smaller farms and had to struggle harder to make a living under more primitive conditions. They often had to work very hard to reap the crops of their soil. One cannot deny that the farmers in the *Große Werder* had to fight frequent flood damage caused by small and large breaks in levees, until the Nogat River was regulated at the end of the 19th century. But their farmland was generally more elevated than the land in the *Kleine Werder*. Here, the land was sometimes up to 4 meters (12 feet) below sea level (at Thiergart). During the spring, when the snow melted, the water had to be pumped from the meadows and pastures to prevent the soil from turning "sour." This was done with pumps driven by wind. These pumps transferred the water from drainage

ditches into the many river branches, which finally flowed into the *Frische Haff* (a large lake separated from the Baltic Sea by a narrow strip of land, a *Nehrung*). The reward for all this effort came in the following summer and fall. There was some justification for calling the *Große Werder* and the *Kleine Werder* “the land where honey and milk flow.” The auction of bulls in Marienburg was always well attended by farmers from West Germany and Holstein who valued the registered cattle bred and raised in this area. Some of these were even sold to neighboring countries to improve their breeding stock. These were pleasing successes, but they could only be achieved with hard work. There was little free time for leisure and it is understandable that they did not spend much time on preserving the history of their ancestors. Of course, the family did not immediately forget the deceased. But the more years went by, the fuzzier became the personalities of the deceased under the pressures of daily life. When the author started to research intensively the history of the Penner family during the 1930s, he experienced it several times that even the next of kin gave only vague answers to the author’s questions. It took a lot of effort to just gather the information presented in the following part of this treatise.

The oldest documented ancestor of Heinrich Penner (#2) in Thiergart and later in Christburg is recorded in the church registry of the Mennonite community in Thiensdorf (now Jezioro) –Preußisch Rosengart (now Rozgart) in the *Kleine Werder* (east of Marienburg and south of Elbing). It contains the following entry: Jacob Penner Sr. (#16) deceased November 1, 1791, at the age of 36 years. According to this entry, he was born around 1755 and has the ancestor number 16. Nothing is mentioned about where he lived and how he earned his living. There is also no word mentioned about the widow he left behind, so that her name is a big question mark. One can only assume, and probably rightfully so, that Jacob Penner worked a small farm in the *Kleine Werder*. We only know that this property was located in Baalau (now Balewo), because the next member in the Penner ancestry was born there. The younger Jacob Penner (#8 and #16-1) was born on September 11, 1791, and was only a few weeks old when his father passed away. It is a big question mark how the widow and her son, or children, managed to struggle through life. It is said that she remarried to have someone to help her with the farm until the heir, or the children, were old enough to do the work. Of course, only one of them could inherit the farm, while the remainder of the children had to leave. This must have been the case here, too. We find the younger Jacob Penner (#8) later in Markushof (now Markusy), after he married Catharina Wiehler (#9) on January 22, 1829 in Thiensdorf. He died in Markushof on July 13, 1854. The widow, born about 1802, was the daughter of a Heinrich (?) Wiehler (#18). She survived Jacob Penner (#8) by almost 10 years and passed away in Wengelwalde (now Zohwiniec) on May 1, 1864, probably at the home of one of her children. At that time, there were no homes for the elderly into which one could deposit inconvenient elderly members of the family. Until a few decades ago, the elderly lived with their children until death called them away. The change came in our time when life started to place greater demands

on us. The present younger generation does not think that they, too, will some day be condemned to live in a ghetto for the elderly.

After the family name Wiehler showed up again, like it did already on earlier occasions, a few words about its origin! Postma, whose dissertation about the Prussian and Russian Mennonites had been mentioned earlier, sees in Wiehler the old first name "Wille," while Brechenmacher prefers a different derivation in his etiologic dictionary of German family names. According to him, the name Wiehler (also written as Wieler) is derived from the middle-German word "wuol" meaning a "waterhole." In this connection he mentions the oldest recorded bearer of this name, an Uolrich Wüle, who was a tenant (Zinsmann) in Dürrheim (Villingen). We are unable to determine who is correct. Both explanations are possible, even though Brechenmacher's is preferred because of the name's ending in "-er" (Wüler or Wuoler). Names ending with "-er" are mostly from Upper Germany (South Germany) and the mentioned Uolrich Wüle came from that region. As we have shown earlier, many Mennonites came from the Upper German region. That the name appears with two spellings is meaningless, as we emphasized earlier. There was no registration office (*Standesamt*) in existence, yet, to insist on the uniform spelling of names. The name Eydße, which appears in the next generation of the Penner family, is written once this way and at other times in another way.

Both spouses, Jacob Penner (#8) and Catharina Wiehler (#9) did not grow very old. Jacob Penner died when he was 62 years and 4 months old. He lived in Markushof and died of a stroke. He was buried in the cemetery of this community. Catharina Wiehler reached the age of 61 years, 10 months, and 13 days. An abdominal infection (cancer?) was recorded as the cause of her death. When the father died, there were still six grownup children and one minor child listed as heirs. When the mother passed away, there were only two grownup sons recorded. This does not mean that in meantime several children had passed away. This can be explained with the presence of all children in 1854, i.e. sons and daughters, while in 1864 only the grownup sons are mentioned, one of whom had to eventually leave the farm. Allegedly, this happened to Heinrich Penner Sr. (#4). He was born in Markushof on November 19, 1838. Already a year before his mother died in Thiensdorf, he married Maria Eydse (#5) on May 6, 1863, in Thiensdorf. She came from Wengelwalde (now Zohwiniec) and we will talk about her later. Whether Heinrich Penner (#4) was paid off in some way can no longer be determined. Of course, since he was already married in 1863, he could not have been one of the two sons of the deceased Catharina Wiehler (#9), who were mentioned as being still at home on May 1, 1864. As the oldest son, he would have been called Jacob, just like his father. Instead, he was named Heinrich after his maternal grandfather Heinrich Wiehler (#18).

The knowledge of such customs is very important in genealogy. It often makes it easier to recognize connections, which are not always obvious! This is also the case with Heinrich Penner (#4). Until then, this first name did not appear in the

ancestry of the Penner family. Most Mennonite families picked their first names from the Old Testament. Therefore, this first name must have come to the family through an outsider, like a maternal grandfather. This assumption verifies that the mother Catharina Wiehler (#9) is the same as the Catharina Wiehler listed in the book of baptisms for the Elbing-Ellerwald community. This entry states that the Elder of this community, Jacob Kröcker, baptized the daughter of Heinrich Wiehler (#18) from Elbing (now Elbląg) on June 25, 1820. Since young Mennonites were usually baptized at the age of 16-18 years, the Catharina Wiehler born in Elbing (?) in about 1802 is most likely the same as the one who became the second wife of Jacob Penner in Markushof. The wedding was on January 22, 1829, in the church of Thiensdorf. This supposition is supported by the fact that since the death of her parents, Catharina Wiehler evidently lived with relatives in Markushof. The church register certifying her marriage lists her as a foster daughter of Bergens in Markushof. Apparently, the later spouses knew each other for quite some time, because they had lived in the same village before Jacob Penner took the orphan as his second wife. This was for the benefit of both: The orphaned Catharina Wiehler had found a permanent home and Jacob Penner (#8) had again a woman in his house.

Over 9 years later, she presented her husband a son. Heinrich Penner Sr. (#4) was born on November 19, 1838, in Markushof. His birth is registered in the church records. He did not remain in Markushof, but moved to a nice farm in Thiergart. The farm was of a good size and was able to feed its owner and his family quite well. On May 6, 1863 he took Maria Eyds(e) (#5) as his wife. They were married in the Mennonite church in Thiensdorf. In the course of time, they had one son Heinrich (#2) and seven daughters. The names of these daughters were: Maria, later Mrs. Beilharz in Kulmsee; Sarah Zbinden, formerly Elbing and most recently in Switzerland, from where her husband originated; Katharina Claaßen (?); Martha Wiebe, at last in Thiergart; Lisette Braun, widowed Dirksen, in the U.S.A.; Helene Bock, at last in Alaska; Auguste Lang, widowed Jäger, in Southern California (born in 1879 and deceased in early 1970). The author's second son, who also emigrated to the U.S.A., visited her a couple of times in Van Nuys, CA. The author himself met personally only Sarah Zbinden, Martha Wiebe, and several children of the named sisters, as well as the spouse of Sarah Zbinden and the widower of Lisette Braun, who was born in Lower Saxony.

Maria Eyds(e) (#5) (also written as Eyds, Eydse, Eidse or Eitz) was the mother of all these children. As remarked earlier, variations in the spelling of names were quite common during those years. She was born on April 30, 1833 in Wengelwalde. The birth dates show that she was five years older than her spouse. She passed away in Thiergart on August 7, 1898, almost one year after the wedding of her only son. Her father was Heinrich Eidse (#10), whose father, again, was Heinrich Edße (#20). Her mother was Sara Penner (#11), the daughter of a Peter Penner (#22). Sara Penner was born on February 7, 1792 and passed away on July 27, 1864, as a Mrs. Dau. The church wedding of Heinrich Eidse (#10) and Sara Penner (#11) was on November 21, 1814, in

Thiensdorf. The couple was divorced again after the birth of their daughter Maria Eyds (#5) in 1833. The reason for the breakup of this marriage was adultery committed by the wife Sara, née Penner (#11). After the divorce, she married her lover, the master baker Dau in Wengelwalde.

See the addendum at the end of this report for more information about other descendants of Heinrich Eidse (#10) and Sara Penner (#11).

The marriage between Maria Eyds (#5) and Heinrich Penner Sr. (#4) was not always an easy and harmonious one. It appears that Heinrich Penner ruled his house like a despot who tolerated no freedoms and demanded the utmost from everybody who worked for him. He still lived with the idea of the old Mennonite patriarch, whose orders were to be followed without hesitation. The consequence of this was that the hired help, male and female, never stayed for very long. Even his own children were not willing to unconditionally submit to the whims of their father. The emigration of his daughters to America was an example of this. Finally, his only son, Heinrich Penner Jr. (#2), gave him notice. According to the son's own account, the house doctor diagnosed him as physically exhausted at the age of 17, because his father had exploited him to the degree of abuse. This meant a lot, because "Vatchen" Penner (#2), as his own children called him later on, was really a pretty tough fellow. The author was able to personally convince himself of this on several occasions since 1924. But we will talk more about this later on.

After a relatively short time to recuperate from these exhaustive episodes, the son had to return to the "grinder" until one day, in about 1895, the idea came to him to leave his parents' farm, just like his older sisters had done. Without his father knowing about it, he borrowed money and bought a farm in Thiergart, which had just come on the market. His father had expected anything but this. When he heard the news from his son, he was pretty shocked, as the younger Heinrich Penner (#2) told the author himself. But the inevitable had happened and the father had to accept the facts. The father was foolish enough not to have noticed that children grow up to become adults and that they have a right to be respected as such. Despite of all his experiences, the father persisted on his patriarchal behavior. When he was already an 80-year old man, only the interference of his grandson Oskar saved him from being beaten up by one of his hired men. He never left Thiergart, where he had spent most of his life, even after his son had moved away from his own farm. He closed his eyes there forever on February 19, 1922, eleven years after the son had moved his business from Thiergart to Christburg in the neighboring District Stuhm (now Sztum).

Heinrich Penner Jr. (#2) was born in Thiergart on May 27, 1869. As already mentioned before, he was the only son of his parents. After he had left his parents' home and was on his own, he married Elise Entz (#3) in Rapendorf (now Rogowo), near Preußisch Holland (now Paslek). She was already named as a

member of the Enß ancestry. She was born in Krebsfelde (now Rakowiska) on August 20, 1872 as the daughter of Heinrich Enß (#6) and Emilie Wieler (#7). Heinrich Penner Jr. (#2) and Elise Entz (#3) were married on September 17, 1897. They had eight children, not counting the stillborn twin brother of Olga, between 1898 and 1910. We will talk about these children after we have a better understanding of their father's life and activities. As long as some of the children are still alive, there is the danger that the author's judgment will be in conflict with their own self-concept. For the already deceased children, the still living family members and their surviving children or grandchildren may want to write themselves what they know and remember of their parents or grandparents.

Heinrich Penner Jr. (#2) had farmed for only a few years when he decided to combine his agricultural enterprise with a commercial business. He had found gravel on one of his fields in the area of the neighbor community Güldenfelde, District Stuhm (now Sztum). He started to mine this gravel to produce cement products. These products were primarily concrete pipes used for soil improvement (most likely for the drainage of wetlands). The manufacture of concrete products was a good side business and yielded extra income. But the gravel supply was limited and not of the very good quality "Vatchen Penner" had originally thought it to be. Unless he wanted to return to farming, he had to consider moving his business to a better location. This happened in 1910 when he purchased a gravel pit near the railroad property of the town Christburg. He started out with a partner from the city of Marienburg (now Malbork), whom he soon paid off to become the sole owner of the business. The new manufacturing plant benefited from the availability of the railroad track that connected Marienburg with the railroad station in Christburg. Heinrich Penner Jr. raised the money necessary for the construction of the new facility by selling some land of his farm in Thiergart. The remaining money was borrowed. For reasons easy to understand, the family moved to Christburg in 1910, where they lived in a rented apartment in the *Bahnhofstrasse* (Street leading from the town to the railroad station). In 1916, the family moved to the recently acquired property in the so-called *Schlossvorstadt* (a residential area near an old estate manor). To it belonged about 18.5 acres (7.5 hectares) of good land. This land was supposed to keep the family from starving, as the food shortage during World War 1 (WW I) became increasingly critical. This property remained in the possession of Heinrich Penner until the German population was expelled from that region in 1945. In the will made by Heinrich Penner (#2) at the end of the 1930s, he made his daughter Olga (#2-6) the heir to this property. The remainder of the farm in Thiergart, which had been leased for several years after the Penner family had moved away in 1910, was finally sold to someone outside of the family. This became necessary during the economic crisis at the end of the 1920s, when money was needed to save the manufacturing plant for concrete products in Christburg. The business was then threatened by financial insolvency. Much of the blame for this situation, however, belonged to "Vatchen" himself. The inflation during the early 1920s, during which the money lost some of its value every day, had caused many people to work with credit. Because of the

increasing inflation, they no longer paid attention to the enormous interest rates. These rates could be as high as 50%. This condition was the consequence of a currency shortage. Heinrich Penner, too, belonged to this group of people. They continued doing business with credits even after the introduction of the stable *Rentenmark* in 1923. When in the course of a global economic crisis sales dropped to almost nothing, the interest on credit had soon to be paid not from the income, but from the substance, i.e. the capital investments. This also was the case with the Concrete Products Company Penner. Business after business declared bankruptcy. Heinrich Penner (#2), who once was one of the wealthiest men in Christburg, did not know which way to turn. The brother of the author of this family history, Diplom Ingenieur (an academic engineering degree) Gerhard Doerry, deceased in 1974, had worked in the Penner business for an entire year. His pay consisted of only room and board and an allowance. He left there, because he did not want to take the responsibility for the demise that threatened the company. If this was prevented at that time - and I want to emphasize this - the credit for this not to have happened, should go solely to Oskar Penner, who would have much preferred to be a farmer. But at a time of danger for his father's business, he saved it from financial ruin. We will talk more about this a little later.

The hardest blow that struck Heinrich Penner (#2) at this time was the loss of "Muttchen" Elise Entz (#3). She died on February 17, 1931 in the Catholic Hospital in Marienburg (now Malbork). She suffered from a kidney ailment and the chief medical doctor at the hospital desperately fought all day for her life. A large following of neighbors in the *Niederung* (low land in the *Kleine Werder*) laid her to rest in the Güldenfelder cemetery. Here was already the grave of their oldest son Emil (#2-2), who passed away soon after his birth. "Vatchen" Penner's daughter Olga (#2-6), who was the only one of their children still at home in Christburg, took care of his household until he made the best of it by marrying in 1933 a relative of a business man in Christburg. The author remembers her only under the name "Tante Klara." She was a very businesslike and thrifty woman, who kept her new spouse on a short leash. Vatchen, for whom his daily *Schnapsche* (West Prussian dialect for *Schnaps*, a distilled alcoholic drink) and his *Cigarrche* (West Prussian dialect for a cigar) were essential for his wellbeing, received only a small allowance from the profits made in the garden and the chicken house. But he knew how to help himself. Tante Klara's chicken started to lay less and less eggs. In reality, the missing eggs ended up in the hotel to pay for the cigars and the *schnaps* he had bought on credit. The grandchildren suffered the most when their grandfather sent them into the garden to pick berries for themselves and Tante Klara chased them away, again. She still lived when he celebrated his 70th birthday in 1939. This event reunited most of his family. Tante Klara passed away during the first war years and did not leave much of a gap in the lives of the family. She was a much different person than Muttchen, who made no demands and was always ready to serve the family. Muttchen's entire life was dedicated to her family.

When in 1945 the great trek (migration by horse and wagon) to the west began (before the Russian army occupied the eastern provinces of Germany), Vatchen joined his son-in-law Hans Wiehler to save what they were still able to save. They moved through Gollnow (now Goleniow) in Pomerania, where the author lived at that time, and on through Mecklenburg to the gates of Lübeck. There was the end of the trek. In meantime, Vatchen's oldest son Oskar and some of his employees from Christburg built an emergency production plant in Ballenstedt in the Harz Mountain. Already in late 1944, Oskar Penner had sent some of his machinery to this location. He also sent his wife to Ballenstedt, who then expected her second child. He wanted her to look forward to the birth without worrying about the events of the war. After the German capitulation in May 1945, Mecklenburg and other parts of Germany were surrendered by the Allies to the Russian army in exchange for the western sectors of Berlin. There was then the danger that the horses belonging to and used by the Penner family during the trek would be confiscated. Vatchen Penner hitched up the horses one more time and together with a not-so-young female cousin he went on his way to bring his son the last team of horses from their former home. His undertaking was successful. From then on, Heinrich Penner lived in Ballenstedt and visited from there the author and his family several times in Kirchweyhe and Uelzen. He even celebrated his 85th birthday in Uelzen, surrounded by his family who came from all parts of Germany. Despite of his old age, he came one more time to Uelzen. Unfortunately, he was unable to come to celebrate his 90th birthday in the home of his son-in-law Doerry in Uelzen. He died of food poisoning caused by spoiled meat on December 31, 1958, a half year before this birthday. His last resting-place is in the cemetery in Ballenstedt in the Harz Mountain. With him we lost a man who was active all his life. When he failed now and then, we should not forget that he attended only an elementary school in a village, which did not provide him with the necessary education for a good overview of changing economic conditions. When one considers these facts, then it is astonishing what he, who at the age of 17 was already physically and mentally exhausted, accomplished. For most of his life he suffered from alleged gastric problems until in the 1930s this condition was diagnosed as appendicitis. After the successful surgery, he developed a new level of energy, which nobody had imagined he had and which never left him until he died. It is a duty of honor for his descendants and their children to give him credit for what he had accomplished.

The author believes that he has said enough with this brief appreciation of "Vatchen" as a person and of his accomplishments. There probably are many more things that should have been mentioned as, for example, the purchase of the hotel *Berliner Hof* during the First World War (WW I). Initially, he had turned over the management of this hotel to his brother-in-law Heinrich Enß (#6-1) and his wife Marie Schoeneberg. But he soon took the hotel again away from them, because the Enß couple considered the income of the hotel more as a means for a good life for themselves than as a place for productive employment. Heinrich Penner then quickly sent his oldest daughter Käthe (#2-1) to manage the hotel, despite of her young age. As appreciation for her effort, he later signed the

ownership papers over to her. The brother-in-law Enß and his wife returned home without much ado. The oldest son of the brother-in-law, Heinrich Enß Jr. (#6-1-1), was married to Ilse (?) and worked in the agricultural field. He then became an agricultural civil servant and later worked as an employee in Oskar Penner's manufacturing plant for concrete products. He finally became a *Sonderführer* (an administrator working for the Nazi Party) in occupied Russian territory and was reported "missing" at the end of the war. His sister, Elise Enß (#6-1-2), married a Hans Penner, whose mother's maiden name was Regier. The younger brother, Hermann Enß (#6-1-3) was born on July 13, 1901. He, too, worked for a while for Oskar Penner. After that he worked in a home for the elderly in Christburg, where he distinguished himself by his unfriendly behavior towards the old people. He finally became an auxiliary policeman and was killed in a shootout with a mentally ill murderer. His widow was the former dressmaker in Christburg, Anna Kaminski. There also was a daughter from this marriage. She was named Annelie Enß (#6-1-3-1) and was born on September 7, 1932. This daughter later married a Walter Ebert, but got divorced soon after the birth of their daughter Sabine (#6-1-3-1-1) on September 22, 1964. Thus ended the male lineage of the Enß family, from which Muttchen (#3) had descended. But most of the children of the Heinrich Penner couple are now (in 1974) buried, too. Even if for reasons mentioned earlier, it is not useful to go into details of the various individuals, they should not be ignored. We will only talk a little more about their son Oskar (#2-5), who saved the factory of his father from going bankrupt and who returned it to a new level of prosperity. But we will do this only after we are done with an overview of all the children. The marriage of Heinrich Penner Jr. (#2) and Elise Entz (#3), their wedding day was September 17, 1897, produced eight surviving children: 4 boys (Emil Penner passed away as an infant) and 4 girls. There also was a stillborn twin brother of the youngest daughter, Olga.

- 1.) Käthe Elise Penner (#2-1). She was born on December 4, 1898, in Thiergart. She married Johannes Wiehler on July 5, 1921, in Christburg. He was born on January 17, 1897, in Kampenau (now Kepniewo), District Marienburg. After farming the remainder of Heinrich Penner's farm in Thiergart for a few years, they took over the management of the hotel *Berliner Hof* in Christburg. The title to this hotel had already been transferred to Käthe several years earlier. However, for economic reasons, the hotel was given up during the 1930s and Hans Wiehler became an employee in the production plant of his brother-in-law Oskar Penner. The collapse of Germany in 1945 brought him and his family to Selmsdorf in Mecklenburg. He was killed in an accident caused by a drunken policeman (Volkspolizist) on February 6, 1955. The widow remained in Selmsdorf, from where her two younger children had crossed the border into the West German Bundesrepublik (BRD). After the oldest son Günther Wiehler (#2-1-1) had left Selmsdorf and had settled down in Dresden, the mother followed him there. More details about her and her children can be found on the added information sheet about the descendants of Käthe Wiehler.

- 2.) Emil Penner (#2-2) was the second child of Heinrich Penner and Elise Entz. He was born in Thiergart on March 21, 1900, a little over a year after his older sister Käthe. He passed away during the same year and was buried in the cemetery of the neighboring community of Güldenfelde, District Stuhm.
- 3.) Hermine Penner (#2-3) was born in Thiergart on July 10, 1901. She was a sickly child and was not expected to live a very long life. But she made lies out of all predictions and was still alive in 1974, when she lived in Wendlingen on the Neckar River (She finally passed away on May 26, 1987 when she lived in a home for elderly artists in Stuttgart-Mönchfeld). She had dedicated her life to art (weaving and painting). She married the sculptor Max Verch on December 6, 1933 in Berlin, but divorced him again after WW II after suffering several disappointments in her marriage. The couple had no children.
- 4.) Erna Penner (#1 and #2-4) was, like all other children of Heinrich Penner and Elise Entz, born in Thiergart on September 16, 1902. She married the *Studienrat* (a title for high school teachers in public service) Dr. Albrecht Doerry from Marienburg, West Prussia, on April 22, 1924. The wedding was in Christburg. (You may find more information on this in the autobiography of Dr. Albrecht Doerry: *In changing Times*). This marriage produced a total of six children: Jürgen (#1-1), Reingard (#1-2), Gundula (#1-3), Wulf-Thedel (#1-4), Uwe (#1-5), and Astrid (#1-6). She, too, had to flee from her home in Gollnow, Pomerania, when the Russian army approached this town in early March 1945. She succeeded in her attempt to find refuge in the District of Uelzen, as had been agreed upon earlier by everybody in the family. She had her two youngest children with her. Her spouse found her a week later in an attic room in the village of Emmendorf. The family moved to the brickyard in Kirchweyhe, District Uelzen, on June 28, 1945. In meantime, her daughter Gundula, who had served in an air defense unit of the Reichsarbeitsdienst (RAD) stationed near the border with the Czech Republic, had found her way to Emmendorf and to her mother. Wulf-Thedel, who had been drafted into the RAD for military training a few days before the Russians arrived at the gates of Gollnow, had been taken prisoner of war by British troops and was released one day before his parents moved to Kirchweyhe. Shortly before Christmas, Reingard came across the still poorly guarded border from Mecklenburg, which was occupied by the Russian army. When her mother became ill with diphtheria two days before Christmas and was hospitalized, Reingard took over the care of her siblings and of her father. At that time, she had no idea that she would take over this task until the fall of 1947. Reingard's mother, Erna Doerry, née Penner (#1), was to be discharged from the hospital on the following day, when she suddenly developed a thrombophlebitis followed by embolism of the lung. This caused her death on January 12, 1946 in Holxen, District Uelzen (certified by the registration office in Uelzen). The oldest son, Jürgen, was released as English prisoner of war in the fall of 1946. In response to the urging by his children, the father, Dr. Albrecht Doerry, decided to enter into a second marriage with the widowed Wilma Reiser, née Fietze, from Celle. She was born on February 19, 1913 and passed away on January 5, 2000. This marriage relieved Reingard from

the heavy burden of caring for her father and siblings and she now was able to return to her profession as a kindergarten teacher. In meantime, all the children, with the exception of Astrid, are married and have children of their own. A summary of them follows at the end of this overview, like with the children of Käthe Wiehler and Oskar Penner.

- 5.) Oskar Penner (#2-5) was born on November 9, 1903, in Thiergart, District Marienburg, West Prussia. His life and accomplishments will be discussed in more detail in a special presentation at the end of this overview. We will now only briefly touch on his life. Oskar was finally the son his parents had wanted to take over and to carry on his father's work after his older brother Emil had already passed away as an infant. But Oskar had only one goal: He wanted to become a farmer just like his Mennonite ancestors had been. But fate wanted it differently. We will talk about this later on. When he married at the age of 33 years in Mühlhausen, Thuringia, he was already facing other tasks. His first marriage with Monika Staubesand on October 6, 1936 was dissolved again less than five years later on September 16, 1941. His first marriage produced two daughters: Regina (#2-5-1) was born in Elbing on November 22, 1937. She married Dr. Walter Greiner (born on July 17, 1926) on April 13, 1962 in Königsbronn on the Brenz River and has four children: Andrea (#2-5-1-1) (born on December 17, 1963), Lucia (#2-5-1-2) (born on September 30, 1965), Karl-Heinrich (#2-5-1-3) (born on September 8, 1967), and Leopold (#2-5-1-4) (born on November 10, 1969). Regina's sister, Sabine Elise (#2-5-2) was born in Elbing on April 2, 1939. She married Ulrich Haible (born on November 11, 1936) in Königsbronn on August 20, 1964 and has two children: Claus-Peter (#2-5-2-1) (born on September 1, 1966) and Claudia (#2-5-2-2) (born on April 28, 1969). Oskar Penner remarried on December 12, 1941 in Christburg, West Prussia. His second wife, Karla von Wantoch-Rekowski (born on October 3, 1917 in Christburg) gave him three more daughters: Katharina Irene (#2-5-3) (born in Elbing on April 1, 1943) married a distant cousin, Ulrich Kämmer (born on December 29, 1927, in Obuchshöfchen [?], East Prussia) on August 1, 1964 in Königsbronn. She has two children: Mathias (#2-5-3-1) (born in Bremen on September 24 1965) and Friederike Hedwig Irene (#2-5-3-2) (born on May 11, 1967, in Heidenheim on the Brenz River). Cornelia Penner (#2-5-4) was the fourth daughter of Oskar Penner. She was born in Ballenstedt, in the Harz Mountain, on November 23, 1944 and married Michael Mäder in Königsbronn on October 30, 1970. He was born on October 31, 1943 in Schönberg, (now Sulikow) Silesia. The fifth and last daughter is Christine Penner (#2-5-5) who, like her older sister, was born in Ballenstedt, in the Harz Mountain, on April 21, 1947. She gave up her original intention to work in the book trade after she had served an apprenticeship in this field. She changed over to work in a theater. This completes the rough sketch of the life of Oskar Penner and his family. An overview, like for the children of Käthe (#2-1), married Wiehler, and Erna (#2-4 and #1), married Doerry, can be found in a later place. But first we want to mention the other children of Heinrich Penner and Elise Entz.

- 6.) Olga Penner (#2-6), born in Thiergart on January 16, 1906, was the next child in the sequence of children. She was supposed to have had a stillborn twin brother. The birth of twins is not a rarity in descendants of the Enß family. As the youngest child still at home, she played the "Cinderella" of the family until it got too much for her. She left and became a governess in Berlin. There, in the capital of Germany, she met Georg Gaerths, who was born on June 13, 1904 in Janowitz (now Janowiec), District of Bromberg. Their wedding was on March 14, 1940, in Berlin-Schöneberg and on July 27th, 1940 she gave birth to twins: Eckhart (#2-6-1A) and Renate (#2-6-1B). Eckhart married Brigitte Peukert, who was born on May 17, 1941, in Liegnitz (now Legnica), Silesia. They had a daughter Claudia (#2-6-1A-1) on December 24, 1971 in Berlin-Buch. Eckhart's twin sister Renate had a daughter Ariane (#2-6-1B-1) on August 19, 1970, also in Berlin-Buch. Olga Gaerths, née Penner (#2-6), was not able to enjoy her grandchildren for very long. She passed away in Berlin on February 6, 1973, on the same date as her brother-in-law Hans Wiehler. In the sequence of the children of Heinrich Penner and Elise Entz followed their next to last child,
- 7.) Heinz Penner (#2-7). He was born on December 21, 1908 in Thiergart, West Prussia, just like all his siblings. After finishing elementary school in Christburg, he continued on the *Realschule* (a high school) in Marienburg, where his future brother-in-law Dr. Albrecht Doerry had a position as a civil service teacher (Studienrat). On the advice of his cousin Ellen, née Bock, Heinz emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1929. After working for five years as a waiter in Chicago and as a steward on a cruise ship, he returned to Germany in 1934 to establish himself as the owner of a bar serving apple wine. When this did not materialize for formality reasons, he returned to America and became a citizen of the U.S.A. He returned to Germany shortly before the start of the Second World War (WW II) and took over the management of the *Berliner Hof* in Christburg. The hotel was renovated and modernized. Heinz Penner married Ursula Lippitz from Polixen, District Stuhm, on April 3, 1943, where she was born on December 8, 1920. To avoid internment as an U.S. citizen, he volunteered to serve in the German army and was killed in action on the eastern front, i.e. in Russia, on July 18, 1943. His widow, who did not have any children from this marriage, remarried after 1945. Her second husband's name was Stobbe. They emigrated to South America, but later returned again to West Germany. This marriage produced five children. The family lives now in Buchholz, District Harburg.
- 8.) Reinhold Penner (#2-8) was the eighth child and the fourth son to be born to his parents in Thiergart, West Prussia, on August 14, 1910. He, too, attended the *Realschule* (a high school) in Marienburg, West Prussia. He then worked in the construction field and was drafted during WW II. He was badly wounded and reported as *missing in action* in Russia on September 16, 1941. This was the birthday of his sister Erna. He was married to Anne-Lore Densch, born on March 29, 1912 in Bischofswerder (Biskupiec), East Prussia. They had one son, Joachim Penner (#2-8-1). He was born on December 17,

1941 and is the only male in his generation of the Penner family and who is in the position to pass on the Penner name to the next generation.

After portraying in rough sketches the Penner siblings from Thiergart, or later from Christburg, let us single out the oldest brother, as one can call him without qualms, and think of him as the one who portrays in a special way the characteristics of the Penner family. It is

Oskar Penner
(#2-5)

He was born in Thiergart on November 9, 1903. Since much has been said already about him, there is no good reason for repeating the vital dates of his life. It is more important to point out the significant features of his Mennonite faith. Growing up in a rural environment and with the blood of old Mennonite patriarchs pulsing through his arteries, his goal from early childhood on was to become a farmer like his ancestors. Thiergart was always an example for him that constantly occupied his mind. Already in his youngest years, he was always the first one when he worked in the fields. He demanded the utmost from himself before he demanded it from his coworkers. When he celebrated his 20th birthday on November 9, 1923, he had already distinguished himself as an agricultural inspector in East Prussia. At that time, and later on too, he would have rejected any thought of trading his agricultural profession for any other occupation. Farming was too deeply ingrained in his system. And still, he followed the call from his father and took over a completely run down factory for concrete products, even though it was with a heavy heart. This shows a feature of real Mennonite values. The personal desire of the individual had to take the back seat to the needs of the family. What his father had created could simply not be allowed to go under. Already on December 4, 1923, did he start to work in the Christburger production plant. But he soon noticed that he needed a good professional training in his field in order to cope with the problems he faced. He took private lessons in mathematics to pass the entrance exam for the Engineering School in Strelitz, Mecklenburg. He successfully studied there for five semesters and left the school to further prepare himself professionally by working at the office that oversaw construction in the District of Stuhm, West Prussia. In 1930, he took over his father's business and also assumed his debts, which had grown to 50,000 Reichsmarks. There also was a mortgage of 20,000 Reichsmarks to pay off four of his siblings. He himself had hardly a penny of cash. Within a few weeks, the author was asked to arrange for a loan of 1000 Reichsmarks so that Oskar Penner could at least pay the wages for his workers. He started out with only a few employees and took on any kind of job. In 1933, when the Nazi Party (National Socialistic Labor Party) came to power, but before all the emergency programs went into effect, he had already 32 full-time employees. He accomplished all this while Germany was still in a severe recession. This all was Oskar Penner's doing. Like he was always

the first when he was a farmer, so it was still the case in his new work environment. Before the start of WW II in 1939, his business had already 400 full-time employees and 300 seasonal workers. This was a success that speaks for itself. The War brought new tasks for him. Runways and airports had to be built in the occupied territories in the east and the Oskar Penner business was always out in front. It continued to function even when the "Chef" (top executive) was badly wounded by an exploding Russian mine, which mutilated both of his legs. Oskar Penner had good people working for him. He had trained them himself. But then came the time when he had to take leave from his beloved home. He first went to Ballenstedt in the Harz Mountain, where his spouse had found refuge with his three oldest daughters (Regina, Sabine, and Catharina) at the end of 1944. A new Penner Cement Product Factory was to be created there. But it came differently. He again had to flee from the pressure exerted by the Soviet bureaucracy in the East German zone (DDR) under its control. The escape route brought him to Königsbronn on the Brenz River, where he was met with distrust. The business to be taken over by Oskar Penner had a very bad reputation, because its owner did not understand the technicalities of his business. Oskar Penner succeeded anyway. Within a short time, the wretched refugee Oskar Penner transformed into one of the most respected citizens of Königsbronn. And he did this despite of his severe war injuries and the blood circulation problems caused by these. He did this solely with his trusting employees. Many of them had been his full-time workers in Christburg or had joined him later on. In old Mennonite tradition, they all trusted each other. This trust found its utmost expression when Oskar Penner's body was laid to rest on the cemetery in Königsbronn in September 1972. The employees attended the funeral of their "Chef" not because he was the owner of the business, but he had been their coworker, regardless whether they were German citizens or guest workers. He had an open ear for everybody who came to him with his worries and needs. He helped out wherever there was a real need for assistance. He sought his relaxation behind a blind and waiting for the red buck to appear, or by driving through the countryside to which he was closely connected by his farmer's blood. Despite of his severe physical handicap, in his thoughts he still lived in his old West Prussian home, where he had spent the years of his youth. The vast meadows, the waving grain fields and the scattered villages with their Mennonite homes, which had large open porches in front (*Vorlaubenhäuser*). All this came back to life in his conversations about his "homeland" (*Heimat*). One would feel, as if one had been there just yesterday. Yes, this was Oskar Penner!

The Children of Heinrich Penner

Penner, Heinrich (#2) oo September 17, 1897 **Entz, Elise** (#3)
 (*) May 27, 1869 in Thiergart (*) August 20, 1872 in Krebsfelde
 (+) December 31, 1958, in Ballenstedt (+) February 17, 1931 in Marienburg

(#2-1) **Penner, Käthe** Elise oo July 5, 1921, Christburg **Wiehler, Johannes**
 (*) December 4, 1898 in Thiergart (*) January 7, 1897 in Campenau
 (+) January 28, 1983 in Dresden (+) February 6, 1955 in Selmsdorf
 Children: Günther, Erika, Horst

(#2-2) **Penner, Emil**
 (*) March 21, 1900 in Thiergart (+) 1900 in Thiergart

(#2-3) **Penner, Hermine** oo December 6, 1933, Berlin **Verch, Max**
 (*) July 10, 1901 in Thiergart (*) February 2, 1897
 (+) May 26, 1987 in Stuttgart-Mönchfeld (+)
 Divorced: December 10, 1957. No children.

(#2-4) **Penner, Erna** oo April 22, 1924, Christburg Dr. **Doerry, Albrecht**
 (*) September 16, 1902 in Thiergart (*) March 17, 1897 Wollstein, Posen
 (+) January 12, 1946 Holxen, Uelzen (+) July 12, 1980 Veerßen, Uelzen
 Children: Jürgen, Reingard, Gundula, Wulf, Uwe, Astrid

(#2-5) **Penner, Oskar** oo A Oct. 6 1936 Mühlhausen **Staubesand, Monika**
 (*) November 9, 1903 in Thiergart (*) ? Divorced: Sept. 16, 1941
 (+) September 5, 1972 in Königsbronn
 Children: Regina, Sabine

oo B December 12, 1941 Christburg, **Von Wantoch-Rekowski, Karla**
 (*) October 3, 1917 in Christburg
 (+) February 9, 1999 in Aalen

Children: Catharina, Cornelia, Christine

(#2-6) **Penner, Olga** oo March 14, 1940, Berlin **Gaerths, Georg**
 (*) January 16, 1906 in Thiergart (*) June 13, 1904, Jannowitz/Bromberg
 (+) February 6, 1973 in Berlin-Buch (+) ?
 Children: Eckhardt, Renate

(#2-7) **Penner, Heinz** oo April 3, 1943, **Lippitz, Ursula**
 (*) December 21, 1908 in Thiergart (*) December 8, 1920, Polixen/Stuhm
 (+) July 18, 1943 (killed in action in Russia)
 Children: None

(#2-8) **Penner, Reinhold** oo ? **Dentsch, Anne-Lore**
 (*) August 14, 1910 in Thiergart (*) March 29, 1912, Bischofswerder
 (+) September 16, 1941 (missing in action in Russia)
 Children: Joachim Penner (The only male Penner in this generation)

(*) Day of birth (+) Day of death
 oo Day of marriage oo A Day of first marriage oo B Day of second marriage
 ? Information is not known or is questionable

Descendants of
Käthe Wiehler, née Penner

(#2-1) **Käthe Penner** oo July 5, 1921, Christburg **Johannes Wiehler**
(*) December 4, 1898 in Tiergart (*) January 17, 1897 in Kampenau/WPr.
(+) January 28, 1983 in Dresden (+) February 6, 1955 in Selmsdorf/Meckl

(#2-1-1) **Wiehler, Günther**

(*) June 21, 1923, in Thiergart, District Marienburg, West Prussia
oo March 19, 1948 in Selmsdorf, Mecklenburg

Ilse Vitense

(*) August 31, 1921 in Selmsdorf, Mecklenburg
Son: (#2-1-1-1) **Edgar** Wiehler (*) November 28, 1948 in Selmsdorf, Meckl.

(#2-1-2) **Wiehler, Erika**

(*) June 14, 1926 in Thiergart, District Marienburg, West Prussia
oo June 30, 1956 in Hamburg

Demuth, Jürgen

(*) September 4, 1927 in Duisburg (+)
Twin Sons: (#2-1-2-1A) **Gunnar** Demuth (*) March 6, 1960 in Hamburg
(#2-1-2-1B) **Holger** Demuth (*) March 6, 1960 in Hamburg

(#2-1-3) **Wiehler, Horst**

(*) December 7, 1928 in Thiergart, District Marienburg, West Prussia
oo July 27, 1957 in Gadebusch, Mecklenburg

Riedel, Margarete

(*) October 25, 1930 in Königsberg, Neumark
Daughters: (#2-1-3-1) **Sybille** Wiehler (*) August 27, 1959 in Hamburg
(#2-1-3-2) **Ulrike** Wiehler (*) May 16, 1964 in Hamburg

Descendants of
Erna Doerry, née Penner

(#1 and #2-4) **Penner, Erna** oo April 22, 1924 (#D-1) Dr. **Doerry, Albrecht**
(*) September 16, 1902 in Christburg (*) March 17, 1897 in Wollstein/Pos
(+) January 12, 1946 in Holxen/Uelzen (+) July 12, 1980 in Veerßen/Uelzen

(#1-1) **Doerry, Jürgen**

(*) April 11, 1925 in Marienburg, West Prussia
oo October 11, 1952 Birmingham, England (U.K.)

Jahn, Ilse

(*) January 15, 1929 in Immenhausen/Kassel
Children: (#1-1-1) Martin Doerry (*) June 21, 1955 in Uelzen-Veerßen
 (#1-1-2) Beate Doerry (*) April 2, 1960 in Lüneburg
 (#1-1-3) Ursula Doerry (*) May 7, 1966 in Celle

(#1-2) **Doerry, Reingard**

(*) June 19, 1926 in Marienburg, West Prussia
oo A February 23, 1960 in Keighley, Yorkshire, U.K. Divorced

Robinson, Donald

(*) February 3, 1923 in Keighley, Yorkshire (+) ?
Children: (#1-2-1) Catharina Robinson (*) January 7, 1961
 (#1-2-2) Cordula Robinson (*) August 10, 1966
oo B December 21, 1985 in Aachen

Dr. Schmidt, Reimer

(*) April 10, 1916 (+) November 14, 2002 in Aachen

(#1-3) **Doerry, Gundula**

(*) September 7, 1927 in Marienburg, West Prussia
oo August 16, 1952 in Uelzen

Eggeling, Willy

(*) August 19, 1914 in Kroppenstedt, Up. Silesia (+) November 25, 1997
Children: (#1-3-1) Christine Eggeling (*) May 2, 1954 in Uelzen-Veerßen
 (#1-3-2) Justus Eggeling (*) October 20, 1956 in Uelzen-Veerßen

(#1-4) **Doerry, Wulf T.**

(*) December 29, 1928 in Marienburg, West Prussia
oo August 27, 1955 in Omaha, Nebraska

Penner, Edith

(*) September 28, 1933 in Rudnerweide, West Prussia
Children: (#1-4-1) Armin Doerry (*) February 19, 1957 in Chicago, Illinois
 (#1-4-2) Karen Doerry (*) April 5, 1958 in Chicago, Illinois
 (#1-4-3) Hilda Doerry (*) June 16, 1960 in Chicago Heights, Illinois
 (#1-4-4) Norbert Doerry (*) Jan. 16, 1962 in Chicago Heights, Illinois

Descendants of
Erna Doerry, née Penner
(Continued)

(#1-5) **Doerry, Uwe**

(*) July 18, 1934 in Marienburg, West Prussia

oo August 28, 1959 in Stuttgart

Ostertag, Sigrid

(*) June 16, 1934 in Stuttgart

Children: (#1-5-1) Frank Doerry (*) March 21, 1963 in Stuttgart

(#1-5-2) Georg Doerry (*) September 13, 1964 in Oldenburg

(#1-6) **Doerry, Astrid**

(*) November 2, 1935 in Marienburg, West Prussia

Not married and no children

(*) Date of birth

(+) Date of Death

oo Date of marriage oo A Date of first marriage oo B Date of second marriage

~ An approximate Date

? Information not available or questionable

Please note: With a few exceptions, towns are located in Germany, many of them in areas annexed by Poland in 1945.

Descendants of Oskar Penner

(#2-5) **Oskar Penner** oo **A** October 6, 1936 **Monika Staubesand**
(*) November 9, 1903 in Thiergart, W.Pr. (*) December 10, 1913 in Mühlh.
Divorced: September 16, 1941

Children: (#2-5-1) **Regina** Penner (*) December 22, 1937 in Elbing, W.Pr.
oo April 13, 1962 in Königsbronn **Walter Greiner** (*) July 17, 1926

Children: (#2-5-1-1) Andrea Greiner (*) December 17, 1963
(#2-5-1-2) Lucia Greiner (*) September 30, 1965
(#2-5-1-3) Karl-Heinrich Greiner (*) September 8, 1967
(#2-5-1-4) Leopold Greiner (*) November 10, 1969

(#2-5-2) **Sabine** Elise Penner (*) April 2, 1939 in Elbing, W.Pr.
...oo August 20, 1964 **Ulrich Haible** (*) November 11, 1936

Children: (#2-5-2-1) Claus-Peter Haible (*) September 1, 1966
(#2-5-2-2) Claudia Haible (*) April 28, 1969

oo **B** December 12, 1941 in Christburg **Karla von Wantoch-Rekowski**
(*) October 3, 1917 in Christburg (+) February 9, 1999 in Aalen

Children: (#2-5-3) **Catharina** Irene Penner (*) April 1, 1943 in Elbing, W.Pr.
oo August 1, 1964 in Königsbronn **Ulrich Kämmer** (*) Dec. 29, 1927
Children: (#2-5-3-1) Mathias Kämmer (*) September 24, 1965 in Bremen
(#2-5-3-2) Friederike Hedwig Irene Kämmer (*) May 11, 1967

(#2-5-4) **Cornelia** Penner (*) November 23, 1944 in Ballenstedt
oo October 30, 1970 in Königsbronn **Michael Mäder**
(*) Oct. 31, 1943 in Schönberg, Schlesien

(#2-5-5) **Christine** Penner (*) April 21, 1947 in Ballenstedt, Harz

Please note: This information was accurate in 1974 and amended only when new and more accurate information became available to the translator.

Descendants of Hermine Enß

Hermine Enß (#6-3)	oo Nov. 2, 1898 in Rapendorf	Gottlieb Böttcher
(*) November 22, 1875 in Krebsfelde		(*) Nov. 3, 1865 in Roßmin/Posen
(+) February 18, 1907 in Thiergart		(+) July 3, 1917 in Schneidemühl

Children:

(#6-3-1) **Lydia Böttcher** oo May 15, 1926 in Elisenhof **Paul Horn**
 (*) August 3, 1899 in Markushof/Wpr. (*) September 15, 1893 in Grutschno

(#6-3-2) **Meta Böttcher** oo March 7, 1928 in Elisenhof **Erich Manigel**
 (*) July 28, 1900 in Markushof/Wpr. (*) February 24, 1893 Pürschkau/Silesia
 (+) (+) 1948 in KZ Buchenwald (Conc. Camp)

(#6-3-3) **Hulda Böttcher**
 (*) July 28, 1900 in Markushof, West Prussia.
 (+) May 15, 1971 in Ehrhorn near Soltau

(#6-3-4) Hermine Böttcher	oo May 31, 1933, Elisenhof	Gerhard Bloch
(*) August 30, 1901 in Thiergart		(*) June 29, 1903 in Thurno/Neustettin
(+) ?		(+) ?

(#6-3-5) Ernst Böttcher
 (*) January 7, 1903 in Thiergart, West Prussia
 (+) 1942 (Killed in action in Russia, near Rzew)

(#6-3-6) **Johannes Böttcher**
 (*) April 26, 1905 in Thiergart, West Prussia
 (+) March 5, 1923 in Elisenhof, Preußisch Friedland

(#6-3-7) **Arthur Böttcher**
 (*) April 26, 1905 in Thiergart, West Prussia
 (+) August, 1905 in Thiergart, West Prussia

(*) Date of birth
(+) Date of death
oo Date of marriage
oo A Date of first marriage oo B Date of second marriage
? The information is either unknown or questionable

Descendants of Jacob Enß-Mierau

Jacob Enß (Entz) (#48)	oo ~ 1783/84	Catharina Dück (#49)
(*) ~ 1760		(*) ~ 1757
(+) June 17, 1826 in Mierau		(+) August 2, 1832 in Orloff

(#48-1) **Jacob Enß, jr.** (*) 1785 (+) September 30, 1841 in Marienau

(#48-2 and #24) Peter Enß	oo Feb. 28, 1809, Orloff	(#25) Maria Hamm
(*) ~ August 1786 in Mierau		(*) March 31, 1785 in Orloff
(+) In Russia		(+) May 6, 1860

(#12 and #24-1) Jacob Enß	oo March 24, 1829	(#13) Maria Kätler
(*) April 18, 1810 in Orloff		(*) December 21, 1809 in Orloff
(+) May 8, 1855 in Orloff		(+) February 26, 1857 in Orloff

(#24-2) **Peter Enß** Moved about 1869 to Saratow (Volga region in Russia)

(#12-1) Peter Enß (*) Nov. 19, 1831 in Orloff

(#12-2) Maria Enß (*) Feb. 5, 1837 in Orloff oo **A Peter Friesen, oo-B Fast**

(#12-3) Anna Enß (*) Oct. 16, 1838, Orloff oo Aug. 16, 1860 Abraham Regier

(#6 and #12-4) Heinrich Enß oo March 15, 1866 (#7) **Emilie Wiehler**

(*) April 1, 1843 in Orloff (*) July 23, 1843, Klein Mausdorf

(+) 1908 (?) in Grünlinde (+) July 27, 1912 in Christburg

Heinrich Enß became a foster son of Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B) after the death of his parents in 1857.

(#3 & #6-2) Elise Entz	oo Sept. 17, 1897, Rapendorf	(#2) Heinrich Penner
(*) August 20, 1872 in Krebsfelde		(*) May 27, 1869 in Thiergart
(+) February 17, 1931 in Marienburg		(+) December 31, 1958, Ballenstedt

(#1 & #2-4) Erna Penner	oo April 22, 1924, Christburg	Dr. Albrecht Doerry
(*) September 16, 1902, Thiergart		(*) March 17, 1897, Wollstein/Posen
(+) January 12, 1946, Holxen/Uelzen		(+) July 12, 1980, Veerßen-Uelzen

(#12-5) <u>Helene Enß</u>	oo January 22, 1868	<u>Abraham Unger</u>
(*) May 29, 1848 in Orloff		

(#48-3) **Catharina Enß** (*) ~ 1791 (+) October 4, 1816 in Marienau

(#48-4) Dietrich Enß	oo	Anna Hamm
(*) September 25, 1796, Klein Mausdorf		(*) May 16, 1794 in Orloff
(+) August 4, 1880		(+) November 15, 1870,

Marienau Please note: Anna Hamm is a sister of Marie Hamm (#25), wife of #24 Peter Enß

**Descendants of
Jacob Enß-Mierau**
(Continued)

(#48) Jacob Enß (*) ~ 1760 (+) June 17, 1826 in Mierau	oo	(#49) Catharina Dück (*) ~ 1757 (*) August 2, 1832 in Orloff
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(#48-4) Dietrich Enß oo July 31, 1817 (*) Sept. 25, 1796, Klein Mausdorf (+) August 4, 1880	Anna Hamm (Sister of #25, Maria) (*) May 16, 1794 in Orloff (+) November 15, 1870, in Marienau
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(#48-4-1A) **Peter Enß**
 (*) April 8, 1828 in Marienau

(#48-4-1B) Cornelius Enß oo May 28, 1852 (*) April 8, 1828 in Marienau (+) Feb. 6, 1907 in Schönsee	Margarete Conrad (*) January 31, 1833 in Schönsee (+) April 27, 1903 in Schönsee
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(#48-4-1B-1) Dietrich Enß oo (*) September 28, 1854 in Marienau (+) August 18, 1930 in Schönhorst	Helene Wölke
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(#48-4-1B-2) **Cornelius Enß, jr.**
 (*) October 19, 1856

Note: Dietrich Enß (#48-4-1B-1) and Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B-2) became *Ziehbrüder* (foster brothers) of Heinrich Enß (#6 and #12-4) in 1858, when Heinrich Enß (#6) was taken into the home of Cornelius Enß (#48-4-1B)

The Hamm Ancestors

(#200) Martin Hamm oo (*) ~ 1690 (+) August 30, 1750	(#201) Anna Bergen (*) ~ 1693 (+) May 28, 1764 in Orloff
(#100) Michael Hamm oo Febr. 23, 1751, Orloff (*) February 4, 1723 in Orloff (+) November 17, 1787 in Tiegenhof	(#101) Helena von Bergen (*) January 30, 1729 (+) December 15, 1778 in Orloff
(#50) Michael Hamm oo (*) October 19, 1758 in Orloff (+) November 28, 1831 in Orloff	(# 51) Helene Esau (*) August 19, 1759 in Ladekopp (+) April 21, 1834 in Orloff
(#25) Marie Hamm oo Febr. 28, 1809 in Orloff (*) March 31, 1785 in Orloff (+) May 6, 1860	(#24) Peter Enß (*) November 30, 1774 in Mierau (+) ?

The Dück Ancestors

(#196) Jacob Dück oo (*) ~ 1693 Buried: June 2, 1747 in Altendorf	(197) Maria Albrecht (*) in Walldorf
(#98) Diedrich Dück oo (*) ~ 1733 Buried: January 21, 1772 in Krebsfelde	(#99) Maria Penner (*) ~ 1730 (+) February 8, 1810 in Marienau
(#49) Catharina Dück oo ~ 1783/84 (*) ~ 1757 (+) August 2, 1832 in Orloff (?)	(#48) Jacob Entz (*) ~ December 19, 1760 (+) June 19, 1826 in Mierau

(*) Date of birth
 (+) Date of death
 oo Date of marriage
 ~ Approximate date

Addendum

By

Wulf T. Doerry, Translator
(March 2003)

When the author, Dr. Albrecht Doerry, wrote the original report on this family's history in 1974, he lacked some important information about the descendants of **Heinrich Eidse** [#P-10] and **Sara Penner** [#P-11]. This information finally became available to the translator, when Ilse Edse [#P-10-2-14-2] sent to the translator a certified copy taken from the church records in Thiensdorf and Markushof in February 1935. The added personal notes by Ilse Edse turned out to contain some of the missing links in our family history, which I now like to add as an *Addendum* to the original translated report on ***The Ancestors of Erna Penner and her Siblings.***

Heinrich Eidse [#P-10] (also: Edhse, Eydse, Edße, Eyds, and Eitz) was born on June 5, 1781 in Augustwalde (now Wisnewo?). He died on December 18, 1854, in Wengelwalde. Heinrich Eidse had married **Sara Penner** [#P-11] on November 21, 1814. This marriage produced 6 children. The youngest of these children was **Maria Eydße** [#P-5] and [#P-10-6], who was born on April 30, 1833 in Wengelwalde (now Zohwiniec). Maria later married **Heinrich Penner Sr.** [#P-4], who was born on November 19, 1838 in Markushof (now Markusy) and passed away on February 19, 1922 on his farm in Thiergart (now Zwierzno). Their wedding was on May 6, 1863 in Thiensdorf and they became the grandparents of **Erna Doerry**, née Penner [#P-1] and [#P-2-4], the focal person of this family history. Erna never knew her grandmother Maria Eydße [#P 5], since she had passed away already on August 7, 1898, i.e. four years before Erna's birth.

Maria Eydße [#P-5] and also [#P10-6] had at least two brothers. Except for his name, nothing else is now known about Georg. The younger of the two brothers was **David Edse** [#P-10-2], who was over 4 years older than Maria Eydße. David was born on December 12, 1828 in Wengelwalde and died on December 26, 1890. **David Edse** [#P 10-2] was the common grandfather of **Ilse Edse** and her late husband **Rudolph Edse**. David Edse was married twice and had a total of 14 children. His first wife gave him at least two surviving daughters: Anna Edse (she married Heinrich Martens and lived in Elbing) and Marie Edse. After David Edse's first wife had passed away, he married Maria Stobbe on June 18, 1868. She was born on October 20, 1846 in Wengeln (now Wegle Zokowo) and passed away on October 12, 1913 in Elbing. This was her only marriage and she had at least five surviving children. The oldest of these five children in David Edse's second marriage was **Auguste Edse**. [#P-10-2-10]. (This ancestor number is based on the questionable assumption that the first marriage produced 9 children). Auguste never married and was the owner of a store for tobacco products in

Elbing. She was followed by **Heinrich Edse** [#P-10-2-11], who married Berta Janssen. They owned and operated a restaurant and a dance hall before WW I. After the war, he worked for a cheese manufacturing business. The third child was **Lisette Edse** [#P-10-2-12]. She married Berta's brother Rudolf Janssen, who was a farmer in Altendorf, near Tiegenhof. **Rudolf Edse (#10-2-14)**, born on December 23, 1888 was the youngest of her five surviving children. He married Erna Emilie Berta Nitschmann on June 10, 1916 in Königsberg, East-Prussia, and passed away in Bad Godesberg on his 77th birthday. Rudolf Edse had been a land surveyor. His wife Erna Nitschmann was born on April 16, 1895 in Metz, Alsace-Lorraine. They were the parents of **Ilse-dore Maria Edse (#10-2-14-2)**, born on October 16, 1918 in Pfaffendorf near Koblenz. Ilse-dore Edse married her cousin **Rudolph Edse** and had been a professor for German language and related subjects at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Ilse-dore also had two siblings. A brother died at birth and a sister **Liselotte Martha Edse (#10-2-14-3)**, who was 16 months younger than Ilse-dore. Liselotte was married to Joachim Gehring, MD. He died in WW II as a prisoner of war in Russia. She then remarried and had two sons with Ulrich Knorr. Andreas Knorr, Ph.D. (#10-2-14-3-1) in biology and pharmacology, and Wolfgang Knorr (#10-2-14-3-2), who was a Navy captain and has an MA in Electrical Engineering.

David Edse's 13th child was a son named **Cornelius Edse [#P-10-2-13]**. He was 2½ years older than Ilse-dore's father **Rudolf Edse** and was born on May 21, 1886. Cornelius Edse married Anna Marie Louise Schlottau, who was born on October 27, 1889, in Hamburg and died there on June 12, 1963. Cornelius was a master baker and operated a shop for fine pastries and sweet baked goods (Konditorei) in Hamburg. He passed away in this city on March 9, 1964, almost 9 months after his spouse. Their son, **Rudolph (Rudy) Edse [#P-10-2-13-?]** was born on December 14, 1913. He passed away on January 8, 1998 in Columbus, Ohio after a successful career as a professor of Aero & Astronautical Engineering at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He had married his cousin **Ilse-dore Edse** [#P-10-2-14-2] on November 25, 1939 in Braunschweig, Germany and came to the U.S. shortly after WW II. This marriage produced two children: Klaus-Peter Edse [#P-10-2-14-2-1] and Franziska Edse [#P-10-2-14-2-2].

Klaus-Peter Edse was born on August 31, 1940, in Braunschweig, Germany, and married Marilyn Jean Wolf on February 6, 1962 in Columbus, Ohio. They have one daughter, Lisa Michelle Edse [#P-10-2-14-2-1-1], who was born on December 3, 1968 in Columbus, Ohio and is married to Jake Sauceman. She works as a public relations expert. Klaus-Peter married his second wife, Jane Dixon, on January 26, 1982. This marriage produced two children: Jennifer Brooke Edse [#P10-2-14-2-1-2] and Justin Edse [#P-10-2-14-2-1-3].

Franziska Edse [#P-10-2-14-2-2] was born on January 1, 1943, in Braunschweig, Germany and married Lloyd Robert Lawrence, Ph.D. in

Aeronautical Engineering, on June 11, 1966 in Columbus, Ohio. Lloyd Robert Lawrence was born on November 4, 1942 in Cleveland, Ohio. This marriage produced three daughters. Janet Margaret Lawrence [#P-10-2-14-2-2-1] was born on November 28, 1968, in Columbus, Ohio. She has a M.D. and works as a physician in Internal medicine. Kathryn Lynn Lawrence, J.D. [#P-10-2-14-2-2-2] was born on November 5, 1970, and is now an attorney at law. Kathryn also is the mother of Zoe Jane [#P-10-2-14-2-2-2-1]. Barbara Ann Lawrence [#P-10-2-14-2-2-3] was born on August 26, 1972 in Woodbridge, Virginia. She has a BSc in Photography and Art and works as a computer and design expert.

Addendum By

Heinrich Penner

Written by Oskar Penner for
Heinrich Penner's 100th Birthday

Dedicated to all 17 Grandchildren
Of Heinrich Penner

(Translated into English by Wulf T. Doerry)

In Memory of May 27, 1969

Heinrich Penner

Heinrich Penner was born on May 27, 1869 in Thiergart, District Marienburg, in West Prussia. His parents were Heinrich Penner [#P-4] and Marie Penner, née Edse [#P-5], owners of a small farm in Thiergart. Vatchen [#P-2] and also [#P-4-5] (the German endearment form for *father*) had four older and three younger sisters. He attended the one-room elementary school in Thiergart and was baptized in the Mennonite faith at the age of 14 years.

As was common in those days and still was custom a generation later in our homeland, he had to help on his parents' farm while he was still a child. As a young man and as a young adult he had to do everything that needed to be done on the farm.

Our Vatchen always went through life with open eyes. This way, he acquired a considerable and respectable knowledge while he worked hard physically.

Our grandfather, Vatchen's father [#P-4], was very conservative. He saved the premiums for his fire insurance by simply not buying any insurance. Then, a hired man set fire to the barn and all the farm buildings on my grandfather's farm burnt down. My grandfather had to rebuild the farm with his own means. This caused our grandfather to become a poor man. His savings were not sufficient to cover the construction costs. This was the reason why Vatchen had practically no capital of his own when he wanted to become independent. On the other hand, this experience taught our grandfather a good lesson. The new buildings were not only insured, but our grandfather took over the collection of insurance premiums for the entire village of Thiergart. With this he earned an additional income on the side. Recognizing a mistake one has made and to draw appropriate conclusions from it, is probably the reason why our Vatchen and I, too, were able to often turn a negative experience into a positive action.

Vatchen was able to buy the Nickel farm on January 13, 1896. This property was not far from our grandfather's farm and it was about twice its size. This farm property had been rented and operated by the owner's son-in-law, a Mr. Allert. It was one of the best farms in Thiergart.

To be able to buy such a farm for 50,000 gold marks and without possessing any own capital proves that our Vatchen, like our grandfather too, enjoyed a very good reputation. Otherwise, this transaction would not have happened. At that time and later, too, it was common that a young man, who wanted to acquire a farm, had to marry first a well-to-do girl so that they together could buy a farm.

But our Vatchen did it differently. He bought a farm all by himself and then he went looking for a wife.

Thus, our Vatchen married our Muttchen (German endearment form for *mother*, like “Mom”) Elise Enß [#P-3] on September 17, 1897. Their wedding was in Rapendorf, District Preußisch Holland. This marriage produced eight children: Käte, Hermine, Erna, Oskar, Olga, Heinz, and Reinhold. There also was a son, Emil, who was born between Käte and Hermine; but died shortly after his birth.

Vatchen did quite well on his farm. He not only paid off a good amount of the purchase price, but he also bought several other parcels of land. In 1904, his farm was one of the largest properties in Thiergart. He could have led a quiet and comfortable life as a respected farmer in Thiergart. But his enterprising spirit pushed him on.

On land owned by the farmer Fiehbrand in the neighbor community Güldenfelde was a good supply of sand. Vatchen rented this property and in 1905 he established there a manufacturing facility for cement products. But he soon found out that the Güldenfelder sand was not suitable for producing quality cement. He searched for a better supply and found it in Christburg.

Together with the estate owner Hermann Krause from Georgenhof, he purchased the property Broda near Christburg. To finance this, Vatchen sold the parcels of land he had added to his farm. The only exception was the *Schusterhansen*, an especially good meadow of 10 Kulmische Morgen (about 5 hectar or 12.35 acres). Thus, the original Thiergart farm property remained intact with the meadow added to it. Vatchen thought that this farm should later be the central point for his family.

We moved from Thiergart to Christburg in 1910. The manufacturing plant for cement products developed quite well. There were significant improvements in progress in the area and these projects became a good outlet for his cement products. In addition, Vatchen made good contacts in the districts of Dirschau and Graudenz. There was hope that the new business would provide a secure existence for the Penner family.

The move from Thiergart to Christburg was for our entire family a change into a foreign and new life. Vatchen came into a social twilight. The following proverb existed among the people living in the *Werder Lowlands*: “It is better to drown in the lowlands than to die of thirst in the highlands.”

Vatchen was a good farmer in the lowlands and was recognized as such in the *Werder*. He was respected by his peers accordingly. He now wanted to give up a “first class” farm in Thiergart to open up a fabrication facility for cement products in Christburg. Many of Vatchen’s friends and acquaintances had their doubts and laughed at him. The citizens of Christburg knew the Broda property.

Its sandy soil was regarded as the worst one could have on a farm and the gravel pits were considered as depleted.

The gravel pits in the Christburg area gained significance in 1888/89 when the railroad tracks were built between Marienburg, Miswalde, and Allenstein. The railroad went through the Broda property and exposed the valuable gravel, which was needed as a foundation for the track. Several entrepreneurs mined the gravel until about 1900, when it became unprofitable to mine gravel on this property.

The business people in Christburg and construction experts shook their heads about the farmer from Thiergart, who wanted to establish a manufacturing facility on the exploited Broda property. The Rector (school principal) Böttcher, one of my former teachers, ridiculed Vatchen in a bar with the following words: "You want to be the owner of a manufacturing facility, and you do not even know how to correctly speak the German language."

The First World War abruptly interrupted this promising development in 1914. The manufacturing facility shut down or temporarily worked with only two employees. This gave the impression that this enterprise was a failure. The time was right to separate under favorable terms from the business partner Krause in Georgenhof. The farmland around the manufacturing property was sold to the farmer Juchta. In 1917, Vatchen bought #19/20 Schloßvorstadt (a residential property) in Christburg and operated the small farm belonging to that property. Our family lived off its production and the income received as rent for the farm in Thiergart. In about 1919, Vatchen started to trade in lumber. In connection with this, he purchased the *Hotel Berliner Hof*. My sister Käthe, who was already 21 years old, was officially recorded as the owner of this new property. Vatchen had laid the following foundations to support his children:

- 1) The farm in Thiergart.
- 2) The manufacturing facilities for cement products.
- 3) Property in the Schloßvorstadt.
- 4) About 20 semesters of study for Hermine in Königsberg and Berlin.
- 5) The *Hotel Berliner Hof*.
- 6) Three semesters of study for me (Oskar) in Strelitz.
- 7) Five semesters of study for Reinhold in Strelitz after completing an apprenticeship in bricklaying.

Except for a brief period of time when Käthe ran the kitchen of the *Berliner Hof*, the hotel was rented out until 1929. Then Käthe and her husband Hans Wiehler gave up farming in Thiergart and took over the management of the hotel. Now came a hard and very difficult economic time for our family. I will report more about this time in my own memoirs. I only want to point out that in the spring of 1930, when we really intended to celebrate the 25th year of Vatchen's company, the business was threatened with financial ruin.

Our Muttchen died after a short illness on February 17, 1931. Except for Heinz, who was in America (U.S.A.), all of us children were present in Muttchen's hospital room when she passed away. Hermine came from Berlin and Reinhold arrived in time from Strelitz. When Muttchen closed her eyes for the last time and on the behest of Vatchen, we children held hands and promised to hold together and to support and help each other in need.

When in 1935 thirty years had passed since the founding of Vatchen's company, our economic conditions had developed to the point that we could hope that at least the cement products manufacturing plant was back on a sound basis. The manufacturing plant did very well after 1930 and together with the construction business started by me (Oskar), it seemed that we could save also the remainder of the family's properties.

This fact and the improved prospect for the future gave me a reason to talk to Vatchen about past times. I asked him how he in 1905, when he was at the peak of his farming days, decided to start an entirely new and high-risk business that was totally foreign to him. Vatchen explained to me that he saw in Thiergart something that was complete and created by his ancestors and that he wanted to create something that was really of his own doing. In his opinion, this enterprising spirit came from his mother, Marie Edse [#P-3], into our family.

(Vatchen remained in contact with his cousin Rudolf Edse (#10-2-14), formerly in Königsberg, until shortly before his death. Vatchen sent me the letters and through this we reestablished contact with the Edse family. Uncle Rudolf Edse was a friend of Alois von Wantoch-Rekowski, a brother of my father-in-law. - The world is small. – The daughter (of Rudolf Edse), Dr. Ilse Edse [#P-10-2-14-2] is a Professor in the USA, like also her husband, Dr. Rudy Edse, a son of Uncle Cornelius Edse [#P-10-2-13] from Hamburg. Both (Rudy and Ilse) moved to the USA after the end of the Second World War and now live at 5693 Olentangy Blvd in Worthington, Ohio. Both have visited us here in Königsbrunn whenever they came to Germany with their children. We, like the Edses, like to keep in touch. My two oldest children have visited the Edses in America, who continue to carry on the hospitality of our homeland.

In 1939 - the war in Poland was almost over and seemed to be won – Vatchen, Heinz, Reinhold and I sat together and talked about the current situation. At that time, Vatchen expressed his opinion that wars always cause changes that could not be anticipated. He talked about the past, the late 1920s and the early 1930s. During this time he had started to have doubts about himself. He came to think that he probably did everything wrong in his life. But now, after the cement products company had become a great success and Heinz had taken over the hotel, it has been proven that these businesses provide a good livelihood for the family and he started to be happy again about his life.

Vatchen, who was very reserved with praise and recognition, then said something like this: He was especially happy about not having dropped the Wiehlers and that Hans now seemed to be in the right profession (Hans had worked himself up to the position of chief book keeper in my business). And then it was a great joy for him that Reinhold had taken over, or will take over, the responsibility to pay for Hans-Günther Wiehler's studies. He was convinced that our extended family could overcome all difficulties as long as we continue to work together.

It came worse than anybody could have imagined. Reinhold and Heinz were killed in action in Russia. We had to leave Christburg. Our trek of horse-drawn wagons and under the guidance of Hans Wiehler, ended up in Selmsdorf, Mecklenburg. Vatchen was on this trek, too. The horses and wagons represented a considerable investment and the German Wehrmacht confiscated some of them.

When Vatchen found out that I had started a new manufacturing company in Ballenstedt in the Harz Mountain, he tried to talk some people into helping him with saving the last horses by taking them to Ballenstedt. This was a distance of about 300 kilometers (185 miles). Vatchen reasoned: "If Oskar started another company in Ballenstedt, then he can use a few more horses. They are capital and will be lost here in Selmsdorf."

Nobody wanted to come along. They laughed at him and warned him of the danger caused by the turbulent conditions at such a short time after the war. Vatchen hitched up two horses by himself, among them the purebred "Tannennadel" (*Fir Needle*, the name of a mare). Aunt Meta Hintz accompanied Vatchen. Vatchen risked his life on this trip. At that time, an old man could be killed for much less than a couple of horses. After a relatively short time, I believe less than 14 days, Vatchen arrived in good shape in Ballenstedt.

These horses, together with some equipment I gave him, were the foundation for Vatchen's means to make a living until his death. It was to his and my great satisfaction that he, a free farmer from the Werder, which he was and always remained, used not one penny from a fund to pay for his support. He lived off his own earnings and capital, even as an old refugee, and passed on his savings to his daughter, our sister Olga. She used it to help pay for the education of her children.

Our Vatchen died on December 31, 1958 in Ballenstedt / Harz.

Life continues!

Signed: Oskar Penner

Königsbronn – Haus Christburg

In May 1969

Addendum

by
Dr. Albrecht Doerry

Who, like I did in the course of several decades, involved himself in the ups and downs of a growing family, will recognize how strong the effect of his ancestors' blood is that pulses through the arteries of the individuals. This was especially evident in the Mennonites. When they left their original homeland for the sake of their faith and started anew in the area of the Weichsel and Nogat Rivers, they could only succeed by working hard and by overcoming great difficulties with diligence.

This spirit of perseverance is deeply ingrained in the Mennonite faith and was the foundation for Vatchen Penner's achievements. But also the other side of his being, the clear view for a necessary action, is a trait that is founded on the character of the Lower German Mennonites. But what differentiates Vatchen from the masses is the fact that he used the natural ability he was endowed with to achieve things, which deserve recognition and utmost respect.

But one thing stands out above everything: Whatever he created of value was for the purpose to help his family progress. He wanted to spare them from the thorny road he traveled in his younger years. His well-developed sense of responsibility for his family is a legacy of the Mennonites and therefore bestows upon his descendants the moral obligation to remember him not only with recognition and respect, but also with love.

In this spirit, his oldest son Oskar took over the burden of saving his father's business when it was threatened to be drawn into the continuing collapse of the German economy during the late 1920s. He did this because this burden had become too heavy for Vatchen's shoulders and also for other reasons. Oskar not only saved what could be saved, but he also rebuilt the business under great personal sacrifices.

Uelzen, in May 1969

Signed: Dr. Albrecht Doerry

Names of Communities in former West Prussia

<u>Original German Name</u>	<u>New Polish Name</u>
Altendorf	near Tiegenhagen
Altmünsterberg	Str. Koscielnica
Baalau	Balewo
Christburg	Dzierzgon
Danzig	Gdansk
Einlage (on the Nogat River)	Jazowa
Elbing	Elblag
Ellerwald	Janowo
Gollnow	Goleniow
Groß Mausdorf	Myszewo
Grunau	Gronowo Elb.
Grünlinde	Zboce
Güldenfelde	(north-west of Thiergart/Zwierzno)
Heubuden	Stogi
Kampenau	Kepniewo
Krebsfelde	Rakowiska
Klein Mausdorf	Myszewko
Ladekopp	Tuja
Leske	Laski
Marienau	Marynowy
Markushof	Markusy
Mierau	Mirowo
Neudorf	near Tiegenhof
Neuendorf	Nowa Wies
Neumünsterberg	Nw. Koscielnica
Orloff	Orlowo
Orloffferfelde	north of Orloff
Petershagen	Piotrowo
Pr. Holland	Paslek
Pr. Königsdorf	Olesno
Pr. Rosengart	Rozgart
Rapendorf	Rogowo
Rosenort	Rakowe Pole
Schönhorst (on the Vistula River)	Gniazdowo
Schönsee	Jeziernik
Stuhm	Sztum
Thiensdorf	Jeziro
Thiergart	Zwierzno
Tiegenhagen	Zelichowo
Tiegenhof	Nowy Dwor Gdanski
Walldorf	Orliniec
Wengelwalde	Zohwiniec
Weichsel	Wista
Zeiskendorf	near Tiegenhof