

Bukovina and its Bukovina Germans
Die Bukowina und ihre Buchenlanddeutschen

by Willi Kosiul
translated by Irmgard Hein Ellingson

Dear Bukovina friends and those interested in Bukovina!



As a Bukovina German of the *Erlebnisgeneration*, or the generation who personally experienced Bukovina, the homeland of my ancestors and also of my own childhood has never released me. This has led to the fact that for the last 20 years, I have intensively occupied myself in archival research and with study of the comprehensive literature concerning Bukovina, in order to learn more about the region. This work has so fascinated me that a number of books have been produced. My basic approach was and remains this: to learn everything about the historical development and the people of Bukovina, from its origin until the resettlement of the Germans. Therefore one does not just get a cursory overview from my work but will rather obtain new insights, new truths. It was also important for me to compare various publications about the former crownland and its Bukovina Germans with one another to express everything in the most truthful and understandable manner.

So my books are interesting not only for Bukovina people and their descendants, but also for every person who is interested in history and especially in the history of Bukovina. Bukovina lies on the eastern curve of the Carpathian forests. Many peaceful people, including the Germans, lived together there with their own traditions, their interesting cultural and successful economic development.

A great deal of interesting and important information, as well as many pictures and scans of original documents, contributed to the more than 600 pages in the two volumes. Fortunately the Reimo Verlag, located at Am Mitterfeld 3 in D-85445 Oberding, Germany, was prepared to publish these two books with the title „Die Bukowina und ihre Buchenlanddeutschen“ (Bukovina and its Bukovina Germans) as well as another book, „Ortsgeschichten aus der Bukowina“ (Village Histories from Bukovina), which is still being prepared. *Herr Dr. Valentin Reitmajer*, who operates the Reimo Verlag with his wife, is known to many as the publisher of interesting books in addition to being a Bukovina descendant who is well acquainted with the region.

The first volume appeared at the end of 2011. The second volume will follow in the beginning of 2012. The books may be ordered online at <http://www.reitmajer-verlag.de/> Reimo Verlag Dr. Valentin Reitmajer, Am Mitterfeld 3, 85445 Oberding, Tel: 08122/4799715 oder 7990, Fax: 08122/4799714, E-Mail: reimo_verlag@gmx.de at a cost of 51,90 € per volume.

**„Die Bukowina und ihre Buchenlanddeutschen“
Bukovina and its Bukovina Germans**

Volume I:

The Origins of Moldavian Bukovina in 1343 until the End of the Austrian Monarchy in 1918

Bukovina ...

- until 1774 – a part of the principality of Moldavia
- from 1774 until 1786 – under Austrian military administration
- from 1787 until 1849 – a county within the [Austrian] Kingdom of Galicia
- beginning in 1774 - immigration of the Germans in Austrian Bukovina
- from 1849 until 1918 – a duchy of the Austrian monarchy

Volume II: the continuation of Volume I: Romanian Bukovina from 1918 until 1940 and the Resettlement of the Bukovina Germans in the German Reich in 1940

- annexation of Austrian Bukovina to the Kingdom of Romania in 1918 until 1940
- life of the Bukovina Germans as a national minority under Romanian rule
- the resettlement of Bukovina Germans in the German Reich in 1940
- camp life in the German Reich, the processing as well as naturalized citizenship and settlement
- flight of the Bukovina Germans in 1945 from the eastern settlement regions toward the west

An additional book titled „Ortsgeschichten aus der Bukowina“ or Village Histories from Bukovina is being prepared for 2012.

The emphasis in this book is detailed information about various cities as well as villages and communities with at least 100 German citizens in Bukovina.

From the establishment to the resettlement.

With mention of the founding families and an account of the land and people..

In the process of writing the book, I have experienced much joy, which the reader will discover and share.

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Please contact me with any questions.

My Brief Biography

I was born in Czudyn in northern Bukovina in 1930, and grew up in a multi-national family. My father was Polish and German, and my mother had German, Polish, Slovakian, and Moldavian ancestry. We lived peacefully with many nationalities, although the national orientation had long since ceased to have a German orientation. Therefore I had to attend the Romanian primary school from 1937 to 1940.

The resettlement at the end of 1940 opened the path to an unknown future for me and for all Bukovina Germans. I was just 10 years old as the unforeseen odyssey began.

Life in various resettlement camps under National Socialist administration was particularly difficult for my mother and her three children because of her multi-national background. My father and my oldest brother remained in Bukovina. Of our eight siblings, four died in Bukovina in the meantime. It was only in March 1943 that we were resettled on a farm in *Oberschlesien*, or Upper Silesia,. Here I was able to attend the German primary school, which I had to leave only two years later with the beginning of the flight from the Soviets. My oldest brother (of those who had resettled with me) had died in battle in Russia in the meantime. In the chaos of the advancing eastern front, I fled alone as a 15-year-old with strangers on a horse-drawn wagon. Weeks later, I found my mother and sister again. Upon arrival in Schwarzenberg in the *Erzgebirge* (Harz Mountains), the local Soviet commandant ordered us back to Bukovina.

After various stops, I was interned in the „Deutschen Haus“ [German House] in Radautz on bread and water rations, awaiting deportation to a Soviet military camp for forced labor with my mother in February 1946. Fortunately the journey did not take us to Siberia, but rather to Riesa by Leipzig. After some additional stops, we settled in Mecklenburg. In the meantime, my sister had arrived by her husband in Chemnitz. In Mecklenburg, I was able to obtain an administrative job in spite of my poor schooling. I started a family and my mother lived with us until the end of her life. My desire for advancement took me to evening school, where I repeated the school examinations, improved my general knowledge, and earned additional qualifications. I carried my love for my lost homeland Bukovina deep in my heart. I have visited Bukovina four times and to this day maintain contact with my relatives there. After intensive archival research and through study of the literature pertaining to Bukovina, I have prepared two comprehensive books under the title „Die Bukowina und ihre Buchenlanddeutschen“ [Bukovina and its Bukovina Germans] for my fellow countrymen and -women, their descendants, and for all who are interested in the history of Bukovina. An additional book with the title „Ortsgeschichten aus der Bukowina“ [Village Histories from Bukovina] is being prepared and will appear in 2012. Writing this book afforded me with great joy because I have learned so much more about the establishment, the life, and the resettlement of our people in Bukovina.

Who are the Bukovina Germans?
Wer sind die Buchenlanddeutschen?

German settlers came from southwestern Germany beginning in 1782, the Zips mountains in 1784, Bohemia in 1793, and from lands of the Austrian monarchy to Bukovina. They settled in Bukovina, on the eastern curve of the Carpathians, which had passed to the Habsburgs in 1774. There they lived in peace with about a dozen ethnic groups of various religious confessions. They had an orderly economic infrastructure, a sophisticated administrative and school system, a thriving cultural and social system, a diverse press, and a *Landtag* (provincial parliament) with a *Nationalitätenparlament*, in which the crownland worked out its *Bukowiner Ausgleich*, or national settlement. It was Europe in miniature upon 10,442 square kilometers, and it really existed! According to the 1910 census, Germans formed 9.2% of the population. Other peoples living in the land were Ruthenians (Ukrainians) with 38.4% of the population, Romanians with 34.4%, Jews with 12.0%, and Poles, Armenians, Hungarians, Lipovans, Slovaks, and others totalling 6.0%.

excerpt from the webpage
www.bukowinafreunde.de