

MARY (Maria) PELZER, nee Heppenstiel

This will be a story of how families, friends and neighbours, in a time of crisis, will stick together and help one another. This story involves the Heppenstiel, Krenz, Pelzer and Lach families in Volhynia, war-time Germany, post-war Germany and after 1950, in Saskatchewan.¹

Maria Heppenstiel was born in 1931 in the village of “Janowka, Kreis Rovno”, as she tells it. The village is now called Ivanivka, Volyn Oblast, in north-western Ukraine. It is about 100 kilometers to the Polish border. Maria recalls that the village was almost completely German, with only two Ukrainian families living in Janowka.



Maria was the daughter of Reinhold Heppenstiel and Amalie Milke. Both parents were also born in Janowka. They married in Janowka on 23 May 1930. They were descendants of Germans who had migrated in the mid-1800s from East Prussia to the Volhynian province of South Russia, today in northwest Ukraine. The family believes that four generations of Heppenstiels lived in Janowka. As was the case for most of the Volhynian Germans, the Heppenstiels were Evangelical Lutherans. By the year 1900, more than 200,000 Germans lived in

Volhynia, most of whom had migrated from Poland. Maria recalls that her family was very poor. Both of her parents worked for farmers and Maria had to supervise her two younger siblings during the day.

The Russification programs of the Tsarist administration, beginning in the 1870s, reduced or eliminated many of the linguistic, religious and other rights previously enjoyed by the Germans living in the Russian Empire. The Volhynian Germans particularly lost the right to own land in the so-called border regions of the Russian Empire. With the advance of the German Army in World War One, the Russian government ordered all the Germans in Volhynia province to be evacuated and exiled to Siberia, on the spurious pretext that the Germans were spies and saboteurs behind Russian lines. Over seven thousand families were expelled, including those of Maria’s parents. Many hundreds died along the way. With the fall of the Tsarist government in 1917, most of the Volhynian Germans returned in 1918. But they had to start over. Their homes and yards had been expropriated and sold to non-Germans. Maria remembers them living in a crude house with a dirt floor. They had one cow which they kept overnight in the porch during the winter months.

¹ Volhynia is a region of Eastern Europe that, at various times, was part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, the Kingdom of Poland, and the Russian Empire. Maria’s story begins in that part of historic Volhynia which now lies in northwestern Ukraine.

Because the Heppenstiel family owned only a small plot of land, they escaped the cruelties of Stalin's collectivization program in the early 1930s. But they could not escape the famine which resulted, the so-called Holodomor. Those Germans who survived soon experienced another forced re-location.

In December of 1939, as per the secret terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Agreement², the German population of Volhynia was evacuated and re-located to Poland. Maria was only 8 years old. Maria remembers that the Polish people were treated horribly by the Nazi Party of Germany. They were forced off their farms and put to work in factory communes. The Poles resisted wherever they could, resulting in regular sabotage of factory production (Mary's memory).

The in-coming German population was placed on these farms, and took over the agricultural production for "the Fatherland". They worked very hard to make the land productive. The Heppenstiel family consisting of the parents, brother Samuel, Maria and sister Olga lived near Wincentów, Kreis Łąck, Poland, about 60 kilometers southeast of Łódź. Two more younger sisters joined the family here, Frieda and Liese. There had been a brother Eduard, who died of starvation in Poland in 1940. He was only three years old. The Bessarabian and Rumanian Germans arrived in the summer and fall of 1940. After Germany's surprise invasion of Russia in June, 1941, more and more Germans were re-located to Poland, Silesia and Austria.³

At age 12, after a two-week qualification program in Litzmannstadt (today known as Łódź) Maria attended the gymnasium (school) in Lask (Łask), which meant she could only go home on the weekends, when her father would pick her up with a horse and buggy. Maria learned to read and write, and to speak, the English language at the gymnasium. Her English teacher was indeed from England. Maria's father never attended school at all, and so was determined that his children be educated. Mary recalls that, despite his lack of formal education, her father was a very intelligent man. Maria and her family lived in Wincentów until the end of 1944.

Beginning in January 1945, millions of refugees began fleeing toward eastern Germany to stay ahead of the quickly-advancing Red Army. It was a chaotic scene, without any over-all supervision or authority. Maria (she became Mary in Canada) remembers the ditches full of dead people. She remembers airplanes strafing the fleeing refugees, but they made it safely into eastern Germany. Maria recalls that retreating German soldiers often shared their food with them along the way. Red Cross kitchens further saved thousands of refugees from starvation during the flight to the west. The family next lived in Torgau, fifty kilometers northeast of Leipzig, but not for long.

Maria Heppenstiel was only 14 years old when she was orphaned by the death of her father in January 1946 in Torgau. Her mother had died of starvation six months previously, in July

² Officially the treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the USSR.

³ Hundreds of thousands of Germans from South Russia were also exiled directly to Siberia beginning in August of 1941.

1945. (The plot of the two graves is still marked in the Torgau Friedhof, or cemetery.) Although Maria and Olga and their brother Samuel had been living in Germany since 1939, it was still a foreign country to them, and it was now teeming with millions of East European displaced persons.

The five children were totally on their own, the youngest being barely 3 years old. After the death of their mother, their father had vowed to prevent his children from being placed into foster care. This responsibility now fell to Maria, the oldest. With the help of the German Red Cross (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz) she made contact with an aunt (Tante Otti, their mother's step-sister) who was living in Tilleda, Kreis Sangerhausen, which was in the Russian Occupied Zone. During their flight ("die Flucht") westwards, Maria's family quite by accident had met up with "Oma" Frölke, who was a friend and neighbour of Reinhold Heppenstiel in Kolesno, and not a relative. She joined them for the rest of the trek. The five Heppenstiel children along with Oma Frölke traveled by train to Tilleda and moved in with Tante Otti. Eight people were cramped into a small house. Maria, to this day, has high praise for the German Red Cross.

Oma Frölke only lived with them there for a short time before she found her own family and moved to Selsdorf. She then took custody of the two little girls, Frieda and Liese. Maria and Olga helped as best as they could to provide for their sisters. Samuel, only 15 years old, worked as a German-Russian translator for the Russian Occupation Authorities who had taken over a large country estate to use as their base of operations. One advantage was that Samuel was able to bring home food for the family. Samuel even received and wore a Russian Army uniform.

Sometime in 1947, Maria and Samuel packed their rucksacks and made their way (more than 300 km) on foot to Eichede, Kreis Storman, 40 km northeast of Hamburg, which was in the British Zone. They walked until they reached a checkpoint and were informed they had entered West Germany. The guards were totally shocked because they had just walked across a one-kilometer wide strip of "no-man's land" which straddled the border between the Russian and British occupation zones. In broad daylight, they could easily have been shot!

Arriving in Eichede, they lived with their Aunt Berta Baier (a sister to their deceased mother, Amalie). Here too, there were three or four families living in one room in a Gasthaus. About a year later, Maria's sister Olga and Tante Otti also moved to Eichede to work on a farm. To avoid the checkpoints, they likely hired a guide to take them into the western zone.

Samuel and Olga stayed in Eichede, but Maria soon found a job cooking in the kitchen of the hospital in Ribbesbüttel, Kreis Gifhorn. She lived in the hospital residence. While in Ribbesbüttel, Maria received word from Oma Frölke that she was too old and sick to properly care for the two younger sisters, Frieda and Liese. Maria traveled by train to Selsdorf to bring the two young girls back to Ribbesbüttel, but this meant crossing back into the Russian Zone without the proper travel pass. On the return trip, Maria found two men who said they could get them across the border back into the western zone. They took Maria and her sisters to a

bridge over a river, with a dense forest on the other side, and not far from the train station. Once on the bridge, two Russian Soldiers quickly apprehended the two men. The soldiers told Mary to run to the forest where they would not be seen. But nearby, there was an empty train car with Russian soldiers who continued to shoot into the ground as they ran for their lives to get to the train station. Maria recounts, "Mein Gott, I don't know how I did it, having to carry Liese most of the way!"

By 1948, all five Heppenstiel siblings were free of the Russian Occupation Zone. Maria lived in Ribbesbüttel. Samuel and Olga were in Eichede, about 200 kilometers to the north. Liese went to live with the Krenzes (Wilhelm and Berta nee Heppenstiel) in Ribbesbüttel. Frieda lived with Tante Berta Baier in Eichede. When not working at the hospital, Maria was expected to help the Krenzes provide for Liese.

Also living with Wilhelm and Berta Krenz was Berta's mother, also named Maria Heppenstiel, by now 69 years old. She had been living with the Krenzes ever since they were evacuated from Volhynia in 1939. The younger Maria (Mary) remembers Uncle Wilhelm making a wooden trunk for her before they had to leave Janowka in 1939. This is the trunk that Maria used to pack a few items of clothing, a feather pillow and feather tick to take to Canada. She still has the trunk today. Uncle Wilhelm also made pantofles, wooden shoes with a leather covering. Maria too had a pair. Everyone in Ukraine at the time wore these kinds of shoes. She never saw "real" shoes until she got to Germany.

Gustav Pelzer, living in Regina, enters the picture here. Gustav Pelzer, born about 1899, had immigrated with his wife Emma to Saskatchewan in 1921, according to the 1926 Canada Census. He began farming in the Markinch district; he also became an Immigration Agent after the end of World War Two. In order to hold on to his job, he needed help to run his farm. In 1948, he sponsored the immigration of Wilhelm Pelzer, whose father was a cousin to Gustav. In 1950, Gustav sponsored the immigration of Rudy Krenz, son of Wilhelm and Berta, and thus, a first cousin to Maria Heppenstiel. Wilhelm worked on "Uncle" Gustav's farm. The Pelzers and Krenzes had been neighbors and friends in Kolesno, and not far from Janowka, where the Heppenstiel family lived.

Arranged marriages were not uncommon in that era, and so it was that Aunt Berta Krenz (nee Heppenstiel) began thinking it was time for Maria, now 18 years old, to find a husband. No doubt, Berta and Gustav Pelzer in Regina were corresponding, and the idea surfaced that Maria Heppenstiel in Germany would make a good match (ie. wife) for Wilhelm Pelzer in Saskatchewan. So the wheels were put in motion, so to speak, but Maria herself wanted nothing to do with the idea. She did not even know Wilhelm Pelzer. Aunt Berta encouraged Maria to write to him in Saskatchewan. But Maria did not want to abandon her siblings, especially the two younger sisters. And Maria herself did not feel ready to marry. Eventually Maria did write a letter to Wilhelm introducing herself. He replied that he had once actually seen Maria in Ribbesbüttel, but she hadn't taken any notice of him. Meanwhile Aunt Berta applied to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief organization for Maria to immigrate to

Saskatchewan. Maria's application was accepted and Lutheran World Relief agreed to sponsor Maria's emigration. Farmers and businesses all over Canada were advertising for farm and domestic help among the displaced people of Europe. When would-be immigrants had no financial sponsor, Lutheran World Relief would match an immigrant to one of these job postings. In Canada, pastors actively helped would-be sponsors with the paperwork, and found work placements for new arrivals. To this day, Maria praises the work of the Canadian Lutheran World Relief organization which was founded in 1945.



Maria Heppenstiel and her first cousin Anton Krenz crossed the Atlantic Ocean on the Ship Beaverbrae⁴, arriving in Halifax in July 1950. Maria was allowed to work in the ship's kitchen, serving food to the tables. As a kitchen worker, she had access to the kitchen, and was able to eat as much as she wanted. On arrival in Halifax, the Lutheran World Relief organization had assigned Anton to a farm near Sunnybrook, Alberta and Maria to North Mark, Alberta. Anton's brother, Rudy Krenz of Edenwold, Saskatchewan knew of course they were coming. He had arrived only one

month earlier. The pastor of the Lutheran Church in Edenwold, working no doubt with Gustav Pelzer, contacted Lutheran World Relief which agreed to arrange train tickets for Maria and Anton to travel instead to Edenwold, Saskatchewan. It made sense for the family to be together. A four-five day train trip brought them from Halifax to the Edenwold train station, where Rudy Krenz met them with a horse and buggy.

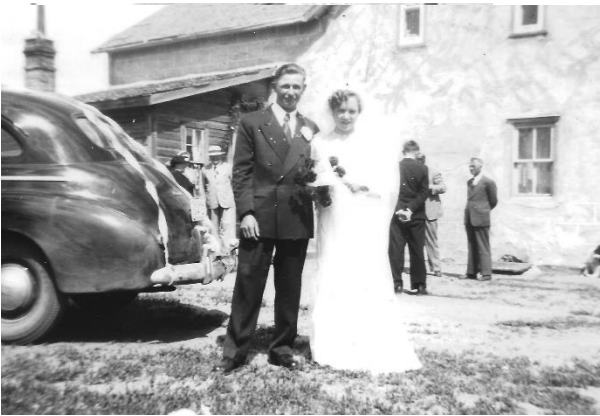
Newly-arrived refugees sponsored by the Canadian Lutheran World Relief organization were expected to pay for the cost of the transatlantic journey and the rail fare to Saskatchewan. Maria remembers that her debt to Canadian Lutheran World Relief was \$90. Anton Krenz's work placement was with Henry Frombach and his parents, successful farmers in the Edenwold district.

But Mary had a different work placement where she was treated poorly and was paid far less than the normal rate. She was required to work in the fields, as well as in the house. She arrived in Canada with basically the clothes she was wearing, and could not afford to buy new clothes, let alone begin to repay her debt. Learning of her distress, Anton arranged for Maria (Mary) to work for Mr. Frombach, and Mary's situation quickly improved. She recalls Henry Frombach as a "saint" for all the good things he did for her. Besides her much-improved wage, he purchased many extra things for her and her life improved immensely.

⁴ Purchased by Canadian Pacific in 1947, the former freighter Beaverbrae was refitted as a passenger ship. Placed at the service of the Canadian Christian council for the Resettlement of Refugees, the ship sailed every 28 days with 773 passengers. The Beaverbrae made 52 transatlantic crossings, bringing 33, 259 passengers from Europe to Canada. The last trip left Bremen on 28 July 1954.

Once settled in Canada, Maria and Anton worked to bring their two families to Canada. Back in Germany, Aunt Berta had also completed the necessary registration papers for Samuel and Olga, without realizing that their life situations had changed. Olga, pregnant at the time, opted to remain in Germany, as did Samuel, now an expectant father. Liese, not yet eight years old, came in 1951 with her Grandmother Maria Heppenstiel along with Uncle Wilhelm and Aunt Berta Krenz. They departed from Bremenhaven on 11 July 1951 on board the ship Nelly, with destination stated as Anton Krenz of Edenwold, Saskatchewan. Anton's mother, Berta Krenz, was an older sister to Reinhold Heppenstiel, both children of the elder Maria Heppenstiel.

Twelve-year old Frieda arrived in 1953 with Karl and Renate Lach, relatives of Maria's on her mother's maternal side. Frieda went to live with the Krenzes, Wilhelm and Berta. The Lachs (Karl and Renate) only stayed in Canada for about 4 years, and returned to Germany. Wilhelm (Bill) Pelzer's sister and husband also returned. Grandmother Heppenstiel died in 1957 in Regina. Both Frieda and Liese lived with the Krenzes for a while, but later moved in with the newly-married Bill and Mary Pelzer.⁵



Maria (now Mary) Heppenstiel married Wilhelm (Bill) Pelzer in Markinch on 17 June 1951, less than a year after arriving in Canada. Their families had known each other in Volhynia. The match-making of "Uncle" Gustav and Aunt Berta had brought them together. They had 3 children – Anne Marie, Edmund and Christel - who gave them 9 grandchildren, and as of now, 14 great-grandchildren. Sadly the younger

daughter Christel, died in 2022 at age 60. Anne Marie's husband, Terry, died in 2012 also at age 60.

The newlyweds, Mary and Wilhelm, went to work for Gustav Pelzer on his farm. After their refugee debts were cleared, they began to rent this farm from Gustav, an arrangement that lasted until 1957 when they moved into Regina, and purchased a home from Bill's sister and husband who were returning to Germany. The first two children were born before they moved to Regina. Wilhelm worked in construction and Mary began cleaning homes and taking in boarders. They worked hard. In 1959 they purchased a small farm located near Craven, just off Highway # 6, about 30 kilometers north of Regina⁶. Bill (Wilhelm) and Mary continued working in the city, as before, on construction and cleaning, driving daily back and forth to Regina. Little by little they acquired more land, most often paying cash. Eventually they were

⁵ Frieda and Liese were eventually adopted by other families – Frieda in 1955 moved in with Henry and Joyce Seeman of Woodley, SK, (north of Estevan) and Liese in 1957 joined Albert and Helen Seeman, also of Woodley. Both proved to be wonderful and loving families for the younger Heppenstiel girls.

⁶ As an aside, the Pelzers bought this farm from Bill and Adele Wagner. I have previously written Adele's story.

farming seven one-quarter sections of land. Wilhelm and Mary owned this land for 50 years, before turning it over to their grandson Nathan, who still farms this land today (2025). Wilhelm retired from farming in 2007 when he and Mary moved into a brand new condominium building in Regina where Mary still lives. Wilhelm died in 2019. Mary continued cleaning houses until she was 92 years old!

Over the years Mary worked in more than fifteen different homes, but she speaks most fondly of the McMillan family, for whom she worked for over 50 years – not only house-cleaning, but also cooking, baking, painting, baby-sitting, and anything else that needed attention around the house. Mary only retired from this job when Dr. McMillan retired a few years ago. Mary developed a very special relationship with this family and still maintains weekly contact.

Listening to Mary talk about her life, it is easy to see that she was a prodigious worker. Raising three children and looking after two boarders, she had five lunch boxes to prepare each weekday. Through the course of a year, she and Bill would butcher eight steers and one pig and numerous chickens. They made their own sausage of course. They also custom-butchered animals for others. They tended two large gardens. She baked her own bread from flour ground from their own wheat at a flour mill in Humboldt. All this, while cleaning houses in Regina! Every Sunday, Mary and Bill had a houseful of company, which meant more cooking. German was most often the language of conversation in the Pelzer household, and Mary is proud to say her three children speak (spoke) German fluently.

Mary recalls working many years in the cafeteria during Agribition Days, as well as during the Exhibition. The cafeteria was managed by long-time friends who owned a restaurant in downtown Regina. She remembers the visit by Prince Philip. The table centers were crafted from stalks of wheat from the Pelzer farm. Most nights, Mary did not get away until after 11:00 pm.

When Wilhelm and Mary visited Germany in 1964, they drove their blue Plymouth car to Halifax and then traveled by ship with car and children to Bremerhaven. They spent more than 3 months in Germany, visiting many families, relatives and friends. That big Plymouth car caused some problems on the narrow German streets of many towns! Daughter Anne Marie fondly recalls this magical trip because it occurred over the Christmas season. She remembers entertaining the ship passengers by singing German Christmas carols with her brother Edmund.

Although Bill and Mary made numerous trips to Germany over the years, the 1999 twenty-eight day tour of Germany, Poland and Ukraine was a highlight. Anne Marie and her husband Terry joined them on this “Back to the Roots” tour organized by Regina’s Trinity Lutheran Church Pastor Helmut Nachtigall. In Ukraine they were able to travel to both villages where Mary and Bill were born.

Other travels took Bill and Mary to the United States, Mexico, Australia and New Zealand.

When asked, Mary has no “favourite childhood memories”. She remembers only poverty, hard work, fear and the burdens of responsibility. From the young age of five and six, she had to look after and care for her younger brother and sister while their parents worked as farm labourers in Volhynia. Orphaned in 1946 at age 15 years, this responsibility to look after her four siblings in Germany stayed with her.

Although Mary had initially been very reluctant to leave Germany and immigrate to Saskatchewan, she has no regrets now. She does not have any “favourite memories” of Germany either. This is not surprising, considering everything she experienced from 1940 to 1950. Having visited Samuel and Olga in Germany several times, Mary says Saskatchewan is the better place to live. She prefers the wide open Canadian landscapes, of which Saskatchewan has its fair share. But neither does Mary have any favourite memories of Saskatchewan! Mary is much too pragmatic to let personal emotions cloud her judgement.

Nevertheless, Mary does admit that her transition to life in Saskatchewan was easy. She appreciated the wider range of consumer goods. She quickly realized that Saskatchewan was a place where she and Bill could work hard, make a good living, and “get ahead”. She was used to hard work, and was very comfortable with living in small villages and working on the land. Living in the Markinch area at the beginning, she was surrounded by other Germans who made up the population majority. She was soon involved in Church activities, and she realized that she enjoyed entertaining and cooking. Mary says there were always people around her, and she never felt alone. She feels Saskatchewan was, and is, a much less-costly place to live than in other regions of Canada. And it proved to be a good place to raise their children, and a good place for son Edmund to expand the farming operation with his son Nathan, taking the Pelzer farm into the third generation.



The five Heppenstiel siblings, Germany, 1976.

Mary’s brother Samuel died in Germany in 2008 at age 76. He had suffered from diabetes which eventually led to the amputation of both legs. Samuel had worked in a coal mine near Dortmund. Olga lives in Todendorf, Germany, 40 km northeast of Hamburg. Olga and Mary talk frequently on the phone. Also living in Todendorf is Mary’s maternal first cousin, Meta with whom she has regular telephone contact as well.⁷

Mary and Bill became involved in the larger German community in Regina, first through their church. Mary and Bill came in to dances at the Regina German Club and gradually became involved with the club, attending and working at many events like the Weihnachtsmarkt

⁷ The Pelzers too are a close family. Seven Pelzer cousins still meet monthly in Regina for lunch. Bill (Wilhelm) Pelzer, Mary’s husband, also had a first cousin with the same name.

(Christmas market) and the Mosaic Cultural Festival. Mary sang in the German Canadian Society Harmonie Choir for forty years. She was also the Social Convener for the choir, a job to which she devoted a lot of time and her usual high energy level. This commitment included some major events like the Western Canadian Sangerbund Festival. She often attended Frauenstunde, or German Women’s Club. Perfectly bilingual, Mary still speaks German every day. Today she fills any spare time with knitting, crocheting and embroidering. She has knitted hundreds of dish cloths and scrubbers, for example. (Full disclosure: This writer went home with one of each!) In addition, Mary has crocheted lace trim around personalized handkerchiefs, and knitted numerous baby blankets. All of her work – dish cloths, scrubbers, handkerchiefs, blankets, etc – have been gifted to others, and never sold.

These creative crafts make up only a small part of Mary’s day. At 94 years of age, Mary will most often be found in the kitchen. Among her many friends and neighbours in her building, Mary is famous for her homemade soups, her kuchen and strudel, jams and preserves, especially her beet pickles. (“Just yesterday, she made ten jars of strawberry jam and a dozen cookies.”) Naturally, one person alone cannot consume everything that comes out of Mary’s kitchen. Most is given away, especially to those who are ill or not feeling well enough to cook or bake. At 94 years of age, Mary is still driven by that need to look after others.

In Mary one meets a person who overcame many difficulties in life. Burdened at a young age with responsibilities, she never really had a childhood. Teenage years – what are those? Mary was forced into adulthood at a young age, having to look after not just herself, but also her four siblings in war-torn Germany. She reluctantly immigrated to Saskatchewan. There she entered marriage with less than the usual enthusiasm, quickly followed by motherhood. From the turmoil of her early life emerged a very energetic and resilient woman with a strong personality. She credits her faith in God, instilled in her at an early age, with the strength to keep moving forward in the face of the many difficulties she has had to face in life. She is today still a very out-going person who highly values family and friends. Mary is thankful for her close relationship with her sister Liese, now known as Betty. Cooking and entertainment remain very important aspects of her life, and the weekly get-togethers are a highlight for her. Mary’s story illustrates for us the tremendous benefits Saskatchewan has received from the hard-working German immigrants.

Every day she thanks God for the life He has given her. Daily devotions have been a part of her daily routine for nearly her entire life. Since the closing of her church (Trinity Lutheran), Mary attends daily worship services online, every morning except Saturday. She remains devoted to her Church and to her church community.

END

Photo Gallery



Mary Pelzer, her daughter Annemarie and Mervin Weiss. Regina, February 2025.

1	2	a	3	b	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Page 3
55	33197	KLUT	Otto	Germ. Luth.	M	M	16.	2.15	36	Pol.	Erwin Floetzke		Patrick, Sask.
56	33198	"	Agathe	"	"	"	M	F	3.	6.15	36	"	"
57	33199	"	Harry	"	"	"	S	M	21.	5.41	10	"	"
58	33200	"	Christel	"	"	"	S	F	23.	11.46	4	Germ.	"
59	63980	KILLANSKI	Rudolf	Germ. Luth.	M	"	19.	12.98	52	CEM	Walter Killanski	c/o C. Schweitzer, R.R. #4	Elmira, Ont.
60	63981	"	Anna	"	"	"	M	F	11.	10.03	47	Lith.	"
61	61368	KONRAD	Edmund	Germ. Bapt.	M	M	14.	7.09	41	Pol.	John Rebnan	10329 - 97th St.	Edmonton, Alta.
62	61369	"	Karoline	"	"	"	M	F	19.	8.13	37	"	"
63	61370	"	Sophie	"	"	"	S	F	14.	7.36	14	"	"
64	61371	"	Lina	"	"	"	S	F	25.	4.42	9	"	"
65	61372	"	Horst	"	"	"	S	M	11.	1.43	7	"	"
66	61373	"	Harry	"	"	"	S	M	27.	1.50	1	Germ.	"
67	45591	KORT	Waldemar	Germ. Orth.	M	M	13.	1.98	52	Pol.	Margaretha Olesovich, 73 Ross St.		Welland, Ont.
68	45592	"	Marina	"	"	"	M	F	30.	1.97	53	Russia	"
69	63891	KREBS	Daniel	Germ. Ch.o.God	W	M	4.	.85	66	Pol.	Edmund Krebs	c/o T. Guse, R.R. # 4	Wetaskiwin, Alta.
70	63892	"	Ernst	"	"	"	S	M	18.	.32	19	"	"
71	62893	"	Friedrich	"	"	"	S	M	25.	6.33	18	"	"
72	64337	KRENZ	Wilhelm	Germ. Luth.	M	M	14.	1.06	45	Pol.	Anton Krenz	Box 31	Edenwold, Sask.
73	64338	"	Berta	"	"	"	M	F	24.	7.06	45	"	"
74	64339	"	Linda	"	"	"	S	F	28.	2.37	14	"	"
75	64410	HEPPENSTIEL	Maria	"	"	"	W	F	28.	10.78	72	"	"
76	64411	"	Liesa	"	"	"	S	F	7.	11.43	7	"	"
77	64165	KSCHESINSKI	Hermann	Germ. Luth.	S	M	21.	5.32	19	Pol.	Kneale Jones	R.R. # 1	Copetown, Ont.
78	62537	LEHMANN	Klara	Germ. Luth.	W	F	9.	10.05	45	Pol.	George Bechal		Mankota, Sask.
79	62538	"	Harry-Rich.	"	"	"	S	M	6.	6.36	15	"	"
80	58605	LEXA	Karl	Germ. Luth.	S	M	11.	3.09	42	Yugosl.	Katharina Kroch	R.R. # 3	Harrow, Ont.
81	59063	MERZ	Josef	Germ. Cath.	M	M	31.	7.05	45	Pol.	Leo Merz		Cranbrook, B.C.
82	59064	"	Maria	"	"	"	M	F	3.	9.12	38	"	"
83	59065	"	Adolf	"	"	"	S	M	16.	6.37	14	"	"
84	59066	"	Erich	"	"	"	S	M	28.	10.42	8	"	"
85	59428	"	Stanislaus	"	"	"	S	M	18.	9.31	19	"	"

Example of an immigration file from the Arsolen Archives. This page documents the immigration of Mary's mother Maria Heppenstiel, along with her sister Liesa and her Uncle and Aunt Wilhelm and Berta Krenz, along with their daughter Linda Krenz. You can see the contact person on arrival in Canada is Anton Krenz of Edenwold, SK.



L to r: Maria in Germany. Mary on the Gus Pelzer farm. Mary and Bill Pelzer.



L. Grave marker for Mary's grandmother and namesake, Maria Heppenstiel who died in Regina in 1957.

R. Heppenstiel sisters in Saskatchewan. Frieda, Mary and Betty (Liese) with Mary's daughter Annemarie.



The Gasthaus in Eichede, Germany, as it appeared on a visit in 2005.

A map of Europe showing Maria (Mary Pelzer) nee Heppenstiel's relocations 1939 – 1950.

