

October 1, 1984

Hermann Thiessen
Breslauer. Str. 3
D 3167 Burgdorf
West Germany

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Dear Mr. Thiessen:

It was a pleasant surprise to hear from you and to learn of your genealogical interests and accomplishments. Your sister-in-law, Erna Wiens gave us a most cordial welcome and visit to the Weierhof community, July 27.

Enclosed is a summary of the names, birthplaces, birthdates, and locations where some of my forebears lived in Prussia and Russia during the 1800's. This information was prepared by Arthur H. Fast and Orlando J. Wall both from Frazer, Montana(USA). The FAST FAMILY TREE(1763-1963) was published in 1963.

My present interest is to trace our FAST family prior to 1800 with particular emphasis upon FASTs living in Prussia or Poland during the 17, 16, and 1500's. Maybe this is an overzealous ambition, nevertheless, I would like to follow the FAST migration across Northern Europe, through Poland and Prussia, then to Russia and the USA.

Already, I have examined the listing of FASTs in Benjamin H. Unruh's, Karl Stumpp's, Gustav Reimer's, and Horst Penner's publications as well as reviewed the Markushof, Danzig, Montau, Konigsberg, and Tiegenhagen Mennonite church records for births, baptism, marriage, and death information concerning FAST family members.

Since my interest in genealogical research is to go backwards in time I have not focused upon records after the first quarter of the 1800's. Enclosed is a copy of a Wilhelm Fast, born June 14, 1814, whose parents were Abraham Fast and Magdalena(Schultz) Fast as recorded in the Konigsberg churchbook.

There are several needs that I have at the present time: (1) Would you know where I could find a full listing by name of the 150 or so families including family members who left the Rudnerweide and Tragheimerweide villages with Franz Goertz as (lehrer) or elder in 1818/1819 and migrated to the Molotschna Colony in Southern Russia? (2) In addition to the Markushof church records, what civil, land, church, or state records(documents) would help me find the forebears of Johann Fast born in Liebenbruck, who married Anna Allert, February 20, 1806 in Finckenstein, Prussia? (3) Do you know where I could obtain any completed or published FAST family genealogies that would shed light on my research efforts? (4) Also, would you give me names and addresses of German or other European genealogists who might provide information for me? (5) Are there genealogical publications that you would recommend for additional resource materials? And finally, (6) Would you send me your price for the Thiessen family book which I saw in the Erna Wiens home in July, the one you compiled?

My professional area of service is university teaching and have just completed 27 years as professor at California State University, Fresno. Your response to any of my inquiries would be greatly appreciated. If I can be of any assistance to you, please let me know.

Again, I thank you most heartily for your letter and willingness to assist me in tracing my ancestors in Poland.

Peter G. Fast
1517 W. Palo Alto
Fresno, California 93711
USA

Cordially,

Peter G. Fast