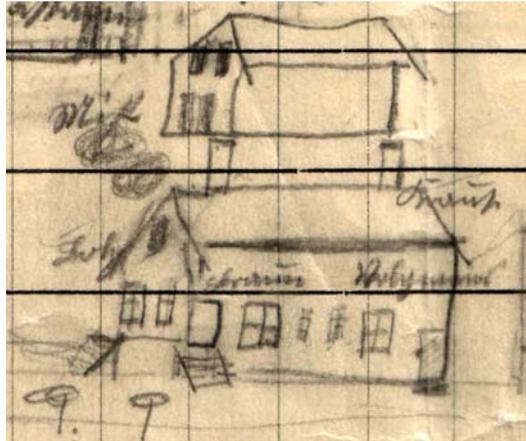
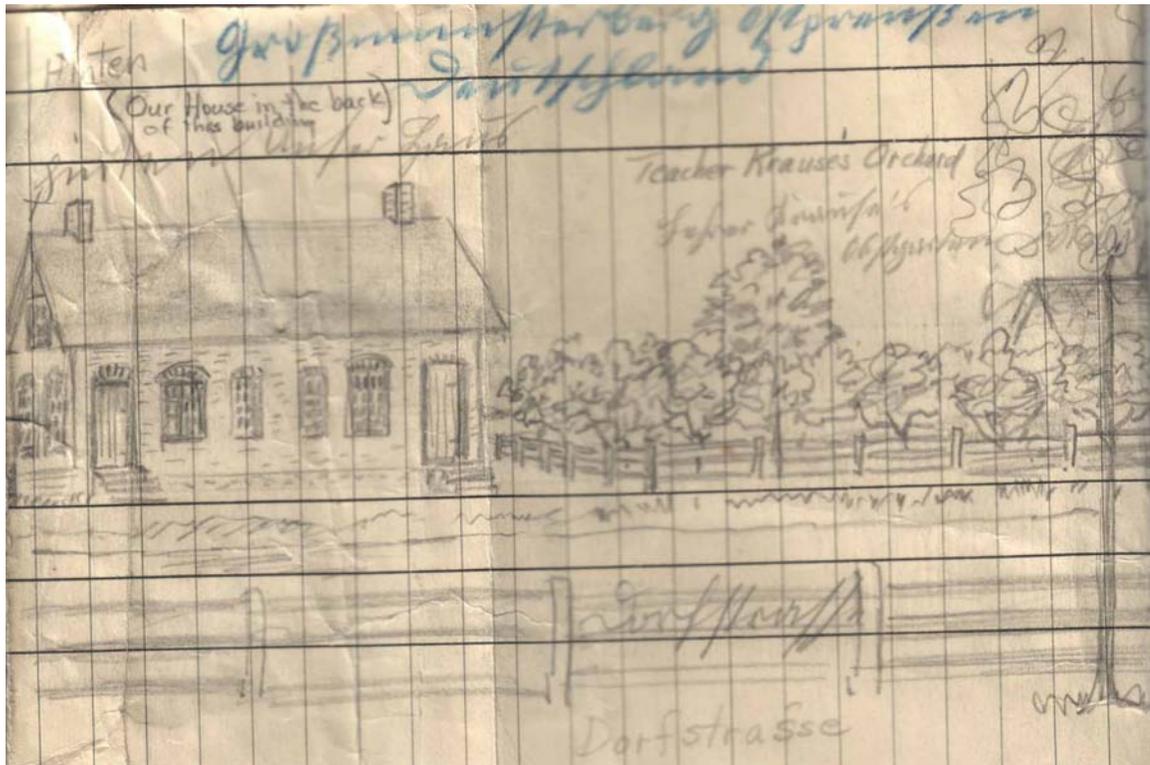


map and translated the German labels into English. Shown on the map were the house where the Bolz family lived with three other families, the school house, the chapel on the cemetery and many of the kinds of trees that grew in the village.

Four families, the Bolzes, Brauns, Krauses, and Vogelmakers, lived in a kind of apartment house. Their parts were each much like one-room apartments with an upstairs loft and with a basement below for poultry and small animals.



House in Which the Four Families Lived



Picture of House Redrawn by Walter Kuse

The schoolhouse, according to the village map drawn by Eleonore, was next to the house where they lived, separated only by the teacher's orchard. A small stone chapel stood nearby in the village cemetery. The map showed three marked graves. One may have been the grave of baby brother Fritz, born after Eleonore. Gardens and fields were outside the village.

A peasant family working for a landowner at a time when the industrial revolution was just beginning to affect Germany, obviously "knew its place" in the community social order. The landlord's overseer would walk through the village in the early morning, marshaling his work forces for a given day's work assignment by calling names of villagers as he passed their houses. A loud shout of BOLZ would summon great-grandfather to a particular task.

The landlord's residence is not shown on Eleonore's map, but she showed the road to it and in the lower left hand corner, a building with a stork's nest on it and the owner's orchard. The picture below shows a building with a stork's nest on it. This picture was a lithograph from a collection done by a German bookseller named Alexander Duncker in the late 1800's. The lithographs showed the residences of many Prussian landowners and included the estate at Gross-Münsterberg. This one shows the part of the estate that the village children would not have been allowed to enter and that Eleonore would only have seen from a distance.



Gut Gross-Münsterberg, Kreis Mohrungen, Provinz Ostpreußen, Lithografie aus dem 19. Jahrhundert

The men must have welcomed the ringing of the evening bells from the church that signaled the time for their return to the village from the fields. German songs

learned by the Dorf children in school had words and melodies that described the joy of seeing the setting sun and hearing the chiming steeple bells summoning workers to the rest of the evening.

The village children in homespun clothes, wooden shoes, and hand knit stockings watched the gentry or Herrschaft drive through the Dorf in their carriages. The girls carried their knitting with them even while at play. Older children took care of younger ones. Eleonore's resourceful older brothers solved this baby-sitting situation by putting a large rock on her dress so that she could not crawl away. Then they went off to play.

The map showed a pond where flax was retted. Later this was spun and then woven into linen. Eleonore's mother, Dorothea, had a loom standing in their room. The houses had dirt floors. Bread was baked in an oven connected to the fireplace and heated by first building a fire in it and then raking out the coals.

The map also showed a Linden tree. We shared the map with Chuck Braun, a member of the Braun family, whose ancestors may have lived in the same house with the Bolz family. When he traveled back to East Prussia, now Poland, to the village where our ancestors had lived, he took Grandma's map to the village and found it to be quite accurate even now. Chuck made a video of his visit to the village. He found a "Linden tree" that Grandmother had drawn on the map. It was still alive after around 130 years. According to a German book about nature the Linden tree can live to be 1000 years old. (Eisenreich, p. 66) The German Linden tree is closely related to the American Basswood.

Grandmother had often sung a favorite German song written by Wilhelm Müller called "Am Brunnen vor dem Tore." Franz Schubert wrote the melody. The song told of memories of a special Linden tree that stood near a well by gateway to a village. German choirs singing this melody can be found on the Internet by typing in the name of the song.

Grandma's village had a resident schoolmaster, Lehrer Krause, who taught all subjects. The children learned long poems, songs, history, geography, and religion as well as reading, writing, and arithmetic. We wonder if Grandmother learned "Am Brunnen vor dem Torre" at school.

When we look at our basswood trees, we think of Grandmother's childhood experiences, her map and her memories of the Linden tree, still standing even now.

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Am Brunnen vor dem Torre (Various web sites.)

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