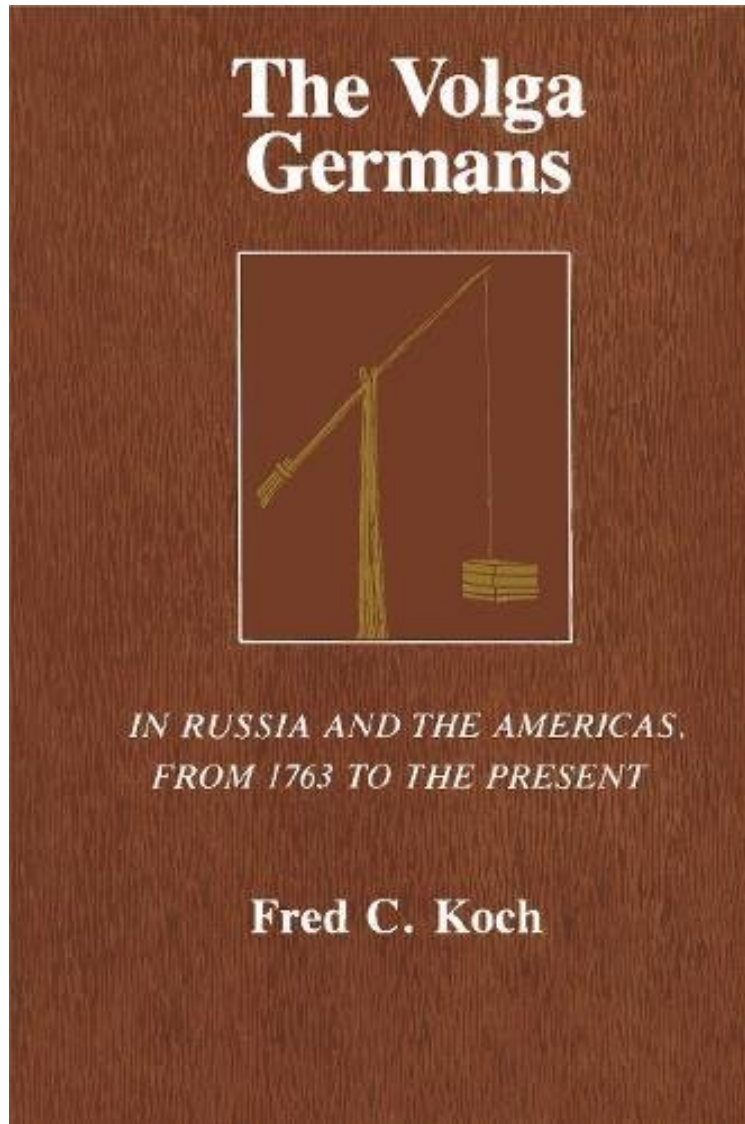


[E-BOOK] The Volga Germans: In Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the Present

The Volga Germans: In Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the Present

Fred C. Koch

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Fred C. Koch : The Volga Germans: In Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the Present before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Volga Germans: In Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the Present:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Interested in Russian German Heritage? Read about Volga Germans, Emigrating First to Russia Thence to AmericaBy Andy Anderson aka Travis C.As a youth growing up, even until I

reached 37 years of age, my mother was convinced she was German. Then, after her own mother died two days previously, my mother learned, on her last night on Earth, that her mother actually was born in Russia. Mom died unaware of her Volga German heritage. It would be seven years before I became aware of the initial 104 towns that pioneered the southern border of Russia in Catherine The Great's scheme to bolster her adoptive country's hold on the frontier wrested back from China. The first book I found pertinent to the Volga Germans was *Wir Wollen Deutsche Bleiben: The Story of the Volga Germans* by George J. Walters. That book led me to this, *The Volga Germans in Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the present*. Fred C. Koch documents much more about the spiritual and religious thoughts and practices than did Walters. But, of greater importance, Koch gives us understanding and documentation regarding the Volga Germans emigration to Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and other countries of the New World. For me, since my Mother's grandfather hailed from the Volga German Republic but he fathered Mom's dad in Argentina, this aspect was a key importance. Another nice feature of Koch's book is, 'A Roster of the German Colonies on the Lower Volga.' This feature should be a nice aid to genealogical researchers. Overall, I rate this 360-plus page, 'The Volga Germans: In Russia and the America's from 1763 to the Present,' as a five star for anyone interested in the Germans who emigrated first to Germany, thence to the Americas. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A Slice of Personal History By Louis Noodleman I've always known my mother's family came over to the States from the German Frank Colony, but I knew nothing else. This book has supplied me with such a wealth of history about my ancestors. When and why they left Germany for Russia, when and why they left Russia for the U.S., how they lived, where exactly they lived. All of these questions are answered for my ancestors' colony and for the other Volga Germans as well. This book is a treasure. 22 of 23 people found the following review helpful. A Must Read for All People from German for Russian Families By Diana L. Croissant This book and the one entitled *Wir Wollen Deutsche Bleiben* are essential reads for anyone who comes from a family of Germans from Russia. This ethnic group is discussed almost never in American History books, and indeed, it is a group of people who often took more pride in fitting in to the United States rather than talking about their struggles when they first arrived. But as a grandchild whose four grandparents arrived as teenagers from Russia but who were German and not "Roosian" (as they pronounced it), I found this book to be an excellent source for understanding my heritage and providing me all the more reason to be proud of my people. Koch's research is very thorough. Read it if you are a German from Russia and want to know your heritage. Please read it if you are not, simply because it describes a group of people you may have never heard of before but people you should know as part of the tossed salad or melting pot (whichever metaphor you prefer) of the United States.

Catherine the Great recruited thousands of colonists "to populate her lower Volga River frontier with dependable permanent settlers who not only would bring stability to this lawless, underdeveloped, and uncharted region, but also would reclaim the vast wasteland there"—an area larger than the state of Maryland. This recruitment program ended in 1766, after drawing a majority of the colonists (about 30,000) from west central Germany, particularly the Hessian states. Since 1874 many inhabitants of this overpopulated land island between Saratov and Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) have emigrated to the Western world—to homesteads from the plains of western Canada to the pampas of Argentina, but chiefly in the U.S. By 1920 more than 300,000 Volga Germans were counted in the U.S., mostly in the private states but including 24,000 in the East and 30,000 on the West Coast. Meanwhile, the number of German-derived residents of the Soviet Union exceeded two million—the original Evangelical and Roman Catholic settlers having flourished, despite adversity, and having been joined by Mennonites in 1854. The author paints a vivid picture of the pioneering activities of the Germans on the Volga, meeting the challenges of a hostile environment and raids by brigands, and keeping their culture alive through an elaborate system of parochial schools. A century ago population pressure forced many Volga Germans westward to the Americas, or eastward to Turkestan and Siberia somewhat later. Although Lenin established a Volga German Autonomous Republic, Stalin abolished it in 1941 during the Nazi invasion and deported its population to Siberia and Central Asia. A 1964 Soviet decree retracted wholesale charges of disloyalty against the Volga Germans but denied restoration of their Republic. The story of the Volga Germans and their adventures in North and South America from 1874 to the present is a warm and vibrant one. Both laymen and scholars will find it rewarding.

About the Author Fred C. Koch, who came to the U.S.A. from the Volga German colony of Kolb at the age of five, has spent his entire career on newspapers in the State of Washington: in Wenatchee, Cashmere, Spokane, and Seattle. During World War II he served with the Office of War Information in London, the Office of Psychological Warfare in Paris, and military government in Frankfurt and Berlin. He is a graduate of the University of Washington and is active in the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.