

# *Denison in the Genes*

*German-Russians: from Ukraine to Texas, c.1880s to 2013*

The First Three Generations of American Descendants of the  
Constantine "Mack" & Anna Öster Christman Family of Denison, Texas

By

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***Constantine "Mack" Christman & Anna Öster m. 11 April 1896 Denison, Texas  
(German-Russian Immigrants to USA)***

Constantine "Mack" b. 1872 d. 1925 and Anna Öster Christman b. 1874 d. 1928 (buried together in Fairview Cemetery) were immigrants to the United States from the little village of Freudental, Odessa, Ukraine, Russia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Family oral history has it that one of the families, probably the Christmans, came to Texas through the port of Galveston. However, ships' manifest records from that time and place are difficult to find because of the hurricane around 1900 that took away most of the public buildings on Galveston Island.

What *is* known is that Mack arrived with his father, Friedrich Christmann b. 1833 d. 1901 (buried in Oakwood Cemetery), several brothers and sisters (might be step siblings), his step-mother, Elizabeth, and a group of cousins. Their ship left the port of Hamburg, Germany and arrived in Baltimore, Maryland. They made their way to Denison where they set up housekeeping and Elizabeth opened a business as a midwife (advertised in the Denison City Directory). Friedrich worked as a general laborer in the larger Denison businesses, such as the Waples Platter Co. The grown children settled in various businesses and farming adventures, living in the area surrounding Denison and Pottsboro, Texas. Anna was listed as a seamstress in the 1890-91 Denison City Directory. In the 1896 directory, she was listed as a servant in the Pace home. However, that could not have lasted long as she married Mack Christman that year. Eventually, some of the boys went to Wichita Falls, Texas.

Before leaving Europe, Friedrich (a widower two times over) married Elizabeth Dexter (unknown birth and death dates). Elizabeth had three single adult daughters; Friedrich had three single adult sons. The four couples married and sailed for America with a substantial group of children among them. One of the two children born to Elizabeth and Friedrich Christmann was Emma b. circa 1882, who married Anna Öster's brother, Daniel Öster, Sr. They moved to Wichita Falls and opened Öster's Bakery there just as Mack had opened a bakery in Denison. Emma's sister, Carolina "Carlie" Christman (b. circa 1886, d. 1910), married Heinrich Hendrix (b. circa 1885, d. 1908). They had two children who were orphaned at very young ages and Emma took them in, raising them with her large brood of children.

Anna, her siblings, two step-siblings (one married with a child), her mother, Otilia Bittermann (Öster) Oberländer b. 1845 d. circa 1910 (buried in unknown cemetery Grayson County), and her step-father, a widower named Eberhardt Oberländer b. 1845 d. circa 1900 (buried in unknown cemetery Grayson County), arrived in the port of New York around the same time as the Christmanns after leaving Bremen, Germany. The Öster and Christman families were next door neighbors in Freudental. Mack's father (Friedrich Christmann) was the village blacksmith, and Anna's father (Adolf Öster b. 1844 d. unknown date & buried unknown location in Russia) owned a large walnut orchard, which Anna referred to as "vast". Anna also reported that they had storks nesting on their roof. Subsequent investigation has shown that storks are a fairly common bird in the area, but the sight of them nesting on the rooftops of private homes is still overwhelming to me.

When Anna's father died at a young age, her family was stripped of all their possessions by the Czarist government in place at that time. Anna recounted that the government official in charge of the mission to take their personal items took her doll from her arms and handed it to a local official for his child, leaving Anna distressed and crying. Soon, her mother married a widower, Mr. Eberhardt Oberländer, and they brought their mixed brood to Texas in 1890. Mr. Oberländer had a young son named Jakob who stayed in touch with the Christman family (he was known as Uncle Jake) until his death in the 1960s. Although he was raised by his older, married sister, Barbara Klein, with her family in Oklahoma, he considered his father's second family to be his own. There was also an infant named Eduard Oberländer listed on both the New York and Hamburg manifests who was of an age to be the child of Otilia and Eberhardt. His records disappear after arrival in the USA; thus, I believe he may have died as an infant or child sometime between 1890 and 1900.

Mack and Anna married in April 1896 and moved into a small home at 928 West Woodard. They lived in that home until their bakery business, which was begun near the house on Woodard with John Krattiger (a cousin), became such a success in Denison that they were able to build one of the finest Victorian homes in town at 931 West Woodard, and move the business (Home Steam Bakery) to a downtown location at 610/612 West Main Street by 1915. The large house still stands today.

Mack died suddenly of a heart attack in 1925 about age 52, and Anna died of cancer in 1928 about age 50. The family business was sold and the large home on West Woodard was sold. It would come back to the Christmans one last time about 1948, when Mack and Anna's eldest son, Milton, and his wife, Leonie, purchased the old house for their family. Leonie sold it sometime in the early 1960s after Milton died in Dallas in December, 1959.

### ***1<sup>st</sup> Generation American Christman Children & Their Families*** *A Brief Introduction*

While living at 928 West Woodard, Mack and Anna Christman had 5 children. Two of those children lived to adulthood; the other three died in infancy. The 1900 and 1910 censuses support the family oral tradition that they had twin daughters who died (probably at birth) before 1900, as well as a son named Clarence b. 11/1903, d. 4/1904, who is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Denison. There are no marked gravesites for the

twin girls; however, there are 3 unmarked plots known to belong to the Christman family next to Clarence's marble grave marker. One of these graves may contain the twins' remains. It was often the Victorian custom to bury twin infants together in the same coffin, especially if they died at birth. As the marker would be well over 100 years old and probably inexpensive for the time (the couple was newly married with a fledgling business), it may have disintegrated or been broken and discarded. Their next child after Clarence was Milton Leslie Christman, b. 8/1906, d. 12/1959 – my grandfather. Look for more details on his life and family in a later section. Subsequently, Anna and Mack had another son, Constantine, Jr. (aka Lewis Henry). Lewis ultimately moved to Fort Worth and died there, though he is buried with his first wife, Mildred, at Fairview Cemetery. They did not have children.

Anna and Mack had one more child: a daughter named Helen Anna Marie b. 5/1916 d. 1/2000 (buried Fairview Cemetery). Helen was born in the back bedroom of their fine new home at 931 West Woodard. During Helen's childhood, sometime after Mack's untimely death, Anna became ill and realized she would not be able to finish raising her youngest child, Helen, (only 12 years old when orphaned). Thus, Anna made provisions in a will that Helen be raised at the I.O.O.F. (Odd Fellows) home in Corsicana; but her big brothers, Milton and Lewis, made sure she was able to come back to Denison to graduate high school with her class of 1935. During her senior year, she lived with the Kollert family who had been close friends with her parents. Helen always said they treated her like she was their own daughter.

Helen married L.D. Lessly b. 1911 d. 1992 (buried Fairview Cemetery) and they lived in Denison all their lives, raising two fine sons. They were happily married for over 50 years. Both were staunch members of the Presbyterian Church. L.D. was a devoted Masonic brother, and Helen was a member of Eastern Star. When they passed away, they were buried side by side in Fairview Cemetery next to both their families.

Their younger son, Freddy Lessly has remained in Denison all of his life. He is married and has two children. Freddy is a tireless worker for Denison civic causes, including the public library board, the Denison High School Alumni Association, and the Rotary Club. He is a devoted family man and a highly respected member of the Episcopal Church.

Helen's and L.D.'s older son, Larry, lives on the west coast. He is married, but does not have children. Larry is an accomplished attorney who has served on many state boards and been honored as a reagent for the board of the state university system in his adopted home state. Larry has also attained the rank of General in the United States Air Force.

### ***Milton Christman & Leonie Steele m. 18 June 1925 Denison, Texas (1<sup>st</sup> Generation)***

Milton Christman b. 8/1906 d. 12/1959 (buried Fairview Cemetery) was a spunky, charming, young man, which is likely what earned him the nickname "Dutch". He enjoyed life to the fullest and was known to be involved in his fair share of childhood innocent pranks. One of our favorite family stories is that he used to tie a string to one toe and hang it out the second story window of his bedroom at night. Early on weekend mornings, his pals could wake him by tugging the string and they would all be off for a secret fishing trip! As a teenager, he was enrolled in Wentworth Military Academy. He

played the trombone and was in the marching band there. After returning home, he met my grandmother – the love and light of his life – Leonie “Lally” Steele, b. 7/1908 d. 11/1979 (buried Fairview Cemetery).

Leonie was also known to be a spunky girl who was bright, inventive, and had a sparkling personality. She also took painting lessons from Dr. Mott, a locally known artist who inspired her to paint beautiful still-life and landscape oil paintings all her life. She was the last child born into the Albert G. Steele b. 1868 d. 1953 (buried Oakwood Cemetery) and Mary Ellen Poulston b. 1875 d. 1949 (buried Oakwood Cemetery) family. She had one brother and three sisters. They were Alberta Grace, Bernice Ermine, Fannie J., and John Henderson. Leonie loved to sing and dance to the latest tunes. (Many years later, when I was a child, she would take me by the hands and sing songs like “You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby” or “Ain’t She Sweet” as she danced me around the kitchen.) She was always on the cutting edge of fashion for the times, and even entered into a beauty pageant or two. She once told me that she was the first girl in Denison to have a two-piece bathing suit which she wore in one of those pageants. I’ve seen the photo – and yes, it was two pieces. It was a pair of shorts and a tank top made of the close knit wool used for bathing suits in the 1920s – very daring for the day.

The couple was inseparable and decided to elope at the tender ages of 18 and 16 in June of 1925. Despite the universal parental disapproval of their young marriage, the couple moved into a rental property on Monterey Street belonging to the Christman family and began their life together. Leonie’s mother prevailed, however, and the couple soon moved to her home at 1001 Murray Street. It is unclear to me if the couple continually lived there or moved in and out a time or two; but, my father, Jon Milton Christman was born there in November 1929 (d. 9/1968 buried Fairview Cemetery). Their daughter, Marianne Christman was born in March 1935 when the family lived at 930 West Woodard. It was during these years that Dutch owned and operated the Light Crust Bakery. Leonie was a stenographer during the depression and, all things considered, the family prospered because of their determination and stalwart work ethic.

The family lived at 930 West Woodard with Leonie’s mother, Mary Ellen Steele, until they were able to buy back the large Victorian family home at 931 West Woodard from the Harlow family in 1948. Mary Ellen and Albert Steele had divorced several years before this, although he did remain in close contact with his family. He visited regularly and usually spent several weeks in the summer with them. Mary Ellen died of her second stroke in 1949. She is buried in Oakwood Cemetery. Albert died in February 1953, only 4 weeks before I was born. He is buried with Mary Ellen in Oakwood Cemetery. Their son, John Henderson Steele is also buried with them. Two other sisters, Bernice and Fannie are buried in Denison with their respective husbands; Alberta, who served in the Navy in WWI, is buried in Jefferson Barracks military cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri with her husband and son.

Despite the usual daily trials of any family, everyone in the Christman family seemed to come out unscathed. They enjoyed what they had; cherished their family; and looked to a better day when something hurtful befell them. Another happy favorite family story is that they bought the second television set owned in Denison sometime around 1950. Family and neighbors regularly gathered in the large den to watch. I feel certain Leonie and Milton were very pleased to have the TV gatherings – they loved a

great party! I can just envision everyone sitting all over the sofas and chairs and even on the floor to catch a glimpse of the *Ed Sullivan Show* or the local news at 10pm My grandparents never bragged or gloated about their successes – they simply shared what they had with everyone they could.

Leonie and Milton sold their second family-owned business, Right-Way Laundry on Myrick Avenue, and then moved to Dallas about 1956 where he worked as a laundry manager. They immediately moved into a lovely, large, home in an historical district. They lived there for about two or three years and decided to purchase one of the homes in the same block of Swiss Avenue.

Unfortunately, Milton, like his father, died at a young age of a heart attack in December 1959. He was only 53 years old. Milton and Leonie were just in the transition of moving into their new home, and he never got to live in it. Leonie continued to live in their recently purchased large home in the historical district of Dallas for twenty years. Everyone in the family lived in the house with her at one time or another. She wanted a home full of laughter, children and love! Leonie died in November 1979 of a stroke. She and Milton are buried side by side in Fairview Cemetery in Denison. Her daughter, Marianne, lived in the house on Swiss Avenue with her husband, Willie Hughes, until they moved to Denison in 1985. After Willie died in 1991, Marianne stayed in Denison where she lives today. Willie is buried in Fairview Cemetery near Leonie and Milton Christman.

***Jon Christman & Joyce Compton m. 18 June 1950 Greenville, Texas (2<sup>nd</sup> Generation)***

Leonie's and Milton's first-born and my father was Jon Milton Christman b. 11/1929 d. 9/1968 (buried Fairview Cemetery). He was a bright child and known throughout his life for many talents. His sense of humor was well known, and he inherited his father's childhood passion for a bit of pranking. His ability to mimic famous voices (or anyone's voice) was remarkable, and he had a photographic memory that made studying very easy – if he had the inclination to do it! Everyone in the family had a particular artistic bent, and my father's was singing. He had a beautiful voice with classical qualities and would surely have been a success in that field had he pursued it. Instead, he decided to pursue a business career after he married my mother, Joyce Compton b. 1/1929, in 1950.

He began by working for his father in the family's laundry business, but soon obtained employment at Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. Over the years, he would work for two other telephone companies, serve as the manager of the Chamber of Commerce for Farmer's Branch, Texas, and own a general contracting business. His last position was as general manager for a company based in Kansas that owned upscale apartment complexes in Dallas County. His health often dictated what work he could do as he had a serious heart condition and was not allowed extreme stress or long hours at times when he was ill. He suffered a major heart attack at age 31 in 1961 and was unable to work for two years. After that, he started his contracting business so that he could control how many hours he worked. But, as he always did, he worked too much. He suffered three more heart attacks in the ensuing 7 years, and died suddenly in 1968.

My parents had a short courtship of three weeks. It was obvious from the beginning of their relationship that they would marry, so they decided on the very short engagement to make it possible for them to marry on his parents' silver wedding anniversary. My mother's mother rose to the occasion, however. She produced a beautiful wedding, made my mother's dress, and did all the other things a mother of the bride is obligated to accomplish. But, she did it all in about a week. Mother and Daddy were married at Wesley Methodist Church in her hometown of Greenville, Texas (Hunt County) on June 18, 1950. The church is still in operation; however, the original buildings have long since been demolished. Our family has keepsake bricks from the original church that my father painted a bright metallic gold and lettered with the date of his marriage to my mother.

Daddy was not one to stay in one house for life or even for very long. He and Mother moved into a small cottage about a block from Leonie and Milton at 116 Chandler Avenue in 1950 when they married. As mentioned earlier, he worked at the family owned business, Right-Way Laundry, in Denison until he obtained a position with Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. They lived in the little house until I was almost 4 in 1957. Those seven years are the longest period of time I know he lived in one spot after he married mother. In 1957, right after his parents went to Dallas, we all moved to Dallas. He loved to move to different homes, and Mother loved to rearrange furniture. It's a good thing I was a flexible child! Many times it was Daddy's work that took us to new locations; but sometimes it was just because he was interested in a better house or a different neighborhood.

As previously mentioned, the last move we made as a family was to an upscale apartment complex in Irving, Texas (Dallas County) in the summer of 1967. Daddy was the general manager of that apartment complex as well as two others in Dallas. Mother was the manager of the apartments in Irving. It was the first time we had ever lived in an apartment, and I spent my summer getting very tan and waterlogged in the pool. In the fall, I began my sophomore year at MacArthur High School in Irving, Texas.

The move to Irving was bittersweet for us. While we all enjoyed ourselves and our new lives to the fullest for a few months, our happiness was cut short when Daddy passed away from his fourth heart attack at age 38 in September, 1968. He is buried in Fairview Cemetery in Denison, next to his mother. Suddenly, I was a 15 year-old high school student with a single, working mother. Mother was determined to stay where we were, and was quickly promoted to the position my father had held with the management company. I continued high school, majoring in foreign languages (German, French and Spanish) and journalism, until I graduated in 1970. A good friend and Masonic lodge brother of my father's taught me to drive. As it happened, he and his brother owned a used car lot. I was never without some kind of vehicle to use until we were able to purchase one for me as a graduation present. I remember that a lot of good people tried to fill in where they could (especially with hauling a teenager around) and the end result was that Mother and I were well looked after in my father's absence.

In the fall of 1970, I was off to college at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. I was barely 17, and I must confess I did not do my very best at studying. In fact, I did very little in the way of studying. But, I can't say I didn't learn anything. Life has a funny way of teaching us even if we don't read the book. After a year of fun and not-so-wonderful grades, I left school and married my long-time

sweetheart, Michael Atchley. The following year we were blessed with a son. Michael and I were great best friends for many years before we married; but we soon discovered that living in the same house was not the same and we divorced. However, we did remain close friends and devoted parents to our son for 35 years until Michael's death in 2007. Oh, but now I am ahead of myself . . . .

While I was away at college, Mother decided to make a career move that became a life-changing move for her. She accepted a wonderful position managing a lovely condominium complex in far north Dallas. It was there she met her second husband, Harry Blair. They married in the late summer of 1978. Unfortunately, Harry was diagnosed with a virulent type of lung cancer about that time. He endured surgery and chemo; yet, he did not survive long. He passed away in December of 1978.

Mother has remained single since then. She lived in Dallas until 2006 when she moved to Houston to be with me. Today she shares an apartment with me in Houston, Texas. She is 84 years young; driving, shopping, taking the dog for her morning walk, and often cooking those great meals I remember from my childhood!

***Toni Christman & Michael Atchley m. 1971 Dallas, Texas (3<sup>rd</sup> Generation)***

I met Michael Atchley b. 10/1950 d. 12/2007 (buried in Ardmore, Oklahoma) in the fall of 1965 when I was only twelve years old. He was all of fifteen – very much an older “man” to me. We met at my junior high school Halloween party and were, like my grandparents before me, inseparable for the rest of our lives. And, like my grandparents before me, this love at first sight relationship was met with a universal and resounding disapproval from our families. We spent the first three years of our time together trying to work on our parents for approval to go to the movies or out to eat – and working out just whose parents would do the driving since neither of us was old enough for a license!

Life with Michael was very much a party, as long as we weren't living in the same house. Every day something funny or touching or memorable happened. He was more exciting than anyone I'd ever known. For example: The night we met, we participated in the cake walk as it was closing down. We won an apple pie for our effort, but could find no plastic forks left in the cafeteria. So, we went off to the corner – determined to eat our pie before we left the party – and like two little kids we plowed into it with our fingers. That story, along with many other rib-ticklers and poignant moments followed us all the 42 years we were friends. We also shared a mutual love of architecture and drafting. We were champion card players – not one couple in our circle of friends could beat us in a spirited game of Spades, and we often played late into the night. White Rock Lake in Dallas was our “hang out”. Once we were old enough to drive and be out in the car together after dark (I thought that would *never* happen), we would drive around the lake many nights and just sit by the old bath-house and talk.

While I was busily flunking out of my freshman year at Stephen F. Austin, Michael was completing an associate's degree at the Dallas County Community College District's downtown location, El Centro. He was interested in theater, I was interested in marriage. To Michael. I won that one, but he later took up a form of theater – ballet – which he continued off and on for many years. He was talented and well-suited to dancing, too. I have to admit it – he cut a dashing figure in those tights and velvet

tunics! In all fairness, though, Michael could make a trip to Kip's Big Boy an adventure if he wanted to. Michael was musically talented, too. He played piano, flute, and oboe. In his later years, he sang in the choir of the Episcopal Church he attended in his adopted home town of Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Michael and I were married in Dallas, Texas at Prestonwood Country Club on July 19, 1971. It was his parents' silver wedding anniversary – we planned that so the tradition would continue from my parents to us. The Justice of the Peace was over 30 minutes late because of a terrible rainstorm - poor fellow! One of the elderly guests was heard to say, as I walked down the aisle, "Oh my! She almost looks thin in that beautiful dress!" The photographer insisted on taking a couple of shots that made it appear Michael was begging me to marry him – down on bended knee with his hand in a very dramatic pose on his forehead as I turned away. All was in good fun and we loved every minute of it! And, the champagne flowed like water, which, in retrospect, may have been better thought out. The cake and hors d'oeuvres were perfect, and every one of our friends showed up. My father's best friend gave me away. Our wedding turned out to be Cinderella at the ball with no lost shoe! We were so young and inexperienced that when we arrived at our first apartment on our wedding night, we stopped at the payphone to call home and say we were safe in the deluge of a rainstorm.

As soon as we discovered we were expecting, we bought a house near White Rock Lake in Dallas because that lake had been a favorite haunt of ours when we were dating. That was back when you could buy a small house as "Paint for Down Payment" on an FHA loan. Our house had two bedrooms and one bath with an attached garage – quite nice, but in serious need of a coat of paint inside and out. And so, we set out to paint. And we painted, and we painted, and we painted. I thought we'd never finish painting. But we did finish, we got approval for our loan, and we moved into our new house just months before our son arrived. Every night after work, Michael would play Chopin or some other classical music on his piano while I made dinner. I was enthralled with this private concert, and sometimes he'd play things we could sing together. Somehow (and I'll never figure out how) we walked away from the closing on that little house with the owner paying us a couple of hundred dollars. Once again, the luck of things meant to be prevailed!

The greatest story of them all was the birth of our son. Never were two parents prouder. By the second day in the hospital, we politely kicked out the other family visitors and told them "We are the ones with the new baby – can we please have some time alone?" Michael had very definite ideas about how social matters ought to be handled and to his way of thinking; those guests were wearing me out and keeping him from sitting with me and our new son. Michael and I even had a small spat as to who would get to carry the baby from the car into our home and his awaiting grandparents. Michael won. I let him because I wanted to watch his eyes light up and his smile beam. I wasn't disappointed.

We had prepared the perfect nursery – all bright rainbow colors meant for either gender baby (no way to tell before birth back then). The house was full of the antiques we loved and we had a huge collie dog named Willis. Later on, Willis would prove to be a real boon to us as our son learned to crawl by grabbing handfuls of the dog's fur and pulling himself over the sleeping animal. Willis the collie never made a sound. I often wondered if the poor dog really slept through those ordeals.



I felt like we must be Ozzie and Harriet, and for a while we were. Michael was the devoted bread winner. I was in domestic bliss; cooking, cleaning, taking care of the baby and even ironing Michael's work clothes every morning. But as time went on, we discovered that the things we had in common were intensely fun did not include living in the same house. While it is true that we divorced after about two and a half years of marriage in 1973, that didn't stop us from being best friends. I always thought maybe we were a little bit too close. We were more like Lucy and Ethel with each of us taking turns dreaming up "the plan", laughing together, hanging out with our friends - but being able to go to separate homes when the party was over. So we divorced and took up separate living quarters. After a brief period of being "appropriately miffed" over the divorce, we went right back to being best friends and remained so until Michael died in December 2007. I have to admit, I lost my best friend that sad day.

### ***Christman Family Members Moving Ahead in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

There aren't many of us Christmans from Denison left these days. I am the only one from my direct line who actually carries the surname. My aunt, Marianne Christman Hughes lives in Denison, as does my cousin, Freddy Lessly (son of Helen & L.D. Lessly). Larry Lessly, Freddy's brother, lives on the west coast.

Although I work on genealogy almost every day, I find there are not many of us Texas Christmans left anywhere. We have many distant cousins living in the Dakotas who are descendants of Old Friedrich's brothers. I have found a 5<sup>th</sup> cousin to me living in Germany (born in Germany). She and I have a wonderful time visiting and exchanging family information. I recently received a group of photos from her trip to the Ukraine to the villages where our ancestors were born. My great-grandfather, Mack, always said he learned to swim in the Black Sea, so she sent me a special picture of it. It seems funny to see guys in Speedos and women in bikini bathing suits on a beach where my great-grandfather might have walked in the 1870s!

And so, we move along. There may not be many of us, but there are still a couple of children. My son plans to marry next year – who knows if he might have a future generation to pass this genealogical research to? In the meantime, I do this research of my ancestors' lives because I want to know. Knowing where I came from is fascinating to me – and to think – it all started when Leonie Christman, my grandmother, decided I would be the keeper of the family stories! I was only about 9, so I guess we could say I've been at this for about 50 years! Give or take...

*\*If you have any information on the family described in this article, please feel free to contact me at [tchristman0315@gmail.com](mailto:tchristman0315@gmail.com) I am interested in anything you have – records, old certificates and communications from the German Russians in Ukraine (I speak German and can get old German script translated). Photos of anything or person related to the Christman or Öster families are of particular interest (of course); and, if there is anything I can do to help you with documents in German, I'd be happy to help. General photos of the villages of Ukraine during the 19<sup>th</sup> century would also be wonderful. I am especially interested in photos of the homes that have storks nesting on the roofs. You may also visit my family tree at [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com) It is named "Christman & Compton Families in Texas" My user name is ChristmanT53. You can find many other family*

*names from the same villages in the Odessa region of Ukraine where my great-grandparents hail from. Many of these families came to the USA and married into families they knew from the old country. Some of your family names may show up – feel free to check for them. I have an extensive tree.*



*Es grüßt Euch ganz lieb  
Toni Christman*

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