

The origin and development of the colony Augustwalde¹

(Partial transcript of the resolution of Guben's district committee, 2 October 1902)

Determines the findings of the auditing college for cultural concerns of the country, 28 September 1866, that the city of Guben first occupied 6 lots citing identical contracts on its forest territory in 1797 and that in 1813 and 1814 additional 3 lots were listed with similar conditions.

Due to the original contract dated 7 March 1798 with Martin Hensel, the settlement started in avoidance of the frequent wood theft in the city heath as well as in order to prevent further boundary disputes. The settlement was located between the furthest border of the city heath and the Niemaschkleban "Bruch" behind the long wood near the 3 border heaps in direction of the cold fountain towards the so-called dense hazel hedge.

The colonist was in all to be taken as a Niemaschkleban Büdner, as such liable to the normal tributary's oath and to

- a) pay 4 Thalers to the treasurer (for farm and garden ground as well as the permission to collect fallen branches and small wood) and 6 Groschen² to the mayor (allowance to spin);
- b) render the usual services – resp. to the Niemaschkleban Büdners – during the annual big as well as smaller hunting events; to do 6 days of hand labor during the annual harvest for the tenant of Niemaschkleba, also threshing services, furthermore to serve the community in autumn as lumberjack;
- c) watch out as good as possible for wood thieves or other serious faults and problems and to report them to the heath officer, furthermore to render courier services ("Zechboten-dienste") to Crossen and other villages.

The colony of Augustwalde had no independent administration up until the establishment of the district regulation. During the various decades, a so-called "Schulze" (= mayor of a village or small town) was elected, however it is not reported that he was supported by jurors/assessors. The Schulze was only elected as the assistant of Niemaschkleba's mayor by the lord of the manor.

Augustwalde and Heideschäferei both were not able to lead an independent community life and to fulfill the obligations of a community. Both settlements had repeatedly been released from the performance of claims due to a lack of efficiency, e.g. the keeping of a night guard.

Augustwalde³

Augustwalde, commonly named "Hazels", derived from the grove of hazel bushes where the early settlement was first founded on the outskirts of the city heath at the end of the 18th century or formally according to its sovereign at that time, the electoral prince August of Saxonia; as opposed to the colony Friedrichswalde, located on Krossen ground on the other side of the boundary rivulet Hammernitze, the latter's name going back to King Friedrich II. The village borders to the royal forest/Braschen hunting ground in the east, to the Guben city

¹ State Main Archive of Brandenburg in Potsdam, Rep. 6B No 230, leaf 84

² 6 Groschen = 75 pennies

³ Territorial History of Lower Lusatia, Rudolf Lehmann, page 525

heath in southern and western direction and to the field mark Niemaschkleba to the western and northern direction. Most recently Niemaschkleba had given compensation for 48 acres of pastures, the 9 colonists belonging to Augustwalde/Niemaschkleba now own 30 acres. Each of the 9 colonists pays 2 thalers each for house/garden/field tax as well as spinning tax. The settlement itself is mortgaged with 30 Thalers "Laudemien"⁴.

Founding treaty – Augustwalde No 1

The founding treaty between the counsel of Guben and the colonist Martin Friedrich Gromm to build a house plus barn and stables and to plant a garden was signed on 7 March 1798; see also Founding Act of Augustwalde, volume III, leaf 1, pages 1-4 (Federal Main Archive of Brandenburg in Potsdam) on the colony of Augustwalde:

Quote in archaic traditional German stating that "the mayor and counsel of the Electoral Saxonian District City of Guben in the margraviate Lower Lusatia allowed 6 farmers to establish a new settlement in order to both avoid wood theft and to prevent further boundary disputes. The settlement shall be located at the furthest corner between the city heath and the Niemaschkleban Bruch, behind the long wood near the 3 mill heaps in direction of the cold fountain towards the so-called dense hazel hedge. The following conditions are to be observed:

1. The new colonist shall in everything be taken as Niemaschkleban Büdner and as such liable to the usual tributary's oath. This condition remains unchanged, no matter what further obligations will come through future changes (farm, owners, possessions).
2. Whereas he shall be given the necessary wood logs for the new buildings free of charge, later on when repairs or rebuilding will be necessary, he will have to pay the usual forest price for them. Furthermore, the barn and stable shall be put under the same roof as the living house. Also, the walls of the house shall not be filled with coarsely grinded wood but laid in bricks and coated with clay.
3. The annual house and garden tax is 1 Thaler 12 Groschen to be paid to the treasurer.
4. 2 Thalers 12 Groschen are to be paid to the treasurer for the permission to collect woods/branches lying about to be used as firewood. He shall not be seen using an axe, only a short-handled hatchet⁵ is allowed, otherwise he will be held and punished for wood theft.
5. Annually 6 Groschen spinning tax are to be paid to the mayor.
6. Resp. to the Niemaschkleban Büdners, he is to render the usual services during the annual big as well as smaller hunting events. If not rendering the services manually, he may instead pay the requested tax.
7. Each year during harvest time, he is to do 6 days of hand labor for the tenant.
8. On demand of the tenant, he also is to render flailing services from Bartholomew till Michaeli.
9. Furthermore, on demand of the treasurer and not to be disputed against, he may be drawn to fell cordwood against payment. If asked for, this task has priority over his other doings.
10. It is his duty to watch out for "Holzdefraudanten"⁶, to transfer them or their hideaways to the heath authority for further examination and punishment. Should he himself be captured as timber thief, he shall not keep his misdoings secret.
11. In case he is asked to do courier services to Crossen or elsewhere, he is to go immediately without delay.

⁴ Laudemien = Grund-/Bodenzins = ground rent

⁵ Axt/Beil = both mean the same in German, axe/ax

⁶ Holzdefraudant = Holzdieb = wood/timber thieves

12. He is allowed 1 cow and 1 calf *to be shepherded and fed on the pastures of the village, this against payment of 1 "Metze"⁷ oats*. Pigs are not allowed to be led into the heath, they have to be kept in the stable.
13. He belongs to the parish of Niemaschkleba and same as the local Büdners has to pay the usual church tax to the pastor of Niemaschkleba as well as all other "Accidenzien"⁸.
14. It goes without saying that he is to pay the usual taxes to the landlord and to comply to his very orders.
15. Finally, he is to cover all liabilities from 1 January 1800 on.

Guben, 7 March 1798

Colony: Augustwalde⁹

Augustwalde is a colony under Guben's control and rules. The 9 colonists were assumably former forest workers who after the "Rezeß"¹⁰ of 1862 were given land in compensation for:

1. collecting broken/lying about timber from the city forest,
2. grubbing resinous pinewood and "Stubben"¹¹
3. shepherding 1 cow and 1 calf

Notable field names were not included in this settlement. Orally passed on were:

1. Die Hirschgrube = The Deer's Pit
2. Der Hammerteich = Mallet Pond
3. Der Busch = The Bush

On the way to the desert Mikulice (Augustwalde) 2004¹²

A landmarking boundary post used to show the boundary between Friedrichswalde (Prussia) and Augustwalde (Saxonia). Both settlements were small colonies. The colonists were given forest ground to build their houses on it as property. When the war was over, Friedrichswalde consisted of 13 houses, in Augustwalde there were 8 or 9. The children of both villages went to school in Merzwiese.

Augustwalde was about 14 km northeast of Guben, on the northeastern outskirts of the Guben city forest. It was founded at the end of the 18th century by the city of Guben and was named after its sovereign. In 1869 the small village covered 32 acres; in 1900 it was 21 hectares. In 1900, 57 people lived there.

Augustwalde belonged to the treasury of the city of Guben, however to the parish of Lindenhain (called Niemaschkleba before 1935). The railroad from Guben to Crossen passed Augustwalde very closely. Augustwalde had a main forestry.

The rivulet Hammernitze flows between Friedrichswalde and Augustwalde. A small bridge still exists and the rivulet is still flowing. Whereas in Friedrichswalde still some of the houses are standing, a paved sidewalk exists and a new road is being built from Niemaschkleba to Merzwiese, Augustwalde no longer exists (= "ist wüst geworden" = turned into a desert). The ground of the vanished settlement can only be reached by bike.

⁷ Metze = a measure for corn and cereals

⁸ Accidenzien = certain church taxes for celebrations such as baptism, marriage, burial

⁹ Field names of the District Guben, Lower Lusatian Notes, volume 11, 1910, page 124

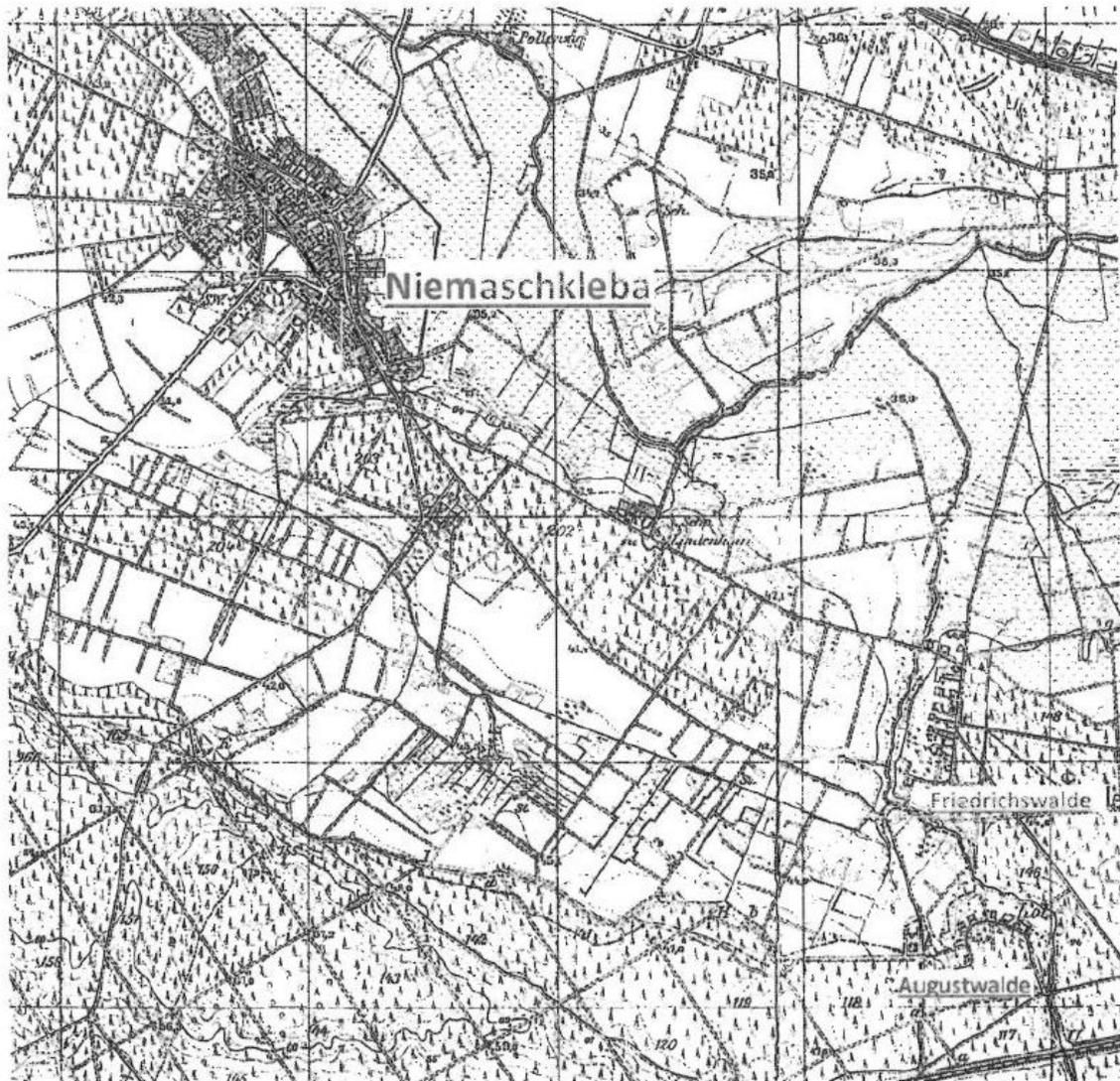
¹⁰ Rezeß = obsolete Ausdruck für lands/ortsrechtlichen Vergleich = former settlement

¹¹ Stubben = Baumstumpf = tree stumps/stubs

¹² Lusatian Review of 21 August 2004 by Hans-Joachim Bergmann

A bridge, a small creak, a cellar, a chestnut tree, some Douglas firs, oak and pine trees, lilacs growing wildly on places where houses used to stand. A lumberjack found some bricks and tiles in the ground, dug them out and cleaned them – that was all that was left of Augustwalde.

Augustwalde has also entered the world of legends and tales. Gander informs that “in our city forest a war treasure is supposed to lie, supposedly brought by the French in spring of 1813 on their hasty retreat from Russia and buried somewhere near Merzwiese or Augustwalde”



Augustwalde: List of Locals

House No	Last name, First name as of 1870 ¹³	Last name, First name as of 1902 ¹⁴	Last name, First name as of 1945 ¹⁵
1	Lampe, Anna Elisabeth small Būdner, 4 pers.	Gast, Gustav Adolf colonist	Gast, Hugo 4 persons
2	Schulze, Gottlieb small Būdner, 4 pers.	Kutzbach, Elisabeth not married	Kutzbach / Hempel 4 persons
3	Gromm, Gotthilf small Būdner, 4 pers.	Gromm, Gottlieb Ernst Būdner	Gromm / Krüger
4	Krug, Maria Dorothea born Türke, widow, 5 pers.	Krug, Gustav Wilhelm Būdner	
5	Klebsch, Gotthilf small Būdner, 4 pers.	Kauschke, Gottlieb worker	Zarn, Reinhold
6	Hensel, Wilhelm small Būdner, 7 pers.	Hensel Wilhelm farmer	Hensel
7	Meyer, Gottlieb small Būdner, 3 pers.	Freund, August Leberecht signalman	Freund, Gustav
8	Stahr, Anna Elisabeth born Gromm, wid., 3 pers.	Stahr, Ernst widower	Kochegay, Gustav
9	Kappel, August small Būdner, 5 pers.	Kappel, Auguste born Burdack, widow	Kappel
10	Weinert, August municip. dep. forester, 5p.	Schulz, Gottlieb u.a. colonist	

Actuality: 25 April 2017

¹³ Class tax (roll) of the community Augustwalde in the district of Guben,
State Main Archive of Brandenburg, Rep. 6B Guben No 529

¹⁴ Resolution of the District Committee of Guben, 2 October 1902,
State Main Archive of Brandenburg, Rep. 6B No 230

¹⁵ Card index of the Federal Archive Bayreuth and List of Locals by Anni Eisler, born Türke, from Niemaschkleba