

The (hereditary) millers of Niemaschkleba (Lindhain)¹

Outside the village Lindhain (formerly called Niemaschkleba) there lies the old mill. Whilst many of the old mills are forever resting by now or do not exist any longer, this one is still fulfilling diligently its job...

1622 the miller of Niemaschkleba died. His successor is Matthes Kadoch. His certificate of appointment reads as follows: "The new miller, Mathes Kadoch, is to pay 100 Taler in cash, 3 Malter (* see below, old measuring unit for grain) of grain, of which 20 Scheffel (**) to the hospital of Guben, 15 Scheffel to the pastor and 1 Scheffel to the sexton, furthermore is to pay 15 Taler cramming fee and has to keep read 2 dogs for hunting. The miller is to keep orderly millstones thus being able to mill the farmers' grain well. He has to take care of the dams, whereas the community has to help him cleaning the ditches. The miller receives the mill, meadow and herb garden. He is allowed 8 cows, 2 oxen and 12 pigs, to be grazing together with the village livestock on the village meadow or else alone on the pastures of the village. Their manure is to be given to the villagers. The contract is callable quarterly by both parties"

(*) **Malter** = **Getreidemaß**

Anders sah es beim Getreidemaß aus: Es war in jeder Landesregion oder Stadt sehr unterschiedlich. Die Abfolge (Maßkette) der kleineren Maße, in denen das Malter geteilt werden konnte, war sehr uneinheitlich. Als Beispiel sollen [Mühlhausen](#) und [Münden](#) stehen. Erstere hatte auf ein Malter 4 [Scheffel](#) oder 16 [Metzen](#), Münden sechs Scheffel. Im heutigen [Lippe](#) und [Ostwestfalen](#) war ein Malter drei Scheffel,^[4] in [Gotha](#) nur zwei Scheffel. Das [Nürnberger](#) alte Malter hatte 16 [Metzen](#) oder 32 [Diethäuflein](#), was 128 Maß waren; das entsprach 167,1 [Liter](#). Das Malter hatte schon unterschiedliche Größen in jedem Dorf und verschiedentlich gab es das große und kleine Malter. Das Maß war auch von der Getreideart bestimmt und entsprechend wurde es gehäuft oder gestrichen verwendet. Es gab das Hafermalter, das für glatte oder raue Frucht usw. In [Stein am Rhein](#) im [Kanton Schaffhausen](#) in der [Schweiz](#) war 1 Malter glatte Frucht = 130 1/6 Liter und das Malter für raue Früchte war gleich 300 Liter. In Nürnberg waren zwei Malter Getreide oder Erbsen 1 [Simra](#), bei Gerste und Hafer waren es vier Malter auf ein Simra.

(**) **Scheffel** = Der **Scheffel** auch **Schaff**, **Schäffel**, **Simber**, **Sümber**, **Sümmer**, **Simmer** ist ein altes [Raummaß](#), das zur Messung von [Schüttgütern](#) (z. B. Getreide) benutzt wurde und deshalb auch Getreidemaß genannt wurde

In 1667 Martin Lehmann becomes miller and in 1688 Hans Kapke. These fast changes did not seem to be good for the mill. When after Hans Kapke the next miller, Lindner, moved in, a lot was broken and no longer of use. The son and successor, George Lindner, writing in a letter dated 25 September 1684 (?) to the council of Guben: "My ancestors, whose footsteps I followed, found the mill quite broke and had to rebuild it themselves".

This George Lindner liked living in Niemaschkleba. When he heard that a Hans Dammaschke from Tzschernowitz was planning to buy the mill he was only renting, he sent his stepson to Guben, informing (the officials) that he would like to buy the mill and was willing to pay as much as Hans Dammaschke. When the council did not listen to this, he wrote a letter begging not to throw him and his wife out. However, George Lindner seems to have fallen in disgrace of the council and in 1684, Hans Dammaschke from Tzschernowitz bought the mill. Thus, through the purchasing sum of 300 Taler, the mill no longer is worked by a tenant but from now on by a hereditary miller, the so-called "Erbmüller" (= passing on the mill/millership from generation to generation...) The charges (see above) were still the same for the miller as used to be during the lease. And upon re-selling the mill, the town would have the pre-emptive right.

With this first hereditary miller, a history of the mill and its owners starts, whose work lasted for almost 200 years and whose descendants are living in Niemaschkleba (Lindhain) up to now. Hans, Christian, Johann Christian, Christian Gotthilf, Marit Elisabeth Dammaschke marrying August Oelschläger and Friedrich Rudolf Oelschläger were the next 6 generations passing before our eyes. Let us now hear some details:

¹ „From our Heimat“, supplement of the Guben newspaper No 66, 7 November 1935, by Willi Schulz

Christian Dammaschke had a hard time fighting for his living as Niemaschkleban miller. His income was rather low and the charges and tax had to be paid to the city of Guben. 1695 he addresses a complaint to the council of Guben. His distress must be veritable, as the council directly comes to his assistance. The miller is now granted the right to distill brandy and to give it away, however he has to pay a tax of 1 Taler to the council of Guben. He is allowed to fetch wood for free from the heath when needed for rebuilding the mill, is allowed to fish in the pond and may benefit from fruit trees and oaks against payment. As the activities of Johann Krüger and Johann Klauisch, the clergymen, with milling grout (= Grützmühle) and ?? (= Oelpuffe) cut the income of the miller, they are requested to abolish Grützmühle and Oelpuffe at once. Furthermore, the miller now is allowed 14 instead of 11 cattle and 2 horses. Christian Dammaschke has given the church presents on several occasions. These gifts probably have been elicited through the miller's wife who was the daughter of pastor Christian Bart.

Again hard times must have had the grandson of Christian Dammaschke.

His son Christian Gotthilf died early and the granddaughter married the miller Johann August Oelschläger and inherits the mill. However Johann August Oelschläger never felt comfortable in Niemaschkleba and sold the mill. This must have been terrible for the old miller! In a protesting letter to the council he writes that he had not passed on his mill to now be sold to foreign immigrants! Despite his protest Christian Dammaschke had to witness strangers moving into the mill of his ancestors.

Thus, temporarily, the mill belonged to strangers. However, the granddaughter must have had a hard time abroad and the longing for the village where she was brought up gave her no peace. Therefore, in 1826 she bought the mill of her ancestors back from the miller, at that time Johann Karl Gottlieb Klein. A lot of villagers were happy about the return of the miller's daughter; however her husband, Johann August Oelschläger was not welcome but disliked. When he digged a new ditch and established a cutting mill, 12 villagers protest against his doing so. The city council is on the protesters' side and orders the miller to either satisfy them or refill the ditch. Also, the hospital's principal is not really satisfied with miller Oelschläger's flour deliveries. One time it is too black, the next time it contains too much sand, therefore, a new regulation is passed that instead of delivering flour for 3 years to the hospital, the miller is to pay the relevant amount of money. These were rather unpleasant conditions for the miller, and as his wife did not want to leave her village again and move abroad, he left alone.

1843 their son Friedrich Rudolf Oelschläger took over the mill. The restless heritage of his father – the hunger to search happiness and a living far away – could also be found within him. In the revolutionary year of 1848 he raised his voice mightily and requestingly against the Guben council. Amongst others, he wrote: "As everywhere in the world the oppressed rise and vent their anger both in evil and in good sense, the time has come that I myself have to show my indignation about the local injustices". Then follows a list of repeated unfair treatment of the city of Guben against him. His letter ends with "Therefore, I'd rather die as freedom fighter than perish here as a lewd miller." When receiving neither answer nor different treatment, he writes again on 18 December 1848, "whether the magistrate has understood the attitude of the Niemaschkleban miller?"

His reaction is even fiercer when the cattle from the manor come near his milling ditch. He writes, "Shall I have the small milling ditch stamped and trampled by the cattle of the manor?" After the excitement and heated discussions have ebbed, he humbly begs the magistrate for pardon promising that this will never happen again.

On 2 April 1878 he sells the mill for 39.000 RM to Niemaschklebans Gerichtsschulze Gromm. After almost 200 years with but little interruption, the family of the Dammaschkes had done their duties and their era of hereditary millers ended. The actual miller's maiden name now is Dammaschke again. Perhaps the first hereditary miller, Hans Dammaschke, was one of her ancestors?

1622 Kadoch, Matthes

1667 Lehmann, Martin

1688 Kapke, Hans (wrong date! perhaps 1668?)
Lindner
Lindner, George

1684 Dammaschke, Hans
Dammaschke, Christian oo Barts (first name unknown, daughter of the pastor)

1695 (evidence)
Dammaschke, Johann Christian (see → chronology 1722, punishment of the miller who had the child of his catholic wife baptized in the Stift (= monastery, cloister?))

Dammaschke, Christian Gotthilf
Dammaschke, Marit Elisabeth oo Oelschläger, Johann August
Klein, Johann Karl Gottlieb

1826 Oelschläger, Johann August oo Dammaschke, Marit Elisabet (repurchase of the mill)

1843 Oelschläger, Friedrich Rudolf (1848 evidence by newspaper advertisement:)
Sought: Proficient miller apprentice who is capable and wide awake, used to handlabor, proud of the milling work to be done, persevering rather than vagabonding, will find immediate and permanent place to work against reasonable payment in grinding and cutting mill. Decent parents may also place their son as apprentice. Where? Please contact Niemaschkleba/Guben, 4 April 1846, M. Oelschlaeger²

1878 Gromm, Gerichtsschulze, purchase 2 April 1878

1945 Gromm, Emil (son) oo Dammaschke (first name unknown), mill = house No 18 (E.Gromm had 2 daughters: unwed Anna and Hildegard oo Stein, Erich, tavern and butcher in Niemaschkleba, No 95, Torsaule Dammaschke)

² Public announcement in the official journal No 15, Frankfurt/Oder, 15 April 1846