

SPECIAL FIELD TRIP TO  
ORDWAY, COLORADO

November 13-14; 1975

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Dates of travel: November 13-14, 1975

Purpose: On October 16, during a preliminary investigation of potential sources and informants in the southeastern part of the state, I contacted Erwin Bauman of Ordway, Colorado. Mr. Bauman, the son of the late Rev. Edward Bauman, told me that he had several boxes of rare books, personal papers, handwritten sermons, and other memorabilia of his father that were "stored outside in the garage." He showed me a few samples from the collection, including two German volumes (badly weathered) that were printed in the mid-eighteenth century. Mr. Bauman told me at this time that the Department of Germanic Languages at the University of Texas (Austin) had expressed interest in acquiring his father's collection. However, Mr. Bauman hoped that the collection could remain in Colorado, preferably at a University where his father's books and papers would be at the disposal of scholars and interested researchers. When I informed Mr. Bauman that one of the goals of our Germans from Russia in Colorado Study Project at CSU was the creation of a special archive, he displayed genuine interest. I told Mr. Bauman that since the late Rev. Bauman had served numerous communities of Germans from

Russia and had established a number of German-speaking churches in eastern Colorado, his collection of personal papers and rare books would be a valuable historical addition to our newly established archive at CSU. Mr. Bauman agreed to consider the offer and I assured him that our project coordinator, Dr. Sidney Heitman, would contact him within a few days.

Shortly after my return to Fort Collins, Dr. Heitman and Mr. Bauman exchanged a number of telephone calls. Both individuals decided that a brief trip to Mr. Bauman's home in Ordway was necessary before any commitments could be made by either party. It was agreed that the date of November 13-14 would be mutually convenient.

Travel expenses (3 persons):

Lodging (1 night)	40.17
Meals	60.50

Thursday, November 13, 1975

Dr. Heitman, John Newman (Special Collections Librarian) and myself left Fort Collins and headed south to Ordway at 8:00 a.m. via Denver and Highway 71. Before entering Ordway, we stopped briefly at the local cemetery on the northern outskirts of the town and viewed some of the tombstones and gravesites. We were unable to locate the old section of the cemetery and were later told that most of the area's early pioneers were interred in the cemetery at Las Animas.

We arrived in Ordway at 1:00 p.m. and were able to meet Mr. and Mrs. Bauman at the scheduled time (2:00 p.m.). Mr. Bauman told us a few details about his father's life as a minister in the early years of Colorado before showing us samples from the late Rev. Bauman's collection. As Mr. Bauman talked, all of us concurred that a biographical study of his father was a necessary undertaking and we discussed this possibility at some length. Mr. Bauman agreed to help in any way that he could and consented to be interviewed on tape by someone from our project at a time to be determined later. Several old books and volumes were shown to us by Mr. Bauman and these were carefully examined by Special Collections Librarian John Newman (an evaluation written by Mr. Newman is included with this report). Mr. Bauman told us that most of the other volumes, including a manuscript printed in 1701, were still in storage. Mr. Bauman apologized that he was unable to find any of his father's personal papers but agreed to produce some samples when we returned

the next day. We suggested that all of us spend the remainder of the afternoon in Sugar City, about five miles distant. Mr. Bauman agreed to accompany us and he related many interesting stories about Sugar City and its predominantly Russian-German population.

After arriving in Sugar City, we briefly toured the town and viewed some of the homes and churches. Mr. Bauman encouraged us to stop at the home of Karl Grasmick, Jr., who earlier had told Mr. Bauman that he would show us the inside of the German Lutheran Church in Sugar City. Mr. Grasmick proved to be a very enjoyable person and he unlocked the doors at the church and proudly showed us its interior. While we stood inside the church, Mr. Grasmick related many stories about the history of the building, his family, and Sugar City. He told us that he was confirmed and married in the church. "I was so scared when I got confirmed," he laughingly told us, "that when the minister asked me what was the first commandment I couldn't even speak;" Mr. Grasmick also remembered his three-day wedding celebration and the musicians who accompanied the bridal party to and from the doors of the church.

After viewing the interior of the church in Sugar City, Mr. Grasmick and Mr. Bauman "showed us around the town." Both men complained that the town was "nothing like it used to be." They remembered when the community boasted a population of 5,000 and its streets were lined with fine hotels and modern stores. As we drove down main street, only the post office and a pool hall were

visibly intact and still operating. We were shown where the sugar refinery once stood and some large, dilapidated homes in this area that originally belonged to the manager and other officials of the factory there. We were also shown three uninhabited homes southeast of Sugar City that were built by the sugar company for German emigrant families from Russia. A few photographs were taken of some of these scenes but the late hour of the day discouraged us from taking more. We decided to return the following day when there was sufficient sunlight. After taking Mr. Grasmick home, we thanked him for his hospitality and expressed our desire to return at a later time. He was very cordial and offered to help us in whatever way he could. We drove back to Mr. Bauman's home in Ordway where we agreed to meet with him the next morning and discuss the feasibility of acquiring some of his father's collection. It was after 5:00 p.m. when Dr. Heitman, John Newman and myself left Ordway and proceeded south to Rocky Ford, where we spent the night.

Friday, November 14, 1975

We left Rocky Ford at 9:00 a.m., and arrived at Mr. Bauman's home at the scheduled time (9:30). We discussed a variety of matters before viewing more of the late Rev. Bauman's collection. John Newman asked if Mr. Bauman was able to locate any of his father's personal papers and he replied that he was able to find a small loose-leaf notebook which he showed us. At Mr. Newman's encouragement, he eventually produced a box of personal papers, most of which

appeared to be handwritten sermons in either German or English. Most of the material was written in ink and dated. Both Dr. Heitman and Mr. Newman commented on the historical importance of this material repeatedly. John Newman asked if Mr. Bauman would loan our project the bulk of the personal papers (some 4 inches thick) and explained that these materials would be copied, indexed and the originals would be promptly returned. Mr. Bauman consented and the proper release forms were signed authorizing this temporary transferal by both Mr. Bauman and John Newman.

Before leaving the Bauman's residence, we were shown a number of family heirlooms and other articles, including a collection of hand-crafted spoons (in-laid with jewels) brought from Russia by Mrs. Bauman's uncle, C. C. Young. Mrs. Bauman, whose parents came from Bessarabia, also showed us a Russian samovar and similar items. Mr. Bauman asked us to stop by the office of the Ordway New Era and talk to the editor, Mr. Minnick. We agreed to do so and Mr. Bauman kindly accompanied us. At the newspaper office, Mr. Minnick expressed interest in our research and added that his paper had published a press release concerning our project last August. He gave us a complimentary brochure about Ordway (included with this report) and also the address of a graduate student from the University of Colorado who is writing her thesis on the National Sugar Company--which once operated in the Sugar City area:

Dena Markhoff  
History Department  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

After leaving the office of the Ordway New Era, Mr. Bauman accompanied us on a return trip to Sugar City. We stopped briefly at the cemetery and also photographed various scenes in Sugar City, including the factory-built homes southeast of the town. We were unable to see a Mrs. J. E. Crockett at this time, whom Mr. Bauman had encouraged us to see. Mrs. Crockett has compiled several scrap-books of old photographs and clippings of Sugar City, but her ill health (thought to be a serious heart condition) prevented us from stopping in to examine her collection.

At 12:00 p.m. we returned to Ordway and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Bauman for their hospitality. We again stressed the urgency of tape recording Mr. Bauman's recollections of his father and he consented to do this with one of our staff members at his earliest convenience.

We left Ordway and proceeded west to Pueblo. We returned to Fort Collins at 5:30 p.m. via Interstate 25.

