

Left to right, Anna Tgahrt née Dyck (1872-1945), son Bruno, and Peter Tgahrt (? -1928). Photograph taken in 1919 in Elbing, West Prussia.

Threads of a Life: Searching For Bruno Tgahrt

by D. Frederick Dyck*

Tante Emma placed the photograph back in the shoebox with dozens of other loose photographs in her collection. It was winter 1966, and I would never see this photograph again.

The black and white photograph of the young man has haunted me for over thirty years. He was dressed in a dark military uniform that was unfamiliar to me, sitting astride a motorcycle. The photograph was marked "Berlin, 1936."

Tante Emma Harder (1888-1988) told me his name was Bruno Tgahrt and that he was my father's first cousin. Tante Emma could tell me little more except that Bruno was the son of my grandfather's sister Anna née Dyck and that he had survived World War II.

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When I made the decision in 1997 to research and write a family history about my Mennonite ancestors, I resolved to learn more about Bruno Tgahrt and include the information in my book. I thought that finding information about someone born in the twentieth century would not be too difficult.

Over the course of the ensuing seven years, I have discovered how wrong this assumption was. I have also discovered many helpful people in the unlikeliest of places, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and U.S. Army Intelligence, to name a couple.

Delving into military/war records and archives is a foreign experience for most Mennonite family researchers. However, those of us who have ancestors who lived in Europe throughout the first half of the twentieth century often find these records invaluable aids in furthering our knowledge of our family's history.



Bruno Tgahrt, age one. The photograph is embossed Saratov, Russia. All photographs are from the collection of Alice Sitler Dyck.

My only lead other than the 1936 photograph of Bruno was Tante Emma's remark that he had survived the war. My mother, Alice Sitler Dyck, knew the Dyck family history better than anyone else in the family so it was logical that my search would begin with her.

My mother told me that she recalled my grandmother, Marie G. Dyck (1884-1973), telling her that Bruno had telephoned the Dyck family farm in Kansas in 1948, from New York. According to Marie, Bruno's side of the conversation consisted of telling her that Bruno's mother, Anna Tgahrt *née* Dyck (1872-1945), had been killed in an Allied bombing raid on Berlin, Germany, in 1945, that he was in the United States to be a witness (presumably involving war crimes), and that he could no longer have any contact with the family.

This cryptic message raised many questions in my mind. Was the dark uniform I recalled the black of a man in the SS, Adolf Hitler's troop of bodyguards and concentration camp staff? Had Bruno been involved in genocide or war crimes? How did he come to be in the United States as a witness?

I wondered what path in life could have led from birth in the Mennonite colony of Am Trakt, Russia, to war crimes witness? In the course of my search for answers to these questions, I have been able to solve a lot of the mystery surrounding the life of Bruno Tgahrt. Yet much remains mysterious and probably always will be.

Bruno's parents were Peter Tgahrt and Anna *née* Dyck. Anna Dyck was the only child of the second marriage of Jakob Dyck (1832-1882) to the widow Anna Wiebe Penner.¹ The widow Anna Penner had two children when she married Jakob Dyck, February 23, 1871, at the Russian Mennonite settlement of Am Trakt. These

Penner children were Catherine, born ca1868, married name Toews, and Peter born ca1870, died 1957 in Reedly, California.

Anna Wiebe Penner Dyck died one year after her marriage to Jakob Dyck, having given birth to daughter



Bruno Tgahrt, 1919, age ten. This photograph was taken in Danzig, West Prussia.

Anna in 1872. Anna's father Jakob Dyck married his third wife, Justine Wall (b. February 1, 1855, Mierauwald, West Prussia, d. ca1930, Siberia, Russia) on September 26, 1873, Am Trakt, Russia.

Catherine and Peter Penner lived with their step-father and his new wife, as did Anna Dyck. Jakob and Justine would have five children of their own by the time Jakob Dyck

died April 4, 1882. After Jakob's death the two Penner children and Anna would go to live with their Penner grand-parents in Am Trakt.

In December 1891, Anna Dyck married Peter Tgahrt. Peter's birthdate is unknown as is anything about his family at Am Trakt or in West Prussia, the place of origin of all Am Trakt settlers. Peter and Anna lived on a farm at Am Trakt previously owned by Anna's uncle Cornelius Dyck (1835-1893). Cornelius had immigrated to Woodland, Washington, in 1890 with his wife Cornelia *née* Pauls and their two sons, Dietrich and Cornelius, Jr.

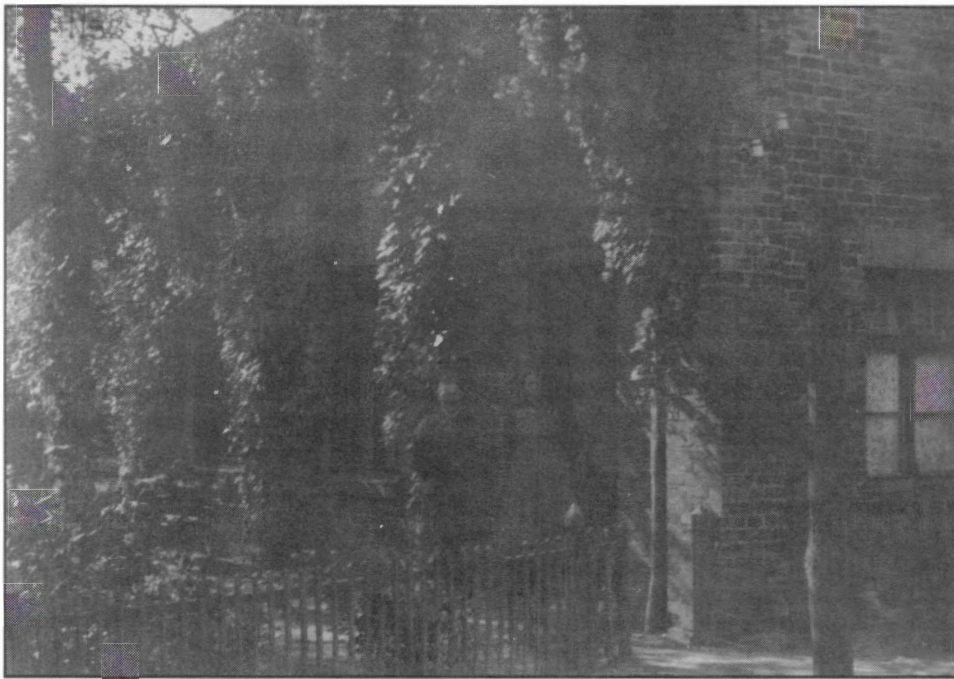
Peter and Anna Tgahrt had a daughter born sometime before 1908, but she died as an infant. On October 2, 1908,² a son named Bruno was born. Bruno would be the couple's only living child.

Information about the Tgahrt family at Am Trakt comes from my first cousin, once removed, Gustav Dyck of Baidt, Germany. Gustav was born December 16, 1913, at Medemtal, Am Trakt, Russia, and is Bruno Tgahrt's first cousin, son of Johannes J. Dyck (1878-1921) and Maria *née* Wall (1886-1974).

Gustav's family lived near the Tgahrt family, and Gustav spent a lot of time at the Tgahrt farm playing with his cousin Bruno. Gustav's recollection was that the Tgahrt family was financially well off until the advent of the Russian Revolution in 1917. Perceptions of a child regarding wealth are not to be wholly relied on, but it does appear that Peter and Anna Tgahrt were what would be today termed upper-middle-class.

¹ For the author's Dyck ancestral lineage, see *MFH* 20 (October 2001).

² Deutsche Dienststelle copy of Bruno Tgahrt's identification document issued February 1940.



Peter (left) and Anna (right) Tgahrt, 1919, West Prussia.

Because Bruno was their only child, they were able to indulge him in ways Gustav obviously envied. Bruno had his own riding horse and a dog and nice clothes to wear. Surviving photographs of the Tgahrt family show Bruno to be fashionably dressed in sailor suits (popular in Europe) and well tailored coats.

After the beginning of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and ensuing civil war between the Red and White armies in Russia, the Tgahrt family suffered as did all Mennonites of Am Trakt and the colonies in the Ukraine. Gustav Dyck was present when the Communist district commander came to the Tgahrt farm and confiscated Peter Tgahrt's horses. Quoting from Gustav's letter:

"It seems like it was not long ago, Bruno was 10 years old [1919]. The Communists took everything they had and sent them to Germany, out of Russia. I can still remember well how the Red commander took nineteen of their horses. Bruno stood by my brother Hans and me as they led the last horse out, Bruno's pony. The commander tied it to the vehicle. Bruno ran to the pony and led it back into the shed. The commander went to the shed and returned with the pony and was tying it to the vehicle again.

Nearby was Bruno's dog, a big yellow dog named 'Karo,' who jumped at the commander and tried to bite him. The commander shot the dog dead. Bruno could never forget it, I wouldn't either."³

The Tgahrt family did not stay in Germany very long after their expulsion from Russia. In late 1919 they were in America living with Anna's half-brother, Jacob J. Dyck, my grandfather. Nobody in the Dyck family can recall how long the Tgahrts stayed in Kansas, but it seems they never seriously considered settling there.

A short excerpt from the journal of Johannes J. Dyck (1885-1948) of Saskatchewan, Canada, gives a hint of where the Tgahrt family went after leaving Kansas. This quotation from the journal is from the summer of 1928.

"During harvest Johannes and I drove the two binders. I behind him so that I could help in case of trouble. The girls did all the stooking (Old English for shocking), over 300 acres. It was a hard and exhausting time for all of us, but we had a lot of courage. While we were cutting wheat, Jakob Dycks (the author's grandfather) from Kansas came to visit us for half a day. When we were almost finished cutting, Aunt Anna Tgahrt and her son Bruno and Otto Penner came from California for a visit."⁴

Anna Tgahrt's older half-brother Peter Penner lived in California, and it appears likely that when the Tgahrt family left Kansas they went to California.

Exactly how young Otto Penner was related to Anna is unknown, but he may have been her nephew. This journal excerpt also shows that Anna was traveling without her husband Peter Tgahrt. He is known to have died in 1928.⁵

From this journal entry, I surmise that Peter died in California between January and July 1928. How long Anna and her son Bruno remained in Saskatchewan is unknown, but I have been unable to locate any evidence that they were

there more than a few months.

Bruno Tgahrt was 20 years old in 1928 and was probably instrumental in the decision for him and his widowed mother Anna to return to Germany. Anna had Dyck and Penner relatives living in West Prussia, and there may have been Tgahrt relatives there as well. This seems thin for a reason to return to Germany. Bruno and Anna had many more relatives in the United States and Canada and could have settled in Kansas, California or Saskatchewan, Canada.

Another possibility was suggested to me by Gustav Dyck. According to Gustav, Bruno had a long-time fascination with airplanes and piloting. Not being a citizen of the United States, he would not have been acceptable as a volunteer for America's infant Army Air Corps. It is most likely that Bruno and his mother were at this time German citizens,

³ Letter to the author from Gustav Dyck, Baintd, Germany, August 16, 2000.

⁴ Rena and George Krockner, eds. *A Pilgrim People, Volume II* (copyright 1994 by Rena and George Krockner, 317 Kelvin Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3P OJ1).

⁵ Deutsche Dienststelle copy of Bruno Tgahrt's identification document issued February 1940.

and there was a lot of residual bias against Germans in the years after World War I. It is possible that Bruno experienced this bias firsthand in American schools and decided there was no future for him in America. The exact date of Bruno and Anna's arrival back in Germany is not known, but certainly it was no later than the early 1930s.

In the early 1930s, Germany was the scene of great political turmoil. The Great Depression that had its beginnings on October 29, 1929, with the collapse of the American stock market hit Germany especially hard. Taking advantage of the situation in Germany, Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933. The rising tide of German nationalism embodied in the Nazi party appealed to many disillusioned Germans.

Given his life up to this point, it is easy to imagine Bruno being caught up in the near hysteria of Nazi Germany in the 1930s. He had seen first-hand what Communism meant: it was no abstract lesson to see your pony taken and your dog shot.

The rootlessness of his family's years in the United States and Canada made him long for a place where he fit in, where he could speak his native German without fear of recrimination and insult. Like many restless young men, Bruno would have been attracted to the structure of military life.

In 1934 Bruno returned to Saskatchewan, Canada, and again visited the Johannes J. Dyck family near Rosthern. This visit was recalled by Cornelius J. Dyck, Johannes' son, in a conversation with the author in 2001. Cornelius said that Bruno had a new car that he drove very fast and that all the girls including Cornelius' sister found him attractive. Cornelius overheard adults talking about Bruno being a German Air Force pilot.

A letter from Bruno's mother Anna to her half-brother Jacob Dyck in Kansas was found in a box of Dyck family papers in November of 1999. It provides evidence that Bruno was in some type of military service in 1935. On March 25, 1935, Anna wrote:

"I have been in Ellrüng for a time. Bruno has taken a little room for himself in Berlin since that's where his service is and apparently [he] will not get away soon. For me it is better here because I didn't know anyone there. We're both fearful but it just can't be otherwise for now. If the Lord extends His grace, Bruno will learn something that he wants to become so much; then, he can choose an apartment for himself. Oh, yes, we're all looking to our heavenly Father, without Him we are nothing. I am so happy that Bruno so firmly believes that. He sent me a poem in his last letter that is so important to me that I want to write it down for you.

*"For each day that you, my God, do give,
In which I can taste how you love me,
For each light that brightens my path for me,
For each sunbeam in this dark world,
For each comfort when I am frightened,
Take, Lord, this song of praise from my heart.*

*When I often ponder future times,
You have already prepared a hope for me,
And, if today, an ache presses miserably,
Perhaps tomorrow it will have moved on.
Wherever I go, your arm is around me,
You'll never leave me alone. For that,
I thank you.*

*For each song that a little bird sings to me,
For every sorrow that brings me nearer to you,
For every happiness, every little drop of fortune,
For every peaceful countenance,
For every cloud that passes overhead,
This is all for you, a song of jubilation.*

*For every friend's greeting that brings me joy,
For every hand that strews a tiny flower for me,
For every heart that yearns toward me,
That, with me, loves and believes and
struggles and carries on,
For all the Blessedness, Lord, there and here,
For all eternity, I thank you.*

"That poem is, for me, a devotion; everything is in it and he who offers thanks is dear to me and that is the path that I would show him, reverence for God.

"However, I have to close. It's all too little that I am writing, I have to write to Bruno too. He has such a strict service that it's almost unpredictable. And for me it is very, very difficult. Kaete's grandchildren are also here, of course. Russian Bolshevism couldn't affect them. Nice children, what a joy! Kaete is going to Dresden

to become a [Red Cross] sister. Albert will, after the first of October, become a Reichsmariner (sailor) and Gustav is a musician. And it would be that way, also, if Hans' children came over. They are so good with Tichen and the Lord will further protect them.

In cordial love, greet everyone.
Your aunt and sister,
Anna Tgahrt."⁶

This poem written by Bruno caused me to seriously question that he could have been in the SS or participated in genocide or war crimes. A strong belief in God is no guarantee that a person cannot commit the most horrendous of crimes, however. History is replete with mass murder committed in the name of God. Two infamous Nazi criminals were former ministers and theology students: Paul Blobel of "Commando 1005" and Otto Ohlendorf of Einsatzgruppen "D", both in Nazi-occupied Russia.

In order to prove or disprove Bruno's membership in the SS, I wrote to the National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Maryland. From reading books about the Holocaust, I knew that there was a copy of the SS name index at the National Archives. I received a detailed, cordial letter of response to my inquiry about Bruno Tgahrt from Donald L. Singer, Modern Military Records, Textual Archives Services Division.

Mr. Singer wrote that he had checked the IRR (Investigative Records Repository) files in record Group 319, the Identification of Prisoner Sheets in Record Group 338, the SS name index to the Berlin Document Center records, and two name indexes to the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) records. All these searches were negative for Bruno Tgahrt. The closest entry to match was an enlisted man in the SS name index by the name of Alfred Tgahrt, born October 25, 1909.

⁶ Translation from German to English provided by Alice Sitler Dyck.



Bruno Tgahrt, 1936, Berlin, Germany. Bruno is wearing the uniform of the Luftwaffe (German Air Force).

The search of the OSS personnel list yielded the name of my uncle Will Gustav Dyck (1914-1974). I had requested this search because I thought it might be possible that Will had somehow aided Bruno's entry into the United States after World War II ended. The OSS was the U.S. intelligence service started by William ("Wild Bill") Donovan in the weeks immediately following the Japanese bombing of the U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. Will Dyck was serving in the U.S. Army prior to December 7, 1941, and was transferred to the OSS in April 1942. According to the OSS personnel list supplied by Mr. Singer, Will Dyck was assigned to "Special Investigations."

In a remarkable display of thoroughness, Mr. Singer also checked the European name index and the suspect and witness file in Record Group 53: Records of the Office of the

Judge Advocate General (Army). Again the results were negative for Bruno Tgahrt. The National Archives does not have a name index for NSDAP (Nazi Party) personnel files but does have a series of microfilm of NSDAP personnel files from the Berlin Document Center. These two series are: Series MFOK (Ortsgruppenkartei records) and Series MFKL (Zentralkartei records). Mr. Singer checked the appropriate rolls of microfilm, X024 and R142, respectively, and again found no Bruno Tgahrt. Mr. Singer informed me that the National Archives does not have personnel records for the Luftwaffe (German Air Force). For these records I would have to contact the Bundesarchiv in Aachen, Germany.

The Bundesarchiv responded to my request for possible Luftwaffe records of Bruno Tgahrt saying that nothing was available in Aachen. Frau Meentz informed me that my

letter was being forwarded to Deutsche Dienststelle, German Service Office for the information of next-of-kin of those who fell in the former German Army/Military, in Berlin, Germany.

In April 2001, I received a letter from Frau Wengel of Deutsche Dienststelle. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of Bruno Tgahrt's German identification document issued in 1940. This document provided a great deal of useful information. Bruno's birthdate of October 2, 1908, is shown in box 3. Until receiving this document I had only an approximate date of birth, ca1909. Birthplace, box 4, is Ostenfelde, a village of the Russian Mennonite settlement of Am Trakt. Location is listed as near Saratov, Russia. Box 6a, Religion-Evangelical, 6b, Race-Aryan. Box 7, married with two children.

Bruno's occupation is listed as Ingenieur (engineer) in box 8. Box 9a, father Peter was a farmer (landwirt), died 1928. The "+," a cross indicates deceased. Mother's name is Anna Dück, Germanized Dyck. The top right hand portion of the document, 9b, shows that Bruno had an unnamed sister, deceased. Box 9c lists Bruno's wife, Gertrud *née* Rassloff born Fürstenfeldbruck, Göthestr. 15. Bruno's education, box 10, consisted of Volksschule (Elementary School), Gymnasium (High School), and Technikum (Technical College). Under the heading of other languages spoken, box 11, is English. Section 12a, Membership in organizations: DAF 35. The meaning of this is not clear. 12b, Capabilities/Related activities: Swimmer, Driver's Licenses: Class II, III, I. This could mean automobiles, motorcycles, and airplanes. Also Bruno had a German Imperial Sports Certificate. The addresses in 13b and c would be his places of residence. The document is dated as issued February, 26, 1940.

Frau Wengel wrote that Bruno was assigned to Fighter Plane School at Schleissheim on December 25, 1939, and sent to an active fighter plane squadron on February 26, 1940. Frau Wengel also wrote that additional information about

Bruno's war service was not available. This is not an unusual circumstance when dealing with German war records. Many record centers/archives were destroyed in the massive Allied bombing raids on German cities.

With the information from the National Archives and Deutsche Dienststelle, I had eliminated Bruno Tgahrt as a member of Hitler's SS, the Nazi Party, and he was not on any list as a war criminal or witness. This being so, why the mysterious telephone call from New York and why had not Bruno made any attempt to contact family in the United States and Canada? Having confirmed that my Uncle Will Dyck was in the OSS, I was still not ready to discount the possibility of some involvement in espionage by Bruno. His having been born in Russia, living there for the first ten years of his life, serving in the German Luftwaffe and being fluent in English suggested to me that Bruno would have been a valuable asset to the West with the advent of the Cold War.

While I contemplated my next move, I received a vital piece of information about Bruno from my mother. On a whim she checked the Social Security Death Index on the Internet for the name Tgahrt and found only one listing. It was for Bruno Tgahrt, b. 2 October 1908, d. August

1980, Hughsonville, Dutchess County, New York. As luck would have it, my mother had a cousin, Stan Carver, who lived in Dutchess County, New York.

With a telephone call, Stan was enlisted to help in the search for Bruno Tgahrt. Stan's check of Dutchess County telephone books back to 1960 yielded to Bruno Tgahrt. Likewise, he could find no obituary for Bruno in any Dutchess County newspaper. Passing by a large rural cemetery on his way to a doctor's appointment, Stan stopped and asked the sexton if there was a Bruno Tgahrt buried there. The sexton called Social Services and confirmed that Bruno had been cremated and buried in the Fishkill Rural Cemetery. Buried beside Bruno was his wife Elizabeth, died 1969.

Having confirmed that Bruno did come to the United States, lived in New York, and that he died there in 1980, I wrote a Freedom of Information Act request to the CIA to see if Bruno had been involved in espionage for the United States or if there had been any connection between Bruno and my Uncle Will Dyck in the OSS during World War II. On November 7, 2001, I received the CIA's response from Kathryn I. Dyer, Information and Privacy Coordinator. Ms. Dyer's cordial letter explained that there

was nothing in CIA files about my cousin Bruno Tgahrt. Ms. Dyer said that she had also checked the records of the predecessor of the CIA, the Coordinator of Intelligence (COI), formed in 1941 and absorbed by the OSS, the War Department Strategic Service Unit (SSU), and the Central Intelligence Group (CIG, 1946-1947). Ms. Dyer did confirm that my Uncle Will Gustav Dyck was listed on the rolls of the OSS. I knew this already, but it was nice to have the information on official CIA stationery. Because I was seeking information about a relative and my request was deemed valid by the CIA, Ms. Dyer informed me that normal fees for research were waived.

One other possibility for an espionage connection remained to be checked out. In another Freedom of Information Act request, I asked the Department of the Army, United States Army Intelligence and Security Command, Ft. Meade, Maryland, if they had any information about Bruno Tgahrt. The Army's response was written by Russell A. Nichols, Chief, Freedom of Information/Privacy Office, on behalf of Brigadier General Keith B. Alexander, commanding General, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command.

Like Ms. Dyer's letter from the CIA, Mr. Nichols' letter was very cordial. Unfortunately, it contained no information about Bruno Tgahrt. Mr. Nichols explained that U.S. Army Investigative Records Repository (IRR) contains reports of intelligence operations and projects, investigations of persons, incidents, events, or organizations of interest. There is a Master Name Index for individuals maintained by the Department of Defense that cross-references all of this information. A name-only search was negative for Bruno Tgahrt. Again, because I was searching for information about a relative and mine was deemed a valid request, all research fees were waived.

All the negative responses from the U.S. Archives, CIA, and U.S. Army were not at all disheartening to me. I was pleased to be able to clear Bruno of any possible connection to



Bruno Tgahrt, center, in Berlin, Germany, in 1936. The other two men are unidentified.

Addresses of Agencies and Archives

- **National Archives and Records Administration**, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001
- **Bundesarchiv**, Abteigarten 6, 52076 Aachen, Germany
- **Deutsche Dienststelle (WASSt)**, Eichborndamm 179, 13403 Berlin, Germany. The Deutsche Dienststelle and Bundesarchiv will respond to letters written in English if they are kept short and to the point. Include birth date, place of birth, and death date, if known, of the individual about whom you are seeking information. Letters written in German will receive a quicker response.
- **Central Intelligence Agency**, Information and Privacy Coordinator, Washington, D.C. 20505
- **Department of the Army**, Freedom of Information and Privacy Office, 4552 Pike Road, Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-5995. When requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act, make certain to mark the outside of your envelope as a Freedom of Information Act Request. Likewise your letter should begin with a heading of Freedom of Information Act Request.
- **The General Services Administration**, Washington, D.C. 20405, will send free, on request, booklets describing records that are available in the Military Service Records of the National Archives of the United States and your right to Federal records under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act.

the Nazi Party, SS, or any involvement in genocide or war crimes, even as a witness. I have concluded that my grandmother Marie Dyck was mistaken in her recollection of the telephone call she had from Bruno in 1948, or that she, or Bruno, made it up to serve their own ends.

Why would my grandmother do such a thing? It may have been that Bruno wanted to come to Kansas after his arrival in the United States. It is very probable that Marie did not want a former Luftwaffe pilot coming to live with her family in the Emmaus Mennonite community near White-water, Kansas. In fact, I think this is the most likely explanation. The story about being a war crimes witness was made up as a way to explain to her husband, Jacob J. Dyck, Bruno's uncle, why Bruno would not be coming to Kansas and why the family would not hear from him again.

From what I have been able to learn, Bruno did not contact any other family members in the United States or Canada after 1948. His telephone call to Marie Dyck was most likely his first, and the negative response from Marie discouraged him from any ideas he may have had about going to live with other relatives.

Undeterred by my failure to find any new information about Bruno through intelligence sources, my mother continued the New York connection with her cousin Stan. They had contacted the funeral home that had done the cremation of Bruno and his wife Elizabeth. The Cedar Hill crematory provided the information that Bruno had died of sepsid pneumonia and that his occupation was insurance salesman. Also provided was a copy of Elizabeth Tgahrt's obituary in the "Poughkeepsie Journal," a local newspaper.

Using information from Elizabeth's obituary, my mother was able to learn that Elizabeth's maiden name was Graham and that she came from an illustrious family in Nova Scotia. Her grandfather was Sir Wallace Nesbit Graham, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, knighted by King George V.

In 1931 Elizabeth married Frederick Brandt and had two children, Clare and Bruce. Elizabeth was married a second time in 1940 to a man surnamed MacDaniels. Bruno Tgahrt was Elizabeth's third husband. When she died she had six grandchildren, according to her obituary in 1969. Nothing more about Bruno Tgahrt, however.

What became of Bruno's first wife in Germany, Gertrud *née* Rassloff, and their two children? In an attempt to find out, my mother sent letters to all 21 Tgahrts listed in the German national telephone directory on the off-chance that one of them might be a relative of Bruno and Gertrud. There was no response to these letters. I consider it highly probable that Gertrud and the two children were killed in the war.

This is where my search for Bruno Tgahrt has ended for now. Questions that remain: How did Bruno survive six years of war as a fighter pilot? How did he gain admittance into the United States? According to the records available from New York, Bruno had a life of financial hardship and died a lonely man. How much different would his life after 1948 have been if he had been able to make a new start with the help of relatives in Kansas, California, or Saskatchewan?

My hope for Bruno is that he found happiness in his marriage to Elizabeth, her children, and grandchildren. And how I wish that I had started my search for Bruno Tgahrt 25 years earlier. I like to think that we would have become good friends.