



“From 1764 to 1768, 104 German colonies, with a total population of 23,019, were established along the Volga River in Central Russia, in what were then the governments of Saratov and Samara. This vast territory was for the most part, a treeless plain, or steppe, which had been inhabited by semi-savage tribes of Tartars, Bashirs, Kirghiz, and Kulmucks.

In order to establish a bulwark against these tribes roving along the border, an attempt had been made by the Russian government some years before to colonize this region with Russian settlers. The plan failed, however, because Tartar hordes soon attacked and ravaged the settlements.

In 1763, the government tried a new plan. Instead of settling her own people in this region, Catherine II, in a manifesto issued July 22, invited people of other nationalities to settle this Volga area, offering special privileges as an inducement.” Text reproduced from *Pietism and the Russian Germans in the United States*, by George J. Eisenach, published, 1946, The Berne Publishers, Berne, IN.

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