



Paul and Eva Baumgardt were born in the village of Golzau in West Prussia. Most of their siblings died in infancy as high rates of infant mortality were simply part of the hard life their Polish forefathers and mothers lived.

For 125 years (1795-1918) Poland was partitioned and ruled by three powers – Russia, Austria, and Prussia and the Polish people fought to retain their national identity.

Paul Baumgardt aged 29 years married 19-year-old Eva Fliss in Parchau, West Prussia on 19 January 1863. Between 1864 and 1886 they became parents to eleven children

Casimir Joseph Baumgardt changed his surname to Bungard when he married, he was the only son to have children. The daughters formed the Francis, Wells, Morrison and Wilson branches of the family tree. Most of these children lived long and fruitful lives, except Johann who died aged 2, Eva Martha who died aged 9, and Eva Christina who died aged 26.

The reason for the Baumgardt family migration is unknown but they travelled with other Polish immigrants aboard the *Palmerston*, arriving at Port Chalmers on 6 December 1872 along with 228 passengers.

Through the kindness of Charles Hilgendorf, a Waihola shopkeeper who spoke German and understood their language and wanted to help them, Paul and Eva and the other Polish immigrants settled at Waihola.

Paul initially secured labouring work with Brogden and Sons who had won the construction contract for the Southern Trunk Railway Scheme.

By 1873 the family, unable to speak English, were almost certainly living in tents at Allanton then called Greytown.

Paul and Eva secured three quarter-acre sections at a land sale in July 1873 for nine pounds. They proceeded to construct a dwelling from timber and canvas, including a room dug into the hill. In September of 1874 Paul acquired a further five sections for fifteen pounds, and this same month their first New Zealand-born child was born.

In December 1874 Paul purchased another two sections. Further land was purchased in 1876 and 1881 including a 21 acre farm block on the outskirts of Waihola, and he became a farmer. In 1884 he sold 12 of his 14 blocks.

In 1887 after 14 years residing in New Zealand Paul became a naturalized New Zealander. He was known as a friendly and generous man, helping people wherever he could, including donating the church bell for the Catholic Church built by the Polish community at Waihola.

On 22 February 1908 Eva died at Waihola, aged 63 years, and was buried as a Catholic in the Waihola cemetery after a service in the Catholic Church.

Paul was 90 years of age when he died on 14 July 1923 and was buried as an Anglican in the family grave at Waihola.

In June 1892 Casimir Joseph Bungard (formally Baumgardt) married Caroline Domen [sic] in Milton, Otago. Caroline Wilhelmina Augustie Gutschlag was born at sea aboard the *Scimitar* and was the daughter of Wilhelm Gutschlag and Caroline Dauman. In childhood Caroline (junior) was the survivor of a 'terrible accident' as reported:

The Bruce Herald gives the following account of the accident at Otakia, which we have already mentioned as having resulted fatally in the case of the woman. An accident of a most fearful and calamitous nature, and which, it is feared, may yet in one instance prove fatal, occurred at the Taieri on Tuesday night. A number of Germans, and their families, recently from work at the Chain Hills, have encamped in tents in the scrub at the rear of Mr McKeegg's White House Hotel, being engaged upon the railway works in the vicinity. The party numbers six men in all—four married and two single—having in each case separate tents.

On the night in question they had all retired to bed early, when, about eleven o'clock, one of the single men, hearing loud cries for help, ran out of his tent, and was horrified by seeing that that

occupied by one of the married men, with his wife and child, was in flames, and the owner, Gutschlay, was outside it, having apparently only just escaped, for his hair was in absolute flames. The man, who was the first to come to the rescue, rushed to the tent, tore open the end of it, and got out Mrs Gutschlay and her infant. By this time all the rest were awakened, and the unfortunate sufferers were conveyed to another tent, where it was found that Mrs Gutschlay had suffered injuries of a terrible nature about the upper part of her body—her head, neck, and back were frightfully burnt, and on portions of her arms the flesh was merely a charred mass. The infant was badly burned about the head, but the injuries to the husband were not so severe. On Wednesday morning Mr McKegg kindly took the poor people into the Dunedin Hospital in his spring-cart.

The cause of the fire was, it would seem, purely accidental. The Germans have been noted for the quietness of their behaviour and the regularity of their habits. The Gutschlays were in the habit of keeping a can of lighted, charcoal in the tent at night for the purpose of warming it, and though warned of the danger they incurred by doing so, they persisted in this course, and there is no doubt that to it they owe the unfortunate mischance which has befallen them. It may be added that Gutschlay and his wife were both young people, the wife being only 20 years, and of very considerable personal attractions."

The woman has since died from the effect of her injuries, leaving Caroline motherless at eight months.

Life in these early days was fraught with danger and tragedies were many and varied.

The red flax wreath as laid on Paul & Eva's Grave, the flax bouquet on Polish born Joseph & his wife Caroline's grave, and posies on all other graves of descendants of the Baumgardts (Bungard) were placed as a tribute to their memory and were hand crafted by Katherine Greer a descendant of Paul & Eva Baumgardt.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) from information in *Baumgardt Family History* by Elizabeth Cowie and her mother Pauline Morris, and Papers Past.