

MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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The Harders and their charges at the Grossweide Orphanage. Photo courtesy of Centre for MB Studies, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Grossweide Orphanage in the Molotschna Colony (1906-1922)

by Herb Giesbrecht

The Mennonites in nineteenth and twentieth century Russia considered themselves to be a concerned people, sensitive, that is, to each others religious, social and other needs. Still, it was a century after their coming to southern Russia (Ukraine) before any serious efforts were made to give this concern significant institutional form. It is a curious and perhaps uncomplimentary fact that these religious communities, privileged as they were, should have taken so long to organize their own institutions for the welfare of their aged, ill, infirm or otherwise disadvantaged citizens and neighbors.¹

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, evidence of a social conscience, did emerge among individuals and even small groups of concerned persons. During the period from 1885 to 1915, their vision resulted in the founding of at least ten such institutions. The Grossweide Orphanage in the Molotschna Colony was one of them.²

Only two of these institutions, however, were officially adopted and supported by a

larger Mennonite group such as a Conference of churches. These were the Maria School for the Deaf-Mutes and the psychiatric institution 'Bethania'.

All of the others were initiated and sustained as strictly private enterprises, or "faith ventures" as some called them. The Grossweide Orphanage was also such a venture. It was begun by Abraham A. and Justina (nee Epp) Harder in the Molotschna village of Grossweide, in 1906.

Abraham Harder, as he tells us in his diary,³ had sensed a distinct calling while yet a youth, to do something special for orphan children. Being very poor and lacking the opportunities for further education, he and his wife, whom he had married in 1891, took up farming in the Crimea. When the urge to establish some sort of orphanage would not leave them, Abraham and Justina sold their belongings, released their farmland and property holdings and moved back to Rosenort in the Molotschna in 1906. They had only about 5,000 rubles in hand.

Harder mentions that an inner voice directed him, while walking alone in the forest one day, to return home promptly and to read the Bible: it would reveal to him what he ought to do. Very soon thereafter he took a look at some property in the village of Grossweide, in the Gnadenfeld district. The owner had operated a store for many years. The business went bankrupt, but the property still included a large house, a barn, a granary, a garden, and about twelve acres of land. Harder discussed the matter with his brother-in-law and then decided to purchase the place at a cost of 7,000 rubles. The down payment was 300 rubles.

When the Harders took possession of the property on July 20, 1906, they observed the forlorn and neglected aspect of the place. Despite some misgivings they got down to work, and with the help of neighboring carpenters and bricklayers, repaired and renovated the buildings as needed.

After a miraculous answer to explicit petitions for needed supplies the Harders decided a week later to make their orphanage a "work of faith" on principle. Harder received an invitation from Abraham Kroeker of Halbstadt, editor of the Mennonite weekly, *Die Friedensstimme*, to attend a meeting called by the brethren of the Raduga Publishing House. People from other villages were invited as well to discuss and decide whether they might want to form an organization or society that could assume responsibility for management and support of such an orphanage.

The situation was indeed a promising one. Abraham Kroeker was chosen to be chairman, Friedrichsen as secretary, of the meeting, with Abraham Harder present, to present a first-hand report on his anticipated venture. When Harder naively confided to those assembled that he and his wife regarded their project as a "work of faith," the assembled visitors simply accepted this statement to mean that nothing more needed to be done. This was indeed unfortunate.

Everyone agreed however that establishing an orphanage in their midst was a good idea. When the dedication service was announced for September, 1906, without issuing any special invitations, a large crowd of well-wishers was in attendance to express moral support at least, for the Harder Orphanage.

Harder placed an announcement in *Die Friedensstimme* concerning the recent establishment of his Grossweide Orphanage. It would be a social welfare institution depend-

(cont'd on page 2)

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ent upon the gifts of donors, where orphans, and under certain conditions half-orphans as well, between two and ten years of age, could be admitted without any tuition costs whatever. By the time of the dedication service, two orphans had already been admitted.

By the first winter (1907/1908) the Grossweide Orphanage, as it quickly came to be known, had already established its own school and hired one teacher. An old wagon shed on the site was quickly renovated to include a classroom, teacherage, and workroom.

Soon enough, in answer to specific prayer once again, a sister from Samaria arrived to offer her help. Thus the school now had a teacher and a matron. A large wall motto, with the inscription, "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:2), was placed over the entrance of the dining hall to give public testimony to the dominating conviction and inspiration of the entire Orphanage staff.

In a few years it became evident that more space would be needed, both in the school and for dormitory bedrooms. The necessary funds and materials were found in an astonishing manner. Within less than a year (April-October 28, 1912) the new building was completed. The structure, 30 by 65 feet, required some 80,000 bricks and the total cost ran to 12,000 rubles.

On dedication Sunday Harder was able, however, to assure the guests that this new building was entirely debt-free.

According to Harder's description the lowest storey of the building, half of it sunk into the soil, held the boilerroom which supplied the source for all central heating, for the bath house and dressing and living rooms. A second storey contained two classrooms, a play room, a teaching room, a large room for sisters, two antechambers, and a corridor. The third storey comprised three bedrooms and three rooms for sisters.

Harder was very much concerned that the necessary means for a building or a specific household need might come from God, always at the appropriate moment, so that he need never be obliged to incur a personal debt. One incident, among many recorded in his diary, strikingly illustrates this approach. One day Harder received a letter from a remote friend granting him permission to borrow 300 rubles on this friend's account in order to finish building the school. Harder did not feel free to do so and began to ask friends closer at home for a loan in this amount since the general building account was empty. But none of these friends could or would lend Harder this amount. The day following, however, a sister, quite unaware of this specific need, arrived at the Orphanage and, having been impelled by the Spirit of God as she confided, presented Harder with the 300 rubles which he needed.



The orphanage grounds at Grossweide. Photo courtesy of Lena Paetkau, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

While himself not a cultured or educated man, in the usual sense of the terms, Harder was not parochial in his thinking. He did not shut himself off from the ideas or influences of notable preachers — such as Elder David Duerksen of the Crimea, for instance — or of forward-looking businessmen, such as Nikolai Schmidt of Steinbach. He conferred with such men and was open to their insights and suggestions, hoping that his ministry at the Orphanage would be enriched thereby. Upon the encouragement, and at the expense of a close acquaintance, Harder visited a number of orphanages in Germany in 1913 in order to acquire further ideas for the improvement of facilities and services in his own Orphanage.

In 1913, the Grossweide Orphanage was obliged to erect another building on its campus, this time a summerhouse which could serve as a shelter for the children in times of inclement weather and as a dining hall during the summer months. This building, named "Sichern," was gradually equipped, with playground and sports equipment suitable for the children's entertainment: a bowling (skittle) lane, a bicycle, a round-about swing, a gym set, a football and a pony.

Most of these playground amenities were rarities among the village children generally. A former student of the Orphanage informs us that among the 76 villages in the vicinity of Grossweide then, only two or three bowling lanes were to be found anywhere, and a bicycle was very rarely seen at all.⁴

Harder was also able to acquire two other nearby buildings. He could thus enlarge the campus somewhat and also provide a needed worship assembly hall, more accommodation for the teacher, and a small hospital. As the orphan children grew older, and as donated revenues gradually increased, Harder's long-cherished plan for the acquisition of farmland could finally be realized. This, he hoped, would provide work for orphan boys who had completed their elementary schooling but

had no access to gainful employment elsewhere.

In 1915, Harder purchased an estate (*chutor*) consisting of some 48 dessiatines (about 55 hectares) of land and including a garden and buildings. The estate was located about 40 *versts* (km) away from Grossweide in Kuruschan. In 1914, the oldest son of Harder, also Abraham by name, and his wife Tina, moved to Kuruschan to supervise farming operations on this estate.

It had also been Harder's ambition, if God would have it so, to construct a variety of workshops in which the youths at the Orphanage could acquire training in specific work skills and trades. The onset of World War I, however, rendered the realization of this ambition quite impossible.

Several sisters, who regarded their work as "voluntary" assisted in the Orphanage with a variety of household and social care duties. By 1913, five of them were fully engaged in the work at Grossweide Orphanage. One of these acquired further training in Germany (1913) before returning to become the head matron of the institution.

The "daily round" in the elementary school of the Orphanage⁵ included two hours of academic instruction (in German) in the morning, a noon-day break for play and lunch, lasting about 40 minutes, two further hours of classroom instruction, and finally two hours of practical "handiwork" activity. The outcome of such handiwork and craft endeavors was the production of articles (usually offered for sale at the end of the school term).

(to be concluded)



GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY

by Alf Redekopp

SOME BOOK NOTES

The following books were recently received at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Dueck, Ulrich, *Die Familie Rahn Von Tiegenhof*, Grosshimstedt bei Hildesheim, W. Germany: By the author, 1986, ca. 300 pp. This book contains much more than a history of the descendants of the Rahn family that originated in the Prussian village of Tiegenhof. Many genealogists will find helpful the inclusion of over 50 pedigrees of individuals who married into this family. This feature outweighs by far the fact that the publication is not even typed, but neatly hand-printed and in German. Some good photographs are included in the publication.

Schmidt, Ella (E.J.), et al, eds., *The Peter Unruh Genealogy, 1675-1981*. Wichita, KS: By the family, 1981. 328 pp. This book traces the descendants of Peter Unruh (1786-1848) who belonged to the Przechewka Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church in Russia and with few exceptions left for Kansas in 1874. This is the third edition of the genealogy. The first and second editions appeared in 1941 and 1959, respectively. Not only has the format and size changed greatly; this edition also includes some maps and photographs.

These new titles are in print now too: Dyck, Cornelius J. and Wilma L., editors and compilers, *A Pilgrim People. The Dyck, Isaac, Quiring and Wiebe Story*. Saskatoon, SK: The Dyck Family, 1987, 176 pp., hdc.

Klassen, Sarah, et al, editors, *What is My House. Peter Cornelius Froese and Descendants*. Winnipeg, MB: Froese Heritage Committee, 1987. 215 pp., hdc., \$50.00.

Patkau, Esther L., comp., *The Paethkeau Book, 1714-1987*. Saskatoon, SK: The Book Committee, 1987, 487 pp., hdc., \$60.00.

Stoesz, Dennis, ed., *Our Stoesz Heritage, 1836-1987: Story of Cornelius and Agnetha (Wiebe) Stoesz and their Descendants*. Niverville, MB: Stoesz Book Committee, 1987, 240 pp., hdc., \$30.00.

NEW FAMILY NEWSLETTER

A four-page newsletter on the Klippenstein family, entitled *Klippings*, was begun in January, 1987. This newsletter is a fine example of what a family can do to build interest in the family history — and keep plans alive for a family reunion at the same time. Vol. 1, No.2 (December, 1987) includes a research article on the Prussian origins of the family, and an article on some Klippensteins of the Soviet Union today.

Does anyone know of other regular family newsletters? Let us know. Copies of *Klippings* (both issues) can be obtained from Ted Friesen, Box 720, Altona, Canada, R0G 0B0.



A *Kinderfest* (children's festival) of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Slavgorod, Siberia, held in the summer of 1917. Approximately one-half of the children and all the teachers have been identified. Beginning in the front they are: David Epp, lying on the ground; second row, eleventh and twelfth persons from the left are Tina Peters and Helene Huebert. In the last row, left to right are David Siemens, A. Schellenberg and Franz Goerz. A listing of all the children who have been identified is available from the Centre for MB Studies. The photograph was donated by Maria Wiens to the Centre for MB Studies.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Twenty-five participants attended a genealogy and family history workshop, sponsored by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society on February 23 at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College. Some of the family names which these participants are researching include: Giesbrecht, Goertz, Goerz, Janzen, Klaassen, Penner, Schellenberg, Thiessen, Warkeintin, Wiebe and Wiens. For further information readers may contact Margaret Kroeker at Mennonite Genealogy, Inc., Box 393, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 2H6, or call [204] 772-0747.

QUERIES

Giesbrecht: Elisabeth Giesbrecht m. to Gerhard Wall. Their daughter Elisabeth Wall, b. May 24, 1845, in Schoensee, Molotschna, m. to Heinrich B. Unruh (1846-1883). These Unruhs are the parents of the late A.H. Unruh, founding president of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg. I would like any information about Elisabeth Giesbrecht, such as dates, parents, and ancestors.

Giesbrecht: Who were the parents of Peter P. Giesbrecht (1883-1963) m. to Elisabeth Wittenberg (1886-1959)? This couple died in B.C., possibly the Yarrow area.

Redekopp: Any information on Heinrich Redekopp (1847-1898) in Romanowka NS, Ignatyev. A son, Heinrich (1873-1909/10), m. Maria Derksen (1878-1908), b. in Steinau N1. Another son was David Redekopp.

Wekkesser: What was the maiden name of Margareta Wekkesser, wife of Gottlieb Wekkesser? Their daughter, Amalia (1896-1976), was adopted into the Jacob Niebuhr home at a young age after her parents passed away. Amalia m. 1) Peter Hamm (1893-1969) in 1917, and 2) Cornelius Heppner (?-1975) in 1970.

Mexico: In the 1920s emigration movement from Russia a certain number of families settled in Mexico for a rather short period before moving to Canada. Does anyone know how many families were involved in this settlement? When did they arrive in Mexico? Why did they go in the first place? Why did they so quickly leave the settlement for Canada?

All responses to this column (and other queries) should be directed to Alf Redekopp, c/o Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1-169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, Canada, R2L 2E5.

Genealogies For Sale

Several published Klippenstein genealogies are available at the present time. They cost \$15.00 each. They have been prepared for the following children of Behrend Klippenstein (1781-1841): Peter, Bernhard, Katherina (Klassen), Johann, and Heinrich.

Order from Ted Friesen, Box 720, Altona, Canada, R0G 0B0.

Donor Acknowledgement

We at the Heritage Centre would like to express our gratitude to the people, listed below, who have made financial donations since December 6, 1987 to support the programs of the archives. Our 1988 donations, as of March 14, total \$686.00, with our goal being \$4,000.00. Thank you again for your support.

Nova Scotia

Glenn Penner, Halifax

Ontario

Harvey L. Dyck, Toronto
Frank Klassen, St. Catharines
Maria Naeser, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Abram Reimer, St. Catharines

Manitoba

Peter Bergen, Winnipeg
Miss E. Friesen, Winnipeg
Emma Hogg, Ashern
Menno Klassen, Winnipeg
Lawrence Klippenstein, Winnipeg
Walter E. Kroeker, Winnipeg
Katherine Martens, Winnipeg
Leona Schulz, Winnipeg
Henry P. Thiessen, Winnipeg
Peter Wiebe, Winkler
Jake Wiens, Winnipeg

Saskatchewan

H. Bergen, Regina
Gladys Christensen, Prince Albert
Peter Funk, Lucky Lake
Garner Goertzen, Regina
John D. Rempel, Hague

Alberta

Henry J. Funk, Edmonton
Piera Tietje, Calgary
Mary Unruh, Edmonton

British Columbia

Nick Janzen, Surrey
Katherine H. Loewen, Maple Ridge
Henry Schapansky, Burnaby
George Wiebe, Surrey

United States

Barbara Meister Ferre, Athens, Georgia
Richard N. Loeppky, Columbia, Missouri

"About Free Lands" — MHC Gallery

The MHC Gallery displayed the exhibit "About Free Lands" from February 1 through March 3. The exhibit traces the history of the immigration of east European peoples (including Mennonites) into western Canada. The exhibit was provided courtesy of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature.



Sara Loewen (left) and her sister Helena (ca. 1938). Photo and information courtesy of Sara Martens, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Sara Loewen Estate Bequest

We are very pleased to acknowledge a gift to the MHC archives from the estate of the late Sara Loewen, most recently of Steinbach, Man. The donation will help to publish *Bote Index, Vol. II*.

Sara was born in Rosenthal/Chortitza, Ukraine in 1893. In 1926 she came to Canada with several members of her family, including her father, Gerhard, who became well known as a poet later on. The family settled down in Stuartburn, Man.

Sara was fond of music and children. She became a member of the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and remained a member there till her passing on March 2, 1986.

MHCA Conservation News

The MHCA would like to thank the Manitoba Heritage Conservation Service for the loan of a hygrothermograph from January 4-22, 1988. The device assisted in monitoring the temperature and relative humidity in the vault. It also gave the MHCA staff a clearer idea of how a winter environment affects the temperature and humidity in the vault.



Photo Index Completed

by Peter Rempel

The MHCA Photograph Collection has recently been catalogued and indexed. The catalogue lists over 10,000 images (photographs, slides and negatives) in ca. 330 separate collections. The index, with ca. 2,200 distinct subject headings, provides ready reference to the catalogue list or to the images themselves.

This was the first major cataloguing project at the MHCA using a computer. Hence it can be easily up-dated and the catalogue can be quickly researched for details in the descriptions.

The catalogue and index were prepared by Peter Rempel, and funded by a grant from the Canada Council of Archives, Ottawa, Canada.

REFLECTIONS ON COLLECTIONS

by Jim Suderman

TWO COLLECTIONS: REV. M.A. KROEKER AND THE J.J. WIENS / DAVID GOERZEN FAMILY

Recently, the Archives received two substantial collections of letters. One collection, donated by I. G. Neufeld, consists of correspondence (dated 1924-1950) addressed to Rev. Martin A. Kroeker (Mennonite Brethren). The MHCA collection consists of photocopies; the original correspondence is held elsewhere. Martin was the son of A. Kroeker, former editor of *Die Friedensstimme*, published at Halbstadt in Ukraine. He received most of his correspondence while in Marion, South Dakota.

Kroeker received letters from a wide variety of places and people, including the MB Publishing House, the Northern Pacific Railway Co., G.J. Thielmann, A. Fast and many correspondents from Canada. Some of the issues discussed include the military draft, the C.O. courts in the Soviet Union and aid to the Mennonites in Russia — all pressing issues of the time.

The second collection, donated by Kathy Peters, consists of letters from various members of the J.J. Wiens and David Goerzen families. All correspondence is from the Soviet Union and dated ca. 1920 to 1933. This collection is particularly valuable to researchers because Mrs. Peters has typed a transcription and translation (into English) of each letter.

Collections such as the two listed above preserve a vital part of our Mennonite heritage. They give researchers a glimpse into the daily lives of our forebears, a glimpse not attainable from more "official" documents. Readers are encouraged to preserve the papers of their family members and are welcome to deposit them in the Archives.



The Plautdietsch New Testament translation team [l-r]: Peter and Mary Fast, John J. and Margaret Neufeld, and Vi Reimer. Missing from photo, Joe and Barbara Grimes.

New Testament in Plautdietsch

The New Testament in *Plautdietsch* (pronounced PLOWT-deech), rolled off the presses at Kindred Press in Winnipeg, Man., in January, 1988. The translation was a joint effort of Mennonite Brethren Communications of Winnipeg and Wycliffe Bible Translators with its sister organization, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

Much of the groundwork for the translation was completed by Rev. J.J. Neufeld of Winnipeg, speaker on a *Plautdietsch* radio program produced by Mennonite Brethren Communications. The translation team also included Peter Fast, long-time member of Wycliffe, Vi Reimer, a SIL linguist, and Dr. Joe Grimes, SIL translation consultant.

Available from Kindred Press, 3-169 River-ton Ave., Winnipeg, Canada R2L 2E5 for \$19.95

Evening Hours

The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies will continue to be open Tuesday evenings through the month of March. Evening hours will be discontinued from April through August. Beginning in September the Archives will again be open Tuesday evenings.

Mennonite Brethren Centennial Calendar 1988

March 26, Rev. H. H. Janzen evening, 7:30 p.m., in the Kitchener MB Church, Ontario.

June 8-11, British Columbia Provincial Convention in Chilliwack, Central MB Church.

July 8-11, Centennial Conference of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Winkler, Man.

July 10, Centennial Sunday: Morning "Praise" service and afternoon "Outdoor Music Festival" in Winkler.

July 10, Conference send-off for the "Centennial Youth Caravan" summer ministries program.

October 20-22, Disciple-making 1988, Centennial Program, Central Heights MB, Abbotsford, B.C.

November 3-6, Deeper Life Services, Winkler MB Church with Rev. J. H. Quiring.



Upcoming Event

On Tuesday, April 19, 1988, 7:30 p.m., the Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of Canada will host the Manitoba Historical Society at a joint meeting in the MBBC auditorium.

The Manitoba Historical Society is one of the oldest societies in western Canada. Founded in 1879, it has been responsible for the production of many fine books, pamphlets and also the restoration of historic buildings throughout Manitoba.

Among its many ongoing activities the Society presently operates Dalnavert, a house museum in Winnipeg, and publishes the journal, *Manitoba History*.

The joint meeting is open to the general public. Members of both societies are encouraged to attend. The program will consist of three presentations on Mennonite themes: "Mennonites in Russia" by Dr. Helmut Huebert, "Mennonites in Canada" by Dr. Abe Dueck, and "Mennonite Brethren in Manitoba/Canada" by Ken Reddig.

These presentations will be followed by a viewing of the audio-visual on Mennonite Archives in Canada entitled, "It's News To Me." Refreshments will follow the program.

Volunteers

The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies operates on a very slim budget. Therefore, the organization of textual documents of the 180 or more congregations in Canada, the six provincial conferences together with their agencies can become a very large task.

This broad mandate could not be achieved without the constant support of a wonderful, dedicated group of volunteers. These volunteers give of their time and talents one day each week to assist in the sorting, arrangement, filing and translation of the many textual records housed in the Centre.

It is with much gratitude and great joy that we take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of these fine people.

We would like to thank publicly:

- **Erica Voth** for her diligent work in maintaining the congregational materials which constantly flow into the Centre and in maintaining the obituary collection, which is in continual use by genealogists. Erica, with her knowledge of German and ability to read and write "gothic script," is often assigned the task of transcribing older textual records.

- **Lena Ewert**, who has the joy of being the first person to sort through collections received from various agencies of the Conference. These records often come into the Centre in great disarray and Lena has the patience to spend long hours putting order to the chaos. Lena also has a good knowledge of German

(cont'd on page 6)

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

In the March issue of *MH* you published a photo (p. 6) of Holdeman youth at Needles, B.C. The Jacob Reimer family moved to Needles in 1912, and a few other families later than that. If the photo was in fact taken at Needles, it would have to be dated later than 1911. After the settlement dispersed in 1916, many of the settlers moved to Linden (Swallowell), Alberta. At a great revival there in 1918-19 many of these young people became dedicated members of the church.

According to several people whom I consulted, the persons in the photo are the following: [back row, l-r] Gerhard de Veer (Crooked Creek, Alta.), Cornelius Wiebe (Steinbach, Man.), Willie Krebs (Steinbach, Man.), Peter Penner (Linden area, Alta.). [front row, l-r] Susie Reimer (Mrs. Peter Wiebe, Linden), Martha Wiebe (Mrs. John Wohlgemuth, Steinbach), Mary Wiebe (Mrs. John Barkman, Greenland, Man.), Margaret de Veer (Mrs. John Esau, Crooked Creek), Mary Krebs (later of Steinbach), Margaret Reimer (Mrs. Solomon Boese, Linden), Agnes Wiebe (Mrs. Peter S. Guenther, Steinbach).

Lloyd Penner
Stettler, Alberta, T0C 2L0

Dear Editors,

Regarding the *MH* of June, 1987, p. 5. The woman standing in the photo is Liese Martens. She was my sister-in-law. She came to Canada in 1926 and worked as a maid in Winnipeg. She went to Kitchener in the fall of 1927 and was married to Nicolai Fehderau. She belonged to the MB Church. Liese died in 1987.

Mrs. Louise (Enns) Martens
Boissevain, Manitoba

Dear Editors,

I am writing to you about the photographs in the June, 1987 issue. Firstly, I am under the impression that the women in this picture were choir members in Winnipeg (perhaps at the Mary-Martha Home). Two of my aunts are in this picture and, at the time, they were living with their mother, Anna Rempel Schellenberg, on Logan Avenue in Winnipeg.

Anna Rempel Schellenberg (fourth from right, second last row), was born at Waldeck, Memrik (Russia), in 1895 and died in Toronto, Ontario in 1965. Agatha Rempel Schellenberg (third from left, last row) was also born at Waldeck, Memrik, in 1901 and died in Toronto in 1979. They were both buried at the Woodland Cemetery in Kitchener, Ontario.

In the picture on page 3, I think that the girl on the left (forefront) with the black neck-piece scarf is my Aunt Sara (Wiens Warken-tin). She was born in Russia in 1903 and married Arthur Horsman. According to my information, the picture was taken in 1932.

Irma Jupp
126 Clearview Ave., Ottawa, Ont., K1Y 2L2.

Dear Editors,

As author of *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, I am grateful that you asked a well-known historian and archivist to review the book in the December, 1987 issue of *Mennonite Historian*. Not being a professional in the field myself, I am honored to have had Lawrence Klippenstein take the time and effort needed to carefully evaluate my labours. I appreciate and accept both his general comments and his specific criticisms of the *Hierschau* study.

With remarkable knowledge of detail, Klippenstein noted that Ältester Abraham Goerz (without the "t") of Ohrloff and Johann Isaak of Rueckenau were not elected to the Second Duma (page 215), nor were Goerz and Heinrich Janz of Halbstadt elected to the Third Duma. They were elected to the "electoral college" which subsequently elected the actual representatives to the Duma. In my original review of the data I missed this distinction. My only consolation is that the editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* in 1907 made the same mistake. Klippenstein correctly points out that Hermann Bergmann actually sat in the Third Duma and Peter Schroeder in the Fourth.

My reference to eight Forstei camps (page 210) came not from P.M. Friesen as Klippenstein supposes, but from the eminent Mennonite scholar David G. Rempel, and he quoted S.D. Bondar, whose book was published in 1916. With his thorough research on the subject, Klippenstein has found another camp — making the total nine, plus one mobile detachment. Three were in Kherson province, three in Taurida, two in Ekaterinoslav, and one (the last to be built) in Siberia (Issyl Kul).

With the happy necessity of having to run another printing of *Hierschau*, I will, of course, make the appropriate corrections of the text. Many thanks to Klippenstein for helping make the story more accurate.

Helmut T. Huebert

Dear Editors,

We have a few boxes of Dad's book *Miracles of Grace and Judgement* left. Many of the copies are autographed by Dad (Gerhard Schroeder, ed.). I suggest that anyone interested in a copy, should order it before the book is no longer available.

The price of the unsigned copies is \$7.50 US for single copies and \$5.00 US a copy in lots of 10 or more — for resale. Write to: 101 S. Corinth, Lodi, CA, U.S.A. 95242.

Joanne Wiebe



(Volunteers, cont'd from page 5)

so she is often assigned the task of transcribing textual records from "gothic script" into Latin characters.

• **Ida Toews** for many hours spent in translating books and documents. The first of her translations, the *Winnipeg City Mission*, will be published later this year. By now Ida has translated four books and booklets. In her retirement, she has put to very good use her many years of teaching German and English in Winnipeg public schools.

• **Walter Regehr**, who began as a volunteer in the archives this fall. A retired school principal, with a fine command of the German language, Walter is translating documents relating to the Russian Mennonite experience in World War I. With his many years of involvement in church-related work, he also serves as an able resource person on congregational and conference structures.

The Centre for MB Studies is looking for still more volunteers. Please feel free to contact the Centre if you are willing to volunteer your time and talents or if you know of someone who might consider such involvement.

Volunteers are an essential link in the transmission of our historic faithfulness to God to succeeding generations. Without the help of these faithful people, the task of providing the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference with the best possible archives, would be much more difficult indeed.

KMB Orphanage Newsletter Sought

In 1890 members of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church (KMB) chartered an orphanage southeast of Hillsboro, Kansas, U.S.A. Known as the "Industrial School and Hygiene Home for Friendless Persons," it was considered a home missions project for many years. The Home had close ties with the River Brethren of Pennsylvania. One of their teachers, Sister Amanda Dohner, served as the first matron of the Home.

For many years homeless children were brought in from Chicago and raised in this orphanage. Reports note that at times up to 80 children were in residence. However, between the years of 1910-1915 the Home changed its mandate. A new charter, accepted in 1915, defined the institution as a home for the aged and officially changed its name to "Salem Home."

Beginning in 1895 a small publication known as the *Gemeindeblatt und Waisenheim* was published on a monthly basis to promote and report on the work of the orphanage. It ceased publication about 1904. Many copies of this publication are still missing.

The Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Hillsboro, Kansas, is looking for copies of this publication to complete its collection. If you know where any copies might be located, please contact the Center for MB Studies, Hillsboro, Kansas, U.S.A., 67063.



Shannon Krushel

Jesus the Light

by Shannon Krushel

Sometimes;
you feel like you're looking,
at life through a dirty window.
Emotions,
like desolation,
and despair,
unknown before,
flow like rivers,
deep within the soul.

Always;
concerns and worries nag,
at the edge of the mind.
Slowly dominating,
all your dreams,
and thoughts,
Making problems the focus,
and pleasure a fantasy.

Never;
lose sight,
of the brilliant light,
at the end of the tunnel.
Guiding you,
through the tangled,
web of life,
and death.

Shannon, 14, the daughter of Howard and Lee Krushel of Calgary, Alta., wrote this poem as a tribute to her grandfather, Henry Krushel, who passed away on December 14, 1987.

RUSSIAN MENNONITES, 1941-1945

I am researching the history of Mennonites in the Soviet Union during the period 1941-1945. I would appreciate meeting, writing or phoning anyone who could provide me with information for this period.

Jim Suderman, Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Canada, R3P 0M4, or phone: Home — [204] 256-2206, Office — [204] 888-6781, Ext. 244.

Church Anniversary Celebrations

25 Year Celebration

Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church

Clearbrook, B.C.

June 26, 1988

For inquiries contact Brigitte Hildebrandt, Box 2206, Clearbrook, B.C., V2T 3X8, or call [604] 859-4132.

60 Year Celebration

Osler Mennonite Church

Osler, Sask.

July 3, 1988

Osler Mennonite Church 60th Anniversary celebrations (1928-1988) with special services in the Osler School gym. All former members and friends of the congregation are cordially invited. Watch for further notices and send all inquiries to Kathy Boldt, Box 129, Osler, Sask., S0K 3A0.

50 Year Celebration

Niagara United Mennonite Church

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

July 9-10, 1988

All persons who have had contact with the church past and present are invited. To celebrate the occasion an illustrated 50th Anniversary Book will be published, and will be available for purchase at the July 9-10 celebration. Inquiries should be sent to Otto Dirks, Box 909, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., L0S 1J0.

The Mennonite Heritage Centre is planning to place a plaque for the late Rev. David Toews of Rosthern, Sask., on the MHC cairn. It is hoped that a preliminary presentation can be made in Saskatchewan and an unveiling held at the CMBC grounds during the summer.



50 Year Celebration

Homewood Mennonite Church

Homewood, Man.

July 9-10, 1988

Inquiries should be sent to Rev. Peter Penner, Box 1300, Carman, Man., R0G 0J0.

50 Year Celebration

Springstein Mennonite Church

Springstein, Man.

July 30-August 1, 1988

All those who have been or are associated with the congregation are invited to help us celebrate this anniversary. For more information write the hosting committee before April 30: Box 38, Springstein, Man., R0G 2N0, or call [204] 735-2758.

50 Year Celebration

Reinland E. M. M. Church

Reinland, Man.

August 7, 1988

For more information write to: Dave Hoepfner, Box 300, RR #1, Winkler, Manitoba, R6W 4A1.

25th anniversary

Charleswood Mennonite Church

Winnipeg, Man.

Meetings will be held at CMBC in Winnipeg on June 5.

Inquiries may be directed to: Jonah Loepky, 699 Haney St., Winnipeg, Man. R3R 0Y7.



The Mennonite Heritage Centre has recently published *Mennonite Historian Index, Vol. I-XII (1975-1986)* and *Resources for Canadian Mennonite Studies. An Inventory and Guide to Archival Holdings at the Mennonite Heritage Centre*. The Inventory was made possible by a SHRRRC grant and will be distributed to pertinent institutions free of charge. The Index may be ordered from the Heritage Centre for \$2.00 a copy (with postage and handling extra). Direct any inquiries about these two publications to: Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Canada, R3P 0M4.

BOOK REVIEWS

Plett, Delbert, *Profile of the Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde 1874*. (Steinbach, Manitoba: DFP Publications, 1987) pp. 312, p.b., \$29.95.

Reviewed by John Friesen

This book is the fourth volume in the Kleine Gemeinde Historical series. Delbert Plett, a lawyer and historian in Steinbach, Manitoba is the author and editor of this series.

In the first volume, *History and Events*, Plett published many documents from various private collections. In the second and third volumes, *The Golden Years* and *Storm and Triumph*, he wrote a history of the Kleine Gemeinde from the years of its founding (1812) to the time of its emigration to North America (1874). Plett intended these two volumes to provide a corrective to the almost uniformly negative interpretation which most Mennonite historians had given of the Kleine Gemeinde. In addition to the historical interpretation, the two volumes also included numerous documents in whole or in part.

This fourth volume is very different from the previous three. It provides very little historical narrative on the Kleine Gemeinde in Russia. Instead it provides a vast amount of detailed information about the families and clans who moved either to Manitoba or to Nebraska, U.S.A. in the 1870s. Since all the material is given in English translation, this book will be especially valuable for people who cannot read the German originals.

In Part One of *Profile* Plett provides information from four major sources about the Kleine Gemeinde immigrant families who settled in Manitoba: (a) the Genealogy Register by Ältester Peter Toews (b) the Quebec Ship Lists 1874-75 (c) the Shantz List of immigrants and (d) the Rural Municipality of Hanover Tax Records of 1883-1884.

For the Kleine Gemeinde settlement on the Scratching River near Morris he presents material from a number of sources since no one source provided a comprehensive collection of information about all the settlers in the early years.

The first collection in Part One, namely the Register by Peter Toews, is liberally footnoted by Plett in order to provide cross-references and additional family information. The other sections are reproduced, in English translation, largely as they appeared in the original.

Part Two deals with the Kleine Gemeinde settlement in Jansen, Nebraska and Meade, Kansas. Most of this section consists of a study of these two Kleine Gemeinde settlements by Henry Fast of Steinbach Bible College. In contrast to Part One which consists almost exclusively of genealogical information, Part Two consists largely of historical narrative. However, as part of this narrative Fast also includes a listing of all the families which originally settled near Jansen. Part Two concludes with some ship lists, tax lists, and census records for the Nebraska settlement.

Part Three includes diaries of six Kleine Gemeinde people, five men and one woman. The most important one is that by Ältester Peter Toews for the years 1871 to 1878. It details the events of the last years in Russia, the arrangements and travel to Manitoba, and the first few years in Canada. These diaries contain a wealth of information. They are well written and communicate both the joys and the sorrows of the early years. They reflect the pain caused by the rending of the Kleine Gemeinde into two parts when the Church of God in Christ Mennonite (Holdeman) group was formed in Manitoba in 1881-82.

Part Four includes detailed genealogical information and a brief history for eight Kleine Gemeinde families. The genealogies begin in the eighteenth century and proceed up to the settlement in Manitoba.

The book concludes with an appendix in which Plett replies to James Urry's review of *The Golden Years*, published in *The Journal Of Mennonite Studies* (Vol. IV, 1986). Plett charges Urry with falsely accusing him of errors. More important, though, is Plett's contention that Urry implicitly sides with the traditionally negative interpretations of the Kleine Gemeinde. Plett says that Jim Urry, like P.M. Friesen, the noted Russian Mennonite historian, assumes that the progressive, pietistic Ohrloff Mennonitism is normative, and that other groups which did not agree with the Ohrloff view, like the Kleine Gemeinde, were considered narrow-minded and conservative.

This response to Urry is quite out of character with the rest of the book. Since it deals with issues of interpretation, some other forum, where ongoing discussion could continue, would have been preferable.

With this volume Delbert Plett has made another important contribution to a better understanding of Kleine Gemeinde history. It is particularly helpful in that it provides information about the settlement years in the 1870s. This data will be invaluable to social historians, genealogists, and others interested in the life of the Kleine Gemeinde people who settled North America during that period.

Dr. John Friesen is Associate Professor of History and Theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man.

Book Notes

"After hundreds of years of using the Scriptures in German, the Mennonites finally have God's Word in their own everyday language." With these words Wycliffe Bible Translators announced the publication of *Daut Niebe Testament* (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1988, \$19.95), introduced elsewhere in this issue.

Perhaps 1988 marks some kind of "coming of literary age" of Low German. The Univer-

sity of Alberta Press, Edmonton, has just released Victor Friesen's, *Windmill Turning: Nursery Rhymes, Maxims and Other Expressions of Western Canadian Mennonites* (139 pp., \$21.00), a scholarly treatment of a subject tackled some years ago in coloring book form by Valeda Unger (*Dee Goldene Schlut*, Steinbach: Derksen Printers, 1974).

The University of Manitoba Press has announced the publication this fall of Doreen Klassen's *Singing Mennonite. Low German Songs among the Mennonites* (300 pp. \$30.00 hc).

And Volume III of the works of Arnold Dyck, to be released later this year by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, will give us the bulk of Dyck's Low German writings in critical scholarly edition for the first time.

This flurry of publication highlights the significance of the 1982 seminar at which 18 *Plautdietsch* speakers agreed on an "official" standard orthography, and of the second edition of Herman Rempel's Low German dictionary (*Kjenn jie noch Plautdietsch?* Winnipeg: Mennonite Literary Society, 1984) which basically follows this new orthography.

It probably also signals that the Low German *Fiebel* (Primer) produced by Peter Fast, long-time member of Wycliffe (Peeta Faust, *Wie räden en läsen Plautdietsch*, Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1987, 22 pp) will soon need to be superseded by something more substantial.

Also noted.

Chronicles and Genealogy of the Abram Edmund Klassen Family (Insel Chortitz), 168 pp. loose-leaf, available at \$20 from the publisher, Helena Braun, 45940 Collins Dr., Sardis, B.C.

Herman Enns, *Behold Your God*, 24 sermons selected by Walfried Goossen from the 500 left by his pastor (1962-74) at Hamilton Mennonite Church.

Inquiries about the above titles may be directed to *Mennonite Historian*, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3P 0M4.