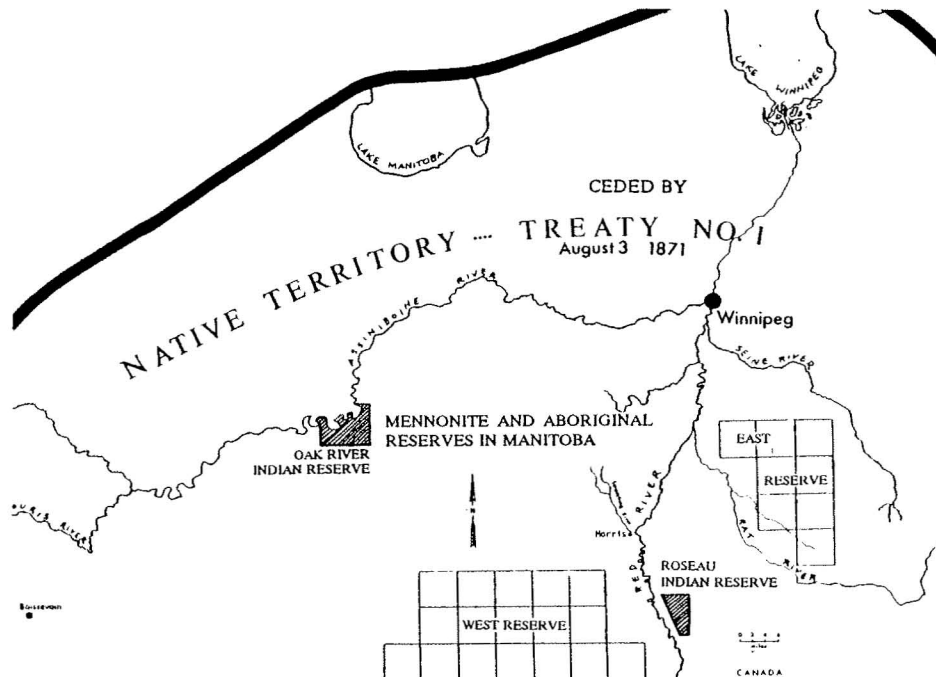


# MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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The areas of the reserves are not necessarily drawn to scale. Gerald Loewen of Winnipeg designed the layout.

Map adapted from: *Mennonite Memories. Settling in Western Canada.* (1977), 46.

## Mennonites and Aboriginals: The East Reserve and Roseau River Beginnings, 1870 - 1890

by Rosemary Kuzina

The term "reserve" has been used for both Native Canadian settlements and Mennonite land allotments in Manitoba. However, the treatment of these two groups and the land acquisition process has been very dissimilar in many ways.

Both peoples were seeking the right to practise their own traditions and beliefs in their homeland, but the privileges offered by the Dominion government of Canada to the Russian Mennonite immigrants of the late 1800s came at the expense of the Ojibway people residing in southern Manitoba. This essay will compare the beginnings of the Roseau River Indian Reserve and the East and West Reserves for the Mennonites, particularly the manner in which the federal government related to these developments.

One point of commonality between the

Ojibway and the Mennonites was in their early settlement patterns. Both were forced to migrate due to the conflicting views of their neighbours. The Ojibways came originally from eastern Canada. By the 1600s they had become intermediaries for the European traders dealing with western Canadian Native tribes. Moving westwards, the Ojibway settled around Portage La Prairie in Manitoba, but due to the warlike nature of the Sioux tribe residing there, the Ojibway continued to move. The increase in trade activities and the influx of Selkirk settlers in 1812 prompted them to settle along the Roseau River, where they had to change their lifestyle from one mainly concerned with the bison hunt, to fishing and small game hunting.

Around this same time in Ukraine, the

Mennonites had undertaken a migration of their own. During 1788-89 and 1795 they had first moved to the Chortitza area in New Russia where they were allowed to set up their communities in the villages, own private farms, establish their own schools and churches, and retain their own language. Eighty years later the Mennonites, like the aboriginals of Manitoba, were facing crucial issues that threatened to undermine their existence. The Russian government was modernizing its army in the early 1870s which could mean a loss of military exemptions. At the same time schools were being upgraded, and religious freedoms being eroded. By 1870 many families were landless and very poor.

The positive solution for the Mennonite dilemma became the means by which Native Canadians were forced to relinquish their rights. An offer of free land, military exemption, and the right to govern their own schools and churches by the new white Canadian government prompted many Mennonites to emigrate to what Euro-Canadians considered to be an empty wilderness. Native tribes and Metis populations occupying western Canada viewed the government's actions and the incoming immigrants as encroaching on their homeland. Thus the government decided to sign treaties with these aboriginal Canadians in order to open up the land that had already been offered to white people.

The ensuing negotiations between the federal government and the Native tribes were based on very different demands and expectations, as well as conflicting interpretations of each other's words. The government's plan was to populate the region with European citizens establishing farms and villages, with small tracts of land set aside for the natives. The Natives envisioned large areas of prairie where they could fish and hunt freely without the intrusion of settlers. Correspondence from the province's Lieutenant-Governor to the Secretary of State for the provinces illustrates these differing perspectives dramatically.

...the Indians seem to have false ideas of the meaning of a reserve. They have

(cont'd on p. 2)

(cont'd from p. 1)

been led to suppose that large tracts of ground were to be set aside for them as hunting grounds, including timber lands, of which they might sell the wood as if they were proprietors of the soil.

In defining the limits of their reserves, so far as we could see, they (the Indians) wished to have about two-thirds of the Province. We heard them out, and then told them it was quite clear that they had entirely misunderstood the meaning and intention of reserves. We explained the object of these in something like the language of the memorandum enclosed, and then told them it was of no use for them to entertain any such ideas, which were entirely out of the question. We told them whether they wished it or not, immigrants would come in and fill up the country; that every year from this one twice as many in number as their whole people here assembled would pour into the Province, and in a little while would spread all over it, and that now was the time for them to come to an arrangement that would secure homes and annuities for themselves and their children.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile negotiators for the Native bands described the area they wanted around the Roseau River.

We claim from the mouth of Rat Creek up the Red River to the International lines; from Red River going along the boundary line that to Roseaux Lake, southend; from Roseaux Lake down to a line parallel with the boundary line from Rat Creek.<sup>2</sup>

This totalled approximately 190 square miles for a band population of 600 persons, i.e. about two-thirds of the East Reserve set aside for the Mennonites. The first allotment of land for the new Mennonite settlers consisted of eight townships equalling 288 square miles. When that was filled the government gave out another 17 townships west of the Red River (hence the West Reserve). Other accommodations made during these reserve negotiations with the Mennonites included an agreement that the government would respect their religious and economic interests.

As noted in a signed document from John Lowe, Secretary in the Department of Agriculture, dated 25 July 1873, the Mennonites and the government were fully aware of each other's intentions and concerns. This letter clearly suggests the factors which were important to the settlers,

the concessions made by the officials, the fact that both groups understood the terms, and the legal framework the colonies were to be based on. The grant was worded as follows:

An entire exemption from military service...

Any person who is head of a family or has obtained the age of 21 years shall be entitled to be entered for 1/4 section or a less quantity of unappropriated Dominion lands, for a purpose of securing a homestead...

The said reserve of eight townships is for the exclusive use of the Mennonites, and the said free grant of each...

Should the Mennonite Settlement extend beyond the eight townships set aside...other townships will be in the same way reserved to meet the full requirements of Mennonite immigration.

If next spring the Mennonite settlers...decide to exchange them(townships) for any other unoccupied eight townships, such an exchange will be allowed. ...

From the moment of occupation the settler acquires a "homestead right" in the land.

The fullest privilege of exercising their religious principles is by law afforded to the Mennonites without any kind of molestation or restriction whatever, and the same privilege extends to the education of their children in schools.<sup>3</sup>

But while these arrangements were being made for the anticipated arrival of the Mennonites, the Native bands were not faring as well.. When Treaty No. 1 was finally concluded on 3 August 1871, the various tribes received next to nothing in exchange for the 12 million acres of land they had to surrender to the Dominion of Canada. Generally the reserves were to be large enough so each family of five had 160 acres, schools were to be built and maintained on every reserve by the government, and each person would receive three dollars annually (the current rate is six dollars).

While the band thought the government would enforce the boundaries of these newly established reserves, it actually took the Indian Affairs administration another two years to authorize any surveys to officially designate those parameters. Finally in the

fall of 1873 the surveys were done for all the Treaty No. 1 reserves, except for the Roseau River band. It was not until 1882, eleven years after the signing of the treaty, that the final adjustments were completed. An Order-in-Council confirmed this only in 1890. Finally the band ended up with only 80 square miles, or two townships of land, certainly a great deal less than what the original request had been.

This total was achieved by a census count since the land allotment related to the number of persons living in the area of the as yet undefined reserve. In 1874 surveyors noted the population to be 325 and added on 25 to 30 per cent for those not accounted for in the count. That would provide the new reserve with 13,554 acres,<sup>4</sup> or 81 square miles of land. However, the claim that concrete census figures were unavailable is not warranted since they were readily available from the annuity payment lists which the government had records of since 1871.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the payout lists suggest a population nearer 500 individuals. If the government had used the 1881 population for the final tally on the survey, the total would have been 563 persons, thus increasing the acreage by 4500.

With this interlude in defining actual boundaries, the Natives were forced to put up with a lot of related problems, mainly of settlers trespassing to cut timber and even occupying those areas which the band could not legally prove was theirs. In fact, on a "Map of the Province of Manitoba, Shewing [sic] the Surveys effected to 1st. January 1874"<sup>6</sup> prepared by the Dominion Lands Office, the area of the Roseau River Reserve is noted only as a "Proposed Indian Reserve" while the others were distinctly marked as "Indian Reserves".

Other problems encountered by the Roseau band included the fact that they could only hunt on the reserve and were requested to take up farming instead. While Natives had been successful at agriculture previously, the land they were now relegated to was not conducive to that activity, and the machinery the government provided soon broke down. The authorities did nothing to repair it. Also, those who resided outside the reserve area had been promised by the government that they would be protected. But if they built only small huts on their yards, they would get a much smaller plot of land because it showed they were not really interested in pursuing agriculture.

(cont'd on p. 6)

## FAMILY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

by Alf Redekopp

### Adalbert Goertz on Mennonite Genealogy

"Tracing Mennonite Roots in Prussia and Eastern Europe" was the topic which Adalbert Goertz addressed at a Winnipeg meeting of over 80 people on July 21, 1990. Goertz presented the participants of the seminar with a detailed comprehensive inventory of Mennonite Church records that were created in Prussia and Poland.

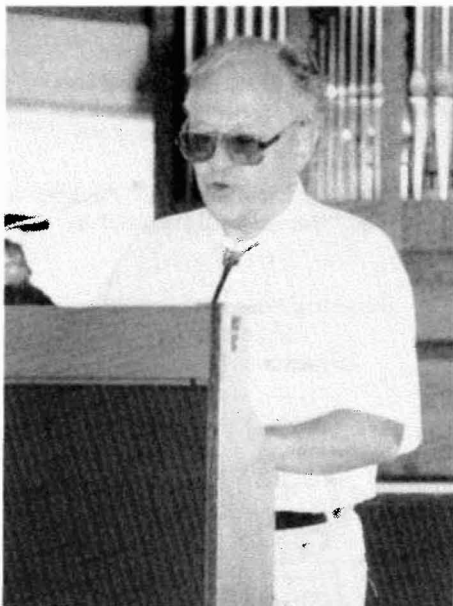
His presentation indicated not only the history of these records which included where the originals and microfilms of the same are presently kept, but also which records have been transcribed and published in either German or English journals. Besides the use of Mennonite Church Records, Goertz also discussed the use of Catholic and Lutheran parish records, since at a certain time in history the Prussian government administration required that the recognized state churches keep the vital statistics of all residents in its parish.

Goertz emphasized the need to study and know the geography of Poland and Prussia when pursuing their use. As an aid to research a list of Mennonite villages in the Danzig and Marienwerder districts as presented indicated the appropriate parish record to consult. Goertz also presented a list of some of the archives that a western researcher may want to visit. He stressed as well the importance of sufficient preparation to avoid duplicating the research efforts of others. Don't waste time researching records which are available on microfilm in the west, he said. Take specific note of the new sources discovered, write down the call numbers and titles, and inform others in the research community of your discoveries upon returning home.

### Queries

**Spent** - Historical data wanted for a Spent record. Interested in any information with the "Spent" surname from family histories, registers or other sources. Nothing considered too trivial. Also, if you are of the Spent lineage write your family descent to: Ron Spent, 4412 7th St. NE, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 55421.

**Bergen/Baergen/Bargen** - Looking for addresses of Canadian Bergens, as well as contacts in Europe. Working on a comprehensive family chart of the Bergen family of the Russian Mennonite tradition. Anyone collecting information on the



Adalbert Goertz addressing the Genealogy section of the Polish-Prussian Mennonite Symposium.

Photo: Courtesy Dick Epp, Saskatoon.

Bergen, Baergen or Bargen surname, contact: Mike Hornbaker, Box 192, Maize, KS, USA, 67101.

**Steinfeld** - Seeking all possible information on the origin of the village of Steinfeld in the Schlachting Settlement in Russia. When did the first settlers come? Where did they come from? What were their names? Who came from where? Why did they come? etc. Contact: John N. Klassen, Hindenburgstr. 36, D-7015 Korntal, West Germany.

**Sarah Derksen and descendants she brought with her from Orenburg, U.S.S.R., to West Germany.** From left to right they are: (front row) Margarita (Derksen) Block, holding Ina; Sarah Derksen; Jakob Block, holding Lydia; (back row) Margarita Block; Jakob Block, holding Rudolf; Margarita (Friesen) Block, and Peter Block.

Photo: MCC - Andrea Wenger



### Tracing Mennonite Families back from Russia to Prussia

Mike Hornbaker writes in a letter to the *Historian* and wishes responses from readers about a pattern he has discovered and a theory which he has used successfully on several family histories (Bergen, Esau, Peters, Epp). Using Karl Stumpp, Benjamin Unruh, Horst Penner and the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* as sources, Hornbaker has developed a theory, in his words, "that makes it easy to go from Russia to Prussia".

The method is as follows: Cross reference all surname entries in Stumpp and Unruh (since neither gives a complete picture) and add names in Penner. You will see where they were from, where they went, all members of the immigrant generation and their ages. Being from the same town and being of close age, even if they are married and have their own families should tell you they are brothers or a least first cousins.

There is a "family cluster" effect within the Mennonite communities. Certain groups of surnames move together. If a group of people of the similar surnames moves to villages in Russia that are relatives close to each other, look for family relationships (siblings, cousins, uncles, etc.) Anyone wishing to confirm or refute this pattern, contact: Mike Hornbaker, Box 192, Maize, KS, USA, 67101.

Address queries, etc., regarding items on this page to: Alf Redekopp, CMBS, 1-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R2L 2E5.



## Projects in Progress

**The directory of serials.** Jake Wiens, an MHCA volunteer, continues to key in materials listing MHCA newspapers, newsletters, periodicals, etc. This stage may be completed by Christmas time.

**Bote Index, Vol. II.** Peter Rempel has completed listing and editing data for Vol. II. CMBC Publications will be publishing the volume, possibly this fall also.

**Backlog reduction.** Three or four collections will be archived this year under the terms of the recent backlog grant received from the Canadian Council of Archives. One of the collections includes about a dozen cartons of records brought in from Elim Bible Institute when it closed in 1988, and six cartons deposited by Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba recently.

**Finding Aids Microfilmed.** A large collection of finding aids at MHCA will be microfilmed as part of the National Inventory of Documentary Sources in Canada being prepared by Chadwyck-Healey Inc.

**Mennonitisches Jahrbuch Index.** An index to *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch 1903-1913* has been republished. Copies can be secured from the Mennonite Heritage Centre for \$4.00 plus postage. Peter Rempel is editor of this index.

## Plans for Restoring the Mäedchenschule

*A reader of Mennonite Historian recently sent us the following letter. It has to do with plans to renovate and restore the well-known Mäedchenschule (girls' school) built in Chortitza in 1895, and still in use as a school today.*

To the representatives of the Mennonite communities in Canada and USA.

At present co-op company "Shlyach" has been carrying on reconstruction of the two-storeyed building. On the ground floor of this building (180 sq m) we are planning to open

-a Centre to provide cultural and business ties with Mennonites living on the territory of the Soviet Union and abroad,

-an Exhibition hall. Documents and pictures on display will acquaint visitors with the Mennonite settlement in the south of the Ukraine.

It is planned that the Centre shall

-maintain business contacts with the Mennonite communities in the cities of

### Directory of Mennonite Archives and Historical Libraries

Verzeichnis Mennonitischer Archive und Historischer Bibliotheken

Répertoire des Archives et des Bibliothèques Historiques Mennonites

 12  
1990 Winnipeg

Third edition

The new third edition **Directory of Mennonite Archives** is available from **Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB., Can. R3P 0M4. Cost: \$6.00 including postage.**

Karaganda, Orenburg and other areas, -fulfill individual orders of people who want to clear up their family tree,  
(cont'd on p. 6)

## Recent Acquisitions

We list here a few items recently deposited at MHCA. Complete lists can be obtained from the Centre.

1. Materials from the papers of the late G.G.H. Ens of Reinland, Manitoba.
2. Fifteen volumes of *Family Life*, purchased from the Heritage Library at Aylmer, Ont. (focus on Amish life).
3. Copies of two dissertations related to Russian Mennonites. One is by Dr. Leonard Friesen of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. It is entitled, "New Russia and the Fissuring of Rural Society, 1855-1907", (University of Toronto, 1988), and the other is Dr. Henry Paetkau's study titled "Separation or Integration: The Russian Mennonite Immigrant Community in Ontario, 1924-45", (University of Western Ontario, 1986).

  
MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTRE  
600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3P 0M4

4. Some back copies of *Gospel Herald*. Our set is nearly complete now. We still need all the issues of 1937.

5. Copies of maps related to village reconstruction at Deutsch Wymyschle (Poland). Courtesy of V. Marchlewskii from Warsaw.

6. A copy of the memoirs of Gerhard Cornies, Leamington, Ont.

## Staff Changes

Several MCHA staff persons have come and gone this summer. The fall "team" is now in place and the work goes on.

First of all we need to announce **Jim Suderman's** move to take on a new job at the Archives of Ontario. Jim came to the Centre in the summer of 1986 and has made a valuable contribution to the program in the past four years.

In late July **Arlyn Epp** completed his work project under a Careerstart grant. He is back at CMBC and will be employed on a "casual help" basis in the coming year.

In July and August we were able to get the short-term help of **Heidi Koop** who has since taken up a part-time position with the CMBC library. **Doug Klassen** joined us for a few weeks in August as well.

Finally we are very pleased to announce the interim appointment of **Kimberly Epp** as secretary-receptionist of the Centre. She began her work on September 4. Kimberly is a graduate of CMBC.



**Kimberly Epp, now secretary-receptionist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.**

**Jake Wiens** and **Anne Harms** are continuing their volunteer work, a much appreciated addition to the services offered here. We are hoping that **Karl Fast**, of Winnipeg, will join us as a volunteer also. He will be working with translations from Russian into English.

## Centre Open Tuesday Evenings

Beginning on Tuesday, September 11, 1990, the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies will be open each Tuesday evening from 6:00 PM to 9:30 PM. These evening hours are in addition to the regular 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM hours, Monday to Friday. The arrangements will continue till April 30, 1991.

All researchers are invited to utilize these additional hours. Also invited are those interested in simply touring the archives, browsing through some old newspapers and/or books, or looking for genealogical resources.

## More on Matuskiwiz

In the June issue of the *Mennonite Historian* we noted on page three the discovery of the fact that from 1886-1895 a certain Maximilian Matuskiwiz served as editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. In the article we requested further information as to who he was. To date the only new information we have received is a brief note on his death which appears in the December 30, 1925, issue of the *Rundschau*.

In the death notice his activities following his tenure as editor of the *Rundschau* are given. Following his move to Los Angeles in 1895 he owned and operated his own printing business, namely the Franklin Printing Company. During the last years of his life he served as secretary of the Printers Board of Trade. He died in Lincoln Hospital, following a brief illness.

Most interesting in the notice are two statements, which raise many questions. First, it is confirmed that he served as the second editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. Secondly, it is noted that he was a Catholic. However, it is hastily added, "...he fulfilled his duties very well, to the very last detail."

These details only serve to deepen the mystery as to who Matuskiwiz was. Why did John Funk entrust the editing of his paper, serving Mennonites from Russia in both Canada and the United States, to a Catholic? Matuskiwiz must have been a very special kind of person to have garnered the confidence of John F. Funk for this important task. Certainly John F. Funk deserves some credit as well. For him to have given over the paper to a Catholic indicates an ecumenical openness unheard of in those days. There obviously is a great deal more to this story than what we currently know. If anyone can help us, please let us know.



Players of the North-End MB Church Orchestra 1942-1943. This may be the beginning of the Mennonite Community Orchestra. Left to Right: Hans Dirks, Anne Hiebert, Rudy Martens, Henry Shier, Menno Isaak, Ed Barkman, Ruth Buss, Mary Barkman, Bill Neufeld.

## International Visitor Volunteers in Centre

Through the Mennonite Central Committee International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP), the Centre has secured the services of Mautji Pataki from August through January, 1991. Mautji comes to the Centre from South Africa, Transvaal Province. He received his B.A. in Education in South Africa at the University of the North and has spent the past two years as a Refugee Ministries field worker for the South African Council of Churches (Northern Transvaal Region).

His relationship with the South African Council of Churches has always been

strengthened by his membership with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa where he served in the Youth Fellowship Department on part-time basis for several years. This service later exposed him to the South African Council of Churches Youth Ministries Department.

Though a full time appointee with the S.A.C.C., Mautji still serves as a Youth worker for both the R.P.C.S.A and S.A.C.C.

Born as the first child in his family on 19 August 1965, he is today a brother to three sisters - the youngest being twins. His mother and father, a professional teacher and a qualified truck driver, respectively, are both still living in Transvaal.

## Music Collection Being Catalogued

Retired MBBC librarian Herbert Giesbrecht, began a four-month music cataloguing project in early September. This project, funded through the Manitoba Council of Archives Backlog Reduction Program, is designed to help reduce the backlog of music materials held in the Centre.

With the donation of the large Ben and Esther Horsch music collection last fall, the Centre was faced with the massive task of properly cataloguing the many hymnbooks as well as arranging and describing the sheet music and textual sources. Combined with the already large collection of music materials already in the Centre, it became evident that only by hiring a trained librarian could this project be adequately completed.

The Centre is pleased to have secured the services of Herbert Giesbrecht for this project.



**Reserves** (cont'd from p. 2)

Meanwhile, the Mennonites fared no better in their first attempts at farming. They did have the option, though, of moving over to the West Reserve where the land was better. By 1890 new villages were prospering with their own schools and churches established, and good crops were being produced.

The Natives, on the other hand, were struggling with the school system given to them. Teachers were difficult to obtain, so residential schools in western Manitoba town were utilized for the Native children. Here they were not allowed to speak their own language, wear their own type of clothing, or retain their customs.

While the Mennonite immigrants eventually prospered and became a part of Canadian white society while still maintaining many of their traditions, the Native Canadians have had to endure the decrees of the Dominion government for over one hundred years. Today the Roseau River band is talking about its land rights. It will be interesting to see how this important issue affects not only the Natives, but the neighbouring Mennonite towns as well.

**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories* (Toronto: Belfords, Clark and Co., 1971), 33-34.

<sup>2</sup>*The Manitoban*, 12 August 1871. See also Linda McDowell and Stan Plett, *Roseau River Reserve: An Ojibway Community*. (Morris, MB: Morris Macdonald School Division, 1976). Bk I-III.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from John Lowe, Department of Agriculture, Canada, 25 July 1873, Ottawa, published in E.K. Francis. *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*. (Altona, MB: D.W. Friesen and Sons, Ltd., 1955), 44-45. For a brief sketch of early Manitoba Mennonite settlements cf. also *Mennonite Settlement. The East and West Reserves*. (Winnipeg: Historic Resources Branch, 1981).

<sup>4</sup>*Canada Sessional Papers*, No. 8, 38 Victoria, A. 1875; National Archives of Canada, RG10, Black Series, Vol. 3555, file 16, letter dated 18 September 1874.

<sup>5</sup>National Archives of Canada, RG10, Vol. 1675; Vol. 3555, file 16; Vol. 9351-9358.

<sup>6</sup>National Archives of Canada, National Map Collection, No. 1 VI/501-1881.

Rosemary Kuzina is an editor with Archaeological Services, Canada Parks Service, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**Restoring** (cont'd from p. 4)

-collect and systematize documents on the history of the Mennonite villages in the south of the Ukraine,

-look after Mennonite cemeteries in the Zaporozhye region.

At the end of June (beginning of July) 1990 the co-op company "Shlyach" started restoration and repair of the former Mennonite girls' school situated in what was formerly Chortitza Colony. In one of the rooms of the school (100 sq m) an ethnic-historical Mennonite museum will be created.

We count on your assistance in carrying out the above described projects and work planned for the near future in providing photos and other materials required for reconstruction of original Mennonite houses and their interiors. We would be pleased if you can send some exhibits to our museum.

We would be glad to fulfill the orders of those people who want to trace the historical fate of their relatives, their former houses, public buildings etc. We are also prepared to carry out productional and financial activities on the principals of joint venture.

If you get interested in these activities and our plans for the future, please get in contact with us. We appreciate your ideas and suggestions.

Our address: S.N. Shmakin (Chm); Co-op company "Shlyach"; Chkalov St. 99; Zaporozhye, 330059; USSR.

**Book Notes** (cont'd from p. 7)

wilderness. The new fold-out time-line by Marlene Epp is a valuable addition, but almost as often confusing as it is enlightening.

Two non-Mennonite literary journals published special editions in connection with Assembly XII. *Prairie Fire. A Magazine of Canadian Writing* (Winnipeg, Vol. 11, No. 2, Summer 1990, 224 pp., \$11.95) and *The New Quarterly. new directions in Canadian writing* (Waterloo, Vol. X, Numbers 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 1990, 326 pp., \$10). Both invited Prof. Hildi Froese Tiessen, Academic Dean at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, to serve as guest editor for a special issue featuring "New Mennonite Writing" (*Prairie Fire*) and "Mennonite/s Writing in Canada" (*New Quarterly*). Dale Boldt served as guest editor for visual art in the former volume, which features 38 contributors, while the latter volume has 33. There is some overlap, of course, but the number of writers with Mennonite connections and the volume of their literary output may soon give new meaning to the expression "the silent in the

land." *Prairie Fire* may be ordered from 208-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 9Z9.

"An exhibition of Visual Art by Artists of Mennonite Heritage" at a Winnipeg gallery during Assembly XII was accompanied by a 60-page "permanent document for the exhibition" prepared by curator Priscilla B. Reimer. *Mennonite Artist: Insider as Outsider* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1990, pb. 8.5 x 11", \$15). A brief profile of the 14 artists represented in the exhibit together with a sample of their art, some of it in full colour, comprises the main part of this handsome publication. Reimer's thoughtful introduction seeks to locate the place of visual art and the artist in the Mennonite community and to help the artists "share their gift" with a sometimes reluctant constituency. Available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

Leo Driedger's *Mennonites in Winnipeg* (Kindred Press), also published in connection with Assembly XII, was reviewed in the June *Historian*.

The centennial celebrations of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Manitoba, this summer produced two publications: an English translation by Ida Toews of Paul J. Schaefer's biography of the first principal of the *Mennonitische Lehranstalt, Heinrich H. Ewert: Teacher, Educator and Minister of the Mennonites* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1990, 128 pp., pb., \$10), and a history of the school, Gerhard John Ens, *Die Schule Muss Sein. A History of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute*. (Gretna: MCI Centennial Committee, 1990, 286 pp. hdc., \$30). Order from MCI, Gretna, MB, R0G 0V0.

Delbert F. Plett, the Steinbach, Manitoba lawyer known for his series of volumes on the history of the *Kleingemeinde*, has released *Pioneers and Pilgrims* (Steinbach: Crossway Publications, 1990, 100 pp., pb., \$5). It is subtitled "the story of the Mennonite Settlement in Manitoba 1874-1877. Pioneers of the land; pilgrims of the faith. A novel." Order from D. Plett, Box 669, Steinbach, MB, R0A 2A0.

Two well-known story tellers, Dr. Victor Peters (retired professor of history) and Dr. Jack Thiessen (retired professor of German) have collaborated on a new volume of Low German stories, *Plauditsche Jeschichten: Gespräche - Interviews - Erzählungen* (Marburg: N.G. Elwert Verlag, 1990, 317 pp., pb., \$28). Its 50 entertaining selections contain interesting information about Mennonite ways in Russia, Canada and Mexico.



## Book Reviews (cont'd from p. 8)

with it too. A metaphor's communicating strengths are its concreteness and its generalizability, allowing the development of many images, insights and applications. But there are also its weaknesses, when an attempt is made, as in this case, to provide a scientific understanding of the resistance to modernity.

In regard to technology, for instance, the inference of the metaphor would be that the "negotiations" would be with people in the host society or at least with the seductions of technology itself. But upon closer reading, one notes that negotiation is not with the outside world or with the telephone, but within the Amish community itself. This flexibility in the nature of the "bargaining" metaphor applies in many of the illustrations Kraybill uses. This weakens the effectiveness of the metaphor, though it does not destroy it. My feeling is that there are other factors at work in the adaptation to modernity which the metaphor approach does not encompass or comprehend. For example, the function of sacred symbol systems deriving from a history of persecution is not given much credence.

The book makes a strong impact, nevertheless, although it may not fully satisfy those who share a hard-core scientific orientation. With its many engaging pictures, human interest stories and vignettes, the book provides a masterful statement of the tension between tradition and modernity for more humanistically inclined persons, of whom there are, thankfully, every greater numbers.

*Calvin Redekop is Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Director of the Institute of Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.*

Redekop, Calvin, *Mennonite Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989). 397 pp., \$4.95.(US).

Reviewed by Jacob Peters.

Contemporary Mennonites are neither a sectarian movement nor an ethnic group but a religious-utopian movement "which will continually be tending toward ethnicity as it establishes its ideals, but which always pulls back to its ideology" (366). This dialectical perspective is suggested as an appropriate framework for understanding contemporary North American Mennonites. Redekop uses the sociological insights gained from several decades of teaching and working in Mennonite institutions to frame his analysis.

The analysis begins with a brief historical overview of the Mennonite movements,

indicating origins, migrations and major groups. Identifying Germanic Mennonites as "birthright" Mennonites and non-Germanic Mennonites as converted or "convinced" Mennonites, adds a contemporary dimension to the traditional Swiss-Dutch-German categories. In the second part Redekop examines the core dimensions of the movement. The "Mennonite ethos" is shaped by anabaptist-Mennonite beliefs nurtured in the congregation and social community and expressed through the Mennonite personality and cultural activities.

Part III focuses on several basic institutions that have evolved to meet the needs of the movements, such as family, education, economics, politics and service. Contradictions between the Mennonite religious ideology and the level of bureaucratization are readily apparent in this section. The book concludes with a review of the internal and external forces that have shaped our Mennonite identity. It is recognized that fundamentalism and liberalism have had a significant impact on life-style and practices but pale in comparison with urbanization and material comfort.

For informed readers on Mennonites this book will not add much new information. However, several alternative interpretations of the Mennonite religious movement deserve careful consideration. The view that Mennonites have moved from a religious to an ethnic movement, advocated by E.K. Francis, is rejected. Mennonites have moved instead from a protest movement to become a religious people. Mennonite divisions are not a reflection of different belief systems but rather represent conflicts over what constitutes "faithful biblical discipleship" (264). Redekop does not accept the view that cultural baggage restricts Mennonite outreach. It is made difficult not because of cultural, but rather religious demands. Somewhat ironical is the fact that Redekop sees the future of the Mennonites in the hands of a group not discussed in the book, namely, so-called "third world" Mennonites.

The multiplicity of typologies used to describe Mennonite society will overwhelm the reader. For example, social organization is categorized as either theocratic, commonwealth, community or individualistic; intellectual life is viewed as either retreatist, cooptative or integrationist; economic life is modelled as either a community of goods, radical confrontation or conventional economics. What one gets in the book is a good comparative analysis within the typology but a very

underdeveloped association across typologies. In places where this happens depth and newness is added to the analysis, e.g., using a social organization typology in the family chapter. More of this interaction would help the reader understand how these typologies contribute to creating three types of Mennonites, i.e., utopian restitutionists, sectarian/ethnics and acculturationists.

The analysis, as one might expect in such an all-encompassing work, tends to be uneven. This is most notable in the institutional section. For example, the family chapter, although brief, gives a good overview of the contemporary family including the area of divorce and the role of women. On the other hand, the education chapter lacks both up-to-date data and analytical depth. Bible schools are only mentioned in passing.

Outsiders should welcome this overview of the contemporary Mennonites. Those holding stereotypes of Mennonites as simple or plain people (depicted once again on the cover picture) will be surprised at the diversity of life-styles and the complexity of networks. They will also quickly discover that a more honest title would have been North American Mennonite Society and a more appropriate cover picture would show a large urban church with late model cars standing around it.

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## BOOK NOTES

The recent meeting of Assembly XII of the Mennonite World Conference in Winnipeg provided the occasion for a number of significant new publications. Published directly under MWC Assembly XII auspices was an *Information Handbook and Tour Guide* compiled by historian-archivists Lawrence Klippenstein and Ken Reddig. Its most significant contribution is in the section "Manitoba Conference Profiles," which provides a brief characterization of eleven MWC-related groups in the province.

Mennonite Publishing Service released a third edition of Margaret Loewen Reimer's *One Quilt Many Pieces. A Reference Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada*. (Waterloo: Mennonite Reporter, 1990, 54 pp. pb. \$5). Substantially revised from the 1983 edition, it provides a historical sketch and current data for 35 Mennonite groups in Canada, renewing its position as the best concise guide to the Canadian Mennonite

(cont'd on p. 6)

## BOOK REVIEWS

Hostetler, John A., ed. *Amish Roots*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989). 344 pp., hdc, \$29.95 US.

Reviewed by Sarah Klassen

*Amish Roots* edited by John A. Hostetler, is a sampler - it invites the reader to sample Amish life through the recorded experiences, recollections and impressions of a variety of writers, most of whom are Amish. In compiling this anthology, Hostetler has pulled excerpts from a variety of sources such as letters, journals and local papers, as well as from scholarly works and national magazines. The fact that much of the writing is personal and comes from the pen of people not usually given to explaining themselves, lends the book its particular appeal, and authenticity.

The excerpts are arranged topically, beginning with historical information on the origins of the Amish, their coming to America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and pioneering the American west. This is followed by sections on the various aspects of Amish life: family, church, community and relations with the "world".

The picture of the Amish that emerges from these samplings is not unfamiliar. Here is an essentially rural people who live simply, in community with the like-minded, apart from the world. They incorporate their worship of God into the normal routine of life and prefer to let lifestyle and actions, rather than words, testify to their faith.

The strengths of the "plain people" are their sense of community, their sound (in the light of current ecological concerns) farming methods, their work habits and their peace position. However, fragments of the darker side of Amish life also surface. Church government does not always run smoothly; disagreement and division occur, leaving a legacy of pain. The youth do not always grow up without kicking against the traces; some of them, drawn by a desire for more education or more social variety, leave church and community, never to return. And indeed, the church rules (those of several congregations are listed) could make church *Ordnung* (discipline) seem narrow and even petty to a more liberal reader.

Still, the overall picture is sympathetic, and the reader will come away unable to think of the Amish way either as merely quaint and unprogressive or as an utopian alternative to the mad pace of modern life. These are people who have tried to match faith with

lifestyle, and who have suffered for what they believe, not only for being peculiar.

This is a delightful book to browse in. The reader will discover how names like "Lewis Riehl" and "Pieght" and "Huyard" came to be included with more familiar Amish names; what impressions photographer Lord Snowdon and poet Archibald Macleish gained from their contact with the Amish; what kind of riddles these people enjoy and what stories are passed from one generation to the next. Since the individual excerpts are short, ranging in length from one paragraph to several pages, the appetite is whetted without being completely satisfied. The comprehensive bibliography at the end directs the interested reader to sources where further information may be found.

The bibliography, brief notes on their contributors and a complete index make this anthology a useful reference book.

A further attractive feature of this volume are several sections of coloured plates interspersed with the text. These depict the traditional lettered and decorated bookplates and bookmarks fashioned by the Amish, as well as coloured drawing of birds and flowers. Most of these are from the nineteenth century, with one merit award drawing attributed to Christopher Dock dated 1760.

John A. Hostetler (who has also authored *Amish Society* and *Hutterite Society*) is to be commended for putting together this fine book which will not only look handsome on anyone's coffee table. It will also provide fresh insight into a unique culture.

*Sarah Klassen, Winnipeg, is a teacher and author.*

Kraybill, Donald B. *The Riddle of Amish Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989). 304 pp., hdc., appendix and bibliography, \$35.00, pb., \$8.95. US.

Reviewed by Calvin Redekop.

That the Amish continue to be of interest to a wide gamut of people is illustrated by the wide distribution of the film "Witness," the recent *Wall Street Journal* article describing the disease "Glutaric aciduria," discovered by Homes Morton in his study of the Lancaster Amish, and the books that continue to roll from the presses at Johns Hopkins University.

The book under discussion here is the second major one produced by Johns

Hopkins Press on the Amish, the first being John A. Hostetler's well-known *Amish Society*. *The Riddle of Amish Culture* is not an update or revision of Hostetler's book, but rather an attempt to get a deeper understanding of a single, but all-important question as Kraybill states it, "How did they manage to flourish in the midst of industrialization?" (vii). Kraybill believes that this question baffles most North Americans and hence he uses the metaphor of the "riddle" to frame his argument.

To gain his insights and understandings of the Amish, Kraybill studied their own literature and documents, including letters, conference minutes, diaries and the like. He also interviewed over two dozen community leaders. The description of the Amish community and its stance on a series of important issues including religious and social organization, the passing on of the faith, the control of technology and work, and the integration of change into the tradition so as to keep the substance of the "Charter" intact, is helpful and insightful. But nothing substantially new is presented which cannot be found in Hostetler's book, except for his treatment of work and business involvements, which have not been dealt with before in a Mennonite sociological analysis. The author's discussion of the implication of work and business for Amish society is very helpful.

The major thrust of the book is a call to understand the "riddle" which explains the Amish success at surviving in a society which puts them under great pressure to conform. Kraybill proposes that the Amish, being rational and reasonable, having established a tradition of negotiating with the host society and striking a bargain on issues which demand adaptation, as for example, the telephone. The bargain consists of agreeing "to exclude it from homes, while allowing its use in community shanties and in or near shops and barns" (150). The same procedure, Kraybill maintains, has been used for a variety of other technologies.

The essence of the bargaining process, as I understand it, is the Amish concern to retain their cohesive community life, while the interest of "modernity" is to adapt to modern industrial society. Kraybill suggests that the Amish are aware of the need to compromise, and hence have developed a finely-honed "negotiating" mode of give and take (20).

This is a lucid way of defining the problem of modernity's attempt to "seduce" a group concerned about keeping community alive. But there are weaknesses  
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