

MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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Nikolai Friesen, *Oekonom* (business administrator) and minister, with Mennonite unit leaders of the Sherebkovo Forestry Camp.

Photo: *Damit es nicht vergessen werde* (1977), 177

Some Stories About My Father, Nikolai

by Nicholas N. Friesen

My grandfather, Johann Cornelius Friesen, who resided in Marienthal, Molotschna, was the half-brother of Peter Friesen of Sparau. His second wife was Susanna nee Voth. As an elderly couple they moved to the village of Donskoi, Neu Samara, where Johann's son, Nikolai, was teaching at the time. They lived in a tiny house on their relatives' (the Nickels) yard. Johann C. Friesen died here in the fall of 1913.

My father, Nikolai Friesen, was born on May 31, 1873, and died in his home in Ischalka, Neu Samara, on June 11, 1950. He taught for 35 years, including many years in Kaminetz and the last ones in Ischalka. In 1904, my father was ordained to the ministry at Pleshanov when Brother Boschman was ordained as *Aeltester* (elder or senior minister). Three years later he became both agriculturalist (farmer) and preacher in the city of Sherebkovo. At that time my parents already had six children and father had hired a private tutor, Herman Goertzen of Kaminetz. Father's monthly salary was 75 rubles. Room and board were free.

Meanwhile, Father had purchased land from his father-in-law, Peter Stobbe, in Ischalka, and five years later he decided to move to the farm with his family. This was when he also accepted the role of preacher, while continuing to teach.

I recall the youthful Cornelius F. Klassen who came to our place and together with my father went to visit government offices in order to arrange non-combatant exemption privileges for young men. Alternative service such as working in forests became an option. When the war began in 1914 Cornelius Klassen also served as medical orderly. He became leader of a medical team on a train transporting the wounded. In 1917 he returned home.

We were plagued by grasshoppers in 1921. Whether it was the *volosts* or the churches who helped out I do not know, but father and his brother-in-law Jakob Stobbe of Ischalka went to Siberia, where the harvest was plentiful, to obtain wheat. They returned with three railroad cars full of grain. At this time we had no stable government with little or no communication.

While away Father contracted typhoid fever. He was ill for more than three months and meanwhile we starved at home. How delicious was the first slice of bread we enjoyed after his return! I still think it sinful to waste precious food.

Father was a faithful and loyal teacher, but he was strict. He was also my teacher that first year in Kaminetz as well as during my seventh year in Ischalka. He took me to the village of Yugovka, where an inspector examined the graduating students. I was on my uncle's yard when Father approached me saying: "Come with me. You will also write the exam." I was stunned. "You will make it", he said. And I did.

As a result of this experience I later had the opportunity to go to the *Zentralschule* (junior high school). In two years I completed the requirements and received a teaching certificate.

Father was also a much appreciated preacher and spiritual counsellor. Every Sunday he preached in the Ischalka schoolhouse. For major celebrations and festivities we went to the church in Pleshanov. Following catechism classes my father invited Rev. Sawatzky to determine my readiness for baptism.

Heinrich Willems of the Mennonite Brethren group was the choir leader in Ischalka, and later he was joined by Brother Schmitt who accepted the leadership of a male choir. We had choir practice three times per week. These were blessed and beneficial times for us. My father was also musically inclined; he played the violin. We also had two guitars and a zither. Frequently we played and sang as a family.

As the eldest in the family I could occasionally go with Father when he visited the sick. I recall vividly three of such visits. I listened to and never forgot the testimonies of three of these ill persons. Father frequently also wrote Russian letters for others.

Father was a representative to the last *Bundeskonferenz* (All-Union Conference) held in Moscow in 1925. When Brother A.A. Toews collected materials for his first *Mennonitische Maertyrer* publication we were preoccupied with caring for the family and with church responsibilities from four in

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the morning until late at night. Later I made a few notes. When in the 1920s emigration was at its peak, Father went to Moscow in order to obtain the necessary emigration documents for other people. Yet he himself had a single daughter, Susanna, who was unable to leave due to eye problems. He refused to leave her behind.

When the war so devastated the southern areas and also Ufa was evacuated, Father wrote to his relatives inviting them to come to Neu Samara where it was relatively calm. It also remained quieter in the Orenburg settlement. By now most of the older generation have died and many of the younger ones live in Orenburg and Neu Samara. Presently many of them would like to emigrate to Germany. Some already have.

In his later years Father was asked to marry couples who had official marriage licences but never had the opportunity to experience a real wedding with a marriage ceremony. In his last letter he wrote: "I want to go home, only go home". In the last days of his life he said: "Lord, ...I praise your righteousness alone."

Father died at his home in Ischalka, Neu Samara, on June 11, 1950. By faith in the blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour and by the grace of God he has gone into His everlasting rest. He was a widower for the last eleven years of his life.

This article was translated for publication by A.E. Heidi Koop of Winnipeg. Rev. Friesen is a retired minister presently residing in BC.



Nikolai Friesen (1873-1950)



Nikolai Friesen and his family preparing to leave the Sherebkovo Forestry Camp as members of the service unit look on. Photo: *Damit es nicht vergessen werde* (1977), 177

My Record of Peace Service During World War II

by Paul E. Poetker

Having attended Normal School in Calgary 1939-40, and taught elementary school in the Grande Prairie School District the following school year, I received a summons to appear before a board of attorneys in Lethbridge with about 35 other young Mennonite men from that area.

Each one of us was asked to appear separately before the board members who questioned us about our beliefs pertaining chiefly to war and tried to persuade us that it was our duty to serve our country in the army. I believe only one agreed to serve.

The interrogators often talked two at a time and tried to make us nervous. But I believe they found most of us very calm and knowing what we believed. This made them very angry, and they told me they believed my teaching certificate should be revoked. They had interrogated other groups in the province of Alberta, possibly with the same results. This approach was then discontinued, probably because they had so little success.

We told them that we were willing to serve in the medical corps but not take basic training in the use of guns. However, at the beginning of the war there was no provision for such service with separate training. When I tried to enlist in such service near the end of the war in 1944, I was rejected because of an injured knee.

Near the beginning of the war, one man, Jake W. Goerzen (later Dr. Goerzen) had

been drafted, and during a march past at which time each man was to pick up his gun, Jake refused. The march past was repeated several times, as I recall, but Jake, with strong Christian convictions, stood his ground. He was consequently transferred to the alternative service program and served in the Geikie CO camp near Jasper.

In the camps I found mostly Mennonites: Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ (later they changed their name), Holdeman Mennonites, and Old Colony Mennonites. There were also quite a few Jehovah's Witnesses, and Hutterites, some Brethren (Plymouth), Seventh Day Adventists, a Doukhobour, an Anglican, some pacifists with little religious orientation, a Nazarene, an Evangelical Free, church members and some Two by Two's.

Practically all of the Mennonites, Brethren, Hutterites and those with evangelical orientation, sometimes including the S.D.A.'s were able to have Christian services together. However, except for one visit by a United Church minister (there must have been some U.C. boys in our midst), I recall only visits by Mennonite chaplains.

It was also a training ground for future ministers, men who had attended Bible school and now had an opportunity to develop their preaching. Two such persons were Henry R. Baerg and Henry Penner. The latter served a large congregation in

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FAMILY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

by Alf Redekopp

Queries

Loeppky - I have traced my Loeppky lineage back to Johann Lepke b. 1772 (See Family 7 in B.H. Unruh). Can anyone help fill in the "Prussian past" for this family, say from 1550 to 1789? Contact: Jack R. Loeppky, 13778 Marine Dr., White Rock, BC, V4B 1A4.

Wiebe - Who were the ancestors of Abraham Wiebe (b. 1754) in Neudorf, Prussia? Can anyone provide further information about Adam Wiebe (ca. 1575) from Dollart, Holland? Contact: Jack R. Loeppky, 13778 Marine Dr., White Rock, BC, V4B 1A4.

Kehler - I am looking for the children and grandchildren of Jacob Kehler (ca. 1901-1956) and Margaret Friesen who farmed at Schoenwiese, Manitoba near Gretna. Contact: Alf Redekopp, 1-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R2L 2E5.

Dyck - I am searching for parents, brothers, sisters and descendents of Philip Dyck (Dueck, Dück) b. 9 June 1824, d. 8 March 1965 in Manitoba, Married three times (1) 1847 to Elizabeth Peters, had two children, Katherina b. 1847, Jacob b. 1848 (my great grandfather); (2) Helena Hiebert; (3) Margaretha Hiebert. Did Philip have a brother Gerhard? Were his parents Abram Dyck and Katherina Fehr? Who were Elizabeth Peters' parents and siblings? If you can help, contact: Eva Dyck, 375-7th Ave S.E., Swift Current, SK, S9H 3P8.

A Recent Acquisition

The Centre for MB Studies in Canada has recently acquired on computer diskette the following Prussian Mennonite baptism records compiled by Adalbert Goertz of Waynesboro, PA:

1. Ladekopp (1782-1804)
2. Tiegenhagen (1782-1800)
3. Orloffelfelde (1772-1804)
4. Montau (1751-1813)

Note also that Glen Penner has recently published "West Prussian Church Records at the Mennonite Heritage Centre", (October, 1990) in *Mennonite Family History*. This is an excellent article listing the Prussian microfilms of these same lists and others at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. It indicates the

MENNONITE GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Date: Monday, February 25, 1991, 7:30 pm

Place: Archives Reading Room
Provincial Archives
200 Vaughan St.
Winnipeg, MB

Speakers:

Elizabeth Blight, PAM, "An Overview of the History of Photography"

Dr. George Epp, MSC, "Photography in the Mennonite Colonies of Russia"

Sponsored by:

The Winnipeg Genealogy Committee
Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society.

corresponding call numbers of duplicate microfilms at the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College, Newton, Kansas, as well as the corresponding film numbers as indexed by the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Recent Publications

Bellingham, Mary et.al. *Beginning research in Germany. An Introduction to German-American Genealogy*. 2nd edition. St. Paul, MN: German Interest Group, Minnesota Genealogical Society, 1989. 62 pp.

This book is a general introduction on how to get started in German genealogical

research. It includes German history, information about German records and where they are located, suggestions on writing to Germany, and addresses of German-American archives and genealogical societies concerned with particular areas of German research.

Plett, Delbert F. *Pioneers and Pilgrims. The Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde in Manitoba, Nebraska, and Kansas, 1874-1882*. Volume 5. The Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde Historical Series. Steinbach, MB: D.F.P. Publications, 1990. 604 pp.

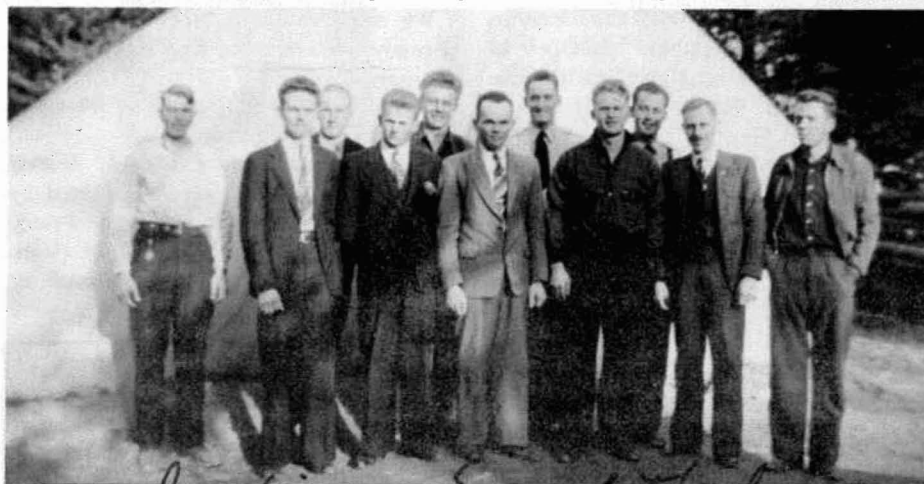
This volume contains chapters on the writings of the pioneers, personal accounts, historical sketches, family histories and other writings of spiritual leaders at the time of the 1882 division in the Kleine Gemeinde often called the "Holdeman Division". Plett has included 10 genealogies: the Jakob Barkman Genealogy (1965); the Peter Epp Family Tree (1690); the Cornelius Esau Genealogy (1772); the Daniel Fast Genealogy (1753-1829); the Johan Harder Genealogy (1764-1826); the Johan Harms Genealogy (1771); the Jakob Heidebrecht Genealogy; the Gerhard Schellenberg Genealogy (1725-1802); the Martin Warkentin Genealogy (1764); Wiens Families in the Kleine Gemeinde.

Plett, Leslie and Marion. *Family Register of Peter F. Plett 1884-1990*. (Calgary, AB, 1990) Pb., 123 pp. Illustrated. Traces the descendants of Peter (1908-1970) and Sara Koop Plett (1886-1963), of Blumenhof, Manitoba. The Pletts were a part of the Kleine Gemeinde church in that community.

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

Some of the men at a CO camp in Geikie in 1941. L.R. Willie Janzen, Henry Baerg, Abe Willms, John Goossen, - Voth, - Tjart, Pete Vogt, John (?) Neufeld, Peter Unger, Paul Poetker, Henry Klassen. (Can you provide the missing names?)

Photo: Courtesy of Paul Poetker, Edmonton, AB.



New Serials Directory Available

The Mennonite Heritage Centre has recently completed the first draft of a serials catalogue in which the available issues of all the Centre's bound and unbound holdings can be found. Approximately 525 titles are included in this listing. Entries will continue to be made as new materials arrive. Editorial work will be done to provide a second draft in the near future. The catalogue can be used in the reading room of the Centre during working hours.

For more information contact the archives at (204) 888-6781, ext. 243. If you would like to dispose of any used Mennonite newspapers, serials, magazines etc., call the number listed above to arrange a deposit.

CO Meetings Coming Up

Fifty years after the start of alternative service camps and projects in Canada and the U.S., scholars and others will examine the Mennonite experience in both countries.

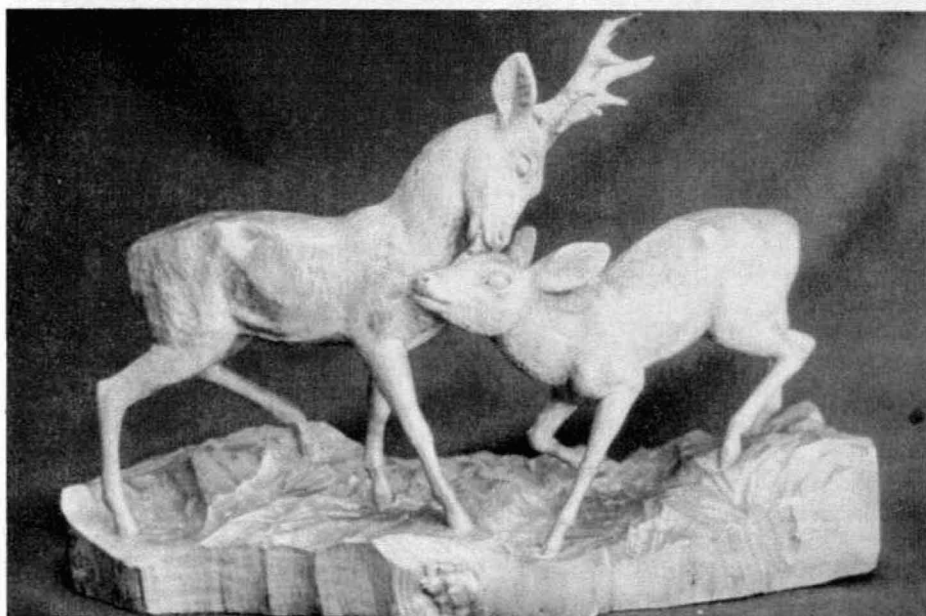
A conference on "Mennonites and Alternative Service in World War II," sponsored by *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, will be held at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, USA, May 30-June 1, 1991.

The first camp in the United States opened at Grottos, Va., in May, 1941. In Canada operations started in June, 1941, with a road camp at Montreal River, Ont., and camps in national parks at Riding Mountain, Man., Prince Albert, Sask., Banff and Jasper, Alta., and Kootenay, B.C.

The event will include presentation of major papers and personal experience stories. Topics include "Mennonite Military Experience in WW II," "Relation of Mennonites to Governments, WW II," "Mennonite Women as Conscientious Objectors," "The Camps," "Influence of Alternative Service on Non-Historic Peace Churches," and "Influence of Alternative Service on the Mennonite World."

Mennonite Quarterly Review, a journal devoted to Mennonite history, thought and current affairs, is published by the Mennonite Historical Society of Goshen College. For information, write MQR editor John Oyer, Goshen College, Goshen IN, 46526.

Note: There is some discussion being given to holding a similar meeting in Canada next year. Watch for further announcements.



Sculpture by Jacob Wedel, formerly of the Soviet Union and now living in Germany.

Photo: Courtesy of Otto Hertel, Germany.

New Exhibition at MHCA

A group of seven Mennonite artists, headed by Peter von Kampen of Winnipeg recently mounted another exhibit of paintings in the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery. The exhibit will run into the new year, perhaps through February. An open house was held for the opening on November 23. Admission is free to all visitors of the gallery.

The other artists involved are: Tina Buller, Marlies Friesen, Else Krueger, and Heinrich Rempel all from Winnipeg, as well as Pat Hildebrand from Steinbach.

For further information call Peter von Kampen 1-(204)-489-7622 in Winnipeg. Sales of paintings may be arranged.

Publications for Sale

We are pleased to note the following recently published books available at the Heritage Centre.

Driedger, Leo. *Mennonites in Winnipeg*. (1990) Pb., 95 pp., \$6.00.

Dyck, Arnold. *Collected Works/Gesammelte Werke*. Vol. IV. Edited by George K. Epp and Elizabeth Peters. (1990) Hdc., 503 pp., \$25.00. CAN. (Vols. I-III also still available for \$25.00 each, or \$90.00 for all 4 volumes. CAN)

Fast, Karl. *Lass dir an meiner Gnade genuegen*. (1989) Pb., 138 pp., \$11.00. About the author's mother in Orenburg, Soviet Union.

Friesen, John, ed. *Mennonites in Russia. Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz*. (1989) Hdc., 387 pp., \$22.00.

Klassen, Peter J. *A Homeland for Strangers. An Introduction to Mennonites in Poland and Prussia*. (1989) Pb., 95 pp., \$19.00.

Klippenstein, Lawrence, ed. *Es wurde wieder ruhig. Die Lebensgeschichte eines mennonitischen Predigers aus der Sowjetunion*. (1989) Pb., 183 pp., \$11.00. The life story of a Mennonite minister, Peter Derksen, now residing in Germany.

Lichti, Dieter Goetsz, ed. *Mennonite World Handbook. Mennonites in Global Witness*. (1990) Pb., 490 pp., \$11.00.

Peters, Victor and Jack Thiessen. *Plautdietsche Jeschichten: Gespraechen-Interviews-Erzaehlungen*. (1990) Pb., 317 pp., \$25.00. Low German stories written in the dialect.

Reimer, Priscilla. *Mennonite Artist. Insider as Outsider*. (1990) Pb., 60 pp., \$12.00. Produced for Mennonite World Conference, Assembly XII.

Schroeder, Andreas. *The Mennonites. A Pictorial History of Their Lives in Canada*. (1990) Hdc., 180 pp., \$34.00.

Send orders to Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB, R3P 0M4.

Do not send cash. You will be invoiced. Postage and handling are extra.



New Rundschau Index

Mennonitische Rundschau Index, Volume I (1880-1889) and Volume II (1890-1899), compiled by Bert Friesen at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, are now available for \$50.00 each, plus shipping and handling. Send orders to: Centre for MB Studies, 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R2L 2E5.

Ken Reddig Resigns

At an October meeting, the Canadian MB Conference Board of Higher Education regretfully accepted the resignation of Ken Reddig, Conference Archivist and director of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada. Reddig was the first full-time archivist of the Canadian Conference and served in that capacity for over 11 years. During that time, the holdings of the Centre increased a great deal, and many people made use of the materials.

Reddig has accepted a position as Head of Textual Records and Public Service with the Provincial Archives of Manitoba. He began his new duties at the beginning of December, 1990.

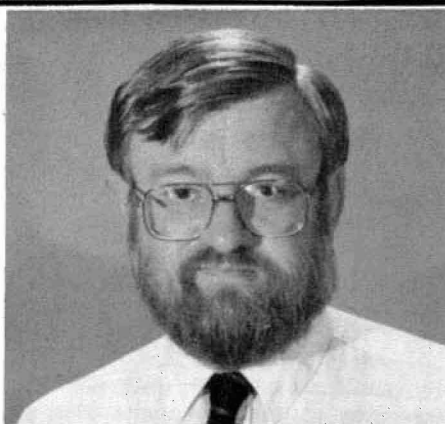
In the meantime, a search has begun for a new director. During the interim, Alf Redekopp, archival assistant, and Herb Giesbrecht, former MBBC librarian and Conference archivist, will share responsibilities for the day-to-day operation of the Centre.

What's in a Name?

by Jacob Loewen

The following vignette was sent to us by Dr. Jacob Loewen who is presently writing a book on the subject of "Mennonites and the Sword." Dr. Loewen was a missionary to Columbia with the Mennonite Brethren Church from 1947 to 1957. For several decades he served as translation consultant with the United Bible Societies in South America. He writes:

I was attending a Bible Society meeting in Spain and a local church asked for a preacher from our conference. I was sent. The driver got lost and we arrived at the church late. The already desperate minister quickly left the pulpit and came to the back of the church to receive me. He asked me from what church I hailed. When I said, "Mennonite", a most unexpected thing happened. He cupped his hands and shouted to his wife who was playing the organ, while the congregation was singing a



Ken Reddig

hymn: "Querida, un Menonita! (Sweetheart, it's a Mennonite!)."

At once the organ music stopped as the organist rushed the length of the church on stocking feet, threw her arms around my neck, and gave me a resounding kiss. I was visibly embarrassed. When she realized that, she explained. "During the Civil War, I and my family were kept alive by food which came in bags with clasped hands and a logo which said, "In the name of Christ, Mennonite Central Committee." As a family we then vowed that if anyone survived the war and ever met a Mennonite, that person was to kiss the Mennonite on behalf of the whole family." I was that first Mennonite!

Something happened then and there in my heart that made me very proud to be a Mennonite and that is why it has been so painful for me to come home to find so many of the ministers who occupy our

Mennonite church pulpits are still ashamed of the Mennonite name and the heritage it represents.

This is why I was devastated, when a leading minister recently told me, "The first thing I do with every church I pastor is to get rid of the Mennonite name on the sign in front of the church. I consider it an impediment to evangelism."

I repeat what I have said before. "I think the reason we still have people who duck the Mennonite name, is that people do not know the value of that name in the world at large and they are ignorant of the priceless heritage that that name brings with it. It is my prayer that this writing may be a small step in the direction of changing that.

On Women in Ministry

by Paul Foote

The question has often been raised as to whether women missionaries, fifty or more years ago, were ordained to preach. In her account of her life as a missionary, Paula Foote, an MB missionary in China, noted the following:

During the summer of 1922 preparations had to be made for my departure to China and for the work there. In August the Mennonite Brethren Church at Bessie, Oklahoma, put up a tent for the ordination and farewell festivities for me.

The farewell from my home church and friends was not easy, but God gave me grace for that. The thought of an ordination gave me struggles. Women in our conference do not preach. Why should I be ordained if I could not proclaim the gospel to those who had not heard it? Women were permitted to tell the Gospel to women and children.

What if men would come to my women's and children's meetings? Should I stop proclaiming the Gospel message? Did not the men have a right to hear the Word of God?

The church had asked Pastor Jacob Reimer of Bessie, Oklahoma, and Elder Johann Foth of the Ebenfeld Church near Hillsboro, Kansas, to officiate at my ordination. Both were considered to be among the most conservative leaders in the whole conference. What a surprise to me when Elder Foth in his sermon at the ordination proved with Scripture passages that women should preach. He spoke about Mary Magdalene, who had followed Christ to the cross, who also took note of the place where he was buried while the disciples left

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him. Peter had even denied him. She was the first of Christ's followers who was at the grave on the resurrection morning. She was the first to tell the greatest story of all stories that Christ had arisen from the dead. Christ himself commanded her to carry the news to the disciples, the men, and to Peter who had failed him.

My problem about ordination was solved. My later experience proved that this was of the Lord.

Source: Paulina Foote, *God's Hand Over My Nineteen Years in China*. Hillsboro, Kansas: MB Publishing House, 1962. 25-26.

Thoughts on War and Peace

by Nicholas Peters

The following untitled poem was written by the author just after the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Peters, who lived for some years at Grande Pointe, had emigrated from Russia in 1925 as a boy of 10 and had seen firsthand the horrors of revolution and war in his native country. He joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 and trained as a flying officer. He died March 7, 1945 after his aircraft was hit by enemy fire.

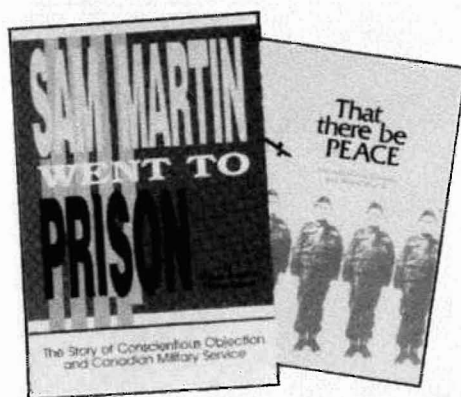
The poem is from a collection of poems entitled *Another Morn*.

I gaze into the world with sorrowing eyes
And see the wide-abounding fruits of hate.
We fight, we say, for peace, and find
The wars we make
To be a spring of hate and source of
future war.

Is there no peace for man?
No hope that this accursed flow
Of blood may cease?
Is this our destiny: to kill and maim
For peace?

Or is this 'peace' we strive to gain
A thin, unholy masquerade
Which, when our pride, our greed,
our gain is touched too far,
Is shed, and stands uncovered,
what we are?

Show me your light, O God
That I may fight for peace with peace
And not with war;
To prove my love with love,
And hate no more!



Available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre:

Lawrence Klippenstein, ed. *That There Be Peace. Mennonites in Canada and World War II*. (1979) Pb., 104 pp., \$8.00.

William Janzen and Frances Greaser. *Sam Martin Went to Prison. The Story of Conscientious Objectors and Canadian Military Service*. (1990) pb., 62 pp., \$5.00.

Meetinghouses Once Turned Ninety Degrees

by Tim Reimer

Many of the earliest Mennonite meetinghouses in North America had a long pulpit located on one of the long sides of a rectangular building. The long board pews were arranged, either in parallel rows facing the preacher's bench, or with shorter benches at right angles at each end, forming a U-shape. It has been suggested that these formats were chosen because they allowed the congregation to be near the preacher, and that they afforded the greatest sense of community among the worshippers.

However, these designs were very quickly abandoned. In fact, the oldest Mennonite church buildings seen on the prairies today usually have the entrance on one end and the pulpit on the other. What reasons did congregations have for deciding to move the pulpit, or, more precisely, to turn the axis of the interior ninety degrees, so that the main aisle ran *along* the rectangle instead of *across* it?

One might hypothesize that it was due to the influence of the school building. Unlike the sense of equality implicit in the concept of priesthood of all believers, the teacher/pupil relationship was authoritarian and unilateral. Did the habit of meeting in the school building, together with the increased training of the clergy, influence Mennonite worshippers toward a more institutionalized concept of the church? It

is at least plausible that such a tendency contributed to the eventual relocation of the (now shortened) platform and pulpit at one end.

Another hypothesis is that the axis turned with the demand to accommodate more worshippers in one building. Dr. Cornelius Krahn observes that "As the congregations grew in size the buildings grew in length". But buildings that grew "in length" most likely already had the axis running along the rectangle to begin with. Moreover, there are some examples of large church buildings which retained a "U" shape arrangement, even adding a second set of benches in a balcony.

Dr. Richard K. MacMaster has referred to the benches facing one another, (i.e., the two sides of the "U") as the "front" benches, giving the impression that there may have been an evolution from a "U" shape to a "U" shape with a growing "bottom part" to the point where the two arms paled in size. Thus, MacMaster calls them "amen corners". Eventually these were eliminated, leaving, in effect, a "long axis" arrangement.

A third possibility is that Mennonite congregations allowed their meetinghouse designs to be shaped by those of other Protestant churches. In the latter, the emphasis was more upon the preaching and hearing of the Word, hence, an elevated pulpit in front of benches that basically facilitated hearing the sermon. Again, perhaps the reason lay in developments in church polity. With fewer preachers, the need for a long pulpit or table for the preachers and "Vorsaenger" no longer existed.

The answer to this and other questions of Mennonite meetinghouse architecture are of more than just historical or architectural interest. They may provide insights into changes in views of the church, whether conscious or unconscious. There are ample extant resources for an architectural history of meetinghouses. The opening of the "gold mine" is dependent now on the formulation of appropriate questions.

Tim Reimer is presently serving under MCC in Berlin, Germany.

J.M. Studies Note

You may again get Vol.2, 1984 of *Journal of Mennonite Studies* as a back number. Readers who wish to order this issue in order to make their set of the *Journal* complete, may write to or call: Harry Loewen, editor., *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 2E9, ph. (204) 786-9104.

My Record of Service (Cont'd from p. 2) southern Ontario for years. In one camp especially (Haney, B.C.) where there were a number of men very knowledgeable about the theology of their various churches (eg. Calvinism, Arminianism, Christian perfection). We had some very enlightening and interesting discussions. Of these, Henry Schnell (Evangelical Free), George Hofer, Bill ("Machine gun" - he talked so fast) Funston and Steve Biggs (Brethren) should be especially named. They were all dear friends and brethren in Christ.

There were also men with considerable technical ability in our midst. I remember Henry Voth (Lethbridge) tuning his piano accordian. Some men contrived a radio broadcasting unit, I'm told. The broadcast started with the usual kind of news and then switched to make humorous remarks about the camp boss. Of course, he had been programmed to hear it - and was out to the suspected cabin like a shot to shut down the broadcast.

I will comment about each camp in turn: **Geikie** - On August 6, 1941, thirty-six young Mennonite men, conscripted for alternative service during WWII, departed from Coaldale by chartered bus for a partially prepared camp near Geikie, a small railway station about eight miles west of Jasper. The location was attractive, under small pines along the Miette(?) River. I was also in this group. (to be concluded)

Corrections, Please!

We are grateful for people who help us correct errors that "sneak" into the *Historian*. At the suggestion of Lorna Bergey of Kitchener, Ontario, we need to note:

1. That in the article "Native People and Mennonites" (*Mennonite Historian*, June, 1990, p. 1) the reference to the German Land Company should have stated that it was organized to purchase a 60,000 acre Tract which was subdivided into 128 lots of 448 acres each, and 32 lots of 83 acres each.
2. That the reference to the MCC Aid office for aiding Old Colony Mennonite settlers in Ontario might have added that it is situated at Aylmer, Ontario. Cf. "The Kanadier Mennonites..." by Menno Kroeker, same issue, p.4).

We also omitted footnote references to two sources in Rosemary Kuzina's article on the Roseau Reserve and Mennonites in the September, 1990 issue (p.6). The sources are: Ken Reddig, "Early Ojibwa Migrations and the Establishment of the Roseau River Reserve No.2", unpublished paper,

University of Manitoba, 1982, and Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonites and Indians in Southern Manitoba: Establishing Reserves, 1870-1890", unpublished paper, Mennonite Heritage Centre, 1984.

Book Notes

Genealogies are regularly noted or reviewed elsewhere in the *Historian*. Two recent family histories go well beyond the listing of genealogical data and deserve mention here.

Ernest J. Dyck, *Courage, Courage, The Lord Will Help. The Family History of Johann P. Dück and Descendants from Schönfeld, Southern Russia* (Leamington: John H. Dick, 1990), traces the family's history from mid-19th century to its immigration to Canada in the early 1920s, with brief summaries of the lives of each of the children in North America.

Ruth Friesen, *A Godly Inheritance* (Hague, SK: Morning Glory Publishing, 1988) begins with historical fragments dating back to Isa Brand von Riesen who in 1785 married Catrina Diedricks in Prussia, quickly tracing several branches of her ancestors through the Russian experience to the late 19th century, and then tells in greater detail the 20th century experience in Canada.

While of primary interest to members of their extended families, both family histories have significant appeal to the general reader as well.

Recently received literary items

A new historical novel, *Chariots in the Smoke* (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1990) by the popular writer, Margaret Epp. The story begins in the Spanish Netherlands in 1537, moves quickly through Danzig to Russia, and ends in present day Canada.

David Kline, *Great Possessions. An Amish Farmer's Journal* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990), 235 pp., hdc., \$16.95 (US) is an Ohio Amish farmer's gentle expression of his delight in the earth and its beautiful creatures.

Di Brandt's second volume of poetry, *Agnes in the Sky* (Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1990) was also released recently.

Collected Works. Arnold Dyck Werke, Volume IV (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1990), edited by George K. Epp and Elisabeth Peters. This final volume of the set includes previously unpublished works, mostly in High German, selected essays and letters, and a portfolio of illustrations. At 504 pages the \$25 price makes it a genuine bargain. All four volumes are available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre at the same

Book Reviews (Cont'd from p. 8)

rate printing job should be lauded in this work as well.

One doubts if a similar effort of high quality and useful information exists for any other ethnic group in Canada.

The second of these two volumes deals with a speciality which may not solicit universal interest. As a matter of fact, the *Cossacks* book is a catalogue produced as part of an exhibition of maps mounted at the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre three years ago. The exhibit was curated by Bohdan Kordan, who also co-authored the *Geography* volume noted earlier. Twenty five maps are included in this selection.

The catalogue provides its commentaries in two languages, English and Ukrainian. They offer the reader an introduction to early Ukrainian history at the same time. Cartographers will find the analytical remarks very useful as well.

The catalogue presents the maps in chronological sequence to the degree that this can be determined. Having to reduce the originals meant, of course, that some of the readability had to be sacrificed. One needs to locate and use the originals themselves if one is primarily interested in details of information and outline found on these geographical sketches. These originals can be found in collections such as those held by the Centre itself, the University of Alberta, and other owners.

Lawrence Klippenstein is historian-archivist and director of programs at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

price per volume (or \$90.00 for the whole set). * * *

Two books from Germany relate to Mennonite history in Russia. Heinrich Löwen, *In Vergessenheit geratene Beziehungen* (Bielefeld: Logos, 1989) is a slim volume exploring early contacts between Mennonite Brethren and Baptists in Russia. Georg Hildebrandt, *Wieso lebst du noch?* (Stuttgart: Verlag Dr. Bernhard Abend, 1990) is the author's first-person account of his years in the Soviet gulag. It includes a shorter section dealing with his release and emigration to West Germany. * * *

Just off the press! *Altona: A Pictorial History*, by Vic Penner and Ted Friesen. The book is published by Friesen Printers. This "coffee-table" hardcover, 203 page, very well illustrated volume stands out in excellence among local histories published to date. A review may follow.

BOOK REVIEWS

Toews, Aron A., *Mennonite Martyrs: People Who Suffered for Their Faith. 1920-1940*. Translated by John B. Toews. (Winnipeg, MB; Hillsboro, KS: Kindred Press, 1990). 263 pp., pb., \$29.95

Reviewed by Abe Dueck

Mennonite Martyrs is a translation of 61 of the close to 200 individual accounts contained in the original two volumes of *Mennonitische Märtyrer*. Strictly speaking, not all the individuals were martyrs, but they were all people who suffered and were persecuted. The original volumes also contained a variety of other materials such as poems, general accounts of events, the farewell address of B.B. Janz in 1926, etc.

The value of a translation of these accounts would appear to be beyond dispute, and Toews has produced a very readable translation. Although the stories of those who suffered were originally compiled from a variety of sources a very little was done by the original compiler to edit the material or to verify the accuracy of details, the book demonstrates remarkable unity and coherence.

Volume II of the German edition contained a few editions and corrections in an appendix and Toews has added a few additional notes of information provided by *Umsiedler*. It seems likely that still more information on some of the individuals may be forthcoming from such sources.

A few relatively minor issues of criticism might be raised. First, the criteria for the selection of accounts for translation appear somewhat inadequate. The major criterion stated by Toews is the length of the accounts (which, Toews states, is hopefully related to depth). Other criteria might have helped to achieve a better balance. In particular, it is noteworthy that the several accounts pertaining almost exclusively to women are omitted (e.g., Helene Hamm, Susanna Hildebrandt). Yet these are poignant and detailed accounts. Perhaps eventually most or all of the original accounts will also be translated into English.

Since only about one-third of the original accounts are included in this volume, it would have been helpful to include an appendix with the entire list in alphabetical order with page references to the German edition. Furthermore, an index of names and places would be a valuable resource. Many names are mentioned in the accounts besides the ones that appear in the headings. Two of the individuals listed in

the notes (p.263) are people whose accounts are not included in the translation. On the other hand, the supplement and corrections regarding J.J. Toews (Vol. II, pp. 489-91) are not included even though the main account is translated. There are also a few typos and editorial errors.

The book is probably intended primarily for the general reader rather than for academics. If so, a brief historical introduction would have enriched the volume considerably for those who are not acquainted with the general events which led to such terrible suffering.

One of the hallmarks of the Anabaptists in the sixteenth century was their willingness to suffer for the cause of Christ because that is what it meant to be followers of Christ. The *Martyr's Mirror* by Tieleman van Braght preserved many accounts of such suffering. The accounts in *Mennonite Martyrs* stand in that tradition and continue to remind us that we too may be called upon to suffer for Christ's sake.

On the other hand, they also suggest that not all suffering was necessarily on account of the Christian faith and that we need to be aware of other factors which may have contributed to the suffering of Mennonites, and many others.

Abe Dueck is Academic Dean and Professor of Church History at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg.

Dueck, Dora. *Under the Still Standing Sun*. (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1989). 293 pp., pb, \$13.95

Reviewed by Mary Friesen

Under the Still Standing Sun, an account of the life of a Mennonite woman who, at the age of 16, arrived in the Paraguayan Chaco with her family, provides a unique and dramatic portrayal of the Mennonite immigration experience of 1929. Leaving behind the terrors and uncertainties of Communist Russia, Anna Sawatzky initially embraces the new and unknown country with excitement and optimism, but discovers that the reality of pioneering in this hostile wilderness involves unforeseen hardships and backbreaking work. In the end she emerges from it all as a mature woman who has maintained the spirit of joy and developed a deep appreciation and love for her new home.

By interspersing a number of subplots based on historical facts, Dueck provides an interesting religious-sociological treatise on Mennonite community life under the scorching Chaco sun. One of the significant elements of this novel is that it proves a

woman's perspective on pioneer life in a male-dominated community. The author illustrates a unique insight by describing Anna's incredible stamina as she struggles, together with her husband, to raise a family and create a community of peace and harmony. The reader is made aware of this physical and emotional struggle through the constant analysis of the characters and their behaviour provided as part of the narrative.

Under the Still Standing Sun is recommended not only for its portrayal of life in a pioneering family, but also because it captures the essence of the Paraguayan Mennonite experience.

Mary Friesen, formerly of Paraguay, is a teacher at Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute, Winnipeg.

Luciuk, Lubomyr R., and Bohdan S. Kordan, *Creating a Landscape. A Geography of Ukrainians in Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), Hdc., 62 pp. \$37.50.

Land of the Cossacks; Antiquarian Maps of Ukraine. (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre, 1987), Hdc., 52 pp.

Reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein.

The *Geography* volume is really a cultural "map" of Ukrainians living in Canada. In a skilled and colourful graphic manner, its authors manage to portray quite precisely where the Ukrainian population finds itself geographically at the present time, how that distribution got to be what it is now, and most significantly for the goal of this book, what this cultural mosaic looks like today.

There is a strong focus on the religious and linguistic features of the larger community. Illustrations of architecture, and other photos, for instances, of cemeteries, bring in added cultural dimensions to help portray the human elements of the landscape shown on the sketches and maps.

Meaningful sociological analysis accompanies the charts, graphs, and other visual presentations which are made to depict patterns of settlement that have been created on the Canadian landscape.

A list of selected references and an index to place names help to highlight the professional manner in which this work was produced.

The excellent work of cartographer Geoffrey Matthews and his assistants of the University of Toronto must be noted. Good editing, a colourful dust jacket, and a first
(Cont'd on p. 7)