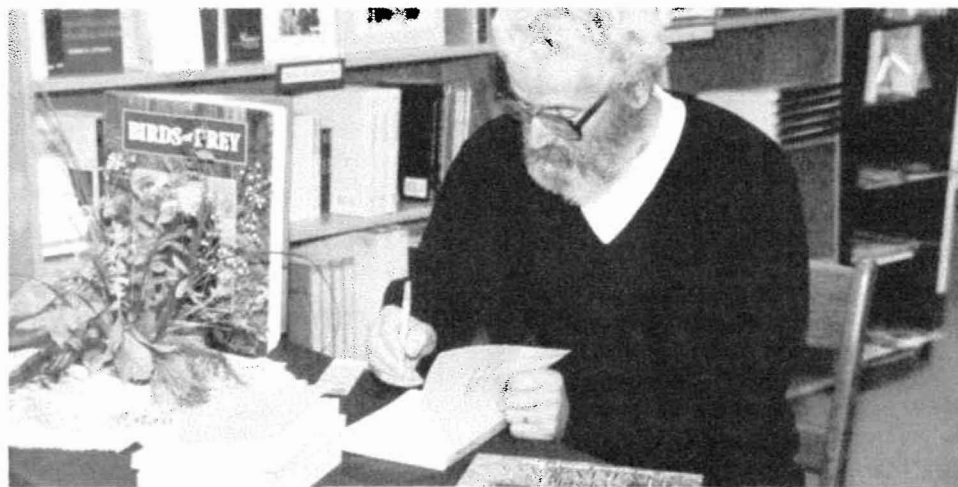


MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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The publication of *Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870-1925* will be good news to academics and non-academics alike. The author, Dr. Adolf Ens, is seen here autographing copies at the CMBC bookstore. Photo: Courtesy of Erwin Stremler, *Der Bote*, Winnipeg, MB.

Music in Russia: A Mennonite Choralbuch Rediscovered

by Peter Letkemann

Ten years ago, while researching my dissertation on "The Hymnody and Choral Music of Mennonites in Russia," I was surprised to find references in Russian Mennonite sources to a *Choralbuch in Noten*, apparently published by Raduga Publishers in Halbstadt.¹ A critical review of the *Choralbuch* by the editors of *Der Botschafter* appeared shortly after its publication in early 1910.² The following year Max Ferdinand Pohl, music instructor at the *Kommerzschule* in Halbstadt, also wrote a scathing critique of the *Choralbuch*.³ Prior to reading these references, I had assumed that all Russian Mennonite musical publications were printed only in *Ziffern* notation.

Unfortunately, I could find no mention of the *Choralbuch in Noten* in either the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* or the *Mennonite Bibliography*. I was also disappointed to discover that no copy of such a book existed in any North American Mennonite library or archive. Why, I asked myself, had a Mennonite publisher gone to the expense of printing a chorale-book in "staff-notation" when Russian Mennonites sang only according to *Ziffern*? And why had no copy of this book survived?

The answer to the question came from the pages of *Der Botschafter*, *Friedensstimme* and the *Christlicher Familienkalender*. Almost every edition of these well-known Russian Mennonite publications carried ads for pianos and harmoniums, both from dealers in Bremen or Leipzig, Germany, and from Mennonite dealers such as J.K. Enns in Melitopol, A.J. Unruh in Tiege and H. Born in Halbstadt.

In one of these ads, Wilhelm Neufeld, a prominent teacher and preacher in the Molotchna and one of the editors of the *Choralbuch* gave his endorsement to one particular harmonium: "My local choral society has been in possession of its harmonium for half a year now. I can recommend it for its noble tone and its relatively low price . . . I would encourage every musical wealthy family to acquire one".⁴ In pre-revolution Mennonite society, it seems that the possession of a piano or harmonium in the home had become a symbol of affluence and social status for a "cultured" person.

Anyone who has ever tried to play a four-part hymn from *Ziffern* will know how difficult this is. With more and more pianos

and harmoniums finding their way into Mennonite homes and schools, there was obviously a growing demand for a notated edition of the Mennonite chorale-book. As the reviewer in *Der Botschafter* wrote: "Anyone who can play better by notes than by *Ziffern* has long wished for a note-version of the Mennonite chorale-book."⁵

In early September of this year I came to the Mennonite Heritage Centre one morning expecting to do some genealogical research. Lawrence Klippenstein asked in passing whether I would be interested in examining a collection of books recently brought in by Helga Wiebe of Springstein, a part of the library of the late Gerhard H. Peters (former principal of the MCI in Gretna). I told him that I would be glad to do so, little realizing what I was in for.

As it turned out, Peters' collection contained numerous songbooks in *Ziffern*, including a complete and well-bound edition of *Liederperlen*.⁶ In the middle of the pile I found a thick, unassuming booklet with no title on the cover or spine. When I opened it, I was astonished to read *Choralbuch, dem neuen mennonitischen Gesangbuch entsprechend, zum Gebrauch in Kirche, Schule und Haus, zusammengestellt von K.W. und W.N. In Noten gesetzt von Chr. W.* Here at last was a copy of the elusive and long-lost *Choralbuch in Noten*!

The *Choralbuch* was well bound and measured about 5" x 8" in oblong format. The pages were in very good condition and it was obvious that the book had not been used very much. It was published in Halbstadt by Raduga but no publication date was given anywhere in the book. From the above-mentioned review in *Der Botschafter*,⁷ I knew that the book appeared early in 1910. On the reverse of the title-page I read that the book had been printed by J.A. Frey & Co. in Riga. Obviously Raduga did not have the technology to print "staff-notation".

The compilers of the *Choralbuch* were Kornelius Wiens and Wilhelm Neufeld, both prominent teachers and preachers in Gnadenfeld and Halbstadt.⁸ They had published two previous *Ziffern* editions of their *Choralbuch* in 1897 and 1902. A third *Ziffern* edition was published shortly after the appearance of the *Choralbuch in Noten*.⁹

The transcription from *Ziffern* to notes was prepared by a non-Mennonite musician
(cont'd on page 2)

Music in Russia

(cont'd from page 1)

with the initials "Chr. W." Raduga identified him only as a "professional with advanced training (St. Petersburg Conservatory) who is known as a composer, teacher and choir leader in higher circles, who performs with the singers of the Imperial Opera, and of whose ability we are convinced."¹⁰

In spite of these favourable credentials, the end-product left much to be desired. The reviewer of *Der Botschafter* wrote: "...what a disappointment when I started to play. I immediately found a host of errors, in fact there is hardly one error-free song in the entire book."¹¹ Max Pohl reiterated these claims a year later in his review of the *Choralbuch*.¹² An examination of the *Choralbuch* substantiates their critical claims: errors, such as parallel fifths and octaves, direct octaves, improper doublings, and improper use of inversions abound on almost every page.

Given these critical reviews one wonders how many Mennonites would have been willing to pay the high price of two rubles for such a flawed book. In fact, Pohl's critical review generated so much debate that the topic of the flawed *Choralbuch* was eventually placed on the agenda of the annual *Bundeskonferenz* held in Nikolaipol in October, 1912. The conference delegates agreed that the Neufeld-Wiens *Choralbuch* - in both *Ziffern* and "note" versions - was not only flawed but also detrimental to good congregational singing. Consequently, they appointed a six-person committee to produce a new book.¹³

Entitled *Choralbuch zum Gebrauch für Kirche, Schule und Haus, mit Berücksichtigung des mennonitischen Gesangbuches zusammengestellt im Auftrage der Allgemeinen Konferenz der Mennoniten-Gemeinden Russlands*, this work was eventually published in Halbstadt in 1914.¹⁴ It contained most of the hymns found in the Neufeld-Wiens *Choralbuch*, but with completely different, and correct (!), harmonizations. This effectively made the existing *Choralbuch in Noten* obsolete for accompaniment purposes. Its fate was sealed by the ensuing turmoil of war and revolution.

Endnotes

¹ Peter Letkemann, "The Hymnody and Choral Music of Mennonites in Russia,



Wilhelm Peter Neufeld

Photo: From P. M. Friesen. *Die Alt-evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, p.598c.

1789-1915", unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Toronto, 1985. On the Raduga Press cf. Ken Reddig, "Mennonite Publishing in Russia: The Raduga Press of Halbstadt", *Mennonite Historian* Vol. 13 (March, 1987), 1-2.

² [David H. Epp or H. Ediger?] "Das neue mennonitische Choralbuch in Noten", *Der Botschafter*, No. 29, 13. (26.) April, 1910, 4.

³ Max Pohl, "Das mennonitische Choralbuch und die Musikverhältnisse bei den Mennoniten", *Der Botschafter*, No. 85, 28. October (10. November), 1911, 3-4.

⁴ Advertisement in *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1907, 186-187.

⁵ Cf. note 2.

⁶ These publications are described in Letkemann, 429-454. The Mennonite Historical Library at CMBC has copies of them all.

⁷ Cf. note 2.

⁸ Wilhelm Peter Neufeld taught in Gnadenfeld from 1881-1898 and in the Halbstadt *Zentralschule* from 1898-1911. He was a minister and choir director in the Gnadenfeld congregation. Cf. P.M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)*, translated from the German (Fresno, CA: 1980), 737-738; Letkemann, 332-338, 448, 465-466. Kornelius Wiens taught for many years at

the *Mädchenschule* in Halbstadt; from 1908 on he taught at the *Zentralschule* in Halbstadt. He was a minister of the Halbstadt congregation. Friesen, 739.

⁹ Letkemann, 332-340.

¹⁰ Verlagsgesellschaft Raduga, "Etwas über unser Choralbuch", *Der Botschafter*, No. 38, 18. (31) May, 1912, 4-5; Cf. also *Friedensstimme*, No. 34, 2. May, 1912, 4-5.

¹¹ Cf. note 2.

¹² Cf. note 3.

¹³ Conference reports are given in *Der Botschafter*, No. 86, 2. (15.) November, 1912, 3.

¹⁴ Letkemann, 340-346.

Dr. Peter Letkemann resides in Winnipeg, MB.

The Cormier Search - Help!

Some months ago Ben Cormier of Winnipeg came to visit us. He had a very unique story to share, and a special search to tell others about. Here is part of his story.

In 1893 a number of Russian Mennonite families were moving to Canada from Ukraine. The train they boarded in April to go west was stopped at the small station of Schreiber, 145 miles east of Fort William because a case of small pox was diagnosed on the train. The sick child was seven year old Aurore Cormier (see photo on p. 5). She died on April 30. Her family, the Moise Cormiers, was the only non-Mennonite family in the coach they were in (holding 67 persons). The whole train had to wait till all medical precautions were taken care of. It finally came to a stop just outside Fort William. Aurore was then buried, "without religious rites in a field four kilometers from Fort William about 800 or 900 feet from the road" (taken from a diary kept by her mother, Marie).

The descendants of this family are hoping to locate the exact site of Aurore's burial, and if possible, bring the remains to Manitoba to be buried in a family plot. The Cormier family settled in LaSalle when they arrived in Manitoba.

Do you, the reader, know any Mennonite family which may have come to Western Canada in April 1893, or descendants who might have some information on this incident? If so, please contact Mennonite Historian, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, and we will pass on the data to the Cormier family. They would be most grateful.

GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY

by Alf Redekopp

Queries

Ediger - I would like to exchange information with members of the Isaac Ediger family about Nikolai N. Ediger (1865-1925) married to Sara Wiens (1865-1943). Their children were: Agatha (m. J.K. Wölke), Johann (m. Louise Enns), Sara, Anna (m. to A.J. Dick), and Nikolai (m. to Susanna Hamm). Several descendants have lived in Germany since 1989. Contact: Mary Hoepfner, 338 11th St., Morden, MB R6M 1L7.

Kehler - I need information on the ancestors of Cornelius Kehler (b. 13 August 1903) in Nikolajevka No. 6, Orenburg. He arrived in Canada in 1926 from Russia with his wife, Margaretha Epp. He was the fourth child of Peter Kehler (?-1921) and Margaretha Loewen. Some siblings: Agatha, (d. 1921), Gerhard disappeared 1919, and Peter. Contact: Diane L. Kehler, 6223 Skyway Drive, Columbus, OH 43229-2114

Pordenau - I would like to hear from any descendants of the village of Pordenau, Molotschna. My paternal grandfather, Johann Heinrich Janzen, son of Heinrich Franz Janzen and Anna Teichrob, was born there on July 29, 1865. A village map with names is desired as well. Contact: Olga Hryciuk, 1616-114th Avenue, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4N6

Rempel-Klassen - Cornelius H. Rempel, son of Heinrich and Justina Rempel (b. 14 November 1903 in Deyevka, Orenburg) and Aganetha Klassen (b. 27 June 1905 in Neplujev No. 1), and their son Peter (b. 25 November 1927) left Gruenfeld, Slavgorod settlement, and emigrated to Canada in 1929. They arrived in August 1929 at the Johann Klassen home in Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. I am looking for information on the family. Contact: John Dyck, 48 Coral Cres., Winnipeg, MB R2J 1V7.

Tiessen - The 1835 Molotschna census lists an Isbrandt Franz Tiessen (b. ca. 1799) living in Tiegerweide, with his wife Justina Loewen (b. ca. 1795) and children, Elisabeth (b. ca. 1821), Anna (b. ca. 1825), Agneta (b. ca. 1829) and Jacob (b. 1833). I have information on the descendants of Jacob. Does anyone have any further information on the three daughters? Contact: John D. Thiesen, 300 East 27th, North Newton, KS 67117-9989

Wohldemfürst - I would like to hear from any descendants of the inhabitants of the village of Wohldemfürst, Kuban, in the

Caucasus. My mother Olga Müller, daughter of Friedrich F. Müller and Elizabeth Hamm, was born there on January 30, 1905. Contact: Olga Hryciuk, 1616-114th Avenue, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4N6

Book Notes

C.T. Friesen. *Johann "Hans" Ediger 1775-1994* (Houston, Texas : Private publication, 1994) pb., 746 pp.

This book traces the descendants of Johann Ediger (b. 1775) in Montauerweide, West Prussia. He was first married to Anna Fransen, then to Elizabeth Ewert, and died in Schardau, South Russia, in 1835. We find here the history of the descendants of the four Ediger sons from the second marriage, namely: Solomon (b. 1816), Heinrich (b. 1819), David (b. 1821) and Cornelius (b. 1827). Solomon, Heinrich and David died in Kansas and Cornelius died in Nebraska. The book contains very helpful biographical sketches of persons from the earlier generations, some photos, maps, and a comprehensive name index at the end. Contact: C.T. Friesen, P.O. Box 262304, Houston, Texas 77207-2304.

Melvin J. Loewen, comp. *The Descendants of Cornelius W. Loewen (1827-1893) and Helena Bartel (1833-1876)* (Steinbach, MB : Heritage Classics, 1994) pb., 339 pp.

Cornelius W. Loewen and his wife Helena Bartel were part of the first group of Mennonite settlers coming from Ukraine and arriving in Western Canada in 1874. This book traces the descendants of their two sons, Cornelius B. Loewen (1863-1928) and Isaak B. Loewen (1865-1938). Included are short biographical notes of various descendants as well as notes on Cornelius W. Loewen's siblings and ancestors. This Cornelius was born the ninth child (out of thirteen) of Isaak Loewen (1787-1873) and Margaretha Wiens (1813-1861) in Lindenau, Molotschna. Solomon L. Loewen published a book in 1960 tracing the descendants of these thirteen children. This book uses the same organization and numbering system. Contact: Heritage Classics, Box 20839, Steinbach, MB R0A 2T2.

Marlene Reimer, comp. *Unger Family Tree : Peter Unger (1855-1936) and Helena (Nikkel) Unger (1857-1954)* (Boissevain, MB : Private publication, 1994), duo-tang bound, 47 leaves.

This compilation begins with Peter Unger (b. 1800) in Schoeneberg, followed by his son Peter Unger (b. ca. 1830) in Niederhortiza, the father of Peter Unger (1855-1936). Specifically it traces the descendants of the latter. This Peter Unger was born in Neu-

Chortiza, Russia and moved to Grigorjevka around 1889. Here he became a successful farmer. At the age of 70 he emigrated to Canada in 1925 and after one year in Osler, Saskatchewan, settled in the Boissevain, Manitoba, area. A number of leaders have either married into this family or are descended from it. These include such people as ministers Jacob M. Pauls, Jacob F. Pauls, Jake Harms, and Rudy Franz; Professors Leo and Otto Driedger, and Professor Peter Pauls, just to list a few. Contact: Marlene Reimer, Box 1088, Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0

Margaret Kroeker, Hanna Rempel, Roy Vogt, et.al. *A Vogt Family History*. (Winnipeg, MB : Mennonite Genealogy Inc., 1994) pb., 158 pp., \$25.00.

This book describes the life of Andreas Vogt (1854-1914), and his wife Aganetha Block (1857-1930), who lived in Schönwiese, Chortiza. It links Andreas and Aganetha with their ancestors in Prussia. Then it describes their life in Russia and the lives of their descendants in Canada after 1923. Contact: Mennonite Genealogy Inc. Box 393, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6.

Noteworthy Articles

Orpha V. Schrag, "Andreas D. Schrag: Volhynia to Dakota," *Mennonite Family History* (July, 1994) pp.100-107. MFH is published by Mennonite Family History, P.O. Box 171, Elverston, PA 19520-0171, and is available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg, MB.

Henry Schapansky, "Chortitz: The Old Colony Russia; The First Settlers: 1788-1803, Part II," *Mennonite Family History* (July, 1994), pp. 120-124.

Adalbert Goertz, "1787-1810 Baptisms of Thiensdorf-Markushof, West Prussia," *Mennonite Family History* (July, 1994), pp.128-129.

Esther Jost, "From Crimea to Kansas with Elder Jacob A. Wiebe and Peter M. Barkman," *Mennonite Family History* (October, 1994), pp. 156-159.

Dennis Seher and George Dorscher, "Passenger Lists," *Heritage Review* (September, 1994), pp.39-48. This list spans the period from 1908 to 1914 and contains several Mennonite families scattered throughout.

HR is published by the Germans from Russia Heritage Society, 1008 E. Central Ave., Bismarck, ND 58501, and is available at the MHCA or CMBS in Winnipeg, MB.

Send inquiries to Alf Redekopp, CMBS, 1-169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5.

Recent Acquisitions

1. Wehrmann Family photograph collection. 80 items. Donated by Ernest Enns, Winnipeg, MB.
2. Emmanuel Mennonite Church Records (Winkler, MB). One carton. Deposited by John P. Klassen, Winkler, MB.
3. Silberfeld School District Records, 1921-1965. Bergthaler Mennonite Church (Gretna, MB) records, 1956-1992. One carton. Brought by Abe Loewen, Gretna, MB.
4. Anna Willms Collection consisting of correspondence, photographs and books. One carton. Donated by Dick Epp, Saskatoon, SK.
5. Sterling Mennonite Church (Winnipeg, MB) records, 1958-1990. Deposited by Norm Voth, Winnipeg, MB.
6. David Schroeder papers consisting of topical files and some correspondence, 1940s and 1950s. 30 files. Donated by David Schroeder, Winnipeg, MB.
7. Personal papers of Johann W. Rempel (1875-1933) and his wife Anna (nee Kaethler) (1884-1966) consisting of personal documents, 1895-1941. e.g. school transcripts, tax assessment, baptism certificate, passports, correspondence, etc. Donated by Judith Rempel, Calgary, AB.
8. Photocopy of a Peter Niebuhr diary originating in Georgthal, Fuerstenland, Russia. Donated by Elise Epp, Springstein, MB.
9. *My Pilgrimage : The Memoirs of Nicholas N. Fransen*. Donated by Nicholas N. Fransen, Vineland, ON.
10. Genealogical tables of Galician Mennonites and other related papers. Donated by Glen Linscheid, Butterfield, MN.
11. English translation by Herman Rempel of Martin W. Friesen's *Neue Heimat in der Chaco Wildnis*. Manuscript provided by the translator.
12. Personal papers of Maria Siemens and Victor Peters; also, 14 new copies of *Lost in the Steppe* (ed. Henry Dyck). Four cartons. Donated by Victor and Elisabeth Peters, Winnipeg, MB.
13. Edenburg Sewing Circle records, 1944-1994. One carton. Brought by John and Marlene Plett, Gretna, MB.



A photograph of the Moise and Marie Cormier family taken in April 1893. Aurore is standing to the left of her mother. Photo: Courtesy of Ben Cormier, 133 Niakwa Rd., Apt. 1402, Winnipeg, MB R2M 5J5

MHC Gallery News

We were delighted to present a paintings exhibit by Lena Sawatzky of Winnipeg in November and December. Floral motifs and carvings were added to create a context for nature and other scenes.

Several persons including Robb Nickel of Winnipeg plan to mount a wood carving arts exhibit in January and February. Drop in to have a look!

Hepburn History Book

Our Rich Heritage, an 800 page volume with 1400 pictures is available for \$65.00 plus \$5.00 postage and handling. The book features the history of Hepburn and the surrounding districts of Mennon, Hew Home, Richmond, Marion, Emery, Steele, Lakeburg, Parker, Schmidtsburg, Carson, Hudson Bay and Edenburg.

Also available is a historic calendar featuring Hepburn and districts, for \$15.00 plus \$2.00 for shipping.

Order from:

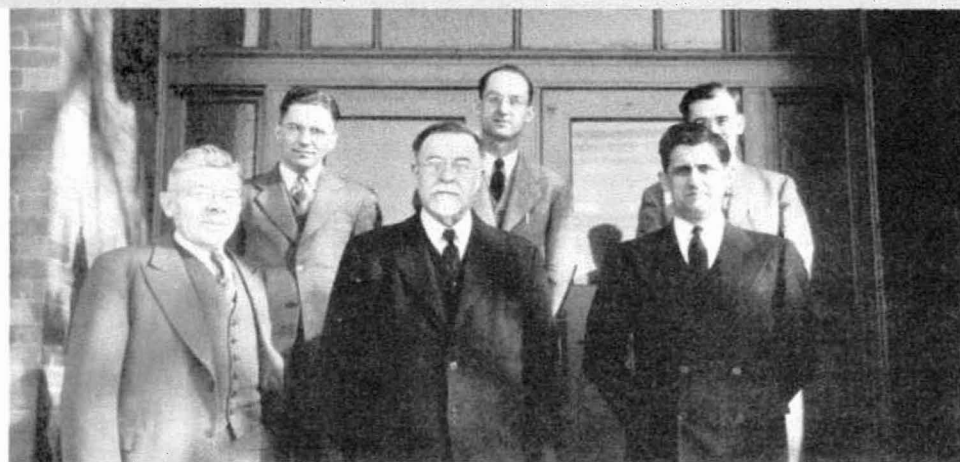
Hepburn History Book
 Box 119, Hepburn, SK S0K 1Z0.

Apologies!

1. In the June issue of **MH** the Beier inquiry (p. 3) should have listed the death date of Johann Beier as 1867, not 1897.
2. Re: the article, "Our Lohrenz Ancestry" in the September issue of **MH**. One name needs to be added to the list of children of Peter P. Lohrenz (p. 9), i.e. Tina, m. to Cornelius Neufeld, a brother to the Peter who married Agatha. Also note: the middle name of Peter Lorenz Neufeld does not have an "h".
3. The author of *Wilder Honig* (**MH**, September, 1994, p. 12) should have been cited as Hedi, not Heidi Knoop.
4. Re. the photo p. 11 of the Sept. issue of **MH**. The names should be Darcy Reimer (not Doug) and Tim Koop.

Finally we'd like to note that we have received a number of responses to the James Urry article on the Boers in the September issue of **MH**. We feel we want to publish much of that material, but could not find the space in this issue. If all goes well, it will be shared in the March 1995 issue. If you, as reader, have anything to add, let us know as soon as possible. Thank you very much.

We thank those who sent in corrections and apologize for the errors.



The faculty of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, MB, in 1945-46. Front (l-r): Henry Wall, Abraham H. Unruh, John B. Toews (President). Back: Reuben Baerg, Jacob H. Quiring and Ben Horch.

Mennonite Brethren Bible College: Discovering its Theological Roots

by David Ewert

The Mennonite Brethren Bible College was founded 50 years ago in 1944. On October 28 and 29 the Concord College Convention celebrated the event. Following is an excerpt from a presentation by Dr. David Ewert, long-time faculty member and President of the College from 1982 to 1988.

There were many aspects of acculturation and adaptation to the North American environment that provided us with challenges in the early days of MBBC. We faced the challenge of discovering our historical heritage and identifying with it. Interestingly, this rediscovery was stimulated by scholars outside the MB Church. In the early 1940s Harold S. Bender of Goshen, Indiana, published his "Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision," which led to the publication of a great many volumes on our Anabaptist heritage.

In my growing-up years I was often embarrassed by our Mennonite way of doing things (perhaps it would be more correct to call it the "European" way). Many of us young people were trying to find our way in an English-speaking world and yet remain loyal to the Scriptures. So we looked with a very critical eye at the life of the church in which so many things were still done the way we did them in Russia. In the early 1950s we had many students at MBBC who had similar feelings.

It was through teachers such as John A. Toews and Frank C. Peters that our students were introduced to the rich heritage we had

in 16th century Anabaptism. Their enthusiasm rubbed off even on those of us whose interest in history was less than theirs. This renewed interest in our historical roots had a salutary effect on our students. Some of them went away from MBBC with the conviction that it was alright to be Mennonite; they needn't be ashamed of their past.

With the discovery of our spiritual roots we also faced a rather serious theological challenge: With which theological current in North America were we going to identify? In Anabaptism, discipleship was a central concern—following Jesus' teachings as found in the Sermon on the Mount. In American evangelical circles there were those who taught that the teachings of Jesus did not apply to us. He had come to establish a Jewish kingdom and his teachings pertained to that kingdom. Since, however, the Jews had rejected him, God brought in the age of the church. But once that age would come to an end, He would pick up the Jewish strand, and then the teachings of Jesus would be the laws of the millennial kingdom.

This was a fundamental plank in the teachings of John Darby. Some of our ministers had already imbibed this teaching in Europe and brought it to Canada. Several Bible school teachers, such as William Bestvater, principal of the Herbert Bible School, had studied in American Bible colleges and spread this so-called "dispensational" method of interpreting the Bible.

Dr. Abraham H. Unruh, the founder of MBBC, had remained somewhat aloof from

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this kind of teaching. On one occasion when he heard Bestvater expound God's plan for Israel and the church with a large canvass on the front wall of the church, Unruh asked him, "Broda Bestvoda, menst du de leve Gott wout sich no denim Koda rechte?" (Brother Bestvater, do you think the dear Lord will be guided by your rag?).

I had already consigned Clarence Larkin's charts to the fire before I came to college. However we had a bit of a problem within the faculty, since Henry H. Janzen and Henry Regehr were strong proponents of Darbyism. Fortunately at that time, because most churches had several ministers who didn't have to agree on every issue, we enjoyed that luxury at college as well. I don't recall that we had internal conflicts because of different ways of interpreting Scripture. Today one would be hard-pressed to find a Bible teacher in any of our schools who takes the dispensational approach. MBBC deserves some credit for that.

Dr. David Ewert now lives in Clearbrook, BC.

Recent Acquisitions

1. Photocopies of Giesbrecht and Harder genealogical materials collected by the late Herb Giesbrecht. Donated by Margaret Giesbrecht, Winnipeg, MB.
2. Tabor Bible School (Dalmeny, SK) records consisting of three documents. Received from Peter W. Fast.
3. Choral music used at the Manitou MB Church.
4. Manitou MB Church financial records, 1940-1989.
5. J.J. Toews personal papers consisting of study papers, lecture notes, sermons notes and radio sermon transcripts. Donated by Mrs. Lena Toews, Winnipeg, MB.
6. River East M.B. Church records transferred from church office.
7. Coaldale M.B. Church Tape Recording Collection consisting of material prepared for the radio ministry known as Gospel Bells, 1964-1974. Donated by the Coaldale M.B. Church, Coaldale, AB.
8. Abram P. Willms personal papers consisting of poetry writings, 1933-1957. Donated by Mrs. Mary Thiessen, Calgary, AB.

MMHS Board Meeting

The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Board of Directors met on October 12, 1994 at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. Each committee presented a report which highlighted various projects that the society has undertaken. Abe Dueck of the Research and Scholarship Committee reported that the next book to be published in the Echo Verlag series will be the one on Johann Cornies. CMBC Publications will do an assessment at the end of 1994 on whether to proceed with further volumes. John Dyck of the Local History Committee reported that the Reinländer Church Register will go to press very shortly and be ready at the beginning of 1995.

In other news the board forwarded Lawrence Klippenstein's name as a nominee to replace Ken Reddig as the MMHS representative on the editorial board of the Journal of Mennonite Studies. Bert Friesen, society president, reported that the Jewish-Mennonite-Ukrainian conference will be held August 28-30, 1995 at the University of Manitoba and St. Paul's College. The title of the conference will be "Jews, Mennonites and Ukrainians: Their Experience in Canada." The conference will feature the presentation of approximately 30 papers, a banquet at the Westin Hotel, and possibly a joint exhibit. Adolf Ens and Ted Friesen will work with representatives from the Jewish and Ukrainian groups at raising funds for the event.

The next board meeting is scheduled for February 1995 after the annual meeting.

New Genealogical Resources

by Richard Thiessen

Molotschna 1835 Census

Henry Fast of Steinbach has recently completed a preliminary translation of the Molotschna 1835 census (P.J. Braun Archives) from Russian to English. Copies of this translation, which has proven to be of immense help to numerous researchers, are available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre and the Centre for MB Studies, both in Winnipeg. The MMHS Genealogy Committee has decided to enter the census into the Mennonite Genealogical Central Registry, a computer database administered by the Genealogy Committee and located at the Centre for MB Studies in Winnipeg. Before this is done, a number of individuals fluent in Russian will proofread the English translation done by Fast. The

GENEALOGY & FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOP

Hear

Speaker: Dr. James Urry
Wellington, New Zealand

Theme: Forenames, nicknames and diminutives: some thoughts on, and the significance of, Mennonite naming

Date: Monday, Jan. 16, 1995
7:30 p.m.

Place: Concord College Lecture Hall
169 Riverton Avenue
Winnipeg, MB

Cost: \$2.00

Sponsored by the
Winnipeg Genealogy Committee of the
Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

proofreading work will begin in December 1994 and be completed soon thereafter. Entry into the computer database will commence once the proofreading has been carried out.

Molotschna Church Registers

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) has recently microfilmed hundreds of documents held in various Russian archival centres. A number of these documents may be of interest to individuals doing family research on Mennonite ancestors who lived in Molotschna. These documents are in fact Lutheran Church registers for the Molotschna region, which are currently located in the St. Petersburg (Russia) archives and were microfilmed in 1993. It appears as though the registers were started in 1833, and they run up to the twentieth century. The registers include births, marriages and deaths by village.

The vast majority of entries in the registers are for German Lutherans.

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However, there are Mennonite names listed periodically throughout these registers. As far as can be determined, all occurrences of Mennonite names are of persons who married Lutherans and thus came under the auspices of the Lutheran Church.

The microfilm copies of these registers are stored in Salt Lake City, but can be ordered through any Family History Centre run by the Mormon Church (Canadian addresses are available at MHCA and CMBS). The microfilms must be viewed on site. The registers are listed under the geographical heading "Molotschna, Kr. Melitopol, G. Taurien." The microfilm call numbers all begin with GS 188. For further information contact Richard Thiessen or Bert Friesen, c/o MMHS, 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5.

Mennonite Genealogical Central Registry

The MMHS Genealogy Committee has recently established the Mennonite Genealogical Central Registry. By the end of the year the database will contain individual records of approximately 25,000 Mennonites, taken from the following sources: Schönhorst Church Register (Schönhorst, Chortitza); 1776 West Prussian census; Reinländer Church Register (Manitoba); Gustav Reimer's list of 17th and 18th century land title deed holders and owners of fire insurance; baptism lists for the West Prussian Mennonite congregations of Ladekopp, Montau, Tiegenhagen and Orloffferld; Alan Peters' index to the names appearing in *Die niederländisch-niederdeutschen Hintergründe der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen* by B.H. Unruh; and personal records contributed by individuals. Plans are already under way to enter the rest of the names appearing in the Reinländer Church Register, along with all names appearing in the Molotschna 1835 census. **Note:** The Reinländer Church Register is at the printers now. The software being used has been developed by Bert Friesen, Richard Thiessen, and Alf Redekopp and is based on dBASE IV. Individuals who wish to contribute their genealogical records to the central registry may do so by requesting a copy of the software, entitled Genlink.

If individuals are already using other genealogy programs, such as Brother's Keeper or Personal Ancestry File, they may submit records in GEDCOM format. Copies of Genlink are available from Bert Friesen, c/o MMHS, 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5. Records in GEDCOM format may also be sent to Bert Friesen.

Annual MMHS Meeting

Place: Mennonite Heritage Village
Steinbach, MB

Time: Sat., January 21, 1995,
7 p.m.

Speaker: Dr. Harvey Plett
Steinbach Bible College
Steinbach, MB

The business meeting (about an hour) will be followed by the speaker's address.

The speaker's topic and music to be arranged.

Refreshments will be served after the program.

PENNER FAMILY REUNION

For the descendants of
Peter Penner and Margaretha Wiebe
(1850-1924) (1854-1945)

Where: Winkler Bible School
Winkler, MB

When: July 28-30, 1995

For further info call John Dyck
(204) 256-1637

Other Penner relatives are also welcome!

Source of info: *Penner Newsletter* Vol. 1,
No. 1, (Fall, 1994), p.1.

WIEBE FAMILY REUNION

For descendants of
Gerhard Wiebe and Anna Redekopp
(1808-1863) (1814-1861)

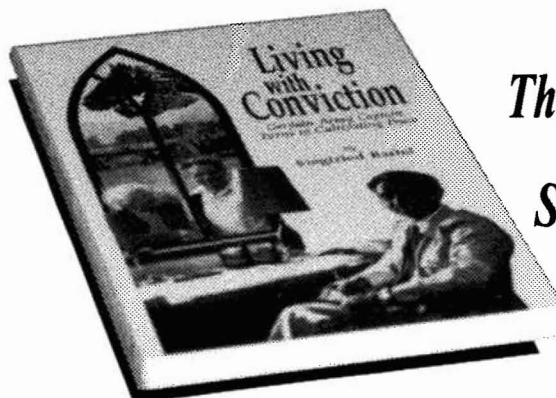
Where: Winkler Bible School
Winkler, MB

When: July 1996

For further info call Jacob Dyck
(204) 325-8757

Source of info: *Windows on Wiebes Newsletter* Vol. 1, No. 1, (Fall, 1994) p.1.

Living with Conviction



*The Memoirs
of
Siegfried Bartel*

Living with Conviction traces the story of one man's struggle to overcome guilt and become convinced that the way of peace is the only alternative to war.

"Your story is one of the great messages to present and future generations." **Ted E. Friesen**, Altona, MB
President, The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada

"I don't know whether we have any other books that grapple with the problem of peace and war quite the way yours does. I enjoyed it very much." **Peter J. Dyck**, Akron, PA

"...Bartel has a moving story to tell." **Christian Info News**, Vancouver

It is available in church related bookstores, from MCC offices
and from:

CMBC Publications

600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4 (204) 888-6781

Echo Historical Series News

CMBC Publications and MMHS are continuing the publication of translated titles in the Echo Historical Series. Books to be published in 1995 include **Johann Cornies** by D.H. Epp and **Am Trakt** by W.S. Sirukin and Johann J. Dyck. Original copies of **Am Trakt** are still available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

BOOK REVIEWS

Toews, Art, ed. *Arnaud Mennonite Church 1944-1994* (Arnaud, MB: Arnaud Mennonite Church, 1994) Hdc., 112 pp. \$25.00
 Historical Committee. *History of the Oak Lake Mennonite Church 1929-1992* (Oak Lake, MB: Oak Lake Mennonite Church, 1994) Pb., 182 pp.

Reviewed by Alf Redekopp

Recently two histories of Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba churches were published. *History of Oak Lake Mennonite Church 1929-1992* covers the period from 1929 to 1992. It traces the history of a Mennonite congregation that began in the late 1920s as recent Mennonite immigrants from Russia acquired farms around Oak Lake in western Manitoba. The book also discusses the beginnings of a group which initially met in homes for worship. This congregation became part of a group of 37 smaller bodies which made up the Schönwieser Church (*Gemeinde*), sometimes referred to as a "*Gruppen Gemeinde*", because of its make-up, with the mother church in Winnipeg, (later First Mennonite Church), assuming the leadership role. In 1974 Oak Lake Mennonite Church was the last of these affiliate congregations to become autonomous, an event which in fact, marked the end of the Schoenwieser *Gemeinde*.

The book will be of interest to those wishing to understand the earlier administrative structures of Mennonite congregations, as well as the challenges and adjustments which were faced by them over the years.

From the book, *Arnaud Mennonite Church* it may appear that this congregation began 15 years later than the Oak Lake group. This is not quite the case. The Arnaud congregation also had its beginnings in the 1920s as Mennonite immigrants from Russia began settling near Ste. Elizabeth, Arnaud and Dominion City. They organized as the Arnaud Mennonite Church in 1926, but when a decision was reached to construct a church in Ste. Elizabeth in 1929, the group received the name, *Die Lichtenauer Gemeinde zu Ste. Elizabeth*, reflecting the origin in Russia of many of its adherents.

In 1944 the people who lived closer to Arnaud organized and built a meeting place in Arnaud. This congregational history deals primarily with the development of the Arnaud group after the building took place. This also led to its severance from the *Lichtenauer Gemeinde* and becoming an autonomous congregation. It officially joined the

Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba in 1945.

Both of these congregational histories make a significant contribution towards understanding the life and history of Mennonite immigrants of the 1920s as they established churches in a new land.

Alf Redekopp is archivist at the Centre for MB Studies and assistant archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, both in Winnipeg, MB.

Roth, Lorraine. *Willing Service: Stories of Ontario Mennonite Women*. (Waterloo, ON: Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario in cooperation with Women's Missionary and Service Commission of Eastern Canada, 1992) Pb., 275 pp.

Reviewed by Connie Loeppky

This book invites readers to enter into the lives of some amazing women. At first it may seem that this is just another collection of personal stories highlighting women, but there is more. One cannot read these stories without experiencing the richness of the lives of these women.

Read, for example, about women like Mary Ann Cressman (1864-1948), the founding mother of Women's Missionary and Service Commission of Ontario, and Salome Bauman, (1909-1986), "Teacher 'Extraordinaire'" during Rockway Mennonite School's first twenty-five years. In one of Salome's congregational teacher training classes, she explained that teachers like to tell children to sit still, and God is telling them to wiggle!

The stories were written to commemorate 200 years of settlement by Mennonites of Ontario, 1786-1986. Historically Mennonite women have played a supporting role in churches and community and this support has not always been recognized as a role of worth. Although this book is written in the humble service mode, the powerful message of love and commitment to God comes through in the variety of stories. The "willingness to serve" comes through as a constant reminder to the reader, and it is the publisher's desire that the readers will meet the challenges of their days with the same dedication and creativity as these women did.

Connie Loeppky is director of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada Resource Centre in Winnipeg, MB.

BOOK NOTES

Herald Press has recently published two books of a more academic nature that may be of interest to some readers. Gary K. Waite has translated and edited *The Anabaptist Writings of David Joris: 1535-1543* (Waterloo, ON and Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994). This book is Volume 7 in the *Classics of the Radical Reformation* series, which also includes volumes of the writings of Michael Sattler, Pilgram Marpeck, Balthasar Hubmaier, Dirk Philips, and various other early Anabaptists. On a related note, a European publisher is planning to produce a CD-ROM of several core Mennonite/Anabaptist writings, including the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, and volumes from the *Classics of the Radical Reformation*.

A second Herald Press book is Bernd G. Laengin's work entitled *Plain and Amish: An Alternative to Modern Pessimism* (Waterloo, ON and Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994). This is a fascinating book written by one who has lived with the Amish, and translated from a German original.

Of interest to those who are thinking of writing a congregational history is a book by James P. Wind *Places of Worship: Exploring Their History*, (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1990). The book is written by an experienced historian who gives advice on how to write a congregational history. He points out questions to be asked when exploring the history of a church, and offers advice on how to go about documenting political and secular influences on a congregation.

Readers interested in the Prussian Mennonite "trek" (flight to Germany) of 1945 will be interested in Elizabeth Wiens' book *Schicksalsjahr 1945 Erlebnisse nach Tagebuchnotizen* (Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON: Privately published, 1993) pb., 146 pp.

Two new books on Paraguayan aboriginals of the Chaco are David Hein's *Die Ayoreos-Unsere Nachbarn der Mission im noerdlichen Chaco* (Filadelfia, Chaco, n.d.) pb., 212 pp., \$13.50, and Abram Loewen's *Frau Braun die Lange, die Uebrig blieb. Vom Niedergang einer Indianersippe in Paraguay* (Preetz, Germany: Adelheid and Heinrich Derksen, 1994), pb., 99 pp. It has an introduction and epilogue by Heinrich Derksen.

Nostalgic Recollections of Jake Krueger (Altona, MB: published by the author, 1994), pb., 217 pp., \$25.00, joins the growing list of recent autobiographies and memoirs. Perhaps you, the reader, have a new book in print as well. Let us know!