

MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church moved toward integration with the General Conference at its April 12-13 meeting in Sarasota, Florida by recommending, for the interim, that two GC members be appointed to its committee as soon as possible. Attending the meeting were, standing, from left: John D. Thiesen (GC representative), Carolyn C. Wenger, Lawrence Klippenstein (GC representative), Hope K. Lind, Nate Yoder, Kimberly D. Schmidt. Seated: Marcus Miller, John E. Sharp, Arlin D. Lapp, John D. Roth. Photo: Courtesy of Lorraine Sheeler, Sarasota, Florida.

Getting Together: The Ontario Swiss and Russian Mennonites At First Glance

by Lorna Bergey

The stories of Swiss and Russian Mennonites in Canada have intersected at significant points and occasions. This article is excerpted from a talk prepared for presentation at the George Street Mennonite congregation in Waterloo, Ontario. The occasion was a 50th anniversary service commemorating the 1924 arrival of Mennonites emigrating from the Soviet Union to Canada during that period.

Of great significance in both your history and mine is the fact that many of the acts of God which brought you and me to this time and place were performed through our Mennonite people. I refer specifically to the practice of mutual aid within our communities in the first 450 years of our history. Within the first century and a half of our fellowship story,

Mennonites in Holland responded to the needs of their Swiss brethren and sisters when they fled from Switzerland to the Palatinate in search of religious freedom. Some of my forefathers who joined this migration arrived at their destination destitute because all of their possessions had been confiscated by the Swiss authorities.

The historic event we are celebrating today became a reality partly because the Mennonites residing in Canada in the early 1920s promised the government of Canada to provide food, shelter, and clothing to Russian Mennonite refugees until they were able to become established economically. The refugees were to be billeted in Ontario for several weeks as they waited to move on to the Russian Mennonite settlements further west.

Waterloo County Mennonites were

asked to furnish billets for approximately 600 people. Eight hundred and twenty-five arrived. To provide the necessary accommodation, each resident family in the county was contacted by a committee to ascertain available accommodation in the area. At that time most of our people lived on farms in large houses. In those days too, farmers produced most of their family's food requirements so there was always plenty of food for a few extra mouths.

But were you ever asked to open your home to complete strangers? Can you imagine what fortitude it would require to host total strangers? At this point in history Mennonites in Ontario knew very little about their brothers and sisters in Europe. As someone said at one of the board meetings of the Mennonite Historical Society, "The Swiss German Mennonites in Ontario and the Mennonites from Russia of Dutch German descent were brought together under trying conditions. However, in true Mennonite fashion they made the best of the situation and the melting together of two cultures was begun."

There are several things which might qualify me to attempt this assignment. As historian of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario I am deeply interested in the effect of past events on our contemporary church life. Also, the Jacob Y. Shantz who played a major role in the resettling of the 1874 migration of Mennonites from Russia to Manitoba was the youngest brother of my great-grandfather, Joseph Y. Shantz. What is more, I witnessed the events as a child. My parents took a young couple with a child into our home at that time. Since childhood experiences are usually deeply ingrained it has not been difficult for me to recall this specific event.

Kindly allow me to reminisce about that day in August, back in 1924, when my parents were busily engaged in preparations to receive a Mennonite family from the Soviet Union. I was told that we were having company from Russia who would stay in our home for several weeks. Up to this point in my life I was accustomed to having guests from Pennsylvania stay in

(con't on page 2)

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(con't from page 1)

our home for a few days. Naturally then my next question was, "Why is the company from Russia going to stay with us for several weeks?" I was told about a revolution and a terrible famine which left people without the necessities of life and without hope for the future. This news stirred my childish sympathies deeply.

The day dawned when our expected guests from Russia arrived at our house. My curiosity was immediately aroused by the shirt worn by the father. It resembled the cut of my father's night shirt - and I thought if he was going to wear this article of clothing during the day, why didn't he tuck his shirt tail in? The woven basket trunks intrigued me. The kerchief worn by the woman was not unlike those worn by both of my grandmothers. Likewise the use of tobacco by the man did not disturb me as my grandfather was a moderate smoker.

The name Friesen added a new dimension to the Mennonite family names of Eby, Brubacher, Bowman, Martin, Weber, Shantz and Cressman with which I was familiar. The man's name was Johann and the little boy was called Hansli.

With the arrival came the news that our guests would stay with us for several months, not several weeks as previously planned. They would not proceed to the western provinces until spring.

Upon receiving that information my parents began to revamp our personal living quarters in order to provide our guest family with a separate living unit of three rooms, a kitchen, living room and bedroom. At this point our personal life was invaded, and we felt a bit displaced in our own home.

Our household now consisted of a Pennsylvania German Mennonite family - my father and mother, my younger sister and myself along with a Russian Mennonite family of three - a father and mother with their little son, plus our hired man who had just migrated from Ireland. My family spoke English and a Palatinate dialect known as Pennsylvania Dutch. The family from Russia spoke German and Plautdeutsch, and the hired man spoke English with a heavy Irish brogue. It was quite an adventure to have such a cosmo-



Children of William and Katherine Penner (from Russia) with family members of their hosts Jacob and Elmina (Hunsberger) Brubacher on a farm near Kitchener, Ontario, in the fall of 1924. L-R: Howard B., Willie P., Elmer B., Tina and Annie P., and Mary B. Photo courtesy of Lorna Bergey, Kitchener, Ontario.

politan group living under one roof with no alternative but to try to work together and make the best of the situation. This was truly a feat in an era when all ethnic groups harboured strong biased feelings about each other and each group entertained a very high egotistical opinion of themselves.

Both the immigrants from Russia and the immigrant from Ireland spoke of not having enough food to eat in their homeland. Such a state of affairs was beyond the comprehension of a child born and raised in an Ontario German Mennonite home where there was always plenty of food available.

As already stated I had only a younger sister in my family at this time. We played together as harmoniously as is possible when a younger child finds herself dominated by an older sister. However, in this extended family situation we both for the first time became subjected to male domination and boisterousness in our play which was quite distasteful to both of us at times. This experience no doubt prepared my sister and me for the rigours of family life with our three brothers who appeared on the scene sometime later.

Even as a child I noted some differences and some similarities in the family life of our guests and in that of our own family. In both families, the father definitely was the head of the house. He ulti-

mately made the final decisions. But the mother in the Pennsylvania German family seemed more free to voice her opinions pro and con on an issue (hoping, no doubt, to influence the father's decision), than did her counterpart in the Russian Mennonite family.

After our guest families were settled in their temporary homes throughout Waterloo County they began to search for their friends and other members of their families who had joined the migration. When they were located it was quite common for the host families to arrange an opportunity for their guests to visit each other.

I can recall one of these experiences quite vividly. Our guest family and our own family were invited to come to another home for Sunday dinner. In this home a farmer and his family lived in the main part of the house and had a young couple with several small children as their guests. His elderly parents lived in the "Doddy" house and they had an elderly Russian Mennonite couple billeted with them. On this particular Sunday the elderly Russian Mennonite couple also had visitors. A large table was extended in the huge farm kitchen. At dinner time it was loaded with food and we all sat down together to partake of a typical Pennsylvania German Mennonite Sunday dinner.

(to be concluded in the next issue)

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GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY

by Alf Redekopp

Queries

Bergen - I am seeking information on the family of David Bergen b. 9 June 1880 and died at Maidstone SK. David Bergen m. Maria Dyck (1881-1947). Maria Dyck was the daughter of Heinrich Dyck and Anna Wall. The Bergens had 12 children: Maria b. 1900, m. to Mr. Dinter (?); Anna b.d. 1901; Agatha b. 1903; Anna b. 1905; Helena b. 1907; David b. 1909; Justina b. 1910; Aganetha b. 1913; Minnie b. 1914; Katharina b.d. 1917; Martha b. 1920; Elizabeth b. 1923. Maria Dyck Bergen, I believe, has died in Saskatoon. Contact: Martha Martens, Box 101, Horndean, MB ROG OZO, ph. 204-829-3584.

Friesen/Dyck - I am seeking information on my great-grandparents (first name unknown) Friesen and Aganetha Dyck. They lived in Hamburg N. 3, Plujew, Gouvernment Ekaterinoslav, Russia in 1872, moved to Fürstenland about 1877, and then to Michaelsburg. They came to Schoenfeld, MB, in 1892 with children Henry H. (m. Katrina Hildebrand), Susie (m. Abram Neufeld), Annie (m. Peter Epp), Tina (m. John Andres), Agatha (unknown Peters), Agnes (m. George Wiebe) and Elizabeth (my grandmother, m. John Heppner, b. 18 July, 1893) at Schoenfeld, MB. The Friesen family moved to Waldheim, SK in 1894. Friesen died July, 1891. In 1900 Aganetha Friesen moved back to Manitoba. My grandparents Elizabeth Friesen and John Heppner had children Henry, Lizzie, Agnes (Nettie) my mother, and Annie. Then they moved to Waldheim where these children were born: Justina, Peter, George, Helen and Mary. Contact: Grace St. Jean, RR # Eleven, Peterborough, ON K9J 6Y3.

Kroeker - I am seeking information on Peter Kroeker who married Anganeta Bergen. Peter is thought to have been born in Schoenau in the Molotschna Colony and Anganeta in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony. They had a son named Peter Kroeker, born in Schoenau on 1 January 1857, and married to Maria Penner born 14 December 1853, birthplace unknown, but may have been Gnadenfeld, Molotschna. They came to Canada in 1924 and originally settled in Reesor, ON where Maria died in 1932. Peter moved to Black Creek, BC where he died in 1938. They had eight children, only four of whom

married: Maria Kroeker m. Heinrich Wiebe, Peter Kroeker m. Maria Wilims, Franz Kroeker m. Anna Mandtler and Heinrich Kroeker m. Elisabeth Bergen. Johann and Anganeta Kroeker never married and the other two did not survive infancy. Contact: Mary Loewen, 6405 Prince Albert St., Vancouver, BC V5W 3E7 or by E-mail 72163.401@compuserve.com.

Mandtler - I am seeking information on Gerhard Mandtler b. 15 September 1855, in Lindenau, Molotschna. He married Katharine Isaak b. 11 August 1860, in Lindenau and had a daughter, Anna Mandtler who married Franz Kroeker. Gerhard was a famous clockmaker in the Molotschna colony. Any information about ancestors, siblings or other offspring would be appreciated. Contact: Mary Loewen, 6405 Prince Albert St, Vancouver, BC V5W 3E7 or E-mail 72163.401@compuserve.com.

Wiebe - I am seeking information about the ancestors of Gerhard Wiebe m. to Aganetha Frienguth. Their son Gerhard Wiebe (1781-1848) m. Elizabeth Kroeker (1783-1844). Contact: Elsie Wiebe, #306-333 Garry Cres. NE, Calgary AB T2K 5W9.

Recent Books

Marianne Heinrichs Janzen. *Heinrichs Family Tree 1876-1994*. (Winnipeg, MB: Private publication, 1994) pb., 290 pp.

This book is about the children of Heinrich K. Heinrichs (1876-1919). These children lost their father on 19 October 1919, when at the age of 42 he became the first fatality at the hands of the Machnovze bandits in the village of Eichenfeld. This book combines an essay on Eichenfeld that the author wrote for a university course, with a collection of personal recollections from various writers, and articles about the Selbstschutz, famine and emigration, to give the reader a sense of what Russia was like between 1919 and

1923. Contact: Marianne Janzen, 308-2130 Main Street, Winnipeg, MB R2V 3E8.

Elsie Wiebe. *Wall Family Tree: The Descendants of Gerhard Wall (1840-1919) and Maria Dueckmann (1844-1914)* (Calgary, AB: Private publication, 1996) pb. 75 pp.

This book traces the history of the descendants of Gerhard Wall (1868-1931) and his siblings. Gerhard Wiebe (1868-1931) married Elizabeth Siemens (1868-1944) and lived in the Ufa region near Davlekanova. Some descendants came to Canada during the 1920s migration, others emigrated to Germany much later. The book includes numerous genealogical charts as well as the recollections of various family members. Contact: Elsie Wiebe, 306-333 Garry Cres. NE., Calgary, AB T2K 5W9.

Paul Peter Reimer. *The Life and Times of My Grand Children's Ancestors* (Vancouver, BC: Private publication, 1995) pb., 710 pp.

This book is the story of Paul Peter Reimer, born 1916 in Altona, Manitoba, and married to Isabelle Irene Raine (1920-1991) in 1944. This book contains the family history of the Reimer ancestors who migrated to Canada from Russia in 1874 and the Neufeld ancestors who came in 1891. It also recounts the Anglo-Saxon origin of Isabelle Raine, and the French Canadian ancestry of Paul's daughter-in-laws. The appendix includes numerous charts showing ancestors and descendants of the people discussed in the family history. Contact: Paul Reimer, 205 Earl Street, Tarpon Springs, FL USA 34689.

Regina H. Neufeld. *Descendants of Jacob S. and Katharina Hiebert* (Steinbach, MB: Private publication, 1993) pb., 208 pp.

This book contains a history of Jacob S. Hiebert (1833-1906) who was married first to Aganetha Dueck (1836-1874) and then to Katharina Hiebert (1855-1916). This family came to Canada in 1875 from the Bergthal Colony in Russia and settled near Niverville, Manitoba. The book includes many photographs, family registers with the vital statistics, and narration by various family members. Contact: Regina Neufeld, Box 60, Tourond, MB R0A 2G0.

Solomon L. Loewen (1898-1996)

It was with a mixture of sadness and gratefulness to God that we received the news of the passing away of Solomon L. Loewen of Hillsboro, Kansas in March of this year. He was a long-time genealogist and retired Tabor College professor who compiled the large volume in 1961 entitled *The Descendants of Isaak Loewen*.

Send inquiries to Alf Redekopp, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. E-mail: aredek@mbnet.mb.ca



Recent Grants for MHC

We are pleased to announce that the Mennonite Foundation of Canada has given a grant of \$2000.00 to the Mennonite Heritage Centre. It will go toward expenses for holding the CMC History Symposium in early July, 1997, Winnipeg.

A second grant for MHC has come from the Canadian Council of Archives. It provides \$1420.00 as a matching grant for the purchase of archives boxes.

These grants will help significantly assist us in programming for 1996-97. We are very grateful. We also thank all those who have sent other kinds of donation in 1996. Gifts are always welcome!

News Notes

*The publication of *Mennonites in Canada Vol. III* by Dr. Ted D. Regehr has been rescheduled for August, 1996. It will be "launched" in Saskatoon on September 7.

*Canada Day Celebrations will be held at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, MB on July 1, 1996. Gates open at 9 a.m. For further information call 1-204-326-9661.

*The Heritage Centre has recently received significant materials on the forestry camps for COs in Tsarist Russia. These include several hundred pages photocopied from the Zaporozhian Archives, 18 letters written (in Russian) from the Alt-Berdian forestry camp in 1916, and a number of lists of names of men in camps from 1892-1905.

*Janis Thiessen of Steinbach, MB won the prize given in the Grad School/Seminary division of the P.M. Friesen History Contest. Her paper was entitled "Working with Friesens: Labour Within a Mennonite Business, 1933-1945". It is a study of the D.W. Friesen Company of Altona, MB.

*On April 3 the East European Branch of the Manitoba Genealogical Society became an independent organization now

known as the East European Genealogical Society Inc. Its address is: Box 2536, Winnipeg, MB Canada R3C 4A7.



"Untitled (Shepard)" by Helene Dyck is one of the art works exhibited at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. Dyck was one of seven artists in the exhibit. The exhibit was prepared in conjunction with the Anabaptist Women Doing Theology Conference May 9-10. The exhibit closed on June 15.

Wanted

A copy of the book *The Great Trek of the Russian Mennonites to Central Asia* by Fred Belk. Please contact me if you have a book for sale. **Anna Johnston, 624 Shangri Lane, Sacramento, CA 95825 USA**

Invitation to Bergen Reunion

For all descendants of Isaac (1816-1888) and Helena (von Niessen) Bergen. Their children were Isaac, Anne, Helena, Jacob, David and Gerhard.

Dates: August 31 - Sept. 2, 1996

Place: Altona, MB

For further information contact:

Martha Martens, Box 101,
Horndean, MB R0G 0Z0.

Aussiedler Rediscover Menno Simons

by Karl Koop, MCC Germany

A recent gathering here to commemorate Menno Simons' birthday confirmed Aussiedlers' deepening interest in their roots.

Most of the 120 participants were Aussiedler, immigrants from the Soviet Union to Germany. And the gathering's chief organizers belong to the Alliance of Baptism-minded Congregations - a conference formed in 1989 to bring together Aussiedler of Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Baptist heritage from the former Soviet Union.

Many of the Aussiedler in attendance were born under Soviet communist rule and, before immigration, would have known little or nothing about their historical and theological roots. Most would never have heard of Menno Simons.

But at the March 14 to 17 gathering in this small town near Bielefeld, participants attended workshops, heard presentations on many aspects of Menno Simons' theology, and took part in animated discussions.

Since coming to Germany in the last ten to twenty years, the Aussiedler have rediscovered their roots and now read the works of Menno Simons and other Anabaptists with enthusiasm and fascination. They are already planning a conference commemorating Conrad Grebel's 500th anniversary for 1998.

Representatives from Canada, Paraguay, Russia and Kyrgyzstan also attended this 500th birthday celebration for Menno Simons.

For further info contact Jon Harder <hib@UCI.COM>

Note: Dr. George K. Epp of Winnipeg Manitoba also prepared several presentations for this conference. He tells us that Logos, also an Aussiedler organization, has published a series of booklets on Menno Simons.

Menno Simons
1996 500 YEARS



Northend MB Choir ca. 1924-25. Front row, middle - Milly Horch; second row, far left, Mandy Ross; second from left, Heinrich H. Neufeld (conductor); far right, Anna Thiessen; third row, middle, Bill Neufeld. (Readers are asked to submit information of anyone not identified). Photo: Courtesy of CMBS, Winnipeg, MB.

Early MB Membership Lists in St. Petersburg Archives

By John B. Toews

This article is excerpted from the original published in the March, 1996 issue of The California Mennonite Historical Bulletin. The actual lists are included there. See also Website <http://www.fresno.edu/cmhs/bulletin.htm>

The current microfilming project in the Russian imperial archives in St. Petersburg, spearheaded by St. Petersburg Christian University, promises a rich supply of documents for future historians and genealogists. The first microfilm reel received from St. Petersburg contained an unexpected surprise for researchers interested in the early years of Mennonite Brethren Church. On this reel were two membership lists for that group, the first compiled on 29 February 1860, and the second on 5 January 1861.

We have always known about some of the founding persons thanks to documents published by Franz Isaac and Peter M. Friesen¹. Our only knowledge of the other earliest Mennonite Brethren members, however, derives from the eighteen signatories to the secession document of 6 January, 1860, and the fifteen additional names attached to the 30 March letter addressed to the leadership of the Ohrloff and Halbstadt Mennonite congregations². These two documents account for all but one of the names-Johann Hubert of Wernersdorf, Molotschna, - compiled on

the newly-discovered list of 29 February 1860.

In the patriarchal fashion of the day, district officials listed only the male heads of families, but it seems reasonable to believe that their wives shared their convictions. The register, while containing mostly known names, nevertheless provides new perspective--the early Mennonite Brethren Church did not consist of 25 family heads, but of 130 persons, both male and female. Obviously there were other "mothers in Christ" like Katherine Reimer Claassen (the wife of Johann Claassen), some of whose letters were published by P. M. Friesen.³ We can only speculate what role the wives of Abraham Cornelsen, Dietrich Klassen or Jacob Reimer played in disciplining their large families to become the next generation of Mennonite Brethren.

The listing of 29 February 1860 clearly delineates the demographics of the early Mennonite Brethren movement. Most of the dissidents were concentrated in the southeastern villages along the Jushanlee River: Elisabeththal, Schardau, Marienthal, Rudnerweide and Pastwa. Three of the four families in Waldheim and Gnadenfeld are connected with Gottlieb Strauss. His two sons, Friedrich and Johann, signed the letter of 19 March 1860, while daughters Karolina and Wilhelmine married

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David Duerksen and Jacob Reimer respectively.⁴ "Outposts" like Liebenau and Wernersdorf had increased their numbers by 1861, but geographically the 1861 listing shows that the distribution of church members had changed little. Two villages--Grossweide, where the 6 January 1860 signatory Abraham Cornelsen relocated, and Sparrau--were added to the sphere of Mennonite Brethren influence. Rather astounding are the number of families in Rudnerweide by 1861.

The 1861 compiler specifically commented on seven single Mennonites joining the Brethren. He also found it significant that the new movement was causing family divisions: three men joined without their families, and a wife joined without her husband. In the case of Anna Penner, her son Bernhard--already a member in February 1860--obviously provided spiritual direction.

There are some unexplained omissions in the 1861 list. The original signatories Peter Stobbe, Jakob Wall and Martin Klassen, as well as the adherent Jakob Kroecker, are not mentioned.⁵ The omissions must have been an oversight on the part of the volost secretary. Peter Stobbe's signature appeared on several official Mennonite Brethren documents dating from 1860 to 1863. Jakob Wall⁶, Martin Klassen⁷, and Jakob Kroecker⁸ also continued to be active. The 1861 compilation should therefore list 34 families and 190 people.

These early Brethren listings possibly allow two further observations. First, the early Brethren functioned primarily in the context of village house churches which expanded very gradually. Second, the Brethren initially constituted a very small movement. Little wonder that district authorities tried to squelch the dissidents through civil law.

Endnotes

¹Franz Isaak, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte derselben* (Halbstadt, Russia, H.J.Braun Verlag, 1908), 174 ff.; Peter M. Friesen, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische*

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Evangelical Mennonite Brethren in Alberta: Bruderthaler or Mennonite Brethren?

by Abe Dueck

The first part of this article was printed in the March 1996 issue of the Mennonite Historian. This is the conclusion of Dueck's article.

The 1936 EMB conference met in the home of G. D. Huebert of Gem, who was one of two secretaries appointed by the conference.²⁰ Other delegates present included A. A. Toews (chair), G. Thielman (secretary) and Abram Martens. The first major item on the agenda was a discussion of the Bruderthaler conference in Meade, Kansas on 4-9 June 1936. The EMBs of Alberta had sent five delegates who travelled by automobile. G. D. Huebert had also visited the Northern District Conference (MB) sessions in Waldheim, Saskatchewan, and the Bruderthaler Church in Langham.

Various other issues were discussed at the conference. A. A. Toews reported that a group meeting in Yarrow, BC wished to join the Bruderthaler Conference.²¹ The conference in Meade, KS had expressed a willingness to accept the group. Furthermore, the Ontario MB Conference had sent its minutes to the Alberta Conference, thereby expressing its desire for close fellowship. The Alberta EMB Conference decided to reciprocate by sending their minutes to the Ontario conference. Finally, the Conference decided to meet at Linden in the following year (1937).

During this period, Alberta (and eventually, British Columbia) became a separate district (#5) of the Conference of Defenseless Mennonite Brethren in Christ.²² The 1935 *Yearbook* lists District No. 5 for the first time and includes a list of twelve ministers and deacons, all of whom were probably immigrants of the 1920s. Isaak N. Ediger of Winnipeg was also included in the list.²³ The others came from seven different Alberta localities. A. A. Toews was listed as the Superintendent of the district. The 1938 historical sketch by A. A. Toews of the EMB churches in the district indicated that there were members in various localities for a total of 160 members.²⁴ The small group at Gem worshipped with the MBs but it was not included in the Gem membership register. A group at Yarrow was under the leadership of Jakob Wittenberg.

The three Alberta MB conferences from 1936-38 were still listed as joint MB/

EMB conferences, although separate MB sessions were also held. But not everyone was comfortable with this arrangement. At the separate MB sessions in 1937, held in the EMB church in Linden, a representative of the Vauxhall church asked whether it wasn't time to end the relationship with the EMBs because of differences on certain issues such as baptism and the nature of the church (*Gemeindebau*). The subsequent discussions did not yield any resolution, but the delegation decided to devote an entire day to deliberation of the issue at the next conference. B. B. Janz was quoted as stating that he viewed the relationship be-



John R. Barkman, then a Bruderthaler school teacher in Swalwell who related to the Allianz and MB settlers, and also arranged for the visit of evangelist George P. Schulz. Photo: Courtesy of Leona Reimer, Kleefeld, MB.

tween the two groups as an interim one.²⁵

When the delegation undertook a discussion of the issue at the 1938 conference, nothing new emerged. The MB conference decided to continue to work co-operatively with the EMBs as it had done in the past. The 1938 conference, however, was the last one which was referred to as a joint MB/EMB conference. The 1939 minutes did not list any EMB delegates. This conference was held in Coaldale together with the Northern District Conference. This may have been a factor in determining the nature of the conference. The 1940 Alberta conference was again held in Coaldale because the

Vauxhall church had recently been burned by an arsonist. At this conference the EMB church indicated its intent to work independently on issues relating to relief work.

The final chapter with regard to the Namaka church came in 1941. Evidently working with the Bruderthaler (now officially known as EMB!) had proved to be less than ideal, particularly because the Alberta EMB churches were geographically too far removed from the majority of Bruderthaler churches. The Linden EMB church waited longer before it too decided to join the MB Conference. At the conference on 6 December 1947 in Coaldale it submitted its request to join and stated the following reasons:

1) It was geographically too far removed from the other congregations of the EMB Conference;

2) It was in close geographical proximity to the MB congregations in Alberta and was often served by brethren from those congregations;

3) It sought the healthy development of its members, particularly the youth.

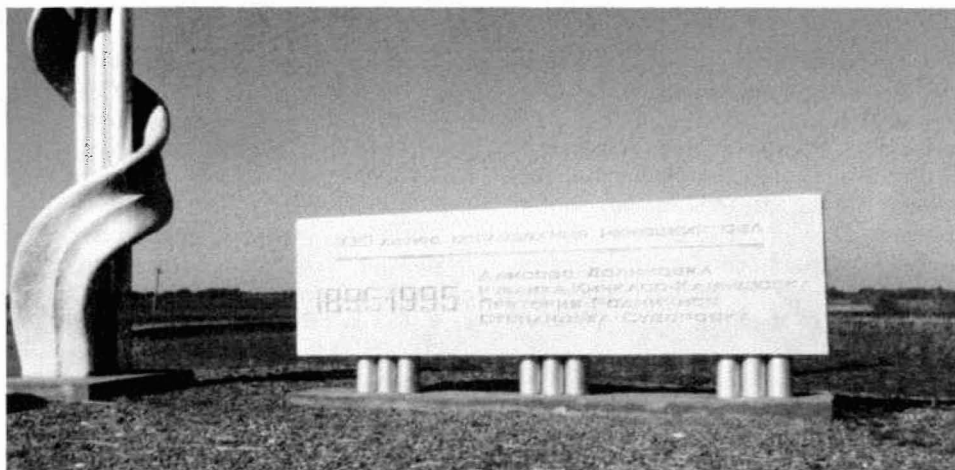
The conference unanimously agreed to accept the Linden church.

In the meantime, the Conference of Defenseless Mennonite Brethren in Christ had also evolved and changed. Ironically, in 1937 the Conference adopted the name, "Evangelical Mennonite Brethren in Christ" as their official name, even though they often continued to be referred to as "Bruderthaler."²⁶

To what extent did the Alberta EMB Conference play a role in this change of name? Calvin Redekop has suggested that the name was adopted "because of increasing education, and adoption of the English language and other changes."²⁷ The developments described above, however, suggest that the name "Evangelical Mennonite Brethren" was borrowed from the group of Russian immigrants of the 1920s which were already officially known as such. It must also be remembered that the modern North American evangelical movement, initially often referred to as "neo-evangelicalism," was a product of the 1940s and therefore could not have been a factor in prompting the change of name.

Ironically, it appears that the group of Russian Mennonites who were instrumental in the change of name from the "Defenseless Mennonite Brethren in Christ" to the "Evangelical Mennonite

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The sign erected in the Orenburg Mennonite settlement to commemorate the centennial of its existence in Russia (1895-1995). See the recent book by Karl Fast, *Orenburg die letzte mennonitische Ansiedlung in Osteuropa* (1995). It can be ordered from the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Photo; courtesy of Bill Schroeder, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Mennonite and Lutheran records in Tiegenhof (Prussia) and Josephsthal (Russia)

by Hilda Matsuo

Many genealogists are aware that Mennonites and Lutherans sometimes lived in close proximity in some areas of the world. This was true in Prussia-Poland, for example. This article will make readers more aware of sources where information on Mennonites is available in Lutheran records. We thank Hilda for making this item available. - The editors.

Lutheran records of baptisms in Tiegenhof, West Prussia (1784-1793) yield a total of 40 typically Mennonite names out of a total of 273 names. Out of the 571 birth/baptisms recorded during this period, just over 14% of the surnames are names which we in North America see as typical for Mennonites coming to this continent from Eastern Europe since the late 19th century. Similarly, in the Lutheran records of deaths in Tiegenhof, West Prussia (1784-1793), just under 17% of the surnames (37 out of 224 from a total of 440 entries) consist of "typical Mennonite names". For the next period (1794-1803) the incidence of these names goes up to 19%. It should be noted that these statistics include only Lutheran entries.

After 1793 it becomes more common for the Lutheran death records to indicate Mennonite entries. The name "Claasen", for instance, has five Mennonite death entries and four Lutheran entries between 1794 and 1803. In other words, some Mennonite vital statistics were kept by the Tiegenhof Lutheran Church. There would appear to have been an arrange-

ment between the two religious groups. For example, certain funds from Mennonites are noted at the time of the erection of a new Lutheran sanctuary in 1831-32. The funds for the building came from a number of sources such as 4000 taler from the government, 536 taler from Mennonites, 151.5 taler from other Lutherans from the towns of Platenhof, Tiegenhof and Petershagen, and the list continues.

Leaving West Prussia and going to Josephsthal, Jekaterinoslav, Russia, there are other surprises. Parish records for 1876 in Josephsthal show a fairly large number of Lutheran baptisms taking place in Chortitz on the first, second and third day of June, 76 persons in total. Except for a 19-year-old girl with the surname of "Schwarz", coming from a Baptist family; and two children from a Swedish family with surname "Müller", age 16 and 6, the rest of the baptismal candidates are infants. Among the infants baptized is Peter Martens whose father Peter is named as a Mennonite from Chortitz, but he and his wife are at the same time declared as both being Lutherans.

Note: We are aware that this situation existed also in the Molotschna area and we may have more on that later. *The editors.*

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EMBs in Alberta

(con't from page 6)

Brethren" was also the group that soon left the denomination to merge with fellow *Russlaender*, namely the MBs in Alberta. Their common experiences in the turmoil of the Revolution and its aftermath in Russia could not keep them apart from each other for long in their newly-adopted homeland.

Endnotes

²² BC Conference minutes refer to fellowship with the Brudertaler as early as 1934.

²³ Ediger was an Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (*Allianz*) minister, and one of the founding teachers of the Steinbach Bible Institute. He had joined the EMB church in Russia in 1905.

²⁴ Aron A. Toews, "Die Geschichte der Evangelischen Mennoniten Brüdergemeinde zu Namaka, Alberta, Canada, und ihre Stationen in Alberta bis zum 1. Januar 1938", in *A Historical Sketch of the Churches of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren [1889-1939]*, ed. by G.S. Rempel, et. al. (Rosthern, SK: D.H. Epp, n.d.), 14.

²⁵ *Protokolle, Buch I*, p. 221.

²⁶ Earlier (1889-1917) they had been known as the Conference of United Mennonite Brethren of North America.

²⁷ Calvin Redekop, "The Embarrassment of a Religious Tradition", *Mennonite Life*, 36, 3 (September, 1981), 18.

Early MB Membership Lists

(con't from page 5)

Brüderschaft in Russland 1789-1910 (Halbstadt, Russia: Raduga Verlag, 1911), 189 ff.

² P.M. Friesen, 198-199.

³ *Ibid.*, 313, 331, 355.

⁴ See Alan Peters, "Brotherhood and Family: Implications of Kinship in Mennonite Brethren History", in *P.M. Friesen and His History: Understanding Mennonite Brethren Beginnings*, ed. by Abraham Friesen, *Perspectives on Mennonite Life and Thought*, No. 2 (Fresno, CA: Center for MB Studies, 1979), 35-60. There has been some speculation that there were two Johann Strausses among the early Brethren. The 1860 and 1861 listings seem to suggest that there was only one. See James Urry, "The Social Background to the Emergence of the Mennonite Brethren in Nineteenth-Century Russia", *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 6 (1988): 27.

⁵ P.M. Friesen, 192, 199, 295, 337, 343, 364.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 192, 199, 202. See also John B. Toews, ed. and trans., "Mennonite Brethren Founders Relate Their Conversion", *Direction* 23 (Fall 1994): 31-37.

⁷ P.M. Friesen, 191, 199, 295, 338, 350.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 199, 295, 338, 343.

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Book Reviews

Rempel, John D. *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism* (Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1993), hdc., 271 pp., \$38.95. Klaassen, Walter, ed., *Anabaptism Revisited* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992), pb., 209 pp., \$22.75. Goossen, Walfried. *Anabaptism: A Dying Candle* (Winnipeg, MB: Henderson Books, 1994) pb., 80 pp., \$5.00.

Reviewed by Hans P. Werner

The above works represent three very different approaches to the question of the meaning of Anabaptism today. John Rempel concentrates on the way one's view of Christ relates to celebration of the Lord's Supper. He chooses three Anabaptists as representative of the theological positions of the 16th century - Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgrim Marpeck, and Dirk Philips. The depth and detail of Rempel's theological examination of the writings of these men makes reading the book a somewhat daunting project. Rempel examines the written legacy of the three church leaders and compares their views of Christ with those of their Anabaptist and Protestant opponents. For the student of history the rich historical background included in the study justifies the time required to plough through the more theoretical portions of the work.

Rempel's goals are theological rather than purely historical. His brief summary of how the theological positions of Hubmaier, Marpeck, and Philips worked themselves out in subsequent Mennonite church life leaves the historical reader wishing for some of the depth that pervades the theological discussion. Rempel comes to conclude that the depth of thought and reflections represented by the three theologians was largely ignored in subsequent church thought. Persecution and the general lack of explicit theology among Mennonites are cited as primary reasons for this omission until well into the 20th century.

The *Festschrift* edited by Walter Klaassen is also designed to rediscover the meaning of Anabaptism for the end of the 20th century. The eleven essays in the book are supplemented with a biographical sketch of Dr. C.J. Dyck in whose honour the work was published. The overall objective of the essays is to enrich and fill in the gaps in the origins of Anabaptist practices of baptism, the sacraments, conversion and others. Individual contribu-

tions in the volume admirably supplement earlier discussions of neglected issues and periods in Anabaptist history. Most noteworthy in this regard is the article by Sjouke Voolstra on the conversion controversy among the Waterlanders in Amsterdam. On the whole, however the collection lacks an identifiable connecting thread to engage the reader in revisiting Anabaptism of the 16th century, and relating it to modern Mennonite thought.

Walfried Goosen's discussion on returning to Anabaptist origins is a thoughtful critique of trends in modern Mennonitism. Goosen's historical treatment is somewhat broad in its scope and exhibits inconsistencies in its interpretation. In spite of the emotional tone of his arguments, an unmistakable yearning for the intensity of early Anabaptist confessions pervades his thoughts.

The three books reviewed here illustrate the continuing struggle to redefine the meaning of the 16th century experience for Mennonites of today.

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Book Notes

Family history continues to be a vital area of research and writing. Most readers will not yet have seen Peter and Therese Lohrenz's *Erinnerungen*, giving us a glimpse of their life in Russian tsarist times, the Soviet Union, and then later Germany (1995, private publication, pb., 160 pp). Order from the authors at Am Wulwer Esch 5a, D 49809 Lingen (Ems), Germany. *Sarah's Prairie* (1995, pb., 350 pp., \$14.99) is a novel based on a Mennonite family's experiences in coming to Manitoba from Ukraine. It is written by Delbert Plett of Steinbach, MB, and published by Windflower Communications of Winnipeg, MB. To order call 1-204-668-7475.

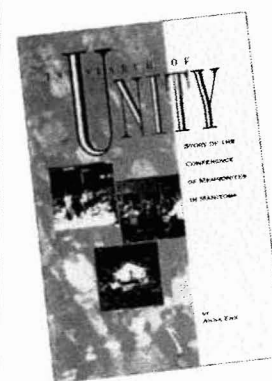
Arnie Neufeld of Winkler has written the story of his family, the Neufelds, in *Prairie Roots and Branches* (1995, Heritage Valley Publications, pb., 160 pp). It has a number of photographs. Order from: Heritage Valley Publications, Box 224, Winkler, MB R6W 4A5. Norman Fehr's autobiography is entitled *Homeward Bound and Family Bound* (1994, private publication, pb., 246 pp.) and is available from the author at RR1, C-2, PV Hgts., Armstrong, BC V0E 1B0. Some months ago the family of the late Dr. John G Doerksen

of Winnipeg released his autobiography *As I Remember: The Story of My Life* (1995, pb., 209 pp., \$12.00). Inquiries about the volume may be directed to Centre for MB Studies, 1-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5.

Turnstone Press has announced publication of several new volumes by writers of Mennonite background. One is Lois Braun's book *The Montreal Cats* (1995, pb., 226 pp., \$16.95), coming after her earlier books, *A Stone Watermelon* (1986), and *The Pumpkin Eater* (1990). The other volume is Patrick Friesen's *Blasphemer's Wheel* (1994, pb., 150 pp., \$12.95). All can be ordered from 607-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 1H3.

Collected papers of the late Dr. Reuben Goertz, published as *Princes, Potentates, and Plain People: The Saga of Germans from Russia*, was done by the Center for Western Studies at Augustana College of Sioux Falls, South Dakota (1994, pb., 232 pp., hdc. \$23.95, pb., \$13.95).

Some time ago the Heritage Centre received a copy of *Eden Mennonite Church: Chilliwack, British Columbia, 1945-1995* (1995, hdc., 208 pp, and well illustrated). The 50th anniversary volume is offered in thanksgiving for God's grace in sustaining the life and work of this congregation. Henry Wiehler served as chairman of the Publication Committee. One of our current MHC Heritage Committee members, Henry Rempel, belongs to this congregation.



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