

MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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These are Mennonite families from Ukraine/Russia who emigrated to Mexico in 1924-26. Most of them left the country after that, finding conditions for permanent settlement unsatisfactory. Photo: Courtesy of Abe and Hanna Rempel, Winnipeg, MB and Cuahatemoc, Mexico.

Amish Mennonites: Their Origins and Place in the Canadian Mennonite Mosaic

by Lorraine Roth

The 500th anniversary of the birth of Menno Simons may be a good time to become acquainted with the Amish wing of the Mennonite constituency. It has been said that the Amish are the ones who should carry Menno's name because they more closely follow his teachings than do most groups who are known by his name. Next to the Bible, the writings of Menno and the Dordrecht Confession of Faith are considered the cornerstones of Amish faith and practice.

Amish Origins

The Amish have their origins among the Anabaptists of Switzerland. They called themselves Swiss Brethren. The Anabaptists in Alsace, France¹, had formally accepted the Dordrecht Confession at a conference held in 1660. This confession contained articles on footwashing and the shunning of disciplined members. The Swiss Mennonites were not accustomed to either of these practices, but many of the Swiss refugees in Alsace began

taking them seriously.

Several years after the above-mentioned conference and the introduction of the Dutch confession, a young Swiss Mennonite minister by the name of Jacob Ammann visited the churches in Alsace. It has generally been asserted that Ammann taught his views on footwashing and shunning to the Alsations, but it may actually have been the other way around.

That Ammann became the champion of these practices is certainly true. He also found some congregations in Alsace who in his view, were compromising too much with the established Protestant churches. He also became concerned about the worldliness in dress, which at that time seems to have had to do particularly with the introduction of buttons as a means of fastening clothing. He was also concerned about the shaving habits of men.

In the late summer of 1693, Jacob Ammann made a preaching or consultation

tour in his native Switzerland. It has generally been assumed that Ammann had taken this tour entirely on his own initiative. However, it is more likely that he was representing a broader range of Alsatian congregations, and was not simply a self-appointed advocate of his personal views.

That Ammann was a willing representative of the practice of a stricter discipline and an effort to halt the inroads of the "worldliness" of the day, cannot be disputed. Correspondence surrounding the debates which took place in the late 17th century between the leaders of the factions which developed over the above issues, certainly places Ammann as the principal character espousing a stricter discipline².

That Ammann's name has been used to identify the conservative wing of the Swiss Brethren is then not surprising. It is nevertheless more likely that the term "Amish" or some variation thereof was applied to it by those outside the group and not from within it. In fact, the term Amish is more of an American phenomenon than European. The "Amish" who came to Canada were not accustomed to the term and some of them had not even heard it before they got to Waterloo County. In the Hesse area of Germany they were known simply as "Mennonit" or "Mennist." In Alsace and Lorraine they were known as Anabaptists. They usually thought of themselves simply as "Täufer" (Baptizers).

Since the "Amish" in Europe used the same terms to identify themselves as the Mennonites, how did one distinguish between the two? The most common terms used among themselves were the *Häfler* and the *Knöpfler*. The "Amish" who wore hooks and eyes to fasten their coats were called *Häfler*. The Mennonites who used the more fashionable buttons were called *Knöpfler*³. It is likely that terms such as "Ammansch" or some form of "Amish" were also used, but one never finds them in the formal documents. The term "Amish" is widely known in Europe today. That is due more though to the movie "The Witness" than learning from the historical context of the movement.

(cont'd on p.2)

The Amish Mennonite⁴ Experience in Europe

Mennonites first migrated to America in 1683, i.e. several years before the division among the Swiss Brethren took place. During the 1700s several thousand Mennonites came to America, but only a few hundred "Amish" were among them. Most of the Swiss who were sympathetic to the conservative movement left Switzerland to find asylum in Germany and France; they did not attempt to migrate to America. A few, however, did get as far as Holland, and remained a distinct congregation there for many years.

Throughout the 1700s, the Amish Mennonites established themselves in Alsace and Lorraine, in a few areas in Baden, east of the Rhine, in the Palatinate and as far north as Kassel in Hesse. Due to the devastation in central Europe caused by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), rulers were anxious to build up their territories, and Swiss immigrants were especially welcome. One ruling family in particular was tolerant of Anabaptists and sought them out as farmers on their various estates.

Such farmers would be asked to pay certain rents, supply the ruling household with a certain portion of the produce and maintain the herds and animals of the landlord, but would also be allowed to have and build up his own herd. If the rents were not too high, if the economy was good, and if the farmer was a good manager, life went tolerably well. On the other hand, if any of these elements was missing or went wrong, there could be problems.

Frequent wars and natural calamities usually kept the economy of Europe in shambles, and landlords were not any more lenient about rents in the 18th century than they are in the 20th. Hence, life in Europe was frequently difficult and sometimes intolerable.

The historical event which again changed the face of European life was the French Revolution. It certainly was a decisive factor in the life of the Anabaptists living in Alsace and Lorraine. Following the institution of the Republic in 1792, the last independent kingdoms in Alsace and Lorraine became French. The Anabaptists -- if they were willing to "promise" (instead of swear) allegiance to the Constitution -- gained full citizenship. The Constitutional Government

The Amish of Canada

Orland Gingerich



The work by Orland Gingerich was published in 1972. Lorraine Roth of Kitchener, ON, expects to publish additional data on the Amish of Canada in 1997.

had also been willing to grant them partial military exemption -- they could serve as unarmed teamsters. However, when Napoleon came to power, he armed the teamsters and adamantly refused to grant any military exemptions. His military exploits required many soldiers, and his influence spread to other parts of Europe.

Some Mennonites and Amish Mennonites moved to Bavaria in the early 1800s, but Napoleon's influence affected them there as well. The prince who had invited immigrants including Mennonites from Alsace and the Palatinate found favour with Napoleon, who crowned him King of Bavaria. The prince returned the favour to Napoleon by also demanding compulsory military service.

With this turn of events, the Amish Mennonites began looking to America to solve their dilemma. Several thousand left, beginning shortly before 1820 and continuing throughout most of the century. Many found their way to the American frontier, but a significant number came to Canada.

Amish Mennonite Migration to Canada

A number of Amish Mennonites had come to Canada. Shortly after 1800 they

came mostly to York County, from Somerset County in Pennsylvania. It is not known whether they tried to organize a congregation. If they did, it has not survived. A number of families returned to the United States, usually to Ohio, rather than Pennsylvania, and many of their descendants are members of Amish congregations today. Those who remained in York County assimilated with the general population.

The founding of a permanent Amish Mennonite settlement is attributed to the efforts of Christian Nafziger, who was born in the Palatinate but had immigrated to Bavaria. Nafziger left his family late in 1821, and sailed from Amsterdam to look for a place to which he could take his family and others of like faith. He landed in New Orleans, made his way up the Mississippi to Cincinnati and then east to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The Mennonites there told him to go to Canada to look for land. Mennonites had settled in the Niagara Peninsula as early as 1786, and others had gone to the interior on the Grand River, around 1800.

Nafziger and the Mennonites in Waterloo visited the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, and the Executive Council which was temporarily meeting at Niagara-on-the-Lake. The Mennonites had drafted a petition for land and had in mind the Crown Reserve just west of Waterloo, which is now Wilmot Township. Crown Reserves were being held in the hopes that their sale or rents would provide revenue for the government, but the settlers objected to these blocks of wild lands interspersed among the land which they were trying to settle. They impeded road building and harboured the foxes and wolves which preyed on their livestock.

Since the Reserves could not be released for settlement without royal assent, Maitland provided Nafziger with a letter of introduction for the Colonial Office in London. Nafziger returned to Pennsylvania and sailed from New York. He stopped in London where he visited the Colonial Office and is to have obtained, in writing, assurance that the Reserve would be available. According to the story circulated at the time of Nafziger's death some years later, he had also gone to see the King, who confirmed the negotiations already made, pressed a few gold coins into his hand, and wished him a good journey.

(to be concluded in the next issue)

GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY

by Alf Redekopp

Queries

Goerzen - Heinrich H. Goerzen (1832-?) and his wife Sarah Klassen (1835-1895) arrived in Canada in July 1875. They homesteaded in Osterwick, Manitoba. Children included Susanna (1859-?), Heinrich (1861-?) (from a first marriage with Eva Bergen), Peter (b. November, 1866) and Jakob (b. October 1871, d. 1919). Any information regarding the ancestors and descendants of this family will be appreciated. Contact: Duane Goertson, 7934 124 St. Surrey, BC V3W 3X6 or e-mail: duane.goertson@deepcove.bc.ca

Neustaedter - I am interested in all the descendants of Kornelius Neustaedter (October 16, 1831-May 10, 1903) first married to Helena Hildebrandt (d. January 9, 1862), and then married to Helena Hildebrandt (Aug. 30, 1841-May 26, 1903). I know of one son from each marriage, Peter Neustaedter from the first, and Abram Neustaedter (1864-1945) from the second. Did Kornelius Neustadter have more children born to either of the two Helena Hildebrandts? Contact: Herbert Peters, 1420 Faulkner Crescent, Saskatoon, SK S7L 3R4.

Recent Books

Clara Klassen. *Klassen Genealogy: From the Land of Revolution and War to the Land of Freedom and Peace* (Abbotsford, BC: Private publication, 1996) hdc., 636 pp.

This book contains the family history of the descendants of Gerhard Julius Klassen (1839-1920) and Anna Petkau (1841-?) who lived in the village of Burwalde, South Russia. The ancestry of this family is traced back to Julius Julius Klassen (d. 1798) and his wife Katharina Bergen (d. 1799) who settled in Burwalde. Compiled in a "scrapbook" fashion, with scores of photographs, anecdotal stories, and copies of documents from a variety of school, church and community life event, this books contains a large amount of family history information. Contact: Clara Klassen, 61-34959 Old Clayburn Road, Abbotsford, BC V2S 6W7.

Matthias H. Rauert/Annelie Kumpers-Grave. *Van der Smissen: Eine mennonitische Familie vor dem Hintergrund der Geschichte Altonas und Schleswig-Holstein* (Hamburg: Nord Magazin Verlagsges., 1992) hdc., 274 pp.

The Van der Smissen family played a significant role in the Mennonite church and community life in the Altona area at Hamburg, Germany. The family's origin traces back to 1576 when Gysbert I van der Smissen escaped Belgium during the Inquisition. Contact: Nord Magazin Verlagsges., Postfach 10 19 46, 2000 Hamburg 60 Germany.

New Genealogical Source

Grandma: Genealogical Registry and Database of Mennonite Ancestry Volume 1. (Fresno, CA: Genealogy Project Committee of the California Mennonite Historical Society, 1996) CD-ROM.

The CD-ROM contains a genealogical database of Low-German Mennonite ancestry, maps, church records for the Rosenort Mennonite Church in Prussia, and computer software useful for examining the contents of the CD.

The main genealogical database, named GRANDMA, contains over 135,000 persons organized into family groups. The ancestral lines of these persons can be traced to Mennonite communities in Poland and Russia. At this point, the database is strongest for Mennonite Brethren families whose ancestors came from Russia to the United States in the 1870s or 1880s. The CD includes files in the Brother's Keeper format (the preferred program of the producers), as well as files in GEDCOM format for import into other genealogical software programs preferred by the user. The main database requires 43 MB free space on the hard drive.

The installation instruction on the CD cover contain several significant errors, but if one follows the instructions in the various text files on the CD, the installation process is clear and happens smoothly. Included on the CD are copies of the shareware software such as Brother's Keeper Windows, Brother's Keeper DOS, GedTool, Image viewers and some utilities.

In addition to the main database, the CD also includes the source data files submitted by 12 contributors, as well as ship list indexes for over 14,000 names of Mennonites who arrived in the USA between 1872 and 1904.

This CD represents the first substantial item produced through the coordination and cooperation of genealogists to avoid the duplication of efforts. A second volume is already projected for early in 1997. Persons interested in ordering Volume One, or in becoming a contributor toward future

volumes, should contact: California Mennonite Historical Society, 4824 East Butler Avenue, Fresno, CA 93727-5097 or e-mail: kennrem@fresno.edu.

The 1789 Land Census of West Prussian Mennonites

by Adalbert Goertz

The oldest census of Mennonites in Prussia was taken in 1776 by order of King Frederick II. For most practical purposes it marks a barrier for most family researchers which is difficult to overcome. After King Frederick's death in 1786, his successor and nephew King Frederick William II was not nearly as tolerant as his great uncle.

Since the Prussian army was based on the landowners' resources in manpower and horsepower, and since the Mennonites were granted religious freedom and exemption from military service, it became increasingly worrisome to the military that Mennonites kept increasing their land holdings, thereby decreasing the military land base of what was called the canton system of conscription.

The new king agreed to the suggestion that land holdings of Mennonites be frozen, and issued the Edict of 1789 which regulated and limited Mennonite land ownership. Each land acquisition from non-Mennonites was made dependent on a special permit called a *Consens*. A *Consens* was not necessary for a Mennonite-to-Mennonite transfer or if the Mennonite purchaser would relinquish his military exemption *Privilegium*. Whether a *Consens* was granted or refused depended largely on local government recommendations and on how much land was sold by Mennonites to non-Mennonites.

From 1789 on, we have periodic land censuses up to 1868 when the Edict of 1789 was repealed. Some regional land censuses (1824, 1829, 1845) have been published in *Ostdeutsche Familienkunde*. Whether another land census called a *General-Nachweisung* (for 1802-1805?, 1824) exists, is uncertain, but possible.

Since these land census counted the land unavailable as a military resource, we find data only which pertain to the amount of land given in the units *Hufen*, *Morgen* and *Ruten*. One *Hufen* equals 16.8 hectares which
(cont'd on p. 7)

Send inquiries to Alf Redekopp, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4 or 169 Riverton Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5. E-mail: aredek@mbnet.mb.ca



CMC History Symposium

Plans for the CMC history symposium are shaping up. The dates will be July 2-3, 1997 and the sessions will be held together with the CMC summer sessions in Winnipeg.

Tentatively the program has been set up as follows:

Wednesday evening, July 2.

Adolf Ens, "Setting the Stage: 50 Years of CMC"; Jake Peters, "Concerns Reflected in Conference Resolutions after 1950"; Leo Driedger, "Peace and Social Concerns in the CMC"; Ted Regehr, "The Influence of WWII on CMC".

Thursday morning, July 3 (jointly with Ministers and Deacons session)

Henry Poettcker, "Policy Changes and Developments in Leadership Patterns"; Esther Patkau, "Women's Ministries in CMC - the past 50 years"; Helmut Harder, "Theology and Practice in CMC"; David Schroeder, "Development of Youth Ministries".

Thursday afternoon, July 3

John Funk, "The Changing Role of Theology in Native Ministries"; John Friesen, "CMBC - 1947-1997: An Insider's View"; TBA, "Development of Christian Education in CMC"; Sam Steiner, "The Formation of MCEC - 50 Years".

More information will be shared in the near future. We hope you are planning to attend.

Thanks to Donors

We owe a special word of thanks, we feel, to thirty five or more donors who have contributed under the Friends of the Archives support program in 1996. These are persons or groups who have committed themselves to a minimum contribution of \$100.00 per year for at least five consecutive years.

As well we want to note the contribution of many others to the general budget, and to special projects related to procuring

Director of Mennonite Heritage Centre

The Heritage Committee of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada invites applications for the position of Director of Mennonite Heritage Centre.

Degree in archival studies expected; additional training in history desirable. Familiarity with Mennonite history, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and the German language are assets.

Apply by Feb. 28, 1997 to:

Paul Friesen, Heritage Committee
600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
Telephone: 204-888-6781 Fax: 204-831-5675
E-mail: cmbclib@mbnet.mb.ca

documents in the former Soviet Union.

Total contributions from individual and corporate donors may total as high as \$13,000.00 for 1996. This is very significant for making the CMC heritage program possible. Thank you again.

Grants Received

The Heritage Centre was significantly helped by a grant of \$1420.00 given by the Canadian Council of Archives for the purchase of archival boxes needed to deposit materials permanently.

Both the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada and the Bote committee have given \$500.00 grants to help archive recent larger deposits of their office files. This work is to be completed in 1997.

A CMBC Careerstart grant was shared with the Heritage Centre as aid to hire student help for the summer. Claudia Fast was available for that work.

The contribution of the CMBC student employment program gave us some recent part-time help as well. Maren Kliever and Leah Bueckert were involved at the archives during the fall term.

These contributions are much appreciated and we welcome those who may wish to become a participant of the work of the Heritage Centre in some way.

News Notes

The Heritage Centre relates to and consults with, various other heritage organizations. This activity is reflected in these notes.

* The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada has completed all its provincial "launches" for *Mennonites in Canada Vol. III*. About 1000 copies of the book have been sold by the Society so far. Boxed sets of all

three volumes are now available. Cost: \$69.95 CAN plus shipping. Order from the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg.

* The binational Mennonite historical conference featuring *Mennonites in Canada* and *The Mennonite Experience in America*, and scheduled for October, 1997, in B.C. has been postponed. Further information will be available shortly.

* A number of presentations given at the November 15 *Mennonites in Canada* symposium held at the University of Winnipeg in Winnipeg, will be appearing in the next (early 1997) issue of *Journal of Mennonite Studies* published by the U of W Chair of Mennonite Studies. Dr. Royden Loewen, holder of the Chair, currently edits the Journal.

* A conference featuring the theme "Every Day Mennonite Life in the Werder" will be held on June 7-8, 1997, in Novy Dwor (formerly Tiegendorf) not far from Gdansk (formerly Danzig) in northern Poland. Thought is being given to planning a tour of Central and Eastern Europe that will give opportunity to take in this conference. If interested contact the Mennonite Heritage Centre as soon as possible (ph. 1-204-888-6781, or fax 1-204-831-5675).



Assembly 13 Gathered of the Mennonite World Conference will meet in Calcutta, India, in the week of January 6 - 12, 1997. The November 26, 1996, issue of *The Mennonite* provides further information. Published proceeds of all the earlier conferences from 1925 - 1990 can be obtained from the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

Volunteers and Other Staff

The work at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, as at many similar institutions, depends heavily on the work of volunteers. A number of individuals have contributed substantially to various tasks and projects at CMBS over a longer period of time.

William Schroeder, a retired school teacher and librarian, has contributed his services for one day per week for many years. He has helped with tasks such as mailing of the **Mennonite Historian**, labeling and reshelving books that have been recatalogued, copying various documents, making copies of photographs and many other miscellaneous tasks.

William Schroeder, former teacher at Winkler Bible School and Assistant Editor of the **Mennonitische Rundschau**, has helped with describing and filing various archival documents, proofreading, translating, etc.

Gertrude Klassen is another long-time volunteer at the Centre. She comes in periodically to file congregational bulletins as well as obituaries. The obituaries are primarily those which are published in the **Mennonitische Rundschau** and the **Mennonite Brethren Herald**.

Another regular at the Centre is Walter Regehr. Walter has been working at the translation of a large volume of primary sources from the Russian Mennonite experience. These were published in the original German language in *The Mennonites in Russia from 1917 to 1930: Selected Documents*, edited by John B. Toews (1975). An initial draft of the translation is almost complete. No decision has yet been made with regard to possible publication. Walter has also helped from time to time with various other tasks at the Centre.

In addition to regular staff (Alf Redekopp--Archivist; Abe Dueck--Director), one other individual has worked part-time in recataloguing and computerization of the holdings in the J.A. Toews Historical Library. Tamara Dyck has completed a significant amount of the work related to this project.

Mennonitische Rundschau Indexing

Considerable progress has recently been made in preparing Volume VI of the **Mennonitische Rundschau Index**. This volume will cover the material from 1930 to 1939. The initial work on this period was done prior to the work on Volumes I to III, but was left



Bill Schroeder, one of the volunteers at CMBS. Photo: Courtesy of Centre for MB Studies.

incomplete. No work has as yet been done on the period from 1910 to 1919 which would constitute Volume IV. It is anticipated that Volume VI may be published in 1997.

Personal Papers Redescription Project

Alvina Block continues to work on the Personal Papers Redescription Project which is being funded by a Control of Holdings Grant in the amount of almost \$6,000 from the Canadian Council of Archives.



Alfred Bergmann (left) with Pitschelder, a Tyrolean prisoner of war in 1946. Photo: Courtesy of Irma Foth, Winnipeg, MB.

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The German Prisoners of War Story

by Irma Foth

During the World War II a total of 26 major military prisons which eventually housed almost 34,000 prisoners of war were opened in Canada. The largest of these was the one in Lethbridge which at one time had 17,000 prisoners of war. A previous article in the Mennonite Historian (March 1996) featured some experiences of Mennonites in the Coaldale area with these prisoners of war.

In response to that article, Irma Foth of Winnipeg sent us a brief description and some photographs of similar experiences with German and Austrian prisoners of war in the Glenlea area of Manitoba where another smaller camp was established. Reader's responses are always welcome. Abe Dueck, co-editor.

In the late summer of 1945 (46?) a prisoner of war camp was set up near St. Agathe, MB, a few miles south of Glenlea. About twenty Mennonite farmers resided in this area. Jacob Pankratz taught at Cartier School and also served as a lay minister in the Glenlea Mennonite Church. His son Rudy(?) worked with a road gang on Highway #75. As he ate his lunch on the side of the road, he saw several German POWs eating on the other side of the ditch. They were being guarded by a Canadian soldier.

Young Pankratz, who spoke German fluently, struck up a conversation with these men, and they told him about their life as prisoners. They had been sent to Manitoba from Alberta to help with the harvest. They were treated humanely, but their rations were very inadequate leaving them on the verge of malnutrition. Some of these men had been prisoners since the African campaign in 1940.

Rudy told his father about the plight of these men. Mr. Pankratz at once mobilized his friends and neighbours, even asking a Mennonite grocery store owner Riediger of Winnipeg for help. Some of these groceries

(Cont'd on page 6)

A Chortitza Dissident and the Old Church: An 1855 Letter

Translated with notes by John B. Toews

In 1853 a quietistic revival began in the village of Neu-Kronsweide which had a significant impact upon the Chortitza settlement. The regional elder (*Aeltester*) Jacob Hildebrand apparently welcomed the renewal. In the words of his son Cornelius the movement "illuminated the churches like the dawn of a new day."¹ Unfortunately we know little about the discussions and tensions which preceded the 1860 emergence of the Brethren Church in Einlage, Chortitza.

A small clue as to when the tensions arose can be found in a letter preserved in the files of the Department for Foreign Religions in the St. Petersburg Imperial Archives. The identity of the sender or addressee cannot be established. The person referred to as, "brother Neufeld", can probably be identified. The two leading ministers of the Einlage Brethren were Abraham Unger and Heinrich Neufeld.² Both were subject to police investigation, arrest, and seven-week imprisonment. Somewhat later Neufeld was persuaded to join the so-called "exuberance movement" (Hüpfen) spearheaded by Gerhard Wieler. This caused a serious split among the Einlage Brethren.

By mid-1855 Neufeld was obviously agitating against the Old Church and its structure. The letter writer Franz identifies him as a "reformer". While he shows pastoral love and concern on the one hand, Franz also exudes the rigidity of tradition which had come to characterize Mennonite life and faith in the Ukraine. If dialogue was still going on in 1855, the impatience of both Neufeld and his opponents was already in evidence.

St. Petersburg
June 30, 1855

Mr. Johan Friesen in Einlage

My dear friend and brother in the Lord!

My heartfelt thanks for your kind letter of April 15, which I received recently. It naturally made me sad and I prayed. "Remember, O Lord, what has happened to us, look and see our disgrace." Lamentations 5:1 (NIV)

How I wish that dear brother Neufeld had not allowed himself to be so completely drawn into the matter. We disciples of Christ have been shown and taught another way in

Matthew 5:39 and Romans 13:2. If brother Neufeld were an elected and ordained Mennonite elder and leader his office would have demanded that he uphold Mennonite order against the dissidents. Since he is a subordinate he should not have rebelled against the elders and leaders, but remained quiet and submissive. If attempts at reconciliation can't accomplish anything, if his conscience finds it impossible to submit to the directives of the ruling elders - then he should think of separating from the Mennonites and joining another group. If he wishes to remain a Mennonite it is his civic duty to submit to the rules and regulations of the elders and leaders. He should not oppose the laws, arrangements and conventions of the Mennonites as well as the established order of faith, but declare his approval. Should his conscience not allow this, he is free to leave this society/community (*Gesellschaft*) with its regulations, teachings and customs.

As a reformer he does not have the right to rebel and resist the elder in charge or to organize a group against him - even if the elders were dealing more severely with them. Whoever wants to remain a Mennonite must submit to the elders and obediently do their bidding. After all everyone is free to select whatever order he wishes. Once he has made the choice he must live with it. Our Lord took upon himself the human condition. Matthew 11:29-30 tells us that our Lord also offers us a yoke. As long as our dear Neufeld wants to remain among the Mennonites he must like one of the quiet in the land submit himself to human regulations in all he does.

May he be a true disciple of Jesus in his heart and in all his aspirations. Let him be focused on the Word, let him be in prayer to the Lord his Saviour, let him keep peace with all. Tell him this and remind him of my love for him. Plead with him not to take yokes upon himself that are not in keeping with the Gospel but rather contradict them. If he cannot fellowship with us he should read the Holy Scriptures with a friend, take them (the Scriptures) to heart, pray and exercise brotherly love. I think that is what our dear Lord would want us to do. His thoughts and ways; His training and teaching are far wiser and more beneficial than ours.

Franz, Minister in St. Petersburg

Endnotes

¹ Cornelius Hildebrand, "Aus der Kronsweider Erweckungszeit". *Der Botschafter*, VIII (1913), No. 9, p. 2.

² On Heinrich Neufeld see P.M. Friesen, *Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland* (Halbstadt, Taurien: Raduga, 1911) pp. 264-280.

John B. Toews is currently Professor of Church History at Regent College, Vancouver, B.C.

The German Prisoners of War Story (cont'd from p.5)

were smuggled into the camp, some taken to the officer in charge. I know of a group of ladies who baked pastries and sent them to the camp.

At first there was to be no communication between the POWs and the Canadian populace. Then they were sent to farmers in small groups under a guard, returning to the camp at night. Later they were put up by farmers and stayed several weeks. It was a very rainy fall and they had to work in the soggy beet fields without proper footwear.

The farmers paid wages to the authorities for the work, but they were not to pay the prisoners. Stull, most farmers tried to do something for these unfortunates. I know of one farmer who borrowed money from the bank and sent the families of the two prisoners who worked for him, some CARE parcels. They cost \$15.00 each at that time.

My brothers employed several men, Leo Baur, Paul Heese, Pitscheider, Lampert, and Fischeregger. They were appreciative of anything that was done for them. My sister-in-law, Justina Bergmann, asked them once whether they would like some special food that would taste like their home meals. They asked for pancakes. One of them said that most likely he would never again in his life eat anything as delicious.

One young man, a 19-year-old when captured, was an artist. He painted a portrait of my niece, a one-year-old. Later, he sent us several beautiful paintings from his home in the Tyrol (now Italy). I still cherish these paintings.

Several prisoners attended Mennonite church services, although most were Catholics. My family stayed in touch with several of these men for years. They had become friends - in a time of hopelessness the Christian love which the Mennonites gave them must have been like an oasis in the desert of hate and rejection.

MEXICO MENNONITES - 75 YEARS -

In August, 1997, the Mennonites of Mexico will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of their coming to that country in 1922. Contact Abe Warkentin, *Mennonitische Post*, for further information (ph. 1-204-326-6790).

The 1789 Land Census

(con't from p. 3)

equals about 41 acres which equals 30 *Morgen*, and one *Morgen* equals 300 *Ruten* (square rods).

This census contrasts with the 1776 census which has nothing to do with land ownership and which counts Mennonite family members. Since it was the land in Mennonite hands which was counted and recorded it is not surprising that we find Mennonites who were counted more than once when they owned two (or more?) plots of land. Moreover it is not obvious whether two or more names mean different individuals or the same person holding more than one piece of land. If the locations associated with the same Mennonite name are close together, we can assume that we are dealing with the same individual. If the locations are far apart, we are probably dealing with different individuals.

Since the legal status regarding land ownership of Mennonites in the western parts of the kingdom (i.e. Rhineland, Krefeld, Koblenz) was different from that in West Prussia, we do not find similar censuses of Mennonites there. Mennonites were not permitted to own any land; they were all *Paechter* (tenants).

The data of the 1789 land census has been transcribed from a microfilm obtained from the Prussian archives at Merseburg. These records have since been transferred from Merseburg to Berlin and have the *Signatur*: II. HA. Gen. Dir. Abt.9. Westpreussen. Materien. Tit.109, No.1: *Mennonitensachen* vol.2, 1787-1798, 389 *Blatt*, *Auswanderung*, *Grundstücke* etc.: Ad Nr.1: vol.2: *General-Nachweisung von den in dem Marienwerderschen Dept. befindlichen Mennonistischen Besitzungen, seit wann und wie dieselbigen die Grundstuecke besitzen und was für Abgaben zu den Kirchen* etc., de anno 1789.

This transcription of the 139 pages contains 2443 name entries. Since, according to official Prussian census figures, there were 2207 *possessionierte* Mennonites in West Prussia in 1789, we must conclude that the

excess numbers in this listing are duplicate name entries. The full listing and index is accessible at the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society website: <http://www.infobahn.mb.ca/mmhs/mmhsngen.htm>.

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Book Reviews

(Cont'd from page 8)

Like all of us, Peter Koop was influenced by the times and circumstances in which he grew up. Experiences during the Russian Revolution, both world wars, depression in the 1930s, poverty in adult life resettlement and new blessings in a new land, retirement and old age and the death of loved ones had a profound impact on him and his family. Yet through all aspects of life, he remained a man of faith and courage. This is a sensitive and well-documented record of one family's dedication and faithfulness in dealing with the struggles of life.

Based on her ten-year struggle with breast cancer, Heidi Koop also offers her readers a well-documented and very personal look into our complex medical system which has long since abandoned its honourable objectives and ethics. *Surviving the Medical Maze* tells the story of being caught in a medical maze, a "no-man's land", as she calls it, powerless to deal with the forces of the medical system at a time when she was most vulnerable and needy. She also tells of learning to meet these challenges with the help of others who provided her with the necessary means.

This is a story of neglect - neglect on the part of the surgeon to provide adequate information, to consider alternate treatments besides chemotherapy and radiation and total disregard for the patient's wishes. The resulting harm from the faulty biopsy meant that the cancer soon spread to the lymphatic system and to other vital organs. It also meant cruel treatments and unbearable side-effects. In her efforts to seek and maintain a quality life, Heidi Koop reaped humiliation and endless unnecessary suffering from a medical system that cannot look beyond their own pocket books and "scientific" process.

This book will be of interest to readers who can identify with Heidi Koop's experiences - those who are currently at the mercy of our medical system. It was written to draw attention to a need for people to make informed personal healthcare decisions, to be aware of options available to them, and to exercise their freedom of choice in doing so. Most importantly, this work was written

for those persons in positions of power who will hopefully use their power to facilitate the implementation of viable medical alternatives.

Copies of these books may be obtained by contacting the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Helga Dyck resides in Winnipeg where she has worked in the Institute of Humanities at the University of Manitoba.

Kutz, Jacob A. and Ingrid Harder. *My Life in the Ukraine & Canada as I Remember it* (Peterborough, ON: 1996) pb., 69 pp.

Reviewed by Alf Redekopp

J.A. Kutz, treasurer of the Ontario Mennonite MB Conference for 30 years, can tell a very unique story. Kutz may well have been one of the first Ukrainians living near the Mennonites in South Russia to become a Mennonite. He writes, "All my ancestors belonged to the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church. I was baptized as an infant. Later, when I joined the Mennonite Church in 1919, I was baptized by sprinkling, and when I joined the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church in 1927 I was baptized by immersion (p.13).

Kutz gives us a view of life around the village of Mariawohl, Molotschna, where for four generations members of his family worked as Ukrainian herdmen tending village livestock in the common pasture. Not being a Mennonite living in a Mennonite village meant that his father had to get permission from the Orthodox priest for Jacob to attend the village school in Mariawohl. Although permission was not granted, his father enrolled him anyway.

In his home Ukraine was spoken, on the street, Low German was the vernacular. After completing the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*, Kutz entered the Mennonite Business School in Halbstadt.

The story progresses chronologically through Kutz's life in Russia, including an arrest and imprisonment in 1921, emigrating to Canada in 1926, struggles of survival in the West and finally settling in Kitchener in 1927, where he began his own business as a barber.

The booklet has been prepared by Kutz's granddaughter from written notes, taped interviews and videotapes in which Kutz shared his story. Readers should find the story interesting because of its unique perspective.

Book Reviews

Regehr, T. D. *Mennonites in Canada 1939 - 1970: A People Transformed* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1996), hdc., xxi, 583 pp., \$29.95.

Reviewed by John H. Redekop

This long-awaited volume of *Mennonites in Canada*, the sequel to Frank H. Epp's classic two volumes which appeared in 1974 and 1982, has been worth the wait. Ted Regehr has produced a major work which will doubtless achieve a well-deserved readership.

One can point to numerous general strengths. Impressive research and careful scholarship combine with a highly readable style to make the volume suitable for the average lay reader as well as the advanced specialist. Rank and file Mennonites and even readers with no knowledge about Mennonites will have no difficulty following the descriptions, explanations and analysis. The author appropriately balances the general with the particular, the local with the national and the negative with the positive. Human interest stories and effective use of words and phrases significantly enhance the account. The relative emphasis given to the various groups of Mennonites is fair and the overall arrangement of the material both clear and logical.

Several additional strengths should be noted. Regehr has adroitly set the Canadian Mennonite experience in both the larger Canadian as well as international contexts. The Personal Prologue, with its honesty, candour and biographical anecdotes, adds an important dimension. The cross-referencing of end notes to pages greatly facilitates the checking of sources. The Bibliographical Essay and the fine index, though short on the listing of concepts, constitute useful aids as do the several appendices and the fifteen pages of photos. While the treatment is generally impressive, the analysis of alternative service, of issues relating to World War II and war and peace generally, and of urbanization struck me as especially insightful.

The question of relative emphasis is always a difficult one in a work of such breadth and scope. Difficult decisions must be made. Even so, I wondered about some of the choices. From this reader's perspective insufficient attention was given to some crucial areas. Aside from the excellent analysis of church music, not enough was said about the changes affecting the churches. Were preachers preaching new kinds of sermons? Had the heavy emphasis on

prophecy abated? Were young people remaining faithful to the churches? Had the role of the church changed?

Similarly, given the fundamental shift from agriculture to trades, professions and business, a more extensive discussion of both the short-term and the long-term consequences would have been warranted. Also, the whole realm of politics was virtually neglected. An analysis of the massive impact of the Far Right on Mennonite political thought and behaviour in Canada and at least minimal treatment of the sudden shift to political involvement in Canada would have enhanced this volume. After all, between 1940 and 1969, 63 Mennonites were candidates in federal elections in Canada and 107 were candidates for seats in provincial legislatures. Thirty five Mennonite candidates were elected, many to cabinet positions. Such a massive transition, politically, is worthy of comment. Space for such additions might have been made available by virtually eliminating, if need be, the discussion of Dr. Spock, by drastically reducing the discussion on B.C. berries, and by spending a little less time on the *Canadian Mennonite*, important as that paper obviously was.

My main query about relative emphases, however, is more basic. The author generally defines Mennonites as a religious group - virtually all of the comparisons seem to assume such a definition - yet, according to my calculations, about half of the material deals with ethnic matters. No explanation is given for this emphasis. Indeed, one looks in vain for a clear discussion of how Mennonites should be viewed. Are the Mennonites an ethno-religious group? Are they mainly a religious denomination? Are they mainly an ethnic group? If Mennonites are mainly a religious group, then why spend so many chapters dealing with agriculture, economic pursuits, arts and literature, and other sociological concerns? A discussion of Baptists, Pentecostals, or the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church would likely not have included such discussions.

Early rumours suggested that this book contained an anti-evangelical bias. In general I found the author's treatment of this aspect fair and reasonable, although clearly not overly sympathetic. In a few instances more objectivity might have been prudent. Rural "theological formulations" are called "simplistic" (p. 182), Biblical events are called "tales" (p. 230) and missionary efforts to win converts described as "intrusive" (pp.329,355).

Some assertions may deserve rethinking or at least modification. Are Mennonites ethnic Germans (pp. 79-80) or not (pp. 89,232)? Did all Mennonite berry and tree-fruit

farming in British Columbia "collapse", or only part of the raspberry and strawberry production? In my listening to many of George Brunk's revival sermons in the 1950s I did not conclude that "severe criticism of the established Mennonite churches was an essential part of his message" (p.210). The assertion that "anti-sex attitudes are deeply engrained in Christian theology" seems to be too sweeping an indictment (p.213). And to say that "Frank Epp was an enthusiastic supporter of North American evangelism" (p.405), even with some subsequent qualification, seems to overstate the point. Also the brief comment on page 17, about how the Mennonite Brethren church got started is more accurate than the later explanation about a division of the Mennonite church in Russia.

Some spelling, composition and grammatical errors will presumably be corrected in the next printing. It struck the reviewer as humorous to read about "military supervision by conscientious objectors" (p.50). A few factual errors (e.g. description of the role of the Conference of Mennonites in B.C. in founding the MEI) also need attention.

In sum Regehr has produced an outstanding account of a people who were indeed, transformed, who, in the main, experienced accommodation rather than assimilation, and who, despite the pressures of urbanization, prosperity, and modernity, generally still held firmly to most of the Anabaptist-Mennonite values which make Mennonites in Canada a distinctive, significant and interesting minority.

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Koop, A.E. Heidi. *Peter: A Man of Stamina and Courage* (Winnipeg, MB: 1993) pb., 181 pp., \$20.00.

Surviving the Medical Maze (Winnipeg, MB: 1996), pb., 152 pp., \$15.00.

Reviewed by Helga Dyck

In *Stamina and Courage*, Heidi Koop relates the story of the life of her father, Peter H. Koop, from the early years in Russia (1903) to his death in Winnipeg, in 1990. Much of the book is based on the unpublished memoirs of her father (*Der kleine Künstler*, completed by Peter H. Koop in 1979). The latter chapters are based on various writings and notations, and stories told by word of mouth. It also contains interesting photos and other illustrations.

(Cont'd on p.7)