

HERITAGE POSTING

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West Reserve Street Village Design and Architecture



Suderman residence in Reinland. An example of a house-barn architecture originating in northern Europe. A photo of the late 1960s. Photo credit: Harold Funk



The original stand of trees on the Neuberghthal street is well preserved. This was a typical feature of the street villages of the West Reserve. A photo of the late 1960s. Photo credit: Harold Funk



Residences: 1. Ens 2. Peters 3. Suderman
4. Meetinghouse; 5. School:

A typical street village layout: Reinland - aerial view. Photo credit: Harold Funk



Detail of barn construction. Note the fitting and lack of nails. This was typical of the late 19th century architecture in the street villages of the West Reserve. Photo credit: Harold Funk

These photos depict the architecture and layout of a street village in the West Reserve when the Mennonites first arrived in the 1870s.

Today there needs to be a concerted effort to arrest their deterioration and disappearance.

The Sommerfeld Mennonite Church

by Jake E. Peters

In the late 1870s and early 1880s over half of the Bergthal people who had settled in Manitoba moved from the East to the West Reserve. By 1882 they had a functioning Gemeinde led by Ältester Johann Funk. Fairly quickly, it became clear however that Funk's agenda departed from accepted Bergthaler practice and teaching.¹

To the East Reserve Ältester David Stoesz it seemed the division was related to higher education. Also very significant were Funk's emphases on personal conversion and foreign missions.² It should be noted that the new school in Gretna functioned under Wilhelm Rempel's leadership in 1889-1890 with greater than expected public support and without precipitating a church split. Internal differences only hardened into a formal division after H.H. Ewert from Kansas was recruited (with Manitoba Government assistance) to come and head the school.

From the fall of 1891 until March 1894 the majority who were no longer willing to put up with Funk were served by Ältester David Stoesz with communion and baptism. Abraham Doerksen (Ältester, 1894-1922) oversaw the rebuilding of the church and its extension into Saskatchewan and Alberta. A variety of educational issues plagued the church. A significant number of Sommerfelder children were affected when the Roblin government passed a law in 1907 requiring all public schools to fly the Union Jack. Many schools returned to the private system. In 1916 the Norris government passed a law requiring all children to attend public schools. This led to a further reversion to private schools, but the government did not permit this and proceeded to set up public schools in the communities and fine parents whose children did not attend.

The result of these difficulties was that about 600 Sommerfelder people emigrated to Mexico and another 357 emigrated to Paraguay in the 1920s. The remaining members adapted as well as they could to the new realities. A new Ältester, Heinrich J. Friesen, was elected since Abraham Doerksen had chosen to emigrate.

The 1930s confronted the church with another round of revivalism. Four ministers were strongly affected by evangelistic meetings held in the Reinfeld-Winkler areas in February 1934 and eventually proceeded to form their own Rudnerweider Gemeinde.

The experience of sending their younger men to CO work under government control during World War II and the sense of the world encroaching on the church led some 564 people to emigrate to Paraguay in 1948.

The late 1950s saw another split where the most conservative element left the church. Ironically the stresses after the war, and the Paraguay emigration, brought the church to its lowest ebb, where it had a bare 2,000 members. However, it also created an environment that was less contentious. It was now possible to build a viable community, committed to a life of discipleship and to embark on a program of gradual reform as the brotherhood saw fit; Ältester Johann A. Friesen oversaw this process from 1955 until his retirement in 1993.

The Sommerfeld Church has been misunderstood by outsiders (and sometimes even by insiders). It was never irrevocably opposed to either public elementary or higher education. They accepted that their members made up a significant element at the Mennonite high schools in Gretna and Altona.³ What they did feel was that education "often ... alienates them (youth) from their parents, from our rural communities and from our congregations."⁴ They feared as well that it did not contribute to humility. Finally, they did not accept that education qualified one for the ministry. The calling from the Gemeinde as the instrument of God was what fitted one for the ministry.

The Sommerfeld Church throughout the greater part of its history has, unlike the Old Colony (Reinländer) Gemeinde, left many things to the individual conscience. Participation in municipal politics, blood donations, or Federal pension and family allowance schemes were all explicitly left to the individual's conscience. Perhaps even

more significantly, the decisions to emigrate in any of the migrations was left to the individual, without overtones of unfaithfulness if he chose to remain in Manitoba.

Finally, over the past century the Sommerfeld Gemeinde has been blessed with strong capable leadership. Interestingly Ältester Doerksen, H.J. Friesen, P.A. Toews, and P.M. Friesen all had experience in municipal government. Through internal divisions, depressions, wars, emigrations, and prosperity, they have guided the church ably and faithfully.

Endnotes

1. See Johann Funk "Erklärung" *Christliche Bundesbote*, 5 May 1892, p.5.
2. Dennis Stoesz, "A History of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church of Manitoba, 1874-1914", MA Thesis, U. of Manitoba, 1987, p.67.
3. See "General Decree for the Private Schools of the Sommerfelder Mennonite Congregation" in Gerhard John Ens, *The Rural Municipality of Rhineland, 1884-1984* (Altona, MB: RM of Rhineland), p.284, point#6.
4. See Peter Bergen, *History of the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church* (forthcoming), 1907 Brotherhood minutes, point#2.

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The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter, *Heritage Posting*, welcomes letters and reports pertaining to the historical interests of society members. Correspondence can be mailed to Bert Friesen, 169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2E5, or e-mailed to the editor at editor@mmhs.org

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The Post Road in the West Reserve

by Conrad Stoesz

The Mennonites arriving at Fort Dufferin, Manitoba, in 1875, faced a daunting situation. As pioneers from Eastern Europe they faced settling in a prairie with few trees, few evidences of any settlement infrastructure, and only their efforts at making a new life in Manitoba.

Once the location of their street villages was decided, they faced the time pressure of getting ready to survive the first winter just months away. Their first dwellings were made from the prairie soil and grasses. The little available wood was gathered for fuel for the winter. They dug wells and began breaking the prairie for crops the coming year.

The winter proved as harsh as they were told it would be. Snow and wind made it difficult to travel. In the summer one had to contend with open prairie, swamps, and mosquitoes. Plans had to be made to make travel easier.

In May, 1878, Oberschultze Isaak Müller called a meeting of all the village Schultzen (these were all civic leaders). It was decided that the most commonly used trail would be marked by a series of posts and thereby linking many villages. The posts would be ten feet long, and placed on the north side of the trail at fifteen rod intervals in line with mile posts. Each village and each homesteader had to contribute to the effort. The resulting marked trail became known as the Post Road.

The beginning point was at Fort Dufferin, around which the town of Emerson grew. It became an important trading centre for the area. In subsequent years, new villages sprang up along the Post Road. The road ran in a west and north westerly direction through Reinland to Osterwick and Waldheim and ending in Mountain City, south of Morden.

Other trails were also used in the area. There were those used by the Boundary Commission and the North West Mounted Police. The Post Road was the only marked road and it became the most important. It

was used to supply the settlers with lumber and farm machinery. Mail came along this road no later than 1882.

The entire length of the road could not be travelled in one day. So people opened their homes to travellers. Some of best known were the David Schellenberg family in Neuanlage, the Jacob Giesbrecht family in Reinland, and William Brown's first hotel established in Neuhorst. Young David Schellenberg would wake up to find up to fourteen people sleeping around the stove on the floor. He learned his first English from non-Mennonite travellers.

The posts were tempting for other uses than intended. Wood was scarce so this was accessible fuel wood. Müller was petitioned and he was instrumental in getting action from the provincial government. They passed legislation in 1881 which stated that if anyone was found destroying or mutilating the posts they would be subject to a ten dollar fine. This law is one of the first ones governing road travel in Manitoba.

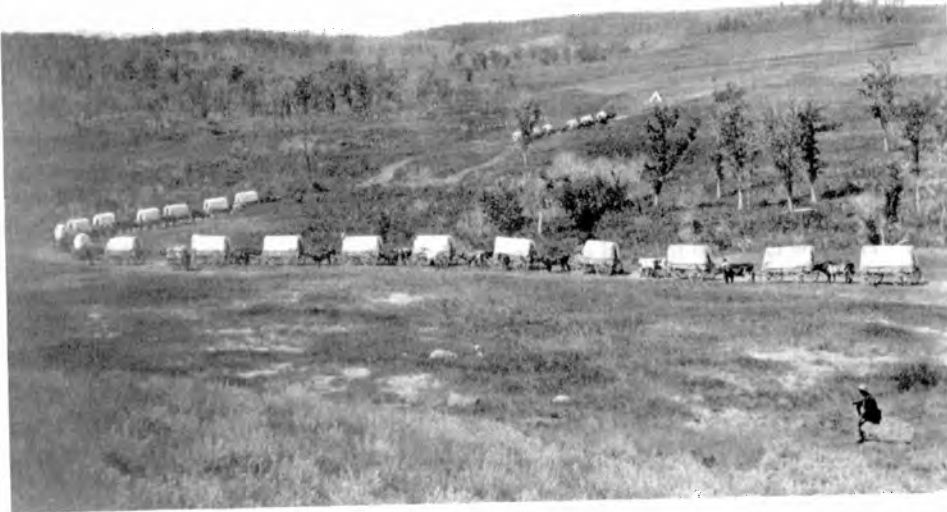
By 1884, six years after the Post Road was first started, the local municipal governments began giving more attention to travel and the need for more infrastructure. More machinery was available, more land was being drained, and more land was being plowed for crop use. By 1885 the street village system began breaking down. A new grid system of roads was being planned and implemented. Gradually then, the Post Road was not needed. If it did not fit into the new grid system it was plowed under for crop use.

Today, only the eastern portion of the Post Road remains. This portion became incorporated in the Provencal road 243. The western portion had virtually disappeared by 1930. Today, the only remnant of the western Post Road is a bridge piling in a pasture on the western side of the village of Reinland.

The Post Road was an important factor to smooth the establishment of the Mennonite settlement on the West Reserve. It provided a means of supplying goods and services. It was a means of staying connected, of belonging, as well as a safe means of travel. It is still today part of the culture and language of the locals. It is still referred to when asking or giving local directions. It was an unique part of the West Reserve's history.



An 1883 depiction of the West Reserve Post Road in the village of Reinland. Depiction was obtained privately by the author.



Boundary Commission ox and horse train near Dead Horse Creek in the Pembina Hills, in a photo taken in 1874 (probably 4 mi. [6.7 km]) south of Thornhill, Manitoba. Credit: Provincial Archives Manitoba

Fort Dufferin, The Fortyninth, and the West Reserve 1875 (Part 2)

by Edwin D. Hoepfner

At this point the first Mennonites of the West Reserve are out on their claims, establishing homes and communities, bringing home their dearly bought supplies from Emerson and Pembina and the first instalment of flour and grain, the "Brottschuld" courtesy of the Ontario Mennonites, on their substantial wagons, and preparing for their first Manitoba winter. Their Fort Dufferin sojourn was behind them - but the lonely, little and probably unmarked graves would not soon be forgotten by the families affected (in part 1 these were referred to as located south of Dufferin, see p.7, *HP*, No.28. but in actual fact they are north of Dufferin).

Fort Dufferin, named after the Governor-General of the day, is not only central to the establishment of the Mennonites west of the Red River - it was also of significance in an episode concerning the arrival of many non-Mennonites, who came to settle in southern and southwestern Manitoba. There appears to be some uncertainty as to how long Dufferin continued to serve as an immigration reception facility. In a report "Dufferin" prepared for the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch in October 1975, it is stated "Just how long Dufferin was used for this purpose is not known."⁷ It can now be confirmed that it was still in use for this purpose in 1881 when a family by the name of Wilson "... spent the winter of 1881 in the old Dufferin Hotel near Emerson, before moving on to Turtle Mountain."⁸ There is some description of the family's travel along the Boundary Commission Trail, but, oddly enough, there is no reference to the posts marking this road at 250 foot intervals through the Mennonite settlement, nor is there any apparent reference to stopping places until after they had reached the Pembina Hills.

The importance of Dufferin as an historical artifact and landmark transcends the Mennonite experience there. It was constructed to house and to serve as the headquarters for the British (and Canadian) North American Boundary Commission 1872-1876. By 1874 the boundary survey was nearly complete and only a few Commission staff were still there. The newly forming North West Mounted Police assembled at Dufferin and in 1874 set out on their

famous march West to bring Canadian sovereignty and law enforcement to the West. Thanks to the recent re-enactment of this NWMP march West in 1999 as a celebration of the 125th anniversary of this event, this episode is now somewhat more widely known. The boundary survey of 1872 - 1876 was a tri-national project, with the United States North American Boundary Commission headquartered at the military installation of Fort Pembina near Pembina, North Dakota. There was considerable interaction between the two boundary commissions, who together, each on its own side of the "fortyninth," marked its location from Lake of the Woods to the continental divide - and this suggested the quotation from Robert Frost's poem with which this article began. Once the NWMP had departed from Dufferin, it was essentially vacant for 1875 and could, seemingly almost providentially, shelter our forebears in 1875 and thereafter. By means of its function, or rather functions, as home for an international survey, temporary and brief home for a national institution, the NWMP, and temporary home for a variety of in-coming immigrants and other homesteaders, Fort Dufferin is a national, provincial and local historic site.

It is beyond the purpose of this article to say much about the boundary survey, but some things are essential for our understanding of how and why southern Manitoba came to be the way it was and is. There is substantial literature on the subject and a small selection of it is listed in the bibliography.⁹ As was intimated in the introductory paragraph, together with the bibliographic references, there is a substantial historic record of the near-boundary area (on both sides) going back just over two centuries to the 1790s.

It is most probable that Alexander Henry's carts on their trips from Pembina to the vicinity of Pinancewaywining in 1802 created the first cart trails, of which the Boundary Commission Trail, and the Post Road were later modifications and/or further developments. Included in the photographs is a view of the Boundary Commission's Pembina Mountain East Depot. This depot was about 43 miles from Dufferin on the B.C. trail/Post Road not far from Mountain City, (SW ¼, 24-2-6 W),¹⁰ about 4.5 miles south-southwest of Morden, incidentally, within a

(cont. on p.5)

MMHS News & Notes

Board and Committee Reports

As was reported at the annual meeting, the **Local history Committee** has lost two key people in the past year with the passing of Bill Harms and John Dyck. At their last meeting the committee welcomed Dave Harms from Altona, Mavis Dyck from Morden and Ron (Joe) Braun from Altona to the committee.

After two successful publications, the committee is now concentrating on Volume 3. It will feature the Gemeinde histories of the West Reserve and some biographies of church leaders.

The **Board** at its recent meeting discussed ways of fund-raising for the Society. Various ideas were suggested which will be explored.

The **Genealogy Committee** is working on subsequent volumes in the Genealogy series. The main content of the second volume will be a translation of Part 2 of B.H. Unruh's book.

The **Sites and Monuments Committee** is part of the planning for 125th celebrations. They are particularly involved in planning the erection of a number of plaques and cairns in the West Reserve.

Other plans for the 125th anniversary celebrations were discussed by the Board and are reported on page 6.

Mennonite Migration to Russia
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Fort Dufferin, Part 2

(cont. from p.4)

few miles of Waldheim. The Boundary Commission Trail/Post Road ascended the Pembina Hills escarpment at this point, about 9 or 10 miles due north of the boundary, because the slope is much more gradual here, and it was merely following the path marked out in 1859 by John Palliser's British North American Exploring Expedition.

Fort Dufferin

There were approximately eleven buildings plus three latrines in 1872 with further storage and stables and temporary buildings added in 1873. The following details are taken from the 1975 Historic Resources Branch Report.⁷ The base camp was designed by Lieutenant A.C. Ward and the construction was done by a contractor who obtained most of his labour and materials from Minnesota. The main accommodation buildings are described as: "all frame and consisting of officers' quarters - a two storey building - and attached kitchens, three one-storey buildings for the assistants and men, and a stable for fifty horses, storehouse, cook house, bakery, workshop, and smithshop."

Three buildings, each of two rooms for fourteen men, plus officers' quarters for twelve suggest accommodation for only a total of 96 people was available ($96 = 3 \times (14 \times 2) + 12$). This would certainly confirm Mr Jacob Fehr's recollection that there was little elbow room. Perhaps some people had to be accommodated in the shops, store houses, and/or stables. Recall the MDFP report of 53 families debarking on July 14, 1875: using Mr Shantz' figure of 5.5 persons per family, this gives us a total of about 292 persons.

The seventeen townships of the West Reserve were not **officially** set aside for exclusive Mennonite settlement until the Order-in-Council of 25 April 1876.¹¹ The Dominion Lands agency in 1875 must have acted on internal instructions of the Department of the Interior - but this information was not available to the Canadian settlers from Ontario, who had already made claims in the wooded sections of the western most townships in the reserve area.¹²

This year, 125 years after the initial reception at Fort Dufferin, we remember with deep gratitude those who made great sacrifices to pioneer in a new land, and we reflect also with equal gratitude on the society that was prepared to receive our forebears.

(Endnotes on p.6)



Boundary Commission Depot at Pembina Mountain (1872-1874) (Waldheim - Glencross - Mountain City area). Credit: Provincial Archives Manitoba

125th Manitoba Mennonite Anniversary

West Reserve Anniversary Plans In High Gear

Planning for the 125th anniversary celebrations of the first arrival of Mennonites on the West Reserve in July, 1875, is now well underway. They landed at Fort Dufferin, West Lynne, before moving out to settle on the treeless Reserve area.

By the fall of 1875 close to 300 Mennonite families had settled in 18 villages in this partially surveyed area west of the Red River. Here, on the United States border between Emerson and the Pembina Hills, they found what they were looking for--fine prairie land with few settlers on it. An Order in Council of April 25, 1876, completed the legal arrangements for settling this reserve, over 500,000 acres.

Anniversary celebrations of Mennonite settlement in the West Reserve are being planned in various communities. A specially-appointed 125th MMHS anniversary committee, the Historic Sites and Monuments committee, and a local nine-person Dufferin reenactment program committee have combined their efforts to organize these events.

Here is a brief update on events and activities in the 125th programme:

- The main event will be a special **landing reenactment** (with a **drama** written by **Wilmer Penner**, Steinbach, and directed by **Henry G. Ens**, Reinland) **planned for Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. on 16 July 2000, at the original site of Fort Dufferin** just north of Emerson/West Lynne near the Canada-USA border. Watch for detailed announcements in the media and special mailings.
- A memorial in the form of signs and symbolic posts, with plaques, to recall the **West Reserve Post Road** will be erected. An unveiling of the project is expected in August. Watch for a special article feature on the Post Road in the upcoming issues of

Heritage Posting.

● CFAM radio spots, and other features, will highlight important Mennonite historical events related to the West Reserve, and underscore events to come.

● A **West Reserve Mennonite history insert** will be published on 26 June 2000 in the local papers of Altona (Red River Valley Echo), Winkler (Winkler Times), Morden (Morden Times), and Carman (The Valley Leader). The editorial committee is headed by Esther Epp Tiessen at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg.

● Community events like the homecoming of Neubergthal, and the former Edenthal and Edenburg villages (held on 30 June-2 July 2000, and 1-2 July 2000 respectively), as well as various family events will carry 125th anniversary features. Watch for exhibitions, etc. at area festivals like the Sunflower Festival (a 125th parade in Altona), Harvest Festival (a Low German drama in Winkler), and Corn and Apple Festival (Morden), as well as joint East and West Reserve events at Pioneer Days (5-8 August 2000) at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach.

● A special **memorial to Ältester Johann Wiebe** (1837-1906) of the Reinländer Mennonite church will be unveiled at a Wiebe family gathering to be held at Reinland on 22 July 2000.

● We are hoping that CJOB and CBC Winnipeg will be featuring the anniversary in some way also.

● **Volume III of the West Reserve Historical Series**, edited by Adolf Ens, Jake Peters, and Otto Hamm (Morden), is to be published in the autumn. A history book on Plum Coulee is being prepared by Cleo Heinrichs and Agatha Giesbrecht. The republication of the book *Reinland: An Experience in Community*, written by Peter D. Zacharias (1976) is being undertaken at Reinland.

● Many families have chosen the year 2000 for reunions. A few of these are the Hoepfner reunion July 21-23 at Steinbach, a Heinrich Wiebe reunion on July 21-23 at Provident College, Otterburne, a Jacob H. Dyck reunion at Altona, and a Bergen reunion July 28-29 at Gretna.

For further information on any of the above items contact Conrad Stoesz, chair of the 125th Anniversary Committee, at 204-888-6781 or 669-6575.

Endnotes for Fort Dufferin, Part 2

6. John Warkentin and Richard Ruggles; *Historical Atlas of Manitoba* (Manitoba Historical Society, 1970) (pp 235 and 269).
7. Dufferin by B. Potyondi; *Historic Resources Branch* October 1975 page 26.
8. Helen E. Cowan; *On the Old Boundary Commission Trail* (Deloraine Times and Waskada News, Deloraine, Man. Thursday, March 30, 1944).
9. *International Boundary Survey and Fort Dufferin*.
- 9.1. John E. Parsons *West On The 49th Parallel - Red River to the Rockies 1872 - 1876* (William Morrow and Company, New York, 1963).
- 9.2. Marjorie Forrester; *Shooting the Stars and Chaining the Land* (The Beaver, Spring 1960 pp 10 - 17).
- 9.3. Marjorie Forrester; *That Northwest Angle* (The Beaver, Autumn, 1960 pp 32 - 38).
- 9.4. Marjorie Forrester; *Markers on the Forty-Ninth* (Manitoba Historical Society Series III No 16 pp 78 - 90).
- 9.5. John Peter Turner; *The Historic Forty-Ninth* (RCMP Quarterly Vol 9 No 2 Oct. 1941, pp.166-177 and Vol.9, No.3, Jan. 1942, pp.270-281).
- 9.6. Sergeant H.A. Stewart; *Fort Dufferin* (RCMP Quarterly Vol 7 No 4 April 1940 pp 377 - 379).
- 9.7. Capt. S. Anderson, R.E.; *Chief Astronomer to the N.A. Boundary Commission; The North American Boundary from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains* (A Paper read, March 27th, 1876 Royal Geographical Society, R.G.S. Journal Vol 46, London, 1876 p. 228).
- 9.8. Capt. Featherstonhaugh, R.E.; *Narrative of the Operations of the British North American Boundary Commission, 1872 - 1876* (Professional Papers of the Corps of Royal Engineers Vol XXIII, New Series, Woolwich, 1876, pp 24 - 49).
- 9.9. Suzan Scott; *Fort Dufferin* (Historic Resources Branch August 1972).
10. PAM MG 14 B44 Howard Winkler Papers; *Mountain City* (1875? - 1883).
11. E.K. Francis; *In Search of Utopia* (D.W. Friesen & Sons Ltd, Altona, Manitoba, 1955) pp 62.
12. John H. Warkentin, "Mennonite Settlement of Southern Manitoba," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1960, p.66-68.

Johann Funk, Ältester of the Bergthaler Mennoniten Gemeinde of Manitoba (1882-1911)

By Lawrence Klippenstein

Johann Funk was born in Niederchortitza, Chortitza settlement on 26 December 1836. His parents were Margaretha Braeul (1806-1861) and Peter Funk (1799-1884). Johann was born the year of the founding of the Bergthal Colony in New Russia. The family moved there soon after.¹

The future Ältester Johann Funk will have had his early schooling in the Bergthal settlement (possibly in Heuboden).² He was baptized in the church in the Bergthal village. He married Margaretha Braun (1839-1861), youngest daughter of Susanna Leiki (1796-1864) and Ältester Jakob Braun (1791-1868). Margaretha and Johann had one daughter, Susanna, before Margaretha died. Johann remarried to Susanna Rempel (1842-1879) on 28 October 1861. Johann and Susanna had fourteen children of whom nine died in infancy.

The Johann Funk family moved to Manitoba from Bergthal Colony in 1875. They settled on the East Reserve village of Bergthal. In 1877 Johann Funk was ordained as a minister of the Bergthal group by Ältester Gerhard Wiebe, who had also moved to Manitoba with his family in 1875. Johann's wife, Susanna, died in childbirth on 2 December 1879. Johann remarried, to his third wife, Elisabeth (Louise ?) Dyck (1855-1926), daughter of Elisabeth Ens (1820-1883) and Johann Dyck (1821-1908), later of Altbergthal.³

In 1881 Elisabeth and Johann Funk moved to the West Reserve where they were a founding family of the Bergthal village (later Altbergthal). In 1882 he was ordained as Ältester. Over 300 Bergthal families had moved from the East Reserve to the West Reserve by 1882.⁴ Other church leaders assisting Funk were Heinrich Wiebe, Edenburg; Abraham Bergen, Schönthal; Isaac Giesbrecht, Neuhoffnung; and Abraham Schroeder, Altbergthal.⁵

Besides the Bergthaler church group, the other main church group on the West Reserve was the Reinländer Mennoniten Gemeinde. It was organized in 1880 by Ältester Johann Wiebe (see *HP*, No.28). The Bergthaler on the East Reserve came to be known as the Chortitzer Mennonitengemeinde under the leadership of Ältester Gerhard Wiebe and after 1882, of Ältester David Stoesz.⁶

Ältester Funk gave leadership to the West Reserve Bergthaler Gemeinde from 1882-1911. The first ten years were spent in organizing congregations and tending to special pioneering concerns. Such were mission work, education, and tensions with Reinländer members.

The first crisis for Ältester Funk concerned his support of the Gretna Normalschule which opened in 1889. His support for the school and its leader, Heinrich Ewert, caused a split in the Bergthaler group in 1892. The dissenting group elected Abraham Doerksen from Sommerfeld as their Ältester. The remaining "Funksche Gemeinde" had about sixty families who supported Funk's emphasis on mission work, and other renewal efforts.⁷ Leadership came also from ministers, Heinrich Ewert, Benjamin Ewert, Jakob Hoepfner, and Franz Sawatzky.

The final period of Funk's activity, 1903-1911, began with another education crisis. Should the school at Gretna be enlarged? Should the school be relocated to Altona? In the end the school was rebuilt in both places. Heinrich Ewert headed the new MCI at Gretna from 1908 on. Funk supported the Altona option whereas others in the Bergthal leadership group favoured the Gretna option. This tension in the end was a factor in Funk's retirement in 1911. He was replaced by Ältester Jakob Hoepfner.⁸

The West Reserve Bergthaler made specific moves around 1900 to form a conference with the Saskatchewan Rosenorter Mennonites. The first sessions of their representatives took place in 1903. The main Bergthaler leadership came again from the ministers Heinrich and Benjamin Ewert and Jakob Hoepfner. Funk had a lesser role in this initiative, but remained involved in the work of the church as a whole.⁹

Ältester Funk passed away on 17 March 1917. The Lehrdienst of the Bergthalers with Johann Funk at the helm had worked with courage, if not always with total tact and local sensitivities, to lay a foundation on which a new church body could carry on effectively. It would be more than fifty years before further major changes would take place in the Bergthaler

brotherhood.¹⁰ Even then the membership would look back and agree that basically their early leaders, certainly including Funk, had laid firm foundations, and those following them had served them well.

Endnotes

1. Mary Dueck Jeffery. *Ältester Johann Funk: A Family Tree* (Winnipeg, MB, by the author, 1980), 15. This work also includes an essay by Esther Epp titled, "Ältester Johann Funk: His Life and Work", 1-8. See also John Dyck, ed. *Bergthal Gemeinde Buch* (Steinbach, MB: Hanover Steinbach Historical Society, 1993), 48, entry A102. See also Lawrence Klippenstein, "Funk, Johann", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography 1911-1920* (Toronto Buffalo London: University of Toronto Press, 1998), Vol. XIV, 379.
2. On Bergthal beginnings see William Schroeder. *The Bergthal Colony. Revised Edition* (Winnipeg, MB: CMBC Publications, 1986), 17ff.
3. MHCA, Vol. 718, *Bergthal Church Register No. 1*, 22, and Dyck, *Gemeinde Buch*, 104, entry B6 and 282.
4. MHCA, Vol. 3720, file 3 "Altbergthal Notes", and John Rempel and William Harms, eds. *Atlas of original Mennonite Villages Homesteaders and Some Burial Plots of the Mennonite West Reserve* (Altona, MB: by the authors, 1990), 30, 39, and 41. See also Jeffery, 9 - 12.
5. On Johann Funk's ministry among Bergthalers of the West Reserve see Henry J. Gerbrandt. *Adventure in Faith: The Background in Europe and the Development In Canada of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Manitoba* (Altona, MB: The Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Manitoba, 1970), 83ff. Peter D. Zacharias. *Reinland: An Experience in Community* (Reinland, MB: The Reinland Centennial Committee, 1976), 207.
6. For several important aspects of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church story see Dennis Stoesz, "A History of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church of Manitoba 1874-1914", unpublished MA thesis, University of Manitoba, 1987.
7. See Gerbrandt, *Adventure*, 93 and Zacharias, *Reinland*, 207. A study of the various backgrounds of people who remained in the Bergthaler group is in Sandra Bergen, "The Bergthal Church in Southern Manitoba: Statistical Analysis of Names of Origin and Settlement", unpublished CMBC paper in the MHCA alphabetical vertical file.
8. On Hoepfner's leadership see Joy Poettcker, "Hoepfner Genealogy", unpublished CMBC paper in MHCA author alphabetical vertical files in the section "Jakob Hoepfner in Michaelsburg 1875" (the memoirs of Jakob Hoepfner), 26 - 27 and Gerbrandt, *Adventure*, 105, 115 - 117.
9. Gerbrandt, *Adventure*, 91.
10. The moves to make local Bergthaler congregations more independent, and to merge with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada created a new chapter for the story of the Bergthaler people in Manitoba. Cf. Gerbrandt, *Adventure*, 330ff, and his *Postscript to Adventure in Faith* (Winnipeg, MB: CMBC Publications, 1986), and Elizabeth Bergen, "Bergthaler Churches Close Historic Era", *Red River Valley Echo*, June 14, 1972, 2.

Book Reviews

Rempel Peter. *Mennonite Migration to Russia, 1788-1828.*, eds. A.H. Redekopp and R.D. Thiessen, (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 2000) pb., 249 pp., C\$35.00.

Reviewed by Henry Schapansky

It is an exciting event when documentary material on the Russian Mennonites is made accessible to the public in book form. The documentary material presented in the present volume is in fact, supplementary to all these works, but in particular to B.H. Unruh's book and the 1835 Molotschna census data. Indeed, the reader will want to have both works at hand when going through this volume.

The documents assembled for this book may be grouped, and here I differ slightly from the view of the author in his preface, into the following categories:

1. The Old Colony lists of 1797 and 1806
2. The Grodno lists of 1803 -1810
3. Lists of households established in Russia 1815-1828
4. Lists of visas issued by the Russian Consulate at Danzig 1819-1828

1. The Old Colony lists of 1797 and 1806

The documentary lists under this section are among the most important of the whole book, being compiled at early dates than elsewhere in this book. For that matter only the B.H. Unruh's lists of 1793 and 1795 are dated earlier than 1797, and there are Old Colony families who may only be documented in the 1797 or 1806 lists. We may therefore be grateful indeed that this material has been published here.

The two lists were compiled for quite different purposes and differ greatly in material presented. The 1797 list was a general Old Colony census (and included Krongarten) and contains information regarding the economic data of each household including the number of horses, cattle, sheep and pigs owned. Only the household head is named, but the total number of males and females in each family is tabulated. The lists are organised by villages, with a last section for new settlers not yet assigned to any particular village. The 1806 list was established for the purpose of establishing the tax free years remaining to each homestead. By homestead I mean homestead in the Canadian sense, according to the various provincial homestead acts, where families received a free grant of land (and some tax exempt years) under certain conditions. The German word is *Wirtschaft*. The 1806 list gives the name of the original owner of the homestead rights, and the owner in 1806, along with a count of males and females in the 1806 owner's family. The 1806 list therefore contains only the data relative to the 1806 *Wirtschaft* owners, and the original owners.

2. The Grodno Lists (1803-1810)

The great value of the Grodno lists is the inclusion of a considerable amount of information regarding the individual families, their travelling companions (relatives and servants) and the financial aid received. A good many details regarding arrival and departure dates, illnesses and routes taken are included. There is certainly a lot of new and additional material in this section, and for some families who do not overtly appear in the 1808 lists, this may be the only data presently available.

3 & 4. The Lists of Households and Visas after 1815

The most interesting and informative new data is contained in the visa lists themselves. All the persons travelling on the passport are generally named and include various relatives (and the relationship to the passport owner), maiden names (in some cases) and the village where the passport-holder resided. All of this adds a great deal to our knowledge of the settlers.

As will be apparent to the reader, this volume contains much new and varied information. Some of the data will be more useful than other data. The importance of the data in sections

3 & 4 (as outlined above) have been recognized in this volume by the inclusion of a brief but excellent economic overview of the new settlers (1815-1825) by Conrad Stoez. Also included is a map of the Vistula delta and valley, detailing the villages from which many of the new settlers originally came. Included as well is some informative introductory commentary re the original lists. This book undoubtedly deserves the popularity it will achieve.

Book Notes

- New is a book about Howard W. Winkler entitled, *The Papers of Howard W. Winkler*, written by Irvin J. Kroeker. The book details the life and work of Winkler who was the Member of Parliament for Lisgar from 1935-1953. A unique aspect of this book is the summary at the end of the book giving the reader a taste of the Howard Winkler materials at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba. The book can be purchased from Open Door Communications, Box 6803, Osborne Village, Winnipeg, Mb., R3L 2V9.
- Dr. Helmut Huebert has published a book entitled *Events and People: Events In Russian Mennonite History and the People That Made them Happen*. It contains biographies of various Mennonite leaders such as Deputy Jakob Bartsch, Aron Sawatzky, and Jakob Reimer. It also contains maps and interesting events such as floods and the Purge. This 258 pp. book, with index, can be bought from The Centre for M.B. Studies for \$25.00.
- *Mennonites in the Global Village* by Winnipeg Sociologist Leo Driedger documents the change in Mennonite thought as urbanization has occurred. It includes many interesting charts. This 264 pp. book was published by the U. of Toronto Press for \$19.25.
- Marlene Epp has authored a book entitled *Women without Men, Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War*. It documents the story of the lives of Mennonite families who lost their fathers and husbands and how the women coped with becoming refugees, and settling in a new country. This 275 pp. book was published by the University of Toronto Press.