



HERITAGE POSTING

Newsletter of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

No.33 June 2001



Jacob Peters, MMHS President, addressing participants on the 80th anniversary of Wm. Hespeler's death. Photo credit: Conrad Stoesz

Our Most Highly Esteemed Friend Mr. William Hespeler Our Dear Old Friend Mr. Hespeler

by Edwin D. Hoepfner

Klaas Peters of the Mennonite East Reserve in his booklet "Die Bergthaler Mennoniten" refers to William Hespeler in the two eloquent phrases: "Unser höchst achtbarer Freund Herr William Hespeler" (p.8) and "Unser lieber alter Freund Herr Hespeler" (p.10). No more fitting descriptions came to mind when we contemplate the life of William Hespeler (b.1830 Dec.29, Gernsbach/Baden - d.1921 Apr.18, Vancouver/B.C.) in this the eightieth anniversary year of his passing. This anniversary was the inspiration for a small memorial gathering at the site of his grave in St. John's Anglican Cemetery in Winnipeg, April 18, Wednesday, at 15.00 hr. The celebration was initiated by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society. Society President Jacob Peters addressed the gathering, remembering some of the many services which William Hespeler provided to the settlement of Mennonite in Manitoba in 1874 and thereafter. The presence of Professor Dieter Roger, University of Manitoba and of Emeritus Professor Werner Entz of Brandon University who also spoke added an appropriate dimension to the remembrance. Werner Entz was one of the first scholarly authors of a work on William Hespeler.



William Hespeler with his grand daughter, Mary Georgina Nanton. Photo credit: MHC



William Hespeler, about 1871 in Karlsruhe/Baden, before trip to southern Ukraine to make contact with Mennonite community leaders interested in emigration to North America. Photo credit: MHC



Georgina Hope Nanton (daughter) in Black Forest Costume, ca. 1880. Photo credit: MHC



(L-R) Edwin Hoepfner, Prof. Werner Entz, Prof. Dieter Roger at St. John's Anglican Cemetery. Photo credit: Conrad Stoesz



Mary Hespeler nee Kaetzie, d. 1872 probably at or near Baden Baden, first wife of Wm. Hespeler and mother of his two children. Photo credit: MHC

Corrections

True Heirlooms (p.4, No.32, March 2001)

- (1) Left-hand column, paragraph 2 should read "its first place of abode in Canada was a sod hut in Schönfeld, East Reserve...."
- (2) Left-hand column, paragraph 3 should read "... their baby, Jacob, was born in Bergthal Colony and died in Orel, near Moscow."
- (3) Left-hand column, paragraph 4 should read "In 1878 the Groenings moved to the West Reserve, farming in Gnadenthal, near Plum Coulee. In 1897 they bought land in the Lowe Farm area. Abraham Groening got cancer in 1915 and died in 1917."

Plum Coulee Centennial Invitation

by Cleo Heinrichs

The heart and soul of Plum Coulee is beating in sync with the Centennial, only a few weeks away! A committee of dedicated people meets twice a month to hone the final details of this great event! Plum Coulee was on the map long before incorporation on January 18, 1901. A community of Jews, Ukrainians and British settlers, with a smattering of new Mennonite immigrants on the outer periphery, lived here to till, toil and trade. Business establishments included lumberyards, grain elevators, grocery stores, livery stables and blacksmith shops. There were hotels, two big ones in fact! A school and a church were soon part of the community too.

One hundred years have passed since the Incorporation of Plum Coulee as a Village. To celebrate this milestone, Plum Coulee is staging a Centennial Homecoming weekend, July 13, 14 and 15, 2001. Come and celebrate with us. On Friday the 14th, the Registration desk is open at 5 p.m.. There will be entertainment at the school from 7 to 9, a free wiener roast at the park starting at 8:30, followed by more entertainment from 9 to 10, and fireworks, also at the park, at 10:30. Saturday's schedule begins at 7 am, with a free pancake breakfast served by the Plum Coulee Credit Union. The parade is at 10, followed by the official opening at 11:30. 12 to 1, lunch break with several options of where you may eat. At 1:30 the Queen pageant speeches, recognition of Plum Coulee's oldest resident, and other activities. After supper which is at 5, more entertainment with a fashion show, followed by a street dance.

Begin Sunday with a Continental breakfast, then participate in the worship service at 10, with Rev. Peter Wiebe as guest speaker. He's a former Coulee youth, whose father Rev. B. P. Wiebe was a minister in the local Bergthaler church. Lunch time will again feature several options of menus, after which there will be time to reminisce at 2 p.m. A "Faspa" at 4 is the closing event of the Plum Coulee Centennial! Come and help us celebrate!

Reinland 125th + 1 Anniversary Celebration Invitation

The Village of Reinland was established in 1875 by the Reinlaender Mennonite Church and became one of the primary villages on the Mennonite West Reserve. In 1876 the first church was built in Reinland and still stands today as the oldest Mennonite church in western Canada.

To celebrate its distinguished history the village of Reinland is hosting Reinland 125+1 Homecoming 2001 on 13-15 July, 2001. Included will be circle games, parade, drama, worship service, and of course food. The village will also be reprinting its history book, *Reinland an Experience in Community*, originally published in 1976. You can preorder a copy of the reprinted book and the supplement. Please register by contacting Armin Ens at 204-325-8559 or visit the web site at www.web4.net/reinland.

Mennonite Swedenborgians of The Happy Lake School District

by Doreen Funk and Lawrence Klippenstein

In the September 1999 issue of *Heritage Posting* we published an update on Mennonite Swedenborgian research. At that time we introduced Doreen Funk as a person once connected with the Happy Lake School District near Roblin, Manitoba, and now working on a history of that community. Her publication entitled, *'Looking Back at family and friends'*, is now off the press.

The article below is drawn from writings in this publication. Since some of the first people moving to the area came from the former West Reserve in southern Manitoba, we felt it relevant to share some of her material here. Anyone wishing to contact Doreen personally may write to her at 560 Palmer St., Quesnel, B.C. V2J 1N8. We are pleased to share some of her findings here.

Julius and Anna Dueck Hiebert, pioneers in the Happy Lake District, were married in 1890. An 1891 census of the West Reserve lists them as a couple aged 21 and 19 respectively.¹ Julius was born on 25 December 1869 in Heuboden, Bergthal Colony, New Russia. He came to Canada with his parents, Johann and Helena, along with nine brothers and sisters, on 30 July 1876.²

My father always said that his grandfather, Julius, always maintained that his wife Anna came over on the same ship he travelled on. Her parents were Heinrich and Agatha Ens Dueck, also from the Bergthal Colony, New Russia. The passenger lists of the 1870s migration show that the Duecks came to Canada on the S.S. Nova Scotian on 27 July 1874. Anna was listed as 3 years old on this list.³ Julius may have meant that he and Anna

(cont. on p.6)

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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

Waldheim Revisited - Corrections and Additions to the Founding Families of Waldheim

by Edwin D. Hoepfner

The German historian, Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), who laid the basis of modern historical research, defined the task of the historian - it is to tell "... wie es eigentlich gewesen war ..." - what actually happened. Sometimes that is painful and/or causes pain. Our understanding, and interpretation, of the past is based on, and limited by, the available source material, be it family stories and traditions or actual written documentation. When new sources become available, our understanding of the past becomes modified accordingly - and new insights are generated. This can be healing - the choice is up to the individual.

Some corrections of typographical errors in the Waldheim article in *HP*, No.32, March 2001 are necessary. More important is the new insight gained by the author as the result of the discovery and decipherment of my late grandfather's autograph "Lebensverzeichnis" (b.1878 Dec 06 - d.1970 Oct 10 Winkler), which he wrote within six to eight months prior to his death. This discovery occurred shortly after the article had gone to press.

First - the typographical corrections:

- (1) Page 3, left-hand column, a little below the middle of the page - delete the word "the" just before "Dominion Land Surveyor (DLS);
- (2) Page 3, left-hand column, delete the word "long" after "300 m"; "the street was about 300 m east of the section line ...";
- (3) Page 7, right-hand column, last paragraph, second sentence should read: "Excellent documentation confirms that the woods which (replace "that") were the source ...";
- (4) Page 7, right-hand column, last paragraph, second last sentence should read: "... Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach as the last extant (insert "extant") dwelling made from Allard's Point timber.";
- (5) Page 7, left-hand column, Lot Wa 11 - second sentence "... is buried on NE 16-2-5W" (i.e. delete "homestead" and replace WE 15 with NE 16).

This last error is partly due to the author; in the draft version of the article submitted to *HP*, the burial site was given as SW 15-2-5W. The correction to NE 16-2-5W is due to the "Lebensverzeichnis". In the early summer of

1967 my father, Peter M. Hoepfner (1906-1987), drove me to Waldheim and showed me, amongst other sites, the grave of my great-grandfather (Wa 11), which, he told me, was "on his farm"; I understood this to mean his homestead quarter-section SW 15-2-5W. It turns out that the grave, with the headstone, is actually on NE 16-2-5W. It is the only headstone on that plot; the plot is large enough to accommodate several graves but there was no surface indication that other graves might be present - and my father made no mention of any other burials there - which is odd, as we shall see. The West Reserve Atlas, on page 98, indicates by means of the symbol [240] that there is a graveyard plot on NE 16-2-5W; the atlas is, however, in error on page C-34, where it is indicated that "No Names" are known for [240] - the single headstone is there. Thanks to Mavis and George Dyck, Morden, who researched the ownership history of NE 16-2-5W, it is established that Peter Hoepfner purchased that quarter-section from the original owner, Jakob Reimer (Wa 07) on 21 May 1884. This sale and its date is likely related in some way to the process of the village break-up in 1885. Following the death of Peter Hoepfner in 1921, this property was divided into north and south halves, with the north half, site of [240], being purchased by Heinrich P. Hoepfner. It is probable that this Heinrich P. Hoepfner is the youngest son of Katharina and Peter Hoepfner - he is shown as a boy, standing just behind and between his parents in the photograph of these three on page 222 of the West Reserve Census; the same photo appears on page 50 of "Peter Brown; The Brauns of Osterwick." Thus my great-grandfather was buried "on his farm(land)" but not on his homestead.

Why was he buried there, and not, as one might expect, in the village cemetery, where his father, Peter J. Hoepfner (b.1825 Insel Chortitz - d.1907 Waldheim, Wa 19) rests? According to my father, his grandfather was a precursor ("Vorsinger" - we know it nowadays as "song leader") in the Waldheim congregation. Apparently there was some disagreement between him and the congregation about hymn singing. The precise nature of the disagreement has not come down to me. There was no resolution of this disagreement and so he was put under the ban by his church - consequently, when he died, it seems that his burial in the village cemetery was not permitted. His son, my grandfather, understandably was still sensitive about this painful episode. In my father's papers I recently found, in addition to grandfather's "Lebensverzeichnis," a very worn "Choralbuch - zunächst zum Gebrauch in den mennonitischen Schulen Südrusslands" with the notes, etc. indicated by numerals. It initially belonged to my great-grandfather and presumably it figured in that disagreement. On the fly-leaf my grandfather has noted some biographical/genealogical material and "Dieses Buch habe ich von meinem lieben Vater bekommen. Er war ein religiöser Mann ..." (This book I received from my dear father. He was a pious man ...).

This is only a part of the story of [240]. Readers familiar with "The Brauns of Osterwick" will have read the account, on pp.38-40, of Jakob Braun of Osterwick, who, having taken his quarter-section out of the Osterwick village system, was then put under the ban by his church - it is thought in about 1890 (p.306). At his death he could not be buried in the Osterwick cemetery and was buried in his garden in 1903, subsequently disinterred in about 1907 (November), transported to Waldheim and buried on the Peter Hoepfner farmstead (p.307) (p.40). On p.299 we read that this burial was on NE 16-2-5W. Grandfather's "Lebensverzeichnis" confirms this. Jakob Braun, the father-in-law of Peter Hoepfner (1851-1921) was, therefore, the first to be buried on this plot, followed by his widow, Maria Fast Braun, in 1914, followed by Peter Hoepfner, as the third, in 1921. Finally, my great-grandmother, Katharina Braun Hoepfner, died on 15 March 1936 and was buried there beside her first husband on 18 March 1936. Although I have no memory of the funeral, I can dimly recall he taken to Waldheim on 18 March 1936, at the age of 4½, in a "double" farm sleigh, from my grandfather's farm in Burwalde (where, incidentally, Jakob Braun's brother, Johann, is buried on SW 31-3-4W [217]). The ground was still deeply covered with snow. Alvin Wiebe of Morden, a grandson of Katharina, can recall many details of the funeral, particularly the colours of the matched horse teams for each sleigh in the procession. According to him, there is a fifth burial on this plot - a child, name not known, of a brother of Katharina. Peter Brown, grandson of Jakob Braun, knowing that there were no grave markers for the Brauns buried on NE 16-2-5W, headed a project, which culminated in a collective Braun Memorial stone, in effect a Braun Cenotaph, on a separate plot in the Glencross Cemetery, which was dedicated on 25 June 1972 (p.299-307); it is pictured on p.298 of his book. In the late 1970s, Peter Brown confided to the author that he had purchased a plot in the Glencross Cemetery for himself and his wife.

The apparent mystery of the location of Jakob Braun's grave is solved. There they lie, banned father-in-law and son-in-law, wife and daughter, pioneers of Osterwick and Waldheim, in ground hallowed only by the presence of their earthly remains. What other stories of people, events, and places throughout southern Manitoba are waiting to be told "wie es eigentlich gewesen war?"



Betty Unger displaying some of her fabrics and furniture pieces. Photo credit: Conrad Stoess

Local History workshop: Fabrics, furniture and clocks

by Elmer Heinrichs

Some 50 persons attended a spring workshop on Mennonite material culture planned by the local histories committee of the Mennonite Mennonite Historical Society at Altona 28 April 2001.

While Mennonites derive their very identity from and are best known for their Anabaptist religious faith, they have over centuries adapted and developed a material culture, and a workshop recently examined the role of fabrics/ceramics, furniture and clocks in Mennonite community life.

With an extensive display, Betty and Henry Unger, and Janice Thiessen guided the workshop in a discussion of fabrics and related materials. Particularly interesting were several fine specimens of head covering, long understood as a Biblical prerequisite for Mennonite women.

One of the creators of head covering here on the West Reserve was Elizabeth Hiebert of Schoenwiese, later Winkler. "The material for these curly caps 'kruese Metse' was never black enough, and some of the head dressing was frilly and longer in back," said Unger.

A once popular art of creating hand-made sewing baskets has almost vanished. Kerchiefs, often beautifully embroidered, often initialled, at times dated; patchwork and crazy quilts, with blocks/stars; and samplers (examples to be followed) first made by mothers, then by daughters.

One man built a flower shadowbox for his wife in 1931. Toys too were popular and included dolls and even a child's bench (Ruebank). Henry Giesbrecht, of Thames, was known for his drawings and paintings, and teachers began the Wensch, a short poem, in the 1800s.

On a new topic, presenter Jake Peters submitted that the pattern of Mennonite furniture date back to Prussia (now Poland), and Russia. "But by 1789, most standard items like the chest (Kjst), corner cupboard (Akjschaup), bed (Bad), bench (Benki) and cradle (Waej) were in place."

Mennonite furniture was adapted for use. But there were cupboards for the loveliest plates, and a chest, with key (sometimes with chimes) was usually a part of a bride's dowry. But in Canada the chest gradually fell by the wayside and a dresser (Ko'mood) took its place.

Peters noted how in Russia houses weren't locked, but special items, like chests, were. At times built-in false tops and special compartments, and some dovetailing added

esthetic beauty. Fine craftsmanship was simple, satisfying, and signified modesty, honesty and a love of order.

Tony Funk, of Hague, Sask. introduced local historians to the history of clocks in our homes. Mennonite craftsmen were already making clocks in the Danzig, Prussia (now Poland) area in the 1700s, and the technology moved along with Mennonites re-settling in the Ukraine.

The clocks, the pride in many homes, utilized patience, perseverance and personal pride. Primarily four individuals made these masterpieces. Kornelius Hildebrandt, Peter Lepp, Gerhard Mandtler followed an early master Gerhard Hamm. But the most influential were the Kroegers.

In Arnold Dyck's novel *Lost in the Steppe*, he depicts his own happy childhood in his native Russia. A bored young Hanschen finds among all the dead and boring objects of the small room ... "one, which has a semblance of life, one that moves and can also be heard.

"That is the small wall clock, the smallest of three in the house. The biggest hangs in the great room. That is the Kroeger clock; it has a long yellow chain, two weights, and a long shining pendulum. Kroeger in Chortitza makes such clocks, and they never go to pieces."

A special arts event was the book launch of Vol. 3 of the West Reserve Historical Series, "Church, Family and Village: Essays on Mennonite Life."



Tony Funk showing some features of Kroeger clocks. Photo credit: Elmer Heinrichs



Arthur Kroeger, son of the influential clock-making Kroeger family, holding a photo collage of 'Kroeger Uhren'. Photo credit: Elmer Heinrichs

MMHS News & Notes



Prof. Harvey Dyck making presentation concerning the Mennonite Centre in Ukraine. Photo credit: Conrad Stoesz



Museo Y Centro Cultural Menonita, A.C. Abraham Schmitt with Adolf Ens. Photo credit: Henry Ens

Museum/Archives project in Mexico

by Abe Dueck

Several years ago the MMHS entered into an informal agreement with a committee in Mexico to engage in a cooperative venture which would establish a Mennonite Archive and Museum facility in the area where a large number of Mennonites have established colonies near Cuauhtemoc in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico. It was agreed that a group of individuals would solicit funds, particularly in southern Manitoba, and that these funds would receive charitable donation receipts for income tax purposes. 10% of the funds would be held back by the MMHS in

order to cover its expenses and to allow the project to proceed on a cooperative basis. The MMHS would offer assistance in terms of professional counsel re archival objectives and practices, etc. The historic connection of many of the Mexican Mennonites with the Mennonites of Manitoba was recognized and the value of such a project for both communities was recognized.

Over these years, money has been raised of which a substantial part was from the Mennonites in Canada. Other funds came from Mexico.

It was now decided that the funds raised in Canada should be transferred to the group in Mexico, information gleaned about the project, and further assistance offered. To accomplish this Abe Dueck, Adolf Ens, and Henry Ens travelled to Mexico. They accomplished the above mentioned objectives and have made plans how to further be part of the cooperative venture in the Museo Y Centro Cultural Menonita, A.C.



Jacob Peters, President of MMHS (R) and the three editors, (L-R) Jake Peters, Adolf Ens, Otto Hamm, of the WRVH series, Vol. 3, *Church, Family, and Village, Essays on the Mennonite Life in the West Reserve*. Photo credit: Conrad Stoesz

Mennonite Material Culture Workshop

by Elmer Heinrichs

Mennonites on the Manitoba West Reserve celebrated the 125th anniversary of their arrival here in the Red River Valley last year, but the launch of a third book on 28 April 2001 on the Mennonite area west of the Red showed that the writing of its history continues.

Two earlier volumes on the West Reserve, both edited by John Dyck and William Harms, were: *Reinländer Gemeinde Buch 1880-1903*, and the *1880 Village Census of the Mennonite West Reserve*. The newest book is dedicated to the two men, both deceased, for their work.

The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society has now published "*Church, Family & Village: Essays on Mennonite Life on the West Reserve*." Society president Jake Peters said it was good to see this new book, recognizing it was a project requiring commitment and hard work.

He gave credit to the local history committee for giving leadership to the local history workshops that foster research and writing on church, school, family, and village. He noted that eight of the 22 essays in the book were first presented at local history workshops 1993-98.

Peters thanked editors Adolf Ens, Jacob E. Peters, and Otto Hamm for introducing us to our West Reserve Mennonite heritage by describing its leaders and churches. The essays on the life-work of reserve director Isaac Mueller, Bishop Johann Wiebe and the Reinländer Mennonite Church, Bishop Abraham Doerksen and the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church, and Bishop Johann Funk and the Berghaler Church, provide an excellent coverage of early religious and civic life.

And with several village histories, Neuenburg, Edenburg, and Altherrthal, "we get a good picture of pioneer life. A volume reflecting the work of master craftsmen..." says Peters.

Genealogy

Ancestors of Richard Thiessen

A. Heinrich Thiessen b. ca. 1760, Prussia, d. Prussia.
B. Jacob Heinrich Thiessen b. ca. 1780, Bolwerk?, Prussia, m. (1) Anna _____, b. 1781, Prussia, d. Tiegengagen, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, m. (2) Sarah Wiebe, b. 1795, Krebsfeld, Amt Elbing, Prussia?, Jacob d. Molotschna Colony, Ukraine. Migrated from Bolwerk, Amt Elbing, West Prussia to Molotschna, Russia in September, 1804.

C. Dirk Jacob Thiessen b. ca. 1814, Tiegengagen, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, d. Molotschna Colony, Ukraine.

D. Dietrich D. Thiessen b. ca. 1836, Tiegengagen, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, m. in Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, Agatha Braun, b. 12 Nov. 1835, Münsterberg, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, d. 01 Jan. 1905, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine. Dietrich d. Gnadenthal?, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine.

E. Johann Dietrich Thiessen b. 17 Dec. 1858, Münsterberg?, Molotschna, Ukraine, m. 11 Oct. 1879, in Gnadenthal?, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, Katharina Regehr, b. 26 Aug. 1858, Nikolaidorf, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, d. 10 Jan. 1933, Prangennau, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine. Johann d. 24 Jan. 1920, Prangennau, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine.

F. Dietrich J. Thiessen b. 17 Oct. 1880, Gnadenthal, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, m. ca. 1903, in Prangennau, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, Anna Dueck, b. ca. 1878, Neukirch, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, d. ca. 1953, Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R., Dietrich d. ca. 1948, Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R.

G. Johann Dietrich Thiessen b. 22 Feb. 1909, Nikolaidorf, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, m. 12 Aug. 1928, in Prangennau, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, Maria Delesky, b. 06 Aug. 1906, Gnadenthal, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, baptized 1942, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, d. 1967, Aktjubinsk Region, Kazakhstan. Johann d. 10 APR 1961, Malinkova, Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R.

H. Abram Johann Thiessen b. 22 Mar. 1929, Prangennau, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine, baptized 11 Aug. 1957, East Chilliwack M.B. Church, Chilliwack, m. 21 Aug. 1959, in East Chilliwack M.B. Church, Chilliwack, Anna Esau, b. 06 Feb. 1934, Reston, Manitoba, Canada, baptized 27 Aug. 1950, East Chilliwack M.B. Church, Chilliwack.

I. Richard David Thiessen b. 24 Sep. 1962, Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada, baptized 03 Jun. 1979, East Chilliwack M.B. Church, Chilliwack, m. 27 May 1989, in Bakerview M.B. Church, Clearbrook, B.C., Karen Anne Heidebrecht, b. 09 Feb. 1965, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, baptized 08 Jun. 1980, Greendale M.B. Church, Sardis, B.C.

Contributed by Richard Thiessen

Swedenborgians (cont. from p.2)

both came to Canada on the same month of the year, that is July.

After they were married Julius and Anna settled in the school district of Neuhoffnung about eight kilometres west of Altona, in Manitoba where the Johann Hieberts had taken up a homestead on Section 28, Township 1, Range 2W around 1880.¹ Later

Julius and Anna moved to Plum Coulee several kilometres to the north of Neuhoffnung and still later to Chaplin, Saskatchewan.

Their seventh child, Elizabeth, became my grandmother. She was born in Plum Coulee on 3 February 1901, and married Jacob Funk on 4 March 1919 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Jacob had been married before to Grandma Lizzie's older sister, Lena, who had passed away shortly after the birth of her first child, Ernest. In the early 1920s, Elizabeth and Jacob moved to Boggy Creek near Roblin, Manitoba, along with Lizzie's parents and siblings.

Their settlement became known as the Happy Lake district, located on Block 20-30-285 according to one map. There the government had built a school in 1910, with the first teacher being Jack Pickergill who became active during his life as a Manitoba politician. My father tried to correspond with him at one time, but could not get any responses.

Church services of a New Jerusalem congregation were held in this school. It was served by travelling ministers. My father, Delmer Funk, was baptized by a certain Rev. John Zacharias who belonged to the New Jerusalem church. Others who came as ministers were Rev. Alden, and Rev. Henry Redekopp whom I remember very well.² My father also recalls a young teacher at Happy Lake whose name was George Wiebe, and who later became a music professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College.³

The following families resided in the Mennonite settlement at the Happy Lake district: Anna and Julius Hiebert, their fourth child, Mary, married to Sam Lenderbeck; Mary and Sam's daughter Mavis, who married Peter Wiens, another daughter of Anna and Julius, Aganetha, who married David Klassen and whose children all went to school at Happy Lake.

As well there was the family of Elizabeth Hiebert married to Jacob Funk (my grandparents), six of whose children were born and raised there. They were Ernest, Herman, Leonard, who died in infancy, and Delmer (my dad). The following children were born at Boggy Creek: Thelma (died at 3), Raymond, Herbert, Marg, Linda, and Chester.

Delmer married a local girl, Irene Burwash. These are my parents. They had six children who were raised at Boggy Creek: Shirley, Walter, Robert, Marsha, Doreen (myself), and Doug. Other families of the community, as recalled by my father, were Julius Hiebert, Jr., with his wife Inez Bennet; Diedrich (another son of Anna and Julius), with his wife Eveline Lester; Cornelius and Alvina Lilley Hiebert; Earl and Dora Hiebert Lester; Peter Rempel whose wife left their home; Frank and Mary Sawatsky, whose son John stayed to work the family farm, and whose son James now has the farm (John bought the property on which the school used to stand - I am not sure if the building is still standing somewhere now), and David Friesen and Annie Wiens.

Other families who settled there were named: Davey, Larocque, Germaine, Marchant, Langan, Labibertae, Jarvis, Kapell, LaFord, Nolan, Bennet, Thorn, and McKenzie. The children of these families also attended the Happy Lake school.

Around 1939 these Mennonite families built a church for the congregation of New Jerusalem. Logs were hauled in from the Pine Lake area. They were milled at the David Friesen mill, with all the men and even boys helping (my dad was among them as a boy of 14). My great grandfather, Julius Hiebert, made the altar and the pews. I believe one of my Hiebert cousins in the area still has the altar in their home. Julius was also the first caretaker.

The site of the church building was just down the road from where I grew up. The building was moved to my father's farm which is now owned by my brother. It was also once my grandfather Jake's place. Great grandma Hiebert was the midwife for the community.

The last of the Julius Hiebert's children, my grandmother, Elizabeth Funk, recently passed away at the age of almost 97. Grandma is buried in the Silverwood Cemetery not far from Boggy Creek, alongside Grandpa Jake and a few other ancestors.

My mother, Irene, also has a lot of history in this area. I was baptized in 1964 at Boggy Creek, by Rev. Richard Tafel. I am now living at Quesnel, B.C., and very happy that the book is finally finished.

Endnotes

1. John Dyck and William Harris, eds., *1880 Village Census of the Mennonite West Reserve* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1998), 424.
2. John Dyck, ed., *Berghal Gemeinde Buch* (Steinbach: Hanover Steinbach Historical Society, 1993), 110 (which lists the family in the Berghal settlement), and 322 (which lists the family on the passenger list). The entire family listed in the Berghal Colony Church register is also listed on the passenger list, with the exception of Anganetha, who passed away in 1867, before the family left.
3. The Heinrich Dueck family is listed in the *Berghal Gemeinde Buch* on p. 166. There were only two children, Anna and Heinrich, with the family when they came to Canada. They are found on the passenger list on p. 264.
4. John Rempel and William Harris, eds., *Atlas of original Mennonite Village Homesteaders and Some Burial Plots of the West Reserve, Manitoba (Altona: by the editors, 1990), 30-31.* It seems that the Hiebert family may have lived on the East Reserve when they first came, and then moved to Neuhoffnung, possibly in the late 1870s. See *Berghal Gemeinde Buch*, 110.
5. Some of these ministers are mentioned in Adolf Ems and Leonard Doell, "Mennonite Swedenborgians", *Journal of Mennonite Studies* (Winnipeg: Chair of Mennonite Studies, 1992), 101-117.
6. See Doreen Funk, *Looking Back at family and friends* 13-14d, where George records, in a letter to Doreen, some of his memories of teaching at Happy Lake School, in 1946-1947.



Julius and Anna Hiebert's 25th Anniversary

Anna (1871-1960) & Julius Hiebert (1869-1959)

welcome to the

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada



The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada is working on a Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia Online. On this page is an illustration of the web site: www.mhsc.ca which allows a search of the information of this encyclopedia. It is hoped that there will not only be extended use by MMHS members, but also some contributors. If you are interested please contact the editor of *HP* (see p.2).

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Book Review

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Zagradovka*, trans. Victor G. Doerksen (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications & Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 2000) sc., 112 pp.

Reviewed by Isaac Block

Gerhard Lohrenz's German manuscript was published by Echo-Verlag, Rosthern Saskatchewan in 1947 as the fourth book in the Echo Historical Series. When he wrote the manuscript he had neither the advantage of easy access to archives where he may have been able to do primary research, nor the benefit of interviewing World War II refugees who survived the ordeal of escaping Zagradovka in their Russian homeland.

This 112 page book is a strange mix of history, memory, and sentimentality. As a historical document, the English translation is an improvement over the original text in that it has a number of footnotes which not only substantiate the record, but also allow the historian to do further reading and research prompted by these notes. Having said this though, there are still very many stories or comments for which there are no substantiating references. The impression that this is a scholarly historical work may be misleading.

While the book is based in part on memory, the writing style is inconsistent in that it is not always clear who memories are being reported. Additionally, Lohrenz relies quite heavily on the writings of other people who also write largely from their own memories. This is not to say that the memories are misleading, but as with all memories, they may be shaped and reshaped through ensuing years and experiences.

Without a doubt, the content of this book is driven by a good dose of sentimentality. This sentimentality reaches its highest point in the final paragraph in which Lohrenz once more goes down memory lane and describes a Zagradovka like the one he wishes it had been. This is not necessarily a fault, since by the standards of the society of Ukraine as well as Mennonite standards, in the late nineteenth century this colony had all the marks of a model community with its farms, industries, organization, and yes, its churches which cooperated rather than competed with each other.

Even though the book may come short as a scholarly work, and it may be distorted by memory, and it may be sentimentalized, it is likely the best and most comprehensive description available to us at this time of this daughter colony of Molotschna. Unfortunately, like many other Mennonite historians, Lohrenz makes little attempt to understand and explain the social and political context and realities into which the Mennonite immigrants were thrust when they arrive from Prussia. The tragedies that disrupted and destroyed Mennonite life in this colony seemed to come as a surprise to the members of this community, including Gerhard Lohrenz who grew up in it but eventually escaped and lived to tell the story.

This book is of considerable interest to me personally for two reasons. Lohrenz was one of my pastoral predecessors in the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, a congregation which was established to provide a church home for post World War II refugees such as those who survived the atrocities of the Russian revolution which he describes in some detail, and the second world war. His ability to build a church with people who had spent years as refugees after having to flee their beloved Mennonite colonies is remarkable. It is also of interest to me because both sets of my maternal great-grandparents were among the early settlers in Zagradovka and my maternal grandparents grew up in this colony during the formative and prosperous years which Lohrenz describes.

Book Notes

• "Church, Family, and Village, Essays on the Mennonite Life in the West Reserve" is

a production of the Local History Committee of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society. This twenty-two chapter, 310 page book is a wealth of detailed information regarding the life and time of the Mennonite West Reserve. It sells for \$20.

• "The Johann Stoesz Family 1731-1992" is a book compiled by Arlene Stoesz. The 88 page book focuses on Johann and Maria Stoesz, who settled in Mountain Lake Minnesota, and their descendants. Contact the author at 39891 610th Ave. Butterfield, MN 56120. Cost is \$15 American.

• "As Remembered, Life and Times of and by S. Fred Peters" of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan is an 156 page autobiography complete with story and photos.

• "History of the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church" by Peter Bergen is now in print. This project began as a history of the Church's first bishop, Abraham Doerksen, but was expanded to a history of the church. The book is hard cover, and a total of 308 pages. Copies can be purchased from the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg, Mb R3P 0M4 for \$40.

• "The Rempel Family Book" follows the descendants of Wilhelm Rempel (1820-1901) and Agatha Sawatzky (1825-1882). This hard cover, 500 page, book contains stories and information of people living in Mexico. Contact George Rempel, 804-325 6th Street, Winkler, MB R6W 1G5 for more information.

• "Heinrichs, The Descendants of Jakob Julius Heinrichs (1849-1893) and Katharina Dueck (1850-1910)" is a soft cover, 110 page, book that focuses on genealogical information. For a paper or electronic copy, contact M. Albert Durksen, 27 Pinecrest Bay, Winnipeg, MB, R2G 1W2

• "Daß du nicht Vergessest der Geschichten, Lebenserinnerungen von Heinrich Dürksen" is an autobiography by Heinrich Dürksen following his life from Russia to Paraguay.

• "Looking back at Family and Friends", by Doreen Linda Funk contains short stories and family history of the Hiebert, Funk, Burwash, Laliberte families who lived in the Boggy Creek and Happy Lake areas. The book is soft cover with about 75 pages.