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(Continued on inside back cover)
With this issue the *Journal* becomes a quarterly. From now on, it will appear in Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter issues, which will all be devoted to the history and folklore of our people.

The decision to expand the *Journal* from three issues to four a year was made, after a review of our publications policy, at the January 1982 meeting of the AHSGR Board of Directors, held in Anaheim, California. We know that our members will welcome this decision. We hope that they will also keep sending us both the quantity and quality of contributions that will make it a success.

We shall need a constant stream of materials not only from our historians and folklorists, but also from members who do not have such specialized knowledge. Many of you have reminiscences written by your immigrant parents or grandparents, old letters from Russia, family documents of historical value, and other such items. Not all of these are of general interest, but many of them are. We would be happy to translate them (if necessary) and edit them for publication. We have competent translators who can cope with Russian and German languages, including dialects and the old German script.

You will note that a large portion of this issue is devoted to items dealing with the famine in Russia in the early 1920's. Many of our older members will have memories of that period: the heart-rending appeals from relatives and friends in Russia, the widespread organization of relief societies among our people in America, the donation of large sums of money for famine relief, the sending of thousands of food parcels to individual families, and the large-scale effort of the U.S. government, through the American Relief Administration, to help famine sufferers in Russia. The famine caused the flight from the stricken area of many thousands of people, some of whom went to other parts of Russia, but most of them to western Europe and eventually to America. We have the story of a group of these in Barbara Wagner's "Fugitives from Fear" and the story of an individual in Edward John Amend's "Escape from Starving Russia", the first part of which appeared in our last issue. We also have the first half of a list of nearly 900 Volga German refugees, who arrived in Frankfurt on the Oder on December 9, 1922. Many of these later came to America and some of them, or their descendants, are now members of our society. We want to hear from them, particularly from those who have stories to tell.

The rest of this issue, as you can see from the Table of Contents, deals with a variety of topics.

Of great interest to me personally, as it will be to many of you, is the report by Charles Lambrecht of his exciting discovery of aerial photographs of some of our ancestral villages.

Worth special attention, because it is a type of activity that should be emulated in hundreds of our communities, is the report by Felix Kuehn of a research project in rural Manitoba, in which much material of historical value is being discovered in old church records and in average homes.

Professor John B. Toews of Calgary returns to our pages with some special insights into Mennonite religious and social life in Russia in the 1860's and 1870's.

To these and to our other contributors, whose names are more familiar to you, I express thanks on your behalf.
Dr. Karl Stumpp carried greetings to the 1971 convention held in Lincoln, Nebraska. At left is David J. Miller, then president. At right is Ruth M. Amen who was convention chairman.

Dr. Stumpp returned in 1978 for AHSGR's tenth anniversary convention. Emma S. Haynes is at right.
DR. KARL STUMPP (1896-1982) A
Life of Service to his People
Adam Giesinger

The indefatigable researcher, distinguished historian and cartographer, prolific writer and lecturer, Karl Stumpp, who inspired a great resurgence of interest in the history of the Germans in Russia and made the story of our people much more widely known in their old fatherland and overseas, died in Stuttgart, Germany, on 20 January 1982. He was the most respected and most influential figure in the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland in Germany and was the inspiration for us to establish a similar society in America. He loved his people and devoted his life to their service. His death will be mourned by the many thousands whose lives he touched. For those of us who knew him we]] the loss is a very personal one.

Karl Stumpp was born at Alexanderhilf near Odessa on 12 May 1896. His boyhood was that of the average farmer's son in the Russian German colonies at the turn of the century. Because he was a good student, his parents decided to send him on to higher education. After elementary schooling in his home village, he attended the district Zentralschule in Grossliebental and then Gymnasia (classical secondary schools) in Dorpat and Odessa, where he passed his matriculation examinations. Late in the year 1918, when the German occupation troops were leaving southern Russia, Karl Stumpp and a number of other colonist sons accompanied them to Germany, hoping to continue their studies there. Arriving in a fatherland on the point of economic collapse, with no means of their own, these young men faced many difficulties. Gertrud Braun, writing in Volk auf dem Weg in May 1981, reminisces about their situation and about the beginnings of the career of Karl Stumpp:

"Under the most difficult circumstances, making use of every opportunity for work to earn money, our young Black Sea Germans were able eventually to begin their studies at Tuebingen. I can still see the group before me. One of them towered over the others in height: Karl Stumpp. He was one of the quietest. No one could then have guessed how important he would later be for our people and far beyond them. In 1922 he passed his state examinations, with majors in Geography and Natural Science. The subject of his doctoral dissertation was: The German Colonies in the Black Sea Region. That was the beginning of his life's work. It has never been out of his mind since. The purpose and the meaning of his life had been determined."

Shortly before accepting the offer of a teaching position in the German secondary school for girls at Tarutino in Bessarabia, Karl Stumpp married Martha Prinz, a fellow-student at Tuebingen, also from the Black Sea region. The young couple then went to Bessarabia, which had been separated from Russia in 1918 and annexed by Rumania. This was a close as they could get at that time to their old homes in Russia. During the very busy years in Tarutino from 1922 to 1933, our very energetic young Dr. Karl Stumpp not only carried out his professional duties at the school with exceptional success, but engaged in a great variety of extracurricular activities. He established a youth organization, trained choirs, gave lectures throughout Bessarabia on the history of the Germans in Russia, and did extensive genealogical research. In 1933 he had to leave Bessarabia because he refused to become a Rumanian citizen.

Returned to Germany, he became business manager of the Verein fuer das Deutschtum im Ausland (Society for Germans in Foreign Countries), with office in Stuttgart. His field of concentration was, as one would expect, the Germans in Russia. During the five years that he held this position, he gave over 400 lectures on the history of his people. In 1938 he transferred to the Forschungsstelle des Russlanddeutschtums im Deutschen Auslandsinstitut (Research Department on Russian Germans in the Institute for Germans in Foreign Countries), with office in Berlin. Here he was in his element. Research and writing on the history of his people was now his full-time work.

Apart from his doctoral dissertation, which had been published in 1922, and a 17-page article on the same topic in Ostdeutsche Monatshefte in 1925, there were no Stumpp publications before 1936. From that year onward, however, until the outbreak of war with Soviet Russia in 1941, there was a steady stream of articles in various periodicals, most frequently in Deutsche Post aus dem Osten, but also in several others. By 1941 his researches had given him the materials for a book, Ostwanderung der Wurttemberger 1816-1822, a collection of documents on Wurttemberg emigrants to Russia.

The war brought new tasks. In the summer of 1940 Soviet Russia forced Rumania to give up Bessarabia, but made an agreement with Germany for the transfer of the Germans in that province to the Reich. Be-
cause of his familiarity with Bessarabia, Karl Stumpp was one of the persons chosen to go there in the fall of that year to supervise the migration of the 90,000 Bessarabian Germans to their ancestral homeland. Then in June 1941 came the German invasion of Russia. Within weeks the Wehrmacht had overrun large areas of Russia in which many Germans lived. Dr. Stumpp was now called upon to head an organization, called Kommando Stumpp, to collect information in the German villages of the occupied area and to give the people help and advice as needed. He set up his headquarters in the city of Dnepropetrovsk and, with about 50 men assigned to him, began his work early in the year 1942. The voluminous village reports prepared by this task force appeared to be lost in the confusion of the German withdrawal from Russia, but they got to Germany somehow and eventually turned up among the Captured German Documents in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. We have a microfilm of these Village Reports of 1942-1943 in our AHSGR Archives. There are articles on the reports in Work Paper No. 18 (September 1975) and in Work Paper No. 24 (Fall 1977).

From our point of view, another part of Dr. Stumpp’s work in Dnepropetrovsk in 1942 was of greater importance than the village reports. The city of Dnepropetrovsk had been the headquarters from 1800 to 1818 of the government office which had supervised the founding of the German Black Sea colonies. Well aware of this, Dr. Stumpp searched for the Archive in which the records of that era were kept, and he found it! The most interesting documents located there were the census records for the early years of the Black Sea colonies, particularly those for the year 1816. He put a number of people to work transcribing these lists, brought the transcripts to Germany, and eventually, with financial support from AHSGR, published them in his monumental work, The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862.

As a result of reverses in the war on the Russian front and internal quarrels in the Nazi hierarchy, Kommando Stumpp was abruptly dissolved in the early months of 1943 and Dr. Stumpp himself assigned to military duties. When the war ended in the spring of 1945, he was in West Germany, but his family in Berlin. Because he feared being caught in the Russian dragnet, he went underground for some months, working under an assumed name as a farmhand in Wuerttemberg. Unknown to him, for he had lost contact with them, his wife and daughters also found their way to the west and settled in Tübingen. Here the family was eventually united and Dr. Stumpp found employment as a teacher in the Uhlandgymnasium.

A new opportunity in his field of interest opened up for Karl Stumpp in the early 1950’s with the founding of the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, in which he soon became the dominant figure. He was the first editor of the society’s newsletter, Volk auf dem Weg, and continued in this post from 1951 to 1963. In 1957 he became chairman of the board and in 1968 Sprecher (authorized spokesman). He retained the latter position till 1975, when he retired from it because of his age. Always he considered it of the highest importance to make the history of his people better known. In the first years of the Landsmannschaft he published historical articles in Volk auf dem Weg, but soon decided that an annual journal devoted to the history of the Germans in Russia was an urgent need. Beginning in 1954 he edited a series of twelve Heimathbücher, which together covered materials on all German settlement areas in Russia and even the settlements of descendants overseas. No writer before him had ever attempted such comprehensive coverage. He also prepared a series of maps covering all settlement areas and included one or more of these with the Heimathbuch each year. In 1958 he published his very valuable Schrifttum ueber das Deutschum in Russland, a bibliographical guide widely used since that time by all students of the history of the Germans in Russia. All these publications, a basic library of materials in this field, appeared under the auspices of the Landsmannschaft.

In 1964 there appeared in Germany what is undoubtedly Karl Stumpp’s most widely distributed work, Die Russlanddeutschen: Zweihundert Jahre unterwegs, which has many beautiful pictures taken in the German colonies in Russia. In 1967 this was translated into English by Joseph S. Height and appeared under the title, The German-Russians. Widely sold among our people in America, this work aroused much interest and played a large role in inspiring the organization of our society in 1968.

Karl Stumpp was tremendously pleased when he received the news of the founding of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. For him it was another dream come true. He gave advice and encouragement to the founders, donated valuable books from his personal library to give a start to our Archives collection, visited us on the occasion of our second international convention, at Lincoln in June 1971, at which he was the featured speaker, and again at our tenth anniversary convention in Lincoln in June 1975. His amiable personality, his enthusiasm for the cause, and his inspiring addresses at these gatherings made a lasting impression on all who had the privilege of meeting and hearing him. To cap his contribution to us, he left us a lasting memorial of himself by assigning to us the rights to his two major
works: The German-Russians and The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862, which will be kept in print by us in perpetuity.

Although the infirmities of old age forced him to cut down on his activities in recent years, Dr. Stumpp could not stop working. In 1980 he produced an up-to-date revision of his bibliography, Das Schrifttum über das Deutschtum in Russland, now available from AHSGR. In process of publication is a monograph on The New Russian Names of the former German Villages. In the last weeks of his life he produced a new map showing where the Germans now live in the Soviet Union, as indicated by the 1979 Soviet Census.

Now, at last, he can rest from his labors.

DR. KARL STUMPP - IN MEMORIAM

Emma S. Haynes

When news of the death of Dr. Karl Stumpp reached me, I felt as though I had lost a member of my own family. From the time of the organization of AHSGR in October 1968, we had become close friends and working companions. I shall always remember him not only for his scholarship but also for his outgoing personality and dedication to the cause of the Russian German people. Hans Harder, a Mennonite author who lives in Germany, once said to me, "Have you ever noticed that when a person starts talking about Russian German affairs. Dr. Stumpp's whole face lights up?" And light up it did. Almost every waking moment of his life was devoted to telling or writing the history of his people.

In addition to being a scholarly person, he had a lighthearted side to his nature which revealed itself in many ways. I remember coming back to Stuttgart in 1973 with Dr. Stumpp and a group of Landsmann-schaft members. We had been attending a meeting in Freiburg in the Black Forest. Someone in our group had an accordion, and for practically the entire journey our compartment resounded with the sound of Russian German folksongs under Dr. Stumpp's direction. I often heard him tell the story that on the occasion of his first visit to Lincoln, in 1971, a young woman, who was a member of AHSGR, asked him to dance with her. He pointed to his heart, indicating that dancing might be too strenuous for him, but she replied, "Then you stand still and I'll dance around you!" Dr. Stumpp confessed that at this he got up and was soon dancing like everyone else. A few days later in Greeley, at the home of David Miller's son-in-law, who is a veterinarian, we saw Dr. Stumpp climb upon a horse, and with a broad smile gallop happily away, waving a big Texas hat. And who can ever forget how in 1978, at another Lincoln convention, he climbed up on a chair to show how much he appreciated being invited to the 10th anniversary of AHSGR.

His unfailing generosity has often been mentioned. During the early years of AHSGR, when we could not afford to buy any books for our archives, he emptied his shelves and gave us many volumes which still form the backbone of our collection. He also sent to AHSGR thirty-seven different maps which he allowed us to reproduce and sell at a profit to our society.

His desk was always covered with letters from all parts of the world asking for help in genealogical or historical matters connected with the Russian German people. These letters were always answered immediately. In my own case, it would be impossible to tell how often I turned to him with questions. Never once was I made to feel that this was a burden.

His large book on Emigration from Germany to Russia will always remain a permanent memorial to him. Since coming to Washington D.C. from Germany five years ago, I have spent much time working in the National Archives on Passenger Lists. The handwriting on these lists is often atrocious. When I come home, I invariably get out Dr. Stumpp's book on emigration to see if the names of people coming to America coincide with the names of their ancestors leaving Germany for Russia.

On May 12, 1981, on the occasion of his 85th birthday. Dr. Stumpp was honored by the West German government and by the Landsmannschaft for his many services. From that time on, his health steadily became worse and he was eventually confined to his bed. In his last letter to me, written on November 25, 1981, he told me that he had updated his map of the Soviet Union showing the areas in which German people live today. The map was given to Brezhnev on his visit to West Germany in November. Another letter was written by a friend just one week before he died. She told me that he was very weak and in much pain, but was extremely grateful for even the smallest favor done for him. We are glad that his suffering is now over, but it seems so very sad that he can no longer answer our letters. He leaves a gap which can never be filled.
MEMORIES OF DR. KARL STUMPP
Arthur E. Flegel

It was an honor and a privilege for me to have learned to know Dr. Karl Stumpp on a very personal basis. His name first came to my attention during the late 1950s when I was doing research at the Hoover Institute of Stanford University. There I found a variety of articles bearing his name and especially the early issues of the Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland. Correspondence with him aroused my desire to visit him in person at the earliest possible opportunity. Our first meeting took place in Stuttgart at the headquarters of the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland on September 12, 1966, while my wife and I were on a tour of Europe.

My first impression was one of awe at being in the presence of this famous person, the leading historian of the Germans in Russia. His impressive mien and stature tended to add to the awesomeness of the occasion, but this was soon dispelled by his friendly personality and his obvious readiness to become better acquainted with this visitor from America. The following day we took the train to Tuebingen, where he met us at the station with his Volkswagen and brought us to his modest flat. Here we met his charming soft-spoken wife, Martha, and enjoyed a brief but meaningful visit with the two of them. During the conversation, I learned about his extensive collection of historical and genealogical materials and of his hope of compiling all of this material into a book at some future date. Subsequent correspondence increased my interest in his materials and led to our second visit with him three years later, July 21, 1969. By this time the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia had come into existence, an occurrence that greatly interested and excited him.

We next met in person at the second international convention of AHSGR in Lincoln, Nebraska, in June 1971, where Karl Stumpp was one of the featured speakers. By this time, with encouragement from the AHSGR Board of Directors, he was on the verge of publishing his book on the emigration from Germany to Russia, I had volunteered to head an AHSGR campaign to raise the $10,000 needed to insure publication of the book under the auspices of the fledgling society. An Honorary Contributor's program was inaugurated to which our people responded in a most generous fashion, so that by the fall of 1971 the printing process could be begun.

Following the convention at Lincoln, Dr. Stumpp toured the United States and Canada. He arrived at Memo Park, California, on June 29 and stayed with us till July 12. On June 30 we drove him to Fresno, where his address to a gathering of some 500 people at the Lutheran Cross Church led to the formation that very evening of the Central California Chapter. His appreciation of the California scenery caused us to proceed to the Yosemite National Park, where the waterfalls and majestic cliffs overlooking the valley floor completely enraptured him. Similarly, the huge Redwoods at the nearby Mariposa Grove brought exclamations of awe from his lips. It became evident that he was a person deeply sensitive to the beauty and wonder of God's creation.

On July 2 we drove to Lodi, California, where a gathering of some 150 people enjoyed meeting the distinguished visitor and set about enthusiastically creating the Lodi Chapter of AHSGR. After returning to Menlo Park, Dr. Stumpp saw his first typical U.S. Fourth of July Parade at Redwood City on Sunday, July 4, for him another unforgettable experience. Since Monday was also an official holiday, it had been selected as a meeting date on which the members of the recently formed Golden Gate Chapter of AHSGR could meet Dr. Stumpp. It was a heart-warming occasion, with all those in attendance being deeply impressed with Dr. Stumpp's knowledge and his warm personality. In the following days we also took our guest to visit the Stanford University Libraries and the LDS Genealogical Branch Library at Oakland, and sightseeing in the San Francisco bay area and the Monterey peninsula. On July 12 he left by air for Denver, Colorado, to continue his tour in the Northern Colorado, area.

In the months that followed, our correspondence increased substantially because I was researching old maps in the Stanford University library to locate, for his proposed map of Germany and Poland, the towns and villages from which Germans had migrated to Russia, especially to Bessarabia. I was also reading microfilms of Bessarabian church records at the Oakland Genealogical Society Library for information for his Emigration book now well on in the printing process.

In the summer of 1972, Cleo and I again flew to Europe, where among other activities we visited Karl and Martha Stumpp at Tuebingen from July 8 to 12. During these times together we learned to know the Stumpp's very well. While there on this occasion, we helped them to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary.
sary by treating them to a festive dinner in the company of mutual friends. Along with sightseeing in the area, the week afforded us an opportunity to visit the Christian Guide printing firm to observe the Emigration book in the process of being printed.

Even after his 75th birthday, when the Stumpps had left Tuebingen to live in a Retirement Center in Stuttgart, he continued to sit at his desk working on projects for the Germans from Russia. In the last months of his life an alphabetical listing of all former German towns and villages in Russia with their present-day Russian names became a reality. These lists are now in process of publication by the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland in Stuttgart.

Dr. Stumpp's last trip to the United States was in 1978, when he attended the AHSGR tenth anniversary convention at Lincoln. The following year, I spent four days, June 6 to 10, with him at his retirement home in Stuttgart, during which I taped his fascinating life story. That was my last physical contact with him, although our constant exchange of letters continued as before to keep us close to one another.

Although we were aware that he was seriously ill, it was still a shock when his daughter, Mrs. Sigrid Thach, called us from St. Louis on January 21,1982, informing us of his death on the 20th. It was very like him to insist on dying at home, among his friends and familiar surroundings, rather than in the hospital. It is gratifying to know that he received excellent care and attention from the staff at the Retirement Center during his last days.

Dr. Kari Stumpp will remain in our memories as a warm, sensitive person, whose interest in research on the history of his beloved Landsleute never flagged and who was ever ready to serve them in any capacity and on all occasions. He can truly be called the Patriarch of the Germans from Russia in our time.

Dr. Stumpp at work in his home at the Retirement Center in Stuttgart. Photo was taken by Arthur E. Flegel.
An American Relief Administration Child Feeding Station in Alt Doennhof. (From A History of the Volga Relief Society)

JOHN W. MILLER
President Volga Relief Society

GEORGE REPP
Representative in Russia
Among the graphic descriptions of the conditions on the Volga in the years immediately following the Communist revolution is one by a German Communist, Bernhard Bartels, then living in the region, in his book, *Die Deutschen Bauern in Russland*, pp. 66-70:

The years 1919-1921 were the most critical time for the Soviet regime. It was cut off from its sources of raw material and foodstuffs. Its industry had no coal and worked only for war purposes, the railways stood still and the cities hungered. Bread had to be obtained, cost what it might. The Red army and the workers had to be fed. The kulaks had food reserves but would not give them up because nothing could be given them in payment. The food had to be taken from them by force. The means used was the Compulsory Assessment, for the accomplishment of which Food Commissars were appointed, with great authority and with their own troop detachments. Every farmer is now familiar with them and with the methods that they used to accomplish their ends. But this procedure saved the revolution. Without bread the Red army could not have been victorious. Besides, it thoroughly fleeced the rich farmers. That it did much harm also no one denies. The average farmer and to some degree even the poor farmer could not be spared; they too had to give up their bread, often the last they had. But there was no other way. The revolution demanded endless sacrifices from the workers. Many an innocent person suffered under the suspicion of having hidden bread; many a farmer became a victim of the mere rapacity and cruelty of some of these food collectors. Many a troop detachment was made up of highly unreliable local people. Some mutinied against the Soviet regime and made common cause with the kulaks. In some places also there prevailed a criminally careless attitude with respect to the foodstuffs collected, so that very large quantities spoiled.

All this was grist to the mills of the enemies of the Soviet regime and embittered even its friends. And so from 1919 to 1921 one uprising after another flared up in the German colonies, on the Volga as well as in the south.

The first uprising on the Volga was on the Bergseite; it was liquidated by comrades Schneider and Beret. Shortly thereafter followed the Warenburg uprising, plotted by the kulaks Friedrich Bier and Wormsbecher to oppose the land and food assessment policies. In January 1921 there raged in the colonies, overrunning them twice, the bands of Vakulin, who was himself difficult to find because he was given hiding places in all areas by Russian and German kulaks. Everywhere, wherever the rebels were able to capture the leaders of the Soviet first subjected to the most cruel tortures. There perished in this way, as a victim of the Vakulin uprising, comrade H. Bartel of Schaffhausen. But the most dangerous of the rebellions was that of Pyatokov. It followed that of Vakulin, even before that one was completely liquidated. Pyatokov had been a district food commissar, who had become a traitor. He invaded the Volga colonies from the west, as had Vakulin (they had been connected there with the rebels of Tambov). Very quickly he approached Seelmann, which was defended only by a small group of Communists and Red army men. These were defeated in the unequal battle. All those that were captured by movement, they murdered them. These were not only Communists but many non-party people. Often they were Pyatokov were murdered. In this way 100 men perished, in addition to those that died in the battle. Only a few comrades escaped, as if by a miracle. The liquidation of the Pyatokov uprising cost many sacrifices.

Then a new calamity overtook us, the great famine of 1921-1922. O sorely tried Soviet Russia! Just liberated by gigantic exertions and sacrifices from the gangs of international counterrevolution, still covered by the bleeding wounds inflicted by the terrible world war, you are struck by the misery of a famine of a severity never seen or heard of before! As if the elements wanted to come to the help of the defeated enemies, to knock down even at this late stage the gravely wounded victor!

The Volga German Republic was the center of the region of the crop failures. Even in the year 1920 there had been a crop failure here. The harvest had brought only 2.4 puds per dessiatine of rye and only 5.5 puds of wheat, not even a return of the seed. No general famine resulted then, because some last remnants of grain from previous years were still on hand. In isolated cases there was famine. But the area sown and the numbers of livestock declined drastically. The total area sown in 1921 was only 33 percent of that of 1916, that for wheat only 9.3 percent. The number of horses in 1921 (before harvest!) was only 46 percent of that of 1916, that of cows 70 percent.

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Then a new calamity overtook us, the great famine of 1921-1922. O sorely tried Soviet Russia! Just liberated by gigantic exertions and sacrifices from the gangs of international counterrevolution, still covered by the bleeding wounds inflicted by the terrible world war, you are struck by the misery of a famine of a severity never seen or heard of before! As if the elements wanted to come to the help of the defeated enemies, to knock down even at this late stage the gravely wounded victor!

The Volga German Republic was the center of the region of the crop failures. Even in the year 1920 there had been a crop failure here. The harvest had brought only 2.4 puds per dessiatine of rye and only 5.5 puds of wheat, not even a return of the seed. No general famine resulted then, because some last remnants of grain from previous years were still on hand. In isolated cases there was famine. But the area sown and the numbers of livestock declined drastically. The total area sown in 1921 was only 33 percent of that of 1916, that for wheat only 9.3 percent. The number of horses in 1921 (before harvest!) was only 46 percent of that of 1916, that of cows 70 percent.
The crop failure of 1921 was a total one. The harvest again gave only 2.4 puds of rye per dessiatine and of wheat only 1.6 puds. The causes of this double crop failure were, on the one hand the drought, which extended over the whole south, southeast and east of Russia and which our agriculture had not yet learned to master, and on the other hand the long war and then the civil war, which had completely disorganized agriculture with its mobilizations, requisitions and contributions, and its banditry and so on. Particularly difficult for the colonies were the grain deliveries to the central government for feeding the Red army and the cities. In 1918 eighteen million puds were delivered, in 1919 twelve million puds, in 1920 six million puds. Even in 1921, before it was known that there would be a crop failure, one million puds were taken away. As one can see, these figures decreased from year to year, but this was due to a decline in the grain reserves, not to a decrease in the pressure.

The new crop failure therefore found the Volga colonies completely denuded of reserves. As a result the famine was bound to strike here immediately with full force. This is what did happen. Part of the population fled panic-stricken in all directions in the hope of finding shelter and a piece of bread somewhere. In the period from 1 January 1921 to 15 August 1921 alone the population declined by 93,000 persons and 95 percent of those still remaining here were hungry. According to statistics presented to the Central Aid Commission, $6^{1/2}$ million puds of grain imports were needed in the area for putting the fields into crop, for feeding the needed work animals and breeding livestock and as food for the population. Because of the enormous extent of the calamity over the whole of Russia, help on such a massive scale from the central government could not be counted on. Altogether it was possible through government help, through bartering operations of public societies, and through foreign and domestic aid to gather up $1/2$ to 2 million puds of grain. Some 80,000 persons were evacuated or fled from the area, 50,000 to 70,000 persons died of hunger. Even today, six years after the frightful calamity, the deep wounds which the young Volga Commune received in the famine years 1920-1922 have not healed completely, particularly because in the interim there has been one additional crop failure (in the year 1924).

Although Bartels gives us a fairly accurate account of the causes and the calamitous effects of the famine in the Volga region, as a good Communist he also goes out of his way to find excuses for even the worst excesses of the agents of the Soviet regime. Those of us who know the history of that time note a significant omission in his story. Although he mentions foreign aid, he fails to give credit to the large-scale American relief effort which saved many thousands of Volga German lives during the famine period. The American aid did receive acknowledgement, however, from another Volga German writer of the time, Peter Sinner, who wrote an article on "Our Volga Germans in North America" in the 15 January 1923 issue of the Communist periodical, *Unsere Wirtschaft*, which is given in translation below:

There are more or less numerous Volga German colonies in several states of the United States and in Canada, Right at the beginning of the famine here in the old country these joined together to form Volga Relief Societies to encourage each other to help and to undertake all that was humanly possible. And what these simple workers, on their own initiative, not forced by anyone, have done out of love for their old home and for their brothers and friends, is without parallel in human history.

Of the more than 60 million dollars, for which ARA in the course of the past year has delivered foodstuffs, clothing and medical supplies to the famine regions of Russia, the calloused hands of the Volga German workers in North America contributed a lion's share through their relief societies. They are credited with having contributed more than half of the amount that was distributed as famine relief through ARA in the German Volga region.

According to American estimates, at least 10 million people in Russia were saved from death by starvation through help from North America. Of the Volga Germans, G. Repp believes, at least 75 percent would have died of hunger or infectious diseases, if the help in foodstuffs, clothing and medical supplies had not come from America. These figures are not quoted in the American colonist press in a boastful manner, to gratify the self-respect of American citizens. No! People are not boastful about this in America.

Next, it is thought, in addition to the foodstuffs, the crying need for clothing and shoes has to be satisfied. Further, the people feel obliged to participate in the most active way in the economic reconstruction of the Volga colonies. They want to help provide the old home with livestock and equipment: work animals, plows, tractors, machinery, and the like.
To provide the additional aid in the most systematic way, the two oldest and strongest relief societies in Lincoln and in Portland took the initiative and called a convention of all the Volga German societies and groups of the United States and Canada, to meet in Lincoln on 3, 4 and 5 November, for the purpose of establishing an association of all Volga German societies in North America. Delegates came from most of the states in which Volga Germans live. The societies in Nebraska, Oregon, Colorado, Kansas, South and North Dakota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, etc. were more or less well represented. Altogether about 2300 people participated in the convention.

To report on the situation, G. Repp, Rev. Jacob Wagner and ex-Governor Goodrich, the first American who traveled through our colonies the previous fall, were invited to address the gathering. The main report came from G. Repp. His views were seconded by Jacob Wagner, who had just returned from a trip to Russia on the last day of the convention. These reports on the situation in the Volga colonies led to the following unanimous conclusion; "The situation in the old country will continue to be very serious this winter. We must continue to help with all available means."

The result of the convention was the founding of an "American Volga Relief Society", which unites all the Volga Germans of the United States and Canada, said to number more than 200,000 persons. To the executive committee of the new society, which has its headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska (Orpheum Building), were elected: as president, Dr. H. P. Weckesser from Anton; as vice-presidents, Roehrig (Balzer) and Jacob Wagner (Frank); as secretary, P. Schmidt; and as treasurer, J. J. Stroh.

The society will undoubtedly be beneficial to Volga Germans both here and over there. Soon after the close of the convention the solicitation work in all areas began with redoubled energy. Through the Volga German newspapers, Kalifornia Post, Dakota Freie Presse and Welt-Post, as well as at all public gatherings, our countrymen were asked to organize the sending of food-stuffs and clothing, and to give gifts or loans to provide horses and agricultural machinery for friends here in the old country.

At the same time this association of all Volga German groups in North America also promotes their own ethnic interests, their own culture, and along with it the economic significance of the Volga Germans in America. Thus our Americans have gained much for themselves through the help that they have given to their old home. Our need has caused them, in order to become strong, to find their way together from the four winds, to close ranks and to build a mighty aid organization, which has won them much respect in their old home, in the eyes of their fellow-citizens and their country.

So wrote Peter Sinner. But the Communist editors of Unsere Wirtschaft were not happy with his praise of the Volga German organizations in America, which they considered to be the creation of pastors and others hostile to the Soviet regime. They appended the following comments to the Sinner article:

While we bring the article by P. Sinner in our periodical, the editorial staff feels obliged to make the following comments:

In the article itself, as well as in the material of the famine aid, there is noticeable the somewhat one-sided nationalistic character of the American emigrant organizations, which were influenced by such people as Pastor Schleuning, recently in America, and other similar nationalists, who are not so concerned about helping the famine sufferers, as in raising their own authority and undermining Soviet power.

We believe that the American Germans would have been able to do their duty towards the hungry people much better through the direct mediation of ARA than through the Schmidts, Schleunings and other "benefactors of the people", since a considerable portion of the contributions would have been saved from the necessity of an evaporation in the treasuries of the Schmidt-Schleuning offices.

We are happy that many American Volga Germans are beginning to be of the same opinion and are ignoring some of our emigrants, the big business men and the pastors.
NOTES


2. *kulak = fist* was a derogatory term applied to the better-off peasants in Russia by the Soviet regime. It came to be used for any peasant who farmed on a large enough scale to employ hired help.

3. 1 pud = 36 lbs. 1 dessiatine = 2.7 acres.


5. ARA = American Relief Administration, headed by Herbert Hoover, set up to help famine sufferers in Russia.

A REPLY TO THE EDITORS OF *UNSERE WIRTSCHAFT*

Emma Schwabenland Haynes*

The editorial staff of *Unsere Wirtschaft* did not tell the truth when it said Russian German Americans had used anti-Soviet pastors and industrialists to forward money which they had raised for famine sufferers. The truth of the matter is that from the very start, American citizens worked through the American Relief Administration (A.R.A.). The first telegram to that organization was sent on August 8, 1921 by John W. Miller of Portland, Oregon, three days before he was elected president of the Volga Relief Society. Mr., George Repp, who left for Russia on September 9, 1921, was on the payroll of the A.R.A. and accompanied Governor James P. Goodrich, Herbert Hoover's personal representative, to the German colonies. In the same way, the Central States Relief Society with headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the Colorado societies sent their money to Washington D.C. The records of the A.R.A. credit the Russian German people of the United States with $220,000.00.

In addition, an even greater amount of money was sent to Russia by means of Food Drafts, which sold for $10.00 each and could go directly to a friend or relative. The package contained 49 pounds of flour, 25 pounds of rice, 10 pounds of lard, 10 pounds of sugar, and 20 cans of milk. By the end of 1922 it was also possible to send $20.00 for a Clothing Draft which consisted of cotton, flannel, and woolen yard goods plus lining, buttons, and thread. All food drafts and clothing drafts were also furnished by the A.R.A.

The Volga Relief Society as well as other societies united in November 1922 to form the American Volga Relief Society under the presidency of Dr. H. P. Weckesser of Lincoln, Nebraska. That fall, and again in 1923, over 130,000 pounds of new and used clothing were gathered and shipped free of charge to Russia by the A.R.A. This clothing was packed in Lincoln and accompanied to Russia by Mr. Jacob Volz of York, Nebraska.

It is true that during these years several ministers and priests who had formerly served along the Volga came to the United States to collect money for famine sufferers. Rev. Johannes Schleuning, for example, tells us that he received $10,000.00. Such sums, however, were extremely small when compared with the hundreds of thousands of dollars sent to the A.R.A.

Major credit for the famine aid must be given to the United States Congress which on December 22, 1921 appropriated $20,000,000.00 to buy corn and seed grain for the Soviet Union. It was also the United States government which paid for the child feeding program. During the twenty-two months that the A.R.A. remained in Russia, it distributed $61,500,000.00 in food, clothing, and medicine, which constituted ninety per cent of all the foreign aid given to the Soviet Union during these years. This is a fact which has seldom, if ever, been mentioned by the communist government of Russia.

*Mrs. Haynes is the author of *A History of the Volga Relief Society,* published in Portland, Oregon by A. E. Kern & Co. in 1941. There is a copy in the AHSGR Archives (GR-35).
Civil war disruptions of economic life, food requisitioning by the Bolshevik regime and a severe drought in the spring of 1921 brought famine conditions to the Volga region, which led thousands of German colonists to flee westward hoping to reach Germany and eventually America. This is the story of one such group. The majority of these were from Frank Kutter, a small German village "a day's distance by horse" south-west of Saratov; a few families were from Frank and from Walter.

By the fall of 1921, many people of Frank Kutter felt that they could not survive the hardships any longer. They decided to leave the village which had been so dear to them for so long. A man named Alex Mueller told his fellow villagers that, although winter was approaching, it would be unwise to postpone their decision to leave. He insisted that by spring it might be impossible to leave at all. He assured them the trip would not be difficult, and that they should be in America within two weeks. Muller had many connections and knew how to work with Russian government officials. He proceeded to help make arrangements for the trip.

Alex Mueller was formerly known as Alexander Ivanovich Bier and had originally come from Warenburg on the Wiesenseite (east side) of the Volga. He was well educated and had served as a government official under the Czar.* After the Bolsheviks took over, he was imprisoned, brought to trial and sentenced to be shot. His guard in Jail was also a German and helped him to escape. Bier walked for several miles in the Volga river so that dogs could not follow his scent. He finally settled down in a town several miles north of Balanda. Later when officials started to ask questions about him there, he escaped and came to Frank Kutter, where he used the name Mueller.

There were about 105 people who wanted to leave. Fred Zeiler, the Schaefers and the Guenthers were from Frank; Maria Schossler and the Alles and Gies families were from Walter. Everyone else was from Frank Kutter.

The people held an auction sale to liquidate their assets. Since they could take only what they could carry, they had to sell nearly everything. They had no choice but to accept the best price they were offered. Things which were unsold had to be left behind, usually given to relatives who decided to stay in Russia. There was little interest on the part of the Russians in their preparations to leave, and no moves were made by the government to prevent them from going.

Alex Mueller "made the papers" for the people who were leaving. Draft age for the Czar's army had been 20, but draft age for the Communist army was 19. To avoid trouble with the authorities, Muller made certain that no one had papers showing him draft age. He changed their ages to make the young looking ones younger and the old looking ones older.

Among the people leaving were the Sigwart and Wagner families. Magdalena Sigwart was the widow of David Sigwart, who had managed the flour mill in Frank Kutter till his death in 1918. There were three Sigwart children: Anna, David and Leah. The Wagner family consisted of Conrad and Anne Marie (Magdalena's sister) and their four boys, Conrad (Coonie), Adolph, Fred and Dave; Conrad's parents, Henry and Mariakatherine Wagner; and Conrad's second cousin and wife. Henry and Jette Wagner.

Magdalena Sigwart had a bundle containing cotton summer quilts, winter quilts with camel or sheep wool filling, flannel sheet blankets, pillows and a featherbed. Each family took along large quantities of bread, smoked summer sausage and sweetwood tea, which was the only food they would eat for weeks, and, as they would later discover, would be gone before they reached Poland. Besides their own individual eating utensils, they took a pot, tea kettle and frying pan to do the cooking. As for clothing, they could take only the bare necessities; most of them had only the clothes on their backs.

The Wagner family had millions of rubles of paper money in a gunny sack — inflation was rampant. The Swigarts had some gold coins, which they attached two deep all around a belt and slipped through a tunnel in the waist of Anna's union suit. Many of the women sewed their family gold coins into the layers of petticoats that they wore.

* Alexander Bier was a first cousin of Rev. J. C. Schwabenland, father of Emma Schwabenland Haynes.
On or about 5 December 1921, the group left Frank Kutter for Saratov by sled. All were driven by relatives who chose to remain in Russia. Some of the sleds were open, others were closed, but the drivers always sat outside. Some of the sleds were pulled by horses, others by camels. Camels had been brought to that area earlier and were quite common. Each sled contained blankets to keep the occupants warm. The trip to Saratov took nearly 24 hours. They left midday and stayed overnight in a small town. They broke up into small groups and stayed at several homes where they paid the people for the food and lodging. They arrived in Saratov the following day.

It was necessary to stay in the city for several days, while Alex Mueller's two brothers, who lived there, helped him to make the travel arrangements. While still in Sartor, one of the Bernhardt children was running around in the house where they were staying, when he slipped and fell, breaking his leg, which forced the family to return to Frank Cutter. Alex Muller had a sick child and was not able to go with the group when they left Sartov. He planned to come later.

The people traveled by train in empty boxcars. There were no seats or beds to sit on; it was necessary to sit or lie on the bundles they carried. There was no stove or other source of heat, even though the temperatures were well below freezing. There were no windows in the boxcars and so it was always dark, even during the day. The clatter of the train and the smoke gave everyone headaches. There were no toilet facilities or water to wash with.

There were many delays on the trip. Often the boxcars were removed from the main track and put on a siding for a day or more; then they would travel a way farther and stop again. Sometimes when they were stopped, the boys were sent out to scavenge whatever scrap wood they could find, with which a small fire was built on a square metal plate in the boxcar. Water for tea was obtained by gathering snow and melting it over the fire.

Not everyone was in the same boxcar. Usually the women, girls and small children stayed together and the men and older boys were by themselves. Only a few people could understand the Russian language. No one knew Polish. Most of the time no one had any idea where they were or what would happen next. What few decisions could be made were made by the men. The women were neither consulted nor informed.

When the group arrived in Smolensk, it was necessary to stay there about a week before another train was available. Arrangements were made to stay in an abandoned house which consisted of one large room. People went to the market and bought apples, potatoes and sausages. They cooked the potatoes in their skins and dipped them in the pan drippings from the fried sausages. This was the first hot food they had eaten since leaving Saratov two or three weeks earlier.

Everyone was beginning to show the effects of cold and hunger. Three-year-old Lean Sigwart died of diphtheria in Smolensk, the first death of at least twenty seven before the group reached Frankfurt on the Oder. Someone in town built a small casket, and they received permission to bury Leah in a mass grave in town. They dug a niche in the wall of the grave for the small casket, and John Miller, who had been schoolmaster and preacher in Frank Kutter, led a service for her. Henry Hoffman and the Hoffman baby also died in Smolensk. Most of the others who died later had no services, and their bodies had to be abandoned wherever they died. Sometimes it was even necessary to drop the dead from a moving train.

The group continued the trip to Minsk by boxcar, arriving there about 1 January 1922. The train was parked at the edge of town, and they stayed in the boxcars a few days until the cars were needed elsewhere. Then they went into town and made arrangements to stay in an apartment building. In the middle of the night, a number of men were taken away for questioning. Apparently they were able to satisfy the authorities, because they were released the following morning.

At Minsk the people who had been together up to this point broke up into various groups. Some were detained here by illness or death. Others joined groups from other villages and went on with them. The Stroh brothers decided to return to Frank Kutter. John Miller was sick and his family stayed in Minsk with him. His wife, Odelia, had a baby there, but both she and the baby died.

While John Miller was still in Minsk, Alex Mueller and his family arrived and joined him. The two searched all over Minsk for other Germans who were also trying to leave Russia. Unlike many people who were leaving the country illegally, these wanted to have legal papers. Alex and John made a list of these people and traveled to Moscow, about 500 miles east of Minsk, where they told the Communist authorities that these were displaced persons driven from their homes in Germany during the war and obtained approval to take them out of the country from Minsk. There was a whole train-load of these people. Only moments after crossing the border into Poland, their train was stopped, but by then they were safe from the Russians.
The remainder of this account is about the group made up of the Wagner, Sigwart and Krenning families, who were to be joined later by the Guenther and a man named Schwebel.

It was only about 18 miles from Minsk to the Polish border. The three families paid two drivers 18 million rubles to take them to the border in their sleds. Henry and Jette's share was 3 million rubles and they sold their felt boots to get the money. Jette had spare leather shoes and Henry had leather boots. In spite of their constant fear, they were still able to joke that the person who bought their felt boots also bought the lice!

When they left Minsk, the moon was shining brightly. The old people and small children rode in the sleds with a few of the bundles. Everyone else walked and carried whatever they could. About half way to the border, they were passed by a man riding a gray horse. He looked back over his shoulder in an ominous way, and they sensed that it meant trouble. About a mile farther on, the group came to a small Russian town. There was a long row of houses with a church at the end of it. As they approached the church, a police officer came out of a building and asked where they were going. They were certain that this was the man who had passed them earlier. After asking them a few questions and making threatening gestures with his gun, he arrested them. It was obvious that he had guessed that they were trying to leave the country.

The adults were put into a shack used by summer field workers. While the flimsy construction may have been adequate for use in the summer, the place had no heat and even with 14 people in it was at a sub-freezing temperature. The officer took the children to his house for the night, where his wife fed them and kept them warm.

In front of the officer, the sled drivers promised to return to Minsk with them and refund their nine million rubles. Although the amount mentioned was only half the actual amount involved, the officer seemed surprised that they had charged so much.

While they were detained by the police, the group became acquainted with a farmer from Husenbach who lived on the other side of the gulch. The man had a large family and they too had been arrested while trying to leave the country. They had decided to stay in Russia and he took the job of feeding the cattle of the chief of police. It was decided that the group would stay with this Volga German family while Conrad Wagner and Konrad Krenning went back to Minsk with the drivers to get their money back. While in Minsk, they met Jacob Guenther and his family and brought them back with them. A German named Schwebel who was serving in the Russian army and was stationed in that town, heard the group talking and decided to leave Russia with them. He needed to be very cautious about his plans, because in his case it meant desertion from the army.

After the group had stayed with the Husenbach family for a time, a man who lived in a village near the border was visiting in the area. He was hired to take them to his village in his sled. From there they hoped to escape across the border. The last few nights in Russia, the group stayed in an empty schoolhouse. Their food had run out by that time and so Coonie Wagner and Fred Guenther went begging door to door for food.

At first it was thought that civilians would help them to cross the border, but when the time came to go, it was two uniformed men who escorted them. They said they would take them as far as the border, but not across it. It was obvious that the police had been bribed with gold and silver in order to get their cooperation in the escape. There was about a foot of snow on the ground, and after it got dark the guides took them to a place where they thought it would be safe to cross the border. They pointed out the light of a farmhouse in the distance and told them to go there. The escapees walked in knee-deep snow single file toward the light. When they finally reached the farmhouse, they learned with disbelief that they were safe in Poland at last. Polish border guards came to the house later and seemed surprised that the group had not been stopped by the Russian border patrol.

The Volga German refugees were given food and lodging at the farmhouse that night. A foot of straw was spread on the living room floor for them to sleep on. It was the first night that they slept well since leaving Frank Kutter many weeks earlier. The next day they all went into town and were able to get space on a boxcar going to Baranowicz.

When the train arrived in Baranowicz, it was met by Polish officials who had the difficult task of determining what to do with the people who were fleeing Russia by the thousands. Like the group from Frank Kutter, nearly all were sick or dying from cold, starvation and disease.

The dead were removed from the boxcars and taken away on wagons. Everyone was inspected for disease and lice. Clothes were fumigated and everyone had to take a shower, which was a novel experience,
since in Russia people bathed in a washtub. Large numbers were dunked in tanks of antiseptic solution. Unfortunately, arriving in Poland was not the end of their problems. Poland had suffered severely from the effects of war and did not have the resources to handle thousands upon thousands of sick and dying refugees. Relief was starting to come in from American agencies, but it was never adequate for the enormous job to be done. Frau Werner of the Red Cross in Warsaw worked hard to help families through the terrible ordeal. Many claim they owe their survival to the Red Cross.

In the weeks and months ahead, the refugees lived under the most deplorable conditions in unheated buildings formerly used as prisons or army barracks. It was not unusual to have frozen moisture condensation on the inside of the "hospitals". People slept like sardines wedged together on three-tiered wooden decks. There were no mattresses and they had only their own blankets to cover them. They were really no better off than when they had lived in the boxcars. Cigarette smoke in the cramped quarters made the air unbreathable. A common complaint was that most people often went for days without anything to eat. Giant rats often stole what little food was available and sometimes attacked the people.

Baranowicze served as a clearing house for all of the refugees. There were three hospitals there, plus other hospitals in Warsaw and Poznan. Sick people were sent to one of these cities. Those who were not sick were usually sent to Poznan. There were often 300 people or more in these transports. At this point families became separated and many people never saw their loved ones again. Often they never found out what had become of their lost relatives.

Those who were "well" lived in constant fear of getting sick and being taken away from their family. When someone did get sick, their people hid them under the covers during inspection so that they would not be discovered. This was not difficult to do, since it was very cold, and everyone shivered under the covers all day, leaving their beds only to go to the outhouse. Because people were wedged in so tightly, there was no way for the inspectors to tell who might be missing. But there were always people who informed on others and then the sick person would be taken away, possibly never to be seen again.

Of the Wagner and Sigwart families, only six persons were well: Grandma, Coonie and Jette Wagner, and Magdalena, Anna and Dave Sigwart. They were housed in a brick building in Baranowicze for a few days before being moved to Poznan. The army barracks in Poznan were unfit to live in. The roof leaked badly and the dirt floor became a sea of mud whenever it rained. There was no heat at all. Jette miscarried her baby. Grandma Wagner became sick and was taken away, never to be seen again.

Back in Baranowicze, Conrad Wagner waited for his family to get out of the hospital. Dave and Grandpa were put feet-to-feet in the same bed. One day, Dave could feel Grandpa's cold body and knew that he was dead. After he told the nurse that Grandpa was "Kaputt", the body was taken away and never seen again. The ground was frozen too hard to bury the bodies, and from the window, Dave could see them stacked up behind the hospital like cordwood.

Finally the Wagners were well enough to leave the hospital and took a train to Warsaw where they planned to connect with a transport train going to Poznan. In Warsaw, however, both Conrad and Dave became ill and were hospitalized. Kasper Knopf was also in the hospital there with Conrad. Dave was still in the hospital after Conrad got out. He was seriously ill and eventually became delirious. Finally he was dunked in a tank of disinfectant, which apparently broke the fever, and after that he became coherent and started to recover.

Meanwhile, in Poznan, Coonie and the three Sigwarts were making plans to go on to Germany. This was the middle of March 1922. Coonie was terrified that he would never see his family again and was worried about what might have happened to them. He and the Sigwarts were carrying their belongings across an open field from their barracks to a large block type building where everyone was to assemble before boarding the train for Germany. Just then, a train pulled up and Coonie saw his family get off! What an emotional reunion! Immediately they made arrangements to travel together so that they would not be separated again.

It was early in the morning when the two families left Poznan. This was the first time they traveled on a passenger train. A Lutheran Sister from Bielefeld traveled with them. It was necessary to wait for several hours at the German border while she made arrangements for the trainload of people to travel on to Frankfurt on the Oder. While waiting, they saw many people who had traveled various parts of the journey with them, but had become separated along the way. As the train crossed over into Germany, the sun was shining brightly, a symbol of the prospects that lay ahead of them.

When they arrived in Frankfurt, it was night and every single light was turned on. Again, they were
inspected, fumigated and had to take showers. They were given clothes and food furnished by the Red Cross. Although they didn't get their old clothes back, that wasn't much loss, for after four months of constant wearing, there wasn't much left.

It was necessary to live in barracks used by Russian prisoners during the war, but the buildings were clean and had wood floors. Each family curtained off their beds from the other families for privacy. Train-loads of new immigrants arrived daily and joined loved ones who had become separated. Anna Sigwart started confirmation classes. Anne Marie Wagner gave birth to John. David Willman and Henrietta Fahrenbruch were married. Children started school. People were given jobs until overseas sponsors could be found and travel arrangements made. Everyone could finally make plans for the future, for at last they truly knew that there would be a tomorrow.

A Group of the "fugitives" in Frankfurt on the Oder in the summer of 1923 Seated, left to right: Anne Margaret Klein holding Ernie, Henrietta Willman holding Clara, Jette Wagner holding John, Mary Barbara Rothe holding Alex, and George Klein. Standing, left to right: Fred Rothe, Fred Klein, David Willman, Henry Wagner, Conrad Rothe, and Lydia Rothe.

People on the Journey from Frank Kutter to Frankfurt on the Oder:
from Frank: Jacob and Marie (Zeiler) Guenther and infant Jacob*; Anna Elizabeth (Bernhardt) Guenther, Jacob's mother; Fred Schafer*; George and Alice Schafer; Jacob and Marikathrine (Differ) Schafer and children Lydia, Carl, Dave, Solomon* and Linda*; Fred Zeiler; from Walter: Henry and Lena (Reiswig) Alles; John and Katherine Elizabeth Gies and children John, Alexander*, Elizabeth*, and Wilhelm*; Maria Schossler;
from Frank Kutter: Conrad Bernhardt and wife, several children**; George Bernhardt*; Fred Diener (formerly of Husenbach); Alexander and Alice (Schauerman) Fahrenbruch and his sister Henrietta; Henry and Aniis (Schafer) Hirsch; Carl* and George Hoffmann, brothers; Henry* and Jette Hoffmann and infant*; Fred and Anne-Margrethe (Hoffmann) Klein and children Fred* and Katherine*; George Klein; Henry and Marie (Hoff) Klein and Reinhold*; Kasper and Katherine (Schneider) Knopfand Molly, Carl, David, Fred* and John*; Conrad and Anna Margaret (Bernhardt) Krenning and Marie, John*, George* and Carl*; Conrad and Anne Margaret (Schauerman) Lebsack and Lydia and Linda*; George, Carl and Dave Lebsack, brothers; John and Odelia* (Flauming) Miller and George, John, Anna and infant*; Conrad and Mary Barbara (Willman) Rothe and Alex* and infant*; Fred and Lydia Rothe, brother and sister; Jacob Schmidt; Magdalena (Hock) Sigwart, Anna, Dave and Leah*; Adolph and Henry Stroh, brothers***; Conrad and Anne Marie (Hock) Wagner, Coonie, Adolph, Fred and Dave; Henry* and Marikatherine* (Wacker) Wagner; Henry and Jette (Rothe) Wagner and infant*; David Willman.

*died on the journey
**left the group in Saratov to return to Frank Kutter
***left the group in Minsk to return to Frank Kutter

Editor's Note: Judging from this story, most of the group that left Frank Kutter early in December 1921 arrived in Frankfurt on the Oder in the spring of 1922. Some, however, did not arrive till later. The Henry Hirsch and John Miller (Muller) families, for example, appear in the list (Nos. 162-167) of the Volga Germans who arrived in Frankfurt on 9 December 1922, published in this issue of the Journal. Alexander Bier (the Alex Muller of the story) and his family, not listed by Mrs. Wagner, also arrived on 9 December 1922. They are Nos. 857-861 on the portion of the list that will appear in the next issue.

Edward John Amend, a refugee from the Volga region in 1921, whose description of his adventurous flight, Escape from Starving Russia, began to appear in the Journal in the Winter 1981 issue. This picture was taken about forty years after those adventures, when he was a Lutheran pastor in America.
ESCAPE FROM STARVING RUSSIA
Edward John Amend

The author left his teaching post at Franker-Kutter in the Volga region in the spring of 1921 and, posing as an Austrian prisoner-of-war, accompanied by two Hungarian prisoners-of-war, took off westward, hoping to reach western Europe and eventually America. The first installment of his story appeared in the Journal, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Winter 1981).

***

Finally the long expected day arrived, the weather was excellent and we started out after sundown, heading for Atkarsk, the county seat of the Russian district. I knew Atkarsk very well, and that was the reason we decided to go there instead of to Goloi-Karamish, the county seat of the German district.

Some twenty-five miles this side of Atkarsk was the home of my step-father who had married again after the death of my mother two years before. According to our preconceived plans this was to be our first day's destination. We walked all night, and towards morning we came to my step-father's home. Since the death of my mother he and I had severed all connections, and, when I told him about my intentions, he shrugged his shoulders and said with indifference, "It's your head that's going to come off, when they catch you. Just go ahead and do as you please."

I had quite a few clothes that I had been unable to dispose of without arousing too much suspicion, and I surely had no intention to take them along on my long trip. Therefore, I offered them to my step-father in exchange for any provisions he would want to give us. We had counted a great deal on these provisions; it was really part of our plan. Good clothes at that time were almost as scarce as food, and my step-father was only too glad to make the barter. So, his new wife filled a large knapsack for us with dried meat, fish, some vegetables, and even a few baked potatoes.

We rested all day, and in the evening I donned one of the shabbiest suits I had with me, and, tying the knapsack with the precious provisions on my back, we set out again on the last stretch of our journey on foot as it later developed. By midnight we reached the city and made our way to the depot where we intended to spend the rest of the night. But when we arrived there we found so many transients sleeping in the waiting room almost on top of each other, that we could not even enter the depot and had to spend the remaining hours of the night out in the yard. A Russian depot has always been the common hotel for travelers of the lower classes.

The following morning Janos and I left Karaman to guard our sacks while we went downtown to see what we could learn about transportation for released prisoners. When we reached the main street we immediately went to the Soviet headquarters to inquire about our deportation. In front of the building that literally swarmed with hundreds of people was a bulletin board with all the newest decrees and notices to citizens of the commune. We stopped before the bulletin board and with anticipation read the notices. To our great joy we found just what we wanted. It was a brief announcement instructing all refugees who had been driven from their homes during the war and all ex-prisoners who desired to go home to appear at a certain address at once and register there. We had heard before that the Soviet government was putting forth a great deal of effort to return to their countries aliens who had no desire to remain and were not in sympathy with Communism. We now learned that what we had thought was merely another rumor was actually the truth.

One can easily imagine that we did not hesitate at all and soon stood in front of the emigration office. Before entering I warned Janos that he would have to do all the talking, because I was afraid that the ease with which I spoke the Russian language would perhaps betray me. As we entered the office, we found a very large lady in charge at the desk who to our surprise spoke a very good German.

Yes, we were informed, (his was the place where we were to register. Yes, refugees and ex-prisoners were being sent home. And to our further inquiry about when we would be able to leave, the lady replied: "Just as soon as there will be a sufficient number to make a car-load." How long would that take? Well, she did not know exactly, but since the last car load had been gathered in two months, it should not take longer than about two or three months. In the meantime, we were told, we could stay at a camp near the city where there were even then about half a dozen Volhynian refugees staying.

We handed the lady our papers from the village Soviet; mine naturally had been forged with an assumed
name. The lady bureaucrat filed our names in the record book and waddled into another room where she remained longer than I thought was good for my personal comfort. During her absence my composure suddenly left me. It was the first of a series of just such ordeals that I had to face until I met with so many that towards the last I became used to them and did not mind them any more.

"What if they have records of all the prisoners and will find no name that corresponds to my alias?" I asked myself. As I knew from personal experience, Atkarsk was really a hotbed of Bolshevism. At the beginning of the new regime many a nobleman caught in the snares of the ruthless revolutionists and later on many a revolting peasant had been abruptly executed on the bank of the river which ran near the edge of the city.

Nothing, however, as calamitous as I imagined occurred; instead the obese lady emerged from the inner office holding two certificates which she calmly handed to us. Then she filled out a certain blank and gave it to Janos, informing him that it was the permit to stay at the camp and also entitling us to apply for food at the city co-operative.

We left the emigration office with jubilant feelings, and on the way back to the depot discussed the question of whether or not to remain at the camp. From the very first Janos was for the idea of staying and taking the regular course suggested to us, but to me that seemed to be the worst means of exposing myself to unnecessary dangers. To my two companions it really mattered very little, even though they should be compelled to wait a few months longer. What were two or three months to them in comparison to the six years or more already spent in captivity?

But I had my personal reasons for leaving that city as soon as possible. In the first place, I was too well known in Atkarsk to remain undetected for very long; I had quite a number of acquaintances there whom it would have been very embarrassing to meet at that time. The main reason, however, for my natural impatience was my uneasiness about the course that would be pursued by the school authorities, who obviously were soon to discover my desertion.

"Nothing doing," I told Janos, when he argued for staying and employing what was to his mind the safest procedure. "You two may remain, if you want to; for myself, I am going to get away from here as soon as there is a chance."

When we got back to the station, we found Karaman contentedly sitting by our bags; he had not moved a step since we left him in the morning. Naturally, he, too, was overjoyed as we related to him our good luck. He and Janos immediately set out for the emigration office to have Karaman taken care of also.

While awaiting their return, I had ample time to think things over, I realized at once that our original plan had to be changed and that we could safely abandon our intention of walking that great distance to the Polish border. There was now a more convenient way open to us. Apparently we could legally use railroad transportation and reach our goal under government protection.

In the absence of my two friends, I did not sit quietly watching our sacks as Karaman had, but, though not leaving our meager property out of sight, I strolled around and tried to solicit as much information as I possibly could. Some of the people I asked were just as ignorant about the matter as I myself, while others seemed to be better informed. From them I was able to learn that there were no regular trains, except such as conveyed detachments of the Red Army. These trains, I was told, were to be avoided, for the soldiers were dangerous to trifle with. It often happened that they would throw undesirable passengers off the train without ceremony. On the other hand, there were regular freight trains generally used by common passengers. Since the entire system of transportation had become public property as a result of the decrees of Communism, no fare was needed for the use of trains to any destination. But, besides being very inconvenient to travel on, the freight trains were also usually crowded by all kinds of people.

I was determined to leave at the very first opportunity, even if I was to part with my companions permanently. That decision I made to them when they returned. Since now I had legal credentials in my pocket, I had really little to fear to risk it alone.

"You may stay," I informed them when they again argued for going to the camp, "but the sack with the provisions will go where I go, and the money also will not yet be divided."

With this ultimatum I left them sitting on the lawn and went out on the platform of the station to make some more inquiries, especially of railroad employees and loitering soldiers. When I returned to my obstinate companions, they had fully made up their minds to stay in Atkarsk. Karaman obtained some hot water, which was always kept in readiness at every railroad station in Russia. We made some tea and had our
meager lunch, and, at last after considerable persuasion, I was able to prevail on them to remain there at the station with me, at least until the following morning. The deafening commotion and terrible bedlam inside the depot was almost unbearable; children were whining pitifully, women screeching, and men were shouting at each other and quarrelling about nothing. The tobacco smoke and the continuous exhalation of those hundreds of human beings packed into the one room made one dizzy and sick merely to pass through the building. Besides, every little space was already taken by all shapes of human beings and was stubbornly guarded by them. Consequently, we dared not seek a place inside, but fortunately were able to squeeze into a corner in the corridor, where it was at least a little more sanitary than inside the waiting room, though it became very cold we later found out, especially towards morning. The noise and commotion inside were deafening, yet, as a result of hunger, cold, and complete physical exhaustion, that mass of miserable humanity somehow quieted and at last fell asleep.

An hour or so before daybreak, I could not endure the cold any longer and went outside on the platform. While I was standing there, almost alone except for a few hurrying station employees, I suddenly heard the rumble of an incoming train, I crossed the tracks hastily and went to find out about the type of the train, and especially its destination. It turned out to be a freight train consisting mostly of oil tanks. It was to pull out almost at once, and its destination, I was told was Tamboff.

Without any hesitation I ran back to the depot, found my way to the corner where my two companions were huddled together shivering from the cold, aroused them from their stupor, and told them about my discovery. They grumbled at first, but finally followed me to the waiting train. After a few more pointed arguments, along with me they climbed on top of one of the oil tank cars. It was very dark, but even in the darkness we saw that we were not the only passengers on the car, for almost every coupling and bumper held some reckless traveler risking his life and bound for some goal urgently necessary to him.

Because the air was still very cold, none of the passengers was riding on top of the box cars. The three of us, however, were not very particular about our places and cared little for outward comfort. The thing that mattered most, at least to me personally, was to get out of Atkarsk somehow. Instinctively fearing the chilly breeze that I knew would strike me as soon as the train started, I hid myself behind the protruding collar of the opening of the tank, riding it as if on horseback.

We did not have to wait long for the train to resume its interrupted trip. With occasional stops on the road, we rode almost the entire day until late in the afternoon when we pulled into Tamboff, which, as we had definitely learned, was the final destination of that train. I got down from my uncomfortable position without much regret, because from the very first jerk of the train back in Atkarsk to my dismay I discovered that, of all the inconvenient places on the train, I had chosen the worst. To my utter chagrin I found that the tank was full to the very top, and every sharp jerk of the train caused its greasy and slimy contents to splash into my face, dripping down all over the front of my clothing. It was too late for me to change my place and find another less filthy position until the train made its first stop, but by that time the damage had been done beyond repair. I arrived in Tamboff with the front of my Jacket drenched, and I was a real sight. The situation was at once comical and tragic.

But, except for this unpleasant incident, I was overjoyed at the first real success of our adventure, which was now so far advanced that there was no easy retreat. At least, now there was no danger of my two companions forsaking me. I was quite content, and even Janos did not seem to feel worried any more about the ultimate outcome of our venture.

We were hungry and dead tired. And so, after a few morsels of food and a cup of hot tea, we crowded in among the multitude of human beings in the waiting room of the station. In Tamboff, too, as at every other station on the road, everything was filled with crowds of starving and haggard-looking passengers awaiting some destination not known to anyone else. It appeared to me later on, after seeing thousands of them along the road, that many actually had no definite destination in mind, but were simply stranded in these places and, not knowing where to go or what to do, remained right where they were. Among those ill-fated transients were also hundreds of homeless, wretched waifs, of whom there must have been millions in Russia at that time. Those shiftless little tramps had to be watched at every turn, for like evil-looking and sneaky rodents they were always ready to snatch anything they found unguarded. It was pathetic to see that the overcrowded and stinking depots in the larger cities were in most cases the only shelters these the most unfortunate really had.

My two companions and I somehow squeezed into an empty space at the center of this room which had
apparently before been the main passage through the crowded building. Reclining on our sacks or on our insect-infected neighbors, we tried to go to sleep.

I talked with some of the soldiers, many of whom seemed just as aimless about their destination as the other transients. From them I was able to learn that the trains leaving Tamboff were more frequent than back in Atkarsk, because Tamboff was one of the regular thoroughfares between Moscow and the Caucasus. This good news helped me to endure the terrible inconvenience of that first night in Tamboff since I hoped to escape it soon. We tried our best to sleep in the malodorous atmosphere, which apparently was not so difficult for my two companions who had been more hardened to such inconveniences than I. But I myself could not fall asleep, though every bone and muscle of my body craved relaxation and cried out for rest.

Finally a feeling of nausea overcame me, and I arose and went out into the fresh air. There on the platform of the station I walked back and forth trying somehow to revive my failing strength in the fresh and chilly air. While thus promenading, I heard several trains arrive and depart again, but they either were all filled with soldiers or were freight trains going in the wrong direction.

I must have been strolling on the platform for hours when at last the light of early dawn enabled me to distinguish objects around the dark, unilluminated depot. Suddenly I saw another train pull in from the direction of Atkarsk, and this time the train stopped close to the platform. With keen interest I watched the train come to a stop. As if by command the doors of the box cars were pushed half-way open, and a disheveled group of people, mostly women, poured out with tin kettles in hand and ran towards the nearest faucet for hot water. I realized at once that this was the right train for us, and so I made my way through the crowded sleepers on the floor inside the depot to wake my two companions and urge them to follow me. We hurried to the waiting train, and there we could see that from somewhere a number of other prospective travelers had appeared, standing in front of the doors, pleading for admission. A few soldiers and other male occupants of the cars vigilantly guarded the doors against any new passengers who would increase the crowding of those already there.

Seeing the situation, I realized that there was hardly any chance for us to force ourselves into any of the cars by ordinary means. Something more subtle was necessary. Therefore, I handed my sack to Janos, hastily snatched our little tin kettle from Karaman, told my companions to wait, and ran towards the building again. There I filled the kettle with boiling water, and on the way back I told my companions to follow me closely. Acting as if I had been a former occupant of the car, I pretended as if I had just jumped off a moment ago to get some hot water and calmly tried to climb back in. The soldier who guarded the door was about to push me off, but, seeing me without baggage and cap, he hesitated an instant, while I told him that this was my car. He stepped a little to the side and permitted me to crawl in. I looked behind, nodded to Janos, waited longer than was necessary in the door, and thus gave Janos a chance to throw our bags in after me. Then, standing in front of the soldier to obstruct his view of what was going on, I made it possible for Janos to climb up and also to pull Karaman after him. When the soldier and a few of the other passengers discovered that we were new passengers, our intrusion was greeted with a flow of vulgarity and cursing but by then it was too late to throw us out again. In addition, we claimed that we had just as much right to the train as other comrades, and we calmly pushed our way to the other side of the entrance and slumped down on the floor.

Our car, as we soon discovered, was more than filled to its capacity. The two shelf-like accommodations on both ends of the car were packed with men, women, and children, some of whom were sitting up, others lying asleep. Even at the center of the car, around an extinguished cast iron stove, all available space was occupied. We were barely able to crowd into a small empty place no doubt left by those former passengers who had gone out after hot water. For a long time we were denounced in the severest terms, but we turned a deaf ear to all that protestation. As nonchalantly as possible under the circumstances, we threw a few leaves of tea into our kettle, pulled out a few baked potatoes and a few dried fish from our knapsack, and ate our breakfast.

A short while later the train set into motion again, and we pulled out of Tamboff, being most fortunate in not having to change trains again all the rest of the way to Moscow. For three long days, stopping sometimes for many hours at certain stations on the road, we were able to preserve our most uncomfortable place in the car. Never did all of us leave it at the same time. After those days of crammed and largely sleepless traveling we finally pulled into Moscow.

(To be continued)
In the year 1921 Russia suffered a widespread drought, which was especially severe along the Volga river. Ordinarily a large amount of grain had been kept on hand for such an emergency, but the country had just gone through a terrible Civil War and all of the food had been requisitioned by marauding armies. As a result, deaths from starvation began. Many inhabitants of the Volga region left for the Black Sea area or the Caucasus in hope of finding something to eat. Others traveled to Minsk near the Polish border hoping to go to Germany and continue from there to North or South America.

Late in 1922 the German Red Cross signed an agreement with the Polish authorities allowing refugees from Minsk direct transit across Poland. As a result 889 Volga Germans arrived in Frankfurt on the Oder on December 9, 1922. Practically all of them had relatives or close friends in North or South America, who would presumably help them to journey to the New World. The majority of these emigrants had come from the Wiesenseite (east side) of the Volga, with Marienberg, a Catholic colony, heading the list with 83 emigrants. It is interesting to note that such Bergseite colonies as Balzer, Bauer, Kamenka, Kolb, Messer and Norka had no representatives in this group. After their arrival, the refugees were placed in a camp at Frankfurt on the Oder, where Dr. Valentin Rothermel, himself a Volga German, took care of their medical needs.

The names of these refugees were printed in a supplement to the first issue of 1923 of *Der Wolga-deutsche*, a weekly newspaper then published by Volga Germans living in Berlin, Germany. Dr. Rothermel brought a copy of this list to Chicago, Illinois, where he arrived in 1924. Years later, the list became the property of Mr. Gottfried Gross of Sheboygan, Wisconsin. In 1979 it was photocopied by Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried Heinze of Orange, California, who, realizing the importance of the document, sent a copy to AHSGR headquarters. Gottfried Heinze is No. 151 on the list. He was an eleven-year-old boy when his parents arrived in Germany in 1922. His family's original home had been in Dreispitz Chutor on the Wiesenseite of the Volga, rather than Dreispitz as is shown on the document.

AHSGR would be interested in hearing from other Volga Germans whose names are on this list.

**Father's No. Name**  **Name**  **Date of Birth**  **Relatives in America**

1. Dreit, Georg  Johann-Georg  13.9.98  Georg Dreit (father), Lincoln, Nebraska
2. " Katharina (nee Harter)  Konrad  25.11.99  Henry Spomer, Lincoln, Nebraska
3. Froschheiser, Konrad  Balthasar  5.12.88  Johann Niedens, Hoisington, Kansas
4. " Lydia (Strauch)  9.10.96
5. " Viktor  Konrad  10.11.21.

From *Blumenfeld*, Protestant
6. Hoffmann, Maria (Riffel)  Johann-Georg  16.5.95  Henry Weimer (father), Leader, Saskatchewan
7. Nuss, Maria (Weimer)  Heinrich  24.2.86

From *Bmbander*, Catholic
8. Bondank, Kaspar  Joseph  17.1.07  Mike Bondank (brother), Kansas City, Kansas
10. Mollecker, Michael  Jakob " Margaretha (Storm)Johann  21.4.99
11. " Paul  Michael  21.3.18  20.11.73
12. " Magdalena  29.6.07  23.12.15
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<th>Name 2</th>
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<td>Martel, Adam</td>
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<td>&quot; Scholastika</td>
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Peter Fuhr, Col. Lat. Tosca, Argentina
Michel Braun, Col. Santa Maria, Argentina

G. Meringer, Pampa Central, Argentina
David Eberhard, Prov. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Georg Meringer (brother), Pampa Central, Argentina

Peter Bartel, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Andreas Mollecker, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Joh. Stalldecker (step-brother)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Joh. Ernst, Col. Santa Maria, Argentina

Lorenz Schewalje, Billings, Montana

John Storm, Kansas City, Kansas

Jakob Seibel, Portland, Oregon
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Georg Hartung, **Lingle, Wyoming**

Adam *Muller,* **Yakima, Wash.**  
Georg Seibel, c/o Fr. *Muller,*  
Portland, Oregon

*Alex,* **Borger, Fresno, Calif. Joh.**  
Borger, Pasadena, Calif.

Jakob *Grunewald,* **Lingle, Wyoming**

Jakob Brehm, **Hastings, Nebraska**

Johannes Weber (no address)

Konrad Walter, **Lincoln, Nebraska**  
(brother)

Georg Schmidt (bro.), **Windsor, Colorado**

Wilhelm Brehm, Denver, Colorado  
Henry Brehm, Wyomore(?), Nebr.

Georg *Steinmetz* (nephew), **Powell,**  
Wyoming
109. " Johannes           Oswald                14.10.03
110. " Anna                       30. 8.05
111. " Amalia                      13.10.07
112. " Anna-EUs.                  16. 2.10
113. " Pauline                    21. 6.11
114. " Mane (Nagel) Heinrich (wife of No. 116)       6.10.03
115. " Martha Oswald               3.10.18
116. " Wilhelm                      5.12.01
117. " Wilhelm Wilhelm              3.10.19
118. Hohenstein, Friedrich       10.10.71
120. " Friedrich Friedrich          5.92
121. " Eva-EUs. (Laas) Jakob        3.11.94 1.
122. * Amalia Friedrich            5.01 25.
123. " Maria                        4.05 17.
124. " Heinrich                    3.94
From Dehler, Catholic
125. Ostertag, David Johannes From Dietel, Protestant
126. Reichel, Heinrich Johannes

127. " Emilie (Spat) Heinrich 1. 1.01
128. " Georg Johannes            1. 6.03
129. " Andreas Andreas            12.10.98
130. " Maria-Elis. (Voss)         21.12.68
131. " David                      6. 5.04
132. " Elis.                       11. 7.06
133. " Eva                         14. 9.09
134. " Jakob                       7.10.05
From Dobrinka, Protestant
135. Schneider, Eduard Adam From Donhof, Protestant
136. Rutz, Anna-Elis. Peter.      31. 1.73
137. " Heinrich Heinrich          4. 2.00
138. " Anna-Elis.                  17. 3.05
139. " Wilhelm                    21.10.07
140. " Jakob                      22.12.15
141. " Elis.                      15.10.10
142. Keller, Heinrich Johannes    7. 3.96
143. " Philipp Kath.-Elis.         21. 1.08
144. " Katharina (Wolf)             13. 1.04
145. " Alexander Jakob             14. 3.95
146. " Johannes                   13. 1.19
From Dreispitz, Protestant
147. Heinze, Georg Reinhard      20. 5.70

Germann, Portland Oregon Emanuel Baum, Culbertson, Nebr.

Michel Rutz, Windsor, Colorado

Michael Hergert, Prov. Entre Rios Argentina (uncle) and Joh. Keller (brother)

Reinhard Heinze (bro.), Brighton, Colorado; Juan Schuckmann, Prov.
Entre Rios, Argentina; and David Herbel, Lucas, Kansas.

From Frank, Protestant

148. " Anna-Elis. (Schuckman) Heinrich 21.6.73
149. " Anna Georg 28.11.95
150. " Ottlie ** 21.12.08
151. " Gottfried >> 26.12.11
152. " Emma ?; 30.6.13
153. " Rahel » 25.1.15
154. " Lea n 5.11.17
155. " Alexander » 30.3.99
156. " Maria-Katharina 11 16.8.02
157. " Lydia » 6.4.04
158. " Natalie n 5.5.07
159. " Emilie ^\textsuperscript{estant} Heinrich 9.3.02

From GQbel, Catholic

162. Hirsch, Heinrich Jakob 30.1.96
163. " Anna (Schafer) Georg 13.9.84
164. Muller, Johannes Johannes 13-7.12
165. " Georg >> 2.8.15
166. " Emilia i) 2.7.18
    " Johannes Christian 14.8.98
    " Muller Protestant
    " Meier Alexander 23.7.09
170. Meier, Lydia »* 5.1.12
171. " Emilie Georg iolic 29.1.94
172. Schonhals, Heinrich Georg 15.8.89
    " Konrad 23.10.88
    " Katharina (Stamm) Mattheus 24.8.98
    " Mitzig, Peter Adam 7.1.94
    " Merkel, Georg Jakob 6.9.93
    " Konrad 14.6.97
177. " Katharina Philip p 9.11.96
178. Hoffner, Peter Konrad 14.6.97
179. " Lydia (HHgert) Konrad 14.6.97

From Grimm, Protestant

180. Michel, Christian Christian
181. " Amalia (Scherf)
182. " Arthur
183. " Bertha
184. EhrUch, Lydia David
185. " David (bro.)

^TomHUdmann, Catholic

186. Veit, Katharina (Resch) Jakob
    From Hoffental, Protestant
Came to Germany earlier

Konrad Kissler, Lincoln Co. Wash.

H. Lobsack, Grand Island, Nebr.

Georg Muller (address garbled)

Friedrich Schick (uncle), Canada.

Heinrich Bier, Fresno, Calif.

Georg Schiel, Sterling, Colorado

Peter Mitzig, Topeka, Kansas

John Haberkom, Sterling, Colorado

Peter Haberkorn, Denver, Colo.

John Michel, Rosetown, Sask., Canada

21.12.91
27.11.93
27. 2.14
24. 6.14
24.11.05
15. 3.14

25. 8.99
187. Weckesser, Konrad Friedrich 27.10.89 Alexander Weckesser, Denver, Colo.
188. " Katharina Heinrich 4.4.61
(nee Weckesser) Katharina
189. " Konrad Friedrich 15.10.99
190. " Adelheid Alexander 16.3.85
191. " (nee Steinbrecher) 29.11.84

192. " Anna Friedrich 28.6.04
193. " Friedrich 2.9.4.06
194. " Berta 2.26.08
195. " Hilda 2.3.12.10
196. " Maria 25.10.11
198. " Georg 12.6.13(?)
199. " Paul 26.1.20 .65
200. Kaiser, Heinrich Heinrich 21.4.68 .99
(nee Weckesser) Christian
201. " Sophie (Gottfried) Heinrich 7.11.01 .66
203. " Elisabeth Heinrich 16.5
204. Geist, Heinrich

205. Gottlieb
206. Heinrich
207. Karl
208. Emma
209. Emanuel
210. Kling, Johannes Johann

211. " Charlotte (Koch) Konrad
212. Flat, Philipp Jakob
213. " Wilhelmine (Buff) Philipp
214. " Alexander Jakob From Huck

Protestant
215. Euler, Heinrich Heinrich
216. Schneider, Christof Johannes

217. " Anna-Marg. (Kab) Georg
218. " Alexander Christof
219. " Viktor
220. " Christof
221. " Maria
222. " Emilie

From Hussenbach, Catholic
223. Schonfeld, George Johannes
224. " Anna (Schuler) Justus
225. " Georg Georg
226. " Konstantin
227. " Eduard

From Hu&aren, Catholic
228. Mehling, Georg Heinrich
229. " Elisabeth Georg
230. " Emilie
231. " Jakob

David Brose, Fresno, Calif.
and Friedrich Gleim, Rocky Ford, Colorado
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Georg Nuss, Bayard, Nebr. and Jakob Weinbender, Rhein, Sask, Canada (brothers-in-law)

Martin Filbert, Canada

John Schneider, Sheboygan, Wise.
Christian Wells, Manitowac, Wise,

Katharina Wolf, Hays, Kansas

G. Jakob Mehling (no address)
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234. Schwab, Jakob Jakob 23.10.98
From Josefsta, Catholic
235. Ger, Paul Georg 14. 1.02
236. "Emilia (Richter) Karl 2. 2.04
237. Dieser, Katharina Heinrich 24.10.06
238. "Heinrich >> 15. 3.09
From Katharinenstadt (Marxstadt), Prof. and Cath
240. Bissin, Wilhelmine (Leikam) Heinrich 14. 3.60
241. Eduard Alois 27.11.99
242. Peter >>; 15. 8.02
243. "Friedrich I1 1. 3.81
244. "Katharina (Schutz) Alexander 17. 8.87
245. Leo Friedrich 13. 7.12
246. Jakob II 24.10.15
247. Wilhelmine ii 19. 5.08
248. Margaretha n 2.11.22
249. "Johannes Alois 25. 5.83
250. Elisabeth (Stab) Alexander 20.12.86
251. "Alexander Johannes 11. 2.09
252. Alois >>; 10.11.14
253. Viktor I1 "4.17
254. Emilie ii 15.11.10
255. "Konstantin Alois 16.-4.87
256. "Pauline (Bissin) Johannes 23.10.91
257. Rothermel, Alexander Jakob 30. 9.86
258. Sophie (Altergott) Heinrich 8. 2.89
259. 'Alexander Alexander 24. 1.12
260. Sophie >>Alexander 10. 9.13
261. Schuler, Alexander Justus 10. 5.88
262. Anna (Schonfeld) Johannes 1.12.86
263. "Johannes Justus 23. 2.92
264. Turban, Anna (step-dau.) Jakob 17.12.03
265. Weissbecker, Alois Anton 26. 6.58
266. "Alexander Alois 28. 1.86
267. "Emile (Bissin) >> 22. 3.89
268. "Eugenie Alexander 11. 6.11
269. Julia II 27. 3.13
270. "Martha iif 29. 3.16
272. Maria n 10. 7.22
From Kauz, Protestant
273. Schreiner, Wilhelm Georg 8.11.96
274. "Maria (Reisbich) Heinrich 14. 9.00
From Kind, Protestant
275. Pickelhaupt, Johannes Heinrich 25.10.83
276. Felk, David Friedrich 25. 7.64
277. "Christina (Rempel) Michel 13. 6.63
278. "Cornelius David 14. 2.05

Mildenberger, Sterling, Colo.

Clemens Blattner, Ft. Dodge, Iowa

Henry Bissing, Hays, Kansas

Christian Pfeifer (brother-in-law)
Hays, Kansas

Maria Weissbecker, Anna Bissing and
Joh. Wolf, Hays, Kansas

Joh. Weissbecker, Hays, Kansas

Joh.-Georg Schreiner, Walla Walla,
Washington
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<td>12.9.05</td>
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<td>Gottfr. Becker</td>
<td>son-in-law</td>
<td>12.9.05</td>
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<td>son-in-law</td>
<td>12.9.05</td>
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**From Laub, Protestant**

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<tr>
<td>Maria-Cristina</td>
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**Joh.-Georg Lieder (father-in-law)**
North Platte, Nebraska

**Joh.-Georg Lieder (uncle)**
North Platte, Nebr.

**Philipp Muhl, c/o Georg Lieder**
North Platte, Nebr.

**Jos.-Georg Weber, Adam Hermann**
and Georg-Peter Jakobi
320. " Peter
321. " Anna
322. Weber, Heinrich
323. " Katharina (Sommer)
324. " Susanna
325. " Wilhelm
326. " Friedrich
327. Dellos, Gottfried
328. " Maria-Kath. (Temmk
329. " Anna
330. " Heinrich
331. " Amalia
332. " Luise

334. " Margareta (Kuhn)
335. " Margaretha
336. " Heinrich
337. " Konrad
338. " Kari
339. " Johannes
340. " Peter
341. Bitter, Maria (Markus)
342. " Katharina
343. " Philipp
344. " Emma
345. " Peter
346. Keck, Peter
347. " Christine (Bitter)
348. Markus, Kari
349. " Maria (Bitter)
350. " Maria (Keck)
351. " Anna
352. Rubi, Christine (Markus)
353. " Konrad
354. Bitter, Maria (widow)
355. " Barbara
356. " Peter
357. " Maria-Christina

From Leichtling,
358. Elsenbach, Barbara

(Gottlieb Keck, Rocky Ford, Colo. Henry
Peter Weber, St. Paul, Minn. Georg
Weber, Glencoe, Minn.

Gottlieb Dellos, Lincoln, Nebr. Peter and Johann Dellos and Johann Scharf, Fresno, Calif.
Ruck and Georg Grill, Fresno, Calif.

Peter Bitter, Fresno, Calif.
Konrad Bitter. Kerman, Calif.
Konrad Bitter, Oshkosh, Wise,
Peter Elsenbach

(To be continued)
APPEALS FOR HELP FROM THE BLACK SEA REGION 1922-23 TO CANADIAN RELATIVES WHO EMIGRATED 1886-1889

Adam Giesinger

On 1 September 1886 a 21-year-old single man, named Anton Schafer, left his native village of Josephstal near Odessa, Russia, to come to western Canada, to an area near Balgonie, east of Regina. He was undoubtedly attracted to this region by information that he received from his brother-in-law Joseph Diewold, who had arrived here in the spring of 1886, with his wife and four children, along with three other families from Josephstal. These four families had settled on homesteads near Balgonie and, so far as is known, were the first Germans from Russia to settle in the region that later (1905) became the province of Saskatchewan. They were followed in succeeding years by a substantial number of other families from Josephstal, who settled down in the same area. Eventually, in imitation of their Russian experience, the group established a small hamlet four miles east of Balgonie, to which they gave the name St. Joseph's Colony. The story of this colony has been interestingly told by Dr. A. Becker in Saskatchewan History, Vol. XX, No. 1 (Winter 1967), 1-18.

Young Anton Schaefer, needing a wife, found no eligible young ladies among the early arrivals in the new settlement until the spring of 1889, when 17-year-old Thekia Materi arrived from Mariental/Odessa. Anton Schafer and Thekia Materi were married on 6 May 1889, soon after her arrival.

On the same ship as Thekia Materi came Anton Leibel and his wife Barbara (nee Schaefer), with three children, the eldest of whom was Barbara, who later married Florian Becker and became the mother of Dr. A. Becker.

Through the courtesy of Dr. Becker and of Leo Schaefer, son of Anton and Thekia Schaefer, I have been privileged to read a number of surviving letters to the Schaefers from relatives in Russia, ranging in date from 1898 to 1923. The pre-1914 letters deal mainly with family matters, but those of 1922-1923, from some of which I quote below, are of general interest. They give a graphic picture of famine conditions in the Black Sea region at that time. By the time of these letters Anton Schafer had been in Canada 36 years and the letters are not from brothers and sisters but from nephews and nieces.

A nephew, in an undated and unsigned letter, writes to Uncle Anton and Aunt Thekia as follows:

... I want to describe to you the misery and the want that exists here. It is so terribly bad that I cannot describe it to you. We feel that we are doomed to perish. I want to explain to you how and why. We have no horses and no cows left. They have all died and everything else has been taken from us. We have nothing except what we receive from God and good people, that's all we have to eat. We have no clothing and no shoes. We are not sufficiently covered to go out to be seen. . . . and all winter long we have had someone in the hospital. My three daughters, 26, 24 and 20 years old, are all sick. . . . My son of 22 years died of hunger. I'm afraid that my daughters will die the same way. . . . I'm looking forward to the spring to get out into the fields. . . but I have no horse, no seed grain, no cows, no pigs, no chickens, no cat, no dog, no clothing, no shoes, no bread . . . Please, Uncle Anton and Aunt Thekia, help us in our great need.

We don't know whether a food parcel from the Canadian relatives arrived in time to save this particular family, but such parcels were sent, not only to this family but to several others who appealed for help. Two letters in the Schaefer collection, both written in the spring of 1923, testify to this.

On 8 April 1923 Anton and Elenora Zerr in Mariental/Odessa wrote to Uncle Anton and Aunt Thekia Schaefer, with greetings also to Uncle Anton and Aunt Barbara Leibel. They acknowledge receipt of food parcels sent to the Zerr family by the Schaefers and the Leibels. The letter indicates that Anton Zerr is slightly better off than the earlier writer. He still has two horses and two cows and has just seeded some grain: 3 dessiatines of winter wheat, 2 dess. of rye, 4 dess. of barley and 2 dess. of oats. (1 dessiatine = 2.7 acres)

Another letter from Mariental, written 22 May 1923, came from Leopold and Magdalena Keller to Uncle Anton and Aunt Thekia Schaefer, with greetings to Uncle Anton and Aunt Barbara Leibel and to Uncle Henry Schafer. In it there is a very emotional and grateful response to food parcels sent to the Kellers by the Schaefers and the Leibels:

We want to let you know that we received, with indescribable joy, the food parcel that you sent us. It came on 19 May and contained 54 pounds flour, 16 pounds sugar, 1 pound tea, 28 pounds rice, 12 pounds lard, and 20 cans of milk. For this we express to you our heartfelt thanks.
Was so much in need that I can't describe it? To add to our joy there came another parcel on 21 May from Aunt Barbara with the same contents. We greet you dear Aunt Barbara and all your family and thank you many times. God bless you. As mentioned above, indescribable joy entered our house. All our children came running together, as when the greatest misfortune, or the reverse, the greatest good fortune happens. Indeed no greater good fortune and joy could have come to us at this time. We cried for joy. The children were so happy about these far-away relatives, who had not forgotten us, although they had been in America so long. The sorrow and the joy of it was a heartbreak for us parents... Again, many many thanks from us and from our children, all 10 of them. May God reward you, dear uncles and aunts.

FAMINE DEATHS UNDER THE OLD REGIME?
Adam Giesinger

The Russian steppes, both in the Volga and Black Sea regions, generally had fertile soil, which produced abundant crops when there was sufficient rainfall. Unfortunately the rainfall was not always sufficient and occasionally there was a complete drought over wide areas. The grandfathers of some of us experienced disastrous years in 1891 and 1892. Anton Schneider, writing in the 1860's, gives 1843, 1847, 1853-1855, 1860, and 1864-1866 as years of crop failure on the Volga, within his memory. The 1848 chronicles of the Black Sea colonies mention 1812-1814, 1822-1824, 1833-1834, 1841-1842, and 1845-1847 as years of little or no crop in southern Russia. The most widespread drought in the south was in 1833, described by the 1848 chronicler for Tiergart as follows:

Then came the terrible year 1833, which everyone still remembers. Even the spring was unusual. Clouds appeared in the sky, but they were not rain clouds, they brought only wind. For days, even weeks on end, the winds blew and drew every bit of moisture from the soil. The time for haying came, but there was not a blade of grass to be seen. The time for grain harvesting came, but the grain had not even germinated; all the fields were still black.

Obviously such conditions had devastating effects and brought great hardships. Much of the livestock died and the people suffered from food shortages. In spite of this, however, there was no general famine in the German colonies at that time nor on later occasions of recurring crop failures. Wise ordinances of enlightened government officials of the colonization era prevented such disasters.

In the special legislation promulgated for the new colonies there was provision for the establishment in each village of a community granary, to which each farmer was to contribute yearly half a chetverik (about 10 kg) of winter grain and half a garnetz (about 1 kg) of summer grain, which was to be kept in storage until needed in a crop failure year. In addition, each farmer was asked to keep on hand at all times a two-year supply of grain for food and seed. Obedience to these ordinances became a habit in the German colonies and prevented large-scale loss of life from starvation until the Communist era.

The new regime, in 1919-1920 and again in the early 1930's, confiscated all stores of grain in the German villages and brought them, for the first time in their history, thousands of deaths from hunger in 1921-1922 and 1933-1934.

Notes

1. Schneider's manuscript, never published and lost during the revolution, is cited by Volga German historians such as Beratz and Schmidt.
RECORD GROUP NO. 373
Aerial photograph of Pfiefer, Russia. File No. GX 1583 SD. Exposure No. 67. Scale 1:14,500. Taken Sept. 9, 1942. Purchased from The National Archives, Washington, DC 20408.
October 17, 1981, is a day that will long remain in my memory. It was the day when one of my lifelong desires came true. For many years it had been my wish to see photographs of my ancestral village, Pfeifer, Russia. Seeing an aerial photograph of it was an extra bonus.

My keen interest in this goes as far back as grade school days in the 1930's. Geography stories about Russia would find me searching for a picture of Pfeifer. It would have made me happy just to see the name on a map.

My search led to countless letters' through the years, including some to the German and Russian Embassies. A letter written in the Russian language was mailed to the Mayor of Gvardeiskoje as present day Pfeifer is known. Since it was a Catholic colony, an inquiry was sent to the Vatican in Rome, But it was all to no avail.

In the early years of AHSGR, Professor Joseph Height encouraged me to find someone that could put together a plat of Pfeifer. My father, George Lambrecht, was still living at the time. With a landmark here and there, we had a start. Of the many contacts made in my search, Mrs. Mary Konradi of Denver, Colorado, suddenly appeared about the year 1969. With her memories of it and the help of two of her friends, she put together a plat of Pfeifer. That was a highlight in my research.

Early in 1981, my interest was renewed. I wrote a letter to the Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, D. C., enclosing the Stumpp map of the Volga region and asking whether they had any aerial photographs of the area in which Pfeifer is located. They told me that there was "some World War II imagery which may possibly satisfy your request", but that this was now in the National Archives. A letter to the Archives brought the answer that they had a collection of approximately one million captured German aerial prints. The collection dates from 1940-1945 and shows much of Europe (including the USSR), North Africa and the Middle East.

I had again enclosed in my letter the Stump map of the Volga region, showing the location of Pfeifer. Imagine my excitement when their reply went on to say that Pfeifer was included on eight different missions, with a total of thirteen exposures to choose from!

Photostatic copies cost $7.25 each. They are 12" x 12" in size. The people at the Archives tell you the scale, the quality, the date and whether the whole or only part of the village is shown.

I ordered four different photos and when they finally arrived it was a day of great excitement! The house in which my paternal great grandparents had lived could be pinpointed. Other landmarks shown on Mrs. Konradi's plat could also be picked out. St. Francis of Assisi church yard can be seen, but the church itself does not seem to be there. The Ilovlya river, community orchards, granaries, as well as the fields on both sides of the river are distinct.

Since Mrs. Konradi left Pfeifer in 1913 at the age of 21 years, the Russians have built a railroad and a highway through the area east of the river. These show clearly on the photos.

Aerial Photographs are not available for all the villages. There is none, for instance, for Seewald(Verkhovka), where my maternal grandparents came from.

Excellent copies of maps in the Russian language can be obtained from the Defense Mapping Agency, Washington, D. C. 20315, free of charge. If you give them the latitude, longitude and present Russian name of the village, the people at the National Archives are able to determine the area desired.
RECORD GROUP NO. 373
Aerial photograph of Mannheim and some small neighboring villages. File No. GX 4789 SK. Exposure No. 82. Taken April 18, 1944.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Emma S. Haynes

Charles Lambrecht began his report by saying that October 17, 1981 is a day that will long remain in his memory. In my case, the important date is October 25, 1981 when Mr. Lambrecht telephoned to say that he had received four aerial photographs of Pfeifer from the National Archives. His tenacious efforts to obtain these pictures finally paid off magnificently.

After the Pentagon turned over to the National Archives its one million captured German aerial photographs, cartographers began the arduous task of arranging them according to lines of latitude and longitude. No names of towns were given on the original prints. In order to locate the village of Pfeifer, a cartographer, Mr. Bill Wilson, used a very detailed American map of the Soviet Union which was compiled in 1956. By comparing this map with the one of the Volga colonies drawn by Dr. Karl Stump, which shows degrees of latitude and longitude, it was possible to find the print of Pfeifer shown in this issue.

I was, of course, anxious to find out if the National Archives had a print of my father's native village of Straub on the eastern side of the Volga. Mr. Wilson was able to make for me a picture showing not only Straub but also the adjacent villages of Laub, Dinkel, Jost, and Laube (Lauwe). Although individual streets are not clear, the picture is interesting for showing how the Volga divides into three parts as it flows past these villages. Straub was found on the American map under its old Russian name of Skatovka.

When ordering pictures it is necessary to give both the original German name of the village and the Russian name by which it is called today. This information can be found for the Volga colonies in Work Paper No. 23 (Spring 1977), pp. 1-5. There is a map of the Volga with lines of latitude and longitude preceding the article. For Black Sea Germans, Dr. Karl Stump gave their present names in Heritage Review No. 17 (April 1977), pp. 29-30. Lines of latitude and longitude may be obtained from AHSGR map No. 26 in the current issue of "Materials Available for Purchase."

Every print contains the date when the picture was taken. In the case of Pfeifer, it was September 9, 1942 and of Straub, October 4, 1942. This was a little over a year after the deportation of all Volga Germans to Siberia and Soviet Asia. The German army was now engaged in a battle for the city of Stalingrad which lay on the Volga, south of the German colonies. On September 16, 1942, the Germans had entered the outskirts of the city from the northwest and were beginning to bomb it into ruins, but the Russians held on grimly, fighting street by street and house by house. On November 19 their famous counterattack began, which led to the surrender of General von Paulus on February 2, 1943. German casualties from this battle alone consisted of about 300,000 men. One cannot help but wonder what happened to the photographers of the deserted villages to the north.

I was curious about what pictures existed for the German colonies in the Ukraine, and asked for a print of Mannheim/Odessa, the village in which Dr. Giesinger's father was born. According to Dr. Stump, Mannheim is known today as Kamenka (not to be confused with the Volga German town of Kamenka, which lies north of Pfeifer). This print is also reproduced in this article. The photograph was taken on April 18, 1944, about three weeks after the people of Mannheim were evacuated by the Germans in a hazardous wagon trek through Bessarabia, Romania and Yugoslavia to Hungary, where they were put into freight cars and sent to occupied Poland. On the picture one can see ditches which had been dug west of town to obstruct traffic. It is obvious that this picture was taken from a much greater height than that for Pfeifer, it therefore shows not only Mannheim but a large area surrounding it. The whole area covered is indicated on the map. It includes several other German villages, whose names are given on the map, as well as some Russian villages. As you can see, no details can be distinguished. The houses in the villages show up only as points of light.
In case any readers are interested in ordering pictures, please address your letter to:
Center for Cartographic and Architectural Archives Room 2-W
National Archives Washington D. C. 20408
Allow at least three weeks for a response. Give the lines of latitude and longitude, and use both the old and modern
ame of the village. Readers are warned, however, that these pictures are taken from a considerable height and may
not give as many details as you wish. In addition, the German army photographers were interested primarily in
railroad lines and rivers. I was unable to obtain a picture of my mother's native village of Norka, and Mr. Lambrecht
could not get Seewald. Both of these places were not on a railroad line and were too far west of the Volga.
J might add that unfortunately Bob Wilson will have left the National Archives by the time this Journal is printed.
However, Mr. Robert Richardson, who will take his place, is equally kind and helpful.
Before the October Revolution (1917) volost and village offices among the Mennonite colonies in Russia were literally bursting with records and accounts of every description. Two events radically altered this state of affairs. The revolution brought civil war and with it a series of occupations by anarchist bands or military contingents of the Red or White army. In some instances records were dumped on the street and burned, in others used as wrapping paper for local street markets. The records covering over a century of Mennonite life in Russia vanished forever. Only those in government offices or private hands survived. None of these provided much information on nineteenth century church and village life.

The surviving portion of the diary of the minister Jacob Epp, on deposit at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba, affords a rare opportunity to enter into the Russian Mennonite world of that era. Epp lived in the so-called "Hebrew Colonies" in the region south of Sofiyevka and east of Krivoy Rog. A number of Mennonite farmers from the Chortitza settlement had been located in these Jewish villages to serve as model farmers for their less experienced Jewish neighbors. Each village was assigned a given number of Mennonite families, who were tied into the local economic and agrarian patterns. Religiously and culturally, however, each group remained very separate. Epp's diary pictures Mennonite life as it might have found expression in any self-contained Mennonite settlement.
In order to interpret properly the portrait contained in the Epp diary, an awareness of two dimensions governing nineteenth century Mennonite society is essential. The one involves the concept of the church in the Russian Mennonite setting, the other relates to the role of the elder and minister within that context.

The sixteenth century Anabaptist-Mennonite movement stressed such teachings as the separation of church and state, a free church voluntary in its membership, and non-resistance. Eventual freedom from persecution allowed these notions to institutionalize. A secure life in a self-contained community gradually produced a Mennonite church which encompassed all of society. Dissenters who originally objected to the union of church and state in the sixteenth century not only felt comfortable with the arrangement in Prussia but reconstructed it once they had migrated to Russia. For diary writer Epp a church coextensive with society simply reflects the normal order of things.

The Dutch-Prussian Mennonite tradition which the settlers brought to Russia granted considerable power to the church elder. He presided over all matters pertaining to faith, worship and ordinances. While his role was essentially spiritual in nature, the moral jurisdiction implicit in the office endowed the elder with considerable civic authority. There were contradictory elements in his position. On the one hand he was elected by the congregation he served. On the other he lived in a political world where absolutism was the order of the day and it seemed natural that the local authority system function like the national one. In the frontier setting characterizing the early years of colonization the elder and his associates provided a consistent rallying point. As the nineteenth century progressed, Mennonite industrialists and estate owners assumed some of the civic power held by the elder, but by and large a working balance between the two was retained. The elders and their network of supporting ministers never relinquished their role as the guardians of faith and public morality.

This is clearly illustrated by the activities of Jacob Epp in the Hebrew Colonies. He was not only the worship leader and preacher, but the chairman of a church council whose jurisdiction encompassed matters like public mischief, theft, juvenile delinquency, public drunkenness, adultery, illegitimacy, marital quarrels, inter-family disputes, breach of promise, Jewish-Mennonite relations and even false rumors. Except for homicides the Mennonites living in the Hebrew Colonies governed themselves. Epp's church theoretically embraced the entire Mennonite community. Whether members demonstrated their piety by regularly attending or not really did not matter. Indiscretions relating to a broad range of civil and occasionally criminal law brought them first before the church council and subsequently the congregation. Expulsion meant not only a loss of face but of legal privileges associated with the Mennonite community as such. Excommunication, though sparingly used, was nevertheless an effective weapon in regulating and stabilizing Mennonite life and morality.

Broadly speaking the issues and concerns raised in Epp's diary fall into two categories: religion and society. While the two themes overlap in a community where the church engulfs the state, an artificial division for the sake of analysis is nevertheless possible. Most of Epp's life experiences occurred in the context of his position as an elected Lehrer (teacher-minister). He held the position for life unless he committed a grave moral offense or proved grossly incompetent. Together with other elected ministers and deacons he participated in a type of ministerial council known as the Lehrdienst. Members of the ecclesiastical officialdom were popularly referred to as Ohms. When faced with pressing issues they usually met in the so-called Ohmsstuebchen (ministerial room) for consultation. If a violation of the community order could not be resolved at that level or if the infraction was of a serious nature, it would be presented to the Bruderschaft, an assembly of all adult males having membership in the local church. Its decisions, resulting from open discussion and debate, were final. In all likelihood they would be respected even by the regional elder.

### I. Religious Patterns and Issues

#### The Church Calendar

The sequence of the religious year was clearly prescribed for Epp and his co-worker Paetkau. Together they tried to ensure at least one worship service per month in each village. The majority of these were house services, sometimes attended by less than twenty people. A small church was erected in Nowowitebsk, which served as a central meeting place on festive occasions or simply as a village center for worship. Epp faithfully records his preaching rounds. These demanded not only a weekly sermon but also participation at engagements, weddings and funerals. In such circumstances a liturgical pattern at least eased the difficulty of juggling the roles of minister, farmer and community leader.

New Year's day always meant religious service if possible in the central church.¹ On this occasion it was
customary to publish the vital statistics associated with the Chortitza settlement during the past year. The next religious holiday, *Heilige Drei Koenige* (Epiphany), was also marked with a church service. From the standpoint of the congregation the high point of the ecclesiastical year came with Easter and Pentecost. Special assemblies marked Palm Sunday, Good Friday, as well as Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. Easter Tuesday was still considered a holiday though no services were held.

In the nineteenth century Russian Mennonite church only one baptismal service per year was observed, usually on the day of Pentecost. Preparations for the occasion began well in advance. Epp regularly did several readings of the articles of faith as contained in the Confession of Faith. In 1870, for example, he began the presentation at the church in Nowowitebsk on April 19. The second half of the articles were read on May 3. On this occasion some 17 baptismal candidates were presented to the congregation. On May 10 the first half of the articles were read again and the baptismal candidates presented a second time. The following Sunday (May 17) the reading continued from article 8 and the list of baptismal candidates was again published. Catechism instruction began on May 19 and continued on May 21, which incidentally also marked the celebration of Ascension Day in the Nowowitebsk church. On Sunday, May 24, the articles were again presented and the assembled baptismal candidates responded to the questions asked them. The preparations for baptism were now complete.

According to customary Mennonite practice only the elder could perform the baptismal rite and administer the Lord's Supper. Elder Gerhard Dyck of Chortitza arrived in the Hebrew Colonies on May 25 and the following day baptized the young people at Nowoshitomir. The following day a communion service was held in the church at Nowowitebsk. A special service was usually held on the previous day, in which communion participants gathered to hear a preparatory sermon.

Harvest and thanksgiving festivals appear to have been well established on the Russian Mennonite religious calendar. Epp's diary mentions them from 1860 onwards. They were celebrated either in a home or in the local church, depending on the monthly schedule of services. The occasion was little more than a simple worship service with no mission emphasis or ensuing social activities. On October 4, 1870, for instance, a marriage ceremony followed the service, an event which could have taken place at any Sunday worship. Advent and Christmas held much meaning for Epp; in his preaching schedule he carefully observed each Advent Sunday with an appropriate sermon. Christmas itself was celebrated for three days, with services held on the first two.

A rare event of considerable significance for Epp and the settlement took place in mid-September 1870. On September 13 the community elected the teacher Johann Wiebe as elder. The installment service under the direction of the Chortitza elder, Gerhard Dyck, took place in Georgsthal on the following day. Epp's account reads:

"The installation of the elder was held in the afternoon in Lepp's Scheune. A very large assembly gathered and the service began. We first sang No. 142, "Ein froh Gemueth erweckt den Geist zum Singen" (A joyous heart awakes the soul to song) — all nine verses. In his opening remarks the beloved elder Gerhard Dyck explained (he purpose of the gathering. Then (he) prayed. Following the reading of the text he spoke on the duties of an elder and (the duties) of congregation. Now we prayed again. Two Questions were directed to the newly elected elder which he answered with a "Yes". Two questions were likewise addressed to the congregation who answered silently. After the prayer the becoming elder knelt down and the elder Gerhard Dyck confirmed him as an elder with God's word and the laying on of hands. Then he raised him and kissed him. The presiding elder requested the ministerial council (Lehrdienst) to congratulate the newly installed elder Johann Wiebe.

The blessings of my colleagues varied. Each one kissed him. The deacon Johann Enz read his blessing from a sheet of paper. Now the (newly) installed elder gave a heart warming sermon. Then the hymn "Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade" No. 603 (Oh abide with your grace) was sung. Thereupon elder Gerhard Dyck presented his sermon, following which the congregation knelt. The congregation sang all five verses of No. 274 "Heiliger Jesu Heiligungsquelle" (Holy Jesus healing stream) for the close."

The installation ceremony was obviously a highlight for Epp. He notes in his diary that he purposely provided a detailed description of the proceedings "so that in later years one can read how such things are done at the present time."
The Lehrer as Arbitrator and Peacemaker

As a Lehrer Epp was also expected to be something of a community servant capable of performing a broad range of duties. As indicated earlier, he was expected to function in areas like child welfare, juvenile delinquency, public mischief, theft, Jewish-Mennonite relations, property law and property right, local quarrels and even assault. The diary entries for the years 1860-1864 clearly delineate the scope of this kind of activity. Early in January 1860, Epp listened to charges involving child neglect. A week later he was called upon to assess damages caused by loose animals in the village. Seven days later he was called to Nowopodolsk to advise on an issue involving the community cowherd.

On January 27 Heinrich Banmann complained to Epp about the treatment accorded to him by his son. Epp was frequently called upon to solve problems relating to indebtedness, wage disputes, damage to borrowed goods and even outright theft. On one occasion the worker Joseph Kroger complained that the farmer Peter van Neissen had not paid him fully. On another Epp resolved a dispute between brothers-in-law about a lost sheep. More serious was the case of the Kamjanka teacher Peter Klasse, who had not been paid by the villagers. Epp called a public meeting and extracted the promise that they would pay "as soon as possible." An episode involving Peter Teichroew from Nowokowno, who had purchased a cow from Heinrich Penner, proved more dramatic. Penner's wife, who had opposed the sale, entered into Teichroew's barn to retrieve the cow, only to be discovered. Undaunted, she attacked him with her stick. In another instance a Mennonite, whose nonresistance momentarily lapsed, broke the leg of a free-running heifer which had repeatedly damaged his crops. Now, some three years later, its Jewish owners claimed recompense additional to the three silver rubles already paid. When Epp's nephew purchased a car by forging another name to a promissory note and failed to show any real remorse for his trespass, the matter was referred to the Bruderschaft. Placed amidst his peers he somewhat reluctantly admitted the error of his ways.

Cases of excessive drinking invariably came to Epp. Most problems related to alcoholism were predictable, like the December night when a battered Mrs. Peter Rempel sought refuge from her husband in Epp's house. Drunken parties, youthful pranks committed while under the influence of alcohol, excessive consumption at auction sales and local bazaars, even death while in an alcoholic stupor — such matters only increased Epp's concern. The verdict on the April 9, 1862, wagon accident of Abraham Unger and Franz Redekopp came from an agitated Mrs. Unger: "... it's because of the Branntwein (whiskey)!

Habitual drunkenness was usually dealt with at both the level of Lehrdienst and Bruderschaft. The names of several alcoholics repeatedly surfaced in the diary, a somber reminder that not all was right in paradise, Epp usually reserved the severest invectives in his diary for alcohol-related problems.

Epp and the Waisenamt

In the nineteenth century Mennonite world, disease epidemics or the complications of childbirth meant shorter life expectancy. The dividing of estates and the providing for the orphans appeared all too frequently as agenda items in everyday village life. In order to regulate these issues the Mennonites migrating to Russia in the late eighteenth century, no doubt borrowing a Prussian practice, almost immediately established a Waisenamt (orphans' agency or bureau). Its mandate focused on the division of the inheritance, the appointment of two guardians in the event of the death of one or both parents and finally the education and Christian nurture of the children. Jacob Epp functioned both as a representative of the institution in the Hebrew Colonies and as a guardian in individual cases. His diary entries in this respect provide some glimpses of the operation of this agency in the 1860's and 1870's.

On October 9, 1861, Epp acted on behalf of the local Waisenamt director van Kampen when he listed the total inventory belonging to the widower Gerhard Wiebe, who also happened to be his next door neighbor. The cash value totaled 913 silver rubles. The auction sale, where Epp again represented van Kampen, was held on November 10 and netted 1,144 silver rubles. The farm itself was bought by the school teacher Heinrich Olfert for 755 silver rubles. The last line of Epp's diary entry is rather astounding. "The under-age children were distributed among good people by the guardians, only the youngest son Bernhard remained with his father for the time being."

Matters became much more personal in 1863. On February 28 Epp reported that his wife's illness was becoming worse. Two days later she called her children to her bedside. A daughter, born on March 4, lived less than two hours and was buried on March 7. The condition of Epp's wife worsened. On March 12 she reported to husband Jacob a vision of a beckoning Christ. Four days later, after an illness of 21 weeks, she passed away. On the day of her funeral Epp could only write: "rest well my dearest love, after the suffering you endured rest well until that greater Easter morning."
There was another significant entry on April 29:

"On Monday the local supervisor, Peter van Kampen, together with the guardians of my children, Abraham Hiebert from Einlage and Peter Loewen from Nowoshitomir, made a list of my inventory, which amounts to 530 silver rubles and 600 kopecks. My debt is over 200 silver rubles, so we made the following division;

1. In money - 20 rubles per child payable on May 1, 1865.
2. The daughters each get a chest and the sons an additional ten rubles in lieu of that. (This is also payable in 1865.
3. Each child receives a Bible, a song book and a catechism.
4. Each child receives one cow and five sheep.
5. When they (the children) grow up: one (Sunday) dress, one bed, one mattress, two pillows and one foot covering."

Unfortunately we don't know what happened to the Epp family at this point, for the diary entries from May 12 to July 2 were cut out of the manuscript. Later in July he reported that "I and my wife drove to Islutschistaja to our children." He had obviously remarried. The first child of this second union was born in 1866. Epp kept the younger children from his first marriage with him, but this was not always done.

One cannot help but speculate what effect the dissolution of the estate might have had on the surviving partner. When the estate of the widow Redekopp in Nowokowno was divided, each child received such basic items as a bed, mattress, sheets, two pillows, a songbook and a catechism. Some 600 silver rubles, no doubt realized through a public auction, would also be divided among the children. As a compensation her intended husband Abraham Penner promised her one-sixth of his possessions (not including any land), which would be inherited by her children in the event of her death. In another instance a lengthy and at times unpleasant discussion focused upon the room and board to be charged to old widow Elias. After some consideration of her reserve capital it was set at 100 rubles per year. Nowhere in the diary is the widow's share explicitly mentioned. It seems she shared in the proceeds of the estate equally with her children.

The diary reader is struck occasionally by the sense of pragmatism associated with the distribution of orphaned children. As guardian of the Klassen children, Epp found employment for the oldest two, found interim homes for the next two and distributed the rest "as real adoptees: Katarina at Benhard Schellenberg in Rosenthal, Peter at David Penner, Bernhard at Gerhard Penner in Blumengart and Helena at Anton Baergmann in Neuendorf." Eight children in eight different homes.

Ziffern (Ciphers)

Epp's diary provides an interesting sidelight on the evolution of congregational singing among the Russian Mennonites. In 1837 a Prussian teacher in the South Russian colonies, Heinrich Franz Sr., compiled a Choralbuch in which the melodies were notated in Ziffern (ciphers). Its use in a manuscript version was probably restricted to schools until its publication in 1860. Arranged for four voices, the hymnal was now potentially available to all Mennonite churches. In a conservative setting where song (however dismal) and liturgy were sacrosanct, such innovation was bound to cause sharp reaction. Epp's diary jottings, often unintentionally humorous, reflect the sequence of the debate.

There are periodic references to the problems of Zahlengesang for over a decade in Epp's account. On January 8, 1860, he reported: "I have received a letter from my co-worker Isaac Klassen in which he complains that the public worship on Christmas Day in Nowoshitomir had been disturbed by a Zahlengesang." Next evening when the offending song leader (Vorsaenger) Heinrich Olfert visited Epp he complained that Klassen had compared such singing to a drinking song. It seemed that Klassen himself created a disturbance when he stood up in order to pronounce the benediction while the singing was still in progress. His own brother Franz and Peter Neufeld walked out of the assembly.

A month later Epp tried to discuss the matter with the Isaac Klassens by pointing out that the numbers simply reflected the notes used in much older songbooks. "They talked themselves into such a feverish pitch that their faces reddened and their facial features twisted." Tensions between the two ministers intensified the next day as they went about inspecting the village school, as Klassen insisted that the traditional singing by ear "was better than the Zahlengesang."

Six years later on Palm Sunday Epp made a significant entry:
"Today was the first time this year that we held services in our church. Most of the local residents were present and many children had come. That may have motivated the song leader, the school teacher Olfert, to sing a *Zahlenmelodie* at the close, which was also sung with resounding voices by the children. This is the first *Ziffermelodie* which has been sung in this church, though during the winter this has happened several times in the house services. In the church at Chortitza the *Zahlengesang* has been in use since last fall.\(^{33}\)

The increasing practice of *Zahlengesang* did not mean universal acceptance. In 1868 Epp reported: "After the sermon we sang hymn no. 108 according to *Ziffern*. During the second verse Jacob de Veer walked out and waited in the cloakroom until it was finished."\(^{34}\) De Veer was determined in his opposition. Two weeks later he again stormed out of the service during the closing song without bothering to wait for his daughter. He found an ally in Peter Peters who slammed the church door so hard when he left that it sprang open again.\(^{35}\)

Jacob de Veer now claimed that he could not come to church if the congregation persisted with *Zahlengesang*.\(^{36}\) When the baptismal candidates, which included de Veer's daughter, were presented to the congregation for the second time neither de Veer nor Peters were present. Some members of the congregation demanded they be called to account for their actions and felt children could not be accepted if their fathers were not in attendance.\(^{37}\) Both men apparently bowed to community pressure, at least Epp makes no further mention of this dispute. The victory of *Zahlengesang* seemed assured when Epp preached in *Nowokowna* on February 9, 1869, for "both the opening song and the song after the sermon were sung according to *Ziffern*. "\(^{38}\) At the end of the year Epp could report that "the fuss about *Zahlensingen* or the *Ziffermelodie* has subsided, though in *Kamjanka* and *Isllutschistaja* they still sing the melodies by ear(*Gehoermeledien)*."\(^{39}\)

Such optimism proved premature. The old orthodoxy reasserted itself at the funeral of Epp's seven-month-old grandson in *Islutschistaja*. It was the first time *Ziffermelodie* were sung here, but under what unhappy circumstances! When Epp arrived at the home of Gerhard Andres the song leader was missing, so he requested another leader to begin the opening song, which he did. Jacob de Veer "immediately suspected that they intended to sing *Ziffermelodie*. While the funeral guests were taking their places he, with his cap on his head and tobacco pipe in his mouth, walked about the porch to see how they would sing. When the singing began he made tracks for home."\(^{40}\) De Veer's protest was of no avail. The following day at a small post-funeral service the participants again sang according to a *Ziffermelodie*.\(^{41}\)

The end of this continuous issue nevertheless seemed to be in sight. At places the old song leaders were withdrawing because the people preferred the new method of singing. "The majority have become of one opinion and *Ziffergesang* is no longer seen as a great evil."\(^{42}\) As Epp later discovered, it was still an issue in some of the other settlements.\(^{43}\) In the Hebrew Colonies the new singing mode "was everywhere accepted", except in *Islutschistaja*, where "two church members do not want to attend services because of it."\(^{44}\) Perhaps the emergence of a far more crucial issue, that of state service, made *Zahlengesang* seem irrelevant.

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**The Question of Universal Military Service**

In 1870 Epp and the community he served faced an unexpected crisis. It stemmed from the government's intention to introduce universal military conscription. Such action in Epp's estimation clearly violated the privileges originally granted the Mennonites. He first heard the disconcerting news in November 1870, when his brother returned from a visit to Chortitza and

"brought a sad bit of news. In the future every Russian will have to do military service according to the Prussian model! What good does our *Privilegium*, which was granted us and our posterity for all time, do now? Can it protect us against the decrees of higher authority? Oh I fear our church is facing a difficult future, for the judgments of God are already drawing near."\(^{45}\)

In his last entry for 1870 he again reflects upon the issue which he perceives as a judgment from God. "We have richly deserved a punishment, for the life in our congregations can be called more worldly than Christian."\(^{46}\)

Judging by Epp's diary, the question of universal military service generated a high level of anxiety in the Chortitza region. In January 1871, Epp learned that elder Gerhard Dyck and his own brother Heinrich planned to leave for St. Petersburg.\(^{47}\) A special ministerial conference (*Lehrerversammlung*) to deal with the issue convened in Chortitza on February 11, 1871. Both delegates, who planned to join a Molotschna
group led by elder Leonhard Sudermann of Berdyansk, addressed the assembly. Elder Dyck spoke of the proposed legislation as a "visitation of God brought about by our sins." He admonished the Mennonite churches to "earnestly seek a return to God through Jesus Christ" and advocated that all "should pray to God so that this threatening danger be turned aside." Heinrich Epp in turn reminded the ministers that Mennonite mothers also participated in this struggle and faced the future with a sense of "anxiety for their small sons." In conclusion elder Dyck once more urged the assembly to pray. A prayer and petition service for the success of the mission was scheduled for the following day in the Chortitza church.

For Epp the first indication of the direction of the negotiations came via a letter from his brother dated March 28, in which he stated: "The Mennonites will be exempt from bearing arms or military service, but will be used for Sanitaetsdienst (service in the medical corps)." Heinrich Epp also noted meeting the Czar in his summer garden and briefly conversing with him. "Judging by his questions he almost seemed to know that we were Mennonites." Brother Heinrich apparently kept a diary of the events transpiring in St. Petersburg, which Jacob read in mid-May. He could not help musing about the short duration of privileges which were once given for all time, Heinrich's diary nevertheless gave some hope, for "the high authorities have been well-disposed towards us and so God will also help in the future."

Epp's sense of reassurance again gave way to anxiety as he reflected upon the recent events on December 31, 1872. St. Petersburg was not acting to resolve the problem. "The sword of divine wrath is drawn over our congregation. A dark thundercloud is forming over us. (At present) the lightning can only be seen on the horizon, but the roll of thunder can be heard from afar. Our religious freedom stands in danger. Until now all the attempts of our deputies to present our wishes to the father of (our) land have failed."

The diary suggests that the pros and cons of emigration emerged in Russian Mennonite society by 1873. When Epp journeyed to Neuhofterth in early January to hear more about the new czarist law, he learned about two things: the inevitability of the Sanitaetsdienst; and secondly a letter written by Bernhard Warkentin from America whose content all those present "absorbed with joy." Emigration propaganda from abroad was perhaps beginning to shift the reasons for emigration from a religious to an economic basis.

Religious Awareness

Epp's diary suggests no substantial shifts in the content of his religious-intellectual awareness between 1860 and 1880. As a Lehrer in his church he functioned in a number of religious and civil capacities which were predictable. Services in the various villages had to be conducted at least once a month, which often meant a sermon a Sunday for Epp. The practices of baptism and communion were routinized and predictable; the Sunday services simplistic and straightforward. By and large religion was a reaffirming experience. There was no real need to rethink theology. His contact with advocates of the emerging Mennonite Brethren movement was very occasional. When it occurred there was more confrontation than dialogue. Epp had no occasion to examine carefully the Brethren view of conversion, though he seems to have been sympathetic to their desire for a church of committed believers. Again and again he lamented the lethargy within his own church and stressed the need for revival. Judging from the diary, Epp did not read very extensively. He specifically mentions John Bunyan and a book on the background of the New Testament. Non-Mennonite preachers rarely entered his world, though he did hear the Baptist Oncken from Hamburg preach in the Chortitza church. On another occasion he reported the visit of a Baptist Bible calporteur named Riege. When the high school teacher Diehl from the Lutheran colony of Grossliebental visited Epp, an interesting discussion ensued on the question of infant versus adult baptism. It was Diehl's first contact with Mennonites. The visitor was particularly impressed by the fact that Epp cherished Johann Arndt's Wahres Christentum and the writings of Hofakker.

(To be concluded in the next issue)

NOTES

This description is based on Epp’s diary entries for

1. January 21, 1860
2. September 14, 1870
3. Ibid
4. January 7, 1860
5. January 14, 1860
6. January 21  1870
7. January 21, 1866
8. November 26, 1861
9. November 26, 1863
10. September 1, 1860
11. March 18, 1860
12. June 3, 12, 1860.
15. February 23, 1860.
17. April 9, 1862.
19. March 2, 1863.
23. December 19, 1866.
26. Ibid.
27. January 31, 1868.
31. February 8, 1860.
32. Ibid.
33. March 20, 1866.
34. April?, 1868.
35. April 21, 1868.
36. April 24, 1868. Epp recalls that he had spoken with the old elder Jacob Dyck about the use of *Ziffern-*
gesang in the schools 15 years ago and expressed the concern that it would bring strife to the churches. The wise old elder replied that such instruction should not stop. *Ibid.*
37. April 28, 1868.
38. February 9, 1869.
39. December 31, 1869.
40. February 8, 1870.
41. February 9, 1870.
42. March 8, 1870.
43. August 24, 1870.
44. December 31, 1870.
45. November 18, 1870.
46. December 31, 1870.
47. January 23, 1871.
48. February 11, 1871.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. March 30, 1871.
52. Ibid.
53. May 15, 1871.
54. December 31, 1872.
55. January 4, 1873.
56. February 11, 1868.
57. August 7, 1870.
58. October 11, 1869.
59. May 29, 1867.
60. July 5, 1870. The entry does not indicate whether or not Epp possessed these books.

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The times most full of expectation were those when the grain fields were ripening toward harvest, particularly if it had rained at the right time and there was hope for a good crop. Growth was observed from week to week with anxious attention. Often, almost regularly late on Sunday afternoon, a team was hitched up and my parents drove around the fields, now to this side, then to that. These were probably the only occasions on which my mother came out and learned to know the fields by their position and type of soil. Otherwise she was always at home, leaving everything that went on outside to father. Now, on these trips, she could see the importance of her work at home in the kitchen and cellar, in the yard and garden. Without this work there would have been no waving fields and no harvest. Mother never interfered with father in his business; she just quietly did her work. But therein lay the obligation for father to do his job well.

On such trips, one child or several children were always taken along, in the wagon box in front of or behind the seat, the smallest child on the seat between the parents. We children did not have to sit for long on those bare hard boards on the wagon floor. Father took his scythe along and cut the grass on the road's edge at the end of the fields as feed for the horses at home. When the wagon box was full, we lay on the grass and rode in splendor. We also sat higher now and could see what was happening in front and could hear everything that father was telling mother and explaining to her. Our view spanned a wide circle and spied every bird. Nothing that interrupted the silence of the steppes escaped our attention. To be sure, there was not much to be seen or experienced there, but what little there was had its own charm and impressed itself on our minds all the more deeply. And when the sun had set and it quickly grew darker and nothing could be heard from a large area round about except the dull rattling of the wagon wheels on trails overgrown with grass, then childlike fantasy had an immeasurably wide free play and peopled the loneliness with its shapes.

Sometimes several men would go out together and wander through the nearby fields on the wagon trails, on the middle furrows where the grain was quite scant, or on the boundary between two fields, where in our time grass still grew. It was customary then to leave a narrow strip of land unplowed and unseeded. Later on nothing was left unplowed. Rather than that, it even became the practice to plow a furrow's width away from one's neighbor, so as to be sure of not being short. Earlier, people had not been so greedy; with few exceptions they were satisfied with their own. We loved to join our fathers on such walks. In this way we went where we would not have dared to go alone, for fear of monsters that might be lurking there or afraid of losing our way. The latter fear was well grounded. Not only children, but adults also, could get lost there and often needed a long time to find their way out of the sea of grain.

On such excursions we were especially on the lookout for hawk, bustard or crane nests. Our fathers destroyed hawk nests with eggs or with young ones without consideration. Hawks, which were very numerous in our area, threatened all fowl, as well as young rabbits. For them there was no mercy. But if we scared up a bustard or crane from its nest, we were permitted to look at the nest with its brown-speckled bustard eggs or bright green crane eggs, but nothing more. The eggs lay in a slight depression, with a few feathers in it, almost on barren ground. But the young brood did not fare so well when they were somewhat bigger. Then the little bustards were taken home to mother's kitchen and the young cranes home to be tamed.

As goal for our excursions we often chose a "Mogila" situated about 2 km from our village. Mogila was the name given to the artificial flat hills heaped up several meters high and visible from a distance here and there on the steppe. They were graves of old lords of the steppe or observation posts or, as in our case, refuse hills heaped up by the Tatars in their propensity to bring all their ashes together into one pile. In this way they also created lookout points for themselves. They served the same purpose for us, although, of course, we had no enemies to look out for. They did not serve us, as they did the Tatars, as a place to sit.

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together cross-legged, smoking and gossiping our life away. The Tatars, with their long-stemmed little pipes of fired red clay, led a lazy life. The hard-working German farmers were quite another breed, such as the ancient steppe had never before sustained. They too, of course, enjoyed smoking and gossiping, but only in their well-earned evening rest period on the bench in front of the house or at the yard gate. Each and every Tatar ash heap was an offence to them. They went over it with plow and seed, but nothing grew there, or rather it burned up in the sun's heat and dryness. We children rummaged through the ashes searching for little knuckle bones from sheep that we used in playing. We called them "Aschigg," obviously an old Tatar name for an old Tatar game. The prehistoric children of our age must have played it in their day, for sometimes we found a little bone into which lead had been poured, clearly to make it heavier and more suitable for the game.

But the drives or walks through the fields were not always joyous. Often they were done with an anxious heart to see whether a long-yearned-for rain, when it finally came, would not be too late for the crop. The surface layer of the black soil of the steppe was very fertile. No fertilization was needed, but rain had to come at the right time. If rain did not come before the great heat, everything shrieveled unmercifully. At such times one looked up at every little cloud in the sky hoping that it would bring rain. Or one lived in constant tension when day after day heavy black masses of clouds hovered over the silent thirsting steppe or moved over it without releasing rain. If rain did not come at the right time, all the diligence, all the work of the entire year was in vain. We children comprehended that but vaguely. Only later did we really understand it.

In our way, of course, we waited for and rejoiced in the rain no less. When the black clouds began to unload in a heavy thunderstorm — that was really something! The scorching rays of the sun and the hot wind blowing for weeks had sucked the last little drops of water from the earth. Wide cracks had developed in the stone-hard soil. Trees and shrubs stood limp and dust-covered. Still sheltered in their jackets, the heads of grain stretched pointed and parched toward the sky. They could not emerge because they lacked the water that gave vigor and strength. But when finally, after long and anxious waiting, the rain came, the steppe was often transformed into a sea, and a mighty, dirty yellow stream rolled down the village street. If you happened to be out in the field, you heard the most polyphonic music. You could hear this at home too, of course, particularly in the evening or at night. It was a bubbling, brewing and stewing.

The water remained for a particularly long time in the clay pit near the village, at the point where one turned on the road to the railway station at Kurman. From there all the yellow clay was taken, and so, with time, deep holes were formed. Into these holes streamed the roaring and foaming waters, channeled by the many hollowed-out paths toward the sky hoping that it would bring rain. Or one lived in constant tension when day after day heavy black masses of clouds hovered over the silent thirsting steppe or moved over it without releasing rain. If rain did not come at the right time, all the diligence, all the work of the entire year was in vain. We children comprehended that but vaguely. Only later did we really understand it.

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All the cracks and holes were filling, gurgling air bubbles rose up till everything was full. Everything living below the surface was driven out; snakes, mice, hamsters, polecats and weasels, and the jerboa, those delicate quick-moving creatures with their short forelegs and with rear legs all the longer, and their long tail with its velvety soft white tuft of hair at the end.

We boys rolled up our pant legs as far as we could and took advantage of this splendid opportunity. On the flat steppe, of course, the water soon disappeared, soaked into the earth or ran off. In all the depressions and holes, however, it stood for a long time. We romped and dived in these even then when we came out much dirtier than when we went in. At other times we had to bathe in narrow well troughs or in tubs. Now, for once, we could do it in bigger open water. We plunged in courageousness and when we emerged again we looked like clay dolls. Only when the water changed to a viscous broth and was inhabited by all sorts of creatures did we give up our pleasure from and in the water. The water remained for a particularly long time in the clay pit near the village, at the point where one turned on the road to the railway station at Kurman. From there all the yellow clay was taken, and so, with time, deep holes were formed. Into these holes streamed the roaring and foaming waters, channeled by the many hollowed-out paths that led by there. In this pit a well had been dug, which supplied at two meters depth the sweetest water in the village, clarified rainwater. Our water elsewhere had a high saltpeter content. Whenever guests came who were used to sweet water, we brought our tea water from this little well.

Near this clay pit had been the old Tatar settlement, from which our little village received the name "Meschen," when we were no longer permitted to call it by its German name, Ludwistal. The only remains of the Tatar settlement were the "Stinkpotern," as we called them. These were plants, remarkable because they remained green even during the greatest drought, pushed out their white star-shaped blossoms with yellow stamens, and bore their fruit, which was round, the size of a pea and full of seeds. Their stems grew about half a meter high and their odor was unpleasant. These plants always stayed green because their roots, thick as an arm, went down several meters to ground water. For that reason, they were very difficult to eradicate. The plowshare could not cope with them; they had to be dug out. Their woody roots provided an excellent fuel that housewives preferred to anything except vine cuttings. Incidentally, these plants grew only where Tatar settlements had been located, nowhere else. The "Tatar Forest," as we called it, was of course always a popular playground for us children. There was always something green there and
behind the bushes good places to hide. Such a place existed nowhere else away from the farmyard. There we-conducted our robber games. The nearby clay pit offered additional splendid hiding places.

But I must correct myself: old Meschen was not situated here, but rather 1 km away from the village, on the road to the parochial village, Hochheim, later called "Naimann." There too a "Tatar Forest" grew. Such a forest outlasted many generations, where it was not eradicated by force. In my day the village territory of Tatar Meschen served as pasture, because the ground could not be plowed. We loved to go there in the spring on Sundays or on school holidays. Next to the "forest, " in the holes of filled-in wells or in grain-storage caves, there grew man-high thistles and wild hemp. We made paths into these terrifying thickets and built our robbers' roosts. Enterprising American Indian instincts were acted out here, but, of course, not stimulated by Indian tales, for the printed word, books were rarities for us. It was simply the youthful urge for adventure, which also lived in us, even though we could satisfy it only in the narrowest confines and the most simple manner. What was missing was generously supplied by the imagination, which is always the most exuberant and most active in the emptiest space; for the less there is, the more it must create and fashion. It created oh so many characters for us, the totally unspoiled children of the steppe!

David Weigum, at left, with his cousin, Johannes Modersitzki, when they were students at a boys' school in Niesky, Silesia, Germany, in 1890.
When we grew older we used to smoke secretly in these, our hiding places. We drew tobacco and paper from our pockets — the one had bought some, the other had taken it from his father's box — we rolled cigarettes and puffed blissfully. In our hidden recess we were secure against any surprise. Telltale yellow on our fingers from the smoke was rubbed off on a wall. Father punished us a number of times for smoking, but he could not pursue it and suppress it effectively and seriously because he was a heavy smoker himself.
In spite of this we respected father and feared him, but perhaps mainly because of the blows that he tended to deal out in anger. We took tobacco from father secretly - and just as secretly and illegally he acquired it from the Tatars. They brought it in sacks, along with other, harmless things, from village to village and served their clientele. Sale of tobacco was a state monopoly. If a man happened to be caught selling it and had no opportunity to appease and to silence the "Urjadnik" (village constable) with a few pounds of the noble plant, he had to pay a heavy fine. But bribery failed only very rarely. The policeman, because of the paltry pay he received for his difficult service, was all-too-happy to acquire his supply of tobacco at no cost. Whatever else he needed, he usually acquired by the same method. Their great fear of the police did not permit our German farmers to be stingy. They preferred to give almost anything to keep the police at a distance.

From the "Djurt" - that is what we called the goal of our outings and the other sites of vanished Tatar settlements with their ashen soil - it was not very far to Hochheim, called Naimann in Tatar. Often we extended our excursions that far, 4 km from Meschen. We were attracted there principally by the Jewish grocer, particularly at a time when we had none in Meschen. For a few copper coins we could there have our pockets filled with "Semitschki," sunflower seeds to shell, and also buy some "Konfekt" (candy), two for a kopék. These were wrapped in plain colored paper, not color-fast. But their substance was good - much better than later when the outer wrapping became ever prettier and more enticing but the contents worse. If one was the happy owner of a twenty, then he could buy himself a box full of "Eljwa," an excellent Asiatic sweet made from some kind of oily seeds. That subsequently became a special pleasure, in a rye or wheat field off the road, where the high grain stalks came back together over one's head.

In Naimann my mother had a good friend, Mrs. Hooge. She was a good loyal soul. I am not surprised that those two ladies found each other. No woman that I remember from my childhood or later youth had such a relationship with my mother as Mrs. Hooge, so full of goodness of heart and the urge to live it out in practice. We were never permitted to leave her house without having had our coffee with all possible good trimmings. If the cherries or mulberries or anything else in the garden around the house were ripe, it was understood that we could enjoy these, whether under or on the tree or bush. To eat on the way home and for our mother and brothers and sisters, we had to stuff all our pockets full and tie as much as we could into our pocket handkerchiefs. These good things attracted us mightily, especially because at that time we still had no trees at home, except the acacias in front of the house by the road, I don't know why, but the Swabian villages were far ahead of us in gardening. Perhaps, in fact most probably, their more advanced culture went along with their more lively piety. We had conformity; the Swabians in Naimann, Schoenbrunn, Hebron, etc. had piety.\(^1\) Their fathers in Neuhoffnung, Neuhoffnngstal, Rosenfeld and Neustuttgart near Berdyansk on the Sea of Azov had emigrated from Korntal\(^2\) near Stuttgart for pietistic reasons and had settled in Russia, formed free congregations, nominally Lutheran but not ritualistically, having simple services without liturgy. Their spiritual leaders were always laymen, even though they soon called theologically educated pastors from their Swabian homeland. In my day their pastor in Schoenbrunn (Adargin) was Pastor Christen, educated at St. Chrischona near Basel. He was a fervently devout man, with the force and impressiveness of a popular eloquence such as none of our official pastors far and wide possessed. To this man thronged many stimulated and searching souls even from outside his parish. My parents were among these, belonging as they did from early days to the church brotherhood. When Pastor Christen preached in Naimann, alternating with the Lutheran clergyman who lived in the village, my parents often went there and dropped in at Mrs. Hooge's, not far away from the church. In this way the two families got to know one another and their friendship grew out of their common religious principles. Later our visits to the Hooges were no longer because their home was close to the church but rather because our hearts were near to God there and here. I shall come back to this later, because these contexts, just through my parents, determined my very own life.

To Schoenbrunn (Adargin), about which I just spoke as the place where the Separatist preacher, Christen, resided, it was about 8 km. There we children dared to go only later, probably then only in stages, each time a bit farther. What attracted us onto this road at first may have been a bush, probably a blackthorn bush, which stood just about on the village boundary. It was pitiful and tattered because many a whip-handle had been cut from it until there was nothing more to cut. Such a living bush on the steppe had the same effect as running water, it was something sacred. To it we devoted our pilgrimages and our constantly new expressions of surprise. Later the bush disappeared, sacrificed to the plow like so much else. — At this point, you were already about halfway to Adargin. There, at the entrance to the village, stood a grocer's shop, just as in Naimann, and a windmill to entice us. We climbed it, but usually dispersed quickly when a troop of village boys or servants showed up in the distance, as if these would regard us as enemy infiltrators.
whom they had to attack and chase away! We did not go into the village at any time. There was no one to visit there, and so the village remained for us a charming secret. Schoenbrunn was entirely enveloped by the green of splendid trees and was perhaps the most beautiful village on the flat steppe. On the one side, down toward the riverbed, all of the farmers, probably because of the good water, had magnificent orchards and highly productive vineyards. The Salgyr, the only larger Crimean river, flowed close by the village. In later times it may have been mostly dried up in the summer, because the springs were choked up with mud and because upstream most of the water had been diverted to irrigate the fruit and vegetable gardens. We got to know the village gradually only when our parents began to go there occasionally to a mission or harvest festival and took us along. It appeared as lovely as paradise to us, something the like of which we had never seen before. Those heavily laden fruit trees and behind them the long rows of vines full of delicious grapes' Here the water in the wells was not at all deep down and could be got out quickly and easily with a pump. We could not stop admiring it all and had difficulty in understanding how the inhabitants of Schoenbrunn managed to make flow for only a short while. It was quite different also from what the rain brought about in our village.

But one thing Schoenbrunn did not have, and even we children sensed that, and for this reason everything remained basically strange and cold: it did not have a Mrs. Hooge. A good human heart is and remains after all the most attractive and most splendid thing. Later I had the opportunity to get to know the Adargin people somewhat more closely, but by that time my childhood interests had given way to those of a man. The life of the people and wellsprings of their souls captivated me much more than tree and bush or water and flower. Truly my eye for it and my receptive grateful apprehension of the sparse beauty of the steppe remained in me as long as I stood and walked on its soil. Even after I had seen and enjoyed many lands and a great abundance of rare beauty, my soul still appreciated much more the simple modest charm of my home soil. It is as if in many ways a man stands still and stops developing, so that you wonder about yourself and ask; are you then really still a child and have not grown older? I was often surprised that people took me for an adult and accordingly took me seriously. - But where have I arrived now? It was about work that I wanted to tell you and about how childhood games and youthful enjoyment grew out of it. Let me return to my theme.

The hay had been brought in. The longed-for rain had fallen. Now the grain fields were ripening toward harvesting. People prepared for harvest as they would for a festival. They were full of joyous anticipation when they sensed a good yield in prospect. Many a family father had good reason to rejoice: long enough he had only had to expend — now he would finally be able to receive as well. We were, of course, more modest in our wants in those days and greed for money had not yet produced wheat and land fever. Nor did we have debts yet as we did later. If prospects for a harvest were not so good, we proceeded all the more carefully to bring in the little that we had.

In my earliest memories harvesting work was different from what it was later when machines changed things so much. Back then you could still hear the beat of the scythe sharper. Swath after swath had to be mowed by hand under the burning hot sun. Father, naturally, with his full-time and half-year hired men, could mow only the smallest part himself.

Several days before harvest the Kazapps, as the Great Russians were called, arrived from the north. They gathered by the hundreds at the railway stations and the market places or wandered from village to village, men, women and girls. The men wore shirts and pants of rough hand-woven linen. The shirt extended over the pants almost to the knees and was tied at the waist with a bright cord. On their heads, over their long hair cut horizontally at the neck, they wore a broad brimmed straw hat that they had woven themselves. On their feet they wore "Postoly", low-cut shoes of birch bark. They wore no stockings but had linen rags wrapped around their feet, as well as around their calves up to the knee and tied with a cord. The women wore a short skirt of rough wool, gray or brown, in natural colors, just as the sheep gave the wool- Their shirt was brightly embroidered; over it they wore a short jacket that was usually quilted, and then a bright kerchief. Each of them had a coarse coat as their only protection day or night, in rain or cold. To the extent that they did not go barefoot, the women wore heavy Muscovy leather boots with long legs. What other clothing or provisions they needed for the journey, they put into a little linen sack that they carried on two bands like a rucksack. Each of the men shouldered a scythe- The scythe itself had been taken off the handle but was securely bound to it, as was the scythe-rake that caught the stalks during the mowing and laid them down neatly, ready for the sheaf-binder,
So the Kazapps lay around or wandered around in many, many groups, arranged according to their home villages, and waited to be hired. Their poverty at home must have been great, for, before there was a railway to the south, they had to trek hundreds and hundreds of kilometers. And what they then received for their hard work was little enough: perhaps 3 rubles per dessiatine, plus the provisions they needed for the meals that they cooked themselves. They were given bread, flour, potatoes, millet for Kappa (a mush), onions, garlic, dried fish and, rarely, some meat. They also received milk and a small barrel of water. They were directed to the field to be harvested and then one had only to replenish their provisions occasionally, otherwise one did not need to be concerned about them. Until the work was completed, they lived day and night on the open fields. Only a steady rain would drive them into the village and this seldom happened. At night they would stretch out their weary bodies on the sun-parched grain, with their coarse coat over them. If the nights were cold, they would burrow themselves into a pile of grain.

That people worked hard was taken for granted even by us children. But I believe that we had a special admiration for the Kazapps, for their industry, their tenacity, and their unpretentiousness. They were true nature people, whom we shall never forget. Their poverty at home, as I have said, must have been great to cause them to wander so far for such meager earnings. And how very angry they were when the mowing machine eventually found its way to the steppe, I can still recall vividly when the first one came to our village. Wilhelm Spiess had bought it at the Kurman-Kemeltschi railway station. He, who later served as district mayor for many years, was the most progressive man in the village, and was also the first to own a mowing machine. He could not go himself to bring the machine home and so he sent his father-in-law, "Old Lust", as he was generally known, to get it. The old man experienced a dangerous trip. It was only the speed of his horses which made it possible for him to get home safely with an undamaged machine: a band of Kazapps met him; the past met the present. These usually peaceful people probably sensed, rather than knew, what a dangerous competitor entered the steppe with this machine. They wanted to pull this first machine from old Lust's wagon and bum it, but the attack was unsuccessful. Alas, even if they had succeeded, the old time, characterized by the sharpening and rustling of the scythe, would soon be gone. Gone with it soon also was the life close to nature and the contentedness of the mowers. The machine brought the clatter of the factory and its spirit of haste and greed to the quiet steppe. Now the primeval, unviolated sod with its silvery-white waving "goat's beard", for which the older people loved the steppe so dearly, disappeared, piece by piece, even faster than before. After only a few years they had to go to the cemeteries, if they wanted to see its pitiful remains. There they still found a small piece of primeval sod not yet broken up and violated by the plowshare.

When old Lust arrived with the first machine, everyone gathered at the home of Wilhelm Spiess. There may have been a representative of the factory present. Or did one or all of the farmers, who were there, put this marvelous thing together? Toward evening it was ready for use, with three horses hitched to it, and in a field near the village one could see how quickly and neatly it worked. How could the Kazapps compete with that? The platform reels turned rapidly and bent the stalks into the knife, which moved back and forth with lightning speed. The man who sat on the rear end of the machine could hardly move the cut grain away fast enough with his blunt fork to make room for the newly cut stalks. When the platform was full, he let the "drop board" fall, which he had held up on a string with the pressure of his foot, and pushed off the pile of grain with his fork. So the machine went around and around the field. Soon only a narrow strip remained, and after this had been cut, the entire field glistened with the yellowish-white stubble, all of the same height. The following summer there were, I believe, few farmers without a mowing machine. But it was some years yet before the Kazapps with their scythes upon their shoulders were no longer seen. They were still permitted to perform their cheap services alongside the machine. For what they cut they tied in sheaves, and this had an advantage over the grain thrown together in piles, in that it got less wet in prolonged rain. Even much later, when the machine had its unlimited sway, there still had to be some mowing with the scythe, and that for grain bent down by rain and wind or by its own weight. At times it was necessary to go back even farther, to the use of the sickle, but I can recall only one summer when we had to do this.

It was an important event every summer when the mowing machine was removed from the wagon-shed, where, its large wheels removed, it leaned against a wall. We children helped in assembling it with the greatest eagerness, more in play, of course, than seriously. When the large, wide cast-iron wheel, we called it the cogwheel, which provided the moving power for the knife and the reels, was being put into place, real manpower was needed. When all the driving belts had been put on and all the bearings greased, the machine was ready to be hitched up. Even this happened before evening. To test the machine a barley field near the village was cut. The next morning harvesting could begin in earnest.
We children were most attracted by the cast-iron seats, especially the rear one, on which the man sat who removed the grain from the platform. He had the most difficult task to perform. Only the strongest and most skilful man could be used for this work. In addition to the incessant activity, for the fork could never be left motionless or everything became tangled and stopped up near the knife, there was also the dust. The burning sun and the dust were almost unbearable. Oh, how much sweating and groaning and cursing occurred at the rear of that machine! It was pitiful to see how the poor man scarcely had time to breathe. Resting a little during the moving of the grain was out of the question: the platform reels kept feeding grain to the knife, which cut and cut and cut incessantly. The opportunity to catch his breath came only after the machine had made two or three trips around the field and needed to be greased. Then he reached first for the small water Jug which hung next to him. What he did was not drinking: he just poured the water down. Small wonder, when— he always sat there drenched, his shirt wet enough to be wrung out. So he drank not only to be refreshed, but also to replace the enormous water loss in his body, so that he could sweat something out again. The water in the little jug was also too warm, hence hardly refreshing, unless he had stopped at the large water barrel at the campsite and had filled it with fresher water. Incidentally, such a "grain remover" had to be treated especially well. This was achieved mainly by paying him higher wages and giving him more drinks of Schnaps than the other workers. He richly earned it. I am amazed that many a worker performed this task without receiving higher compensation. How contemptible were those farmers who permitted all this labor to be performed for them without paying extra compensation worth mentioning! — But I wanted to talk about the rear seat. When the machines returned home in the evening — when they worked far from the village, that happened at best only on Saturday — then we children ran far out to meet them so that we could ride home on that back seat. There was room for just one on the seat. The others stretched themselves out on the platform of the machine on grain that was being brought home for the livestock and poultry.

Incidentally, we could be of some help with the harvest quite young. Even though we could not help to gather the cut grain with the pitchfork and to build the Kopitzen (piles), we could follow and rake together what was inadvertently left behind. During harvest any help was appreciated. People worked feverishly. They gave themselves no rest either day or night until harvest was finished. The weather scarcely needed to be feared: it was, as a rule, continuously sunny and dry. One was not certain, of course, that a sudden thunderstorm might not come as a surprise. And to have everything that one had worked for during the whole year spoiled at the end was a matter of concern. A heavy rain, even after the crop had been stacked in piles, caused the grain to lose its golden color and some of its weight, which resulted in a lower price. What made harvest work more and more an unbearable and senseless chase, of course, as time went on, was the fact that everyone wanted to get the advantage over his neighbor and finish first. If work could not be begun early in the morning because of dew, the machines rattled on all the longer in the evening. No one wanted to be the first to unhitch and stop work for the day. In other words: there was a definite end to the day’s work at most on a Saturday evening. As a result, the large broad grain-fields were quickly mowed down. The steppe then no longer looked like a waving sea in the breeze. It was now crowded with innumerable little round stacks of cut grain. Even from a distance one could distinguish in their midst the sheaves laid on top of each other in rows, but these grew less and less from year to year, as the machine asserted its sway in an ever more unlimited way. Ever more rarely one now saw with it the Kazapps, in their white linen pants and their long loosely-hanging blond hair, cutting their swaths with the scythes, slowly, step by step.

A time for sheaves, it is true, came again, but now they were no longer tied by hand but by machine from America. When the first grain binder came into the village, there was again amazement from young and old. The binder, however, did not come into general use as rapidly as had the reel-machine, the first mowing machine, mainly because it was a more refined mechanism, which demanded more intelligence to operate. It could not be entrusted to just any hired man to work with. Where there was no son or some other completely trustworthy or skilled person, the binder could not be used. The greatest trouble arose when some part of the machine broke. Repair parts, when the blacksmith’s art failed, were difficult to obtain. My father too later bought such a machine, but it didn't work very long. Then the expensive thing stood under the barn eaves and served as a roost for the chickens at night. After some years, another man bought it cheaply and — worked very well with it. He probably had more dexterous hands and could feel his way better into the delicate mechanism.

At the same time as the binder, the so-called rake-mowing-machine was attempting to find customers among us. This was a machine with rakes, like arms, which were lowered at definite intervals to push the cut grain from the platform. Normally the rakes bent the grain towards the cutting knife like the reels in
the old machine. For a long time Boos was the only farmer who owned a rake-machine. Russian hired men and the simple reel-machine produced within the country were best suited to each other, both were equally rough and strong, with few demands on intelligence and skill.

For us children harvest time was always an enjoyable time. What attracted us particularly were the birds and the many different animals of the steppe that we could now catch in greater numbers than before. Their hiding places in the tall grain disappeared as the grain fell. Also at this time of year the young became fledged: the cranes and bustards, partridges, quails, snipes, etc. The grain strip became narrower and narrower as the machine moved back and forth. Finally everything that was in the field had to come out, if it had not already saved itself. But where to? All the grain was destined to fall. Finally only the stubble remained everywhere.
At this time rain was very unwelcome to the farmers, but quite otherwise to the farm hands and all the young people. The rainy days were very coveted days of rest. There was, of course, work to do even then:
repair work and work in the farmyard had accumulated. But one could sleep in and get a good rest from the harvest rush. If the rain didn't last long, the hired hands stayed out in the field. There were dry places under the wagons and next to them under large sailcloth's that were spread out. Here everyone gathered to pass the time by smoking, talking or playing cards or the accordion, both of which, the cards and the accordion, were loved by the Russians above all. Genuinely Russian music is in a minor key. The Russian expresses his soul in mournful songs. And the words deal with his distant home, far away within "Little Mother Rossiya", with father and mother, brother and sister, and with the girl for whose sake he wandered south to the Germans. When he returns home he will bring tied in a corner of a handkerchief the few rubles that will pay for his wedding. Like the rainy days, the Sundays and holidays were also appreciated and celebrated by the farm hands.

Notes (by A.G.)

1. The Swabians in these villages, as well as those in their mother colonies near Berdyansk, were pietistic Protestants not under the jurisdiction of the official Lutheran Church in Russia.
2. The Swabian Separatists who came from Germany to settle near Berdyansk were the spiritual children of Wilhelm Hoffmann, the founder of the Separatist village of Korntal near Stuttgart, but their homes before emigration were not in Korntal. Cf. Georg Leibbrandt, Die Auswanderung aus Schwaben nach Russland 1816-1823, Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat-Verlag 1928, 168-176.
3. The Great Russians are the people of the central provinces, the Muscovite Russians, as distinguished from the Little Russians (Ukrainians) and the White Russians.
AND THEY BUILT AN ALTAR

90 Years of Lutheranism in the Brokenhead District

Felix Kuehn

The 1980's will be remembered as a decade in which more and more people began to ask themselves: "where are my roots?" In the Lutheran parishes of the town of Beausejour, Manitoba, and in the surrounding district — known as the Brokenhead in pioneer times — this question will soon have some rather complete answers thanks to a project undertaken by the Brokenhead Lutheran Historical Society (BLHS) in 1980. Officially supported by the LCA parishes of Trinity Thalberg, St. John's Greenwald, St. Paul's Green Bay and Zion Beausejour; as well as the ELCC parish of St. John's Lydiatt and the Missouri Synod parish of Grace Beausejour, this group plans to publish a book dealing with the history and heritage of the Lutherans of the Brokenhead district. It will appear in 1982, the 85th anniversary of the first recorded Lutheran Communion service, as well as the 90th anniversary of the very first Lutheran service in the district. The following is an account of the background of the organization of this group, the results of their labors up to the present time, and their hopes for 1982.

The rural landscape of western Canada is dotted with hundreds of little pioneer cemeteries, many of them totally neglected and long since abandoned. They are a sad sight, one which suggests to their rare visitors that the people of the surrounding communities have entirely forgotten their pioneer forefathers. Until just a few years ago, several such cemeteries were located in the Beausejour district some fifty miles northeast of Winnipeg. Good intentions had been entertained for several decades to have them renovated, but little had come of these plans until the last years of the 1970's, when the individual congregations of the area undertook to clear these sites, to fence them appropriately and to identify them. The exact locations of many of the graves had long since been forgotten and due to the loss of some parish records by fire in 1932 even the names of many of those interred here were not known.

At this point the church council of the Lutheran parish in Beausejour requested the writer, who had been involved in historic research for a number of years and was a great grandson of one of the original settlers, to compile an account of whatever data it was still possible to obtain. When completed, these records sparked such a warm interest in the history of the parish that the possibility of having a small booklet on this theme came to be considered. As this idea was discussed in the community, it soon became evident that there was sufficient interest to make possible the publication of a more extensive history. Several informational meetings were held, at which a representative of a publishing company that specializes in community histories explained how other communities have successfully carried out such projects. As a result of a very positive response from all who attended these meetings, the Brokenhead Lutheran Historical Society was formally organized on 15 September 1980 in the home of Rev. Peter Stiller of Beausejour. An executive was elected and the writer was appointed as full-time coordinator.

A major early problem of the society was the financing of the project. Funds were raised by taking deposits on advance orders for the proposed book and through low-interest loans from interested members of the community. Two parishes participated in the initial stages of the project, but as it became better known throughout the district, all six Lutheran parishes, members of three synods — LCA, ELCC and the Missouri synod — became associated with the BLHS and the original executive grew from nine to twice that number.

Previous research had already revealed that the first recorded Lutheran Communion Service in this part of Manitoba had taken place on 7 June 1897. With this in mind, plans were initiated to publish the book in 1982, the 85th anniversary of that service. When this project was undertaken, two of the four persons baptized on that occasion were still alive. About a year later, however, one of these pioneers, after having lived his entire lifetime in this area, was laid to rest less than a mile from where he had been born.

It has now been discovered that the first Lutheran service in the area actually took place some five years earlier, in the year 1892; hence our subtitle, "90 Years of Lutheranism in the Brokenhead District."

It was in the year 1888 that the first three German Lutheran families took up land in the Brokenhead district: Julius Koch, Friedrich Wenzel and Wilhelm Bachmann. The following year the Gottfried Ritter family arrived. Their daughter, Emma, born 6 September 1889 at Brokenhead, was baptized in Winnipeg on 11 October 1889. This is the first event which records an association of these early settlers with the Lutheran Church. This baptism was performed by Rev. Heinrich Schmieder, the founder of the German Lutheran Church on the Canadian prairies and the first resident German Lutheran clergyman in western Canada. He had arrived in Winnipeg only seven months previously. The Trinity congregation, which Pastor Schmieder
had been called to serve, is the oldest German Lutheran parish west of Ontario, and this baptism is the 30th noted in its records.

The scope of the history of this district, and in particular that of the Lutheran portion of the community, was relatively unknown to the founding members of the new society. All were aware of the extent to which our history had already slipped from our grasp and was continuing to do so at an increasing rate. What was not realized was that there was still a very large amount of material available. It soon became apparent that the Brokenhead district is astonishingly rich in historical resource material. As interest in the project gradually increased, more and more families began to search in old trunks in the attic or rummage through long-neglected boxes of basement junk looking for items that might be a tie with the past. Today, as a result of diligent searching, many families are the proud owners of notable historical items which they never dreamed they had.

Old books turned up in abundance. A number of them date back to the eighteenth century, wonderfully ancient volumes printed in large type on linen paper, with wooden covers, bound in leather, and originally held shut with little clasps. One family submitted a copy of the 34th edition of Gottfried Kleiner's Hirtenstimme, printed in Hirschberg in 1867. It had been brought from Germany to Russia by an ancestor who had been one of the first lay ministers in a certain well-known colony in the province of Volhynia. It had been passed down through four generations of the family. About a year later, to the great astonishment of the society, a copy of the 13th edition of the same work, printed in the same shop but 82 years earlier, came to light. In Russia the two families who had owned these respective volumes had lived less than five miles apart.

An astonishing variety of old documents and certificates have been submitted to the society, from which a representative cross section will be selected for inclusion in the book. The most numerous are all types of church documents, particularly those from the province of Volhynia. Two of these, bearing the signature of the illustrious Pastor Heinrich Wasem of Zhitomir, traveled in the 1880's from the Rovno district to Brazil, and in the 1890's first back to Russia and later to America. Many others were made out by Pastor Eduard Althausen, the first resident pastor of Tutschin. He was one of the very few Lutheran pastors from Russia to visit North America. An interesting memento of his visit of 1921 to Manitoba was found in the church records of the Greenwald congregation, a receipt for $30.25, which he had received from that parish for relief work among Volhynian refugees. Other documents submitted to the society were made out by Pastor Althausen's successors: Schneider, Krusche, Rusnok, Sikora and Fuhr.

Quite a number of military documents, both from the Russian Imperial army and the Polish army, came to light. Several families still treasure the passports secured by their forefathers to come to Canada. One of the most interesting bears the signature of the governor of Volhynia, Baron von Stackelberg, a member of one of the most notable Baltic German families, which had been serving the Romanov dynasty as early as the reign of Catherine II. Another rather unusual document is a passport printed in the Imperial German printery in Berlin, both in Russian and German, which German citizens living in Russia required in order to leave the country. Several families had their forefather's Sitten Zeugnis (Character Reference), which testifies to the fact that these individuals were leaving their original homeland as citizens in good standing. A few diplomas were also found. One of the most beautiful is a graduation diploma, the size of a small newspaper page, of the year 1901. It was made out by the Roman Catholic Academy of Samara. Strikingly designed, printed in four colors and trimmed with gilt, it bears the majestic double-headed Byzantine eagle of czarist Russia.

It became evident in the course of this research that the German settlers of the Brokenhead district were wonderfully representative of the major elements of all the German settlements of western Canada. In addition to the many Volhynian Germans, there were people from the old settlements in central Poland, Lutheran and Reformed Volga Germans and a few Catholics, people from the then Austrian province of Galicia and others from Germany itself. In one area, which bore the name Libau, a congregation had quite a number of Baltic Germans. The three main immigration periods are represented; the first and by far the largest around the turn of the century, and those following each of the World Wars.

The preliminary research began in January 1980. A year and a half later it was possible to begin weaving the various strands of information into the chapters of the book. Its opening scene takes place in a humble log cabin not far from the town of Beausejour, where some two dozen Lutheran pioneers have congregated on Pentecost Monday of 1897 to hear the Gospel and to receive the Lord's Supper from their young pastor, Rev. Martin Ruccius, who, one month later, was to become the first president of the first German Lutheran Synod of western Canada. Here the kitchen table of the Kietzer family served as their altar, the first Luth-
eran altar of the Brokenhead district. In the next chapter we slip back into the sixteenth century, the time of Luther, whom we see before the first Lutheran altar in the Castle Church in Wittenberg. From Germany we follow the footsteps of our forefathers as they trek into Poland, Russia and the Austrian Empire, and finally to America and to the Brokenhead district. The third chapter begins by sketching, in broad outline, the story of the founding of the Lutheran Church in western Canada and particularly in Manitoba. It concludes by detailing the development of the parishes east of Winnipeg, with special emphasis upon those located in the vicinity of the Brokenhead river, and those, some distance removed, once part of Zion parish of Beausejour. Included among the latter are not only Thalberg, Greenwald and Green Bay, but also the Whitewater parish and the Lutheran parishes that once existed in the vicinity of Springfield, Niverville and Friedensfeld.

It was in the year 1900 that the first Lutheran churches east of Winnipeg were built. Two of them were dedicated that year by Pastor F. Beer of Trinity parish, Winnipeg. The Grace Lutheran Church at Springfield was dedicated on 19 August; the Peace Lutheran Church at Friedensfeld on 15 November. In the 81 years since that time, twenty other Lutheran churches have been consecrated to the glory of God within this district. Their pulpits, and more particularly their altars, became the focal points of the Lutheran communities surrounding them.

Since the first recorded Lutheran Communion Service in this part of Manitoba, more than fifty pastors have served the Lutheran people of this district. The BLHS has attempted to get in touch with each of them, or in the case of those of the pioneer era, with members of their families. An autobiographical or biographical article of each will make up chapter four. It is these stories, the society believes, which will provide an insight into the lives of the men who made the Lutheran Church in this part of the world what it is today.

A book such as ours would not be complete if it did not deal with the lives of the ordinary people, for this is the aspect of history that most of us find the most interesting. We will deal with the individual stories of some 200 families, in varying degrees of detail, according to the information available. Some of the early settlers have disappeared leaving almost no trace behind them. But for most of the families who settled here we have the story of the family right up to the present time, with many recent pictures. Some families have been able to trace their roots deep into? the nineteenth century, and at least one has had seven generations living in the Brokenhead district. Since many of the pioneer Lutheran families of western Canada had members who once lived in this area, this book will be a valuable tool for many people who are researching their family tree. As far as possible this dimension of our story has been told in the words of the pioneers themselves, with extracts from old letters, from articles taken from old newspapers, and from the accounts, very few in number but therefore all the more valuable, penned by some of these early pioneers and their pastors. These make up the final chapter of the book.

The challenge now facing the BLHS is raising sufficient funds to publish the book. We feel confident that this challenge will be met in the next few months.
In the late months of 1970 a number of issues developed that brought dissension into the ranks of the board of directors and acrimonious discussion in correspondence and later at board meetings. Some of these were petty, others had some substance. None of them were such that they should have disrupted the work of the society as much as they did. The growing influence in society affairs of the newly formed Lincoln Chapter was resented in some quarters. A new brochure for membership recruiting, prepared by Alice Amen Heinz in the fall of 1970, had features which were found objectionable by some board members. The work of an Emblem Committee, appointed on 19 May 1970 to develop a suitable emblem for the society, with Paul Reeb as chairman, proved to be an unexpectedly divisive activity. There was objection to the sale at the next convention of a Lincoln-prepared commemorative plate, which featured an "unauthorized emblem" and some doubtful history. Involved in some of the foregoing were disagreements about the date of the founding of the society and about the awarding of certain "emeritus" titles by the board.

The first discordant note appears in our records in the form of a letter of 6 July 1970 to David Miller from board member Paul Reeb:

I have given considerable thought to the recently adopted policy to open chapter charters for our society on a numbered basis (Lincoln, Nebraska being #1). The more I think about this the less favorable I feel toward this system; it gives the impression that the low numbers might be "status seekers" by being the first in line and should perhaps be allotted preferential treatment, or that they might have the right to expect it. ... Perhaps "Chapter One" should naturally be in line for the next national president??

A fuller summary of the views of some of the dissident board members came to David Miller in a letter of 13 November 1970 from Theodore C. Wenzlaff. He was concerned about dissension developing in the ranks of the board and explained the reasons for it as follows:

The root of the problem seems to center around the growing sense of importance of the Lincoln Chapter, a case of the tail wagging the dog, as it were. I'll consider various aspects of the trouble.

1. The society has an Emblem Committee . . . which, I understand, has been working diligently to develop an approved official emblem. . . . However, now I have heard (rumor) that the membership brochure for which 3000 copies have been ordered will display thereon the Lincoln Chapter unofficial emblem that they used on the plate that they designed, manufactured and handed out at the Greeley convention. If this be true, then I would have to agree that this is in the nature of a slap in the face to the Emblem Committee . . .

2. Rumor further has it that the membership brochure will include a full-page spread about Mr. H. J. Amen. It is true that he was elected "president emeritus" by the board, but, as my informant questioned, should the Lincoln Chapter be allowed to dominate the AHSGR? . . .

3. Having heard the above rumors, I reread the minutes of October 29, 1970. I have found therein that the board approved the sale of the "commemorative plates of the 1970 convention at the 1971 convention". This further perpetuates the use of the unofficial Lincoln Chapter emblem which is baked thereon. Was the commemorative plate with the emblem emblazoned thereon and designed by who-knows-who ever authorized?

I have objections to the use of the commemorative plate . . . for two additional reasons:

a. The statement on the back side of the plate says that our forefathers migrated to Russia in the 1700's. This would exclude almost all of the Black Sea Germans since the bulk of the settlement there did not occur till after 1804. Obviously, the statement applies essentially only to the Volga River settlements.
b. The statement on the back side of the plate indicates that the AHSGR was founded on October 6, 1968 in Greeley. It is true that there was a meeting set up on that date at Greeley, but what about the meeting on September 8, 1968, at Windsor Gardens in Denver, which John Werner, the Urbachs, you, I and others attended? . . . 

4. I noted further in a rereading of the October 29, 1970 board meeting that "Miss Amen distributed a proposed outline of the 1971 convention program." I agree that it is a proposed program, but I wonder if this is going to be a Lincoln Chapter convention or an AHSGR convention? I'm sure that you would like to be relieved of all the detailed responsibilities, but I strongly urge that the AHSGR top echelon control all activities of the convention.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I haven't written this letter to foment dissension within the AHSGR. Far be it from that; rather it is intended to stave off divisiveness. Apparently there is already some dissension in the ranks.

David Miller's reply to Wenzlaff on 23 November 1970 did not deal with all the matters raised, but explained events connected with the brochure and mentioned briefly the commemorative plate:

First of all, let me say that we agree that the emblem authorized for the convention program was for that purpose only. We were up against the production of a brochure. Mrs. Heinz, who designed the program and had the emblem designed, volunteered to do the brochures, and I think she did a good job. The printing company which helped her with it suggested the use of the emblem. She asked me about it, and I simply approved the use for the limited purpose of the brochure. I think this was a mistake, but at least that is what happened. Several people had worked on the brochure. I myself had tried to put one together and never did get it completed. Alice volunteered to do it, and I simply turned the job over to her. Having done that, I felt I ought to go along with her suggestion on the emblem. So much for the explanation.

There were only 3000 of the brochures printed. I take it that we will have distributed them within perhaps six weeks time. We are now in the process of revising the brochure. . .

The material itself, I think, is pretty much along the lines of what I had in mind, and I think the folder is pretty well received. Mrs. Heinz also suggested that my picture should go in the brochure. . . I then insisted that since the president's picture was being used, the president emeritus' picture should also be used. . . I felt that the picture and summary of the banker and the lawyer would lend some prestige to the folder that it would not otherwise have had . . .

. . . it is difficult to come by leadership, or perhaps more correctly stated, someone who will undertake a job and see to it that it will be carried through. Both Ruth Amen and her sister, Alice Amen Heinz, have tremendous ability and drive. . . . They both had time, and I felt we needed to get them into the organization. The size of the Lincoln group demonstrates the wisdom of the choice, if accepting volunteer help is a choice— I do not feel that the Lincoln group is attempting to take over the functions of the national board in any way.. . .

On the inscription on the back of the plate saying migration during the 18th century I did suggest a change, but the suggestion came too late and the plate had already been fired. The design on the Lincoln plate has not been used as an emblem. . . .

Wenzlaff's reply, dated 5 December 1970, opened with the following interesting paragraph:

As president of a society that is growing and becoming ever more complex, yours is an unenviable office to try to keep everyone happy. I know that you are trying to be fair with everyone and I think you are doing an admirable job. I sincerely believe that without your leadership and diplomacy our society couldn't have had such a phenomenal growth in less than two years.

He then commented on the matters mentioned in Miller's letter. An interesting observation concerns the emeritus titles that had been bestowed by the board. Although he himself made the motion to make H. J. Amen president emeritus, he now realizes that the emeritus was a mistake, since the word "actually refers to an honorary title given to one after retirement corresponding to the office or title held by that person before retirement." Further on, he repeated again his earlier question regarding the founding date:

You did not comment on my question regarding the official founding date of the society, so I bring it up again. I have always felt that the society was founded at Windsor Gardens, Denver, on Sunday, September 8, 1968. At that time we had not decided on a name for the society, but, if my memory serves me right, we did elect you president at that first meeting and many, if not
most, of those present paid their first year's dues. I am concerned about historical accuracy. How was it
determined that the society was founded on October 6, 1968?

The question regarding the founding date of the society also occupied the mind of Paul Reeb. The files contain a
letter from him, dated 27 November 1970, to David Miller, in which the following comments occur;

Dave, you have taken this matter of establishing the Oct. 6, 1968 founding date squarely upon your own
shoulders in order to protect the real culprits. . . Alice Heinz and Ruth Amen. You have told me that you had
also given the Oct. 6, 1968 date to Emma Schabenland Haynes for her report that appeared in Volk auf dem
Weg. I have found the . . . article by Mrs. Haynes and note that you did not give to Mrs. Haynes the October
date, or if you did, she did not report it as such as you had indicated to me that she did. From the April 1970
issue I quote Mrs., Haynes article in part;

The widespread interest which these books aroused encouraged three Colorado citizens of
Russian-German descent: Mr. David J. Miller, Mr. John H. Werner and Mr. W. F. Urbach to meet
on May 15, 1968 in order to discuss the organization of an 'American Historical Society of
Germans from Russia', Helpful advice came from Senator T. C, Wenzlaff' of Nebraska and
Professor Height of Indiana; and the actual organization took place in Denver, Colorado, on
September 8, 1968.

In the name of propriety and good will, wouldn't it have been better to offer a similar line of public
introduction as to the beginnings of our society as Mrs. Haynes presented instead of switching months later to
show on a Lincoln souvenir plate and a brochure that the organization took place in Greeley, Colorado on
Oct. 6, 1968 and make no mention of the individuals who got together in Denver, Colorado?

A letter of 7 December 1970 from Ruth Amen to Paul Reeb, obviously in reply to a letter from him, throws some
light on the controversy regarding the commemorative plate:

I do want to say again that when the Lincoln Chapter engaged the artist to draw up a design for the
commemorative plate, there was no thought of its being used as an emblem. We tried to tell something about
our people and our sole purpose was to pay tribute to our forefathers in a tangible way. We feel our purpose
has been achieved. Using the plate design as the emblem was the idea of others and we are pleased that it was
liked that much. . . .

As for the founding date, she maintained that the 6 October date was the correct one:

Conceived earlier, yes, but founded as printed on the plate. We were very careful about that and
made a special phone call to Dave to confirm it.

On 7 December 1970 Paul Reeb wrote a lengthy letter to Ruth Amen dealing with a variety of topics. Included were
the results of what he called "considerable in-depth research" on the founding date. Mentioned here for the first time is
the fact that John Werner has a tape recording of the proceedings of the meeting of 8 September 1968. Ruth Amen's
information from David Miller regarding the founding date was disposed of in the words:

Mr. Miller told me that he had given you on the telephone the Oct. 6, 1968 founding date on a more or less
spur-of-the-moment remark without serious reflection as to what perhaps actually took place. He said that
Ruth wanted a date and this just popped into my mind.

Later in the same month, there were two letters from Theodore Wenzlaff, one to Mr. and Mrs. William Urbach on
16 December and another to Paul Reeb on 18 December, each of which dealt with his concerns about the founding
date and the use of the emeritus titles. There is also a reply from the Urbachs, written by Mrs. Urbach on 23
December. It makes the following suggestion regarding the problems raised by Wenzlaff:

... we would give a lot to discuss these organization points with you. Our next meeting of the Board of
Directors will be on Sunday afternoon, January 17th here at Windsor Gardens in one of the clubrooms.
Would it be possible for you to attend? If so, could you come on Saturday preceding and we will get a small
group together to discuss how best to iron out these points that have come up? We can "put you up" and
would love to have you here. It would be good for some of us to discuss the method of presentation at the
Board meeting.

Wenzlaff accepted this proposal in a reply of 6 January 1971:
permanent organization; December 19, 1968 — date of incorporation. Since the date of October 6, 1968 was used in news releases, membership solicitations and the brochure, as well as the commemorative plate, it appears to me a validated date. It would be a mistake to change it at this late date.

We learn later, in a letter of 13 February 1971 from Mrs. Urbach to the members of the board, that a small group, invited by the Urbachs in the hope of finding a way to resolve the differences that existed, met in the Urbach apartment on the evening of 16 January. Its actions must have been a disappointment to the peace-loving Urbachs, who were anxious to restore harmony to the board. The proposal that the group prepared for presentation to the board the next day was, at least in part, confrontational in character, for it proposed to set up a "watchdog" committee to keep the president in line.

If the weather reports are favorable, we will try to make it to the next board meeting on January 17. We will drive to Windsor Gardens on Saturday, to arrive on January 16. I think your idea of having a small group assemble in advance to discuss how best to iron out certain points of dispute is a good idea....

John Werner telephoned me on December 24, 1970, and he had some matters which are disturbing him. Perhaps they could be discussed, too. I suggest that the meeting be set up with a 'temporary chairman' so that the discussion may be submitted to the board on Sunday afternoon.

May I suggest that Paul Reeb of St. Francis, Kansas, be invited to this advance meeting. He attends all the board meetings and he hasn't been very well satisfied with all aspects of those meetings and decisions.

As indicated in this letter, there was, in addition to Reeb and Wenzlaff, another disaffected board member, John Werner. He had written a letter of resignation to the president as early as 10 November 1970, giving as the reason "business and other activities" which "tax me to the limit in my present state of health." Because the board did not want to lose his services, it postponed action on this letter until his reasons could be probed further. On 22 December David Miller wrote him a Christmas letter, in which he asked him to withdraw his resignation, adding: "I will call you after Christmas and make a date with you to talk it over." It is obvious from the remark in the Wenzlaff letter that Werner's reasons for resigning were other than the one stated in his letter to Miller. One surmises that the president was quite aware of this.

On 11 January 1971 David Miller wrote a seven-page letter to the members of the board reporting on the activities and the progress of the society to date and outlining plans for the future. This report has some interesting comments regarding the founding date:

The date of the creation of AHSGR was requested of me by Ruth Amen for inclusion in the commemorative plate and by Mrs. T. V. Haynes for inclusion in her report to the Landsmannschaft. To Mrs. Haynes I gave both dates. After some study I gave the date of October 6, 1968 to Ruth M. Amen. Ruth, Lydia and I discussed this at McCook, Nebraska, May 1970 during "German Days" celebration. ... It is my opinion that October 6, 1968 is the correct date of the formal organization of AHSGR. ... Meetings of interested persons prior to and after October 6, 1968, all contributed to the progress of the Society. The choice of date are September 8, 1968 — ad hoc committee (Windsor Gardens); October 6, 1968 — Greeley, Colorado, The motion embodying the proposal, presented at the board meeting of 17 January, is given in the minutes of that meeting as follows:

It was moved by Paul Reeb that pursuant to Section 5, Article IV of the By-laws of our Society, an Executive Committee be formed to consist of not less than 3 nor more than 5 members and that the immediate objectives of this Executive Committee shall be as follows:

1. To review and make proposals concerning the historical accuracy of dates, places and titles as now being used in the Society's publicity releases and publications, as well as on its commemorative objects;
2. To review and make proposals concerning possible changes in the Society's By-laws and committee structure with a view to strengthening its organizational functioning;
3. To consider and make proposals concerning such other matters as they may deem to be in the best interests of the Society in identifying the order of its priorities;
4. That said committee proposals then be submitted for a vote by secret ballot of the International Board for their approval or disapproval of each proposal presented to them. That such
ballots must be returned to the executive committee within 30 days to be counted before a board of directors meeting of either regular or special session. The results of such a ballot to be binding upon the AHSGR Society.

Mr. Reeb further moved that this executive committee be formed and composed of the following five members: John Werner, Ted Wenzlaff, Dr. Joseph Height, a member to be voted upon from this board assembled here today, and the fifth member to be selected by the committee itself; and that the committee will then also select from amongst their midst their, own chairman.

The motion was seconded by Ted Wenzlaff. A brief discussion followed. The motion was not approved. The members listed as present at this board meeting were: Mr.; & Mrs. David Miller, Miss Ruth Amen, Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Wenzlaff, Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Lehr, Mrs. William Urbach, Mrs. Marie Gilbert, Mrs. Gerda Walker, Mrs. Alice Heinz, John Long, Paul Reeb, J. Robert Lebsack, Mr. & Mrs., Chet Krieger, and Mr. & Mrs. John Werner.

The split that was obvious at this meeting made no one happy. David Miller, showing considerable forbearance, tried to repair the damage that had been done. On 25 January 1971 he addressed a joint letter to John Werner, William Urbach, Theodore Wenzlaff and Paul Reeb in the following words:

I deeply regret that plans for the second international convention and the regular agenda items prevented a thorough discussion of the resolution presented by Paul, seconded by the Colonel and voted down by the board.

The questions raised by the resolution and the comments should be given the most serious consideration by all the Board members. I have called a special meeting of the Board of Directors for Sunday afternoon, February 21, 1971 at Windsor Gardens, if a meeting room can be arranged there. . . . This item will be the first one on the agenda. I sincerely hope that each of you individually or as a group will give the Board the benefit of your suggestions, criticisms and recommendations. I suggest that each individual point be presented to the board for such action as you seek.

I am certain that each of us seeks the best interest of AHSGR in the best of faith.

This conciliatory approach seems to have softened also the attitude of his critics. Around the end of January Werner and Miller had "a very constructive meeting". After it, on 3 February Werner had a telephone conversation with Wenzlaff to tell him about his discussions with Miller. Then, on 5 February, in a letter to Werner, Wenzlaff summarized his views, somewhat changed now as a result of the conversations. The executive committee, envisaged earlier, it was now conceded, might be picked by the president from the officers of the society and might have the president himself as chairman. He thought it was important, however, that the committee address itself immediately to "resolving some of the problems facing the society so that we can get everyone working together again." On 9 February Werner wrote to Miller, enclosing a copy of Wenzlaff's letter, with which, he said, he was in substantial agreement. He thought it would be good strategy to hold an officers' meeting prior to the board meeting of 21 February to agree on recommendations to be made to the meeting. Otherwise, he feared, "a board meeting, especially without Ted Wenzlaff and Dr. Height, would not resolve the present conflict." He closed with the words;

Finally, after considering all the pros and cons of my own position as an officer, I feel that unless we can work out some kind of inner group action committee to give me a closer working relationship with "what goes on" I do not feel that I want to continue in a "half in half out" capacity.

On 12 February David Miller addressed another letter to the officers of AHSGR, in which (1) he asked John Werner to take the initiative in arranging the meeting of officers that he was recommending and (2) asked all officers to put in writing whatever complaints and suggestions they had so that they could be dealt with at the special meeting of the board. Theodore Wenzlaff responded to this on 16 February, presenting in considerable detail his arguments for (1) designating 8 September 1968 as founding date for the society and Windsor Gardens, Derive?, Colorado, as the place; (2) correcting the wording on the Lincoln-created commemorative plate, if its distribution was to be continued; and (3) changing the word emeritus to honorary in the titles bestowed oh Mr. H. J, Amen and Dr. Stumpp.

On 17 February John Werner also responded to Miller's letter, addressing his reply to all officers of the 60
society. Having learned that Wenzlaff would not be able to come either to an officers' meeting prior to the board meeting or to the board meeting itself, he saw no hope of an officers' meeting being able to solve the current problems and therefore declined to arrange such a meeting. He was not hopeful either that the board meeting would make the kind of changes in the organizational structure of the society that he thought were needed and he would therefore not be attending the meeting. Regarding the founding date of the society he said:

In reviewing my original records, including a 2-hour tape recording of the Windsor Gardens organizational meeting and the minutes of said meeting which I personally took as temporary secretary, I am convinced that there should be no question that a historian would select the Sept. 8, 1968 meeting as the proper date.

The special meeting of the Board of Directors finally met on 21 February 1971 with the following in attendance; Mr. & Mrs. David Miller, Mr. & Mrs. Carl Amen, Mr. & Mrs. William Urbach, Jerry Lehr, J. Robert Lebsack, Paul Reeb, Harold Stoll, Mrs. Gerda Walker, and Mr. & Mrs. Chester Krieger. Although Theodore Wenzlaff was not present, the meeting dealt expeditiously with the three items on which he had requested action in his letter of 16 February. The emeritus titles for Mr. H. J. Amen and Dr. Karl Stumpp were changed to honorary. There was a discussion "on the problem of historical dates for the beginning of the Society", followed by a motion by Mrs. Rachel Amen, seconded by Mrs.- Urbach, establishing the following dates:


b. October 6, 1968 — AHSGR formally organized at Greeley, Colorado.

c. December 20, 1968 — Articles of Incorporation for AHSGR issued by the Secretary of State for the State of Colorado, Byron A. Anderson.

This motion was approved. Discussion followed on the sale of commemorative plates at the next convention. By motion of Harold Stoll, seconded by Paul Reeb, it was recommended to the Lincoln Chapter that the new issue of commemorative plates to be sold at the 1971 convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, show the dates as established at this meeting and that the migration dates to Russia include both 1700's and 1800's. This motion was approved. Since John Werner was not present and had not sent any written suggestions regarding the changes that he desired, his concerns were not dealt with and his resignation from the board, submitted earlier, was finally accepted, with an expression of regret.

David Miller's relief at the denouement of this disruptive interlude in society affairs is obvious in some of the letters he wrote in the days following this board meeting.
In this issue of the Journal, we list thirty-seven new items that have been added to our archives in Greeley, Colorado. We are particularly indebted to Mrs. Chester Krieger of Denver who gave us eleven of the new items, and about twenty duplicate copies of such valuable books as the *Heimatbuecher* for the years 1963-1968, Mela Meisner Lindsay's *A Window in the Iron Curtain*, Elizabeth Claus Faiman's *Our People*, and George J. Eisenach's book on Pietism (in the German language). These items were from the library of her deceased husband, Chester R. Krieger, one of the founders and first secretary of AHSGR. We are indeed very grateful to Mrs. Krieger for this donation. A further eighteen books, primarily family histories, were sent to Greeley too late for inclusion in this issue. They will appear in the next Journal. Readers are reminded that these items are not for sale. They may be borrowed through inter-library loan from our archives in the Greeley Public Library.

**GR 1251.**

**Bachmann, Berta**


Berta Bachmann is the wife of a German Lutheran pastor who left the Soviet Union in 1972. In this book she describes the privations and misery of the Russian German people who were deported to Siberia and Soviet Asia in 1941.

**GR 1229**

**Bachmann, Peter**

*Mennoniten in Kleinpolen 1784-1934.* Lemberg: Mennonitengemeinde, 1934. 404 pp. in German; 22 pp. separate English appendix. Purchased by AHSGR.

The first 116 pages of this book trace the background of the Mennonites in Switzerland, Holland and the German Rhineland, but the rest describes the Mennonite settlements near Lemberg, which was part of the Austrian Empire before World War I but is now part of the Soviet Union.

**GR 1225**


A report on the Conference of Brethren in Nebraska, held in the Ebenezer Church in Lincoln from the 3rd to the 5th of November 1950.

**GR 1237**

GR - 1243

There is scattered material on Germans from Russia throughout the paper.

GR - 1260 Harwood, W. S.

This interesting article describes the Black Sea Germans who settled near Eureka in the Dakotas. It is accompanied by photographs showing how people dressed and lived in that period.

GR - 1233 Haynes, Emma Schwabenland
*My Father and His People.* Typed manuscript, 1965. 81 pp. Donated by the Author.

A biography of Rev. J. C. Schwabenland (1871-1959) with a description of Straub on the Volga where he was born.

GR - 1224 Heitman, Sidney

Dr. Heitman shows that although there is no direct falsification of official Soviet census data per se, there are important deficiencies in the published statistics.

GR - 1254 Henschel, Gustav

Gustav Henschel (1874-1963) came to Canada with his parents from Volhynia and settled in the Stony Plain district near Edmonton, Alberta. He wrote this autobiography at the age of 83.

GR - 1247

A brief history of the church is given. Pages 1 and 4 picture the exterior and the interior of the shrine.

GR - 1264 Klippenstein, Lawrence, ed.
*Mennoniten-Geschichte und Literatur. Eine Buecherliste.* Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: Mennonite Heritage Center, 1981. 16 pp. Donated by the Author.

A list of books currently available in Winnipeg with the names of the people or institutions from which they may be purchased.

GR - 1258 Kloberdanz, Timothy
"Archaic Symbols of Medieval German Catholicism as Found among the 'Wolgadeutsch.' (A tribute to those little Women in black Babushkas)." A paper in Anthropology at Colorado State University, Fall, 1972. 25 pp. Donated by the Author.

In this paper, Mr. Kloberdanz discusses such things as the "Brand of Judas," in which charred pieces of wood taken from a bonfire built on Holy Saturday were used to inscribe holy signs on doors and windows. Another ancient superstition is the belief in an "Alp" which came to molest people and animals at night.

GR - 1261 Kloberdanz, Timothy J.
"Field Report; A Preliminary Investigation of Sources and Informants in Southeastern Colorado." Germans from Russia in Colorado Study Project. October 15-18, 1975. 18 pp. Donated by Timothy J. Kloberdanz with the permission of Sidney Heitman.

Mr. Kloberdanz visited county court houses in the towns of Pueblo, Ordway, La Junta, and La-mar to examine naturalization records of Volga Germans. He also had interesting conversations with Volga Germans in these places as well as in Sugar City.


A short article on use of the thistle as feed for horses and cattle during poor crop years. Information obtained from Dalton A. Gaede, a descendent of Russian Germans from Odessa.

GR - 1255 Markstaedter, Eduard, ed.
This is an excellent summary of the entire history of Germans in Russia from the time of their settlement after 1763 to the present (1981). It includes many charts, pictures and maps showing where and under what circumstances they are living today.

GR-1259 Mayer
Berthold.
"Bericht ueber die Reise in mein Heimatsdorf Sofiental in Bessarabien." Typewritten paper, 1981. 7 pp. Donated by Timothy Kloberdanz with the assistance of Rev. and Mrs. Marvin Hartman.

An extremely interesting report of a side trip taken by Berthold Mayer to his native village of Sofiental (Bessarabia) in July 1981. He found that many houses had been torn down and the church had been made into a House of Culture.

GR-1184
Mennonite Historian. Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: History Archives of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.


GR-1240 Olson, Marie Miller and Anna Miller Reisbick.

This booklet is based upon the reminiscences of individuals who lived in Norka on the Volga during different periods of time. It also contains two chapters from My Mother's People by Emma S. Haynes.

GR-1234 Rock, Kenneth W.

An excellent report on the life of the Germans from Russia in Colorado. Prof. Rock seems to have read everything that has been written about this group and in addition has conducted many interviews with them. He treats his subject with sympathy and understanding. A very worthwhile account.

GR-1249. Sawatzky, Walter

Mr., Sawatzky is uniquely qualified to write this book. He began his research at Keston College in England in 1973 and is currently responsible for the Mennonite Central Committee's East/West Research Office in Neuwied, West Germany. He has made numerous trips to the Soviet Union to visit Mennonite and Baptist groups there and has conducted many interviews with Soviet Germans now living in the West.

GR-1248 Schaab, Christopher

Christopher Schaab was born in the colony of Semenovka on the Volga and became a school-teacher in Pfeifer before World War I. He was interested in the early history of the Volga Germans and wrote this booklet in honor of their 150th anniversary in Russia. There is no record of his coming to the United States. Presumably he sent his manuscript to South Dakota to be published.

GR-1262 Scheuerman, Richard ed.

An attractive booklet on the history of Cashmere, Washington, which was called Old Mission until 1906. This project earned Mr. Scheuerman an award as "Outstanding Leader in Secondary Education" in 1977.

GR-1252 Schmemann, Serge

Mr. Schmemann's prophecy, that more Germans would be allowed to emigrate from Russia after Brezhnev's visit to Germany, has not been fulfilled so far.
GR-1235 Schnurr, Joseph

A short essay on foods of the Russian Germans and their preparation. Recipes which had appeared in Volk auf dem Weg are included.

GR-1244 Schritter, John and Avis

Most members of this church were Black Sea Germans.

GR-1245 Schritter, John and Avis
The oldest Lutheran Church in Colorado. 8 pp. illus. Donated by Mrs. Chester Krieger.

The story of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, north of Bethune, Colorado.

GR-1226 Schwebel, Henry

This article describes Volga German history from the 18th to the 20th centuries. A personal reminiscence.

GR-1246 Sturdevant, Lori

Except for advertisements, the entire issue is devoted to the Hutterites of South Dakota.

GR-1228 Toews, J. J.

Dr. J. J. Toews describes missions among the Indians in Brazil, Paraguay, Colombia, and other Latin American countries. A detailed report.


This church was originally known as the Bethel MB church of Boyd, Oklahoma. The name was changed in 1961. The book is profusely illustrated with pictures of the church's history.

GR-1241 Wichenheiser, Fr. Augustine, ed.

A short history of Assumption Abbey based, to a large extent, upon an article written by Rev. Denis Fournier, O.S.B. in 1958. The book is illustrated with pictures of the lovely abbey church in Richardton which was built under the leadership of Abbot Vincent Wehrle between 1905-1909.

(GR - 1250 Wiebe, Gerhard

Gerhard Wiebe describes the Bergthaler immigration from Russia to Canada in the 1870's. This was one of the three major Mennonite groups that settled in Canada between 1874 to 1880.

GR-1239 Wiebe, Raymond F.
"Brief Notes of Mennonite Immigrant Histories." 1892. 3 pp. Donated by Mrs. Chester Krieger.

This paper discusses the major Mennonite groups that came from Russia and tells how they brought Turkey Winter Wheat to Kansas.

MAP. Roll 3, Section E, Number I. "Map of the Mennonite Colonies in the Chaco, Paraguay, South America." Drawn by the administration of the colony of Fernheim. Donated by Ruth Amen.

Reviewed by Emma Schwabenland Haynes.

The author of this extremely interesting book is the wife of Rev. Eugen Bachmann, the last German Lutheran minister of a registered church in the Soviet Union. She was born 1923 in a German village southeast of Kharkov in the Ukraine. In 1937 during the "Great Terror" when most German men were arrested on trumped-up charges, her father fled with his family to a neighboring Russian village for safety. Berta, at the age of fifteen, found employment in a machine factory in the city of Voroshilovsk on the Donetz River,

Shortly after Hitler invaded Russia in June 1941, Berta's father and two older brothers, the younger only fifteen at the time, were put into a work force from which the father and one brother never returned. The remainder of the family was deported to northern Kazakhstan in October of the same year. As their train went past unharvested fields of grain, kerosene was being poured over the crops to prevent the German army from getting any of the food.

The road to Asia seemed interminable. One day German war planes attacked their train killing many people, but after they entered the Ural Mountains, they felt more safe. Berta, who had never seen mountains before, was enthralled by their beauty- Then they again entered endless steppes. One morning the train ground to a halt and they were told that they had arrived at their goal. Wagons were waiting to transport them to a Kazakh village twenty-five kilometers away. They reached the village at night and found people lying on straw in round tents called yurts. Very few of the Kazakhs could speak Russian, but the Germans were welcomed kindly and given something to eat.

The overseer of the kolkhoz to which they had been assigned was a Russian who had been deported as a "kulak" about ten years previously. As a result, he had sympathy for the newly arrived Germans and tried to help them as much as possible. He turned over to Berta's mother and some of her friends, an empty house without a roof. All of the women worked steadily to repair the place before winter set in, even stealing a window from the cowshed. However, their good friend was replaced by a man from the front who hated all Germans. During the ensuing winter, there was a constant battle to fulfill the daily norm of tasks, such as herding the cattle, collecting firewood, harvesting grain, and cleaning out the stables. Hardly any men were available for the heaviest work, and women who lagged were threatened with deportation to the "Trudarmee" or compulsory work force. Danger of starvation was always near. There was a law saying that one had to serve a year in prison for stealing a kilogram of grain, but unless people did steal, they could not go on living.

During the second winter, Berta was sent to a tractor school where she worked out-of-doors, repairing tractors in the terrible cold. One day she and a group of other German girls decided to run away and return home. But they were caught and Berta, as instigator, was ordered to the Work Force. However, when she came to the train station, a Kazakh advised her to get off the train after it had passed two stations and to catch another train going in the opposite direction. Berta did this and to her amazement was allowed to continue working at home.

Then she was sent to a school for lathe turners 600 kilometers away. Her mother wrote that the food problem back home had become increasingly worse and that her legs were already swollen. Then she heard of a farm which raised food for the NKVD (Soviet Secret Police). She went there and got a job for which she received 400 grams of bread daily and a dish of hot soup. She was overwhelmed at the "generosity" of her NKVD masters.

After finishing her training course, Berta was supposed to go back to the village that had sent her to the school, but instead she got off the train near the NKVD farm and was hired as a statistician. Months later she was arrested for having done this. An additional charge was made that she had spied for the Germans, Since she would not confess to the latter charge, she was put in a prison with prostitutes and thieves, but after seven months, the NKVD man in charge of workers on the farm, managed to get her released.

In the year 1945 the long war finally came to an end. Most Germans now expected to be freed, but instead, their captivity continued.
It was during this time that those Germans from the Ukraine, who had been evacuated to Poland by the German army, were re-captured by the Russians and joined their compatriots in the internment camps. Berta says that these Germans were treated with even greater harshness than those deported in 1941, because they were regarded as traitors. She then writes:

(During their captivity) our Russian German women lost every trace of friendliness, of charm and of beauty. Their faces had a harsh appearance because of the terrible conditions under which they lived. But it was about these Russian German women, whose deportation and fate filled my mind, that I decided to write.

Finally in December 1955 an amnesty was granted to all Soviet Germans. They could now live wherever they wished, provided they did not go back to their original homes on the Volga or in the Ukraine. Berta and her mother had moved to the city of Zelenograd (formerly Akmolinsk) somewhat earlier. Here they joined about twenty to twenty-five German women who would gather on Sunday for a religious meeting. One day they heard that a Rev. Eugen Bachmann, a Lutheran minister, who had served a twenty year prison sentence from 1934-1954, was in town. They asked him to visit them and he became their pastor. Berta and other women managed to raise 28,000 rubles with which they bought a two family house. One half was used as the church, and the other half became the parsonage. On January 24, 1956, Berta became Mrs. Eugen Bachmann.

The remainder of the story is already known to many of our members. During the following years. Rev. Bachmann had a series of heart attacks and lost the sight of one eye. For this reason he accepted a vysov to come to Germany in March 1972. He was met at Friedland by Rev. Hermann Zwecker, who was the guest speaker at the 1972 Convention of AHSGR and who then played a tape in which Rev. Bachmann sent greetings to our society. Sec Work Paper No. 9 (October 1972), pp. 7-16.

If you can read German, you will find this book well worth buying. It will be kept in stock at AHSGR headquarters. The price will be announced in the Newsletter, as soon as it has been determined.

*Eine Reise durch Deutschland und Russland seinen Freunden beschrieben.* (A trip through Germany and Russia described for his friends) by Johann Baptisto Cataneo of Graubunden (Switzerland) and present pastor of the Reformed German colony of Norka in the Saratov district on the Volga, in the Russian Tatary of Asia. Chur (Switzerland): Bernhard Otto, 1787. 152 pp. (Photocopy)

Reviewed by Emma Schwabenland Haynes

The fact that Pastor Johann Cataneo refers to Saratov as lying in the Tartary section of Asia is proof that this book was published in the 18th century. Afterwards, the Ural Mountains were considered the boundary line between Europe and Asia.

A Swiss pastor, the Rev. Johannes Janet, who had come to Messer on the Volga in 1778, invited his friend, Johann Cataneo, to travel to Russia and serve the churches of Norka and Huck. Although Rev. Cataneo had six children, he accepted the invitation. His journey to Norka took three months, from early May to August 1784. This was approximately seventeen years after most Volga Germans had arrived in their colonies. Pastor Cataneo kept a diary of his trip and eventually sent it to a friend in Switzerland who had it printed.

The diary begins on May 8, 1784 when the Cataneo family crossed the Swiss border by stagecoach to Lindau, Germany, which lies on the northern shore of Lake Constance. As they continued northward, the pastor saw his beloved Swiss mountains disappear into the horizon. This was a very sad moment for him because he knew that he would never see them again.

On May 19 the family entered the beautiful city of Augsburg. Cataneo now decided to buy his own carriage, which he took along to Russia and later used in visiting villages of his parish. Horses with their drivers were rented at every post station from here to the Baltic. Usually three or four horses were used, but if the road was very difficult, it was necessary to obtain six.

In the 18th century, Germany was divided into hundreds of free cities, principalities, and kingdoms. Augsburg was such a free city as was Nuremberg through which they also passed. Then came the university town of Erlangen, after which they entered the kingdom of Saxony.
they endured the worst accommodations in all of Germany. They had to sleep on straw pallets in the same room with many other travelers and with the children of their host. However, they had nothing but praise for the city of Leipzig where people of the three major faiths: Lutheran, Reformed and Catholic, all lived together in peace. Inhabitants of the town were so industrious that one could see women knitting while walking in the streets.

They entered Prussia at Magdeburg where an unpleasant incident occurred. Their carriage was surrounded by Prussian soldiers, presumably to inspect it, but soon the soldiers began shouting, "Brandy! Brandy!" There were so many of them that Cataneo could not possibly pay them all. He threatened to report the incident at the nearest police station and also said that he was surprised to find such incivility in the domain of Frederick the Great. At this an officer appeared and order was soon restored. Two guards were commanded to accompany the Cataneos to their hotel and to stand watch over their carriage all night. From that moment on, the strangers received nothing but courtesy from both the police and the Prussian army. The next day, after leaving Magdeburg, the travelers saw the homes of newly arrived people from Wuetemberg who had been persuaded by the agents of Frederick the Great to settle in Prussia.

The ground now became quite sandy and continued in this condition all the way to the Baltic Sea. But they were able to go on, and soon reached the busy trade city of Luebeck, which was, both for them and for most of the former German colonists, the point of departure for Russia. The Cataneos received comfortable quarters in a ship called Friedrich Andreas and their carriage was put as ballast in the hold of the vessel. On the 1st of June they left Luebeck. During the nine days that it took to reach Russia, it was light all night long. The sun set at 11 P.M. and rose again at 2 A.M., but at all times it was possible to read.

Their ship reached Russia by way of Kronstadt which had been built as a fortress to protect St. Petersburg. Here they were delayed for two days because there was no wind, but finally on June 12, they reached their destination. Rev. Cataneo thanked God that He had brought the family from Graubunden in Switzerland to St. Petersburg in Russia, a distance of 386 German miles in five week's time!

The first stones for St. Petersburg had been laid by Peter the Great in 1703, Within a few years, the town had a population of 60,000, and continued to grow very rapidly. The Winter Palace, in which Catherine the Great lived, was already completed, and work was progressing on her magnificent Summer Palace. Everywhere one could see the construction of elegant homes, palaces, churches and government buildings.

The Cataneos spent sixteen interesting days here. On one of them, Rev. Cataneo had to go to the Justice Building to obtain a letter of introduction to the city government of Saratov. His papers mentioned that Pastor Janet would vouch for him. On the evening of June 27 the family began the last leg of their journey. They left the city by means of Moscow Street which had been begun in 1718 and was considered a wonder of transportation. Since the ground around St. Petersburg is very marshy, a bridge had been built going in a straight line to Moscow, 705 verst southeast. Trees had been chopped down on either side of the road so that herds of cattle, which were being driven to Petersburg for food, would have room to graze.

The Cataneos joined a caravan which changed from day to day. At one time 117 wagons traveled with them, but at other times there would be only several dozen vehicles. Every family took care of its own food, either carrying it with them or purchasing it from Russian peasants. At night they would stretch out under the sky or else find refuge in a peasant's home. To avoid the heat, the travelers would get up at 3 A.M. and travel until 10 A.M. Then they would take a noon-day pause until 3 P.M. and continue until 10. It often happened that the groups would sing Russian religious songs or folk songs which the Cataneo children learned to accompany on their drums or pipes.

After three days they reached the ancient city of Novgorod with its beautiful churches and massive walls. Then came Tver on the Volga, from which they could have gone to Saratov by ship, but Pastor Cataneo chose to continue to Moscow where the family remained for three days. When they left the city, Rev. Cataneo carried a newly purchased gun because he had been warned that from now on, the journey would probably become more dangerous. Sometimes the Russian peasants refused to have anything to do with the travelers, and would not even sell them any bread or give the children water. In such cases, Rev. Cataneo would get out his gun, which so frightened the peasants that they were willing to sell their products. Then a fork in the road appeared, and with two other wagons, the Cataneos turned east toward Saratov, which they reached on July 31. They were kindly welcomed by city officials to whom Rev. Cataneo presented the letter of introduction which he had received in St. Petersburg.

People from Norka, who had been notified of the pastor's arrival, accompanied him to his future home. The family arrived on the evening of August 3rd and were received with much love by their fellow Christians.
Everyone was amazed that the Cataneos had come to Norka in three months' time. It had taken most of the other people an entire year to arrive. The towns of Norka and Huck had a combined population of 2,000 people, but an additional 600 Reformed Germans lived in other villages which the pastor had to serve. In 1784, 40,000 German colonists lived on the two sides of the Volga, but these people had only seven Lutheran and three Reformed ministers, and four Catholic priests.

Members of our society may be disappointed that Rev. Cataneo does not tell us anything specific about the people in his Norka parish. Instead, he repeats stories of the difficulties of the early years; of attacks by robbers, of the Pugachev Rebellion, and of the devastation on the Wiesenseite by the Kirghiz. Then come several pages describing agriculture, fishing, and the cattle industry. Marriages in the colonies and the role played by the "Kuester", or schoolteachers, are described. The book ends with a portrayal of the Asiatic tribes of the area.

A copy of this work is now in the AHSGR Archives. It is probably the oldest book in our entire collection.


Reviewed by Arnold C. Schultz

Troubles and Triumphs 1914-1924 is a translation into English from the original German of excerpts from the diary of Peter J. Dyck, a German Mennonite of the village of Ladekopp in the Molotchna colony of the Ukraine. The period covered by these excerpts begins with Sept. 14, 1914 and continues until June 29, 1924 when the Dycks were on their journey to Canada from South Russia. The diary is thus a reflection of the life of Dyck's community during the First World War and the Russian Revolution. Ladekopp was on the front line of the war being waged for the control of the Ukraine by the German, White, and Red Russian armies. As the fighting fluctuated back and forth the different armies occupied the village, the villagers being forced to house and feed the soldiers in their homes, which were frequently vandalized not only by the soldiers but also by roving hands of anarchists who took advantage of the disturbed conditions of the area, murdering, raping, and plundering.

Peter J. Dyck, born in 1878, began to teach when he was not yet eighteen. After seven years of teaching he farmed for seven years. In 1910 he purchased a brickyard in Ladekopp, which he operated until the war in the Ukraine forced him to abandon the operation. He then worked as a bookkeeper in the Molotchna Mennonite Credit Union, a bank in Halbstadt, until 1916 when the government ordered all Germans dismissed from their jobs. But he was able to secure the position of manager and treasurer of an orphanage in Halbstadt which he retained until his emigration to Manitoba, Canada, where he became an active member of the community.

An important issue for the Mennonites in this situation of war and revolution in the Molotchna was that of military service. They disagreed on the issue of non-resistance. The Russian government had proclaimed universal conscription in 1874. Some Mennonites did not find this a problem and went into the regular army. The November 20, 1919 entry of the diary reports that forty Mennonite soldiers of the White Russian army rode through Ladekopp. But the diary makes it clear that many Mennonites did non-combatant service as stretcher bearers, medics, and forestry service workers.

As a result of the government's mobilization and expropriation of horses, wagons, and farm produce, there was extreme suffering for lack of necessary supplies, especially food. There was widespread starvation. Dyck reports on January 16, 1922 that there were sixty starving persons in Ladekopp. Three hundred of a possible 442 of the villagers qualified for food assistance. On April 18, 1922 Dyck reports that seven gophers were eaten by some members of his family.

Such conditions are a test of the moral fiber of a community, and many entries in the diary report the rampant looting, stealing, burglary, arson, suicides, and murders. Dyck implicates the Mennonites in this moral decadence and describes the suicides of two Mennonite men in the entry of July 23, 1919. In the
entry of May 9, 1922 Dyck complains that Mennonites "are becoming corrupted and depraved." But he retained his own sense of moral perspective in a morally chaotic society.

The diary reflects the great faith of Peter Johann Dyck. He regularly attended church services and Bible study groups in spite of government attempts to restrict and regulate religion. He participated in the meetings of the Associated Mennonite Assembly in the Molotchna area, the purpose of which was to maintain Mennonite institutions. The last year of the diary is dominated by his repeated expressions of his desire to leave Russia.

The book is edited by Dyck's son, John P. Dyck, and contains a helpful glossary. (A copy of this book has been presented to the AHSGR Archives).

(The book can be purchased from: John P. Dyck, Springstein, Manitoba ROG 2NO Canada at $12.00 hardcover, $8.00 paperback.)

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On the cover: Dr. Karl Stumpp is pictured in his study. Photo courtesy of Volk Auf Dem Weg, Nr. 2, Februar 1982.

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