# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REDACTIONS: THE EDITOR'S PAGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA WHO PIONEERED IN SASKATCHEWAN</td>
<td>Adam Giesinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN THE WAKE OF THE GERMAN ARMY ON THE EASTERN FRONT, AUGUST 1941 TO MAY 1942</td>
<td>Reports by Dr. Karl Stumpp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PETER SINNER</td>
<td>Translated by Adam Giesinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOSTALGIC REFLECTIONS</td>
<td>Ann K. Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FOLKLORE OF GERMAN-RUSSIAN WOMEN</td>
<td>Irene Rader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENNONITE RESPONSES TO THE PACIFIST MANDATE: THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>Lawrence Klippenstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GERMAN COLONISTS ON THE VOLGA</td>
<td>Georg Kromm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS AND ARTICLES RECENTLY ADDED TO THE AHSGR ARCHIVES</td>
<td>Frances Amen and Mary Lynn Tuck</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the cover: The Florian Becker family and farmstead near Balgonie, Saskatchewan. Florian Becker, a pioneer in St. Joseph's Colony, Balgonie, was the father of Dr. A. Becker, a well-known Canadian member of the AHSGR.
REDACTIONS: THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The 1984 AHSGR Convention, held in Regina, Saskatchewan, gave me the opportunity to describe for our American visitors the oldest settlements of Germans from Russia in Saskatchewan, which lie just east of the city. Although I have lived in Winnipeg for more than forty years, the Regina district is still home for me. I lived in Regina as a teenager and had my first teaching position there. Many friends of my youth and numerous relatives live in the city and district. About a month before the convention, I made a research tour through the old settlements, talked to some of the descendants of the original settlers, and took many pictures. You will find my story of these settlements in this issue of the Journal.

We present in this issue also another item from the convention program. The Folklore of German-Russian Women, a contribution to the convention's Folklore Symposium by Mrs. Irene Rader, an active member of AHSGR, who lives in Morgan Hill, California. Additional items from the convention program will appear in our Fall issue.

This issue's installment of Dr. Stumpp's account of his travels In the Wake of the German Army on the Eastern Front will be of particular interest to our Volhynian German members. He visited sixteen German villages, then still existing in the region north and northwest of Zhitomir, and described the conditions that he found there.

The second installment of the Autobiography of Peter Sinner, which appears in this issue, takes us back to the turn of the century and describes his life as a student and as a young teacher, and his participation in the revolution of 1905. The concluding portion of this interesting life story will be published in our Fall issue, along with a list of Peter Sinner's publications.

Lawrence Klippenstein, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg (now on sabbatical leave), has contributed to this issue a paper based on research that he carried out for his doctoral dissertation. It deals with the responses of the Mennonites in Russia to the pacifist mandate, a traditional part of their faith, when challenged by government authority. The responses, as Dr. Klippenstein explains to us, were varied and became more difficult during the revolutionary period and the Communist era that followed.

[signed] Adam Giesinger
TOWNSHIPS EAST OF REGINA IN WHICH MANY GERMANS FROM RUSSIA SETTLED
1885-1900

ii
THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA WHO PIONEERED IN SASKATCHEWAN

Adam Giesinger

The first Germans from Russia arrived in Regina in the summer of 1885. There was then no province of Saskatchewan. The vast region from Manitoba westward to the Rockies and from the United States boundary northward to the Arctic was a Canadian hinterland called the North-West Territories, ruled by a federally-appointed governor resident in Battleford on the North Saskatchewan river. The territories had a few Hudson's Bay Company trading posts along the lakes and rivers, near which Indians and Metis lived, a number of missionaries working among these, and red-coated Mounted Police to maintain law and order. There had been, in the spring of 1885, an Indian uprising some 150 miles north of Regina, but this had not appreciably affected the southern portion of the territories.

The founding of Regina had taken place just three years before. It was in the summer of 1882, when our first transcontinental railway line, the Canadian Pacific Railway, was being built across the southern part of what is now Saskatchewan. The engineers who surveyed the route arrived here in the spring of that year. They chose to run the railway across a little stream which had been given the picturesque name *Pile of Bones Creek*, but was later re-named *Wascana Creek*. Soon thereafter the railway authorities chose a section of railway-owned land near this crossing as a town site. This area was then uninhabited level prairie, stretching as far as the eye could see, with no trees and no sign of water except this creek, whose many little tributaries meander through a considerable region east of here. Along the banks of a portion of it, called *Many bones Creek*, some of the early immigrants from Russia were soon to establish their homes. In 1882, however, there was no white population in the area. The nearest whites lived at the Fort Qu'Appelle trading post about 45 miles to the northeast. The railway reached the new town site in the late summer of 1882 and the first train arrived from Winnipeg on 23 August of that year. By that time Edgar Dewdney, then lieutenant-governor of the North-West Territories, had named the town Regina, in honor of Queen Victoria, and had chosen it as the new capital of the vast region under his jurisdiction.

The choice of this featureless field of prairie grass as capital was ridiculed by many of its early visitors from the east, who considered it the least scenically attractive of the possible choices, but Dewdney's decision prevailed. He was later accused of having had a personal financial motive, the ownership of a parcel of land in the neighborhood, which increased greatly in value as a result of his choice. In spite of its scenic deficiencies the new town developed rapidly as a government and business centre. The land of the Regina plains proved to be exceptionally fertile and the railway brought a steady stream of settlers to occupy it. They came from eastern Canada and the British Isles, but soon also from continental Europe. The federal government had established a Dominion Lands Office at the town site as early as July 1882 and in the next two years alone 4148 homestead entries were recorded there, more than at any other land office in the west. The rapid influx of settlers and the resulting development of agriculture in the area made Regina an important distribution centre for the goods and services needed by the settlers. Soon after its founding, the town also became the headquarters of a well-known Canadian institution, our red-coated Mounties, established by the federal government originally as the North-West Mounted Police to police the western territories, but later made the national police force and re-named the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Their historic barracks and training school are still a feature of this city, which some of you have seen this week.

The prairie grass, which was the most prominent natural feature of the countryside in 1882, was gradually replaced by vast waving fields of high quality wheat, which brought prosperity to Regina and district by the turn of the century. At the census of 1901 the town of Regina had a population of 2249. In 1903, at the request of its Council, it was incorporated as a city by the Territorial Assembly. In 1905, when the federal government set up the province of Saskatchewan, it became the capital of the new province. As the city's prosperity and importance grew, even its scenic problem was solved to some extent: imaginative engineers built a dam on historic *Pile of Bones Creek* and created *Wascana Lake*, on the south side of which our beautiful Legislative Building was then erected.

For the thousands of Germans who came from Russia to settle in its environs, Regina became their city. While most of them stayed on their homesteads, some were discouraged by the early difficulties on the farm and moved to the city to find other work. During the first decade of the new

Address at the AHSGR Convention banquet in Regina, Saskatchewan, June 30, 1984.
century the area east of Broad Street along 10th, llth and 12th Avenues became a shantytown of many little houses with outdoor plumbing, inhabited by recent immigrants from eastern Europe. By 1911 the foreign-born population in the city was 6830 in a total population of 30,000. It was a polyglot group, with all East European languages represented, but the majority were German-speaking immigrants from Russia and the Austrian Empire. It was therefore called Germantown. Among its inhabitants Germans from Russia were the largest single group. Some had decided to settle here permanently. Others were here only temporarily while searching for land.

Between 1885 and 1914 some 50,000 Germans from Russia settled in what is now Saskatchewan. Smaller numbers came after the first and second world wars. Together their descendants now make up about ten percent of the population of the province. In the time available to me here, I can not describe all their widely scattered settlements. I shall therefore confine my attention to the largest early group, those who came before 1900 and settled in the region east of Regina, within a radius of about 40 miles from the city.

The first group of interest to us consisted of 25-30 families who arrived in Halifax on the S.S. Brooklyn on 29 April 1885. They were Baptists from Kataloi in the Rumanian Dobruja, whose fathers had left Russian Bessarabia in the 1840's and 1850's. The Dobruja was then under the mild rule of the Turkish Sultan, who was generous with land grants and permitted his new subjects to run their affairs with little interference. On arrival in the Dobruja, they had been pietistic Lutherans, but in the 1860's, through the efforts of zealous missionaries from Neu-Danzig in Russia, they had been converted to the Baptist faith, which led to quarrels with their Lutheran neighbors. Other problems arose as a result of a change of rulers. In 1878 a Russo-Turkish war deprived Turkey of the Dobruja and gave it to Rumania and the new rulers began to interfere in an annoying way with the life of the German colonists. These problems led the Kataloi Baptists to search for a new home. After considering various possibilities, including Palestine, a group of them chose to come to Canada, about which they had heard good reports from an English doctor then resident in the Dobruja city of Constanta.

The immigrants from the Dobruja who arrived on the S.S. Brooklyn were led by 66-year-old Johannes Seibold and his younger brother Jacob, both accompanied by their families. With them came their brothers, Friedrich and Christian Seibold, with families, and some 20 other families, among whom were: Christian Banek, Philipp Butz, Friedrich and Josef Edinger, Friedrich Gentner, Gottlieb Kalk, Franz and Georg Leitner, Thomas Lutz, Georg, Michael and Thomas Pepple, and others. The CPR brought them west to Winnipeg, where they spent a few weeks while Johannes and Jacob Seibold travelled on to Regina to find land for their group. They chose an area about 30 miles northeast of Regina, where the group then homesteaded in Township 20, Range 16, and called their settlement Neu Tultscha (New Tulcea), after their nearest city in the Dobruja. Soon after their arrival, under the guidance of a Baptist preacher named Petereit, who lived in Winnipeg and whom they had met there, they organized the first Baptist congregation in the North-West Territories. Reverend Petereit visited them periodically during the next few years. Poor crops from 1892 to 1894 caused some of these people to leave Canada to go to the Carrington district in North Dakota, where some of their friends and relatives from the Dobruja had settled some years earlier. Others, including their leaders, Johannes and Jacob Seibold, chose to stay in Canada. Johannes Seibold, born in 1819 in Teplitz, Bessarabia, migrated to the Dobruja with his father in 1842, and eventually died near Kendal, Saskatchewan, in 1917, at the age of 98. His brother Jacob died in 1907 and is buried, with his wife Helene, in a little cemetery near the highway just west of Balgonie. Katherine Seibold Rink, a member of our Regina chapter, who is a great-granddaughter of Johannes Seibold, recently guided me to Jacob's grave.

The name New Tulcea, given to the Dobruja Baptist settlement in 1885, disappeared in a few years. New immigrants from Bukovina in the old Austro-Hungarian Empire began to arrive in the area in considerable numbers in 1889, under the leadership of Phillipp Mang Sr. These re-named the settlement Edenwold (Edenwald), which eventually became the name of their nearest station when the railway came through. The Bukovina immigrants were Lutherans and they organized the first Lutheran parish in the North-West Territories in 1889. Their first pastor, Heinrich C. Schmieder, came from Philadelphia to serve them and other German-speaking Lutheran settlers who arrived in the following years.

Of more significance for the future of Saskatchewan, because they were the vanguard of large numbers of other immigrants from southern Russia, was the arrival in Winnipeg in the spring of 1886 of four adventurous young men from Josephstal near Odessa, Anton Diewold, Joseph Diewold,
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Edenwold.

Cairn in Honor of the Pioneers of Edenwold.
Johannes Kuntz and Georg Eckert, with wives and children. An immigration agent advised them to go west to the Regina district, where good homesteads were available, and agreed to accompany them for an on-site inspection of the land. Three of the four men decided to go, but Anton Diewold, having heard about the Indian uprising a few months before, did not like the idea of settling in such an unsafe area. When the other three returned, however, and reported favorably on what they had seen, all of them decided to go. They received loans from the CPR to purchase necessities, including oxen, harness, plows, wagons, and cookstoves, and the railway took them west to Balgonie. where they arrived on 22 May 1886. They were accompanied by a solicitous CPR immigration agent, who provided them with tents and helped them to get settled on their homesteads. Nature gave them a rousing welcome. During their first night under tents, there was a terrifying thunder storm with strong winds and heavy rain. Their tents were blown down, exposing them to the elements. This experience motivated them to proceed rapidly to the building of sod houses for more secure shelter.

Letters home to Josephstal in Russia encouraged friends and relatives to come. In the fall of 1886 the following families arrived: Peter Junker, Wendelin Wagmann, Balthasar Wagmann, and Christian Grad, and two single men, Anton Schafer and Philipp Weisgerber; in 1887 the families Franz Wagmann, Franz Geiger and Franz Neigel, and the single man Johann Neigel; in 1889 the families Johann Klotz and Anton Leibel, and the single women Thekia Materi and Christina Selenski; in 1890 the Stanislaus Laturnus family; in 1891 the Andreas Leibel family; in 1892 the families Anton Bachmann, Johann Wiest, Peter Kunanz, and Kosmas Matt, and the single men Florian Becker and Anton Bengert. Others, mainly relatives of these, came to this settlement in later years.

These immigrants from Josephstal were pious Catholics and as early as 1887 built themselves a little stone church, large enough to accommodate about thirty families, on the Peter Junker homestead. They were visited occasionally by priests from Regina until 1892, when they received a resident priest of their own. The first church building was also used as a school. A public school district was organized and an English-speaking teacher employed as early as 1887. During the winter of 1888 fourteen pupils were in attendance.

According to the Canadian homestead law, the immigrants had to build houses on their homesteads and live there for three years, and cultivate a certain acreage, before they could receive title for the land. The Josephstal immigrants did not like the isolated life on their homesteads and appealed to the authorities to be permitted to establish a little village, in which all could live together as they had in Russia. Receiving permission to do this, thirty families agreed to the purchase of 80 acres of land from the CPR, on which they established, in 1894, a little hamlet, which they called St. Joseph's Colony. The thirty homesteaders built houses in the new village and in 1897 erected there a new St. Joseph's church, which has survived to the present day, although it is no longer used for regular services. Some of you visited this interesting old church in the early part of this week. We owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Anthony Becker, a son of one of the founders of St. Joseph's Colony, for his research on the early history of this settlement.

The years 1890-1891 saw the arrival in what is now Saskatchewan of Germans from several different areas of southern Russia. The vanguard of at least four different groups came to Regina and established settlements east of the city. The "old settlers" near Balgonie, the Josephstaler, who spoke their language, although a different dialect of it, showed the newcomers how things were done in Canada.

The first group of these new immigrants came from the Catholic villages of Rastadt and Muenchen, in the northern part of the Beresan region, about 60 miles north of Odessa. They were attracted to immigration to the Regina district through enthusiastic letters from Philipp Weisgerber, who had come to Canada with the first Josephstal settlers in 1886 and was now writing to his friend Victor Koch in Rastadt. The following left Russia in the spring of 1890: from Rastadt, the families Anton Schmidt, Johannes Ell, Raymund Dielschneider and Peter Dielschneider, and two single men, Heinrich and Sebastian Gartner; from Mlinchen, the families Johannes Bast, Sebastian Schropp, Michael Scherger, Andreas Bengert, and Adam Martz, and the single men Johannes Thomas, Benedict Fener, Franz Bast, and Karl Bengert. When this group arrived in Winnipeg, an immigration agent found temporary accommodation for them, while three of the men, Johannes Ell, Georg Bast and Sebastian Schropp, travelled west, with the agent, to Balgonie to look for homestead land. On arrival, one of the "old settlers", Johannes Kuntz, drove them about 12 miles southward, to the Manybones Creek area, where good homesteads were available. When the scouts returned to Winnipeg, the various families bought themselves supplies and equipment and the CPR took them all to Balgonie, where they arrived on 6 June 1890.
Catholic Church in St. Joseph's Colony, Balgonie.

The Interior of St. Joseph's Church.
The next day happened to be a gala occasion for both the old settlers and the newly arrived. It was the Catholic feast of Corpus Christi, on which it had been their custom in Russia to hold a religious procession. To make it an even more solemn occasion, Archbishop Tache had come from St. Boniface to administer the sacrament of confirmation. The pious newcomers participated happily in these impressive religious ceremonies. The following day, however, they had to begin the laborious task of establishing themselves in their new homeland.

First the men drove to Regina to apply for homesteads. They also bought oxen and wagons and other equipment and then took their families to the area in which their newly acquired land was located. For the next three weeks, until the first sod houses had been built, the families lived in tents supplied by the immigration department. During this period they suffered much from occasional downpours of heavy rain, as well as from mosquitoes night and day. In addition to plowing up sod to build the walls of their houses, they had to travel many miles to the north with their oxen to find brushwood and trees for the roofs. They labored feverishly for long hours to finish enough houses to bring all families under cover.

In the spring of 1891 another five families came from Muenchen: Heinrich Bengert, Franz Dietz, Franz Bast, Wilhelm Thomas and Joseph Schropp; and the Johannes Eberle family from Rastadt. In November of the same year there came from Rastadt the families Johann Obrigewitsch, Jakob Reinhardt and Gustav Koch, and the single men Hyronimus Ebenal and Martin Frey; and in December the Andreas Wollbaum family from Muenchen and the Johannes Reinbold family. The spring of 1892 brought the families Peter Herauf, Simon Schmidt, Georg Michael Koch and Christian Dielschneider, and the single man Andreas Koch, all from Rastadt, and in 1893 the Mathias Obrigewitsch family from the same place. The year 1893 brought also two families, Michael Seiferling and Alexander Schneider, and the single man Friedrich Schneider, from the Crimea.

Like the founders of St. Joseph's Colony, the new arrivals were not happy living isolated on their homesteads. In 1896 they bought land on which they established two small villages about three miles apart: one on section 14, township 16, and range 17; and the other on section 7, township 16, range 16. Unofficially the little hamlets were generally called 14-Colony and 7-Colony, from their location, although their official names were Katharinental and Rastadt respectively. Originally there were 12 families in 7-Colony and 21 families in 14-colony. They built their houses there in 1897.

An additional 18 families arrived from Rastadt in 1898-1899 to settle near the earlier group. In 1902 these founded a third little village, some miles southeast of 7-Colony, which they called Speyer. In this group were the families: Meinrad Eberle; Mathias Fuchs; Michael, Hyronimus, Johannes and Joseph Selinger; Gregor, Johannes and Martin Resch; Vincenz and Andreas Frey; Adam, Vincenz and Ignaz Ell; Pius Uriacher; Thomas Ackermann; Leonhard Ferner; and Michael Wormsbecher. From Karlsruhe, via Kansas, came Jakob Geis.

Religious services were provided for these new settlers occasionally by priests from Regina and later by the resident pastors of St. Joseph's, Balgonie. At first mass was said in some of the homes, but in 1894 a small sod church was built a little to the southwest of the later 14-Colony, where there is still a cemetery. In 1903, by which time the settlement area had grown considerably, it was decided that a new larger church was needed. As you can imagine, much argument arose about where this church ought to be located, each of the little villages wishing to become the parish centre. The Archbishop of St. Boniface, under whose jurisdiction the Catholics of the Regina district then belonged, had to impose a decision. He chose the most centrally located of the three villages, 7-Colony, and there the present St. Peter's Church was then erected. Until 1915 St. Peter's was served from St. Joseph's. It then received its first resident pastor in the person of Father Heinrich Metzger, who eventually, in 1930, wrote the history of St. Peter's Parish, from which I have borrowed freely.

Father Metzger, a native of Alsace, was an artist, whose paintings in the sanctuary of old St. Joseph's Church some of you saw this week. He also inspired the construction of the replica of the Grotto of Lourdes on the sloping bank of Manybones Creek, just north of St. Peter's Church.

The second major group of German immigrants from Russia that began to come to the Regina district in the year 1890 came from Klosterdorf on the Dnieper river northeast of the city of Kherson. The first persons from that village who came to Canada were Peter Rieberger, his wife Christina and three children, accompanied by a single man, Peter Kraus. They arrived in Winnipeg in the summer of 1889 and found work with a German-speaking farmer near the city. Their enthusiastic letters home led to a major migration from Klosterdorf and the neighboring village of Muhihausendorf. On 7 September 1890 the first group of eight families left Klosterdorf on route to Canada. They arrived
St. Peter's Church in 7-Colony (Rastadt).

Replica of Grotto of Lourdes on the banks of the creek just north of St. Peter's Church.
in Winnipeg on 8 October, where they were welcomed by the Riebers and by Peter Krause, whose parents and siblings were in the group. Here the families remained until the men had traveled west to Regina to find homestead land. On 25 October the eight families finally arrived in Regina. They were: Alexander Ehmann; Johannes Pahlmann; Johann, Jakob, and Christian Maier; a second Johann Maier; Johann Reinlander; and Wilhelm Kraus. In the spring of 1891 the following additional families arrived; Wilhelm and Andreas Ehmann; Andreas Ehmann Jr.; Michael and Daniel Maier; and Wilhelm Reinlander. The Peter Rieberger family now also came from Winnipeg to settle with the group. In 1893 another eight families joined these: Andreas, Johannes and Joseph Fahlmann and a second Andreas Fahlmann; Joseph Ehmann (the patriarch of the group, then 70 years old) and his sons Joseph Jr., Albert and Georg.

The first of the Klosterdorf immigrants had found homesteads to the southwest of the Rastadt-Muenchen group, who arrived in the same years. When their patriarch, Joseph Ehmann, reached the settlement in 1893, he found the earlier arrivals, among whom were three of his sons and a daughter, living disconsolately on their lonely homesteads. He therefore organized a little village, in which they and the more recent arrivals could all live together. They bought land for the purpose and built 14 sod houses all in a row, to accommodate all the Klosterdorf families who wished to live together in the village. They called this village St. Mary's Colony.

Like the other early German immigrants from Russia, this group also immediately began to plan for a church in their midst. One of their early contacts in Regina was a French-Canadian merchant, a Mr. Bonneau, who owned a large wooden store on Broad Street near 13th Avenue. Because Regina business in general had moved northward to South Railway Street and he too wanted to build a new store there, he offered to sell his building to the Klosterdorfer for $200, although it was worth much more. They bought it, took it apart and moved the pieces out to St. Mary's, where they set it up and furnished it to serve as their church. By the summer of 1895 it was ready for use and religious services began to be held in it. No resident pastor was available, but priests came periodically from St. Joseph's or Regina to serve the St. Mary's congregation.

After 1903, when their leader, old Joseph Ehmann, died, his descendants and others of the residents gradually began to leave St. Mary's, some moving to Regina for non-farming occupations, others to houses on their own land, and some to other settlement areas, particularly to the Holdfast district northwest of Regina. The village houses eventually all disappeared, leaving only the church building and a cemetery near it. These were neglected for many years, but received attention again through the efforts of a great-grandson of the patriarch Joseph Ehmann, Rev. Daniel Ehman, a Catholic priest. He visited the old St. Mary's church in 1939 and was saddened by its state of disrepair. After his visit he wrote an article on the history of this church, with the title, "The Church with the Broken Heart". When Archbishop Monahan of Regina read this article, he resolved to put this church building back into use. He had it moved about 14 miles south to the village of Riceton, where a church was needed. There it was repaired and became Sacred Heart parish church for the Catholics of that area. It is still in use. Of the old St. Mary's Colony, only the cemetery now remains. It is on the north side of a graveled road about 2 1/2 miles west of Kronau. The last burial in it was in 1921. Thereafter, for many years, it was neglected. It became overgrown with grass and weeds, most of the wooden crosses disappeared and some of the remaining tombstones fell over. Eventually, again through the efforts of Father Daniel Ehman, what was left of the cemetery was put into presentable condition. About a dozen tombstones were still there and they were set up again. A fence was built around the area. A shrine in honor of St. Joseph was erected in the northwest corner. The most impressive of the monuments still remaining is on the graves of the patriarch Joseph Ehmann and his wife Marianna.

The majority of the early German immigrants from Russia that settled in the area east of Regina were Black Sea Catholics, but not exclusively so. Among the immigrants who arrived here in the 1890's there were also Lutherans from southern Russia. The first of these came from the villages of the Kronau settlement, located near the Inguletz river about 75 miles northeast of the city of Kherson. Since this was only 45-50 miles north of Klosterdorf, it is quite possible that the people there learned about settlement possibilities in Canada through the Klosterdorfer. In any event, two families, Gottlieb Martins and Michael Buhler, from the Kronau settlement arrived in Regina in the spring of 1891 and were followed the next fall by six other families: Johann Buhler, Georg Renner, Johann Leippi, Johann Kessler, Karl Kessler and Friedrich Leippi. These eight families settled just east of the Klosterdorfer group. In 1893 they were joined by the following families: Gottlieb Posehn, with sons August, Julius, Friedrich and Karl; Johann Leippi; Johann Euteneier, with sons Jacob,
St. Mary's Cemetery, west of Kronau, Ehmann Monument in the centre, St. Josephs Shrine in the background.

Sacred Heart Church, Riceton, "The Church with the Broken Heart".
Friedrich, Heinrich and Gustav; Gottlieb and Ludwig Walker; and Jacob Leippi. In 1894 there arrived Heinrich and Johann Posehn, and Johann Leippi; in 1898, Otto Euteneier; and in 1903 Heinrich Wegwitz. The area settled by these immigrants, which was just east of that settled by the Klosterdorfer, was called New Kronau. Later, when the CPR built a railway line through this area to connect Regina with Stoughton, Arcola and Carlyle in southeast Saskatchewan, the name Kronau was given to the railway station nearest their settlement. Very soon after the first group of these settlers arrived, they were visited by Pastor Heinrich Schmieder from Edenwold. His visit to the New Kronau group was the beginning of a Lutheran parish that still exists in this area. In the early years church services were held in a school, but in 1912 Bethlehem Lutheran Church was built on the Henry Posehn homestead. This church was later moved to the village of Kronau, where it is still in use.

In the early years church services were held in a school, but in 1912 Bethlehem Lutheran Church was built on the Henry Posehn homestead. This church was later moved to the village of Kronau, where it is still in use.

In 1891 a group of 15 Catholic families, eight from the Liebental colonies and seven from the Kutschurgan colonies in the Odessa region, arrived in Balgonie intending to settle with the Josephstal group already established there, among whom some of them had relatives. These 15 families were: Philipp Kiefer, Andreas Leibel and Anton Weisgerber from Josephstal; Adam and Michael Klotz from Mariental; Philipp Materi and Anton and Daniel Zerr from Franzfeld; Anton Huck and Johannes Lochert from Selz; Christian Kirschner and Jakob Jung from Baden; Joseph Biegler and Johann Deis from Mannheim; and Lorenz Klein from Elsass. Of these, Andreas Leibel decided to stay with the Josephstal group near Balgonie, but the rest found homesteads in a new area at some distance to the southeast, north of Manybones Creek, about 10 miles east of the Rastadt-Muenchen group who were settling near this creek at the same time. For this new settlement area, the nearest railroad station then was Qu'Appelle, about 20 miles to the north. But near it eventually the Canadian Northern Railway, when it came through there in 1907, established the Vibank railway station. In 1897 the settlers from southern Russia were joined by nine Catholic families from Zichydorf in the Banat, Hungary, who settled just south of the first group. These families were: Johann Kleckner, Thomas Kleckner Sr., Joseph Binzenberger, Anton Kayner, Joseph Rist, Peter Orthmann, Michael Donauer, Nikolaus Leitner and Josef Bartole. These two groups, "die Ungare" and "die Russe", as they sometimes referred to each other, became the nucleus of the later St. Paul's Parish, Vibank. In the early years religious services were provided occasionally by a priest from Qu'Appelle and after 1895 by the resident parish priest of St. Joseph's Colony, who came once a month. In 1900-1901 the Catholic population in the district was increased considerably by a large influx of more families from the Liebental and Kutschurgan colonies in southern Russia and from the Hungarian Banat. In 1904 a church
was built in the primary settlement area and on its completion the new St. Paul's Parish was able to obtain a resident parish priest. This was not convenient, however, for some of the newcomers of 1901, who had homesteaded 8 to 10 miles south of the original settlement. Because of their distance from St. Paul's church, they organized *Blumenfeld* parish, with a little church of their own at a central point in their settlement. Here they were served by visiting priests for some years.  

In 1912 St. Paul's church, originally located about three miles northwest of the later site of the village, was moved to Vibank, leaving only a cemetery on the original site. As the parish grew, it became necessary to replace the old church building with the new larger church that now adorns the main street of Vibank. In 1916, by which time there were, in addition to St. Paul's, Catholic parishes also in Odessa and Sedley, church services at Blumenfeld were discontinued, the church building was sold and moved away, leaving only a cemetery at the site, which still exists. On a recent research tour through the area, I visited both the old Vibank cemetery and the Blumenfeld cemetery, where many of the pioneers are buried.  

Among the early settlers in the Vibank district there were also German Lutherans. They came for the most part not from Russia, but from Austrian-ruled Bukovina. The following families are said to have come in 1898-1899: Anton Staudt, Ferdinand Staudt, Johann Staudt, Friedrich Lenz, Otto Lenz, Johann Meisel and Frau Johannes Tobias. Some additional families came a little later: Daniel Rust, Richard Koch, Johann Wolf, Jacob Dillinger, F. Meske, Frau Johannes Schmidt, Johannes Tobias Sr., Karl Vorreiter, August Stuhlberg and Ludwig Meisel. These were the nucleus of the later Emanuel Lutheran congregation in Vibank.  

One of the great handicaps of the early years was the settlers' distance from railway stations to which they could haul their farm produce for sale. Until the first decade of the new century the only railway through the region east of Regina was the main line of the CPR, which passed through Balgonie-McLean-Qu'Appelle and on to Winnipeg. Only the St. Joseph's settlers were close to this railway. The others had to travel from 15 to 35 miles on difficult prairie trails to the nearest railway station. Only after 1900 were two new railway lines finally built through the area: a CPR line through Kronau-Lajord-Sedley connecting Regina with Stoughton and Arcola in the southeast, and a Canadian Northern line through Davin-Vibank-Odessa-Kendal connecting Regina with Brandon, Manitoba. These contributed greatly to bringing an era of prosperity to the region by 1910.  

Among the pioneers that I have dealt with in some detail, there are six groups from southern Russia. They began to come to this area twenty years before the province of Saskatchewan was organized, when Regina was only three years old and was no more than a small village. They were

*The Old Cemetery of St. Paul's Parish Vibank, Saskatchewan.*
among the first settlers on the Regina plains. At the risk of boring you, I have read to you the lists of their names, because these are names that should be remembered and recorded. They came to a foreign country, whose language they did not understand, to an area where conditions were still primitive. They were poor when they arrived — reports of the time refer to them as “indigent Russians”. They had little education, little knowledge of the world. But they had a deep faith in God and they were hardy, enterprising and industrious. They built sod houses for their families and worked their land with oxen. They suffered from fierce winter blizzards and were tortured by cruel swarms of mosquitoes all summer long. They lost crops through drought and frost and hail and rust; but they persevered and converted the barren prairie into productive farmland. Even during their early poverty they dotted the countryside with churches and with schools. In the manner characteristic of our people, they argued long and vigorously over the location of these institutions, but in the end always cooperated to build them. They were among the most progressive of the settlers who developed this province. Their descendants are proud Canadians, who have distinguished themselves in all walks of life, in war and peace. Thousands of them now live in this city and district and some of them are in this audience. They can look back with pride and should look back with gratitude to their intrepid forebears, who had the courage to cross the great ocean to build homes in what was then a primitive, uninhabited prairie land.

Notes

1. There is an excellent pictorial history of the city of Regina, published by the city in 1978 on the occasion of its 75th anniversary as a city. Edited and introduced by J. William Brennan, its title is, Regina Before Yesterday: A Visual History 1882 to 1945.

2. The passenger list of this voyage of the S.S. Brooklyn is available through interlibrary loan on microfilm reel C-4512 from the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa. There's uncertainty about some of the names on the list, hence uncertainty about the exact number of families who were Dobruja Germans.

3. The early years of the Edenwold district are described in: Heinz Lehmann, Das Deutschtum in Westkanada (Berlin: Junker und Dunnhaupt Verlag, 1939), pp. 199-204. Names of some of the early settlers are mentioned in the introduction to Lydia Seibold Anderson's Seibold Family Genealogy.
St. Paul’s Catholic Church in Vibank, Saskatchewan (The new church).

Emanuel Lutheran Church in Vibank, Saskatchewan.


6. The names of these Klosterdorf immigrants are listed in the work by Metzger, mentioned above.

7. My information on the vanished St. Mary's Colony came from the late Father Daniel Ehman, who gave me a copy of an article on "The Old Cemetery of St. Mary's Colony near Kronau", as well as a copy of his family history book, *The Joseph Ehmann Family Tree* (1923-1968).


11. A friend of my youth, John J. Mildenberger of Portland, Oregon, who spends his summers in his old home, Kendal, Saskatchewan, guided me to Blumenfeld cemetery, where his grandparents are buried.

12. See the work by Hordem, mentioned in note 8, for the history of this parish.

*Iron Crosses in the old Vibank cemetery.*
IN THE WAKE OF THE GERMAN ARMY ON THE EASTERN FRONT,  
AUGUST 1941 TO MAY 1942 
Reports by Dr. Karl Stumpp  
Translated by Adam Giesinger

The first three reports of this series appeared in the Journal, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1984. Report No. 4, presented here, written in Zhitomir, Volhynia, describes the writer’s visits to German villages in the Zhitomir region over the period August 27 to September 9, 1941.

* * *

In Zhitomir I visited the Russian church. A woman was just decorating the holy pictures. She approached me, took me by the arm, caressed me and tearfully offered thanks for our coming. She pointed to a holy picture which had been used by the Bolsheviks as a rifle target. Your soldiers [she said] visit us and on entering the church take off their caps; ours have desecrated the church. From this congregation a representative had visited Stalin personally to beg for the preservation of the church. He came back from Moscow with the promise, but was then persecuted and the church was converted into an archive.

An ethnic German (Lemke) here told me that a plan to shoot all the ethnic Germans was not carried out only because an aircraft appeared and all the Bolsheviks fled. The same ethnic German told me something interesting about a man named Postishev. He was a Ukrainian, who in 1934(?) introduced, in place of our Father Christmas [Santa Claus], a Grandfather Frost for New Year's. In clubs, schools and homes fir trees were set up, decorated with balls, hammers and sickles, and with candles, later with electric lights. Grandfather Frost, covered with cotton-wool, then organized games for the children. Postishev became very popular, particularly with children. Songs and poems were written about him, in which Communism was scarcely mentioned, but a great deal was said about him. It was thought that he was planning an insurrection. Postishev disappeared, but Grandfather Frost remained, although in a somewhat changed form.

From Zhitomir I visited 16 German communities:

**Neuborn**, near Zhitomir, founded in 1865, now has a population of 1010, of whom 698 are Germans, 237 Ukrainians, 43 Poles, 27 Russians, 8 Czechs. The mayor, Hohenstein, readily and knowledgeably gave me information and showed me around the village. I noticed particularly that there was very little livestock in the collective. Hohenstein explained to me that this was due to the fact that the best livestock had been taken away, the reason being given that it was diseased. The real reason, however, was that the livestock was wanted for butchering. It was taken to the city and was given mainly to the Jews. Privately each farmer has a cow. Each also has 10 to 15 chickens. But in the Bolshevik system people get very little value out of these. Each farmer has to deliver 150 eggs, even those who have no chickens. Hohenstein described an experience he had had on a train. There was a Jew with him. In conversation this man declared cynically: "You can keep the chickens, but we'll take the eggs!" Hohenstein told me with deep emotion about the arrival of the Germans, excusing himself for breaking into tears. We went to a community residence, the newest accomplishment of the Soviets. In this house 24 families live under one roof. You hear the neighbors to the left and right and the many children in the corridor. The whole building is just one large room, with one small kitchen for the use of all.

**Andreyev** has a population of 660: 575 Germans, 85 Ukrainians; 208 German men, 367 German women, 8 mixed marriages, with 3 husbands and 5 wives foreigners. Eduard Wegner was killed here by a German bomb. His wife told me how eagerly he had waited for the arrival of the Germans. He was on his way to a neighbor's with his 5-year-old boy, when a bomber appeared overhead and he was fatally wounded by a bomb fragment. The child was found sitting on his father's head; he did not want to leave his father. At the moment hops are being harvested here. About 80 women are working in the harvest. They work eagerly and hurriedly so as to harvest 20 kg and thus earn 1.5 days' pay. The women have their children with them, including the infants. All day the little ones lie out in the field. A mother nurses her infant without taking time to rest a little herself. She has to earn, and earn ... so that her family could be nourished. In the evening the women receive a piece of paper (5x5 cm), on which the number of kilograms is written. Only at the end of the harvest is everything entered into the workbook. At a gathering in the evening the women complain about
German Villages Visited by Dr. Stumpp
August 27 to September 9, 1941.

EASTERN VOLHYNIA
their difficult fate. The majority of the men are in banishment. In this matter the sad fact is confirmed that in general the Germans themselves are to blame, because they reported on each other. In Andreyev the number of deported is said to be 400. Again and again one hears the sigh: "What can one do?" or the statement: "Often we wished for death." One woman had a nervous breakdown when her husband was arrested. Another woman, sick at heart, sits on a woodpile with her two children. A third child is working in the hops harvest to earn bread for the family. A well-to-do farmer named Liske had to leave his home village and settled in neighboring Tchernyachov, where he had to chop wood for Jews to earn his livelihood. Often the women sat with their children in unheated rooms in the winter because the husband, who would have got wood, is missing.

For their slave labor, the people receive as pay for a work day something fluctuating between 150 g and 2 kg of grain, between 30 kopecks and 2.5 rubles in money, and between 400 g and 2 kg of potatoes. The work days are calculated according to a very complicated formula: a worker receives 1.5 days for harvesting 0.55 ha; 0.5 day for stacking 0.5 ha of oats; 0.45 day for stacking a tonne (1000 kg) of straw, and so on. The teacher's salary in Andreyev is 240 rubles a month, from which there are many deductions, leaving a net amount of only 184 rubles. The teacher's wife has to work in the collective to enable the family to live on their income.

Mlynok has 108 families, of which 76 are German; the number of persons is 479, of which 349 are German; there are 2 mixed marriages. In the evening the youth here assembled in the garden and sang German songs. Soon the whole community had assembled and sang along. I took advantage of the opportunity to make a speech. You feel here what these people have endured. From this community many volunteered for the German army in 1918. They would now like to re-settle in Germany.

Feodorovka has 303 inhabitants, 267 of them German. There are 3 mixed marriages. The local mayor complained about the large number of men that were used in supervisory work here and could not be used for actual labor, although they have to be fed and paid by the collective. There are here: a chairman of the collective, 4 brigadiers, 2 bookkeepers, a warehouse supervisor, a dairy supervisor and a deputy to him, a chief forester, a fire chief, a quality inspector, a road-building brigadier, a telephone officer, altogether 15 officials in a community of 303 people. In addition there are: 4 horse grooms, a miller, 2 blacksmiths, 3 cabinet-makers, a saddler, 10 persons caring for livestock, 2 feeding pigs, a beekeeper and a person caring for chickens. Altogether, therefore, there are 40 persons withdrawn from work on the land.

Toporishtche has 502 inhabitants, of which 263 are Germans, 186 Ukrainians, 47 Poles and 5 Czechs. There are 73 German families here, of which 17 are without a male head, 16 deported, one died of hunger.

Helenovka has 391 inhabitants, of which 226 are Germans, 158 Ukrainians, and 7 Poles. Here 11 houses and 8 collective buildings were set on fire before the Russian forces left. In all communities the following had to be carried out under threat of death: (1) in the presence of a district official all agricultural machines had to be knocked to pieces; (2) the livestock in the collective had to be driven away, except the calves and pigs, which were divided among the farmers; (3) all archival materials and community records had to be burned. This last order, in particular, was carried out thoroughly, so that no village now has records regarding its history nor are there any village plans to be found. In only one community [Sadki] could a large portion of the village records be saved.

In Helenovka I had the experience of attending a community meeting, which showed very well what an unbearable situation it is that our German people have to live there among a foreign majority. The proceedings were carried on in the Ukrainian language, for otherwise the majority of those assembled would not have understood. The consequence is that the Germans too are forced to speak Ukrainian. You notice here in particular that the German women, in contrast with those in the Black Sea and Volga regions, speak a perfect Ukrainian. The mayor asked me publicly to address the meeting and to point out especially how necessary it was to continue to work in the collective. There are bitter complaints that the Ukrainians no longer wanted to work in the collective. The Germans too long for the day when they have their own land again; they've had enough of the collective. Through appropriate explanation they could be made to understand, however, that a change in this matter was not possible at this time. But they begged again and again to be freed from collective work just as soon as it was possible.

The teacher in Helenovka originated from Kronsfeld, Tauria. In his home village also a few Russian families had been settled. In spite of this the German settlements in that region (the Molotschna) have preserved their purely German character. The old settlements there still exist. In 1923 Kronsfeld
had 54 farmyards, today it has 89. It was interesting to hear from Teacher Kneissler that many Volhynian Germans had been settled in his home region. In 1937 there were 32 men deported from Kronsfeld. The collectives there are in better condition than those in Volhynia and as a result the grain and money payments per work day are higher than here. The houses are also much better than in Volhynia and the people are dressed better.

Fassova Rutni has 149 families, with 651 persons, of whom 127 families with 573 persons are Germans and 22 families with 78 persons are Ukrainians. Of the German families, 62 have no male heads, 52 of whom were deported. Only one German died of hunger here, while in the neighboring Russian village 240 died. This phenomenon is general. It is true, happily, that in the German settlements in Volhynia there were only isolated cases of people dying of hunger in the famine years. The Volhynian Germans explain that in this way: (1) As a consequence of the heavier precipitation, there are no total crop failures here as there are in the Volga and Black Sea regions. Potatoes always grow and people are therefore able to provide themselves with food from the land in their village lot. (2) Again and again it is repeated, that many more would have died had it not been for the help received from the organization "Brothers in Need" (Brüeder in Not) in Germany. The Hitler letters-of-credit saved our life. With these letters one could buy in the Torgsin [well-stocked Soviet stores set up in the 1930's, which accepted only foreign money, ed.]. Subsequently, in the years 1937 and 1941, many of the recipients of such letters were deported. The Bolsheviks called these letters blood-money, alleging that they were provided at the expense of the poverty-stricken people in Germany.

Krassna-Retshka actually consists of three collectives: (a) Neues Leben, (b) Voroskilov, and (c) Olshovka. In Neues Leben there are 287 people, 264 of them Germans, 6 Ukrainians, 17 Poles. In Voroshilov there are 194 people, all Germans, 29 men, 47 women, 118 young persons.

This village suffered a great deal in recent war action. Three times the people had to leave the village, because the Bolsheviks were firing on it. 3 Germans fell victims to bullets. A woman was seriously wounded. 17 houses and 3 collective buildings burned down.

In the neighboring village of Nebizh also there are 15 German families. On the whole there is scarcely any Ukrainian village in which there are not a few German families. This is a consequence of the following:

(1) In earlier days there were no closed German settlements in Volhynia, but every farmer built his house on his own land. As a result the settlements often extended over many kilometers. When the collective system was introduced, it was often closer and more convenient for those living at the edge of the settlement to join the neighboring Russian collective. When later on the houses were taken down and moved closer together, these German farmers no longer had the option of moving into the German collective. They were forced to remain in the Ukrainian collective.

(2) In the Russian collectives there were generally no tradesmen, so that German tradesmen had an opportunity there for better positions and better earning possibilities.

(3) Some German farmers were expelled from their collectives or had such difficulties there that they preferred to settle in other collectives, even in Ukrainian ones.

(4) Many well-to-do Germans went to Ukrainian collectives in order to escape from persecution and deportation.

(5) Another group settled voluntarily in more eastern regions (Yekaterinoslav, Siberia, etc.), because they hoped to find better living conditions there. When, after a few years, they returned, they were no longer accepted by their own collective, or in most cases the district authorities forbade their acceptance, so that they were forced to settle in other collectives, often in Ukrainian ones.

Again and again you meet cases of German farmers who re-settled in cities, especially in Zhitomir, because they were no longer tolerated in their village or because they wanted to escape the danger of deportation. In the city they eked out a living as night watchmen, street cleaners and to a lesser extent as office workers.

On the trip from Krassna-Retshka to Solodyri, I met a group of school children on the road. They were carrying their books and their shoes under their arms (a frequent sight here) and were walking in the cool wet weather towards Poromovka. I spoke to these children and discovered that there were 3 Germans among them. From them I learned that there were in this Ukrainian village six German families (Schmidt, Bergmann, Rossler, Ehlerl, Ristow), together 32 persons. In the neighboring small town of Goroshki there are said to be 20 to 30 German families.

Rogovka is a settlement in which a German minority lives among newly settled Ukrainian farmers.
(Kazaps). These Germans have had to suffer much. They complain that these Kazaps are a cruel people, who constantly made threats against them. They are also lazy and no longer want to work in the collective.

*Solodyri* consists of two collectives: (a) *Neues Leben*, and (b) *Roter Oktober*. About 300 Germans and 500 Ukrainians live here. There are 5 mixed marriages. Old man Hartmann and his wife complain bitterly about their sufferings in the last few years. Here I learn more details about the deportation of the year 1935. From the first to the seventh of January a large number of men were arrested. They were told that they had to be ready to leave within 2 to 3 hours. They were taken to the prison in Zhitomir. Regarding this arrest a song was written, of which the following is one verse:

> In the night, at the twelfth hour  
> came the Russian police,  
> took the men from their families,  
> leaving the women and children alone.

When singing this song for me, a mother and daughter broke into tears. Three weeks later the families of these arrested men were also deported. On 28 January 1935 the police came at midnight and placed guards around the houses. The women were given 24 hours' time to prepare clothing and food for a month. In 38 degrees of frost they were then driven to Zhitomir. Here the families, along with their men brought from prison, were put on a train and sent to Karelia (Murmansk). There they had to live in barracks and work in the forests. In 1938 more men were arrested here and taken away. Later the same year, there were again many families arrested and were "re-settled" in the Don region and later Kharkov. This type of "re-settlement" was in fact somewhat different from the earlier deportations, because in this case part of the family's personal property and livestock could be sold or taken away. The number of families in each community to be resettled was decided by the district Soviet. The village Soviet then chose the families. In some villages there was even a recruiting drive for the purpose, so that there were cases in which the families went to the new settlement areas voluntarily. Here mixed collective villages were established. The Germans were placed with Russian farmers, who had themselves been deported. Later the men in this area were also arrested and deported, so that, as in Volhynia, many women are without their husbands.

*Neudorf* has 49 families, of which 29 are German, 19 Ukrainian and 1 Polish. This village is completely Baptist. Still standing today is the red-brick church, in which monthly services were formerly held for all the Baptists of that region. Today this church, like those in many other villages, is used as a granary. The ethnic Germans deported from Neudorf were taken to various regions... Notable is the fact that far fewer people were deported from Neudorf than there were from *Heimtal* although both of these villages are within the region 100 km from the border [from within which the deportation of Germans was greatest]. Neudorf belongs to the *Horoshki* local government district [mainly Ukrainian], whereas Heimtal belongs to the formerly almost completely German *Pulin* district. This suggests that the deportations were more numerous in German districts than in others. The personnel of the district government also had a decided influence.

*Heimtal* has 83 families, of which 22 are German, 59 Ukrainian and 2 Polish. The German population is only 60. There are 3 mixed marriages. From Heimtal and the neighboring *Pulin-Huta*, 97 German
families were "re-settled" in 1936 in the Don region in the villages of Vorovenko and Epifonovka. The former teachers' seminary in Heimtal is still standing, but the church has been torn down. Heimtal was once a flourishing German colony, but today has only 22 German families. The 5 German men still living here are old or sick.

**Pulin-Huta** has 92 families, of which 16 are German and 76 Ukrainian. The population is 339, 61 Germans and 278 Ukrainians. There are 3 mixed marriages. There are only 9 German men left here, including 3 who have just returned to their home village from Zhitomir.

In Pulin-Huta we stopped to talk to 80-year-old Ferdinand Holz. His ancestors came from Holland. He told us about the founding of the village. There was once a glass factory (Huta) here. The factory eventually failed. The owner wanted to sell the land to his employees, but they had no interest in it. The land was then bought by 17 German families, who came in from Poland. The landowner had his employees driven away by Cossacks, so that the Germans could settle here. Old man Holz listened devotedly to my descriptions of Germany and particularly to information about the Fuehrer. Tears ran down his cheeks. When I told him about the attempt on the Fuehrer's life in Munich, he grasped my hand and said: "Sir, we heard about that. My neighbors came to me and we fell on our knees in gratitude that the Fuehrer had been preserved." You have to realize that these people were completely cut off from Germany, were not allowed to read papers and were strictly forbidden to listen to foreign news broadcasts.

**Wederna** has 42 families, of which 9 are German and 33 Ukrainian. There are no mixed marriages here. The German population is 38: 3 men, 11 women, 24 children.

**Blufnental** has a population of 388, of which 89 are Germans and 299 Ukrainians. There are 8 German men, 26 women, 55 children. There are 24 German families, including 3 mixed marriages.

**Sadki** has 189 families, of which 151 are German, 21 Ukrainian and 17 Polish. The population is 724, of which 584 are Germans, 77 Ukrainians and 63 Poles. There are 6 mixed marriages.

Summarizing on the basis of these individual reports, one can say the following about the Volhynian Germans in Russian territory:

The German settlement region lies northwest of Zhitomir within the triangle between Korosten—Novograd Volynskiy—Zhitomir. There are also German settlements between Zhitomir and Kiev, but about them it has not yet been possible to gather information. Those settlements that formerly existed beyond this area, particularly in the border region, have almost completely disappeared or have only a few families still remaining.

The character of these settlements has changed completely, both with respect to their structure and the composition of their population. In the largest number of these formerly entirely German settlements, the ethnic Germans are today a minority. That is particularly true of the 100 km border region, from which there was a mass re-settlement (actually a deportation) in 1935. Only east of this zone, between Zhitomir and Korosten, has the German character been preserved and do the Germans still form a majority in the villages. For example, in *Neubom* there are 698 Germans in a total population of 1010; in *Andreyev* 575 of 660; in *Mlynok* 349 of 479; in *Feodorovka* 267 of 303; in *Fassova-Kutni* 573 of 661; in *Krassna-Retchka* (a) collective Neues Leben 264 of 287 and (b) collective Voroshilov 168 of 194. The number of German settlements here once comprised about 230.

After the first world war there lived in this region about 60 to 70 thousand Germans. Nothing accurate can be stated about the situation today. Counting, or rather estimating, is made more difficult by the fact that many Germans live scattered, in the cities and in Ukrainian settlements. Happily it can be said that during the present war the casualties were few. There were arrests made, of course, but they were much smaller in number than the deportations of 1929, 1935 and 1937. Nothing can be said yet about the fate of those ethnic Germans drafted into the army (on the average 8 to 10 in each community). The total German population in this region, including the area west of Kiev, could be 30 to 35 thousand.

**Settlement Forms and Houses**

The outward picture of the German settlements has been completely changed since the introduction of the collective. In contrast with the Volga and Black Sea regions, there were no closed settlements here before the first world war. Instead the German farmers had built their houses on their own land. The houses were therefore a considerable distance apart and the settlements stretched over large areas. This type of settlement made the organization of a collective-system difficult. The
Soviets therefore ordered, without hesitation, that the houses were to be torn down and to be rebuilt at a designated place. Again and again one hears from the ethnic Germans here the expression: "That's a transplanted house." The new settlements were built according to quite different survey plans. The Ukrainian and German, and in some cases Polish, farmyards lie all mixed up with each other. The church towers have disappeared from the villages and the churches have been converted into clubrooms or granaries, where they have not been torn down completely, as in Heimtal. Characteristic of all settlements are the collective buildings, long stables for cattle and horses, as well as open buildings for the agricultural machines. In most cases these are together in one place. In each settlement one sees also the high, long, narrow building, with an attached red-brick heating room, which serves to dry the hops. Characteristic also is the windmill. To each house there belongs a yard of area 0.30 to 0.60 ha. The natives generally have 0.60 ha, the newcomers 0.30 ha.

The houses all look alike. They are built of boards 20 cm wide and 8 cm thick. The whole house consists of three rooms: a living room, a kitchen, and a stable. In the living room there is a bed and at most a rough couch made of boards. There is seldom a wardrobe. In this room the whole family spends its time. The wife, with one or two children sleeps on the bed, the husband on the rough couch. When there are several children, they sleep on the floor, or when they are bigger in the kitchen. The lifestyle is obviously simple and the facilities for washing very primitive. The people have very few dishes and only primitive forks and knives.

The Collective Economy

The collectivization was begun in 1929 and was enforced by any and all means, deportation, imposition of unbearable taxes, etc. The forced joining and the work in the collective have brought about a complete change in all respects and a worsening of the standard of life. The German settlers have become work slaves. They complain bitterly again and again.

The people are exploited to the utmost by the prevailing wage payment system. They have to work and slave day after day, without pauses for rest, from morning till night, to earn their bread. The principle, "those who don't work, won't eat," is enforced without consideration. Where the husband has been banished and there are only small children, the wife alone has to work for the living. No time remains for her to educate her children, to look after them or to nourish them well. She has to take the children with her out to the field, even when they are only nursing infants. The people have to push themselves to the utmost, to get credit for as many workdays as possible. These workdays are calculated according to a complicated system, which varies from village to village. There is no uniform wage system; it is different in every village. First grain has to be delivered up to the state and some set aside for the horses, pigs and cattle. What remains is then divided among the people according to the number of workdays entered in the Work Book. The quantity of grain given out per workday varies from 150 g to 2.5 kg, the money wages from 0.3 to 2 rubles, and the potatoes from 0.5 to 2.6 kg. In the village of Bogolyubovka (Gotthilfsdorf) no grain or money at all was given out for two years.

A sad chapter is the taxation. The various taxes, deductions and loans [to the government] take a large percentage of the wages and income. In one village, for instance, the teacher's salary was 240 rubles, of which 56 rubles were deducted. At the same time, an average suit for this teacher cost 700 to 800 rubles, and a good one 1000 to 1500, even 2000 rubles. Shoes with rubber soles cost 60 rubles, with leather soles 200 to 300 rubles. A teacher's family has enough to live only if the wife also works in the collective. In addition to the taxes in money, the farmers also have to deliver food products from their private cow, chickens and pigs. From the cow 110 liters of milk, as well as meat [presumably calves] had to be delivered. The meat could be delivered also in the form of chickens, geese and ducks. Each family had a cow, 5 to 15 chickens and 1 to 3 pigs. There were no horses in private possession.

There is a general complaint that the collective system requires too many bosses. These are always well-dressed and have plenty to eat, but work very little and drink a great deal. In the small village of Feodorovka, for example, with 303 inhabitants, there are 40 officials (bosses).

The collective system has also led to a great neglect of the land. In the old days the individual farmer had enough horses and cattle and thus enough manure to fertilize his fields, but in the present method of farming there is no longer enough manure. As a result the crop yields are much lower and the fields look wild and neglected. The potatoes are generally hidden by a luxuriant growth of weeds. The same applies to the buckwheat, which is commonly grown in this area. If the work plan
can not be finished, the fields just remain uncultivated. As a substitute for the use of fertilizer, all collectives have been asked to use a seven-year crop rotation: wheat, rye, flax, barley, oats, clover, summer fallow.

The crop here, contrary to that in the region of Lemberg and Starokonstantinov, is only average and in some places poor. In some villages there were considerable crop losses through the present war: fields grazed bare, trenches dug through them, damage by tanks, etc.

In addition to the usual crops, wheat, rye, buckwheat, oats and barley, there are also flax, hops and rubber grown here. The people eat almost exclusively rye bread and buckwheat groats. All the wheat goes to the city. A striking part of the landscape are the many dark-green hop fields. Hundreds of German women work in these fields. Hops require a great deal of labor, but they also produce the most income.

The school has been completely Ukrainian since 1938. Before that the language of instruction had been German. That year the majority of the German teachers were deported or transferred. Today there are very few German teachers, the majority are Ukrainian. German is taught only in the upper classes. The supervision over the school became more and more strict, so that instruction in the German sense became completely impossible. The children attending in the last three years can therefore scarcely read or write any German. But they have to learn Bolshevik songs and poems. What must a teacher, whose parents were deported or died of hunger, what must the poorly-clothed and undernourished children feel, when they hear verses like the following:

Wir sind im Sowjetland so frei wie der Aar,                   In the Soviet land we're as free as the eagle,
der hoch in den Lueften sich wiegt,                      which moves gently high in the air,
denn hier ist auf immer und ewig die Schar             for here have been defeated forever
der blutigen Tyrannen besiegt.                         the multitude of bloody tyrants.

Or

Brothers, to the sun, to freedom,
Brothers, up to the fight!
Brüder, zum Licht empor! dem
Brightly from the dark past
leuchten die Zukunft hervor,
emerges the future,
Brüder, in eins nun die Hände!
Brothers, join hands!
Brüder, das Sterben verlacht!
Brothers, laugh at death!
Ewig der Knechtschaft ein Ende!
Serfdom is ended forever!
Heilig die letzte Schlacht.
Sacred is the last battle.

There are, it is true, other poems along with these, such as Goethe's May song and [other well-known German poems].

Community religious life has disappeared. The churches, without exception, are closed and the buildings used as clubrooms or granaries. The church towers have all been taken down. There are no more German pastors. Most of the children are therefore not baptized. Funerals rarely take place in the old way. Almost no one dares to have his family members buried with religious ceremony. Here and there a courageous old man or woman is sometimes found who will read from the bible or hymn book at the graveside. The cemeteries are neglected and one rarely sees a cross in them.

The Volhynian Germans, in spite of difficulties and persecution, have preserved their ethnic character. The language in the parental home is still exclusively German. Only in the cities is Ukrainian also often spoken in the homes. Young people still sing German songs. The strict old morality has declined somewhat. Divorce cases, nevertheless are still rare. In spite of the fact that the Germans now live mixed with other nationalities, there are relatively few mixed marriages. In most cases it is German girls marrying Ukrainian or Polish men. The reasons are: (1) to avoid deportation and be left in peace; (2) the fear that a German husband would be deported and the woman left to live without a husband; (3) the shortage of German men, the majority of whom have been deported. The number of children has decreased in comparison with the past, for the following reasons: (1) economic hardships; (2) forced overwork; (3) the senselessness of having children when there's no future for them; and (4) artificial birth control found entry into the German villages in the period 1926 to 1938.

It is terrible to see how poorly dressed the German people are. The men especially go around in torn and patched pants and coats. From spring to fall everyone goes barefooted.
The famine years 1921-22 and 1933-34, during which tens of thousands died in the Black Sea and Volga regions, had relatively little impact on the Volhynian Germans. In only a few villages were there deaths from hunger. At the same time hundreds died in the neighboring Ukrainian villages. The Volhynian Germans explain this as follows: (1) in Volhynia precipitation is generally adequate and there are therefore never complete crop failures; (2) potatoes, beans and peas can always be grown in the lots around the houses and these tide people over bad times; (3) Germans have always divided up the stored supplies better than the Ukrainians; (4) above all, the help from Germany played a large role. With the Reichs mark credit notes (Hitler notes) the people were able to buy food supplies at the Torgsin (foreign currency stores). Many of the recipients of these notes were arrested in 1937 and sent into banishment.

The ethnic Germans speak of the deportations with horror. The following phases of the deportations can be distinguished: (1) In the year 1929 the well-to-do farmers with their families were sent away to Siberia, the Ural region, Murmansk, Archangel, Dalni-Vostok, and the Don region. (2) Numerically the greatest deportation took place in 1935. In the villages of Heimtal and Pulin-Huta alone, for example, 97 families were "re-settled". The re-settlement extended over the whole zone 100 km from the western border. In this zone whole communities disappeared and the Germans became a minority everywhere with respect to the Ukrainians, who were mainly reliable Bolsheviks resettled here from the Chernigov region. Hardest hit were the almost completely German districts surrounding Pulin and Novograd Volynskiy. (3) In 1937/38, under minister of the interior Yeshov, another deportation took place, mainly for political reasons. Chiefly men were arrested and deported. (4) Shortly before the outbreak of the present war, there were again many men deported. Mostly these were from families who were in contact with Germany or had relatives there.

As a result of these deportations, the best families, particularly their men, are gone. The men still remaining are generally old or have some kind of infirmity. Apart from the deportations, many families left their home villages for various reasons to settle in neighboring cities or villages or even in the interior of Russia.

During the present war, the Volhynian Germans have suffered relatively little and had to make few sacrifices. The German troops arrived so fast that the planned shooting of Germans on special lists could not be carried out. About the fate of those drafted into the [Soviet] army (on the average 6 to 10) and those arrested, there is as yet no information. According to plan, orders were issued to carry out in all villages, under threat of punishment by death, the following actions: (1) The livestock belonging to the collective was to be driven to more easterly regions. There are villages in which the collective now does not have a single cow. In other villages all the cattle or most of them have been brought back. Most of the horses too were taken away. (2) In all villages men appointed for the task, under the supervision of a Communist, were to knock to pieces the agricultural machines, so as to make them unusable. Such destroyed machinery can now be seen on every collective farm. (3) All village council documents (account books, village plans, etc.) were to be burned. (4) The planned burning of houses could be carried out only partially.

The Volhynian Germans, after their difficult years, are fortunate to have lived to see the arrival of the German troops. The spiritual and physical tortures of the past decades have left deep marks. Now new life and new hope returns. People feel free again. Only when they talk about the past, the faces become grave and tears come to their eyes. Again and again there are expressions of joy over our restoration of Sunday and of their church. Now they can not only rest again, but above all devote Sunday to their families. Naturally their hearts are inflamed by many questions and they have many wishes. What will become of us in the future? Will we be resettled? Will we receive our land again? Time after time you hear them express the following wishes: (1) We are tired of the collective; abolish it as quickly as possible. (2) We want to live in closed German settlements again. The foreign environment is unbearable for us as a permanent situation. (3) We have a great need of German books, especially with religious content, periodicals and newspapers.

Information about Volga and Black Sea Germans

In two Volhynian villages I met German teachers from the Black Sea region. Teacher Kneissler from Kronsfeld, Tauria, now in Helenovka, was able to give me valuable information about the Prischib region. In that area significantly fewer Russian families had been settled in the German villages. These were therefore able to preserve their German character. Mixed marriages take place very rarely, 2 to 5 cases in a village. Divorces are a great rarity. All the villages of the Molotschna district still
exist and there are even a few new ones. Many Volhynian Germans have settled in these. Conditions there are much better than in Volhynia. The collectives are economically stronger and as a consequence the wage scales are higher. The houses are much better and some of them have electric light. The old barns have generally been torn down and the formerly typical long colonist houses have become smaller. The people are generally better dressed than in Volhynia. From Kronsfeld five families, with wife and children, were deported in 1929 and 32 men in 1937.

In the prisoner-of-war camp in Zhitomir, I had the opportunity to talk to 18 colonist sons from the Volga and Black Sea regions. The information from the Volga Germans agreed with that which I gave in an earlier report. Hinkel from Kutter told me that in his family of 16 persons 8 died of hunger. Of the 18 young men I interviewed, 7 could scarcely read or write any German. They explained this by the fact that they had to work in the collective to earn food for the family and therefore had no time to go to school.

Especially valuable were reports from boys from Kandel, Elsass, Baden and Strassburg. These four Catholic villages have remained completely German. There is not a single Russian family living there. In Elsass there are three Jewish and one Gypsy family. The one Jew is chairman of the collective, the second bookkeeper and third is in the cooperative store. In Baden there are two Jewish families and in Strassburg there are said to be more. The boys speak an unadulterated Palatinate dialect. The girls and women know scarcely any Russian. In Baden there are 13 German teachers. The young people still sing German songs.

An officer from our staff is in Neu-Beresina now and reports that the village has survived. The German inhabitants had hidden themselves and had come out of hiding after the arrival of our troops.

Karl Gotz writes that he is now in a German colony of over 1500 inhabitants and states that the people there have faithfully preserved their German character. Gotz is of the opinion that the total number of Germans has not decreased in spite of famine and deportation. The German language is fully preserved. Only an insignificantly small portion of the people have been bolshevized and these are generally outsiders. Family life has been fully preserved. From this German village 120 men, at their best age, were deported in 1937/38, only 21 of whom were ever heard from again.

(To be continued)

Teachers’ Seminary in Heimtal. (Photo courtesy of the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland.)

Notes by Translator

1. Heimtal was chosen in 1864 as the parish center for the German villages in this region. It had a church and a resident pastor until the 1930's. In 1904 it became the site also of a teachers' seminary to train sexton teachers for the German villages. This operated until 1915 when the Tsar's government forced it to close and converted the building to other uses.

2. The Blumental mentioned here is the village visited by Hertha Karasek-Strzygowski in 1942 and described in her book, Wolhynisches Tagebuch. Translations of several chapters of this have appeared in the Journal.
3. My Student Years

When the large packet boat, scarcely four hours later, stopped in Saratov and spit out its many passengers, I stood confused in the crowd rushing by me with creased and sleepy faces, and looked around searching for advice and help. Not one of those to whom I addressed my questions in broken Russian answered me. Shoved aside, I tried to collect myself. I felt very depressed. Here I was, standing on the threshold of a new life. What awaited me here in this strange big city? Was it happiness? Or perhaps misery? Whatever it was, I said to myself in encouragement, forward!

I walked bravely through the city, in the direction of the German inns. There I found lodgings with Frau Rausch in the servants' quarters at 5 kopecks a day. When I told this kindhearted lady why I had come to the city, she said: "Dear boy, you would have been better to stay at home! You are unlikely to find anything to do here at this time. Secondary school students wander about here every day looking for apprenticeship positions, but don't find any and have to go back home again." But she gave me detailed advice as to where I should go and how I should conduct myself to be successful.

She poured me a cup of coffee (my parents had a good reputation with her), and after breakfast accompanied me out to the street. First I went to the Volga German owners of the large flour companies. Everywhere the answer was brief: "We don't need any apprentices." Then I went to the different Russian merchant establishments and offices. My rustic appearance and my simple, though clean, colonist boys' mode of dress probably did not make a particularly good impression. Everywhere, when I inquired at a store or office, the answer was always: "Ne nado!" (We don't need any.) Usually I was not permitted to go to see the boss himself, very often I was ridiculed.

So I wandered about, day after day, a whole week long, from one business place to another. Nowhere was there any prospect or hope. When, late in the second week, my little bit of money had been used up down to 25 kopecks, I had to get ready to go home, difficult as it was for me to do that. Before leaving, I decided to try once more to knock at the door of old Reinecke. I had already applied to his sons, where I had received a firm "No!". I went down to the mill and asked the porter to be permitted to see K. K. Reinecke. He showed me the entrance to the main office and advised me to wait until the boss came in from his living quarters up above. I would have to apply to the old man; the young men are not sympathetic to simple farmers' sons. Soon the upright, stern old man, a truly patrician figure, came in. I rose and greeted him. Then I followed him boldly into the office. His son Alexander was there and wanted to get rid of me quickly. But the old man beckoned me to follow him into his private office. Shyly I followed him through the main office. He sat down at a table and looked me over through his glasses from head to toe. I stammered my request to him. He asked me where I came from and whose son I was. As there was a branch of the firm in my home village, the old man knew my father. Was I able to write neatly? O yes, that I could do, German and Russian? Yes. He took me to an unoccupied desk in the office and had some paper handed to me. Write for me a job application in German and in Russian, he ordered. Very quickly I had the application written, for I had practiced that for days. When I brought it to him, he remarked, in amazement: "Finished already? Not bad! So you wanted to go home today? You can do that. In two weeks our comptroller will be coming out to Schilling. You can come back with him then. You will start work for us on 12 June." I thanked him, bowed to him and left. The old man smiled. He must have seen the delirious happiness shining in my eyes. I flew past the old porter shouting "Thank you", then out into the street. As soon as I was out of sight of the office, I must have given way to frisky jumping about, while emitting shouts of joy. People looked at me in amazement and laughed. What great happiness that was! What bliss it was!

At home people didn't find it believable that I had really found a job. Eventually they even began to tease me: O yes, old Reinecke will come himself in person to pick up Johannes Sinner's Peter! But I had faith in the old man and in fact on 10 June exactly the comptroller arrived and came to our house immediately from the boat. I was to get ready, for tomorrow evening we would be leaving for Saratov, if I had not changed my mind. The next night we took the boat. On 12 June I was in-
stalled as a trade apprentice in the flour business of the "Mercantile House of the Reinecke Brothers," received a monthly salary of 2 rubles, 50 kopecks, with free board and lodging. I had to carry out the usual duties of an errand boy: to sweep the flour stall the first thing in the morning, to sweep and dust the office, to set up the tea machine, to bring the noon-day meals to the older clerks in the business, and in between to carry out heavy sacks of flour to the wagons of buyers, to pile up flour, etc. etc. The workday was long, from 8 to 8. It was particularly hard in the winter; the flour stall was not heatable, as the doors had to be left open. By the time you were able, about 10 in the evening, to go to your warm room, you were frozen through to the bones. When finally around 11 o'clock all 18 to 20 roommates, all such young fellows as myself, were ready to retire, I was able to get at my books. But I was not always able to accomplish this. My roommates often carried on all kinds of youthful activities: danced, had rows, teased one another but liked especially to tease me, because I, in their opinion, wanted to be something better than they. They tortured me terribly, threw felt-boots at me, forbade me to leave the light on, because it kept them awake. But I bore it all and studied until my head grumbled.

One day I read an advertisement that a Sunday and evening school was to be opened in the factory quarter. I went to Alexander Reinecke, who had in the meantime succeeded his father as head of the firm, and asked him for permission to attend the school on Sunday. He wanted to think about it. Upon my second request he still had the same answer and when I asked a third time he gave me a definite refusal. I then went to the old man, told him all about it and asked him to intercede with his son for me. He listened to me quietly and then said: "Go and ask Alexander again." I knew that this time my petition would not be a failure. When I entered Alexander's office next day to deal with a business matter, he immediately brought up my personal request: he had considered it again and would permit me to attend the school on Sunday. That was on a Saturday. Next day I ran breathlessly through the factory suburb to the Sunday school and asked to be accepted. You are too late, I was told. I begged the director. He replied that he could not do anything about it, that all classes were filled. I was close to despair. Just then a teacher came out of his classroom. I turned to him. He was sympathetic to me, went to the director and interceded for me. They discussed the matter and soon the verdict was: accepted. My advocate, an outstanding worker in the field of adult education, P. N. Kasanzev, registered me and took me along with him into his class. The first thing we did was to write an essay on "The Happiest Day of my Life". With flaming enthusiasm, I described my most recent experience. My command of the Russian language was dreadful. But some good followed from this effort. Next Sunday my new protector returned my essay to me, very badly marked up with a red pencil, but with a notation that I rewrite it carefully, correcting the errors. Below the essay were the words: "The content of this work is excellent." This rare distinction of Kasanzev gained for me definite respect in the eyes of my fellow-students, intelligent young factory workers, who had at first treated me very coolly.

It was a new world into which I had entered. The teachers addressed us in a formal way. This in itself made you feel happy in this environment. Then you learned something new every hour, something above everyday experience. Teachers and students lived on terms of intimate friendship. As far as I was concerned, my progress was astounding, above all in the Russian language, I was soon advanced enough to be able to borrow one book after another from the library and to read and read through the nights. It was here that I first learned to know Schiller and Goethe (in the Russian language!). I became more and more friendly with my classmates, who were all without exception factory workers. I discovered very soon that they all belonged to secret political societies. I too became a member of such a group. Here the history of the revolutionary movement in western Europe and in Russia was studied. Also books, legal and illegal, in which the struggle for freedom of various peoples was described, were borrowed from illegal libraries. The reading was done according to a carefully prepared plan. This planned course advanced our development very much and sharpened our taste for serious significant reading.

Our teachers in the Sunday school were mostly former public school teachers, who had lost their positions because of their revolutionary mentality (unreliability) and were now working in a variety of office jobs. They played a large role in our lives and often invited us to their homes as guests. At the end of the school year, they always organized an excursion of the whole school out into the country. As a result, teachers and students became very close friends.

After I had attended this school for two winters and had read a great deal on the side, I began to think about soon taking the examination for the first four classes of the Realschule [non-classical secondary school]. I decided, however, to take first of all the examination for elementary public school
teachers. For this I needed again the permission of my employer, for the examination would take up a number of evenings. I went to see Alex. Reinecke. He not only refused my request in a most decided way, but told me the same evening that I was being transferred to Pokrovsk, which was then just a village. In this post you had to work not only on weekends, but even on Sundays, from daybreak on into the night. This was therefore a punitive transfer. Everything in me protested against this undeserved reprimand. But where could I find protection? The old man was out of the country. To talk to Alexander again made no sense, because at the slightest show of opposition he would have dismissed me from my job. When I said farewell to my teachers and friends, they were highly indignant and advised me not to go. But I gritted my teeth and went. In Pokrovsk the employees already knew that I had been sent there because of my studies. I was harassed unspeakably by them all. I often gnashed my teeth. But I bore it all and worked like an ox in a yoke. I had to stand the torture for only a short time, however. At the end of the second week of my exile, I received a letter from my teacher, P. N. Kasanzev, who was employed in the railway administration and now wrote to me to tell me that he had found an office job for me there. I was to get ready quickly and come to Saratov immediately. At first I was insanely happy. Then I remembered that in the offices of the railway administration only persons with good secondary education or even higher education were employed. What was I to do? I wandered to and fro in my garret all night long. The maids took peeks up there several times; they seemed to think that I had gone mad. Finally, after a difficult inner struggle, I reached a firm decision: you'll try it! If your friends think it's possible, it will probably be so. Early in the morning I asked the local manager for an urgent leave-of-absence for a day. He refused to give it to me. I then brought him my paybook and asked him to discharge me. He refused this also. I then left without permission. In Saratov I first went to see Kasanzev. He took me to his superior, Engineer W., who received me and told me that from that day on I would be serving as a clerk in his office. I didn't need to worry, everything would be arranged. He himself was also a farmer's son and had worked his way up. I was to go now to separate myself from my flour sacks. To his surprise he learned that slavery still prevailed there.

When I left W.'s private office, my last worries had disappeared. What I found particularly touching was the fact that everyone here addressed me with the formal you. Despite the Sunday school, this appeared odd to me. In my work up to now I had always been addressed as Du and very often in the mother tongue.

Leaving the railway administration office, I proceeded towards a difficult interview. I went to see Alexander Reinecke. What did I want? Who gave me permission to leave my job? he shouted at me. I told him that I had come to receive my discharge and asked for a certificate. Then he exploded into a wild rage, called me an ungrateful swine, a parasite, who had so far been fed at no cost and who now wanted to run away, instead of working to pay for his bread. When I asked again for a discharge certificate, he sent me to the devil's mother and ran over to his home.* His old uncle, Karl Specht, the general manager of the firm, who was a witness of this scene, took pity on me and asked me to write up an ordinary discharge certificate, which he would sign. When the certificate was finished, he signed it, handed it to me and wished me happiness.

Again a period of my life had passed. My student years were at an end.

4. Preliminaries to my Public Activity

In the railway administration I soon acquired a secure place in the regard of my colleagues as well as of my superiors. I also enjoyed the association with these cultured people, who were generally well-disposed towards me. The most attractive and most pleasing aspect of my position, however, was the fact that I had to work only 6 hours a day. In the summer you also had the whole of Saturday free or worked only 5 hours. In the non-working hours you were in the full sense of the word your own master. Soon after starting in this position, I took my teacher's examination. Even when I had to go for the examination in the morning, permission was granted without question. When, after passing the examination, I wanted to satisfy the practice teaching requirement, this was made possible for me by permitting me to come late to my job, for I always did my work punctually and conscientiously. As for salary, I received ten times more than at Reinecke's.

*Later the changes to which our life is subject reconciled us again. Alex. Reinecke had to face difficult circumstances and very often came to me for advice and took advantage of my sincere interest in his welfare. This fall (1927) he died of a heart attack.
I used my spare time most generously in preparing myself systematically for the university entrance examination and to satisfy my greed for reading. Because I was getting near the age for military service, it wasn't possible for me to prepare myself in time for what was then a very difficult entrance examination. Therefore I prepared myself for all eventualities by taking immediately an examination which would permit me to go for a year's voluntary military service. Actually I had already firmly made up my mind to serve my military period as a public school teacher. I kept both routes open until the decisive moment, but finally remained with my previously-made decision. My participation in secret socialistic societies, which I continued through all those years, had made me an outspoken opponent of militarism. Activity as a public school teacher, on the contrary, attracted me also for political reasons. In that work one could carry on political propaganda among the people, as well as among the teachers. When the time for the call-up into the army came closer, I asked one of my teachers and well-wishers for a letter of recommendation to the public school inspector in Novousensk and made a flying visit to there. In view of the recommendation, the venerable inspector received me like an old friend and let me choose from among the open positions the one that appealed to me the most. I chose Enders on the Karaman. He had the appointment contract written out for me, gave me the necessary explanation regarding local conditions, advised me about how to behave with respect to my colleagues in that area, towards the farmers and my future pupils, blessed me with the sign of the cross and kissed me, and then accompanied me for some distance. Two hours after my arrival in Novousensk, I was back in the train again, with the appointment in my pocket, ready for the return trip.

5. My Activity as a Public School Teacher

As field of activity for my public school teaching career, I had chosen the village of Enders on the lower course of the Great Karaman. Enders had not, up to that time, had a public school. A building for such a school, which was about to be opened, was built in the summer of 1900. I now hurried to go there to open the new school. When I arrived and familiarized myself with conditions, I realized immediately that Enders was a very poor and very backward village. I could find only one person there who had learned to read and write to some degree while serving in the army. I chose him to be school trustee. Then I immediately asked the village mayor to call a community meeting and informed it that starting next day I would be registering the pupils and that I would begin instruction in two weeks. The people remained frostily indifferent to the whole matter. That surprised me somewhat. For I was not aware of the evil rumor that had preceded me to the village and had been slinking around there for several weeks. This absurd story said that the government was sending a Russian teacher, whose assignment would be to convert the children to Orthodoxy. This evil rumor, absurd as it was, bore its evil fruits. All this was kept carefully hidden from me. I visited the people in their homes. They were cold, right to the heart. The village secretary, in whose house, fortunately, I had rented living quarters, had carried on active recruiting work for the public school and the new teacher. All this happened behind my back. In spite of all efforts, I sat in the school all through the first week almost in vain. Only a very few registered their children and at the beginning of instruction I had scarcely half of the required number of pupils (60), although there were in the village 396 children of compulsory school age. For the opening day, I invited the pastor for the blessing of the new schoolhouse. All were confounded with surprise, most of all the pastor himself. But he could not decline. He came and made a propaganda speech against the new school and the fashionable, godless people of the world. He warned the people to be prudent and to stay with their old schoolmaster [in the church school, ed.]. Now I knew where the community's mistrust came from and I also finally learned about the rumor concerning my alleged russification mission. The people themselves now realized that the whole rumor was a clumsy maneuver by obscurantists. In the first three days after the beginning of instruction my classroom filled up and by the end of the week I had so many applications that I could have filled another two classrooms.

The instruction went smoothly. And to the degree that my pupils became ever more attached to me, the hearts of their elders also opened up to me. It did not take long until even the small children on the street greeted me joyously. That my pupils took off their caps in polite greeting to young and old was also something unusual in Enders and did not fail to make an impression. When on my evening walks I now called at somebody's house, I always encountered sincerely happy faces. And when on Saturday afternoons people saw me walking towards the neighboring village, someone usually hitched up a horse, caught up to me and took me there and back again.
When the farmers' fall work was done, I began an evening school for a group of single young men. I also began giving lectures to the old people on Sunday afternoons on a variety of agricultural improvements. I illustrated these lectures by use of a projection lantern. The attendance was large. I also established contacts with the teachers of that area. At my suggestion we subscribed together to a number of good periodicals and newspapers. Myself I began to write frequently to the correspondence columns of newspapers.

During the Christmas vacation there was a secret district congress of the then illegal all-Russian teachers' union, which had been founded in 1894 during the all-Russian industrial exhibition in Novo-Novgorod. I was chosen as the union representative for the district of Novousensk. Now I carried on my political recruiting activity more zealously and more boldly than before. In the summer I was delegated to go to teachers' courses in Samara and Saratov. There I became acquainted, among others, with outstanding scientists and writers such as Prof. A. Kornilov, Tchereshchin, Rykatchev, Shilkin and the Petropavlevsky family. But my main interest was still my schoolwork and my further preparation for the university entrance examination.

I taught the school in Enders for three years. My pupils were carried away by my zeal and my enthusiasm and manifested a great thirst for knowledge. They soon read through not only the whole school library but also my own books. Later, after graduating successfully from the school, they continued through self-study. Some of them worked their way up by this method to becoming public school teachers, two of them even on to university, one of whom is now the director of a large secondary school. The intimate friendly relations between teacher and former pupils still exist today. Enders became a second home to me and has remained so to this day. When I go there, I am the welcome guest of the whole village.

My political activity had attracted the attention of the police to me. It was time for me to change my place of residence. The third year I spent my summer vacation in Kazan and in the fall I took the examination to qualify as a teacher of German. Upon application I was offered positions in three educational districts: in Kazan, Moscow and Kiev. When I returned to Enders from Kazan, the appointments were already there waiting for me, including one in the form of a telegram. I was also informed secretly on the way that the police were waiting for me, that I would have to submit to a house search and would be arrested. I packed up my precious belongings the same night in preparation for leaving Enders. In spite of extreme care and secrecy on my part, the people of Enders learned through the driver that I had hired that I would be leaving before daybreak and they assembled in the middle of the night to see me off. Many old people and young people were in tears. I pretended that I was going to Kazan, but I actually went to the most distant corner of the empire, to Volhynia. To there I had been summoned by telegram. Thus ended my successful work as a public school teacher. Another stage of my life was left behind.

6. Secondary School Teacher in the Ukraine

After a three-day railway trip, I arrived at my new destination, Rovno, Volhynia. This old ancestral seat of the Princes Radzivill, with its picturesque castle ruins dating back to feudal times and its beautiful beech-tree park on a hill, made a deep impression on me. The mass of the people were Jews, officialdom was Russian, the aristocratic upper classes were Polish. The composition of the school population presented the same picture. My position was in the girls' secondary school. My students were very eager and thirsty for knowledge and I began my new work with pleasure. In my spare time I made excursions into the neighboring historically significant areas. I also made trips into the district capital Ostrog and other places worth seeing. As I knew that there were some 300 German settlements in Volhynia, I extended the radius of my travels farther and farther and gradually visited, particularly during the vacation period, all the German colonies. They were mostly small and poorly developed, for they were generally on rented land. The farmers were peaceful, upright and industrious people. What I disliked about them was their servility, which they had acquired from the Poles: they kissed the pastor's hand. I contributed at that time the domestic news column of Glinther's Friedensbote, which appeared in Talovka (Beideck), province of Saratov, and published in it reports about the life of the Volhynian Germans. I also published at that time (1903-04) in Dorpat my first little book, dealing with fruit growing in the Volga colonies.

In the summer of 1904 I took a trip through the Caucasus and visited the Volga daughter colonies there. During this trip I came across the Odessaaer Zeitung, about whose existence I had not been aware up to that time, and immediately began to make contributions to it. On a stopover in
Odessa, I learned to know the father of our colonist press, Karl Wilhelm, and made an agreement with him to publish in his paper the descriptions of my travels, written during the summer. In addition to giving me the usual honorarium, he promised to send 300 copies of the paper free for three months to addresses in the Volga colonies that I would give him. I, in return, promised to recruit correspondents for him in the Volga colonies. This agreement was faithfully carried out by both of us. In this way the Odessaer Zeitung acquired access into the Volga colonies in the fall of 1904. After that I worked diligently for the Odessaer Zeitung, until it was killed during the first world war.

My work in the school proceeded smoothly. At the same time I studied for the university entrance examination. In the spring of 1905, I began the examination in Kiev, but overwork brought on serious nervous problems, which led doctors to recommend that I postpone the examination to the fall.

7. My Participation in the Revolution of 1905

Soon after my arrival in Rovno (1903), I organized a student political society. This did not long remain hidden from the secret police. In the spring of 1905 a student strike broke out in the Gymnasium [classical secondary school], which I had to lead to prevent unnecessary sacrifices among the students. It was now advisable for me not to return to Rovno. I therefore had myself transferred in the fall of 1905 to the city of Priluki in the province of Poltava. When I arrived there, the whole province was convulsed by agrarian unrest. In the city itself obscurantist elements were zealously preparing a Jewish pogrom. On the very first day after my arrival, I found two anti-Jewish appeals in my mailbox. As it was already known in Priluki before I arrived that I, a contributor to the most prominent Ukrainian newspapers, the Kievskiye Otliki of Professor Shelesnov and the Poltvatchina of W. G. Korolenko, had been assigned to that city, the local intellectuals now turned to me for advice. I declared my readiness to give a public address, on the first convenient Sunday, on the threatening danger of a Jewish pogrom. Even before the announcement of this was published I began to receive threatening letters. The danger increased from hour to hour. Before I entered the theatre for my lecture, the sign of the cross was made over me and I was blessed as if I were about to die. The theatre was full of farmers and factory workers. Perhaps at the risk of my life, I made my position clear that this persecution of the Jews was a despicable machination of reactionary elements and a stigma on our country and our people. I told of my terrible experiences of such bloody deeds in Zhitomir and Rovno. When I finished, everything was at first solemnly quiet. Then an old farmer exclaimed: "Spasybi tobi, panitshu!" (Thank you, young man). Thereupon there was a general murmur: "Spasybi! Spasybi!" No one moved from his place. Then a group came up the steps to the stage. "Now you'll get it!" I thought. I felt for the revolver in my breast pocket. Then I was lifted slowly and carefully into the air. The men had come from the back with a chair and had raised me into the air with it. I begged to be lowered. But neither begging nor scolding helped in the least. Accompanied by the crowd of a thousand people. I was carried across a large open space right to my own door. Here they lowered me and kissed me. They were all Ukrainian factory workers.

Now I had a troubled time. There was rarely a day in the next few weeks, when, on leaving the school after hours, I was not taken away by a delegation from the villages in the neighboring districts disturbed by agrarian unrest, Priluki, Piratin, Pereyeslav, Nechin (gouv. Kharkov). When we arrived at the particular village, the whole community was always already assembled. My task was to pacify the overheated spirits of the youth and to introduce some organization into the movement. I described my experiences and observations in articles in the Kievskiye Otliki, the Poltvatchina, and the Odessaer Zeitung. The first two of these were fined or confiscated several times because of my articles.

In October 1905 the all-Russian general strike broke out. A strike committee was organized in Priluki, of which I was made chairman. The sessions went on day and night almost uninterrupted, for we had to administer the whole district. The officials had voluntarily gone to prison because they feared for their lives. When the strike was over and the October Manifesto was issued, there began for me an endless series of trips. I was taken to the villages to explain the manifesto to the farmers. That continued till the 15 or 16 December. My last presentation took place on the 14 December, the 80th anniversary of the Decembrist uprising. Completely exhausted and ill, I gave my lecture on the Decembrists in the club at Priluki. On the next day or the day after, the infamous Filonov, with his brutal followers, arrived in the neighborhood of Priluki and began his executions in the villages. I was sick in bed. This time it would be my turn... Then he was suddenly called away to Sorotshiny, to carry out there the well-known bloody punishment of the peasants. I got up out of bed, wrote
a description of his activities in Priluki and sent the report to W. G. Korolenko, via a messenger, of course.

The strongest protective measures were imposed on the province of Poltava. My most important collaborators were arrested. They were: two school headmasters, four medical doctors, a few students and leading workers, among them the liberal Count Lamsdorff, the nephew of the Russian foreign minister, who was taken to prison in his equerry's uniform. I myself, still ill, had previously been brought to an estate (at Rewuzky). From there, in a roundabout way, I was brought to the railway and then by workers and friends out of the province on a locomotive. Twice I went through the ring of police and secret agents. They did not recognize me because I had colored my hair brown and disguised myself.

I fled to Saratov. When I arrived there, I had already been searched for among all my acquaintances. I therefore had to go underground, i.e. to remain hidden with various persons themselves not under observation, here today, there tomorrow. In that way I spent nearly a year. To keep myself busy, I helped to organize a German newspaper in Saratov, the *Saratower Deutsche Volkszeitung*. I was the actual first editor of this newspaper, although it was signed by Adolf Lane, now in Berlin. I was co-publisher and co-owner of the paper until it ceased to exist.

(To be continued)

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NOSTALGIC REFLECTIONS

Ann K. Smith

It was 1973 — just one year after my first trip to Russia, the land of my forefathers — when we sat in the living room of Mrs. David Chrispens of Chicago, Illinois, nostalgically sharing memories that Mrs. Chrispens vividly recalled, prompted by a picture on the wall. It was a church — a beautiful church — her church in Nichnaja Dobrinka on the west side of the Volga river in Russia. It was the church around which all life in Nichnaja Dobrinka revolved. Here she had been brought to the altar for baptism, and later in life to be confirmed in the Lutheran faith. The church held deep meaning for her, for here the foundations of her life were laid. Her memory held both happy and sad recollections. She remembered her church in its glory and at its demise.

All the villagers loved this church and identified with it. Each spring, after a hard winter had left its effects on the exterior of the building, the villagers, in a community project, saved their milk and, after skimming off the cream, brought the remainder to the church, where the able-bodied men gathered, mixed the milk with "Weissel" (a form of calcimine), and then white-washed the outside walls from top to bottom. Thus the church was kept always beautiful, glistening in the spring sun, with its golden cross and dome reflecting the pride, the strength and the faith of these humble people of Nichnaja Dobrinka, and bringing dignity to their "Dorf".

The milk, she explained, was an excellent binding agent for the "Weissel" and stood up well. Because of the many children in the village who needed milk, it was a sacrifice to provide it for this purpose, but it was done with love and willing hearts, for in their church they found the strength and faith so often needed in the trying days of life on the Volga.

Unrest in the country at large brought changes even to the village along the Volga, but never did she dream in her youth that Nichnaja Dobrinka would fall victim to the savage destruction that she was to see.

Silence fell upon us, as she closed her eyes briefly. Then she opened them again and in a sad tone of voice recalled the days of the Reds vs the Whites storming the villages along the Volga in the early 1920's. She told how the Bolsheviks stormed her village and how the villagers drove them out and away across the Volga. Determined to destroy the village, the enemy shot at the church from the other side of the river while the villagers steadfastly held their positions inside the church and prayed. Eventually, she said, all the Germans were driven from their homes by the evil forces. Now only the Russian name, Nichnaja Dobrinka, remains of a "Dorf" rich in history, with a church, now destroyed, that provided security and taught a love that binds to the ends of the earth.

As we parted, she affectionately called me An'ja and asked that one day I tell others about "her" church in Nichnaja Dobrinka. She died in 1973.
THE FOLKLORE OF GERMAN-RUSSIAN WOMEN

Irene Rader

Have you, like I, ever wondered what life was like for our German-Russian ancestors? I've always been especially interested and curious about the lives of the women. My search for answers usually brought only a few sentences or paragraphs about women and they were scattered here and there in the books and articles about 'Unsere Leute'. As I gleaned these bits and pieces of information from the various sources and fashioned them into a comprehensive whole, it reminded me of the pieces and scraps of cloth that our female ancestors gathered and saved to stitch together into a patchwork quilt. Each piece must have evoked some special memory of a time, a place or an event in their lives. So too, should these bits and pieces of information that I offer you this afternoon in this talk, bring you some special memory of someone in your past; your great-grandmother, or grandmother, perhaps your mother, an aunt, a sister or a friend. Much as each piece in a patchwork quilt is different in color, size, shape or texture, so were our ancestral women's lives different in family origin, appearance, experience, behavior and talents. Just as the colorful pieces fit together to make a quilt a work of art, so did the various and interesting lives of the German-Russian women combine to form the beautiful pattern which is our heritage.

The oldest woman in the household was considered the matriarch of the family and she was the one who told everyone what to do. The family often consisted of the parents, their children, and their children's spouses and children. As each son married, his wife and later the children became part of the family unit. Frequently a household consisted of two or even three married sons and their families. Even when they came to America, this arrangement was kept to some extent. Many families lived together out of economic necessity.

Not only did the woman who was head of the household decide what work would be done each day, she also would decide who would do the job. Of course she carried her share of the load, often working in the fields when needed and also working late into the night after the rest of the family was asleep. In some households the woman controlled the purse strings. There was a saying that when the woman handled the money, the house was bigger, and when the man handled it, the barn was bigger.

The mother was often the one to whom the children went for advice or help with their personal problems. The father was more of an authority figure and the disciplinarian. He was not as easily approached or taken into one's confidence in private matters as the mother was.

It was usually the grandmother or mother who taught the children their prayers and catechism, a task that was not taken lightly. In the "dorf" or village the women were called on to nurse the sick and to help with the cooking for events such as weddings and funerals. It was a big job preparing the food for the many people at these gatherings that would sometimes last for several days. Enough dishes had to be gathered and then returned when the event was over. After a funeral the people would gather at the home of the bereaved and the neighbor women prepared the food and performed other household tasks while the family was in mourning. The task of preparing the body of the deceased for burial most often was done by the women.

All of the women made their own butter, soap and fuel. The fuel was made from the "Misthaufen". The women tended the vegetable and flower gardens. The produce from it would be dried or preserved in some way for the winter months. They helped with the butchering and rendered the lard. Much of the milking was done by the women and girls. In earlier days yarn was spun from wool and thread from flax which later was woven into cloth. The cloth had to be made into clothing and the yarn knit into stockings, caps and mittens. Bedding had to be made. Straw, hay or dried leaves were used for mattresses and goose or duck feathers were used for making pillows and bed coverings.

No housewife and mother could afford to become known in the community as a poor bread baker or a poor cook. Daughters in their teens were ceremoniously taught the art of baking and cooking. It was greatly in their favor as prospective brides to possess skill in the kitchen.

Only certain work was permitted on Sunday such as the preparation of meals. No secular activities such as sewing, mending, cleaning or washing were allowed. They would perform certain work on

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An address delivered on 28 June 1984 during the Folklore Symposium at the Fifteenth International Convention of AHSGR in Regina, Saskatchewan.
certain days of the week; that is, wash on Monday, bake on Tuesday, etc. It was almost a sacred ritual with some of them.

Married women working outside the home for pay was almost unheard of in Russia or America until after the turn of the century. However, in earlier times, the young unmarried girls would hire out to work in other homes. This was the described in the book, The White Lamb. In the book the girl hopes to earn enough to buy the things she would need in setting up her own household after marriage. She also hoped to earn enough to get a pair of leather boots or shoes.

In Miracles of Grace and Judgement, Rev. Schroeder mentions that even though they had very little income in the winter of 1918, they managed to have two girls serve them. One helped his wife with the cooking and the cleaning, while the other fulfilled the role of Kindsmadel or babysitter. He did not recall how much they paid them, but often these girls worked for room and board only, thus relieving the parents from having one more mouth to feed. This was especially helpful when the girl came from a large family.

To earn money on their own, the immigrant women in America who lived in town took in washing from the wealthier people. Some also sought housework in the homes of the established citizens to supplement the family income until the males in the family were on a firmer financial footing. In pioneer days, the farm women would bring eggs, cream and butter to town to trade for goods they wanted to buy. They would also save some of the money to build a nest egg of their own.

Very little direct reference to schooling for girls in the first half of the 1800's is made in any of the writings I researched. Only the word "children" is used in regard to elementary education in the village schools, so young girls probably did get some schooling in their pre-teen years. Several sources stated that schooling ended at the age of 13. Since only men became schoolmasters and ministers or priests, it can be assumed that any formal schooling beyond elementary level was highly unlikely for women until the latter part of the 1800's.

Instruction was ordinarily given only in the winter months, for the children were needed in the summer to help in the fields. In general, school attendance was irregular, although a six-hour day was normally required. The colonist school was equipped with furniture of the utmost simplicity. At the front sat the schoolmaster, to the right sat the boys and to the left the girls, all on sturdy long benches, each equipped with a writing top. Instructional subjects consisted of reading and writing in German and sometimes in Latin, and religious studies. The schools were always closely supervised by the churches until the turn of the century. The boys had arithmetic, but this subject was considered useless for the girls in the earlier decades of the 1800's.

In an article about the art of Fraktur, Ethel Abrahams quotes a New Year's wish written by a 13 year old girl to her parents in her school copy book. It says and I quote: "Dearest Parents: Receive with kindness my warmest wishes, that continually in tranquillity God accompany you in your course in life. To our young people's teacher: I also wish him strength from God that when he becomes burdened, may he ever be content in his teaching and that his efforts be blessed to us and to him . . . God protect Russia's boundaries from war, pestilence, and hard times. Finally I wish all of you together the eternal kingdom of heaven. These are my childlike wishes for you. (Signed) Justina Friesen, Halbstadt, January 1, 1844". From this message, one can conclude that this girl who wrote so eloquently and expressively must have had some basic schooling.

In the book, The Pastor, Rev. Gross writes that it was his mother who wrote to her brother in North Dakota that he would be coming to America and that he should be received like a son. Here then we have more evidence that women could read and write.

It wasn't until the end of the 1800's that any mention of secondary schools for girls was made. During the period of 1895 to 1918 there was a rapid expansion of the Mennonite educational system. Five secondary schools for girls were founded at that time. The years 1906 to 1908 saw enthusiastic activity in the founding of new German secondary schools throughout the Black Sea Region. Among them was a school for girls in Tarutino, Bessarabia and a progymnasium for girls in Landau. After the outbreak of war in 1914, many of the schools were closed. In 1913 Miss Magdalina Schardt founded a girls school in Karlsruhe. Before the revolution German children between the ages of 7 and 14 had knowledge of both the German and Russian languages, equal to any school in the European system. They had more than 3,000 schools, also branches in specialized fields for teachers, finishing schools for girls and higher learning for the boys.
After immigrating to the United States and Canada, the homesteaders recognized that the need for schooling was essential. However they sensed the need to have the subjects taught in the English language. Usually they received instructions in English in the public school and German was taught in connection with their religious training.

Even as late as the 1920's and 1930's, girls from German-Russian homes in America seldom went to high schools, especially in the rural areas. The girls often had to help the mothers with the younger children in the family and it was thought to be of more value to a girl to learn the art of becoming a housewife, since most of them would have little use for higher education when they became housewives and mothers themselves.

The courtship days of young women in Russia in the 1800's were quite different than they are now. Sometimes there was not actually any courtship at all because the match was arranged by the parents of the bride and groom or another third party. Property considerations were always important. Daughters inherited land only when there were no male heirs in the family and since most German-Russian families were large, it was unlikely that any young girl owned land in her own right. However, a girl's family provided a dowry that was within their means. Weddings were usually held in the fall after the harvest was over. Preparations for the event took many days and it was a community-wide event. Never before or after the wedding day would the girl be the center of such attention.

By the turn of the century the young people who were to be married had more of a say in who they would like to marry. Dr. Bruntz in his book, *Children of the Volga*, tells it this way; "The young people walked up and down main street, the boys making eyes at the girls and the girls looking coyly at the boys. Occasionally one of the boys was bold enough to walk with one of the girls. This was usually greeted by comments from the bench sitters. "Is Heinrich going with Frieda?" Wonder what her parents think of him?" his was an indication that parental approval was still needed before a marriage was possible. In the colonies the girls usually married by the time they were eighteen. A young woman still single at twenty was practically regarded as an old maid.

In the New World, where homesteads were often many miles apart, the church offered a time for young people to become acquainted. Dates often resulted from these contacts, although a young couple would hardly ever go out by themselves like they do today. The young people in their late teens would meet in groups in each others homes on Sunday afternoons. This practice continued until the advent of the automobile and telephone put an end to these earlier forms of courtship.

Much of the anxiety a young German-Russian bride felt centered around leaving her own home, pregnancy and childbirth. In the earlier decades of the 1800's doctors were extremely rare, so the midwife played a prominent role in the village. Even after better medical services became available, the midwife had become so ingrained in her community services that she only reluctantly surrendered her position. Some of the midwives practiced "*Brauchen*" as an auxiliary to the technique of infant delivery. By this means they sought to cure almost any ailment by the use of soothsayings, chants, charms and folk medicine.

Another role filled by a girl or young woman was that of acting as the *Christkindchen* at Christmas time. She was usually a robust girl dressed in a white gown. The girl's face was covered with a muslin veil while a brightly colored sash and streamers adorned the gown. The *Christkindchen* wore an apron in which were placed sweets and nuts; beneath those she concealed a switch. The "treats" or the switch was dispensed by her according to what the behavior of the children had been throughout the year.

How did our female ancestors dress? Dr. Height tells us about it in his book, *Paradise on the Steppe*. He says that it was inevitable that the traditional German folk costumes, many of them very colorful and varying greatly in style from one village to the next in Germany, underwent some modification in Russia where the colonists were exposed to alien conditions and where all contact with the ancestral homeland was lost. Although they preserved some of the features of the old folk costumes for many decades, they also adopted several items that were distinctly Russian. The heavier coats or shawls and warmer boots were two such items that were needed to ward off the colder Russian winter weather. Of all the many and varied headgear of traditional Germany that survived, the one known as the "Kopftuch" or kerchief was the most common. The bodice and separate shoulder shawl disappeared, but the voluminous skirt, the jacket-like blouse and the apron was preserved. As a result, women's attire became simpler, plainer and more practical. Much of the color and charm
gave way to the sombre sobriety of the steppe. Since these were also very religious people, they often thought such frills as lace and jewelry were ungodlike. More modern fashions became popular with the young people only just before World War I. The materials became finer and more colorful and the styles changed almost yearly.  

The older women almost always wore a head covering. The girls wore long braids, while the women wore their hair swept back, parted in the middle and pinned together at the back to form a bun. On Sundays the women wore a white kerchief; never a hat. It was artistically tied at the front and may have had a crocheted lace border, such as might have adorned a blouse or apron. When the women got ready for church in summer, they picked a spray of Schmeckkraut (a type of mint) and placed it in their prayerbooks so that they could refresh themselves during the services.  

In Up From the Volga, Grace Ochs describes one of the characters as not a pretty woman as far as physical features go. Her nose was flat, her hair gray and stringy, parted in the middle and pinned back tightly in a braided bun. She wore black clothes, always made in the same way: black full skirt, black blouse, and a black scarf folded in a triangle like a diaper and tied stiffly under her chin. In summer she used two or three underskirts, in winter six or seven. She still followed the dress customs of her native Russia in this country.  

The New York Herald described an arriving Swiss Volhynian party as follows: They were all Germans, but having lived all their lives in Russia, their German has a curious Russian flavor. They were dressed in their primitive homespun garments usually of coarse wool and of a most primitive style. They had funny old handkerchiefs tied round their heads, and certainly no Broadway milliner ever supplied one of those quaint bonnets which the fair Mennonite beauties wore.  

Descriptions of what little girls wore was sparse to non-existent in all the articles I read. Some of the pictures show the style and color similar to what the older women wore, although dresses were a bit shorter, perhaps to make it easier for them to run and play.
Fred Buechler & Katharina Hieb married on January 6, 1914. She is wearing a "Brautkranz" headpiece. These are the parents of Irene Rader.

In the articles about what a bride wore on her wedding day, one source said that in some colonies a bride would wear blue or even black, but more often brides wore white. She also wore a veil fastened to her head with an elaborate wedding wreath known as the Brautkranz or Rosakram. It usually had colored streamers, wax pearls and flowers. In some villages, after the bridal wreath was removed, it was replaced by a cap called the Haube or Weiber cap to denote her new marital status. This hat was handmade of black material and sometimes had a ruffle around the edge.

The German-Russian women were characterized as indefatigable workers, both in the kitchen and the field. A German traveler who visited some of the colonies in 1838 marveled at "their unending activity, their frantic drudgery" and came to the conclusion that "such busy-bee housewives could not be found in any household of the 50 million Russians." The houses were kept clean and tidy and the yards were free of refuse and litter.

If the German-Russian women had any social life outside the home it consisted of going to church and visiting with the neighbors. On Sunday afternoons or perhaps in the winter, families would gather in each others homes and make Maistubbe, that is, visit with each other. Often they would end the afternoon or evening with singing and eating. The women would sing hymns while they worked around the house, but singing outside the home, except in church, was done only by the young boys and men; never the women.
The women also enjoyed leisure times with their own families. A natural sense of humor often ran through the entire family. They were taught to laugh along with the others and to enjoy their own mistakes. Such attributes were a help to them when unpleasant responsibilities, pressures and illnesses came.

If the women enjoyed any hobbies, perhaps it was keeping a flower garden, which was often the pride of the village. She may also have done some fancy needlework, crocheting and knitting to relax, although most of the items they made were practical things such as sweaters and stockings.

In all of the material I read, there was no one woman whose name stood out from the rest. No one woman in particular who made a name for herself in Russia or in America. It was not in their nature to become involved in politics, business or community activities. These were duties and responsibilities of the men. Only the name of little Anna Barkman, the daughter of the Mennonite farmer who came to the plains of Kansas from Russia, stood out from among the thousands of women who immigrated to America. In Russia Anna had the job of picking out the plumpest, reddest and firmest grains of Turkey Red wheat for planting in Kansas. Everyone knows how that wheat helped make the plains states become the bread basket of the world and in many ways it may have helped to change the course of history.

Even though the German-Russian women have remained rather anonymous, we all know they contributed so much to the greatness of Canada and the United States. They endured many hardships and made many sacrifices so that their husbands and families could grow, prosper and succeed. In trying to come up with a fitting description of the physical appearances of the German-Russian women, I found that no clear stereotype emerged. Some were tall while others were short, some were fat while others were thin, some were dark and ruddy-complexioned, while others were light and fair-skinned. The characteristics that most of the women possessed was knowing the pain of separation, a strong and abiding faith in God and an acceptance of their lot in life.

Today we have gathered at this convention to remember these women; the women who left their German homeland to be among the first settlers on the barren steppes of Russia, the women who left friends, family and dorf life to homestead on the plains and prairies of North America. Our journals and family histories abound with stories, often very tragic, of the long and difficult journey to a new land. We must not forget the women who remained in Russia, who faced famine, war and the killing and deportation of the men to Siberia. Ingrid Rimland's book, *The Wanderers*, tells this story of three women of three generations in graphic and heart-wrenching detail.

The determination, persistence and faith that all of these German-Russian women possessed was remarkable. These were the most powerful qualities they passed on to succeeding generations. It was the women who helped pass on the customs, values and history of our people by the foods they cooked, the home atmosphere they created and nourished, the skills and lessons they taught and the stories they told of their own past.

It is a challenge for all of us attending this convention, especially for the women, to continue passing on these traditions and customs to our own children and grandchildren. Our heritage is more than just a series of events. It is the personality of the people, the way of life, the motivating factors that helps us succeed in whatever we attempt. No one of us exists in isolation. Each of us is a part of a greater story, some of it already written, some that we will write and some that we must pass on to others for them to complete. Often we are too concerned with tomorrow to recognize the significance of our yesterdays. It is our past that guides us to where we are today. It is my hope and the hope of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia that we, the men and women of today, shall not forget our mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers and all the women who came before them. Their lives should be an inspiration to us all. They were women to be respected, admired and loved. Because of their shining example, I am proud to be called a German-Russian woman too.

**Notes**

The clothing of the women was generally simple, but practical. The older women almost always wore a head covering. The girls wore long braids, the women wore their hair swept back, parted in the middle, and pinned together at the back to form a bun. On Sundays the women wore a white kerchief; never a hat. It was artistically tied at the front and had a crocheted lace border, such as that which also adorned the blouse. In the summer months one could observe a quaint custom. When the women got ready for church, one could see them go to the flower garden in front of the house. There they picked a spray of "Schmeckkraut" (a type of mint) and placed it in their prayerbooks, so that they would refresh themselves when tired during the services. Photo from Karl Stumpp, The German-Russians.
MENNONITE RESPONSES TO THE PACIFIST MANDATE:  
THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE  
Lawrence Klippenstein

The designation of pacifism as an eminently Mennonite theological "axiom" is widely recognized by many Christian and even other communities. In its practical application this Mennonite stance of peaceful living historically meant the rejection of violence, or as it was commonly put, the use of the "sword", characteristically as wielded by magistrates or police, and above all in the waging of war. Menno Simons himself stated the accepted view as follows:

Our wagon fortress is Christ, our weapon of defense is patience, our sword is the Word of God . . . iron, metal, spears and swords, we leave to those who (alas) consider men's and pig's blood about the same worth.  

Time and circumstances eventually demonstrated that under certain conditions it would be difficult to maintain the clear demarcation of that definition. In due time all European Mennonites had to deal with inexorably overwhelming social, economic and political forces which relativized the early absolute position more and more. Mennonites became less and less of one mind on the traditional commonly-shared point of view, with a changing view on attitude to the bearing of arms exposing most dramatically when and where, if not always just how, the shifts occurred.

The Russian experience of the Mennonites is sometimes held up as a contrasting variant of the situation that came to prevail in all other European Mennonite communities. Elsewhere, i.e. in Holland, Switzerland, France, Germany, Prussia and Poland, it is pointed out. Mennonites surrendered their non-resistant position in the nineteenth century. In Russia they did not. Some Mennonite leaders indeed viewed the tsars as divinely called by God to preserve the non-resistant idea as far as Mennonites were concerned. As Christian rulers, it was suggested, these Russian protectors exercised a concern for believers in peace not easily duplicated elsewhere in the world, not even in North America itself.

As a preliminary comment on the Russian Mennonite situation this essay will seek not so much to test the validity of that particular or other assessments of the tsarist contributions to Mennonite pacifistic faithfulness, as to point to a few factors which shaped the Russian experience as a whole, to suggest how that formation could have taken other directions than it did, and to call forth questions which neither my research or that of others has adequately answered thus far.

It could well be argued, in reflecting on the Russian chapter of Mennonite pacifism, that this facet of faith did not really constitute a particularly vital issue when in 1788 and 1789 Prussian immigrants first set out to farm in the Ukraine. Those who left the Vistula delta to settle on the Dnieper did so less from the pressure of ideological differences with Prussian society or its state than from the urge to own and cultivate more land. The need for land among the Mennonites had been aggravated, of course, by laws which finally forbade the acquisition of more land as long as military service was refused. In the end, however, only people who had little or nothing to lose made the trek to the Ukraine. Most of the families who faced loss of property or other penalties if they emigrated changed their minds and stayed. They would work out the conflict of religious loyalties and state obligations another day and in other ways.

Since all immigrants could look forward to military exemption as granted by Russian colonization decrees, there was little to quibble about when the contract for settlement came into being. The land scouts, Hoeppner and Bartsch, would have preferred, presumably in keeping with community opinion back home, to be free even of those non-combatant obligations which war-time might bring on the colonists at some time — the quartering of soldiers, for instance, or wagon driving duties and the like. They seemed uninclined however to bargain hard at this point, finally agreed to Potemkin's proposals, and signed the terms of colonization which evolved from the 20-point statement presented to him by the two men.

The traditional tenet of pacifism could have received a thorough review early on in the Russian colonization experience if those who raised the issue of pacifist integrity could have sustained their influence in the colonies, and if the leaders generally had not accepted so readily and uncritically the obligations of local self-government set down for them from the very beginning.

Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 did not physically affect the new Mennonite colonies, but the tsar's call for help even among the Prussian Mennonite settlers failed to get a unanimously positive
response. A young Prussian Mennonite minister, Klaas Reimer, who had moved to the new Molotschena village of Petershagen only half a dozen years earlier forthrightly reminded the colony leaders that signing a promise to support the war, if only with monetary donations, was an unbiblical compromise of their faith. This created an uncomfortable dilemma. The tsar's "invitation" to stand by the needs of the motherland seemed soft-spoken enough, but to refuse signatures for the pledges would mean disobeying his wishes. Some leaders nevertheless supported Reimer in his position. Still, contributions, albeit very modest, did come from the new colonies. Reimer could not make his view a majority position, in fact, evoked enough opposition to his views on this and other matters that he finally withdrew from the larger brotherhood to form a congregation of his own.  

To those who accepted civic duties as Oberschultzen or lesser official positions it was always fairly clear that state obligations ought not to be taken lightly. If these responsibilities became a problem, the officials of the Guardianship Bureau would try to clarify the matter as soon as possible. When civic and church leaders could not agree, the Bureau was apt to take the side of the former although in the pre-Cornies period at least, the ministers not infrequently did manage to get the last word. Later this balance of power tended to reverse itself to some degree.

It appears from our vantage point today that the conservative churchmen of that era were poorly equipped to lead the community in thinking through matters like state-church relations. Their "closed" perspective of things, as James Urry has termed it, sometimes did not fit in neatly with the demands of development and progress as more open-minded individuals in their midst were wont to define it. The state on the other hand had little patience with those who tended to question its objectives, people like Bishop Heinrich Wiens for example, who openly resisted the state's directives with the theory that the church too had its jurisdiction where the state should not interfere.

One could not argue, on the other hand, that these same clerics, ill-trained as they were, and shortsighted as they may have seemed, did possess at least the Anabaptist instinct if not the sophisticated arguments, that the church needed to retain a critical facility when it came to state policies as such. Men like Reimer were simply pointing out that the tsar's seemingly irrefutable suggestion that Mennonite Christians in some way assist the defeat of Napoleon in war, must also be theologically cross-examined, not simply obeyed without giving the issue any thought at all.

It is fairly clear that the placing of local civil government into the hands of these same parishioners tended significantly to blunt the edges of possible criticism of state plans and goals. In not a few instances it would lead officials sanctioned by the Guardianship Bureau to contest the decisions of the ministerial, when state policies seemed to contradict the ideals of the church itself.

There is evidence to suggest that the leaders who joined and stayed with Klaas Reimer may have perceived the problems most clearly in this regard. In this circle one senses a strong commitment to the teachings of Menno Simons, the readings of his writings, and the production of literature to propagate these ideas. Their so-called dogmatism, and their abrasive frontal approach to questions of what we would call lifestyle and cultural adaptation today, perhaps also their familial closedness (they seemed to be mostly interrelated families), condemned them to remain a small congregation [Kleine Gemeinde in German) with relatively little influence in the brotherhood as a whole. Possibly a closer examination of the recently-discovered Peter Toews papers and all the other extant literature produced in this circle, will show this group to have articulated most perspicuously among all Russian Mennonites of that period how a biblical view of church-state relations might be practically applied in their setting.

A particular dimension that calls for further study is the impact of pietistic evangelicalism on the Mennonite community in the first half century of settlement in Russia. It seems cantankerous today that some Russian Mennonite leaders would reject the Russian Bible Society's initiatives because it was strongly supported by pietist groups and individuals who were not pacifists, and who might therefore soften up the traditional Mennonite position by their influence. We do not yet have a very clear understanding of the total theological thrust represented by the Pietists of Gnadenfeld who came into the colonies somewhat after the founding, eventually to become a catalytic agent in the renewal of the 1850s later on. P. M. Friesen does mention the fact that some of the Mennonite Brethren had serious questions about relating to Polish Baptists because they were not pacifists. The Brethren, that is to say, were not ready to surrender their Mennonite orientation on this point although connections with non-Mennonite evangelical groups had become quite intimate during the revival.
Mennonite conscientious objectors during forestry service in the Crimea in 1913. This group was sent to the Crimea from the Alt and Neu Berdiansk forestry camps (see map). (Photo: Gerhard Klassen, Virgil, Ontario).

During the first world war, some Mennonite conscientious objectors served in the Red Cross medical service. In this picture of wounded Russian soldiers, the Red Cross workers included the Mennonite Peter Dyck. (Photo: Gerhard Lohrem)
Such an investigation needs to include a look at the development of evangelicalism on Russian soil. The Ukrainian indigenization of the Stundobaptist revival in the 1860s, as well as the diffused impact of pacifist Russians such as the Doukhobors and a little later the Molokanes, prepared the soil for the non-resistance teachings of Leo Tolstoy. This in turn brought into being a strong pacifist strain of thought among Russian Baptists and Evangelical Christians early in the twentieth century. A casual look at the situation suggests that Mennonites did not find a meaningful way to relate to these groups and this development around them. During World War I these evangelicals did put forth a strong plea for exemption as had been given the Mennonites three decades before. Many of them went to prison for doing so. Under tremendous pressure and persecution a large number of Doukhobors had left for Canada in 1890s, hoping that they might establish their pacifistic communal way of life more easily there.

It is possible that the institution of exemption provisions in the program of alternative service, i.e. the forestry camps, isolated the Mennonites too much from groups with whom discussion of pacifistic themes might have brought an added dynamism into Mennonite thought and practice. One could conclude from reading about indigenous Russian pacifists that they were prepared to suffer for the right to express their non-resistance, but it appears that most Mennonites were not. This judgement must be given with caution however, since the Soviet period would produce a significant testimony in this regard, more striking certainly than was true in the 19th century (unless one views the decision to emigrate as a form of suffering as well). More will be said about this a little later.

We must also try and discern more deeply the nature of the process of Russian acculturation and the growth of a genuine sense of Russian citizenship which had begun to accelerate by the end of the nineteenth century certainly, and more perceptibly so by the time WWI broke out. As ethnic Germans the Russian Mennonites resisted strongly any measures of government or other forces that seemed to threaten their traditional German cultural identity and communal integrity. Simultaneously however they needed to evidence at least some readiness to accommodate the culture of their new homeland. The legislation which called for more use of the Russian language in the schools, some forms of state service, if not in the armed forces themselves, and modifications in local administration had driven about 17,000 persons to emigrate to North America. For the rest of the Mennonite population these same developments began to create a deepened awareness of somehow “belonging” in Russia, as well as a readiness to take advantage of the more extensive economic and educational opportunities which opened up to them just before and after 1900.

By World War I some of the Mennonites were willing to speak of themselves as Russian patriots — with certain reservations, of course. Most of them held an even stronger commitment to old and established Mennonite values (religious, educational, linguistic, familial, etc.) as understood at the time. Culturally it was a kind of dual citizenship which Russians could never quite understand or appreciate, which could be easily caricatured as a kind of potential if not actual disloyalty to their homeland, and something that continued to set apart the Mennonite settlements as islands of fundamentally alien communities on Russian soil.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and especially the First World War brought to light a sense of identity with the needs of the country in a measure not really seen before. Young servicemen now insisted that Mennonites could not go on hiding behind their privileged status while their countrymen fought and died, and thousands of families suffered crushing privations at home. The much more risky medical services on the front line began to attract eager volunteers, and if the young men had all had their way, larger numbers might have joined the active forces as well. The brisk debates on the significance of forestry service which surfaced between the two wars became a prelude to a much more profound reevaluation of the meaning of pacifism which would resurface with the October Revolution and the struggles of the civil war.

The decision to take up arms through participation in the White army and above all by the formation of the Selbstschutz (self-defense units) produced a painful moment of truth for the Mennonite community as a whole. Apparently it had been possible to avoid any major confrontations on the issue of using armed protection for themselves as long as the matter was one of tolerating the village policeman (who might in fact do his work unarmed), hiring guards to protect estates, a familiar practice long before the civil war days, or even of stocking small private arsenals in Mennonite homes themselves.

Organizing a Mennonite army, possibly two thousand strong or larger, was another matter altogether. Suddenly it seemed that a principle that had stood for 400 years, indeed had served as
The Mennonite Self-Defense (Selbstschutz) unit of the villages Blumenort, Tiege and Ohrloff in the Mohtschna settlement. In the back centre are several German officers who trained these troops. (Photo: H. A. Epp, Ontario)

A group of Mennonite conscientious objectors serving in the Red Army in 1922-1924. (Photo: Peter H. Wiens, Gretna, Manitoba)
a kind of focal point of faith, a Mennonite raison d’être had been surrendered by mass consent. Respected leaders of long standing, including teachers such as Benjamin H. Unruh, not only endorsed the decision to fight, but now helped also to direct the troops. The argument of desperate necessity was difficult to refute under the circumstances, and the Bible itself seemed amenable to serve the cause. It could be asserted boldly later on, that many lives were saved by the Molotschna units, and possibly it was so.  

But all these facts could not obviate the guilt which followed. The success of the venture (as some said it was) could not erase the conclusion on the part of many that it had been an unwise, indeed, the wrong thing to do, that armed self-defense was simply not the Mennonite way to respond to threats of this sort. To this day it is for some Mennonites a sad chapter in the story — understandable, yes, like one can understand that the disciple Peter might under tremendous pressures of fear and inner turmoil deny his Lord, but still a question, a problem, a warning. 

Ironical as it seems, the Bolsheviks may have given the answer and the solution. They were prepared, initially at least, to recognize the validity of conscientious objection to military service. But, they insisted firmly, conscientious objection must come forth as a personal conviction, attested to by witnesses, and it must stand up to the scrutiny of a court, in order to be recognized for service exemption. Precisely these assumptions and this procedure may have struck the Mennonite community where it was weakest. For many young men the institutionalization of alternative service under the tsars had removed the challenge to think through a CO stand as a personal tenent of faith. Not a few of them resented being herded into the camps by a process that seemed to ask nothing of them except to do as you were told. They appeared to have no choice in the matter. It seemed, indeed, that as a Mennonite you were born as a CO, and there was little you could do about it.

The Soviets argued that really each young person should be free to decide the matter for himself. More fundamentally of course, they asserted just as loudly that the whole notion of non-resistance was little more than a strategem to oppose the regime, that it represented a monstrous exercise in hypocrisy since the Selbstschutz plainly showed where Mennonites really stood on the issue, and the Mennonite leaders, most of all the wealthy kulaks were simply using their young men to undergird their selfish objectives in refusing to support the revolution.

In any case the official recognition of conscientious objector status was no longer something one could take for granted. There was no longer any firm legal basis as there had once been under the tsars, on which Mennonites could confidently make their stand. The privileged position of the pre-revolutionary period had been demolished, and even the admirable efforts of people like B. B. Janz, Peter Froese, C. F. Klassen and various "experts" who spoke for the men before the courts would not change the situation for long. A protest had once more become personal and precarious, as it had been, we might observe, in the beginning of the Mennonite movement four centuries and more before, and we could add as it had been for Jesus Himself much longer ago. Had things been put right again, we could ask?

My own recent study of Mennonite pacifism in Russia was an enterprise of limited objectives and it may turn out, of modest achievement. I did not set out to procure the documents of the Soviet archives themselves but relied rather on what could be found in North American libraries and archival holdings. Much of the story has been told, although, it seemed to me only by bits here and there, a little on the 1874 military law, some things on the forestry camps, more careful studies of the civil war and the following years. It was difficult to get an overall perspective however, and that I may have helped to provide. Thorough contextualization has been a missing dimension of much of our work on Russian Mennonite themes, and I tried to work on that in my study as well.

It was possible to sketch in considerable detail matters like Mennonite participation in five major Russian wars: the Napoleonic invasion, the Crimean conflict, the Balkan war of 1876-1877, the Russo-Japanese war, and of course, World War I as well. The record of conscientious objection in the first decades of Soviet history is now beginning to emerge more clearly. John B. Toews has given us a penetrating view of the work of B. B. Janz in pushing for new exemption legislation, while the memoirs of COs and other scattered reports on those years have helped to bring the total alternative service experience into proper focus.

Soviet legislative changes, related to exemption for objectors, and the internal process by which these possibilities were eliminated completely are not yet fully documented. We would like also to examine more closely the question of Mennonites joining the active Red army during the thirties when it appears that this began to happen with greater frequency than it had before. What was it
that finally broke the initial widespread resistance to taking this step? Or were these joiners still an exception rather than the rule? Available evidence suggests that this was the case.

It may be significant to note that there was never an official bargain with Mennonites to surrender resistance to the state in terms of accepting military service in return for benefits that might appear useful to them in the end. The Evangelical Christians and the Baptists had done just that in the 1920s. From volunteering for the forest camps and other duties such as work on roads and dams, Mennonite men were transferred to force labor battalions when alternatives for military service came to an end with the Stalin constitution in 1936. This became the pattern even more so when the war broke out in 1941, and what followed after that has become yet another chapter in the account.

The Mennonite record of exercising a pacifistic faith in the Russian environment is that of a persistent struggle to keep a clear conscience and remain a faithful religious community. It was an experience of victories and defeats, routine work and agitated decisions, a modest effort some might call it. The final significance must undoubtedly remain unassessed, and the full results untold.

Notes

1. An important scholarly re-examination of the sixteenth century recovery of this perspective is found in James Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1972). Among the Mennonite treatments of the subject one must note Clarence Bauman's *Gewaltlosigkeit im Täuferum: Eine Untersuchung sur theologischen Ethik des oberdeutschen Täuferums der Reformationzeit* (Leiden, 1968).


5. The economic motives of Mennonite emigration have been difficult to evaluate given the more typically religious rationalizations given for these moves. A call to look more closely at the non-religious reasons is given in P. Albert Koop, "Some Economic Aspects of Emigration with Special Emphasis on the 1870s Migration from Russia to America," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* LN (April, 1981), 143-166. On the Prussian move cf. Horst Penner, *Die ost und westpreussischen Mennoniten in ihrem religiösen und sozialen Leben in ihren kulturellen und wirtschaftlichen Leistungen*, (Weierhof, 1978).


10. Cf. the Peter Toews papers, cited above, and also Henrich Balzer "Verschand und Vemunft. Einfachende und nach der Lehre des Evangeliums eriaeuterte Ansichten uber den Unterschied des Verstandes und der Vernunft eines Menschen." *Gemeinde unter dem Kreuz* II, May, 1886-January, 1887. Other writings appeared in pamphlets which are not found in standard bibliographies to date.


12. A brief but very useful summary of Tolstoy's ideas on pacifism is in Brock, 442ff. Pacifism among Russian Baptists and Evangelical Christians had its first thorough treatment in Paul Steeves, "The Russian

13. The Doukobor experience in Russia is well summarized in Koozma Tarasoff, Plaku Trava. The Doukobors. (Grand Forks, B.C., 1982), 4-37.

14. Cf. the views of nationalistic Russians like A. A. Velitzyn in articles which he published in Russkii Vestnik from January, 1889 to September, 1890, which are analyzed in Harvey Dyck, "Russian Mennonitism and the Challenge of Russian Nationalism." Mennonite Quarterly Review LVI (October, 1983), 307-341. The nature and growth of Russian Mennonite patriotism is discussed in Harry Loewen, "The German-Russian Tensions among the Mennonites in Russia, 1789-1917," in P.M. Friesen and His History edited by Abraham Friesen (Fresno, Calif., 1963), 34-52.

15. Discussions of the pros and cons of forestry service as a witness for peace appeared, for example, in Der Botschafter, June to September, 1909.

16. The Selbstschutz episode has been analyzed in John B. Toews, "The Origins and Activities of the Mennonite Selbstschutz in the Ukraine (1818-1919), Mennonite Quarterly Review" LXVI (January, 1972), 5-40.

17. Debates on the topic have recurred more recently in Der Bote in a dialogue under the title, "Sollten wir wirklich voellig wehrlos Sein?" running from November 16, 1980, well on into issues of the next year. The production of the film "And When They Shall Ask" in 1983 reopened the discussion also.


19. An early example of this interpretation appeared in A. Reinmarus and G. (Heinrich) Friesen, Mennonity (Maskva, 1930), and also in A. (Penner) Reinmarus, Anti-Menno. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mennoniten in Russland. (Moskau, 1930), as a partial translation of the earlier volume.


Officials of the Alt Berdiansk and Neu Berdiansk Forestry camps in 1910. Six of the nine men pictured here were Russians, the others Mennonites.
The first manifesto of Empress Catherine II, issued 4 December 1762, had no success because it contained no promises of special privileges for the immigrants. The second, more gracious manifesto, issued by the Empress on 22 July 1763, caused thousands of emigration-eager Germans to leave their homeland, devastated by the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), with the hope of finding a new Eldorado in the distant provinces of Russia. The contents of this manifesto were briefly these: Every foreigner, who would undertake to migrate to Russia and settle on uninhabited lands, would receive a friendly welcome. The settlers would receive significant privileges, advantages, and settlement assistance. They would be given the needed travel money and daily support money from the day and station of their registration to their destination, so as to make it possible for even the poorest of the poor to find their salvation in Russia. The invitation extended by this second manifesto was especially effective in Germany, where vast stretches of land had been devastated by the above-mentioned Seven Years' War and the accompanying conflagrations, where 800,000 soldiers had lost their lives for no good reason, and the peoples of Europe had been thrown into indescribable misery and homelessness. There was therefore no shortage of poor and afflicted people of every kind, who had nothing to lose by emigration and possibly much to gain. Catherine's manifesto could not have come at a better time. From Wuerttemberg, Prussia, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Hesse-Kassel, Saxony, Bavaria, Mecklenburg, even from Switzerland, the Netherlands, and France, there assembled around the Russian emissaries large multitudes of volunteers to be led by them to the new home.

Rosslau on the Elbe was the nearest assembly point. The first emigrants arrived in this city on 8 April 1766. From here they were taken to the seaport Lubeck. On 23 May one group of the emigrants left Lubeck harbor on large seagoing ships and after a pleasant voyage of nine days on the Baltic sea arrived in the harbor of Kronstadt near St. Petersburg. Another group was not so fortunate. It did not reach the shores of Russia until after a three-month, very difficult and dangerous voyage, during which one ship sank in the Baltic, although all the emigrants aboard were saved. This transport had to undergo indescribable suffering during the long and perilous voyage. All became ill and, because of the lack of medicines and doctors while at sea, many died, their bodies being thrown to the waves.

Continuing their journey, the newcomers arrived in the present district capital, Oranienbaum, on the Gulf of Finland, where the Empress Catherine II was then holidaying at her country villa. She welcomed the immigrants most graciously and assured them of her protection and of her constant solicitude and affection.

From Oranienbaum the immigrants, now divided into three groups, undertook the journey to Saratov, their intended destination. One of the groups chose the direct route over Novgorod, Tver, Moscow, Ryazan, and Penza to the district capital Petrovsk, where they found accommodation for the winter. The second group chose the water route via the Neva river, Lake Ladoga, and the tributaries of the Volga; many of these spent the winter in Torzhok and Tver, while others travelled onward on river barges as far as Kostroma. The third group wintered in Kolovna and in the spring travelled down the Oka and the Volga to Saratov.

On 24 June 1767, the feast of St. John the Baptist, the first arrivals came to the area where Katharinenstadt now is. They found nothing there except sky and steppe, trees and water. But they went to work without delay, erected the first indispensable earthen huts and tents, and then build their little houses on sites suited for the purpose, partly in Katharinenstadt, named after the great Empress Catherine II, partly in other areas nearby. The rest of the immigrants, who arrived at the same time, travelled on down the Volga as far as Saratov, from where they also were assigned by the authorities to the founding of a number of colonies on the mountain and meadow sides of the Volga.

Thus there arose the same year on the meadow side besides Katharinenstadt these other colonies: Pod-
stepnaja (Rosenheim), Wolskaja (Kukkus), Priwalnaja (Warenburg); and on the mountain side: Talowka (Beideck), Sosnowka (Schilling), Norka, Ustkulalinka (Galka), Gololobowka (Doenhof) and, sixty versts above Saratov in a northwesterly direction, Jagodnaja-Poljana. Later, in the year 1772, the colony Pobot-schnaja was added, seven versts south of Jagodnaja, and finally in 1802 the colony Neu-Skatowka (Neu-Straub), whose people came from Alt-Skatowka (Straub) on the meadow side, twelve versts south of Jagodnaja-Poljana. These three colonies now form a parish.

In the year 1768 the last immigrants arrived in the Volga region and founded settlements there, bringing the total number of colonies on mountain and meadow sides to 102, with a population of 800 families (some say 8,000 families), which had a total of about 27,000 persons of both sexes. The recruiting and settlement of the colonists cost the crown 5,199,813 rubles. This sum was charged against them to be paid off in the course of time. Through "All-Highest Decree" (of 20 April 1782), a portion of this debt, the sum of 1,210,198 rubles was remitted, consisting of 1,025,403 rubles spent for the building of colonist houses and churches, and 17,914 rubles paid for medical help for sick immigrants; as well as 136,470 rubles owing by families who had died out on the route from Oranienbaum to Saratov and 20,382 rubles owing by the families taken away into captivity by the Kirghiz.

During the whole journey, by water or by land, every colonist received punctually the daily support money promised to him and the amounts received were completely adequate to buy the needed provisions. The crown also gave help for the setting up of farm operations. Each family received two Kalmuck horses, a cow, a Russian plow, a harrow, an axe, a spade, a borer, an ordinary unshod one-horse Russian peasant wagon, and so on. The crown likewise gave the colonists loans for furnishings and for seed grain.

Among the first settlers there were artisans of all types, merchants, artists, learned men, professional men, even a Count Doenhof from Berlin, who had come to Russia earlier, had joined the colonists in Oranienbaum, and later settled in the present colony of Doenhof, which was named after him. Count Doenhof was the only colonist who understood a little Russian. In the colony of Doenhof they still speak of a very able Pastor Doenhof, presumably a descendant of the Count. The pastor died in 1864.

Only a small minority of the immigrants were experienced farmers and these had to serve as teachers for their fellow-colonists in the new homeland. In general the immigrants were poor and many of them entirely without means. There were, however, some examples of people who had considerable capital on arrival and others who subsequently received substantial inheritances from abroad.

As my eldest son, Theophil Kromm, has sent to our dear relatives in Schotten a copy of the book by Gottlieb Bauer, Geschichte der deutschen Ansiedler an der Wolga (History of the German Colonists on the Volga), I shall, in continuing this story, concentrate on Jagodnaja-Poljana and its neighboring villages.

Translator's Notes

1. These were not the first emigrants. Several groups of Germans migrated to Russia in 1764 and 1765.
2. Kromm is wrong regarding the dates of founding of some of these colonies. Beideck, Schilling, and Galka, for instance, were founded as early as 1764. The dates for all the Volga colonies, obtained from archival sources, are given in a list in Gottlieb Beratz, Die deutschen Kolonien an der unteren Wolga. Saratow: Druck von H. Schellhorn, 1915.
3. There were 103 German and 1 French colony originally. The total number of families was undoubtedly closer to 8,000 than to 800.
4. Kromm's history of Jagodnaja-Poljana, as it appeared in the Schottener Kreisblatt in 1910, will be published in a future issue of this Journal.
BOOKS AND ARTICLES RECENTLY ADDED TO THE AHSGR ARCHIVES
Prepared by Frances Amen and Mary Lynn Tuck

GR - 1629
Parmele, Mary Platt

The author examines the topography, geography, ethnic make-up of Russia up to the end of the 19th century in the context of how these features helped to direct the formation and evolution of the empire. A general history is woven around these items.

GR - 1612
Paul, Andrea I.

This is a supplement to the 1974 Guide to the Manuscript Division of the State Archives, which our library does not have.

GR - 1607
Penner, Gustav Adolph

Includes notes written by Johann Epp and translated from the German, family group charts, some historical items and some other notes, also translated into English.

GR - 1604

This periodical deals with information pertaining to the Dakotas. There is a two-part article on the German-Russian pioneers in the "Backgrounds" section of these two issues.

GR - 1562
Radimersky, George W., editor.

Includes a festival sermon and articles on the progress made by the Mennonites in America, their child-rearing and religious practices, pioneer preachers and experiences, the arrival of Hutterites, etc.

GR - 1728
Rayburn, Mrs. Theodore, editor.

Background and brief history of the church, accompanied by many pictures.

GR - 1714
Richmond Historical Society, Richmond, Sask., Canada.

Contains maps of townships (1917-1922), many pictures and family histories.

GR - 1567
Riemann Erhard, editor.

A useful tool in finding information relating to Germans from Russia in this periodical.

GR - 1708
Roloff, Oscar Samuel

Roloff provides a family tree, historical background, a family crest, pictures, newspaper articles and information about the coat of arms.

R
GR - 1605
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dowagiac, Michigan.

The church records include minutes (1911-1925), marriages (1886-1958), births (1885-1959), deaths (1886-1959), lists of members. Included are records acquired by St. John's from the German Lutheran Evangelical Society founded in 1872. St. John's was established in 1911.

GR - 1587
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Riverton, Wyoming.

GR - 1573
St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cornelius, Oregon.

Accompanied by many pictures, this booklet details the activities of the church during its establishment and growth to the present day.

GR - 1595
Schach, Paul

A thorough analysis of the influence of the English language on the dialect of the Pennsylvania Dutch.

GR - 1603
Schach, Paul

Includes maps of Rhineland-Palatinate areas where this phenomenon is found and a discussion of the various aspects of it. This sound change occurs in some of the German-Russian dialects.

GR - 1570
Scheck, Florian, compiler.

Some relatives who remained in Russia are included in this volume, along with pictures, family group charts and family members in Colorado and Kansas, whose ancestors came from Herzog, Volga region, 1876-1908.

GR - 1602
Schleucher, Kurt

This anthology commemorates the 300th anniversary of the coming of the first Germans to America. There is general reference to Germans-from-Russia immigration and contributions to the American society.

GR - 1599
Schmidt, Arthur

Includes a section on the German evangelical settlements in Volhynia.

GR ~ 1619
Schmidt, Edwin Adam

Includes passenger list of S.S. City of Richmond, February 21, 1876, and family history. Family group charts are given.

GR - 1625
Schoiz, Hans und Wilhelm Sundermeyer

Grammar book with exercises for anyone wanting to learn German. All exercises and directions are written in German.

GR 1715
Sherman, William C.

Presents for the first time a detailed set of maps showing precisely where the ethnic groups reside in each county and region of North Dakota, with extended commentary.
accompanying the maps. Also, many photographs.

GR - 1594
Sitton, Thad.

Gives some practical hints and examples for the collector of oral history.

R
GR - 1598
Smith, Clifford Neal and Anna Piszczan-Czaja

An important genealogical tool, including sections on German ethnic religious bodies in America, on language (tribes and dialects, German surnames, Christian names), on the organization of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, on genealogy in Germany, on heraldry and on German-American genealogy.

PZ4 .S6644
Smucker, Barbara Claasen

The story of a family who came to Canada in the 1920's from a village on the steppes of the Ukraine in South Russia seeking religious freedom.

GR - 1716
Spurgin, Sandra (Braun), compiler.

Includes the townships Bakker, Buchanan, Burr Oak, Cherry Grove, Dakem, Exeter, Gayton, Greanavon, Logan, Odessa, Selz, Strasburg, Union, Williamsport, Winchester and Winona.

GR - 1569
Stahl, Mrs. Jacob M.
along with an examination of the versions of the songs sung by the Volga Germans.

GR " 1726
Toews, W. J., J. J. Balzer, H. J. Fast, F. W. Hiebert, I. I. Bargen
Brosamen aus Erfahrungen der Mennoniten in und um Mountain Lake, Minnesota, c. 1938. Mimeographed copy. Donated by Mary Voth.

This work consists of a preface and four articles in German and English; "Our Immigration and its Causes", "Reminiscences", "Pioneer-Life Sketches of the Mennonite Settlement in and around the Town of Mountain Lake, Minnesota," "Emigration from Russia in 1876 and the New Conditions in America"; and in English only, "A Challenge to the Present Generation."

R
GR - 1588
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (formerly Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church), Walla Walla, Washington.

GR - 1566
Tuck, Mary Lynn

Dissertation abstract (see GR 1701) and other items relating to the Norka Dialect: personal data for informants Anna Giebelhaus and Mollie Kaiser; Kaiser: unmodified Wenker sentences, phonetic transcription of them, foreign words in dialect, syntax; phonetic transcription of Giebelhaus tape and Standard German interlinear text.

GR - 1701
Tuck, Mary Lynn

This dissertation examines the dialect of a secondary settlement of Germans in Lincoln, Nebraska. The informants are either immigrants themselves or descendants of immigrants who came to the United States from Norka. Relevant Russian and American backgrounds and data about the informants are presented. The idiom's phonemic, phonetic, idiolectal, syntactic, grammatical and morphological features are described. Selected English and Russian loanwords are discussed. The processes of language leveling, blending and compromising are summarized, and sound and word comparisons between the idiom and dialects in Germany are provided.

GR - 1574
Volga Relief Society, McCook, Nebraska.
Records 1921-23. C. J. Scheideman, Secretary. 63 pp. Donated by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Scheideman.

This is a record of the money collected and sent to the Volga colonies during the famine of 1921-22.

GR - 1725
Voth, Mary, compiler.
The Fast Family. Typed manuscript, 16 pp. Donated by Mary Voth.

Some of the genealogical items in this are taken from the church records of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Henderson, Nebraska; others were collected from family members. The family migrated to Hamilton County, Nebraska, in 1978 from Klippenfeld in the Molotchna and settled in Oklahoma in 1894.

GR - 1724
Voth, Mary, compiler.
The Voth Family. Typed manuscript, 21 pp., 1982. Donated by compiler.

Draws from the family record prepared by Johann Voth, which was published in 1850, and brings the historical and genealogical record up-to-date. Traces the family from West Prussia to Halbstadt, Molotchna, and to Alexanderwohl and other villages. The family came to Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1874 and later moved to a farm.

GR - 1723
Walker, Judith Jean Beglau

This well-written, exhaustive study includes German-Russian historical information for the village of Gueldendorf, histories of the John Gums Sr. family, the Jacob Gums II families and of Katharine Gums Bier's family. Other sections of interest in-
elude German recipes, German folklore, a family reunion, family group charts and miscellaneous pictures.

**GR - 1705**
Wall, O. J., compiler.

This family history includes an index of family members, family pictures, the backgrounds of the families, a letter, a family poem, a diary, an obituary, a passenger list of the ship Strassburg, family group charts and addresses of family members.

**GR - 1568**
Wallis, Michael

Accompanied by pictures from the Ukraine, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, the material dealing with the characteristics of the Mennonite people and their farming and religious experiences, was collected chiefly through personal interviews.

**GR - 1563**
Walther, Carl Ferd. Wilhelm

A book of sermons from the gospels for all religious observances throughout the year. This book was named by some Germans-from-Russia in their Lutheran churches.

**GR - 1571**
Waltner, Gary

Particular attention is devoted to loans received from different groups by the Swiss Mennonites in Dakota Territory.

**GR - 1579**
Wedel, Arthur A. and Elizabeth K. (Goering)

Ancestral history from Holland to Russia and finally to the Kansas prairies. Includes family group charts.

**GR - 1565**
Wiebe, David V.

Centennial Edition commemorating the 100th anniversary of the coming of a large group of Anabaptist Mennonite immigrants to North America from Russia. It traces their spiritual and social contributions as they migrated first from Holland, France, Germany and Switzerland to South Russia, Prussia, the Crimean Peninsula and Poland, then to the U.S. and Canada.

**GR - 1627**
Wiens, Dorothy, compiler.

Includes photographs, a short historical background, family history, ancestral charts and obituaries.

**GR - 1706**

Contains the following interesting articles:
1) Kolonie Korist — Entstehung, Entwicklung und Aufloesung einer deutschen Bauernsiedlung im mittleren Wohynien in den Jahren 1867-1940, von Nikolaus Arndt,
2) Als Lehrer und Kantor in Wohynien — Erinnerungen an die Taeitigkeit in den deutschen Kolonien 1933-1939, von Arnold Jahns.
3) September 1939 — Wohynische Erlebnisse waehrend des Polenkrieges, von Hugo Karl Schmidt.

**GR - 1630**
Yearout, Glen Alvin and Alien Anderson

Family group charts and some family history.

[End of Volume 7, Number 2, Summer 1984]