



Roots and branches

Newsletter of the Mennonite Historical Society of BC

*"What we have heard and seen
we will tell the next generation."
Psalm 78*

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Wrenching our Youth From

Frivolous Pursuits:

the history of the Bible School Movement in Western Canada

A lecture by Dr. Bruce Guenther, Mar 5, 2005. For details, see p. 2.



Coaldale Mennonite Brethren Bible School, founded 1929. (See article on BB Janz, p.4)

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Editorial

Happy New Year! These words ring hollow in the light of the disaster that has just struck Asia. As the death toll mounts, the Mennonite Central Committee will be among relief agencies doing their best to provide food, water, clothing and other necessities of life.

I am reminded that MCC was born of the Ukraine Famine of 1921/22. My great-grandfather was one of the many who received food. A few years later, through efforts by men like B.B.Janz, some of the family was able to emigrate to Canada. MCC helped again after WWII through leaders like Peter and Elfrieda Dyck and C.F.Klassen. Thousands of refugees, among them my parents, received food aid, help in locating relatives, and assistance in finding new homes in Canada, the U.S. and South America.

In the midst of our secure and prosperous lives, it is important to remember that destitution and destruction can happen to anyone. We are not immune. For this, if for no other reason, we must tell our stories to the next generation. (LBP)

Future events in brief

May 15 3 p.m. Central Heights church. Irmegard Baerg plays the Mennonite Concerto.

Oct. 15 Annual banquet at CBC with Dr. John Ruth, storyteller. *Swiss Mennonite Aid to the Russian Mennonites: the birth of MCC.*



Bethel Bible Institute

Lecture

Wrenching our Youth From Frivolous Pursuits: the history of the Bible School movement in western Canada

**by Dr. Bruce Guenther,
Professor at ACTS Seminary.**

Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

**March 5, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Mennonite Church**

3471 Clearbrook Rd.

Abbotsford.

Queries

Looking for information about this family:

Johann Heinrich Neufeld born 23 February 1862 at Wernersdorf, Molotschna. He married Anna Toews 8 Dec. 1886 at Fuerstenau, Molotschna. Anna was born 20 July 1860 at Fuerstenau. Anna, together with children Helene, Peter J., Jacob J. emigrated to Canada in 1925, initially settling at Rosthern SK. The eldest son, Henry, died in Russia, and Johann Heinrich N. also died in Russia in 1922. Anna (Toews) Neufeld died at Rosthern SK 4 Feb 1941.

If you have information about Johann Heinrich N. or Anna (Toews) Neufeld, please contact: Ruben Neufeld, 12160 Woodhead Rd, Richmond BC, V6V 1G3 - Tel. 604-278-0335 - email: f19neufeld@yahoo.com

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Shepherds, Servants, Saints and Sinners By Henry Neufeld.

"It is not more authority and power that we need, but community and especially servanthood," said Dr. Harry Loewen in an October lecture at the BC Mennonite Historical Society. Loewen traced the pattern of leadership in Russian Mennonite history from 1880 – 1960. In that era church leaders fell into categories of saints, sinners, servants and false prophets; some fit several of these categories.

Loewen, the former Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, spoke to over 500 at the CBC gymnasium in Abbotsford. "Mennonites have prided themselves in not having any popes," he said, but they still had strong leaders. In Menno Simons time church leaders had a lot of power and could enforce their authority without the consent or involvement of the congregation. He cited the example of a 17th century Danzig Mennonite portrait painter who was banned by the Danzig Mennonite church for creating "images." The painter moved to Holland where Mennonites were more tolerant of his art.



Claas and Elizabeth Epp and daughter Margareth, 1876.

Loewen described Johann Cornies as a *Mennonite czar* and benevolent dictator: an economic leader who had an inordinate influence in all aspects of Mennonite colony life. Russia also produced Claas Reimer, the founder of the *Kleine Gemeinde* as well as Claas Epp, who led a group of followers to

Asia to await the Second Coming of Christ. With the failure of that mission Epp was excommunicated from his own church, dying a lonely man.

Three types of leadership emerged in Russia, said Loewen. First, pastors, elders and deacons. Second, secular administrators, the *Schultz and Oberschultze*. Third, the emerging educated group, usually the teachers. This group expanded as Mennonite youth received higher education at European universities. That, combined with Russian government policies encroaching on Mennonite life, and young men entering the medical corps during WWI, resulted in Mennonite youth having much wider contact with the outside world than in earlier times.

"A Mennonite class of intellectuals became leaders and sought changes," said Loewen, citing Jacob H. Janzen's writing and directing dramas in the girl's school as an example. Artist and sculptor Johann Klassen, (later at Ohio's Bluffton College) returned to the Russian colonies after his European education and felt neither his family nor his community understood him. Despite the lack of understanding, the Mennonites who studied in Europe did not return as "angry young men," but sought new ways of serving their communities.

Women from that era are not mentioned as leaders, and this gave Loewen "much anxiety". "The absence of women leaders in these years reflects poorly on the men of our history." He emphasized that when men were arrested and killed in the Stalin era, it was women who provided the shelter, food and leadership.

Facing collectivization of farms, loss of their factories, the closing of the

churches, and many men being exiled or shot, Mennonite leaders were



C.F. Klassen, Elfrieda and Peter Dyck

courageous shepherds and servants. "These leaders were not saints but some came close to being saints. They led their people spiritually, culturally and practically when it was dangerous to do so...."

Loewen cited C.F. Klassen and Peter Dyck as examples of "true servant – shepherd leaders."

While there are many dedicated leaders today, Loewen closed with two concerns: some church leaders "...don't care much about their faith heritage; they are lured by the "siren songs" of other evangelical traditions that are often too difficult to resist." Secondly, Loewen expressed concern about churches and conferences being run like businesses with the CEO's and a few people on top making decisions.

Loewen encouraged involvement of the body of believers in decision making, noting that Acts 15 provides a sound model where elders and the whole church made decisions. Loewen concluded with a plea for prayer for our leaders.

The evening included singing led by Holda Fast Redekop, music by Heidi Hein and a brief illustrated report on the Molotschna 2004 celebrations by Dr. Art Friesen.

Looking Out for my Brothers: Mary Neumann's recollections about her father, B.B.Janz

by Helen Rose Pauls

Mary Neumann greets me with a hug, "My good friend's daughter has come to visit me." She is shrunk at over 90 years, but her eyes are as bright as ever. I remember her from my childhood as the storekeeper's wife from Arnold, not realizing until much later that she is the daughter of Mennonite statesman, B.B.Janz, to whom many of us owe gratitude for being in Canada.

When asked to tell me impressions of her father, she does not hesitate. "I loved my father very much," she says, "so the least I can do is tell about him."

"I was born in a village in Ukraine called Tiege, where our father B.B. Janz was the teacher. The teacherage and the school were under one small thatched roof. At school Papa was my teacher and I didn't know what to call him, so I didn't call him anything. At home, he played the violin while he taught us many songs, and he also had us perform in front of the school. In winter, while mother made supper, he read us stories and got quite emotional during the

On one of his visits, he brought me a doll cradle of woven twigs which he had made during the cold, dark and lonely winter nights. Meanwhile, we had to move into a little house on the churchyard, where mother and us five children could clean the church. We had the use of a small barn for keeping a cow and chickens, as well as a fruit and

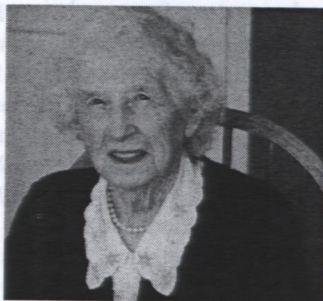
vegetable garden. Mother was very resourceful. She could sew and make over old clothes, dry the fruit from the orchard, and dig and store potatoes for winter. She was a farmer, and had said as a young woman that she would never marry a teacher or preacher. However, not once did my parents own a home or land in Russia."

It was during this time, that Russia's turmoil began. Revolution, civil war, forced collection of grain and produce, Machno's massacres, famine, and disease decimated the country and the Mennonite villages. B.B. Janz, ordained as a minister in 1909, felt an overwhelming responsibility to help his people. He corresponded with American Mennonites about the plight of their brothers and sisters in Europe, and chaired the *Union of Descendants of Dutch Lineage* (Verband der Bürger Holländischer Herkunft; VBHH) in 1920, the foremost Mennonite political organization in Russia at that time. He tried to negotiate the release of Mennonite youth conscripted into the Red army, but with little success. By 1921, when the famine hit Ukraine, Janz had become a foremost diplomat and negotiator, helping to clear the way for American Mennonite relief agencies to send food to the starving colonies. His tenacity prevailed and food arrived, too late for some. This effort was the beginning of what would come to be called the Mennonite Central Committee.

"What a brave mother I had," Mary continues. "When the poor years came and food was scarce, I remember mother and we children standing as we always did, to say grace before the meal. Mother said 'Amen', and suddenly she fell to the floor. She had given what food there was to us, and had fainted from hunger. One day when father was home, an American visitor entered our little house. Oh, how wonderful he looked with beautiful clothes, shiny shoes, lovely things, and he was so well groomed! We were instantly in awe of "America". Father had been begging for bread from his "brothers" in America, and this man had been sent to see conditions in Russia. Soon we had a food kitchen in the local school, as did most of the Mennonite villages, and the neediest, mostly children and the elderly, could receive a meal a day. What joy! America had sent food..



Benjamin B and Maria (Rogalsky) Janz with children Peter, Helena, Gertruda, Maria, Jakob.



Mary Neuman

sad parts. We little girls all cried, too. Then he was called for his two years of alternative military service in the forest, and was rarely home.

And more joy--baby Martha was born. Oh how we loved that beautiful child! Not everything was dark, because she was a sunbeam! Martha entered our family, and Peter, my oldest brother, had to leave it. He was close to the age of being taken into the army and that should not be, so he was sent to Canada with relatives. Our turn would come later, after father helped many others leave. One evening father came home after another long absence, and little Martha asked me who that man was, for she could not remember him."

B.B. Janz was the first leader to explore emigration seriously, foreseeing a very bleak future for Mennonites in Russia. His tenacity and integrity gave him influence with Russian authorities. During this time, he was usually away from his family, in meetings in Charkov or Moscow. Although the leaders had drawn up lists of 20,000 hopeful émigrés, there were setbacks: repeals, medical inspections, difficulties with visas, devalued currency, a war-ravaged transportation system, and uncertainty on the part of the sponsoring Canadian Pacific Railway and the host country. These terrifying waits during this chaotic time made people very anxious, and in desperation, they flocked to the Janz home.

"We began to dread it whenever dad was home," Mary says. "We were five children and two parents in a little house, and my sisters and I slept on the "pull-out" bench beneath the front room settee. We could not go to bed until the last visitor had decided to leave. How mother coped, I cannot imagine."

"One day, when father was in his Moscow room, a Communist friend came to him and said, 'Janz, it is high time that you get out of this country, because they are looking for you!' Dad bought his visa in a different city and came home to say good-bye to us. He returned to Moscow with his hat deep over his forehead and with his collar up, and left on the train for Latvia. Months later, we held an auction and also left our home, with dad's friend who would help us in Moscow. He saw us onto our train to the border of Latvia, where the big red gate stood. What tension was in the air! How quiet it was on the train as we neared the border and the train went slower and slower. Praise God, the train was not stopped, and men threw their hats in the air, and we sang, 'Now Thank We All Our God'! Arrangements had been made for us to travel to Southampton, England, and as our ship docked, father appeared on the deck. What a reunion!"

"Before long, we were living in a house in Winnipeg. It was wonderful to be together as a family and make a new start. It took only a few days for my two older sisters and I to find work as domestics in private homes in the city. At fifteen, I was expected to earn the money to pay my travel debt to the C.P.R. Father would spend much energy, and travel all over Canada, trying to collect this debt from the "brotherhood", together with David Toews from Rosthern, Sask.. Also, he had a new challenge, as he knew no English. When he had to eat

in restaurants during his travels, he would just point to something on the menu. Usually he ate whatever came, but sometimes he couldn't."



Eventually, the family was able to buy farmland in Coaldale, Alberta, where Janz became the leading minister. He traveled extensively for the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, helped found the Coaldale Bible School, the Coaldale Mennonite High School, as well as serving on boards such as MCC, Christian Press, and the Canadian M.B. Conference. He was even sent to South America for a year of reconciliation and resettlement among the various Mennonite groups there, to unite the recent settlers into one harmonious church. This job was very difficult, as each group held on to their own ideas. Janz apparently lay on the earth and cried, "Help me Lord, for I don't know what to do." The churches eventually melded together. It was this reliance on God that gave Janz the tenacity to continually "Look out for his brothers".

*taken from an interview with Mary Neumann, Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia [v], and a speech that Mary wrote for her ninetieth birthday.

A young man was marooned on an uninhabited island. Several years later, he was found and rescued by a passing ship. Proudly the man showed off his accomplishments.

"And what are those?" his rescuers asked, pointing to three beautiful buildings.

"Well," said the man. "This is my house. This is my church. And that," he said, pointing, "is the church I used to go to."

Book Review: *Thicker than Water: A Story of Faith and Courage*, by Henry Klippenstein.
Reviewed by Linda Falk Suter.

In writing *Thicker than Water*, Klippenstein has recaptured the personal story of his family's struggles, hardships, courage and faith in their transition from the pre-World War I tranquility and prosperity in Southern Ukraine to the terror, killings, typhus and starvation of the Russian Revolution and finally the journey to a new country. In this new land the rich farming land of the Ukraine has been replaced by the dust bowl of Saskatchewan, and "Plautdietsch" replaced by the harsh-sounding English. In the midst of this, Henry's parents, desperately poor, maintain integrity and dignity as they scrape out a living for their growing family.

Thicker than Water begins with a brief summary of Mennonite history from its 16th century origin to the invitation from Catherine the Great in the late 18th century to settle in the Ukraine. Then in 1870's came the first wave of immigrants to America followed in the 1920's by the second wave. The Klippensteins belong to this 1920's group. After stopping briefly in Manitoba, they settle in southern Saskatchewan.

The story is told by Hendriek (Low German for Henry), the infamous middle child of a family of seven children. Through his persona the reader learns to know the characters of

Pa and Ma Klippenstein and their five sons and two daughters. So Hendriek's story becomes a kind of *Bildungsroman* as he conveys the impact of the immigrant experience during his formative years.

Although it is Hendriek's story, it is in fact the story of all Russian Mennonite immigrants, and, indeed, in a larger sense it represents any immigrant who leaves the old and familiar to dare to venture into the unknown. One could even say that Hendriek's story becomes the metaphor for the struggle, pain, disappointment, courage and faith for anyone who chooses to embrace life fully. Thus it is not a story of defeat, but one of "the courage to be".

The author concludes with several short stories that feature somewhat embellished episodes of Hendriek's life. The style changes and "with touches of wry humour and a healthy dose of proverbial prairie seed stuck firmly in his teeth" (quote from *Forward*), the author recalls little vignettes that serve well for oral readings. (One is reminded of the early Mark Twain's short stories.) It is within the detail, the exact setting and the explicit word choice that the humour lies. The delight is that Hendriek can not only laugh at the circumstances, but also at himself as his inquisitiveness gets him into countless troubles.

The author's story comes full circle as he takes the 1800KM bus trip from Vancouver to Saskatchewan for his 50th high school reunion. He is apprehensive--what will he find? It is a good experience. He relives his growing up years, the bittersweet school days; he revisits the site of the old farm with only the barn foundation and a few scraggly caragana bushes remaining. He grieves for "the incredible hardness of his parents' life". But in all this he also experiences a catharsis, a healing that in all that has happened on his life's journey, he now theologically finds himself "back on the Mennonite bus".

Thicker than Water is delightfully entertaining, yet profound. The reader enjoys the escapades of the Klippenstein children and of course the ever-curious Hendriek. At the same time, the reader stands in awe marveling at the invincible spirit of survival of this immigrant family--no it is not mere survival--it is a celebration of affirming life fully.

(Linda Falk Suter is Emeritus Assoc. Prof. Of English at Bluffton University in Ohio.) The book is available from the author for \$20.00 (including postage) Henry Klippenstein, 814 Frederick Rd., North Vancouver, BC V7K2Y3 (604) 987 1506

Acquisitions

by Hugo Friesen

- Family Histories and Genealogies - We have received 40 or more of these informative books and binders containing a great deal of information for family research.
- EWZ microfilms - Dr. Tim Janzen has graciously donated another 92 microfilms of family information of the Mennonites coming from Russia to Germany during the 1940's. The microfilms are purchased from the National Archives in Washington, D.C.
- Cedar Hills Mennonite Church files and documents - This church began around 1939 and their first church building was located near the east end of the Patullo Bridge at New Westminster. Originally, this church was known as the United Mennonite Church of South Westminster but in 1964 they moved to a new location on 100th Avenue in Surrey and the church was renamed, Cedar Hills Mennonite Church. At this time they are amalgamating with the Living Hope Christian Fellowship and asked us to house their historical collection of files, records and documents.

Finding Mennonite Family Arrivals by Ship

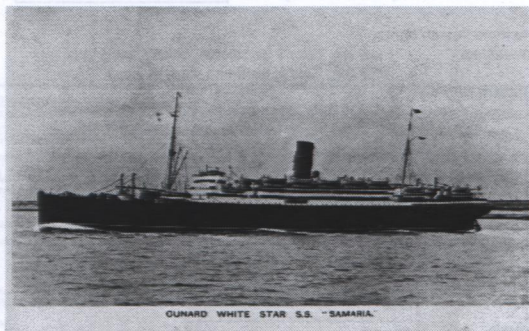
By Ron Issak

With the rapid expansion of the internet and its wealth of genealogical information many projects are initiated and often the links between them can be lost, or for the novice, they are difficult to find and navigate through. The following is a compilation of the current internet locations for ships lists containing Mennonite names. Use of these lists presumes that you are familiar with basic internet navigation and search functions.

These lists will be most useful to those that know:

- a) year, arrival date and port of entry to Canada and on which boat they arrived
- b) the year of arrival only (This can take time but is well worth the effort).

If you don't know the year, or ship name or port of arrival but it was after 1923 the Mennonite Board of Colonization records may help. (next article in this series).



Internet links tend to change over time but the following are the active sites at this time:

Master Immigration and Ships list Odessa library.

There are numerous sites on the Odessa Digital library. <http://www.odessa3.org/collections/ships/>

Mennonite Passenger List 1872-1904 to the USA

<http://www.odessa3.org/collections/ships/link/mships.txt>
for details on the ships get ship number from above site and then go to
<http://www.odessa3.org/collections/ships/link/mindiv.txt>

Quebec Mennonite Passenger Lists: 1874-1880

with Names Compared to the Hamburg Passenger Lists and Families Cross Referenced to Church Registers
<http://www.mmhs.org/canada/quebec/passenger.html>

Mennonite Immigrants on Quebec Passenger Lists: 1881-1896*

<http://www.mmhs.org/canada/18811896.htm>

Mennonite Immigrants to Canada Departing from Hamburg, Germany: 1890-1898

<http://www.mmhs.org/canada/hamburg.htm>

Mennonite Ship Passengers Arriving in Canada: 1900-1914 Includes

Quebec Ship Arrivals 1900-1909
Halifax Ship Arrivals 1900-1914
St. John Ship Arrivals 1900-1909
St. John Ship Arrivals 1910-1914
http://www.mmhs.org/canada/post_1900_canada_migrations_sorted.htm

1915 - 1918 not yet posted on the internet

1919 - 1924 Immigrants to Canada

From 1919 through 1924 Canada had what was called an Immigration Form 30. In order to take advantage of this you need to determine which microfilm to order by searching for family name and then family members.
http://www.genealogy.gc.ca/10/100804_e.html

1925 - 1935 Immigrants to Canada

All arrivals via Pier 21 in Halifax are now listed in a searchable database via the Canadian National Archives.
http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020118_e.html
click on 'search the database'

The process is quite simple and by changing the given names you can identify family groups. In the following example we searched for Peter Voth who arrived in 1926 with family. The search showed 2 possibilities, one being a child. By clicking on the 'square' to the left of the 29 year old Peter Voth a 3rd screen appears which gives more details including the ships name, date of arrival and the microfilm number for the record.

Figure 1

Home > Our Services > ArchiviaNet > Immigration Records

ArchiviaNet : On-line Research Tool

Immigration Records (1925-1935)

Enter one or more search terms.
 Wildcard characters: \$ (eg. colon\$ for colonie, colony, etc.)
 ? (eg. Sm?th for Smith, Smyth, etc.)

Important notes

- for surnames using \$: for example for O'Brien and other similar surnames, type O'Brien
- for surnames having **two words**: for example for Van Horne use quotes such as "Van Horne"

Surname:

Given Name:

Year of Arrival:

Port of arrival:

Ship:

Figure 2

ArchiviaNet : On-line Research Tool

Immigration Records (1925-1935)

Search terms: " : 4=1 AND 2 AND 3 : 3="1926".HO00. : 2=PETER.R170. : 1=VOTH.R180. : " References: 1 - 2 of 2

	Surname	Given name	Age	Nationality	Year of arrival
1	Voth	Peter	29	Ru	1926
2	Voth	Peter	2m	Ukr	1926

Figure 3

ArchiviaNet : On-line Research Tool

Immigration Records (1925-1935)

Surname: Voth
 Given name: Peter
 Age: 29
 Sex: M
 Nationality: Ru
 Date of arrival: 1926/11/20 (YYYY/MM/DD)
 Port of arrival: Quebec, Quebec
 Ship: MONTCLARE, Canadian Pacific
 Reference: RG76 - IMMIGRATION, series C-1-a
 Volume: 1926 volume 24
 Page: 79
 Microfilm reel: T-14729

Note: Due to the poor legibility of the original indexes, some information in this database may be incorrect and/or incomplete.
 Source: FND076 - 401500

What can you expect to find ?

The internet sites with passenger lists vary in format and content but the basic data is provided such as name, age occupation together with date of arrival, ship name and destination. The following is a typical example.

Name	Pass. No.	Age	Sex	Mar.	Occ.	Destination	Ship	Port		Arrival Date
								Dep.	Arr.	
Wall, A	345	37	M	N	Lab		Montreal	L	Q	30 May 1881
Klassen, Peter	2323		M	Y	Lab	Gretna MB	Parisian	L	Q	1 Nov 1890
Klassen, Margaretha	2324		F	Y	Wife	Gretna MB	Parisian	L	Q	1 Nov 1890
Klassen, Peter	2325		M		Ch?	Gretna MB	Parisian	L	Q	1 Nov 1890
Klassen, Catherine	2326		F		Ch?	Gretna MB	Parisian	L	Q	1 Nov 1890

The ordering and searching of microfilm can be a lengthy task but in family history research very little seems to go quickly. Here are my results from researching both Form 30A's and the 1926-1935 microfilm records. The following is taken from a draft our family's story and shows the record for my grandfather Cornelius Jacob Isaak who arrived in Canada in 1924.

"A form (30A) was required for each passenger. Shown below is the form (#461) for Cornelius Isaak, age 37, a married male with wife Lydia. He is a German speaking Mennonite, from the Ukraine, who intends to settle and continue the occupation of farmer. ... The back of the form shows they are under special contract arrangements arranged by the Central Administration of Dutch Descendants in the Ukraine.

30A

MINNESOTA ORIGINAL Class 03 Date of Signing 1924 461
DECLARATION OF PASSENGER TO CANADA
 NAME ISAAK CORNELIUS Age 37
 Are you married, single, widowed or divorced? M
 If married, are you accompanied by husband or wife? If so give name of husband or wife
 Intended occupation FARMER Intended occupation FACTORY?
 Race or People UKRAINE Religion Mennonite German
 Object in going to Canada To settle
 Do you intend to remain permanently in Canada? YES
 Have you ever lived in Canada? No If you have, give Canadian address
 Port of first arrival in Canada _____ Date _____
 Port of last departure from Canada _____ Date _____
 Why did you leave Canada? _____
 Money in possession belonging to passenger \$ 200
 Can you read? YES What language? GERMAN
 By whom was your passage paid? Mennonite Church Canada
 Have you ever been refused entry to, or deported from Canada? No
 Discharged by _____
 Mennonite Settlement _____
 I hereby declare that the above is the signature of passenger and that I have passenger a copy of Immigration Booklet 30A.
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY RIGL

BOOKING OFFICE OR EXCHANGE OFFICE TO FILL IN THIS SPACE.
SPECIAL CONTRACT
 Date of issue of ticket _____ Name of Agent LIBAO
 If prepaid order, give following information regarding exchange of the order.
 Place _____
 Date exchanged _____
 Name of agent _____
DECLARATION
 Passport No. _____ Serial No. _____
 Issued by CENTRAL ADM. OF DUTCH DESCENDANTS IN UKRAINE
 Date of Issue _____
 Passport designates holder a national or citizen of UKRAINE
 Stamp of _____
 Action taken: Admitted Cause _____
 Examining Officer _____

Each applicant was required to sign the documents and in the case of younger children it appears that parents signed for them. While it is difficult to see this form does show that the destination in Canada was Rosthern, Saskatchewan. The documents were obtained from microfilm ordered from the National Archives of Canada."

From Ships records for 1925-1935 the Canadian Government Return or ships immigration registry can provide a wealth of information. Headings include the usual of name, age, country and place of birth on the left side together with whether a cash or credit passenger and occupation. The right hand side asks for destination in Canada, name and address of nearest relative in country from which you came, passport information such as number, place and date of issue, how much money they arrived with and how they are traveling inland (i.e. which railway).

The information varies from family to family but generally was worth the search.

For information on ordering microfilm from the National

Archives of Canada follow this link. http://www.collectionscanada.ca/02/020207_e.html I can be reached at teched@direct.ca for comments or questions. R.I.

CANADIAN IMMIGRATION SERVICE
 ARRIVING AT _____ 20 _____ 1926
 SHEET NO. 31
VOL 24 PAGE 70
 OCCUPATION _____ DESTINATION _____
 WHY TRADE OR OCCUPATION IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY? _____
 WHY TRADE OR OCCUPATION IN CANADA? _____
 IF DESTINED TO RELATIVE, FRIEND OR EMPLOYER STATE NAME AND GIVE NAME AND FULL ADDRESS OF ANY ADDRESS ANY PERSON IN CANADA GIVE THE ADDRESS IN ORDER TO WHICH YOU ARE GOING.
 NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF YOUR NEAREST RELATIVE IN THE COUNTRY FROM WHICH YOU CAME. IF A WIFE OR CHILDREN ARE TO FOLLOW YOU LATER TO CANADA, GIVE NAMES AND AGES.
 PASSPORT NUMBER, PLACE AND DATE OF ISSUE _____
 ACTION TAKEN AND CIVIL STATUS _____
 20763 Extra Fee \$5.00 C.P.R. _____

By Ship to Canada: Excerpts from the Diary of Henry Woelk

translated by Mary Woelk.

On October 21, 1947, Henry Woelk filled out the official IRO eligibility form and started the process that would bring them to Canada. (They had received news that their names were registered in ETS Buchholz-Hannover with the number NN: 7047-7051 A in August.) A month later, after inquiring with Mr. Voth of MCC, he found that the original papers were lost. He refiled. November 24, the family left for Buchholz. A month of further processing followed: X-rays, blood work, immunization, police inquiries, visa approvals at the consulate, further physician check-ups. January 19, the family arrived at the port of Rotterdam and loaded their possessions aboard ship for the trip to Harwick, England.



Woelk Family: Back row: Katharina 18, Hedwig 23.
Front row: Katharina, Mary and Henry Woelk

21/01/48 Customs and luggage loaded onto Aquitania. Ate. Left at 5:30PM. Dinner.

22/01/48 The time was turned back one hour. Lots of rocking. Among the women sea sickness.

23/01/48 The time was turned back one hour. Much rocking and rolling of the boat. Fresh wind. Lots of whitecaps. Most are sea sick. Tina is lying down. Hedy and Mariechen came to eat, but ate little. Kaethe slept through dinner. I am healthy, have missed no meals, the food was exceptional. I ate double portions yesterday and today. The ship is wonderfully arranged. We are on Deck "D". Women and children on Deck "C" in big rooms. It is warm. Towards evening it became less rocky. In the shops there are many things to buy.

24/01/48 Tina is up and has walked on the deck. The dining room is more occupied. For breakfast we had

apples. I still have lots of appetite. A cinema is also on the ship. The wind is becoming stronger. On "D" Deck the waves are crashing against the windows. They are big and close together. The time was turned back an hour. Towards evening the wind became stronger and gradually became a storm. Movies are being shown every day on the ship. A Deck is beautifully organized. Big rooms with upholstered furniture and carpets. The same on the other decks. The English are dressed plain but well dressed. We met a little steam boat that was rocking terribly.

25/01/48 35 degrees latitude. In the night the wind became fierce. Children are not allowed on deck without adult supervision. The waves are about 15 - 20 meters high. It looks beautiful from the back of the deck. Most passengers are healthy and are coming to eat. It looks very funny when people walk, sometimes up, sometimes down, then from one side to the other. We are sailing into the wind. Until now we have traveled this far:

	Latitude	Longitude	Miles	Knots
22/11	50.14	10.22	379	22.49
23/11	50.26	21.48	438	17.52
24/11	49.23	35.00	514	20.56
25/11	48.17	40.14	217	8.68

In the Pantry I counted 13 butchered pigs. The food is wonderful. **Breakfast:** Roasted flakes (wheat) fried egg, bacon, half a grapefruit, real coffee, tea with milk and sugar as one likes, rolls, butter and marmalade

Lunch: Soup, green beans, chicken with rice, mashed potatoes, dressing, raisin cake with cream, butter, coffee, rolls

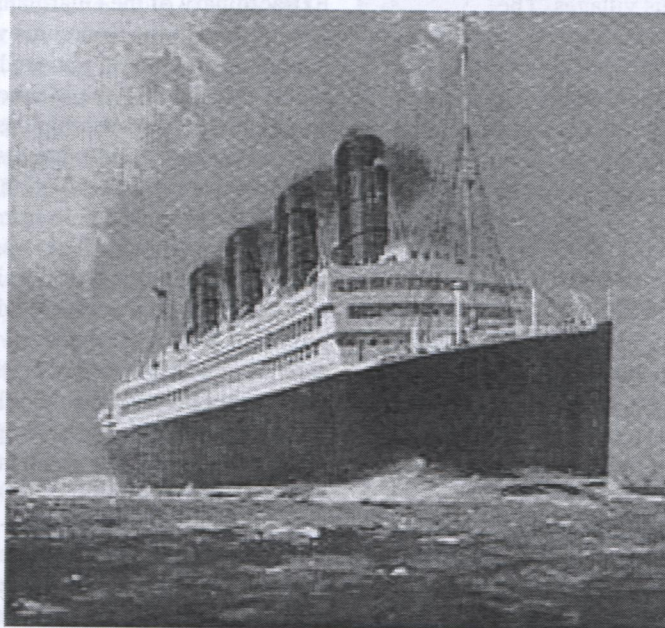
Dinner: Soup, baked potatoes, cooked potatoes, carrots, preserved plums with cream, coffee, butter, rolls.

We get a little bit of everything. There are eight of us at table 24. The same every day. At 4 PM we can get a cup of coffee with biscuits. Most passengers are now coming to the dining room.

26/01/48 The storm has abated somewhat. At night it was very rocky. Now the rocking is more side to side. It seems as if the ship is traveling a little faster. We hope to be in Halifax the day after tomorrow. Would like to step on solid ground again. There are still a few sick passengers, but most of them are well. The tables are becoming fuller and everyone is eating a lot. For breakfast we had an orange. Every day we get "Supowichje". It has become colder outside, but otherwise it is nice and warm. We are almost at the colder Labrador Stream and out of the warm Gulf Stream. The money we received is also getting less. One would like to eat something sour after all the sweets. Am eating the meat with good mustard. Real pepper is also always available. Now we are sitting in the Salon on A Deck on soft couches with little tables.. There are lots of things to buy to drink. Wine, lemonade etc.

Mennonites on the Ship

H. Woelk	5 Persons	Nicolaipol
H. Wiens	2 Persons	Einlage
Maria Rempel	2 Persons	Einlage
Miss Voth	1 Person	Molotschna
Kaethe Dick	5 Persons	Molotschna
Mrs. Holzrichter	1 Person	Chortitza
Miss Epp	2 Persons	Molotschna
Miss Janzen	2 Persons	
Johann Janzen	7 Persons	
Herm.Heinrichs	3 Persons	Molotschna?
Leni Pries	1 Person	Chortitza
Friesen	4 Persons	Osterwick
Walter de Fehr	1 Person	Molotschna
Rehan	1 Person	Molotschna
Bargen (Holland)	2 Persons	Nieder Chortitza
Nass	2 Persons	Molotschna
Mrs. Loewen	8 Persons	Molotschna
<u>Total</u>	<u>46 Persons</u>	



RMS Aquitania.

27/01/48. Slept well. The sea is quieter. It is cold,

Mountains along the coast covered in snow. At 5:50, pilot came aboard. Entered inlet to Halifax, the lights of the city visible. Landed at 6:00 AM. At 9:00 AM received \$15 per person, and train ticket to Beechy. Slept on ship.

28/01/48. Breakfast at 7. At 8, beginning of the immigration Commission, where we appeared at 11. 11:30, cleared customs, baggage transferred to train. We boarded the train to Montreal. Bought provisions for the trip for \$6—2 kilos sausages, 2 white breads, 5 apples, 10 oranges, 10 bottles lemonade. Have eaten our fill. On the train there are different things to buy. This is a special train that only stops at major stations. WE are supposed to arrive in Beechy on Saturday. We're accompanied by immigration officials. The train is heated, and we have hot and cold water. Lots of paper, and a mirror for shaving. The train rocks quite a bit. Train stations are simple. The countryside is hilly and wooded; no farms, but clear pastureland with many people. Much snow.

29/01/48...Arrived in Montreal. Greeted by MCC representative Mr. Warkentin. Went with him to town to buy provisions for 2 days: 5 white bread, one brown, sausage, butter, marmade, apples, oranges and bananas. Mary very tired. At 10 PM we boarded the train for Winnipeg, one extra car for 36 Mennonites.

31/01/48 Arrived in Winnipeg at 4:30, met by J. Wiebes (Hans Bergen's Mary)...Stayed in Winnipeg until Tuesday eve.

4/02/48. Arrived in Saskatoon....(The family was to stay in Beechy, but visited with friends and relatives in the area until February 28) The visiting was wonderful. Jake took us back March 2. It was cold and there was a snowstorm. On Mar. 3, Hedy went to work for Johann Braun. I'm am working for David at present. Mary started school March 1. She likes going to school.

The trip cost us \$1165. David has paid for us, and we gave him a receipt. On March 25, Kaethe started work at a café in Beechy.

What's in a Name?

Over time the Mennonites in Russia, especially in the Molotschna Colony developed a compendium of "nicknames" to describe the residents of the various villages. The designations were never complementary, but always pejorative, if not outright insulting. They were also always in their vernacular *Plautdietsch* (Low German), a vividly expressive tongue that is often most difficult to translate without losing the 'sense' of the expression. This may not be a particularly significant part of the Mennonite experience in Russia and would probably rate no higher than a 1.5 on a scale of 1 to 10. However, the Mennonite's sojourn in Russia was not only a tale of pious devotion, of magnificent achievement, or of equally noble suffering. It was also a tale of human interaction, of foibles and failings, and of the day to day minutiae of earning their daily bread. This little vignette was part of this more mundane part of our forefathers existence.

Nobody really knows when, or where, or how, this system of derogatory nicknames began. Since they were always pejorative, they probably began when one villager became annoyed with another in a neighbouring village and instead of violence, resorted to verbal abuse. Since generally speaking they would not blaspheme, other demeaning or derogatory language was used. Sometimes these names would rhyme with, or otherwise relate to the village name, othertimes not.

The village of Konteniusfeld was named after Judge Samuel Kontenius, a Silesian immigrant and career civil servant in the Imperial Russian Government. In 1799 he was sent on an inspection tour of the immigrant settlements in New Russia. After his

And Thus Shall They Be Called

By Edward Hildebrand

subsequent report, he was commissioned Chief Magistrate of the New Russian Agency for new Immigrants and later, Member Extraordinary of the Guardians Committee. Judge Kontenius was an honorable and honest man and was highly esteemed by the Mennonite community. His leadership ensured that the Mennonite immigrants of the second wave in 1803 would in fact receive the promised help from the Russian Government. This was in sharp contrast to the first immigrants who were never given the lands promised them and whose government assistance was embezzled by thieving and corrupt bureaucrats. Did the honors accorded the good Judge rebound to the worthy residents of the village carrying his name? Of course not! Their fellow Molotschna-ites called them *Kozzefelda*, (literally, Goat Fielders, or maybe Goat Herders). Many other villages had animal related names.

The villagers of Hierschau were called *Eemsjekjniopa*, (Ant Pinchers). I suppose someone accused them of getting their jollies by crawling along the ground pinching ant bottoms. Others in this category are: Schoenau - *Krauntjemaltja* (Crane Milkers, they must have pretended to be 'high flyers' because how else could you milk a crane?), Rueckenau - *Pogge* (Frogs), Sparrau - *Schpohlinge* or *Schpautze* (Sparrows), Schoensee - *Kroijs Nest* (Crow's nest), Fuerstenwerder - *Hupps Fleje* (Jumping Flies), and Paulsheim - *Pudleheima* (Doghouse Dweller).

Others, sometimes more, sometimes less insulting names related to their daily life. The villagers of Lindenau were called *Rullkoake* (Not really translatable but 'Fritters' will have to do), Wernersdorf - *Wauhmet Bultje* (Warm Bread), Neu Halbstadt -

Glummsbiedel (Cottage Cheese bags), Franztal - *Fortzevesohla* (in printable English - body gas spanker), Grosweide - *Bulleleida* (literally Bull Leaders, maybe Cow Herders), and Friedensdorf - *Kureijoolinja* (*Kurei* is a species of noxious weed, *joolinja* means yearlings - Weedyearlings). Some nicknames related closely to the village name, such as, Gnadenfeld - *Gnautzefelda* (*Gnautze* was a very infectious rash, something like eczema, occurring between the fingers), Waldheim - *Wauldheena* (Forest Hens), and Landeskronen - *Laundheena* (Land Hens or maybe Prairie Chickens).



The village of Altonau was sometimes called *Hunjsenj* (Dog's End - don't know which end). This name can be traced to a journey by the Tsar Alexander II from Moscow to the Crimea. Enroute he overnighed in the Molotschna village of Altonau. The villagers were concerned that His Imperial Majesty's sleep not be disturbed and therefore banished all the village dogs to the most distant end of the village. This sector was forever after known as the *Hunjsenj*, and sometimes the name was applied to the entire village.



Home of Heinrich Spers, Muensterberg (built in 1827)

Muensterberg—residents known as Dwoibiedel

The villagers of my own ancestral village of Muensterburg (Molotschna) were called *Dwoibiedel*. *Dwoi* is a cheese made by the fermentation of cottage cheese together with heavy cream. One explanation for the manufacture of this cheese was to have calcium rich milk products available for children during the season cows went 'dry'. (This may or may not be factual.) In any event the product was made by packing this mixture of cottage cheese and cream, well peppered, into cloth sacks and hanging them to ferment within the warm confines of the dwelling. The process, and the resulting product, were extremely smelly and created a stench throughout the house that would last for months. Therefore, when people called Muensterburgers *Dwoibiedel*, they were really calling them Stinky Cheese Bags.

Some nicknames were applied to entire colonies (mostly by Molotschna-ites). Residents of Sagradowka were called *Sagradowsche Zanze* (Sagradowka Scythes) *de Twee Schnedige* (double cutting) I first heard this term within my own family. My late mother, bless her, was a fairly typical hard working Mennonite lady and a proud daughter of Sagradowka. On one specific family project she was particularly ambitious, zealous, and hard driving, causing my father to good naturedly refer to her as a *Sagradowsche Zanz*. When I asked what the expression meant, he explained that when the Sagradowka colony was founded, mostly by sons

and daughters of Molotschna-ites, the new settlers started with very little. However, being ambitious hard working Mennonites, they were determined to catch up to the more established colonies. They worked so hard and diligently that some people accused them of over-doing it in the extreme. To accomplish quick success, they were even jokingly accused of inventing their own style of scythe that would cut not only on the forward stroke but also on the return or reverse stroke. I'm not sure that is even possible. But nevertheless, they were given the appellation *de Sagradowsche Zanz, de Twee Schniedige*.

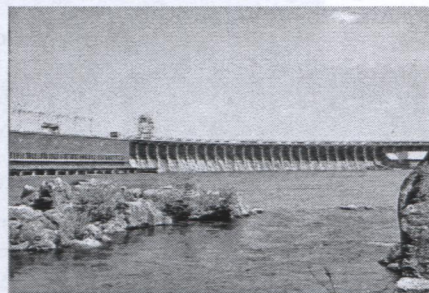
Sagradowka-ites were also called *Nohkloppasch* (literally, After Knockers). This somewhat pejorative term was used by Molotschna residents who wanted to accuse, usually in jest, their kinsfolk of continually coming home for more handouts. The parents or sponsors had purchased the lands and given the new settlers in Sagradowka their original stake. But apparently this was sometimes not enough. The new settlers were forever returning home and knocking on the door asking for more handouts. Therefore, *Nohkloppasch*.



Molotschna—Schwoatebroak Schwamma (E.H. photo)

Molotschna residents appear to have been quick to apply pejorative terms to

everyone else, but they did not escape unscathed. The Old Colony (Chortitza) referred to them as *Schwoatebroak Schwamma* (literally, Summer Fallow Swimmers). This may have been a derogatory reference to Molotschna's local flowing water, the Molotschnaya River.



Hydro-electric Dam on Dniepr River;
(photo from website:
[www.grooviespad.com/groovic/
ukraine/zaporizhzhya/Zaporozhye.htm](http://www.grooviespad.com/groovic/ukraine/zaporizhzhya/Zaporozhye.htm))

The Old Colony was located near the majestic Dnieper River (*aum Nippa*) and its broad sweeping waters that were quite suitable for swimming at that time and had long stretches of sandy beaches along its shores. The Molotschnaya River on the other hand was little more than a muddy creek, subject to flash floods. Attempting to swim in this water may well have been tantamount to swimming in Summer Fallow. But the Old Colonists nevertheless accused the Molotschna-ites of trying, therefore: *Schwoatebroak Schwamma*.

I will not attempt to credit my sources because they are many and varied, written and oral, and arose over a span of many years. Some sources are well remembered but others are problematic, or completely forgotten. Therefore, to be fair I thank them all anonymously. This is not a complete list of this element of Mennonite life in Russia. If readers can add other names, please write to the Editor, Roots and Branches, and we may some day publish a more complete list.

Letters from the Past: Peter P and Helena Martens Part 2

from the family archives of Lydia Isaak

Peter P. Martens was called into the Forstei in 1903 and has been away from home for 1 1/2 years now.

Helene manages the farm and takes care of baby Peter, born July, 1904. He manages to get home occasionally, but misses his wife and baby very much.



Private Forest Cottage,
Berdiansk, Melitopol
Tavrechesk. June 17, 1905

Dear Love,

I want to write you a few lines. I am well, thanks be to God, and I wish you and our dear Petja the same. I can't come home tomorrow—will tell you the reason when we next see each other. Nothing much new to report. What is Petja doing? Is he healthy or does he still have a bad cough? Things are going well here, but it's very hot. It must be harvest time at home—they are harvesting grain here now. Have the carpenters come, and are they working on the barn? You must be very busy now! Is my sister Susie healthier? Write me a few lines, so I know how things are at home...

A hearty greeting and kiss to my parents and siblings, and to you my love, and our little Peter.

your Peter

In this next letter, Peter is stationed in Simferopol. The couple now has two children., Peter, 3 and Lena, 18 months.

Simferopol, Crimea
7 December, 1907.

Dearly beloved Lensch,

A short letter, in reply to yours of Nov. 27. First, I wish you God's blessing and health for both body and soul.

As far as the deal with Dück from Lichtfelde, I'm at peace about it. If it has been sold, it was not meant to be ours. Don't worry about our future. God will take care of it, and will give us our own home if we trust in him...



Well, my love, what are you and the children doing? Do you miss your dear Papa a little bit? Soon I'll be coming home—in 10 days—we will all be so happy! Then we can gaze on each other again, kiss and love each other.

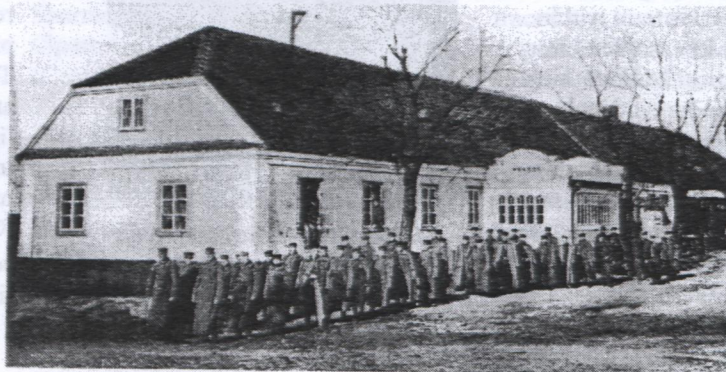
Time is going by quite quickly since I have a lot of work to do. I have to do a lot of calculations and difficult assignments so that I'm often up till 1 AM, but I enjoy it. I'm also taking two courses from an official in the Post office.

I am so happy that Lensch is healthy again. I have bought a Christmas present for Petja. Could you buy something for Lensch out there—I can't find anything for her. We discussed buying a fur coat here. I have checked out prices and they are more expensive here than at home, so don't send money.

Hans Friesen lives here in Simferopol. His Ana is doing very poorly. She's very ill—I went to visit them yesterday, but we could only see her for five minutes, then she asked to be left alone again. The doctor had given her three injections of morphine but nothing helped.

In the letter in which I wrote about Hans Friesen and the 1000 R. you have misunderstood what I meant. I'm not going to write more about it in case of more misunderstanding—it will be easier to explain in person.

Well, everything's fine, I'll be home soon my dear ones. Wishing us a happy reunion! your Peter.



Old Berdiansk
Forstei Barracks.
There were also 3
camps in
Kherson,
3 in Taurida,
2 in Ekatrinoslav
and 1 in Siberia.*

*(Hildebrand, a
family history,
by Ed Hildebrandt,
p. 80)



Peter Martens and Co-workers in the Forstei

back row, left to right: Johann Barkmann, Cornelius Thiessen (F.C.Thiessen's brother), Johann Regier, Peter Martens.
 front row: Abraham Wiens, Peter Sukkau, Heinrich Epp (died in Yarrow) Abraham Wiebe.

The Edith Smith Coincidence

by Ron Isaak

In a previous article concerning Mennonite transport of immigrants to Paraguay I stated that I was looking for more contact information. I had some obituaries and family details that were the result of several years of sporadic efforts to obtain more information on our Isaak relatives in Paraguay. Not a single contact had been found who could provide the names and or an address for direct contact with this family, until the "Edith Smith" coincidence.

This revolves around the placement of my mother-in-law (Edith Smith, nee Leach) in the Tabor Home care facility in Abbotsford. On being admitted we

learned that Mom Smith will be sharing a room until single accommodation comes available. Her 'roommate', Maria Unruh, speaks very little English and Mom Smith speaks no German. My wife Bonnie and I got to talking to Mrs Unruh (age 90 and nee Stahl), her in accented English with German phraseology and me in my very poor German. She told us she came to Canada from Paraguay in 1959 but was born in Russia.

I inquired further and asked her if she was in Moelln Germany and which transport did her family take to Paraguay. She asked why I was interested. I told her about my

grandfather's brother Gerhard Isaak. She smiled and said "oh, the Gerhard Isaak with all the girls?" (The family had 13 children and 10 were girls). "Yes" I said and she replied "well the second youngest one, Agnes Isaak, is married to my nephew Albert Stahl!!" Can you believe it!! My (English) mother-in-law is a key to finding an address and contact in Paraguay for my 'lost' great uncle and his family. I have written to them and look forward to getting more information and expanding this part of our family tree.

Ron Isaak
 Member MHSBC

Letters
from the far

Peter P. M...
Forst in 19...
from home fo...
Holme man...
care of baby...
He manages to...
but never li...
much.

DER BOTE

by Irene Bergen, translated by Louise Bergen Price

When we came to Canada in 1948, the only books we owned were the Bible and hymnbook we'd received from MCC, so the Mennonite periodical, *Der Bote*, became a very welcome guest in our home.

During the week there is no time to read, but on Saturday afternoon Mom finally has time to sit down. The house is clean, the floors washed and polished, buffed to a shine with an old soft sweater. Buns are rising on baking sheets on the table.

Saturday she does not have to cook supper—the evening meal will be fresh buns, boiled eggs, tea and coffee. So she sits on the wood box, tending the oven, waiting until it's just the right temperature to bake the buns. The first baking sheets go in, and soon aroma of Zwieback baking mingles with the smell of Johnson's paste wax. Mom leans back and reads. First the lists of new immigrants to Canada, then the devotional "Licht von Oben." Such interesting stories and poems, too—she's lost in another world when suddenly someone comes into the kitchen—"Mmm, fresh buns!"

Ach du liebe Zeit, they're too brown again! Can't put them in front of Faspas guests like that! She'll have to pay more attention next time. She shakes the buns, golden with just a hint of brown on the crust, onto the table, and slides two more sheets into the oven. She takes *Der Bote* and moves to a chair near the window where the light is better.

Dad comes into the kitchen, sees the fresh crusty buns on the table, nicely browned, just the way he likes them. Mom is so deeply immersed in the paper, she doesn't notice he's in the room. He takes a piece of firewood, slides it quietly into the oven—just to help the next batch turn out as perfectly brown and golden as the first.

At Sunday Faspas, along with fresh buns and coffee, the discussion centers around news and stories from *Der Bote*. The children have their own page: *Der Kinderbote*, filled with stories and poems.

In the mid-fifties, when the Iron Curtain opens, *Der Bote* and its cousin paper, the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, are filled with lists of people searching for relatives. *Jakob Bergen of Schönhorst, now living in Germany, born 1928, looking for his family... Peter Bergen of Schönhorst, living in Russia, born 1931, ...*Hundreds of families finally receive news about friends and loved ones.

When large numbers of Umsiedler leave Russia in the 1980's and 90's, there are lists in *Der Bote*, this time of people who've moved to Germany. Again people scan the lists and wonder—will there be family members, friends among these names?

For many years now, *Der Bote* has been a welcome guest in the homes of Russian Mennonites. Now when Mom and her friends gather for Faspas of coffee and Zwieback, they often ask: Have you read in *Der Bote* that this person has died, too?



your Peter