Eureka: Its Finished!

HSHS completes Volume 3; Historical Sketches.

Some 20 board members and contributors to Historical Sketches, Volume Three of the East Reserve Historical Series, gathered at the SRC lounge on December 22, 1994, to celebrate its completion. A brief program was highlighted by words of congratulations by Professor Adolf Enns on behalf of the West Reserve and the presentation of an honorarium to editor John Dyck to recognize all his hard work.

The writers and board members of the Hanover Steinbach Historical Society had been anxiously awaiting this event. In fact, a large public book launch had been tentatively planned to mark its release. Because of delays in the completion of the book it was not physically available until December 21.

In fact, for a while it seemed that it would not be available before Christmas at all. This is a bad time of the year to plan any event but it was felt that something should be done to mark such an important occasion. We decided to hold a private "coffee klatch" for writers and board members only.

The turnout was great. Everyone enjoyed some well-deserved accolades as complimentary copies of the book were handed out. The enthusiasm in the air was invigorating as the writers checked themselves out in print.

Contributors Pose

In a sense HSHS has been working with Volume 3 since the publication of Volume 1, Working Papers in 1990. The work for some of the articles which have now finally been published was started well before 1990. In 1993 the Bergthal Gemeindebuch was published and its preparation had absorbed much energy of our energy for the preceding two years. But this was really only a reproduction of existing sources.

Finally, our new work representing ground breaking research, new and previously unpublished documents, and some of the best history writing ever, is finished.
Vol 3: A Description

Historical Sketches of the East Reserve 1874-1910
(Volume Three in the East Reserve Historical Series)

By John Dyck

What Bergfeld "Shrock" farmer made loans at interest to pioneer Steinbach business people? Who was the first Mennonite to train as a medical doctor in America and open a practise in Winnipeg with his brother-in-law? (He later went to Rosetown). Can pioneer East Reserve farmers be credited with starting Erasmian Penner on the road to becoming a millionaire?

Which East Reserve Mennonite Aeltester went to Mountain Lake to organize the church there and to ordain their first Aeltester? Which former East Reserve resident helped elect Cornelius Hiebert to the first Alberta legislature? Who built the first windmill in Steinbach in 1877? Which church was moved in 1917 by a steam engine assisted by horses?

Answers to these and other questions can be found in Hanover Steinbach Historical Society's recently released Historical Sketches of the East Reserve 1874-1910. The book consists of 720 pages of history written by eighteen researcher/writers and depicting a broad range of experiences of residents in the pioneer East Reserve community. The book is divided into four topical sections, each dealing with different aspects of the settlement.

A section on village histories is followed by biographies of pioneer leaders to tell us about life in the village and about the people who gave it leadership. The variety of pioneer "sketches" in the book will broaden the understanding of the people and places that made up that community and give succeeding generations a greater appreciation for the diversity that existed among them.

The sixteen chapters in the first section tell the story of eighteen pioneer villages. Each village was a unique community with its own individual characters who helped give the village a distinctive personality. Some of those villages, like Schoenfeld and Tunnernau, disappeared entirely when residents relocated to the West Reserve in 1879-81. Other villages, like Alt Bergfeld and Hochfeld, survived until the emigration to Paraguay. Still others, like Krousshal and Ebenfeld, were transformed into, or absorbed by, new communities under anglicized names - in these cases, both well and Mitchell.

While information on some of the villages has been sparse, other villages have had scribes who recorded the experiences of individual villagers as well as community events. Altona was never an organized village on the East Reserve and most of its families soon established a village by the same name on the West Reserve. While that left little village history to record, that story was still significant in the context of the larger East Reserve history. Furthermore, the next generation had legitimate questions regarding the origin of the name and that question needed an answer. The same could be said for other similar communities.

Jacob Wiebe of Alt-Bergfeld kept a journal of his ocean journey and early settlement and village experiences. He and his children continued to write about some of the later events. This has provided information from which a substantial record can be developed of that community. Similar journals were kept by other pioneers.

The biographies section starts with the stories of four businessmen/farmer, two of Bergthal/Chortitzer background and two of Kline Gemeinde background, whose North American careers started in this community. In their later lives they spread their influence over a broad landscape in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the midwestern states and along the west coast. Their stories are an important part of our heritage.

Aeltester Gerhard Wiebe and David Stoessel and minister Heinrich Friesen worked hard to organize the Bergthal/Chortitzer continued on next page.
A Description
continued from previous page

Church on the East Reserve and also helped organize what later became the Berghal and Sommerfield Mennonite churches on the West Reserve. Their service to the Fargo and Mountain Lake Mennonite communities is probably less known. Gerhard Wiebe went to Mountain Lake to ordain Abraham for the First Mennonite Church there.

The biography of minister Peter R. Reimer details some of the similar efforts on behalf of the Kleine Gemeinde congregation. The separate biography of Maria Plett Reimer offers a glimpse of the significant, but frequently unrecorded, impact which women had in the pioneer community. Many more of these stories are waiting to be told.

A section on ministers' journals and sermons tells volumes about the concerns these leaders had for the spiritual condition of their flocks. The journals give us insight into the lives of lay ministers who had to carve a livelihood out of virgin soils while finding time to give spiritual guidance to friends and neighbours who made up their congregations. At the same time they made trips to give support to members of their congregations and other people who moved to Fargo, Mountain Lake and later the Hague-Olser and Herbert communities.

A chapter on researching and writing family histories pools the varied experiences of four knowledgeable researcher/writers and offers some excellent tips on how to develop a good family history. Each of these writers brings his/her own interests and experiences to bear on the subject. The value of many of these suggestions is illustrated in the Thiessen family history which follows. A subsequent commentary on Johann W. Thiessen, a member of the same clan, adds to our knowledge of that family and offers a further example of how to write family stories.

Comparing the experiences of pioneering Mennonites in Manitoba with other similar groups has become a major study for Dr. Royden Loewen. In this fascinating chapter he compares experiences of Mennonites in Manitoba and Nebraska.

In the final chapter, lawyer Delbert Plett details the largely unrecognized contributions to the Mennonite print culture made by East Reserve Mennonites. The surprisingly long list of materials printed by and on behalf of pioneer East Reserve Mennonites has certainly made an impact on the direction taken by the community.

The eighteen researchers/writers who have taken the time to document the stories in this volume have made a rich and lasting contribution to the history of Manitoba and to our understanding and appreciation of the pioneer East Reserve community.

Historical sketches can be ordered from HSHS Box 1960, Steinbach, Manitoba R0A 2A0. $10.00 plus $4.00 postage.

Loewen Wins Prize

The Committee on the Albert B. Corey Prize has selected Royden K. Loewen's book Family, Church and Market as the winner of the 1994 competition. The prize is awarded annually to a historical work having relevance to both Canada and the United States.

We at the HSHS are proud of Roy's success in the world of North American academia. It is difficult for any writer who presents Kanadier or 1870s Manitoba Mennonites in a balanced and positive way to obtain recognition among Russian Mennonite academics and so we recognize Roy for the ground breaking work he is doing.

Presentation of Honourarium

President Delbert Plett, presents the honourarium to editor John Dyck, acknowledging his dedicated service. Prof. Adolp Fox bottom right. (Photo by Henry Fast)

Visiting at the book launch l. to r. Orlando Hiebert, D. Plett, Linda Duhler, Jake Doerksen and Mr. and Mrs. John Hiebert. (Photo by Henry Fast)
Editorial
by Delbert F. Plett Q.C.

It was with deep regret that I and other members of the HSHS executive received Wilmer Penner's decision to step aside as editor of Preserving. With his renowned stature as Manitoba's premier playwright and director of Low German drama, Wilmer has given our infant newsletter status and recognition which might otherwise have taken years to develop.

Wilmer's decision to take on the position of editor shows his depth as a person and the scope of his experience. Few of the younger people realize that Wilmer was once a star quarterback and football strategist who took his Lundmark Dutchmen team to several championships during the 1960s. At that time he was teaching at the University of Winnipeg. After a stint in South Africa and farming, he returned to his first love teaching 10 years ago.

I am always amused when individuals of Wilmer's immense talent and intelligence are willing to direct their energies to their own culture when the same could undoubtedly have earned them recognition and financial rewards if applied at a national or even international level.

Wilmer is truly a renaissance man and the HSHS will be forever indebted to him for bringing to life (and also naming) Preserving as our newsletter.

The board of directors has appointed myself as the interim acting editor, a position which I have agreed to carry out for a year or two. Fortunately Wilmer has already established the tone and format which will make the task immeasurably easier.

At the same Board meeting it was decided to make an appeal for an assistant editor. Someone, perhaps, who might be interested in taking over in a year or so or even just helping out temporarily. The main qualification is an interest in writing and the culture of the Hanover Steinbach area with a few evenings to devote to each issue. Anyone interested is asked to call me at 326-6454 or Wpg line 474-3031.

On a sadder note, I refer to Eugene Derksen who passed away July 16, 1994. As a historical society we wish to recognize individuals who are involved in heritage preservation. Eugene's accomplishments in this field were outstanding.

His cherished avocation was the "Heritage Village Museum" in Steinbach. Through his stalwart support as a founder, director, active executive member, and frequent financial contributor, Eugene breathed life and energy into the institution and will be sadly missed.

He also contributed in many other ways. Through his business "Derksen Printers" he sponsored many books which would not have been published otherwise. Reflections on our Heritage, for example, was funded by Derksen and would not have happened were it not for his vision. This journalistic look at Steinbach and area published as a centennial history in 1974 is an invaluable source of information.

Another example: in 1981, he printed the English translation of Berghalder Gerhard Wiebe's Emigration from Russia to America at no charge. It was his modest gift to the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society for which he typically declined all recognition.

In 1989, he and Harry Peters, another family member, made the initial contributions of money for research which resulted in the publication of John Dyck's pioneering biography of Oberschulze Jakob Peters (1813-1884), the first Municipal leader of what is now the R. M. of Hanover.

The list goes on. The worth of such endeavours only increases as the years and decades go by. Through these and countless other projects Eugene's contribution to our community will live on forever.

In Remembrance

EUGENE DERKSEN

Announcement

Linda Buhler is interested in editing a series of articles about women who have contributed to the culture of the East Reserve, Hanover-Steinbach area. The first article of this series appears on page 12. Anyone interested in contributing an article is asked to contact Linda at 326-1426 or write Box 2895, Steinbach, Manitoba R0A 2A0.

Coming in the next issue

Aeltester Gerhard Wiebe (1827-1900) of Chortitz, Manitoba, was the most famous pioneer of our community. Historians have given him a bad rap calling him "fearful, paranoic and ignorant." Dr. Adolf Ens, in Vol. 3, p. 318, calls these assessments "inadequate." The June, 1995 issue will feature several articles about Gerhard Wiebe. Is it too late to set the record straight?
The Naming of Prefontaine Road

By Jacob Doerksen

Two miles north of Provincial Road 311 and Provincial Trunk Highway 59 we find Prefontaine Road. The story of how this road got its name contains a lot of important Mennonite history. It is the story of the forming of Public School Districts among Mennonites and how one man helped lessen the blow.

One of the reasons for the Berghal Colony Mennonites to come to Canada was because in the initial dealings with the Canadian Government they were promised complete freedom to operate their own schools. This was to continue only until 1916. But signs of Government interference had already started earlier.

In 1890 the Protestant Majority in Manitoba thought it was time to take over all school operations in the province. Catholic public schools were done away with and a plan was put in place to entice the Mennonites to accept Government involvement in their schools.

Dr. Bryce, a Presbyterian minister, was in charge of handling the Mennonite situation. He helped bring Mr. Ewert to Manitoba to serve as Inspector and teacher to help swing Mennonite schools over to the public system. He portrayed himself as a friend but little did the Mennonite group in Regina know that only months before he had spoken out very strongly against religious instructions in public schools. Religious instructions in school was very important to all Mennonites. But thanks to the French Catholics the Government plan was scuttled when the Federal Government became involved.

So for the next number of years the plan to change all schools to Public Schools progressed very slowly. Much too slow for those in control. By 1916 the government had already alienated themselves with most Mennonites over school involvement; even those who had excepted the extended Olive Branch in 1890. The time for more drastic action had come. The Public School Attendance Act had been passed the year before and now all bilingual Schools were abolished. The Mennonites and other Nationalities had operated those Public Schools created amongst them as bilingual schools.

Now those schools were abolished along with all private schools not teaching the prescribed curriculum and Public, English only, schools were put in their place. The Mennonites had much to fear. Statements like those made by Premier Roblin a few years earlier when he said, "While we welcome all, our duty to British Subjects is to see that the children are taught the principles of the British Constitution ... What we need is to get the youth filled with traditions of the British Flag and then when they are men they will be able to defend it." had already caused great concern amongst the Mennonites. Many of the Mennonite Elders were not familiar with the English language. If the children were going to be taught English only, they would surely lose them. In all the situation did not look good.

Although Public School legislation was in place by 1916 the change to Public School Districts only started taking place after the War in 1919. At this time four distinct groups made up the Mennonite community on the East Reserve. The Holdeman, Kleine Gemeinde, Old Berghalder, by then known as the Chortitza and the Bruderthal.

Out of these four the Chortitza showed most resistance to the Public Schools. They together with the Sommerfelder on the West Reserve did a lot of negotiating with the government without any success. Dr. Thornton, the Minister of Education would not bend. The Chortitza wanted no part in public education, therefore, they would not take part in forming any of the new public school districts. As a result, during the first few years, all of the districts where the Chortitza lived were given English names. This went on until 1922 when the Liberal Government of T.C. Norris was defeated.

By this time many Mennonites were leaving Canada and others threatened to do so. The Chortitza tried to secure their position to the point were they could at the very least keep teachers from their own congregations. This also failed. So they also decided to leave. They asked for a delay on the forming of new school districts. It was unofficially granted. Albert Prefontaine was named to the cabinet. He together with another Catholic, P.A. Talbot, worked hard for standards in education that were more acceptable to the Mennonites as well as their own people.

The moratorium on forming public school districts on the East Reserve ended in 1926. Those school districts which were formed previously but still operating as Private Schools were now taken over by the Public Trustee and in those areas where public districts had not yet been formed, they were now formed. At this time, however, other than English only names were used. Rosengard for instance kept its name and the school to be located on the southwest corner of section 10 township 8 range 4E was given the name Prefontaine School. It was named after the long time politician and friend of the Mennonites, Albert Prefontaine. The school operated until 1969 when it was closed. Today Prefontaine Road, which is the road next to where the school stood, is the only reminder we have of this long time friendship of a dedicated politician who helped the Mennonites through difficult times.

David Jtudy, Member of Parliament for Provencher, presents $5,000 cheque to HSHS representatives Irene Eunis Kroeker and Orlando Hibert. The Board of Directors of the HSHS express its appreciation to Mr. Jtudy for his assistance in obtaining this grant.
The Wiebes of Eigenfeld

By Peter D. Wiebe, New Bothwell

Abraham Wiebe I was born in Prussia in 1752. He came from the village of Nuedorf, G.R. Werder, in the Vistula Delta of Prussia. He moved to Russia with his family; wife and three daughters Maria (b. 1774); Aganetha (b. 1780); Agatha (b. 1785) in 1788 and settled in the village of Nuedorf, Russia. He was blind, and was accompanied by his brother Claus. His wife died shortly after arriving in Russia, and around 1791, he married Helena (b. 1772) 21 years of age, and two more children were born; Abraham II (b. 1794); Martin (b. 1797). By the 1802 census Abraham had died, and his widow remarried Johann Peters and had four more children; two girls and two boys. The Wiebe family homestead was taken over by the Peters family lineage.

Abraham Wiebe II was born in Nuedorf, Russia on July 5, 1794 and married Anna Janzen on March 24, 1818 (b. Oct. 21, 1797, d. May 29, 1852). Abraham Wiebe II died on Jan. 12, 1851. Children Abraham III (b. Jan. 14, 1819); Peter (b. Aug. 13, 1822); Cornelius (b. Dec. 1, 1826); Martin (b. Nov. 11, 1830); Maria (b. Feb. 1, 1833); Anna (b. Nov. 4, 1837). The family moved to Berghel.

Abraham Wiebe III was born Jan. 14, 1819 (in Nuedorf?) in Russia, and was baptized by Aeltester Jacob Dyck in 1838. He married Susanna Kopp (b. Nov. 24, 1816 in Prussia) on March 9, 1839. She was from Rosengard, Russia. They had six children, four boys and two girls with Maria dying at five days of age. Mother Susanna died at age 31 years, 11 months in Oct. 29, 1848. Abraham remarried Maria Klassen on Feb. 20, 1849 (b. Feb. 18, 1821, d. Jan. 7, 1855). They had another four children, three boys and one girl with David dying with the mother in childbirth on Jan. 7, 1855. He then married Aganetha Dyck from Nuedorf, on June 5, 1855 (she was 24, he was 36). They had another 10 children, the first and third died two days apart at ages five and two, for a total living children of 16. (Possibly Helena died in Russia, or stayed in Russia, as she is not listed on ship or census records). They came to Canada on July 20, 1876 on the S.S. Sardinian #39, Abraham was 56, his third continued on next page.

Photo taken around 1900. Margarettha (Krahn) Kehler married Abram B. Wiebe (b. 1846) April 13, 1880. Children l. to r.; Katherine, married widower Abraham L. Friesen whose son Abraham lived in Mitchell on NW 32-6-6E which land also belonged to grandfather Wiebe who owned six quarters of land, Heinrich who died at age of 21, Margarettha (Mrs. David Huebert), Abram (1881-1951). Abram farmed on the family homestead. This photo is representative of the many fine old pictures still in private collections that need to be preserved. Linda Buhler has collected many such photos and published some in her 3 articles in Volume 3, including this photo of the Wiebe family at p. 111. (Photo courtesy of George F. Kehler)
The Wiebes

continued from previous page

wife Azariah was 44. They came with seven children, one of which Heinrich age eight died and was buried at sea. Of the remaining six children the second oldest was Johann age nine. They left their home in Schoenthal Village, Bergthal Colony, Russia to take out a homestead near Steinbach, Man., in a village or hamlet called Eigenfeld.

Of the other children by his first and second wife; only four; Martin, Konnehls, Wilhelm and Anna Bueckert (nee Wiebe) are listed as having come to Canada. The other four, ranging in age at this time of 21 to 33 years, probably remained in Russia. We know son Abraham was living in Steinau, Russia in 1887.

Abraham Wiebe III shows up in the Land Titles as having registered homestead on the SW Section 33-6-6E on May 3, 1877, about 1 1/2 miles due west of present day Steinbach. This was the village or Hamlet of Lichtenau/Eigenfeld, close to the then village of Nuendorf and roughly just northwest of where Homestead Crescent is today. Fire insurance records list his assets up to 1884; tax rolls 1883-84, census 1881, and Selcin Lists for 1883 list Abraham and family, his brother Konnelius with his adult sons Kornelius, Jacob and families, his brother Peter and (Peter’s) son Abram and families.

His fire insurance was cancelled in 1884, which usually meant the person died or moved to “Yonksied,” but this case I think, on the basis of a letter in the Mennon. Rundschau in 1887 that Abraham III died in 1887 and is buried on his homestead quarter. There is an unregistered cemetery plot listed on this quarter.

I don’t think he moved to “Yonksied” because he is not listed in any of the West Reserve villages or cemeteries.

But this question remains, if he died in 1887, why was his fire insurance cancelled in 1884? Not only was Abraham III a pioneer in Canada, he was 17 years old when the Bergthal Colony was established. His parents were a part of this new settlement, so he was certainly no stranger to pioneer life.

Two of Abraham III’s sons; Johann (b. Aug. 3, 1866); Jacob (b. Jan. 20, 1858) homesteaded northeast of Plum Coulee in the West Reserve. The homestead of Johann (NW 7-3-2) is still occupied by grandson, Leonard Wiebe, with some of the original house still in use after considerable renovation. Johann Wiebe fathered 13 children, the oldest being Peter (b. 1888), my grandfather. Peter had five sons; Peter, Diedrich, Jacob, Johann, Abram (four more children died in infancy); Diedrich (b. July 25, 1912) was my father.

The Abraham Wiebe (b. 1819) referred to above, had a brother Peter Wiebe (b. 1821), who also settled in Eigenfeld. His son Abram Wiebe (b. 1848) married a widow Gerharda Kehler, nee Margaret Bernhard Krahn (b. 1844). They had a son Abram Wiebe (1881-1951) who continued to farm on the family homestead, SW 33-6-6E, and who passed it on to his son Abram D. Wiebe who passed it on to his son Dick Wiebe in 1990.

Notes:
2. Families of 1788 Migration to Russia by Marianne Janzen.
3. Census 1795, 1795. By the time of the 1802 census Abraham died.
4. Letter written by Corinella Warkentin and Connelius Regier dated May 10, 1794. “Wir selbst wurden bis zu Tranen geruhr, da unter vielen anderen, die sich an den Wangen drangen, auch der blinde Abram Wiebe befand.” Abraham Wiebe I is the only person by this name listed in the 1795 census. He moved there in 1788. Conclusion — he must be the blind Abraham Wiebe referred to by Warkentin and Regier. Note: Researcher Henry Schapansky does not agree with this conclusion, but it appears to be the only possible explanation.

8. B.H. Unruh and Stump agree that Claus and Abraham were related — Shapansky does not.
9. Partial family records, some show birthdate 1795.
11. Family records.
Mennonite Landing Site Dedication

It was August 1, 1994, the 120th anniversary of the arrival of the first Mennonite immigrants to Manitoba. The day had broken fresh and clean. Bright sunshine flooded the site where the first 65 families, including my great-grandparents, Blumenort teacher Cornelius P. Friesen had disembarked.

As I turned south along the river road from the corner of P.R. 311, I soon noticed a long line of cars parked along the highway. This was unbelievable. Cars were parked for a mile along the road.

The site itself was over flowing with people. The idea of a landing site cairn and park had obviously caught something in the Mennonite psyche. It had been a long time since I had seen 500 people out to any Mennonite function where someone wasn't being buried.

Guest speaker former Governor-General Edward Schreyer referred to a speech by a predecessor of his Governor-General Lord Dufferin, who in 1877 marvelled over the 60 flourishing villages which had sprung up as if by magic and almost doubled Manitoba's population in three years. Schreyer added "that Dufferin would certainly have been impressed 120 years later."

Guest speaker Milo Schantz is a direct descendant of Jakob Schantz, an "old" Mennonite from Waterloo, Ontario, who worked as an agent for the Canadian government to assist the Russian Mennonite settlement in Manitoba.

Also addressing the audience was C. Wilbert Loewen the initiator of the project. He challenged young people to ask the question, "What mean these stones?" (A quote from Joshua) in finding out stories about their own roots.

Professor Royden K. Loewen acted as Master of Ceremonies. He provided the historical background of the immigration and its significance to Canada's development. He pointed out that the site "is a beautiful spot — a natural stopping place for people travelling Highway 75."

Current plans are to locate some barbecue pits and picnic tables at the site. A beautiful place to come to reflect and fellowship with family and friends. This is an ideal way to commemorate the courage and fortitude of the 1874 pioneers — much better than some monument in front of a government building someplace that is seen and used only by pigeons.

The natural beauty of the landing site — its harbour of ash and oaks, the shaded path down the bank, the gently burning river — speaks proudly of the drama which took place here 120 years ago.

The cairn serves as a gentle reminder of the faith which led these settlers to leave their prosperous Wirtschaften in Southern Russia to reestablish their communities in southern Manitoba.

The Landing Site Committee consists of Chairman C. Wilbert Loewen, treasurer Orlando Hieber, Frank Driek of Rosenort (since deceased), and Professor Royden K. Loewen.

Drama Group

A photo of the drama group which performed at the event l. to r.: Rodney Kroeker - Rudy, Carol Kroeker - Lies, children left to right: Maryann Funk - Mariche, Susan Funk - Sus, Jennifer Funk - Teahet, Jason Friesen - Jacob. (Photo by Erland Hieber)
August 1, 1994
Mennonite Landing
Site Dedication


Unveiling the cairn
Orlando Hiebert, Ed Schreyer, Mr. and Mrs. Milo Schaniz pose in front of cairn. (Photo by Henry Fast)

C. Wilbert Loewen with son Chris and son-in-law Royden Loewen. (Photo by Sheila Reid)

Roy Loewen standing by gate. Stan Plett, President of Steinbach Bible College standing by other post. (Photo by Henry Fast)
The Moravian Brethren

By Dick Wiebe, R.R.1, Ste. Anne

I received the January 3, 1994 issue of the *H.S.I.S. Preservations* in the morning mail and was quite impressed by an article by John Dyck regarding the humanitarian aid the Manitoba Mennonites had rendered to the Moravian Brethren in Bruderheim, Alberta in the mid 1890s.

I found it interesting that after 75 years these Moravian Brethren had not forgotten about the aid as their church Secretary Arthur Settler invited Bishop Henry Schellenberg of the C.M.C. to their 75th anniversary in 1970. (Apparently Bishop Schellenberg was unable to attend due to other commitments at that time.)

At noon the day I read this article, my cousin, Mrs. Neta Klippenstein, phoned me that she had come across some bunch of old letters and documents. Neta’s brother who was helping clean up the vacant house was about to put the box into the bonfire when she asked him, “What’s in there?” “Oh,” he replied, “just some old letters and papers that nobody can read.” “Let’s not burn them yet,” she said, “maybe I can find somebody that can read them.”

Now this morning Neta said, “I thought that you being older and the only cousin of ours from Dad’s side of the family, you would probably have the most interest in this material.”

She asked if I could still read German, to which I replied, “Yes, but not very fluently but I can still comprehend it.”

Well she said, “then it makes more sense if you have this stuff.”

While leafing through the letters my eyes all of a sudden popped wide open. In my hand I had an envelope postmarked Bruderheim, Alberta, May 9, 1895, addressed to our great-grandfather Bishop David Stoesz of the C.M.C.

Receiving the *Preservations* newsletter that morning, I quickly turned to the article on the Moravian Brethren in Bruderheim and noticed that there was a definite connection here. The letter I had in my hand was from Pastor A. Lilge of the Moravian Brethren in Bruderheim, thanking Bishop Stoesz and his congregation for the food, horses and other aid that they had sent by rail to Edmonton, which is about 25 miles northwest of Bruderheim.

Going through the box, I found four more letters written by Pastor Lilge to Bishop Stoesz dating from October 30, 1895 to October 3, 1900.

“Neta!” I said to my cousin, “I definitely had a hand in this, as these letters wouldn’t have nearly the significance to me if I hadn’t read the *Preservations* newsletter this morning.”

“Well,” she said, “I just got an urge this morning that I should at least have a look at them.”

Some weeks later after reading the other four letters and having talked to John Dyck, of the Historical Society as to what I had come across, my wife and I decided that we’d make a slight detour on our trip to Calgary in summer and see if we could find any of the Moravian Brethren in Bruderheim.

August 8, in our motel room in Edmonton I was paging through the telephone directory to see if I could find any names of people or churches that could give me a lead. I saw the name Arthur Stellter, Fort Saskatchewan. I dialed the number and a lady answered.

After introducing myself and explaining the purpose of the call she replied, “Yes this is the Arthur Stellter residence you are referring to but, Mr. Stellter passed away a year ago. I have heard him talk about the Moravian Brethren and with the help of the Historical Society I think I could give you a lead.”

Now this morning Neta said, “I thought that you being older and the only cousin of ours from Dad’s side of the family, you would probably have the most interest in this material.”

The next morning we drove to Bruderheim and without any trouble found the Bruderheim Moravian Church. Luckily, there were two persons at the church at the time we arrived there, a Mr. Frey and Mr. Barkman. When we introduced ourselves and showed them the letters of Pastor Lilge to Bishop Stoesz and explained our relationship to Bishop Stoesz they were just completely overwhelmed. It was so amazing that it took only a couple of minutes to establish the common faith in Jesus Christ that we share, and we just praised Him that after 99 years these letters would still reappear. They assured me the photocopies of the letters by Pastor Lilge that I gave them would be much appreciated by their members and their postor (who was on holidays at the time) and would be well preserved. I know it’s wishful thinking, but wouldn’t it be something if someone out there would come across some letters written by Bishop Stoesz to Pastor Lilge?

After having lunch at the Frey house and a lot of reminiscing we went back and toured the new church building on which they just started the inside finishing work.

They started construction on this building three years ago and are only continuing construction as money becomes available. They are not relying on pledges or loans. Their target is to have the $700,000 plus 8,000 square foot project completed by May 1995 for their 100th anniversary. They insisted that we accept their invitation to attend the two-day celebration. They also expressed a sincere desire that Bishop Hildebrand also attend and participate in the program. Anybody else interested in coming would be most welcome too, they assured us. My wife and I are looking forward to a wonderful time in Bruderheim next May.

Steinbach Pioneer Monument

It started years ago, what to do about memorializing my mother’s grandparents who drowned in the Red River in June, 1875.

Rev. Jacob Barkman’s body was recovered the same day. Mr. Jacob Friesen’s body was washed downstream and floated ashore a week later. His body was promptly buried in Winnipeg in a rough box. Mr. Barkman’s body was transported by a Mr. Beauchemin on an ox cart to Steinbach for a proper funeral and buried somewhere in Steinbach in an unmarked grave.

After some inquiring we found others with grandfathers also buried in unmarked graves in the “Pioneer Cemetery” or elsewhere.

November 15, 1994 a meeting was called at Pioneer Inn. Some 25 people attended. This group decided to move ahead to erect a solid granite cairn in tribute to the original 18 settlers on Main Street together with their wives regardless where they are buried.

The Town of Steinbach has now given approval to erect same in Pioneer Cemetery just inside the gate. Also they will issue tax deductible receipts to donors toward this project identified as “Pioneer Cairn Project.”

We propose a granite column approximately 50 inches at the base tapered slightly upward and tall enough to accommodate names of nine settlers and their wives on each of two sides. The front is to quote a suitable epitaph. We welcome your suggestions. The back side is to be dedicated to Barkman and Friesen who drowned in the service of their community.

By the middle of January, 1995 we plan to call another general meeting to gather your input, suggestions and to elect or reelect a new executive of five.

Fund-raising has begun and we are anticipating help from the town, the province, our country and local corporations. May we count on you?

Submitted by Harvey Bartell on behalf of “Pioneer Cairn Project.”
Gleanings from the 1835 Molotschna Census: Herman Friesen

By Henry Fast

Among the North American immigrants of the 1870s we find a number of families who seem to have lost their ancestral link in the Mennonite family tree. One of these was Heinrich Delesky Friesen (1827-1877) who settled in the Hochstadt district of the East Reserve in 1877. According to letters in the Mennonitische Rundschau, Heinrich had been a painter and dyer of cotton cloth in a number of villages in the Molotschna Colony and may never have been the owner of a farm in Russia. His early death in 1877 also contributed to the slow economic growth of the remaining family members. (see Jacob S. Friesen - Reminiscences, July, 1993)

Heinrich's sons, Gerhard, Heinrich and Jacob were prolific correspondents to the MR and showed a keen interest in the extended Friesen family. On numerous occasions they inquire as to the health and whereabouts of their uncles, Herman, Johann and Jacob and their families who remained in Russia. They were even aware of their father's uncle, Gerhard Friesen, who lived in Grossweide. Yet in spite of all these letters, they never mention their own grandfather's name.

It was, however, the Friesen brothers' usual mention of their uncles in the MR letters that helped to identify the family in the 1835 Census. The records of the Schoenau village lists a Herman Herman Friesen (lot #3) who had immigrated to Russia in 1816. The family is listed as follows:

Children of Heinrich D. Friesen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age (1835)</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herman Herman Friesen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Died in 1829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son Herman</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son Johann</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son Jacob</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son Heinrich (1827-1877)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter Maria</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother Johann Herman Friesen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Died in 1829</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Census, however, makes no mention of Herman Herman Friesen's wife Maria (Delesky). This is strange, since in a letter to the MR, May 10, 1893, H.S. Friesen writes that his grandmother, née Delesky, died in February 1877. Did she remarry after her husband's death in 1828 and leave her young family to fend for themselves? This would seem very unusual. Maybe, someone can offer an explanation for the omission of Maria's name from the Census list.

In 1818, three of Herman Herman Friesen's brothers arrived in Russia and a year later settled in the village of Margenau, on lot #37. The family unit is listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age (1835)</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Friesen</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Helena</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Sara</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter Anna</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter Helena</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirk Herman Friesen</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Helena</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter Helena</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerhard Herman Friesen</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Helena</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gerhard Herman Friesen died on November 5, 1893 in Grossweide at the age of 81 years, 2 months. (MR. Jan 17, 1894)

It seems that only Heinrich Delesky Friesen of this family clan immigrated to North America. I would appreciate any further information on this family.

Update on Vollwerk Cemetery

By Linda Buhler

The Peters Memorial Committee has once again had their ambitious goal thwarted as this year's heavy rains hampered efforts to complete Phase II of their restoration project at the Vollwerk Cemetery in Mitchell.

Despite wet soil conditions which made the physical work at the site an impossibility, the committee has nevertheless continued with their vision. This included the delivery of the monument, which is to be erected at the gravesite of Oberschulze Jacob Peters. The selection of a concrete marker was made following the advice of the Heritage Grants Advisory Council to choose a monument in keeping with the nature of the historic markers already present at the Cemetery (in particular those of the Oberschulze's two sons). The monument which stands close to six feet tall is complete with an 18" x 24" bronze plaque honoring this humble Mennonite leader.

The grant from Heritage Grants Advisory Council for Phase II of this project has already been approved. This, together with donated funds, will cover any further restoration of existing historic tombstones, continued restoration of the cemetery site, the erection of a fence and/or the planting of evergreens around the perimeter, and subsequent landscaping.

Once conditions improve, cement piers will be poured to provide a proper base for the concrete monument. The Hanover Municipality will be providing an approach on the east side of the cemetery (from Reichenbach Road) making it more accessible once it is officially declared and listed as a Historical Site.

The Committee is further planning an identification marker for the Vollwerk Cemetery which would include a list of all known graves (marked and unmarked). This will be made possible through its fund-raising efforts and its subsequent generous financial support which the Committee wishes to recognize.

Dedication and official unveiling of the Oberschulze Monument and a large Peters family reunion is tentatively slated for next summer.
Agnes Toews Kornelsen, Hairdresser

By Linda Buhler

In an era when Mennonite girls were trained as domestic help, teachers, or possibly telephone operators, Agnes Toews broke tradition by opening Steinbach's first hairdressing salon.

Born on March 26, 1911 to Peter Toews and Caroline Eck whose property was where Penner Chey now stands, Agnes received her training in Winnipeg before coming back to her home town in 1935 to open her beauty shop. (Steinbach's population was approximately 1000 at this time.)

Her salon was located at two different sites during her years of operation. These were a rented building approximately where Steinbach Hatchery now stands as well as rented facilities at the Coote's Hotel.

Known locally as "Coote's Hotel," it was actually owned by Mr. and Mrs. Peter B. Peters (nee Helena Rempel). They had built the Tourist Hotel in 1926 and bought the Coote's Hotel from Henry Coote in 1931 as it conveniently stood on the adjoining property. Across the hall from Agnes' shop, Jake R. Peters operated the Barber Shop while brothers Peter and Clifford operated the Pub in the Tourist Hotel until the buildings were joined around the year 1947.

Agnes Toews and Peter B. "Hotel" Peters were both direct descendants of two of the 12 Mennonite delegates sent to America in 1873. Agnes' grandfather was Cornelius Toews, one of the Kleine Gemeinde delegates from the Borosenko Colony while Peters was the grandson of Oberschulze Jakob Peters of the Bergthal Colony.

Young teenage girls whose mothers had never dreamt of cutting off their "crowning glory" now came to Agnes to get a perm, connected to coil and wires and a machine that must have appeared daunting to the first timer. Haircuts were 25¢ while hot perms were $1.98. Her clientele quickly grew as more women became accustomed to the luxury of having their hair done. This necessitated the addition of an employee, Martha Barkman. The used hairdryer that Agnes Toews purchased for her shop in 1935 is now a part of Dave Falk's private antique collection as is her curling iron which was heated by a wood alcohol burner.

After marrying William D. Kornelsen (son of longtime teacher Gerhard G. Kornelsen) in 1942, Agnes continued hairdressing for a few more years before retiring from the business due to health reasons. Martha Barkman bought the business, operating it from the "summer kitchen" of the former J.R. Friesen residence.

Agnes (Toews) Kornelsen died on May 21, 1987. She is remembered not only as being a trendsetter in a Steinbach we would not recognize today, but also as a generous, warm and caring woman who was loved by all who knew her.

Tourist Hotel and Coote's Hotel circa 1930. Arrow shows location of Agnes Toews' beauty salon.
Rev. Heinrich Friesen

By Irene Enns Kroeker

"Our earliest Mennonite ancestors were individuals who lived according to the articles of their faith and who migrated from one country to another in pursuit of spiritual ob-

jectives in safety and peace." Rev. Heinrich Friesen was one such Mennonite. A devout and peaceful man who had a strong faith rooted in years of history, Rev. Friesen's story is the story of the Bergholder Mennonites.

His story begins in Prussia. Abraham von Riesen (b: 1769), the grandfather to Heinrich Friesen, left Prussia around 1778 together with his family and settled in Neuendorf in the Colony of Chortitz. Benjamin H. Unruh lists Abraham von Riesen as living there in 1793. Abraham met and married Anna Doerksen (b: 1773) at Neuendorf on June 6, 1791. They had 10 children together. Jacob, the seventh child of Abraham and Anna, was the father to Heinrich.

In the Friesen family Bible, a notation left by Jacob Doerksen Friesen (b: 1801) tells us that he was from the village of Nieder Chortitz, Russia and it is likely that Heinrich Friesen was born in this village. Jacob was a very large, fat man, very strong and fast in his younger years.

Heinrich Friesen's mother was Helena Duseck (b: 1807). Her sister Agatha Dyck was the mother of Adelste Jacob Wiebe (1827-1900) of the Bergholder Colony. Helena was the daughter of Peter (b: 1742) and Agnetha Duseck (b: 1768). Peter, who was born in Prussia, was drafted to serve as personal bodyguard to Friedrich the Great, King of Prussia, and served in this capacity for 18 years. Agnetha was a widow when Peter married her.

In 1837-39, several families left the Chortitz area to settle in the Bergholder Colony. Jacob Friesen moved with his sons Jacob, Heinrich and Abraham to Schoenheld, a village in the Bergholder Colony. Heinrich grew up in this village; however, after marrying Agatha Hibbert of Schoenheld on October 10, 1862, he moved to his wife's village and settled there until they immigrated to Canada in 1874.

A notation in his journal gives the following information about his wedding:

"1862, the 10th of October I, Heinrich Friesen, a widower by now, moved with his sons Jacob and Abraham and their families and his daughter Aganetha to Canada in the fall of 1874. They arrived in Quebec on October 22, 1874, wintering in Ontario before moving to the east Reserve. The sons Jacob and Abraham then moved to Butterfield, continued on next page

Fraktur Art

Third in a Series: Gerhard Doerksen (1825-1882), Hochstadt

by Garth Doerksen.

Gerhard Doerksen (1825-1882) came to Russia with his parents Bernhard and Maria Doerksen and his grandparents Gerhard and Margaretha Doerksen in 1819. The Bernhard Doerksen family settled on Wirtschaft 6 in Fischau where young Gerhard went to school and grew to adulthood. Gerhard was a creative person who enjoyed art.

Two samples of his boyhood Fraktur are extant. Presumably the two pieces: a New Year's wish dated January 1, 1834, and another New Year's wish dated January 1, 1838, are the work of an artistic school boy aged 9 and 13 respectively.

In 1875 Gerhard Doerksen came to Manitoba with the Kleine Gemeinde and settled in Hochstadt near present day Kleefeld. Next issue: "Gerhard Doerksen's arithmetic book: A teacher's manual?"

The writer Garth Doerksen is the great-great grandson of Gerhard Doerksen. Garth is a school teacher in Winkler, Manitoba.
Rev. Heinrich Friesen
continued from previous page

Minne soca.

Heinrich had come to Canada with his in-laws somewhat earlier, arriving in Quebec on July 27, 1874 on the S.S. Peruvian. He came to the East Reserve in Manitoba, settling with his wife and family in Hochfeld, a village that was located four miles east of Blumenort. Jacob D. Friesen, 73 years of age, decided to settle with his son Heinrich in Hochfeld, residing there until his death. He had a small house of his own on the yard of his son Heinrich.

Heinrich Friesen was to work hard in Manitoba as a deacon and as a minister. Upon his death on September 12, 1921 he had served the church as deacon for slightly more than four years, as minister for almost 36 years; preached approximately 998 times and served at 71 funerals and 25 weddings.

One of Heinrich Friesen’s journals included a list of sayings and proverbs which are being used in Preservations from time to time.

Endnotes to Heinrich Friesen:
5. According to the Bergthal Gemeinde Buch, p. 25, Jacob Friesen was born in Nieder Chortitza however, since the land for Nieder Chortitza was bought in 1802, and Jacob Friesen was born in 1801, it is unlikely that Jacob would have been born there. It is clear, however, from family records that Jacob Friesen lived in Nieder Chortitza.
8. Journal of Heinrich Friesen held at the home of Miss Mary Enns, Steinbach.
the book does not deal with the turmoil caused by the forming of the new public school districts including Arran, Bothwell, Moray, and Seaton among the Mennonites. It does give us a brief glimpse of some of the reactions of the local people.

For instance the article on “Education” tells us that in Seaton a public school did not operate until 1928. That was a full 9 years after the public district was first formed. As other historians have indicated this delay was not against the wishes of the local residents. Another indication of the need for change after the closing of private schools was the forming of Saturday Schools in New Bothwell and Osterwick. The third item showing turmoil but also not dealt with directly but again hinted at are the two moves to Paraguay. Otherwise the book deals mostly with the positive elements which have helped to build the community as it is today.

The business, sports and recreation sections give us good detail of what has gone on in the community of New Bothwell over the last 75 years.

The “Family History” section of the book is the largest of all. It contains over 250 pages of valuable family histories. It provides excellent information on a large percentage of the families who have lived in the area. With the residential maps in the front of the book and the family history section it is easy to trace any long distance neighbors whom you never knew but always wanted to know who they were.

Finally one can not forget the reminiscences done by whoever lived in the area. One that I think that will put any mind back in touch with their own school years is the story told by one of the teachers of the little red haired boy in grade three who had more energy then her. He was trained to handle. He had a habit of teasing an older and heavier student. As soon as class was dismissed he would holler “Come on Patso” and the chase was on. Months went by as the teacher watched the game unfold. Never did he get caught until one spring day a muffled cry for help came through the window. The teacher looked out and there she saw his little red head and skinny legs peeping out from under the body of the pursuer who was bouncing up and down as she sat on his body. For once she ignored the pleas for help — it was Pay Back Time!

Jacob Doerksen is an electrician residing in the Niverville/ Ile des Chenes (Reinland) area.

**Book Notes**


Kornelsen, Mary and Kehler, Betty. *Family Register of Abraham Kornelsen and Maria Wiens* (Box 21085, Steinbach, Manitoba, R0A 3T3, 1994), 287 pp.


There has always been a strong interest in family history and genealogy among the descendants of the Russian Kleine Gemeinde (KG), namely, our modern day Holdeman and EMCers. The present crop of books gives no indication that this is about to change.

All of these books are soft cover and attractively put together. None of them contain any pictures which denotes that they are published by people of Holdeman background. All of the books contain a modest amount of historical information in many cases excising material — properly credit-ed, of course — from established histories relevant to the particular family.

In most cases the editors and publishers have also included additional source material and recollections available in each family. Without fail these articles are well written and leave the reader or student of family history looking for more.

At 319 pages, the *Heinrich Reimer* book is one of the more ambitious of the lot. The book traces the descendants of Heinrich Reimer who was born in Prussia in 1791 and immigrated to Russia in 1803 where he had a prosperous Wirtschaft in Murtau, and from there to Gruenfeld, Manitoba, in 1873, where he died and is buried in the old Gruenfeld cemetery at the corner of the PTH 52 and PR 265 (see Leaders, 613-35, for biography).

The book fills a big vacuum as until recently Reimers in the KG were associated only with Klaas Reimer, founding elder, with the result that the history of the other equally important clan was often overlooked. His son Heinrich Reimer (1818-1876) settled in Blumenhof, Manitoba, in 1875 and it is his descendants by his third wife Maria Warkentin that are enumerated in the book.

The *Franz Froese* book fills an equally important void in the family history of the KG. Franz Froese married Anna Braun, daughter of Isaac and Margaretha Loewen Braun of Mariawohl (see Leaders, 514-5). Froese came to Rosenort, Manitoba, in 1874 and settled in Rosenort where he and his descendants farmed. The book contains also previously unpublished recollections and family information.

The father of Franz Froese born 1825 died continued on next page
Book Review

continued from previous page

when he was relatively young. As a result no
information was available regarding his par-
ents. If I can be allowed to digress briefly
I will like to share a recent discovery regarding
this family. In 1916 Peter P. Isaac of
S fatal, Alberta, wrote in his “Stammnacb
Meiner Voreltern” that the children of Franz
Froese were cousins to Johann Regehr
Kansas, who was a son of Abraham Regehr
and Elisabeth Froese (1820-1896).

In reviewing the recently available 1835
census a few weeks ago I noticed by happen-
stance the family of Georg Adrian who had a
step-son Franz Froese born 1825 and a
step-daughter Elisabeth born 1829. Their
father was Johann Johann Froese who set-
tled on Wirthschaft 17 in Rudnerweise in
1826.

Abraham Kornelsen was born in Kon-
temushfield and moved to the village of Hoff-
nungsburg, Crimea, in 1860. In 1874 they im-
migrated to Manitoba and settled in
Heuboden situated 1 mile north of PTH 52
and 1 mile west of PR 205. Abraham served
as a deacon of the KG. He was struck by a
horse and died in 1893. His family has since
spread all over North America with many
descendants living in Northern Mexico and
Belize. The Kornelsen book is an update of
one done in 1969 by George U. Kornelsen
of Belize.

The Wiebe book deals with the family of
Heinrich F. Wiebe, a KG deacon from
Blumenort, Manitoba, who died in a violent
blizzard on December 14, 1876, a tragedy
which shocked southeastern Manitoba which
had only been settled two years previously.

The book contains a well-written biography
of son Jakob T. Wiebe of Greenland who
served as the elder of the Manitoba congrega-
tions of the Church of God in Christ,
Mennonite, during the 1940s and 50s. His sec-
ond son Peter H. Wiebe moved to Needles,
B.C., and back again to Steinbach where his
descendants presently occupy many im-
portant positions in the community.

Last, but not least, is the Bartel book
which lists the descendants of Heinrich Bart-
el (1834-1867), an orphan, whose two sons
Jakob and Heinrich were also orphaned and
who came to Manitoba in 1874/5 as foster
children. Both grew up to establish large fa-
milies which are well represented in southern
Manitoba. Future descendants will probably
find the Bartel book the most helpful as it
contains an extensive biography of each of
the children of Jakob and Heinrich as well
as maps, poems and other useful docu-
mentation.

By D.F. Plett, Steinbach

BOOK REVIEW

John Friesen. “Against the Wind, the sto-
ory of four Mennonite villages” (Winnipeg,

Against the Wind is a story which will be

of special interest to the descendants of Men-
nonite immigrants from the four villages of
the Baratow-Schlacltin colony in Southern
Russia. The author, John Friesen, whose
parents lived in this colony has accepted the
challenge of researching and putting into
print this lesser known segment of Men-
nonite history.

The Baratow-Schlacltin colony was situat-
ed in Ekaterinodav Province near the indus-
trial city of Krivoy-Rog. The Baratow tract
was bought in 1872 from Count Repnin by
the Chortitza colony. Two villages, Neu-
choritz and Guadental were situated on this
parcel of land. Two years later an adjacent
tract of land was purchased from Captain
Schlacltin where shortly the villages of Gruen-
feld and Steinfeld were begun.

Friesen systematically discusses the cli-
mate, geography, religious life and the eco-
nomic base of these villages. At the begin-
ning of WWI the Baratow-Schlacltin colony
had made significant progress in both
agriculture and industry. The Froese imple-
ment factory in Gruenfeld at one time
employed up to 140 workers. The Bolshevik
revolution with its accompanying anarchy
was the beginning of the end of the Baratow-
Schlacltin villages. Disease, banishment and
emigration effectively reduced the Mennonite
presence in this area to only a few persons.

Friesen is to be commended on his
thorough research of the presented materi-
al. The information in this book can easily
form the basis for others in telling the sto-
ries of their parents or grandparents who
pioneered or lived in this colony.

Reviewed by Henry Fast

Preservings

-being the Newsletter of the
Hanover / Steinbach Historical Society Inc.

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