MENNONITE LIFE

January 1949

Published in the interest
of the best
in the religious, social, and economic phases
of Mennonite culture

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COVER
Winter Shadows

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MENNONITE LIFE

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(From left to right)

GERHARD WIENS, professor of German and Russian at the University of Oklahoma, author of text-books and articles (p.9).
EMIL R. RIESEN, formerly Bethel College, teaches philosophy at University of Arizona, and is dean of its college (p.20).
JOANNA SUDERMAN ANDRES, active in writing and religious education is editor of *Missionary News and Notes* (p.4).
LELAND HARDER, social science instructor in Moundridge, Kansas, high school, is doing research on Plockhoy (p.41).
C. C. REGIER, professor of history, read this address at the West Virginia Academy of Social Sciences (p.17).

J. H. JANZEN, writer, minister, and lecturer, has retired as elder of United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ontario (p.11).
DELMAR WEDEL, of Aberdeen, Idaho, now in Germany, has worked among German prisoners of war since 1944 (p.35).
JACK G. CLASSEN, son of a well-known educator of Chortitza, is a refugee in Germany with journalistic ambitions (p.6).
HORST QUIRING, Mennonite of Prussia, once pastor of Mennonite Church in Berlin, active in a publishing enterprise (p.34).
I. G. NEUFELD is instructor in journalism and assistant in public relations at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas (p.46).

Not Shown

HENRY W. LOHRENZ (1878-1945), educator and church leader, was founder and first president of Tabor College (p.3).
ABRAHAM FAST, born in Russia and educated in Germany, is minister of the Emden Mennonite Church (p.30).
Author of "Disaster Ends Russian Mennonite Settlements" (p.22) was a leader of the Mennonites in Russia. He desires to remain anonymous, but can be contacted through *Mennonite Life*. This is also the case with the author of "*Ohrloff an der Molotschna*." (p.29). For information concerning Cornelius C. Reimer, see editorial note page 16.

Acknowledgements

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The Appeal of Christmas Today

BY HENRY W. LOHRENZ

THE Christmas story has always had a strong appeal. It has captivated the imagination of the child, engaged the minds of poets and musicians, and called forth the best skill of artists. The finest selections in poetry and music have been inspired by it, and the paintings of the Christ child and his mother are among the finest productions in the field of art.

What about the mind of the American student today? Has the story of the Christ child any appeal to him? Does the reading of the accounts as given by Luke and Matthew awaken any response in the young people who make up the major population of our colleges and universities? Or shall this story from Bethlehem be relegated to the field of myths and at best be carried on the pages of our books only as a beautiful illustration of a relic from an age when the race was young and imaginative and credulous? What appeal can the story of the Christ child have to the mind of the modern American student?

It seems impossible to me that this appeal has died out except where it has been subjected to the dessication of lifeless criticism, or where it has been the object of unappreciative mirth. It cannot be otherwise than that these gems of sacred writings retain their appeal for the mind of the American student when he is allowed to develop normally and respond naturally. What are these appeals? Of what do they consist? What is their nature? Let me point out four fields in which the Christmas story, in my opinion, still has an appeal to the American student—and always must have.

The Scientific Appeal

The simple story of the birth of Jesus appeals strongly to the scientific mind. It cannot be otherwise. The scientist is bent on investigation. He wishes to know. He is not satisfied with superficial generalities; he desires to probe to the heart of things and to know the facts as they really are.

The shepherds of Bethlehem set the example. They were not satisfied with the message that was delivered to them, even when it was spoken by a voice from heaven and a voice that has never erred from the truth. They said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass." They were bent on investigation in order to discover the real facts in the case.

Someone may say, "There is too much of the supernatural in the story. If Matthew had not based so much of his account on the voice of God speaking to Joseph in dreams, and if Luke had omitted his reference to angels, and if the virgin birth were not so definitely asserted, the story would present an entirely different face. As it is, the case is lost even before it is called up for investigation."

Such reasoning is unscientific in the extreme. As a matter of fact, the "supernatural" is the very element that presents the scientific appeal. The scientist deals constantly with unsolved problems. He is forever prying into things that are still a mystery. The less he knows about the subject, the more diligent he is in his investigations. Lack of understanding, incompleteness of comprehension, and absence of parallel cases are no reasons to rule a problem out of court. In fact, uniqueness and rarity are the keenest incentives to scientific procedure.

Two little cells lie side by side in a waterpool. They are washed back and forth by the same currents and are warmed by the rays of the same sun. Yet one gives rise to a tadpole; the other develops into a lily. Why? You say there is a difference in the microscopic structure of the two cells. That is very true, but where is the scientist who will claim that the differentiation of cells presents no mystery? The more he knows of these little bits of living protoplasm, the deeper grows the mystery.

Two blades of grass sprout from the same rootstock. The one is eaten by a goat; the other finds its way into the stomach of a little lamb. Ultimately the atoms of the one add toughness to the horns of the more sturdy animal, while those of the other blade reappear in the downy fleece of the lamb.

Who will explain the mystery? Who would expose his ignorance and claim that there is no mystery? As a matter of fact, the recognition of an unsolved problem has always held out an appeal to the scientific mind, and hence the coming of the Christ child presents an incomparable appeal to the mind that is scientifically inclined.

The Ethical Appeal

The social worker is interested in the reconstruction of society. He would banish poverty, eliminate crime, and build up a social group in which every member develops to perfection. There shall be no curtailing of their happiness, no infringement on their rights, no restriction in the expression of their true inner self.

Every social worker can recite from memory a long chapter of failure. Pet schemes of every description have been tried; ideas of rarest novelty have been worked out and applied; reconstruction programs of commendable detail have been put into operation; yet the social ills of the world are more numerous today than they were a thousand years ago. The social wrecks of the present century wear a face that is just as sad and just as expressive of despair as was the face of the king who ordered the children of Bethlehem slain!

A bright ray of hope rises against this dark background. Everyone who followed the example of the shepherds found a share in the experience of the Shepherd. Those humble folk on the plains of Palestine "returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." They told the story of the Christ child as they had witnessed and experienced it. Theirs was a catching story, one that stuck; once told and heard, it could never again be forgotten, and today it is recounted in every land, and in languages that were yet unborn when the first Christmas carol was sung.

The most wonderful thing about it all is the remaking of human lives! For just as Christ was born at Bethlehem, He may become a reality in human hearts today. Where this experience takes place, there is a remaking of the whole man. Sin is conquered; the guilty conscience disappears; the cravings of base appetite are controlled; evil habits are broken; and out of the human heart, which had been a hotbed of evil passions, blossom the fairest virtues. The rebirth of the Christ child results in the remaking of human lives.

The Philosophical Appeal

Philosophy deals with ultimate realities. It endeavors to unite in one fundamental principle the varied questions that rise from human experience and reflection. Philosophy is "the desire to know things in their reality and unity" (Alexander).

Man—if he is honest with himself—cannot escape the consciousness of the fact that things are not as they should be. Disruption has taken place. He still hears the echo in his soul of a harmony that once existed when man had immediate communion with God. There lingers in his memory the recollection of a golden age, the age of innocence.

Now the tables have turned. Sin entered. Guilt became a reality. Separation followed. Unhappiness, disquietude, misery, grief, and self-condemnation followed in quick succession. Man wandered away from God, and the gulf became greater as time went on. Efforts to return resulted in failure. No human agency was found adequate to heal the breach.

Then God answered the cry of the human soul; Paul puts it this way in Romans 8:3— ". . . . what the law could not do, ... God sending his own Son . . . . condemned sin in the flesh." How did He do it? By "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." That is Paul's version of the Christmas story. He adds to it when he declares to the Corinthians "That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses" (2 Cor. 5:19).

(This is an incomplete chapel talk given in Tabor College and found among the papers of H. W. Lohrenz by his daughter, Mariana Lohrenz Remple. See article page 32, October, 1948.—The Editor.)

Pfeffernuesse, Springerle und Marzipan

Von Johanna Suderman Andres

Es iſt Weihnachtszeit. Vor mir auf dem Tiſch ſtehen wieder Teller mit vertrautem, weihnachtlichem Backwerk. Und wie ich darauf ſchaue, werden die flachen, bunten Schalen plötzlich tief und weiß . . . mit einem ſchmalen Goldrand . . . Und die Tiſchdecke hat auf einmal ein anderes Muſter . . . Weit zurück ſind meine Gedanken geeilt in eine ferne, halbvergeſſene Welt, die Märchenwelt meiner Kindheit.

. . . Ich ſteh vor einer Tür. In Rußland wars. Ahnungsvoll iſt mir ums Herz. Die Pulſe klopfen vor Erwartungsfreude. Ein paar Minuten noch . . . wie lang ſie doch ſind! Noch iſt die hohe breite Tür verſchloſſen. Neben mir ſind die Geſchwiſter. Keines ſpricht. Ob's ihnen auch ſo geht wie mir? Nur eins weiß ich—die Tür wird ſich öffnen . . . öffnen . . . bald werd' ich . . .

O Wunder aller Wunder! Sie öffnet ſich . . . iſt offen! O tiefes Entzücken! Es ſtrahlt mir ein Stern . . . Er zieht mich, leitet mich zu der Krippe hin . . . Ich weiß nicht wie noch wann, doch ich ſteh unter dem Stern, in dem Schein der vielen Kerzen—ſchau hinein in den ſchimmernden Glanz des Weihnachtsbaumes.

„Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht" klingt an mein Ohr. Ein wenig ſing ich mit, ein wenig nur . . . Ich ſchau umher . . . Meine Hand, die in des Vaters großer Hand ſtill geruht hat, wird etwas feſter gefaßt. Ich fühle, es iſt doch kein Märchen, alles iſt wirklich da . . . Vater, der mich hält . . . Mutter iſt am Klavier . . . Schweſter und Bruder ſind neben mir . . . Ich muß ſtill ſein . . . Ich darf nicht fort.

Vater lieſt die Weinhnachtsgeſchichte. Licht . . . Engel . . . Freude . . . Geſang . . . Hirten . . . Krippe . . . Heiland . . . Ich kann die Worte gut verſtehen, iſt ja Herrlichkeit um mich in dem lichten Saal. Und Freude. Sie erfüllt mich ganz. Und doch bin ich ungeduldig. Die Hirten eilten und fanden ſchnell . . . Ich will auch eilen, finden . . . Aber Vater hält mich feſt.

Es wird gebetet . . . Ich kann mich nun nicht länger halten, ich ſchau herum . . . Das Licht der Kerzen erfüllt alles. Ich ſchau nach links und ſchau nach rechts und weiß nicht, wohin zuerſt den Blick wenden. Da—o ſeliges Entzücken! Auf einem Stuhl ſitzt, auf mich wartend, neben einem Stall mit kleinen Tieren mein Herzenswunſch: Eine Puppe mit hellem Lockenhaar.

Sicher war das Amen des Gebets geſagt worden, denn plötzlich war ich frei. Plötzlich war alles ein Jubel und Jauchzen. Ins Märchenland war ich zurück verſetzt, und alles um mich her vergeſſen. Was das Herz ſich gewünſcht, was es lange erſehnt, erhofft und geſucht hatte, all das war jetzt gefunden!

Alles! Und doch viel mehr, als das Kinderherz er-

(Fortſetzung auf Seite 10)

SOME INGREDIENTS OF THE CHRISTMAS ATMOSPHERE

Some ingredients of the Christmas atmosphere are: *Peppernuts, Springerle, Marzipan,* and various other cookies and nuts. Here are the recipes of some of these as shown on this page:

PEPPERNUTS

3 cups sugar
3 cups syrup
¾ cup butter or lard
1 cup milk
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. cloves
¼ tsp. cardamom
¼ tsp. star anise
1 tsp. vanilla
½ tsp. almond extract
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
1 coconut (ground)
flour (enough to make stiff dough)

Follow usual directions for mixing cookies. Place dough in refrigerator until chilled. Then place small portion of dough on floured board and roll with palm of hands until it is ½ inch in diameter. Cut off ¼ inch sections of dough with floured knife and arrange on greased cooky sheet. Bake in moderate oven.

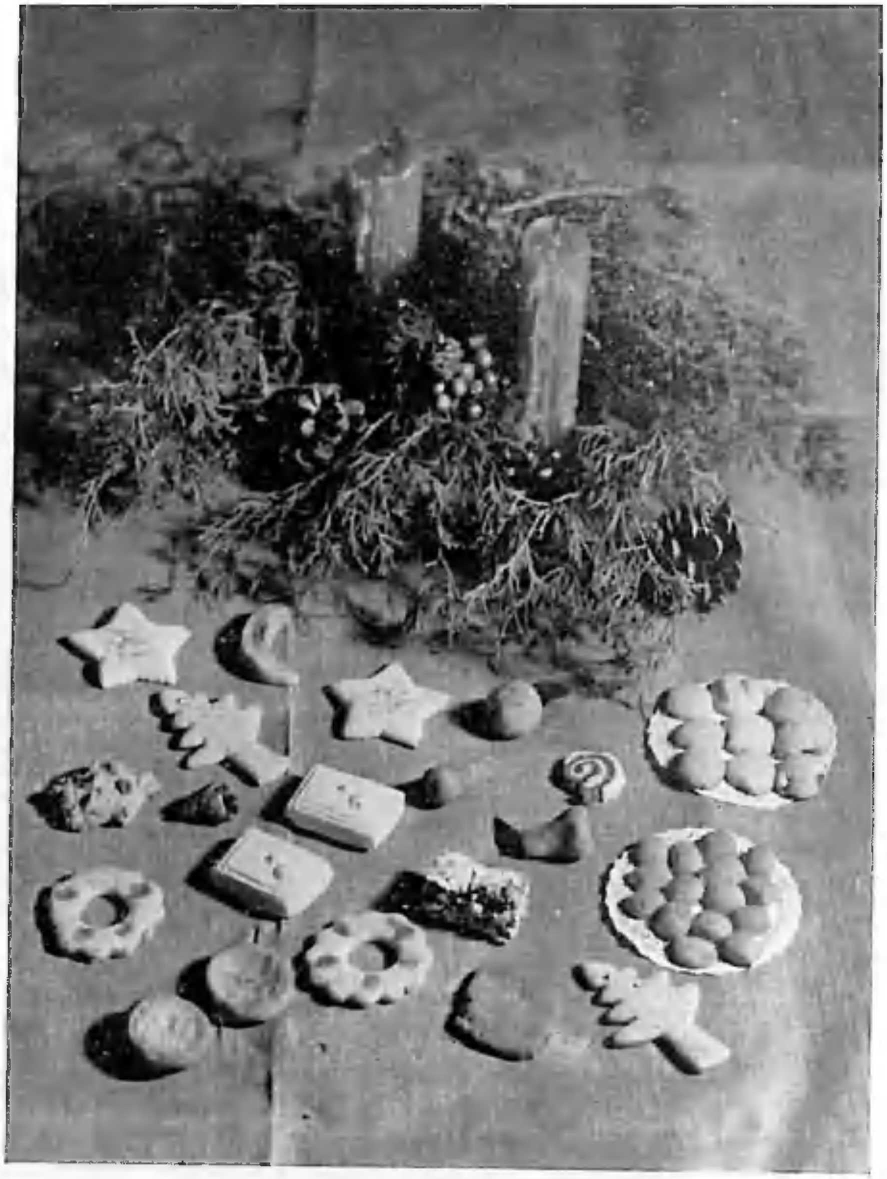
SPRINGERLE

2 cups fine granulated sugar
4 eggs
4 cups cake flour
4 drops anise oil
Anise seed for pan (may be omitted)

Beat eggs till thick, add sugar gradually, then beat well for about 15 minutes. Add anise oil and blend. Fold in flour. Roll out ½ inch thick. Flour springerle board and press firmly into dough. Place on buttered cookie sheets. Let cookies stand over night in cool place to dry. In morning place in moderate oven (375°) to set shape, but turn immediately to 300°. In 15 minutes the cookies should be light in color with the appearance of having been iced. Keep cookies in a tight can for 2 or 3 weeks before using to improve flavor. To soften place a cut apple into the can a day or two before using.

MARZIPAN

For recipe see *Mennonite Life*, January, 1947, page 10.



Christmas carolling near Hillsboro, Kansas. Such customs are challenged by educational philosophy described below.

WHEN CHRISTMAS CAME

BY JACK G. CLASSEN

"WELL," said the teacher, a big blackhaired man in his early forties, "I've had a lesson in Class 5-A, and in one of the books I found quite an amazing piece of paper. Christmas verse." He paused and let his eyes wander over the thirty-four boys and girls before him. The pupils were silent, their gaze fixed on the desks or the wall.

"I did not think anybody in a Soviet school could go on indulging in such downright foolish and completely backward things. . . . Well, one sees your parents do not give you the progressive education that ought to be expected." Again he paused, turning a long yellow ruler in his bony long-fingered hands. He was angry now, because all the pupils avoided his eyes and some of them were steadily blushing. He knew this sort of thing, this stubborn mental resistance.

The teacher now addressed the class in general. "You've been going to school for five years, and we, your teachers, have done our best to free your minds from superstition and noxious bourgeois ways of thinking. You know what our government, our Communist Party, thinks about religion. You know what Marx said: 'Religion is opium for the people.' Well, I should not tell you this over again if I did not know that some of those pupils learning verse for recital on Christmas Eve, as they call December 24, are right here among you." The silence had become heavier. The lesson had just started, and there was no hope of quick relief to be brought by the gong announcing a break.

"Lena Wiens!" the teacher said in a sharp voice. An eleven year-old girl rose timidly from the bench and stood straight and still, looking at the white wall ahead. She was blushing slowly and painfully, and as the teacher just kept looking at her she lowered her eyes and started to fumble with the end of one of her braids. "Well," the teacher said, grinning, "you are one of the best pupils in this class, and you learn Christmas verse. Worse, you carry those things around with you, and you've been showing the verse to other pupils. . . . . Do you believe in God?"

The girl said nothing.

"Hey, I want an answer," the teacher said, moving up to her. "Tell me, do you think there is a God?"

"Yes," the girl said, but so quiet that some of the pupils did not hear.

"Well," the teacher went on," if there is a God, where do you suppose He exists? Up there in the clouds? Or somewhere riding on a star? What does He eat? Why doesn't He fall down?"

"God is invisible," the girl said.

"That's your parents speaking out of your mouth," the teacher replied angrily. "Say, if God's invisible, how do you know He exists? Have you seen Him?"

"No, but He has made all things on earth, the animals and the trees; if it were not for God there would be no things on earth." There were two big tears running down the girl's cheeks.

"You know it's forbidden to bring religious writings to school. You know that's religious propaganda and subject to punishment. You've been trying to influence other pupils!"

"I only showed the verse to Hilda Bellman!" The girl had broken down; she hid her face in her hands and started to cry silently.

"Sit down," the teacher said, "I'll talk to you about this later on. And to the director." Then he went up the aisle and started on another victim.

* * *

The episode described above took place in 1935 when I was a pupil in Class 5-B of the Chortitza Primary School. It was a German language school, housed in the building of the once-famous Chortitza *Zentralschule.* That, however, was the only actual connection between two entirely different systems of schools and education. The Soviets had transformed the school into a Communist, state-owned institution whose primary aim it was to prepare the children of the German speaking Mennonites for life according to the rules of a "progressive" socialist society, which had overcome the "evils" of capitalist exploitation and medieval religion. There were about 300-400 pupils attending seven classes. The pupils were sent to school when they were eight years old (attendance was compulsory), and when they graduated they were supposed to be about fifteen, but many did not keep up with the amount of knowledge demanded of them and had to stay in the same class for another year. About half of the teachers at the school were of Mennonite birth, the other half were mostly Germans from the Odessa region. The latter constituted the "progressive" element, because they were more easily converted to Communism than the Mennonites with their sturdy peasant tradition and their deeply religious way of thinking. The Bolshevists, therefore, took great pains to select Communist teachers.

The German Primary School was transformed into a Russian school in 1938, and gradually three higher classes were added so that in 1941 the school had become a full-fledged 10-grade school—*polnaya srednaya shkola*—as they are called in Soviet Russia, which means that graduates from the school can be admitted to universities.

In the early thirties, however, the Chortitza school was still far from assuming the looks of a well-organized Soviet establishment. The teachers were either old Mennonite veterans who cautiously avoided politics, letting the children believe in religion and private property, or

Chortitza Mennonite *Zentralschule* transformed into Communist Secondary School. First graduating class (1941) of which most of the students and some of the teachers were of Mennonite background. Author standing second from left.

young Communists who had for some reason embraced the Bolshevist doctrine. Between these forces there developed a violent and bitter battle, conducted partly in the open and partly in secret, mostly with disastrous results for the non-Communists.

During my first three years in school my teacher was a certain Miss Schweitzer (*Genossin* Schweitzer we called her), from the settlements near Odessa, a member of the *Komsomol* (Communist youth organization linking the younger pioneers to the Communist Party). The first day in school we were taught a song which went like this:

Rot, rot, rot ist meine liebste Farbe,
Und ich bin ein Rotgardist!

Great efforts were made by the Communist teachers to draw us children into the pioneer organization. The badge of this organization is a flaming-red necktie, regarded with secret horror and sometimes awe by most Mennonite children, for the wearing of such a necktie meant defiance and renouncement of God. The pressure was particularly great for good pupils, and we were often at a loss what to retort to the admonitions of our young teacher. If we said our parents had forbidden us to join, that might be dangerous for them, they might lose their job, or, even worse, be deported. If we said that we did not feel fit to "shoulder the responsibility" of membership in such an organization, why, then we invited unending hours of mental tribulations and reproachment. We had not yet learned the quiet diplomatic attitude we were to acquire later on. Most of the children were unanimous in declining the Communist doctrine. Church services had been made impossible by the Soviet government, and our religious education depended on our parents.

* * *

Christmas had always been the most significant celebration of the year for the Mennonites. In the old days of the Tsarist regime our parents used to go to church at six o'clock on Christmas Eve, the old and the young, to sit under an enormous Christmas tree, the children's eyes bright with excitement; on the morning of the 25th there usually was *Bescherung* (presentation of gifts) in the home, and then they went off to church again. Christmas extended from Christmas Eve to the 27th.

The Communists were well aware of the Christmas spirit and they did everything to break it. There were no Christmas vacations; the winter vacations started on January 1. The more ardent teachers began their anti-Christmas propaganda in the first days of December. Invariably on December 24 an anti-religious meeting was held in the school, and all teachers and pupils had to be present. The meeting started immediately after the lessons in the evening and continued until about 9 o'clock. Some pupils and even teachers of the older generation stole away, but they were easily noticed by others and such things would tell on the future careers of these "reactionaries." In these meetings we were informed that the story of Christ's birth and his existence withal was an invention of the greedy clergy, for there was no mention of Christ in the writings of contemporary Roman historians; on the contrary, it had been proved by scientists that the whole of the New Testament had been written at least two centuries after the alleged appearance of Christ.

We sat and thought of our Christmas trees at home (pieced together from branches smuggled home from a wasteland known as the *Schwienskopp*, where a few crippled pines managed to survive the annual reaping), of possible little presents, and of the Christmas carols to be sung.

A few years later, however, some clever Communist in the Ukrainian administration (his name was Postyshev) hit upon the idea that the charm of sparkling Christmas trees and gifts for children and candy might be used for the Communist propaganda machine. It was to be not a Christmas tree, but a New Year's tree, erected in the hall of the school on December 31. There was the traditional meeting, speeches of the teachers with the names of the best pupils being mentioned, then there were prizes distributed, poems recited—mostly about our immense gratefulness to the genial Stalin ("Thanks to the great Stalin for our happy childhood" had become the standard slogan), and after that there was gaiety unlimited, the smaller children were told to form circles and to dance around the tree, holding hands and chanting Soviet songs, and the older soon followed suit with waltzes and foxtrots.

Christmas trees (as we still preferred to call them) and ornaments were put on the market, and most of the Mennonite families took advantage of this for their Christmas celebrations. Now we only had to wait until New Year if we wanted to show our presents to our classmates.

With Easter it was much the same as with Christmas. We were told that the Christian Easter derived from the heathen festival of the coming of spring, connected with the goddess Ostara, and that the clergy had taken advantage of this. Again there were no vacations, and there was nothing more despicable and ridiculous than colored eggs. Yet none of us would have Easter without these indispensible components of Easter joy.

We only had to be careful not to bring eggs to school. Sometimes there were little accidents, though. Once a few pieces of colored eggshells were detected under the desk of the son of a teacher! That was really shocking. Some eager pioneers lost no time in conveying the news to another teacher who was just conducting the lesson. She was a parson's daughter and it can be assumed that she felt sympathy for the child and its father, but she was stricken with fear and reported the case to the director. The director called a special meeting of the members of the Teachers' Union (all teachers had to be members) and a trial was held. Some were for immediate

(Continued on page 47)

HUNGER

BY GERHARD WIENS

ONE DAY twenty years ago, when I was very new in America, I asked a fellow-student whether he had ever heard Schubert's *Ave Maria*. "Lots of times," he replied and began talking of something else. Some months before, I had heard for the first and only time this song of unearthly beauty, and since then had had to talk about it at every conceivable opportunity. I knew my friend to be fond of music and had expected rhapsodic utterances of joy at the mere recollection of the music which had filled my heart with rapture.

Since then I myself have heard the great song "lots of times." I have listened to good music for hundreds of hours every year. But my joy still reaches ecstatic dimensions rather regularly. I believe that this would not be quite so true if I had not gone through years of musical starvation. Before I came to America I had not heard a single important piece of classical music. I had never heard a first-rate artist.

My privations in other fields of culture had been equally severe. I had not seen a single noteworthy work of the graphic arts. I had never witnessed a good theatrical performance. I had never been to a museum. For years I was even denied free access to good books, the prime source of culture from which in America all who are willing may drink.

During those dark years of the Russian revolution, of civil war and terror, of disease and famine, we might have been expected to be content with preserving our miserable lives. But the material and spiritual suffering only intensified our cultural yearning. Large portions of this tattered, frightened humanity, people who would formerly have been content to live normal lives of material well-being, knocked at the door of culture seeking entrance to the timeless realm of the free mind and the soaring soul. The door remained closed most of the time. But whenever it did open the joy was deep.

Oh, the books, the wonderful books which we did not have! I still believe that, to keep us from taking the excellencies of good literature for granted, we should occasionally read a bit of trash. But during those lean years I read fifth-rate flotsam because there was not enough fourth-rate rubbish to keep me busy. I frantically borrowed books wherever I could. In my fourteenth year I ferreted out a deposit of Russian classics: a friend of my relatives, who was living in a distant village, was willing to loan me what he had: the complete works of Pushkin, Lermontov, and Gogol. I staggered: the *complete* works of Pushkin! Lermontov! Gogol! I set out immediately, on foot, to get the books. What beauties they were, too! Thick quarto volumes, generously illustrated. That year was my Pushkin-Lermontov-Gogol year.

The next year I entered the oldest secondary school of our settlement. When I saw the library I gasped. Here were *all* the classics, German and Russian, and entire shelves of books on science, art, history, geography, travel! The director of the school loaned me the library catalog over the week-end and I made a list of the books I was going to read that year—about two hundred of them. The year was over before I finished the first hundred. It was a very short year.

That same year I was also introduced to the English language. Ever since my elder brother had first showered me with glib fragments like "La plume est sur la table," I had longed to learn a foreign language. Our English teacher was sick most of the winter and in the spring he had to work in his vegetable garden in order to keep from starving the next winter. As a result we did not get beyond drawing-room gems like: "In winter the days are short and the nights are long." We had no text in the course. (We no longer used textbooks in any course. There were none to be had. Our homework consisted of working over our notes in the daytime and sitting in our dark rooms at night *thinking* them over. We went to bed early, exhausted.) Then, miraculously, I discovered, and was able to borrow from the second cousin of my uncle's friend, an excellent textbook for self-instruction in the English language. Throughout the summer I worked in the fields with the rest of the family, but in the evenings and early mornings I studied English. It was marvelous. At the end of the summer I read with understanding and love the selections of English literature included in the textbook. Then I had to return the book. Persistent scouring of the country for miles around uncovered a tattered copy (beginning and end missing) of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

That autumn famine engulfed our region. I left school and came home. All winter we sat around the house and starved pleasantly. To practice my English I started a diary. In writing it I received constant aid and comfort from an English dictionary which I had unearthed, of all places, at our next-door neighbor's. The publication date of the dictionary was 1840.

Are you wondering where I found anything with which or on which to write? We never really worried about having something with which to write. Our pencils, to be sure, had long since been used up to the last half-inch stubs. But we had enough old pen-points left to last us until things would again be manufactured in Russia or until we would no longer care to write. And making our own ink was a simple matter. The juice of a certain wild berry, when boiled down, made a very usable writing fluid. Some years, however, this ink would ferment and turn into a kind of heavy liqueur.

But we were not able to devise any substitute for writing paper. We ransacked our attics. Somebody explored the numerous defunct business establishments and made a killing by selling the letters and bills from their files. Was not one side of the sheets perfectly blank? We would often use a sheet of paper three times: we wrote at right angles across the original writing and then diagonally across both. I once gave lessons in shorthand to a group of fellow students and heartlessly exacted ten sheets of paper, to be blank on *both* sides, from each student in payment for the course, refusing to consider that after the course they might have nothing on which to write their shorthand. Posters and public announcements always disappeared from bulletin boards overnight until the authorities learned to use only paper which had already been thoroughly used on the other side. Of course, we never, never threw any paper away. I still do not throw away any, according to my American wife.

I had always been keenly interested in science and chafed under the physical limitations of our scientific studies. I looked once through a microscope; I witnessed one chemical experiment performed by our teacher; I collected and buried in a herbarium the wild flowers of our village. For all the rest of science I took my teacher's word. My favorite sciences were geology and astronomy. But the leaves of the story-book of Earth were nowhere exposed on our flat steppe. The stars were above us to see, but only with the naked eye. I had a four-inch magnifying glass and wore double-concave spectacles—there, I decided one moonlit evening, were the makings of a telescope. I erected the magnifying glass on top of a fencepost, took the eyeglasses out of the frame, held them, doubled up, in front of my eye and gazed at the man in the moon. He was grinning at me.

I was very fond of history and always wished I could see something really old and historic. I was thrilled when I first learned that our region had, since prehistoric times, been successively inhabited by many peoples, and that the Goths had probably trekked right through our backyard, with the Huns hard on their heels. Our steppe was dotted with ancient burial mounds, some so low that our plows had all but levelled them away, a few so high that they are likely to remain landmarks till the end of time. One year a fox dug his burrow in a small tumulus on my father's field and excavated for me a pile of brittle rusty arrowheads, spearheads, and rings, human and animal bones, and—the prize of all—a complete stirrup. One day I persuaded two other boys to help me excavate farther. We dug industriously for an hour. But a few yards away there was a much larger mound, about twelve feet high. "Why bother with the little one?" we argued against nobody. "Let's go after the big one. It may have gold in it." We made a trench in the large mound, but by midafternoon we were only half-way down. We had not brought enough drinking water with us, the village was four miles away, it was the beginning of the famine, and we were not too strong. One boy remembered belatedly that he was supposed to help his father that afternoon, and left us. The other boy's archeological enthusiasm began to show signs of deterioration. I myself was tormented by grave doubts. We went home and decided to wait and hope that the fox would enlarge his area of operation.

Our musical fare was very meager, but it was relished with a keenness which many of my musically well-fed readers probably cannot imagine. We sang the beautiful Russian and German folk songs, we played them on our balalaikas, guitars, mandolins, and violins—by ear. At eight I began to teach myself to play the balalaika, I advanced to the guitar, then the mandolin, and finally the violin. Chaos was already around us when I reached the mandolin stage, and I contrived to make the strings out of telephone wire (rescued from field lines abandoned after a battle) which I covered by winding homemade silk thread around them. We fortunately still had a horse (a black one, it is true), when I needed hair for my violin bow. The music I made was very imperfect, but in my heart I heard perfect sound. It was a major experience of my childhood when I discovered, on my guitar, the dominant seventh chord. (Those who cannot understand my thrill should listen to the concluding measures of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.)

I have now lived in America twenty-three years. I too, have come to take this country's rich cultural opportunities for granted, almost like a native. But not quite. There are times when remembrance of past privation transfigures the ordinary American scene around me into fairyland and heightens modest cultural enjoyment into ecstasy. (Condensed reprint from *Books Abroad*.)

Niejaoaſchwenſch

Etj jach dän Schorſchteen royki,
Etj wißt wol, want jie moyki:
Scheeni Niejaoaſchkoyki.
Jäw jie mie eeni,
Dan bliew etj ſchtaoni.
Jäw jie mie twee,
Dan fang etj aun tao gaoni.
Jäw jie mie dree enn fea taojlitj,
Dan wenſch etj jü daut gaunzi Himelritj!

Pfeffernüſſe . . . (Fortſetzung von Seite 4)

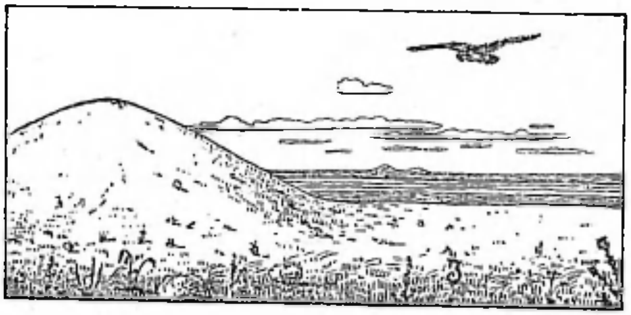
kannte—ins Elternhaus eingekehrt war der Himmelswunſch für die Menſchheit, Friede und Wohlgefallen, denn auch hier war der Heiland geboren. Auch hier würde er als Hirte treue Wache halten, bis eine jede Kinderſeele reif geworden, Ihn als das rechte Weihnachtsgeſchenk zu empfangen.

Ja, wie kam ich doch zurück zu dieſer Kindheitsſtunde?

Das haben mir die Pfeffernüſſe, die Springerle und der Marzipan angetan.

Die Kurgane der russischen Steppe

Von J. H. Janzen



Die „Mohhillen“ oder „Kurgane“ der ruſſiſchen Steppe ſind Fürſtengräber, die einmal zur Zeit Daniels und Nebukadnezars über verſtorbenen Skythenfürſten aufgeſchüttet wurden. In mehr oder weniger gerader Linie ziehen ſich dieſe Hügel vom Baltiſchen bis zum Aſowſchen Meer und durch die kaukaſiſche Steppe hindurch. Sie ſind meiſtens auf ſtrategiſch wichtigen, die Landſchaft beherrſchenden Punkten aufgeſchüttet und trugen früher auf ihrer Spitze die Standbilder der darin Begrabenen, roh in Sandſtein gearbeitet, Geſichter, Hände, Kleidung nur kaum angedeutet.

Da man aber von alters her die Ahnen verehrte, wurden auch dieſe „kammnyie Baby“ (ſteinerne Großmütter), wie der Ruſſe ſie nannte, zu Götzen, die man anbetete. Die reſpektloſe Neuzeit hat ſie dann freilich mit wenig Verehrung weiter behandelt, hat ſie von ihrem erhabenen Standpunkt in die Höfe der Bauern herunter geſchlept und ſie dort zu Torpfoſten an der Straße oder zu „Schubbjaks“ in den Kuhverzäunungen gemacht.

In ihrem Inneren bargen die Mohhilten ganz zu Anfang die Gebeine der Verſtorbenen und deren Schätze, doch machte ſich ſchon in ganz alter Zeit loſes Geſindel drüber her, grub Tunnels unter die Kurgane und raubte die Schätze derſelben, und bei ſpäterem Aufgraben fand man nicht viel mehr als Unordnung darin, wie es nach einem Grabraub auch nicht anders zu erwarten iſt.

Der letzte Kurgan, der vor dem erſten Weltkrieg (1914) von Geſchichtsforſchern aufgegraben wurde, war die „Solocha“ bei dem Dorf „Schertomlyk“, wo mehrere bedeutende Kurgane auf verhältnismäßig kleinem Raum zuſammengedrängt ſtehen. „Solocha“ nennen die Ruſſen ein unordentliches, verſtrubeltes, unreinliches Mädchen. Auch Waſſernixen gehen unter dieſem Namen. Wahrſcheinlich iſt die ſteinerne „Baba,“ die ſie vor einigen Jahren vom Hügel ſchleppten nicht von beſonderen Schönheit geweſen.

Dieſer Kurgan war einer der größten Süd-Rußlands. Das Grab darunter war zweiſtöckig, unregelmäßig rund und durch eine Wand in vier halbrunde Kammern geteilt, zwei oben und zwei unten.

In der größten der unteren Kammern fand man das Knochengerüſt des dort begrabenen Fürſten und in der Nebenkammer die Ueberreſte ſeines Streitroſſes. Daneben lagen Silber- und Goldſchätze von der Kleidung und Rüſtung des Gewaltigen, und auch einige Fetzen vom Lederzeug und den Seidengeweben wurden gefunden.

Das Prachtſtück des Grabſchatzes aber war ein rieſiger Kelch (3 Fuß hoch) byzantiniſcher Kunſt aus getriebenem Silber mit einem in Relief gearbeiteten Fries, aus lauter Pferdeköpfen beſtehend. In anderen Hügeln der Schertomlyk-Gruppe wurden ähnliche Kelche gefunden, deren einer einen Fries trägt, auf welchem in Reliefarbeit das Zähmen wilder Stuten durch die Skythen dargeſtellt iſt.

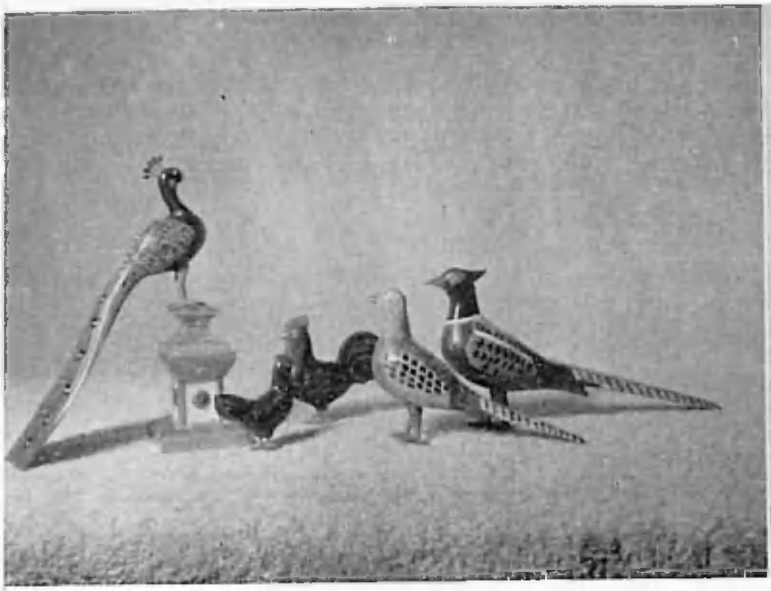
In der Vorderkammer des Oberſtockes, deſſen Decke der ebenen Erde gleich lag, fand man die Skelette der fürſtlichen Wache und in der Hinterkammer die Ueberreſte der Weiber des Gewaltigen. Aus der Stellung der Skelette konnte geſchloſſen werden, daß ſowohl Wache als auch Weiber lebendig mit dem Verſtorbenen begraben wurden. Schmuckſtücke und Waffen aus Gold, Silber, Meſſing und Bronze lagen umher, und Gefäße aller Art ſtanden da herum. Man hatte dem Fürſten offenbar reiche Wegzehrung, ſtarke Bewachung und gute Geſellſchaft auf ſeinen Weg in das Reich der Schatten mitgeben wollen.

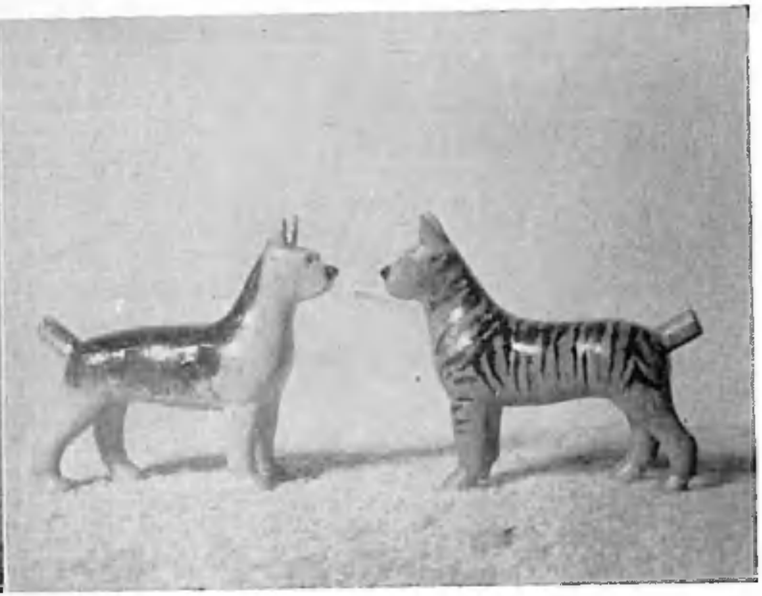
In jenen uralten Tagen war es Sitte, daß bei einem Begräbnis jeder Angehörige des Verſtorbenen einen Korb Erde auf ſein Grab ausſchütte. Ein Einſamer blieb einfach unbegraben liegen wie bei den Medern, Perſern, Tibetanern und anderen. Wer einen kleinen Bekanntenkreis hatte, bekam einen kleinen Grabhügel. Im Kriege wurden die gemeinen Soldaten oft in Maſſengräbern beſtattet, damit die wenigen Verwandten derſelben mit gemeinſamen Kräften doch einen anſehnlichen Hügel über ihnen aufſchütteten. Doch nahmen ſich auch dieſe Maſſengräber den großen Fürſtengräbern gegenüber nur ſehr beſcheiden aus, denn zur Beſtattung der Fürſten brachten Hunderttauſende von Untertanen ihre Körbe voll Erde her, und die Kurgane erhoben ſich bis zu 100 Fuß hoch über der Steppe.

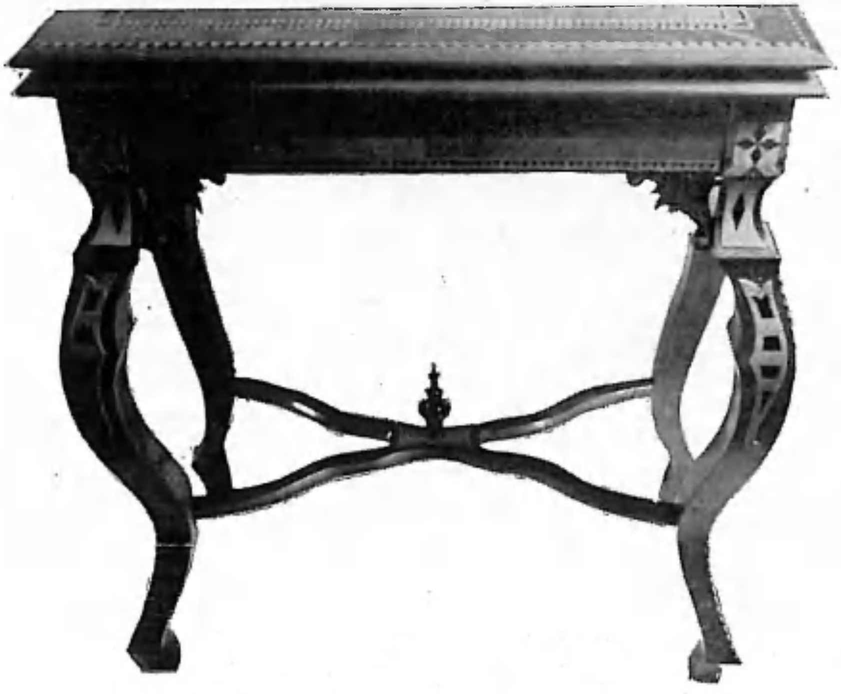
Ein Maſſengrab wurde in der Nähe von Ohrloff von Jacob Schultz aufgedeckt. Darin lagen 8 Skelette ſternförmig, mit den Köpfen im Zentrum zuſammen, und über ihnen erhob ſich ein vielleicht 8 Fuß hoher Hügel. Den Weg von Sparrau nach Großweide (und auch von Rudnerweide nach Tſcherniegowka) kreuzte eine Kette von niederen Maſſengräbern, die ſpäter, mit Erdwällen verbunden, wahrſcheinlich zur Zeit der Kampfe zwiſchen den Kaſaken und Tataren, als Schanzen dienten und bei uns auch als „die Schanzen“ bekannt waren.

Die großen Fürſtengräber ſtanden einſam auf hohen

(Fortſetzung auf Seite 28)







GERHARD ESAU

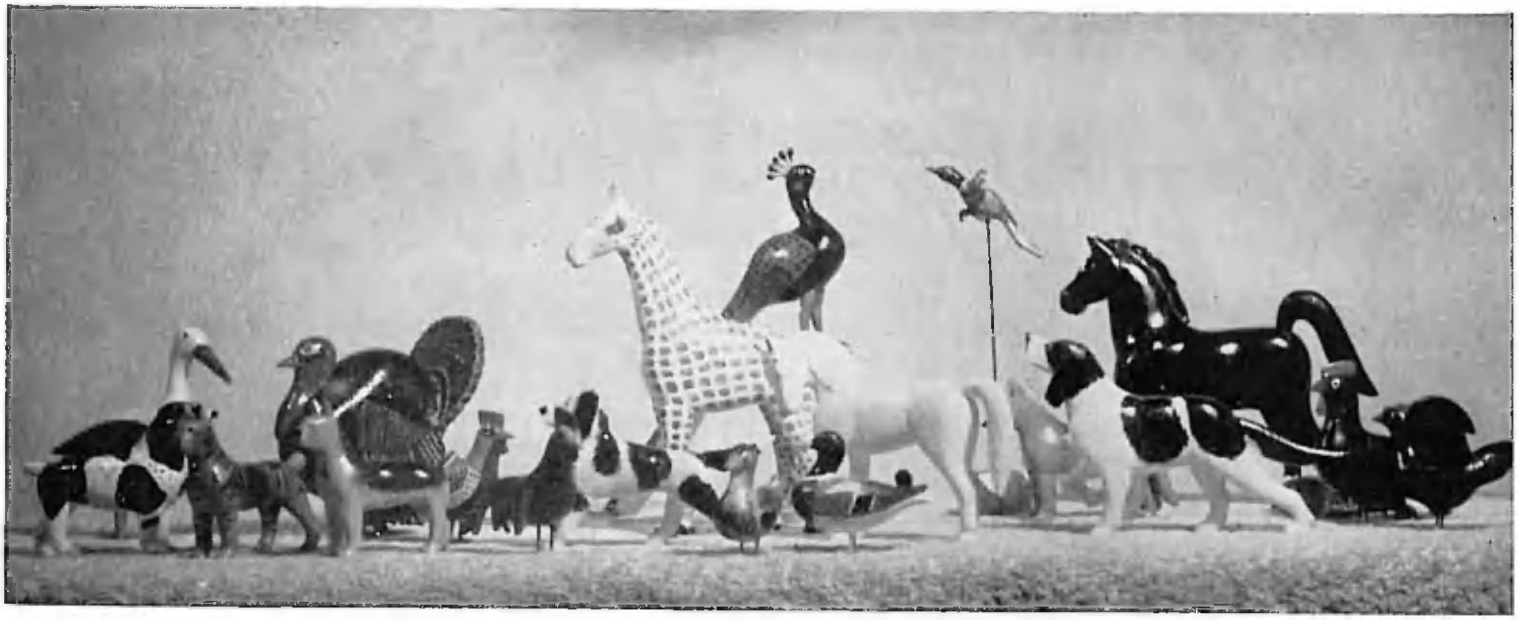
Artist in Wood

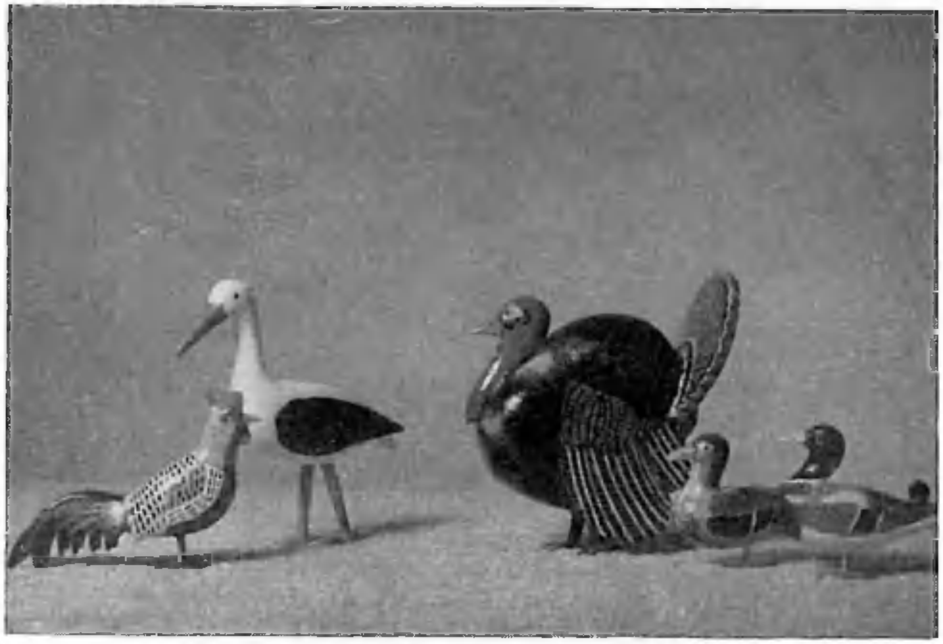
AS A YOUNG BOY in Central Asia Gerhard Esau learned cabinet-making from his father and at the age of twelve he carved his first horse. Since then he has carved inlaid tables (shown at left and opposite) requiring as many as 8,500 separate pieces of wood and several years of work, and many thousands of animals some of which are shown on these pages.

Carving has been not only a pastime of Gerhard Esau for the last fifty years; he has also turned it into a source of income. "At first," he says, "I took my carvings from door to door beginning several weeks before Christmas. Later this was no longer necessary as my customers came to me and bought what they wanted. Six years ago I sold over 240 carvings, such as horses, dogs, and birds in the three-week period before Christmas."

Born in the province of Samara, Russia, September 28, 1876, young Gerhard migrated with his parents to Khiva, Asia, in 1881. Here he went to school under the Mennonite teacher, Wilhelm Penner, and also learned the trade of cabinet-making from his father. Coming to America in 1907 he has since made his home in Beatrice, Nebraska.

He not only carves the animals, but also casts all the metal stands, legs, etc., when necessary, in addition to painting his pro-



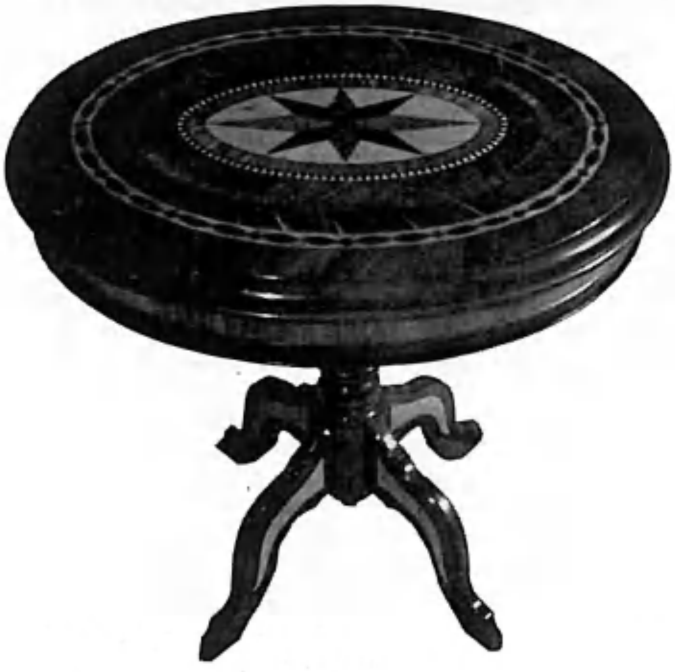


ducts in their natural colors. Besides carving birds and beasts of his own choice, he fills requests of many of his customers.

The inlaid tables shown here are made of native walnut with inlays of sixteen different kinds of wood from all parts of the world: African ebony, rosewood, black magnolia, red and white gum-wood, red, white and grey oak, myrtle, Brazilian pernambuco, Texas ebony, osage orange, mesquite, holly, bird's eye maple, and cherry.

At the age of 72 Gerhard Esau continues his pastime of carving, which with cabinet-making and furniture repairing, is also his profession. Inquiries concerning the sale of the carvings shown on these pages, as well as items made to order, should be addressed to Gerhard Esau, 500½ Court Street, Beatrice, Nebraska.

Esau carves for hours on some of the products and sells them for a small sum. Asked what he found his hardest piece of work, he replied: "I have been at it so long that none of them seem hard any more."



MENNONITE RELIEF WORK IN RUSSIA

BY CORNELIUS C. REIMER

DURING the great famine in Russia (1921-23) after the Revolution a number of foreign-relief organizations started relief work in Soviet Russia, such as: American Relief Administration (Hoover, A. R. A.), American Mennonite Relief (A. M. R.), Jewish Distribution Committee, Young Men's Christian Association, Catholic Mission, Lutheran Relief Committee, American Baptist Relief, Society of Friends, Nansen Relief, and others.

To administer relief under these organizations, they needed trustworthy local workers proficient in several languages; the Soviet Government was, accordingly, asked to find such personnel. Announcements were made in Soviet newspapers concerning employment with foreign offices.

American Charity Organizations in Russia

I agreed to work at the Moscow head office of the American Relief Administration (A. R. A.); and upon examination by the political authorities, I was enlisted as an employee and attached to Donald Renshaw's Division, where I worked from May until December, 1922.

When Alvin J. Miller, acting as director of the American Mennonite Relief organization (A. M. R.) in Moscow, learned that I was a Mennonite, he asked the American Relief Administration to release me for his work.

The American Mennonite Relief organization in Russia was administered by the Mennonite Central Committee and acted in co-operation with other relief organizations. Help was given to the needy farmers of the Ukraine, Caucasus, Siberia, and the following provinces of the Volga district: Ufa, Samara, Saratov, and Orenburg, among Mennonites as well as non-Mennonites, who suffered inexpressibly from the horrors of the Revolution and famine.

Pioneer workers in the Soviet Russian famine areas were the Americans: Alvin J. Miller, Orie O. Miller, Clayton Kratz, B. F. Stoltzfus and Arthur W. Slagel. They were followed by G. G. Hiebert, C. E. Krehbiel, P. C. Hiebert, P. H. Unruh, H. C. Yoder, D. R. Hoeppner, Daniel Schroeder, and others.

One of the first Americans to encourage and help Mennonites was Clayton Kratz who mysteriously disappeared early in his work and was never heard from again. American Mennonite representatives encountered much resistance from the Soviet authorities in getting authorization for help to their dying friends and relatives in Russia. But the fine diplomacy of Alvin J. Miller, who made several efforts to enter Soviet Russia before being admitted, at last succeeded. After this the greatest relief work in the history of Mennonites started and saved not only thousands of Mennonites, but also many Ukrainians, Russians, Tatars, and Germans.

The American Mennonite Relief organization succeeded, not only in saving human lives from death, but also in starting a far-reaching agricultural reconstruction program and encouraging new branches of home industry in predominantly Mennonite areas.

Thousands of yards of home-made woolen- and semi-woolen cloth was woven by industrious Mennonite women and distributed among the poorest. Ready-made cloth and clothing, from American Mennonites, were also distributed in quantities valued at half a million ruble. American Mennonite relief provided for cotton and wool, tools and weaver's looms, for spinning and weaving instructors, as well as for sheep, which were donated to Mennonites in order to produce their own wool.

The aim of the Mennonite relief program was to encourage the people to develop a reconstruction program of self-help. Priority was given to agricultural restoration through the use of Fordson tractors. American Mennonites also sent tractor specialists who instructed the farmers in mechanized farming. Mechanization of farming proved to be the salvation of agriculture as draught animals were almost extinct and available man-power was barely sufficient to bury the dead.

Besides tractors and tractor instructors, the agricultural reconstruction program also included provision of repair shops and fuel for the maintenance of tractors; farm animals, such as horses, sheep, and cows; and seeds, like wheat, rye, and barley. It was my duty to organize the office procedures of these various activities.

Provocations appearing in Ukraine newspapers failed to deter the American Mennonites from helping their brethren in Russia, although the inspired hostilities grew worse. After a meeting of American and Russian Mennonite representatives at Moscow, I agreed to refute the lies of the inspired articles by preparing for newspaper publication articles giving the truth concerning the activities of the Mennonite committees in saving dying people in Russia.

I, therefore, published a statistical survey of the conditions before and after foreign Mennonite aid, giving also the suffering of the Mennonites in all parts of the Soviet Union during and after the civil war. Extracts of these reviews were also submitted to the late President of the U. S. S. R., M. Kalinin.

Having worked with the American Mennonite Relief organization in various departments, I was well acquainted with all of its records. I was also chairman of the Revision Commission of the All-Mennonite Agricultural Association, which united several thousand Mennon-

DANK DEN BRUDERN JENSEITS DES OZEANS
WIR WAREN HUNGRIG UND IHR HABT UNS GESPEISET

One of the tokens of appreciation for the American Mennonite relief work during the Russian famine, 1921-23.

CHORTITZA - ROSENTAL
1922

ite farmers in all settlements throughout the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, I composed diagrams of agricultural activities in all Mennonite settlements throughout the Soviet Union covering periods before World War I, during the famine, and after agricultural reconstruction work. In these diagrams I illustrated the former high level of Mennonite farm production throughout the Soviet Union, and then, the decline and ruin of Mennonite farming during the Revolution and, finally, the results of the attempted agricultural reconstruction. These diagrams were exhibited at the All-Mennonite Congress at Moscow, 1925, where members of the People's Council Commissariat were present and could not help testifying to the progress of the agricultural reconstruction work on Mennonite farms.

Due to the help of the American Mennonites in saving farmers from starvation and afterwards in agricultural reconstruction, by introducing mechanized farming, and establishing revolving credit funds for the purchase of horses, cattle, and seed, agricultural implements and garden tools, the Mennonite settlements in all parts of Soviet Russia overcame many difficulties and showed marked superiority in grain- and stock- farming. Up to 90 per cent of the Mennonites co-operated in this Agricultural Association.

Expulsion of Foreign Relief Workers and Emigration

After the right wing of the Communist party was suppressed in 1925-26, a program of terror was directed against all who showed inclinations toward foreign "capitalist" influence, toward private ownership, and toward Christianity. Only one system of farming—collective farming with a real Soviet proletariat as members and workers—was to be permitted. Former landowners and peasants, who before the Revolution had owned more than 1 or 2 cows and 1 or 2 horses were suspected of being infected with "ownership tendencies" and were considered dangerous for the collective farming system.

Mass expulsions, deportations, and death sentences started. It is obvious that the Mennonites as former owners of approximately 160 acres of land, with 8-12 horses were considered as in the bourgeois class. Their being aided by foreign-relief organizations was interpreted as "having connections" with capitalist countries and being "sympathetic" to foreign "dangerous" ideals.

A. J. Miller managed to continue working among the Mennonites in Russia several years longer than other workers. Finally, he too was forced to leave the Soviet Union. He was the last representative of all foreign relief organizations in Soviet Russia.

All of the American Mennonite Relief funds, property, valuables, and records were entrusted to me until further notice from the Mennonite Central Committee. Three members of the Mennonite Agricultural Association were asked to aid me in saving the American Mennonite Relief funds. I was also promised shelter and assistance in America in case of need.

By this time the organization, The Society of Mennonite Citizens of Dutch Origin, was disbanded by order of the Soviet Government. Some of the funds were given to the All-Mennonite Agricultural Association. But soon this Association received orders to disband immediately. One after another of the Mennonite Co-operatives for Cultivating Grain and Breeding Thoroughbred Animals were obliged to disband. The Mennonite Commission for Church Matters *(K. F. K.)* was also disbanded. Chairmen and secretaries of local Mennonite associations were arrested, as well as all people active in Mennonite co-operatives.

Hundreds of former wealthy Mennonites, who had saved their lives during the Revolution, civil war, and famine, now were arrested and deported, their families exiled, their property expropriated. Other Mennonites, terrified by new Soviet orders to surrender their property to the Soviet collective farms and fearing resettlement in Siberia, hastily gathered their valuables and fled by night to the railroad stations in order to reach Moscow and ask permission to emigrate. This was during the year 1929.

The Soviet government at Moscow, and especially the Communist party, were shocked by the steadily increasing number of Mennonite applicants for emigration. At first they came in dozens, then hundreds of Mennonites and even thousands came overcrowding the houses in the suburbs of Moscow where they tried to get shelter while awaiting visas for emigration. Only a few thousand Mennonites were privileged to leave Russia during this time (1929) most of which settled in Brazil and Paraguay.

The answer of the Soviet authorities was severe: prison and deportations. Adult men were arrested by a refined cruelty: they vanished on their way to the emigration authorities. The G. P. U. officials also arrested the remaining Mennonite leaders such as former members of relief organizations. teachers, preachers, and those who tried to reach consulates of foreign countires. Communication with foreign friends and relatives ceased through fear of Soviet censorship.

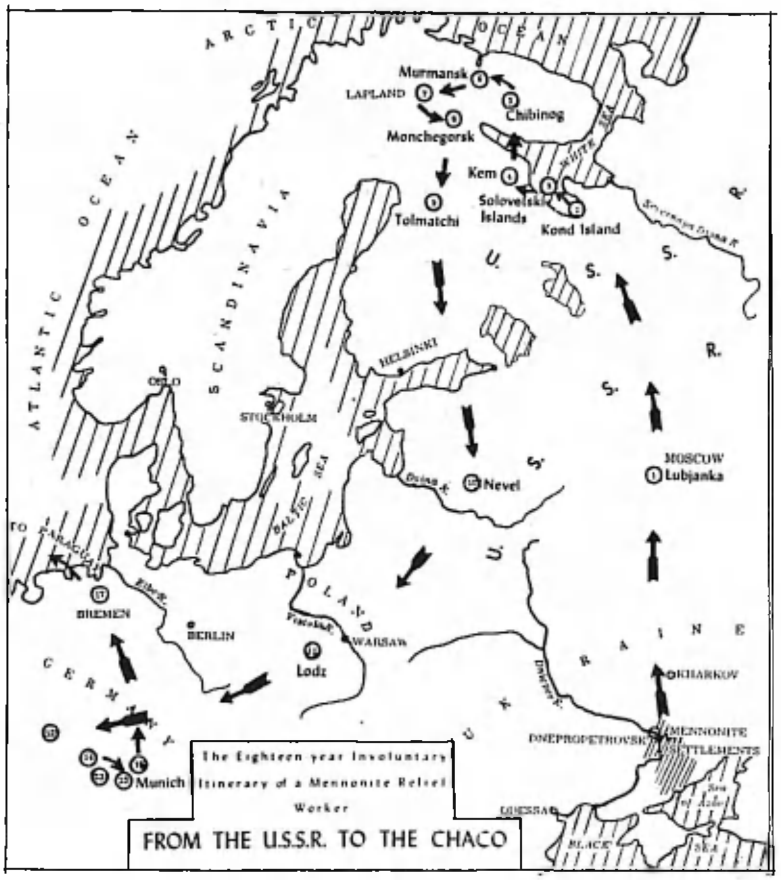
In Prison and Labor Camp

In October, 1929, I was arrested and the G. P. U. confiscated all property of the American Mennonite Relief, all records and also my private correspondence, together with my statistical work *A.M.R. Activities in Russia,* to which I had devoted two years of thorough study.

During twenty-two months of prison life, four years in concentration camps, and five years of exile and persecution, I learned many details of the suffering of Mennonites in dungeons, jails, concentration camps, and exile through the statements of eyewitnesses, as well as of the suffering of thousands of clergymen and millions of peasants, expelled and persecuted by Communism.

It would require a whole volume or more, if I should describe all the moral and physical suffering I endured during thirteen months in a dungeon. I spent many sleepless nights due to the horror of seeing and hearing tortured prison-mates awaiting death sentences, for having done no wrong according to the law of any civilized country.

From the Ukraine to Paraguay via the Arctic Circle



I was only examined once. After spending ten months in a dungeon and growing weaker because of the sleepless nights of horror with not a single walk outside my cell in that time, some inmates of my cell asked a physician, who occasionally examined the prison, to do something for me. After examining my health, he stated that in my case only fresh air could save me. He could only "advise" me to "agree" with my examining commissar and not to be so resolute. I refused to agree with my examiner and preferred rather to be true to my conscience, because I had the reports of eyewitnesses concerning prisoners who had agreed with their examiners. Some of my fellow inmates tried to save themselves by involving guiltless persons in their cases, but they perished, nevertheless, or went insane from frightful pangs of conscience. The methods of the examiners were to convince the arrested people to make "self-accusations." These were used afterwards by the examiners to trump up false charges and provide an excuse for shooting additional "counter-revolutionists."

Later, I was forwarded to another prison, where I was permitted a daily twenty-minute walk in the prison yard; and after another three months of prison life, I was taken to far-off northern concentration camps without trial or any other official court proceeding, to be kept for some ten years. On the day I was sentenced, hundreds of other prison inmates got the same ten-year sentences. Standing in *queue* they were informed by slips of paper of the sentence of the G.P.U. Most of the people were satisfied that, for the time being, at least, their lives were saved. Everyone was, of course, aware that he had been selected for slave work in far-off regions, where the Soviets were about to start large scale mines. After years in the pits north of the Polar Circle there were periods spent in dungeons, then a period as a laborer in exile, then months in jail and again so-called "liberation" which meant more work in the Far North. Then along came World War II which took me southwest to the battlefront and into Germany, leaving me as a displaced person in the American Zone of Germany. In the Munich area I came in contact with the Mennonite Central Committee and was fortunate to be included in the first large group of Mennonite refugees to be moved to South America.

Cornelius C. Reimer, author of this article was an M.C.C. relief worker in Russia after World War I. As a result of his activities he spent eighteen years in prisons and concentration camps as indicated by the arrows and numbers on the map. He is one of the few who managed to escape into Germany during the war. The displaced person's camps in which he resided are also indicated by arrows and numbers. He reached Paraguay with the first group of refugees where he now lives with an invalid daughter. He would appreciate letters from friends and readers. Why not also send him who sacrificed so much for others some material aid? His address is *Casilla de Correo*, No. 166, Asuncion, Paraguay.—The Editor.

Diese Liebesgaben
verdanken wir dem
Mennonite-Central-Committe
Christenpflicht"

Millions of destitute families still need your spiritual and material assistance.

A CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN WAR AND PEACE

BY C. C. REGIER

DURING the late war the Mennonites were frequently mentioned in connection with conscientious objection to war. During the last few years their relief work has received attention.

Without going into their long, and often sad, history, let us merely state that they date back to the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century and constitute one of the oldest Protestant denominations. They, the Church of the Brethren (Dunkers), and the American Friends (Quakers) make up the Historic Peace Churches of this country.

Even before the passage of the Selective Training and Service Act on September 16, 1940, they foresaw the possibility of such a measure and acted accordingly. As early as 1937 one of their committees called on President Roosevelt, and early in 1940 they pointed out to him that the problem of the conscientious objector had caused much trouble in the first world war and suggested the advantage of advance discussion and the desirability of setting up a civilian agency to deal with the problem. When the Conscription Act was passed, it provided that conscientious objectors should, in lieu of military training, "be assigned to work of national importance under civilian direction." Just how this part of the act was to be applied was left to the President and the Selective Service System.

The Historic Peace Churches, through their representatives, at once got into contact with the Selective Service and particularly with the director, Clarence A. Dykstra. They recommended that the government establish a separate civilian agency of the government to handle the work of the conscientious objectors, provide the cost of maintenance, and pay the men approximately the wages that drafted men received. Dykstra was inclined to agree with this plan, but the President turned it down. In the negotiations which followed it was agreed that work camps should be created for the CO's and that the government would furnish or loan cots, bedding, and other items of camp equipment; provide technical supervision for soil conservation and other similar projects; furnish general administrative and policy supervision and inspection, and pay the men's transportation costs to the camps. What the churches agreed to do was stated by the director of Selective Service in a memorandum to the President:

> The National Council for Conscientious Objectors, representing those church groups which include in their membership a large proportion of the conscientious objectors, has agreed for a temporary period to undertake the task of financing and furnishing all other necessary parts of the program, including actual day to day supervision and control of the camps (under such rules and regulations and administrative supervision as is laid down by Selective Service), to supply subsistence, necessary buildings, hospital care, and generally all things necessary for the care and maintenance of the men. Admittance to these camps will not be dependent on membership in the particular church groups undertaking this work. These church groups recognize the special problem created by the conscientious objector. Although generally opposed to the institution of war, they wish to serve their country in a manner compatible with their point of view by undertaking this voluntary obligation.

The President's approval for this arrangement was secured on December 19, 1940.

It should be noted that the government paid no wages to the men in the camps and that it furnished no insurance or compensation in the event of sickness, accident, or death. Thirty men met with fatal accidents in line of duty or died of natural causes. What compensation was received came from the churches. However, men who were assigned to special projects generally received maintenance plus $10-$15 a month.

In May, 1941, the first Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps were opened. By the end of the year there were 22 camps. Most of them were concerned with soil conservation and forestry service. During 1942, a total of 52 additional units were organized, and by the end of the war 151 had been authorized. Of this total 62 were base-camps with the remainder serving as special projects. The churches administered 58 camps and the government 4. Later several of the church-administered group were transferred to the government group, at government request. These units were scattered over 34 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Only 20 were located in southern states. Maryland led with 17, then came Pennsylvania with 12, Virginia and California each with 10, Ohio 9, Michigan 8, Oregon and New Jersey each 7. Some 18 different kinds of agencies were organized, each performing a different kind of service. Among these services, besides forestry and soil conservation, were experiments in technical fields such as biology, meterology, and agriculture; community education, recreational, and health programs; public health work; mental hospital work; "guinea pig" projects; dairy farm work and dairy herd testing, and artificial insemination programs; fire fighting in trained parachute-corps; processing food, etc.

As the war progressed, more and more of the units were assigned to mental hospitals. Of the 51 such units, the Mennonites administered 25. Nearly 3,000 CPS men engaged in this kind of work. They worked in 46 of the nation's 350 public mental hospitals. Not only did they bring kindness and sympathy to their patients, where callousness and brutality were much too common but they also set about to improve conditions. They published a magazine that was designed to aid the attendants at mental institutions, and they collected more than 1,600 reports of conditions and experiences. These "documented, firsthand, on-the-scene reports of actual experiences" are now on file with the National Mental Health Foundation, which is itself largely the result of the war-time efforts of these CO's. This organization published a little book by Frank L. Wright, Jr., entitled *Out of Sight Out of Mind*, in which a few dozen of these experiences and observations are related. It constitutes a shocking indictment of our mental institutions. Since the war the Mennonites have started a small mental hospital of their own near Hagerstown, Maryland, and are proceeding with two more, one in Reedley, California, and the other in Kansas.

Some young men from the Peace Churches went into the regular military services. They caused no special problem, nor did those who accepted non-combatant military service. How numerous were those who would have nothing to do with the military system? They fell into two groups: those who defied the law, and those who tried to be law-abiding. For the first group my figures are not complete. They went to prison, of course. The Federal Bureau of Prisons stated the situation for the year ending on June 30, 1944, as follows: Jehovah's Witnesses, 2,530; other CO's, 694; and "evaders", 1,455. Up to June 1, 1945, the unofficial count was 1,500 CO's and 3,900 Jehovah's Witnesses. In 1947 the President's Amnesty Board recommended that of the total of 15,805 Selective Service violators then in prison, 1,523 should be pardoned. After this was done there were still 1,400 CO's, 4,300 Jehovah's Witnesses, and thousands of other Selective Service violators left in prison. Among those who refused to heed the call of Selective Service were some 40 Mennonites. All have since been pardoned. The average sentence was for 33.4 months. Many prisoners were paroled to straight military service or to CPS. The number of CO's in federal prisons was seven times that of World War I.

The second group—those who stayed within the law—included many Mennonites. The *Directory of Civilian Public Service*, May, 1941, to March, 1947, gives names and addresses of 11,996. They came not only from the three Historic Peace Churches but from 226 other religious groups, and 449 were non-affiliated and 709 unclassified as to denomination. There were 107 groups that furnished only one representative each. The fourteen churches which had a hundred or more members in CPS came in this order: Mennonites, 4,665; Church of the Brethren, 1,353; Society of Friends, 951; Methodists, 673; Jehovah's Witnesses, 409; Congregational Christian, 209; Church of Christ, 199; Presbyterian, 192; Northern Baptist, 178; German Baptist Brethren, 157; Roman Catholic, 149; Christadelphians, 127; Lutheran, 108; Evangelical and Reformed, 101.

Who bore the cost of the CPS establishment, and how great was the cost?

> In the six-year period from 1941 to March 31, 1947 (when it expired), the Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites paid out a total of $7,202,249.36 for the operation of CPS, and the Government paid $4,731,558 for the cost of government camps and the Camp Operations Division of Selective Service. . . . In addition to maintaining their own men in CPS, these churches, prior to 1944, shared equally the cost of assignees from other churches and organizations and of those who were unaffiliated. After January 1, 1944, each operating agency maintained all the men in its own camps and units. A few of the churches have reimbursed the historic peace churches in full, and others in part, for their own conscientious objectors in CPS. The cost of the agencies of the three churches is as follows: Mennonites, $3,188,578.05; Friends, $2,332,176.31; Brethren, $1,681,495.

What has CPS contributed to the country in wages? If the 8,237,866 man-days which these CO's have given were computed on basis of an army private's original pay of $50 a month, it would amount to $13,729,775.

During the war the pacifists generally deplored the fact that they were not allowed to make a positive contribution to peace. The whole CPS setup was a protest against war. What they wanted was to promote peace and good-will in a war-torn world. Almost from the beginning they planned and trained for reconstruction work in war-devastated areas. As the military situation would not, at the time, permit such work in Europe, they had their eyes on China. One unit actually proceeded as far as Cape Town, but had to return on account of hostile action on the part of Congress. That kind of work had to be dropped for the duration of the war. Other kinds of foreign relief work were also greatly restricted because of limitations on relief shipping, as well as the sending out of relief workers. During the last two years of the conflict war sufferers' relief, nevertheless, reached considerable proportions.

In foreign relief work the Canadian Mennonites cooperate with the Mennonites of this country. Together they have a membership of about 200,000. Their joint agency is the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) with headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania. Collecting-centers and warehouses for food and clothing are also located in Silver Springs and Ephrata, Pennsylvania; Newton, Kansas; Reedley, California; Kitchener, Ontario; and Winnipeg, Manitoba.

By 1946 and 1947 the relief contributions made through MCC were large for a group of this size. Between December 1, 1946, and November 30, 1947, some 5,073 tons of food, clothing, soap, and other commodities were collected, having a value of $1,876,000. Of this total 346 tons was clothing. The greater part of these foods were sent from the Gulf ports of Mobile and New Orleans, in order to save on inland transportation charges. Twenty-seven carloads of food were attached to the "Friendship Train," for this offered free transportation to Atlantic ports.

Besides food, clothing, and soap, collections were made of tools, garden seeds, religious literature, Christmas bundles, schools bags, and toys.

Where were these contributions sent? About three-fourths went to Germany. The rest went to a dozen different countries, with Austria, China, Poland, Hungary, Italy, and India among the principal recipients. Holland made a rapid recovery after the war as far as food was concerned, but of clothing she received 93,000 pounds in 1947. By then more than a million of the 8,000,000 Dutch people had received aid from the MCC.

Christmas bundles and Christmas joy in devastated Germany "In the Name of Christ."

Relief worker, Magdalen Friesen, as Santa Claus.

Again old and young gather round the festive tree.

The slogan for Mennonite relief work is "In the Name of Christ." It is attached to each item of clothing and to each food package. Anything that is brought to a relief center that cannot be sent "in the name of Christ" is either reworked or discarded. This slogan at once raises the gift from the level of politics, sectarianism, or partisanship and places it on the plane of unselfish Christian service.

By the end of 1947 a total of 473 relief workers, male and female, had been sent out by MCC—to 16 different countries. Most of them went for a term of two years. Their material compensation was maintenance and $10.00 a month. Among them were more than a hundred men who had already served from one to four years in CPS.

The sincerity of the pretensions of these pacifists can in a measure be gauged by comparing their contributions to CPS, which were in a way compulsory, with their voluntary contributions to relief. These are the cash figures for the United States for the last four years:

	1944	1915	1946	1947
CPS Contributions	$676,088.28	$729,443.12	$428,946.92	$ 12,908.75
War Sufferers' Relief	190,148.68	323,920.89	734,554.35	791,179.60

This totals up to $1,847,387.07 for CPS and $2,039,803.52 for foreign relief. This is not the whole story. To these cash figures must be added the gifts-in-kind which we have already mentioned. These (including the gifts from the Canadians) amounted to nearly $2,000,000 for each of the last two years. There were some gifts-in-kind during the war for the CPS camps, but they never reached the proportions of the post-war gifts for foreign relief. Contributions for relief are still pouring in.

Nor have the Mennonites neglected their regular church activities, which are extensive, and include home- and foreign missions, publication, schools, etc. For this year (1948) the General Conference Mennonites alone (one branch out of many) have adopted a budget for themselves that comes close to a million dollars.

One problem that looms large is the refugee problem. At the end of the war there were some 20,000 displaced Mennonites in various parts of central and western Europe. Most of them were from the Ukraine. They had fled before the oncoming Russians in 1944 and 1945, and made their way to Germany and points west. For them to go back meant enslavement or death. Many of them were gradually gathered into camps, where they are being supported by MCC.

In 1947, 2,305 of them were helped to Paraguay and about 400 to Canada. This year (1948) another three shiploads of about 3,200 have been sent to South America, and others are to follow. More than 2,500 have been brought to Canada. The United States has just recently opened its doors to displaced persons from Europe thus admitting also Mennonite refugees. More than $600,000 was raised by American Mennonites in 1947 to finance the movement of their refugee brethren.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

BY EMIL R. RIESEN

THE accomplishment of any major task, not excluding that of winning the peace, calls for a three-fold approach—the emotional, the intellectual, and, of course, that of action. In the case of achieving international peace direct action has been tried in the form of good will service, adjustment of tariffs, even war to end all future wars. The emotional approach also has been tried. Who does not more or less ardently wish and long and pray for peace? The intellectual attack on the problem of peace has, however, been very, very feeble. Difficult though it may be, is it too late to add that approach to the other two? Even the building of a good home requires that sound intelligence be mingled with eager wishes and with concrete action.

Why is it that the task of establishing enduring peace has always been bungled? Why is it that even Western Christianity with its central message of love and good will has not established peace within its borders? These are large, soul-searching questions.

The present reviewer presumes to give an important though admittedly a partial, answer. His answer is that nations have not understood and often not tried to understand other nations. Most representatives of great cultures and religions have not understood or even thought it worthwhile to try to understand other cultures and other religions. Without such understanding there can be no peace and harmony except peace and harmony that is imposed by the stronger. Such peace is only a truce that is not genuine nor lasting. All this would seem to be so elementary and simple that it is commonplace. Yet most deeper truths are simple even though their implications are endless.

How then shall an individual, a peace group, or a peace-loving nation help to achieve that mutual understanding which is so obviously essential in a United Nations whereby wars may cease? The quest is probably so arduous and so long that many will faint by the way.

The present reviewer sees examples in the three books listed below of that kind of careful and patient questing for the truth which is needed before nations can understand each other. Young scholars eager to serve the cause should arise by the hundreds to make similar inquiries. Patient and intelligent readers by the million should read and re-read such books and actively seek to know and understand their neighbors. This is one essential to enduring peace.

1. BENEDICT, RUTH: *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Patterns of Japanese Culture). New York, H. Mifflin, 1946, 324 pp., $3.00.
2. NORTHROP, F. S. C.: *The Meeting of East and and West.* New York, Macmillan, 1946, 530 pp., $6.00.
3. NORTHROP, F.S.C.: *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities.* New York, Macmillan, 1947, 399 pp., $4.50.

The book by Ruth Benedict grew out of the need of the United States Office of War Information in World War II. Our designers of diplomatic and miltary strategy were often puzzled both by the purposes and by the strange morale of the Japanese. What ideals and ends, i. e., what ideology motivated their bold conduct of the war? What peculiar training lay behind the extraordinarily weird performance of Japaneses soldiers? What were the deeply entrenched attitudes of thought and behavior in this peculiar people?

The author is a cultural anthropologist and generalizes her problem thus:

> One of the handicaps of the twentieth century is that we still have the vaguest and most biased notions, not only of what makes Japan a nation of Japanese, but of what makes the United States a nation of Americans, France a nation of Frenchmen, and Russia a nation of Russians. Lacking this knowledge, each country misunderstands the other. We fear irreconcilable differences when the trouble is only between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and we talk about common purposes when one nation by virtue of its whole experience and system of values has in mind a quite different course of action from the one we meant. We do not give ourselves a chance to find out what their habits and values are. If we did, we might discover that a course of action is not necessarily vicious because it is not the one we know—to demand uniformity as a condition of respecting another nation is as neurotic as to demand it of one's wife or one's children (p. 13).

The present reviewer read *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* for its vivid and authoritative portrayal of the patterns of Japanese culture. It is not a "juvenile" book, nor is it a technical treatise on a civilization so very different from our own. It should be read by the serious general reader, first, as an interesting and competent study of an important civilization; second, as an example of work that needs urgently to be done by scores of peoples as a means to mutual understanding and peace.

In *The Meeting of East and West* Northrop undertakes the herculean task of sketching on a large canvas a portrait of the major ideologies which underlie the present clash of civilizations. The very boldness of such an undertaking is tremendously impressive. The author's range of information and his powers of interpretation are extraordinary. The tone of the book betrays the author's compelling desire to contribute to a solution of the present world crisis.

Life in Latin America, he shows in the first three chapters, is anchored in a different pattern of values than is life in the United States. The combination of interests which explains the goals and the behavior in our culture is different from the combination of interests which accounts for theirs. Each culture needs to learn to understand and appreciate the ideals of the other if we are to become actual good neighbors.

In successive chapters Northrop uncovers the unique elements in British democracy, in German idealism, in Russian Communism, and in Roman Catholic culture as it has been shaped by the powerful influence of Greek thought. The author then does a similar thing with the oriental cultures of India, Japan, and China, masterfully contrasting the meaning of Eastern civilization with that of the West. In the concluding chapters of the book are presented, first, the author's solution of the basic problem of reconciling East with West and, second, his description of the instruments of peace.

In *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities* Northrop undertakes to illuminate one of the most important problems of our times. Most people do not as yet recognize it as a problem. Everyone has heard the oft-repeated statement that man's knowledge of nature is out of step with man's knowledge of social and spiritual values.

Northrop is fully aware of the fact that until today scholars have generally been of the opinion that problems of fact and problems of value are not only different but also that the latter cannot be attacked by any methods that may be called scientific. Here Northrop vigorously disagrees. In fact, he undertakes in this volume to formulate the basic principles of such a method.

Northrop is profoundly impressed by the urgency of the world's need for convincing knowledge in the various fields of human relations and spiritual values. In medicine and in industrial production scientific principles discovered anywhere—in Germany, in Russia or in the United States—are universally valid. They are eagerly sought and immediately used by friend and foe. The assumption that the principles of the good life, i.e., of ethics, of good and bad, of right and wrong can be similarly discovered by scientific methods if developed in the broad area of the humanities underlies the author's latest work.

Among the readers of *Mennonite Life* there are scores of scholars and scientists who will find the study of Northrops' *Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities* profoundly rewarding. The serious general reader will find the careful reading even of selected chapters in *The Meeting of East and West* an experience long to be remembered. Many more would find *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* a gateway to the understanding of another race of God's children.

DISASTER ENDS RUSSIAN

Die Burg, a Mennonite estate of Chortitza first used by Communists then by German occupation forces in 1942. Left, Mennonite of Ukraine, 1941-1943.

WE may designate four particularly turbulent times that unleashed themselves upon our Mennonite settlements in Russia:

1. *The Civil War of 1917-1920 and the consequent famine of 1921-1922.*
2. *The liquidation of the kulaks, and the agrarian collectivisation (1928-1933).* In the latter two years of this period a severe famine again took place.
3. *The frightful waves of purges and terror in the years 1936-1938.* Thousands of Party and Soviet functionaries and millions of collective farmers were sacrificed to the zeal of this purge. Again our villages suffered most severely.
4. *World War II.* Beginning in 1941 the Soviet government gave our villages their death blow.

The few years between these frightful periods gave our people opportunity to revive somewhat.

* * *

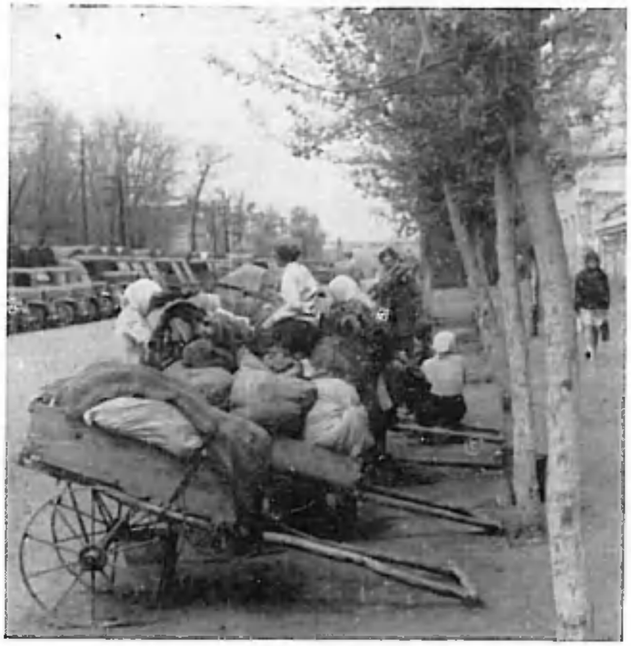
It is impossible, in the limitations of one article, to describe in detail these upheavals and their effect upon our Mennonite villages. Besides, much has already been written about our experiences during the Civil War and the first great famine; the second period of tribulation may also be quite well-known. It is not yet possible to describe in a thorough manner the consequences of the last two periods of distress upon our villages. For that reason I shall only make a few provisional observations.

The Liquidation of the Kulaks

Our best years, comparatively speaking, were the years of the New Economic Policy, about 1922-1928. In this period we could convene church conferences, organize large Mennonite agricultural associations in the Ukraine and in other areas of Soviet Russia and for some time we even published Mennonite periodicals (*Unser Blatt* and *Der Praktische Landwirt*). Some 18,000 Mennonites were permitted to emigrate and those that remained there experienced a pronounced economic and cultural revival.

Since 1927 the Soviet government forbade further emigration. Church conferences were no longer permitted. The agricultural associations worked under great difficulties; the struggle proved to be too much, and in the summer of 1928 the All-Mennonite Agricultural Association had to be liquidated. We stood before the second great storm.

The government measures which gained momentum since 1928 grievously affected our settlements. We had, thanks to our industriousness, attained a degree of pros-



Main street of Chortitza, 1943. The Red Army is returning and refugees are moving westward. Right, Mennonite woman of Ukraine, 1941-1943.

MENNONITE SETTLEMENTS

perity and were, accordingly, classified as *kulaks* to be liquidated. Equaly illegal were our efforts to preserve our heritage, to keep our own schools, and to cultivate our church life.

The consequence of this increasing pressure was that beginning in May, 1929, our people in increasing numbers, left home and farm and hurried to Moscow to appeal directly to the Soviet government for permission to emigrate. While much has been written concerning this movement, the best presentation of these events in Russia is to be found in the book *Die Schicksalswende des russlanddeutschen Bauerntums 1927-1930*, by Dr. Otto Auhagen, Leipzig, 1942. Auhagen was at that time agricultural expert attached to the German embassy in Moscow. He tried by all possible means to assist the Mennonites; many of those who emigrated will remember him well. Thanks to the efforts of our Mennonite organizations some 6,000 of our people were able to leave Russia. The rest (some 7,000), however, were placed on freight trains and forcibly returned to their homes (most of these were Mennonites, but there were also Evangelicals, Catholics, etc.).

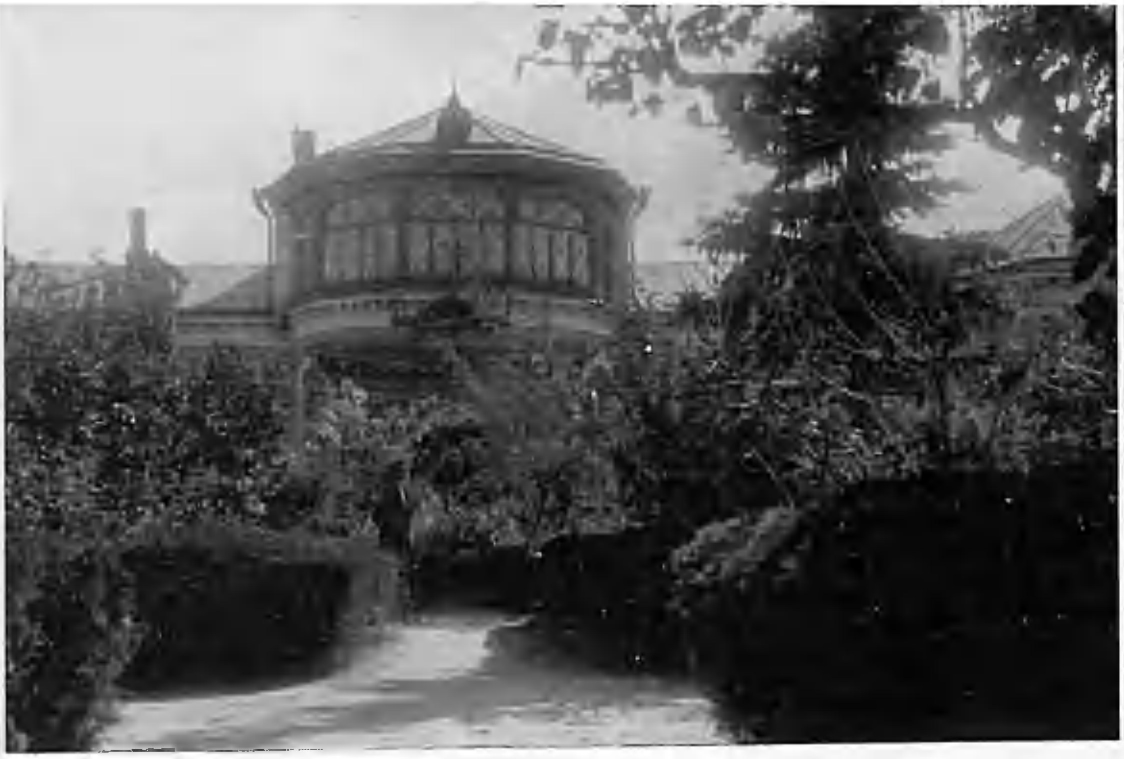
In the eyes of the G. P. U. (Soviet secret police), this movement constituted a revolt, and it instituted stern measures of reprisal. On October 15, 1929, about 400 persons waiting for their passports were arrested and for the most part confined to the large Butyrki prison in Moscow. The officers demanded that these arrested farmers produce written statements that they wished to go back home voluntarily; they were also expected to give the names of the "agitators" for the emigration. However, they remained firm and insisted upon accepting the responsibility for their trek to Moscow. The names of most of these prisoners have not become known. We have not learned much of their fate; a few were freed, others were given over to the mercies of their local G.P.U. Those that survived later suffered the fate of the liquidated *kulaks*.

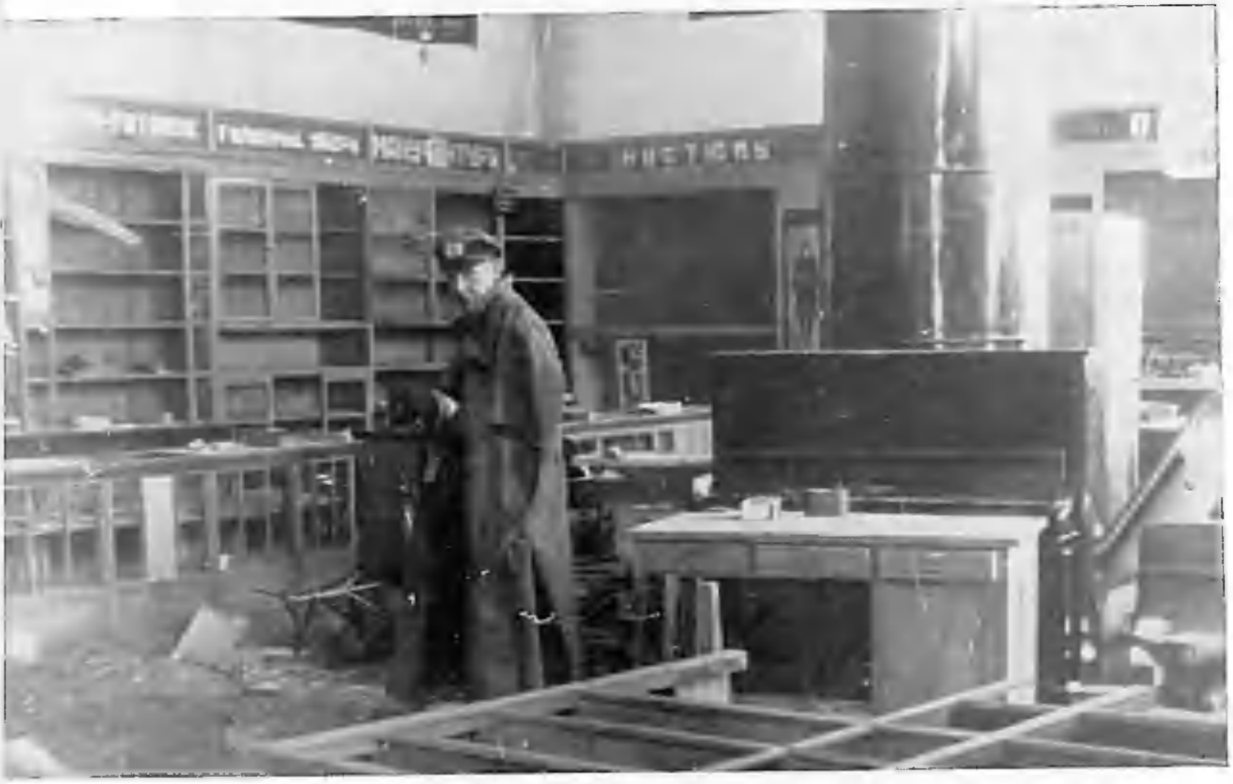
With the emigration movement of 1929 our people undertook a courageous attempt to flee from Soviet Russia; however, only a comparatively few succeeded, as every such attempt was suppressed with brutal violence.

Those who occupied positions of leadership, especially the leaders of the All-Mennonite Agricultural Association, were subjected to frightful inquests (at which the G.P.U. showed a particular interest in discovering any leanings toward emigration) after which they were confined for many years in prisons and concentration camps.

In a cell of the Butyrki prison Elder Jacob A. Rem-

(Continued on page 26)





MENNONITE

Molotschna, Ukr

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page

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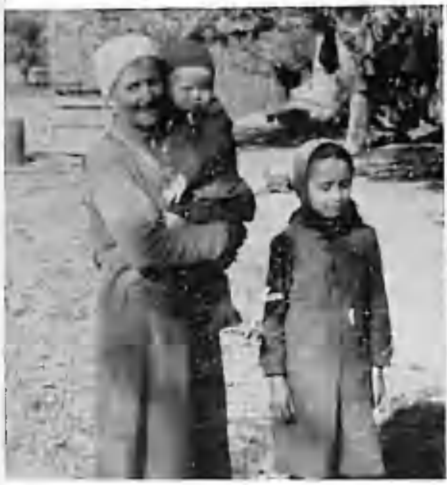

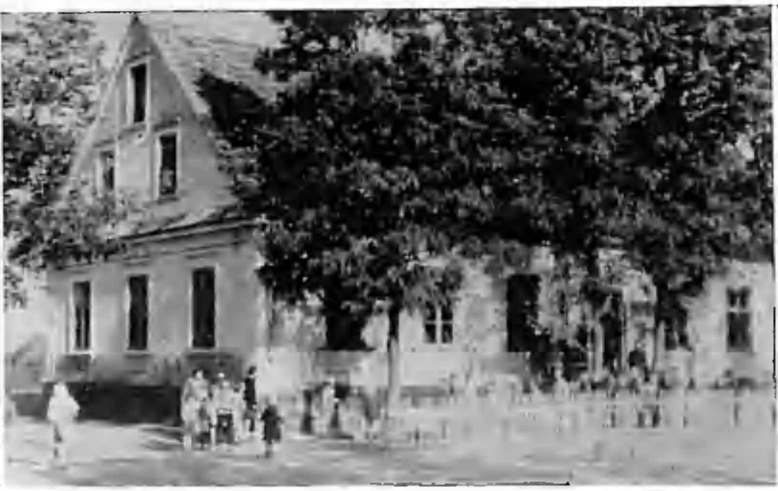

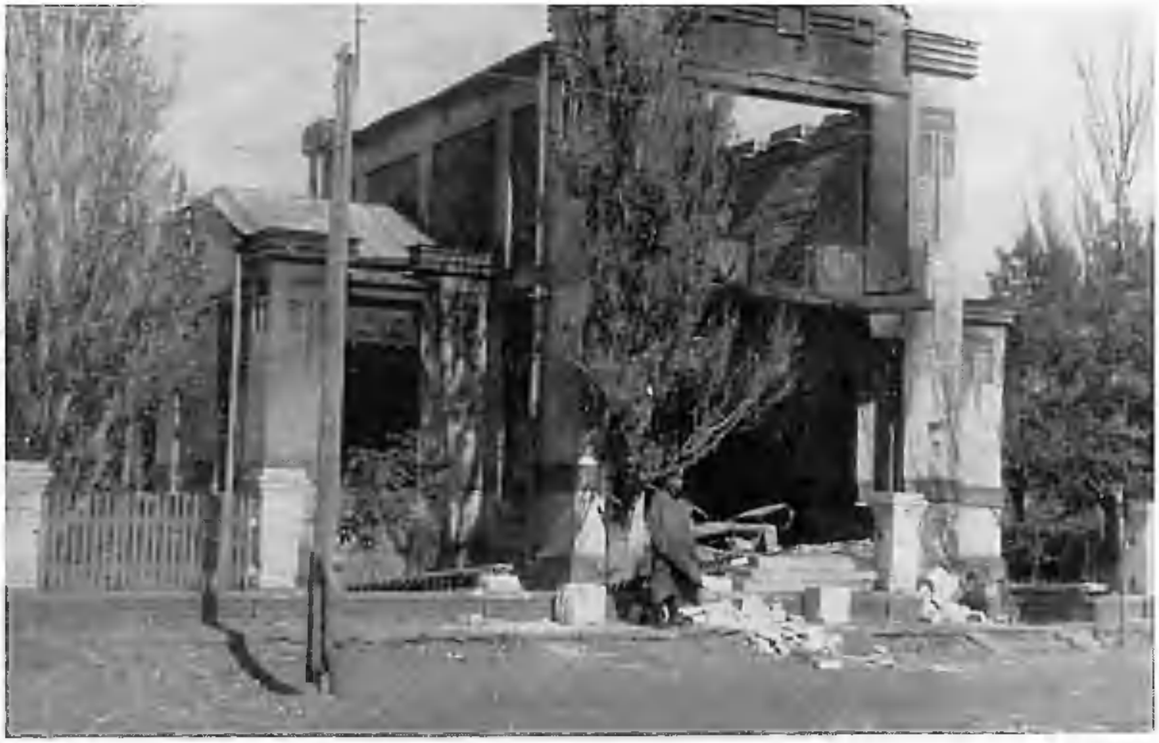

VILLAGES

raine, 1941--43

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ases, been torn down. During
ing it had become useless.

Dnieper Bridge, Burwalde, destroyed 1941. Note barb wire.

Army vehicles in Chortitza, during German occupation.

DISASTER ENDS SETTLEMENTS

(Continued from page 23)

pel, of Gruenfeld, has also been seen among those who were arrested. After a few years he was freed but was again arrested and imprisoned in the frightful prisons of of Vladimir and Orel. Upon the approach of the German Army (1941) the Soviet guards are said to have shot many of the prisoners.

The years 1929-1932 saw hundreds of trains of liquidated *kulaks* from every province being taken to the forests of the North and Siberia. Many Mennonite families from all our settlements were found in these trains. These deported ones were the most "fortunate" in that they were able to settle in small groups and again organize some kind of community life and maintain their morale. Courage, industry, and patience and the assurance of God's help achieved miracles even in this circumstance.

The Mennonite settlements as such were not yet liquidated, and those people remaining in them became, almost without exception, members of collective farms.

The Purges

In the fall of 1936 N. J. Yeshov became Commissar and upon charge from Stalin carried through a purging program which is, no doubt, unique in the history of mankind. This purge included all classes of society: collective farmers, workers, intellectuals, and in particular also members of the Communist Party. Those who were purged of the first group were mostly confined to the many concentration camps and "died like flies." Purged members of the intellectuals and party members were soon found in the large political prisons organized by Yeshov in the provinces of Vladimir and Orel where a frightful regime with unimaginable brutality was maintained. Tuberculosis, boils, and scurvy were the result. When many of the inmates of these prisons were sent to concentration camps these miserable people counted it as a stroke of good fortune and were happy over the change. After completing his commission Yeshov and his hangmen also disappeared, many of them being shot as scapegoats.

What was the effect of these events upon our Mennonites? Those who were already in prisons and concentration camps experienced the full fury of the Yeshov regime and emptied the bitter cup of its last dregs.

In the Mennonite villages one wave of arrests followed another. For example, in a Siberian Mennonite village almost all men had been taken so the women were arrested, forced into labor battalions even farther east and told that they were now to spend ten years in the "Work-Improvement" camps—without a hearing. Workers were needed to achieve the great goals of Communism!

What of our intelligence? With our intelligence we had exhausted all possibilities of living in peace with Soviet officialdom. Now the G.P.U. fabricated the charge that a "German-national fascist counter-revolutionary organization" existed in the Chortitza district, and a special board sentenced the "leaders" with the death penalty; the official proceedings lasted only 10-15 minutes and nothing further was heard of those who were condemned. The "members of the organization" were placed in camps. False confessions were forced from the accused through various tortures; this was official murder.

Those already banished were again drawn into merciless suffering. For example, a group of Mennonites from the Samara settlement was banished to the far North in 1930. Here they had established a collective farm and were able to maintain a tolerable existence. They had even begun to cultivate church activities. In 1937 four of their group (three men and one woman) were arrested and sentenced—no further trace of them appears. In 1929 a new lawsuit was instituted: twenty-four young people were accused, three were released, and twenty-one young men and women were exiled to Siberia where they were to languish for 8-10 years! One of these young women was accused of conducting a children's Sunday school in 1932; another was accused of promoting propaganda against collective farming.

It may be of interest to some readers to know that the secretaries of the German Communist divisions, namely Schilhawi, Hochstaedter, and Gebhart, with whom we had many conflicts in those days, have now all disappeared from the scene. This is equally true of the local Communist leaders in the German Volga Republic. Where they are now only the Soviet secret police knows.

World War II: The Final Phase

I hesitate to speak of the end of the Mennonite churches in Russia for we know not what may yet happen. In any case, the effects of the last war have been frightful. The Soviet government capitalized on this opportunity and tried, as far as possible, to liquidate the Mennonite settlements.

Already in August and in the fall of 1941 some 350,000 Germans from the Volga district were deported beyond the Urals. Our Koeppental Mennonite settlement was also exiled in this group. The information concerning those who were banished and those who remained is scarce. We may assume that many have lost their lives.

In this instance the German Army was still distant; however, the entire population of the southern settlements was exiled to the Northeast in an increasing tempo as the German Army approached. This effort was not always successful, but the measure of success was sufficient; the Memrik settlement for example, experienced a terrible fate—practically all were deported.

Those remaining in the area occupied by Germany later accompanied the German soldiers in their retreat, wandering in long columns back to Germany whence they had come 150 years ago.

* * *

Destitute, our forefathers went to Russia. With pains and perseverance they were able to achieve a significant degree of prosperity. Our religious and cultural life was developed to a high state of achievement. Then, however, the great catastrophes came, and a part of the descendants went back to the old, now terrible shaken homeland. They had to continue their journey farther west, finally reaching safety across the seas. A loving, brotherly hand is helping them in this and many are finding new homes.

Never, however, shall we forget those who are still in Russia!

May the Lord be merciful to them and strengthen them!

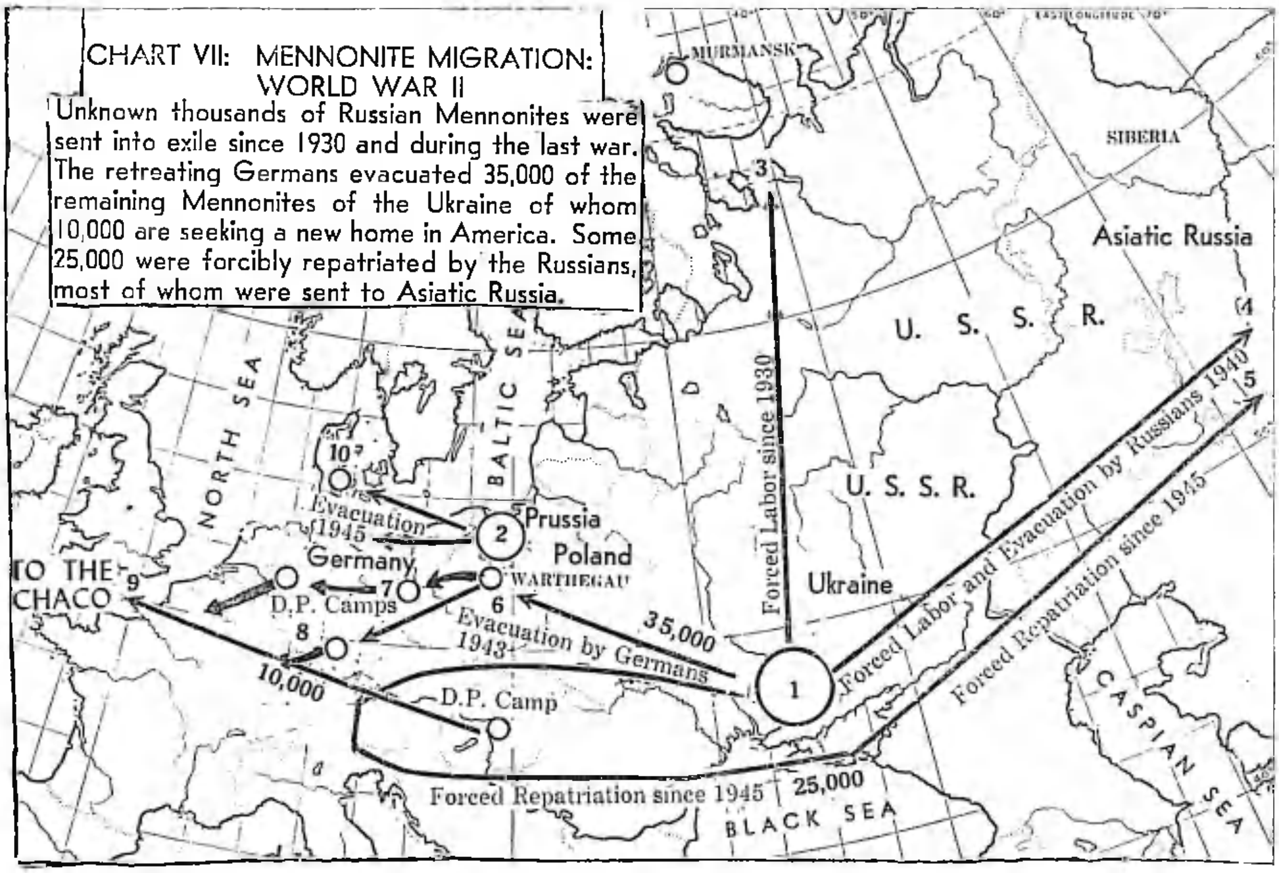


CHART VII: MENNONITE MIGRATION: WORLD WAR II

Unknown thousands of Russian Mennonites were sent into exile since 1930 and during the last war. The retreating Germans evacuated 35,000 of the remaining Mennonites of the Ukraine of whom 10,000 are seeking a new home in America. Some 25,000 were forcibly repatriated by the Russians, most of whom were sent to Asiatic Russia.

MURMANSK
SIBERIA
3
Asiatic Russia
U. S. S. R.
4
5
Forced Labor and Evacuation by Russians 1940
Forced Repatriation since 1945
U. S. S. R.
Forced Labor since 1930
Ukraine
NORTH SEA
BALTIC SEA
10?
Evacuation 1945
2
Prussia
Poland
Germany
WARTHEGAU
TO THE CHACO
9
7
D.P. Camps
6
8
35,000
Evacuation by Germans 1943
1
10,000
D.P. Camp
Forced Repatriation since 1945
25,000
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA

Die Kurgane

(Fortſetzung von Seite 11)

Punkten der Steppe, ſo daß man von einem bis zum nächſten ſehen und ev. auch ſignaliſieren konnte.

Im Gegenſatz zu den ägyptiſchen Königsgräbern, in denen man immer ſo viel Geſchriebenes vorfindet, weiſen die Kurgane gar nichts davon auf, es ſei denn daß einmal von den benachbarten Kulturvölkern geraubte Gefäße ihren Weg in die Grabkammern fanden. Deren Inſchriften hatten jedoch mit der Geſchichte der Begrabenen nie etwas zu tun. Von den beiden erwähnten Kelchen nimmt man an, ſie ſeien von den Skythen bei den kunſtfertigen Griechen beſtellt worden, und die beſtellenden Reiter hatten den Künſtlern das Sujet vorgeſchrieben. Sie zeigen kunſtgerechte Bilder aber keine Schrift.

Niemand weiß, wann ein Hügel aufgeworfen wurde, und wer die Begrabenen ſind, welche Namen ſie trugen, und welche Werke ſie vollbrachten.

Als aus der Mehrzahl der Kurgane keine Schätze mehr zu holen waren, ergriff die umwohnende Bevölkerung wiederum eine abergläubiſche Scheu vor denſelben, und man blieb ihnen möglichſt fern.

In einer Niederung des Alexanderwohler Planes lag ein Grab anderer Art, von einem großen Steinkubus verſchloſſen, unter welchem unſere Alten an der Oſtſeite noch Stufen geſehen haben wollten, die in die Tiefe führten. Als ich auf dem Stein ſtand, war er ſchon ganz unter die Erde der Niederung geſpült, und nur mit Mühe konnte man noch ſeine Oberfläche freilegen, wenn man es ſehr ernſtlich wollte. Aber das wollte außer mir niemand, und ich konnte und durfte es nicht, denn der Bauer, dem der Acker gehörte, wollte nichts lieber, als daß der Stein tief genug unter die Erde kam, daß er mit dem Pflugſchar darüber hinſtreichen konnte. So iſt auch dieſes Grabes Geheimnis ungelöſt geblieben und der Stein nun wohl ſchon ſo tief in die Erde verſunken, daß niemand ihn mehr finden kann. Nicht einmal Legenden zirkulierten mehr über dieſes Grab, als ich in den Jahren 1903 bis 1905 in Friedensdorf Lehrer war und manchmal zu demſelben hinausging.

In Büchern habe ich geforſcht, aber die Geſchichte der alten Gräber der Steppe blieb ein Geheimnis, und alles was ich ſchließlich noch tun konnte, war, daß ich das folgende Gedicht eines mir unbekannten ruſſiſchen Dichter's in's Deutſche überſetzte, der mit ſeinen wiſſenſchaftlichen Forſchungen ungefähr ſo weit gekommen war, wie ich ſelber.

Kurgan

In der Steppe auf offenem Plane
hält einſam ein Hügel die Wacht.
Ein Rieſe, ein ruhmreicher Ahne
Ward hier einſt zu Grabe gebracht.
Ein Trauermahl wurde gehalten:
drei Tage lang Opfer und Grau'n;
man ſchlachtet' zu Ehren dem Alten
ſein Streitroß und all' ſeine Frau'n.

Und als auf dem Grabe verklungen
des Kampfſpieles Getöſe und Hall,
da haben zur Laute geſungen
die Sänger ſein Lob ihm zumal:

„O Ritter, es rühmt deiner Taten
ſich hochgemut ewig dein Land;
dein Werk iſt dir wohl ſtets geraten,
ringsum iſt dein Name bekannt . . .
Und ſollte den ragenden Hügel
der Wind mit der Zeit auch verwehn —
dein Ruhm, trotz der Zeit ſchnellem Flügel,
bleibt dir ewig als Denkmal beſteh'n . . ."

Es wechſelten Völker und Namen; —
verwandelt der Erde Geſicht.
Jahrhunderte gingen und kamen,
doch den Hügel verwehten ſie nicht;
ſtolz hebt zu den Wolken der Recke
und ſchweigend ſein Haupt noch empor;
doch vergeſſen iſt längſt ſchon der Recke,
dem ewigen Ruhm man hier ſchwor . . . .

Wer war er? — Wen hat er bezwungen?
Welche Kronen wohl ſchmückten ſein Haupt?
Wo hat er ſein Schwert einſt geſchwungen?
Wen hat er ermordet — beraubt?

In unverbrüchliches Schweigen
gehüllt ſteht der Hügel im Feld.
Ihn umſchmeicheln die Winde im Reigen;
doch vergeſſen iſt längſt ſchon der Held,
und niemand mehr ſinget ihm Lieder,
und niemand mehr trauert um ihn;
ſeinen Namen nennt niemand je wieder;
ſein Ruhm iſt auf ewig dahin . . .
Der Springbock nur jagt an dem Hügel vorbei
durch die Ebene hin;
mit lautem Schwirren fliegt manchmal herbei
ein Heuſchreckenſchwarm; und bei Tagesbeginn
ein Erdhäslein flitzt wohl darüber hinweg;
auch kommt wohl ein ſtolzer Reiter
mitunter hierher noch auf einſamem Weg,
hält Ausſchau und zieht wieder weiter;
eine Kranichſchar mit ſchrillem Geſchrei
läßt auf ihm ſich zur Ruhe wohl nieder,
verweilet ein wenig und ſteigt auf dann frei
in die Luft und verläßt ihn wieder.

Doch tauen aus Wolken nur linde
noch manchmal die Tränen herab,
und es wehen die flüchtigen Winde
des Vergeſſenen Staub von dem Grab.

Mennonite Brethren Church, Tiege, Ukraine, used as store during Communist era. For interior see page 24.

Ohrloff an der Molotschna

Es iſt Anfang Oktober 1941. Ich befinde mich in meiner Eigenſchaft als Dolmetſcher an der Krimfront bei Perekop—Armjanſk. Es iſt unruhig, und die Herbſtnächte ſind ſchon unfreundlich kühl. Hier wird es nicht leicht werden . . . . . Da erreicht mich endlich der lang erwartete Befehl: Sonderauftrag für die Front bei Melitopol! So geht mein ſehnlicher Wunſch, die Molotſchna-Heimat wiederzuſehen, nach 17 Jahren in Erfüllung.

Ein guter Kamerad begleitet mich. Ueber Melitopel, Atuakas und Altonau kommend, traffen wir abends in Ohroff ein. Es iſt ſo finſter, daß wir beinahe in den vor dem Dorfeingang verlaufenden Panzergraben hineinfahren (denn wir müſſen ja wegen der Flieger ohne Licht fahren!). Vor zwei Tagen erſt hatten hier noch Kämpfe ſtattgefunden. Doch ſahen wir auf unſerer Fahrt von der „Alt-Berdjaner" Forſtei bis Ohrloff keinen einzigen deutſchen Soldaten, außer uns ſelbſt.

Nun ſuchen wir Nachtquartier. Das Dorf iſt wie ausgeſtorben. Wir fahren von Hof zu Hof und klopfen an Türen und Fenſter. Die Fenſterſcheiben ſind kreuz und quer mit Papierſtreifen beklebt, was uns überall in der Sowjetunion begegnete, — Sicherung gegen Luftdruck (allerdings eine unzuverläſſige Sicherung!). Nur zwei oder drei Türen öffnen ſich vorſichtig: die Bewohner ſind Ruſſen oder Ukrainer. Endlich ein deutſcher Gruß: hier wohnt—im Hauſe von Riediger—eine Koloniſtenfrau aus E. mit ihren Kindern und ihrer Mutter. Sie durfte hier bleiben, weil ihr Mann Ruſſe und Angehöriger der Roten Armee war. Alle anderen waren eine Woche zuvor mit Ziel Mittelaſien abtransportiert worden; nur noch wenige alte Ohrloffer waren unter ihnen, denn die meiſten wurden ſchon um 1930/31 im Zuge der Kollektiviſierung Opfer der „freiwilligen Umſiedlung".

So iſt mein Wiederſehen mit der Heimat nicht belebt von der Freude des Sichwiedererkennens und auch nicht ausgefüllt mit Erlebnisberichten, es iſt ſehr ſtumm und ſchwer—ſo ſtumm und ſchwer wie die Zwieſprache, die ich mit meinen Ahnen auf dem reſtlos zerſtörten, einſt ſo gepflegten Ohrloffer Friedhof hielt (die Denkmalſteine der Cornies, Wiebe, Reimer, Görtz, Warkentin, Janzen und wie ſie alle hießen, waren zu Pflaſterſteinen verarbeitet worden!) . . . .

Die nackten Gebäude nur zeugen noch von dem hohen Stand unſeres mennonitiſchen Gemeinweſens: Krankenhaus, Taubſtummenanſtalt, Zentralſchule und Mädchenſchule. Die Wirtſchaften haben keine Wirtſchaftsgebäude mehr, ſie wurden abgeriſſen; dafür iſt der Hof von H. Warkentin zum Mittelpunkt des Kolchosgutes ausgebaut worden. Die Ziegelei wurde nicht etwa wieder in Betrieb genommen, ſondern abgriſſen, weil man ſchnell Ziegelſteine für ein zwiſchen Ohrloff und Blumſtein aufzubauends ruſſiſches Kolchosdorf brauchte, das ſich dann auch noch „Kulſturnoje" nannte!

(Fortſetzung auf Seite 40)

Emden *Rathaus* built 1575 in Renaissance architecture. Left, before bombing, right, after. Left center, *Gasthauskirche*, scene of disputation of Reformed and Anabaptists, 1544.

A SIGHT-SEEING TOUR OF

BY ABRA

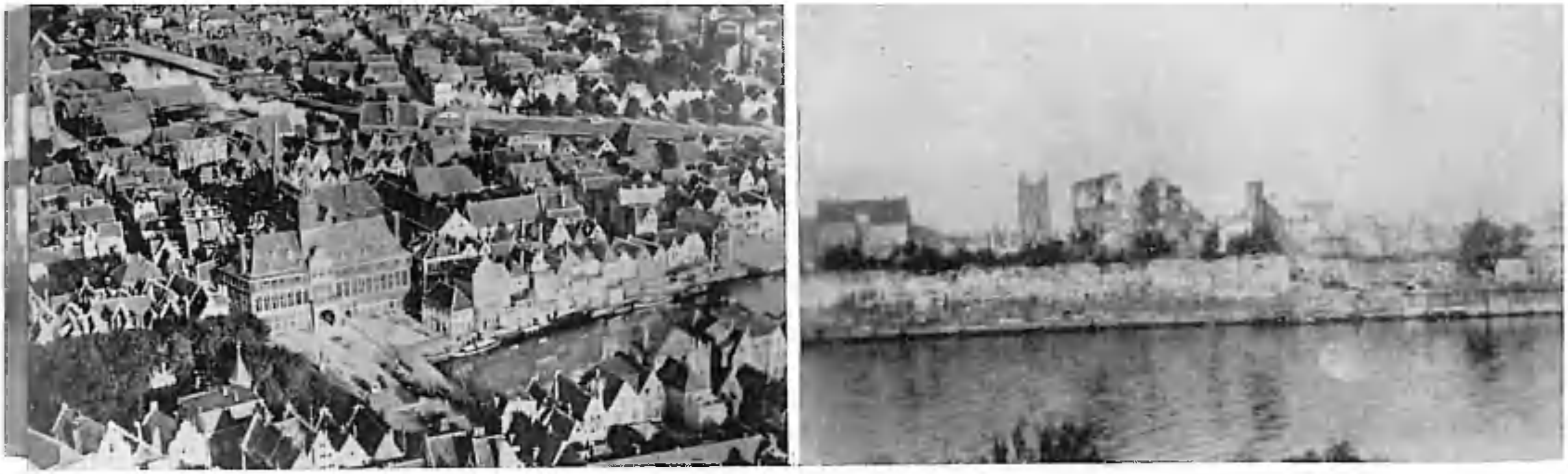
IN JULY, 1936, our Mennonite church at Emden, in Ostfriesland, enjoyed an occasion during which it was again in the limelight of Mennonite history. In connection with the Mennonite World Conference at Amsterdam a number of those who took part in the sessions, including several brethren from overseas, came to Emden to share with us at this historical site of Mennonitism our fellowship of faith.

A tour through this old coastal city with its many canals and windmills patterned after those in Holland, brought our group to various old and memorable buildings which at once reminded us of the earliest days in the life of our church and of Mennonitism in general. I would like to tell of these historically significant buildings and places of interest that have played such an important role in our early history.

Our tour began with the Cathedral *(Grosse Kirche)*. It seems that during the time of the Reformation this congregation was inclined to accept a radical solution for the problems pending in that day. In an addition to this building, the *Geerkammer*, the peaceful Anabaptist Melchior Hoffman, of Strassbourg, baptized three hundred persons in January, 1530, and thus he founded the Mennonite church at Emden.

Even though the rulers disliked the presence of Anabaptists in the city, they dealt tolerantly with them. From here the peaceful

Left, Reverend and Mrs. A. Fast, with Mennonite youth from various countries. Right, Russian Mennonites on way to Canada and South America after baptismal service.



Only 20 per cent of the beautiful city of Emden, North Germany, was left after an air raid. Ruins of Cathedral tower can be seen in left background.

EMDEN--Before and After

AHAM FAST

movement spread through Holland and other neighboring provinces.

As the tour proceeded we heard the story of another old church, the *Gasthauskirche*. At this site the renowned religious disputation of the Reformed group and the Anabaptists took place in 1544. At this occasion, the Pole, a Lasko, a leader of the Reformed group, tried to win the Anabaptists to the Reformed confession. The Anabaptists were represented by their outstanding leaders: Dirk Philips and Menno Simons. Among other subjects the Anabaptists emphasized: (1) The Divine nature of Christ; (2) baptism upon confession of faith; (3) the expression of faith in works of love; and (4) separation of church and state. Had all the reformers accepted the Anabaptist position at the time, separation of church and state would long ago have been accomplished. Even though no agreement was arrived at, the discussion did serve to strengthen the authority of Menno Simons. After this occasion, the peaceful Anabaptists in Friesland were first called *Menists*, a name which gradually spread to other countries. The Mennonites at Emden now enjoyed such tolerance and freedom that they became the center or focus of the whole Mennonite movement from Amsterdam, in the west, to Danzig, in the east, and to Cologne, in the south. Church conferences, frequently held under the leadership of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips, naturally centered in Emden.

Our tour further took us to the renowned *Rathaus* (townhall),

Right, center, present parsonage at Leer, home of A. Fast. Right, Reverend and Mrs. Fast approach ruined Mennonite church in Emden. Below, distribution of relief food and clothing in Emden.

built according to the Renaissance style of architecture in 1575. It was a memorial of the great industrial progress which the city now enjoyed through the addition of refugees and persecuted craftsmen from Flanders and Holland. Of the Mennonites, a source from that early time reports that, "They lived in the most prominent houses, and occupied the best locations in the city; they promoted great trade and mercantile establishments and worshipped openly in great numbers." Through their trade with Flanders and England they brought the entire linen-industry of East Friesland to an unheard-of state of prosperity. We may thus conclude that the Mennonites also contributed to the construction of the townhall, as was later the custom in such cases as the hospital, the secondary school, etc. True it is that the builder of the townhall came from the land of persecution—Flanders—from which many had already fled; and true it is that the architecture was reminiscent of the style of the townhall in Antwerp, where many had lost their homes.

This era of material prosperity was followed by troublesome times which eventually ended in the Thirty Years' War, from 1618-1648. We were reminded of this when on our tour we came to a small, modest house in the *Webergilde Strasse*—the home for the poor of the Mennonite church. Since the house was small, the number of poor in the congregation must never have been large. In spite of this, the poor-fund played an important role in the financial dealings of the church. This fund was used to help refugees, persecuted in other areas and scattered brethren of the faith. In fact, this fund, founded on faith and integrity, developed into a credit institution that served to help many weavers through the difficult economic periods of unemployment. Indeed, even the counts and later the princes of the land had occasion, when they were in great need, to benefit through credits obtained from this congregational fund. The royal court used various occasions such as a succession to the throne, royal marriages, funerals, or other occurrences to demand payment for protection granted, maintaining this system of extortion by threatening the people with the loss of property or religious privileges.

Author, center, and World Conference guests, 1936. Right, B. H. Unruh.

The Mennonite church, with its wide portal in a neo-gothic facade and its slender cross, was at once set apart from other buildings in the vicinity of the townhall. Interior arrangement and the elevated organ on four pillars was of the character of the classical period. The podium and pulpit were of a later period, while the adjoining sexton's house (parish house) toward the *Strohstrasse* with its stairways, custodian quarters, and vestry was styled in genuine Baroque. This building, dating from 1769, was the result of the union of two Mennonite congregations—a Waterlander-Friesian-Flemish, those *auf dem Spyker* ("meeting in the storage room"), and an Old Flemish from those *ausser dem alten Neutor* ("outside the old Newgate"). Their differences finally consisted only in the fact that the former possessed more of an urban character, while the latter were of rural background.

Even though the industrial and political development of Emden had now been joined to that of Prussia, the Mennonite church as such was still part of the brotherhood in Holland and continued to cultivate the closest family relationships with the churches in Groningen and Amsterdam. In the church vestry where the catechetical instruction was given, one could see ample evidence of this relationship in the long rows of copper engravings of the best-known ministers of the Dutch churches. Many of them, as for instance, Dirk Philips, Menno Simons, Leonhard Bouwens, Hans de Ries, Cornelius van Huyzen, S. S. Hoekstra, and S. Cramer had also been ministers at Emden. Mennonite history particularly was fostered here, as evidenced by the extensive library which included all available *Mennonitica* from four hundred years of history. Here, also, were all the yearly reports of the church since 1632 in a row of thirty-nine volumes, bound in pigskin; we cannot mention the wealth of other precious historical material.

Our tour ended at the home of the minister, the parsonage in the *Grosse Osterstrasse*. It was an old house, given a Baroque exterior in 1803, and since the middle of the eighteenth century had with its flower-, fruit-, and vegetable gardens served as residence for the ministers and their families. Here I gave the participants in the tour a brief review of the fate of the church in the last few decades. In spite of the greatest efforts of such people as the merchant, Isaak Brons, his wife A. Brons, author of *Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der altevangelischen Taufgesinnten* (a history of the Mennonites), and their son Bernhard, in behalf of the congregation and of the entire *Vereinigung der deutschen Mennonitengemeinden*, the number of members in Emden constantly declined through emigration and death.

After the first World War the church had only thirty-two members. After 1918 the membership increased through accessions from other confessions. In 1932 the membership had grown to over three hundred. Both church and parish house had to be remodeled and enlarged. In closing my account to the Conference guests I indicated that this growth was evidence that even in this century the Mennonite church had power to attract and win outsiders as long as it gave convincing witness to its fundamental principles which since the Reformation have been its strength. These are: (1) The foundation of the church—not the burden of legalistic requirements but the freedom of the Christian under Grace; and (2) growth of the church—not subject to political pressure but according to the apostolic example of voluntary discipleship.

* * *

Several years have passed since that day when through a twenty-minute air raid the city was so thoroughly destroyed that only 20 per cent of the city—a remnant in the suburban area—remained. When Cornelius Dyck, of Canada, was with us some time ago, he could still photograph the ruins of the above-mentioned landmarks of the story of the Mennonites in Emden. Only the tower of the Cathedral *(Grosse Kirche)* is still standing; of the townhall only the lower stories have survived; of the Mennonite church only the portal; and of the parsonage only the lower stories remain. Only a few members have not been bombed out from two to three times; they have lost everything. Even those things we had removed from the city for security, as for example the archives and the library of the church, were destroyed when the battlefront passed over. Now most people live crowded together in the scantily furnished and repaired ruins of houses and cellars or in the neighboring villages and towns from which they commute daily to town.

Even in our need a new opportunity presented itself to us, an opportunity to help others in their distress as our brethren in the faith came to us from the distant East. Naturally, we could not assist them with what we did not have. Yet, in their wholly alien circumstances we could give them advice and intercede for them with the officials; we could help in providing them with places in neighboring Leer, Oldenburg, and Bremen, where they could assemble for their worship services and other gatherings.

As in other cases so in this: The greater need of the refugees in their homelessness led us to see our own need as of less urgency; their future seemed as hopeless as ours. At all events, we sensed the historical importance of the present which brought us together with those Mennonites who, four centuries previous, fled from these parts to the Vistula River area and later migrated to Russia. Then the helping hand of the Mennonite Central Committee from America became more and more active in our area in aiding the Russian, Prussian, and local Mennonites; many began to see the historical significance of the present in that their faith in the good, and in love, "In the name of Christ" was strengthened. We cannot thank our American sister congregations enough for this food for body and soul!

Standing, A. Fast, author of article, Heinold and Mrs. Fast. Seated, Reverend and Mrs. E. Haendiges, of Monsheim, Germany.

I was particularly impressed by the manner in which contemporary events indicated their historical significance when, in spite of hindrances and difficulties, the first international Mennonite youth conference was held in our midst. Representatives from Russia, Prussia, Holland, Canada, the United States, Paraguay, and local youth attended the sessions. I felt that something of the spirit of Pentecost glowed in the hearts of this youth and that this spirit, in spite of falsehood and folly, in spite of sin and shame, yet crossed all boundaries of language and material possession and led, in ways unknown, into all truth. May the glowing of this Spirit grow into a flame which will embrace all of Christendom, including also the Mennonite congregation at Emden.

Vom grossen Heimweh

Von Horſt Quiring

Die Geſchichte unſerer mennonitiſchen Gemeinden iſt eine einzigartige Geſchichte der Wanderungen: von Deutſchland nach Amerika, von Holland nach Weſtpreußen, von Weſtpreußen nach Rußland, von Rußland nach Nord- und Südamerika, und immer noch iſt die Wanderung nicht zu Ende. Sie iſt gerade zum Merkmal unſerer Gemeinſchaft geworden. Die Geſchichtsſchreiber unter uns haben mit großem Fleiß alle dieſe Wanderungen aufgezeichnet, ihre Urſachen und weltweiten Auswirkungen dargeſtellt und neuerdings auch ziemlich genaue Statiſtiken aufgeſtellt, ſo daß wir gut Beſcheid wiſſen, wie die Bewegungen im einzelnen verliefen. Es iſt eine Geſchichte angefüllt mit Nöten und wirtſchaftlichen Schwierigkeiten, aber auch mit ergreifenden Zeugniſſen helfender Bruderliebe, wo immer eine neue Heimat gegründet werden mußte.

Aber kann man ſo ſchnell in einem anderen Lande „heimiſch“ werden? Wie oft gehen die Gedanken zurück in das Land, in dem Kindheit und Jugend verbracht wurden, in dem man ein Haus und damit ein „Zuhauſe“ hatte. Wie viele mußten das Heimweh überwinden oder ſie haben es als großes Leid ſtill erduldet und die Sehnſucht mit ins Grab getragen:

Wir Mennoniten ſind nüchterne Menſchen, keine Träumer, darum konnten wir heute und in unſerer Geſchichte immer verhältnismäßig ſchnell in einem neuen Land heimiſch werden. Dazu kommt noch ein Grund, der ſicherlich weſentlich iſt: auf Grund der Tatkraft und des Zuſammenhalts der Gemeinden wurde überall bald ein gewiſſer Wohlſtand erreicht und damit das Gefühl des Geborgenſeins in der neuen Umwelt verſtärkt.

Wie aber iſt es in jenem Land, das die Menſchen in Armut und Unfreiheit leben und ſie zu keinem Glück gelangen läßt, im Land der Arbeitslager und Zwangsdeportation? Dort, wo keine Ausſicht auf eine ſchönere Zukunft beſteht? Es gibt unter den Millionen von Menſchen, die da unter dem ſtärkſten ſeeliſchen Schmerz, dem Heimweh, leiden, viele Mennoniten, die teils als verſchleppt, teils als Kriegsgefangene unter harten Bedingungen leben und arbeiten müſſen. Leben? Iſt das ein Leben, wenn Menſchen nur aus Heimweh ſterben? Wenn ſie ſich verzehren im Gedanken an die verlorene Heimat?

Dieſen vielen leidenden Namenloſen (wer kennt ihre Namen alle?) ſoll dieſer Artikel gewidmet ſein. Nichts iſt eindrücklicher als ein Bericht, wie es einem Gefangenen ergangen iſt. Sicherlich iſt es ein Einzelſchickſal, aber nach all den Berichten, die ich inzwiſchen von unzähligen andern gehört habe, iſt es den meiſten ähnlich ergangen.

* * *

Ich wurde in Lettland bei Riga als deutſcher Soldat von der Roten Armee am 8. Mai 1945 gefangen genommen. Bald wurden wir ins Innere Rußlands geführt und mußten arbeiten. Ich fing an mit der Arbeit in einer Fabrik, dann kam ich in ein Kohlenbergwerk bei Nowgorod. Da ich auf einem Bauernhof in Weſtpreußen groß geworden bin, war ich an körperliche Arbeit gewöhnt, aber dieſe Arbeit war doch zu ſchwer. Acht Stunden, bei Nichterfüllung der „Norm“ 10 oder 12 Stunden, Kohlen loshacken oder aufladen dabei 3 mal täglich eine dünne Suppe und ein Stück Brot, das war mehr als ein normaler Menſch aushalten kann. Bald war ich bis auf 90 Pfund abgemagert und kam in ein Erholungslager. Dort durfte man überhaupt nicht arbeiten ſondern mußte bei relativ guter Verpflegung ausruhen, um ſchnell für den nächſten Arbeitseinſatz kräftig genug zu ſein.

Man kann ſich nur ſchwer vorſtellen, in welche ſeeliſchen Konflikte dieſe Art der Menſchenbehandlung die Einzelnen brachte. Der natürliche Wunſch, ſich endlich wieder ſatt zu eſſen, dazu geſund und kräftig zu werden, wurde durchkreuzt von dem andern Gedanken: Je eher ich geſund werde, umſo ſchneller komme ich wieder zu der Sklavenarbeit und werde durch die „Mühle“ getrieben, wie man ſagte. Dann kam vor allem die Erwägung hinzu: bleibe ich krank oder mache ich mich krank, ſo komme ich vielleicht nach Hauſe. Denn bisher kamen meiſt nur Kranke und Schwache, d.h. Arbeitsunfähige, nach Hauſe.

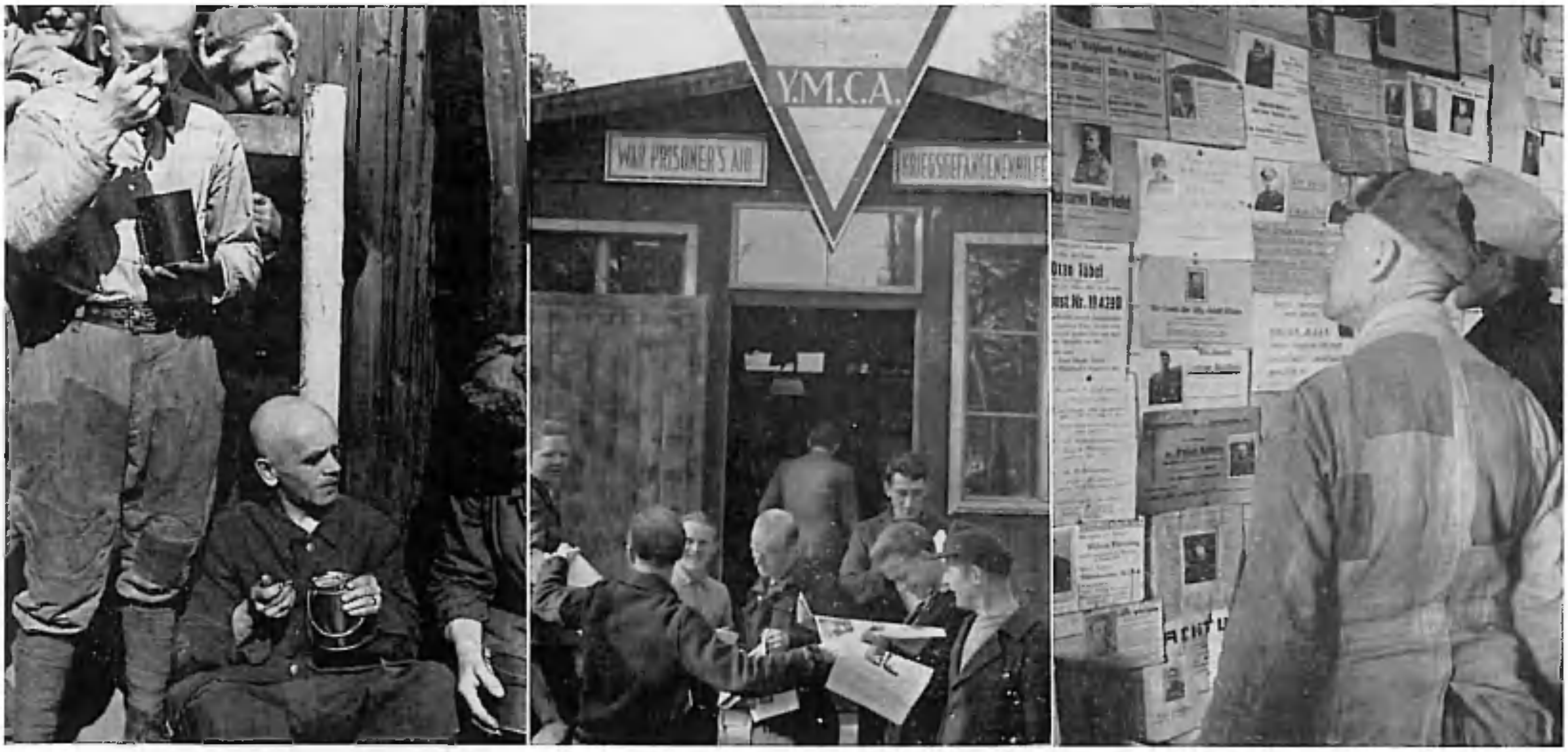
Kein Gefangener konnte an dieſer entſcheidenden Frage vorbeigehen. Manche ſind auf dieſe Weiſe nach Hauſe gekommen, manche dabei geſtorben. Das Spiel mit der Geſundheit iſt ſehr gefährlich, und welche Unnatur ſteckt darin! Darf ich die mir von Gott geſchenkte Geſundheit, unſer höchſtes Gut, mit Abſicht ſchwächen und ſei es auch in der beſten Abſicht, zur Familie zurückzukehren und ein menſchenwürdiges Daſein wieder zu erlangen? Es ſind ſchier unlösliche Gewiſſenskonflickte, die ſo ſchwer ſind, daß ſie kaum jemand nachfühlen kann, der Aehnliches nicht miterlebte.

Ich habe immer wieder nach hartem Kampf der großen Verſuchung widerſtanden, bis eine gnädige Fügung Gottes mich nach Hauſe führte.

Wir wurden im Mai 1947 nach dem Südkaukaſus transportiert, um zum Straßenbau verwandt zu werden. Hier erkrankte ich an Malaria, dann bekam ich Hungeroedeme (Waſſer), und dadurch wurde ich arbeitsunfähig und mit dem nächſten Transport nach der deutſchen Heimat gebracht. Im Januar 1948 konnte ich die Wiedervereinigung mit meiner Familie erleben, die ich vier Jahre lang nicht geſehen hatte.

Ich habe in meinem Bericht im weſentlichen die

(Fortſetzung auf Seite 37)



Just returned from Russia and England. Searching the bulletin board for missing relatives.

REHABILITATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR

BY DELMAR WEDEL

ARRIVING from the United Kingdom, Russia, Egypt, and France, German prisoners of war come to the great transit and release camp—*Muenster Lager*—the last lap in their long journey to freedom.

During the last year over half a million prisoners of war returnees, passing through *Muenster Lager,* have received their discharge papers and entered "city street." The road ahead is not easy. The returnee has problems which most Americans find difficult to appreciate.

The American service man when discharged from civilian or the armed services, found an organized community prepared to give him every form of support and assistance. The German POW returnee finds only an impoverished and disorganized community bristling with social problems and one that is ill-prepared to provide even minimum public assistance. The returnee from Soviet Russia, emotionally and physically exhausted through years of hard work and inadequate food, attempts to exchange his tattered uniform for decent clothing and footwear. Returnees have other dominant concerns—locating a missing family, searching for decent work, or perhaps the returnee is homeless or in need of a rehabilitation center. The pictures, far more than words, convey some of the basic problems facing the returnee.

The YMCA service in *Muenster Lager* includes spiritual ministry, personal 'counselling, vocational guidance and job placement, missing-persons tracing-service (operated by German Red Cross), material aid, and facilities for recreation and orientation.

One of the most pressing needs of the returnees, especially those from the East, is that of clothing and footwear. Many men still wear vestiges of their uniforms issued five to eight years ago. Some men have lived, worked, and slept in one suit of clothes since the day of their capture. Most shoes, if they may be referred to as such, consist of a wooden sole with a canvas upper. Because of inadequate supplies, only homeless returnees are issued clothing. We feel that the returnees who have settled homes should be served by welfare organizations on the parish or community level.

Many of the returnees require physical and mental rehabilitation before they are prepared to accept the responsibilities of civilian life. Scores of returnees visit the YMCA job-placement and vocational guidance office. An attempt is made to combine an appropriate job with a Christian social environment. Here are a few cases taken from the files of *Patenschaft,* our vocational guidance service.

From the Files

Not long ago a returnee, whom we shall call Fritz, hobbled into our social service center. He explained to the vocational counsellor that he wanted a job; however since he had been drafted before he could finish his education, he was without a trade. He was quite aware that the odds were against him. Fritz was referred to the Christoph Sauer *Werkstaette,* a unique educational institution founded to train disabled veterans. Though he had lost both his legs in the fierce fighting on the Eastern Front, he still possessed a fighting heart and a pair of arms. He is now preparing to become a tailor.

Some weeks ago a YMCA representative, while visiting the camp hospital, discovered a young returnee broken in body and in spirit. This youth had no news from his family since their expulsion from the eastern section of Germany. He was homeless. There remained the dismal prospect of wandering the streets or becoming a member of the *Bahnhof Jugend.* Under these circumstances there was little purpose in recovery, while in the hospital he was at least assured food and lodging.

This young returnee was encouraged to accept employment with the YMCA. In the meantime the missing-persons tracing-bureau began the task of locating father, mother and sister, all of whom had been torn from each other in their exodus from East Prussia. Fortunately, there is a happy ending to this case. The members of his family have been located, and within a few weeks this lad will take his place within the family circle.

Mennonite POW's

The question is sometimes asked whether any Mennonite returnees have been discovered in the mass of men returning to *Muenster Lager.* Just last week a young Mennonite returnee, who as a POW had been repairing streets in the vicinity of Moscow, visited my office. He was exhausted from long hours of work and inadequate food. His camp was one of the camps where Sunday church services were permitted. Mr. Lose's former home was near Danzig, consequently his family was forced to seek refuge elsewhere. During his captivity he had lost contact with his family and it was not until sometime later that he learned from another Mennonite that his family had been sent by the Mennonite Central Committee to Paraguay. While this youth was in *Muenster Lager* the Mennonite Central Committee refugee unit was consulted and it is hoped that he will be able to join his family in the near future.

I recall having met another Mennonite who, having been released from his English POW camp, passed through *Muenster Lager* en route to the Russian zone of Germany. During his transit in *Muenster Lager* he visited a local library in search of good reading material. He was handed a book which he did not find to his liking. As he returned it, he explained that he was a Mennonite and found the book too "militaristic." The returnee, who visited my office at the suggestion of the librarian, said he still felt himself to be Mennonite. During our interesting conversation he explained that while in England he associated with several Christian families with whom

"Home" at last. What does the future hold for them?

AUTO
TJALE
REIBER

Familiar footwear of refugees and returnees.

Vesper service at *Muenster Lager.* Does Christianity speak to the needs of these men?

he spent his free time. He is returning to Eastern Germany to support his mother who has been without support since the wartime death of her husband.

Spiritual Journeys

When we attempt to secure glimpses into the spiritual journeys of these returnees, we find a confused picture. The effect of war upon individuals has been varied. Some men have been drawn nearer to Christ, others have been pushed farther away. One young German in his late twenties shared this account of his wartime experience.

After a thorough indoctrination of National Socialist philosophy while a member of the Hitler Youth movement, he joined the German Army confident of the justness of its cause. While deep in the heart of Russia, he realized that his foes also held strong convictions and expressed their loyalty to their own ideology through the fierceness of their resistance. Both were fighting and dying for what they believed to be right. It struck him that human understanding of justice and truth was far too relative and subjective. While behind the barbed wire of the prisoner of war camp, his thinking became even more Christian in its orientation. He became convinced that human ethical behavior and value judgments must be consistent with Divine standards as revealed in Christ and the New Testament.

During this same period of personal growth he had a dream in which, from the top of a church tower, he was shown a valley filled with broken and war-torn bodies. It became clearer to him that our culture was ill . . . . war and violence were not consistent with New Testament teaching. He discovered new resources in the Christian faith which led to personal happiness and a resolve to express his faith in service to his fellowmen.

It is difficult to discern the spiritual journey of the hundreds and thousands of returnees from the Russian prisoner of war camps. The net result of their experiences has been such as to destroy the human and intimate relations existing between normal persons. The machine of war and subsequent imprisonment has emptied them of their habits of decency. The experience of having seen themselves and their fellows stripped of educational and cultural overtones and reduced to their animal reactions has been frightening. This emotional shock has cast some into a pit of despair.

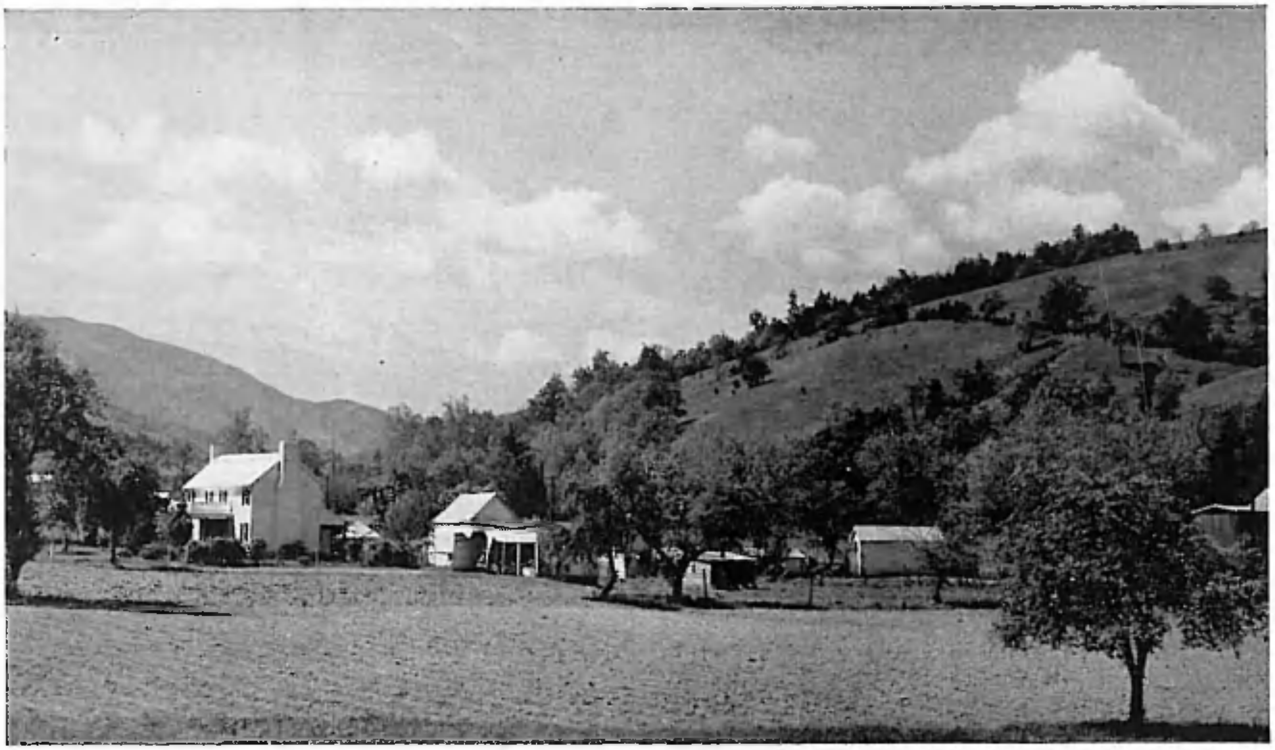
The Gospel remains good news, but it is not effective until it is brought to these men in such a way so as to speak to their condition. Unfortunately, a large section of the German church continues to put its message in forms which do not speak to their condition.

This ministry in *Muenster Lager* is made possible through the generous support of various denominational agencies. The support from Mennonite churches expressed through the Mennonite Central Committee has been particularly helpful. We often receive letters from former prisoners who express their thankfulness and ask that we extend their gratitude toward those who make this service possible.

Heimweh (Fortſetzung von Seite 34)

inneren Leiden, die Gewiſſensqualen, das große Heimweh geſchildert. Die körperlichen Qualen, der Kampf mit Ungeziefer und Schmutz, die Arbeit bei mangelhafter Bekleidung, bei jedem Wetter, die Unſicherheit wegen häufiger Betriebsunfälle und das unfreie Leben überhaupt in der Maſſe hinter Stacheldraht, das alles iſt ein weiteres Kapitel.

Vielleicht wird ſich ſpäter einmal, wenn wir Abſtand von dieſen leidvollen Erlebniſſen gewonnen haben, eine Feder finden, die dieſes dunkelſte Kapitel unſerer Zeit darſtellt. Der erſchütterndſte Abſchnitt wird der über das große Heimweh ſein.



". . . . the beautiful valley spreading out below me . . . . fascinated me just as it had done years ago . . . ."

INTERLUDE IN THE SHENANDOAH

BY SYLVIA HARRIS

IT WAS while visiting some friends in the nation's capitol that I suddenly decided to return to my western home by way of the Skyline Drive, and stop off at Harrisonburg, Virginia. Perhaps my sudden decision was due to a flare of nostalgia at being so near my childhood home in the Shenandoah Valley, for I had not returned to this lovely, lush section since I had left it as a twelve-year-old . . . . more than twenty years ago. I was eager to see if things were still unchanged.

Rolling along atop the Blue Ridge with the beautiful valley spreading out below me, I found that the atmosphere of this serene spot fascinated me just as it had done years ago when I had played over the hills as a child. Suddenly I thought of Martha . . . . and longed to see her again.

Martha had been my one childhood chum . . . . a wee, curly-headed member of this typical Mennonite settlement of which there are many throughout the United States. Day after day I had played with her, Sundays I had gone to church with her—I in my "worldly" attire and she in the regulation, "little-girl" garb of the Mennonites, merely a small pattern of the adult's. The plain, long-sleeved dress had never appealed to me and the severe, unadorned bonnet had always seemed incongruous on her softly curling, black hair.

I knew through irregular correspondence that Martha was married now and it was an easy matter to find her home, once I was in the general neighborhood. A thoroughly clean little boy sitting in a parked car, pointed out the plain, white framehouse with its well-kept dooryard of shaven grass and center-walk bordered with flowers.

"You won't find them home, though," he volunteered. "They just left to go to Weaver's."

Sure enough, I recalled, it was Sunday and "Weaver's" was Martha's church. It would be pleasant to attend and find her there after the service.

"It's Communion day," added the small boy.

I smiled to myself as I remembered how the youthful Martha had dreaded these long, semi-annual communion services and how hard it had been for her to sit quietly until they were over. Turning to the child I asked, "Are your folks going to Weaver's this morning, and do you think I might go with them?"

"I'll run and ask papa," the youngster declared as he tumbled out of the car and rushed into the house. Presently he was back. "Yes, you can go," he beamed. "There's seven of us to go in the car but the twins don't take up much room, because they ain't but four weeks old."

The family filed out to the car. I introduced myself and was pleasantly and hospitably wedged into the conveyance.

When we reached the church I slipped in and took a seat on the "women's side." Except for a few changes, everything was as I had remembered it. The old, oil-burning, hanging lamps had been replaced by plain electric light fixtures, the back-breaking benches had given place to more comfortable pews, and I missed the two big, pot-bellied stoves. The same threefoot partition still divided the "men's side" from the "women's side," and the pulpit was unaltered—a narrow, table-like affair, chest-high and running the entire length of the low platform. Behind the pulpit a long bench extended against the wall, to be used for visiting ministers. Today being communion day, ten solemn-faced preachers were seated thereon, overlooking the large congregation which had assembled.

The front seats were occupied by the older members. The "sisters" wore severe, dark, long-sleeved dresses of ankle length and capes which were a sort of evolution of the three-cornered kerchiefs worn by the Quakers. Their plain, black bonnets had been removed immediately after they were seated, revealing "prayer head coverings"—small, close-fitting caps of white silk net or similar material. The younger women were dressed like their elders except that their skirts were a little shorter and their dresses more brightly colored.

The men wore collarless coats, the shirts underneath showing collar buttons but no ties. When I was a child many of the older Mennonite men had beards, although the upper lip was always bare, as mustaches were "worldly." Now nearly all were clean-shaven. The older men carried large, round-crowned black felt hats but the younger ones had more modern fedoras.

There were many children, the Mennonites being given to large families, and in appearance these youngsters were small replicas of their elders.

A week before, I had attended church in one of Washington's proud cathedrals, where the utmost in sensory and emotional appeal prevailed . . . . richly colored light coming through the stained-glass windows, a stately processional, swelling anthems by trained voices, choir and rector in flowing robes, the sermon a masterpiece of polished oratory.

Here in this Mennonite service everything was the

Weaver's Mennonite Church, place of worship described in this article.

ultimate in simplicity. Plain glass filled the window-frames; there were no ushers or robed choirs. The severely plain woodwork and bare pine floors were guiltless of paint or varnish. The music was unaccompanied hymn singing, in which young and old joined heartily. The minister, who had probably finished his formal education when he left the country school, was nominated from the congregation and chosen by lot. His sermon, preceded by several hymns and a long prayer during which the congregation knelt on the hard floor, was one of homely, doctrinal exhortation. He had a sprightly way of quoting unrelated passages from widely separated parts of the Scriptures to support his thesis. I marvelled.

In the midst of the lengthy sermon many of the numerous babies began to cry and if the wailing were too persistent the mother carried the infant to an antechamber to quiet it. Mennonite mothers attend church with their offspring as soon as possible after the incident of childbirth.

Communion followed the sermon. Hymns were sung while the deacons made preparations. Bread and unfermented wine were passed to the seated congregation by two ministers and two attending deacons—a pair on the "women's side" and one on the "men's."

Following the communion came the ordinance of foot-washing. While the deacons were bringing in ordinary foot-tubs of gray enamel or galvanized iron partly filled with water, one of the ministers preached a brief sermon concerning the observance. He reiterated their belief that Christ, in washing the disciples' feet and exhorting them to do likewise, meant that all of his subsequent followers should do the same, again and again quoting Scripture to substantiate the belief. Eight or ten tubs were placed in both the men's and women's aisles, near the front of the church, and benches were set on either side. Large, immaculately clean, white towels were provided for each tub.

Then the solemn rites began. Two "sisters" went to a tub and sat down on either side. One stooped down and washed and dried the already meticulously clean feet of her companion, who in turn did the same for her. The ceremony was completed when they arose and kissed each other full on the mouth. They returned barefooted to their seats, where they resumed their shoes and stockings. No special routing was observed during the foot-washing; without crowding or disorder the members approached the tubs and awaited their turn while the rest of the congregation added to the solemnity of the occasion by singing appropriate hymns. When everyone had finished, the service was terminated by a hymn, a final long prayer, and the benediction.

The congregation poured out of the church; friends and relatives greeted each other, unhurriedly visiting among themselves and with the large number of "worldly" people who always attended the semi-annual occasion of the Mennonite communion service.

Eagerly I searched among the kind-faced, friendly folk until I found Martha. It was the same Martha but changed more than I could have anticipated. She had grown stout and matronly. Her once lovely, curling hair had been so strictly disciplined by being pulled tightly back from her face and skewered in a tight knot or "tuck" that it was now quite straight. Her face was no longer fresh and rosy, but her smile and kindly, honest countenance beamed as she cordially greeted me and introduced me to her husband and six children, inviting me to "come along."

In an incredibly short time after reaching Martha's spotless home, five-year old Mary shyly told me that dinner was ready. The table was crowded with large platters and serving dishes heaped with golden-brown fried chicken, succulent ham, garden-fresh vegetables glossy with butter, salads, varieties of pickles and preserves, two large cakes. It was a typical Sunday dinner of the "Valley" Mennonites; it looked and tasted exactly as I remembered these dinners from childhood.

My interlude in the Shenandoah had not been disappointing. My old friend Martha, with all the added years and responsibilities, was fundamentally the same. Her people, the "Valley" Mennonites, mingling with yet holding themselves aloof from their "worldly" neighbors, were still going on with their simple, unflinching trust and faith, their joy in sacrifice and close communion among themselves and with their God.

Ohrloff

(Fortſetzung von Seite 29)

Das Ohrloffer Bethaus richtete man durch Umbau im Inneren als Kinderkrüppelheim ein, im Bethaus in Tiege hielt die Kooperative ihre Waren feil.

Weil man den Geiſt, der unſere mennonitiſchen Menſchen beſeelt, nicht auszutreiben vermochte hat man ſie aus ihren Heimſtätten verjagt. Was wir in dieſen Fotos ſehen, ſind nur noch Schatten, aber es ſind Schatten unſerer großen von Gott geſegneten Vergangenheit in unſerer ſüdruſſiſchen Heimat. Mögen wir in ihnen die Umriſſe unſerer Zukunft erfaſſen!

Mennonite Life Binders

We are now offering at cost ($2.00) beautiful and substantial binders for the first ten issues of MENNONITE LIFE. Made of stiff card-board with metal top and bottom, these binders are covered with black imitation leather and have MENNONITE LIFE stamped in gold.

All back issues are still available at 50 cents each.

MENNONITE LIFE
North Newton, Kans.

City gate

Zierikzee. Bolwerk

Harbor

City hall

Zierkzee, Holland, birthplace of
PIETER CORNELIS PLOCKHOY

PIONEER OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION IN AMERICA

BY LELAND HARDER

A SMALL, diversified group of people gathered in the Town Hall of Zierikzee, in the Netherlands on the 19th of September, 1913, to rear a bronze memorial tablet in honor of Pieter Cornelis Plockhoy. In that town, which has a written history of 1,000 years, Plockhoy had been born some 300 years before this commemoration. The memorial was erected in the name of the Netherlands Society of Philadelphia, and the ceremony was conducted by several of its members. They had the burgomaster and chief men of the city come together at nine o'clock in the evening (because the tablet had arrived late through mistake); and there, in the best room, the Council Hall, in the presence of living descendants of the pioneer, the tablet was unveiled. The inscription read:

ONE IN CHRIST
TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR OF
PIETER CORNELIS PLOCKHOY OF ZIERIKZEE
A PIONEER OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION IN AMERICA
FOUNDER OF THE DUTCH COLONY AT
ZWAANENDAEL, DELAWARE, U. S. A.
THE NETHERLANDS SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA
REARS THIS MEMORIAL
SEPTEMBER, 1913

Who was this Plockhoy? In the history of England he is known as the reformer who wrestled with Oliver Cromwell on behalf of the poor masses. Several writers of American history call him a pioneer of social and political democracy. To the Netherlands Society he was simply a Dutchman who had made significant contributions to the development of America. Others claim he was the first voice raised in America against slavery, the father of the co-operative movement, the man whose writings inspired the Brook Farm experiment in New England.

Whether or not all these claims are accurate, the facts —little known—are that Plockhoy came from a Mennonite environment in Holland and that the co-operative colony on the Delaware which he founded was primarily a Mennonite settlement. Established in 1663, this settlement was destroyed after scarcely a year of existence in the war for supremacy in the New World between England and Holland. The fame of the pioneer today transcends Mennonite localism. His contributions have, in fact, received more publicity outside the Mennonite fold than they have within.

The Netherlands Society of Philadelphia appropriately invited John W. Bayley, then minister of the Germantown Mennonite Church, and his congregation, to the Plockhoy memorial exercises in Holland. Accompanying the invitation was a letter from Dr. William Elliot Griffis, prolific historical writer, who was in charge of the project. He wrote:

> Dear Brethren in the Gospel:
>
> I believe your congregation was the first to make public protest in America against slavery, but Plockhoy was the first individual to do so. He was a Mennonite, and we honor his memory on September 19 at Zierikzee, his birthplace . . . .

The historical particulars of Plockhoy and his colony were hidden in obscurity for several centuries. The first bits of information came to light during the middle of the nineteenth century, when J. Romeyn Brodhead and E. B. O'Callaghan, American historians, collected from archives in America and Europe all available documents relative to the early history of New York. Among these records was a very singular contract between the Dutch government and "Pieter Corneliszoon Plockhoy, of

Zierikzee," comprising the rights and privileges granted to the Mennonites in their New Netherland settlement. Also among these documents was a strange Dutch pamphlet by several unknown authors which contained in the Appendix, "117 Articles of Government" for a colony, in America. After study and investigation Brodhead and O'Callaghan concluded that these articles applied to Plockhoy's colony, and were probably written by him. These laws, which Brodhead placed "among the most extraordinary of the early memorials of American colonization," comprised a system of democratic self-government.

Interest in the strange settlement grew, and historians began to search for more information. Among the few additional items which were discovered was the prospectus which Plockhoy had published in Holland to induce prospective emigrants to join his society.

As a member of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, S. W. Pennypacker tried to determine the fate of the Mennonites and their leader after the colony was destroyed by the English in 1664. He discovered that after thirty years of severe privations Plockhoy, with his wife, wandered into the new Mennonite settlement at Germantown where he at last found Christian friends who gave him a home for his few remaining years. The pioneer was old, poverty-stricken, and blind. The fate of his people, however, remained a mystery. "History throws no light on the subject," wrote Pennypacker, "and of contemporary documents there are none."

Meanwhile, some research scholars were at work in Europe. They were trying to determine the authorship of two English writings, published in London in 1659, and signed "Peter Cornelius." Several possible authors were considered, including one, a contemporary with Plockhoy, who had maliciously claimed this distinction; but when one of the writings was compared with the prospectus which Plockhoy had written in Dutch and published in Amsterdam, they were found to be practically identical. Further research indicated that Plockhoy had appealed to Oliver Cromwell, then Lord Protector of the English Commonwealth, to sponsor one of his reform schemes. The English writings, which contained new religious, social, economic, and political ideas, belonged to him.

Supplementing these findings were a few particulars in the Mennonite archives of Holland; it now became possible to reconstruct the life and activities of Plockhoy in Holland, England, and America.

Although very little is known concerning his early life, evidence indicates he was born in Zierikzee about 1620 of Mennonite parentage. The members of the small Mennonite church in this city were considered by their brethren elsewhere as "still-standers" for refusing to become affiliated with any one of the various branches of the church—Flemish, Frisians, Waterlanders—whose differences seemed to them insignificant. A leader in this church was the father of Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan. The latter became a minister in the Mennonite church of Amsterdam.

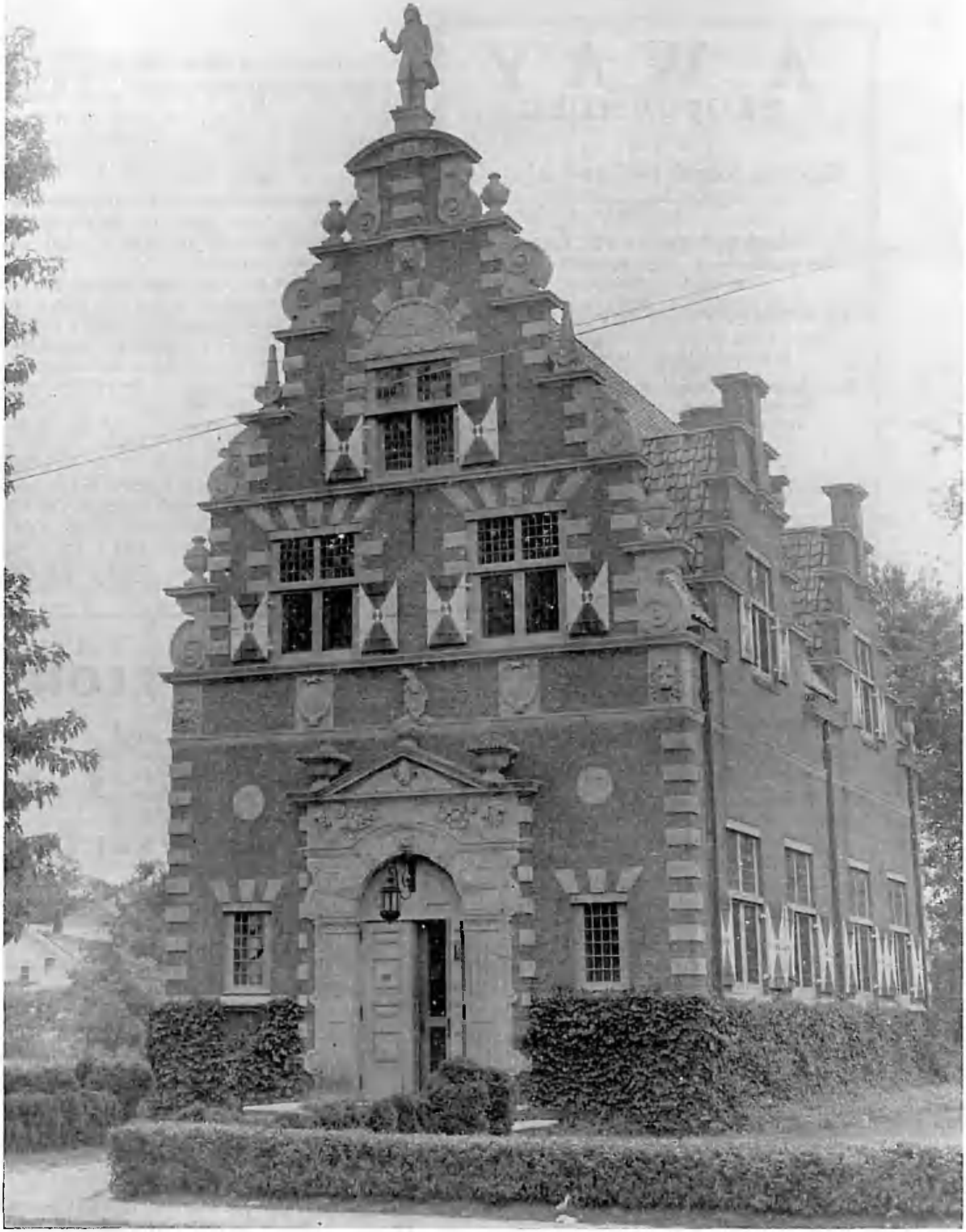
Plockhoy and the young de Haan, who was also born in Zierikzee in 1622, both became associated with the group of people known as "Collegiants." The Collegiants were not an organized religious body, but, as members of several denominations, simply met together to discuss the common faith. They believed these meetings, or *collegia,* were far superior to other forms of worship. They believed in separation of church and state, were anti-Calvinistic, and accepted no set creed. When they met together, someone would read a passage of Scripture, perhaps offer an interpretation, after which all were invited to speak. Many Mennonites attended these meetings. When Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan became a Mennonite minister in Amsterdam in 1646, he inaugurated Collegiant practices in his church. Plockhoy evidently also went hither, for among the charges that were later made against de Haan by more conservative individuals was that his church was split into various factions, one of which was that of the *Plockhoyisten.* This indicates that Plockhoy associated with the pastor of the Lamist Mennonite church, Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan, and was, like he, influenced by the Collegiant movement being a leader of such a group in Amsterdam.

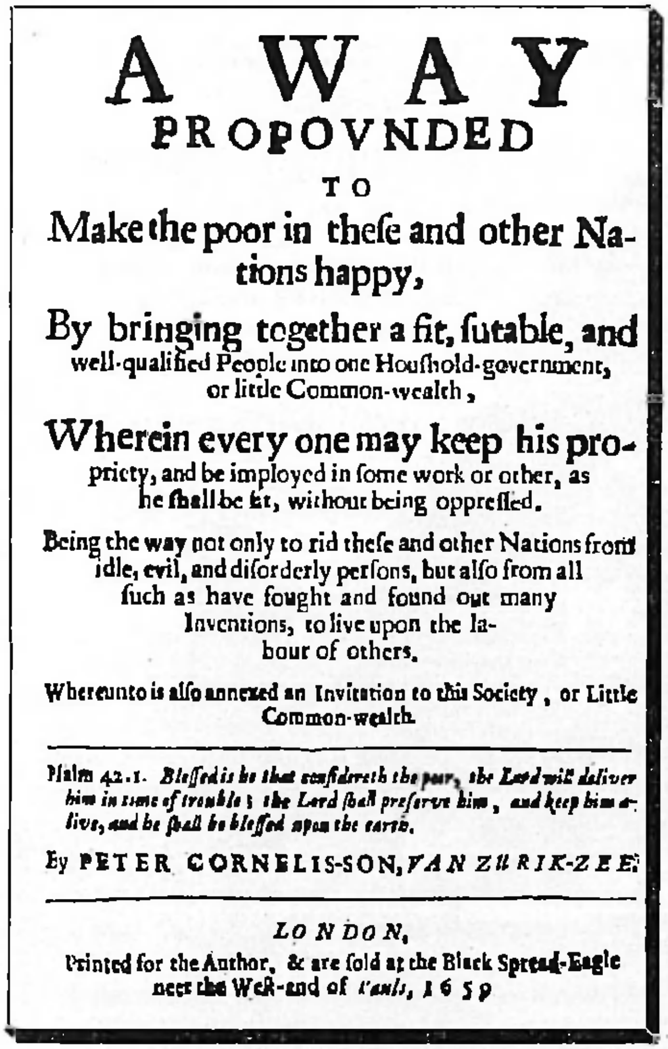
Perturbed at the dictatorial rule of the state in religious matters, and much concerned because the various Christian groups, mainly because of their disunity, could do nothing about it, Plockhoy devised a scheme which employed the Collegiant method to unite the various Christian groups in a sort of federation. There was to be in every community one general Christian assembling place where all would come together for spiritual meditation and an exchange of views concerning Biblical doctrine. This program, which was not designed to replace individual church activities, was considered the "only way to abolish all lording over consciences."

Believing that Commonwealth England was the place to begin the reform and hoping that the tolerant-minded Oliver Cromwell would receive his program, he went to London in 1658. "I resolved for awhile," he later wrote, "to leave my family and native country, fearing if I should not manifest to the magistrates in England what was upon my spirit, that they, having much to do with other affairs, might, through the subtilty of the clergy as in other nations, easily be deceived."

The Lord Protector was assisted in his government by a council and Parliament. Plockhoy appeared before the council and was granted a personal interview with Cromwell himself. We do not know how Cromwell reacted for he died before acting upon the petition; and if the reform scheme had found any favor, it certainly came to naught amid the turbulence which followed the dictator's death.

Memorial to Dutch Settlers →
Zwaanendael Museum, Lewes, Delaware, built to commemorate the settlement of the Dutch on the Delaware in 1631. It was here that Plockhoy and his group of twenty-four Mennonite families established their settlement in 1662.





A WAY
PROPOUNDED
TO
Make the poor in theſe and other Nations
happy,
By bringing together a fit, ſutable, and
well-qualified People into one Houſhold-government,
or little Common-wealth,
Wherein every one may keep his propriety,
and be imployed in ſome work or other, as
he ſhall be fit, without being oppreſſed.
Being the way not only to rid theſe and other Nations from
idle, evil, and diſorderly perſons, but alſo from all
ſuch as have ſought and found out many
Inventions, to live upon the labour
of others.

Whereunto is alſo annexed an Invitation to this Society, or Little
Common-wealth.

Pſalm 42.1. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble; the Lord ſhall preſerve him, and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth.*

By PETER CORNELIS-SON, *VAN ZURIK-ZEE.*

LONDON,
Printed for the Author, & are ſold at the Black Spread-Eagle
neer the Weſt-end of *Pauls*, 1659

Plockhoy invited the people of Cromwell's England to join his commonwealth "to make the poor happy."

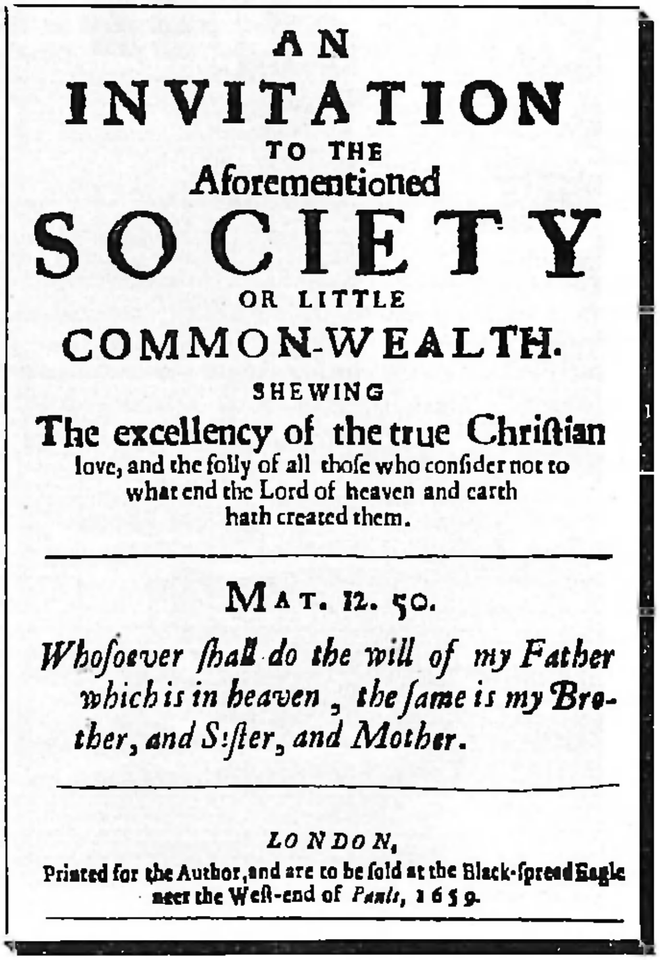
Failing in his first attempt, Plockhoy went to the people. Hoping to "awaken the Public Spirits in England," he published the letters addressed to the magistrates. He called his pamphlet, *The Way to the Peace and Settlement of these Nations Fully Discovered.*

During the same year and still in London he published his second writing, comprising a new reform scheme much larger in scope than the first. The new publication was entitled, *A Way Propounded to Make the Poor in these and other Nations Happy.* It was a plan for a Christian, socialistic settlement based on equality and association. The proposed "little Commonwealth" was to be composed of four classes of people—handicraftsmen, husbandmen, mariners, and masters of arts and sciences. It was not communistic, since members were required to keep their property separate; according to the Tenth Commandment, "none ought to covet another man's goods." The members were to work six hours each day. Plockhoy envisioned a large and prosperous trade with the outside world for three reasons: (1) he would sell his products at the lowest possible price; (2) the people living in common, eating together, etc., could live cheaply and thus, make better-quality products at the price; and, (3) the profit would go back to the Society and used for the common good of all, or periodically distributed between its members. The fundamental purpose of the plan was "to set up again (as in former times) righteousness, love, and brotherly sociableness."

There is no record to indicate how this project fared, or whether it was even started. In 1661 Plockhoy was back in Holland promoting his American colony, which was based on the same ideas.

He and twenty-four "Mennonist families" petitioned the City of Amsterdam for a tract of land in New Netherland and financial assistance to begin a settlement there. The Amsterdam burgomasters, who had authority from the Dutch West India Company to dispose of land on the Delaware River, approved the petition; and on June 6, 1662, the contract was signed.

It took the group eleven months to get started. There seem to be several reasons for the delay. In the first place Plockhoy's original plan called for many more than twenty-five individuals or families; and he wanted to enlist at least 100 before getting underway. This called forth the prospectus mentioned above entitled, *Kort en klaer ontwerp,* ("Brief and Concise Plan"). This publication contained, beside Plockhoy's writing, several poems by well-known authors. One was entitled, "Spurring



AN
INVITATION
TO THE
Aforementioned
SOCIETY
OR LITTLE
COMMON-WEALTH.
SHEWING
The excellency of the true Chriſtian
love, and the folly of all thoſe who conſider not to
what end the Lord of heaven and earth
hath created them.

MAT. 12. 50.
*Whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father
which is in heaven, the ſame is my Brother,
and Siſter, and Mother.*

LONDON,
Printed for the Author, and are to be ſold at the Black-ſpread Eagle
neer the Weſt-end of *Pauls*, 1659.

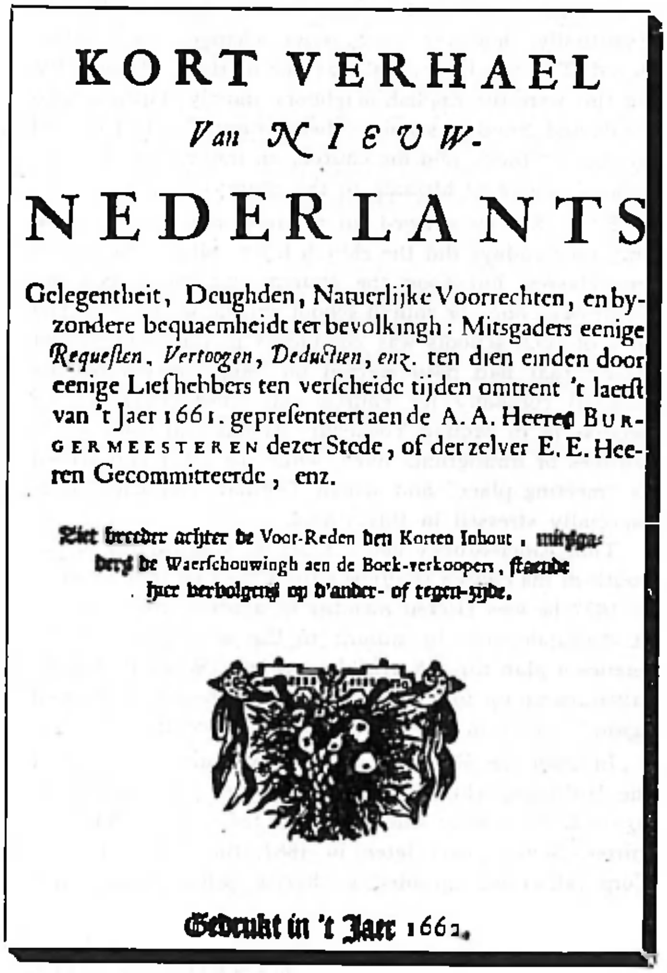
Verses," indicating the intention of spurring on friends of the undertaking.

Two stazas appeared as follows:

You poor, who know not how your living to obtain;
You affluent, who seek in mind to be content;
Choose you New Netherland (which no one shall disdain),
Before your time and strength here fruitlessly are spent.
There have you other ends, your labor to incite;
Your work, will gen'rous soils, with usury requite.

You have a portion there which costs not pains nor gold;
But if you labor give, then shall you also share
(With trust in Him who you from want does there uphold)
A rich reward, in time, for all your toil and care.
In cattle, grain and fruit, and every other thing;
Whereby you always have great cause His praise to sing.

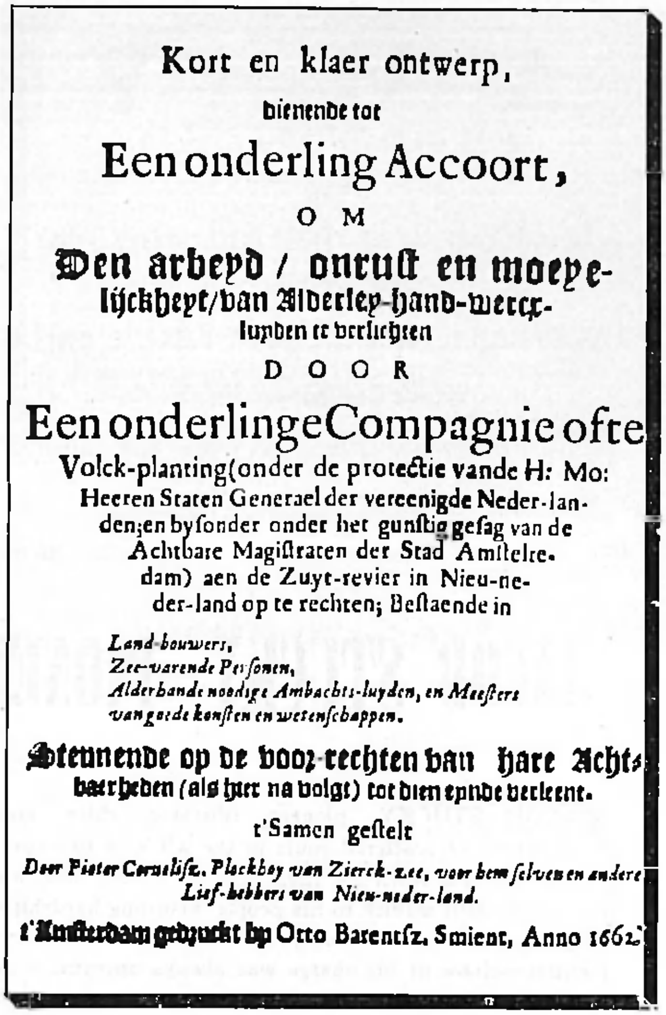
Another factor which delayed the enterprise was the lack of an adequate structure of government for the colony. The contract gave the members the privilege of adopting their own laws so long as they didn't conflict with those of Holland. Plockhoy constructed a tentative outline of government which provided, among other things, that membership in the society should not be restricted to a particular denomination, and that members should either perform some service for the protection and defense of the group or pay a regular sum of money to be used for the same purpose. The defenseless Mennonites objected to the latter clause; and finally a compromise was reached, consisting of the "117 Articles of Government" mentioned above. According to these articles, conscientious objectors to military service and prepared resistance of any sort were to be exempt from all obligations in this relation.



KORT VERHAEL
Van NIEUW-
NEDERLANTS
Gelegentheit, Deughden, Natuerlijke Voorrechten, en byzondere bequaemheidt ter bevolkingh: Mitsgaders eenige *Requeſten, Vertoogen, Deductien, enz.* ten dien einden door eenige Lieſhebbers ten verſcheide tijden omtrent 't laetſt van 't Jaer 1661. gepreſenteert aen de A. A. Heeren BURGERMEESTEREN dezer Stede, of der zelver E. E. Heeren Gecommitteerde, enz.

Ziet breeder achter de Voor-Reden den Korten Inhout, mitsgaders de Waerſchouwingh aen de Boek-verkoopers, ſtaende
hier vervolgens op d'ander- of tegen-zyde.

Gedrukt in 't Jaer 1662.



Kort en klaer ontwerp,
dienende tot
Een onderling Accoort,
OM
Den arbeyd / onruſt en moeye-
lijckheyt / van Alderley-hand-wercx-
luyden te verlichten
DOOR
Een onderlinge Compagnie ofte
Volck-planting (onder de protectie vande H: Mo:
Heeren Staten Generael der vereenigde Neder-lan-
den; en byſonder onder het gunſtig geſag van de
Achtbare Magiſtraten der Stad Amſtelre-
dam) aen de Zuyt-revier in Nieu-ne-
der-land op te rechten; Beſtaende in

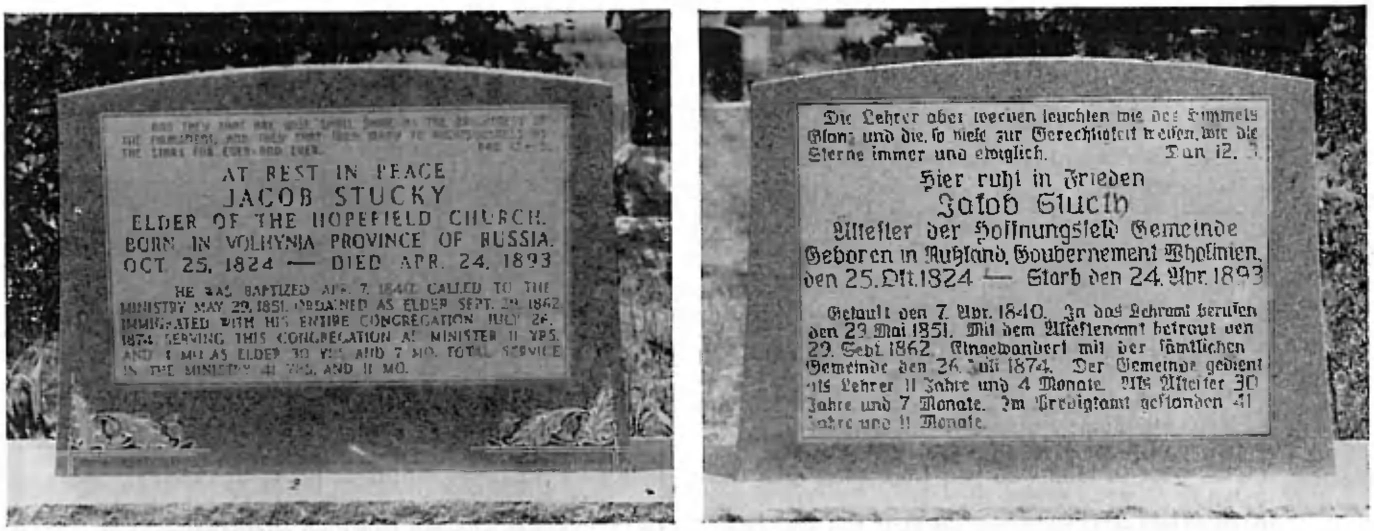
Land-bouwers,
Zee-varende Perſonen,
Alderhande noodige Ambachts-luyden, en Meeſters
van goede konſten en wetenſchappen.

Steunende op de voor-rechten van hare Acht-
baerheden (als hier na volgt) tot dien eynde verleent.
t'Samen geſtelt
Door Pieter Corneliſz. Plockhoy van Zierck-zee, voor hem ſelven en andere
Lief-hebbers van Nieu-neder-land.
t'Amſterdam gedruckt by Otto Barentſz. Smient, Anno 1662.

Two of the Dutch pamphlets by Plockhoy promoting the plan of establishing an ideal community in America.

Plockhoy's political philsophy, as seen in these articles, comprises perhaps his greatest contribution to America. The colony was to be governed by its members; the powers therein were to be separated into legislative, executive, and judicial branches; representation was to be on the basis of population; new laws were to be enacted by a majority of the legislators; and there was to be a single executive, elected by the people, who should approve all new laws. One of the most striking provisions was the article, "no lordship or servile slavery shall burden our company." This was to become the first law to prohibit slavery in America!

(Continued on page 48)


AND THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT, AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER. DAN 12:3
AT REST IN PEACE
JACOB STUCKY
ELDER OF THE HOPEFIELD CHURCH.
BORN IN VOLHYNIA PROVINCE OF RUSSIA.
OCT 25, 1824 — DIED APR. 24, 1893
HE WAS BAPTIZED APR. 7, 1840 CALLED TO THE MINISTRY MAY 29, 1851. ORDAINED AS ELDER SEPT. 29, 1862. IMMIGRATED WITH HIS ENTIRE CONGREGATION JULY 26, 1874. SERVING THIS CONGREGATION AS MINISTER 11 YRS. AND 4 MO. AS ELDER 30 YRS. AND 7 MO. TOTAL SERVICE IN THE MINISTRY 41 YRS. AND 11 MO.
Die Lehrer aber werden leuchten wie des Himmels Glanz und die, so viele zur Gerechtigkeit weiſen, wie die Sterne immer und ewiglich. Dan 12. 3
Hier ruht in Frieden
Jakob Stucky
Ältester der Hoffnungsfeld Gemeinde
Geboren in Rußland, Gouvernement Wholinien,
den 25. Okt. 1824 — Starb den 24. Apr. 1893
Getauft den 7. Apr. 1840. In das Lehramt berufen den 29 Mai 1851. Mit dem Ältestenamt betraut den 29. Sept. 1862. Eingewandert mit der ſämtlichen Gemeinde den 26. Juli 1874. Der Gemeinde gedient als Lehrer 11 Jahre und 4 Monate. Als Ältester 30 Jahre und 7 Monate. Im Predigtamt geſtanden 41 Jahre und 11 Monate.

Tombstone of Jacob Stucky in the Hoffnungsfeld cemetery near Moundridge, Kansas.

JACOB STUCKY—PIONEER OF TWO CONTINENTS

BY I. G. NEUFELD

JACOB STUCKY, pioneer, educator, elder, and shepherd of scattered souls in the wilds of two continents, died April 25, 1893, after two score and two years of faithful service to his people. Scorning hardships and poverty during the early years in the New World, the spiritual welfare of his charge was always uppermost in his mind. Even during his dying hours he was concerned with the young people of his church, especially those who were candidates for baptism, admonishing them to be followers of Christ.

Six hundred people gathered to bid farewell to their pastor when he died at the age of 68, and six elders carried his remains to the Hoffnungsfeld cemetery. His influence had extended far beyond the limits of his immediate neighborhood and his church, for in the early days there were few ministers and even fewer elders in the New World to visit the sick, bury the dead, marry the young, and counsel the perplexed. During the first six years in Kansas he baptized 142 souls, after he had taught them the catechism—60 of these in his home church at Hoffnungsfeld, 56 at Canton, 20 at Pawnee Rock, and six at Hartford, Kansas. In addition to this he performed weddings and administered communion, as well as conducted funerals.

That this involved real sacrifice on the part of the elder, is obvious from the fact that people walked or drove with oxen or horses 6-8 miles to church over open prairie. Because of the danger involved in traveling nights over territory without bridges or roads. Rev. Jacob D. Goering, his assistant, would go with him on these lonely journeys of mercy. All this was done as a service to the Lord.

At first after Elder Stucky and his congregation arrived in America on September 3, 1874, church services were conducted as they had known them in Russia. Eventually, however, progressive changes were introduced. The Sunday school was one of them. Responsible for this were the English neighbors, mostly Baptists, who conducted Sunday school. Their example was followed by Jacob Stucky and his church, an innovation that became a source of blessing to the church.

Elder Stucky showed an interest in education. Not only on Sundays did the church train children in organized classes, but soon the church also introduced the *Gemeindeschule*, or church school, during week days. The first of such schools was conducted in the Immigration House that had been erected on land donated by the railroad company for church and school purposes on Section 19 in Mound Township. At one end some 15-20 families of immigrants lived, while the other end served as "meeting place" and school. German and Bible were especially stressed in this school.

That Elder Stucky had a heart for the training of the youth of his church is evident from the fact that as early as 1877 he was elected member of a committee of seven at Alexanderwohl to submit to the next Kansas Conference a plan for a *Fortbildungsschule*. When that committee came up for re-election in 1879, he was appointed again to serve in the cause of higher education.

In 1880 the Fourth Kansas Conference was held at the Hoffnungsfeld church, of which he was the pastor. Again Elder Stucky was placed on the educational committee. Seven years later, in 1887, the Bethel College Corporation was granted a charter; Elder Stucky was

Jacob Stucky (1824-1893).

one of thirty-three whose signature appears on this document. He continued to indicate his interest in the education of Mennonite youth by subscribing to a building fund to the extent of $100.

Who was this Jacob Stucky who helped to lay the foundation of orderly church life, assisted in bringing about a Kansas Conference of churches, and benevolently aided early efforts of education?

Elder Stucky was born in Volhynia, Russian Poland, October 25, 1824. In 1840 he was baptized, marrying Anna Waltner in 1849. Two years later, in 1851, at the age of 27, he was elected to the ministry, and after eleven years, in 1862, he was ordained as an elder.

Jacob Stucky came from an old Swiss-German family who, because of severe persecution in Switzerland, migrated with many other Mennonite families to Montbeliard, France. After a century in France, about 1790, his ancestors accepted the invitation of Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, and migrated to Urshulin, Russian Poland. Seven years later they moved to Michelsdorf, near Warsaw, where in 1810 his father, Christian Stucky, became the elder.

In the years 1815-17 these Swiss families, among them the Stuckys, once more migrated, founding the village of Eduardsdorf on the estate of one Prince Lubominsky, only to be dissolved again forty-four years later, in 1861, to move 160 miles further east, founding two new settlements, Kotosufka and Neu-Kotosufka, near Shitomir. The villagers had to cut their homestead out of a solid forest, giving young Jacob Stucky his early experience of pioneering and thus preparing him for the task that was awaiting him in America. A church was built half way between the two villages, but eventually they merged into one and the church became known as the Stucky church.

Twelve years later, at the head of the entire church of seventy-three families, Jacob Stucky migrated once more—this time to America. They arrived in New York, September 3, 1874, and went by train to Peabody, Kansas. After several weeks they located in McPherson county.

One year before the trek to America started, Elder Stucky's wife died. In 1879 he married Barbara Voran, nee Kaufman.

On April 27, 1893, mourners gathered at the home of their beloved pastor at 9 o'clock in the morning. Elder Jacob Toews, of Newton, read II Cor. 5:1-10 and Wm. Galle, of Moundridge, prayed, whereupon they left for the church. After the service had been opened by singing Hymn 565 from the *Gesangbuch mit Noten,* Elder Jacob Buller, of the Alexanderwohl Church, offered a prayer and spoke briefly on II Cor. 5:1-10. Elder D. Gaeddert, from Hoffnungsau, based his remarks on Eph. 2:18-22. Val. Krehbiel closed the service with prayer, after which the children of the elder sang a hymn which they had especially composed for this occasion. Six elders carried the casket to the cemetery, where Chr. Schowalter, from Iowa, spoke on Rev. 7:9 and I Thess. 4, after which Chr. Krehbiel, of Halstead, prayed. The congregation sang Hymn 530.

Thus the life of a faithful servant of Jesus Christ came to an end.

WHEN CHRISTMAS CAME

(Continued from page 8)

eviction, but in view of his otherwise good record the teacher got away with a serious warning.

As we grew older the sharp edges gradually wore off. We kept silent, giving the outward appearance of sincere, Soviet citizens. We had learned that one could persist in faith spiritually, surrendering external things. With Russian pupils in our classes our school lost its aura of Mennonitism. The Russians soon formed the *avantgard* of our political activities. Many of them were members of the *Komsomol,* and the knowledge of the Russian language gave them further advantage. We did not mind that. There was no serious controversy between pupils of Mennonite and Russian stock; the Russians are the most friendly and sociable people when they forget politics, and somehow we managed to let them forget politics as far as we were concerned. We concentrated on our sciences, and for the three years we spent in the 8th, 9th, and 10th grade in the Chortitza School, our class, the first to reach the 10th grade, was noted for its earnest study and aversion to everything that savored of politics.

PLOCKHOY

(Continued from page 45)

At last on the 5th day of May, 1663, the Plockhoy emigrants, few more than the original 25 Mennonite families, sailed from Rotterdam in the ship, "St. Jacob." The ship arrived at New Amstel on the 28th of July, having left the Mennonites "with their baggage and farm utensils" at the Horekil also called Zwaanendael ("Valley of Swans"). Thirteen months later the English fleet attacked Manhattan; and Sir Robert Carr, with his son, conducted with unnecessary brutality the reduction and destruction of the forts and colonies on the Delaware River. A later account of the campaign contained the statement that Carr "destroyed the quaking society of Plockhoy to a naile."

Only one scant piece of information is known concerning the brief existence of this settlement. One of its members had written to the City of Amsterdam stating that the Indians at the Horekil "had declared they never sold the Dutch any land to inhabit." It seems apparent that the Mennonites encountered nothing but difficulty at the very outset of the establishment of their "little Commonwealth." Concerning their final outcome, one can only guess. Some believe they were sold as slaves in Virginia. Others argue they became scattered in the confusion accompanying the change in administration. Perhaps they found their way back to Holland.

Concerning Plockhoy: In 1682 he was granted two lots in the new English town of Lewis (now Lewes, Delaware), near the original site of his settlement, on the condition that he would build a house on each lot according to certain dimensions within one year, or be fined ten pounds and lose the lots also. Having grown old and blind, he was, perhaps, unable to fulfil his obligations. Ten years later, he and his wife appeared in Germantown where they became public charges. The Germantown court record for November 25, 1694, instructed William Rittenhouse and Jan Doeden, both Mennonites, to take a free-will collection for the purpose of building a little house with trees and a garden for Plockhoy on the "end street of the town by Peter Clever's corner"; and an entry the following month indicates that Plockhoy was granted a half-acre of land at that location. Germantown is today a suburb of Philadelphia, and the "end street of the town" is the present Washingtown Lane.

After perhaps eighty years of life Pieter Cornelis Plockhoy died peacefully among his own people. Although he spent his life trying to help the downtrodden and the poor he finally fared worse than those he had tried to help. The rule of his life, as he stated, was the command of Christ, "If any among you would be greatest, let him be servant of all."

What must impress all who read his writing is his sincerity. "For which end," he wrote, "that we may transmit the world unto our posterity in a better condition than we first found it, I have contributed this little—." Plockhoy's endeavors represent another contribution of the Mennonites to the world and a challenge to the Mennonites of today.

To Our Readers:

Our editorial office has received the *Mennonitische Lehrerzeitung*, a quarterly magazine devoted to education among Mennonites. In an attractive and well-edited form it presents valuable information and gives inspiration in the educational field. For subscriptions and information write to Victor Peters, Horndean, Manitoba, Canada.

From Contributing Readers

Editors, *Mennonite Life:*

Upon my return home tonight I found the latest issue of *Mennonite Life* on my desk. As usual I read it from cover to cover at once. Each time I have felt like applauding when I got through. Only this time I should like to tell you about it.

In my opinion you are making a unique, worthwhile, and needed contribution to our people and to those who come in contact with them. Let me congratulate and thank you.

I was especially interested in the articles about P. M. Friesen. As it happens, Mr. Friesen was the brother of an uncle of mine by marriage, which made it all the more interesting to me.

Very sincerely yours,
A. E. Hiebert, M. D.
Wichita, Kansas

C. Henry Smith (1875 - 1948)

C. Henry Smith, distinguished Mennonite educator and historian who served as associate editor of *Mennonite Life* and gave unstintingly to further the ideals which *Mennonite Life* strives to foster, passed away October 18.

He was a pioneer Mennonite educator and historian whose enthusiasm for his subject was contageous. At different times he served on the faculties of Goshen, Bethel, and Bluffton colleges and in many ways gave his time and talents to the work of the church.

His many books will remain a monument to his scholarship and the foundation on which future generations of scholars will build. His memory will ever be a challenge and an inspiration to all who love our Mennonite heritage.

MENNONITE LIFE

An Illustrated Quarterly

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The spirit of the Lord is upon me,

For he has consecrated me to preach the good news to the poor,

He has sent me to announce to the prisoners their release and to the blind the recovery of their sight,

To set the down-trodden at liberty,

To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor!

Luke 4:18—19