

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ANDREWS, Cornelius
Anna
52 Leeper St. St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #68, sides A and B

Recorded on May 24, 1978, in Low German

Biographical sketch: Mr. Andrews

- born in Furstenau in 1898
- attended Dorfschule; Handelschule
- father John Andres
- voluntarily joined Sanitaetsdienst; fought in the White army
- baptized in 1919
- served in the Selbstschutz
- married Anna Bergen in 1921
- emigrated with wife and two sons in 1925 via Moscow, Riga, Southampton
- stayed in Morris, Man. area for 10 years
- farmed in Arnaud
- moved to St. Catherines; sold real estate

Mrs. Andrews:

- born Anna Bergen, Nov. 10, 1900, in Eichenfeld
- father Gerhard Bergen; mother's maiden name Plett
- moved to Mariawohl in 1903
- baptized in 1919

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ANDRES, William Sr.

Creek Road, R.R. No. 3, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Tape #26, sides A and B

Recorded on July 26, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1902 in the Molotschna
- father was a farmer, quite well to do
- completed Centralschule
- joined the White army and sought refuge in the Crimea upon its collapse
- had great love for Russia and its people and hated to leave
- unable to obtain military permission to emigrate with his family he sent them on ahead hoping to be able to join them shortly, escaping through eastern Russia if nothing else
- the borders closed and he was stranded
- fled to Moscow in 1929
- was arrested and sent back to his home for helping others leave
- hiding from authorities he returned to Moscow to catch the train now being permitted to leave for Germany
- spent about half a year in refugee camps in Germany
- finally emigrated to Canada in April, 1930
- moved to Vineland to join his family, worked on the farm
- difficult time adjusting to Canadian life, forgetting Russia
- eventually bought his own farm and did well

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

BAERG, Aron and Gertrude

28 Old Oxford Rd., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #103, sides A and B

Recorded on May 31, 1978 in English

Biographical sketch: Mr. Baerg

- born in Fischau in 1904; father was Cornelius
- parents moved to Crimea; he stayed with his grandparents in Fischau until 1921
- left Russia with his family in 1924; payed for his own passage
- emigrated via Riga and England; landed in St. John, N.B.
- parents stayed in Southampton for two months with his sisters who had trachoma
- lived around Waldheim, Sask. about eight months; then moved to Crowfoot, Alta.
- all equipment and livestock were provided for them in exchange for a half-share of the harvest
- several good years were followed by five years of crop failure
- married Gertrude Willms in 1928
- after W.W. II they owned a sugar beet farm in Coaldale, Alta.
- moved to Ontario

Mrs. Baerg

- born in 1905 in Hierschau
- parents were John and Gertrude Willms; mother's maiden name was Plett
- father died in Aug. 1914
- eldest brother took part in the Selbstschutz
- survived several encounters with bandits
- left Hierschau for Rosthern, Sask. in 1926
- moved to Namaica shortly thereafter

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (ontario)

BARG, Abram

1 Margaret St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #69, Sides A and B

Tape #63, Side B

Recorded on June 20, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1895 in Schönbrun. Father was Johann
- attended school of commerce in Halbstadt for four years
- married in 1918 to Lena Neufeld
- mother was murdered by bandits
- emigrated privately in May, 1924
- went to Rosthern; moved to Kitchener; moved to Leamington in 1926
- bought half-acre farm here (under glass); pioneered the culture of English seedless cucumbers in Canada
- has been a vocal critic of the accepted Mennonite points of view for many years

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

BERG, Maria
2nd. Ave. Louth, R. R. #3, St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #67, sides A and B

Recorded on May 24, 1978, in Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on Dec. 15, 1878, in Chortitza
- father Jacob Peters; an invalid; worked as tailor and restaurateur
- went to Dorfschule; 4 years Maedchenschule
- married Peter Berg in 1910; he was a teacher; taught in Steinfeld from 1910-1914
- husband served as Sanitaer; she lived with her mother while he was in service
- fled from bandits to Kronsweide; from there to Alau
- emigrated in 1923 with the 2nd eschalon; Mr. Berg leader of their group
- settled in Morris, Man; worked for Kanadier (Eidse family)
- bought own farm in 1925
- spent 18 years in Reesor; moved to St. Catherines area

RUSSIAN-MEKNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

BERGEN, Mr. and Mrs. Johann

59 Glen Park Rd., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #21, sides A and B

Recorded on July 15, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- he was born in April, 1896 (she in July) in Rosengart
- received public school education
- were married in 1918; he served two years as Sanit#ter
- rejected as immigrant to Canada so decided to go to Mexico with a group of about 50 others in 1925
- after four months here they requested admission to Canada
- travelled to Manitoba, then bought a farm in Sask. with another family and stayed here for 8½ years
- moved to Winnipeg for some time
- eventually moved to Ontario after the War

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Manitoba)

BESTVATER, Abram

Box 223, Grunthal, Manitoba

Tape #113, sides A and B

Tape #114, side A

Recorded on July 14, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on Oct. 5, 1899 in Neu Chortitz
- father was Jacob; came from Marienburg; owned 1½ Wirtschaft
- attended school in Steinbach
- moved to Steinfeld in 1901
- father died in 1910
- attended Zentralschule in Osterwick
- interned during W.W. I because of his German citizenship
- married Margaretha Martens in 1923
- emigrated in 1929 via Germany
- settled in Grunthal
- in 1931 bought a two acre farm; subsequently he bought another 130 acres
- in 1953 he acquired 1½ quarter sections
- moved to present home in 1957

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

BRAUN, Gerhard

Apt.#C-110, Heidehof, 600 Lake St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #20, Side A

Recorded on July 15, 1976 in Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1897 in Lichtfeld
- when his mother died 1½ years later he was raised by a Jacob Wall family
- completed public school
- worked on the farm of his adopted father
- served as Sanitäter in Moscow for one year
- served in the "Deutscher Battalion" of the White army
- emigrated to Manitoba in 1925
- worked on the farm for six years
- tried to farm for himself for some time but without success
- moved to Ontario
- developed some resentments toward the church in Russia
- married later in life

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

BRAUN, Sara

10 Draper St., St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #63, side A only

Recorded in English on May 2, 1978.

Biographical sketch:

-born in Osterwick on Dec. 13, 1895

-father a minister, teacher--David Rempel

-four sisters, one brother

-education: 2 years Maedchenschule in Russia; Kindergarten through Normal school in Canada

-taught school in Russia on private estate and Dorfschule

-married Jacob Braun in 1923

-emigrated via Southampton in 1923

-mother detained in Lecheld because of glass eye; father stays also

-arrived in August, 1923 near Rosthern, Sask.

-stayed in Waldheim; worked as housekeeper

-went through public school to learn English; went to Normal school

-taught in Saskatchewan for four years

-lived in Detroit during the Depression

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

CLASSEN, Alex

Tape #4, sides A and B

Recorded on May 27, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born on a large estate near Cherson on Dec. 23, 1898
- educated first by a private tutor, then in the Central-schule at Ohrloff and finally at the Commerce School
- served in the Selbstschutz
- had to flee to the Crimea in 1919
- served in the White army in which he placed great hope
- inducted into the Red army where he served for two years
- returned to Ohrloff after his release in 1921
- saw little future in Russia and hence emigrated in 1924
- worked at Wideman's near Markham for two weeks, then at Horner Bros. in Richmond Hill before moving into Kitchener
- married in 1925; wife soon fell ill with TB
- found work at the Kaufman Rubber Co. where he remained for over 42 years
- exercised his skills as an artist in spare time as part of a "Group of Seven" painters
- attended St. Peter's Lutheran before the immigrant church was organized
- a deep and personal fear of communism remains

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

DICK, Abram

99 Brentwood Ave., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #32, Sides A and B

Recorded on August 9, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Gnadenheim in December 1896
- father was a merchant, retailing various international goods in his store
- sold his business when the war broke out and moved to Halbstadt to become manager of the Co-operative (father, that is)
- was drafted in 1915, served in the Caucasus until 1917, returned home and was drafted by the Reds to work in the office in Alexanrovsk until 1922
- achieved the rank of Under-officer
- had also served in the Selbstschutz
- never bothered about this, however, becoming instead a very trusted administrator for the Reds
- had completed 5 years of Commerce school
- married in May 1925
- worked to secure passports for 56 people
- emigrated in Oct. 1925
- went to Kitchener, then next year to Pelee Island
- was able to repay Reiseschuld with the help of \$250 they got from the German Government as repayment for the thousands of rubles his wife's father had loaned the German army during their occupation of the Ukraine
- during the Depression he worked for 10 hours a day at 9 cents an hour while paying 70 cents a day bus fare but refused to go on relief
- worked many years in a furniture factory before going to Brazil on an MCC assignment from 1952 to 1964

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

DICK, Jacob P.

Tape #7, sides A and B

Recorded on June 3, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born on Dec. 12, 1905 in the Schönfeld colony
- father was a miller, also had a tree nursery
- lived in the Crimea from 1910-18
- then moved to Gnadenfeld in the Moltschna
- Grandfather banished for service in the Selbstschutz
- some (including stepmother) didn't want to leave as condition improved somewhat under NEP
- father collected some \$2000 from sale of possessions in Russia and had this transferred to Canada so he could buy a farm
- attended Agricultural College after Revolution
- emigrated in 1925
- bought a small dairy farm in Waterloo
- often met with other immigrants to share experiences and to sing songs about "Die Heimat"
- includes candid evaluation of some feelings related to WW II of which memory is good

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
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DRIEDGER, J.P.

R.R. #5, Leamington, Ont.

Tape #79, sides A and B

Tape #80, sides A and B

Recorded on June 6, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1901 in Schönfeld area
- Gutsbeztzer Peter A. Driedger was father
- had three brothers and three sisters
- five years in the Dorfschule; two years in the Zentralschule; one year private tutoring; two years at school in Orloff
- lived in Schönfeld until 1919; installed a share-cropper and fled to Orloff
- served in the Red Army from 1922 to 1924 raising horses
- emigrated via Moscow, Riga, Danzig, London, Southampton
- sailed on the "Empress of Scotland" to Quebec; landed on October 17, 1924
- came to Waterloo
- spent first winter logging in northern Ontario
- moved to a farm on Pelee Island in the spring of 1925 (share-cropping)
- after 1926 their Reiseschuld paid
- married Agnes Dueck in 1927
- bought a 200 acre farm in the Leamington area in 1928
- their rapid success was publicized by Jac. H Janzen and written of in Der Bote
- lost farm in six years due to the depression
- worked as a share-cropper until 1942; bought a farm (current residence) in Leamington

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
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DRIEDGER, N.N.

R.R. #4, Leamington, Ont.

Tape #87, sides A and B

Tape #88, sides A and B

Recorded on June 21, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Schönfeld in 1893
- father (Nikolai) had an estate of 300 acres; died in 1906
- mother remarried to the nephew of Johann Cornies; had a 900 acre estate
- two brothers, one sister
- had seven years of public school and three years of high school
- worked as an orderly on train carrying wounded from the Front for the first year of W.W. I; the following two years were spent in a Sanitätsdienst office
- married Katherina Dueck on February 15, 1918
- family lost land and property; fled to Neukirch in Sept., 1919
- emigrated in 1924; worked on farm in Newton Siding, Man. for three years
- moved to Pelee Island in 1927; worked on road construction; was ordained as minister
- moved to Leamington in 1930
- in 1933 he was elected as the first Elder in the U.M. church in Leamington

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

DUECK, Gerhard G.

Springstein, Man.

Tape #115, sides A and B

Tape #114, side B

Recorded on July 18, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on May 27, 1891, in Schönfeld
- father was Gerhard; owned an estate of about 750 acres
- six years in school; the latter years were spent in a Russian school
- in the forestry service from 1912 to 1917
- lost their possessions after the Revolution; regained them with the German occupation
- bought farm in Tiegenhagen; married Lena Braun here (daughter of Abram) in 1923
- served in the Selbstschutz
- emigrated in 1924: Riga, Southampton, Quebec; settled in Springstein
- spent the first three years on a communal farm
- farmed in Springstein all his life

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

DUECK, H. J.

#215 Tabor Apts., 3 Tabor Dr., St Catherines, Ont.

Tape #70, Sides A and B

Recorded in Low German on May 29, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born on Jan. 9, 1899, in Elizabethtal
- father a minister, Jac. P. Dueck; from Pordenau
- went to Dorfschule; 4 years secondary school in Alexanderkron and Gnadenfeld
- drafted into the White army; served as Sanitaer
- was in the Selbstschutz cavalry
- married Katherina Baerg, daughter of Johann Baerg in 1922
- emigrated in 1924; came to his sister's place in Haywarden, Sask.
- moved to communal farm on C. P. R. land in Namaica, Alta.; stayed from 1927-29
- moved back to Haywarden; stayed until 1931
- moved to Vineland, Ont.; worked in greenhouses
- bought farm in Virgil in 1937
- one of the founders of Eden Christian College of Virgil

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

DUECK, Henry

#1410-100 Queen St. N., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #52, sides A and B

Tape #53, sides A and B

Recorded on August 26, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in June 1902 in the Crimea
- his father owned a large estate here and a much larger one in Siberia
- attended the Commerce school in Alexanderkrone until 1918
- joined the White army under Wrangel in order to free his oldest brother to work on the farm
- worked in a hospital, then as a mechanic before returning home
- worked as a grain buyer for the government after the Revolution earning large amounts of money
- also established several small businesses of his own
- ran a clandestine threshing operation on their farm despite checks by authorities
- decided not to emigrate during the mass movement because conditions were much better in the Crimea and were improving generally
- had tried to leave via Odessa in 1923, however
- conditions worsened and he went to Moscow in May and June 1929 to investigate prospects for emigration
- married in end of Sept. and fled to Moscow the next day
- became group leader of the fourth group but was arrested several weeks later
- managed to escape and returned home but returned to Moscow upon learning that the border was being opened
- forced his name onto the thirteenth list but had to get all new papers in short order
- was able to trick and bribe the officials so that everyone in this group was permitted to leave
- spent about 4 months in the refugee camp in MÖln before being permitted to come to Canada

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

EMMS, Gerhard J.

#14 Tabor Manor, 1 Tabor Dr., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #51, sides A and B

Recorded on August 24, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Dec. 1885 in Tiegendorf, third youngest of a family of 6 children (6 others had died)
- father had an estate of 425 acres
- completed Centralschule in Halbstadt, then managed the estate for a time
- served in the Forstei, then as a Sanit ter from Dec. 1914 to Dec. 1917
- moved off the estate into the Molotschna colony in fall 1918
- emigrated in June 1924
- came to Waterloo and worked on the farm for a year, then got a job at Dominion Tire
- laid off in 1932 and became a door to door salesman for Watkins in which he continued for 30 years
- "not for a second" did he think of returning to Russia

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ENNS, Herbert and Maria

39 Dupont St. E., Waterloo, Ontario

Tape #11, sides A and B

Recorded on June 9, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

Mr. Enns

- born in Petershagen, Molotschna in 1912
- father was a teacher
- moved to Muntau for a year where his father served as secretary for the district government
- then moved to Tiege
- received six years of education
- played with soldiers' ammunition during German occupation
- emigrated in June, 1924
- part of first group to go to Ontario
- got his grade 8 education, went to work for a printer
- moved to Manitoba, Feb.-Dec., 1925 to join a group farm but it didn't work out so back to Ontario

Mrs. Enns

- born in 1912 at Lichtenau where her father had a lumber yard at the railway station
- only Mennonite family among Russians here
- in the midst of shelling on occasion here
- emigrated in July 1924
- detained at Southampton for 10 days
- lived in Elmira for five years
- attended the Lutheran church there and became actively involved
- moved to Kitchener during the Depression and joined the Mennonite church but had to make some adjustments
- were married after the Depression

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ENNS, John

#101-28 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #93, sides A and B

Tape #94, side A

Recorded on June 28, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on Dec. 24, 1901 in Alexandrov; father was Jacob Enns
- moved to Samoylovka after several years; had an estate here
- moved to Gregoryovka; then moved to Neu Halbstadt
- attended Zentralschule and Kommerzschule
- father sold farm in 1914; worked as secretary at a cooperative in Neu Halbstadt
- he took part in the Selbstschutz and served in the White Army
- emigrated to Constantinople in 1920; was found by the M.C.C. in 1921
- went to Germany; stayed here for two years
- was allowed to go to Canada in 1923; to Herbert, Sask.
- worked at various jobs
- moved to Winnipeg in 1926
- married Agnes Peters in 1928
- moved to Leamington; worked at Heinz for 38½ years
- after his retirement, he worked at his son's hardware store
- second wife is Elizabeth Pauls Harder

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

FAST, Jacob C.

53 Menno St., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #12, sides A and B

Tape #15, sides A and B

Tape #19, side A

Recorded on June 14, 17, and July 13, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1901 in Blumstein
- completed Centralschule in Ohrloff, then to Handelschule in Alexanderkrone
- father was an industrialist, owned a dye factory and a kleine Wirtschaft on which he had a tree nursery and some orchards
- father forced to pay 20,000 to anarchists in 1918
- served in the Selbstschutz
- fled to Crimea in 1919 to hide, returned in May, 1920
- drafted into the peace-time army in Sept. 1922 where he served for 1½ years
- refused to bear arms, however
- called before a military tribunal for their religious activity
- demobilized in spring, 1924 and began to plan for emigration
- engaged to Anna Nickel and departed on June 20, 1924
- contracted malaria on the trip
- went to vineland to work for Chris Fretz on the farm
- problems of tradition in getting married in the First Mennonite Church
- language barrier and misunderstandings made for a bad time on the Culp farm so he quit and went west to work on the harvest in 1925
- moved to Kitchener the next spring and worked in a factory
- lost their house during the Depression, got established later (see also articles on military service and emigration on microfilm. Mr. Fast has in his possession diaries of the same as well as memoirs of life in Russia and in Canada.)

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ENNS, Jacob
Box 123, Virgil, Ont.

Tape #59, sides A and B

Tape #64, side B

Tape #65, sides A and B

Dates: April 25 and May 9, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1898, in Schoenau
- father was Herman Enns; he was in tile-making business
- mother died in 1911
- worked in Sanitaetsdienst on Train #174 from 1916-1917; entered service voluntarily
- bribed his way out of the service in 1917
- involved in black market activities during the civil war
- was in Moscow during October 1917 revolution
- served in the Selbstschutz
- served in the White army under Gen. Thiele as machine-gunner
- emigrated in early 1930; quarantined in Hammerstein
- left for Brazil in May 1930
- worked here as farmer and cobbler
- came to Leamington in 1947; well-known in the Virgil area as "Schusta" Enns

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

EPP, H.H.

345 Hanover St., Steinbach, Man.

Tape #107, sides A and B

Recorded on July 12, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Rosenthal in 1901; father also called Henry; mother's maiden name was Ida Peters
- father's occupations were teacher, poultry breeder, and taxi driver
- attended Dorfschule and Zentralschule
- father died of typhus in 1920
- village was invaded by bandits
- served in the Red Army for three years; received a citation
- emigrated to Rosthern; worked on a farm for four years
- moved to Steinbach; worked in a mill; in a store
- was janitor at Steinbach high school for 26 years
- wife's maiden name was Anna Penner

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

EPP, Jacob

#102-28 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #91, sides A and B

Tape #92, sides A and B

Recorded on June 28, 1978, in German

Biographical sketch:

- father was Jacob Epp; mother was Maria Giesbrecht; born in Fischau in 1888
- had 150 acres of land
- attended Dorfschule for 7 years; Zentralschule for 3 years; Lehrerseminar for 2 years
- from 1906 to 1924, he taught in Tiegenhagen (4 years) and Schönau (1912-1924)
- married Helena Willms in 1917
- spent two years in the forestry service
- was ordained as minister but the Communists didn't allow teachers to preach
- emigrated in 1925
- came to Waterloo; moved to Pelee Island in 1926; ordained as minister here
- moved to Port Rowan; had a chicken farm here for eight years
- moved to Leamington in 1935

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

FAST, John

#10-129 Division St., Kingsville, Ont.

Tape #82, sides A and B

Tape #95, sides A and B

Recorded on June 19, 1978 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Neuhalbstadt in 1905
- his grandmother and mother were non-Mennonites; he never joined the Mennonite church
- attended elementary school and Musterschule
- emigrated in 1924 to Elmira, Ontario
- stayed 1½ years in Elmira; moved to Kingston
- in the Canadian army for 18 years; did intelligence work
- worked for the Canadian External Affairs department in Russia

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

FEHDERAU, Nickolas J.

64 Donald St., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #31, sides A and B

Recorded on August 6, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1904 on an estate in the province of Taurida
- due to the unrest of 1904-05 the family moved into Halbstadt
- was able to complete Centralschule
- began to flee along with many others when the Selbstschutz broke down and the Reds and Bandits occupied the area
- were ordered back and threatened by the bandits. Their lives were saved by two Mennonite friends who were Reds
- suffered greatly after the Revolution
- emigrated with 2 sisters in June 1924
- moved to the Freeport area, worked first on a farm, then in the Sanitorium
- after a year moved into the city to work

(see also memoirs of life in Russia)

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

FISCHER, Alex

166 Talbot St. E., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #84, sides A and B

Tape #85, sides A and B

Recorded on June 20, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1894 in Zeltz, 80 miles from Odessa
- father (Johann) was an industrialist; owned mills, tile factory
- attended Russian school through Gymnasium
- served in the cavalry on the Polish and Rumanian fronts in W.W. I
- fought against the Bolsheviks in the Ukrainian Resistance, the White Army, and the Deutsche Battalion
- spent four years in Blumstein; married Margaret Rediger, his first wife
- emigrated in 1924; worked for a Lutheran farmer the first year
- rented 35 acre farm; paid Reiseschuld in two years
- his first wife died after 10 years of marriage
- married Anna Friesen, daughter of Cornelius and Katherina Friesen
- moved to Manitoba and back to Ontario

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
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FRANSEN, Nick

R.R.#3, St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #49, sides A and B

Tape #50, sides A and B

Recorded on August 24, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1907 in Mariawohl, one of 8 children
- father died in 1922 of typhus
- had to quit school after second grade high school to help on the farm
- some of the experiences and sights of the Revolution which he experienced as a young boy left a lasting and painful impression
- survived the famine thanks to the grain his father had hidden underground the fall before
- felt there were some flaws in the distribution system of American aid
- emigrated in June, 1926
- remained in Riga for over a month while his sister (Mrs. William Andres, see Interview #23) waited for permission to enter Canada
- went to Vineland but then immediately west to Man. and Sask. to work on the harvest
- returned to Vineland and worked on the farm for 1½ years, then moved to Kitchener to work in a factory until he was laid off in Dec. 1929
- returned to Vineland and bought a farm 3 years later
- first years on the farm were the hardest
- was also very active in the formation of the Vineland congregation, in the Prediger Konferenz and the Ontario Conference and in the Sunday School Conference

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

FROESE, Franz Peter

#201-171 Donwood Manor, Winnipeg, Man.

Tape #116, side A and B

Recorded on July 20, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on Feb. 11, 1883; father Peter Cornelius Froese
- attended Zentralschule for four years in Chortitza
- served in the Vorstei during the Japanese-Russian War
- lived in Siberia until 1924; emigrated to Aberdeen, Sask.
- moved to Laird; moved to North Battleford in 1926
- was forced to sell his farm because of the Depression
- moved to Virgil, Ont. in 1937; moved back to Manitoba
- worked with his brother in Manitou for three years; moved to Headingley
- bought a farm at Rosengard
- moved to Kildonan after W.W. II; worked in a leather factory
- first wife died in 1947; remarried to Maria Walde
- bought farm of 2 acres in Arnold, B.C.
- moved to Clearbrook
- second wife died in 1967; he moved to Tabor Manor in Virgil
- moved to Winnipeg in 1970

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

GOERTZ, Henry

Apt. B-119, Heidehof, 600 Lake St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #22, Sides A and B

Tape #20, side B

Recorded on July 19 & 20, 1976.

Biographical sketch:

- born August 28, 1898 in Wernersdorf
- moved to Terek in 1902, returned to Wernersdorf where his mother remarried after his father had died in Terek
- family was very poor, had to work from early on
- completed public school when Revolution broke out
- was approached by Russians who knew him to become an informer for Makhno's bands; he refused and suffered greatly for this later
- joined the Selbstschutz after witnessing an attack
- joined the White army in Nov. 1920, serving in the cavalry
- fled the Crimea after its collapse
- hunted by Red authorities, he fled to Terek with several friends
- married here in 1922
- still a hunted man he was able to persuade the local Soviet Commissar to help him obtain papers necessary for emigration
- emigrated in 1926
- settled in Kingsville, Ont.
- Moved to New Hamburg during the Depression

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

GUENTHER, Franz

#3, Senior Citizen's Apartments, Main St., Grunthal, Man.

Tape #112, sides A and B

Recorded on July 14, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1891
- father was a farmer and merchant
- moved to Ojrenburg in 1902
- attended Dorfschule and Zentralschule
- excused from service in W.W. I; worked in a store
- after the Revolution, he started a co-operative
- married Alice Penner in 1918
- emigrated to Winnipeg in 1926; moved to Gretna
- moved to Altona where he worked as a janitor
- in 1932, started a general store in Grunthal
- is the father of triplets

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

HAMM, David

#118-D Heidehof, 600 Lake St., Ont.

Tapes #56 and #66, sides A and B

Recorded on April 25 and May 10, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born March 1898 in Alexandra
- attended Dorfschule, 4 years at Central school, 1 year teacher's school
- worked as bookkeeper for Niebuhr Mill before war
- volunteer in White army in June 1918; captured by Reds in Nov. 1918
- served in Red army; released from service late 1920
- married Maria Funk in 1923
- held various jobs in the Soviet civil service to 1928
- emigrated in late 1928; landed in Halifax in Jan. 1929
- arrived at brother's place in Windsor
- moved to Hanover near Owen Sound; worked in moulding factory for 14 years
- moved to St. Catherines

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

HEINRICHS, Abram H.

Creek Road, Box 22, Virgil, Ont.

Tape #30, side A only

Recorded on August 4, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1902 on an estate outside the Old Colony (9,000 acres)
- employed up to 300 people in the summer
- left at age 13 when his father was inducted into the Sanitätsdienst
- completed 5 years of Commerce school in Alexandrovsk
- experienced the Revolution in this larger city
- emigrated fullfare with his sister in 1927
- hid from the others in Quebec because he didn't want to go out West at that time of year (October)
- went instead to Kitchener
- difficulties in finding a job
- decided to learn a trade at his expense
- moved frequently in search of employment
- started his own business in 1947

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

HIEBERT, Henry

37 Jackson Ave., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #37, sides A and B

Tape #38, side B only

Tape #46, side B only

Tape #54, side A only

Recorded on August 13 and 27, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Oct. 1896 on an estate in Neuhof where his father was the manager (about 9,000 acres)
- had public school on the estate and completed high school as well
- conscripted during the war and served the Russian army from 1915-17 as camp musician and army chauffeur
- served as interpreter for the German occupatioal army
- joined the Selbstschutz
- drove an armoured truck for the White army until its first retreat when he contacted typhoid fever
- under Wrangel he worked in Sevastopol building an armoured car destroyer until the final defeat of the Whites
- returned to Alexanderkrone and got married
- was elected village secretary in the Soviet administration from 1921-23
- emigrated in 1924 with the first group from the Molotschna
- come to Canada with nothing but "brought along hope."
- worked on several farms for the first few years, then rented a farm near Wheatley with his brother for a year
- moved to Kitchener where he got a job as a machinist which he continued for 30 years, excepting the Depression

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

HUEBERT, Henry and Clara

35 Tecumseh St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #25, sides A and B

Recorded on July 26, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- he was born in Sept. 1898 in Schönwiese
- his father was a business man, owned a brick and tile factory and some land
- he completed high school in Halbstadt
- she was born in 1908 in Grünfeld where her father operated a flour mill
- her education was interrupted by the Revolution
- her father saw the Revolution coming and sold the mill
- her family fled illegally through Poland to Germany in 1922 with hired guides and forged papers
- stayed in the Lechfeld refugee camp for 11 months
- he joined the White army and was later arrested by the Reds for having fought against them
- his freedom was purchased after he had served a month or more
- he emigrated in July, 1923 and settled in Altona
- she worked on the farm of some Sommerfelders near Winkler
- he worked for some Old Colony Mennonites
- she later moved to Winnipeg to work while he joined his father's attempt at farming with another family near Starbuck
- he moved to Ontario to find work in about 1927 or 28, she moved, also to the Windsor area, in 1929
- were married in 1937? and went to Germany in 1939 where he had prospects for work
- remained stranded there throughout the War, returning in 1949

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

ISAAK, Nikolai

40 Grantham Ave., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #24, sides A and B

Recorded on July 20, 1976 in German and Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born about 1902 in the Molotschna
- lived in St. Petersburg from 1910-18 where his father was a teacher in a Lutheran school
- had little to do with Mennonites; attended the Lutheran church
- moved to Berdjansk when the Revolution got out of hand
- after his father's death he moved to Halbstadt where he completed the equivalent of 1 year University
- tried to gain permission to travel to Germany to continue studies
- when the opportunity to emigrate to Canada arose he chose that route of escape out of Russia in 1924
- first worked on a farm near Kitchener, then several other jobs
- later settled in Reesor
- conditions and factors persuaded him to leave in the early 40's and he settled in the Niagara area

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

JANZEN, Jac. D.

33 Poplar St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #78, sides A and B

Tape #77, side B only

Tape #89, sides A and B

Tape #90, sides A and B

Recorded on June 6 and 21, 1978 in English and German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Tiegerwiede on February 2, 1895
- father owned a small farm and rented additional land; was also a shoemaker
- seven years in Dorfschule
- served three years as Sanit ater in W.W. #1
- briefly imprisoned as a counter-revolutionary
- worked in the Verband
- married Elizabeth Unrau in 1923
- worked for Jacob Wiens in the Winkler, Man. area
- moved to Leamington; ordained as first minister in the Leamington U.M. church
- worked as sharecropper and farm worker for ten years
- owned a farm for 24 years
- moved to present address in Leamington

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Abram P.

47 Dupont St. E., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #45, sides A and B

Tape #46, side A only

Recorded on August 23, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Oct. 1893 in Alexandrovsk
- father died when he was four, mother when he was nine, so his grandparents looked after him
- grandfather was an Aeltester in Neu-Schönwiese, father had been a teacher and a bookkeeper
- after completing his schooling in Russia he went to Germany to study
- was caught here by the outbreak of the war
- was detained as an enemy alien for 10 months; served in the camp as wash house supervisor
- served a short time after the war in a military hospital
- returned to Russia in Nov. 1918
- worked as a draughtsman here as he had in Germany
- experienced great difficulties finding a job in Canada; finally taken on as an upholsterer which he continued until his retirement
- very active in the organization of the Waterloo church
- served as its first chairman and in many other capacities on the local and provincial level

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Dietrich

30 Maurice St., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #39, sides A and B

Tape #36, side B only

Recorded on August 16, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Osterwick in 1901
- father farmed
- completed Centralschule
- feels the Selbstschutz was a "rather sad story"
- was inducted into the Red army in Sept. 1922
- worked in the office of a military hospital
- were treated well and trusted but didn't cooperate with political instruction at all times
- on the day of Lenin's funeral they received a double ration and they wished for a funeral every day
- moved to Kronsweide in 1927
- on November 5, 1929 he fled with his wife and 2 children to Moscow just before all movement was stopped
- they were checked by the authorities but not sent back
- spent 2 months in the Mülh refugee camp
- came to Waterloo and got a job on the farm for the first 2 summers
- then moved to Beamsville for 3 years and to Virgil in 1937

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Jacob J.

66 Monroe St., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #35, sides A and B

Tape #36, side A only

Recorded on August 11, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in New York in 1910 where father owned a mill
- father died in 1912, mother remarried in 1914 and sold the mill
- moved to Lindenau where they rented a farm
- step-father was critically injured in a fall, could no longer work very hard so they left the farm and operated a general store
- can still visualize the bandits but these didn't bother them because they were so poor
- feels the Selbstschutz should not have been organized
- nearly starved to death during the famine
- food kitchens were not much help to them
- saw no future in Russia so prepared to emigrate in June 1924
- mother died in May so their departure was postponed until July
- went to Winkler, Man., was hired out to the Old Colony Mennonites in Rhineland
- an unpleasant experience here
- bought an 160 acre farm here when some of these people left for Mexico at the end of that year
- father couldn't help much, brothers and sisters went to school
- forced to sell in 1928 and moved to Ontario
- out of work for 6 months during the Depression due to an eye disease had no income, only a cow for milk but took no relief
- eventually began to sell milk and built up a small dairy

RUSSIAN-MEN ONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Katherina

468 Elizabeth St., St. Marys, Ont.

Tape #10, sides A and B

Recorded on June 9, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Ladd₂ekop, Molotschna in 1885
- father was a Blacksmith
- moved to Schönsee, then to Klippenfeld, and at age 18 to Terek in the Caucasus
- at 22 she married a widower 20 years her senior with 5 children
- forced to flee Terek in 1917
- moved to Kuban where they stayed with some Mennonites for a while
- returned to the Molotschna
- husband died in Jan. 1924
- emigrated with her family in June 1924
- very happy to leave Russia
- first years in Canada were very difficult
- received a \$500 loan from A.R. Kaufman to repay her Reiseschuld
- attended a Baptist church for some time

(her memory is weak and sparse)

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Maria (and Margaret who participated only briefly)

3 Southdale St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #23, sides A and B

Recorded on July 19, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born on Feb. 17, 1905 in Rheinfeld, Sagraadowka
- father was a farmer
- survived a Makhno massacre of their village
- father was unwilling to leave in the 1920's
- when conditions worsened steadily they joined the flight to
Moscow in 1929
- brother and his family were sent back along with countless others
- these, however, elluded authorities and left with the second
last group
- spent 9 months in the refugee camp in Germany
- emigrated to Manitoba to work as domestics
- later moved to Ontario to find better jobs

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KLASSEN, Peter

Box 127, Queenston, Ontario

No Interview. Mr. Klassen does not fit into this category inasmuch as he left Russia in 1909. His experiences are extensive and closely related however. They are extremely interesting and valuable. He did not deem it worthwhile to be interviewed because he has written some memoirs of his life. These were published in the Bote some time in 1969-70. The biographical notes which follow were taken from the original copy which he gave me to read.

- born in 1891 in Osterwick
- went to Germany in 1909 to further his studies
- reports on life and conditions here
- was stranded here by the war and remained throughout
- served several Baptist churches during this time
- writes about the youth movement of the 20's
- some involvement with aid to refugees from Russia, eg. in Lechfeld
- made a trip through Russia in 1927
- recalls the plight of the 1929 Russian-German refugees from the perspective of living in Germany
- emigrated to Brazil in 1932
- edited a periodical entitled "Die Brücke" from 1932-37 which details many experiences of early settlement in Brazil. A microfilm copy is on deposit in the Archives at Conrad Grebel College.
- moved to Curitiba in 1938 for other ministerial service
- describes the impact to WW II
- experienced the wave of post-war refugees
- visit to Mennonite colonies in Paraguay in 1948
- trip through Canada and the USA in 1950
- served as minister in Asuncion, Paraguay from 1951-53
- emigrated to St. Catharines, Ont. in 1959

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

KOOP, Herman

35 Dunbar St. S., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #13, sides A and B

Tape #19, side B

Recorded on June 15 and July 14, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Schönwiese on Oct. 18, 1898
- had four sisters
- father was the president of a large farm implement factory and dealership with connections with America as they sold Massey-Harris equipment
- after Centralschule he completed the School of Commerce in Alexanderskrone
- served in an artillery unit of the White army for some time
- family moved to Sevastopol for two years during the Revolution where he joined the medical corps of the White army for 1½ years
- deserted this unit when the Reds took over
- had to get his release from the army reserve list in order to get permission to emigrate (miraculous experiences)
- only one of his family to leave; with a group of 127 people
- many miraculous and deeply moving experiences in Russia
- emigrated in 1924, hated to leave Russia
- worked on Mennonite farms, then for Massey-Harris in Toronto for two years, odd jobs across Ontario during the Depression
- finally in Guelph for 10 years, then in Kitchener

the experiences are deeply ingrained, vividly remembered and quite emotional

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

MARTENS, Cornelius

Tape #1, sides A and B

Recorded on May 25, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1892 on a 1300 acre estate in South Russia
- education includes five years at the Eugenfeld Agricultural Institute
- served in the Forstei from 1913-18
- married in 1918
- fled to the Crimea in the wake of the Makhno invasions
- later returned to Halbstadt
- emigrated in 1924
- worked on the John Bauman farm in the Waterloo Region
- established his own harness and shoe repair shop, first in Tavistock and then in New Hamburg, which he maintained until his retirement in 1967
- dreams of the past, he says, are nightmares
- his memory faltered and sketchy at points

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

MATHIES, John

42 Neptune St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #72, sides A and B

Recorded on May 31, 1978 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Schoenfeld on Oct. 24, 1910
- father was David Mathies, estate owner
- educated by tutor on the estate
- stayed with his grandparents while his father was in service
- mother and grandparents murdered by bandits; father also shot but survived
- lost their land after the Civil War
- emmigrated in the fall of 1925 via Riga, London and Southampton
- arrived in Dominion City, Man. in Nov. 1925
- worked on farms in Lettelier and Gretna areas
- father bought a farm vacated by Mennonite emigres to South America; stayed here one summer
- came to Ont. in the fall of 1927
- worked as sharecropper with his father for four years
- bought a farm in Leamington; stayed here until 1935
- moved to Beamsville; worked as a teamster; bought a six acre fruit farm
- married Hilda Schultz in 1945

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

MATHIES, John

645 Weber St. E., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #44, sides A and B

Tape #43, side B only

Recorded on August 19, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born on an estate in Schönfeld in 1904
- completed 2 years of Centralschule before the Revolution
- when the workers come demanding double pay his father paid them and they were later spared by these
- an uncle and numerous other relatives were murdered
- when it became too dangerous on the estate they moved into the colony to Kleefeld in 1919
- completed Handelschule and 2 years of Teacher's College in Halbstadt before teaching for one year in Alexanderwohl
- emigrated with the first group from here in 1924 with his mother, brother and sister-in-law (father had died)
- went to a farm near Tavistock for about 1½ years
- wanted to see Niagara Falls right away but since these people hadn't heard about it they went only a little later
- moved to Vineland where he was married in 1925
- one year later they moved to New Hamburg
- he was laid off for 2 years during the Depression but never took relief; worked odd jobs instead

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

NEUFELD, Wera, Olga & Alice

Tape #6, sides A and B

Recorded on June 2, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- Wera was born in 1902, Olga in 1904 and Alice in 1907
on a large estate near Melitopol
- educated here by a private tutor
- loved Russia dearly, enjoyed these years due to their youth
- moved into the city in 1918
- returned briefly to the land, then fled to the Crimea
- hoped for restoration of the old government
- later moved back to Melitopol where father died
- Olga and Alice continued their education after the Revolution
- mother wanted to move to Canada only for 10 years, for a
rest, then return to Russia
- arrived in Canada in July, 1925
- worked on several farms and in various homes
- wanted to go back to Russia
- gradually came to like it here
- Wera visited Russia several years ago
- often reminisce and laugh about the past
- "It couldn't have been any nicer!"

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

NICKEL, Cornelius and Agatha

6 Dietz Ave. N., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #3, sides A and B

Tape #9, sides A and B

Recorded on May 26 and June 8, 1976 in English

Biographical sketches:

Cornelius Nickel

-born March 22, 1902 (Julian calendar) at Besentschuk Station,
Government Samara

-completed 2 years of high school before the Revolution

-father owned a farm implement dealership

-fled to Berdjank, then to Alexanderkrone, Molotschna where
he completed Centralschule

-fled to the Crimea at Christmas, 1919 as father was an out-
spoken anti-communist, later returning to the Molotschna

-drove for the army for 42 days

-father had seen the Revolution coming and had invested some
money in Finland which now saw them through the famine and
paid the fare to Canada

-emigrated with a group of 17 people in the spring of 1924

-went out to Saskatchewan where he worked on the harvest

-came to Ontario that winter where married Agatha Wiens

-worked an Vineland for some time, then out to Manitoba
to join her parents on the farm

-spent the winter in a lumber camp

-back to Ontario where they bought a farm in 1928

(for further details and a continuation of the account see
the Personal Reminiscences compiled by Mr. Nickel and on
deposit on microfilm in the Conrad Grebel archives. See
also the family History of the Wiebe and Nickel Families
for accounts of Russian life by both Mr. Nickel and his
forefathers and Mrs. Agatha Nickel (Wiens) and her family)

.....more

NICKEL, Cornelius and Agatha

Agatha Nickel (Wiens)

- born on June 9, 1904 (Julian calendar) in Schönfeld
 - had some horrible experiences under the Makhno including the near murder of her father
 - fled to the village of Blumstein in the Molotschna from their estate in 1918
 - emigrated with her family in June 1924; very seasick; quarantined
 - billeted out in Wellesley
 - married on December 28, 1924 just before her family moved out west to farm
 - joined them in July, 1926
 - returned to Ontario next year
- (Mr. Nickel's account includes further details)

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

PAULS, Mr. and Mrs. Henry

Blytheswood, Ont.

Tape #86, sides A and B

Recorded on June 20, 1978 in English

Biographical sketch: Mr. Pauls

- born on Sept. 28, 1904 in Chortitza
- father (Bernhard) was a farmer; mother's maiden name was Helena Epp
- attended Dorfschule and Zentralschule; three years of Lehrerseminar
- emigrated in 1923; detained for three months in Germany because his father had trachoma
- arrived in Saskatchewan ; worked on farms
- lived on the Sheldon farm from 1927 until its collapse in 1930
- bought a farm in Sunningdale, Sask.
- moved to Blytheswood, Ont. in 1950

Mrs. Pauls

- born in 1908 in Einlage; father Cornelius Hildebrand
- father was imprisoned and finally shot by the Cheka
- three sisters died of typhus
- attended Dorfschule and Zentralschule
- emigrated with her mother and two sisters in 1927 to Henley, Sask.
- worked on various farms; also worked in Saskatoon
- married in 1937
- children: Henry, 1938; Elfrieda, 1940; Rudy, 1942; Walter, 1944; Vernon, 1946; Ria, 1954

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

PENNER, Jacob and Aganetha

Main St., Grunthal, Man.

Tape #110, sides A and B

Tape #111, side A only

Recorded on July 14, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch: Mr. Penner

- born in 1897 in Schönhorst (Chortitza)
- attended Dorfschule
- in Sanitätsdienst in 1916 and 1917
- married Aganetha Friesen in 1920
- emigrated in 1923; came to Winnipeg; moved from Winnipeg to Giroux to Blumenort
- moved to the Strout farm near Headingley; lived here one year
- bought farm in Fort Garry; moved back to the Strout farm
- moved to New Barkfield in 1926; bought a farm from National Trust Company
- became a Canadian citizen in 1928-29
- in 1935 they joined his brother-in-law in Ont.; worked around the peninsula for 12 years
- moved to Dunville, Ont. in 1947; bought a farm
- moved to Grunthal in 1974

Mrs. Penner

- born in 1897 in a Jewish village
- father had an oil factory and an oil export business; father was Isbrandt Friesen
- she and her siblings were sent to their grandparents to enable them to attend a German language school
- fled to Schönhorst during the Revolution
- emigrated in 1923
- had six children

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

PENNER, Jac. P. and Katherina

Leamington Home for the Aged, 22 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #76, sides A and B

Tape #77, side A only

Recorded on June 6, 1978 in Low German

Biographical sketches:

Rev. Penner

- born in 1901 in Chortitza
- father was Peter Penner; teacher in Zentralschule
- went to Musterschule; four years of Zentralschule; three years at
Lehrerseminar
- taught Dorfschule in Chortitza for two years
- served in the Red Army
- came to Saskatoon in 1925
- completed grade 12 in Rosthern at Diedrich Epp's request
- in 1927 he began teaching in Ilford, Sask.; two years here
- married Katherina Winter in 1928
- moved to Heidelberg, Sask.; taught five years here
- taught in Hamburg, Sask. for eleven years
- ordained as minister in the Tiefengrund congregation

Katherina Penner

- born Katherina Winter in 1901
- father was Jacob Winter; he died in 1902
- she was raised by grandparents
- attended Dorfschule, Mädchenschule, and Lehrerseminar
- fled to Memrik for one year during the Civil War
- returned to Neuendorf and taught here for three years
- emigrated in 1927; arrived in Winnipeg
- worked in Saskatoon as a maid
- was living on the Sheldon farm when they married in 1928

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

PETERS, Gerhard & Helen

Tape #5, sides A and B

Recorded on June 1, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

Gerhard Peters

- born in Schönfeld in 1903
- attended Commerce School in Halbstadt, later Teacher's College
- father owned an implement dealership
- father and several relatives shot by bandits

Helen Peters (nee Thiessen)

- born in Muntau (Molotschna) in 1904
- became a teacher
- almost died of malnutrition
- married in 1924 just before emigrating so she could go along with his family
- he served in the "German Battalion" of the White army although under age
- fear dominated their lives in Russia
- arrived in Canada in July, 1924
- experiences while working for Mennonite farmers were not too good
- moved to Vineland, Mr. Peters went out west to Moose Jaw to work during the harvest
- soon back to Kitchener
- not able to buy a house until 1940
- experiences have strengthened their faith

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

PETERS, John

Leamington Home for the Aged, 22 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape # 74, sides A and B

Tape #75, side A only

Recorded on June 5, 1978 in Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1902 in the Ukraine; father John Peters
- family moved to Siberia in 1910; he farmed until 1924
- drafted into the Red Army in 1924; served as prison guard
- emigrated to Manchuria, China
- he supported himself by working at odd jobs in Manchuria
- obtained emigration visa through German consulate
- left China in 1932; through Hong Kong, Ceylon, Marseilles; overland to the coast; to Brazil
- went from Brazil to Chaco, Paraguay
- raised cotton on German-equipped farm; land and voyage funded by Mennonite Board of Colonization
- emigrated to St. Catharines, Ont. after W.W. 2

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

POETKER, Henry

60 Ramblewood Way, Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #17, sides A and B

Recorded on June 23, 1976 in Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on an estate in Gnadendeld in 1904
- forced to give it up and flee during the Revolution
- continued to move from town to town afterwards as refugees
- father received 3 or 5 permanent stripes on his back from beatings by the Bolsheviks
- believing there to be no future in Russia they emigrated in 1924
- moved to Vineland where they worked the first two summers
- then moved to New Hamburg to farm on their own, a move he still questions because of the hardships they experienced
- language difficulties made things harder
- were discriminated against in Russia because they were German, he says, and in Canada because they were Russians
- enjoyed the close fellowship of the small congregation in New Hamburg where they worshiped with the MB's
- had a bad experience with Reiseschuld repayment

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

REGIER, Abram P.

1 Pine St., Virgil, Ont.

Tape #47, sides A and B

Tape #48, sides A and B

Recorded on August 24, 1976 in English (some German)

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1895 in Chortitza
- father was a farmer, mother a Koop from the industrialist clan
- completed Commerce school and applied to the engineering university in Dnepropetrovsk
- was 1 of the 150 admitted out of 3,000 applications and 1 of the 2 Mennonites there
- forced to leave during the first year when he was conscripted into Sanitätsdienst in 1917
- served about 1 year including several months on the front
- attended lectures occasionally during the German occupation
- stationed in Odessa during his service; achieved rank of an officer and was accountant responsible for the entire Ukraine
- joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party while here
- very active on local councils and organizations, including secretary of local VBHH committee, and in the formation of the Selbstschutz
- was arrested several times for his activities but escaped imprisonment through superior's intervention
- emigrated in 1923
- served as group leader for the trip- a frustrating experience including several disputes
- went with a group to Acme, Alta. to work for some Holdemaner
- worked for several farmers as well as a regional Reiseschuld collector
- bought an interest in a farm in the Peace River district on Mennonite terms but it didn't work out

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

REIMER, Mrs. Gertruda

51 Brick St., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #42, sides A and B

Tape #43, side A only

Recorded on August 18, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1884 in Fishau
- after completing Dorfschule she worked as a seamstress for another family for several years
- at age 19 she married a preacher just returned from studies in Germany and he traveled as an evangelist for 2 years
- they then moved to Ufa where land was much cheaper to buy
- he also served as a minister there although most were Kirchen-gemeinde but they had a close fellowship
- 7 years later they moved onto a homestead farther away
- forced to flee to the city in 1918
- in 1921 they fled south having heard of the possibilities of emigration
- lived in Ruckenau for 2 years, then her husband became minister in Tiege in 1924
- when finally granted passports her husband was omitted and they left without him in 1926
- he was able to join them several days later in Moscow
- went to Winnipeg where they lived for 4 years
- moved to Leamington in 1930 where her husband died one year later
- she was left with a Reiseschuld of over \$3,000 but was able to repay it through the generosity of an American cousin
- one daughter suffered a mental breakdown, probably as a result of the hard experiences in Russia

a very warm, contented, alert old lady

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

REGEHR, Henry

387 Second St., Steinbach, Man.

Tape #104, sides A and B

Recorded on July 11, 1978, in German

Biographical sketch:

- born on March 21, 1903 in Zagradovka
- father was Abram Regehr, minister in the M.B. church
- eleven brothers and sisters
- moved to Münsterberg in 1908
- in November 1919, twenty members of his family were killed by bandits in one hour; he escaped through a window
- fled to his brother's place in Blumenort (Zagradovka)
- married Tina Warkentine in 1924
- initial emigration attempt was unsuccessful because he was of draftable age
- emigrated in 1926; detained four months in Southampton
- arrived in Steinbach, Man. in May 1927; met a mill owner and went with him to Saskatchewan; worked for him in Foam Lake, Sask. for twenty years
- was ordained as a minister in the M.B. church
- returned to Steinbach in 1948
- is of the opinion that the Mennonite exodus from Russia happened in order to facilitate the spreading of the gospel

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

REIMER, Henry J.

27 Randerson Ave., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #40, sides A and B

Tape #41, sides A and B

Recorded on August 18, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1899 in Ruckenu
- father was a Reisedprediger
- had to run the little farm they had from 14 years old on
- sailors came and plundered in their town at the outbreak of the Revolution
- joined the drills for the Selbstschutz under the Germans
- joined in the fight against Makhno when the Germans left
- fought at Blumental when the bandits had joined the Reds
- they had a force of about 250 men and held off a force perhaps five times larger for several days
- suffered only 1 casualty while the enemy lost many
- he believes that God did not condone the Selbstschutz but he protected them
- served in the so-called German Battalion under Denikin but deserted when these retreated
- mobilized under Wrangel to serve as a supply driver
- deserted these when they were defeated and returned home
- worked in the relief kitchens
- emigrated in 1924 and came to Waterloo
- worked on the farm for 2 summers and in the forest for 2 winters before moving to Kitchener to work in a factory
- was laid off for over 20 months in about 3 years during the Depression but never took relief

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

REMPEL, Agatha

2 Pearce Ave., St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #62, sides A and B

Recorded in English on May 2, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1906, in Schoenfeld
- father Henry Enns; mother born Marie Heidebrecht
- grandfather owned a number of estates
- fled to the Molotschna in 1919
- taught school to children unable to attend school because of political upheaval
- emigrated in July, 1924 via Southampton; arrived in Quebec on August 8
- came to Altona; stayed one year
- moved to Reesor; lived there for 10 months
- married Jacob Rempel in 1927
- lived in various places east of the Red River until 1944
- moved to Simcoe, Ont., in March, 1944; worked in tobacco until 1953
- moved to St. Catherines in 1954; worked as seamstress

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

REMPEL, Anna

#303-165 Donwood Manor, Winnipeg, Man.

Tape #117, sides A and B

Recorded on July 20, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1893; surname was Neufeld
- parents had a factory
- forced to flee during the Revolution
- two uncles killed by the Revolutionaries
- emigrated to Winnipeg; worked as a seamstress
- her father and brothers started a mill in Altona
- married in 1932
- moved to Saskatchewan in 1935
- moved to Steinbach
- moved to Donwood Manor in 1974

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

REMPER, Henry P.

274 Stirling Ave. N., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #33, sides A and B

Recorded on August 10, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in March 1907 in Rosental
- father was a professional photographer
- quit school after the second grade of Centralschule
- couldn't take any more of the conditions in Russia and decided to emigrate
- left on the second train with his father and brother on July 14, 1921
- father and brother were detained in Germany due to illness
- he continued on alone
- a "grand and glorious feeling" on arrival in Canada
- worked at odd jobs in the Rosthern area before moving east in 1926
- went to Vineland to find work, then returned to Kitchener to work in a furniture factory
- survived the Depression without taking relief
- was married soon after
- went to work in the upholstery business and eventually went on his own

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

REMPEL, J. J.
Elizabeth
#115 Pleasant Manor, Virgil, Ont.

Recorded in Low German on April 25 and May 9, 1978.

Tape #54, sides A and B

Tape #55, sides A and B

Tape #64, side A

Biographical sketch: Mr. Rempel

-born 1886 in Tiegenhof

-attended Dorfschule for 6 years; high school for 3 years

-married at 26; took over operation of father-in-law's farm; stayed 2½ years

-drafted into White army; in Sanitaetsdienst 2 3/4 years; released late 1917

-sister-in-law, niece killed by bandits in Jan. 1918

-fled to Blumenthal; returned to Tiegenhof and stayed until Oct. 1918

-on lists for emmigration in 1920

-wife and two children died in 3-month period in 1921

-remarried in 1923 to Elizabeth Woelke

-worked in Verband with B. B. Janz, Phillip Cornies, Jac. H. Janzen

-emigrated in 1926; arrived in Kitchener at the home of Irwin Shantz

-worked in sanitarium one year

-bought land in Manitoba; worked for Colonization Board and Intercontinental Co.

-moved to Grunthal, Man.; stayed 16 years on 68 acre farm

-moved to Ontario

Mrs. Rempel:

-born Elizabeth Woelke in 1895

-father from Germany

-married Mr. Rempel at age 28

-her brother emigrated with the Rempels

-worked as housekeeper in Kitchener during first year in Canada

See also Mr. Rempel's memoirs, "Gedanken und Erinnerungen aus den Jahren
1918-1924"

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

SAWATZKI, Peter J.

1 Countess St., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #99, sides A and B

Tape #100, side A only

Recorded on June 29, 1978, in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born on August 3, 1894 in Gregoryovka
- father was John; was a farmer; sold his farm and was a mill owner; returned to farming
- attended Dorfschule and first two years of Zentralschule in Gregoryovka; finished Zentralschule in New York; took Lehrerseminar in Chortitza
- served in the Vorstei from 1915 to 1917
- taught in Dorfschule near New York for two years; farmed for two years because wages were too low
- married Katherina Funk in 1920
- emigrated as paying passengers in 1924; had ticket to Rosthern but were advised in Quebec to go to Manitoba
- arrived in Altona on Aug. 11; worked in the harvest
- moved to Halbstadt; worked as farm worker and carpenter
- bought 40 acre farm; sold it and returned to Halbstadt
- was apiarist from 1928 to 1942
- moved to Leamington in 1942
- ran a farm for two years; bought a 25 acre orchard
- Mrs. Sawatzki was hit by a car in 1952; she is still suffering from those injuries

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

SCHROEDER, Woldemar

40 Cardill Cr., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #14, sides A and B

Recorded on June 16, 1976, in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Memrik in 1907
- parents were from Poland
- father farmed at various places, moved to Sgradovka when the war started
- father wanted to emigrate already shortly after the war started
- father served as Schulze in 1919
- emigrated in 1923
- was detained at Quebec by himself for several weeks
- went west to Drake, Sask. where they farmed
- went back to school and eventually got his Teaching Certificate
- taught in northern Saskatchewan for a year, then moved south
- settled in Ontario in the 50's

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

STEINGART, Frank

9 Linwood Ave., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #27, Side A only

Recorded on July 26, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in Sept., 1896 in Rückenau
- father owned a mill and a farm
- worked as a book-keeper for a mill after his education
- was elected as the village official during the Revolution
- worked hard to represent his people even in the face of repeated pressure and threats from Red officials
- secured the passports for himself and 24 others despite innumerable barriers
- emigrated in 1924
- moved to Alberta to work on a farm for one winter
- soon moved to Manitoba to buy a farm on Mennonite Terms
- was employed as a field man for the Intercontinental Land Company which was selling farms to Mennonites
- also worked with C.F. Klassen collecting the Reiseschuld
- almost lost his farm during the Depression but was saved by Government intervention
- moved to Ontario in 1937 when conditions became too critical

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

THIESSEN, David

32 Elgin Street, Waterloo, Ontario

Tape #2, sides A and B

Recorded on May 26, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in March, 1894 in Nicholaihof (Nicolaidorf?)
- baptized in 1914
- Forstei service for three years from 1915
- married in 1918
- fled to Spat in the Crimea after being dispossessed
- inducted into the White army under Wrangel
- later worked in a mill where he stole flour to survive
- emigrated in 1925 among a group of 27 people
- worked on a farm in Steinbach, Man. for seven weeks
- felt he was being taken advantage of so decided to move to Ontario in December
- eventually found work as an upholsterer which he continued until his retirement
- bought a house in 1929; a hard time paying for it during the Depression
- his wife had been a student of J.H. Janzen in Russia
- Canada very soon became his "home" and all thoughts of Russia were left far behind

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

THIESSEN, Gerhard

74 Danforth Ave., Leamington, Ont.

Tape #81, sides A and B

Recorded on June 7, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born on October 3, 1894
- father Jacob Thiessen; mother was Mr. Thiessen's second wife (Aganetha Epp)
- father had 1,000 acre farm; father died in 1905
- three years at commercial school
- volunteered for the Sanitätsdienst; worked on trains for wounded
- returned to school for two more years
- fled to Schönau from the bandits in 1918
- reclaimed their estate when the German army came
- served in the Selbstschutz in Blumenthal
- married Katherina Enns
- emigrated in 1924 via Riga, Belgium, Quebec to Waterloo
- stayed on farm of Moses Hunsberger for one year
- moved to Pelee Island; stayed here 18 years share-cropping tobacco
- served as minister on Pelee Island
- left island in 1943 for Leamington

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

TIESSEN, Henry

291 Weber St. E., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #30, side B

Tape #34, sides A and B

Recorded on August 11, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1905 in Ladekopp, attended Centralschule in Halbstadt
- parents died when he was 15, he was left to care for 3 brothers and 1 sister, all younger
- father had farmed, served as Schulze for several years
- urged him to associate with everyone regardless of class or wealth
- he continued to farm when on his own
- elected to serve as assistant to the presiding officer of the village for several years
- conditions in Russia looked futile so he decided to emigrate
- left alone in 1926, travelled with another family
- arrived in Woodstock, then moved to Leamington to work for a year
- went to school to learn a trade and worked in several factories
- no future here so he went to Teacher's College and became a teacher
- taught up north for a year and at Reesor for 8 years
- was the first teacher and later principal at Eden Christian College in Virgil
- later got his BA from Western
- continued teaching in Kitchener while also lecturing in German extension courses at the Universities here in Waterloo

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

THIESSEN, Johanna

#304-6 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

TIESSEN, Justine

#302-6 Garrison St., Leamington, Ont.

Recorded on June 29, 1978 in Low German

Biographical sketches:

Mrs. Johanna Thiessen

- born in 1898 in Chortitza
- father was Peter Lepp, part owner of the Lepp-Wallman factory
- father sold his holdings when she was five; bought an estate near Memrik (1600 acres)
- attended public school for 3 years; the balance of her education came from private tutors
- fled to New York in 1918; from thence to Marienpol and back to New York
- arrived in Niverville, Manitoba on Sept. 17, 1926
- became a Canadian citizen on May 2, 1932
- stayed here one year; moved to Kingsville, Ont.
- bought farm during W. W. II
- mother of 3 sons and one daughter

Mrs. Justine Tiessen

- born in Memrik in 1891
- father was Johann Rempel
- moved to Samara in 1903; had a farm of about 60 acres
- married Nikolai Tiessen in 1913
- parents were killed in 1918 by bandits; fled to Halbstadt
- took care of a family of seven orphans
- emigrated in 1925; arrived in Kingsville, Ont. on Oct. 1

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

TOEWS, Gerhard G.

74 Louisa St., St. Catherines, Ontario

Tape #60, Sides A and B

Tape #61, Sides A and B

Recorded on May 2, 1978

Biographical sketch:

- born in Schoenfeld in 1897; lived there until 1918
- Great-grandfather settled in Furstenau in 1823
- went to Kommerzschule and Technische Hochschule
- father lost land and property to Soviets
- brother and brother-in-law murdered by bandits
- served in the cavalry of the White army
- left Russia in Nov. 1920; arrived in Germany in Oct. 1920
- emigrated to Saskatchewan
- married Elias in 1924
- worked as Vertreter in Saskatchewan
- returned to Germany in 1939
- served in German army on the Russian front
- returned to Canada in 1951

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

TOEWS, Mrs. Maria

65 Bridgeport Rd. E., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #16, sides A and B

Recorded on June 22, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1897 in Osterwick
- after four years moved to Kharkov where they lived for 20 years until they had to flee for their lives during the Revolution
- father arrested several times, family fled alone
- returned to Osterwick after the Revolution
- emigrated to Canada in 1926 with a group of 18 families
- decided to move to Ontario but were not billeted out, had to make it on their own
- married in 1922, husband from a wealthy family while she was only a working girl so there was strong opposition from his family to this union
- he worked on the farm for the first summer, then was mostly unemployed for the next five years
- she worked as a cleaning lady and anything else she could get because they had a little girl, father was sick and couldn't work and only the younger brother had a steady job
- starved more the first years here than earlier in Russia
- made it through though she can't explain how- just because they had to- and she is thankful to God

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

UNRUH, Cornelius

208 Stanley Dr., Waterloo, Ont.

Tape #8, sides A and B

Recorded on June 7, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1902 in Ohrloff
- father was a minister
- although conditions improved somewhat during NEP they had given up hope, felt it was "no use hanging around"
- survival through a miracle during the famine
- forced to drive for the armies several times, bought his life with a cigar
- a miracle that so many got out
- completed the equivalent of about grade 13
- emigrated in June, 1924
- worked on a farm, then in a mill, finally in a luggage factory in Guelph
- second ones to repay their Reiseschuld
- started his own luggage shop, sold some time ago but still works there full time
- knew wife from Russia but able to marry only after the Depression due to economic factors
- very often talk and reminisce about Russia now

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Manitoba)

VOGT, Peter A.

383 Main St., Steinbach, Manitoba

Tape #106, sides A and B

Tape #108, sides A and B

Tape #109, Side A

Recorded on July 13 and 22, 1978 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Schönwiese in 1900
- lived in the vicinity of large Mennonite industries, including Lepp-Wallman factory
- father was a farmer and minister
- attended school of commerce
- worked in social welfare bureau in Russia after the Revolution
- emigrated with the whole family in 1923; arrived in Winnipeg on Aug. 20
- came to Clearsprings; moved to Steinbach
- bought a printery with Mennonite author Arnold Dyck
- began a business with brothers Abram and John; they parted ways after 4 years
- was a merchant in Steinbach until his retirement

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

WALL, Abram A.

72 Rochelle Dr., St. Catharines, Ont.

Tape #28, sides A and B

Recorded on July 27, 1976 in English and German

Biographical sketch:

- born July 1902 in Nicolaidorf
- moved several times within the Molotschna
- father was a miller. Popular conception was that a miller couldn't be an honest man so his father had to sell when he was elected minister in 1910
- father was called into the Forstei in 1915 and the entire family moved to the Crimea with him
- continued his education here until they left in 1917 and returned to Klippenfeld
- completed Commerce School
- served as bookkeeper for a flour mill until the food shortage forced its closure
- mobilized to serve in the Soviet administration
- married in Aug. and emigrated in Sept. 1925
- went to Alberta to work for a Holdeman farmer
- stayed out West for 12 years, then moved East
- served on the Canadian Mennonite Board of Relief and Immigration for many years from 1947 on

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

WALLMAN, Paul

#416 Tabor Apts., 3 Tabor Dr., St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #73, sides A and B

Recorded on May 31, 1978, in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in December, 1901; Andreas Wallman was his father
- great-grandfather was a Hutterite who joined the Mennonites after the 1870's emmigration of Hutterites
- born in Chortitzza; father was part owner of the Lepp-Wallman factory
- attended Musterschule and 2½ years of intermediate school
- their property was destroyed after the Revolution
- family persecuted because of their wealth; still cannot talk of these times
- served in the White army
- worked in a hospital until he lost his job to a Communist
- married Katherina Pauls in 1925
- was in the 1929 flight to Moscow
- emigrated via Riga, Hammerstein; son died in Hammerstein during an epidemic
- arrived at David Pauls (father-in-law) in Arnaud, Man.
- moved to Gretna to learn English after 6 months
- passed grade 12 after 2½ years; attended Normal school
- taught school in Plum Coulee, Man.
- contracted T. B.; in a sanitorium for 2 years
- bought a small farm; tried to return to teaching
- moved to Ontario

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

WEIER, John and Susan
#215 Pleasant Manor, Virgil, Ont.

Tape #57, sides A and B
Tape #58, sides A and B
Recorded on April 26, 1978, in English

Biographical sketches:

John Weier

- born in Tiegerweide in 1909
- attended Dorfschule in Tiegerweide
- left for Canada on Oct. 4, 1925; arrived in Winnipeg on Nov. 4, 1925
- stayed at Wilhelm Dycks near Altona; moved to Killarney area in spring of 1926
- married Susan Warkentin in 1931
- blacksmith in Lena and in Enterprise
- moved to Halbstadt
- lived in Niverville from 1942 to 1950
- started fruit farming in Virgil, Ont. in 1950

Susan Weier

- born in 1909
- orphaned at age four; raised by grandparents in Schoenfeld
- experienced Blumenort massacre in 1919
- emmigrated in fall of 1925 to Arnaud, Man.
- moved to Lena; married in 1931
- seven children: Katherina, 1933; Margaret, 1935; Helmut, 1939; Elizabeth, 1941; Annie, 1942; Agnes, 1947; John, 1949.

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Manitoba)

WIEBE, W.J.

110 Barkman Ave., Steinbach, Man.

Tape #105, sides A and B

Recorded on July 11, 1978 in low German

Biographical sketch:

- born in Kharkov on April 10, 1902
- father, Jacob, was M.B. minister and farmer
- father sold his farm in 1908 and built a mill with his brother-in-law; died in 1916
- married Eva Neufeld in 1925
- bribed his way out of service in the Red Army
- emigrated in 1928; came to Morden, Man.
- worked on farms; had a very difficult time because of the Depression
- moved into the town of Morden; worked in a mill
- owned a broiler poultry farm
- moved to Steinbach in 1975

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

WICHEPT, Johann J.

Ritsenhouse Road, Vineland, Ont.

Tape #29, sides A and B

Recorded on August 4, 1976 in German

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1897 in Mariawohl, Molotschna
- father died in 1910, mother in 1913
- after completing Centralschule he went to Kharkov to get his teacher's training
- served 15 months in the Sanitätsdienst in the Crimea from 1917
- learned some English while here
- taught for 5 years after returning
- emigrated in 1925
- moved first to Kitchener but soon went to Vineland
- instrumental in founding the Vineland congregation and served as its first minister from 1927 on when he was ordained by J.H.Janzen
- very active in the Conference
- elected elder in 1944 and served until 1965
- served as minister to refugees in Europe (Mennonites) after WW II

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS
of the 1920's (Ontario)

WIEBE, David

12 Chestnut St., Kitchener, Ont.

Tape #18, sides A and B

Tape #27, side B only

Recorded on June 25 and July 30, 1976 in English

Biographical sketch:

- born in 1901 on an estate where father was the manager
- gained his education here though only about equivalent to grade 6
- moved to Altenau where they were registered during the Revolution
- inducted into the peace-time army where he served from 1922-24
- fought a legal battle to obtain non-combatant status
- was assigned to a military hospital in the Caucasus where he eventually became the chief orderly/supervisor of the venereal department
- Mennonite boys were very well liked and established good relationships with the authorities
- demobilized and returned home 5 days before his parents emigrated
- was able to emigrate 3 weeks later in July, 1924
- moved to Galt, Ont. where he was employed on the farm of a Mennonite; this proved to be an unpleasant experience
- worked for several other farmers before moving into Kitchener

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS

of the 1920's (Ontario)

WUERFFEL, Renate

Tabor Manor, 1 Lawrence Ave., St. Catherines, Ont.

Tape #71, sides A and B

Recorded in German on May 29, 1978.

Biographical sketch:

- born in Rickenau in 1898; father was Franz Steingart
- father had land, mill
- mother died when Mrs. Wuerffel was young; father remarried; second wife died soon also
- father had 4 children: Renate and brother by first wife and two sisters by second
- went to school 6 years; left to assist father at home
- married Fredrich Wuerffel in 1921; emmigrated to Germany 1921
- came to Canada; joined her family at Haywarden, Sask.
- moved to Coaldale, Alta.; worked on farm as cook
- to Lethbridge; opened a knitting shop; worked at making dresses
- moved to Ont.; worked in knitting factory in Stratford
- bought farm in St. Catherines, Ont.; took in boarders