



Celebration!

The 1974 100th Anniversary of the
Swiss Mennonite Arrival in America
as Recorded in Newspapers and
Periodicals of the Time.

Volume 1
1973

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The 1973/1974 activities of the Swiss Mennonite Centennial were broadly covered in local newspapers and Mennonite periodicals. In addition to the 100th anniversary celebrations, other activities included the Turkey Red Wheat Centennial, the recognition of the Santa Fe Railway for moving 1 billion bushels of wheat in 20 months, the beginnings of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association, and the construction of a new monument.

The articles in this document were from newspaper and periodical clippings that were collected by Harley J. Stucky in three scrapbooks. The scrapbooks were purchased at an auction by an individual and donated to SMCHA.

The articles were scanned as graphic files, rearranged to fit on standard letter sized pages and then assembled into PDF documents. As the papers were 40 years old and glued into scrapbooks, there were yellowing, creases and crinkles to overcome. We believe the articles are readable, although some may be more challenging than others. In any event, it is an interesting look back at our history.

The articles were divided into three volumes for ease of assembly and for shorter download times. The three volumes cover three time periods:

Volume 1 - 1973

Volume 2 - January 1974 through June 1974

Volume 3 - July 1974 through December 1974

SMCHA Research Committee
Maynard and Marlene Krehbiel
Wayne Goering

Secure Site for Centennial Marker

MOUNDRIDGE, KAN. — Descendants of the Swiss Volhynian immigrants who arrived in this region from Russia in 1874 and other interested persons are invited to attend a transfer of property and dedication of a site for a centennial marker on Sunday morning, June 24, at 11 a.m.

This event will take place two and three-fourths miles west and one north of Moundridge, at the site of the old immigrant house near the Hopefield Mennonite Church. The property was originally given to the Swiss Volhynian immigrants, led by Elder Jacob Stucky and his assistant, Jacob Goering, by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. It was to be used for school and church purposes.

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the new arrivals as well as a place of worship and an emergency housing unit.

At the June 24 ceremonies, the Hopefield Mennonite Church will convey the deed and title to the acre and a half site to the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Assn. The Association is making plans to erect a centennial marker there as one phase of its centennial activities.

During the site dedication Dr. E. G. Kaufman, president emeritus of Bethel College, will give a brief historical sketch of the Swiss Volhynians.

THE SWISS Mennonite Cultural and Historical Assn. includes the Eden Mennonite, First Mennonite of Christian and Hopefield Mennonite congregations of Moundridge, First Mennonite of Pretty Prairie, Bethany and Zion Mennonite of Kingman, First Mennonite

of McPherson and First Mennonite of Burns, as well as the Salem and Salem-Zion Swiss Volhynians and their descendants in South Dakota.

Harley J. Stucky of North Newton is president of the Association. Other executive officers are William Juhnke of McPherson, Edwin R. Stucky and Walter Goering of Moundridge, and P. J. Goering of Pretty Prairie.

Newton Kansan

5 Feb 1973

Newton Man to Head Committee

MCPHERSON — Harley J. Stucky of Newton was elected president of the newly-organized Swiss-German Mennonite Centennial Committee in a meeting at the 1st Mennonite Church here Sunday afternoon.

Edwin R. Stucky of Moundridge was named secretary, Walter W. Goering of Moundridge was chosen treasurer, and Peter J. Goering of Pretty Prairie was elected trustee.

Dale Stucky, Wichita attorney, presented the articles of incorporation and by-laws for approval.

The Swiss Mennonites came to the Moundridge area from Volhynia, Russia in October, 1874, and some of the group moved to the Pretty Prairie area about 10 years later.

The group will sponsor and agro-cultural tour of Switzerland, Germany and Russia leaving from New York March 26 and returning there April 16.

Wichita Eagle-Beacon

24 June 1973

Title to Lands Of Mennonites To Be Accepted

By The State Staff

MOUNDRIDGE, Kan. — The title to historic lands where the Swiss Volhynian Immigrant House once stood will be transferred to the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association here at 11 a.m. today.

The land, owned by Hopefield Mennonite Church, is being given to the historical association for the purpose of erecting a permanent monument commemorating the 100th anniversary of Mennonite immigration to the Moundridge area.

The dedication and title transfer service will be on the site, located 3¾ miles west and a mile north of Moundridge, near Hopefield Church.

Historic Turkey Wheat In Centennial Comeback

LARGE HEADS of Turkey Red Wheat are again waving in the Kansas wind. The historic wheat variety—the kind Mennonites brought to the Great Plains from Russia a century ago—is being grown on a plot near Newton by Harley J. Stucky in preparation for the Mennonite centennial next year.

Stucky's wheat field has a number of varieties, including Centurk, so named for a century of progress in the development of Turkey Red winter wheat varieties.

The original Turkey Red variety has exceptionally long heads and tall straw and has retained its rich dark green color throughout the growing season. According to Stucky, it did not seem to be af-

fectured by plant and soil mosaic, prevalent in many other varieties during the wet spring months. •

THE TALL WHEAT straw was an asset in the days when farmers wanted straw to bed livestock and mulch fields. Today, shorter straw is preferred as insurance against lodging.

Turkey Red is a later maturing variety and farmers generally abandoned it in the 1920s and 30s because they wanted an early maturing wheat. There is currently a trend to plant some of the later maturing varieties, so Turkey Red Wheat is staging a comeback—at least for another year or two.

A number of people plan to plant Turkey Red this fall, reports Raymond Lichti of Moundridge, chairman of the wheat committee of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association. The field near Newton gives evidence that it is a hardy variety.

BECAUSE OF ITS superior milling and baking qualities, Turkey Red Wheat superseded the soft wheat varieties and became the backbone of the huge wheat industry which vitalized every aspect of the state's economy. And Turkey Red continues to live on in the newer varieties which trace their origin to it.

One of the prime reasons Mennonites settled in Kansas was that the land and climate were similar to those in South Russia, thus making it possible for them to continue growing wheat as they had before.

The remarkable transition of the virgin prairie during the 1870s and 80s is noted by Andreas in his "History of Kansas." Where a little earlier buffalo and elk roamed the almost uninhabited land, he states that in 1874 1,568 acres of winter wheat were planted in Harvey County, and this was increased to 49,748 acres by 1882.



INSPECTING a five-acre plot of Turkey Red wheat near Newton are (from left) Jack Barnes, Harvey County agricultural extension agent; Harley J. Stucky of North Newton, owner of the acreage; and Raymond Lichti, Moundridge, of the Swiss

Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association. Seed for the plot was obtained from Kansas State University, Manhattan, where the original Turkey Red strain has been maintained for comparison with newer varieties.

Immigrants Brought Wheat to Plains Region

By Dr. Cornelius Krahn

ON SEPT. 29, 1872 Bernhard Warkentin wrote to David Goerz in Russia about an agricultural fair in Minneapolis which he had visited. He had just come from Russia and was getting acquainted with a new country and its unlimited possibilities. Excitedly and in detail he described what he had seen at the fair.

Among the fruits, vegetables and wheat he discovered a hard winter wheat variety which could already at that time have given him some ideas for the future.

As soon as he had helped the Mennonites find places of settlement he promoted the introduction of Turkey hard winter wheat from the Ukraine where the Mennonites raised this wheat and where his father had a mill. Soon he built mills in Newton, introducing and promoting the hard winter wheat industry.

NOW THE SANTA FE Railroad, the state of Kansas and the Mennonites are preparing to observe the centennial of the Mennonites' coming to the prairie states and provinces. A Santa Fe commercial advertisement states that the wheat which the Mennonites brought from the Ukraine is now being shipped back to the Ukraine, referring to Russia's large-scale purchases of wheat from the U.S.

During our visit to wheat fields in the Ukraine last summer we had an opportunity to examine the present hard winter wheat varieties in the field of a collective farm. We picked some kernels, which are now growing in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

However, I decided that it would be good to obtain a larger quantity of a number of varieties of scientifically tested wheat for seeding. My request, sent to the proper authorities in the USSR, received immediate attention. A ten-pound shipment in four little sacks with four different varieties has arrived. They are ready to be seeded in fall so that these varieties can be displayed at the time of the centennial observance in 1974.



WHEAT FROM RUSSIA—Dr. Cornelius Krahn, Mennonite historian and a native of Russia, examines seed wheat he ordered from the

MANY EFFORTS are under way to observe this event in areas where Mennonites settled in large numbers, such as in Kansas and Manitoba and the states and provinces in between. No group or community should feel "left out," but should plan to "do its own thing" and join in the happenings on a larger inter-Mennonite scale, of which there will be many. It should be a time of gratefulness

expressed in self-examination and a determined and steady look forward.

Following is the text of a resolution passed by the Kansas legislature proclaiming 1974 as the centennial year of the introduction of Turkey red hard winter wheat into Kansas. The resolution was introduced by Rep. W. W. Graber of Pretty Prairie.

A CONCURRENT resolution proclaiming the year 1974 as the year for celebrating the centennial of the introduction of Turkey red hard winter wheat into Kansas and the beginning of the great wheat industry in Kansas; imposing duties upon certain state agencies; and encouraging all cities, communities and citizens to participate in such celebration.

►Whereas, The State of Kansas is known as "the wheat state," having gained that title from its great rolling fields of hard winter wheat, which have provided a strong agricultural economy and the basis for its growth and development; and

►Whereas, Turkey Wheat changed Kansas from a prairie to the breadbasket of the world; and

►Whereas, The hard wheat industry of Kansas, which ultimately spread throughout the midwestern states of the United States from Kansas, was begun with the introduction of the first substantial amounts of Turkey red hard winter wheat to the Arkansas river valley area of central Kansas, primarily in the counties of Harvey, Reno, Sedgwick, McPherson and Marion, by the immigration of some ten thousand (10,000) Mennonites from Russia; and

►Whereas, The great hard wheat industry in Kansas was initiated and encouraged by Bernhard Warkentin, a Mennonite miller, whose father had successfully produced Turkey red hard winter wheat in the Ukraine, and nurtured by the first contingent of Mennonite immigrants, they carried it with them among their belongings to central Kansas.

It was through the efforts of Warkentin, an envoy sent in search of an ideal place of settlement for the religiously oppressed German-Russian Mennonites, and

C. B. Schmidt, immigration agent for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad company, which had completed its line through Kansas about 1872, that the Mennonites settled with their prized Turkey red hard winter wheat in Kansas. Warkentin had visited areas of the midwestern United States from Manitoba, Canada, to Mexico, before selecting central Kansas as the immigration site. He settled in Halstead, built a grist mill on the banks of the Little Arkansas river and began experimenting with the growing of hard winter wheat in Kansas in preparation for the immigration of his fellow Mennonites.

After arrival of the immigrating Mennonites, about 1885 or 1886, Warkentin imported the first large shipments of Turkey red hard winter wheat for expansion of the early hard winter wheat industry in Kansas; and

►Whereas, The waving fields of hard winter wheat continue to contribute substantially to the economy, growth and heritage of the state of Kansas: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas, the Senate concurring therein: That the year 1974 is hereby proclaimed the year of centennial celebration of the introduction of Turkey red hard winter wheat into Kansas and the beginning of the great wheat industry in Kansas; and

Be it further resolved: That the Kansas Legislature instruct the Kansas wheat commission, the state board of agriculture, Kansas State University of agriculture and applied science, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, Mennonite Conferences and the Kansas Department of Economic Development to work jointly in coordination and promotion of appropriate activities for the enlightenment, enjoyment and benefit of the citizens of Kansas and interested persons in other states of the United States or other nations.

Mennonite Centennial Marker Site Dedication Near Hopefield Church Next Sunday

Moundridge Journal
21 June 1973

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Harley J. Stucky of North Newton is president of the association. Other executive officers are William Juhnke of McPherson, Edwin R. Stucky and Walter Goering of Moundridge, and P. J. Goering of Pretty Prairie.

Dedicate Moundridge Site For Swiss Memorial Marker

MOUNDRIAGE, KAN.—The Hopefield Mennonite Church in a special service Sunday, June 24, transferred property and dedicated the site for a centennial memorial for Swiss Volhynian Mennonite immigrants from Russia who arrived in the area in 1874.

The Hopefield church, located two and three-quarter miles west and one north of Moundridge, is considered to be the oldest existing Mennonite church building in Kansas. Site for the marker is just west of the church, where an immigrant house was erected by the Santa Fe Railroad in 1874 as temporary housing for the settlers.

Harley J. Stucky of North Newton, president of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Assn., was in charge of the morning service, which began inside and concluded outdoors at the site.

DR. E. G. KAUFMAN, president emeritus of Bethel College, gave a brief historical sketch of the Swiss Volhynians, tracing their migrations from Switzerland in the 17th century to South Germany and France and later to the province of Volhynia in western Russia, from where nearly the entire group left in 1874 to settle in Kansas and South Dakota.

He cautioned the descendants of the pioneers concerning the dangers of too much acculturation, especially in terms of materialism and militarism, and urged Mennonites to live lives worthy of their heritage.

TAKING PART in the service were representatives of various congregations of the Swiss Volhyn-

ian background, including: William Voran, Bethany Church, Kingman; David Stucky, First Mennonite, Burns; a ladies trio of First Mennonite, Pretty Prairie; James Gingerich, First Mennonite of Christian, Moundridge; Ed. R. Stucky of the Eden Church, Moundridge, and the Eden Men's Chorus.

In the outdoor ceremony, Wayne Stucky, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Hopefield Church, transferred the title of the site for the marker to the Association.

Construction of the monument is expected to begin in early fall. Focal point of the memorial will be a 40-ft. shaft topped by a globe, with landscaped walkways extending in four directions from the marker's base.



MEN'S CHORUS OF EDEN MENNONITE CHURCH SINGS AT DEDICATION OF THE SITE FOR A CENTENNIAL MARKER AT THE HOPEFIELD CHURCH NEAR MOUNDRIAGE, KAN.

300 attend site dedication near Hopefield Church

Three hundred people attended the "Transfer of Property and Site Dedication" at the Hopefield Mennonite Church last Sunday morning. Representatives from the congregations represented in the Swiss Mennonite Cultural Historical Association participated in the services.

Chairman for the service in the sanctuary of the church was Harley J. Stucky, president of the corporation. Congregational singing, including both English and German, was led by Donna Goering Richert with Mrs. Arlene Stucky at the organ.

Harley J. Stucky described the plans for the marking of the centennial of the coming of the Volhynian Mennonites to be held August 31, September 1 and 2 of 1974. Plans include the erection of a suitable marker on the spot where the original immigrant house stood. He pointed out that twelve committees are at work planning for the various phases of the celebrations. He appealed to the group present to assist in the collection of historical and other materials.

The scripture lesson was read by William Voran, representing the Kingman church and David Stucky, representing the Burns church led in prayer. Special music was provided by a ladies trio from the Pretty Prairie church. Ed R. Stucky, Moundridge, explained the purpose of the offering and led in the of-

fertory prayer.

Dr. E. G. Kaufman, author, lecturer, and President Emeritus of Bethel College, presented an historic sketch tracing the history of the descendants during the 450 year period. Pointing out that the idea of remembering is mentioned 276 times in the Bible, Dr. Kaufman appealed to all present to gratefully remember their heritage. Vividly he spoke of the persecutions and sufferings for 350 years. Addressing himself to the young people present the speaker said "young people remember your heritage and carry on this tradition."

Concluding his historical sketch, Dr. Kaufman raised the question, "How are you going to remember? Sure by building a memorial...but especially remember it by living a life worthy of inheritors of such a tradition."

The congregation next moved out to the site, about 300 feet from the church, for the ceremonies conveying the deed and title from the Hopefield Mennonite Church to the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association.

The Male Chorus of Eden Mennonite Church opened the outdoor session by singing two numbers. Wayne Stucky, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Hopefield Mennonite Church read the official resolution of the congregation authorizing the transfer of the

land to the Association for the permanent marker. Also included was a tract of land to be used in connection with the celebrations next year. Harley J. Stucky, president of the Association, received the deed on behalf of the Corporation.

Rev. James Gingerich, pastor of the First Mennonite Church, led in the dedicatory prayer. After the singing of "The Work is Thine O Christ," Rev. Andrew R. Shelly, pastor of the Hopefield Mennonite Church, led in the benediction prayer.

Moundridge Journal
28 June 1973



PARTICIPATING IN SUNDAY'S CEREMONIES at Hopefield Mennonite Church were Wayne Stucky, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Harley J. Stucky, President of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association. (Photo courtesy Mennonite Weekly Review)



MEMBERS OF THE HOPEFIELD CONGREGATION and marker will be erected. The site is approximately 300 feet
guests observe transfer of land to the Swiss Mennonite from the church. (Photo courtesy Mennonite Weekly Review)
Cultural and Historical Association where a Centennial

Turkey Red Wheat

(A Mennonite Weekly
Review Story)

Large heads of Turkey Red Wheat are again waving in the Kansas wind. The historic wheat variety—the kind Mennonites brought to the Great Plains from Russia a century ago—is being grown on a plot near Newton by Harley J. Stucky in preparation for the Mennonite centennial next year.

Stucky's wheat field has a number of varieties, including Centurk, so named for a century of progress in the development of Turkey Red winter wheat varieties.

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PAGE TWO

Thursday, July 5, 1973
Moundridge Journal

First Mennonite Church - oldest of Christian - Moundridge Churches

by Emily Siemens

The First Mennonite Church of Christian, now located at 419 South Christian Avenue, Moundridge, has been a part of area history for nearly 100 years.

The name Christian has been with the church since its establishment. The original location of the church building was in the now-extinct village of Christian, Kansas, located in Garden and Alta Townships in Harvey County, extending into Mound and Turkey Creek Townships in McPherson County. Christian and Daniel Krehbiel, Christian Hirschler and Christian Voran bought the land and laid out the town site in 1874. The town was named after the three "Christian" founders.

The First Mennonite Church began with thirty settlers of South German stock that made their home in and around Christian and Halstead on land bought from the Santa Fe Railroad in 1874. Five days after their arrival, a church service was held in the schoolhouse in Halstead. Reverend Christian Krehbiel stated at the service, "We came to Kansas not merely to enjoy God's creation, but we desire even more to serve Him and build His Kingdom." Immediately a church was

organized, a constitution drawn, and deacons, elders, and ministers ordained.

Since the settlers were so spread out from Halstead to Christian, two churches were built, one in each town. They were known as the north and south churches. Cooperation between the two existed for a while but due to location they eventually both became independent.

Valentine Krehbiel was the first minister of the north church, in Christian. In the beginning the church had 65 members and 146 people attending. The Santa Fe donated money for educational purposes to both north and south churches for eight years.

Duties became overwhelming for Reverend Krehbiel so John Rupp and William Galle were ordained. A Sunday School for children or Christian Education program was started, beginning with a German reader for text and progressing to Bible history and then International Sunday School lessons.

By 1880, a sixteen foot addition was added to the Church of Christian to accommodate the swelling congregation but soon that was not adequate. In 1884 a new church building was dedicated. The church was

chartered under the name First Mennonite Church of Christian the same year. At that time there were 225 members and 415 persons attending.

The Eldorado-McPherson branch of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad established a station one mile north of Christian in 1886. The station, named Moundridge, became a new center of development. Many of the members of the First Mennonite Church of Christian lived in the new Moundridge area.

Reorganization of the First Church took place after the new building was in use. Conflicts over the constitution caused the "Garden Township" and "West Zion" churches to emerge.

In 1902 Valentine Krehbiel died. For five years the First Church had no elder. P. P. Wedel and John C. Goering were then ordained as ministers. Rev. Goering was elder from 1908 to 1917. Reverend Wedel became permanent elder and pastor.

Because of needed land and central location in a prospering town, the First Church was moved to Moundridge in 1908. It stood at the same place it is located today. A new school building was erected in 1909.

Prior to World War I services were held in German only, but

First Mennonite Church - oldest of Christian - Moundridge Churches

Cont. from Page 1

due to pressures caused by the U.S. involvement in the war, the church was forced to modify this policy. On August 28, 1918, a typewritten notice was tacked to the church door reading: "Notice: no more German services will be allowed at this church." Services were, in actuality, still in German. However, twice a month a night service was held in English.

Many other changes took place. Vacation Bible School became a reality in 1926. Public schools were opened so there was no need for a church-run school any longer. A church library was started as a result. Eventually, services were given in English.

After World War II, in 1949, a new church was built to replace the 66-year-old one. The new building was built on the same grounds, where it stands today. For future expansion, the church was built with a 500-person capacity.

Reverend P. P. Wedel served the church for 46 years before resigning. He is still living at the Memorial Home for the Aged today. Rev. Wedel was replaced by Rev. Edmund J. Miller, who was with the church for eight years. Rev. Ralph K. Weber then became pastor till 1965, when Rev. Robert R. Coon took over.

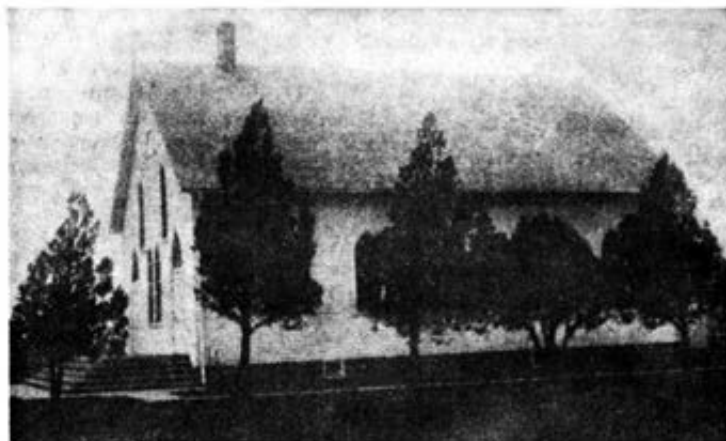
In 1965 First Church had a membership of 257 and an average attendance of 212 people. By 1971 the membership had increased to 273, however, average attendance decreased to 165.

In 1971 Rev. James Gingerich, from Burrton became pastor and holds the position today.

As of December 31, 1972, total membership of the First Church was 266, with an average attendance of 165.

Worship service is now held at 9:30 a.m. Sundays. Sunday School is at 10:30 a.m. Active organizations are youth fellowship, junior choir, chancel choir, sisters mission society, mission study workers, board of deacons, trustees, Christian education, and Christian Service and church council.

The First Mennonite Church of Christian tells a story of the past, and is a part of Moundridge area history being made today.



PAST AND PRESENT, The First Mennonite Church of Christian. The older structure was erected in 1884, Christian, Kansas. In 1908, it was moved to it's present site, Moundridge. The newer church, built in 1949, is used today.

Ground broken for Swiss memorial marker

by Andrew Shelly

Ground breaking ceremonies were held last Thursday morning on the site of the construction of the Swiss Memorial Marker to be erected a short distance west of the Hopefield Mennonite Church. The prayer of dedication was delivered by Rev. Andrew R. Shelly, pastor of the Hopefield congregation.

Vernon Wedel, Halstead, son of Jacob Wedel of the Moundridge community who is a resident of Memorial Home, will serve as contractor to construct the twenty foot stone tower. Assisting him on Thursday was Milo Goering, member of Eden

Mennonite Church, son of Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Goering, who translated the history of the coming of the Swiss Mennonites by P. P. Wedel.

Twenty tons of silverdale stone arrived during the morning hours. The plot was laid out and footings poured before evening. One of the interesting discoveries encountered during the digging of the foundation was an old square nail. It is assumed that this nail was used in the construction of the old Immigrant House in 1874. The nail will be on display as a link to the original house and dwellers on the land.

It is anticipated that the initial construction of the 20 foot tower

will take about 8 to 10 weeks. Next spring the 40 ft. monument will be completed. The top half will consist of two parts. A large ten foot high seamless globe will rest on the stone tower, representing our world. On top of this will be a ten foot cross.

Harley J. Stucky, North Newton, serves as president of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association, and Walter Goering, Moundridge, serves as treasurer. Chairmen of committees are as follows: Memorial Marker, Menno Kaufman; Immigrant House Replica, Melvin Stucky; Fine Arts, Mrs. Elmer H. Goering; Recipes, Mrs. Alice Kaufman; Cultural and Practical Arts, Herbert E. Stucky; Clothing, Mrs. Varden Loganbill; Family Pictures, Mrs. Art Wedel; Wheat, Ray Lichti; Swiss Community, Ed R. Stucky; Fund Raising, Menno Kaufman; Tours of Historical Sites, Dale Stucky and Promotion, William E. Juhnke.

Work this week is proceeding with Vernon Wedel in charge of construction and Jonas Flickner in charge of landscaping.

The dates for the Swiss Centennial celebrations are August 31 (the date of the docking of the City of Richmond) and September 1 and 2, 1974.



GROUNDBREAKING AT THE Swiss Mennonite Memorial Marker site west of Moundridge included from left: Pete Schrag, Pete Kaufman (both of the Hopefield Church), Harley J. Stucky, President of the Association, Vernon Wedel, contractor and Milo Goering, Eden Mennonite Church. (Andrew Shelly Photo)



CHESTER KOEHN OF GOERING HARDWARE unloaded 20 tons of Silverdale Stone from one truck. (Andrew Shelly Photo).

Moundridge Journal
23 August 1973

Young men played migration roles

(Ed. note — Kansas will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the introduction of Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat into the state in 1974. The wheat was introduced here by Russian Mennonites who migrated to escape Russian militarism and nationalism. In a series of copyrighted articles, John F. Schmidt, of the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, traces the history and background of the Mennonite migration.)

(C) By John F. Schmidt

Mennonite Library

Having received documentary assurances of their religious freedom and of their nonresistant status from Catherine II and later also from Paul I, Mennonites in Russia were most reluctant in 1870 to consider migration. They continued to think that a personal representation to the czar was all that was necessary to confirm all the ancient privileges.

The work of Cornelius Jansen was crucial in convincing them that 1) the new laws would indeed alter their status and threaten to undermine their religious position and 2) North America was the only viable destination in the consideration of migration.

Two young men, who later made significant contributions to Kansas, played a vital role in getting the migration under way. David Goerz was a promising school teacher and Bernhard Warkentin was the son of a miller. Their intimate friendship, as shown by their correspondence in the Mennonite Library and Archives, began in 1861 when Warkentin was 14 and Goerz was 12.



David Goerz

Knew position

By 1872 Warkentin was well aware of the threatened position of the Mennonites and the rising migration fever. With two other young men, Philipp Wiebe and Peter Dyck, he embarks for America in the late spring of 1872. It was a venture of three young men who could afford to travel but for Warkentin it must have had definite exploratory overtones.

The group visited Niagara Falls, Chicago, St. Louis, and then stopped at Summerfield, Ill., where Christian Krehbiel was the pastor of a Mennonite church. The observant Warkentin took note of agricultural conditions wherever he went.

A few weeks later he wrote from Brookville, west of Salina, using the letterhead of the Brookville House. He describes the trip to Milwaukee, via Chicago, through Wisconsin and into Minnesota. In Minnesota they (with land agents) traveled for five days by horse and buggy through the open prairie.



B. Warkentin

Winter too long

Warkentin liked the black soil and the abundant streams. He does think the winter lasts too long and the mosquitoes were terrible. They proceeded through Iowa to Omaha where they took the Union Pacific to Cheyenne, stopping several times to make horse-drawn trips into the country. From Denver they went to Central City and then back by Central Pacific to Brookville. "When we got to the state of Kansas we noticed that the whole prairie was filled with buffalo skeletons. Once in a while we saw buffalo herds in the distance."

Before the summer is spent, Warkentin has decided to stay in America while his two friends plan to leave New York for Russia Oct. 1.

Warkentin now becomes the guest of state and railway land agents. He has heard of wonderful land in Oregon and Washington and already he is fearful that land prices are rising as a result of the migration westward.

Long letters

Meanwhile, back in the Ukraine, David Goerz, the schoolteacher, writes voluminous letters to his faithful friend telling of the sentiment of the Mennonites toward migration. When letters from Warkentin finally arrive Goerz is requested to share the letter with others. "People here want to know very much about America and your valuable letters from the new world not only serve the interest of our friendship but also the interest of many, many people in this congregation."

There is opposition to the migration in Russia while some who had been in favor of migrating to Palestine now openly promote America. Some congregations are preparing to elect representatives to be sent on an investigative tour of America. Repeatedly, delegations are sent to St. Petersburg to plead the case of the Mennonites.

Goerz is fearful that their letter writing activity would rouse local or political suspicion. He advises Warkentin that his return to Russia may be hazardous. Later he tells Warkentin that the printed materials sent from America has evidently filled the wastebaskets of the Russian censors and border post offices.

He prepares

Meanwhile Goerz makes his own preparations to migrate to the new world. In October he sells his small farm; in December he submits his resignation of his school position for the following year. During the Christmas holidays he visits relatives and friends, always sharing information from Warkentin's letters and thus promoting the migration idea.

In March he is confident that this will be his last month in Russia; he has given his final examinations, bid farewell to school and friends, and proceeds on a farewell visit through the colonies. Then something happened to frustrate his plans. With embarrassment and extreme disappointment he writes on April 23, "It is impossible to indicate the emotions which overwhelmed us as our loved ones preceded us to America and we remained behind for an indefinite time, and it is equally impossible to explain the difficulties which made our departure at this time unattainable."

His passport seems not to have been cleared. However, later in the summer he did leave, for on Aug. 21 he and his family, together with some forty-five other Mennonites, arrived in New York on the Holsatia.

Meanwhile, Warkentin attended McKendrie College, in Lebanon, Mo., spent some time in Texas, and met some of the delegates from Russia, accompanying some of them to Texas and Kansas. The Goerz family proceeded to Summerfield, Illinois where David became the teacher of the parish school.

Mennonites nearly passed over Kansas

(Ed. note — Kansas will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the introduction of Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat into the state in 1974. The wheat was introduced here by Russian Mennonites who migrated to escape Russian militarism and nationalism. In a series of copyrighted articles, John F. Schmidt, of the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, traces the history and background of the Mennonite migration.)

(C) By John F. Schmidt
Mennonite Library

Letters from America distributed by Cornelius Jansen among his friends in Russia as well as information shared by David Goerz from letters by his friend Bernhard Warkentin may have been decisive in causing the Mennonites to think of America as the promised land.

However, most Mennonites still expected more information and there was some skepticism that the information available was not really official. Jansen was not a ministerial leader and Warkentin was a youth in a society that was more trustful of age in such important matters.

The children of Israel had sent spies to the promised land to evaluate the prospects and bring back a report. This procedure was not unfamiliar to the Mennonites in Russia. Prior to their settlement in South Russia they had sent two men, Johann Bartsch and Jacob Hoepfner, from West Prussia to Russia to spy out the promised land.

Picked delegates

Thus on February 11th, 1873 David Goerz writes to Warkentin that the migration idea has become sufficiently serious that several congregations have chosen delegates who are to make an investigation trip to America. The delegates were chosen by various communities and congregations wherever migration was a serious option. That the delegation finally numbered twelve was sheer coincidence as the various groups of Mennonites acted quite independently in selecting their delegates.



Wilhelm Ewert

The instructions to some of the delegates covered their mission. They were to 1) contact governmental agencies in an attempt to secure assurances of religious freedom, including exemption from military service, 2) look for land of good quality and sufficient quantity to meet their needs and available at convenient terms, 3) secure some assurance that they would be able to continue their church services in their own manner and in the German language, and 4) secure reductions in transportation expenses as had already been offered by Canada.

The delegates left in three groups and traveled independently of each other in the early stages of their journey. They made contacts with Mennonites in Pennsylvania and Ontario, Canada and on the way to the west stopped at Elkhart, Ind. where John F. Funk, the Mennonite publisher, was the moving spirit in providing information and guidance. All groups met in Fargo, Dakota from where they took a boat on the Red River for Winnipeg, Manitoba.



Tobias Unruh

Wrote memoirs

Several of these delegates, including Jakob Buller who later settled with the Alexanderwohl congregation in southern Marion County, and Leonhard Sudermann who settled at Whitwater, left letters or wrote memoirs recounting their experiences. Christian Krehbiel, then living at Summerfield, Ill., also wrote memoirs in which he told of his contacts with delegates. In addition, there are diaries by Tobias Unruh who settled in South Dakota and Paul Tschetter, a leader of the Hutterites, who settled in the Dakotas.

Some of the impressions and observations of the delegates are noteworthy. Tobias Unruh, for example, noted that, "In America the people do not live in colonies like we do in Russia. We find a lone home here and another one there." This finding led to a further observation, "It is our desire to settle collectively on farms like in Russia and these isolated farmers would hinder this."

In Manitoba, Unruh observed that it would be very good country if "ditches were provided that the low places could be drained." All the delegates were observant of soil conditions, prices of farm produce, and wages paid to farm labor.

Impressed with Canada

The delegates were entertained at length in Manitoba where William Hespeler, a representative of his Canadian government, arranged land inspection tours and also introduced them to the governor of the province. Their impression of Manitoba seems to have been very favorable. However, after several wagon tours in the country Sudermann wrote "Brother Buller and I came to the conclusion today that the fourteen townships designated for us were insignificant and we had better start back tomorrow morning." After over two weeks in Manitoba they were back in the states touring Minnesota and the Dakotas.

After two more weeks in these areas they briefly visited parts of Iowa and Nebraska and then reconnoitered at Summerfield, Ill., where they found Christian Krehbiel, the church elder, busy stacking grain. Experiences were shared until past midnight.

Speaking for all the delegates Sudermann wrote "We now felt that our mission in investigating the various localities to determine the suitability for settlement for our people to be about finished although Kansas had not yet been thought of, but since the eastern part, which is most suitable all taken up, this was also dismissed." In his memoirs Christian Krehbiel writes, "That was a painful bit of news for Warkentin and to soften it for him I ventured the observation that...if their commission was to find the best land available, then they had not fully discharged their mandate for they had not seen Kansas or Texas and could accordingly not include them in their report."

Wilhelm Ewert who later settled near Hillsboro agreed, "Krehbiel is right; I am going to make the trip." However, Sudermann chose to go east without seeing Kansas.

Kansas too warm

Krehbiel then tells of the trip to Kansas by Buller and Ewert escorted by Warkentin. Buller

was convinced that Kansas was too warm. Krehbiel argued that in Kansas one required fewer clothes, less fuel, less winter fodder, and farmers enjoyed a longer season to do their work. Buller was not convinced. Krehbiel continues, "Man proposes and God disposes. Without any further intervention on my part Buller and his vast congregation from Alexanderwohl, Russia eventually did come to Kansas."

Before returning to their homes the delegates again visited Mennonites in Pennsylvania whose material help would later become very significant. Some delegates visited the offices of the Northern Pacific Railway and a group also took time out to see President Grant in Washington, D.C. Early in September the delegates were back in Europe. However, they already met some of the Mennonite immigrants and the migration was underway.

That so many of these immigrants chose to settle in Kansas in the face of competition from Canada whose offers could not be duplicated on this side of the border is truly remarkable. However, even as the delegates were touring the Dakotas, Kansas, and Texas, land had already been bought by Russian Mennonites in Morris and Marion Counties. In future articles we will look at the machinery of migration and Mennonite encounters with the American government and the western railways.

WHEAT CENTENNIAL

High Plains Journal
10 Sept 1973

preliminaries get under way as whole area plans on Turkey Red Winter Wheat activity

Not long ago the Aberdeen Angus people celebrated the centennial of the introduction of the black cattle in the United States at a little town called Victoria in north central Kansas. The celebration was not very long, but it made its mark on historic dates.

We are coming up now on a year, all of which has been designated as "Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat Centennial" year by a Kansas House concurrent resolution No. 1014, passed by the Kansas legislature and signed by the governor.

Advent of Turkey Red Winter Wheat to the High Plains area is one of the most important agricultural events in the history of this vast, flat, semi-arid country running from deep in Texas north to the Canadian border. Turkey Red wheat is the base of a vast wheat production empire in the High Plains. Not much of the real, old Turkey Red is left, but the genes of the proud old wheat live on in its many descendants. Besides an empire of wheat production, based on the old Turkey Red, a second empire of wheat handling, movement, and processing.

The cattle brought into the High Plains to graze and grow in the wake of the buffalo herds that once roamed the Plains, provided one major part of the agricultural picture. The winter wheat brought into Kansas in 1874 by the Mennonite people laid the foundation for a second great agricultural empire in this central United States.

A Kansas committee was formed for the Centennial at Hillsboro when a meeting was called by Robert Arnold, representing Governor Docking. An executive committee and an advisory committee was formed to work with the year-long celebration.

On the executive committee are Harley J. Stucky, North Newton, and Wesley J. Prieb, dean of Tabor college, Hillsboro, co-chairman; Robert A. Arnold, Hillsboro, secretary-treasurer; Dr. Floyd Smith, Kansas State university; Tom C. Roberts, pre-



sident, Kansas Wheat Improvement association, Manhattan; John M. Cranor, executive vice-president, Kansas Grain and Feed Dealers association, Hutchinson; Byron Wood, assistant director, Kansas Department of Economic Development, Topeka; Glenn Gottlob, assistant secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Topeka; John R. Duke-low, Kansas Wheat Commission, Hutchinson; and John Becker, representative of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, Sylvan Grove.

The first thing the Centennial committee did was to announce a contest for a design or logo to identify the year's celebration. The design will be used on letterheads, billboards, publications, and promotional material.

Anyone may enter the contest. Prize for the winning design is \$100, with second and third prizes of \$35 and \$15.

Designs must be a minimum of 8 by 8 inches in size, and should be sent to the State Wheat Centennial Office, 109 East Grand, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063. All entries must be postmarked not later than Sept. 25, 1973.

Evidence and structures of the says 100 years ago when Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat was brought into Kansas have been slipping away with the years. There are several projects to reconstruct or restore some of the early buildings connected with people who were early promoters of the wheat such as Bernhard Warkentin, a Mennonite miller of Halstead and New-

ton.

Of history there is plenty. Turkey Red, the wheat which changed Kansas farming, was brought into Kansas by the Mennonites, fleeing military conscription by a Russian czar.

One of the members of the advisory committee is Dr. Cornelius Krahn, professor emeritus in church history and German, from Bethel college, North Newton. For many years, Dr. Krahn served as director of the Mennonite Historical Library and Archives in North Newton. Today the records of the coming of the Mennonites have been well-preserved in these archives.

Similar information in the state's libraries and museums will be valuable to those participating in the Wheat Centennial.

We would like to see groups all over the state of Kansas — and in other states such as Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming and North and South Dakota, who benefit from the introduction of Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat — look about them to see not only what they have that is of historic value, but also what has grown from those little grains of wheat the Mennonites brought with them when they came to this country seeking freedom. Then when they have located and authenticated their find, the local group needs to shine and refurbish it, and set it out so that people far and near will pay attention.

We're all for a Wheat Centennial. We hope wheat producers make it work.

CO-CHAIRMAN
Harley J. Stucky
2117 North Main
North Newton, Kansas 67117
(316) 283-3029

Kansas Committee
Turkey Red Wheat Centennial

1874 - 1974

OFFICE: 121 South Main - Hillsboro, Kansas 67063
(316) 947-3162

CO-CHAIRMAN
Wesley J. Priebe
Tabor College
Hillsboro, Kansas 67063
(316) 947-3121

Number 1

September, 1973

STATE WHEAT CENTENNIAL BULLETIN

This bulletin is designed to introduce you to the 1974 Turkey Hard Red Winter Wheat Centennial for the state of Kansas. The wheat centennial state office is located at 121 South Main Street, Hillsboro, Kansas.

While the responsibilities and activities of this office are being defined at this time, we are already responding to many inquiries about the goals and purposes of the wheat centennial, the growth of the Kansas wheat industry, and the dates of the celebrations and festivities which will take place during 1974, the centennial year. Future issues of this information sheet will announce the plans for the state-wide activities and the local communities as they become available.

PROCLAMATION
BY THE GOVERNOR

Executive Department
State of Kansas
Topeka, Kansas

TO THE PEOPLE OF KANSAS, GREETINGS:

WHEREAS, Kansas grows twenty percent (20%) of the wheat of the nation and serves as the "Bread Basket of the World"; and

WHEREAS, most of this wheat originated from Turkey Hard Red Winter Wheat — the seeds of which were brought by the Mennonites to the prairies of central Kansas from Southern Russia in 1874; and

WHEREAS, wheat is essential to the health and welfare of millions, not only in the United States, but abroad in many lands; and

WHEREAS, the waving fields of hard red winter wheat continue to contribute substantially to the economy, growth and heritage of the State of Kansas:

NOW, THEREFORE, I ROBERT B. DOCKING, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF KANSAS, do hereby proclaim

1974 as the Turkey Hard Red Winter Wheat Centennial

and encourage every Kansas city or community and citizens to participate in planning and supporting appropriate centennial celebrations and activities during 1974. DONE at the capitol in Topeka under the Great Seal of the State, this 17th day of September, A.D., 1973, BY THE GOVERNOR: Robert B. Docking,
Elwell M. Shanahan
(Secretary of State)

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE TURKEY HARD RED WINTER WHEAT CENTENNIAL

Co-Chairman	Wesley J. Prieb, Hillsboro	
Co-Chairman	Harley J. Stucky, North Newton	
Secretary-Treas.	Robert A. Arnold, Hillsboro	
Member	Dr. Floyd W. Smith, Manhattan	Kansas State University
Member	Tom C. Roberts, Manhattan	Kansas Wheat Improvement Assn.
Member	Byron Wood, Topeka	Kansas Dept. of Economic Dev.
Member	Glenn Gottlob, Topeka	Kansas Department of Agriculture
Member	John R. Dukelow, Hutchinson	Kansas Wheat Commission
Member	John M. Cranor, Hutchinson	Kansas Grain and Feed Dealers
Member	John Becker, Sylvan Grove	Kansas Assn. of Wheat Growers

THE CENTENNIAL OFFICE STAFF

Shelda J. Harms	Office Manager
Lollie J. Hayes	Office Secretary
Raymond F. Wiebe	Research Associate and Public Relations

WHEAT GROWING IN EARLY KANSAS

The story of winter wheat raising in Kansas is older than statehood itself. The Shawnee Indian Mission, in Johnson County, reported sowing 100 acres of winter wheat in 1839. A Sac and Fox Indian farmer sowed 40 acres in 1850 and members of the Osage Tribe were reportedly sowing wheat in 1851. The early white settlers raised both spring and winter wheat of the softer types, together with a greater acreage of corn.

Wheat production increased in Kansas during these early years, along with the population gain, as more land was opened for crops. Corn occupied a major portion of the cropland. In 1875, corn production was still almost six times as large as the wheat yield.

Wheat production statistics were separated into the spring or winter types for the first time in 1870. That year spring wheat production was larger than that for winter wheat. But by 1872, twice as much winter wheat was raised while spring wheat had declined. This trend continued so that by 1886 winter wheat was harvested from 982,000 acres, and spring wheat was harvested from 83,500 acres.

T. C. Henry, a self-styled "winter wheat evangelist", planted 500 acres east of Abilene in 1873. He sowed the Early Red May and Little Red May varieties of soft winter wheat. By 1878 his operation covered 10,000 acres in Dickinson County. (Much of the above information is based on the article by Dr. Homer E. Socolofsky in *MARKETING KANSAS WHEAT*, 1959).

Eight vanguard Mennonite families from the Crimea and Molotschna areas of South Russia settled in Marion County during the summer and fall of 1873. They were: Peter Funk, Jacob Funk, Abraham Quiring, Johann Fast, Heinrich Flaming, Rudolf Riesen, J. J. Funk, and Henry Unruh. In addition, Bernhard Warkentin (a single man) and Peter Wiebe, together with German Mennonites from Summerfield, Illinois, reserved land near Halstead in Harvey County during late 1873.

These small groups of immigrants were reinforced by hundreds of Mennonite families from South Russia during the late summer and fall months of 1874. These 1874 immigrants brought small amounts of many agricultural seeds with them including some Turkey Hard Red Winter Wheat. They settled on Santa Fe Railroad land in Marion, McPherson, Harvey and Reno Counties.

Grain Brought by Mennonites

Kansas Governor Proclaims 1974 Wheat Centennial

HUTCHINSON, KAN.—Governor Robert Docking of Kansas issued a proclamation here early this week designating 1974 as the Turkey Red Wheat Centennial.

Turkey Red, the parent strain of hard winter wheat raised in central states of the Great Plains, was brought to Kansas in 1874 by Mennonite immigrants from Russia. Today Kansas is the leading state in wheat production, accounting for about 20 per cent of the U. S. total.

The centennial year was initiated by the 1973 Kansas Legislature with the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 1014, introduced by Rep. Walter W. Graber of Pretty Prairie.

NAMED IN THE resolution to participate in implementing the centennial are: The Kansas Wheat Commission, the state Department of Agriculture, Kansas State University, the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, the Mennonite conferences, and the Kansas Department of Economic Development.

To plan and coordinate centennial activities, Governor Docking

requested Robert Arnold of Hillsboro to convene a planning session in July, which resulted in the formation of the Kansas Wheat Centennial Committee. Executives of the committee are Harley J. Stucky of North Newton and Wesley Prieb of Hillsboro, co-chairmen, and Robert Arnold, secretary-treasurer.

The committee established a state centennial office in Hillsboro in response to an offer by the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce to provide staff and facilities. The office staff includes Shelda Harms, office manager, and Ray Wiebe, research and public relations consultant.

FOUR PROJECTS have already been initiated through the Hillsboro office:

- A centennial stamp to be issued by the U.S. Postal Service;

- A wheat centennial car tag for 1974;

- A contest to create an official wheat emblem;

- Promoting the designation of part of U.S. Highway 50 from Emporia to the Colorado border as "Turkey Red Wheat Trail."

The committee plans to promote a five-county area in central Kansas as "Turkey Red Country," focusing on historical sites in communities such as Hillsboro, Gessel, Newton, Moundridge, Halstead, and Buhler-Inman area. A trail linking the sites is to be plotted.

THE WHEAT Centennial Committee is cooperating with the Inter-Mennonite Centennial Committee, which is planning a major festival in Wichita's Century II center in October of 1974.

The event is to include a pageant-drama, a male chorus festival, arts and crafts exhibits, music concert, ethnic foods, and celebration through worship. The pageant-drama, now being written by Urie Bender, will later make a tour of various communities.

Steinbach Observance To Mark Arrival of Immigrants in 1874

Steinbach, Man.—July 31, 1974 has been designated "Steinbach Day" for special celebrations commemorating the arrival of the first Mennonites in Canada 100 years ago, according to a declaration of Mayor A. D. Penner.

All Steinbach stores except essential services will be closed. A street will be closed off to provide a place for serving of food and for special events such as old-time games, an evening concert, Low German plays, and a fireworks display.

Residents of the town will be urged to open their homes to visitors.



GOV. ROBERT DOCKING HOLDS WHEAT CENTENNIAL PROCLAMATION
... Turkey Red wheat stalks, loaf of bread, car tag displayed ...

Special travel plans

(Ed. note — Kansas will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the introduction of Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat into the state in 1974. The wheat was introduced here by Russian Mennonites who migrated to escape Russian militarism and nationalism. In a series of copyrighted articles, John F. Schmidt, of the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, traces the history and background of the Mennonite migration.)

John F. Schmidt
Mennonite Library
(Fifth in a series)

One of the assignments given the Mennonite delegates on their investigation tour to America was to negotiate with transportation companies in order to secure favorable rates and concessions on lands these companies had at their disposal.

A group of the delegates did confer with officials of the Northern Pacific Railroad and secured from them proposals which offered land in the Dakotas at an average price of \$3 per acre, with seven years credit, free land for church and school purposes, and favorable transportation rates from New York.

Although this was good as far as it went, American Mennonites soon realized the need of an organized effort in dealing with steamship and rail lines and in gathering and disbursing funds to aid in financing the migration. Before the close of 1873, two committees were formed in the States and one in Canada to deal with the migration. The work of the Mennonite Board of

Guardians, headquartered at Summerfield, Ill., was most effective in aiding the migration to the plains states.

Officers of the Mennonite Board of Guardians were Christian Krehbiel, president; David Goerz, secretary; John Funk, treasurer; and Bernhard Warkentin, business agent. Funk was a publisher at Elkhart, Ind. The other members belonged to the church at Summerfield and in the following year were to migrate to Halstead.

Circulars to Russia

The Board of Guardians set for itself the goal of making it possible for every Mennonite who wished to do so to take advantage of the opportunity to migrate to America. Circulars were at once sent to Russia explaining the mechanics of the plan. The Board solicited gifts and loans of money and in turn made the money available as a gift or loan. Arrangements were immediately made with steamship companies to secure favorable rates and to secure their cooperation in honoring credit certificates issued by the Board which passengers would present in lieu of cash for tickets.

In order to secure special rates for Mennonites, available only to Mennonites, each family was identified by a certificate signed by the elder of the church. The cer-

tificate further stated, "not having the means to pay his way, he may, upon presenting this certificate, apply for the necessary means, to the Aid Committee of Needy Mennonite Emigrants in New York, for the journey from . . . to . . ."

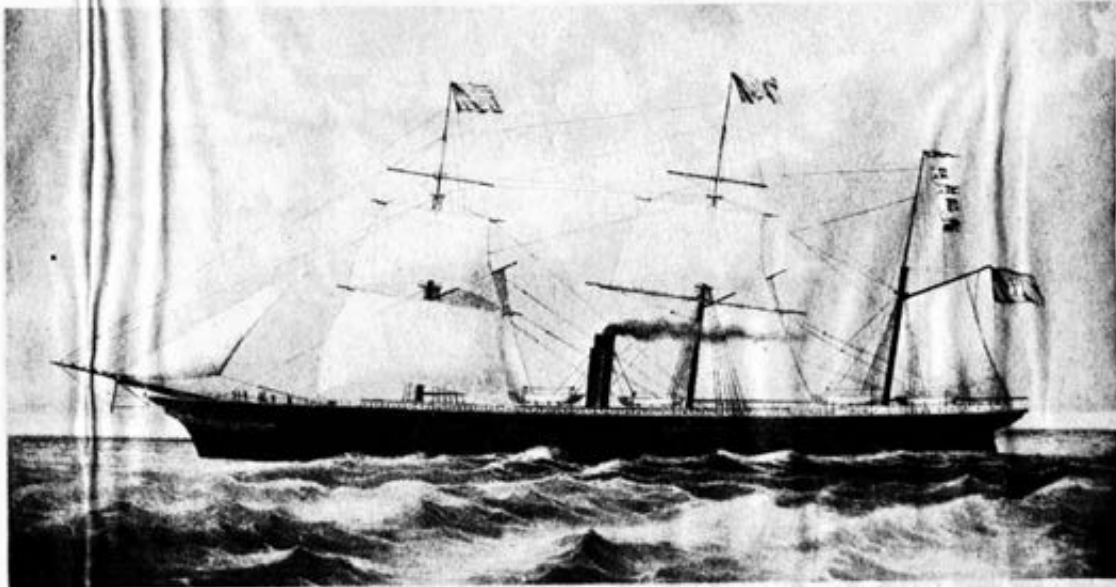
It was expected that those with means would pay their way and help their needy brethren. It was also expected that some would require help from Hamburg while others would need assistance from New York only. Since the estimates of the number migrating was at first placed as high as 50,000, the Board feared that its resources might be consumed too speedily if the poor people were allowed to come in too great numbers.

Help from Quakers

Funds were solicited all over America and Canada. Quakers in England also contributed to the immigration fund. The migrants also formed mutual aid corporations in the various congregations through which those who were able contributed or loaned money to a common treasury for the benefit of those who were destitute.

Another phase of the work of the Board was that of meeting the emigrant ships, giving the emigrants an introduction to America and especially guarding them from being victimized by charlatans and unscrupulous land agents. The astute Bernhard Warkentin discharged this task very ably until he felt

made migration easier



MENNONITES in the Hoffnungsau congregation, who settled near Inman, came to America on the Teutonia. (Photo courtesy The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Va.)

forced to withdraw because of suspicions raised against him in Russia that he has using his father's money to promote the migration.

Steamship and rail lines were vying with each other to get the burgeoning migration business. The Board of Guardians contracted with the Inman Line for ocean transportation while the Executive Aid Committee of Pennsylvania closed a contract with the Red Star Line whose steamers landed at Philadelphia.

J. N. Abbott of the Erie Railway Co. and agent of the Inman Line wrote to Warkentin, April 17, 1874: "I am sorry to learn

that some of the Mennonites in Pennsylvania prefer the Red Star Line. The accounts of the disasters that are befalling their steamers will not be encouraging to your people in Europe to come by that line."

\$35 for passage

Rates were so attractive that passage could be booked from Hamburg to Atchison for \$35.00. In fact, non-Mennonites heard of some of the arrangements offered the Mennonites through the Board of Guardians and offered to pay their way if only they could come under the Mennonite "umbrella."

Once in America the emigrants still needed help. It was

the plan of the Board to find employment among the American Mennonites for all emigrant needing money and able to work. Bernhard Warkentin, for example, carried with him requests from congregations and families for emigrant workers, which he tried to honor when he met the incoming ship. A few young men stopped in Pennsylvania or Indiana to earn money, fell in love with their employer's daughter and never joined the relatives in the West.

Records of the Board show that it expended some \$41,000. However, its aid in advisory counseling and directing was perhaps the most significant part of its work.

Arrival in America

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By John F. Schmidt
Mennonite Library

(Sixth in a series)

A migration sets the stage for high expectations as well as for deeply felt emotions. Some members of a family circle leave and some remain. First impressions are deeply etched. This was particularly true of the Mennonite migration of the 1870's.

In one instance a few families remained to collect the money from the sale of their land. This was necessary because they had not been able to sell their land to fellow Mennonites. One of these writes to friends in America, "Your leaving drew me and my wife to Hochstadt to see the last train off. There we experienced what parting means in this world, as brothers, sisters, relatives and friends took leave."

'A dead silence'

Of the first Sunday after the migration he writes, "There were few people in the church. It was like a dead silence compared to former times. O, when I recall the farewell sermons of Elder Buller and all, yes all, of the other ministers, and now they are all gone, as well as all of my loved ones."

In another letter there are questions, "The wagon you have bought, has it iron axles? The hay you have made, is it like ours that we have in the shed? Is the butter high per pound? Coffee and tea, is it expensive per pound? When we come will there be land for us to be had near you, or will we be as far from you as we lived here?"

Of those who wrote of their first encounters with American ways, none wrote in greater detail or more observantly than H. R. Voth who was nineteen at the time of the migration.

Barracks in Nebraska

For some time the group in which Voth found himself was quartered at Lincoln, Nebraska, in temporary barracks while the leaders investigated railroad lands. "Here," he says, "I had a golden opportunity to put into practical use my English which I had learned in books in Russia and which I cherished very much."

After serving as translator for the immigrant groups at Lincoln, the group later transferred to Topeka, choosing land in Kansas in preference to Nebraska. As Voth tells it,

"At first we were housed in a large empty factory, King's Bridge Shop in Topeka, near the railroad and the river. The entire floor had been covered with new boards and the immigrants were then shown their places, family by family. In the center I once counted 129 kitchen stoves in a row. There the people cooked, baked and did their washing. The railroad supplied the necessary fuel. As soon as one freight car of wood had

didn't end problems



(Photo courtesy Kansas State Historical Society)

OLD KING'S Bridge Building, Topeka, was a temporary shelter for migrating Mennonites.

been consumed, another loaded one would be rolled into the building."

After the settlement areas had been chosen, the Santa Fe proceeded to build immigrant houses at the various locations chosen for settlement. The needs of the Mennonites were announced in the newspapers and soon, Voth says, "our home was the center of a large farmer's market." Here his translation service was again used from early to late. He tells us further,

"On Sundays many visitors from the city and the vicinity usually came to the Kings Bridge Shop to see the immigrants who were encamped as a herd of cattle on the boarded floors. Many were curious about various

things and asked questions but nobody understood them; then they would be shown to the spot where our family camped where they were not a little surprised that I could answer them in English, which no doubt was miserable enough, nevertheless did yield some recognition. It remained unforgettable for this youth when a visitor clasped his shoulder and said, 'O, you will be a senator some time, you will be a senator some time!' a prophecy which until this time (1929) has not been fulfilled."

Voth's reaction was that of a young man with few pressing responsibilities. The response of Elder Jacob A. Wiebe, leader of the Gnadenau group settling

south of Hillsboro, gives us the burden of those with major responsibilities. He had selected land and while waiting in Peabody for the families to follow, he meditated,

"The great responsibility of having selected a place of settlement for so many poor people rested heavily on me. In my great grief I sat down on the steps, I thought of the poor families with their children, we had no provisions, no friend in the new world, the winter was nigh at the door, we were wanting of dwellings, provisions, agricultural implements and seed, everything was high in price, some of ours were old, weak and sick, the future seemed very gloomy, there were also no prospects of

rain, only wind, dusty and very hot, all this fell over me, so I could not help myself but leave my tears free flow."

Wiebe was consoled and told it would rain. On a Sunday morning he took his family in his wagon and rode out to the settlement location.

"I had loaded some lumber and utensils and my family on top. So we rode in the deep grass to the little stake that marked the spot I had chosen. When we reached the same, I stopped, my wife asked me, Why do you stop? I said we are to live here. Then she began to weep."

Wiebe and Voth and the others lived to see happier and more prosperous times.

Threshing wheat with flail revived

(By Karen Sipes)

Recreating the style of nearly a century ago, John Voth, Moundridge, demonstrated recently the process of threshing wheat with a flail.

Made by his grandfather to thresh his first wheat harvest in this country, the flail, as in its initial harvest was again used on wheat grown from seed imported from Russia.

In conjunction with the preparations for the 1974 Kansas Wheat Centennial, Dr. Harley Stucky, North Newton, co chairman of the centennial committee, began his efforts to obtain Russian wheat in 1971 with letters to the Dept of State and the Russian Embassy.

Dr. Stucky, who is also executive director of the Tri-College Centennial Committee and president of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Assn., received only discouragement at first.

Told in February, 1972, that a quarantine for flag smut made importation seed impossible, Stucky however, eventually, received a shipping label from the Agriculture Dept. allowing him to continue his efforts.

Designating President Nixon's visit to Moscow in May of that year as the ice-breaker, Dr. Stucky finally received 2 varieties, a total of about 13 pounds, of Russian hard winter wheat from the All Union Institute of Plant Husbandry, Leningrad, USSR.

With the boxes which had contained the wheat at this feat, Dr. Stucky said shipment was made directly from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

Clearly emblazoned with Nieman-Marcus insignia, the boxes, Dr. Stucky surmised, evidently came from the famous Texas department store.

He described the wheat as having unusually large kernels and being exceptionally productive. "It is the type of wheat which is grown in the Ukraine," Dr. Stucky noted, "and represents the best in Russian hard winter wheat."

While a wagon loaded with the harvest from that seed waited to be flailed, Stucky, Voth, and Herbert Stucky, Voth's cousin discussed the tool's history and use as told them by their fathers and grandfather.

Confident that the wheat which he had planted on 4 acres purchased from a homesteader near Moundridge would yield a crop, their grandfather made the tool that winter, the grandsons related.

Having arrived at Moundridge in October, 1874, the elder Stucky and his 3 sons planted the wheat with wooden peg harrow and a team of mules on the land which had already been plowed by the homesteader.

Made from 2 pieces of wood purchased from a family at Halstead and leather bought at Lehman Hardware, Newton, the flail was used throughout

the following winter to thresh the 80 bushels harvested from that first crop, the heirs reported.

Telling how the flail works, Herbert Stucky explained that the impact knocks the grain from the head. The straw is then lifted with a fork. Wind blows the chaff away from the kernels, he said, as it is dumped from a scoop.

Recalling earlier days, Voth remembered threshing rye with the same flail. "We borrowed it from grandfather," he said.

Also used in that first harvest was a scythe with a cradle which, Voth noted, is also still in the family.

Other links to those first settlers also remain.

In addition to wheat, immigrants brought with them from their mother country other favorite seeds and plants.

"Our grandmother told us she brought sugar peas, beans and poppy seeds with her," Voth added.

A peony plant, brought to this country by his wife's elders, still grows on the home place east of Newton, Herbert Stucky revealed.

He also has kept alive, with help and advice from a nursery in Topeka, an apricot tree which had been brought to this country by his grandfather.

The past, in some cases, still lives in the present.



Threshing wheat with flail revived

(By Karen Sipes)

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Flail expert

Using a flail made by his grandfather in the winter of 1874, John Voth, Moundridge, demonstrates the process on wheat grown from seed imported from Russia. (Photo by Karen Sipes)

Demonstrates forefathers' method of harvesting wheat by hand

Moundridge Journal
11 October 1973

Recently John D. Voth, Moundridge, demonstrated the wheat threshing process employed by area Mennonite immigrants almost one hundred years ago. The demonstration took place on land owned by Dr. Harley J. Stucky, North Newton.

The harvest tool used in the demonstration was a flail, made from two pieces of wood and leather, and constructed by Mr. Voth's grandfather in 1874. It was first used to harvest 80 bushels of wheat from a 4 acre plot located on land purchased from a homesteader near Moundridge that same year.

The wheat harvested in the demonstration was Russian hard red winter wheat similar to seed brought to this country by the Mennonite immigrants. It was obtained from the All Union Institute of Plant Husbandry in Leningrad, USSR, due to the efforts of Dr. Harley Stucky, North Newton. Dr. Stucky is co-chairman of the 1974 Kansas Wheat Centennial Committee. The quest for the Russian wheat began in 1971, and approximately thirteen pounds of 2 different varieties were finally received by Dr. Stucky after lengthy negotiations with the U.S. State Department and the Russian Embassy.

Herbert Stucky, Voth's cousin, also of Moundridge, discussed the tool's use and history, as related by their respective fathers and grandfather. He advised that the flail is used to knock the grain

from the wheat heads. The straw is then lifted with a fork, and the wind blows the chaff away from the kernels as they are dumped with a grain scoop.

Stucky also told of a peony plant brought to this country by

his wife's elders, which is still "alive and well" on the family home place near Newton, and an apricot tree brought over by his grandfather, which he has managed to keep alive through the years.



Flail expert

Using a flail made by his grandfather in the winter of 1874, John Voth, Moundridge, demonstrates the process on wheat grown from seed imported from Russia. (Photo by Karen Sipes)

Mennonite history

Santa Fe agent lured emigrants to Kansas

(Ed. note — Kansas will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the introduction of Turkey Red Hard Winter Wheat into the state in 1974. The wheat was introduced here by Russian Mennonites who migrated to escape Russian militarism and nationalism. In a series of copyrighted articles, John F. Schmidt, of the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, traces the history and background of the Mennonite migration.)

(C) By John F. Schmidt

Mennonite Library
(Seventh in a series)

The Mennonite migration of the 1870s materialized at a moment in American history when land similar to the steppes of the Ukraine was most available.

In 1862, Congress had passed the Homestead Act to hasten settlement of the vast areas of prairie land beyond the Mississippi.

A policy of granting land to railroads crossing the plains was to yield the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe nearly three million acres. The land lay in alternate sections ten miles on either side of the railroad right-of-way. Since no land was left for the Santa Fe east of Emporia other land was granted so that the Santa Fe received approximately a forty mile swath between Cottonwood Falls and Spearville.

Catalyst needed

Since the sale of this vast acreage of land and the Men-

nonite migration seemed to coincide, only a catalyst was needed to trigger the proper reaction and fill the void in central Kansas.

This catalyst appeared in the Santa Fe land agent, especially in the person of C. B. (Carl Bernhard) Schmidt who in January of 1873 went to work for the Santa Fe Railroad. He had come to America from Germany in 1864 and in 1868 became a grocer in Lawrence, then later an implement salesman.

As a correspondent for several German newspapers he knew of people who wished to migrate to America. He had, in fact, enjoyed correspondence with Cornelius Jansen and when some of the Mennonite delegates visited Kansas, Schmidt accompanied them as General Foreign Agent of the Santa Fe.

No doubt Schmidt learned a lesson from the first sale of land by the Santa Fe in the summer of 1873. A. E. Touzalin, Land Commissioner of the Santa Fe, learned of two Funk brothers, Peter and Jacob, lately from the Crimea and now looking for land. Christian Krehbiel sensed the importance of the occasion and advised Touzalin to sell the brothers some good land at a low price in order to get the first Mennonite settlers from Russia on Santa Fe land. Touzalin's successor, A. S. Johnson, took

the Funk brothers and Krehbiel to some lands in central Kansas where the brothers chose land near Marion Center.

Bargaining session

In closing the deal at Topeka, the Funks were offered two sections at \$4.00 an acre. They counter-offered at \$2.00 an acre. In the bargaining session that followed Krehbiel reminded W. B. Strong, president of the Santa Fe, that his company would do better to make the Funks a present of the two sections in question rather than let the men go to Nebraska, Minnesota or elsewhere for they were sure to be joined by considerable numbers of other immigrants. In the end the brothers got the two sections for \$2.50 an acre and paid for the land in cash. This did help to turn the migration tide toward Kansas.

Touzalin meanwhile shifted from the Santa Fe to the Burlington and Missouri in Nebraska while Johnson hired C. B. Schmidt as foreign immigration commissioner. Schmidt and Touzalin were now to confront each other in bidding for the Mennonites. A large group was quartered at Lincoln and was offered land in Nebraska along the Burlington and Missouri (later the C. B. and Q.). However, the Mennonites had also promised Schmidt that no decision on land would be made until they had seen Kansas. A committee soon returned from Kansas and announced its decision — Kansas.

Touzalin then made offer after offer for the Burlington to all of which Schmidt replied that the Santa Fe would do the same. The price of land was drastically reduced — Schmidt countering each offer. When Touzalin offered the land free Schmidt said nothing. He now saw that the Mennonites would come to Kansas even though they would have to pay something for the land. Later Schmidt admitted that his instructions had been: "You bring the Mennonites at any cost."

Schmidt was now in his heyday. On October 15, 1874, the Topeka Commonwealth reported:

"One of the largest bona-fide land sales ever made in Kansas, perhaps in America, has just been concluded by the Santa Fe Railroad Co. with the community of Russian Mennonites who landed in New York in September . . .

The land purchases amount to about 100,000 acres."

It was the year of the big grasshopper invasion but the Mennonites outstayed the grasshoppers and continued to buy land. Their terms still seem most generous: \$3.50 an acre, seven per cent down with the balance in eleven years with seven per cent interest.

In February, 1875, Johnson sent Schmidt to Russia to recruit more Mennonites for Kansas. Among the Mennonite villages of the Molotschna Colony he was received most cordially. He shared letters and news from friends and relatives in America. Soon, however, he discovered that his activities were not appreciated in Russia and he left secretly and hastily. More Mennonites came to America in 1875 and the succeeding years. By 1885 some 12,000 had come to America with the majority of these settling in Kansas.

Mennonite 'villages' were spread over miles

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(C) By John F. Schmidt
Mennonite Library
(Eighth in a series)

The first home many Mennonites enjoyed in Kansas was the communal home of an immigrant house erected for them by the Santa Fe. Hastily built to provide shelter until their own houses could be built, the communal homes were long narrow buildings without the conveniences that we associate with a home and without even the minimum of privacy.

The women were kept busy with the laundry, baling and taking care of the children while the men spent their days at the locations chosen for their future homes erecting the shelters which were to be their homes in the early years.

In some communities, notably in Alexanderwohl, the present Goessel community, Mennonites continued to think of the village pattern as the only viable one for a community. From six to ten houses would front a one mile street. Since Mennonites had bought alternate sections of land, the village pattern was often interrupted by a mile of no houses.

Village names used for generations in Prussia and Russia were now used in Kansas: Blumenort (Place of Flowers), Gnadenfeld (Field of Grace), Gnadenenthal (Valley of Grace), Hochfeld (High Field), and Blumenfeld (Flower Field).

An advantage of the village style of life was that the village herd boy could take all cattle out to the common pastures for grazing. Only a few years after the arrival of the Mennonites did barb wire become common.

Common roof

The houses of the Mennonites also were often patterned after the old country style in that house and barn were sheltered under the same roof. Noble Prentis, in a contemporary account describes the house of El-

der Jacob A. Wiebe, "He took us over the structure, a maze of small rooms and passages, the stable being under the same roof with the people, and the granaries over all, the great wheat stacks being located at the back door."

This type of structure was taken by the Mennonites from the Netherlands to Prussia, then to Russia. It may still be found among some of the conservative Mennonites in Canada, Mexico and Paraguay.

Upon closer inspection one could find variations in structure and materials used. Houses in the Gnadenau village, for example, resembled the contemporary "A" house with the ends made of prairie sod, cut in brick form and dried in the sun. The roof, which started from the ground, was composed of poles thatched with grass.



GNADENAU VILLAGE, in 1887, was typical of Mennonite communities.

Mud insulation

While many of the other Mennonite houses seemed to be of standard frame construction they were insulated with dried mud or adobe bricks from the floor to the ceiling and placed between the studding of the walls. When the Marion Reservoir was built some of these adobe houses were demolished to make way for the reservoir.

A feature of the early Mennonite homes which attracted a great deal of attention was the "Mennonite Grass Burner." A traveler of those days, J. D. Butler, had fallen in with some of the Mennonite deputies looking for land. In a treeless prairie he was prompted to ask, "what will you do for fuel?" and the answer was, "Look around. We see it ready to our hands in every straw stack and on every prairie. Grass and straw are what we, and our fathers before us, have always used."

The Mennonite stove was placed in the center of the house so the heat circulating through its brick chambers would heat all rooms of the house. Smaller ovens for baking and cooking were

conveniently located and a large brick chimney sometimes doubled as a smokehouse to cure pork.

The stove was heated up twice a day during cold weather with about two armfuls of straw or a proportional amount of dry manure. Noble Prentis, Topeka journalist, suggested that the Mennonite stove, "once thoroughly heated with light straw, will retain its warmth longer than young love itself."

W. J. Groat of the Marion County Record, gives us his impression of the interior of a Mennonite house,

"The furniture consists principally of bedding, of which they seem to have an ample supply, and of the warmest material. Nearly every family has an old-fashioned German time-piece, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, the weights and pendulum of polished brass, and apparently heavy enough to run a small engine; but we noticed they all kept the same time. They have as yet but little use for the improved chair system as they use their trunks and chests for that purpose."

In 1882, seven years after he had first visited the Mennonites in 1875, Noble Prentis again visited the Mennonite communities north of Newton. He now noticed that they had given up the village system with each farm being entirely independent. The village names, however, still attached themselves to small communities. Prentis noticed the trees:

"The most surprising thing about these places is the growth of the trees. I left bare prairie, I returned to find a score of miniature forests in sight from any point of view . . . several acres around every house were set in hedges, orchards, lanes and alleys of trees—trees in lines, trees in groups, and trees all alone."

After visiting several Mennonites and enjoying their hospitality he concluded, "I have never seen elsewhere such a picture of agricultural prosperity. If anyone has not yet made up his mind as to the possibilities of Kansas agriculture, I recommend a visit to the Kansas settlements."

Dedication Sunday at Moundridge site

MOUNDRIDGE — The Hopefield Mennonite Church will transfer land 3¼ miles west and a mile north of here to the

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association during a special 11 a.m. service, Sunday. The Association plans to build

a centennial marker on the site to commemorate the arrival of Mennonites in this area. The fate of an existing monument erected in 1943 is uncertain at this time.

"This is sort of the center of the Mennonite community," said Harley Stucky, president of the Association. "We will erect a rather big, rather impressive monument there, about 40 feet tall."

Dedication of the site will occur during the service and Dr. E. G. Kaufman, president emeritus of Bethel College, North Newton, will give a brief sketch of Mennonite history.

The Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association includes the Eden Mennonite, First Mennonite of Christian and Hopefield congregations, Moundridge; the First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie; Bethany and Zion Mennonite congregations, Kingman; and First Mennonite Church, McPherson and Burns.

It also includes the Salem and Salem-Zion Swiss Volhynians and their descendents in South Dakota.

Hutchinson News
24 October 1973



(News photo by Stan Thiessen)

THIS MONUMENT near Moundridge will soon be replaced by a larger monument to commemorate the arrival of Mennonites in this area.

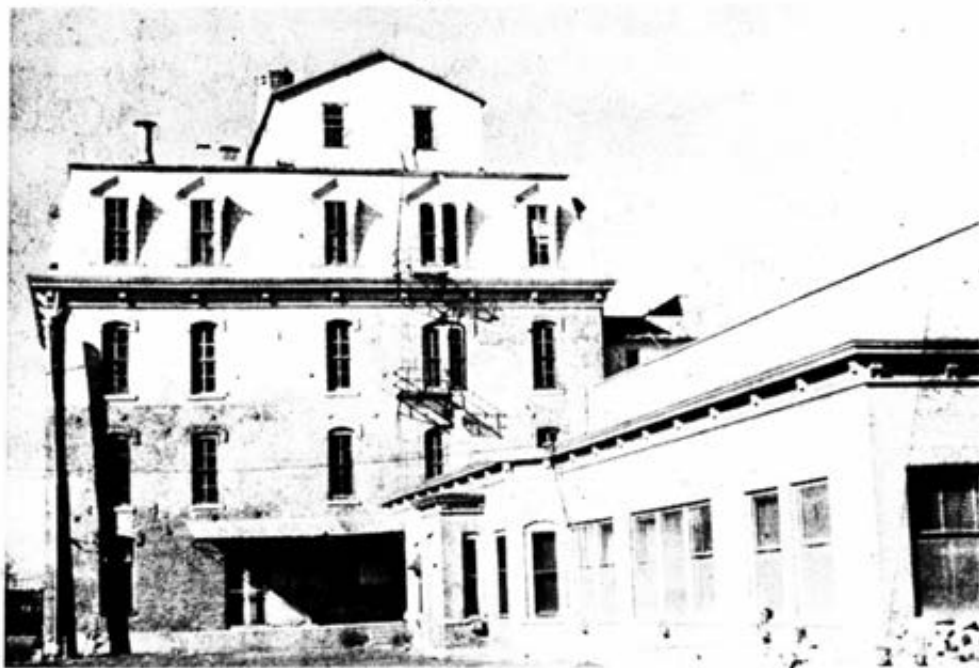
Until Turkey Red came, mills lacked ample wheat

By John F. Schmidt

Mennonite Library
(Last in a series)

The year 1974 is the centennial year of the introduction to Kansas of Red Turkey hard winter wheat. Historians on the subject do point out that some French settlers in Marion County were growing hard winter wheat prior to the coming of the Mennonites. However, only very small plots of hard winter wheat were grown and Hugh Coultis, reporting for the Kansas Board of Agriculture in 1905, reports that Bernhard Warkentin, who had built a water-power mill on the Little Arkansas river at Halstead, was compelled to ship wheat from Atchison to supply his mill.

Before many years had passed, Warkentin had a good supply of hard wheat available from the farmers of central Kansas — Marion, Harvey, Reno, and McPherson Counties. There are many stories, some of which have passed into the realm of folklore, telling of how the Mennonite children were occupied in the spring of



WARKENTIN MILL ground imported wheat from Russia.

1874 in hand picking the best wheat kernels to be placed in a small jug or bag for the trip to America. We do know that, being agriculturists, Mennonites did expect to continue their life style in the New World and accordingly

brought along a great variety of seeds as well as tools and even some farm implements.

Flowers, trees

In transplanting a way of life, Mennonites took it for granted that they would need vegetable gardens, flowers, and trees about their farmyards. Noble Prentiss comments on the well-kept flower gardens he found among the Mennonites in 1875. Visitors also commented on the delicious watermelons grown on practically every farm, the seeds of which had been brought from Russia. The Mennonites of Swiss background, living in the Moundridge and Pretty Prairie areas, would have certainly brought along poppy seeds. Small plots of poppies are still being grown to supply the seeds for the local traditional pastry, the poppyseed roll.

Among the trees brought from Russia were the Russian olive and the mulberry, the latter especially for the leaves which were fed to the silk worms.

Since they brought along lowers, vegetables, trees and the implements to cultivate their crops, the Mennonite farmers would naturally have thought about the necessity to bring along wheat, the great commercial crop grown along the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

Mills in Ukraine

The hard red winter wheat had become popular in South Russia in the middle of the 19th century, so that by 1874 Mennonites exported large quantities of wheat from the seaport of Berdsk and enterprising Mennonites, including the father of Bernhard Warkentin, had established flour mills in the Ukraine to mill the high quality wheat. Before long, Mennonites had established im-



BETHEL COLLEGE threshing stone.

plement factories and were producing wheat-farming implements.

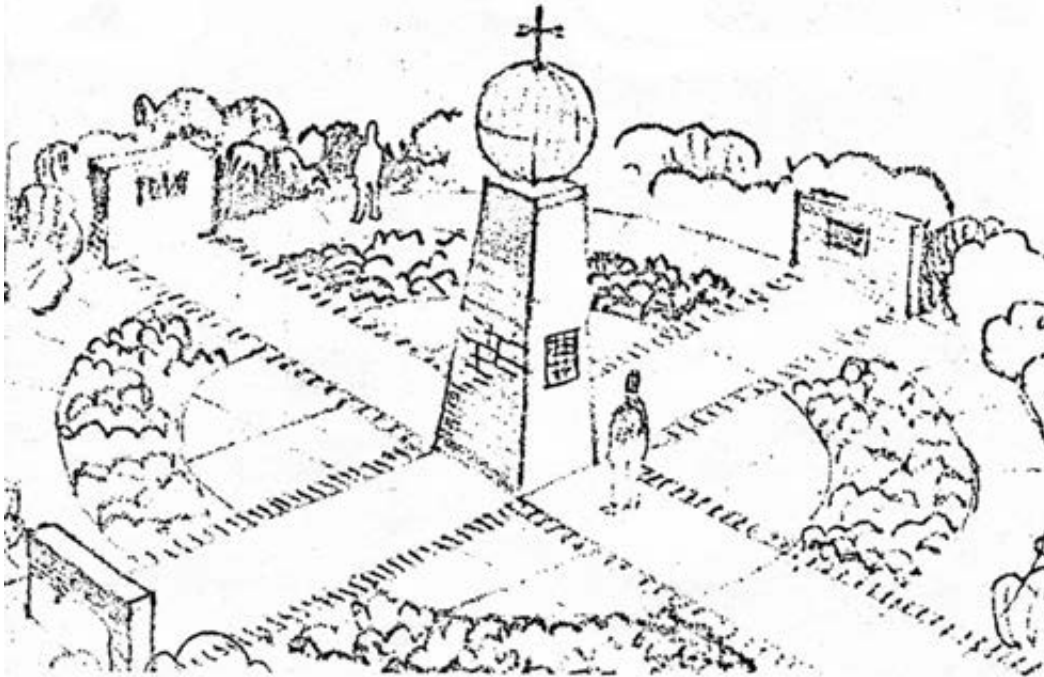
Mark A. Carleton, cerealist in U. S. Department of Agriculture, stated in the USDA Yearbook of 1914 about the Mennonites: "Each family brought over a bushel or more of Crimean wheat for seed, and from this seed was grown the first crop of Kansas hard winter wheat."

Spread slowly

The good qualities of Red Turkey wheat were not generally appreciated and its spread at first was slow. The contribution of Bernhard Warkentin, Mennonite miller at Halstead, is most significant in popularizing the growth and use of this wheat. In 1877 Warkentin changed from water power to steam and from stone burrs to steel rolling mills. In 1886, after he had established his milling interests in Newton, Warkentin imported several thousand bushels of wheat from Russia. Carleton, armed with letters of introduction from Warkentin to the Mennonite farmers in the Ukraine, also imported many varieties of Russian hard winter wheat in 1898. Later, Warkentin imported more of this wheat, firmly establishing Kansas as the leader in the plains states in the production of hard winter wheat.

The Mennonite threshing stone, quarried and hewn from solid rock and now the emblem of Bethel College, symbolizes this Mennonite relationship with wheat. Very likely never used to thresh wheat, the threshing stone still symbolizes pioneer integrity and new world aspirations.

December 6, 1973
SWISS MENNONITE CULTURAL & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWS



PROGRESS REPORT

The stone work on the Commemorative Marker is complete. Now we need landscaping, walkways, globe and cross, lights, plaques, gravel and grass and culvert for entry.

Congratulations are due to the Recipe Book Committee, particularly Mrs. Alice Kaufman, McPherson and Mrs. Ruby Stucky, Murdock and the rest of the committee, and all those who contributed. The 192 page "Centennial Treasury of Recipes" is available for Christmas giving. This will make a beautiful Christmas gift and long remain a memorabilia of good food--\$5.00. Also Martin Schrag's "European History of Swiss Mennonites from Volhynia" is at the press with a publication date of January 15. A Tri-College publication "The Centennial History of the Coming of the Russian Mennonites" is also available for Christmas giving.

Our South Dakota brethren are planning Centennial activities on May 26, July 4,5,6,7 and on Thanksgiving Day, 1974.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR--1974

Jan. 13 - 7:30 p.m.--Panel review "Reasons for Leaving Russia" at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge. Panel will consist of members from the Swiss Mennonite churches.

Feb. 3 - 2:30 p.m.--Annual meeting of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural & Historical Association at Hopefield Mennonite Church. Also a meal (?) at 5:30 p.m. Slide presentation at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 16--Play sponsored by Fine Arts Committee--dialect play "Von Russland auf Americka" or other one-act plays.

Mar. 10--Western District Centennial Sunday. All congregations to plan and develop their own programs.

Mar. 23 & 30 - 7:30 p.m.--A chronological style revue of garments wore at time of immigration to U.S. to present time. Sponsored by Committee on Clothing. To be given at Pretty Prairie Grade School on the 23rd and at Moundridge High School Auditorium on the 30th.

June 2--Field Day. Visit to Alta Mill and various plots of Russian and Turkey Red Winter Wheat.

June 16-23?--During this period the Turkey Red Wheat planted on the Hopefield Church ground-- $4\frac{1}{2}$ west and $\frac{1}{2}$ north--will be cut with a binder, shocked and hopefully some of it hauled into storage for safekeeping.

Aug. 30--Evening parade and other activities at Pretty Prairie, perhaps other special activities in Moundridge, Newton, and Halstead vicinity.

Aug. 31--At the site of the Commemorative Memorial Marker activities all day will include a young people's walk from Peabody to Moundridge; parade of horses, buggies, wagons, and saddle club at Moundridge and Pretty Prairie the day before; an old-fashioned threshing bee; "City of Richmond" docking service; traditional meal; walking plow contest; demonstration of old grinder using horsepower; and pony rides, wagon rides, and horse pulling contest.

Sept. 1 (Sunday)--9:30 a.m.--Worship services. All congregations invited to a special worship service. Traditional meal at noon.

2:30 p.m.--A special dedicatory service of the Commemorative Marker.

4:30 p.m.--A style revue will be presented.

5:30 p.m.--Traditional Swiss Volhynian foods offered.

7:30 p.m.--Fine Arts Committee will sponsor some one-act plays.

Sept. 2--Miscellaneous activities, including tours to some of the original farms, Peabody Cemetery, Halstead Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Alta Mill, Mennonite churches of the Swiss Volhynians, Adobe House at Hillsboro, Wheat Palace at Goesel, Alexanderwohl Church, Gnadenau Village, possibly Lindsborg Mill. Activities would probably be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Oct. 11-13--Mennonite Festival at Century II with special programs in evening and on Sunday. The Western District Conference will meet in joint session with other Mennonite conferences on Friday and Saturday.

Thanksgiving, 1974--"The Messiah" given at Pretty Prairie and Eden Church, Moundridge by the Moundridge and Pretty Prairie combined choruses.

HONOR ROLL

We recognize in submitting this Honor Roll that some individuals whose financial resources are limited have given generously and sacrificially of themselves in thought, time and energy in the promotion of Centennial activities. The following Honor Roll reflects the kind of brochure which will be prepared for the annual meeting in February and again for the Centennial days, August 31-Sept. 2, 1974. For want of space, this list does not include those who are entitled to membership by virtue of the gift of \$10.00 to \$49.99.

Boosters:

(\$50.00-99.99)

Elmer H. Goering, Moundridge
Marvin E. Goering, Moundridge
Wm. Juhnke, McPherson
Linda Kaufman, Moundridge
Viola Kaufman, Moundridge

Varden Loganbill, Mdridge
David Stucky, Burns
Herbert E. Stucky, Mdridge
Jonas L. Stucky, McPherson
Willard W. Stucky, Mdridge

Centennial Givers:

(\$100.00-499.99)

Anonymous--for services rendered
Mrs. Chris (Marie) Goering, Moundridge
Eric Goering, Moundridge