

Mennonite Swedenborgians

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The immigration of Mennonites from Russia to North America in the 1870s was accompanied by considerable religious turmoil. The middle decades of the century had witnessed pietist-inspired revivals in their communities, giving rise to the Mennonite Brethren (1860) and the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren (1869) and widely affecting the older Kleine Gemeinde as well as the main Flemish-Frisian church. The political changes of the 1860s added to the internal stress and precipitated the emigration of about a third of the Mennonite community.

Three of the groups emigrated as entire communities more or less consciously committed to maintaining or recapturing their original vision of faithfulness. All three quickly experienced geographical and ecclesial separation in their new environment. The united Bergthal Colony and Church initially lost a small part of its group to Minnesota and then separated geographically in Manitoba with a large body leaving the East Reserve in the early years of settlement to relocate west of the Red River. The already fractured Kleine Gemeinde also chose Manitoba, but a portion settled in Nebraska, and a part of the Manitoba group settled at Scratching River, some distance from the main body on the East Reserve. The Volhynian Ostroger divided between Dakota territory and Kansas.

By the early 1890s a group of "progressive" Bergthal Church members on the West Reserve together with Elder Johann Funk separated from the main body over issues of education and other aspects of accommodation to the American scene. The

Kleine Gemeinde experienced an even more drastic division in the early 1880s, when about half of its membership together with Elder Peter Toews left to follow John Holdeman in quest of the "true church." A large portion of the Kansas group of Volhynian Ostroger followed the same route.

In the midst of these larger divisions, individuals and family units found themselves unsatisfied with either faction. Those in or near towns had the option of joining the local congregation of another church. That, however, meant largely losing one's Mennonite identity, even in a German-speaking group like the Gretna (Manitoba) Lutheran church. Swedenborgianism (officially, Church of the New Jerusalem) seemed to offer the possibility of a new religious orientation without having to leave the Mennonite sociological community. This meant, however, that they had to found their own new congregations and provide leadership in and for them. They did this so successfully that the Western Canada Conference and the Kansas Association of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem were still essentially "Mennonite" in 1918.

At least two of their Canadian leaders, Klaas Peters of Waldeck and Gerhard Ens of Rosthern, played important roles in the larger Mennonite community as immigration and land agents and in Mennonite delegations to Ottawa in connection with World War I and the post-war immigration from the USSR. In these ventures they worked side by side with Rev. David Toews, Rev. Benjamin Ewert, and other recognized Mennonite leaders.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), son of a Swedish Lutheran pastor, had a distinguished scientific career from his graduation at Uppsala University in 1709 until his unusual religious experiences beginning in 1743. From age 57 until his death at 84 he claimed to have entered "the world of spirits" regularly, sometimes daily. In the resulting 30 volumes of his religious writings Swedenborg expounded the implications of his "theory of correspondences," the idea that everything in the natural world has its counterpart in the spiritual world. According to this, the Bible is to be understood neither as a literal description of actual happenings nor as mythology, but rather by reference to the spiritual correspondences of scriptural details. Swedenborg's entry into the spiritual world enabled him to discover these correspondences.

Most of the theology resulting from this reading of the Bible is quite orthodox. But his basic conviction that two principles, love and wisdom, constitute the essence of God led Swedenborg to explain the problem of evil wholly by the freedom with which God endowed humans. As love itself, God is not reconciled to us in the atonement; rather, Christ came to enable humans to do that which through sin they had almost lost all power of doing: to shun evil and do the Lord's will in life. Those who persist in doing evil will go to hell (they are not sent there by God) where their suffering will consist of having to live with others who persisted in their evil while on earth.

While for Swedenborg the "essential church" was constituted by those with a genuine love of truth and goodness (and hence "invisible"), he did not preclude the possibility of instituting a specific New Church in order to incorporate the new

truths which the church in the past was not ready to receive. Twelve years after his death this happened in the founding of the Church of the New Jerusalem in England. The first North American congregation was founded in 1790.

Beginnings among Mennonites

Kansas. The teachings of Swedenborg seem to have entered the Russian Mennonite communities via the Holdeman revivals or in parallel with them. How did John Holdeman, a Swiss Mennonite schismatic from Ohio, come to evangelize among Russian Mennonite immigrants in Kansas and Manitoba? In the 1870s emigration from Russia to America, the large congregation from the Ostrog area of Volhynia divided. One portion with Elder Tobias A. Unruh settled in South Dakota while the other portion chose Kansas. To help settle the latter group, leaderless without their elder and economically poor, a Kansas Relief Committee was formed. Neither the other Russian Mennonite immigrant groups nor the American Swiss Mennonites there seemed able to provide an adequate spiritual ministry to these Ostrogers. In that situation David S. Holdeman, a member of the Relief Committee and a leader in the Hesston congregation of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, informed his nephew John, still living in Ohio, that these people needed help.¹

John Holdeman (1832-1900), the self-styled evangelist who had founded the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, in 1859, made his first visit to these "desperate Poles" in the fall of 1878. The response to his ministry was overwhelming, with seventy people rebaptized by him that winter, giving birth to a new congregation in Canton, Kansas. The group grew rapidly. As families moved to other parts of Kansas, they took their new faith with them.

Holdeman was not the only "outsider" who saw in the immigrant Mennonites a mission field. The German Synod of the Swedenborgian Church, centred in St. Louis where the local pastor C.A. Nussbaum edited the *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, supplied the newcomers with missionary propaganda.² As a result, the first Mennonite Swedenborgian congregation was organized in 1888 among the Ostroger at Pawnee Rock, Kansas.³ Under the leadership of Benjamin P. Unruh, who was ordained in 1890,⁴ the congregation grew from an initial membership of 15 adults to 60 communicants and 55 children by 1900.⁵ The movement expanded to Pretty Prairie, where another "ex-Mennonite New Church Society" under the leadership of August Huxmann welcomed Nussbaum for four days of missionary work in 1901.⁶

Manitoba. Holdeman's success among these Russian Mennonites, coupled with difficulties in his own Swiss Mennonite community in Ohio, led him to devote much of his energy to mission work among the new immigrants.⁷ He renewed his contact with Elder Peter Toews of the Kleine Gemeinde in Manitoba, with whom he had initiated correspondence earlier.⁸ Some preliminary visits between the two men led Holdeman, together with his close associate, the ex-Amish Rev. Marcus Seiler, to a major mission to Manitoba in the winter of 1881-82. The result of this mission was the conversion and rebaptism of about half of the Kleine Gemeinde

membership together with Elder Toews to form the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (Holdeman) in Manitoba.⁹ Almost from the outset, discipline problems which were reported in the Manitoba Holdeman church seemed to be related to the teachings of Swedenborg.¹⁰ Seiler returned to help deal with the problem. Noting the appeal which Swedenborgianism had for their new church members and other immigrant Mennonites, Holdeman agreed that a statement should be written against it and allowed Seiler to take on the assignment. The more Seiler read in Swedenborg's works, the more attractive he found them. By 1887 he himself was definitely interested in Swedenborg's teachings and urged Elder Toews to investigate them thoroughly.¹¹ When Holdeman became aware of this, he excommunicated Seiler and himself wrote the refutation in 1889.¹²

Not long after these dramatic events in the Kleine Gemeinde, Holdeman's influence also penetrated the Bergthal Church in the Gretna area on the West Reserve. A small Church of God in Christ, Mennonite congregation there was served by Rev. John D. Dueck in the mid-1880s.¹³ An important link between the East Reserve Kleine Gemeinde and West Reserve Bergthal communities is found in a group of seven "Old Colony" families, likely from Borosenko, who came to Manitoba with the first Kleine Gemeinde group in 1874 and initially settled with Bergthal Colony people in the East Reserve village of Chortitz.¹⁴ While they joined the Bergthal Church and relocated to the West Reserve village of Edenburg some time during 1878-1881,¹⁵ they no doubt retained some ties with Kleine Gemeinde friends whom they had come to know in Borosenko or on the ship. Two of them, Abram Klassen and Johann Nickel, soon joined the Holdeman church.¹⁶

It was this small Holdeman congregation which provided Seiler with an opportunity to come to the Gretna area in 1887 on a preaching mission. He made a strong impact on some in his Mennonite audience. Klaas Peters, school teacher at Edenburg since the year before,¹⁷ describes it as follows:

Marcus Seiler used Swedenborg's explanation of the inner meaning of the Word of God; and whenever he (emphasis on the "he") preached, the whole congregation was very attentive.¹⁸ When he was asked where he had learned of such profound expositions, he answered that the time was at hand when the Lord was establishing His New Church on earth, and that the doctrines of this new church had been written down in a number of books by a man named Emanuel Swedenborg.¹⁹

Seiler then gave some New Church literature to interested persons among his listeners. They included Abram Klassen, Peter Reddekopp, and Wilhelm Vogt of the Borosenko group; Holdeman Church members Jacob Wiens and Abram Guenther;²⁰ and David Loewen, Jacob Niebuhr and Heinrich Wiebe.²¹ Peters' account continues:

We read these books carefully, passing them around from one to another, until a number of us around Gretna were well acquainted with them. ... Such was the introduction of the truths of the New Church to Manitoba; and the spreading of them could no longer be stifled. ...

We spoke often and much to our friends about the new doctrines, and gave them books to read, and certain of them accepted the new truth. Among them were Jacob Zacharias

... and Mr. Peter Reddekopp.²²

In 1898 Adolph Bartels, a minister of the New Church from Chicago, conducted meetings in various southern Manitoba localities, including the school building at Edenburg near Gretna. Here two families, who had been adherents of Swedenborg's teaching for some time, joined the New Church and had their small children baptized.²³ Three years later the General Convention of the New Jerusalem sent Bartels to help the Manitoba adherents organize formally. Klaas Peters remembers the name chosen to be something like "The Rosenfeld New Church Society."²⁴ In 1901 Rev. Benjamin P. Unruh of Pawnee Rock visited the newly organized group and supervised the election of Klaas Peters (1855-1932) and Peter Hiebert (1854-1921) of Rosenfeld as leaders of church services.²⁵ Both were ordained as ministers of the New Church by the Rev. S.S. Seward, president of the General Convention and the Rev. Adolph Röder on 23 July 1902.²⁶

This newly organized society (congregation) soon lost most of its charter members and leaders through migration. A "society" was still listed for Gretna in 1918, but without a leader. A similar group in Plum Coulee was led by Jacob Loepky.²⁷ Most of the core group members migrated farther west about this time, taking with them their new religious enthusiasm and beginning New Church societies where they resettled.

As in most *Kleine Gemeinde* villages in Manitoba, a Holdeman congregation emerged in Rosenort (Morris) during the revival of 1881-82. But as the Holdeman historian sadly observes, this "little flock was soon to experience its time of sifting when Satan in the form of an angel of light, through false doctrine, caused several members to leave the fold and accept the doctrines of another faith."²⁸ Among the first to join the New Church here were the families of John H. Enns, David H. Enns, and Heinrich Eidse.²⁹ It is believed that John Enns became part of the New Church during his years at the Mennonite Educational Institute in Gretna where he began studies in the 1900-1901 school year.³⁰ At the request of the Western Canadian Conference he was ordained as minister in 1913³¹ and served the group until his move to Texas in the 1920s.³²

Saskatchewan. Abram Klassen's brother, Peter, was introduced to Swedenborg's writings on his arrival in Manitoba from Russia in 1890. When he moved to the Rosthern district two years later, he found himself no longer able to function in the Mennonite church but not yet ready to join the New Church.³³ Other Mennonite Swedenborgians from Manitoba joined him in the Rosthern area about 1894.³⁴ The town's founder and most prominent citizen, Gerhard Ens, came to the new teaching in dramatic fashion. Peter Vogt³⁵ visited the new settlement one winter in the 1890s. As he was putting on his fur coat to leave for home, Ens noticed some reading material in Vogt's pocket and inquired as to its nature. Vogt gave him a New Church tract (the one which explained the floating iron of 2 Kings 6:6!) and had a convert. Ens, it is said, "delighted to relate how he walked a mile in a big blizzard to his intimate friend, Mr. A.H. Friesen, to share his new found treasure with him."³⁶

In 1898 Rev. Adolph Bartels helped the group of half a dozen families to organize formally.³⁷ Claassen and Ens, the latter as a lay minister, gave leadership

to this congregation. In 1901 Claassen wrote a "missionary work . . . addressed especially to members of the Mennonite Church." Consisting mostly of "extracts from the Writings," it "places the doctrines of the Old Church in sharp contrast with the Doctrines of the New," according to a review in the Swedenborgian periodical, *New Church Life*.³⁸ Later that year a note in the same paper reported that a travelling missionary had sold thirty-six copies of the book among Russian Mennonites in Pretty Prairie, Kansas.³⁹

In spite of not having a resident ordained minister, the Rosthern group quickly established a flourishing Sunday school and by 1901 erected the first church building in the town of Rosthern.⁴⁰ At least one reader of the *Mennotische Rundschau* lamented the fact that Mennonites also had contributed financially to the building and thereby "share in the guilt of spreading these heresies."⁴¹ By 1913 the building was too small, so the group purchased a larger one from the Mennonite church and sold theirs to the Seventh Day Adventists.

Wilhelm Wiebe and Heinrich Bergen from Manitoba appear among the earliest Swedenborgian members at Hague.⁴² Bergen and his father-in-law, Jacob Friesen, founded the Hague Printing Shop, which published a good deal of New Church literature. The arrival of Abram Klassen from Edenburg later in 1901 provided local leadership, giving the Hague society independent status and helping it to grow. Bergen was listed as the leader in 1918, with Cornelius P. Unruh also serving as an "authorized preacher" since 1913.⁴³ In that year the Hague-Rosthern area had 22 families totalling some 150 persons, young and old, affiliated with the New Church.⁴⁴

Rev. Peter Hiebert moved to Chaplin shortly after his ordination at Rosenfeld in 1902. Here he homesteaded a couple of miles north of town and served as minister of the local Swedenborgian church until his retirement about 1918.⁴⁵

When Jacob Zacharias began to study the New Church doctrines in Rosenfeld, he felt that he was no longer welcome in his Mennonite church. Some of his siblings refused to eat in the same room with him and his wife. So in 1906 he moved to Herbert where his family formed the nucleus of a New Church society, here regarded as "an offshoot of the Mennonite Church."⁴⁶ As owners of a prosperous farm and the Herbert mill, the Zacharias family was instrumental in the construction of a meeting place for the New Church in 1915.⁴⁷ Their son, John E. Zacharias, who was ordained as a Swedenborgian minister in the same year, served as president of its Western Canadian Conference from 1916 into the 1930s.⁴⁸

Rev. John M. Friesen, ordained as minister in the Bergthal Mennonite Church at Altona in 1895, moved to Herbert in 1909. A former inspector of Mennonite public schools in Manitoba (1906-1909), he taught in Herbert, was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1912, and associated himself with the New Church. During the early 1920s he preached at the annual conference sessions several years and served as its vice-president 1923-1925. Rev. John E. Zacharias conducted his funeral service in 1930.⁴⁹

The Klaas Peters family left Didsbury in 1907 to become founding pioneers of Waldeck. They immediately formed the nucleus of a New Church society here with Peters as its minister.⁵⁰

Alberta. Klaas Peters, who had been involved in immigration work since 1888, moved to Didsbury about 1903. The Wilhelm Reddekopp family from Oregon also relocated there in May of that year.⁵¹ The small Swedenborgian group started by them at nearby Sunny Slope was served by Peter Peters, a son of Klaas, in the late 1950s.⁵²

British Columbia. Peter W. Harms and family were among the first New Church people to settle in Renata, British Columbia, arriving from Waldheim in 1910.⁵³ Harms had been an early Swedenborgian lay leader in the Rosthern area, serving as the first secretary-treasurer of the Western Canadian Conference in 1907.⁵⁴ His wife taught Sunday School in Renata. From 1914 the Church was served by visiting ministers. While Rev. John E. Zacharias, Herbert, took over this visiting role in 1922, the Western Canadian Conference recommended the following year that Harms be authorized to officiate at marriages and funerals.⁵⁵

In 1907 the scattered groups on the Canadian prairies were organized into "The Western Canadian German New Church Conference" at Herbert.⁵⁶ In 1917 "German" was deleted from the name. At the same session the Conference decided to join the "General Convention of the New Jerusalem."⁵⁷

Oregon. Peter Reddekopp moved to Oregon in 1889 and attempted, together with the family of his brother Wilhelm, to start a Swedenborgian church among Mennonite settlers there.⁵⁸ Even with occasional missionary visits as early as 1894, the small group struggled.⁵⁹ Shortly after Wilhelm's wife died in 1902, he moved to Didsbury with his twelve children.⁶⁰ Peter Reddekopp's appeal for New Church people to settle in Oregon⁶¹ seems not to have produced results, and he also soon left.

Mennonite Church Response

Initially these adherents of Swedenborg's teachings remained members of their respective Mennonite churches, although Klaas Peters writes that at first they "were scorned by many and sarcastically called 'Swedenbergers'."⁶² It was not until ten years after Seiler's visit to Gretna that the Bergthaler Church leadership began to take disciplinary action. In May 1897 the *Lehrdienst* (ministerial council) requested Elder Johann Funk to call Peters to its next meeting to discuss with him "his stance toward the teachings of the New Church."⁶³ No minutes of that meeting are extant and the membership records indicate simply that Klaas and Katharina Peters withdrew in 1897 to transfer to the Swedenborgians.⁶⁴ Two years later the Mennonite Brethren Church in Manitoba began disciplinary action with respect to Peter Hiebert, leading to his excommunication.⁶⁵

Publicly Mennonite leaders repudiated Swedenborgian teachings. John Holdeman regularly advertised his pamphlet, *A Brief Refutation of Swedenborg's Assumption of his Greatness and his Heretical Teachings*, beginning in the first issue of *Botschafter der Wahrheit* in 1897. Benjamin Ewert reported in 1898 that in Bartels' services in the Gretna area "the teachings and views of the Protestant church were pictured as against reason and in error, and occasionally derided and made fun of."⁶⁶ Ewert was prepared to recognize the existence of various religious views, but

found it almost incomprehensible that a person born and raised as a Mennonite could be brought to the point of having his small children baptized.

Around the turn of the century a series of warnings and rebuttals of the New Church appeared in the Mennonite papers. In 1900, for example, the *Mennonitische Rundschau* reprinted a news item about the New Church in Pawnee Rock, Kansas. It was followed by a stern editorial note: "Swedenborgianism and Mennonite teachings are far apart. Any Swedenborgian who claims to be Mennonite is guilty of a lie."⁶⁷ In 1902 the *Mennonitische Rundschau* and *Herold der Wahrheit* ran a series on "Swedenborg and Holy Scripture," in which many of his teachings were systematically refuted by the quotation of relevant biblical texts.⁶⁸

As late as 1912 the *Bundesbote* published a two-part article entitled "Swedenborg's heresy in the light of Scripture."⁶⁹ It is clear that Mennonite leaders held that one could not be simultaneously Mennonite and Swedenborgian.

Yet in most communities relations between "Mennonite Swedenborgians" and other Mennonites appear to have been good. From Manitoba Klaas Peters reported in 1903 that many of the Mennonite ministers were friendly, associated freely with the Swedenborgians and were very interested in discussing "the new revelations."⁷⁰ His business enterprises in Waldeck, those of Zacharias in Herbert, Klassen, Hamm and Wiebe in Hague, and Ens in Rosthern thrived in largely Mennonite contexts. Swedenborgians contributed disproportionately to community leadership. Peters and A. H. Klassen served their respective municipalities as reeve and Ens was twice elected to the provincial legislature. All three as well as C.P. Unruh and J.M. Friesen were at one time justices of the peace. Since such roles were still shunned by Mennonites, it was convenient to have them filled by "Mennonite" Swedenborgians.⁷¹ Immediately after the troubled years of World War I, this normally convenient arrangement created considerable tension when Unruh as justice of the peace was forced to fine Mennonite parents whose children failed to comply with the School Attendance Act.⁷²

Mennonite Swedenborgians also gave significant leadership within the larger Mennonite community. Klaas Peters was a member of several Mennonite delegations to Ottawa during World War I, helping to work out exemption from military service. Gerhard Ens was a key member of the Mennonite Board of Colonization in the 1920s using his political experience and connections to re-open Canada to Mennonite immigrants from the USSR.⁷³ His friend, the prominent Mennonite leader, Elder David Toews, officiated at his second wedding in 1936,⁷⁴ and both Elder J.J. Thiessen and Rev. J.G. Rempel spoke at his funeral in 1952.⁷⁵ The latter emphasized the strong ties Ens had maintained with Mennonites in spite of his membership in the New Church. "He loved his people," said Rempel. Klaas Peters stressed the same point when he maintained in 1918 that he was still "just as good a Mennonite as I ever was" in spite of reading and believing Swedenborg's writings.⁷⁶

This affinity continued into the second generation. When John Zacharias, son of Herbert's pioneering Swedenborgian family, felt called to ministry, he returned to Manitoba to begin his studies at the Mennonite Educational Institute in Altona.⁷⁷

Henry Peters, son of Klaas, shortly after his graduation from theological school and ordination in the New Church turned down several invitations to a salaried position as pastor. Explaining this in his "Autobiography" at age 72 he wrote: "The reason was my old Mennonite idea that a minister should earn his living like other people and donate his work to the Lord." So he returned to the farm, determined to make his living there and to "preach on Sunday as all Mennonite ministers had done for generations."⁷⁸ During the tensions of 1918 he wrote his Swedenborgian mentor that "nearly all our New Church brethren here [at Waldeck] take the position that we are still Mennonites, although we have accepted a new faith The old doctrine of non-resistance still outweighs the new doctrine of defense of the 'greater neighbor' and I shall never attempt to take this tenet away from the present generation."⁷⁹ This was confirmed at the 1919 annual meeting of the Conference when a motion "that we as New Church people do not support, not taking up arms" was defeated.⁸⁰

David Toews, describing the Rosthern area churches in 1907, seems clearly to consider the Swedenborgian congregation as among the "Mennonite" groups, in contrast to Catholic, Lutheran and *Engländer* "belonging to various denominations."⁸¹ Rev. Jacob J. Balzer, General Conference Mennonite Home Mission worker, reported in 1912 that in southern Saskatchewan the General Conference Mennonite Church was surrounded by "allerhand irrthümliche Richtungen," including Swedenborgians who had recently again baptized a few Mennonite children. But he also noted without surprise that they faithfully attended all his Bible lectures in the Mennonite church.⁸² As late as 1931 the New Church continued to use the services of the Mennonite *Waisenamt*.⁸³

Perhaps Arnold Dyck's *Bua* was not so wrong when he called them "*onse Schwedenboarja*."⁸⁴

New Church Response

Leadership of the New Jerusalem Church was much more uneasy with the idea of a hyphenated Swedenborgianism. This was a problem in Kansas, whose Association in 1918 still consisted of only the two "Mennonite" congregations of Pawnee Rock and Pretty Prairie, and on the Canadian prairies, where the Western Canada Conference consisted of the following "German" societies: Rosenort (Rev. John H. Enns), Plum Coulee (Jacob Loeppky), and Gretna, in Manitoba; and Chaplin (Rev. Peter Hiebert), Hague (Heinrich Bergen), Herbert (Rev. John E. Zacharias), Rosthern (Gerhard Ens), and Waldeck (Rev. Klaas Peters) in Saskatchewan.⁸⁵ This "Mennonite" Western Canada Conference had 229 members while the Swedenborgian church in the whole of the rest of Canada consisted of only four societies with two ministers and 209 members.⁸⁶

The differing stances of the two groups with respect to war brought the tension into sharp focus in 1918. Rev. John Enns reported from Rosenort that the prejudice against them had been diminishing, "but just now the New Church's participation in the war is a great offense to the Mennonites."⁸⁷

In Saskatchewan "many of the New Church people, former Mennonites," were dissatisfied that they were unable to obtain certificates of immunity from

conscriptio, according to a report in *New Church Life* by Rev. F.E. Waelchli.

To remedy this condition, the Rev. Klaas Peters travelled to Ottawa, and there made certain representations to the Canadian Government, as a result of which he, too, was authorized to issue such certificates. What was the nature of the representations made, appears from the papers he issues to those who desire them, wherein he declares that he is "a duly ordained and authorized minister of the New Jerusalem Community of the Denomination of Christians called Mennonites."⁸⁸

Waelchli strongly condemned this action. He believed that many of those who obtained such certificates from Peters "did so without realizing the seriousness of the step taken—the denial of the Church involved." He doubted that the "Mennonite" Swedenborgian leaders themselves recognized this seriousness: "When this is brought home to them—if *their leaders will do this*—it may be that they will deeply regret what they have done, and duly repent."⁸⁹

This report sparked a forthright editorial under the heading "New Jerusalem Mennonites." This kind of "conglomeration" might be expected if "new receivers of the Heavenly Doctrines" were not sufficiently instructed on the distinctives of the New Church "and led to ultimate their separation from the old sects by baptism." Klaas Peters' linking of the two groups was flatly rejected.

That the name of the New Church should thus be coupled with a sect of the vastate [*sic*] church is a grievous thing, and we cannot suffer it to pass without a solemn protest. For it is an utterly unwarranted use of the name of the New Church, and a gross misrepresentation of its true character.⁹⁰

Klaas Peters' trial and conviction in November 1918 for unlawfully issuing military exemption certificates is well known.⁹¹ During the proceedings Peters "tried to impress on the court that the New Church is only a section of the Mennonites, and that all the members of it consider themselves Mennonites."⁹² At least one of his co-religionists disagreed with that claim. Gerhard Ens testified that the two churches "have nothing whatever to do with each other, and a man cannot belong to the New Jerusalem and be a Mennonite at the same time."⁹³

This interpretation was more in keeping with the official New Church stance than that of Peters. The editor of *New Church Life* understood Swedenborg's teaching to require the rebaptism of all who converted to it from other churches which were "Christian in name only." Those who rejected this did "not realize what 'baptism involves and effects,' namely, that it involves separation from their old sect in faith and life, thus in *name*, and that it effects an actual insertion among true Christians in the spiritual world."⁹⁴

At its founding convention in Herbert in 1907, the Western Canada Conference had addressed this issue of baptism. Klaas Peters had argued that just as the Jewish church had the outward symbol of circumcision, so the Christian church had the symbol of baptism. But the New Church had no general outward symbol, only the inward sign of "a righteous love for the Word of God and a life according to it." The Conference had apparently accepted this interpretation and adopted a resolution "that a baptism performed by an ordained Christian minister would be accepted, and re-baptism for New Church membership was not required."⁹⁵ The more liberal

“General Convention” apparently found this stance acceptable, which the more conservative faction, the “General Church,” did not.⁹⁶

The Swedenborgian Attraction

We have suggested that a significant reason for all of these Mennonites’ leaving their church to pioneer New Church congregations in their North American setting lay in their weak attachment to the fractured church communities with which they settled. Frontier conditions further loosened the ties. Peter Claassen reflects strongly a dissatisfaction with the Mennonite church, both here and in Russia.⁹⁷

But there were also positive attractions that drew them to the New Church. Clarence Hiebert suggests that the significance of revelations in Swedenborg’s teaching, the emphasis on being the “true church,” and “a serious attempt to be more disciplined (perfectionism tendency)” were similar to Holdeman’s emphases and tended to attract the same type of people.⁹⁸ Haury thinks that in Pawnee Rock the latter two were especially significant.⁹⁹

Among Canadian converts to the New Church a strong emphasis recurs on the help Swedenborg offered in understanding the Bible. The deep impression made on the Gretna group by Marcus Seiler’s “profound expositions” of Scripture has been noted earlier as has Gerhard Ens’ conversion through an expository tract. In a similar vein Peter Epp wrote in 1901 that “all the spiritual books which I have read (and they are many) did not come close to Swedenborg’s writings in opening up the Holy Scriptures so clearly for me.”¹⁰⁰ Klaas Peters was attracted by some Swedenborgian doctrines—no physical resurrection, judgement according to works, a hell under God’s control—but most strongly by the “spiritual sense of the Word.”¹⁰¹

Clearly there was strong commitment to the New Church on the part of those who joined. An impressive number became ministers. In the Western Canada Conference this continued strongly into the second and third generations.¹⁰²

Small groups of descendants of these “Mennonite Swedenborgians” continue to meet regularly, if infrequently, generally served by a visiting minister (*Reiseprediger*). The groups in Winnipeg and Roblin, Manitoba, for example, meet less than once a month when the Saskatoon-based missionary comes to lead services; Rosthern about biweekly. Mennonite neighbours may be quite unaware that their acquaintance in the same town belongs to the Church of the New Jerusalem.

Notes

¹Clarence Hiebert, *The Holdeman People. The Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, 1859-1969* (South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1973), 105-16.

²*New Church Life* (1901):628.

³Hiebert, 116-22; David A. Haury, *Prairie People. A History of the Western District Conference* (Newton: Faith and Life Press, 1982?), 182-83. Grant Seibert, *History of the Berghthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kansas* (Great Bend, 1976), 45.

⁴*Journal of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem*, (hereafter *Journal GCNJ*) (1918):150.

⁵*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 6 June 1900; *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 45 (May 1900):76.

⁶*New Church Life* (1901):628. At least two Mennonite ministers, Tobias T. Dirks and Heinrich Siebert, became active in these two New Church groups in Kansas. *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 45 (April 1900):40; 48 (April 1903):85-86, 97-98.

⁷Hiebert, 203.

⁸Hiebert, 135-43. Hiebert, p. 136, indicates that Holdeman may already have corresponded with Toews before the latter came to Canada.

⁹John M. Penner, *A Concise History of the Church of God*, 3rd ed. (Hesston: Gospel Publishers, 1967), 100.

¹⁰February and July 1883. Hiebert, 534.

¹¹Hiebert, 535.

¹²Hiebert, 204-205; 187; 535-36; 571. Johannes Holdeman, *Eine kurze Wiederlegung von Schwedenborg's unschriftmäßiger Behauptung* (Jasper, Mo.: By the author, 1889) and John Holdeman, *A Brief Refutation of Swedenborg's Unscriptural Assumption* (N.d.).

¹³Penner, 85-86; *Histories of the Congregations of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite* (Moundridge, Kansas and Ste. Anne, Manitoba: Gospel Publishers, 1975), 40-41.

¹⁴Isaac Braun, Peter Esau, Abram Klassen, Johann Nickel, Johann Quiring, Peter Reddekopp, and Wilhelm Vogt. Orlando Hiebert, "Chortitz," in John Dyck, ed., *Working Papers of the East Reserve Village Histories 1874-1910* (Steinbach: Hanover Steinbach Historical Society, 1990), 45-46, 198; Quebec Passenger Lists, *S.S. Austrian* 1874, 2-3, Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives (MHCA), microfilm #45.

John Dyck, *Oberschulze Jakob Peters (1813-1884)* (Steinbach: Hanover Steinbach Historical Society, 1990), 60, identifies Vogt as living in Borosenko.

¹⁵Until 1894 "Berghthal Church" refers to the entire church community which came from Berghthal Colony in Russia. Later the East Reserve portion is known as Chortitzer, while the West Reserve group divided into Sommerfelder and Berghthaler.

In the Chortitzer Church Register, 1874, they appear in unbroken sequence, A-21 to A-27 (MHCA microfilm #184, fiche #12); in the Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, they are 1A-15 to 1A-21. (MHCA microfilm #393, fiche #1). Dyck, 132-33, indicates that the last three of them left Chortitz in April of 1881.

John Rempel and William Harms, *Atlas of Original Mennonite Villages, Homesteaders and Some Burial Plots of the Mennonite West Reserve, Manitoba* (Altona, 1990), 17, show all except Quiring acquiring quarter sections of land in Edenburg.

¹⁶Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1A-16 and 1A-18 show Johann and Maria (Quiring) Nickel and Abram and Barbara (Quiring) Klassen as "bei die Holdemans Brüder gegangen."

¹⁷Leonard Doell, "Klaas Peters (1855-1932) A Biography," in Klaas Peters, *The Berghthaler Mennonites* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1988), 46. The Peters family arrived from Berghthal Colony

in 1875, settling in Grünthal on the East Reserve, and relocating to the Gretna area in 1881. Ibid., 43-45. Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1B-126.

¹⁸*Kleinegemeinde* Elder Peter Toews reports even more dramatically on the charismatic power of Seiler: "Once, while Mark Seiler was present in our house and 14-15 of us were gathered together, he prayed, and I received a special power which shook my whole body Later I learned that others who were present had, more or less, experienced something of the same special power and joy." Quoted in Hiebert, 146.

¹⁹Quoted in translation by his son, Rev. Peter Peters in "New Church Worthies," p. 1, written about 1948 using statements sent to him by his father while Peter was in theological studies. Unpublished manuscript, copy in MHCA.

²⁰Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register: Wiens 1A-141; Günther 1B-157. Günther was also from Edenburg; Wiens from nearby Silberfeld.

²¹Klaas Peters, mentions Wiens, Klassen and Vogt. Rev. John E. Zacharias and Rev. Henry W. Reddekopp, "The New Church in Western Canada," unpublished manuscript, n.d., add Reddekopp. Peter Claassen, "Gleanings from New Church History. Development of the New Church at Rosthern, Saskatchewan," *New Church Life*, 1921:566, adds Rev. Heinrich Wiebe, Loewen, Guenther, and Wiebuhr [sic].

Loewen and Niebuhr were from Rosenfeld (Reinland Colony Records, Book 9; MHCA microfilm #44), and still members of the Bergthal Church (Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register: Loewen 1A-224; Niebuhr 1A-223).

Heinrich Wiebe, Edenburg, remained a Bergthal Church minister until his death in 1897. (Bergthal Church Register, MHCA vol. 718, 1:24.) But Peter Claassen (*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 45 (October 1899):11) found him very helpful during his own first encounter with Swedenborg's writings in 1890, and claims that Wiebe "für diese Lehre gestimmt war."

²²Peters, "New Church Worthies," 2. Jacob Zacharias, like Niebuhr and Loewen, lived in Rosenfeld (Reinland Colony Records, Book 9). From the Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1B-143, it appears that he was a member there until his move to Herbert; the last entry is from November 1899.

²³Benjamin Ewert, Edenburg, 31 March 1898, report in *Christlicher Bundesbote*, 14 April 1898.

²⁴Peters, "New Church Worthies," 2.

²⁵*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 47 (January 1902):36-37.

Hiebert lived in the village of Neuhoftnung (Reinland Colony Settlement Records, Book 9; Henry J. Siemens et al, ed., *The Story of Johan and Helena (Toews) Hiebert and Descendants* (N.p., 1983), 310.) When he moved to Oregon in early 1890 (*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 February 1890) he was apparently still a member of the Sommerfelder Church (Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1B-154). By 1899 he was back in Manitoba, living in the Lowe Farm area and apparently in the Mennonite Brethren Church (Siemens, 55).

Peters may have less formally been chosen as minister earlier ("New Church Worthies," 3).

²⁶*New Church Life* (1902):54. Peter Peters, 3. A detailed report, including the questions asked of the two candidates and the charge given is found in *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 47 (August 1902):92-93.

A somewhat different version of the beginnings of this congregation is given by Röder, President of the German Synod, in the report cited above, p. 93:

In einem Meer buchstäblichen Lippenbekenntnisses schwimmen schon viele Neukircheninseln, denn die Mennoniten halten sich starr und fest am Buchstaben und gehen ohne gewaltigen Antrieb selten oder nie darüber hinaus. Aber Br. Johann B. Klaassen, der durch Jakob Böhme und später durch Emanuel Swedenborg auf das Geistige aufmerksam gemacht wurde und dasselbe glauben und lieben lernte, behielt diese Erkenntniß und diese Liebe nicht für sich; er theilte sie andern mit und nach und nach ward es uns gestattet, solche Freunde wie die Brüder Peters, Hiebert, Zacharias, Harder, Wiebe

und viele Andere unter die Bekenner und Anhänger der Neuen Kirche zu bewillkommen.

²⁷*Journal GCNJ* (1918):172. In another listing (p. 147) and in the Conference president's report (pp. 106-07) neither of these groups is mentioned.

²⁸*Histories of the Congregations*, 238. Hiebert, 534, thinks that this refers to the intrusion of Swedenborgian teachings already in 1883.

²⁹Tom Eidse, interview with Adolf Ens, Richer, Manitoba, 20 November 1991.

³⁰"Namen der Schüler," Mennonite Collegiate Institute, 75th Anniversary Yearbook, 1889-1965.

³¹*Minute #7 of the annual meeting of "The Western Canadian German New Church Conference," Rosthern, 5-6 November 1912, MHCA; Journal GCNJ* (1918):150.

³²Note in "N.C. History" folder of Tom and Edna Eidse; copy in MHCA. Enns served the Western Canadian Conference as vice-president 1920-1923. See annual meeting minutes.

³³*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 45 (October 1899):11.

³⁴Claasen, "Gleanings," *New Church Life* (1921):567.

³⁵Likely the oldest son of Wilhelm and Anna (Quiring) Vogt of Edenburg. Peter, married to Maria Friesen in 1882, probably remained in Manitoba when his parents moved to Oregon in the 1880s (Bergthaler Church Register, 2-237). Together with the Peter Hiebert family, the Peter Vogts emigrated to Oregon in 1890. *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 February 1890.

³⁶Zacharias and Reddekopp, 1.

³⁷Henry W. Reddekopp, "The Rosthern Epilogue, History of the Western Canada Conference," 3. *Old and New Furrows. The Story of Rosthern* (Rosthern: Rosthern Historical Society, [1977]), 147; Jake Friesen, "A History of the Church of the New Jerusalem," *Saskatchewan Valley News*, 12 May 1937.

³⁸*Der Wahre Glaube und die Glaubensform der alten Kirche in neukirchlicher Beleuchtung, zusammengestellt von Peter Claassen* (St. Louis: 1901, 246 pp.), *New Church Life* (1901):604. See also notes in *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 47 (September 1901):4, and last page of *Beilage*; 47 (November 1901):18; 47 (March 1902):52, 56.

³⁹*New Church Life* (1901):628; *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 47 (October 1901):15.

⁴⁰Reports in *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 28 June 1899 and 28 February 1901; *Old and New Furrows*, 147. "Homesteading at Rosthern," in Lawrence Klippenstein and Julius Toews, ed., *Mennonite Memories. Settling in Western Canada* (Winnipeg: Centennial Publications, 1977), 183, gives the date as 1897.

⁴¹*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 28 February 1901.

⁴²Both were present at the 1901 annual meeting of the Rosthern-Hague Society. (Report by Peter Claassen, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 13 March 1901). Wiebe left the Manitoba Bergthaler in 1898 to join the Swedenborgian church. (Bergthaler Church Register No. 1, p. 334 #200.) See *Old and New Furrows*, 602-08, for a brief account of Wiebe's story.

⁴³*Journal GCNJ* (1918):172, 151, 153. Unruh came to Canada from South Dakota in 1896 through the influence of immigration agent Gerhard Ens.

⁴⁴F.E. Waelchli, *New Church Life* (1913):621, gives the following breakdown: Rosthern - 7 families; Hague - 8; Laird - 6; Waldheim - 1. *Old and New Furrows*, 606, reports 25 families.

⁴⁵Siemens, 54-55; *Journal GCNJ* (1918):106-07; 172; *New Church Life* (1913):621; (1918):645.

⁴⁶June Siemens Buhr, et al, comp., *Bittersweet Years. The Herbert Story* (Herbert: [Town Council, 1987]), 38.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 43, 47, 148.

⁴⁸*Journal GCNJ* (1918):147, 151; Western Canadian Conference, annual meeting minutes.

Jacob Zacharias was president from 1911-1916.

⁴⁹Henry J. Gerbrandt, *Adventure in Faith* (Altona: D.W. Friesen, 1970), 155-56; J.G. Rempel, *Fünfzig Jahre Konferenzbestrebungen, 1902-1952 (Konferenz der Mennoniten in Kanada, n.d.)*, 70-72, 22; annual meeting minutes, Western Canadian Conference; obituary in *Herbert Herald*, 23 October 1930.

⁵⁰Peters, "New Church Worthies," 4; Doell, 71.

⁵¹*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 48 (May 1903):101.

⁵²Doell, 48, 61, 73; *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Sunny Slope," by J.G. Rempel.

⁵³Lawrence Klippenstein, "Early Mennonites in B.C.: Renata, 1907-1965," *Mennonite Historian*, VII (September 1981), 1-2; Bergthaler Church Register, 1-208; report, Augustus M. Pearman, Provincial Constable, Naskup, B.C., 5 June 1918 to Capt. F.R. Glover, Chief Inspector, Dominion Police, Vancouver, in PAC, RG 24, vol. 115, HQ 7168-1; copy in MHCA vol. 2615.

⁵⁴Henry W. Reddekopp, "The Western Canada New-Church Mission Field," mimeographed manuscript, n.d., copy in MHCA; minute 4.B, organization meeting of the Western Canadian New Church Conference, Herbert, 1 July 1907.

⁵⁵Mary Warkentin and Rose Ann Rohn, *The Story of Renata 1887-1965* (N.p., 1965), 26; minute #5, annual meeting, Western Canadian Conference, Rosthern, 8-9 July 1923.

⁵⁶Zacharias and Reddekopp, 1; Peters, "New Church Worthies," 3; minutes, 1 July 1907.

⁵⁷Minutes #5 and 8, annual meeting, Herbert, 8-9 July 1917.

⁵⁸*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 1 January 1890. The Wilhelm Vogts also moved to Oregon (Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1A-19), but after the death of his wife in 1895 Vogt returned to Manitoba, married in Alt-Bergthal, and joined the Bergthaler Church (Bergthaler Church Register, 1-110, 111, 341).

⁵⁹*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 11 July 1894, 1, reports Reddekopp in Louisville, Oregon, thanking the New Church synod for helping to send a missionary to his area. He also wishes the synod would conduct a mission in Manitoba: "Es ist dort ein großes Feld und nur wenige Arbeiter."

⁶⁰Obituary of Maria (Neufeld) Reddekopp in *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 47 (August 1902):95; 48 (May 1903):101.

⁶¹*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 48 (October 1902):17.

⁶²Peters, "New Church Worthies," 2.

⁶³Minutes of the Manitoba Bergthaler Ministerial, 8 May 1897, #4, MHCA, vol. 727. There are no minutes for the date on which Peters was to have appeared before the ministerial, and no record of any formal discipline.

Peters appears to have been part of the small group that remained with Elder Johan Funk when the Bergthal church on the West Reserve split over the education issue. The Sommerfelder Mennonite Church Register, 1B-126, lists his family as "ausgestorben," the last entry being in 1884.

⁶⁴Bergthal Church Register, 1-57, and 208, #107-08: Austritt: "1897 wegen Übertritt zum Swedenborgianismus."

⁶⁵*Gemeindestunde* (Brotherhood) Minutes of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba, Grossweide, 10 June 1899, #2, and 15 July 1899, #2. Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies Archives, Winnipeg. Apparently Hiebert was a member of the Mennonite Brethren church on his return to Manitoba from Oregon. His brother Philip Hiebert wrote in 1902: "Peter belongs to the Brethren Church but was excommunicated because of erroneous ideas. That is, he is under Swedenburg's influence." (Siemens, 130; cf., 55)

⁶⁶"die Lehren und Anschauungen der protestantischen Kirche als irrtümlich und vernunftswidrig dargestellt, und mitunter noch verspöttet und lächerlich gemacht." *Christlicher Bundesbote*, 14 April 1898.

⁶⁷*Mennonitische Rundschau*, 6 June 1900, 2. An editorial critical of New Church methods of "smuggling themselves" into Mennonite communities on page 4 drew a lengthy response from Peter Claassen in *Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 45 (August 1900):89-92. This in turn provoked a sharp rebuke by an anonymous "Augenzeuge" from Rosthern, lecturing Claassen on Matth. 7:1-5. *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 14 September 1900.

⁶⁸22 October 1902, 2; 29 October, 2-3; 5 November, 2-3; 12 November, 3. This brochure by Rev. N.C. Coosby of Olney, Ill., was translated from the English for the *Rundschau*. See also 6 June 1900, 4; 22 February 1899, 8.

⁶⁹*Christlicher Bundesbote*, 29 February and 7 March 1912; "Swedenborgs Irrlehre mit der Bibel beleuchtet." In sharp contrast is the rather favourable evaluation of Swedenborg by Rev. A.A. Harder half a century later. *Der Bote*, 10 October 1967, 2.

⁷⁰*Bote der Neuen Kirche*, 48 (April 1903):88-89.

⁷¹J.G. Rempel, 35 (1904), 55 (1908), 66 (1910), reports repeated rejection of the appropriateness of Mennonites serving as Justice of the Peace.

⁷²Cornelius P. Unruh, Hague, 23 August 1920 reports to Hon. W.M. Martin, Minister of Education, that a Mennonite church leader had threatened him. Saskatchewan Archives Board, Martin Papers, M4, I-59, 20015.

⁷³See Frank H. Epp, *Mennonites in Canada 1920-1940. A People's Struggle for Survival* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1982), 167, for a discussion of the tension created by having the Swedenborgian Ens on the Board.

⁷⁴*Old and New Furrows*, 369.

⁷⁵*Steinbach Post*, 13 February 1952.

⁷⁶Undated letter of Klaas Peters as translated by the Department of Defence, Public Archives of Canada, RG 24, vol. 115, HQ 7618-1. Doell, 80.

⁷⁷*Bittersweet Years*, 76-77.

⁷⁸Henry K. Peters, "Autobiography," unpublished manuscript in MHCA, 58.

Peter Claassen, *New Church Life* (1921):569, emphasizes the same point, although he does not intend it as a compliment: "But the Mennonite characteristics remain, and so we find that a former dogmatic Mennonite can scarcely become a thorough New Churchman. Some of the old Mennonite leaven continues with him."

⁷⁹Henry Peters, Waldeck, 14 October 1918 to Mr. Hite, 2-3; copy in possession of the authors.

⁸⁰Minute #8, annual meeting, Western Canadian Conference, Herbert, 6-7 July 1919.

⁸¹*Der Mitarbeiter*, 1 (August 1907):87.

⁸²Report, 16 January 1912 to Board of Home Mission, Newton, Kansas. Copy in MHCA, Vol. 674.

⁸³Minute #3, annual meeting, Western Canadian Conference, Herbert, 5-6 July 1931.

⁸⁴Arnold Dyck, "Koop enn Bua enn Dietschlaund," in *Collected Works*, Volume II, edited by Al Reimer (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1986), 388. It is of these people rather than the Mennonite Templers in Russia that *Bua* is thinking.

⁸⁵*Journal GCNJ* (1918):172.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 98, 106-107, 146-147, 148.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 114.

⁸⁸*New Church Life* (1918):645.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 646; italics in the original.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 637; quoted again *ibid.*, (1919):113-14.

⁹¹Doell, 79-80.

⁹²*Saskatoon Star*, 3 December 1918, quoted *New Church Life* (1919):114.

⁹³*Ibid.*

⁹⁴*New Church Life* (1918):637-38.

⁹⁵Peters, "New Church Worthies," 3-4. The minute on baptism in the record of the founding meeting (1 July 1907) is considerably less explicit than Peters remembers the decision to have been.

⁹⁶This division took place in 1890 (Rev. Paul B. Zacharias, "A brief look at New Church history," ca 1984, mimeographed manuscript in "N.C. History" file of Tom Eidse; copy in MHCA). Waelchli and *New Church Life* represent "General Church."

⁹⁷*New Church Life* (1901):568.

⁹⁸Hiebert, 205.

⁹⁹Haury, 183.

¹⁰⁰Peter Epp, Schönthal, 9 September 1901 to John Esau, Rosenfeld, East Reserve, in Peter Epp diary, 181. MHCA, Vol. 2214.

¹⁰¹Peters, "New Church Worthies," 2.

¹⁰²Ordained ministers included: Henry, Peter and Klaas Jr., sons of Klaas Peters; Henry and Erwin, grandsons of Wilhelm Reddekopp; Paul and Eric, sons of John E. Zacharias, and Isaac, son of Gerhard Ens.