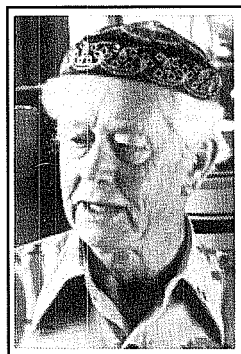


# In Memoriam

**David G. Rempel**

**(November 17 (n.s. 30) 1899 - June 27 1992)**



**James Urry, *Victoria University of Wellington***

David Rempel proved a hard man to keep up with. In spite of his small stature and his 85 years, striding along the sidewalk he exhibited remarkable energy. I almost had to trot to keep up. All the time his mind was active, he talked about the local neighbourhood, about current politics and the Mennonite past. Everything was expressed with great clarity, with a sense of passion, mixed with touches of humour. This continued through the day and, apart from his brief afternoon nap, into the evening until I was quite exhausted. I was increasingly amazed by his memory, the profundity of his ideas and the depth of his insight into history.

Although I only visited with him twice, for twenty years David and I maintained a vigorous exchange of letters, articles and other material.<sup>1</sup> He humoured me, chided me for youthful impetuosity, forgave my impertinence and gently guided me towards a richer and fuller understanding of Russian history and Mennonite life. But when on June 27, 1992, David Rempel died a great personal and intellectual force vanished from my life and Mennonites lost a scholar, a man of vision and a person of great integrity.

David Gerhard Rempel was born according to the old Julian calendar on the 17th of November 1899 in the Khortitsa village of Nieder (Nizhniaia) Khortitsa in the New Russian province of Ekaterinoslav. Born between centuries, his life was

shaped profoundly by political events. His father's business was deeply affected by the Revolution of 1905; his brother John served at the centre of the Mennonite medical service in Moscow during World War One and later was held hostage by Makhno's men. David witnessed revolution, war, anarchy, death and terror in Russia and then experienced the woes of emigration and adaptation to a new land and the adoption of a new language. He lived through the troubled inter-war period which saw the rise of Stalin and Hitler in Europe and in North America the Depression and the New Deal. At first hand, he viewed the devastation of Europe in World War Two and the Cold War which divided East and West. But he lived to see the collapse of communism and the rebirth of Russia and Ukraine. He was truly both in history and of history.

David's father, Gerhard (1863-1919), was a businessman who owned a small shop in the village but whose major source of income was derived from trading in grain. Gerhard's first wife died in 1891, leaving him with three young children, so he married Maria Pauls (1867-1920) of Rosenthal who bore him four children. David was the second youngest son of this second marriage, one of seven children in all. Although from farming stock, David's father was typical of the emerging Mennonite middle-class and recognised the importance of education and the advantages of social mobility. All his children were provided with an excellent education. David's elder half-brother, John (1890-1962), a person who was to have an important influence on his life, became a teacher and later an influential religious leader in Russia and Canada; his elder sister Maria (1892-1977) attended the Khortitsa Girls' School and would have gone on to higher education if she had not become her father's business assistant; his younger brother Jacob (1903-1976) was for many years Professor of Biology at the University of Saskatchewan. After local elementary school in 1913 David followed his elder brothers to the Khortitsa High School, graduating in 1917.

David's elder brother Heinrich was intended to take over the family business. But Heinrich enjoyed poor health so David was sent to a commercial school at Barvenkovo, an industrial centre in Kharkov province with a small but prosperous Mennonite community.<sup>2</sup> By the summer of 1917 the worsening political situation following the fall of the Tsar forced David to return to Khortitsa where he enrolled in the Teachers' Training Seminary. The Civil War and the activities of the anarchist Nestor Makhno disrupted his education and devastated the colony. Tragically, both his parents and his brother Heinrich died of typhus within days of each other in 1919/20. In 1920 David graduated from the Seminary and taught school until 1922 when he was forced from his post by the Soviet authorities because his brother John was a minister. In 1923 David, with brothers John and Jacob, emigrated to Canada, later to be joined by their married sister Maria Klassen. A half-brother and sister remained in the Soviet Union suffering arrest and banishment under Stalin.

In Canada David began to learn English at the Rosthern German-English Academy and then, with a few other young Russländer men, was selected for higher education in an American Mennonite college with the intention that he would

return to Canada and teach Mennonite immigrants. So, in 1924, David went to Bluffton College in Ohio graduating with an AB in 1927.<sup>3</sup> Instead of returning to Canada, he took an MA in Political Science at the University of Wisconsin and in 1929-30 obtained a teaching fellowship at the School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. He then went to Stanford University in California where as a research assistant to Professor Ralph H. Lutz he researched and translated documents for a major study on modern German history.<sup>4</sup> He then obtained a Stanford University Fellowship and worked towards his Ph.D. which was awarded in October 1933.<sup>5</sup>

While at Bluffton David had met an American Mennonite, Laura Kennel, a librarian with degrees in English, whose ancestors had emigrated from Alsace Lorraine and Bavaria. They were married in 1930, but with the Depression David needed to secure regular employment. In January 1934 he accepted a teaching post at San Mateo Junior College (later the College of San Mateo), a position he held, with increasing responsibility and authority (he held the Chair of the Social Science Division from 1946 to 1961), until his retirement in 1964. He taught mainly history and politics. In 1943 he volunteered for military service and joined the US Army Air Force. In 1944 he was appointed to the Historic Section of the US Strategic Air Force (USSTAF) and later was attached to the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) in London and Versailles. Returning to civilian life and San Mateo College in 1946 he continued to work part-time until 1951 with a team writing the history of the Air Force's role in the war.<sup>6</sup>

His wife Laura died in 1950 after some years of illness, leaving David to raise their two daughters. He maintained his interest in Russian and Mennonite history but could do little extensive research until 1962 when he visited the Soviet Union, carrying out archival research in Leningrad and Moscow. In 1963 he married Maria Ringelman Cavanagh, a widowed Bluffton graduate, and looked forward to a busy and productive retirement concentrating on Russian Mennonite history. However, he failed to obtain permission to return to the USSR and continue his archival research while a series of debilitating illnesses and operations disrupted his life. He managed, however, to finish a number of important articles and continued to collect material on Mennonite history. In 1983 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Waterloo in recognition of his contributions to research and scholarship. His second wife died in 1984 and although health problems, especially with his eyesight, continued he remained active, working on a number of projects while maintaining an extensive correspondence with friends, family and researchers until his death.

If a sense of history was not in David's blood, it was certainly in his mother's milk. Maria Pauls on her mother's side was descended from the Hildebrands of Insel Khortitsa linked to one of the founding colony delegates Jacob Höppner. Her grandfather was Jacob Hildebrand, Elder of the Schönwiese Frisian congregation and her uncle was Cornelius Hildebrand whose sketches are an important source on Old Colony history. During the nineteenth century, the Hildebrands had collected historical papers forming the important Hildebrand *Nachlass* which, along with

rich oral family traditions, were important sources for David H. Epp in his writings on Mennonite history.<sup>7</sup> Maria Pauls was widely read and as David would recall, she ensured that “virtually every Mennonite-written account, or about them, was to be had in our home.” While attending school in Khortitsa, David boarded in a household dominated by his Hildebrand grandmother.

If history was a constant presence in David’s early life, so were contrasts in his social and cultural world. His father belonged to the Chortitza Flemish congregation but joined the Frisians on marriage to David’s mother; the children, however, were all baptized in the Flemish church. On his mother’s side were links to a number of wealthy estate-owning families. While on business trips with his father David experienced the diversity of life, Mennonite and non-Mennonite, in Russia’s southern steppes. Growing up in Nieder Khortitsa, considered a half-Russianized village by many colonists, also widened young David’s horizons. The village, situated at the margins of the colony, bordered by Ukrainian villages and across the Dnieper River the industrial city of Alexandrovsk, was socially diverse, with prosperous farmers, businessmen and a Mennonite proletariat. Throughout his life David never lost his sense of the diversity of place, people and opinion nurtured by his early experiences in Russia which he remembered with deep affection.

Towards the end of his life David reflected on his career as a historian: “I have never remotely considered myself the Nestor of Russian Mennonite historians, in fact not even as a *historian* on the subject, but primarily as an amateur in the field and as a collector of materials for younger men specializing in this area.”<sup>8</sup> This disclaimer can easily be dismissed. David was an extremely skilled historian, careful and meticulous in his attention to detail, yet possessing an instinctive understanding of the past. [See for example his article on the Mennonite medics in this issue. Ed.]

David’s original intention at Stanford was to write his doctoral thesis on the 1906-11 land reforms of Russia’s famous prime-minister Peter Stolypin. This choice was based on personal experiences. Following Stolypin’s reforms, his father encouraged landless Mennonite farmers in his village to claim land they rented in a neighbouring Ukrainian area. His actions proved unpopular with the established village farmers, who boycotted his business causing financial difficulties. David intended to concentrate his research on the reforms in the Khortitsa area, but later focussed on the reform legislation disputes between Stolypin and the Russian Duma (parliament). Then, as they were often to do in his life, unexpected events forced David to reconsider the direction of his research.

By the early 1930s reports revealed the true impact of Stalin’s collectivization policies; there was famine in Ukraine and elsewhere in Russia and accounts of arrests, deportations and terror. Communist literature appeared attacking Mennonites and condemning their past.<sup>9</sup> David felt a need to respond. He altered his thesis topic to an account of Mennonite emigration, relations between Mennonites and the Tsarist government, Mennonite economic achievements and their contribution to the development of New Russia. Basically the thesis concentrated on social and economic history, although David’s account of the late nineteenth and early

twentieth century was only sketched briefly. The reason for this imbalance was not a lack of research material, but a lack of time: with the Depression deepening and a need to secure employment, he was forced to submit his thesis early. Even so the account is a masterful analysis and is still widely quoted. During the 1930s David published two major articles; one, in two parts, outlined the emigration of Mennonites to Russia in the context of government policy and the other the government's attempts to expropriate Mennonite land and property during World War One.<sup>10</sup> These early publications reflect David's life-long concern to place the study of the Mennonite past firmly in the context of Russian history, and also to understand Mennonite political economy in terms of the relationship between Mennonite economic development and changes in government policy in which, after a period of close partnership, Mennonites and officialdom became increasingly alienated. Whereas at first the state had encouraged Mennonite immigration and supported economic development, after 1880 opposition to the Mennonites culminated in the infamous expropriation legislation of World War One. Almost all David's later writing can be seen as a sustained attempt to understand and to explain the causes and effects of such changes up to 1917.

David did not begin to publish again on the Russian Mennonites until after his research in the Soviet archives in 1962. Following Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin and a slight thaw in the Cold War, western scholars were allowed limited access to Soviet archives. David seized the opportunity to work in the State Historical Archives in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) searching for evidence of links between the Russian state, its ministries and Mennonites during the nineteenth century. He was particularly interested in the reform policies of the Ministry of State Domains from the 1830s onwards, the Mennonite struggle over land in the 1850s and the relationship between government agricultural policies and Mennonite farming later in the century. His research was ably assisted by some elderly, but highly skilled, Russian archivists who by chance reported that one of their colleagues in Moscow had discovered references to Mennonites in the papers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Archive of Ancient Documents. Putting aside his Leningrad research, and abandoning a planned trip to Khortitsa, David went to Moscow where he discovered the papers dealing with the first contacts between Mennonites and the Russian state, including the negotiations between Prince Potemkin and the Mennonite delegates Höppner and Bartsch, and the initial settlement of Khortitsa.

In Leningrad and Moscow David secured over 10,000 pages of archival sources on microfilm. But the following year he was refused permission to return to continue his research. He never regretted discovering the Moscow archives and wrote extensively on the initial emigration, the foundation of Khortitsa and early Mennonite state relations. This subject also dominated his major account of the rise and development of the Mennonite Commonwealth published in 1974 which, like his thesis, concentrated on the early period providing only a briefer sketch of later developments.<sup>12</sup> For many years David worked on an account of Mennonite model farming, government policy and political controversies over the future of peasant

agriculture before 1917. Unfortunately this study was never completed to his satisfaction, although extensive manuscript drafts survive and hopefully will be published in due course.<sup>13</sup>

The other major period of David's research interests concerned World War One, the Revolution and the Civil War with particular attention to Mennonite political responses. He sought new material on Russian government moves during 1915-1917 to expropriate the land and property of "German" colonists, checking through the Duma debates and attempting to confirm that some leaders of the Mennonite community were involved in attempts to bribe influential officials in Petrograd to remove or alter the impact of the legislation. Mennonite service in the medical corps during World War One and the radical calls by many servicemen in 1917 for political and social reform of the Mennonite Commonwealth, also fascinated him. During the 1930s his brother John had published in *Der Bote* accounts of his experiences of service in the medical corps in Moscow and of subsequent events in Khotitsa in 1917-1919. David collected these accounts together, combined them with other unpublished material left behind by his brother and added material from his own research to produce a stunning account of this period which also needs to be published.<sup>14</sup> His last published paper, an account of Mennonite revolutionaries based in part on his brother's notes, is abstracted from this manuscript.<sup>15</sup> He actively encouraged older Mennonites to record and where appropriate to publish their accounts of the period of war, revolution and terror. It was David who assisted Gerhard P. Schroeder to edit his important memoirs of revolution, anarchy and civil war.<sup>16</sup> Other material remains unpublished.

In his final years David also collected sources on his own family's history. As the most senior, and certainly the most knowledgeable, member of an extended family he was inundated with requests for information by relatives. However, David's idea of "genealogical" research was more extensive than most genealogists and might best be described as family and community history with genealogical details included. When I last heard of its progress, the family history had expanded to almost 800 pages and undoubtedly constitutes a major source on local Mennonite history providing the kind of detail and colour largely lacking from other accounts.<sup>17</sup>

This concern with family and personal experience reveals another essential aspect of David's writing. His view of the Mennonite past was particularly Old Colony oriented: a view from the Khortitsa colony on outwards to the larger Mennonite world and the wider Russian environment. Of course, he was quite aware of this and was far too professional to let his personal prejudices interfere with his scholarship. However, he did feel that the preference given to the work of Molochnaia historians, especially to P.M. Friesen's book, was to the neglect of Khortitsa writers such as David H. Epp and to a proper understanding of the importance of the Old Colony in Mennonite history. His writings on Mennonite historiography were an attempt to correct past work, rather than to establish a new orthodoxy. While others may have found it convenient to dismiss his work as parochial — *Daut es oba mau wada en Ooltkolnia* — there is a distinct advantage

to be gained from understanding that some of his writing is so richly informed by his Old Colony experience.<sup>18</sup> It adds to, rather than detracts from his writing. And David never romanticized the past; he knew far too much about both the achievements of the old Mennonite world and its darker aspects to fall into that error. He was opposed to the tendency, as he liked to express it, "to sweep aspects of the Mennonite past under the proverbial rug." In fact, on occasion he took singular delight in pointing out the reality of Mennonite life to those who kept harping on *de goode oole Tiet*.

In many ways while David's unpublished accounts of Russian Mennonite history are extensive, his published output remained small.<sup>19</sup> In part this is a reflection of the state of Mennonite publishing until recent years: David's work was often too detailed and in places too controversial to find a Mennonite publisher. But his own writing style did not always assist his cause. On the one hand David always knew too much about a topic, while on the other, keenly aware that there were always new sources to be found, he also was aware that he did not know enough. This meant that works were never "finished" and constantly were being revised or set aside for future attention once more sources became available. David also seemed to lack the discipline to stick to a point and not to wander off at a tangent, a tendency which, understandably, increased as he grew older. At the same time, a great deal of his energy was dissipated in other activities including answering numerous enquiries at great length, searching for new sources and finally writing long, polemical responses in reply to what he saw as gross historical errors in Mennonite newspapers and magazines.<sup>20</sup> In terms of the latter, I always considered there was something quixotic in David's attitude and felt that the subjects of his detailed and meticulous responses were not really worthy of his scholarly attention. But he obviously felt that such refutations were important because, as he often pointed out, the writing of Mennonite history needed to be grounded in a proper, critical and professional historiography.

If David was wrong to dismiss his historical expertise, he was entirely correct in identifying the importance of his collecting activities. In spite of his family's collection of books and papers, David left Russia with little of historical value other than his excellent memory and a fine porcelain cup and saucer, a gift his parents had received at their wedding. David always regretted the personal loss of his family's papers, but he was also aware that war and revolution had destroyed and dispersed important historical material, while the Soviets had seized many papers in the colonies and closed the archives. It was reports of the fate of such collections, combined with official Soviet attacks on the Mennonites, that encouraged David to begin to collect historical material which could form the basis of proper Mennonite research library and archive in North America.<sup>21</sup>

During his doctoral research David encountered the German colonist historian, and later Nazi, Georg Leibbrandt who told him of archival collections in Odessa and put him in touch with the director of the Regional Archive of South Russia, one Riabinin-Skliarevskii. The director provided a listing of relevant archival documents, most concerned with early nineteenth century foreign colo-

nists in New Russia, and David also arranged to borrow sources from Odessa on inter-library loan through Moscow. Through the director he also contacted the historian G.G. Pisarevskii who in the pre-revolutionary period had published major accounts of foreign colonization, including Mennonite settlement in Russia. Pisarevskii presented him with copies of his work and other sources David purchased through a state agency selling historical books for hard currency in Moscow. But as Stalin's terror intensified David's access to Soviet citizens and sources dried up, a situation which merely encouraged him to renew his efforts to secure other material.

David also discovered the rich collections of the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. and these he utilised in the 1930s, again in the late 1940s when he spent summers working on Air Force history and later in the 1970s and 80s when his eldest daughter moved to Washington. Gradually he amassed not just a collection of original books and articles, but also extensive notes from official publications and journals. He also maintained contact with Mennonites who had emigrated to Canada in the 1920s some of whom during the 1930s completed questionnaires on aspects of their economic activities. Unfortunately much of this material, along with some of his early research notes, was lost in family moves during World War Two. After the war he planned with his brother John an extensive research tour across Canada to interview older Mennonites and to collect material. These plans were frustrated by the illness and death of his wife, and then his brother's illness forced their abandonment. However, David maintained extensive contacts with Mennonites in Canada and the USA through correspondence and periodic visits, especially after his retirement. He located important diaries and other historical sources and interviewed a number of people including the son of Jacob Esau, the industrialist and mayor of the provincial city Ekaterinoslav who had emigrated to California after the revolution. Finally there was his highly successful research tour in the Soviet Union and the thousands of pages of microfilm he obtained.

David was eager that his extensive collection be preserved in a proper Mennonite archive where it could be used by scholars to promote the study of Russian Mennonite history. The problem was that many of the existing centres seemed unsuitable; they lacked skilled staff and were under the control of individuals he distrusted or worse, religious leaders either disinterested in history or concerned only to preserve documents which enhanced their extremely narrow view of the past. Although an American citizen, he particularly distrusted some United States Mennonite colleges and looked to Canada as a possible home for his collection. But until the 1970s little had been achieved by Canadian Mennonites to preserve their heritage or to promote historical research. During the 1970s new archives were established in Ontario and Manitoba and in the early 1980s David concluded an agreement with Conrad Grebel College to receive his collection of published and unpublished material. He was an admirer of the research and writing of the College's one-time president, Frank H. Epp, and the College's library and archive seemed to him relatively independent of church control, closely affiliated



as the College is with the University of Waterloo. The College later made an appointment in the field of Russian history to enhance the value and use of the collection.

Much of David's collection was transferred to Conrad Grebel during his lifetime including the microfilms of his Soviet research period, a large collection of published and unpublished Mennonite material, and basic works on Russian history, society and culture. David also made generous financial contributions to support the College, its library and archives and continued to donate new books relevant to the study of Russian history. The remaining material, withheld for his own research will now complete the collection.

After years of neglect, David was delighted to witness the blossoming in recent years of studies into Russian Mennonite history, particularly in Canada. He supported new publications and was particularly pleased with the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*. He was excited by the establishment of new collections, the expansion of holdings including the acquisition of newspaper microfilms and finally the opening of archives in Russia and Ukraine with the discovery of some of the material that had vanished in the 1920s and long thought lost or destroyed. Again, he contributed financial support to institutions and individuals to collect such material and shared with enthusiasm his own sources, knowledge and expertise with archivists and young scholars. He was not one to hoard and selfishly guard his collection as a private and personal resource as is unfortunately still the case among some Mennonites, even those who claim the status of scholars. He despised these *Puntminist*i (paltry/niggardly Mennonites) who endlessly squeezed him for information, advice and money, but who never gave anything in return, often not even acknowledging his assistance. Instead he freely gave, expecting little in return, merely pleased to see that his efforts were at last bringing forth new scholarship. I was one whose research and work was so richly rewarded by his generosity, and I know that many younger researchers, professional and amateur, also owe him an immense debt of gratitude.

As well as a scholar, a collector and a benefactor, David Rempel was also a political figure. His home in Russia had been the centre of political discussion and debate, and his own experience of events had sensitized him to political issues. He came, in contrast to many Mennonites of his generation, from a remarkably liberal background and his liberal, democratic sympathies were further enhanced and developed in North America. In later life he liked to refer to his "Americanization," the period when as a student he travelled across the United States with ordinary people, improving his English and his knowledge of the land, people and institutions of American society. Teaching politics at San Mateo, including American constitutional history, also broadened his understanding of political systems. He became and remained a life-time Democrat.

Shocked and horrified like most Mennonites of the terror and destruction wrought by Stalin and his Communists in the Soviet Union, unlike many Mennonites David could clearly differentiate between the Russian people and the Soviet state. He never ceased to love the land of his birth and its peoples while abhorring the

Soviet regime. But such views found few supporters among many Mennonites of his generation who considered that his liberal views were outrageous and who branded him a dangerous “Red”—*zu rot angehaucht*— and Communist sympathizer. David’s alienation from other Mennonites intensified during the 1930s as he witnessed the identification of many sections of the Russländer community in Canada with *Deutschtum* and the Nazis. Privately he argued against Mennonite support for such an odious regime and the fact that he was later proved correct merely intensified opposition to him in certain quarters. In later years he never hesitated to challenge misinterpretations of the Mennonite past, to correct ill-informed opinion and to ridicule Mennonite conservatism, particularly among some individuals and religious conferences. This did not endear him to sections of the Mennonite community nor did his democratic views, expressed with force and clarity. He was horrified by Mennonite support for Richard Nixon and the apparent gullibility of many for popular television evangelists who mixed politics with religion to dupe people. If his final years were richly rewarded by developments in Russian Mennonite historiography, they were challenged by the politics of successive Republican administrations which were anathema to everything he stood for.

David possessed a strong sense of social justice, another inheritance of his past which again set him apart from many of his contemporaries. His experience of famine in Ukraine left him with a sense of empathy for suffering peoples in all parts of the world. Financially and otherwise he supported a wide range of social and charitable concerns; he never forgot the support the American Mennonites had provided in relief aid to Russian Mennonites and he contributed to MCC’s economic and social programmes.

David once took me to meet old friends, one an aged non-Mennonite minister from an established New England family. Unfortunately the minister was now senile, but David had always been impressed by his approach to matters of life and faith. I did not question David further, but did remark that in California people seemed convinced of their immortality in this world rather than the next, and were kept alive by science and technology in an almost obscene manner. He smiled at me, but did not answer. Later he remarked that surgeons had removed everything from his own body that could go wrong; from now on it would just be the end.

Whatever his personal views on faith and the afterlife, actions speak louder than words and deeds define the value of a person’s life rather than the hollow rhetoric of piety. David lived a full, rich life and has left a mighty legacy for Mennonites which future generations will learn to value and admire. These include his writings, his priceless collection of resources and, above all, the example of an engaged scholar in the world. David Rempel was born a Mennonite and died a Mennonite, of that at least I am sure.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>This memoir is based extensively on information supplied to me by David Rempel in this correspondence and in documents and letters to others he shared with me over the years.

<sup>2</sup>"Barvenkovo." *Mennonite Encyclopedia* 1: 240; the seven-class business school was a joint Mennonite/Russian venture; one of the instructors was Peter G. Epp, author of the novel *Eine Mutter* whom David would later encounter as a teacher at Bluffton College, Ohio.

<sup>3</sup>In 1983 David described his experiences at Bluffton in detail. "The first 'Russian Boys' at Bluffton College 1924-1928." Unpublished manuscript dated March 22, 1983, 19 pp.

<sup>4</sup>Ralph H. Lutz, *Fall of the German Empire, 1914-1918*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1932; David's name appears on the title page as one of the two translators.

<sup>5</sup>*The Mennonite colonies in New Russia: a study of their settlement and economic development from 1789 to 1914*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1933, 333 pp. Approached in the 1970s with offers to publish the thesis, David contemplated a large-scale revision utilising his new sources but unfortunately this proved impossible.

<sup>6</sup>For an account of the work of this group which involved 34 civilian and military historians see Thomas P. Ofcansky, "The United States Air Force History Program." In Barbara J. Howe and Emory L. Kemp eds, *Public History: an Introduction*. Malabar (FL.): Robert E. Kreiger Publishing Co., 1986, 311-13, 321; David contributed to the volume of *The Army Air Forces in World War II* dealing with the period 1944 to 1945.

<sup>7</sup>On the importance of the Hidebrand Nachlass and David H. Epps' work see David G. Rempel, "An introduction to Russian Mennonite historiography," *Mennonite Quarterly Review (MQR)*, 48, 1974, 409-46; in the offprint he presented to me David attached a typed dedication to his grandmother Marie Hildebrand Pauls and to his parents acknowledging how their interest in the past provided the stimulation for his own research.

<sup>8</sup>From a letter to me dated 11 January 1986; he expressed similar sentiments in his generous foreword to my book, see David G. Rempel, "Foreword." In James Urry, *None But Saints: the Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia, 1789-1889*. Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1989, 14.

<sup>9</sup>The major books were those by A.I. Klibanov, *Mennonity*. Moscow: Ogiz, and especially the works written by two Mennonite communists: A. Reinmarus (A. Penner), *Anti-Menno: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mennoniten in Rußland*. Moscow: Zentral Völker Verlag, and A. Reinmarus and G. Frizen (Friesen), *Mennonity*. Moscow: Biesbozhnik.

<sup>10</sup>"The Mennonite emigration to New Russia 1787-1870. "Part I the colonization policy of Catherine the Great." *MQR*, 9, 1935, 71-91; "Part II the emigration to Russia." *MQR*, 9 1935, 109-28; "The expropriation of the German colonists in South Russia during the Great War." *Journal of Modern History*, 4, 1932, 49-67.

<sup>11</sup>"From Danzig to Russia: the first Mennonite migration," *Mennonite Life*, 24, 1969, 8-28; "Important historical facts discussed." In N. Kroeker ed., *First Mennonite Villages in Russia*. Vancouver: the Author, 1981. In 1985 David indicated he was preparing a manuscript for the 1989 bicentennial of the Mennonite settlement in Russia to be entitled "Stresses and strains of the Old Colony 1789 to about 1810" which does not appear to have been completed. Aspects of this research, however, appeared in a number of guises in his various writings on Mennonite history which appeared in *Der Bote*, especially "Bemerkungen zu unserer mennonitischen Geschichtsliteratur," *Der Bote* 19 July - 6 September 1966; "Geschichte und Geschichten," *Der Bote* 21-28 November 1967; "Zum 200 jährigen Jubiläum der mennonitischen Einwanderung in Rußland, 1789-1989," *Der Bote*, March 20, 1991 - August 7, 1991 (some eighteen installments).

<sup>12</sup>"The Mennonite Commonwealth in Russia: a sketch of its founding and endurance, 1789-1914." *MQR*, 47, 1973, 298-308; 48, 1974, 5-54; also issued with continuous pagination by the author 1974.

<sup>13</sup>"Mennonite agriculture and model farming as issues of economic and political controversy 1837-1917." Unpublished manuscript; the copy I have is undated, heavily annotated and consists of 83 pages.

<sup>14</sup>John G. Rempel and David G. Rempel, "Recollections of war, revolution and civil war 1914-1920." Unpublished manuscript, nd., vi, 262 pp; see also David's response to Gerhard Lohrenz's review of John B. Toew's book in his "A response to the 'Lost Fatherland' review," *Canadian Mennonite*, August 13, 1968, 7-12.

<sup>15</sup>Translated, annotated and with a postscript by David G. Rempel, "Mennonite revolutionaries in the Khortitza settlement under the Tsarist regime as recollected by Johann G. Rempel," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 10, 1992, 70-86.

<sup>16</sup>Gerhard P. Schroeder, *Miracles of grace and judgment: a brief account of the personal contact and experiences with some of the leaders and followers of the notorious Makhnovshchina during the civil war in the Ukraine 1914-1923*. Lodi: the Author, 1974. David wrote an introduction to the book outlining the causes of the partisan movement (ix-xiv) and is listed on the title page as one of the editors, although Schroeder points out (xv-xvi) that David rewrote the first 144 pages of the book "sentence by sentence."

<sup>17</sup>The title of this work is "Branches across the Wall."

<sup>18</sup>It is somewhat ironic that after having been corrected for ill-informed comments on the role of Johann Cornies, a Molochnaia Mennonite of some prominence whose reputation David found he had to defent, that the Canadian Mennonite concerned should then accuse David of being a typical Molochnaia Mennonite deprecating people from the Old Colony! See David G. Rempel, "Historian challenges Sawatzky's review," *Mennonite Mirror*, 4(9-10) June, Summer 1975, 18-20; 15-19; H.L. Sawatzky, [Letter] *Mennonite Mirror* 5(1) October 1975, 23.

<sup>19</sup>Among these papers are accounts of the relationship between the Russian state, the church and the Mennonites with reference to missionary activities; the visits of officials and foreigners to the Mennonite colonies in the 1830s and 1840s; Mennonite schisms and schools and numerous notes and drafts for intended articles or longer studies.

<sup>20</sup>As well as articles and letters addressed to *Der Bote*, David also contributed pieces to *Mennonite Life*, *The Canadian Mennonite*, *The Mennonite Reporter*, *The Mennonite Mirror*, and in 1965 was involved in a series of bitter exchanges on the Germanic nature of Mennonite identity with the editor and correspondents of *Die Post* in Steinbach, Manitoba.

<sup>21</sup>The following is based on our personal correspondence and in part on David's account written in April 1985 for Len Friesen and Sam Steiner of Conrad Grebel College entitled "Personal interests and family experiences which strongly influenced my endeavours in the collecting process."