

The Tie That Binds: Prussian and Russian Mennonites (1788-1794)

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The relocation of a substantial portion of a community by group emigration allows one to see a cross-section of church life that “normal” times do not readily afford. The eighteenth century Mennonite move to New Russia provides a good opportunity to observe where the Mennonite church of Poland/Prussia was with respect to language, Flemish-Frisian relations, congregational practices and their implicit basis, and communal life patterns. The availability of the diaries of two prominent Prussian Mennonite elders covering this period provides such a study with details and first-hand freshness. Heinrich Donner (1735-1805) was minister (1766) and elder (1772) of the Frisian Orlofffelde congregation, and Gerhard Wiebe (1725-1796) minister (1751) and elder (1778) of the Ebling-Ellerwalde Flemish congregation.¹

During the course of this research it became obvious that the secondary sources of this crucial earliest period of Mennonite settlement in Russia are frequently factually inaccurate and misleading in interpretation. Primary sources are accordingly given preference in re-telling the story here. Alternative interpretations are indicated in endnotes.

The paper attempts to reconstruct church life and organization during this seven-year period in narrative form and then reflects on some of the issues in a more analytical section.

1. Attitudes to the Migration

Heinrich Donner’s “Chronik” does not reflect any great enthusiasm for the emigration. The earliest entry in 1787 simply reports: “Some Mennonists have taken land in Russia and made a contract with the Empress. They are Mennonists from the Danzig region.”²

The 1788 entry is considerably longer. On the positive side it notes that Deputy Bartsch was a Frisian, that the land accepted from the Czarina amounted to 1080 Hufen,³ and that he has filed a copy of the contract made with Prince Potemkin. On the other side it notes that in West Prussia only

those “Mennists who had no property [*Besitz*] were permitted to emigrate,” that they had to pay a tenth of their assets (*Vermögen*) in order to receive permission to leave, that the assessors charged large fees, that the West Prussian cabinet categorically forbade the emigration of Mennonites, and that some seventy-seven households in the Elbing and Tiegenhagen were now in dire straits, having sold their goods and given up their housing. It ends with the note that “Only one family from our congregation, Absalon Engbrecht of Neustädschenwalde with wife and child is joining the emigration.”⁴ A little later it reports:

On the 13th and 14th Sundays after Trinity Sunday we had to publicize an official notice that no Mennist should undertake to move to Russia without the knowledge of the government. Nevertheless, many did leave, heedless of the danger caused by Russia’s current war with the Turks and Sweden. . . . Because of the Turkish war they were unable to move to the location for which they had contracted. Hence they did not know where to set up their home. May the merciful God be their protector and keep them in his care!⁵

Whether Donner’s apparent coolness to the migration resulted from this limited interest among West Prussian Frisians, or vice versa, is not clear. He was preoccupied with other matters during this time. His church frequently asked him to negotiate with the government regarding the status of Mennonites, and he seems to have a strong sense of loyalty to the state and invested considerable efforts in reducing Prussian restrictions on Mennonite landholding.⁶ In his own area he was involved in a long-drawn, sometimes bitter conflict with a number of other Frisian congregations led by Elder Jacob Siebert (d. 1784) and his successor Hans Siebert of Thiensdorf, leading to an eventual split in 1791.⁷

Among the Flemish leadership stronger support for the emigration is evident. On August 7, 1786, Russia’s invitation to immigrants was read in both the Frisian and Flemish congregations in Danzig. Objection from the city authorities, however, kept the leaders from formally endorsing the September 14 offer of Jakob Hoepfner and Jakob von Kampen to be official delegates to explore settlement in Russia. The Flemish elder, Peter Epp (1725-1789; minister 1758; elder 1780), sufficiently heeded the warning of the Danzig authorities that he refused in December to read the more direct invitation of Georg Trappe, but he did not prevent Trappe’s men from distributing his pamphlets at the church exit in January or keep him from attending a communion service in February.⁸ Although Epp was careful to pass on to his congregation the warnings of the city authorities, he was considered an active promoter of the emigration.⁹

The diary of Elder Gerhard Wiebe of Elbing nowhere reflects anything except support for the emigration. Nor can one detect any objection from either Dirk Tiessen (17??-1806; minister 1755; elder 1767) of the Grosswerder Congregation or Cornelius Regier (1743-1794; minister 1765; elder 1771) of Heubuden.

2. Provision of Ministerial Leadership: the Flemish Church

On February 10, 1788, Peter Epp invited his colleagues Gerhard Wiebe and Cornelius Regier to Danzig to discuss the question of how to provide ministers (*Lehrer*) for the would-be emigrants. Since the question of exit permits was still quite unsettled, they decided to wait until the move would actually take place when it would become obvious who and how many would go.¹⁰ By March 15 Regier, having heard that permission to leave was likely going to be granted, wrote to Epp: "How will it be if the emigration really comes to pass? I am concerned that none of the *Ohms* [ministers] will decide to go along as shepherd for these poor sheep. . . . I am frequently concerned where we will find the means to provide sufficient *Lehrer* [teacher-ministers] for the emigrants to Russia."

The emigrants did not wait for this matter to be decided before leaving. Some fifty of them were already in Riga when the deputies, Hoepfner and Bartsch, returned in 1787. A further four families left Danzig on February 23, 1788. Another group left with Deputy Hoepfner on March 22.¹² Very few of these had official exit visas. Some from the Marienburg and Tiegenhof regions sold their possessions, slipped into Danzig Territory where the authorities were less strict, and then quietly left the country without waiting to be checked out.¹³

When permission to emigrate finally came from the West Prussian government on June 2, a meeting of the whole Flemish *Lehrdienst* (elders, ministers, and deacons; hereafter translated as "ministerial council") and all those waiting to emigrate was called for Rosenort for June 10. Three letters from Amsterdam were read at this gathering, urging Flemish and Frisians to live harmoniously with each other and not consider intermarriage between the two groups as mixed marriages (*Aussentrau*). Since the permission to emigrate excluded anyone owning land, it was clear that no current ministers would be in the group leaving. The meeting accordingly decided that an election of ministers was to be held after exit permits had actually been obtained.¹⁴

However, many people did not want to wait until all had received their exit permits. These gathered in Rosenort on July 28 ready to depart, but expecting that ministerial elections would take place, Elder Regier explained that an election was still premature because many on the Prussian side had not yet been able to obtain permission to leave in spite of all their efforts. An election was thus inadvisable since it might choose someone who would not be allowed to leave.¹⁵

A letter from Dubrovno, the first stopping place in Russia, prompted further meetings. Tiessen and Regier were already discussing the matter with Wiebe in Ellerwald on September 14, when a note from Peter Epp suggested that the entire ministerial council be called together. This meeting, at Tiegerfeld on September 23, rejected the Danzig proposal of sending an elder and other leaders to Russia to hold elections there, and instead suggested to the

emigrants that the churches in Prussia hold candidate elections and submit the names to the group in Dubrovno. For now these men could conduct church services among them and later ministers could be elected and ordained out of their ranks.¹⁶ By this time the number of Flemish emigrants stood at 152 families, the large majority (93) of them from the Grosswerder congregation.¹⁷ The Dubrovno group had already elected Jakob Wiens, Gerhard Neufeldt, David Schoett and Bernhard Penner to conduct Sunday services by reading Kroecker's sermons.¹⁸

In response to five letters received from Russia in early 1789, including one from Deputy Jacob Hoepfner in which the emigrants offered to pay travel expenses for an elder to come to organize the church, a further meeting of the ministerial council was held on January 27. It was unsuccessful in persuading Peter Epp to go, (the other two elders present did not want to draw lots with him) but he submitted the matter to the Danzig congregation on February 5 and there decided conditionally that he would go in spring.¹⁹

By mid-February it was obvious that Epp's health would not permit a spring journey. The Flemish leadership then decided that twelve to sixteen ministerial candidates should be elected in Dubrovno and their names submitted to Prussia for a final selection of four ministers and two deacons. A committee to conduct the election was named, with one representative from each of the four congregations: Jacob Hoepfner for Grosswerder; Jakob Wiens, Danzig; Peter Albrecht, Elbing; and Martin Claassen, Heubuden.²⁰

The emigrants acted swiftly. By March 27 the candidate list was back in Prussia and a meeting of the ministerial council was held in Petershagen to make the final selection. The 168 votes cast had named a total of twenty candidates. Jakob Wiens (47 votes) and Gerhard Neufeldt (27 votes), both of Danzig, and David Giesbrecht (18 votes) of Petershagen, an acquaintance of Elder Dirk Tiessen, clearly led the list and were declared elected as ministers. The lot was then cast among the next five Flemish candidates (Peter von Dyck, Rehwald — 12; Peter von Dyck, Lakenwald — 12; Anton Claassen, Heubuden — 9; Cornelius von Riesen, Töpferdamm — 6; Bernhard Penner, Danzig — 4) resulting in the choice of Penner as minister, and Dyck (Lakenwald) and Riesen as deacons. The results were sent to Russia together with instructions to the electoral committee for the ordination.²¹

The candidate election in Dubrovno had been conducted by the entire group of emigrants, and their letter drew attention to the promise of the Frisians to work in unity with the Flemish. Nevertheless, the Prussian Flemish ministerial council decided to disregard the two Frisian candidates, Cornelius Froese and David Schoett, in making the final selection, "because they are not familiar to us and in so short a time we could not find adequate information about their manner of life."²² Since Schoett was already serving the united Dubrovno group, along with Wiens, Neufeldt and Penner, in leading Sunday worship services, his rejection in the choosing of ministers represent-

ed a serious rebuff to the Frisians. If, as Smissen reports, the six candidates were asked at their ordination "whether they were united in faith with the Flemish Church of Prussia," this would have been further cause for the Frisian group to separate.²³ According to Elder G. Wiebe, who sent the authorization to ordain, the question to be asked was rather "Whether you are one in faith with the church of God as you confessed and accepted in your baptism?"²⁴ In any case, the Frisian group gave up the attempt to form a united church and henceforth met separately.

In May new letters arrived from Dubrovno, urgently asking that the church in Russia be provided with an elder. A large brotherhood meeting in Danzig on May 24 finally convinced Peter Epp to go. However, Epp fell seriously ill immediately after his farewell sermon on August 2 and died on November 12.²⁵ Meanwhile, the immigrants left their temporary stopping place at Dubrovno and completed the journey to Chortitza. Responding to word of Epp's sickness, the new ministerial council urgently pleaded for help in fully organizing their congregation by the provision of an elder. In a December letter they drew attention to problems arising from the fact that the Frisian group now seemed to be much better organized than they.²⁶ By March 1790 the Prussian Flemish ministerial council had agreed on an alternative to sending one of their elders to Russia. Citing as precedent the way in which the Palatine Mennonites had organized their congregation at Einsiedel near Lemberg in Poland, they gave the Russian group full authority to elect and ordain an elder from among its ministers.²⁷

The congregation at Chortitza received this authorization on June 1, 1790. David Giesbrecht had by then been relieved of his office because of strife caused by him in the congregation. The election for elder among the three remaining ministers chose Bernhard Penner (1756-1791). Jakob Wiens, the oldest of the ministers, then ordained Penner.²⁸ With Giesbrecht no longer functioning, and the number of immigrants increasing, elections for new ministers were held shortly after New Year in 1791. Johann Wiebe, a nephew of Elder Gerhard Wiebe, and David Epp, Danzig, were selected. A further election on June 1 chose Gerhard Willms and deacon Peter Dyck as ministers, and Jakob Klassen and Johann Wiebe (Heubuden) as deacons.²⁹

By now Elder Penner was quite ill and requested an assistant. The newly chosen minister, Johann Wiebe (1766-1823), was elected but felt that he was too young and incapable to accept the office. Penner died on July 29 before the matter could be resolved, leaving the congregation without an elder once more.³⁰

When Johann Wiebe was again urged to accept the office after Penner's death, he agreed to do so on condition that a co-elder be elected and that both go to Prussia to be ordained. David Epp (1750-1802) was elected but the trip to Prussia for ordination did not materialize for various reasons.³¹ Wiebe then once more withdrew his candidacy, while Epp finally allowed him-

self to be ordained by Minister Jakob Wiens on February 2, 1792. Not all in the congregation agreed with this move but were prepared to accept Epp as their leader if the ministerial council was united on the matter. With minister-elect Peter Dyck and deacons Cornelius Friesen and Johann Wiebe opposed, the congregation faced division and disunity.³²

The Prussian Flemish ministerial council met at Tiegerfeld on May 14 to discuss the plight of the Chortitza congregation. The meeting affirmed Epp's ordination and the election of both elders. It urged Wiebe also to accept ordination, assuring him that he need have no reservations about the efficacy of the *Befestigung* (ordination).³³

In a letter to Jakob Wiens, sending an *Attest* (letter of transfer) for David Epp at the latter's request, Elder Jacob de Veer (1739-1807; minister 1774; elder 1790) of Danzig hints at what may have been the reasons for reluctance to accept Epp as their elder. "Should some members of our congregation, now in your congregation, recall unpleasant incidents that took place during the tenure of the late Elder Peter Epp, and as a result be uneasy in view of his [David Epp's] new office, then we want to reassure them that we have investigated these matters carefully and found that everything has been properly taken care of." The *Attest* was signed by three witnesses and had also been approved by the entire Flemish ministerial council on May 14, who agreed that "since his transgressions were not considered punishable, but dealt with and forgiven...they cannot be a hindrance to him in his office."³⁴

In November Johann Wiebe reported his side of the developments. He noted that after the election of David Epp, ten members did not sign the letter authorizing them to go to Prussia for ordination. When this matter was discussed in the ministerial council, Gerhard Neufeldt said he was sorry that he had signed. Unable to resolve the issue internally, the matter was submitted to "our government" but without resolution. In his turmoil, Wiebe felt himself obligated to resign from the ministerial office. A petition to elect a new elder and ordain him as they had done with Penner produced only fifty-five signatures. Thereupon David Epp accepted ordination but Wiebe could not find himself ready to do so yet. He did, however, reaccept the office of minister.³⁵

A brief note of November 27, signed by D. Epp, Johann Wiebe, Jakob Wiens and Gerhard Willms, informed Elder de Veer that they will report to him regarding "changes in the ministerial council" as soon as possible.³⁶ When that information finally arrived in August 1793, it reported that Johann Wiebe had still not accepted ordination as elder and that Peter Dyck did not accept the office of minister. In addition to David Epp, the ministerial council thus consisted of Johann Wiebe, Jakob Wiens, and Gerhard Willms as ministers, and Cornelius Friesen, Johann Wiebe, and Jakob Klassen as deacons.³⁷ By then it was rumoured in Prussia that Gerhard Neufeldt had been deposed.³⁸

In October 1793 a lengthy letter was received in Danzig and Elbing signed by nineteen brothers on behalf of a larger group in Chortitza. These accused David Epp of having bought stolen grain in Danzig; of not having paid all his debts before emigrating; of heavy drinking in Dubrovno; of not properly delivering to six brothers money received for them in Riga for the purchase of building lumber; and of deposing Minister Gerhard Neufeldt from office when he confronted him about this. "Ohm Epp," they said, "is a man who rarely has as much money as he is capable of spending." His involvements in secular business are a hindrance in his office. On occasion, when disputes arise, "he brings brothers before the secular authorities without first presenting the matter to the congregation." In the process Mennonite teaching is sometimes, "ja die mehrste Zeit," (most of the time) set aside. Ohm Wiebe, on the other hand, "is a young man of limited experience and is also not concerned about many things." He is in any case not to be persuaded to accept the office, maintaining that he is not competent for the task and that it is too difficult to restore order in a congregation which is involved in so many disputes.³⁹

The Danzig ministerial council dealt promptly with these charges. The matter of Epp's buying stolen grain was fully corroborated as an incident that involved church discipline in which Epp "got off by the skin of his teeth, being spared by the brotherhood more out of love for our venerable elder, Ohm Peter Epp, than out of conviction." It was also true that he did not pay all of his debts before emigrating, owing money to at least three men. If it is true that he had a hundred florins cash on his journey, then it did not all belong to him. The other accusations, the Danzig group suggests, should be discussed in the entire Flemish ministerial council.⁴⁰

Before such a meeting could be arranged in view of the virtually impassable late fall roads, Minister Johann Wiebe and Jakob von Bergen arrived from Chortitza, urgently requesting that an elder and a minister come with advice and assistance to restore order in the church in Russia.⁴¹ A meeting of the ministerial council in Rosenort on November 15 agreed in principle to the request of the Russian visitors. This recommendation was to be ratified by brotherhood meetings in all four congregations and the delegation selected.⁴² Elder J. de Veer of Danzig opposed the suggestion of sending two men to Russia unless they agreed to remain there. Otherwise any order more or less established might disintegrate shortly after their departure. Instead he suggested that Johann Wiebe be ordained and given instructions on how to deal with the situation.⁴³ Wiebe, however, refused ordination and insisted that the disagreements with Deputies Hoepfner and Bartsch and with elder David Epp were so severe that they could not be internally resolved.⁴⁴

Elder Cornelius Regier of Heubuden agreed to go when both Gerhard Wiebe and Dirk Thiessen were excused on the basis of age, and J. de Veer because he was unable to leave church and household for so long a time. Fur-

ther delays were caused when Regier's first partner, Abraham Siemens of Gross-Mausdorf, broke his foot, and when his replacement, Cornelius Warkentin (1740-1809) of Rosenort, was delayed by a flood.⁴⁵

The Danzig ministerial council now responded to the nineteen dissidents in Russia, advising them to submit to Regier and Warkentin and to heed their advice.⁴⁶ A letter of authorization was prepared and signed by the entire Flemish ministerial council on March 1 and the two finally departed on March 14.⁴⁷

After some adventure on the journey, including a holdup just past Warsaw, the two arrived at the village of Neuendorf in Chortitza on Good Friday, April 18, to a highly emotional reception. The next day they moved their quarters to the home of Johann Wiebe.⁴⁸

After the Easter holidays a series of meetings was arranged to bring the contending factions together. Deputies Hoepfner and Bartsch were most cooperative. The nineteen who had complained against Elder David Epp were reprimanded, and after both sides had confessed and forgiven each other, peace was established.⁴⁹

Cornelius Regier became sick on May 11 and died after a severe twenty-day illness on May 30.⁵⁰ Warkentin spent most of this time at his partner's bedside. After the funeral on June 3 he resumed the task of helping the congregation to reorganize. Warkentin officiated at communion and baptism services, received members into churches by transfer, and conducted elections for ministers and deacons. On June 15 in Neuendorf Peter Dyck was unanimously re-elected to the ministerial position he had earlier declined to accept. On June 24 in Chortitz David Giesbrecht (probably the one deposed earlier) and Gerhard Ens were elected.⁵¹ Presumably Warkentin ordained all of these as well as Johann Wiebe, who now finally accepted the office of elder. In addition, he seems to have re-instated the deposed minister, Gerhard Neufeldt.⁵²

3. Provisions of Ministerial Leadership: the Frisian Church.

It is not known whether the Frisian emigrants were also exhorted before departing for Russia to seek to form one church with the Flemish in their new home. In any case, during the winter of 1789 in Dubrovno the two groups functioned as one congregation. A Frisian, David Schoett, was included in the team chosen to lead Sunday worship services and was delegated with Bernhard Penner to write to the Danzig church for help.⁵³ This followed the close co-operation that had characterized the work of Deputies Hoepfner and Bartsch from the outset.

When ministerial candidates were elected in early 1789, the Dubrovno group included two Frisians in the list, Schoett and Cornelius Froese. At least the former, with twelve votes, should have been given serious consideration by the March 12 meeting of the Flemish ministerial council at Petershagen, since the cover letter drew specific attention to his presence and to the promise of the Frisians to be united with them in all things, and since Flemish candi-

dates down to four votes were entered into the lottery for the fourth minister and the two deacons.⁵⁴ Frisian disappointment with the Prussian decision to pass over their candidates is thus quite understandable.

The decision to separate seems to have been made when this response arrived from Prussia. A letter from the Chortitzta Flemish ministerial council in December 1789 reported that with the exception of a few families, the Frisians (ca. 36 families) had not joined with them at all but had organized their own church. Their ministers included Frantz Pauls, who imposed himself on them (“der sich hierzu aufgeworfen”) and the two candidates, Froese and Schoett, whom they accepted without further election. Schoett had already died. In addition, the Frisians claimed that their elder, Johann Klassen, had followed them. He was now deceiving them with marvellous tales and fables, leading them away from simple faith in Jesus Christ (“viel Wunder und Fabeln ihnen einbildet, und die Sinnen verrücket, von der Einfältigkeit in Jesu Christo”). The Flemish leaders were not convinced that he had indeed been ordained as elder and asked the Prussian church to look into this.⁵⁵

During this first winter in Chortitzta, the Frisians isolated themselves in the fortress (*Festung*) at Alexandrowsk. Here Klassen received the first baptismal class of youth into the church.⁵⁶ Hoepfner and Bartsch identified them as the rebellious people (“die widerspenstigen Leute”) in a February 1790 report to Elder Gerhard Wiebe. Under the leadership of their ministers, Klassen and Pauls, they were looking for a place of their own (“eine andere Gegend”) to settle. In spring a group of about thirty families founded their own village of Kronsweide.⁵⁷

In November 1792 Elder Heinrich Donner of the Orlofffelder Frisian congregation received a letter from Kronsweide reporting that “Jan Clas [Johann Klassen] of Rosenkrantz, who had moved to Russia, was creating problems in the church there as he had also done here.” He was trying to force himself on them as elder (“sich zum Ältesten aufwerfen wollte”).⁵⁸ By 1793, Klassen was causing so much trouble that the church forbade him to preach.⁵⁹

Pauls, also from Rosenkrantz, apparently wrote to the Flemish leadership in Prussia in 1792. Gerhard Wiebe, commenting on Pauls’ letter in a note to his nephew, Johann Wiebe, is surprised at its spiritual pride, weak empathy (Mitföhlungskraft), and wrong application of Scripture passages.⁶⁰ Pauls, too, was deposed by 1794, leaving only Cornelius Froese when the Flemish leaders arrived in 1794.⁶¹

Froese, minister since 1789, was apparently elected elder in 1792 and confirmed in that office by Elder Heinrich Donner.⁶² Under his leadership the Kronsweide congregation obtained its own church building in 1792, while the much larger Flemish congregation still met in private homes.⁶³ Froese came from Thiensdorf congregation in West Prussia. Thus, only David Schoett of the first four ministers was from the dominant Lithuanian congregation.⁶⁴

Shortly after Regier and Warkentin arrived in Chortitz, Froese died. At his funeral on May 8 they were urgently and tearfully begged not to abandon the Kronsweide community. Apparently no baptism or communion service had been held among them in five years.⁶⁵ Warkentin held services in Kronsweide on June 20, 22, and 25. Leadership elections on the latter date chose Lithuanians Heinrich Arend and Franz Baumann of Kronsweide and the newly immigrated Cornelius von Riesen of Schoenwiese as ministers, and N. Odse as deacon.⁶⁶ All were presumably ordained by Warkentin.⁶⁷

It is not clear whether elections for an elder were also held at this time.⁶⁸ Normal Mennonite practice, in which elders were chosen only from the ranks of ministers, would suggest that none was elected during Warkentin's visit. The next known Frisian elder after Froese was Heinrich Janzen. Klaas Reimer, at whose election as Kleingemeinde elder Janzen presided, claims that Janzen was ordained by Cornelius Warkentin.⁶⁹ B. H. Unruh gives the date of his ordination as 1795 and his place of origin as Rosenkrantz.⁷⁰ Others date it still later.⁷¹

4. Concluding Observations

A brief recapitulation of some significant aspects of the Mennonite community at this transition period may help to dispel misleading impressions gained from the secondary literature.

A. Language

By the time West Prussia formally became a part of the Kingdom of Prussia with the first partition of Poland in 1772, Mennonites were already largely acculturated. Dutch as the language of preaching and church singing was replaced by High German, a bit earlier in rural areas belonging to West Prussia than in the free city of Danzig. In the Heubuden Flemish congregation, for example, the transition took place during the eldership of Cornelius Regier's predecessor, Gerhard von Barga (1741-71).⁷² In Danzig, Peter Epp's predecessor, Hans von Steen, ended his term as elder (1754-79) already teaching catechism classes in the German language whose introduction he had strongly opposed. The customary funeral song composed when he died in 1781 was ironically the first in Danzig written in German.⁷³

Contacts continued occasionally with the Dutch churches. Thus, Heinrich Donner sought advice and support in Holland as well as in Hamburg in his disagreement with fellow Frisian elders over the acceptance of non-Mennonites into membership.⁷⁴ Trappe could still persuade Amsterdam leaders to write to Prussia regarding the Frisian-Flemish separation, and the Prussian leaders still took advice of their Dutch colleagues seriously.⁷⁵ But the Mennonite gift of two fat oxen, 400 pounds of butter, 50 ducks, 50 hens, and 20 cheeses for the ceremonial honoring of the new Prussian king, Frederick II, at Marienburg in 1772, and the presence of Donner and Cornelius Warkentin as official delegates, symbolized that the Dutch-Polish era was over.⁷⁶

That they were much more at home in the Werder Platt (Low German) than in literary High German is obvious both in their writing and in the random spelling of names in the various village lists from the early years of settlement in Russia.

B. Church Unity

The old Flemish-Frisian division was in fact less pronounced than the early events in Russia suggest. All important contacts with the governments were made jointly. In 1772, in compliance with the wish of the Prussian government, a union of the two groups was sought. The Frisian representatives promised that their church would adopt the Flemish policy of forbidding marriages with Catholic and Lutheran partners, but strong objections, threatening to lead to a spilt, restored the former practice. By the late 1770s inter-marriage between Frisian and Flemish was quietly accepted. Annual conferences of the ministers and elders of both groups took place since 1772, leading to close personal friendships and cordial relations among the leaders.⁷⁷ In 1779 elders Heinrich Donner and Gerhard Wiebe jointly published the Waldeck-Elbing Catechism.⁷⁸

The first membership transfer by letter of transfer between the two churches took place in 1768,⁷⁹ but only gradually became common practice. In the Heubuden congregation Frisians were not accepted without rebaptism until 1770.⁸⁰ In the Orloffferfelde Frisian congregation the acceptance of Flemish transfer applicants was handled like the re-admission of banned Frisians until 1783.⁸¹ As late as 1786 the Flemish leaders in Königsberg slighted a visiting Frisian minister and deacon from Lithuania by not inviting them to sit with the other ministers in a church service, forcing them to sit among the lay members (“sondern unter die brüder sitzen müsten”).⁸²

That the separation of the two groups in Russia took place after their initial close co-operation in Dubrovno was thus likely due not so much to historic differences as to the unfortunate action of the Prussian Flemish ministerial council in rejecting the Frisian ministerial candidates. This allowed minority trouble-makers, like Johann Klassen, to persuade the largely Lithuanian Frisians to separate from the largely West Prussian Flemish. Since the death of their elder Cornelius Froese at the time of the visit of Regier and Warkentin in 1794 left the Frisian (Kronsweider) congregation entirely bereft of ministers, that might have been an occasion for re-uniting the two groups. For various reasons, which Regier and Warkentin promised to explain on another occasion, they felt that this was not the appropriate time to effect such a union.⁸³ Nevertheless, the Kronsweider group had no reluctance in accepting the definitive leadership ministry of Cornelius Warkentin in helping it to reorganize.

C. Church Practice

The four Flemish congregations (Danzig, Elbing-Ellerwald, Tiegenhagen, and Gross-Werder/Heubuden) clearly had a very close and harmonious work-

ing relationship. From the outset of emigration talk, they sought to ensure the establishment of a new partner congregation in Russia. When legal difficulties in receiving exit permits and the impatience of some to leave prevented an orderly group emigration, that organization could not take place prior to departure. Unsettled conditions in Russia and unforeseen illness and accidents caused further delays. Gerhard Wiebe wrote to the Chortitza ministerial council as late as 1790 that he had waited all summer and fall for a letter from them, wondering whether perhaps Russia's enemies had overrun and destroyed them. In desperation he had written to the Hutterites at Vishenko asking them to investigate.⁸⁴

Throughout the period, communication with the congregation in Russia was always collegial. The implicit paternalism of the Prussian Flemish leaders in feeling that they needed to organize the congregation in Russia seems no more than what responsible leadership would owe to its members. The suggestion of Brons and Epp, that no one among the emigrants was worthy to be ordained, finds no trace of corroboration in the sources.⁸⁵ At every point where the immigrants were reluctant to take responsible decisions or assume responsible positions, the Prussian leaders offered humble encouragement.

Suggestions that the ordination of the first ministers and elder via letter by the Prussian elders constituted, as it were, a second-rate ordination, are quite misleading. The letter sent to Dubrovno by the Flemish ministerial council in March 1789 did not ordain the chosen candidates but authorized the congregation to ordain them.⁸⁶ The church would have given authorization for the ordination of a minister in one of its Prussian congregations in a quite similar way, although an elder would then have been present in person to lead the ordination service. The same is true in the election and ordination of the first elder. Gerhard Wiebe writes: "It is unanimously agreed that the immigrants be given full authority to hold elections for an elder and to ordain the same."⁸⁷ There is no indication in the sources that Bernhard Penner's authority was ever questioned because he was ordained "only" by a minister, or only by letter and not by an elder.

When Penner died without having succeeded in providing a successor, the Chortitza congregation proceeded to elect and ordain another, with Minister Jakob Wiens officiating. If David Epp's leadership was refused by some members for this reason, the Prussian ministerial council rejected their reasoning. "David Epp has been elected in an orderly manner and been prayerfully ordained and thus cannot be released just like that; that would invalidate both the election and the ordination and cast doubt on the efficacy of the prayer connected with it."⁸⁸ In admonishing Johann Wiebe to accept the position of elder to which he had been elected, the emphasis is on the call of God through the voice of the congregation. But Wiebe, too, was assured that he need have no reservations about the ordination.⁸⁹

Most accounts of the work of Elder Cornelius Regier and Cornelius Warkentin in Russia in 1794 assume that Regier on his deathbed ordained his colleague as elder "to ensure that his authority was maintained."⁹⁰ That Warkentin himself did not report such an ordination is ascribed by Smissen to his modesty.⁹¹ The normal concern for handling church matters in an orderly way was no doubt heightened in this mission, since Regier and Warkentin were sent specifically to straighten out a disorderly situation. For Warkentin to complete that mission by himself might well require him to act in certain functions normally reserved for elders. The letter of authorization ("Vollmacht") prepared for them by the Prussian Flemish congregations on 1 March 1794, explicitly gave full authority to both men, though, of course, it did not anticipate that Regier might die before the task was completed.⁹² It would be natural, therefore, for Regier to confirm for the benefit of both the Chortitza congregations and Warkentin that he had the authority to complete the task assigned to them. Heinrich Donner, a close colleague of Warkentin on many joint missions to government offices, interpreted Regier's action as confirming Warkentin for the completion of the matters ("zu Vollen-dung der Sachen bestätigt").⁹³ In any case, Warkentin's Grosswerder congregation considered him still to be an ordinary minister on his return from Russia, electing and ordaining him as elder in 1795.⁹⁴ For Regier to have ordained him to that office, without his prior election by a congregation, would have been "disorderly." Klass Reimer later cited as a precedent Warkentin's having performed ordinations as "a minister."⁹⁵

Another aspect of church practice is raised by the assertion that Johann Wiebe was chosen as elder while he was still an ordinary lay person. D. H. Epp asserts this, apparently on the basis of the claim of the villagers of Rosenthal that Wiebe had given this as the reason for not wanting to travel to Prussia for ordination.⁹⁶ Since the sequence of events indicated above shows that Wiebe was already a minister before being elected as elder, and since he had already agreed to accept the further ordination as elder if another were elected to serve alongside of him, Epp's conclusion is not warranted. Choosing an elder out of lay ranks would have been an innovation, hardly to be contemplated by the immigrant group, and even less so in view of the specific instructions from Prussia on the occasion of choosing their first elder that they "prayerfully elect an elder *from among your ministers.*"⁹⁷

While it was a formal requirement that an elder be chosen from the ranks of the ministers, it seemed to have been informally a distinct advantage to have proper family connections.⁹⁸ Among the elders involved during this era, the following may be noted. Heinrich Donner was grandson of Johann Donner, preacher of the Frisian congregation of Danzig, and was succeeded as elder of Orlofffelde by his son Johann.⁹⁹ Cornelius Regier succeeded his father-in-law Gerhard von Barga as elder in the Heubuden Flemish congregation.¹⁰⁰ When Peter Epp became elder in Danzig, his older brother Hein-

rich was a minister in the Gross-Werder congregation and a younger brother, Cornelius, was his ministerial colleague in Danzig. The latter's son David became the second elder of the Flemish congregation in Russia.¹⁰¹ David's colleague, Johann Wiebe, was a nephew of Elder Gerhard Wiebe of Elbing-Ellerwalde. This tendency probably resulted on more than one occasion in the passing over of a more suitable candidate in preference to one 'properly' connected when choosing congregational leaders.

D. Relations with the state

The long tradition of living under a *Privilegium* in Poland and Prussia and the existence of a state church in Russia naturally suggested that the religious status of Mennonites be negotiated prior to an immigration. That such an important negotiation was allowed to be handled by two laymen, not even officially appointed by the church community, is surprising. The resulting status of the Mennonite colonies gave rise to considerable ambiguity and confusion as to where the "state" ended and Mennonite community began. Thus, already in the brief period under consideration matters were rather quickly taken to the "Obrigkeit" when strife in community and church broke out.

Matters in Prussia were similar. The disagreement in the Frisian church was taken into the courts by the Thiensdorf congregation, no matter how much scorn Donner heaped on his opponents for doing so.¹⁰² The Prussian Flemish leadership at one point suggested that the Chortitza leaders petition the Russian government for a plot of land for the support of an elder.¹⁰³ The Potemkin-Hoeppner-Bartsch agreement of 1787 apparently included provisions for an annual subvention of 400 rubles for a Mennonite "pastor."¹⁰⁴ Neither of these appears to have materialized.

The migration to Russia was not by an organized church group, as was largely the case in the move from Russia to Canada in the 1870s, but by groups of families. Difficulties in community organization arose more from the ill-defined role of Deputies Heoppner and Bartsch, whose powers derived from the Russian government and whom the congregations had not authorized, than from lack of order in the church. After some initial hesitation, the leaders in Prussia were more eager to confer authority on the congregation in Russia than the immigrants were to receive it. With the exception of some signs of reluctance on the part of Jacob de Veer of Danzig, this willingness was based more on a recognition that the Chortitza group, as a congregation, in fact had this authority, than on a wish to rid itself of an unpleasant situation.

Notes

¹Alteter Heinrich Donner, "Chronik aus dem Kirchenbuch der friesischen Mennonitengemeinde in Westpreußen," and Gerhard Wiebe, "Verzeichnis der gehaltenen Predigten samt andern vorgefallenen Merkwürdigkeiten in der Gemeinde Gottes in Elbing u. Ellerwald von anno 1778, d. 1ten Januar." Copies of both are found in the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives, Winnipeg. Page numbers cited for Donner's "Chronik" are to a typewritten transcription by Werner Janzen, Almersbach. On the former see Edmund Kizik, "Die Chronik Heinrich Donners. Eine wichtige Quelle zur Geschichte der Mennoniten in Westpreußen im letzten Viertel des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 45(1988): 54-66; on the latter, Peter M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)* (Fresno: General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1978), 58-64.

²Donner, 37.

³Compared with a total of 2166 Hufen held by Mennonites in East and West Prussian and Lithuania in 1787. Donner, 24-26, 29, 37, and Paul Karge, "Die Auswanderung west- und ostpreußischer Mennoniten nach Südrußland, 1787-1820," *Elbinger Jahrbuch*, 3 (1923):72, give further details.

⁴Donner, 38-39. An Absalon Engbrecht does not appear until 1818 in the lists of Benjamin Heinrich Unruh, *Die niederländischniederdeutschen Hintergründe der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18., und 19. Jahrhundert* (Karlsruhe: by the author, 1955), 361.

⁵Donner, 39.

⁶Donner, 34-35, 50-51; H.. G. Mannhardt, *Die Danziger Mennonitengemeinde. Ihre Entstehung und ihre Geschichte von 1569-1919* (Danzig: Selbstverlag der Danziger Mennonitengemeinde, 1919), 127.

⁷Donner, 30-41.

⁸Johann van der Smissen, "Zur Geschichte der ersten Gemeindebildung in den Mennoniten-Kolonien Süd-Rußlands," *Mennonitische Blätter*, III (March 1856):18-19.

Smissen's article, based largely on the Danzig Flemish church files, is the most coherent account to the founding of the first Mennonite churches in Russia. It was reprinted by Jacob Epp in *Zur Heimath*, VI (1880):107, 115, 123, 130, 139, 147, 163, 171; in *Der Botschafter*, V (1910) #91-99; in *Friedensstimme*, XI (1913), #7 (23 January):7-10; #8 (26 January):12-13; #9 (30 January):10-12; and in Franz Thiessen *Neuendorf in Bild und Wort. Chortizaer-Bezirk, Ukraine, 1789-1943* (n.p.: by the author, n.d. [1984]), 19-24. The latter reprint is incomplete and contains numerous typographical and other errors which distort the story.

Mannhardt, 128-29; A. Brons, *Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der altewangelischen Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten in kurzen Zügen übersichtlich dargestellt* (first published 1884) Zweite Auflage (Norden: Diedr. Soltau, 1881), 285; J. J. Hildebrand, *Chronologische Zeittafel* (Winnipeg: by the author, 1955), 148.

⁹*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, sv "Epp, Peter," [11:237]; D. H. Epp, *Die Chortitzer Mennoniten* (Odessa: by the author, 1889), 41 (page numbers refer to the 1984 reprint, Steinbach: Die Mennonitische Post); Friesen, 131.

¹⁰Gerhard Wiebe, "Verzeichnis," 143.

¹¹Cornelius Regier, "Nachschrift zu einem Attest der Mennoniten Gemeinde Heubuden, gerichtet an die Danziger Mennoniten Gemeinde," 15 March 1788, *Der Bote*, 7 December 1938, 4.

¹²Hildebrand, *Zeittafel*, 149; Mannhardt, 129; Unruh, 287-88. For further details see Karge, 83, 86-88.

¹³Donner, 39; Smissen, 19; Franz Harder, "Die Auswanderung aus der Danziger Mennoniten-Gemeinde nach Russland," *Mitteilungen des Sippenverbandes der Danziger Mennoniten-Familien Epp-Kauenhowen-Zimmermann*, 3(1937):101.

¹⁴Wiebe, 147-49; Epp, 39-40.

¹⁵Harder, 101; Ernst Regehr, "Ein Bericht aus alten Tagen," *Christlicher Gemeindekalender*, 1937:80; Smissen, 19; Brons, 285-86; Epp, 38.

Gerhard Wiebe was gone on a trip to Königsberg from July 24 to August 5, and has no diary entry on this meeting at all.

¹⁶Wiebe, 153, 154; Smissen, 20; Brons, 286.

¹⁷Ernst Regehr, *Geschichts- und Predigertabelle der Mennonitengemeinde Resenort* (Elbing: by the author, n.d. [after 1937]), 7; Smissen, 19; Harder, 102; Mannhardt, 129.

See David G. Rempel, "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Russia: A Sketch of Its Founding and Endurance, 1789-1919," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* XLVII (October 1973): 293-294, for a further discussion of immigrant numbers.

¹⁶Epp, 41, and N. J. Kroeker, *First Mennonite Villages in Russia 1789-1943. Khortitsa-Rosental* (Vancouver: by the author, 1981), 49, follow Peter Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung der Mennoniten aus dem danziger Gebiet nach Südrußland* (Halbstadt: P. Neufeld, 1888), 49, in identifying the third man as Jacob Schött. Unruh, 211, #26, and 297, #101, lists only a David Schütz among the immigrants.

¹⁹Wiebe, 157-58; Smissen, 19-20; Epp, 42; Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 53.

²⁰Wiebe, 158; Smissen, 20; Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 51; Epp, 42; Kroeker, 49.

²¹Wiebe, 160-61; Smissen, 20. Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 52; Epp, 42; James Urry, *None But Saints. The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889* (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1989), 66; Cornelius Krahn, *ME*, sv "Chortitza Mennonite Church" [I:568].

²²Wiebe, 162. This may have been a valid reason in the case of Schoett, who came from Plauschwarren, Lithuania, but much less so for Froese, who was from Ellerwalde, Kanitzen. Unruh, 297, #101; 295, #41.

²³Smissen, 20.

²⁴Wiebe, 161; letter dated Elbing, 2 April 1789.

²⁵Smissen, 20-21; Mannhardt, 130. Epp's farewell sermon is found in *Der Bote*, 7 and 14 October 1942, 5-6.

²⁶Wiebe, 178-81. The letter of 18 December 1789 is reprinted in *Mennonitische Warte*, 1938, 19-21.

²⁷Wiebe, 182-86, letter, 11 March 1790.

²⁸Wiebe, 212; Smissen, *Mennonitische Blätter* III (May 1856): 34.

²⁹Wiebe, 212, letter, 4 June 1791.

³⁰Wiebe, 224-27; David Epp, 11 March 1792, to Jakob de Veer, Danzig, and Gerhard Wiebe, Elbing; Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 52. The account of Brons, 288, is highly problematic.

³¹Smissen, 34. Epp, 55.

³²Wiebe, 227; Smissen, 34. Brons, 289, and Epp, 56, are problematic.

³³Letter, Jacob de Veer, Danzig, to Lehrer Jakob Wiens, Chortitza, 14 June 1792, in de Veer letters, 3-5, MHC Archives; Wiebe, 233-37, letter, 21 June 1792 to his nephew Johann Wiebe.

³⁴de Veer letters, 6.

³⁵Wiebe, 243-44; Johann Wiebe, 15 November 1792, to G. Wiebe.

³⁶de Veer letters, 7.

³⁷de Veer letters, 9-10; Wiebe, 256-57; David Epp, 8 July 1793 to de Veer.

³⁸de Veer, letters, 10.

³⁹Johann Pauls, Cornelius Enß, Johann Sawatski, Heinrich Claassen, Antonie Höpner, Jacob Höpner, Hans Dyck, Abraham Friesen, Johann Neufeld, Frans Barkmann, Johann Bartsch, Peter Peters, Abraham Krahn, Johann Wieler, Peter Dell, Wellem Barkman, Isaak Kasdorff, Peter Teigrecht, Johann Krahn, 3 September 1793, to Danzig Ministerial Council, de Veer letters, 10-12; Wiebe, 259-63; Smissen, 35.

⁴⁰J. de Veer, 28 October 1793 to G. Wiebe, de Veer letters, 14.

⁴¹Wiebe, 263-64, 7 Nov 1793.

⁴²Wiebe, 263-64; de Veer letters, 16-17; Smissen, 35.

⁴³J. de Veer, 1 December 1793, to C. Warkentin, de Veer letters, 17-18.

⁴⁴de Veer letters, 18; Smissen, 35. For a discussion of the charges against the deputies, both before and after 1794, see David G. Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia: The First Mennonite Migration," *Mennonite Life* XXIV (January 1969): 21-28.

⁴⁵de Veer letter, 17-19, 21; Smissen, 35.

⁴⁶de Veer letters, 20-21, 27 February 1794; Epp, 57-58.

⁴⁷Wiebe, 270-73; de Veer letters, 22-23; Smissen 35-36.

⁴⁸Regehr, 80; letter, Cornelius Warkentin and Cornelius Regier, Chortitza, 10 May 1794, to Prussian ministerial council, in Smissen, 36-37; Wiebe, 275-77.

⁴⁹Epp, 59-60, reprints the *Vereinigungsschrift* (letter of reconciliation), signed at Chortitz, June 1794, by Cornelius Regier, Cornelius Warkentin, and Baron Joh. v. Brackel; Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 96.

⁵⁰Smissen, 37. Epp, 60, gives the date as June 16 on the Julian calendar.

⁵¹Smissen, *Mennonitische Blätter* III (July 1856): 49.

⁵²Wiebe, 289. Smissen, 49.

⁵³Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 50.

⁵⁴Ibid., 52; Epp, 42.

⁵⁵Wiebe, 178-81; *Mennonitische Warte*, 1938, 19-21. On Schoett and Klassen, see also Friesen, 891, 165.

⁵⁶Epp, 68; Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 79-80.

⁵⁷Wiebe, 199.

⁵⁸Donner, 48, cf 31; Unruh, 212, "Verzeichnis der Mennoniten-Familien in der Kolonie Chortitz vom Jahre 1793," #32; 292, "Abwanderungen in das Chortitzaer Siedlungsgebiet, Liste 1788," #17.

Friesen, 165, 891, and J. H. Enns and Cornelius Krahn, *ME*, sv "Kronsweide," [III:249], list Klassen as the first elder.

⁵⁹Unruh, 292, "wurde 1793 abgesetzt;" cf 212, note at the end of Kronsweide list. C. Regier and C. Warkentin, Chortitz, 10 May 1794, in Smissen, 36. Is. P. Klassen, "Die Kronsweider Gemeinde," unpublished manuscript in MHC Archives.

⁶⁰Wiebe, 236.

⁶¹Smissen, 35. The "H.P." in Warkentin and Regier's letter must refer to Franz Pauls. Hildebrand, *Erste Auswanderung*, 45.

⁶²Unruh, 295, "Abwanderungen in das Chortitzaer Siedlungsgebiet. Liste 1788,"⁶³ Handwritten note by Kornelius Hildebrand, Chortitz, in MHC Archives copy of *Namens=Verzeichniss der in Deutschland, Ost= und Westpreußen, Galizien, Polen und Rußland befindlichen mennoniten-Gemeinden, sowie ihrer Aeltesten, Lehrer und Vorsteher* (Danzig: Edwin Groening, 1857), 67. Klassen, "Die Kronsweider Gemeinde." Donner's "Chronik" however, has no entry to that effect.

⁶⁴Smissen, 35; de Veer letters, 8.

⁶⁵Unruh, 211, "Verzeichnis . . . 1793," Kronsweide, #6 and #26. Data in Unruh, 211-12 and 288-89 show that 26 of 35 families in Kronsweide came from Lithuania.

⁶⁶Warkentin and Regier, in Smissen, 36. This suggests that Froese may have been elected as elder but not ordained.

⁶⁷Smissen, 49. Unruh, 211, Kronsweide #1, 2; 214, Schoenwiese, #13; 244, #9. Odse, or Ot-sel, as Klassen identifies him, does not appear in Unruh.

⁶⁸Donner, 53, mentions only the *election* of ministers. Warkentin's diary fragment, on the basis of which Smissen reconstructs events, apparently does not mention any ordinations he may have performed.

⁶⁹Warkentin's report (Smissen, 49) does not indicate any such election. Donner, 53, mentions only that Warkentin conducted the election of *ministers* in the Frisian church. Friesen, 891, leaves a gap in the elder list from 1794 to 1800; but p. 165, inserts "N. (?) ordained in 1794 by Cornelius Warkentin." Epp, 68, thinks that such election was probably held.

⁷⁰Friesen, 130.

⁷¹Unruh, 212, "Verzeichnis...1793," Kronsweide, #34, has a Henirich Jantzen among the Rosenkrantzer, "die sich nicht unterschrieben haben;" cf. 214, #12; 243, #19; 253, #326; and 296, #66.

⁷²Urry, 67, gives 1797. Klassen, "Kronsweider Gemeinde," says that he came from Lithuania in 1796 and was elected as minister shortly afterward, becoming elder only in 1800. Kornelius Hildebrand, 67, indicates that Janzen came from Lithuania in 1794, was elected minister in January 1797 and ordained as elder in July 1797; cf Kornelius Hildebrand, note on inside back cover of the MHC Archives copy of *Namensverzeichnis der Aeltesten, Lehrer und Diakonen oder Vorsteher der Taufgesinnten Mennonitischen Gemeinden in Ost= und West=Preußen, Lithauen, Polen und den neu angesiedelten Kolonien in Rußland* (Elbing: Agathon Wernich, 1835).

⁷³Bruno Ewert, "Geschichtliches aus der Mennonitengemeinde Heubuden-Marienburg," *Christlicher Gemeindekalendar*, 49 (1940):51-52.

⁷⁴*ME* sv "Steen, Hans von," by Cornelius Krahn [IV:623]

⁷⁵Donner, 33-34, 1784-85.

⁷⁶*Missive...aan de Doopsgenzinde Christenen...in de Staaten van Haare Majesteit Catharina de Grootte, Keizerin aller Russen,* Leeuwarden, 31 July 1788. *ME* sv "Missive," by N. van der Zijpp [III:717]; Urry, 49.

⁷⁶Donner, 24.

⁷⁷*ME* sv “Flemish Mennonites,” and “Frisian Mennonites,” by C. Neff and N. van der Zijpp [II:339-40, 413-13]; *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, sv “Marcushof,” by A. Driedger [III:42]; “Thiendsdorf -Preußisch Rosengart,” and “Tragheimerweide,” by Horst Penner [IV:313-14, 348-49]; “Rosenkrantz,” by E. Crous [III:542].

⁷⁸Donner, 26; *ME*, sv “Donner, Heinrich” [II:84].

⁷⁹*ML*, sv “Friesische Mennoniten,” by C. Neff [II:9].

⁸⁰Ewert, 52.

⁸¹Donner, 30.

⁸²Donner, 35.

⁸³Smissen, 37.

⁸⁴Wiebe, 182.

⁸⁵Brons, 285-86; Epp, 38.

⁸⁶Wiebe, 160-61.

⁸⁷Wiebe, 183, 18 March 1790.

⁸⁸Jacob de Veer, Danzig, 14 June 1792, to Jakob Wiens, Chortitza; de Veer letters, 3-5.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*; cf Wiebe, 233-36, letter, 21 June 1972 to Johann Wiebe.

⁹⁰Brons, 292; Friesen, 91; *ME*, sv “Warkentin, Cornelius,” by C. Krahn [IV:888]; Urry, 67.

⁹¹Smissen, 37.

⁹²The text of the “Vollmacht” is found in de Veer letters, 22-23, and in Wiebe, 271-73; key paragraphs in Brons, 290.

⁹³Donner, 53.

⁹⁴Regehr, *Geschichts- und Predigertabelle*, 7.

⁹⁵Friesen, 130.

⁹⁶Epp, 55; Friesen, 160-63, 885.

⁹⁷Wiebe, 183; emphasis added.

⁹⁸Urry, 66.

⁹⁹*ME* sv “Donner, Heinrich,” [II:84].

¹⁰⁰Ewert, 52.

¹⁰¹Anna Epp Ens, “Pedigree Chart of Peter Epp and Anna Claassen,” Appendix Insert for *The House of Heinrich* (Winnipeg: Epp Book Committee, 1980).

¹⁰²Donner, 34.

¹⁰³Wiebe, 183.

¹⁰⁴Rempel, 288.