

## Mennonites in Europe, North and South America

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Translated by Allen E. Konrad – March, 2007  
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[Words in square brackets indicate translator's comments]

[Translation Begins]

Mr. Jakob H. Janzen  
164 Erb St. West  
Waterloo / Ont.  
Canada

593 Dr.Q/Re 13 August, 1938

Janzen.

Dear Mr. Janzen, senior,

Your letter of 9 July this year was brought to our attention by Dr. Lincke for processing. A list of former German settlements in Russia does not yet exist. The Research of Germans in Russia (*Forschungsstelle des Russlanddeutschtums*) of the DAI, established a few weeks ago (\*) by the Association of Germans in Russia (*Verband der Russlanddeutschen*) in Berlin took upon itself the job to get this done. I have drawn up a comprehensive list of Germans in Russia of the Mennonite confession. Beyond that, I would appreciate a list (names, addresses) of all your known German settlements in Russia, groups in Canada and in the United States.

Dr. Lincke has also asked that I share with you that he would be glad to send you the book by Hummel titled: "Hundred Year Entailed Estate Law in Russia" (*Hundert Jahre Erbhofrecht in Russland*).

Heil Hitler!

(\*) July 1938!

Main Department for Expatriate Germans  
Kinship Information:

1.A.

(Dr. Quiring)

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[Translation Begins]

9 July, 1938

Dr. Lincke  
Deutsches Ausland Institut  
Stuttgart  
Haus des Deutschtums

Dear Dr. Lincke!

I want to thank you very much for sending me the books by Lindemann, Malinowsky and Leibbrandt. I already had Lindemann's book, but many around here are very interested in what he had to say in his book about us (Tiege, Molotschna, South Russia) and for that reason is being read by many.

What is needed in these times, which is happening with the establishment of the Kinship Department, is just such a lexicon about the individual settlements and villages of the Germans in Russia, along with information about the inhabitants, the times, their foundings and things peculiar to them. I came across something similar to that by J. Stach and if the publication is still in Prischib, I want to very much get hold of it.

If it should be that one of the books you recommended by E. Schmidt, V. Schirmunski or Th. Hummel contains such information, more or less extensively, I would be very thankful to you if you would send that book to me and I will send the money to you upon receipt of it.

With the German Greeting "Gruess Gott"  
Sincerely Yours,

Jakob H. Janzen

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[In this translation, the page sequence on the microfilm is maintained, although it appears that some pages are out of sequence when it comes to places talked about]

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**United States of North America**

The first Volga Germans came to the United States in 1875, to Lincoln and Sutton, Nebraska, gathering points for the immigrants.

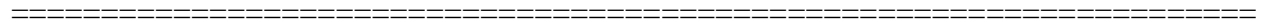
In 1881, the Volga Germans spread to Washington, Oregon and California; later into all other states.

<b>1937</b>	Residing in the State of Illinois about	20,000
	In the city of Chicago	12,000
	In all of the U.S.A.	1½ million

Fort Peck Reservation United States of N. America ( <i>Hart, Montana</i> )	Mennonite Settlement in F.P.R., north of Wolf Point Station near Oswego. Largest and most significant settlement in the northwestern states. <b>(Nothing is mentioned about Germans from Russia!)</b>
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Jansen, Nebraska	Jansen was founded in 1886 as a Mennonite Settlement by Peter Jansen, a Mennonite from Molotschna (Taurida). All 300 inhabitants (1937) are Mennonites <b>(whether they are Mennonites from Molotschna is not indicated!!!!)</b>
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One can discover a lot from the newspaper office of the **Dakota-Freien Presse** about the Germans from Russian settlements in the "States" – that there are over 1,500 Germans from Russian settlements in 32 States, Canada and South America.



<b>Capitan Mesa</b> Paraguay	German-speaking colony. 120 km up-stream from Encarnacion. Inhabitants about 100 families, Reich Germans, <b>Germans from Russia</b> (how many ?) Germans from Brazil
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<b>Fernheim</b> Colony and <b>Menno</b>	<b>1788</b> – Some 6,000 Mennonites emigrated from Prussia and went to the Black Sea area of Russia. <b>1874</b> – 700 Mennonite families immigrated to Canada and the United States. <b>1928</b> – 277 Canadian Mennonites immigrated to Chaco, Paraguay (200-250 km from Puerto Casado); founding the
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Colony of "Menno" with 18 villages and something like 250-260 farm-yards.

**1930** – Northwest of Menno, Mennonite Germans from Russia settlement Colony "Fernheim", 19 villages. 300 families fleeing from Russia plus a small group from Poland.

**1932** – A group of 360 persons from the Amur District

**1937** – 404 Families – 2,110 souls.

In this year, 140 families left Fernheim and went east (Rosario near Encarnacion).

It was necessary to redistribute the land: In place of 40 hectares; 100 hectares per head. Teachers reduced, number of students declined.

**Fernheim** (continuation)

**Inhabitants as of 01 January, 1937**

	Male	Female	Totals
Born:	63	60	123
Died:	13	08	21
Married:			20 Couples
Moved in:	07	08	15
Moved away:	74	58	132

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Total	404 farm families ( <i>nach Begiehn</i> 420)		
	28 business, manufacturing and laborer families		
Total Souls	1,061 males	Fernheim	2,110
	1,049 females	Menno	1,688
	=====	=====	
	2,110 souls ( <i>2,200 nach Begiehn</i> )		3,798 Mennonites

As a result of two years of persistent drought and severe grasshopper infestation, 200 families decided to leave the settlement and went to settle in the eastern part of Paraguay. Harder Report 24 February, 1937.

As a result of the emigration of half the inhabitants (about 200 families) due to running out of funds because of the bad harvests, those 150-200 families who stayed behind had the difficult task to resettle a new village and redistribute the land that was forsaken.

1930/32: 2,000 Germans from Russia Mennonites  
 1937: 19 inhabited areas (all from "Molotschna")

### Population Movement Fernheim

1930 births	20	deaths	88 (year of typhus)
1931 "	43	"	14
1932 "	79	"	11
1933 "	90	"	31 (year of malaria)
1934 "	100	"	30
1935 "	103	"	14
1936 "	123	"	21
Births	558	Deaths	209

German Newspaper (*Dt. Ztg.*) from Paraguay 10 October, 1937. In August of 1937, 150 families, made up of 760 persons, departed and founded a new place 40 km from Villa Rosario.

Situation as of September, 1937 (according to Menno-Blatt No. 9 – Sept. 1937)

Village Name	Farms Previously	Farms in 1937
01. Lichtfelde	24	14
02. Kleefeld	23	12
03. Gnadenheim	25	14
04. Wiesenfeld	20	08
05. Friedensfeld	25	18
06. Friedensruh	25	14
07. Schoenwiese	23	12
08. Schoenbrunn	26	15
09. Auhagen	22	11
10. Rossenort	28	12
11. Waldesruh	24	10
12. Rosenfeld	14	was liquidated

Chihuahua Cuauthemoc, "Altkolonie"

Mexico **6,847** Old Colony Mennonites in 49 villages with 229,126 acres of land (Kloetz quotes 7,500).

Industrial center: Villa Cuauthemoc, in the northwest part of Mexico. Railroad, 250 miles southwest of El Paso

1,500 (somewhat liberal) Mennonites in Sta. Clara Tale, 90 miles north of Villa Cuauthemoc.

1,500 Mennonites in Durango

Some 120 Germans (Mennonites) live in Cuauthemoc, who came from Volhynia and the Ukraine after the War, said to be doing good (*fortschrittlich gesinnt*).

### **The Mennonite colony by Cuauthemoc**

Made up of 3 settlements, with 60 villages, 12,000 souls. Came here from Canada in 1922. 60 schools, 60 teachers. About 2,000 children instructed in German. Settlement plan of Cuauhtemoc attached: K. Goetz says that 9,000 men came from Canada and of those 7,500 settled in Cuauhtemoc, 1,500 in Durango. (Because of the Mexican government's assimilation efforts, these established settlements had to be settled somewhere else, to stay was untenable. Where to go to? Divergence of opinions. Paraguay or Brazil? (Schmiedehans favored staying.)

Elders: Jsaak M. Dyck. Preacher Abraham Dyck (his brother) very influential and enlightened. Most intelligent was preacher Johann P. Wahl in the village of Neuanlage.

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Burucayupi

**Sauce de Buricayupi** Uruguay

This settlement lay in the Department of Paysandu. It was founded in 1929 by Germans from Russia refugees (coming from the camps of Hammerstein and Prenzlau) and today (letter from teacher Gotthardt Fuchs of 18 September, 1937) number 10 families with 53 children of school age. Of genuine German conviction. School was established 01 May, 1936.

### **Germans from Russia in the Brazilian State of Parana**

Augusta Victoria

In 1932, a colony of 22 German families was established. In 1935, 20 refugee Germans from Russia families arrived from the Soviet Union

Curitiba  
Garten Settlement Portao

61 Germans from Russia schoolboys, (how many families?)

### **1877-1879 Arrival in Parana of Volga Germans**

Heimtal, Parana (north)

Founded in 1930

Population increase of 70 colonists in April, 1931 (Reich Germans, Germans from Russia, Austrians, and Swiss)

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Aquinhas, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil /situated by the Uruguay River

In the Summer of 1934, with the assistance of the Emigration Office of the German Caritas Association and the Catholic Central Association out of America, Germans from Russia refugees, who traveled via Harbin, were settled in the estates of Brazil's Sul Territory.

1 school exists (the community is apparently purely Catholic!)

Bello Centro  
Munic. Santa Rosa

The population is predominantly Polish and Russian. Toward Tucundavo-Machado, to the southeast, however altogether Germans from Brazil and Russia.

Porto Feliz  
de Mondahy  
Sta. Cath.

Reich Germans	279
Germans from Brazil	1,481
<b>Germans from Russia</b>	<b>7</b>

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Gruental, Manitoba  
(Canada)

Established by Mennonites in 1874. Then all inhabitants moved to Chaco, Paraguay in 1926. Today, the place is occupied by those Mennonite Germans from Russia who came in 1924. Also a string of Mennonites who left Chaco and returned to the settlement here.

Steinbach, Manitoba  
(Canada)

The village of Steinbach belongs to the Hannover District (Municipality). Just about all of them German Mennonites who came from Russia. All industry and shops are in the hands of the Germans. There are no Jews in Steinbach (1938!)

The village of Steinbach was established in 1874 by Mennonite Germans from Russia. Some came in 1924.

Reesor, Ontario  
(Canada)

The settlement was established in 1935 by Mennonite Germans from Russia and in 1937 had 250-300 souls. The location of the settlement was somewhat close to the north of Urwald. The school is conducted in English. Before

and after instructions, an hour of studies is set aside for the use of German. There is special difficulty during the period of German instruction for those settlers using the Low German (plattdeutsche) dialect because they stubbornly hold on to it.

**Continuation of Fernheim**

Village Name	Farms Previously	Farms in 1937
13. Hiebertsheim	08	03
14. Blumenort	19	08
15. Orloff	20	10
16. Karlsruhe	21	13
17. Schoenau	22	12
18. Wuestenfelde	23	10

**Statistics on Souls** 01 January, 1938 (according to "Menno-Blatt")

Immigrants since the beginning of the settlement	2,038
Those who then left since the beginning of the settlement	1,124
Births since the beginning of the settlement	639
Deaths since the beginning of the settlement	223
	=====
Current number of souls:	1,330
655 males      655 females	

"Friesland" – Rosario Source: Menno-Blatt of 09 September, 1937

140 families (706 persons) left Fernheim settled here in 1937. In addition, 6 more families of 28 persons who settled here earlier. Altogether there were 168 families with 734 souls. They established 9 villages.

List of names: "Mennoblatt" No. 9 Sept. 1937  
 " " No. 1 Jan. 1938

	Farms	Souls
No. 01 Korniesheim	14	74
No. 02 Grossweide	35	172
No. 03 Central	05	23
No. 04 Gruenfeld	07	28
No. 05 Rueckenau	15	90
No. 06 Landskron	21	121
No. 07 Waldheim	15	85
No. 08 Rosenberg	25	123



No. 09 Blumenort (au)	06	33
	<hr/>	
	143	749

The district settlement contained 7,000 hectares of land; it was purchased on very favorable terms from owners Arthur and Wilhelm Strauch.

Jesus Colony  
Paraguay      It lies between the earlier Jesuit Reduction of Jesus and Trinidad (established 1685)  
1918 Arrival of the first settler  
1936 45 German colonists (most of them Germans from Russia)

Neu-Hoffnung  
Paraguay      A Mennonite village near Concepcion. Founded 1937: 20 families  
( It isn't noted whether it was by Germans from Russia or not!!!)

The Germans from Russian in the Brazilian Federal District of Parana I. 10 September, 1937. 125,000 Germans from Russia, that is, more than 50% of all Germans in Argentina stem from Germans from Russia.

The Germans crossed the ocean in two great waves, most of them from the Volga District and from various Mennonite colonies, mostly after 1873. For the Germans in Russia it had to do with a string of privileges that were cancelled, privileges which Queen Katharina had promised for all times to those coming to settle. The exodus headed out for the prairie provinces of Canada and the United States of America where the Germans from Russia farmers introduced the greatest development of vineyards [hand-written correction *Weizenbaues* =cultivation of wheat], just as in Argentina and Brazil.

The second big migration was launched with the domination of the Soviet and stretched out from 1920-1930. Some came via Siberia and Harbin, where even now a few hundred Germans from Russia still live. They came to Brazil and Paraguay. Others moved on, via the motherland, to Canada and America and from there on to Mexico or into the Chaco of Paraguay. Already in 1915, in opposition to Canada's legislation forcing Germans to conduct their school classes in English, a movement started to go to South America and Mexico.

The number (not exact) of Germans from Russia in overseas countries:

Canada	80,000
U.S.A.	100,000
Mexico	12,000
Brazil	10,000
Argentina	125,000
Paraguay	5,000
=====	
Total of over	300,000 Germans from Russia

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