

Emigration from West Prussia to South Russia: 1798–1802 and 1806–1815

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The immigration waves, big and small, of Mennonites to South Russia are fairly well known[1]. It is often assumed that all Mennonite immigrants to South Russia came during one of these periods. Most of the first Chortitza colony settlers arrived either in 1788–1790 or 1795–1797. The next, large, wave of settlers arrived (mostly in the Molotschna colony) in 1803–1805. Another large wave of immigration, mainly to the Molotschna again, occurred during the period 1816–1820. Below is an attempt to gather information on those who immigrated during the five year period from 1798 to 1802 and the decade from 1806 to 1815.

The 1798 to 1802 period followed a Prussian decree which forbade the West Prussian Mennonites from emigrating except with special permission [2]. Only a handful left during this period. Mennonites were once again allowed to leave in 1803. During the period 1806 to 1815 the disruption caused by the Napoleonic wars made emigration from West Prussia difficult. However, over 60 families or individuals made the trip.

There are only 2 families for which I have solid evidence of immigration to Russia between 1798 and 1802.

Those are:

Jacob **Niebuhr** (1766–1835), who immigrated about 1802.

Erdman **Nickel** (b. ca 1743), who immigrated in 1801

There were certainly more. The problem is that the immigration time period of 1788-1802 is very poorly documented.

Many of the immigrants for 1806–1815 are found in the 1835 census, where the year of immigration for the head of each household is provided. There are also immigrations for this period found in Unruh's book (pages 355, 356, 358 and 359) [3] and Rempel's book (pages 99 to 103) [4]. These 61 people, together with their year of immigration, birth and/or death year, destination in Russia, GRanDMA number and page in Unruh or Rempel can be seen here. Another table following this one presents the same data alphabetized by surname.

Year	Surname	Name	Birth/Death Year	Russian Location	GM#	Literature
1806	Fast	Helena	b. 1746		1152524	PR99
1806	Friesen	Johan	b. 1735		none	PR99
1806	Martens	Johann	b. 1784		none	PR99
1806	Neufeld	Abraham	b. 1736		100650	PR99
1806	Neufeld	Heinrich Jacob	b.1759	Fuerstenau#28/Liebenau#18	46136	PR99
1806	Olfert	Jacob Abraham	d.1825	Fuerstenau#13	46203	PR99
1806	Pauls	Hermann	b. 1751		52929	PR99
1806	Peters	Joahnn	b. 1757		149762	PR99
1806	Peters	Johann Michael	b. 1777	Fuerstenau#23	46295	PR99
1806	Plett	Johann	b. 1786		62206	PR99
1808	Buhler	Abraham	b. 1765	Chortitza	15739	BHU355
1808	Cornies	Johann	d. 1808	died enroute	none	BHU355
1808	Eitzen	Johann	b. 1774	Chortitza	8779	BHU355
1808	Regehr	Jacob Bernhard	b. 1784	Rudnerweide#18	52806	
1808	Wiens	Peter Jacob	b. 1770	Rueckenau#26	47069	PR100
1809	Albrecht	Dirk	b. 1781		749613	PR100
1809	Braun	Johann Isaac	b. 1790	Fuerstenau#6	44016	
1809	Dyck	Abraham	b. 1740		none	PR101
1809	Dyck	Dirk Simon	b. 1782	Fuerstenau#28/Margenau#34	51758	PR100
1809	Dyck	Jacob Jacob	b. 1788	Ladekopp#23/Liebenau#8	62344	
1809	Ens	Gerhard Jacob	b. 1787	Rueckenau#6	44814	
1809	Fast	Daniel	b. 1747	died 1810 or 1811	44971	PR100
1809	Ginter	Dirk Dirk	b. 1765	Fuerstenau#18	51721	PR100
1809	Hamm	Heinrich Peter	b. 1775	Rosenort#21/Fuerstenwerder#24	236754	PR100

Year	Surname	Name	Birth/Death Year	Russian Location	GM#	Literature
1809	Harder	Johann Johann	b. 1779	Fuerstenau#15	351543	PR100
1809	Harder	Peter	b. 1771		none	PR100
1809	Klassen	Johann Jacob	b. 1801	Friedensdorf#33	51524	
1809	Klassen	Peter	b. 1780		none	PR100
1809	Loewen	Daniel Daniel	b. 1755	Halbstadt#32/Lichtfelde#30	62205	PR100
1809	Mantler	Albrecht Jacob	b. 1773	Fuerstenau#24	51746	
1809	Mantler	Jacob Jacob	b. 1873	Lichtenau#8	62427	
1809	Neufeld	Johann Peter	b. 1786	Muntau#30	101768	PR100
1809	Peters	Aron Johann	b. 1781	Rueckenau#9	46270	PR100
1809	Rempel	Wilhelm	b. 1733	Chortitza	103052	PR100
1809	Schultz	Aron	b. 1769		none	PR100
1809	Schultz	Jacob	b. 1773		none	PR100
1809	Thiessen	Peter Wilhelm	b. 1779	Muntau#27	46669	PR100, BHU355
1809	Wall	Friedrich Friedrich	b. 1780	Blumestein#34/Lichtenau#34	46722	PR100
1809	Zacharias	Klaas Klaas	b. 1767	Lindenau#30	101101	PR100
1810	Draksel	Christian Johann	b. 1774	Rueckenau#2	265602	
1810	Ens	Abraham Heinrich	b. 1771	Muntau#28	44799	PR101 (1809)
1810	Ens	Abraham Jacob	b. 1785	Rueckenau#10	265390	
1810	Ens	Jacob Isaac	b. 1772	Rueckenau#25/Tiege#16	44826	PR102
1810	Kauenhofen	Bernhard	b. 1786	Chortitza	18745	BHU355
1810	Klassen	Abraham Cornelius	b. 1790	Fuerstenwerder#9/Lichtenau#32	44037	PR102
1810	Klassen	Cornelius Cornelius	b. 1771	Rueckenau#27	44035	PR102
1810	Kroeker	Jacob Jacob	d. 1827	Lindenau#29/Pastwa#17/Rudnerweide#43	53029	PR102
1810	Neufeld	Jacob	b. 1794		none	PR102
1810	Reimer	David Peter	b. 1784	Kronsgarten/Schoensee#28	223744	PR102

Year	Surname	Name	Birth/Death Year	Russian Location	GM#	Literature
1810	Schmidt	Daniel Daniel	b. 1783	Rueckenau#13	46538	
1811	Dyck	Klaas Klaas	b. 1789	Orloff#21	102066	
1811	Friesen	Gerhard Jacob	b. 1789	Gnadenheim#9	175204	
1811	Klassen	Franz Julius	b. 1759	Schoenau#16	53126	
1811	Regehr	Isaac Peter	b. 1773	Muntau#29	101752	
1811	Sudermann	Heinrich Daniel	b. 1788	Orloff#5	313770	
1811	Toews	Abraham Johann	b. 1794	Tiege#12	102979	
1814	Born	Catharina	b. 1773		43919	BHU359
1815	Penner	Cornelius Jacob	d. 1824	Altonau#2	60497	
1815	Reimer	Jacob Peter	b. 1775	Margenau#32	217889	PR103
1815	Thiessen	Heinrich Peter	d. 1832	Rosenort#21/Fuerstenwerder#34	52026	PR103
1815	Wiens	Abraham Abraham	b. 1801	Elisabeththal#16/Schoenau#39	2301	

Table sorted alphabetically by surname:

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1814	Born	Catharina	b. 1773		43919	BHU359
1809	Braun	Johann Isaac	b. 1790	Fuerstenau#6	44016	
1808	Buhler	Abraham	b. 1765	Chortitza	15739	BHU355
1808	Cornies	Johann	d. 1808	died enroute	none	BHU355
1810	Draxsel	Christian Johann	b. 1774	Rueckenau#2	265602	
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1806	Friesen	Johan	b. 1735		none	PR99
1809	Ginter	Dirk Dirk	b. 1765	Fuerstenau#18	51721	PR100
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1809	Harder	Johann Johann	b. 1779	Fuerstenau#15	351543	PR100
1809	Harder	Peter	b. 1771		none	PR100
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1809	Klassen	Johann Jacob	b. 1801	Friedensdorf#33	51524	
1809	Klassen	Peter	b. 1780		none	PR100
1810	Kroeker	Jacob Jacob	d. 1827	Lindenau#29/Pastwa#17/Rudnerweide#43	53029	PR102
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1806	Plett	Johann	b. 1786		62206	PR99
1811	Regehr	Isaac Peter	b. 1773	Muntau#29	101752	
1808	Regehr	Jacob Bernhard	b. 1784	Rudnerweide#18	52806	
1810	Reimer	David Peter	b. 1784	Kronsgarten/Schoensee#28	223744	PR102
1815	Reimer	Jacob Peter	b. 1775	Margenau#32	217889	PR103
1809	Rempel	Wilhelm	b. 1733	Chortitza	103052	PR100
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1809	Zacharias	Klaas Klaas	b. 1767	Lindenau#30	101101	PR100

Both Unruh and Rempel mention people who may, or may not, have immigrated between 1806 and 1815. Below are some comments on those families who do not cleanly fit into the two categories mentioned in the pervious paragraph.

The following names appear on pages 100 – 102 of Peter Rempel's book. The names are either garbled or have been misread. I am only able to identify one of these people.

K... **Sacharias**, 43 in 1809 (b. ca. 1766) is Claas Zacharias.

Johann **Perier**, 46 in 1809 (b. ca. 1763)

Johann **Goned**, 58 in 1809 (b. ca. 1751)

Johann **Ginw** (Gitz?) 51 in 1809 (b. ca. 1758)

Joseph **Loewen**, 27 in 1810 (b. ca. 1783)

The Following are listed on pages 355 and 356 of BHU as immigrating in the 1806 – 1815 period, but did not do so:

Jacob **Doleski** did not immigrate until 1816.

Peter **Harder** did not immigrate until 1818

Peter **Thiesen** applied for immigration in 1806 but did not immigrate until 1810.

Aron **Peters** immigrated (with his parents) in 1795, not 1809.

Maria **Dyck** immigrated in 1795.

Johann **Dyck** immigrated in 1795.

Jacob **Wiens** immigrated in 1795.

Aron **Warkentin**, immigrated in 1816 according to the 1835 Molotschna census.

Johann **Dyck**, immigrated in 1819 according to the 1835 Molotschna census.

It is unlikely that Gerhard **Janzen** immigrated. He is not found in the 1811 Chortitza or Molotschna colony census lists. Some of his children are recorded as having lived and died in West Prussia, while others are known to have been in the Molotschna colony. For example his son Franz immigrated in 1828 according to the 1835 census.

Unruh also has some further vague references to people who may have immigrated in the 1806–1815 time period:

Jacob **Wiens** of Schoensee to Rosenort

Jacob **Classen** from Heubuden to the Molotschna colony

It is difficult to identify these people in any church register or census list.

Jacob **Schmidt** (who is #46544) immigrated to the Michalin settlement in Volhynia.

Notes:

1. Henry Schapansky, *Mennonite Migrations (and The Old Colony, Russia)*. [New Westminster, BC]: Henry Schapansky, ©2006. See chapters 6 and 7 on the immigration to Russia.

2. Schapansky, p. 146. The death of Catherine the Great in 1796 and subsequent reign of her son Paul I from 1796–1801 may have also played a factor.

3. Benjamin H. Unruh, *Die Niederländisch-Niederdeutschen Hintergründe der Mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*. Karlsruhe, 1955.

4. Peter Rempel, *Mennonite Migration to Russia, 1788-1828*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, [2007].

Page created 15 November 2016; reformatted 28 January 2024
Formatting by Richard D. Thiessen

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