

Residents of Margenau, Molotschna: 1899

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The [Sep. 20, 1899 issue of the Mennonitische Rundschau](#) includes a letter by [David Duerksen](#) of Schoenthal, Crimea in which he works his way through the village of Margenau, Molotschna colony, providing information on each household. Duerksen's knowledge of Margenau comes from several years of teaching school there. Duerksen mentions his visit to "Amerika" several times. He left Hamburg on Apr. 23, 1896 arriving in New York on May 1, 1896 (according to Hamburg and New York ship passenger lists). Unfortunately, return passenger lists are not available to me. There are a few letters to the *Mennonitische Rundschau* reporting on his visit during the summer of 1896.

Note that this is not an exact translation. I have paraphrased many sentences and skipped sections which provide no information on the village or its residents.

If they are known with some confidence, I have provided numbers in the GRanDMA database for individuals in square brackets. This letter is particularly useful since many of the people mentioned below can not be located in the most recent version of the database.

He first reports on those families who owned farms:

#1 Is next to the church where Heinrich **Reimer** [1023511, 123242?] lives. He has had two wives. His earlier wife was Agatha **Hiebert** [1125666?] and his current wife is Katharina **Wiebe** [1022952] from Rueckenau. It is currently the location of the village office. Two of his daughters are married – Helena [643836] with Wilhelm **Fast** [647525] and Katharina with Wilhelm **Loewen** [659148] Fasts live in Ufa and Loewens live in Crimea.

#2 Was earlier two half farms. Now a full farm owned by Peter **Kasdorf** [473263] The old grandfather, Peter **Kasdorf** [101249], who died a few years ago will be known to the readers. Peter Kasdorf's oldest daughter Barbara [474714] is married to Gerhard **Reimer** [474718], son of Peter **Reimer** [474719] of Spat. The Gerhard Reimers live in the Feodosia region of Crimea.

#3 In earlier years old Franz **Dyck** lived here, now Jacob **Lorenz** [239516]. He is a merchant (*Kramladen*) and wood seller (*Holzhandel*) in addition to farming. They have a large healthy family. The oldest daughter, Agatha [239573], is married to David **Hiebert** [239579], son of David **Hiebert** [371977] of Margenau. The young David Hiebert is often sick. He is a carpenter (*Tischler*) and lives at the half farm.

#4 Where the old Abraham **Dyck** lived. This half farm is owned by Jacob **Lorenz** [239516]. The other half, which earlier belonged to Abraham **Janzen**, now belongs to Heinrich **Maekelborger** [55247]. He is already with his fourth wife. The third wife was a **Dyck** of Mariawohl, current wife is an Anna **Hildebrand** [781446] from Sparrau. His oldest daughter, from his first wife, Helena, was married to Martin **Dyck** [1141170] of Pastwa. She died some time ago.

#5 There was earlier a store (*Kramladen*) here, but now belongs to Johann **Abrahams** [173776]. He previously lived in Kleefeld where his first wife, a **Ketler** [151671], died. He then married the widow of the late Gerhard **Neufeld** [59498] of Margenau. She is Elisabeth **Sperling** [1093284].

Between #5 and #6 is the middle street (*Mittelstrasse*). In earlier times Johann **Huebner** [110750], then the old (departed) grandfather Johann **Harms** [4489], lived here. Now Johann **Klassen** [51824]. Two of his daughters are married. Helena married Jacob **Driedger** [476616] of Gnadenthal and Maria married the widower N. [Abram] **Matthies** [1079897] of Friedensruhe. Klassen's oldest son is in America.

#6 Peter **Regier** [217715] preacher of the Mennonite Brethren congregation now lives where Jacob **Isaac** lived in earlier times. He is a son of the preacher Peter **Regier** of Tiegerweide, earlier Gnadenthal.

#7 Here lived Peter **Langemann** [345075], son of the earlier owner, the late Jacob Langemann. Two Langemann brothers live in Spat, Crimea, namely Johann [110201] and Martin [34074].

#8 David **Klassen** [6718], who I saw in Manitoba, lived here. Gerhard **Wiebe** [601705], son of Gerhard **Wiebe** [110269] of Margenau lives here. His oldest daughter Helena married Peter **Wiens** [351728], son of Bernhard **Wiens** [351728] of Rueckenau. They live in Crimea.

Between #8 and #9 is the 2nd middle street on which the school is located. Johann **Sommerfeld** lives there, next to Jacob **Wiebe**'s place.

#9 This was the old Johann **Harms**' [4489] farm. Now split into two half-farms. Franz **Hiebert** Jr. owns the buildings and half the land and Jacob **Wiebe** [601415?] owns the other half of the land.

#10 Jacob **Wiebe** [601415?] currently lives on the old Martin **Rempel** [6446] farm. He has built a new large house, but the barn and stalls are old. How is Mrs. (Tante) Rempel and children, who I visited in Manitoba 3 years ago doing? A letter from Cornelius [128438] or Elisabeth [6454] would make many friends [here]. I met Abraham **Rempel** [56444] recently, while on a trip.

#11 This farm, where Franz **Janzen** [65005] lived, has been split into two parts. The buildings, farmyard and half the land belong to Jacob **Hiebert**, son of Jacob **Hiebert**, #24 Margenau. The other half of the land is owned by Johann **Kasdorf** [144312]. Jacob Hiebert is married to Sara, daughter of Jacob **Harder**. Jacob **Harder** is currently living in Hierschau. His wife died several years ago. She was an Anna **Braun**.

#12 Cornelius **Regehr** [1341808] lives here. His wife is a Catharina **Regehr** [1341807] from Friedensdorf. Is Johann **Regehr** [23012] of Kansas still alive? A letter from his children Johann [10262], Anna [28287], Aganetha [23723] would make us great friends. Isaac **Regehr** [946947] in Margenau died suddenly a few months ago.

#13 Peter **Penner** [43692] lived here. Now Peter **Janzen**, grandchild of the old Heinrich **Janzen**, Margenau, lives here.

#14 Heinrich **Dirksen** [101197] lived here. His son-in-law Johann **Wiebe** [601224] now lives here. His son Heinrich is married to the daughter of Isaac **Friesen**. If I am not wrong, the old Mrs. **Dirksen** is still alive. If my memory serves me correctly, she must be living with her children in Liebenau.

#15 This was two half farms but is now a single farm. Part of the farm is newly rebuilt and belongs to Peter **Penner** [43692], whose father is supposed to have died in Nebraska. Could Jacob **Friesen** [64984], formerly of Margenau report something about this to me? Penner was my cousin. What are Gerhard **Dyck** Sr. and Gerhard **Dyck** Jr. doing? Is Johann **Dyck** still alive? Letters from this family's old acquaintances would be very valuable. Heinrich **Ott** [65278] Franz and Cornelius **Dyck** [64214] – what are you up to? Do you know anything regarding Bernhard **Kroeker** [70352] Franz **Kroeker** lives 5 werst from us. We get together every Sunday.

#16 Franz **Hiebert** [85242] currently owns the farm of the old Jacob **Hiebert** [45690]. He is already on his 3rd wife. She was the widow of Peter **Esau** [405437] of Alexanderwohl. Hiebert has been sick lately. The farm buildings have been there for over 20 years, including the “*Nebenhaus*” on the yard.

#17 Formerly owned by Kornelius **Hiebert**, now Jacob **Regehr**. The stall and “*Querscheune*” [crossbarn] are newly built. Regehr's son Jacob is married to the daughter of Heinrich **Gossen** of Alexanderthal. They live in Schardau and own the old Heinrich **Kliewer** farm.

#18 Old Franz **Janzen** lives here. They no longer have any of their own children at home and rent the land out. They are very old and will soon die.

#19 This consists of two half farms. One belongs to Jacob **Ott** son of Johann **Ott** [278648]. The other belongs to Heinrich **Wiebe**, son of Johann **Wiebe**.

Jacob Ott's son Jacob [1511118] is married and lives in Orenburg. Their daughter Helena is also married, to Peter **Koop**, son of Johann **Koop** of Rueckenau. If I am not in error, they also live in Orenburg.

#20 The house originally belonged to the old Peter **Kasdorfs** [101249] and now belongs to son-in-law Isaac **Friesen** [3884], who was my fellow traveller to "Amerika". Half of the farmland belongs to Johann **Abrahams** [604918]. Isaac Friesen's daughters Anna and Katharina are married: Anna [50187] with Peter **Reimer** [50188], son of Jacob **Reimer** [3889] of Friedensruhe, and Katharina [50194] with Heinrich **Wiebe** [50194] of Margenau. A daughter, Maria [50201], still lives at home. The other half of #20 belongs to Heinrich **Teichroeb** [1155348] son of Peter **Teichroeb** of Margenau. They have their father, Peter, living with them.

Then comes the School in which Franz **Gossen** of Liebenau is the teacher.

#21 Belongs to Kornelius **Dirksen** [124558]. He is with his 2nd wife. The first wife was a Judith **Dirksen**. [followed by comments about her death] His current wife is a **Janzen** from Steinfeld, whose father lives in Hierschau.

#22 Belonged to the Abraham **Brauns**, who are both dead. It now belongs to Jacob **Reimer** [784711] son of Kornelius **Reimer** [785647] of Wernersdorf.

#23 Belongs to Kornelius **Wiebe** [601079] son of Gerhard **Wiebe** [110269] of Margenau. He is the youngest son. His wife is an **Eckert** [600822] from Spat, formerly of Friedensdorf.

#24 Owned by Jacob **Hiebert** [1125664]. Is his brother-in-law David **Falk**, who I visited together with uncle Peter **Siemens**, still alive? What is happening with the latter's sons Julius and Jacob? Jacob Hiebert's wife has been sick for some time.

What follows appears to be information on those who were landless:

Peter **Wedel** and his wife, Sara **Becker** are still alive. How are their brothers in "Amerika" doing?

Old Heinrich **Huebner** [110747] is still alive. His wife, a **Wall**, died a long time ago.

The old Peter **Janzen** died years ago in Sagradovka.

Kornelius **Kroeker** has a windmill in Margenau. His son Kornelius is already married.

Isaac **Goerzens** are both deceased.

Johann **Harder** lived in the *Kleinwirtschaft* near the cattle track. His son, Jacob, lives in Hierschau.

Johann **Kasdorf** [144312] lives in Abraham **Rempel's** *Kramladen*. He is the son of Peter **Kasdorf** [101249] of Margenau. He is with his 2nd wife. The first was a **Friesen** [144313] and the current wife is a **Penner** [1203633] from Grossweide.

Gottfried **Lindenbaum** lives in Johann **Regehr's** former place.

Johann **Ott** lives in Peter **Loewen's** former place.

David **Hiebert** lived where Heinrich **Wiebe** once lived.

Abraham **Janzen**, who earlier lived by the church, lives in the house where Johann **Neufeld** died.

David **Kroeker** lives in the house where old Heinrich **Huebner** died.

Peter **Regehr**, grandson of Heinrich **Regehr**, lives on the farm where Jacob **Friesen** lived.

Heinrich **Block** lives on the farm of the old Isaac **Regehr**.

What is Gerhard **Neufeld** of Mountain Lake doing? Are they still alive?

Does the sick uncle **Dyck**, who I visited [in America] with uncle Jacob **Harms** still live?

How is Wilhelm **Dirks** and his family doing?

I have not heard from brother-in-law David **Loewen** and family in a long time. Did they receive our photographs?

I've known nothing about my relatives Peter **Thiessen** in Dakota and brother-in-law **Thiessen** in Nebraska. Nor have I heard from Heinrich **Friesen** in a long time.

David **Duerksen** [#14748]

Schoenthal, [Crimea]

Addendum:

From the 16 May 1900 issue of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, page 2:

1) The ½ farm, #4, sold for 4,000 Rbl. to a Heinrich **Hiebert** of Altona.

2) The farm, #12, of Cornelius **Regehr** sold to Franz **Goossen** of Liebenau for 7,150 Rlb. **Regehr** has moved to Baschlitsche in Crimea.

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