

Mennonite Roots in Corn, Oklahoma

Most of us have heard of the "Daughters of the American Revolution" and the "Society of Mayflower Descendants". Those aspiring to join these organizations must painstakingly document their direct descent from a soldier in the American Revolution or a passenger on the Mayflower.

Sometimes I think that the closest Mennonite equivalent might be to create an organization called: "The Society of Mennonites from Corn". All you have to do is talk to a current or former resident of Corn, Oklahoma--or even the descendant of such a person--and you quickly realize that there is something very special about this tiny community in southeasterern Oklahoma.

Even a short stay in Corn seems to leave a lasting impression upon one's faith, outlook, demeanor, and sense of humor. Above all, life in Corn seems to have created special linkages between the members of this imaginary organization. You might almost describe it as "a special fabric of understanding that extends from Corn-er to Corn-er".

Corn--or more properly Korn-- was settled during the great rush into Oklahoma in 1893. The former Indian territories were opened to homesteaders that year, and many Mennonites from Kansas, Nebraska, and elsewhere were among the throngs of people stampeding into Oklahoma to farm the land.

A Mennonite Brethren Church was established in 1893 in Korn, and a Mennonite presence in that little town has continued since that time. The church has always kept good family records, and we can therefore easily identify the Mennonite Brethren families that have ever belonged to the Corn MB Church community.

Incidentally, the name "Korn" was forcibly changed to "Corn" during the First World War, and the obvious tension between the church and the state that this kind of act implies may be one prevailing theme that has contributed to the Mennonite "spirit" that one recognizes in those from Corn.

The church records somehow survived the devastating fire that totally destroyed the church building in 1949. The oldest family record book is a comprehensive, complete record of those families which have attended the church. The entries for each family include such valuable information as the names of the parents of the father and mother in each family, the village of origin in Russia, and often the year of immigration to America.

The following list identifies the earliest families recorded in the book. Because the records are so complete, and the number of families so large, I have only included those families where the birthdate of the father occurs before 1870.

In addition, I have indicated by name only the first wife for each husband. Therefore, those men who married more than once are listed only with their first wife. The church records, of course, provide full and complete information regarding each marriage. Those wishing to view the entire records on each family, or review information for later families, can see microfilm copies of the church records at the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Fresno.

LIST OF EARLY CORN FAMILIES

David BALZER (1842) and Maria BULLER (1842)
Abraham BARG (1865) and Maria BALZER (1868)
Peter BARTEL (1867) and Anna VOGT (1865)
Gottfried BERG (1850) and Elisabeth SCHRITT (1851)
Peter BERG (1834) and Maria KLEINAU (1836)
Heinrich BERGEN (1866) and Margaretha NICKEL (1871)
Peter BERGMAN (1839) and Helena VOTH (1845)
Heinrich BERGTHOLD (1848) and Alvina STARKE (1849)
Jacob BLAGOWSKY (1868) and Christina BERG (1866)
Johann BOESE (1850) and Maria SCHMIDT (1853)
Isaac CORNELSON (1861) and Katharina NIKKEL (1864)
Jakob DEFEHR (1851) and Katharina WIENS (1854)
Johan DICK (1864) and Anna RICHERT (1866)
Abraham DOERKSEN (1865) and Katharina GIESBRECHT (1859)
Abraham DUERKSEN (1863) and Susanna RICHERT (1868)
David DUERKSEN (1830) and Karolina STRAUSS (1832)
Heinrich DUERKSEN (1853) and Anna BRAUN (1853)
Johann DUERKSEN (1863) and Katharina WARKENTIN (1863)
Heinrich DYCK (1842) and Margaretha HARMS (1842)
Johann DYCK (1867) and Maria FALK (1870)
Ferdinand ENGEL (1848) and Dorothea LIETKE (1851)
Rudolph FADENRECHT (1857) and Amanda HINZ (1864)
Johann FAST (1851) and Helena WOHLGEMUTH (1851)
Fridrich FINK (1866) and Helena WIENS (1878)
Johann FISCHER (1850) and Sara WARKENTIN (1866)
Martin FISCHER (1851) and Aganetha PENNER (1860)
Heinrich FLAMING (1845) and Helena FAST (1845)
Heinrich FOOTE (1863) and ? BLOCK (1865)
Peter FRANSEN (1865) and Anna WARKENTIN (1873)
Heinrich FRANZ (1868) and Agnes VOTH (1872)
Jakob FUNK (1851) and Maria KOOP (1865)
Kornelius FUNK (1838) and Elisabeth JANZEN (1841)
Johann GLAESMANN (1867) and Maria FRIESEN (1865)
Abraham GOERTZ (1861) and Elisabeth BAUER (1858)
Hermann GOERTZEN (1859) and Katharina SAWATZKY (1859)
Martin GOERTZEN (1867) and Anna KLIEWER (1869)
Johann GOOSEN (1849) and Anna REIMER (1849)
Kornelius GOOSSEN (1867) and Margratha WEDDEL (1873)
Peter GUNTHER (1847) and Margaretha PETERS (1850)
Bernard HAMM (1848) and Justina FUNK (1848)
Gerhard HARDER (1868) and Helena RADOWSKY (1876)
Isaak HARMS (1863) and Maria DELESKY (1863)
Franz HIEBERT (1843) and Susanna WALL (1848)
Heinrich HIEBERT (1856) and Wilhelmina LOETKEMAN (1858)
Klaas HUEBERT (1849) and Maria RICHERT (1847)
Abraham ISAAK (1842) and Helena REGIER (1843)
Peter JANTZEN (1850) and Agatha ENNS (1855)
Abraham JANZEN (1850) and Helena KLASSEN (1852)
Cornelius JANZEN (1861) and Katharina NEUFELD (1866)
Cornelius JANZEN (1863) and Maria WALL (1866)
Henrich JANZEN () and Helena THOMAS (1844)
Heinrich JANZEN (1836) and Anna FUNK (1835)

Heinrich JANZEN (1866) and Katharina REIMER (1867)
 Jacob JANZEN (1865) and Karolina KOEHN (1861)
 Johann KIEHN (1843) and Helena BLOCK (1846)
 Peter KLAASSEN (1858) and Elisabeth BULLER (1859)
 Cornelius KLIEWER (1869) and Elisabeth RICHERT (1870)
 Gerhard KLIEWER (1853) and Maria EKKERT (1847)
 H. H. KLIEWER (1852) and Maria RATZLAFF (1853)
 Johann KLIEWER (1855) and Katharina FLAMING (1858)
 Peter KLIEWER (1849) and Eva ZIELKE (1853)
 Peter KLIEWER (1866) and Maria GIESBRECHT (1866)
 Abraham KOOP (1867) and Eva MARTENS (1874)
 Gerhard KOOP (1862) and Katharina JANZEN (1864)
 Jacob KOOP (1864) and Ida REIMER (1871)
 Thomas KOOP (1836) and Maria BOESE (1829)
 Eduwart KREWALL (1869) and Augusta WEDEL (1877)
 Abraham KROEKER (1867) and Helena BAERG (1872)
 Cornelius KROEKER (1869) and Maria JANZEN (1873)
 David KROEKER (1848) and Katharina WALLMAN (1847)
 Franz KROEKER (1864) and Elisabeth SCHMIDT ()
 Jakob KROEKER (1849) and Anna NEUFELD (1853)
 Peter KROEKER (1852) and Anna KLASSEN (1854)
 Abraham LEPPKE (1862) and Susanna WIENS (1868)
 Heinrich MARTENS (1867) and Elisabeth GIESBRECHT
 (1872)
 Johannes MUELLER (1861) and Friderica HABERER
 (1863)
 Aron NEUFELD (1858) and Sarah ISAAK (1861)
 Peter NEUFELD (1838) and Katharina QUIRING (1838)
 Peter NEUFELD (1859) and Maria PAULS (1861)
 Franz NICKEL (1855) and Karolina DUERKSEN (1860)
 Johann NICKEL (1864) and Katharina NEUFELD (1865)
 Benjamin NIKKEL (1840) and Helena NEUFELD (1835)
 David NIKKEL (1850) Helena BERGMANN (1853)
 Heinrich NIKKEL (1858) and Agatha KRAUSE (1866)
 Jakob NIKKEL (1868) and Helena ESAU (1873)
 Peter NIKKEL (1860) and Susanna KLIEWER (1863)
 Friedrich NORD (1861) and Gertruda GOERTZEN (1871)
 Jakob PAULS (1864) and Anna DYCK (1875)
 Abraham PENNER (1864) and Helena JANZEN (1871)
 Heinrich PENNER (1854) and Anna ABRAHAMS (1854)
 Dietrich PETERS (1859) and Susanna BRAUN (1865)
 Abraham REIMER (1860) and Anna FRANZ (1862)
 Cornelius REIMER (1837) and Katharina KOEHN (1838)
 David REIMER (1868) and Anna WEDEL (1870)
 Heinrich REIMER (1869) and Agatha EDIGER (1874)
 Jakob REIMER (1856) and Margaretha BULLER (1858)
 Jakob REIMER (1863) and Maria WEDEL (1886)
 Kornelius REIMER (1862) and Elisabeth FUNK (1865)
 Heinrich REMPEL (1865) and Elisabeth WILLEMS (1872)
 Abraham RICHERT (1850) and Elisabeth SCHLABACH
 (1851)
 Cornelius RICHERT (1832) and Susanna WALL (1842)
 Jakob RICHERT (1849) and Maria KLIEWER ()
 August ROGALSKY (1858) and Maria BERG ()
 Abraham SAWATZKY (1858) and Cornelia FAST (1859)
 Jacob SAWATZKY (1856) and Katharina REGIER ()
 David SCHAPANSKY (1849) and Anna BOCK (1852)
 Samuel SCHIELBERG (1853) and Mina RIEWEN (1855)
 Martin SCHLICHTING (1849) and Elisabeth RENZ (1853)
 August SCHMIDT (1868) and Emilye ENGEL (1872)

Johann SCHMIDT (1858) and Maria REIMER (1865)
 Peter SCHMIDT (1862) and Maria SCHELLENBERG
 (1871)
 Michael SCHWARTZ (1844) and Wilhelmina
 SCHIELBERG (1845)
 Heinrich SIEMENS (1859) and Aganetha HUEBERT (1859)
 Jakob SIEMENS (1849) and Anna WILMS (1854)
 Johann SPRUTH (1852) and Elisabeth BERG (1843)
 Heinrich STOBBE (1856) and Justina PETERS (1854)
 Eduard SUDERMAN (1866) and Agnis FLAMING (1871)
 Eduard SUDERMAN (1833) and Maria PAULS (1833)
 Heinrich THESSMAN (1821) and Anna HEINRICHS
 (1836)
 Cornelius THIESSEN (1856) and Helena KROEKER (1857)
 Dietrich THIESSEN (1852) and Susanna BRAUN (1855)
 Gerhard VOGT (1869) and Maria FRIESEN (1875)
 Kornelius VOGT (1867) and Susanna WARKENTIN (1865)
 Aron WARKENTIN (1830) and Helena FRIESEN (1834)
 Aron WARKENTIN (1862) and ? MAECKELBURGER
 (1864)
 Gerhard WARKENTIN (1868) and Maria HEINRICHS
 (1868)
 Johann WARKENTIN (1842) and Friderka KLIEWER
 (1851)
 Wwe. Heinrich WARKENTIN (1848) and ? ? ()
 Benjamin WEDEL (1856) and Katharina THIESSEN (1855)
 Peter WIEBE (1852) and Maria DUECK ()
 Daniel WIENS (1859) and Kathrina KOOP (1865)
 Heinrich WOHLGEMUTH (1869) and Maria WEDEL
 (1877)
 Peter WOHLGEMUTH (1866) and Elisabeth WIEBE (1870)
 Alan Peters

(cont. from p. 2)

but is scarcely recognizable as the same structure designed
 by one of the most famous women in American architect-
 tural history.
 Kevin Enns-Rempel

1. "Finish Touches Added to New Y.W.C.A. Home." *Fresno Bee*, December 22, 1923.
2. Information regarding Julia Morgan was drawn from several sources, including Sara Boutelle, "Julia Morgan" in *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*. (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977); Sara H. Boutelle, *Julia Morgan: Architect*. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988); Elinor Richey, "Julia Morgan: Architect With Empathy" in Richey, *Eminent Women of the West* (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1975).
3. "Y.W.C.A. Plans New Building" *The Fresno Republican*, October 24, 1922.
4. "Y.W.C.A. Will Consecrate Its New Home." *The Fresno Bee*, February 2, 1924, p. 2. The completed cost of this building represents roughly \$1.3 million in 1989 dollars.
5. "New Y.W.C.A. Building to be Dedicated." *Fresno Republican*, February 1, 1924; "Y.W.C.A. Opening Week is Planned." *Fresno Bee*, December 27, 1923; "Finish Touches Added to New Y.W.C.A. Home." *Fresno Bee*, December 22, 1923.
6. "Caplan Purchases YWCA Building." *Fresno Bee*, November 7, 1943.
7. "Fresno Buildings Will Be Rebuilt As Housing Units." *Fresno Bee*, March 1, 1944; "Rent Rule Clears Way For Opening of Housing Units." *Fresno Bee*, December 5, 1944; "Service Women's Center Will Be Opened Soon." *Fresno Bee*, January 21, 1945.