

The largest part of Lind's book focuses on the Mennonite Church (or "Old Mennonites") and their struggle to maintain their distinctives in doctrine and lifestyle. This group's emphasis on submission to church leadership caused many difficulties. Individual expressions of faith were not encouraged if they differed from the leadership of the congregation or conference.

Although the title implies that this is a history of all Mennonite groups, it mostly focuses on the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonites. The other Mennonite groups receive only cursory coverage.

The book is a valiant attempt to tell the story of the Mennonites in their first century in Oregon. The author provides many facts, though in a somewhat disjointed fashion that may make it difficult for the reader to grasp a cohesive history of Mennonites in this state.

Adonijah Pauls

Center for MB Studies Seeks CPS Material

Civilian Public Service, established in 1940 by the United States government as a system of alternative service, profoundly shaped American Mennonite churches during World War II. The CPS program was far more than a refuge from military service for conscientious objectors. It served as a vehicle for the renewal of Mennonite historical and doctrinal identity and the establishment of numerous Mennonite relief and service agencies in the post-war years.

The Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies is interested in gathering material on the CPS story. Many West Coast Mennonite men served in the program, and many likely still have personal items relating to that experience—letters, diaries, photographs, notebooks, scrapbooks, artifacts. The Center staff requests that people with such material alert them to its existence. Donations of such material are welcomed, though the Center is also willing to copy such material if the owners are not ready to part with it.

These materials pertaining to the CPS story are far more than personal mementos; they are a window onto a significant event in Mennonite history. Please help the Center preserve that story. Contact them at 4824 E. Butler, Fresno, CA. 93727-5097 or by phone at (209) 453-2225.

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The Center for MB Studies: 25 Years of Partnership With the Society

This year marks not only the 25th anniversary of the Historical Society, but also the 25th anniversary of a Mennonite library and archives in Fresno. Known today as the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, this institution owes its birth to the vision of the early Historical Society leaders, who saw one of their goals to be a Mennonite research facility on the West Coast.

At the very first meeting of the Society in 1965 the bulk of the discussion focused on the need to build a library and archival collection. At its second meeting three weeks later, the Society appointed I.G. Neufeld as its librarian. The next several years were marked by Neufeld's vigorous efforts to build a Mennonite library and archives in Fresno. He gathered conference yearbooks, manuscript material and periodicals, which to this time had existed only in scattered personal collections.

Already in 1965 the MB Biblical Seminary and Pacific College offered the Society space in Hiebert Library for its collection and provided some funding during the early years. In 1971 the schools made their relationship to the historical library more official by announcing the appointment of I.G. Neufeld as archivist for the seminary and college. Neufeld served faithfully in this capacity for the Society and schools until his resignation for health reasons in 1973.

At this same time, representatives from the Society, college and seminary began discussing the establishment of a Mennonite Brethren study center in Fresno. The proposal called for an organization with concerns and goals similar to those of the Historical Society, but organized separately from it and with stronger ties to Mennonite Brethren schools and the conference. This dream became a reality on March 4, 1974, with the organization of the "Institute for Mennonite Brethren Studies." A few months later the name was changed to the "Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies."

J.B. Toews became the Center's first Director and embarked on a variety of ambitious projects intended to further historical identity and knowledge within the Mennonite Brethren Church. In 1975 the Center sponsored a "Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History," the first of many such scholarly gatherings. The results of that symposium were published in the book *Pilgrims & Strangers: Essays in Mennonite Brethren History*. Several more books published by the Center would follow in the years to come. The establishment of affiliated Centers for Mennonite Brethren Studies at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas and Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba

ted the work of the Fresno Center to a conference-wide concern for historical revitalization.

With the establishment of the Center, the Historical Society gradually stepped back from its primary responsibility for library and archives collection and assumed instead a supporting role in that area. The Center, with growing financial support from the two Fresno schools, accepted increasing responsibility for the collection of library and archival material that the Society had begun. It also took on a more active role in gathering conference archival material than the Society had been able to do. At the 1975 MB General Conference in Winnipeg, the Center received official status as the repository for the records of that organization.

The historical library and archives functioned without an archivist for some time after the resignation of I.G. Neufeld in 1973. Adonijah Pauls, Librarian of Hiebert Library, carried those responsibilities on a provisional basis until 1976, when Rachel Hiebert was appointed as archivist on a part-time basis.

During the eight years Hiebert served as archivist, the Center collection grew rapidly. In her first annual report of June 1976, she noted that the Center held roughly 1500 library volumes and 18 linear feet of archival material. In her last annual report of April 1984, Hiebert could account for over 5200 cataloged books, 312 periodical titles and over 450 linear feet of archival material. These were good years for the Center collection. This unprecedented growth necessitated new facilities for the Center. In 1980 it moved from a small room in the northwest corner of Hiebert Library into a much larger space on the east side of the library formerly occupied by the San Joaquin School of Law.

The Center underwent a major transition in personnel in the 1980s. J.B. Toews resigned as Director in 1982 and was replaced by Paul Toews. Rachel Hiebert resigned as archivist in 1984 and was replaced by Kevin Enns-Rempel, the Center's first full-time archivist. Both Toews and Enns-Rempel remain in those positions at this time. Under its new leadership, the Center has continued to grow. Presently the Center's collection has almost 8500 cataloged books, nearly 400 periodical titles and some 550 linear feet of archival material. The publication of Peter Klassen's *A Homeland for Strangers* is the most recent in a significant list of books published by the Center. Symposia and special lectures have continued on a regular basis in recent years.

Freed from the responsibilities of collecting and processing library and archival material, the Society turned its attention to supporting the work of the Center. One of the most tangible ways it has done this is through gifts given to the Center at the Society's annual meeting. These gifts have gone far toward helping the Center acquire supplies and material that would otherwise have been out of its financial reach. Among these gifts have been a microfilm reader in 1979, a fireproof file cabinet in 1980, funding for the photocopying of Prussian Mennonite documents in 1982 and 1983, half the cost of a 1685 *Martyr's Mirror* in 1987 and most of the funding toward a laser printer in 1990. The Center remains deeply in the Society's debt for these generous gifts.

The founders of the Historical Society in 1965 dreamed of a strong Mennonite library and archives on the West Coast and set out to make that dream a reality. The groundwork they laid in the late 1960s and early 1970s was a solid one and helped to make possible the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies as it exists today. After a quarter-century of affiliation and cooperation, the Center and Society can look forward to many more years as partners in the promotion of Mennonite historical identity.

Kevin Enns-Rempel

Available from the
Center for MB Studies:

Peter Klassen's
*A Homeland for Strangers:
An Introduction to Mennonites
in Poland and Prussia*

The first English-language introduction
to this "forgotten chapter" in Mennonite history.

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