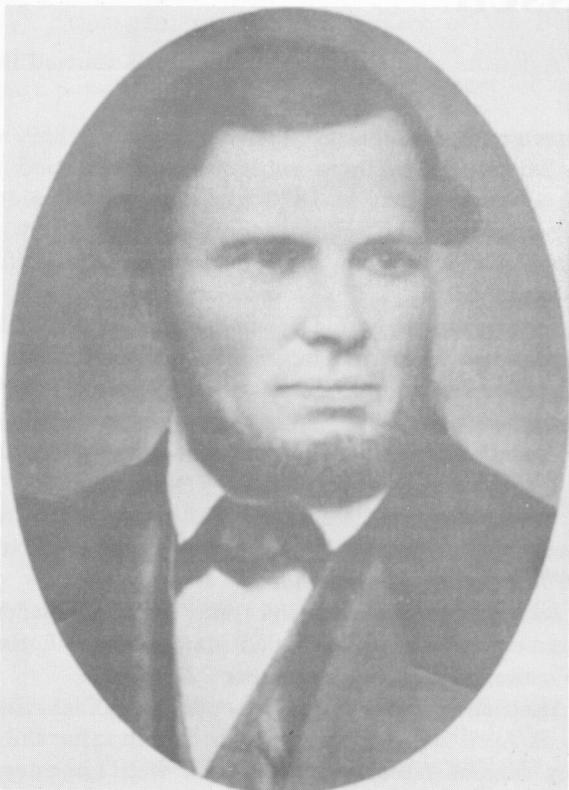


The youngest son, Dietrich J. Classen, published a brief family history that carried the Claassen family lineage back to a Behrend Claassen born in the year 1598 in the village of Schönsee, West Prussia. According to the published history, Behrend was the father of Hans Claassen, born in 1658 in Petershagen, West Prussia.

Hans Claassen, in turn, is listed as the father of David Claassen, born September 13, 1700 in Schönberg, Prussia, and Ida Claassen, who was born July 11, 1688 in Petershagen. These siblings play a part in Johann Claassen's ancestry, since David Claassen (1700 - 1780) married Anna Andres (1722 - 1784), the daughter of Rev. Cornelius Andres (1680 - 1741) and his wife, the aforementioned Ida Claassen (1688 - 1734). Consequently, this was a marriage between uncle and niece, and they became the parents of David Claassen, the father of Johann Claassen, the church leader.

David Claassen, Johann's father, was born October 21, 1760 at Fürstenwerder, West Prussia. He married Agnetha Penner, the daughter of a Peter Penner, and to them Johann Claassen was born on July 27, 1820 at Orlofffelde, West Prussia. The father, David Claassen, died in Prussia on April



Johann Claassen

9, 1827. According to B.H. Unruh, his widow, Agnetha Penner, migrated with her family to the Molotschna Colony in the year 1830.

This proposed ancestry of Johann Claassen goes back much further than currently available records can verify. Unfortunately, we do not know what sources Dietrich J. Classen used for his family history.

We do have access to Claassen family chronicles, begun by a certain Jacob Claassen, born in 1793, who happened to be a first cousin of Johann Claassen. This chronicle confirms all the data for Andres and Claassen families from 1680. This lends considerable credibility to the lineage given by D. J. Classen and makes us wonder where he secured the information for the years before 1680.

It is tantalizing to see an unconfirmed lineage that stretches all the way to 1598, only a few years after the death of Menno Simons. Perhaps further discoveries will make that kind of family lineage available for more of us. Meanwhile, it is appropriate that such a complete family history is available for one who played such an important role in the beginning of our own church history.

Alan Peters

Book Review

Hope Kauffman Lind, *Apart & Together: Mennonites in Oregon and Neighboring States, 1876-1976*. (Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, no. 30). Scottdale: Herald Press, 1990. 415 pages, \$26.95.

Apart & Together tells of the first one hundred years of Mennonite and related groups in Oregon and neighboring states. The book is divided into three major sections. Part I covers the uprooting and planting of new congregations in Oregon. Congregations were established as a result of migration, Sunday schools and other outreach opportunities. The author shares the joys and frustrations of this process with the readers.

Congregational and district histories show the need for strong leadership. The tension between individualism and church community surfaced and recurred in all of Oregon's Mennonite groups. Part of the reason for this tension was the great distance from the larger centers of Mennonite population in the East. As a result, all the Mennonite groups in Oregon made accommodations to their surrounding society, some more than others. Change produced stress and division, but also brought freshness and growth to Mennonites there.

Part II deals more directly with growth and outreach efforts, both successes and failures. The author also treats the question of Mennonite responses to war and their relationship to the larger world. How do Mennonites relate to their surrounding communities? How do they retain their distinctiveness and reach out to others with the gospel? In their attempt to retain their identity Mennonites established educational institutions in Oregon. Western Mennonite High School is a primary example of this phenomenon.

Part III speaks to the issue of Mennonite groups and their relationship to the wider community, both within the larger Mennonite tradition and among other Christian traditions. This is the briefest section of the book. Mennonites seem to have had and still have difficulties relating to other denominations in the Christian faith. They seem very protective of their denominational distinctives.

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