



THE THIESSEN FAMILY TREE

Psalm 89:1, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations."

Our story begins in Aug. 20, 1865, when Henry Jacob Thiessen was born and in Sept. 27, 1868 when Maria Penner was born. These two people were to become the parents of twelve children.

We want to compare this story to a tree growing beside a stream in a mountain setting. Our tree begins to grow about the year 1890, when Henry Thiessen and Maria Penner were united in marriage. They made their home in Felsenbach, South Russia, where they had a 200 acre farm. They also owned a windmill which was operated by Jacob Groening.

In 1891 the tree began to bear branches, when the first child was born, a girl named Anna. She was followed in 1893 by Jacob, in 1894 Henry, 1896 David, 1897 Diedrich, 1899 Mary, 1900 Justina, 1902 Isaac, 1903 Abraham, 1905 Tina, 1906 John and in 1909 Peter.

In 1905 the wind of death swept through the small tree as the first branch broke, when Abraham passed away. He was followed by Peter in 1910, and in 1914 one of the main branches broke, when Mother Thiessen passed away.

The next four years after Mother Thiessen's death were trying years for the Thiessen family. Big dark thunderclouds crossed Russia, and the world. First the Revolution, followed by the first World War, and sickness throughout the whole country. Yet, through all this the tree continued to grow. During this time, Father Thiessen married again. The marriage to Mary Neudorf lasted till 1920, when the wind of death broke off the second main branch when Father Thiessen passed away. ¹⁹¹³

Six years later, a new chapter began for the second generation when God led them to a new country. In 1926 & 1927, seven branches of the tree were transplanted, in the new country, Canada. Here God wanted the tree to continue to grow, even though times would be hard; God would take care of them.

The seven branches that moved to Canada were: Anna, with her husband Jacob Sawatzky, David with his wife Margaret, Justina with her husband Gerhard Bergen, Isaac with his wife Catherine, Helen and John who were not married at this time. These two branches began growing in Canada when Helen married Peter Rempel, a widower, in 1931. *John married Mary Rempel (1931)*