

The Name Thiessen

(Thiesen, Tiessen, Tyssen, Tieszen), a family name common among Mennonites of Prusso-Russian background, was first entered in the Danzig record in 1685. The name was common in Tiegenhagen, Ladekopp, Rosenort, Fuerstenwerder, Heubuden, Elbing, Koenigsberg.

Bernhard Thiessen was a minister at Ibersheim, Germany. Dirk Tiessen was a preacher of the Old Flemisch Grosswerder congregation, serving as elder of the Petershagen district from 1755, and of the entire Grosswerder congregation 1767 -after 1802. Peter Thiessen Sr. and Peter Thiessen Jr. were preachers of the Danzig Flemish church from 1774 and 1800.

From Prussia the name was transplanted to Russia. B.H. Unruh lists seventeen bearers of the name who moved to Russia. Outstanding was Johann Thiessen, who owned a flour mill in Ekaterinoslav and was a benefactor of Mennonite causes. He was killed in 1920. Julius J. Thiessen of the Molotschna, Russia, was an outstanding minister and teacher. Jacob Thiessen, b. 1888 at Olgafeld in Fuerstenland, Russia, emigrated to the Netherlands in 1914 and served as minister in the Mennonite congregation of Ouddorp 1939-45 and Blokzijl 1946-53. John Thiessen of North Newton, Kansas, was a missionary in India and is now executive secretary of the Board of Missions of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Jacob J. Thiessen, pastor of the First Mennonite Church of Saskatoon, Sask., has been chairman of the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization and president of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada for many years. Franz C. Thiessen was an able educator and minister of the Mennonite Brethren in Canada. Dirk P. Tieszen was a minister (GCM) at Marion S.D. His son Edward D. Tieszen was the owner of the Tieszen Clinic at Marion. (Menn. Encyclopedia, Vol. IV, p. 711)

According to B.H. Unruh the name "Thyess" (which later became Thiessen) occurred in 1569. There was a teacher by this name on the Frisian island Texel. Reimer claims that the name Thiessen was at home among the Flemish Mennonites. (B.H. Unruh-p. 70)

Thiessen, Heinrich, Walldorf, born 1759, farmer, migrated to the Molotschna; married to Woelk, Maria, Walldorf, born 1767. Children: Dietrich 18, Catharina 15, Maria 12, Heinrich 8, Helena 6, Jacob 2, Anna $\frac{1}{2}$ (as of Nov. 7, 1803) -B.H. Unruh-p. 352.