

ster; nicht nach den Staaten sondern nach Kanada zog, war die ganze vierte Generation hier verwandt als Vetter und Cousinen. David Klajens und Johann J. Reimers Familien sind hier nicht mit eingeschlossen, weil sie aus den Staaten stammen. Das seltsame bei diesem ist, daß von 1903, als Franz R. Reimer geboren wurde; bis 1955, als Cornelius W. Reimer starb, der älteste und der jüngste Vetter immer in der Klaas R. Reimer Familie gewesen ist. Wäre es nicht wegen Frau Peter D. Kröcker, die anno 1905 geboren ist, so wäre der älteste und der jüngste in der ganzen Generation in den 52 Jahren immer in einer Familie gewesen, daß heißt, an der Kanadischen Seite.

Um den denkwürdigen Tag noch mehr zu vervollständigen blieben noch eine ganze Anzahl da, um in Gesellschaft ihr Vespermahl einzunehmen.

Schätzungsweise waren etwa 1500 Menschen zugegen.

Alle Teilnehmer kehrten heim mit dem Gefühl einen bedeutenden und schönen Tag verlebt zu haben.

Unser aller Wunsch ist, daß doch keiner fehlen möchte bei dem großen Treffen am Jenfeit des Jordans, wo kein Scheiden mehr sein wird.

REIMER REUNION

John C. Reimer

There had been some talk every now and then about some day holding a reunion which would take in the whole Reimer clan. However, because a wide difference of opinion exists on many questions among the relatives, and because the members live scattered all over North America and even beyond, the task of organizing a reunion seemed so unattainable that no one felt like attempting it at that time.

Then, in the summer of 1948, Mrs. Frank D. Kroeker issued an invitation to all the descendants of her grandfather, Klaas R. Reimer, to attend a family gathering. Approximately half of those who received the invitations responded. On Aug. 18, 1948, in the Steinbach Gospel Tabernacle the first large-scale family gathering of the Reimers was held. The effort proved so successful that it was repeated again in the years 1950 and 1951 under the leadership of the writer. Again, in 1953 under the leadership of George K. Reimer, another family gathering took place in the Emmanuel Mission Church in Steinbach.

During the winter of 1954, Bishop David P. Reimer of Blumenort, Mr. K. J. B. Reimer, and the present writer again discussed plans for a gathering of the whole clan. We decided to make the attempt. It fell to the lot of the writer to organize a preliminary meeting to investigate the opinions of the relatives about holding a full-scale family reunion later on that same year. Representatives of each of the eight branches of the family living in Canada, (with the exception of the Henry Hildebrandts' branch who do not live in Manitoba.) were invited to attend this preliminary gathering to make the decision for or against a reunion. The representatives who attended this meeting,

which was held on Feb. 27, 1954, decided to call a full-scale family reunion for the whole clan on July 6th of that same year. This date was chosen originally because it fell approximately between the Manitoba and Kansas harvests but it was later changed because the organizers wisely decided that the original date occurred too close to the big American holiday of July 4th and driving on the highways at that time would involve more risk to the lives of the relatives. The date was changed to July 8th.

An executive committee composed of one member of each branch of the family was formed at this first organization meeting. The committee appointed a chairman.

When the committee next met on March 8th, they decided to undertake the compilation and printing of a family register composed of a list of names of all the descendants of Klaas Reimer, (1770—1837) right up to the year 1955.

Many favored as a site for the reunion, the exact spot in the old village of Blumenort where the pioneer immigrant Abraham Reimer had first settled upon his arrival in Canada from Russia. However, there were two reasons as to why this seemed impractical. In the first place, if the reunion were held here, a tent would have to be used to provide shelter for the gathering in case of rain. And in all Manitoba the committee could locate no tent sufficiently large to shelter a crowd the size of the one they anticipated on the reunion day. Another objection was the fact that the proposed site had only recently been ploughed up. In the end, the committee fixed the place for the clan gathering at the Blumenort church.

About the beginning of March the following notice appeared in the Steinbach Post, the Carillon News, and the Mennonite Review of Kansas:

All descendants of Klaas Reimer (1770—1838) founder of the "Kleine Gemeinde" church, are invited to come to Steinbach for a family reunion on July 6th, 1954. Please notify all close relatives such as children, brothers and sisters immediately. Details will be announced at a later date.

Steinbach, Man.

The committee

These notices were repeated in various other papers such as the Winnipeg Free Press, the Winnipeg Tribune and others. These papers carried stories billing the reunion as the largest family reunion ever held in Canada's history. The newspaper accounts carried with them a picture of the first store owned by the Reimer family, which is also the first store built in Steinbach, after their arrival in Canada. The stories went on to tell how this building (that of Klaas Reimer) at Steinbach was still in good repair, still in the hands of the family, and now being used to house a collection of souvenirs and mementoes of the Mennonite pioneers.