

## CHAPTER NINE MARTIN WARKENTIN ~~1764~~ GENEALOGY.

### Section One. Introduction. *Stammvater Martin Warkentin 1764-1853.*

Warkentin is a common name among the Russian Mennonites. A number of families of this name have been identified in the Kleine Gemeinde. The most widely known to-date is the family of Johan Warkentin (1759-1825) who settled on Wirtschaft No. 3 in the village of Blumenort, Molotschna, in 1804.<sup>1</sup> Considerable information about this family is to be found in the *Stammbuch Melner Voreltern* published by Peter P. Isaac in 1916.<sup>2</sup>

Cornelius Warkentin (1777-1847), was the ancestor of a second family of Warkentins found in the Kleine Gemeinde. He and his family emigrated from the Prussian village of Halbstadt to the Molotschna Colony, South Russia, in 1818, settling in the village of Blumstein.<sup>3</sup> His daughter Elizabeth Warkentin (1819-1905) married Gerhard Schellenberg (1827-1909), and through this family Cornelius Warkentin left many descendants in the Kleine Gemeinde.<sup>4</sup>

A third line of Kleine Gemeinde Warkentins also lived in the Molotschna village of Blumstein. Although this is the least known family it is probably the most significant in terms of numbers and prominence.<sup>5</sup> The family patriarch, **Martin Warkentin**, was born in Prussia in 1764. According to B.H.Unruh, he originated from the village of Ruckenau, Amt Tiegenhoff, and was a linen weaver by occupation. The village of Ruckenau was located several miles southeast of the town of Tiegenhoff, in the Grosswerder area, approximately 10-12 miles due south of the village of Petershagen, the birthplace of Kleine Gemeinde founder Klaas Reimer (1770-1837). The Mennonites living in the village of Elbing were of the Flemish branch of the faith and belonged to the Elbing Gemeinde.<sup>6</sup>

The family emigrated to Russia and settled in the village of Blumstein, Wirtschaft No. 6, on June 23, 1804. According to the *Revisions-Liste* of 1808 the family was relatively well off and owned the following property: 1 wagon, 1/2 plow, 1 harrow, 8 horses, 9 cattle, 2 sheep, and 20 loads of hay.<sup>7</sup> Martin Warkentin was married to Agatha Warkentin also of Ruckenau and as of 1808 they had eight children, namely, Peter 19, Johan 18, Cornelia 16, Elisabeth, 13, Gerhard 12, Heinrich 10, Anna 8 and Martin 2. B.H.Unruh lists also a daughter Helena at the time of the actual emigration in 1803. Since she is not listed in 1808 it is assumed that she died prior to that date.<sup>8</sup>

According to one source, there was a Hans Warkentin of Osterwick or Kronsthal in the Old Colony who was a half brother to Martin Warkentin, born 1764. There was also a Mrs. Abraham Friesen in Neuhorst who was his "Meumke" or aunt? Accordingly Martin Warkentin had many nephews and cousins in the Chortitza Colony. The same source indicates also that there was a Peter Warkentin living in Burwalde who was a brother to Agatha Warkentin the wife of Martin.<sup>9</sup>

Klaas Reimer, the founding Altester of the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites, has made various references to a Martin Warkentin who was involved in the false humility movement which beset that group in about 1818.<sup>10</sup> This appears to be the same person as he is the only Martin Warkentin listed by B.H.Unruh. Evidently the family was reconciled with the Kleine Gemeinde as the families of several of the Martin Warkentin children continued to be prominent in the movement.

Additional information regarding the Warkentin family is found in the diary of minister Johan Dueck (1801-1866) who has recorded for April 10, 1849, that "Martin Warkentin appeared before the Ohms before worship service requesting that he be accepted into the Gemeinde." It is also possible that this may refer to Martin Warkentin Jr. (born 1806). In another diary entry of March 9, 1853, Johan Dueck (1801-1866) states that "the aged Martin Warkentin of Blumstein has died."<sup>11</sup> The latter reference definitely seems to refer to the Stammvater since there was no other Martin Warkentin in Blumstein who would fit that description.

No information is presently available regarding the families of daughters Cornelia and Anna or whether they ever married and had families. The only thing known about son Martin Warkentin is that he was at one time resident in Blumstein as were all his brothers.<sup>12</sup> The writer will very much appreciate hearing from any reader with information regarding these individuals and/or their families.

| Gen | Name               | Birth | Marriage | Death       |
|-----|--------------------|-------|----------|-------------|
| 1   | Martin Warkentin   | 1764  |          | Mar 9, 1853 |
| m   | Agatha Warkentin   | 1765  |          |             |
| 2   | Peter Warkentin    | 1789  |          |             |
| 2   | Johan Warkentin    | 1790  |          |             |
| 2   | Cornelia Warkentin | 1792  |          |             |