

Hermann Friesen (ca. 1750-1819)

by Henry Schapansky

One of the Friesen families with connections to the Bergthaler, Fürstenländer and Kleine Gemeinde in Russia is that of Hermann Friesen. He was likely born circa 1750 and was listed at "Tamm" (or Damm) in the 1776 West Prussian census. Although Schwartzdam (Ellerwald Gemeinde) was the most well-known of all the "Damm's" in the Vistula Delta, it is possible that the reference is to another Damm, possibly in the Rosenort (Gross Werder) area, or alternatively near Neuteicherwald.

The name of Hermann Friesen's first wife is unknown at this time. It seems he had the following children from his first marriage: Helena (b. circa 1775), Anna (b. circa 1783) who married Abraham Giesbrecht, Peter, Eliesabeth (b. 17.7.1785) the first wife of Aron Süderman (b. 16.12.1792), Hermann (b. circa 1790) and Johann (b. circa 1792).

After the death of his first wife, Hermann Friesen married (26.12.1796) Anna Penner. During this period he lived at Altendorf, moving to Stobbendorf in about 1805, after his third marriage (19.2.1804) to Helena Klingenberg (the widow Klassen) of Fürstenau. The children of his third marriage include: Gertruda (b. 2.8.1805), Jacob (b. 4.3.1807), Dirk (b. 2.4.1809), Gerhard (b. 5.9.1812) and Helena (b. 27.6.1814). Hermann's children Eliesabeth, Hermann and Johann were among the first families to leave for Russia after the end of the European War in 1815.

Daughter Eliesabeth Südermann

Eliesabeth married Aron Südermann of Österwick in the Old Colony in 1816. Aron Südermann (b. 28.11.1792) was born at Pietzkendorf (Ladepkop Gemeinde), son of Abraham Südermann who married Suzanna (nee Neudorf) Janzen and later Heinrich Dyck. (Suzanna Neudorf (b. 1754) was actually married four times, her last husband was Jacob Lehn). Abraham Südermann was the son of Anton Südermann, recorded in the census of 1776 at Schönsee (Ladepkop Gemeinde) (and incorrectly as Luttermann), and came to Russia in 1796.

In 1814 Aron Südermann was living at Österwick with his stepbrother Heinrich Dyck, and later moved to Bergthal. Eliesabeth Friesen died in 1824 and Aron married Anna Lempyk in the same year. The Aron Südermanns had two sons, Aron (b. 28.8.1818, d. 19.3.1850) and Abraham (b. 1.8.1822). Most of their descendants came to Canada with the Bergthalers in the 1870s.

The daughters of Aron Südermann include Helena (b. 14.6.1826) who married Jacob Thiessen, Katherina (b. 2.3.1832) who married Kornelius Bannman, Suzanna (b. 3.5.1834) who married Martin Friesen, Maria (b. 9.7.1837), Aganetha (b. 25.1.1840), and Justina (b. 24.1.1843), who married



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Gerhard Wiens.

Sons Hermann and Johann Friesen

Hermann and Johann Friesen settled at Schönau in the Molotschna in 1816. Hermann's father-in-law Jacob Dolesky also immigrated to Russia in 1816. Jacob Dolesky (b. 1769), son of Jacob Dolesky, Neulanghorst) had intended to immigrate to Russia earlier and had signed up for a permit in 1806. He is therefore listed by B.H. Unruh as an 1806 immigrant. Circumstances may have delayed his departure, and by 1807 French troops were already in the area making a move to Russia impossible. The Doleskys' settled at Blumenort, Molotschna.

Hermann Friesen (b. 1790) and Maria Dolesky (B. 1792) were the parents of Heinrich Friesen (b. 12.4.1827, d. 1.7.1877) who came to Canada in 1875 and is the ancestors of many Friesens living in Manitoba today. Hermann died in 1828, his brother Johann in 1829.

The Friesens of Margenau, Molotschna

Shortly afterwards, in 1819, the senior Hermann Friesen along with his sons Jacob, Dirk and Gerhard decided to immigrate to Russia as well. The elderly Hermann died in 1819 shortly after arriving in Margenau, Molotschna. Jacob, Dirk and Gerhard took up homesteads in Margenau, where they are found in the 1835 census. (See Henry Fast article Preservings, No. 5, Dec., 1994).

Jacob Friesen (b. 4.3.1807, d. 1870) of Margenau, Molotschna, married Suzanna Neufeld (1809-1850) and had the following children: Anna (b. 1832, died young), Helena (b. 1834, d. 1914) who married Aron

Warkentin, Jacob (b. 5.2.1838), Anna (b. 26.11.1839) who married Gerhard Reimer, Sara (b. 22.1.1841) who married Abraham Isaac, and Gerhard, Johann and Peter. This family is discussed in the Kleine Gemeinde series of Delbert Plett. (Pioneers and Pilgrims, p.430).

Daughter Anna Giesbrecht

The Abraham Giesbrecht (1780-1830) who married Anna Friesen was the son of Abraham Giesbrecht, listed at Tiegenhoff in the 1776 census. Abraham's brother Bernhard (1775-1851) came to Russia in 1804 and settled in the Old Colony. Abraham had apparently no surviving children from his first marriage, and, it seems, married Anna Friesen circa 1810. Their eldest son Abraham (b. 1.12.1811, d. 5.11.1890) came to Russia between 1837 and 1848 and settled at Kronsthal (his wife was Katherina Friesen (b. 9.9.1805, d. 26.6.1870). Son Hermann died in Prussia in 1833. Son Jacob (b. 4.8.1819, d. 1849) came to Russia and later moved to the Fürstenland Colony. Their children Jacob (b. 13.7.1842), Kornelius (b. 10.1.1844), Abraham (b. 28.2.1846), and Eliesabeth (b.3.6.1848) all came to Canada in the 1870s with the Fürstenländers and settled in Reinland and Blumenfeld, Manitoba.

David Giesbrecht (b. 4.7.1821, d. 9.12.1888) a son of Abraham Giesbrecht (b. 1780, d. 7.4.1840) also came to Russia and later left for Canada where he is found at Neuendorf, Manitoba in the 1881 census.