

RUSSIAN-MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS  
of the 1920's (Ontario)

Interview #21: Tape # 6, sides A and B (96 minutes)

Interviewee: ISAAK, Nikolai,

Interviewer: Henry Paetkau

Date: Tuesday, July 20, 1976.

Place: 40 Grantham Ave., St. Catharines, Ont.

Language: Low German

SUBJECT INDEX (in minutes)

Side A

- 00-08 Funeral sermon delivered by Rev. David Epp in Berdjansk at the funeral of Mr. Isaak's father. A copy of this sermon is on deposit in the archives at Conrad Grebel College.
- 08-35 Settling in Reesor, from a tape made by Mr. Isaak for his children recalling the experiences of early days in the Reesor settlement in northern Ontario. The tape is of extremely poor quality but the information fairly good. See also the book on Reesor by John Enns and the Government Report on conditions in the community on deposit in the Archives. Finally, there is also a copy of the constitution "Fuer gegenseitige Unterstuetzung in Feuersanfaellen".
- 36-52 Letter to the late Gerhard Wiens, Professor at the University of Oklahoma, an old friend of Mr. Isaak. The conversation is about their former home town in Russia and common acquaintances.

End of side A

Side B

- 00-07 Biographical information  
Life in St. Petersburg
  - 07-15 Revolution: -outbreak and attitude toward  
-conditions during  
-conditions afterwards
  - 15-18 Emigration: -process and procedure  
-reasons
  - 18-20 Early years in Canada
  - 20-28 The Reesor settlement: -purpose  
-conditions  
-reasons for failure  
-church life  
-reflections on this endeavour
  - 28-36 Interviewer's comments and evaluation; additional materials
- End of Interview



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Tape # 6, sides A and B

Recorded on July 20, 1976 in German and Low German

Biographical sketch:

- born about 1902 in the Molotschna
- lived in St. Petersburg from 1910-18 where his father was a teacher in a Lutheran school
- had little to do with Mennonites; attended the Lutheran church
- moved to Berdjansk when the Revolution got out of hand
- after his father's death he moved to Halbstadt where he completed the equivalent of 1 year University
- tried to gain permission to travel to Germany to continue studies
- when the opportunity to emigrate to Canada arose he chose that route of escape out of Russia in 1924
- first worked on a farm near Kitchener, then several other jobs
- later settled in Reesor
- conditions and factors persuaded him to leave in the early 40's and he settled in the Niagara area