

## Immediate Ancestors of Tschetter and Mendel families from historian A. G. F. Zugelschmidt

In the year of 1783, the 25th of July, three young men, 18 and 19 years of age, came to the church at Wishinka in Minor Russia. Jacob Tschetter was one of them. The writer says, "They had little knowledge, only what they had heard of their forefathers, that they at one time were Protestants. These men heard of the Hutterites in Minor Russia. They were baptized and taken into the church of the Hutterites.

The same year came also a Paul Mendel, originally a Bohemian. He came over Poland to the church in Minor Russia and joined the Hutterites."

The above mentioned Paul Mendel and Jacob Tschetter were our forefathers. In the year of 1842, the Tschetter and Mendel families moved from Wishinka, Minor Russia (Rumania) to southern Russia in the vicinity of Melatopel and founded the village Hutterthal. In the year 1866, Uncle Paul, son of Jacob and Barbara Tschetter, was ordained as elder and pastor of the Hutterthal Church.

In the Jacob and Barbara Tschetter family, there were 5 boys and 5 girls. They were Joseph, Paul, Jacob, David, and John. Of the five girls, Susanna and Barbara lived, but the other three died early in Russia.

In the Jacob and Anna Mendel family, there were 2 boys and 6 girls. They were Jacob and David; 6 girls, Maria, Anna, Maggy, Elizabeth, Susanna, and Katharina.

In 1868, 20 families moved 200 Russian miles north and founded a new village that they called New Hutterthal. Here the Tschetter and Mendel families became successful farmers. They also had other occupations. Grandfather Tschetter had an oil press. The Mendel grandfather had a flour mill and also a brickyard.

It was in June, 1872, when a caravan or wagons were loaded with lime, brick, and roof plates that were burned and made on the homestead of the Jacob Mendels to be taken to Kathrinaslof on the market. (These caravans were Russian peasants with their wagons for the transportation of these products.)

While there with a friend of his, John Decker, they both were stricken with the dreadful disease, cholera, then raging in that city. John Decker pulled through, but grandfather Mendel died June 2nd, 1872, leaving his wife and 8 children behind.

As mentioned above, the Mendel and Tschetter were successful farmers. They lived on the fertile land called the breadbasket of Russia. They became, "well to do."

They also were religiously inclined, came from the Hutterites stock, were strictly anabaptists, and were strictly non-resistant. In Russia they became acquainted with the Mennonites who had immigrated there from Holland and Germany and whose faith is very similar to the Hutterites. Many joined them.

When the Turkish Russian War broke out and their young men were called into the service of the Russian Army, something had to be done. Meetings were called, and it was decided to flee to America. Men were chosen, and Uncle Paul was one of them. They were sent to America to investigate or explore its possibilities. They travelled in Canada, Minnesota, and the prairies of the Dakota territory. They also went to Nebraska, Kansas, and the East.

Paul Tschetter and his group decided to locate in the Dakota Territory, 40 miles northwest of Yankton, then the end of the railroad; and in 1875, they landed on the open prairies of the Dakota Territory where they are now.