

# I. MIGRATION OF LANCASTER COUNTY MENNONITES TO WATERLOO COUNTY, ONTARIO, CANADA, FROM 1800 TO 1825.

By Hon. A. G. Seyfert.

And Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society, Friday Evening,  
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The religious revolution of the 16th Century, known as the Reformation, is the greatest event in the history of civilization since paganism gave place to Christianity.

The central fact of the Reformation was the detachment from the papal chair of the Protestant Nations. Out of this religious upheaval came many religious heroes. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Menno Simons and many others. Not the least of these was Menno Simons, the Father of the Mennonite Church.

Menno Simons was born in the village of Witmarsum in West Friesland, Germany, in 1492. He died on the 13th of January, 1559, and was buried in his own garden.

As a background to intelligently understand the history of the Mennonites in America, we are obliged to go to the Old World for the origin of this denomination in the New.

Menno Simons was born a Catholic and educated for the Priesthood and entered upon the duties of his office at the age of twenty-eight. According to his own account, he had at this time very little knowledge of the Bible and no religious convictions. He lived a life of ease and self-indulgence and seemed indifferent to the great religious reformation that was sweeping over Middle Europe.

During the early period of the sixteenth century the Reformation developed a radical religious sect known as the Anabaptists, whose head was Thomas Munzer. They pretended to new revelations and dreamed of the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The sect spread rapidly through Westphalia, Holstein and the Netherlands, in spite of the cruel persecutions. The rude and fanatical period of the history of Anabaptism closes with the scandal of Munzer in 1535.

A new era begins with Menno Simons, who founded congregations in the Netherlands and Germany. His followers repudiated the distinctive doctrines of the Munzer fanatics and were more sober and moderate in their views and excesses.

After Simons' renunciation of the Roman Church, he spent several years in West Friesland where under the tolerant Duke of Gelders, he was not molested and gained many converts. In 1542 Emperor Charles V, offered a reward of forty pounds for Simons' arrest. Not only was a price set upon his head, but even those who gave him aid in any form were punished. Men were burned at the stake for having taken him into their homes and for printing his writings. His teachings also brought him into bitter opposition to the Roman Church as well as the Lutheran and Reformed denominations. In addition the State, or authorized church of the government, persecuted him relentlessly for the non-participation in civil and military affairs of the government.

This is not a history of the Mennonites, but I do want to say that no religious sect ever came out of Europe that was on the one hand so cruelly and bitterly persecuted and on the other hand so patiently suffered these harsh persecutions as the Mennonites. Driven from one country to another like wild beasts. Like criminals and outcasts they were sold into slavery; their

property confiscated, imprisoned, imprisoned in the vilest dungeons to starve to death. Thousands perished by the rack, the rope and the stake. After enduring all this for their religious faith, is it any wonder that they turned their eyes westward to the new world where men could worship God as they saw fit without being molested by anyone.

The earliest mention I find of the Mennonites in American history is in the monumental works of Francis Parkman, in which he with a masterhand writes of the "Great Conflict" between the English and French for the possession of North America.

The French Jesuit Priest—Father Jaques—in a report on the religious conditions in New Netherland, now New York, in 1643 says: "There are in the colony, Calvinists, Catholics, English Puritans, Lutherans and 'Menists.'"

Some writers of Mennonite history allege that there were Mennonites in the Plockhoy colony that existed on the Delaware Bay in 1658. I am of the opinion that they are mistaken, for Plockhoy was a social reformer and political communistic Holland Dutchman who founded the ill-fated and short lived colony. He was not the type of man the Mennonites had any faith in, even at that early date of their existence.

It is a well known historical fact that the first permanent Mennonite settlement in America was made at Germantown. These Mennonites came from Holland and Germany in 1683. During the next twenty years many more came and as the land about the village was taken up, a new location was sought for in the fertile valleys, what is now Skippack in Montgomery County.

Wars and persecutions that were renewed with relentless fury in Europe caused a new wave of German immigration from the Upper Rhine country, called the Palatinate in southwestern Germany, to Penn's colony in 1710. Among them were a small number of Mennonites under the leadership of Hans Herr, Jacob Miller, Martin Oberholtzer, Christian Herr and Martin Mylin. That they were exiles from Switzerland on their way to America is well established by a letter one wrote and all signed it, at London dated June 10, 1710, to their brethren in Holland who befriended them. On a warrant dated October 10, 1710, we find the same names and several others for a tract of land, 10,000 acres, on the Pequea Creek, Chester County now Lancaster County. This is the pioneer settlement of the Mennonites in Lancaster County.

By 1717 the deported Swiss exiles came to America in such numbers that Governor Kieth protested and wanted the English government to adopt more stringent immigration laws to keep the Germans from going to the Penn colony in such large numbers.

In 1722 Nicholas Erb and many others came direct from Europe to this part of Penn's woods and settled at Hammer Creek, now Warwick Township. Two years later in 1723, George, Jacob and Henry Weber bought from the Penns 3000 acres in the locality what is now Weaverland in East Earl Township. Here the Martins, Weavers, Zimmermans, Goods and others, whose descendants are still living there, located. From this time on they continued to come in large numbers up to the beginning of the Revolutionary War. They located not only in Northern Lancaster County but also in Bucks, Berks, Montgomery and Chester counties.

In these five counties at the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783 there were thousands of Mennonites. Yet they were not crowding the rural communities. To us at this day it appears as if the land was cheap. Why did they become restless to move on to Virginia, Ohio and Canada?

The soil from which they made their living in this county and some of the others, was the richest and most productive they or any one else ever plowed for a crop. Their forefathers had endured all the privations and hardships of pioneer life to subdue a wilderness. Did the younger generation want to do likewise by going to a new frontier and also suffer the life of a pioneer in a strange and unknown land?

It is well known that many of the first settlers under Penn owed the English government a debt of gratitude for kindness shown them when they came

to London on their way to the Penn colony, but these were all dead when the war for independence began. They were not like the Tories, in the sense that they favored the English crown. Their attitude was one of neutrality for all wars were inconsistent with their religious principles.

The period of anarchy which followed the end of the Revolutionary War from 1783 to 1789, when the new government was finally organized, created a good deal of distrust among the loyalists who at heart favored the cause of the king.

At the same time, the younger and poorer members of the Mennonites in Lancaster, Bucks and Montgomery counties were looking for cheaper land somewhere; for by this time all the land in southeastern Pennsylvania had been taken up. Colonization Societies were being formed for the purpose of helping the poorer members of the older Mennonite Communities to find homes and the question arose: Why not go to Canada? Here the homeseekers might find large tracts of cheap uncultivated land not far from the American border, where each one could own his farm.

As early as 1786 a small group of Mennonites from the locality of Plumstead, Bucks County, left for Canada by going up the Susquehanna, across the mountains through Pennsylvania and New York, crossing the Niagara River, near the Falls, and located in Lincoln county about twenty miles west of the Falls.

Lincoln county at that time included all the territory of Upper Canada along the South shore of Lake Ontario, west of Niagara to where the city of Hamilton is located at the head of the lake.

During 1799 a number of families from the same county followed them and also settled at the same place. This part of the Province is now the fruit garden of Canada. My eyes have never seen a more beautiful sight than this garden spot of Ontario when the blossoms are in full bloom. A magnificent panorama of vineyards and orchards rich in blossoms, with the blue water of the lake as a background.

The soil was thin and sandy. The sand is still there but cultivation and fertilizing has made it a most productive fruit garden now. These pioneers who came from the soil were after a soil that would produce grain and not fruit, for which they had no market then.

Exploring parties to find what was beyond them on the West soon discovered that taller and bigger trees grew in the heavy timbered regions of the Grand River, what is now Waterloo County. Here a few fur traders and trappers, who had temporary quarters in the wilderness, were the only human beings within thirty miles of civilization. Here in the dense forest these hearty pioneers selected their future homes and by untold privations and relentless toil made the finest and richest county out of a trackless wilderness that the Province of Ontario has today.

In the fall of 1799, Joseph "Schoerz" Shirk and Samuel Betzner from Franklin County rode on horseback over the mountains to Niagara Falls, crossed the river to the Canadian side and remained with brethren of the Mennonite church during the winter in Lincoln County. From them, they learned of the fine timbered country to the west on the Grand River.

In the spring they went on an exploring trip and found that what they had been told of this tract was just what they were looking for. Shirk bought a farm or tract of land on the east side of the Grand River, where the present village of Doon is now. Betzner bought a tract on the opposite or west bank of the river, where the town of Blair is located. They paid for their land and returned during the summer, to their homes in Franklin County, to report and make preparations to move to Canada the following year, which they did.

These were the pioneer settlers from Pennsylvania in what is now the Mennonite settlement of Waterloo County, Ontario. The descendants of these families who are now some of the prominent citizens of Waterloo county are proud of the fact that their ancestors made the move on account of their loyalty to the British crown and wanted to live under the English government.

I refer to this as the cause why they migrated from the Cumberland Valley.

This same year 1800, late in the spring, several families from Lancaster County with teams, wagons and household effects, left their homes and after six weeks journey arrived at the Shirk and Betzner location.

Among them was John and Christian Reichert accompanied by David Gingerich, a son of Abraham Gingerich. The latter had a farm near Lititz. He also had eleven children, most of them sons, for whom he could not provide farms in Lancaster County. Hence he sent his son David to Canada with a view of emigrating there. The son's report was so favorable when he returned, that immediate arrangements were made to move there the following year.

Abraham Gingerich was born in this county in 1751. His father, Michael, came from Germany to Lancaster County in 1747. Of the eleven children of Abraham and Barbara Gingerich, ten went to Canada and remained. David had preempted a tract near the Shirk place the year before, but when they arrived the first week in June in 1801, they found another party by the name of Bechtel had located on this site so they had to make another selection near-by. This family of a round dozen Gingerichs was the pioneer movement in the Mennonite emigration from Lancaster County to Canada.

The good report of the new forest homes sent back home created a general exodus and many from Southeastern Pennsylvania loaded their effects in the Conestoga wagon and treked for six weeks to begin a pioneer life in an unknown and foreign land.

Among them was Samuel Bricker, the youngest son of Peter and Mary (Bear) Bricker, who was born in Warwick Township, Lancaster County, on July 25th, 1776. He was single when he accompanied a party of Mennonites to Canada in 1802. But like many another, he left a girl, Anna, a daughter of Christian and Mary Erb, in the old home to whom he was attached and was anxiously looking forward to the time when he could return and take her back to Canada with him. In that charming story, "The Conestoga Trail," by Miss B. Mabel Dunham, of Kitchener, Ontario, Samuel Bricker is the hero of the story who saved the colony.

The tract of land, 60,000 acres, what is now Waterloo Township, was owned by an Englishman by the name of Richard Beasely. From him all the land had been purchased and each one assumed that he had a clear title, but such was not the fact. Beasely, who was what we call a promoter of schemes, did not tell the settlers that a mortgage of \$20,000 was on his tract and that he could not grant a valid title. Samuel Bricker was a shrewd Pennsylvania German. He seemed to have the Yankee instinct of answering a question by asking one at the same time. An errand of some sort, of which we have no record, compelled him to go to Little York, now Toronto, and while there in passing the night at an Inn, picked up a conversation with a stranger who made inquiry of the Waterloo tract and the Dutch settlement, as it was called, and to his great surprise Bricker learned that it was only too true that a mortgage covered all of the Beasely tract, including the farms already paid for by the Mennonites. When he returned to the settlement and reported what he had heard, consternation reigned in the colony. An official investigation by a committee confirmed the fact that Bricker had learned the truth.

It appears that the Indian Chief Joseph Brant, he of notorious Wyoming Massacre fame, had the first title as Chief of the six nations, on 94,012 acres.

Richard Beasely, James Wilson and John B. Rosseau bought 60,000 acres from the Indian for a mere song, and Beasely negotiated a loan on the tract of \$20,000. The stranger with whom Bricker conversed at York, was no other but James Wilson who Beasely had also cheated in a former transaction.

Wilson was an honest man and did not want to see the honest pioneers being imposed upon. Bricker went to Beasely and told him what he discovered. The latter admitted such was the fact and suggested to him that a stock company be formed and he would sell them the whole tract, what is now Waterloo Township.

The settlers were alarmed and became distrustful and discouraged. No more new settlers came for several years from Pennsylvania, nor could Beasely sell any more land.

In January, 1804, the Mennonites met to discuss the situation and finally decided to send Samuel Bricker and Joseph Shirk to the Mennonite brethren in Franklin County to make an effort to raise money to pay the mortgage. Shirk and Bricker made the journey on horseback but the Mennonites of Franklin County took no stock in what they called "The-way-out-of-the-world country," and refused to give them any help. Shirk, in despair, returned to Canada. Young Bricker rode back home to Hammer Creek to see the girl he left there two years ago. He did more than that, for he also immediately reported the financial trouble that confronted the colony in Canada.

His plea made a marked impression but the only one who was thoroughly convinced of the justice and merit of the cause, as a Christian duty to aid the colony, was the leader of the Hammer Creek congregation "Hannes" Eby. He took up the question in a vigorous talk and persuaded the members that it was their duty as Christians to relieve the distress of their brethren in Canada. He told them: "They came not to beg, but to borrow and it is up to us to lend," which they did. Arrangements were immediately made to organize a joint stock company and at another meeting held at the same place in April, 1804, the company was fully organized. The stock was to consist of eight shares. One share should be the maximum and one-eighth of a share the minimum which any members could hold.

All the shares were at once subscribed and Samuel Bricker was appointed the agent of the organization with Daniel Erb as assistant. There being no banking communication at that time with the Canadian government, the next question to solve was, how to convey twenty thousand silver dollars through or over five hundred miles of a roadless country.

A strong box was made in which the silver was nailed in. A light two-horse wagon was procured upon which the box was securely fastened and in May of the same year, Bricker with his assistant Daniel Erb started for their new home on the banks of the Grand River, where they arrived safely in mid-summer with their load of silver.

This light wagon, or buggy as some called it, was for many years preserved in the driving shed on the farm on which Shirk originally located, near Chipopee.

Some years ago the Waterloo County Historical Society got the two front wheels and put them in the Museum part of the Historical Society at Kitchener, where they will remain for all time as one of the most cherished historical relics of the County. I had a photograph made of them which will appear in the report when published. (The chain over the wheels does not belong to the wagon. That was an error on the part of the man who put the wheels on the outside for the taking of the photo.)

An attorney, Hon. William Dickson, of Niagara, was employed who looked after the legal end of the trustees and in due time the mortgage was lifted and the 60,000 acres freed from the cloud that hung over it.

Richard Beasely and his wife, Henrietta, transferred the domain of the future township of Waterloo to Daniel Erb and Jacob Erb, as trustees, from whom the settlers got a legal title. The actual date of the transfer was made at Barton in the district of Niagara on June 29th, 1805.

From the original deed of transfer in the Register's office at Kitchener, the county seat of Waterloo County, I had a photographic copy made of the signatures of Richard Beasely and Henrietta Beasely as well as of Daniel Erb and Jacob Erb, to whom it was deeded and who signed the deeds of all the parties who bought the whole tract as farms.

May I add here, that the cut of the four horse Conestoga wagon is a photo of the wagon also in the Museum part of the Waterloo County Historical Society. The wagon was made in Lancaster County and was used by

Abraham Weber, now Weaver, to move his family and effects from this county to Canada in 1807.

Our Canadian historic brethren appreciate the value of ear-marks in history; hence the care of these interesting relics that had a conspicuous part in the development of their country.

The financial end and valid title was now adjusted. A surveyor was employed and the entire tract divided into farms or sections of 448 acres each. Two years later forty-five thousand acres more were purchased north of Waterloo by another company from Pennsylvania and also settled by Mennonites.

That Lancaster County people owned a whole township in Canada is rather more than an ordinary historical fact. Hannes Eby reasoned correctly when he told them that these people want to borrow, not beg, for within a few years all the money was paid back with interest.

This notable transaction in Canada and the satisfactory adjustment of the same gave the new settlement a great impetus. From every Mennonite community in southeastern Pennsylvania migration to Canada was the leading topic. From this time on to 1825, with the exception of 1812 to 1815, during the Second War with Great Britain, many hundreds left for the Canadian Province.

More from this county than from any other because there were more Mennonites in Lancaster County than in Bucks, Berks, Montgomery or Chester.

I have only space to name some, who among the hundreds that left this county to become permanent citizens in the Dominion.

John Bricker was born December 28, 1769, in Warwick Township. He married Mary Erb from same place and then went to Canada in 1802. Jacob, Abraham and John Brubacher, now Brubaker, and their three sisters from Elizabeth Township went in 1804. These were the ancestors of the many Brubakers in Waterloo County now.

Peter Burkhard was born March 15, 1780, near Blue Ball. He was married to Barbara Good of the same place and moved to Canada in 1820. The numerous families of Burkholder in Waterloo Township all came from Christian Burkholder, who was born February 3, 1783, a son of Rev. Ulrich Burkholder, in the vicinity of Bowmansville. Christian was married to Mary Bauman and moved to Canada in 1818. They had six children who followed the parents and became British subjects.

The most prominent name among the Mennonites in Waterloo County today is the name "Eby." Jacob Eby was a Bishop of the Mennonites in Switzerland as early as 1683. His son, Theodorus, came to America and located south of New Holland where he died in 1737. He was the progenitor of all the Ebys in America. The eldest son, Peter, was married to Annie Mylin. They belonged to the Pequoa colony of Mennonites. Their oldest son, John, moved to the Hammer Creek Mennonite settlement in Warwick Township, where his son, David, was born February 23, 1785, in a house erected by his father in 1754. This house is still a well preserved farm house with date 1754 on the front.

Early in May, 1807, David Eby, Benjamin Eby and wife, Peter Erb and his wife, Daniel Eby, Samuel Eby, Joseph Schneider and a number of others left their homes at Hammer Creek and arrived in the Canadian settlement on the 21st of June, the same year.

The one who became the leader of the pioneers was among the number, Benjamin Eby. In his youth he was not strong and his father often remarked "Bennie will never make a farmer, but will do for a schoolmaster." To this end he was encouraged to study the few books to be had in the community. On November 27th, 1809, he was ordained a minister of the Canadian Mennonites and on October 11th, 1812, a Bishop. Bishop Eby was not only the first bishop of the Waterloo settlement, but also the father of the first Mennonite

church or meeting house erected in Waterloo County in 1813, a cut of which will appear in the pamphlet when printed.

He had another distinguished honor to his credit. Where he located, a village soon came into existence for he sold small tracts of his farm and encouraged industries so as to produce some of the necessary things needed among the settlers. This hamlet was named "Ebyville." Later it became Berlin and now since the "World War" Kitchener, in honor of Lord Kitchener. It is the county seat of Waterloo County and has a population of 25,000.

One of the largest tributaries of the Grand river was a creek as large as our Conestoga, but before the country was settled had no name. The first time Benjamin Eby, the future Bishop, saw it, he said it reminded him of the Conestoga back home and named it Conestoga. Now you may understand why Miss Dunham called her interesting book "The Conestoga Trail" for it is a literary trail from one Conestoga to another.

In Eby's biographical history of Waterloo Township there are 416 Ebys listed. The largest number of one name in the county. They are the descendants of the Ebys who emigrated from Lancaster County. The Erbs also came from the Hammer Creek community and the same author has 185 sketches of the family name that their ancestors transferred from this county to Canada.

During the years 1819 and 20 a large number of Mennonites from the Earls, Caernarvon and Brecknock left with their families for Canada.

Bishop Henry Martin was born July 21, 1741. He married Mary Burkhard and lived near Blue Ball. They had nine children. The record on the tombstone in the Weaverland Cemetery says the Bishop died April 27, 1825. The third son born to them was named Peter. He married Anna Zimmerman on Christmas Day, 1793. They had seventeen children. In 1819 the parents and fifteen children accompanied by Daniel and Henry Weber and a number of others, made a party that moved to the Mennonite settlement in Waterloo.

Eby, in his "Who is Who" of Waterloo Township has 339 Martins listed. Nearly all came from the Peter Martin family.

The same summer another party consisting of Peter Mosser, Frederick Musselman, John and Daniel Good, David and Samuel Horst, John Lichty and a number of Baumans, who came from the Allegheny Valley just across the line in Berks county, also followed the others to Canada.

One of the last ones who left the old home at Shirk's tannery in Caernarvon as late as 1862, was Peter Shirk, a son of Christian and Elizabeth Shirk. He made his home with his uncle, Jacob Hoffman, at Berlin and became a miller by trade. He married Anna Weber Martin, and raised a family of thirteen children. He established himself as Waterloo County's foremost citizen in the milling business and when he died a few years ago, was the possessor of a great estate among which were the famous Lancaster Mills at Bridgeport near Kitchener. Mr. Shirk also was the County Treasurer of Waterloo for many years. I knew him quite well when I was located at Stratford. He was in that Consular district and frequently came to the office to transact affairs with his native country.

The Weavers, or Webers, Wanners, Wengers, Stauffers, Witmers and Zimmermans all came from eastern Lancaster County and their descendants are many whose homes are now in Waterloo County.

Space and time prevents me from going into a detailed history of each. In conclusion I want to say a word of the journey from Pennsylvania to Upper Canada. The distance of over 500 miles over the mountains, through swamps, and no bridges, over the streams and rivers, was one of the great difficulties to overcome with more or less danger. The last part of the distance was the worst of the whole journey. The Beverly swamp that lay between what is now Dundas to the German settlement, a distance of 25 miles, was then next to impassable. It took the emigrant trains from three to four days to work their way through. A few years ago the Ontario government constructed a fine concrete Provincial Highway over the same route and one can

now roll over the same in less than an hour, by auto. Just what route the emigrants followed I was not able to find out. Those from the east end of the county went by way of Reading when they started, but which way then, I know not. Some crossed the Niagara River where it leaves Lake Erie, or near the city of Buffalo now, and others below the Falls near where the river enters Lake Ontario.

Crude man power ferries were the only means to get across at either place. The Conestoga wagon with four and six horses attached was the mode of transportation. They were loaded with household effects and farming implements. Food for the family and feed for the horses took up room. Some had tents, others slept in the wagons. Cows and sheep were driven along by many. The women and children often had to follow the teams on foot, there being no room in the wagons for them.

When the tiresome and perilous journey was at an end, that which confronted them in the wilderness settlement was discouraging indeed. The new home had to be hewed out of the dense forest to erect a temporary shelter to house the family and stock. To clear the land for the next year's crop was hard work to begin with.

These pioneers endured untold hardships and privations the first few years in their new homes. The climate in this northern latitude was much colder than in Sunny Pennsylvania they had been used to. The days during the winter months were short and dreary. The snow was deep and isolation from the outside world was as complete as if there was no one else in existence. Provisions and feed were scarce. Potato peelings had to be saved for planting. No mill within miles to grind flour or feed.

Forest fires during the fall of the year were a great menace. The trees were cut down and burned to clear the soil. A number of times these fires got beyond the control of the settlers and destroyed their buildings.

The summerless year of 1816 gave them much concern. Ice and frost cut down their crops and want of food and feed for the winter was great. The following year proved one of fine crops and the pioneers were encouraged.

In all frontier pioneer settlements in all countries there is much lawlessness. Part of the population consists of such who left civilization to escape the law. Horse-racing, drinking, gambling and all the other vices prevail until law and order is established.

I want to add, so far as I have been able to study the advance of civilization, I have never found a new settlement where these conditions did not prevail.

To the great credit and honor of the German settlement from Pennsylvania on the Canadian frontier, there was nothing of this sort of wild life. They were a God fearing religious people. Their implicit confidence and abiding faith in the future made them hopeful and at last they prospered and were happy and contented.

I have often been impressed with the fact that when we consider the unsanitary conditions under which the greater part of the human race is born, how the generations continue to follow one another with unflinching regularity. A new frontier settlement is an amazing mystery in the philosophy of life. Lacking in modern comforts and conveniences in their crude homes, no medical care worth speaking of to care for their sick.

Such were the conditions in this out of the way settlement. Yet it is a remarkable fact that each family had from eight to seventeen children and nearly all grew to manhood and womanhood, who helped to carve out of the wilderness the richest agricultural county in the British Dominion. Toil and thrift with confidence in God and themselves made them the distinguished pioneers whose memory will be duly honored by a government that appreciates the part they did in making that government and its institutions what it is today.

In 1921 the Historic Sites and Monument Branch at Ottawa wrote to the President of the Waterloo County Historical Society as to the site in Waterloo



County worthy of a National Monument. The following year the Premier of the Dominion Government, Hon. Mackenzie King, who by the way is from the adjoining county, interested himself in the matter and the County Pioneer Memorial Association was formed, with a view of erecting a Tower of Honor to the Pioneer Mennonites who came from Pennsylvania.

On the high banks of the Grand River opposite the Town of Doon on the Betzner farm in 1810, the first cemetery was laid out in which the Mennonite Pioneers were buried. Here the remains of many Lancaster County born men and women are at rest in their dreamless sleep.

There are many other graveyards in the County of Waterloo in which the pioneers from Lancaster County are buried. On the opposite bank of the Grand River, where the Pioneer Memorial is now being erected, two years ago an imposing monument to the memory of the Schneiders, who came from Lancaster County, was dedicated.

The Cemetery in which the largest number of Lancaster County pioneers are buried is located near Hespeler and is known as "Wanner's Cemetery." The land for this graveyard was donated for this purpose by Henry Wanner a native of this county, who settled on the farm, part of which the cemetery is now.

The Memorial Association added an acre of ground to the original graveyard, on the Betzner farm, put a handsome iron fence around it and otherwise beautified it. On the 24th of June, last, the first sod for the Memorial Tower was turned by Dr. Orr, President of the Ontario Historical Society, in the presence of thousands of people. Brig. Gen. Cruikshank of the Dominion Historical Society, and D. N. Panabaker, Esq., President of the Pioneer Memorial Society, delivered addresses, in which they paid fine tributes to the memory of the Pennsylvania German pioneers.

The design of the Monument is Swiss, in honor of the settlers' ancestors. It is circular in form, built of field stone, lined with concrete with a gallery 28 feet from the ground and rising to a height of 72 feet. It faces south toward Pennsylvania, from whence they came. Bronze tablets will be imbedded on the sides of the Monument on which the names of all the settlers prior to 1823 will be inscribed.

This imposing tower commands a wide area of the beautiful well cultivated farms that the pioneers dug out of the forest. It will be finished so as to be dedicated either on May 24th or July 1st, this year, on one of Canada's national holidays.

I am indebted to the memory of Ezra E. Eby, a great-grandson of "Old Hannes" Eby, of Hammer Creek, who published in 1895 a biographical history of two large volumes containing over eight thousand distinct biographical sketches of those who came to Canada from Pennsylvania and their descendants. Also to Miss B. Mabel Dunham, of Kitchener, the author of "The Conestoga Trail," and Prof. Smith's excellent work, "The Mennonites of America," for data and facts to write that which I have written.

I devoted a good deal of time and labor in research for material to dig out of it such history as relates to the Lancaster County Migration of the Mennonites to Canada from 1800 to 1825. Whether I have succeeded in my effort in presenting a paper that is worthy to put in print for future generations to read, I will leave to you to be the Judge.

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