

Applications of Mennonites to Immigrate from Jeziorka, Prussia to Russia: 1804

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Two groups of Mennonite settlers left Przechowka near Schwetz in Prussia: one group left for Kleinsee or Jeziorka in 1727, possibly even as early as 1727.ⁱ Jeziorka is located about 30 km northwest of Schwetz. Herbert Wiebe gives a name list for the Przechowka, Deutsch-Konopath and Kleinsee settlers as of 1772.ⁱⁱ A second Przechowka group joined 28 families from Jeziorka in 1764 to settle in the Frankfurt/Oder district of Brandenburg province to establish the settlements of Brenkenhoffswalde and Franztal in the Driesen Amt along the Netze River which at that time was drained to claim more arable land for Prussia.ⁱⁱⁱ

A mostly untapped source for emigration studies is the Geh. Preuss. Staatsarchiv in Berlin. Examples of what we may expect to find are the records of the General-Directorium as the central Prussian government was called prior to 1806. These records on emigrants may reveal more than what is spelled out in print by authors like B.H.Unruh or K.Stumpp and may prove worth your attention.

The Prussian census of Mennonites in 1776 lists the names in Jeziorka.^{iv} The list of Mennonite settlers for 1789 is given in the following table.^v

Mennonite Possessions in Prussia in 1789

No.	Name	H (Hufen)	M (Morgen)	R (Ruten)	G.RanDMA Number
1	Heinrich Nachtigal	1	6	—	
2	Behr. Ratzlaw	1	—	—	
3	Heinr. Schmidt	2	—	—	
4	Peter Retzlaw	—	15	—	
5	Jacob Fouth	—	2	—	106921
6	Behr. Ratzlaw	—	6	—	
7	Andr. Kuhn	—	7	150	40857
8	David Schmidt	1	2	—	
9	Abrah. Rychert	1	—	—	
10	George Buller	3	15	—	
11	Witwe Nachtigallin	1	15	—	

No.	Name	H (Hufen)	M (Morgen)	R (Ruten)	GReDMA Number
12	Jacob Schmid	—	4	150	58516
13	Cornel. Jantz	1	4	150	
14	Joh. Unrau	1	7	150	
15	Peter Becker	—	7	—	
16	Johan Jantz	—	4	—	
17	Peter Unrau	—	8	150	
18	Jacob Becker	1	8	—	
19	Peter Retzlaw	—	15	—	
20	Peter Schmidt	1	10	—	
Summary		18	17	150	

H = Hufen (often translated into English as *Hides*): A major historical unit of land area. In Prussia, **1 Hufe** was typically equivalent to **30 Morgen** (roughly 16.7 hectares or about 41 acres), historically considered enough land to sustain a family farm.

M = Morgen: A smaller subdivision of land representing a "morning's work" of plowing. **30 Morgen** made up 1 Hufe.

R = Ruten (or *Quadratruten* / square rods): The smallest fractional unit of measurement used to record smaller parcels, plots, or fractions underneath a Morgen (with 1 Morgen traditionally containing 300 square rods).

On 15 September 1803, eight Mennonites from Jeziorka appear at the Prussian authorities of Amt Schwetz in West Prussia and give notice that they and their families wish to immigrate to Russia near the town of Ekaterinoslaw on the Molotschna Wodda. They give their personal data as follows:

No.	Surname	Given name	Age	GReDMA No
https://mennonitegenealogy.com/russia/Berlin/212b.jpg				
1	Ratzlaff	Peter	39	47729
	wife	Anna née Schmidt	41	47862
	child	Anna	15	47886
	child	Andreas	12	1251899
	child	Maria	9	47888
2	Koehn	Andreas	39	40857
	wife	Anna née Ratzlaff	50	40863
	child	David	17	40864
	child	Jakob	15	40865
	child	Berend	11	283716

	child	Anna	23	41339
	child	Sara	21	41340
	child	Maria	13	40866
	child	Eva	8	1688719
	father	Andreas Koehn	60	40854
	mother	Anna née Buller	70	33026
https://mennonitegenealogy.com/russia/Berlin/213a.jpg				
3	Schmidt	Jakob	33	58516
	wife	Maria née Schmidt	37	100100
	child	Anna	9	1688720
	child	Peter	6	1688721
	child	Jakob	2	103268
4	Schmidt	Andreas	26	13309
5	Schmidt	Samuel, weaver	24	58519
	fiance	Maria Koehn	24	40861
6	Buller	Peter	31	32855
	wife	Anna née Ratzlaff	30	33045
	child	Eva	6	33046
	child	Anna	4	1324554
	child	Peter	3	33047
	child	Maria	1	33048
https://mennonitegenealogy.com/russia/Berlin/213b.jpg				
7	Buller	George	49	32851
	wife	Maria née Koehn	49	32854
	child	Jakob	18	32688
	child	David	15	32859
	child	Maria	12	32860
	child	Anna	10	32861
8	Foth	Jakob	44	106921
	wife	Maria née Nachtigal	42	42359
	child	Johann	15	106922
	child	Eva	9	398350

In addition, the petitioners give detailed information on their land holdings which they intend to sell prior to going to Russia.

This list is signed with xxx by 1,4,5,6, and with their name by 2,3,7,8.

In 1804 permission to emigrate was granted which means a 10% tax on all property being taken out of Prussia. Not all of the applicants immigrated to Russia at this time.

ⁱ Zijpp, Nanne van der and Richard D. Thiessen. "Jeziorka (Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland)." *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. September 2014. Web. 6 Oct 2026. [https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Jeziorka_\(Kuyavian-Pomeranian_Voivodeship,_Poland\)&oldid=141177](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Jeziorka_(Kuyavian-Pomeranian_Voivodeship,_Poland)&oldid=141177); *Mennonite Family History* (1988): 34; (1990): 151.

ⁱⁱ Wiebe, Herbert. *Das Siedlungswerk niederländischer Mennoniten im Weichseltal zwischen Fordon und Wiessenberg bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Marburg a. d. Lahn, 1952: 80-81.

ⁱⁱⁱ Mannhardt, H. G. "Brenkenhoffswalde and Franztal (Lubusz Voivodeship, Poland)." *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. 1953. Web. 6 Oct 2026. [https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Brenkenhoffswalde_and_Franztal_\(Lubusz_Voivodeship,_Poland\)&oldid=174061](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Brenkenhoffswalde_and_Franztal_(Lubusz_Voivodeship,_Poland)&oldid=174061); *Mennonitische Blätter* (1928): 90; *Mennonite Family History* (1985): 48-50.

^{iv} Ludwig, Karl-Heinz. *Zur Besiedlung des Weichseldeltas durch die Mennoniten : die Siedlungen der Mennoniten im Territorium der Stadt Elbing und in der Ökonomie Marienburg bis zur Übernahme der Gebiete durch Preußen 1772*. Marburg 1961: 258-260; LDS Film #1056552, Salt Lake City, UT.

^v Gen. Dir. Westpr. Mat. Tit. 109 ad Nr.1, vol.2 and Nr.17 (p.55-57, 126: Jeziorka emigrants, LDS Film #1056559, item 3).

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