

# The Hyas Doukhobour Settlement

by Jonathan Kalmakoff

Among the first settlers in the Hyas district of Saskatchewan were a group of Independent Doukhobors. Attracted by homestead lands and the promise of a railroad, the Russian pacifists arrived in 1902 to establish the village of Vozvyshenie. For five years, they lived, prayed and worked there under the motto of “Toil and Peaceful Life”, transforming the prairie wilderness into productive farmland. By 1907, however, the village experiment was abandoned, owing to the lack of railroad facilities and difficulty of getting goods to market. The story of Vozvyshenie illustrates the role of the traditional Russian village model, cooperative organization, homestead policy and the location and timing of railroad construction in the early settlement of Independent Doukhobors on the Prairies. The following article examines their little known contribution to the history and development of the Hyas district.

## Origin and History

The Doukhobors were a religious group founded in 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia. They rejected the rites and dogma of the Orthodox Church and denied the authority of the Tsarist State, refusing to swear allegiance to anyone but God. Their practical, commonsense teachings were based on the belief that the spirit of God resides in the soul of every person; therefore, to kill another person was to kill God. The Doukhobors were frequently persecuted for their faith by Imperial Russian authorities and forced to live in the frontier regions of the Empire.

In 1895, the Doukhobors refused to perform military service and burned their firearms in a symbolic demonstration against violence. Their pacifist stand was met with renewed persecution by authorities and many were tortured, imprisoned or exiled. Their plight attracted international attention, and with the assistance of Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy and the Society of Friends (Quakers), the Doukhobors sought refuge by immigrating to Canada.

In 1899, over 7,500 Doukhobors arrived in Canada, settling on three large blocks of land reserved

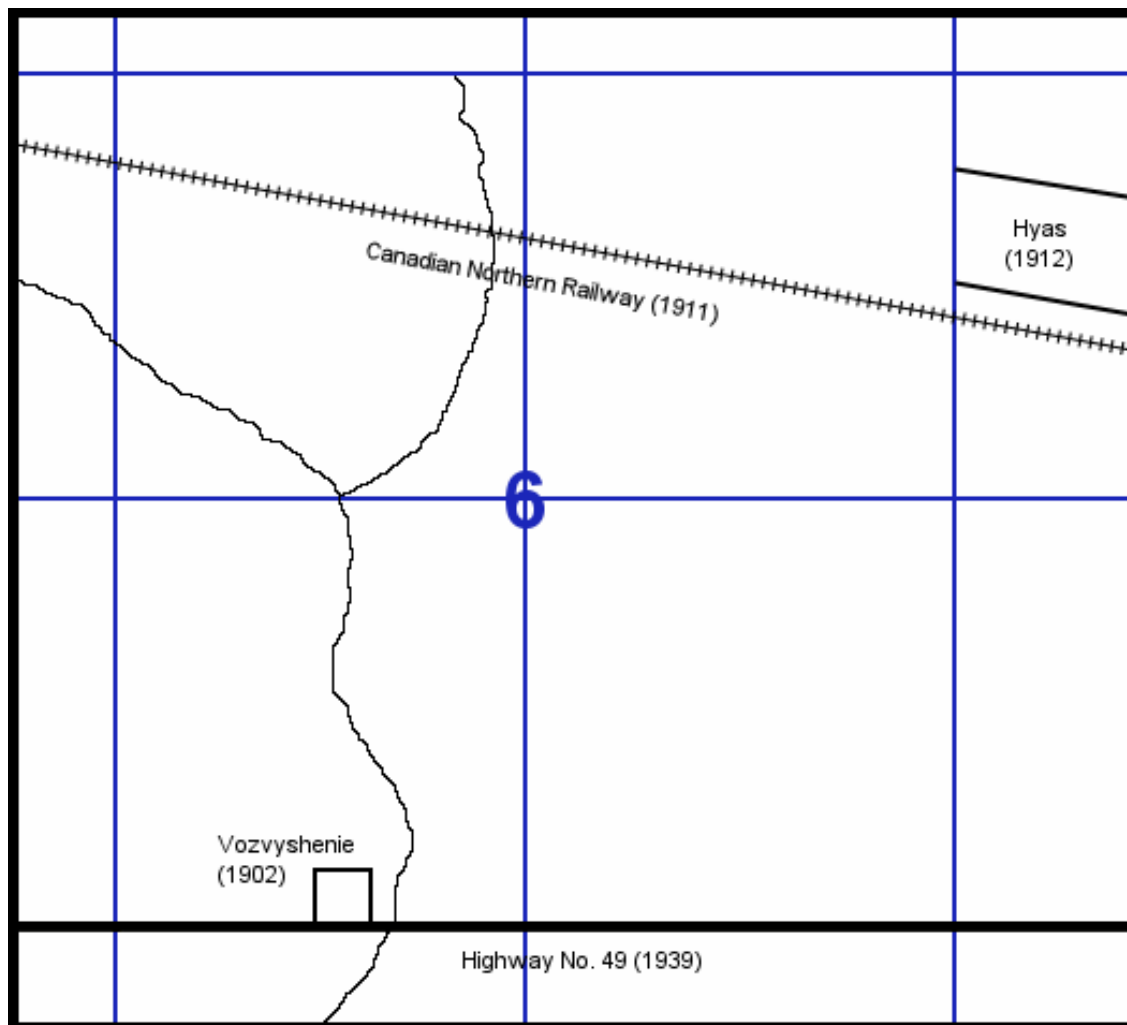
for them by the Dominion Government in the Northwest Territories, in what are today the districts of Pelly, Arran, Kamsack, Veregin, Canora, Buchanan, Langham and Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan. Following the motto of “Toil and Peaceful Life”, they cleared, broke and farmed the land and established over sixty villages, as well as flour mills, elevators, saw mills, brick factories, trading stores, roads, bridges and ferries in these areas.

During the first years of settlement, the Doukhobors adopted a communal way of life. Organized as the “Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood”, they held all land, livestock, machinery and other property in common. All work in the fields was performed jointly, all produce went into a communal granary and all proceeds, including outside earnings, pooled into a common treasury. Virtually all aspects of Community life – spiritual, social and economic – were organized according to the utopian communal vision of their leader, Peter V. Verigin.<sup>1</sup>

As time passed, however, many of the younger Doukhobor men withdrew from the Community and entered for individual homesteads. These men had traveled around the country working for Canadian farmers and had imbibed some independent ideas. They came to resent the narrowness and rigidity of Community life and grew tired of throwing their wage labour into a pool and getting very little out of it. They retained the essentials of their religion, particularly pacifism, but rejected the central leadership and communal lifestyle as being not essential to true Doukhoborism.<sup>2</sup> Most of these “Independents” settled on their individual homesteads after leaving the communalism of the Community villages. A few, however, sought to retain the traditional village form

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(Author's Collection)

Map of Vozvyshenie Village site in relation to the present day Village of Hyas

of settlement.<sup>3</sup> Such was the case of the Independent Doukhobors who settled in the Hyas district.

### Arrival and Settlement

In the spring of 1902, a group of twenty-nine Doukhobors in the Buchanan district broke away from the communal lifestyle to farm independently. As all of the desirable homesteads had been taken up in that district, they were obliged to search elsewhere for land. After careful investigation of the countryside, traversing it from west to east and from south to north, they chose lands situated twenty-five miles to the northeast, a day's journey by horse and wagon, in the Hyas district.<sup>4</sup>

The Hyas district was a wilderness of rolling prairie covered with scattered poplar and scrub, interspersed with spruce, when the Doukhobors arrived.<sup>5</sup> Much of the land was still unsettled. It was unsurveyed and there were no roads save for a deeply rutted pack trail, a branch of the Fort Pelly Trail, which ran through

it.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, the land met the settlers' essential requirements: excellent soil, a good water supply and accessible timber to build.<sup>7</sup>

A significant factor in their decision to locate was the Canadian Northern Railway Company's 1902 proposal to extend a branch line from Swan River, Manitoba west through the district.<sup>8</sup> When the Doukhobors inquired with the Dominion Lands Branch office about homesteads in the vicinity, they had been promised the branch line within a year or two. It was well understood at the time that rail access to distant markets would be essential if they were to prosper on their homesteads and farms in the hinterland.

To this end, the Russian speaking settlers filed homestead entries on Section 6 of Township 34 and Sections 30 and 34 of Township 33, all in Range 2, west of the Second Meridian along the proposed railway route.<sup>9</sup> Under the *Dominion Lands Act*, they could obtain patent for the land provided they cultivated

at least thirty acres on each quarter-section, became naturalized subjects and swore an oath of allegiance to the Crown.<sup>10</sup>

Ordinarily, homesteaders were required to build a house on their quarter-section and reside there for a period of time, usually six months a year for three years. However, the Doukhobors were granted the modifications of the "Hamlet Clause" under the *Dominion Lands Act* which allowed them to fulfill the residence requirements in their traditional village form of settlement and fulfill their homestead obligations without actually living on their individual quarter-sections.<sup>11</sup>

The Doukhobors thus selected a suitable place on the southwest quarter of Section 6 to establish a village.<sup>12</sup> It was located so that it would be more or less central to their homestead entries to minimize the travel distance between their homes and their fields. It was adjacent to a small unnamed stream which offered a reliable source of water. Stands of spruce trees were situated nearby for use for building and heating. As it was built on a rise of land, relative to the swampy lowlands to the south, it was named *Vozvyshenie*, from the Russian for "elevation" or "rising ground". It was the first organized settlement in the district, predating the village of Hyas by a decade.

The village initially consisted of five 18' x 30' houses constructed of hand-sawn logs with low-pitched

gable roofs thatched with grass.<sup>13</sup> They were built in two rows facing each other across a wide central street, laid out in the *Strassendorf* (street village) pattern used in Russia. Behind each house was a large garden plot for use by each family. Numerous outbuildings were also built, including barns, stables, granaries, a bathhouse (*banya*), blacksmith's shop (*kuznitsa*) and outdoor clay oven (*pech*').<sup>14</sup> A row of spruce trees was planted along the central street of the village.

The original families comprising the village of Vozvyshenie were those of Wasyl Swetlishnoff, John Salikin, Alexei Barisoff, Peter Negraeff, John Rilkoﬀ, Joseph Derhouseoff, Peter Sookorukoﬀ and Semyon Kalmakoff. In the ensuing years, they were joined by the families of Alexei Katasonoﬀ, Efim Bedinoﬀ, Alexei Derhouseoff and Zakhar Derhouseoff from the Arran and Runnymede districts.<sup>15</sup> Most of the village families were related to one another either directly or through marriage.

### Village Life

The Doukhobors of Vozvyshenie lived together on a free and voluntary basis, without formal leadership or institutions. Village meetings (*sobranie*) were held from time to time at which women and men participated equally in the decision making process.<sup>16</sup> The elders (*starichki*) provided advice and direction for the affairs of the village. Disagreements were

To wit :

I, *Alex Alexey Barisoff*, do solemnly ~~swear~~ <sup>affirm</sup> that the answers to the foregoing questions are true and correct in every particular. That I claim a Patent for this Homestead under the provisions of the "Dominion Lands Act."

That I obtained an entry, and claim a Patent for the same for my own benefit, and not in the interest or for the benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever.

SO HELP ME GOD.

*affirmed*  
before me at *Carleton Place*  
this *7<sup>th</sup>* day of *October* 19*07*  
having first been read over and explained to the said applicant.

*St Paul Barschel*  
Sub-Agent of the Dominion Lands, or  
Homestead Inspector for the *YORKTON* District.

*Alexey + Barisoff*  
mark.

Patent form for Alexei (Alexey) Barisoff.  
(Saskatchewan Archives Board, Homestead File 878895 for Alexey Barisoff)





*A line of spruce trees marks the central street of Vozvyshenie.*

rare and the Doukhobor values of love, non-violence, hospitality, simple living and justice prevailed in day to day relations.

Agriculturally and economically, the villagers organized themselves along broad cooperative lines, as they had in Russia.<sup>17</sup> Homesteads, village lots, buildings, livestock and machinery were considered the private property of each household. Each family worked its homestead independent of the others. At the same time, they cooperated in common undertakings, sharing labour, draft animals and implements whenever they could be spared from their own work. To some extent, such mutual assistance was a practical necessity in the early years of Prairie settlement, when survival was paramount.

The Doukhobors were almost entirely self-sufficient in food production. They grew potatoes, cabbages, tomatoes and other vegetables in their gardens; picked wild berries, nuts and mushrooms in the forest; consumed milk and dairy products from their cattle; slaughtered their cows, pigs and chickens for meat;<sup>18</sup> caught fish in the nearby rivers and streams; and grew wheat which was milled to produce flour for baking.

The villagers also manufactured most of their own cloths, tools and furniture.<sup>19</sup> The women wove cloth and made garments, rugs, shawls, and hangings from homespun fabrics. The men produced furniture, boots and shoes, ladles, harnesses, horseshoes, spades, spinning wheels and various tools. Store-bought items consisted of those few items which could not be made, grown or produced in the village, such as salt, coal oil, glass, sugar, tea and soap.

As with all new settlers, the Doukhobors struggled to increase their cash income. In summer, the able-bodied men left the village to work as railway labourers and farmhands at subsistence wages while the women, children and old men managed the lands and households.<sup>20</sup> It was this collective sharing of responsibilities which made their continued existence possible.

Clearing and improving the homesteads was a slow, difficult process that took the majority of the villagers' time and labour. Before crops could be sown, the settlers had to remove trees and scrub, drain sloughs and clear the fields of rock. Using axes, hoes and sickles along with teams of horses hitched to walking plows, the Doukhobors could only clear ten to fifteen acres at



(Author's Collection)

*Log farmhouse of Alexis Barisoff. The last remaining building of Vozvyshenie.*

the most in a year. All villagers old enough to work contributed towards this effort.

As parcels of land were cleared, the Doukhobors cultivated and sowed it to produce rye, barley and oat crops. They put much of it into grass for pasture and hay. As more feed was produced, additional livestock were acquired. At first, the villagers were limited to subsistence farming, with nearly all of the crops and livestock raised used to survive, leaving little, if any, surplus for sale or trade.

Diversions from the arduous work were few. Leisure was not a concept known to the Doukhobors since, according to their teachings, people were not supposed to be idle. All the same, the villagers socialized as they worked together in the village and in the fields. Work and leisure thus formed an integrated whole.<sup>21</sup> Prayer meetings (*molenie*) were a major weekly social event on Sunday morning. Other less formal social gatherings were held from time to time.

Generally speaking, the Doukhobors shared many of the same experiences as other settlers. Isolation, loneliness, harsh weather, deprivation and adversity were met with persistence, optimism, thrift, resourcefulness and the acceptance of unremitting hard work. At the same time, their life was made easier in

that they were a close-knit community and worked together, whereas a single homesteader often lived by himself, far from other neighbours.

### **Growth and Prosperity**

In spite of the initial hardships of pioneer life, Vozvyshenie grew and even prospered. By the taking of the Census of Northwest Provinces in 1906, it was a bustling village of forty-five people living in eleven households.<sup>22</sup> Now the villagers had eighteen horses, thirty-seven milk cows and forty-seven horned cattle.<sup>23</sup> They had brought a large area surrounding the village under cultivation and had begun to produce a surplus of agricultural products.

By this time, the Doukhobors were no longer alone. Following the Dominion Lands Survey in 1904, in which sections and quarter-sections were laid out, hundreds of new settlers poured into the district. The vast bulk of these people were Galicians from Western Ukraine and Scandinavians, Swedes and Norwegians, who arrived via the United States. Other groups included English and Scottish settlers from Ontario and Russian and Ukrainian Evangelical Protestants who, like the Doukhobors, fled Tsarist Russia to avoid religious persecution. They all came seeking a better

way of life, bringing with them a diversity of languages, manners and customs.

It was evident that the Doukhobor village was a gathering place for many of the newcomers where they met to discuss local news, weather conditions and matters relating to the land and its settlement. To some extent, the newcomers were dependent on more established settlers for advice and direction to start their own homesteads, and the Doukhobors were foremost in offering hospitality and generosity to all who came to them for assistance.

For instance, when the first groups of Russian and Ukrainian Evangelical Protestants arrived in the district, they stayed at Vozvyshenie for several days, and with the help of the Doukhobors, got to their homesteads.<sup>24</sup> The two groups of settlers, being able to converse in their native language, remained on friendly terms, visited one another's homes and engaged in lively philosophical discussions.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, one Evangelical Protestant settler, Pavel Skripnik, was so impressed by the Doukhobor way of life that he converted to their faith and took the surname "Skripnikoff".

With the influx of settlers, regular mail service became available in 1903 as the Plateau post office was opened on Fred Wright's farm on Section 16 of Township 33.<sup>26</sup> In 1905, it was moved to the general store belonging to Adolph Kennedy on Section 20 of Township 33 and renamed the Ulric post office.<sup>27</sup> Then, from 1909 to 1911, it was re-opened as the Cokato post office on Tom Tetlock's farm on Section 26 of Township 33.<sup>28</sup> Mail was conveyed fortnightly by stage from Kamsack via Fort Pelly. With this convenience, settlers were better able to transact business and maintain correspondence with friends and relatives in outlying parts of the country.

Despite the rapid growth of the district, however, the settlers were disadvantaged by the lack of accessibility and distance of markets. The main supply route, the Fort Pelly Trail, provided a tenuous link to the outside world and was often impassible by horse and wagon. Although supplies could be obtained locally at Kennedy's or at the Hudson Bay Company store at Fort Pelly, fourteen miles to the east, the nearest market for livestock and grain was the town of Canora, located twenty miles to the south, which was too far away to be practical and economical.

The railway had been promised, but each autumn, when it came time for grain hauling,<sup>29</sup> there was no sign of a railway and the settlers had to haul their grain to Canora. The Doukhobors hitched two teams of

horses to a sleigh and hauled up to sixty bushels per load. The entire trip consumed two days.<sup>30</sup> During the relatively mild winters of 1905 and 1906, the journey was bearable. However, during the severe winter of 1907, the heavy loads often got upset in the deep snow and it was several days before they got back to the village. Similar long and arduous journeys were made to drive the cattle the Doukhobors raised overland to Canora.

### **Abandonment and Dissolution**

By the end of 1907, many of the Doukhobors had grown dissatisfied with the lack of railway facilities, the difficulty of getting goods to market and the resulting unprofitability of their farms.<sup>31</sup> After much deliberation, most decided that the economic benefits of relocating closer to the railhead outweighed the limitations of staying at Vozvyshenie. Consequently, eight of the eleven families abandoned their homestead entries, left the village and relocated to new homesteads which had been thrown open in the district north-east of Canora.<sup>32</sup> Their partially improved homestead entries were eventually taken up by new settlers.

The departure of the majority of families led to the dissolution of the village. The remaining families - those who were unwilling or perhaps unable to abandon their efforts and relocate to another district - moved out onto their individual homesteads. As houses and barns were removed or dismantled for building materials, the physical structure of the village was reduced to the farmstead of the family homesteading the village quarter-section.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Doukhobor village of Vozvyshenie, which only a year before had bustled with activity and promise, disappeared from the map.

### **New Beginnings**

The families who stayed behind, those of Alexei Derhousoff, Zakhar Derhousoff and Alexei Barisoff, continued to improve their entries on Section 6 of Township 34. In due course, they obtained patents to the land.<sup>34</sup> They were joined by another Doukhobor family, that of Ivan Nahornoff, who arrived in the district from Russia in 1910 and purchased the southeast quarter of Section 35 of Township 33.<sup>35</sup> The 1911 Canada Census reported twenty-one people in these four families.<sup>36</sup> Their mixed farming operations were amongst the most prosperous and successful in the district.

Ironically, in the end, the railway eventually did arrive. In late 1911, the Canadian Northern Railway Company completed the Thunderhill Branch



Line through the district.<sup>37</sup> Its construction made life significantly easier for the local settlers, ending their isolation, giving them direct access to markets, stimulating agricultural and economic growth and acting as a catalyst for local improvements, including the construction of a modern road system.<sup>38</sup>

The following year, the railway company constructed a siding, with a boxcar station and loading platform, on the northwest quarter of Section 5 of Township 34. A hamlet was surveyed there, which soon boasted a post office, school, two general stores, restaurant, elevator, bank, hotel, blacksmith and livery stable along with numerous residences.<sup>39</sup> It became a small commercial centre where local farmers came to ship livestock and grain to market, transact business and pick up necessary supplies and also collect mail. Thus the community of Hyas, as it came to be known, was established as it is today.

Ironically, the district's earliest settlers, the Doukhobors, did not long remain to enjoy these modern developments. As land values soared and land grew scarcer along the new branch line, the Barisoff, Derhousoff and Nahornoff families, unable to expand their landholdings, and desiring to live closer to their coreligionists, sold out in 1914-1915 and relocated to the Kamsack district, a predominantly Doukhobor-settled area, where they purchased new farms.<sup>40</sup>

## Epilogue

Time has erased most, but not all, traces of the Doukhobor village of Vozvyshenie. A line of spruce trees, now part of the shelterbelt surrounding the Serdachny family farm, still marks the central street of the village. A solitary log farmhouse nearby stares silently at the traffic passing by on the highway west of Hyas. Little else remains except in old records, yellowed photographs and in the memories of the villagers passed down to their descendants. Yet, the story of Vozvyshenie offers a unique perspective of the history of the district, the Doukhobor contribution to its development and the myriad factors which led to the founding of some Prairie settlements and the demise of others.

As well, the story of Vozvyshenie offers an interesting counterpoint to previous interpretations of Independent Doukhobor settlement on the Prairies. In the past, scholars had interpreted the Independents' abandonment of communal villages as an outright rejection of that form of settlement. In the case of Vozvyshenie, however, while these Independents

rejected communal ownership and living, they did not abandon the concept of "community". Instead, they sought to maintain a community in the context of cooperativism and individual land ownership. In doing so, they opted for a form of settlement more akin to that which they had left in Russia, than either the utopian communalism of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood, on one hand, or the rugged individualism of "Canadian" settlers on the other. It was only later, when increased wealth and economic opportunity made them less dependent on each other, that the Doukhobors of Vozvyshenie discarded the traditional Russian village model as being no longer necessary for either their physical survival or the preservation of their spiritual life.

## Endnotes

1. Peter Vasilyevich Verigin (1859-1924) was the leader of the 'Large Party' of the Doukhobors in the Caucasus, Russia from 1887 to 1899 and the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood in Canada from 1899 until his death in 1924.
2. Woodcock, George & Ivan Avakumovic, *The Doukhobors* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 240.
3. Almost nothing has been published of the few Independent Doukhobors who rejected communalism but retained the old-world Strassendorf village plan and operation.
4. These original Doukhobor settlers hailed from the villages of Novo-Goreloe and Kirilovka in the Buchanan district. The latter village had been located in the Hyas-Tadmire district from 1899 until 1901, when it was relocated to the Buchanan district in order to be closer to the railway facilities proposed by the Canadian Northern Railway Company. Hence, many of the settlers were already familiar with the Hyas district, and were no strangers to land speculation based on rail expansion.
5. Saskatchewan Archives Board, File I.73, Edgar Bray, Surveyor's Note Book, November 16, 1903.
6. *Ibid.*
7. In choosing their land and village location, the Doukhobors in the Hyas district were guided by the same essential considerations as their brethren in the North Colony, South Colony and Saskatchewan Colony. See Carl J. Tracie, *Toil and Peaceful Life: Doukhobor Village Settlement in Saskatchewan, 1899-1918*. (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1996), pp. 44-50, 67-69, 84-87.
8. In 1902, the Canadian Northern Railway Company petitioned the Dominion Government to have its charter amended to allow an extension of the line "from a point on the Company's line at or near Swan River in Manitoba, thence along the Swan River valley and in a generally westerly direction to a point on the Company's authorized line at or near the crossing by that line of the Saskatchewan River." The petition was authorized by Statutes of Canada, 1903, Chapter 97.
9. Saskatchewan Archives Board, Homestead File Nos. 878895, 1416184 and 1410052. See also Library and Archives Canada, RG 15, V1166, F5404684, Vozvishennie Village File.

10. *Ibid.* Note the requirement to swear an oath of allegiance to the Crown violated the Doukhobors' religious beliefs; therefore, they crossed out the reference to an oath and substituted the word "affirm" on their homestead forms.
11. The right to live in villages, as opposed to residence on individual quarter-sections, was covered in the so-called "Hamlet Clause" (Section 37 of the *Dominion Lands Act*).
12. Note the Dominion Lands Branch reserved the village site out of the original Alexei Barisoff homestead entry for the surrounding quarter-section SW6-34-2-W2. See Vozsvishennie Village File, *supra*, note 6.
13. Homestead File No. 878895, *supra*, note 6.
14. Interview with Dan Deduke, Hyas, Saskatchewan (July 3, 2005).
15. These later Doukhobor settlers came from the villages of Kamenka and Truzhdenie in the Runnymede district and the village of Vera in the Arran district.
16. The village decision-making structure was similar to the traditional Russian *mir*, a self-governing council of peasant households in Imperial Russia that held assemblies, voted on matters affecting the village and organized collective undertakings.
17. Prior to the social and spiritual reforms instituted by Peter Vasilyevich Verigin in the 1890's, the Doukhobors in Russia lived together in villages, but worked individual plots of land separately from each other. They cooperated in common undertakings, but only after their own work was completed. This form of settlement offered the Vozvyshenie Doukhobors, at least for a time, a viable alternative to both the utopian communalism of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood and the rugged individualism of the isolated homesteader.
18. Unlike their Community brethren, who under the influence of Peter Vasilyevich Verigin became vegetarians, the Independent Doukhobors ate meat.
19. Tarasoff, Koozma J. "Doukhobors" in Paul Robert Magocsi, (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Canada's People*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), pp. 422-435.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. Library and Archives Canada, Census of the Northwest Provinces, 1906, Saskatchewan, Mackenzie District No. 14, Sub-district No. 27, pp. 1-2.
23. *Ibid.*
24. "The History of Stenen" *The Norquay North Star* (May 20, 1955), p. 6.
25. *Supra*, note 11; Interview with Wilf Belous, Hyas, Saskatchewan (June 15, 2005).
26. Canadian Genealogy Centre, "Post Offices and Postmasters Database". Retrieved June 1, 2006, from <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/post-offices/index-e.html>.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. In the autumn homesteaders waited until the ground was frozen before transporting their produce to the railhead. See "Homesteading" in *The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2000 Edition* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2000).
30. For similar accounts, see "Pioneers Came to South Hyas in 1905." *The Norquay North Star* (May 20, 1955), p. 4; and J.F. Paul Barschel, *A History of Canora and District* (Canora, Saskatchewan: Canora Golden Jubilee Committee, 1960), p. 45.
31. It was generally established that grain could not be profitably marketed if had to be hauled by horse and wagon for a distance greater than ten to twelve miles to a railway point. See T.D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway, Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies 1895-1918* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), p. 192.
32. Vozsvishennie Village File, *supra* note 6.
33. *Ibid.* Note in 1907, following the dissolution of the village, the Dominion Lands Branch added the village site to the Alexei Barisoff homestead entry for the surrounding quarter-section SW6-34-2-W2.
34. Note Alexei Barisoff obtained patent for the SW6-34-2-W2 in 1908; Alexei Derhousoff took patent to the NW6-34-2-W2 in 1910; and the SE6-34-2-W2 was patented to Zakhar Derhousoff in 1911. See Homestead Files, *supra*, note 6.
35. By 1910, desirable homesteads were hard to come by in the district, so those settlers who arrived later had to purchase land.
36. Library and Archives Canada, *Census of Canada, 1911*, Saskatchewan, Mackenzie District No. 210, Sub-district No. 25, p. 6 and Sub-district No. 22, p. 33.
37. The Canadian Northern Railway Company completed the 72-mile Thunderhill Branch Line over an eight year period commencing in 1903: the 20.2 mile section from Thunderhill Junction, near Swan River, to the Saskatchewan Boundary was completed in 1906; the 15.4 mile section from the Saskatchewan Boundary to Pelly was completed in 1909; and the 36.5 mile section from Pelly, through the Hyas district, to Preeceville was completed in 1911. See Regehr, *supra*, note 26, pp. 205-207.
38. Saskatchewan Archives Board, Ulric School District No. 2432 File.
39. "History of Hyas Dates Back to 1910" *The Norquay North Star* (May 20, 1955), p.5.
40. Following the arrival of the railway in the Hyas district, the price of farm land advanced from \$5.00 per acre to upwards of \$30.00 and \$40.00 per acre within a three-year period. See Certificate of Title No. MM94, dated October 25, 1910, issued for NW6-34-2-W2 to Zakhar Dergowusoff; Certificate of Title No. 228MQ, dated December 22, 1910, issued for NW6-34-2-W2 to Alec Dergowusoff; Certificate of Title No. 67OW, dated October 2, 1913, issued for NW6-34-2-W2 to Joseph Derhousoff; Certificate of Title No. 200PF, dated April 14, 1914, issued for NW6-34-2-W2 to Louie Slegel; Certificate of Title No. 37MS, dated January 27, 1911, issued for NE6-34-2-W2 to Alexey Dierhousof; Certificate of Title No. 129OW, dated October 8, 1913, issued for NE6-34-2-W2 to Joseph Derhousoff; Certificate of Title No. 204PF, dated April 14, 1914, issued for NE6-34-2-W2 to Louie Slegel; Certificate of Title No. 370, dated 1908, issued for SW6-34-2-W2 to Alexey Barisoff; and Certificate of Title No. 74PU, dated April 23, 1915, issued for SW6-34-2-W2 to Louie Slegel.