

Bernhard Warkentin Farm

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Warkentin Farm

Other Name/Site Number: Bernhard Warkentin Homestead,
Little River Stock Farm

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 140 East North Street

Not for publication:

City/Town: Halstead

Vicinity:

State: Kansas County: Harvey Code: 079

Zip Code: 67056

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X
Public-local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

5
 1

 6

Noncontributing

 buildings
 sites
 structures
 objects
 0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 8

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this _____ nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- _____ Entered in the National Register _____
- _____ Determined eligible for the _____
National Register
- _____ Determined not eligible for the _____
National Register
- _____ Removed from the National Register _____
- _____ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Domestic Agriculture Agriculture Agriculture	Sub:	Single Dwelling Agricultural Outbuilding Animal Facility Storage
Current:	Domestic Agriculture Abandoned	Sub:	Single Dwelling Storage

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
Vernacular: Queen Anne	Foundation: Stone Random Ashlar
	Walls: Clapboard, Asbestos
	Roof: Asbestos Shingle
	Other
	Description:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Bernhard Warkentin Farm consists of a 12-acre tract, within and adjacent to the city limits of Halstead, Harvey County, Kansas. The tract includes a two-story frame house, carriage house, livestock and hay barn, pump house, silo, and open fields. The site is bounded on the northwest, north, northeast, and east by the Little Arkansas River. The main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad bounds the property on the south. The Halstead Farmer's Co-operative Grain Elevator borders the property on the west. All extant buildings are believed to have been erected before Warkentin's death in 1908. [1]

Warkentin acquired this property in 1874 shortly after arriving in the Halstead vicinity. In January of 1874 he began planning a water-powered grist mill; the mill was "under roof" by the end of June. At this time he began construction of a private residence of locally burnt bricks on the site of the present residential structure. By November, the house was completed and Warkentin started construction of a barn. [2]

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Warkentin was recognized as both a leading member of the Mennonite community as well as an important regional flour miller by 1875. In 1877, he moved his mill south to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad and converted it from water to steam power. In 1884, Warkentin demolished his original residence and constructed the present building. Attributed to Kansas architect John G. Haskell, the building was constructed in a vernacular interpretation of the then-popular Queen Anne style. It is assumed that the old barn was also razed and that the present carriage house, barn, and pump house were constructed at the same time. It is possible that the old barn was merely added to; truss systems vary in the front and rear barn areas. A date for the construction of the silo is presently unavailable. [3]

In 1887 Warkentin moved his family to nearby Newton, Kansas, some 10 miles east, where he owned considerable flour milling interests. Warkentin continued to retain the farm property in Halstead until his death in 1908. The fields belonging to this farm complex figured in important wheat hybridization experiments sponsored by Warkentin in cooperation with Mark Carleton of the United States Department of Agriculture, using wheat strains obtained by Carleton on trips to the Russian Ukraine and Crimea in 1898-99 and in 1900. These exploratory trips, guided by Warkentin's expertise, resulted in many significant cereal innovations in the American grain industry, including the introduction of Durum wheat to the Great Plains while Carleton was head (1901-18) of the Office of Cereal Investigations of the Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture. Interestingly, the fields within the boundaries of the Bernhard Warkentin Farm are currently used by the DeKalb Company for hybridization experiments. [4]

The following are descriptions of the remaining cultural resources located on the Warkentin Farm.

MAIN HOUSE

The main house consists of a 2-1/2-story frame building covered in asbestos siding. The general plan is rectangular. The primary elevation of the building is 3 bays wide and 5 bays deep, and faces south. The roof is steeply pitched and hipped with three small cross gables covered in interlocking composite shingles, topped at the apex by an elaborate sheet metal double finial cresting. The roof is interrupted by two large brick chimneys on the north and east elevations. The chimneys are

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capped by corbeled detailing. A third, unornamented, secondary chimney is located at the north end of the kitchen wing. All chimneys are carried on the interior of the building. The original exterior wall treatment consisted of clapboarding but was covered in asbestos shingle siding at an undetermined date. The building is painted white. [5]

A one-story verandah porch runs from the center of the primary elevation to the east. The porch then turns and runs to the center of the east elevation's first floor. A canopy with a simple gabled roof is attached to the western end of the porch on the south primary elevation, sheltering the main entrance. The gable end is decorated with wooden machine-turned details. In the center, two square pilasters support an upper block having a machine-turned oeil-de-boeuf. The remaining porch roof slopes from the house in a shed configuration. Both porch and canopy have a machine-turned spindle frieze and baluster detail. The main entrance has machine-turned newel posts and baluster railings. The canopy and porch are supported by machine-turned tapered posts centered between square supports. The tops of each post are augmented by simple notched brackets. [6]

The front (south) of the building is asymmetrical and consists of basement, first, second, and attic stories. The basement level of the primary elevation is hidden by the porch, except for a small exposed section at the west end. The basement level is comprised of a coursed ashlar foundation pierced by double-hung windows for light and ventilation. The first story consists of a three-panel bay window topped by a shed roof supported by end brackets. The end brackets are pierced with a circular design. The bay window is equipped with double-hung windows. The upper section of each double-hung window is of the "Queen Anne" variety: the sections are multipaned and divided into a series of squares by a system of wooden muntins; each square is made of a different color glass. The front doors, beneath the previously mentioned gabled canopy, are double doors equipped with large etched glass lights in the upper panels with the initials "B.W." etched in the glass. The doors are elaborately detailed to simulate carving. The door is equipped with a transom. Two double-hung, one-over-one windows are located to the east of the main entry. The second-story primary elevation consists of three sets of paired, double-hung, one-over-one windows. The first pair are located directly over the first-story bay window. The second pair occur over the main entry. The third pair center over the two eastern first-story windows. Attic-story details

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include a shed roof dormer with a paired two-light sash, centered over the main entrance canopy. An overhanging pent roof covers the eastern gable entablature, having two large brackets centered over the eastern second-story paired windows. A multipaned, multicolored window is centered in the east gable, comprised of 25 small lights. [7]

The western secondary elevation is more symmetrical and consists of basement, first, second, and attic stories. The foundation level contains four basement window openings. The first story has two double-hung, one-over-one light windows on the south end; an oversized, semi-hexagonal bay window comprised of five double-hung, one-over-one light windows; and two smaller double-hung, two-over-two light windows at the north end. The second floor mirrors the first, with the exception of the north (rear) wing; only one smaller double-hung, single-light window exists at the north end. The oversized bay window continues to the second story from its first-story configuration. The attic story mimics the primary facade; a small two-light shed dormer is centered over the second window from the north on the first story. The oversized gable entablature is supported by two simple brackets located at the far ends of the gable. The entablature is ornamented with a machine-cut running arch pattern. The entablature is capped by an overhanging pent roof. The pediment contains one square double-hung, one-over-one light window; the sill rests on top of the pent roof; and the head trim is segmentally arched.⁸

The eastern secondary elevation is asymmetrical and consists of basement, first, second, and attic stories. As in the western elevation, the foundation is pierced by basement windows. The first story is comprised of the one-story porch, which extends from the south front of the structure, around the southeast corner of the first story and ends at approximately the center of the east facade. A single, double-hung, one-over-one light window occurs beneath the porch roof. At the end of the porch is a two-story polygonal bay window with four, double-hung, one-over-one light windows. The east elevation is completed by a screened service porch extending along the east side of the kitchen wing; the entrance to this porch is on the north. The service porch has an elongated hip roof that slopes away from the main structure. The second-story elevation consists of one double-hung, one-over-one light window, and a bay window with four double-hung, one-over-one light units. The remainder of the elevation is recessed approximately 15 feet. Three double-hung, single-light windows complete the second floor east elevation.

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The attic elevation consists of a large gable located above the polygonal bay. The simple, paneled entablature is supported by two shallow brackets at either end. Centered in the gable is a trio of three narrow, double-hung, one-over-one single-light windows. [9]

The north (rear) elevation is asymmetrical and irregular in design. The rear section contains the kitchen wing of the building and is recessed approximately 15 feet from the east elevation; it is flush with the western elevation. It consists of basement, first, second, and attic stories. The basement elevation is comprised of a single, double-light window and a shed vestibule with a simple gable roof that covers the basement entrance. The first story consists of the entry to the service porch and a pair of double-hung, two-over-two light windows at the far east end of the rear elevation. The second story contains a single double-hung, one-over-one light window at the far west end of the rear elevation. The attic story consists of a simple gable without ornament or fenestration. [10]

The interior plan used in construction of the Warkentin home is typical of many found in standard house plan books of the 1880s. The basement consists of three large open rooms and two smaller spaces. The fruit cellar area is accessed by a stair from the kitchen above. A door opening to the west enters a hallway that serves the outside north cellar entrance and the large south room. This room contains a large brick flue approximately in the center of the space; one side is slanted to accommodate the corner fireplace in the first-floor office. Two smaller rooms are to the east. Both have doors into the larger room, but they are not interconnected. [11]

The first floor plan consists of a central hallway flanked by a formal parlor on the east and an office on the west at the front (south) of the house. The main stairway is located on the west side of the central hall. North of the front parlor is a secondary parlor with a bay window on the east wall. This room is separated from the formal parlor by pocket doors. To the west of the second parlor is a dining room with a bay window on the west wall. The dining room is separated from the secondary parlor by pocket doors. A door on the north wall centered between the secondary parlor and the dining room enters a service hall running east/west in the kitchen wing. A stairway is located on the north side of this narrow hall. A bathroom is located on the east end, an addition to the house sometime after

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1885. The secondary hall extends around the back of the stairs and opens into the kitchen. The kitchen also has access to the dining room through a door that opens into a former pantry area; the doorway is located on the north wall of the dining room. A doorway on the east wall of the kitchen opens onto the service porch. [12]

The second floor plan generally repeats the configuration found on the first floor. It consists of a north/south central hall with the main staircase ascending to the north. Bedrooms flank the central hallway; two occur on the east side, three on the west. Two of the bedrooms have bay windows. The north end of the main hall intersects with a narrow east/west hallway. The north/south central hall ends at a different level than the intersecting east/west hall; a step occurs to the right and left at the point of intersection. A bathroom is located to the east, over the bathroom on the first floor. To the south of the bathroom, a small doorway accesses the attic. To the left of the central hall intersection, the secondary hall turns to the north, entering the northernmost bedroom. This bedroom, unlike the others, is equipped with a large walk-in closet on the east wall. [13]

The attic area is accessed by a doorway located in the secondary east-west hallway on the second floor. The stair ascends to the west. The attic is comprised of two large areas on different levels with connecting steps. The larger of the two areas occurs in the southern section of the building. Three chimney flues are located in the southwest, north and north/northeast sections of the attic. A large copper-lined gravity water tank is next to the stairway. [14]

Interior treatments of the main house are typical of the period. Woodwork is machine-turned, having both oeil-de-boeuf and chamfered corner blocks. Elaborate fireplaces with glazed tile hearths and firebox surrounds occur in the dining room, north parlor and office. Two types of fireplace mantels exist in the house. One is of soapstone with a faux marble granite finish; the other type is of turned wood. Incised designs complete the treatments on the soapstone mantels. Turned finials and other detailing are found on the wooden mantels. Hearth surrounds are detailed in glazed tile. The newel posts and balusters for the main stairway are ponderous, machine-turned elements, somewhat oversized for the structure. A remnant of the original wallpaper treatment has been preserved on the interior of a closet located

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beneath the north end of the central stairway. Executed in vivid blues and reds, it is reminiscent of Caucasian Kazak rug designs popular in Western Europe and the United States at the end of the 19th century. [15]

The house is attributed to Kansas architect John Gideon Haskell (1832-1907). Haskell designed the State Capitol at Topeka and served as architect of University of Kansas at Lawrence. It is presently unknown who designed the other buildings on the property. [16]

CARRIAGE HOUSE

The carriage house is located to the northwest of the main house. It is a 1-1/2-story frame building covered in vertical board-and-batten wooden siding with a simple, gabled roof capped by a single, central ventilating cupola. The building is rectangular and symmetrical in design. The west and east elevations are equipped with large sliding barn doors on roller tracks. Set of paired doors are centered in the facades. The north and south elevations are devoid of detail except for a single, double-hung, one-over-one light window that occurs in each gable end. The vertical siding is applied in two sections, on the north and south elevations, that break at the gable line. The lower ends of the vertical gable boards are pointed, creating a running, toothed pattern. The roof is shingled in wood. The square ventilating cupola is equipped with wooden louvered panels and a four-cornered bell-cast roof. [17]

The interior of the structure is open and without detail. Most notable of the interior features is the truss system which supports the roof. The system consists of an "X" brace intersected by a horizontal beam. As with traditional "W" truss systems, this system required no supporting posts, a distinct advantage for maneuvering vehicles inside the carriage house. Local tradition notes this truss system as European in origin; however, this origin for the system has not been conclusively confirmed. [18]

BARN

The livestock and hay Barn is located directly north of the main house. It consists of a 2-1/2-story frame structure covered in narrow clapboard siding. The general plan is in a "T" configuration. The south, or main, section is ten bays wide and

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three bays deep. The north wing is ten bays deep and three bays wide. The roof is made up of two simple interlocking gables covered in wooden shingles. Both the north and south sections are capped by two square ventilating cupolas having four-cornered bell-cast roofs. [19]

The main facade of the first story is symmetrical and consists of a central doorway on roller tracks flanked by windows on either side. The door has a four-light window in the center. The windows to the west consist of a single window opening at the far west end, two sets of paired windows to the east and an additional single window located next to the central doorway. A double-hung, four-over-four light window occurs directly east of the barn door. East of the double-hung window are two sets of paired windows and a single window at the far east end. All windows seem to have been originally of the four-light variety except for the double-hung unit east of the main entry. Most of the window glazing is missing or is substantially damaged. Barn doors on roller tracks complete the first-floor facades on the east and west ends. A similar series of small windows and doorways completes the first-floor east and west facades on the north wing. Due to inaccessibility the gable end of the north wing could not be observed. [20]

The second-floor elevation of the main section is symmetrical and comprises a central loft door situated above the main entrance. Two sets of tall, ventilating louver openings are located to either side of the loft door. The ventilating louvers are over the first-story's first set of paired windows from the east and west, respectively, and the single windows nearest the main entry. The east and west second-story elevations of the barn's main section are symmetrical and consist of a loft door located above the first-floor barn door with tall, ventilating louvers located to either side of the loft door. Similar loft and window openings comprise the east and west second-story elevations for the north wing. [21]

The symmetrical east and west gable ends of the main section consist of a large loft opening located above the smaller second-story loft access. Two small windows flank the large loft opening. The east gable end is punctuated by three ventilating windows. One is at the top of the gable area; two others are located to either side, and are placed slightly lower on the facade. The gable end of the north wing was not accessible to photographers. [22]

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The original construction date of the Barn is undetermined. It probably dates from the construction period of the main house, ca. 1885. The floor plan is "T" shaped, forming east/west and north/south galleries. The livestock stalls in the south section are intact. Floors are finished in brick and have been damaged. The north/south gallery was altered for dairying purposes at an undetermined date. The second floor is comprised of large, open areas for hay storage. A gravity system of feed chutes and openings is located on this level for the feeding of livestock; small sliding doors open into various stalls so that feed can be introduced. Machinery relating to belt-powered automated barn functions is also located on this level. This system was powered by a steam turbine located in the small brick structure (Engine House) immediately to the south of the barn. The exact functioning of the machinery is not known. [23]

The main (south) section of the roof is supported by traditional "king and queen" post truss systems. The rear (north) section is supported by a cantilevered "king post" system with vertical and diagonal bracing. Given the presence of two types of roof support systems, one section of the barn may pre-date the other. It is not certain which is the older. [24]

ENGINE HOUSE

The Engine House is a simple 1-story gabled brick structure laid up in American bond. The building is symmetrical and roofed in wood shingles. Double-hung, four-over-four light windows are located on the east and west elevations. The north elevation is devoid of detail save for a narrow opening on the west side with a coursed sill, running from the gable down the wall for approximately 3 feet. This opening provided access for the belt from the steam engine on the interior of the structure to the machinery located in the Barn. The south elevation contains a segmentally arched doorway centered in the facade. A single-panel door accesses the interior. The building's date of construction is unknown. [25]

SILLO

Approximately 50 feet northwest of the Barn is a Silo constructed of glazed terra-cotta tiles. The Silo is approximately 40 feet in circumference and 70 feet in height. It is topped by a circular mansard-type wood shingled roof with a wooden dormer and

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deteriorated feed chute on the southwest side. The date of construction is unknown. [26]

ENDNOTES

1. The National Register of Historic Places nomination prepared by Richard Pankratz in 1974 and the draft National Historic Landmark nomination prepared by Ralph Christian in 1979 allude to the farm also including a calf barn and a chicken house; these elements were removed at undetermined dates.
2. Bernhard Warkentin to David Goerz: January 21, February 15, February 24, February 28, April 9, June 3, June 14, June 24, November 2, November 12, and December 14, 1874. Original German transcripts in the hand of Bernhard Warkentin. Typewritten translations; translator unknown. Bernhard Warkentin Collection, Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, Newton, Kansas, hereafter referred to as BWC; Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Company Records (hereafter referred to as ATSFRRRC): Land Sales to Mennonites, January 14, 1874, Bernhard Warkentin, RR 308:13, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas.
3. Kansan, September 2, 1875, p. 2, and December 30, 1875, p. 3; Weekly Kansan, October 11, 1877, p. 3, and January 24, 1884, p. 3, typewritten transcripts, BWC; Wedding invitation, B. Warkentin to D. Goerz, August 2, 1875, BWC; B. Warkentin to D. Goerz, December 14, 1874, BWC; Ralph J. Christian, Draft National Historic Landmark Nomination, Bernhard Warkentin Homestead, 1979; Richard Pankratz, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Bernhard Warkentin Homestead, 1974.
4. Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture 1914 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1915), 397-401; J. Allen Clark and B.B. Bayles, Technical Bulletin No. 459: Classification of Wheat Varieties Grown in the United States (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1935), 106-107; National Archives to Professor Cornelius Krahn, Bethel College, November 8, 1944, 1-8, MLA-MS-68, BWC; M.A. Carleton, Assistant in Charge of Cereal Investigation, to Mr. B. Warkentin, President, M.E. Co., Newton, Kansas, August 14, 1899, as reprinted in the Weekly Kansan, August 25, 1899, p. 1, typewritten transcript, BWC; Interview with

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- Harley Stucky re: DeKalb experimental fields, North Newton, Kansas, July 28, 1988.
5. Photographs, Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Halstead, Kansas; Site visits, July 27 and October 13, 1988, William Patrick O'Brien, Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.
 6. Ibid.; Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide To American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 263-287, passim.
 7. Photographs, Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Halstead, Kansas: Site visits, July 27 and October 13, 1988, William Patrick O'Brien, Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office; Virginia and Lee McAlester, op. cit., 263-287, passim.
 8. Ibid.
 9. Ibid.
 10. Ibid.
 11. Photographs, Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Halstead, Kansas; Site visits, July 27 and October 13, 1988, William Patrick O'Brien, Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.
 12. Ibid.
 13. Ibid.
 14. Ibid.
 15. Ibid.
 16. Ibid.
 17. Ibid.; Ralph Christian, Bernhard Warkentin Farm Draft National Historic Landmark Nomination, 1979, passim.
 18. Photographs, Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Halstead, Kansas: Site visits, July 27 and October 13, 1988, William Patrick O'Brien, Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.

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19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.; Interview with Harley J. Stucky, Newton, Kansas, July 27, 1988.
22. Photographs, Bernhard Warkentin Farm, Halstead, Kansas: Site visits, July 27 and October 13, 1988, William Patrick O'Brien, Department of Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Portrait and Biographical Record of Leavenworth, Douglas and Franklin Counties, Kansas (Chicago: Champman Publishing Company, 1899), 166-168.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B X C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria: 1, 2

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance	Significant Dates
Agriculture	1874-1908	1874, 1884
Ethnic Heritage/European		1899-1901 1908

- NHL Theme(s):
- XI. Agriculture
 - E. Mechanical Agriculture as Business Enterprise Beyond Self-Sufficiency
 - XXX. American Ways of Life
 - E. Ethnic Communities: German Russian-Americans

Significant Person(s): Bernhard Warkentin

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: John Gideon Haskell

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

SUMMARY

The farm complex located at 140 East North Street in Halstead, Kansas, represents an important era in the life and career of Bernhard Warkentin (1847-1908), an individual nationally significant for promoting German Russian Mennonite immigration to the Central Great Plains region of the United States and for introducing and improving various Central European wheat varieties in the region. Warkentin's involvement in and

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management of the major German Russian Mennonite immigration to the United States (1873-85) reflect important trends in the settlement of the American West. His promotion of various Russian and Turkish wheat varieties and work in the American western milling industry helped to revolutionize the American grain economy. His similar efforts with both European and American hybrid wheats, in conjunction with the United States Department of Agriculture, established the foundation for the United States' 20th-century rise to prominence in the world's hard red winter wheat market.

HISTORY

Bernhard Warkentin was born June 19, 1847, in Altona, a village of the Molotschna German Mennonite settlement in the Russian Ukraine. The Mennonites followed the Anabaptist teachings of the Netherlander Reformation theologian Mennon Simmons (1496-1561), which emphasized separation of church and state, simplicity, and non-violence. Because of their non-violent attitudes and refusal to serve in armies, the Mennonites had found difficulty in practicing their religion.

German Anabaptist groups had been encouraged to settle in the Crimea and Ukraine in the 18th century during the reign of Catherine the Great. Guarantees of immunity from Russian conscription caused many to leave various European states and to take up residence in Russia; the first groups began leaving Prussia and the Polish Vistula area for the Ukraine in 1788. These immigrants continued to see themselves as Germans; they maintained German traditions and language. They conducted their business and printed their newspapers in German. Like various Jewish groups, they remained detached from mainstream Russian culture, operating almost exclusively within the purview of their settlements. Many involved themselves in agriculture and wheat farming. [27]

Warkentin's father was a miller and also involved in wheat farming. Bernhard worked in the family businesses. Tradition maintains that the elder Warkentin imported various strains of Turkish wheat into the Ukraine in the 1860s. The milling industry in the Ukraine began in the 1850s with the introduction of large-scale farming and the development of threshing machines by innovators such as Peter Lepp of Chortitiza in 1853. Such development led to the formation of milling firms such as Nieburh Mills of Alexandrovsk, with an output worth 3,000,000 rubles

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annually. By the 1870s the Russian grain and milling industries were quickly consolidating into the hands of a few wealthy Mennonites. Mennonite historian Cornelius Krahn estimated that one-third of Russian Mennonite lands belonged to only 384 families, the largest of these estates consisting of 54,000 acres. However, 75 percent of the Mennonites held less than 200 acres and lived in villages of 30 to 50 homesteads.

Thus, the late 19th-century German Russian Mennonite immigrants to America came from two distinct classes--modest farmers of traditional Mennonite backgrounds and a few wealthy Mennonite businessmen already well versed in grain production and the flour milling industry. Neither group was poor by most immigrant standards, although certain Polish Mennonite groups, arriving in the middle to late 1870s, and other Russian groups, arriving in the 1880s, had fewer resources than most Mennonite settlers.

Bernhard Warkentin represented the second class of Mennonites. He was a young, wealthy speculator with a two-fold, interrelated agenda--to find a suitable homeland for his people and a suitable, growing environment for his business. [28]

In the 1870s life in Russia changed dramatically for the Mennonites. The progressive policies of the "Tsar-Liberator," Alexander II (1818-81), affected the Mennonites adversely. The abolition of special privileges for select groups constituted part of Alexander's reforms. The possible rescinding of the Mennonites' conscientious-objection privilege caused many leaders to consider immigration to other lands more permissive of Mennonite religious teaching. [29]

In June 1872 Bernhard Warkentin and three companions arrived in the United States from Russia. Although referred to as an excursion, it is nearly certain that the trip was planned as more than a pleasure tour; at least one Mennonite historian feels that initial plans for the trip may have been made through Mennonite leader Cornelius Jansen, a miller and Prussian Consul at Berdyansk, who, as early as 1870, advocated immigration to America. Whatever the reason, the trip proved to be an important one for Warkentin. An aspiring milling businessman could not have picked a better time to tour the midwestern United States.

In Minneapolis, a new milling process promised to revolutionize the American industry. Hard wheats, previously difficult to mill, could now effectively produce a higher gluten content ("New

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Process") flour, thus improving bread per unit ratios. The United States stood on the threshold of a new and exciting age in grain production and flour milling. In the next ten years, the introduction of new wheat strains and American improvements building upon European technologies, such as the French and Hungarian roller systems, quickly outmoded older grindstone methods of milling and revolutionized the American grain industry.

Warkentin would have the opportunity to investigate these new advances in American milling; he attended the Agricultural Exposition in Minneapolis in 1872 and commented on the display of Arnautka wheat, a Russian variety. With their backgrounds in agriculture and milling, familiarity with semi-arid environs, and experience in dry-farming methods, Warkentin and the Mennonites represented a perfect group to settle the wild and open plains of the western United States. They would play an important role not only in the settlement of that vast area, but in the establishment of its economic base as well. [30]

Another related technological development provided the linchpin for the Mennonite settlement of the western United States and the development of its grain and milling industries. American railroad companies, intent on transforming the West into productive settlements and profits, solicited various immigrant groups, offering cheap transportation and lands. A group of farmers such as the Mennonites represented a godsend to railroad concerns such as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company. Caught in an economic depression with millions of acres of right-of-way to dispose of, railroads viewed immigrants as a way to bolster their sagging businesses while guaranteeing a stable economic population base for future railroad enterprise.

That the Mennonites were solvent immigrants with agricultural talents only served to intensify railroad efforts to secure them as settlers on railroad-owned land. Thus, the technological advancements in milling and railroad industries of the United States in the post-Civil War era provided a perfect opportunity and environment for a beleaguered religious group to translate their traditional way of life into commercial prosperity on the American Great Plains. [31]

Warkentin's trip to America did not go unnoticed. A article in the Nordische Press, a Petrograd newspaper, under the heading "Notes from Berdyansk" noted that three young wealthy Mennonites

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accompanied by a foreigner were going to America to start negotiations with American representatives. Such articles caused great concern in the Mennonite community. Many feared that the Russian authorities would prohibit their emigration. It is true that the Russian government viewed the prospective immigration with concern. Arguments between government agents and Mennonite leaders continued as Mennonite groups left the Ukraine.

After stopping briefly in New York, Niagara Falls, and Cleveland, Ohio, Warkentin proceeded to Elkhart, Indiana, to stay at the home of John F. Funk, editor of the Mennonite newspaper Herold der Wahrheit (Herald of Truth). Here Warkentin and his companions delivered letters from Cornelius Jansen. Funk noted in his newspaper that the travelers had arrived "... simply for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the American people So that they may tell their parents and friends how it is and what the prospects for a future home here may be." Funk also noted that the group did not represent an official delegation. This may have been an attempt to mollify Russian authorities. After visiting the site of the preceding year's Chicago Fire, Warkentin and his companions toured the American West, using the home of Rev. Christian Krehbiel at Summerfield, Illinois, as a home base. From June until October, they traveled to Saint Louis, Missouri; Chicago, Illinois; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Sioux City, Iowa; Denver, Colorado; Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Brookville, Kansas; and various other mid-Western and Western locations. [32]

Warkentin described the Mississippi River in comparison to the Dnjeper in Russia; his letters to his childhood friend David Goerz displayed an interest in every detail of his journey. Warkentin noted that "until this time it is not necessary for our people to leave Russia, but if it would become a necessity ... I would recommend to our people to find a new home in America." After 1500 miles of travel, Warkentin reported that the conditions regarding "agriculture and cattle raising" in the American West and in the Russian Ukraine were similar. Horses and cattle looked better than Russian varieties, stated Warkentin; sheep, however, looked to be inferior. Warkentin noted the use of "many mules." "In general, wheat is not the best," he stated; he noted a particularly poor yield for winter wheat in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana due to a dry year. However, he noted in the Summerfield, Illinois, area that the wheat crop was good. Warkentin noted other pertinent details in his letters to Russia: the use of steam threshing machines, crop yields of 20 and 25 bushels per acre, favorable comparisons with Russian crop prices ("sometimes

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a little higher"), corn that grew to 12 and 16 feet in height, and farmers who sowed clover and timothy for feed purposes. "The pastures are similar to those at home and are called prairies," noted Warkentin. [33]

Whether or not Warkentin and his companions were on an official fact-finding trip for the Molotschna settlement is debatable. It is clear that Warkentin assumed the role of unofficial agent and inspector; this assumed role created problems for him with the Mennonite leadership that colored the rest of his professional career. But regardless of his official or unofficial status, the effect of his detailed letters to his friend David Goerz cannot be overstated. Goerz shared the letters with the Russian Mennonite community at large. There is little doubt that Warkentin's correspondence convinced many that Western America constituted the best choice for migrating Mennonites.

In October of 1872, Warkentin's friends returned to Russia; he, however, stayed at Summerfield after receiving news that his fiance had died. During his stay he found railway companies interested in the possibilities of selling railroad right-of-way to interested immigrants. The railroads courted Warkentin, although at this time he had no official standing. However, he did have a notarized statement that he was acting "as [an] agent for a Russian Colaney [sic] to Look for their Interest in selecting a Location of Land for the purpose of founding a colony [sic]." It should be noted that the justice of the peace issuing the notarized statement was a friend of Warkentin's and also a Mennonite. The statement may have reflected Warkentin's true authorized status as a Mennonite agent--or it may represent the clever machinations of a young business entrepreneur; it is impossible to say which is true. Warkentin, intent on his two-fold purpose of public service and personal aggrandizement, undoubtedly saw advantages along both lines. [34]

Warkentin set out with the railroad representatives, on the initial trip of what proved to be four excursions, in September 1872. M.C. Hazard of the Northern Pacific escorted Warkentin and Funk through Minnesota and Dakota Territory. In January of 1873, Warkentin visited Manitoba upon invitation of the Canadian government. A month later he visited Texas on the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway; later the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad invited him to visit Kansas. [35]

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Warkentin continued to send letters to Russia; his information covered all aspects that potential immigrants required: types of soil, climate, wages, baggage transportation, prices and information regarding the milling industry in Saint Paul. His letters prompted the arrival of an official Mennonite delegation of 12 men who visited the United States and Canada in 1873. Warkentin, however, found himself ignored by this deputation, although his correspondence had prompted the arrival of the delegation. [36] The delegation returned to Russia in late summer 1873, unable to decide on a common place of emigration; some favored Canada, some the Dakotas, and still others, Kansas.

Warkentin, nevertheless, took a major role in the ensuing emigrations. A relief committee was created to help immigrants by the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference in 1873; Bernhard Warkentin was one of the three members. At Summerfield, Illinois, on November 7, 1873, during a Conference of the Western District, Warkentin was elected to another immigration committee. These committees met in concert on December 2, 1873, and formed the Mennonite Board of Guardians. Warkentin became business agent for the group; his friend David Goerz, by this time of Summerfield, Illinois, acted as secretary. [37]

The next year proved a busy one for Warkentin. Mennonite concerns over non-combatant status were assuaged by meetings with President Grant by way of introduction by railroad mogul Jay Cooke. Cooke desperately needed this immigration to succeed; the collapse of his banking house in 1873 had precipitated a national economic depression. The possibility of sale of his railroad lands to financially independent immigrants must have seemed most attractive. Warkentin is not listed as a member of this delegation; however, in a later letter to Goerz he stated that if he found that the Russian government was stopping his correspondence he would "... send a petition to President Grant so that such nonsense will be halted." Whether this reference reflects an actual entre to political influence, youthful arrogance or a naive confidence in his new citizenship is unknown.

For his part, Grant attempted to soothe Mennonite concerns by predicting that the United States would not be involved in any wars for the next 50 years; Secretary of State Hamilton Fish provided further assurance of non-combatative status for the Mennonites. Once convinced of the relative safety of residency in the United States, the Mennonite colonization of Kansas began in earnest, further complicating the year's tight schedule for

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Warkentin. Carl Bernard Schmidt (a German-speaking native of Saxony where his father had served as royal architect) worked as immigration agent for the Santa Fe Railroad and assisted Warkentin and the Mennonites in making their decision for the location of a settlement.

On January 14, 1874, Warkentin and 25 families of the Summerfield, Illinois, congregation purchased land in Harvey County, Kansas, for a settlement. Warkentin himself bought 1,360 acres. His 80 acres between the Arkansas River and the right-of-way of the Santa Fe Railroad served as the site for his mill and home. Thus, under railroad sponsorship, the German Russians from the Ukraine began a new life on the plains of Kansas. The name of their town was Halstead--possibly a reworking of the name Halbstat, one of the towns of the Molotschna district. [38]

Warkentin characteristically wasted no time. Seven days after his land purchase, he surveyed the river for a location for his grist mill. But he was torn between his duties with the Board of Guardians and his development in Halstead. Warkentin also found himself in the middle of conflicts between the Santa Fe railroad agents and competing companies. Conflicts with the immigration and his duties as business agent delayed his construction for over a year. [39]

In 1874, a rumor passed quickly among the Mennonite communities that the Russian government intended to stop the emigration. According to the rumor, Russian authorities had discovered Mennonite immigrants were being cheated by Americans. The rumor stated that the Russian government intended on using the story of cheated Mennonites as an excuse to stop the exodus, basing their actions on protective measures. Upon inquiry, however, the Imperial Russian General Consulate denied any such intention in a letter to the secretary of the Society for the Protection of Mennonites in New York. At the same time, the Russian government worked out agreements with various Mennonite groups for alternate, non-combative service. But the German Russians from the Molotschna settlements and elsewhere continued to emigrate to the American West. [40]

In 1875, the Santa Fe Railroad made an all-out effort to induce additional Mennonites in the Ukraine to immigrate to Kansas. There is little doubt that this push resulted from Cornelius Jansen's urging and Warkentin's work with the railroads. Carl B. Schmidt managed and promoted the railroad's Foreign Immigration

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Department. Equipped with letterhead and newspaper advertising that boldly proclaimed "Three Million Acres On Eleven Years Credit," Schmidt set about to bring these prosperous farmers to Santa Fe Railroad lands. Schmidt and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad knew these immigrants constituted a special group of people who stood to profit the railroad. In 1875, Schmidt embarked on a journey to solicit Russian Mennonites for immigration. [41]

An agreement between Bismarck and the Russian government as a result of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) stated that Germany would give up protective rights over Germans living in Russia; Bismarck agreed as long as Germans were given 10 years to emigrate. Cornelius Jansen alerted his brethren to the agreement; he was summarily expelled from Russia and immigrated to the United States. In cooperation with Jansen and other Mennonite leaders, and with letters of introduction to various Mennonites secreted on his person, Schmidt proceeded across the Russian frontier between Eydtkuhnen and Wirballen; a search by Russian soldiers failed to identify him. A week's railway journey through Russia brought him to Alexandrovsk. From Alexandrovsk he proceeded by sleigh to Alexanderwhol and from there through the 56 villages of the Molotschna Mennonite Colony. [42]

His reception was warm among the Mennonites, stated Schmidt, because his arrival had been announced by "letters from Kansas." In fact, Schmidt carried letters from Warkentin to his father, chief magistrate of the village of Terpenjie. Warkentin and his father played an instrumental role in Schmidt's mission. Schmidt had been discovered by the Russian military at Berdjansk. A Mennonite miller with whom he had stayed had been arrested; Schmidt was in flight when he arrived in Terpenjie. The senior Warkentin, however, offered him protection, and the military did not pursue him. Schmidt remembered years later the elder Warkentin as stating, "Here I am the Tsar, and no gens d'armes will dare touch my guest," an impressive combined exhibition of both political influence and courage. Before Schmidt's late arrival, the senior Warkentin, assuming Schmidt had been arrested, contacted his son in Kansas. Arrangements were being made by the Santa Fe Railway with the American government for Schmidt's release before any of his letters arrived at Topeka. Such actions reflect the importance of Warkentin and his family in Schmidt's success in recruiting Mennonite farmers for Kansas.

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It is true that Warkentin and his family did not play an exclusive role in the Santa Fe's recruitment of German Russian Mennonites. Schmidt himself connected the beginning of the large Mennonite immigrations to the United States to the concurrent arrival of Cornelius Jansen in the United States in 1873. However, the role played by Warkentin and his family should not be underestimated. Without the help of Warkentin and his father, the Santa Fe Railway's attempt at recruitment might have become entangled in an international incident and the attempt to lure Mennonite farmers from the Crimea to Kansas might have been seriously impeded. [43]

The farmers from the Molotschna colonies were prosperous; some were wealthy. Schmidt noted that a Mennonite bishop entrusted him with a draft for 80,000 rubles (\$56,000) on this trip to invest in the Santa Fe's land grant bonds. Schmidt's proselytizing for the railroad was cut short by Russian officials; however, his results, he confided, were "exceedingly satisfactory." In 1875, according to Schmidt, 400 families (1900 persons) purchased 60,000 acres of land in Marion, McPherson, Harvey and Reno counties in Kansas. This infusion of capital, following the national depression of 1873 and the grasshopper and potato bug plagues of 1874, was much welcomed by the national and State economies. It was particularly welcomed by Mr. Jay Cooke's railroad. Both catastrophes worked to Mennonite advantage. Depressed prices created a buyer's market. The Mennonites, well-to-do immigrants, benefited from a nation in sore need of their resources. [44]

As Schmidt spread the gospel of railroad lands and immigration, making arrangements for travelers on the Red Star and other steamship lines, Warkentin received the immigrants in New York and assisted them in their choice of a final destination. It is obvious that, as business agent for the Mennonite Board of Guardians, Warkentin provided the vital link between Schmidt, the Santa Fe Railroad, and the Mennonite immigration. Warkentin compared prices on steamship lines and sounded out various American railway companies for transportation to western America. He steadfastly maintained that he was not an agent for Kansas in particular; there were many, however, who believed otherwise. Before Schmidt's trip to the Crimea in 1875, Warkentin traveled between New York and Halstead in 1874, monitoring the construction of his water-powered grist mill and attempting to help immigrants in need. Some Polish immigrants were in dire straits; these Warkentin assisted out of his own pocket until the

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Board of Guardians could act. Although Schmidt saw himself in later years as the "Mennonite Moses," it is certain his role was strictly commercial. From Warkentin's correspondence it seems he made inquiries about the license he needed to operate as an immigration agent in April of 1874. Young Bernhard was appalled by the numbers of people arriving, their lack of direction, and, at times, their lack of resources. Also rail ticket prices quoted by Schmidt at \$15.00 a person were found to actually be \$18.00 and \$19.00. Schmidt may have taken economic advantage of the Mennonite exodus to the American West from the Russian Crimea, but it was Warkentin and his associates who arranged the logistics and, more importantly, protected Mennonite interests from exploitation by the railroads and other American businessmen. [45]

Warkentin simultaneously looked after his and Goerz's speculative interests in Halstead while managing the Mennonite immigration to Kansas; town lots were purchased and Warkentin's mill continued to slowly progress. In a letter dated April 10, 1874, he noted that he expected the mill to be completed in May. Warkentin had much of the work supervised by others; he spent 68 days between February 8, 1874, and June 8, 1874, between Halstead, Kansas, New York and Summerfield, Illinois, managing details of the immigration. By the middle of 1875, Warkentin found it necessary to resign from the Board of Guardians. Arguments with the Board over relief for indigent immigrants, accusations by Cornelius Jansen that he operated solely as an agent for Kansas, other conflicts in the location of immigrants in Nebraska and Kansas, conflicts with other agents at Castle Garden in New York, and related matters contributed to his resignation.

His work with the Mennonite Relief Committee and the possible danger of retribution to his family in Russia also influenced his decision. His name had become synonymous with the immigrant movement. Russian authorities were concerned over not only the immigrants already in the United States; they feared the loss of a small group of eight Mennonite millionaires who had attempted to remain in Russia as foreign citizens. Their feelings over the immigration, the loss of many farmers and the possible loss of the Mennonite millionaire families caused much hostility.

Warkentin also had, at times, found himself forced to provide necessities for indigent immigrants until the recalcitrant Board of Guardians saw fit to reimburse him. Between September and December of 1874 approximately 1,100 Mennonites--200 families--

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arrived in Kansas. Much of their initial welfare fell to Warkentin, even to the point of his soliciting donations. Thus, Warkentin acted on the idea of American immigration, when leaders in the Mennonite community hesitated or argued. His actions angered older church members and often put him in the uncomfortable position of sacrificing personal interests for the good of the immigration. At times he found himself taken advantage of by railroad promoters as well as by church members in both financial and political matters of the immigration. By the middle of 1875, other business and personal matters began to occupy Warkentin. His mill was ready and a marriage was in the offing. He distanced himself from the immigration. Warkentin, however, continued to be active in the Relief Committee. [46]

The management of immigration had not left much time for Warkentin's milling business and the speculative interests of friends and family. He had been forced to leave the mill construction in the hands of hired agents. By June of 1874, the mill was "under roof." At this time he began construction of a private residence of locally burnt bricks. By November, the house was completed and Warkentin started construction of a barn. [47]

Warkentin was recognized as both a leading member of the Mennonite community and as an important regional flour miller by 1875. In June of that year, Warkentin's father traveled from the Crimea to Kansas to attend Bernhard's wedding. On August 12, 1875, he married Wilhemena Eisenmeyer of Summerfield, Illinois. This marriage, as with much of the rest of Warkentin's life, had speculative aspects. "Minna's" father, Conrad Eisenmeyer, was a wealthy miller, having businesses in Saint Louis, Missouri, and Summerfield, Illinois. Minna's Methodist religion presented some problems; however, she was accepted into the Mennonite congregation. [48]

Warkentin's business interests developed with lightning speed. In 1877, he removed his mill improvements on the Arkansas River, including his wooden dam; moved the mill south to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad line; and converted it to steam power. It is possible that he also installed a roller system at this time. In 1881, Warkentin constructed a large addition to the mill. In 1882 a new engine house and second boiler were added to the complex. According to historian David Hauray, every year major improvements were made to the enterprise.

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In 1884, Warkentin demolished his original house and constructed the present residence. Attributed to Kansan architect John G. Haskell, the building was constructed in a vernacular interpretation of the then-popular Queen Anne style for a cost reported in the local papers of \$10,000. It is assumed that the old barn was also razed and that the carriage house, barn, and pump house were also constructed at this time. Warkentin's home at Halstead was not the typical Kansas farm. By 1882, a "wind engine" had been erected for water pumping. The local papers noted "... we understand he does not intend to rely wholly upon the weather clerk to furnish moisture for his vegetation."

Warkentin was well known for his blooded stock, particularly his carriage horses. A deer park was established adjacent to the home; the animals escaped in 1886 and an article in the local paper noted that Warkentin had stated that Halstead's citizens "would confer a great favor on him by refraining from shooting them." Barely 11 years after his marriage to the daughter of a wealthy flour miller, Warkentin himself presided over a considerable estate in the south central plains of Kansas. [49]

Along with managing a major foreign immigration, speculating in real estate, establishing a flour mill, building a house and barn, and marriage, Warkentin busied himself in the local grain market. The credit for the introduction of winter wheat to Kansas remains a hotly debated question. Kansas was not known for its wheat in 1870. Mennonite tradition states that the German Russians brought the strain with them in the 1870s and developed it. However, certain winter wheats are recorded as being introduced in Illinois as early as 1855. Winter wheat yielding 25 bushels an acre was milled at Abilene, Kansas, as early as 1870. Other Russian strains were available; Warkentin himself mentioned seeing Arnautka wheat in Minneapolis at the State Agricultural Fair in 1872. By 1880 Michael Dowling of Abilene planted 600 acres of hard winter wheat "introduced into this country two or three years ago." In 1881 and 1882 Professor Mason Shelton and the Kansas State Agricultural College experimented with Russian wheat varieties. Mennonites may well have planted their own self-imported grains, but, if they did, the initial effect on the nation's economy was negligible.

Warkentin's and the Mennonites' early involvement with winter wheat cannot be denied, however. In June of 1874, Warkentin wrote Goerz that the winter wheat crop was due to be harvested; this would have represented the first wheat crop planted by the

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immigrants. (The type of winter wheat or the origin of the seed is unknown.) Warkentin mentioned another wheat crop in October of 1874. In June of 1875, he noted, "Our farmers are in the process of gathering in the richly blessed crop. We can't be thankful enough for the unearned and abundant blessings."

Three planting seasons (two winters and an intervening spring) had given the Mennonites a strong foothold in Kansas. Familiar with deep plowing methods, they adjusted quickly to the environment. Again, what types of wheat were initially used are unknown; it is evident that at least some were strains already available locally. It is also known that winter wheat, although of minimal importance initially, was used by the Mennonites from the time of their arrival in Kansas. [50]

While it is not known who was responsible for introducing the wheat strains that would ultimately make Kansas the "Wheat State," there is no doubt as to the identity of its primary promoter. Warkentin had acted as business agent for the Mennonite immigration, a managing, middle-man vocation for which he had great talent. He now applied the same talents to the promotion of hard winter wheat. Warkentin showed an early interest in wheat experimentation; an article in the local paper in December of 1879 recorded him as buying "Odessa" wheat for seed and paying \$1.00 a bushel for the grain. In 1884 he shipped a carload of Oregon May wheat for seed.

In 1885, Warkentin made a 6-month trip to Russia and Europe with his family. While in the Crimea, Warkentin arranged to import several thousand bushels of hard red winter wheat. As far as is presently known this constituted the first large-scale importation of hard winter seed wheat into the United States. [51] Acceptance of the wheat was slow in coming. But its lower price, higher loaf yield, gluten content and tolerance for the steppe-like climate of Kansas slowly caught the attention of midwestern farmers and millers. By 1891, Kansas hard wheat flour began international competition in the London, Liverpool and Glasgow markets. France also accepted the flour. Jansens and Company of Antwerp, Belgium, complimented Warkentin's flour as early as 1888: "Kansas flour of Turkey wheat is always welcome in this country. In fact, it is the only flour that answers well the purpose." [52]

Up to the end of the 19th century, the "search for a perfect wheat" continued on the Kansas Plains. Warkentin was by no means

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alone in this search; many others were importing and experimenting with various wheat strains. Upon return from Europe, Warkentin and others established a new mill in nearby Newton in November 1885. He continued experiments with hard winter wheat at his new mill. The gray and speckled quality of the hard wheat was eliminated by new rollers and purifiers which Warkentin installed. In 1887 Warkentin moved his family to Newton where they erected a new residence. Warkentin continued to retain the house and farm in Halstead, however. In 1891 Warkentin leased the C. Eisenmeyer Company mills in Halstead and then purchased them outright in 1896. In 1899, he purchased the Blackwell Mills in Oklahoma, thus creating one of the larger milling operations in the Midwest. [53]

Warkentin's rapid business expansion rested on his experimentation with winter wheat. The fields belonging to Warkentin's Halstead farm complex figured prominently in wheat hybridization experiments sponsored by Warkentin and others involved with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In 1896, Mark Carleton, a cerealist with the United States Department of Agriculture experimenting with wheat and oats near Salina, Kansas, visited Warkentin to ask about the latter's experiments with wheat. Warkentin gave Carleton information concerning the wheat strains brought to Kansas by the Mennonites and his importation from the Crimea in the 1880s.

A correspondence grew between the two men. Carleton traveled to Russia in 1898-99 and obtained a number of Russian varieties for experimentation. Upon returning he contacted Warkentin concerning the leasing of acreage with which to begin experimentation with about 300 new varieties of wheat. Warkentin assured Carleton that acreage could be found in Newton. He made arrangements with locals to provide leased land and also provided some acreage himself. By 1900 Carleton was exhibiting grains at the Paris Exposition in the name of the United States Government.

Meanwhile, as a member of the Kansas Millers Association, Warkentin received from that organization the authorization to procure seed wheat for Kansas from the Crimea. Circulars were produced and distributed. Carleton, armed with letters of introduction to Warkentin's relatives, toured south Russia, looking for the best drought- and rust-resistant wheat strains. Although he and Warkentin did not always agree as to the best seed wheat, Warkentin was quick to defer to the expert, while at the same time stoutly stating his own ideas on the subject. In 1900, the

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Kansas State Millers Association, through Carleton and Warkentin, imported about 15,000 bushels of Turkey Red Wheat for sowing in Kansas. From this importation ultimately came the Kharkov wheat, a hardier strain. From a single head of Crimean wheat, particularly Pedigree 762, came the famous 1917 Kanred wheat. In 1916 a "sister strain of Kanred" (Pedigree 1066) was crossed with a northern spring wheat known as Marquis, resulting in the highly favored Tenmarq variety. Thus it was that the center of the world's grain market shifted from the Crimea to Kansas as a result of an ethnic religious immigration. [54]

Certain scholars have justifiably taken exception to giving the Mennonites exclusive credit for the introduction of hard winter wheat to Kansas. There can be little doubt, however, that the immigration to Kansas had a dramatic effect on the Kansas wheat industry; before 1870 wheat did not figure prominently in Kansas agriculture. It has been noted that the wheat imported by Warkentin had little lasting effect. This is also true; however, his sponsorship of wheat experiments in conjunction with Carleton at Halstead had a prominent effect on the future of Kansas wheat. Carleton himself credited Warkentin with a primary place in the testing and promotion of hard red winter wheat in Kansas. Warkentin's was not an exclusive arena of endeavor, assuredly; however, his influence in the grain and milling industries as a manager, organizer and promoter of hard winter wheat should not be underestimated. [55]

Warkentin involved himself in other business interests in addition to his grain and milling occupations. He imported and promoted not only wheat seed but also beet seed, another typical product of his south Russia homeland. Warkentin invested in local banks in both Halstead and Newton. He invested in the Mennonite Mutual Fire Insurance Company started by his friend David Goerz; acted as a director of the Miller's National Insurance Company of Chicago, Illinois; the Terminal Warehouse Company of Kansas City, Missouri; the Western States Portland Cement Company of Independence, Kansas; and the Kansas-Canada Investment Company. Other investments included the Prudential Trust Company of Topeka, Kansas; the Great Western Agency Company; the Soda Ash Plant of Hutchinson, Kansas; the Freeholders Fire Insurance Company; the Indian Glass Company of Independence, Kansas; and the Otto Weis Alfalfa Feed Company. Warkentin also was prominent in the founding of Bethel College at Newton, Kansas, and served on its Board of Directors until 1903.

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He served on the first Board of Directors of Bethel Hospital, providing much needed financial support to the institution. [56]

Warkentin's immigrant background faded as he amassed wealth in the New World. His acculturation began almost immediately. As noted earlier, marriage to Wilhemena Eisenmeyer presented problems among the German Russian Mennonites because of her Methodist religion; however, due to her German background and willingness to convert, the problem was solved, at least temporarily. Warkentin's association with the Mennonites had always been stormy, perhaps due more to economic than religious differences.

As he became more wealthy, Warkentin drifted from the Mennonite fold. Although he continued to support their institutions, he and his family joined the Presbyterian Church in Newton after moving to that town in the late 1880s. Although he served as a prime mover in the Bethel College enterprise, he sent his daughter Edna Wella to Bryn Mawr for education. Perhaps the most telling break with his background rests with the education of his son Carl, who received a portion of his schooling at Wentworth Military Academy, Lexington, Missouri. Obviously, a great change had taken place in Warkentin's life; the question of non-military service that had originally brought the Mennonites to Kansas now seemed to matter little to Warkentin. His willingness to cooperate with the government regarding agricultural projects also ran contrary to Mennonite theology. His views, way of life, and business interests had become "American." [57]

In the midst of wheat experiments and various business interests, Warkentin and his wife left for a trip to the Mediterranean in January 1908. Travels took the couple through Italy, Egypt and into Palestine. Ever the miller and businessman, Warkentin noted in his diary various grain milling operations he saw on his trip. In March, they arrived at Jerusalem. After crossing the Sea of Galilee, they proceeded into the Ottoman Empire. On a train on April 1, 1908, Warkentin was accidentally shot and killed by Mehemed Said, grandson of Eddel-Kadir, Emir of the Algerian Arabs. Said's pistol discharged in the adjoining train compartment. The bullet struck Warkentin, who died 15 hours later in Beirut. According to the Kansas papers, Said was not prosecuted due to his royal status; whether the United States Government made inquiries concerning the accident is unknown.

Warkentin's body was returned to Newton, Kansas, and he was buried in the family mausoleum at Newton. The Mennonite

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Congregation of Halstead closed the Warkentin entry in the congregation's book with "Man war Reich geworden!!" ("And they became rich!")--a curious entry, no doubt expressing the estrangement between Warkentin's original German Russian heritage and religion and his new American wealth and identity. [58]

CONCLUSION

Warkentin's career and his farm at Halstead represent important facets of the history of immigration and settlement in the American West. Unlike many other immigrant groups, the Mennonites, by comparison, were well-funded and well organized, planning and managing their migration with the skill of experienced businessmen and agriculturists. The American economy welcomed the arrival of this wealthy, skilled immigrant group in the years immediately following the Depression of 1873. A stable group of immigrants, they promised not only to settle isolated lands, but to make those lands economically productive as well. Their advent was one of the first post-Civil War waves of Central European immigration that ultimately changed the face of the American Nation.

The arrival of Mennonite groups in south central Kansas and elsewhere also reflected important technological advances that complemented and facilitated their arrival. American railroads, attempting to curtail the disastrous 1873 national economic collapse, sponsored and promoted the immigration, providing transportation, lands and technological assistance as well. The Mennonites arrived in the midst of a serendipitous technological explosion in the grain milling industry that complemented their traditional agricultural and economic base. Their understanding and use of these phenomena enabled the Mennonites to create a new life in America within a relatively short period. Such understanding and willingness to adopt new ways also resulted in the rapid acculturation of many Mennonite groups. Although some sects clung to older traditions, many "Americanized" rapidly. The arrival of the Mennonites on the Kansas plains in the 1870s presaged a radical change in both Kansas agriculture and economy. Before the Civil War, wheat had not figured substantially in Kansas farming. After the arrival of Mennonite farmers, wheat became the principal grain crop for the entire State.

In addition, the Mennonite farmers and millers of the Ukraine successfully combined their Old World skills with New World technologies to enhance their industries. Their skills with deep

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plowing and "dry" farming techniques gave them an advantage and the necessary knowledge to succeed in the establishment of an agricultural economy. The millstones and threshing stones of south Russia were quickly abandoned by the immigrants in favor of roller mills and threshing machines. Their interest in improving the quality of grain, evidenced by their husbandry in the Crimea and Ukraine, manifested itself on the plains of Kansas, resulting in USDA-sponsored experiments that ultimately changed the face of the world's grain economy.

The Mennonite immigration to the United States reflected an international, political and economic scene involving not only American interests but also those of the major European nations and Canada as well. By the turn of the century, Kansas wheat had successfully entered the international market; by 1924, barely 50 years after the Mennonite immigration, Kansas proudly boasted that it grew the best wheat in the world.

Bernhard Warkentin's life and career reflect the major themes of the Mennonite immigration of the 1870s and 1880s and the development of the American grain and milling industries. Better than any other, Warkentin's career exemplifies those elements that made the Mennonite immigration an important event in American history. The Mennonite migration to the United States cannot be attributed to any one person or event--many personalities such as Cornelius Jansen, Christian Kreibel, David Goerz and Carl Bernard Schmidt played crucial roles in the development of the migration.

But Bernhard Warkentin's career as a promoter, agent, and manager for both the Mennonite immigration and the improvement of wheat strains and the American milling industry is unique. Mark Carleton, in his article "Hard Kansas Wheats Winning Their Way," made reference to "Human Immigrants and Cereal Immigrants" in his analysis of the winter wheat industry of Kansas, the Mennonites and the relationships of these two phenomena. Bernhard Warkentin, to a large extent, managed both immigrations. [59]

Admittedly, his was not a totally altruistic endeavor on either count. He was reimbursed by the Mennonite Board of Guardians for his time in shepherding immigrants from New York to Kansas and his economic speculation in Halstead was directly dependent on a successful execution of his duties. But without such a manager, the Mennonite immigration of the 1870s and 1880s might have been, at least initially, less effective. With Warkentin's promotional letters and knowledge of lands and transportation systems, the

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Mennonites were able to plant crops much sooner than if they had had to learn about their new environment and American systems by trial and error. Warkentin's expertise not only benefited the immigrants; the railroads were assured of the purchase of their lands by a stable group of people with capital.

Similarly, Warkentin's economic prowess and technological abilities both in milling and grain experimentation provided a base for experts such as Mark Carleton to sponsor experiments that provided much needed drought-resistant hard winter wheat strains. This work also resulted in the introduction of the Durum or macaroni wheats, which had an effect not only in Kansas but throughout the American West. [60] Without Warkentin and others like him, experimenting with various types of wheat and methods of milling, the international shift of the world's grain market and American domination of the world's grain and flour industries might have been substantially retarded.

More than any other single person, Warkentin acted as a catalyst for both the Mennonite immigration and the improvement of the American grain and milling industries. That catalytic action resulted in the revolutionizing of American agriculture and in substantial improvements in world economy and food supply. His careers in immigration and wheat experimentation provide an example of the success of an American immigrant who stood at the crux of opportunity in 1872--at the meeting place of a great international immigration and a technological revolution. Warkentin used the best of both to advance his own career, and, in the process, benefited not only his fellow immigrants but the rest of the American nation and the world as well.

ENDNOTES

27. David Haury, "Bernhard Warkentin: A Mennonite Benefactor," as reprinted in The Warkentin House ([Newton]: Warkentin House Association, 1986), 3; Encyclopedia Britannica Macropaedia (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1983), 11: 904; Cornelius Krahn, ed., From The Steppes To The Praries: 75 Years (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publications Office, 1949), pp. 6-8; Abraham Albrecht, "The Mennonite Settlement in Kansas" (Master's Thesis, University of Kansas, 1925), p. 2.
28. Krahn, op. cit., 6, 10; James C. Malin, Winter Wheat In The Golden Belt Of Kansas (University of Kansas Press, 1944),

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166; John F. Schmidt, "A Century Ago Mennonites Came To Kansas With Turkey Red Wheat," p. 4. (Photocopy, Manuscripts Department, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas); Warkentin to Goerz: August 3, 1862, January 6, 1863, September 27, 1866, October 1, 1866, December 3, 1867, January 12, 1870, and June 17, 1871, BWC.

Conclusive supporting evidence for the story concerning Warkentin's father and the 1860 importation of red wheat from Turkey is not available. This was not the first immigration of Mennonites to the United States; Mennonite groups had been immigrating to the United States since 1663.

29. Fred Richard Belk, The Great Trek Of The Russian Mennonites To Central Asia 1880-1884 (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1976), 43-45. The Hutterites, a Moravian and Austrian Anabaptist group which settled in the Russian Ukraine in 1770, were also part of ensuing immigration to the United States.
30. James C. Juhnke, A People Of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation Of The Kansas Mennonites (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1975), 14; Ray Allen Billington and Martin Ridge, Westward Expansion: A History Of The American Frontier (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1982), 648-649; Trevor I. Williams, History of Technology, The Late Nineteenth Century, c. 1850-c. 1900 (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1970), V: 29-31; Krahn, op. cit., 10; Malin, op. cit., 188-191.

Malin states that the roller process was first patented in France in the 1820s. He also states that for some unknown reason the roller process became associated as an American invention, created to deal exclusively with the properties inherent in hard winter wheat. This, states Malin, is not the case. According to Williams, Hungarian roller milling replaced "high-milling" methods on the Continent and "low-milling" methods in England in the 1840s. Also, according to Williams:

Roller milling was rapidly adopted in the United States and the flour thus manufactured, being whiter than that produced from stone-milled English wheat, became popular and was soon imported into England in

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large quantities. It is generally "stronger" than flour made from English wheat, that is, it forms a stiffer dough, absorbs more water (thus yielding more loaves per sack), and, being free from oil and from the diastatic enzymes of the embryo, it does not become rancid or malted; usually, also, it makes taller and better 'pile' loaves. (P. 30)

31. Billington and Ridge, op. cit., 652-653; Gilbert C. Fite, The Farmer's Frontier, 1865-1900 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 15-33.
32. Goerz to Warkentin, May 24/June 5, 1872; Warkentin to Goerz, July 29/11, 1872, BWC.
33. Ibid.
34. Haury, "Bernhard Warkentin: A Mennonite Success Story," 9-14; Notarized Statement, Office of Henry Ruth, Justice of the Peace, Summerfield, Illinois, February 7, 1873, BWC.
35. Haury, "Bernhard Warkentin: A Mennonite Success Story," 9-14.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., 15-16.
38. Land Sales Records, ATSFRRRC, January 14, 1874, RR308: 13 (photocopy); Juhnke, op. cit., 16; Warkentin to Goerz, June 24, 1874, BWC.
39. Warkentin to Goerz, January 21, 1874, and December 14, 1875, BWC.
40. Goerz to Warkentin, May 24/June 5, 1872, BWC; Imperial Russian General Consulate In The North American United States, Ministry for Foreign Affairs to Honored Secretary of the Society for the Protection of Mennonites, New York, translated from Russian original by James Mote, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, Lakewood, Colorado, BWC.

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41. C.B. Schmidt, "Reminiscences Of Foreign Immigration Work For Kansas," Transactions Of The Kansas State Historical Society, 1905-1906, George W. Martin, ed. (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1906), 487.
42. Ibid., 489-490.
43. Ibid., 490-496.
44. Ibid., 490, 492, 493-95.
45. Warkentin to Goerz: April 10, May 18, May 22, July 29, and December 5, 1874; Warkentin to the Mennonite Board of Guardians, January 7, 1875, BWC.
46. Warkentin to Goerz, March 23 and 30, June 14, 24, and 28, July 29, September 19 and 24, October 12, November 2, 12, 20, and 28, December 5, 8, 14, and 17, 1874; January 21, February 15, 24, and 28, April 9 and 19, June 3, and August 1, 1875; Warkentin to Mennonite Board of Guardians, December 28 and 31, 1874; January 2 and 7, 1875; Warkentin to the members of the Kansas Aid Committee, Brother Issak Kilmer and others, April 22, 1875; Warkentin to Reverend Ch. Krehbiel, May 31, 1874 (translation only), BWC.

The changes in letterhead tell their own story concerning Warkentin's career with the Mennonite immigration and his personal development. As early as February of 1874, Warkentin is listed as Business Agent for the Mennonite Board of Guardians. Other letterheads, from hotels in Nebraska and on official stationery of the ATSF Land Office give evidence of his close involvement with the railroad's immigration efforts. By December 8, 1874, Warkentin had printed personalized stationery with his name "B. Warkentin, Halstead, Kansas" in Gothic and Italian script, a manifestation of either his status as a wealthy immigrant, his positive attitude over impending personal success, or possibly both. December 28 found Warkentin writing to the Mennonite Board of Guardians on his future father-in-law Conrad Eisenmeyer's stationery from the latter's flour mills on Chouteau Avenue in Saint Louis, Missouri. On December 31, 1874, Warkentin penned a letter on Wells, Fargo and Company stationery from Hutchinson, Kansas, regarding the plight of 120 Mennonite families and his financing of their needs. An undated letter draft from Warkentin to Johnson

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bears the first Keck, Warkentin and Co. Halstead Mills letterhead--a subhead noted the mill was run by water power. The earliest dated letter on this stationery is April 9, 1875. An April 22, 1875, letter written on his personal stationery noted a new title--Secretary of the Kansas Aid Committee. By June, Warkentin was writing on letterhead of the newly named Kansas Local Relief Committee.

47. Warkentin to Reverend Ch. Krehbiel, May 31, 1874 (translation only); Warkentin to Goerz, June 24, and November 12, 1874, BWC.
48. Haury, op. cit., 22-25; Warkentin to Goerz, June 16, 1875, BWC; Kansan, September 2, 1875, p. 2 (typewritten copy).
49. Weekly Kansan, October 11, 1877, p. 3, January 24, 1884, p. 3 (typewritten copies); Haury, op. cit., 28.
50. Malin, op. cit., 6, 14-15, 162-165. 179-180; Krahn, op. cit., 10; Mark Alfred Carleton, "Hard Winter Wheats Winning Their Way," Yearbook Of The United States Department of Agriculture--1914 (Washington: GPO, 1915), 400; Warkentin to Goerz, June 14 and 16, October 12, and November 2, 1874; June 24, 1875, BWC.
51. Kansan, December 14, 1879, p. 2 (typed copy); Malin, op. cit., 200; Haury, op. cit., 29, 35.
52. Haury, op. cit., 32-35; Malin, op. cit., 197, 220-221, 189-209, passim.
53. Haury, op. cit., 30-32; Malin, op. cit., 201-209.
54. Haury, op. cit., 32-36; Carleton, op. cit., 397-401; J. Allen Clark and B.B. Bayles, Classification Of Wheat Varieties Grown In The United States, Technical Bulletin No. 459 (Washington; United States Department of Agriculture, 1935), 106-107; Krahn, op. cit., 12; Malin, op. cit., 207-209; National Archives, Washington D.C. to Professor Cornelius Krahn, Bethel College, November 8, 1944 (8 pages--last pages missing), Folder 18, Warkentin/Carleton Correspondence, BWC; Weekly Kansan, June 9, 1899, p. 5, August 25, 1899, pp. 1, 10, September 1, 1899, p. 6, October 19, 1900, p. 3, November 23, 1900, p. 1 (typed copies); circular, undated, Committee of Grain Dealers/Committee of

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Millers Ass'n (typed copy), BWC; Bernhard Warkentin to M.A. Carleton, May 5, May 31, July 2, November 9, and December 15, 1900; January 9, 1901; Mr. M.A. Carleton to Mr. Bernhard Warkentin, November 13, November 16, and December 18, 1900; January 12, January 15, and March 23, 1901; M.A. Carleton to Mr. B.T. Galloway, May 21, and June 18, 1900, BWC.

55. Malin, op. cit., 188-209.
56. Haury, op. cit., 36-44; Weekly Kansan, April 30, 1891, p. 1 (Typed copy.)
57. Haury, op. cit., 46-59.
58. Ibid., 50-54.
59. Carleton, op. cit., 399.
60. Malin, op. cit., 206.

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Schmidt, John F. "A Century Ago Mennonites Came To Kansas With
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 Collection: Manuscripts Department: Kansas State Historical
 Society, Topeka, Kansas.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has
 been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other: Specify Repository: Bethel College, Newton, Kansas

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreeage of Property: Approximately 12 (twelve) acres.

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

<u>A 14</u>	<u>631310</u>	<u>4207390</u>	<u>B 14</u>	<u>631300</u>	<u>4207460</u>
<u>C 14</u>	<u>631450</u>	<u>4207630</u>	<u>D 14</u>	<u>631610</u>	<u>4207550</u>
<u>E 14</u>	<u>631680</u>	<u>4207390</u>			

Verbal Boundary Description:

Block 14, City of Halstead, Harvey County, Kansas, as shown by the recorded plat thereof, together with all that part of the E 1/2 of the NE 1/4 of Section 35, Township 23 South, Range 2 West, of the 6th P.M., lying south of the center line of the channel of the Little Arkansas River, except that portion of the following described tract lying in the E 1/2 NE 1/4 of Section 35, Township 23 South, Range 2 West, and south of the Little Arkansas River: beginning 1296 feet west of the southeast corner of said NE 1/4; thence, north 600 feet; thence west 35.8 feet; thence, south 600 feet; thence east of the quarter-section line 33.9 feet to the place of beginning. Together with easement on and over Block 15, City of Halstead, as conveyed to Carl B. Warkentin under and by virtue of the deed of easement from the Midland Flour Milling Company to Carl B. Warkentin, dated September 29, 1932, and recorded in Volume 121, Page 208, of the Miscellaneous Records in the office of the Register of Deeds of Harvey County, Kansas.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary described above contains approximately 12 acres and includes the structures that constitute the Warkentin Homestead and some of the land that Warkentin utilized for seed plots in experimentation with Turkey red wheat.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

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Organization: History Division, NPS

Date: June 20, 1990

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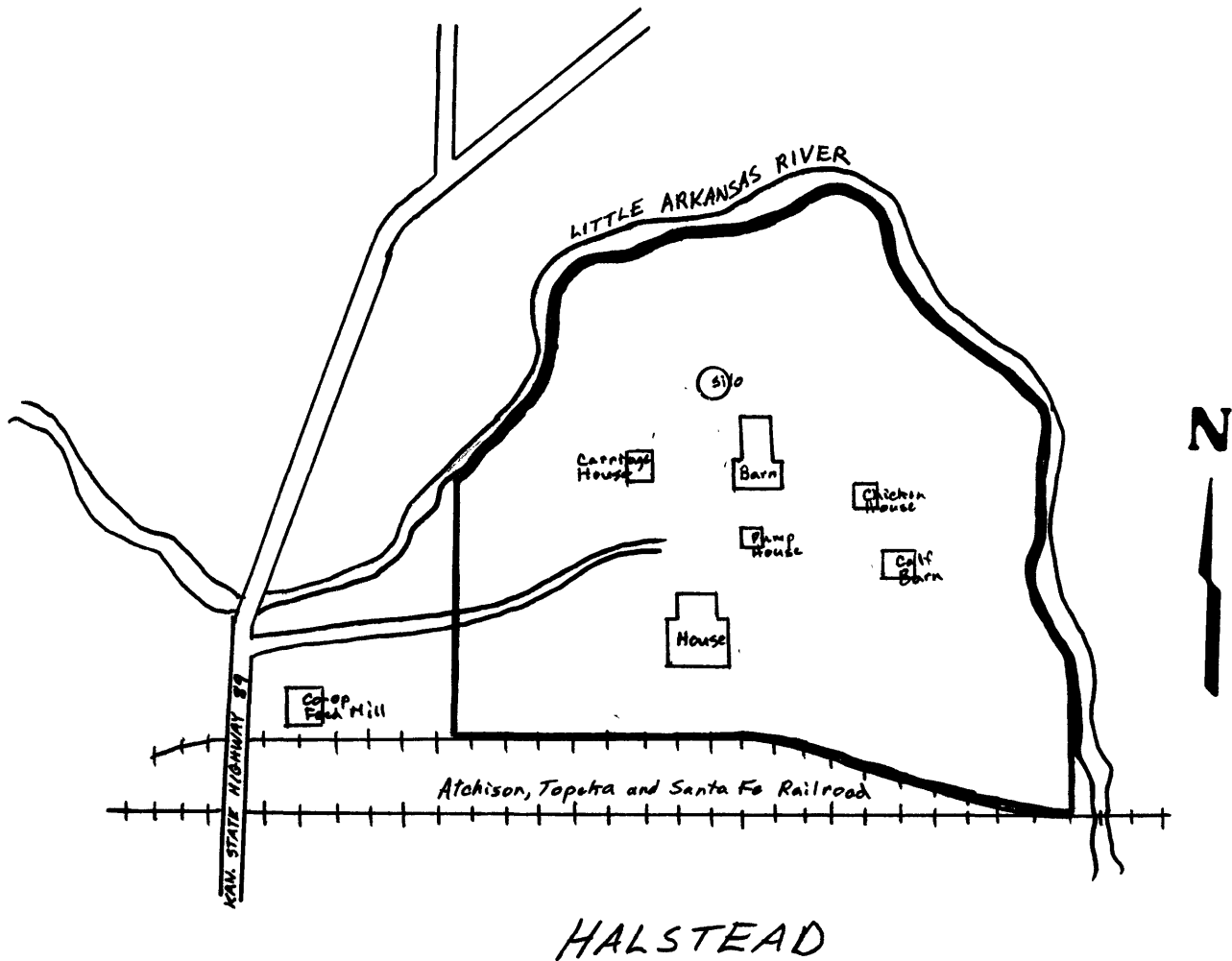
Telephone: (202) 343-8165

City or Town: Washington

State: DC

ZIP: 20013-7127

BERNHARD WARKENTIN HOMESTEAD
Approximately 500 feet east of Kansas Highway 89
and north of Halstead
Halstead, Kansas



AASLH Sketch Map
J. Gardner, 1979