MYTH AND HISTORY: TURKEY RED 'WHEAT' 
AND THE "KANSAS MIRACLE"

by

Norman E. Saul

In 1897, Henry King wrote an article on Kansas for the popular 
"Scribner's Monthly" that began: 

There is no more enticing scene 
than the Kansas prairie in spring. 
The eye wanders out over 
gracefully swerving and 
unmonotonous lines to what seems 
the very limit of things; you dare 
not conjecture where the earth 
ends and the sky begins. 

Many today might second that thought 
after traveling westward on I-70, but 
perhaps, after three generations, we 
have lost some appreciation of that 
scene. This article will examine 
the remaking of that landscape's lines 
by new settlers and conjecture about where 
myth ends and history begins. 

In 1873 and 1874 a number of 
Mennonite families in southern Russia 
commenced a long migration 
by train and steamship to America. There, after 
considering several possible locations, 
most of them chose the virgin prairie of 
Kansas, where railroads like the Santa 
Fe had many sections of land-stretching 
in a checkerboard pattern across the 
state to sell cheap. The largest group, 
from the Molochia-Ukrainian village of 
Alexanderwohl, alone bought sixty-five 
of them from the Santa Fe in Marion, 
McPherson, and Harvey counties and 
homesteaded quite a few more. When 
these people left Russia, each family (it 
was later believed) brought a sack or 
crock of wheat, a hard red winter wheat 
which made Kansas famous and an 
economically prosperous agricultural 
state. The Catholic and Lutheran Volga 
Germans who came to Ellis, Rush, and 
Russell counties a couple of years later 
reinforced and helped spread the 
adaptation of "their" Russian wheat. 

That is the story. It is a nice, neat 
one. And in 1974 the state celebrated 
the centennial of this event in grand style; there were parades and 
celebrations in practically every town: a 
wheat queen was crowned--Andrea 
Polansky of Belleville; and Highway 50 
was appropriately renamed the "Wheat 
Centennial Memorial Highway." A 
paperback novel was even published 
with the title Turkey Red. A U.S. postal 
stamp commemorated the occasion. 

Prominence was given to it in a 1985 
article on Kansas in the National 
Geographic, and in March of 1989 it 
was featured in The New Yorker in a 
three-part series on the Great Plains by 
Ian Frazier that later became a 
best-seller in book form. Quoting from 
the article: "As it turned out, the 
Russian Mennonites made ideal plains 
farmers--they had been practicing on the 
steppe for nearly a hundred years." 

After relating some nonsense about sod 
houses (the first Mennonite settlers 
generally did not bother with them) and 
an alleged ability to cope with
grasshoppers, Frazier stated:

Most important, the Mennonites knew what to plant. Each Mennonite family had brought a bushel or more of Crimean wheat from Russia. This wheat, a hard, red, short-stemmed variety later called Turkey Red, was resistant to heat, cold, and drought. It was the right crop for the plains, and the Mennonites knew to cultivate it... And so the idea continues in the popular imagination today, but what does history—the search for and telling of what actually happened—say about all of this? In short, the story is largely a myth, as historian James Malin of the University of Kansas demonstrated in the 1940s, but like all myths it has some factual basis, more perhaps than Malin was willing to grant. The truth about Turkey Red and the Kansas wheat miracle is more complex to unravel but in its way is as intriguing and exciting as the myth.

The situation in Russia in the 1870s must first be examined. Dubbed “Rooshians” when they arrived in Kansas, the Ukrainian Dutch-speaking Mennonites, the Volynian (Polish) Swiss-speaking Mennonites, and the Volga German Lutherans and Catholics, who spoke a variety of German dialects, were concentrated, respectively, in substantial and relatively prosperous colonial settlements almost a thousand miles apart, where they had settled about a hundred years earlier. Many of them were unhappy and restless because of population growth and restricted opportunities for expansion to new lands. Moreover, there were increased Russian nationalist pressures that threatened their cultural identities, and the liberal reforms of Alexander II's government also threatened the special privileges that had been granted to them when they first moved into Russia. The chief of these was exemption from recruitment into the Russian army. The Mennonites were naturally concerned because of their pacifist religious beliefs, but even the Catholic and Lutheran Germans were afraid that military service would mean conversion to the Russian Orthodox church. Even more, this and other actually progressive steps by the Russian government meant greater interference by the central government in the historic autonomy of these foreign agricultural colonies. "Liberal" reforms—treating everyone more equal—were thus a cause of dissent, much as among Soviet nationalities in recent years.

There is a certain irony that significant economic progress in Russia and technological change encouraged emigration. The telegraph and newspapers carried advertisements of cheap land in America, and the extension of Russian railroads to their areas provided access to relatively cheap and easy transportation. Other factors prodding movement were religious controversy and growing distinctions between rich and poor in the communities. The Mennonites were, in fact, able to work out with the Russian government a rather progressive system of alternative service and thus avoided military conscription. Yet, quite a few of them did leave Russia, and most of these initial emigrants came to Kansas.

Why Kansas? Land agents of the Kansas Pacific and the Santa Fe, such as C. B. Schmidt, certainly had something to do with their choosing Kansas. The Mennonites were also guided by co-religionists from Illinois and Indiana (such as the Funkas, the Krebbels, and the Wiebes) who knew good agricultural opportunities when they saw them. And officials of Kansas, who had seen their state crippled by
When and how did the story of Mennonites carrying wheat to Kansas gain currency? The first public references to the 1874 Mennonites bringing Turkey Red date to the early 1900s, especially in a Saturday Evening Post article of 1910 by F. D. Coburn, Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture. There is much confusion and many contradictions, however, in these accounts. Finally, early in 1927, Bliss Isely, an editor of the Wichita Beacon, set out to trace the origins of Turkey Red for a Sunday feature article. As recounted several years later, he first wrote to Carl Warkentin, the son of a prominent miller of Ukrainian Mennonite background, but Warkentin proved uncooperative. Isely then enlisted the aid of David Kiebert, a mathematics professor at Bethel College, who asked his students to enquire in their communities when they went home for the weekend as to the origin of Turkey Red wheat. One of these Bethel undergraduates found an elderly woman living in Hillsboro, Anna Barkman Wohlgemuth, who recalled at age eight obeying her father's instructions back in their Crimean village of Annenfeld.
Which happen to mean Anna’s field),
to pick out, quoting Isely, “the best seeds from their bins—ONE GRAIN AT A TIME.” Intrigued by her recollection that this amounted to two gallons, Isely then determined that the young Anna had selected exactly 259,862 grains, disregarding the fact that a gallon measurement did not exist in Russia.

The Anna Barkman story thus became an important part of the Turkey Red myth. Unfortunately, it is rather unscientifically documented, and Mrs. Wohlgemuth died shortly afterwards without apparently writing anything down. It is weakest in identifying what kind of grain was in that Crimean granary and in relating what actually happened to it in Kansas, if it ever completed the long journey from Odessa, through Friesau, Hamburg, New York, and a lengthy stopover near Elkhart, Indiana. Moreover, characteristic of myths, this story from one family of a particular Mennonite sect in the Crimea was quickly expanded to include every Mennonite family who emigrated from various places in Russia.

A question also arises over what kind of grain was likely to be in a Crimean Mennonite granary in 1874, since in that year four times as much rye as wheat was produced in Russia, oats yields doubled those of wheat, and barley, millet, buckwheat, and other grains nearly equaled wheat. All kinds of wheat represented only twelve percent of total Russian grain production in 1870. Russia, like Kansas, was simply not a major wheat area in 1874. Mennonite agriculture in Russia was also quite diversified with emphases upon dairying and sheep raising as much as grain production.

The Southern Russian steppe, where the Molochna and Crimean Mennonites lived, however, was the only subregion of Russia where the production of wheat exceeded rye, barley, and other grains, and reliable contemporary evidence supports the recent development there of a hard, red winter wheat, called arnaulda, which was rising in importance for export to Southern Europe.

But even if we admit that two gallons and perhaps a few other sacks or crocks of hard Russian wheat came to Kansas with the Krimmer Mennonites who settled Gnadenau just south of Hillsboro, in August 1874, problems still exist: were these grains actually planted? And, if so, how was this variety—or these varieties—kept separate and distinct from the great many other acres of wheat planted by the Mennonite immigrants that fall? Or did the “gallons” end up as chicken feed or the first loaf of bread? The answers, unfortunately, are elusive, but during the first couple of years, Gnadenau and other Mennonite settlements in that area attracted many visitors and press reports. Nothing can be found from them about any new wheat. From newspapers it appears that the Santa Fe Railroad, anxious that their Mennonite customers have a successful start, provided discounted seed wheat from local stocks. Most likely it was Early Red May, a soft red spring wheat best adapted to surviving a winter in south central Kansas, though several other soft varieties—Lancaster, Gypsy, and White Gemini—were grown in Marion County that fall, while next door in Harvey County, White Walker and Gold Drop were popular.

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the triumph of winter wheat over spring
wheat, of hard wheat over soft, and
of wheat over corn.

In 1873, before the Mennonites
arrived, Kansas was primarily a corn
state and most of the wheat was planted
in the spring. But a few had followed
an earlier Indian practice—around
Shawnee Mission (Johnson County)—of
planting wheat in the fall. In fact, one
of the first documented commercial
fields of wheat in Kansas, that on Judge
Spicer's farm four miles west of
Lawrence, was sown in the fall of
1856. What these fall sowings suffered
in the way of winter kill was often made
up by better yields in a dry summer
than that planted in the spring, as the
winter wheat would benefit more from
early spring moisture and escape
summer rust damage. The main
obstacles were the absence of a local
market for wheat and cheap
transportation to distant markets, wheat
being deemed unsatisfactory for feeding
livestock and horses, and the prevalence
of corn, which was usually harvested too
late to allow for fall wheat planting in
those fields. Winter wheat, moreover,
was vulnerable to the winter and late
spring drives coming up from Texas and
Oklahoma, but once these were better
controlled and fenced off, it had greater
possibilities on the plains.

Then, after the Civil War came the
railroads, and they brought more
settlers—and distant market possibilities.
Finally, T. C. Henry, an ambitious real
estate agent and promoter, planted
about 500 acres of wheat in a field just
east of Abilene in the fall of 1873 and
expanded it to 1,200 acres the following
year. He used six oxen teams pulling
Moline gangs plows on a stretch along
the railroad three miles long. Everyone
travelling along the Kansas Pacific (now
the Union Pacific) marvelled at the
scene, especially when his Marsh cutters
and steam threshers yielded golden piles
of grain, while the still immature spring
wheat and corn was being devastated by
drought and grasshoppers in 1874. The
lesson was learned, and Henry made
much of the publicity and his
recommendation of Early Red May (the
soft spring wheat which he considered
most suitable for fall sowing). In 1875,
Kansas farmers, including the new
Mennonite immigrants from Russia,
increased their wheat sowings
substantially to 750,000 acres, two thirds
of it in winter wheat.

The acreage of spring wheat
continued to decline in proportion,
especially when more dry land prairie
was brought under cultivation. The
Catholic and Lutheran Volga German
immigrants, coming into Ellis, Rush, and
Russell counties in 1876 and later,
made quite an impact, quickly changing
this Kansas landscape from cattle
ranching to farming on this drier land,
similar to the Volga region. But in
Kansas they had the advantage of a
milder winter and the possibility, that
ever existed in Russia, of planting in
the fall to take maximum advantage of snow
melt and spring rains. In Russia they
always had planted spring wheat,
predominantly a hard-grained variety
known as White Turkey (beloturka) a
durum type wheat, because the severity
of the winter there was similar to
Canada or North Dakota.

So the settlers from Russia adapted
to Kansas and shifted from spring to fall
planting and initially to soft wheat. A
Hays City newspaper reported in 1893,
"Our Russian friends are on the high
to fortune, raising wheat against all
odds [!] is making them rich." But
ample proof exists of the endurance of
spring wheat and corn in 1884 over in
Russell County, Christian Anschutz, the
Volga-German Lutheran founder of a
Kansas family that was later to achieve considerable economic prominence, cultivated 70 acres of winter wheat, 60 acres of spring wheat, and 50 acres of corn, along with smaller fields of barley, oats, potatoes, and tobacco. No doubt a major reason for this was the necessity for family farmers, unlike promoters such as Henry, to be diversified.

In fact, in these years after the Volga Germans arrived, one third of the cultivated land in Ellis County was in corn. Clearly, that crop was by no means beaten in Kansas and could still grow as high as an elephant's eye in summer. The Topeka *Daily Commonwealth* reported in October 1879, "Corn is king in Kansas, so far as space is concerned. They plant it by the square mile." Even the Mennonites around Newton and Marion grew this farm staple too—and still do. They also experimented with cotton, tobacco, flax, and even rice in their quest to find the best return. The Winfield *Courrier* reported (March 23, 1876) that for the year after the great grasshopper plague, "Kansas produced more corn to the acre . . . than any other state in the union." It would still be many years before Kansas would become the wheat state.

When did "Red Turkey," its Russian name because the grains were "redder" than other wheat and was thought to have come from the Balkan part of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire, or "Turkey Red" in Kansas, actually come into the picture? While most farmers simply planted what they had grown, the search for better varieties of grain had been going on for many years in both Russia and the United States, the two primary grain exporting countries.

As early as 1862 the Department of Agriculture was seeking wheat samples from Russia as well as other countries, and a hard spring wheat, Scotch Fife, spread rapidly from Canada into Minnesota in the 1870s. A variety of hard red wheat called Osbey, brought from Russia in 1877, produced impressive results for the Missouri Agricultural College in 1882. But even earlier, in 1881, a hard red winter wheat from Russia was definitely established in Kansas, though probably not from Anna Barkman's two gallons, as something called "Turkish" was listed as a local variety and as hard wheat in the Kansas City market reports. It had reached Ellis County the next year, according to the Hays City *Star-Sentinel* (July 13, 1882): "The turkey-bearded wheat proved itself a valuable quality beyond expectation. People who attended the fair last season will remember the sample of seed exhibited." This report also provides a clue as to how it spread.

In 1883, the Marion *Record* compared the color of "Turkey" to Red May and concluded, "But then the contrast will disappear when the Russian wheat entirely supersedes the softer varieties, as it seems destined to do." But it would still take time.

The wheat experiments in Kansas were promoted by large farm entrepreneurs such as Henry, by millers, exporters, and railroads, by state officials, and by cereal grain specialists. In 1887 the Kansas Agricultural College's experimental farm near Manhattan was testing 51 distinct varieties under the supervision of Edward Mason Shelton, who, interestingly, was originally from England. Though some of these were hard wheats with Russian, Turkish, and Bulgarian labels, Shelton still recommended Early Red May or Zimmerman, both soft wheats, for Kansas, but he noted that a Turkey wheat, which he referred to as "amber"
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Kansas, but he noted that a Turkey
wheat, which he referred to as "amber"
in color, was being grown successfully in
McPherson County—that is, in
Mennonite territory.22
Shelton also reported that the
advantages of some of these new
Russian varieties of wheat were greater
hardiness, and therefore less winter kill,
and for at least one Turkish variety,
resistance to black rust, which was a
special problem encountered by all
summer varieties that ripened late in
the season. But a major disadvantage
remained—milling—although this is a kind
of chicken and egg problem: which
comes first, the mill or the wheat?
These hard varieties were generally
classified at the time as "macaroni"
wheats, and indeed the primary stimulus
for growing hard wheat in southern
Russia was its export to Italy and other
parts of the Mediterranean. One other
important advantage of hard wheat was
that it is richer in gluten (protein) and
would produce more flour (and thus
more bread) per bushel. In the United
States, there was yet less demand for
this kind of flour and consequently a
lack of milling facilities that could
handle hard wheat. But the spread of
hard spring wheat in Minnesota led to
the establishment of new milling
processes in Minneapolis, using steel
rollers instead of millstones and an
air-forced middling process to separate
the bran.23
Also, a vastly increased immigration
from Southern and Eastern Europe to
American urban areas was changing the
American flour market. By the
mid-1880s, some of the new demand
was met by a Newton miller of
Ukrainian Mennonite origin (though he
converted to the Presbyterian faith at
marriage)—Bernhard Warkentin. In 1885
and 1886 in quest of wheat varieties he,
in fact, made two trips back to Russia,
where his father was still in the milling
business.24 In the Crimea and in the
Berdianst (Sea of Azov) exporting area,
with which he was most familiar, was
grown a general class of hard, red
spring wheat known as arnaouka, strains
of which had localized names such as
Kievka and Krasnaia Turka or Red
Turkey. He brought back a carload of
arnouka—which means "Albanian" in
Russian—and pioneered the further
testing of samples in Kansas with the
help of Shelton and his successor, Mark
Carlton.25
Warkentin also contributed
another way; he adapted milling
machinery in Kansas to steel rollers of
the Minneapolis kind that could grind
hard wheat more effectively. In 1886 he
bought the Monarch Steam Mill in
Newton and modernized and expanded
it the following year as the Newton
Milling Company. Soon his "Cream of
Kansas" flour was being produced by
several mills and sold nationally. By
1888 he had broken into the European
market. That year Janssen and
Company of Antwerp (Belgium)
informed Warkentin that "Kansas flour of
Turake wheat is always welcome in
this country. It is the only flour that
answers well the purpose."26 That fall
acreage devoted to hard winter wheat in
Kansas and surrounding states soared.

It is important to note that other
modern steel roller milling operations,
employing a "middling" purifying
process, spread rapidly across the state
at that very time. In McPherson the
Queen Bee Mill was modernized and
refitted in 1894 and produced flour that
was reported to compete well with
Pearl of Minneapolis. The Pearl
Milling Company also commenced
operations there in 1894, while the
Smoky Valley Roller Mills nearby in
Lindsberg, now a museum (as is
Warkentin's Newton mill), began
producing its hard wheat "Golden
Patent" flour in 1888. Responding to
market demands, the Inman mill began operation in 1892 and was subsequently expanded into one of the area's largest and longest lasting. These wheat processing mills that soon replaced stockyards as the economic backbones of small towns in Kansas had advantages over the larger centralized flour mills in controlling quality of supply and of having cheaper transportation costs.

So, perhaps the true centennial of Turkey Red should be celebrated in 1990. This approximate date is supported by a Russian agricultural dictionary, published in 1895, which, in its detailed definition of wheat, noted that *arnaulea*, as reported by a Russian cereal expert visiting the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1892, "is called red turkey in America and is grown as a winter wheat." Certainly the dramatic expansion of agriculture and ranching across Kansas was attracting worldwide attention by then. Henry King quipped for a national audience in 1897, "It has been asserted that the Kansans would not care to go to heaven unless he could be guaranteed an ample range to the west of it."

But that is not the end of the story, and a true centennial is further obscured by historical complexities. Wheat in the 1890s was still secondary to corn in Kansas, partly, in fact, because of its vulnerability to winter kill, disease, and the Hessian fly, and to market uncertainties and persisting milling problems, but also because of the coincidence of increasing demand for feed grain to fatten cattle and pigs for the growing urban market. Marion and McPherson counties produced five times as much corn as wheat in 1899, and even in Russell County more acreage was devoted to corn than wheat. Perhaps even Mennonites and Volga Germans were shifting fields from wheat to corn at that time. Moreover, the wheat that Warkentin ground into flour at this time was listed in the market reports as No. 2 Red, which was probably some "Turkish" or *arnaulea* variety but may not have been the classic Turkey Red that made Kansas famous. And the miller himself recommended to others and planted "Oregon May" on his own farm near Halstead in the fall of 1888; Carleton later reflected that good quality Turkey wheat was not appreciated until the late 1890s. The search was not over.

Several more years of tests followed. In 1898, as an "agricultural explorer" for the Department of Agriculture, Carleton toured Russia extensively and brought back a very hard durum wheat from the Volga region called "Kubanka," which was initially tried in Kansas. Two years later, Warkentin, representing the Kansas Millers' Association, and Carleton visited South Russia together and pinpointed a Mennonite village in the Crimea which had been practicing advanced seed selection. Warkentin apparently bought the crop, for the next year 15,000 bushels were shipped from Odessa to Kansas City (like carrying coal to Newcastle) and from there by carload lot to various points in Kansas. This was no doubt Turkey Red, but other *arnaulea* or "Turkey" strains of hard red wheat, one labelled "Kharkov" from its place of origin, were introduced from Russia by Carleton about the same time.

The Kansas Agricultural College finally realized the importance of having an experimental farm in prime wheat country and established one near Hays in 1902. Thanks to the success there of *Kharkov* and subsequent agricultural extension promotion, by 1909 it had swept Kansas, and corn definitely and permanently into second rank. The Wichita Eagle reported in 1909 that
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determined, hard working immigrants arriving from areas of Europe where corn was unknown; clever land promotion by people like Henry and Schmidt; cheap and convenient railroad and homesteading land; the drought and grasshoppers wiping out spring wheat and corn in 1874; experimentation and seed selection over a number of decades by millers and agricultural specialists such as Warkentin, Krehbiel, Shelton, and Carleton; the industrial revolution that perfected milling and transportation technology while also packing cities with people hungry for spaghetti and macaroni and good, cheap bread; and perhaps, but not yet founded on historical fact, that week or so of painstaking seed picking by Anna Barkman that at least provided a colorful and appropriate folk image for agricultural change; but above all, by soil and climate conditions and the social, economic, and political environment of a very unique part of the world.

NOTES

1. Purchase records are in Land Department Records, 1873-75, RR 308:13, Santa Fe Railroad Papers, Kansas State Historical Society [hereafter KSHS]. I am very much indebted to the collections and helpful staff of the society for much of the content of this paper, and to the Kansas Committee for the Humanities, whose "Speakers Bureau" inspired an earlier version of this paper, the first audience being a county extension group in Cimarron (Gray County). It was also presented in 1989 to annual meetings of the Kansas History Teachers Association and the Kansas Folklore Society, and benefited from audience feedback and encouragement for subsequent revisions.


5. For an excellent essay on the interrelations of myth and history and the historian's role, see Austin F. File, "Folklore and Local History," chapter four of his Exploring Western Americana (Ann Arbor and London: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 43-54.

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7. Wichita Eagle, August 27, 1874; Alberta Pantle, citing elder Jacob Wiebe,
"Settlement of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren at Gnadenau, Marion County," The
Kansas Historical Quarterly, vol. 40, no. 5 (February 1945): 269. For rich descriptions
of Mennonite arrivals, see Topeka Daily Commonwealth, especially the articles by
Noble Prentis, July 26 and October 15, 1874, and April 25, 1875.

8. Bliss Isely, "Why Kansas is a Great Wheat State," Wichita Beacon, May 15,
1927, in Wheat Clippings, vol. 1, 1870-1930, KSHS. This was repeated by a number
of newspapers, notably by the Kansas City Star, June 5, 1927, under the heading,
"Mennonite Children Selected the 'Wheat Seed that Has Made Kansas Famous." F.
D. Coburn gave the credit to Warkentin: "Fighting a Bread Famine," The Saturday

Northwestern Miller, June 28, 1944.

10. Wichita Beacon, May 15, 1927; Kansas City Star, June 5, 1927; "Highlights
of Gnadenau," Parkview Centennial Committee (Canton: The Sterling Press, 1974),
pp. 7-9. One other story of wheat being brought directly from Russia in 1875
surfaced in 1949, when a trunk belonging to Abraham Seiberg, who settled near
Dundee in Barton County, returned to Kansas along with the claim that it had
contained Turkey Red wheat. "Treasure Chest That Brought Kansas Start in Wheat
Goes to Great Bend as Its 'Home'." Topeka Daily Capitol, November 1, 1949, Santa
Fe Clippings, KSHS.

11. A. S. Nifontov, Zemnoe proizvodstvo Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka
[The Grain Production of Russia in the Second Half of the 19th Century] (Moscow:

12. Ibid., pp. 171-75. One of the best contemporary sources is an Englishman
who was selling agricultural machinery to the Mennonites in Russia: George Hume,
Thirty Five Years in Russia (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co.,
1914), pp. 50-55. He notes that a hard wheat produced by Mennonites in the 1860s
was much in demand in Italy for macaroni.

13. For the history of this unique Mennonite village see David V. Wiebe,
Grace Meadow: The Story of Gnadenau and Its First Elder, Marion County, Kansas
(Hillsboro: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1967), and Pantle, The Kansas
Historical Quarterly (February 1945): 259-85.

14. On varieties of wheat: Harvey County News, October 6 and November 24,
1875, and Marion County Record, January 24, 1878. On the seed wheat for the
Mennonites, see Glenn Danford Bradley, The Story of the Santa Fe (Boston: Richard
Russian settlers make a great specialty of wheat, and are largely increasing its
production in Marion County every year. Our Americans raise immense quantities
of it, but do not make it so much of a specialty--rather preferring a variety of crops."
Peabody Gazette, July 29, 1881; and "Wheat around Gnadenau looks well, of which
there is considerable." Marion County Record, April 13, 1879. But on the continuing
dominance of corn: Topeka Daily Commonwealth, October 26, 1879.

15. For good outlines of wheat history, see Homer E. Socolovsky, "History of
Varieties: Our History in Microcosm," *Social Science Journal*, vol. 16, no. 3 (October 1979): 67-78; and Quisenberry and Reitz, cited above.


18. Russell County Census, 1885. As late as 1882 the North Topeka Farmers Club debated the topic: "Can wheat be successfully raised in Kansas?" The *Topeka Times*, June 30, 1882.


21. North Topeka Mail, quoting the Marion Record, October 25, 1883; Malin, p. 181.

22. Hays City German-American Advocate, July 18, 1883.


25. The Russian chapter of Turkey Red has yet to be written, and sources are not easily attainable. Since armata was apparently a Turkish term for special Albanian (terroristic?) tax collectors in the Balkans, one possible scenario is that wheat collected in Bulgaria found its way to the Tatars in the Crimea, where it was discovered by the Mennonites moving there just after the Crimean War. But it was known to Russians as early as 1840. V. I. Dal', *Tolkovy slovar' zhivago Velikoruetskagoazyka* [Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language], vol. 1 (Moscow, 1863), p. 20; I. Demol's article of 1842 in I. Palmpestevoj, ed. *Sbornik stat' o sel'skom khoziaisstve iuga Rossii--izvlechenykh iz Zapisk Imperatorskogo Obshchestva . . . s 1830 po 1868 god [A Collection of Articles about the Agriculture of South Russia—Extracted from the Notes of the Imperial Society . . . from 1830 to 1868] (Odessa: P. Franiew, 1868), pp. 271-73.

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