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# Johannesruh became Eigenhof

• by J. C. Fehr

The Eigenhof district is located west of Gretna directly north of Blumenort between Grunthal to the east and Kronstal to the west.

Part of this district was settled in 1875, when a Mr. Johann Friesen homesteaded the SE¼ of section 15-1-2W and built his farmstead there.

Apparently there were very few settlers in this area in the early years as no village was established.

There was a village a few miles to the east by the name of Blumenhof which is long since dissolved.

The reason for the reluctance of the people to settle this area was probably the heavier soil to the north and west portion of this district.

There is a story as to the origin of the name Eigenhof. Originally this district was known as Johannesruh (as documents verify).

Then a certain Mr. Johann Klassen, having made his final land payment, went to the neighbors rejoicing, "Yetzt ist's mein eigen Hof" (now it's my own yard). Henceforth the district was known as Eigenhof.

It was established as a school district by a Douglas By-law No. 485 on November 6, 1888. However there is no record of a school having been in operation before 1900.

In that year a private school was begun in the home of David Zacharias. He lived near the center of Section 15 on the SW quarter. In 1902 they had classes at the Jacob Toews' home with a Miss Reimer as teacher.

In 1903 they were again at the David Zachariases, this time using the summer kitchen as a schoolhouse.

A new school was built in 1907 one quarter of a mile south of the Zachariases. In 1910 it was moved east a short distance (by horse and winch) unto the John B. Penner farm.



Farmstead of Bernhard Penner, showing the house he built in 1896. This Eigenhof property was originally homesteaded by Mr. Johann Friesen in 1875.



Eigenhof school photo around 1920. Seen here, left to right, are: Annie Penner, David Penner, Frank Toews, Henry Penner, Billy Toews, Ed Penner, Jacob Penner, Eddie Toews, George Toews and Henry Toews.

In 1911 it was established as a public school district No. 1591 by a Rhineland By-law No. 178 on June 6. It was then moved closer to the road (PR 243). As

the district was more fully settled, the school was moved one mile north to SE 22-1-2W.

Some years later it was replaced by a new school and

used as a teacherage. The school district operated until Aug. 18, 1971, when by Order-in-Council it became part of Rhineland School Division.

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*for Penner farm*