THE COMPLETE COLLECTION encompasses over 13,000 black and white photographs, negatives, color slides, floorplans, and site survey documents. The subjects of interest include houses, barns, sheds, and various agricultural structures. Today, many of these structures no longer exist.

"For about 10 years at NDSU, I'd get the architecture and the history students together and we'd saturate the state studying the housing Germans from Russia built out there. They didn't build sod houses. They didn't build claim sheds. The built houses...just like they did back in the Black Sea area near Odessa, Ukraine."  

—Father Sherman

FATHER WILLIAM C. SHERMAN PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

GERMANS FROM RUSSIA HERITAGE COLLECTION

North Dakota State University Libraries
Fargo, ND

www.ndsu.edu/grhc
FATHER SHERMAN and NDSU students primarily explored central and western North Dakota, seeking out vernacular architecture. Student John Guererro especially assisted with research and photography. Most of the images were captured during the summers between 1972 and 1976.

FATHER WILLIAM C. SHERMAN is a well-known and celebrated North Dakota scholar and educator. He taught Sociology of the Great Plains and Religion at NDSU from 1971 to 2001. He served at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Grand Forks from 1976 to 2003. Father Sherman has been awarded two honorary doctorates, one from the University of Mary, Bismarck, and one from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. His work highlights the unique and complex history of North Dakota inhabitants, especially that of the Germans from Russia.

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE:
Buildings created with materials native to the area, such as stone, wood and clay.

A WORD ON ETHNICITY AND RELIGION

Father Sherman and his research crew not only gathered valuable information related to building techniques and solutions, but also anthropological and linguistic data. Numerous groups were documented during Sherman's expeditions, including:

- Bohemian-Germans
- Czechs
- English
- Estonians
- Germans
- German-Russians
- Hungarian-Germans
- Norwegians
- Ukrainians

This diversity reflects the complex ethnic heritage of South Russia. Religious traditions represented included Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite, and Jewish beliefs.

FIND THE COLLECTION ONLINE AT:
digitalhorizononline.org → William C. Sherman Photograph Collection