

Neva Conference

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Neva Conference was a European Russian church unit that operated from 1913 to 1928.

Territory and Statistics

Period: 1913-1928.

Territory: The governorates of Estonia (1913-1920?), Livonia (the Estonian-speaking part) (1913-1920?), Novgorod, Olonets (later called Cherepovets?), Pskov (from 1920), and St. Petersburg (later called Petrograd, then Leningrad).

Membership 424; churches 21.¹

Organizational History

The territory of the Neva Conference belonged to the Baltic Conference and the Middle Russian Mission. For the origin of Adventist work in the area, see articles on those church units and their predecessors.

At the meeting of the Baltic Conference in St. Petersburg, January 25 to 27, 1912, it was decided to divide the church unit into two units: the Baltic and the Neva Conferences.² The Neva Conference comprised the governorates of Estonia and St. Petersburg, the Estonian-speaking part of Livonia, and the governorates of Novgorod and Olonets (taken from the Middle Russian Mission). No headquarters address was listed.³ By the end of the first quarter, membership was 562.⁴ Initial officers were: president, D. Isaak; secretary, W. Gaidischar; treasurer, P. Brandt; and executive committee members S. Jefimov, A. Klement, and K. Willumson.⁵ The conference was part of the Russian Union.⁶

By 1913 it had become untenable to administer the work in the immense empire as one union. At the European Division Council at Budapest, commencing on October 30, it was decided to divide the Russian Union into the East and West Russian Unions.⁷ The Neva Conference became part of the East Russian Union when the union began operation at the beginning of 1914.⁸

With the coming of World War I, the believers in the Baltics found themselves on the Eastern Front, and subsequently in the midst of the Baltic Independence Wars and the Russian Civil War. Due to these

circumstances, there are no reports on the Russian church organization in the *SDA Yearbook* from 1918 to 1921. The next organizational changes took place in 1920. Estonia became independent in 1920, and consequently the Estonian Conference was organized at the same time, which meant that Estonian territory was cut off from the Neva Conference.⁹ That same year the North Russian Union was organized and the Neva Conference became part of it. Perhaps it was at the same time that the Pskov governorate was added to the Neva Conference.¹⁰ In 1923 the address of the conference was reported for the first time, at Ropshinskaya 12, Q. 13, Petrograd!¹¹ In 1927, instead of Olonets governorate, Cherepovets appeared in the territory description.¹² The headquarters address changed to Bolyshaya Pushkarskaya 34a I, Leningrad 3.¹³ In 1928 many of the Russian church units were reorganized. The North and East Russian Unions were merged into the Northeastern Union Conference.¹⁴ The Neva Conference and the White Sea Mission were joined into one church unit, the North Russian Conference. It became part of the Northeastern Union.¹⁵

List of Officers

Presidents: D. Isaak (1913); O. E. Reinke (1914-1921); unknown (1922); J. Gorelik (1923-1924); J. Reimer (1925-1926); L. L. Wojtkievic (1927-1928).

Secretaries: J. Ljwoff (1913); A. Borm (1914-1916); unknown (1917-1921); L. Wojtkiewicz (1922-1924); E. Anderson (1925); T. J. Waegele (1926-1928).

Treasurers: R. Gaisch (1913-1914); A. Poltrock (1915-1920); Th. Witgele (1921-1925); E. Anderson (1925); T. J. Waegele (1926-1928).

SOURCES

“Berichte der Russischen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1913.” *Zions-Wächter*, May 5, 1913.

Brandt, P. “Ausschuß-Sitzung der Baltischen Vereinigung.” *Zions-Wächter*, March 18, 1912.

Conradi, Ludwig R. “European Division Council in Budapest.” *ARH*, December 18, 1913.

Conradi, Ludwig R. “New Developments in Eastern Europe.” *ARH*, July 4, 1912.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1883-1886; Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1887-1892. Battle Creek, MI: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1893-1894. Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1904. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905-1929.

NOTES

1. For period and territory, see the present article; for membership and churches, see "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1928), 140.
2. P. Brandt, "Ausschuß-Sitzung der Baltischen Vereinigung," *Zions-Wächter*, March 18, 1912, 129; Ludwig R. Conradi, "New Developments in Eastern Europe," *ARH*, July 4, 1912, 11-12. Brandt refers to the Neva Conference as the North Russian Conference.
3. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1913), 110-111; "Middle Russian Mission," *Seventh-day Adventists Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association), 117.
4. "Berichte der Russischen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1913," *Zions-Wächter*, May 5, 1913, 245.
5. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventists Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1913), 111.
6. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventists Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1913), 110-111.
7. Ludwig R. Conradi, "European Division Council in Budapest," *ARH*, December 18, 1913, 12.
8. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1914), 109.

For some reason, the White Sea Mission is not reported in 1914 and its territory is found in the territory description of the Neva Conference. In 1915 this change has been undone. "White Sea Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1913), 112; "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1914), 109; "White Sea Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 109.
9. "Esthonian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1921), 96.
10. For Union affiliation and territory in 1920, see "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1923), 103. Before becoming part of the Neva Conference, the Pskov governorate was last reported in Duena Conference, but that was many years before, in 1917. "Duena Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1917), 130.
11. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1923), 103.
12. I do not know whether this is a matter of renaming or a different administrative division. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1927), 138.
13. "Neva Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1927), 138.
14. "Northeastern Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1929), 161.

15. "North Russian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1929), 162.

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