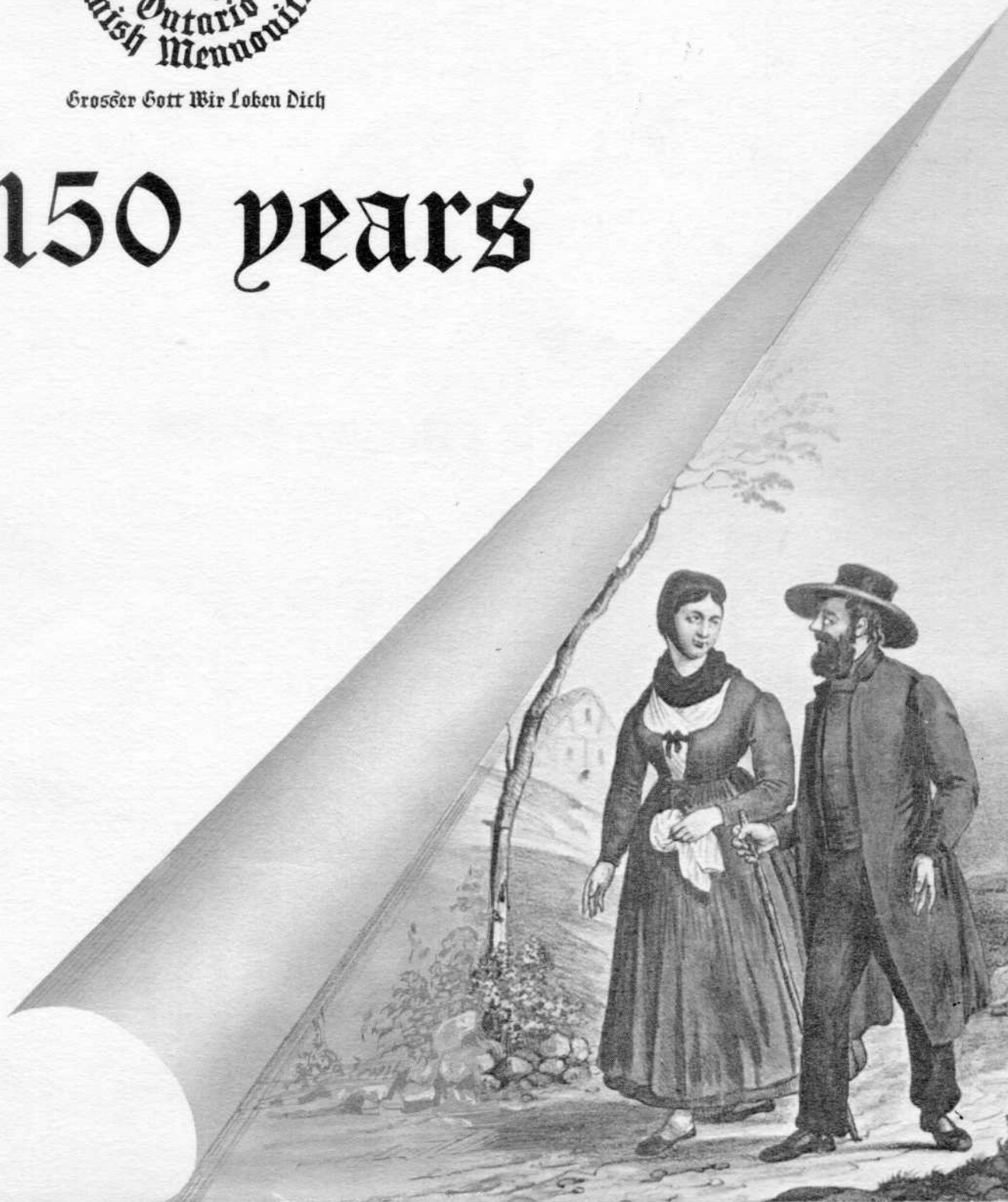




Grosser Gott Wir Loben Dich

150 years





Grosßer Gott Wir loben Dich

Sesquicentennial of the Amish Mennonites of Ontario

- PROGRAMME
- 150 YEARS

by Lorraine Roth

Dorothy Sauder, Editor

SPONSORED BY THE MENNONITE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF ONTARIO AND THE WESTERN
ONTARIO MENNONITE CONFERENCE

Western Ontario Mennonite Conference Inc.

August 2, 1972.

PROCLAMATION

In the summer of 1822 Christian Nafziger, an Amish Mennonite from Bavaria, came to Canada looking for a place for his fellowmen to settle. His vision included the privilege of purchasing their own land, the freedom to worship and live in accord with their religious beliefs, and the opportunity to make a decent living.

Out of gratitude to God, our country, and our neighbours - who have helped to make this dream a reality - we wish to share our past with all who care to celebrate this one hundred and fiftieth anniversary with us.

Unfortunately not all has been "sweetness and light" (in the words of Matthew Arnold) in our sojourn in this land of ours. Much hard labour and many privations were the lot of the early pioneers. We have had our share of failure and tragedy. The Amish reveal only too clearly the frailties of our common humanity. May our knowledge of the past enable us to build a better future.

We can indeed say with the Psalmist, "The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage." We, the executive committee of the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, proclaim the year 1972, and the thanksgiving season in particular, a special time of thanksgiving for our heritage. We urge all to a renewed dedication to the noble principles for which our forefathers lived and died.



Vernon B. Zehr, Moderator



Gerald Schwartzentruber, Secretary

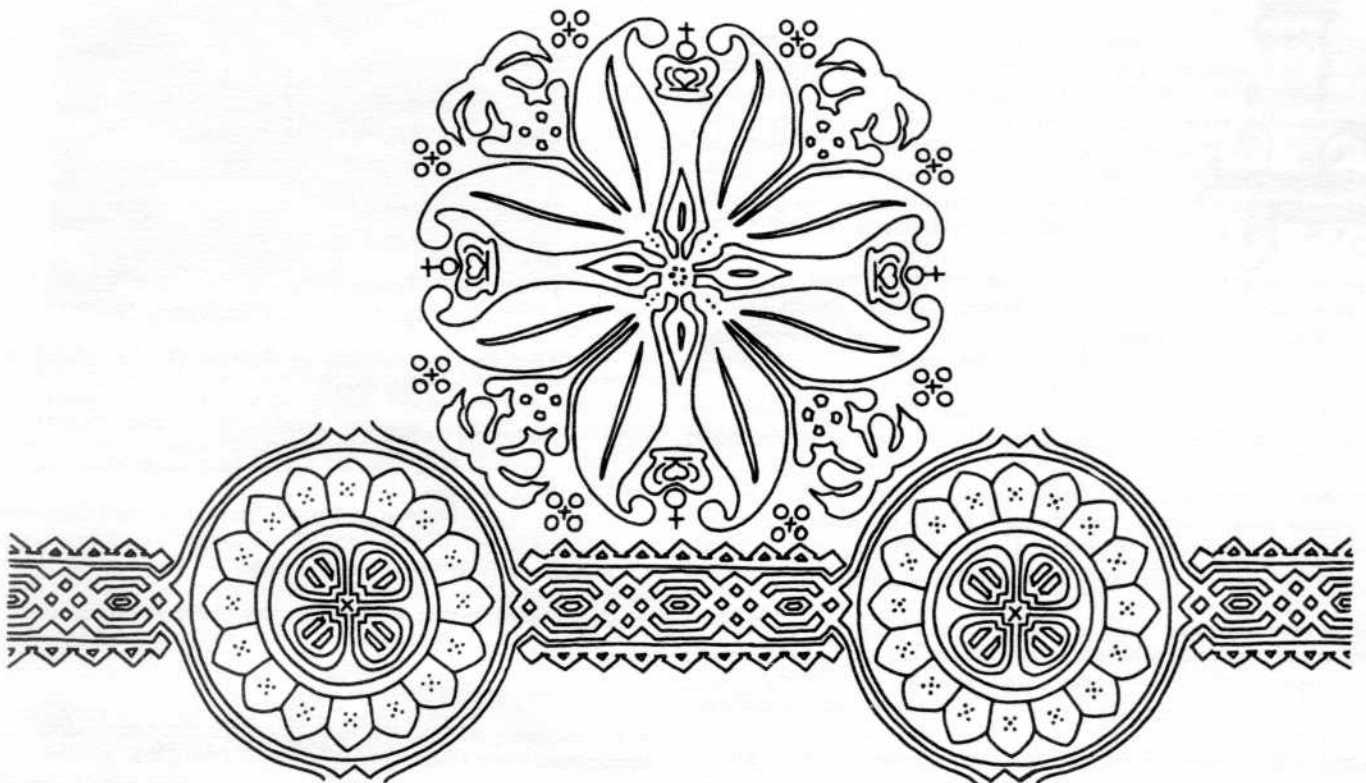
Welcome

The Western Ontario Mennonite Conference and the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario heartily welcome you to join us in commemorating the sesquicentennial of the coming of the Amish Mennonites to Canada. Traditionally, the Amish spend very little time recording their history. However, during our preparations, we have gained a new awareness of their unceasing quest to live simply, at peace with their fellowmen, and in the fear of God.

During the first three hundred years in Europe, their quest was repeatedly frustrated. In Canada, these ideals have borne fruit in their communities whenever the good of all men and the glory of God were given the highest priority.

In times past we have been self-conscious and sometimes apologetic about our Swiss-German ways. With the new multicultural emphasis in Canada, we wish to share in this stimulating exchange of tradition. This new freedom promises to bring a new day upon our generation and, hopefully, will reach national and international dimensions. We consider this occasion an opportunity to share our heritage with all men of goodwill.

Now is the time to look back and catch the spirit of our forefathers who boldly faced the new challenges of the sixteenth century. We admire the pioneering vision, courage, and fortitude of those who established communities in the New World. We invite you to share in our search for the faith that sustained them.



Waterloo

Saturday, September 30	4:00 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies "Pilgrimage of a People" Dr. J. Winfield Fretz, President, Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario Steinman Mennonite Church
	8:30 p.m.	Martyrs Mirror Oratorio Menno Singers Alice Parker conducting Waterloo Oxford Secondary School
Sunday, October 1	3:00 p.m.	Martyrs Mirror Oratorio Alice Parker
	8:30 p.m.	Martyrs Mirror Oratorio Alice Parker
Thursday, October 5	8:15 p.m.	Pennsylvania German Folklore Society (Waterloo Chapter) presents a program in the dialect. Waterloo Oxford Secondary School
Saturday, October 7	2:00 p.m.	Historical Tours 4 - hour tour of Amish farmlands including supper. Departure from Waterloo Oxford Secondary School.
	8:00 p.m.	Pageant "This Land is Ours" Urie Bender Avon Theatre, Stratford
	8:00 p.m.	Illustrated Lecture on European background of the Amish Jan Gleysteen, Scottdale, Pa., historian Waterloo Oxford Secondary School
Sunday, October 8	Morning	Homecomings in the churches of the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference. Fellowship Dinner
	2:30 p.m.	"This Land is Ours" Avon Theatre, Stratford
	2:30 p.m.	German Hymnsing Steinman Mennonite Church
	2:30 p.m.	Illustrated Lecture on European Background Waterloo Oxford Secondary School
	8:00 p.m.	"This Land is Ours" Avon Theatre, Stratford
Monday, October 9	8:00 p.m.	Illustrated Lecture on European Background Waterloo Oxford Secondary School
	Morning	Thanksgiving Services in Western Ontario Mennonite Churches
	2:00 p.m.	Historical Tours 4 - hour tour of Amish farmlands including supper. Departure from Waterloo Oxford Secondary School. •Displays, Demonstrations
	1 - 3 p.m. & 5 - 7 p.m.	Thanksgiving Dinner (family style) Waterloo Oxford Cafetorium
	7:00 p.m.	Closing Program "Vision of a People" Rev. Norman Litwiller Steinman Mennonite Church
	8:00 p.m.	"This Land is Ours" Avon Theatre, Stratford



'This Land is - Ours'

Playwright - Producer: Urie A. Bender
Director: Loretta Yoder
Assistant Director: Margaret Foth



Urie Bender has his roots in Wilmot Township and the Amish of Ontario. He writes with sensitivity and compassion as he unfolds the story of his people. Born in Baden, Bender studied at the University of Western Ontario and the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author of several books and has written extensively for the church. Bender has held positions as editor, English teacher, advertising manager and public relations consultant. He and his wife, Dorothy, live in Ephrata, Pa.

Loretta Yoder, from Indianapolis, holds an M.A. in drama from Indiana University. She has had extensive experience in directing drama and is associated with various drama groups. Her special qualifications to direct "This Land is Ours" stem from her own heritage in the Conservative Amish Mennonite faith.

Margaret Jantzi Foth has a degree in English and has done graduate work in drama in Buffalo. Mrs. Foth's Amish background gives her a keen interest in historical drama.

Sponsors

Western Ontario Mennonite Historical Committee
Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario



The marks of men are etched on time — past and passing.

Many, barely scratched on rocky trails, have long since faded. The rough terrain gives a wanderer today the only hint of agony and ecstasy — both of which have clutched at those who walked that way. But other marks, gouged deep, remain. Monuments to wisdom or foolishness, they changed the face of earth and so claim the eye. Some are only scribbles on history's pages. Some remain like a signature — new forms from dust of hazy past — creator touch upon the chaos of another day.

Other times, one sees the marks of men on men. Cut deep, shaped strong — spirit crushed or resurrected — to leave a throng of followers in the wake of burning desire, or twisted hope, or faith.

Where men are marked by men, there stand the true monuments in time — solid, unyielding to the centuries.

So — This Land is Ours: a feeble reach into other centuries. Who can really read the lines drawn by those who conquered myriad fears to shape another home; or those who paid for freedom to believe with the coin of breath?

Perhaps only we can read those pages — yellowed now — filled with strong lives and vibrant faith. But also, perhaps, not until all the tomorrows become yesterdays can the reader fully understand the message.

To that ambitious end, our Amish Pageant — This Land is Ours.

ACT I Origins

Scene 1: Change — and other Rutted Pathways.

Amishman looks at change, trying to understand the forces which shape a man or a people. He also probes the essence of a faith commitment and wonders aloud if this, too, must change.

Scene 2: Valleyview

Valleyview Mennonite Church is one of the few congregations in Canada with direct Amish Mennonite origins. Here the two poles of past and present appear together — sometimes in understandable distance and other times with surprising nearness. The Valleyview Youth Fellowship in the course of studying church history, employs a choric format to dramatize what they have been learning. The entire pageant grows in this context.

Scene 3: Birth of a Brotherhood

In its first part, this scene depicts briefly the startling result of changing perceptions about faith in God and how this faith shaped a man's life, actions, and relationships. As a religious rite or celebration, adult baptism was completely unacceptable to authorities — religious and civil — in the sixteenth century. That, along with their growing abhorrence of the state church concept and its practices, marked the earliest Swiss Brethren (Anabaptists) as a sect to be stamped out. Although he was not the first martyr in the movement, the death of Felix Manz in the second part of the scene marks both the level of commitment to their belief as well as the beginning of a bloody persecution of those whose understandings contributed largely to the concept of "free church" — a church free of state control.

Scene 4: Fugitives

The Anabaptists (re-baptizers) were hounded by civil and religious authorities throughout much of what we know as Europe today. Although peace-loving, they were seen as a threat to the established order in which church and state often merged in objective and practice. In consequence, they suffered severe privations, imprisonment, medieval tortures and often death — for their faith.

Scene 5: Amish Beginnings

Anabaptists came to be known as Mennonites — after Menno Simons, an early Dutch leader. His understandings of the New Testament helped to shape much of the early doctrine; his leadership contributed significantly to the strength of the Anabaptist movement. More than one hundred and fifty years later, among Mennonists (Mennonites) of Switzerland, Alsace and the Palatinate, differences in interpretation developed. Particularly at issue was the banning of relationships between Mennonites and those who had been excommunicated from the group. The question of how seriously this should be taken became the focal point for Jakob Ammann's leadership of a faction which, after Ammann, became known as Amish Mennonites.

ACT II Migration

Scene 1: Motivation

Many factors influenced the major migrations of Amish Mennonites to Canada; perhaps the simplest explanation would be to say they were viewed as second class citizens in most European countries. The requirements of military service, the poverty brought about by economic sanctions and, not, least the strong emotional residues remaining from generations of persecution, laid foundations for the explorations which followed.

Scene 2: Exploration

Christian Nafziger's courageous trek to the New World became a symbol of both the frustrations and the hopes that gripped the hearts of Amish Mennonites in various European communities. Through Pennsylvania to Canada he searched for the land that would answer their hopes. With the help of Mennonites in Ontario and the good services of Sir Peregrine Maitland, then Governor of Upper Canada, Nafziger was able to report his find of land in what is now Wilmot Township. Within a very few years much of the migration took place and spilled over into South Easthope, East Zorra, Wellesley, and Stanley Townships.

Scene 3: Courage

Not even dramatic resumé of historical events can portray the stubborn courage which the early settlers displayed. Throughout the entire experience men and women distinguished themselves and their forbears with notable examples of courage and perseverance.

ACT III Settlement

Scene 1: Life in the Settlement

A backward reach into history is frequently imaginary. However, considerable documentation is available which reflects the common routines, the ethnic ceremonies, the normal rites of passage and the simple faith of a people almost crushed — yet abiding.

Scene 2: The First Missionaries

Very little in their past prepared them for the break with tradition represented by the leaving of two young couples for missionary service in South America. The consequence, that which today is seen in terms of faith or commitment or altruism, was seen then by some as a grievous departure from the "old ways."

Scene 3: Accommodation and Change

From the traditional past to a new present, for any close-knit group, may well become a leap into disaster or a giant step of growth. Here viewpoint provides a kind of answer: for some the old ways are gone and "more's the pity." For others, today is rooted in a marvelous heritage and growth is the only answer to the awesome challenge of a past such as the Amish Mennonites enjoy.

Scene 4: The Bridge from Yesterday

From Anabaptist beginnings to 1972, the Valleyview Youth Fellowship has travelled full circle. In its quest for historical information it has achieved self-understanding. And in the process, it has uncovered the very essence of its heritage as well as the road marker for the journey into tomorrow.

*Who walks there? Not only those who claimed the soil of
Wilmot or surrounding acres. Or those who chopped the roads or
framed the early homes from fledgling pine. Or those who tore
the stumps from out the soil to make a field — and then another.*

*Nor only those who fenced the fields, or gravelled roads, or
built great barns, or worked the fields with noisy engines. Or even
those who carved small empires from rustic farmland.*

Not those alone — or their descendants.

*But with them also, their fathers. Fathers in the flesh, no less.
And more — fathers in the faith. Hardy stock. Stuff of heroes.
Harassed, but not obliterated. Beaten, but never crushed. Killed,
but always living on in the hearts of willing compatriots.*

*Those who gave the lie to cowardice; who knew weakness
only as a fleeting shadow at high noon; who were consumed by
their desire to be true — these, driven from their homes and lands,
sought again and yet again a freedom to live.*

*In their search — from the European near-shore to Penn's
Land in the new world — they came to Upper Canada. So it came
to be as they traced the path of Mennonites to the Beasley Tract,
they found beyond a promised Canaan — their peace and home.
And they said, "This Land is Ours."*



Taxes,
War,
Exemption fines

Hunger
banishment
abject poverty.

Each tore loose the roots of years ---
the bonds of neighborhood
or common cause
and ploughed again the soil
where recent seeds of hope
had sprung afresh ---
to let their promise wither
in the heat of hate.

Each wrenched the spirit
hither
yon
'til heart fell sick
and eyes were almost blind
to light of other day.

In this despair
they heard
of land across the sea,
where freedom cast its hue
where faith could grow

where — hunger ran before the verdant crops,
and want gave way to sweat upon the brow.

No single driving force
can tear a man
from kin or simple comforts
all his own.

But press a second,
third,
or more,
upon a broken spirit ---
fearful
poor and hungry
trampled down,
misunderstood ---
then see a spark of hope
ignite and burn ---
flame in whose glare
naught else is seen
save hope fulfilled!

In this as well
the Amish are a part of man.

(from "This Land is Ours")

Like the seed in spring,
with rain and sun,
The human spirit
breaks forth ---
with warm of hope,
drawing the inner
push of courage.

Hidden sometimes
for a long winter
in the dank of despair.

So ---
the first settlers of Wilmot ---

Many still scarred
by the persecution
of their fathers
--- by decrees
which sucked away whatever good
their diligent efforts might earn.
--- or by wars
which racked the countryside
with devastation.

This hardy lot
found somewhere a hidden deep
of courage
sparked to life again.

to face ---
on the road to a new life
--- the rending hurt of friends
or family left behind
--- the tossing months on North Atlantic
with fear
a constant clammy hand
clutched 'round the heart

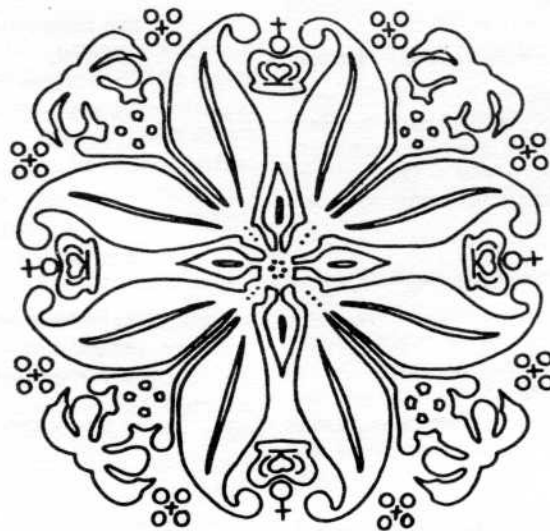
--- the jostling miles
six hundred long
across a month or more of sunsets
sinking dark
into unknown tomorrows.

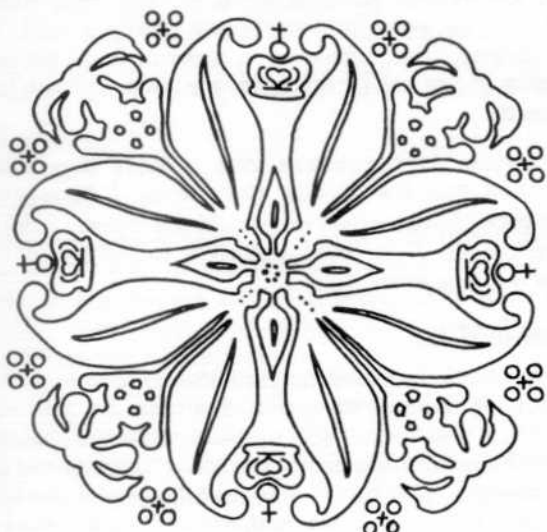
To face all this
and then to come at last
to untouched forest
--- only forest

And call it home ---
--- home.

Every tree — promise of an aching back
every open space — a challenge
and every foot of soil
the stuff
from which a new life could be shaped.

These were the settlers of Wilmot.
(from "This Land is Ours")





Martyr's Mirror

Oratorio

Text by John Ruth

Music by Alice Parker

Cast of Main Characters

Georg Blaurock	Don Landry
Catharina Blaurock	Mary Snider
Jan Wouters	Albert Friesen
Maeyken Wouters	Lois Snyder
Monk	Howard Good
Bailiff	Doug Millar
Executioner	Dan Lichti
Georg's Son	Duane Rudy
Friend	Tim Johnson



Part I. 1. Procession

Pange, lingua, gloriosi / Corporis mysterium, / Sanguinisque
pretiosi, / Quem in mudi pretium / Fructur ventris
generosi / Rex effudit Gentium.

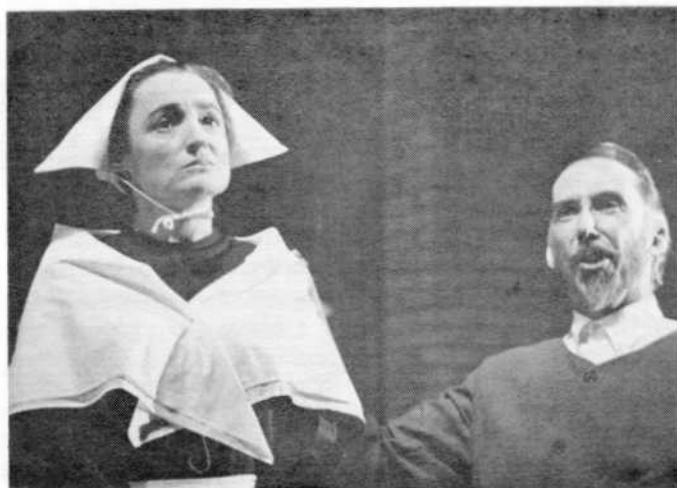
Nobis datus, nobis natus / Ex intacta Virgine, / Ex in
mundo conversatus, / Sparso verbi semine, / Suimoras
incolatus / Miro clausit ordine.

In supremæ nocte cenæ, / Recumbenscum
fratribus, / Observata lege plene / Cibis in legalibus, / Cibus
turbæ duo denæ / Se dat suis manibus.

Verbum caro, panem verum / Verbo carnem efficit; / Fitque
sanguis Christi merum: / Et si sensus deficit, / Ad firmandum
cor sincerum / Sola fides sufficit.

Tantum Ergo SACRAMENTUM / Veneremur cernui: / Et
antiquum documentum / Novo cedat ritui: / Præ stet fides
supplementum / Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque / Laus et jubilatio, / Salus, honor,
virtus quoque / Sit et benedictio: / Procedenti abutro-
que / Compar sit laudatio. / Amen.



2. Georg Speaks

Brothers and sisters, hear the Word of God! A new day is upon us. We can read the Book, We can learn Christ's lesson. We can follow Him in life.

He needs no priest to speak for Him! He calls all men to be converted, and be baptized, and live a new life. A new day is upon us. Christ gives us love that casts out fear. The Lord is with us. He will reward us. His trust is immortal. A new day is upon us.

3. Reading of the Mandate

4. At Home

There is no other way. My husband, must it come now? The combat of the cross must be maintained. Where will it lead? Will you be put in jail? In God I have put my trust. I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Christ calls us to follow at any cost. Yea, through I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Psalm twenty - three, verse four. Death, father? Your Death? Be strong and of a good courage; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. My wife and my son, my heart doth safely trust in you. The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer. My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

5. Gathering for Meeting

Good evening, friends. Let the children come to me for their lesson. Who will be first? By His light I walked through the darkness. Job twenty - nine, verse three. The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? Psalm twenty - seven, verse one. Very good, Anneken; and you, Hans? And God said: Let there be light: and there was light, Genesis one, verse three. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm one hundred and nineteen, verse one hundred and five. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. From St. John chapter. one, verse five. Let us sing together: He who would follow Christ in life — Must scorn the world's insult and strife / and bear His cross each day. / For this alone leads to the throne; / Christ is the only way. / Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. Psalm four, verse six, and it goes on: Thou hast put gladness in my heart. God has put a song on our lips.

6. The Secret Meeting

Lord God, we'll ever praise you / Till life comes to its end, / For giving faith to know you / As our eternal Friend. / You send to us your Holy Word, / Which makes us feel your kindness, / Now that it has been heard. /

Our flesh will not support us; / It is too feeble stuff; / Your promise is trustworthy; / That is defence enough. / Now give us faith to overcome, / And see your work completed / Even to martyrdom.

Your holy place they have destroyed, / Your altar over - thrown, / And reaching out their bloody hands treach'rously killed your own. / And now alone, a little flock, / We few who still remain, / Are exiles wand'ring through the land / In sorrow and in pain.

Alas, we are like scatter'd sheep, / Their shepherd not in sight, / Lost far away from home and hearth, / And, like the birds of night / That hide away in rocky clefts, / We have our rocky hold; / Yet not far off, as for the birds, / There lurks the hunter bold.

We wander in the forests dark, / With dogs upon our track; / And like the captive, silent lamb, / As pris'ners are brought back. / Men point to us amid the crowd, / As though we cause uproar; / As sheep are driven to the sword, / We're slaughter'd by the score.

7. The March to Jail

Jan, I'm frightened! How long will they keep us in jail? I don't know, but it's the best thing that could happen. Jan! How can you say that! You know I don't want to leave the baby for very long. The baby? Don't think of the baby. Think of the glorious road to heaven. Think of the glorious following in the footsteps of our Lord. I know I should think of that, but Jan, she's so tiny and helpless. No one else can love her as I do! Trust in the Lord, my dear wife. My baby; my little child, God keep you from harm. God keep you safe from harm; I'll come to you soon! My baby, my little child.

8. In Prison

In fear and need I call to you: O God, be my protection. My dear husband in Christ! I can hear you sing! Praise the Lord! I can hear you, too. God be praised that we can strengthen each other. Let us sing to let our brothers outside know that we have not given up the faith!

I sing with exultation. / All my heart delights / In God, who brings salvation, / Frees from death's dread might. / I praise Thee, Christ of heaven, / Who ever shall endure, / Who takes away my sorrow, / Keeps me safe and secure.

Sing praise to Christ our Savior / Who, in grace inclined. / To us reveals His nature, / Patient, loving, kind. / His love divine outpouring / He shows to everyone, / Unfeigned and like His Father's / As no other has done.



Christ bid us, none compelling. / To His glorious throne, / He only who is willing / Christ as Lord to own, / He is assured of heaven / Who will right faith pursue, / With heart made pure do penance, / Seal'd with baptism true.

9. Interrogation

10. The Torture

A safe stronghold our God is still, / A trusty shield and weapon. / He'll help us clear from all the ill / That hath us now o'ertaken. / The ancient Prince of hell / Doth show purpose fell; / His mail, craft and pow'r, / He weareth in this hour, / On earth is not his fellow.

With force of arms we nothing can, / Full soon were we downriden; / But for us fights the proper man / Whom God himself hath bidden. / Ask ye Who is this same? / Christ Jesus His Name, / Lord Sabaoth's Son, / He and no other one / Shall conquer in the battle.

And were this world all devils o'er, / And watching to devour us, / We lay it not to heart so sore, / Nor can they overpower us. / And let the prince of ill / Look grim as he will, / He harms not a whit, / For why? his doom is writ, / A word shall quickly slay him.

God's Word, for all their craft and force, / one moment will not linger. / But spite of hell, shall have its course, / 'Tis written by His finger. / And though they take our life, / Goods, fame, children, wife, / Their profit is small. / These things shall vanish all, / The city of God remaineth.

11. The Secret Visit

Keep up your courage, friends! Thanks be to God, our brothers! We bring you comfort: letters and food. Bread for the body, thoughts for the mind, love for the soul. Thanks be to you, our brothers! What message have you for the brotherhood? Tell them that God has kept us true. We will. Take this letter for my daughter. I have learned to write, but I want to send a token to my Son. Here, take this pear which you have brought to me: Give it to my Son. And say his mother sent it to him from jail to show her parting love to her Son. We'll see that it is done, Catharina. And tell him I pray his life will bear much fruit for Christ. The whole flock is praying for you day and night. Take them this hymn we have composed in jail. O God, think of your pris'ners; Sing it as a prayer for us, because our final testing is not far off. Your sentencers are coming. Farewell. Fight on! Be valiant soldiers of Christ. Farewell in Christ.

12. The Sentencing

13. Maeyken's Accusation

Jan! my baby! Jan! you didn't tell me! Jan, you knew I'd never see her again! Jan, you didn't tell me! Jan, I'm not strong enough to be a martyr; Jan, I'm not ready to die! I want my child! Jan, you didn't tell me! My baby!

14. Closing Chorus

O God, think of your pris'ners, / Now in their time of need. / They lie in chains and torment, / Who to Your Word give heed. / O lend them strength to testify. / To foes, by overcoming, / That you are standing by.



Then may your presence lead them / To everlasting joy; / With you, they shall be reigning / Throughout eternity. / Therefore, all Christians, have good cheer; / See what our God will give us / After our trials here.

Part II. 15. Procession to Execution

Hooray, it's market day, good things to eat, good things to see, and friends to meet. Look, learn, behold, beware! King, crown, sword, majesty and mandate have pow'r over heretics, blasphemers, baptizers!

16. Catharina's Testimony

The emperor should rule, it is his duty; And Christians should honor his command, Yet there is One above the emperor, You so-called Christians, have you read the Bible? Can you learn the lesson that Jesus taught? Was it hate? or love? Let us render unto Caesar what is Caesar's; and unto God, all that is rightfully His.

17. Son's Exhortation

Be true to Christ, Mother! (A - ha! keep an eye on that one, men!) God bless you, Son. Did you get my token? (Come on, come on, keep moving! Let her have her say. She sounds like an honest woman.) By His light I walk thro' the darkness. Mother! Will they truly kill your mother? She dies in Christ! She doesn't need to die. They will free her in a moment. They don't want to kill her. (True, that is true). Tell her, you tell her to live! But she would have to say that all that she believes is not true. She knows that Christ our Lord Himself was put to death on the Cross. How could she deny Him, and all that she believes? How could she deny Him? It is the only way. I do not understand. (I envy her, her faith and her Son! Come on, come on, keep moving!)

18. Georg Comforts Maeyken

Evil heretics. Christ's servants follow Him to death, / And give their body, life and breath / On cross and rack and pyre. As gold is tried and purified / They stand the test of fire. / For God's soldiers, life is an unending warfare. Look at me! Am I cut out to be a soldier? I'm not strong enough to be a martyr. I have no strength! God is your strength, my sister, your help in jail and chains. He goeth with you to exile, He is with you in fire and water. Fight bravely, and you will receive the crown of life!

O God, O God, O God! Evil heretics, O God!



19. Jan's Testimony

My God, I'll send my praises, / In this, my final hour, / To
Thee in heav'n above me, / With heart and voices pow'r. / O
Lord, so greatly kind Thou art, / Give strength to make me
faithful, / For now I must depart.

With grace endue my thinking / In this, my final fight; / To
you I give my spirit, / In you I have delight. / Christ, help me
bear the cross anew; / Forgive them, heav'nly Father. / They
know not what they do.

I charge you all, dear lov'd ones / In God put all your
faith; / Don't let yourselves be troubl'd / About my bitter
death. / For God will turn our loss to gain; / We must take our
departure / From such a land of pain.

20. The Incipient Riot

Fight bravely! / Could not these harmless citizens be
spared? / Why must the punishment be so severe? / These
bailiffs are too thirsty for their blood! / Can they be murdered
in the Name of Christ? / These peaceful people ought to be
released! / Fight bravely! (Let them go! Tear down the stakes!)

21. Maeyken's Testimony

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, / whose mind is stayed
on Thee; / Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, / whose mind
is stayed on Thee: / Because he trusteth in Thee.

God has put a song on her lips, Hallelujah!

Trust ye in the Lord forever, / for in the Lord God / is
everlasting strength.

God is your strength, little flock; / your help in jail and
chains. / He goes with you to exile, / He is with you in fire and
water. / Fight bravely, / and you will receive the crown of life!

22. Jan's Response

Hallelujah! We're going to meet the Bridegroom! We offer our
very bodies! What will you give, friends, for the faith?

Renouncing all, they choose the Cross. (These good shoes,
they're only two months old. See that some needy person gets
them.) And claiming it, count all as loss, (Dear prisoners, I beg
your forgiveness for what I must do to you.) Yes, home and child
and wife. (Poor soul, we hold no grudge against you.) (I thank
you.) Forsaking gain, forgetting pain, (Just remember, Christ calls
you, also, to be His disciple.) (I thank you!) They enter into life.
(Cheer up, neighbor. Step forward and do your work. It will only
bring us to God's presence. Come, we will meet the Bridegroom
with our lamps burning.)

23. Georg's Testimony

I see the city of God coming down to earth, / And a voice
from the throne declares: / The dwelling of God is with
men, / And mourning, and pain, and death / Shall be no
more. / And I see no temple in the city, / No holy place to
dispute, / For its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the
Lamb.

In the light of that city the nations shall walk; / its gates shall
never be shut by day, / There shall be no night. / And the
Lamb of God / is its Light.

24. Fire!

Fire! The flame of devouring fire! The Lord will come with
fire; for by fire will the Lord plead with all flesh.

When through fiery trials / thy pathway shall lie, / My
grace, all sufficient / shall be thy supply; / The flame shall not
hurt thee: / I only design / thy dross to consume, / and thy
gold to refine.

Fear not, / I am with thee; / O be not dismayed. / For I
am thy God / and will still give thee aid; / I'll strengthen
thee, / help thee, / and cause thee to stand, / Upheld by my
righteous omnipotent hand.



25. Blessing of All Martyrs

O God, for your sake they are killed all the day long. / No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. / For we are sure that neither death, / nor life, / nor angels, / nor principalities, / nor things present, / nor things to come, / nor powers, / nor height, / nor depth, / nor space / nor time, / nor anything else in all creation, / will be able to separate us / from the love of God, / in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us, / and grant us peace.

26. Recessional Hymn

I sing with exultation, / All my heart delights / In God, who brings salvation, / Frees from death's dread might. / I praise

Thee, Christ of heaven, / Who ever shall endure, / Who takes away my sorrow, / Keeps me safe and secure.

Whom God sent as example, / Light my feet to guide. / Before my end He bade me / In His realm abide. / That I might love and cherish / His righteousness divine, / That I with Him forever / Bliss eternal might find.

Sing praise to Christ our Savior, / Who in grace inclined / To us reveals His nature, / Patient, loving, kind. / His love divine outpouring / He shows to every one, / Unfeigned and like His Father's, / As no other has done.

Christ bids us, none compelling, / To His glorious throne. / He is assured of heaven / Who will right faith pursue, / With heart made pure do penance, / Seal'd with baptism true.



INTRODUCTION

One hundred and fifty years ago, the first Amishman set foot on the soil of Wilmot Township in what is now Ontario. Migrations began following the year 1822 mainly from Europe, although a few Amish also came from Pennsylvania or by way of other states. They settled in Wilmot Township and in the adjacent areas to the west.

The descendants of the Amish Mennonites can be divided roughly into three groups. The sixteen congregations constituting the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference have a total baptized membership of approximately 2,700. Six conservative and independent congregations have an estimated 600 members, while the five Old Order groups have about 400.

The Old Order Amish Mennonites have changed little during the last 150 years. They fulfil the public's image of "Amish" and are a truly ethnic group. They have no desire, however, to become a "tourist attraction." They simply wish to be obedient to God's Word as they understand it.

In 1964, the present Western Ontario Mennonite Conference officially dropped the term "Amish" because the distinctive Amish characteristics had largely been lost by this group of congregations. They identify themselves with the Mennonites, but still retain their own conference organization. The Mennonites had begun colonization in Waterloo

150 Years

by Lorraine Roth

Township about twenty years previous to the coming of the Amish and, in true brotherly fashion, had helped them to establish their homes in Wilmot.

Those who belong to the organized Conference have been very much assimilated into Canadian society. Church buildings are comparatively plain although most of them have been rebuilt, and some have made use of modern architecture. Worship services tend to be informal. The white cap or "covering" is still worn extensively, especially during worship. Plain or uniform clothing is found less frequently. Weddings and funerals tend to adopt the formality of contemporary society.

The independent congregations are found somewhere between the Conference and the Old Order groups. They are generally more conservative in dress and church customs, but accept modern conveniences and methods of work.

During the past fifteen years approximately 1,000 Amish have migrated to Ontario from Pennsylvania and Ohio. They have located at several places but the most thriving of their settlements is at Aylmer.

The story told in the following pages is limited to that group of Amish Mennonites who began their historic trek 150 years ago, and carved their homes out of the forests of Upper Canada. Their descendants have tried to carry the torch of faith and courage. It is hoped that the telling of this story will help them to carry it into the future.

IN QUEST OF LAND

In August of 1822, a man by the name of Christian Nafziger appeared in the forests of present-day Wilmot Township. Few white men had passed this way and even fewer had stopped to contemplate the pillars of oak, pine, and maple, with their leafy branches towering to impressive heights, allowing only here and there a glimpse of sky beyond.

For Christian Nafziger, this experience meant both hope and fear: hope, because he was told that here he could have religious freedom and own land — and some of it free! It meant fear, because he could not be sure it was true and because he did not know how he could transfer his family to this place! Fear of hardship or hard work probably never entered his mind. But, believing that God had led him to this very moment, he trusted his future to the same faith.

Christian Nafziger was born in the Palatinate, Germany, and with many other Mennonites had gone to Bavaria some time during the early 1800's. He became convinced that there was no hope of improving the living conditions for his family and brethren in Europe. He determined to search for something better.

In the summer of 1821, Nafziger set out with little more than his walking stick. He arrived in Amsterdam and appealed to a certain Mr. von Eeghan who gave him a voucher for 50 Thalers (the German root of dollar) drawn on the Vincent Nolte Shipping Company of New Orleans.

No doubt, it was due to the connections that Mr. von Eeghan had with New Orleans that Nafziger landed at that port in January of 1822. Here he received 10 Thalers left from the voucher after his passage had been deducted and was given another 10 Thalers as a gift. With this he made his way northward, arriving eventually in Pennsylvania where Mennonites and a few Amish had settled in the previous century.

Here Nafziger was advised to look for land in Upper Canada where it was cheaper. Again he was given money as well as an old horse with which he continued his journey. While in Upper Canada, he was shown the area west of the Mennonite settlements in Waterloo. He counselled with the Mennonites because they had had some difficulties with land dealers. Nafziger contacted Governor Maitland who promised that 50 acres of free land would be granted to him and his people, this grant to be recognized as payment for clearing a roadway along the front of each lot.

Nafziger was overjoyed with these prospects. He returned via New York and London where, still a bit distrustful, he sought an audience with King George IV in order to make his request. The king confirmed the promise to him and his group, pressed a few gold coins into his hand, and sent him on his way!

In January of 1823, after an absence of one and one-half years, Nafziger returned to his family. Since there were still no funds, the family had to wait until letters had passed between Nafziger and his new-found friends in Waterloo who promised to send money for their fare to Philadelphia.

The Nafzigers, along with several other families, arrived in Philadelphia in the spring of 1826. Christian and his family once again experienced the hand of God leading them when they met a family from Bucks County who took them into their home and gave them money, a team and a wagon for their journey!

The Nafzigers, their three sons and two daughters, arrived in Upper Canada with great rejoicing in October of 1826. The following year they took possession of their land on Bleam's Road. However, they did not live long to see the effects of their efforts. Christian's wife died before they were able to establish themselves, and Christian also died ten years after the family's arrival. It was left for others to see the forest in Wilmot, East Zorra, Wellesley, South Easthope, Mornington and Hay Townships give way to neatly surveyed lots and fenced fields, frame, stone and brick houses and well-stocked barns. (Taken from **Canada Museum**, May 5, 1836. Berlin (Kitchener) Ontario.)



EUROPEAN BACKGROUND

Christian Nafziger and his fellow colonists were Amish Mennonites whose genealogical, as well as religious, roots go back to Switzerland. They trace their beginnings to the Swiss Brethren who, in 1525, separated from Zwingli, the Reformer, by initiating adult baptism on confession of faith. This step was revolutionary even in the midst of the Reformation and incurred the fiercest opposition of both religious and secular leaders. The Brethren were dubbed Anabaptists (re-baptizers), and the society of the 16th century was so well taught to hate and fear the Anabaptists that the term came to stand for the vilest person imaginable. In fact, this evil connotation has remained until modern times and only recently have Biblical scholars and sociologists been able to remove the stigma; so that even Mennonites can use the term with self-respect!

The Brethren insisted on adult baptism because they saw the church as a group of believers who voluntarily and responsibly committed themselves to Jesus Christ and to each other. They saw this group as a part of society, but it was not likely to be the whole of society in any given time or place. This kind of commitment also denied that one's faith could be determined by either prince or priest. This entire concept, of course, was completely foreign in Europe at that time in history.

Part of this commitment was holy living or discipleship. The church was not divided into a laity and a clergy, or religious orders who served God while the rest of society did not. Their opponents testified to the piety and benevolence of these people. In a report made in Berne, Switzerland, in 1693 to determine how to counteract the Anabaptists, their quality of life was given as the reason for their being held in such high regard by the people.

The Brethren also understood the Jesus Way to be that of the cross. This meant absorbing hostility and violence but not inflicting injury on another, not even in retaliation.

It is difficult to understand how the ideals and beliefs of the Brethren brought such a scandal upon them. The Reformers had seen the corruption in the Roman Church and were willing to run the risk of doing something about it, but this was simply "house cleaning" existing society. By repudiating their baptism as infants, allowing themselves to be rebaptized, and refusing to baptize their own children, the Brethren were challenging the authority of both the church and the state. Anabaptism finally won the right to hold its convictions, but not without a great struggle.

Unfortunately, there were other movements taking place at the same time. Many civil leaders were unable to see the difference between the pacifist Anabaptists and the violent agitators. In the same year that the Swiss Brethren parted ways with Zwingli, Thomas Müntzer led the Peasants' Revolt. Müntzer was erroneously considered to be the originator of Anabaptism and looked upon as a typical leader. From 1533 to 1535, the city of Münster in Germany was the scene of a tragic rise in religious fanaticism which began with a priest preaching against infant baptism and ended with the execution of the leaders after the populace had almost perished of starvation. This movement had little in common with the Swiss Brethren, but it certainly added fuel to the flames of fear and animosity which were already rampant.

In spite of the severe persecution, the movement spread very rapidly throughout much of Europe. Thousands were imprisoned, sent to the galleys, tortured and mercilessly killed by drowning, burning at the stake, or pulled apart on the rack, in an effort to stamp out the heresy! From 1525 to 1531, 5,000 were killed! A trail of blood followed through the century until 1614 when the last known martyr died in Switzerland.

In 1537, a Dutch priest by the name of Menno Simons became convinced that infant baptism was unscriptural, joined the movement and became its recognized leader. His ministry and writings gave the movement much-needed stability and unity. It is from Menno Simons that many Anabaptists, including the descendants of the Swiss Brethren receive the name "Mennonite."

In the 17th century Anabaptists still were not tolerated in Switzerland. They no longer faced death, but their property was confiscated and they were banished from their cantons. Hence many families bearing names familiar to Ontario Amish Mennonites such as Brennemen, Kropf, Roth, Zehr, Ruby, Kennel, and Lichti, left their homes in central Switzerland and sailed down the Rhine from Basel. Some found their way into Alsace - Lorraine on the western side of the Rhine. Others sailed a little farther north until they reached the Palatinate and Hesse.

In spite of the difficulties from without the group, the Anabaptists had their share of problems within. Even though they had a strong sense of brotherhood, they also had a good deal of rugged individualism. In the late 17th century a certain Swiss minister by the name of Jacob Ammann became convinced that the church needed a stricter discipline. The main issue seems to have been the practice of shunning those members who were being disciplined for incorrect behavior. Shunning was generally interpreted as barring the person from communion, but Ammann insisted on using it as a boycott in business and all social interaction as well. Even a wife was not to sit down to the table to eat with her husband or she would also be subject to the discipline. Other lesser issues were clothing and beards. The distinctive feature in the clothing was the continued use of pins as well as hooks and eyes instead of the new - fangled buttons which were coming into widespread use and, incidentally, were very prominent on soldiers' uniforms. (The Anabaptist repudiation of the military included the rejection of anything that had military connotations.) Jacob Ammann's ideas were accepted by few in Switzerland and in the Palatinate, but in Alsace his movement gained a large following. They became known as Amish Mennonites - Amish from Ammann.

Although the Anabaptists no longer suffered the severe tortures and death of the first 150 years of the movement, they were still considered a dangerous sect. In the early 1700's, it was feared that they were becoming too numerous in the Ste. Marie - aux - Mines Valley in the northwestern part of Alsace. Louis XIV passed an edict expelling them from the valley in 1712. Count Christian II of Birkenfeld, however, gave them certificates of good conduct stating that the only reason for their expulsion was their religious belief. Many of those who left settled in the areas of Montbeliard or in Lorraine, both of which were then not under French

rule. Because of their reputation as good farmers, they were welcomed by Duke Leopold - Eberhard, but were given to understand that they were merely tolerated and were not given written contracts.



This Amish Mennonite meeting house near Montbeliard was built in the 1700's. Kitchen and dining facilities were on the ground floor. The assembly room and small council room for ministers was on the second floor. It is now used for storage.

In 1780, another census was taken of the Anabaptists in French territories and again the report was that they were good farmers and without reproach "except for the errors of their sect to which they are completely zealous and attached!"

By 1800, numerous wars between German princes and between the French and the Germans had laid waste much of the Palatinate. The French Revolution had spread its reign of terror through Alsace and Lorraine. The Napoleonic Wars and the accompanying military conscription had wearied all of Europe. Maximilian, King of Bavaria, had confiscated most of the Catholic cloisters in his kingdom. Many of these were farming communities. Since he was from Zweibrücken, Maximilian was acquainted with the Mennonites and invited them to Bavaria where he settled them in these cloisters as well as on some other undeveloped land. Quite a number of Amish Mennonites from Alsace, Lorraine and the Palatinate accepted this invitation.



Rothsee, a former Catholic cloister, was the home of the John Oesch family before coming to Canada.

For religious reasons or because they were "foreigners," Mennonites found it very difficult to purchase land even when they could afford it. On the other hand, rents were so high that a farmer may have had very little left with which to feed and clothe his family.

Beyond the economic factors and general feelings against any sects (non - state religious groups), the Mennonites also felt the burden of universal military conscription particularly intolerable. Until the time of Napoleon, armies were generally supplied by mercenaries. Where there was conscription of the general populace as in the French Republic, the Mennonites were often able to receive exemption by paying a fee. Napoleon, however, refused to make any allowance for religious scruples against military service, and many other European rulers and states adopted this policy.

It was from this European situation that many Amish Mennonite settlers came to Canada beginning in the 1820's. From eastern France (Alsace and Lorraine) came Zehrs, Roths, Lichtys, Nafzigers, Gingerichs, Erbs, Gaschos, Rubys, Waglers, Kennels, Littwillers, Jantzis, Jutzis, Ropps, Baechlers, Gerbers, Kropfs and Steinmans. Families by the name of Bender, Brenneman, Schwartzentruber, Gingerich and Zehr found their way from Hesse and the Palatinate, Germany. From Bavaria in southern Germany came Nafzigers, Oeschs, Schrags and Steinmans. Two Kipfer (Kuepfer) families (twin brothers) came from Switzerland.

Translation of Passport on opposite page

Isar District	
Kingdom of Weilheim	
Interior Passport	
For Johannes Esch, farmer	
Born in Barbenstein near Zweibrücken	
Resident in Rothsee	
To ride through Mannheim to Zweibrücken on a personal mission	
The duration of the pass is 3 months	
Personal Description	
height	tall
face	long
nose	proportionate
hair	brown
eyes	blue
marks	none
Signature of the Traveller	
Johannes Esch	
Dated 18th of Feb. 1820 and three	
Bavarian Kingdom of Weilheim	
official stamp and signature	
(On the reverse side it is dated March, 1823 with the official stamp and signature of Zweibrücken)	

Nr. I

Mar. Kreis.

4845

Königliches Landgericht Weilheim

Reise Pass im Inlande

Ich, Josef v. S. Pfister
gebürtig zu ... in ...
aufgeführt zu ...
wird über ...
in ...
dauern und ... Monate

Personbeschreibung

Alter ...
Nation ...
Größe ...
Mutter ...
...
...
...
...
...

Unterschrift des Reisenden

Josef v. S.

Act. ... 18...

Königlich bayer. Landgericht Weilheim



Thoma
Hendelstr.

JOURNEY TO CANADA

The immigrants generally landed on the eastern seaboard and stopped off in Pennsylvania where they purchased or were given wagons, teams and equipment for the journey to Upper Canada. Young, single people often remained for a few months or even years in order to work and earn some money before setting out on their venture into the wilderness. In some cases they also found a marriage partner.

Families packed their belongings into covered wagons pulled by two teams. Feather ticks on hay provided beds for the journey. A supply of fried pork served to make lunches along the way. A cow tied to the wagon provided milk. Any milk that was left over was put into a churn or bucket suspended from the wagon. By the end of the day, chunks of "ready - made" butter floated in the milk!

In cases where settlers landed at New York and went directly to Canada, they sailed or followed the trail up the Hudson River to Albany and from there made the trip west to Buffalo. However, those coming via Pennsylvania generally followed the trail through Harrisburg, up the east side of the Susquehanna River, through Bath and Tonawanda, New York, to Buffalo or Lewiston. This was the path of the Indian who instinctively followed the easy grade. Another route, especially from the more north - easterly Mennonite settlements, began at Reading, crossed the Susquehanna at Wilkes - Barre, skirted Lake Seneca to Rochester and then crossed the Niagara below the Falls at Queenston. Sometimes the wagons had to be dismantled and carried piece by piece across the mountain passes or through the mud. At other times, the wagon box served as a boat to ford the larger streams.

There were a number of crossings at the Niagara River. Black Rock, just slightly north of Buffalo, was probably the most popular. Ferry service was provided here as early as 1783. Evidently the Indians had also built a footbridge here.



This chest carried the belongings of the Michael Yantzi family across the Atlantic. The drinking cup was also used on the voyage.

EARLY SETTLERS

The Michael Schwartzentruber family from Waldeck, Germany, is believed to have set sail on a cattle boat in November of 1822. Due to storms and loss of compass and chart, the trip took from seven to eight months. The misfortune of having to sail on a cattle boat was turned into their favor, for they could slaughter the cattle for food. People who were thus stranded on passenger ships suffered hunger and often perished. The Schwartzentrubers landed at New Jersey, trekked up the Hudson River route and crossed the Niagara on the Indian footbridge at Black Rock. They first lived in Ebytown and then built their log cabin southwest of present - day Petersburg with a view of the Baden Hills to the west.

Joseph Goldschmidt and John Brenneman were ordained ministers and Jacob Kropf, deacon, in 1824 with a mandate to serve the new settlers of Amish Mennonites who were moving into Upper Canada. Goldschmidt settled on the north side of highway 7 & 8 in what is today the village of Baden and Jacob Kropf settled on an adjacent lot. Goldschmidt moved to Ohio in 1831.

In 1825 Jacob and Veronica (Litwiller) Gingerich and Christian and Margaret (Gingerich) Honderich arrived and settled on adjacent lots on Blead's Road. Jacob was a wagon-maker and he chose this particular lot because of the many fine oaks which would make excellent wagon wheels. Peter Litwiller brother to Veronica, came in 1829, married Elizabeth Lichti, and settled on Erb's Road. Peter later became a very influential bishop and well-respected in the community. He lived close to St. Agatha and he and the Catholic priest frequently spent their evenings discussing and studying the Bible. A warm mutual regard developed between the two men. On Litwiller's death, Father Funken had the bells tolled as the funeral procession passed his church.

Christian Nafziger and his company arrived in Upper Canada in October of 1826. Christian settled on his chosen lot on Blead's Road. Christian Steinman, a minister, accompanied the Nafzigers and settled on Snyder's Road. It is on his farm that the Wilmot church was built and thus is now known as the Steinman Mennonite Church. John Oesch arrived from Bavaria in 1824 or 1825 and settled beside Joseph Goldschmidt. John was ordained minister in

the new settlement in 1829 and bishop in 1834. After the marriage of his oldest son, John again pioneered in Hay township but died shortly after making this move. The descendants of thirteen of the eighteen Oesch children (five died while young) number about 10,000 and today are found in most areas of the North American continent.

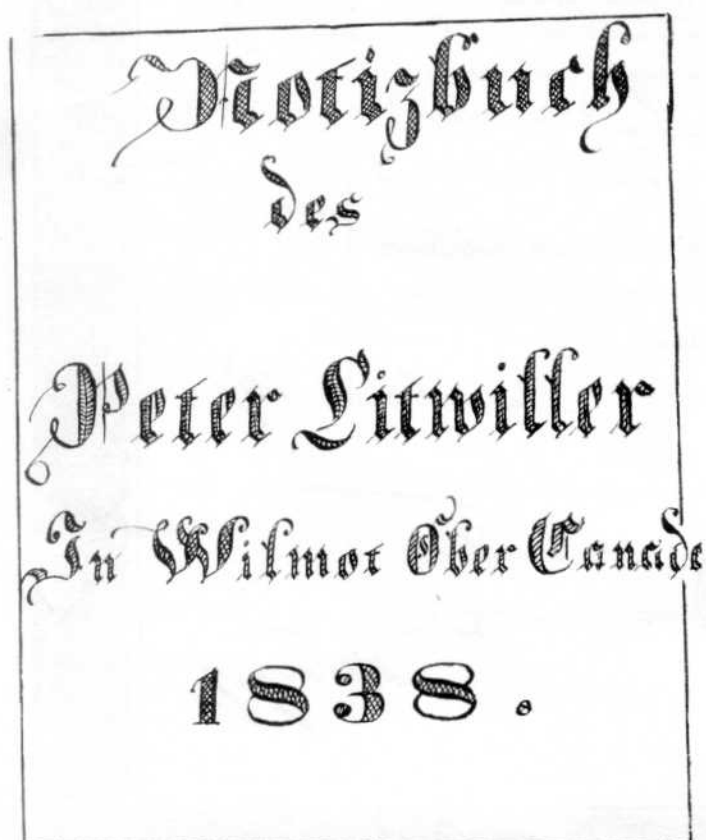
A family of Brennemans, a widow, three sons and a daughter, came from Germany. The daughter, Magdalena, was married to George Helmuth in 1826. They first settled in Wilmot but later moved to East Zorra township in Oxford County. John Brenneman settled on Blead's Road and Daniel chose a lot just across the Nith River also on Blead's Road. Daniel and the Jacob Bender family who came in 1831 from Hesse, Germany, were among the first settlers to push westward into the wilderness. The youngest of the Brennemans, Jacob, married a young Irish immigrant and pioneered in the neighboring township of South Easthope in Perth County.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The initial settlement surveyed for the Amish Mennonites was called the German Block. It extended from Waterloo Township to the Nith River (then called Smith's Creek) with lots on either side of three parallel roads running east and west. The pioneers called them **Oberstrasse** (Upper Street), **Mittelstrasse** (Middle Street) and **Unterstrasse** (Lower Street). These are now Erb's Road, Snyder's Road (Highway 7 & 8) and Blead's Road respectively.

The government of Upper Canada was offering fifty acres of free land to settlers who would fulfil the settling duties and pay the patent fee. The settling duties consisted of clearing five acres of land for each hundred leased, opening a road in front of the lot, and building a log house of certain dimensions. This was to be completed eighteen months after receiving the location ticket in order to be entitled to a deed, payment for which was approximately \$9.00. The remainder of the lot, consisting of another 150 acres, could be purchased at about \$2.50 per acre.

In 1830 Samuel S. Wilmot was asked to make a survey of the conditions of the settlements in the German Block. A copy of his report is located in the National Archives in Ottawa. The map on pages was prepared from this report. It shows the names of the settlers claiming the lots, those who were being recommended to receive their deeds for the fifty acres, and the progress of the road clearance.



Flyleaf of the notebook of Peter Litwiller

POLICE GENERALE
DE FRANCE

Passe-port

à l'Etranger,
Valable pour un an

DEPARTEMENT
de la Meurthe

Registre 10.^e
N^o: 23

SIGNALEMENT.

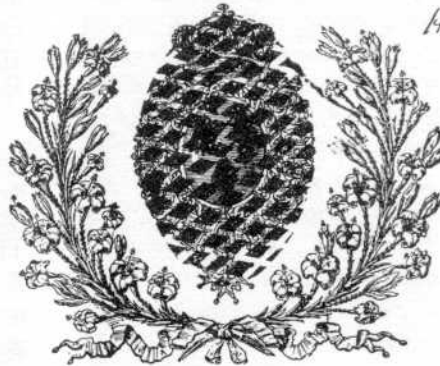
Agé de 32 ans
taille d'un mètre —
— 66 centimètres
(pieds — pouce),
cheveux châtains
front court
sourcils châtains
yeux vert
nez court
bouche grande
barbe grasse
menton court
visage ovale
teint clair

SIGNES PARTICULIERS.

2

Signature du Porteur:

Paul Rindt



Hans Heckly

Au nom du Roi,

Nous Préfet du Département de la
Meurthe

Requerrons les Autorités civiles et militaires du Royaume, et
prions les Autorités civiles et militaires des Etats amis ou alliés de
la France, de laisser passer librement le *seigneur Heckly*,
jeune, marié, avec sa femme et deux enfants
natif de *Louaumont* { *Meurthe*)
demeurant à *Louaumont* {
allant à *New York* (*Amérique*)
et de lui donner aide et protection en cas de besoin.

Le présent Passe-port est valable pendant un an
pour sortir du Royaume.

Fait à Nancy le dix-neuf mars 1834.

Le Préfet *L. Amant*

Par le Préfet



Le Secrétaire général,

Paul Rindt

Pris du Passe-port, Dix Francs.

Unfortunately, there was misunderstanding and also a certain amount of corruption. It was probably little wonder that Christian Nafziger did not quite trust the governor, but took his request directly to the king! The original settlers, for some reason or other, had not received location tickets, and it took a great deal of correspondence appealing to the

"promise held out by *Government* to Christian Nafziger, (now dec.), Jacob Erb, deceased, and others" until the deeds both for the fifty acres of free land as well as those for the remaining purchased acreage were received. A certain Christian Erb was still trying to obtain his deed after twenty - one years!

Translation of Passport on opposite page

<p>Police General of France</p> <p>Passport to the exterior Valid for a year</p> <p>Department of Meurthe</p> <p>Register 10 No. 43</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Age — 34 years Height beyond a metre 66 centimetres (five feet, five inches) Hair — chestnut forehead — covered eyebrow — chestnut eyes — green nose — well - formed mouth — large beard — large chin — round face — oval complexion — fair</p> <p>Particular marks</p> <p>Signature of Bearer Hans Steckly</p> <p>for Baltimore</p>	<p>General Police Seal</p> <p>Hans Steckly</p> <p>IN THE NAME OF THE KING</p> <p>We, the Administrator of the Department of Meurthe</p> <p>We request the Authorities civil and military of the Kingdom and we pray the Authorities civil and military of the friendly states or allies of France, to allow to pass freely Mr. Steckly, John, labourer, and his wife and two children native of Xouaxange, living at Xouaxange (Meurthe) going to New York (America) and to give him help and protection in case of need.</p> <p>The present Passport is valid for one year to go out of the Kingdom.</p> <p>Made at Nancy the nineteenth of March 1831.</p> <p>The Administrator (Signature)</p> <p>For the Administrator</p> <p>The Secretary General (Signature)</p> <p>Headquarters of Department of Meurthe (Seal)</p> <p>Price of Passport, 10 francs.</p>
	<p>On the reverse side is as follows:</p> <p>Town of Havre Superintendent of Police</p> <p>Havre, April 8, 1831 (2 Signatures)</p> <p>— — by the ship Corsair</p> <p>Havre April 9, 1831</p> <p>The Signature of Shipping (Signature)</p> <p>Barbara Steckly's Signature</p>

To all to whom these Presents shall come :

Whereas Christian Schwartzenhuber, of the Township of Wilmot in the County of Waterloo in the Province of Canada, Yeoman, _____

is entitled to receive a conveyance of the Lands hereinafter mentioned, which Lands are part of certain property vested in Her Majesty, under and by virtue of a Statute of this Province, passed in the sixteenth year of the reign of Her Majesty, intituled "An Act to amend the Laws relating to the University of Toronto, by separating its functions as a University from those assigned to it as a College, and by making better provision for the management of the property thereof, and that of Upper Canada College," And whereas, under the provisions of the Statute aforesaid, DAVID BUCHAN, of the City of Toronto, Esquire, the Bursar of the University and Colleges at Toronto, has been authorised by a Commission under the Great Seal of this Province, to transfer and convey any of the property aforesaid to purchasers and others entitled to receive conveyances thereof: **Now these Presents witness**, that the said DAVID BUCHAN, as such Bursar, under and by virtue of the said Commission and the said Statute, AND IN CONSIDERATION OF the sum of One hundred and eighty seven Pounds and ten Shillings — paid therefor by the said Christian Schwartzenhuber _____

Christian Schwartzenhuber, his _____ heirs and assigns for ever, ALL that certain parcel or tract of Land, being composed of the Bear three fourths of Lot number eight on the South Side of Snyder's Road in the said Township of Wilmot, containing one hundred and fifty acres of land, more or less

In Witness whereof the said DAVID BUCHAN, as Bursar aforesaid, has hereunto set his hand and affixed the Seal of his Office, this ninth _____ day of July, in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty five. _____

Signed, Sealed and Delivered, IN PRESENCE OF

James Nelson

David Buchan
Bursar

Deed legend

The original deeds for lot 8, Snyder's Road South, written on parchment are still in the hands of the descendants of Christian Schwartzenhuber. The deed for the 50 acres of free land is dated 1842. The one for the remaining 150 acres (reproduced here) is dated July 9, 1855.

12th March 1830.

199.

The Council took the Same into consideration and were pleased to make the following Minute -

Recommended that a Letter be written by the Clerk of the Council to Christian Haffsinger who has been engaged as Agent for the German Settlers in Wilmot informing him that upon the Report of the Deputy Surveyor Mr. Wilmut the Government will issue Patents to the persons recommended by him as per the accompanying Schedule No. 5 at any time after two months have elapsed, and that the reason of the delay is only to afford an opportunity for Mr. Haffsinger to correct errors, or to make known any adverse claim if any there be. -

And that Mr. Haffsinger be also informed that the College Council will on application dispose of the one hundred and fifty acres attached to each actual Settlers Lot for twelve Shillings and Sixpence an acre, as recommended by the Government

Adjourned till Tuesday next at 12 O'clock.

The proceedings of this day approved by His Excellency The Lieutenant Governor.

In February of 1830, Samuel S. Wilmut sent in his report to the government concerning the German and Pennsylvanian settlers who had settled in Wilmot Township. (see reproduction of signature at right.)

In March Council met and considered his report. The minute reproduced above was the result of their deliberations. Schedule No. 5 referred to in the minute is a series of charts consisting of 12 pages (9" x 14" each) giving the lot numbers, original locatees' names, present occupants, amounts spent on improvements, cabins built, distances from a mill, types of soil and timber, and the state of the road clearance. These documents are located at the National Archives in Ottawa. The above is reproduced by permission.

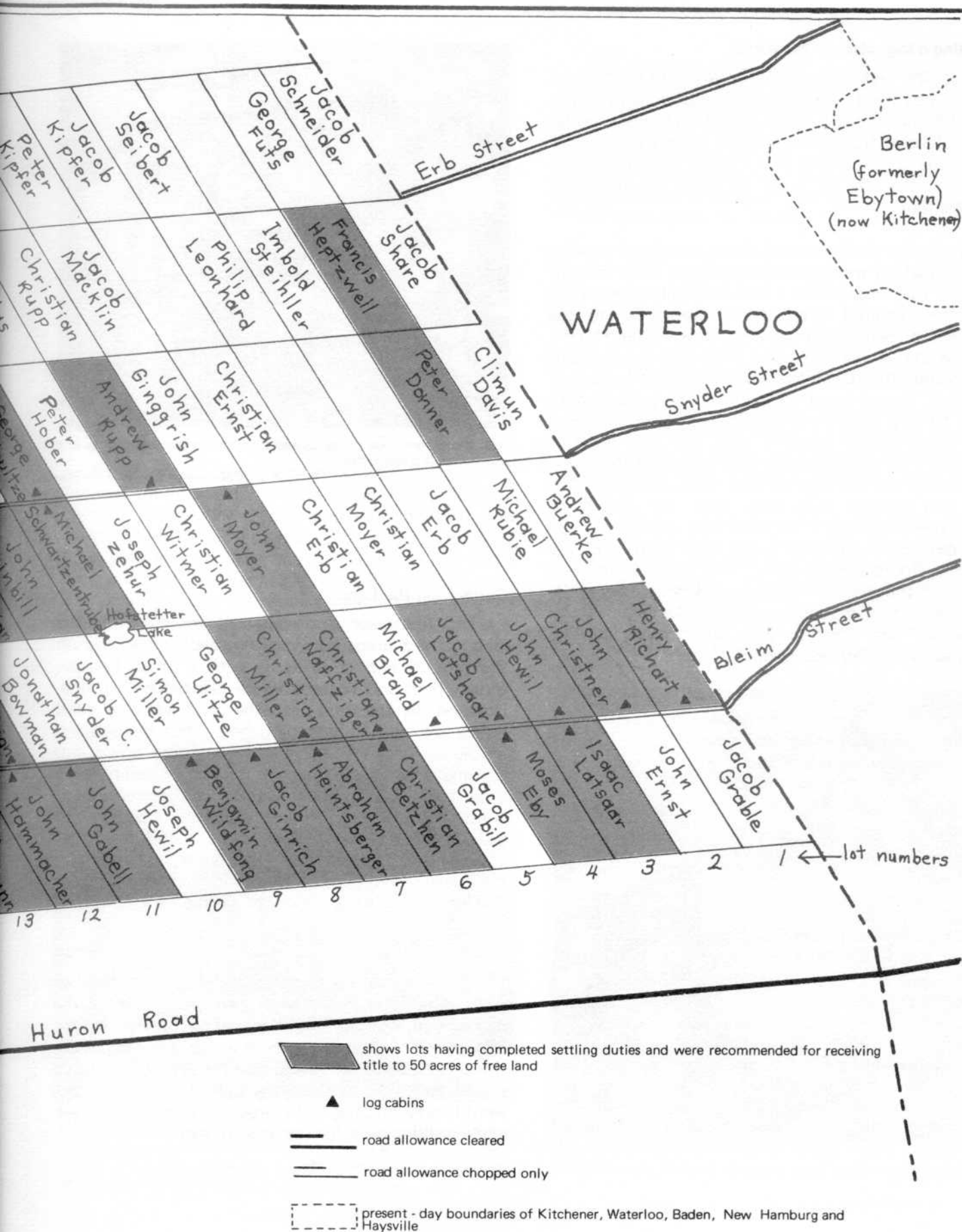
York 11th Feb 1830
Sam^l S. Wilmut
Dy Surveyor

WILMOT

Information to compile this map was taken from report of Samuel S. Wilmot on survey of German settlements in 1830.

Scale taken from National Topographic Series: 40 P/7 East Half

EDITION 4ASE
SERIES A 751



Note: Spellings of names are those used in 1830 report

Building a log cabin in the forest

The first task of the pioneer who had selected his lot and had taken the necessary steps to claim it, was to build his log cabin. If the site of his house was any great distance from a settlement, he and three other men (one a carpenter) and a yoke of oxen set up camp at the site in order to make the necessary preparations.

A spot for the house was cleared and large logs for the foundation were pulled into place. Then trees of uniform thickness (about a foot in diameter) were cut into the required lengths and drawn up to the foundation. Beams and sills were drawn up and hewn. Large white ash and basswood trees were cut and split into planks for flooring. This took about a week or ten days. Then a group of ten or twelve persons were asked to help raise the building. The foundation logs were dove-tailed together and the sills notched down. A man stepped up on each corner of the frame and connected the logs as they were rolled up. The roof was covered with bark, split clap-boards or hand-hewn shingles. The door and window-places were cut out. A stone back was built to the fireplace and the floors pinned down. The inside walls were hewn and the spaces filled up with small timber while the outside was mudded over to make it air-tight. "Windows" and the door were put in place, and the cabin was ready for occupancy!



Jacob Kipfer, grandson of the pioneers, points out the notched logs of the cabin before it is dismantled.

(Courtesy of London Free Press)

Cultivating the Land

The first year or two wheat could be planted among the stumps by simply spreading the seed on the ground and covering it with a small harrow. Indian corn and potatoes were planted with a hoe. However, by the third year, the yield was very small unless the ground was ploughed. Thus the settlers' problems were not solved by chopping down and burning the trees. To remove the stumps and roots in order to be able to plough was an even greater task. It is little wonder that Samuel S. Wilmot in his report to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1830 said that to clear and cultivate their land in order to support their families required all their immediate exertions and left little time or energy to work on the roads.

Mills were set up to grind the wheat into flour as soon as possible in a new settlement, but the early pioneers in Waterloo County had to take their first wheat to Hamilton while those in Hay township took theirs to Goderich. It is said that the John Oesch boys would take two sacks to the mill in one trip. They would carry one bag until tired, set it down, and rest while walking back for the second one!

Roads

The government tried to accomplish some of the road - building process by having the settlers clear the front of their lot as part of their settling duties in order to receive their grant of fifty acres. This, however, was sometimes difficult to achieve. Some settlers were unable to perform all of the prescribed duties in the allotted time. Some lots had been purchased for purposes of speculation by people who lived elsewhere. Frequently these people did nothing about the road clearance. To make matters worse, there were large tracts of land such as Wellesley township which were Clergy Reserves. These lands were not available to regular settlers and thus hindered road construction.

Even after the settlers had cleared the road - allowance strip, this still did not produce a "road." There were streams and rivers to cross and swamps to fill in. The mud in spring and during heavy rains gave way to deep and hard ruts in summer. It was in winter that the roads were really at their best. Sleighs gliding over the snow were a welcome relief to the bumping of springless wagons whether it was through axle - deep mud or over hard, dry ruts.



(Courtesy Stratford Beacon - Herald)

The pioneers travelling the Huron Road to Hay stopped here. With the coming of the railroad Fryfogel Inn fell into disuse as a stagecoach stop. In the 1870's Christian Schrag, an Amishman, used it as a cheese factory. Today it is a museum.

The pioneers knew what it was to walk! They frequently walked great distances as well as shorter ones. The first East Zorra settlers often walked to the Sunday worship service at Wilmot until their own congregation was organized. John Oesch made at least one trip from Baden to Hay township on foot. Pioneer Daniel Schrag, minister in East Zorra, walked from Pennsylvania to Ontario!

SETTLEMENTS BEYOND WILMOT

By 1831, the settlers had already crossed to the west side of the Nith River, and in a few years had spread into South Easthope Township (Perth County) and into East Zorra Township (Oxford County).

In 1828, the Huron Road from Guelph to Goderich was opened. Since this road passed the Wilmot settlement just one road south of Bleam's Road, and then joined with present - day Highway 7 & 8 through Stratford, it provided easy access to Huron County. By 1850 the John Oesch family, along with four or five others, were pioneering for the second time.

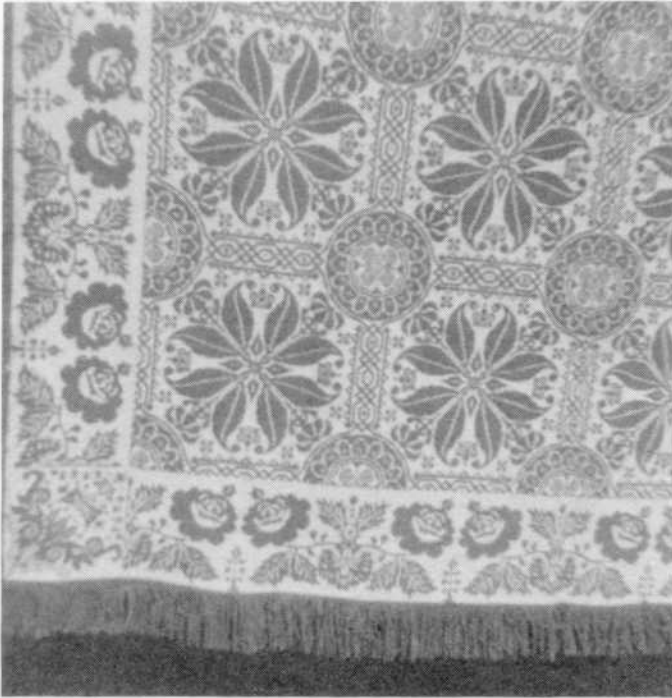
Although Wellesley Township was adjacent to Wilmot, it was settled later because this area had been set aside as a Clergy Reserve (popularly known as the "Queen's bush.") However, the Rebellion of 1837 and continued pressure finally forced the government to sell these lands to settlers and to abandon the idea of Clergy Reserves altogether. Thus in the 1850's Wellesley was open for settlement which continued to spread into Mornington Township.

About fifty years after the arrival of the Amish in Canada, the five areas — Wilmot, East Zorra, Wellesley, Mornington, and Hay — had been settled with an organized congregation in each. Immigration had almost ceased and many of those who had found their way to Ontario had moved on to the frontier states of Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. No doubt a more temperate climate as well as the less forested areas of the West appealed to many who found the Canadian winters too rigorous and the chopping of the dense forests rather tedious. Also, land on the frontier was always cheaper and thus more attractive.

Home Industries

Very few of the things used by the pioneers were purchased in a store. Milk was made into cheese and cream was churned into butter. The hide of the cow was custom-tanned and brought home for the itinerant shoemaker. Spinning wheels for both flax and wool were standard equipment in every household. Some of the yarn and the linen thread was taken to the weaver to be woven into cloth. The remainder of the yarn was knit into socks, mitts, or caps by the women of the household. Sometimes itinerant tailors were employed to make up some of the family's supply of clothing.

Soap was made with scrap fat boiled with lye. The lye was made by pouring water over ashes which had been collected in a barrel. Candles were a luxury and were often reserved for guests. They were made from tallow. Tin candle-molds could be purchased, making their manufacture a relatively easy task. The light of the fire was the chief source of light on a winter evening. Chunks of resin-laden pine burned brilliantly. A rag wick soaked in grease on a saucer was frequently used to light the way to bed.



This cover was probably made by a Mr. Brubacher in Baden in the 1890's. His woolen mill was on the land originally claimed by Joseph Goldschmidt. The Kropf family had built a sawmill here.

Covers with a centre seam were made by the itinerant weavers who used a smaller, portable loom.



The spile is the type made and used by the pioneers. The sap bucket was a later manufacture.

To some of the immigrants, Canada was the land where syrup flowed from trees! The process of extracting the syrup is not an easy one even now, but the pioneers also had to make their equipment. The spouts were hand-made from narrow pieces of wood with a gouged-out groove. These were rather long so that the sap ran out into little troughs placed at the foot of the tree. These troughs were hewn out of split pine logs which were hollowed out to hold about a pail of sap. Large logs were hollowed out in which to collect the daily sap run. These huge troughs could hold up to fifty barrels. The sap was boiled in kettles suspended from a pole supported by two forked branches anchored in the ground on each side. In order to keep the vigorously boiling sap from bubbling over the rim of the kettle, a piece of pork fat was rubbed along the upper edge of the kettle. The boiling sap did not pass this ring.

Much of the pioneers' supply of sugar was obtained by boiling down the sap still more and then pouring it into greased pans and removing when hardened. The sugar could then be scraped off these lumps. A more refined sugar could be procured by putting it into a barrel and stirring while cooling. Small holes bored into the bottom permitted the molasses to drain off, leaving the sugar much lighter in color. Vinegar was also made by boiling the sap sufficiently to reduce three or four pailfuls to one, and then allowing it to ferment.

RELIGION AND CULTURE

The life of the Amish Mennonites centered around the church. This did not mean that one spent a great deal of time "at church". In fact, most congregations did not have worship services every Sunday until the 1930's. (Sunday School was held on alternate Sundays during the summer after the early 1900's in congregations permitting them.) "Church" for the Amish Mennonites was "the Brotherhood," and one's relation to it is what counted. This was the guiding principle of all of life. There was a certain "order" of life to which members were expected to adhere, and too much deviation was discouraged by discipline. Some infractions of the "order" were simply dealt with in the home.

For example, young people sometimes went to a studio and had their picture taken. If the pictures were found, and if the home was a strict one, they had to be burned. Hence early photographs are rather scarce! Other infractions had to be confessed before the congregation. These might range all the way from singing a hymn to a new tune, dancing, or drunkenness. For sins of a more serious nature, the member was excommunicated and reinstated on confession. Anyone who was excommunicated was under the "ban" until he was reinstated. There was a great deal of discussion over how far the practice of "shunning" the banned person should be carried.

Worship

In Europe, the Anabaptists for many years had no church buildings. Usually they met in each others' homes. During times of persecution when their meetings were forbidden or harassed by spies, they often met secretly in caves or woods. Even where the Anabaptists came to be tolerated to a certain extent, church buildings were allowed only if they were "hidden." In Pennsylvania the Mennonites had built "meeting houses," but the Amish continued to have their services in homes.

In Canada, the Amish worshipped in their homes for more than fifty years. Many of the old country homes were built with a "house church" in mind. One side of the main floor was one large room which served as the kitchen, dining and family room. This was the one that was turned into the assembly room by setting up the congregation's supply of benches which were taken from one home to another as the members took their turns.

Except for communion services, the whole family attended the service which lasted three hours or more. Children were free to help themselves to cookies and sweets on the cupboard while the service was in progress. Young people usually took a break outside sometime during the morning.

At noon a simple meal (usually bean soup) was served to the entire congregation. People stayed to visit until about four o'clock in the afternoon and then they hitched up their horses and went home. Many of the young people stayed or returned in the evening for singing and visiting. Sometimes confessions needed to be made at the following meeting because the singing and games had turned into dancing or some had consumed too much cider!



The first Steinman Mennonite church was a typical "meeting house." It was replaced in 1946.

In the 1880's all of the Amish settlements built meeting houses. These were very plain, rectangular buildings. The unpainted, open - backed benches were arranged along one side and at the ends to face the ministers' bench and table along the remaining side. Hat racks lined the walls on the men's side of the room. Large wood - stoves provided the heating. At one end of the building were two small rooms — one served as cloakroom and nursery for the women and children, and the other as a council room for the ministers.

Outside the church, extensive sheds to shelter the horses and buggies were built on one side while a cemetery with rows of small, plain tombstones was laid out on the other.

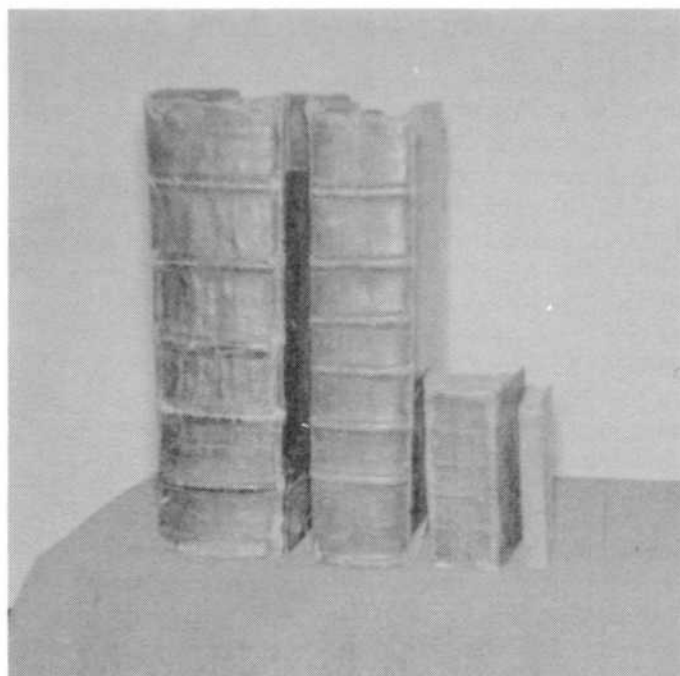
Once the meeting houses were built, people visited each other for Sunday dinner. Often as many as twenty guests congregated at one home without previous arrangements or invitation.

The worship services were very simple but followed a well-defined pattern. At the time for the service to begin all (except the young men and boys) were seated at their places — older women on one side and older men on the other; the young girls in front and the young married women with their children at the back. The bishop, ministers and deacons were, of course, on the ministers' bench. The bishop or an older minister announced a hymn. A long silence followed before a song leader in the congregation led out. During the first verse, the ministering group filed out by order of age or rank to the council room in order to discuss the order of service. On the singing of the second verse the young men filed in and took their places. The congregation continued to sing until the ministers returned. One of the opening hymns sung at every worship service was "O Father God we praise Thee."

Two ministers would be expected to take extensive part in the service. The first one began with general remarks concerning man's need and God's abundant grace. After the reading of the Scripture, the second minister spoke more specifically on the chapter just read. The sermons were largely in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect while the hymns, Scripture and prayers (read or recited) were in high German. For prayer, the congregation knelt facing the benches. At the conclusion of the service each minister or deacon who had not spoken previously gave a testimony or exhortation. These testimonies and announcements were made while seated. No offering was taken.

Literature

The books of the Amish Mennonite settlers were few but very distinctive. The four books that were found in each home were the Bible, the **Martyr's Mirror**, a hymnbook called the **Ausbund**, and a prayer book which also contained the 1632 edition of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith.



The basic library found in most Amish homes in pioneer days. Left to right: Bible, Martyrs' Mirror, Ausbund (hymnbook), Die Ernsthafte Christenflicht (prayerbook).

The Froschauer Bible (thus named for the printer) was first printed in Switzerland in 1529 and was very popular with the Anabaptists. For the most part, Froschauer used Luther's translation, substituting other translations of the prophets which Luther had not yet completed. These early editions were of an immense size with thick leather covers (or board covered with leather), complete with clasps. The last edition of this Bible was reprinted in Strasbourg in 1744. Many of the Amish Mennonite immigrants brought copies of these with them. Some of these Bibles were then already 250 years old!

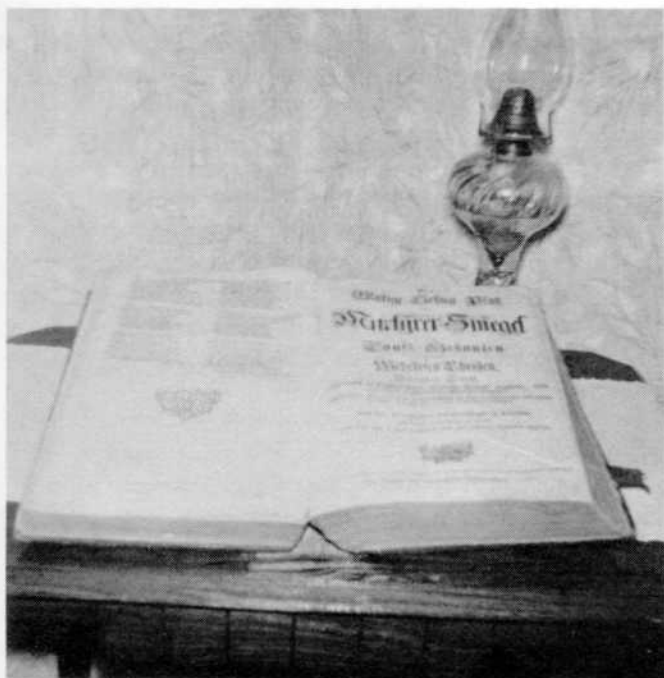
The **Martyrs' Mirror** is also a large volume. Van Braught, a Dutch Mennonite, collected many Anabaptist martyr stories from the 16th and 17th centuries and compiled this book containing stories of martyrs from the New Testament times to the 17th century. This volume was not available in German until 1749 when it was printed in Pennsylvania. In 1780 it was reprinted in the Palatinate, Germany.

The first partial edition of the **Ausbund** was printed in 1564. It consisted of 51 hymns composed and sung by Anabaptist prisoners in the castle in

Passau, Germany, from 1535 - 1537, most of whom either died in prison or were killed. These verses are not of a high literary quality, but are sincere and deeply religious. Born out of persecution, they speak of sorrow and pain in this life, but also express joy and peace. Above all, they sing high the praises of God. Later editions added more martyr hymns, a "Confession of Faith," and a collection of stories of persecutions suffered by the Swiss Brethren from 1635 - 1645. The **Ausbund** is still used by the Old Order Amish today. It is the oldest hymnbook in continuous use in the world.

Except for the **Ausbund**, few Amishmen have contributed much in writing. One of the few was George Jutzi, born in France. After having lived in Pennsylvania and Ohio, he came to Ontario. In 1842 he wrote a "Letter to Exhortation to his Posterity." Much of this is written in rhyme. It was published and printed in Pennsylvania.

A variety of theological and devotional books have been found in family collections, particularly those of early church leaders, revealing a depth of interest and understanding frequently not attributed to the Amish.



The Jacob Brenneman library included this 1870 edition of the **Martyr's Mirror** printed in Germany.



This 1580 edition of the Froschauer Bible was brought to Canada by John Oesch. Viewing it in the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, are Lorraine Roth, great great granddaughter and Nancy (Schrock) Byler, great granddaughter of John Oesch. Nancy's grandparents were David and Magdale Kropf who migrated to the American frontier over 100 years ago.

Music

Not only is the selection of hymns in the **Ausbund** unique, but so is the music. At the beginning of each hymn is a suggested tune but the music is not printed. The music is very slow, almost chanted. In fact, some have thought that Amish music originated in the Gregorian Chant of the Middle Ages. It is quite likely, however, that the tunes came from old folk tunes, but the slow tempo and the added embellishments due to several centuries of oral transmission have made the original tunes quite unrecognizable. This type of singing is still used among the Old Order Amish during the regular Sunday morning preaching service.

Another hymnbook called the **Unparteiische Leidersammlung** became the recognized hymnbook of the congregations which later organized themselves into a conference. These hymns were sung to faster tunes than those in the **Ausbund**, but they did not contain music.

Fairly early in the 20th century, **Lieder und Melodien** with notes came into use and with it four - part singing. Some people attended community

singing schools, and finally they were also held in the churches. Since then, choruses, choirs, quartettes, etc., have contributed much to the musical life of the church and the community. However, choirs have never become a regular feature of the Sunday morning worship service. Total congregation participation is still preferred.

With the Anabaptists, the use of organs in the woods, caves and homes was not a question. Nor is it a question among the Amish who worship in homes today. For many years, the simple meeting-house church did not raise the question of the organ either. However, modern affluence, ecumenicity and outreach have caused some congregations to consider and use certain instruments.

Language

Since the Amish Mennonites were generally of Swiss-German origin, the language was predominantly German. However, a number of the immigrants in Ontario came from areas where French had already been adopted by the Mennonites and hence spoke French fluently.

The spoken German in Pennsylvania and in Ontario came to be known as Pennsylvania Dutch. This dialect is very similar to the one spoken in the Palatinate and because of the large immigration of Palatines — Lutheran as well as Mennonite — this was the dialect which predominated in these areas. Although there were similarities of vocabulary between Alsatian and Palatine German, Pennsylvania Dutch is most easily understood in the Palatinate.

German was used exclusively in religious services. It was taught in the public schools until late in the 19th century. Then an effort was made to keep it up by means of the Sunday school. Finally, in the 1930's, it was abandoned.

The Amish Mennonites have a rich linguistic heritage which they have not developed as much as they could have. The French element has been completely lost. Pennsylvania Dutch was spoken in most homes up to the present generation, but is rapidly losing out. Little effort is made today among the Old Order to learn to read, write or speak high German, rendering the German Bible and hymnbook which are used in worship services almost unintelligible.



The Old Order Amish dress of today very much resembles the typical Lorraine costume except that it is plain rather than fancy!

Dress

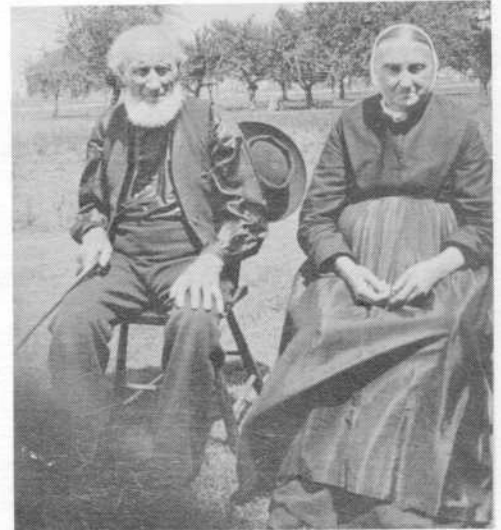
One of the distinctive features of the Amish today is their clothing, but it was not always so. Their style of clothing does not have religious significance except in the emphasis on simplicity. For example, the hooks and eyes instead of buttons were meant to be less showy. The "distinctive garb" today was not distinctive back in the 17th century, but resistance to change has now made it a curiosity.

At the beginning of this century a young Amishman was probably quite inconspicuous when he went to town. (He did not grow a beard until he was married!) A young Amish girl adorned her dress with tucks, lace collars and ruffles and was probably as inconspicuous as her brothers. When she went to church she left off her lace collar, put on her shoulder cape and white cap and she was "in order."

Along with the revival movements which came into the church in the 1920's and then again in the 1940's there came an emphasis on uniformity of dress. The ministers were to wear a "plain coat" and in some areas the laymen were also encouraged to wear it. The shoulder cape became a regular part of the dress, although the apron was generally dispensed with. The cap was interpreted as a prayer veiling, and women were encouraged to wear it all the time.



(above)
Amish young people and children
(studio style) in the early 1900's.



(left)
1890's

(right)
1930's

older Amish couples



Bonnets and shawls are outdoor garb for the Old Order Amish women today. The men can be distinguished by their beards and black hats.



Amish girls wear the white organdy pinafore and cap or kerchief to Sunday services.



Boys wear their hair to their ears and a black hat like "Pop".

IT IS NOT GOOD
THAT THE MAN
SHOULD
BE ALONE.

PHOTOGRAPH



WILL MAKE
HIM AN
HELP MEET
FOR
HIM

PHOTOGRAPH

CERTIFICATE

THAT

David E. Brennemann and Magdalena Fehr.

Were solemnly united by me in the

Holy Bonds of Matrimony

at Oxford Co. Maine.

on the 30. day of November.

in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred

and 1869. conformably to the Ordinance

of God, and the Laws of the State.

Each joined with the other
In presence of GOD
TOGETHER LET US
SIGNED

Joseph Fehr.

Barbara Brennemann

Surety Witness

Joseph Ruby.

Weddings and Funerals

An Amish Mennonite wedding was very simple in everything except the lavish preparation of food for the many guests. About a week before the wedding, the couple would go to each home to personally invite the guests which included the children. The marriage took place in a relative's or neighbor's home in the forenoon. Usually two couples attended the bride and groom. Dinner was served in the bride's home. The afternoon was spent in singing and visiting. After supper many of the older people went home while the young people remained for more singing, visiting, and feasting.

After a death in the family, neighbors and friends came into the home to make extensive preparations for the funeral which was, of course, held in the home. The house was cleaned and arranged for a large number of guests, and food was prepared to serve at least one meal to all those attending. A generous supply of ham was cooked to be sliced cold. Crops of pickled beets, stewed apples and applesauce were prepared. An abundance of bread, coffee cake and apple pie was baked.

The funeral service was held in the home in the forenoon and, if the cemetery was at any great distance, food was served before leaving for the burial. All those attending the funeral returned to the home for a meal and fellowship.

Later, funerals took place in the afternoon with a short service at the home, then a public service and burial at the church with relatives and friends returning to the home for a fellowship meal.



Superstition

If one would have compared the Anabaptists of the 16th and 17th centuries with the rest of society, no doubt they would have appeared well ahead of their time in their attitude to superstition and magic. However, with the later resistance to change, the Amish have carried over into the modern day some vestiges of these superstitions and have perpetuated them much longer than the rest of society.

Among these practices one finds the use of the horoscope, almanac and charming. One rather frequently finds the horoscope along with the dates in old birth records in family Bibles. Whether these were taken at all seriously is rather doubtful. The use of the almanac in determining the correct phase of the moon in which to plant or do certain farm tasks was quite common and is continued by older people to some extent. Charming, a combination of incantation and prayer for the sick, was practiced extensively and is continued by some older people particularly among the Old Order.

DIED.



*In South Easthope, on Sunday, Jan. 2nd,
1898, at 10.30 a. m.,*

Dr. Peter Zehr

Aged 89 Years and 8 Months.

THE FUNERAL

*Will take place from his late residence,
lot 11, Con. 2, South Easthope, on
Wednesday, Jan. 5th, at 10 a. m. In-
terment in the Mennonite Cemetery, 16th
line E. Zorra.*

*Friends and acquaintances will please
accept this intimation.*

Births

Daniel Schrag, geboren April, 1813, in Königlich Bayern Pfortingland.
 Eliza Hüngrich, geboren 27. Juli, 1825, auf den Atlantischen Ocean.
 Jakob Schrag, geboren 1. Mai, 1841, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Christian Schrag, geboren 30. Juni, 1843, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Catharina Schrag, geboren 24. März, 1845, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Magdalena Schrag, geboren 14. Mai, 1846, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Daniel Schrag, geboren 16. März, 1851, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Maria Schrag, geboren 17. Juni, 1854, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Daniel Schrag, geboren 23. August, 1857, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Peter Schrag, geboren 26. November, 1858, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Anna Schrag, geboren 20. März, 1860, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Johannes Schrag, geboren 28. Juli, 1861, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Leah Schrag, geboren 30. August, 1862, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Rachel Schrag, geboren 28. Mai, 1864, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Barbara Schrag, geboren 28. August, 1865, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Beronika Schrag, geboren 30. November, 1866, Perth Co. Ontario.
 Elisabetha Schrag, geboren 4. März, 1868, Perth Co. Ontario.

Arts and Crafts

Art for the sake of art was not pursued by the Amish Mennonites. However, art was not absent from their daily lives. Although the lady of the house was limited in her expression of beauty through her own adornment, she was not limited when it came to design in quilts and other handwork to adorn her home. Nor was she censored for the beauty of her flower and vegetable gardens. She could try any amount of artistic skill on her pies, cakes, and butter molds.

Well-proportioned farm buildings and pleasing arrangement of buildings, trees, and fences, and even straight rows of corn do not just happen. The farmer is often an artist in his own way.



Colourful flower gardens frequently mark the homes and farms of the Amish.



Left-over pieces of material are used to make attractive designs in quilts.



Worn out clothing is torn into strips and hooked into brightly coloured carpets. Strips of felt or wool may also be used.

(Opposite Page)

Many records and certificates were inscribed in family Bibles in this beautiful Gothic script.

Occupations

Although the Anabaptist movement did not begin among the peasants or farmers, for the Swiss Brethren this is where it ended. Long before their migration to America, the Mennonites were known as good farmers. Their industry and willingness to work stood them in good stead as early immigrants to Upper Canada. Although agriculture was their main occupation, they also engaged in a number of related activities such as wagon - making, cheese - making, baking, carpentering, and blacksmithing.

One of the pioneers, Dr. Peter Zehr, a minister in the East Zorra congregation, also practiced medicine. It is claimed that he studied in Paris before coming to Canada. After taking a short course in Toronto, he was able to secure a licence from the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

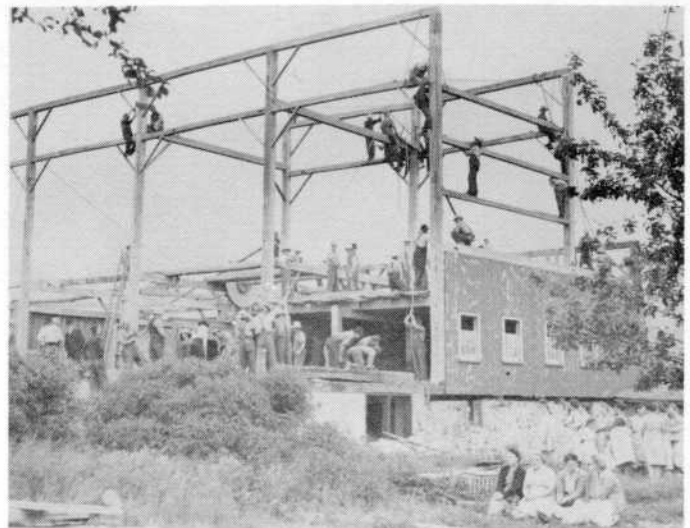
Those Amish who have resisted the use of the motor vehicle and electricity have not been able to make use of these improvements in their farming operations, but those who have gone along with these changes have often been among the first to try new farming methods. One Amish Mennonite generated his own electricity near Baden before hydro came into the community. And it was an Old Order Amishman who invented a self - feeder for the threshing machine!



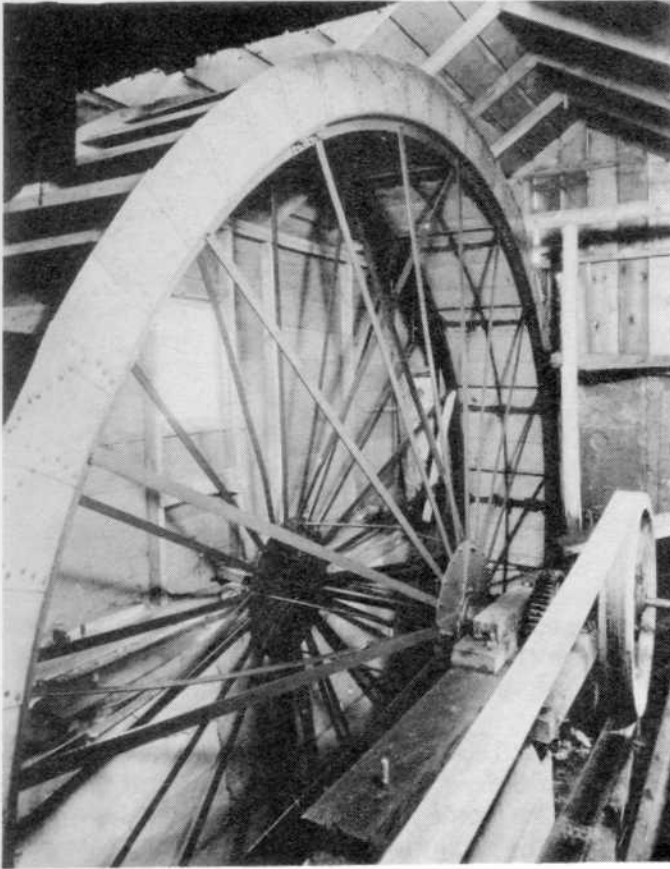
The typical Amish farm consisted of a large brick, stone or frame house with a smaller "Daddy Haus" connected to it. Well - kept fences surrounded the yard and the bountiful vegetable and flower gardens. The Old Order who do not use electricity keep their windmills in good repair.



Most Old Order Amish groups still use horses for their farm work as well as for transportation.

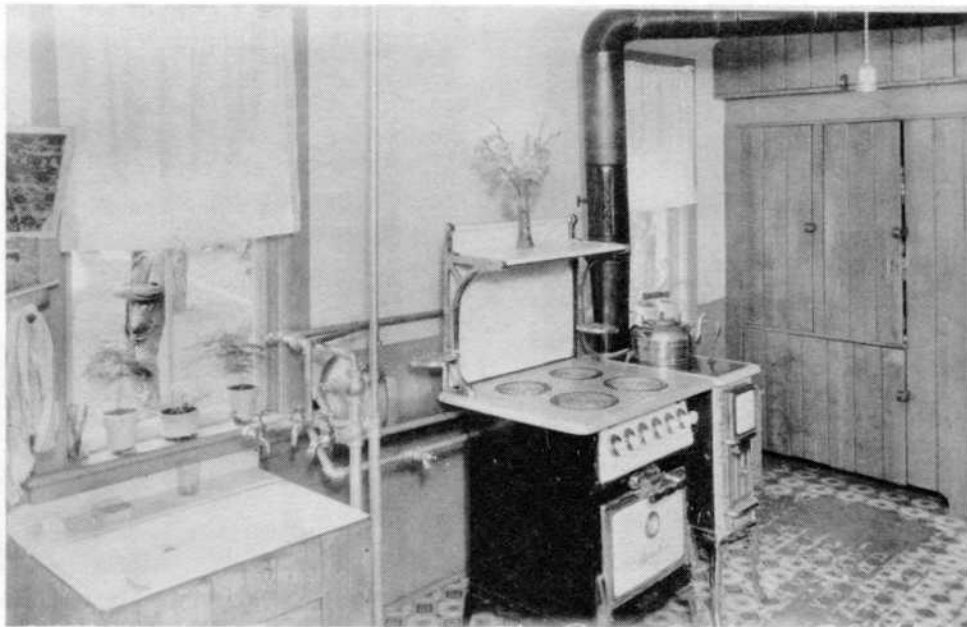


A barn - raising calls forth the team - work of the Amish.



(courtesy — Ontario Hydro)

At the turn of the century Abraham Gingerich generated his own electricity by means of this home-made water wheel. By 1920 commercial hydro made the water wheel obsolete; so it was sold. Mr. Gingerich views the ruins of the building which had to be dismantled in order to remove the wheel. In 1931 the Gingerich kitchen was well-equipped with electrical appliances, and running hot water on tap.



CHURCH LIFE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Sunday School leads the way

At the turn of the century, the Sunday school came into the life of the church. There were a number of "good reasons" for starting such a programme. At this time it was still customary to have preaching services only on alternate Sundays. Since there were now meeting houses, it was very convenient to meet every Sunday and to have Sunday school when no other service was held. Also, the public schools no longer provided for the learning of German as they had earlier and, since it was still used exclusively in the life of the church, it was rather important that the children learn German. While the children learned their German ABC's, the adults listened to the exposition of a chapter from the New Testament by the superintendent. Two or three superintendents were elected; these took turns on successive Sundays.

During the more recent decades many of the congregations have provided the whole range of Christian education programmes and activities found in the modern Protestant church. Short-term winter Bible schools for young people and adults were popular in the 1930's and 1940's. Summer Bible schools for children have maintained a high interest since 1940. For many years Sunday school conferences provided for rich conference-wide fellowship and inspiration. Today many people are finding meaningful experiences in camping and retreats. The Conference operates Hidden Acres Camp in North Easthope.



Hidden Acres Camp provides facilities for rest and recreation.

Divisions

In both Wellesley and Mornington the congregations were divided on the issue of whether or not to use meeting houses. In each case, a group continued to meet in the homes. In East Zorra there were a number of families who then moved to Wellesley and Mornington in order to continue this tradition. These two groups today form five congregations and are known as Old Order Amish Mennonites. In dress they have changed very little from the 17th century style. One of these congregations allows the use of motor vehicles and electricity, but the others still resist these modern innovations.

Wellesley and Mornington suffered another division when the Sunday school was started. The "Nafziger" and "Lichti" groups built meeting houses and have adopted modern farming methods and other conveniences, but have retained a modified Old Order style of dress and worship.

Since the 1930's a number of new churches have been organized which were not a result of strife or division. In some cases, the congregation had outgrown the facilities and it was thought better to "swarm" rather than to build larger facilities. In other cases, it was outreach that provided the impetus.

In recent years, there have also been a number of divisions because of dissatisfaction with the trends in the existing churches, and groups have separated themselves in order to maintain a stricter discipline in one area or another.



Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, is an example of the use of modern architecture — the laminated arch.



Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, was begun by the Poole and Maplevue Churches. In a number of rural areas, the Mennonites have purchased the churches of other denominations whose members have moved to the city.

Church Organization

The Amish have always been very congregational with a minimum of organizational structure. Each congregation generally ordained one bishop, several ministers and deacons. These leaders were chosen from among the group and usually had some leadership abilities. If the congregation had presented more names than there were offices to be filled, the lot was used to make the final choice. It became quite customary to ordain the ministers from among the deacons and the bishop from among the ministers.

When it became apparent that new leadership was needed in a congregation due to death or advanced age of one or more of its leaders, a day for voting was set. The congregation was exhorted to pray and much soul-searching took place. On the day of the voting, the congregation gathered and those who wished to vote entered the council room one by one to give their suggested name. Those receiving a sufficient number of votes were interviewed and asked to accept the call from the church as a call from God

and to promise to carry out their responsibility faithfully if the lot fell on them. (In more recent times the voting and the ordination did not take place at the same time, allowing more time for the interviews.)

Those who had received the votes of the congregation and their wives were asked to come to the front of the assembly. In as many books as there were offices to be filled, the deacon had placed slips containing the words, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Prov. 16:33) These books were placed on a table and rearranged several times so that one no longer knew which books contained the slips. After prayer, and in the hush of the solemn gathering, each candidate chose a book. The lot fell on those in whose books the slips were found. The couples were exhorted and prayed for, and the men were ordained to a life of service to the church.

With a plural ministry of this type, the church had a "built-in" church council. In addition, it almost eliminated the need for salary or support since the work of the ministry was shared and the leaders could continue their farming. In many instances the leaders were older men whose children carried on much of the farm work, freeing them for their ministry.

Until 1920, the ministers of the various congregations held periodic consultations but in 1923 a permanent conference organization was effected. It was understood, however, that conference had a consultative role, not a policy-making one. The Old Order, Lichti and Nafziger congregations did not join the conference.

Many of the conference churches have become highly organized. Some have tried a salaried and trained ministry. Some are experimenting with team ministries or lay elders. In the midst of all this change and the church's search for her place in the modern world, it sometimes seems that the Anabaptist concept of brotherhood and solidarity is almost lost. But then at other times it surfaces in remarkable ways and one sees again the beautiful miracle of brotherhood in Christ.

Revivals, Missions, and Social Concern

The Anabaptists were zealous missionaries with a very strong sense of social concern. The rapid spread of the movement bears testimony to their zeal. Not only were they interested in the souls of men, but also in their material welfare. One of the causes for accusation against them was their insistence that one's goods must be shared with the unfortunate. Their descendants in Ontario at the beginning of the 20th century had lost most of this zeal and had settled down to be the "quiet in the land." They were still industrious, and they did share not only with each other in times of need, but also with their neighbors. However, the vision was quite limited.

As early as 1862, the Amish of Ontario organized a Fire and Storm Aid Union in order to more effectively carry out the principle of mutual aid among the brotherhood. This organization has withstood over 100 years all of the divisions which have broken relationships among them.

Pietism (a deeply devotional life, private rather than in the context of brotherhood) had influenced many Amish Mennonites already in Europe. Since the beginning of the 20th century, various revival movements have deepened the spiritual life of the congregations and have also contributed to an interest in the modern mission movement.

To the news of famine in India at the turn of the century, the churches responded with offerings for relief. The women had long been having "quilting bees" in their homes in order to help each other; now they began having these in order to make quilts and other items for those in need.

The Amish took their share of orphan immigrants into their homes and many of these adopted the faith of their foster parents. Thus an active Old Order laymen, who served as chairman of the Fire and Storm Aid Union for many years, is a German-speaking Englishman! In the 1920's, the Amish were also very active in helping to re-establish their Mennonite brethren who had fled the revolution in Russia.

In the 1920's the Nelson Litwiller and Amos Swartzentruber families from Wilmot went to Argentina under the Mennonite Mission Board. They were the first Canadian Mennonites to serve as foreign missionaries. The Amish Mennonite churches were slow in capturing the vision of these "pioneers." However, in the last twenty-five years a considerable number have served abroad and on the North American continent as missionaries or in voluntary service projects.



Amos and Edna (Litwiller) Swartzentruber were married in 1920. They served in Argentina for over 40 years. Amos passed away in Kitchener in 1966. Edna lives in Argentina.

Their oldest daughter Doris (Snyder) Wispe lost their first husband en route to Argentina. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage and was buried at sea. Orley opened the work of the **Mission Mennonite Francaise** in France in the 1950's. He is now serving the Episcopal Church in New York. Anita and her husband Raul Garcia serve the Mennonite Church in Argentina.



The Nelson Litwiller family in 1952. Standing: Esther Schertz, Lois Buckwalter, Beulah Gonzalez, Eunice Miller. Seated: Nelson, Ada, John.

John died in 1971 following surgery to correct injuries sustained in an auto accident several years earlier. John was serving the Presbyterian Church in Chile and Argentina. Lois and Eunice are serving the Mennonite church with their husbands in Argentina and Uruguay respectively. Esther lives in Illinois, and Beulah in Indiana.

The Mennonite Church, through its mission boards and relief agency (M.C.C.), has developed a world - wide service programme which has given young people in the United States the opportunity to serve the needs of the world's people rather than take part in their destruction through the military. Canadian Mennonite youth share freely in these projects even though they are not bound by conscription to do so. The Conference has also sponsored or supported local projects such as nursing homes and the London Rescue Mission.



Nithview, a home for the aged, owned and operated by Tri - County Mennonite Homes Association, a charitable non - profit organization responsible to Western Ontario Mennonite Conference.

In 1947, several families from various congregations moved to the Ailsa Craig area near London. They first settled on some abandoned farms. This relatively small group has initiated and supported private as well as church - wide projects. Among these are the Mission Services of London, a programme of emergency shelter and rehabilitation for men, as well as work with women, families, and teen girls. Alvin N. Roth, who has been director of the mission since its beginning in 1951, was granted the Award for Distinguished Community Service in 1971.

The Valleyview church in London has also become the centre for experimentation in relevant ministry in today's world. They are providing an internship programme for students from the Goshen Biblical Seminary.

"Boys' Farm," a rehabilitation centre for disturbed boys, was also initiated by the above group. These and other projects have drawn in many Mennonites from other areas and have involved a great many local persons and agencies.



London Rescue Mission was opened in 1951 and is now incorporated in the programme of Mission Services of London.



Boy's Farm at Ailsa Craig is now known as Craigwood. It has grown into a miniature village of homes for house parents and their families of boys.



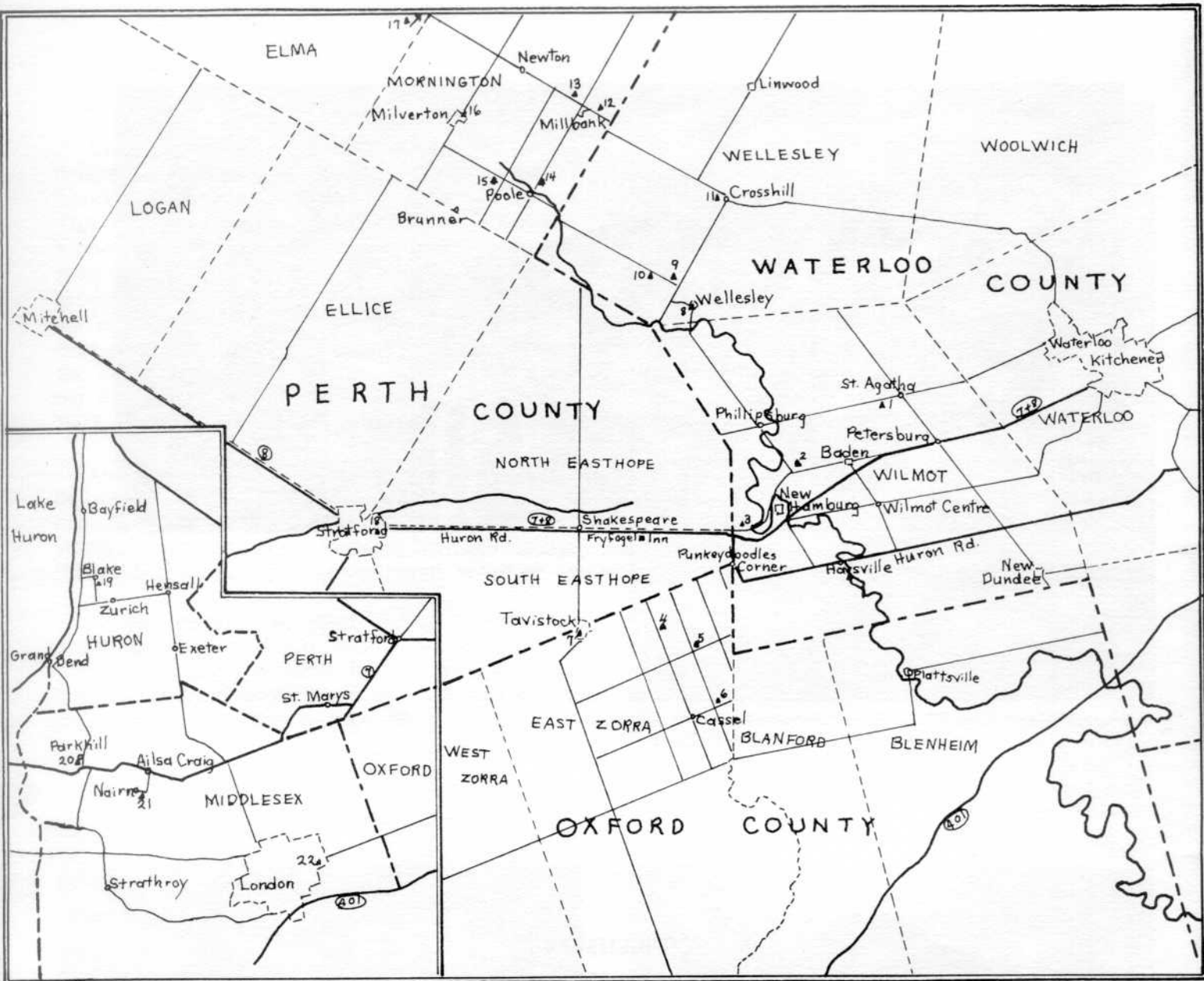
Teen Home provides a home for teenage girls who find themselves alone in the big city.



A Mission Board session in 1964. Clockwise: Ralph Lebold, Sam Schultz, Dan Zehr, Alvin Roth, Alvin Jutzi, Rae Nafziger, Herbert Schultz.

CONCLUSION

The curtain on the last 150 years has been pulled back to give a glimpse of those who braved the dangers of the sea and the hardships of the virgin forest. Beyond that it has been pulled back another 150 years to Jacob Ammann and his zeal to maintain a pure church. And back still another 150 years the opened curtain reveals the Swiss Brethren who took the leap of faith which did not end with them. What the next 150 years hold only God knows now; the historian shall know hereafter.



Insert scale: 1" = 10.7 miles (approx.)

Scale: 4 inches = 20 miles

List of Churches

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. * St. Agatha | 15. Mornington (Nafziger) |
| 2. * Steinman | 16. Milverton Conservative Mennonite Church Fellowship |
| 3. * Hillcrest | 17. Salem Fellowship |
| 4. * East Zorra | 18. * Avon (Stratford) |
| 5. Maple Grove | 19. * Blake |
| 6. * Cassel | 20. * Bethel Chapel (Parkhill) |
| 7. * Tavistock | 21. * Nairn |
| 8. * Zion | 22. * Valleyview (London) |
| 9. Cedar Grove (Lichti) | |
| 10. * Mapleview (Wellesley) | |
| 11. * Crosshill | |
| 12. Bethel Conservative | |
| 13. * Riverdale (Millbank) | |
| 14. * Poole | |

*Churches belonging to Western Ontario Mennonite Conference

Note: The Old Order groups do not have church buildings. They are located in Wellesley and Mornington Townships and the eastern side of Elma Township. They are divided into four districts: West, Central, North and South. The fifth group who use cars are located anywhere in the Millbank - Newton - Milverton area.



Sesquicentennial Committee: l to r, back row: Ruth Arnell, Orland Gingerich, Ezra Bender, Lorraine Roth; seated: Dorothy Sauder, Alvin Gingerich, Ruth Zehr, Ronald Zehr.

Sesquicentennial Committee:

Research and Program Director: Alvin Gingerich

Conference Historian: Orland Gingerich

Historical Committee : Alvin Gingerich
Mrs. Ruth Arnell
Mrs. Ruth Zehr

Coordinators: Ron and Ruth Zehr

Business Manager: Ezra Bender

Publications Committee: Urie Bender, Convenor
Orland Gingerich
Miss Lorraine Roth

Publicity Committee: Mrs. Dorothy Sauder, Convenor
Orie Bender
Phil Bender
Mrs. Lorna Bergey
Mrs. June Leis
Mrs. Mabel Snyder
Mark Yantzi

Demonstrations and Displays:

Mrs. Ruth Arnell, Convenor
Mrs. Reta Bender
Mrs. Jean Gingerich
Miss Lillian Kennel

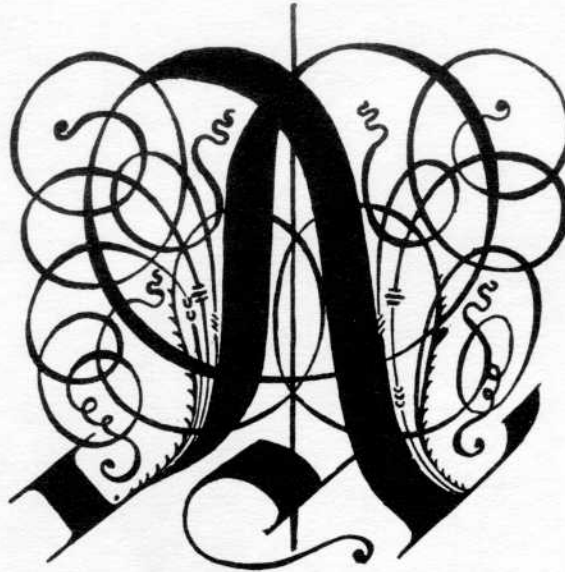
Tours Committee: Mark Yantzi, Convenor
Rae Nafziger
Alvin Gingerich

Lodging Committee: Walter and Ruby Hammer
Earl and Ferne Bender
Carl and Fern Erb
John and Geraldine Gascho

Thanksgiving Dinner Committee: Mrs. Pearl Roth, Convenor
Mrs. Beatrice Kuepfer
Mrs. Beatrice Schultz
Mrs. Anna Mae Steinman

Pageant: Author - Producer: Urie A. Bender, Ephrata, Pa.
Director: Mrs. Loretta Yoder, Indianapolis, Ind.
Assistant Director: Mrs. Margaret Foth, Clarence, N.Y.
Stage Manager: Phil Bender, Tavistock

Ticket Agent: Alvin Jutzi



*people who have not the pride
to record their history
will not long have the virtues
to make history worth recording;
and no people
who are indifferent to their past
need hope to make
their future great*

RESOURCES ON THE AMISH

The Mennonite Encyclopedia: a comprehensive work on the Anabaptist - Mennonite movement. Scottdale, Pa., Herald Press, c1955. 4 vols.

Amish Society, by John A Hostetler, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1963.

The Amish of Canada, by Orland Gingerich, manuscript.

The decorative motif used throughout this booklet is taken from the bed coverlet pictures on page 30 . The stylized tulip is a favourite Pennsylvania Dutch design, but its use here to form a rosette is rather unique. Notice the small crowns between the tulip and the tiny hearts within the crown. The crowns may indicate loyalty to the British crown, but this motif is also found in decorations south of the Canadian border.

Pictures on page 35 :

top left to right: John and Maryann Kropf,
Violet and Amos Brenneman

centre left: Christian and Barbara Baechler

centre right: Christian and Magdalena Brunk



Thanks to those who provided photographs, to Ivan Moon for symbol, to Gwen Roth for lettering, and to Urie Bender for pageant copy and permission to use poems from "This Land is Ours."