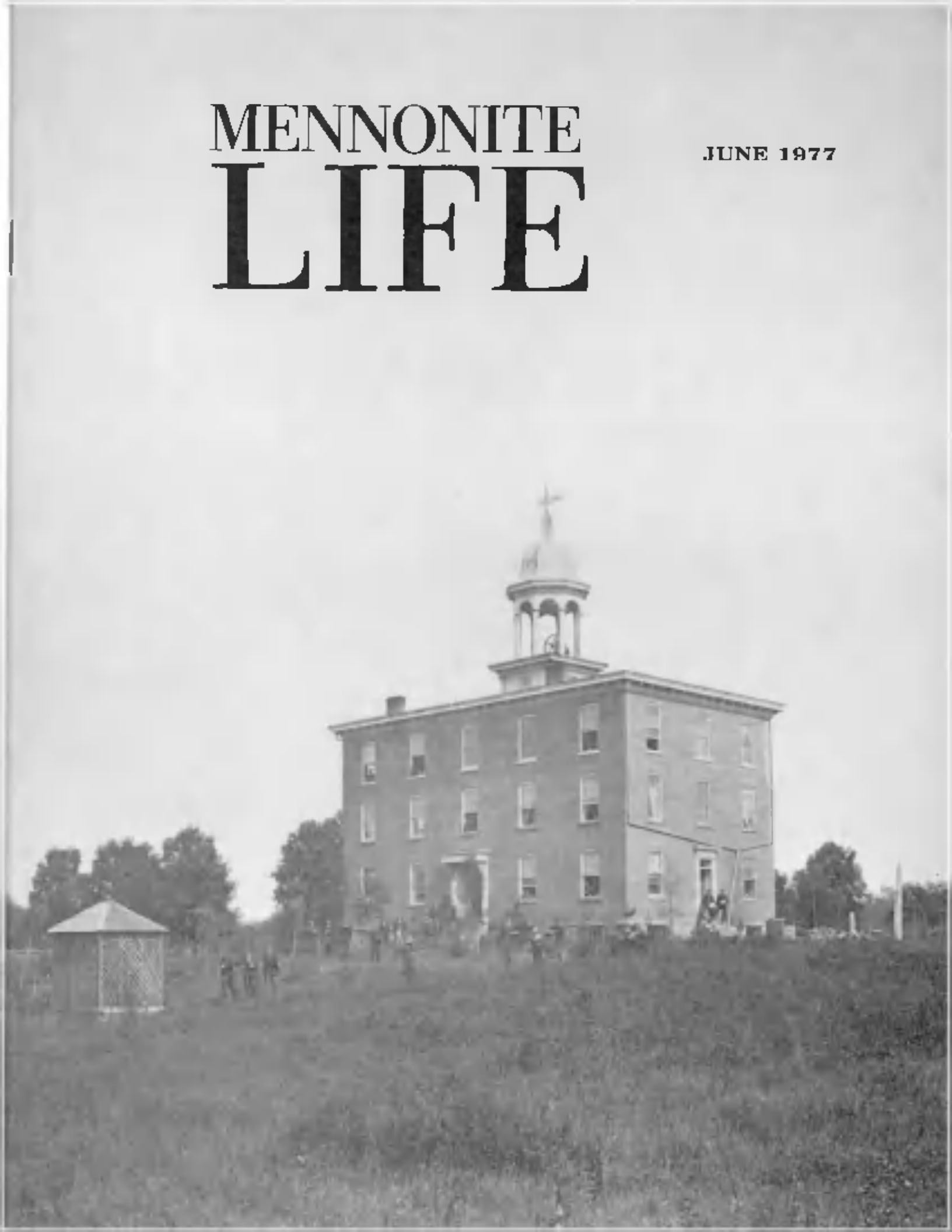
MENNONITE LIFE

JUNE 1977



In this Issue

With this issue of *Mennonite Life* we have introduced changes in the format which are designed to make the articles easier to read and the general appearance more pleasing to the eye. We are grateful to Gwen Claassen, student in the Bethel College art department, and to Robert Regier of the Bethel art faculty for counsel in designing this new format.

The Wadsworth School, which was the first experiment in Mennonite higher education in America, opened its doors in 1868—three years after the end of the American Civil War and six years before the coming of the flood of Mennonite immigrants from Russia and Prussia to the prairie states and provinces.

Wadsworth—like Butler County and Wayne County, Ohio; Summerfield, Illinois; and Donnelson, Iowa—was a way station in the westward migration of Mennonites. Six of the first nine conferences of the General Conference were held at Wadsworth—two just prior to and four during the eleven year existence of the Wadsworth School.

The Kauffman Museum, which is moving to new facilities on the Bethel College campus, is a treasure house of exhibits related to natural history and a delightfully varied range of artifacts: Cheyenne, Hopi, African, early American, agricultural, Mennonite pioneer life, and much more. A series of directors have watched over with care and affection this collection: P. J. Wedel, Charles Kauffman, John F. Schmidt, and Steve Friesen.

The bibliography on the United States Bicentennial compiled by Marianne Harms, Librarian of the Mennonite Historical Library, gives evidence of extensive Mennonite writing on Bicentennial themes during 1975-76.

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Cover

The Wadsworth School at Wadsworth, Ohio, c. 1870. Photograph from the Mennonite Library and Archives.

Back Cover

A photocopy of the first issue of *Nachrichten aus der Heidenwelt* (News from the Heathen World), the first publication on missions to be published in North America. This periodical, which first appeared in January 1877, was edited by Carl Justus van der Smissen (1811-90) who served on the faculty of the Wadsworth School from 1868 to 1878. The original copy is from the Mennonite Library and Archives.

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A Mennonite College Through Town Eyes

by Rachel Kreider

Rachel Kreider, Wadsworth, Ohio is the author of The Mennonite Cemeteries of Medina County *and the* History of the First Mennonite Church of Wadsworth, Ohio, 1852-1952.

On May 4, 1866 a farmer in Wadsworth, Ohio, who had been persuaded to leave his plow and become an editor, issued the first village newspaper, the *Wadsworth Enterprise*, a four page weekly with six columns of fine print per page, that would

> labor to develop and advance the legitimate interests of society and especially there in which our paper is devoted, viz: Local and Home Interests, Religion, Education, Temperance, General Morality, Agriculture and Miscellany.

In his first editorial column, after stating the purpose of his paper and its standards, he next announced that a new Mennonite college was opening in Wadsworth and he would therefore give a history of these people in the next several issues.

His first sketch ran for a full column and began:

> This denomination of christians (usually pronounced as though it were spelled ma neasts) were originally called Waterlanders from a district in Holland, where they originated. They are a denomination of Baptists and were founded by Menno Simonis after whom they take their name. . . .

If his information was vague on Mennonite history, he hardly had any way of knowing it and his contact must have been quite limited. Later on he wrote:

> We have no statistics at hand to determine the number in this country except that they are quite numerous in Pennsylvania and are also found in Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, New York and Canada.
>
> Another division of their church took place in 1811, a number of Mennonites seceding from the main body which they considered as having fallen from the original faith. This secession founded the Reformed Mennonite Society of which we shall speak hereafter. It is this branch of the church that built the College in Wadsworth, and we shall endeavor to give our readers a description of the building, size, cost, etc. at our earliest convenience.

When he got to this point—a description of the new building—he surely could write with more confidence and the Mennonite historian could take his account more seriously. Although Mennonites had lived for forty years west of town, where he grew up, he hardly could have had a clear idea of what relationship, if any, there was between these who were building the new school and his old neighbors out in Guilford Township.

The First Mennonites from Ontario

Henry Geisinger of Canada, father of sixteen children, is said to have been the first Mennonite to arrive in Medina County, settling in the southwest corner of Wadsworth Township in 1825. With him came his wife's Kurtz relatives, the Widemans, Knips, and Koppeses—all from Ontario. In a short time he went back to Northhampton County, Pennsylvania, to bring his uncle William Overholt to be a minister for the new congregation. Almost immediately came other Overholts, Leathermans, Bergeys, and Wismers—all from one daughter colony or another of the Skippack settlement. The Rohrers and Newcomers from Lancaster County came in 1832 via Maryland, bringing a more conservative bent and contributing a sturdy core to the Mennonitism of the community to this day. All these Mennonites settled in the River Styx valley several miles west of Wadsworth and except for the Rohrers were probably more identified with the villages of Rittman, Seville, Guilford Center, Pee, Blake, or even Medina. In the early 1830's they built a meeting house on the corner of Daniel Wideman's farm, two miles west and one mile south of Wadsworth. The Kindigs, Liceys, and Overholts, farther up the valley and near the Continental Divide, thus had a long drive to church and in bad weather an unpleasant one. Consequently, by 1850 another small building was erected two miles north and three miles west, known as the Guilford Church, and the congregation held services at each place on alternate Sundays for many years.

The editor would naturally have had more interest in the history of Wadsworth, closer in, and its people. During the first year of his publication he printed various sketches about the early days and reminiscenses of the old-timers. With a name like John Clark, he too may have belonged to the New Englanders who first settled this part of Northeastern Ohio, a region known as the Connecticut Western Reserve. The Yankees moved south as far as the east-west road in the village;

The first meeting house at Wadsworth, Ohio. Mennonite Library and Archives.

in fact, the southern boundary of the Western Reserve was also the south line of Wadsworth Township and Medina County. This had been a very heavily wooded area. The first tree was felled on March 1, 1814. This opened the settlement of Wadsworth at a natural location of the intersection of two main roads, the only through streets in Wadsworth even today. Forty miles north, Cleveland was incorporating into a village in the same year—incidentally, the same year in which Ephraim Hunsberger was born.

Although the Yankees had reached Wadsworth first, the Pennsylvania Germans (German Reformed and Lutherans) soon began pushing over the line from the east and south. The two unalike groups did not get along well in the beginning and intermarriage was frowned upon at first by both sides. Assimilation began soon, but in 1823 two-thirds of the population was still English, hailing from Connecticut and New York. By 1866 three-fourths of the 2800 people around Wadsworth Center were of German stock and half the adults understood German.

John A. Clark's *Enterprise* pointed out that according to the 1850 census Wadsworth was the third largest town in the county, with 849 males and 773 females (next to Liverpool at the opposite corner with 2203 and Guilford with 1800). Furthermore Wadsworth was assessed higher than anywhere else in the county, with a total value of real and personal property of $743,616. The editor referred enthusiastically to the rich fields surrounding the village and the number of buildings "already completed, some at several thousand dollars each . . . church edifices [are] being repaired, a Town Hall and Union School soon to be erected, a railroad station, an extensive machine shop and planing mill just going into operation, added to the extensive and well-known Carriage Manufactory of H. J. Traver, and a college building nearly completed. . . ." The Fourth-of-July orator was quoted in the newspaper:

> Where is the town but five miles square
> That can with this of ours compare!
> Her fields and fruits are rich and rare,
> Her waters sweet and pure her air—
> Where is the town that can compare?
> We ask, and Echo answers, Where?

Ephraim Hunsberger Arrives

In 1850-1851 several more Mennonite families—Alderfer, Nice, and Oberholzer—came from Montgomery County in Pennsylvania and settled closer to the western edge of the village. They had gone through the schism of 1847 in the Franconia

Wadsworth, Ohio, c. 1880.
Photo: Wadsworth News Banner.

Wadsworth, Ohio, c. 1880.
Photo: Wadsworth News Banner.

Conference, when John Oberholzer and his followers, comprising a fourth of the membership, were excommunicated for advocating Sunday Schools, a church paper, conference minutes, and other innovations for which the main body was not yet ready. The experience was still too fresh and their loyalty to the dissidents too strong for them to feel at home in the congregation they found in Medina County. When in the summer of 1852 two of their number—Rev. Ephraim Hunsberger and his father—came to visit close relatives in Montville Township, this group asked him to preach for them in their homes during his stay. After he returned home, he received a letter from them, asking him to return and start a church for them. As he had a family of seven children and was satisfied where he was, he at first declined the invitation. Later, after consulting with Rev. Oberholzer, he was persuaded that this was a call from God and that he should accept. He was ordained elder by Rev. Oberholzer and in that same month, October 1852, he moved his family to Wadsworth, to a farm west of town, which is now within the city limits.

He immediately began preaching for the little group in the Holmesbrook School until a meeting house could be built a quarter-mile farther northwest on Diagonal Road. With the aid of the Hereford Church back in Montgomery County, they were able to erect a simple frame debt-free and dedicated it October 9, 1853, with representatives present from the mother church. Hunsberger organized the first Mennonite Sunday School in Ohio, introduced Oberholzer's new church periodical—*The Religiöser Botschafter*—to his people, and actively encouraged Conferences with the Mennonites of Canada. When Mennonites in Iowa invited the eastern churches to a conference in 1860, he heartily endorsed the idea in a letter to the *Botschafter*, encouraging any representatives coming through from the East to stop with him in Wadsworth. There was no word for a long time and then one day Oberholzer and Enos Loux showed up unexpectedly at his house on their way to Iowa. He told them that if the conference would decide to meet again, they should extend his invitation for the meeting to be held in Wadsworth. And thus it was that the Articles of Constitution for the new General Conference were sign-

Elizabeth Overholt Hunsberger (1828-1899), the second wife of Ephraim Hunsberger, Wadsworth, Ohio. Mennonite Library and Archives.

Ephraim Hunsberger (1814-1904), Wadsworth, Ohio. Mennonite Library and Archives.

in the little church on Diagonal Road.

Eleven years later, when another conference was held in Wadsworth (the fourth), secretary M. S. Moyer inserted this explanatory paragraph into his report for the local newspaper:

> That the reader may have a better idea of this conference, it may be well for him to know a little of its history. Before the year 1860 nobody under the name General Conference had ever assembled. In this year a conference was held in the West Point, Lee County, Iowa, when four or five churches were represented. Their object was to devise plans to unite more and more this scattered persuasion in order to labor more effectively in spreading the Gospel according to the last commandment of our Savior. This body adopted this name, not so much because all Mennonite churches *were* represented but because it was hoped that the time would once come when all *would* be represented. There has been a steady increase in these twelve years and the prospects are that it will continue to increase in the future.

Wadsworth Selected for a College

Ephraim Hunsberger was thus active in this new Conference from the beginning and from the first was drawn into the deliberations about founding a Mennonite school. He travelled with Daniel Hege in Canada to generate interest and to raise funds, signed his approval of the plans along with other delegates at Conference, was put on the first Committee of Supervisors, was host for their first meeting, and was chosen to be general treasurer. In selecting the final site, the other two members voted for Wadsworth, but Hunsberger modestly voted for Ashland so as not to appear too forward and selfish. He no doubt agreed with the others, however, that Wadsworth was an excellent site for the new school. It was in a beautiful section of the country, it had convenient railroad facilities, and the proposed site on what is now known as College Street was close enough in for convenience but also far enough out that town life would not disturb the students. Unfortunately the price quoted for this land was prohibitive. When he learned later that the whole farm could be bought for a much more reasonable figure, he purchased the entire plot and arrangements were made to sell off lots, reserving 24 acres for the college.

The townspeople could hardly

have known the heights of the idealism, the depths of the frustrations, the earnestness or the inexperience of the founders of this school unless Ephraim Hunsberger confided in them more freely about his problems as supervisor than we think would have been in his nature. To relieve his burden, Jacob G. Kulp, a local Mennonite took over the office of general treasurer. The building operations progressed quite successfully; however, the final costs were much greater than anticipated. During this period of hard times relating to the Civil War, a debt developed that plagued the school throughout its history.

The editor, aware of the debt, nevertheless shared the enthusiasm of the church leaders. He had been a teacher himself. He wrote in the issue of May 18, 1866:

> It was our pleasure a few days since to visit the College located near the village by the Mennonites. This building is erected one half mile west of the center of the village, exactly at the center of the township, the north-south center line passing through the building.
>
> This college is constructed of brick and it is sixty-five feet long standing east and west, thirty eight feet wide and thirty seven feet high, exclusive of the observatory and the belfry, which makes it about twenty six feet higher.
>
> The roof is nearly flat, elevated one inch per foot and is covered with tin. The basement of the college, which was built in the fall of 1864, the west end of which is to be used as a cellar and the east end as a kitchen and eating room." (Sentence left incomplete)
>
> In the spring of 1865 the main building was commenced under the direction of Aaron Kent of Pennsylvania, boss workman. It is now ready for the plasterers, who are to commence their work in a few weeks. The college has already cost about $10,000 and when completed will cost about $4000 more. Sixteen acres of the land also belong to the Society, a portion of which they propose to lay off in streets and town lots as soon as convenient. With this college in the west and the Station (R.R.) . . . In the south, we may reasonably expect that Wadsworth will grow rapidly and become a place of considerable importance.

On August 31, 1866, appeared this article about the Mennonite College:

> The splendid brick building in Wadsworth known by the above name is called an Academy by the Mennonite Society; and it is but one of the buildings that the Society propose to erect if this is proven to be a success. Workmen are busily engaged at the building and the period of its completion is not very far distant.
>
> Mr. Oberholzer, the president of the Committee, is now in the West on business relating to the college and expects before his return to engage the services of two professors to take charge of the institution. The building will be completed in time for the winter term of school and as it is open to all denominations, we hope those who desire to attend a first-class institution of learning will make arrangements to come here this winter. Terms, boarding, etc. will be reasonable, and all can be accommodated.

On October 12, 1866, the paper carried an article about "A New Bell." The bell,

> weighing about eight hundred pounds was placed in the belfry of the Mennonite College on last Wednesday.
>
> The dedicating ceremonies of this Institution will commence tomorrow (Saturday) and continue two days. The General Conference will begin on Monday and probably continue during next week.

Delays in Opening the College

The Conference gave *The Enterprise* a 600-word report of its proceedings. The three short paragraphs relating to the business of the school stand in sharp contrast to the ten pages devoted to it in H. P. Krehbiel's *History of the Mennonite General Conference* (1898). He described from the inside point of view the emotional high points and low points in the efforts of the Conference to explore new directions. He closed his chapter with high praise for the zeal manifested in the new causes and for small beginnings well made. However, the nominated teachers did not accept and the school could not open without teachers.

The *Enterprise* of October 26, 1866, reported:

> As the Mennonites cannot begin their school until spring, they very generously offered their building to the public to hold a select school until that time. The offer has been accepted and Mr. Encell, an experienced teacher, will open a select school in the building on the 12th of November.

Other announcements were made about Rev. J. G. Encell's Select School, which began eventually on November 20 and was to run for fourteen weeks. The cost for the "common English branches" was $4.50, with fifty cents additional for each of the higher English branches, including Latin grammar. Texts were described, among which were the McGuffy Readers. According to the *Memoirs* of Charles Hard (1915), a third-generation Wadsworthian, the attendance was large. Some of the Civil War soldiers, trying to make up some lost time, were among the pupils. But Hard was not impressed with the quality of education: "The scholars seemed to enjoy themselves more than they studied . . . they learned very little."

In the issue of January 25, 1867, we read of plans to consolidate the offices of the Mennonite periodical and the town newspaper:

> This paper, German (*Der Mennonitische Friedensblatt*), has assumed a quarto form and adopted a new title, being formerly called *Christliche Volksblatt*, published at Milford Square, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This is the organ of the denomination that built the College here, and the paper will probably be published at this place at no distant day. That and the *Enterprise* office will probably be consolidated but each

The Wadsworth School, Wadsworth, Ohio, several years after the photograph on the cover. Mennonite Library and Archives.

paper will retain its distinctive features.

Nothing ever again was reported of this plan. On March 29, 1867, appeared the following:

> The Directors of Wadsworth College request us to announce that from a disappointment in their efforts to secure a German teacher, they will not be able to open the school before after (sic) harvest in time for an early fall term. They return their thanks to the community for their indulgence heretofore and hope the community will continue to bear with them in this disappointment.

On September 5, 1867, this is noted:

> It is not definitely decided when the College will begin but we are assured that all possible haste is being made and that the delay is caused by circumstances over which the managers have no control.

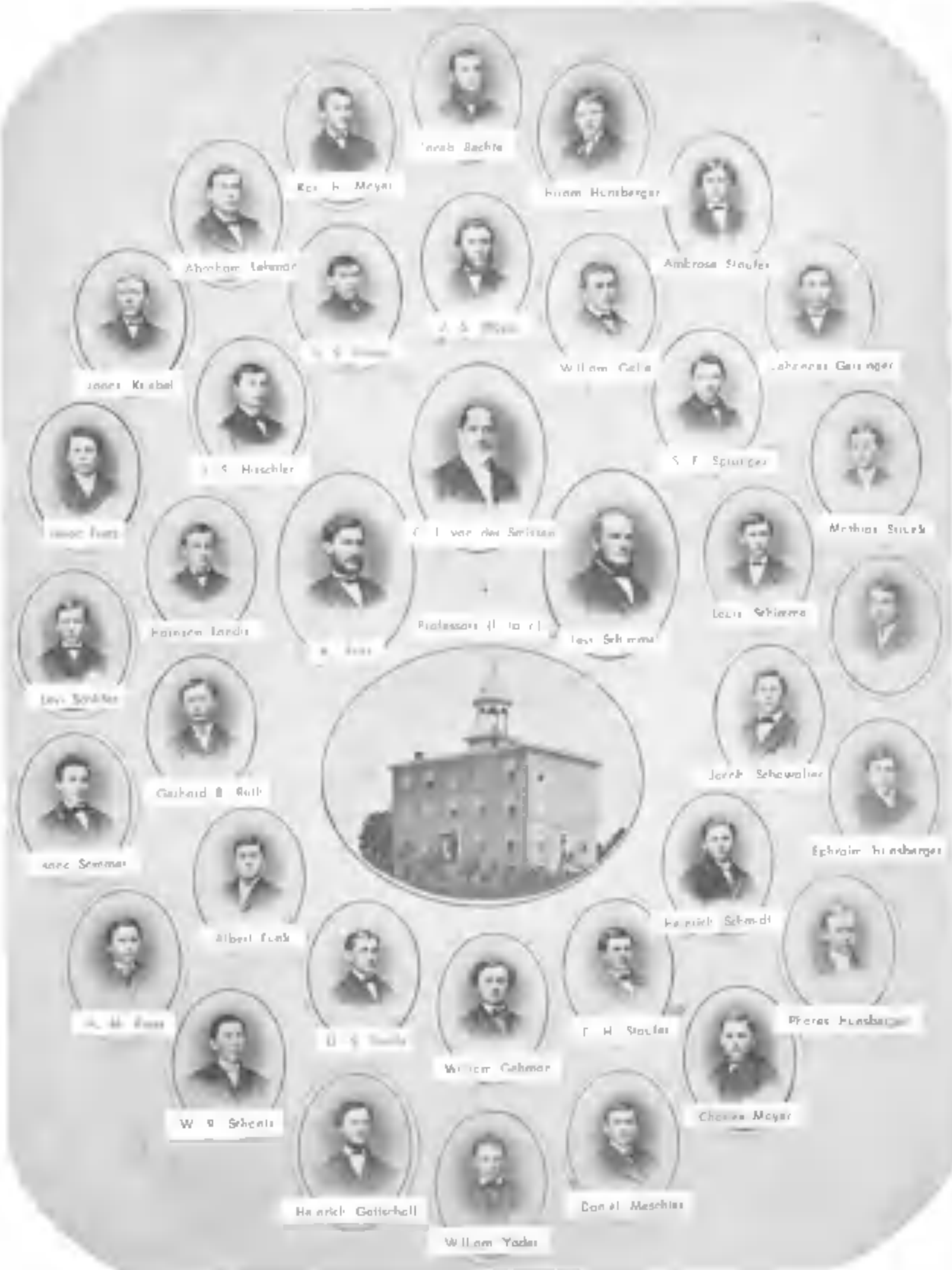
November 21, 1867:

> We learn that the German professor of the Mennonite College has arrived but are not advised when the institution is to open. We presume, however, that arrangements will soon be made and announced.

The College Opens January 2, 1868

Finally on November 28, 1867 came this news:

> WADSWORTH INSTITUTE
>
> This institution (usually called the College) will be opened on Thursday, January 2, Mr. Christian Showalter, principal (German) and Mr. A. P. Fritz, teacher of ancient languages, English literature, etc. Those desiring to avail themselves of its privileges should make arrangements soon. A major announcement appeared on December 19, 1867:
>
> WADSWORTH INSTITUTE
>
> It has been announced that the first term of the Institute will commence Jan. 2, 1868, and will continue twelve weeks, but as many are unadvised as to the real object of the school who will be admitted, the course of study, etc., we have thought it best to make the following announcement:
>
> The founders designed the school to meet the educational wants of the Mennonite Church and to educate young men to conduct their schools; but as it is not probable [that] a large number of this class of students will attend during the first term, others, and also those who do not wish to board in the Institute but desire to study the branches in the English Department, will be admitted. The course of study in this department includes the common English branches, algebra, geometry, Natural History, Physics, Botany, Latin, Greek,


Hiram Hunsberger
Ambrose Staufer
Albert Funk
William Gehman
Heinrich Gottschall
William Yoder

and History equivalent to what is generally read by the Preparatory and Freshman classes in Western colleges. The German course can be obtained by applying to Prof. Showalter.

Tuition will be about the same as at other schools in this vicinity.

A. P. Fritz

Carl Justus van der Smissen Arrives

On January 14, 1869, appeared this casual entry in the *Enterprise*:

> We failed to mention last week that Prof. C. J. van der Smissen (German) has entered upon his duties at the Mennonite Institute in this village. We hear the Professor very favorably spoken of as an eloquent speaker and fine scholar and hope he may find his duties pleasant and agreeable.

No Mennonite periodical would have failed even for one week to mention the coming of Carl Justus van der Smissen. There was nothing casual about the arrival of this dynamic church worker and experienced pastor from Germany, the first theologically trained Mennonite professor in America. He entered upon his duties with considerable vigor and dedication. Six months later the editor wrote the following:

> June 1, after the opening services, Prof. v d Smissen laid his plan of instruction before the conference, the consideration of which consumed the forenoon. We have not received the plan but think it might contain matters of interest to the public and hope it will be printed.

The very Mennonite objectives as spelled out by Prof. van der Smissen probably never reached the editor's desk, for he had come to train Mennonite ministers. He told the General Conference that he understood the purpose of the institution to be "to train the young men to be pious, humble, modest members of our denomination." He "declared in favor of a three year course in which instruction should be given in Bible History, Exegesis, Mennonite Confession of Faith, Church History, History of the Waldenses, Homeletics and Practical Theology." It soon would become clear that the educational emphasis of the new co-principal of the college and the educational emphasis of the town did not necessarily coincide.

There was repeated reorganization of supervisors to meet the needs of the school. At the 1869 General Conference the Managers of the Institute were expanded to six, "three of them, including the president, shall live in the vicinity of the Institute and the remaining three at other points. . . . For the local portion of said committee were appointed Rev. E. Hunsberger, Jacob Kulp, and David S. Shelly." The other three were William Oberholzer of Pennsylvania, Daniel Baer of Illinois, and Jacob Hoch of Canada. The conference minutes report is that "Prof. v d Smissen should send a motherly epistle to the division of the old school Mennonites."

Did this mean the main-line American Mennonites or the local brethren in the older church across the valley? The school was a symbol of the continuing polarization that was going on among the Mennonites of Medina County. Some of the young people at the Guilford end of the settlement were attending the school and also leaving the Mennonite church, neither fact necessarily dependent upon the other.

Ephraim Hunsberger was on good terms with the townspeople and his large family identified themselves with the town particularly well. More and more of his church members were moving into town and entering businesses there. They began speaking English and adopting the ways of their neighbors. Rev. Hunsberger might weep and pray for erring members but he would not excommunicate them. On the other hand, Bishop Rohrer out on Mennonite Hill held the reins more firmly than ever. Perhaps he thought he could point across the valley to show what could happen if regulations were eased. Eventually most of his congregation was taken over by the more conservative Wisler faction in the schism of 1872.

For many months in the newspaper there is a long silence about the college. In January of 1873 various observances of Christmas in the town's churches are described, but the college is not mentioned. In September, 1873, an announcement read:

> Carl J. A. van der Smissen, late of the University of Halle, will preach in the German language at the Reformed Church next Sunday afternoon at three o'clock.

He was not identified as being from the college. We have no real way of knowing how much the townspeople were aware of the storm brewing at the school. Editor Clark, now the mayor, and in 1870-1871 principal of the village school, surely must have known something of the trouble and kept his newspaper mercifully silent.

A Time of Troubles

Professor van der Smissen arrived with the understanding that he was to be head of the school, which was not the interpretation of Prof. Christian Showalter, who thought he was a co-principal. The double-headed system soon became confused and unmanageable. Van der Smissen found it difficult to harmonize his European standards with the cultural lag he found in this Midwest town, nor could he easily make allowances for the weaknesses of his colleagues. The personality clash was so great that a special committee was appointed to attempt some reconciliation. As H. P. Krehbiel tells the story, matters became worse. Strained relations arose between the eastern and the western constituencies. No sooner had this crisis passed when friction developed between the principal and the head of the supervisors. Meanwhile the students were losing interest and respect and attendance was dropping. The climax came on July 8, 1876, with attempted arson by someone unknown, or at least never identified. To top off the personal and financial woes

Faculty and students of Wadsworth School. Mennonite Library and Archives.

Faculty and students of Wadsworth School. Mennonite Library and Archives

of the college came the immigration of thousands of Mennonites from Russia. Many of them needed assistance and the excitement began to drain away attention and resources from the school.

The Conference leaders, who had worked so very hard to establish the school, were of course unwilling to see their efforts come to naught. After a full investigation of the difficulties, they made a detailed report and devised a new plan to save the school. First of all they set up two distinct departments which were to be independent of each other, the one a theology department to train ministers in German and the other conducted in English to train teachers. Schedules were so arranged that students could enroll in both. Hereafter the school would be open to all. This meant admitting women but it could also mean that non-Mennonites might feel more welcome now. The annual charge was advanced to $170 for the more elementary studies; higher branches would entail extra costs. This plan was to be tried for one year, from January 1, 1876, to January 1, 1877, but it was actually in effect for two years.

College Divided and Women Admitted

After a full year of no reference to the college in the local paper, this announcement appeared on December 8, 1875:

> The recent action of the Mennonite Conference admits females to its institution in this place and gives other privileges not heretofore granted. We will give further particulars as soon as the official information is received. We apprehend that this will be a good thing for the institution as well as the community.

The December 15, 1875, *Enterprise* carried an advertisement for the Mennonite Institute, listing an English branch under Prof. A. B. Slutzman and a German branch under C. J. Van der Smissen which "admits both sexes. . . . Location healthful and beautiful. . . . Courses of study varied and complete. . . . Expenses unusually moderate. . . . Special studies such as painting, drawing, languages, and vocal and instrumental music can also be pursued. . . . Instruction also given in all kinds of fancy needlework, and in making leather and wax flowers. . . ."

An editorial in the January 12, 1876 issue included this:

> The Mennonite College in this village has taken a step in the right direction. [It] has issued 4000 catalogues, both German and English, and is starting out finely. We hope to see them prosper beyond calculation. Catalogues will be furnished on application.

Three months later this announcement appeared:

> Reports having reached the principals and committee of the Mennonite College that certain students procured liquor, they request us to say that any conduct of that kind is in violation of the rules and will not be tolerated. All persons are forbidden to furnish liquors of any kind to the students of the institution. No students are allowed to leave the College grounds without permits. . . . In the case referred to the parties had no permission to leave the grounds.

The extant copies of the Wadsworth Enterprise end abruptly with April 27, 1877, six months before the decision was made to close the school. In the last months of the

newspaper record are reports of graduation exercises, a series of reports on the Literary Society, and the first announcements of the community teachers' association organized by the College—all related primarily to the English branch of the Wadsworth Institute.

These reports indicate that the English school was working out well. Thirty students had enrolled initially and by 1877 there were sixty. The two departments apparently worked well together and the school "was regaining its old-time popularity. Prof. van der Smissen's theological department had opened with but three students but three more enrolled soon afterward. The number increased to sixteen that year, although the next year opened with eight. Sister Hillegonde van der Smissen's *Sketches From My Life* (1934) reflect the happy memories of a young person involved with the school in those days—picnics in the woods, singing from the Seminary roof, boiling down maple sap, a merry rat hunt in the stables, a sleighing party. From Krehbiel we learn that even the financial prospects were brightening. Through the energetic efforts of D. Krehbiel there was a debt reduction of $6100. Both Eastern and Western divisions of the Conference expressed confidence in the new arrangement and, although records from the English Department have been lost, it seems that the attendance was as good as at any time in the school's history. A. S. Shelly, who in 1877 succeeded Prof. Sutzman as director of the English department wrote:

> The attendance kept increasing during the two years and the prospects were so encouraging that we would gladly have continued if we could, have rented the building longer. . . . Our last term closed in May, 1879.

The Closing of the College in 1878

When the Conference convened at the end of 1878 and decided to close the school and sell the building and grounds, it must have been a great surprise to the community and to many Mennonites as well. They gave two reasons in the preface of their recommendations for procedure:

> The present double arrangement of our school does not seem to be suited to the development of an educational influence generally beneficial and experience shows that the location is not the best for the continuation of a school in which the German language predominates . . . therefore such a school does not prosper well here.

They were not proposing to close the school as much as to move it, but there were undoubtedly those who heard the death knell. With so many German immigrants arriving west of the Mississippi and entering into the activities of the Conference, it was natural to assume that German theological training should be set up where German was still spoken. Other outlying congregations, struggling with financial obligations, no doubt also felt little enthusiasm to sacrifice for a normal school for Ohio. Thus, suddenly, the first Mennonite college came to an end.

Its end, like its ten-year existence, was viewed from differing vantage points by the townspeople and the General Conference Mennonites. For the town, the normal school went on. Shelly's department rented the building until it was sold to M. D. Dague of nearby Doylestown. In 1879 he bought the building grounds for $5000 in the interests of his son, who moved his Collegiate Institute from Chillicothe, Ohio, to this new location. No record exists to show how long his school continued, but the building was vacant in 1885, when one Professor Eberly from Smithville in Wayne County made a proposition to the town of Wadsworth that he would move his school there if they would buy the old building, convert it into a dormitory, and build another building nearby. After the necessary arrangements were completed, the school opened yet that year with 100 students. By 1888 it received is charter as the Western Reserve Normal College. One of the teachers wrote later: "Attendance increased from year to year. In 1887 the enrollment was 165. In 1890 it was 246. Special classes were maintained for those preparing to teach and many of the surrounding schools drew their teachers from the Normal School." Successful though it was, it apparently did not exist beyond 1896 nor have we found any reasons for its discontinuance.

The empty building, used for storage and other purposes from time to time, was considered as a site for the proposed Central College which was established in 1899 at Bluffton. The old building was condemned in 1924 and torn down. When Dr. S. F. Pannabecker in later years was in the community and sought some kind of memorial from the old building that he might take to the Mennonite Biblical Seminary at Elkhart, the only thing that could be found was a door frame that a farmer had stored in his barn. The old bell, which lay neglected for a number of years beside the new building, was rescued by the principal of the school, George Mayer, who wrote an article about the building and led the effort to have the bell anchored in granite in front of the school, now known as Isham School. Only the name of College Street and this old bell, now sprayed with aluminum paint, remain as visible evidence of the first Mennonite institution of higher learning in America.

The Mennonite perspective of the Seminary, their first college in America, was quite different. Great sacrifices had been made. Seventeen small churches had raised at least $31,700 for its support, Summerfield alone contributing $5400. If Wadsworth was comparatively untouched by the struggle and sacrifice, neither could the town fully realize how far reaching the influence and how significant the immeasurable rewards. These students blazed the trail for the next Mennonite generation and bridged the gap between the old untrained lay ministry, with narrower horizons, and the trained pioneers in the later programs of missions, higher education evangelism, publications, church unity, and the rediscovery of Anabaptist discipleship. The Wadsworth Seminary was not established in vain.

The Kauffman Museum

by Steve Friesen

Steve Friesen is Curator of the Kauffman Museum, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

The Kauffman Museum is the synthesis of two separate museum developments unrelated to each other until the later 1930s. While the Museum of Natural History and American Relics at Bethel College struggled through the first decades of the 20th century, Charles Kauffman was building a museum in his house in South Dakota. Finally in 1940, due largely to the efforts of Ed. G. Kaufman, the two museums merged and became the Kauffman Museum of Bethel College.

The Museum of Natural History and American Relics was the oldest of the two museums. The first reference to it was in the December, 1896, *School and College Journal*, which stated it would eventually contain "a herbarium of plants, a cabinet of insects and other zoological specimens, collections of metal and minerals, etc." The news item further stated that the museum consisted mainly of a collection of Indian relics given by H. R. Voth and a stuffed owl. It requested donations of other specimens and curious relics.[1] The remains of a mammoth found in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, and threshing implements were among the major acquisitions during the museum's first decade of existence.

In 1910 a room in the Administration Building was set aside for the purpose of housing the museum. More natural science specimens were added and a small paleontological collection was purchased. The most important acquisition at this time was the donation of the Deknatel-Van Der Smissen pipe organ in 1910. P. J. Wedel of the Bethel science faculty became curator of the museum in 1911 and filled that position for six years.[2]

Prof. J. H. Doell became curator of the museum from 1916 until 1924. After 1924 little appears to have been done with the museum until 1932 when Ed. G. Kaufman became president of Bethel College. A museum committee was appointed and the museum was moved into five rooms in the Science Hall basement. In 1938, President Kaufman began negotiations with Charles Kauffman to move his museum to Bethel College.[3]

Charles Kauffman's museum had its origin in 1907 when he completed a correspondence course offered by the Northwestern School of Taxidermy.[4] After his marriage to Fannie Schrag in 1908 he bought

Charles Kauffman (1882-1961)
Photo: Kauffman Museum

P. J. Wedel working in the Bethel College museum around 1915. The museum was housed in a room in the basement of the administration Building. Photo: Mennonite Library and Archives.

Interior of the 1875 log cabin and the pioneer family carved by Charles Kauffman.
Photo: Kauffman Museum

Charles Kauffman puts the finishing touches on several African monkeys which he mounted.
Photo: Kauffman Museum

Foreign and domestic animals on the second floor of Alumni Hall. Although Kauffman mounted most of the specimens in the Museum, many of these larger specimens were purchased.
Photo: Kauffman Museum

a farm near Freeman, South Dakota, which soon housed a growing museum. Beginning initially with mounted specimens, soon Kauffman's collection expanded to include a variety of historical items.

Certainly the largest item added to Kauffman's collection at this time was a log cabin. Discovered on his farm concealed under ordinary siding, the cabin was built in 1875 by Mennonite settlers. Kauffman hand carved the figures of a pioneer family, the parents reportedly modeled after himself and his wife, and placed them in the restored cabin.[5]

Charles Kauffman was an exceptional woodcarver. The log cabin family and an American Indian family were carved primarily with a hatchet and a pocket knife. He carved several dioramas while in South Dakota and later while at Bethel College. One of his carvings is of George Washington mounted on a white horse.

Kauffman was also a painter. Although he painted some still lifes and illustrated mottoes, his best work was done on the backdrops for his animals. He felt that the animals should be placed in a setting simulating their natural environment. His skill in painting was particularly suited for accomplishing this purpose.

Kauffman's museum in South Dakota grew rapidly. Initially housed in a second floor bedroom, it took over the second story and eventually the entire house after the Kauffmans built a new home.[6] In addition to the specimens he mounted himself, Charles Kauffman also bought a Bengal tiger and a Polar bear during this period.

By 1938, when he was approached by President Kauffman, Charles Kauffman's museum was again outgrowing its home and he was open to moving it to a college. Both Freeman Junior College and Bethel College were interested in acquiring Kauffman's museum. But Bethel College's offer was more attractive to Kauffman and the College was more centrally located in the United States so Charles Kauffman moved his collection there in 1940.

Transported in the course of three trips, the total cost of which was $229.01, Kauffman's museum was housed in the remodeled Alumni Hall.[7] The collections from Bethel's previous museum were added to the


VCC
1903
BC 105

These late Victorian lamps are part of a lighting device collection that spans several centuries.
Photo: Steve Friesen

Kauffman collection and the Kauffman Museum opened to the public on March 10, 1941.[8]

For the next 20 years Charles Kauffman aided by his wife served as curator of the Kauffman Museum. With a much larger and varied constituency the collections of the Museum expanded to include a variety of areas. His Sioux artifacts soon were joined by items from the Cheyenne, the Hopi, and the Navajo—donated by Mennonite missionaries. From the mission fields of South America, Africa, China, and India came such articles as clothing, household utensils, farm tools, and musical instruments. Samovars and other Russian items brought by the Mennonites were also added to the collection.

The Kauffmans were quite interested in the history of technology and acquired a variety of tools, implements, and transportation devices. A Model T Ford, a 1911 Cutting, buggies, and several bicycles were among a group of items illustrating early transportation. One of the more impressive acquisitions was a Lincoln Paige biplane bought by two Waltner brothers in 1927 and given to the Museum in 1944.

The decorative arts collection assembled by the Kauffmans includes calligraphy, fraktur, and paintings by Mennonite artists. Charles Kauffman also did ornamental taxidermy which involved the use of fur, horns, and hoofs in the construction of chairs, tables, and hat stands.

Finally, the natural history collections experienced great expansion during this period. Kauffman's favorite animals were birds, of which he collected close to 400 native species and 100 foreign species. Among these were included several endangered species such as the whooping crane and one species presently extinct, the Passenger pigeon. The nearly 100 mammals included specimens ranging in size from a shrew to a buffalo. Fish, reptiles, insects, coral, shells, rocks, and minerals rounded out the natural history collection.[9]

Under the direction of the Kauffmans the Museum grew until in 1959 an annex was added to Alumni Hall, an enterprise funded primarily through the Newton Chamber of Commerce. Two years later Charles Kauffman died on December 29, 1961. The Kauffman Museum had been the work of practically his entire lifetime and it was out of that lifetime that most of the collections emerged. He molded the nucleus of the Museum and provided an impetus for its collections that continues today.

After the death of Charles, Mrs. Kauffman continued the work with the Museum until she retired in 1964. John Schmidt, who had been working with Mrs. Kauffman at the Museum since 1962, became the new director and continued in that position until August 1976.

By the Sixties, approaches toward museums had changed somewhat from the approaches that were current to the time Charles Kauffman was molding his museum. Professional training was available for museum workers, better exhibit techniques had been developed, and there was increased interaction between museums throughout the country. During his years with the Kauffman Museum, John Schmidt worked on bringing it this more professional orientation.

He attended a variety of seminars on museum work and took part in professional museum organizations. He also expanded the Museum's reference library to include works on items within the collection and on various museum techniques. John also began to define the various policies of the Museum, including the limiting acquisitions to objectives more closely relating to the purpose of the Museum.

Close cooperation with various anthropology classes conducted at Bethel led to the erection of several new exhibits: "Indians of America," "Agriculture in Equitorial Africa," and "Pende Masks." The "Pende Masks" exhibit was the result of the donation of 149 masks from the Pende tribe in the Congo by Henry Goertz and the 1969 graduating class. This acquisition in 1971 and the donations of a 1908 Clyde Silent Car and a 1926 Cadillac were some of the larger additions to the Museum while John Schmidt was director.

In 1973 a consulting team from the National American Studies Faculty visited the Museum and held a museum workshop based on its collection. The team observed:

> The NASF representatives were also impressed—overwhelmed is the word—by the extraordinary collection housed in the museum and archives. This incredibly rich material could and should make Bethel College a center for scholarly interest and study on a nationwide basis.[10]

Among the results of the workshop three exhibits constructed by Bethel students using the textile, gun, and natural history collections.

During the Mennonite Centennial in 1974, John Schmidt and the Museum were actively involved in many of the events. The Museum's major contribution was a large exhibit dealing with the Mennonites and Wheat Technology. Two Bethel students researched and compiled an informative pamphlet to accompany the exhibit.

Schmidt was responsible for a variety of other temporary exhibits and projects involving the extension of the Museum into the surrounding community. Charles Kauffman and the early founders of the Bethel College museum gave the Kauffman

A 1908 Clyde car, one of six early automobiles in the Museum's transportation collection.
Photo: Kauffman Museum

Molded glass caster set and cut glass inkwell.
Photo: Tim Voth

Museum its life; John Schmidt extended that life and gave it a contemporary quality.

The years of 1976 and 1977 have been and will continue to be years of upheaval and change for the Kauffman Museum. Due to plans for locating a new Bethel College Student Center on the site of Alumni Hall, Kauffman Museum is being moved to a new location. As the move from South Dakota to Kansas marked a major transition for the museums of Bethel College and Charles Kauffman thirty six years ago, so this new move will mark a major transition and transformation for the Kauffman Museum.

FOOTNOTES

1 "Bethel Happenings," *School and College Journal*, 1 (Dec., 1898), p. 91.
2 P. J. Wedel, *The Story of Bethel College*, (North Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Press, 1954), pp. 151-152.
3 *Ibid.*, pp. 481-482.
4 The Northwestern School of Taxidermy Diploma, May 10, 1907. In the Kauffman Museum collection.
5 Adolph Waltner, "Charles J. Kauffman: A Life of Determination, Sacrifice, and Accomplishment," *The Freeman Courier*, LIX (April 3, 1962), p. 1.
6 Glen Harder, *Kauffman Museum* (Unpubl. paper submitted to Bethel College, 1953), p. 2. In the Kauffman Museum files.
7 Letter from Ed. G. Kaufman to Charles J. Kauffman, Aug. 8, 1910. In the Kauffman Museum files.
8 Wedel, p. 482.
9 Edna L. Ruth, "A Museum That Went to College," *Nature*, LIX (Feb., 1956), p. 92.
10 Irma Funk and Joanne Zingrando, *National American Studies Faculty Community Museums Programs' Kauffman Museum Workshop*, (Unpubl. report submitted to Bethel College, 1973), p. 2.

Babylonian cuneiform, terra cotta cone, and tablet. Dating from around 2,066 B.C., they are some of the oldest objects in the Museum.
Photo: Steve Friesen

KANSAS SUN

He worked under the Kansas sun,
one hundred degrees of Kansas sun;
plowed prairie under Kansas sun;
looked until his eyes were dazzled
by Kansas sun, and dreamed under Kansas sun,
and his dreams came to something; harvesting
Red Turkey wheat under Kansas sun;
four children born under Kansas sun.
Now sons look at dazzled sun,
sons harvest wheat under Kansas sun.

WHO THEY WERE

The buffalo grass my parents walked
and cut for sod for their first home
and busted and harrowed
and sowed Turkey Red Wheat on
and harvested thousands of bushels
leans south today
blown by rare Oklahoma North wind.
The gravestones tell who they were:
Daniel Suderman:
Born: September 6, 1867.
Died: May 14, 1938.
Margaret Becker Suderman:
Born: December 19, 1875.
Died: May 22, 1968.
But the wind which whispers in the grass
says more than gravestone
who they were:
hardy people who knew good years
as neighbors and disaster as family.
Simple people acquainted
with sky-conquered land,
with sandburs, wheat, winter,
a simple clap board church
without a steeple.
Wind blowing against that church
on the outside,
God's spirit blowing
over them on the inside.

BAKED BREAD OF FELLOWSHIP

It's been almost thirty years since I belonged
to a Mennonite church, but when I hear a name
like Bartel or Friesen, or Balzer I'm still
curious to know whether they're Mennonites
or like me a birthright Mennonite still proud
of an Anabaptist heritage. I almost always find
a way to ask. If they are, or have been,
Mennonite, I felt a thrill, a sense of fellowship,
a shared history of plume moss and pacifism.
Everytime I meet a Mennonite I look once more,
more carefully, at what I never want
to take for granted. It may seem stupid,
but I don't think so; in a world where
so many have lost their identity, it's good
to know the mutual aid of friendly pfeffernesse
and faspa to help you understand your own name
better and its family ties, and to separate you
from the crowd and help you know, if not
who and what you are, at least where you
came from and what you've taken with you.
I'd rather belong to a small community
sharing simple home baked bread of brotherhood
than to the large society shaving the
indigestion of millions of McDonalds.

Poems by Elmer F. Suderman

WHERE?

Where is the boy of yesterdays,
the child so soon become the man?
What is the time that passed between?
In retrospect a fleeting span
of suns and clouds, joys and strains,
of hopes not always realized;
Perennial seeds to spring the dream.

And fears there were to overcome,
high hurdles in life's Marathon
that stitched their dreads into the years,
razed the heart, welled the tears;
they flexed the sinews of the will
that shaped the subtle web of character
in boy so soon to be the man.

We mourn the boy so light of foot,
that featherweight so incorporeal,
birdframe so intent on soaring;
more spirit he than flesh and bone,
the earth his springboard more than home.
Mourn those eyes so bright from inner light,
undimmed by any depth of sorrow,
laughter iridescing tears that purled,
eyes open wide to nature's wonderworld,
curiosity alive for his tomorrow—
Shall we still find him in the man?

Jacob Sudermann

Delbert Wiens. "From the Village to the City—A Grammar for the Languages We Are." *Direction*, October 1973—January 1974 issues, II, No. 3 and 4, pp. 98-149.

"From the Village to the City" is a 50 page essay which was first published in the October 1973 and January 1974 issues of *Direction*. *Direction* is a quarterly, published cooperatively by Mennonite Brethren Schools. Delbert Wiens is Associate Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at Pacific College. He completed a Bachelor of Divinity at Yale Divinity School and holds a PhD in the History of Culture from the University of Chicago.

The subtitle of the essay is "A Grammar for the Languages That We Are." This subtitle refers to the central metaphor of the work. The author points out that there is a close analogy between the way we learn languages and the way we learn "life" or culture. The essay begins with an account of how the early Russian Mennonites in America spoke Low German as their mother tongue, used High German for worship and learning, and learned English for commerce with the world. Each of these languages was learned in a different way and to a different degree. Each symbolizes a degree of familiarity and identity with a life style or culture. A culture may be built into our very fabric so that we are not even aware of it (mother tongue), or it may have a complementary and cooperative relationship to a more primary culture, or finally it may be known from the outside, as it were, by translation.

The thesis of the essay is the Mennonites of today are living in relationship to three different cultures, those of the village, the town, and the city; and that different people have different relationships to each of these cultures. "We Mennonite Brethren now 'speak' several cultural 'languages' and a host of dialects. We will not solve any of our problems unless we come to terms with this."

Using the basic insight provided by the central analogy, the author explores a host of topics centering around Christian nurture and education. In the course of this exploration, one finds a great many helpful and sometimes surprising insights. One is tempted to quote a good many but one will have to suffice. "Our colleges are products of the town attempting to recreate the context of the village in order to confront the city."

The work is somewhat weakened by attempting to cover too many topics and failing to have a clear central focus. Surprisingly, there is no reference to pacifism even though the notion of life style is so central to the essay. Though the work is written with the Mennonite Brethren Church in mind, it is clearly applicable in most essentials to all Mennonites who are in the acculturation process. In its main outline the essay is a great success and should be read by all who can still remember the "village" or who know those who can.

Marion Deckert
Bethel College

John L. Ruth. *'Twas Seeding Time. A Mennonite View of the American Revolution*. Scottdale, Penn. and Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1976.

Fresh from the completion of a 450th anniversary biography of Conrad Grebel, John L. Ruth has penned this popular history of Mennonites in the American Revolution. It is a spirited book, fluently and evocatively written, with the additional merit of being dramatic in tone while scrupulous in interpretation. The quietistic Mennonites and Amish of Pennsylvania, inheritors of William Penn's beneficence, were a frontier people in 1776, with little or no education, much labor to perform, and the usual concerns of carving out a living in a time of Indian/white troubles and political agitation which threatened the King's peace. When the revolutionary wave crested, they sympathized with the Hanoverian princes become English monarchs who had facilitated their settlement. Defenseless Christians had no calling to undermine political authority, they reasoned, but had rather obey governments as far as Scripture allowed. If this predisposed them to feel partial toward English rule, it did not warrant a violation of their historic nonresistance. On the issue of military service the pious farmers of Lancaster and vicinity stood with their forebears. Like the later Russian Mennonites of 1917, with whom their experience might profitably be compared, the Mennonites in the War for Independence strove not to

fight, and as a consequence some of them suffered harassment, loss of property, and eventual exile.

While depicting the revolutionary challenge to Mennonite pacifism, Ruth raises issues which have relevance to the rest of American Mennonite history. One is the problem of Mennonite social distinctiveness, which in times of crisis has been seen as the result of congenital group ignorance. Ruth cites the wartime opinions of Dr. Benjamin Rush as to the intellectual, cultural, and by implication, religious inferiority of Mennonites. Certainly the record of Canadian and American Mennonites in World War I suggests that when Mennonites have been attacked for sticking to one ideal, pacifism, they have also endured the kind of derisive abuse which in this country is normally associated with the plight of poor minorities of color. Secondly, Ruth is explicit about the psychological cost exacted by the revolutionary turmoil, specifically the Funkite schism, which though rooted in Bishop Christian Funk's willingness to accede to an American loyalty oath was cemented in petty personal disputes that somehow seemed to grow larger and out of proportion to the real issues involved.

The title of this book, *Times Seeding Time*, derives from the author's fantasy, eloquently stated in the postscript, of simple farmers who despite inadequacies are still capable of acting on their best motives. To plant is better than to kill despite the latest rationale for skirting moral imperatives, and Ruth's best passages are of a "sheepish" people who instinctively, "almost inarticulately," hold to their core beliefs. This was their glory: that however much the Mennonites of Pennsylvania wavered or muddled, as for instance over their preference for the stability of British rule, they resolved to be peaceful men with no quarrel which could ever sanction recourse to arms. And yet one question is left unanswered because it extends beyond the Revolutionary War framework. Colonial Mennonites favored the English out of a conviction that they were committed to the established authority or because they doubted the success of the rebellion. Is it possible that in another revolution, where the government represents an unquestionable tyranny not present in the colonies, that nonresistance could bolster a government antithetical to human justice? If so, what are the mechanisms which expand on the means and ends of a life which seeks to promote love and return good for evil? This is a continuing problem of Mennonites in an age of revolutions, a problem first faced in its modern form by the Funks, Fretzes, Alderfers, and Longacres of what was then an outpost and is now a nation.

Allan Teichroew
Washington, D.C.

John B. Toews, *The Mennonites in Russia from 1917 to 1930. Selected Sources*. Published by the author, 1975, 503 pp.

The publishing of these sources is a follow-up of the author's book covering the same subject matter entitled *Lost Fatherland*, which appeared in 1967. Archival materials have been collected and preserved in Mennonite communities, in homes and more recently in archives with the provision of classifying, preserving and making them available for use. Very few have thus far been published. The author must be congratulated in this new venture, which hopefully, can be continued by others in significant fields of research. Published selected sources like these not only provide useful information but can guide those interested in the field to the much larger archival holdings than those selected for print.

In the preface to *Lost Fatherland* the author stated in 1967 that he had made use of three major archives, among which the A. A. Friesen collection at the Bethel College Historical Library was first in significance, since it "provided the most important source for this investigation." The reviewer remembers vividly how he went to A. A. Friesen in Northern Saskatchewan to visit him and how, as a result, the archival materials were deposited in the Mennonite Library and Archives.

At that time this was one of the few places where provision for their care was available. Many other collections in this field were here already and others have been added since. Among those who have made most use of this collection are H. B. Janz, Frank H. Epp and John B. Toews. Frank H. Epp's book, *Mennonite Exodus*, published in 1962, was in part also based on these sources with the focus on the Canadian Board of Colonization with David Toews as the moving agent. John B. Toews' *Lost Fatherland*, 1967, centers around H. B. Janz and his work in Russia. Both cover the same field and time, namely the post World War I era between 1921-1929 dealing with the conditions among the Mennonites in Russia, American Mennonite aid and the migration of some to Canada.

John B. Toews spent a year in Kansas in teaching and research and gathering materials in the archives which he continued and which led to the publications of *Lost Fatherland* and the *Selected Sources* to which we are calling attention here. This era of the 1920's produced many documents and memoirs and much correspondence in Russia, Germany, Canada and the United States. Some have appeared in print and many are stored in archives and others have disappeared or are not accessible. The author lists over twenty agencies which had something to do with the Mennonites of this period and provided sources of information. Among the archival sources not mentioned are the large collections of P. C. Hiebert, chairman of the Mennonite Central Committee, and H. A. Fast.

In the chapter, "Revolution, Civil War and Destruction," selected sources of conditions in the major Mennonite settlements from the Ukraine to Siberia are presented. In "Bread from Abroad" sources document the aid brought to the Mennonites and their effort to rebuild their agricultural tradition. The chapter, "Emigration," features the

era of migration to Canada from 1922 to 1926 including the conditions of the settlements, efforts to restore and maintain their schools, congregational life, conferences and other activities. The last chapter, "Flight to Moscow," presents documents about conditions which led the Mennonites in a mass movement to Moscow. Of these some left Russia and others remained since there was no country willing to have them. It could be pointed out that in the "Table of Contents" he lists under each chapter heading the names of the writers, dates, places with the code where the original source is now located. The "Glossary" gives the code for all organizations that were involved in the transactions featured in the sources. In the preface the compiler gives the reasons for selecting the sources and making them available adding that in "the interests of documentary accuracy" he prints them "exactly as they appeared in the original texts."

The well-written brief introduction calls attention to major sources and where they are located, followed at the end by a list of abbreviations, which identify the collection without being specific in some instances where they are located. The chapter headings are in the English language with a German version in smaller type. With one exception all chapter headings are followed by a brief introduction in the English language. The text of all documents is in the German language; this would mean that those in the Russian language were either translated into German or they were not included. The book contains valuable information about various conference sessions and some statistics. The index includes subjects and places but not persons.

Anabaptist scholars have produced numerous publications containing writings and documents of the early centuries. Franz Isaac published a volume of sources devoted to the Mennonites in Russia during the 19th century. This book by John B. Toews is a pioneering effort in this field devoted to the 20th century.

Cornelius Krahn
Bethel College

Anabaptist Beginnings, (1523-1533), A Source Book, Edited by William R. Estep, Jr. Neuwkoop, Holland: B. De Graaf, 1976.

This book is exactly what the subtitle implies. Basically, it breaks no new ground since there is little in it, apart from the editor's general introduction, and his editorial comments on various selections, that has not been previously published elsewhere. Why then did the publisher consider this book important enough as a publishing venture to list it as volume XVI in his series titled *Bibliotheca Humanistica and Reformatorica*?

The answer to the above question is simple enough. Dr. Estep has here gathered together into one volume eighteen documents which may well be considered as primary sources for Anabaptist beginnings. While these documents were previously available only in widely scattered places, and in most cases were accessible only to the more advanced scholars who could read the archaic sixteenth century German; or in some cases, Latin.

In this particular volume, all of these primary Anabaptist sources appear in English translations. Where English translations of these documents were available, such as John C. Wenger's translation of Conrad Grebel's Programatic Letters of 1524, or Pilgrim Marpeck's Confession of Faith, 1532, for example, Dr. Estep made use of such translations, giving proper credit to the translator in his editorial comments. Where English translations of the Latin or German originals were not available, they were supplied by the editor himself.

The beginning student in Anabaptist history cannot be other than grateful to Dr. Estep for compiling, translating, and editing *Anabaptist Beginnings* in a language that he/she can read and understand. The more advanced scholar will find Dr. Estep's introductions to the eighteen documents helpful, though he/she may at times wish to quarrel with Dr. Estep's interpretations.

As the author states in the Introduction, he assumed, and perhaps intended that this book would be used as a supplement to his earlier narrative history of sixteenth century Anabaptism, *The Anabaptist Story*. For this purpose the present volume should serve admirably.

While this reviewer has no difficulty in accepting either Balthasar Hubmaier or Hans Denck as belonging to the category of normative Anabaptism, it does seem to him that this rather brief book, 172 pages in all, is rather too heavily weighted with selections from the writings of Balthasar Hubmaier to be truly representative of Anabaptist beginnings as a whole. Seven of the eighteen selections that make up this primer of primary Anabaptist sources are from Hubmaier's pen. One might raise the question whether so many selections from the patron saint of Baptists, in a book titled, *Anabaptist Beginnings*, does not reveal the editor's Baptist bias rather too strongly?

While I am personally happy to see a selection from the writings of Hans Denck included in this anthology, I am puzzled as to why Dr. Estep has chosen the so called *Widerruf*, written toward the end of Denck's tragically short life, rather than one of the following: *Ordnung Gottes*, *was geredet sei dass die Schrift sagt*, or *Vom Gesetz Gottes*. These were written at the height of his controversy with the Lutheran clergy over predestination, bondage of the will, and the function of the Law. This controversy was certainly fueled by Denck's Anabaptist as well as his mystical persuasions.

Estep accepts without question the view of Irvin Horst that Anabaptism spread to England, and that the number of Anabaptist martyrs under Bloody Mary's reign, exceeded the number of Lollards executed by Henry the XIII (p. 5 of Introduction). Not only does Estep accept this point of view, but also holds that the English Baptists, which emerged out of English Separatism, as well as the Brownists and Barrowists before them, were strongly influenced by their Anabaptist or Mennonite congregations. Of the latter he says the following: "The Anabaptist witness in England was not without effect. The Brownists

and Barrowists were apparently dedicated to the Anglicans for their recruits, to the Puritans for the substance of their theology, and to the Anabaptists for some aspects of their ecclesiology. *A more important fact often overlooked is that the very concept of the gathered Church, the heart of Separatism, was evidently Anabaptist in origin and not a conscious product of the Magisterial Reform.* None of the Reformers developed an ecclesiology of churches composed of committed disciples only." (p. 5 Introduction).

Estep also maintains that the English Baptists, Smyth and Helwis, withdrew from English Separatism, only after their direct contact with the Waterlander Mennonite congregation in Holland after 1608 (p. 5 Introduction).

Estep's evidence for this direct or indirect influence of Anabaptism upon English Separatism, as well as the English Baptist movement, is convincing to this reviewer. Less convincing is his view that this influence continues indirectly through the Pietist movements. Estep's summary of the common characteristics of the Free Church Movement, p. 12 of the Introduction, is helpful and provocative. His "broader conclusions," which he says "assert themselves from this brief historical sketch," provide a fitting way to bring this review to a conclusion.

1. It appears that no Free Church stands outside the stream of Christian history. The dependence of Free Churches upon prior antecedents, recognized or not, is an ever-recurring fact.
2. Indebtedness to the biblical witness is the common denominator always present.
3. Apparently theological and spiritual renewal waits not for new structures so much as for the personal discovery and appropriation of a biblical faith.
4. Given the absence of coercion, Christianity is capable of forging new forms to meet the ever-changing conditions of a new age.
5. A certain degree of accommodation on the part of any Christian movement appears necessary if it is to speak effectively to its world. An inflexible unbending stance condemns Christianity to a fossilized existence and a rejected witness. On the other hand, with compromise at the point of its basic integrity, Christianity easily becomes captive to its culture and thereby loses its soul to a new paganism that feigns itself Christian. Thus, the age-old tension between Christ and culture refuses to resolve itself. And Christianity, in whatever form it appears, is forced to determine what is *adiaphora* and what is absolutely essential to its witness. The following documents reveal how the Anabaptists in the dawn of the Free Church movement met and attempted to resolve that historical dilemma. (pp. 12-13 Introduction).

Dr. Estep is compiling and editing this book, and De Graaf in publishing the same, have provided the Christian Church universal, and Free Church Movement in particular, with one more tool whereby the temptation of contemporary Christianity to become captive to its culture and thus lose its soul to a new paganism which feigns to be Christian, may be resisted.

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The Concept of Grace in the Radical Reformation by Alvin J. Beachy. Volume XVII, *Bibliotheca Humanistica & Reformatorica*, Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1977. Pp. xvi plus 196, plus Appendix, bibliography, and index, 197-238. Hfl. 90.00

The major part of this volume was first written as a doctoral dissertation at Harvard Divinity School in 1960 under the direction of Professor George H. Williams, who has now written the foreword for it. Upon the encouragement of friends, and the general conviction that the central thesis of the work has not thus far been superseded, the author agreed to submit it for publication without change, but added an Appendix of 43 pages to continue the dialog with literature which has appeared on the subject since he first worked with it.

The decision to publish was a happy one. There are still relatively few volumes dealing exclusively with one aspect of Radical Reformation theology and which do it as competently as this one does. The author knows sixteenth century Reformation history well and moves with skill among the seven representatives he has chosen for his study as well as in the thought of Luther and Calvin. He is cautious in drawing his conclusions and does so only after meticulous work in both primary and secondary materials. It comes as something of a surprise to this reviewer that a landmark work such as this is, which has been available in xerox and microfilm form for a good many years now, has not received broader recognition and reaction.

The thesis of the author is that the concept of grace was as central to the theology of Dutch and South German Anabaptism as to the theology of Luther and Calvin, but that the two "camps" were working with a very different understanding of its nature and meaning. Whereas the Magisterial Reformers read Paul in Augustinian perspective and were led thereby to both bondage of the will and double predestination, which necessitated a forensic understanding of grace, the Radical Reformation had a distinct preference for the gospels in working out their soteriology, especially the Gospel and Epistles of John, and consequently came to understand salvation as an ontological change within the believer rather than a forensic change of status before God. This presupposed less of a dichotomy between nature and grace than that held by Luther and Calvin and, therefore, a different understanding of original sin. Grace could not be earned but the process of divinization was central to the soteriology of a significant number of the leaders of the Radical Reformation. Grace is defined as God's act of regeneration by which the divine image in man is renewed and by which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the believer becomes a participant in the divine nature.

In contrast to most studies of Anabaptist theology this one does not discuss the Swiss Brethren but is based on the writings of six Dutch and South German Anabaptists: Menno Simons, Dirk Philips, Melchior Hoffmann, Hans Denck, Pilgrim Marbeck, and Balthasar Hubmaier—and one Spiritualist, Caspar Schwenckfeld. The problem which the thesis addresses itself to is identified in Chapter I through an analysis of the accusations of legalism, Pelagianism, universalism, work-righteousness—and an evaluation of the Anabaptist replies to these charges. This is followed in Chapter II by an investigation of Anabaptist anthropology and its implications for grace. Chapter III discusses the appropriation of grace through conversion and regeneration, as well as the significance of the celestial flesh Christology, and Chapter IV applies the definition of grace to the church. Chapter V defines the hermeneutics which both lead to and arise from this conception of grace, and Chapter VI tests the implications of this view of grace for ethics. Chapter VII offers a summary and evaluation statement.

Grace as ontological transformation rather than as objective infusion (Roman Catholicism) or "objective imputation (Luther and Calvin) is not a new insight to those who have worked with Dutch Anabaptist sources, especially the writings of Dirk Philips, but the implications which the author draws from this go beyond any previous work. Grace becomes a cornerstone of Anabaptist theology. It is here that the author finds the roots of voluntarism and its antecedent free will and, consequently, of the ethic of discipleship. From this premise also follows the distinctive Radical Reformation view of the Old Testament as promise and the new as fulfillment—by taking the incarnation seriously. Believers' baptism, and the rejection of infant baptism, is based upon the anthropology underlying this view of grace; children inherit not only original sin but also the *lux naturalis* (light of nature) as that part of creation which was not destroyed in the fall. It is this emphasis which has also been stressed by Dutch theologian J. A. Oosterbaan in his assertion that the work of grace began at creation, not at redemption, and that grace is nothing less than the creating love of God itself, an integral part of his divine nature. ("Grace in Dutch Mennonite Thought" in C. J. Dyck, Editor, *A Legacy of Faith*, Newton: Faith and Life Press, 1962, pp. 69-85).

Particularly provocative, and encouraging further reflection is the conclusion that the well-known Anabaptist-Mennonite church-world dualism is likewise rooted in this understanding of grace. The divinization corollary of *imitatio Christi* makes the disciple keenly aware of the clash of the earthly and heavenly kingdom claims upon him, leading at times to enduring suffering, to withdrawal from society, and to a consequent limitation of his feeling of responsibility for the social order. Government is necessary, for example, and part of the will of God but the disciple cannot become involved in it. This approach provides fresh material for the study of nonresistance.

The bulk of the Appendix is given to an analysis of the question whether Anabaptism was the radicalization of Protestantism, as Harold S. Bender and others proposed, of whether it was a survival of medieval mysticism. The work of Kenneth Davis, Gottfried Seebass, and especially Werner O. Packull's recently published *Mysticism and the Early South German-Austrian Anabaptist Movement 1525-1531* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1977) amply confirm the author's finding that Dutch, and especially South German Anabaptist roots do indeed go back to the *Theologia Deutsch* and Tauler. From this perspective Luther was the real radical of the sixteenth century, rather than the Anabaptists, when he broke with the heritage of the Frankfurter. It should be pointed out, however, that this Lutheran radicalism did not essentially change his understanding of the nature of the church, of church-state relations, nor of the sacraments he retained. Nor did it greatly change morality in Lutheran lands though the universal call for reformation was more concerned with morality than with doctrine. In defense of Bender it should also be noted that he worked primarily with the Swiss Brethren where the thesis that Grebel and company were indeed "completing the reformation" has, while challenged, not been refuted.

Section IV of the Appendix is a foray into Swiss Brethren historiography to debate the James M. Stayer thesis that Anabaptist pacifism was primarily a "strategy for survival" rather than a principle of Christian existence. Much more attention would need to be given to correlate this meaningfully with the central thesis about grace, but the arguments given against the survival interpretation are well placed. Stayer himself has had second thoughts about Anabaptist apoliticism and related issues according to a new preface to a second edition of his *Anabaptists of the Sword*, which he entitled "Reflections and Retractions." In this section the meaning of the statement "... after Münster and well before Schleitheim ..." is not clear in view of the 1534-35 and 1527 dates, respectively, for these events.

The author is to be congratulated for this major contribution to understanding Anabaptist theology and for pressing the doctrine of grace back beyond an historical treatment to a systematic analysis of its meaning in Anabaptist thought in a way which is clear and unequivocal and yet invites further dialog with the Lutheran, Reformed, and Roman Catholic traditions. For Mennonite readers the greatest help may well lie in the alternative it offers to the sequential option of grace plus works dominant in American evangelicalism, as well as to the prevalent motifs of holiness and sanctification. Anabaptism took all of these concerns very seriously and holistically in their understanding of grace and refused to treat them as additives to other regnant theologies. This insight is potentially of great significance to the life of the church.

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The Mennonite Response to the Bicentennial 1975-1976

by Marianne Harms

The following bibliography is a compilation of items relating to Mennonite responses to the U. S. bicentennial, which were published (with a few exceptions) during 1975-1976. The sources are composed of books, leaflets and periodicals. The periodicals include the major U.S. and Canadian publications as well as regional publications. All of the periodicals are received at the Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College.

The bibliography is divided into four sections: I. Articles; II. Books and Leaflets; III. Letters; and IV. News. Articles, letters and news items are found in periodicals. Leaflets are separately published items. The compiler would appreciate receiving any additions to this list.

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Nachrichten aus der Heidenwelt.

Heinrich Baumann

„Die Heiden werden in deinem Lichte wandeln und die Könige in dem Glanze, der über dir aufgeht." — Jesaja 60, 3.

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„Durch die herzliche Barmherzigkeit unseres Gottes hat uns besuchet der Aufgang aus der Höhe; auf daß Er erscheine denen, die da sitzen in Finsterniß und Schatten des Todes, und richte unsere Füße auf den Weg des Friedens."

Darum „Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden; preiset Ihn, alle Völker, denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit waltet über uns in Ewigkeit. Halleluja!"

Mit diesen Schriftworten möchte ich das neue Blatt einführen; diese Schriftworte möchte ich der ersten Nummer als Ueberschrift geben, und ich schreibe diese Zeilen mit dem Wunsche, daß die lieben Leser mit dem Schreiber fröhlich Halleluja! Halleluja! singen und sagen; und daß ihnen das Herz möge regen und wallen in dankbarer Freude darüber, daß dieser Gott, unser Gott, auch uns das Heil erschienen; auch für uns aufgegangen der Aufgang aus der Höhe, und daß alle Lande sollen der Ehre des Herrn voll werden.

Wieder ein neues Blatt! denkt aber vielleicht der Eine und der Andere derer, welchen dieses Blatt in die Hände kommt. Es werden der Blätter doch gar zu viele! Wer hat Zeit sie zu lesen und Geld genug sie zu bezahlen! Der Schreiber nimmt das Niemand übel, hat er doch oft genug selbst so gedacht und gesagt, und es ist ihm oft vorgekommen, als ob des Lesestoff's in unseren Tagen fast zu viel würde, und als ob es gar kein Unglück wäre, wenn Dieses und Jenes ungeschrieben und ungedruckt bliebe. Wenn er nun dennoch an der Herausgabe eines neuen Blattes sich betheiligt, so hat das seinen Grund darin, daß bisher unter den Mennoniten noch kein Blatt erschienen ist, das recht eigentlich zur Erweckung, Belebung und Förderung des Missions-Sinnes von Mennoniten für Mennoniten geschrieben. Es gibt also eine Lücke auszufüllen, und soviel der Herr Gnade gibt, auch auf diesem Wege in dem von dem Herrn so bestimmt gebotenen Werke der Ausbreitung des Evangeliums über die ganze Welt Handreichung zu thun.

Es ist ja bekannt genug, daß auf unserer Gemeinschaft eine Schuld ruht; daß unsere Väter und auch wir das Gebot des Herrn: „Das Evangelium zu predigen aller Creatur," Marc. 16, 15 in keiner Weise so hoch und werth gehalten, wie wir es hätten thun sollen, und daß wir eben dadurch uns eines reichen Segens beraubt haben; denn das lehrt ja die Erfahrung, daß der Segen, welcher der Heidenwelt durch die Verkündigung des Evangeliums gebracht wird, in reichem Maße auf die zurückströmt, welche dazu halfen und mitwirkten.

Es ist nun, Gottlob! der Missionssinn auch unter den Mennoniten bei Diesem und Jenem erwacht. Unter den meisten Abtheilungen gibt es Einzelne wenigstens, welche das Gebot des Herrn und ihre Schuld gegen die Heidenwelt erkennen, und die möchten, daß es anders wäre oder doch anders würde, die aber noch nicht recht wissen, wie das geschehen soll und kann. Diese zunächst werden unsere Mittheilungen aus dem Reiche Gottes in der Heidenwelt gerne lesen und freudig verbreiten. An diese wendet sich unser Blatt denn auch vor Anderen und bittet: Lieben Brüder helft uns, und lasset uns einander zu gemeinsamer Arbeit die Hand reichen!