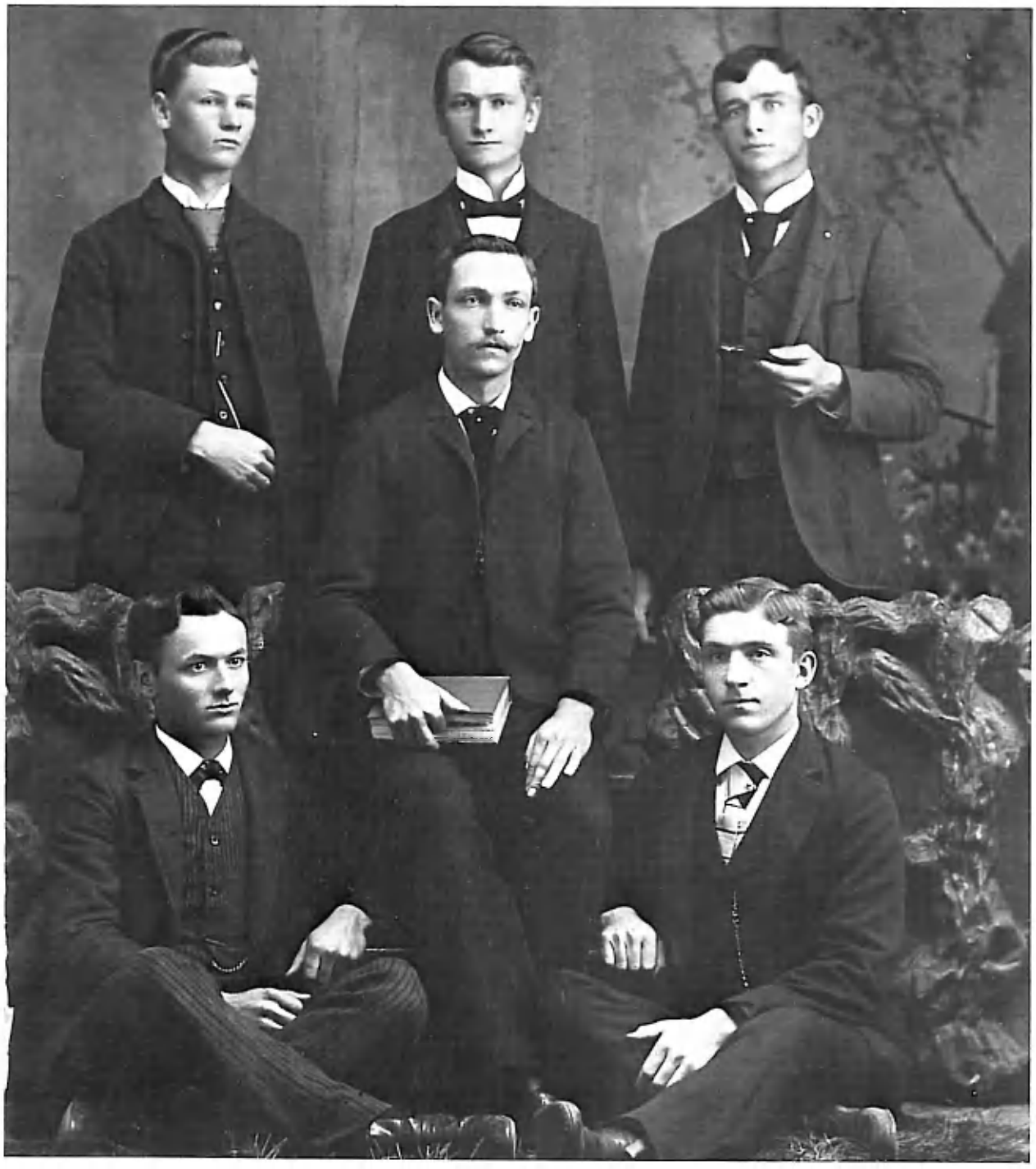
MENNONITE LIFE

DECEMBER 1983



In this Issue

This fall marks the centennial of the beginning of the Halstead Mennonite Seminary, which was the predecessor of Bethel College. James C. Juhnke, Professor of History at Bethel College, reflects on the vision of the Halstead Seminary in a sermon delivered at the First Mennonite Church of Halstead on September 18, 1983.

Nancy-Lou Patterson, Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Waterloo, interprets the landscape of the Swiss-German Mennonites in Waterloo County, Ontario. She describes the various components of the landscape, discussing not only the imagery but also the theological influences and significance.

Robert D. Linder, Professor of History at Kansas State University, and James C. Juhnke have allowed *Mennonite Life* to print lectures originally delivered at a Conference on the American Dream, held at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas, on April 21, 1983. Linder discusses the development of civil religion in America from its Puritan origins through recent influences by the new religious right. Juhnke examines the religious pilgrimage of Dwight D. Eisenhower in the context of American denominationalism and civil religion.

As the centennial of Bethel College approaches during the next five years, *Mennonite Life* will feature a number of articles and photographs relating to the history of the college. This issue reproduces a few pages from the autograph book of Miss Lizzie Wirkler. It was common during the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century for students to collect autographs (along with poems and drawings) from their friends and teachers. The selections from Miss Wirkler's book feature some of the more elaborate contributions and date from the years 1892 through 1894 while she studied at both the Halstead Seminary and Bethel College.

MENNONITE LIFE

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Front Cover

Halstead Seminary Students: including H. J. Kliewer, J. W. Kliewer, P. H. Richert, M. M. Horsch, and Abram Albrecht.

Back Cover

Halstead Seminary Students and Facilities: the close-up photograph shows teachers, H. H. Ewert and H. O. Kruse, with the students in 1886-87.

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All photos are from the Mennonite Library and Archives with the exception of the eleven illustrations provided by Nancy-Lou Patterson for her article and the three Eisenhower photographs provided by the Eisenhower Library, Abilene.

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Except the Lord Build the House: Halstead Seminary Centennial

by James C. Juhnke

Based on a sermon for centennial of beginning of Halstead Mennonite Seminary, Halstead First Mennonite Church, September 18, 1983. James C. Juhnke.

One hundred years ago, on Sunday morning, September 16, 1883, the Halstead Mennonite church was filled to overflowing for Sunday School classes. The Halstead congregation had established itself as one of the most progressive of Mennonite congregations in Kansas, and holding Sunday School in the church meeting house was just one mark of their willingness to innovate. Sunday School was a new and controversial institution. Most Kansas congregations, if they allowed it at all, kept Sunday School out of the church building and away from the Sunday morning meeting time.

After the Sunday School meetings were finished, everyone walked out of the church and joined others waiting outside in a grand procession to the corner of what is now 4th and College Street. There stood a magnificent new building—the Halstead Mennonite Seminary. The large crowd gathered on the east side of the new building to listen to some words from David Goerz, one of the leading citizens of the town and the Secretary of the Halstead College Association. Goerz quoted these words from Psalm 127: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."[1]

After a few brief comments, Goerz reached into his pocket and brought forth a bright and shiny new key to the door of the Seminary building. He ceremoniously handed it over to Elder Wilhelm Ewert, the chairman of the Kansas Conference of Mennonites. Elder Ewert opened the door, and then he and Goerz led the entire assembly through the large new structure from east to west. Some visitors passing through the halls got their first look at the inside of the nearly completed building. The only Mennonite post-primary educational institution in America, it was a large wood frame building, with three recitation rooms, a library room, living quarters for the principal, and boarding and lodging facilities for more than thirty students. When all had passed through the building to the west side, they gathered once again and worshipped God in thanksgiving and praise. They sang hymns and read scripture. They heard *two* sermons, one from Elder Ewert, who was from the Bruderthal congregation east of Hillsboro, and one from Elder Leonhard Suderman, of the Emmaus congregation east of Whitewater. And the Halstead Mennonite Seminary was dedicated to the glory of God.

In this procession, these Mennonites recapitulated in ritual form the greater migration from East to West, from Europe to America and from Eastern United States to the Western plains, which nearly all of them had experienced in their own lives. Many of them had come to Kansas from Russia in 1874, less than a decade before. The West was where they had arrived, where they had planted and would take root. The West stood for opportunity, for freedom, for progress. They met on the East side, unlocked the door, passed over to the West, and there they dedicated their new building. It is hard to imagine any community ritual more dramatically powerful than this procession and dedication must have been at Halstead a century ago.

Seventy-two students enrolled in the Halstead Seminary that year, 62 men and 10 women. They were taught by two bright young teachers, Heinrich H. Ewert and Peter J. Galle. Ewert, the new principal, was the son of Wilhelm Ewert, president of the Kansas Conference. For ten years, from 1883 to 1893, this school educated young people for service and mission and for leadership in community and church. Although it was called a seminary, it would today be classed as a Bible Institute. A total of 545 students studied here in that decade, while the Seminary Association and administration struggled to raise adequate funds for current operations as well as to settle the question of whether Halstead or Newton should be the ultimate location of the school.[2]

Three dimensions of the vision which created the Halstead Seminary may be of special interest today. *First, the Halstead vision was for Christian education.* "The highest calling of mankind is fellowship with God," said Elder Suderman in his dedication sermon. It was a purpose of this school, he said, "to make our children acquainted with God's plan of salvation." There were public schools where Mennonites might go for education, but these schools could not be counted on to teach evangelical Christian values. American public education belonged to the public. No one denomination could expect its own doctrines and values to be taught.

Everything these leaders wrote

about the school—their sermons, school catalogs, appeals for funds—articulated some expression of Christian evangelical purpose. It was a Biblical vision. Bible stories and images came as naturally to these pioneers as breathing the air or plowing the soil of the steppes and the prairies. They had experienced their own Exodus and saw America as the promised land. They believed the Scriptural promises were fulfilled in Jesus as Christ and Lord. They believed in following Jesus, and that the commands of Jesus were to be taken seriously and acted out in daily life—including the command to love your enemies, even when governments said it was time to kill and destroy its enemies.

Second, the Halstead vision was for Christian mission. The General Conference Mennonite Church had earlier established another school in Wadsworth, Ohio, for the training of pastors and missionaries. The Wadsworth School had lasted ten years—closing five years before the Halstead opening. Halstead was in one sense a continuation of Wadsworth. The books from the Wadsworth School library were transported to Halstead and became the core of a new library. At one earlier point, conference leaders expected that the General Conference Mission Board would be the sponsoring institution of the Halstead Seminary. One member of the mission board was Christian Krehbiel, an immigrant from Weierhof in South Germany, and the father of 16 children. Krehbiel was pastor of the Halstead congregation and a leader in Kansas church affairs. Krehbiel was a promoter of education and an advocate of the Halstead Seminary, but his heart was most deeply in Christian mission.

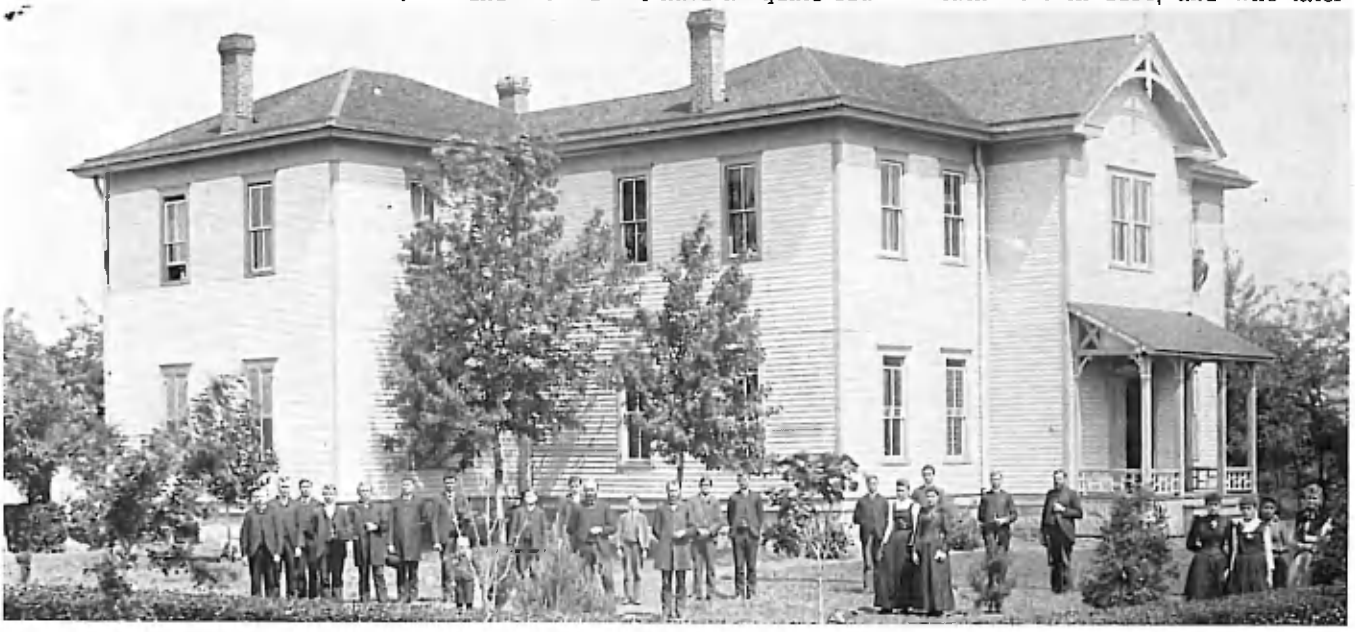
Three years before the Halstead Seminary opened, in the summer of 1880, Krehbiel and the mission board had sent out the first Mennonite missionaries to go to preach the gospel to culturally different peoples. Those missionaries, Samuel and Susie Haury, left with their oxen and wagons for mission work in Indian Territory from Halstead. Christian Krehbiel hoped that young men and women from the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Tribe could be brought up from Indian Territory to learn in the classroom alongside the Mennonites and others. It was an interesting missions strategy—not only to send the missionaries to unreached tribes to preach the gospel; but also bring the young people to learn the gospel and the white man's ways right in the heart of this frontier of Christendom.

At first the Cheyenne and Arapahoe young people attended seminary classes with the whites; there were fifteen Indians the first year. The Indians did not have adequate educational background, and they had trouble relating to the students who often spoke German. So a separate Indian school was constructed on the Krehbiel farm outside of Halstead. Here the large Krehbiel family, and especially the energetic mother, Susanna Krehbiel, ran an Indian school until 1896,—under auspices of the General Conference Mission Board and with funding from the United States Government Department of Indian Affairs.

In addition to being a mission itself, the Halstead Seminary trained young people to become missionaries. Teacher Heinrich Ewert later claimed great satisfaction that six of his students from that time became missionaries. The missionary enterprise—the Biblical Great Commission to proclaim the gospel to all nations, was central to the vision of the Halstead Mennonite Seminary.

Third, the Halstead vision was for building church congregations. A central purpose of the Halstead Mennonite Seminary was to train people for leadership in their local congregations — Sunday School teachers, parochial school teachers, deacons, ministers, elders, and faithful church and family members. Teacher Ewert counted nineteen of his students who later became ministers or elders in the churches.

Cornelius H. Wedel, who came to teach here in 1890, and who later



Halstead Seminary, 1892.

Halstead Students in 1884: back row—C. H. Friesen, Sam Baer, Daniel Krehbiel, and P. A. Claassen; front row—G. A. Haury, G. N. Harms, and Daniel Hirschler.

became the President of Bethel College when the school moved to Newton, set forth most clearly the meaning of Mennonite congregation and community. He believed it was the purpose of Mennonite education to promote a way of community living and religious faith for which he coined a new word: *Gemeindechristentum*. Unfortunately, this concept lacks an English language equivalent. Literally *Gemeindechristentum* means congregation-christendom. Wedel believed that the Kansas Christian communities were part of a tradition which went back to the Bible and to the church of apostolic times, and a tradition which was rediscovered and renewed by the Anabaptists in Reformation times. It was a Christendom—a coherent culture of Christian expression—but it was not like the Protestant European Christendom which was defined by state churches. The true Christendom, Wedel wrote, was rooted in the *Gemeinden*, in the congregation, the face-to-face community of believers who worshipped together, were accountable to each other in manner of living, worked together for Christian mission, and built each other up in social, economic, and cultural life as well as in religious life.

One major challenge facing the Mennonite congregations was the transition from the German to the English language. It was important that this transition move slowly and deliberately, in order to avoid a major rift between the younger generation and the older generation. The preachers who were trained at Halstead had to know how to preach in the German language, with good German grammar, if they were to stay in spiritual touch with their parents and grandparents. A too-rapid shift from German to English would fracture the community by alienating the young from the old. Moreover, the German tradition carried with it a rich hymnology which these people did not want to lose—and which they saw was being lost by American Mennonites who had been here for decades and were giving up German completely. Both the speakers at the Halstead school dedication emphasized the importance of teaching the German language.

This Mennonite emphasis upon community—the role of the congregation of Christian believers—ran counter to the powerful forces of American individualism. In America, and especially on the frontier, each person was to be lord of his own life. But in the Mennonite tradition, as defined and promoted in Halstead, it was not the individual —the isolated self—who was lord. It was Jesus who was lord, and the gathered community of disciples was his chosen instrument for extending his kingdom.

* * * * *

The Halstead congregation was the home of a disproportionate share of strong leaders among the Kansas Mennonites a hundred years ago. They pioneered the Sunday School movement. David Goerz led the way in publications with his newspaper for immigrants of the 1870's, *Zur Heimath*, in addition to his involvement with a great variety of educational, benevolent and institutional enterprises. Christian and Susanna Krehbiel led the way in the missionary movement, as well as raising another generation of significant conference and community leaders. And Bernhard Warkentin was a successful business enterpreneur in the milling and wheat producing business to the benefit of thousands and millions beyond Halstead and Kansas.

We celebrate their achievement, not because we are unaware that they, like us, had feet of clay. We celebrate because of the faith and vision which moved such people. Although we are a hundred years removed from those beginnings, that faith can be our own. Our world today, no less than theirs, stands greatly in need of Christian education, Christian missionary enterprise, and local congregations which are communities of discipleship and witness.

Endnotes:

1 For a newspaper account of this event see *Christdicher Bundesbote*, Oct. 15, 1883. 157-8.

2 The most complete account of the Halstead Seminary, written by one who was a student there, is Peter J. Wedel, *The Story of Bethel College* (North Newton: Bethel College, 1954), 28-44.

Above: Halstead Seminary Graduating Class, 1893.
Below: Students and Faculty of Halstead Seminary.

"See the Vernal Landscape Glowing": The Symbolic Landscape of the Swiss-German Mennonite Settlers In Waterloo County

by Nancy-Lou Patterson

In 1980 a group of Swiss-German Mennonite people in Waterloo County prepared a "Book of Remembrance," a collection of hymns, quotations, and drawings, to give to a shut-in: Mr. Daniel Weber (1896-1981). One typical page contains a poem entitled "Be Still and Know" which states, "There's a refuge that's sure/and a shelter secure/In the quiet communion of Prayer." (Fig. 1) Divided by an exhuberant array of roses, the page contains two neatly drawn landscapes: at the top is a realistically depicted farm scene viewed through a forcefully delineated fence; and at the bottom, a cabin on a remote and tree-dotted hillside. These images symbolize shelter and refuge, the ideal prayer life; indeed, the ideal life. Images like these are drawn from deep sources of Mennonite spirituality.

The Swiss-German Mennonite settlers who came from Pennsylvania to what is now the Waterloo Region of southern Ontario brought their Bibles with them; in addition, they brought prayer books and hymnals which included not only Mennonite and other Anabaptist writings, but a full harvest of Lutheran and other continental Protestant religious, mystical, and pietistic works. Consequently, the specific sources of their symbolic preoccupations can be found in books from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which were still current in the conservative Mennonite community through the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries in Waterloo County, Ontario.

Pietism, which is "in its essence pure subjectivity,"[1] emerged after 1600. Anabaptism rests upon an ef-

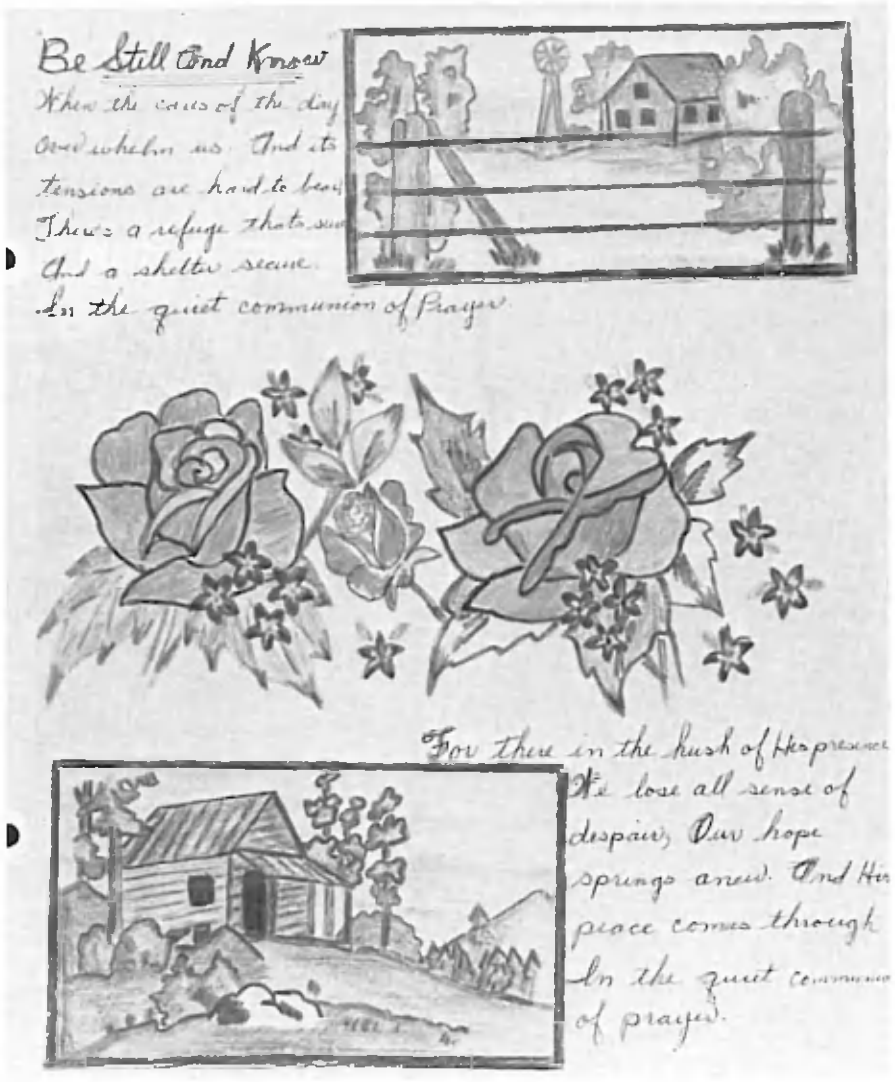


Figure 1. Page from Book of Remembrance for Daniel Weber (1896-1981), made near West Montrose, circa 1980. (Photo:Fine Arts Archives, University of Waterloo)

fort to live a life of discipleship, willing to suffer for the faith. When this spirit is no longer tested by physical circumstances, the faithful may turn inward to pietism. Johannes Arndt (1555-1621), a Protestant mystic, published his *Das Paradiesgärtlein voller Christlicher Tugenden* in 1612. It has served as a model for all later German devotional books: indeed, one authority states that "Pietism in the strict sense goes directly back to Arndt."[2] Copies of the *Paradiesgärtlein* ("Paradise Garden") were in use throughout Waterloo County in the nineteenth century. One copy in the 1832 edition printed in Philadelphia was inscribed in German script by Michael Zehr in 1846. This edition possesses a remarkable frontispiece depicting the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden—shown the door by an angel and accompanied by an earth-bound snake —; Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane; a devout Christian at prayer; and another receiving a shower of gifts from a cornucopia borne by a pair of angels. Three of these four images contain landscape views with trees, bushes, and a castle in the foothills by a watery mead. (Fig. 2)

The flyleaf of another copy was lavishly decorated by Anna Weber (1814-1888) in 1872, with an ornament so vivid as almost to outshadow the striking frontispiece. Other copies come to light from time to time, and numerous examples have been reported from the Pennsylvania congregations as well.

In pietism it was thought possible for the redeemed "to experience in this present life the blissful enjoyment of . . . salvation,"[3] an idea which sixteenth century Anabaptists, their very lives threatened by persecutions, would not have been able to pursue. Later generations, however, have turned toward the *Paradiesgärtlein* for private prayer and meditation. A standard prayer book, it circulated widely in the Palatinate and among North American Mennonites. A similar book, the *Lustgärtlein* ("Pleasure Garden") was still in use by Pennsylvania Amish in the early twentieth century. An eighteenth century work, Tersteegen's hymnal, *Das Geistliche*

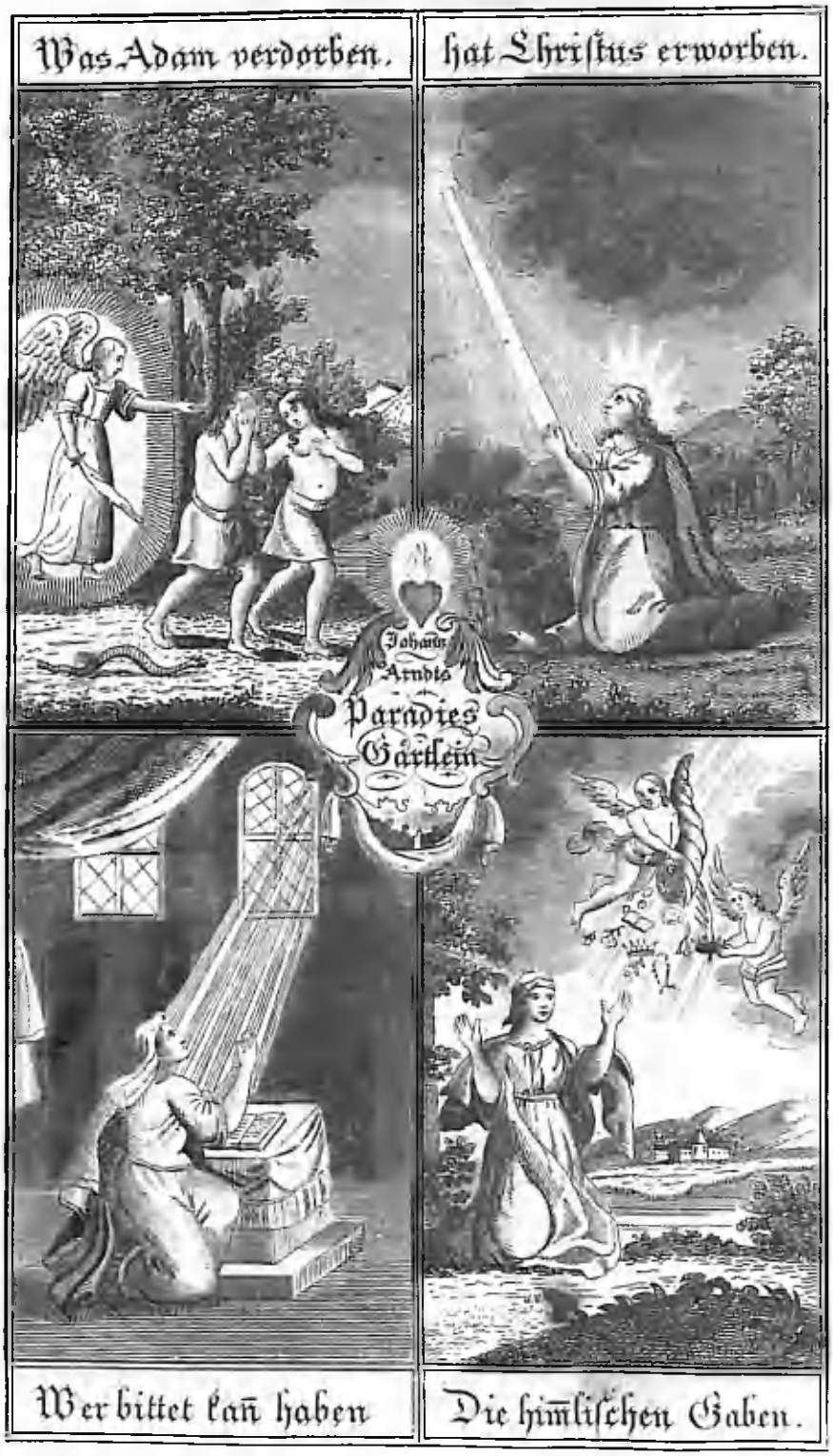


Figure 2. Frontispiece, Johann Arndt, Paradies Gärtlein *Philadelphia: William G. Mentz, 1832 [1612]. (Photo: Fine Arts Archives, University of Waterloo)*

Blumengärten inniger Seelen (The Spiritual Flower Garden in the Soul) (1729) was widely used by Mennonites as well. The operative metaphor of all these works is "the soul's enjoyment as it proceeds . . . through experiences of spiritual elevation and peace as if walking through a beautiful flower garden."[4] Works like these truly deserve the epithet "popular," because of their wide circulation, and they "played an important role in the 'imagination' of the spiritual world and the experience of the individual."[5] Through such means, devout lay people received Protestant teaching which carried forward the mystical elements of medieval thought intact and still resonant.[6]

The floral element, which appears ubiquitously in the decorative arts of Pennsylvania German people, has been explored by John Joseph Stoudt as a symbolic motif with religious dimensions. For him, the lily and rose forms represent the Christ-Flower blooming in Paradise. The religious resonance of these motifs is suggested by their use on tombstones, baptismal certificates, and the family registers of Bibles, among other placements of religious context. The blossom, wreath, bough, and other vegetal images have carried a religious meaning since Near Eastern and Classical times, as images of life and afterlife; indeed, as images of Paradise.

Paradise is, however, a spiritual place. Images of flowers and birds and animals do suggest a paradisal source, but the idea of paradise as a landscape was also a significant motif in ancient art, and has found expression in Christian literature and art as well. In the rapidly developing studies of landscape and garden as art forms, two Latin phrases recur: *locus amoenus* and *hortus conclusus*. The *locus amoenus* is the "pleasant place" much admired and mentioned in Classical writings and reiterated during the Renaissance. It refers to the ideal landscape. The *hortus conclusus* is the enclosed garden which in Medieval thought symbolized the Garden of Eden. It has become an image for the ideal garden.

In Mennonite thought the *locus amoenus* is a neatly fenced landscape in which every element contributes to comfort, tranquility, and order. This landscape not only symbolizes but actually becomes the realization of a state of blessedness, permitting enjoyment in the physical present of the redeemed conditions of its inhabitants. This paradisal situation is made explicit in the household garden, an *hortus conclusus* which forms part of the steading (area occupied by the house and barn and other farm buildings) of the farm; the garden as a metaphor of *Gotteseligkeit*, pietistic godliness, is deeply ingrained in Mennonite spirituality.

The concept of the peaceful country retreat as a place of blessedness in this world is reiterated in the songbooks still used by the Old Order Mennonite community in Waterloo County, which contain hymns from a wide range of European Protestant sources. The "Lancaster Hymn Book" was brought by the first settlers to Waterloo County; along with the Bible and Arndt's *Paradiesgärtlein*, this was the book with which the "sturdy pioneers ventured into the wilds of Canada to build homes and Mennonite congregations,"[7] as one of their descendants put it. A copy of this *Gesang-Buch* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Johann Barr, 1820) was used by Anna Weber (who came to Upper Canada with her family in 1825) for her earliest work of art in 1866: its flyleaf opposite the title page was painted with a bird on a bough accompanied by her name and the date.

This book was used by the community until 1836, when *Die Gemeinschaftlich Lieder-Sammlung* (Berlin, Canada: Heinrich Eby) was published by a son of Bishop Benjamin Eby. Hymn 163 of the *Leider-Sammling* is by Gerhard Tersteegen, the eighteenth century pietist poet. In his commentary on this hymn, Isaac R. Horst states that the singer "seeks the Lord where he can repose calmly and in seclusion."[8] Operative words translated by Horst for his readers include silence, holiness, calm, bliss, eternal rest, and, interestingly in view of the page from the "Book of Remembrance" discussed at the beginning of this essay, *Hütte*. This word Horst defines as "cottage, place of rest." When the author consulted a copy of this book used in his youth by Simon E. Martin (an edition of 1908 printed in Berlin, Ontario, by Broedecker and Steubling), he remarked "it doesn't mean a big house; it means a hut."[9]

The word appears in the final lines of the hymn:

Deck' mich bei dir deiner Hütte zu
Bis ich erreich' die volle Sabbath-Ruh.

Literally this means "Cover me with you in your cottage until I reach the full Sabbath-Rest," and a rhyming translation might render this verse as follows:

Cover me within your cottage blest
Until I reach the fuller Sabbath-rest.

The cottage image depicted in the "Book of Remembrance" page and suggested by this hymn, is evoked with special power by Michael Scherck (1905), a Mennonite commentator who described the idealized settler's cabin:

> What a comfortable picture on a frosty winter's day is a backwoodsman's log house situated in a clearing, white with snow, with the smoke from the chimney curling up through the treetops, the cows standing around in the barn yard, the dog whisking around the door. . . . It gives one an idea of the phase of life which might be described as living "near to nature's heart."[10]

In this passage the cabin is placed at the centre of nature and associated with beginnings, with the primary phase of life in pioneer Upper Canada. Centre and origin are combined, and the symbolism of Paradise is associated with the new settlement, the new Paradise on earth.

A similar image was used by Simeon E. Martin in a letter to the author in 1976. In it he meditated upon Psalm 84:

> "How amiable are thy Tabernacles, oh Lord of Hosts" . . . this plural word tabernacles at once suggests to me a scene that is found in the first part of the story by the name of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" . . . This was a very lovely scene described by the author, whether fictitious or real. The slave

> families each had their cabin, possibly half hidden in the shrubs or trees, which alone would speak of tranquility . . . This to my mind is a faint description of the beautiful scene of verse one of our lovely Psalm.[11]

Another book used by Mr. Martin in his childhood was his first songbook, used each Wednesday at the weekly "Singing School." It is *The Philharmonia* compiled by Martin D. Wenger in 1875. Song 63 of this book is a paean to the beauties of nature:

> See the vernal landscape glowing
> With the choicest flowers of Spring;
> See the streams and rivers flowing,
> While the choral songsters sing.
> Nature decks both field and forest
> In her richest robe of green,
> Softly breathe the whisp'ring zephyrs
> O'er the gay and smiling scene.[12]

The word "landscape" in the first line is echoed by the word "scene" in the last. Both of these hymns, which come from different eras, concentrate upon the landscape as an image of symbolic significance. The older German hymnist, from the eighteenth century, longs to be enclosed with God in his small, withdrawn dwelling, in blessed anticipation of the Sabbath rest to come. The more recent English hymnist, probably from the nineteenth century, contemplates a landscape decked for Spring. Both of these landscapes are subsumed in the image evoked by Michael Scherck in 1905, of "well-tilled fields, smiling pasture land, fruitful orchards, and comfortable, happy homes,"[13] and by Dutch-German Mennonite immigrant Waldemar Neufeld, who wrote of his arrival in 1925:

> . . . the sight of Waterloo's gently rolling hills with the fenced-off orchards, fields and forest, the clusters of farm buildings was a revelation."[14]

The settlers nourished in this pietistic tradition soon turned to publishing similar works in their own right, as works already quoted above have indicated. The Swiss-German Mennonite community has produced an expanding collection of memoirs, biographical histories, hymn books, and works of self-interpretation, continuing and exploring such ideas into the present day. An examination of these texts discovers a number of utterances suggesting the symbolic dimensions of the Mennonite farmstead as landscape.

There is a series of image systems in these works. First is the origin story or migration narrative, which contrasts a trackless forest with a benign clearing where a cabin has been built. Such images have a stereotyped element which shows their mythic function as well as the fictional element which may be present. They have been written long after the fact, and record impressions of late nineteenth or twentieth century people rather than original settlers. These settlers are said to have "bravely plunged into the wilderness, erected their cabins amidst the howling of wild beasts and yells of the treacherous savages; carving out their homes, subdued the land, and made the wilderness to rejoice as the rose."[15] On leaving Pennsylvania the same events recur; Michael Scherck (1905) writes: "Between the Canadian border and the frontier settlements in the States stretched two, three, and four hundred miles of dense forest, inhabited by wandering tribes of Indians and infested by ferocious wild animals in great abundance."[16] The earliest settlement in Upper Canada, at the Twenty Mile Creek in the Niagara Peninsula, is described by Allan M. Buehler (1977): "the family settled near the Twenty-Mile Creek . . . in what was at that time a dense forest, inhabited only by Indians and wild beasts."[17]

When the settlers "continued their journey through the forests and swamps," in the words of Ezra E. Eby (1895), they found themselves in Waterloo County. "At this time Berlin was a dense and impassable swamp, inhabited by wolves, bears, foxes, and other wild animals."[18] There at last were created the settlements of "the early pioneer families who cleared their little agricultural islands out of an endless sea of trees,"[19] in the words of Virgil Emerson Martin (1979).

In contrast with this theme are comments upon the beauty of the indigenous landscape of Upper Canada. Here the beautiful appearance of the unspoiled natural earth is emphasized, and the ubiquitous references to wild beasts and dangerous Indians are reversed or contradicted. The apparent contrast probably reiterates the Romantic perceptions of nature as, on the one hand, wild, untamed, and dangerous; and, on the other hand, benign, unspoiled, and paradisal. It will be noted that in either case, the Indians are treated not as people with a history and life of their own, but as part of the landscape, flora and fauna to add colour and meaning.

In this mood, St. Jacob's, Ontario is described as a "Peaceful Valley in the wilderness," where lie "the gently rolling countryside and picturesque river valleys of Woolwich Township."[20] The writer describes the earliest settlers: "Soon they came upon a river and were struck by the beauty of it."[21] Angus Bauman (1940) remarks "With all the wild animals about, there has not come to the writer's notice one case of a human life being lost as a prey to them."[22] And Ezra Eby points out, in regard to Indians:

> The settlers had no want of venison or fish. For a small loaf of bread and a six-penny crock of thick milk the Indians would bring them the nicest quarter of venison or a large basket filled with the finest of speckled trout. In those early times the Indians were very numerous and if kindly treated would never injure anyone. Parents often left their children alone and the Indian children would play with them and the squaws would take care of the white children. As a rule the young people were always rejoiced to see the Indians come.[23]

The second image-complex concerns the landscape created by full settlement (beyond the primeval cabin), which to a degree still exists in the Waterloo Region, often occupied by descendants of the original settlers. In these statements the elements of demarcation and division is very strong; we read of specific tracts, measurements from this church to that crossroads, firmly delimiting the space to precise properties, and of areas which are re-

lated to a publicly shared grid of roads with their recognizeable names and identifiable features.

Land is defined as a tract of legal definition: "The tract was in the first place a regular parallelogram, 283 perches long and 96 perches wide and included all the land belonging to the Mennonite church (about 3 acres) except the graveyard," Christian Meyer wrote in his memoir of 1895.[24] It is also defined in terms of the road; one tract described by Meyer extended "all the way from the corner of the Mennonite church southwest along the Harleysville and Souderton turnpike . . . to the corner of the other road generally known as Young's corner."

This emphasis upon division by fence and road symbolized both enclosure and separation. Isaac Horst in *Separate and Peculiar* (1979) describes the way outsiders see the Old Order life: "they see the guidelines as a fence around the oasis. They fear the close confines of its welcome greenery. Much as they long for the shelter of the cooling trees, they still retain the privilege to dash out into the burning desert."[25] To make the point even clearer to those who prefer the desert, he writes "there is a fence around the sheepfold; not to deprive the sheep of better pasture; but to shelter them from marauding wolves." The binary or bipolar structure of these utterances—oasis /desert and sheep/wolves—mark them as symbolic statements. The same writer uses a similar dichotomy more literally in the following passage from *Up the Conestogo* (1979):

> Left, right, north, south. The road leading past the farm has always been a dividing line. Today it separates the municipality of Woolwich from the city of Waterloo. In pioneer days it separated Block 2 (Waterloo Township) from Block 3 (Woolwich Township). At the time of the church schism of 1889, it symbolized the line between the progressive group to the south and the more conservative group to the north.[26]

The "schism" Horst describes is the one marking the separation of Old Order Mennonites from other Mennonites.

Another writer raised in the Old Order community uses a similar image of division without the religious resonance: Allan Buehler states in *Pennsylvania German Dialect* (1977), "I was born on August 24/ 1899, on a farm located between Heidelberg, and Hawkesville, on the road that bisects Wellesley and Woolwich townships, in Waterloo County."[27] The use of dichotomy to express the contrast between lifestyles recurs in the writings of children from the Old Order Community. A grade 7 student wrote in her poem of 1980:

> Our Heritage
> In the city of Waterloo
> You can hear the cars go by
> But in the country
> You can hear the birds cry.[28]

Here the polarities are city/country, and the images are cars/birds. Clearly, country is to be preferred, and the birds, so ubiquitous in the folk ornament of this community, are the figure used to symbolize it.

The full landscape image consists of a central steading, with house, barn, and associated buildings, garden, and orchard, often located upon a hill, surrounded by tilled fields, neat fences, and occasional woodlands, beneath an open sky. The farm of George and Amon Martin near Waterloo, Ontario, combines all of these features. (Fig 3) The landscape is orderly, controlled, and completely utilized. Every feature serves a function, including the forest, which is either a woodlot or a sugar bush, and has a fence to itself. The only areas not entirely contained in this system are the swamps (which can be harvested in winter) and the cedar bush stands along the steep banks of some rivers.

Conservative people sometimes make drawings of the "home place" to depict this scene. Two of these are the drawing made in 1931 by Orvie Shantz of his home near the Grand River (now part of Waterloo, Ontario), and an anonymous drawing from the New Hamburg area which depicts a type of garden seldom seen after the turn of the twentieth century. Orvie Shantz's drawing (Fig. 4.) shows the house at the centre with porch and stairs and trees just as they still exist. Numerous outbuildings crowd around, including the barn with its capacious straw-shed, no longer extant. The drawing was made from the school-ground, perhaps half a kilometer away, looking downhill, and the angle of the view has been depicted with naive but effective perspective. From that position, the garden which was located at the lower left between the fence and the house, could not be seen and was not included. Photographs taken of the house before the dismantling of the barn show that the garden was

Figure 3. General view of the farm and steading of George and Amon Martin, near Waterloo, Ontario, 1982. Author's photo.

not visible from the vantage-point of the schoolhouse. The fields, with their splitrail fences, stretch away into the background at the top of the drawing.

A farmstead with a clustered grouping of a similar type is seen in an aerial photograph of John and Pat Weber's farm near Conestogo: the house, summer kitchen, "grossdawdy house" and large garden and orchard are in the foreground, and the barn (since burned and replaced), silo, drive-shed, and other buildings appear at the rear. The tree-lined creek leads away into the background. This cluster of buildings with its defining fences is actually bisected by a lane which meanders from the road, in between house and barn, and out at the left, toward another farmstead deeper in the countryside. (Fig. 5)

The second drawing, from New Hamburg (Fig. 6) shows a farmstead divided strictly into two halves: at left is the barn with its capacious manure yard and associated drive-shed. At right is a house with a summer kitchen behind and a large four-square garden in its yard, accompanied by a tall wind-

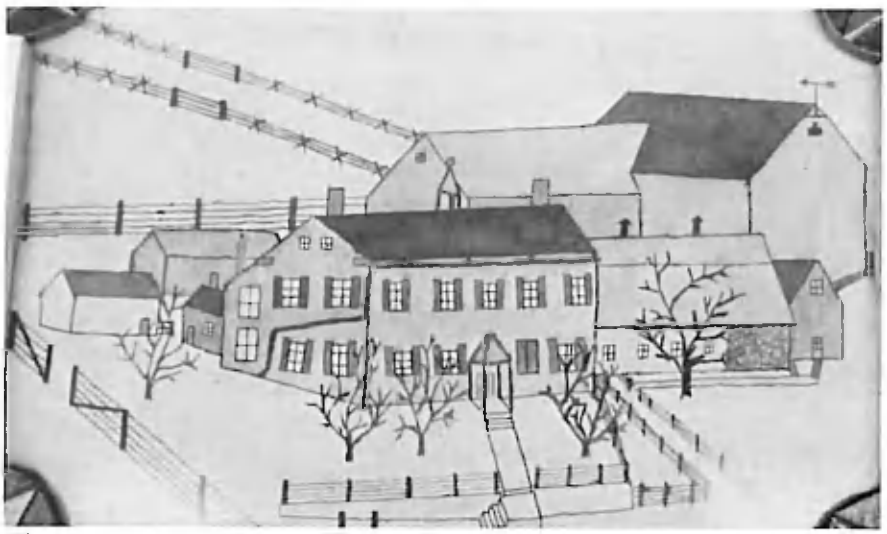


Figure 4. Orvie Shantz, "Home Place" drawing, circa 1930, Waterloo, Ontario. Author's photo.

Figure 5. Pat and John Weber's farmstead, near St. Jacobs, Ontario. The barn was built for Angus Weber by Simon E. Martin in 1941. (Photo: Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Ottawa, from anonymous aerial photograph, circa 1960).

Figure 6. Anonymous "Home Place" drawing, near New Hamburg. (Photo: Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Ottawa)

Figure 7. Emmanuel Bowman's farmstead, near St. Clements, Ontario, 1983. Author's photo.

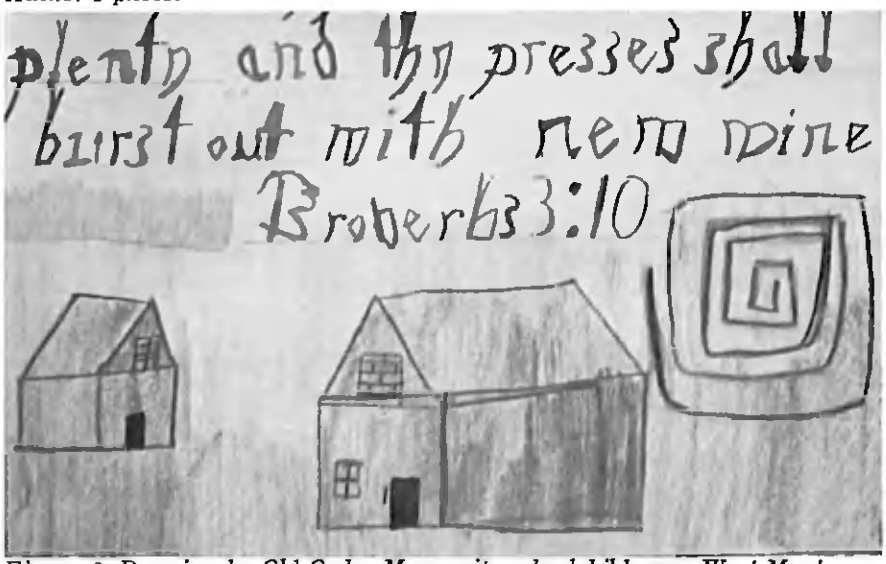


Figure 8. Drawing by Old Order Mennonite schoolchild, near West Montrose, Ontario, 1979. (Photo: Fine Arts Archives, University of Waterloo)

Figure 9. A field in process of being ploughed, containing a single "land" with its central "crown," and a distant "bush" (forested land) separated by a fence, near Waterloo, Ontario, 1980. Author's photo.

mill. A farmstead of this type, near St. Clements, Ontario (Fig. 7) belonging to Emmanuel Bowman, shows the house and its buildings on a slope at some distance from a barn and its buildings; though divided by space, the components of the steading are related and actually repeat the same organization with a central building surrounded by smaller forms descending the hillside.

Occasionally the other parts of the farm—bush and field or pasture—are given place in these depictions. A child's drawing on a calendar for August, 1979, made in an Old Order Mennonite "parochial" school, shows a pair of buildings suggesting a schematic house and barn, accompanied by two even more enigmatic images. (Fig. 8) At the upper left is a horizontal line with a band of vertical shading arising from it; this may depict a bushlot seen at a distance (See Fig 8 for comparison.) At right is a large counter-clockwise spiral. This was identified by Pat Weber as "the straw harvest." The harvest takes place in August and the reapers proceed in a counter-clockwise spiral around the field, just as the child has shown it. Another pattern imposed upon the landscape—ploughing—traces an image of bilateral symmetry, as each "land" is created by ploughing up and down the two original furrows which are called "the crown." The difference between cultivated land and treed bush is emphasized by the placement of a fence between the two regions.[29] (Fig. 9)

The bush has been remarked upon occasionally in folk literature: two conservative Mennonite women have published a book of their own hymns including one, "Alone Upon the Bush Trail," in which the singer speaks of bathing her spirit among "God's wonders rare,"[30] and another writer describes his experience as a youth on his alternative service in World War II. The pacifist writer, recalling his life in the remote northern forest, concludes: "It did not take long to find out that God Almighty, who created Heaven and earth, is also with us in the wilderness as well as at home."[31]

At the symbolic core of the full

landscape is the garden, with its orchard, almost always placed close to the house. Drawing upon medieval traditions, the nineteenth century garden was divided into four quarters or squares, rectangular beds which were hand-dug and strictly divided by four paths and surrounded by a fence. This four-square garden is represented in front of the house in Leah Frey Daum's depiction of her "home place," (Fig. 10) in which the centre of the garden contains a flowering bush. In this *hortus conclusus*, contemplation of the flowers and vegetables growing together was experienced as guests were taken inside the fence to admire the garden. Rototilling gradually replaced hand-working and did away with the four raised beds, but many women living today remember this structure from their mother's gardens. It was customary to place at one of the entrances to the garden a plant called the "Adam and Eve" plant, which one woman remarked was always trying to get out of the garden."[32] In the garden of four Amish sisters near Wellesley, Ontario, a garden which retained the four-square form until 1979 still has such a plant where its gate once stood.[33]

Finally, the depiction of the landscape as an idealized image appears in a special form of hooked rug, the "scenery mat," which is very popular in the Waterloo County Mennonite community. Alice Frey (born 1956), a young Old Order Mennonite woman, prepared a mat of this type in anticipation of her wedding. (Fig. 11) Using a conventional pattern which shows a modest cottage surrounded by trees, flowers, waters, mountains, and birds, she presents an image in twentieth century terms of the *Hütte* where one may obtain a foretaste of the coming Sabbath-rest.

In these various works of art, literature, and landscape-creation, attitudes toward the landscape are given expression. A series of symbolic structures are exhibited—wilderness/clearing, outsider/insider, desert/oasis, city/country, progressive/conservative, external/enclosed —which place the Mennonite farm family in a favoured position within this landscape, and the world with all its dangers outside. There is thus a didactic significance in these expressions about the Swiss-German Mennonite landscape of Waterloo County with its field-surrounded steading and its symbolic garden. What emerges is a metaphoric structure which equates the ordered farmstead with the state of blessedness obtained through Christian redemption, and its garden with the Garden of Paradise.

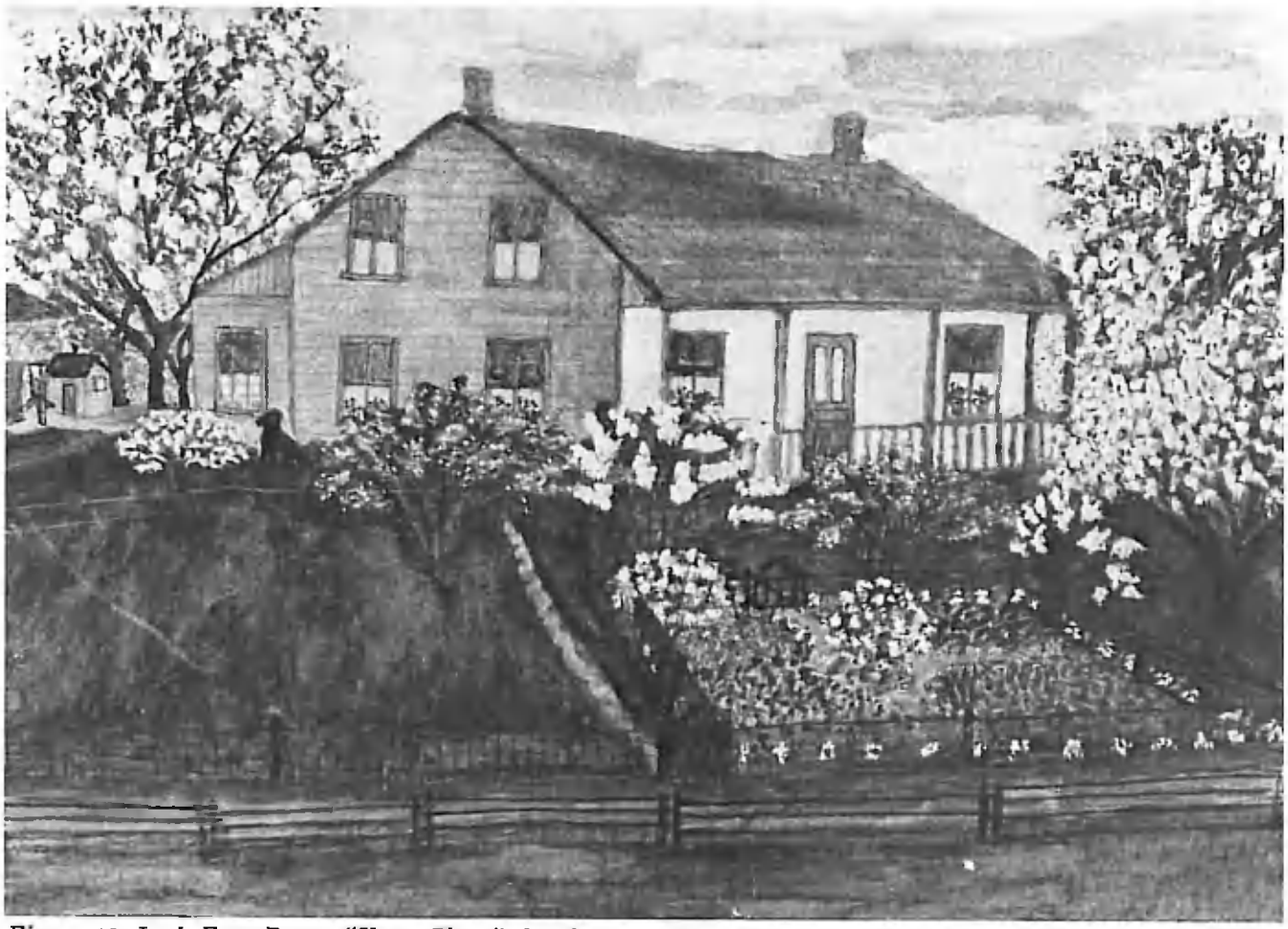


Figure 10. Leah Frey Daum, "Home Place," detail, circa 1960, Kitchener, Ontario. Scene depicted is near Elmira, Ontario. Author's photo, made through the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. William Byfield.

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Figure 11. Alice Frey, "Scenery Mat," circa 1972, near Conestogo, Ontario. (Photo: Michael Bird, made in situ, *1979)*

Religion and the American Dream: A Study in Confusion and Tension

by Robert D. Linder

"The American Dream" is an illusive concept.[1] Roughly speaking, it has something to do with freedom and equality of opportunity. As a matter of fact, in the political realm, it involves the shared dream of a free and equal society. The fact that the reality does not fit the dream is probably well known, for no society can be both free and equal at the same time. Even in a relatively open and mobile nation like America, there are still relatively few at the top of the heap, many more in the middle, and some at or near the bottom. Nevertheless, in the United States, even those who have the most reason to deny its reality still cling to its promise, if not for themselves at least for their children. In any case, it can be said of the American Dream, in the words of sociologist W. Lloyd Warner, that ". . . though some of it is false, by virtue of our firm belief in it, we have made some of it true."[2] What is true in the case of the American Dream and society-at-large also seems to be true in the realm of religion and the Dream.[3]

Puritan John Winthrop's oft-cited and well-known 1630 metaphor of "A City upon a Hill" and sometime Baptist and Seeker Roger Williams' less known but equally hallowed vision of a country in which, as he observed in 1644, "God requireth not an uniformity of Religion to be inacted and inforced in any civil state . . ." provide the background for understanding the historic tension between two aspects of the American Dream in religion. Over the years, the Puritan sense of cosmic mission as God's New Israel eventually became part of America's national identity and the Radical stand for religious freedom developed into the American ideal of religious and cultural pluralism. And so the two dreams of Americans for a religiously harmonious nation and a religiously free nation have existed side-by-side down to the present-day—sometimes in relative peace but often in considerable tension.[4]

The First American Dream and Religion: Puritan vs. Radical

The Puritans who gave the country its rich imagery of America as a City on a Hill and as a second Israel lived with a great deal of tension themselves. They were, by self-definition, elect spirits, segregated from the mass of humankind by an experience of conversion, fired by the sense that God was using them to revolutionize human history, and committed to the execution of his will. As such, they constituted a crusading force of immense energy. However, in reality, it was an energy which was often incapable of united action because the saints formed different conceptions of what the divine will entailed for themselves, their churches, and the unregenerate world at-large. But, still, they were certain of their mission in the New World—to be an example of how a covenented community of heartfelt believers could function. Thus, in New England the relation of church and state was to be a partnership in unison, for church and state alike were to be dominated by the saints.[5]

This arrangement worked fairly well for the first American Puritans, but in the second and third generations the tension began to mount between the concept of a New Israel composed of elect saints on the one hand, and the Puritan conviction that true Christians were those who had experienced a genuine conversion to Christ on the other. Everything in the New Israel depended on the saints. They were the church and they ruled the state. But what if the second generation did not respond to the call for conversion and the supply of saints ran out? The answer was eventually to create a device usually called the halfway covenant, whereby those of the second generation who did not experience conversion in the Puritan mold could be admitted to church membership after making a profession of communal obedience and thereby have their children baptized in order to place them under the covenant. The Puritans found how difficult it was to make certain that the second and third generations were soundly converted and thus qualified to keep the City on the Hill operating properly according to the ordinances of God.

In any case, the Puritans maintained their sense of destiny and purpose by means of this patch-work arrangement. However, the concept of New England as God's New Israel was given new impetus during the First Great Awakening in the first half of the seventeenth century. American theologian and Congregationalist minister Jonathan Edwards, for one, saw the hand of God at work in the awakening, in both a theological and social sense. Edwards believed that there would be a golden age for the church on earth achieved through the faithful preaching of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. The world thus would be led by the American example into the establishment of the millennium. In this, the New Englanders were surely God's chosen people, his New Israel.[6]

As most people know, the millennium did not come in Edwards' day or even immediately thereafter. Instead the First Great Awakening died out and the original theistically-oriented chosen nation theme was metamorphosed into a civil millennialism. This occurred in the period

between the end of the awakening in the 1740s and the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775. It was in this era that the transferral of the central concepts of seventeenth-century Puritan ideology to all America, including the New Israel motif, took place. Disappointed that the great revival did not result in the dawning of the millennium, many colonial preachers turned their apocalyptic expectations elsewhere. In short, when the First Awakening tailed off, its evangelical spokesmen had to reinterpret the millennial hope it had spawned. In the process, the clergy, in a subtle but profound shift in religious values, redefined the ultimate goal of apocalyptic hope. The old expectation of the conversion of all nations to Christianity became diluted with, and often subordinated to, the commitment to America as the new seat of liberty. First France and then England became the archenemies of liberty, both civil and religious. In his insightful study of this development, historian Nathan Hatch concludes:

> The civil millennialism of the Revolutionary era, expressed by the rationalists as well as pietists, grew out of the politicizing of Puritan millennial history in the two decades before the Stamp Act crisis. . . . Civil millennialism advanced freedom as the cause of God, defined the primary enemy as the antichrist of civil oppression rather than that of formal religion, traced the myths of its past through political developments rather than through the vital religion of the forefathers, and turned its vision toward the privileges of Britons rather than to heritage exclusive to New England.[7]

Thus, the first Great Awakening was not only a significant religious event, but also a popular movement with wide-ranging political and ideological implications that laid the groundwork for an emotional and future-oriented American civil religion. The revolutionary generation began to build an American nation based upon religious foundations of evangelical revivalism. The latter-day New England Puritans were joined by many Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Dutch Reformed of equally evangelical persuasion in seeing themselves as jointly commissioned to awaken and guide the nation into the coming period of millennial fulfillment.

But in the process, where the churches moved out, the nation moved in. Gradually, the nation emerged in the thinking of most Americans as the primary agent of God's meaningful activity in history. They began to bestow on their new nation a catholicity of destiny similar to that which theology usually attributes to the universal church. Thus, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution became the covenants that bound together the people of the nation and secured to them God's blessing, protection, and call to historic mission. Most important, the United States itself became the covenanted community and God's New Israel, destined to spread real freedom and true religion to the rest of the world.[8]

In the nineteenth century, this transmutation of the millennial ideal resulted in what became known as "Manifest Destiny." Coined by journalist John L. Sullivan in 1845, Manifest Destiny came to mean for countless Americans that Almighty God had "destined" them to spread over the entire North American continent. And as they did, they would take with them their uplifting and ennobling political and religious institutions.[9]

But there was another religious dream abroad in the land which did not rest upon the model of a City on a Hill or God's New Israel. This was the belief in religious liberty which had grown out of the Protestant left, generally known as the Radical Reformation. This view originally stood alongside of and in many cases opposed to the idea that New England was God's New Israel. The classic spokesperson for this second concept was Roger Williams, founder of the Rhode Island colony —the first real haven for religious dissidents on American soil.

As already mentioned, Williams rejected the Puritan notion of a religiously covenanted community which could exercise political power. He valued religious liberty and religious individualism more than religious uniformity and religious communitarianism. In fact, he stoutly rejected the Puritan teaching that New England was God's New Israel and flatly stated that:

> The State of the Land of Israel, the Kings and people thereof in Peace and War, is proven figurative and ceremoniall, and no patterne nor president for any Kingdome or civill state in the world to follow.[10]

In sum, Williams boldly asserted his basic premises that civil magistrates are to rule only in civil and never in religious matters, and that persecution for religion had no sanction in the teachings of Jesus, thus undercutting the whole ideological foundation for the Puritan hope in creating a Christian state that would be a City on a Hill.

Quaker William Penn was also in this radical tradition. In both Baptist Rhode Island and Quaker Pennsylvania, religious liberty resulted in religious pluralism. This was all right with Williams and Penn, for both believed that this was the biblical way. But how could God's New Israel survive such a cacaphony of spiritual voices? How could the religious mosaic which soon emerged in the new nation be reconciled with the view that America was God's chosen nation? How could any semblance of religious unity be achieved if religious liberty prevailed? In short, how could this religious smorgasbord ever be regarded as a covenanted community?

The answer lay in the willingness of Enlightenment figures like Thomas Jefferson to reach out to the New Israel exponents on the right and the religious liberty champions on the left in order to create an American civil religion. Jefferson, the great champion of religious liberty and political individualism, also embraced the imagery of the United States as a second Israel. In his second inaugural address on March 4, 1805, Jefferson told the American people that during his second term as their national leader he would need:

> . . . the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the neces-

saries and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with His providence and our riper years with His wisdom and power, and to whose goodness I ask you to join in supplications with me that He will so enlighten the minds of your servants, guide their councils, and prosper their measures that whatsoever they do shall result in your good, and shall secure to you the peace, friendship, and approbation of all nations.[11]

Thus Jefferson articulated the belief held by most Americans of that day that the United States and not just New England was a City on a Hill.

The American Amalgam: Civil Religion

Exactly what was the civil religion which was able to subsume, for a time at least, these two divergent strands of the American Dream? Briefly stated, civil religion (some call it public religion) is that use of consensus religious sentiments, concepts and symbols by the state—either directly or indirectly —for its own purposes. Those purposes may be noble or debased, depending on the kind of civil religion (priestly or prophetic) and the historical context. Civil religion involves the mixing of traditional religion with national life until it is impossible to distinguish between the two, and usually leads to a blurring of religion and patriotism and of religious values with national values. In America, it became a rather elaborate matrix of beliefs and practices born of the nation's historic experience and constituting the only real religion of millions of its citizens.[12]

The first American civil religion was supported by both the nation's intellectuals—mostly children of the Enlightenment—and the country's Christians—mostly Bible-believing evangelicals. The intellectuals like Jefferson supported it because it was general enough to include the vast majority of Americans and because it provided the moral glue for the body politic created by the social contract. The evangelicals supported it because it appeared to be compatible (perhaps even identical) with biblical Christianity. In any case, from this confluence of the Enlightenment and biblical Christianity, American civil religion emerged to promote both the concept of religious liberty and the notion that America was God's New Israel![13]

Under the aegis of American civil religion, the idea of the City on a Hill and God's New Israel was advanced to that of the "redeemer nation" with a manifest destiny. In other words, gradually, the old Puritan notion was infused with secular as well as religious meaning, and joined with political as well as religious goals. This was accomplished in the course of American expansion and by means of political rhetoric and McGuffey's Reader.[14]

The result of these developments is perhaps best illustrated by the story of President William McKinley's decision to annex the Philippines following the Spanish-American War in 1898. In November of the following year, McKinley, himself a devout Methodist layman, revealed to a group of visiting clergymen just how he came to sign the bill of annexation following a dreadful period of soul-searching and prayer:

> I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I . . . went down on my knees and prayed to Almighty God for light and guidance. . . . And one night late it came to me this way—
> (1) That we should not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable;
> (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable;
> (3) that we could not leave them to themselves— they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule worse than Spain's was; and
> (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them. . . . And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly. . . .[15]

In short, McKinley said that destiny and duty made it inevitable that the Americans should bring civilization and light—democratic civilization and biblical light—to the poor Filipinos! Manifest destiny had led God's New Israel down the primrose path of imperialism!

The concept that the United States is God's New Israel and a chosen nation is hardly dead. In his 1980 acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in Kansas City, presidential nominee Ronald Reagan declared:

> Can we doubt that only a Divine Providence placed this land, this island of freedom, here as a refuge for all those people in the world who yearn to breathe free? Jews and Christians enduring persecution behind the Iron Curtain; the boat people of Southeast Asia, Cuba and of Haiti; the victims of drought and famine in Africa, the freedom fighters in Afghanistan. . . . God Bless America![16]

In many ways, Reagan's words in that instance extended the concept from America as a City on a Hill to America as a Cosmic Hotel, from the nation as a Model of Merit to the nation as a Magnet to the Masses.

President Reagan has used the City on a Hill/Manifest Destiny motif with telling effect on many occasions since taking office in January, 1981. For example, in September, 1982, he received roaring approval from a large crowd at Kansas State University when he asserted: "But be proud of the red, white, and blue, and believe in her mission. . . . America remains mankind's best hope. The eyes of mankind are on us . . . remember that we are one Nation under God, believing in liberty and justice for all.[17] In March, 1983, he brought cheering evangelicals to their feet in Orlando, Florida, when he proclaimed to the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals: "America is great because America is good" and reiterated that this nation was "the last best hope of man."[18] The idea that America is God's chosen nation, in a religious as well as in a political sense, is alive and well and living in Washington, D.C.!

While the former Puritan concept of a City on a Hill and God's New Israel evolved over the years from an evangelical, communitarian application to a religious, national one, there has been a parallel develop-

ment from religious liberty to cultural pluralism. Originally, religious liberty meant that the various denominations were free to spread the Gospel as they understood it, without intrusion by either the government or a state church. In this context, an evangelical Protestant consensus emerged which made the United States in the nineteenth century into what historian William G. McLoughlin called "a unified, pietistic-perfectionist nation" and "the most religious people in the world."[19] However, that consensus began to crack near the end of the century as new immigrants from non-Protestant churches or no churches at all flowed into the country and as the secularizing forces associated with Darwinism, urbanization, and industrialization made their presence felt in American society. And, as the country became more diverse, that diversity was protected—some would even say encouraged—by the nation's commitment to religious liberty. Thus, slowly but surely, religious freedom was translated into cultural pluralism.

However, by the post-World War II period, this cultural pluralism was beginning to strain the very bonds of national unity. It was a time of increasing tension and confusion. Looking back on the period 1945-1960, the late Paul Goodman lamented:

> Our case is astounding. For the first time in recorded history, the mention of country, community, place has lost its power to animate. Nobody but a scoundrel even tries it. Our rejection of false patriotism is, of course, itself a badge of honor. But the positive loss is tragic and I cannot resign myself to it. A man has only one life and if during it he has no great environment, no community, he has been irreparably robbed of a human right.[20]

Goodman's analysis was not only a modern jeremiad, however; it was also a plea for the emergence of a modern unifying concept which would serve to hold the republic together. The destruction of the old evangelical Protestant consensus and with it the original American civil religion, and the emergence of cultural pluralism based on the American doctrine of religious liberty—and now reinforced by the melting pot myth—all spelled out the need for a new civil religion based on the new facts of American life. Ironically enough, during the very period when Goodman's observations most closely applied, a rejuvenated civil faith was emerging. This new civil religion took shape during the Eisenhower presidency and it was as amiable and ambiguous as Ike. It was now a civil religion which had been enlarged to include not only the three major faiths of the land—Protestant, Catholic, Jew—but virtually anyone who acknowledged a Supreme Being. The national mood of the 1950s was congenial to an outpouring of religiousity, and examples of it abounded: national days of prayer, the addition of "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag in 1954, the authorization to place "in God we trust" on all currency and coins and the adoption of the same phrase as the national motto in 1956 are a few examples.

Interestingly enough, hard on the heels of the new upsurge of civil religion in the 1950s came a time of great political turmoil and widespread religious renewal in the 1960s. It was in this context that the New Religious Right emerged in the 1970s—galvanized by its hostility to theological and political liberalism alike. In many ways, this New Religious Right resembled the old Puritanism as it began to interact with the American civil religion. Its first order of business was to purify the church and state, to restore old values and old ideals, and, if possible, to put an end to the confusion and tension of the age.

The American Civil Religion in the Hands of the New Religious Right: the Confusion and Tension Heightened

The leaders of the New Religious Right of the 1970s found a civil religion which invested the civil officers of the country with a certain religious mystique; one which linked the social order to a higher and truer realm; one which provided religious motivation and sanction for civil virtue; one which, in short, served the functions of an established religion—and they liked it! It was a public religion which gave the majority of Americans an over-arching common spiritual heritage in which the entire nation supposedly shared. Because it did not appear to contradict their understanding of the American past nor their commitment to Bible Christianity, and because they did not have a profound understanding of civil religion or American history, and, further, because civil religion seemed suited to their goal of restoring America's spiritual and political vigor, New Religious Right leaders embraced the American civil religion as they found it. They did not seem to be aware of or understand one perplexing feature of the American public faith, pointed out by historian Sidney E. Mead and others—namely, that it included a central doctrine of separation of church and state. This concept is, of course, a legacy of the historic American emphasis on religious liberty. As such, it greatly complicates the operation of civil religion in America and provides the public faith with a subtantial element of self-contradiction. In any case, the New Religious Right hardly noticed this in the beginning and is often perplexed by those who refuse to go along with such parts of its program as prayer in the public schools—a perfectly logical civil religion activity—because of the principle of religious liberty and its corollary separation of church and state.[21]

But this last point illustrates the fact that the appearance of the New Religious Right in the 1970s has exacerbated the old tensions associated with the two religious components of the American Dream. Most of the adherents of the New Religious Right come from traditions which accept the doctrine of religious liberty, but the movement has wholeheartedly embraced that part of American civil religion which emphasizes America's national mission as God's New Israel. How can a nation that is so culturally diverse speak in terms of a national mission? Unfortunately, the New Religious Right does not seem to acknowledge the reality of that cultural diversity but prefers to think of America as it was throughout most of the nineteenth century

—a religiously homogeneous nation.

Moreover, the New Religious Right's millennial vision for America seems inconsistent and confused. Belief in America as a City on a Hill and as God's New Israel requires a postmillenial eschatology—the view that the Kingdom of God is extended through Christian preaching and teaching as a result of which the world will be Christianized and will enjoy a long period of peace and righteousness called the millennium. During the nineteenth century, postmillennial views of the destiny of America played a vital role in justifying national expansion. Although there were other explanations for the nation's growth, the idea of a Christian republic marching toward a golden age appealed to many people. Millennial nationalism was attractive because it harmonized the republic with religious values. Thus, America became the hope of the nations—destined to uphold Christian and democratic principles which eventually would bring spiritual and political freedom to the world.

This is exactly what the leaders of the New Religious Right, men like TV evangelist Jerry Falwell and best-selling author Tim LaHaye, believe. Falwell declares that the various activities of the Founding Fathers indicate that they "were putting together God's country, God's republic, and for that reason God has blessed her for two glorious centuries."[22] He has written approvingly: "Any diligent student of American history finds that our great nation was founded by godly men upon godly principles to be a Christian nation. . . . Our Founding Fathers firmly believed that America had a special destiny in the world."[23] LaHaye proclaims that: "America is the human hope of the world, and Jesus Christ is the hope of America."[24]

The only problem with all of this is that Falwell, LaHaye and many other leaders of the New Religious Right are also premillennialists—adherents of that view of the future which claims that Jesus' return will be followed by a period of peace and righteousness before the last judgment, during which Christ will reign as king in person or through a select group of people. This kingdom will not be established by the conversion of individuals over a long period of time, but suddenly and by overwhelming power. Evil will be held in check during the millennial kingdom by Christ, who will rule with a rod of iron. Further, premillennialists believe that this kingdom will be preceded by a period of steady decline and by certain signs such as great tribulation, apostacy, wars, famines, earthquakes, and the appearance of the antichrist.

By way of contrast, nineteenth-century premillennialists, who then constituted only a minority of American Christians, did not believe that their nation was a recipient of God's special favor but was rather just another Gentile world power. In short, they did not support the view that the United States was God's New Israel. Moreover, premillenialists today still maintain a rather gloomy scenario of the future, including the concept of a time of great decline immediately preceeding the second coming of Christ.[25]

There has always been inconsistency on the part of premillennialists with regard to the interpretation of world events and their desire to be patriotic Americans. This is particularly marked in the New Religious Right.[26] Individuals like Falwell and LaHaye have felt called to enter the social and political arena, but they do not have a consistent eschatological base for such activities. In essence, they want to support a certain type of postmillennial vision for America while maintaining a premillennial eschatology.

In fact, much of the New Religious Right's program seems to be contradictory and inconsistent. Perhaps this is because of its confused eschatology. A further problem with its millennialism is its encouragement of the new American civil religion with its emphasis on the chosen theme while ignoring the enormous cultural pluralism present in the United States today. There seems to be something bizarre about attempts to advocate any scheme to spread American political, cultural, and religious values to the world when nobody in this country seems certain what those values are anymore. Moreover, much that is proposed by the New Religious Right appears to contradict the historic American Dream of religious liberty—especially in terms of its drive to introduce state prayers into public schools, its advocacy of tax credits for these who send their children to parochial schools, and its insistence upon a large standing, professional army.[27]

Conclusions

There are many similarities between the adherents of the New Religious Right and the Puritans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both seem to be movements composed of self-confessed godly people determined to change the moral and religious climate of their day. There also appear to be many of the same tensions in the two respective movements—especially the desire, on the one hand, for heartfelt religion to prevail and the wish, on the other, to impose a certain level of morality on society in general. There is, if you will, a perplexing contradiction in the movement which makes it want to create some kind of national religion (or quasi-state church) of "true believers." As the Puritans discovered, it is impossible to combine the two elements in any meaningful way because true faith cannot be forced, especially in the context of religious freedom. It appears historically impossible to achieve the Puritan goals of an elect society composed entirely of genuine believers while at the same time allowing any sort of religious freedom which, in turn, makes the conversion experience meaningful. That was the Puritan dilemma and it may well be the dilemma of the New Religious Right as well.

What happened to the Puritans when they tried to impose their values—no matter how high-minded and uplifting to mankind they may have been—on a larger society? They met first with frustration, then with disillusionment, and finally with the prospect of either acquiescing to a new regime or going into exile. After three generations of attempting to bring godly government to England and after fight-

ing and winning a civil war, Oxford don and Puritan divine Dr. John Owen in 1652 could only survey the Cromwellian regime and lament:

> Now, those that ponder these things, their spirits are grieved in the midst of their bodies;—the visions of their heads trouble them. They looked for other things from them that professed Christ; but the summer is ended, and the harvest is past, and we are not refreshed.[28]

In the end, what will happen to the New Religious Right if and when its participation in politics comes to naught? What will come of its vision and participation in the American Dream? If the concept of a New Israel and a covenanted community could not be implemented and maintained in a country like seventeenth-century England or a place like colonial New England with their culturally and religiously homogeneous populations, how can anyone expect such an idea to be successfully realized in an increasingly pluralistic society like the United States in the 1980s?

The New Religious Right, like the Puritan movement of old, may have to learn the hard way that the best that Christians can hope for in a largely unconverted world is genuine religious freedom in which to practice the Faith and preach the Gospel. That part of the American Dream is still meaningful, precious, and possible. The live question of this generation is: can it be preserved? Adherents of the New Religious Right are trying to save the American Dream. But how ironic it would be if, in the process, they destroyed it!

NOTES

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9. Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (New York: Knopf, 1963), pp. 31-32.
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11. *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 21.
12. The basis for this definition of civil religion is found in the following: Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus*, No. 96 (Winter 1967): 1-21; D. Elton Trueblood, *The Future of the Christian* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 83-102; and Will Herberg, "American Civil Religion: What It Is and Whence It Comes," in *American Civil Religion*, ed. Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 76-88. For an evaluation of civil religion from two different but complementary points of view, see Wilson, *Public Religion in American Culture;* and Robert D. Linder and Richard V. Pierard, *Twilight of the Saints: Biblical Christianity and Civil Religion in America* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978).
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17. Ronald W. Reagan, "Believe in Her Mission," Landon Lecture at Kansas State University on Sept. 9, 1982, published in full in *The Manhattan Mercury*, Sept. 9, 1982, p. B2.
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"One Nation Under God": Religion and the American Dream

by James C. Juhnke

Eisenhower as Symbol

The Eisenhower Center at Abilene, Kansas is a good place to reflect upon the history of religion and the American Dream. The Eisenhower family house, the museum, the library, and the chapel, give testimony to some of the unique and central dimensions of American religion. Here are symbols both of the American dream of tolerant religious pluralism and of the American dream of reestablished religious unity. In the Eisenhower chapel, a shrine of American civil religion, one can inquire what it means that this monument honors a military hero and a president who grew up in a sectarian River Brethren home and whose mother taught him that going to war was against the quite particular and specific command of Christ. On one hand we see a religious pacifist mother who grieved deeply when her son chose to go off to military academy. On the other hand we later find this same son, weary with decades of war's bloodletting, possessed with a passion for international peace and moved to issue prophetic warnings against the growing power of military-industrial complexes at home and abroad. Somehow the particularist sectarian dream struggled to find a national and a universal voice. The shape of such strivings, moving from the particular to the general, conformed to the outlines of the history of religion and the American dream.

Eisenhower Family Portrait, 1902: front row—David Jacob (father), Milton, and Ida; back row—Dwight, Edgar, Arthur, and Earl Roy.

Eisenhower in Uniform.

Eager Pluralism: from Sect to Denomination

The dream of tolerant religious pluralism belonged in a special way to the Quaker William Penn. The best wisdom of Europe in Penn's time held that religious pluralism was intolerable for the health of a state. Without one established, official, state religion, it was believed, the partisans of competing religious groups would continually tear at each others throats and make civil order impossible. Because effective government depended upon the establishment of one true church, anyone perverse enough to refuse membership in that church was a candidate for execution or exile. Many such dissenters were executed and many were exiled, as library shelves of martyr books eloquently testify. A given European church-state establishment might choose to tolerate a few marginal dissenters, Anabaptists, Huguenots, or Waldensians, but only if the sectarians kept very quiet and in no way offended the interests of church and state. The sect remained a sect, subservient and subordinate to the state church.

William Penn disagreed with the prevailing church-state wisdom. And he had the extraordinary opportunity to incorporate his ideals in the experimental colony of Pennsylvania. Here would be one place on earth where there would be freedom of religion, where no one would be persecuted for unorthodox religious opinion or practice. The social and political life of Pennsylvania fell far short of Penn's dream of brotherly love. Pennsylvania's history was scarred by bitter contentiousness. The pacifist Quaker Party dominance in Pennsylvania did not outlast the colonial era. Over the years, Quakers and other pacifist sects were moved to the margins rather than to the center of American society. But the ideal of nonestablishment religious pluralism adapted and survived to take its place as an enduring and successful American national experiment.

It was in the Pennsylvania sectarian heartland that Eisenhower's River Brethren forbearers fashined their special religious communities. They, along with other similar groups, are still there today, although some of their sons and daughters have moved outward and westward to new frontiers such as Kansas. Today the Kansas Brethren in Christ send their young people back to Grantham, Pennsylvania, to study at their own Messiah College, the institution which more than any other in America has a kind of sectarian claim to this religious strand of the Eisenhower heritage.

As America developed, the groups once identified as sects, underwent a remarkable metamorphosis of religious mentality and organization. They became, with some notable exceptions, American religious *denominations*. The exceptional ones—the Old Order Brethren, Old Order Amish, Old Order Mennonites—successfully resisted modern technology and worldly involvements and maintained a sectarian mentality. But the larger numbers of sects found a way to maintain distinctive identity while at the same time taking on the institutional shape of dominant American Protestantism. They organized their own enterprises for publication, education, home and foreign mission, and religious social services. They built denominational headquarters with all the marks of modern ecclesiastical busyness and bureaucracy. Without an established state-church to define themselves over against, they found a legitimate and acceptable place within the mosaic of American denominationalism. This is a distinctively American phenomenon and it can be expected to continue. What happened to the River Brethren, the Mennonites and the Mormons can be expected to happen to such groups as the new religious so-called cults of today—the "Moonies," the Divine Light Mission, or various "Jesus" groups. This denominationalizing process is an important form of Americanization. The "melting pot" label applies only in part to this process, for the denominational form in important ways helps make it possible for socio-religious groups to maintain distinctive identity. We have a religious moasic in America, not a bland and uniform soup.

Reluctant Pluralism: from Established Church to Denomination

The dream of reestablished religious unity belonged in a special way to William Bradford and John Winthrop and that righteous host of Puritans who established the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. The Puritans were heirs of the reformer John Calvin. They hoped to build a new holy commonwealth which would embrace all its inhabitants in a common religious inheritance. Their grandiose objectives, guaranteed by a covenant with God, included the regeneration of England and all Europe by the exemplary light of the Massachusetts city on a hill. These folk had remarkable capacities for hard work, for solving community problems, for getting rich, for seeing to the education of their children, and for preparing future leaders. But they had little interest in religious toleration and pluralism. If a reckless Quaker missionary came up from Pennsylvania preaching dissenting doctrines, she would be banished. If she persisted, she was executed. Others with alternative dreams, such as Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams, were invited to dream elsewhere. The Massachusetts Puritan dream was for a unitary (albeit congregational) religious establishment.

The Puritan dream fell on hard times in colonial America, as did the dream of William Penn and dozens of other utopian European visionaries. Manifestations of spiritual deadness, materialistic greed, shameless pleasure-seeking, and religious divisiveness plagued the colony decade after decade. Measured by its dream, Massachusetts seemed a spiritual failure at the same time that it achieved substantial economic and political success. The "Great Awakening" revivals of the 1730s helped to restore spiritual fervor to a rapidly secularizing society, but the revivals also enhanced religious *variety* by alienating "New Lights" from "Old Lights," by emphasizing inner experience to the detriment of traditional authority, and by eroding the identification of churches with territorial boundaries. Revivalism was to give prominence to a new set of church groups—Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and others—who drew members out of old Puritan stock and took the religious initiative on the frontier. Eventually the old Puritan dream of a newly established church had to be abandoned entirely, as Congregationalist, Unitarian, and Presbyterian heirs of Calvin all accomodated themselves to a status of denomination among denominations. In a new society as bewilderingly diverse as America, a state-church religious establishment proved quite impossible. In America, as nowhere else, it became possible to distinguish between church membership and membership in the social-political order.

Place of Meditation, final resting place of General Eisenhower, Abilene, Kansas.

American denominations developed in ways that met the needs of members for social belonging as well as for spiritual meaning. Andrew M. Greeley, a writer of some first-rate sociology and some second-rate novels, suggests that denominations met the special social and identity needs of people who needed to cushion the shocks of immigration and of transition from peasant village to industrial metropolis.[1] Americans found *denominational* identities so important, and held onto their Baptist or Disciples or Polish Catholic affiliations so fervently, because they needed to belong somewhere in the face of social disorganization.

A New Form of Religious Unity: Civil Religion

The idea of God's special *covenant* with the experiment in America proved to be more durable and adaptable than did the dream of establishment. With the coming of the War for Independence and the founding the new republic, Americans redefined the Covenant with God to embrace not just one ecclesiastical group but the whole American national experiment in democratic republicanism. The City on a Hill, the Light to the Nations, was now not Massachusetts Bay, but the United States of America. The War for Independence, fought against European tyranny, was a righteous crusade. Nation-building became a holy enterprise.

The idea of America's covenant

with God has been important in America's self conception from the founding of the republic to the present. It has endowed America's interests and enterprises with cosmic significance. It has fostered the tendency to turn our wars into moral crusades which must result in unconditional victory. Because we have seen ourselves peculiarly blessed by God, we have believed ourselves manifestly destined to succeed in all things—extending the "area of freedom" to the Pacific Ocean, rooting out the scourge of slavery, making the world safe for democracy, enlarging the circle of democratic liberty and participation to include the excluded (blacks, women, gays, etc.), holding back the Communist menace, and much more. In the words of Ronald Reagan, "Can we doubt that only a Divine Providence placed this land, this island of freedom, here as a refuge for all those people in the world who yearn to breathe free? Jews and Christians enduring persecution behind the Iron Curtain; the boat people of Southeast Asia, Cuba and of Haiti; the victims of drought and famine in Africa, the freedom fighters in Afghanistan. . . ."[2] Such official religious rhetoric grows out of, and continues, a long heritage of covenant theology.

The President's words remind us once again of the American national civil religion which has emerged alongside the churches and the church denominations. It is a religion which includes Protestant, Catholic and Jew (and hence typically makes no reference to Jesus). It is expressed in the flag salute quoted in the title for this session, in the national anthem, in stories of military heroes and martyrs, in the Bible and the language used for presidential inaugurations, in national holidays, and in the hushed and reverent tones of visitors to the Eisenhower chapel and other national shrines. It is expressed in the words "under God," added to the flag salute while Eisenhower was president. In nearly all of its official uses, the civil religion invokes the approval and blessing of God (so unlike those starchy Puritans who discerned so many signs of God's disapproval).

On rare occasions the American civil religion has transcended self-congratulation and invocation of God's blessing. Abraham Lincoln in his Second Inaugural Address suggested that the nation's Civil War sufferings were somehow the outcome of the nation's sinfulness and hence the sign of the judgement of God upon a slaveholding society. Martin Luther King, leader of nonviolent campaigns for black dignity and freedom in America, freely used the framework of our national civil religion in critiquing American racism and in projecting his dream for the moral regeneration of America. The insights of such as Lincoln and King, rare though they may be, remind us that God both judges and blesses, and is beyond manipulation for narrow personal, ethnic or national purposes.

Conclusion

We claim to be "One Nation Under God." The oneness of our nationhood, confirmed by the symbols and rituals of civil religion, is not the oneness of an established religion. It is rather the oneness of disestablishment, and of an ambiguous and incomplete separation of church and state. Europe once offered a model of established church and excluded sect. America evolved a model in which both church and sect took on a new form—the denomination. Sectarians gained legitimacy while losing something of their prophetic edge. The churches lost somewhat more in the exchange, giving up their hopes for the special favors and responsibilities of official establishment. Denominations in America, whether large or small, came to have relatively little direct claim upon, or responsibility for, national policy. Thus church historian Sidney E. Mead can say, "in the United States the contest between what is commonly called church and state is actually between the one coherent, institutionalized civil authority, and about three hundred collectively incoherent religious institutions whose claims tend to cancel each other out."[3] We are "One Nation," unified in our civil religion and comfortably splintered into denominations which help meet our needs for identity and belonging. We are also "Under God," deliberately more under God's blessing than under God's judgement. This peculiar religious complex, like all religious manifestations, offers great opportunities for genuine and prophetic transcendence as well as for deplorable idolatry and self-delusion.

The oral history collection here in the Eisenhower library has an interview with one of Ike's cousins, Nettie Stover Jackson. Jackson reported that Ike's family asked a blessing before each meal, and returned thanks after each meal. Ike was so eager to escape from the table that while everyone's eyes were closed for giving thanks, he'd turn around on his stool, "and the minute she said, 'Amen,' he was off and gone like a shot." Ike's mother "was just afraid that he woudn't turn out very well."[4]

Eisenhower did in fact escape from the sectarian religiosity of his parental home. He eventually became a Presbyterian, baptized a Christian in January 20, 1953, the very same day that he took the oath of office as President of the United States.[5] As the juxtaposition of baptism and inauguration suggests, Eisenhower was not so much claimed by a particular denomination as by the American civil religion. Under the banner of that religion, Eisenhower as president sponsored prayer breakfasts, national days of prayer, a Foundation for Religious Action, and well-publicized visits to the White House by religious leaders such as Billy Graham. Although he apparently avoided strong denominational attachments, Eisenhower's pilgrimage was very much a part of the history of religion and the American dream.

ENDNOTES:

1. Andrew M. Greeley, *The Denominational Society*, 1972, p. 3.
2. Ronald Reagan, "Presidential Nomination Acceptance Address," *Vital Speeches*, Aug. 15, 1980, p. 646.
3. Sidney E. Mead, *The Nation With the Soul of a Church*, 1975, p. 69.
4. Oral Interview of Nettie Stover Jackson by William T. Shelton, May 5, 1972, p. 22. Eisenhower Library.
5. *Memorial Services in the Congress of the United States and Tributes in Eulogy of Dwight David Eisenhower*, 1970, p. xxxi.

Bethel College Centennial: Lizzie Wirkler's Autograph Book

by David A. Haury

Academy and college students in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century often collected autographs from fellow students and teachers. The autograph books usually included intricate drawings and original poetry. The Mennonite Library and Archives possesses numerous such books, including examples from the Wadsworth Seminary, Halstead Seminary, Bethel College, and other Mennonite institutions.

This research note features three pages from the autograph book of Miss Lizzie Wirkler, a student at the Halstead Seminary and at Bethel College from 1891 to 1894. These illustrations reveal the elaborate nature of some of the drawings: On this page is one of the earliest sketches of the Bethel campus. On the next page, P. R. Voth, later pastor of the Buhler Mennonite Church, shows his skill as an artist and poet, and the adjacent drawing reveals that *fractur* was not a lost art among Kansas Mennonites.

April 2nd 1874

In dem schönen Garten Eden
Wo des Lebensbäume blühen, —
Dort ist Ruhe für die Müden,
Da ist Ruh für dich. —

Zur Erinnerung
an
P. R. Voth
Lehigh Co
Kans.

Bethel College
Newton
Kans

If your task is once begun,
Never leave it till it's done.
Be the labor great or small,
Do it well or not at all!

In remembrance of your friend
H. P. Unruh
Lehigh
Kans.

Mennonite Seminary
Halstead
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Book Reviews

Marlin Jeschke, *Believers Baptism for Children of the Church*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1983. Pp. 150, price $7.95, paperback.

Marlin Jeschke's book is an important one. Our theology of children in the believers church has sometimes been fuzzy. Jeschke's thoughtful contribution should be widely read and discussed.

I found this book to be of deep personal interest. Raised in the Calvinist tradition, baptized as an infant, and confirmed as a young adolescent, I joined the Mennonite Church by letter of transfer without rebaptism. Jeschke's thinking helped me sort out my own experience and set me free from a vague sense of guilt about my entrance into the believer's church tradition without rebaptism. Jeschke makes a strong and Biblical case for baptizing persons only after the age of accountability has been reached in order for baptism to have its fullest impact and meaning. On the other hand, he portrays with sensitivity the traditions that do baptize children, and allows that these may be instructive for us at certain points. He does not yield to the temptation of polarizing the different traditions as good and bad; right and wrong.

Jeschke's main thesis is that children of believers are in a special position of privilege. Children who are carefully instructed in the way of the Lord from birth forward will be much less likely to have a dramatic conversion experience. Their entrance into the Christian way will be more natural and unspectacular. Jeschke sees this as much more glorious and desirable than the need to have children serve time as slaves to sin and then return to the Lord. He enjoins us to celebrate this better path. He says "The more effective the job that Christian parents and the church do of guiding their children into the Christian way, the less likely it is that these children and youth *can* have a dramatic conversion experience. We must learn not to lament this. Grateful as we are for every bum or skid row derelict who got "unshackled", we must learn to exult in the even more glorious testimony of Christians who grew up in a home where grace was said at meals, who were taken to church and Sunday school, and who joyfully embraced in adolescence and for all of their life thereafter the Christian way taught and modeled for them by the church." He does not disparage conversion. Rather he sees conversion as the way people come to faith who never were presented with the gospel or had the opportunity for nurture.

Jeschke names this position as a third way. Churches have often dealt with children in the church in one of two ways. Either the church baptized infants, or it has insisted that children come to baptism by way of confession of sin and repentance. This is a two-category theory in which people are either saved or lost. He reminds us that there is a third category—namely, innocence. Innocence places children in the position of being open to influence, education and example.

The author does a good job of tracing the history of baptism as a background to his thesis. He traces the roots of baptism to the Exodus event. The exodus was a deliverance or a crossing over from the pagan world to participate in God's community. The New Testament rite of baptism is also a rite of entrance into the community of God's people. Baptism does not save, but is a sign of a desire to participate fully with God's new community. This thorough treatment of the history and meaning of baptism is an important contribution of the book. These understandings become the basis of who we baptize and when. Baptism should take place whenever faith appears in a person, oftentimes, in adolescence. Jeschke does not feel we can program baptism through catechism classes followed by baptism at a set time of the year. The Biblical pattern would be baptism first, followed by instruction.

The implications of Jeschke's thesis are manifold for the church. Certainly the church has a very important ministry and mission to all children. We should try to reach as many children as possible with godly nurture. Another implication is that much more energy, creativity, time and resources need to be invested in working with children in our churches and homes. While we see the mission to children as a serious and urgent task which is essential in moving children toward faith, we also respect the innocence of children. Jeschke concludes by repeating a phrase used throughout the book—"children are God's idea. He made them." We are encouraged to work *with* God and not at cross purposes with Him. God will do His part and we must do ours to bring the children we seek to nurture to an "owned faith."

Jeschke does not raise the question of adult education, to prepare the adults in our churches to be the model and example and teachers needed for such an important task. Perhaps it will become the subject of another book. *Believers Baptism for Children of the Church* is an excellent resource which will be profitable reading by pastors, church leaders, Christian educators, and parents. Discussing it will give us opportunity to rethink our basic premises and practices regarding instruction and baptism patterns in our churches.

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Book Reviews

Naomi Lehman, *Pilgrimage of a Congregation: First Mennonite Church, Berne, Indiana.* Berne: First Mennonite Church, 1982. Pp. 439. (Hardback: $22.00 and Paperback: $15.00)

In 1852 Swiss Mennonites from the Jura mountain are of Canton Bern began to settle in Adams County, Indiana, near the present town of Berne. This history of the First Mennonite Church, Berne, the largest Mennonite congregation in North America, tells the story of these Swiss Mennonites, their beliefs and culture as well as their religious institutions. The Berne congregation was originally known as the Münsterberg Mennonite Church and had close ties with the nearby Baumgartner church formed by an earlier group of Swiss Mennonites. Although he was not the first leader of the Berne congregation, Samuel F. Sprunger was the primary formative influence on the congregation during over thirty years of ministry beginning in 1871. Sprunger was actively involved in the General Conference and led his congregation into the General Conference in 1872 and the Western Conference in 1876.

The organization of a congregational history always presents a challenge: neither a completely chronological nor a topical format is adequate. Naomi Lehman combines both structures: the first half of the book discusses the development of the congregation during the term of each minister, and following an "intermission" of humorous anecdotes, Lehman develops various themes and institutions in more detail. Although this organization involves some repetition and may confuse some readers, it allows adequate discussion of both the personalities and the issues influencing the congregation.

Lehman writes her history in a popular style and includes a wealth of anecdotal and personal material which only an insider could relate. Occasionally the style may be too informal, as when the soul of John A. Sprunger flew to mansions above (p. 347). Scholars and readers seeking additional information may be disappointed at the lack of footnotes, but each chapter has a list of sources. Only a few errors, such as references to the Mennonite Library and Archives by its name of two decades ago, the Bethel College Historical Library, have crept into the text. Ironically, Mennonite Church historian, J. C. Wenger, provides the forward for this history of a General Conference congregation.

This history celebrates the progress of the First Mennonite Church in its pilgrimage over one hundred thirty years. Yet much of the story recounts setbacks along the way. Few General Conference congregations have experienced as much internal dissent and division. At first the congregation resisted the new ideas and clothes which S. F. Sprunger had acquired at the Wadsworth school. Controversy surrounded J. W. Kliewer's promotion of the construction of the present sanctuary. More serious was the fundamentalist-modernist division which began to divide the congregation during the ministry of P. R. Schroeder. An anti-conference aspect of this division developed under C. H. Suckau. Erosion of Mennonite doctrines also occurred, and during World War II Berne had only one in six men serving in alternative service compared to nearly half of the General Conference as a whole participating in CPS. The ministry of Olin Krehbiel brought a revival of support for the General Conference and nonresistance, but the formation of Grace Bible Church after Gordon Neuenschwander replaced Krehbiel indicated that old divisions still existed.

Lehman's writings may have opened some old wounds and created additional unhappiness. Yet the story would have been incomplete and inaccurate without describing the issues and personalities dividing the congregation. Lehman provides a sympathetic account which attempts to portray the disputes fairly. Perhaps the account is occasionally too sympathetic and lacking in objectivity, but most congregational histories completely ignore dissent. Lehman has not written a lifeless story but brings out the vibrant and heartfelt concerns of the members through their struggles. The congregation's ability to surmount obstacles reveals the strength and loyalty of the members. Certainly agreement among 1200 members will never be complete, and the seriousness with which they adhere to their faith has contributed to the controversies.

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Goertz, Hans-Jürgen, ed. *Profiles of Radical Reformers; Biographical Sketches from Thomas Müntzer to Paracelsus.* Walter Klaassen, English edition editor. Kitchener, Ontario: Herald Press, 1982, 280 pp. ($9.95—paperback)

This eagerly-awaited[1] English translation of *Radikale Reformatoren* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978) is not a book without fault. Like all collections of essays by different authors, it is uneven. Some of the "Profiles" are highly and stimulatingly interpretative (e.g., Goertz's opening essay on Thomas Muntzer); others are largely biographical and somewhat pedestrian. The quality of the writing varies, as does the quality of the translating. But if *Profiles of Radical Reformers* is not a perfect book, it is, nevertheless, an important contribution to the bibliography of sixteenth-century Anabaptism.

It is an important contribution because it provides the professional historian with useful, concise, sketches, "in accord with the best current research," (p. 22) of twenty-one sixteenth-century "radicals" who range from the obvious (Müntzer, Karlstadt, Schwenckfeld, Franck, and Servetus) to the more obscure (Sebastian Lotzer, Michael Gaismair, Johannes Hergot, and Martin Cellarius), from the Anabaptist (Hut, Denck, Reublin, Grebel, Sattler, Hubmaier, Hutter, Marpeck, Hoffman, Rothmann, and Menno Simons) to the radical Roman Catholic (Paracelsus).

No professional historian of the Radical Reformation can be an "expert" on each of the above, so even the professional historian will find new and useful information in this volume for himself and for his students. With its reliance on the "best current research" and its current bibliographies appended to each essay, *Profiles of Radical Reformers* is an exceptionally appropriate text for an undergraduate course on the Radical Reformation.

Profiles of Radical Reformers may prove to be *very* important contribution to the bibliography of Anabaptism if it in fact "reaches out to a wider circle of readers," (p. 22) as its editor intended. For in that "wider circle" is the educated lay reader who has more than a passing interest in his or her Anabaptist roots, but who, in all likelihood, has missed the last twenty years of Anabaptist historiography.[2] For this reader, the old orthodoxy of Harold S. Bender and the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* is still unshaken.

There is scarcely a trace of the old orthodoxy in this volume. Hans Hut, Hans Denck, Wilhelm Reublin, Melchior Hoffman, and Bernhard Rothmann are taken every bit as seriously as Grebel, Sattler, Hubmaier, Hutter, Marpeck, and Menno Simons.

Moreover, the line between the Anabaptists and the non-Anabaptists in this work appears broken and indistinct at best. Indeed, in reading these "Profiles" of twenty-one "Radical Reformers," one is struck above all by the remarkable similarity of their pre-reform and Reformation careers. Most were reasonably well-educated, most were influenced by the new humanism, most were vehement in their anticlericalism, most identified rather strongly with the poor in their society, most insisted that Christianity must make a perceptible difference in one's lifestyle, and all were "radicals" in their attempts "to explode [their] own time's prevailing norms of life and thought." (p. 21) Anabaptism, then, clearly emerges as but one radical—even variegated—response to the theological and sociological upheaval of the early sixteenth century.

Here, then, is the new orthodoxy justifiably presented as a matter of historical fact. It is to be hoped that the educated lay readers of *Mennonite Life* will seize this opportunity to familiarize themselves with their Anabaptist roots and the new orthodoxy about those roots. By so doing, they will not only enrich their understanding of their peculiar spiritual heritage; they will also ensure that *Profiles of Radical Reformers* realizes its fullest potential.

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[1] In their previews of *Radikael Reformatoren*, both Peter J. Klassen and Cornelius Krahn called for an English translation of the book. See Klassen, Review of *Radikale Reformatoren*, ed. Hans-Juergen Goertz *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 54 (January 1980): 69-70; and Krahn, Review of *Radikale Reformatoren*, ed. Hans-Juergen Goertz, *Church History* 49 (December 1980): 487.

[2] To a large extent, this lack of awareness about recent research is due to the exclusive reliance on older works such as the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* for information about the Anabaptists. Unfortunately, however, even some recent attempts to present the Anabaptist story to lay readers have neglected the last twenty years of Anabaptist historiography. See J. Denny Weaver, Review of *The Mennonite Story* and *The Mennonite Story: Leader's Guide*, by Rudy Baergen, *Mennonite Life* 37 (March 1982): 31.

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