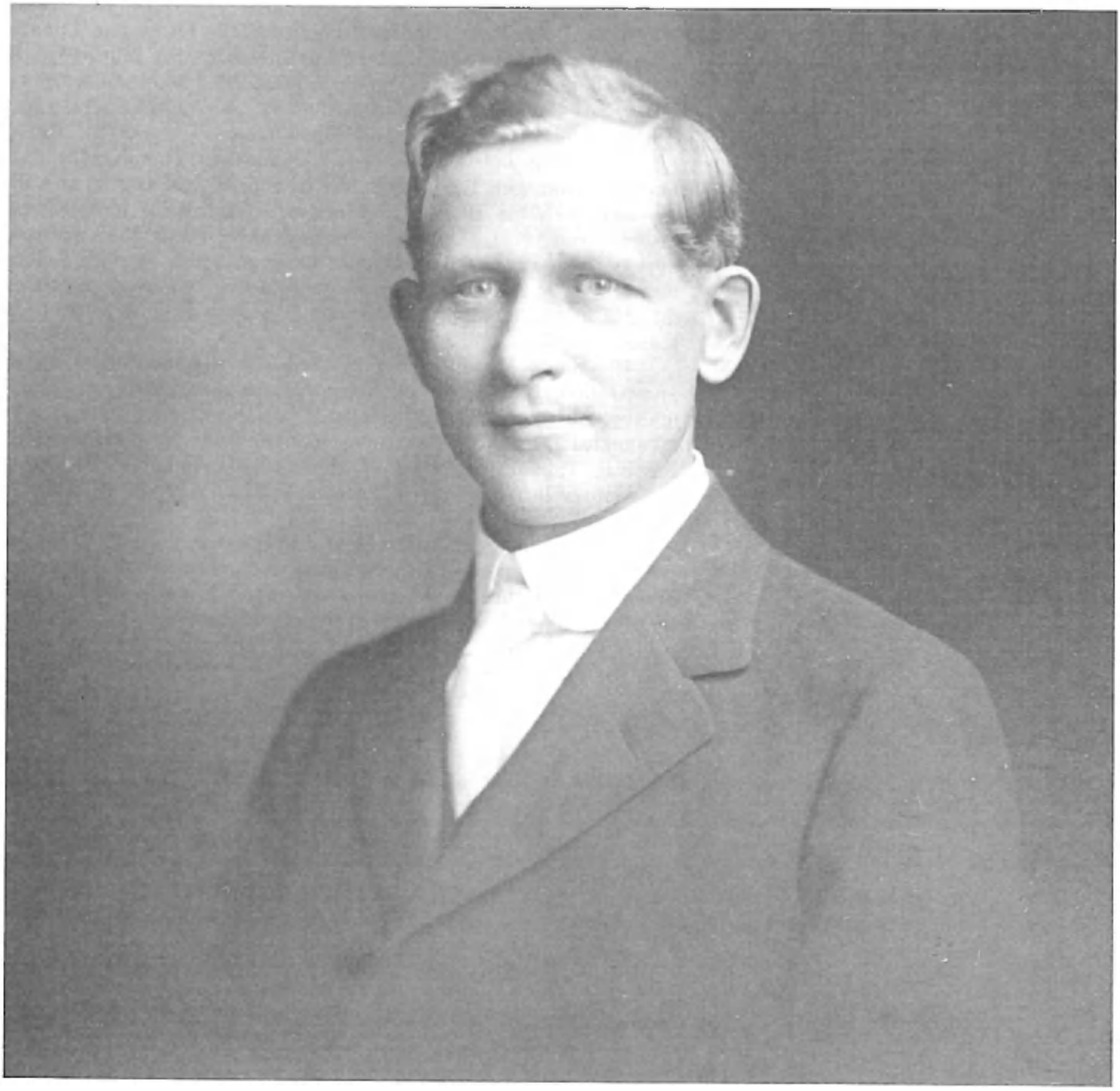
MENNONITE LIFE

DECEMBER 1984



In this Issue

I would like to apologize to our readers for the late delivery of the September issue. The schedule of the printer created numerous and lengthy delays. Our mailing list was entered into a computer in September, and the computer will facilitate more efficient handling of new subscriptions and renewals. If your address contains errors, please contact us.

Joel Goertz provides an account of Mennonite hog butchering, an activity which occurs at some fall harvest celebrations but is no longer a part of the routine on most Mennonite farms in central Kansas. Goertz produced this paper last January for a Mennonite history class at Bethel College, and the illustrations are from the butchering at the Bethel College Historical Library's Folk Festival from 1959-61.

Allan Teichroew, a senior archivist at the Library of Congress, describes an example of Hutterite architecture, the mill of the Bon Homme Colony near Tabor, South Dakota. The photographs from the Library of Congress collection exhibit details of the structure which is now at the bottom of Lewis and Clark Lake.

Mennonite Life would like to thank Tad Thompson and *The Packer* newspaper for permission to reprint his article and illustrations on Titus Hoover, a Mennonite cantaloupe and vegetable grower from Port Treverton, Pennsylvania. The article previously appeared in *The Packer* on September 4, 1982. Thompson is the Eastern editor of *The Packer*. *Mennonite Life* is pleased to print additional poetry of Elmer Suderman. His six poems focus on prairie scenes.

Rosemary Moyer, photo archivist at the Mennonite Library and Archives, and I have prepared a photo essay entitled "Weddings of Yesterday." This essay is taken from an exhibit prepared by the Mennonite Library and Archives for the 1984 Bethel College Fall Festival. The brief account of Mennonite weddings at the turn of the century is from *Prairie People: A History of the Western District Conference.*

Calvin Redekop, Professor of Sociology at Conrad Grebel College, investigates several sociological factors which influenced the Mennonite Brethren upon their arrival on the American frontier. Redekop relates these factors to the emergence of H. W. Lohrenz as a Mennonite Brethren leader and draws several important conclusions from this case study.

MENNONITE LIFE

December, 1984 Vol. 39 No. 4

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Front Cover
H. W. Lohrenz in 1916

Back Cover
Heinrich and Elizabeth Wiens Lohrenz Family, ca. 1886. H. W. is standing on the right.

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A Disappearing Tradition: Mennonite Hog Butchering

by Joel Goertz

A half century ago, just before my father entered his teens, most Mennonites were occupied in farming and coped without the benefit of the convenient luxuries which we today regard as necessities. Lack of electricity excluded refrigeration as a means of food preservation, for example. Therefore, each individual family was much more involved with raising and preserving food than we are today. Methods of raising and preserving were passed down orally and by example through the generations and became established as traditions.

One such tradition, hog butchering, was enacted at least once a year on most Mennonite farms. Pork was then the primary source of meat, and when the desire for fresh pork grew overpowering and the weather became cool enough, it was declared time to butcher. Cool weather was essential to enable the pork meat to cure properly and to be preserved before modern refrigeration.[1] Temperatures no higher than 20's for several days were desirable.[2] (Sometimes my great-grandfather Goertz would get such a "hankering" for fresh pork that he would call a butchering during an early, brief cold snap. When the weather would warm up again to normal temperatures the meat would spoil and have to be thrown out after 2 or 3 weeks.[3])

Relatives who lived close by were called to participate in the task. The participants typically included the couple who owned the farm where the butchering took place, their parents, two or three siblings and their spouses—all together usually 10-12 adults and numerous children. All

Scalding hog in oil drum using block-and-tackle.

would gather for an early breakfast served at about 6:30, at a time of the year when sunup was about 7:45. During breakfast a large container would be filled with water and a fire built under it. When it grew light enough a man went to the hog pen and killed the chosen hog with a .22 caliber rifle. The hog was immediately "stuck" with a butcher knife by a man experienced enough to know the proper location and technique to drain the blood effectively. (According to my father only sows were butchered, but he could not explain why. He vaguely suggested that the quality of meat was superior.[4] A member of the community stated that he believed sow bacon to be of superior quality.[5] In any case, two or three large sows would be butchered to provide for the needs of his eight member family.[6])

Following the bleeding, the hog was dragged to the container in which water had been heating so it could be scalded, thus enabling all the hair to be easily removed and the skin cleaned. The scalding was accomplished in one of two ways. The more desirable way required a scalding trough, which was a long, fairly wide trough about two feet deep. The hog was hoisted up using a block-and-tackle arrangement and was lowered onto several tire chains that were positioned in the trough such that their ends were hanging over the edges. One or two men on each side of the trough then grasped the ends and rolled the hog around in the water in the trough so it would be uniformly scalded. If a scalding trough was not available, a large oil drum (55 gallon) with one end cut out was filled with water and used instead. In this case one end of the hog was scalded at a time. (One had to be careful not to fill the drum so full of water that when the hog was lowered water would spill over the edge of the drum.) This is the method that my father remembers his parents used. After scalding, the hog was suspended head-first by its hind legs, and the skin was scraped clean of hair and stubborn dirt. The usual tool for scraping was a corn knife—probably because its blade is large and wide enough to be safely grasped by both hands. A special tool shaped like a

Scalded hog ready for scraping.

Scraping hog and slitting abdominal cavity.

bell with the edge sharpened was also used if available.[7]

Now the actual butchering began. First, the abdominal cavity was slit open and the entrails removed. Of these, the heart, liver, and intestines were saved and set aside for later use. Next the head was cut off and the hog was separated by making two saw cuts about 2 inches on either side and parallel to the backbone with a carpenter's saw, or with a meat saw if one was available. Sawing this way precluded pork chops, which simply weren't made at that time. (To make them the backbone had to be cut right down the middle.) The rich meat surrounding the backbone was ground up for meat sausage.[8]

At this point the butchering moved into a shed or garage if it had not already been moved. Sometimes immediately after scalding the hog was moved inside and suspended from the rafters. (Also, at this time another hog was slaughtered and started through the butchering process.) The separated sides of the hog were moved to the butchering table. (My father mentioned that when setting the wooden panels upon the sawhorses, to be used for butchering tables, they had to be careful to place the ends of the sawhorses at least 6 inches from the edge of the table to prevent rats from swiping meat during mealtimes.) The legs (hams) were cut off the sides and the feet were cut off the hams and set aside to be pickled later. The ribs were cut out of the sides to be made into spare ribs (my grandfather's favorite delicacy[9]). The deboned sides were then cut into slabs 3-4 inches wide. These slabs were laid on the table, skin side down, and a butcher knife was used to trim off the layer that had been closest to the ribs that was used to make bacon. The remaining fat was easily separated from the skin (rind) by sliding the knife between the rind and the fat.[10]

By this time the hog was largely separated into various portions, which were converted into final products by different processes. A description of these processes follows.

One process requiring considerable time was rendering the huge quantities of fat a single hog yielded—often at least 100 pounds on a sow weighing 400 pounds. After the fat was stripped from the rind it was run through a meat grinder to break it down and then was put in a large cauldron (perhaps twenty gallon size) over a fire. The purpose of this procedure was to melt the lard, to steam off as much moisture as possible, and to separate the cracklings from the lard. One batch was finished when the cracklings had turned light brown. The batch was then strained to separate the lard from the cracklings. Both

The hog was sawed into halves and the head removed.

Removal of entrails.

Melting the lard and separating cracklings.

were stored in large (two to five gallon) crockery jars. My father reported that seven to eight gallons of cracklings were yielded for fifteen to twenty gallons of lard. Cracklings would only keep two to three weeks, which may be one reason they were often considered to be a delicacy (although I didn't find them very palatable).[11]

The legs became hams. Trimming the hams probably was one of the more esteemed jobs, although I could not determine the necessity of shapely hams, except for their aesthetic appeal. After the hams had been well cooled for a few days, they were packed into a wooden barrel, with the largest hams at the bottom, and covered with a salt brine and left there for many days. (My father could not recall how long they were usually left in the barrel.) The bacon was also soaked in the same barrel. In any case the hams had to soak long enough for the salt to penetrate to the center of the hams for its preserving effect. Being in thin slices, the bacon soaked up the salt sooner and, consequently, was removed sooner than the hams. After they were sufficiently cured, the hams were put in the smokehouse for the final flavoring (and final curing—if smoking also served that purpose). Damp straw or damp sawdust was used to produce the smoke. The hams were smoked all day, and the fires had to be tended closely. After smoking, the hams were stored until needed by suspending them from rafters, safely out of the reach of cats. Prepared in this manner, the hams would keep throughout the winter and part of the summer, although the outer layer might become rancid in summer.[12]

Sausage was another major preparation. There were two kinds of sausage, liver sausage and meat sausage. Liver sausage was one/fourth to one/third liver, along with the ears, snout, head meat, lean meat, and a generous amount of fat. (About half of it was fat.) Meat sausage was comprised mainly of lean meat. Sometimes one front ham was used for meat sausage. All the meat intended for sausage was run through a meat grinder and then put into a press, which when operated forced the sausage through a

small hole at the bottom and through a short pipe onto which the casing had been pushed to receive the sausage as it was squeezed out. The casing for liver sausage was the large intestine and for meat sausage the small intestine, both thoroughly cleaned, of course. Sometimes the casings were so riddled with intestinal worm holes that the meat would bulge out and produce a lumpy sausage. The meat sausage was one and a half to two inches in diameter, and the liver sausage was about three inches in diameter. Liver sausage was cooked and eaten in about three weeks or it would spoil. To preserve it for several more weeks, it could be put in crockery jars and covered with lard. Meat sausage was usually smoked. It was highly resistent to spoilage, but when it had been kept so long that spoilage threatened, it could be canned.[13]

During the interview I remarked that I had occasionally heard the term "pickled pig's feet." My father replied that indeed the feet were pickled, along with the tongue, the heart, the ears, and the snout—if the latter items were not ground up in the liver sausage. These items were cooked and then put into the pickling solution, which he thought consisted of salt brine and some vinegar (but he was not certain).[14]

Some of the butchering processes were done by the men and some by the women. The women prepared the intestines to receive the sausage, mixed the sausage meats to insure the proper seasonings were added, rendered the lard, and, of course, prepared the meals. The men slaughtered and cleaned the hogs, did the main butchering in the shed, and trimmed the hams and bacons for proper shape. Also, one self-appointed man usually spent most of his time cleaning and scraping the odd parts, such as the head, feet, and ears. Children could be kept busy too—removing fat meat from the rind, cutting meat into strips for grinding into sausage, stuffing sausage, stirring lard, and carrying wood and water. The labor divisions between the sexes were largely traditional.[15]

Pets were sometimes a nuisance. Cats and dogs would constantly be begging, and if they had an opportunity, they would take matters into their own paws. This necessitated the posting of a guard during mealtimes if the butchering area could not be sealed off.[16]

Top, Squeezing sausage into casings; bottom, Sausage for sale.

Although butchering day involved a long day of intensive labor, "it was something that had to be done so it was done with pleasure." The adults could talk over the concerns of the day and complain about the hard times, while engaged in a common, productive effort by helping a brother put food on the table. No money ever exchanged hands at the end of the day; instead, they all helped one another butcher when the time came. In a way it was analogous to a family gathering. "It was a pleasure to work together," and a few harmless pranks were usually pulled to help maintain the good atmosphere. For example, my father said that sometimes a man might walk around half a day before he discovered a pig's tail fastened to the back of his coat.[17]

ENDNOTES

1 Interview with Ernest Goertz by Joel Goertz, 21 January 1981.
2 Conversation with Arthur Schmidt, 22 January 1984.
3 Goertz Interview.
4 Ibid.
5 Schmidt Conversation.
6 Goertz Interview.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Interview with Arnold Goertzen by Joel Goertz, 21 January 1984.
10 Goertz Interview.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.

The Hutterite Mill of Bon Homme Colony: An Architectural Documentary

by Allan Teichroew

To view the architectural record of the Hutterite mill at Bon Homme Colony near Tabor, South Dakota, is to admire again the Hutterites' achievement. Compare, for instance, their longevity as a sect to the better-known Shakers and Rappites. While the landmarks of these and other 19th-century communes still stand (and are prized for their uniqueness), the communities which inspired and built them no longer exist. Restored settlements such as the utopian village of New Harmony, Indiana are at best museums or tourist spots. They may be "living" museums where curatorial staff try to reenact scenes from the past, but the functioning of the sites is far removed from their original purpose.

The reverse is true of the Hutterites, whose society flourishes despite the absence or loss of some of its earliest and most valued architecture. The Bon Homme mill depicted here is an example of an important frontier structure which has disappeared. In November, 1952, its fate already in doubt because of an impending flood control project, the two-and-a-half story mill suffered an explosion and fire. Not long afterwards the site became part of the reservoir which the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers carved out of the Missouri River Basin. Today the building sits in the undertow of Lewis and Clark Lake.

Southeast perspective of Bon Homme Colony Mill.


S.D.
1


1875
1916

All the more fortunate that just months before the explosion a survey team documented the building with photographs and drawings. The group responsible for the study, the Historic American Buildings Survey, known by its acronym HABS, conducted the investigation as part of a nationwide attempt to record the country's architectural heritage. Members of the visiting team at Bon Homme Colony included architect John A. Bryan and field workers from the National Park Service. Since its founding as a federal project in 1933, HABS has developed into a collaborative effort between the American Institute of Architects, the Interior Department, and the Library of Congress, where the edited field notes and documents for over 16,000 landmarks are preserved. It is from the HABS collection in the Library's Prints and Photographs Division that the following items have been reproduced.

In viewing the floor plans, details, and side views of the mill, note that the scale on the drawings does not apply to these reduced versions. Observe also that the inscription "1875" over the main doorway is for the date construction was started—completion of the building did not occur until sometime the next year. In the brief comments which accompanied its report, HABS surmised that no one architect was responsible for the mill's plans but that stonemasons and carpenters had come from among the membership of the Hutterian Brethren. This information is modified by a colony source who cites community tradition as holding that immigrant Bohemians were engaged as stoneworkers at the rate of thirty-five cents a day.

Around 1900 the mill, which had been built to operate by waterwheel and an artesian well, was changed to steam power. The purchase of a Fairbanks engine accounts for the addition of a wooden engine room on the west side. Observe that the outer walls of the main building had been constructed of chalk stone and that the interior walls and floors were of wood. The yellowish-looking stone, also used in most other structures in the colony at the time, was extracted from the Missouri River over which Bon Homme was perched. A number of the immigrant-era buildings have survived to the present day and can be viewed either in the original or in the many illustrated books on Hutterite life and history.

Unfortunately, even though the HABS report at one time contained photostatic duplicates of the machine specifications of the Bon Homme mill, the documents seem to have been separated or lost from the current file. Available notes state only that the machinery had been furnished and installed around 1890 by a company from Moline, Illinois. They also say that Bon Homme miller Michael Waldner, who lent the originals of the specifications to HABS, informed the visitors that colony shipments were still being received as far away as Georgia. Rye flour was its preferred product, and the Bon Homme mill was one of the few operations in the country using 19th-century methods to turn out processed grains for

Top: Grinding Wheel Hoist (Background).

Bottom: Northwest perspective.

Right: Door Detail.

food.

When operations finally ceased because of the fire, the mill at Bon Homme had functioned just over seventy-five years. Its closing or removal was predicted by the HABS photograph of the main door which shows a tacked-up newspaper account of the Gavins Point Dam. Fire or no fire, the Missouri River flood control project spelled the end of the mill. Also nailed to the door area was a somewhat unbrotherly warning against trespassers and an obviously not-so-lucky horseshoe. One cannot, in passing, help noticing the names of various persons who carved their monikers up and down the door frame. Were the graffiti signatures mute testimony to some latent strain of individualism?

No story of the Bon Homme mill would be complete without reference to an incident that occurred during World War I. The conflict against Germany induced every Hutterite colony but the Bon Homme settlement to migrate temporarily to Canada. In the middle of the war, patriotic sentiment against Hutterites for their pacifist beliefs and German origins grew so intense that the mill itself became the focus of controversy. On February 16, 1918, a laborer living near the colony turned over to local police a tin can which he claimed had been found at the mill. In the can, along with a strainer and spoon, was a cup full of ground glass. For superpatriots, the implication was that Hutterites were engaged in a subversive plot to kill innocent Americans. They were lacing commercial flour with lethal glass. But when an agent for the Bureau of Investigation arrived to examine the evidence, he found nothing to corroborate the charge. Suspicion pointed instead to the man making the accusations. A former horse thief, he had previously served time at the state reformatory for boys. Neighbors who knew him "stated that his reputation was bad," according to the agent, and it seemed plain that he had planted the evidence himself. The case was dismissed.

Column Detail.

Poems of the Prairie

by Elmer Suderman

FRAMING THE PRAIRIE

Here the prairies exist,
exist because nothing else
is here.
We notice prairie because mountains,
trees, lakes are absent.
Here the wind blows
because nothing stops it.
You can't photograph
the prairie.
Put a border on it and
the ubiquitous wind and sky
dissolve the landscape.
The only way I know to frame
a prairie is to put
a Mennonite on it, give him a plow,
some fence posts and barb wire,
and he'll frame it before
your camera clicks.

THE THIRTEEN MILE ROAD

The thirteen mile road
crawls over rolling hills
between wheat fields in June
and corn and milo in summer.
In August the nearest cloud's
a thunderhead in Texas.
In winter in slides
through snow drifts.
This black-top road, rough
from car, combine and pick-up
tires, cuts through fields
my grandfather plowed with oxen
and the horse-drawn plow.
Tonight I follow the North Star
and smell rain on dry buffalo grass.
The road takes me back,
back to when my family came
one hundred years ago
to start a new life,
back to where I remember
an old life and all that was
good about it—so I, too,
can begin, as they did,
over again.

WE GREW WATERMELLONS

We grew watermellons
but not to sell.
We ate them, usually throwing
them in the stock tank to cool
first. When we shocked wheat
bundles near a patch, we'd take
time out, thump a few to find
the most luscious one.
We dropped it on the ground.
It split in pieces. We reached in,
took out the heart where no seeds grew
and enjoyed our Mennonite fruit,
dripping over our face and hands,
the wind our only napkin.
In fall, after the first frost,
we threw what was left
to the pigs.

TIME LIES ACROSS THE WHEAT

The Minneapolis Moline combine
clatters behind the Old Rock Island
tractor I'm driving.
I turn to watch the ripe heads
of Turkey Red Wheat
bent by header,
cut by sickle,
carried by canvas into
the heart of the combine,
plump grains separated from straw,
grain pouring into combine bin,
straw spinning out of spreader.
I drive around and around
the field leaving sun-bright stubble
in a wider and wiser swath.
My skin crawls with chaff
blowing over the combine
and down the back of my bib overalls.
The wheat is good here.
My brother raises the reel.
The flow of the grain from the spout
becomes a liquid stream.
Time lies across the wheat
and the stubble and pushes
its way against my tired eyes.

HOME

A white house stood at
301 South Seventh Street,
on a corner lot facing west

so we could watch the sun set
and the storms gather,
a house surrounded by the

Chinese Elms we planted
for what little shade
they offered,

trees we watered
and hoed a circle around
to keep the water

close to the roots
and the bermuda grass at bay,
trying to keep them alive

though no matter what we did
some died anyhow in the hot dry years
of 36 & 30,

but it was our dirt
those that lived grew in,
and it was paid for

and no one could take it
away from us, and it was,
and in my imagination

always will be
home.

A DRIVE THROUGH THE PRAIRIE

Through the prairie far
as eye can see: a road,
sunflowers growing beside it.
Against the blue sky
the old dark shadow
of the gaunt windmill.

Some trees in the field
lead a little toward the south.
Others grow up straight.

At a Distance to 'Worldly' Ways

by Tad Thompson

PORT TREVORTON, PA.—At the end of one of the black-plastic-mulched vegetable rows, a horse-drawn steel plow has been left imbedded in the soil for the summer. The contrast of the ancient machinery and modern cultivation techniques is typical of the paradoxes of Willow Brook Farms, here.

It is a farming operation headed by Titus Hoover and is one of hundreds of Old Order Mennonite and Amish farms in the Pennsylvania Dutch region of east-central Pennsylvania.

Hoover's farm, however, is different from the farms of many of his traditional Pennsylvania Dutch neighbors, in that the produce grown at Willow Brook is sold wholesale.

He markets the cantaloupe melons grown on 55 acres by 15 growers, who together make up Willow Brook. Except for three, the 15 growers are Hoover's sons and nephews.

"It's been 29 years since I started marketing cantaloupes," the white-bearded Hoover said. "I know the buyers and they know me."

One of his oldest customers is Weis Markets Inc., in nearby Sunbury, Pa., which is a strong promoter of Pennsylvania-grown produce. Today, one-third of the Willow Brook "Zucker Melone" cantaloupes (as they are called in the Pennsylvania Dutch language and labeled on the shipping cartons) go to Weis.

Another third of the melons is shipped to retailers in Rochester and Ithaca, N.Y., and Hoover recently acquired a new customer in Boston to receive the remainder of his crop.

All of this marketing is executed

Titus Hoover on a trip through his fields.

despite the fact that "we don't have a telephone," Hoover said. "I walk to the neighbors' to use a telephone. Also, there is a friendly neighbor whose children deliver a message if someone calls.

"There are many articles of faith which we cherish," Hoover said. In addition to not keeping a telephone, those of his Old Order Mennonite faith do no swearing of oath in a courtroom. "Jesus said, 'Thou shalt not swear,'" he explained.

They will not accept interest on their money, because interest "makes the rich richer." They will own no motorized vehicles, televisions or radios. The Old Order Mennonites do not subscribe to newspapers or magazines.

How do they get the news? "We hear people talk. We get it a little late sometimes," he said with a grin. By not knowing everything that is happening around them, "we think we can sleep quieter and better than if we know what's going on."

They play no games. They own books; they read and discuss the Bible. They will be photographed, but will not pose to be photographed.

Hoover does not condemn people who lead "worldly" lives. "My father was a modern Mennonite; he drove a car.

"But in my heart, I feel I would lose salvation. I look beyond the horizon. I feel I would not be saved if modern things were in my reach. Rather than go the way of my parents, I would rather sacrifice my natural life."

Yet, the Old Order Mennonites do accept some "worldly" things, such as riding on motorized transportation in certain instances. "We would almost have to get out of the world if we didn't touch anything," Hoover said. "But, we try not to indulge any more than we have to."

In growing cantaloupes and vegetables, Willow Brook growers fertilize with manure and some chemical fertilizers.

"We use very little herbicide, because we think it may not be the best thing for the soil to use too much. And, it was commanded in the Bible that we should eat bread by the sweat of our brow. In other words, we're put here to battle with the weeds. We don't want to take full advantage of battling the weeds with herbicide."

The plastic mulch also is used to battle the weeds. Hoover has used the plastic for 18 years. "We've learned our produce grows so much nicer and the yields are heavier," he said.

Two horses pull a sled bearing the 2,000-foot-long rolls of plastic when it is laid. "I've laid 85 miles of plastic a year for the last nine years. That's 700 miles over hills (altogether)," he said.

When it was noted that is hard work, Hoover replied, "It is for the horses."

Willow Brook owns seven horses, of two types. Driving horses, which weigh about 1,200 pounds, are kept for pulling the black wagons the Mennonites use for transportation. The field working horses weigh 1,500 to 1,800 pounds. Inflation does not spare the Mennonites, as the cost of horses has been increasing, Hoover said. A good horse today costs no less than $1,000. But, the horses work from the time they're 4 years old until they're about 18. Old horses are sent to the slaughterhouse.

Last year, the 15 growers associated with Willow Brook shipped 24 truckloads of cantaloupe melons to the wholesale markets. All of the melons were packed in the barns of the individual growers. The growers, who hire outside help during harvest, start harvesting Zucker Melones at the first light of the sun and quit harvesting at noon, before the melons get too hot.

The Star Headliner variety cantaloupes—which has been the only variety grown by Willow Brook for the last 11 years—are placed on straw-covered, horse-drawn 2-ton capacity trailers as they are harvested.

Hoover stresses the importance of good quality to each grower. Each one labels his cartons with a grower number, so "if there are any complaints, we know exactly who to talk to." Willow Brook offers three sizes of melons, with 15, 12 and 9 cataloupes per carton. The shipping season started this year on July 29 and will go to Sept. 15.

Tractor-trailers are hired to haul the fruit to market.

A fruit store is kept in the barn of the home farm of Willow Brook. The farm's cucumbers, sweet and hot peppers, potatoes and a neighbor's tree fruit are sold from the store. Ninety percent of the vegetables grown by Willow Brook are distributed through the same retail channels as the cantaloupes, but 90 percent of the total Willow Brook wholesale sales are melons.

A Pennsylvania congressman visited Hoover's store during the Nixon administration, and sent two cartons of Zucker Melones to the President. "We received an autographed photo from him (Nixon)," in return, Hoover said proudly.

Hoover, who is 57, is the father of five sons and five daughters. Not all of the Hoover children have stayed by their father's strict faith.

Concerned about what he sees as a general trend away from the Fifth Commandment, Hoover has used several winters to translate three "Holland language" books, which discuss the value of honoring parents, into high German and English.

The three books, which normally are kept in the library of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., were the original copies of the books, which were written between 1591 and 1622. They had never been translated before Hoover's effort.

The Mennonite religion was originated by Menno Simons, a Dutch Catholic priest who broke away from his church in 1536, several years after Martin Luther began the Reformation in Germany. The Catholics persecuted the Mennonites for "hundreds" of years, with the worst of the persecution coming about 1660, when hundreds of Mennonites were burned at the stake, according to Hoover.

He said that during the persecution, many of the Mennonites who died stood in the flames and sang hymns.

"This is how we feel we would be willing to stand by our beliefs. We haven't been tried, but we feel we would be willing to lay down our lives for our faith," Hoover said.

A daughter-in-law of Hoover tends to a customer inside the retail stand at Willow Brook Farms.

Weddings of Yesterday

by Rosemary Moyer and David A. Haury

One hundred years ago "dating" was frowned upon or prohibited. No parties, youth groups, or sporting events brought young people together even for recreation. A couple was never seen together in public before their engagement was announced. Community celebrations of birthdays, anniversaries, and weddings often provided the only contact with members of the opposite sex. Recall that the sexes were separated at worship services. A woman traditionally received a request for marriage through her father rather than directly. The father or brother of the groom met secretly with the father of the bride and asked for permission for the couple to court. If this offer of marriage was accepted, then the couple would ride to church and attend other social functions together.

In some communities an institution developed which facilitated association between the sexes. The "crowd" came into existence during the 1890s and remained until the 1920s, when changing social patterns eliminated its usefulness. The "crowd" met on Sunday evenings. All young people were welcome, and no invitations were issued. Word about the location of the gathering somehow spread throughout the community: The youth played a variety of games, but no special program or refreshments were provided. After the games, couples paired off, and the "crowd" thus facilitated the first dating. Parents evidently tolerated the "crowd," and it reveals a change from the more rigid moral standards practiced earlier. Gradually other opportunities for mixing developed, but standards of morality did not fall. It was customary to practice continence for several weeks after marriage lest a premature baby spark rumors. Since contacts with non-Mennonites and between different Mennonite groups were limited, a high degree of intermarriage often existed within each community.

The celebration of a marriage also differed a century ago. Four to five weeks before the wedding, relatives and friends would gather at the home of the bride for the *Verlobung*, an engagement party which included games and singing. However, the minister was also present to question the bride and groom before announcing their engagement in church the following week. The evening before the wedding the *Polterabend* also took place at the bride's home. Guests brought the wedding presents and refreshments were served. This party was very noisy and involved shooting guns and later fireworks. A similar party, the charivari, followed the wedding in some communities. This custom survived until recent years, but these affairs are in total contrast with the more decorous dinners and receptions surrounding a wedding today.

The nineteenth-century wedding ceremony itself was a worship service. The entire congregation was invited, and no one received written invitations. The ceremony lasted over an hour and included a complete sermon. The bride and groom sat throughout the service. The only music was congregational singing since solos did not become customary until much later. The bride was not accompanied by attendants, and only a few brides received a diamond ring. The wedding was held at the bride's home, usually in a large tent erected for this purpose. Several weeks of butchering, baking, and decorating prepared for the dinner and program following the service. The guests often sat down for two hot meals during the five- to six-hour celebration. At perhaps half of the earliest weddings, wine, whiskey or schnapps was served. Some Western District congregations preserve a few wedding traditions from this early period, but most of these practices disappeared long ago.

(Text from David A. Haury, *Prairie People*, pp. 68-70)

Left. John A. and Anna (Funk) Schmidt: Fruit rancher Reedley, California.

Top left. Heinrich H. and Elizabeth (Baer) Ewert (1882): Principal—Halstead Seminary, 1883-91.

Top right. Henry O. and Katherine (Krehbiel) Kruse (1886): Teacher—Bethel College, 1898-1902. Following the deaths of their spouses, H. H. Ewert and Katherine Kruse were married in 1926.

Page 19. Four unidentified wedding photographs. Contact the editor if you can provide information.

Left. Peter and Mary M. (Unruh) Wall: Farmer—Buhler, Kansas.

Top left. Gustav A. and Clara (Ruth) Haury (1891): Teacher—Halstead Seminary and Bethel College, 1890-1926.

Top right. John R. and Margaret M. (Dirks) Thierstein (1895): Teacher—Bethel College, 1903-04 and 1921-37.

Top left (page 21). Peter J. and Lena A. (Krehbiel) Wedel (1899): Teacher and registrar—Bethel College, 1902-34.

Top right (page 21). Jakob and (?) Gerbrandt: Jacob graduated from Bethel Academy in 1902 and returned to Russia, becoming itinerant minister for Mennonite settlements in Ufa and Siberia.

Right. Peter W. and Matihilde (Ensz) Penner (1902): Missionaries—India, 1908-49.

Top. Bernard P. and Katherine (Goerz) Krehbiel (1903): Children of Christian Krehbiel and David Goerz.

Bottom. Edmund G. and Hazel S. (Dester) Kaufman (1917): President—Bethel College, 1931-52.

Top. Cornelius and Effie (?) Froese.

Bottom. Abraham R. and Katherine (Klassen) Duerksen (1924): Farmer—Goessel, Kansas.

The Emergence of Mennonite Leadership on the Frontier: A Case Study of H. W. Lohrenz

by Calvin Redekop

Introduction

The settlement of the North American frontier has provided the background for an immense folklore, much of it romantic. For Mennonites of Russian background, the settlement on the prairies was an exciting opportunity but also a great risk. In this paper I focus on the Mennonite Brethren, from the time of arrival, circa 1875 to the mid-1940s, which spanned the life of Henry W. Lohrenz (1878-1945). I propose to present the material in several sections: First, a brief review of the background conditions which figured in the development of the Mennonite Brethren experience in the frontier. Secondly, I want to briefly describe what the crucial issues were which confronted the Mennonite Brethren as a people. Next, I want to isolate what appeared to be the specific challenges which needed response, and finally, I will attempt to analyze the emergence of H. W. Lohrenz as a leader among the Mennonite Brethren.

I. Background Factors Relevant for Mennonite Brethen Leadership Emergence.

A. The accounts of MB settlements in the United States and Canada suggest that the MB migrations from Russia were composed of small groups of families, who moved at differing times and settled in scattered points on the frontier.

John A. Toews concurs with this observation when he states:

> There appears to have been little organized religious life among the early Brethren in Kansas. Whereas other groups had come into the state as organized congregations . . . the Mennonite Brethren prior to 1879 seem to have suffered from a lack of strong leadership (132).

He illustrates this with the Ebenfeld congregation which resulted "when a number of families settled in this community a few miles southeast of Hillsboro" and proceeded to organize themselves (133). These fragmented groups slowly proceeded to coagulate and form centers of identity and strength in the face of centrifugal forces. This is also illustrated by the Ebenezer-Buhler community, where two small family groups formed congregations, only to re-analgamate in 1921 because of lack of strength. The former congregation formed in 1878, while the latter, a daughter, formed in 1893. Numerous other congregations disappeared in this era.[1]

B. The early MB migrants were only moderate in wealth, education, and leadership. The MB movement in Russia had developed strong leadership, apparently reluctant to strike out for America, believing that it was necessary to shepherd and nurture the flock in the homeland. Hence it appears that the families who came were coming for economic and social reasons, as well as religious. This is illustrated by Abraham Schellenberg, who in 1879 immediately became an important leader in Kansas among "the scattered groups of believers throughout the Midwest . . ." (Toews, 134).

If the better educated and financially able MBs stayed in Russia, it is reasonable to suppose that the migrants were by and large concerned about establishing economic independence, higher education and social betterment. But it is apparent that the desire for land and economic advance explains at least in part why there was such a dispersion of settlements in Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma (John A. Toews, 136 ff.). Toews states: "More attractive economic prospects on the constantly expanding 'frontier' prompted many MB families to leave older settlements and move out to the growing edge of the country" (142).

C. Because of the earlier openness to non-Mennonite influences in Russia, namely, the German Pietist movement, and cooperation with other groups like the German Baptists and Lutherans, the MB settlements were relatively prone to changes. This is especially true in language, but also in family relationships such as intermarriage, education, and theology. The cooperation with the Church of the Brethren at McPherson College as early as 1898 (Janzen and Giesbrecht, 43) suggests interaction with the school

and its people had already taken place, a scant twenty years after the arrival of the first settlers! The decision to join the National Association of Evangelicals in 1945 indicates the openness to mainline evangelicalism ahead of other Mennonite groups.[2]

D. The increasing ambivalence regarding the basic Mennonite identity began to bear down on congregational life. With the relatively weak conference structure (a situation which began to be remedied with the emerging conference structure) and the defensive stance toward the Conference Mennonites, there developed a need to redefine who the MBs were. Among the issues discussed at conference sessions as early as 1883 were "Marrying outside of the Church" (p. 83) and in 1889, marrying with non-members (p. 83). In 1878 the sisters were admonished to continue to wear headcoverings while in worship services (p. 79). The Baptists apparently provided special problems, since a conference resolution in 1878 suggests "That since we believe and teach nonresistance, we withdraw from the fellowship of the resistant Baptists . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 15).

The great ferment, questioning, and search for direction is indicated by the amazing amount of publishing and literary production. It is probably safe to say that no other Mennonite group produced as many religious and quasi-religious publications as did the MBs in the United States and Canada. By 1883 the conference had agreed to publish conference material in the *Rundschau,* which itself later became an important MB publication, and by 1884 a publications committee was formed and the *Zionsbote* was projected. Most MBs will recognize the significance of the *Zionsbote* in the life of the church. The *Hillsboro Herald* was another paper.[3]

II. Challenge Confronting the Church on the Frontier.

Any comprehensive view of the sociological factors challenging the Mennonite Brethren is bound to fall short, but the following hopefully can make a contribution.

A. Probably the foremost challenge was the preservation (and also the formation) of unity, solidarity and direction. In the light of the centrifugal forces of the frontier, it became very necessary to evolve a solid authority and faith. The formation of the MB conference structure is clearly the most significant. J. A. Toews suggests that it was the work of missions, church papers, and higher education which motivated the formation of conferences (p. 195 ff.).

But it is equally probable that it was because of a need to unify, and to clarify doctrine and direction that the conferences (Bundeskonferenzen) were formed. J. H. Lohrenz states: "The purpose in effecting this conference (October 18-20, 1879) was to promote spiritual fellowship among the churches, to define and establish a united position on points of doctrine and practice, and to unite themselves for more effective mission effort and other activities" (*ME,* I, p. 672). H. S. Bender suggests that the MB conferences hereby developed an "authoritative" position not shared by other Mennonite groups (*ME,* I, p. 669).

The subsequent acts of the various conferences, including the establishment of the mission, education, and publication committees, and the proclamations including the confessions of faith attest to the importance of the conferences. That this was an ongoing objective is indicated by the resolution of 1951 which states, ". . . That we as churches of the Conference recognize resolutions and decisions of the Conference as morally binding and obligate ourselves to observe and carry them out . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 31).

B. A related challenge to unity and solidarity was the challenge of preserving the faith while adapting to contemporary conditions. It was one thing to call for a renewal of spiritual life in the relatively isolated Mennonite community context in Russia. It was quite another to be finding the way where the "antagonist" was no longer as relevant and the "world" became a new society and nation with great freedoms. The freedom to own land anywhere, to move anywhere one pleased, to go to school in cities farther away, to evangelize at will, and to read magazines and books which came from infinitely varied fountains changed the "antagonist." The Jehovah's Witnesses were active, as were the traveling preachers of many sects and groups.[4] Literature, especially the newspapers of the many aspiring editors, became available. The forces of liberalism and Fundamentalism were appealing for support and alignment. A statement by Conference in 1907 states: "That the Conference urges the churches not to permit outside collectors to have the privileges to the extent that our own Conference interests suffer thereby . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 181).

C. Not only did the MBs face the adaptation of outside factors, they also faced the internal problem of preserving the essence of the Christian faith while maintaining a Germanic culture. It was well known by most Mennonites, already in Russia, that the Germanic culture could create problems for evangelical faith. But the MBs, because of the pietistic commitment, became ever more ambivalent and antagonistic to this connection.

This commitment to the German culture, especially language, was nowhere better expressed than in the fact that the MBs took over the German department at McPherson College in 1899 and for all practical purposes developed it into a Bible department. But even earlier, in 1884, the conference reports indicated a concern about a *"Fortbildungsschule"* to "retain the German language and to train teachers and mission workers" (Prieb, *ME,* IV, p. 679).

The challenge of preserving the traditional commitments to spiritual life and faith, yet moving into the contemporary world to be relevant and to make a contribution was not easily met. It involved not only the displacement of the German language from center stage, but also the German culture. Now, loyalty to nation, democracy, education and the like, began to force its way into the life of the congregations.

The elementary and preparatory schools which were established as early as 1875, the second year of settlement (H. P. Peters, 19) were according to Johann Harder, "for the purpose of teaching the children the most essential things in life.

The chief purpose, however, was to teach the children the German language, and make them acquainted with the Bible" (22). The Bible school movement, as well as the church high schools, which demonstrated a remarkable growth in the early twentieth century, beginning with Corn Bible Academy in 1902, were responses to this issue.

The printed page became a very important medium for the struggle of integrating (or separating) culture from religion. The *Vorwaerts* and *Zionsbote* are especially important in this regard. The language issue came to a crux in 1936, when it was decided to publish the *Christian Leader* "in order to meet the needs of our English speaking young people . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 198).

D. Retention of Young People. Statements concerning young people appear in the documents continually.

The *"Jugendverein"* or Christian Endeavor played a large role in keeping youth in the church (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 237). But the temptations were there, as indicated by the conference resolution of 1905, "That the Conference refers to its resolutions of 1885 and 1889, which show that churches are not to participate in the national (worldly) celebrations, such as the Fourth of July celebrations, but to offer the youth something better, like missions or children's festivities, or the like" (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 237).

The greatest threat to loss of young people and hence the unity and vitality of the conferences was higher education. Though it is not known how great the percentage of youth getting higher education was, it was the instigation to launch a "denominational school," namely, Tabor. H. W. Lohrenz was very concerned about providing a future for "our young people." Mrs. Lohrenz remembers, "We had just settled down comfortably into our coach seats (returning south after their wedding at Mountain Lake, Minnesota) when my companion looked straight into my eyes and said, 'Was werden wir fuer unsere Jugend tun?' (What shall we do for our youth?) He had patiently waited till the wedding activities were over and painful farewells were behind us, so that I could give him my undivided attention so he could share what was uppermost in his heart" (Tabor, 1957).

It is clear that the Bible schools, Tabor College, and numerous other events including the formation of a *"Jugenbund"* proposed in 1933 were aimed at preserving the loyalty of young people who were being tempted by other loyalties.

E. Evangelism and Witness. Though there was a clear commitment to this goal among members of the congregations, its fulfillment and realization were not easy. First the frontier was relatively sparsely settled, and access to populations demanded an urban movement which was not easy.[5] A problem presented itself—invitation to join a Mennonite church, if it were to develop, would be very difficult since it would involve a major cultural adaption.

On the other hand, establishing new fellowships of converts demanded forming new congregations among culturally strange peoples similar to establishing foreign missions in India. This resulted in a curious adaptation where mission and evangelism came to mean "Promoting evangelism throughout all the MB churches . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 157). The Conference reports on home missions with the exception of brief work attempted among Russians in North Dakota and Saskatchewan pertains to the appointing of ministers and raising funds for evangelistic meetings and Bible study conferences in the established churches. For example, the home "missions report" of 1930 reported on information of the four districts in terms of Sunday school pupils, choirs, singers, etc. (Janzen and Giesbrecht, p. 163).

"City missions," a separate category, an extensive report in the Conference proceedings, indicates the amount of work done was rather sparse. Beyond a city mission begun in Winnipeg and the Minneapolis mission, started in 1898, there was no other activity. Foreign missions indicate much more activity, and include India, Africa and the American Indians by 1895.

The challenge of the missionary call for Christians was not as easily launched in the new land as the rhetoric would imply. The "turning inward" of the missionary urge has, of course, considerable logic. It served to "conserve" the young people for the church, and it also served to perpetuate and preserve the "religious experience" involved in conversion which had been so important in the formation of the Mennonite Brethren. It also helped to create a unity which was also needing attention.

An unintended consequence of doing "home missions" among one's own people was that it convinced themselves that they were more "evangelistic" and non-ethnic than other Mennonite groups, when in fact the MB conference had been as "enclavic" and separatistic as any Mennonite group.

F. The need to retain an existence separate from other Mennonite groups was another challenge which the MB conferences have had to mount. This course was already set in Russia when Classen went to Petersburg to explain his request that the Mennonite Brethren receive separate status (Toews, p. 44). In the new land, however, especially when they were interspersed to a great degree among the "others," there developed a need to justify separate ways.

Considerable cooperation and mutual support in many areas existed, especially in the early elementary schools with other Mennonite groups (Peters). There was even some cooperation in higher education, including attendance at Bethel College, especially before Tabor was formed, but in the main, the Mennonite Brethren had to explain to themselves and others why they should do it alone. There was also intermarriage and hence familial connections and interaction.

The duplication of effort and resources, and the creation of a rationale or ideology for separate existence when they are not immediately clear or reasonable creates a great burden. This "defensive posture" may have inhibited free and creative work on a wide front, and provided a challenge to the church.

G. But the defensiveness vis-a-vis the other Mennonite groups was not the only challenge. Identity in the context of the wider American religious scene continued to plague the

MBs. The need to justify separate life from the Baptists seemed to be especially difficult and created a great deal of ambivalence. The first missionaries in India served under Baptist auspices, and in Nebraska a Mennonite Brethren church school is "listed, in an 1888 atlas, as 'Mennonite Baptist German School.'" (Hiebert in Paul Toews, p. 122). J. A. Toews states: "Through the years Mennonite Brethren have moved away from the original exclusiveness and narrowness . . ." (380). Whether this means cooperation from strength and solidarity or from a dissolving center is not made explicit.

The temptation to identify with the newly adopted home and to support it became very strong for the Mennonite Brethren as it did for other Mennonite groups. Obviously the great freedom in the realm of religious practice, as well as the great economic opportunity provided strong pressures to express appreciation and support. Although the MBs did not enter the political and military sectors in great numbers, there was nevertheless a sharp debate between those who supported a more reluctant stance, and those who wanted to move the church into the mainstream of American life. The conference of Mennonite Brethren in 1888 passed a minute stating that "While we desire to have a good government, members should be careful so as not to defile their conscience . . ." (Janzen and Giesbrecht, 184).

An interesting and illuminating perspective on the spirit of the tension can be found in the conflict that was flourishing in the Hillsboro area, expressed especially in the *Hillsboro Anzeiger*. Editor J. F. Harms entered into the public forum with vigor and promoted a stringent adherence to the Republican party (Juhnke, p. 46). The *Hillsboro Herald*, more oriented toward the Democratic party, emerged. Other newspapers also vied for attention. The conference action noted in the paragraph above attests to the temptations for patriotism.

H. Possibly the greatest challenge which confronted the MBs, along with the other Mennonite groups, was the challenge of the liberalizing and rationalist forces which were emerging on the intellectual landscape. This challenge was faced at the beginning of the MB schism, and has continued to the present.

Wedding photograph of Henry W. Lohrenz and Anna Friesen, 1906.

Among the American influences Toews lists are Pietism, the Baptists, the Bible institutes and the Bible school movement. He does not specifically mention Fundamentalism, with its offspring or relatives, as the case may be, such as Dispensationalism (p. 149). Although Toews does not mention this wing, Clarence Hiebert does refer to it: "In North America contacts with Baptists continued. Some Mennonite Brethren leaders were educated at the Colgate-Rochester Baptist Seminary in New York. German speaking Walter Rauschenbusch was an appreciated, if occasional, speaker at Mennonite Brethren gatherings in Kansas" (p. 123).

More apropos to the influence of rationalism and liberalism are the schools attended by the early leaders at Tabor College. H. W. Lohrenz studied at the University of Kansas, Columbia University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Presbyterian Theological Sem-

inary, and Northern Baptist Theological Seminary (an honorary D.D.). The *Tabor College Herald* lists seven faculty members with B. D. degrees, of which four received degrees from Yale, one from Mariona, one from Witmarsum, and one from Baptist Theological Seminary (H. W. Lohrenz). Other faculty members are listed as having studied at Rochester (2), and one at Winona Lake School of Theology.

The rationalist-liberal movement became an increasingly major threat among the MBs, and the strong swing in the direction of Fundamentalism - Dispensationalism may have been a response to this influence. This proposition will be explicated in the section dealing with H. W. Lohrenz and his colleagues. It is this confrontation which can explain the history of Tabor College better than any other, it seems to me.

III. The Emergence of the Leader: A Case Study of H. W. Lohrenz

There are several cautions which need to be inserted at this point. The first is obviously the accuracy of the analysis presented above.

Further, the relating of an era or a movement to one person is clearly tricky. If it can be shown that the biography in question clearly represents at least to some degree the major forces and dynamics, then the connections made from one biography can be useful. It is my belief that H. W. Lohrenz (HWL) perceived rather well the major factors and elements in his church, and that his responses reflect rather well the major issues which were agitating the brotherhood. We will address this section by reviewing the concerns HWL had, and then attempting to indicate why HWL acted as he did.

A. The Major Concerns of HWL.

1. The centrifugal pull of cultural and economic assimilation.

There are many sources for this conclusion, but one of the best is HWL's speech "The Early Aims of Tabor College." In this speech HWL couches the talk in the Exodus of Israel, and refers to "a perpetual memorial to God's deliverance of his people." Further he talks about Moses and the admonition to the people to remain steadfast. Peoplehood is what HWL has in mind when under purpose 1 of the founding of Tabor he says:

> Similarly it was not the aim of the founders of this institution just to provide an opportunity for acquiring an education. Such opportunities can be found everywhere. It was very definitely the purpose of the founders to provide an educational environment in which the youth of our people would be safe from the dangers that threaten their faith and their virtue at many places (7).

He clinches the argument by stating that "the institution must watch over the social and ethical life of its constituency in order to preserve the high ideals of purity and simplicity of life . . ." (8).

Lohrenz does not specifically list what the corrosive and seducing forces are which must be guarded against, but in other of his writings he refers to the materialistic love of property and land. In a speech entitled "Laying the Foundation," given in 1903, he states, "What influence lays its foundation cornerstone at the very bottom? . . . One of the first defective stones to appear is selfishness."

A most delightful "fable" seems to characterize this concern the best. Entitled "The Most Valuable Capital," HWL recites the experience of a newly married couple which has the opportunity to make three wishes. He describes them as happy, but having one fault: "When one feels comfortable, he wishes to have it still better." Because the couple is hungry, the first wish produces a sausage supper. Before they recognized that in theory already two wishes had been fated, the angry husband wishes that the sausage be attached to his wife's nose for making such a stupid request. By then they realize that the third wish is already determined—to remove the wart. HWL concludes his homily by asking why there is so much strife. "Why?" he asks. "Because they look upon money as the only valuable thing; riches seem to them the power that makes their influence count" (4).

In reference to the cultural and religious assimilation to which he was directing his attention, HWL in his Tabor College speech states:

> It is not enough simply to have trained leaders. The question then is: In what direction do they lead the people? Whither are we as a church or denomination going? Is there unity of aim? . . . It does not take much imagination to picture to us what happens when one leader follows one direction, and another has a contrary aim (9).

His reiterated concern about the future of the young people attests to his awareness of the dangers of intellectual and cultural assimilation.

2. The Important Role of Education in the Forging of a Direction.

It is well known that HWL almost singlehandedly brought Tabor College to life. It is less clear why he did so. An answer, which may be a bit startling, is that HWL believed in the power of the mind, and the importance of rationality. He seemed to feel that the challenges facing the church, as outlined in the second section, could best be met by an educated and rational membership.

It is in this context that the second Tabor College architecture must be understood. No other argument can explain the formidable, almost pretentious Greek facade. Unquestionably HWL had his hand in that decision, and the message it evoked, and still evokes, is that of a reverence for the life of the mind. A clarification and a documentation of this thesis remains for future scholars.

In a Tabor Day Picnic, held May 1, 1925, HWL lists a set of very reasoned factors which made Tabor necessary. The reasons why there could not be cooperation with McPherson and Bethel Colleges, he said, included the spirit that prevails, the independence of the schools from the churches, the teaching that obtained, including liberal policies in athletics and theatricals.

In an amazingly engaging commencement address to the eighth grade in Romona, Kansas, on May 12, 1931, HWL spoke on "What Studies are of Greatest Value?" The three highest subject areas are studies which: 1) enable us to make a living; 2) "enable us to understand other people; and 3) heighten qualities of character that make for the best manhood and womanhood." He states how he was inspired under

Henry W. Lohrenz in 1927.

a teacher who "lived in his subjects and who loved to teach. Under his guidance I made my first acquaintance with the great classics of the German people. . . . In the great literature of our libraries these men speak to us and make us acquainted with a larger world" (4). "It is of far more importance to know what the man or woman was, not by their profession, but by the qualities of their character and by virtue of the powers of mind and soul." Numerous other sources bring out HWL's devotion to the life of the rational mind.

It is therefore plausible to propose that HWL felt and believed that the way to lead the people so they could become what they were called to be, was through the use of the mind and the best that culture had to offer. HWL's own broad general education and his familiarity in the natural science, theology, classical literature and history attest to this devotion.

3. Working with and within the Church Structures to Achieve Ideal Ends.

HWLs entire life is an eloquent statement to the concern that the Church's objectives are achieved by working with the people, rather than against them. It would have been easy for HWL to leave the MB peoplehood, as many did. HWL was often disappointed or frustrated and experienced opposition, deserved and undeserved.

HWL, however, recognized the need to "bring the brotherhood" with him, and this is indicated by his first and probably major achievement, namely, the creation of Tabor College. The long road to move Tabor College from a project of the *Schulverein* to the official sponsorship as a conference school in 1933 was achieved through HWL's continuing support.

The temptation to "go it alone" and develop the school alongside the conference was strong. But HWL's other conference and congregational activities attest to his unrelenting commitment to work within the church organization. A review of his activities reveals that between 1915 and 1930, he was at the same time president of Tabor, intermittently in graduate school, member of the board of missions (including chairman, and member of general conference (including its moderator).

4. Keeping the Religious Commitment and Scientific-Humanistic Elements Together.

The uneasy equilibrium between a simple God-fearing faith and dependence upon human wisdom and achievement haunted the Mennonite Brethren. For numerous reasons, some of which have been alluded to above, there was a strong temptation to become familiar with the "larger world," to use HWL's term. This is perceived in the movement of young people into higher education, and is reflected in HWL's own life. HWL wrote at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1925 a paper entitled "Religious Awakening and its Development in the Individual." In masterful prose, HWL discusses the phases in "religious awakening." He quotes extensively well-known educators such as James Pratt, Edwin Starbuck, Frank Hickman, Edmund Conklin, George Barton, W. S. Bruce and William James.

HWL suggests that "This process of religious awakening is not the same in all individuals" (14). He suggests the first form might be termed "gradual growth" (14). The second he proposes as "the conversion Type" (15). He concludes his

paper by saying, "But in whatever form or mode of expression this religious awakening does occur, we may conclude with Dr. Hickman 'Conversion and the normal development . . . work toward the same end . . . namely, the unification of the individual's life around a religious ideal and object of loyalty . . .'" (p. 16). It would seem that this paper is not mere sophistry, but a concerted attempt to deal with religious experience.

HWL held on to evangelical commitments while moving out into the exhilarating atmosphere of classical and scientific exploration. The letters to HWL from his faculty members in graduate school indicate the tensions and attest to their trust in his understanding of the tensions. One graduate student writes: "And because I have had much of my training in Yale, I have at times been under suspicion. Again, in order to be open and honest with you, in order that you and the Board may act intelligently, let me say that I am ever more hungry for the vital life in Jesus Christ . . . I do continue to have the same feeling of obligation to our people and I have therefore opened the door as wide as possible towards you so that no alienation need arise" (P. S. Goertz to HWL, March 22, 1928).

Finally, in order to understand HWL, brief reference must be made to the structure of Tabor College itself. It will be recalled that the three reasons for the establishment of Tabor were: 1) make "liberal education available to the youth of our people"; 2) provide trained leadership to the churches that would suppport the school"; and 3) "to give preparation for certain vocations" (*The Early Aims of Tabor College*). The profile of the curriculum provides further insight into the emphasis: Of the total of 44 classes, seven were Bible courses, five taught German, 15 focused on English, History and Psychology (no separation is indicated), 9 courses treated Mathematics and Natural Science, 2 classes taught music, and 6 classes featured handwriting (*Schoenschreiben*) and bookkeeping (*Ein Bericht von Tabor College*, October 1927).

This was not a Bible school, whatever its definition. It seems reasonable to assume that the early faculty and administration, as well as students and some supporters of the school, were committed to the quest for expanding the foundations of faith to include the knowledge which had already accrued in the larger arena. The integration of faith with new wisdom is always a problem, but given the particular context, i.e., the MB history on the frontier described above it must have driven a wedge deep into the unconscious as well as semi-conscious foundation of the *"Bund's"* unity.

The mistrust which developed as the membership tried to discern what was "true biblical faith," and what was "untrue" expressed itself in the uneasy relationships between Tabor administrators and the constituency. But HWL managed to keep the tension under control to a large extent. Some of his successors were not so fortunate. The unsettling of an evangelical pietism came by way of intellectual analysis. Since Mennonite Brethren were human, they could not avoid the need to subject the emotional life to rational scrutiny. (See for example, P. M. Friesen, "The excesses of the Molotschna 'Enthusiasts'" (p. 325 and passim).[7]

There are other concerns which HWL propounded, but a few words about HWL as a person are in order before we conclude.

B. Reflections on why HWL Emerged.

Personal observations which emerge upon reading HWL materials are presented here for what they are worth. I will not take the space to document these impressions: 1) HWL was an unusually intelligent person; he thought and reasoned very systematically. His handwriting, his delivery, syntax, etc. give an overwhelming impression of a disciplined person in the realm of ideas; 2) HWL seems to have been unusually integrated and focused. One does not get the impression of ziz-zagging motion, erratic and confused. He was single-minded and devoted; 3) He was guided by identification with lofty ideals and persons. He states that J. F. Duerksen was a lasting inspiration for him. The topics he discusses and the people he refers to indicate great idealism; 4) HWL had an unusual ability to work with and through other people. Not that there were not tensions among groups he worked with, but he was in some sense an "organization man," which attests to his love for people and his willingness to submit himself to others; 5) HWL had an unusual predilection for work. He considered it the noblest opportunity for humans, and saw it as a necessary component to the religious life (i.e., emotion was balanced with work).[8] 6) The Lohrenz family appears to have been a harmonious supportive clan which gave Henry the freedom and support to follow his pursuits. Conversely, HWL seems to have related well with his own extended family.

VI. Conclusion: HWL and the Frontier: Engagement or Retreat?

What lessons can we learn from the Mennonite Brethren on the frontier and the emergence of HWL. The emphasis in this last section will be more evaluative.

A. HWL and Engagement.

In many ways, HWL can be described as having engaged his faith and the MB tradition with the challenges of the "new" frontier. It was an "engaging movement" in reference to bringing the church into the twentieth century in the areas of faith and reason, the need for higher education, the warning against materialism, the emphasis on orderliness and integrity. His was further a creative response in keeping a "people" together in the light of disintegrating tendencies such as loss of the German language and culture, since he was not ashamed to lift up the German language and culture as one expression of human life and the possibility of being a good Christian and German at the same time.

HWL's awareness that "a People" existed, and that they should be kept together pursuing a focused objective is probably the highest example of the way he engaged the brotherhood with the forces of newness and challenge. His support of mission work, expressed in the many, many letters he wrote to missionaries as well as the time he spent on the board, attests to his

awareness that the "cutting edge" was in engaging the forces of darkness right where they were.

The awareness that any group will need to confront the mundane issues of the work-a-day world, indicated by the third objective of Tabor's founding, shows that HWL wanted to help the *"Bund"* be prepared to enter the world, but he trained to meet the temptations and challenges with the best the tradition and heritage had to offer.

B. HWL and Ambivalence.

Was there some area in which our protagonist lacked clear direction? I sense a bit of hesitation or ambivalence in HWL's profile in the area of understanding fully and integrating fully his Anabaptist-Mennonite-Pietist heritage into the new world in which he lived.

Little mention of the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage and beliefs, either in a positive or negative way, is made by HWL. Little reference is made of the Mennonite Brethren beliefs which had such significant consequences, not only in Russia, but on the frontier as well. He did relate to other Mennonites, teaching at Bethel for two years, and being a good friend of some of the leaders there. But we are in the dark about what he thought of the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage. There is no documentation to understand and integrate the pietistic emphasis which the Mennonite Brethren tradition had preserved so intently all these years. Did he really believe that a pronounced religious experience was necessary? The paper he wrote indicates a negative.

In the light of all the "engagement" HWL produced on the frontier, it would seem carping to suggest that he missed helping the members of the Mennonite Brethren *"Bund"* to find out who they really were, helping the brotherhood to avoid the serious disturbing and disintegrating elements such as the extreme dispensationalism, which infiltrated the body. Clearly, the blame cannot be placed on HWL alone, but it would have been good if he could have wielded his immense influence in that direction a bit more strongly.

J. B. Toews states that "Within our own brotherhood there exists an uncertainty as to our specific theological identity in relation to the broader stream of evangelism, especially its fundamentalistic wing, as well as the larger Mennonite world" (Paul Toews, ed., p. 150). Beyond the theological uncertainty, the Mennonite Brethren have not understood their strong ethnicity, in spite of strong missionary rhetoric to the contrary. John E. Toews states, "For the non-ethnic to become a member of a Mennonite Brethren church and a leader in the conference implies the contradiction of accepting totally different ethnic identity as well" (Paul Toews, ed., p. 168).

The Church of Jesus Christ is always on the frontier, if not in a geographical and cultural sense, then at least in a spiritual sense. And the individual members of the church help determine the nature of the conflict on these frontiers. The conflict will not always be victorious, and some members contribute more to victories than others. Henry Wiens Lohrenz was significant in helping the Mennonite Brethren conquer the frontier of faith.

Original Tabor College building which burned on April 1, 1918.

ENDNOTES

[1] It is interesting to note how many times HWL himself moved. While he was at home his family moved at last three times. Clarence Hiebert says, "Mennonite Brethren, on the other hand, came in fragmented, small leaderless groups" (Paul Toews, ed, p. 112).

[2] See Clarence Hiebert, op. cit., esp. page 120 ff. The groups most attractive to MBs were Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and Swedenborgian.

[3] For a discussion of the role newspapers played, especially in the Hillsboro area involving MBs, see Juhnke, chapter 4

[4] A controversy involving Jehovah's Witnesses is told involving my own grandfather, Benjamin Redekop at Lustre, Montana. Accusations of being "seduced" by the JWs were apparently lodged against him. The accounts handed down in my family, admittedly also possibly biased, maintained that Grandfather was simply trying to read up on them so he could refute their claims (between 1917 and 1923).

[5] The best discussion, though very brief, is Clarence Hiebert, op. cit., pp. 115 ff. This refers specifically to the MBs. In *The Holdeman People*, chapter 4, Hiebert provides a very extensive picture of the frontier in which Holdeman worked to achieve converts. A useful account of a closely related group, yet different is David V. Wiebe's, *Grace Meadow*.

[6] This argument is discussed in HWL's own account of why Tabor College was begun. The reason for severing cooperation with McPherson College included this factor. Cf. "Ein Bericht," p. 7, "Zuerst kommt dieses zur Sprache im Jahre 1901, wie es im Konferenzbericht heisst: 'Aber doch wird der Wunsch immer wieder laut, dass wir eine ganze eigene Schule haben moechten.'"

[7] The relationship between rationalism and pietism cannot be expanded on here. There is of course voluminous literature on the subject. In Mennonite Brethren circles, there is open admission that pietism and anti-liberalism helped the MB conference opt for Fundamentalism (J. A. Toews, p. 375 ff.). Insofar as Fundamentalism was a reaction to liberalism the issue is clear. But liberalism is a facet of rationalism and scientism, which are not discussed much in MB literature, as far as I can find. It is my feeling that HWL is far more influenced by rationalism than by liberalism. HWL discusses "the period of struggle and competition" in a lecture on "The Forest." It is clear that he was very familiar with the Darwinian view of nature.

[8] In a talk given in rhetoric class at McPherson College in 1903, HWL states, "Work is a strong factor in building character, and a love for it should be awakened at any cost . . . for activity . . . develops the hidden treasures of the soul." He discusses the merits of work in other contexts.

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Book Review

Cornelia Lehn, *I Heard Good News Today*. Newton, Kansas; Faith and Life Press, 1983. 148 p. ($12.95 U.S., $15.95 Canada)

Parents and teachers have always known the power of a story! No other method of sharing knowledge or experience is more happily received. But parents, Sunday School teachers and many other workers with the young have known moments when they would give a great deal for the right story close at hand. *I Heard Good News Today* may be that long awaited collection. The work of selecting the stories, rewriting them to fit children's needs, and organizing them in a manner that makes them easy to find has been done for us by the author. Cornelia Lehn knows children and their tastes. She knows how to go about finding human interest stories. She knows how to write and simplify them for easy telling.

One of the unique qualities of this collection is the wide variety of selections. Too often books of so-called "missionary stories" have had such a sameness that having read one, the reader feels he knows them all. In *I Heard Good News Today*, the author has chosen different kinds of stories and told them in such a way that the pattern of faith and courage in the face of overpowering odds is unique and interesting in each one.

It is easy to see how these stories can be used by ministers looking for a short story-sermon. Teachers in Sunday School and Daily Vacation Bible School will find valuable resources here. But I would imagine that parents will be the ones who will most treasure the collection as a basis for story telling or reading in the home. They have the "feel" of an oral story, just made for telling in an informal home setting where conversation can naturally follow the telling as each family member makes the story "his own."

Because of the choice and nature of the selections, this is a book especially appropriate for Mennonites, but not exclusively so.

Even those conventional componants of this book—the foreword, preface, and conclusion—tell us much. In the foreword we learn of the recognition of need for such a book and the steps taken by the Women In Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church in commissioning the author, Cornelia Lehn, and in underwriting the book's production. In the preface the reader is told of the author's awareness of how the "good news" spread from its source to the present day and her dreams of how the book will serve the church and community today and in the future. The conclusion is the challenge to present day "hearers" of the good news to "pass it on", and the acknowledgements indicate to all readers the rich resources on which the author drew to create her stories.

Church libraries will certainly want a copy of *I Heard Good News Today*. More importantly, families will enrich their personal collections by adding this new book of stories.

Blanche Spaulding
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