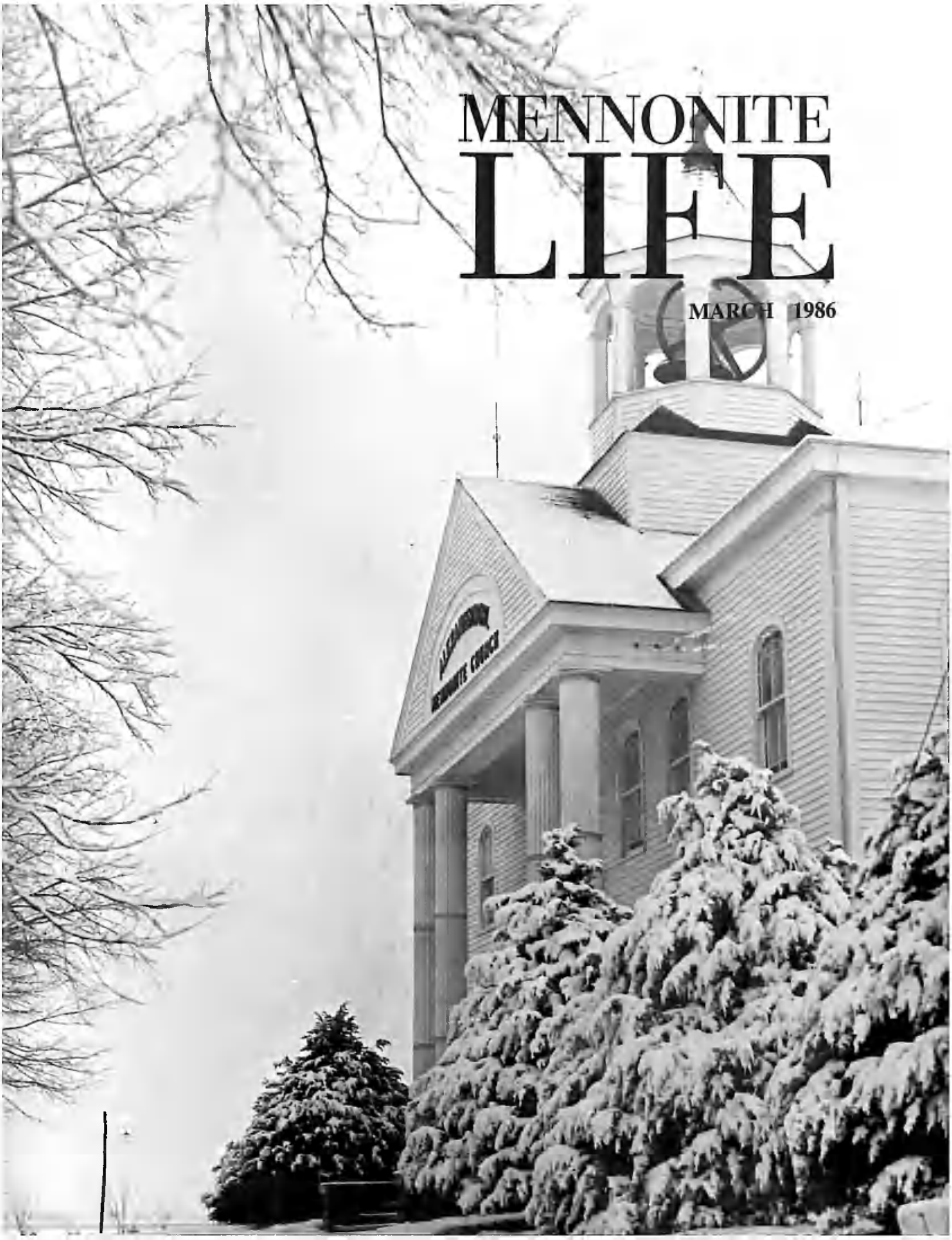
MENNONITE LIFE

MARCH 1986



In this Issue

This issue includes our five-year index and a summary of the results of the survey sent to about half of the *Mennonite Life* subscribers. With this issue we also welcome John D. Thiesen to our staff as book review editor. He may be contacted through our editorial offices at Bethel College.

Wojiech Marchlewski is a new contributor to *Mennonite Life*. He is an ethnographer employed in the documentation and restoration of cultural landmarks in Poland, and his doctoral dissertation was a comprehensive ethnographic study of the former Mennonite settlements near Warsaw. He is continuing his research on Mennonites in Poland, and he may be contacted through the editor.

Anthony R. Epp, member of the foreign languages department of Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, Nebraska, summarizes the beliefs of sixteenth century Anabaptists as expressed by John Calvin in his *Brieve instruction pour armer tous bons fideles contre les erreurs de la secte commune des Anabaptists* (1544). This refutation of Anabaptist positions illustrates not only their views but also the seriousness with which a major reformer undertook this endeavor.

Many aspects of Mennonite architecture have not been studied. In his article Brian D. Stucky examines one of the most significant Mennonite structures in North America. The often photographed Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas, reveals a unique style of church architecture. Stucky, who resides and teaches art in Goessel, explores the design, construction, and remodeling of the church in the context of the Mennonite theology and cultural heritage.

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MENNONITE LIFE

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Front Cover
Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Back Cover
"Hollander" buildings along the Vistula River.

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Reader Survey

by David A. Haury

Last October I sent a questionnaire to half of the *Mennonite Life* subscribers to obtain evaluations of the contents and format of the publication. I received back 46% of the questionnaires and will summarize some of the information gathered in the survey. I did not send the questionnaire to libraries, and thus over 75% of the individual subscribers received the survey.

The survey and recent subscription statistics indicate that *Mennonite Life* has not attracted new readers despite major promotional efforts during the past three years. 72% of the readers have subscribed for more than five years, 19% for two to five years, and only 9% for less than two years. *Mennonite Life* also has not attracted younger readers. 43% of our readers are over age sixty-five, 30% are age fifty-five to sixty-four, 13% are age forty-five to fifty-four, 8% are age thirty-five to forty-four, and 6% are age twenty-five to thirty-four. No one under age twenty-five responded to the survey. About ten readers who have subscribed since the first issue in 1946 responded.

Mennonite Life is a magazine which subscribers read and keep. 86% looked through all four of the most recent issues, and 87% have kept all four of these issues. In fact, 86% have kept most of the back issues, and many indicated that they were boxing or binding the issues on their personal library shelves. Several have complete sets.

Although 18% of *Mennonite Life* readers are not currently members of a Mennonite congregation, most of these readers were formerly Mennonites or of Mennonite background. 54% are members of the General Conference Mennonite Church, and 24% are members of the Mennonite Church. Many of these (Mennonite Church) subscribers attend congregations with dual conference affiliation. A low 4% were Mennonite Brethren. *Mennonite Life* has often emphasized the Russian Mennonite experience and should appeal to more Mennonite Brethren.

Readers expressed general satisfaction with the format of *Mennonite Life*. The design, printing, illustrations, editing, and proofreading received excellent and good ratings from over 90%. Only the usefulness of footnotes ranked slightly lower. 88% believed that the number of illustrations was about right, and 11% would prefer more illustrations. With the December 1985 issue *Mennonite Life* shifted to heavier paper to improve the quality of printing and to make the magazine more substantial.

Dozens of respondents emphasized that *Mennonite Life* should not copy *Mennonite Quarterly Review, The Mennonite, Mennonite Family History,* or *Festival Quarterly*. Only 6% thought *Mennonite Life* should be more scholarly, and 9% thought it should be less scholarly. A higher percentage of 13% favored shorter articles. Although readers did not request a major change in content or focus, they emphasized seven areas of special interest: biographies, local history, congregational history, family history, social history, original documents, and Anabaptist history. Education, missions, theology, and women's history ranked second in interest. I will seek more manuscripts in these areas, and I welcome suggestions for specific topics or writers.

Only 24% indicated that they always or usually consulted the Radical Reformation and Mennonite Bibliography. However, many of these added special comments about the value of the bibliography. Since half of the readers never or seldom consult the bibliography, I am considering revisions in this annual feature. One possibility is to add a short, annotated list of current books to the bibliography. 60% of the readers always or usually consult the book reviews, and this annotated bibliography should be a popular feature. Only 4% seldom or never refer to the book reviews.

The letter which introduced the questionnaire incorrectly implied that *Mennonite Life* has lost its readers to *Festival Quarterly* or *Mennonite Family History*. While some *Mennonite Life* readers subscribe to these other publications, few, if any, have dropped *Mennonite Life* in favor of them. This was not my concern. Instead I desired to determine if the format or emphases of *Mennonite Life* did not appeal to our readers. The responses to the questionnaires indicated that this was not the case. Readers not only supported the format and content of *Mennonite Life* but also encouraged it to retain its uniqueness. *Mennonite Life* will continue its current format and coverage of a broad range of historical and other topics of interest to all Mennonite groups. I will seek more articles in the areas of interest mentioned in the survey. Thank you for your suggestions and continued support.

The "Hollander" Settlements in Mazovia

by Wojiech Marchlewski

The Mazovian land which lies in the flood belt of the Vistula river had not been adapted for farming by the latter years of the 18th century. The left side of the river from Warsaw to Płock was covered with marsh and forest. The landlords tried repeatedly to settle their subjects on this land, but these efforts at cultivating were unsuccessful. The only settlements on this land were villages which had been founded in earlier centuries and which based their existence on forest-related industry. These people lived on the sandhills along the river and were occupied with lumbering, bee-keeping, and the production of potash.

The only ones who managed to farm the flood regions, as well as the marshes, were the so-called "Hollanders,"* who had previously come to Żuławy in northern Poland from Friesland in the 16th century. Their activity was widely known in the region of Gdansk, Malbork and Sztum. By the end of the 16th century, the Hollanders had expanded the settlement along the Vistula into the region of Swiecie, and by the middle of the 17th century they had come as far as Torun. The settlement took place in a manner strictly planned and organized on the one hand by the settlers themselves, who were in need of new land, and on the other hand by the owners of the flood lands and marshes.

The cause of the continuous southward movement of the Hollanders along the Vistula was the increasing size of the group and the religious persecution which they suffered at the hands of the Prussian state—the Hollanders in the 17th century were predominantly Mennonite.

On these Polish lands, the Hollander colonists were offered settlement under favorable terms. They were ensured religious freedom; personal freedom; their own judiciary with jurisdiction independent from that which the landowners held over their other tenants; tenancy based on rental payment and exemption from all rental payment for an initial period of seven years upon settling the land, as well as guaranteed tenancy for forty years.

The first Hollanders came to Mazovia in the middle of the 18th century and settled on the government estates of Troszyn. The settling of colonists in this village was made possible by a set of decrees issued by Stanisław Augustus Poniatowski (1732-1798). Later the colonists settled on private estates about 100 kms. west of Warsaw in Swiniary, Czermno, and Sanniki. The greatest wave of settlement occured at the turn of the 19th century and was promoted by the activity of the Prussian chamber.

The Hollander groups were locally administered. They elected a chief administrator and aldermen to direct the development of the community. They obtained a number of rights which went beyond those which a Polish peasant could claim.

The first task of the colonists was to clear the thickly overgrown forests. This massive clearing of land caused the water tables to rise so that subsequent floods were more frequent and extensive. Thus efforts were begun to drain the land. A system of drainage canals was planned, and everyone in the community took part in digging them. The canals were planned so that the water which flooded the terrain—normally in Spring and Fall—would quickly run off.

A Hollander building in the village of Bieniew built beyond the flood region.

Right. East view of Hollander building dating from 1890.
Below. The same building: Keda Karolinska, Koko Gabina.

The network of run-off canals directed water from particular fields to the main canals by employing the natural slopes of the terrain. The seven year initial exemption from rental payment made it economically feasible for the Hollanders to devote so much time to this task.

The economy of the Hollander communities was ordered with regard to the features of the natural environment. The type of crops as well as the siting of fields was strictly defined by the range of flooding and the configuration of the terrain. Residences and fruit orchards were set on the land nearest the shore line. On the lowlands beyond the banks of the river, there were pastures, meadows, and plough fields.

The main occupation of the Hollanders was cattle and pig raising as well as fruit and vegetable crops. This type of farming was the most appropriate with regard to the Spring and Fall flooding. After the waters receded, the meadows would become quickly covered with grazing grass. Their fundamental crop was potatoes (The Hollanders were the forerunners of potato cultivation in Poland), which were planted immediately after the Spring floods when there was still a lot of moisture in the soil. The harvest was completed before the Fall floods.

The canal system drained the field quickly in spring and fall but was not as effective with the occasional floods which occurred "out of season." In order to counteract this type of flooding, they set up dykes. They were set up along the shore at a distance of between twenty and one hundred meters from the outer boundary of the dwellings. The dykes were purposely built no higher than two meters because the breaking of a higher dyke would have seriously threatened the dwellings. During periods of heavy flooding, the low dykes were quickly submerged and the water passed over and into the natural reservoirs situated in the lowlands.

The whole terrain of meadows was protected by fascine fences made from willow twigs. These fences kept the

More Hollander buildings. The top photograph is a south view of a building constructed about 1840 near Wymysle Nowe.

field from being covered with the sand carried in the flood waters of the Vistula. The flooding of the lower lands did not cause great complications on account of the excellent drainage system.

The dykes protected the area from most floods, but some floods occurred which threatened the very existence of the settlements. In order to protect people, animals, and inventory from the elements, all living quarters, animal shelters, and storage rooms were lifted onto artificial hummocks constructed from clay and rock. The hummocks were relatively high, from two to four meters. They were between thirty and forty meters long, and their width ranged from ten to fifteen meters. They had the shape of a long, shallow ellipse.

An additional problem was that the flood waters occasionally carried large blocks of ice with them. In order to defend against these blocks, the Hollanders planted a short row of narrowly spaced trees—ones which mature quickly, mostly poplars—on the narrow end of the hummock facing against the flow of the river. The hummocks were constructed so that they offered the least resistance to the flow of the flood waters, thus enhancing their durability.

The living quarters, animal shelters, and storage rooms were constructed so as to best suit the conditions of the natural environment as well as the demands and needs arising from the type of cultivation and economic system in use. Since people, animals, and goods needed protection from the floods, all farm buildings had to be constructed on the hummocks. In fact, everything was placed under one roof. Buildings were set up so that the living quarters, barn and animal quarters were side by side.

Storage sheds, however, did not appear as their function was fulfilled by the use of lofts which spread over the entire length of the edifice. The construction of these large lofts was required in large measure by the need to store hay, yet also by the need to protect people and goods from the floods. During severe floods horses, cows, and other animals were led up portable platforms into the attic or loft.

The living quarters were located on the most elevated portion of the hummock. The living space was sectioned so that two families might live under one roof, sharing a central chimney. A hall with doors to the yard at both ends separated the living quarters from the animal sheds. The chimney hearth comprised a portion of one wall in each room of the living space. The hearth was fed from the hall and was equipped so that it could also be used in preparing animal feed and for smoking meat.

In the kitchen there was a stove and baking oven, as well as space for dining. The living room was adjacent to the kitchen and was used for sleeping, as well as for socializing and family activities. This room connected with a second, larger room used for sleeping, which had an exit to the garden. Gardens were exceptionally well cared-for and objects of their care-takers' pride.

In the majority of buildings, the walls were not plastered but painted or even left as unfinished wood. All the rooms had hardwood floors laid on ground beams. The floor in the passage hall was made of clinker bricks. The animal quarters, which were entered either from the hall or from the outside, had floors made of paving stone.

Access to the animal shelters was given by numerous doors. In addition to the two entrances just mentioned, there were also entrances to the cow barn through a door located in the coach-house, as well as a door in the front wall of the barn. There were two spaces where inventory was kept available: in the larder and the service room. Neither of these was heated and the service room was used only in summer.

Wooden pallets covered the floors where the animals were. Manure was washed out by liquefying and draining it out along paving stone gutters. The daily disposal of manure was an indispensable rule of hygiene, since only the hall separated the animals from the living quarters.

The last section of the edifice was a coach-house or barn (as in the illustration), and it was situated on the lowest part of the hummock. It was designed to store farm equipment and serve as a place where hay could be loaded from the lofts onto wagons.

There were no windows in the rooms where animals were kept. Bipartite doors substituted for windows. Ventilation and light were provided by opening the upper portion, while the lower portion remained closed to keep the animals in. This type of door was not known in the neighboring villages inhabited by Poles.

The "Hollanders" left their settlements on the Vistula in 1945. Settlers from nearby villages, as well as others "from beyond the Bug" came to take their place. As a result of the subsequent agricultural reform, an artificial partitioning of the land came about which partially destroyed the system of drainage, subjecting entire complexes of fields operating under it. The organization of fields was completely changed as well. The grounds of the Hollander settlers had been apportioned in such a way that the lengthwise sides of their long, narrow fields lay perpendicular to the flow of the river. This apportionment, in conjunction with the bordering of fascine fences, made it virtually impossible for sand to be washed onto the fields. Furthermore, the whole concept of protecting the terrain from floods was submitted to change. The low, clay-earth dykes were given up in favor of high dykes made of sand.

The new inhabitants who settled in the Hollander buildings adapted the function of particular rooms to their own needs. For the most part they stopped storing hay in the lofts and used the former coach-house for this purpose. In the living quarters they set up a granary and storage compartments for other produce.

As a result of the agricultural reform, the number of plots no longer corresponded to the quantity of available buildings in the Hollander style. A completely new type of construction was begun which disregarded the practices of their predecessors. They completely forsook building houses on the artificial hummocks and sited them instead on lower ground.

Recently, a tragic scenario appeared on the terrain below Płock. The high dykes and the dam which was built in Włocławek had brought certain, temporary benefits for the flood region of the Vistula. However, the Płock flood of 1981 obliterated all of these achievements. The absence of regard for the forces of nature caused the majority of newly built homes to be destroyed and the fields to be buried in sand. The breakage of the high dykes, which had separated the terrain entirely from the Vistula, caused such a quick inundation of buildings and fields that it was not possible to evacuate. In this whole cataclysm it is a significant fact that the water did not inundate the buildings of the Hollanders on the man-made hummocks. This fact has something of a symbolic dimension in that

it shows how people must consciously accomodate nature in a spirit of coexistence.

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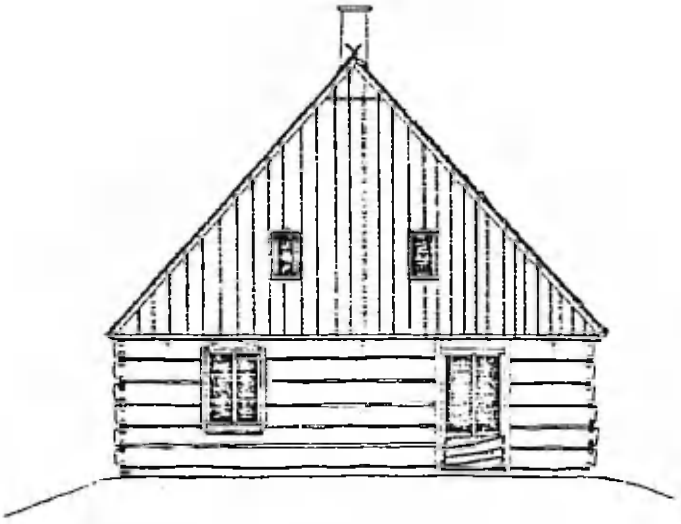
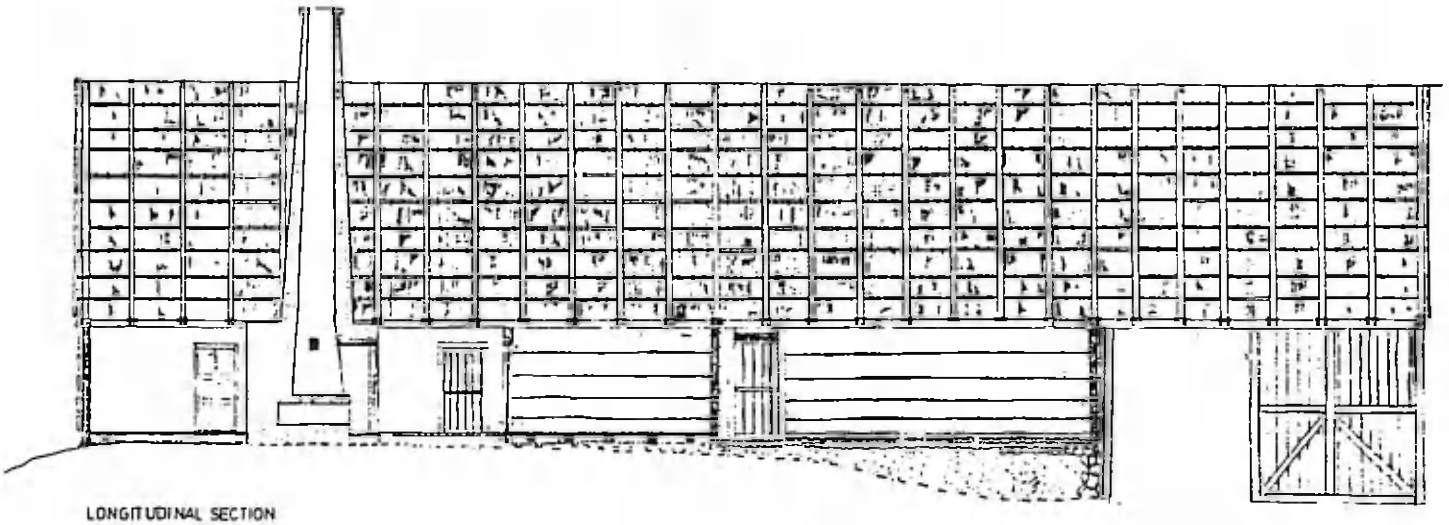
*Translator's note: I have retained a literal rendering of the Polish term *Holendrzy* ("Hollanders") throughout, in spite of the fact that it is not the most common term applied to these folk nor is it particularly descriptive. The problem is that there does not exist a suitable, single term to describe this multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic group of settlers. In Poland, the term *Holendrzy* and the special body of law which applied to them—*prawo olederskie*—related to the initial settlers who had come from Friesland in the 16th century. Over time, the group became integrated and this term lost its strictly descriptive character. The term has been retained in Polish historiography.

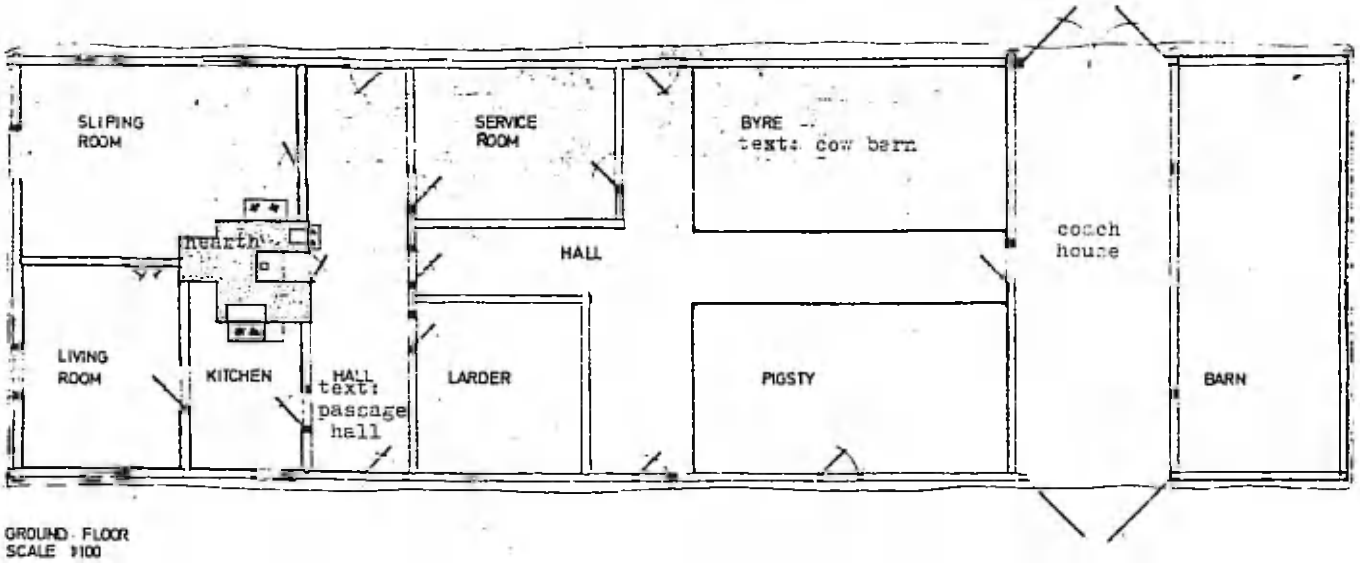
Translated from the Polish by Samuel T. Myovich, MCC Poland.



EAST ELEVATION
SCALE 1:100



LONGITUDINAL SECTION
SCALE 1:100



GROUND - FLOOR
SCALE 1:100

Poems

by Fern Pankratz Ruth

AT COUSIN RAYMOND'S FARM

"And here's the wedding chapel," Raymond says,
And opens unimpressive wooden doors
Into the sturdy barn's west anteroom.
We cousins step onto the gray dirt floor
As onto holy ground. Our eyes are drawn
To aging raftered heights of ceiling, where
Excited swallows sweep their forked tails
Above dark hornets' busy buzzing flight.

Bright threads of sunlight splay through splintered wood.
The south wind's summer blast of searing heat
That sifts through clattered cottonwoods, becomes
Two spirits' blessing blown. This seems to be
A sacred place for us, whose father built
This sturdy granary long years ago;
For as he built and labored, he paid court
To our fair mother, steady-eyed and true,
The daughter of the farmer of the land;
And as the barn was built, so was their love.
What better place for speaking wedding vows
Than here in this new hall? The word was spread
Through the community. "Come witness as
Our daughter weds a farmer of good name."

They came, the farmer pioneers, to fill
The clean wood-fragrant room. They hung their wraps
On these ten-penny nails left rusting here
At shoulder height. The solemn elders spoke,
The choirs sang chorales, the two were one.

Today we chatter platitudes to veil
The wondering if maybe somehow they
Are here, and watching, loving, hold us close,
As sound waves bring their choir music home.

At Alexanderwohl, in Kansas, farmers
Give themselves to labor with a prayer.

They waken early to the cool dawn world
And step into the drenching dew-wet day
To see and smell the ripened wheat that stands
With burdened heads bowed low before
The rising of the Kanza's sun.

Gray waking birds begin to sing their morning claims
From hedgerows dense with mulberry and osage orange;
Small beings dart and slither underfoot.

The farm yard comes alive with stock and fowl
As morning chores are done in loving rote
Where night-cooled grasses quiver and lie bent,
Remembering the searing summer sun,
Reviving in this coolest time of day.

The farmer, too, gains strength from slowly waking morn
That gleams from gray to blue to green to gold
While engines hum and come alive and grind
Into a chorus, begging dew to dry
From bearded heads, so rites of harvest time can bring
The good seed into granaries and stores
To feed the many hungry faceless least of these
Whose cry he hears above the combine's whine,
Whose whimper is the whisper of the wind.

A GIANT TREE A-SHINE

The muffler into which he breathed gave back
His own warm breath, to breathe, and breathe again.
December wind whipped sheets of cold across his face
And night wind iced his fingertips and toes.
Parental hands that hugged his shoulders helped
Him up the giant strides of chapel stairs
Where doors to Christmas opened and he stood
In warm and fragrant darkened lovingness.

All movement pulsed in rhythm with the tree
That sang of Christ-birth with a hundred flames
Of colored candles clipped to cedar green.
A myriad tinseled ornaments were spun
To glisten and reflect the sparkleshine
And animate the aromatic bulk
That smelled of candlewax, and cedarwood,
And brown bag smell of paper mingled with
Oranges and apples, nuts and sweets,
That hid in tubs and barrels at its base.
A hushed expectancy closed heart to heart
As father became children, misty eyed,
And children grew matured and awed and still.
Dear words were spoken and the choirs sang,
And charity fell soft as snowflakes fall
To muffle sordid ugliness and pain.

Today the city snow is soiled and brown
As marketers push rudely through shop aisles
With merchandise in jumbles marked "cut rate".
His work-worn adult hands caress small scrubs
Of artificial evergreen, and pause.
He stares into the plastic depth, to see
A giant tree, a-shine with warmth and love,
And is again a child on Christmas Eve.

A SPLENDID MIRACULOUS THING

South wind that blows from the sparkling Black Sea,
  Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
Blesses the Steppes, as the Lord blesses me,
  Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

Come to me, children, I'll work as I tell,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
Of your great grandparents, whom God has loved well.
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

Thousands of settlers in Russia's south lands,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
Were North German people. Great Catherine's commands
Had given them land for a hundred good years
Of freedom of worship, and freedom from fears;
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

But as that good century came to an end,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
A new czar was crowned, and he wasn't their friend,
He took back the favors that Catherine gave,
They worried and wondered. Could anyone save?
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

They heard of America, started to plan,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.
How could they all find their way to that land?
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

They sold their belongings, and gathered their gold,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
Keepsakes and seedlings, and when all is told,
Their most precious cargo, their treasure replete
Was bundles and jars full of Turkey Red wheat
Which parents and children, on long winter nights
Had sorted from kernels that were free from blights
To plant in the new land men called Kansas plain,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

They traveled to Kansas, felt cold winter's pain,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans,
And wheat they had seeded, with coming of spring,
Was truly a splendid, miraculous thing
Which grew to bring food and money and fame
To farmers of Kansas of Mennonite name,
Anna and Greta, Cornelius and Hans.

TO AN ORIENTAL GRANDSON

I cannot look at Oriental children's eyes
Without a wish to lean and place a kiss
Where temple and the golden orbit meet.

No smiles to me are dearer than those seen
On laughing lips that squeeze sloe velvet eyes
To shining slits above high facial bones;
No childhood face more dear to me than yours.

Since first I looked into your infant eyes
And pressed my self-kissed fingers fast to yours
The while you gravely took my offered love
With hand outstretched, and sweetly serious smile,
The covenant we made on that day stands!

I find my heart and world have opened wide
To welcome home another much loved host
Of children never really seen before.

THE OLD SILVER COMMUNION CUP

Ten hours a day, six days a week,
our father worked with his hands.
He built and repaired with devotion
unique, and many a home now
stands
To which he gave hours and hours
of his best, on into his eightieth
years;
And ours was one home among all
the rest, and it filled with music
and tears.
So "Happy Days are here Again!"
was heard, and "Parsifal".
He joked and smiled through many a
pain, and built a stronger wall.
No grass could grow where his
children played, he loved his "liv-
ing flowers",
And knew that worthiness is made
through faithful hours and hours;
So as he polished the wood so
crude, he polished all our souls
And though our hearts were raw and
rude, they turned to worthwhile
goals.
Where truth is prized, a precious
thing is built through time and
care,
And endless toil was a song to sing,
and rest was a time for prayer.
There was a time when a church
was rebuilt, and as he started
home
He passed where a pile of rubble
was spilt, and saw amid wood and
stone
The graceful form of an urn that
was cast away with discarded
debris;
Then a shadowy hope made his
heart beat fast, and he knew what
it would be.
When evening had come, he took up
the urn that was tarnished and
clouded and black,
And memories began to churn, as he
thought of the years long back
When cups like this were passed
from hand to hand and lip to lip
By pioneers in this new land, and
each saint took a sip.
He chose a cloth that was soft and
old and stroked with love and
prayer
While the black rubbed off onto
flannel fold, and the silvery sheen
was there
With a luster to make even angels
sing. He knew he could not fail,
For he knew how to polish a sacred
thing—each child was a Holy
Grail!

Calvin Reveals an Early Anabaptist Position Statement

by Anthony R. Epp

On June 1, 1544, John Calvin published a 190-page book, *Brieve instruction pour armer tous bons fideles contre les erreurs de la secte commune des Anabaptistes* (Brief Instruction for Arming All the Faithful against the Errors of the Common Sect, the Anabaptists). Calvin wrote this *Instruction* in direct answer to an Anabaptist publication, called alternately a book and a booklet by Calvin, "in which they have included a compendium of what they believe in opposition both to us and to the Papists, consisting of seven articles to which all Anabaptists commonly subscribe."[1] Although Calvin called its authors "gens ignorans" (50), whose arguments never could sway an educated person, and referred sarcastically to the book itself as a "belle resolution," (54) the painstaking detail with which he answered it suggests that he in fact considered it important enough to train his pastors in refuting it, lest the Anabaptists continue gaining adherents through their arguments.

At the request of his fellow reformer, Guillaume Farel, Calvin wrote the *Instruction* expressly for Reformed ministers in the Neuf-Chatel region in western Switzerland, to help them combat the Anabaptist influence.[2] In addition to arming the faithful, he also hoped to win back some who had already been lost to the Anabaptist cause. To strengthen his arguments, Calvin responded to each of the seven Anabaptist tenets in turn and deliberately quoted the Anabaptists.

Calvin had found the Anabaptists hard to combat because their many divisions made it difficult for others to know just what Anabaptists were, but the appearance of a book about Anabaptists by Anabaptists gave Calvin a base from which to launch his attack on them. Although Calvin never mentioned the name of the book, the fact that the seven points which he quoted correspond exactly to those in the *Bruderlich Vereinigung* otherwise known as the *Schleitheim Confession* (1527), leads one to suppose that the Swiss Reformer was indeed using that confession of faith as the basis for his rebuttal of Anabaptism. Historian William Balke, in his recent study, *Calvin and the Anabaptists*, confirms this supposition through a study of the correspondence between Calvin and Farel. He states that a now lost translation of the *Schleitheim Confession*, made upon the request of a certain Pierre Pelot, had been distributed in French-speaking Switzerland. Balke assumes that Calvin quoted directly from that translation of the *Confession* while writing the refutation.[3] In requesting a refutation of the Anabaptist *Confession* from Calvin, Farel wanted to arm the Neuchatel pastors "with a peaceful weapon with which to defend themselves against Anabaptist propaganda."[4]

Calvin decided to use this base of Anabaptist commonality "so that they not complain that I am imposing on all of them the mistakes of a few individuals in order to besmirch unjustly the entire sect." (54-55) Because he adhered closely to and often quoted the Anabaptist source, one may reconstruct the seven distinctives which Anabaptists believed set them apart from other Christians.

Calvin's methodology gave extensive exposure to the Anabaptist tenets and to the arguments with which they supported their positions. Calvin began by quoting each tenet before giving his rebuttal. In the rebuttal he often used the words "they say" (*ils disent*"), thus indicating an indirect citation from the Anabaptist book. Although Calvin's methodology does not allow one to reestablish the entire Anabaptist statement, and thus establish definitively that he did indeed work from the *Schleitheim Confession*, one can obtain an objective glimpse of the Anabaptists at a time when they still constituted a force with which to reckon.

I. *On Baptism.* Before embarking on his refutation Calvin provided his pastors with a quotation from the Anabaptists on the subject which gave them their name.

> Baptism is to be administered to those who have been led to repentance, believing that their sins are removed through Jesus Christ, and who want to live in the resurrection. However, one must give it to those who request it on their own, not to little children, as has been done under the papacy. (56)

To support their position that baptism must be preceded by repentance and faith, the Anabaptists cited Scripture: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; and Acts 2:37, 8:37, 16:31, 19:2ff. Calvin reported that the Anabaptist book specifically rejected an argument by an Old Testament analogy advanced by supporters of infant baptism. According to that analogy, since Abraham, whose act of repentance and declaration of faith had preceded his circumcision, had circumcised his infant son on the order of God and thus before that son could have come to faith and repentance, it was thus argued through the analogy that infants could likewise receive Christian baptism on the strength of the faith and repentance of those who preceded them.

II. *On Excommunication.* Calvin prefaced his refutation of the Anabaptist way of practicing excommunication by quoting their own words again:

> The use of excommunication must exist among those who profess to be Christians, who, having been baptized, nevertheless inadvertently, without deliberate forethought, fall into error. Such must be exhorted and remonstrated secretly up to two times; upon the third occasion they must be publicly banned in front of the entire congregation, so that we can break bread together and drink of the cup with one mind. (65)

Pointing out that the Anabaptists learned from him all that they knew about excommunication, Calvin stated

that in principle they agreed with him. (Chronology would contradict Calvin's claim at this point, for while he wrote the present *Instruction* in 1544 and his *Institution of Religion* in 1536, the *Schleitheim Confession* dates from 1527, five years before Calvin's first publications.) They part ways when, upon ascertaining that excommunication was not being regularly practiced, the Anabaptists refused to recognize that such an assembly constituted the church and therefore declared that a Christian cannot receive communion in such a setting. A church is polluted, the Anabaptists maintained, "if you don't ban from it those who have merited it [excommunication]." (65) They cited Isaiah 1:6, I Corinthians 5:11 and Ephesians 5:26 to validate their position. In the case of deliberate sin, the Anabaptists were apparently demanding excommunication for life:

> . . . in saying that he who has sinned unconsciously and not consciously, must be banned, they imply, as they also teach and that now openly, that if a man consciously sinned, he should never obtain pardon. (69)

They reasoned that by sinning knowingly one was committing a sin against the Holy Spirit which was irremissible.

III. *Communion.* Calvin, in that he concurred in every respect with the Anabaptists on this point, furnished no quotation from their work, but provided a brief summary of their position: ". . . serving Him in a good and legitimate calling." (77)

IV. *Refusal to Bear Arms.* The Anabaptists believed that "man must separate himself from all pollutions of this world, in order to be one with God . . . they conclude that all use of arms is diabolical." (77) Not only do they condemn "the personal sword" (*le glaive personnel*) or the use of the sword on one's own behalf, but also "the public sword" (*le glaive public*) or the bearing of arms on behalf of the state.

> Moreover it is certain that the intention of these poor visionaries is to condemn all munitions, fortresses, bearing of arms and the like, which are done for the defense of countries, and to prevent subjects from obeying their princes and superiors when they [the princes] would like to use them [the subjects] for such purposes in cases of necessity. (78)

Principal texts cited by the Anabaptists were Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3.

V. *Pastors.* In respect to the role of pastors within the church, Calvin noted a change in the Anabaptist position. Whereas they formerly "wanted every able-bodied person to run about mimicking the Apostles like monkeys, not like true imitators," (79) they later adopted Calvin's position, saying "that no church can sustain itself without a minister." (79) They differed from Calvin, however, in refusing to accept the validity of any but their own ministers. This Anabaptist stance obviously hurt and angered Calvin, for he declared that the Anabaptists treated him and his fellow pastors like "ravishing wolves" and that "they hold us in such abomination that they would believe that they had mortally offended God by having heard a sermon from one of us." (79-80)

VI. *Temporal Powers.* Calvin considered the Anabaptists to be anarchists, for he called them "those enemies of order of any kind." (81) Nevertheless, he perceived a change in their position towards government and service in government. He prefaced his remarks by letting the Anabaptists speak for themselves.

> We agree that the sword is ordained of God, outside the perfection of Christ. Thus the princes and leaders of the world are ordained in order to punish the wicked, and to put them to death. But in the perfection of Christ excommunication is the ultimate sentence, without corporal death. (80)

Calvin repeated this Anabaptist position later in his refutation.

> They say that excommunication has replaced the physical sword in the Christian Church, so that in a case where one formerly punished a crime by death, it is now to be punished by depriving the guilty one of the company of the faithful. (85)

Calvin's wording, while faithfully rendering the Anabaptist position, showed his incredulity at their naivete, for these quotations revealed the Anabaptists' lifestyle based on their belief that the kingdom had already come. Other quotations which Calvin lifted from their tract confirmed their adherence to a two-kingdom view. "The government of the magistrates, they say, is of the flesh; and that of the Christians is of the spirit." (91) "The dwelling of the magistrates, they say, is permanent in this world; that of Christians is in heaven." (91) "They continue to find government service illicit and prohibited to all Christians!" (80) "Now they say that whoever sits in judgment does not deserve to be called Christian, because the office of the sword has no place in Christianity." (81)

In accusing them of backpedaling, thus admitting that the Anabaptists had renounced former anarchist tendencies, Calvin was nevertheless unwilling to allow them to drop that position. He insisted on the inevitability of lawsuits among Christians. In refuting an Anabaptist argument based on Matthew 5 and on Hebrews 7:12ff, he revealed first the argument itself and then the conclusion which to him remained unpalatable:

> It is true, that the scepter and government were to be removed from the line of Judah and from the house of David; but that there was to be no government at all anymore is manifestly against Scripture. (81)

In answer to Romans 13:1ff, the Anabaptists countered that "it is very true that they [magistrates] are ordained of God, but it is not permitted to one of the faith to be a part of it [the system]." (84) They cited Jesus' answer to two brothers to support their opposition to Christians sitting in judgment:

> Jesus Christ, they say, refused to divide the inheritance between the two brothers (Luke 12:14). It follows therefore that a Christian is not to intervene in civil quarrels as a judge over them. (85)

Calvin's response indicated that the Anabaptist prohibition against lawsuits specifically singled out those involving property and inheritances. For Calvin, reacting in evident despair, such a mentality could lead only to chaos and to "a community of goods such that the one who can get anything is welcome to it." (87) He provided no indication, however, that the Anabaptist position itself actually included that stance.

The Anabaptists must have realized that the concept of refusing to serve in the magistrate created a great gulf between them and other Christians, for the Bible passages which they used to support their position were numerous. Following the example of Jesus (John 6:15) who withdrew to the mountain when the people wanted to make him king, the Anabaptists concluded, "It follows then that if a Christian were chosen magistrate, he is in no way to accept it, but to distance himself from it, according to the Master's example." (88) Luke 22:25-26 ("The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them . . . But not so with you . . .") provides further support for the Anabaptist position, as did Romans 8:29, where it is stated: "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . ."

VII. *Oaths.* While finding the Anabaptist position to appear superficially correct, Calvin faulted them for adopting too extreme a position. He again began by quoting from the Anabaptist book:

> We have come to this agreement concerning the oath, namely that it is a confirmation which is to be made only in the name of God: and in truth, not in lying, according to the commandment of the law. But for Christians, all oaths are proscribed by our Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 5:34) (92)

Subsequently Calvin, stating that they maintained that Jesus "taught perfection of the Law," (94) confirmed the importance to the Anabaptists of the Matthew passage to their stance. "They make a big shield out of these words of our Lord Jesus in which he prohibits swearing at all." (93)

The Anabaptist book contains an attack on the Calvinist position on oaths, which the Reformer, before answering, summarized: "However they want to make us believe that we interpret this passage as if it was said that swearing by heaven or earth is wrong but that it is permitted to swear by God." (97) To this accusation, which Calvin rejected as pure calumny, the Anabaptists added an ominous warning: "They cry out saying 'O what madness, what blindness among those who do not consider that God is greater than his throne.' " (97) In addition to rejecting oaths on Biblical grounds the Anabaptists raised the philosophical objection that oaths lead people to promise the impossible: "Here, they say, is the reason why all oaths are forbidden; more especially as we could not accomplish what we promise." (97) After accusing the Anabaptists of creating confusion through their "grunting like pigs," Calvin stated their conclusion: "The conclusion [of the Anabaptists] is that our word be yes, yes; no, no; and that anything beyond that comes from evil." (98)

The Anabaptist publication also contains their explanation of Biblical passages in which oaths are actually made: God, because of his omnipotence, could make oaths in the Old Testament.

> As for God, the Anabaptists respond that He can very well swear, in as much as he can accomplish everything that he says and thus is out of the danger of forswearing himself, given the fact that he is faithful and intends to keep what he promises. But that it is another matter for mortal man, who often cannot carry out what he has promised even if he wants to . . . . (100)

As for oaths made by the apostles Peter and Paul, Calvin judged the Anabaptist view, that the apostles' oaths related only to those already made by God, to be hardly worthy of an answer.

> Saint Peter and Saint Paul did not, they say, swear in order to promise anything, but only in order to give assurance concerning the promise made by God . . . . These madmen say that the Apostles never swore in order to affirm anything of their own accord, but only to witness to the covenant with God. (101)

Since Calvin was aiming through his booklet to aid his own pastors, he added two distinguishing Anabaptist principles to the list drawn up by the Anabaptists themselves. He justified the addition on the basis of his own knowledge.

> Indeed I know that those who composed this fine statement were at that very time teaching them [the two principles added by Calvin]. (103)

(VIII.) They deny the true humanity of Jesus Christ.

(IX.) They teach that the soul upon the death of the body sleeps until judgment day.

These two additions, which, Calvin maintained, ought to have been included in the Anabaptist confession of faith, constitute further charges for which Calvin meant to hold them responsible. Calvin went on to state that some Anabaptists espoused a community of goods and also permitted polygamy. Although the Anabaptists themselves had not included any of these issues in their own enumeration of distinctive beliefs, Calvin considered the issues so important and the link between them and the Anabaptists so strong that he devoted seventy-five pages (110-185 in the original pagination) out of the total 190 pages to these two items (VIII and IX). None of the positions considered distinctive by the Anabaptists themselves received comparable treatment. (Baptism: pages 16-32; excommunication, 33-57; communion, 58; refusal to bear arms, 58-62; pastors, 62-63; temporal powers: 64-89; oaths, 89-110.) Obviously questions concerning the humanity of Jesus and the fate of the soul belonged, from Calvin's perspective, to the heretical tendencies which his reform movement was combatting in 1544, and he had identified the Anabaptists as propagators of threatening heresies in both instances.

Martyrs. To the treatise containing their distinctive beliefs, the Anabaptists had added an account of Anabaptist martyrdom, perhaps that of Michael Sattler who in 1527, in the face of unbelievable cruelty, remained steadfast and was finally burned at the stake.

> Now to give further appeal to their doctrine, they have had the story of the death of I don't know which Michael, their accomplice and an adherent to their sect, printed along with their position statement. And in fact they have made a habit of making an important defense out of the fact that several have died for having remained true to their convictions without having been willing to retract them. (140)

Calvin, while admitting the power of martyrdom in the Christian tradition, closed his response to the Anabaptists with the solemn warning that a lie washed in blood remains nevertheless a lie.

Method. Calvin's answer to the Anabaptist position conformed to its name, *Instruction.* In addition to providing his pastors with a general refutation of the stands for which the Anabaptists considered themselves unique, he armed his followers with his own interpretations of Biblical passages quoted by the Anabaptists and cited other texts with which to stump them. According to a format for the refutation of Anabaptists, Calvin postulates arguments which Anabaptists might use ("if they say . . .") and formulates suggested retorts for his pastors ("then you say . . ."), in an effort to help his pastors know how to debate successfully against the Anabaptists. He considered his *Instruction* to be only a partial counterattack on the inroads made by the Anabaptists.

> I have protested from the beginning, and not without reason, that it was not my intention to refute point by point all the opinions which the Anabaptists hold. For that would mean entering a forest from which there would be no way out. (139)

Although a tone of serious urgency dominates the work, Calvin also selected a vocabulary which portrayed the Anabaptists in a thoroughly negative manner. At times this attack took the form of name-calling. In addition to labeling them as "visionaries" (*fantastiques*) and "madmen" (*frenetiques*), he used such adjectives as "brainless" and "stupid" and resorted at times to substituting the verbs "to vomit" and "to grunt" for the verb "to say." He furthermore saddled them with such unflattering names as "pigs," "vermin," "animals" and "Sadducees." The vicious, reproachful

language might surprise the modern reader, but the fact that Calvin writes as if he were participating in one of the then current public debates, in which name-calling occurred frequently, might help attenuate the negative reaction to such language. Calvin's intent was to create a "peaceful weapon" against the Anabaptists.

Sarcasm also served Calvin as a handy weapon. More than once he used the adjective "beautiful" or "fine" in an opposite sense. He referred to their book as a "fine resolution" (*belle resolution*) and their reasoning as "fine quibbling" (*belle cavillation*). After having refuted an Anabaptist argument on excommunication, Calvin concluded:

> Here you have already two mistakes, which show nicely what great scholars these Anabaptists are and what kind of minds they have for reforming everything, seeing that they couldn't say three words without mixing up everything. (73)

When describing the Anabaptist belief concerning the destiny of the soul, he concluded: "Anabaptists, who in place of white robes, give pillows to their souls to make them sleep." (116)

Calvin's language indicates the seriousness with which he regarded the Anabaptist threat. Experience must have taught him that the Anabaptists could be persuasive. He attributed their success to skillful hypocrisy:

> They falsely abuse this color, leading the simple-minded to believe that they seek to govern themselves entirely according to scripture; however, they have nothing to do with it at all, but entirely with the imaginings of their own brains. (56)

He repeatedly spoke of "the beautiful colors" (appearances) with which the Anabaptists covered everything. Underneath lay a venomous snake, Calvin implied through his imagery: ". . . dangerous poison which the doctrine of the Anabaptists is . . ." (50) "Once again at first they have reasonably good remarks . . . . But in the tail lies the venom, as the proverb says." (77)

Condescension served Calvin as yet another "peaceful weapon": "Do they even merit our opening our mouth to talk to them?" (101) or "in order to excuse myself to those who might think that it is foolishness on my part to spend my time with something so meager and frivolous as this little book, which seems to have been written by ignorant people . . . ." (49) Yet his condescension is tinged with urgency for he admitted Anabaptist successes in "seducing" the uneducated masses. Had they known no success, Calvin would not have written his *Instruction*.

In spite of the haughty attitude and the sometimes scurrilous nature of the attacks, Calvin maintained at many points in his *Instruction* the serious tone of earnest debate. He obviously saw in the Anabaptists a threat to the Reform movement as he conceived it. Often he contested Anabaptist interpretation of scripture. Two short passages indicated a fundamental inability to grasp the vision of life which the Anabaptists were preaching and especially the willingness to live out that vision.

> Moreover, if it is not permissible for a Christian to go to court at all to settle differences concerning possessions, inheritances and other properties, I ask these good doctors, what will become of the world? (87)

> Thereby it is easy to see that these unfortunate fanatics are aiming for no other goal than that of bringing everything into disorder, creating a community of goods such that whoever can get hold of something is welcome to it. (87)

Clearly Calvin could not envision a society radically transformed according to the Anabaptist vision. The radical nature of their two-kingdom approach was apparently too far from the reality upon which Calvin was basing his own vision of the reformation. Balke pointed out that Calvin and his fellow reformers actually hoped that Calvin's *Instruction* would dissuade the Anabaptists from their errors and that they could thus avoid the imposition of stern measures by the Bern Council. "Farel was afraid that the Lords of Bern would take action against the poor sectarians like inquisitors, in a rough and thorough way, more papal than apostolic. Farel felt that it would be best to have a hearing with the Anabaptists and to try to convince them."[5] On April 1, 1544, however, a month and a half before Calvin published his *Instruction*, the Bern Council, taking steps to stem the spread of Anabaptism, threatened its adherents with imprisonment, torture and death. Thus violent measures were instituted even before Calvin's "peaceful weapon" had been readied for battle.

Just a few years before he wrote his *Instruction*, central European Protestantism had been shaken by the attempt at Munster to establish the Kingdom by force. The bloody consequences of that ill-fated attempt were, because of the association of its leaders with Anabaptism, to give the Anabaptists the scurrilous reputation under which their descendants would still be suffering two centuries later. Nevertheless, Calvin, whose stated aim in this book was to stem the spread of Anabaptism, never made even the slightest move to discredit the opposition by associating it with the reprehensible Münsterites. Later historians and theological polemicists yielded to that temptation. The fact that Calvin, whose wife incidentally was the widow of an Anabaptist, "fought cleanly" might indicate that the Swiss Anabaptists were too well known in the area for him to nurture any illusions of defeating them through such a calumnious association. He did ridicule them, but devoted the bulk of his book to a serious refutation of Anabaptist positions. That he attempted in his 190-page *Instruction* to refute their confession of faith might be an indication of Anabaptist successes in 1544.

ENDNOTES

[1]John Calvin, *Brieve instruction pour armer tous bons fideles contre les erreurs de la secte commune des Anabaptistes, Corpus reformatorum*, V. XXXV, *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, V. VII (Brunsvigae: Apud C. A. Schwetschke et Filium, 1868), Col 54. The book actually used for this study was a 1964 reprint by the Johnson Reprint Corporation of New York. All references are to column numbers, since page numbers are not indicated in the work whereas the columns, two to a page, are numbered. Hereafter each citation will be documented by placing the column number in parentheses immediately following the quotation.

[2]William Balke, *Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals*, translated by William J. Heynen - (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), p. 177.

[3]Balke, p. 190.

[4]Balke, p. 178.

[5]Balke, p. 178.

Alexanderwohl Architecture

by Brian D. Stucky

We shape our surroundings, and in turn, they shape us.

Church architecture is not frequently discussed. However, it can be a point of great sensitivity. Not only does it reflect the direct or indirect faith and feelings of the designers and builders of a certain church, but also it continues to shape the faith and feelings of all those who worship within its walls.

The Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kansas, has been noted by Mennonites and non-Mennonites in Kansas and across the nation for its interesting architecture. Although the building has undergone several changes, the century old structure still maintains some of the Dutch Mennonite architectural style, which hints at the roots of the congregation centuries ago.

The origin of the Alexanderwohl Church goes back to the organization of the congregation in the 17th century in Przechowka, West Prussia, near the Vistula River. "According to the names, some of the original members must have come from the Netherlands, some from neighboring Lutherans, and one . . . from Hutterian Brethren. The first known elder of the congregation was Berend Ratzlaff."[1] "In 1784, Jacob Wedel, one of the ministers of the Przechowka Church, compiled the historical records of the church membership as far back as was ascertainable at that time [the earliest being a birthdate of 1640] . . . . The continuous series of dates from 1669 to 1784 [leads one to believe] . . . that this set of dates refers to 115 years of existence of the church by 1784, thus dating the origin of the church in 1669."[2] From the title of this church record book, the Przechowka Church was a member of the Old Flemish or Groningen Mennonite Society.

"When Elder Peter Wedel led a group of 21 families . . . to the Molotschna (Russia) settlement in 1821, they . . . met Czar Alexander I who wished them well (*wohl* in German) in their undertaking. Hence the name 'Alexanderwohl' for the village and congregation established in the heart of the Molotschna settlement . . . . When in the 1870's a new conscription law was in preparation in Russia, the elder Jacob Buller . . . and almost the entire village and congregation"[3] emigrated to America in the summer of 1874. One group arrived in Marion County and another group in Reno County, Kansas. The latter group was led by Dietrich Gaeddert and settled under the name of "Hoffnungsau." Until homes could be built, they lived in immigrant houses built by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company which transported them to Kansas. In the Marion County settlement, the immigrant house was the center of worship at Alexanderwohl for twelve years before the "new Alexanderwohl" church was built in 1886.

Since no minutes of "brotherhood meetings" were kept until October 1892, the earliest source of information concerning the construction of the church has been gleaned from a treasurer's book . . . . The first entry of income was July 27, 1886, indicating that $1,519.00 was received for the building fund at a brotherhood meeting on that date.[4]

Johann Wall (1831-1901) was a carpenter and cabinetmaker by trade, having built the Lichtenau Church in Russia.[5] He was residing on his farm on the eastern fringe of the Hebron church settlement between Moundridge and Buhler, when on the 30th of July, 1886, three men from Alexanderwohl, Peter Pankratz, Heinrich Unruh, and Peter Schroeder, came to see him concerning the building of the church.[6] These three men, along with Heinrich Schmidt, had been chosen as the Building Commission.[7] Wall's diary states, "Have undertaken the building of the church and will try with God's help to accomplish this assignment." On the twenty-third of September he writes, "I went to the Alexanderwohlers to build the church." In November he further writes, "I was involved with the building of the church for 8 weeks and 3 days. Am now at home on this 20th day of November."[8]

The main auditorium of the original church which was directly above the present basement was 40 feet by 70 feet. The church had a front entrance to the east (22 feet by 30 feet) with two stairways. On the first floor under the north stairway was the nursery and on the south under the stairway the Sunday School library. This room was also used for Sunday School. The middle room upstairs was used for the catechism class.[9]

The building of the structure progressed until the time came to construct the roof. A story is told that the head carpenter, unable to solve the problem of building a self-supporting roof that would not blow off in the strong Kansas wind, sat down under a tree to think. After a while, an assistant came running over to him with an idea. The decision was made to build a low arched roof, thus self-supporting with no pillars.[10]

The church treasurer's book lists a variety of building materials, food, and wages to fourteen individuals including the "Zimmermeister" or head carpenter. The final entry of Nov. 24, 1890, lists a total income of $6,051.20 and expenses of $6,030.24. Other miscellaneous items brought the balance to $0.00 on April 10, 1892.[11]

Johann Wall's diary mentions his return to the church on December 11, 1886. "In the afternoon we left for Alexanderwohl for the church dedication, a very nice day. December 12: Church dedication service was held. Had rain during the night and snow with

Left. *John Wall (1831-1900) and Margaret (Wiens) Wall (1831-1916).*

Below. *This east view of Alexanderwohl was taken shortly after completion of the structure in 1886. The occasion is not identified. The Western District Conference of the General Conference first met in this building in 1887, and many other special conferences have also met at Alexanderwohl.*

a northwest wind until noon. A goodly number of people attended in spite of the bad weather."[12]

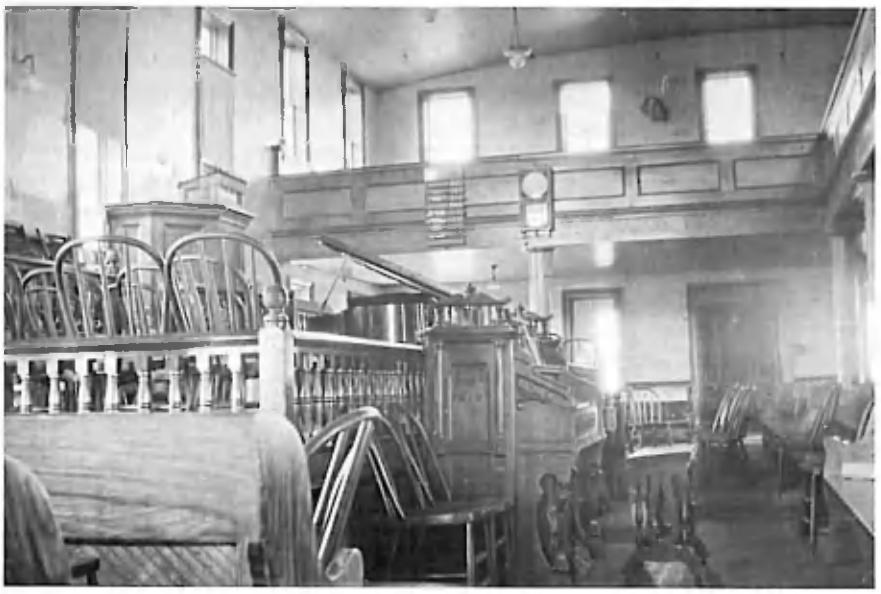
The treasurer's book records December 11, 1886 . . ."To the Zimmermeister . . . for wages due him . . . $110.00."[13] There is no direct mention of Johann Wall, but we may assume it was he.

The most outstanding features of the 1886 Alexanderwohl building center around its "Dutch Mennonite" style of church architecture. The style has endured through hundreds of years and through the migrations to several countries. Characteristics of this style, as observed in Molotschna, are that "along one wall was a platform, with a pulpit on the middle of the platform. On one side of the pulpit on this platform were [benches for] ministers and on the other, Vorsängers [Songleaders]. On the other three sides of the church auditorium was a balcony . . . . At the end of the building, at the side was the minister's room, and at the other end was the mother's room. It also had side entries. The windows were small and ran in two rows, so the building from the exterior gave the impression of a big two storied building. On the side where the pulpit stood were three large, tall windows."[14] Other characteristics are that the floor seating on the sides faced inward, the pulpit was built in a multisided form, as many European churches use, and railings lining the platform were made with lathe-turned spindles. In the Netherlands, chairs rather than pews may occupy the center floor area. The three-sided arrangement with balconies prevented the worshippers from seeing all the others, but allowed large numbers of people, often eight hundred or more, to be placed relatively close to the speaker. This relative closeness in worship is consistent with Anabaptist theology. A very long sanctuary or nave separates those in back from the center of worship.

This Dutch Mennonite style still survives in the Netherlands in buildings approximately three hundred years old. One of the most notable is the Singelkerk in Amsterdam. "Rev. P. H. Unruh, who traveled to Holland, Germany, and Russia shortly after World War I, said that when he walked into the Alexanderwohl Church in Russia, he felt he was almost back home in America. So we see that the Mennonites not only carried their religious practices, but also their Dutch style of architecture from Holland to Prussia, to Russia, and then to America."[15]

No written record exists concerning a church built at Alexanderwohl in Molotschna immediately after the migration in 1821, but there are records about a later building, one that is known through existing photographs. The church record book reads, "Our new church was dedicated on the 30th of October 1860. Because of the severe rainstorm not too many people could come. There were about 300, perhaps more, in attendance."[16] Then follows a record of moneys assessed, borrowed, and repaid. Twenty-five silver rubles were assessed per family, but most could not pay because of poor crops, so funds were borrowed from individuals.

Churches in America that carry signs of the Dutch Mennonite style include Alexanderwohl's sister church, Hoffnungsau, east of Inman and Buhler. The first building in 1880 was a sod structure with a straight sanctuary. But the second, a wooden building built in 1898, was very similar to Alexanderwohl, with the exception that the edge of the balcony was rounded, like a horseshoe.[17] The Hoffnungsau building measured 40 feet by 70 feet [identical to Alexanderwohl] with an addition of 20 by 40 feet. Dietrich Gaeddert was



These three photographs illustrate some of the early changes in the sanctuary.

elected to be building contractor, Abraham Ratzlaff was his assistant, and there was a building committee of five. The carpentry contract was given to Dietrich Funk of Newton, KS. . . . This task, with five workers, was begun May 24 and completed in time for the dedication on November 13, 1898.[18]

Emmaus, near Whitewater, KS., with its pioneers coming directly from Prussia, is an interesting comparison. The first two Emmaus buildings, 1878 and 1908, were both straight sanctuaries, with no balconies. However, in building the present church in 1928,[19] Emmaus developed an interior quite similar to the present Alexanderwohl interior. This church makes a return to the Dutch style after a 54 year absence. However, Emmaus has, like the Hoffnungsau wooden building, strong Gothic pointed windows, in contrast to the simple Mennonite tradition.

Other General Conference churches display the three-sided balcony, such as the churches at Berne, Indiana, Bethel at Marion, S.D., Freeman, S.D. (that has since been replaced), Fortuna, Mo., and Pandora and Bluffton, Ohio. Some of these also have pews formed in a semicircle. Features similar to the Dutch Mennonite style do not necessarily mean that the congregation has Dutch or Prussian roots. On the contrary, some of these have Swiss ancestry. The above churches and others may more likely be part of the early to mid 20th century era in which people and ideas traveled more easily and styles began to blend.[20]

Was one person a carrier of the Dutch style to America? Johann Wall is not mentioned concerning the Hoffnungsau building, although he may have advised in its construction. He did, however, supervise the building of the nearby Hebron church. The Dutch Mennonite style seems not to have been carried to America by a single "architect," but rather was widely enough known to be used by several congregations.

The present Alexanderwohl building, which contains some 112-year old timbers from the immigrant house, has had a series of remodelings and additions in its 100 year history. "In 1899 it was decided to build two rooms 12 by 24 feet, one to be added on each end of the building, [north and south] which were also used for Sunday School. The little room on the south was the minister's prayer room." In 1906 more modifications were completed. Previously, the elevated pulpit area provided a shallow space for only the pulpit, pulpit chairs, and benches for the Vorsänger to the south and ministers to the north. Paneling enclosed the bench area with a semicircle railing in front of the pulpit but allowed walking space between the pulpit and the railing. Access to the platform was gained by a single center set of steps in front of the pulpit.[21]

After 1906, the Vorsänger and ministers' benches and pulpit remained intact, but the platform or stage area extended into the sanctuary below the pulpit, approximately three feet high. This entire platform was bordered with a railing, with the exception of two short sets of steps from the main floor. It was between these "twin" steps that many official functions took place, such as marriages and baptisms. This lower area made it virtually impossible for those in the balcony to see. From the flat platform, steps on either side of the pulpit led to the Vorsänger and ministers' bench area. The choir usually took a place on the south side of the platform.[22] A detailed model of this building built by Alvin Goossen is on display at Goessel's Mennonite Heritage Museum.

Other changes by 1906 included the addition of an ornately trimmed organ, which resulted in the lessening of the importance of the Vorsänger. Also, square pillars were changed to round, but in spite of this, there were many "blind spots" in the church seating arrangement.[23]

Kerosene lights were originally used, until in 1906 carbide gas lights were installed. This worked until January

1918. Following an evening service, all had gone home, when custodian Reinhold Schwartz walked out to the small building regulating the carbide gas on the west side of the church. A kerosene lantern carried by Schwartz ignited a gas buildup, causing an explosion which rocked the neighborhood, knocked out all windows on the west side and some on the south side, and burned and knocked Schwartz unconscious. Henry Ediger, who lived a half mile east of the church, saw the flash and heard the explosion. He quickly ran into the house and told Mrs. Ediger to call Goessel to say that the church was on fire. A ring was made on every party line after which many people arrived on the scene and so the damage was controlled. Following this incident, gas lights were no longer used. Two light plants were purchased and electric lights were installed.[24]

The basement of this building was dug in the spring of 1920. This took much hard labor, because the ground was so hard and dry. Many remarked that it had not rained for a long time under this building.[25]

At brotherhood meetings in the years leading up to 1928, several discussions led to the idea of a new or a remodeled church building. Information is sketchy until in the "fall of 1927 it was decided to rebuild the church, and on the first Sunday morning in February, 1928, it was announced that help was needed Monday morning, February 6, to start removing the additions from the main building."[26]

Daniel F. Unruh (1883-1953) served as the architect and head carpenter for the 1928 remodeling project. Although a charter member of the Goessel Mennonite Church, Unruh had grown up at Alexanderwohl and so was still keenly aware of the wishes of the congregation. He had no formal training in architecture, except for a correspondence course, but was considered a builder by trade. The fruits of his labors are preserved in many fine homes and farm dwellings scattered throughout the community. He also designed and built the Goessel Mennonite Church, [worked on the] Tabor Mennonite Church, and the Mennonite Church near Kingman.[27]

On March 1, 1928, the church was raised 39 inches.with 24 screw jacks. About 36 manpower units were occupied most of the day. F. M. Goossen had the responsibility to manage the raising. The church was raised with all the furniture in it, even the piano and the organ. Rev. C. C. Wedel stepped in about every hour and said that both clocks were still running. At first the congregation intended to have their worship services in the building after it was raised, but when they saw it so high above the foundation and the big basement under it, the decision was made to hold the services and Sunday School in five rural schools. This was done until the new church was dedicated.[28]

The principal changes in the 1928 remodeling were significant, although the basic sanctuary shell remained intact. The center balcony on the east was moved back farther east near the old entrance catechism/cloakroom thus "opening up" the sanctuary. The sanctuary floor was extended eastward under the new balcony, adding to the capacity. To the west, a choir loft and several Sunday School rooms were added. The roof was greatly restructured. Another significant change was the moving of the main entrance to the west side, since many felt that the front of the church should face the road. Since the parking space was to the east, south, and north, the worshippers at first used the west entrance, but as time went by, they used it less frequently, and by 1966 the west entrance was closed.[29]

Dan Unruh's efforts at Alexanderwohl were not without disagreements. Probably the most controversial feature was the introduction of "stained" glass (colored opalescent) windows. These were chosen as a convenient alternative to screen the sunlight, as opposed to noisy shutters or roller shades. They function well for that purpose, but a furor arose over the "Catholic" influence. The building committee calmed the membership with the explanation that they were not picture windows, just simple colored windows, and an explanation of the sun screen function. This was, in time, acceptable.[30]

At the annual meeting of December 29, 1927, the Vorsänger as a group resigned in protest because the new pulpit area was not planned to include seating for them. The importance of their "office" had been weakening for some time.[31] This, however, signaled a visible break with the Dutch architecture and format that had been used for centuries.

Two arbitrary changes were made by Unruh after membership approval of the building plans. One was the addition of the balcony "walk arounds" or "catwalks," and the other was the elimination of a semicircular extension of the stage on which the pulpit was to have been placed. "It will always be in the way," Unruh was to have commented, and simply cut it off in a straight line.[32]

Daniel F. and Elisabeth (Duerksen) Unruh.

The bell tower, rather Victorian in appearance, was also somewhat of an afterthought. C. R. Voth introduced the idea and created interest for the bell tower and was instrumental in its planning. At the church meeting of April 11, 1928, Dan Unruh agreed that the size and structure of the building would lend itself to having a bell tower. A committee was formed, with C. R. Voth as chairman. At the meeting of May 21, the church voted to proceed with the bell tower.[33]

The sisters of the church, at that time not able to vote, were given a special vote on Oct. 25, 1928, to decide if they wanted to continue sitting on the north side as they had. The vote was 112 North, 71 South.[34] Today, seating is mixed, but an older ladies Sunday School class meets under the north balcony and remains there for the service. Likewise, there is a class of men on the south. Thus there is a living remnant of a tradition of over a hundred years.

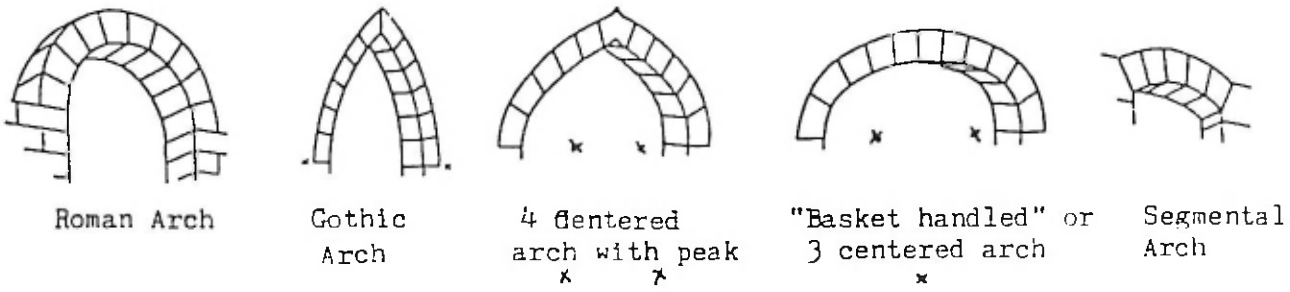
The elimination of pillars to support the balcony (as in the original building) caused great anxiety to some members. Using steel I-beams for support, Unruh successfully cleared the view for many. Those pillars were moved to the basement. However, so great was the fear that the balconies would collapse on

Dedication Day, Nov. 11, 1928, that the Building Committee, to show their confidence, sat in the pew directly under the edge of the "dangerous" balcony. The pastor noted that every seat in the balcony was filled, and that it was "firm," thus alleviating many fears.[35]

Architectural design reflects the direct and indirect faith and feelings of the designers and builders of a church and continues to shape the faith and feelings of all those who worship within its walls. A subtle but often repeated element in the building's design is what could be called the "Alexanderwohl Arch," a low, continuously curving arch that appears above the choir loft and in the colored glass windows. To the typical native church member, it seems nothing special. It is a pleasant shape, not offensive, and nothing more. After all, to many, it is a normal part of Sunday surroundings, but the meaning goes much deeper than that. Besides appearing in the choir loft, it appears in no less than 32 of the colored glass windows, in the bell tower, on each of 8 sides (the bell tower itself would make a charming gazebo), once on the west facade, for a total of 42 appearances. A slightly different low arch appears on the front of the pulpit and on each of the pulpit chairs.

The description of this rare arch is called a "basket handle," "elliptical," or "three-centered" arch.[36] In comparison, a one-centered arch is a half circle or Romanesque arch, having its roots in Roman victory arches, aqueducts, and other structures, and it carries over to early Medieval Romanesque cathedrals up to 1000 A.D. A two-centered arch, designed by placing a compass on paper at two points, results in the pointed Gothic arch, com-

1. Dedication on Nov. 11, 1928.
2. Tent erected for dedication celebration.
3. Work underway in 1928.
4. Bell hoisted up to new tower.



mon in American Protestant (and even Mennonite) church windows, and having its roots in the Gothic cathedrals in France and Germany built in 1100 to 1300 A.D. The three-centered arch is drawn by placing a compass at three positions: two are close to the sides so a somewhat tight curve is drawn connecting to the sides. The third point is lower, but in the center, creating the long, low curve. The connected result is a continuous arch, with no break or peak in it from one side to the other. Somewhat different is the Segmental Arch, which appears on the Alexanderwohl pulpit and on its chairs, with a break at the sides. "The reason for the difference is simply thought to be an error in communication with the company manufacturing the church furniture and pews."[37]

In the 1886 Alexanderwohl building, the three-centered arch did not appear at all, but there were arches, of a sort, which in subtle ways may have influenced the design of the 1928 building. The ceiling was built in a low arch because of the way the roof had to be built in order to be self-supporting, but not because of decorative design. A second arch appeared over the added entrances, but those were modeled directly after the Antioch School entrance. The third arch is the appearance of painted round arches above the west windows, done by the Swiss immigrant folk artist Emil Kym, who worked for a brief time in the Goessel area. He also did decoration on the pillars supporting the balcony. Kym later moved to a place between Moundridge and Buhler.[38]

What then, is the origin of this "Alexanderwohl Arch?" Is it Dutch Mennonite, like the 1886 building? The answer is Dutch, yes, Mennonite, no. It is not common in Dutch Mennonite church buildings, even in the Netherlands. The answer lies with the architect himself, Dan Unruh. In preparation for the Alexanderwohl project, he increased his library of construction and millwork books. A total of about twenty books are still held by the family.

In two of these books are found many illustrations using the three centered arch. Once in each of these two books, the arch is described as "*Dutch Colonial*."[39] Although without proof, it is certainly highly probable that these idea books were the source of the arch. As to its meaning or reason for choice, only Dan Unruh himself could answer. But his contemporaries attach little meaning to this, casually answering, "He probably just thought it looked nice."

Dutch Colonial refers to early Dutch settlements in New York and in New England, in the Hudson valley, in Long Island, and in New Jersey. Its features include a low gambrel roof extending to a porch with pillars, dormer windows, and half circle windows with spokes placed on the gable end. Other features such as woodwork details, fluting, and fanlights in elliptical doorheads flourished as the Georgian (English) architecture became prominent and began blending with the Dutch.[40] In Alexanderwohl, the fluted pillars on the west exterior have earliest origins in pagan Greek temples built to mythological gods, but since that time have been used in various ways from government buildings to mansions. At Alexanderwohl the pillars, together with the round spoked windows on the south, east, and north sides, and some aspects of the roofline suggest that the entire exterior of the church has some Dutch Colonial feeling to it.

Historical appearances of this arch developed following the Romanesque and Gothic periods. The three and four-centered arches seem to have evolved from the French and German High Gothic, spreading northward to Belgium and to Holland, where they changed into lower arches. These arches appear mainly in secular buildings, but rarely in churches.[41] In the Netherlands, the arch seems to be concentrated in the City of Haarlem with many examples, but there are also isolated examples sprinkled throughout the countryside. The exact Dutch roots of the Dutch Colonial style are hard to trace because the Dutch colonists originated from many places in the Netherlands.

In the central Kansas area, many immediately recognize Bethel College's use of the arch above the stage in Memorial Hall and above the door of the present library. In the Goessel community, the house at 100 S. Summit features the arch on the side of the porch. Nearby at 109 S. Summit it appears on the porch with a "keystone" design as a remnant of the days when arches were made with stone blocks. Both of these houses, incidentally, were built by Dan Unruh.

Pre-dating the 1928 Alexanderwohl building is the first Tabor Mennonite Church. The basic structure was built in 1908, with the addition of the entrance in 1915, including a segmental arch similar but not identical to Alexanderwohl's. Dan Unruh did work on this 1915 addition.[42] The old Goessel Mennonite Church interior had an arch, but it was a completely round Roman arch.

The wooden Hoffnungsau Church, which burned in 1947, had somewhat of a low arch above its front entrance, but its low arch was neither three-centered, nor even segmental, but rather appeared more like a yoke. This pattern can be found in pictures of the

The main entrance to Alexanderwohl has been changed several times. This photograph shows the main entrance on the east, but covered entries have already been added over the north and south doors.

brick gate posts of the Russian Alexanderwohl Church.

Changing times led to Alexanderwohl's addition of an education wing in 1961 to the east and south, built in a modern style of red brick, a complete departure from the past with a new, large entrance on the south. This resulted in closing the west entrance, converting the lobby to a pastor's office, and building a new library beneath the choir loft in 1966. In 1965 concrete work was done to support a sagging foundation and to install a walk-in vault for the church's valuable archives. In 1984 a conference room and an elevator were added to the northeast corner.

The charm, grace, and visual power of the Alexanderwohl Church architecture should not be underestimated. In addition to the arch feature, the sheer size of the wooden structure and the strong, repeated diagonal lines of the self-supporting roofline command attention. The bulk of the roof is perfectly balanced against the delicate bell tower lancing the sky.

In speaking to the subject of the influence of architecture on worship, the indirect, or subtle influence is perhaps the most enduring. The tradition of worshipping for years in the 1886 building with its low arched ceiling and low arched entrance roofs, the simplicity of a clearly Anabaptist congregation, the knowledge that the three-sided seating arrangement was influenced by Dutch and Russian tradition, these, together with an exacting Trustee/Building Committee and a larger membership kept Dan Unruh from straying too far from the original style. The introduction of a design theme such as the arch carried out in 42 repetitions was enough of a change. However, it was not offensive, but rather perfectly appropriate for Mennonites, and for these Mennonites in particular. Not common like the round arch, but rare; not high and lofty, like the Gothic arch, but low, illustrating the idea of humility. It is continuous, illustrating unity; it is embracing, all-encompassing, and comforting. Visual characteristics like these may subconsciously influence us in worship to shape our faith and thought. We shape our surroundings, and in return, they shape us.

ENDNOTES

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[4]Velda Duerksen, "Construction of the 'New Alexanderwohl' Church in Kansas," Alexanderwohl Newsletter, September 1982.

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[17]Albert Gaeddert. Interview. Newton, KS Dec. 30, 1985.

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[20]Loris Habegger, Interview, Newton, KS. Jan. 16, 1986.

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[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid.

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Maria Unruh Park, Interview and information including "Obituary of Daniel F. Unruh," *Newton Kansan*, Sept. 11, 1953, p. 5.

[28]Goossen, *Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church*, p. 5.

[29]Goossen interview.

[30]Adolph Bartel and Richard Schmidt, Interview, Goessel, KS June 30, 1985.

[31]Minutes of (Annual) Brotherhood Meeting, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS. Dec. 29, 1927.

[32]Bartel and Schmidt, Interview.

[33]Minutes of Church Meetings, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, April 11 and May 21, 1928.

[34]Ibid., Oct. 25, 1928.

[35]Bartel and Schmidt, Interview.

[36]James S. Pierce, *From Abacus to Zeus, a Handbook of Art History*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1968, p. 4, fig. 4.

[37]Bartel and Schmidt, Interview.

[38]Goossen interview.

[39]*Architectural Interior and Exterior Woodwork Standardized*, Clinton, Iowa, The Curtis Company, 1920, pp. 34, 35; *Builder's Woodwork Universal Design Book* no. 25, Kansas City, Mo. American Sash & Door Co., 1927, pp. 10, 12.

[40]Harold D. Eberlein, *The Architecture of Colonial America*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co. 1927, pp. 15, 26, 29, 35 passim.

[41]Daryl Unruh, Architect. Interview, Newton, KS., July 6, 1985.

[42]Arnold Unruh, Interview, Fort Worth, Tex., July 6, 1985.

[43]Minutes of Annual Meetings, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, 1961, 1965, 1966.

* "Alta" refers not to Alta Township, nor the Alta Mill, but rather to Alta, Post Office on section 3 of Alta Township. As Johann Wall lived on section 6 of Garden Township, the "Alta" P.O. was his closest address. The Alta Mill was on section 24 of Alta Township, and its post office at the time was named "Valentine" in honor of Rev. Valentine Krehbiel.

Book Reviews

Conrad Grebel, *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism: the Grebel Letters and Related Documents.* Leland Harder, ed. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1985. 815 pp. ($69.00-hardback)

By any standard, the appearance of *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism*, the fourth volume in the Classics of the Radical Reformation series, is a signal event for students of Anabaptism. This collection has so very much to recommend it: a fascinating review of the long and tortuous history of the attempt to present to the world the complete works of Conrad Grebel in English; two dozen illustrations of some of the places, people, and documents under review; new translations of all of Conrad Grebel's extant letters and other writings (the vast majority appearing in print for the first time in English); the judicious inclusion of nearly one hundred additional primary source documents (i.e., letters, court records, writings of Ulrich Zwingli, etc.), some of which have never before been transcribed or translated, and all of which help elucidate the life and times of Conrad Grebel; the 198 pages of copious and helpful notes that distinguish this collection as the critical and scholarly edition of the Grebel corpus; "Character Profiles," varying in length from a mere sentence to more than a page, of the 107 principal characters in Grebel's life; a solid bibliography; two excellent indexes (one an index to scriptural references, the other a 25-page subject index); and, finally, two very useful and important maps. The world of Anabaptist scholarship is unquestionably very deeply indebted to Leland Harder and his translators, the Institute of Mennonite Studies, and the Herald Press.

Without doubt, however, the laurels for this exceptional achievement are due Leland Harder. One senses on virtually every one of the 815 pages of this volume the careful concern of its editor. To call this work a "labor of love," as C. J. Dyck does in his "General Editor's Preface," is not to damn with faint praise; it is to speak the truth. This volume clearly has its faults, but in the commitment and dedication of its editor, it stands absolutely without blemish.

Harder deserves praise on numerous counts. Once proposed as a companion volume to Harold Bender's biography of Conrad Grebel, this work could have been unduly circumscribed by the limits of Bender's now-dated treatment of Grebel. Harder wisely moved in precisely the opposite direction, expanding his boundaries so significantly that the work is appropriately entitled "Sources of Swiss Anabaptism" rather than "The Collected Works of Conrad Grebel." In fact, this expansion of the documentation beyond the Grebel corpus is one of the real strengths of the volume. One suspects that many Mennonite readers will be tempted to skim some of the longer sections of Ulrich Zwingli's writings that Harder has included. They will do so, however, to their own detriment. It is time, once again, for the opponents of Anabaptism to receive a fair hearing, and Harder helps to provide such.

The notes which Harder and his translators have provided are almost invariably appropriate and useful. In fact, they provide a veritable cross-referencing system for the entire volume. One can begin with virtually any document and discover—through the references in the notes—all the related documents in the collection. When to this is added a remarkably comprehensive index, no one should complain about inaccessibility to the incredible wealth of information contained in this volume.

One might complain, however, that at points the volume is "over-edited." Harder usually allows the documents to speak for themselves. This is, after all, a collection of source documents, not a biography of Conrad Grebel. Extended introductions are generally reserved either for documents that are problematic in terms of chronology or authorship (e.g., the Grebel/Krusi collection of Bible passages, pp. 425-427), or for documents that bear on the persistently sticky questions of interpretation (e.g., why Grebel's poem was appended to Zwingli's *Apologeticus archeteles adpellatus*, pp. 178-180; or, the long-standing debate over a "turning point" in the Zwinglian Reformation, pp. 267-268), questions which Harder treats with objectivity and insight.

But there is another kind of editorial imposition which this reader found distracting. Harder organized this volume as a drama, complete with five "acts" and a "cast of characters." In his introductions, he frequently emphasizes the dramatic impact of a given letter, sometimes with a Scripture reference thrown in for good measure (p. 96). Surely the documents themselves contain drama enough.

In fact, this "overly-dramatic" format reveals one of the more troubling aspects of *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism*. For whom was the book intended? The format suggests a concern for lay readers rather than scholars, yet the price tag and the apparatus criticus would seem to imply the opposite. Similarly, the titles of sixteenth-century writings are sometimes given in English, sometimes in Latin or German with English translation, and sometimes only in Latin (compare, for example, the "Character Profile" entries for Glarean, Ulrich von Hutten, and Luther). The final product would have been more consistent, cleaner, and perhaps even cheaper if its intended audience had been defined more narrowly.

The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism also has a bit of the flavor of a book published by and for Mennonites. The enlightening introductory essay on the background of the publication of the volume reads like a veritable "Who Was Who in Mennonite Historiography." But there is no companion introductory essay describing the nature of early sixteenth-century European society, complete with a discussion of politics, economics, humanism, etc., which would have better prepared the reader for what lay ahead, perhaps reduced the length of the introductions and endnotes, and certainly placed the phenomenon of Swiss Anabaptism in a broader context. Indeed, the weakest parts of the volume involve the too-infrequent excursions outside the central, Anabaptist focus. When Harder is discussing Conrad Grebel or Felix Manz, the text fairly rings with authority. When he moves to Glarean or Erasmus, he is no longer on terra firma. For example, the entry for Erasmus

in the "Character Profiles" is dated at best, and in error at worst (e.g., On p. 536, Harder implies that Erasmus attended the University of Turin from 1506-1509. Though Erasmus *did* receive a doctorate from that institution, it was virtually an "honorary" one. He spent, at best, one week of his life in Turin.) As suggested earlier, Harder is to be commended for expanding the boundaries of this work as much as he has, but what provincialism remains is regrettable. Conrad Grebel, after all, was more than the first Anabaptist; he was an important and representative figure in the world of Swiss humanism. That world remains too much a mystery in *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism*.

There are, of course, other, more typical problems. For example, Jacob Grebel's trial at one point occurs in 1527 (p. 137); in every other case the proper date (1526) is used. Harder points out that the first Anabaptist martyr, Bolt Eberli, has generally been mistakenly called Eberli Bolt (p. 376), yet he frequently makes the same mistake, even in the "Character Profiles" (p. 530). Erasmus' *Adagia* is incorrectly labelled the *Adagio* on more than one occasion (pp. 536, 606). Still, given the extraordinary length and complexity of this volume, problems such as these are more remarkable for their absence than their presence.

And some of the book's most serious problems are very likely due to circumstances beyond Leland Harder's control. The first of these concerns the price. This book deserves the widest possible readership, but its price will undoubtedly limit that readership. Did the Institute of Mennonite Studies underwrite any of the publication costs? Did the Institute apply for grants to help defray the costs of publication? Did Herald Press take a loss on the publication in order to provide its largely-Mennonite market with maximum access to the volume? One hopes that all of these questions can be answered affirmatively; but at $69.00, it appears doubtful.

A second problem involves format. In this reviewer's opinion, utilizing endnotes rather than footnotes in a scholarly collection of primary source materials is unconscionable. Herald Press is in admittedly good company here (the University of Toronto Press is about to begin the same practice with its distinguished *Collected Works of Erasmus* series), but two wrongs do not a right make. In addition, the press should have numbered every fifth line in the margins of the letters. For a minimum of expense, this would have greatly enhanced and simplified the process of citing what will surely be a frequently-cited collection.

Finally, there is the question of speed of publication. Protracted births are no healthier for books than for babies, and this volume bears the unmistakable marks of a volume which languished too long at the publisher. One senses it even in the notes. At one point, Harder interprets Grebel's failure to earn a degree at Vienna as a consequence of his humanistic disdain for a largely scholastic curriculum (p. 579, note 12). This is a provocative and—in this reviewer's opinion—promising hypothesis (though it must now be checked against James Overfield's *Humanism and Scholasticism in Late Medieval Germany*, Princeton University Press, 1984). But Harder appears to have forsaken that hypothesis a few pages later (p. 582, note 12), when he reverts to the much more standard interpretation of Grebel's "lack of perseverance." Why? One suspects that Harder may have discovered the new insight, asked the press to make the change at the most obvious point, but overlooked the fact that other, less obvious footnotes still propounded the older interpretation.

Even more obvious is the fact that, even with a 1985 imprint, Harder's bibliography contains no items published after 1980. It does not include Hans-Jurgen Goertz's *Profiles of Radical Reformers* (1982), with its interesting essay on Grebel by Heinold Fast. Calvin Augustine Pater's *Karlstadt as the Father of the Baptist Movements: The Emergence of Lay Protestantism* (1984) and Arnold Snyder's *The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler* (1984) are likewise absent, even though both contain material which bears directly on some of Harder's conclusions. But blame for these "sins of omission" must rest with Herald Press, not with Leland Harder. It is a widely-known fact that Harder's manuscript lay idle at the press for months, even years. In view of the excellence of the final product, the delay is especially regrettable.

And this must be the final point in this review, that the final product *is*, in fact, excellent. Despite the problems recounted above, *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism* is an outstanding book. From the printing to the editing, this volume deserves the highest praise and the widest possible readership. Mennonites should read it to appreciate more fully the intellectual and urban roots of their denomination (though some may be more than a little shocked to hear about the youthful behavior of this "founder of the Swiss Brethren"); students of Anabaptism should be required to consult it, not only for the wealth of information it contains, but for Harder's appropriate suggestions regarding areas requiring further research (see, for example, p. 686, note 22; p. 695, note 20; p. 740, note 51); and scholars of the Radical Reformation must read it for the light it sheds on a very complex, but even more fascinating period of history. Leland Harder's dedication and devotion have paid off handsomely, for the world of Radical Reformation scholarship has been immeasurably enriched by the long-awaited fruits of his painstaking labors.

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Abram H. Neufeld, ed. and trans. *Herman and Katharina, Their Story: The Autobiography of Elder Herman A. and Katharina Neufeld in Russia and in Canada.* Winnipeg: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1984. Pp. 212.

This is an autobiography framed with a sense of history. The introductory chapter traces the family background to the sixteenth century from Friesland to Prussia to Russia and Canada. It provides a scope seldom found in a book of 212 pages.

The diary of Elder Herman Neufeld in edited form is more than a chronicle of events. In a personal experiential style it unfolds the life of a people who, while pilgrims in the world, reflect a deep consciousness of purpose.

The family chronicle, from 1892 to 1931, with detailed descriptions of joys and sorrows, successes and failures, in a Mennonite household, is fascinating. A careful reader will recognize the basic commitment to values which are

constantly examined in the context of the Scripture. Here is the story of a family which can well serve as a prototype in Mennonite family history. The close relationships in family ties and interresponsibilities are classic.

The relationship of a minister's family to the spiritual needs of the broader church community is a unique example of deep devotion to Christ and the community of believers. Father Neufeld, an Elder in the Mennonite Brethren fellowship, personifies the ideal of a shepherd in the reports on his itinerant ministry. The caring dimension of his ministry finds expression in the house visitations which appear as central to his assignment as a spiritual shepherd.

The scope of Elder Neufeld's ministry is astonishing. With no academic training he serves as a prototype of a self-educated Mennonite minister. The "Bible prechange" (Bible Conferences) to which frequent references are made appear to be a major source to provide spiritual nurture, equipping him and other ministers of his day for the sacred assignment. (The latter an essential key to the vitality of the spiritual life in Anabaptist history.) The political events which uprooted him in Russia, the immigration to Canada, and the required re-orientation in the North American scene seemingly do not affect the fervor of his spiritual ministry.

Especially touching is the expressed concern for family and friends who were left behind in Russia after the 1923 immigration. The concern for them supersedes the personal hardships arising from the limited economic resources of an immigrant family.

Abraham H. Neufeld is to be congratulated for the work in translating and editing the diary to make it accessible to the wider Mennonite community. This prototype for Christian and Mennonite family life and ministry needs to be read by those who are concerned for the continued effectiveness of the legacy entrusted to the present and future generations of Mennonites.

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MENNONITE LIFE INDEX 1981-1985

Compiled by Mark D. Friesen and Stephanie Hiebert

This is a cumulative index which includes all authors of articles and major subjects treated in *Mennonite Life* during the last five years (1981-1985). Such topics as places, leaders, cultural and religious aspects, etc., are listed.

Authors are listed by last name. Articles are given by month, year and page. The following abbreviations were used: Ma—March, Je—June, Se—September, and De—December.

The following issues contain indexes for previous years: January, 1956 (1946-1955); January, 1961 (1956-1960); January, 1966 (1961-1965); January, 1971 (1966-1970); March, 1976 (1971-1975); and June, 1981 (1976-1980). Back issues are available for $2.50 each. Unbound sets (missing about a dozen out-of-print issues) may be purchased for $50.00, and a complete bound set is $220.00.