

munity. This small book is a gem, imparting deep insight into one strand of Iowa cultural history, that of rural Conservative/Wilburite Friends. . . .

Opening a Window to the World: A History of Iowa Mennonite School, by Franklin L. Yoder. Kalona: Iowa Mennonite School, 1994. xvii, 319 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, index.

REVIEWED BY JAMES S. HAMRE, WALDORF COLLEGE

This history of Iowa Mennonite School (IMS) was written to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the high school founded in 1945 by the Mennonite community in southeast Iowa. The author, a graduate of the school and a product of that community, discusses the people and perspectives that have shaped the institution and provides useful insights into the debates and changes that have taken place in the course of its history. He contends that although the school was founded as "an institution to shelter and protect Mennonite young people," it became "a vehicle of change, opening a window to the very world that many of the founders of IMS feared" (247). The metaphors of walls, windows, and doors are used to describe the school's history. The account, based on archival materials and personal interviews, is well documented.

An institutional history, by its very nature, is of most interest to persons with some connection to the institution under consideration. While that is no doubt true in this case, the book's appeal is not limited to Iowa Mennonites or to persons connected to IMS. The author's perceptive discussion enables readers of other backgrounds to gain greater understanding of the twentieth-century tensions and adjustments within the Mennonite version of the Anabaptist tradition as that group struggled with "the relentless forces of modernization" (x). The author's background in history and religion (B.A., University of Iowa) and graduate work in American rural history (Ph.D. candidate, University of Chicago) enable him to place the developments at IMS in the context of some of the broader cultural and religious developments in America during the period.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.