

The **PALIMPSEST**



Amish Mennonite Buggies Outside Church Three Miles Northeast of Kalona

THE MENNONITES IN IOWA

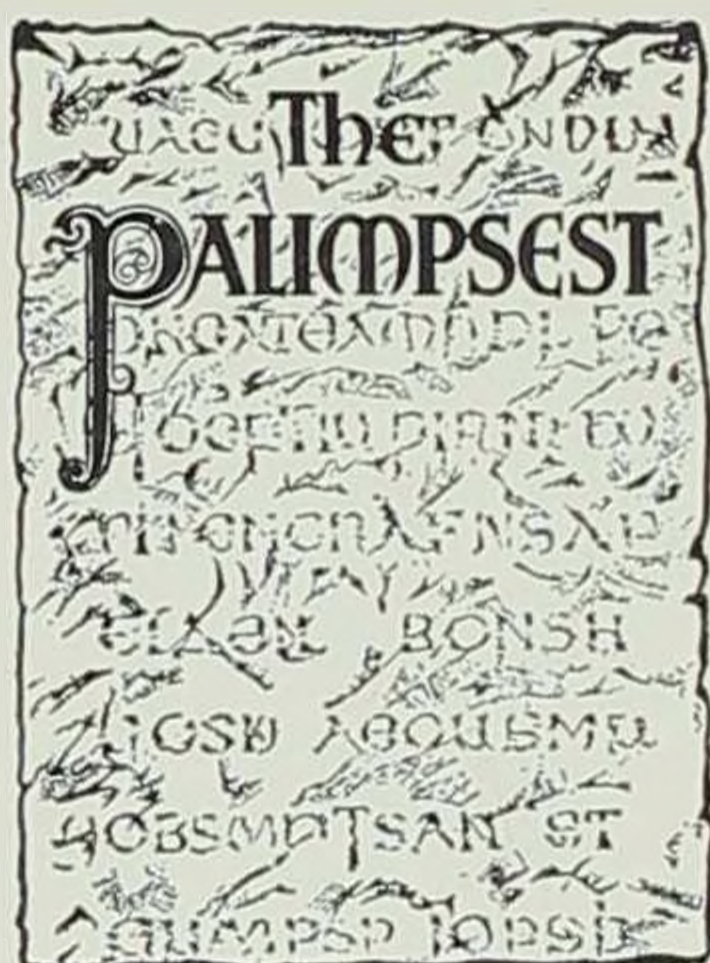
Published Monthly by

The State Historical Society of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa

MAY, 1959

SPECIAL MENNONITE EDITION — FIFTY CENTS



The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

Contents

THE MENNONITES IN IOWA

MELVIN GINGERICH

Names, Places, Statistics	161
Religious Background	165
Beliefs and Customs	171
In Lee and Davis Counties	187
The Henry County Settlement	194
The Johnson County Community	201
Mahaska and Counties West	215

Illustrations

All illustrations unless otherwise noted were procured from Dr. Melvin Gingerich.

Author

Dr. Melvin Gingerich is a native of Kalona, author of the Society's book *The Mennonites in Iowa*, and has been associated with Goshen College, Indiana, since 1947. He is managing editor of the 4-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia* and of *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER JULY 28 1920 AT THE POST OFFICE AT
IOWA CITY IOWA UNDER THE ACT OF AUGUST 24 1912

PRICE — 25 cents per copy; \$2.50 per year; free to Members
MEMBERSHIP — By application. Annual Dues \$3.00
ADDRESS — The State Historical Society, Iowa City, Iowa

THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

VOL. XL

ISSUED IN MAY 1959

No. 5

Copyright 1959 by The State Historical Society of Iowa



Names, Places, Statistics

As the tourist nears Kalona, Iowa, driving southwest of Iowa City on Highway 1, his curiosity is aroused when he is suddenly confronted with a road sign picturing a horse and buggy and warning — ENTERING AMISH COMMUNITY. SLOW VEHICLES. DRIVE CAREFULLY.

Within the next seven miles he will likely see both top and topless carriages pulled by one or two trotting horses driven by bearded men wearing a garb reminiscent of medieval Europe. It may well be that this experience will not surprise the tourist, for within the past decade the Amish have been so well publicized in books, plays, and feature articles that it would appear most Americans should have made their acquaintance.

The Amish in Iowa who number 775 baptized members, (perhaps 1200 with their children), are, however, only one branch of the six kinds of Mennonites living in Iowa today. These six are the Old Order Amish Mennonites, the Beachy Amish Mennonites, the Conservative Mennonites, the

"Old" Mennonites, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, and the General Conference Mennonites, ranked from the most conservative to the most liberal. In 1958 these had a combined baptized Iowa membership of approximately 5,000 and a total family population of perhaps 6,500 or more.

Their largest settlement is in southwestern Johnson County from which area they have spilled over into eastern Iowa County and northern Washington County. In this large community they have a church membership of 2,870, belonging to twenty-one congregations, most of which are in the Kalona-Wellman locality. The second largest settlement is in the northern Henry County-southern Washington County area, with Wayland the chief center. Here they have six churches with a membership of 1,086. Smaller communities are located in Lee, Davis, Buchanan, Calhoun, and Woodbury counties, in which the centers of the settlements, respectively, are Donnellson, Pulaske, Hazelton, Manson, and Luton.

If the tourist were to read the names on the rural mail boxes in the larger communities, he would quickly recognize the prominence of certain family names. In the Kalona-Wellman area he would find the most common names to be Brenne-man, Gingerich, Hershberger, Hochstetler, Miller, Swartzendruber, and Yoder. In the Wayland area the chief names are Boshart, Conrad, Graber, Leichty, Roth, Wenger, Widmer, and Wyse.

All of these names, as well as nearly all others in the Iowa Mennonite communities, with the exception of those in the church in Woodbury County, are Swiss in origin. They originated in the German speaking area of northern Switzerland, although only a very few bearing these names came directly from Switzerland to Iowa. Many came to Iowa by way of Alsace-Lorraine and Ohio or some other eastern state. A larger number, however, are descendants of those Swiss who fled to the German Palatinate in the 16th and 17th centuries and from there, and other parts of Germany, migrated to Pennsylvania and Ohio in the 18th and 19th centuries and finally reached Iowa in the middle and last half of the past century. A small number, nevertheless, came directly from Switzerland, perhaps stopping in Ohio a few years before settling in Iowa.

The name Gingerich, one of the most common Iowa Mennonite names, originated in the canton of Bern, Switzerland. It appears among the Swiss Anabaptists, spiritual ancestors of the American Mennonites, in the 17th century. By the 18th century, the direct ancestors of many of the Iowa Gingerichs had moved to the German state of Waldeck. From there they came to Iowa by way of Pennsylvania and Ohio in the first half of the 19th century.

Other Iowa Mennonite families, such as the Yoders, had come to America a century earlier.

Although most of the Iowa Mennonites are Swiss in origin, their ancestors lived in Germany enough generations to absorb considerable German culture. These are part of America's Pennsylvania German (popularly "Dutch") folk and have maintained Pennsylvania Dutch traditions. When they think of the "fatherland" in the "Old Country," they think of Germany. A minority, however, thinks of Alsace or Switzerland as the home country, but all groups have only a sentimental attachment to Europe, long ago having become thoroughly Americanized.

MELVIN GINGERICH

Religious Background

The 5,000 Mennonites in Iowa are members of a Protestant denomination whose approximately 400,000 adherents have churches in at least thirty-one countries around the globe. The Mennonite church had its origins in Switzerland during the Reformation days among the group known as the Swiss Brethren. Believing in the principle of separation of church and state and freedom of conscience long before the major part of Christendom accepted these principles, they upheld the doctrine of the free church, insisting that only those persons mature enough to make their own free decisions should be eligible for church membership. The church, they were convinced, should be a voluntary association of believers. "Repent, believe, and be baptized" was the Biblical order and since infants could not repent and believe, they were incapable of meeting the qualifications for membership in a voluntary church. Those who had been baptized as infants were rebaptized, hence they were called "ana-baptists" or rebaptizers when they became members of the Swiss Brethren churches.

The Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli, with whom the Swiss Brethren Anabaptists were associated,

however, decided not to follow the plan of the Brethren but rather to establish a new state church to which everyone would be forced to adhere. Infant baptism was enforced by law in order to make the state church universal. When public debates between Zwingli's men and the young university trained men who advocated freedom of conscience and a voluntary church did not change the thinking of either side in the disputes, a few days after the disputation of January 17, 1525, the "Brethren," as they called themselves, met in Zurich, organized themselves into a church, and baptized fifteen persons, under the leadership of Conrad Grebel. Thus was organized the first Mennonite congregation of the Reformation days.

The anabaptist movement spread through northern Switzerland, and into southern Germany and Moravia. A similar movement developed in the Netherlands, where Menno Simons came to be the recognized leader after 1536. In some areas the movement became militantly fanatical but Menno established the priority and leadership of the peaceful anabaptists so that eventually all of those in Holland, Germany, and Switzerland who were in this third wing movement of the Reformation were known as Mennonites, or followers of Menno.

Persecuted anabaptists fled to England where they influenced the Independent movement. Later, when the English Pilgrims lived in Holland before

coming to New England, some of them worshipped with the Dutch Mennonites. From the English independent movement came the Baptist church and Baptist historians, along with the Mennonites, claim Menno Simons as one of their religious heroes.

Christians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not yet ready for such advanced ideas as freedom of religion. Anabaptism became a crime punishable by death in both the Protestant and Roman Catholic countries of Europe. The new four-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia* presents the biographies of approximately 2,000 anabaptist martyrs who died at the hands of their Christian persecutors during those years, the victims of the most cruel punishment that the cunning of men could devise.

Through their four centuries of history the book next in popularity to the Bible in Mennonite homes has been the *Martyrs Mirror*, an 1,100 page volume which relates the stories of hundreds of these martyrs. This book has been most influential in convincing Mennonites of the irreconcilable conflict between the Kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of a worldly society. A shallow theology that argues away human depravity has never seemed realistic to them because of their many experiences with persecuting states, including Soviet Russia. Another popular book among them has been the 800 page *Ausbund*, the nucleus of which

consists of fifty-one hymns written by imprisoned Anabaptists between 1535 and 1540, many of whom died as martyrs. This hymnal is still used in Amish churches in America, although in some Iowa churches an abridged edition is being used.

In spite of these fierce persecutions, anabaptism was not crushed. These men who found a new, vital faith in their first-hand studies of the Bible became the first modern missionaries. Believing that all Christians, ordained and laymen, were commissioned to preach the Gospel, they went about proclaiming the Good News. In time most of the leaders were executed and the remaining members fled to the mountains and other isolated places for safety. Here many won toleration on the lands of the nobility because their diligence and superior farming methods made them desirable tenants. This uneasy kind of freedom tended to dull their missionary zeal, making them a strictly rural people, except in Holland where religious freedom appeared early and where they became a city and an industrial folk.

Oppressive laws remained in the legal codes and the toleration the Mennonites won was a precarious one. When the opportunity came to migrate to Pennsylvania where religious liberty was assured, many Mennonites responded to the invitation. The first permanent Mennonite settlement in America was established in 1683 at Germantown, now a part of Philadelphia. From 1710

down to the Inter-colonial Wars, hundreds of Mennonite families escaped the persecution and economic distress of the Palatinate area and found a refuge in America.

The English-French wars, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution halted immigration for decades, but as a result of the havoc of these conflicts and of the growing militarism in Europe, a new wave of Mennonite immigration to America began after the Napoleonic Wars. In the meantime, Mennonites in America participated in the westward movement, coming to western Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, and Ontario before the end of the eighteenth century. By 1833 they had reached Illinois and by 1839 they had settled in Iowa.

Near the end of the seventeenth century the first major division among the Mennonites had occurred. Jacob Ammann, a native of the canton of Bern, Switzerland, was a Mennonite elder who tried to introduce a strict form of shunning excommunicated members of the church, maintaining that there was to be no social intercourse with such persons. Those who did not agree with him felt that the Apostle Paul's command (I Corinthians 5) meant only that the expelled were to be excluded from communion services. Ammann also insisted upon uniformity in dress and other conservative practices. Contrary to the usual explanation, the issue of hooks and eyes versus buttons

on men's coats was not a part of the controversy although later this became a matter of disagreement.

When he could not persuade most of his fellow Mennonite ministers to agree with his position, Ammann excommunicated them, the result of which was an unfortunate schism that has persisted to this day. The followers of Ammann came to be known as Amish, who in turn during the nineteenth century tended to divide into two groups — the Old Order Amish, and the Amish Mennonites. The latter group has been almost completely absorbed back into the main stream of Mennonite church life but this is not true of the Old Order whose numbers have been increasing steadily in the twentieth century, due largely to their high birth and declining death rates.

MELVIN GINGERICH

Beliefs and Customs

The Anabaptists were products of the Reformation. They owed much to Martin Luther and the reformers. Anabaptist interpretation of theological statements such as the Apostles' Creed were similar to those of the other Protestant groups. But the Anabaptists were the "radical" reformers. They wished to carry the Reformation ideas to their logical conclusion. It is in their interpretation of the nature of the church that one finds the key to their faith. It is here, too, that one finds the views that best characterize their spiritual descendants — the Mennonites.

The Mennonite concept of the church involves a number of characteristics. The first of these is the conviction that the church must be a free, voluntary association of those who confessed their faith in Christ and who were willing to dedicate their lives to the kind of ideal they saw in the New Testament. They would be admitted to membership only upon their confession of faith and their acceptance of baptism which an infant was incapable of doing.

Secondly, they believed that authority rested not in the tradition of the church nor in pronouncements of Christian princes but in the Bible as inter-

preted through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the light of the New Testament. The Anabaptists on trial in the courts often amazed their accusers by their ability to quote readily long sections from the Bible explaining the basis of their convictions. Mennonite sermons to this day rely heavily upon many Bible quotations and the average Mennonite has a much broader knowledge of Bible stories and teaching than does the average American Protestant. The Mennonite church is in a high degree, then, a Bible-centered denomination, in contrast to a ritualistic and sacrament-centered church.

The Mennonites also stressed the brotherhood church, in which titles are rarely used and all members are of equal rank. The fellowship of the saints is thus stressed more than sacraments and ritual. To them the church is a "fellowship" of believers, who are concerned with the joys and sorrows of each individual "brother" and "sister." This has resulted in the formation of various mutual aid and of other welfare organizations, such as homes for the aged, through which they demonstrate their concern for each other's welfare.

The Mennonite concept of a "gathered" church of the kind described above demands that its members live "nonconformed" to the standards of the secular society of their day. Often, as is true of the Amish, this concept has required that they wear a simple garb in contrast to expensive cloth-

ing, designed to cater to the pride of the wearer. Simplicity of life is stressed both because of the principle of Christian stewardship of one's possessions and because the Christian life should be free of pride and ostentation.

But the church must also be a serving church, interested in the welfare of even its enemies. This has led them into the organization of relief projects and disaster service units. Canning meat for relief is a yearly routine in Mennonite farming communities, as is the work of the monthly sewing circles which prepare large quantities of clothing to be shipped to many countries in need.

And the church is to be a witnessing church. The Anabaptist leaders held that the Great Commission to preach the Gospel to all men was to be taken seriously by all Christians, ordained and laymen. The Anabaptists as a result became the first missionaries of the Protestant era and in a few decades had baptized thousands in central Europe. Severe persecution dulled this movement and for centuries Mennonites were not aggressive in missionary enterprises, but within the past century they have established missions on every continent. Only a few Protestant groups have a higher per cent of their members in foreign missionary and service projects than do the Mennonites.

One of the most basic Mennonite concepts is that the church dare not bless nor participate in war. "Overcome evil with good" and "Love your

enemies" are only a few of the Bible quotations that the Mennonite believes must be taken literally and seriously by the Christian. For more than four centuries Mennonites have suffered persecution because they dared resist the demands of states that required unquestioning loyalty of their citizens. The Mennonites understand that their first loyalty must be to God and their consciences even when this means for them punishment and sometimes death, but they accept this as the fate of the Christian in an un-Christian world, believing that the New Testament description of the Kingdom is that of the suffering church.

Finally, the concept of the church as held by the Mennonites calls for a triumphant church in the consummation of the Kingdom beyond history.

The above were the ideals upon which Mennonites have attempted to pattern their churches. Needless to say their practices in Iowa, as in other states where they have settled, do not always coincide with their ideals. There have been glaring failures as well as praise-worthy examples of individual and group idealism. Generally respected by their neighbors as a law-abiding and a God-fearing people, who were good neighbors and industrious farmers, periods of war have brought upon them various types of ill will and even persecution. During World War I their young men were drafted into the army but most of them refused to drill and to take training in the use of arms.

These conscientious objectors embarrassed the government to the degree that it was willing to try a different plan during World War II. Beginning in 1941, Mennonite and other young men were assigned to civilian public service camps where they performed "work of national importance." Of the nearly 12,000 who thus served in the period 1941-47, 4,665 or 38 per cent were Mennonites.

Two Mennonite camps were established in Iowa. Camp Number 18, near Denison in the western part of the state, engaged in soil conservation from August, 1941, to September, 1946. Another Mennonite unit was opened at the State Hospital at Mount Pleasant in 1943 and was closed in September, 1946. Thirty-three men did a variety of tasks in the hospital at a time when there was a critical labor shortage in this institution. Under the present Selective Service Law, Amish and Mennonite men are drafted into a variety of jobs in hospitals, public service institutions, and other positions in America and abroad where they perform work "contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest."

Because they believe that the chief characteristic of a state is its power to enforce its decisions by coercive acts, including even the use of the death penalty and the waging of war, Mennonites have been reluctant to enter politics where they would be required to uphold coercive methods which would be in violation of their love and non-resist-

ance ethic. They regard themselves not as being politically irresponsible but as part of the Christian minority which acts as the conscience of society, constantly reminding rulers of the high standard of ethics to which all rulers ultimately will be held responsible by the Source of all power. Nevertheless, several Iowa Mennonites have served in Congress. Christian William Ramseyer of Bloomfield, Iowa, a member of the Pulaski Mennonite Church, served as the Sixth Iowa District congressman from 1915 to 1933. Edward Clayton Eicher, Washington, Iowa, was the First Iowa District Congressman from 1933 to 1938, and at the time of his death was the Chief Justice of the District Court for the District of Columbia. He was a son of Bishop Benjamin Eicher who founded the Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church.

The Old Order Amish, Conservative Amish Mennonites, and "Old" Mennonites retain certain church practices no longer observed by the General Conference Mennonites in Iowa. One of these is the wearing by the women of the "prayer veil" in church worship. This practice is based upon I Corinthians 11:5. The small cap or "prayer veil" worn by Mennonite women is made of either fine silk net or lawn material but the Amish use organdy. This cap is similar in appearance to that seen in pictures of Pilgrim mothers or like the one worn by "Mother" in James MacNeill Whistler's painting.

The above three groups also observe the rite of feet-washing at the time of communion services. Following the distribution of the emblems the men go to one side of the church and the women to the other where they wash each other's feet in obedience to John 13:14, which states, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." Following the ceremony the two parties who have washed each other's feet then greet each other with the kiss of brotherhood in obedience to Romans 16:16, which commands, "Salute one another with an holy kiss." Communion services are generally held twice each year.

The Old Order Amish use as a means of church discipline the practice of shunning. Those guilty of unconfessed sins are not only denied the privilege of participating in the communion service but the members withhold social fraternization from them so that they may understand that the bonds of brotherhood have been severed and so that the transgressor may be made aware of his misdemeanor. When such a person is in need of help, they however come to his aid and they are encouraged to show only a spirit of love towards the transgressor. To the surprise of many, this method does have a powerful spiritual and psychological effect upon the one shunned and usually he is soon restored to church fellowship.

This device is, however, open to abuses and

when arbitrarily applied has brought about strife and church division. Other Mennonite groups practice church discipline by withholding the privilege of communion from the erring ones, or by expulsion when the guilty one refuses to mend his ways. Some Mennonite churches have abandoned altogether the use of church discipline, no longer adhering to the principle that the church must consist only of those who accept the concept of a church being composed only of those in fellowship with the brethren.

The Old Order, as was stated earlier, meet in each other's homes for worship. In Iowa each district has services every two weeks, with Sunday school on the intervening Sundays. The services, held in German, consist of singing, prayer, Bible reading, and a sermon, like any Protestant service, except that there are really two sermons consisting of extended remarks by the minister who conducts the "opening," and a lengthy sermon by the preacher of the morning, who uses no notes but speaks impromptu not on a particular verse but generally on an entire chapter. This is followed by testimonies by other ministers present as well as by laymen who are called upon to give their approval of the message of the day. Following dismissal, benches are cleared away, tables are set for the noon lunch, and the members continue their fellowship for several hours. The Amish do not have revival meetings nor evening services, and

follow the patterns of worship set many years ago.

Conservative Mennonite groups still have men's and women's pews on opposite sides of the church, have unaccompanied singing, and follow informal patterns of worship rather than liturgical procedures. There is much socializing before and after church services, as well as in connection with women's sewing circles, and neighborhood mutual aid frolics. The concept of belonging together and of sharing with each other as brethren is strengthened in these and in other ways.

Weddings, especially among the Amish, are major social events. Tuesdays and Thursdays in autumn are the usual wedding days for the Amish, who make of these occasions joyous holidays, where good fellowship and an abundance of food prevail. In contrast to the practice of the Amish, for many decades a Mennonite wedding was a simple affair in the home of the bride or the minister, with only a very few, if any, invited guests being present. Within the past thirty years, however, church weddings with scores of guests and impressive receptions have come to be the rule in Mennonite circles. Mennonite church buildings have tended to be simple and utilitarian, devoid of symbolism and ornate decoration. Cemeteries are often on plots adjoining the church. Here too are marks of simplicity, with tombstones being simple and modest in size. Church grounds and cemeteries are always well kept, in keeping with Men-

nonite conception of orderliness and cleanliness.

Attention has already been called to Mennonite mutual aid and relief services. A more recent aspect of Mennonite outreach can be found in the establishing of city and rural missions by local churches. Several years ago the goal of one mission outpost for every Mennonite congregation was adopted with the result that at least four new churches or mission outposts have been established by Iowa Mennonites within the decade of the 1950's. This outreach into non-Mennonite communities is bringing into the church new names not associated with a Swiss or Pennsylvania Dutch background. While only a few Iowa Mennonites have entered foreign missionary service, several score of their young people have served overseas in voluntary service projects under the Mennonite Central Committee or have helped take cattle and horses to Europe and Asia on United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration ships. The average Iowa Mennonite is not provincial in his outlook.

Although Iowa Mennonites are primarily farmers, many Mennonites in recent years have been entering business in such towns as Wayland, Wellman, and Kalona. With several centuries of farming experience behind them, Mennonites had gradually come to feel that the life of simplicity and freedom which they cherished could best be lived in a rural community. There too, they felt,

the principle of brotherhood could best be nurtured. With ideals of frugality, cleanliness, and industry, they have succeeded in obtaining good farms and in giving to their neighborhoods the air of prosperity.

The Old Order Amish, who do not own tractors, automobiles, electric lights, telephones, modern heating and plumbing systems, and radios, seem to have an economic advantage over their Mennonite neighbors who buy these conveniences and as a result are expanding their frontiers into non-Amish communities, displacing farmer's sons who go into business in the nearby towns.

Another sign of the times is the gradual disappearance of the "Grandpa houses," once so common in the community. Earlier, when the son was old enough to operate the family farm, the father built a small house in the same yard where his son lived or built an attached apartment for his use but still continued to help on the farm on a semi-retired basis. Now "grandpa" moves to town but often drives out to the farm to lend a helping hand. It remains to be seen if the Mennonites can maintain their ideals of simplicity and community in an urban or even a small town environment.

Forces other than a rural environment have helped maintain their spirit of community. Constantly subjected to the teaching that the People of God are a minority in any world culture, and that they must be distinct and peculiar because

they have been called out of a secular society to be the salt of the earth, and remembering the years of persecution endured by their forefathers, the Mennonites do not easily make their peace with the world.

Their primary social relationships are within the group and much emphasis is placed upon social contacts with their fellow believers. Nor are these contacts made only within the local community. Amish and Mennonite young people do considerable traveling to Amish and Mennonite communities in other states or to distant settlements within their states. The writer's own grandfather, living in Johnson County, Iowa, met his bride-to-be Veronica Goldsmith of Henry County, Iowa, in Butler County, Ohio. They were married in 1863.

For more than sixty years the Gingerich brothers of Johnson County visited regularly their Goldsmith, Gerig, and Wenger first cousins in Henry County. In the horse and buggy days this trip required one day each direction. Often trips to distant states were reported in detail in Mennonite national church papers as well as in the local papers, thus keeping the community informed of conditions in other Amish and Mennonite communities.

One such traveler and reporter was S. D. Guengerich of Wellman, Iowa, who on his trips east and west sent home remarkable travel accounts. Some of these appeared in the *Wellman Advance*,

while others appeared in the Sugar Creek, Ohio, *Budget*, a weekly paper presenting a nation-wide coverage of Amish news. Mennonite travel news was carried by the *Herald of Truth*, established in Chicago in 1864, and three years later moved to Elkhart, Indiana.

Their Pennsylvania German culture gave their communities special characteristics which enabled them to maintain their distinct physical identities. One of the most easily observed characteristics were their substantial, well-kept barns, generally Swiss-bank barns, the kind built on the slope of a hill where there was good drainage and where a wide ramp on the upper side led into a spacious second floor room. Here loads of hay could be unloaded or stored, protected from the rain or hot sun and in other seasons the farm machinery could be stored in this space. This large, well-ventilated room lent itself to other purposes. In this spacious room during the summer months the church could meet or the young people could hold their Sunday evening "singings."

Another Pennsylvania Dutch characteristic is the dinner bell which appears on poles, or on the top of summer houses, and are rung to call the men in from the fields shortly before the noon hour. These evidently are passing from the scene as antique dealers in recent years made a business of collecting them.

Even more characteristic than these physical as-

pects of their culture was their language which is still used as the house or mother language by the Amish and to a lesser degree by the Mennonites whose ancestors came from the Palatinate. Pennsylvania German is really the regional dialect of the citizens of the German Palatinate. While visiting in the Palatinate a few years ago, the writer was surprised to discover how very similar was the local dialect to the language he had learned to speak as a boy. There have been some modifications because of the introduction of English words, but basically the two dialects remain the same.

Although Amish sermons are supposedly preached in High German, often they are Pennsylvania Dutch with a considerable admixture of English phrases. The Amish child in Iowa is trilingual, learning Pennsylvania German, or Dutch, as it is popularly called, from his parents and playmates, learning High German in Sunday school and church, and learning English in the public schools. Many never learn to speak English correctly because of their tendency to translate German phrases and word-order into English quite literally and often the outsider can recognize the one with the Pennsylvania Dutch background because he has been betrayed by his speech. Comparatively few Mennonite children in Iowa are now being taught the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect but among the Amish this is universal.

Although not all Mennonites (in contrast to the

Amish) have worn distinctive garbs, simplicity of dress was stressed by all groups a century ago. Their costume was similar to that worn by European peasants in the early modern period. The Amish simply "froze" the costumes of the seventeenth century and have perpetuated them to this day. This includes the full skirts, the apron, and the cape worn by the women, the latter a large triangular cloth worn over the waist and coming to a point at the waist in front and in the middle of the back. The lapelless coat fastened with hooks and eyes worn by the men, the broad-brimmed hat, and the broad-fall trousers characterize the Amish men's costume.

All of these sociological devices to help them maintain their separation from the outer society became matters of church discipline and were enforced rigidly to the degree that often the form was stressed at the expense of the spirit. At the present time the Mennonites who have surrendered most of these outward forms of simplicity and separation are trying valiantly to retain a life of separation from the standards of a secular society. Whether they will be able to retain true humility of spirit and simplicity of life in a materialistic culture remains to be seen.

How long will Iowa have its Amish? This question is often asked. The answer perhaps can be found in the field of education. As long as the Amish can give their children an education in a

rural setting under conditions which they can control, there will continue to be strong Amish settlements in Iowa and elsewhere. But if they must send their children away to consolidated schools where values are stressed which they do not cherish, an increasingly large per cent will accept these secular standards and drift away from their childhood culture. The Mennonites who have accepted new cultural forces, such as the English instead of the German language, will likely continue to make adjustments to their environment which may or may not endanger their spiritual values.

MELVIN GINGERICH

In Lee and Henry Counties

John Carl Krehbiel's memoirs indicate that he arrived at Fort Madison, Iowa, on November 1, 1839, the first Mennonite to settle in Iowa. Descendant of a Swiss Mennonite family, his ancestors had bought land in the Palatinate in 1709. John Krehbiel came to America with his brother in 1833, but he returned to Germany two years later where he was married in 1837.

From 1837 to 1839 John engaged in the cooper-age business with his brother in Butler County, Ohio, before moving on to the Territory of Iowa by wagon with his young bride and their one year old son. Their second child, Johanna Maria, was the first Mennonite child to be born in Iowa, on November 26, 1839. She became the wife of Daniel Hertzler and the mother of Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler of Halstead, Kansas, the author of the popular *Horse and Buggy Doctor*. Krehbiel bought the northeast quarter of section 19 in West Point Township, Lee County, where he lived until he moved to West Point in 1857.

By 1845 enough Mennonites had bought land between West Point and Franklin to make possible the organization of a church but the murder of their preacher John Miller in May postponed

this action. In 1849 families by the name of Berghold, Gram, Roth, Krehbiel, Deutsch, Herstein, Blum and Goebel organized a church and selected pioneer John C. Krehbiel as their preacher. After meeting in homes for a few years, the congregation in 1850 erected a log church one and one-half miles east of Franklin, the first Mennonite church in Iowa. Because it was located in the woods, it was known as the "Busch Church." In 1863 a new church was dedicated in West Point. When members began to move to Kansas and other places, the membership declined and eventually the church became extinct. Krehbiel was the last minister, preaching up to his death in 1886.

In the meantime Mennonite families from the Palatinate, Germany, settled in Franklin Township, Lee County, about eight miles from West Point, in the spring of 1851. Among the family names of those who organized a church that fall were Ellenberger, Krehbiel, Galle, Eyman, and Weber. Other Mennonite families joining them in 1852 included those by the name of Rings, Kaegy, Schowalter, Loewenberg, Hirschler, Schnebele, Ruth, and Krehbiel.

The 1852 migration came from various points in Germany by way of New York, Albany, Buffalo, Toledo, Chicago, Peoria, and Burlington. Their first church, two miles northwest of Donnellson, was dedicated in 1855, a second church was built in 1880, and the present Zion Mennonite Church,

in Donnellson was dedicated in 1909. For more than forty years (1861-1905), Christian Schowalter served as the pastor of the church and largely determined the character of the congregation. In 1958 Zion Church had 209 members, with Harold Thiessen as its pastor.

In 1868 the Mennonites living in the vicinity of Franklin decided that the Zion and West Point churches were too far away for convenience and therefore built the Franklin Mennonite church in the town of Franklin. Two decades later the members began to move away and the church became extinct in the 1890's.

Between 1861 and 1875, over a dozen Mennonite families from Lee County, including Steiners, Desters, Rupps, Galles, Webers, Krehbiels, and Schmitts, settled in northwestern Washington County near the present town of Wellman, where they organized the Evangelical Mennonite Salem Church. Beginning about 1865, the largest membership was attained in 1876 when thirty-one participated in the communion service. At about that time the Kansas wheat lands attracted the members of the community. The last business meeting of the church was held in November, 1880, and after that the congregation became extinct.

The two Mennonite churches of Lee County, Zion and West Point, had held a joint conference in 1853 in which they agreed to work together in harmony. In a second conference held in 1859,

they agreed to invite other Mennonite churches to join their union in a conference to be held the following year. The purpose of the union was to promote united missionary endeavors. Daniel Krehbiel, who was born in the Palatinate and moved to Iowa in 1856, was the chief leader in this union movement. From it came the General Conference Mennonite Church, the second largest Mennonite group in America, having grown to 51,378 members by 1958. Part of the centennial program of this denomination to be held in 1959-1960, is a conference-wide study session in the Donnellson Zion church. Here the historic beginnings of their general conference are to be reviewed.

At the same time that the Mennonites were settling in Lee County, members of the Amish brotherhood located in the West Point-Franklin-Charleston area. When they first arrived here is not definitely known but it may have been as early as 1840.

Among the early Amish settlers were families by the name of Rogie, Kinsinger, Werey, Hauder, Raber, Schwarzentruher, Reese, Augspurger, Fordemwalt, and Goldsmith. Christian Raber, an Amish preacher, some of whose descendants were living in Lee County a century later, was among the very earliest. The most influential member of the Amish colony was Elder Joseph Goldsmith who brought his family to Iowa from Butler County, Ohio, in 1846, and immediately became the

leader of their church, a position he held until his migration to Henry County in 1855. The largest membership was fifty, the figure reached by 1855, at which time the family names of Haundrick, Wagler, Schantz, Lehman, Schrock, Musser, Schlatter, Klopfenstein, Miller, King, Bechler, and Roth were represented in the community. Questionable land titles held by those Amish living in the Lee County Half-breed Tract helped bring about the dissolution of the settlement. Their church became extinct before 1870.

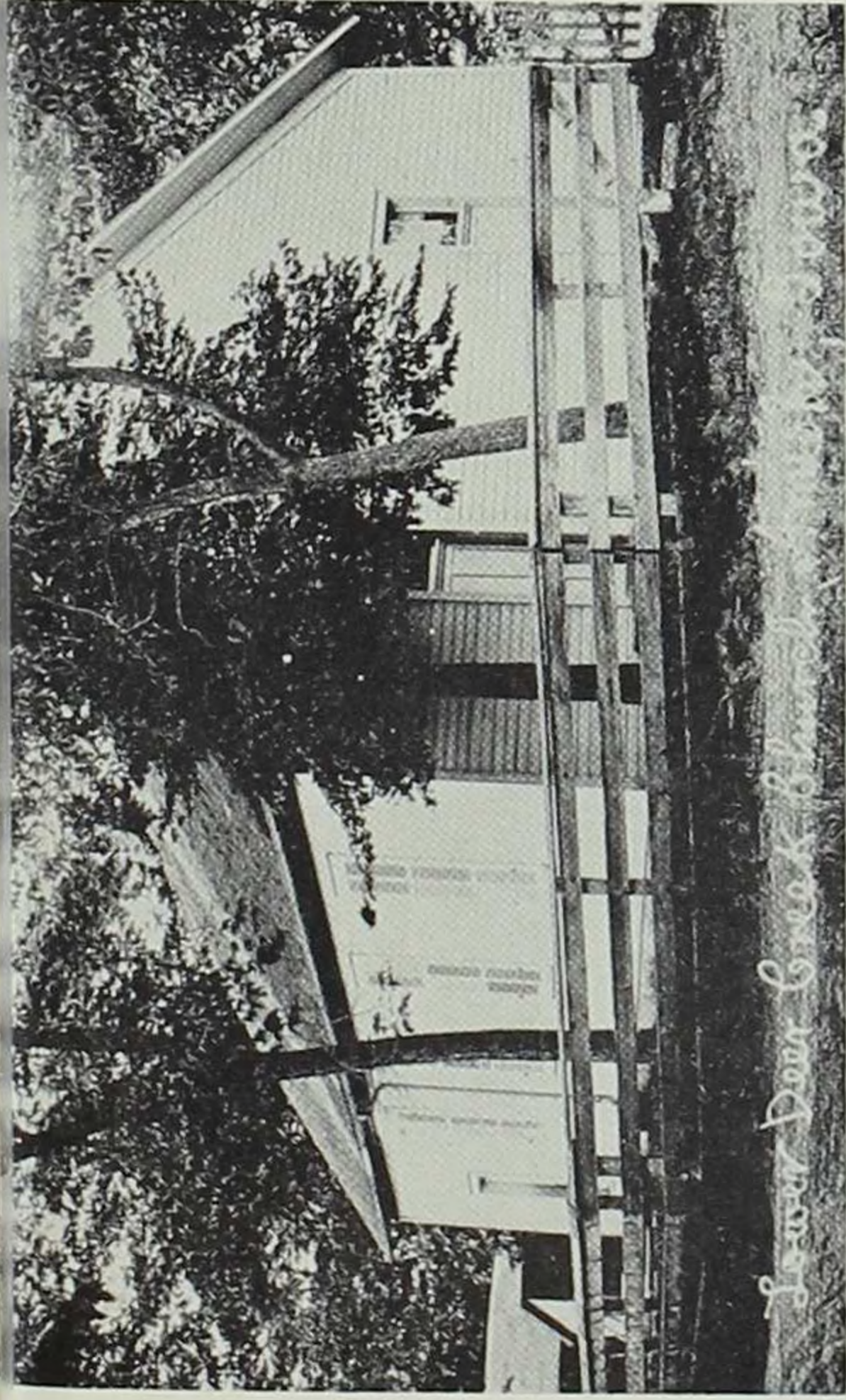
Many of the Amish who left Lee County settled two counties west, in Davis County, where government land was to be had for \$2.50 an acre. The first of the Amish to settle there was the Peter Miller family of Ontario, Canada. Miller purchased land in Bloomfield Township in 1854. Jephthah J. Plank of Lee County, considered to be the founder of Pulaski, purchased land in the vicinity of the present town of Pulaski a month later. By 1860 nearly fifty Amish families had purchased land in Davis County. Among them were these families: Augspurgers, Tschantz, Dieffenbachs, Fordemwalts, Kings, Waglers, Kinsingers, Schlatters, Conrads, Baughmans, Kropfs, Bloughs, and Swartzendruvers. Some had come from Davis County but others had come from Indiana and Wayne County, Ohio.

Although religious meetings were held occasionally, no church was organized in the early

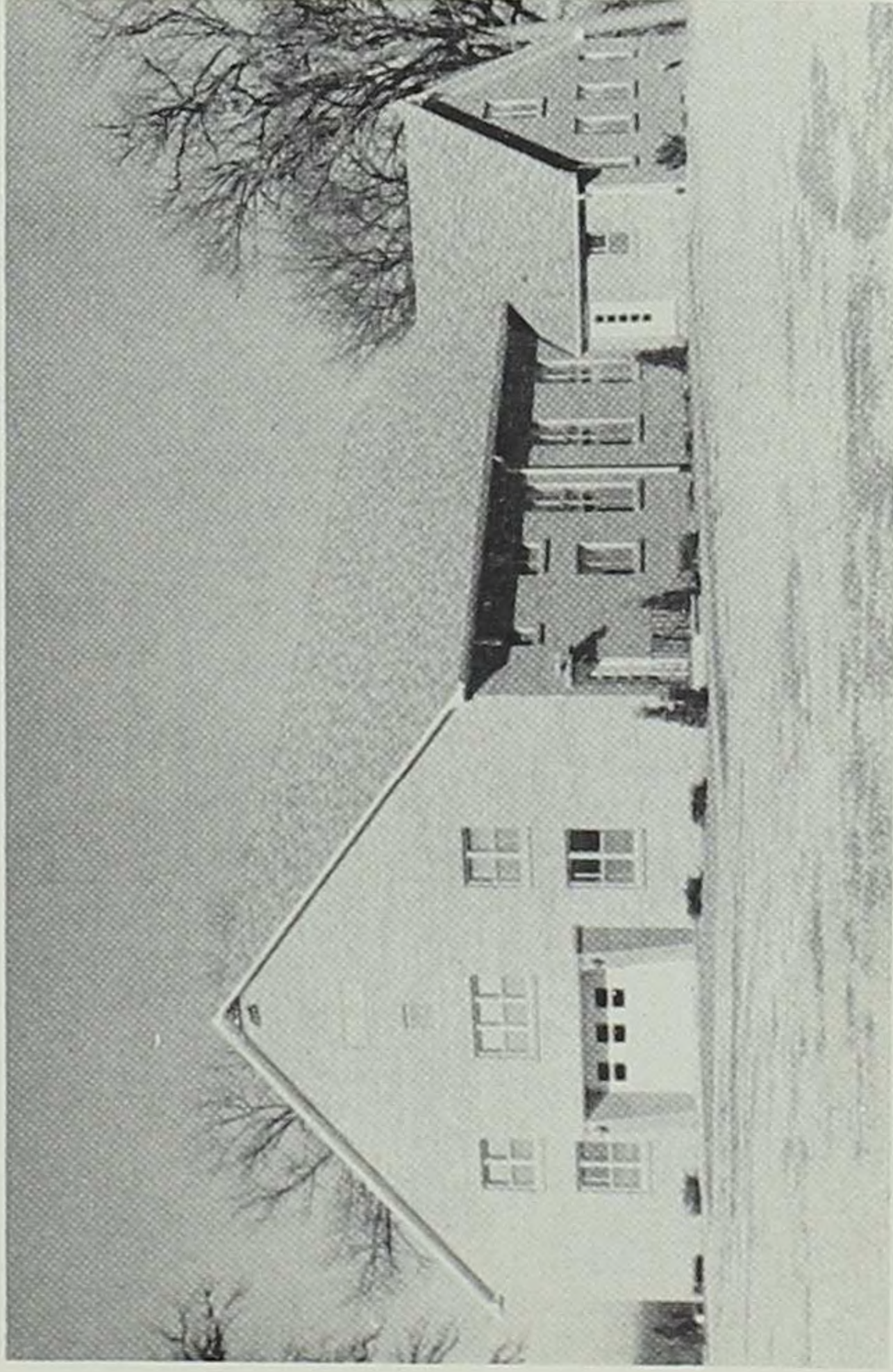
years of the settlement because of the absence of a preacher. Visiting ministers established an organization in 1861 at which time two preachers were chosen, Christ Kropf and Christ Sharp, who however withdrew with about half their members to organize an Apostolic Christian Church in 1866.

At about that time Christian Brenneman was called to preach, which he did until 1869, when Philip Roulet of Butler County, Ohio, became their preacher, a position which he held for twenty-eight years, moulding the character of the church in an unusual manner. Although the church was Amish, it was more progressive than most churches of that brotherhood and under the leadership of Roulet followed an independent course but eventually joined the General Conference Mennonite Church, perhaps in 1892. Earlier many of the Amish practices had been dropped and strong Sunday school and missionary programs were emphasized. During the ministry of Roulet the word "Amish" had been dropped from the name of this Amish Mennonite Church.

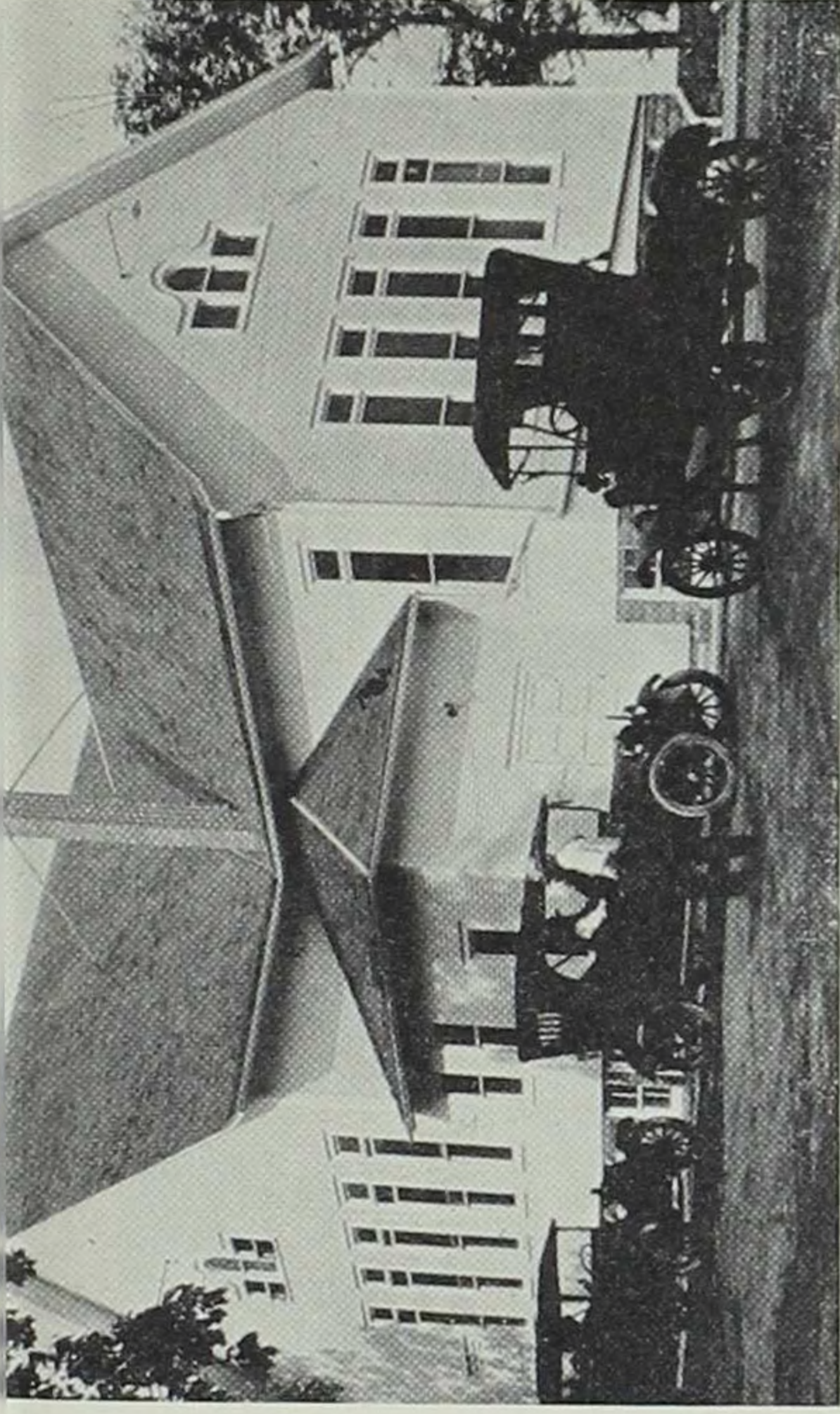
A Civil War experience long remembered by the members of the community was Jim Jackson's raid in October, 1864, when a group of Missourians wearing Federal uniforms rode through Davis County, raiding homes and capturing men who had served in the Union army. Stopping at a number of Amish homes, as well as others in the county, they helped themselves to money and



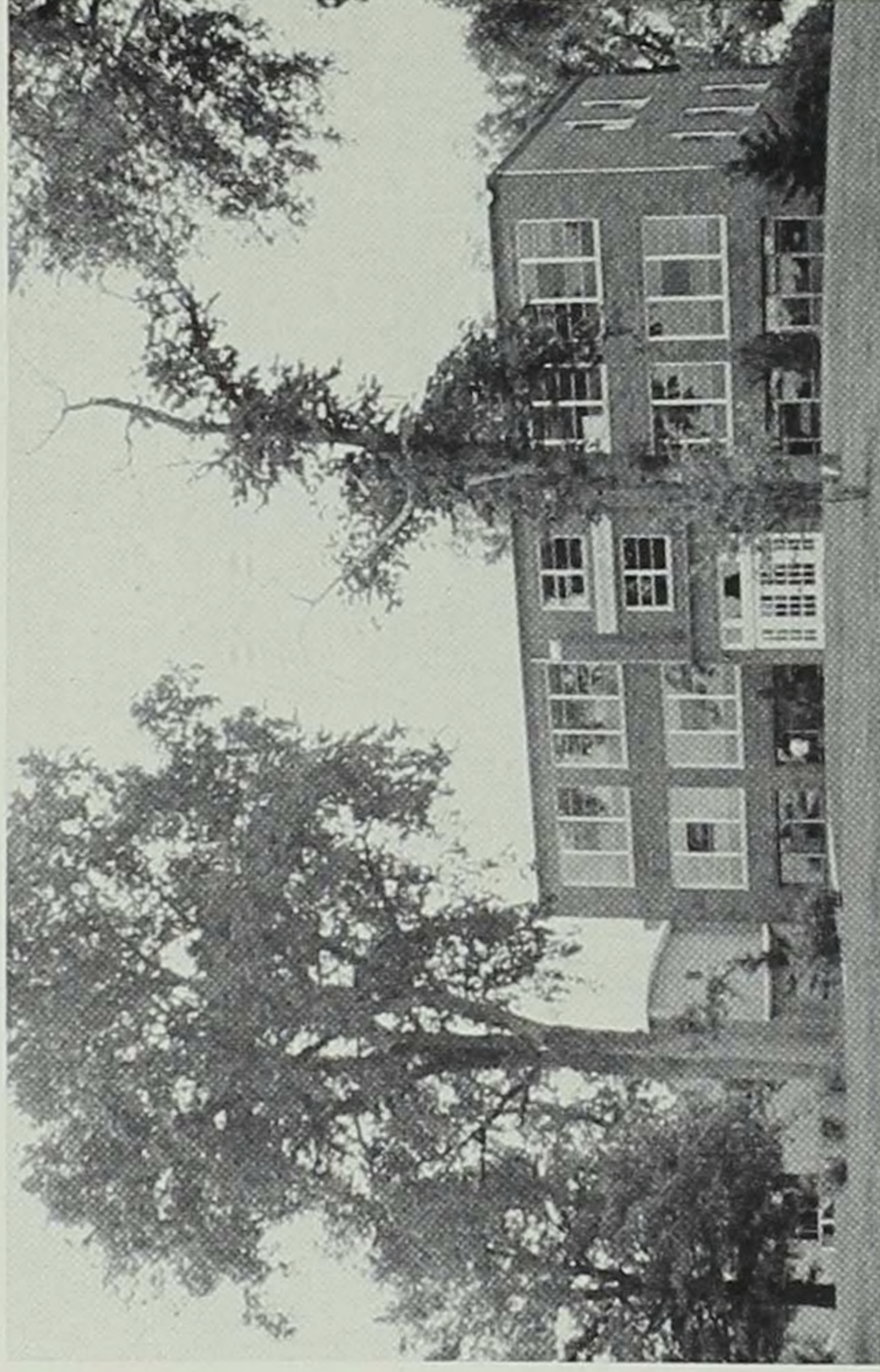
First Lower Deer Creek Amish Mennonite Church. Built in 1890.



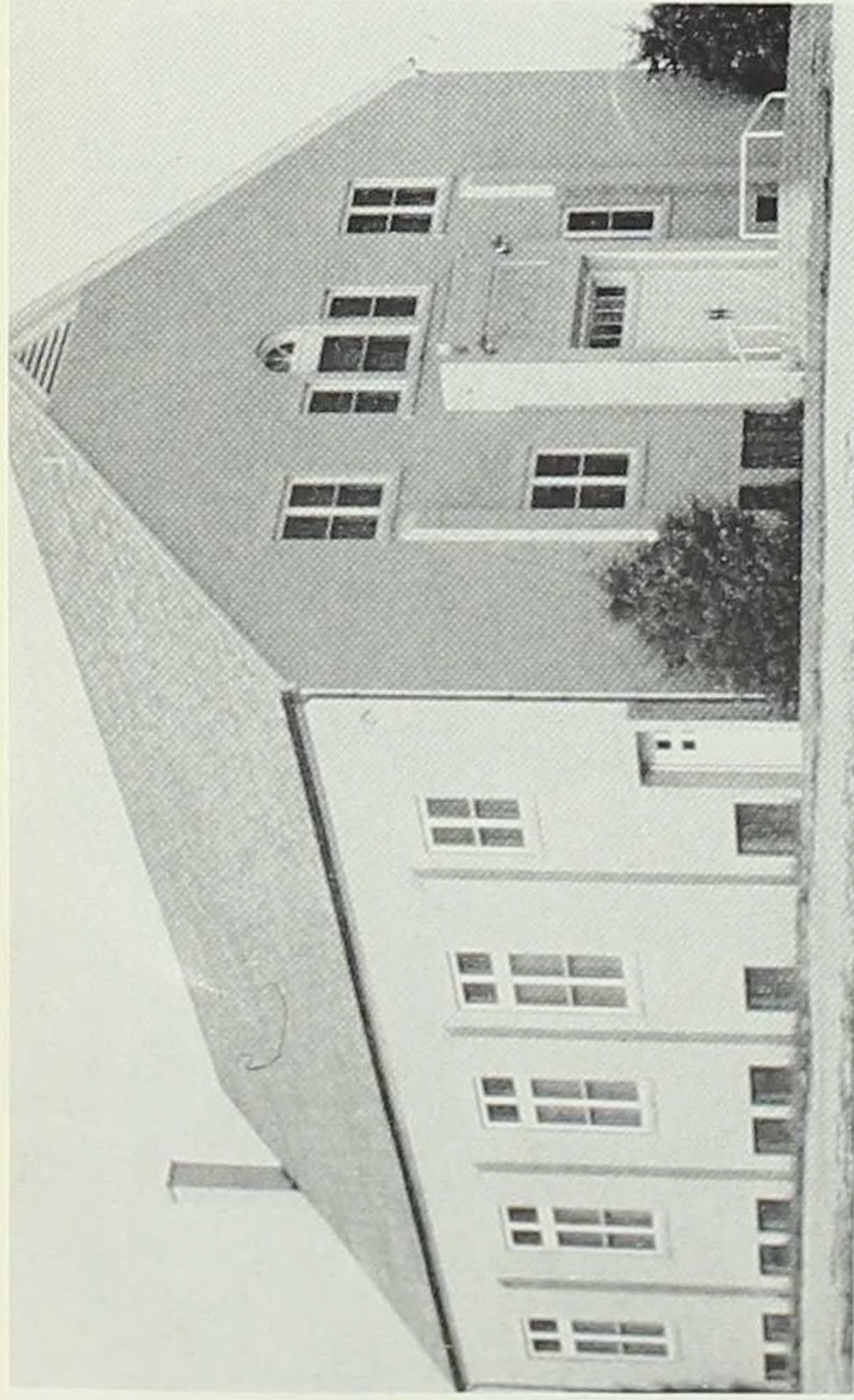
The third Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church. Built in 1956.



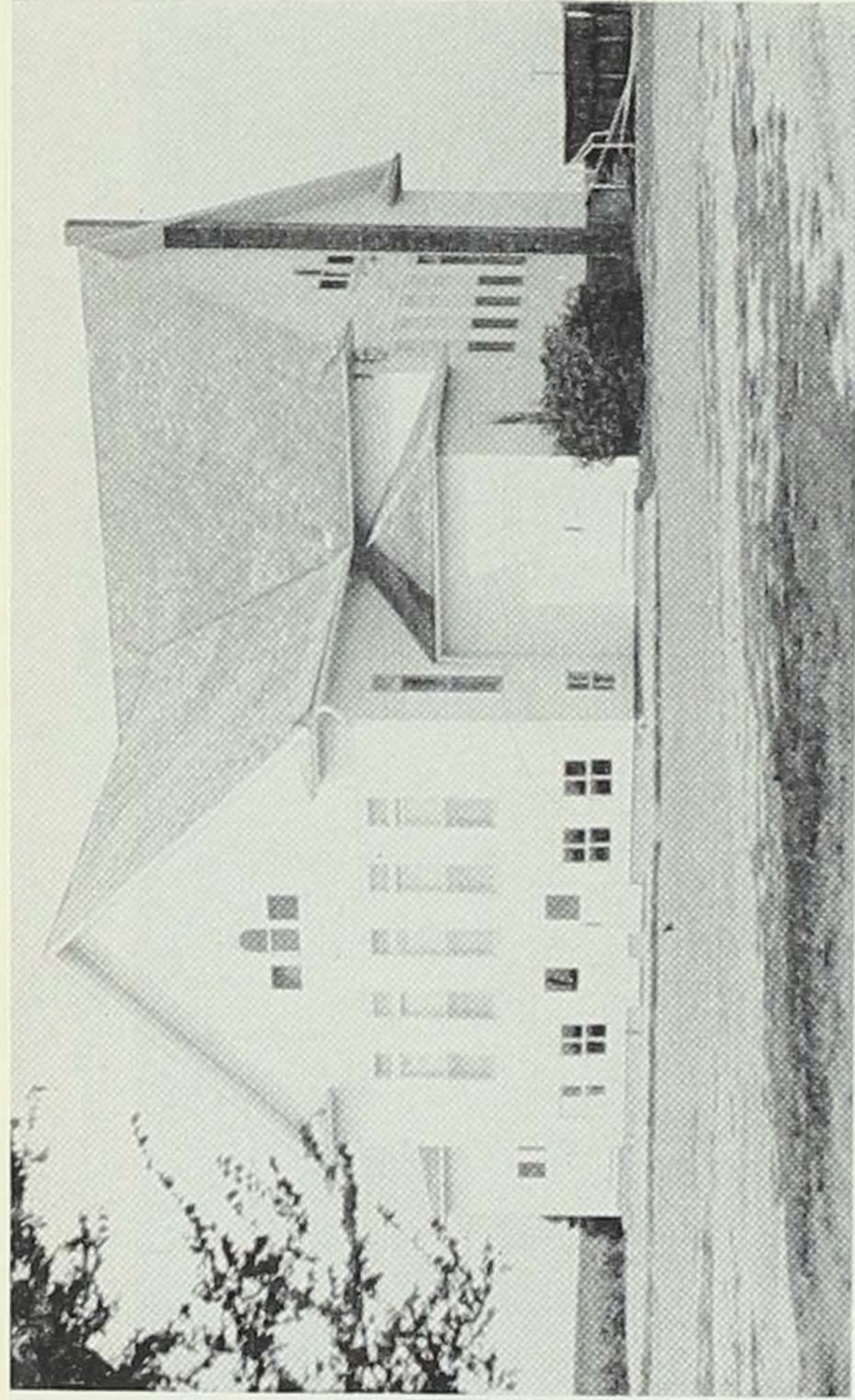
The second Lower Deer Creek Amish Mennonite Church. Built in 1917.



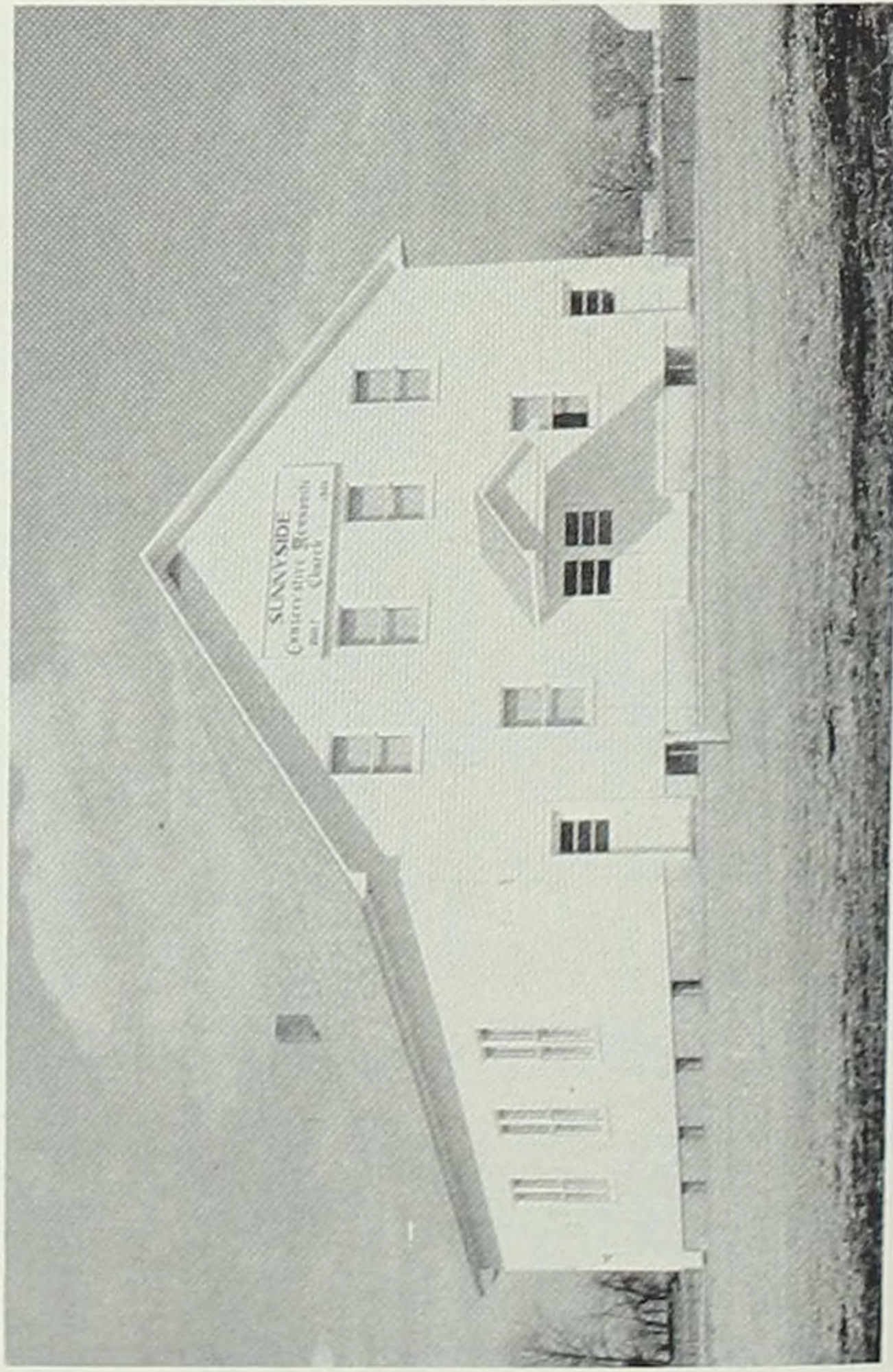
Iowa Mennonite Parochial High School founded in 1945.



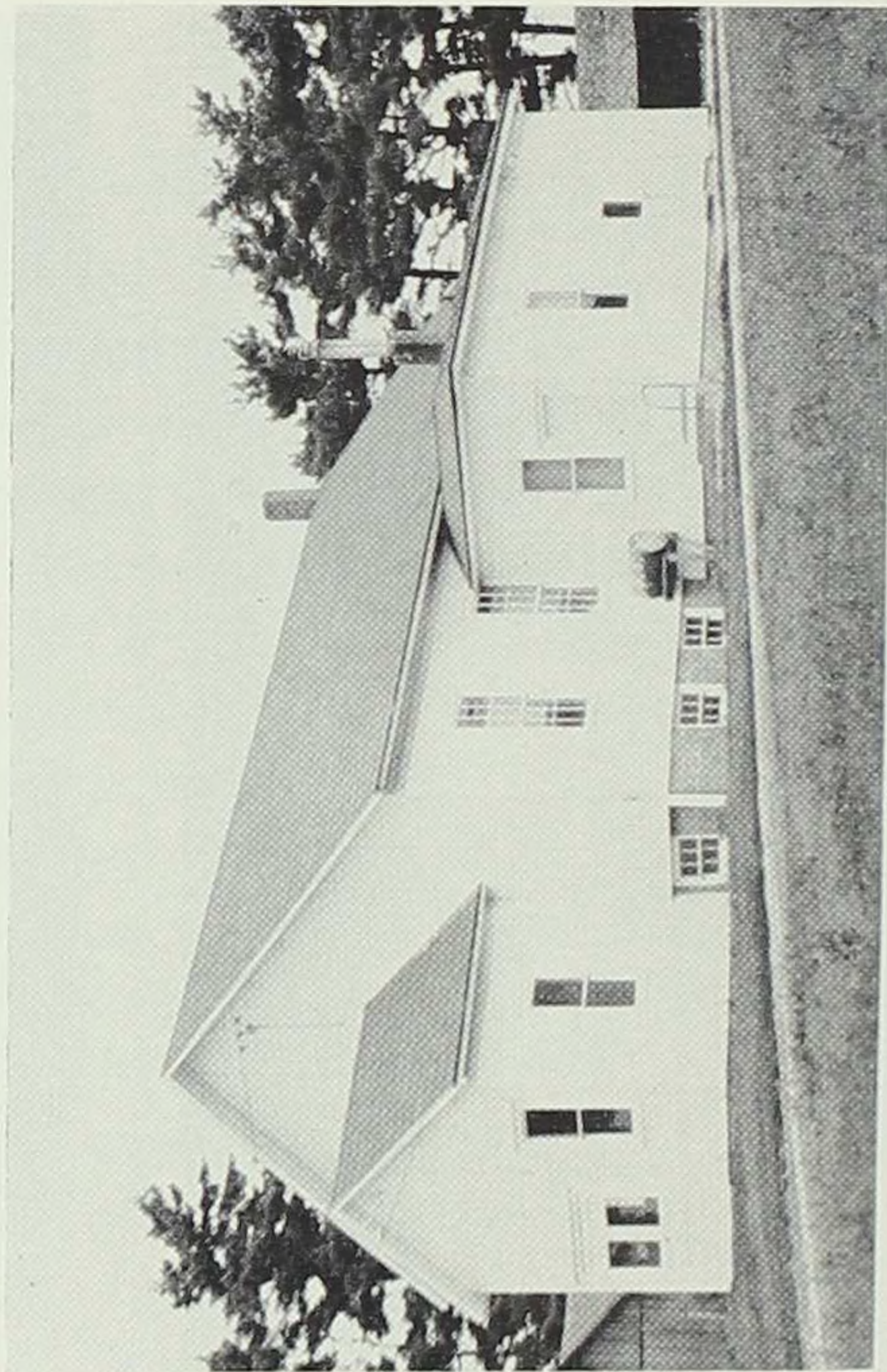
Wellman Mennonite Church. Built in 1940.



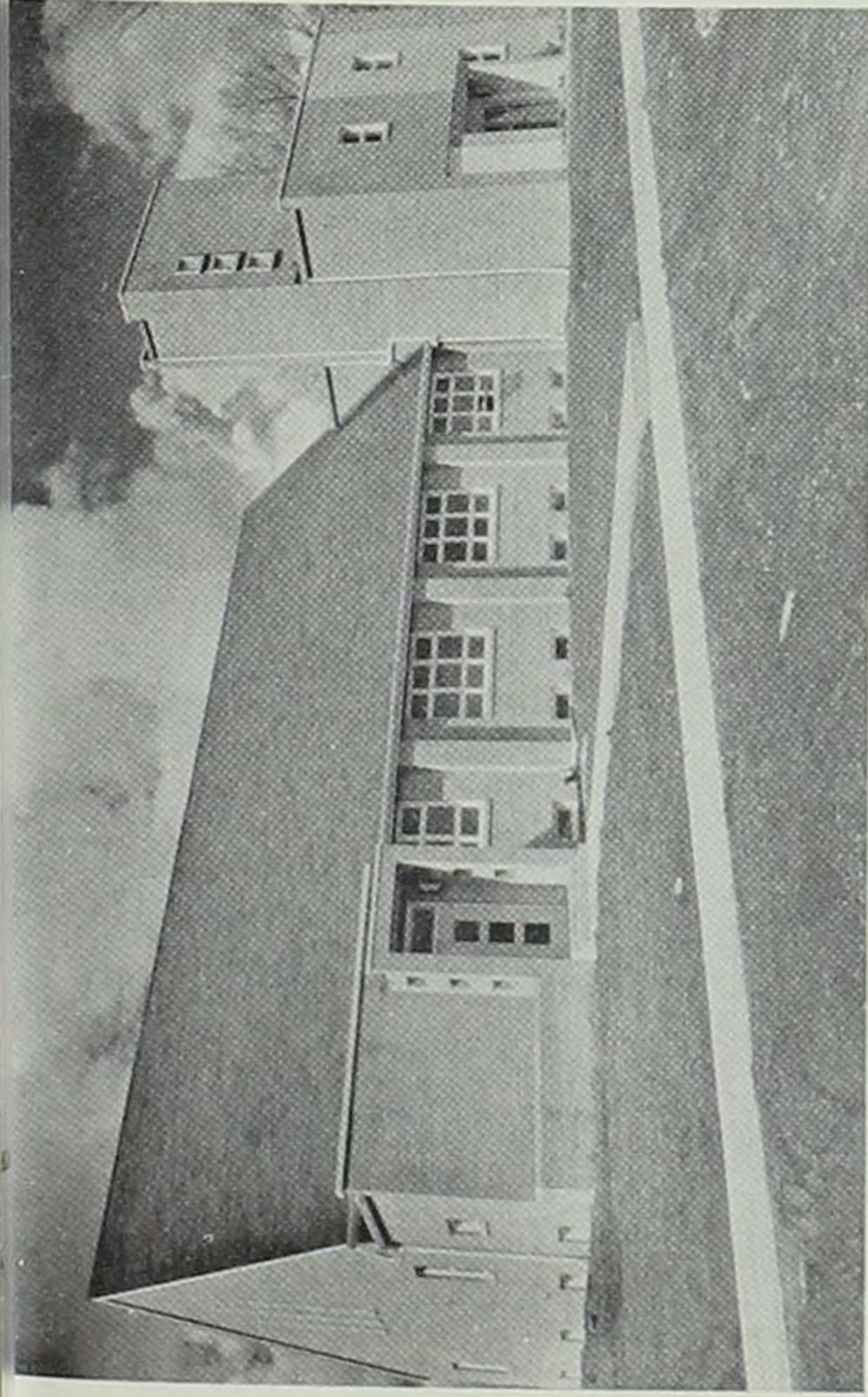
West Union Mennonite Church in Iowa County. Built in 1917.



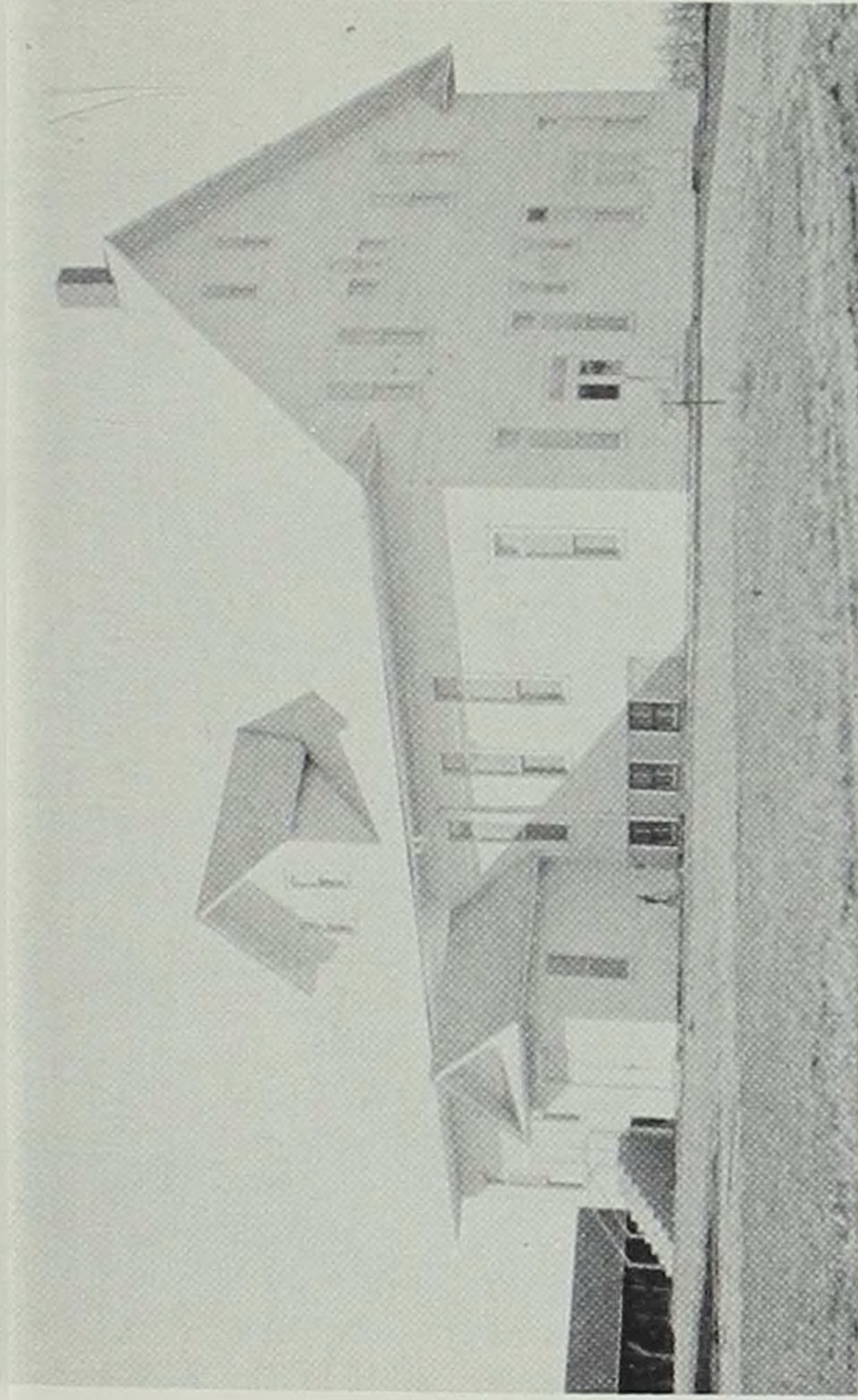
Sunnyside Conservative Mennonite Church. Built in 1956 near Kalona.



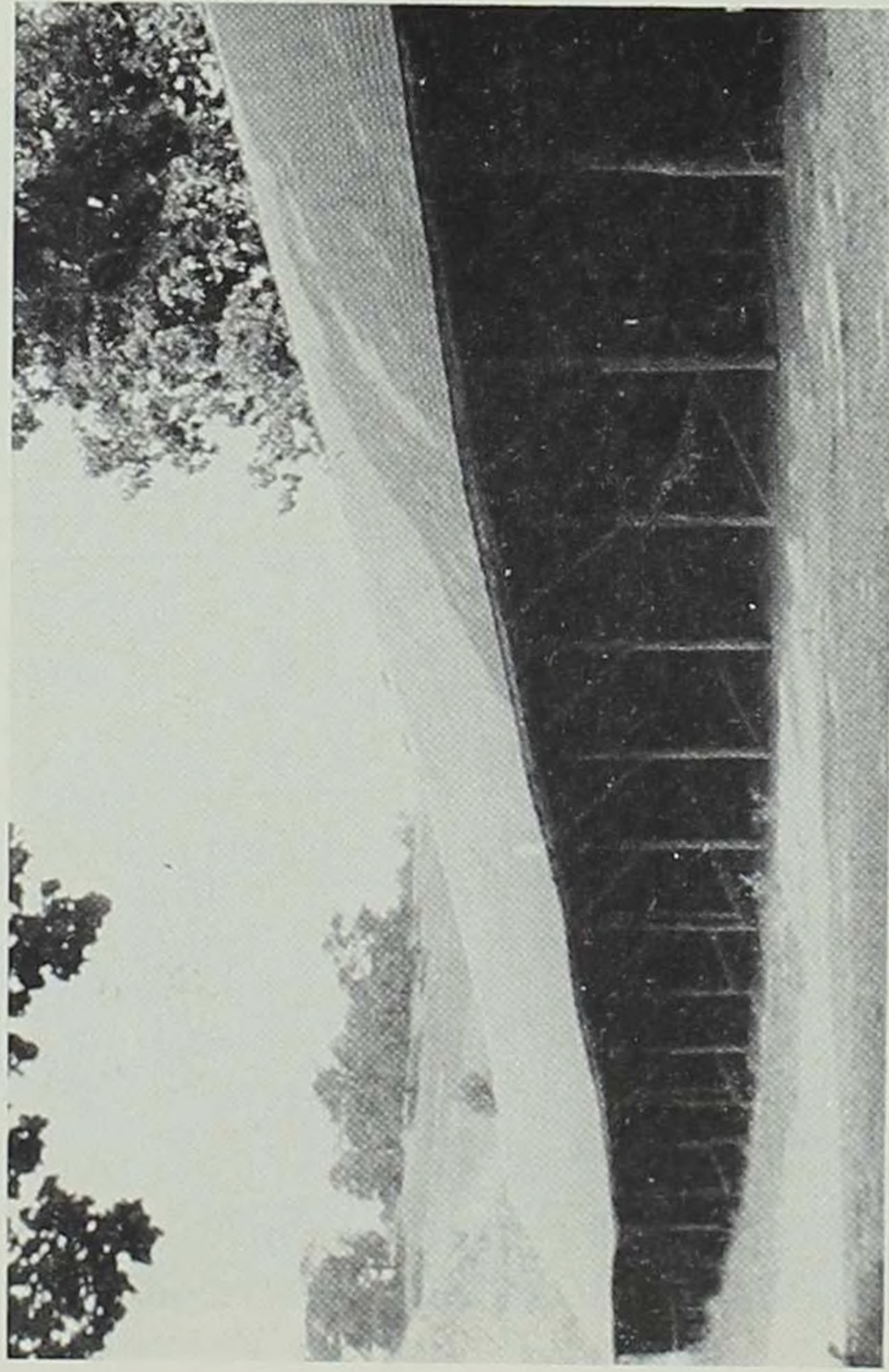
Upper Deer Creek Mennonite Church. Built in Iowa County in 1890.



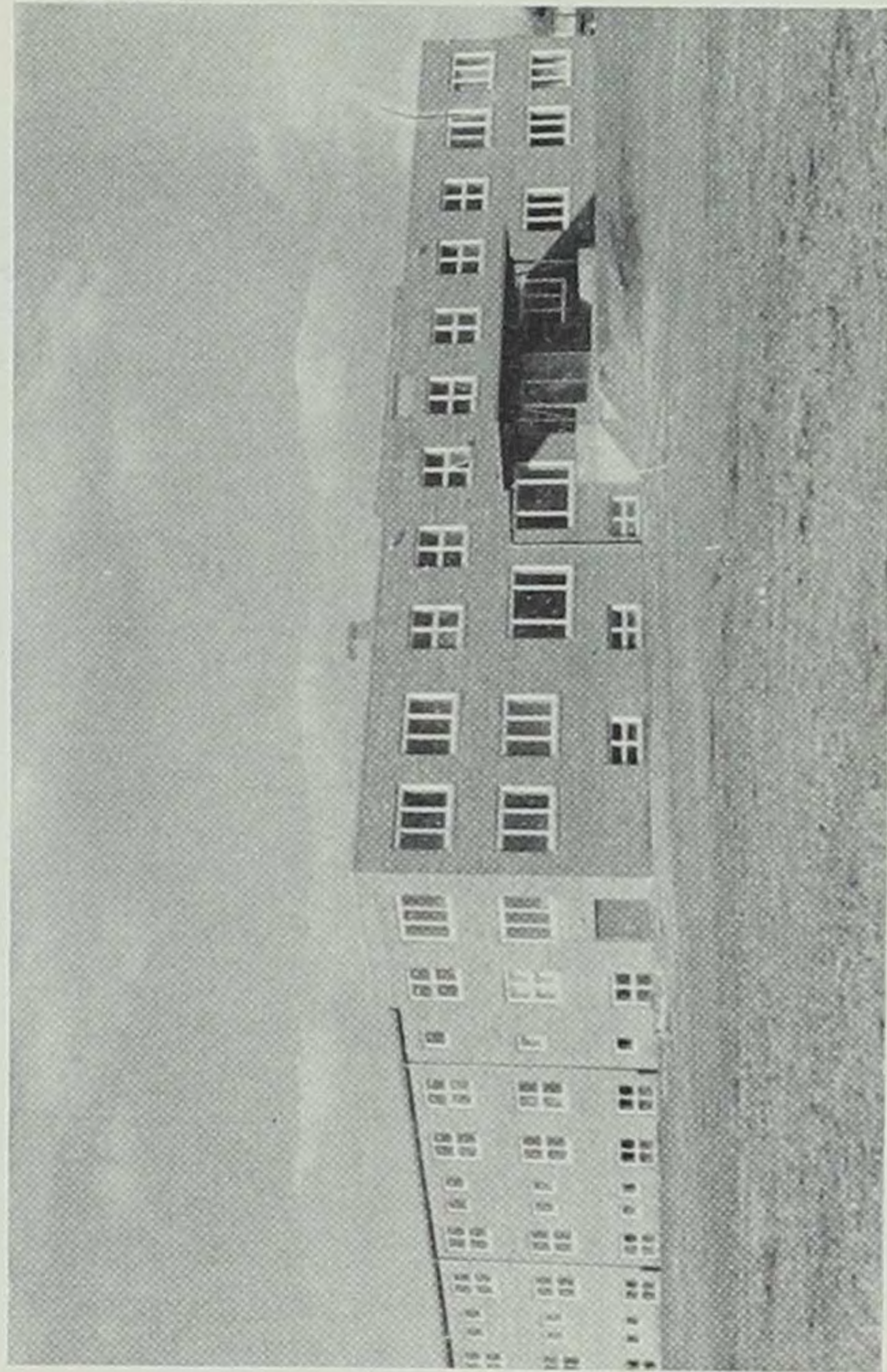
Manson Mennonite Church, in Calhoun County. Dedicated in 1957.



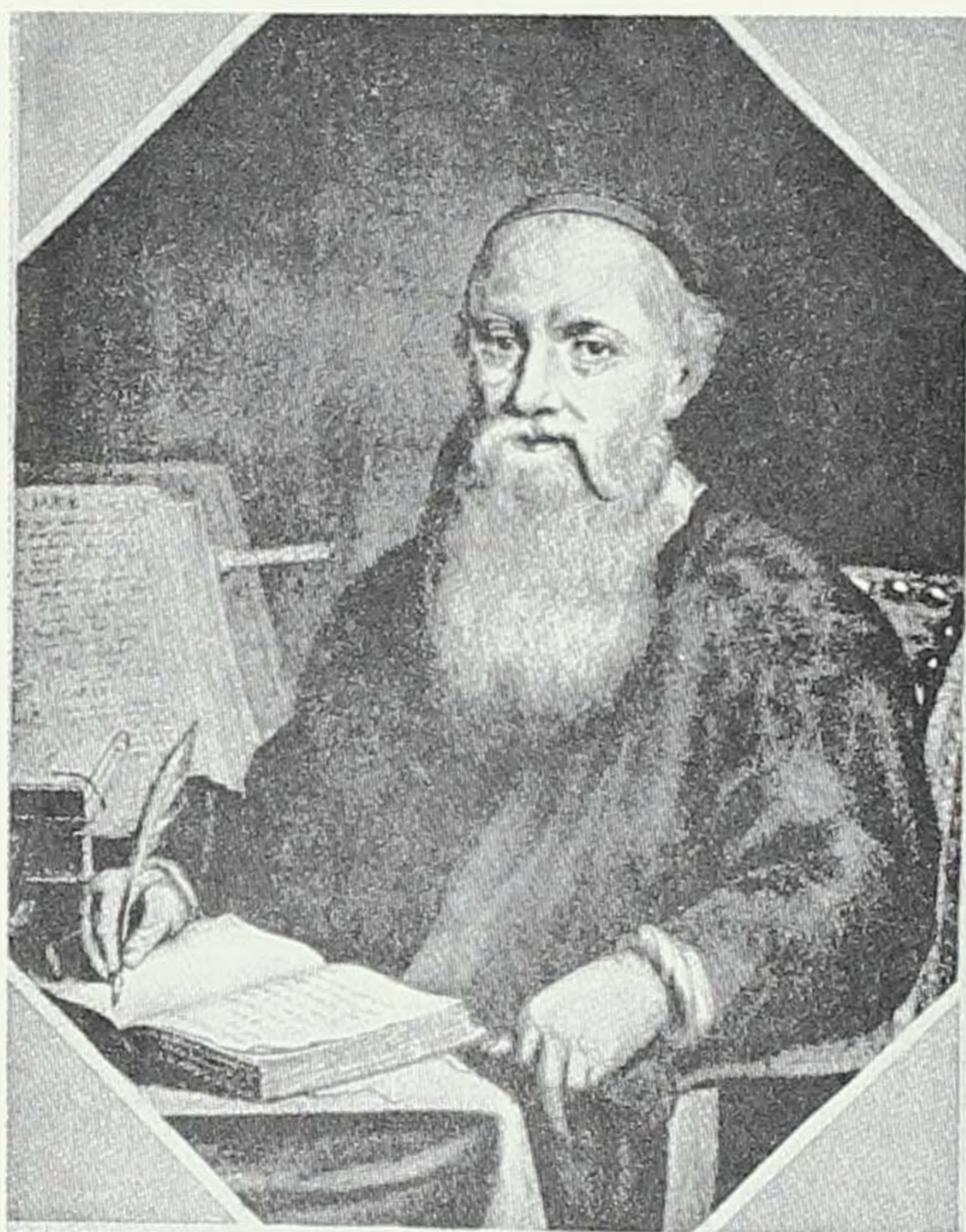
East Union Mennonite Church, north of Kalona. Built in 1922.



"Buggy Sheds" at the Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church.



Pleasantview Home for the Aged, in Kalona. Opened in 1958.

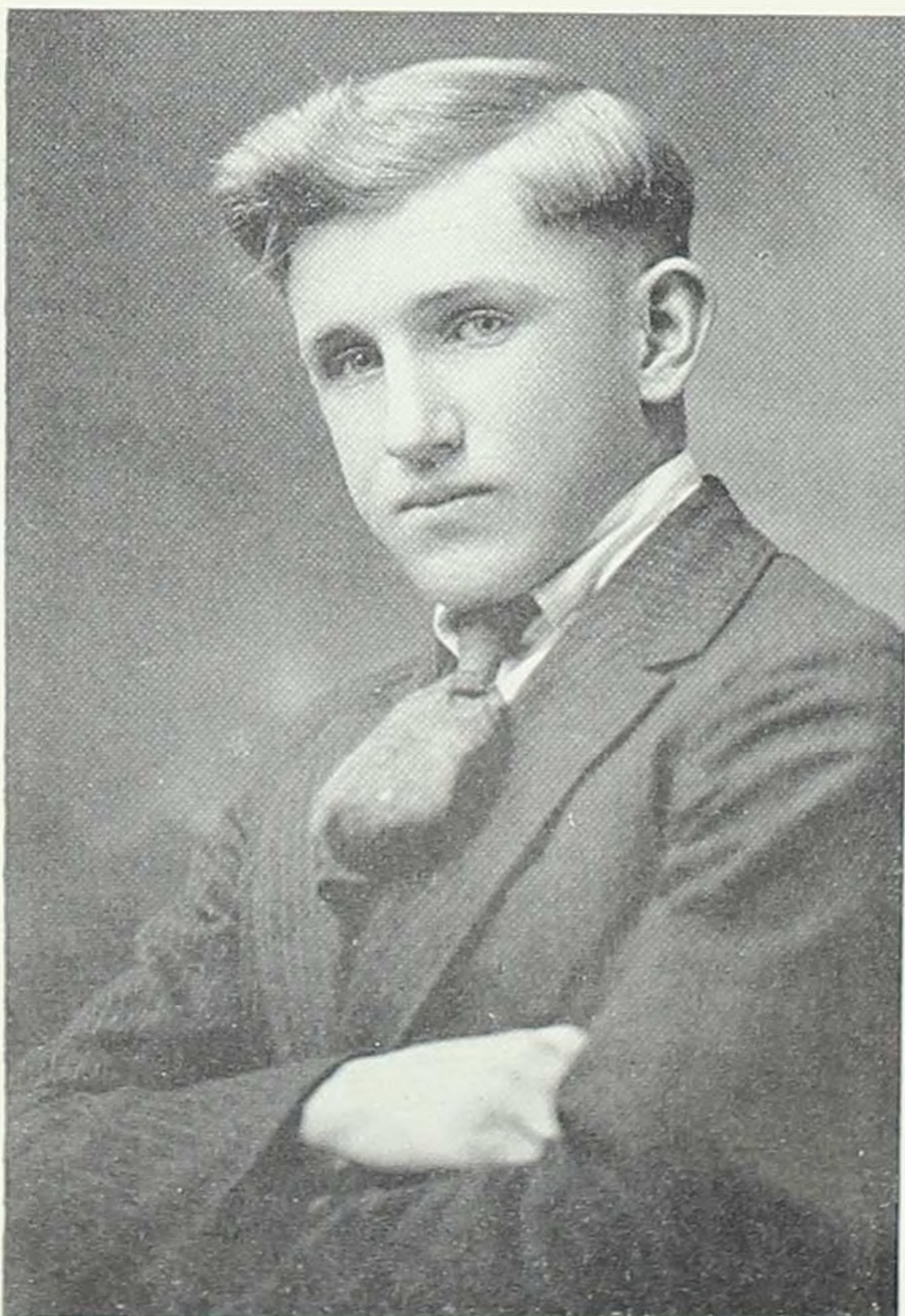


Menno Simons.

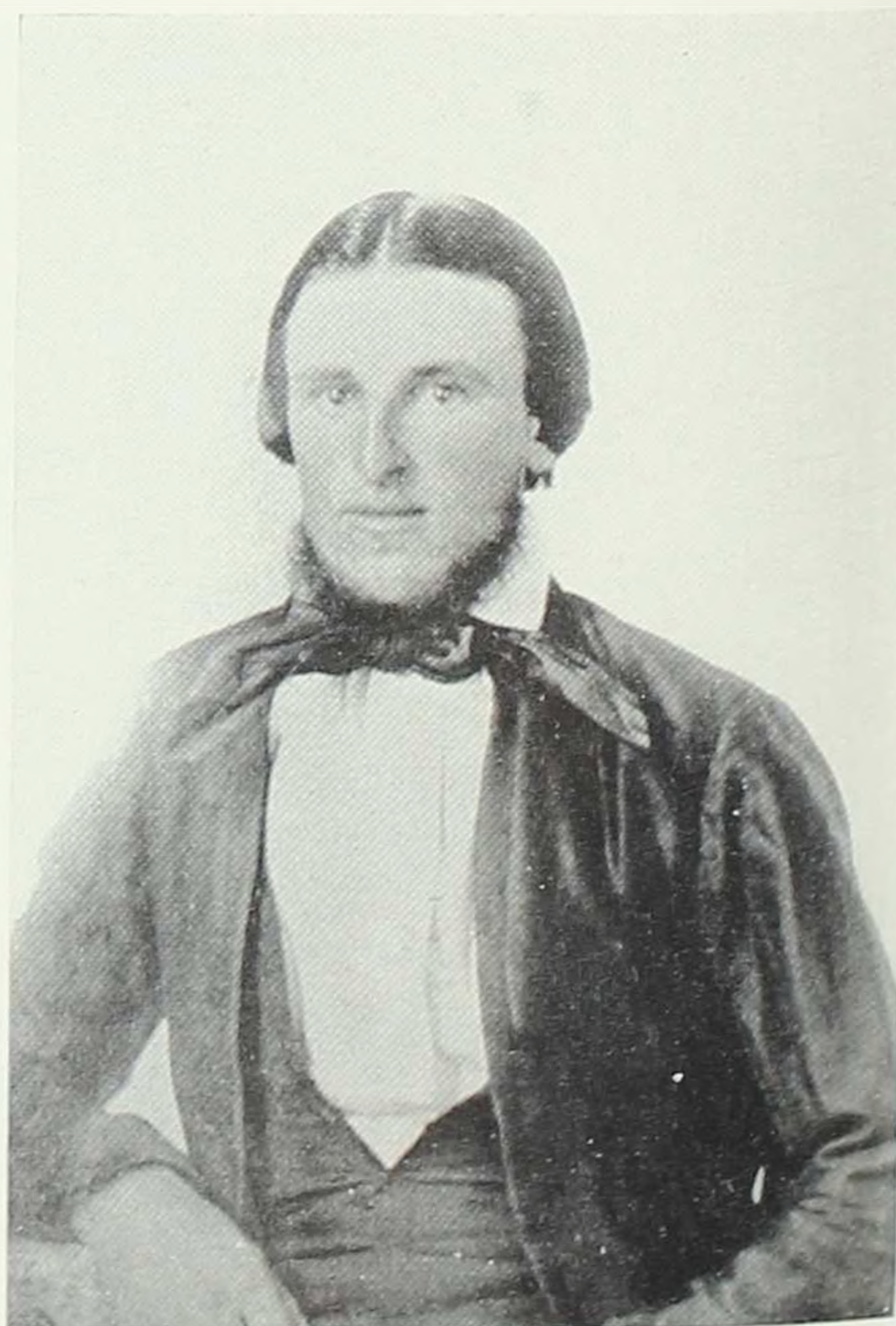
Painting of Menno Simons (1496-1561).



Alsatian Amish couple, ca. 1815, by Lewicki.



Melvin Gingerich — Mennonite Historian.



Joseph J. Gingerich (1840-1916), Kalona.



Six sons and daughter of Joseph Gingerich (about 1914).



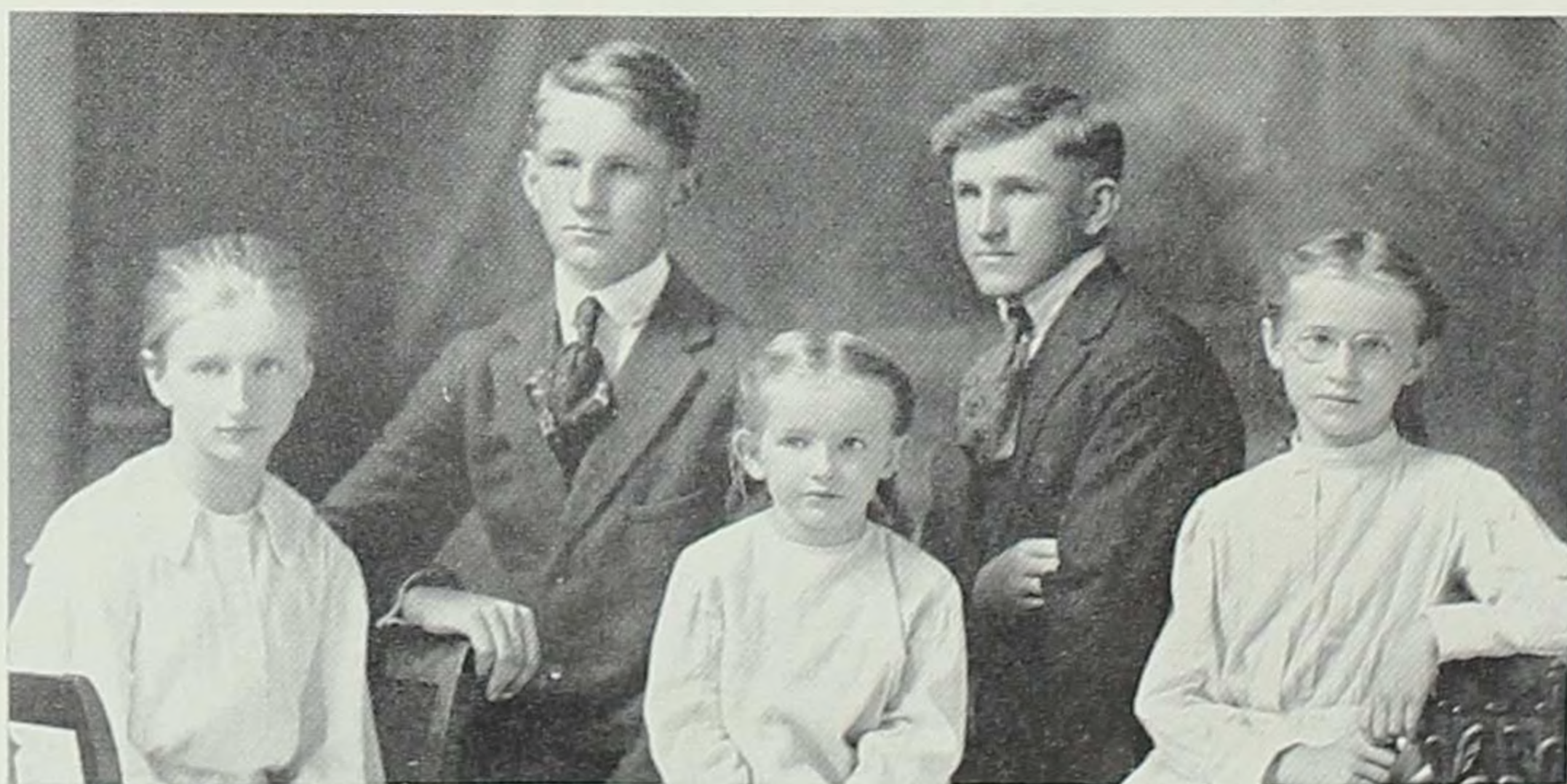
Family Gathering: Twenty-nine first cousins, children of the above brothers and sister.



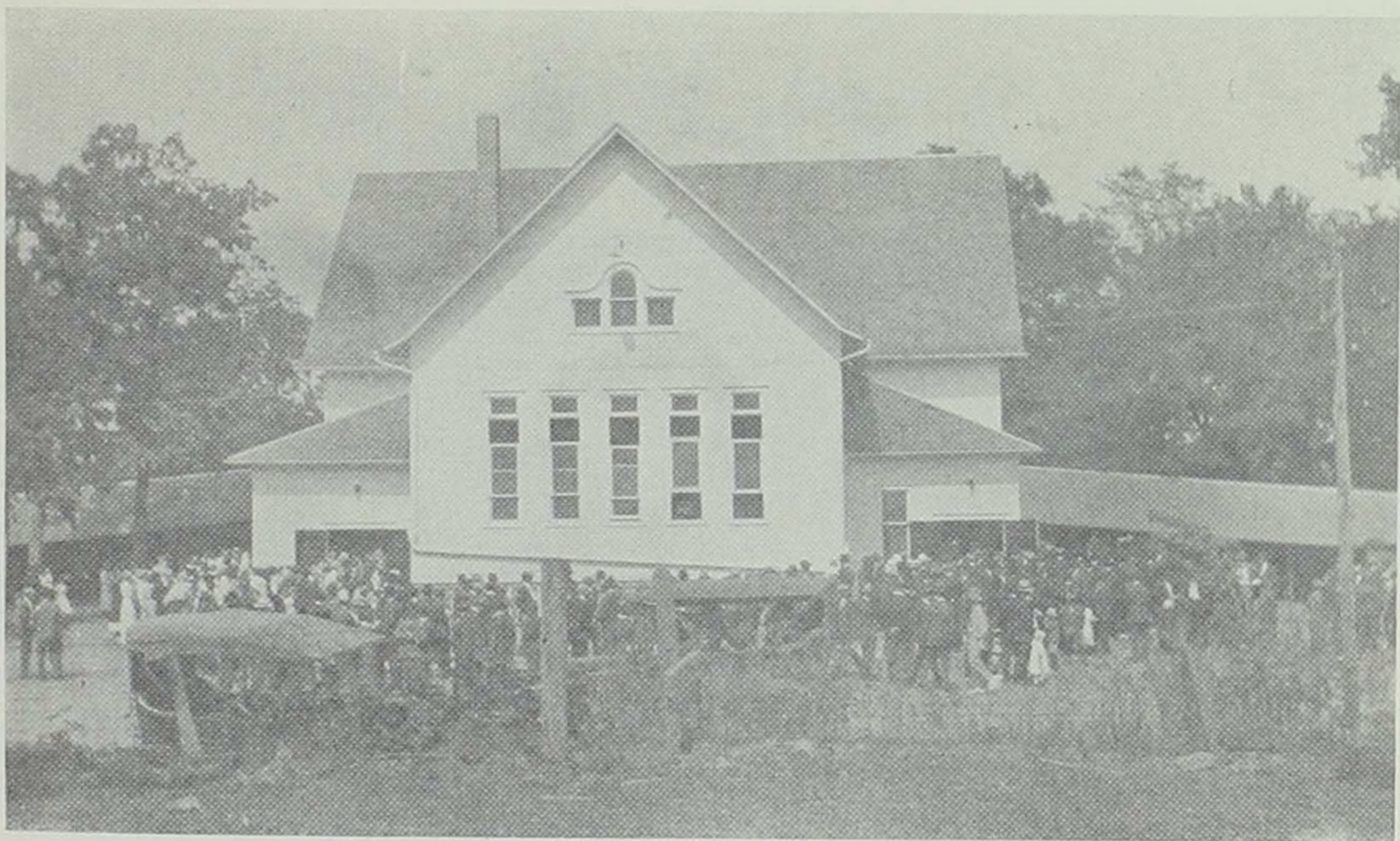
John and Lydia (Reber) Gingerich — Parents of Melvin.



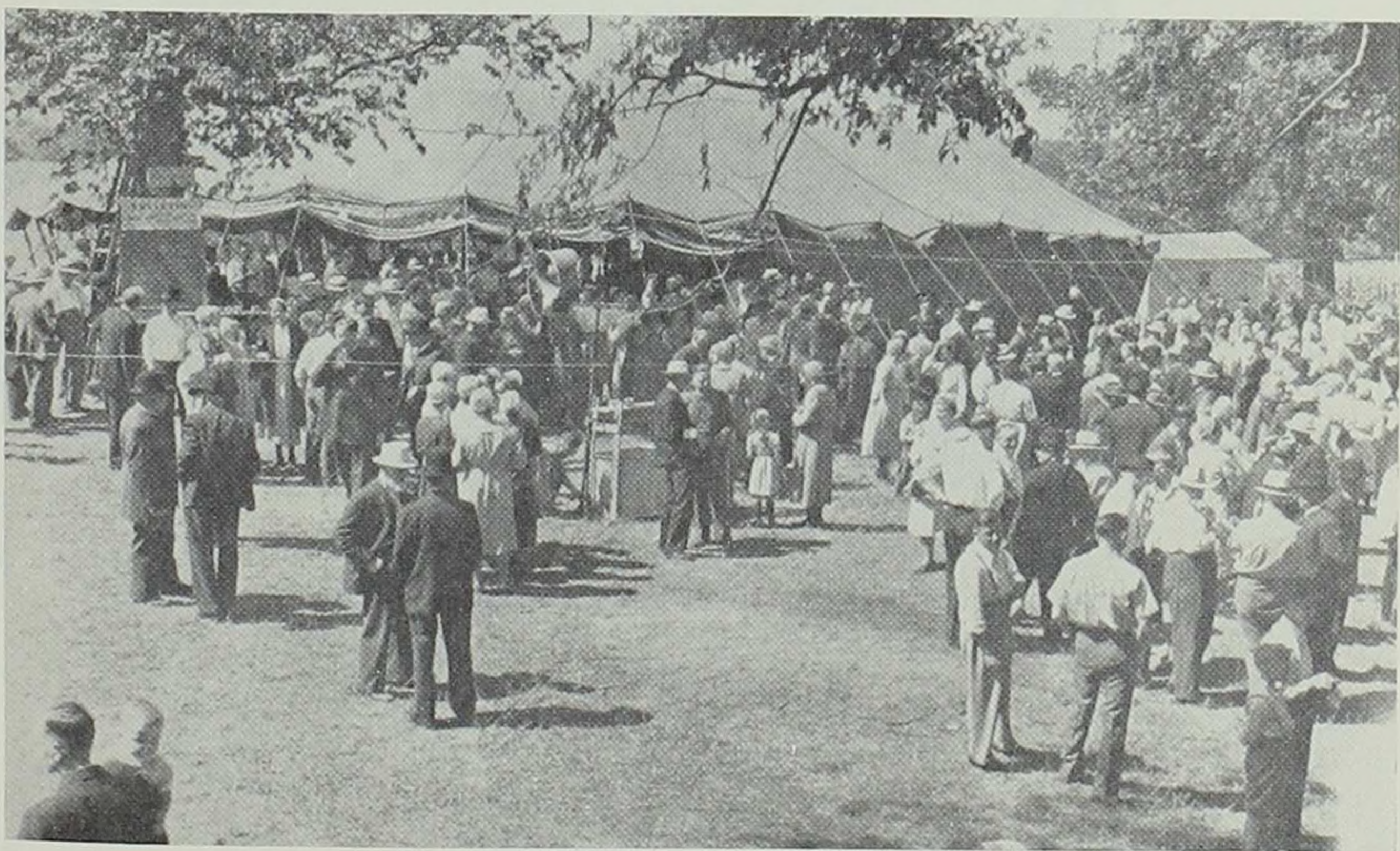
Author Melvin Gingerich on his pony: brother, cousin, and two sisters.



Young Melvin (right) with his brother and sisters.



Day of Dedication (August, 1917), Lower Deer Creek Church.

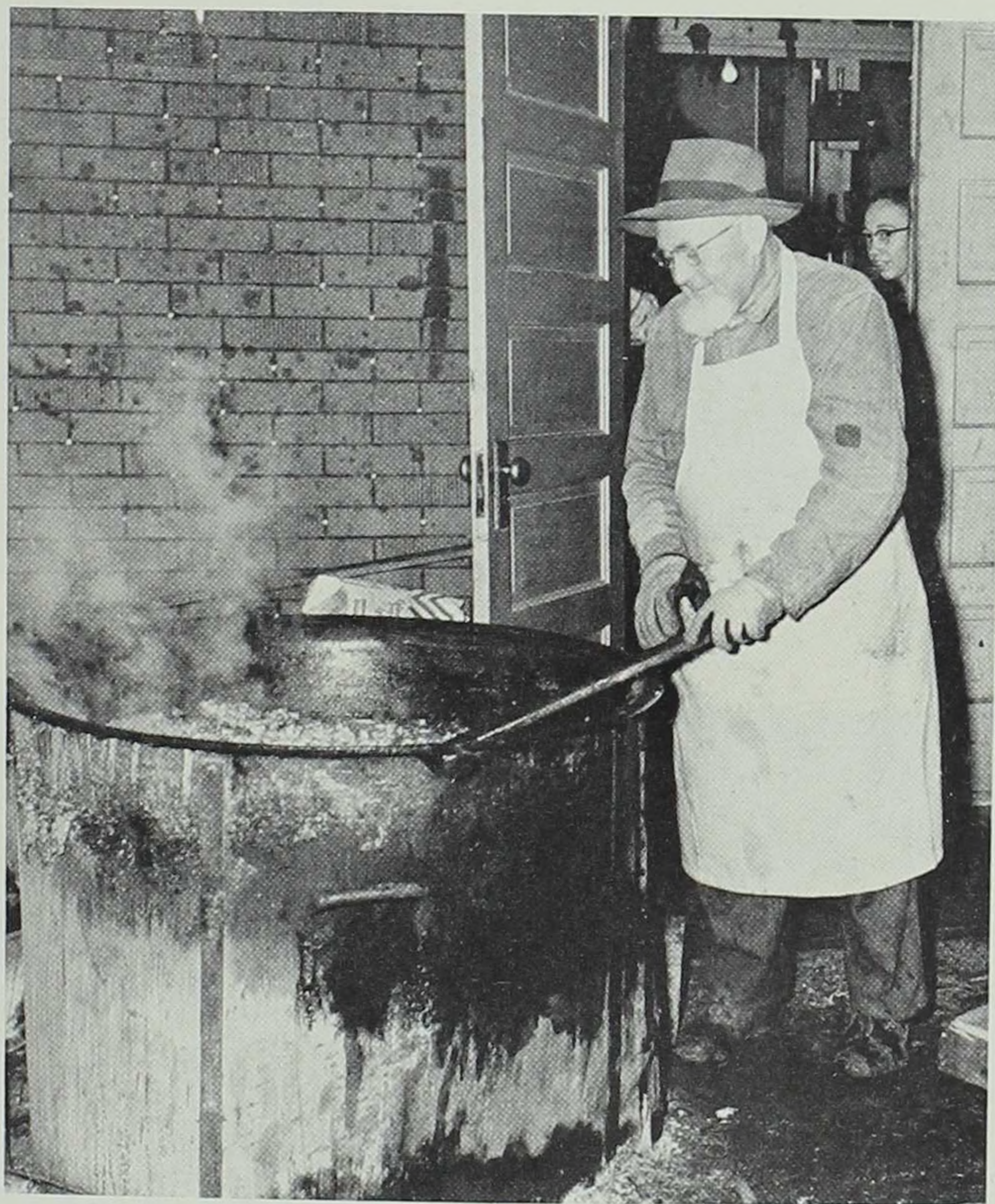


General Conference (1941) Lower Deer Creek.



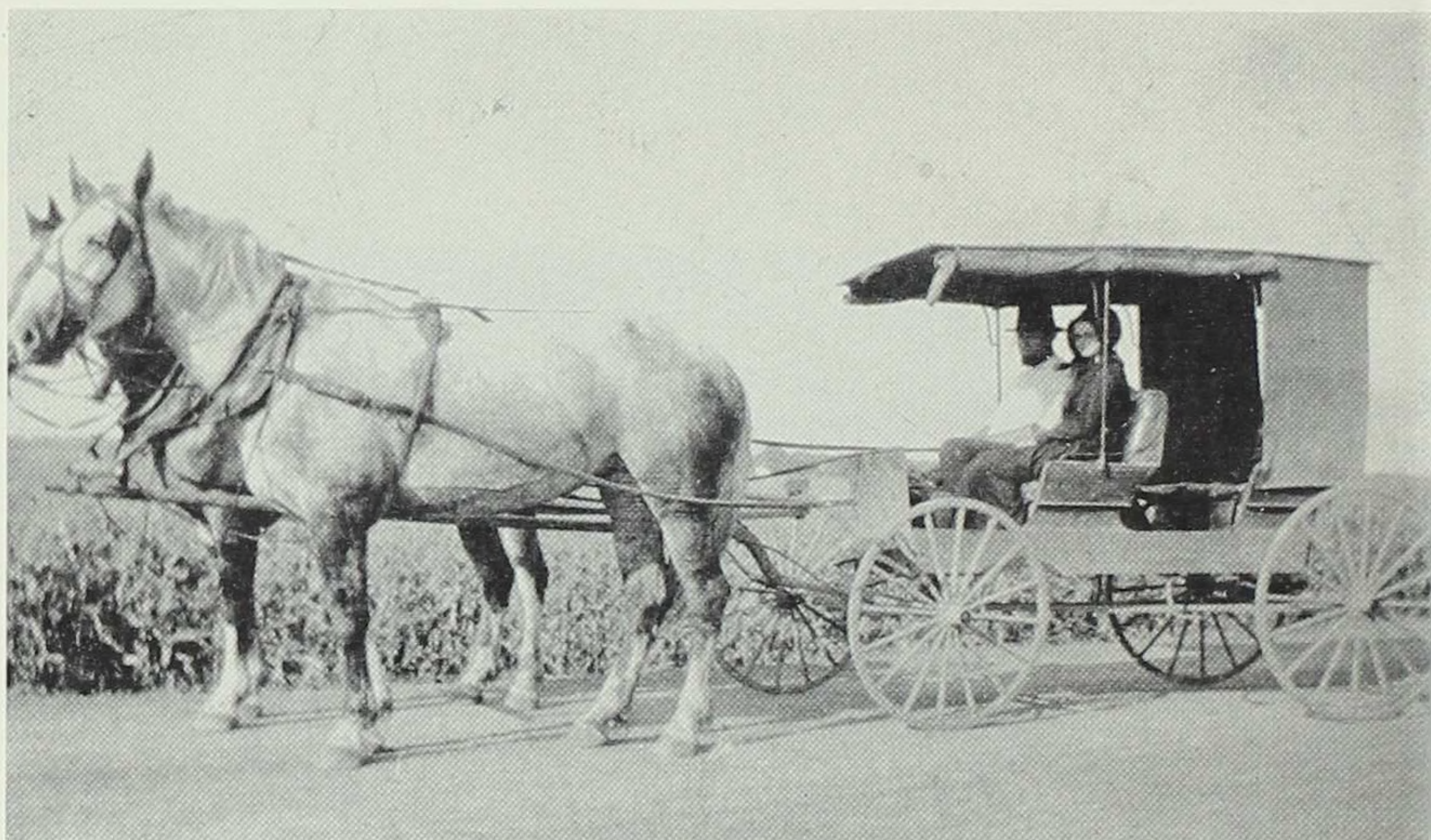
Iowa City Press-Citizen Photo.

Mennonites sealing 2,300 cans of lard and pork in one day for worldwide relief. In addition to pork, soup, relish, jelly, apples, corn, tomatoes, catsup, sauerkraut, and peaches make up the 20,000 cans of food processed by nine Mennonite churches.



Iowa City Press-Citizen Photo.

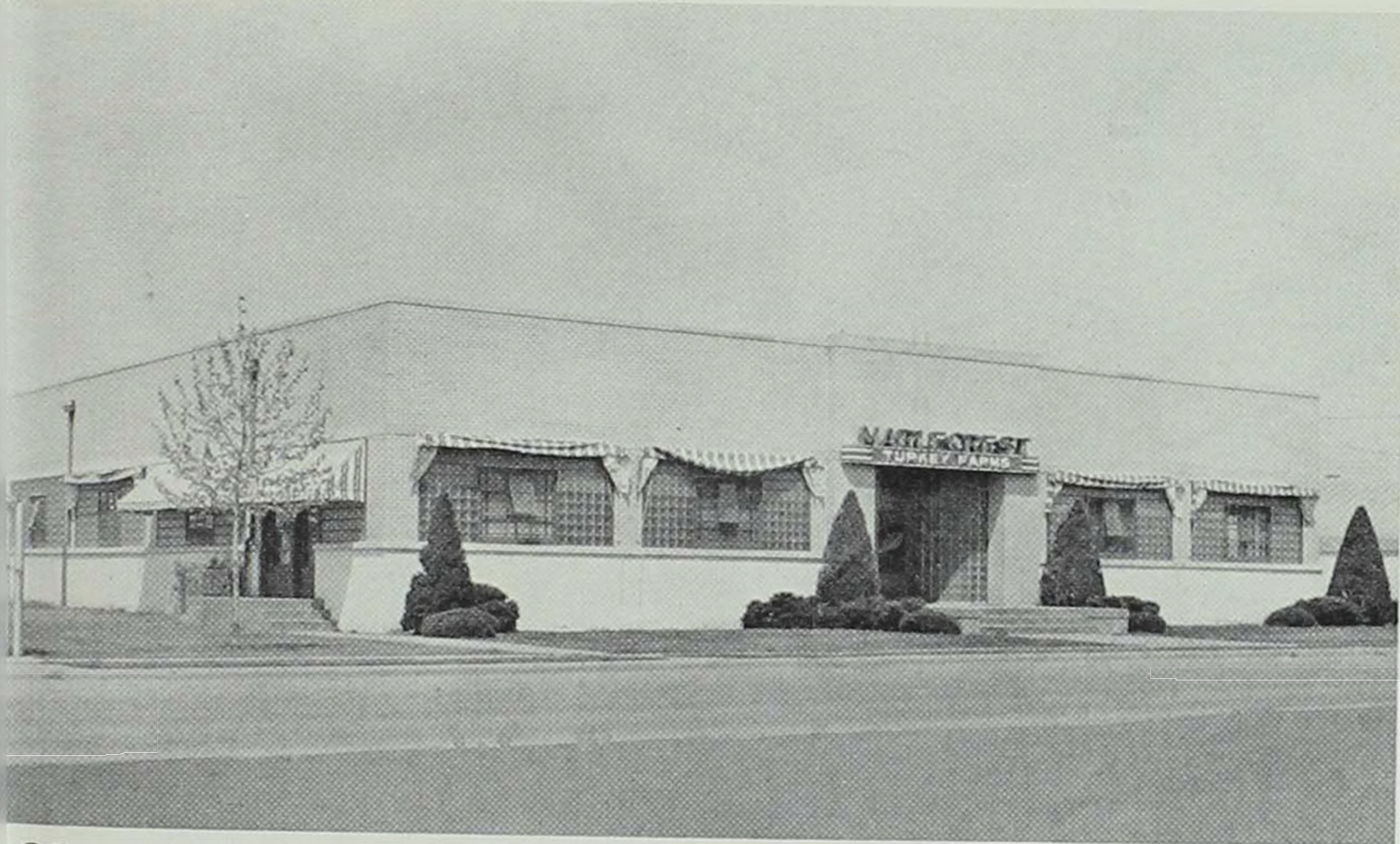
Dan G. Gingerich stirs a vat of pork fat from which lard was produced. About two-fifths of the 2,300 cans of pork put up in a single day in November, 1956, was lard.



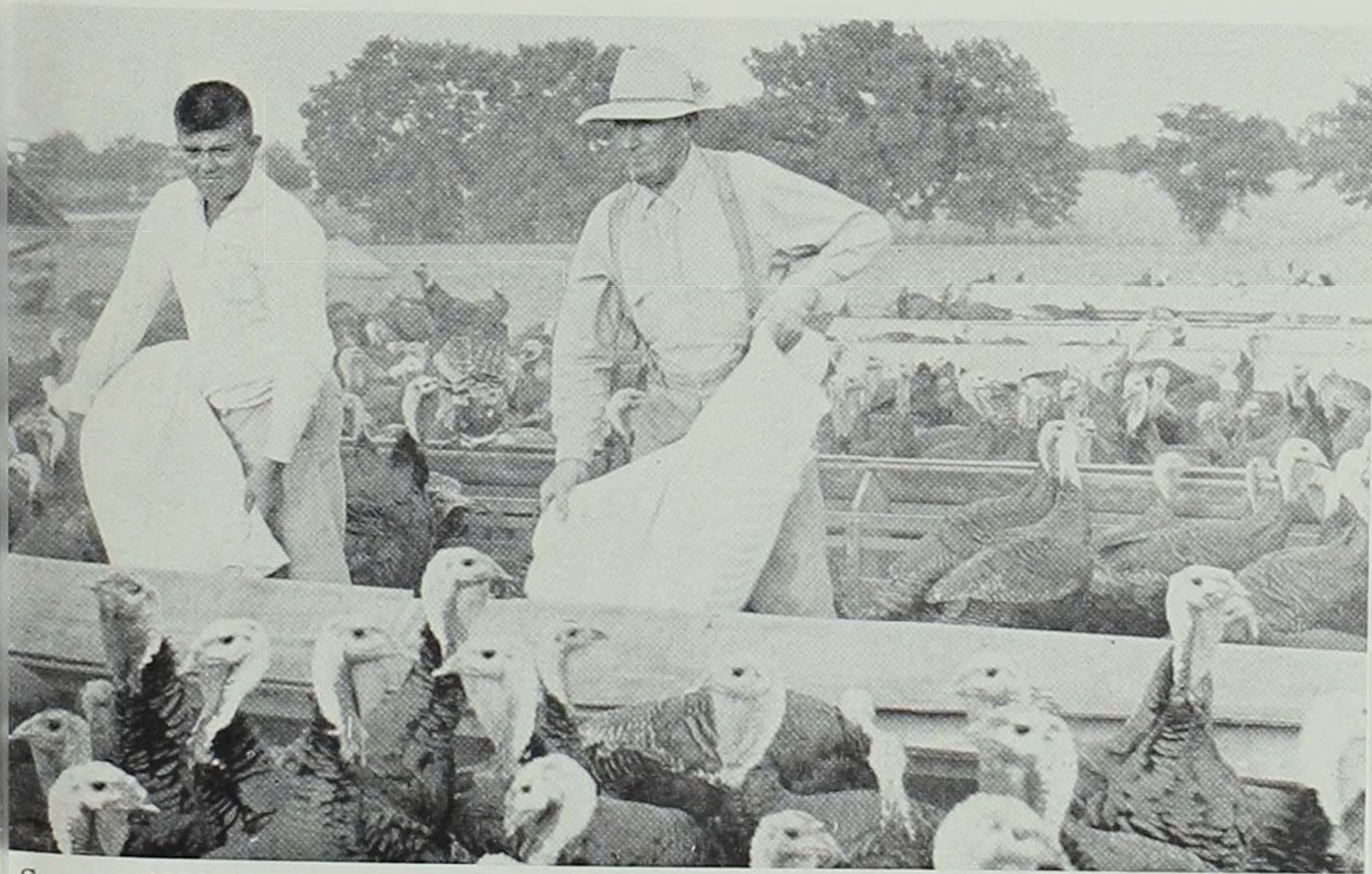
Amish Mennonite couple, Thomas and Ruth Miller of Kalona, in their two-seated buggy.



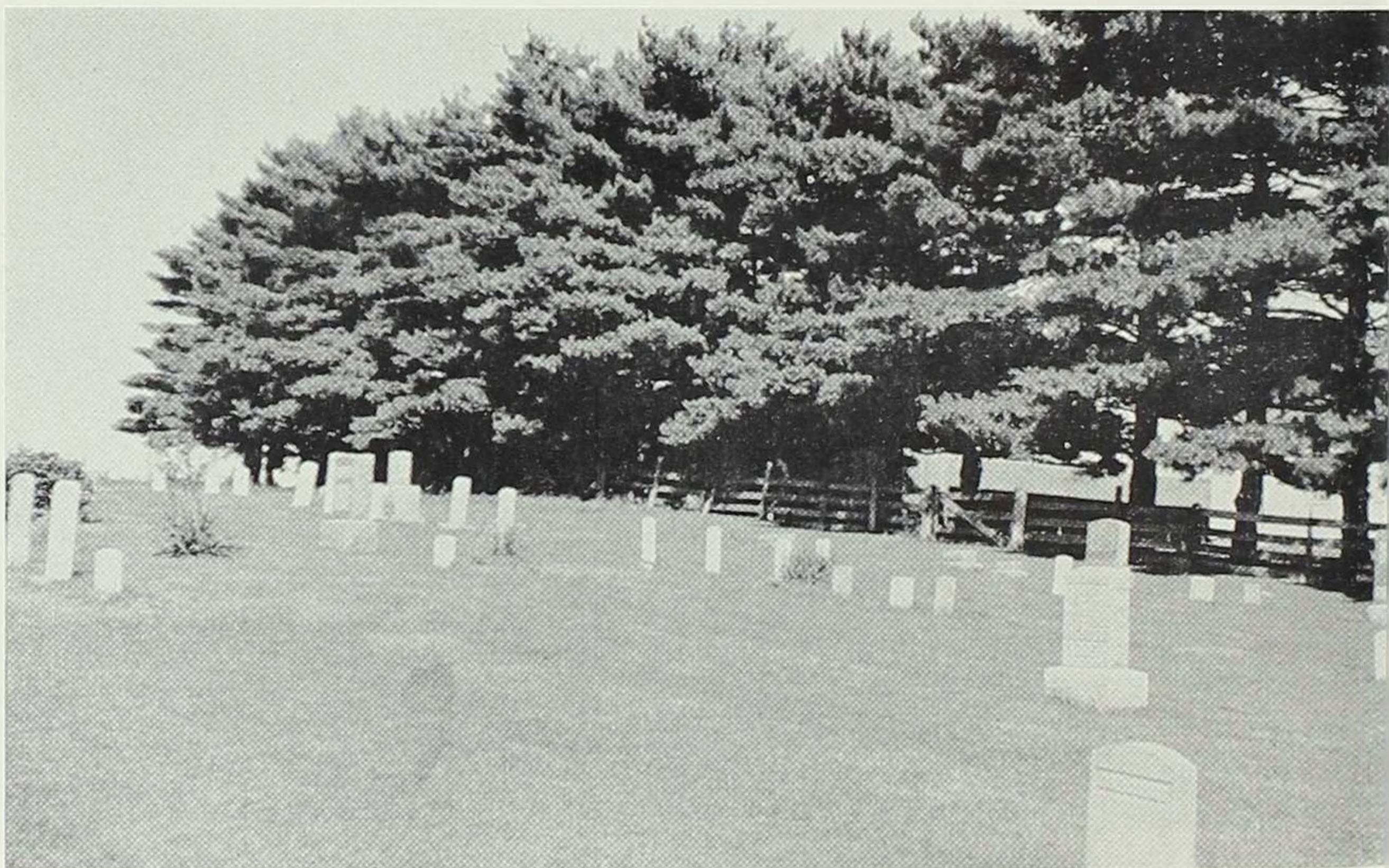
Amish Mennonite school children with their teacher and horse — June 17, 1910.



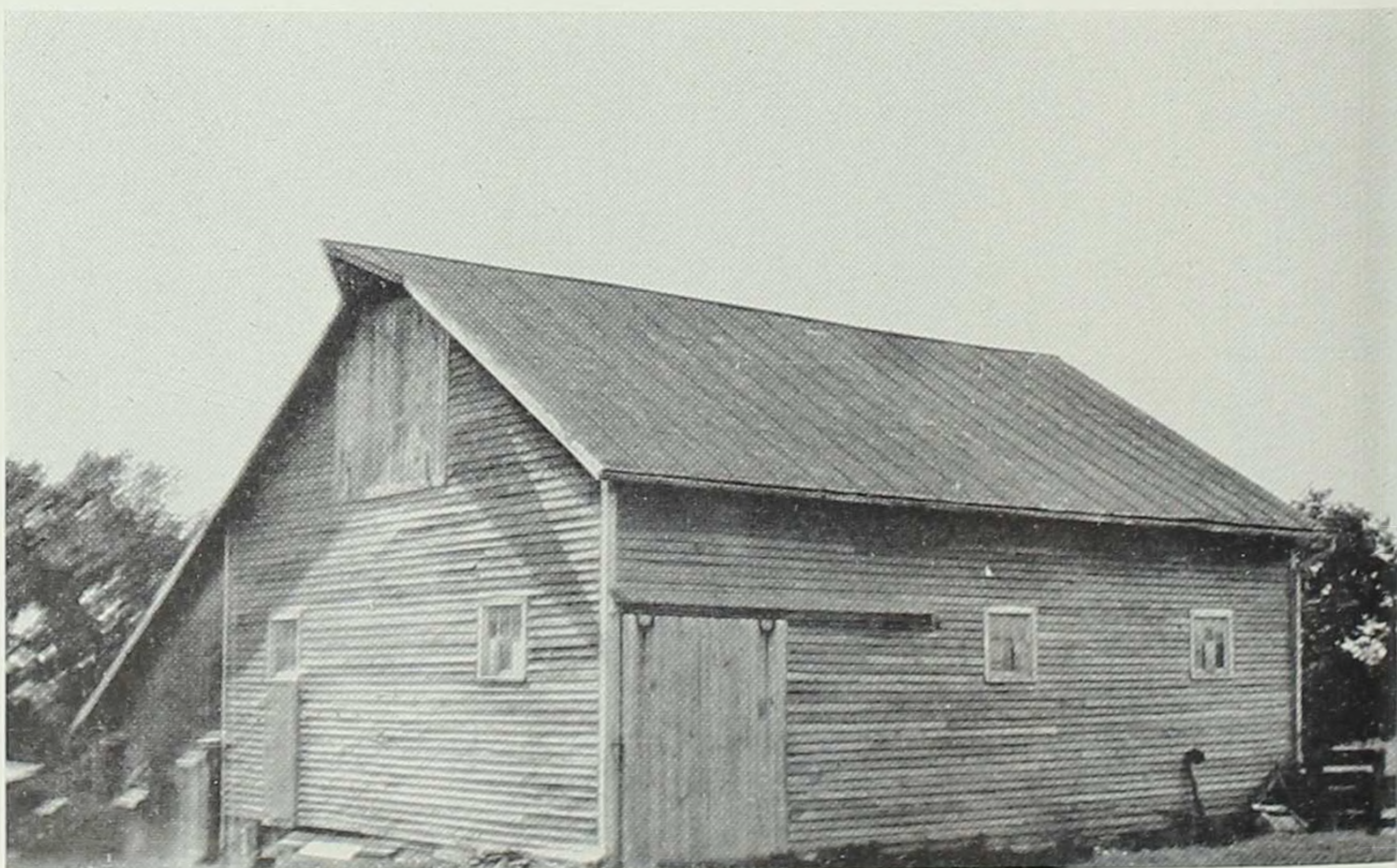
Office of the famous Maplecresc Turkey Farms started at Wellman by a Mennonite —
A. C. Gingerich.



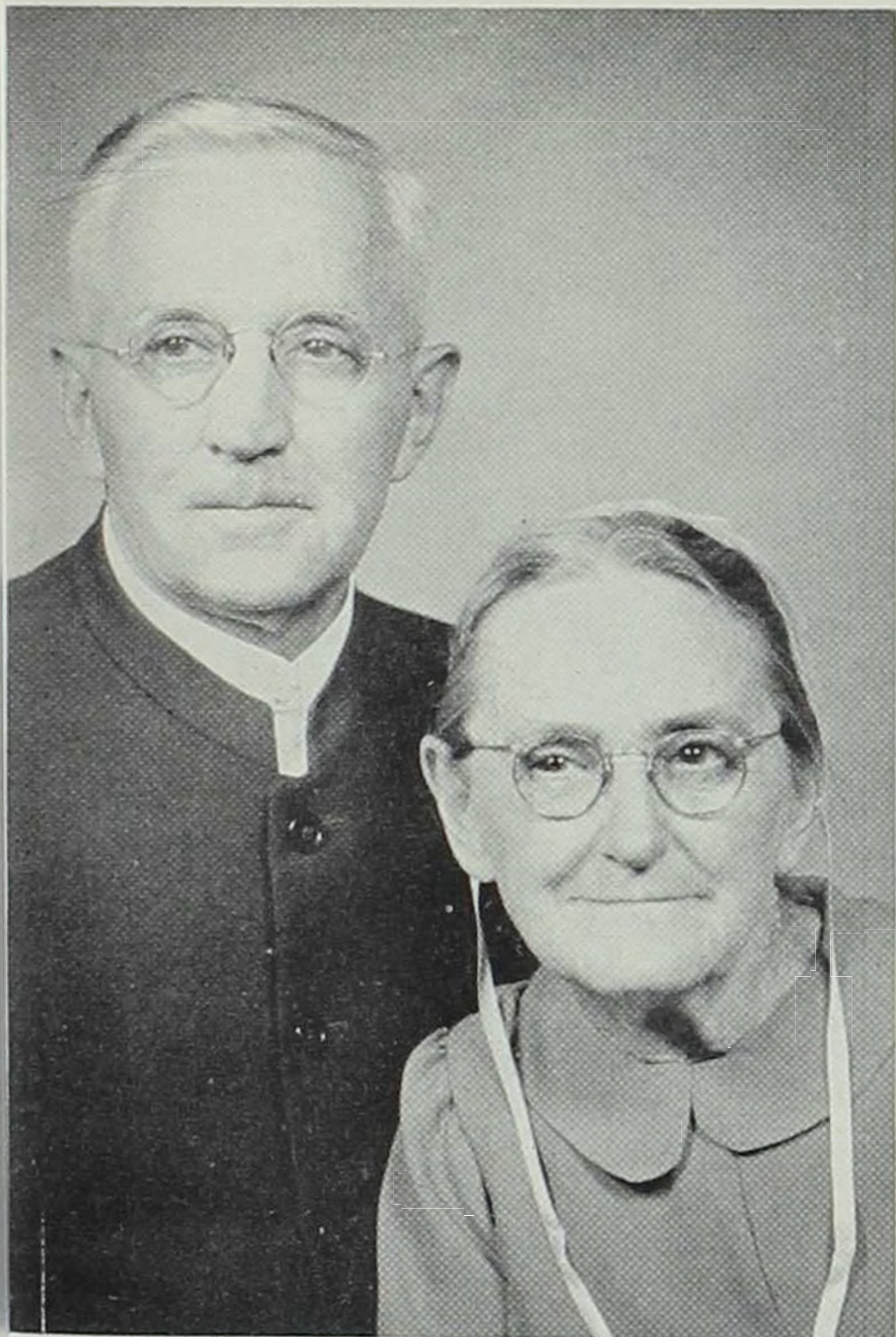
Scores of Washington County farmers, like these Mennonite farmers, raise turkeys for
the Maplecresc Farms.



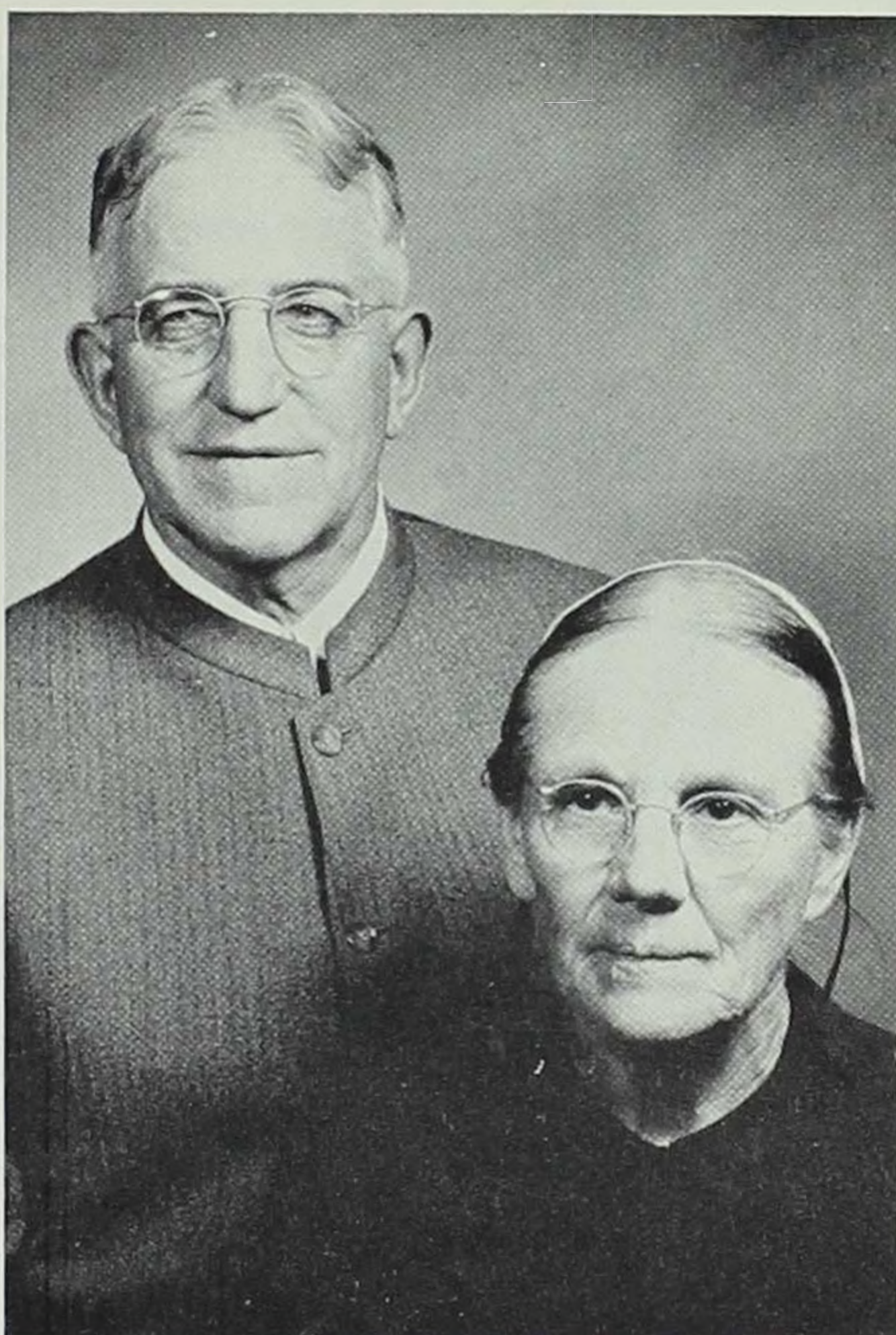
Upper Deer Creek Cemetery.



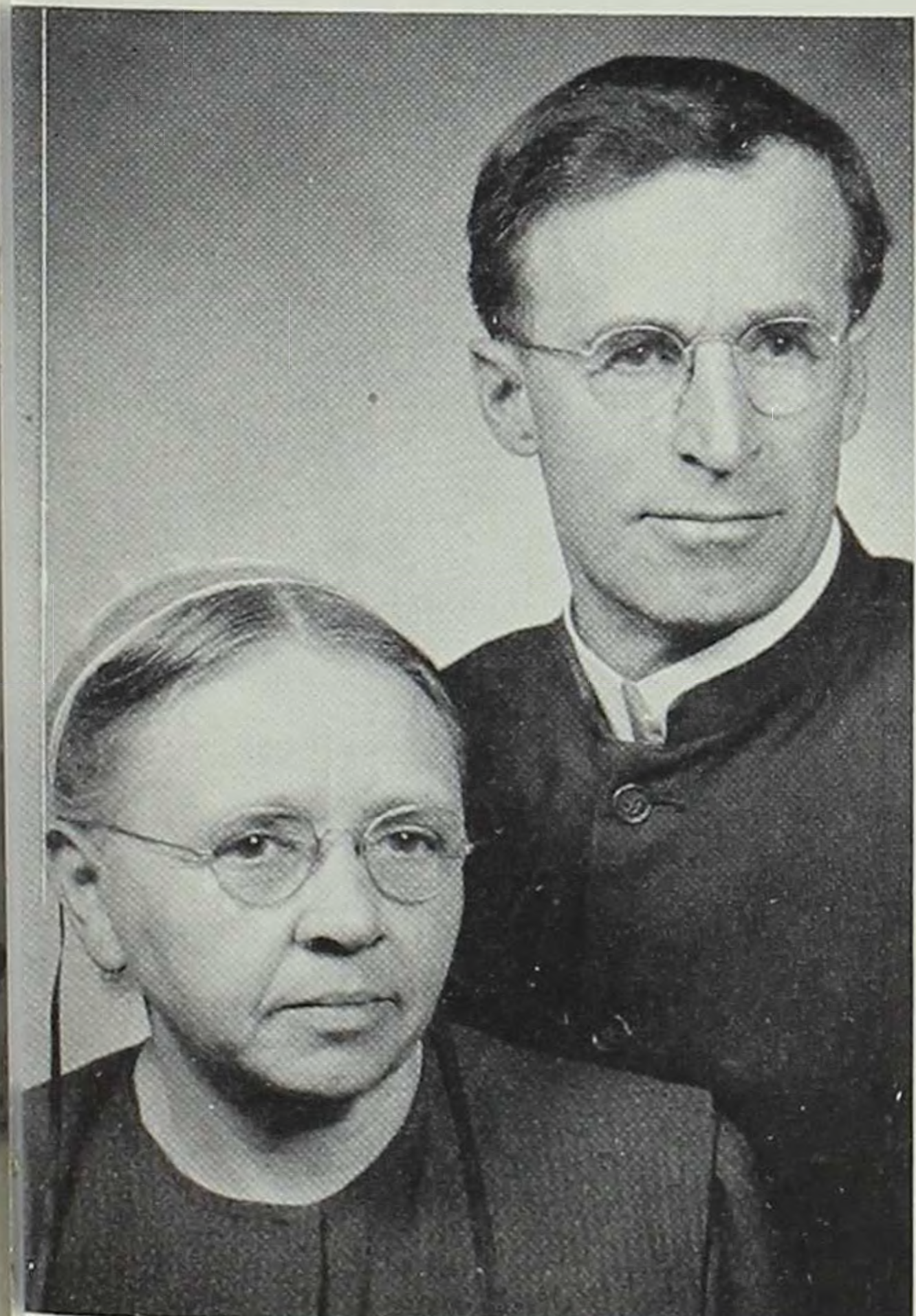
The building which was the first Eicher Church.



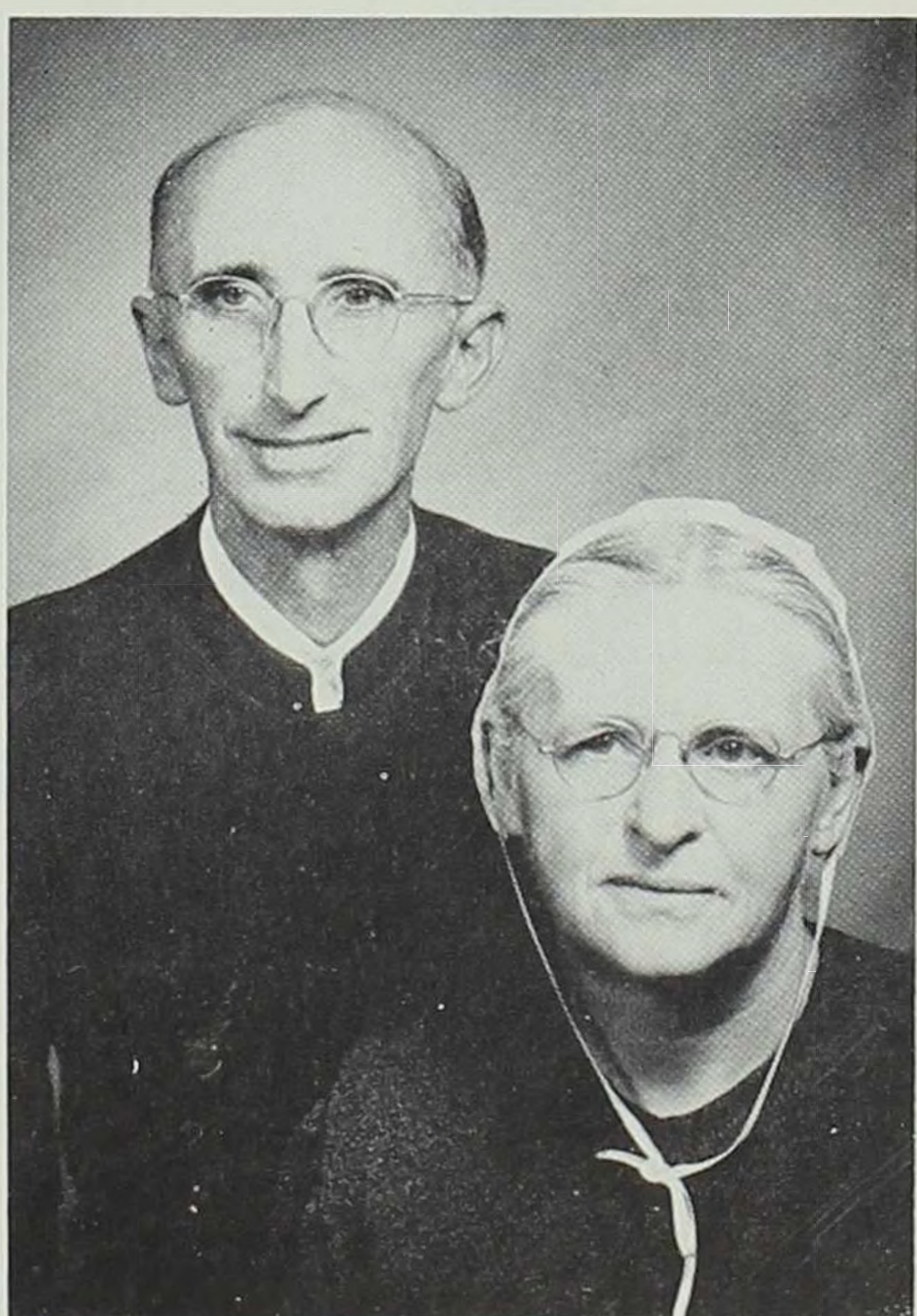
BISHOP and MRS. DANIEL J. FISHER
East Union Mennonite Church



BISHOP and MRS. SIMON GINGERICH
Wayland Sugar Creek Mennonite Church

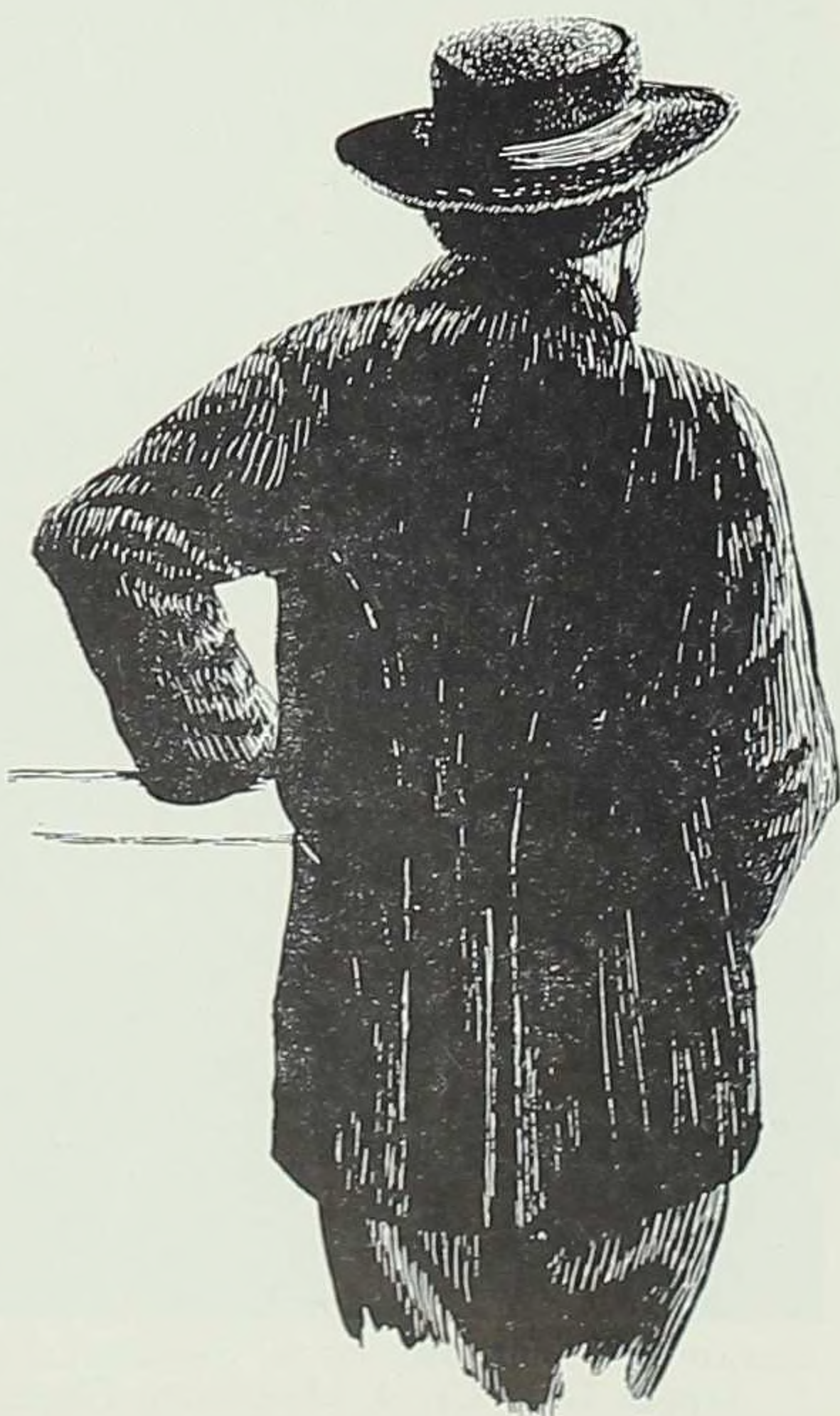


BISHOP and MRS. JOHN Y. SWARTZENDRUBER
Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church

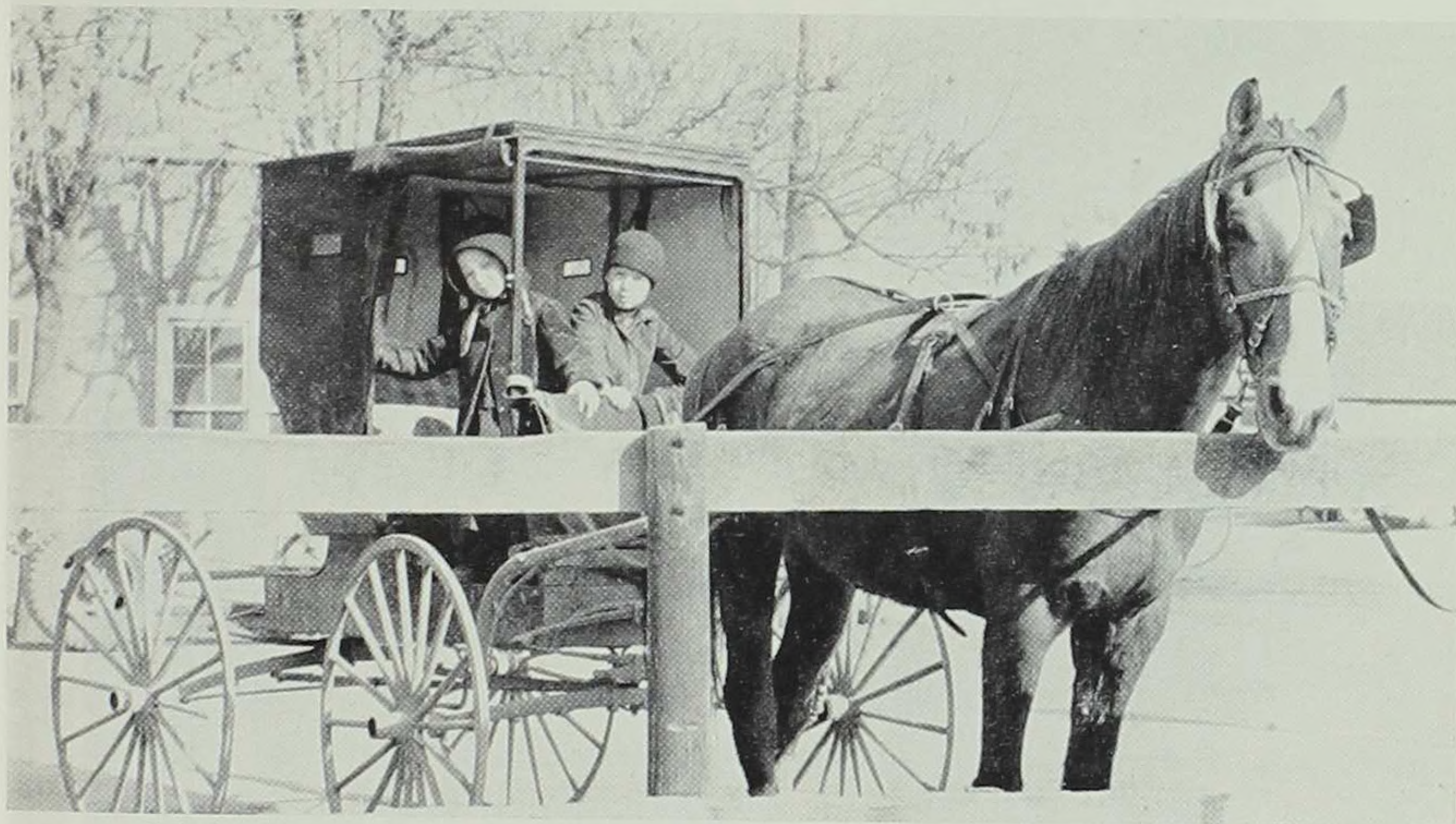


BISHOP and MRS. ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER
Upper Deer Creek Mennonite Church

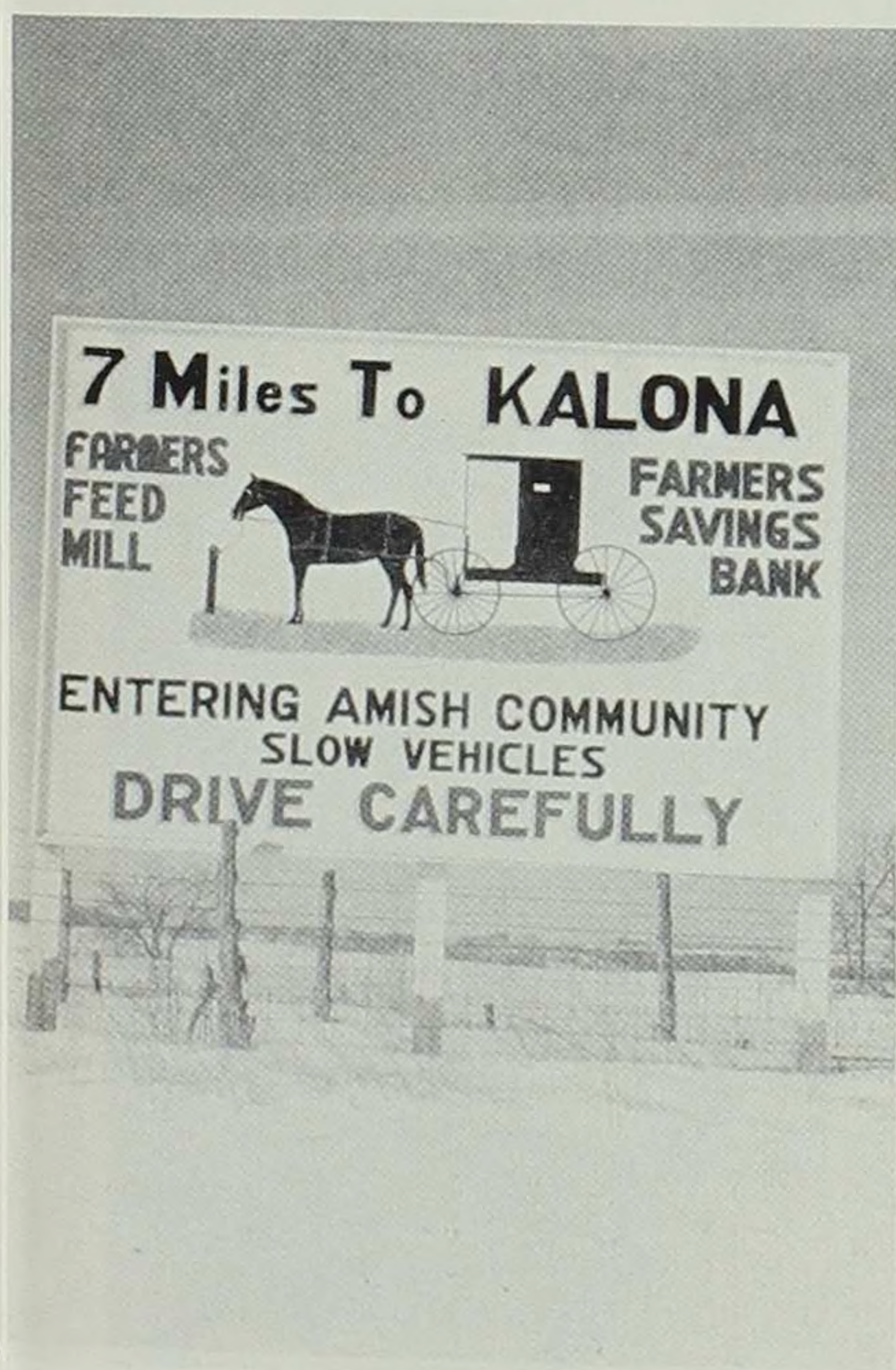
AMISH COSTUMES *ca.* 1950



From J. A. Hostetler, *Amish Life*.



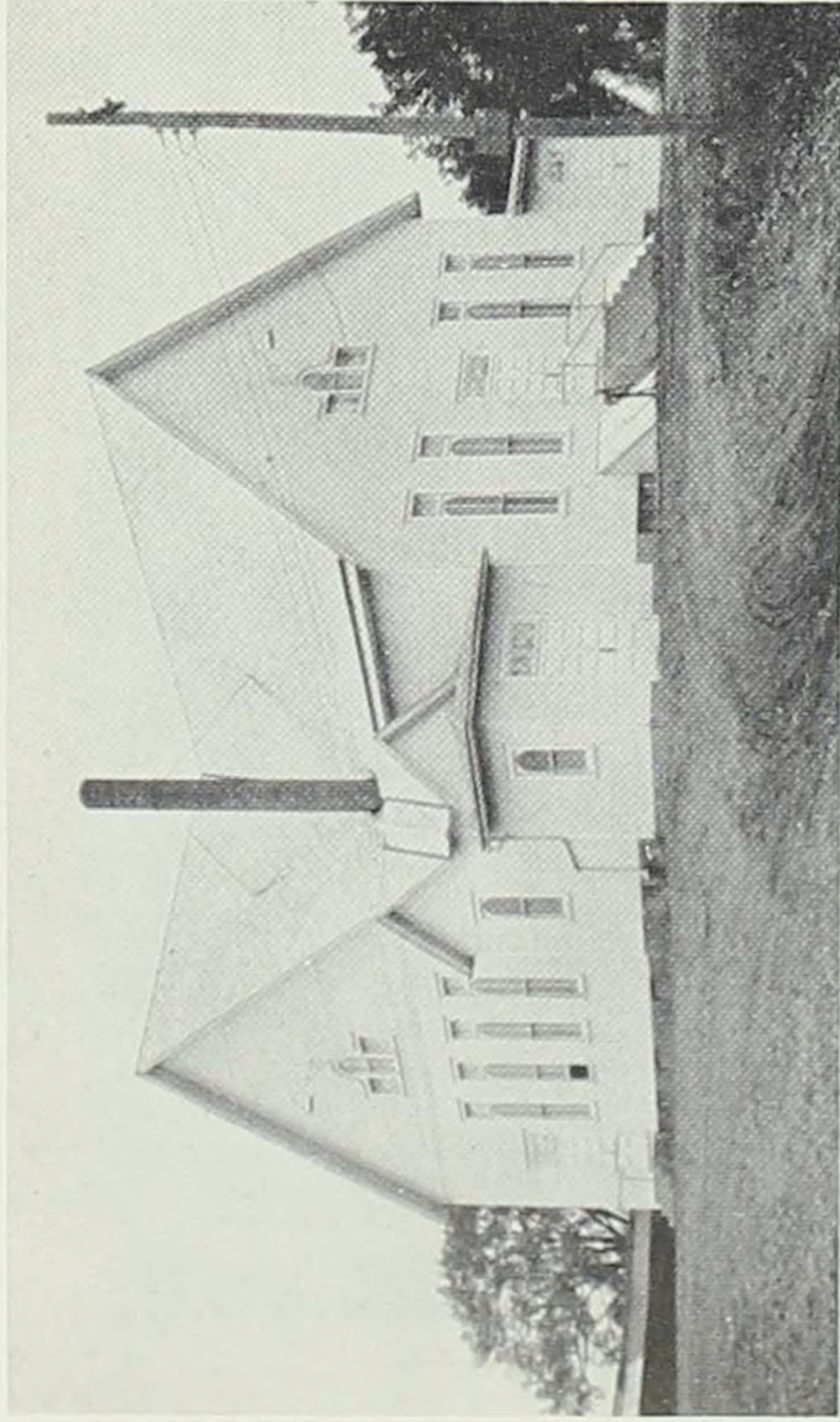
Amish buggy and children, Kalona, 1958.



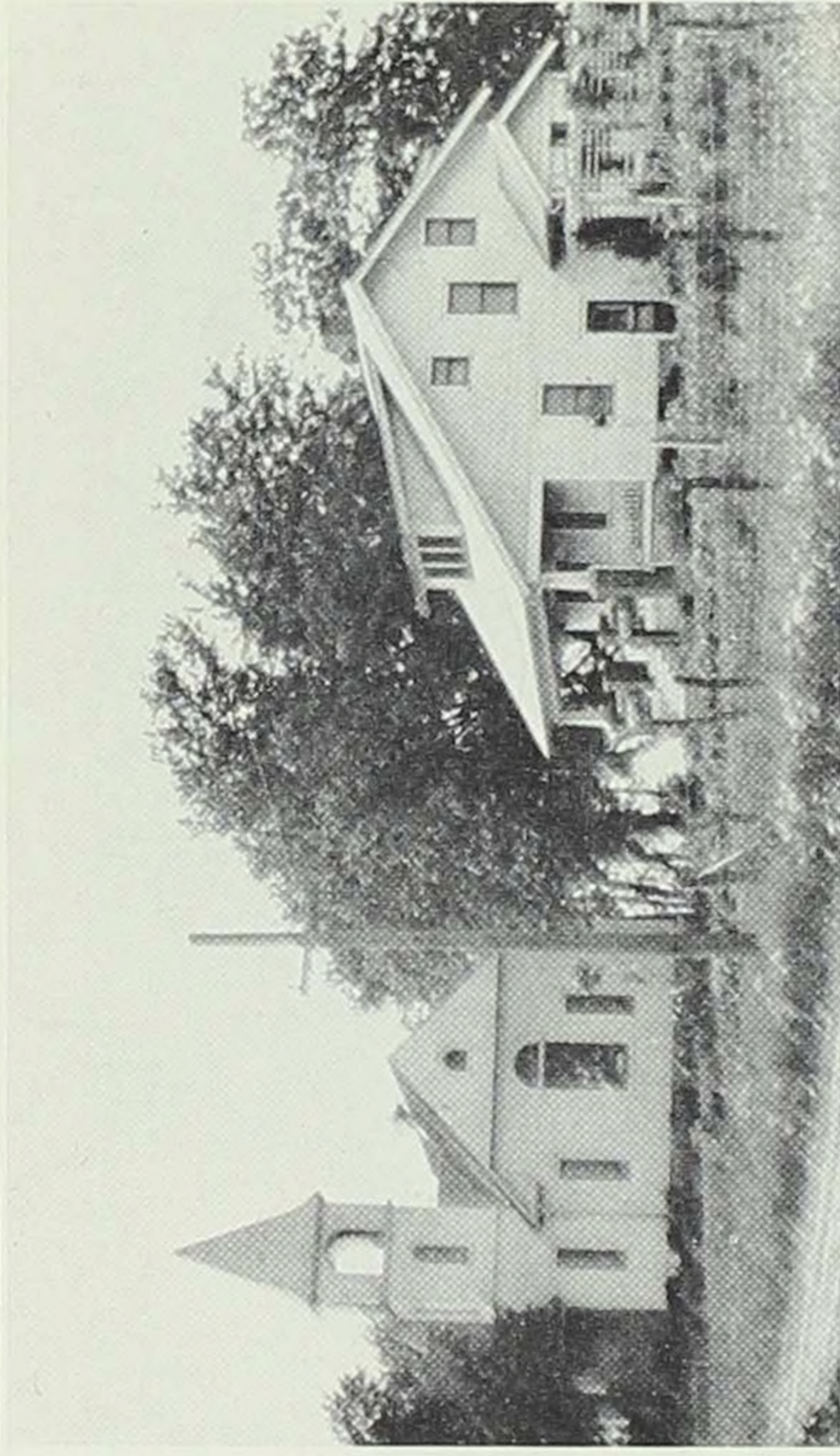
Road Sign on Highway 1 between Iowa City and Kalona.



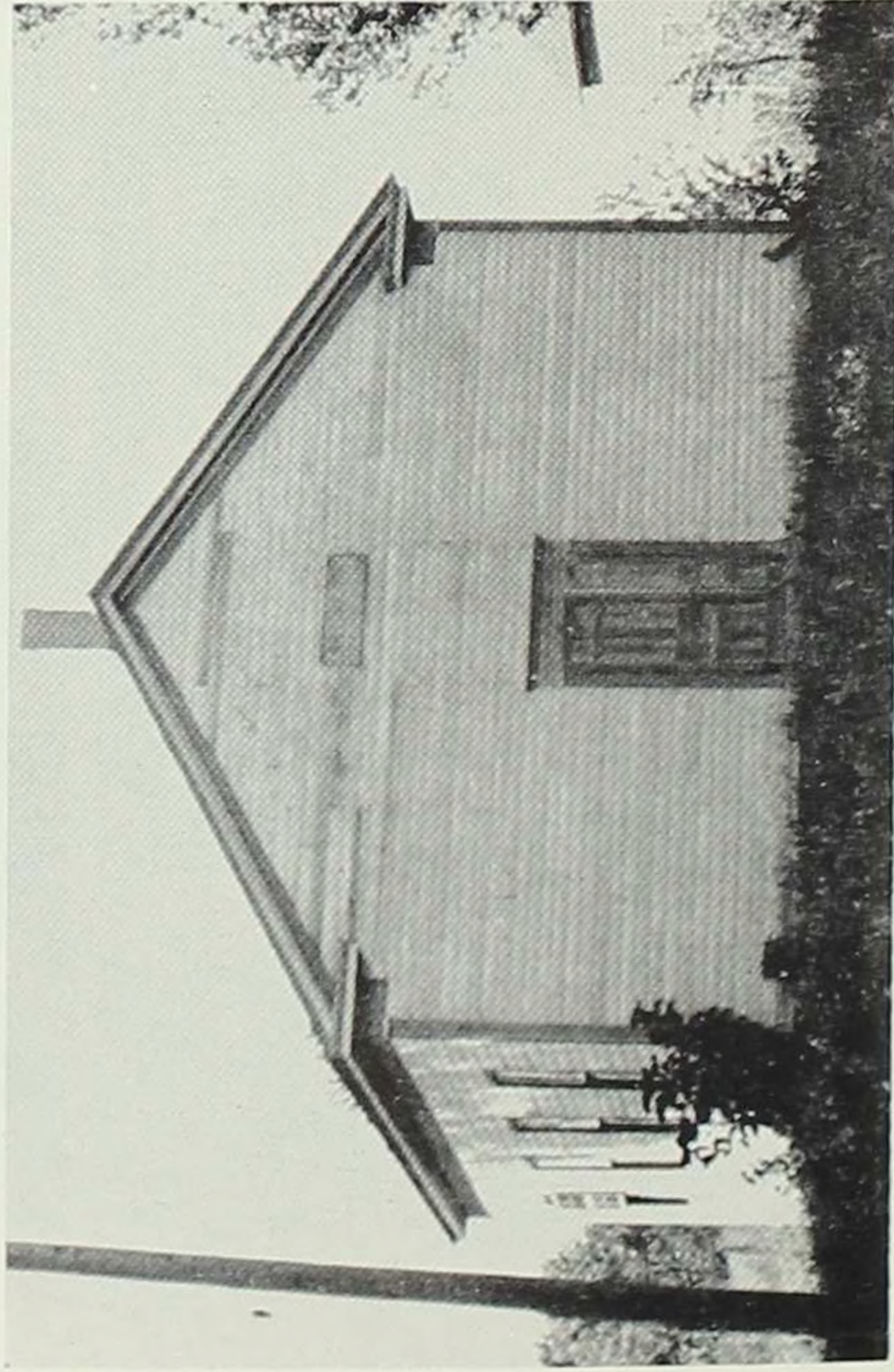
Dolls in authentic Amish children's costumes. Dressed by Mrs. Paul Snyder, Kalona.



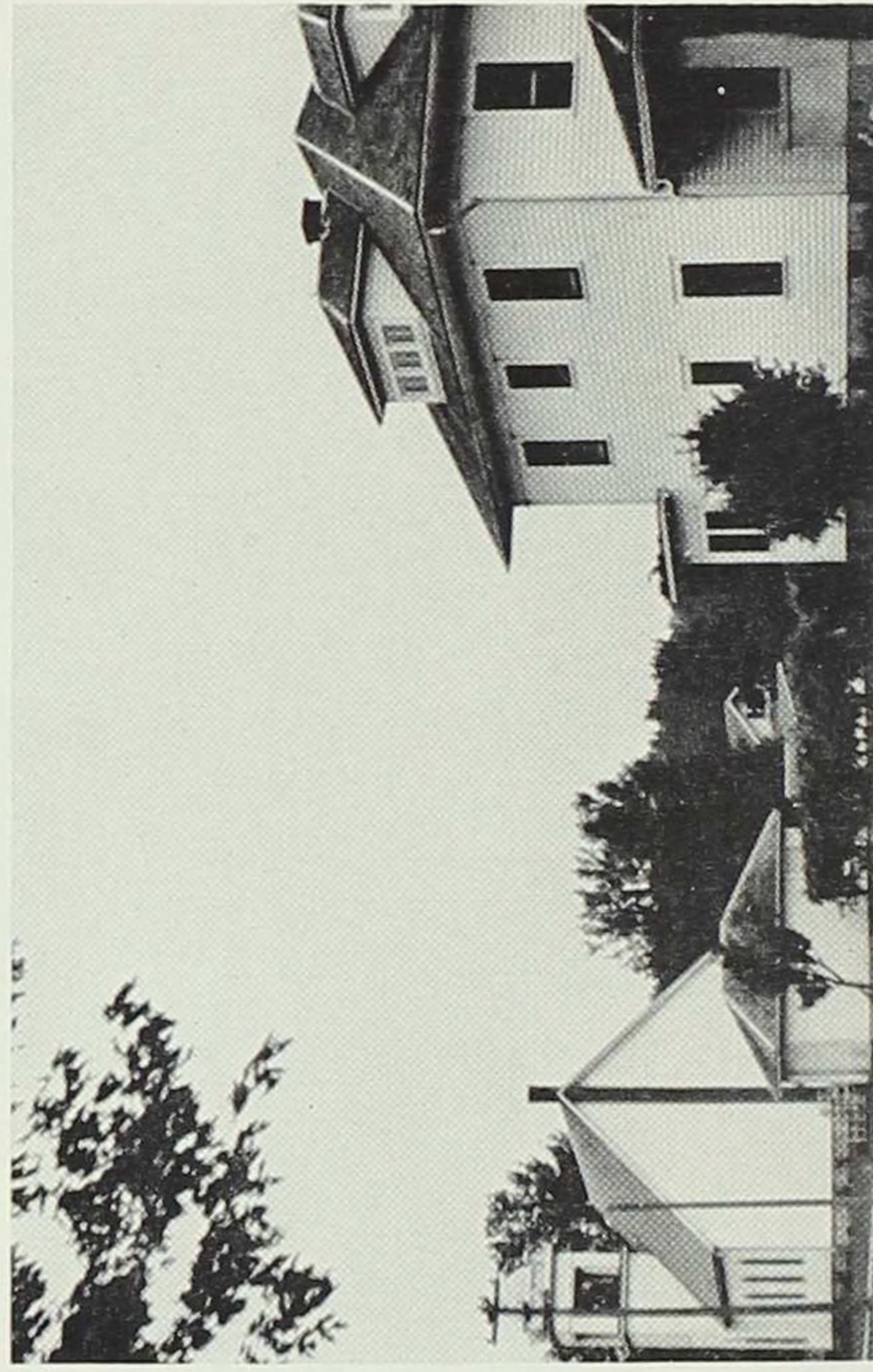
Sugar Creek Mennonite Church near Wayland.



Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church and parsonage near Wayland.



Abandoned West Point Mennonite Church in Lee County. Built—1863.



Zion Mennonite Church in Donnellson. Parsonage in foreground.

whatever else caught their fancy. More than a half century later the old settlers were still relating the incidents connected with Jim Jackson's raid.

For more than three-quarters of a century the Swartzendraver family was prominent in the life of the Pulaski Mennonite Church. Other well known names in the church community were Baughman, Ramseyer, Augspurger, Bachman, and Dieffenbach. In 1959 the church had 154 members, with Kenneth Shelly serving as its pastor. One of four General Conference Mennonite churches in southeastern Iowa, the Pulaski Mennonite Church met annually with the other three in fellowship occasions. Why this community has not grown as rapidly as the Henry and Johnson County settlements is not easily explained. The defection of 1866 is part of the answer. Later a contingent of Amish left the Pulaski community to establish a settlement at Goodland in Sherman County, Kansas, where they built a sod meeting house in 1889.

MELVIN GINGERICH

The Henry County Settlement

During the 1840's a number of Amish settled about thirty miles northwest of the West Point community along the border of Jefferson and Henry counties. A few years later several Amish families settled in southeastern Washington County. Although they lived in three counties, for a number of years they were members of the same Amish congregation.

The pioneer Amish immigrant in this area was Joseph Roth of Belfort, France, and later Wayne County, Ohio, who selected a claim in Jefferson County in 1841 and two years later with his family settled on his Iowa farm. The John Graber family, from France and Wayne County, Ohio, settled in the vicinity in 1844, Graber having selected his claim three years earlier. Other members of the Roth and Graber families moved to northeastern Jefferson County before the end of the decade. The Eglys, Klopfensteins, Brechbiels, Redigers, and Hostetlers were members of the community before 1860. The small community in Jefferson County never had an organized church although Deacon Peter Klopfenstein of their own number occasionally preached. It eventually became a part of the Henry County Amish church.

It is not definitely known who the first Amish settler in Henry County was but in 1847 Daniel Conrad of Wayne County, Ohio, purchased 160 acres of land a few miles west of Trenton. In 1849 his cousin Martin Conrad bought 160 acres southwest of the present town of Wayland. John Roth, a brother of Joseph Roth of Jefferson County, bought 320 acres west of Trenton in 1849. In 1850 John Eicher bought land near the present town of Rome. During the next decade families bearing these names settled in the community: Conrad, Hostetler, Eicher, Baughman, Zehr, Bechler, Christner, Roth, Rich, Klopfenstein, Kauffman, Goldsmith, von Gunden, Garrick, Widmer, Wenger.

The first minister to serve in the Henry County Amish community was Elder Joseph Goldsmith who settled south of Trenton, moving here from Lee County in 1855. He resided in the county until his death in 1876.

Soon after the beginning of their settlement around Trenton, the Amish bought land in Marion Township, in southern Washington County. In 1851 Jacob Leichty and Martin Eicher purchased farms in Marion Township. By 1854 or earlier they had been joined by Christian Eicher, Daniel Conrad, Daniel Eicher, Christian Wenger, Christian Conrad, Martin Conrad, Benjamin Eicher, and Christian Sommer. Before 1860 the additional names of Schlatter, Schrock, Brenneman,

Alliman, Graber, Hege, Tschantz, and Wittrig were added to the church community. Most of these families had an Alsace-Lorraine or Swiss background and many spoke French as well as Swiss-German, in contrast to the Pennsylvania or Palatinate German spoken in the other chief Amish community in Iowa — the one in Johnson County.

The first church service in the Henry-Washington County settlement was held in the home of Daniel Conrad by Elder Joseph Goldsmith who was living in Lee County at that time. It was thought that Goldsmith organized a church in the community in 1852 or 1853. Services were held in the homes of members and were alternated between the Henry and Washington County neighborhoods. Little is known about the early history of the community because in contrast to other Amish churches, no records are extant. The *Washington Press* of January 29, 1868, however, stated that the German settlers in Marion Township were "sober and industrious, good neighbors, honest in their dealings, and in their moral and religious deportment are a pattern to the older settlers."

As the two settlements in Henry and Washington counties increased in size, agitation began for the formation of separate church organizations, and apparently two loose organizations were formed with Goldsmith in charge of both. Gold-

smith was assisted in the Trenton church by preacher John von Gunden, and in Marion Township by Joseph Wittrig and Christian Bechler. There were certain differences of opinion between the two groups which led the Marion Township fellowship to call in a church leader from Illinois who organized the congregation as a separate church in the fall of 1862 and ordained Benjamin Eicher to the office of preacher and Samuel Hege to the office of deacon.

Eicher, a school teacher by profession, was to exert a strong influence in this church for many years. To this day it is generally referred to as the Eicher church, and officially it is the Eicher Emmanuel Church. Eicher was more progressive than his Amish fellow ministers and gradually his congregation drew away from the other churches with which it had been associated in conference activities. After 1874 the Eicher church followed an independent course until it affiliated itself with the Middle District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1892.

With the growth in membership of this congregation a second church was organized in Wayland in 1900, and the two congregations were usually referred to as "the Eicher churches," although they were united under one minister until 1927, when two organizations were formed. Since that time each has had its own pastor. In 1950 a considerable number of members withdrew from

the Eicher Emmanuel Church to form the non-Mennonite fundamentalist congregation — Fern Cliff Free Evangelical Church. In 1959 the membership of the Eicher church was 121, with H. E. Nunemaker serving as pastor. The Wayland Mennonite Church had 336 members in the same year, with Loris Habegger as pastor.

During the mid-nineteenth century American Amish gradually came to be divided into the conservative and progressive camps. A series of Amish ministers' conferences held yearly between 1862 and 1878 failed to reconcile their differences. The conservatives came to be known as the Old Order Amish Mennonites and the progressives as the Amish Mennonites. The churches in Johnson County leaned toward the conservative side while those in Henry-Washington county were inclined to be progressive. Thus the term Old Order Amish was never applied to the Amish of the latter area.

The church in the Trenton area of Henry County, however, was not as progressive as the Eicher church and consequently as was stated above these two congregations drifted apart. Under the sound leadership of Goldsmith's successors in the office of elder or bishop, the Henry County church has experienced a steady growth, maintaining its basic Mennonite doctrines but making adaptations of its practices to fit new conditions. Joseph Schlegel served as elder from 1868 to 1879, Se-

bastian Gerig from 1879-1916, Simon Gingerich from 1916-57, and Vernon Gerig since 1953.

Up to 1871 the Trenton congregation had worshipped in the homes of its members, but in that year a church was built about one and one-half miles southeast of Marshall, now Wayland. Because it was built near the Sugar Creek, it was long known as the Sugar Creek Amish Mennonite Church. After the Western District Amish Mennonite Conference, to which Sugar Creek belonged, was merged with the Mennonite Conferences of the "Old" Mennonites in the area west of the Mississippi in 1921, the term Amish was dropped from the name of the Sugar Creek church.

Because the membership became too large for the meetinghouse, the Sugar Creek congregation in 1949 built a second church (Bethel) three and one-half miles north of Wayland. In 1959 the membership of Sugar Creek was 409 and of Bethel 159. A few years ago the two churches built a fellowship center on the grounds of the Sugar Creek church. This is used for young people's gatherings, family reunions, Sunday school classes, and other activities. More recently two additional churches have been organized by the members of the Bethel and Sugar Creek congregations. These are Eureka, south of Washington, which has 32 members, and Pleasant View, in Mt. Pleasant, which had 29 members in 1959. The total membership of these four congregations, all stem-

ming from the old Sugar Creek church, was 619.

Although these four churches and the two "Eicher" churches of the community belong to two branches of Mennonites, there has been considerable intermarriage between their members and a growing cooperation. The Mennonite Central Committee represents both groups and a number of relief goods projects are carried on jointly. Mennonite Disaster Service of Southeast Iowa and Northeast Missouri is an inter-Mennonite agency representing all Mennonite groups in these regions. This agency is organized to send a corps of workers into areas where storms, floods, or fires have brought disaster and suffering.

Among the persons widely known in Mennonite circles who spent their early years in the Henry County settlement are the brothers C. L. and J. D. Graber, sons of Daniel Graber, who was for many years a preacher in the Sugar Creek Mennonite Church. C. L. Graber was a long-time business manager of Goshen College and has participated in Mennonite foreign relief projects in the Middle East, the Philippines, China, Europe, Puerto Rico, and Paraguay. J. D. Graber served many years as a Mennonite missionary in central India and is now the executive secretary of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. Dr. Olive Wyse of Wayland has served on the Goshen College faculty since 1926.

MELVIN GINGERICH

The Johnson County Community

By far the largest Iowa Amish and Mennonite community in 1959 was the one in Johnson County, and in the adjoining counties of Iowa and Washington. It had its beginnings in 1845 when Daniel P. Guengerich of Fairfield County, Ohio, and his half-brother, Joseph J. Swartzendruber, of Allegany County, Maryland, selected claims along Deer Creek in what was later to be Washington Township in Johnson County. As steamboats had been coming up the Iowa River occasionally since 1841, the Amish settlers believed that Iowa City, then the capital of the Territory of Iowa, would offer exceptional trading privileges. They selected southwestern Johnson County because of its good soil, its ample supply of timber, and its rolling well-drained land.

In the following spring Guengerich and his family, William Wertz and family, and Swartzendruber settled near where Joetown, or Amish, is now located. Immediately they procured basswood in the nearby timber and made the necessary household furniture and then did their spring planting. Having done these necessary tasks, the men walked to Dubuque where they officially entered their land claims.

When the settlers contracted the ague that first summer, Swartzendruber became discouraged and moved back to Maryland, where he was married. He returned to Iowa, with his family, in 1856. The Guengerich and Wertz family were often discouraged in their early years in Iowa but they were so impoverished that they could not have left Iowa had they desired to do so. One year Guengerich lost the team of horses he had brought with him from the east and had to trade his pocket knife to have his corn cultivated. Later he obtained an ox team which he used for many years, even driving them to church.

The third family, the Peter Millers of Knox County, Ohio, joined the settlement in the fall of 1846. The community was still too small to have a church organization and it was not until the fall of 1849 that the first Sunday service was held for them. At that time Joseph Goldsmith and Christian Schwarzentruer from Lee County conducted services in Guengerich's fourteen by sixteen foot log house.

By the spring of 1851 there were more than a dozen Amish families in the community and so Joseph Goldsmith organized a church for them. Their first communion service was held a year later, with Goldsmith in charge. At that time Frederick Swartzendruber was ordained to the office of deacon, the first Amish ordination in the community. A year later his father Jacob Swartz-

endruber was ordained bishop or elder of the Johnson County church.

With the coming of the Daniel Schoettler (Shetler) family from Fairfield County, Ohio, in the spring of 1850, the stream of steady migration began which in time made the Johnson County Amish settlement the largest west of the Mississippi. The Benedict Miller and John Kempf families arrived in the autumn of 1850. Eleven families arrived during the next year. They were Preacher Jacob Swartzendruber and wife and his son Frederick and family, from Maryland; Preacher John Gingerich and family, his two sons Daniel J. and Christian J. with their families, and his son-in-law, Henry Stutzman, and wife, all from Fairfield County, Ohio; Preacher Peter Brenneman and family, Isaac Eash and family, John Roth (Rhodes) and family, John Schlabaugh and wife, and Jacob P. Guengerich and wife, all from Holmes County, Ohio. The first six families arrived in May and the last five in September.

As Amish church services are held in homes instead of meetinghouses, the size of a congregation is determined by the measurements of an average house. Before 1863 the church had grown too large to meet in one dwelling house and so the membership was divided into two groups, those living in Washington Township and in Iowa County belonging to the Deer Creek church and those in Sharon Township and northern Wash-

ington County belonging to the Sharon church. By 1877 the churches were again divided, this time into Upper Deer Creek and Lower Deer Creek and North Sharon and South Sharon.

When the Deer Creek churches again faced the problem of dividing in 1890, they decided to construct churches, a practice contrary to Amish custom. This innovation made unnecessary further subdivisions, but the Sharon churches have continued the practice of dividing geographically into units small enough to make possible home worship services. In 1959 there were the following Old Order Amish congregations in the Kalona neighborhood: Northwest District, Northeast District, Southwest District, Middle District West, Middle District East, and Southeast District. The membership of the districts ranged from 57 to 83, with a total of 447 in the six districts.

Although it was understood that the building of churches by the Deer Creek group would not affect fellowship between them and the Sharon districts, such did not prove to be the case and gradually the two groups drifted apart with the Sharon churches remaining strictly Old Order Amish Mennonites and the Deer Creek group gradually dropping the "Old Order" from their name. In time differences in church regulations and restrictions brought the Deer Creek churches into separate camps, with the Upper Deer Creek Church remaining conservative and becoming a member of

the Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference in 1915.

The Lower Deer Creek church broke completely with the Old Order in 1912 over the issue of the introduction of modern conveniences, particularly the telephone, which the Amish code of simplicity of life has not permitted. From that year until 1917 when it was admitted into the Western District Amish Mennonite Conference, Lower Deer Creek followed an independent and a more progressive course than its sister church, Upper Deer Creek. In 1921 it became a member of the Iowa-Nebraska Mennonite Conference.

In recent years the Upper Deer Creek church has been receiving a considerable number of members from the Old Order Amish community to the east in Sharon Township. As the center of population of the church membership shifted eastward, a new church, named Fairview, was constructed six miles northeast of Kalona in 1936. More recently, in 1957, a third church, Sunnyside, was built east of Kalona. The membership of the three churches in 1959 was 505.

As early as the seventies certain families were becoming dissatisfied with the strict discipline enforced by the Old Order Amish leaders and began holding separate meetings north of Kalona. Some of these families transferred their membership to the more liberal Sugar Creek church in Henry County. At this time, in 1878, one of their group,

Noah Troyer, began preaching in his sleep, or in an unconscious condition. Large audiences came to hear him and the *Iowa City Republican* reported the phenomenon and printed a book of his sermons.

This preaching by an unordained man was frowned upon by the Old Order leaders and helped accelerate the growing division between the two groups. When preacher Christian Warey moved into the community in 1884 he became the leader of the dissatisfied group and was ordained their bishop in 1885. At first this new congregation was known as the Union Amish Mennonite Church because its members came from the various Amish congregations in the settlement. To accommodate the members living in Iowa County, a separation congregation was formed in 1897. Henceforth there was the East Union church and the West Union church. These were members of the Western District Amish Mennonite Conference but the word "Amish" was dropped with the merger of the progressive Amish and the Mennonites into a united conference in 1921.

The Union churches have established other congregations in the community. In 1958 members of the East Union Mennonite Church founded the Kalona Mennonite Church. The Wellman Mennonite Church, organized in 1935, and the Daytonville Mennonite Church (1951) are partly the outgrowth of West Union Church activity. As a result of West Union missionary activity the Par-

nell Mennonite Church, started in 1948, became a full-fledged, organized congregation in 1958. The total membership of these six churches, with their origins in the Union church of 1884, is now 1,324.

Other Mennonite churches in the area owe their origins to the united efforts of a number of the above congregations. Such a one is the Iowa City Mennonite Church, established in 1927, which in 1959 had 89 members. Established through the mission efforts of the community were the Iowa Valley Mennonite Church (1949) near Lone Tree, which in 1959 had 33 members, and the Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church near Hills, dating from 1948, but organized as a separate congregation in 1956. It had 15 members in 1959.

A near neighbor to the larger Mennonite community of the area is the Liberty Mennonite Church, about four miles southeast of South English, in Keokuk County. Perhaps as early as the 1860's, Mennonite families by the name of Rhodes, Hildebrand, Wenger, Herr, and Grove, from Virginia and Pennsylvania, had migrated to Keokuk County but as there was no Mennonite church in the community, they united with other churches.

When S. B. Wenger came to the community in 1879 he found among them some interest in establishing a Mennonite church and decided to promote a congregation. Moving to Iowa in 1881 and living there to the end of his life with the exception

of the years 1892-95, when he resided in Cass County, Missouri, he did not see the realization of his dream until December 7, 1898, when the nine members in the community formed the Liberty church. Earlier Mennonite traveling evangelists at the invitation of Wenger had visited the community occasionally and had baptized members. As the community was Mennonite, and not Amish, the congregation upon organization at once became a member of the Missouri Mennonite Conference, which later became the Missouri-Iowa Mennonite Conference.

In the early years there was a limited amount of fellowship between them and the Amish of Iowa and Johnson counties, but with the merger of the more progressive Amish churches with the Mennonite churches of the trans-Mississippi area in 1921, the West Union, East Union, Lower Deer Creek, and Liberty churches were members of the same conference and fellowship increased. With the larger Mennonite settlement in recent years reaching west of Wellman, the community has almost reached the South English Mennonite settlement. In 1959 the Liberty church had 67 members. Its impact upon the larger Mennonite brotherhood had come largely through the influence of S. B. Wenger, who although only a layman, had for many years written stimulating articles for the church periodicals.

Associated in the minds of many Iowans are the

Old Order Amish communities of Johnson and Buchanan counties. In 1914-15 nine Johnson County Old Order Amish families moved approximately seventy-five miles northward to Buchanan County where, in the vicinity of Hazelton, they established a community, which by 1959 had grown into two Hazelton, one Oelwein, and two Fairbanks districts, with a combined membership of 347. Most of the members live in Buchanan County but the settlement has spilled over into Blackhawk and other nearby counties. The reasons for the new settlement lay in dissatisfaction with the Johnson County Amish churches and the desire for cheaper lands.

Later, families from Kansas, Wisconsin, and Indiana joined the settlement. Their churches are more conservative in dress and in a number of other practices than are those of Johnson County. After a period of strained relations between the two groups, peace and fellowship were restored. Earlier, similar attempts on the part of Johnson County Amish to establish new colonies in northwestern Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana, had ended in failure, but the Buchanan settlement has evidently withstood the test of time and is solidly planted.

Only a few institutions have been established by those in the Johnson County Amish-Mennonite community. One of these was the German School Association of the Old Order of Amish Menno-

nites, founded in 1890. The object of the Association was "to teach and promulgate the German language and the religious principles and discipline of the Amish Church." As long as church services were conducted in the German language, their youth had to be taught to read and understand German. Formerly this had been done in the home and in the Sunday school but with the strengthening of the public schools program, the Amish leaders felt that a more concerted effort must be made to retain the German which was the language of their religious literature.

In 1890 a school was built for this purpose near Deer Creek on the road between the Upper and Lower Deer Creek churches. At first winter terms for older young people were held but eventually the program shifted to a summer term for children and early adolescents. For a number of years each of the Deer Creek churches had its own building but the program came to an end in 1914 in spite of the valiant efforts of S. D. Guengerich, its principal promoter, to defend the institution. The writer can well remember attending "Dutch College," as it was popularly called, during summer "vacations" and of learning to read and write German before he reached his teens. The Old Order in Sharon Township still carries on a German school program although it has not been as well publicized as were the schools in the Deer Creek districts.

A more extensive program of church-sponsored education was inaugurated with the opening of the Iowa Mennonite School in the autumn of 1945 on a nine-acre campus across the road from the Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, about eight miles northwest of Kalona. Its three story brick building and its 80 by 140 foot gymnasium auditorium seating 1800 serve a variety of community needs. By commencement time, 1958, a total of 317 young people had been graduated from its four year high school course, with almost fifty per cent going on to college. Paul T. Guengerich, a local man and a minister in the West Union Mennonite Church, with a master's degree from the University of Iowa, has been principal of the school since 1949. The enrollment in 1958-59 was 221 and its teaching staff numbered fourteen.

The most recent institution in the community is the Pleasantview Home for the Aged at Kalona, a 46-room home built and operated by the Mennonite Benevolent Association consisting of thirty-three members representing the Mennonites of the community. The home was built in 1957-58 at an approximate cost of \$250,000 and was opened for service on April 14, 1958. It serves both Mennonites and non-Mennonites. That its popularity has already been established is proved by the long list of applicants waiting to be admitted as guests of the home.

From the Johnson County Mennonite commu-

nity have come a long list of men who were known throughout the church from coast to coast. The first well known leaders were three generations of Swartzendruber Amish ministers, Jacob, his son Frederick, and Frederick's son Jacob F. Swartzendruber. Able men and educated beyond the level of their fellow ministers, they were widely known and influential in Amish circles. Jacob F.'s grandson, A. Lloyd Swartzendruber, is the present leader of the East Union Mennonite Church.

S. D. Guengerich (1837-1929) was one of the most influential laymen ever produced in the Amish church of America. A school teacher-farmer-printer by profession, he was an early leader in the Sunday school movement and in the German school organization. In 1878 he launched the monthly *Christlicher Jugendfreund*, a periodical for Amish youth. Later he was the editor and manager of the Amish *Herold der Wahrheit*. He was largely responsible for creating interest in foreign relief work and missionary enterprises among the Amish and carried on a correspondence with many foreign missionaries which he shared with his readers and friends. For more than fifty years he lived on his Johnson County farm about two miles northwest of the village of Joetown.

Abner G. Yoder, who moved to Johnson County in 1866 from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, was a widely known Amish bishop. His grandson Abner G. Yoder (1879-1942) of Parnell, Iowa,

held important positions in the Mennonite General Conference and was its moderator in 1937-1939. The latter's son, Gideon, is an elder and a professor in Hesston College, a Mennonite school in central Kansas. Dr. Edward Yoder (1893-1945) was at one time a public school teacher in the Johnson County community and later became a professor of Latin in two Mennonite colleges and finally an editor and research scholar in the church's Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa.

Perhaps the most widely known son of the community is Dr. Sanford C. Yoder, president-emeritus of Goshen College. Before becoming president of Goshen College in 1923, Yoder was pastor of the East Union Mennonite church near Kalona, and through the years has held many positions of leadership in his denomination. The author of travel books, he is a gifted writer and story-teller.

Dr. Guy F. Hershberger was a public school teacher in Johnson County before becoming a professor of history at Goshen College. Hershberger is executive secretary of two of the church wide committees of Mennonite General Conference. Author of a number of books, his latest production *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations* has received wide recognition beyond Mennonite circles.

Dr. Glen Miller, Professor of Chemistry at Goshen College, grew up in Johnson County and

taught school there before joining the Goshen College staff in 1925. It is doubtful whether any other Mennonite settlement of comparable size in America has produced as many doctors of philosophy as has the Johnson County Amish-Mennonite community. Beginning with S. F. Gingerich, a grandson of Elder Joseph Goldsmith of Lee County, who received his doctor's degree at the University of Michigan in 1909, at least ten additional native sons of the community have won this highest university degree.

MELVIN GINGERICH

Mahaska and Counties West

Although there are or have been Mennonite churches in at least eight Iowa counties in addition to the ones mentioned above, only three of the six counties now have churches. Treating the six areas geographically, the nearest settlement to those already mentioned was in Mahaska County, where Preacher Peter Beutler and family from Ashland County, Ohio, settled in Scott Township in 1852. Other Beutler families and the Jacob Gehman family moved to this area during the 1850's. The descendants of the three original Beutler families are known now as Butlers and for many years have been influential in and around Oskaloosa.

During the sixties Mennonite ministers occasionally visited the settlement and reported their trips in the *Herald of Truth*, a Mennonite periodical printed in Elkhart, Indiana. In June, 1867, Jost Bally and J. M. Brenneman visited the settlement. Brenneman reported that fifteen members participated in the communion service, and that Deacon Jacob K. Beutler was chosen preacher that day. In 1871 Matthias Eby visited the Mahaska County settlement and conducted communion services for the Gehmans and the Beutlers.

The church always was small and never had a meetinghouse. Reports from the congregation occasionally appeared in the *Herald of Truth*, including Preacher Jacob K. Beutler's obituary in 1892. During those years only two marriages were performed in the community by Mennonite preachers. The larger proportion of the Beutlers married non-Mennonites and joined other churches. Although they had some contacts with the ministers of the General Conference Mennonites (the group that began its conferences in Lee County in 1859) most of the contacts were with the "Old" Mennonites, the name often used for the group known officially as the Mennonite Church, the original and the largest group of Mennonites in America.

Farther west, in Polk County, a small Mennonite church was organized in the home of John B. Neuenschwander of Polk City in 1858. In August of that year Bishop Christian Sutter came into the community and ordained Neuenschwander to the office of deacon and Joseph Schroeder to the office of preacher. On the same trip he united in marriage Schroeder and Neuenschwander's daughter Anna. Schroeder was a talented young man, having been educated for the Catholic priesthood, although at the time of his ordination the church was not aware of his background. He represented the Polk City Mennonite Church in the General Conference of Mennonites held in Lee County in 1860.

How many years Schroeder preached for the Polk City church is not known but as late as 1865 he united a Mennonite couple in marriage. When it became known that he was secretly a Catholic, the church dismissed him. In 1893 Schroeder was buried in the Catholic cemetery of Des Moines.

Other families in the Polk City Mennonite community included Nussbaums, Beerys, Singers, Gehmans, Snyders, Geffelers, and Leichtys. On May 8, 1863, the visiting bishop Christian Sutter ordained John Singer to the office of preacher for the congregation. In 1865 the Polk City subscribers to the *Herald of Truth* were "Pre. Joseph Schroeder, Pre. John Singer, Jacob Gehman, John B. Neuenschwander, Peter Neuenschwander, and John Beutler." In 1868 John B. Neuenschwander moved to Moniteau County, Missouri. John Singer also moved to Missouri, very likely in the same year, and the church was left without leadership and passed out of existence.

Most of the other families evidently moved away also, and in 1933, when the writer interviewed Jacob Leichty, Jr., it was learned that he was likely the only survivor in the Polk City community that had attended Mennonite services in the area years earlier. Many years later a new Mennonite church was established in Polk County with the founding of the "Mennonite Fellowship" in Des Moines in 1956. The Fellowship had nine members in 1959.

In southwestern Iowa the Mennonites began a community in Page County in the year 1864 when the families of John S. Good, Jacob Horning, and Henry Hoffman, all from Allen County, Ohio, numbering twenty-four persons, settled there. Bishop John M. Brenneman of Allen County had been unwilling to let them leave his church without providing a preacher for the new settlement and consequently ordained John Good to that office before the three families left Ohio. On a number of occasions Brenneman visited the settlement and maintained a fatherly interest in it. He submitted the reports of these trips to the *Herald of Truth*, which furnish excellent source material for the history of the settlement.

During the first years of the community, Ohio relatives joined the Good family. Within the first two decades they were joined by the Fergusons, Snivelys, Shellenbergers, Lapps, Gehmans, and Eberlys. When the writer visited the community in the 1930's, only a very few Good, Horning, and Eberly descendants were left in the county. Some of the families had moved back to Illinois and Pennsylvania, while others had gone on to Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska.

By 1866 the membership figure had reached twenty but by 1878 the number had declined to fourteen and in 1880 only nine members participated in the communion service. In 1879 John S. Good had been ordained bishop but he was never

an aggressive leader and when the young people could no longer understand his German sermons, many joined the more progressive English-speaking churches of the community. Some families moved away so that their sons could find Mennonite wives since, in the words of one of the older Mennonite residents of the community, there were "not enough Mennonite girls to go around." When Bishop John S. Good died in 1889 and preacher Andrew Good moved to Cass County, Missouri, in 1890, the church became practically extinct, although Mennonite evangelists occasionally visited the few remaining families during the nineties.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ had two churches in the area, one in Shambaugh, Page County, and the other in New Market, Taylor County. This branch of Mennonites was formed in 1883 by the union of the Evangelical United Mennonites and a branch of the Brethren in Christ known as the Swankites. They have been progressive in missionary activity, hold camp meetings similar to those of the Methodists a half century ago, and have been much influenced by Methodist practices and church organization. The Shambaugh church is an outgrowth of an early Brethren in Christ church. It became identified with the Mennonite Brethren in Christ in the 1880's. Its sister church, the New Market Mennonite Brethren in Christ congregation, was incorporated in

1894. A third church was established in Trenton, Henry County, in 1880, with a membership of fourteen. In 1947, however, the denomination changed its name to the United Missionary Church and thus they are no longer listed with the Mennonites.

In 1893 four Amish families from Johnson County settled near Clarion in Wright County. These were the families of Shem Swartzendruber, Christian Yoder, William Kreider and Bishop Solomon Swartzendruber. In the following two years at least ten other families joined them, with the names of Swartzendruber, Gingerich, Miller, Gunden, Yoder, Bender and Fisher. By 1902 the church reached its highest membership, when there were thirty-eight members. Their new church was dedicated in July, 1898, with a sermon in English by Daniel Johns of Goshen, Indiana. Disagreements between the church leaders divided the congregation into factions with the result that members began to move away and the church became extinct. In spite of the handicaps under which the church labored, at least four of the young men of the community later became Mennonite elders, and a number of others ministers.

In 1897-1898 several Amish Mennonite families settled in Pocahontas County, in the vicinity of Rolfe and Gilmore City. Coming from Illinois were the families of Joseph Good, Jacob Zimmerman, Joseph Zimmerman, Peter Miller, Joseph

Miller, and Henry Horsch. From Minnesota came the families of Andrew, Joseph, and Peter Shantz. They never had an organized church but Sebastian Gerig and Daniel Graber from the Sugar Creek church in Henry County preached for them at least once a year and the members occasionally attended services in the Wright County church as well as in the Manson Mennonite church, fifteen miles away. When Joseph Good moved to Henry County in 1902, the settlement began to break up.

In 1887 a "Stauffer" Mennonite settlement was begun in Osceola County when Bishop Jesse S. Bauman settled on his 480 acres in section 9 of Harrison Township. He was followed by his assistant pastor Josiah Martin, and by deacon Elias Bowman, all from Ontario, Canada, and by other families from Lancaster and Snyder counties, Pennsylvania, and from Ontario and Michigan.

The Stauffer Mennonites were a small, conservative group who separated from the Mennonite church at Groffdale, Pennsylvania, in 1846, as followers of Jacob Stauffer. This sect was always small and in 1959 numbered less than 500. Stressing simplicity and uniformity their houses and barns followed a common pattern so that many years after they had left Iowa, their community could be recognized by its distinctive architecture. Their little red church, built after 1894, was a symbol of their separation from the customs and standards of their non-Mennonite neighbors.

The economic success of Bishop Bauman caused him to accept modern inventions which had been prohibited in the Mennonite neighborhood, and to compromise his ideals in personal behaviour to the extent that the church turned against him and the congregation disintegrated, becoming extinct by 1915. So the names of Bauman, Brubacker, Martin, Auker, Gingrich, Stauffer, Weaver, Gregory, and Gehman have disappeared from Harrison Township.

A much more successful church was the one established in Calhoun County, in the vicinity of Manson. In 1892 and after, a number of families from Woodford and Bureau counties, Illinois, moved here to obtain cheap land and to settle where their children could procure farms. Among the first Amish Mennonite settlers were the families of Jacob Summers, Peter Ulrich, Catherine Ulrich, Joseph Eigsti, and Joseph Zook. Other family names added to the community in the early years were Baughman, Gingerich, Zehr, and Weiss. By 1936 the church enrollment had mounted to 328 but it later declined when a number of families moved to Pennsylvania. The church had had its greatest increase between 1911 and 1915 when nearly twenty families moved in from Illinois and Indiana. In 1939 the membership totalled 280.

The community started a Sunday school in 1896 but a church was not organized until October

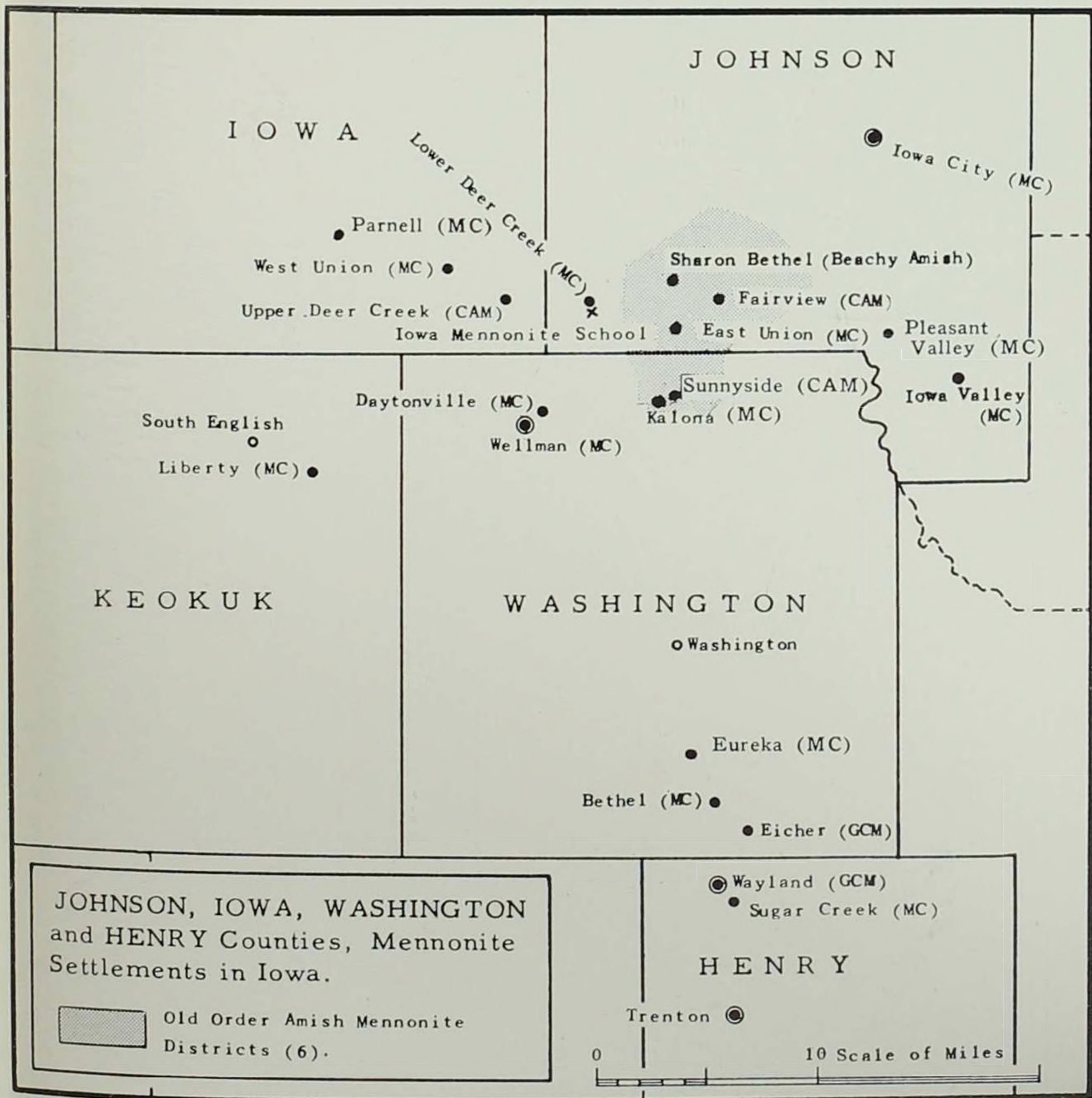
1897, partly because of the presence in the community of "Stuckey Amish," a group from Illinois who had discarded the dress regulations generally followed by Amish Mennonites. Later four or five Stuckey Amish families did join the Amish Mennonite congregation. In April, 1899, Joseph Eigsti was ordained to be the preacher in their church and in May, 1902, Andrew Zehr was ordained to assist Eigsti. In 1903 the congregation built a meetinghouse two and one-half miles southeast of Manson, known as the Cedar Creek Amish Mennonite Church. In 1913 a new church was erected in Manson, which was replaced by a beautiful, modern structure in 1957.

The church throughout its history has been progressive, early changing to the English language, adopting lesson quarterlies, establishing a Sunday school primary department, holding evangelistic meetings and evening meetings, organizing a sewing circle, having church choristers and quartet singing, conducting mission Sunday schools, and absorbing non-Mennonite Germans, Swedes, English, and Danes into its membership long before these practices were general in the majority of Amish Mennonite churches. The congregation became a member of the Iowa-Nebraska Mennonite Conference in 1921.

The latest Iowa county to be entered by the Mennonites is Woodbury. Southeast of Sioux City at Luton the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren

Church established a congregation in February, 1941, when about a dozen families from dried out areas near Jansen and Henderson, Nebraska, moved to this state. They were later joined by a few families from Colorado. In 1956 they had 38 members.

MELVIN GINGERICH



MENNONITE CHURCHES IN

IOWA

KEY

- 1a-Iowa Mennonite School
- 1-Mennonite Church
- 2-General Conference Mennonite Church
- 4-Old Order Amish community
- 5-Conservative (Amish) Mennonite Church

- 6-Beachy Amish Church
- 9-Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church

Johnson County
and surrounding
areas

