

Study of Religious Communism

The interesting second quarter of the nineteenth century is that to which belongs the era of communism based upon fraternity and rationalism. Some communistic settlements of this class may have been founded after 1850, but the faith in the regeneration of mankind through this sort of communism had already begun to wane by that date. The communistic settlements of this class, having as their watchwords "Liberty, equality, fraternity," are connected chiefly with three names, and I think we may indeed say three great names, even if these leaders were visionaries. These names are Robert Owen, a great manufacturer, at one time the "prince of cotton-spinners," the friend of lords and sovereigns, who was listened to with respect by the Congress of the United States; the French enthusiast, Etienne Cabet, who wrote his romance *Voyage to Icaria*, and in the year 1848 led to this country an advance guard of communists who, as they thought, were to redeem the world. The third among these leaders is the one who produced, after all, the greatest impression in the United States, namely, Charles Fourier, who captivated the hearts and imaginations of a considerable number of the noblest Americans — Americans whose

names adorn our history. We naturally think in this connection of Brook Farm, and of men like Horace Greeley, George William Curtis, Nathaniel Hawthorne, George Ripley, and William Henry Channing. Hinds mentions some twenty communistic settlements which attempted to carry out the fraternal ideas of Fourier. Alas! these all long since followed to the grave the settlements of Robert Owen and his friends.

Icaria, Iowa, existed over thirty years, although during that period there were many schisms, and several different colonies were established by those who broke away from the original settlement. No better account of a communistic society has probably ever been written than that given by Dr. Albert Shaw in his book *Icaria: a Chapter in the History of Communism*. Dr. Shaw describes it as the "most typical experiment in rational democratic communism." When Icaria ceased to exist the last communistic settlement founded on a non-religious (not necessarily irreligious or anti-religious) basis perished. Outside of Amana, the only communistic settlements of any note now existing in the United States are those of the Shakers, and their thirty-five communities do not all together have as many members as are embraced in the Amana Society. Amana, then, comprises more than half the communists of the United States, and in studying Amana we are examining the largest and strongest communistic settlement in the entire world.

The Amana Society is known also as the "Community of True Inspiration." The historians of the community trace the society back to the early years of the eighteenth century in Germany, connecting it with the pietism and mysticism of that period in German history. It is said that J. F. Rock established in 1714 in Hesse, Germany, a new religious sect which has now become the "Community of True Inspiration." It was not until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century, however, that these people began the practice of communism. While still in Germany, where they were persecuted on account of their religious beliefs, they assisted one another generously and displayed a spirit of communism. For self-protection and self-support they worked and lived together, communistic practices springing up unconsciously, without any thought of social transformation. In 1842 one of the members became inspired, as they thought, and in his inspiration recommended a community of goods. It seems evident that Cabet and Fourier both had made their influence felt upon these religious people. They felt moved to emigrate to this country in 1842, and in 1843 they made a settlement at Ebenezer, which is now in the suburbs of Buffalo. There they prospered for ten years, but felt that they were too much under the influence of the world near such a large and rapidly growing city, and decided to emigrate to some quieter place in the then "Far West." Finally selection was made

of a large tract of land southeast of the central part of the State, along both sides of the Iowa River, where they now live. They have added to their domain until it embraces 26,000 acres of fine land, including some 10,000 acres of forests, while their numbers have increased until there are nearly 1800 souls among them, and they occupy seven villages—namely, Amana, West Amana, South Amana, East Amana, Middle Amana, High Amana, and Homestead.

The community was incorporated in Iowa in 1859, under the name of the Amana Society, and their main purpose and central thoughts cannot be better described than in the following words quoted from their constitution:

“That the foundation of our civil organization is and shall remain forever God, the Lord, and the faith, which He worked in us; . . .

“That the land purchased here, and that may hereafter be purchased, shall be and remain a common estate and property, with all improvements thereupon and all appurtenances thereto, as also with all the labor, cares, troubles and burdens, of which each member shall bear his allotted share with a willing heart. . . .

“Agriculture and the raising of cattle and other domestic animals, in connection with some manufactures and trades, shall under the blessing of God form the means of sustenance for this Society. Out of the income of the land and the other

branches of industry the common expenses of the Society shall be defrayed.

"The surplus, if any, shall from time to time be applied to the improvement of the common estate of the Society, to the building and maintaining of meeting and schoolhouses, printing establishments, to the support and care of the old, sick, and infirm members of the Society, to the founding of a business and safety fund, and to benevolent purposes in general."

Like the Puritans and Pilgrims who settled New England, the members of the Community of True Inspiration recognize God as the foundation of their social order, and regard His service as the chief end of man. Like the Puritans, too, there is a pronounced strain of asceticism in their beliefs and practices. This earth is a vale of tears, a period of probation during which the children of God are chiefly concerned with the preparation for a future paradise.

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon any peculiar features in the theology of this religious society. They hold to Christianity, and in the main as ordinarily accepted by the various evangelical Christian bodies. In some particulars, however, they resemble the Quakers more closely than any other Christian denomination. They hold baptism to be purely spiritual, and consequently do not baptize with water. On the other hand, they celebrate the Lord's Supper, practice feet washing,

and enjoy love feasts, according to the manner, as they claim, of primitive Christians. Like the Quakers they are opposed to war, and regard oaths as inadmissible. They also object to all wordly plays and recreations which divert the mind from God, and practice extreme simplicity in dress. These characteristics of simplicity and fraternal communism follow them one by one as they are laid away in the grave. Each member takes his place in the cemetery according to his death, being laid next to the one who died last, and each grave is marked by a simple white slab, upon which we find inscribed only the name and age of the deceased. Their two great leaders in this country have been Christian Metz and Barbara Heinemann Landmann, and I was interested in searching out their graves. The slabs which marked them were like all the others, save that they seemed to be even smaller than most of them.

The society is called the Society of True Inspiration because they believe in the continuity of inspiration, but they do not believe that all inspiration is true inspiration; in other words, the spirits are to be tested. Their great movements have been directed by their inspired members, but with the death of Barbara Landmann in 1883 inspiration has ceased up to the present.

It is the firm belief of the leaders of the Amana people that religion is the necessary foundation of communism, and that their own communism is

simply an outgrowth of their religious life. The most fundamental thing with them, then, is not communism, but religion. The ideas which underlie rational, democratic communism have but little sympathy with them. They have their elders in their church; and the trustees, in whom is confided chief power, are elected from among the elders. As one of their elders told me, and told me truly, the rock upon which their organization is built is obedience. As the three words which give form and direction to democratic communism are liberty, equality, and fraternity, so the three words which express what is most fundamental in this Christian communism are authority, obedience, fraternity. The authority which exists in Amana is not on its industrial side so strict and exacting as in a great modern factory. I should say that it is distinctly milder in this particular than the authority which I witnessed at Pelzer and Cleveland. This may be because it is characterized by fraternity, and has in view the equal good of all. It is, however, more far-reaching, since it is religious, and religion exempts from its sway no part of our life, however private it may be. Marriage, and the family, and the entire mode of life fall under the influence of religion, and cannot do otherwise when religion is taken earnestly.

Next to agriculture their principal industry is, probably, the manufacture of woollens. They have also calico print works and some other in-

dustries. Their woolens, it may be remarked, are celebrated, and are found in every part of the country. Their goods are always what they profess to be, and "colony" products have everywhere a high reputation. Here again, however, we see a difficulty in the way of life in accordance with the principles of peace in a world of strife. Knowing that the "colonists" are non-combatants, and opposed to legal as well as physical strife, unscrupulous persons are inclined to take advantage of their love of peace and to palm off as Amana products various goods which are produced elsewhere.

I visited their woolen mills, interested to learn whether or not the peculiarities of fraternal communism would manifest themselves in a high-grade manufacturing establishment. It did not take long to discover differences between the Amana woolen mills and the cotton mills which I had visited a few months previously in the South. The number of adults and even old men and the absence of children first attracted my attention. Education is compulsory, and it is needless to say that in Amana compulsory education means what it professes to mean, which, unhappily, is not always the case in our country. All the children attend school between the ages of five and fourteen, and are not at work when they ought to be preparing themselves for their future life. Those are employed in manufacturing who have some special aptitude therefor, and also many who, on account

of age or otherwise, are too feeble to engage in agriculture or pursuits which require full vigor of body. No one is, however, given more work than he ought to do, and it is probable that the machinery is not "speeded up" so high as in other mills. Seats are provided, so that while watching the spinning frames and looms and whenever this can be done the operators may sit down. No needless effort is required of any one, but, on the contrary, the aim seems to be to render work as easy as possible with the maintenance of efficiency. It is said that frequently in the mill flowers may be seen, but I did not notice any while there. Understanding that a considerable number of women are employed in the woolen mill, I was struck by the fact that only two or three were at work. I was told, however, that this was because it was Monday, and they were engaged in doing family washing. This illustrates the manner in which one sort of work is adjusted to another. My visit was in June, at a time when activity for the fall trade had begun. The hours were long just at this time, thirteen and a half per day, but yet I am confident that no one was overworked. Usually the hours are ten per day.

Probably one could not readily find a more contented lot of working people. They are obliged to hire some outside working people, but so far as the members of the community themselves are concerned, many of the difficulties which are experi-

enced in the competition of private industries are from the very nature of the case excluded. There is no room for conflict between labor and capital when the same persons own the capital and furnish the labor. There can be no opposition to improved machinery when the workers themselves directly and immediately enjoy the full benefits of it, and can readily perceive that they do so. There can be no unemployed, because there is always some work for every one, whatever may be his physical or mental powers. There is no "dead-line" beyond which it becomes difficult to secure employment. When a man becomes too feeble for one sort of work, some other can be provided, and he suffers no harm. Old age has no economic terrors for the toilers of Amana, because the very constitution of the society provides for all. It is simply required that each one should do his best. It is the general testimony of all those in the neighborhood that no one is overtaxed, and also that no one lacks the necessities and comforts of life.

"They don't work too hard," is an expression which one may hear with reference to these people. But, on the other hand, laziness does not appear to afford trouble at Amana. Curiously enough, too, indolence has never been, so far as I have observed or been able to learn, one of the rocks upon which communistic societies have made shipwreck. Others who have studied communistic settlements have noticed this, which is worthy of attention, in

view of the common allegation—didn't Emerson say it?—that "man is as lazy as he dares to be." Charles Nordhoff in his work on the *Communistic Societies of the United States*, published a quarter of a century ago, says this, after having visited the more important communistic settlements at that time existing in the country:

" 'How do you manage with the lazy people?' I have asked in many cases. But there are no idlers in a commune. I conclude that men are not naturally idle."

Probably the annual per capita production of wealth is not so great as it would be in a similar population equally well provided with land and capital. The Amana Society has a great estate, entirely free from debt, and a favorable situation. The number of children and old people to be supported is relatively large, there being among the 1767 members 187 under five and 321 over the age of sixty. They are all brothers, and the essential equality of treatment thereby required acts in some cases as a drawback to the greatest efficiency. One of the most intelligent members of the society told me that this operated against the productiveness of agriculture. The usual number of working hours in the manufacturing establishments is ten, and this renders it difficult to exact the long hours which farmers generally think necessary. All have a generous satisfaction of their material wants, but the life is simple and economical, with an entire

absence of display. Generally there is at least a small balance on the right side at the close of the year's operations, so that there is some progress in the accumulation of wealth. Yet sometimes at the close of the year there is a deficit. The surplus production is, at any rate, comparatively small, and a large part of the wealth has come from the increment in land values.

The distribution of wealth is a comparatively simple matter. All members give their services and put in any property which they may have. They receive an adequate and comfortable dwelling, and an abundance of good food. Each one has also an annual allowance in the form of credit at the "store." With this credit they purchase their clothing and satisfy other wants, whatever is purchased being charged against the purchaser in a credit book, with which all are provided. In making purchases the credit book is handed in to one of the employees of the store, and whatever is purchased is entered. The annual allowance varies considerably—say, from \$35 to \$75. It is considered meritorious to leave any unexpended balance in the funds of the society, and in this way credits are sometimes accumulated. The variations in allowances suggest inequalities which at first might appear to be contrary to the principles of communism. Inequalities, however, are recognized in wants. The educated physician and his family have, as every rational man will have to

admit, wants beyond those of the ordinary man who follows the plough. The physicians do not confine their practice to the members of the community, who, of course, receive their services gratis, and the fact that their occupation takes them more into the outside world makes a difference. But this is, after all, not the whole story.

"If you thrust Nature out with a pitchfork, she will return." There must be some kind of an aristocracy in every society, and in so stable a community as Amana it will be a natural aristocracy. Originally some members of the community were wealthy, one member having put into the common fund, it is said, \$50,000, and some were in general culture and station superior to others. The most highly educated members of the community are probably the physicians. One of them might not be treated better than others, and would not be treated better than others because his profession might bring a large income to the society, but there would be a respect for his learning. Within certain limits, then, equality is interpreted to mean proportional satisfaction of needs.

Each family, as already stated, has its adequate dwelling, and each member of the family his own room. Each family has its own little garden, and what is raised in this garden belongs to the family. The gardens are exceedingly well-cultivated, and afford many dainties in summer and winter; grapes are grown abundantly and furnish homemade

wine. Although it is not encouraged, it is still allowed to sell things from the garden, and what is received belongs to the family. The families are also divided into groups and live together in a "kitchen-house." In Amana, the largest one of their villages, with 600 inhabitants, there are sixteen of these kitchen-houses. There is, in other words, co-operative housekeeping. Now with each kitchen-house there goes a large garden, and the group of persons so associated may sell the produce from their garden and use this to provide such food as they may see fit for the kitchen, in addition to that which is granted by the community. I found one little group which seemed to derive a considerable revenue from an excellently managed hennery. Great pride appeared to be taken in the skill displayed by one of the women in this group who had a large supply of eggs when they were selling for thirty and forty cents a dozen, and other people's hens had almost altogether ceased laying. All this may be contrasted with the French community of Icaria, where, as Dr. Shaw tells us in his work, the individual gardens were destroyed, in order that a mathematical equality among the members might be preserved. Is it any wonder that quarrels ensued which at that time threatened the existence of Icaria?

It has been mentioned that all children are sent to school. The religious life is the chief end, and not the intellectual life, but still there seems to be a

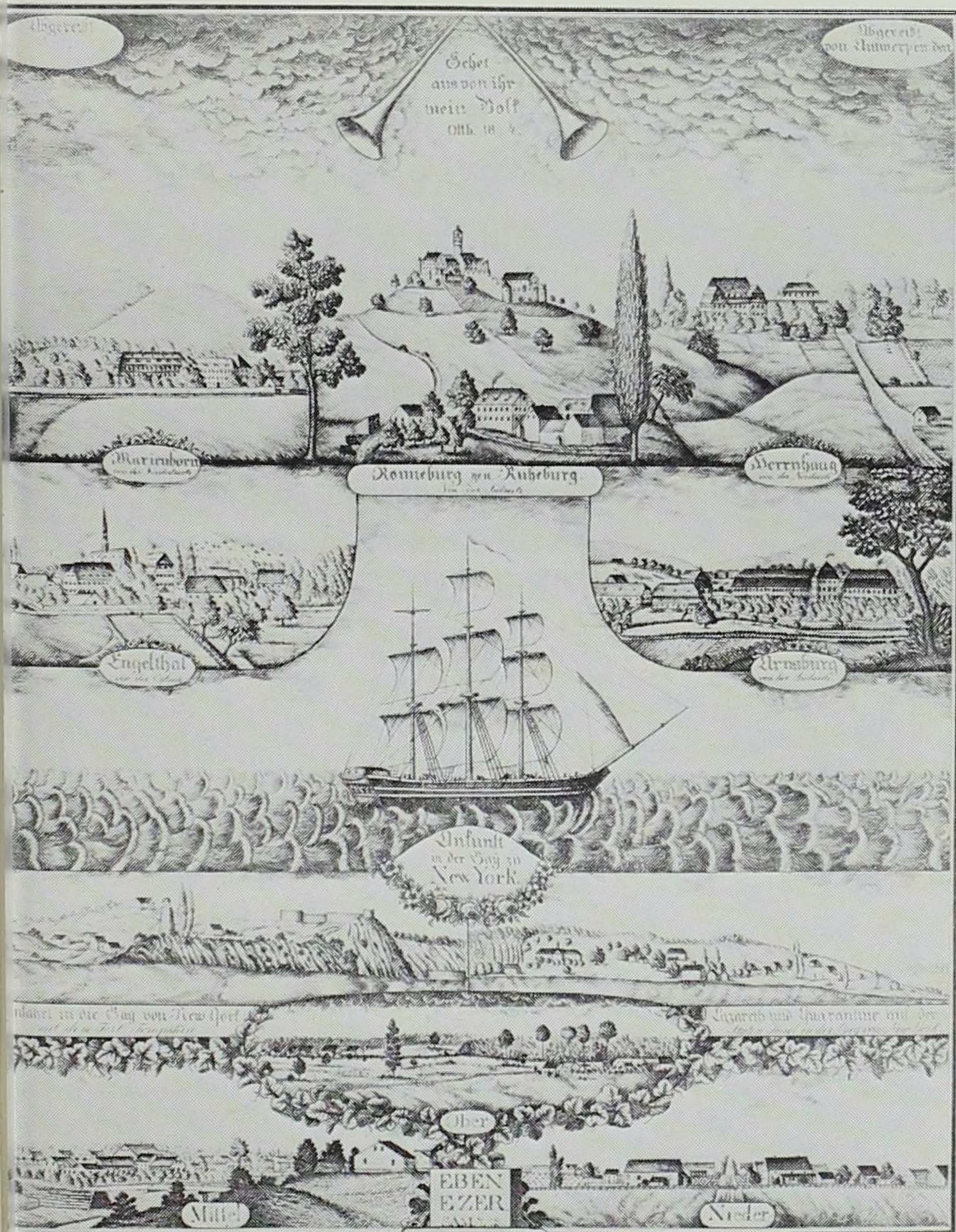
desire to give the members of the community as good an education as their means will permit. Apart from a few religious holidays, the children go to school every day, beginning at about seven o'clock in the morning. There is no regular vacation except Saturday afternoon. The teachers are all men and conduct school in accordance with old-fashioned principles. After the school exercises there comes a "play hour," and then follow various exercises—knitting and crocheting for the girls, and work in field or factory for the boys. Their time is very fully occupied, and no room is left for idleness. One of the interesting sights at Amana is the "school forest" planted by the children. It consists of long rows of trees, mostly pines and firs, which form beautiful green avenues. What has been done at the school forests in Amana affords a valuable suggestion for country schools generally.

Those who are destined to become physicians are sent away to carry forward and finish their education. Three of them have gone to the University of Iowa, one has carried on postgraduate work in New York City, and another has spent a year in Germany.

Everywhere in communistic settlements the members frequently live to a great age. I was impressed with this when I visited the Shakers at Mount Lebanon. During the year preceding my visit, there had been three deaths; two brothers

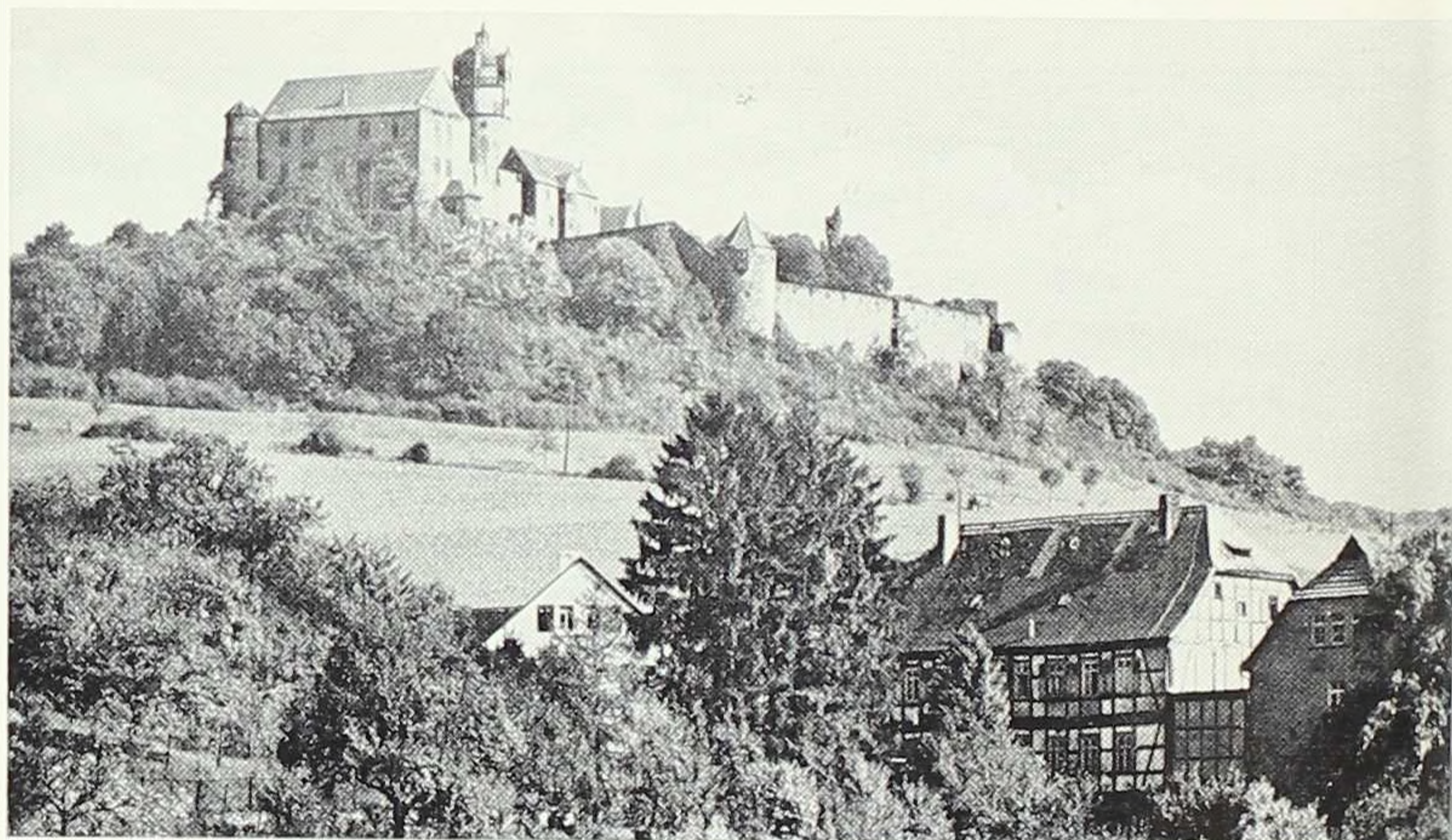
had died aged eighty-seven and ninety-one respectively, and a sister had departed this life at the age of one hundred and eight. Daniel Fraser, who is delightfully described by Howells in his *Undiscovered Country*, was then between eighty and ninety, and his intellectual powers were so keen that it was a delight to converse with him. The leader of Mount Lebanon was Elder Frederick Evans, seventy-eight years of age. "How old do you take this horse to be?" he asked me, pointing to a horse which was drawing a load of apples. "I should say that he was about twelve," I replied. "He is thirty," said Elder Evans; "but he has enjoyed Shaker treatment, not the world's." Mr. Hinds, in his book to which reference has been made, tells us that recently, when he inquired, he was told that one member of the Amana Society had, not long ago, died over one hundred years of age; that there were two living members above ninety, and about twenty-five between eighty and ninety. The Shakers speak of their "watch-tower," and among them one has the feeling that one is standing on a watch-tower, looking at the great, busy world through a telescope, as it were. But the Shakers neither marry nor give in marriage, and their life is more isolated and separated from that of the competitive world of industry than is that of Amana.

The villages have the appearance of a German Dorf, or agricultural village, but they are far more

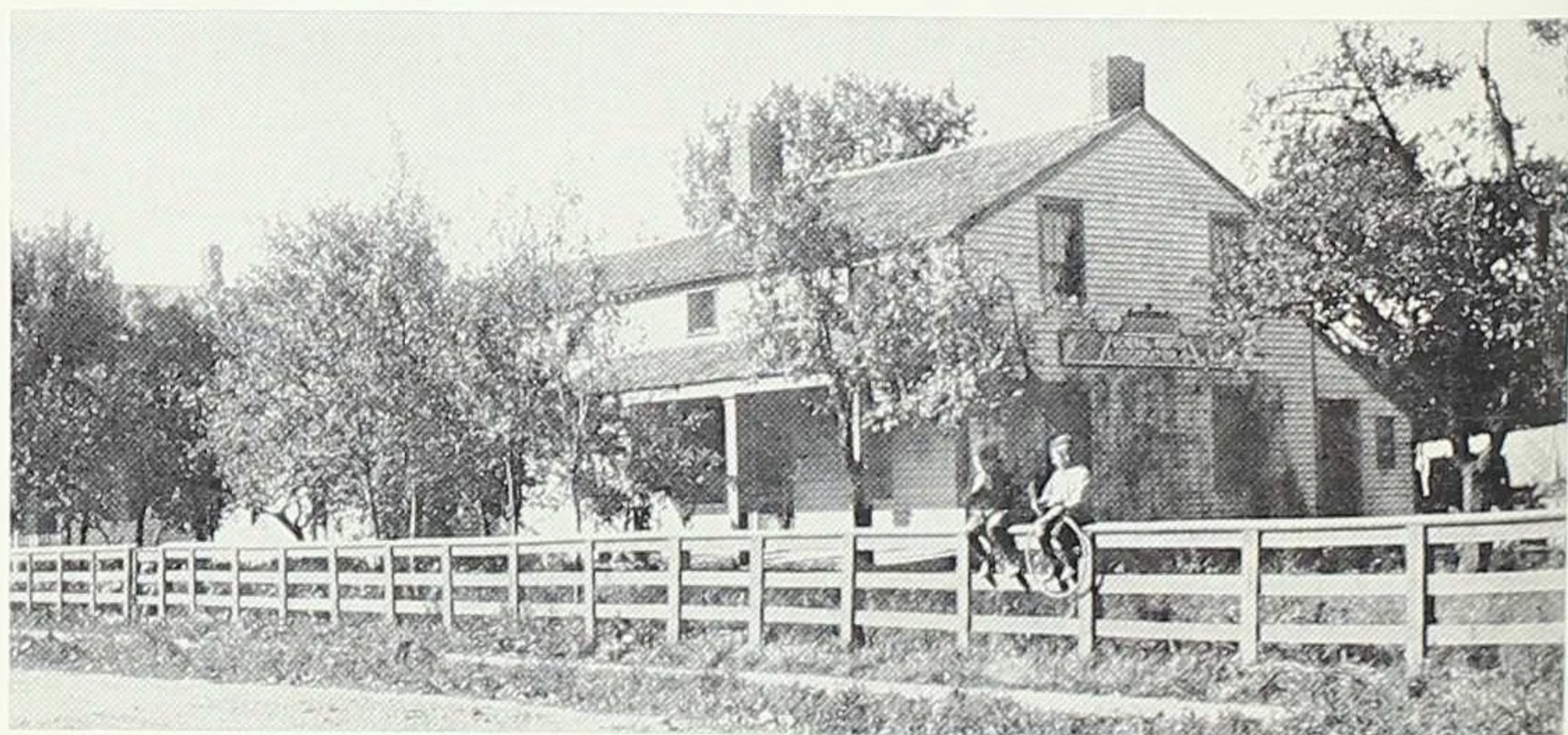


Ronneburg Castle, top center, is flanked on either side, below, by two castles—Marienborn and Engelthal, on the left, and Herrnhaag and Arnsburg, on the right. The ship which carried the Amanites to their new home in America is depicted in the center panel. Their arrival in the Bay of New York is also shown. Ebenezer, the first stop in the United States, is shown in the bottom panel. The final trip from New York to Amana and the State of Iowa took place after this picture was drawn.

FROM RONNEBURG TO EBENEZER . . .



Ronneburg Castle in Germany overlooked the homeland of the Amanites.

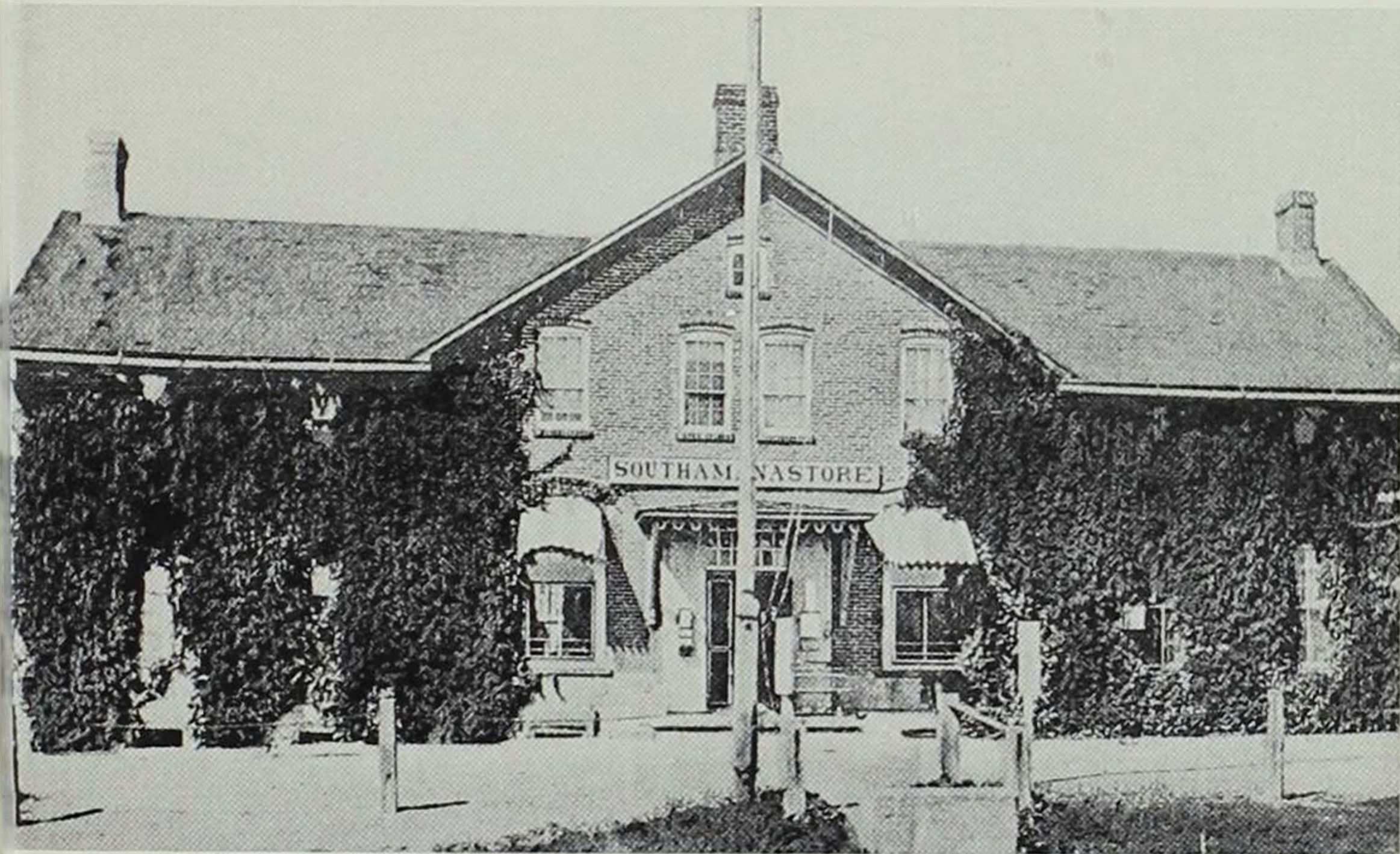


Schoolhouse, Christian Metz' living quarters and kitchen in Middle Ebenezer.



A street scene in Middle Ebenezer.

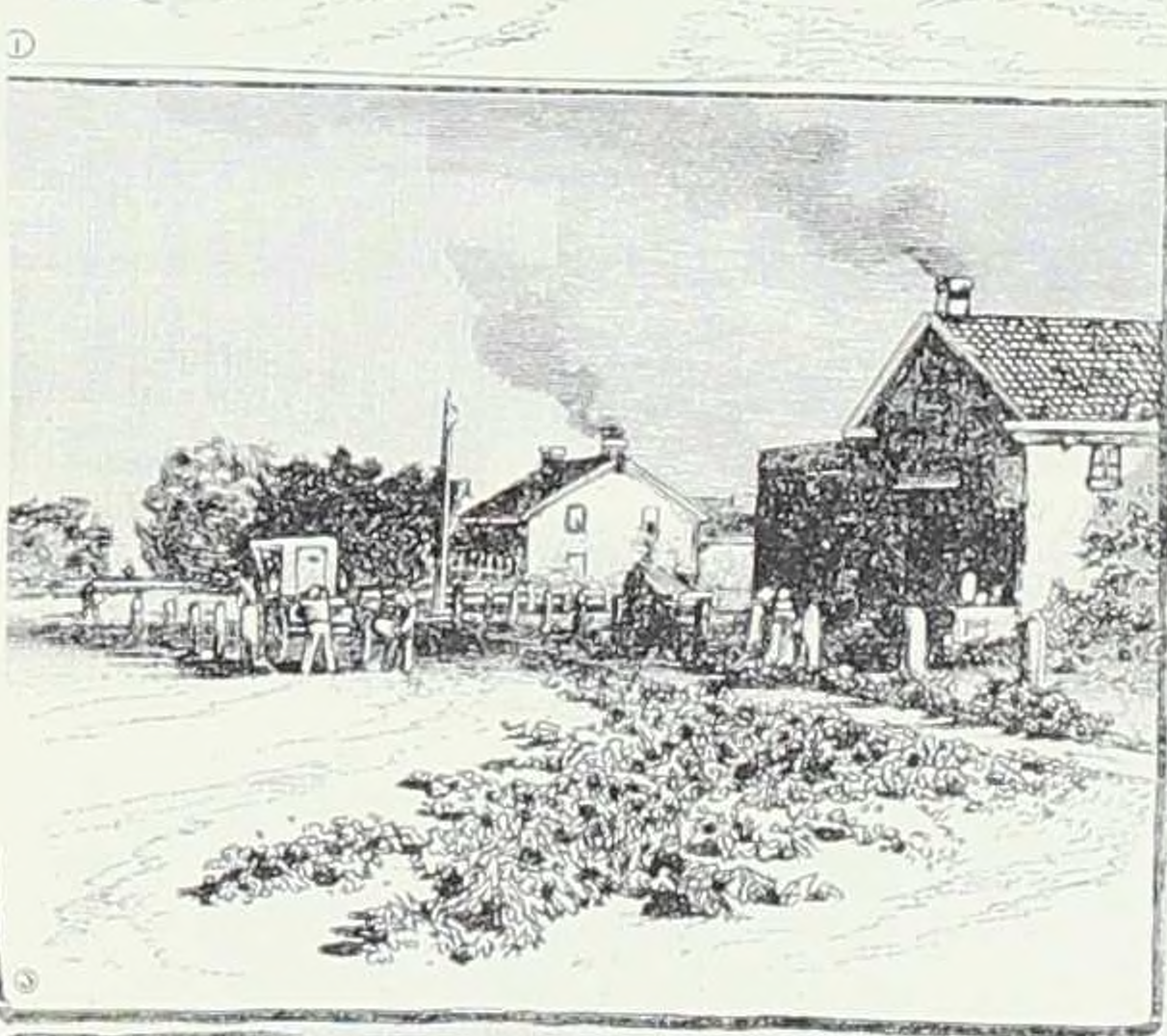
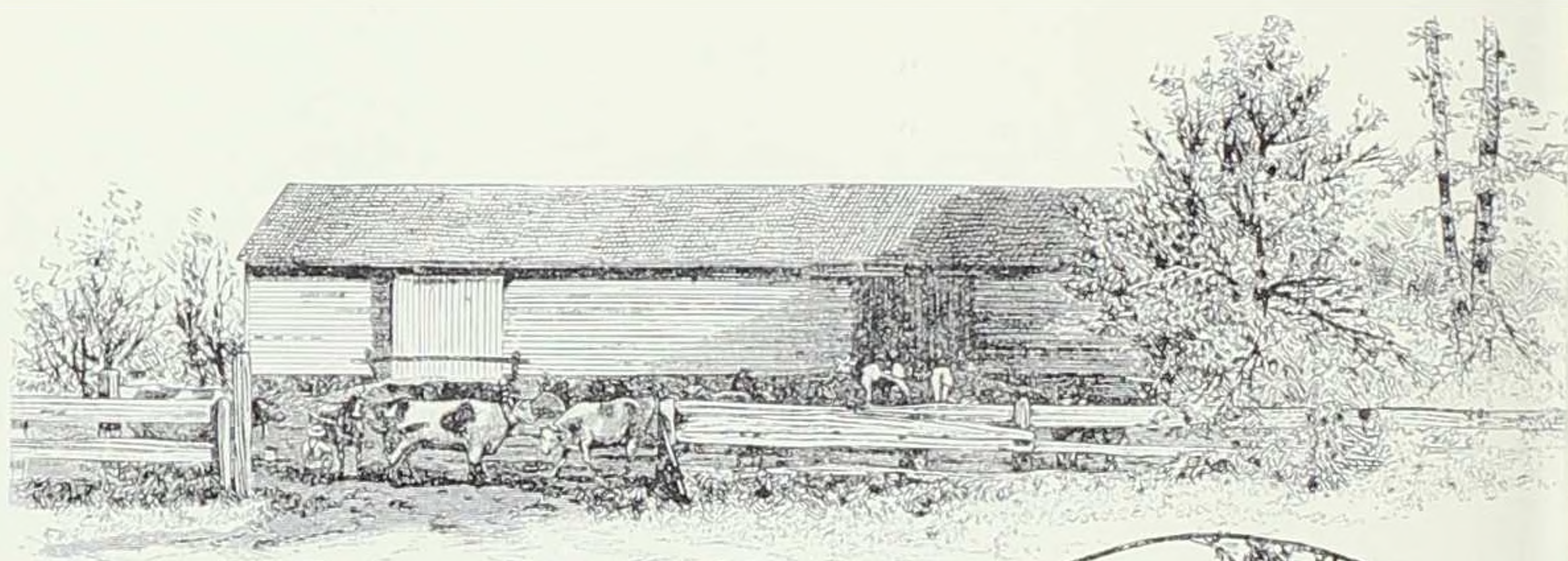
TO THE SEVEN VILLAGES OF AMANA



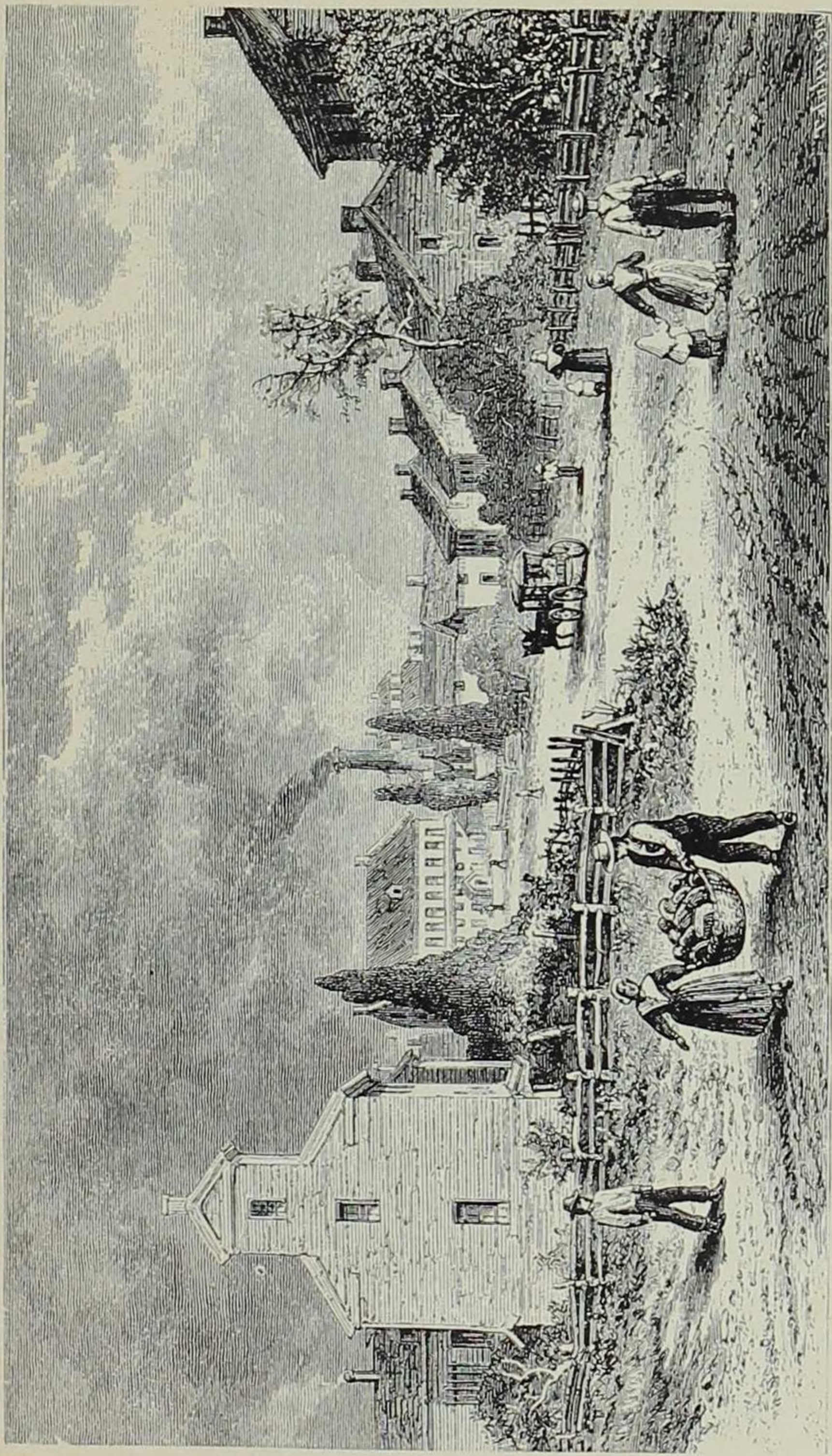
"The store at South Amana carries a stock of goods worth not less than twenty thousand dollars, and its annual trade [1888] is very large." (Shaw) This is the Upper South Amana Store, which was originally the largest.



By horse and buggy visitors arrive at the Amana store, coming from the surrounding countryside as well as neighboring towns and villages.

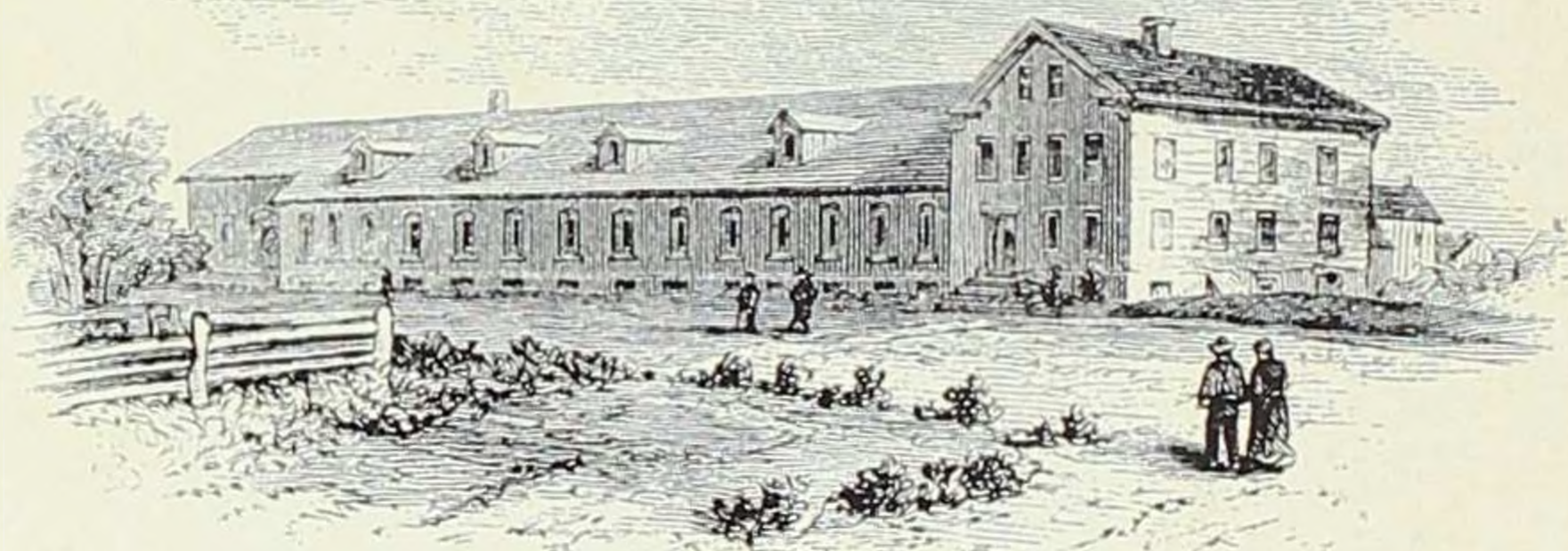


(1) Milking time. "The cattle are pastured outside and driven in every night to be cared for at the six cow barns. . . . These cow barns are immense structures, the lower half of stone, beautifully clean." (MacClure) (2) Church. "The colonists are distinctly religious." (MacClure) (3) Village street. "There is really but one street—a rambling affair—meeting other lanes at all possible angles." (MacClure) (4) Society's vineyard. "Grapes are grown abundantly and furnish homemade wine." (Ely)



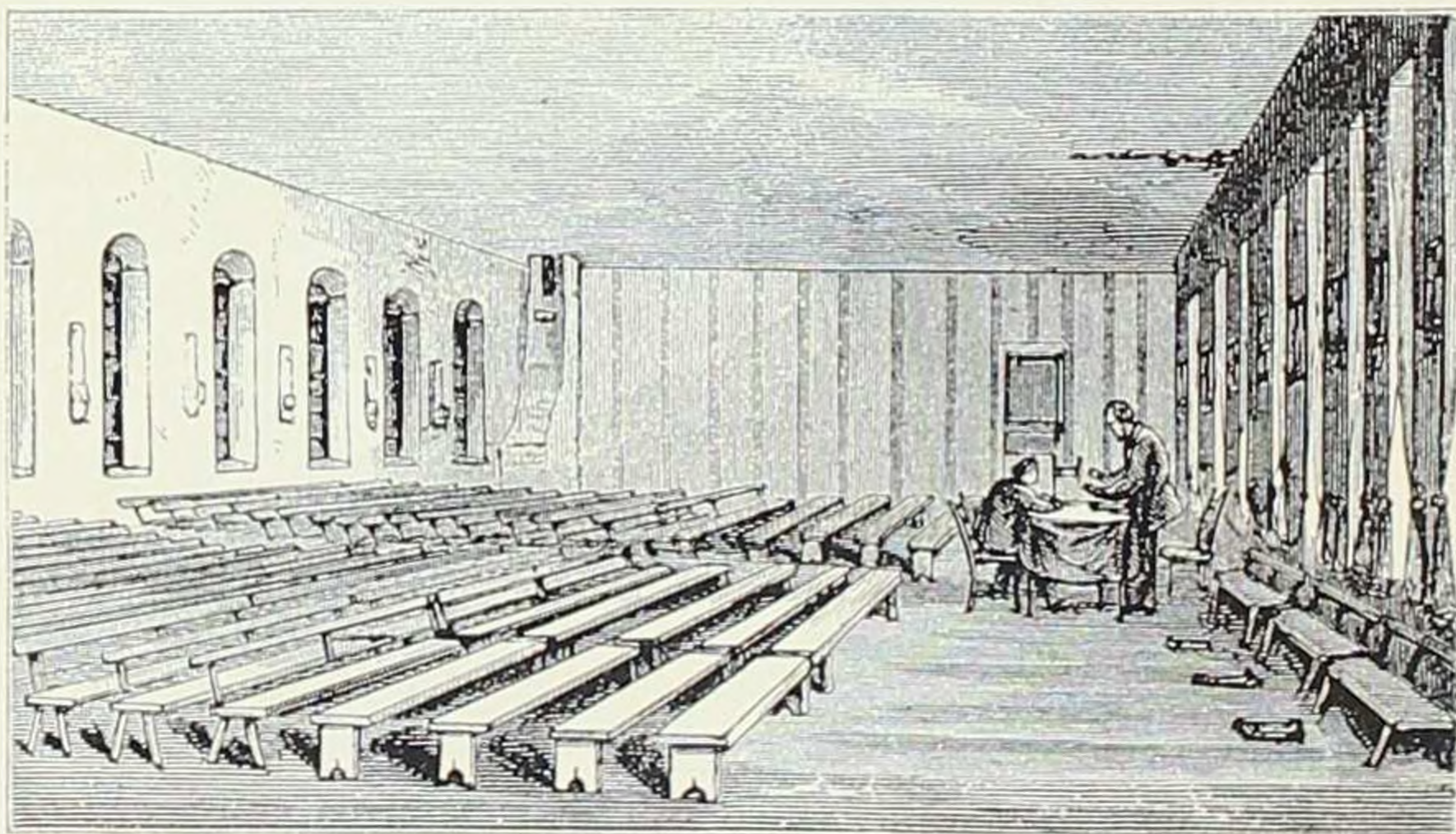
A General View of Amana

In the foreground a couple carries a basket of bread while other residents of the village are bound for various destinations. A delivery wagon, its motive power supplied by a horse, heads down the street toward the woolen mills. The road in the left foreground goes to East Amana. The building in the left foreground is a fire watch tower. (This picture, along with those shown on the next two pages come from Charles Nordhoff's *The Communitist Societies of the United States*.)



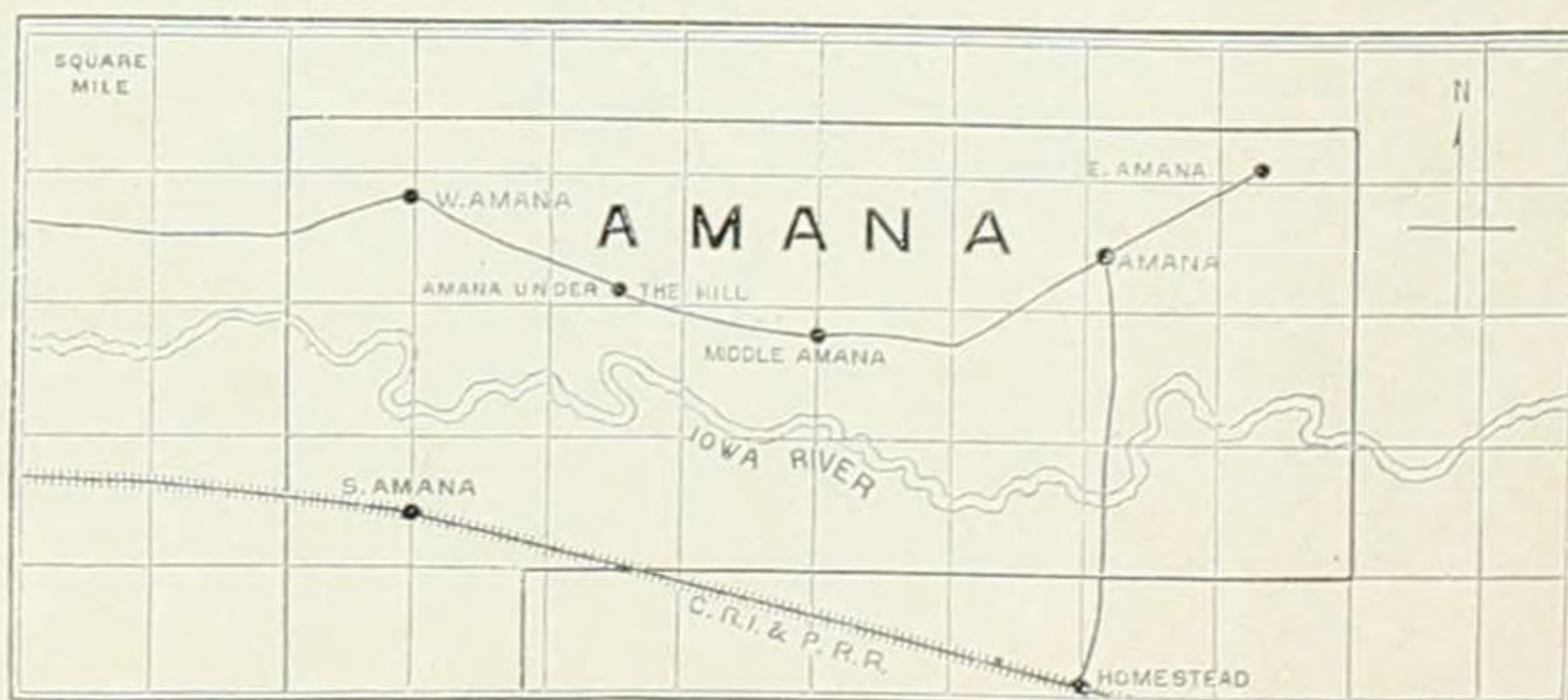
Church at Amana

"There are three places of worship . . . the largest of these a long building with four divisions. The first is for children and young girls, the second for boys, the third for young people of both sexes, and the fourth for adults." (MacClure)



Interior View of the Amana Church

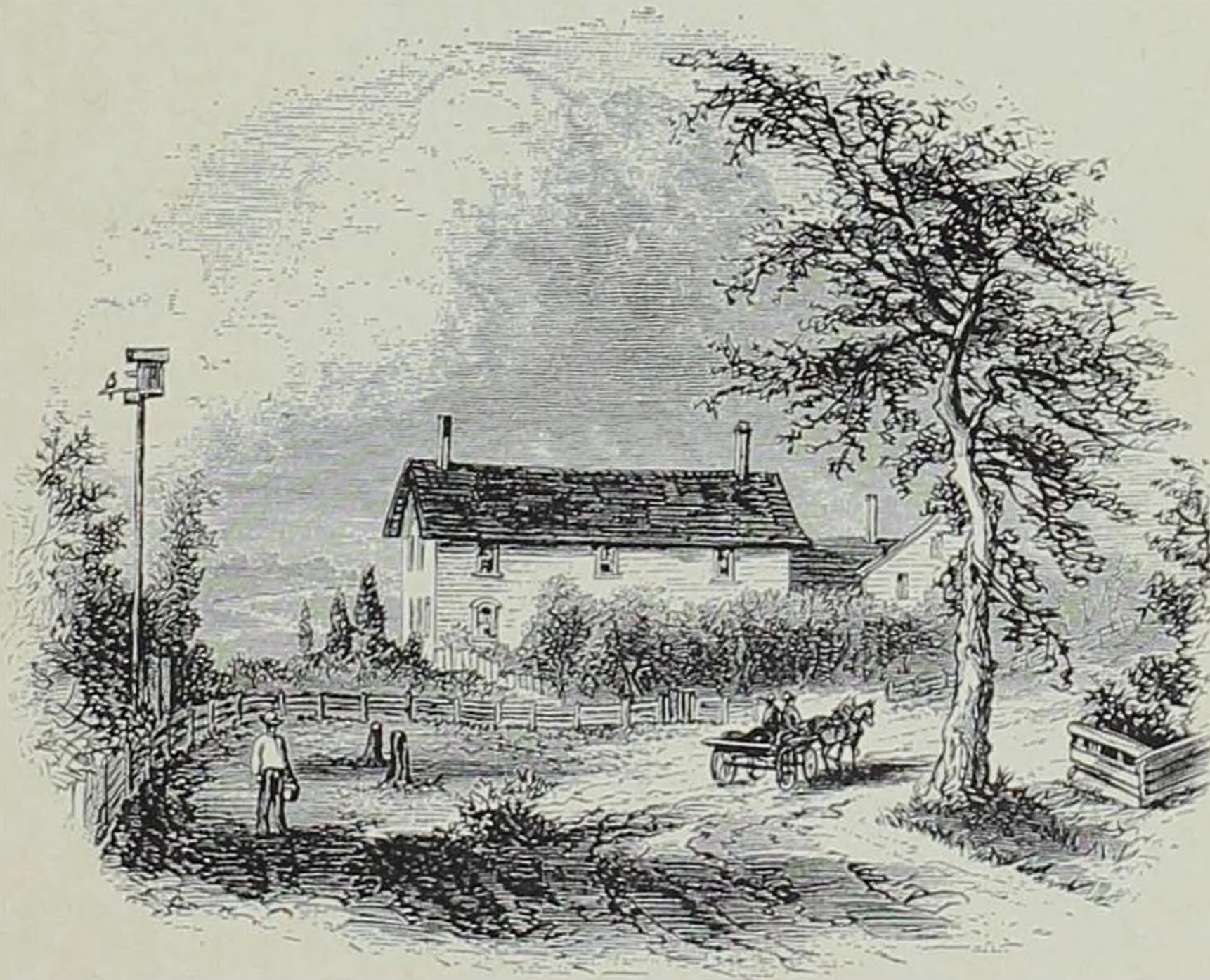
"The pews are snowy white benches with a railing at the back." (MacClure)



A Contemporary Map of the Amana Villages



Grace Is Said Before Eating



Amana Schoolhouse

"German and English are both used in the schools—the latter somewhat painfully. The teaching is conscientious and thorough, in the old-fashioned way." (Shaw)



The women were kept busy in the cornfields . . .



Gathering grapes . . .



Baking cookies . . .



Preparing meals . . .



And feeding the ducks, chickens and geese.

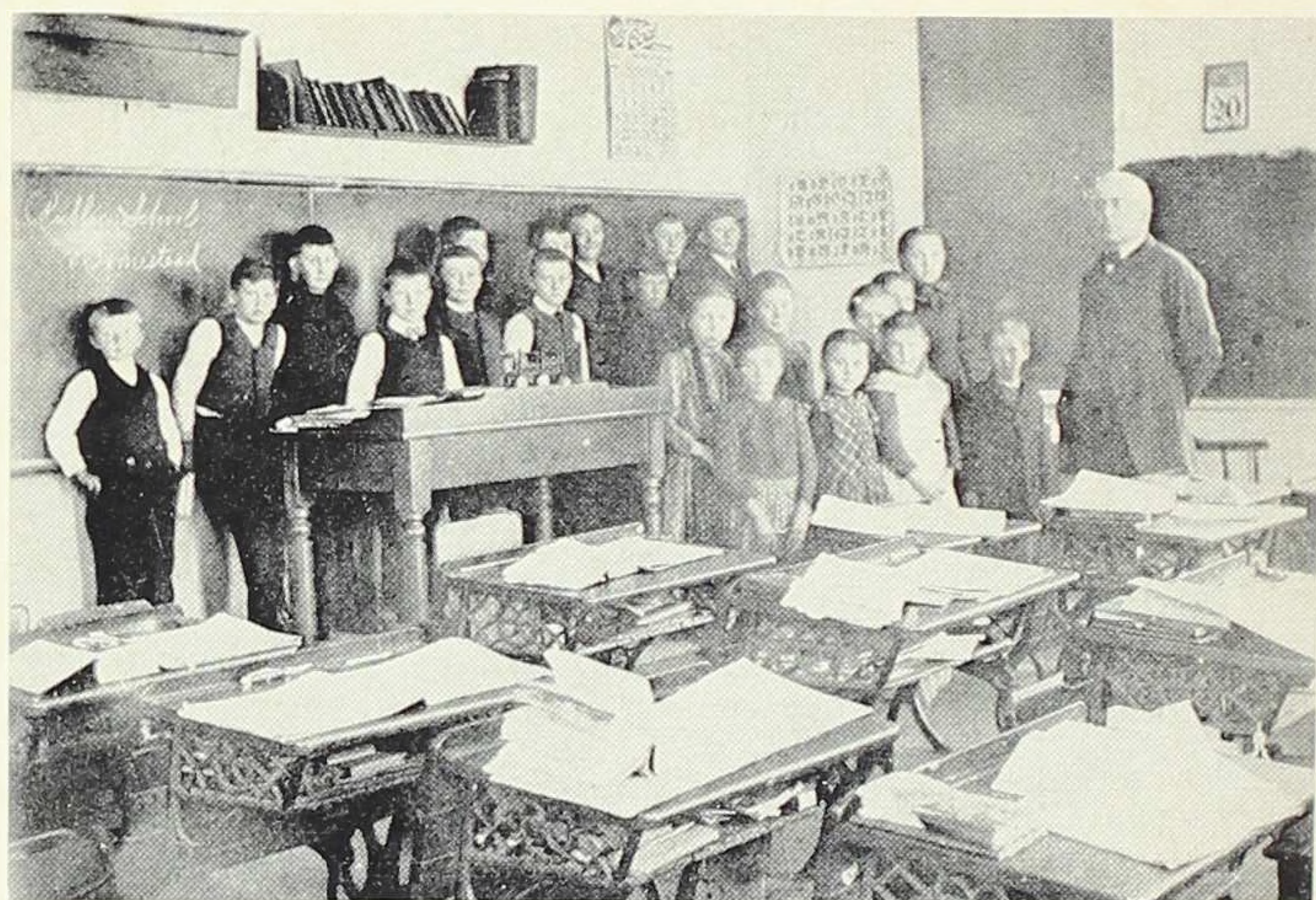


Dr. Noe's kitchen force ran the gamut from young to old.

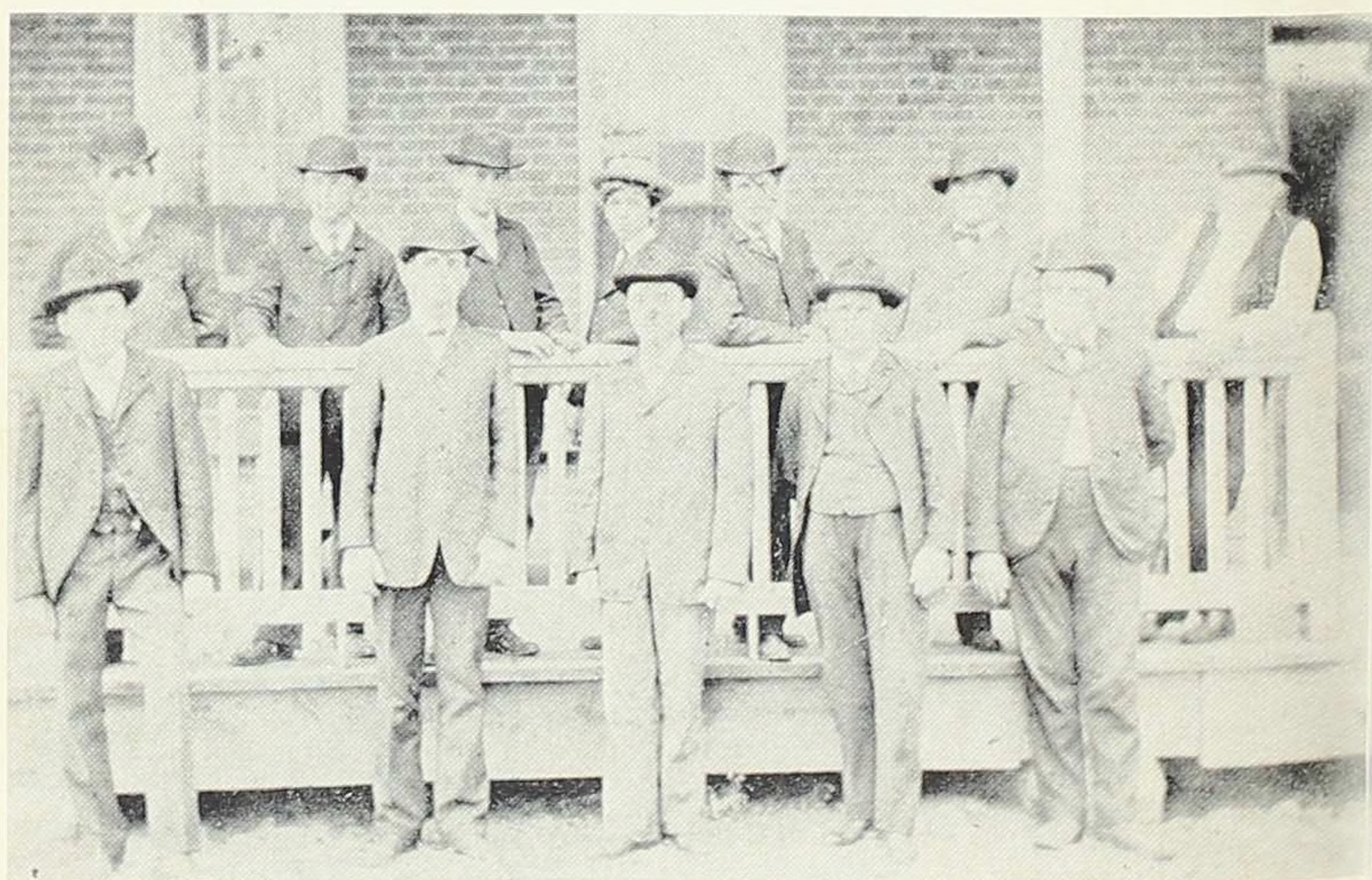


Cabbages! Cabbages! Cabbages!

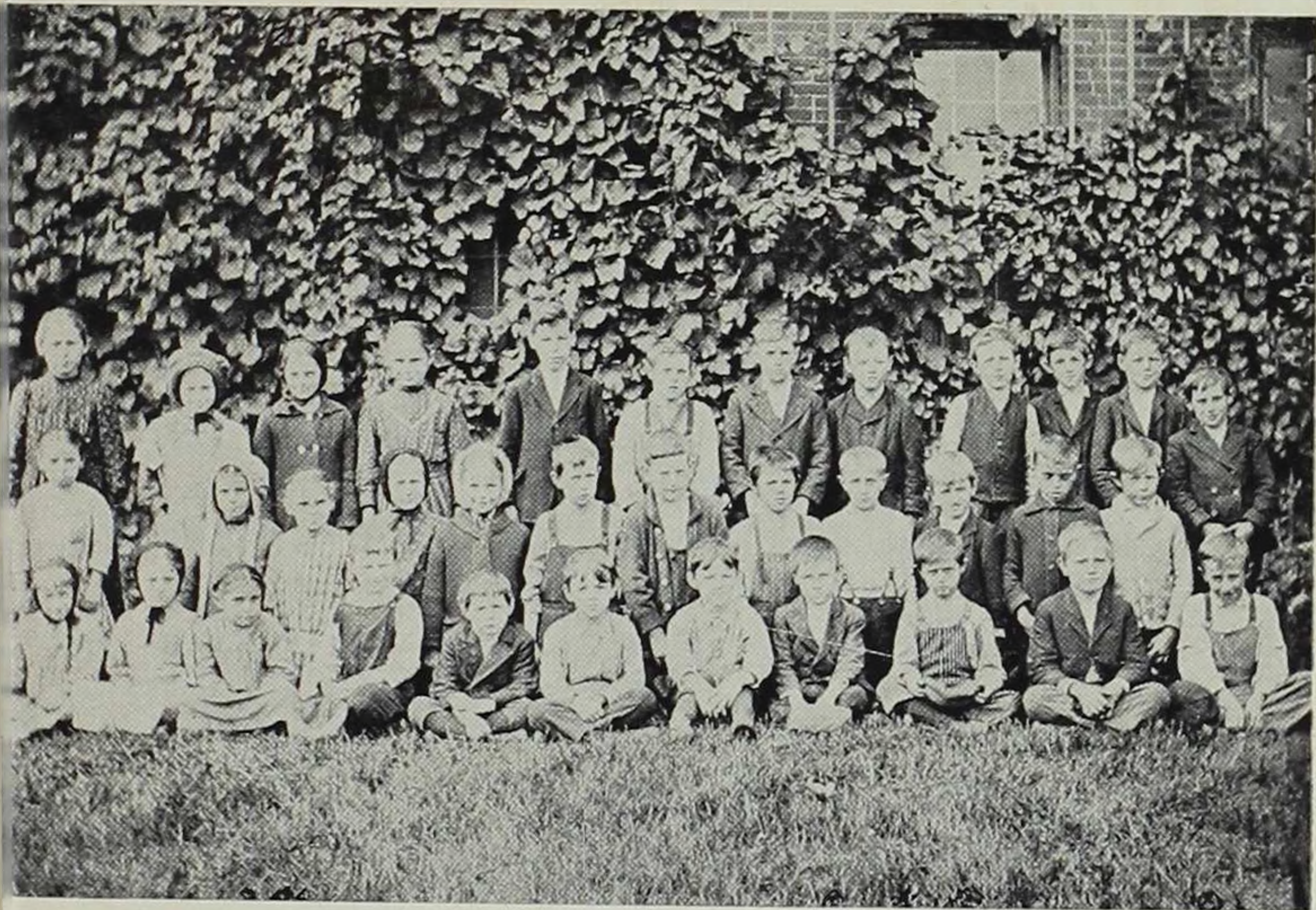
From coleslaw to boiled cabbage to sauerkraut—these were always great favorites with the Amana people. The women working here are on a porch of a Middle Amana community kitchen making sauerkraut.



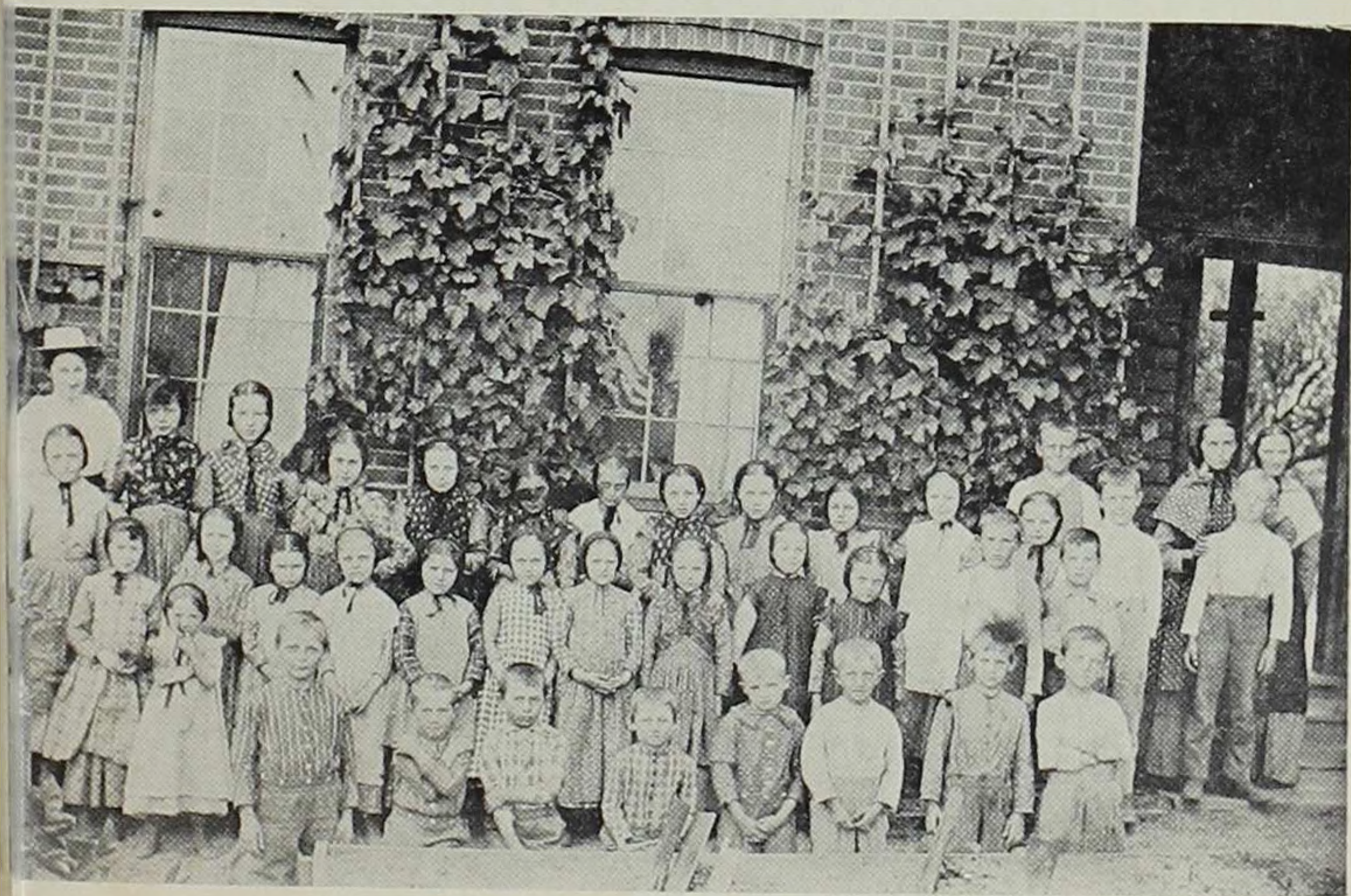
A Homestead schoolroom, Richard Seifert, instructor. "The hours are from 7 to 11:30, 12:30 to 6. They have no holidays or vacations." (MacClure)



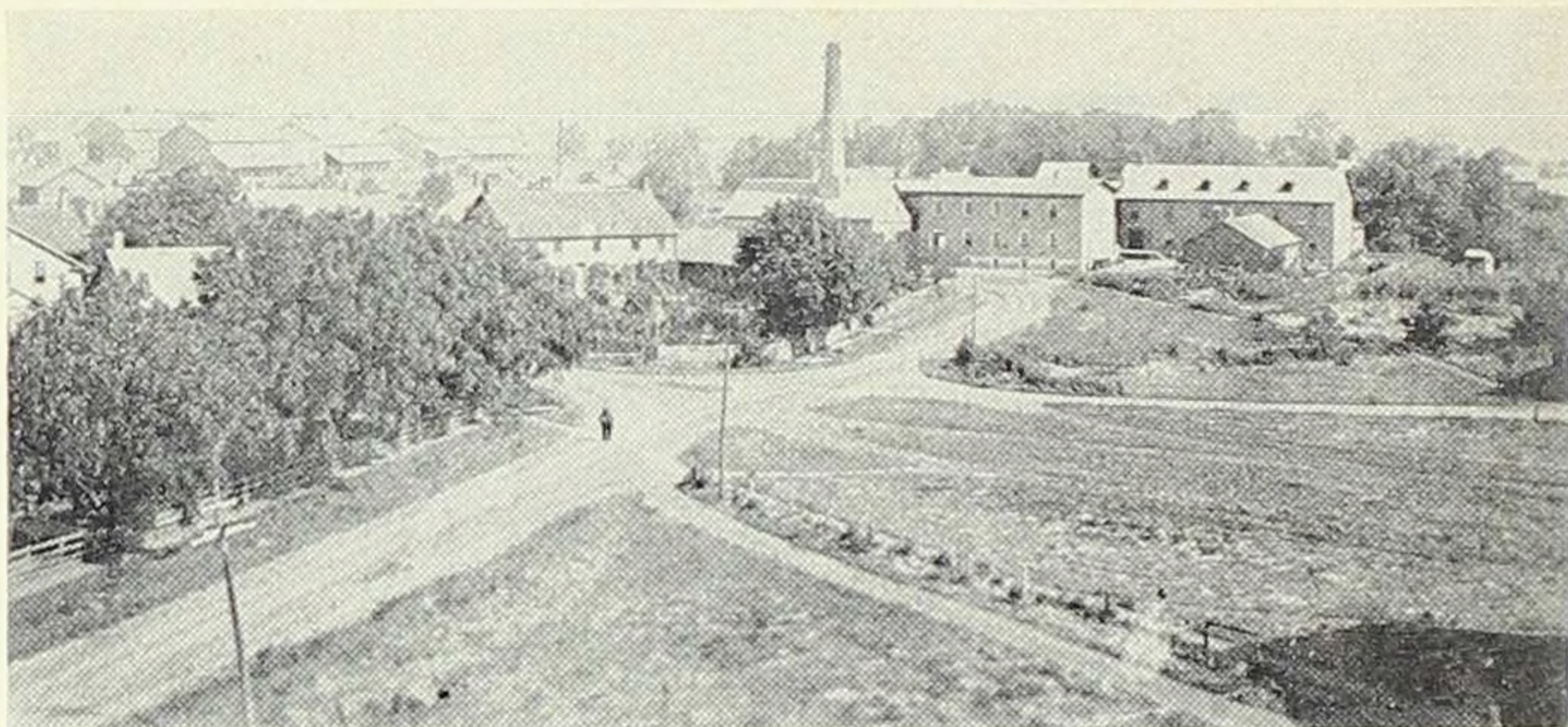
Amana Colony schoolmasters: (left to right, front row): Gottlieb Herr, William Setzer, Emil Miller, Ludwig Unglenk, and Carl Rettig. (Back Row): August Blechschmidt, Herman Puegner, Peter Stuck, Ferdinand Moershel, Emil Seifert, Richard Seifert, and Louis Koch.



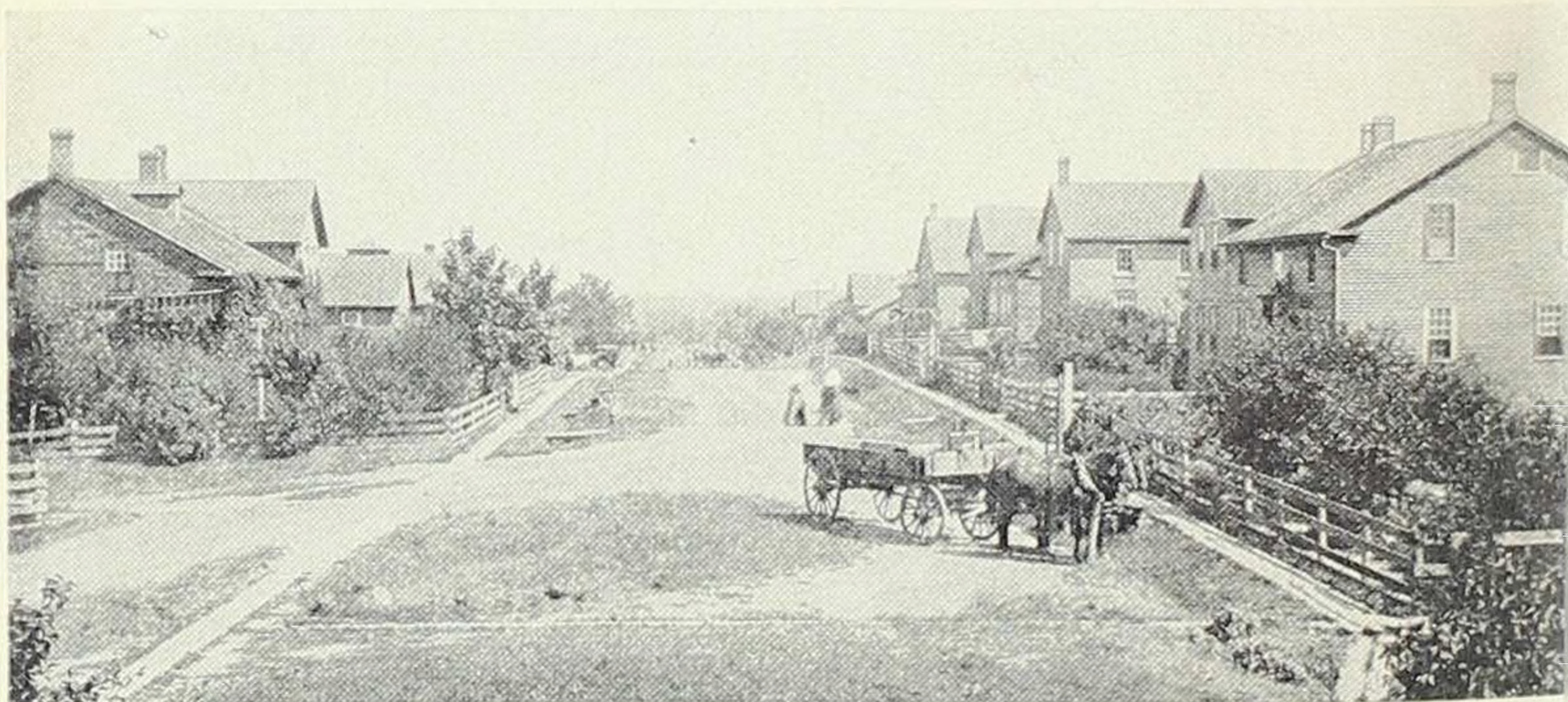
Pictured above and below are two classes from the Amana schools. "Life in the schoolroom begins very young and continues until the girls are thirteen and the boys fourteen. The teachers, of whom there are sixteen in the seven villages, are all men—typical old-fashioned German schoolmasters—and all members of the colony." (Shaw)



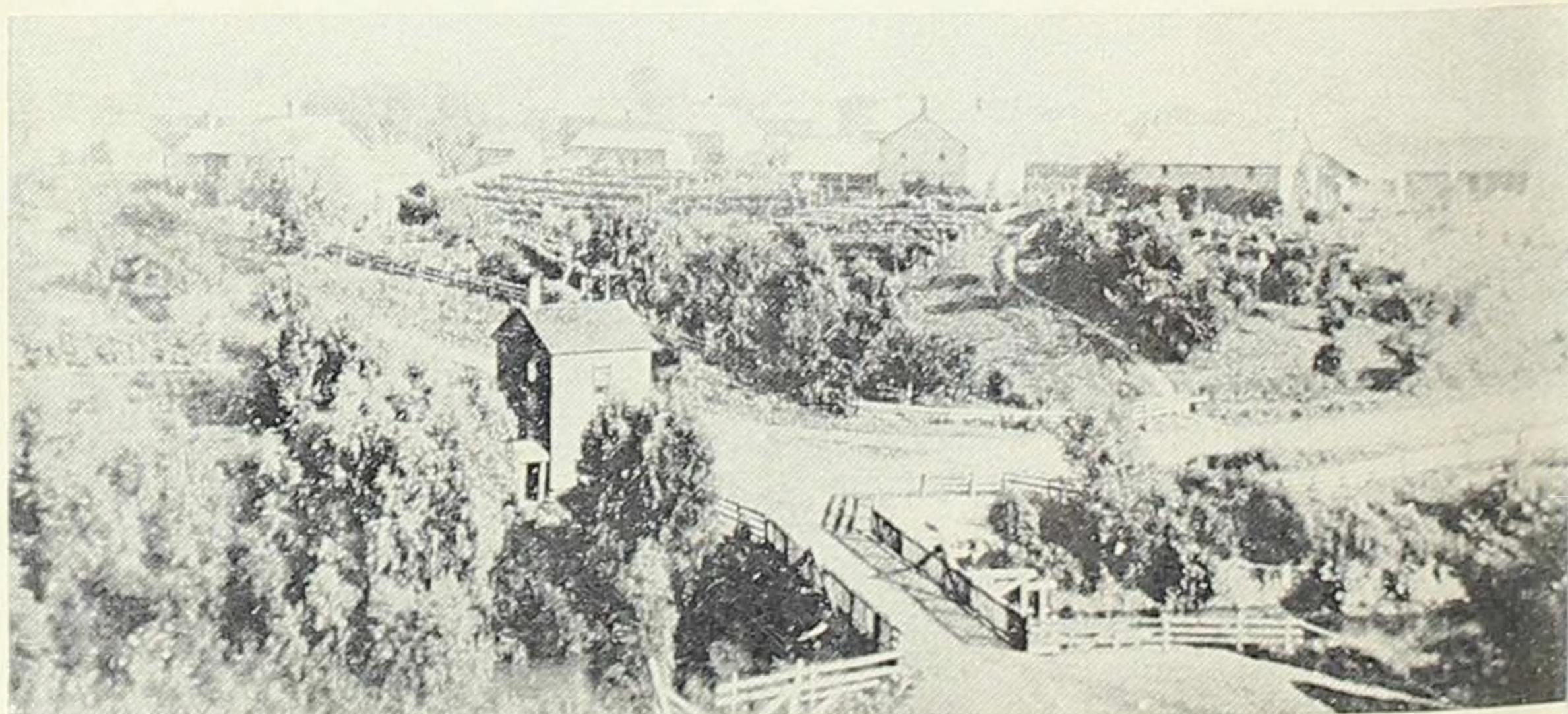
SOME VIEWS OF OLD AMANA . . .



The old print shop—now the Amana Furniture and Sales Room.

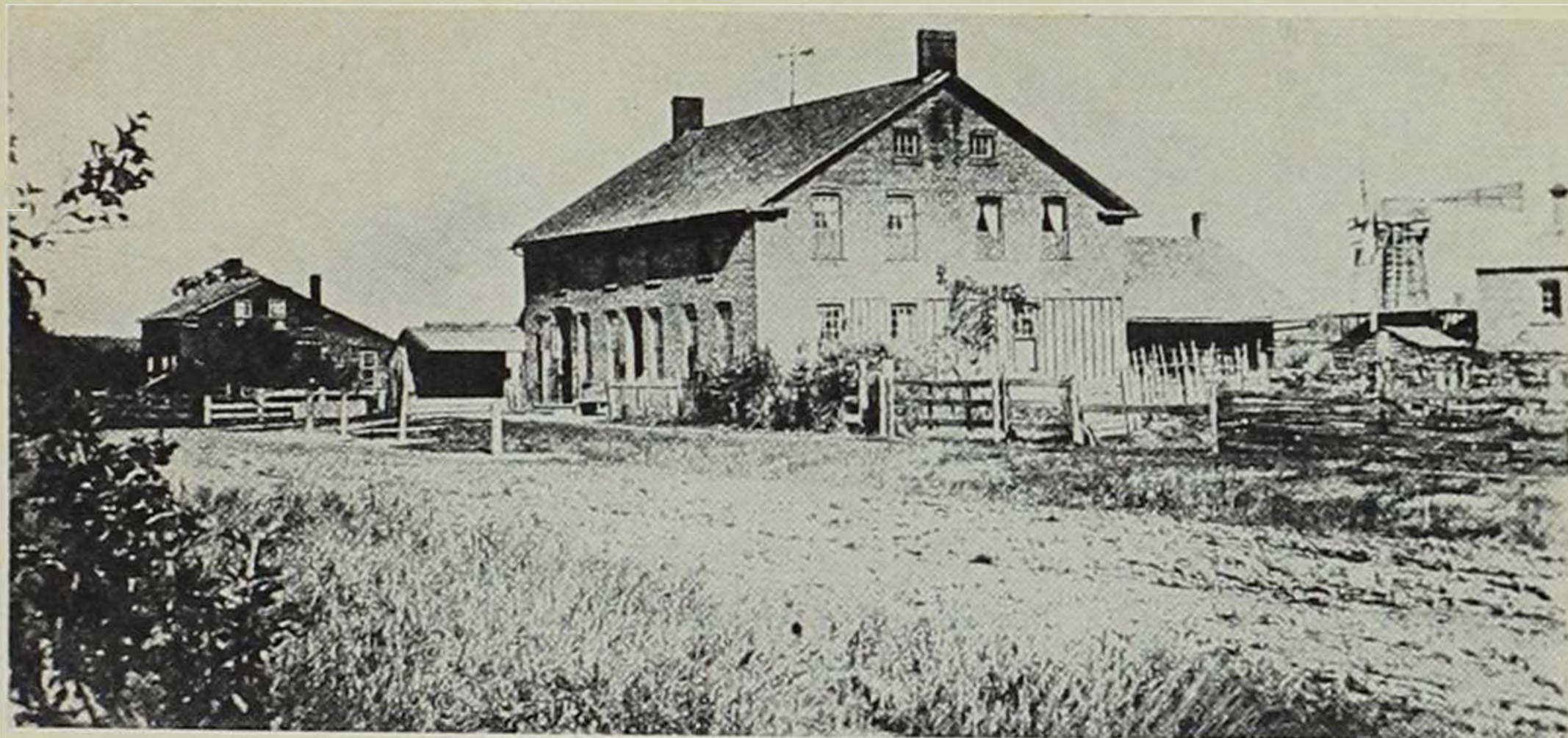


A street in Amana—Peter Stuck home on the left. "In each village there is a long straggling street, with a few side streets branching off irregularly." (Ely)

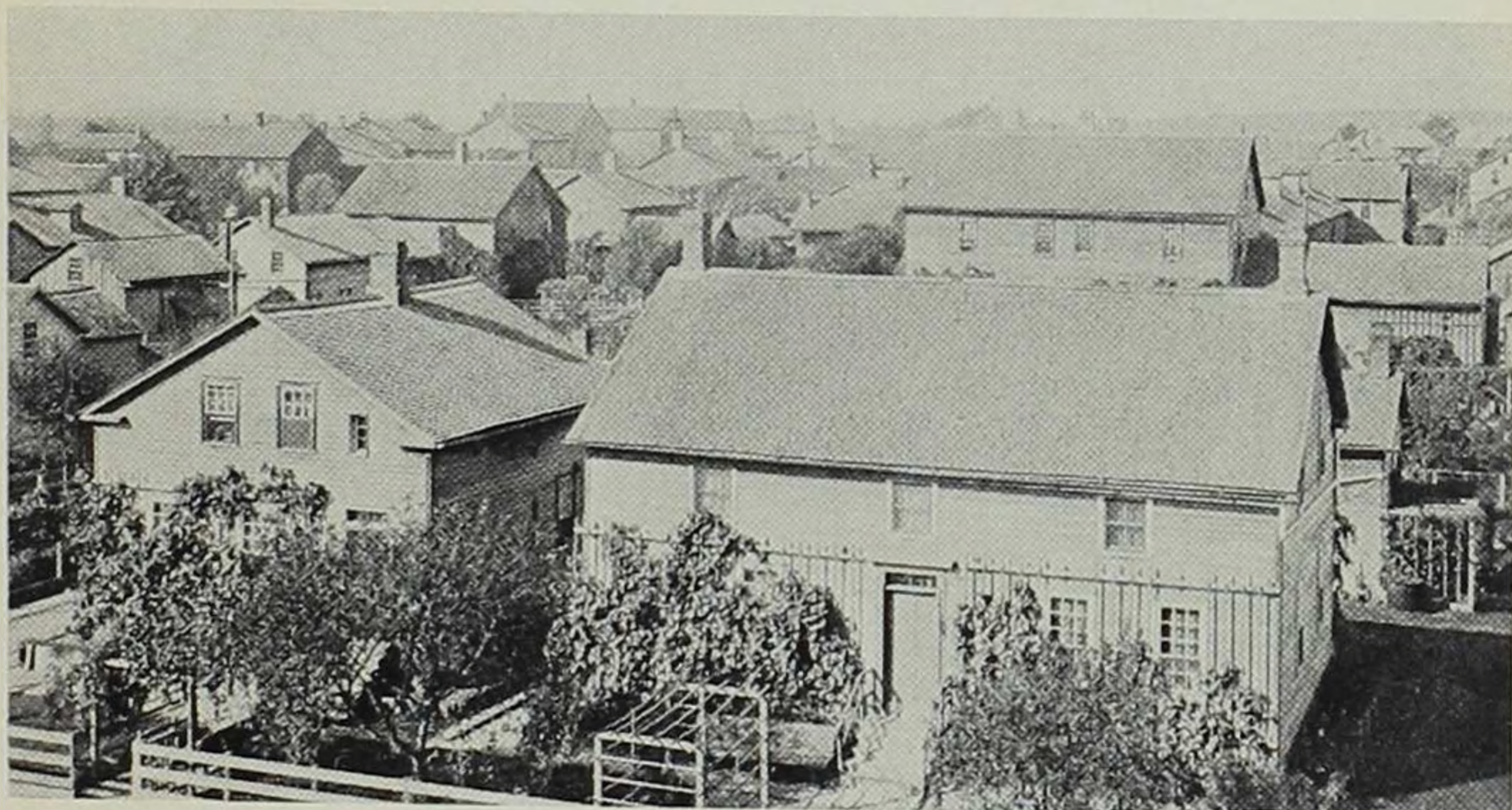


Middle Amana—note bridge and watch tower.

AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

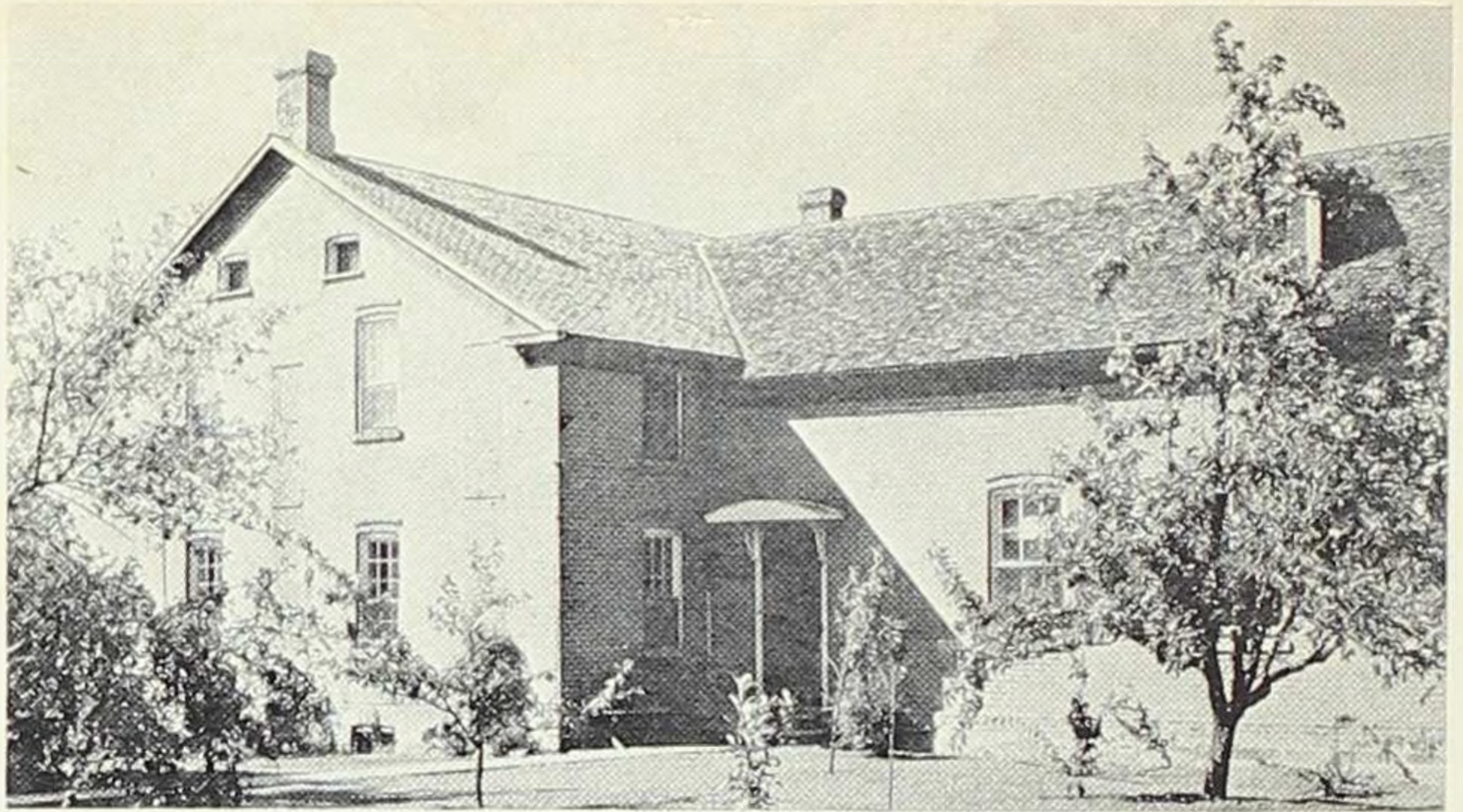


Old Amana drugstore—note windmill on the right.

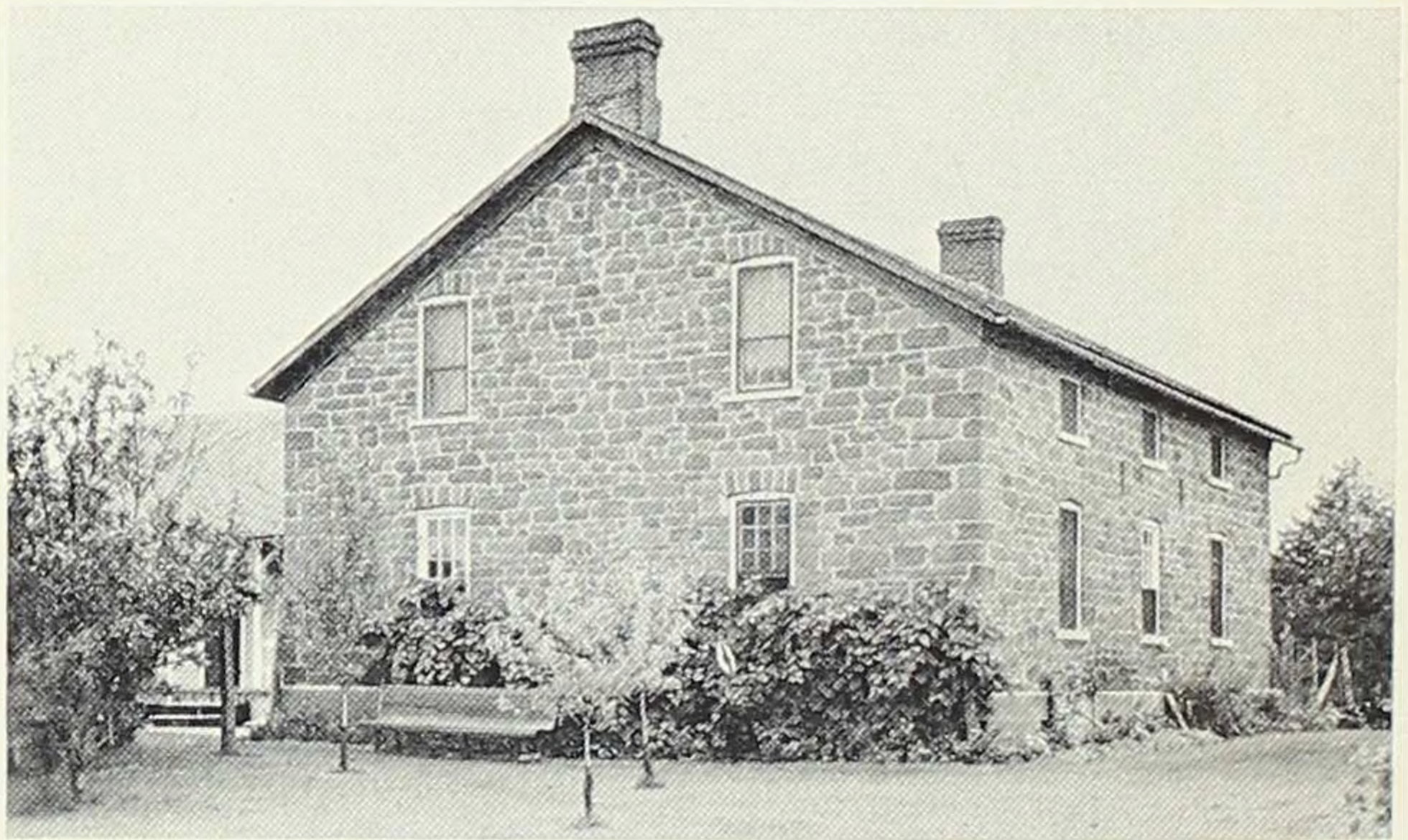


(Above and below) A cluster of Amana homes. Note trellises and grapevines.

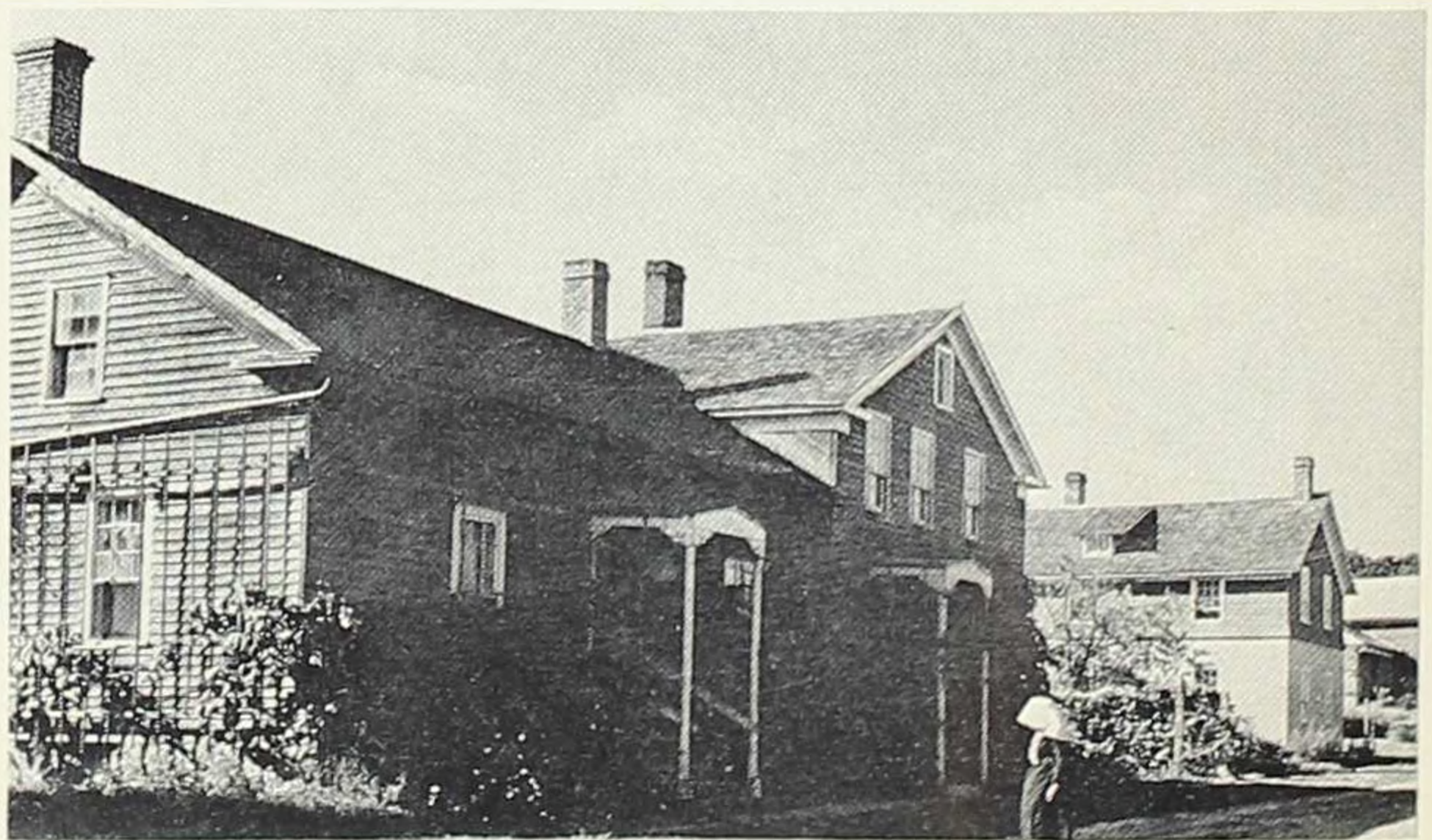




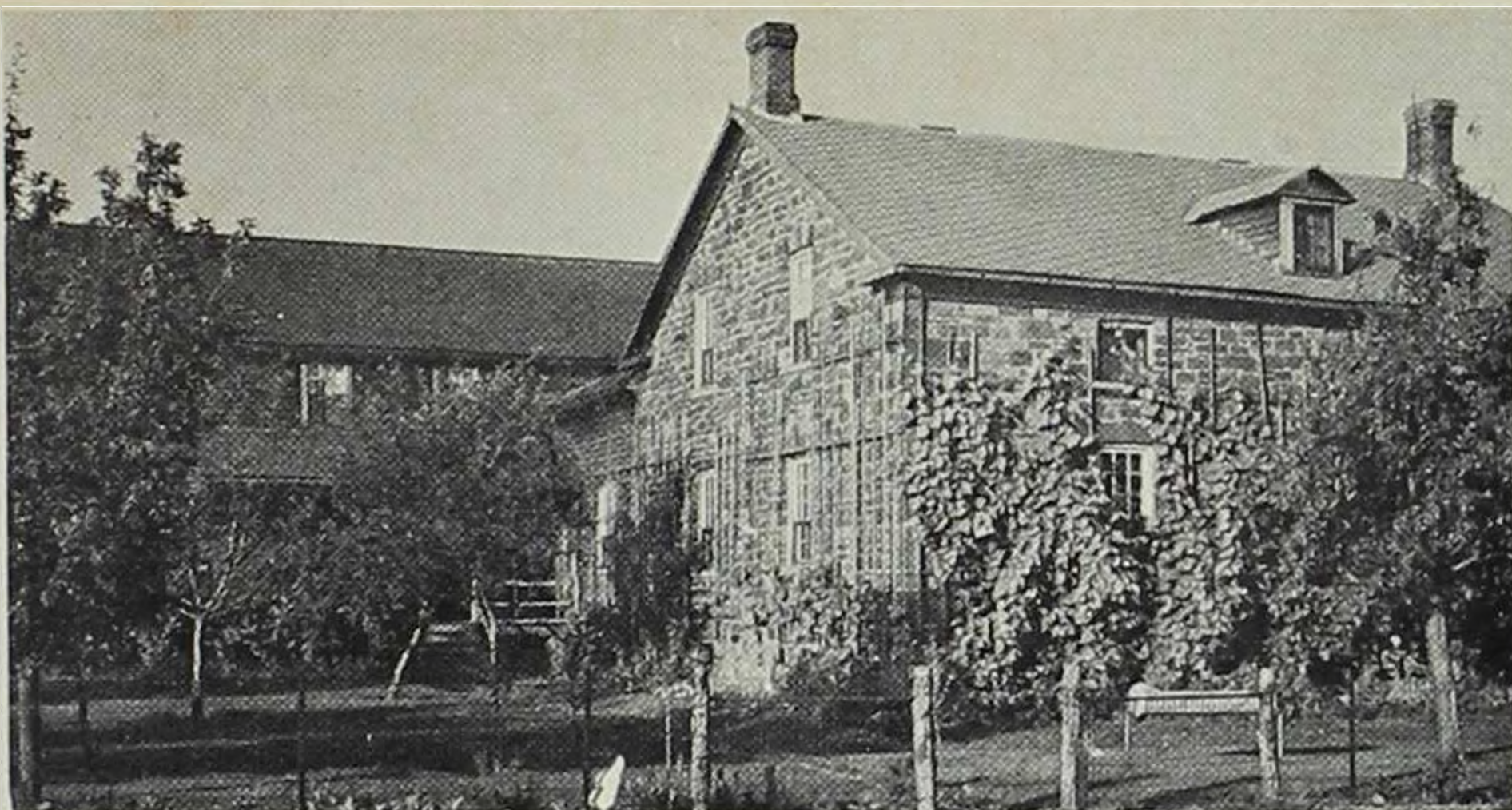
Residence at Homestead.



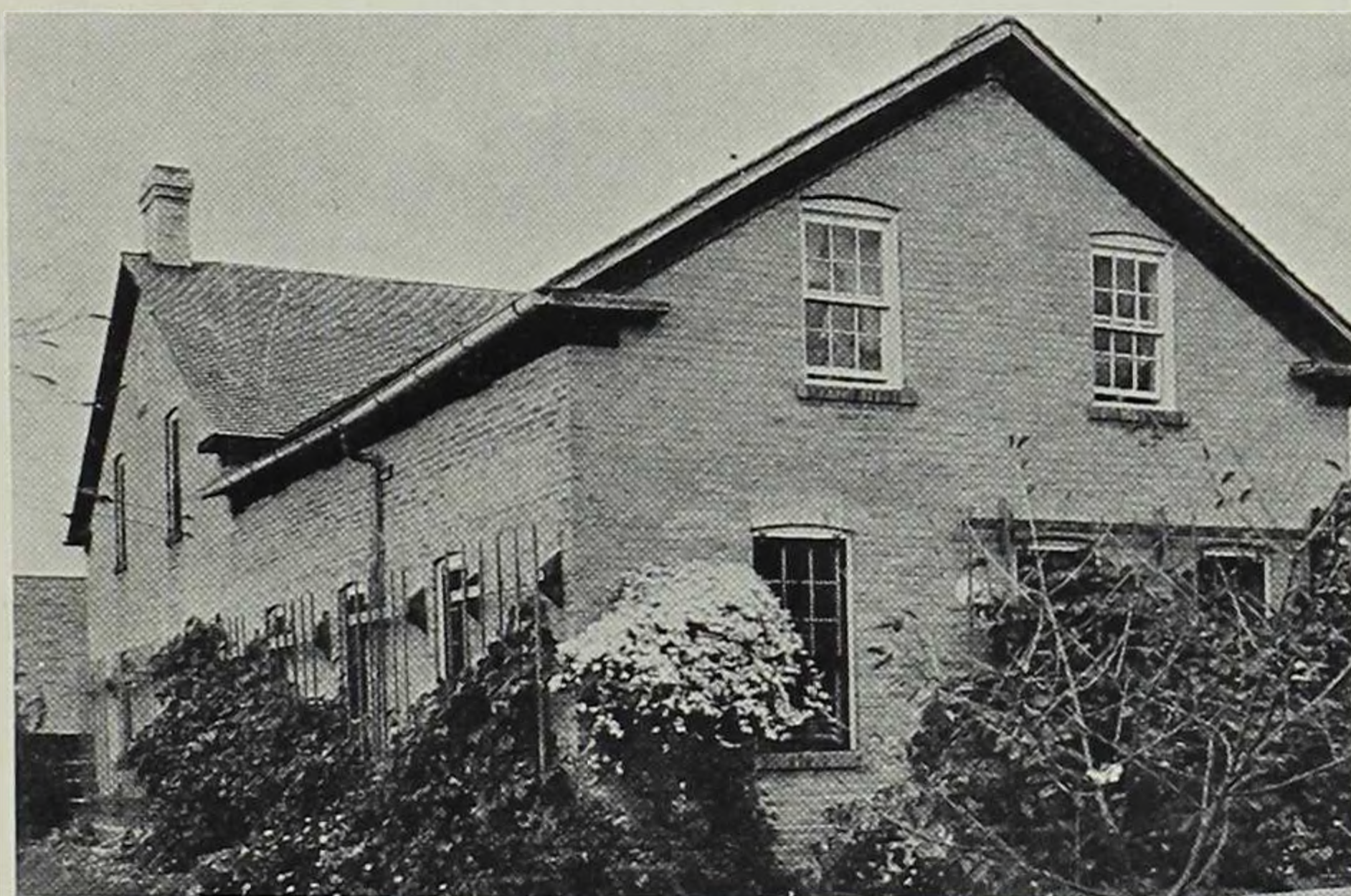
Residence at West Amana.



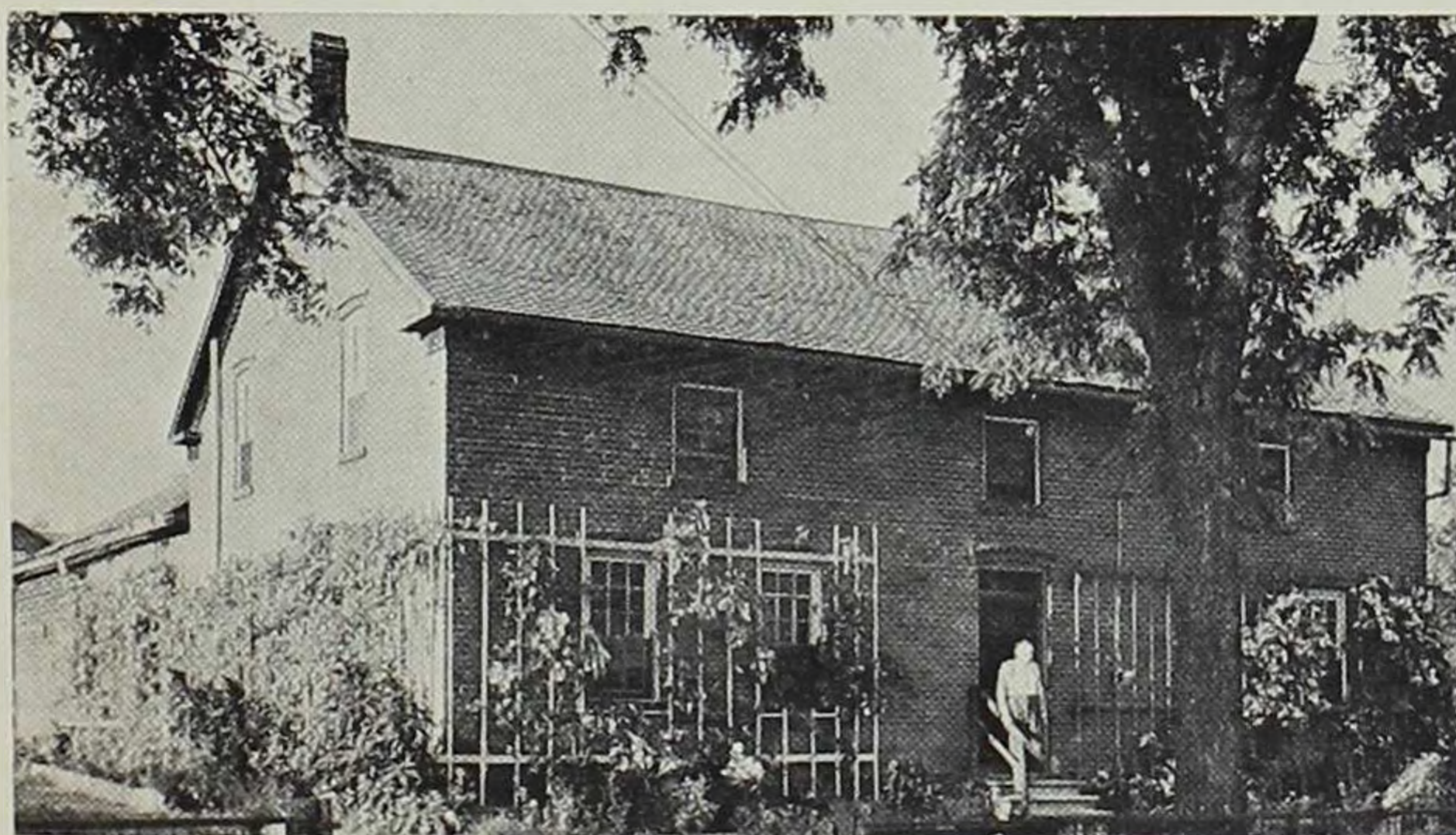
Homes along a street in East Amana.



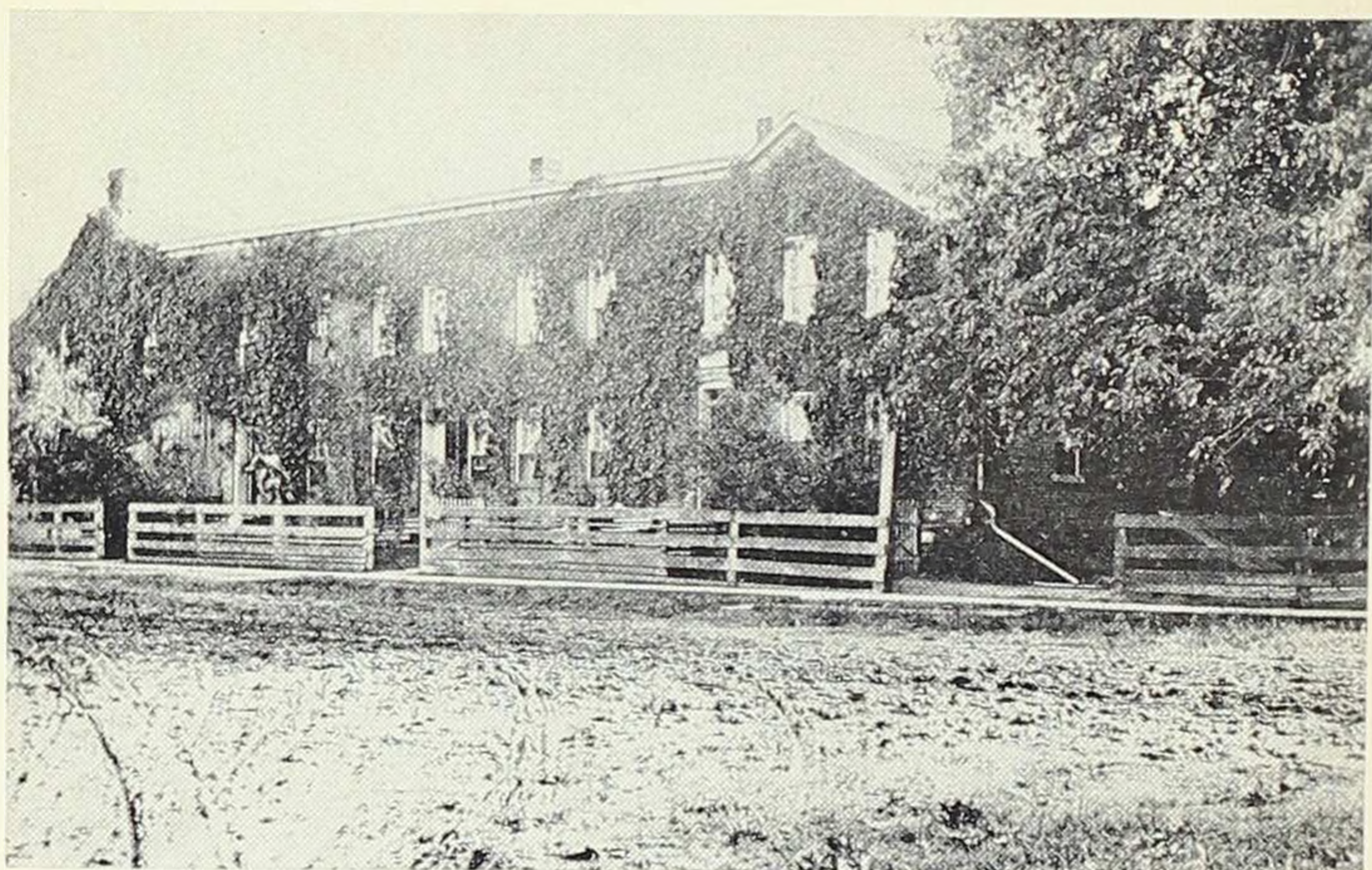
Residence at Amana.



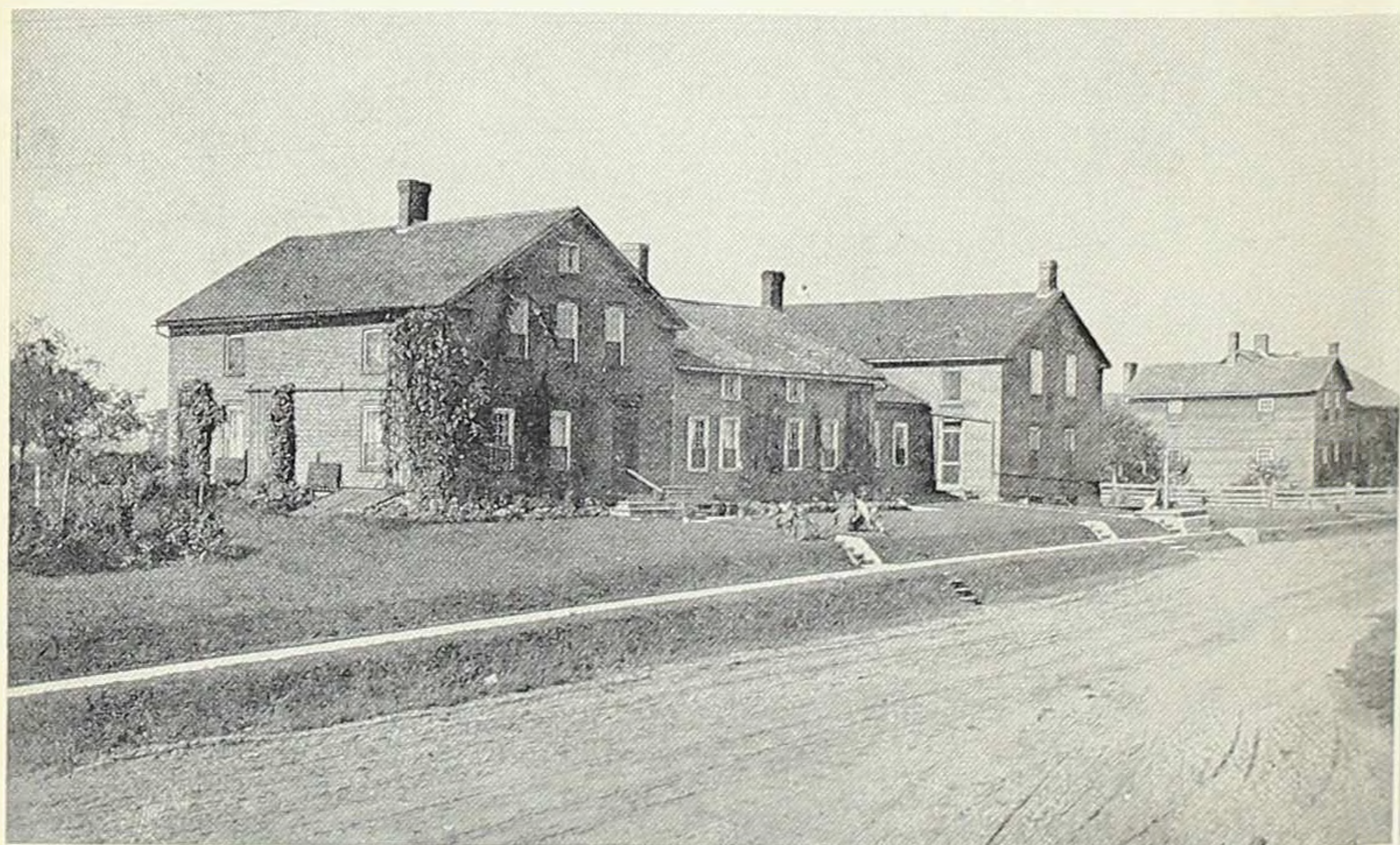
First used as a harness shop and later as a residence in South Amana.



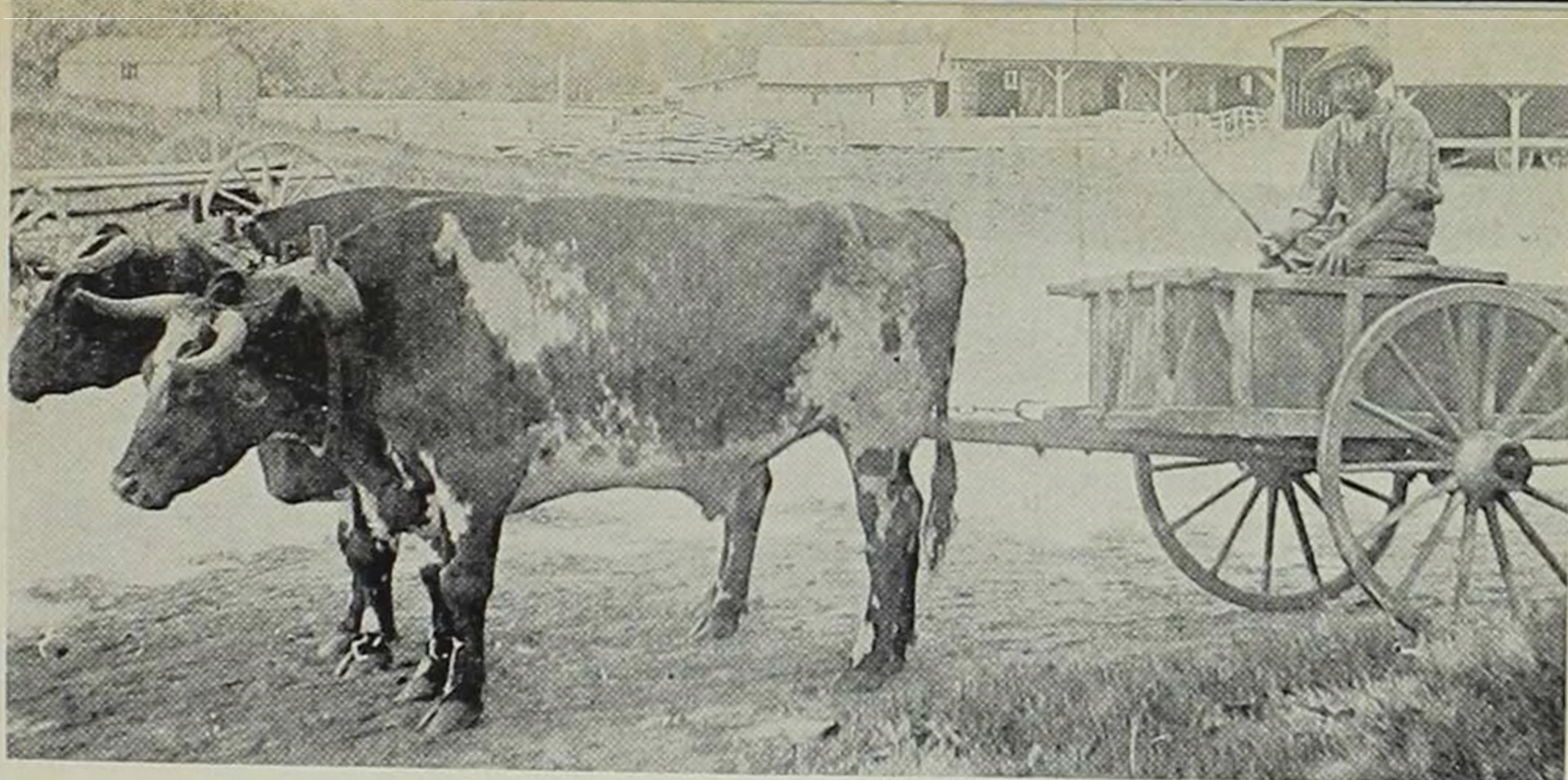
Residence in Middle Amana.



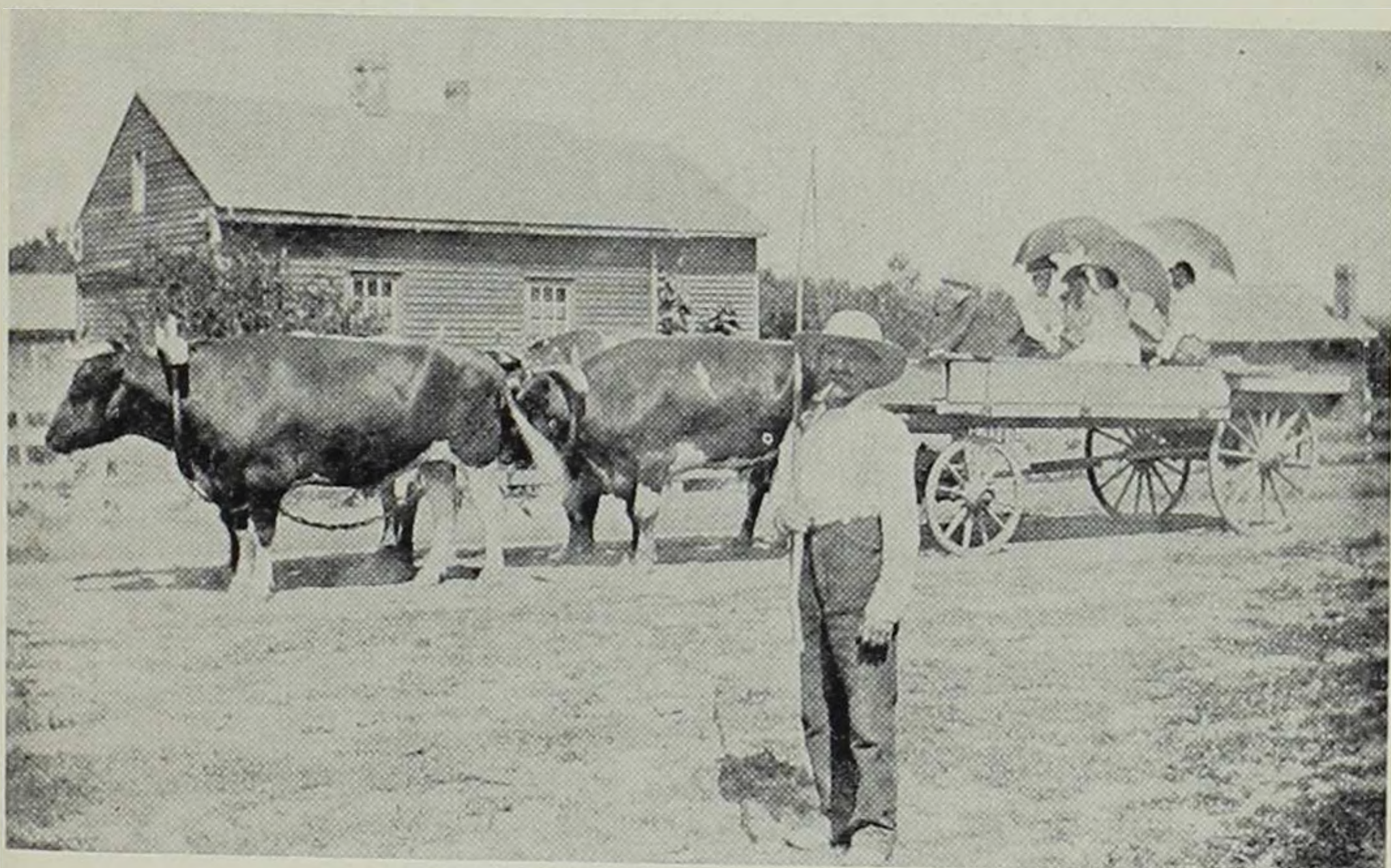
Bill Zuber's Dugout Restaurant now occupies this building in Homestead.



Zimmerman's Kitchenhouse is now the Ronneburg Restaurant in Amana.

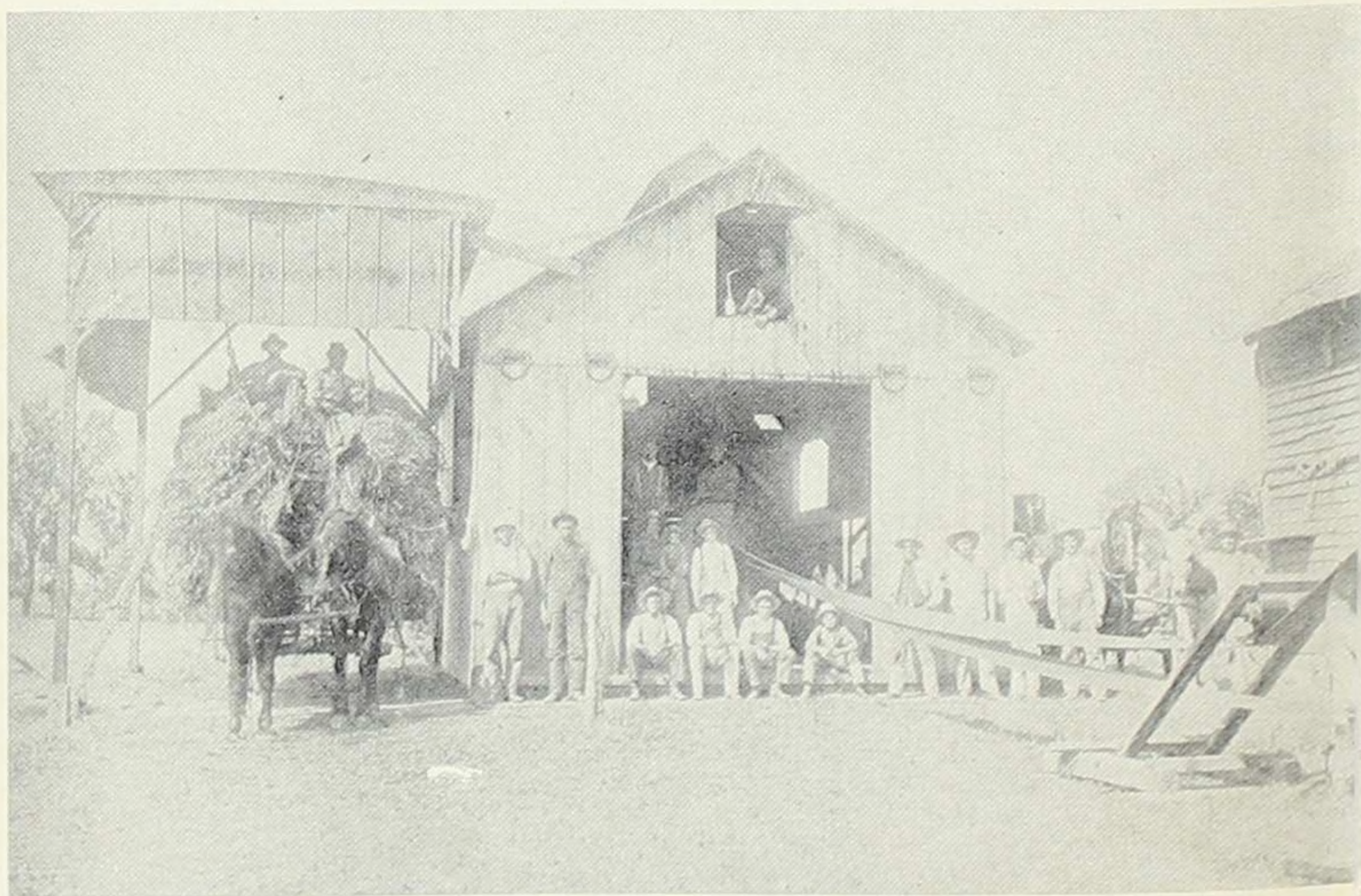


"Oxen, horses, and mules find Amana an earthly paradise." (Ely)



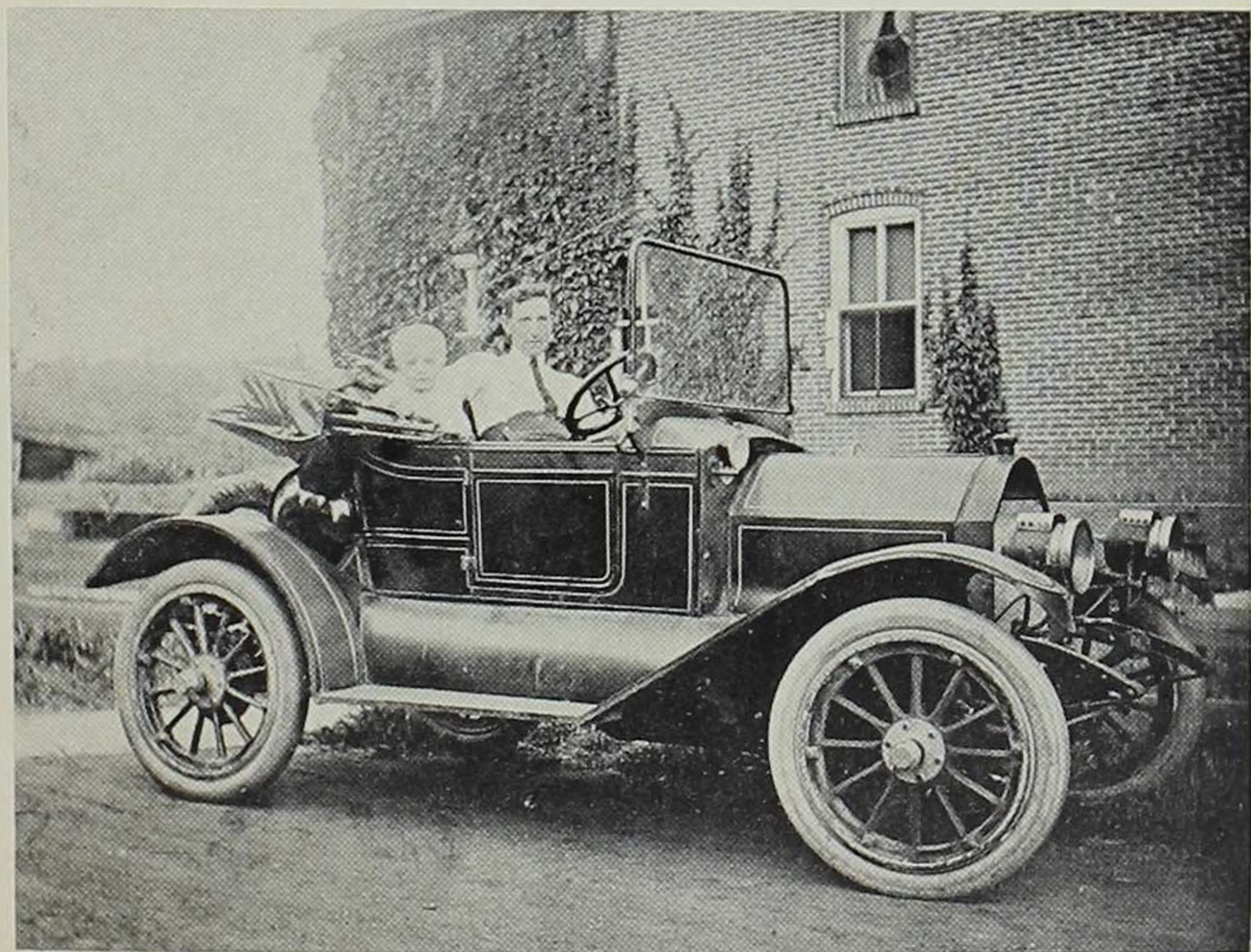


Because of the heavy work involved, farming chores were primarily assigned to the middle-aged men of the colony. However, many boys leaving the schools at 14 years of age were assigned to help with the farm work. Oxen, horses, and mules provided the motive power for field work and the movement of the production of the farm units. Women often were called on to help in the fields as well as the gardens.





Amana children were always eager to be photographed in a visitor's car. The Amanas . . . "had long discouraged automobiles by the effective means of raising their street crossings above the level of the street." (Rice)



For years professional men were the only ones who were given cars. Pictured here is Dr. Charles Noe. "There was another disrupting factor: the desire for personal possessions. It seemed to go deeper than the mere possession of an automobile, or a radio, or a bicycle, or a wrist watch . . ." (Rice)



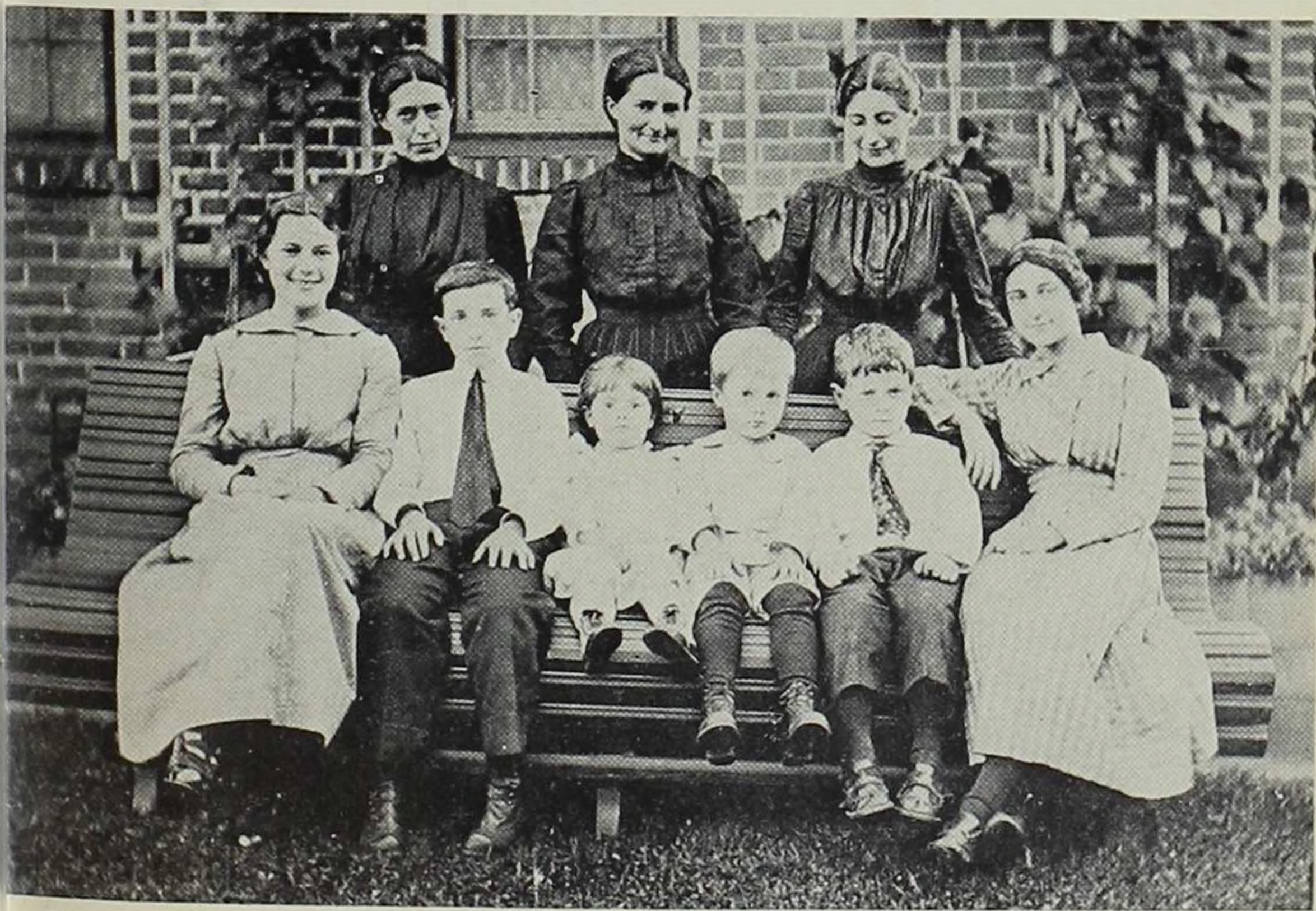
Organizing the first male chorus in Amana were these men, left to right: George Schmieder, Ferdinand Goerler, an outsider—Specht, Henry Klipfel, Adam Clemens, Paul Leichsenring, Sam Christen, and George Roth. Emil Pecher, an outsider, lies in front.



Hunting was popular in the early days of the Amanas.



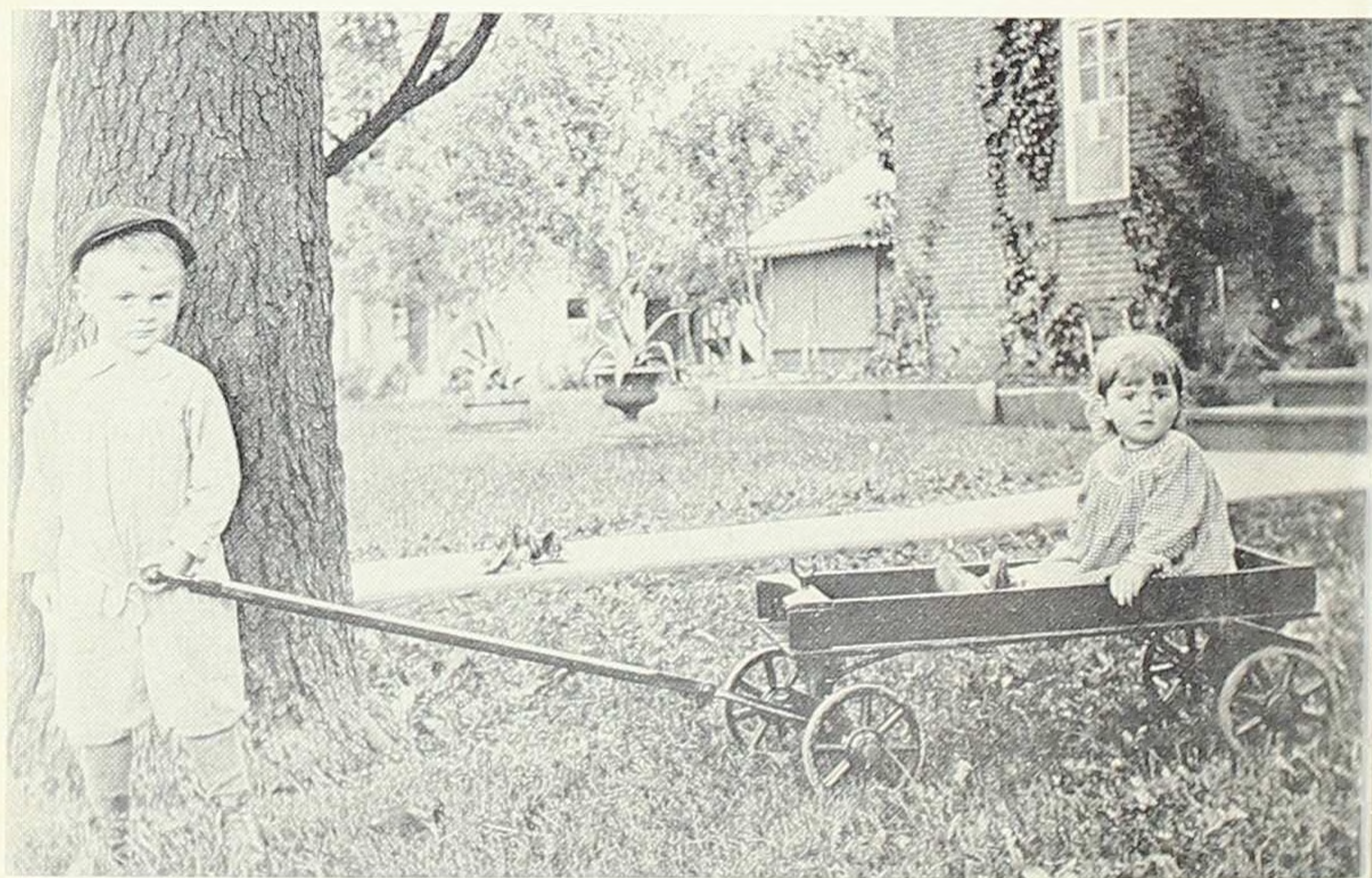
Mrs. Herrmann entertains a few friends around the family board.



Standing are three sisters: Mrs. Charles Noe, Mrs. August Koch, and Mrs. William Miller.



William Leichsenring (upper left), now popular owner of the Ox Yoke Inn, joined a group of Amana girls to gather flowers.



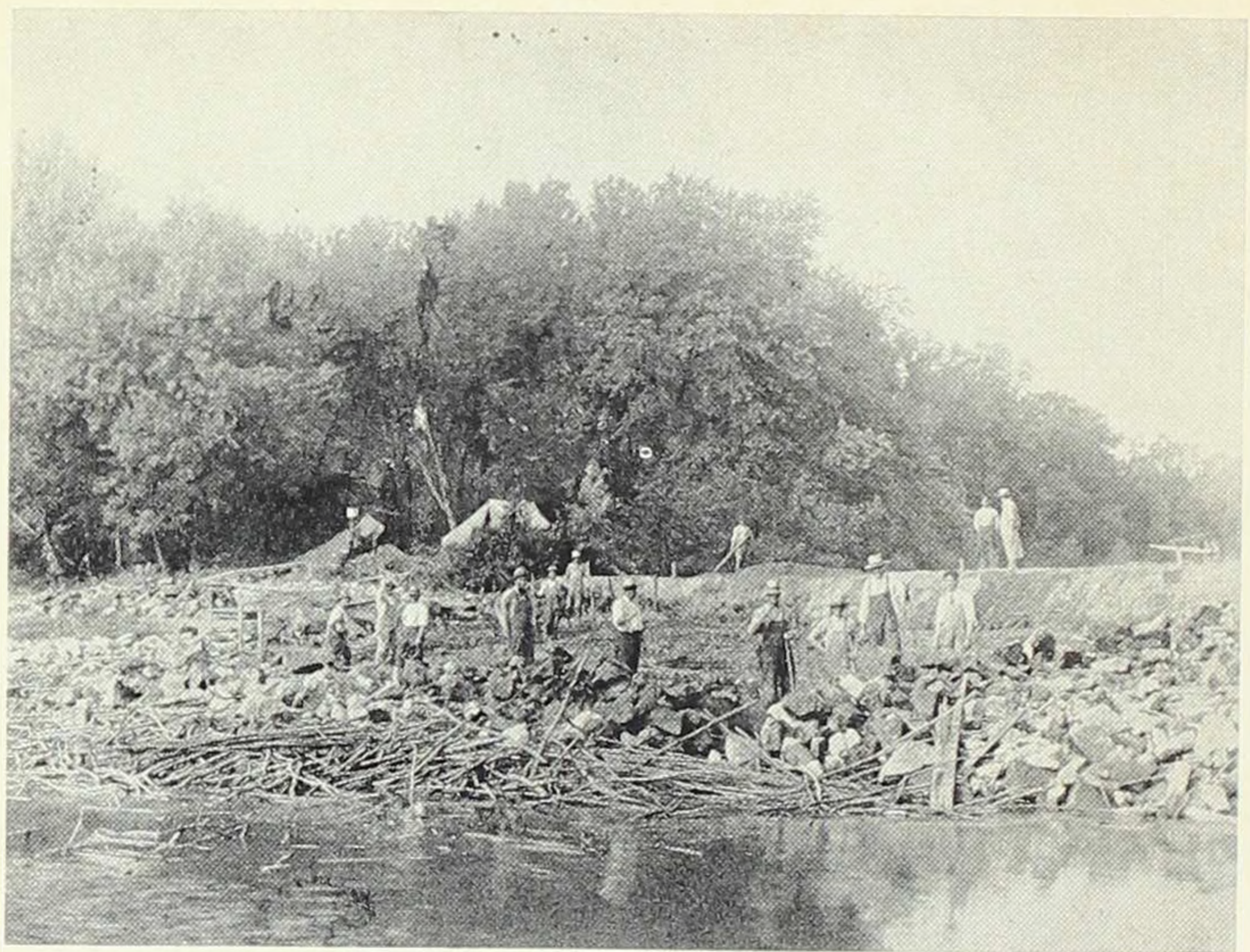
Henry Miller takes little Louise Miller for a ride in Homestead.



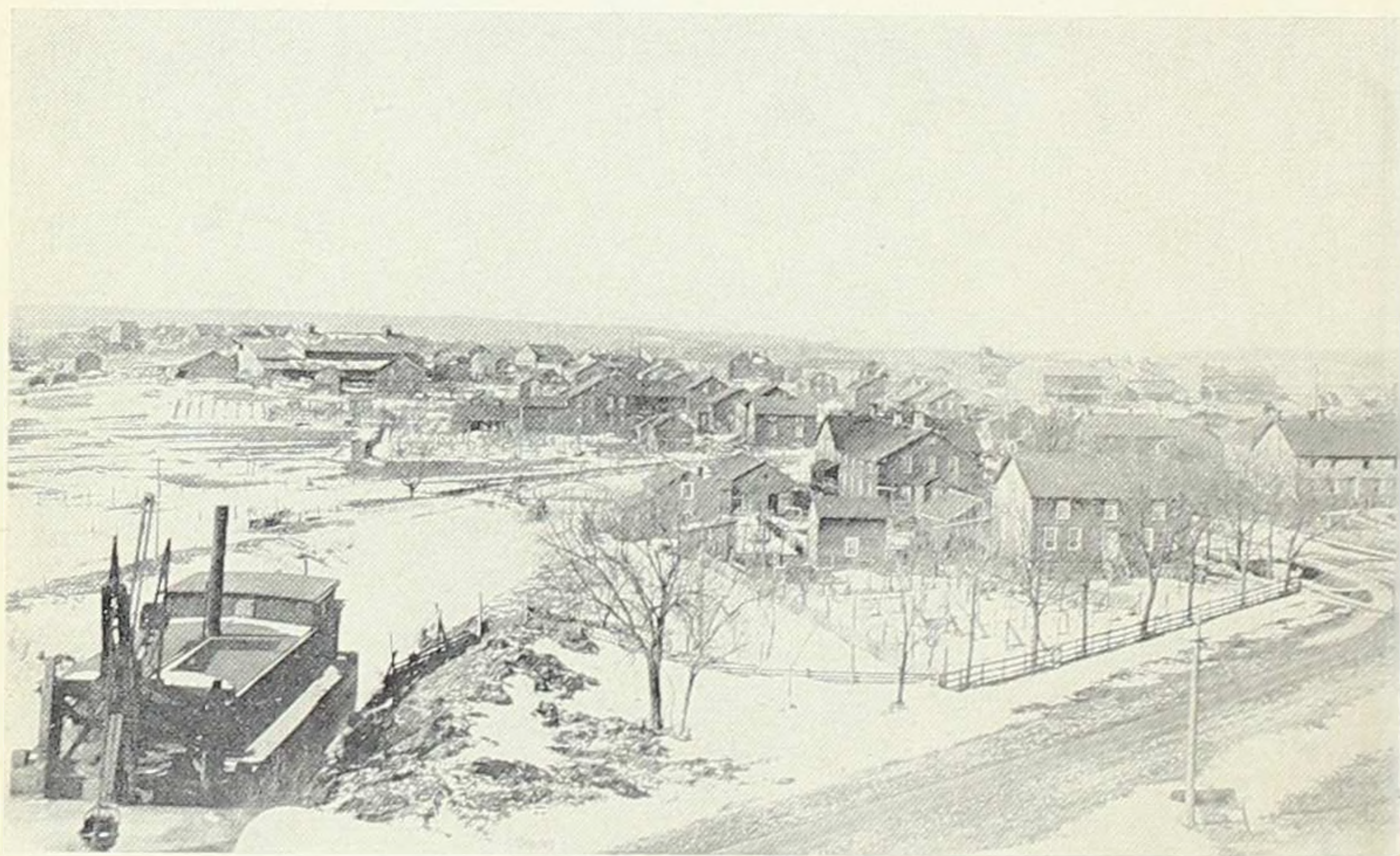
The water lilies in Amana Lily Lake are a blaze of color when they reach full bloom in July and August. "There is a lake that covers 180 acres, and along its margins are pleasant drives and winding, shady bypaths." (MacClure)



Cutting ice on Lily Lake supplied the refrigeration requirements of the villages for the coming summer.



Amana men are pictured as they worked on the construction of a dam across the Iowa River west of West Amana. This supplied the water requirements for the canal.



A dredge was used each summer to clear the canal which connected the various Amana villages. "A canal six or eight miles long has been constructed at considerable expense in order to furnish waterpower for the woolen mills from the Iowa River. A fall of fourteen feet is thus secured." (Shaw)



A disastrous fire destroyed a woolen mill at Amana.



A Rock Island passenger wreck west of Homestead.



Carl Kolb and little Elizabeth Lipman, Homestead, have their pipes under control.



Bill Zuber suffered a broken leg for this picture. The horse, scared by the photographer, tossed and kicked 2-year-old Bill.



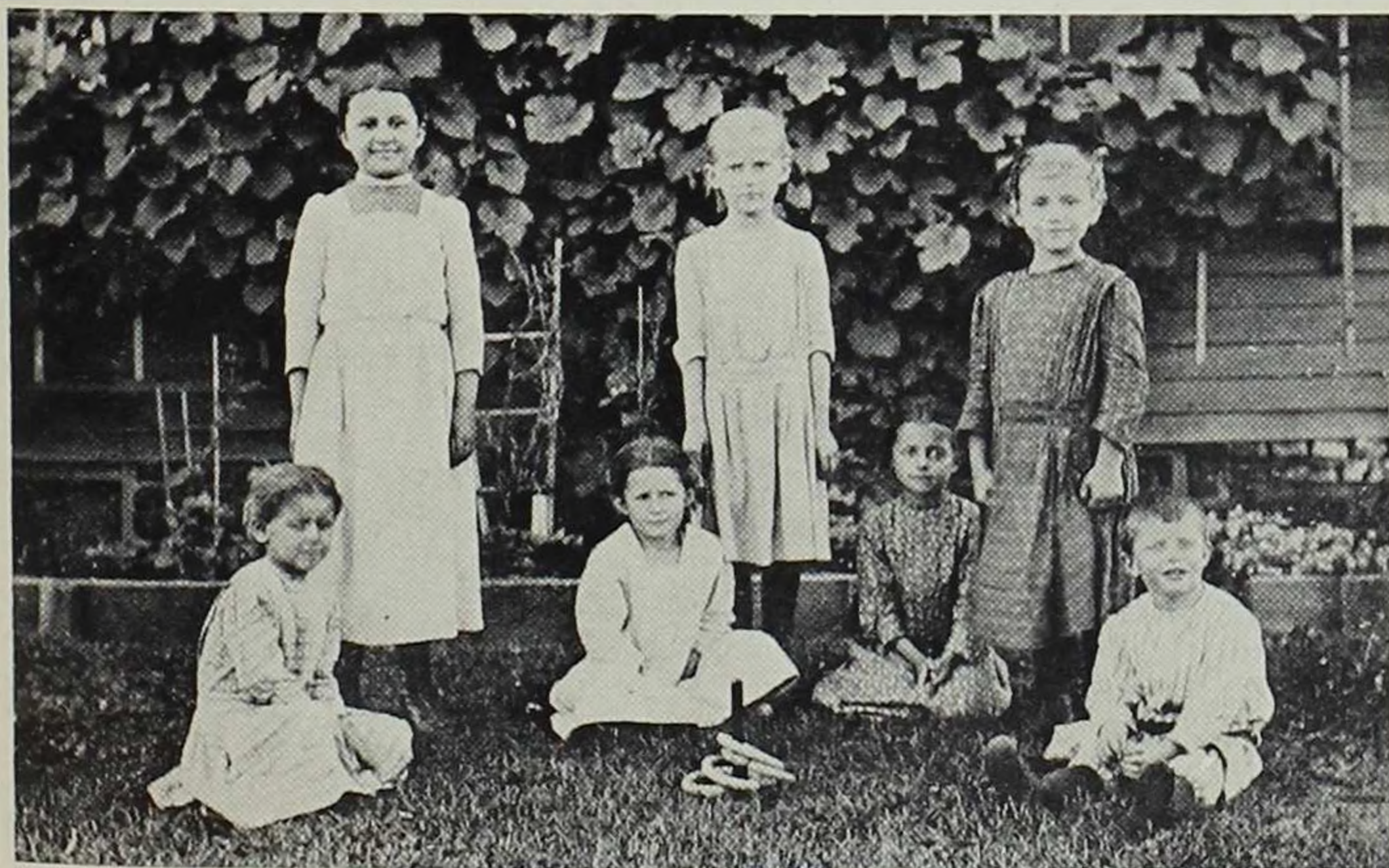
Louise and Henry Miller, Amana.



George Foerstner and Emily and Lilly Wendler.



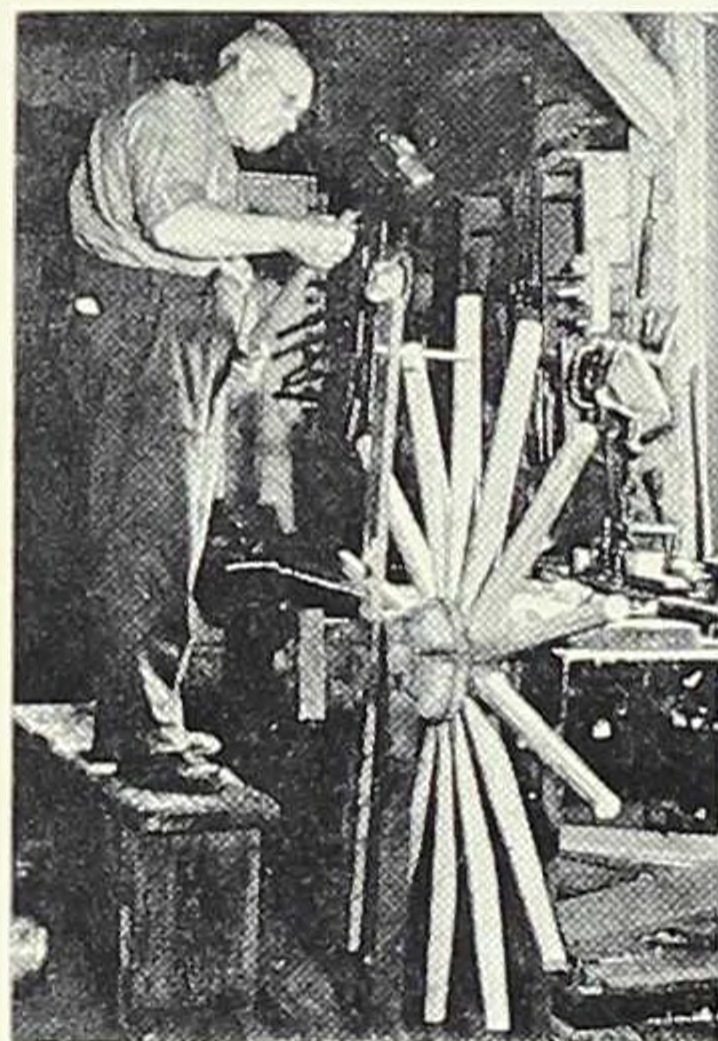
A group of young people from Amana have fun on a day's outing.



Resting from a game of ring toss are these young folks from Homestead. Elizabeth Lipman, pictured on the opposite page is seated, center, behind rings and stake.



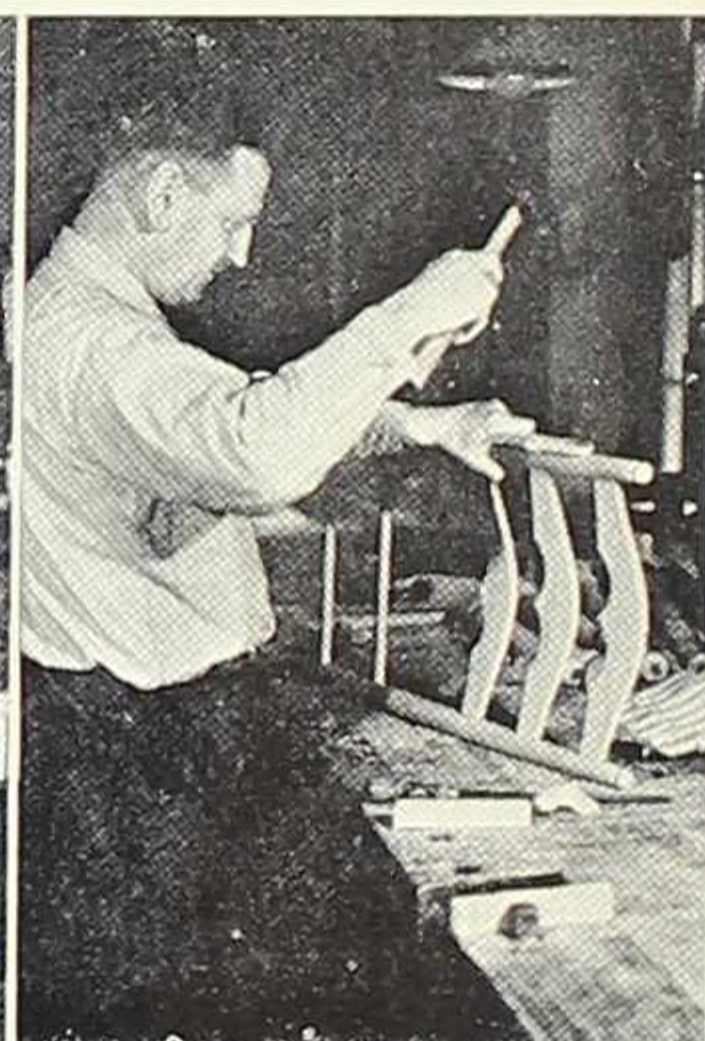
Bakers remove freshly baked bread from an oven.



Wheelmaker



Druggist



Furniture Maker



Desk in Pharmacist William Miller home in Amana.



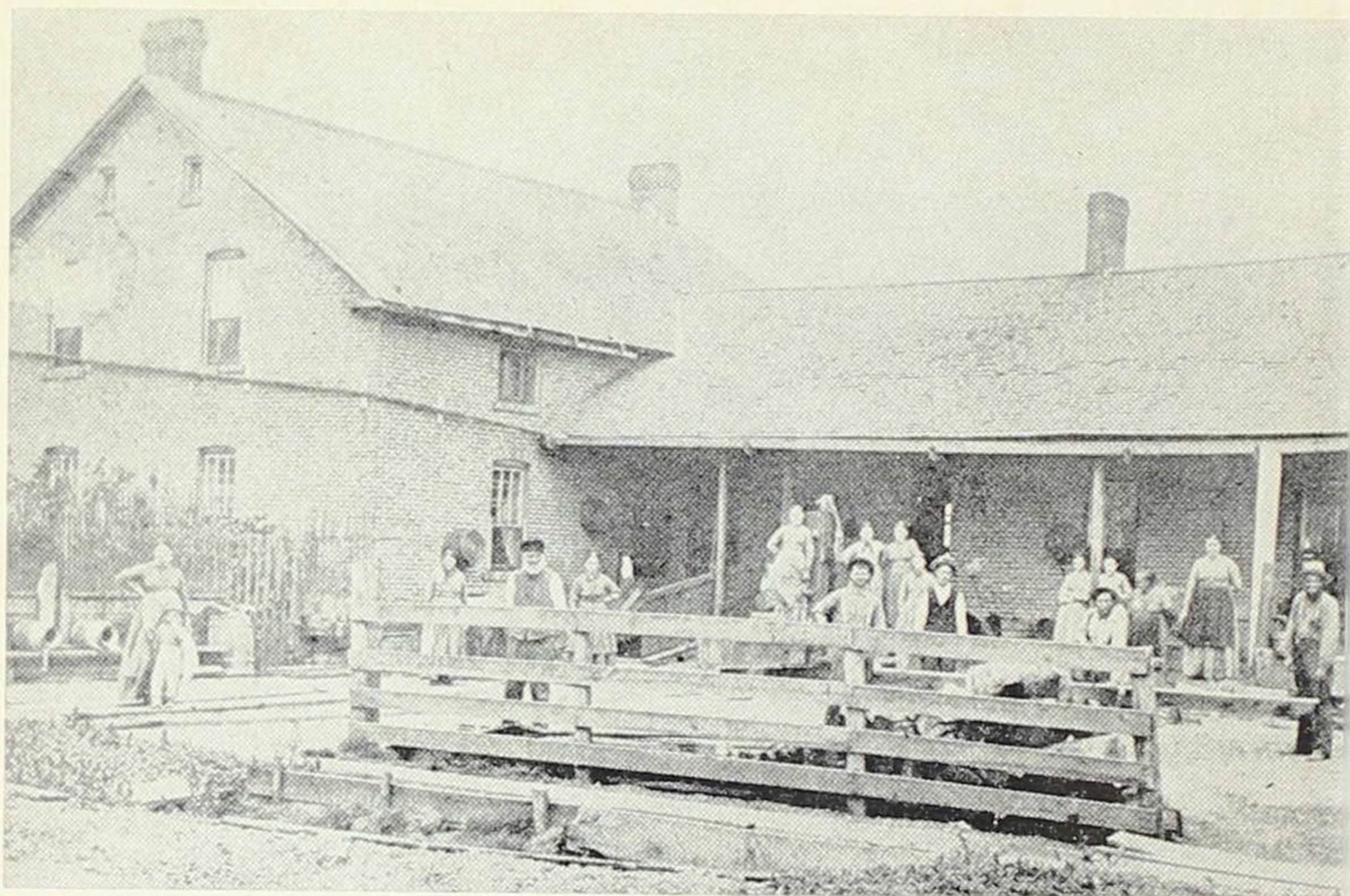
Old brewery in Amana—now completely demolished.



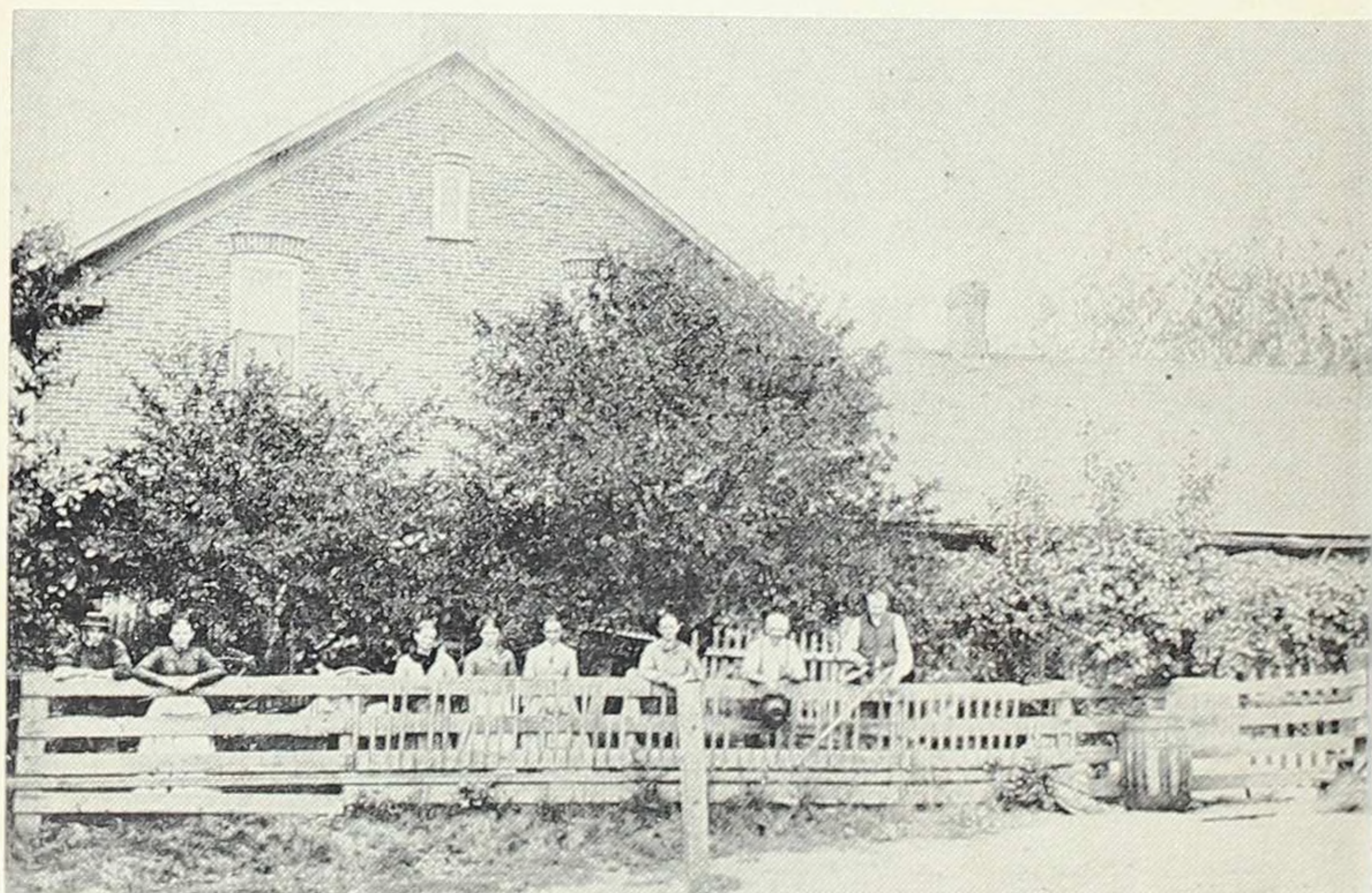
The lumber yard was always a busy place in the Amanas.

The Ehrle Winery in Homestead is the colony's oldest and largest winery.

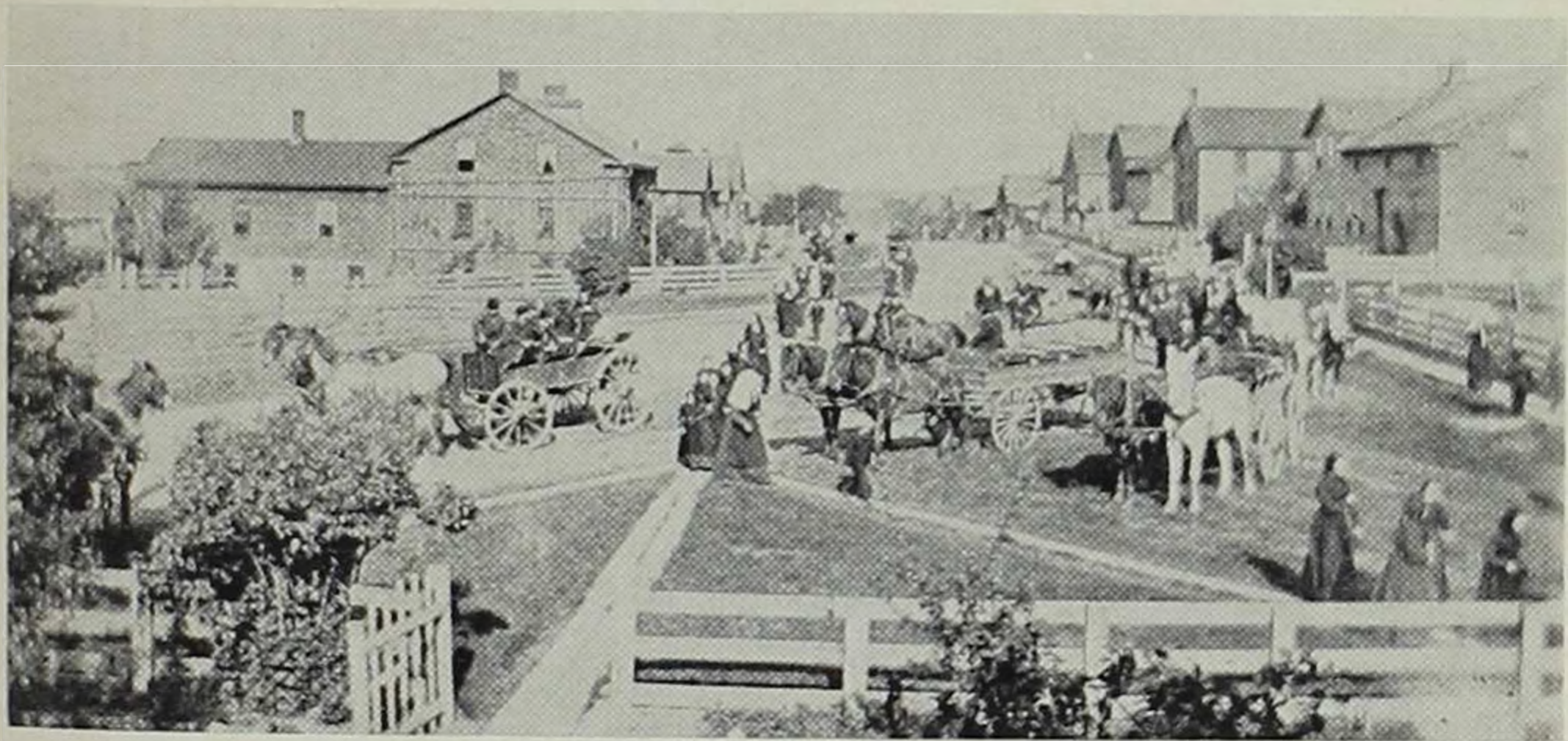




Kippenhan's Kitchen in South Amana. "All members take meals at village boardinghouses, in groups of perhaps forty or fifty. These boardinghouses maintain each their own dairy, are supplied with groceries from the store, with flour from the colony's mills, and with meat from the village butcher shop." (Shaw)



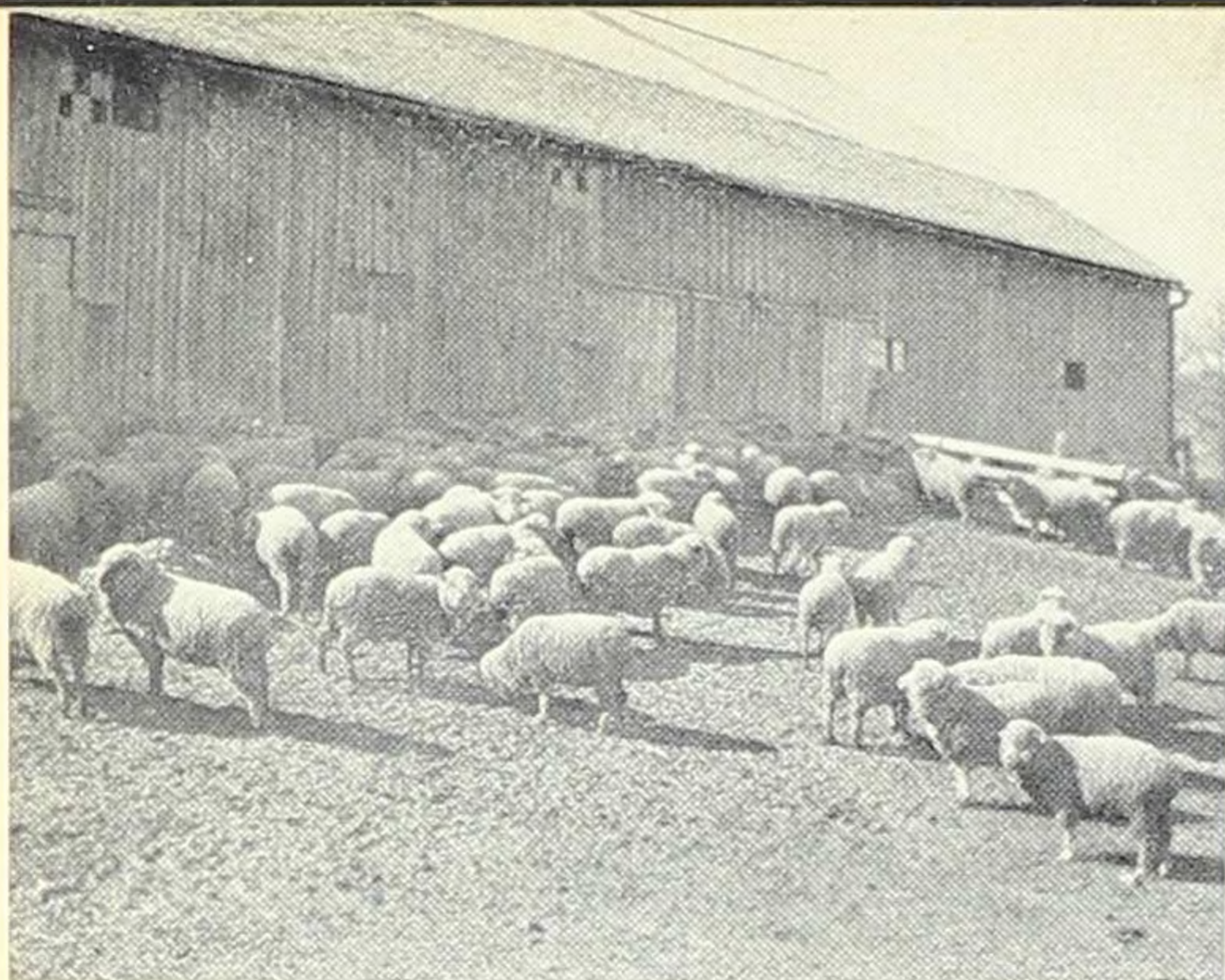
Geiger's Kitchen. "In Amana proper there are sixteen kitchens, each caring for about forty persons. The unmarried men are obliged to board at the hotel . . . There are five meals a day. Men leave the mills in instalments, so the constant coming and going gives one the idea that life is a continual scramble for something to eat." (MacClure)



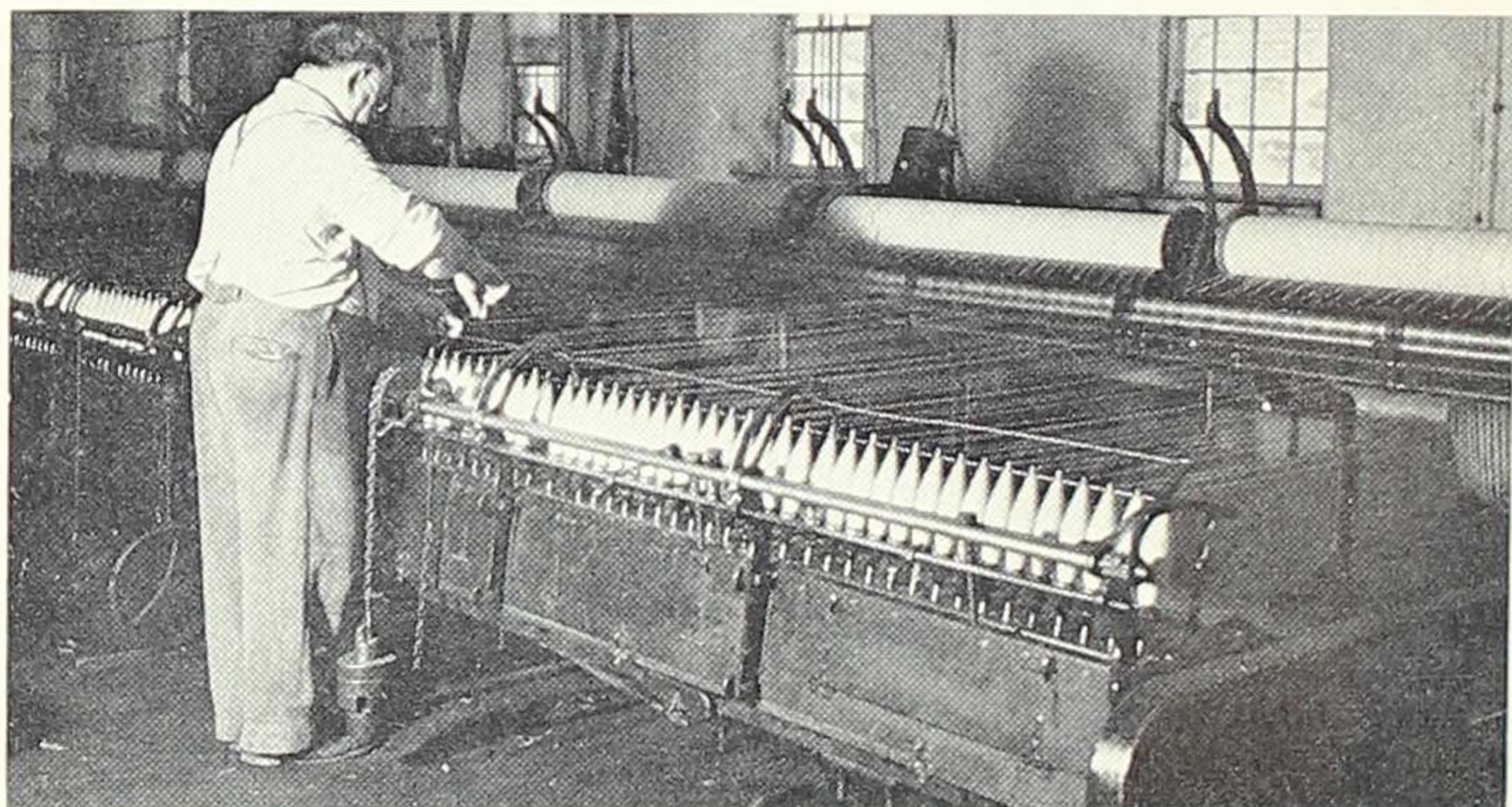
Amana residents ready to leave for church. "It is the firm belief of the leaders of the Amana people that religion is the necessary foundation of communism, and that their own communism is simply an outgrowth of their religious life." (Ely)



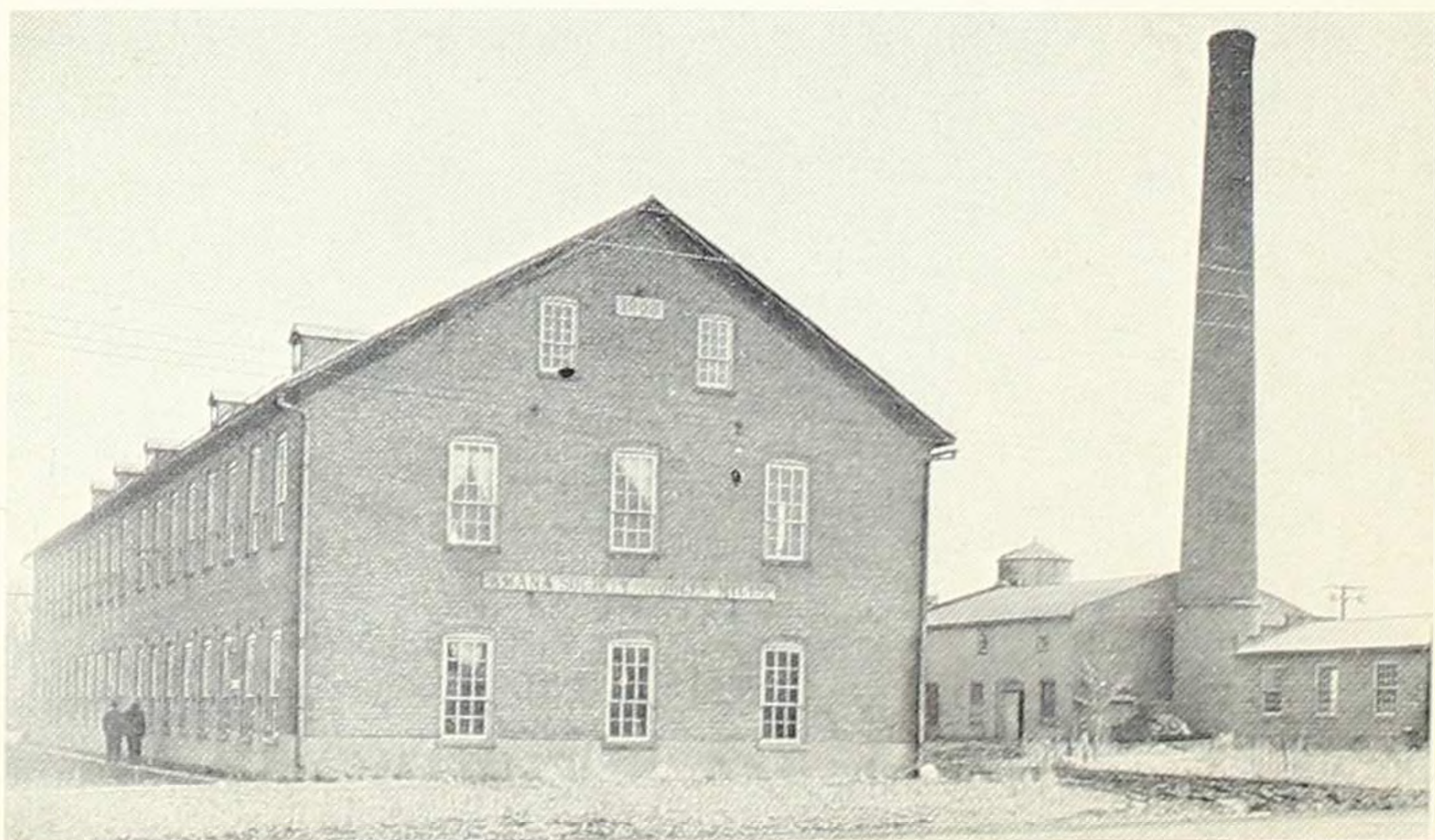
Dickel's Kitchen at Amana burned down on September 27, 1899.



From the sheep ranches of Homestead comes the fleece . . .



That kept the looms (above) of Amana woolen (below) and print mills running.

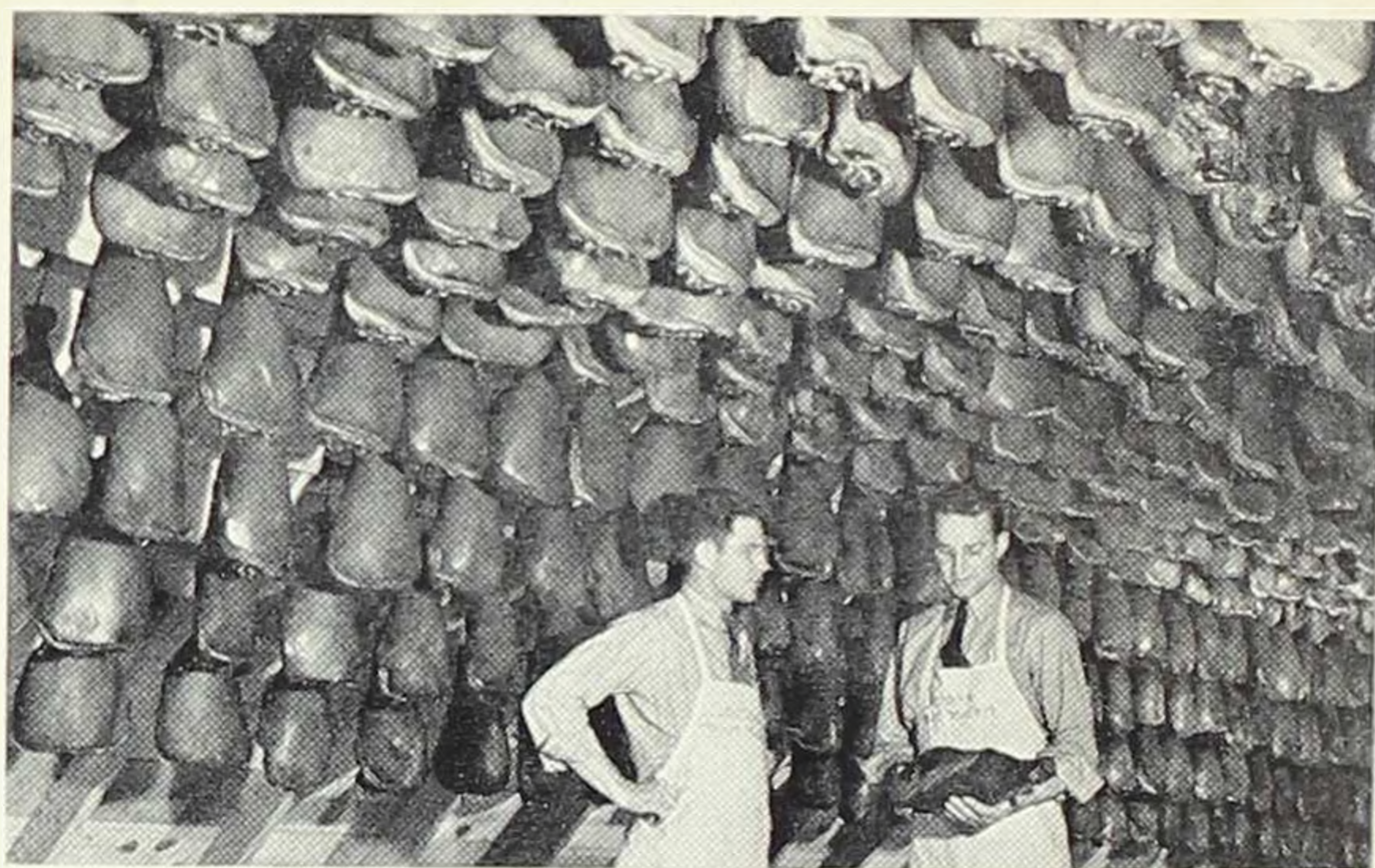




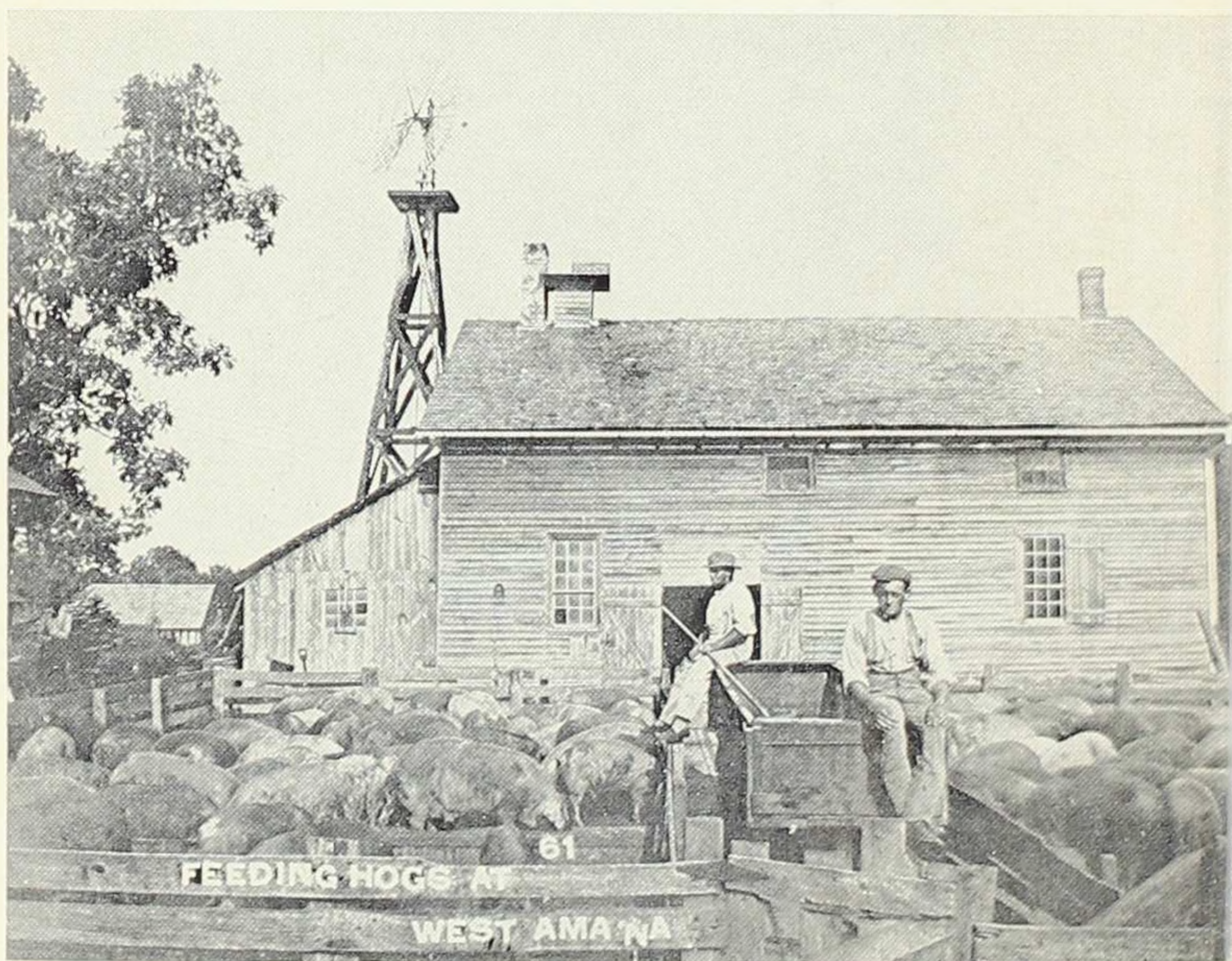
An early sales room was a far cry from today's well-stocked sales area.



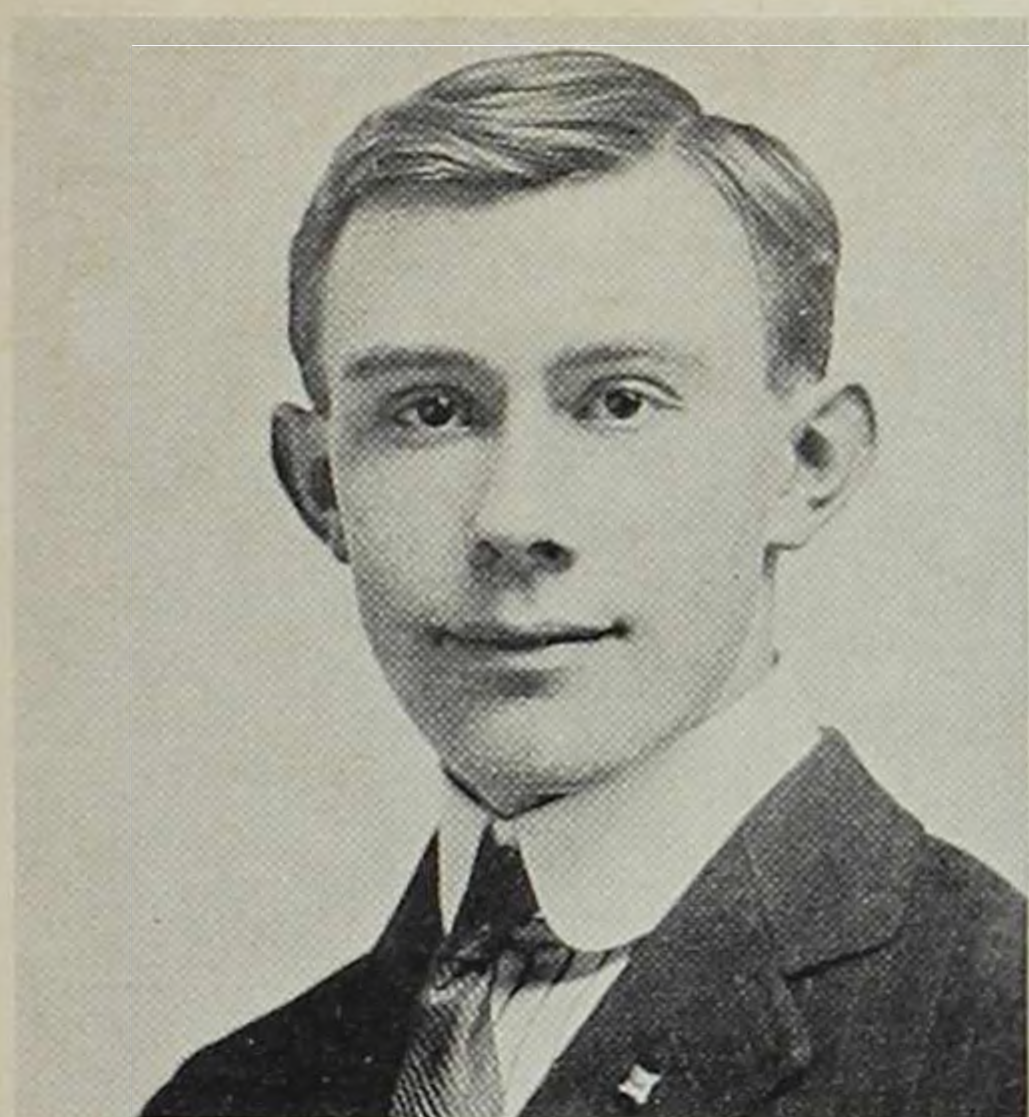
Amana women were skilled in all forms of needlework.



Aging Westphalian style hickory-smoked hams.



Feeding hogs in the yards at West Amana. "The barns and stables are excellent, and supplies of farm machinery the best." (Shaw)



A youthful-appearing Henry G. Moershel was to devote his life to healing the ill of the Amana Colony.



Two young ladies of the Homestead area are ready to give battle in a fast game of croquet.



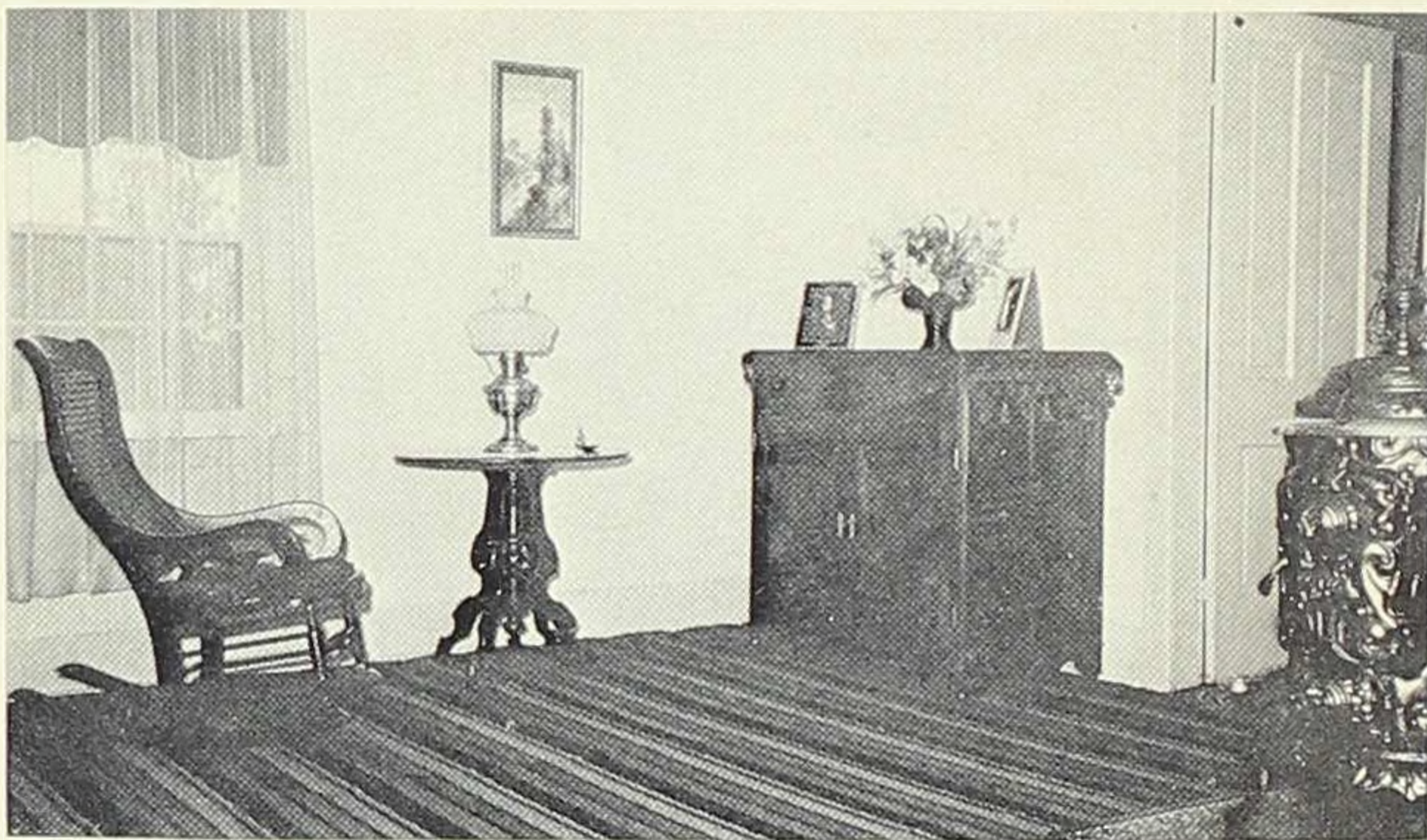
Two younger young ladies absorb the warmth of a springtime sun.



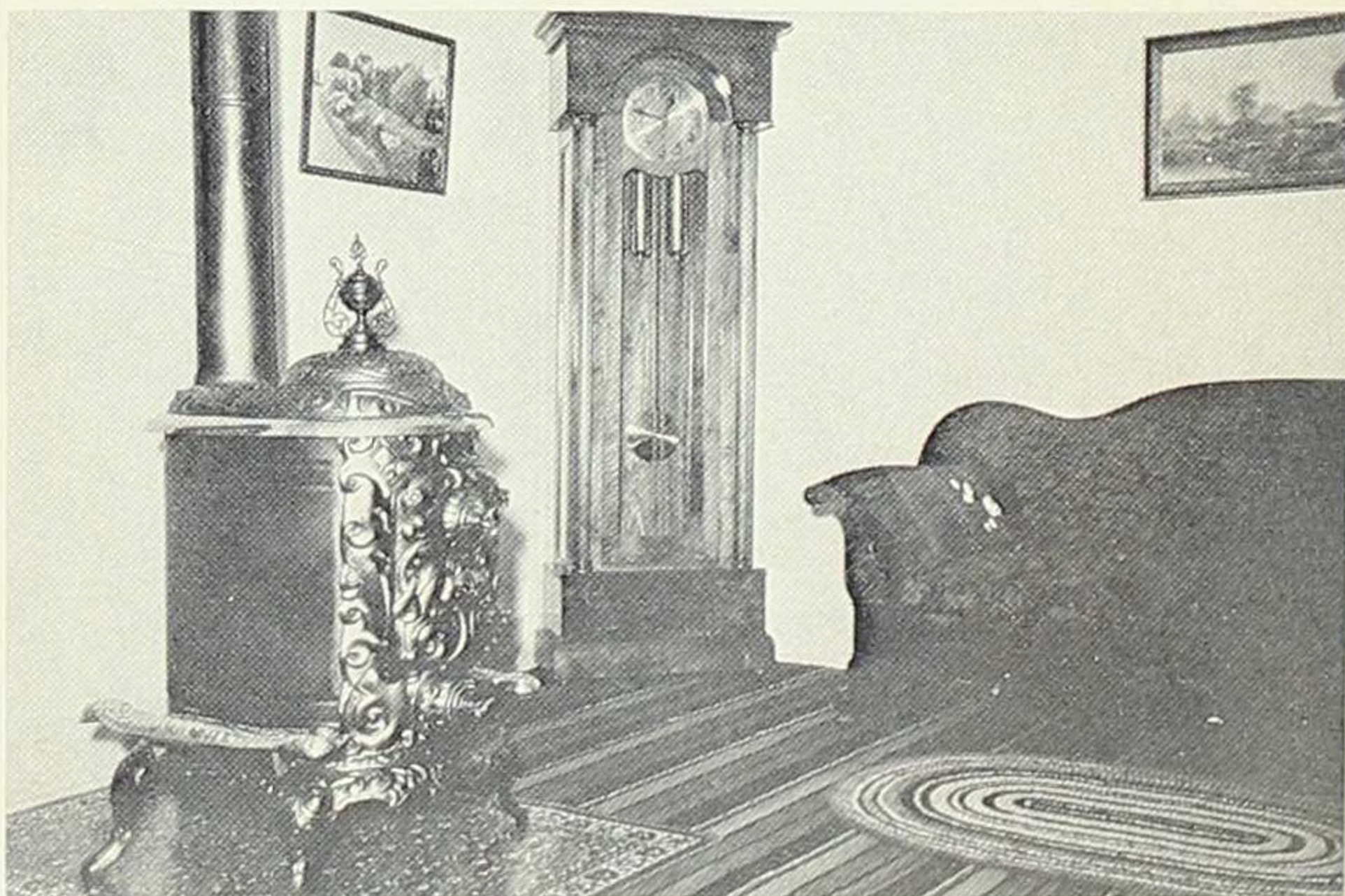
Rudolph Pitz.

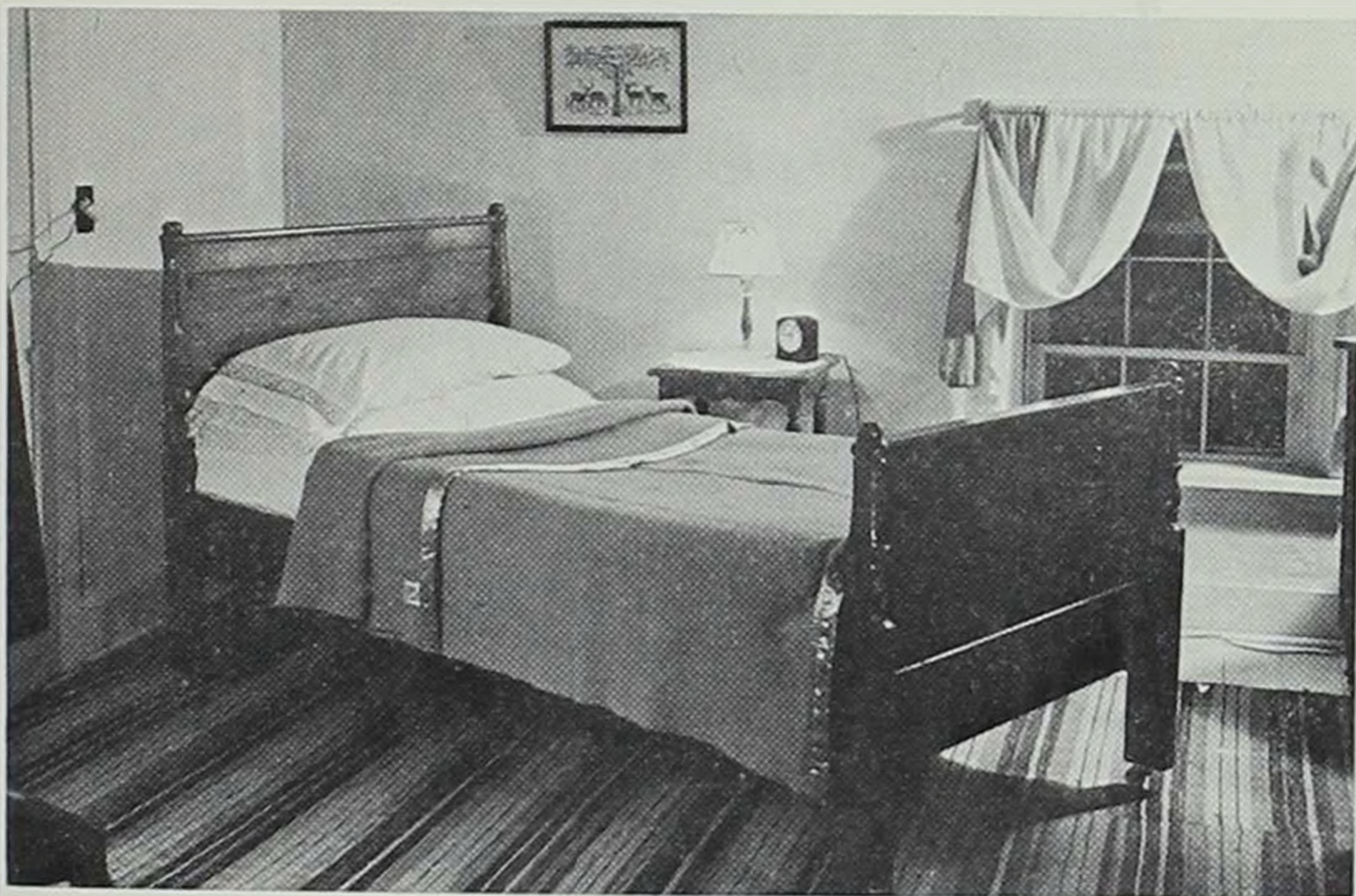


World War I buddies.

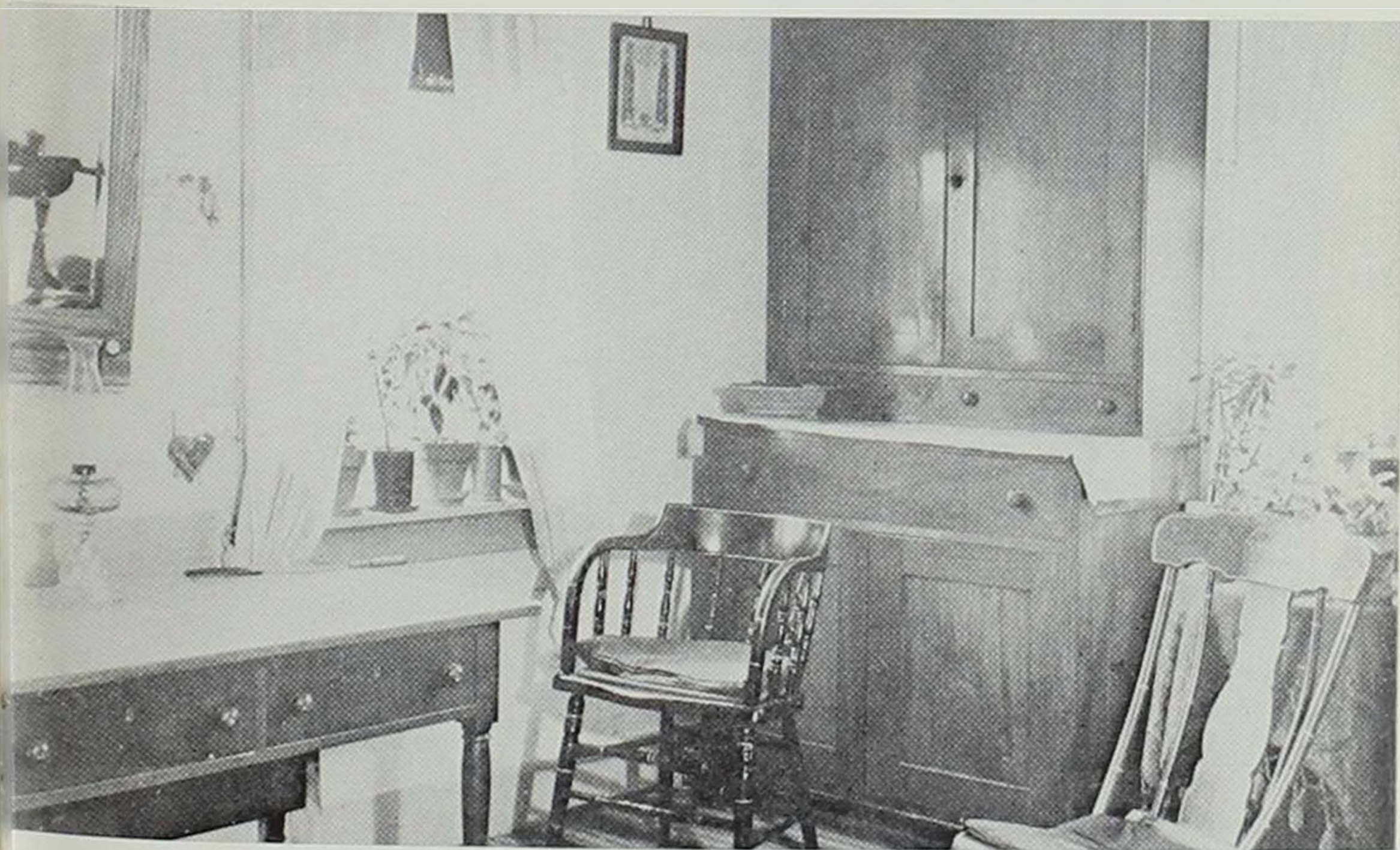


As Lulu MacClure says in her paper, "The furniture of the house is more modern than one would be led to expect from external appearances." As the pictures on these two pages show, the homes were well-furnished, neat, and with a generous supply of wall decorations and plants.





The potted plants in the picture below are an indication of the attention and care given to growing things. This was especially true in the small yards. "The yards about the houses are typically German in the way in which vegetables, trees, and fruit-bearing bushes are intermingled with flowers, all the ground beautifully cared for, and no unutilized land." (Ely)

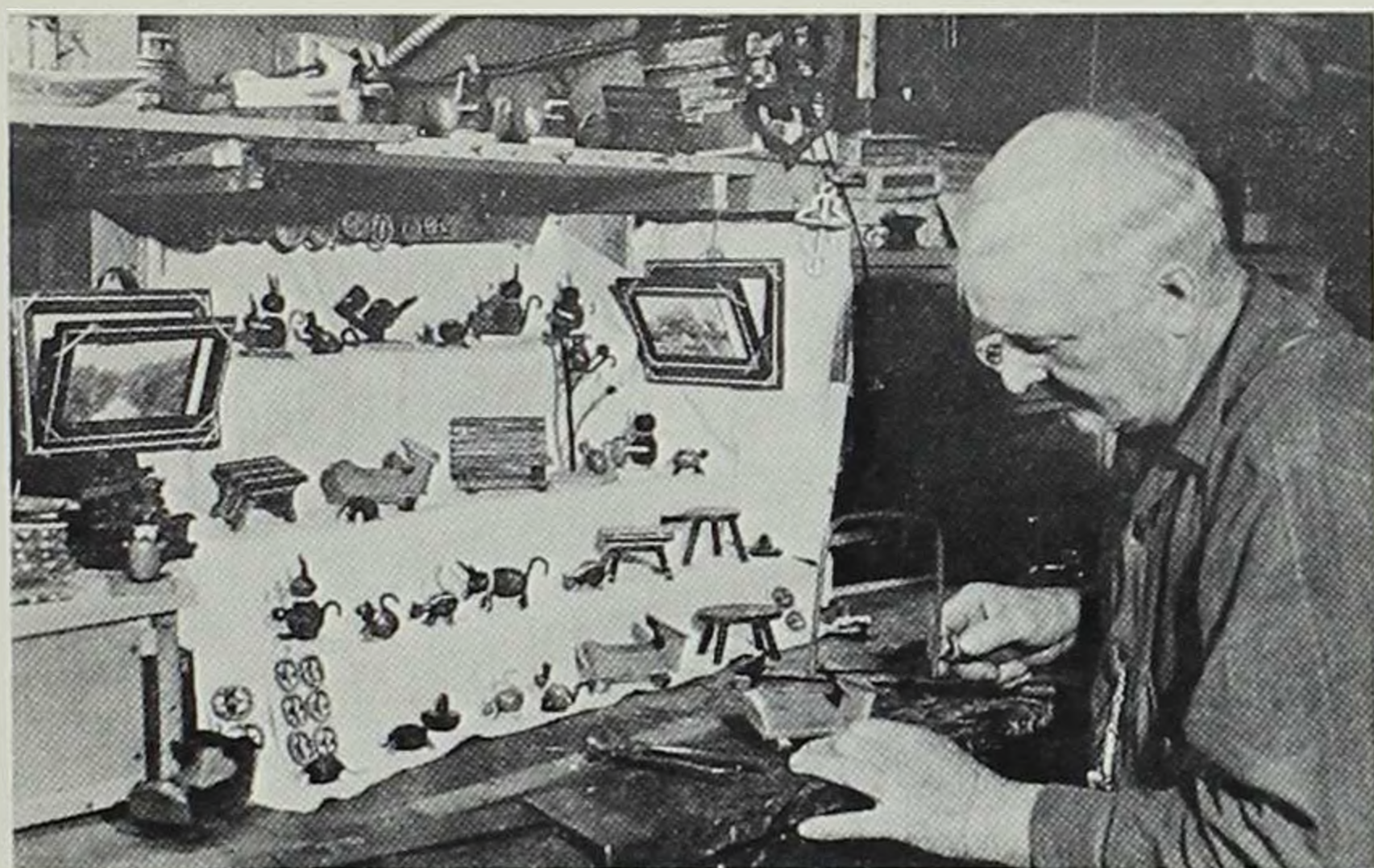




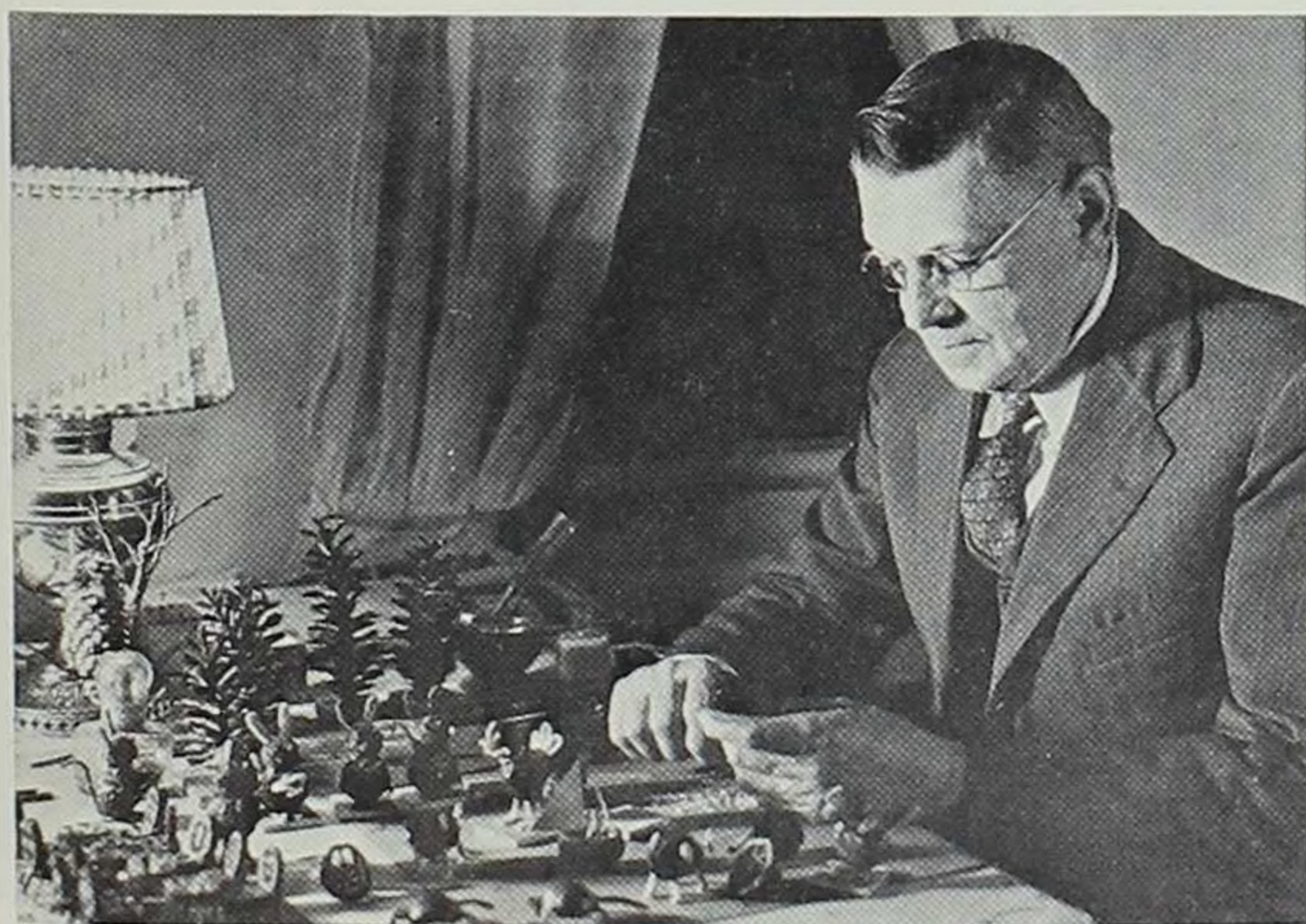
Otto and Dorothy Eichacker in their attractive home.

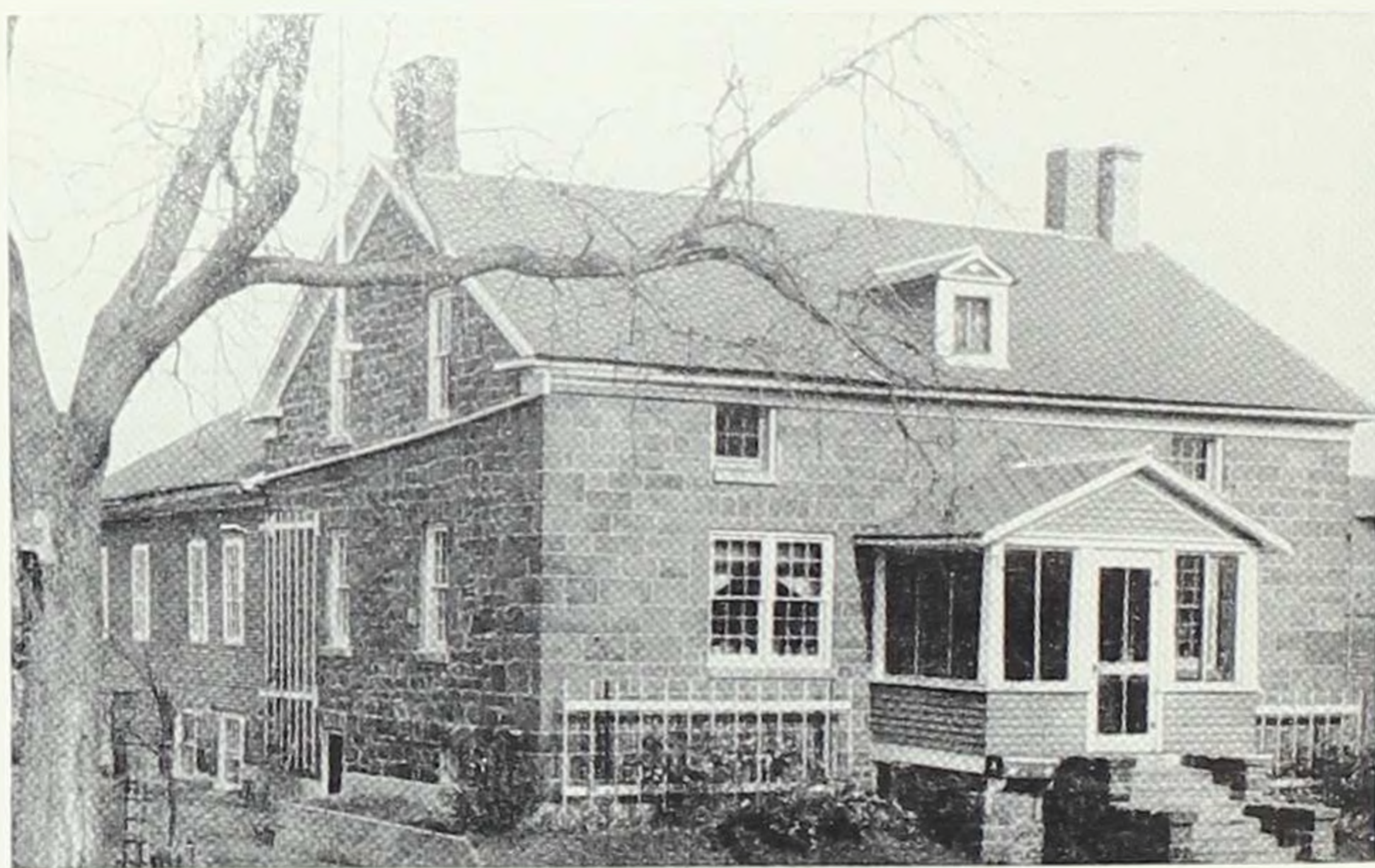


George Schudt visits in the Moershel home in Homestead.

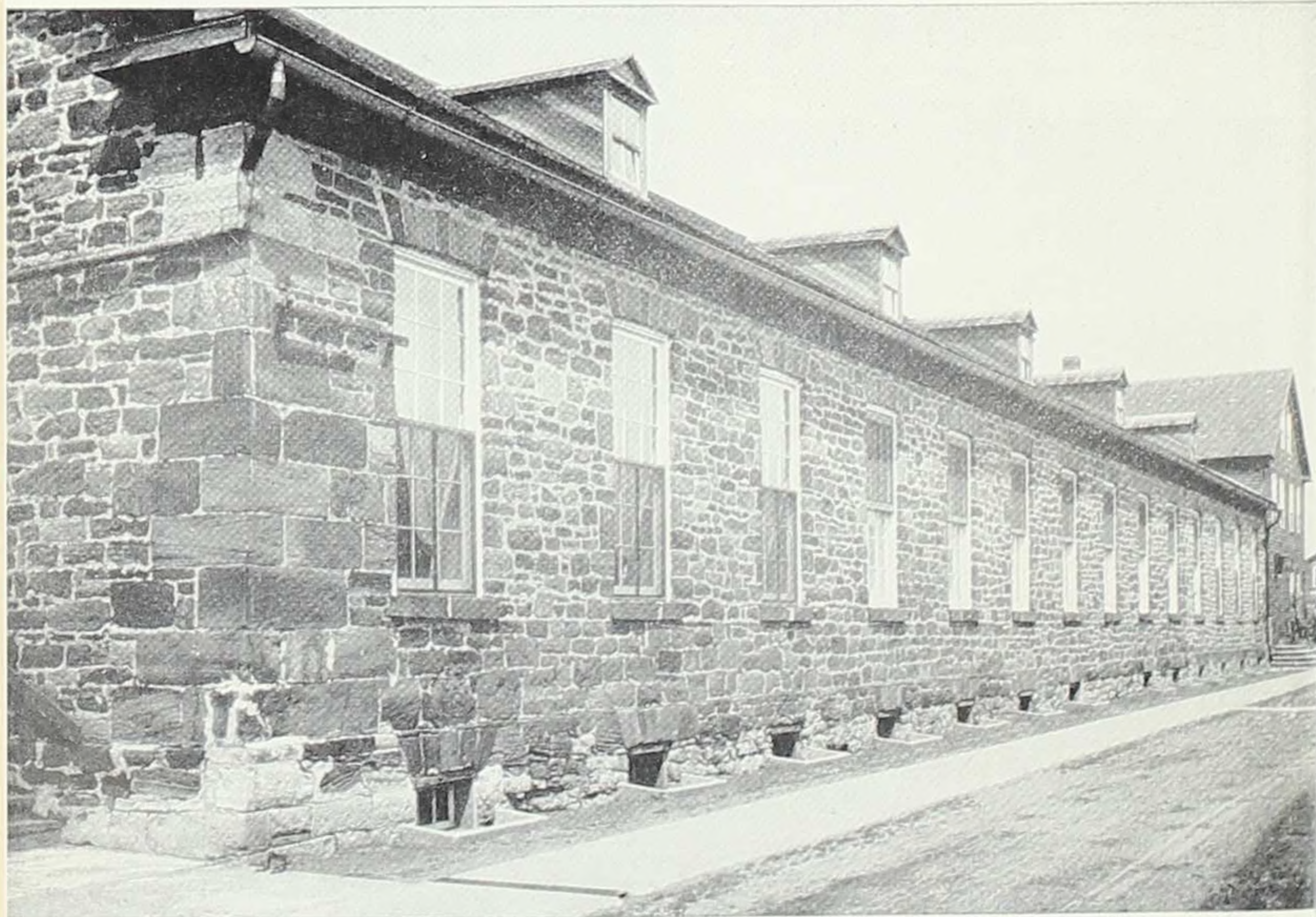


Charles Schinnerling (above), Louise Geiger (right), and Ferdinand Jeck (below) make toys and souvenirs which were placed on sale at various stores in the colonies.





Christian Metz home with modern porch. Metz was the great inspired spiritual leader who brought the Amana to America and Iowa.



The Church at Amana—As it was and still is.

Photo by Fred W. Kent

beautiful than any German village I have ever seen. In each village there is a long, straggling street, with a few side streets branching off irregularly. The houses are of brick or stone or wood, but the wooden houses are unpainted. Unpainted houses are generally associated with poverty and thriftlessness, and most visitors to Amana think these unpainted frame houses unattractive or even ugly. The artist, however, will prefer the weather-stain to the white-painted frame houses with green blinds which one so generally sees in the country village. And, indeed, the weather-stained houses are not unattractive when one has learned to dissociate the absence of paint from poverty and thriftlessness. There is no attempt at architecture in the construction of the buildings, but an effort is made to secure simple, solid comfort. The yards about the houses are typically German in the ways in which vegetables, trees, and fruit-bearing bushes are intermingled with flowers, with here and there a tiny lawn interspersed, all the ground beautifully cared for, and no unutilized land. The one particular in which the love of the beautiful finds complete expression among these simple Germans is in their flowers. Flowers abound everywhere in the richest profusion. Probably in no other place of the same size outside of California could one-twentieth as many roses be found as I saw in bloom in Amana in June. All the old-fashioned flowers are cultivated:

roses, geraniums, marigolds, dahlias, peonies, honeysuckles, petunias, phlox, etc. I saw more flowers in Amana than in the two hundred miles and more between Amana and Chicago.

The kindly nature and the benevolence of the people of Amana are shown in many directions. One is in the care and love of animals. In Homestead, which I visited with a friend from the University of Iowa, my friend pointed to a carriage drawn by two horses, with the remark, "That does not belong to the colony." When asked why, he replied, "The carriage is too fine, and the horses not good enough." Oxen, horses, and mules find Amana an earthly paradise. Birdhouses in the yards are also another evidence of love for the lower animals. Tramps and vagabonds are but too inclined to misuse their good nature, while the penitent prodigal, man or woman, is not turned away. They are good American citizens, even if they are unwilling to engage in war, and disinclined to take a very active part in politics. During the civil war they contributed to benevolent purposes some \$20,000. They take a pride in the privileges of this free country, and were pleased when, in response to inquiries, I expressed myself very favorably concerning the University of Iowa and its recent growth and improvement.

Women are treated well in the community, but the association of one sex with the other is not generally encouraged. On the contrary, it is con-

sidered injurious, probably the feeling being that it diverts attention from the higher and more spiritual interests of life. Marriage is not held to be so high a state as celibacy, and yet they generally do marry. It is interesting in this case to see that the control and regulation exercised in the competitive world of private industry by economic conditions must necessarily be replaced by some other force in a different form of society. Most of us are obliged to defer marriage, in order to make provision for the support of a wife and family. This necessity does not exist in Amana, but manifestly the population would grow too rapidly for the means of support if the younger people could marry whenever they chose. On this account, and doubtless also to prevent rash marriages, there must be the age of at least twenty-four on the part of men and of twenty on the part of women before marriage can take place, and even so the intended marriage must be announced at least a year before the ceremony may be performed. After marriage, the parties contracting it apparently suffer loss in their standing in the church, but can gradually regain a high position by evidences of spirituality.

The officers of the law, so far as they are repressive in their activity, have little to do in Amana. Crime does not exist, and pauperism from the very nature of the case is excluded.

At Amana I was impressed with the tremendous, irresistible world-sweep of democracy,

which, for good or for ill, seems destined to carry everything before it. How, then, shall a few villages of eighteen hundred souls in the heart of enlightened Iowa—the Massachusetts of the Mississippi Valley—stand up against it? Ebenezer was left in 1853 because the influence of near-by Buffalo was adverse, but the great American democratic life flows through Amana in a thousand streams. The United States post office connects these villages with all parts of the earth, public roads lead out indefinitely, while the public school does its work in Amana as elsewhere. Now the public library is likely soon to make its advent, and that in its work spares neither youth, middle life, nor old age. The seclusion of Amana is necessarily yielding to the influence of American environment. Carriages with brightly clad young people, devoted to the pleasures of life, are continually seen in Amana; the trains bring excursions into this strange community; on Sunday, people from the outside world take dinner at the hotels in the villages; and bright, wide-open children's eyes see all the teeming life, and the force of imitation cannot fail to be felt. A happiness is imagined beneath gay colors and under flower-trimmed hats which does not exist, while the real substantial comforts and the solid privileges of their own life are not likely to find full appreciation in the minds of youth. Will the solvent of American life destroy this prosperous community? It has lasted

sixty years. It may last sixty years longer. It may follow Zoar inside of twenty years when the founders and those most closely associated with them have passed away. Who is wise enough to forecast the future? Who can fail to admire the quiet heroism of these honest God-fearing German spinners, weavers, and peasants, as they lead their own lives, serving God diligently according to their lights, seeking Him daily in public prayers and loving one another with their substance; going back to Pentecostal days, as they think, and holding all things in common, so that among them there is none that lacks, distribution being made to every man according to his need.

RICHARD T. ELY