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OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

## Mennonites and Democracy: What Shaped Us?

Intro: Thanks to Ray Kauffman for his work in organizing this meeting and my schedule. In a broader sense, thanks for Oregon Mennonites for their gifts to others in the country and in the world. Jeanne Roth (whose husband was Jake Roth), who lived at the Fairview community 7 miles southeast of Lebanon. In 1957 they founded the East Fairview Mennonite Church. Jeanne invited neighborhood children to Sunday afternoon SS in their home. One was George Neavoll, whose father had died and who needed spiritual nurture. He later wrote that "Jeanne Roth with her flannelboard lessons ... was a modern-day equivalent of St. Augustine or St. Francis." From her, this young lad learned the central principles of the Christian faith. George Neavoll became a prominent newspaper editor. In the 1970s he was editor of the editorial pages of the Wichita Eagle. He was exceptionally interested in issues of peace, justice and human rights. And he was favorably inclined to Mennonite colleges and communities in the area. He gave space for us — both my wife, Anna, and to me — to write opinion and editorial essays in the newspaper. And it all went back to the influence of Jeanne and Jake Roth here in Oregon. I want to thank you for that gift. Given the state of the world in our own time, it is easy for us to get discouraged and to think nothing we do can make any difference. We need to remember Jeanne Roth's Sunday School class, to take courage and make our witness the best we can, and leave the rest to the Lord.

But we are here to stand back and look at the big picture. How Mennonites in America have been shaped by the political and social environment of American democracy.

What is democracy? One definition is that it is rule by the people—a system of majority rule and minority rights. The United States constitution, especially the Bill of Rights, guarantees freedom of religion, of the press, etc. In the United States political democracy has been accompanied by an economic system of capitalist free enterprise, and by a religious system of competing roughly equal denominations.

Richard Mouw, now president of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, once spoke at Bethel College in Kansas and told us that the Anabaptists/Mennonites had a theology and way of living that was shaped in Europe when they were persecuted and martyred by a repressive established church. The challenge for Mennonites in America, Mouw said, was to adapt their thinking and living to the environment of democracy. (He implied we had not done very well at it, that we still had a way to go.)

Democracy has had a double effect upon Mennonites. On one hand American democracy has energized Mennonites and has strengthened our faith communities. Our movement began in Europe, but it has become most dynamic, most prosperous, and most influential in America. We need to reflect on why Mennonitism flourished more in America than it did in Europe. On the other hand, American democracy has weakened Mennonite communities and led to loss of distinctiveness and vitality. As we became absorbed into American society, Mennonites in America have been caught in a long term identity crisis. Some even wonder if we can survive in the long run.

Democracy's double effect has dictated that our history is filled with irony and paradox. We have time this afternoon to identify only a few of the most important paradoxes.

**1. Paradoxes of Peace and War.** We are a people of peace who have thrived in a democratic country that has continually gone to war on its expanding frontiers.

The first successful Mennonite settlers in the new world came at the invitation of William Penn, a Quaker pacifist who planned a new community of social harmony and liberty of conscience. From the 1680s to the 1750s the Quaker experiment in Pennsylvania was a remarkable success, with far less violence between European settlers and Indians than occurred in New England and Virginia. Penn believed that Indians possessed the light of God. He learned the Delaware language, paid generous prices for Indian land, and sold the Indians trade goods, arms and ammunition, while forbidding his colony to have its own militia. Nevertheless, Penn's experiment was an outpost of expansionist empire. His European settlers, including the nonresistant Mennonites, were beneficiaries of favorable military alliances and arrangements. At first the friendly Delaware Indians served as a buffer against more hostile tribes to the west and north. Later the Scotch-Irish, welcomed to Penn's frontier despite their militancy, provided a buffer against Indians who resisted the European settlers' westward advance.

Throughout American history, Mennonites have benefited from American military imperial expansion. We moved westward onto lands in Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, California and Oregon—lands that only a decade or two before our arrival had been cleared out for white settlement by American military forces. Americans did not believe they were a militaristic nation. Nevertheless, American democracy was relentlessly expansionist and prone to violence, especially on its outer boundaries. From the War for Independence through the present occupation of Iraq, America has been imperialistic in ways similar to that of other great powers of world history. America was an "empire of freedom," committed to extending its form of democracy and capitalism to others. To protect and extend that empire, the United States developed the most extensive military/industrial complex the world has ever seen, and put in place systems of nuclear weapons that, if used, can destroy the world many times over.

**SPRING MEETING**

March 25, 2007, 2:30 p.m.
Zion Mennonite Church
6124 S Whiskey Hill Road, Hubbard, Oregon

Chairman.. . . . . Willard Kennel
Welcome . .. . . Ray Kauffman
Introduction of John Ruth ……by Ray Kauffman, Conference Historian
"An Overview of the Beginnings of the Anabaptist Movement" …. John Ruth
Short business meeting, introduction of new officers, announcements & offering
Closing Song
Benediction

**Welcome to one and all**

Times of warfare were often times of stress for the pacifist Mennonites—from the French and Indian War, the American revolution, the Civil War and the wars of the twentieth century. Modern democratic warfare demanded the participation of all citizens. People who were conscientiously opposed to military service or to purchasing war bonds were scorned and persecuted for their refusal. Mennonite communities across the country have memories of events of persecution. For example, here in Oregon during World War I, patriotic rabble rousers vandalized the recently built (1915) Harrisburg meeting house. And in World War II, that church was burned to the ground in an apparent, though never conclusively proven, case of arson. Most intriguing is the story of failed mob action against Kropf family from World War I—a story that Hope Lind says has "assumed legendary proportions." Frank Kropf reported that a mob came out to three different places to take their vengeance upon the German-speaking pacifist Mennonites. "They were prepared and ready to take us out and tar and feather us, but when they came there was a heavenly being that stood between them and us and they couldn't get ahold of anybody. It happened at all three places." *(Mennonite Life,* June 1987, 11-12.) This was allegedly the later testimony of a member of the mob who was sorry for what he had tried to do. In Kansas and Oklahoma the heavenly being didn't always get in the way!!

The paradox for Mennonites is that the stressful times of war generally had a positive effect on the church in the long run. To be sure, the pressures of conscription and military mobilization led many Mennonite young men to abandon their historic nonresistant faith, to march off to war, and to leave the church. Some entire congregations gave up their historic nonresistant faith. And yet for the denomination as a whole, the wars were times that reminded them of their Anabaptist heritage, that forced them to make a choice. New generations of strong church leaders came out of America's wars. And the wars opened up new avenues of service and benevolence that greatly strengthened the church. World War I was followed by the creation of Mennonite Central Committee, a remarkable institution of religious benevolence that far surpasses that of many other much larger denominations. And World War II and the Civilian Public Service program resulted in an explosion of new Mennonite institutions for service, education and mission. Western Mennonite School began in 1945—along with other new Mennonite schools, a creative response to the experience of World War II. The post-war bursts of benevolence and institution-building were made possible by wartime prosperity. Mennonites benefited greatly from high war-time prices for their agricultural products. War has been good for Mennonites—both because it reminded them of a heritage of persecution, and also because it empowered them to greater service.

It is ironical that the end of military conscription in the latter twentieth century may have made it more difficult than ever for Mennonites to sustain their traditional witness against war. The American Selective Service System collapsed as a result of the unpopular and disastrous Vietnam War—probably never to be revived. When our young men are no longer challenged by the military draft, we have lost one of the points of focused confrontation with the world. It is easy to forget who we are.

**2. Paradoxes of Separation and Engagement.** We were a persecuted and isolated European sect that thrived in America by becoming an American denomination.

We today have become so accustomed to the American system of religious denominations that it is hard to appreciate how unique and creative this system of denominationalism was in world history. In Europe, Mennonites were not a denomination. No one was. The German language did not even have a word for "denomination." The Anabaptist, Mennonites, Hutterites and Amish in Europe were marginalized sects. We were always in the shadows of the dominant state churches that barely tolerated us. In Europe one state church was in control—the Lutherans in Germany; the Catholics in France; the Anglicans in England. The government paid for church expenses out of taxes. The overwhelming number of people were born into the established state church—and baptized at birth. Europeans assumed that social peace and order depended on one established state church. There was the established state church and the marginal sects.

The early settlers in America expected to re-establish the state church system in the new world. At the outset the Puritans were the dominant state church in Massachusetts. The Anglicans were in charge in Virginia. The Quakers were in charge in Pennsylvania. They all hoped and expected that they would be the dominant force in the new world political and religious order. But as it turned out, no one church was able to establish domination. They learned that they all had to get along with each other—and even to accommodate rapidly growing new groups such as Methodists and Baptists. For the old established churches, this was a great loss. For the sects, this was a great gain. We now had legitimacy and freedom alongside other denominations.

There was no better place than Penn's colony for a sectarian religious group such as the Mennonites, with their history of persecution and exclusion, gradually to give up the sharp edges of their sectarian identity and to take a place alongside other ethnic/religious groups in a more pluralistic social and religious system. The Pennsylvania German groups—including Lutherans, Reformed, Moravians, Mennonites, Dunkers, the Ephrata Society and the Schwenkfelders—all came to the American frontier with confident and exclusive visions of divine truth. They slowly learned mutual toleration and respect as they became more secure in their separate identities. Former outsiders

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became comfortable insiders within a pluralistic Pennsylvania system that allowed them to preserve and develop their separate identities. Pennsylvania was the original hearth of the American invention of denominationalism—and the first experiment in a new system of stable political parties that defined and promoted the broad public interest.

The Mennonites too became insiders in colonial Pennsylvania. They adapted to, and thrived in, this new world in ways that belied their doctrine of separation from the world. They settled on individual farmsteads, not in communitarian collectives. They sent their children to private schools that were bridges to social relationships with different religious groups. Many self-supporting Mennonite preachers also became local community leaders. Their successful farmers, millers, weavers, or blacksmiths earned community respect in secular as well as religious matters. Mennonites voted in elections, providing key support for the dominant Quaker party. Some of them held political offices. While they became active participants in the newly formed Pennsylvania German subculture, colonial era Mennonites did not have a modern outlook of taking responsibility for the public order. They were still subjects more than citizens. In political elections they "seem rather to have been trading votes for pacifist privileges." In the process they established themselves in a Mennonite heartland that was to thrive longer at one place than Mennonite settlements anywhere else in the world.

The American system of free religious denominations was the counterpart of economic free enterprise and political freedom. The religious groups were free to compete with each other—and they were highly motivated to do so. None of them could depend on the federal government to pay their expenses. To this day, when someone moves into the town of Newton, Kansas, four or five churches are on their doorstep in the first week, inviting them to church. This competition lends great vitality to American religion and the free market lends great vitality to the American economy. It largely explains why religion in America has more participation and more vitality than in Europe. And it explains why Mennonites have also thrived as a denomination in America. We are vigorously competing with other Mennonites and with other denominations.

There have been times when Mennonites have embarked upon programs to separate themselves from the world, to be more strictly nonconformed to the world. An example would be from the late 19th and early 20th century, when a generation led by Daniel Kauffman defined a new set of rules and restrictions—many related to plain clothing—that set Mennonites apart from other people. The irony is that this generation organized their efforts toward nonconformity in such an American way. They created institutions of publication, education and mission that were typical of American denominations. They were Americanized in spite of themselves. From an American perspective, what else could we expect? Each denomination needs to have its own separate distinctive marks of identity.

And so we have the paradoxes of separation and engagement. Another instance of the same paradox surfaced here in Turner, Oregon in the 1969 (Old) Mennonite general conference. At that conference a group of young draft resisters challenged the main body with a call to radical nonconformity to American militarism. They said that cooperation with the draft and with alternative service was too great a compromise with the world. But the mainstream and conservative folk (the CPS generation) was alarmed by these young people with their long hair and casual attire. They did not represent separation from the world as much as conformity to the American youth counterculture and so-called "hippie" movement. So who were the true nonconformists?

3. **Paradoxes of Protestant Polarities.** We are a people of mixed ethnic and social backgrounds who fall into new polarizations of American social/religious origin

Two historical polarities have been foundational in the American Mennonite experience. One was the ethnic/cultural difference between Mennonites of Swiss and South German background on one hand, and Mennonites of the Dutch Prussian Russian stream on the other. Another polarity was the difference between traditionalists and progressives—actually a complex spectrum of groups ranging from rural Old Order Mennonites and Amish on the right to highly acculturated urban congregations on the left. The social dynamic of the Mennonite experience in America has had to do with relationships of these groups to each other, and movement of individuals and groups across the spectrum. Even though Mennonites often lamented the scandal of their many church divisions, the process of division was often energizing to both the traditionalist and progressive sides of a given split. The migration of people on the Old Order or conservative side up the ladder of acculturation has been a significant source of members and leaders for the more liberal groups. Despite their occasional losses, the conservative groups, with large families and ability to hold most of their members, have sustained surprising growth and vitality. On the progressive side, inter-Mennonite ecumenical cooperation has often been a major engine of denominational energy.

One way to read American Mennonite history is the gradual displacement of old polarities indigenous to Mennonite life with new polarities from the American Protestant environment. Thus the cultural and doctrinal peculiarities of Mennonite traditionalists and progressives, as well as of Mennonite Swiss and Dutch, have receded in importance as all of them have taken on new identities of America's polarized religious and political culture wars. The attractions of American versions of Pietism, revivalism, and evangelicalism have especially eroded old Mennonite identities.

Mennonite progressives, including those who attended Mennonite colleges and many who became leaders in denominational offices, were the first to engage in prophetic political involvements. They tended to identify with the anti-war wing of the Democrat party, to listen to National Public Radio, and more recently to read messages from "Move-On" on their computers. Meanwhile Mennonite traditionalists and conservatives had long held to a time-honored Anabaptist separation from the political order. But by 2004 significant numbers of traditionalists and conservatives had been attracted to right-wing evangelicalism and its pro-family, anti-abortion, and traditional-values agenda. These folk tended to make alliance with President George Bush and the Republicans, and to absorb attitudes and language they heard on Fox News and such radio shows as "Focus on the Family" or conservative talk shows. Mennonite conservatives became increasingly politicized.

Would the old Anabaptist/Mennonite commitment to Biblical nonresistance and peacemaking be able to survive this new Americanized polarization? During the highly contentious Bush vs. Kerry blue-state vs. red-state political campaign of 2004, Mennonite historian John Roth observed that members of many

Mennonite congregations were arguing and insulting each other with language and styles taken from the political world. When the old order or conservative groups became politicized and took their cues from mass media sources different from that of the more liberal folk who had long spoken for the denomination in the political order, the stage was set for divisive fireworks. Roth proposed a separationist Anabaptist solution to what he considered a crisis of denominational discord: All Mennonites should take a five-year sabbatical from political involvement.

Is American democracy so contentious that Mennonite denominational unity is threatened unless we withdraw from political participation and discussion? If you have followed John Roth's writing over the past decade or two, you know that he really wants a permanent disengagement from politics—not just a five-year sabbatical. He has never voted in national elections, nor does he want the rest of us to do so. That is something heavy to absorb for people like me who have not only voted but have run for political office and held political positions. But his observations about American politics and Mennonite unity are not without merit—especially in those parts of the denomination where freshly mobilized conservatives have found their political voice. This, too, is part of the ongoing paradoxical story of adapting to American democracy.

**Conclusion:**

A balanced view of Mennonite accommodation to American democracy needs to take into account many other dimensions of social and religious life. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasizing how much Mennonite identity in American democracy has been foundationally shaped by the dominion of war.

On the whole, democracy's popular warfare has helped to guarantee Mennonite identity, even while it meant that pacifist Mennonites would never experience dramatic church growth. Unlike their cousins in the Ukraine, whose subculture was destroyed by World Wars I and II and by Communist terror, American Mennonites generally prospered economically in wartime. They became the objects of popular scorn and persecution, sufficient to remind them of the first principles of the New Testament and Anabaptist heritage. The apparently triumphant democratic war crusades generated resources and energy for Mennonites to build programs of benevolence that served as a moral equivalent for war. American toleration and pluralism made a comfortable place for Mennonites in the national denominational mosaic, while American warfare helped make the themes of peace and service central to Mennonite denominational identity.

At the same time, the allure of evangelical religious ways in American democracy deeply threatened the future of Mennonites. Mennonites are in any case a very fragmented and small denomination, compared to the major confessional traditions. On the one hand, progressive Mennonites may be drawn toward a wider national secularized anti-war movement that separates their pacifism from Scripture and from the Cross of Christ. On the other hand, the more conservative Mennonites may be attracted to an American evangelicalism that seems to have an inviting theology and an alluring worship style, but that has largely sold its soul to American nationalism and militarism while "spiritualizing into irrelevance ethical issues other than those of personal morality." Meanwhile the nation has embarked upon paths of imperialism and militarism that do not require the military conscription that once forced the issue for Mennonites. The United States fights its wars with the assent and support of evangelicals, but without making overt sacrificial demands upon all citizens. How can the central principles of Anabaptism survive where there is no focused confrontation with the world? The new world's democratic environment continues to have ambiguous effect—both energizing and enervating - on the old world confessional tradition of European Anabaptist Mennonites.

## Harold L. Weaver's Family History

### In the Beginning ...

From the Mennonite Encyclopedia:

Weaver (Weber), an old Mennonite family of Swiss origin. As early as 1664 the Palatine Mennonite Census Lists reported two Webers, Peter at Oberflorsheim and Christian at Spiesheim; in 1685 Peter Weber was still living in Oberflorsheim (6 sons and a daughter), a second Peter Weber at Waltzheim, Johannes Weyer at Osthofen, and Heinrich Weber and Dietrich Weber at Gundersheim. In 1732 Peter Weber was a minister at Oberflorsheim. In 1738 in addition to the Weber families at Oberflorsheim (Peter Sr, Peter Jr, Dietrich and Christian), Gundersheim (Peter), Spiesheim (Johannes), Wolfsheim (Mathias, Johannes), there were at Heppenheim near Alzey, four Weber families (Johannes, Heinrich, Martin, and Matthaus). All of these locations were in the Palatinate west of the Rhine. The Webers have ever since been well established in this region. In 1940 according to the Franz Crous lists, there were 67 Mennonite Webers (including children) in the South German Mennonite Churches (only one elsewhere in Germany, at Crefeld), of whom 46 were in the Palatinate (Monsheim congregation leading with 22, Kuhborncheshof 8, Neudorferhof 7, Uffhofen 5, three other congregations 4), plus one in Frankfurt and two in Ingolstadt congregation in Bavaria. Outstanding among the Webers in the 18th century was Peter Weber of Kindenheim a very influential preacher and strong Pietist.

In an effort to put down on paper the WEAVER family history as well as I can recall, and that I am able to research. I will go back several generations to recap where my early ancestors settled when they arrived from Europe (Palatinate). As near as we can tell they arrived and settled in Conemaugh Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. From there they began to spread West to Missouri, North Dakota, Kansas, Minnesota, back to Kansas and then on to California and Oregon and then back to California. While living in California they mostly settled around Dinuba and Terra Bella; this area is in the central part of the state, in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley. They probably would have settled here longer but the cost of land was too high. From there they migrated to Albany and Corvallis areas of Oregon and mainly settled around Suver, Airlie, and the Berry Creek areas. These areas are just to the West of Albany and North of Corvallis. Being of Mennonite heritage and farmers they were looking for fertile land to raise cattle and farm products.

The best I can find is that two cousins, Abraham Weaver and Jacob Weaver, came through Zurich, Switzerland on October 15, 1767 and one to America on the ship “Sally” and landed in Pennsylvania. Our ancestors descend this Jacob Weaver. His date of birth was September 8, 1748. Jacob would have been approaching 20 on his arrival to America. He married Magdalena Oberholtzer. Their son Abraham Weaver, born August 4, 1782, married Christina Kauffman and their son Christian Weaver, born June 6, 1813; married Lydia Miller. They had a son Emanuel Christian Weaver, born July 11, 1835, near Scalp Level Pennsylvania. He married Barbara Blauch (later was

changed to Blough) she was the daughter of Bishop Samuel Blauch. Their son, Menno Blough Weaver was born March 26, 1870 in Morgan County Missouri. The family then moved to Harper, Kansas where Menno met and married Susannah Dettweiler on November 27 1890. They had a family of eight children.

The Emanuel Christian Weaver family moved to an area near Dinuba, California, in the spring of 1905. The Menno Blough and Susannah Weaver family moved to the same area in 1907 and lived there for several years. Gabriel Shenk & his wife Luella, were also living in this area. Luella was a daughter of Elmer and Barbara (Weaver) Sharer. Barbara was a sister to Menno Blough Weaver. Also living in the area were the Benjamin and Leah (Dettweiler) Horst family. Leah and Susannah (Dettweiler) Weaver were sisters.

Then the Menno B. and Emanuel C. Weaver families moved to Oregon and settled in the area of Suver, Airlie and Berry Creek. The children attended Berry Creek School and the school was also used for Sunday services.

There were several Mennonite families living in the area, Including: Odessa Kilmer, Gabriel Shenk (moved here from California), Joseph E. Glick (who had been living in Corning, California), Menno B. Weaver and Emanuel C. Weaver. Barbara (Weaver) Sharer, Henry Harrison & Mary Jane (Weaver) Sharer. Mary Jane (Weaver) Sharer and Barbara (Weaver) Sharer were daughters of Emanuel C. Weaver; Henry Sharer was a member of the Messiah Advent Church. The names of Weaver and Glick would become important in my part of this history. Luke Emanuel Weaver, the fifth child born to Menno Blough and Susannah (Dettweiler) Weaver, married Mary Catherine Glick on December 12, 1920. Luke was ordained (chosen by lot) minister on August 21, 1921. They had four sons while they were living at Airlie:

| | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth Samuel Weaver | b. 19 DEC 1921 |
| Joseph Lyle Weaver | b. 9 APR 1923 |
| Robert Leslie Weaver | b. 9 FEB 1925 |
| William Allen Weaver | b. 27 DEC 1926 |

Upon leaving Oregon, in 1928, the Luke Weaver family settled in Terra Bella, California. They lived around Terra Bella for about three years. Then March 15, 1931 a congregation was formed at Winton, California and Luke, Mary and boys moved to that area to help serve the church there. On November 13, 1932 their 5th son Harold Leroy Weaver was born. They were living near Livingston, California.

**Our Beginnings in America!**

**Family of**
**Jacob Weaver**
**Magdalena Oberholtzer**

Children of Jacob Weaver and Magdalena Oberholtzer:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Abraham Weaver** | b. 4 AUG 1782 |
| | d. 25 OCT 1845 |
| Elizabeth Weaver | b. 1774 |
| Jacob Weaver | b. 1776 |
| Catherine Weaver | b. 1778 |
| Christian Weaver | b. 10 APR 1780 |
| Peter Weaver | b. 1784 |
| John Weaver | b. 1786 |
| | d. 31 MAY 1813 |
| Samuel Weaver | b. 22 MAR 1788 |
| David Weaver | b. 1790 |
| | d. 18 SEP 1856 |

**Family of**
**Abraham Weaver**
**Christina Kauffman**

Children of Abraham Weaver and Christina Kauffman:

| | |
|---|---|
| Jonas Weaver | b. 27 JUL 1811 |
| | d. 30 NOV 1892 |
| **Christian Weaver** | b. 6 JUN 1813 |
| | d. 21 JAN 1877 |
| Emanuel Weaver | b. 22 FEB 1816 |
| | d. 4 OCT 1889 |
| Abraham Weaver | b. 1 MAY 1818 |
| | d. 31 MAY 1895 |
| Daniel A. Weaver | b. 29 MAR 1822 |
| | d. 22 JUN 1895 |
| Christina Weaver | b. 20 APR 1824 |
| | d. 30 MAR 1890 |
| David Weaver | b. 18 MAY 1826 |
| | d. 19 SEP 1871 |
| Lucinda Weaver | b. 24 JAN 1829 |
| | d. 26 JAN 1883 |

**Family of:**
**Christian Weaver**
**Lydia Miller Weaver**

Christian Weaver was born June 6, 1813 in Somerset County Pennsylvania. His father was Abraham Weaver and his mother was Christina Kauffman Weaver. Lydia Miller was born August 22, 1809 in Somerset County Pennsylvania. Her father was Tobias Miller and her mother Maria (Mary) Guthert or (Goodheart) or (Guthartin) (not certain of spelling or name here). Christian and Maria were married in 1834 in Scalp Level, Cambria County Pennsylvania.

Christian died January 21, 1877 and Lydia died May 15, 1847. After her death Christian was married to Susannah Keim.

Children of Christian Weaver and Lydia Miller:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Emanuel Christian Weaver** | b. 11 JUL 1835 |
| | d. 30 DEC 1922 |
| Christiana Weaver | b. 15 JAN 1837 |
| Susan Weaver | b. 28 SEP 1838 |
| Maria (Mary) Weaver | b. 27 JUL 1840 |
| Lydia Weaver | b. 21 MAR 1843 |
| Polly Weaver | b. 29 JAN 1847 |

Children of Christian Weaver and Susanna Keim:

| | |
|---|---|
| Henry Weaver | b. 24 JAN 1850 |
| | d. 28 FEB 1882 |
| Abraham C. Weaver | b. 2 OCT 1851 |
| | D. 2 MAY 1943 |

**Family of**
**Emanuel Christian Weaver**
**Barbara Blough Weaver**

Emanuel Christian Weaver* son of Christian Weaver, born July 11, 1835 near Scalp Level, Cambria Co., PA, married to Barbara Blough, the second daughter of Bishop Samuel Blauch, of Conemaugh Twp., Somerset Co., PA, on February 21, 1856, by Squire Peter Levy. Barbara Blough was born July 21, 1834. They were farmers by occupation and Mennonites by church membership. The family moved a great deal.

1856-65: Lived near Salix, Cambria Co., PA, 9 yr.
1865: Moved to Lowell, Kent Co.. MI, 2 yr.
1867: Moved to Morgan Co., MO, address Tipton, Farmed 4 yr.

Emanuel C Weaver was crippled when he was 10 years old while playing mumbledy peg). As a result of this accident he wore a built up shoe on that leg in order to get around better. When he was older and married he would look for land to buy and farm that was rather flat to start with and also that had already been cleared of trees. It was hard for him to clear the land. He thought he could do better farming this prairie.

1871-76: Emanuel was part owner in a store with a Jonas Wenger in Excelsior, Morgan Co., MO, 5 yr.

1876-85: Peabody, Marion Co., KS, 9 yr. Kansas appealed to him because it was all prairies and he could use riding implements to do the farming. Barbara died September 20, 1879. Emanuel married Lydia (Lauver) Winey July 11, 1880, born September 25, 1835 and died October 13, 1912 in Albany, Linn County, Oregon. Emanuel & Lydia likely new each other in Morgan County, Missouri.

1885: Moved to Onayville, Trail Co., ND

1886: Ada, Morgan Co., MO, 13 yr.

1899: Harper KS, 6 yr.

1905: Reedley, Tulare Co., CA. Then to Dinuba, Tulare Co., CA, 6 yr.

1911: Albany, Linn Co., OR, 2 yr.

1913: He moved to Airlie, Benton Co., OR where he lived with his son Menno, wife Susannah and family until his death in 1922. 9 yr.

Children of Emanuel C. Weaver and Barbara Blough:

| | |
|---|---|
| Barbara A. Weaver | b. 30 SEP 1866 |
| | d. 25 MAY 1961 |
| Martha Weaver | b. 13 JUN 1868 |
| | d. 11 MAR 1869 |
| **Menno Blough Weaver** | b. 26 MAR 1870 |
| | d. 26 APR 1923 |
| Lyddia Weaver | b. 2 MAY 1872 |
| | d. 30 JUL 1872 |
| John Weaver | b. 20 JUL 1873 |
| | d. 5 NOV 1873 |

**Family of**
**Menno Blough Weaver**
**Susannah Dettwiler**

Menno Blough Weaver, the second son of Emanuel C and Barbara Blough Weaver, was born March 26, 1870, and was married to Susannah Dettwiler, of Harper County, Kansas, Nov. 27, 1890. She was horn August 15, 1868. Menno Weaver was a farmer and a dairyman by occupation. To them were born six sons and three daughters. This family were all Mennonites. Menno Weaver was an ordained deacon.

Children of Menno Blough Weaver and Susannah Dettwiler:

| | |
|---|---|
| William Earl Weaver | b. 5 MAY 1892 |
| Fannie Jane Weaver | b. 3 JUN 1894 |
| | d. 14 JUL 1894 |
| Bessie Amanda Weaver | b. 14 SEP 1895 |
| John S. Weaver | b. 11 AUG 1897 |
| **Luke Emanuel Weaver** | b. 27 OCT 1899 |
| | d. 3 DEC 1972 |
| Paul D. Weaver | b. 10 JAN 1902 |
| Ruth Mabel Weaver | b. 17 JUL 1905 |
| Perry Lester Weaver | b. 11 OCT 1907 |
| Clarence Daniel Weaver | b. 20 NOV 1908 |

**Family of**
**Luke Emanuel Weaver**
**Mary Catherine Glick**

Children of Luke Emanuel Weaver and Mary Catherine Glick:

| | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth Samuel | b. 19 DEC 1921 |
| | d. 31 OCT 1986 |
| Joseph Menno Lyle | b. 8 APR 1923 |
| | d. 9 AUG 1995 |
| Robert Leslie | b. 9 FEB 1925 |
| William Allen | b. 27 DEC 1926 |
| **Harold Leroy** | b. 13 NOV 13, 1932 |
| Ruth Ann | b. 2 OCT 1947 |
| | d. 24 NOV 1950 |

I have purposely highlighted the names that bring the direct descendents down to my lifetime. While growing up in California we moved to several different towns. I was born near Livingston. My maternal Grandmother Glick was at our home when I was born to assist in my birth. Dad went for the Doctor but he arrived after I had already been born. Since he needed to fill out the birth certificate he asked Dad and Mom what my name was and at that point they had decided on Richard Weaver. Not long after the Doctor left they again discussed my name and decided to change it to Harold Leroy Weaver. So for years my birth certificate read “Richard.” In fact it didn't change until after I was 21 and went to work forr the State of Oregon and needed my birth certificate to prove who I was. When they sent it up from California it of course read "Richard.” So Mom and Dad went to court in California and had it changed. I had always, without knowing why, liked the name Richard and still do to this day. It was easier at age 21 to change my birth certificate than to change all my other records.

My schooling took place in California. I started the first grade in a small school in Cressey California. It was a 2-room schoolhouse and housed in those 2 rooms all 8 grades. Twin sisters were the 2 teachers there. My teacher's name was Mrs. Whorley she was a very nice teacher and I enjoyed 'finally' getting to go to school. Since we lived about 3 miles from the school either Mom or Dad would drive us to or from school. This was a while before school busses came into vogue and so the parents had to get their children to school on their own. By the time I was in the 2nd grade we had moved back closer to Livingston and so I got to go to a much bigger school. It had a room for every two grades or 4 rooms. I don't remember my teachers' name at this school but I attended there through the fourth grade. Then we moved closer to Winton. Again the schools were growing in size and so at this school there were classrooms for each grade. In the 5th grade my teacher’s name was Mrs. Kucel, she made learning a lot of fun. While living outside of Winton on a large farm, which Dad ran for a 'city' farmer, all of us boys helped with the farming and milking. We had a lot of fun because we could have horses and dogs. Since it was a dairy we had quite a few cats around, most of them were wild, but they helped to keep the rodent population down and were rewarded by all the milk that they could drink. The farm had a large clover pasture for the cattle and acreage for alfalfa hay a short distance away. We also raised field corn which we chopped and put in silos. We had both above ground and trench silos. The trenches were covered with straw and dirt. This supplemented the hay for feed in the winter months for the cows to eat. The farm was about five miles out of the town of Winton. School busses picked children up on the 'main' roads only which meant that we had to walk about a mile to the nearest bus stop.

If we weren't at the stop or at least within sight of the bus driver, we would have to find another way to school. Sometimes it meant we had to walk back home and either Dad or Mom would drive us to school. Foggy days (the San Joaquin Valley seemed to have a lot of in the winter time) made getting to the bus stop even harder. If we weren't close enough for the bus driver to see us through the fog, he would just go on even though we were just a few yards from the bus stop. 'Us boys' were milking and feeding between 50-75 head of cattle and taking care of feeding all the calves and other animals on the farm.

In the spring of the year we would work a spot up near the house so that we could grow a garden. We needed to supplement the food source for five growing boys and Mom and Dad. We always had chickens for eggs and meat and most of the time Mom would make butter from the cream and sometimes even would make cottage cheese. That was always a treat. We would grow our own corn for canning, potatoes and many other root crops some of which we would store in a root cellar for our winter use. Generally in the fall of the year we would butcher a pig and most of that was smoked in a smoke house for bacon and hams and smoked pork chops. The fat was rendered in a large kettle and used some for cooking and frying and pie crust making. The surplus fat was made into soap for doing the laundry, washing our hands, bathing etc. We would also butcher a beef and most of that meat would be cut up and then canned. When the pressure cooker was invented it was a big plus for Mother because she could more safely cook and can the meats and vegetables. (I think back often of the flavor of the canned beef, it had a distinct flavor all its own and the gravy that formed when it was canned was so delicious). A number of years later a large frozen food locker was built in town and this was even a bigger boon because it meant that we could rent storage space and have fresh (frozen) meats throughout the year and extend the period of time to have tasty veggies and fruits from the garden. Living close to peach and apricot orchards had its advantage. Mother knew just how to can them so that they were especially tasty in the winter months.

While living on the farm we did have electricity, Radios were very popular so in the evenings we would gather around the radio and listen to programs like "Amos & Andy" or "Fibber Magee and Molly." We boys liked to listen to the mystery programs like "The Shadow Knows." For you younger ones reading this you have to remember this was a long time before television was even a thought. At this time we were kept very much aware of the war going on because we lived not too far from the end of the runway for an Air Force training base. So the airplanes were zooming overhead night and day and sometimes they sounded almost too close to the top of the house. There were single engine propeller driven planes, as opposed to the later jet propelled ones. So you would hear the noise of the planes for a longer period of time. War times brought on other problems. Food and gas were rationed. We would get ration coupons from the government and if we used them all it was ‘tough luck.’ We couldn't drive or had to make the food stretch longer. Living on the farm did have its advantage because we knew we would have milk to drink from the cows and could make our own butter. It was during this time that 'Victory Gardens' sprung up everywhere. People soon learned that to have enough food to feed their families they had to supplement by growing some of their own vegetables and fruits. Sugar was another rationed commodity. It was this shortage that brought on a bigger use of honey and molasses as sweeteners. We did buy flour for baking. At that time processors were putting flour in cotton cloth bags which were printed in different designs. Mother put her treadle sewing machine to use and when the print was acceptable for us boys we got shirts made out of flour sacks. She also made aprons for herself and sometimes if pieces were big enough she would make napkins for the table or pot holders to use at the stove. Every piece of material was saved so that some day they could be pieced together and made into quilts to keep us warm during the winter months. Shoes, shirts, pants, were handed down from one brother to the next, which was just an accepted fact of life. Sometimes there were patches on the patches. Money and clothing were not that plentiful.

Dad took any other jobs he could to make whatever small bit of cash that he could make. He would stay up all night and water in the vineyards and orchards. I remember he sometimes came home with only 75 cents for working all night. That was the going wages back then. One spring he took a job during the week up in the foothills herding sheep. This was my introduction to the "Basque" people. They would stay in these tiny covered wagons and look after the herds of sheep. They did their own cooking and baking and that was a talent in itself. Dad would take his Bible with him because the spare time he had was spent preparing for the sermons he would deliver when he would get home for the weekend and we would go to church. Mom would need to drive Dad up to the foothills since she would need the car to run errands during the week and to be able to get whatever supplies we would need as a family. She would also need the car to get us to school when we would miss the bus. Dad was the assistant pastor at the Winton Mennonite Church and so much of his time during the week was spent preparing for the Sunday services.

Mother would also help out with any income that she could. She washed and ironed linen table cloths and napkins for a restaurant that was called the "Chicken Coop." A number of years she had a gasoline operated washing machine, the old kind with the wringer up on top. Then after we got electricity she was able to get a new modern 'spin easy' that she really liked. Instead of a wringer it had a smaller tub next to the big wash tank and you would put the clothes in that one and let them spin most of the water out of them and then hang them out to dry. In later years she finally got a 'mangle.' This had a roller on it and would heat up and you operated it by pressing a lever with your knee and the hot plate would raise up and you could start the ironing process. I was there as often as I could be and she would let me run the napkins through. She also would wash and iron uniforms for the waitresses and even got to the place that she would take in nurses’ uniforms and wash and iron them. In those days the nurses wore very stiffly starched caps and the entire uniform was white. I wish I could remember how much she got for washing and ironing but I can remember it was small change for so much hard work. In those days every penny counted!

It is interesting to look back now and think of all the progress that has been made in all fields. Many, many medicines have been discovered. Salk polio vaccine, penicillin, sulfa drugs, and many pain killers, just to name a few, that now can relieve suffering for those who have surgeries or injuries. There have also been many advances in kitchen appliances and electronics that have eased work in the kitchen and on the farm. The biggest boon on the farm that I can remember well was the invention of the milking machine. This enabled farmers to have larger herds

of cows. On a trip several years ago to California we were able to go to a dairy that had over 1500 head of cattle and men were milking just about around the clock. We would put our milk in 10 gallon cans and now it is pumped right from the cow and then strained and goes into a 1000 gallon tank. A huge semi-truck comes and pumps the milk out and takes it to the creamery where then it is used for the many dairy products that we now have available. Oh yes, the barn that they now use for milking the cows is a huge round one and has a turntable that continually moves and has been figured out that once the cow is on the moving platform that by the time she reaches the end of the circle she has been milked and is ready to go back out to the feeding barns. To help keep things clean they are automatically washed off upon entering the milking barn and they also walk through a disinfectant so they aren't contaminating the milk in any way.

**TOP: Berry Creek Schoolhouse near Airlie, Oregon**

**BOTTON: Airlie store and gas station August 1941**
(Salem (Oregon) Public Library Historic Photograph Collection)

## My Pennsylvania Christmas
## (Eighty years ago)
## by Ruth Neuschwander

When Rhoda, my twin sister, and I were in the first grade at Dryland School, our parents decided to go to Pennsylvania to visit my father's family. We left Hubbard train depot before Thanksgiving. We were there until after Christmas. Our sister Hazel was three years old and brother John was one. It was the first train ride for us children. The top bunk on the sleeper was fun for us three girls and John slept below with my parents.

**Ida Troyer Fisher, Rhoda Fisher (Palmer), Joel Fisher Sr. Ruth Fisher (Neuschwander)**

The train was rushing along so fast. A quite large colored man carried a large tray of cups of hot coffee. He would say, "Red hot coffee. Have a cup of coffee, Keep you awake to see the sights."

I remember when we crossed the Mississippi River our father said, "Look, there's the Mississippi River." It was very dark and lights along the river looked so dark and black. It reminded me of a woman floating along with long black hair and long black clothes.

We took our school books with us and I would read to my sister Hazel and John. I remember a middle-aged gentleman said to me, "You should be a teacher when you grow up." I did teach one year in 1931-32, then later when my youngest child was in the seventh grade I taught from 1954-1974 in Donald and North Marion. They were wonderful years. I taught primary grades.

We reached Ronks, Pa., in daylight and walked only a few blocks to Grandpa Fisher's. Our father told Rhoda and I to run ahead and knock at the door. Grandma opened the door and, of course, didn't know who we were until she saw the rest of our family. It was the only visit with our Fisher grandparents. Uncle Joseph lived with our grandparents. He was a train engineer. Our grandparents could have had a free ride to Oregon, but he could not persuade them to make the trip.


**ABOVE: Airlie 1965**
(Salem (Oregon) Public Library Historic Photograph Collection)

Grandpa had a small barn for his Amish carriage and horse. There was a small cement area--like a porch (I thought) in front of the barn. After it got

cold. My father bought a small barrel of oysters in the shell and put it there. Grandpa and father would shuck oysters.

We had oysters fried and scalloped: and in oyster pie. Mother learned how to make oyster pie. Father had told her how he thought his mother made it but he would say it didn't taste like his mother's.

Years later they began to ship frozen fresh oysters west and father would get them at Christmas time and we would have oysters for Christmas Eve dinner.

It had snowed and got very cold. We had a couple sled rides going from place to place. They warmed bricks, etc., and put them at our feet to keep warm. Mama said sometimes we'd go to a new place and they would say "ya tes is ter Chole si frau" and she didn't know who they meant.

## CONCERNING DRYLAND SCHOOL (where Rhoda and Ruth were in school)

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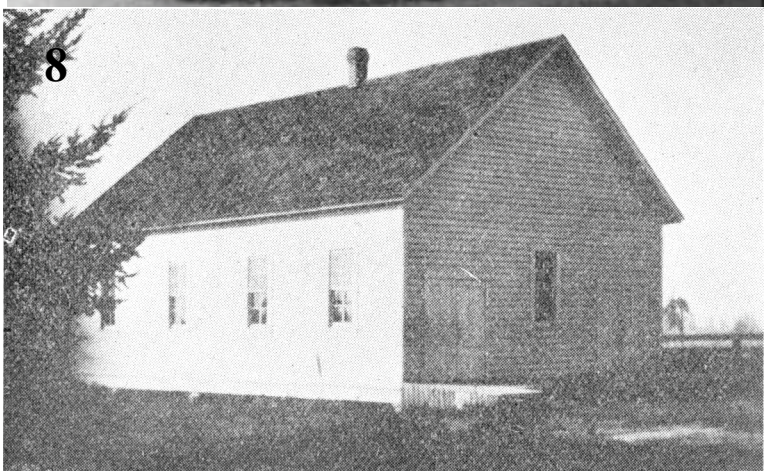


They often have first and second Christmas dinners. And such dinners - an abundance of food. They'd have glass bowls of red and green stuffed peppers and tall glass dishes of celery, and all kinds of pickles down the center of the table. Then all the courses of several kinds of meats, vegetables, etc. and then the pies and cakes.

One favorite place, for Rhoda and I, was the parents of Ida and Ada Stoltzfus. Their father was my father's first cousin. Ida and Ada spent some years in India working for M.C.C. , then they spent 37½ years in Israel. They had a boys school there and also would have a lot of places where they handed out food and clothing. Their first book about India is in our library. I now have their second book of work in Israel and will soon put it in the library.

Some of my father's family stayed Amish. Most did not. We came home after our birthday in January.

**THE END**

## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

When I first read the article by Ruth Neuschwander, I noticed she went to school at Dryland School about a mile across the field from where I grew up. I thought it appropriate to include a few things about Dryland School.

In 1912 the Mennonites and Amish Mennonites of the area erected a 28 ft. by 40 ft. building on the Southeast corner of the Chris Roth farm next to what is now called Elisha Road. Previous to 1912 they held Sunday School and Bi-weekly preaching in Bear Creek School, Eby School and Dryland School. When our family moved to Oregon in 1952, the only one of these still used for school was Eby School.

PICTURE 1: Dryland school, before 1932, on what is now called Dryland Road. Notice the steps are on the front of the porch also notice the bell tower.

PICTURE 2: I 'cut' this from picture 3. Notice the steps enter the porch from the side and the bell tower is gone.

PICTURE 3: (PICTURE COURTESY OF TOM & LELA WANNER who have lived on the site since 1965). I had a very nice visit with Tom & Lela. They were a very gracious host and hostess. Tom said they lived in the converted school house for about a year while they were building their current residence, in picture 5. This aerial photo was taken before 1965.

PICTURE 4: Leland & Vickie Nofziger very kindly allowed me to photograph their current residence which began in 1966 when Lee moved the Dryland School House to his property on Elisha Road which was next door to my father's place at that time. If you look close you can see the front porch and entrance are still the same. Lee & Vickie have done upgrades and additions.

PICTURE 5: Tom and Lela Wanner built this home (1966) on the property where Dryland School stood.

PICTURE 6: This is Bethel Mennonite Church as it is today. This building served the Church of God after it was a Mennonite Church and before it was sold for a residence. The shape of the building is largely the same today even to the windows and the front porch. The rooms used as the 'Upper Room' and the 'Lower Room' for the Bethel Mennonite School until the spring of 1959 are also mostly the same. Two doors have been replaced with windows.

PICTURE 7: Bethel Mennonite Church about 1953.

PICTURE 8: Bethel Mennonite Church very early in its use as a church building. Neither of the school rooms are there and the trees are very young. Notice the tree on the right in picture 7. According to S. G. Shetler's book Church History of the Pacific Coast Mennonite Conference District, "… one of the school trustees refused the use of the Dryland Schoolhouse (*to the Mennonites*). "Being locked out, the Sunday School was held on the outside and J. F. Bressler preached on the outside on two different occasions." This led to a meeting on March 5, 1912 in which it was decided to build this building on the Southeast corner of Christian Roth's Farm. Chris Roth donated the land for the Church.

I hope to have more research and history of Dryland School in a later publication. **THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR INPUT.**

### IN Memoriam

**John L. Fretz died August 8, 2006 at his home in Salem, at age 85. He was born October 15, 1919 in Selkirk, Ontario, Canada. John was the first vice-president of OMHGS and edited the first four volumes of the newsletter. After several years he retired as vice-president due to declining health. However, he continued to serve as an additional member of the executive committee and volunteered at the archives as his health permitted.**