

other Magisterial Reformers, working from a custom established in the Middle Ages, democratized late medieval mystical terminology. They extended the concept of the gracious mystical union of specially chosen souls with the divine to that of a general union of every believer with Christ in faith.⁵³ Radical Reformers, however, are treated otherwise, and if it is admitted that their first generation leadership did follow the magisterial pattern,⁵³ it is always emphasized that the situation was reversed by the second generation. This is particularly noted in discussions of the development of mystical Spiritualism in seventeenth-century Germany.⁵⁴

A brief review of Sudermann's use of such sources indicates that such a premise is far too simple. Sudermann was not spiritualizing the medieval texts, but was channeling a highly developed spirituality into the narrow confines of practical morality. There is no discussion here of the influence medieval texts had on shaping Sudermann's thought with regard to the psychological experience of the general union of the believer with Christ. This experience, Sudermann believed, would develop throughout the believer's life as he moved from union to an illumination of that union and a purgation of all that detracted from it. In this, the medieval tripartite mystical path was effectively reversed. Extensive use of a source by an author does not mean that a similar theological morphology exists between the two. In Sudermann's work, at least, medieval mystical texts, although numerous, were not significantly influential. They served as matter but not form for his theological construct.

⁵³ On the democratization of mystical terminology in the Late Middle Ages and Luther, see Heiko A. Obermann, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 341-43, and his study "Simul Gemitus et Raptus: Luther and Mysticism" in Steven E. Ozment, ed., *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective* (Chicago, Ill.: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 219-51.

⁵³ Note, as well, Ronald J. Sider, "Karlstadt's Orlamünde Theology: A Theology of Regeneration," *MQR*, XLV (1971), 195-200.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Weigelt, 198, 213, 235, 238.

THE BEACHY AMISH IN IOWA A CASE STUDY

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During the past several decades the number of Amish settlements in the American Middle West has increased significantly. Faced with soaring land prices in the eastern United States, many Amish families have sought relief by moving into the central United States where land has been available at more reasonable prices. The result is that since 1950, sixteen new Amish communities—fourteen Old Order and two Beachy—have been founded in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri alone. Throughout the Middle West the Old Order constitute the largest percentage of Amish population, about four-fifths, while the more liberal Beachy Amish make up the remaining one-fifth. Today there are two Beachy settlements in Iowa, one near Kalona and one near Leon.¹

While all aspects of Old Order society have received attention from scholars in recent years, the history of the Beachy and their relationship to the Old Order have been largely unexplored. Because the Old Order are the dominant group within Amish society, their life style has come to epitomize the Amish way of life. Although the Beachy embrace many of the same religious and social customs, they nevertheless deviate in several significant ways. Overall, they are more liberal in their economic practices and less concerned about maintaining separation from the world. Beachy Amish members work in more non-farm related industries than Old Order members, own automobiles, and interact more frequently with non-Amish people. One of the most frequent distinctions made between the two groups is whether they are "house Amish" or "church Amish." The terms indicate a basic difference, as the Beachy worship in churches and the Old Order conduct religious services in their homes. Because of these religious and social differences as well as the limited information on the Beachy Amish, it appears useful to present the following case study of Iowa's two Beachy communities. The paper will include the reasons for their establishment, their religious beliefs and general social behavior and, where meaningful, comparisons with Old Order society.

ORIGINS OF THE BEACHY AMISH

The Beachy Fellowship came into existence in the 1920s in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.² During that decade a conflict developed in the district of Moses M. Beachy, an Old Order Amish bishop of the Casselman

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¹ Following is a list of Old Order Amish settlements in Iowa with date of settlement: Kalona, early 1840s; Buchanan County, 1914; Milton, 1968; Bloomfield, 1971; and McIntire, 1975. The two Beachy communities established since 1950 are Leon, Iowa, and Grove City, Minnesota.

² "Beachy Amish Churches," *ME*, 1955, I, 254.

River District, which centered around the use of electricity, the ownership of automobiles, and the practice of holding Sunday School. Eventually the controversy also involved more fundamental church doctrine when Bishop Beachy refused to excommunicate and shun members of his congregation for joining Conservative Amish Mennonite churches.³ In 1927 the situation reached a climax when the most conservative members of the involved church districts withdrew and joined other Old Order church districts so they would not lose their good standing with the Old Order group. This division resulted in the Yoder (Old Order) and the Beachy congregations, both being named after their respective ministers at that time.⁴

During the next three decades other Old Order church districts followed Beachy's example until Beachy congregations were located in many states throughout the central and eastern United States. Today there are Beachy congregations in eighteen states and the District of Columbia and six foreign countries, with the heaviest concentrations in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Their present membership of 4,297 is spread out among seventy-three congregations. Although there are a few exceptions, the great majority of Beachy Amish are either former Old Order members or descendants of former Old Order members. On rare occasions a non-Amish might join the Beachy group or a Beachy member might marry a non-Amish who then joins the Beachy Church. Throughout North and South America the Beachy Amish constitute approximately one-fifth of the total Amish population.⁵

The first Iowa Beachy Amish church began near Kalona in 1946. Typical of previous church schisms, disagreement arose among certain Old Order members over the use of modern farm equipment. Precipitating the controversy was the fact that Johnson County highway officials had applied an oil surface to roads in the southern part of the county and had then prohibited the use of vehicles with lugs. The members of one church district, the North District, agreed to use rubber on their machinery, but this decision brought an immediate, negative reaction from other church districts. Action was taken to prevent the North District from going ahead with their adoption of rubber tires, and gradually the question of other modern conveniences and equipment also became involved. Soon members were arguing over the propriety of using electricity, owning automobiles and installing telephones. The more liberal members began to challenge the traditional arguments with comments like, "If it is wrong to own a car or use a telephone then why is it right to hire a car or use a neighbor's phone?"⁶

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Marlan Logan, "Beachy Amish in Iowa" (unpublished paper, Iowa State University, 1973), 1.

⁵ *Mennonite Yearbook and Directory* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1975), 81.

⁶ Logan, 5-6; Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

As a result of the disagreements seven families left the Old Order and began meeting separately for religious services. These Amish fathers were Mose Yoder, Willie Helmuth, Enos H. Miller, John Helmuth, Chris Stoltzfus, Mose Coblentz and Benedict Kemp. Their place of worship was an unused Lutheran Church located northeast of Kalona at Kesselring Junction. Hard feelings continued, however, as many homes had been affected with sons and daughters leaving the Old Order and "going Beachy."⁷

Ministers from Beachy churches in other states came to preach until John Helmuth and Mose Yoder were ordained as ministers during the winter of 1946. The Beachy adopted the name *Burkholder Church* after a minister by that name who had visited the group. In 1952 the members built a church five miles north of Kalona and changed their name to Sharon Bethel. From the modest beginnings of seven families, the congregation has grown to forty-one families for a total membership of ninety-nine.⁸

BEACHY EXPANSION

Like the Old Order, Beachy groups have experienced difficulty in finding reasonably priced land, and this problem led them to establish their second Iowa settlement in Leon. In searching for new areas the Beachy have followed the same pattern utilized by the Old Order. The procedure is for several members to form a search committee and travel to different areas where they know land is for sale. Not only is price a factor, but also the possibility of additional farms coming up for sale in the future. When they visited the Leon area the Beachy committee discovered that many of the farmers were between sixty and seventy years old and were obviously considering retirement. Land values averaged \$80 an acre. The two prerequisites for determining a new settlement area—land prices and land quantity—were thus satisfied. The first two Beachy families—Mose Yoders and Wayne Millers—moved to Leon in February 1959. Yoder was a minister in the Kalona Sharon Bethel congregation and had been one of the founders of that group. The families that followed in the next few years came from Oklahoma, Kansas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Oregon and brought the total number of families to twenty-five. During the most recent years the Beachy young people have married within their community and the total number of families is now thirty with a total membership of eighty.⁹

Seldom, however, is the reason for resettlement totally economic. The feeling exists among the Iowa Beachy that the Leon group is the most liberal and that those members who came to Leon were perhaps a little

⁷ Logan, 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 6. Because the Beachy Amish believe in baptism based on confession of faith, the membership number of ninety-nine does not include those offspring who have not yet been baptized. The Beachy, like the Old Order, have large families so the total number of people in this community would be roughly double the baptized members. Typically, there are more unbaptized members in a community than baptized members. John Hostetler, *Amish Society* (rev. ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 80.

⁹ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

union and the employer, maintain an attitude of sincere neutrality. 4. Abide by the regulations of the shop and union with regard to wages, hours, and working conditions (as long as such regulations do not violate Biblical principles).¹⁵

The unions, in turn, agree to excuse the nonresistant employee from membership in the union, payment of union dues, attendance at meetings, and other union activities.¹⁶

In regard to education, the Beachy have not adhered as strongly to their separatist tendencies as have the Old Order. The Kalona Beachy group has its own school, Sharon Bethel, which presently has an enrollment of about seventy students. The school contains three classrooms and hires three teachers. In Leon, children attended the public schools until September 1974, when Beachy parents obtained permission from the Iowa State Board of Instruction to open their own private school, the Franklin Christian Day School. Their action stands in sharp contrast to the Milton Old Order Amish, who organized a school almost immediately upon the settlement of their families in that area. The Beachy do believe, however, that an eighth grade education is sufficient, and that the best way to educate their children is through private schools hiring Beachy Amish teachers.¹⁷

The Beachy provide further religious training for their young people at the Calvary Bible School at Calico Rock, Arkansas. Beachy congregations throughout the nation finance and administer the school and Beachy ministers teach the courses. As the school's name indicates, it is a Bible school and most courses center around that theme. They also, however, offer elementary courses in music, typing, and German. These sessions, each lasting three weeks, are held during January and February. At one time or another most Beachy young people from Kalona and Leon attend the school.¹⁸

In the area of religion, Beachy and Old Order members share common convictions. The Beachy believe in non-conformity and non-resistance and accept the Dordrecht Confession of Faith. They believe as well in the Christian ordinances of feet washing, head coverings for women, the laying on of hands, holy marriage, and the practice of the holy kiss between believers. The major difference is the use of a separate church building by the Beachy.¹⁹

Like most Mennonites, the Beachy believe in non-resistance and therefore will not serve in any military capacity. They believe that, since they are Christians, it is inconsistent for them to "participate in military service, whether combatant or noncombatant, whether in defense or offense, for

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 15, 16.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁷ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January, 1974; State Department of Public Instruction, Des Moines, Iowa, private interview with Mrs. Edith Munro, Elementary Education Consultant, January 1974.

¹⁸ Logan, 17; pamphlet advertising school entitled, "Calvary Bible School, Calico Rock, Arkansas, January 1, 1973, March 2, 1973."

¹⁹ Logan, 2-4.

Christ has commanded us to love even our enemies." To support their pacifist views, the Beachy quote Matthew 5:39-44, which states that in the event of conflict they should turn the other cheek.²⁰ They believe their people should take positive action, such as giving financial aid to the needy and distressed, clothing the naked and, in all ways, seeking to overcome evil with good. In the event of all-out war, the Beachy believe that the Scriptures require them to "flee, or suffer the spoiling of our goods, rather than to inflict injury even on an enemy." (Matt. 10:32, Matt. 5:39, Rom. 12:19)²¹

Like the Old Order, the religious convictions of the Beachy prevent them from any involvement in political matters. They believe in the separation of church and state and believe that the two groups have no right to interfere in the activities of the other. The Beachy further believe that since they subscribe to biblical nonresistance they therefore cannot participate in "a system that bears the carnal sword, 'for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal' (II Corinthians 10:4)." The same beliefs prevent them from participating in political campaigns, political rallies and elections, "for by so doing we would identify ourselves with the system." The Beachy believe that because of God's absolute power over men, they can accomplish more by their prayers than others can by voting against one another at the polls.²²

THE BEACHY FELLOWSHIP

The Beachy Church is considered a fellowship as opposed to a specific conference. Like the Old Order, each congregation is autonomous with a bishop presiding over the membership, assisted by two ministers. The Beachy believe in a support ministry but not in a paid ministry—which means that if the bishop or ministers find they are behind in their own work because of church obligations, other members of the congregation will assist with field work, harvesting or whatever work needs to be done. The bishop and ministers are chosen by lot. Once a year church officials attend a general assembly to discuss common problems. Ervin N. Hershberger of Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, serves as secretary for the National Assembly. Within each individual church district, the bishop conducts communion and performs baptisms and marriages. The ministers assist him with the preaching and give supportive counsel. In Kalona the church services are conducted in German, but in Leon they are conducted in English. Sunday morning church services are alternated with Sunday School. On the Sundays when Sunday School has been held, evening church services are conducted. On the alternating Sundays, the young people have special meetings. Once a month the young people also hold a social get-together called a "Literary." The entertainment consists of games, singing

²⁰ They also quote Romans 12:14; I Peter 3:9; Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3. Also see Dordrecht Confession, Article XIV.

²¹ "Peace, War and Social Issues, A Statement," 6.

²² *Ibid.*, 8.

more progressive than their home congregations would have liked. By moving to a new area where they were involved in shaping the rules of conduct they could accommodate their more liberal feelings. This avoided confrontation in their home congregation and possibly eliminated any desire to leave the Beachy group for a less strict Mennonite group. As with the Old Order, the ability to initiate new communities without loss of prestige or church privileges provides the Beachy members with a safety valve for their discontent.¹⁰

The Leon community reacted somewhat negatively when news of the impending Beachy settlement began to circulate. Rumors flowed freely that the Mennonite people were invading southern Iowa with forty families in the initial settlement alone, and that they would set up an independent economic organization. They would have their own banks, stores and other service operations, so they would have no need of the services of locally owned businesses. Also heard frequently was the rumor that they planned to purchase all the land and drive non-Amish people from the area. Apparently the Leon residents had mistaken the Amish for the Amana residents located west of Iowa City. They believed that the Amish were going to establish a similar society where the stores, industrial plants and land were to be owned communally.¹¹

Moses E. Yoder, one of the two original Beachy settlers and a Beachy minister himself, began to counteract these allegations by attending the Leon Ministerial Council, composed of local ministers. He managed to interpret successfully the Mennonites' religious beliefs and positions as well as plans for migration. The local ministers, in turn, relayed this information to their parishioners. A close relationship developed between Minister Yoder and the Ministerial Council and no doubt the understanding stemming from this relationship was highly significant in calming many fears about the Mennonite "invasion." Gradually the misapprehensions began to fade and community members began to observe that the Beachy members were pleasant, hard working, thrifty people. In fact, many older farmers who were anticipating retirement began to approach Mr. Yoder and offer to sell him their farms. It began happening so frequently that Mr. Yoder commented, "Every time some older man drove in, I knew he had a farm to sell."¹²

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Although the Beachy Amish in Iowa have retained many characteristics of the Old Order, there are many areas of contrast. Economically, the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, February 1975.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, January 1974. Possibly Leon residents were also confused about the present status of the Amanas and did not know that the Amana people dropped the communal basis of economic organization in 1932. Today the Amana Corporation owns the agricultural lands, meat plants, furniture shops, and other operations but each Amana resident owns his or her own home and other private property. An excellent presentation of the Amana story is Barbara Yambura's *A Change and a Parting* (Amana Iowa State University Press, 1960).

¹² Logan, 12.

Beachy are not so concerned about isolating themselves from the outside world. Although most Beachy men are farmers, many others seek employment in outside areas. In the Leon congregation some are employed at a ready-mix plant in Davis City and others operate a window factory and a blacksmith shop in Decatur City. Carpentry, mechanical work and truck driving also attract Beachy wage earners. In agriculture, the Beachy use tractors and electrical equipment, which undoubtedly saves time and makes them less dependent on the manual labor provided by large families. Their acreages remain small, however, so they are still forced to practice extreme frugality in their buying habits, whether the expenditures are for farm equipment or domestic needs. Their machinery is more up-to-date than that of the Old Order, and many do custom combining throughout their area.¹³

One aspect of their economic activities that presents a conflict for some Beachy members is that of working in areas where employees are traditionally unionized. While Beachy members recognize that unions have brought about great improvements in working conditions and wages, they still refuse to identify themselves with any group that might resort to force or power. Pointing out that unions sometimes use mob tactics and violence, they resist membership in such organizations and point out instead that the Bible teaches a better way as revealed in Matthew 7:12, Ephesians 4:31 and II Timothy 2:24. To guide their members in these areas, the Beachy suggest the following:

1. That our members seek employment where union membership is not required.
2. That farmers likewise refrain from membership in farmers unions which also thrive on coercive and sometimes destructive methods.
3. That if and when unions do take control, and if employment or market is restricted to union members, we recommend a transfer of employment or market.¹⁴

The Beachy recommend one further alternative in the area of employment with a unionized company. The agreement or "Basis of Understanding" is similar to one on industrial relations prepared by Mennonite General Conference and approved by officials of the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations. Under these agreements the Mennonite employees agree to:

1. Contribute to a specified cause, usually some charitable or benevolent cause, a sum of money equivalent to the amount of dues paid by the union members.
2. Refrain from interference with or resistance to union activities.
3. In case of conflict, resulting in a strike or similar action between the

¹³ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

¹⁴ "Peace, War and Social Issues, A Statement of the Position of the Amish Mennonite Churches." A statement officially adopted by the ministerial body of the Beachy Amish constituency at their regular annual meeting at Wellesley, Ontario, Canada, April 18 and 19, 1968, pp. 14, 15.

and the presentation of a skit which has been written and acted out by members of the group. In addition, the young people distribute religious tracts in Iowa City, present religious services and singing at the State Penitentiary in Fort Madison and conduct services at the Sunshine Rescue Mission in Cedar Rapids. Disabled persons and widows within the church are also given special assistance.²³

The age at which Beachy young people are baptized presents yet another contrast with the Old Order. The Old Order believe in adult baptism based on confession of faith. The Beachy do not stress the adult aspect but rely instead on the confession of faith. Many Beachy young people are baptized at age fifteen and sixteen and some as young as twelve and thirteen. One Beachy bishop stated that they feel the time for baptism has arrived when the young person begins looking for something more in his or her life.²⁴

The practice of shunning also differs between the two Amish groups. The Old Order believe that members who commit grievous sins should be placed under the ban, or shunned. This action is taken by the bishop only after long, soul-searching consideration and only after the church district members have voted unanimously in favor of the action. Once an individual is shunned, however, he is cut off from regular social and religious relations with other Old Order people. Every attempt is made to help the shunned individual repent and mend his ways so that he can be brought back into the full fellowship of the church, but until that time the ban is maintained.²⁵

The Beachy appear to use shunning less frequently. The Beachy will not shun anyone for joining a more liberal Mennonite group, and only under the most extreme conditions will they shun one of their own members. Rather, they make every effort to work with the wayward individual, showing love and concern and aiding in every way possible, hoping that their behavior will help the individual see "the true way" and return to the Beachy group with the proper repentance. They interact with all Mennonite church groups from the most conservative Old Order to the more liberal such as the Conservative Mennonites.²⁶

Counsel meetings are held twice a year, several weeks before communion Sunday. The purpose is to review the rules and regulations with the entire congregation. It is a time when wrongdoings can be pointed out to members. If the problems are solved, then they can take part in the communion service; if not, however, they do not partake. Overall, the Beachy elders are not as strict as the Old Order regarding their young people's behavior. For instance, the Beachy allow their young people to buy tape decks for their automobiles as long as they contain religious music,

²³ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Melvin Gingerich, *The Mennonites in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1939), 175-178.

²⁶ Beachy Amish community, Kalona, Iowa, private interviews, March 1971.

but they will not allow them to have regular radios. Their rationale is that they can control what the young people listen to on the tapes but they cannot control what they listen to on the radio.²⁷

Needy and disabled persons outside their own church community are also a concern of the Beachy. Membership in the Mennonite Central Committee provides a means of aiding needy people all over the world. A Beachy Amish member from Pennsylvania sits on the seventeen man MCC board that meets annually to review programs and determine future outreach. The Leon group contributes regularly to MCC through periodic meat canning operations. The Beachy cooperate with the Old Order River Brethren, a small group within the Brethren in Christ Church, located at Dallas Center, Iowa. The two congregations donate animals, or money to purchase animals, and a mobile unit operated by MCC comes to Leon where the butchering is done. A health inspector is always present to certify that the process meets federal government standards. The cans of food are then turned over to MCC for distribution.²⁸

The Beachy also have their own separate mission organization, the Amish Mennonite Aid, founded in 1955. Headquarters are located in East Rochester, Ohio, with the governing board composed of Beachy ministers located throughout the United States. Today the agency's main emphasis is upon overseas mission work, with most attention directed to British Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica. Missionary work is also being carried on in Germany. The Beachy purpose is stated as follows in their "Overseas Voluntary Service Manual":

1. To help meet physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of individuals which otherwise would not be met.
2. To demonstrate a positive witness which testifies to the love and power of God and to the life of a Christian by helping others to help themselves by providing information, encouragement, love, tools, and materials.
3. To live together as a group in a way that will demonstrate what true Christianity really means.
4. To strengthen the outreach of the church through daily, consistent life, and by easing the sufferings of those less fortunate, thereby demonstrating Christianity in shoe leather; by assisting the work of missions whenever this is jointly agreed upon by those who are responsible.²⁹

The group's domestic work consists of sponsoring and operating the Old Folks Home in Harrison, Arkansas, and the children's homes at Plain City, Ohio, and Mission Home, Virginia. An additional function of the mission's overseas program was that it provided many young Beachy men

²⁷ Logan, 20.

²⁸ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

²⁹ "Amish Mennonite Aid Overseas Voluntary Service Manual," (East Rochester, Ohio: Amish Mennonite Aid, 1967), 1.

with the opportunity to fulfill their Selective Service requirements for military exemptions through voluntary missionary work.³⁰

In addition to their own missionary group, the Beachy also have their own official publication, the *Calvary Messenger*, published by Calvary Publications at Meyersdale, Pennsylvania. Many Beachy families also subscribe to *Family Life*, a magazine published eleven times a year by Pathway Publishers, Rural Route 4, Aylmer, Ontario.³¹

Perhaps it is in the area of general social behavior that the most noticeable differences appear between the Beachy and the Old Order. Both groups believe in the precept of non-conformity to the world, but the manner in which they enforce it depends upon their interpretation of what is worldly and what is not. This "interpretive process" apparently affords considerable latitude for the Beachy in determining their social behavior. Beachy members wear more modern clothing, have increased business contacts with non-Amish people, and take part in extension programs—all of which indicate a more liberal interpretation of the non-conforming principle than that subscribed to by the Old Order.

In the area of clothing, the Beachy lack a uniformity of dress that is so much a part of the Old Order. The older Beachy men wear the traditional Amish garb of broadfall trousers and plain colored shirts, but wear shorter beards and have their hair parted in the middle and cut quite short. The Beachy women wear a cape style dress of long length, but often made with brightly colored material. They have dark stockings and a prayer cap which is smaller in size than that of the Old Order. In general, their dress is simply less old worldish than their conservative counterparts. Beachy young people dress with varying degrees of modernity, as some young men wear regular short sleeved sport shirts and work style trousers. Some young men who do wear broadfall trousers have abandoned suspenders and have started wearing belts. With the emphasis today on longer hair styles and beards, it is difficult if not impossible always to distinguish between many of the Beachy young people and the general non-Amish population.³²

In their day to day activities, Beachy members interact to a high degree with non-Amish people. Many do so because of their business activities, but increased interaction also comes from the fact that until 1974 Beachy children attended public schools. At different times Beachy members have taken part in short courses offered by county extension officials, such as a tailoring course. In recent years five foster children have been placed in Beachy homes, necessitating continual contact with welfare officials. The involvement of a Beachy minister in the Leon Ministerial Council offers another example of their social relationships with non-Amish peo-

³⁰ Logan, 18.

³¹ Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974; *Mennonite Yearbook*, 81.

³² Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.

ple. Overall, this high degree of interaction is apparently regarded positively by both Beachy and non-Beachy Amish groups. On the other end of the spectrum, there appears to be little interaction with members of the Old Order. While business contacts are maintained between Beachy people in Leon and certain Old Order Amish communities such as Jamesport, Missouri, some Leon Beachy members have never visited the Amish community in Buchanan County.³³

CONCLUSION

The two Beachy congregations in Iowa have grown steadily since their beginnings in 1946 and 1959. Nationwide, the Beachy group is enlarging at an even greater rate. In fact, within the last ten years Beachy congregations have multiplied at such a rapid rate that many Iowa Beachy members have not been able to remain knowledgeable as to the total number of Beachy groups and their locations. They exhibit the same high degree of mobility as their more conservative counterparts, the Old Order, and there is every indication that the Beachy group will increase in both membership and number of settlements. Within Amish society the crucial question is, "How many Old Order members will go Beachy?" Undoubtedly the Beachy will attract a small percentage of Old Order, but as they become more modern in their dress, more worldly in their economic habits, and increase their social relationships with non-Amish people, they will increasingly discourage Old Order members from joining their church. The closer the Beachy remain in religious thinking and practice to the Old Order, the more converts they will attract. The future trend, however, appears to be in the direction of the Beachy becoming more worldly and thus attracting fewer and fewer Old Order members. As they move in that direction, the probability of their dropping the word *Amish* from their name and thus becoming the Beachy Mennonites, becomes more and more likely.

³³ Logan, 12; Beachy Amish Community, Decatur City, Iowa, private interviews, January 1974.