



for C.D.C. Archives

Bulletin

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario
WATERLOO - ONTARIO

November, 1966

THE PRESIDENT REPORTS

A historical society can be as exciting an association as any organization you belong to. It is really a fellowship of people with common interests organized for the purpose of seeing that those interests are realized.

The major purpose of a historical society is to tie the past with the present and to preserve information about significant events of the present for the future. Thanks be to God that there have always been those and still are, who have had a concern for informing future generations.

You are invited to join the young and vigorous M.H.S.O. What is more, you can help the society by being alert for significant historical materials - old letters, diaries, marriage certificates, church records and rare books and Bibles. You can do something toward enriching Ontario Mennonite history even if you don't consider yourself a historian.

J. W. Fretz

FALL MEETING REPORT

The Fall Meeting of the Historical Society was held at Riverdale Church in Millbank. Orland Gingerich presented a paper on the early Amish settlements in Ontario. Joseph Stoll, Aylmer, gave a thorough historical and sociological analysis of the eight Amish settlements in Ontario since 1953.

Because of the many requests for copies of Stoll's paper, and because the material has not before been published, the Society has made copies available at \$1.00 a copy. They can be ordered from the secretary.



Bulletin

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario WATERLOO - ONTARIO

2

MENNONITE CENTENNIAL PAGEANT PLANS

As part of the centennial program for this area, the Mennonite Historical Society is planning to produce a historical pageant. Plans are being made for this memorable undertaking. The support of the entire Mennonite constituency will be needed to make this a success. Approximately 100 people will be involved in the production of the pageant.

The first presentation of the pageant is scheduled for the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium for September 16, 1967. Other showings are contemplated in Essex and Lincoln counties.

M. R. Good of Waterloo is the general chairman of the Pageant Committee. Barbara Coffman of Vineland has written the script. Gerald Loewen, instructor at Rockway Mennonite School will be the producer and director. Roy Snyder, Waterloo, has been appointed as business manager. Abner Martin, Waterloo, will serve as chairman of the music committee. Other committees are being arranged for and personnel selected for the various duties that will need to be carried out.

HELP FOR CONGREGATIONAL HISTORIANS

Mimeographed suggestions on the collecting of historical material are available free of charge from the Secretary. Anyone who might find this helpful may obtain a copy by request.

VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARCHIVES

The Ontario Mennonite Archives are located in the fire-proof room adjacent to the historical library in Conrad Grebel College. The modest, but significant collection of historical items has been significantly enriched during the 1965-66 year. The major contri-



Bulletin

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario WATERLOO - ONTARIO

3

bution has been that of the Ontario Mennonite Conference which moved all of its archives from Rockway School. Major additional accessions were the Amos Reesor collection from Markham of historically valuable books, Bibles and documents; the 1659 copy of the Martyr's Mirror by Simeon Reesor, also from Markham. Mr. Reesor during the year contributed a homemade flail, an artifact reminiscent of a widely-used item on Mennonite farms in days before the use of modern machinery.

Solomon Gehman, now a resident in Fairview Home, Preston, contributed an old family chest, brought by his forebears from Pennsylvania in the forepart of the 19th century, and a footwash-tub, formerly used in the now extinct Mennonite Church at Sherkston. Irwin Weber of Strasburg Mennonite Church contributed a well-preserved copy of Menno Simons' Writings, 1853 edition.

We also acquired several copies of the Ezra Eby book. These were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sauder of Kitchener and Rev. U. K. Weber of Kitchener. A large family Bible, 1724, was given by Mrs. Jacob Snyder.

There are still many valuable historical records in the possession of Ontario Mennonites. The holders of these materials are invited to consult with J. W. Fretz at Conrad Grebel College relative to putting them in the archives on loan or as permanent gifts, where they can be used as research material for people interested in Mennonite life and history.

DR. FRETZ TO WRITE PAMPHLET

The Society has endorsed the writing of a brief history of the Mennonites in Ontario by Dr. Fretz. This is to be approximately a 40-page pamphlet and will be an objective portrayal of



Bulletin
Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario
WATERLOO - ONTARIO

4

the Mennonites to the non-Mennonite reader. It is to be prepared in popular style to make it readily saleable and is to be in print by 1967.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

On November 23, the Society had 52 members, including one life membership. Total funds received through memberships amounted to \$314.00. Your membership will give valuable support to the Mennonite historical activities in Ontario. Memberships are solicited. Please use the form below.

Name _____

Address _____

Occupation _____

Memberships: Student \$1.00; General \$3.00; Sustaining \$10.00;
Life \$100.00

Mail to Dorothy Swartzentruber, Secretary, 117 King St. West,
Kitchener, Ontario