“CRAWFORD COUNTY NUMBER TWO:”

A Now Extinct Old Order Amish Community of the 1930’s

MAURICE A. MOOK

The earliest Amish migrants from Europe to the New World came to Pennsylvania through the port of Philadelphia during the second decade of the eighteenth century. Their first permanently successful colony was established in Lancaster County, where the Old Order Amish cultural tradition has been carried on continuously for two and a half centuries. The Lancaster community is the oldest surviving Amish group in the world today, and is the “mother colony” from which all other Amish communities in Pennsylvania have either directly or indirectly derived. There are at present five Amish communities in western Pennsylvania, and there were formerly two others which are now extinct. Three of these seven groups were formerly known to the Amish of western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio as “Crawford County No. 1,” “Crawford County No. 2,” and “Crawford County No. 3.” By a curious inaccuracy in popular nomenclature all three of these were ascribed to Crawford County, although only two of them were located within its boundaries. “Crawford County No. 1” referred to the Amish church at Atlantic in the southwestern corner of Crawford County. It has been in existence since 1924 and when visited by the writer in 1950 consisted of 25 families, totaling 160 individuals of whom 60 were members of the church. “Crawford County No. 2,” the subject of the present paper, was a congregation-community formerly existing in the vicinity of Spartansburg, in the northeastern corner of Crawford County. It was known also as “Sparta,” but the now extinct community is still referred to by local Amishmen who re-

1 Dr. Mook, who was born and reared in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, is an associate professor of anthropology at the Pennsylvania State University.—Ed.

2 No Amish survive in the area of their origin. Those who did not migrate to America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries later coalesced with other European religious groups.

3 In Somerset, Lawrence, Mercer, and Crawford counties; there are two communities in Lawrence County.

4 Old Order Amish church membership is restricted to adults. Individuals join upon confession of faith in their late teens or early twenties. The Amish are opposed to infant baptism, as are the Mennonites from whom the Amish historically derive.
member the settlement as "Crawford County No. 2." "Crawford County No. 3" was located in Warren County, several miles east of the Crawford County line, which was and still is ignored in the popular Amish eponym. It was a small community of but 24 individuals. It was established in 1933, but soon expired as a victim of the depression.  

The following information concerning the Spartansburg settlement is based upon the oral testimony of present "English," that is non-Amish inhabitants of Spartansburg and vicinity and was collected by the writer during a visit to this area in late August and early September 1951. The author's principal informants during this visit were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Scarem (mail carrier to the Amish in the 1930's), Donald V. Kinney (store proprietor), Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Ellis (gasoline station proprietors), Rev. Jacob W. Birky, (Mennonite minister), Guy M. Fish (automobile and farm implement dealer), Rex Still (barber), Alva Rowe (farmer), Ralph Davis (farmer), Lawrence Snapp (miller), and Mr. and Mrs. William Howitt (farmers). All of these informants, excepting Mr. Birky, are natives of or have lived in this area since the early thirties or earlier, and thus knew the Amish as neighbors and contemporaries. Mr. Birky was helpful as to the present location and affiliation of several individuals who were Old Order Amish at Spartansburg in the 1930's, but who later moved to Ohio and have since joined the Mennonite Church. Mr. and Mrs. Howitt, both active in the Mennonite Church, knew many of the Sparta Amish before and when they moved from Ohio to Crawford County, lived in the immediate vicinity of the people, knew them personally during their residence in Pennsylvania, and were able to recall more given and family names than any other informant. The writer wishes gratefully to acknowledge the help of all the foregoing persons in his investigation in the field. Additional information and several investigatory leads were also received through more casual conversations with a larger number of "English" persons.

5 Psychological factors also contributed to its failure as a community. See Maurice A. Mook, "Crawford County No. 3," in Mennonite Historical Bulletin, 14:6-8 (July, 1953).

6 The Old Order Amish use the word "English" as a generic term for all non-Amish people. They feel closer to Mennonites than to other non-Amish persons and sometimes distinguish Mennonites from the "English." In northwestern Pennsylvania persons of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry designate the Amish as "Dutch," and the Amish in turn call the Pennsylvania Germans "English."
residents of the present community.

It should be emphasized that the information contained in the present paper has come entirely from non-Amish sources. It is thus possibly less accurate and certainly of a less intimate sort than it would be had it come more directly from Amish members of this community. A non-Amishman can never become a full participant observer of Amish life. The Amish members of this former community are now scattered, a few of them are known to have left the Amish faith since their residence at Sparta, and I have recently learned of the deaths of several of them. The whereabouts of others is at present unknown. The occasion for interviewing members of the Sparta Amish community has thus not presented itself, although I hope it will be possible to learn more of this group more directly from the Amish themselves at a later date. Meanwhile older informants forget the past and pass away, and memory is such a precarious thing that it seems best to record such information as is at present known for what it is worth. Written records of this community are entirely non-existent. And if it is later possible to recover knowledge from Amish informants, it will be interesting to compare the present record with possible future more direct information as a test of the relative reliability of the oral testimony of participant (Amish) and non-participant (non-Amish) observers.

The author's interest in the Spartansburg Amish group was first aroused during a previous visit (in August and September, 1950) to the present Old Order Amish community at Atlantic, Pennsylvania. Several Amish informants there, particularly Emanuel Fisher, Andy G. Byler, and Preacher Ben Raber,7 mentioned the Sparta colony, and at least one Amish family (that of Chris Troyer) moved from Spartans-

7 Preacher Ben Raber died in December, 1950, three months after my interviews with him. All three of the above-mentioned Amishmen were cooperative and valuable informants. The Amish choose their ministers by lot. The next lot at Atlantic fell to Andy G. Byler, who thus succeeded Ben Raber as a preacher of the Atlantic Amish church. All Amish churches normally have one bishop, two preachers, and a deacon. The Atlantic church now has its full complement of ministers. The Spartansburg church was never large and apparently never had more than two ministers in residence. For Old Order Amish church organization, types of ministers, their powers and functions, their selection by lot, and the worship service for the ordination of ministers, see Calvin George Bachman, "The Old
burg to Atlantic in the late 1930's. There was some fellowship between these two congregations, particularly in the early years of the Spartansburg colony when the church there was in the process of being first organized. Spartansburg and Atlantic are in diagonally opposite corners of Crawford County, the distance between the two communities by most passable roads being about forty-eight miles. Crawford County is in northwestern Pennsylvania, bounded by Erie County to the north and by the Ohio state line to the west.

In this paper the locally popular expression "Sparta" will be used to include both the town of Spartansburg and the immediately surrounding rural region. Present Sparta informants have some difficulty in remembering exact dates, such as when the Amish first came into the area, and also when the last of them left. Twenty years ago there seem to have been few local events, even of a personal nature, with which individual informants can now associate the earlier movement of the Amish people. Present opinion, however, favors 1930, 1931, and 1932 as the earliest dates, and 1939 and 1940 as the latest years of Amish residence in the region. Both the ingress and egress movements appear to have occupied several years, although present informants refer to the Amish arriving together and leaving together. "They came in a bunch and left the same way." "They came in fast, and then all of a sudden they weren't here anymore." "They came in fast and left fast, but it took them longer to leave than to come." Reminiscent folk statements such as these are well known to be characteristically exaggerated, and from the sum-total of testimony it seems quite clear that the Amish people came as individual families, or as small groups of related families, in the early years of the 1930's, and similarly left during the last years of that decade.

Order Amish of Lancaster County," in Proceedings, Pennsylvania German Society, 49:113-120 (1942). For similar information about the Amish and Amish-Mennonites of the Middle West, see Melvin Gingerich, Mennonites in Iowa, 179-186 (State Historical Society of Iowa, 1939). Also, Joseph W. Yoder gives an interesting description of "casting the lot" in his Rosanna of the Amish, 249-261 (Huntingdon, Pa., 1947). The Rosanna of the title is Yoder's mother, and the lot he describes fell on his own father. The same author includes a highly critical discussion of Amish ministers and the practice of the lot in his Amish Traditions, 16-26 (1950).

8 In Old Order Amish church organization, "fellowship" has a
The Amish as an organized church group were at Sparta perhaps some seven or eight years, although separate families may have come as early as 1930 and a family or two may have stayed as late as 1939 or 1940. One English informant insisted that he came to Sparta in March, 1939, and that there was at that time but one Amish family left, which moved away in the summer of that year. However, another informant, now a resident of another county, said he left Sparta in 1940 and that there were still a few Amish in the area at that time. Several informants said the Amish left in 1937 and in 1938. It seems clear that there was intermittent immigration into and emigration from the Amish community throughout the decade or slightly less of Amish residence at Sparta, but that immigration was the characteristic movement of the early 1930's and emigration of the late 1930's.

The reasons for the Amish coming to Sparta seem to have been predominantly economic. At Spartansburg it is now claimed that in the 1930's the Amish could both buy and rent farms more cheaply at Sparta than they could in Ohio, from which state most of them came. Farm land during the depression of the 1930's was selling for as little as fifteen dollars an acre at Sparta, and the purchase of a farm could be negotiated with as little as a hundred dollars in cash down payment. Most of the Sparta Amish are reported to have arranged for the purchase of farms, although there was also some tenancy under local Eng-

9 An Amish community or colony becomes a church or congrega-
tion when local ministers are selected or acquired from another community. Until this is done a bishop from another congrega-
tion functions as a sort of advisory overseer. He will frequently visit the new community, although this may involve considerable time and travel on his part. All Amish church officials, bishops, preachers, and deacons (all called "ministers" by the Amish), serve nor-
mally for life and always without financial remuneration. The
lish owners. Most, if not all, Amish farms at Sparta were mortgaged, and they were subsequently relinquished for failure to meet mortgage obligations. The main reason for the departure of the Amish from Sparta thus seems also to have been predominantly economic. “They came with little or nothing, and they left with less.” “They were mostly fair farmers, but they just couldn’t make a go of it around here.” “Those were rough years, you know, and hard on everybody.” “They had had better farms in Ohio, lost them during the depression, and got poorer places than they thought they were getting when they came here.” Predominant local present opinion favors the idea that the 1930's were hard on all farmers in the area and that the Amish were in this respect not much worse off than their non-Amish neighbors.

But why did the Amish leave as a group, whereas some of the non-Amish remained on their Sparta farms to survive the depression years? Many local non-Amish farmers, in fact, also lost their farms. This fact of the 1930's makes it difficult to find English farm families in the area now who were there when the Amish were also there. There is also one respect in which the present belief that the Amish were no worse off than their non-Amish farmer neighbors needs correction. Some of the Amish immigrants to Sparta are said to have come with “only their household furnishings.” The Amish who thus had to re-stock and re-equip for farming in Sparta suffered an economic hardship not shared by farmers already established in the area.

A factor facilitating the failure of the Sparta Amish community may have been “church trouble.” One apparently well-informed person mentioned division among the Amish while at Sparta, specifying the binding band around the rim of the black felt hat as one cause of disagreement. This same individual also alluded to church trouble in Ohio as a cause of Amish immigration to Crawford County when the word “church” refers to the local body of baptized believers, for the Old Order Amish have no “church-houses,” as they call them. They worship every other Sunday in an Amish home, or in summer, when the weather permits, on the barn floor. The New Order or “Church Amish” have church-houses, whereas the Old Order or “House Amish” do not. Many other differences in beliefs and customs distinguish these groups.

10 Contrary to the popular English impression that Amishmen are well off and ordinarily own their own farms, there is a high incidence of tenancy among them. This is even characteristic of long-
Sparta colony was established. It is well known that such differences over matters which seem inconsequential to non-Amish observers have been troublesome to the solidarity of Amish communities elsewhere, and that this has been a factor in the establishment of new Amish communities in various areas of the United States. But that internal division was a basic cause of the failure of this particular community seems doubtful, if the knowledge of Sparta English observers is to be relied upon. The prime factor here seems also to have been economic. All informants named cheap land as the attracting factor in the early 1930's, and farm failure due to inability to market farm products and to meet mortgage obligations as the principal reason for the Amish withdrawal.

established and relatively prosperous Amish communities, such as the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, group, according, for example, to Walter M. Kollmorgen's *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community: the Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, 28-31 (Rural Life Studies No. 4, U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1942). In the older communities the Amish can and prefer to rent farms from other Amishmen; but at Sparta, and in any newly established Amish community, this preference pattern is impossible. Tenancy or renting is an essential step in the Amish "agricultural ladder,"—the process by which an Amishman becomes a farmer. All of my Amish informants at Atlantic, Pennsylvania, agreed that the characteristic process is as follows: an Amish boy begins by doing chores for his father; when he is a little older he works as a farm laborer for an established farmer, preferably an Amishman; then he will rent a field or two on a share-crop basis; next he will crop-rent a small farm, perhaps by the time he gets married; then he cash-rents a farm; and finally he buys one, if this is ever financially possible for him. All Amishmen aspire to farm ownership, but by no means all of them achieve it. Many Amish-owned farms have two dwelling houses, a large one and a smaller one. The latter is for the tenant family. It also serves as the "grossdaddy" house to which the Amish couple retire in their old age. Residence in towns or villages is contrary to Amish mores.

11 Other reasons for the establishment of new Amish communities have been the pressure of population upon locally available land and the high prices for farms demanded by English owners when the prospective purchaser is Amish. The Amish, moreover, have historically shown a migratory pattern and have a cultural tradition favoring migration if necessary. They have also moved from one state or part of a state to another when laws compelling school attendance beyond the eighth grade have become too strict or have come to be locally enforced too strictly to suit them. The economic factor has probably predominated as the reason for migration and
from Sparta in the late 1930’s. This was an economic disadvantage that could not be overcome, under the circumstances, by the industry and hard work so often cited as Amish virtues. In fact, there is some doubt, at least now expressed locally, that the Sparta Amish were as industrious as Lancaster County and Mifflin County Amishmen, for example, are known to be. Most informants characterized the group as moderately industrious and as from “fair” to “good” farmers; however, several mentioned and specified individual “drones” among them, and one informant labeled the whole group as such. The latter allegation, however, seems clearly to be an ethnocentric prejudice of the informant. Nevertheless, several informants who knew of Amish communities elsewhere characterized the Sparta Amish as inferior farmers to those “down east” in Pennsylvania and to certain Old Order groups in Ohio.

The Sparta Amish came largely from eastern Ohio, although at least three families are reported to have come from Indiana and two

the beginning of new colonies. Due to their high birth rates and large families, and in spite of the defection of young Amish people from their parents’ religion and way of life, there are now more Amish people and communities in the United States than ever before. There are at present eleven geographically distinct Old Order Amish communities in Pennsylvania, which is more than ever before in the state’s history. Two of these, one in Brush Valley, Centre County, and the other near Mifflintown, Juniata County, have been established since August, 1949.

12 Yoder, Rosanna of the Amish, 23, 69-71, 81, 138, and Rosanna’s Boys, 27-39 (1948). Yoder was born and raised Amish in Mifflin County, but he never joined the Old Order Amish church. All of his books refer to the Amish of “Big Valley” (Kishacoquillas Valley in Mifflin County), and there are differences in the beliefs and practices of Old Order Amish people in different areas of the United States. There are even easily discernible cultural differences among Amish communities in the same state, and in fact among Old Order Amish churches in the same geographical community. Perhaps the widest range of such differences is to be found in the aforesaid Big Valley. Of the groups there, five are Old Order or “House” Amish, and four are Amish-Mennonites who may own automobiles, use tractors in farming, have electricity in their homes, and worship in “church-houses”—all practices that are taboo to the members of conservative Old Order Amish churches. See John A. Hostetler, “The Amish Family in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania,” 251-261 (a thesis in rural sociology, Pennsylvania State College, 1951).
from Virginia. When the Sparta community was abandoned most of these families are said to have returned to the areas of their earlier origin. There were probably approximately twenty Amish families in the Spartansburg area when their community was largest in the middle 1930's. Twenty-three families were enumerated by one informant, although most informants could remember but some six or seven. All of the twenty-three families, however, were not at Sparta at the same time, for the Sparta community was fluid, as small marginal Amish groups usually are, and the now extinct ones also appear to have been.

The following family-name enumeration is based upon the composite oral testimony of all English informants interviewed at Sparta. Inasmuch as the interviews were held at least eleven years after the last Amish family resided at Sparta, and some twenty-one years after the community was first established, the listing must be regarded as incomplete. Each name is that of the husband and family head, consonant with the well-known patriarchal organization of the Amish family. Due to the time lapse involved and the fact that the information is indirect, rather than from the now dispersed Amish subjects themselves, no attempt was made to determine the number of children in each family, or the size of the community in terms of individuals rather than in terms of the number of resident families. The family names remembered, after over a decade of intervening non-residence, are as follows:


14 The Amish themselves think in terms of number of families rather than number of individuals. In three Pennsylvania Amish communities I have asked three bishops and numerous other informants how large the local church is, and the answer has invariably been in terms of the number of families in the church. John A. Raber, an Old Order Amishman of Baltic, Ohio, has for years been publishing an Amish almanac, such as the 1930 issue of his Der Neue Amerikanische Calender, in which the church districts are listed by states; the ministers' names, birth dates, dates of ordination, and post office addresses are given; and the size of each church is indicated by reference to the number of families, not individuals, in membership.
1. Eli Hostetler; Old Order Amish minister; ordained before coming to Sparta; now a Mennonite in Ohio; has recently visited at Sparta.
2. Dan Hostetler; brother of Eli; died of measles within a week of coming to Sparta, leaving a widow with seven children.
3. (Another) Hostetler; first name not remembered; no kin of Eli; said to have been the father of two retarded sons; no other sons; no daughters.
4. John Byler; came to Sparta from Virginia.
5. Ben Byler; brother of John; came from Virginia.
6. John ("Sandy") Detweiler; described as having reddish hair and beard; recently died in Ohio.
7. Emanuel Hershberger; Old Order Amish deacon; now a Mennonite, residing in eastern Ohio.
8. Andy Mast; came to Sparta, with his married sons, from Indiana.
10. Joe Mast; son of Andy.
11. Eli Mast; son of Andy.
14. Bill Schlabach; son-in-law of Eli Hostetler; now a Mennonite in Ohio.
15. Jeff Shrock; father-in-law of John Detweiler; his wife died at Sparta.
17. Chris Swartz; brother of Jake.
18. Chris Troyer; moved from Sparta to Atlantic; now residing near Hartsville, Ohio; a married daughter now resides at Atlantic; a married son now resides in Mercer County, Pennsylvania.
19. Jerry Troyer; moved to Bear Lake, Warren County, Pennsylvania, then to Geauga County, Ohio.
20. Dan Troyer.
21. Jake Weaver; two sons and one daughter.
22. Moses Wengerd; at Sparta only one summer; three married daughters at Atlantic.
23. A young unmarried Yoder and his sister; farm purchased by their father who was never a resident of Sparta.

In addition to the foregoing families there is the interesting case of Bill Sumpter, an "Englishman" who married a daughter of Andy Mast. One informant claimed that this family came to Atlantic with the other Mast families, and he further claimed that Sumpter attended Amish Church with his wife. Mrs. Sumpter died at Sparta and the same informant averred that she was taken into the church upon her deathbed and that she was accorded an Old Order Amish funeral. Not only is this incident most unusual, if true, but the same sympathetic, informed, and apparently reliable informant considered the Sumpter family as socially a unit in the Sparta community, although religiously not a member of the church congregation. If the Sumpter family's social participation was as complete as it is reported to have been, the wife in this case could not have been under the ban, or the ban was not strictly enforced. Another informant, who knew of the Amish practice of banning, said he knew of no case of an Amishman having been "shunned" at Sparta.  

15 All of the Sparta family names listed above are characteristic Amish surnames. For lists of typically Amish names and related data, see C. Henry Smith, The Mennonites of America, 208-252 (Goshen, Ind., 1909), and The Story of the Mennonites, 239, 554, 592 (Berne, Ind., 1945); John A. Hostetler's above-cited thesis, 263, 265-270, and his hundred-page Annotated Bibliography on the Amish (Scottdale, Pa., 1951). Smith's earlier volume includes the best summary history of Amish settlement in America, and Hostetler's bibliographies provide indispensable aids to the student of Amish history and/or sociology.

16 For the Meidung or ban, also called "avoidance" or "shunning," see Bachman, Old Order Amish, 151-159; Gingerich, Mennonites in Iowa, 168-178; Joseph W. Yoder, Rosanna, 133-164; Hostetler thesis, 201-207. For a recent court case based upon the ban, see John H. Yoder, "Caesar and the Meidung," in Mennonite Quarterly Review, 23:76-98 (April, 1949). The Meidung is a very effective instrument of social control among the Amish and understandably means much to them. Differences over interpretation and enforcement of the Meidung led to the separation of the Amish from the Swiss Brethren in 1692; it is thus the historical basis of the separate existence of the Amish as a corporate group. For the Meidung controversy as a basis of Amish separation, see Bachman, 27-50; Smith, Story of the Mennonites, 139-142; John Horsch, Mennonites in Europe (Mennonite History, vol. 1), 262-265 (Scottdale, Pa., 1950).
The Sparta group apparently never had more than one preacher (Eli Hostetler) and one deacon (Emanuel Hershberger); at least but one individual is now remembered by present Sparta residents for each of these offices. One informant claimed that Eli Hostetler was a bishop and that he had been ordained as such in Ohio before coming to Sparta. This minister and several other former Sparta Amish residents within the past several years have relinquished their Old Order Amish faith for Mennonite affiliation. As earlier indicated, there were apparently minor religious disagreements among the Amish while at Sparta, a phenomenon to be expected and in fact instanced by one intelligent informant as due to their origin from several separate Amish communities. If English testimony is to be relied upon there was no serious disruption in the church; however, "church trouble" or differences within the group is an aspect of Amish life that would normally be invisible to the non-participant non-Amish observer. A Mennonite layman is known to have made unsuccessful efforts to convert several Old Order Amish families during their residence at Sparta.

Apparently only about half a dozen Amish couples were united in marriage in this community, and most of these unions are reported to have been solemnized but a short time before the group departed from the area. Several of the families were described as small in size, due to the fact that the mates had been married shortly before coming to Pennsylvania. In addition to the Sumpter family above mentioned,

17 For the Amish attitude toward marriage as a sacrament, and for the special worship service solemnizing this event, see Bachman, 169-180; Yoder, *Rosanna*, 148-173; Gingerich, 229-238.

18 Definite data on a large scale pertaining to the size of the Amish family are lacking, but there is no doubt that it is larger than the present non-Amish rural family in the United States. Almost all references to the Amish family mention its large size, but this is an area of study in which there is need of quantification. According to Hostetler's thesis (p. 16), he found the average number of children per "completed" Amish family in the Speicher (formerly Kurtz) church in Big Valley to be seven. Among twenty-five Amish families at Atlantic, Pennsylvania, in 1950, seven cases of completed families (where the wife and mother was over forty-five years of age) averaged 7.4 children per family. The present author plans to study this problem by a statistical analysis of family size as recorded in several recently published and accurately recorded Old Order Amish family genealogies.
there was at least one other case of marital defection: a Troyer boy is said to have married an English girl who lived at Lake Canadohta, a small rural community several miles from Sparta.19

The number of deaths at Sparta approximately equalled the number of marriages during the ten or less years of Amish occupancy. Burial was on the Amish preacher’s farm20 and the bodies are said to have been disinterred and removed to Ohio at the time of the group’s dispersal. The latter claim, however, could not be verified.

There were no Amish at Sparta who did not farm, although several individuals, and one in particular, are still remembered as good part-time carpenters. Amish men are also reported to have worked on “maintenance,” which locally means occasionally working for the township supervisors in the maintenance of public roads. A few Amish girls were employed as domestics in non-Amish homes in the village.21

19 The incidence of defection of young people from the Old Order Amish communities, by failing to join the church when they become of age to do so, by marrying out of the group, and by migrating from the local community, is unknown. Oral estimates I have heard center around ten per cent. Hostetler reports in his thesis (pp. 208-211) that in the Speicher church in Big Valley, 37.4 per cent of the 374 living offspring of 70 marriages in this church had become members; 31.8 per cent in 1950, when Hostetler did his field work, were not old enough to join the church; and 30.8 per cent were old enough but unaffiliated. This church, however, is liberal and may be atypical of groups of more conservative persuasion. At Sparta I heard of two cases of young people marrying non-Amish mates, which means that they were lost to the Amish church. There were also two cases, here, of adults later leaving the church; both were ministers whose wives left with them. This is certainly an atypical situation for an Amish group of such small size.

20 The Amish usually maintain separate cemeteries. For the funeral worship service, manner of burial, and nature of Amish cemeteries, see Bachman, 181-195, and Gingerich, 248. My observation leads me to differ from Gingerich’s statement that “they take the best care of their cemeteries.” This may be true in the Middle West, but in the East, Amish cemeteries seem rather neglected.

21 The Amish church much prefers farming for men and housewifery for women. If men do not farm their work should be closely related to farming. Farming is their ideal—typically the only full-time pursuit. Even their ministers are also farmers; other occupations are part-time specialties. Working for the government—in this Sparta case for the township—is most unusual. But this was during the depression, and there may have been other departures from the ideal occupational pattern elsewhere.
The present English attitude toward the Amish in retrospect is generally favorable, although there are stories of still unpaid bills at several local places of business. These stories are not acrimonious, however, for informants agreed that nearly every farmer in the community was in debt at the time. A persistently repeated and supposedly humorous story in the present community tells how some local men took an Amishman on a hunting trip with them, got him drunk, and cut off his hair and beard. Several Amishmen are also said to have made rhubarb wine and "(maple) sap beer." Drunkenness was conspicuous by its absence, however, and the hunting story, in spite of agreement concerning narrative details and identification of the victim, may be entirely apocryphal.

Spartansburg now is, and in the 1930's also was, a small village of a few hundred people. All of the Amish lived within a radius of five miles of the village, with the great majority of them concentrated in a sector within two or three miles west of the town. The Amish did practically all of their trading in Spartansburg, and almost all Amish children attended grade school in the village. One informant, who was a boy of high-school age in the 1930's, who lived on a farm in the heart of the Amish area, and who claimed to have known the Amish young people personally, insisted that several Amish girls went to school beyond the eighth grade. This, however, could not be verified, due to the unavailability of local school records.

There is only one reported case of "school trouble" due to the refusal of an Amishman to send his child to school. "He got thrown in the local jug a couple of days for it." Present residents mention no other case of a Sparta Amishman being in trouble with the law. An interview with a former judge of Crawford County, who had served two terms of ten years each and whose terms included the period of Amish settlement at Sparta, disclosed but one case of litigation involving an Amishman of this community. In this case the Amishman was the defendant and he had become involved legally by the prosecuting attorney much against his own wishes in the matter. They were "good law-abiding citizens while in our county," the judge insisted.

The net impression received as a result of local interviewing and investigation is that the Sparta Amish were a small group of people who made a difficult, desperate, and unsuccessful struggle against overwhelming economic disadvantages. Unlike most other now extinct Amish communities, "Crawford County No. 2" seems to have been distinctly and definitely a depression phenomenon.