



YODER NEWSLETTER



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OCTOBER 2005

ROBERT M. YODER – NEWSPAPERMAN (1907-1959)



ROBERT M. YODER ON THE BEAT AT CHICAGO DAILY NEWS

Of the various Yoders who lived and died in the 20th century, perhaps the most widely recognized was Robert M. (McAyeal) Yoder, newspaperman and humorist, who served as an Associate Editor at the Saturday Evening Post and of Woman's Day. These bastions of the well-read American middle class brought him a large audience for his works during the 1940s and 1950s. We would like to thank his daughter, Ann LaPietra, for sharing much of the information and the photographs contained in this biographical sketch.

Robert M. (Bob) Yoder was born in Gibson City, Illinois on August 18, 1907, to Milo Franklin and Lyda (McAyeal) Yoder. Milo (b. 1865 McLean Co., Il.) was the son of Jonathan J. Yoder (YR127322) and Catherine Ballaman, whose family is shown below:

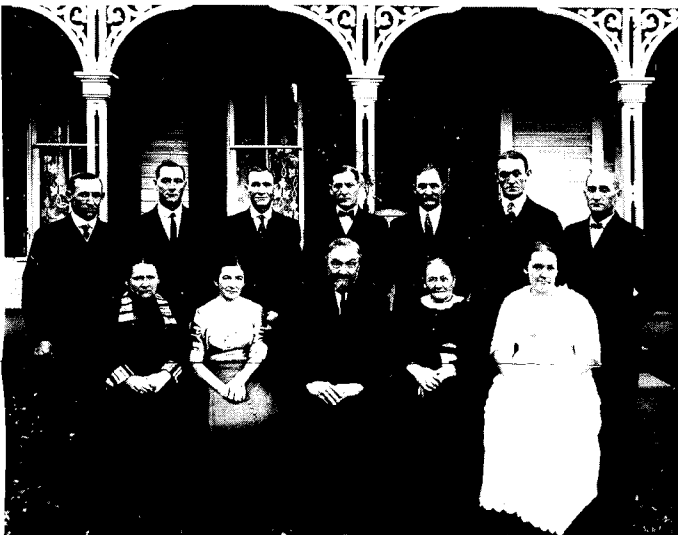


PHOTO AT 50TH ANNIVERSARY, NOV. 1914. STANDING: CHESTER, JUD, JOHN, MILO, SAM, CAREY, JAKE. SEATED: _____, _____, JONATHAN, CATHERINE, _____.

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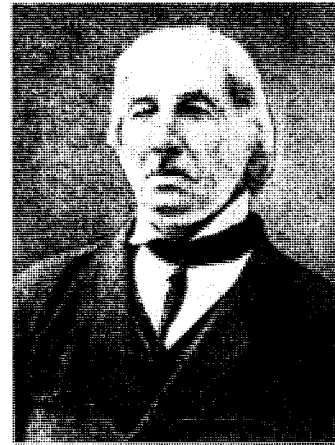
PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

THE 2006 NATIONAL YODER REUNION

AT THE HOUSE OF YODER

See Page 8 for Details

JOSEPH JODER, SCHOOLMASTER- FARMER AND POET



JOSEPH JODER

The 1929 annual publication of the Illinois State Historical Society included an in-depth article by Olynthus Clark, Professor at Drake University, on Joseph Joder (1797-1887). The ISHS has given permission for the YNL to synopsise this article and also to display it in full on Yoder Homepage at www.yodernewsletter.org.

Joseph Joder was of Swiss ancestry. (Editors note: Fourth child of David, youngest son of Christian, son of the "Widow Barbara (YR12a4).) David Yoder was married, about 1790, to Jacobine Eash, who came with her parents from Switzerland during the American Revolution, in the year 1780. To this union were born three sons and five daughters, Joseph being the fourth child and youngest of the sons, born near McCoytown, September 13, 1797. In 1811, David Yoder with his family moved from Berks County, the ancestral home for nearly one hundred years, to Mifflin County, where he purchased land and continued farming until his death in 1820, his wife having preceded him in 1817.

It was here in Mifflin County that Joseph Joder grew to manhood, married and reared a family of seven daughters and one son. His wife was Catherine Lantz, daughter of Christian Lantz and sister of John Lantz, who married Magdalene, called "Lena," the sister of Joseph Joder. He continued farming as his gainful occupation, but added to that teaching school, doubtless more for his love of learning than for the small remuneration he received for teaching. To better his circumstances he moved with his increasing family to the adjacent county of Juniata, where he continued his rural school teaching along with farming. Failing, however, to get ahead and in debt to a confiding and generous friend and neighbor, he decided to better his economic status by migrating to the West.

In the early spring of 1848 he departed with his family, in company with two other families, those of Elias Yoder, his nephew, and Yost Yoder, his brother-in-law, for the region of central Illinois. Glowing descriptions of these prairie lands had been sent back by relatives and friends already there. The families disposed of all of their livestock and other property, except a minimum of household effects, and went by canal and tramway, known as the "Pennsylvania System," to Pittsburgh, where they took passage on an Ohio River steamboat, *Belle of the West*, to St. Louis and there transferred to another boat which took them up the Illinois River to Pekin. From here about the middle of May the families of Joseph Joder and his brother-in-law were hauled overland by wagon to the Mennonite community in the vicinity of Slabtown, long since extinct, near the site of the present village of Congerville. This was just inside the newly organized county of Woodford and about nine miles southeast of Eureka, in what was known as Walnut Grove, the thriving settlement of Kentuckians, followers of Alexander Campbell.

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The Yoder Newsletter- Founded 1983 by Ben F Yoder (1913-1992), Chris Yoder & Rachel Kreider FROM THE EDITORS Chris Yoder, Editor, Battle Creek, MI; John W. Yoder, Circulation Manager, Middlebury, IN; Rachel Kreider, Senior Contributing Editor, Goshen, IN; Esther E. Yoder, Mail Manager, Goshen, IN; Donald Kauffman, YNL Homepage Webmaster, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Other Contributors: Richard H. Yoder, Bechtelsville, PA; Hubert A. Yoder, Charlotte, NC; Dorothy Yoder Coffman, Malvern, PA; Dr. Don Yoder, Devon, PA; Neal D. Wilfong, Cleveland, NC.

SEND YNL CORRESPONDENCE:

- FOR CIRCULATION ISSUES ONLY such as new or renewed subscriptions, changes of address, orders for back issues to: Yoder Newsletter, P.O. Box 594, Goshen, IN 46527-0594.

- ALL OTHER CORRESPONDENCE- Dealing with ancestral queries or contributions for future YNLs or archives (such as reunion notices, letters to the Editor, copies of Bible records or other historical information) to: Chris Yoder, 551 S. Maple St., Saugatuck, MI 49453 or email at cyoder@tds.net.

YNL PRICE INFORMATION \$\$\$\$ (Price unchanged since 1983!)

-The YNL subscription is on an annual basis-two issues for \$3.

-BACK ISSUES of the YNL are \$1 per issue.

Visit: <http://www.yodernewsletter.org/subscribe.html> for mail-in subscription form.

BOX FOUND OF HARDCOPY YODER NEWSLETTERS 1-25!

If you had previously asked to be placed on reserve for a copy if and when reprinted, you won't have to wait. Let us know you had asked to be on the "wait list" and you will have first shot at the recently discovered first printing. \$25 & \$3 postage. Total \$28 Make check out to "Yoder Newsletter". After waiting a month to make sure those who previously asked for one have replied, the balance will be issued on a first come, first served basis until gone.

YODER DATA ON DISK. Included back issues of YNL text, census and county records, family group data and pictures and scanned images. The price for our "Yoder Data on Disk" is \$10 (postage included). Send to YNL address in Goshen.

ORDER THE YODERS OF NC BOOK: The History of the Yoder Family in North Carolina by Dr. Fred Roy Yoder has been reprinted and is available once more!! Funds raised will be used to restore old Yoder gravestones and up-keep of cemeteries at Churches significant to the Yoder Family and the ancestors of the Author. Price \$25 (postage included). Send checks to : "Yoder Memorial Fund" at: Yoder Family in North Carolina, c/o: Bill Yoder, 2707 Zion Church Rd. Hickory, NC 28602 .

YODER VIDEO NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD

"PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH", the wonderful video which describes the Joder/Yoder history from Switzerland to America is now available on DVD as well as VHS video! Price for either is the same \$25 post paid. Order from Virgil Yoder, 110 Northumberland Rd., Irwin, Pa. 15642. PERFECT to show at your next YODER REUNION!

WILLIAM J. YODER FAMILY BOOK

Bishop William J. Yoder lived near Nappanee, In, from 1858-1936. This new book, The William J. Yoder Family -1858-2004 published Feb. 2005, includes information and some stories about the descendants of his 16 children. William J. Yoder is the son of Jonas D. Yoder (YR1253e). Price \$24 (postage included). Order from: Merle Christner, 410 W. Knott, Hesston, Ks 67062, Questions: merle@christners.net



Who knows this fellow?

Ax By "Levy (Levi) Yoder, blacksmith, Lancaster, Pa, 1887. "

Letters to the Editor:

When I went to read the latest newsletter, I was delighted to see a picture of my Grandfather - James Michael Yoder. Yes, it is a picture of him. This picture is him with some sheep at his farm outside Wolcottville, Indiana. Behind him is his 1946 (?) Chevy business coupe. Grandfather was a Dekalb dealer and was noted for introducing chemical fertilizer to the Amish, and others in northern Indiana. It is my understanding that he would give a sample to a farmer he knew and tell them to try it. He would then call on them the following year and, with few, if any, exceptions, he would sell them some fertilizer for that year. He also was the first person to have electric lights in his house. He loved to read, and would read late into the night. He purchased a water generator and rigged it up on a stream at his farm. He then had electric lights!

I sure wonder where the picture came from? Maybe Rhena had it before she passed away. I visited with her and her daughter just days before she passed away. It was sure good to see it in the newsletter.--James W. Yoder, Jr., 1320 Seminole Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604, rustbugs@hotmail.com

Also heard about James Michael from descendant Rebecca Sweigert.

I was born 2/18/12 = 93 years ago. Wife Dorothy Weickert Yoder born May 2, same year. We thought we were doing unusually well until we read the page 1 story about reaching 107 years. No contest.

Our two sons, Glen A. & Fred Timothy, and their lovely wives continue to operate the home building business YODER BUILT which Dorothy & I started here in '73. We surely did not think we would build million \$ homes back then. A spec home under construction recently sold for a bit more.

We sold our lovely large home about 9 years ago and bought a condo. Last year, we sold the condo and bought an existing 3 BR 2 bath small home & made it into a master suite & computer room & book shelves, and a TV room, both small. It's a delight for us. We get lots of help - but do little things ourselves. Oh yes, our extended family includes 3 great grandchildren. - Fred A. Yoder, Fountain Hills, Az.

PHOTO IDENTIFIED--After reading YNL 44 I realized that Mattie Stahley, wife of Yost Yoder, was a sister of my husband's great-grandfather, Peter Christian Stahley. Her father's name was Christian Stahley and he was one of the first pioneers of Nappanee. The person in the picture shown was Christian Stahley, not Christian Yoder. He was Mattie's father. He died around 1909. There was a disagreement between Christian and Peter Christian about the use of windmills. Many people had died from sickness from house wells so the windmills would help stop many deaths. Peter Christian left Nappanee and moved to Stuttgart, Ark. where he bought 160 acres in 1898. -I enjoyed your Yoder Newsletter.-Wendy Stahly, Moore, Okla.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE YNL!

OLD YODER CEMETERY IN "THE GLADES" NEEDS WORK

The Old Yoder cemetery in Stony Creek Township, Somerset Co, Pa needs some work. It is located in the middle of the Zubeck strip mine north of Brotherton. In the October 1998 YNL we reported on the "clean-up" of this cemetery (see; <http://www.yodernewsletter.org/YNL/ynl32.html>), and we subsequently reported on the placement of a monument at that site. During a recent stop through that area, we noticed that it is becoming overgrown once more by nature. This cemetery holds the remains of John Yoder (YR239), his wife Barbara, and a number of others. As it is located on the original "Schweitzer Christian" Yoder homestead, we believe it almost certain that he was buried there as well (d 11/20/1816), along with his second wife Barbara Hooley (d. 3/12/1812). This site is one of those planned to be visited during the 2006 National Yoder Reunion at the House of Yoder, and it would be great if it can be made presentable before that time. Who is willing to help out? Drop a line to Chris Yoder at: cyoder@tds.net.

There being no farms tenantless at this time of year, the comers were cared for by the settlers as best they could, in frontier fashion and true pioneer hospitality. The Joder family was temporarily domiciled with the family of Christian Ropp, a prosperous farmer and Mennonite preacher, who lived just across the Mackinaw River, north of Slabtown. Sleeping quarters for the young members of the temporary, joint household were provided in the large unplastered "upstairs," immediately under the shingles. --- Here the Joders lived for six months, Mr. Joder and three of the daughters working on the Ropp farm for pay, particularly in cultivating and harvesting the crops. In the meantime Mr. Joder purchased from the Government, for the sum of \$50, forty acres of timber land adjoining the Ropp farm. A vacant log house was secured and the neighbors staged a house-raising frolic by tearing it down, hauling the logs to the new farm and rebuilding it. Late in the autumn the family moved into their new home.

The family lived here but a year, Mr. Joder renting twenty acres of wheat and corn land from Mr. Ropp to augment his own meager "clearings" for a crop. By autumn, 1849, the Joders were ready to sell out to Mr. Ropp, who wished to add to his holdings, and they leased a farm a few miles distant and west of the then county seat town of Versailles, often visited by Lincoln on his circuit court junkets. Mr. Joder cherished the memory of Lincoln, whose acquaintance he made in those years. Here the family remained for five years, when in 1854 they purchased a farms on the prairie about eight miles to the southeast and fourteen or fifteen miles from Bloomington. This farm was just inside the Woodford County line, the extreme southwest corner of Kansas Township, in the Rock Creek area, and was situated on the third principal meridian, two miles south of the Carlock-Benson settlement of White Oak Grove and bordering the settlement of the Rowell families recently come from New England. Here the Joders lived till 1862, when, the family grown to maturity, the son and five of the daughters married and settled on farms round about, they made one more and final move. Mr. Joder, having also secured another forty-acre tract, several miles to the north, sold the combined eighty acres' for \$1,200 and bought an eighty-acre farms three miles to the southeast in Dry Grove Township, McLean County, and nearer Bloomington.

Here it was that his life companion died in 1863, and his widowed daughter, Miriam, Mrs. Jonas Kauffman, whose husband was a victim of the cholera epidemic of 1855, and having already returned with her infant son to the old family home, became his housekeeper and homemaker. The two other daughters were also of the family, Emma, the youngest, for a few years until her marriage, and Mary, unmarried and a school teacher until her early death in 1871. In 1868 Mr. Joder sold the south forty acres of the farm to his daughter, Miriam, and doubtless used the proceeds to pay off the long-standing debt to his creditor friend in Pennsylvania. Later he also deeded the other half of the farm to her for taking care of him in his approaching old age. Retiring from active work, he could now gratify his fondness ~~for study and cultivate his talent for writing, and the ten years~~ immediately following were the most productive in all his literary efforts. He died on the last day of the year, 1887, and on January 3, 1888, his body was laid to rest in the family lot in the Lantz cemetery, two miles southeast of the present town of Carlock.

Joseph Joder's schooling was very limited, consisting of a few months at a time in the later years of his childhood, and confined to the mere elements. But upon coming to manhood he had acquired a mastery of the three R's and evinced a thirst for knowledge, which he manifested all through life, and to a high degree satisfied. --- He became an educated man, largely self-taught and self-trained. His interest in learning and his ideal of service impelled him to teach, that he might help others to have something of what he attained.

On coming to Illinois, it seems, he did little teaching. He was engaged to teach a school in the winter of 1848- 1849 at \$10 per month, but was prevented by floods, the district lying on both sides of the Mackinaw, and an epidemic of sickness in the neighborhood. Later, after moving to the farm on the third principal meridian he received a certificate from the superintendent of schools of McLean County, Watkins, and for a term taught the rural school located on the west edge of what was known as the Vance prairie.

He became a linguist of no mean attainment, applying his increasing knowledge of words and forms of expression in the several

languages to his understanding of the Scriptures. He became highly expert in expressing shades of meaning, applying his knowledge to the correction of religious beliefs and practices among his own communion, the Mennonite, followers of the West Friesland, German reformer, Menno Simons.

Besides his proficiency in the study and use of English and German, the latter his mother tongue, Joseph Joder took up the study of Greek and Latin, and finally, in his old age, also that of Hebrew....

.....Joseph Joder's intimate knowledge of German and English, coupled with his well known passion for precision, led him to change the established spelling of his family name, changing Yoder to Joder. Just when he effected the change is not yet known, but it seems evident that he had wrought the change before coming to Illinois, which means that he had become expert in the study of German and English in his Pennsylvania period. The name translated into English by simply taking over the German pronunciation, made it "Yoder," the "d" in the translation having early displaced the "t," doubled ("tt") in the German pronunciation and spelling. The "Yod" being the partly Anglicized spelling, came from the German sound of the letter "j" pronounced "yot." Now, keeping the "od" in the English writing of the modified German pronunciation of the letter "j" as a basic part of the name, our critic contended that in writing the name, the German spelling and not the German sound should govern the English spelling; hence, we have "J-od" instead of "Y-od," making the name "J-o-d-e-r" Joder.

None of the numerous families, however, going back to the first American ancestor, Barbara Yoder, would accept the revised spelling of this reformer kinsman, this stickler for linguistic exactness, disturber of the divine order of things. His only son, Iddo, however, continued the revised spelling and pronunciation. The three sons of Iddo Joder adhere to the same style, one of whom has six sons, hence the name Joder gives some promise of being perpetuated. (*Editors Note: some of his descendants have kept this spelling to this day*)

As observed before, that which distinguished Joseph Joder, setting him apart from the many, was the fact that he came to think on various matters of life, and to write down his thoughts. He wrote both prose and poetry, choosing for the most part the poetic forms of expression; there are but few prose articles of his extant. All his writings tend toward the poetic; in fact, his speech in common conversation was often rhythmic as it was formal and precise." His poetic instinct, his fascination for rhythmic expression led him to write poetry.

The poems in German, practically all of them, deal with religious themes, while those in English cover a pretty wide range of subject matter. In addition to those already listed in footnotes, the following are the most noteworthy:

IN ENGLISH

- "Rejoice Evermore" (before 1860).
- "Our Father's Will" (about 1862-1864).
- "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."
- "English vs. German" (in the '70's).
- "A Visit by Sermo" (in the '70's).
- "Love."
- "To a Little Girl."

IN GERMAN

- "Die Frolic Botschaft" (Glad Tidings) (1869).
- "Nachtrag Zur Frohen Botschaft" (1870).
- "Zweiter Nachtrag Zur Frohen Botschaft" (1871).
- "Nachtrage Zu Frohen Botschaft" (1871).
- "Du Verheissung; das ewige Leben."
- "Kirchweih Hymne" (dedication hymn for the North Danvers Mennonite Church, 1872).

The author's linguistic interest is portrayed in his poem entitled, "English vs. German," in which he praises what to him is the strength and beauty of the German language as compared with the English. It is a couplet poem of 124 lines, both narrative and discursive, depicting a dispute between two school boy truants, one English ("Eng") and the other German ("Germ"). The anecdote on which this linguistic disputation is based reads thus:

*"Two urchins playing near a pool,
Both truants from the village school,
Amused themselves in idle play,
Sticks, mud, and stones in piles to lay;
And gather on the barren strand
Shells, pebbles, and the shining sand.*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

YR1273222- Jonathan J. Yoder (4/9/1840 Fairfield Co, O-12/11/1924 (or 12/12/1923) ML m 11/8/1864 McLean Co, IL Catherine Ballaman (11/20/1844 Butler Co., O- 2/27/1924 McLean Co IL) (VMI.80) (1920- McLean Co. IL)(per M: narr: ges- Jonathan J. Yoder m. 11/9/1862 Elizabeth Frismer. m. 11.8/1864 Catherine Balamon)
 +YR1273221- Milo Franklin (8/-/1865 ML- Gibson City, IL) m. 9/12/1895 Chicago, IL Eliza "Lida" Jennings McAyeal (12/17/1872 Mo- Gibson City, IL)
 YR1273222- Samuel (c1865 IL-)
 +YR1273223- John W. (12/12/1868 Danvers, IL-3/6/1923 Danvers, IL) m. 1/23/1895 ML Ervina C. Künsinger (5/20/1876 Danvers, IL-10/17/1962 Bloomington, IL)
 (1920- McLean Co. IL, John W. m. to Ervina age 43 b. IL)
 YR1273224- Allace (Mary Alice) (c1869 IL-)
 +YR1273225- Jacob E. (Jake) (6/24/1871 Danvers, IL-9/25/1956 Danvers, IL) m. 2/23/1891 Topeka, I Mary C. Greenawalt (2/1/1875-9/28/1957)
 YR1273226- Minnie (c 1875 IL-)
 YR1273227 Oree E (c1873 IL-)
 YR1273228 Bud (Ira J) (c1877 IL-) m. Grace ____ (c1882 IL-) (1920- McLean Co, IL)
 YR1273229- Chester L. (c1879 IL-) m. Lula M. ____ (c1885 IL-) (1920- Verdine, Macoupin Co, IL)
 YR127322a- Carey (-)

Milo married Eliza (Lida) Jennings McAyeal on 9/12/1895 in Chicago, Illinois. In addition to Robert, they had Theodore Dale (YR1273221) (Feb. 4, 1901 Gibson City-May 8, 1990 Los Alamitos, Ca). "Dale" as he was known, married Mabel Elizabeth Nottingham on 8/16/1924 in Pleasant Plains, IL and had a long and distinguished career as a professor of economics and industrial relations. Dale wrote leading texts in his field. Robert's daughter Ann understands that there was also a sister who died young, and believes this child's name may have been Margaret.

Bob did not talk about his childhood. One story he did tell his daughter (not necessarily believed, as "stories" were a natural part of his being) was that he ran away from home at 16 to become a reporter. While she believes that he did graduate from High School in Gibson City, the Naval Reserve personnel record he filed out in the 1940s shows that from 1924 to 1933 he worked for the Decatur Herald as a "reporter, later telegraph editor on a daily newspaper of approximately 30,000 circulation. As a reporter to cover any news story to which assigned, or to work on such beats as the city hall, county courthouse, etc. As telegraph editor, to judge the importance of news received from press association wires, edit it for publication and make up."

He reports his university education as: University of Illinois (Sept 1925-Jun 1927 and Feb 1931-Aug 1932), University of Wisconsin (Sep 1930-Jan 1931). While there is not an indication that he received a degree, he did report 167 ½ semester hours of which 50 ½ hours were in Law and 20 in Political Science. He told his daughter that he and Hoagy Carmichael dropped out of Indiana University because they hated their 8:30 am class in "sewer" (civil) law. (You'll note he did not list U of Ind. on his naval record.)

Bob married Virginia Lipscomb, of Decatur, Illinois, on Jun. 20, 1932, and they were to have three children: Ann, Robert, and Jonathan.

From May 29, 1935 to Dec. 5, 1936 he was a reporter with the Chicago Bureau of the Associated Press, hired: "to cover news stories of national interest and write them for filing the 1200 member newspapers of a national press association or wire service". From Dec. 5, 1933 to Feb. 26, 1944 he was an Editorial Page Columnist for the Chicago Daily News "to write a daily column of personal opinion, on subjects of author's choosing for editorial page of a newspaper of approximately 450,000 circulation." At the Daily News, he was the author of the editorial page column "Sharps and Flats" which had been originated by Eugene Fields.

Chicago Daily News Publisher Frank Knox, who had been the Vice-Presidential nominee with Alf Landon in 1936, became FDR's Secretary of Navy in 1940. Robert's daughter credits Knox with getting her father a Naval commission so he could write speeches for Admirals. He was assigned on 28 Feb 1944 as an Assistant in the Office of the Director of Public Relations for the Naval Bureau of Personnel in Washington. That same year Bob published his first book, There's No Front Like Home. This book consisted of seventeen articles; most reprinted from his columns in the Chicago Daily News, and is prefaced:

"This is a partial account of a side of the war that has not been heroic, but has a certain confusing charm all of its own --- the civilian side. It is dedicated to all cash customers who are rationed and Frozen; who are or have been Overage, Non-essential, or Non-deferrable; who have found themselves 1-A, 2-B, or 3-A, going on 4-F; whose Victory Gardens didn't grow much, and who don't rate anything more than an A card." (An "A card", the most generous rationing allotment, might go to someone who worked in a defense industry.)

A sample of his humor follows from his first article "Drop that Raise":

"For many, the hollowest laugh of the civilian side of this war came the day it was announced that we were Frozen. From that moment hence, it became illegal for anyone to lure us from our job by the offer of a better one, nor could our loving employers give us a raise. To pay more money was no longer merely contrary to the boss's every instinct, it was now contrary to federal law.

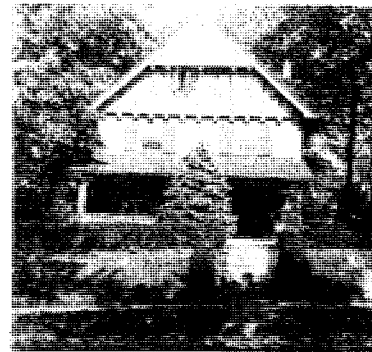
"This, if it had any connection with reality, would be wonderful. Here you go along for years, feeling non-essential, irrelevant, and immaterial, feeling that not even the Missing Persons Bureau would care if disappeared from the Missing Persons Bureau. An then it turns



LT. ROBERT M. YODER SEC. OF NAVY FRANK KNOX

out that you are so valuable that they do not stop at putting a little electrified barbed wire around you, or stopping payment on your pay check, but pass a law warning off any bounder who would lure you from your regular place of employment. It puts thousands of us under a special protection formerly accorded only to the crown jewels, Presidents, and sixteen-year-old daughters. The cad who tries to pay us more money is lucky if he doesn't end up in jail."

Bob's work for the Navy was well received. His official performance report said: "This officer is an exceedingly competent public relations officer. He is an exceedingly facile writer, with great ability. His services are particularly useful in the preparations of speeches and articles. He has a wide background of professional writing and newspaper experience and is highly capable in the editorial field." Since 1941, Bob had contributed to the Saturday Evening Post. As the war wound down, he received an offer from the Post to become an Associate Editor. Vacancies rarely occurred in such positions, and this was an opportunity not to be taken lightly. Bob requested and was granted an early release from his commission so that he could take the job. He moved his family to a new home in Bala-Cynwyd Pa. From here he could go in to the Post's offices in Philadelphia, but he also did free-lance, writing from the third floor room he turned into his office.



HOME 327 KENT ROAD, BALA-CYNWYD, PA

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Over the following years he appeared in the Post more than 100 times with articles, short stories, humorous essays, editorials and pick-of-the-book features. From 1945 to 1949 he wrote the "Keeping Posted" page in each edition. Curtis Publishing, the Post's owner, also named "Woman's Day" and Bob helped edit that publication as well. A few of the titles of his articles included:

- Airplane, Stay Way from My Roof, *Sat. Eve. Post* Nov 30 1946
- Armchair Athlete Is Vindicated, *Sat. Eve. Post* Nov 7 1942
- Buck Rogers Would Love It Here, *Sat. Eve. Post* Oct 20 1951
- Didn't Anybody See Me in Television, *Sat. Eve. Post* Jan 22 1949
- Don't Feed the Golfers, *Sat. Eve. Post* Aug 19 1944
- Don't Shoot Your Wife Before March Fifteenth, *Sat. Eve. Post* Mar 5 1949
- Helpful Hints for the June Bridegroom, *Sat. Eve. Post* Jun 14 1947
- How to Wallpaper a Floor, *Sat. Eve. Post* Dec 27 1947
- Is There a Life After Forty?, *Sat. Eve. Post* Nov 15 1947
- The McGees of Wistful Vista, *Sat. Eve. Post* Apr 9 1949
- My Country 'twas of Thee, *Woman's Day* Apr 1945
- Right with You, Prof. Einstein!, *Sat. Eve. Post* Feb 25 1950
- She's Dear, But Is She Deductible?, *Sat. Eve. Post* Oct 12 1946
- Someday They'll Get Slick Willie Sutton, *Sat. Eve. Post* Jan 20 1951
- They Get Paid for Not Working, *Sat. Eve. Post* Mar 17 1956
- Were You Boiled as a Baby, *Sat. Eve. Post* Aug 29 1959
- What Do Women Want, Anyway?, *Sat. Eve. Post* Sep 17 1949
- What You Should Know About Your Discharge Papers, *Sat. Eve. Post* Jan 12 1946
- Where's All the Meat, *Sat. Eve. Post* Aug 14 1943
- Will Your Newspaper Come by Radio?, *Sat. Eve. Post* Nov 23 1946



BOB COMMENTS ON GRADUATIONS WHEN DAUGHTER ANN GRADUATES FROM HIGH SCHOOL

Bob also did a variety of freelance work. He wrote a series for the Ford Times, taking payment in the form of a new Lincoln convertible to be picked up from the factory in Detroit. One of the family vacations daughter Ann recalls took place in 1950 as they drove their new car back to Pennsylvania through Canada at "break-n speed", "something like 27 miles per hour".



BOB YODER AND FAMILY AT A MONTREAL RESTAURANT (ON THE WAY HOME WITH THEIR NEW LINCOLN)

Ann remarks that her father would have liked to have been a Fred Allen or a Groucho Marx. He used the same kind of biting humor and would have liked the greater degree of notoriety held by those two. Bob was a member of the National Press Club, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, a Democrat, a Presbyterian, and according to his daughter also was a member of the Procrastinators' Club. The Presbyterianism was taken on from his mother, but he did not display it much. Ann does recall when she was twelve her father woke her and her brothers at midnight to come down stairs, as his friend the Judge was there and was prepared to baptize them, which he proceeded to do.

Ann reports that her father was not a "family man". "From his Yoder family, he claimed only the "Yoder ears", (jug-like, we all have them) and the "Yoder great-toe". When I was born he declared himself too young to have children - we were to call him "Bob". While Bob did not speak much of his extended family, a bit about a favorite uncle appears in a letter he sent her shortly after her graduation from university:

"Did you by chance receive a graduation gift from your Great uncle, I guess he would be, Carey, of Danvers, Ill.? Carey was your grandfather Yoder's youngest brother, and dad loved him particularly because Carey really needed Dad. A thing I always liked about Carey was his indomitable courage while driving. He kept turning Fords and Chivvies over on turns because he scorned to alter his speed. He was of course right, though ahead of his times. In time, they banked those *#! D#@! turns. (text adjusted from original)

"Well, last time I saw Carey he must have been crowding eighty, and he is a thorough-going fundamentalist. He would in particular like to save my soul because he figures, secretly, that it will be mighty dull up there in Heaven, just him, the old lady, Moody the Evangelist, and maybe Billy Graham. If I'm along, he knows, we'll go to a restaurant, and that old coot will - as he did last time - say to the waitress, "What time do you quit work, Hazel?"

"I have neglected him shamefully, but he writes me a card, occasionally, always opening Dear Nephew & Family, always closing Yr Loving Uncle. And in the last card, yesterday, perhaps, he asked if that red headed daughter of mine (I told you he was an observant old *#!\$*%! (text adjusted) ever got her graduation gift. It seems - and this is my point - that not knowing your address, he simply sent it to the President, Northwestern College (sic), and asked him to deliver. Unc Carey fiddles around with no middlemen."

Virginia Yoder passed away in Feb. 1958, and Bob continued to live at their Bala-Cynwyd home. Also that year, Bob edited and published his second and final book, The Saturday Evening Post Carnival of Humor. This volume included the best of 50 years worth of humor from the Post, including the story of Tugboat Annie, and works by P.G. Woodhouse, Irvin S. Cobb, Will Rogers, Ring Lardner, James Thurber, Booth Tarkington, Daymon Runyon, Nunnally Johnson, Dorothy Parker and "Wanna Buy a Duck" by Joe Penner.

Bob died of a heart attack on Nov. 6, 1959 at Bala-Cynwyd, leaving three children and a treasury of comedy. As we met with his daughter Ann and discussed her father's life and accomplishments, at one point my wife let out a good chortle while reading a 1950's vintage Post article. Ann immediately remarked that this was the best testimony to his life - that almost 50 years after his death, he could still make people laugh.

Editors note: When my mother, raised in the Chicago suburbs, first met my Dad in 1941, Robert M. Yoder was the only person she'd ever heard of having that "uncommon" surname. -Chris Yoder

YODER THESPIANS

 Oley Yoders Joseph
 (Samuel Chase) and Jeff
 (Ben Franklin) are cast
 members in the Reading
 Civic Theatre presentation
 of "1776". Joe is seen
 beardless for the first time
 since 1990!



JOE YODER JEFF YODER

*In harmony their time they spend
While both pursue a common end;
And to perpetuate their fame,
Resolve to give their piles a name.
Eng calls them mud, and Germ says Dreck.*

Here they fall out, each scorning the speech of the other and praising that of his own.

On coming to Illinois, Schoolmaster Joder became a charter member of the newly organized Rock Creek Mennonite Church, 1853, of which his older brother, Reverend Jonathan Yoder, who two years before also migrated to Illinois, became the pastor and bishop. Reverend Yoder was likewise a man of keen mind, self-educated and, for that day, a progressive and, moreover, a wise leader. The two brothers apparently had much in common, but Reverend Yoder's death, in 1869, soon brought about a change, evidenced in an attack upon the teachings of the liberal layman, Joseph Joder.

In his thinking and close study of the Scriptures, Joseph Joder had come to embrace the doctrine of God's love instead of adhering to the orthodox view of the wrath of God. Our controversial poet wrote several other poems, one after another, in German and, therefore, intended for the Mennonite people, especially for the church leaders, preachers and bishops. The first of these, in 1869, entitled, *Die Frohe Botschaft* translated *Glad Tidings*, sets forth fully the new doctrines of love and universal salvation. The poem created a commotion, coming before the General Mennonite Conference at Fulton, Ohio, in 1870. It led at once to his persecution and soon thereafter to his being pronounced a heretic.

The issue raised by this objectionable poem came to a crisis at the General Conference of Mennonites in 1870, meeting in Fulton County, Ohio, when after a long discussion it was voted that those members who persist in spreading such doctrines, after being warned, should be expelled. But that, after all, was a matter that was in the hands of the pastor or bishop of the congregation, and, in this case, Reverend Stuckey refused to expel his parishioner, author of the poem. At the annual conference, held in 1871 at Meadows, Livingston County, Illinois, a committee was appointed to investigate the whole matter and report at the next conference. Then at that conference in 1877, held in Lagrange County, Indiana, the committee made a rather vague report on the attitude of Reverend Stuckey, the conference endeavoring to extort from him some sort of public confession or disavowal, but did not succeed. The poem under fire came up in the discussions, and after publicly reading several of the most objectionable verses, the conference voted to place under the ban all persons who expressed adherence to the views. A special committee again waited on Reverend Stuckey in October, 1872, and upon his declaring that he regarded Mr. Joder as a brother in the church, he was informed that the General Conference would be obliged to withdraw from him and his congregation.

While the controversy was sizzling the old Rock Creek Church swarmed, dividing into two separate congregations' more or less geographically, but also theologically, although with feelings of mutual good will. Each group, upon abandoning the old location, built a new "meeting house." Rev. Stuckey became the minister of the one located to the south and east near Danvers and known as the North Danvers Church, which was dedicated in the autumn of that year, 1872. The heretic poet, still in good standing in the local church, was requested by Rev. Stuckey to write the dedicatory hymn, which he did, producing in German, *Kirchweih Hymne*. He had previously written several hymns of merit, not all of which, however, had been accepted by the bishops.

In the meantime the decree of the General Conference, a sort of medieval interdict, went forth, most of the churches ratifying it. The North Danvers Church, hoping that the wave of opposition to the poet layman would gradually dissolve, ignored the action. Later, however, under unrelenting pressure and after his congregation had been ousted from the conference, 1873, Reverend Stuckey, the bishop-pastor, did yield to the extent of "setting back" from communion the disturbing member, Mr. Joder, but without expelling him from the church. After communion had been denied him, even though not formally expelled, Mr. Joder absented himself entirely from attendance at church services, since he regarded such action as virtual expulsion and wholly unwarranted. The fact is that he was not a member in good standing and full fellowship and no longer so

regarded. He thereafter continued, unruffled and without bitterness, his accustomed religious life in the privacy of his home and his study with relatives and friends.

He was a large man physically, tall -- six feet, two inches, when in his prime- rough-boned and lank, loosely put together, with long arms and legs and big feet. He was not robust, but a man of strength with an iron constitution, never sick.

In habits, he was abstemious; rigidly temperate. He was not gluttonous, although he did not simply eat to live, for he was a good liver -- he always enjoyed a good table. His one indulgence was smoking. In his old age, he at times "swore off," vowed he would quit, what he regarded as a bad habit, and threw his pipe as far as he could throw it; but he always managed to remember just where he had thrown it!" and without apologies resumed smoking.

He dressed plainly. Until old, he wore "home-made" clothes and only in later years did he resort to "store" clothes or "hand-me-downs," even then the creases were first carefully ironed out before putting them on. His daughter, Mary, was not only a school teacher but also a seamstress, making suits for him and his numerous grandsons. While he was reared in the hook-and-eye age of his religious faith, he early discarded the peculiar superstition that the Lord had decreed a certain style of dress, and took to buttons. Until old age, however, until he began wearing the custom made suits, he wore the trousers without the buttoned vent, continuing the old-fashioned drop front. He always wore the plain white muslin shirts, the only adornment being the, long, wide, well-worn, black tie-band under the wide, turnover attached collar. His hat was neither "stove-pipe" nor derby, but an old-fashioned, high, full-crown hat one hat serving for many years-with a home-made straw of similar style for the two hot months of the summer. Without were his interest-plain living and high thinking may truly be applied to Joseph Joder, thinker, linguist, and poet.

Joseph Joder - He Stirred the Pot.

-by Donald Kauffman

During the 1800s the American west opened up for settlement. As the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska were created, Amish and Mennonite people were among those who moved west. Into the settlements came folks from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and other eastern states, from Ontario, Canada, and directly from Europe. People brought with them their ideas of how things should be done. The American mid-west became a melting pot of regional differences with conflict between the "tradition-minded" and the "change-minded". Joseph Joder was one of the change-minded, although not an official leader in the Amish church. He had a profound affect on the way things developed. He was a "thinker" and not satisfied with all of the prescribed Amish doctrines. He published his ideas and in the process he "stirred the pot".

Changes in the Amish were happening. By the time of Joder's death these changes was well underway. Some folks remained Amish, and became the "Old Order Amish". Some folks became "Mennonite" (various kinds). Some took the middle-of-the-road path and became Amish-Mennonite, trying to keep the best parts of the Amish, but accepting Mennonite ways as well. By 1920 most Amish-Mennonites had dropped the "Amish" part of the name and were "Mennonite", or something else. Joseph Joder was one who helped to make these changes happen.

To read more about these changes see the following:

- Yoder, Paton, "Tradition and Transition - Amish Mennonites and Old Order Amish 1800-1900", Herald Press, Scottsdale, PA., 1991
- Smith, Willard, "Mennonites in Illinois", Herald Press, Scottsdale, PA., 1983
- Smith, C. Henry, "Smith's Story of the Mennonites", Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1981
- Nolt, Steven M., "A History of the Amish", Good Books, Intercourse, PA., 1992

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The YNL will publish Yoder related inquiries or exchanges at no charge. Please limit as possible to include a full return address. All inquiries are checked against our records to see if we can help too. If you receive added info, please share it with the YNL for our files. Send Queries to: Chris Yoder, 551 S. Maple St., Saugatuck, MI 49453 or email at cyoder@tds.net.

Am curious about the history of several post cards I have. They were addressed to Miss Salome and Mary Yoder written in 1910 and 1911. Mary lived in Johnstown, Pa. and Salome in Jerome, Pa. The cards were purchased in Norfolk, and were written by a John, Anna, and a Lucy. One of the postcards talks about the individual preparing to go to China, perhaps as a missionary. Anyone who can identify these people, please drop a line to Mansycook@verizon.com.

SEARCHING FOR YODERS: In respect for the privacy of living individuals, we suggest that if you are able to help make the connection sought, that you pass the name and contact information on to the individual or family involved, and let them initiate contact with the person who has made the query.—The Editors, YNL

DON YODER, LIVED IN KARVALA, GREECE- I'm writing you from Thessaloniki Greece. I (on behalf of my father) am searching for a certain Don Yoder who, in the late 60's, was staying in the town of Kavala, Greece. He was a close friend of my father's (Prodrimos H. Markoglou, poet) and they had a mail exchange after Mr. Yoder left Greece, but as he was constantly changing addresses in the U.S.A. we finally lost contact.. He was married (probably is still) to an American lady and their son was named Karl. His main job at the time was correcting texts for numerous editions. It is not a matter of great importance or emergency but my father asked from me to check in the net for this person so I ended up to you... Yours faithfully, Markoglou Harris, "Xaris Markoglou" <xmarkoglou@hotmail.com>

ROBERT YODER, MILITARY SERVICE IN PUERTO RICO- My Grandfather was Robert Yoder and he was an officer in the Armed Forces, probably the Air Force. My dad told me the family name comes from Pennsylvania. My grandmother died in the early 90's and my dad met his father only once. I was born in Puerto Rico as my father Carl Abraham Yoder, and my two uncles Robert and John Marshall. Carlos Ayra Yoder, 1044 Wood Stream Dr, Grand Prairie, TX 75052

Yoder House Opportunity

In June I had the privilege of hosting the Yoder House in Spruce Forest Artisan Village, Grantsville, MD. During the week 200-some individuals toured the house. Some chose to take the self-guided tour from the beautiful root cellar to the attic, which was used as a smoke house and area for drying fruits and vegetables. Others spent more time studying the architecture of the magnificent structure. Several were particularly interested in the story of the Yoders. This Yoder House is a replica of what is believed to be the house one of the earliest Yoder immigrants built Yost Yoder. However, I doubt that his family experienced the comfort of air conditioning or heat as I did!

Going stairs often is not a requirement, but greeting people is! This was a great joy for me and I learned much from other Yoders who visited. The house includes an adequate basement apartment with a very comfortable bed, kitchen, bath and needed comforts. In addition volunteers receive meals at the nearby Penn Alps restaurant at half price. For me a special plus included being a part of the village where artisans are at work, including our well-known Gary Yoder, bird carver.

Kenneth Yoder and Paul Yoder are local resource persons who worked very hard in building the structure and continue to be involved with scheduling hosts and providing much background information. Why not consider a week or month, or year of volunteering! Contact Paul H. Yoder, 507 Hemlock Drive, Grantsville, 21536 or phone him at 301-895-5411. —contributed by Esther E. Yoder

VISIT THE YODER HOMEPAGE AT:
WWW.YODERNEWSLETTER.ORG

YODER FATHER AND SON ARTISTS



CLAUDE AND OLIN

Claude H. Yoder (the father) was born in the village of Grantsville in the mountains of Western Maryland. His Amish parents were Harvey and Annie Yoder. From infancy Claude had the desire to create art. He sketched on the side of sheds, scrap cardboard, and any paper that he could find. His pockets were always full of small stones, pieces of wood, or seeds. He would carve objects in these found objects. He was constantly disciplined in the "Yoder School" for drawing when he should be reading.

He married Hazel Beachy, a Mennonite woman, purchased a farm and continued his urge to create. His favorite medium became sculpture. He fashioned a work space in his basement with a butcher's block and his tools. He carved birds, animals, people and relief landscapes from assorted materials that he collected or people brought him.

He started showing his work at local festivals. He had one-man shows in four nearby colleges. In 1972 he represented Maryland at the Smithsonian Institute Festival of American Folklore for two weeks on the mall in Washington D.C. He returned in 1973 to teach children to carve.

He had three pieces displayed in the inaugural opening of the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. In the AVAM's second show his eight foot Moses was shown and a piece of music was written about it.

His work was featured in the book "Mountain People, Mountain Crafts" and "The Tree of Life".

Claude designed he and Hazel's tombstone. He placed a bar of music on it for Hazel a singer and a bird on a limb for his love of nature. Claude would have loved his work to be realistic, but the lack of training restricted his desire. It is this naive unschooled quality that made his work charming and distinctive.

Claude passed away in 1991 at the age of 87. Most of his carvings have been donated to a museum in Cumberland, Maryland where a portion of them are always on display.

Olin's (the son) first memories of his Father was sitting on his lap at the kitchen table, kerosene lamp lit as he drew on the back of the oil cloth. One of Olin's prize possessions is a painting done by his Father of a Moose entering a snowy forest. Color was supplied from a cheap watercolor set but he had no brushes. He fashioned brushes from chicken feathers and completed the painting.

Olin attended the Maryland Institute of Art in Baltimore, Maryland and was awarded a Masters in Fine Arts. He has taught the visual arts for over fifty years and still teaches at Catonsville Community College. Olin has received awards in his educational career. He was teacher of the year in 1991 in Anne Arundel County and a state finalist. He has served on art councils and received a prestigious award for his contribution to the arts.

Olin maintains a studio in Linthicum Heights, Maryland. His oil paintings are in corporate collections and he has been in innumerable group and one-man shows. His favorite shows were the two that combined he and his Father's work. It was called, "Amish Father/City Son". At the present time he displays forty oil paintings at "Helen's Garden" in Baltimore. The paintings are constantly changed and can be seen on his website. (www.oilsvyolin.com) Olin also is a cartoonist and has used them in banquet speaking engagements.

Claude passed the love of creating art to Olin and Olin passed it on to his daughter Cindy who has a degree in the Graphic Arts.

ENOS D. YODER FARM- Dr. Don Yoder called to identify the farm of his grandfather (page 6, YNL 45).

UPDATE FROM THE OLEY YODERS

Hello from the Oley branch of the Yoder Family. We had our annual reunion on July 16 at the Fire Hall in Oley, PA. There were 35 people in attendance with the oldest attendee, Colonel Harry Yoder of Boyertown, PA at 89 years and the youngest two 13-year old girls, Adrianna Gentile of Ewing, NJ and Rachel Balderrama of Reading, PA. Everyone was treated to table favors of miniature colonial hats made by Molly Yoder and bundles of hand-made dishcloths made by Gertrude Seiz. During our visiting time we had a chance to meet and greet old friends and to make new ones. Bob Keller and Dick Yoder were there to answer questions about genealogy and Yoder family history. At noon we enjoyed a buffet luncheon with homemade desserts and "make-your-own" sundaes.

Our guest speaker was Jim D'Allesandro, who spoke on Commemorative White House Christmas Ornaments. His presentation was informative and entertaining and the ornaments, which he shared with the audience, were not only beautiful but carried a special historical significance. Jim shared facts and anecdotes about the White House, the Presidents and their families and events that shaped our country. He had the audience guessing about questions on past presidents and also had them laughing at many unusual insights to life in Washington in the early days. Everyone seemed to enjoy the presentation and was amazed at being able to handle the delicate special edition ornaments.

We also had a presentation by Eva Mae Crist of Halam, PA representing the Grantsville, MD group about their upcoming National Reunion in October of 2006. The Oley Yoders hope to charter a bus to attend that reunion next year. If you are from our area and would like to join us or would like more information please write, call or email us at:

Address: Nancy Yoder 415 State St. Pottstown, PA 19464
Phone: Nancy Yoder 610-323-7736 or Joe Yoder 610-779-5932
Email: Ken Yoder kavoder@netcarrier.com

The end of the reunion was a raffle for an assortment of gifts and treats. Everyone had a chance to buy tickets for a chance on the item or items they wanted to win. It seemed the day was a success and we hope that you will be able to join us next year.

One final item of interest, two area Yoders, Joe and Jeff were members of the cast for the spring presentation of the Reading Civic Theatre's "1776" at the Sovereign Center in Reading, PA. Joe played Samuel Chase of Maryland and Jeff was Ben Franklin. Those of us who attended hail their performances and the success of the show.

--The Oley Yoder Heritage Association

YODER 'SMOOTH JAZZ' ARTIST

To learn more about Yoder musician, paul Thomas Yoder, visit: <http://www.paulthomasvoder.com>. His new CD "Dreamin'" is available for order.

10th Annual Meeting of House of Yoder

The 10th annual meeting of House of Yoder, Inc. will be held at the Yoder House in Grantsville, Maryland on the grounds of the Spruce Forest Artisan Village on Saturday, November 12 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The featured speaker will be James Yoder who will talk about the first Yoders in the area as well as speaking about women who as Yoders eventually changed their names by marriage. Other business items and fellowship will also be highlights of the meeting. There will also be an update on the emerging plans for the National Yoder Reunion to be held at the Yoder House in the fall of 2006 (October 19-22). All interested persons, especially those with the Yoder name and/or Yoder ancestry, are welcome at the annual meeting. Questions—please contact Lonnie Yoder at 1066 Smith Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6467; or yoderld@emu.edu.

2006 REUNION PLANS- National Yoder Reunion - Thurs., Oct. 19-22 (Sun.), 2006 in the Grantsville, Md. area. Will include: dedication and tours of the Yoder House, arts and craft sale, a day long tour of Yoder sites in MD and Somerset Co., PA areas, an original drama featuring the life of Jost Joder of Steffisburg, Switzerland, and a worship service in the Yoder House on Sunday morning. Persons desiring further information at this point and/or wanting to receive a registration form may contact Lonnie Yoder at 1066 Smith Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, 540-432-6467, or yoderld@emu.edu.

YODER PASSINGS:

- Nell Yoder, 88, Goshen, In, died, May 11, 2005- widow of YNL co-founder Ben
- Luella C. Yoder, 91, died June 26, 2005. Born Grantsville, daughter of the late Christian J. and Amanda (Miller) Yoder.
- Martha Lynn (Yoder) Elston, died February 6, 2005 in Tornillo (TX), age 53. From lines: YR126, YR2612611, and YRC4.
- Crist L. Yoder retired amish farmer and woodworker of Baltic, Oh died Feb. 15, 2005, age 83. (Desc. of Michael Yoder YRC). See his photo in YNL26 at NC Yoder reunion)
- Kenneth Wayne Yoder, 78, Willow Island, Neb. d. Apr. 3, 2005, Son of Jay Arnold Yoder YR127327e
- William A. Johnson, died Apr. 28, 2005, Des Moines, Ia. Friend of the YNL and contributor of Yoder research
- Dorothy R. Yoder, 91, died Apr. 20, 2005, Lancaster, Pa, widow of the late Stephen R. Yoder
- Sherman M. Yoder, 91, died May 2, 2005, b. Wolford, ND to Aaron C. (YR267356) and Sylvia Renno Yoder.
- Sue (Collins) Yoder, 89, died Aug. 28, 2005, last surviving child of Norman S. Yoder (YR2611915) and Annie Yoder (YR121736) of Pinto, Md.

Dick Christal and Magdalena (Hooley) Yoder

- By Iva Lou Yoder, Edited by Betty Hartzler



On a sunny Sunday afternoon, September 19, 2004, twenty-five descendants gathered in the Allensville Amish-Mennonite cemetery for the dedication of new tombstones marking the graves of "Dick Christal" and Magdalena (Hooley) Yoder.

The original mountain stones, marked "DY 1847" and "MY 1840" (plus a third stone with no markings) had weathered and split. Percy Yoder enlisted the help of Lewistown Monument Co. and at three different times applied a sealer. Despite these efforts, the stones continued to deteriorate and would eventually have crumbled. Percy then began a campaign to replace the old stones with new ones. At three different reunions of DY and MY descendants, collections were taken and held by Iva Lou Yoder, acting treasurer. Other contributions from a number of relatives given to Percy made up the majority of the cost. The original stones will be preserved in the Mennonite Heritage Center in Belleville, PA.

During the brief service, Percy Yoder spoke on Yoder family history, stressing the hardships of the pioneer families. Lee Kanagy had a scripture meditation and prayer. Gilbert Yoder served as photographer for the occasion. There was time for questions and answers and fellowship. This was a memorable time for those who had a part in preserving the memory of Dick Christal and Magdalena Yoder.

DY 1847 was Christian Yoder (Dick or Thick Christal). He was born in 1761 in Berks Co, PA and was the sixth of nine children born to "Strong" or "Stark" Jacob and Anna (Beiler) Yoder. He married Magdalena Hooley (1761-1840), daughter of John and Catharine (Blank) Hooley.

John Hooley moved to Kishacoquillas Valley (Brown Township) in 1791 and was the first Amish minister in Mifflin County. "Dick" Christal and Magdalena soon followed, raising three sons and three daughters in the Valley: Daniel, Christian, Magdalena, Jacob, Catharine and Barbara. Daniel was the only son to remain in Big Valley, buying the farm along Saddlers Creek in Huntingdon County. (It is now occupied by Robert and Virginia Renno.)

There are hundred of descendants in Big Valley and elsewhere who come from this family
