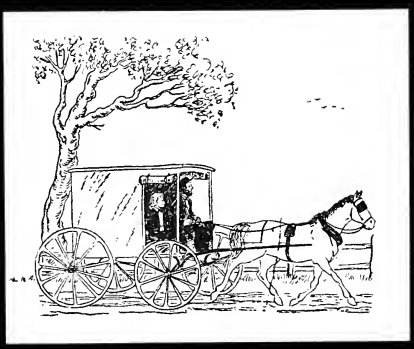


Bobbie

With Love

Dad

Merry Christmas 1941

Little Amish Schoolhouse

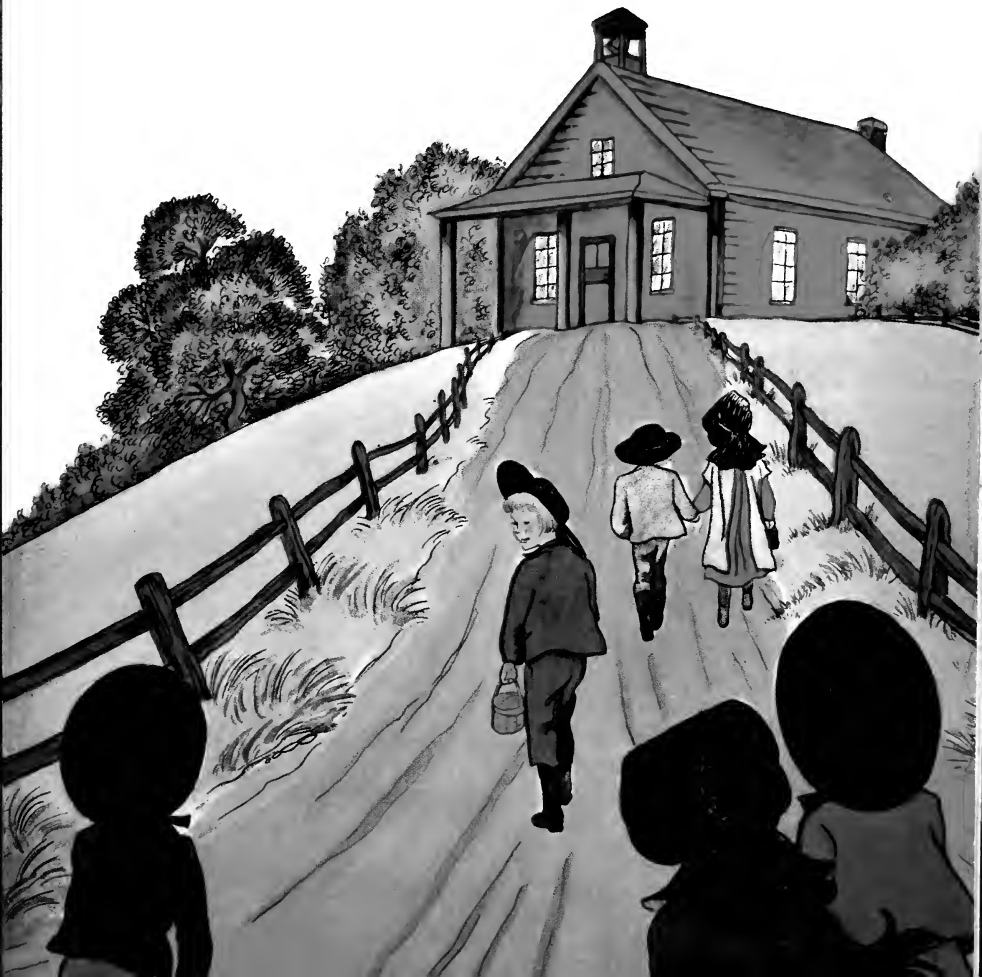
Little Amish Schoolhouse

by Ella Maie Seyfert

Illustrated by Ninon MacKnight

New York · 1939

THOMAS · Y · CROWELL COMPANY



MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To

THE AMISH CHILDREN

who follow in the footsteps
of their brave ancestors

ONE

MARTHA AND DAVID

"HI, DAVID WENGER, WATCH YOURSELF!" a voice shouted warningly. Then *WHIZZ!* A big snowball ripped past David's broad-brimmed hat and squashed into a thousand bits on the rail fence beside him. The wet snow splashed all over David, stinging his face and hands.

He jumped and looked back. "I get you tomorrow once!" he called lustily to the boy who stood in the middle of the road, blowing his breath on his cold fingers. "I sock you a good one tomorrow, Johnny Zook!"

David had been one of the first to rush from the wide-open

schoolhouse door when school was dismissed at the little Amish schoolhouse. Boys and girls of all ages came bounding after, crunching over the snow-covered boardwalk in their heavy-soled winter shoes, glad to feel the cold November air on their faces. They were still excited over the first snow, which had come so quickly on top of Indian summer, and were eager to get out into it again. David wanted very much to stay and play with the other children for a while, but he had to hurry home to his little sister Martha because he had such good news for her this afternoon.

The other boys were still busily squeezing and shaping the new snow into balls with which to "sock" each other, while the girls skipped along in groups, dodging the whizzing snowballs with screams of fright. They pulled their big bonnets over their faces and tucked their woolen shawls close under their chins for protection. When they dared peek out they called "Good night, good night," again and again to groups going in the opposite direction. Two of the girls were still chasing each other round and round on the snowy road in front of the schoolhouse. "Good night, Mary, good night!" The little girl's voice was shrill and happy. "See your face last, Katie, good night!"

David was tempted again to loiter and stay in the fun, but he thought of the good news he had for Martha, and with a last warning to Johnny Zook—"I get you tomorrow already!" —and "Good night, good night," to the other children, he went on down the country road. As he scuffed through the wet snow he gripped his strap of books tightly under his arm and

swung the little splint lunchbasket that hung by his side.

The cries of the children straggling after him sounded pleasant to David as he walked quickly along, especially their Pennsylvania Dutch *"Goot nacht! Goot nacht!"* for this was the language the little Amish boys and girls spoke at home, before they learned to speak English at their little red schoolhouses. Sometimes they mixed Dutch with their English and it sounded very funny to other people.

As he hurried along the road David looked quaint indeed in his big hat and long trousers, for he was dressed exactly as his father dressed now, and as his great-great-grandfather dressed two hundred years ago when he first came to America. Great-great-grandfather's trunk was still in their attic—the trunk which he had brought with him from 'way across the water, from Switzerland, two hundred years ago.

David called the short jacket he wore a *"wammus."* His trousers were long and had no cuffs, and his hat was broad of brim and the crown was low. David's hair grew long over his ears, and his mother cut it straight across his forehead in a bang, which made him look like all the other little Amish boys because they all had their hair cut in this same way, and they all wore the same kind of clothes.

The little Amish girls all looked alike, too. They dressed just like their mothers, in long dresses colored soft green or purple or red, with big aprons over them. Their neckerchiefs matched their dresses, and after they became older and joined the church they wore little white mull caps under their large bonnets, just like their mothers, too.

David lived with his parents on a farm not far from the Welsh mountains in beautiful Lancaster County in Pennsylvania. Other Amish families lived on other farms all around them. They all belonged to the more strict Mennonites—a group called "Plain People" because they lived plainly and dressed plainly, just as their forefathers did in Switzerland so long ago. And they were very proud to be like those brave people who came to America more than two hundred years ago because here they could worship God in the way they felt was right.

When David reached the "by-road" or lane that led to his father's farm this evening, the other children were far behind. But he called "Good night!" and *"Goot nacht!"* as he did each evening when he turned into his lane, though he knew no one would hear.

Halfway down to the house David could see little Martha near the apple orchard. She was running to meet him with Shep, their dog, who leaped along happily in the snow as he recognized David in the distance. David called to Shep and then he called to Martha. He knew how much Martha liked to eat out of his splint lunchbasket so he saved her a bit of his lunch each day.

Now he held the basket high above his head for her to see. "Yoo hoo! Yoo hoo!" he called to her. And "Yoo hoo!" Martha called back to him breathlessly. She tried to run fast over the snowy ground but her long skirts and big shawl were hard to manage in the cold and wind, and Shep reached David long before she did.

"Down, Shep, down! Shame!—It's for Martha," David scolded, as he kept the basket swinging as high as he could over his head.

"Iss ḳalt. It's cold," Martha panted, quite out of breath now. She found the basket lid hard to open because her hands were numb with cold, although she was wearing her warm red home-knit woolen mittens. But just as David offered to help her she gave an extra hard tug and the lid flew off!

"Ach, shoo-fly pie!" Martha shouted, peeping under the red fringed napkin that covered it. Shoo-fly pie is molasses cake baked in pastry and covered thickly with white sugary crumbs. Martha loved shoo-fly pie and when she bit into the crumbly, sugary cake it almost smothered her.

"Ich gleich ḳuchen! I like cake!" she mumbled as she puffed the crumbs all around and tried to swallow the dry mouthfuls.

David was eager to tell Martha his news but she was so interested in the lunchbasket he thought she had forgotten all about it. He went on ahead with Shep. But as soon as Martha managed to swallow the last bit of cake in her mouth she called after him. "Does the *schulhaus* keep still, David?"

But David was far ahead now, racing Shep to the house.

"David!" Martha called again—this time as loud as she could scream. "David! Does the *schulhaus* keep still?"

"Yes, *yes!"* David turned to shout back. "It keeps maybe and tomorrow you go to school with me!"

Little Martha had heard so much talk at home and among other Amish people about closing their little red schoolhouses and building one big schoolhouse to take their places that she

was afraid each day she might hear that her own little schoolhouse was to be closed. Martha thought and worried about this a great deal because her small world was made up of going to church, to weddings, and to farm sales, and for some time now she had been looking forward to next year when she could go to school with David. And she thought she wouldn't like at all to go to a big school with a lot of strange children.

Martha's father and mother would not like this for her and David because they wanted to keep their children close to their home and have them go to school and play with other little Amish children only, so that they would keep to the Amish way of living always.

When Martha heard David call to her that she was to go to school with him tomorrow it made her so happy she jumped up and down until her bonnet slipped 'way back on her head and what was left of the shoo-fly pie was squeezed into pieces in her red-mittened hands.

"Go to school! Go to school!" she shouted with delight, then jerked her bonnet back into place and ran to catch up with David.

Once a year Teacher allowed the boys and girls who would be old enough to start school the next year to come to spend a day at school—the "tryout day" she called it—and now Martha's tryout day had come! She hurried along with David to tell her mother the good news.

The big latch on the blue wooden gate in front of their house was all crackly with ice and snow. Martha strained with both hands to lift it out of the notch and David pulled just

as hard at the top of the gate to help his sister open it.

"A-h-h!" said David, banging the gate behind him. "It gives something good for supper!" He sniffed the air and "Ah," he said again as he breathed in the delicious smell. "Bet it gives schnitz and knepp for supper. Smells like."

"A-h-h!" Martha rolled her eyes as she sniffed back at him. "I *know* it's schnitz and knepp—ah! smells *goot!"*

"Martha Wenger!" David warned her, as they stepped up on the kitchen porch, "you say *good,* g-o-o-d, like Teacher does. Don't you be a dummy tomorrow in school! *Vershteh?* Understand? Don't you dare say 'ain't'; Teacher says not!"

Sure enough, when they opened the kitchen door, there was Hetty, their big sister, dropping spoonfuls of golden batter from an earthen bowl into a pot of boiling ham and sweet apple *snitz brea*—broth. The yellow dumplings bobbed around like little sail boats in the pinkish broth and swelled up to the top of the pot. Then Hetty clapped the pot lid on tight, to steam the knepp—dumplings. She threw the red table cloth quickly over the table, to make it look as though supper were almost ready.

"They make done soon," she said, "dumplings boil in a jiffy if they're not sad. Hurry and feed the chickens, David, I dish up soon now."

"And the wood box makes empty too," Mother's voice reminded him from the other end of the kitchen where she stood leaning over baby Jacob's cradle.

Mother agreed with the teachings of their church that it is a sin to be lazy, and she expected David and Martha to do their

share of work every day, although they were still little children.

All this time Martha was trying to thaw out her cold fingers over the hot cook stove, hoping that she would be allowed to play with baby Jacob in his cradle when her hands were warm again. She had not yet told her good news. Bubbling over at last she leaped across the big kitchen floor to Mother. "I go to school, Mom, tomorrow!" she cried. "You're glad, not?"

"Ya vell, iss goot," Mother answered, still leaning over the cradle. "Now, quick, Martha, run the cellar steps down and fetch up the *sots* [yeast] jar. We bake bread tomorrow."

"Does Jacob croup up again?" Martha asked as she came up the cellar steps with the jar.

"Nein, nein—it's the colic. Martha, don't be *dopplich* [care-

less]. Set the jar over there on the table and come rock him once."

"SUPPER!" Hetty called just then to Father and David who were out at the barn. After they had come and washed up in the basin at the water bench, the family gathered around the kitchen table.

It was such a good schnitz and knepp supper, although Father teased Mother about not having "seven sours and seven sweets." "It's a good *hausfrau* who sets her table with seven sours and seven sweets—not, Mother?" he joked. But he always expected Mother to have these "seven sours and seven sweets" on the table when they had company—sour red beets, chow chow, pepper cabbage, baby watermelons pickled, coleslaw, cucumber rings and sour apple butter; as well as pie, cake, prunes, preserves, home canned peaches, jelly and sweet applebutter tarts.

Martha was allowed to help herself to everything three times. "Three helps," she said, and while she was busily eating she almost talked herself hoarse about going to the little red schoolhouse with David tomorrow. Mother and Father knew how excited she was and smiled over her chatter.

Martha was the first to leave the supper table, and soon she was curled up on the wood box back of the stove, sound asleep.

Mother covered her gently with a thick woolen shawl.

"Schlof, bubeli, schlof—sleep, baby, sleep," she whispered. "I hope your *schulhaus* keeps always for you. We want it so!"

TWO

"TRYOUT DAY" FOR MARTHA

MARTHA WOKE BRIGHT AND EARLY THE next morning. From the very *first minute* she knew that something wonderful was going to happen today, because she felt so happy and excited. And the very *next* minute she remembered what it was!

SCHOOL! She was going to school with David. She was going to see Teacher, about whom she had heard so much. She was going to sing songs as they did at church, and she was going to eat lunch out of David's lunchbasket! And she could play with all the little girls.

She dressed in a hurry, and while she smoothed her shiny

brown hair into the braids that would go around her head, she counted over the things she must remember.

"I daresn't say *'goot'* and I daresn't say 'aint,' " she said to herself softly. "My, I'm scairt of Teacher!" she cried in happy excitement, and flew down the stairs to the kitchen.

There she found Mother packing *two* lunches in David's splint lunchbasket. It was filled to the top with hard-boiled eggs, peanut butter sandwiches, pretzels, snitz pie, and a big apple for each of them! It all looked wonderful to Martha, but it did not tempt her now because she was far too excited to be hungry.

"Our Martha grows big soon!" Father joked at the breakfast table, as he filled her plate with sausage and hot cakes. "Next year she'll be as big as Hetty, not?"

But Martha was thinking of her first day at school and didn't hear a word he said. She couldn't eat her breakfast either, and could hardly wait for the others to finish theirs so that she might leave the table.

"Martha tries school today," Mother said with a smile. "We miss her all day, not, Hetty?"

At last Martha was putting on her bonnet while Mother pinned the woolen shawl close up under her chin, and pulled the warm, red mittens well over her wrists to keep out the cold.

"School! I go to school!" Martha called into Grandpappy's room off the kitchen. "I go to school!" she whispered over baby Jacob's cradle, and baby Jacob wrinkled up his little nose and cooed back at her! "School!" she told her rag doll Sally

Ann, who was propped up on the wood box back of the stove.

David was already at the gate waiting for her, and they went off, waving good-bye to Mother and Hetty who were standing at the kitchen door.

They walked up the hill and down, and as they passed the limekiln Martha whispered, "Spooks!" under her breath. Then they both giggled as they remembered how they had been scared by some "spooks" last fall while they were hunting acorns here in the old limekiln furnace. And the "spooks" had turned out to be only some black pigs.

The first bell was ringing when they came in sight of the schoolhouse. This meant that they were not late, for the first bell always rings out early over the Conestoga Valley to say that "school keeps."

"Hi, there! Wait!" David called to the Zook children who were on ahead. Martha was glad to see that Little Georgie was with them. It was "tryout day" for him too.

When David and Martha caught up with the others, they all hurried along the road as if their lives depended upon their being inside the schoolhouse in good time.

Martha's heart was going pit-a-pat as David opened the schoolroom door, and her cheeks were glowing red from the cold air and excitement. She kept close to David while he put the lunchbasket on a long shelf in the back part of the room—the boys' side of the room—and tossed his books on his desk.

"Go over to Katie Zook," David told Martha quietly. "*Geh!* Go!"

She crossed the room to the girls' side. Katie helped her

take off her bonnet and shawl, and hung them on a big hook beside many other bonnets and shawls.

It was all so new to Martha! She looked around shyly. Why, the room was larger than any "best room" she had ever seen for Sunday church meetings! In the center stood a big, round stove, with isinglass doors through which you could see the bright red coals. The glowing fire made the big room warm and cosy.

On the front wall near the blackboard were two pictures. Each picture had a flag over it. Katie told Martha that the man with a beard like Father's was Abraham Lincoln. Martha thought his face was kind too, like Father's. The man in the other picture had puffs over his ears, which looked very funny to Martha. Katie said that he was George Washington.

Both of these good men had once been President of our country, Katie said. Martha was very much interested in these men and wondered why there wasn't a picture of Bishop Stoltzfus up there with them, because he was such a good man, too.

Until the second bell rang, Martha walked all around the room with Katie while Katie read to her the big printed cards which hung high up on the wall. One said, "Be Honest," another said "Be Polite," and another said "Smile."

As they walked past Teacher who was writing at her desk she looked kindly into Martha's big brown eyes, which were bigger than ever with interest and excitement.

"Good morning, Martha!" she said. "I'm glad you can visit with us today."

Then she put down her pen, reached out and took Martha's hands, which were still cold, into her own to warm them, just as Mother would do.

Soon after this the second bell rang and it was time for "books." The children sat quietly at their desks while Teacher read from the Bible, and then they all prayed the Lord's Prayer.

Martha had stayed close to David when the bell rang, and much to his dismay she wanted to sit with him on the boys' side!

"*Ach* well," he said, "you know besser next winter! Don't set so close!" he scolded in a whisper, as he moved over to the end of the seat. "Keep over there!"

Martha did know better, because at church she always sat on the women's side. Of course she always sat with Mother, which made a great difference. But she still felt very strange here in school and wanted to stay close to David.

When they all sang *My Country 'Tis of Thee* and *O, I Never Can Forget the Old Schoolhouse on the Hill!* Martha wanted to join in, but she was too shy to begin. When she tried to tap her foot instead, it would not reach the floor, so she kept time by nodding her head.

After the singing the children went up to the front of the room in class groups to recite their lessons. When it was David's turn to go up to History class Martha felt very proud of her big brother.

Before he left the seat he had given Martha a pencil and paper on which to scribble. But she noticed little Georgie Zook

sitting across from her looking very lonely, she thought, so she pointed to the empty seat beside her and moved over to make room for him.

"Koom!" she called in a squeaky voice. But in moving quickly to the edge of the seat, *thump!*—she went to the floor. The other children tried hard to keep from laughing David felt so ashamed of her as Teacher raised a hand for the room to quiet down. But Martha crawled quickly back onto the seat, put her head down on the desk and glanced over at little Georgie with an impish twinkle in her eye!

While Martha swung her short legs from the high desk seat and listened to all the reading and spelling during the long morning, she grew hungrier and hungrier and was sorry she had not eaten more pancakes and sausage for breakfast. And by noontime she wished there was even more lunch in the splint basket that Mother had packed so full.

Everything tasted so good that before long the basket was about empty. Then David said, "Listen, Martha, it's long until books again. You put on your wraps and go play with the girls. No, not by me! *Vershteh?* I play corner ball. You play by the girls."

Martha went out then with the other girls, her bright red apple clasped tightly in one hand. It was very cold and the girls played tag to keep warm, eating their apples while they ran from one end of the school yard to the other. When Katie's apple fell to the ground and rolled in the dirty snow, all the other girls crowded round her, willing to share bites of their apples with her.

Martha was especially interested in all the girls she had never seen before, little girls who were not Amish and were not dressed as she was. She thought that the yellow-haired Brooks twins, Dora and Lilly, wore such pretty store clothes. They had beads, too—Dora's were red and Lilly's a deep blue. This was the only way Teacher could tell them apart, and now they showed their beads proudly to Martha.

But *"Kook!"* said Martha herself, as she pulled a string of "Job's tears" from under her thick shawl and let the girls feel the pretty, blue-gray beads that she had strung for herself after picking them in the garden. How surprised the little twins were that beads could grow in a garden! They had never seen any like them before. Their own had come from a store in Lancaster.

Now another girl, Naomi Stauffer, was trying to show off something too. It was something that she was wearing around her neck.

"Boo-o-o!" they all shouted and held their noses when they saw what it was. Then they chased Naomi all around the schoolhouse for wearing a small cloth bag filled with asafetida because the smell was so unpleasant. Naomi said it was a charm to keep from getting sick, and her mother said she must wear it.

But the girls shouted, "Put it away! Put it away or you don't play with us! Cover it up!"

"It keeps the 'blue cough' [whooping cough] away anyhow," Naomi told them defiantly, tucking the bag under the neck of her dress.


D. MACKNIGHT

"Pussy Wants a Corner," someone shouted then as they all raced to the front of the school yard. "Last one over at the steps is the cat!"

Martha ran with all her might because she didn't want to be the "cat" her first game at school. But she was anyway because she stopped to scream in terror, "David, David!" when she saw a group of the boys mixed wildly on the ground, their legs waving high in the air.

"Ach, it's just wrasslin' matches, Martha," Katie Zook cried, as she drew Martha back, looking quite provoked. "It's fun—boys likes wrasslin'—it's not a fight—keep quiet—that's how they tell who's the boss! Come, we go into the schoolhouse and play where it's warm."

It was surely a wonderful day for Martha! She felt braver now as she walked among the girls and watched them play tit-tat-toe on the blackboard. Two little boys were playing "mumble-de-peg" on the platform floor with open pen-knives. "Keep back, Martha," they told her, as a knife, tossed in the air, came down with a "tunk" and stuck into the floor. "That's *zehn* [ten] for you, Daniel Fischer! You win!"

Later when Teacher walked past Martha on her way to her desk, Martha put out her hand to touch her dress, then drew it back quickly. But Teacher understood and said, "Well, Martha, having a good time?"

"Ya, it's *goot!"* Martha answered. She was so excited that she spoke Pennsylvania Dutch without thinking.

Then the big school bell rang for "books" again and they

all hurried to their desks. Teacher called the roll of names.

"Katie Zook"—"Present." "Johnny Zook"—"Present." "Adam Fischer"—"Present." "Christian Stoltzfus"—"Present." "David Wenger"—"Present."

"Where is the present?" Martha asked David, louder than a whisper. David nudged her to keep quiet. Then they all started to sing *Beautiful Snow*. It was such a lively song that Martha was almost ready to join in when it was over and Teacher gave the signal for school work to begin.

During the afternoon Martha heard so much talk of the great men, Washington and Lincoln, and another one, Columbus, all "such good men" that she wondered again why no one said anything about good Bishop Stoltzfus who came to their house to talk to Grandpappy sometimes, and stayed to supper and asked the long blessing before and after the meal.

When David went up to the blackboard to do his arithmetic problem Martha felt prouder of him than ever. She thought he must be almost as smart as Hetty who left school last winter!

She watched him while he wrote a lot of numbers on the board—her arms folded loosely on the desk in front of her, her head held firmly erect. Funny how he looked sometimes —as if he had two heads and wrote with two hands!

Martha's tired head sank down on her arms. She slept a long time, through all the pleasant hum of children's voices, until one of the big boys poured coal into the round stove. Then she woke up with a start.

"Did I snooze?" she asked David, stretching her aching legs. "O-oh! Hum! I dream of baby Jacob!"

School was over! The boys and girls put on their wraps, took their books and lunchbaskets and filed out of the door past Teacher.

"Good night!" Teacher said to Martha, looking down into her freshly wide-awake eyes. Martha put out her hand the way she always did at church when people said *"Wie geht's?* [How do you do.]"

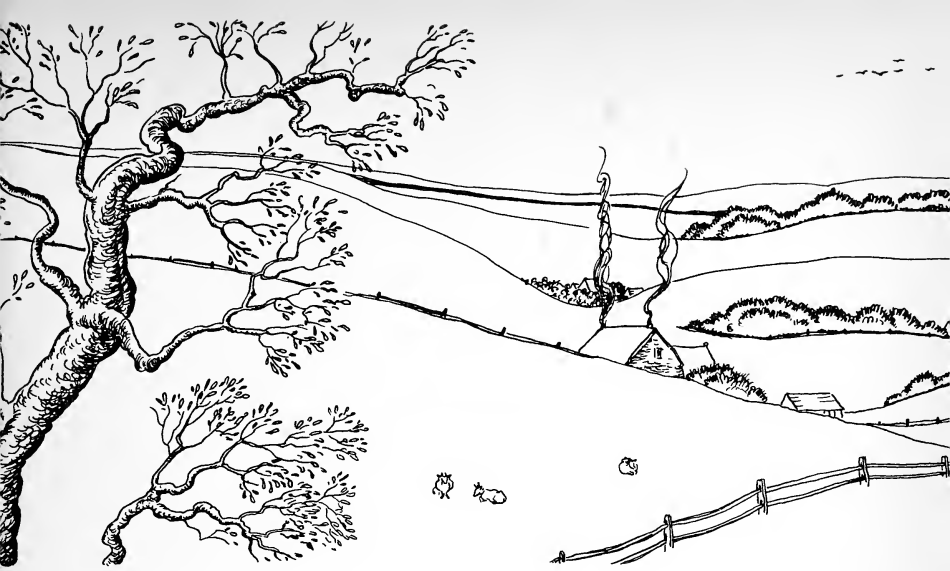
"I like school," she said, brave for a second. Then like a frightened deer she ran down the road after David.

When they reached home they met Father on his way to the barn to shell corn for Mother's flock of turkeys.

"Our Martha knows a lot now, so?" he teased, patting the top of her bonnet. "Her schoolhouse *iss* a *goot* place for her! Was it a *goot* day?"

David had to tease her a bit too so he said, "Y-e-s, but she knows better next time—when she sits on the girls' side!"

But Martha never waited to hear what David said, for she was so anxious to see Mother and Hetty. She raced to the house, threw open the kitchen door and then, "Mom! Hetty!" she cried, "My *schulhaus* keeps still." Her words tumbled out easily now. "It was a *goot* day! And I ain't scairt of Teacher no more!"



THREE

SUNDAY ON THE WENGER FARM

SUNDAY WAS ALWAYS A SPECIAL DAY FOR David and Martha, filled with church-going and meeting with friends and relatives. And each Sunday was always exactly like all the other Sundays that had gone before. But this particular Sunday turned out to be very different, and exciting too, although it began in the usual way.

Hetty had laid a fire in the "best room" and now there was smoke twisting and curling from both chimneys on the Wenger farmhouse. This was a friendly sign, because it meant there would be company to dinner. Someone would come back from church with the family. And Hetty had

made the "best room" ready for company. In fact the whole house had been made especially neat. Yesterday the porch boards had been scrubbed until they were white, and folded strips of old rag carpet were laid in front of the doors.

There were two front doors to this old stone farmhouse. And a big dinner bell hung in the cupola on the top of the roof. One door opened into the "winter kitchen," which was kept cool and dark while they used the "summer kitchen" built across the porch; and the other door opened into the "best room" or parlor, which was used only on Sundays or for very special occasions.

The "best room" had plain, whitewashed walls, and no wall paper or pictures of any kind. And it was very large, large enough for church meetings. Today, however, it was not going to be used for a meeting, for they were going to the home of Hiram Stoltzfus for church.

Martha was already in the back seat of the yellow Germantown wagon when Mother came out of the house carrying baby Jacob all rolled up in a warm blue blanket. While Father held him Mother climbed over the high front wheel into the wagon and then stepped over the front seat to sit beside Martha on the back one. Then Father handed baby Jacob in to Mother, and put the much-needed little "satchel," in which she carried baby Jacob's bottle and extra clothes, at Mother's feet.

Snuggling close to Mother, Martha tucked the blankets warmly about baby Jacob. She always worried about him when they took him away from home, fearing that he might

catch a cold or something worse, like the *opnehme,* the "wasting away."

When they were all settled and ready to start Mother called out, "Make a big dinner, Hetty! Maybe the Zooks come back with us once!"

Hetty was busy sweeping dry leaves from the freshly scrubbed front porch. She was staying at home with Grandpappy who was too feeble to go to church.

"Don't forget to turn the best side of the kitchen rug up, Hetty!" Mother called out again from the back of the wagon as they started off. "For Sunday, you know!"

David was driving Cap today. Father thought he was old enough now to drive although he could not "hitch up." He wasn't tall enough for that, but while he was putting the bit in Cap's mouth and fastening the traces to the singletree, he had wished so much that they had a shiny, squeaky harness for Cap like the one on the horse that Hetty's young man drove when he took her out riding in an open top buggy on Wednesday and Saturday nights.

As the Germantown wagon rolled noisily on, down by the limekiln and up the long hill, past the little red schoolhouse, Martha kept her eyes on the schoolhouse as long as she could see it. Then they turned out on the State Road.

The air smelled damp and weedy. The first snow that had come so unexpectedly was gone—all but little patches that were left in the fence corners and beside tall shocks of corn with yellow pumpkins snuggling close by. A crisp breeze rustled the dry corn leaves, making a soft, soothing murmur,

and overhead crows cawed and flapped against the blue sky.

"It's the end of Indian Summer for sure," said Father sighing. *"Ya, vell,* soon it gives winter!

"But it's a good harvest, Mother," he added as he looked contentedly out over the rich Lancaster county farm land. "The corn ears burst open when we husk them, and that means a warm winter, the almanac says."

"Soon we have corn mush," Mother answered from the back seat, where she held baby Jacob close to keep him warm and comfortable. "Mrs. Hurst says she dries some corn last week already to take to the mill. The miller says it gives his first cornmeal."

"So?" Father said, in surprise. "She beats you, not?"

Mother and Mrs. Hurst, who lived across the fields from each other, were always trying to see who could have the first garden "salad" in the spring and the first cornmeal for mush in the fall. But Mother just smiled at Father's teasing now because she knew he understood that she and Mrs. Hurst were good friends.

As they passed other wagons on the way to church the drivers called *"Wie geht's!"* no matter whether they knew each other or not! Automobiles whizzed by them and left them far behind in their Germantown wagon, which moved slowly along. Father thought automobiles were worldly and against the Scriptures, and because the Bible told him to keep to the old ways, he was satisfied with his good horse Cap.

But David grew excited over each automobile that passed, and he nearly fell out of the wagon trying to see more of an

aeroplane that was dipping and whirling overhead. Cap got into the weeds growing by the side of the road and Father said sternly, "Mind the horse, David."

David sat back then and kept his eye on Cap. He started to wish once more for a shiny, squeaky harness such as Hetty's young man had for his horse. David loved Cap. He was gentle and smart and lively.

They were near the Stoltzfus home now and they could see many wagons already lining the roadsides near it—yellow and black ones, and wagons without tops—buggies, which the unmarried men drove. Some of the horses had been unhitched because many of the families who came a long distance would stay after church to have dinner.

When they entered the big "best room" of the Stoltzfus home it was crowded. David went to sit on the right side of the room with Father and the other men and boys while Martha went over to the left side with Mother. They sat on long benches or straight-backed chairs. The women took off their bonnets but not the tiny thin white caps, which looked very soft and bright against the dark clothes all around them.

Before the services started Mother put baby Jacob to sleep upstairs with several other babies. Martha had gone upstairs with Mother but she hung back as Mother turned to go down again after she had made baby Jacob comfortable.

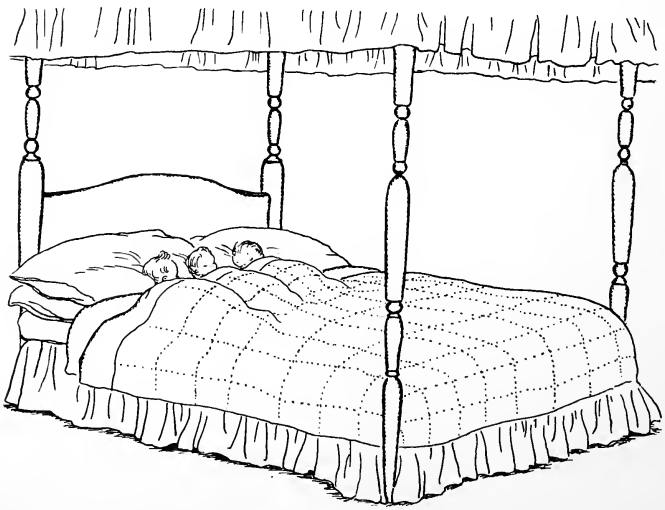
"He don't catch the *opnehme* up here?" Martha asked Mother. She had heard so much about babies who had the *opnehme,* who did not grow but wasted away instead. She had heard, too, that some people even had an old woman mumble

magic words over them to cure them. She worried a great deal about baby Jacob.

"Maybe he catches the *opnehme,*" she said again, but Mother said, *"Nein, nein.* Baby Jacob is good. And anyhow Dr. Herr chases the *opnehme* away with pills from his black bag. Don't fuss so, Martha. *Koom,* we must go down. They start."

A hush fell over the room as they settled down with Bibles and hymn books on their laps. The preacher stood beside a small table. He was just one of the Amish men who had been chosen by lot to be the preacher and he was not paid.

First they sang a German hymn. The preacher read two lines and the people sang them; then he read two more lines which the people sang. This they called "lining the hymn."



After this there was a long prayer, another hymn, and then a long sermon followed by another hymn—and church was over.

Although David and Martha were used to sitting still for a long time during the service, today Martha was restless because she was worried about baby Jacob. Once she even tiptoed upstairs to see that he was all right. She patted him and sang over him very, very softly *"Schlof, Bubeli, Schlof!"* Then, tiptoeing down the stairs, she took her seat again beside her mother who smiled in an understanding way.

"He *schlof,"* Martha whispered. "I tend him."

How they all talked after the meeting was over! Church was not held every Sunday, and they were so glad to see one another. But they couldn't stay much longer now because it was dinner time.

So, *"Koom!"* Mother said to Martha, after they had put on their bonnets and shawls and rolled baby Jacob up in his blanket. "Father and David wait for us. Fetch the satchel, Martha!"

The Zooks went to their home to have Sunday dinner with them, just as Mother had hoped they would, and Martha knew that would mean a good time with Katie, Sarah, Johnny, Georgie, and baby Christian—"Chrissly" they called him sometimes.

At home Hetty had been busy all during the forenoon, and as soon as she spied the two wagons coming rapidly down the hill, she called into Grandpappy's room, *"Der Freundschaft koomt!* The relations come!"

She had already started to set the table in the big winter kitchen, and now, as she brought out the delicious looking pies, she was glad she had used the little pinwheel scalloper on the edge of the crust. They looked as nice as the pies that Mother scalloped so evenly with her fingers. The noodles which had been drying in the sun all morning were golden yellow, and the big slices of frying ham had turned an appetizing brown in the pan on the stove.

"Whoa!" David called out extra loud as he drove up to the front gate. He wanted Hetty to hear him so that she would hurry with dinner. "Whoa, CAP!"

Father took Cap to the barn then while Mr. Zook tied his horse to the wooden hitching post near the mail box in front of the house.

"Your zinnias and asters made out good last summer, not?" Mrs. Zook asked as she came up the stone walk carrying Chrissly, followed by Mother with baby Jacob. Baby Jacob was still fast asleep.

"*Ya,* they give a lot!" Mother was satisfied. "But they are frosted now."

The children trailed close behind the women, and after they had wiped their shoes on the strip of rag carpet at the door, they stepped across the clean scrubbed door sill into the big "best room." But they did not stay there long. They were glad to stretch their cramped legs after sitting in church all morning and were soon starting a game of hide-and-seek.

David counted out in German. Then "Katie's it! Katie's it!" they all screamed and ran for a good place to hide.

The children played until they were called to dinner. The "first table" was for the grownups, and they ate and talked a long time. The children kept playing around the porch, and kept their eyes fixed longingly on the dinner table, peeping through the glass in the kitchen door. They were waiting anxiously their turn to sit down at the "second table." When there was a lot of company the children always had their dinner after the grownups.

It seemed like a long, long time before Mother called *"Kinder, koom essa!* Children, come and eat!" And how they did eat!

Little Georgie left the table first, without even eating his custard pie. "I eat myself done already," he groaned, rubbing his stomach and shuffling out on the porch. "A-ah!"

"Last one over at the pump's it!" David called as he left the table suddenly. After a great clattering of chairs they all chased after him.

"Sarah's it! Sarah's it!"—then a scramble for hiding places —and all was quiet once more.

The men sat out on the porch, chairs tipped back against the wall, while they talked over their crops and their schools. The question of having to give up their little red schoolhouses was always brought up whenever a group of Amish people talked together.

The women were busy talking things over in the kitchen too, while they washed the dishes. Sunday was passing just like all other Sundays on the Wenger farm.

Then suddenly everything happened at once. Water that

Hetty was heating in the big iron pot boiled over on the hot stove, hissing like a steam engine. And although Mrs. Zook called to her, "Make it off, Hetty, quick, or you don't get married for seven years yet!" her warning was lost in the general excitement, for something terrible seemed to be happening at the barn!

The children began shouting and running frantically, with the men close behind them, while a splitting, grinding, swishing sound almost deafened them, and they could see what looked like a bundle of clothes props crushed between an apple tree and the chicken house.

"Ay, yi, yi!" Mother threw her apron around her head and shoulders while she ran with Mrs. Zook and Hetty to see what had happened. Such a squawking and cackling! Shep was barking and the girls shouting. "Airplane! Airplane! It made down fast. LOOK!"

"Ach, girls *iss* dumb!" David puffed and sputtered. "It's a giro—giro—autogiro! Autogiro is what it is. Look at the long sticks once!"

There was more crashing of tree branches and splitting of wood as the queer-looking machine settled nearer the ground, and a young man crawled out of the wreck looking very much frightened.

"Whoa!" Father and Mr. Zook both gasped as they ran to help.

"It's a bad ride you make," said Father. "Are you hurt some?"

"No-o, but I guess I'm in for a law suit," the young pilot

said, looking hopelessly at the wrecked chicken house. "I'm just learning," he explained, as these people who looked so strange to him, crowded round to make sure he wasn't hurt. "And something must have gone wrong," he added, noticing the little girls dressed just like the women, the little boys dressed exactly like the men.

Then his attention wandered again to the possible damage he had done. He started to pull the branches of the apple tree from under his wrecked machine.

"You'll sue me, I suppose?" he asked again in a bewildered way. But Father and Mr. Zook insisted that he leave it all to them. They would clear up the wreckage and help him fix the machine.

"You have a shock from such a fall," said Father. "You don't worry now. I treat you fair. We are Amish. Our people don't go to law, we settle things by the Church."

Father was still so excited that he waved his arms in the air wildly in an effort to make everyone move back out of the way.

"*Geh veck*—go away—*Kinder!* Keep quiet, Shep! David, shoo the chickens back in the yard. Look for some eggs. *Nein, nein*—stay out of the chicken house! We got to fix this machine," he added, bustling about.

Martha and David had never seen Father so excited, and they stayed close as they dared in order to see everything that was going on.

The men found that the machine was not so easy to fix, and the young pilot decided that he must hire a repair man who had a shop out on the State Road. When he left he told Father

he would come back the next day to "settle up" for the damage he had done.

"I'll be back. You trust me?" he asked.

"I trust you," Father said as they shook hands. "My yes is my yes, and my no is my no. You treat me the same, I know!"

This is the Amish people's *hand schlag* or word of honor and they expect everyone else to be as honorable as they are.

All this time David had been doing his best to explain about the engine and the whirring shafts to the "dumb" girls. Father noticed him now and remembered how he had watched the aeroplane dipping and whirling in the sky this morning while they were driving to church. He was beginning to worry about David's great interest in automobiles and aeroplanes. He did not want him to be dissatisfied with riding in their wagon and driving their horse Cap. Father's thoughts were interrupted then for suddenly someone asked for Georgie and Georgie was nowhere about.

"Where *is* Georgie?" David forgot the autogiro and turned to question Martha.

"Yes, where is he?" Mrs. Zook wondered anxiously.

"I don't know," Martha answered, surprised that he was not around in all the excitement.

"Georgie! Georgie!" Their voices echoed and re-echoed,

over the fields and back from the Welsh mountains. "Ge-o-r-g-i-e!"

"He hides himself with us!" Martha assured his mother, who now took up the call herself.

"GEORGIE! *KOOM!"* But there was no answer. They looked across the fields in every direction, expecting Georgie to come out from a safe hiding place any minute.

"Run, Katie!" Mrs. Zook ordered. "Look the beds under! David, poke the haymow through and make the bake-oven door open quick. Mebbe, too, he's in the corn crib," she called after them in a frightened, high-pitched voice.

Sarah raced across the yard to the old spring house where she noticed the door wide open. But Georgie was not inside, so she sped on toward the old sink hole in the wheat field.

Martha got down nimbly on her hands and knees to look into Shep's dog house.

"Georgie, Georgie!" she coaxed. *"Koom,* Georgie!"

Shep sniffed around her, pawing up the ground and barking quite savagely. "Keep quiet, Shep," Martha said, holding a warning finger in front of his nose, "Georgie scares at you!" Then she got down to look once more.

"Not here, Shep," she told the dog as she sprang up, brushed the dirt from her best blue Sunday apron and ran across the yard to look into the empty sauerkraut stand that stood on the back porch. "He mighta tumbled in here," she said to herself.

By this time Father was pulling more branches from under the wrecked giro. Could Georgie have been hiding behind the apple tree when the machine fell? They all stood around him,

breathless and shivering in the raw, cold November wind.

"Nein, nein!" Father was sure he was not there, and a sigh of relief rose from everyone, even though he hadn't as yet been found.

"Why don't you bell?" Martha cried on her way back from a search in the sauerkraut stand. No one had thought of ringing the big dinner bell on top of the house to bring Georgie back, and now everybody started at once for the kitchen, but Hetty was first to grasp the rope swinging back of the kitchen door.

DING, DONG—DING, DONG! The bell clanged out in noisy, jerky tones across the quiet country. Hetty thought it sounded twice as loud on Sunday as it did on week days when she called the men from the fields to dinner.

Ding, dong! It woke Grandpappy up from his afternoon nap. Tottering across his room slowly to the kitchen he cried, *"Vas iss?"* in a trembling voice.

"It's Georgie—he loses," Martha told him in a choked voice, nervously rolling and unrolling her apron on her arms to keep from crying. "But he finds himself when we bell, not?" she asked, trying to be hopeful.

Then she drew the back of her hand across her eyes and darted out of the kitchen door to look down Schoolhouse Road for Georgie—but half way down the stone walk she stopped suddenly.

"Georgie Zook!" she shrieked. For there he was, climbing slowly down from his father's Germantown wagon which was still standing at the front gate near the mail box. No one had

thought to look on the back seat that had been his safe hiding place while he slept through all the excitement.

"I hear the supper bell," he yawned, trying to stand up straight on his chubby, stiff legs. *"Ich denk*—I think I eat my custard pie now!"

Martha grabbed him eagerly, threw her warm shawl over his shoulders and hugged him close.

"Ach, Georgie," she scolded, "you're a bad boy to make me cry once. But I knew that when the bell made, you would find yourself! *Koom,* we go to your mother, quick! It's a big fuss out at the barn, too. Hurry! Hurry!"

FOUR

COUNTRY SALE

ONE COLD AFTERNOON DURING THE FOLlowing week, Martha climbed up on the wood box back of the stove to get the old *Baer's Almanac* from the wall where it hung all the year round. Then she dropped to her knees on the floor, and, resting the almanac on the wood box, she began to thumb the curled pages over and over again.

"Does it say in here where the *schulhaus* comes down?" she asked Mother, who was darning stockings while she rocked baby Jacob's cradle back and forth with her foot.

"The almanac is full of pictures, not? Mebbe it tells of the

schulhaus too, and how it makes down soon!" Martha kept talking to herself as she turned the pages. "It must be here some place, and I find it!"

That very afternoon Martha had heard Father talking about the school to the young man who had come back to pay for the damage done to the chicken house when his autogiro had crashed on it last Sunday. But because neither Father nor the young man seemed to be sure, Martha thought she might be able to find in the almanac whether her *schulhaus* would have to come down.

She thought because it told everything else it would surely tell this too. It always told about the weather better even than Grandpappy's pink goosebone. It told Father when to butcher the pigs so they would give the most meat. And when to pick the apples so they would not rot. She knew too that David got his history dates from the almanac and Hetty found out how to make such good cakes. So it must surely tell when the *schulhaus* would come down, if only she could find it.

"Mo-ther!" Martha asked again in a pleading voice. "Is it here if the *schulhaus* comes down?" To get Mother's attention she banged her fist on top of the wood box until she winced from the sting of it.

"Sh-sh, Jacob sleeps!" Mother put her fingers on her lips. "*Nein, nein,* Martha—we hear about the *schulhaus* at church, and read about it in the papers, not in the almanac," she explained patiently.

Martha hung the almanac back on its nail, but she was still wondering and thinking it over.

"Does the *schulhaus* come down soon, mebbe? Soon as the dandelions make in the pasture, Mother?"

"Nein, Martha, we hope not by the springtime."

"I'm glad," Martha sighed in a satisfied way. "Teacher was *so* nice that *schulday,* and we sing *Be-autiful Snow* dis way." She straightened up, threw back her head, and hummed and sang the tune as best she could. "Be-a-utiful snow! Bea-utiful snow!" her childish voice died off in a whisper, then started again—"Beauti—"

"It's time for David to come from school, Martha," Mother said, looking up at the clock. "Quick, make ready, he looks for you! Put on your thickest shawl—it comes colder all the time now."

Martha turned quickly. She had forgotten all about David. And she must tell him about the aeroplane man too. He had come back and David had missed him. She hurried now with her bonnet and shawl and mittens, and when the door closed behind her, Mother sighed with relief.

Turning to Hetty who was *snitzing*—slicing—apples for sauce, Mother said, "Martha thinks so old-like. She hears such a lot and bothers herself so about the *schulhaus.* And she likes Teacher. So some night we must tell her to come for supper, not, Hetty? She has the high learning, I know, but she makes out good with the children—and I like her, too."

The next morning when Martha slipped out of her warm bed and tiptoed over the cold floor to the window, she was surprised to see feather snowflakes falling over the fields and fences.

"It snows again!" she shouted, wondering if Grandpappy's pink goosebone had told about this snow too.

She dressed quickly, leaving her long apron for Mother to button down the back. By the time Hetty had placed a big dish of sizzling fried *ponhaus* (scrapple) on the table, Martha was down in the kitchen ready to eat. The breakfast table was laden with good things—fried potatoes, dried beef and gravy, chow chow, prunes swimming in thick syrup, bread, *schmear kase* to use in place of butter, coffee and applebutter tart.

"Our Martha must eat more *ponhaus,*" Father told her, as he pinched her pale cheek. "Makes the roses come! *Ya! Ya!*"

David and Martha liked to eat breakfast in the early morning darkness with the big lamp in the middle of the table, while everybody talked over what he had planned to do for the day.

"*Ya, vell,* Mother, it snows for Menno Weaver's sale today," Father said, sipping his steaming cup of coffee with real pleasure.

"The almanac makes out snow for today, and so it is," Mother replied confidently. "But we go anyhow," she added with a special smile for David. She knew David had his heart set on a bright, shiny harness for Cap and she hoped there would be one offered at the sale.

David looked up happily. He had been counting on the sale. It was such a treat for him. Mother would write him an excuse note to leave school at one o'clock, something she did not do very often, and with some of the other boys he would go on to the Menno Weaver farm. He felt sure there would be a set of

shiny, screechy harness for sale and they would buy it for Cap.

By one o'clock the snow had nearly all melted—just as Grandpappy said it would after consulting his goosebone! But everybody knew that the slushy roads would not keep the crowds of people from going to the Weaver's big farm. The Weavers were moving to a hotel in the city and were selling all their farm implements and household furniture.

As soon as they had eaten their lunch, David and three other boys started out from school for the sale. As they trudged a shorter way over rough plowed fields, one mile did not seem so far to go. Soon they could see the long lines of automobiles and wagons around the Weaver farm. Hundreds of people from all over Lancaster County had been gathering there for hours, and from Blue Ball, New Holland, Morgantown, Churchtown, and Smoketown they flocked to one of the largest sales of the year.

"When all the people want the same things, it makes a good sale," Johnny Zook said wisely. And David agreed with him and thought of the harness he wanted for Cap. He hoped too many other people wouldn't want it.

When they reached the house finally they saw that many strangers had come to the sale, too. But it was a friendly gathering. Everyone was talking and the air was full of Pennsylvania Dutch as well as English.

Halfway between the house and the barn were a hot dog stand, a peanut roaster and a bubbling pot of coffee. A kettle of stewed oysters stood beside the huge coffee pot, all ready to be sold.

"It smells just wonderful!" the boys kept saying to each other, hungry again so soon after their lunch. They sniffed the air greedily.

"I think I buy some peanuts," Johnny Zook said, feeling in his *wammus* pocket for his money.

He came back to the other boys after spending his nickel and pressed his cold fingers down into the hot bag of freshly roasted nuts. "A-h! Feels *goot*—buy some and try it!" he told them. But David did not follow his advice. He had to keep all his savings toward the purchase of a harness.

The things to be sold were piled all over the porch and out in the yard, so that people could look them over before buying. There were old-fashioned cord beds, featherbeds, tables, an old water bench, chairs, stoves, rag carpets, dishes, pots and scrapple pans. These were tin, oblong in shape, in which scrapple was poured after it was cooked. When it was cold and firm it was cut in slices for frying. There were clocks, too, and canned fruits in jars, applebutter crocks, potted plants and many other articles. The sale bills down at the cross roads had read, "Everything must be sold."

Mother, Mrs. Hurst, and Mrs. Zook were all there, in warm double shawls and big bonnets, while Martha and Katie, snug in their winter clothing, kept close beside them.

"This makes a good *haussteur* [house furnishing] for Lizzie," Mrs. Hurst said, as she examined a brass preserve kettle that stood among the pots and pans.

"You know my Lizzie marries Benjamin Beiler's Ezra on this Thanksgiving Day coming," she explained to Mrs. Zook.

She had already told the good news to Mother.

"I hear he makes up to her." Mrs. Zook nodded her head knowingly. "He has his farm ready a long time back, not?"

The women tapped the brass kettle with their knuckles to make sure it was sound, and then held it up to the light to look for holes.

"Good enough, not too *sin,*" they declared as one of them stood it back among the other kettles and turned to look over some of the old dishes.

"I think I buy a featherbed for Lizzie, too, if it doesn't weigh too heavy!" Mrs. Hurst decided.

"Oyez! Oyez! O-o-yez! This way! This way!" the voice of the auctioneer cried from the front porch, and the people gathered around him, for the sale was really about to start. Jonas Minnich was the crier, and he seemed to know everyone there.

"Get up close, or you can't hear me! Get up close or you miss a bargain!" He boomed in a voice that was as loud as a megaphone.

He held up one thing after another, praising everything highly, and made jokes as he asked for bids.

"Don't hold on to your purse-strings so tight. You farmers have lots of money!"

"And we work to get it!" A bantering voice came from the crowd.

"How much am I bid for this brass kettle?" the auctioneer shouted now as he swung the kettle back and forth before the crowd.

"Maybe it's gold—looks good for another hundred years, anyhow, ladies! All sound—you hear?" Tum! Tum! Tum-pety-tum! and he beat a tattoo on it with his fingers.

"What am I bid? Twenty-five cents, twenty-five cents—or do you mean twenty-five dollars?"

Everybody laughed and he went on calling. "Twenty-five cents, twenty-five cents, twenty-five cents," as fast as he could say it, until the words ran together in a long loud mumble, and then it began to sound to David like "Cents twenty-five, cents twenty-five, cents twenty-five—"

David was anxious for the crier to get through with all the house things so that they would go on to the barn and get to the shiny black harness he wanted for Cap. He felt in his *wammus* pocket now for the two dollars he had taken from his matchbox bank this morning.

Then, "Do I hear thirty cents?" The auctioneer waited a second for someone to nod.

"Thirty cents, thirty cents, thirty cents—do I hear thirty-five? Come now, this is no tin basin I'm offering you! Forty cents, forty cents, forty-five, fifty—" and he wheedled bids up to seventy-five cents.

"Is that all I'm bid for this brand new old kettle? Great for making ketchup, ladies! Going, go-i-n-g, *gone*—to the lady standing over there beside the pump."

Of course, that lady was Mrs. Hurst, who seemed delighted with Lizzie's *haussteur*.

The sale went on and on. Martha and Katie hopped up and down on their toes to keep warm. But they were having a good

time even though they were chilled through and through.

"Let's look in the house once," Katie said. *"Koom!* Mebbe it warms us."

They strolled through the big bare rooms, downstairs and then upstairs, until they noticed the open door leading to the garret.

"It's the sale up there, too, I guess," Martha said. "Let's look." Up the rickety steps, cluttered on both sides with empty flower pots and bags, they climbed.

"It must be the sale up here soon," Katie felt sure as she stepped into the cold cheerless garret. "It's so full here, too!"

"A-a-h!" Martha drew in a long breath, "smells *shust* like our garret!"

They could hear the birds hopping and scratching on the slate roof above, and the drone of busy voices in the yard far below them as they picked their way carefully among apple-butter crocks, lard cans and boxes piled high with bars of home-made soap. Onions and lima beans that had been spread on newspapers to dry were strewn all over the floor.

"It's a lot to sell, not?" Martha said, looking around in surprise.

Hanging over their heads from the rafters they could see bunches of dried boneset tea, catnip and peppermint, red peppers for pepper hash, strings of unhusked popcorn, a dried beef, little gourds, big ears of seed corn and small bags of dried apple *snitz* and cherries.

Katie reached up and squeezed a bag of cherries slowly.

"Smells *goot,* Martha—sweet! Here, I hold you up once.

Don't squeeze too hard! Maybe it's not *goot* for them."

Martha dug her cold fingers into the cherry bag and breathed in the faint, sweet odor, then slid down from Katie's arms.

"Look, Katie!" She pointed over to the other end of the garret. "It's a Grandpappy's trunk over there like we have!"

Back in the dusty corner by the crumbling chimney, they saw a little old leather-covered trunk that was studded all over with heavy brass tack heads green with age. Fastened around the lid were two wide leather straps with clumsy buckles.

"Shust like ours!" Martha was so sure. "Grandpappy tells me how his pappy—*der Grosspappy*—brings it f-a-r over the water!"

"Yes," Katie agreed with her, "far from Switzerland over two hundred years ago!"

"Let's look in," Martha proposed eagerly.

"We mustn't touch, mebbe!" Katie said, but then gave in.

As they lifted the trunk lid up by the straps, the rusty hinges creaked mournfully, and a delicate odor of lavender and camphor floated around them. They leaned away over the trunk in order to see more closely a beautiful, hand-woven coverlet, yellowed from the long years. Woven on the corner that was folded toward them was a wreath of leaves encircling a date and several initials:

M W

S W 1800

"That's for Menno and Sara Weaver, the great *Grossfater* and *Grossmutter,*" Katie told Martha. "See the pile of towels

1876

with the tulips embroidered on them there? The *Grossmutter* weaves them long ago, when she sits on a weaving stool. Oh, they worked a lot then, not?"

Martha's eyes sparkled with interest but Katie looked around now anxiously. "Mebbe we better go downstairs, it's no sun any more. See, it gets dark up here already!" And she dropped the trunk lid with a bang.

A-a-choo! A-choo! A puff of dust tickled Martha's nose, and when she opened her eyes she saw Katie disappearing down the garret stairs.

"Katie, Katie! My shawl—it makes fast—it pulls! I mustn't tear it! O-o-h!" Martha wailed.

Katie rushed back and tried her best to lift the lid again, but it stuck tight over Martha's woolen shawl.

"Stand still, Martha, wait once a while," she told her in a motherly voice. "I'll fetch David. Now don't fuss up—*ver-shteh*—understand?" And she hurried down the cluttered garret steps as fast as she could go.

In the meantime everything at the house had been sold and the crowd had moved out to the barn. Several cows, a *hummy* (calf), two horses, a *hutshli* (colt), a plow, a shovel, harrow, wheelbarrow, springwagon, a fine set of harness, and many, many other farm tools were there to be sold.

David kept close to Father, and when the shiny, almost brand new harness was put up for sale he held his breath. He wanted so much to see Cap wear a harness like that!

"What am I bid?" came the booming voice of the auctioneer.

"One dollar, one dollar, one dollar." David nodded his head bravely, and the auctioneer noticed him, small as he was. But then another head nodded and David waited. Would it be "one dollar fifty, one dollar fifty?"

But, "Two dollars!" shouted the auctioneer. "Two dollars, two dollars, two dollars," and David's hand dropped to his pocket. He felt for the red handkerchief in which he had carefully knotted his precious two dollars. That was all he had! He couldn't bid any more.

In another minute Mother was by his side. "I help out with my egg money, David," she said, and kept nodding to the auctioneer as she snapped and unsnapped her old purse.

David's breath came quickly. They would get the harness sure, if Mother thought it was so important.

But somebody else was bidding just as earnestly. Somebody else wanted that shiny black harness. David watched Ezra Beiler nod his head.

"Four dollars! Four dollars! Four dollars! Nobody gives me five?"

David's hand went up recklessly, but the next second almost the auctioneer was chanting, "Six dollars, six dollars!"

It was going to be more than Mother had thought, after all, so she stopped bidding too. David's two dollars would go back into the matchbox behind the pewter teapot on the kitchen mantel, to be saved for another sale day. And David was so disappointed that he did not hear Father's voice take up the bidding right away. Not until after the auctioneer's voice said

"Eight dollars," did he hear Father shout "Nine!" But Ezra Beiler shouted "Ten," before the auctioneer had a chance to even take up Father's bid.

Then Father's voice again. This time stubborn, but careful.

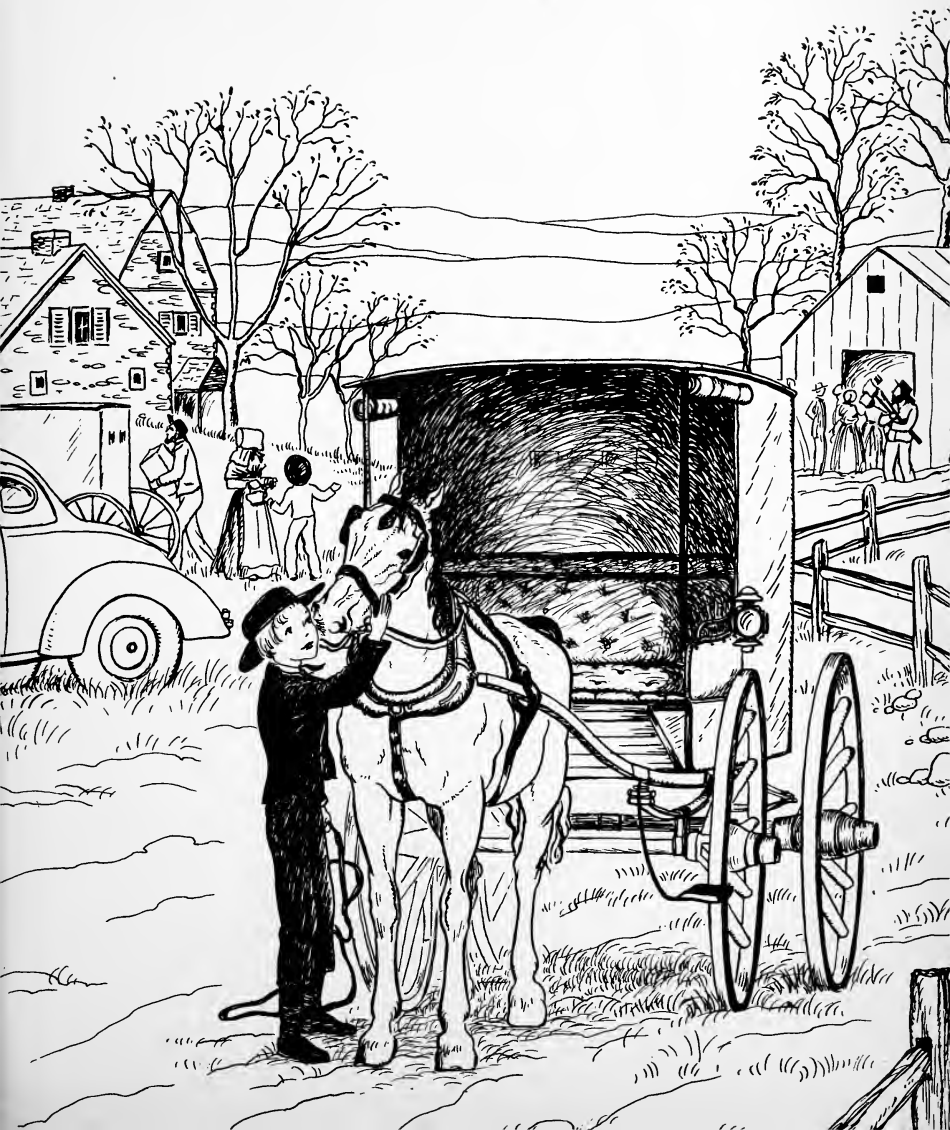
"Ten fifty," Father cried. And David waited, but there was no other voice. The auctioneer started to wheedle again, but the bidding had stopped. The harness was theirs—Cap's. David was so happy he couldn't talk. Father looked very pleased with himself as he came over to them and said, smiling, "You work it out in the hayfield in June! I need an extra hand. It's a nice harness. Take it to the wagon."

David reached for it and was off to show it to Cap. Cap whinnied when he heard the boy coming. He nuzzled into David's hand and David leaned his cheek against him. Cap was warm and alive. He understood when you spoke to him, and was glad when you petted him or brought him an apple. He was much nicer than an automobile or an aeroplane.

David put the new harness carefully under the front seat and went back to Mother and Father. The nice shiny harness was all he wanted! And working out in the hayfield with other men seemed like an easy thing to do!

Now that the sale was over everyone was in a hurry to get home to do his farm work. Things were piled into autos and carriages until it looked like a big moving day all along the country roadside.

David was helping Father tie a shovel and rake which they



had bought to the back of their Germantown wagon. Suddenly he looked up and saw Katie leaping nimbly toward them.

"It's Martha. She sticks in the *Grosspappy's* trunk up in the garret!" she managed to gasp.

"Run, David!" Father said. "I come then! Make fast!"

When David reached the top of the garret steps, followed closely by Katie, he saw Martha standing in front of the old trunk, her back toward him, whimpering and talking to herself.

"Ach!" David stood still, looking almost disappointed. "I thought you get into the trunk. *Vas iss?* What is it? Why didn't you stay by Mother?"

"I—it's my shawl!" wailed Martha softly.

"Well, open the shawl pin and walk once. My, girls iss dumb!" he added, but not as scornfully as usual.

Martha and Katie had not thought of unpinning the shawl, and as it dropped from Martha's shoulders she made a quick step forward, only to be jerked back suddenly.

"It's my apron, too! O-o-h, it mustn't tear!"

"Stand still, I fix it!" David tugged and tugged at the straps. He knew he must not be rough or he would break the old leather, but the lid refused to budge. So he took out his pocketknife, slipped the blade under the trunk's edge, and *poof!* Martha was free.

"There, *Woonerfitsik!"* he said, as he shut the trunk lid lightly. "You must nose into everysing. I never see such a *woonerfitz!* Now, hurry, we go home already!"

"Is it no sale up here?" Martha asked, struggling to repin her shawl with cold fingers.

"No, they save these things," David told her as he helped her with her shawl. "But hurry. Come, I have something to show you!"

They hurried down the stairs and out into the yard. Katie was nowhere in sight as Martha followed David over to the wagon. Father had just finished tying the shovel and rake to the wagon as Martha rushed to him. He looked at her in astonishment.

"Why I thought you—" he began, but stopped short when he saw Mother coming across the road carrying a small, low rocking chair held out in front of her.

Father had a "crutch" against womenfolk rocking in a rocking chair on a work day. He objected to them because he thought it looked lazy to sit and rock, and he did not look so well pleased at Mother bringing home another rocker.

Mother set the rocking chair down on the frozen ground with a thud. "It will be good for you to hold baby Jacob on your knee and play, *Reite, reite, Gowlie!* [ride, ride a horse!]" she told him. "I get it cheap!"

"*Ya, vell,* Mother," and Father looked pleasant now. "Shust jump in the wagon. We go soon." He tied the rocker on the wagon with the rake and shovel, and climbed up beside David.

David was proudly showing the fancy, shiny harness to Martha. "Cap likes it," he said. "I show it to him. He wears it to church on Sunday."

"Giddap, Cap," said Father, and off they went. David held the harness partly in his lap and when Father saw his shining eyes he was satisfied. He chuckled.

"It was a good sale, not, David? But Ezra Beiler must wait for another one if he likes to have a harness—or buy himself a brand new one."

FIVE

THE THANKSGIVING WEDDING

IT WAS JUST TWO DAYS BEFORE THANKSGIVing and David and Martha were on their way to Mrs. Hurst's house. Half way across the fields they sat for a while on the top rail of a fence over which they had to climb. From here they could see the scarecrow that Father had put up in the cornfield in the spring. Father put it there to scare the crows away so that they would not eat the young corn.

The scarecrow was old and tattered now, and flapped and dangled about in every little breeze. It even seemed to bow to them across the wide field.

"See, David, he looks the way Grandpappy's old Charlie

tramp looked long ago, I bet!" Martha said, pointing to the scarecrow with one hand and holding on to the rail fence with the other. "Look, his bundle hanging on the stick over his shoulder is full like our rag bag!"

"What wonders *me,*" said David, "is why his hat is so full of little holes."

"And his jacket splits up the back a lot, too," said Martha.

"Martha Wenger!" cried David in surprised disappointment. "There sits a crow on his shoulder! *Ach,* he's no good. That's why his hat is full of holes. He lets the crows pick in it! No wonder Shep makes so at him! Keep quiet, Shep! Here, come here!"

Shep was barking and pawing up the ground around the scarecrow that wasn't really a scarecrow at all. But when David called to him again, "He's no good, Shep, I tell you. He ain't no scarecrow. He lets the crows eat him. Keep quiet now! Come here!" he stopped barking and pawing and bounded over to David.

"Come on, Martha," said David, as he jumped to the ground among some prickly blackberry vines. "Don't stick yourself on the bushes! Jump over there where the honeysuckle grows."

He held tightly to Mother's pie plates which he carried under his arm. Mother was lending her pie plates to Mrs. Hurst to bake mince and pumpkin pies for Lizzie's wedding on Thanksgiving Day, so David felt that he and Martha were going on a very important errand to the Hurst house. Martha was so excited about the wedding.

"We better make fast, David. See, the black smoke puffs out her chimney and she starts the pies!" Martha knew all the signs. "She bakes a lot of pies for *der huchzig Tad* [the wedding day], you know!"

Soon they could smell cakes baking and ham cooking for the big day. Martha was glad that Mrs. Hurst had needed Mother's pie plates too, for now she would have a chance to see all that was going on in the Hurst kitchen at wedding time. The Amish people usually married in the late fall and winter, after the harvest was over, when they were no longer busy working in the fields.

When they reached the house they saw four big turkeys hanging on the back porch. Then Martha knew that it would be a good wedding!

Lizzie was in the kitchen making her own wedding cake. Martha looked at her carefully but she seemed just the same as on any other day. And she had expected her to look so different, after all the talk about the wedding!

"I come to your *huchzig,* Lizzie, and wear my best dress." Martha in her excitement almost had her nose in the cake batter. "Will you wear your best dress? Mom says that—" but Martha heard David calling her and Lizzie never did learn what Mother said.

"It's time to go home," said David and started off at a brisk trot. Martha tried hard to keep up with him, but he moved over the stubbly ground too fast for her.

"Wait once a little," she puffed behind him. "I think when it iss my wedding day, I'll have turkey too!"

David stopped then and looked at Martha, for he was not only surprised at what she said, but the way in which she said it. He was glad that she was learning to speak English so much better.

"Yes, well," he answered. "You have turkey. Mebbe two of them! But your turkeys have a long time to gobble yet."

They had almost reached their own house by this time, and David saw Father on his way to the barn. "Here, take my *wammus* to the house, Martha. I go help Father to milk."

Thanksgiving was a beautiful day for Lizzie Hurst's wedding. "Nippy, and a dapply sky," Father said, "but it doesn't look for snow. Shust warm enough for the young people to play 'bloom sock' in the barn."

The wedding was to be a solemn but happy occasion, with plenty to eat and games the whole day long. Only the Amish folk were invited. Of course no pictures were to be taken because the Amish did not believe in such worldly things. It was to be just like the weddings of their forefathers in Switzerland long ago—very, very plain.

Hetty and Mother were working unusually fast for they had to be ready by nine o'clock to start to the wedding.

"I'm so glad the goose grease makes baby Jacob better this morning," Mother said as she dressed him. "He crouped up last night and I thought he would be ailing today. There, hold still once, Jacob!"

David was finished with his morning work early too, but he was not so excited as Martha about the wedding.

"Weddings is more for girls, anyhow. I sooner go to the County Fair or a horse sale," he told her, while he combed his long, silky hair in front of the little looking-glass that was fastened to the comb and brush case hanging by the kitchen window.

"*Ach,* you're spited [jealous] you don't have an open-top buggy and get married too!" Martha teased him. She was *so* excited and restless, racing upstairs and down again, trying her best to help the family get ready. She had washed her face until it shone like a china cup, and put on her new purple dress with the dark green apron. Her shiny brown braids were bound neatly around her head, and with her flushed round cheeks, she looked like a little old-fashioned Dutch doll.

"I mustn't *strubbel* my hair," she said, putting on her bon-

net carefully so that she would not disarrange the braids. "It must lay flat, s-o!"

At last they were all ready to go. Even Shep seemed to know that something unusual was going on today. As they went out to the porch he sat by the door, excited and eager, waiting to be told that he might go, too. When David commanded him sternly, "You sit by Grandpappy now and guard him," he looked so sad and crestfallen that David patted him on the head and promised, "I run home after while to see how you get along, and maybe stay home. Weddings is for girls anyhow!" Then he gave Shep another pat and closed the door.

Father carried baby Jacob. "We walk the fields over," he said. "It gives more room for other wagons out on the road," he explained, leading the way, with Mother carrying baby Jacob's little black satchel, and David, Martha and Hetty trailing after.

They walked slowly over the uneven hard ground, stepping carefully over the tobacco stubbles. Although it was early they could see that a great many horses and wagons already had gathered at the Hurst farm.

Men stood around in groups in the yard. *"Wie geht's, wie geht's!"* they greeted Father and the whole family as they made their way up to the house. There they all stopped to clean their shoes on the iron mud scraper that was fastened to the first step at the porch.

"It looks like church," Martha said, as they opened the door into the Hursts' "best room" that was already well filled with people.

"I smell the turkeys!" she whispered to David.

"Sh! You *schwetz* [speak] too loud—sh-h!" he said, back of his hand. David spoke Pennsylvania Dutch because he too was really very much excited.

Martha was right. Hursts' sunny "best room," with its potted plants and bright colored flowers on the deep window sills, was filled with delicious odors! Voices buzzed, children and babies laughed and fretted. Dishes clattered out in the kitchen, and there were sounds of hasty footsteps overhead.

Martha kept close to Mother, twisting and untwisting her handkerchief around her first finger. This *huchzig* will be wonderful, she thought—as good as the *schulday!*

The room was growing quieter. Only the weak wail of a tiny baby upstairs could be heard. "It starts?" Martha leaned over to ask Mother after they had found good seats near the front of the room.

The Bishop stood at one end of the room with Ezra and Lizzie seated before him. He announced a hymn which was sung in German. Then another hymn which was sung in English. After this there was a long prayer. It *was* like church, thought Martha, as she tried to sit quietly, but much more exciting! She could hardly wait for *der huchzig* part.

At last Lizzie, looking quaint and pretty in her plain brown dress and dainty white mull cap, stood up with Ezra before the Bishop. It was a very solemn occasion, because they knew that their promises would last forever and ever.

Martha could see some of the women pat their eyes with their crumpled handkerchiefs. Then she looked up into

Mother's shining, happy face and snuggled close to her side.

"Is that all?" she whispered, looking a bit disappointed when Lizzie and Ezra sat down again.

But there was another long sermon and another prayer before the wedding was over. Then the room buzzed with happy voices again as everybody shook hands with Lizzie and Ezra. And the good time began!

"It was *shust* like church," Martha said afterward to Katie Zook. "I liked it."

Now the women started to set tables for the big wedding feast, while the young people went to the barn to play games.

"Let's go for a walk down by the limekiln," Katie said to Martha and several of the other little girls.

"No-o-o! It's spooks at the limekiln," Martha objected.

"Martha Wenger! Whoever tells you such things!" Katie asked her in surprise.

"Why Hetty says it's spooks there!" Martha felt sure that if Hetty said so it must be true, although she knew too that Hetty often joked like Father.

"Spooks is only shadows anyway," Katie comforted her. "Come on, girls! I'm going!" and she started down the road toward the old limekiln.

"Our Cap got *verhext* [bewitched] in front of the limekiln once and went lame. Then he lost a shoe," Martha insisted as she hurried along beside Katie.

"He'd a lost it just as good in front of the schoolhouse—" Katie argued.

Martha had never thought of her schoolhouse being bewitched, but for a moment now she wondered. It might get *verhext* too.

"He'd a lost his shoe just as good in front of the schoolhouse if the nails had dropped out there," Katie said again, and Martha felt better to hear this.

But now she remembered something else. "Sammy Fasnacht's barn was *verhext* too when it burned down," she said, "because he didn't have circles or fans painted on it to keep the witches away. Hetty tells me that. She hears it often."

"No, Martha, no!" Katie was very impatient now. "Hetty tells you wrong—all wrong! Sammy Fasnacht burned leaves too close to his barn—the witches weren't near it. *Vershteh?* The schoolhouse could come down that way, too. It has no circles or fans on it, either, so there."

By this time the girls had reached the limekiln and were turning back to the Hurst farm again. Martha was quiet now, wondering if her *schulhaus* might burn down because it didn't have circles or fans painted on it. But Katie said that didn't count, and maybe Hetty was only teasing.

Just as they were walking past a pile of logs stacked in the Hurst orchard, they saw one of the logs rolling slowly down toward them, although there was no one in sight.

"It's spooks—I tell you so!" Martha screamed in fear as she started to run, followed by the other two girls. But Katie was brave. "I'll find the spook!" she shouted as she ran around the log pile to look.

"Georgie Zook!" she shrieked. "I've a mind to shake you! How could you do such a thing?"

For there sat Georgie on the huge chopping block, contentedly unraveling one of Mrs. Hurst's long woolen stockings. Katie remembered seeing Mrs. Hurst knitting on it last week. She watched him in amazement now as he gave one long pull and waited to see the tiny yarn loops pop up—then another pull as far as his arms could reach, while the gray yarn piled up beside him.

"I make a ball like the big boys have when they play corner ball," he told Katie, so pleased with himself. "The shoemaker makes a cover from leather. Then I play!"

"Oh, you naughty boy!" Katie snatched all that was left

of the stocking from him, then picked up the loose pile of crinkly gray yarn and rolled it in her apron.

"Now Mother has to knit it all over again for Mrs. Hurst. Tsk! Tsk! Pull up the knitting needles quick, Georgie. Don't bend them!"

Georgie had stuck the four steel needles in a neat row in a crack in the top of the chopping block to watch them sparkle in the sun!

"Here, give them to me!" Then grabbing Georgie by the jacket Katie marched him down the road after the girls.

"Here's your spook, Martha!" she laughed, almost bumping Martha over as she shoved Georgie up to her. "Take him home for Hetty—she likes spooks! See, he unraveled Mrs. Hurst's stocking she was just knitting. It's nothing left but the toe!"

"Don't cry, Georgie," Martha said, when she saw him pucker up his face ready to burst into tears. "I don't take you to Hetty—she don't want you. She has a nice young man with a horse and buggy!" The others girls giggled at Martha's joke. "But I guess you shust don't get no custard pie for dinner, Georgie." Martha scolded now. "That fixes you!"

As they hurried along Martha remembered the other time she thought she heard spooks at the limekiln. Now she said to herself, "Last year the spooks turn into black pigs and now they turn into Georgie. I guess it ain't no spooks after all."

"Come on, girls!" Katie was calling and beckoning to them from farther down the road. "They lift Ezra over the fence. The bridegroom goes over the fence!"

The girls fairly flew now. They must not miss this part of the wedding.

They reached the apple orchard just in time. "Watch! Up he goes! O-*ver!*" The young unmarried men were all there together to help toss the bridegroom over the fence to the married men on the other side. "Now he's married for good," Katie explained, "and can raise his beard like our Pops do! That's how they say, anyhow!"

"Well, he looks shust the same to me," said Martha, as she settled her bonnet on her head, ready to follow the crowd into the barn where they would play games.

The little girls stood a long while and watched the older boys and girls play "bloom sock." They played this game with a hard knotted handkerchief that was passed from one to the other as they sat on a long bench on the threshing floor. When the one who was "it," the "hunter," tried to grab the handkerchief and was "socked" with the hard knot, the barn rang with laughter. They were having such fun! The air was heavy with the odor of drying tobacco hanging overhead and choky with dust from well filled haymows. The singing games echoed and re-echoed through the barn, startling droves of pigeons from their perches in the cupola on the roof and bringing them flapping and cooing down through the sunlight to the ground.

"Ouch!" shouted David, after he had received an unusually hard "sock" from the knotted handkerchief he was trying to grab. "I guess I have enough for a while. I guess I go across now to see how Grandpappy keeps with Shep."

Martha watched him go but was surprised to see him back in a little while. He seemed to have changed his mind about weddings being more for girls! She could see he was having a good time.

And now word was passed around that the big dinner was ready. And there was feasting the rest of the day! Time and again the tables were cleared and freshly set. One group would eat, and then another, until finally everyone, including all the children, had had their dinners. Martha had three "helps" of turkey. There wouldn't be any leftovers for her next day, she knew. And David was beginning to feel uncomfortably full after his many "helps" by the time Father and Mother said it was time to go home to do the farm work.

"I want to stay for the singing tonight," Martha begged Mother. "I w-a-n-t to s-t-a-y with Hetty and hear them sing!"

"Nein, nein, that's only for the big boys and girls to get acquainted at," Mother explained. *"Koom!* Lizzie and Ezra will visit with us soon. Then we make them a present."

Martha could hardly believe that the big day was really over, but she put on her bonnet and shawl and was ready to leave with Mother.

"Come, Martha, fetch the satchel and the paper *tutt* [bag] beside it." Mother was going out the door now. "Your Pop's in a hurry!"

Martha ran ahead then with David, carrying the bulging paper bag of cold turkey, apples, cakes and grapes which Mrs. Hurst was sending along for Grandpappy.

When they reached home David was first to open the kitchen door. Out bounded Shep to meet them. He barked and leaped about gleefully, glad to have them all home again.

"Down, Shep, down now. You dare have the bones from Grandpappy's turkey," David promised him.

"Here, Grandpappy. Mrs. Hurst thinks of you," said Martha, handing the bag of good things to him. "Oh, it was a *goot* wedding, Grandpappy. And now Lizzie Hurst cooks for Ezra Beiler over at his house, not?"

SIX

CHRISTMAS!

"HE'S TENDER! HE FATTENS LONG enough, and I think he eats good," said Mother, proud of her success at turkey raising. She was going over the eighteen-pound bird carefully for the last time, getting him ready for the Christmas feast the next day.

Martha and David crowded about closely as Mother flipped

the breastbone once more, wiped the big turkey both inside and out, and then looked again to be sure that every pin feather was out.

The whole house was aglow with Christmas! Hetty had given it a special cleaning, washed the windows, scrubbed the porches, and even scalloped papers for the closet shelves! Mother's luscious fruit cake, all tied up in a white muslin cloth and looking like a bad case of toothache, had been mellowing in a big brown lard can for over a month. She had made her *springerlies, pfeffernussen kuchen* [cakes], mince pies and *souse* [pig's feet jelly] the day before, and now everything was ready for the great day.

Martha and David had watched all these preparations with delight. But as usual, Martha showed her excitement more than did David, and asked a hundred questions, squealing and hopping about in glee.

"Looks like the wedding," she said, pinching one of the turkey's cold, plump legs. "Look! How big they make! Maybe the *Belsnickle* comes tonight, Mother, not?" she asked with high hope.

David had been telling Martha again about the German custom of boys calling themselves *"Belsnickles,"* going from house to house on Christmas eve with their faces masked, throwing candy and nuts on the floor for the children to pick up.

"Then when the children try to pick up these goodies," he told her earnestly, "the *Belsnickles* try to switch their fingers. Afterwards they hand the switch to the mother who puts it on the mantel to use during the year if the children are bad."

"Or, maybe the *Grishtkindl* comes?" Martha asked now, thinking he would be gentler than the *Belsnickles.*

"The *Grishtkindl* brings the presents with his reindeer. But only to good girls and boys," she added. "David says so, Mother."

But Mother and Father did not talk much about such things. They believed that Christmas was the day when the "inner light" shone bright on everyone and the true story of the Christ Child should be told instead.

"Martha," said Mother, "run upstairs and bring down the long, brown paper bundle tied with red string. It's on top of my painted chest."

Martha found four other packages on the painted chest too, but she picked out the long one tied with red string and carried it down the stairs to Mother.

"O-o-h! such fluffy, woolly slippers!" she exclaimed, when Mother opened the bundle.

"There," Mother said, smiling, as she handed a pair of lamb's wool slippers to Martha, "put them beside Grandpappy's bed tonight when he sleeps. Then he thinks the *Grishtkindl* was here."

Martha thought this over quietly for several seconds. Then she slipped her hands into the warm lamb's wool and looked at Mother knowingly— "He fools himself, but he likes it, not, Mother?"

"Christmas gift! Christmas gift!" Martha called over to David's room the next morning bright and early.

"Christmas gift! Christmas gift!" David answered her, and then there was a race to see who would be downstairs first.

"Christmas gift!" Mother greeted them and handed each one a round brown paper package.

In David's package was a red *wammus* and a big penknife. And Martha received a shiny schoolbox with three bright-colored lead pencils inside, and a box of very pretty *schnoop-duffs* [handkerchiefs].

"Hetty and I make the dinner today," Mother reminded Father, when breakfast was over. "It's a long way to church, over to the Beilers'—so make yourself ready, David. You go to church by Father today."

"It snows! It snows!" Martha was calling from the "best room" where she was trying out her new colored pencils. "Mebbe the *Grishtkindl* brings his reindeer, David!"

"Well, you tell him I'm a good boy, Martha, if he comes—I go to church."

"Maybe you bring somebody back from church for dinner," Mother suggested to Father. "Sammy Fasnacht likes to eat, or the Kreider sisters—they live all alone. It's a big turkey, you know."

The snow became deeper and deeper all morning, and Martha kept wiping the steam from the kitchen windows with her bare hand, for every time Mother opened the oven door to see if the sizzling, sputtering turkey was browning properly, a puff of steam would blow out and cover the cold panes. Martha wanted to see down the road. The *Grishtkindl* might come!

The best room was cosy and warm. Baby Jacob sat on a thick

blanket spread on the floor near the stove, and Martha played with him.

"It's Christmas, Jacob—Christmas!" she said, bubbling over with joy. "See your new horsie! David gives him to you. Look! He has a shiny harness, just like Cap, and his tail is plaited with red string!" But in answer baby Jacob only tried to stuff his calabash rattle down his throat as he gurgled and cooed.

"Church must make out now sure," Martha thought aloud, trying to see through the "best room" windows this time.

"Oh, they come! They come! Church makes out!" she called joyfully to Mother who was busy whipping up the mashed potatoes, that were to be served with the creamed onions, corn, cole slaw, turnips, and all the "fixings" of the turkey.

"A big car comes too! Iss it the *Grishtkindl,* you think, Mother?" Martha asked excitedly.

Mother took another look at the turkey and then slammed the oven door shut before running to the window to see for herself. With one swipe of her apron, she cleaned the window pane of steam. Yes, Martha was right! Father's yellow Germantown wagon was almost at the gate, and right behind it was a big, gray trailer. Mother knew! She had seen trailers when she drove to Lancaster.

"It's the house on wheels—I see them in Lancaster once, Martha."

"Hetty, come," Martha squealed, beside herself now with excitement.

Hetty ran across the kitchen floor and the three of them, Mother, Martha and Hetty crowded close to the window.

Mother had to keep wiping the steam from the panes as they watched.

Cap stopped at the gate. The wheels of the wagon were clogged with snow and the top looked like a big white iced cake. Father and David got out just as the trailer drew up in back of them, and a man stepped out of the automobile part. Then Father and the strange man, with David helping, broke a path up the snow-covered walk to the door of the "best room."

"Mebbe the *Grishtkindl* sends him!" Martha insisted, still hopeful.

"Mother," Father said, as he opened the door and stamped his feet to shake off the snow, "they buy some milk of us for their Christmas dinner. We have some?"

"Some milk!" she exclaimed, too surprised to say more as she followed Father into the kitchen.

David and the strange man, who was tall and beardless, crossed the room to stand by the stove. Baby Jacob, surprised by the stranger, started to cry and David picked him up to comfort him. Martha had forgotten all about baby Jacob, she was so curious about the house on wheels. She still had her face pressed against the cold window pane looking out through the storm at another little girl face pressed tightly against the small trailer window. Martha could hardly believe what she saw!

"Maybe they would eat Christmas dinner with us." Mother found words at last, turning to Father in the kitchen. "The turkey is done and it is plenty. Sammy Fasnacht doesn't come—*nein?*"

"*Nein,* he has it so in his back." Then he said, "*Ya, vell,* I

ask dis man," and Father went back to the "best room" again.

"Well," said the strange man whom David and Martha afterwards always called "Mr. Trailer," "my wife has dinner about ready, but it certainly would be fine to have Christmas dinner with a real family in a real house, and it is certainly good of you to invite us."

"Ya vell, iss goot," said Father, as Mother rushed out to the kitchen to lay three more places at the table.

So in another minute "Mr. Trailer" was going back down the snowy walk, and before long the side door of the trailer opened and a pair of steps unfolded and dropped to the ground. Then a little girl about Martha's size hopped out, followed by a woman. They had coats thrown over their heads and while the man closed the door of the trailer, the little girl and her mother waded up the drifted path and into the "best room."

As Mother took their coats, "Mrs. Trailer" looked about the pleasant room and drew nearer the stove. "It's so cheerful and warm in here!" she said. "Thank you so very much for asking us!"

Martha watched Mrs. Trailer and the little girl shyly for a few minutes before going nearer. She thought Mrs. Trailer was almost as nice looking as Mother, and the dress the little girl was wearing was as pretty as those the Brooks twins had on the day she went to school with David.

Mother gave all the coats to David who hung them in a row on the wall hooks. Then he hurried over to Grandpappy's room to help him to the window so that he could see the trailer too.

"Du liever friede! [Did you ever!]—it makes me think of the old Conestoga wagons they had for hauling when I was a boy, before we had trains." Grandpappy was so excited he had to go over to the "best room" to see the strangers, and David led him. There he talked with Father and Mr. Trailer, telling them all about the old times, when they drove eight horses hitched to the old Conestoga wagons.

"Eight horses to pull the heavy loads over the mountains," he said. "And the bells that hung over the horses' collars made like chimes. We could hear them far over the Valley. Times change! *Ya, vell—"* And after this long speech Grandpappy tottered back to his room again to wait for dinner.

While the men talked, Mother and Hetty were busy in the kitchen, putting the finishing touches to the Christmas feast. Mrs. Trailer played with baby Jacob, and Martha entertained the little girl with her dolly, Sally Ann.

"Kann er Deutsch? [Can you talk German?]" she asked, handing Sally Ann over to her little visitor.

"I'm Victoria," the little girl replied pleasantly, for she thought that Martha had asked her name.

"What?" Martha asked.

"Victoria is my name. What's yours?"

"Martha. Martha Wenger."

"That's a pretty name," said Victoria. "Let's play school, shall we?"

"Yes," Martha agreed. "And first we sing *Beautiful Snow*—like at my school," she said in her grown-up way. "You know, mebbe my little schoolhouse comes down and then I go to a big school. But I like my little school besser."

Victoria didn't know what to say to this. She thought a big school much more exciting. Most little girls wanted to go to a big school.

"Why do you have tucks all around your waist and sleeves and at the bottom of your dress?" she asked, looking Martha over carefully.

"It's to let out when I grow, see?" Martha showed her where Mother had already ripped out a tuck and the material was much brighter. "Pop says I grow like a weed!"

At this they both giggled and their giggles tinkled across the room like tiny bells, only to be silenced by Hetty calling them to dinner.

"Look," said Martha, stopping in front of Victoria before they went into the kitchen. She pushed at a loose front tooth with her tongue. "It wiggles—I must eat slow."

How nice the table looked! Right in the middle of it Hetty had placed a tall glass like a vase, filled with green celery. The tumblers held red fringed napkins folded three-cornered, and Martha was delighted to see that the turkey reposed on the big

purply meat platter that had a peacock painted in the center.

The long quiet blessing seemed extra long to the hungry children, who eyed the steaming turkey over their noses. Mother held baby Jacob on her lap and had to keep pushing her plate out of reach of his clutching hands.

At last Father stood up and carved the turkey! And he did not have to count for his "seven sours and seven sweets" today. There they all were in front of him!

"Help yourself! Help yourself!" he said again and again. "Mother grows this turkey—it's a fine bird."

"Yes, it is," agreed Mr. Trailer. "But we raise good turkeys in Canada too."

"You are from Canada then?" Father and Mother both asked at the same time.

"Many of our Amish people live in Canada now," Father told him.

"Yes," answered Mr. Trailer, "we live in Canada. Now we are on our way to Florida for the winter—but we started a little late!"

"Indeed we did," said Mrs. Trailer, "because this is a part of the country I should like to drive through in the summer time. Your Lancaster County farms must be beautiful. Such fine barns and houses!"

"Fine indeed," agreed Mr. Trailer. "No wonder Lancaster County is called the 'Garden Spot of America.' And I hear that you are going to build a big schoolhouse near here soon."

At this Martha stopped chewing and sat with her fork raised in the air, while David held on to a turkey leg with both hands.

It was a serious moment. Father crossed his knife and fork slowly on his plate before he spoke.

He won't be joking now, thought David.

"Ya-a!" Father began. "We have our little red schoolhouses for many years and now the Government tries to do away with them and build one big schoolhouse where all the children go together!"

"That is the new idea in education," Mr. Trailer assured Father. "The Township school, they call it."

"But," Father argued, "the people must borrow the money to build the big school. That is needless—to borrow. Our Amish people don't believe that way. Besides, we want our little one-room schools near our homes. Then our children can walk there, and needn't ride by a bus, *nein!"*

There was a silence now, broken only by a squeal from baby Jacob banging his pudgy hand on Mother's plate. Martha lowered her fork and David started to eat the turkey leg. Father thought a long time before he spoke again.

Then, "It's shust like this," he went on. "Our Amish people are not well known, and we are not proud and worldly. We keep to the old ways in everysing, and we want our children to do the same."

"I see, I see," said Mr. Trailer, realizing how serious Father was.

"We *must* keep our little schoolhouses," Father spoke again, "so our boys and girls will grow up in the way we think is right!"

After this he passed the mince pie around the table so that

everyone could help himself. Then Christmas dinner was over!

"Look, Victoria, my tooth still sticks!" Martha showed her on their way back to play.

"Why don't you pull it out?" Victoria suggested, very brave as long as it was not her tooth.

"Huh-uh!" Martha objected, shaking her head. "It falls out mebbe when I don't know it. Grandpappy tells me when *der Grosspappy* was a little boy long ago, the blacksmith pulled teeth. But he don't pull mine!"

Just then Victoria's mother called to her. "We must go now," she said, and both little girls looked unhappy over the parting. "Thank everybody for such a delicious Christmas dinner, Victoria."

Mr. Trailer wanted to pay for their dinner.

But, *"Nein, nein,"* Father refused him, looking at Mother who agreed with him with a nod of her head.

"We help spread the 'inner light' today," she said quietly over baby Jacob sleeping peacefully in her arms. "We have plenty. And maybe you stop again when you come back!"

Mr. and Mrs. Trailer smiled and thanked them again as they moved toward the door.

Martha was off in a corner of the room looking over her new box of handkerchiefs.

"Dis one," she said to herself. "Dis one with the tulip worked on it—it's prettiest." Then to Victoria, "Here," she said, "you have a pretty *schnoopduff* for church. I play the *Grishtkindl* fetched it!"

"Thank you very much, Martha, it's lovely." Then Victoria

stepped out into the snow behind her father and mother, and soon two happy little girl faces were again pressed flat against icy window panes, gazing out at each other until the trailer disappeared in the falling snow.

The day after Christmas, which the Amish people call "Second Christmas," turned out to be fine and clear. The snow had blown and drifted high on the by-road leading out to the State Road, and Father and Mr. Hurst and David were opening it up. Martha watched them for a few minutes from her bedroom window. They were shoveling what were called "turnouts" where the snow was piled high on both sides of the road. Drivers had to stop and look ahead; then one would wait while the other, going in the opposite direction, would pass.

Soon the delicious, familiar smell of "funnel" cakes reached Martha and sent her scurrying to the kitchen for her breakfast. Hetty had already made a stack of the buttered funnel cakes which she was keeping warm in the oven while she went on baking more.

She would let the batter run out of the blue funnel onto the sizzling hot plate, closing the bottom of the funnel with her finger while she moved it to another part of the hot plate. Then she turned the cakes deftly with a queer-looking paddle that Grandpappy had made out of iron a long time ago. It had a paddle on one end and a fork on the other. Father joked about it sometimes, saying, "It is like a good rule—it works both ways."

Breakfast was late this morning because Father and David had gone right out to clear a path through the snow in the by-road, and Hetty was keeping the funnel cakes warm for them. Baby Jacob was an early bird this morning and Martha, after stopping to watch Hetty for a second, ran over to hug him.

"Hetty makes funnel cakes for us this morning, Jacob. You must make big quick so that you can eat some too." Then, clapping her hands, she sang to Baby Jacob:

"Botsche, botsche, kuche,
Der Baker hot gerufe
Wer will goot Kuche bache,
Er muss haven sieben sache."

Paddy, paddy the cakes,
The baker has called
Who wishes to bake good cakes,
Must have seven good things in them.

Baby Jacob was clapping his hands too, and then suddenly he burst out laughing—and no wonder! For Martha had backed right into a bag of Mother's rag carpet balls and fallen, rolling over and over on the floor, while Tommy, the cat, who hardly ever left the barn to come into the house, was scampering wildly across the kitchen toward Martha.

"My tooth's out!—It's out!" Martha shrieked weakly. "Where iss it though?" She jumped up and stuck her tongue through the empty space to make sure it was really gone. Then

she looked all over the floor. When she noticed Tommy, he was gracefully arched, ready to pounce on something.

"Tommy—it's mine! Here!" And Martha snatched the pearly tooth swiftly from under his soft paws and clutched it tightly in her fist.

"I drop it down a rat hole, Tommy," she told him. "Out in your barn. It gives a gold tooth then. Hetty tells me so!"

She ran to the window and saw Shep gamboling about and barking at the bright, drifting bits of snow as the men shoveled.

Soon Father and David started toward the house and Martha ran to help Hetty get the chairs to the table for breakfast.

SEVEN

"SECOND CHRISTMAS"

LATER, WHEN THE SNOW HAD SETTLED enough, Father decided they would go sleighing. "We take Mother to the store in New Holland," he told Martha, who had been coaxing for a sleighride all morning. So after dinner he went to the barn to take out the old yellow sleigh that had stood so long in the wagon shed without being used. Its runners were rusty and rough, and the red, plush-covered seat was white with cobwebs and dry straws. It had not been out of the shed for two whole years now because Grand-

pappy's pink goosebone had not given any snows all last winter.

The sleigh looked very queer to Martha. She watched Father from her usual place at the kitchen window, while he brushed it carefully before hitching Cap into the shafts.

"B-r-r!" Father came stamping into the house to put on his long heavy coat. It had a shoulder cape, just like the kind of cape the Pilgrims used to wear. The coat looked green from age, but it was good and warm and Father would wear it a long time.

"Dress warm, Mother—*iss kalt!*" he said as he carried Grandpappy's brown buffalo robe from the back of the "best room" settle out to the sleigh. He covered the seat to make it warm for Mother and Martha. Only Mother and Martha were going with Father and they tied blue veils over their bonnets to keep out the cold air. Martha sat between Father and Mother. Though she stretched her short legs as far as she could, she could barely reach the brick that Mother had heated in the oven and Father had put on the floor of the sleigh to be sure their feet would keep warm. After Father tucked the blankets all snugly about them they were ready to start.

From the porch where they stood to wave good-bye, Hetty and David could see Cap plant his feet firmly as he strained on the shiny, screechy harness that Father had bought for him at the Menno Weaver sale. The sleigh creaked as it slid along the first few feet of snow with a jerk. Martha thought the floor boards were being twisted and torn apart as she saw the shafts

wiggle sideways with every pull. She looked into Father's face, expecting him to tell them to get out of the sleigh.

But he did not. Instead he said, "It goes better when the runners wear smooth awhile. Soon you have to hold your bonnets! Giddap, Cap!"

And sure enough, they were going faster and faster now. The sleigh runners sang a merry tune as they slid ever more smoothly over the crunching snow. Father had no bells on Cap or on the sleigh. Bells were "of the world" he thought, and against his religion. Besides, the sleigh could be seen very easily in the day time against the white snow. But at night he always had a light, because that was the law.

Twice on the way to New Holland Father stopped the sleigh and got out to knock the big balls of snow from Cap's hoofs. It had packed so hard on all of them that he looked as if he were running on stilts. And Father thought he might slip and fall, and perhaps break a leg. He would never want this to happen to Cap.

As they rounded a long curve still some distance from the town Martha could see away off a long, covered Conestoga bridge across the Conestoga Creek. She wondered how Cap would ever manage to pull them through it because there wouldn't be any snow in the bridge. But Cap knew what to do. He pulled the sleigh up the little hill and stopped just at the entrance to the bridge. Then Father got out and, after handing the lines to Mother, he pushed with all his strength at the back of the sleigh.

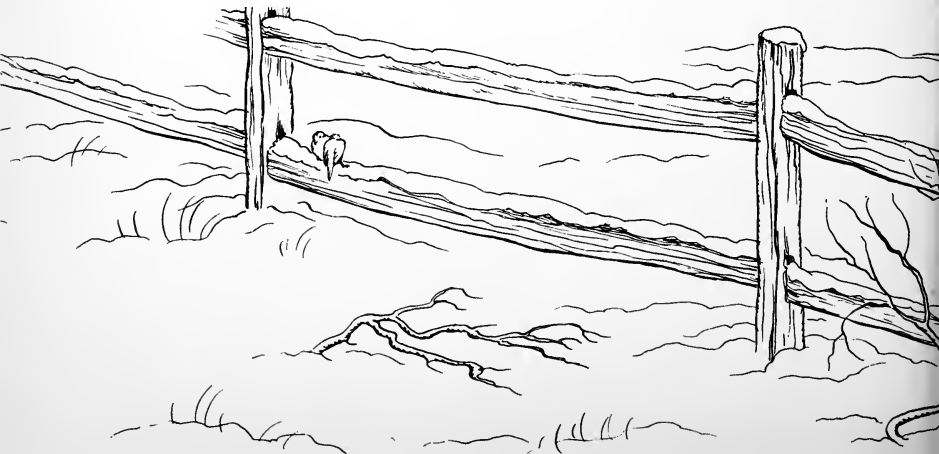
E-e-e-sh-sh-e-e-sh! The sleigh scratched and scraped over the dry, loose boards of the bridge. E-e-e-sh-sh-e-eh! Mother shivered at the squeaky sounds. "I'm glad it's over," she said, when she handed the lines back to Father.

"Not so bad when we come home. Other sleighs and automobiles carry snow in and make a track for us, Mother!" Father said comfortingly.

When at last they drew up in front of the grocery store in New Holland, Cap was frothing around his harness and steaming in the cold air like a basin of hot water. So Father threw Cap's own blanket over him to keep him from catching cold. Then they hurried into the store. Once inside, Martha clumped round and round in her heavy soled shoes, looking at everything as she tried to warm her numb feet. Her legs were so short it had been hard for her to keep her feet near enough the hot brick to keep them warm.

But now she soon forgot all about her feet in her interest in the store. "It's the *Grishtkindl* all around!" she whispered to Mother. "I like it! He looks so kind—just like the Bishop!"

Mother had not brought eggs today, as she very often did, to trade in for sugar, coffee, flour, rice or macaroni, because the



hens did not lay as well when the weather was cold, and too, she had used so many eggs to bake her Christmas *kuchen!*

"Now, some peppermints for Grandpappy," she said to the clerk after all her groceries had been bought.

"You have one now, Martha. Grandpappy would say so!"

Martha took one of the shiny, red-striped candies and popped it into her mouth as she followed Father and Mother out to the sleigh. All the bags of groceries were dropped under the lid of the seat and they bundled themselves in once more. The sleigh creaked and groaned again as they started off with a jerk, and soon the whizzing, singing sound of the runners was music in Martha's ears. She did not wear her veil going home, and the biting wind stung her cheeks until they were rosy as a Pippin apple. The peppermint candy, which was tucked away in her right cheek, made her mouth feel cold inside too. Sometimes the wind got up under her bonnet and almost lifted it off her head. But she would pull it on again and then cover her hands quickly under the blanket.

"Our Martha sleeps tight tonight!" Father was sure when he lifted her out of the sleigh in front of their own blue gate. "She's no *penesick* maid [sickly girl] mit such red cheeks. Look —David and baby Jacob hammer at the window, Martha!"

"Tomorrow mebbe we take baby Jacob for a ride, not?" Martha begged of Mother.

"*Ya, vell,* mebbe," Mother agreed, "if the wind lets up.

EIGHT

TEACHER LEARNS A LESSON

WINTER WAS OVER AT LAST, BUT DAvid and Martha did not have to look in their *Baer's Almanac* to learn this. There were such lovely signs all about! The days were much longer again and fragrant blossoms floated through the air, while robins hopped jauntily over the soft, crumbling ground. Then too, the short tender grass waved by the roadside, hiding bunches of "johnny-jump-ups" and dandelions along the rail fences, where Martha picked them with delight. David's school would be over in two weeks, and when Martha went to meet him these balmy May

days, she pushed her bonnet far back on her head to feel the warm, soothing breeze fan her face. These were all signs of spring that were not even mentioned in the almanac!

Father was plowing down in the cornfield, and Mother had already put her "onion sets" out in her garden near the cold frame that nursed the early lettuce. The lettuce was coming along nicely and Mother hoped to have some big enough to eat before Mrs. Hurst did. She hadn't forgot that Mrs. Hurst had had the first cornmeal for mush last fall. Mother expected to have an extra fine garden this year. Away back in March, as she did each year, she had sprouted boxes of cabbage and tomato seed on the kitchen window sills, and now these tiny plants were ready to be set out into the garden. And they looked so strong and sturdy.

Today, down on her knees in the pleasant sunshine, she dug hole after hole in which to "set" the early cabbage plants. Her trowel gritted and scraped through the mellow earth that tumbled out beside her to wait to be tumbled back again after she had "set" a plant and patted its roots down gently but firmly.

Martha was there in the garden with Mother, and Mother talked to her while she worked.

"Next we plant the peas and beans, when the horns of the moon point up, Martha. Not in the Posey woman sign of the almanac, or they will all go to blossom, and we have no wegetables. Father plants his grain when the moon waxes and grows. Then he thinks he reaps much more. You know that, Martha?"

Martha was tying narrow strips of muslin to the short twigs that Mother always put up in the garden to scare the birds away from the seed.

"I know it," Martha answered, as she stood back and viewed her tiny white flags with satisfaction. "Mom, it's in our pretty seed book where the tomatoes are red as fire and big as Grandpappy's mush bowl. Oh, I think our garden makes out good dis summer."

She retied one slip that had loosened up a bit and then said, "Look, the birds scare themselves off now. It's shust like Father's scarecrow. He makes dis way, Mom!" Martha extended limp arms, bobbed her head and twirled round and round. Then quick as a flash she stopped spinning.

"I'm Dutch as sauerkraut, I'm Dutch as sauerkraut!" she sang out, jumping up and down in the freshly dug earth. "I'm Dutch as sauerkraut—David says so—but HE ain't! That's funny, not?"

Mother's shoulders shook with laughter as she dug faster and faster. *"Ya, vell,* Martha, it is funny," she chuckled. Then she added, "When David comes from school you go along to the pasture with him and pick some dandelions for supper tonight." That will keep her busy, thought Mother.

Martha liked the sour-bitter greens the way Mother fixed them and Father always said, "Dandelions make red cheeks on *die shay Madel* [the pretty girl]!" so she was eager to help gather some.

"I get the big market basket and wait at the gate for David," she said. "There, he comes down the road now!"

David and Martha swung the large basket between them as they set out for the cow pasture that was always so yellow with dandelion flowers in the spring. However, no sooner had they started to pick the long, tooth-like leaves than David thought there might be more leaves on the opposite side of the pasture. So across the field they went to where their cows lay under an immense elm tree on the bank of a small stream. Here they picked and picked until they thought they surely had enough. But after they had pressed the dandelions down, the basket did not seem very full, so they started picking again.

Then suddenly "Honk, honk! Qua-qua-wuawua-r'r'r'—s-s-sh!" and David and Martha looked up with a start. Waddling toward them in a long, wavy line was Mrs. Hurst's flock of geese—the long-necked geese that she raised for goose feather beds and pillows.

"Must have crawled under her fence again," said David.

"I guess they flew *over!*" Martha replied.

Grandpappy had a pink goosebone, and that was all she knew about geese.

"No," David told her, "they can't fly high because Mrs. Hurst clips their wings! But listen, Martha, don't run! The old lead gander, Judas, nips your legs if you do—now mind! Let them go by once. We stand still." And they stood as quiet as two statues, holding the basket between them.

But when Martha saw the old gray gander step out of line and swagger toward her, she dropped her hold on the basket and ran screaming across the pasture. The gander flapped close

behind her, until he finally grabbed the hem of her dress and hung on like a sand bag.

"David! David!" she sobbed with fright. "Judas gets me! He gets me!"

"I told you no running! Now, you big goose, you know besser," David scolded as he shooed and switched the geese back under the fence.

"Listen, Martha, I tell you somesing! Grandpappy tells me when he was a boy they used to make a little wooden frame of four sticks crossed over like a box frame, and put it around the geese's necks. Then they had to stay at home because they couldn't get under the fence; they were in jail, see?"

"No!" Martha answered very crossly, wiping the tears from her cheeks and looking down at the torn gathers of her skirt band. "He scares me like spooks!"

David laughed and picked up the basket by himself, for Martha had enough to do to hold up her torn skirt.

"We go home now. It's a mess for supper," he said, running his hand through the dandelion greens.

"And I read in our almanac, Martha, how some geese cackled and woke up the Roman soldiers, who saved the city from the enemy, long, long, ago. That's history!"

"It makes nossing out to me," Martha pouted.

But David tried his best to put her in better humor. "And," he went on, "Grandpappy tells me how his teacher made goose quill pens with his pocket knife, to write in school. See, we need the geese. We need warm feather beds, not?"

"B-z-z-z-z-z-z!" A lazy big bumblebee flew around Martha's head! She put her hand up to strike it.

"No striking—stop!" David shouted.

"Say, I'm glad the bumblebees are out. Now we go barefoot for sure. Next thing I go fishing! I tell you somesing else, Martha. Grandpappy says when the Indians lived here long, long ago, they had no bees until someone brought them over from England, so the Indians called the bees 'the Englishman's fly.' That's history, too!"

"Well, anyhow, he's a nasty old bumblebee!" Martha snorted, as she struck wildly at the big buzzer and dashed down the road toward home. But David soon caught up with her.

"Who's at our house?" they asked each other when they spied an automobile in front of the blue gate.

"Why, it's Teacher's car!" exclaimed David.

Martha stood still, her mouth wide open in astonishment. She was so surprised she spoke in Pennsylvania Dutch. "O-o-h! *Die* Teacher *koomt!"* she said, and she started to run. Past the orchard, past Teacher's car at the gate, on through the back garden she scampered until she came to the rain barrel that stood by the summer-kitchen door. Hopping up on the big stone in front of the barrel, she looked at her tousled hair and tear-stained face in the deep black water. Then she pushed back her bonnet, dipped her fingers into the water and pasted her hair down very smoothly. Holding on to the barrel with one hand then, she leaned over and dashed the rain water up in her face three times.

"H-o-o-o!" she sputtered after each dash. "I guess Teacher knows me now!"

Then she dried her face on her apron, mumbling to herself all the time. "The nasty gander! My, but it spites me like everysing. I'm glad it's not my Sunday dress! Tsk! Tsk!"

Grabbing her skirt gathers, Martha stepped off the stone, ran through the kitchen and opened the door into the "best room" where Mother and Hetty sat talking to Teacher.

"Why, Martha Wenger! *Ay, yi, yi!"* Mother's usually calm voice was filled with dismay, for she saw Martha wiping the water that dripped down her face and ran off her nose.

"It was Mrs. Hurst's old gander, Judas!" Martha tried to tell them as calmly as she could. "He chases me all over the pasture. I wish Grandpappy had him for his goosebone next winter!" Then she thought of her torn skirt, which hung almost to the floor, for she had needed both hands to wipe her dripping face. Quickly she grabbed at her skirt and tucked it up. Mother and Teacher could not help laughing at her forlorn appearance, even though now her face was bright and smiling.

"Go upstairs right away, Martha," Mother said, trying to smooth things out. "Put on your Sunday dress. Teacher stays to supper tonight."

"What a nice surprise!" thought Martha. She dressed as fast as she could, all the time wondering what she would show Teacher to entertain her. "Maybe she likes the Fractur piece embroidered in colored wool with the Lord's Prayer," she said to herself. "No, I'll take *der Hund* down," she decided. The little white china dog mounted on a round piece of board, un-

der a glass case, was to Martha the most beautiful thing in the house. Someone had brought *der Hund* from the Chicago World's Fair to Mother when she was a little girl, and it was always kept on the painted chest in Mother's room. All dressed in her Sunday dress, which was a lovely dark red that made her face look glowing and bright, Martha grasped *der Hund* tight in her hands as she went down the steps. It was such a precious dog—and if she should break it!

"See, it's *der Hund!*" she said, holding it up before Teacher who had baby Jacob in her lap and was saying "Eye winker, Tom Tinker" to him.

"It's beautiful!" Teacher said, taking it in her hand to examine it more closely.

Baby Jacob reached for it too.

"Nein, nein, you break it!" and Martha set the prized dog over on one of the deep window sills, while baby Jacob stiffened, turned red in the face and let out a cry of defeat. Suddenly he threw up his arms and bumped Teacher's nose so hard the tears ran down her cheeks.

"You bad poy!" Martha cried, and could not get him out to the kitchen to Mother fast enough. Then she hurried back to the "best room" just in time to see Teacher open a shiny mirror case and powder her nose.

"It's the way I look in the rain barrel," Martha said, wrinkling up her own nose cunningly. "But I daresn't be proud!"

Teacher had no answer for this.

"You want to see our date stone?" Martha asked her, trying to think of something interesting to do next.


N.G.M.

"Yes, indeed," said Teacher. So they walked through the yard and around to one end of the old stone house to which so many additions had been built.

"Up there!" Martha pointed with pride to the flat, square stone beneath the gable roof high above their heads.

"What does it say, Martha. I can't read the German. You teach me, now!"

"*Gott gesegne dieses Haus* [God bless this house]," Martha read, "J. W. and A. W. 1820." David had told her this many times and she was proud to remember it for Teacher.

"Grandpappy's pappy and mutter put it up there l-o-n-g ago! He tells me sometimes!"

"Thank you, Martha," said Teacher.

"Mebbe they have it like you on the back of your car, not?" Martha reasoned. "It tells how old!"

"That's my license plate, Martha," Teacher said in an amused voice. "I get a new one every year, but your 'date stone' lasts over a hundred years!"

"This is Shep," Martha said as Teacher stopped to pat him. "He minds me shust like your boys and girls mind you in *schul*. Look!" and Martha put her finger up before Shep's nose. "See, he keeps quiet!"

"You want to see our black 'wootsies' now?" Teacher was not sure what "wootsies" were, but she wanted to see them anyway! Martha thought Teacher was almost as much fun today as Katie Zook. Not at all like in the *schulhaus!*

They started for the barn to see the little black pigs, but just

then Hetty called them to supper, so they turned back to the house. Martha was so happy! It was only when the dandelion was passed around that she was reminded of her fright from Mrs. Hurst's old gander, Judas.

During supper Father talked earnestly to Teacher about the little schoolhouses. "It's like the Christmas dinner when Victoria was here," thought Martha.

"I hear that they will start to build the big schoolhouse this summer," Teacher told Father.

"Ya, vell, somesing must be done!" Father was sure of that—but what? Neither he nor Teacher could say. They had already tried so many things.

"You want to see Grandpappy's sand glass?" Martha asked Teacher as they left the table. "He tells the time with it when I carry in his supper."

Martha took Teacher in to Grandpappy who sat in his big chair beside a small table which held the sand glass and a pewter candlestick. Over on the window sill Teacher could see an old "fat lamp"—like one her mother had. In New England they were called "Betty lamps."

"Wie geht's!" she said to Grandpappy, feeling very glad that she could greet him in Pennsylvania Dutch.

Martha then told her in English all that Grandpappy had to say about the sand glass—that it told the hours the same as a sun dial out in the yard did.

"Oh, he knows a lot!" Martha said eagerly. "But he shust can't say it like you! Now he shows us the *Taufscheins!"* and

Martha helped Grandpappy lift his big Bible from under the table so that he could open it on his knees for them to see. In the back part of the Bible all the births, deaths and marriages, the *Taufscheins,* in the Wenger family were written in a beautiful hand.

"A man comes here to write them," Martha explained. "We pay him. It's like vines and tulip flowers running all around the writing, not?"

"Very lovely!" said Teacher. "Beautiful!"

"Now you see the Martyr Book," Martha went on as Grandpappy handed his priceless book over to Teacher, talking to Martha all the time. "He says it was printed up at Ephrata in the Cloister House. There they even made the paper for it. And it took a lot of men three years to make it!"

Teacher saw that the Martyr Book had been printed by Conrad Beissel long before the Revolutionary War, in 1748—about the time George Washington was a boy.

"Grandpappy says it reads about how the Plain People were —were—how you say it?"

"Persecuted."—Teacher helped her.

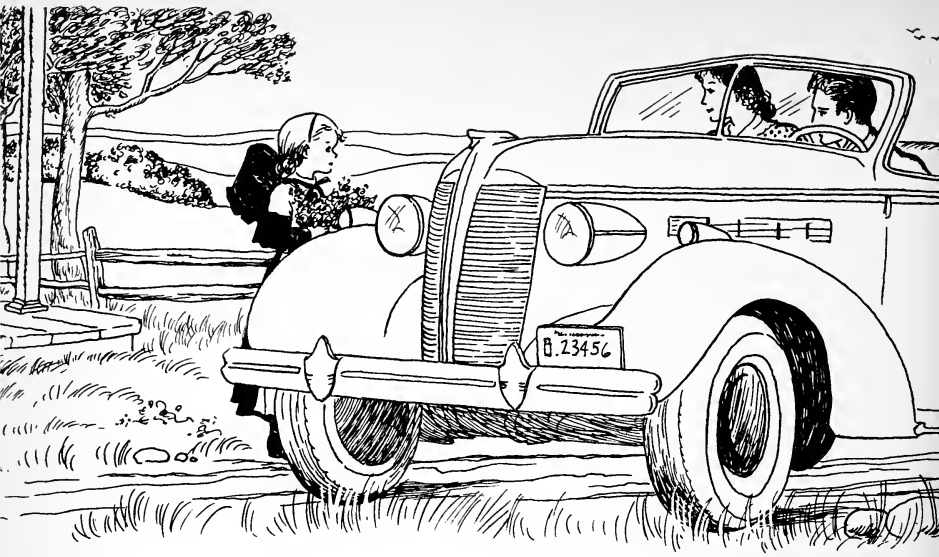
"Over in the old country."

"Very, very interesting," Teacher said thoughtfully. Then she got up and after returning the book to its proper place under the table, spoke again. "I must go home now, Martha. *Gute nacht,* Grandpappy. Tell him I liked my visit, Martha, and I want to come again!"

Martha and Teacher went over to the "best room" then for Teacher's hat and coat, and Martha hoped that she would see

the little pocket mirror once more. But Teacher had no time for primping. She said "Good night" to the family and thanked Mother and Hetty for the good supper.

David and Martha stood at the blue gate then and watched Teacher's little car chug-chug slowly out of sight. The katydids chirped all around them and the frogs croaked down by the pasture stream. Gray ganders and buzzy bumblebees seemed f-a-r away! It was a peaceful ending to a very stirring day.



NINE

A DAY OF HUCKLEBERRYING

ALL SUMMER LONG, WHEN THE WIND CAME from that direction, David and Martha heard the carpenters hammering away on the new schoolhouse out on the State Road. And all summer long they wondered just what would happen in September. Would they go to school? And where would they go to school? Father said there was enough work for David to do on the farm, if he could not go to the little red *schulhaus,* but he would not allow him to go to the new "worldly" schoolhouse out on the State Road.

Mr. Zook and Mr. Stoltzfus felt the same way about their children.

It was hardest of all for Martha. To be six years old at last and then not to be allowed to go to school when the time had come!

She had lost another front tooth and kept watching in the rain barrel to see the new teeth that looked like short white fringe now. She hoped they would all be out by the time she started to school.

"Do they get the water-smeller to find where the water is in the yard at the new *schulhaus?*" she asked Mother as they shelled lima beans together on the back porch.

Martha remembered when Father had a new well dug last summer. A man, a water diviner, had carried a forked willow stick all over the yard, measuring it on the ground and watching for it to turn up, which was a sign that water ran underground. When the willow stick finally turned, the well-digger came with his big machine and found water at this very spot.

Mother did not know whether or not they had a water-smeller at the new schoolhouse.

"Does the *schulhaus* have a bell on it?"

Mother was not sure about that either.

"Will Dora and Lilly Brooks who have the 'boughten' dresses go to the new *schulhaus?*"

Mother was sure they would.

"Does it have a round stove in the middle of the *schulhaus?*"

Mother hoped so.

"Will the good men hang up on the wall under the flags?"

Mother thought they would.

"Will Teacher say when it's 'books' there?"

"Listen, Martha, I think Grandpappy needs you." Mother was glad to put an end to the questions for a time. "He taps his cane."

Grandpappy wanted a drink of water. It had been a trying summer for him because he had had to stay in bed a great deal, but Martha had been a wonderful comfort to him. Now he could sit out on his chair again. During haying time he had fretted a great deal when he could not watch the reaper out in the meadow.

"Make the windows open wide," he had told Martha, "then I hear the reapers and smell the sweet hay!"

He breathed in the fragrant clover odor that brought back pleasant memories.

"When I was a boy," he said, "we cut the hay and grain by hand with a scythe and sickle—no machines then—and we started right after sun-up. At nine o'clock we had a 'piece'—some pies or applebutter bread the *Grossmutter* makes and fetches us to the field with a jug of cold water. *Y-a-a, ya-a!"* Grandpappy was living those days all over again.

"How we worked! When threshing time came, we used a flail to beat out the grain on the barn floor near the haymows. No big thresher to come puffing up the road to help us! *Nein, nein,* Martha—times change a lot!"

"You want to make lamplighters now, Grandpappy?" Martha asked him. "I get the newspapers ready." Together

they rolled up long strips of paper into pencil-like shapes so that Mother could light fires with them and save her matches.

"They roll around like macaronis, not?" Martha said as she rolled them between her hands in the tall pewter holder.

"Now I take a snooze," said Grandpappy, putting his head back and settling more comfortably into his chair.

"You go huckleberrying tomorrow?" he asked Martha.

"Yes, I go. Hetty takes care of you tomorrow."

Father's Germantown wagon rolled noisily along the dusty roadside, as it carried Father, Mother, David and Martha over to the Welsh mountains for huckleberrying. Hetty was staying at home to look after Grandpappy.

Huckleberrying was very exciting for David and Martha and they had been up since dawn helping to get the work done in order to make an early start.

The blistering heat of the midsummer sun beat down on their crinkly, dry-baked wagon top as Mother and Martha, sitting on the back seat, pulled off their big bonnets and fanned themselves desperately.

"Whew!" Martha exclaimed. "It makes like our cook stove!"

"Ya, vell," Mother reminded her, "it's the July sun, and our *Baer's Almanac* calls for hot days now!"

Far across the browning fields that flickered with heat waves and buzzed with hordes of tiny insects, Martha's little red schoolhouse stood in the shade of a row of tall locust trees at the foot of the mountains—the school which was so dear to

all the Amish people and was now doomed to be replaced by a large, new Township school.

Martha watched the little schoolhouse as far as she could see it.

"I'm so glad if my *schulhaus* keeps for me, Mom," she said, fanning her flushed face harder than ever. "Oh, I had such fun the tryout day." Then, jumping down from the wagon seat, Martha stood behind Father.

"Pop, you think I have my *schulhaus* next winter?" she almost screamed into his ear.

"*Ya, vell,* Martha, you know we try hard to save it for you. Don't fuss so about it!" and Father slapped the lines on Cap's back to give vent to his overheated feelings.

"Mother," he asked over his shoulder, "did you bring the old cow bell?"

Mother proved she had by reaching down to the wagon floor and picking up the heavy iron cow-bell tied to a leather strap.

"That's good!"—Father was joking now—"mebbe we better tie it on Martha, to keep her from losing in the woods, not?"

Martha giggled, looked appealingly at Mother, and as they drove along she fanned briskly with her limp bonnet while she tried to steady herself by pushing hard with her feet on the bumping wagon floor.

"Who-o-a!" Father shouted at last, "We hitch here by the roadside and make our way over the clearing to the mountain."

He tied Cap in the shade to the stake fence while Mother and David took the tin buckets out of the wagon. Each one had

a small bucket in which to place the berries; besides these there were two big milk buckets to hold all the berries. They hoped to pick quarts and quarts of them for pies and canning—perhaps have some to sell in the Lancaster market on Saturday, too.

It was not long before they were in the shade of the cool mountain and stripping the little blue berries from the low green and brown mottled bushes into their empty buckets.

At first the berries, as they dropped into the empty buckets, made little pinging hollow sounds. "It makes like the rain on our tin roof, David!" Martha said. "It sounds ping, ping, ping!"

David was squatted on the ground among the bushes, pulling them over to him and picking rapidly all around as far as he could reach.

"Yes, well," he answered Martha, "don't run around so much. Stick to your bush—then you get some! I get a big mess to sell round at the doors in Lancaster on Saturday."

They could see the blue sky through the tree tops all afternoon, and when the sun slipped slowly under a cloud for a while, Father felt sure it would "give a gust soon."

"A thunderstorm would cool the air a lot, though," he said to himself. "Stick together!" he shouted warningly to the others every once in a while when they were out of sight.

By the time the sun's rays slanted through the trees with much less heat, the two milk buckets were almost full of berries.

"Yo-o-ho-o! Yo-o-ho-o! We go home soon!" Father called

as he emptied the berries from his small pail into one of the large ones again. "It's near supper time! Look at the sun!"

Martha had filled her bucket and poured the berries into one of the big buckets only once, and now she stood in a patch of mountain laurel and wild honeysuckle that almost hid her from sight.

"A-a-ah! They smell so good!" she said to herself. "I sink I pick some flowers for Grandpappy's room—he likes to smell at posies."

Nimbly she broke her way through the white and pink blossoms. Snap! Crack! Snap! She pulled them to the right and left, until her arms were filled—and when she looked up, to her amazement she was almost out of the woods.

"Why-why, over there's my *schulhaus!* It's not far either," she thought, as she stared at it, then started to run toward it.

"I'll just look at it once—and hurry back."

Her feet felt heavy in high-laced shoes after running barefoot all summer, so she sat down on the ground and slipped her shoes off in a hurry. She tucked them under her arm and sped down the burning, dusty road to the row of locust trees in front of the schoolhouse. She spied a big, cool-looking stone and sank down on it, dropping her flowers and shoes beside it, just as an automobile stopped before her. The driver of the car mopped vigorously at his steaming face, while his companion leaned out of the car to look at Martha's flowers.

"What school is this, little girl?" the lady asked.

"It's my *schulhaus,*" Martha answered proudly, digging her bare toes into the smooth dust.

"You go to school here?"

"I visit once with my David—but next winter, when I'm six years, I go here, Pop says."

Martha moved closer to her then because the lady looked kind, and Martha wanted to talk about her *schulhaus!*

"You know," she said, "mebbe next winter they tear my *schulhaus* down!"

"No!" The lady seemed greatly surprised.

"Uh-huh—then I go to a great big *schulhaus*—but I like my little *schulhaus* best!"

Martha was speaking in great earnestness, but suddenly her natural shyness overcame her, and she stepped back from the car looking a bit startled.

"It's an Amish schoolhouse all right," the man driving said confidently, "and she knows all about it, too!"

"Will you sell me some of your flowers?" the lady asked, smiling down at Martha coaxingly.

Quickly Martha gathered her flowers from the ground and handed them to the lady. She knew that Mother often exchanged her garden flowers with the neighbors, but she never sold them. They were messengers of good will, followed by many neighborly acts.

"Here, you take them," Martha said eagerly. "I get some more where I pick berries on the mountain again."

"Ach, no!" She refused the dime being pressed into her hand. "Pop has lots of money—but—but"— Then she drew closer to the car, because the lady seemed so interested and kind— "Mebbe you help save my *schulhaus* for me. You talk

it over in your church, like Pop does, not? That saves it!"

The eyes of Martha's new found friends lit up with understanding of her faith in their interest. "Surely," the lady said, "we'll be glad to help you. We'll tell your story just as you told it to us."

They said good-bye then, and thanked her again for the lovely flowers.

"*Goot*-bye!" Martha's happy voice called after them as she watched the car disappear in a cloud of dust.

"Now I put my shoes on," She talked to herself as she sat down on the stone again. "I must hurry back and fill up my bucket once. What's that?"

She strained her ears to listen.

"*Ach,* my goodness, it's our cow bell!—They hunt me!"

Clang! Clang! The muffled sound of the iron bell seemed to be drawing nearer, as Martha started off in a great rush.

"Tsk, tsk! Now I have my shoes on the wrong feet—they pinch like everysing!"

It did not take her long to change them, but when she looked up their Germantown wagon was almost in front of her.

"Who-a!" There was a loud clanking of harness and jangling of empty tin buckets as Cap reared up before Martha.

"Well, Martha," Father spoke very sternly, "why didn't you stay by us? We thought you got tired picking and went home long already—and we go home to see. Now shump in the wagon!"

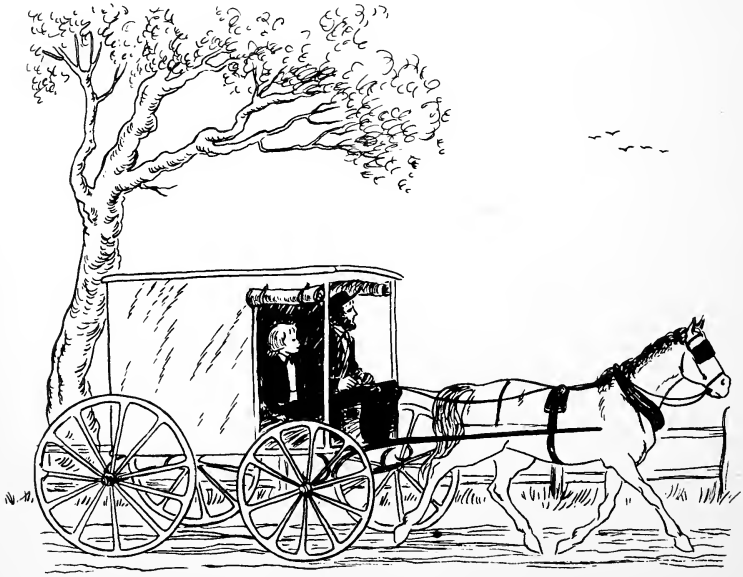
"*Ay, yi, yi,*" Mother's worried voice came from the back seat. She was so sure Martha had been lost. "You lose like my young

turkeys, Martha, and you look so hot! Sit down, I fan you!"

Mother was so glad to have Martha beside her that she didn't have the heart to scold her. But David was not so good-tempered.

"You big goose!" he burst out. "You make me upset the big buckets when I chase around with the cow bell. Now it's just enough berries for the pies—that's all! I tell you to stick to your bush!"

"I—I—see my *schulhaus* when I pick flowers,"—Martha's lower lip trembled as she tried to explain,—"then I run over to look at it, and—and I g-give the flowers to the kind-looking lady in the great big car, and—"



"The one we just pass?" David checked her abruptly.

"Y-e-s, she asks about my *schulhaus* and promises to help save it for me—she liked my flowers so!"

"Did you tell her that you sit on the boys' side with me the day you visit school—and you fall off the seat?"

"That will do, David," Mother warned him and Martha looked up at her gratefully.

"It is Martha's way to help keep her schoolhouse," Mother said, "and mebbe it makes out good—she spreads the news how we want to keep it for our children. They tell it all over!"

"*Ya,* Mother is right, David!" Father spoke up. "Sometimes the little things count big—you sink that over! Our Martha plants a little seed—now we wait for the harvest!"

Father slapped the lines over Cap's back as he watched dark clouds gathering in the west. "Giddap! We drive fast now and get home yet before it gives a gust. Hold on to your bonnet, Martha! You have the cow bell, Mother?"

TEN

WILL THE LITTLE AMISH *SCHULHAUS* KEEP?

IT WAS SEPTEMBER AND SCHOOLTIME AGAIN, but Martha had not yet started to school because their little red schoolhouse was still closed and Father would not allow her and David to go to the new schoolhouse that had been built out on the State Road during the summer.

Like many other Amish children, David and Martha were being kept at home during this time. They heard constant talk about what the Court would do. Although Father never went to law, this was such an important question that he had been

going to many meetings to talk over the school problem with the other Amish men. And tomorrow Father and Mr. Zook and Mr. Stoltzfus were going to the Court in Philadelphia to learn whether their children would have to go to the new large schoolhouse, which the Amish people thought too worldly. But of course, everyone was hoping that they would be allowed to keep their little red schoolhouses for their children.

"Never before," Grandpappy told David as he shook his white head and held on to his cane, "never before have I seen too many schools. When I was a boy we had only a few schools and a few books to learn our A B Cs from, and to write and cipher. And we went to school only a few months each winter those days," Grandpappy recalled. "Sometimes our schoolmaster was the preacher too. We learned to say hymns and Bible verses in school, and the schoolmaster used the rod often on the lazy ones."

"*Ya-a-a,* times change," and Grandpappy sighed. "But after a while then they made a school law. It said you must go to school a long time each winter—six months."

"I'm glad of that," said David, "because I like school. And now we go longer still. But I wish I knew where I go this winter! It settles soon, though, Grandpappy. Tomorrow Father and Mr. Zook and Mr. Stoltzfus go to the Court in Philadelphia—then we know! The Court settles if I must go to the new schoolhouse."

"So-o-o!" said Grandpappy.

"D-a-v-i-d!" Martha's shrill voice trailed across from the "best room." "Mom says for you to come over here and help

her put up the quilting frames once." But David was too much interested in Grandpappy's talk to answer her.

Martha waited for a minute, then she started toward Grandpappy's room, with Shep on a leather strap beside her.

"Shep trains fast, Grandpappy—shust watch him!" she boasted. "He takes me all around with my eyes shut tight, shust like the 'Seeing-Eye' dog I see one day in Lancaster. Yuh, Shep! Yuh! You take me back to the 'best room' now. Watch him, Grandpappy!" And Martha felt her way around the furniture, stumbling and pulling Shep after her.

"Ha! Ha! You train him good for a 'See-Eye' dog," David joked. "Look out! You fall there over the quilting frames!"

Father had brought Mrs. Hurst's quilting frames home with him that morning when he went to the cider mill for a barrel of sweet cider to use in making applebutter the next week. Father could not understand why Mother kept on quilting when she had a chest up in the garret filled to the top with pretty quilts.

"You shust air them every spring, then put them back in the camphor balls again—then get them out and air—"

"They're for Hetty, and you know Martha makes big soon, too," Mother reminded him smilingly. "You forget we paint our gate blue so the young men know where our Hetty and Martha live at!"

Mother and David set up the quilting frames, then screwed them tightly to the backs of four chairs, and put in the "tulip pattern" quilt, so Mother would be ready for Mrs. Zook and Mrs. Stoltzfus. They were coming early tomorrow morning to


HOME
SWEET
HOME

help Mother quilt, while their menfolk went with Father to the Court in Philadelphia to plead for their little schoolhouses.

"It's an anxious day for us, while you go," Mother told Father that night, "and we work and talk together until you come home."

It would be an anxious day for Father too and he hoped very earnestly that they would be able to persuade the Court to let them keep their little schoolhouse.

The next morning the sun streamed through the cheerful begonias and geraniums on the deep window sills of the "best room" and flickered across the tulip pattern quilt, where the women sewed and chattered like school girls on a holiday. It seemed that no matter what they began talking about though, it always led back to talk of their schoolhouses.

"You know," said Mrs. Zook, as she bit off a piece of thread and then looked over the top of her glasses, "it gave a big moving over at the Fischers' last week, even if it did rain like everysing! We helped with a load. The Fischers rent the Schnader farm over by the Mill Road, you know that?"

"S-o-o?" Mrs. Stoltzfus seemed surprised and she tried to talk with her mouth full of pins. "It's a cider press on that farm, not? Over fifty years old—and it's an old spring house there, too, that keeps so good."

"And now," said Mother, "the Fischer children don't walk so far to school this winter—I'm glad of that! That is if we keep our little schoolhouse near home. And oh, I hope we do!"

There were murmurs of agreement with Mother as the women turned over another lap of the quilt. That is, they rolled

the finished part of the quilt up on a narrow band of wood. Then needles continued to flash in the sunlight, drawing tiny stitches after them as they quilted round and round the colorful tulips.

"I hear they put up a new blackboard in our schoolhouse," said Mrs. Zook, hopefully adding, "when it opens up."

"And it needs a new stove," Mrs. Stoltzfus declared. "It's the gas from the old one somesing awful!"

So they chatted on, always about their little schoolhouse, while Hetty prepared their dinner. And above all the kitchen din the women heard Hetty singing—

"Schpin, schpin, mein liebe Tochter"
(Spin, spin, my lovely daughter)

They all joined in the old lilting ballad then, while their feet kept time under the quilt as if they were working the treadle of an old spinning wheel.

"Schpin, schpin . . ."

Suddenly Hetty stopped singing and they heard her slam a cupboard door shut.

"David! Go up to the garret and bring down a crock of applebutter," they heard her say. "It's all, and we need some for dinner. Hurry!"

David felt he was very busy, for Father had left him in charge of the farm while he went to Philadelphia, but he bounded up the narrow steps, two at a time. In the darkening garret he saw row after row of applebutter crocks, all tied up in newspapers—some yellow with age. He picked up a crock

to carry it down the stairs, and as he passed by the little window near the top of the steps he could read on the dusty yellow paper tied around it:

Lancaster Daily New Era
April 1, 1917

Why, this applebutter was older than he was! 1917! That was the time of the World War! This would be something to talk about in the History Class when he got back to school! Holding the applebutter crock carefully in front of him, he started jubilantly down the stairs.

David never knew how it happened. Bump! Thump! Crash! Tommy flew out ahead of him! The applebutter crock rolled down the last flight and out into the "best room," splitting open underneath the quilting frames at Mrs. Zook's feet. And David tumbled after, landing on his back at the bottom of the stairs!

Frightened Tommy sprang over the empty coal bucket, and with a wild leap was in the middle of the quilt. The women screamed as they jumped to their feet and dropped their needles and scissors in their hurry to reach David, who was still lying where he fell. He started to get up slowly then, rubbing his back under his jacket.

"It's nossing wrong! Where's my history paper? Hi, Martha. Don't tear that paper—it's history on it!" he shouted.

Martha was under the quilt, trying her best to press the two halves of the broken crock together around the applebutter which was so thick that it had not even run out on the floor.

"It's nossing wrong, I miss a step I sink!" David assured the frightened women while he limped over to Martha to rescue the yellow, crumpled paper which was still rounded in the shape of the crock with the twine around it.

"You nose too much, Martha! Here, I take it! It reads of the war long ago. I show it to Teacher some time!"

"But it's such a pretty red crock to throw away," Martha lamented, down on her knees, looking over the broken pieces. "It's all shiny inside and a big roll top to hold on to. It spites Mom, not?"

But Mother was thinking only of David, and not of the redware crock that had been part of her *haussteur* when she was married.

"Nein, nein," she said now, "it makes nossing out about the crock. Scat, Tommy! Scat!"

When Mother was quite sure that David was all right the women went back to their quilting. The last "lap" of the tulip quilt was turned over as the fading sun lit up the west window of the "best room," and long shadows played over the porch. They took the quilt out of the frames then, unrolled it and spread it out on the floor for inspection.

"It's beautiful! My, such fine stitching. I believe it is my prettiest quilt!" Mother so appreciated the help Mrs. Zook and Mrs. Stoltzfus had given her. "I sew the edges, then I put it up in the chest with the others, for Hetty and Martha," she added with motherly satisfaction.

"We go home now," both women said, feeling that their day had been well spent. They knew that the menfolks would be

late in coming from Philadelphia. "And it's the farm work to do," said Mrs. Zook. "But if they bring good news of the little schoolhouses, I don't mind!"

"Gute nacht, Martha. See that baby Jacob learns to walk—he makes big soon and then you can call him 'Jakie.' *Gute nacht!"*

Mother decided that they would not wait for supper until Father returned, but would eat as soon as David had finished the feeding and bedding at the barn.

"I guess Pop eats where all the Hetties run around," Martha said, as she looked across the table at his empty place. "Mebbe he eats ice-cream or rivel soup! Mom, what iss the Court he goes to see?"

Mother gave David an appealing glance. "You tell her, David," she said.

"You tell her, Hetty!" David begged of Hetty.

But Hetty decided they needed some butter just then and ran to the cellar to get it.

"She knows when she goes to school!" David spoke impatiently. *"Ach,* well,—it's—it's where smart men, the men with high learning, settle things."

"Like in a 'best room' at church? They sit around a table?"

"Y-e-s, they sit around a table!"

"I think the smart men let me keep my *schulhaus,* David." Martha nodded her head emphatically with each word. Then she left the table and climbed up on the wood box, hugging Sally Ann in her arms, to wait for Father. She never knew

when Mother helped her slowly up the stairs to bed, although it was only seven o'clock.

"You drag so, Martha. One more step—lift your feet—I hold the candle away from you—that's it—now we're up—over there!" and Martha sank down on her bed while Mother pulled off her clothes.

Her sleepy head pressed the pillow without a turn for a couple of hours. Then she woke up with a start!

"The sun shines soon," she thought. "I sleep late." And she pushed down the covers to hop out of bed.

"It makes red out the window so funny!"

She bounded from the bed and ran over to the window.

"Wh-y, it's a fire!" she whispered. "It makes like the sun-up. Y-e-s! Mebbe Sammy Fasnacht's barn burns again! No-o, it looks like it's over at my *schulhaus.* O-o-o-h! Katie said it could just as soon come down this way. It's *verhext,* I guess, and now it burns! I find out."

With chattering teeth she tried to dress herself. "Where's my stockings? Not in my shoes—" She saw them hanging neatly on the back of a chair. "I guess Mom helped me to undress!" She could not remember. "I don't button up all the way—shust two buttons will do! They sleep tight," she thought of the rest of the family, and wondered if Father had come home yet.

"I must keep quiet," and she stole down the steps like a mouse. Her bonnet and shawl, now!

The lamp burned low in the middle of the kitchen table,

and cast a light on a dish of shining red and yellow apples.

"Father ain't home. He didn't outen the light yet!"

She was sure he was not home, for the lock was not on the door either and it opened easily.

Martha closed the door gently and stepped across the porch.

"Be quiet, Shep!" she commanded as he stalked over the grass to meet her. "Quiet!" She put her finger up before his nose and leaned over him, looking for his strap. *"Koom!"* she said sternly, taking hold of the strap. "we find if my *schulhaus* burns down. Be quiet! You see for me in the dark. Quiet now!" she continued to command him until they were 'way past the orchard. "Quiet! Quiet!"

The red blaze ahead flared up, then died down. Shep barked loudly now and pulled on the strap as they flew over the ground toward the schoolhouse. An owl hooted mournfully from a hollow tree. Wh-oo! Wh-oo! "You don't scare me!" said Martha bravely. "Not so fast, Shep!"

Coming over the top of the hill, where she had so often first spied David on his way home from school, she saw now a Germantown wagon outlined against the white limestone road and the dark sky. As it drew nearer Martha stopped. Chuff—chuff—chuff! The measured, march-like beat of the horses' hoofs sounded unusually loud through the still night. Chuff—chuff—chuff!!

"Mebbe it's Father," she said to Shep. She listened for Cap's old clanking harness, forgetting that Cap wore his shiny new one now. The wagon was almost up to her, and she stepped out of the way to let it pass.

"Whoa!" Father's voice boomed out, frightening her, as he jerked Cap up on his hind legs. "Whoa! Martha! *Vas iss?"*

He jumped down from the wagon and gripped her arm firmly. She had never heard him speak so sternly before.

"Vas iss? Did Mother—"

"The *schulhaus*—it burns down—look back there!" Martha's choking voice told him, as she pointed in the dark.

"Nein, nein, not the schoolhouse—it's a big rail pile. They burn leaves too near it."

"Are you sure?" Martha asked doubtfully.

"Y-a, it burns when I pass it—I see it. They try to outen it! Shump in the wagon, Martha. It gets late. Soon it's nine o'clock already!"

Father walked up to Cap's head and looked over the new harness that he had jerked so roughly. Then he gave Cap a pat on the neck. Shep kept close beside Father, looking up into his face in an understanding way.

Martha had one foot on the wagon step when she remembered what she had waited all day to hear. She stepped back to the ground again and ran around to Father.

"Do the smart men say I go to my little *schulhaus* next winter?" she asked him meekly.

"The—the—smart men?" Father did not understand.

"Yes—David tells me it's the smart men in the Court, and they say if my *schulhaus* keeps for me! They sit around a table to say it?"

"S-o-o!" Father understood now. *"Ya,* they promise us the little *schulhaus* keeps for you. Now shump in the wagon."

"They shake your hand and promise?"

"Er-er, *nein, nein*—they shust promise, Martha. They say we keep our little Amish schoolhouse yet a while."

"Oh, my *schulhaus* keeps! It keeps!" chanted Martha, dancing round and round wildly with Shep barking at her heels. "I go to my little *schulhaus* this winter!"

Then suddenly she thought of something and was grave. "Maybe the kind lady who wanted to buy my flowers when we was huckleberrying helped keep it for me, not? She was such a nice lady.

"Anyhow it keeps," she said over again, "it keeps for me and David—and 'Jakie' too!"

Then she jumped into the wagon and they drove home to tell the good news to Mother.


N.G.M.