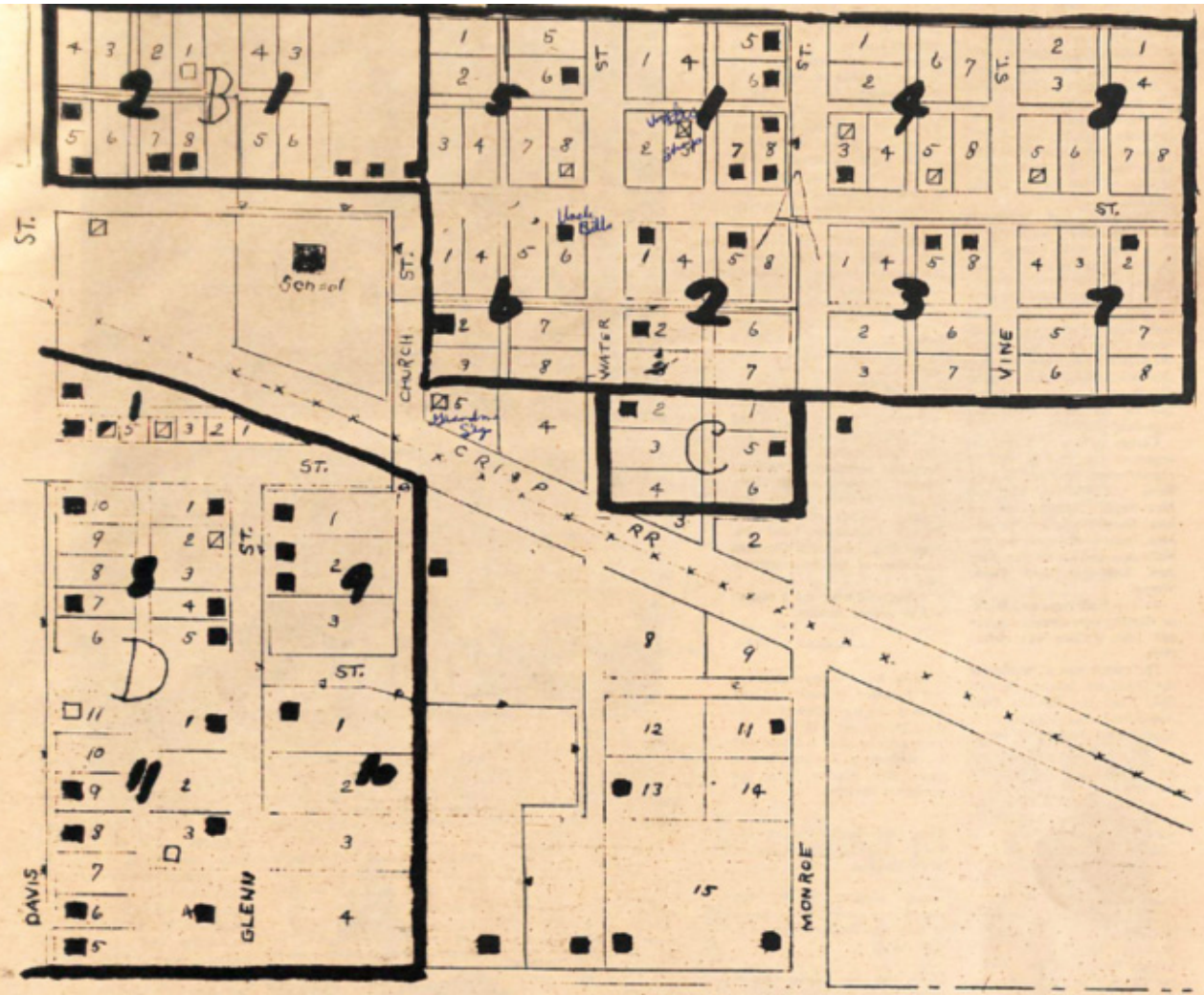


There have been changes during the last few years. Some new homes and businesses have been constructed and some of the older removed.

S.E. Herald, Sept. 7, 1939

The 4th Franklin school re-union was held at the school house Sunday, September 3. A bountiful cafeteria dinner was served on the lawn at one o'clock with Mrs. Grace Thorburn in charge. The business meeting was called at two o'clock by the President, Mr. Ed Bowman. A short program of songs was given by the Franklin pupils, followed by talks given by Charley Root of Waterloo, C.M. Glandon of Sigourney, Mrs. Grace Thorburn of Webster, Mrs. Mary Horn and Mrs. Everett Bower of South English, and Elmer Root of Delta. Many old teachers were remembered; among them: Nancy Frey, Ida Parnell Good, Addie Keirns, Robert Hall, Molly and Lizzie Shawhan, John Wright and others.

Oscar Dobbins and Ellsworth Hervey had charge of the tables and Verda Dobbins and Lanah McLain planned the program. Officers re-elected were: Ed Bowman, Pres.; Henry Hervey, V. Pres.; and Leila Horn, Secy.-Treas. The oldest alumnus present at the meeting was Mrs. Mary Moorman Wilson of Delta. 80 people were present. At four o'clock the meeting was adjourned to meet the first Sunday in September, 1940.

S.E. Herald, July 3, 1941 - Doyle Wagamon has resigned his position as janitor at the school house.

The Home Town Cafe was constructed by Mr. and Mrs. Merle Schauff the same year that Highway 22 was blacktopped.

Johnston Refrigeration, operated by Allen Johnston, is located at the junction of highways 22 and 149.

1955

First Baptist Congregation Observing Centennial This Weekend

South English - The pioneers who founded First Baptist church in South English, which will celebrate its centennial this weekend, came to English River township of Keokuk county almost on the heels of the Indians.

The township had a population of only 90 in 1850, but five years later when the church was organized and the town of South English laid out there were 676.

The Baptist pioneers met often in the cabin homes and sometimes in the log schoolhouse a mile and a half west of the present church site. It was in this schoolhouse that regular church services were conducted and the congregation formally organized in 1855.

Curtiss Bullock of Davenport organized the church with 11 charter members: John Wallace, Retta Ann Wallace, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Harding, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rutledge, Mr. and Mrs. David Noffsinger, Andrew Noffsinger and his mother, Lucy Ann Noffsinger, and Rhoda Worrell.

Andrew Noffsinger and Stephen Harding were elected deacons and John Wallace was chosen clerk.

The church was a member of the Oskaloosa Association until 1860 when the English River Association was organized in South English. Beginning in 1857 church and church school were conducted in a small frame schoolhouse.

It was in 1860 that the congregation voted to build its own building, but work was delayed until March, 1865. Site of the church, in the eastern part of town, was purchased from Cordy Glandon.

The church was finished and dedicated the third Sunday in January, 1866, with Pastor Samuel West preaching. At the dedication, enough money was raised to cover the cost of the building.

In 1869 a new bell was hung, and in 1871 thirty members were added after one meeting. The Women's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in 1885 by Margaret West, the pastor's wife. Original members were Lizzie Strock, May Gore Noffsinger, Lydia Smawley, Ida Parnell Good, Mary Alice Horn, Emma Noffsinger, Mary King and Emma Clark.

In March, 1908, the congregation voted to move and remodel their church. Thirteen months later money had been raised for the site and moving. Cornerstone of the new building was laid Oct. 16 and the church was dedicated Nov. 28, with the Rev. F.N. Bryan in charge.

Ministers ordained in the church have been the Rev. James Coffman, in 1865; the Rev. Walter Huxford, in 1912; and Dr. George Derbyshire, in 1919. Mr. Huxford is now at Piedmont, Ala., and Dr. Derbyshire is pastor of First Baptist church at Palo Alto, California.

Present pastor is the Rev. Thomas Hastings, graduate of Central Baptist seminary in Kansas City who started his pastorate in July, 1954. He is the first full-time resident pastor of the church.

The centennial observance will open this afternoon with a tea, to which members are asked to wear pioneer costumes. Speaker will be Mrs. Howard Roach of Plainfield, president of the National Council of Baptist Women. She will speak on her recent trip to the Baptist World Alliance meeting in London.

Speaker for a meeting this evening will be Margaret City, secretary of the department of special services of the home mission boards of the American Baptist Convention. She is a former member of the church, the granddaughter of Charter Member Andrew Noffsinger and great-granddaughter of Charter Member Lucy Ann Noffsinger.

Also speaking tonight will be the Rev. H. Bjornsen, pastor of First Baptist church in Waterloo and president of the Iowa Baptist Convention.

Dr. Derbyshire will speak on "A Century of Witnessing" during the 11 a.m. centennial service Sunday. He was pastor of the church both before and after World War I. He is vice-chairman of the foreign mission board of the American Baptist Convention.

In the afternoon a historical pageant will be given. Speakers will include the Rev. E.V. Goad of Pella, a former pastor; the Rev. Paul Smith of Des Moines, executive secretary of the Iowa Baptist Convention; the Rev. Charles Martin, town and country worker of the Iowa Baptist Convention, and Dr. Victor Wik, director of Christian education of the Iowa convention.

A basket dinner and a supper will be served Sunday.

After Rev. Thomas Hastings left to take up work in South Dakota, he was followed in the local church services by James Imlay, Arthur Lange and David Bennett. For the last four years Rev. Harley Yates has served as minister.

Top: This Baptist Church was built in 1865 in the east part of South English.

Second picture: In 1909 the church was moved to the corner of Ives and Broadway and was remodeled.

Third: The First Baptist Church as it appears in 1976.

Below: A Tea was held observing the centennial of the Baptist Church. From left to right the ladies are: Mrs. Howard Roach, Executive Secretary, Gladys Miller, Margaret Hubbell, Zetta Safourek, Helen Bedford, Lillie Ruth, Margaret Thompson, Edna McGowan, Marian Moyer, Doris Hastings, with Margaret Wenger pouring. The three-tiered centennial cake with its 100 candles was baked by Jessie Fattig.

The Origins of the Church of the Brethren

(reprinted from **Tell Us About the Church of the Brethren,** by Edward K. Ziegler)

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, two streams of Protestant thought and life were converging in ways that helped to form the Church of the Brethren. A powerful religious awakening in the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany stressing conversion, Bible-study, devotional life, and evangelical witness was called Pietism. And since the early days of the Reformation, a movement to restore the New Testament pattern of the church and obedience to Christ, with denial of infant baptism, was known as the Anabaptist (Rebaptizer) movement. This had spread quite widely, in spite of severe persecution, in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland.

A group of persons awakened by these forces found refuge from persecution in the small province of Wittgenstein under the protection of a tolerant ruler. Here in 1708 a band of eight souls, who lived then in the village of Schwarzenau, concluded after long and earnest study of the Bible that a strong fellowship was essential to their obedience to Christ. They believed that the New Testament required believer's baptism by immersion. Their leader was a well-to-do young miller named Alexander Mack. One of their number baptized Mack in the Eder River, and he in turn baptized the other seven. This newborn church eagerly witnessed to their faith, preached, and baptized new converts.

Growth was rapid. Within a few years there were four congregations and several hundred members. However, their zeal in preaching and baptizing, their repudiation of the State Church, and their refusal of military service soon brought persecution. Several Brethren were imprisoned or sent to the galleys. Some fled to Holland for refuge. Then hearing that William Penn was welcoming religious refugees to his new colony, Pennsylvania, Peter Becker led a considerable group of Brethren across the Atlantic to settle at Germantown, now a part of Philadelphia, in 1719. In 1729 a second large group led by the founder, Alexander Mack, also came to America. A last group under the leadership of John Naas arrived in 1732 leaving no organized church in Europe.

After getting settled in the Germantown area, about Christmas of 1723, the Germantown Brethren met in a home for a Love Feast, baptized a number of new adherents, and established a congregation. In the next fifty years the Brethren, mostly farmers and artisans, spread across the Southern half of Pennsylvania, and into Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. After the Revolution the Brethren spread across the rich agricultural plains and valleys of eastern America. By the early 1850s they had a church in Oregon. Many colonies of Brethren were pioneers in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, then across the Mississippi in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. By the turn of the nineteenth century, strong Brethren churches were established on the Pacific slope. Through these expanding years the Brethren were chiefly a rural folk. From about 1900 on they, like their neighbors, tended to move to cities and into many other occupations. Now the great majority of Brethren are in urban, suburban, or small town churches, though there are still many strong congregations in rural areas in a half dozen states.

The first meetinghouse of the English River Church of the Brethren was erected in 1865. This picture was probably taken during a conference.

The Origins of the English River Congregation of the Church of the Brethren

by Mary Coffman

Why is history such a fascinating subject? Is it because it is about people and events? People like you and me who lived their lives toward a certain goal? History repeats itself. When our Founding Fathers came to America they came to seek out one of their goals, that of religious freedom. The first Brethren to arrive in America in 1719 came with the same goal, and the Brethren settlers who began a westward movement in search of undeveloped territory came with the same desire to make their religion a central part of their existence.

The growth and expansion of the Church of the Brethren in the Nineteenth Century resulted in the establishment of Brethren "settlements" as the sect pushed westward. The English River congregation near South English, Iowa, constitutes one of these settlements. It was during the summer of 1854 that a group of five families, including one minister, left Allen County, Ohio in search of a favorable location where they might settle. They journeyed to Mount Vernon, in Linn County, Iowa, where they were welcomed by others of their sect. The five men left their families near Mount Vernon and continued their search, accompanied now by four men of the Mount Vernon group, none of whom had a family. In their exploration they arrived at a two-room cabin near South English at the opening of Sunday religious services being conducted by a Christian minister. The minister of the Brethren group responded to an invitation by the Christian minister to preach. So far as is known this was the first Brethren sermon heard in this neighborhood. After this service similar union services were held Sunday after Sunday for some time following. Gradually, as the different denominations gained strength from converts and from new settlers, many from Virginia, they organized themselves into separate church groups.

The nine men who had come earlier were joined by their families in September of 1854 and they settled permanently in this area. The official organization of the English River Church of the Brethren is recorded as having taken place during the fall of 1855 in connection with a Love Feast, with two elders from Illinois present. The charter members were David Brower and wife, Solomon Wine and wife, Daniel Wine and wife, Samuel Wine and wife, William Harvey and wife, Sallie Flory, and others by the name of Wolf. David Brower was ordained to the eldership and placed in charge of the new church.

In 1908 the first building was remodeled and served until 1950.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN SOUTH ENGLISH, IOWA

The modern stone building has a large fellowship room, many classrooms and kitchen facilities, making it modern in every way.

The Brethren held meetings in private homes, groves, and schoolhouses until 1865, at which time their first "meetinghouse" was erected. In appearance it was a plain 40 x 60 foot building, as befitted a plain people. It was located to the northwest of our present structure. Shortly after this first church was built a kitchen or workroom was added on to make preparation of the meal for Love Feast easier.

One of our members who worshipped with her parents in that first church when it was still relatively young remembers some interesting facts about that early church. As was stated, the first building was a very plain one. It had two doors on the east side, by which the men and women entered separately. It had a full attic which was used

The Baptist Church was moved from the old town as far as the Christian Church corner by June 23, 1909. By June 24th it was at the corner of Coffman's Store. On June 29, 1909, it was moved to the lot where it now stands.

North English Record, June 22, 1961--

HEIFER PROJECT

"Happy" is the name the children of the North Keokuk Cooperative Bible School chose for the dairy heifer they purchased. Pictured above is the group as they held a dedication ceremony lead by Rev. Jay Johnson.

Daily contributions were received from the children attending the Bible School. On the last day the children chose to forego their usual treat of ice cream and added the $15.00 dollars it would have cost, to the fund. At the close of the school, the fund had reached a total of $98.26. By the time the fund was deposited another $1.74 was donated to make an even $100.00.

"Happy" is the product of the Melvin Dobbins, Eula Collier and Homer Grove dairy herd. A yearling Holstein heifer, she will be held until maturity, when she will be turned over to the Heifer Project Inc. for shipment to some needy family.

S.E. Herald, Oct. 16, 1941 - Beginning Sunday, October 19, there will be Junior Church each Sunday morning at the Christian Church from 11:00 till 11:45 o'clock. All boys and girls, and young people are invited to attend.

C.L. Cox, Bert Harris, Dale Robison and Everett Bower were at the corn shelling site, the number of men in the second picture indicates the size of the harvesting crew.

Some of the years the crop was shelled and marketed as it came from the field, seldom being stored in cribs.

BRETHREN CHURCH
(continued)

for sleeping quarters at times of district meeting and Love Feast. There were three aisles with the benches facing the west, and the women sat on one side, the men on the other. Two large stoves, one on either side, provided warmth for the members. Those closest to the stoves were very warm, those farthest away not so warm. Along the west side was a raised platform with two long benches and a long table between. The ministers, perhaps six or eight, sat on the bench facing the congregation and the deacons sat on the one facing the ministers. The deacons would read the scripture suggested by the leading minister. Then the minister would say to the others, "Brother, please be free." Whoever felt so moved would give the sermon.

Love Feasts, a reenactment of the Last Supper with feetwashing, a fellowship meal, and moon. This was to facilitate teams with wagons, buggies and carriages from as far away as Deep River, South Keokuk (or Ollie), and Crooked Creek in Washington County, finding their way. Another event that took place almost every year was an evangelistic service. One service that was recalled lasted six weeks. Her family missed only two nights. The part of the organization known as the Sunday School came into being in 1877. The school met twice each month (during the summer only) but by 1895 developed into an interesting year-round school. Other activities were district and Annual Meetings, Prayer Meeting, Bible School, and Ladies' Aid Society.

In 1908 the first building was remodeled. It was fitted with central lighting and heating systems. A full basement was dug and several small Sunday School classrooms were partitioned off the main room. Someone has said, "Every generation should build a new church." In the late thirties and was started toward this goal. In the late forties there was renewed interest and definite plans to build were put into action. In August of 1950, just southeast of the existing structure the first shovel of ground was turned by our pastor, Howard Keim. That fall the excavation was finished and the foundation walls were laid. In May of 1951 work was resumed. The grounds were a veritable beehive with volunteer workers, both men and women, until the final project was finished. The women of the church worked in the old structure to prepare meals for from 12 to 45 workers daily. During the farming busy-season, for many of the members, work went right on. Farmer members came to work between corn plowing and hay making whenever they could possibly spare a day.

One member recalls this incident. The funds were getting low and material and hired labor bills had to be met. A meeting was called by the building committee and the situation was placed before the congregation. One faithful member got up and said, "I'll go home and sell my best cow and give the money." Others then made similar sacrifices. So it was with sacrifice in time, talents, and money that we came to dedication time of April 20, 1952 with a great sense of achievement and with the feeling that "this is our church dedicated to the work of the Lord in our community and around the world." Faithful men and women had built a church with the desire to make their religion a central part of their existence. So I say again as I said earlier,

GOD'S ACRE

An interview by Rex Conn of the Cedar Rapids Gazette with C.L. Cox of South English, May 18, 1952:

I hear that you are chairman of the local church's God's Acre program. Tell me about it.

Well, H.W. Raplinger, the banker here, had 40 acres of permanent pasture that needed drainage. A year ago we made a deal with him and he tiled it and rented it to the church on a 50-50 basis. We broke it up and raised a crop of corn on it last year.

How do you get the work done?

We have a list of about 30 men who have promised to help with the farming. We call in a crew to plow, another to get the ground ready and do the planting. Other men do the cultivating and the harvesting. A good many of the men aren't even members of the congregation, but they help to keep the church going.

How much did you realize last year?

The church's share was $1,036 last year, but we ought to do a lot better this year. We didn't get the corn planted until the first week in June a year ago on account of the tiling and the late season.

What denomination is the church?

It's the Union church of South English. The Methodist and Christian churches went together about seven years ago, but the actual union has just become effective. The Rev. Walter Sieck of North English is the pastor.

The group continued farming other ground including some of A.H. Ferris, Mrs. Alice Grove

From Centennial Bulletin of Scotland Presbyterian Church

The northern part of Lafayette township was settled largely by people of Scottish origin, whose fathers first settled in Tazewell County, Illinois, and they and theirs came on to Iowa in 1854. They, the Wilsons, Greiggs, Clydes and Palmers, many of them related in some way, began investigating the possibility of establishing a Presbyterian Church in the community. The following January 27, a number of citizens in and about Sigourney, came together in accordance with previous notice. Thomas H. Dinsmore and S.C. McCune, appointed by the Des Moines Presbytery, presided over the meeting. At a Session meeting at South English on September 23, 1855, the church was fully organized. The following year a small frame building was erected in Sigourney, and the Rev. S.C. Kerr served the two sections of the church for nine months as the first pastor. Services in this community were held in the homes, also at South English and Webster, and often at the Wilson schoolhouse, that was known to us as the Scotland School.

In October of 1858, the members of the church in the eastern portion of the congregation presented a petition to the Presbytery of Des Moines to organize themselves into a separate church. The petition was denied, and it was not until January 29, 1860, that the church of Lafayette was officially reported as having been organized. Among the names of the members of our church when it was organized as a separate congregation was: John Wilson, James Greigg, Chas. H. Gilbert, David H. Greigg, James Palmer, Jane Wilson, Susanna Wilson, David Greigg, Sr., Mary Palmer, David Clyde, Hannah Greigg Clyde, Ellen Booth, Marjora Greigg, David Archer, Marjora Archer, David Branneman, Mary Ann Branneman, Mary Janne Hardman, Jane Scott, Agnes Clyde, Sarah L. Gilbert, Anne Greigg and Margaret Chesney. Rev. D.V. Smock worked to get the churches organized as separate bodies, and served Scotland for seventeen years. In 1869, our present church was built and dedicated by Rev. Smock.

In March, 1922, the church was closed and the membership was transferred to the Keota Presbyterian Church. This did not prove satisfactory, and on June 6, 1937, the Lafayette Presbyterian Church was reorganized.

The Sunday School was started in January of 1885. Though the church was closed from 1922 until 1937, the Sunday School reorganized six years before the church, and is still an active part of the church. The Scotland Kensington was organized in 1912, under the leadership of Miss Fannie Wilson. In 1931, the first Homecoming was held, with George J. Lyle as president. This was an annual event until 1954, when it was voted to be held biannually.

The ministers from the Keota Presbyterian, and later, the Federated Church have served the Scotland congregation as pastors for many years.

Now we have met to celebrate the centennial year, and in our midst is many a descendant of the faithful forbears who made today possible. Today as in that yesteryear, the message of Jesus remains the same, and the Scotland Presbyterian Church stands as a living witness for Christ in the community.

Scotland Kensington
(excerpts from Mollie Rowe history written in '35)

It was Miss Fanny R. Wilson who instigated the movement to form an "association" to promote the best interests of the Scotland community, which was to be called The Scotland Kensington. Riding her horse, Pegasus, which brought her hither and thither in the community, she made a personal call on each of her neighbors, inviting them to a little neighborhood gathering, as she called it, on Thursday afternoon of Nov. 21.

Mollie Rowe recalls her costume of that day - high shoes, with an ankle length dress that had an extremely full skirt and buttoned down the back in rather a severe manner. Her hat was a broad brim affair set on the top of her head in a rather uncertain manner, but held in place by two or more hat pins. (Perhaps that was partially to keep the rats from blowing out of her hair.)

They didn't go in any automobile - they walked. As they trudged along they wondered just how to conduct themselves during the afternoon; you see, this was really a new idea in the neighborhood - an afternoon party for farm women who were accustomed to working rather than participating in social life.

Membership was to be on the basis that any woman of the community might become a member by expressing her willingness to work with the group and affixing her name to the roll. The dues for each meeting were to be ten cents. The day selected was the Thursday afternoon on or before the full moon. Hostesses were selected by invitation from one meeting to the next. No definite rules were established for the type of entertainment but was to be as each hostess might choose. Refreshments were limited to two cats and a drink.

Charter members were Hanna Burkenbine, Edith Cave, Nellie Cave, Aggie Coffman, Margaret S. Coffman, Kate Coffman and her mother, Mrs. Maggie Coffman, Emma Hagist, Anna Herr, Mollie Rowe, Jane Teakle, Laura White and Fanny R. Wilson. Officers elected were Pres. Mrs. Laura White, Secy. Fanny R. Wilson, Treas. Mrs. Aggie Coffman.

In 1916, the ladies decided to have the interior of the church painted. The funds on hand were insufficient, so it was decided to make a free will offering. Mrs. Burkenbine made the motion that provided they give an old hen or the equivalent, amounting to approximately one dollar. Painters were boarded by the nearby Kensington members.

This country church was built in 1869 and served a great many South English people through the years it stood in the northern part of Lafayette township.

This picture was snapped in 1943 when the Rural Club and the C.L.S.C. met in a joint session at the home of Berle Huber.

In 1917, Miss Fanny brought Mrs. Johnson of Sigourney to demonstrate the cold pack method of canning vegetables as well as fruits and meats. Bertha Herr's living room was converted into a canning workshop for the afternoon.

In 1921 the date of meeting was changed to the second Thursday of each month rather than on or before the full moon. Perhaps it was suggested by the two women who were going to Mollie Rowe's home a week before the proper time. They evidently saw, as they were driving down the road, that she was cleaning house, decided they may have read the calendar incorrectly, and decided to call on her near neighbor, Florence Keiser.

It was the Kenginston group which planned the first Scotland Homecoming, which became an annual affair. They also organized the Sunday School.

Kensington was not a church organization, but they have had a close association with the church.

Members of the C.L.S.C. rested a few minutes in the pews of the church as they toured West Branch.

These ladies enjoy their April birthdays by a party each year. Left to right in these two Sheibley, Edna McGowan, Helen Stansbury, Marian Brower, Helen Bedford and a guest, Eva

The Liberty Mennonite Church

The Liberty Mennonite Church built in 1900.

History of Liberty Mennonite Church, South English, Iowa written by Abbie Blosser, South English, Iowa

In the early settlement of Liberty Township, about the year of 1855, a few Mennonite families came from Virginia and settled in the vicinity of South English, Iowa. Not having church privileges, some of them drifted out into the world. A few died, while others went into churches of other denominations.

However, sympathy and faith in the Mennonite church to some degree remained. Which was sufficient encouragement to one member, Solomon B. Wenger of Greenmount, Virginia.

In 1881 S.B. Wenger became impressed with the founding of a Mennonite church in Keokuk County at South English, Iowa. In Oct. 1881 S.B. Wenger came to this place from the state of Virginia with this in view. He soon met with discouragements and fled to other parts. But in a few months returned.

The first meetings were held in the Locust Grove school house on the corner three fourths mile north of where the church now stands.

A few sermons were preached by John S. Good, a Mennonite minister of Shambaugh, Iowa in June of 1883; Bishop Henry Yother of Blue Spring, Nebraska in 1885; J.S. Coffman of Elkhart, Indiana in 1887; and Solomon Beery of Cross Keyes, Virginia in 1888. But no efforts were made to build a church.

Another brother, William T. Lineweaver of Edom, Va. was received into the Mennonite church while on a visit to Virginia in the spring of 1883.

S.B. Wenger's first wife, Sallie J., passed away Sept. 30, 1883. They had no children. In 1886 S.B. Wenger was married to Belle Groey of North English, Iowa. In 1892 they moved to Cass county, Garden City, Missouri. A daughter, Edith, and son, Clark, were born to them before they went to Missouri. They had three more sons later, Arthur, Emory and Millo. All three are deceased.

When Bro. S.B. Wenger returned to Iowa, from Missouri, in the spring of 1895, he had a determination to discharge the duties with which he was so strongly impressed many years before.

In the fall of 1895 A.D. Wenger of Harrisonburg, Virginia, a brother of S.B. Wenger, held a few meetings.

In June 1896 meetings were held by Bro. Daniel Kauffman of Versailles, Missouri. At which time Belle, (Mrs. S.B.) Wenger and Fannie (Mrs. W.T.) Lineweaver became members of the church.

Arrangements were made in the fall of 1896 to have regular preaching services. The Mennonite Evangelizing board, paying half the expenses and the "four members" the other half. Ministers came from other fields and filled appointment over the first Sunday of each month. When unable to secure the services of a Mennonite minister, the appointments were kindly filled by local ministers of the Church of the Brethren. The meeting place then, was at Locust Grove school house.

In the fall of 1896 S.F. Coffman held a few meetings, and in the fall of 1897 J.S. Shoemaker of Freeport, Illinois held a series of meetings and David Good was received into the church. David Good was janitor of the meeting place while it was at Locust Grove schoolhouse.

In 1898 David Garber, of Ohio, conducted a three weeks meeting, when G.W. and Iva Cook and Justy Cook became members of the church. A few weeks later Rilla, (Mrs. Justy) Cook and Johny Smith were received into the church, making a membership of 10.

By the assistance of Bishop L.J. Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va. and Daniel Driver of Missouri, effected the organization of the church with these "ten" members on Dec. 7, 1899 as a church body, declaring its allegiance to the Missouri-Mennonite Conference; afterwards was called Missouri-Iowa Conference. At the same time making a call for a minister to be ordained and sent here as its pastor. The name of the congregation was to be "Liberty Mennonite Church".

S.B. Wenger owned the farm south of the church and he and Justin P. Cook (Justy, as we called him) jointly gave an acre of land from S.B. Wenger's farm, now known as the Seitsinger place. Funds were raised to build a church. In 1900 the first church building was built. The church house was dedicated on Sept. 10th, 1900. Bro. M.S. Steiner of Ohio conducted the service. In January of 1900 Bro. W.T. Lineweaver was ordained by Bishop Daniel Kauffman to serve as Deacon.

Through Daniel Kauffman they learned of a young man, Samuel G. Lapp at Roseland, Nebraska, who was qualified for the ministry and felt a conviction to do Christian service. In February 1901, a call was made for Samuel Lapp of Roseland, Nebraska to come here to serve Liberty church as pastor. He responded to the call. He was ordained in his home congregation at Roseland in February 1901, by Bishop Albrecht Schiffler. Then soon afterwards Sam Lapp with his wife Kate and son Myron moved to South English, Iowa to serve as pastor. His qualifications fitted into the church perfectly.

The following year in October 1902 Bro. Samuel G. Lapp was ordained Bishop to serve in the northern portion of Missouri-Iowa conference district.

People gradually moved here from other places and the church grew. Although never got to be a large congregation. David Geils moved here from Virginia in 1910 or 11 and lived here ten years, then moved to Texas, then to Mississippi. Sam Erbs moved here from the West Union area north of Wellman in the early days of the church and lived here till their girls were ready for college, then they moved to Hesston, Kansas. Also Daniel D. Kauffman's moved here from the West Union area north of Wellman and lived here a number of years. Sam Hoylman, of Roseland, Nebraska, came here and he and Barbara Kauffman were married in her parents, Daniel D. Kauffman home while they lived here. Sam and Barbara lived here a year, then they and the Daniel D. Kauffmans moved to other states. But returned here a couple of times to make their home here. At present the Sam Hoylmans are living in South English, Iowa. These folks as well as others who lived here, a number of years, and moved away, were helpful to the church while they were here.

In February of 1906 Tim F. and Betty Brunk and two daughters, Lorene and Leota of Harrisonburg, Virginia, moved to South English. Abbie Layman came with them but returned to Virginia in two or three years. In Dec. 1924 Tim F. Brunk and family and Earl Hendersons moved to Sterling, Illinois. In 1939 Tim F. and Betty Brunk moved to upland California due to Tim's health.

S.B. Wenger wanted to move to Goshen, Indiana while his daughter and son Clark were in college. He wanted someone to take over the farm (he rented from his cousin) while they were gone. In November of 1906 Perry J. and Ada Blosser and 3 children Wilmer, Abbie and Aquila from Harrisonburg, Virginia moved to South English, Iowa and lived on the Wenger farm which was at that time, near the Church of the Brethren, till the Wengers returned from Goshen.

In September 1907 Perry J. Blosser was ordained to the ministry to assist S.G. Lapp.

Edd Showalter came here when a young man, from Virginia in 1910. At first he worked as a hand and later bought a farm, which he still operates with help. He married Elvina Luers, who joined Liberty church after their marriage. She passed away in Feburary 1956.

L.J. Powell Sr. came here in 1910 from Concord, Tennessee, and went into the hardware business. Later he went into the undertaking business, furniture store and bottle gas business along with the hardware store.

Ida Hertzler came here when a young girl from Concord, Tennessee, to teach school. She and L.J. Powell Sr. were married June 29, 1911, and made their home here at South English, till they moved to Wellman in April of 1946. They still have their membership at Liberty Mennonite church. They were a great help to the Liberty church. Their son John and Gertrude Kauffman of Manson, Iowa were married in 1938. They live on a farm south of South English. Beside farming, they run the hardware store, the bottle gas and ambulance business. Their son Daniel Powell helps with this work. Their daughter Kathleen is married and lives in Ohio.

Lewis J. Powell, Jr. went to Goshen, Indiana when a young man to go to college. He worked for the Culp undertakers. While there he married Rachel Byler. They lived there a number of years. L.J. Powell Sr. felt he needed more help. So in 1946 Lewis and Rachel Powell and three children, Nancy, Jerry and Douglas, moved to South English. Lewis and Rachel now live in Keota, but come to Liberty to church where they are a big help.

Homer Wenger came to South English when a young man, from Virginia. He worked as a farm hand. He later married Velma Cook, daughter of Justin and Rilla Cook. They lived on the Cook home place for many years. Then moved to Wellman, Iowa and run a hatchery till Velma's health was not good. But they always attended church at Liberty church. Homer was church treasurer for 49 years.

Homer Wenger's son Harry who lived at Wellman has been Sec. of the Mission board of the Iowa-Nebraska conference for a few years. He also was Sec. of Mennonite Mutual Aid Insurance Co. for a few years.

Homer's son Wayne and wife Mae have been in rural mission work for a few years in Michigan and quite a number of years in Leburn, Kentucky.

Homer Wenger's daughter is a registered nurse and is the wife of Paul Friesen who is a minister and teacher at Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas.

Amos Weaver came here from Virginia, when a young man around 1909 and worked as a farm hand and went into the threshing machine business. He and Elizabeth Grove, also of Virginia, but who was working at Cullom, Illinois for her brother, were married at Cullom on Nove. 6, 1913 and established their home near Kinross, Iowa, five miles east of South English.

On Dec. 8, 1918 Amos Weaver was ordained deacon for the Liberty congregation.

In the year of 1916 a basement was put under the first church building and a furnace installed. The chimney, at first, was in the center of the roof of the first church. The church was heated by two stoves, one on each side of the church, with stove pipes going up to the center of the church to the chimney, a box-like concern hanging from the ceiling. That was taken out and a chimney built up from the ground on the outside at the north end of the church. A platform porch was across the front of the church. That was taken away and a vestibule built over the front door and cement steps made down to the cement platform walk out in front as it is shown in the picture of the first church.

On June 2, 1916 the first shock and tragedy came to Liberty congregation and to the S.G. Lapp family, when word came that our pastor and Bishop Samuel G. Lapp had drowned at the age of 47 years. Samuel G.

early forties, this pictures Lester working in the shop in the upper

Mennonite Church

Lapp was going to Alpha, Minnesota to hold communion when his train was suddenly plunged into a swollen stream. The bridge of Flood Creek, near Packard, Iowa gave way after a 4½ inch rain. Sam, as we called him, met his death by drowning, when the day coach in which was in, toppled over and fell 20 feet to the bed of the stream. Ordinarily there was only a few feet of water in this creek. The big rain had swelled the stream till 10 feet of water roared through the valley. Sam's body was found later, distance below the place of disaster. His body was taken from the water and business cards in his clothing quickly established his identity. L.J. Powell, Sr. and Justy P. Cook went to Packard, Iowa to identify the body and accompany the body to South English. They, with the body, arrived in South English, on the eleven o'clock passenger train, on Monday June 5th.

On Tuesday, June 6th, at one o'clock Sam's funeral was held at the church of the Brethren, two miles east of South English, where he was buried. He was well liked by the members of Liberty church, as well as the people of the community. He was wise and tactful in his decisions. As a pastor and Bishop of the church he was regarded as a father of Israel. His tenderness, compassion in all his work, drew the hearts of his people to him, as the hearts of children to a tender father. The death of Bro. Sam, the church keenly realized a great loss. It seems strange that the shepherd whose services seemed so necessary to all, should be the first to be summoned to his eternal reward.

The day of his funeral the church was packed even though it was a rainy day. The passenger train stopped at the Lineweaver cross road near the Church of the Brethren to let people off, who came up from Wellman and Kalona. About two hundred people came up on the train.

Sam Lapp served 15 years as minister and 14 years as bishop of the Liberty congregation.

After Sam Lapp's death, the Missouri-Iowa-conference appointed J.M. Kreider of Palmyra, Mo. as our bishop until around 1920 when the conference district was changed from Missouri-Iowa conference to Iowa-Nebraska conference. Then Simon Gingerich of Wayland, Iowa was appointed bishop of our congregation, until Perry J. Blosser (my father) was ordained as bishop on May 26, 1929. Bro. Fortner from Illinois, J.S. Shoemaker and Simon Gingerich of Wayland were present at Perry J. Blosser's ordination of bishop.

S.B. Wenger and family, as well as the church, were saddened when Belle (Mrs. S.B.) Wenger passed away August 29, 1916. S.B. Wenger's daughter, Edith, kept house for him and taught school, until he married Mrs. Minnie Miller of Va. who was a faithful companion to him.

In 1911 the sisters of the church organized what they called "The sister's aid". The first meeting was held in Mrs. L.J. Powell Sr's home in South English. Later it was changed to "Sister's Sewing Circle" and still later to "W.M.S.A." The meetings were held monthly in the homes of the members.

Officers elected at the first meeting were: President, Belle (Mrs. S.B.) Wenger; Vice President, Iva Cook; Secretary and Treasurer, Lizzy Erb (Mrs. Sam).

member, plus birthday contributions of 1 cent per year of one's age (including children) plus earnings of work done for members. There were 17 members in 1912. In 1916 monthly dues were increased to ten cents per member.

Materials at that time were purchased at low prices; as calico, 3 cents a yard; gingham, 5 cents a yard; bleached muslin, 6 cents a yard; children's stockings ~~4 cents; cotton hose (8 cents;~~ butter - 16 cents a pound. Freight on mission boxes - 13 cents and 52 cents, according to size. Boxes were shipped to Kansas City and the Chicago Mission. Earnings were acquired from such work as carpet rags, making bonnets, and coverings, tying comforters and quilting.

After 1917 no more reports were found until those of 1934. It is presumed the books were lost in the fire, which destroyed the church building Jan. 1, 1933.

Several remember that there was an early constitution, but it too is lost. The only provision recalled was, "There shall be no gossiping at the Aid meetings."

On Dec. 7, 1961 the W.M.S.A. observed their fiftieth anniversary of its organization. There were 31 women who met in the basement of the church for work, fellowship and a cooperative dinner. They had a special cake baked and decorated for the occasion. There were five ladies present who were here when the W.M.S.A. was first organized: namely Edith (Wenger) Morgan, Ida (Hertzler) Powell, Mamie (Cook) Wenger, Nona (Cook) Reade and Barbara (Kauffman) Hoylman.

At present in 1968 there are 13 adult members of W.M.S.A. and three girls who attend in the summer during school vacation. Offering now runs from five dollars to eight or ten dollars according to how many are present. The present officers are: President - Elsie Hoylman; Vice President - Naenie Schuman; Secretary-Treas. - Abbie Blosser; Secretary of Literature - Veva Herschberger; Secretary of Home and special interests - Edith Morgan.

In the fall of 1923 a young married couple, Silas and Nellie (Showalter) Horst moved here to make their home. Perry J. Blosser, who was bishop felt the need of help in the ministry. The voice of the church was taken and Silas J. Joest was chosen, and was ordained on Aug. 10, 1924.

On Sunday evening January 1, 1933, another shock came to the people of Liberty congregation and the community when the old church building caught fire, supposedly from the furnace and burned to the ground. The members were all saddened and upset as we had no church building in which to worship. The churches in South English, the Church of the Brethren, and the Scotland Presbyterian church folks all offered us their church to use when they didn't have services or that we could come worship with them.

At that time the Baptist church in South English did not have a minister. Some of their members came to Perry J. Blosser and insisted that we come and have a union Sunday school with them and our minister could preach for us all. Our members had a meeting and it was decided to go to the Baptist church till we got a new church built. We enjoyed the fellowship and worshipping with the Baptist folks.

Plans were made for a new church and when spring came the brethren of our church went to work to prepare to rebuild. The people of South English wanted us to build in South English. They said they would give us the ground on which to

whether we wanted the church in South English or back where it was. Most all the members wanted it back where it was. So, the new church was built where the old one had stood. It was built in the spring and summer of 1933, and was dedicated on Sunday, August 13, 1933.

We were saddened on Oct. 10, 1941 when S.B. Wenger, the founder of Liberty church here at South English went home to be with his Lord. Bro. S.B. Wenger was faithful to his Lord and the church. He was always interested in the welfare of the church. He was a quiet man, but a friendly man and well liked. I don't think I ever heard him make a public talk in church or pray in public, but he was a fine Christian man. He lived what he believed.

Eugene Blosser, son of Perry J. Blosser, was ordained to the ministry here at Liberty church on Sunday morning, July 17, 1949, to be sent as a missionary to China, our first foreign missionary representative from Liberty church.

When that country was closed to foreign missions, Eugene, Louella, and son Phillip returned home and were later sent to Japan where they are still working as missionaries at Sapporo.

Eugene preached his farewell sermon, before going to China on Sunday morning July 24, 1949. He had for his text, St. John 4:14.

Another shock came to the Perry J. Blosser family, the church, and the community, when their children were planning to celebrate their parents' 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 9, 1952. Early in the morning of Jan. 9th, Mrs. Blosser had a cerebral hemorrhage. Everything was ready for the anniversary, except last minute preparations, but they couldn't have it. Mrs. Blosser (my mother) passed away at 5:25 p.m. on Jan. 10, 1952. The Lord only knows why things had to be changed so suddenly.

On the evening of Oct. 4, 1957, the Liberty congregation sponsored a program and also a cooperative supper in honor of Perry J. Blosser's 50 years as pastor of the Liberty church. Speakers were bishops Simon Gingerich, Wayland, Iowa; Dan Fisher, Kalona, Iowa; and Elmer Schwartzendruber of Wellman, Iowa. A special feature was a review of Pastor Blosser's youth, presented by Mr. and Mrs. L.J. Powell Sr. of Wellman, Iowa, who grew up in the same congregation as Perry J. Blosser did at Concord, Tenn.

In May of 1958 Perry J. Blosser resigned his office as pastor and bishop of Liberty church, just a month before he was 82 years old.

Then the Iowa-Nebraska conference appointed a committee of bishops: A. Lloyd Swartzendruber and John Y. Swartzendruber of Kalona and Vernon Gerig of Wayland, Ia. to have oversight of the church. The following year John Y. Swartzendruber was appointed Bishop of Liberty congregation.

On May 25, 1960 Bishop Perry J. Blosser's death was sudden also as was his wifes. A friend went to his home to ask him to help with some carpenter work and found him dead in his chair. The doctor diagnosed it as a coronary fraction. If he had lived 3 weeks longer he would have been 84 years old.

The next shock was to the Amos Weaver children and the church and community when Amos and Elizabeth Weaver went to Kansas to their granddaughter's wedding. On their return trip home, Oct. 16, 1961, the news flashed over T.V. in the evening, of their sudden death as a result of an

Rev. Perry J. Blosser

automobile accident. This was due to their car having left the road near Lancaster, Missouri and came to a sudden stop in a ravine. Both were killed instantly. The church was again saddened by the loss of pillars in the church.

Our pastor, Silas Horst, felt the need of help in the ministry. So Melvin Miller, who moved here from Fort Seybert, West Virginia, was ordained to assist Silas Horst, on August 4, 1963.

Ever since the beginning of Liberty church, unleavened bread was served at communion till after the death of our deacon Amos Weaver and his wife. Our first Deacon's wife, Aunt Fannie Lineweaver, made it till she was too old; then Mrs. Weaver took it over and made it. Some might think it is only a little thing. But often it is the little thing which makes a difference. To me, communion has not meant the same, since they use regular yeast bread. When Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, he used unleavened bread. I was a grown girl, before I knew some of the other Mennonite churches did not use unleavened bread. This special unleavened bread has a special meaning to me, to represent Christ's broken body, which the regular yeast bread does not have. These unleavened wafers some of the non-Mennonite churches use, is a special communion bread and has a special meaning to me, which the plain yeast bread does not have.

On July 30, 1967, Silas Horst told the congregation that he sent in his resignation as minister of the Liberty congregation. On Nov. 19, 1967, he preached his last sermon before going south to Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Since our church is without a pastor, the ministers from the churches around the Wellman and Kalona area and also the Wayland area are taking turns in filling our pulpit. They will do so til a regular pastor can be found.

We trust the work Bro. S.B. Wenger started, will continue and be a blessing to its members as well as the community. "Let us not be weary in well doing."

We are again having unleavened bread at our communion

John and Glenda Zimmer from the Vennard Christian College at Oskaloosa were with us from Sept. 1968 till June 1, 1969. John served as pastor during that time. Their daughter Lisa Marie was born March 11, 1969.

SOUTH ENGLISH LIBRARY HISTORY

December 19, 1936 was an eventful day for the town of South English, as it was the opening day for their new public library. It was located in the Horn and Clark store.

Many of the books on the shelves that day were donated, loaned, or from the traveling library.

The hard working ladies of the 20th Century Club, who sponsored the new library, held many benefits to raise money for the purchase of books. Some of these events were Tag Day, card parties, selling popcorn, home-made ice cream socials, flower shows and plant sales, paper drives, and chili soup suppers.

The first library board consisted of five members: Chairman, Mrs. May Lester; secretary and treasurer, Mrs. Addie Horn; the other members, Mrs. Norman Walk, Mrs. Paul Sheibley, Mrs. Fred Brock, with Cleita Keiser as alternate. Many faithful people have followed this first board.

Then in November of 1937, the library was moved across the street to the Sloan building. At this time, the report states that 106 books, with many magazines, had been sent out for one day. The library also was in a room at the Burly Dunn residence, then moved to its present site in the Old Town Hall in 1952.

Through the years the library has provided books for many pleasurable hours of reading to its patrons and also sources of material for the school children. There are now around 2400 books on the shelves. Mrs. Paul Sheibley is in care of the library on Saturday afternoons, from 1:30 to 3:30.

SCHOOL SPORTS

1933 - 1934
Coach - B.G. Halverson
BASKETBALL

Boys - Lost three scheduled games and two tournament games. Won the consolation game in the county tournament.

Players: Bob Keiser, Roy Claypool, Lester Claypool, Hamill Robison, Arlan Brower, Hal Huber, Derryll Keiser, George Sigafoose, Maynard Keiser.

GIRL'S BASKETBALL

For two seasons, 1920 and 1921, the girls had amassed a total of 545 points to their opponents 97. This was in a series of twenty games played. In 1923, the South English girls entered the state tournament held at Audubon on March 7, 8, and 9th. Quoting from an Audubon paper: "South English was decidedly one of the stronger teams in the tournament...."

1934 - 1935
Coach - B.G. Halverson
BASKETBALL

Boys - Played 22 games. Lost 1 scheduled game and 2 tournament games.

Players: Roy Claypool, Lester Claypool, Arlan Brower, Hal Huber, Hamill Robison, Derryll Keiser, Maynard Keiser, Melvin Cook.

1935 - 1936
Coach - Alvin Schow
BASKETBALL

Boys - Lost all games played.

Players: Maynard Keiser, Melvin Cook, Lyle Keiser, Derryll Keiser, Harold Keiser, Ross Trusler, Bill Clark.

1936 - 1937
Coach - Carl Hamer
BASKETBALL

Boys - Lost all games played.

Players: Lyle Keiser, Harold Keiser, Marvin Lane, Ross Trusler, Billy Van Dunn, Bill Clark, Glen Brower, Arlo Feckley, Bill Claypool, Donald Robison, Dale Burkenbine.

Mascot - Verle Brubaker

1937 - 1938
Coach - James Clinger
BASKETBALL

Boys - Won six and lost eight scheduled games. Won the first game in County and in the Sectional tournament.

Players: Harold Keiser, Marvin Lane, Ross Trusler, Billy Van Dunn, Bill Clark, Glen Brower, Bill Claypool, Donald Robison, Arlo Feckley, Dale Robison.

Mascot - Verle Brubaker

BASEBALL

Spring season - Played nine games and won two.

Players: Ross Trusler, Bill Clark, Marvin Lane, Harold Keiser, Dale Robison, Donald Robison, Junior Good, Bill Claypool, Billy Van Dunn, Glen Brower, J.B. Miller, Walter Slate, Warren Evans, Arlo Feckley, Charles Grove, Eldon Feckley, Verle Brubaker, Robert Garrett, Donald Garrett.

1938 - 1939
Coach - John Hookom
BASEBALL

Fall season - Won all eight games played.

Players: Harold Keiser, Ross Trusler, Marvin Lane, Bill Clark, Dale Robison, Donald Robison, Bill Claypool, Billy Van Dunn, Glen Brower, J.B. Miller, Walter Slate, Warren Evans, Arlo Feckley, Charles Grove, Eldon Feckley, Robert Garrett, Donald Garrett, Keith Pence, Kenneth Pence, Russell Chittick, Paul Dobbins.

BASKETBALL

Boys - Won 21 games, played 24. Lost the first game in county tournament to Martinsburg. Lost the final game in the sectional to Martinsburg. Lost one scheduled game to Wayland. Won North League Trophy.

Players: Harold Keiser, Bill Clark, Ross Trusler, Marvin Lane, Dale Robison, Billy Van Dunn, Arlo Feckley, Donald Garrett, Bill Claypool, Russell Chittick, Charles Grove, Glen Brower, Keith Pence, Kenneth Pence, Paul Dobbins, Warren Evans, Donald Robison.

The S.E. Herald,

Feb. 7, 1935 - W.S. Evans won the guessing contest at the O.K. Grocery last week. There were 1715 matches in the box and he guessed 1685. His prize was $1.00 worth of groceries.

Feb. 21, 1935 - Commercial Club organized

Sixteen business men met last Friday night and organized the South English Commercial Club. This club is not for the business men alone but for every one who is interested in making South English a better place to trade and a better place to live.

The first action of the club was a telephone call, while the meeting was in session, to Sigourney, with a request to the highway commission to do something about the mud hole folks were getting stuck in as they crossed Highway 22 coming in to town from the north. The next morning highway commission trucks dumped eight truckloads of gravel in the ruts north of the elevator. This gives a straight shoot into town. Action number one for a club not yet organized.

H.W. Raplinger was elected president, Don Buchanan- vice-president, and Paul C. Roberts - secretary-treasurer.

A special road committee consisting of H.W. Raplinger, Norman Walk, Don Buchanan, and W.J. Garrett was named to see what could be done about temporary repairs on the portion of Road 22 that goes through town. Those present at the first meeting were: W.B. Robison, R.P. McLain, Ellis Rickey, Don Buchanan, Fred Beach, Earl Dunn, John Powell, Fred Brock, L.J. Powell, Donald Sigafoose, Clarence Grove, Arden Kirkpatrick, C.H. Claypool, W.J. Garrett, Norman Walk and H.W. Raplinger.

Oct. 3, 1935 - A talking moving picture show will be presented in the opera house this (Thursday) evening. The operator, Mr. Gifford Morou, has signed a lease for a term of six months and plans to show here each Thursday night.

Admission is 10 cents and 15 cents.

April 29, 1937 - Rural 8th Grade Examinations will be held at the South English High School next Friday and Saturday, May 6 and 7.

S.E. Herald, September 19, 1940 -the Descendants of Jackson and Sarah Lane held their 1st family reunion, Sunday, in the South English park. 100 persons enjoyed the cooperative dinner served. Five of the family of eight children were present: Wesley and Walter Lane, and Mrs. Ida Kelley of South English; Mrs. John Kuiper of Oskaloosa, and Mrs. Ed Berry of Hedrick. Two sisters, Alice and Florence, live out of the state, and a third sister, Emma, died recently. Towns represented were Barnes City, Oskaloosa, Keota, Iowa City, Parnell, Sigourney, North English, Middletsburg, What Cheer, Harper, Cedar Rapids, Columbus Junction, Hedrick and Muscatine.

Farmers had to drive through places like this to get to town in 1936.

Snow along the Pigeon Road in March 1962.

August 12, 1937 - The Locust Grove Threshing Ring in eleven jobs totalling 309 acres averaged a fraction less than 70 bu. to the acre. This is an average that the boys can well be proud of. Following are the names of those in the ring, the number of acres they had and the yield: -

Name	Acres	Yield
Homer Grove	40	3056
Walter Greiner	41	3135
Loren Coffman	20	1311
Virgil Coffman	27	1554
Sam Flory	20	1378
Joe Holsopple	30	1969
Charles Coffman	20	1461
W.W. Coffman	22	1446
Harry Coffman	18	1272
Will Brower	24	1601
Paul Ruth	47	3156

Roy Grove and Lawrence Claypool were the threshmen, operating one of the Weaver machines. If any other ring has any record to beat this one we would like to have it.

September 23, 1937 - Ten carloads of gravel have just been spread on South English streets and another three car loads have been ordered and will probably be here ready to spread Saturday.

Streets that have previously been surfaced have been given another coat of fine gravel. The coarser grade will have been spread over practically all the streets within the corporation limits by the time all of the thirteen cars have been unloaded.

The gravel was purchased and shipped out of Muscatine and "Perky" Wade of North English had the unloading and spreading contract.

S.E. Herald, September 12, 1940 - The Harris Cafe, operated by Mr. and Mrs. Arlo Harris, is open for business now. It occupies the same building as the cafe formerly used by Mr. Hamersly. A cafe in the town contributes much to the business success of the community.

The Locker Building from the alley in wintertime.

Winter in South English in 1940.

Homecoming & History of Christian Church

Taken from THE NORTH ENGLISH RECORD - Sept. 13, 1951.

HOMECOMING AT S. ENGLISH SUNDAY

The religious history of the town of South English will be relived and reminisced upon next Sunday, September 16 when the Homecoming is held at the Union Church.

The day's activities will begin with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. with Mrs. Mildred Newhouse as superintendent.

At 11:00 a.m. Dr. Loren Lair will conduct the worship hour. He is executive secretary of the Disciples of Christ Church in Iowa.

A basket dinner will be held at noon.

The special homecoming program will be held at 2:30 p.m. The histories of the three denominations in South English will be presented to the assemblage.

Former ministers and members of the three churches making up the Union Church have been invited to return.

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH ENGLISH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

by Owen Hamersly (9-12-51)

We modern Americans sometimes get so busy that we do not take time to look over past records and past History, but it seems to me that we would do well to take a glance at the past and at what the former generations have done for us now and then. Our Iowa ancestors were quite a capable lot of people as a rule and met their problems in a very efficient manner.

That is true of the South English Pioneers who established the South English Christian Church. The town of South English was plotted in March of 1855 and the first organization of the Christian Church dates 1856. The original membership was small but quite enthusiastic and willing to do the needed Church and Sunday School work. But at that with no church building and no regular place of meeting for worship, the first twenty years were not very successful and some years before the erection of the church building in 1875 the original organization had gone down.

In 1875 some fifteen persons who believed strongly in the Christian Church and its teachings got together and pledged themselves to the erection of a Church Building and its support. The names of some of those charter members are familiar to many of the older citizens. Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Miller, the Halls, the Moormans, the Bottenfields, Mr. Morgan and others. Mrs. Liza Gordon, long a member of the church here and who passed away only two years ago was a daughter of Mr. Morgan who was an active helper in the building of the Church that still is in good condition after 76 years of use.

The building completed in 1875 was dedicated by services conducted by Elder Carpenter of Oskaloosa. The original members, mostly farmers, were willing workers and made the Church Services on Sunday their first duty. If visitors came on that day, all went to Church Services first and then came home for dinner and visiting in the afternoon.

Today we would scarcely expect a group of 15 men and women to organize and support a Church and Sunday School. But the early settlers had strong beliefs and worked hard to keep up an organization where they could feel at home in the worship. Probably they were too intolerant and made rather more of their differences from other Denominations than they should, but we must give them credit for enthusiasm and faith in their work, even though it led to the establishment of three Protestant churches in South English when one stronger one would have served the community better.

Seventy-six years has toned down those small differences and has shown that more cooperation is needed. By the turn of the century the South English Christian Church numbered close to 100 members in all. Leaders of the Church at that time were in part W.B. Miller and family, Wilson Miller and family, Frank Fitzwater and family, L.D. Young and wife, Jane Flood, the Herveys and others.

Rev. J.M. Van Kirk was popular as a minister then. VanKirk lived in Kinross and managed a bank there and did his preaching on Sundays more as a matter of helping a cause in which he was enlisted than for the remuneration as a minister.

When we moved here in 1904 we found both church and Sunday School going well and united with them in the religious work here. At that period it was customary to hold an evangelistic meeting of some three or four weeks each year when a special effort was made to enlist new members. Usually an evangelist and a helper with the music were engaged and meetings each evening and twice on Sunday. Having the choir well organized and assisted with members of the other church choirs made the half hour of music before each meeting quite enjoyable. And it was the custom for the singers of the three churches to work together in evangelistic services at either of the three churches.

Pay for ministers and evangelists was far from luxurious. Usually $100 for a meeting of 3 or 4 weeks and $25 for the choir leader. Evangelists and helpers were given board and room at the homes of church members. In a way this was helpful. Invitations out to dinners acquainted them with more of the church members and helped in stirring up enthusiasm for the work.

As time has passed we have gradually changed the plan of enlisting new members and now the Sunday School each year has a group of young people ready to enter the church work.

The Auxiliary organizations have remained very much the same through the years; Sunday School, Young People's Meetings, Ladies' Aid and Prayer Meetings. However, recent years have seen a decided tendency to change the Old Time Prayer Meeting to a church evening with refreshments and which brings the whole family to the service.

As would naturally be expected, the leadership changes from year to year and the change brings the younger members into the active work, often with new ideas and better methods.

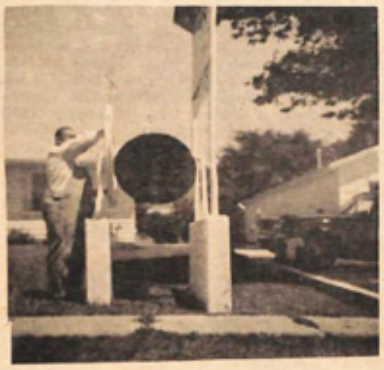
Sunday visiting between families of the church has largely passed out since the coming of the auto and the many outside interests that are to be found on Sunday afternoons.

The people of the Christian Church of South English have been well-pleased with the work of the Union Church since the three churches here started closer cooperation some six years ago. The church has done an important piece of work in building and shaping Christian character and religious practices and will, we think, continue to strive for greater harmony and greater effort to enlist the entire public in the church work.

This building was completed in 1875 and served the community until the Union Church was instituted.

The building was later sold and moved to a farm in North Plank township.

Cut in front of Billi's house.



The bell from the Christian Church was removed and placed on the lawn near the Slate's Trading Post.

Friends and neighbors gathered to help Owen Hamersly observe his birthday anniversary. Seated; Owen and Bessie Hamersly. Standing, left to right: Gladys Sigafoose, Ellen Spivey, Jessie Fattig, Hazel Cox, Alta Garrett, Helen Stansbury, Elva Sheaffer, Jean Chittick, Coral Raplinger.

M.E. Church

September 1851 was the date of the first Methodist organization in South English. The history of Keokuk County tells us that it was one of the first churches to be organized in the northern part of the county. Meetings were held in a schoolhouse near the present site of the Laurence Claypool home.

The church was built in 1858 at a cost of $600. The land was donated by Cordy Glandon. The first members were Joel, Mary, Louisa and Martin Slate, Stephen Glandon, and Rebecca and Hugh Rodman.

A history of this church would not be complete without mentioning the work done by Evangelist Dillavou, who held three weeks of meetings there and took in over 70 members.

In 1910, while Rev. E.V. Pike was pastor, the present building was put up. Four thousand dollars was raised on the day of the dedication; that completed paying for the new building.

UNION CHURCH

Keokuk County history also tells of a Union Sunday school in South English as early as 1857.

The Baptist and Christian churches met together for both church and Sunday School for quite some time prior to the time the Methodists entered into the Union in 1945.

Mrs. Owen Hamersly was the first superintendent of the Union Sunday School.

Those most instrumental in bringing about the union were John Coffman, Arthur Ferris, and H.W. Raplinger. The two ministers who guided the union were Rev. Clifford Dewey and Rev. Glenn Parrott.

That the union has worked very well is attested by the accomplishments of the congregation in solidifying the church and preparing the building as an adequate edifice for worship.

Since the union was perpetuated in 1945 the following projects have been completed: new furnace installed, new well dug, interior of building redecorated with new wood, a parking lot developed, the basement painted and the kitchen equipped for use. Forty acres of corn were planted for the church this spring.

The congregation also has some future plans which include: federating the church, securing a parsonage, securing a resident minister, and painting the exterior of the church building.

Excerpts from the Historical Statement, concerning the Methodist Episcopal Church, made in 1922, (original by Maggie Coffman, presented by Elva Sheaffer)

South English was the first class organized within the bounds of the Webster Circuit and the church was the first one built in the North part of the County. The first class was organized in September 1851 and the church built in 1858. Rev. Burley of Sigourney organized the class. The first members were Joel Slate, M. Mary Slate Hugh Rodman, Rebecca Rodman, Louisa F. Slate, Martin S. Slate and Stephen M. Glandon.

During the years 1852 - 53 - 54, it was connected with Sigourney and served by the following preachers, one year each, Rev. Skinner, John Orr, and Samuel Hestwood.

In 1857, Rev. Benjamin Shinn became pastor for two years and built, in 1858, the first church at South English. He was followed by Rev. I.P. Teeters. In 1864, Rev. D.C. Smith, who resides at the present time in Ottumwa, Ia., was appointed pastor. At this time, the Trustees at South English in 1864 were Charles Sprague, William McNeal, Martin Slate, Stephen Glandon and John Gibbons.

The present church was built under the pastorate of Rev. R.V. Pike and dedicated January 22nd, 1911.

We shared the following ministers with:

Webster: D.C. Smith, 1864-67; J.C. Coleman, 1867-68; W.H. Hawn, 1868-70; J.W. Robinson, 1870-72; John Elrod, 1872-73; J.C. Kendrick, 1873-74; H.F. Pugh, 1874-75; W.I. Miller, 1875-77; John Davis, 1877-79; H.E. Wycoff, 1879-80; S.F. Bishop, 1880-82; P.D. Bodkin, 1882 for two months; D.L. Howard, 1882 for 10 months; George Nulton, 1883-84; J.W. Slater, 1884 for 3 months; W.S. Gardner, 1884-87; E.S. Baly, 1887-88; W.N. Potter, 1888-92; G.F. Kelley, 1892-94; John Davis, 1894-95; W.F. Hughes, 1895-96; W.H. Jones, 1896-99; A.M. Smith, 1899-1902; J.F. Robertson, 1902-04; P.M. Conant, 1904-06; Frank Seeds, 1906-08; A.L. Jordan, 1908-09; R.V. Pike, 1909-14; J.H. Koch, 1914-15; W.J. Scott, 1915-18; H.E. Butler, 1918-19; J.D. ODell, 1919-20; L.R. Burdock, 1920-22; J.A. Worrell, 1922-26; H.H. Fletcher, 1926-27; J.W. Stevens, 1927-28; G.F. Meier, 1928-30; L.G. Channell, 1930-32; J.R.

The doors on the original M.E. Church opened on the north. It was built in 1858.

The building was remodeled in 1910.

Sunday School Class No. 5, was a group of girls taught by Mrs. Morgan Sassaman.

A group picture taken one Sunday morning in 1954 by Noel Montz of Webster.