

Kids' KOrner

Pennsylvania plain people lead horse-and-buggy life

WASHINGTON — When William Penn invited Amish and Mennonite people to settle in his New World colony more than 250 years ago, there were, of course, no electric lights, telephones, or automobiles.

Step into the Pennsylvania homes of those who today most faithfully cling to their European religious roots, and it seems as if these modern inventions still haven't happened. Their use is forbidden.

Old Order Amish and the most conservative Mennonites live the plainest life. In their horse-and-buggy world, days are measured out in planting and harvesting the land, family activities, and church worship.

Clustered in Lancaster County, these plain people have been blessed with some of the richest soil in the country and an ideal climate for farming. Rural Lancaster, nestled in southeastern Pennsylvania, is the most productive agricultural county in the East.

Follow Father's Footsteps

The driving ambition of most Old Order farm boys is to follow in their fathers' footsteps — and farm the land.

Perhaps the most important principle laid down by the 16th-century Dutch Anabaptist leader Menno Simons, from whom the Mennonites take their name, is one calling for a spiritual community living apart from the world and close to the soil. Anabaptists believe in adult baptism.

In the late 17th century, Jacob Ammann took his followers, the Amish, out of the Mennonite church, primarily because it no longer shunned nonconforming members in daily life as Simons had taught.

Both groups have remained

close in spiritual beliefs, and within both, those congregations that have most resisted change in worship and lifestyle are today known as Old Order.

Among people for whom privacy is part of religion, it is rare to get an inside glimpse of Old Order ways. Outsiders are called "English."

On the Old Order Amish farm of the Stoltzfus family, reporters found 6-year-old Samuel already adept at steering a mule straight down the furrows of the garden; his 17-year-old cousin Lloyd was guiding the harrow. Lloyd lives and works on the farm as a "hired boy."

An arrangement used on many farms, the hired-boy system provides needed labor for the farmer and work for boys old enough to be out of school (formal education ends after eighth grade), but too young to farm or get full-time jobs. Wages are paid directly to the boy's parents. Parents start bank accounts for children when they are born and turn the money over to them when they come of age.

Rumspringa for Teen-agers

When neighbors gather to harvest wheat on an Amish farm, "the big ones pitch it up, the middle ones stack it, and the little guys ride," a "middle one" explained.

In the warmth of an Amish kitchen, lighted only by a butane lantern, a 16-year-old girl presses a dress she made herself, using an iron heated on a propane stove. At her age she begins "rumspringa," or "running around," the Amish term for the freedom allowed teenagers before they join the faith, marry, and begin their life "in church."

On the family farm of a Wenger

Mennonite, member of a conservative congregation, 13-year-old Ella Shirk had never had her picture taken, except for formal

family portraits. Many Old Order People avoid posing for photographs because they might seem proud rather than plain in the

eyes of others.

When a Reidenbach Mennonite boy becomes 17, he starts going to

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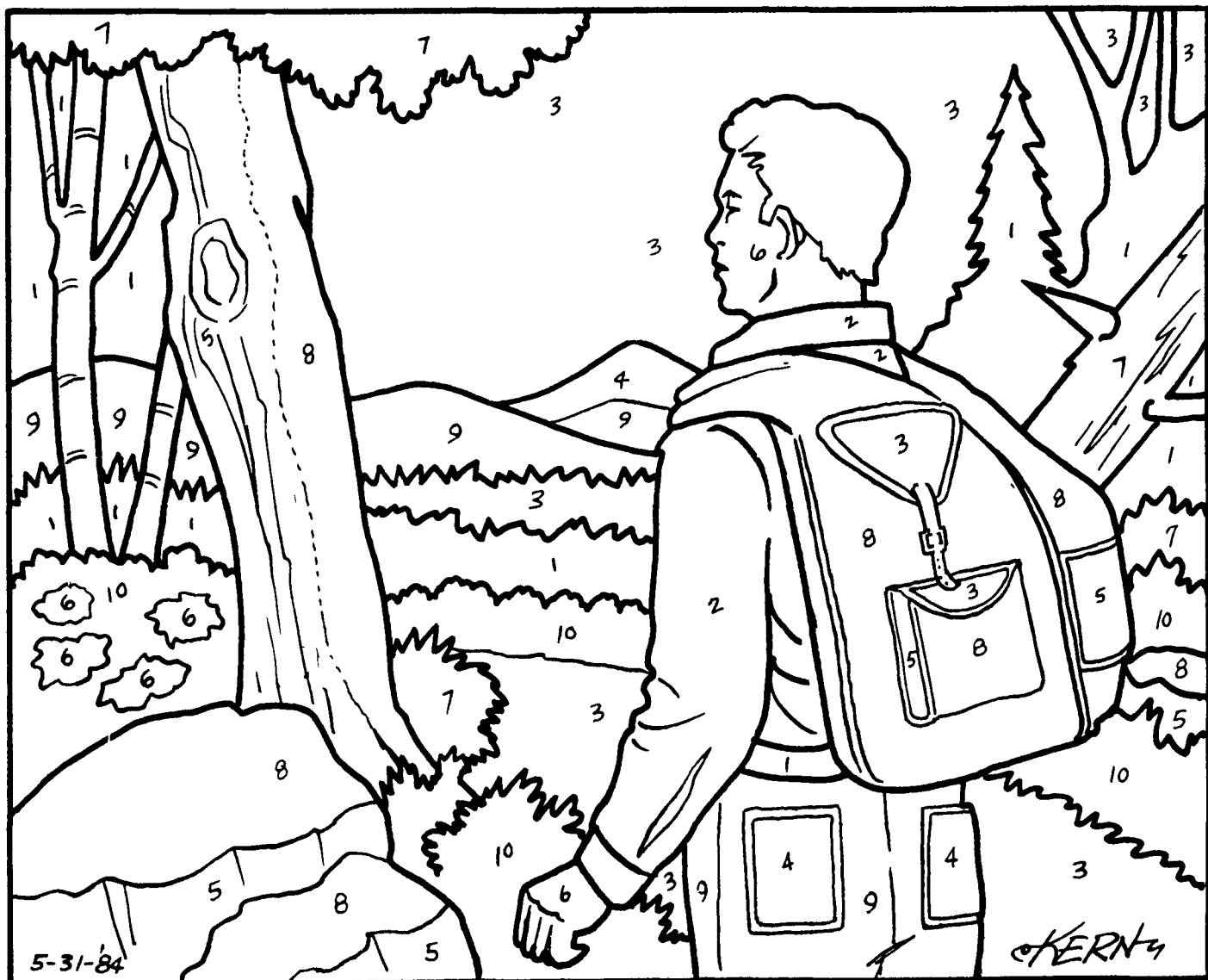


Astride the family mule at age 6, Samuel Stoltzfus is already old enough to do chores on an Old Order Amish farm in Pennsylvania's Lancaster County. His 17-year-old cousin Lloyd guides the harrow. On Old Order farms tractors are not used for field work, and boys are expected to follow in their fathers' footsteps and farm the land.

COLOR THIS!

- | | |
|-----------|---------------|
| 1. BLACK | 6. PEACH |
| 2. RED | 7. GREEN |
| 3. YELLOW | 8. LT. BROWN |
| 4. BLUE | 9. LT. BLUE |
| 5. BROWN | 10. LT. GREEN |

BACKPACK CAMPING IS AN EXCITING KIND OF CAMPING, USING LIGHT-WEIGHT EQUIPMENT. WHEN PACKING FOR A WILDERNESS TRAIL IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER EACH PIECE OF EQUIPMENT CAREFULLY. EXTRA WEIGHT YOU CARRY WILL FEEL LIKE MANY POUNDS ON THE TRAIL.



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