An Old Order (Tobe) Account of the Schisms of Sam Yoder, Abe Troyer-Jake Stutzman, Tobe Hostetler, Joe L. Schwartz, and Seymour, Missouri: An English Translation of Eine Untersuchung in die Alt Amische Gemein von 1922 Bis zu 1974 [An Examination in the Old Amish Brotherhood from 1922 to 1974]

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Abstract: This is a German-to-English translation of a report describing several Amish schisms where the main dispute concerned the Bann (excommunication), Meidung (shunning), and the full council of the brotherhood prior to these actions. The author was a committee member who investigated church unrest in the Seymour, MO, Amish settlement in 1974. The author argues from the New Testament and Menno Simons’ writings that leaders should not use the Bann to control people or get someone out of the way, as the Pharisees of the New Testament did, but should use it to help the sinner and keep the brotherhood clear from sin. The historical account begins with Sam Yoder placing the Bann on anyone who leaves the church for another Amish church. It then discusses difficulties in the Stutzman-Troyer churches, as they had disagreements about holding the Bann and leaders not taking council with the church. This resulted in the Tobe Hostetler schism. The Tobe group agreed to fellowship with anyone who takes full council from the brotherhood, so they fellowshipped with the South Churches. The story continues with a member from the Stutzman-Troyer church who was excommunicated but received into the Adams County, IN, Amish church. Later, a new Adams County bishop, Joe L. Schwartz, decided to uphold the Stutzman-Troyer Bann, causing a schism in the Adams County churches in 1952. By 1968, some people had moved from Adams County to Seymour, MO, but a schism occurred once more over how to observe the shunnings of the Joe L. churches. [Abstract by editor]

Keywords: Excommunication and shunning; Swartzentruber Amish; Troyer Amish; Tobe Amish; Swiss Amish; Adams County, IN

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