

Worcester Historical Society & the Bicentennial Quilt



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the organizations whose generous support, dedication, and commitment made this work possible.

We gratefully acknowledge:

The Visual Arts Department of the North Montco Technical Career Center;
Friends of Worcester (FOW);
Worcester Township;
Worcester Advocates;
Methacton School District;
Schwenkfelder Church;
The Van Nuys Foundation;
The Dave Dambly Foundation;
and the Historical Society Membership.

Their continued encouragement, resources, and belief in this project were instrumental to its completion. We are deeply thankful for their contributions and ongoing support.

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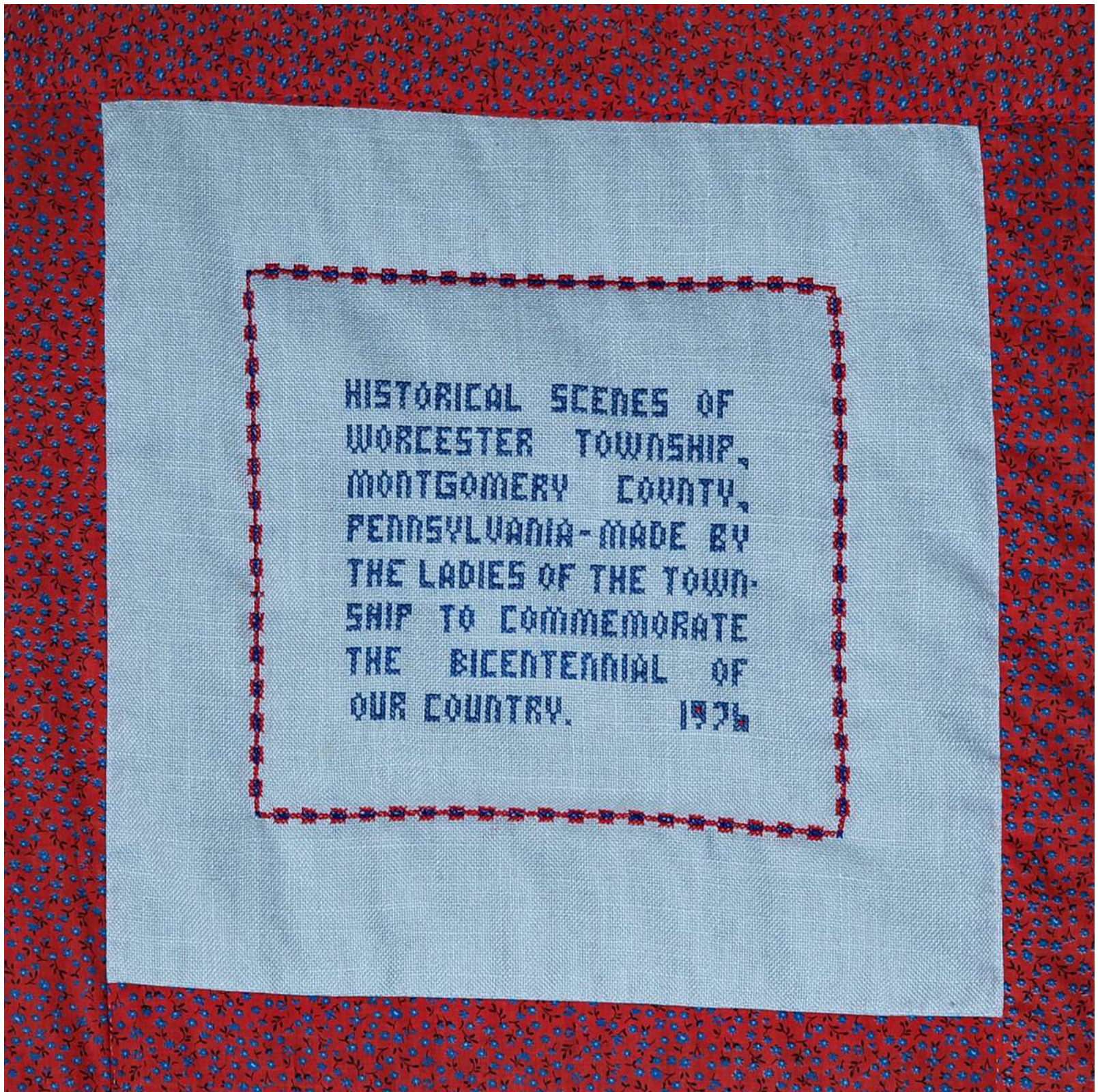
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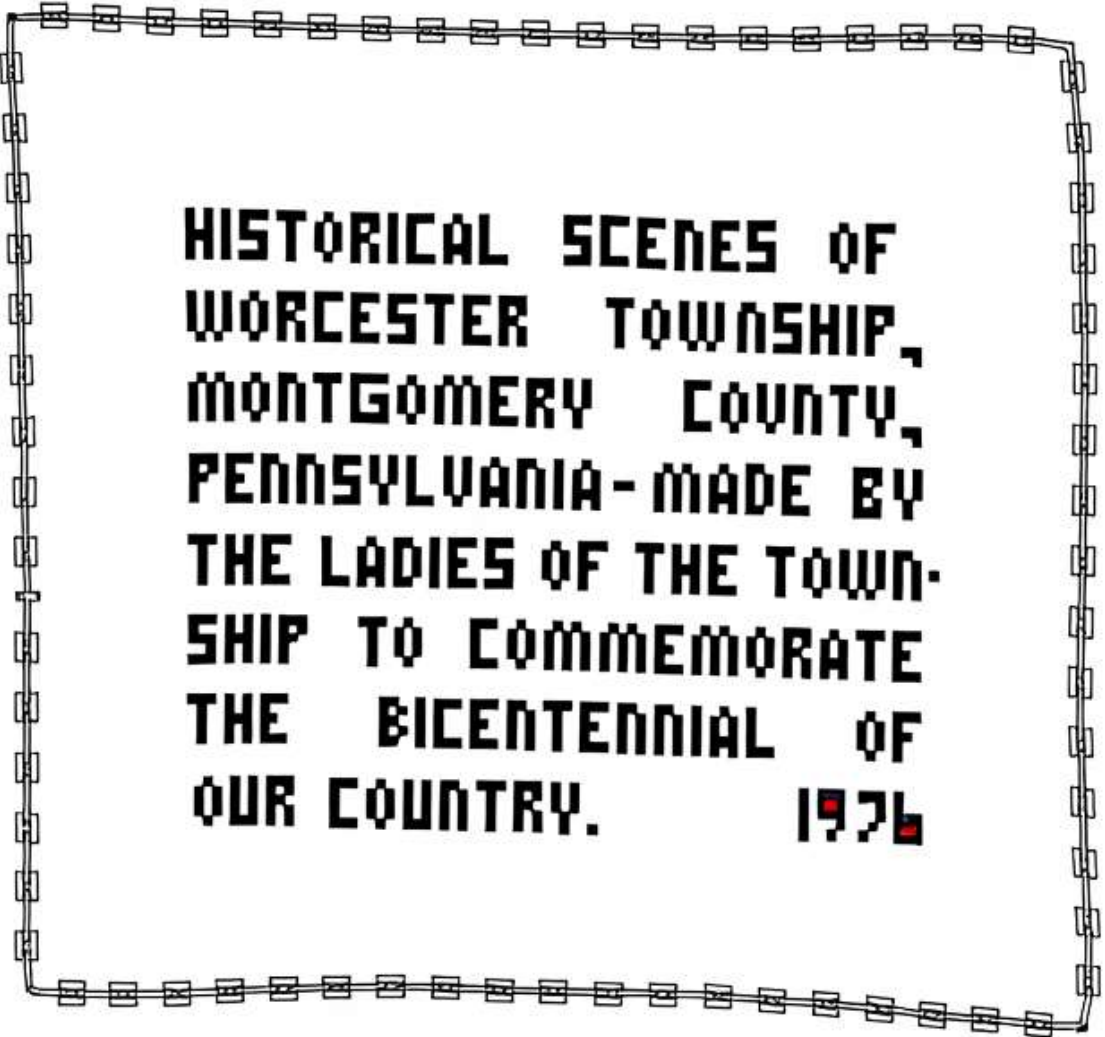
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The Story of the Quilt-- Smokie Hoagland



**HISTORICAL SCENES OF
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP,
MONTGOMERY COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA-MADE BY
THE LADIES OF THE TOWN-
SHIP TO COMMEMORATE
THE BICENTENNIAL OF
OUR COUNTRY. 1976**



Cedars Country Store--Faith Dibble

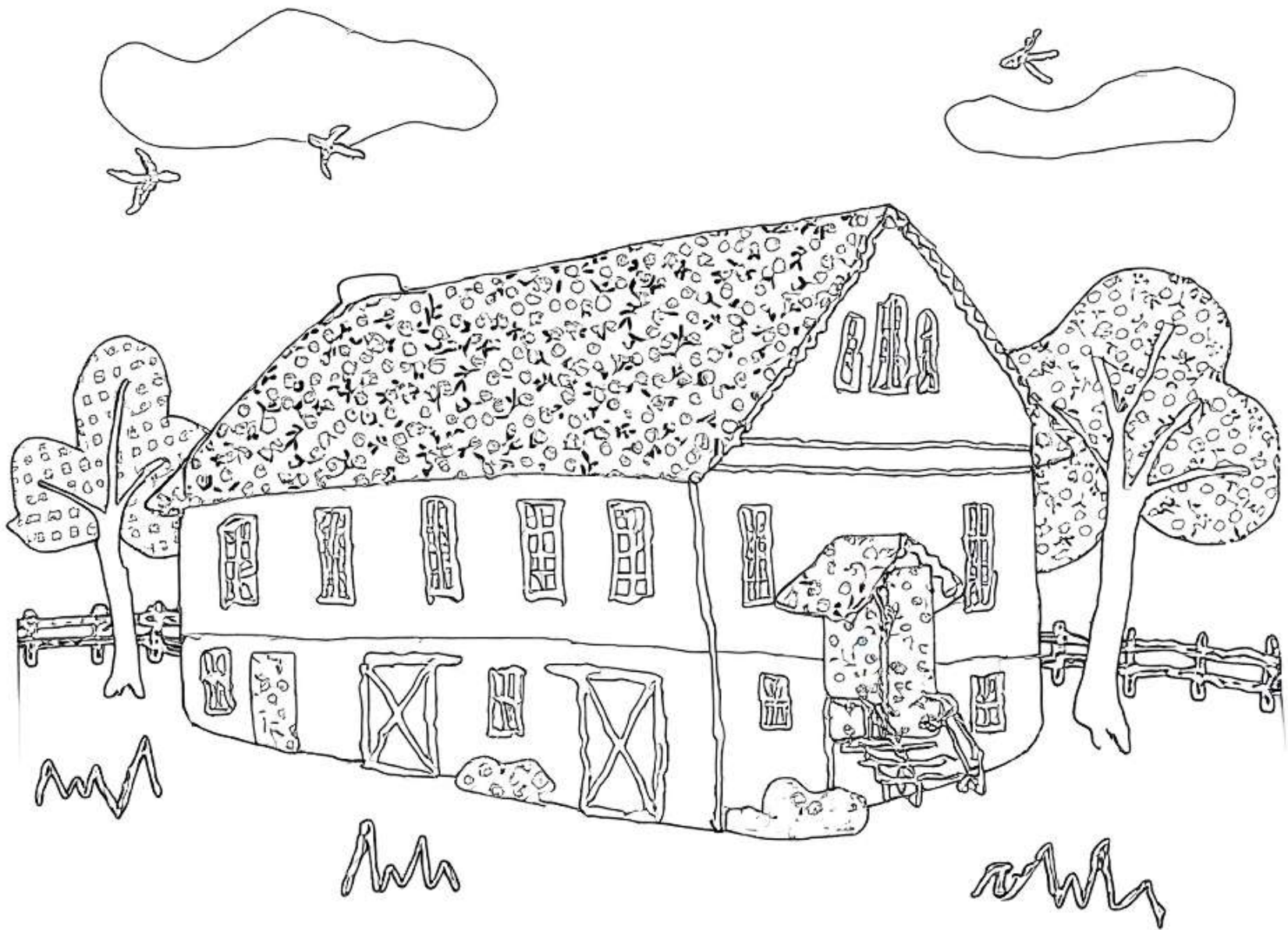


CEDAR'S STORE

F.K. Dibble



The Farmers Union Hall- Janet Horrocks

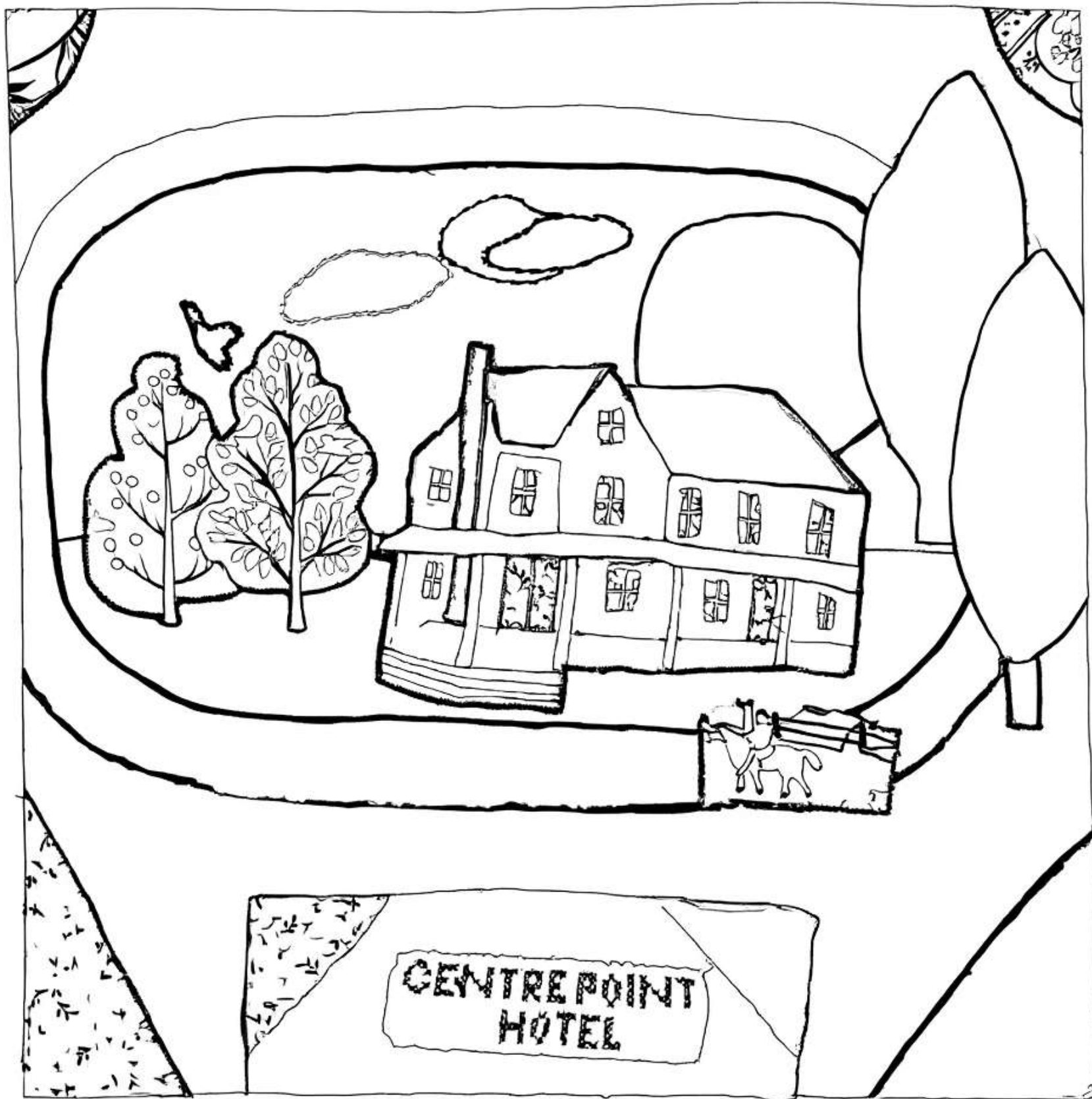


FARMERS UNION HALL
CENTER POINT, PA.

JYH

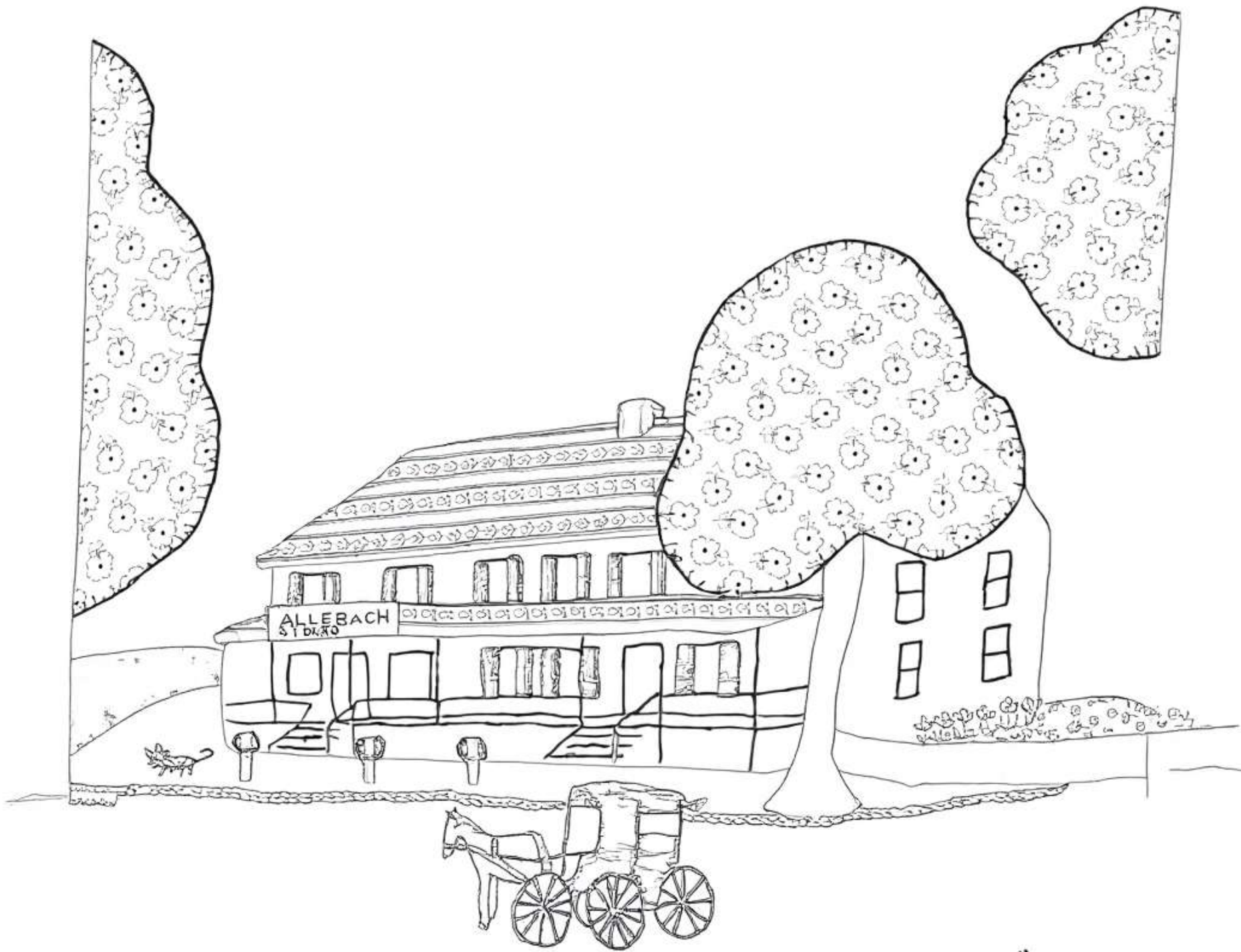


Center Point Hotel--Lorraine Shiery





Allebach's Store—Emily Allebach



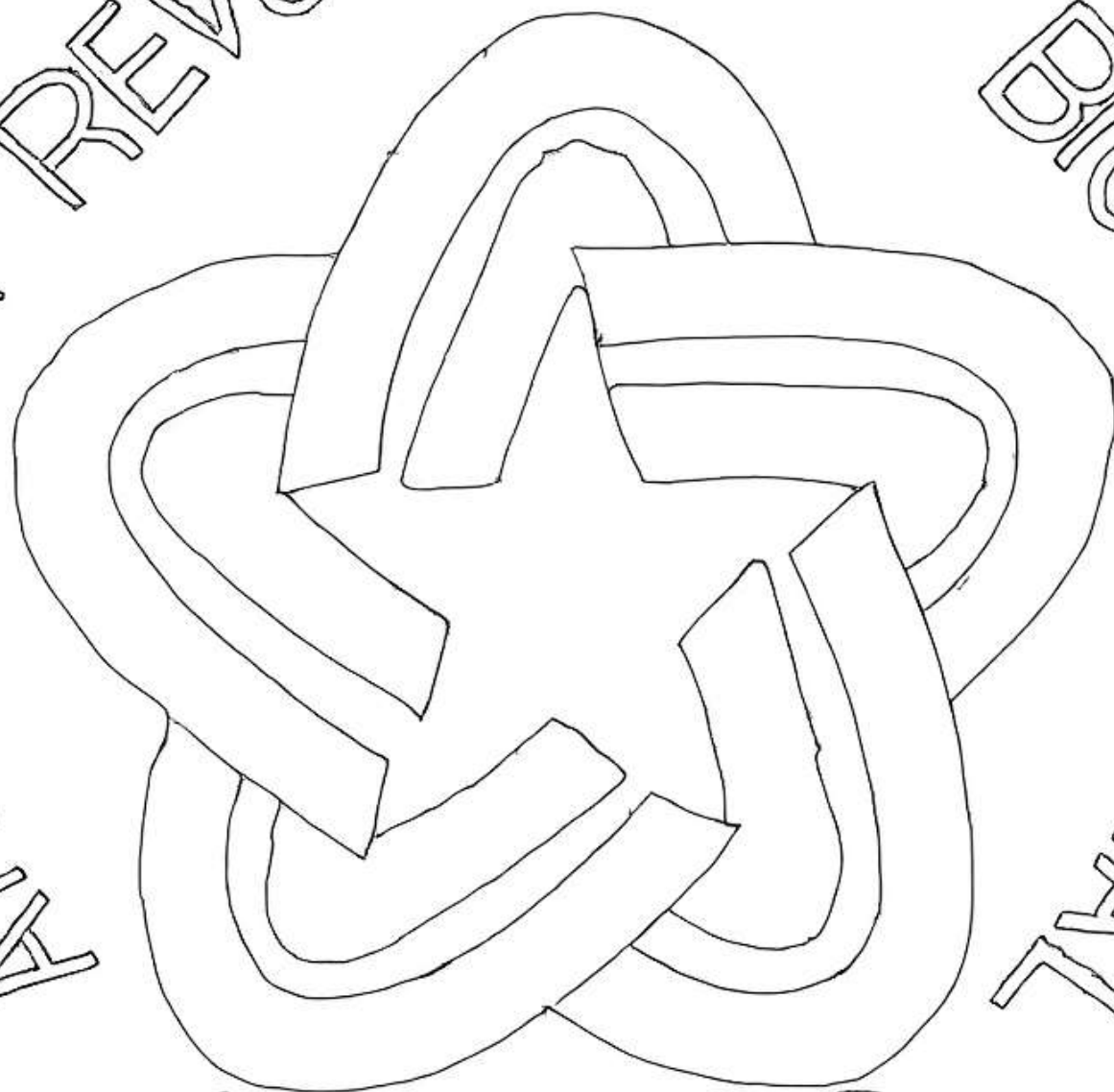
Emily ALLEBACH



The Bicentennial Symbol—Bessie Barnett, Smokie Hoagland

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BICENTENNIAL

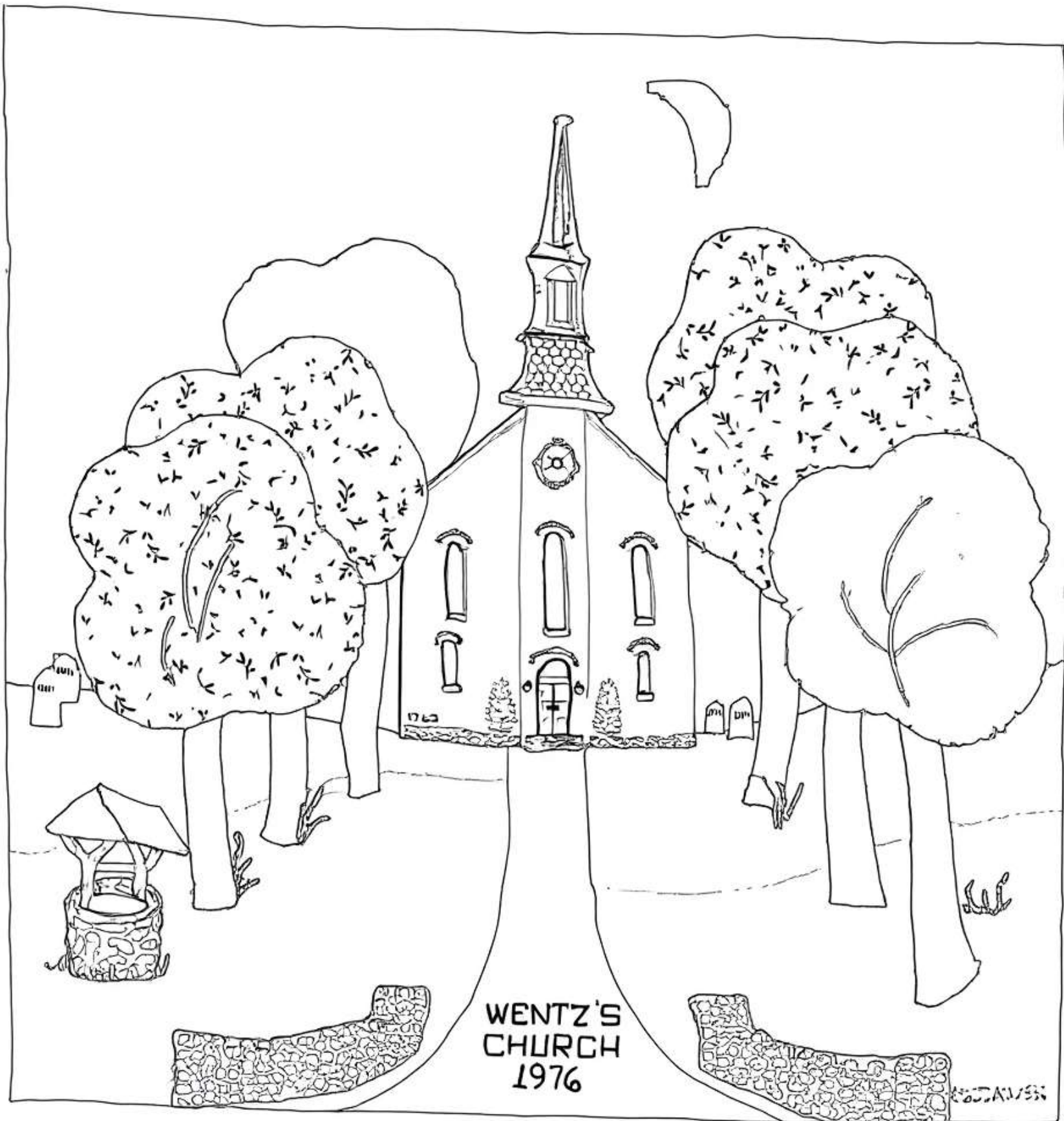


1776-1976

BARNETT



Wentz's Church, Margaret Dawson



WENTZ'S
CHURCH
1976

K. J. ALLEN

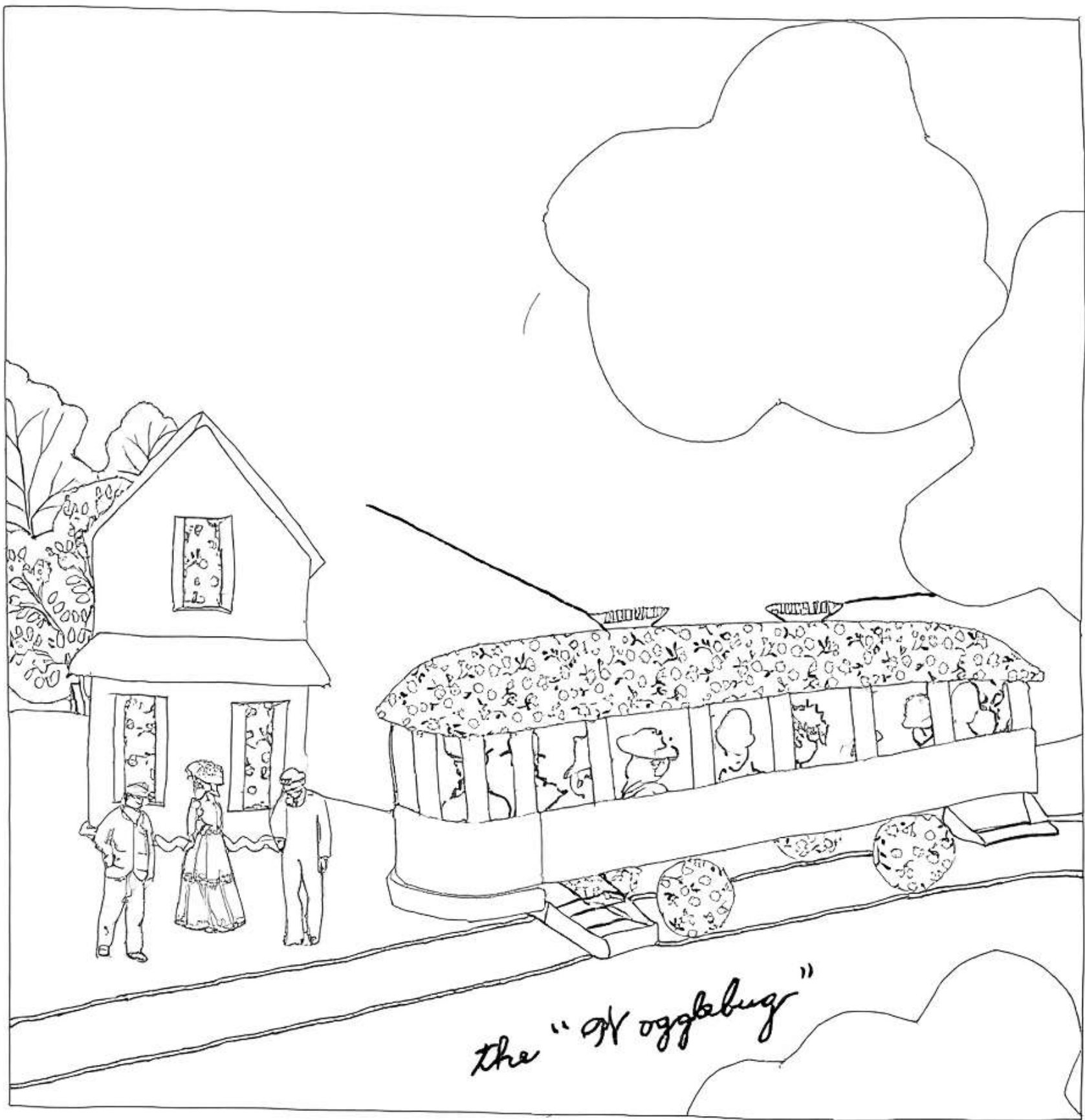


Worcester School—Jean Dodsworth





The Wogglebug—Anne Heebner



" JESU KOM IN MEIN HAUS
WEIßGE NIMME R MER HERAUS
KOM MIT DEINER GARD GUT
UND STELLE MEINE SEL ZU
FRIED " PW+RW 1958



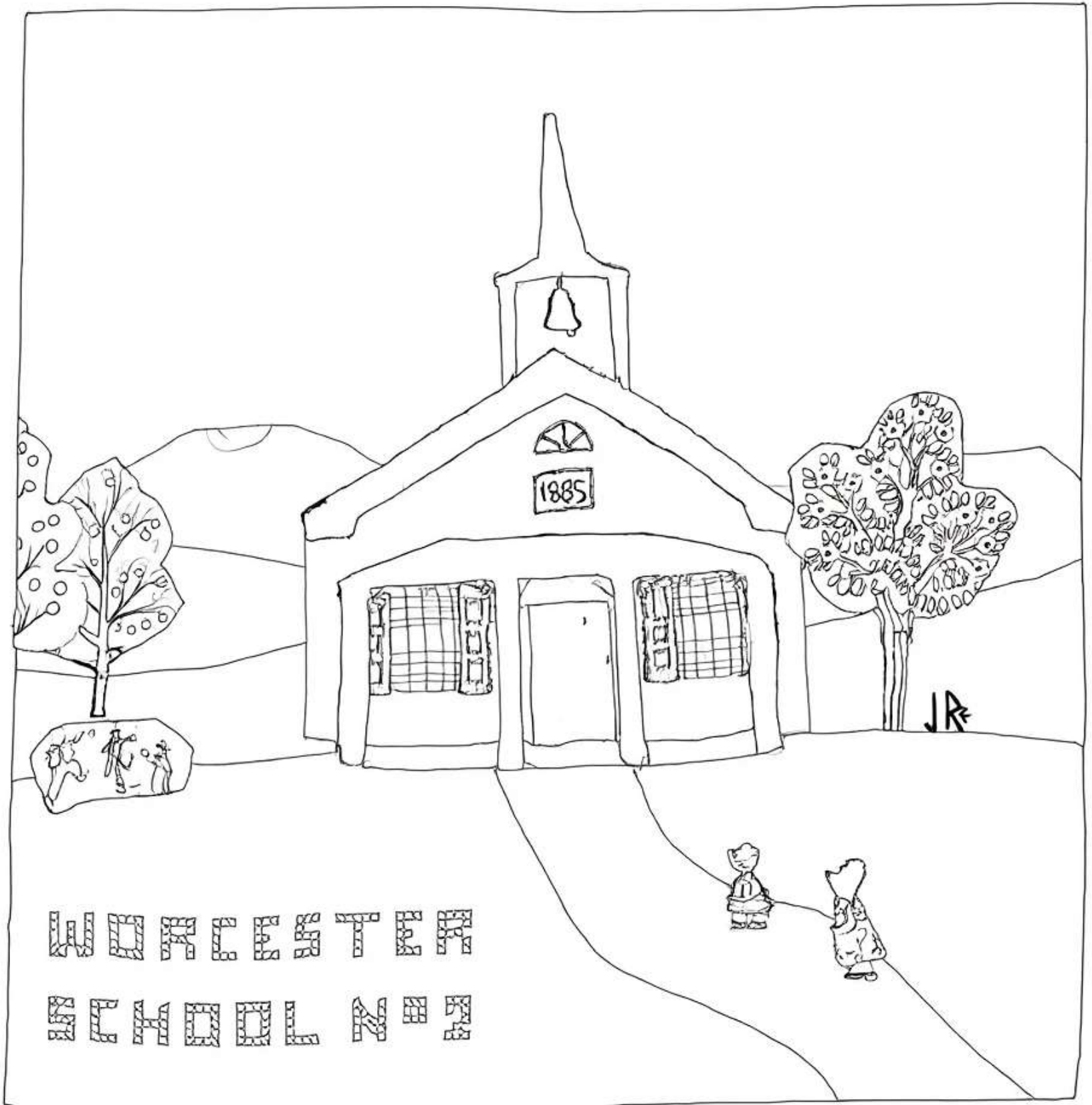
The Peter Wentz Jr. House—Smokie Hoagland

“ JESU KOMM IN MEIN HAUS
WEIßGE NIMME R MER HERAUS
KOMM MIT DEINER GNADE GUT
UND STELLE MEINE SEL ZU
FRIED ”
PW+RW 1753





Worcester School No. 2—Mary Jane Rees



WORCESTER
SCHOOL



Bethel Hill United Methodist Church—Jean McClure, Ida Jenson

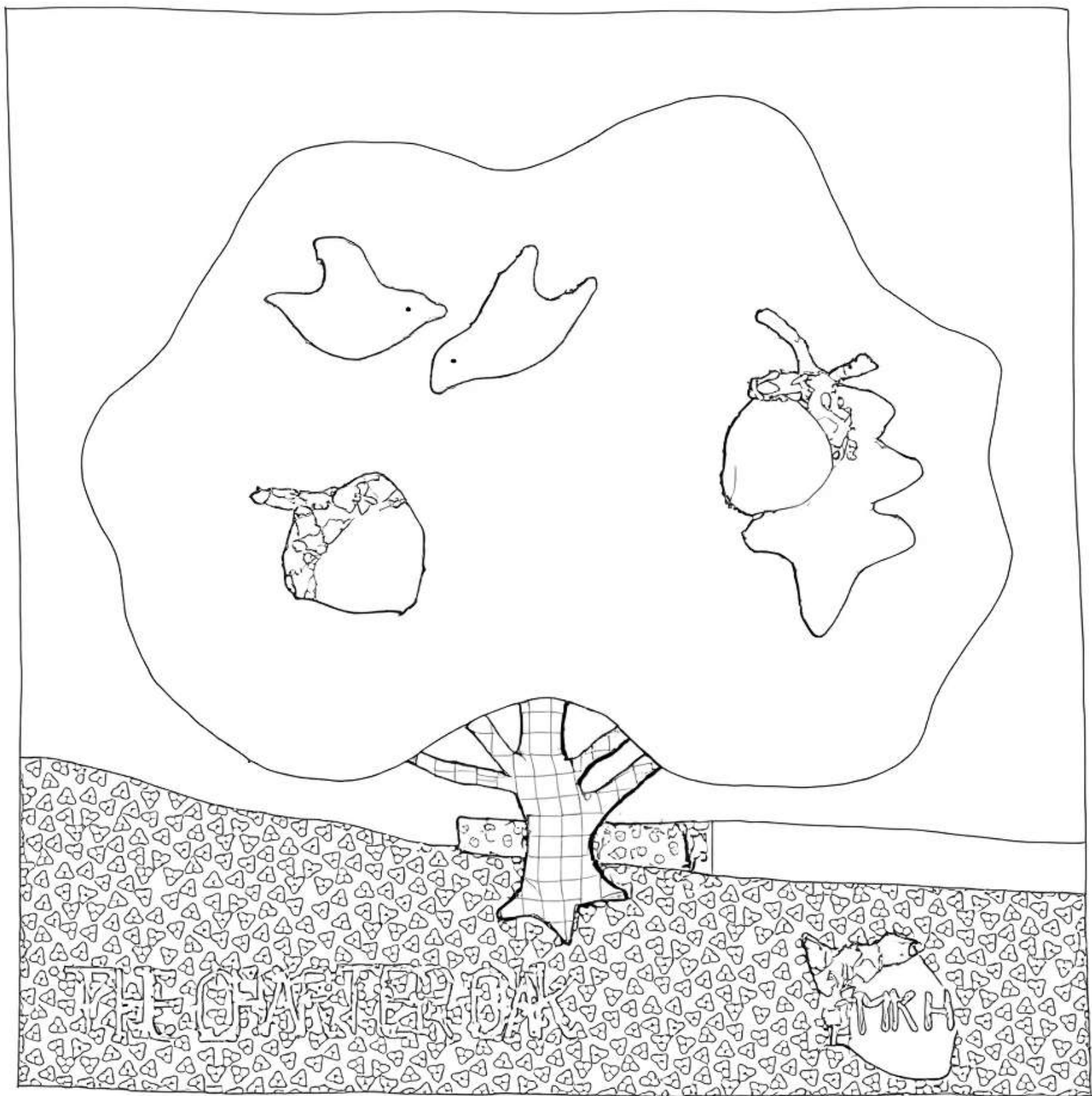


JENSEN-McCLURE

Bethel Hill Methodist Church

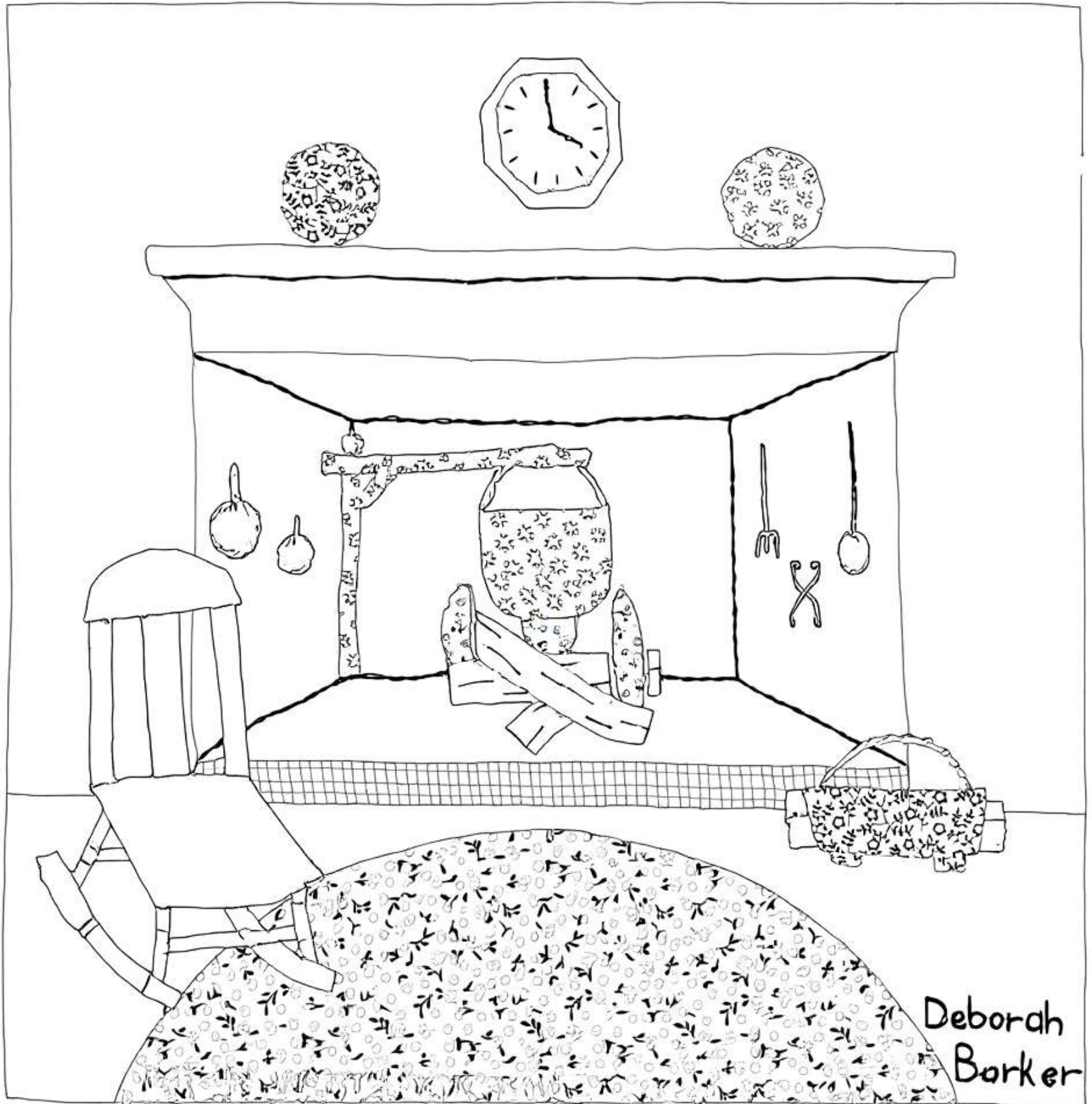


The Charter Oak—Marie Heyser





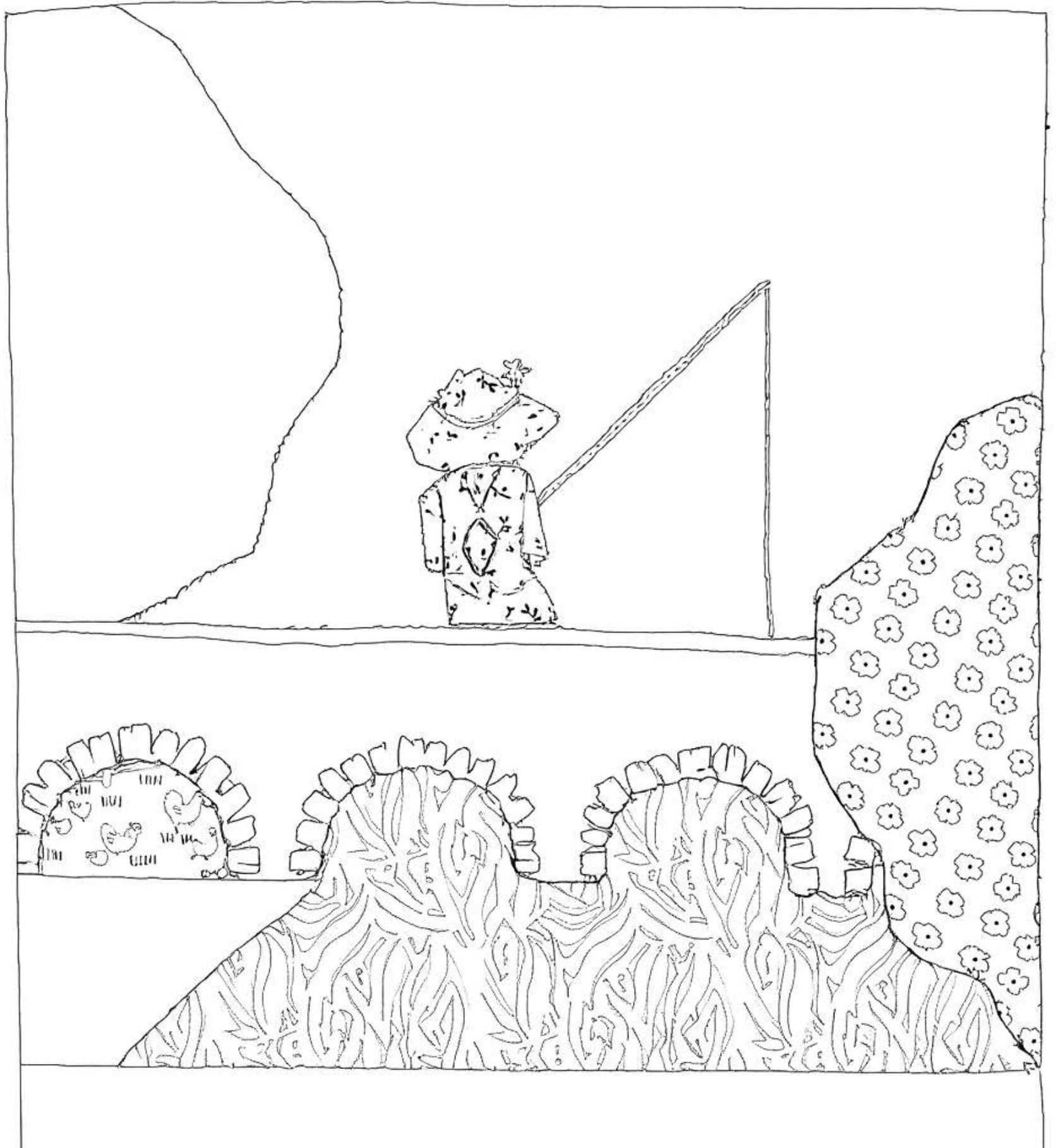
Peter Wentz House Kitchen—Debbie Barker



Deborah
Barker

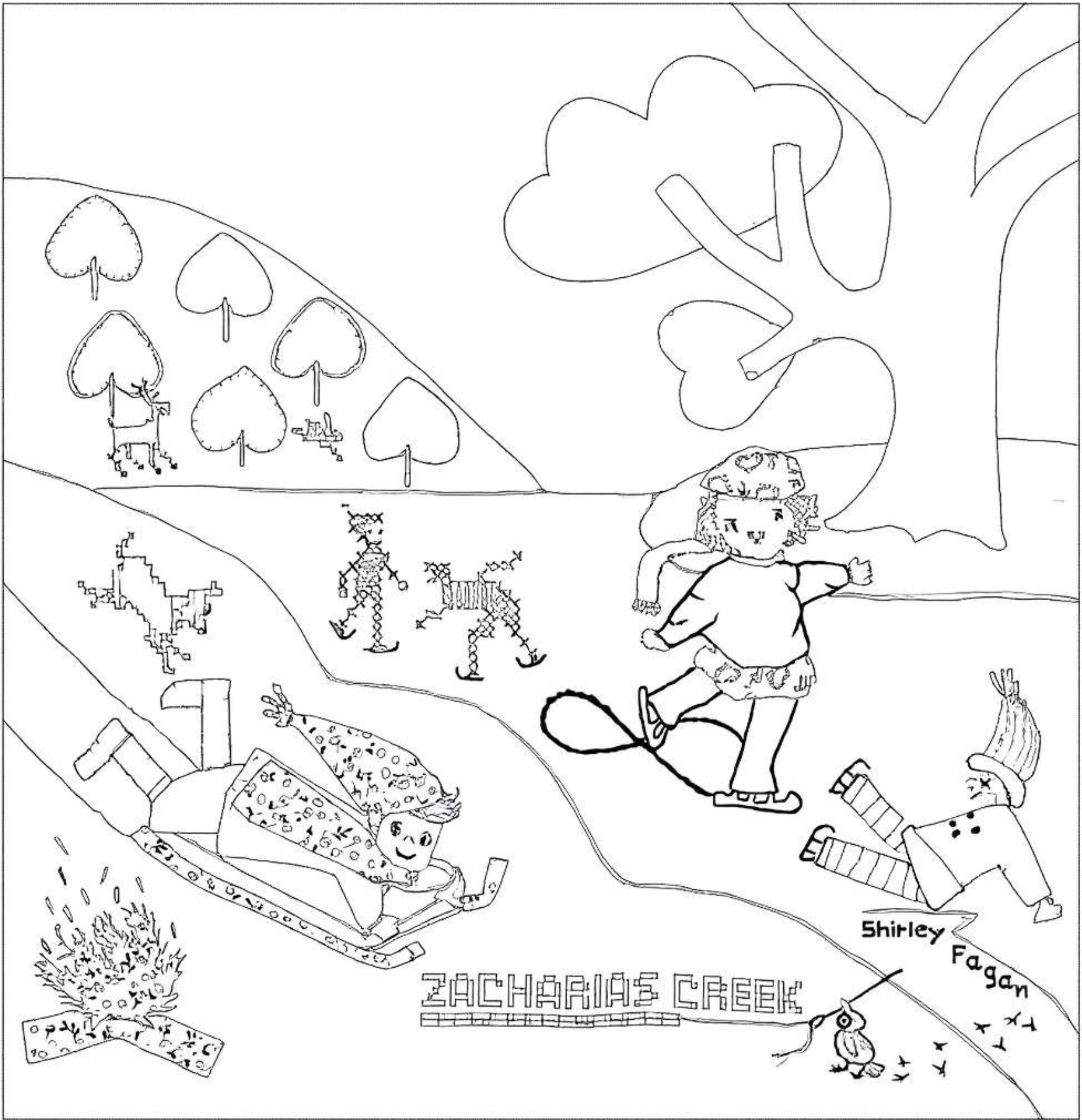


Bridge over the Zacharias—Betty Chambers





Zacharias Creek—Shirley Fagan



ZACHARIAS CREEK

Shirley Fagan

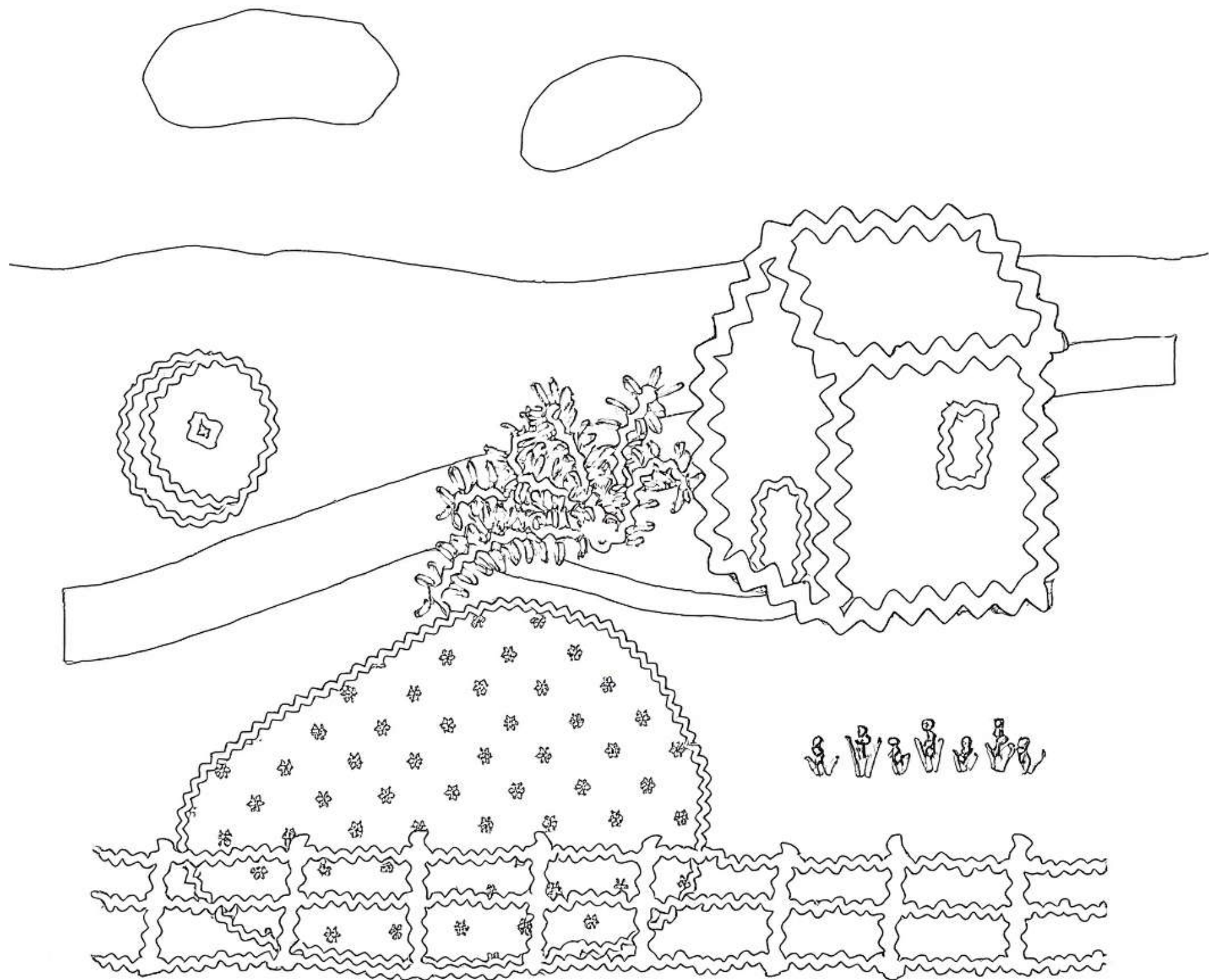


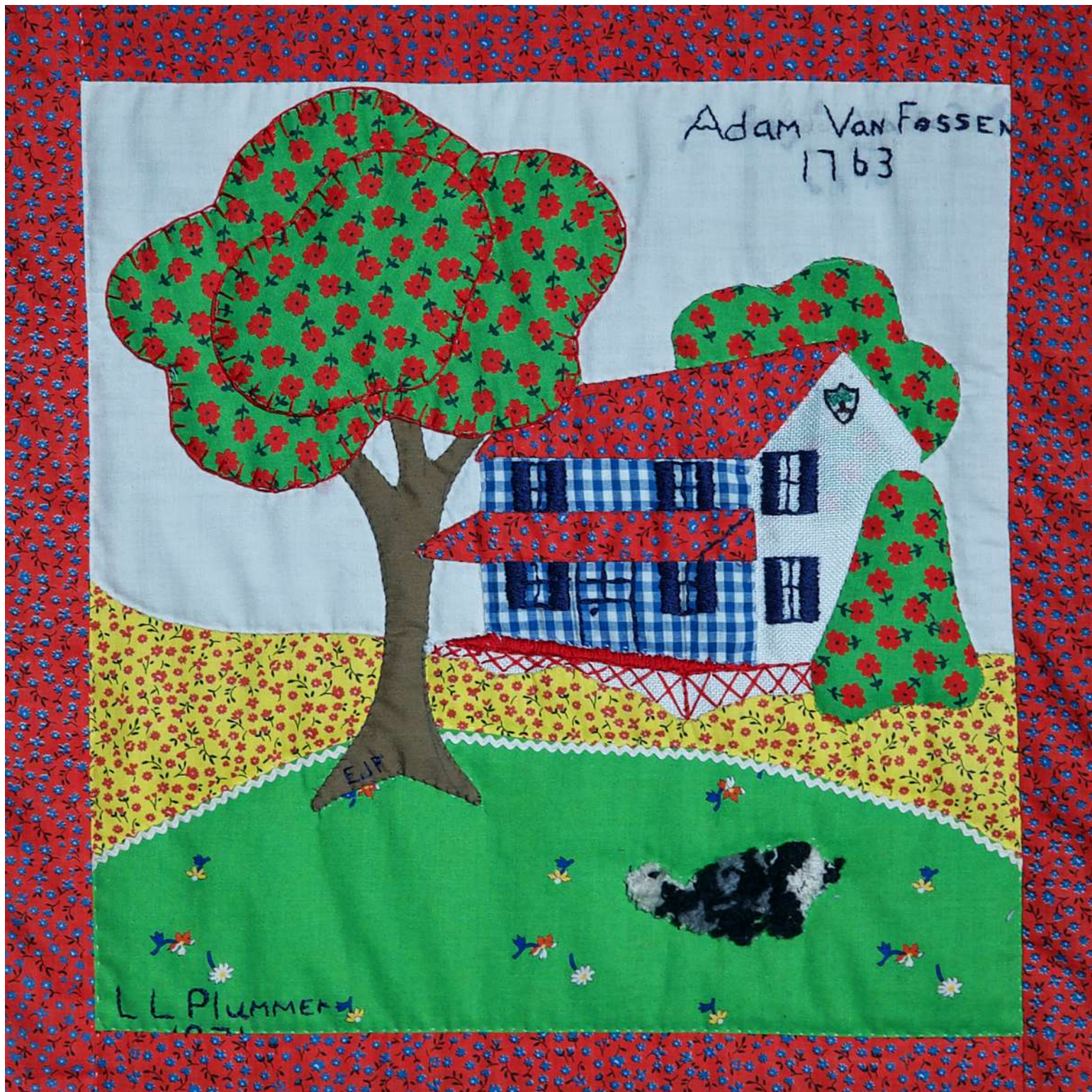
The Spring House—Betty Howarth





Spring House at Willison Smith Farm—Betty Smith





Adam Van Fossen House—Betsy Plummer





Kriebel Mill—Susan Callnin





Farmers Union Horse Parade—Elsie Plummer

F. L. PLUMMER

1934 FARMERS' UNION HORSE COMPANY 1976





Washington's Encampment—Dorothy Aker



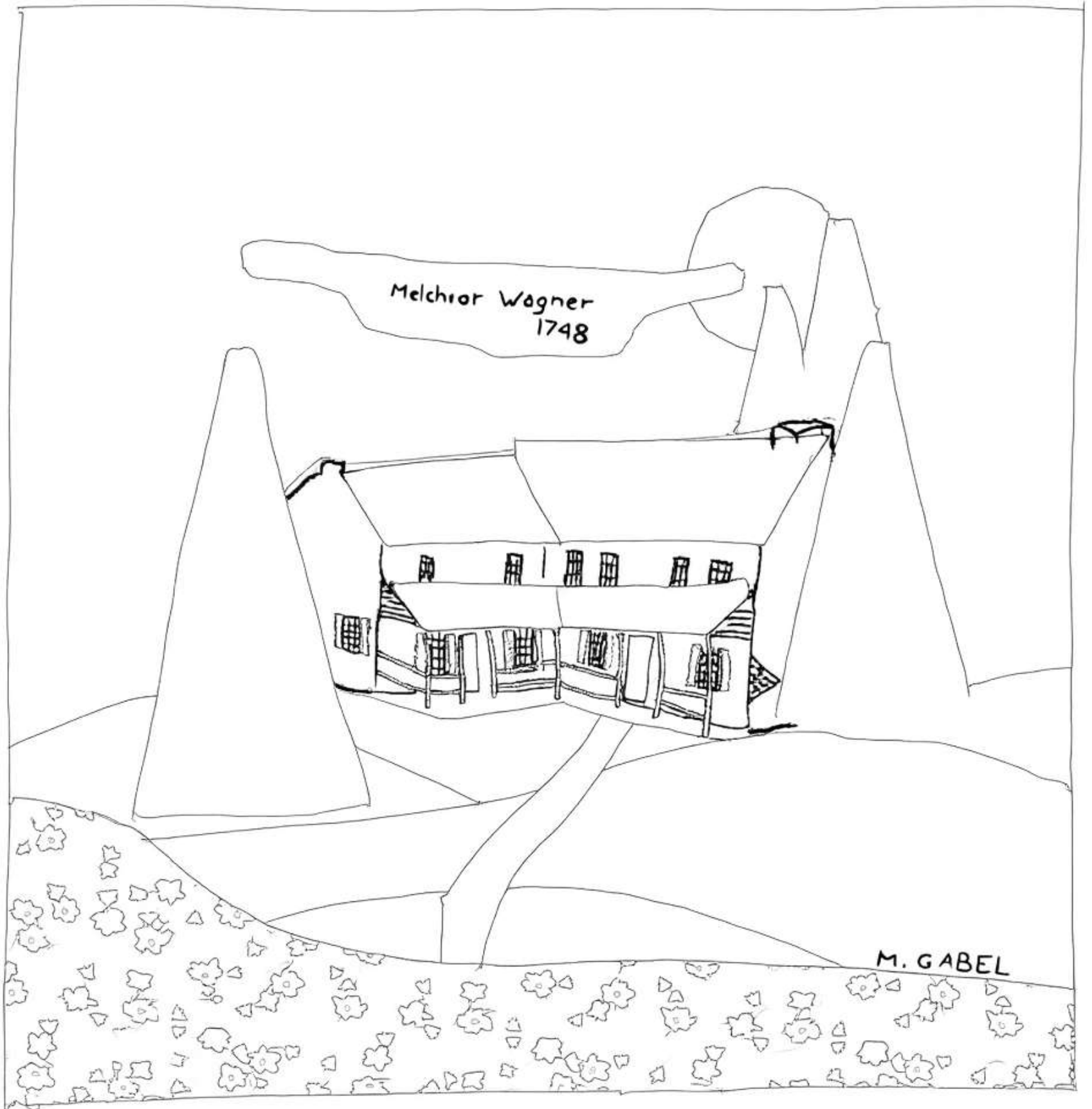


The Wishing Well—Tiernie Callnin





Melchior Wagner House—Marilyn Gabel



Melchior Wagner
1748

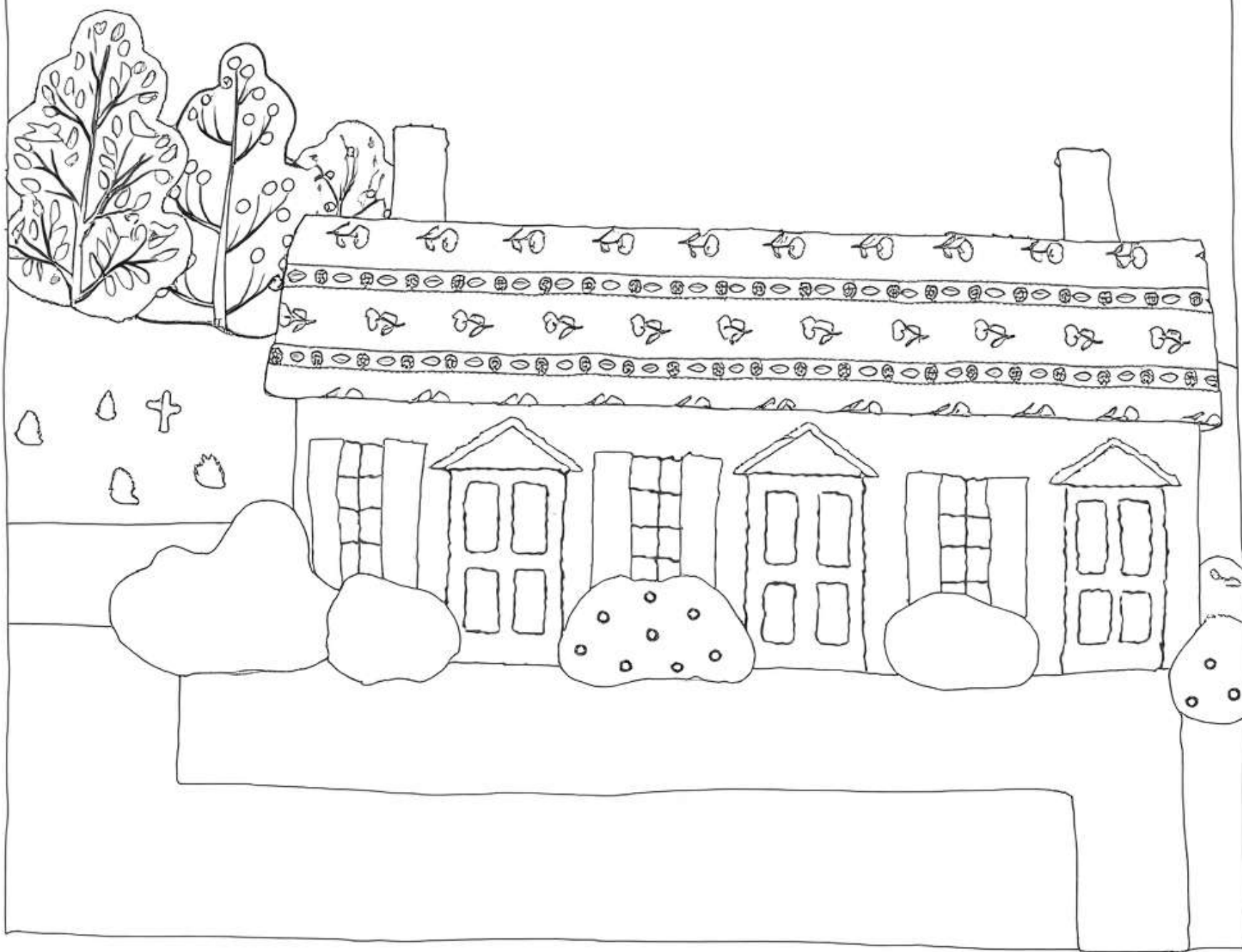
M. GABEL



*Methacton Mennonite Church
D. Cloud*

Methacton Mennonite Church—Dorris Cloud

Matheson Mennonite Church
D. Cloud



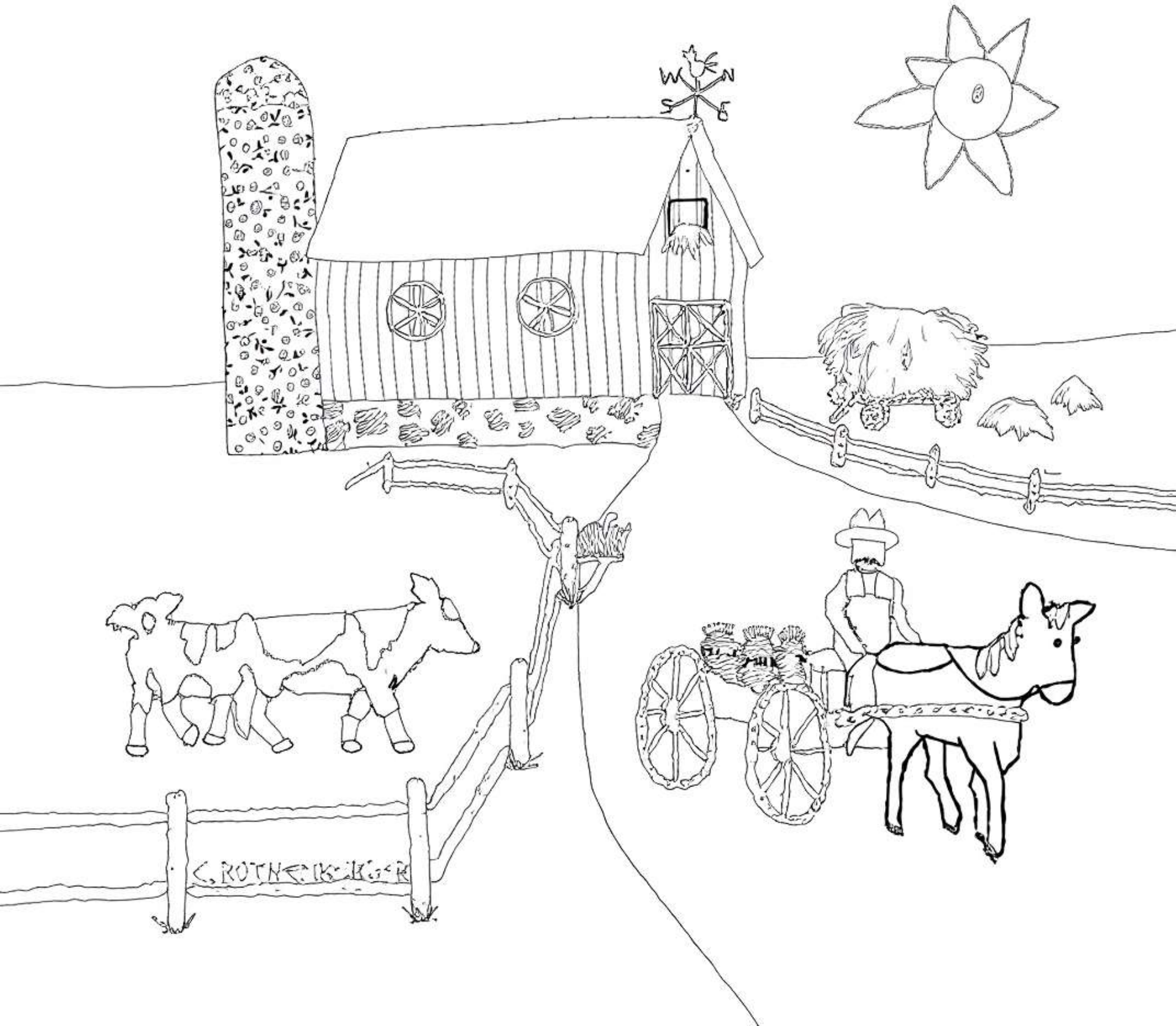


Peter Wentz, Sr. House—Rosalie Smith





Off to the Creamery—Carol Rothenberger Snyder





Merrybrook Farm—Ruth Myers



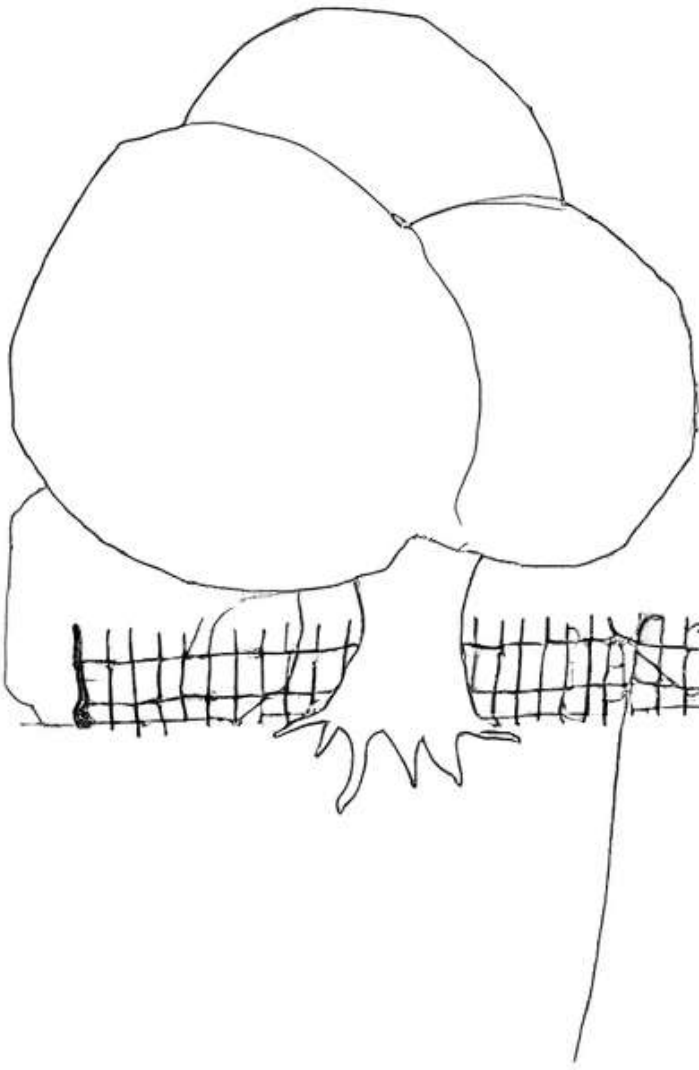
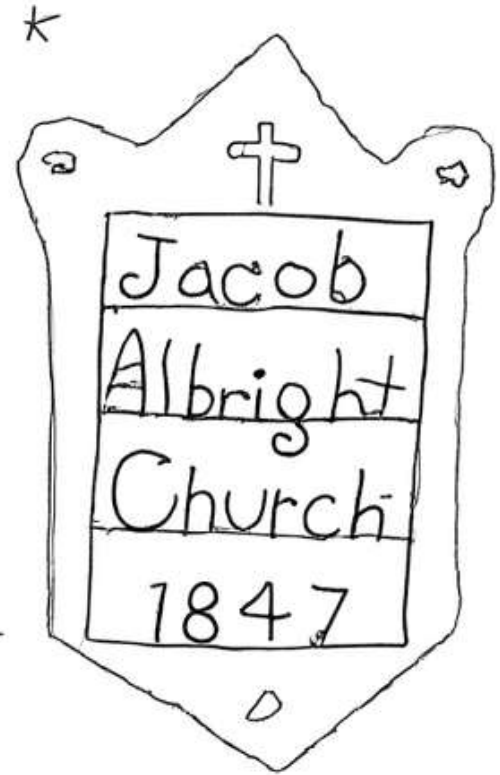
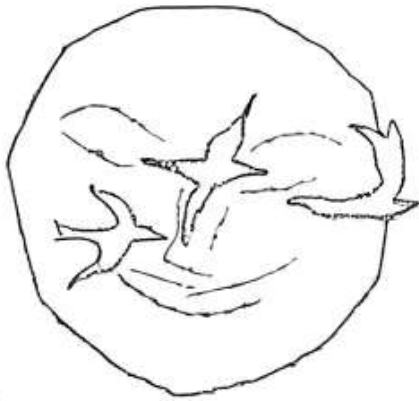


Kriebel Farm—Marie Kriebel



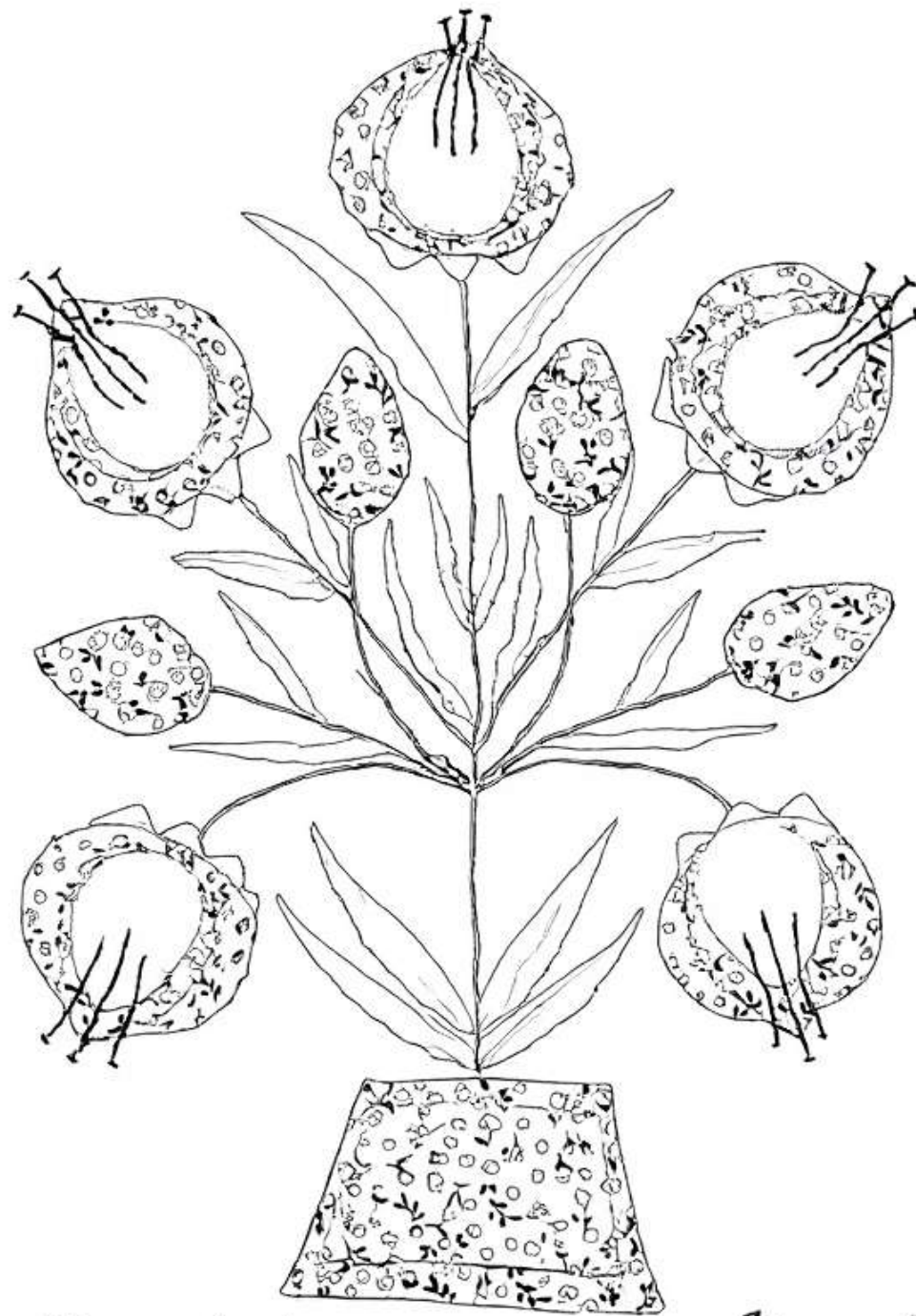


Jacob Albright Church--Doris Weed





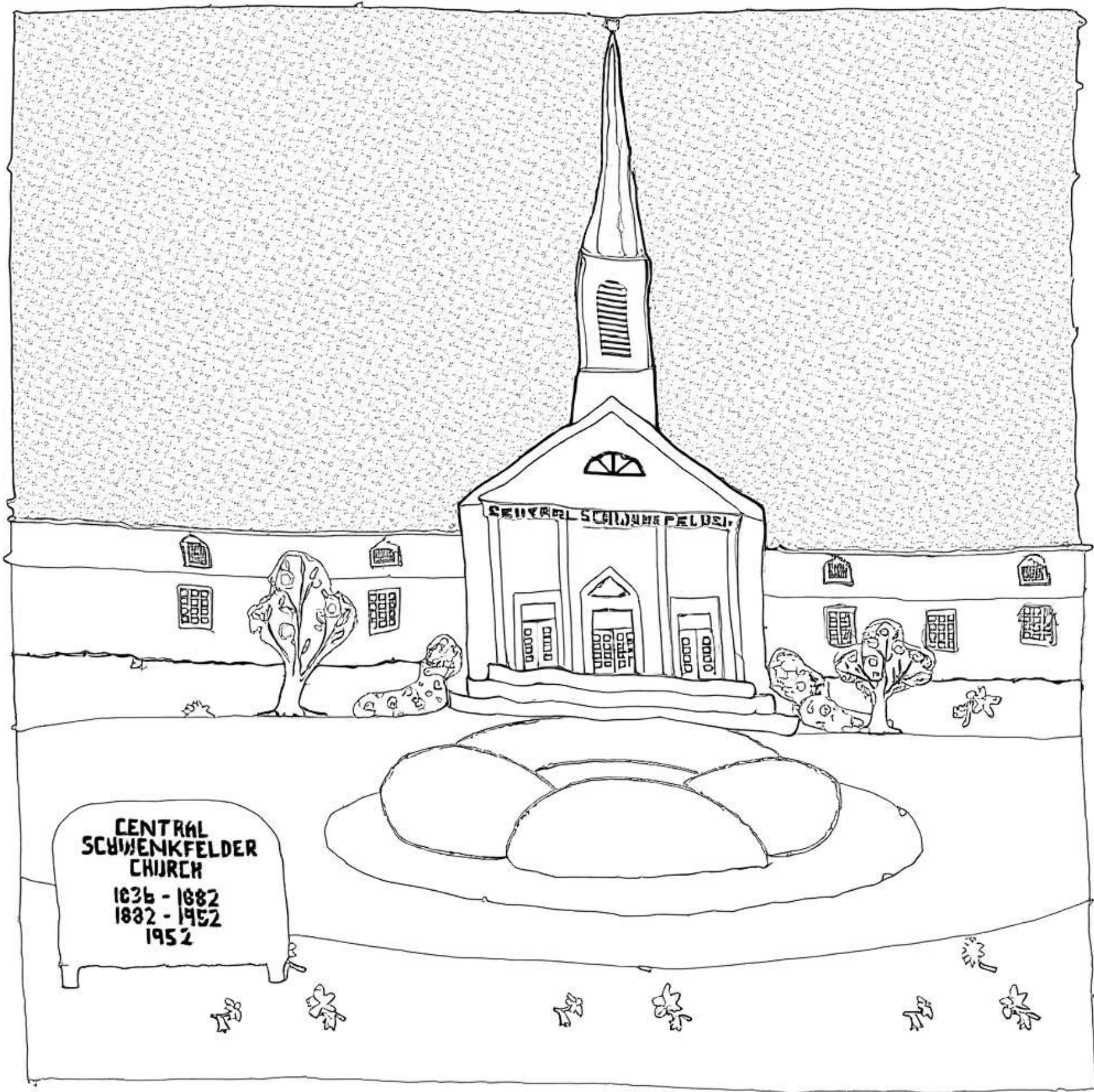
Fraktur—Lettie Schultz



Fraktur by Job Kriebel



Central Schwenkfelder Church—Smokie Hoagland

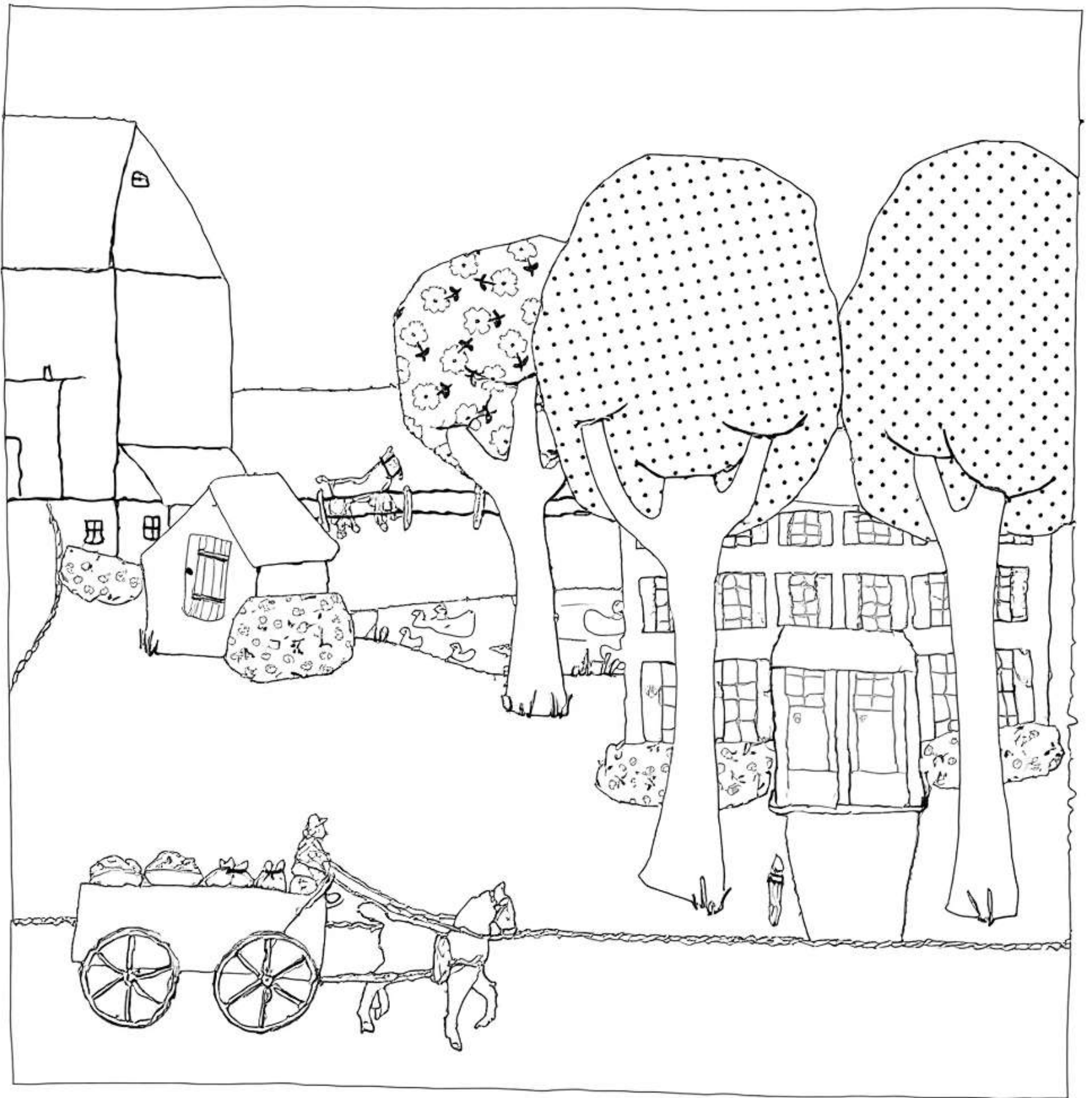


CENTRAL
SCHWENKFELDER
CHURCH

1836 - 1882
1882 - 1952
1952



The Markley House—Gloria Markley



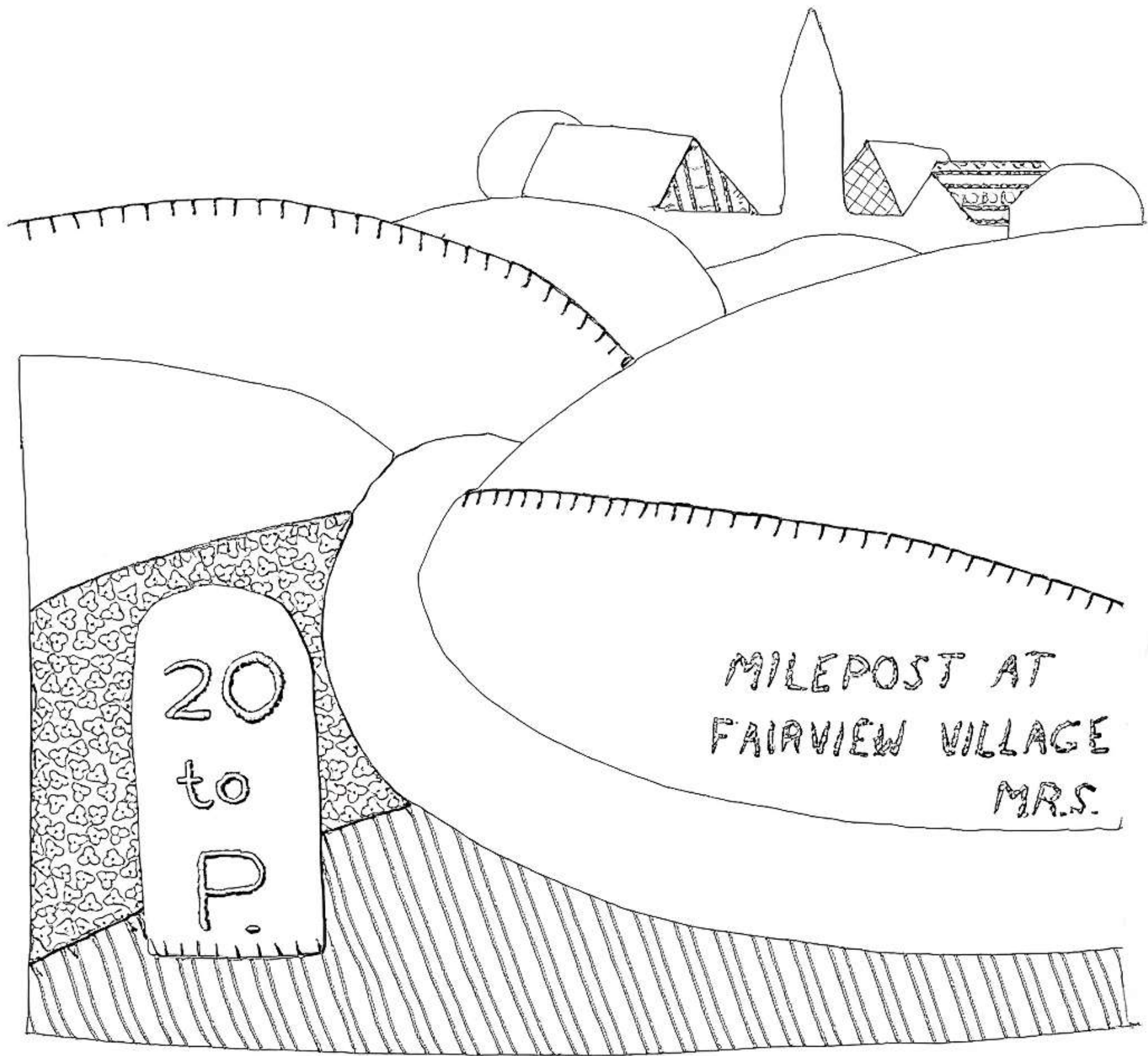


Morgan Tannery—Sandy Gabel Plummer



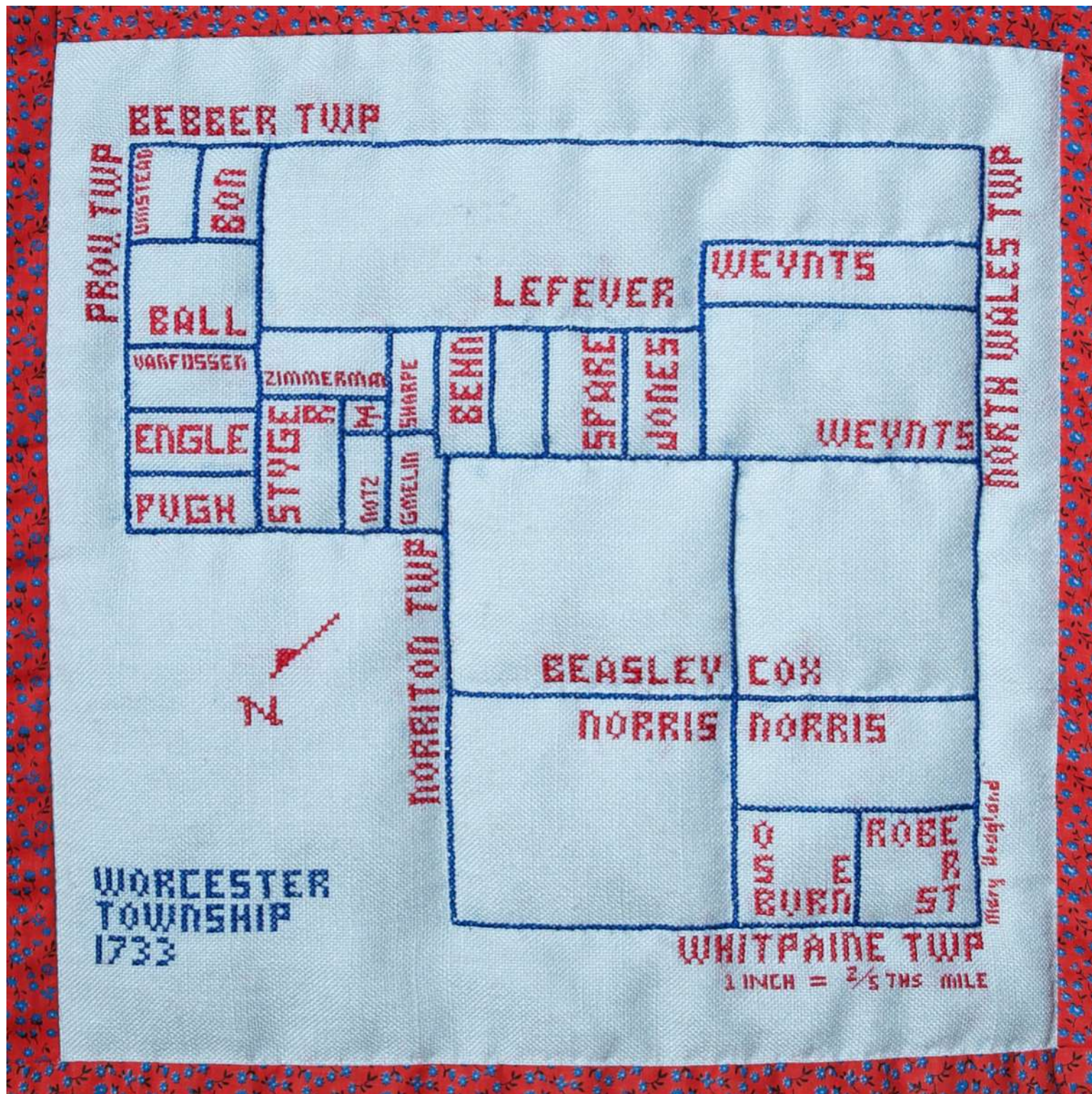


Mile Marker on Germantown Pike—Mary Scott



20
to
P.

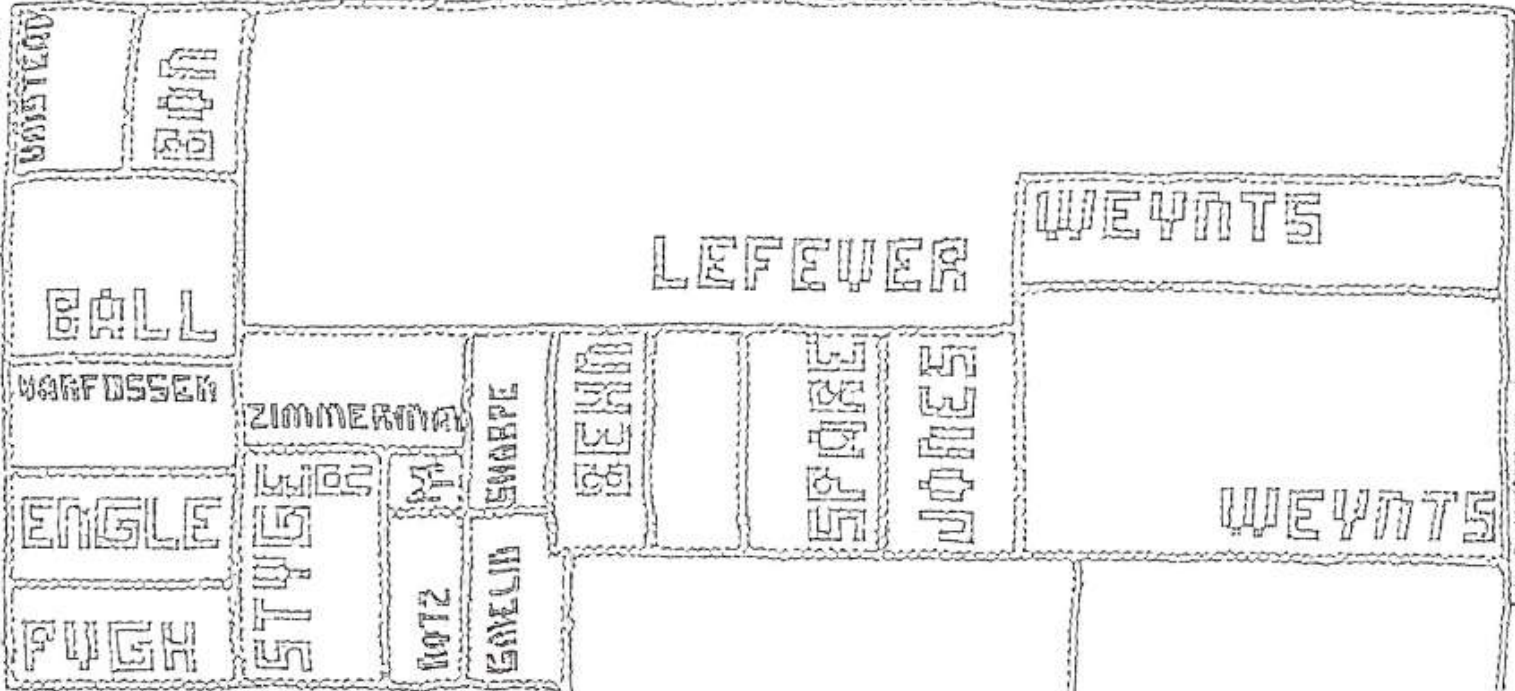
MILEPOST AT
FAIRVIEW VILLAGE
MRS.



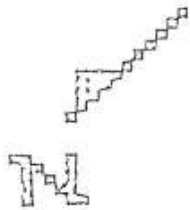
The Township Map—Smokie Hoagland

BEVER TWP

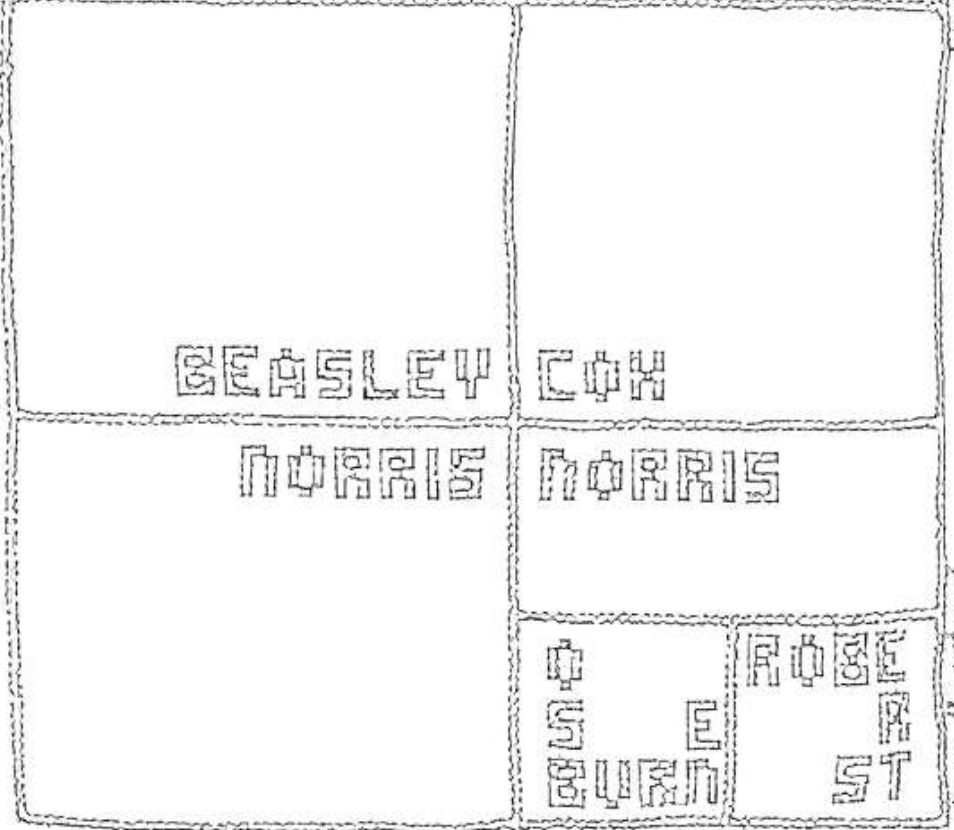
FRON TWP



WILSON TWP



WILSON TWP



WILSON TWP

WORCESTER
TOWNSHIP
MS

WHITPAIN TWP

1 INCH = 2/5 THS MILE

THE WORCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY BICENTENNIAL QUILT

In June 1975, a group of women from Worcester Township, Pennsylvania assembled, at the suggestion of the Worcester Historical Society, to discuss the possibility of creating a quilt as a Bicentennial project.

It was decided to make a quilt of 36 squares that would depict life and history of the Township.

The group varied in age from 14 years to “Senior Citizen” and included two men who contributed to the designs. By mid-summer each person had selected a scene and received a square of white sheeting plus calico in red and blue to be used in some way in each design. Colored material was appliqued over the white square and details were embroidered to complete the 13” × 13” squares.

After the individual squares were completed and stitched together, the ladies of the Schwenkfelder Church did the quilting. The scenes portrayed in the quilt, from left to right, top to bottom, are:

1. THE STORY OF THE QUILT - Smokie Hoagland

2. CEDARS COUNTRY STORE - Faith Dibble

Around 1830 a store was built as an addition to the stone farmhouse on Skippack Pike at Cedar Hill. Although the property has been owned by several families since that time, it has always been operated as a store. In 1930 the United States Post Office opened an office in the store. Robert B. Dibble, the present postmaster, purchased the property in 1950 and has restored the store to its mid-1800 appearance.

3. THE FARMER’S UNION HALL - Janet Horrocks

In the late 1800’s the Farmer’s Union of Montgomery County constructed a building to serve as its headquarters. The upper story was framed and served as a meeting place for the local populace. The stone first floor contained stable space for 40 horses. One of the chief services the Union provided for its members was the purchase of farm supplies at wholesale rates. The Union also organized the first telephone company in the county. In the early 1900’s, high school classes were conducted in the area that today houses the local post office.

4. CENTER POINT HOTEL — Lorraine Shiery

The hotel, located at the intersection of Valley Forge Road and Skippack Pike, served several needs of the community during the mid-1800’s. It was used as a meeting place for the local citizens until the Farmers Hall was built. At one time cows were sold at the rear of the property. In more recent years, the Worcester Volunteer Fire Company frequently held meetings at the hotel. The fire engine was housed here until the hotel was demolished in the late 1960’s.

5. ALLEBACH'S STORE - Emily Allebach

When the Center Point General Store closed in 1967, it had served the community for 140 years. It became known as "Allebach's Store" when Harold Allebach purchased it in 1927. The original building was built in 1827 and served as a house and Post Office. Approximately 10 merchants have occupied the store, each adding another line of merchandise until all the personal needs of a family and items for the home could be purchased, as well as gasoline for the car.

6. THE BICENTENNIAL SYMBOL - Bessie Barnett & Smokie Hoagland

7. WENTZ CHURCH - Margaret Dawson

In 1720 Wentz Church was established by pioneers from the Palatinate in Germany. In 1725 the first church was built in Lower Salford. In 1760 ground was donated by Jacob Wentz and John Lefever and the Worcester Church was built. A larger building was erected in 1851 and the present church was built in 1878.

8. WORCESTER SCHOOL - Jean Dodsworth

The Worcester School #5, or Anders School, is located on Shearer Road. In 1879 the present building was erected on the same location as the previous school and a basement was added. The school was sold at public sale and has been occupied by the John Dodsworth family since 1959.

9. "THE WOGGLEBUG" - Ann Heebner

On July 20, 1907, trolley service was initiated from Norristown seven miles to Center Point. It was affectionately known by the local populace as the "Wogglebug." In 1908 the line was extended to Wentz Church, then to Skippack and finally to Harleysville in 1912. The service was discontinued in 1925.

10. THE PETER WENTZ, JR. HOUSE - Smokie Hoagland

In 1758 Peter Wentz, Jr. built this nine-room house which was to become the headquarters of General Washington before and after the Battle of Germantown. The house had a summer and a winter kitchen, a stove room, a living room, and five bedrooms. On a stone near the open arch appears the German House Blessing, which translates: "Jesus come into my house, Never to leave again; Come with thy blessed favor And bring peace to my soul."

The Homestead was placed on the National Register of Historical Places on May 22, 1973. In 1969 Montgomery County purchased the property and has undertaken the restoration of the house and surroundings. On June 19, 1976, it was opened to the public.

11. WORCESTER SCHOOL #2 — Mary Jane Rees

In 1885 a one-room school was built in Worcester Township on Water Street. It was called the Roberts School after the former owner but was often referred to as the “Water Street School.” The school was in service until it was sold at public auction in 1916. It served as a single dwelling until fire gutted it in 1968. Jay and Mary Jane Rees purchased it in 1969 and began the process of renovating the interior. The exterior still has the charm of the old schoolhouse, including the bell tower and scroll wood trim on the front porch. An old oak tree shades the building now as it did when school was in session.

12. BETHEL HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH — Jean McClure & Ida Jenson

In October of 1770 a log and stone chapel, located on the corner of Bethel Road and Skippack Pike, was dedicated. It was used as a hospital by the American Army after the Battle of Germantown. The adjoining graveyard was used as a place of interment for Continental soldiers. The church became a Methodist Congregation in 1784, and the chapel was used by the congregation until 1845 when the present building was constructed. A Sunday School was organized, and a parsonage was constructed in 1860. The present front of the church along with a separate building to house the Sunday School was added in the early 1900’s.

13. THE CHARTER OAK - Marie Heyser

In 1726 Henry Rittenhouse, ancestor of Joseph Heebner, purchased a plot of ground at the corner of Mill and Quarry Hall Roads in the vicinity of Fairview Village. It is at this corner that the Great Oak stands. It is referred to in old deeds as the “Charter Oak” and is approximately 300 years old.

14. THE KITCHEN IN THE PETER WENTZ HOUSE - Debbie Barker

This square depicts the walk-in kitchen fireplace of the Peter Wentz, Sr. House. (Square 26)

15. THE BRIDGE OVER THE ZACHARIAS - Betty Chambers

The three-arched stone bridge on Skippack Pike crossed the Zacharias Creek near what is today known as Shearer Road. Before the bridge was built, the stream was forded on wooden slabs, at great difficulty. Betty Chambers, whose father was a bridge builder, appliqued and embroidered the little boy on the bridge.

16. ZACHARIAS CREEK — Shirley Fagan

The Zacharias Creek 16 is a prominent stream in Worcester Township. It has a course of about four miles across the northern angle; in that distance, it once propelled three grist mills and a sawmill. It is possible that the singular name given to the creek has been taken from Zacharias Whitpain, an early resident of the adjoining Whitpain Township. It is said that Zacharias once lost his horses and went to find them. They were located along the stream and ever after, the stream was called the “Zacharias”.

17. THE SPRING HOUSE — Betty Howarth

The Spring House was formerly located on Jackass Lane on what was part of the original Wentz tract. It was one of the farm buildings of the Strong family manor, some of which date back to 1718.

In 1970 it was removed, stone by stone, and reconstructed in the woods on the Howarth property on Greenbrier Drive in Worcester.

18. THE SPRINGHOUSE AT THE WILLISON SMITH FARM - Betty Smith

The three-story springhouse is one of the few remaining buildings of the original farm of 112 acres located on Hollow Road. A spring still runs under the stones near the door. To the left of the door is a fireplace once used to smoke meat, and a ladder still leads to a sleeping loft. In the spring the slope above the springhouse is abloom with wild tulips that were brought from Europe in colonial times.

The J. Willison Smith Family has occupied the farm since 1940.

19. THE ADAM VAN FOSSEN HOUSE - Betsy Plummer

This house on Mill Road was built by Adam Van Fossen in 1763. When the Lawrence Plummers bought the house in 1959, 11 owners had preceded them. It is said to be haunted by a female ghost who died in childbirth. The house was a two-room tenant house and was not modernized or enlarged until 1941.

20. KRIEBEL MILL - Susan Callnin

The Kriebel Mill stood on the banks of the Zacharias Creek; immediately above the intersection of Kriebel Mill Road and Green Hill Road. This grist mill was one of the most prominent institutions in Worcester and one of the oldest mill sites in Montgomery County. In the late 1700's it was owned by Jacob Wentz and in the early 1800's by Abraham Kriebel and his brother Samuel. The huge undershot wheel was located underneath the building. Water was directed to it from the mill pond through a tunnel under the road.

The mill itself was demolished in recent time but the foundations are still intact in the basement of the summer house belonging to the present owner, Edward M. Markel.

21. THE FARMERS' UNION HORSE PARADE — Elsie Plummer

The Farmers' Union Company, organized for the "Recovery of Stolen Horses and Detecting the Thieves," provided insurance for farmers. Members pooled their resources to protect themselves. If a horse was stolen and not recovered, the owner was compensated by the company. The local group was organized in 1834 and still meets in Fairview Village. It sponsors a parade and horse show on the first Saturday in June and, rain or shine, the show starts early in the morning, breaks for a parade at noon, and then continues until dark. The parade forms at Methacton High School with horses and pony-drawn carts, carriages, wagons, plus riders on horseback, individuals and groups, and moves to the Fairgrounds in the village past gaily decorated homes.

22. WASHINGTON'S ENCAMPMENT - Dorothy Aker

The scene depicts Washington and some of the soldiers who camped in Worcester Township before and after the Battle of Germantown in 1777. Washington established his headquarters at the Peter Wentz, Jr. house in October of 1777, and during his stay the soldiers camped in the woodland to the northeast. Two soldiers were buried at the rear of the barn. Many muskets and cannon balls, rusty farm spades and other relics found in recent times testify to the presence of the army in the vicinity.

23. THE WISHING WELL - Tiernie Callnin

The wishing well stands in a field at the intersection of Fisher and Wentz Church Roads. There is an exact twin near the Schwenkfelder Church on Valley Forge Road. The wells are made of native field stone and are in excellent condition. They are not old; probably they were built in the early 1900's.

24. MELCHIOR WAGNOR HOUSE — Marilyn Gabel

The Melchior Wagnor house is located at the corner of Dell Road and Water Street. The history of the house goes back to 1733. A dozen owners occupied the house before John and Marilyn Gabel purchased the property in 1974.

25. METHACTON MENNONITE CHURCH - Doris Cloud

The first Methacton Mennonite Church, located at the corner of Quarry Hall and Mill Roads, was a colonial structure of stone. During the Revolutionary War it was used as a military hospital. A second building replaced the first in 1806 and the present building was erected in 1873.

26. THE PETER WENTZ, SR., HOUSE - Rosalie Smith

Peter Wentz, Sr., built this house of red sandstone in 1744. His Initials appear in one corner of the house that originally contained two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. The house was doubled in size in the late 1700's. Oliver and Rosalie Smith purchased the property in 1957; the house has had only six owners. The funeral door can be seen on the second floor in this scene and in the 14th square, one of several large fireplaces found in the house is shown.

27. OFF TO THE CREAMERY — Carol Rothenberger Snyder

Dairy farming, years ago, was the primary Industry of Worcester Township. Any landowner with nine or ten acres would own a cow for his own use. One of the dairy farmers' tasks was delivering his milk to the Center Point Creamery located on Valley Forge Road either by horse-drawn cart or sleigh, depending upon the weather. To a young child it was a special treat to ride along with Dad to the creamery.

28. MERRYBROOK FARM — Ruth Myers

Paul Custer owned 150 acres in the vicinity of Merrybrook Road in 1784 when Montgomery County was established. He built a grist mill on the property in 1795. His son, John, sold 23 acres and 90 perches of land in 1810 and this is apparently the area that "Merrybrook Farms" occupies today. Ruth and Allan Myers purchased the property in 1958.

29. KRIEBEL FARM — Marie Kriebel

The classic old stone farmhouse on the Kriebel farm is dated 1782. The property was once part of the Webber tract that was inherited by a daughter of Peter Wentz, Jr. The Kriebel family purchased the home nearby a hundred years ago and the third generation farms the land today.

30. JACOB ALBRIGHT CHURCH - Doris Weed

The Worcester Church was built in 1845 by a congregation of "Albrecht's Leute" or Albright's People. The denomination adhered to a form of Methodism as taught by evangelist Jacob Albright. Services were held in the church on Valley Forge Road south of Center Point until 1961. An interesting detail of the church is the underground area hidden under a trap door in the front of the church. The exit leads to the back toward the cemetery and the woods. Although it cannot be documented, local historians agree that this was part of the Underground Railroad since the church is located on a well-known escape route for slaves. The church is now the property of the Worcester Historical Society.

31. FRAKTUR — Lettie Schultz

The Fraktur design was copied from an original painting done by Job S. Kriebel. He was born July 27, 1838, and died March 17, 1920. Mr. Kriebel was a farmer whose hobby was painting horses, flowers, and fracturs for his friends and family. A number of these excellent examples of the Pennsylvania German Art is owned by his family. Lettie Schultz interpreted Mr. Kriebel's painting and used the two calico prints which appear in each square throughout the quilt.

32. CENTRAL SCHWENKFELDER CHURCH — Smokie Hoagland

The Schwenkfelders who migrated to Philadelphia in 1734 are spiritual descendants of Casper Schwenkfeld. The congregation originally worshipped in private homes, later in three Meeting Houses in Salford, Towamencin and Worcester. In 1951 the new church on Valley Forge Road was completed, consolidating worship services formerly conducted in the Meeting Houses.

33. THE MARKLEY HOUSE — Gloria Markley

The actual age of the house is not known. In 1850 Abraham Hendricks purchased 41 acres at the corner of Germantown Pike and Church Road, with a three-story stone house, a frame barn and an orchard. The house was built to serve as a hotel but was never used for that purpose. The property was first sold to Loos, then to James Hoffman and finally purchased by William G. Markley in 1878. Ownership was passed from Horace to W. Earl Markley and finally William E. Markley who resides in the house today. The Markley children are the fifth generation to live in the house.

34. MORGAN TANNERY — Sandy Gabel Plummer

Morgan Tannery had had a dozen owners when Andrew Morgan bought the farm and tannery in 1841. The house he built is the kitchen of the present home. When Morgan and his son discontinued the operation of a tannery on the property in 1891, the stone from the building was crushed and used to repair Germantown Pike. Samuel and Elaine Gabel owned the property from 1951 to 1966. Their daughter designed the scene of the house in which she grew up.

35. MILEAGE MARKER ON GERMANTOWN PIKE — Mary Scott

It is said that on a clear day you can see Billy Penn's hat on City Hall in Philadelphia from the hill on Germantown Pike and Fairview Village where the mileage marker is located. Similar markers made of stone can be found marking miles on both Germantown and Skippack Pikes.

36. THE TOWNSHIP MAP — Smokie Hoagland

This is Worcester Township as it appeared in 1734, indicating the various landowners.

