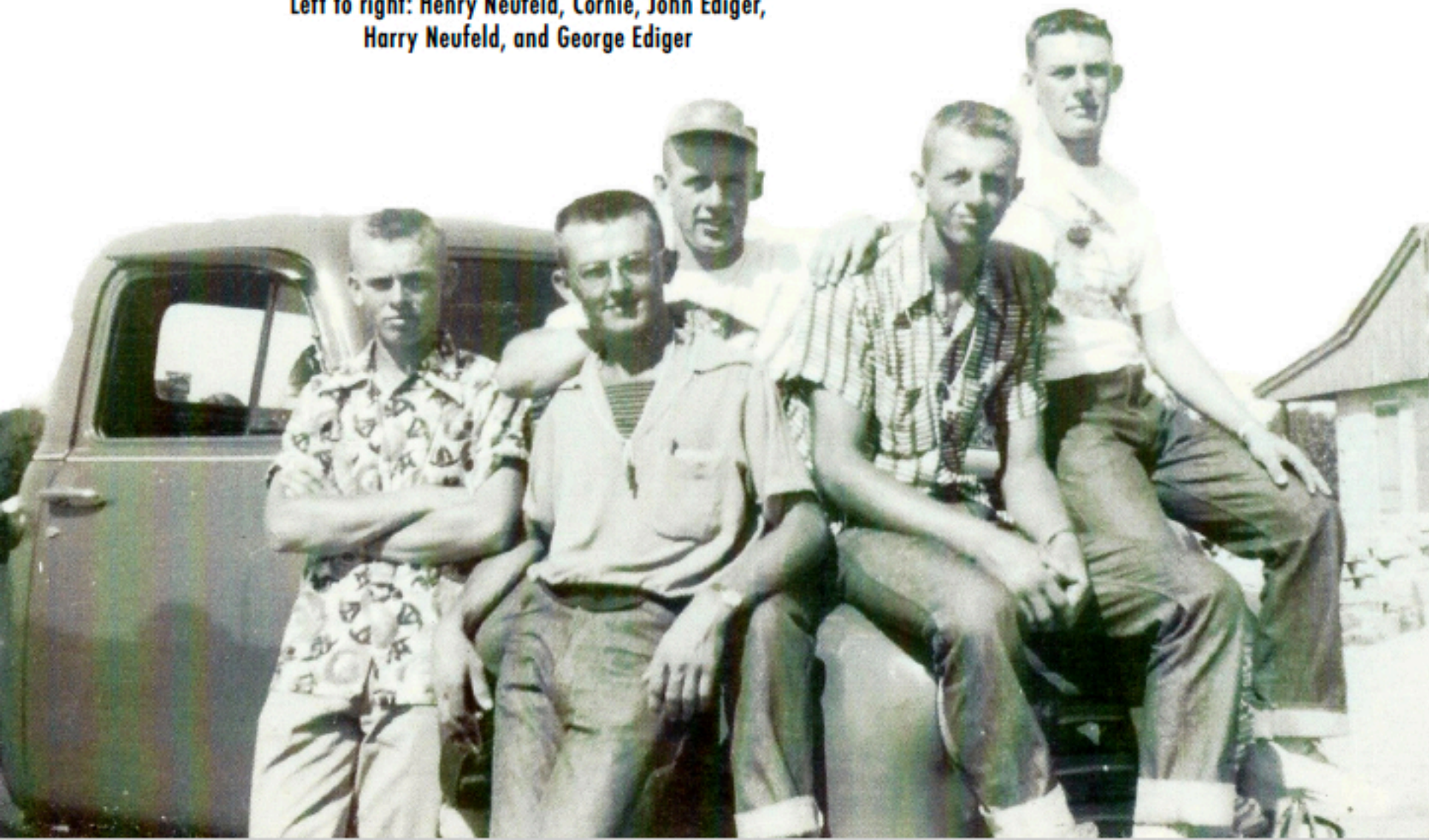


## CONNIE & CORNIE

The summer after my junior year of high school, Abe and Lenora drove me and a few of my friends to Elmdale, Kansas, where the General Conference had rented the YMCA camp to host Mennonite kids from all over Kansas and Nebraska. Sadly, on the first day of camp, just after the noon meal, one of the new arrivals drowned in the lake. The camp session continued, but from that point on, the staff made sure all of us had swim buddies to keep an eye on each other.

After the General Conference purchased its own campsite in Murdoch, Kansas, Cornie and others returned to help with the construction of Camp Mennoscah's permanent buildings.

Left to right: Henry Neufeld, Cornie, John Ediger, Harry Neufeld, and George Ediger



## chapter 7

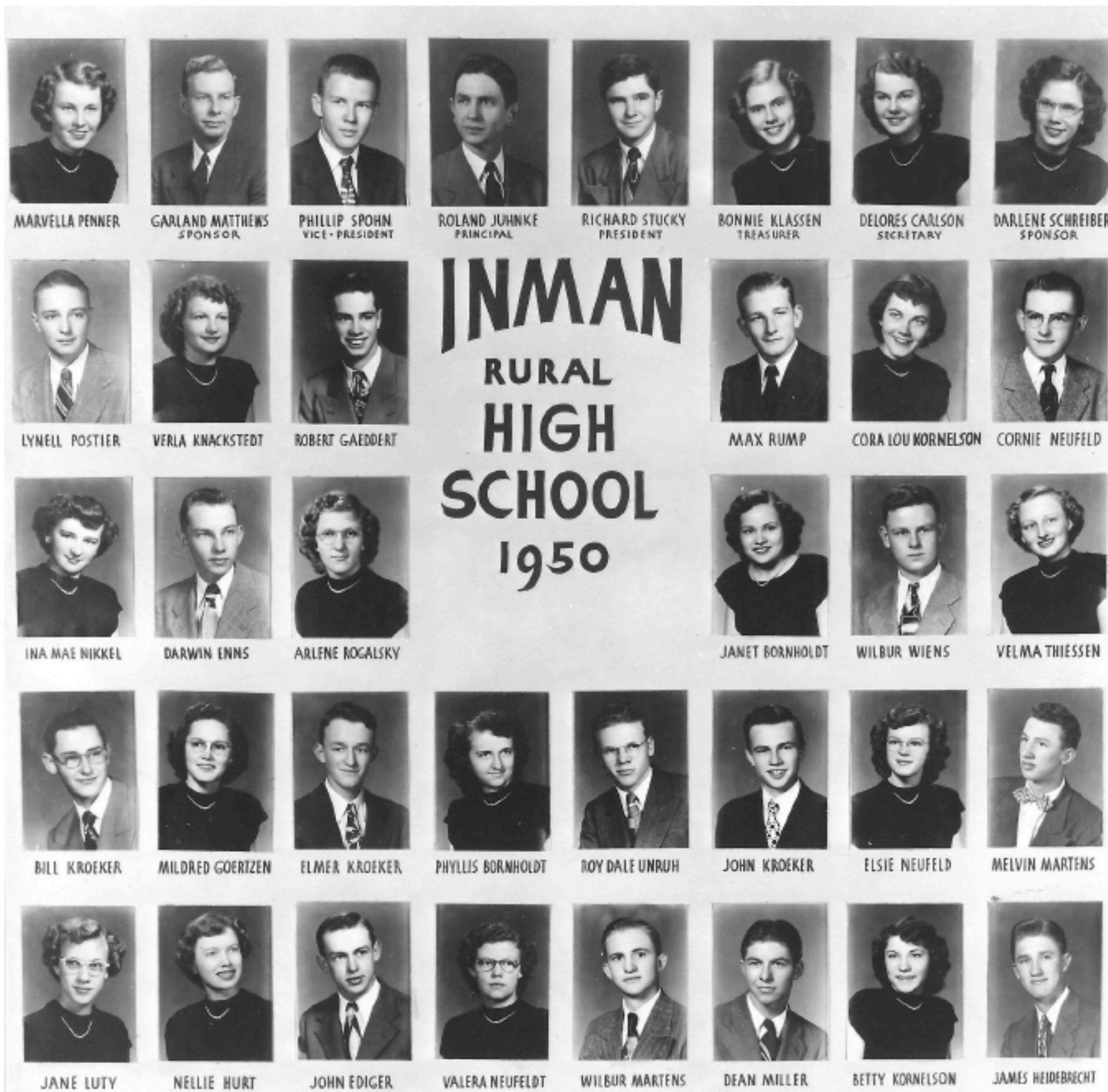
### *Voluntary Service*

TWO OF MY FATHER'S brothers were drafted into World War I, and one of them, Uncle John, was court-martialed; the family story has it that he was so smart, the military thought he had cooked up a ploy to use his Mennonite faith as an excuse to get out of fighting. At the time, there were no provisions for conscientious objectors. When it came time for their younger brother Ike to go off to the war, Grandma insisted that he and his wife move to Canada. The family raised some money, and Grandpa Neufeld accompanied the couple on their long journey, helping to transport all their possessions and get them established on a farm. Uncle Ike and Aunt Emma later returned to Kansas, but not until after several of their children were born in Canada.

By World War II, my brother, Hank had the option to register as a conscientious objector, but it would have left him without an income to support his wife and three children. Instead, he chose to enlist as a noncombatant. Abe, several years younger, got a farm deferment, and Dan was classified 4-F because of flat feet.



## CONNIE & CORNIE



## TWO NURSES IN LIFE & IN LOVE

At eighteen, I went to the draft board to register, as required by law. A funny aside: That's when I learned my real name was Cornelius. Until then, I'd only known myself as Cornie.

The draft didn't worry me, despite the situation in Korean (the conflict between North and South Korea would erupt into war just months after my eighteenth birthday). I was still in high school and expected to get a farm deferment. College recruiters came to school, but I didn't pay much attention. Lena, Sally, Kate, and Dan had attended Tabor College, and Ann and Margaret both went to the nursing school at Bethel Hospital, but I wasn't interested in college. I wanted to farm. My deferment came through, and after graduating high school in the spring of 1950, I happily continued on the family farm.

Most of my family, both the Neufelds and the Edigers, were farmers, but not all of my cousins wanted to carry on the tradition. Edwin, for instance, eventually went off to college, got help with his stutter, and became a speech therapist. For me it was different. Farming was in my blood, and it was what I wanted to do. It was the only life I knew, and the reason I had worked so hard to become a State Farmer with FFA.

I sold some of my livestock and crops, paid Dad the money I owed him, and with the leftover profit I bought my first car, a 1947 Ford V8, from Abe Regehr. I gave him \$500 as a down payment, then worked off the rest. In the end, I paid a total of \$800 for the car. I loved it.

Cornie's first car, a 1947 Ford

