

Migration to Wisconsin's Amish Settlements

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Abstract: The inclusion of information regarding moves of households within the most recently published Amish directory for Wisconsin facilitates the study of migration of Amish households to specific settlements. This paper notes that while certain settlements have attracted newcomers from a wide variety of locations, others are dominated by those coming from a small number of settlements. Many of the settlements have attracted households making long distance moves. Individuals leaving settlements in the process of extinction have accounted for a large share of newcomers in some settlements, but none in others. Religious affiliation appears to be a key determinant influencing the choice of receiving settlements, displayed by comparing the spatial patterns of migration to pairs of settlements.

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Over a century ago, Amish families from Kansas founded a settlement west of Medford within the town of Holman in Taylor County (Miller 2002, 280). At the time, Wisconsin had one other Amish community, the Exelund settlement in Sawyer County, established in 1909 by Amish from North Dakota, joined by households from Montana and several other western states. Exelund became extinct in 1927 with the departure of its ordained minister (Luthy 1991, 504). In 1920, the same year that the Medford settlement was established, the Glen Flora or Jump River Amish settlement was founded in adjacent Rusk County by newcomers arriving from Centerville, Michigan, joined by others from the nearby Exelund settlement and one from McMinnville, Oregon. The Jump River settlement became extinct in 1942 with the departure of its last Amish household; however, its last ordained Amish minister left in 1930, necessitating the settlement's reliance upon the Medford settlement for worship (Luthy 1991, 508).

Brief histories of many Amish settlements, contained within directories that are periodically printed, often focus on recounting the names of the first settlers, reporting their prior locations, and explaining the motivations for their move. For example, the 2002 directory described the history of the Athens Amish settlement.

In the spring of 1990, a number of men from the Spring Run, PA, area made a trip to Wisconsin to look over the state. They were looking for an area where farms were less expensive and a good milk market.... [T]he area west of Athens appealed



to them. There were quite a few farms for sale in a reasonable small area. (Miller 2002, 19)

The paragraph continues by naming the heads of those households that moved to the settlement over the next several years. Similarly, descriptions of Amish settlements within Stoltzfus's (2022) guidebook highlight their founders' origins. The entry for Cashton, Wisconsin's largest Amish settlement with 18 church districts in 2024, begins, "The Cashton community in Vernon and Monroe County was founded in February of 1966. The first four families came from Buchanan County, IA, and the fifth family migrated from Geauga, OH" (Stoltzfus 2022, 320).

Thus, the circumstances surrounding the establishment of many Amish settlements are well documented, and the conditions associated with the demise or extinction of many Amish settlements are reported in detail by Luthy (1991; 2000). Academic research has described many attributes of sites attractive for new settlement (Anderson and Kendra 2015) and listed a variety of push and pull factors that influence Amish migration (Kraybill et al. 2013, 182–183). Yet questions remain regarding movements of families between settlements long after their establishment.

Wisconsin Study Site

Wisconsin, which has experienced rapid Amish growth and expanded from two settlements in 1960 to 62 in 2020 (Young Center 2020), is an excellent site to study Amish migration into both new and existing settlements. Wisconsin is similar to upstate New York, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee, which have also seen settlement expansion as a result of rapid population growth in the largest Amish settlements of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. Lack of available farmland and escalating land prices around the three largest settlements have forced many Amish families to cease farming and to seek other employment or to relocate to places where farmland is reasonably available (Kraybill et al. 2013, 281–283). Yet, where do these Amish families relocate and are there particular settlements that attract specific groups of movers? What is the role of Amish households relocating from nearby communities? Do Amish migrants from large settlements seek similar or different communities than those relocating from small Amish communities? Do Amish settlements attract newcomers from nearby or distant settlements? When Amish settlements fail, do their households disperse widely or migrate en masse to a new location?

Information within the newly published *Wisconsin Amish Directory* (Yoder 2024) was analyzed to answer many of these questions. The compiler of the directory explained his rationale for including data regarding household relocations: "One new feature that is included this time is the information of when and where a family moved into a specific community. Although we didn't have quite 100% participation, I thought this would be interesting, and helps me see where people's roots may have been" (Yoder 2024, i).

The directory includes listings for 4,222 households within 62 Amish settlements, noting that two additional settlements (both having the most conservative Swartzentruber affiliation) are not included. Several more communities, either in the process of formation or becoming extinct, are also missing, but are included in the listing of 67 Wisconsin Amish settlements posted by the

Young Center (2024). The location of their prior settlement or post office was provided by 1,351 of the households included in the directory. Of those households providing prior settlement information, 17.2 percent had moved to their current settlement before 2000, 27.1 percent migrated between 2000 and 2012, 53.8 had relocated since the beginning of 2013, and 2.0 percent reported their prior location, but omitted the year of their move.

Settlement Variations in Reportage of Moves

It is clear that some households that moved failed to provide relocation information. However, the highest rates of household reportage were in settlements established during the past decade or so, and a linear regression clearly demonstrates this relationship. Indeed, the R-square of the regression between date founded and percentage reporting moves was 0.543. Wisconsin's two oldest Amish settlements, Medford (established in 1920) and Blair (founded in 1960), had 2.9 and 6.8 percent of their households, respectively, reporting moves. This is not surprising, given that the heads of most of their households grew up in those settlements. Wisconsin's largest Amish settlement and its third oldest, Cashton, founded in 1966, had 10.5 percent of its households reporting moves, just under the 11.2 percent of the households in Wilton-Tomah, Wisconsin's fourth oldest settlement. Sixty percent of the reported moves into the Cashton settlement occurred before 2000, while 48 percent of those who reported dates for their moves to Wilton-Tomah arrived before the beginning of the twenty-first century. Conversely, information regarding relocations was provided by 71 percent of the households residing in the Cadott settlement, founded in 2018, and by 79 percent of Boscobel's households, within a community established in 2014. Even greater proportions were observed in several smaller settlements that were recently established, where high percentages may also reflect statistical biases due to their small number of households. Within Westfield, founded in 2017, and West Cornell, founded two years later, all of their 11 and 10 households, respectively, provided information regarding their moves.

Households headed by parents who relocated after their marriage were far more likely to report moves than households headed by their children, who moved before their marriages. Lack of reportage of moves can also identify settlements with stagnant or more slowly growing populations, dependent upon their high fertility rates (Donnermeyer 2015) for their population growth, as well as those settlements that predominately send their offspring to other locations and may be heading towards extinction.

Beneficiaries of Settlement Extinctions

Several settlements in Wisconsin were major beneficiaries of the extinction of the Amherst settlement during the 1990s and the Cornell settlement during the past decade. While one of those households leaving the now extinct Cornell settlement moved about ten miles to the new West Cornell settlement in Chippewa County, five relocated to the Sheldon settlement and three went to the Lublin settlement, both in adjacent counties. Five resettled in the Bangor settlement, and several other Wisconsin settlements each gained one household from Cornell.

In contrast to these relatively local moves, other Wisconsin settlements received households from far more distant settlements that have recently become extinct. For example, Woodville in St. Croix County received eight households from the Mossley-Mt. Elgin settlement in Oxford County, Ontario, with one coming in 2013, another in 2020, and six in 2022, the year of its extinction. The Rice Lake settlement likewise received eight households from the Mossley-Mt. Elgin settlement between 2016 and 2022. It also received three households from the now extinct Tripp settlement in Hutchinson County, South Dakota. Six additional households left this South Dakota location for other Wisconsin settlements, two each going to the Granton and Wilton-Tomah settlements, and one each to the Shell Lake and Plum City settlements, which were established in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Medford, Wisconsin's oldest Amish settlement, has been shedding residents since the 1960s. It lost a church district in 1966, and its number of households has fallen to 70 (Yoder 2024). An Amish contributor to the 2009 directory noted, "Ever since 1960, new settlements are starting up all over WI. Very few families have moved in here since then, but a lot of families have moved out" (Miller 2009, 275). An Amish writer wrote, "Since 1960, over 100 families have moved out. People from Medford have helped a lot in starting other new settlements" (*Wisconsin, Minnesota* 2006, 236). Not only has the population of the Medford settlement fallen, but its acreage of Amish-owned lands has fallen by nearly a third since the mid-1950s (Cross 2025). Thus, it is not surprising that 35 households reporting moves to other Wisconsin settlements came from Taylor County.

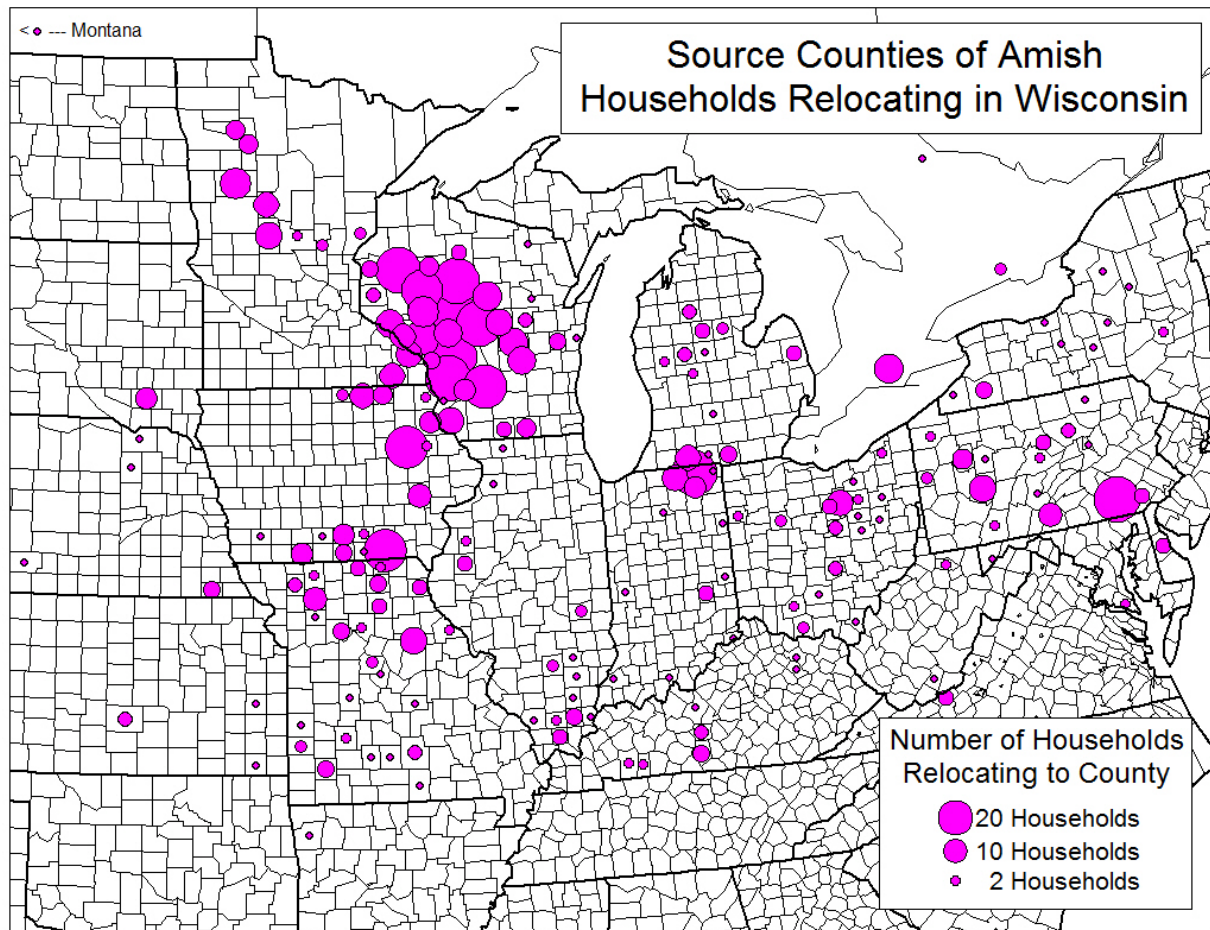
More recently established settlements have also been adversely affected by large-scale departures. The exodus of 11 households between 2018 and 2019 from the Arpin settlement in Wood County to the Cadott settlement, established in 2018 in Chippewa County, left the Arpin settlement, which was founded in 2002, with only seven households in 2024 (Yoder 2024), raising questions about its long-term viability. Yet its losses help ensure cohesiveness in the recipient settlement.

Overall Pattern of Household Relocation

Nearly 42 percent of households relocating into a Wisconsin Amish settlement came from another settlement within the state, although the proportion varied from none to 88 percent of the specific settlement's newcomers. Households moving into Wisconsin from another state accounted for 56.2 percent of those reporting moves, while 2.1 percent of relocating households came from Canada. The source counties for the Amish households reporting their moves into Wisconsin settlements are displayed in Figure 1. Thirty-two counties in Wisconsin were the previous locations of households that moved to other settlements within Wisconsin. At least 157 counties—154 in the United States and three in Canada—contributed households that moved to Wisconsin. (Given that several settlements sprawl across county lines and prior settlement names or postal addresses do not distinguish county of residence, plus the non-providing of prior locations by some households that incompletely reported their moves, this number most likely underreports the total number of source counties.) Sixty-two of the out-of-state counties provided only a single newcomer household to Wisconsin, while four Wisconsin counties contributed just one relocating household.

Figure 1

Number of Amish Households Reporting Moves from the County to a Wisconsin Settlement



Note. Data obtained from Yoder (2024).

Four settlements accounted for over 29 percent of the households that reported relocating to Wisconsin from another state. By far the greatest number, 114 households, came from the LaGrange, Indiana, settlement, including LaGrange, Elkhart, and Noble Counties. The second largest number came from Lancaster and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania, totaling 51 households. Buchanan County, Iowa, sent 29 households, while Iowa's Davis County, along the Missouri border, contributed 28 households. In contrast, the nation's largest Amish settlement in Ohio contributed only five households, one from each of the five counties comprising the Greater Holmes settlement. The nearby Ashland, Ohio, settlement supplied 12 households.

Amish households moving to Wisconsin came from 19 other states plus the Canadian province of Ontario. The easternmost settlement contributing a household to Wisconsin was the Cobleskill settlement in Schoharie County, New York, from which two households came. The southernmost settlement from which a household moved to Wisconsin is an extinct community in Washington County, Arkansas. Rexford, located near the Canadian border in Lincoln County, Montana, is both the westernmost and northernmost settlement that contributed a household to Wisconsin.

Interestingly, households coming from both these Montana and Arkansas settlements relocated to the Bonduel, Wisconsin, settlement, which also attracted a household to move from the northernmost of the three Ontario settlements that contributed newcomers to Wisconsin.

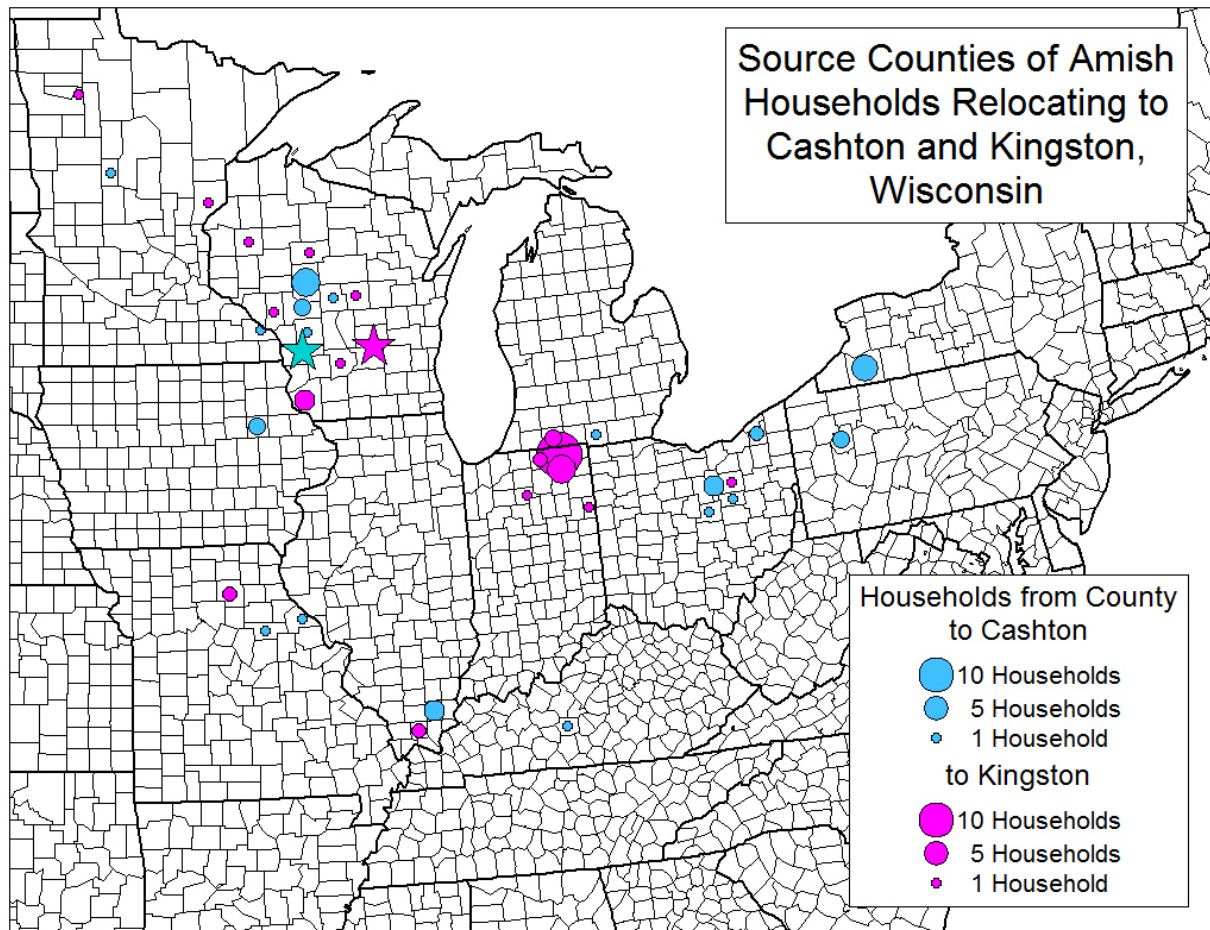
Wisconsin's Amish settlement whose relocated households came from the greatest number of counties was Hillsboro. It received newcomers from 30 counties, six that were in-state and 24 out-of-state. Loganville, with 28, had the second highest number of counties represented by its newcomers, with 21 being out-of-state. Bonduel had the third greatest number, including 15 Wisconsin counties and 12 that were out-of-state. In contrast, the Platteville-Darlington settlement, which had the same number of households reporting moves into the settlement as did Loganville, received newcomers from three Wisconsin counties, seven Pennsylvania counties, and two counties in the other states. Clearly, significant differences exist among the settlements in the geographic diversity of their newcomers.

Comparison of Origins of Incoming Households

Variations in household relocations are explored by considering the different spatial migration patterns of several pairs of settlements.

Cashton and Kingston-Dalton

The two largest Amish settlements in Wisconsin are Cashton and Kingston-Dalton, which comprised 18 and 15 church districts, respectively, in 2024. Ninety-one Kingston-Dalton households reported their moves into the community, compared with 45 Cashton households (Figure 2).

Figure 2*Patterns of Movement of Households to the Cashton and Kingston-Dalton Settlements*

Note. The location of the Cashton settlement is indicated by the blue star and the location of the Kingston-Dalton settlement is shown by the violet star. Relocation data was compiled from information in Yoder (2024).

Yet the number of counties involved in these relocations was almost identical, with Cashton receiving households from 21 counties and Kingston-Dalton reporting households moving from 20 counties. There was no overlap in the counties that were named, nor was movement reported between Kingston-Dalton and Cashton.

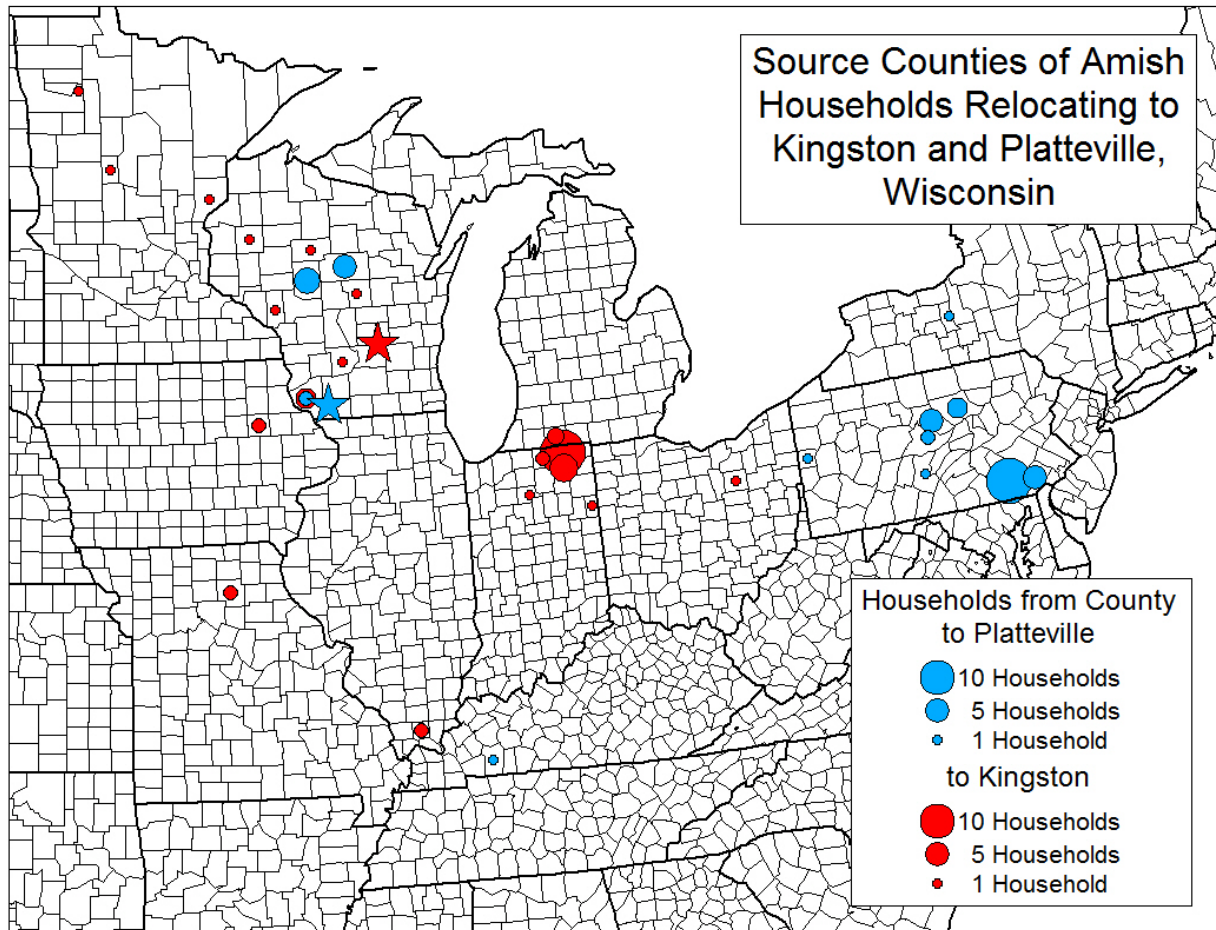
Newcomers within the Kingston-Dalton settlement were most likely to have arrived from the LaGrange County, Indiana, area. Not only did households from that area comprise the settlement's pioneers (Miller 2002, 208), but 21 current households reported moves from LaGrange County (ten from LaGrange, five from Shipshewana, five from Topeka, and one from Howe) between 1977 and 1999, and an additional 33 households came between 2000 and 2012 (Yoder 2024). It continues, with another household arriving from LaGrange in 2022, although the peak migration was two to four decades earlier. Taken altogether, 74 percent of the households reporting moves to the Kingston-Dalton settlement came from Indiana.

Cashton, in contrast, did not receive any households relocating from anywhere in Indiana, nor did any location similarly dominate the relocations. Twenty-nine percent of the households that moved to Cashton came from other Wisconsin settlements, with over half of these from Clark County's Greenwood settlement. One-seventh of those households who reported a move to Cashton came from the Conewango Valley settlement in Cattaraugus County, New York. The Galatia settlement in Saline County, Illinois, contributed 9 percent of Cashton's relocating households. Eighteen percent of the households moving to Cashton came from Ohio, yet only Ashland and Geauga Counties, with three and two households, respectively, contributed more than a single household. Indeed, nine of the 16 out-of-state source counties of households moving to Cashton sent just one household.

The Cashton and Kingston-Dalton settlements are similar in numerous ways besides being Wisconsin's two largest Amish settlements. Many households in both settlements are involved in dairy farming and use 10-gallon cans to transport their Grade B milk to cheese factories, factories that the Amish played a major role in either establishing or operating (Cross 2014; 2016; 2023; 2024a). As engagement in dairying has decreased in both settlements, the Amish erected produce auction houses to enhance the ability of Amish farmers to market their fresh produce and flowers (Cross 2024). Sawmills and woodworking are also major alternative sources of employment in both settlements, although they have a longer history of development in the Cashton settlement (Heasley 2005, 117–122; Cross 2018, 204–205).

Kingston-Dalton and Platteville-Darlington

Households moving to the sprawling Platteville-Darlington settlement displayed a spatial pattern (Figure 3) that had little in common with the array of counties contributing households reporting moves into the Kingston-Dalton settlement. Both settlements are spread across portions of three counties, and neither settlement displays the high concentration of Amish landownership that is seen within the Cashton and Augusta settlements, where 640-acre survey sections are found in which Amish households own all or nearly all the land, except for the road rights-of-way—as in the case of Augusta (Cross 2022; 2025). In contrast, the Platteville-Darlington settlement is spread across 14 towns in Lafayette County, five towns in Grant County, and three towns in Iowa County, with an average Amish land ownership per section of 104 acres and a maximum ownership of 405 acres. Within the Kingston-Dalton settlement, draped over three towns plus the village of Kingston within Green Lake County, four towns in Columbia County, and one town in Marquette County, the average Amish ownership within a section is 112 acres and the greatest ownership within a section is 433 acres. Yet, given the population differences between these two settlements, the average acreage owned per household (82.4 acres in Platteville) is over twice as great in Platteville than in Kingston. Furthermore, ten Amish families within the Platteville-Darlington settlement own at least 200 acres of farmland—and two of these own more than 600 acres—vastly exceeding the extent of Amish landownership within the Kingston-Dalton settlement (Cross 2022; 2025).

Figure 3*Patterns of Movement of Households to the Kingston-Dalton and Platteville-Darlington Settlements*

Note. The location of the Kingston-Dalton settlement is indicated by the red star and the location of the Platteville-Darlington settlement is shown by the blue star. Relocation data was compiled from information in Yoder (2024).

Amish households within the Platteville-Darlington settlement not only have more dairy herds than those in the Kingston-Dalton settlement, but dairying employs twice the proportion of the Platteville households. Unlike the Kingston dairy farmers, who send their milk in ten-gallon cans to an Amish-operated cheese factory, Amish dairymen in the Platteville-Darlington settlement produce Grade A milk that is stored and refrigerated in bulk tanks, suitable for fluid consumption as well as cheese manufacturing. These Grade A milk producers have larger dairy herds than Kingston's Grade B milk producers and rely upon a wider variety of modern technologies, including milking machines and refrigeration, and thus enjoy a wider market for their milk.

Platteville-Darlington received households arriving from 12 counties, nine located outside of Wisconsin. Only one county, Grant County, Wisconsin—which is also home to part of the Platteville-Darlington settlement—overlapped with the list of counties that contributed newcomer households to the Kingston-Dalton settlement. Grant County's Amish households moving to the

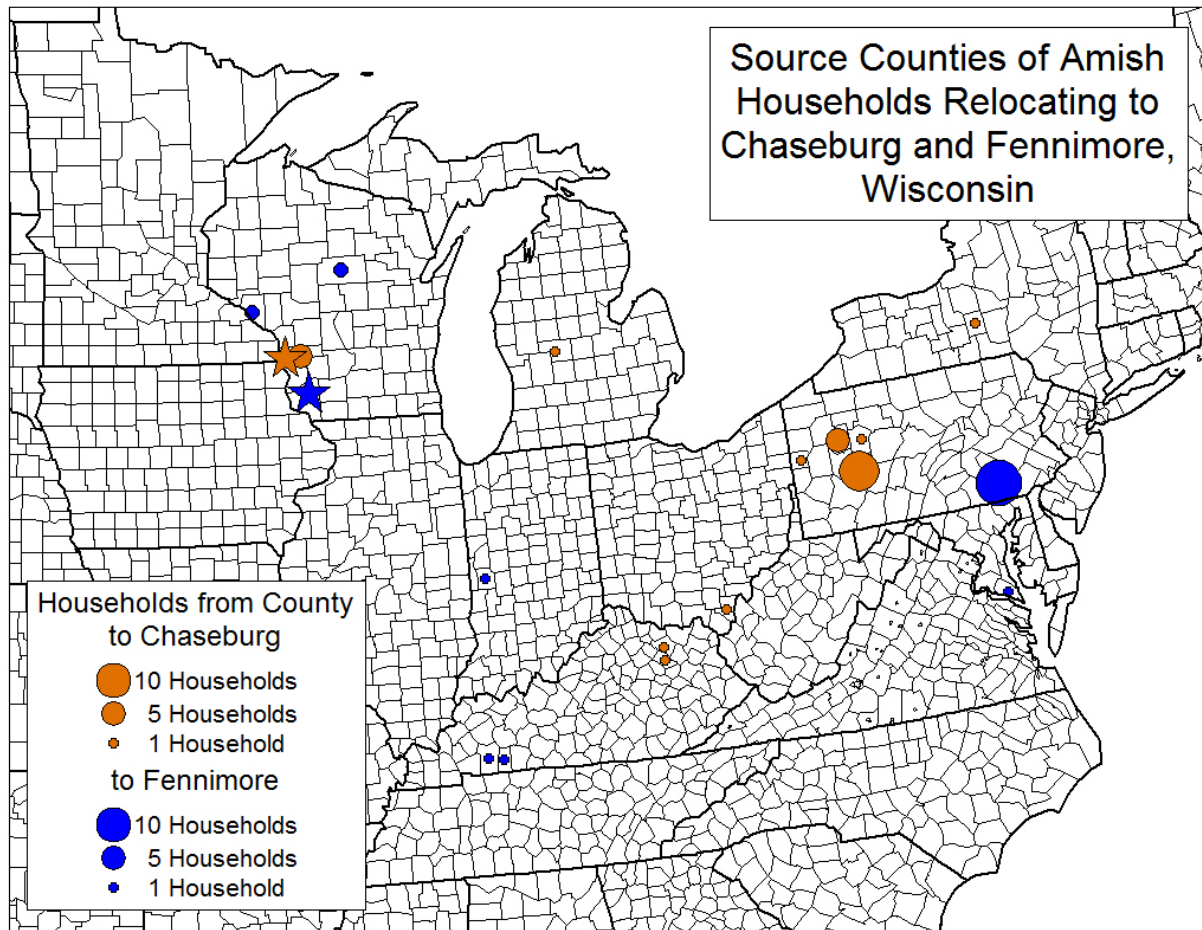
Kingston-Dalton settlement came from the Beetown settlement, while the two Amish households from Grant County moving to the Platteville-Darlington settlement arrived from the Fennimore settlement.

A key clue to the difference between Amish residents of the Kingston-Dalton and Platteville-Darlington settlements is the prevalence of specific Amish surnames, such as Beiler and Stoltzfus, that heralded the arrival of Pennsylvania Amish into Wisconsin (Cross 2003). The 2024 Amish directory (Yoder 2024) lists 53 households surnamed Stoltzfus or Stoltzfoos within the Platteville-Darlington settlement, but none in either Kingston-Dalton or Cashton. Similarly, Platteville-Darlington has 35 Beiler households and 25 Allgyer households. Kingston-Dalton has none. Conversely, a leading surname in Kingston-Dalton is variously spelled Bontrager, Borntrager, or Borntreger, accounting for 87 households. None of the Platteville-Darlington households have this surname.

Platteville-Darlington households reported 20 locations in Pennsylvania from which they had moved. Twenty-nine of the households had relocated from Lancaster County. Five came from adjacent Chester County. Five additional Pennsylvania counties contributed households that moved to the Platteville-Darlington Amish settlement. Five households are shown by the directory as having come from the Athens, Wisconsin, settlement. That settlement “is considered a daughter settlement from Path Valley, PA” (Stoltzfus 2022, 316).

Fennimore and Chaseburg

Fennimore, like the Platteville-Darlington settlement, displays strong links to the Lancaster County area of Pennsylvania. It is located in Grant County, with its southeasternmost household located eight miles from the nearest household of the Platteville-Darlington Amish settlement. Like the Platteville-Darlington settlement, over half of those households reporting moves to the Fennimore settlement came from Lancaster and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania (Figure 4).

Figure 4*Patterns of Movement of Households to the Chaseburg and Fennimore Settlements*

Note. The location of the Chaseburg settlement is indicated by the brown star and the location of the Fennimore settlement is shown by the blue star. Relocation data was compiled from information in Yoder (2024).

Similarly, both communities received households who relocated from Christian County, Kentucky, and Marathon County, Wisconsin, although Fennimore has received newcomers from counties in Maryland, Indiana (Parke County—on the opposite side of the state from the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement), and Wisconsin that did not contribute households to the much larger Platteville-Darlington settlement. Furthermore, the Amish households within the Fennimore settlement are widely dispersed within noncontiguous survey sections and clusters in a manner similar to the landownership pattern displayed in the Platteville-Darlington settlement (Cross 2025), unlike the greater concentrations of Amish-owned parcels typical of most of Wisconsin's Amish settlements.

Both the Fennimore and Chaseburg Amish settlements are similarly sized, having 135 and 117 households, respectively, listed in the 2024 directory, with 18.5 percent of the Fennimore households providing moving information, compared with 25.6 percent of those in Chaseburg

(Yoder 2024). They were founded four years apart: Chaseburg in 1994 and Fennimore in 1998. Their primary occupations, dairying and produce farming, are similar, although logging and sawmills are more prominent in Chaseburg (Stoltzfus 2022). Mean land ownership per household is a third less in Chaseburg than in Fennimore (Cross 2025). Two-thirds of the households that reported moves to both settlements had previously resided in Pennsylvania, but there is absolutely no overlap in those counties from which their newcomers came.

Fennimore shows a distinct link with Lancaster County, and its first four families came from there (Miller 2002). Its households who moved from Lancaster County reported coming from nine locations, with those coming before 2000 arriving from Kirkwood, Lancaster, Quarryville, and Peach Bottom. A larger number arrived between 2000 and 2012, coming from Holtwood, Kirkwood, Lancaster, Leola, Mechanicsville, and Ronks. Since 2013, five additional households moved to Fennimore from Lancaster County—four from Kirkwood, with the most recent arriving in 2023, and one from Kinzers.

Chaseburg displays a strong connection with the community of Smithsburg, located in Indiana County, Pennsylvania, nearly two hundred miles west of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Forty-three percent of Chaseburg households reporting relocation information came from Indiana County. The Fryburg settlement within Clarion County, Pennsylvania, was the previous home of five Chaseburg households, 17 percent of those providing relocation information, with the most recent coming in 2019. Even more recently, Chaseburg has received new households from Hillsboro and Owingsville, Kentucky, and Marathon, New York. Its most recent arrival from another Wisconsin Amish settlement came in 2002 from Cashton.

Amish Affiliation and Relocation to New Settlements

Chain migration of families and neighbors from their former settlements to various Wisconsin settlements is clearly displayed by those groups of households who followed the moves of neighbors and kin who pioneered the settlements. Indeed, movement of Amish households from the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement in Indiana to the Kingston-Dalton settlement has been continuing for the half century since it was founded. However, how do we explain the pattern of migration to these settlements that followed, particularly by those who made distant moves, especially long distance moves from locations that did not send pioneering settlers? Let's look first at the largest source communities. Kingston-Dalton and Platteville-Darlington are dominated by households that moved from the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement in northeast Indiana and the Greater Lancaster County area of southeast Pennsylvania, respectively.

The different geographic and genealogical sources of households that moved to the Platteville-Darlington settlement rather than to the Kingston-Dalton settlement, together with their divergent incorporation of technologies in their dairy farming and land ownership practices, all point to the Amish beliefs and customs that are practiced. These can be examined by considering religious differences among the Amish. As Hostetler (1993, 93) explains, "The Old Order Amish tend to classify groups according to their degree or worldliness, from 'low' to 'high' church.... Between the extremes many affiliations are recognized." Petrovich (2017, 121) notes, "Amish affiliations

exist when church districts willingly associate with one other.” While the precise variations in theology and discipline may not be well-defined, most social interaction among the Amish, including intermarriage and cooperation, takes place among settlements within the same or closely related affiliations (Nolt and Meyers 2007, 138–141). While academic definitions of affiliation vary somewhat, they are discerned “on the basis of lines of fellowship and shared disciplinary procedures, technology usage, and degrees of separation from the world” (Petrovich 2017, 123).

The Kingston-Dalton settlement is considered to have an Elkhart-LaGrange affiliation, while the Platteville-Darlington settlement is classified as having a Lancaster County affiliation (Stoltzfus 2022). As Stephen Scott (2009, 2) noted, there are “moderate majority groups that make up the bulk of the large Midwestern Amish settlements. These districts take a moderate position on technology, dress, and meidung.” The Elkhart-LaGrange settlement is characterized by “a great variety of variations in ordnungs” (Scott 2009, 2), yet all are in fellowship with one other, within the second largest affiliation that is within the Midwest Mainstream Amish grouping. The Lancaster County affiliation covers the largest number of church districts that share a common *Ordnung*, having “fairly progressive standards on technology and strict shunning” (Scott 2009, 1). Let’s consider the Amish affiliations of those places other than the Elkhart-LaGrange and Lancaster County areas from which households moved to both the Kingston-Dalton and Platteville-Darlington settlements.

The Kingston-Dalton settlement is the largest daughter settlement of the Elkhart-LaGrange settlement (Stoltzfus 2022, 387). It also received households moving from the Centreville settlement in Michigan and the Lengby settlement in Minnesota, both also having an Elkhart-LaGrange affiliation. Likewise, two Wisconsin settlements, Beetown and Clear Lake, from which Kingston-Dalton received newcomers, have an Elkhart-LaGrange affiliation. Altogether, households moving to Kingston-Dalton from locations having an Elkhart-LaGrange affiliation accounted for 81 percent of Kingston-Dalton’s households that reported moves. Another 4 percent of Kingston-Dalton’s relocating households came from other Midwest Mainstream affiliations, while 12 percent of the relocating households came from settlements within the Midwest Conservative Old Order Amish group of affiliations.

The Platteville-Darlington settlement was almost entirely settled by Amish arriving from settlements that follow the Lancaster County Ordnung or the Lancaster County (St. Mary’s County) Ordnung. The St. Mary’s variant evolved in St. Mary’s County, Maryland, when Amish from Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, mixed with Amish from Lancaster County, in what was “considered the community’s first daughter settlement” (Stoltzfus 2022, 242). Of the 62 households that provided information about their moves to the Platteville-Darlington settlement, 47 came from Pennsylvania, of which 34 came from the Lancaster County settlement. All but two of the other households from Pennsylvania came from settlements following the Lancaster County Ordnung. One of the two came from an unaffiliated settlement and one came from a settlement having a Renno or another affiliation. The settlements in Kentucky and New York from which households arrived all had a Lancaster County affiliation, as did those from Fennimore and Wisconsin’s now extinct Owen-Unity settlement. The Athens, Wisconsin, settlement, from which

five households reported moves, has the Lancaster County (St. Mary's) affiliation. In total, only three households moving to Platteville-Darlington came from a settlement that did not have a Lancaster County-connected affiliation.

Fennimore, with a Lancaster County affiliation, had 25 households reporting their moves into the settlement. Sixty-eight percent came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and 8 percent came from St. Mary's County, Maryland. All of the settlements in Kentucky and Indiana from which Fennimore gained households have a Lancaster County affiliation. Both Wisconsin settlements contributing households, Wulff Valley in Buffalo County and Athens in Marathon County, have a Lancaster County (St. Mary's) affiliation. Thus, all of those reporting moves to Fennimore share one of the two Lancaster County-related affiliations.

Chaseburg, although also receiving two-thirds of its households from Pennsylvania, received none from settlements having a Lancaster County affiliation. Half of the households reporting moves to Chaseburg came from settlements in Pennsylvania and New York with the Geauga II affiliation, which formed in 1968 with a split within its namesake Ohio county. Twenty percent came from settlements having a Troyer affiliation, with four other affiliations of settlements outside Wisconsin contributing single households. Thirteen percent of those moving to Chaseburg came from Cashton, considered as having its own affiliation within the Midwest Conservative Old Order Amish grouping.

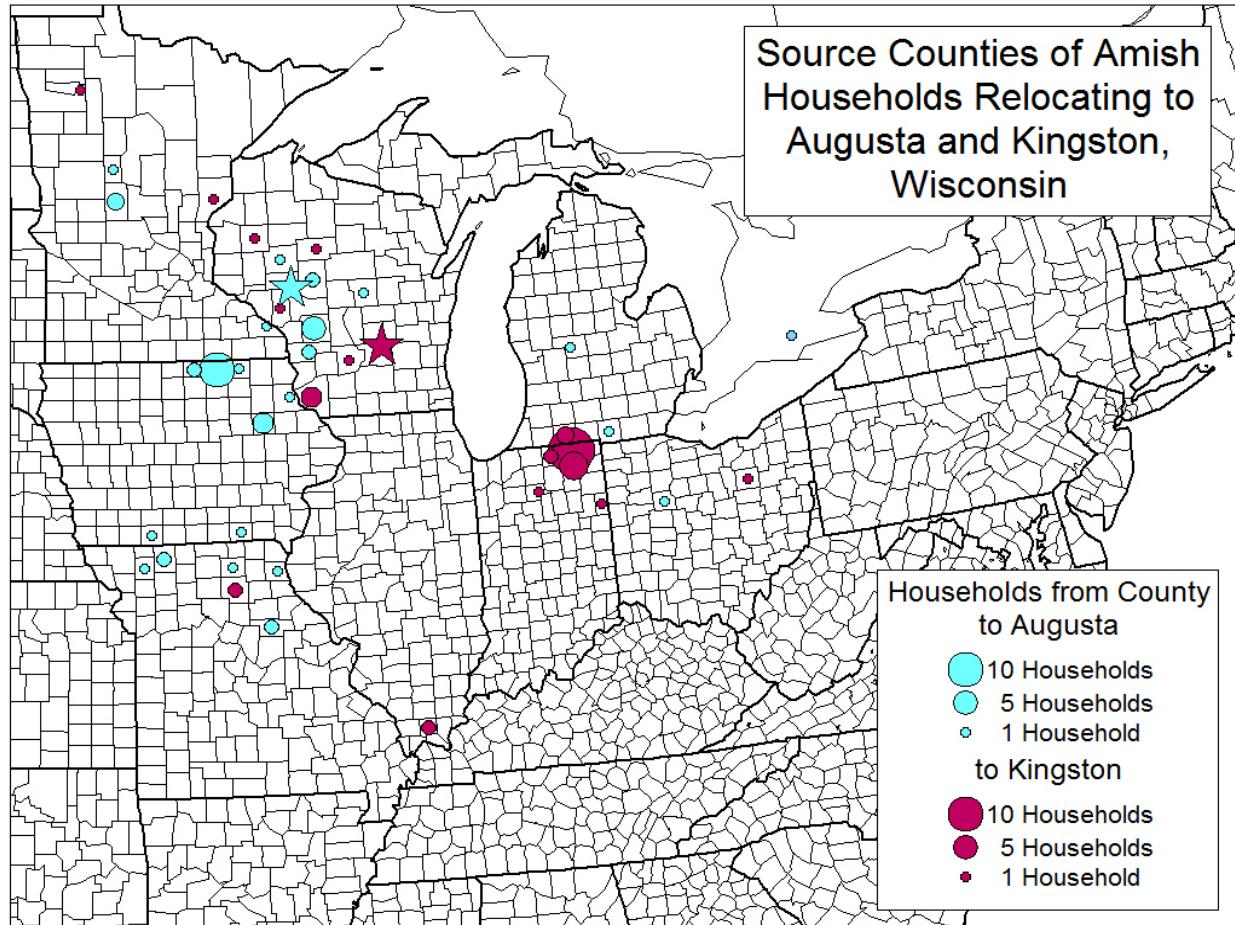
Cashton, Wisconsin's largest Amish settlement, evolved its own affiliation, which "is known to have stricter moral standards than many of the Midwest conservatives" (Scott 2009, 6). Not surprising, households moving to Cashton have frequently come from other Midwest Conservative Old Order Amish settlements. Thirteen percent came from settlements in Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri having Buchanan affiliations. The same percentage came from the Troyer Amish-affiliated settlement in Conewango Valley, New York, which is slightly less strict than the ultraconservative Swartzentruber Amish (Scott 2009). Eleven percent came from Holmes Mainstream affiliations in Ohio. Nine percent of those moving to Cashton came from two Wisconsin settlements having Cashton affiliations.

The Augusta settlement, Wisconsin's third largest, also has a Cashton affiliation, and one of its initial founders was a deacon from Cashton. Augusta also shares a connection with Buchanan County, Iowa. A scribe from Cashton explained, "Almost everybody here had their background in Buchanan County, IA, but no one moved in from there" (Stoltzfus 2022, 317). While Figure 5 indicates that Augusta has received households relocating from seven counties in Iowa, only four households (of the 47 who reported their moves to Augusta) came from Buchanan County. However, 14 households (30 percent of those who reported moving information) came from other settlements within Iowa that have Buchanan affiliations. Three settlements in Missouri and two in Minnesota that sent households to Augusta have a Buchanan affiliation, as did the Mossley-Mt. Elgin settlement in Ontario that contributed one household. Besides those settlements with a Buchanan affiliation, two other affiliations within the Midwest Conservative Old Order Amish group contributed households that moved to Augusta. Two Minnesota counties contributing

households have a Medford affiliation, and seven households came from two Wisconsin settlements with a Cashton affiliation.

Figure 5

Patterns of Movement of Households to the Augusta and Kingston-Dalton Settlements



Note. The location of the Augusta settlement is indicated by the blue star and the location of the Kingston-Dalton settlement is shown by the reddish-brown star. Relocation data was compiled from information in Yoder (2024).

Conclusions and Questions

Given the propensity of Amish groups to splinter over religious doctrine and practice, consideration of a settlement's affiliation, even when poorly defined or unclear, is crucial to explaining the movement of newcomers to certain settlements. Those following the Lancaster County or Lancaster County (St. Mary's) Ordnung sought new locations that are similarly focused, with very few, if any, Amish with other religious affiliations moving to such settlements. Similarly, relatively few from Elkhart-LaGrange affiliations have migrated to settlements having other affiliations. Settlement extinctions incentivize relocations. Given that both the Rice Lake and Woodville settlements have a Buchanan affiliation, it is not surprising that households from both Ontario's Mossley-Mt. Elgin settlement and South Dakota's Tripp settlement, both of which also

had a Buchanan affiliation, made their long distance moves. Some settlements, such as Cashton and Augusta, are attractive to a variety of Midwest Conservative affiliations, but not to the Elkhart-LaGrange or Lancaster County Amish. Considerations of distance appear to be far less significant when planning moves than settling among like-minded neighbors who agree on many religious issues. Indeed, there are many closely situated Amish settlements that have never received relocating households from the other.

The patterns of movement of the Amish to both new and well-established settlements provide valuable insights and raise many questions for further inquiry. While Petrovich (2017) has suggested the reduction of over 40 affiliations into six, the streams of migration only partially support his argument. Movements into Wisconsin's Lancaster County-affiliated settlements have come almost entirely from other Lancaster County or Lancaster County (St. Mary's)-affiliated settlements, excluding all of those other affiliations that are within the Old Order-mainstream group that Petrovich classified together. On the other hand, migrations into the Cashton and Augusta settlements are more supportive of his collection of Andy Weaver-related affiliations. The gathering of households from a variety of settlements that are not only geographically dispersed but classified as having different affiliations provides strong evidence of households that share similar beliefs, beliefs that transcend artificially contrived affiliation classifications. Or, they may be pointing towards the evolution of new religious groupings among the Amish, a process that has been ongoing for nearly two centuries. It is also possible that such migrations are to higher or lower church settlements and indicate household affiliation changes, or cross-affiliation marriages. These questions require future research.

The extinction of so many Amish settlements, both newly established and longtime, has contributed significant numbers of newcomers to certain Amish settlements. Given that the exodus is "usually marked by either progressive or conservative families moving out due to disagreements about the *Ordnung*" (Donnermeyer 2024, 28), recipient communities may either be strengthened by an influx of additional like-minded families, or they may receive those who are disgruntled. Settlements such as Rice Lake and Woodville, each of which recently received six or more households from the now extinct Mossley-Mt. Elgin settlement in Ontario, may provide excellent places to conduct case studies about the impact of such migration. Likewise, how do those settlements that disproportionately attract households from declining settlements, or those in the process of extinction, differ from those who lack such an influx?

Amish directories are well-recognized by academics as wonderful sources of useful demographic data (Colyer et al. 2017) suitable for genetic and population studies. This paper represents an initial effort to utilize directory information (Yoder 2024) to document and study migration among the Amish in Wisconsin. Additional research may illustrate how migration patterns may shift over time and further document patterns of difference or similarity among settlements. If directories published in additional states also begin including information regarding household moves, an even wider array of population movement studies may be facilitated.

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