

## ON GRAIN HARVESTING IN THE "OLD DAYS"

By Ernest Ebert, Grand Forks ND

NOTE: Mr. Ebert was a long-time friend of Henry and Esther Bernard, and grew up in the same area of North Dakota as Henry, near Grafton. On showing him the panoramic threshing photo in the fall of 1992, he wrote the following comments, and also enclosed an article he had written for the Walsh County Record, Grafton ND, August 10, 1977.

It is interesting, reviewing the assorted letters, etc., to find the ways the word 'threshing' is referred to: 'trashing' or 'trash' seemed to have been a common term in the German community; 'thrash', 'thrashing' were among others. The written version probably phonetically followed the spoken version in one way or another. In the early days of machinery usage, grain was cut by a machine called a **binder**, which collected the grain into a **bundle** of grain, tied with twine. In another day, another term for bundle would be **sheave**. These bundles were, in turn, stacked into **shocks**, which later were loaded onto wagons to be carried to a stationary threshing machine somewhere in the field. The entire process was very hard, dirty and often very hot work, and in harvest season the days were very long. Grain had to be shoveled by hand into grain bins, initially. No one who worked on a farm could be weak. They wouldn't survive. As years progressed, work became more manageable, as this 'city slicker' can attest: today's self-propelled **combines**, hydraulic lift truck beds, and stationary grain augurs cut the actual physical work a great deal...but not the length of day, the dirt, the heat....

Dick Bernard

November 6, 1992

Your page-wide photo of an early day threshing rig brought back many memories. Thank you for the picture.

The steamer in the foreground is an Advance Straw Burner – my father had one. The man standing on the ground behind the pile of straw is the fireman, he poked straw into this insatiable monster from 3 a.m. to about 7:30 p.m. The man standing on the engine is the engineer. His most important duty after the machine was set for threshing was to see that the water level in the boiler was maintained over the crown-sheet of the firebox – unpleasant things like a blow-up could occur if this were not done. The third man is the "tanky". Where flowing wells were available, his was an easy job. A 4-F (military slang) could haul water or haul straw.

The man atop the separator is the separator man. A second man was often employed to oil the separator and to help stretch out the long heavy drive-belt when the machine was being set for action. Present day farm economics would no longer tolerate the prolific use of manpower as practiced at that time.

This separator has the old time tall elevator; that's what we had too. After the grain had been separated from the chaff and straw in the busy innards consisting of cylinder, concaves, straw shakers and air blast fanning mill, it was elevated high over the machine into a half bushel bucket which dumped it's contents into the long slanting spout and into the grain box mounted on a wagon. Each dump was registered on a tally which kept track of the number of bushels on a given field. Most of the time the whole elevator assembly was referred to as the "tally" or "weigher". For obvious reasons [height of the tally], the tall tally disappeared from the scene about the time telephone lines made their appearance – World War I. It was replaced by the auger-spout coupled to a short tally.

I would say that this picture was taken before 1920. Also, they intended to burn this straw pile after they moved away. The straw pile is too bumpy to shed rain; piles to be saved were piled steep and high.

### **Threshing Now Lacks Glamor of Yesteryear**

**By Ernest Ebert**

Walsh County Record, August 10, 1977

It's pay day down on the farm. The mechanical monsters with their insatiable appetites for wide windrows of grain, travel along at the rate of three or four miles per hour. A flat stream of yellow straw fans out from each of the several machines and a continuous cloud of dust follows each of these efficient separators of grain from straw and chaff. Each operator sits comfortably in his air conditioned cab, ever watchful of the broad swath as it enters the combine. He occasionally glances at the grain hopper to observe the quality of the job being done and to know when to empty this 150 bushel traveling grain bin.

One of the several watchful truck drivers comes alongside when the hopper needs to be emptied. The combine operator presses a button and the golden stream of wheat is delivered into the huge truck box. After the stream stops, the operator presses another button to stop the unloading auger and the truck driver pulls away to pick up another dump from another combine. It's all done on the go.

After the truck is full, it is driven to the bin site where a high capacity elevator elevates the grain into a large steel bin. The driver opens the truck's endgate and slowly tilts the truck box so that the grain slides toward the endgate opening the elevator hopper. It's all done through the magic of electricity, gasoline diesel fuel and hydraulic power. A girl, boy or wife can be a driver.

Modern harvesting is expensive because of the enormous capital investment in equipment that is required, but the cost would be prohibitive if it were done as it was in bygone days. The new way is fast, smooth and efficient but there is no glamour, no color: everything is so mechanized that people and machines move about like push-button robots.

So let's return to those thrilling days of yesteryears:

My father did custom threshing for twenty-five years. At one time his crew was partly home-grown. My oldest brother was the separator man; Oscar was engineer; David ran the grain elevator and hauled grain and my mother and sister Edith did the cooking. Another sister Kate kept house and did many other things for the rest of us at home.

The old time threshing rig produced lots of action in its time with it's motley crew of lumberjacks, who rolled up their overalls legs over their eight inch shoe tops; young tender feet that had trouble with blisters and grey beards and old drifters who had seen

better days but were still capable. Some of the crew members did a bit of joshing (kidding); some in the crew were characters, others were strictly the no-nonsense type.

There were usually several farm boys working, but the custom thresher obtained most of the teams he needed from farmers whose crops were going to be threshed. They often sent their sons to drive those teams. It helped to pay the threshing bill.

Twenty-two men coming from different background produced quite a mix. For about a month, most of the men slept together in a big tent; straw was used as ones mattress over which individual blankets were laid. Smoking was a constant hazard but luckily nothing ever happened. On rainy days and Sundays, there was often a small stake card game going with inevitable onlookers. Dad watched for "hustlers" and fired them. Hustlers were card sharks who traveled from crew to crew to gamble the men out of their money.

The fireman, engineer, separator man and his helper (oiler) slept in a separate small tent near the steam engine. Fire was an ever present threat with the steamer. Also the men who ran the rig were near their machine and could do some fixing outside of the threshing hours.

In spending much time together working, sleeping, sharing common miseries and just simply talking, a spirit of camaraderie developed within the crew and the members of my family. Toward the end of the threshing run and whenever a few gathered, there was much retelling and embellishing of humorous incidents that had happened. This was especially true on "pay day" when all were in a good mood. It was a bit like a class reunion.

There was always a bit of sadness when the crew left – we had shared many common experiences together for a few weeks, there was much handshaking and some said they would be back next year and several did come back year after year. Everyone in our family experienced a physical and emotional let-down after the many weeks of intense activity. Although we were a naturally talkative family, "thundering silence" ruled for a few days.

Do you remember the steam threshing engine? Four men were needed to keep it going. It needed a constant supply of water and straw and its "tender" was its ever present companion – as necessary as the gas tank on your car. A tender is a water tank on wheels and the tank has a straw rack on top of it. The steamer used about 60 barrels of water every day so the tenders supply needed replenishing several times each day. It was necessary to have a tankman or "tanky" for this purpose. The engine burned several loads of straw in a day's run and a man was needed to haul some of the freshly threshed straw from the separator. It was essential that a tender be fully loaded before any long move was made – to eliminate the possibility of running out of the vital necessities of a steamer.

The fireman poked straw into the fire-box for about 16 hours every working day. It took three hours to "Steam up" in the morning. Also, he was supposed to have a working knowledge of operating the engine so he could take over if the engineer were temporarily away.

"Smokey" the fireman, had the knowledge but he was very excitable. One afternoon when the engine was chugging along effortlessly, the governor belt came off. This had the same effect as an accelerator stuck to the floor boards. Suddenly, his quiet running engine had gone wild and he did not remember which lever to pull or push. Someone got things under control after a bit but at supper time, Smokey was still quite shaken.

As he recounted the incident, his excitement grew and his accent became every more pronounced. At the high point of his retelling he said "Ven de government belt came off I didn't know vat to do." After that and anytime when Smokey wasn't around, any reference to the 'government belt' called for a good round of laughter.

The bundle hauling<sup>1</sup> teams were in the vanguard of every move to a new field. The racks, mounted on wagons which were team drawn, were loaded with shocks taken from the area in the center of the field in order to clear an area for the threshing right to "set". "Setting" meant aligning the engine to the separator so that a long belt could transfer power from the engine to the separator. Doing it quickly and accurately with all those men waiting called for a good measure of skill.

Dad always used two men to each bundle rack, but two men could be saved if four field pitchers were used to help load the eight racks and two men at the separator were used to help pitch off the loads when they got to the separator. These last two were known as "spike pitchers".

Custom threshing meant PRESSURE. Bundles or sheaves were pitched on and off the racks by sweating men. Barley was a short-strawed crop in those days so a bundle that had been bound by the binder had a nasty way of becoming unbound about the time the pitcher had it above his head. A shirt full of barley beards could make one very unhappy especially on a hot day.

In the early days, threshed grain was handled in bags – each bag weighing from 120 to 150 pounds. If there was a renter-landowner relationship, each took half of the number of bags. It was the common way of dividing or sharing the crop. The landowner could store his in one place and the renter in another. In either case the bags had to be handled by hand.

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<sup>1</sup> Bundle, and some other words, are insider terms that go back to the 'olden days'. From the perspective of one just old enough to remember what threshing was like: in the earlier 1900's the ripe grain was cut by a machine called a 'binder' which assembled grain into 'bundles' or 'sheaves' which were tied together with twine rope. These bundles were, in turn, stacked upright against each other in 'shocks', which were essentially, vertical piles of grain to allow the grain to dry, and stay dry. These shocks were then gathered and fed into the threshing machine, which separated the 'wheat from the chaff' – the wheat seeds from the straw. A photo of grain shocks is found on page 40.

The grain hauler handed the bag up to a man who stood on a shelf-like platform mounted just under the granary door, which was high up on the side of the grain bin. That man dumped it inside. After a considerable amount of grain had accumulated in the bin it was necessary to have still another man to spread it around inside. This inside job was a dusty one. Farmers usually exchanged time with each other for hauling grain from the machine. Husky men were required.

About the time of World War I, farmers went to bulk grain handling. Farm owners and renters then stored their grain in common bins and the dividing was done at the elevator after the grain had been hauled and weighed. Using the bulk method, the grain was allowed to run directly into the wagon box from the thresher. It was then hauled to a granary and hand shoveled into the bin. Later on, rather primitive grain elevators powered by gasoline engines elevated the grain into the bin but some shoveling was still necessary to get it into the elevator hopper.

Most any job around the rig was a dusty one. Working hours, not including care of one's team, were from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. with one hour off for dinner. Lunches were eaten while the load ahead was being unloaded or while some spare man pitched off the teamster's load. Wages ranged from \$7.00 per day during World War I to about \$2.00 per day during the depression.

Once in love with a steamer, always in love with one. Notice the attention the steamers get at threshing bees, which are very popular among old timers. The steamer was sm-o-oth. There was something about the combination of exhausted steam and burned straw that produced a pleasant unforgettable smell. On sunny, dry afternoons it was poetry in motion, rocking gently back and forth with each stroke of the piston. The exhaust was practically inaudible. But on foggy, damp mornings, when the bundles were "tough", the steamer's voice rose in anger and it exhausted loud ground shaking objections.

The whistle on the steamer was used sparingly – it frightened some of the many horses. Teamsters were cautioned to hold their horses before it was used. Each whistle in the area had a sound of it's own and could be heard far and wide in the early morning. When we heard a whistle, we knew it was Hans Lykken's, Louis Lykken's, or Alfred Oihus whistle that was being "tooted".

An engine, tender and separator together formed a rather long train as they traveled down the road. My older brother, Oscar, was quite an engineer. Before moving he would screw down the governor to give the engine more traveling speed. The hardworking engine exhausted puffs of steam and smoke that was almost one continuous stream, rising high above the engine, arcing to a horizontal stream and gradually dissipating. After reaching the open clearing in the field that was to be threshed, he stopped the engine just long enough for brother Bill to unhook the separator from the tender, then circled the engine around to line up with the separator. He prided himself on the short time it took him to "set".

Much food was needed to feed a couple dozen hard working men. The men ate in a cook car usually staffed by two lady cooks. (Men cooks had been tried and found drinking). This kitchen was on wheels and located in the farmer's yard where water and fuel were close at hand. As mentioned before, my mother and sister, Edith, often served in this capacity. These days were long for these cooks – breakfast consisted of pancakes, meat and potatoes and was served at 5 a.m. This was followed by lunch at 9, dinner at noon, lunch at 4 and finally supper at 7:30 p.m.

The "Tanky" hauled water from the farmer's well, also located in the yard, and was often a source of help for the cooks, doing such chores as peeling potatoes, emptying refuse containers and carrying pails of water. He had time to do this as well as have an extra cup of coffee while the flowing well was filling his tank. The long day for the cooks ended about 10 o'clock.

I remember one day vividly. We finished threshing for Lynn Miller very late at night. We moved home (3 miles away) after we finished so we would not have to steam up again the next morning. After parking the engine, my brother Lawrence who had been engineer that fall, pulled the whistle cord for a final long, lingering blast. This was the customary way of "letting off steam" after a long fall of hard work.

We didn't know it then, but it was to be the final blast from that distinguished three-toned whistle. The exciting days of the big rig were over in our area.

## THE TELEPHONE AND THE BUSCH-BERNING FAMILIES

As the 1905-06 letters suggest, the coming of the telephone to Grant County, Wisconsin, in 1905 was a big occasion. So it probably was in LaMoure County, though the exact date of the first phone call to the farm is as yet unknown.

At the 1993 Busch-Berning Family Reunion, Bill Berning noted the extensive record of the family in the past, contrasted against fewer letters and more phone calls today – hence less of a record for future generations.

What about the telephone, back then? Most of the following quotes are found in assorted correspondences included in this book.

**Mary Busch Brehmer, born 1913**, recalls that “As long as I can remember we had a telephone. Dad helped build and maintain the first telephone line out of Berlin. It was a lot of work. There were no machines to dig the holes for the poles or string the lines. Maintaining the line wasn’t simple either. It seemed that every thunderstorm shattered a pole putting the whole line out of commission. One man threatened to sue Dad because his sheep barn caught on fire and burned to the ground. His telephone was out and he couldn’t call for help. He figured Dad was responsible.”

**Ruby Berning Fitzgerald**, who lived her first 13 years in Dubuque, recalls that “We always had a telephone. It was a crank telephone. Everyone on the line had a certain number of rings. I think ours was two rings. You could pick up the phone and listen in on conversations. We very seldom did, but every once in a while it was fun to listen in. Of course everyone was pretty careful what they said anyway. If there was a reason for a general call, there would be a series of about seven or eight rings in a row. Mom said that when Halley’s Comet was seen [this would have been in 1910] someone gave a general ring and said “The world will end at noon today.” Created quite a stir. [It is unclear if Christina was talking about a North Dakota phone call, or reporting on what someone had written from Wisconsin.] Uncle Ferdy kept the telephone lines in good repair. I remember several bad snowstorms when the drifts piled so high that we could easily jump over the telephone wires alongside the house in the southwest corner by the trees.”

**Esther Busch Bernard** in her recollections: “The hired girl and I were out in the snow chasing chickens into the coop so they wouldn’t freeze when there was a great long train whistle from the Grand Rapids railroad track. In the house there was a long, long telephone ringing to signify the end of World War I.” [November 11, 1918]

**Letter from Fred Busch, November 4, 1944:** “I am still at the telephone work. Seems I have good success in the telephone business. Been at that work now for a long time. Have the phones all in fairly good working order....”

**Letter from George Busch, June 2, 1942:** “Dad is in Berlin working on the telephone.”

**Letter from George Busch, June 9, 1942:** "We have just finished supper and Dad and Art have gone out to find a "short" in the telephone line. The lightning storm last Saturday grounded the line and they cannot find where."

**Letter from George, June 28, 1942:** "Your call [from Jean elsewhere in ND] was a real surprise... Your voice was familiar but quite far away."

**Henry Bernard**, who married Esther Busch in 1937, said "The only recollection I have of Grandpa Busch and the telephone was when the switchboard was in a house in Berlin and he would operate the board."

**Ruby Berning Fitzgerald** in 1993 said "I don't know much about the maintenance or working of the telephone line, except that it was always there when you needed it, except when the sole operator in Berlin would close down for the night and go to bed. Her maiden name was Betty Switzer. The switchboard was in her home. When I had left home after graduating from high school (about 1938), I called home long distance several times. Always during the day of course. Had no trouble getting through."

**Ann Berning Cranfield** in 1993 said "As to the telephone company, I know Uncle Ferdie was mostly responsible, but Dad and Mom had a part share in it. After any windstorm or ice storm Dad would tell Mom, "Ferdie and I are going out to repair the line."

**Mary Busch Brehmer** in 1993 said "I remember all the work to keep the line in repair because Dad used to take me along to help. There was a switch board operator in Berlin. The pay they received was small so most of them didn't stay long. The switch board operators lived in the house where the switchboard was located, rent free. That was part of their pay. I don't remember too many long distance calls. The telegraph took care of more of those. The operator in Berlin switched your call over to the other local lines in neighboring towns. On the local lines we knew all the local codes, a long and two shorts, two longs and a short, three shorts, etc. To ring a long you turned the crank on the phone twice. To ring a short the crank was turned once. No one was supposed to listen in on a neighbors call. If you did you were labeled a "rubberneck" or "big ears".

**Vincent Busch** in 1993: "The company was Lakeview Telephone Company, named because it started near Cottonwood Lake, 8 miles south of the farm. Cost was never more than \$2.00 per month. It proved its worth during the severe blizzard of March, 1966, when an unrepaired power outage could have been a disaster for farmers in the area."

## THE GARDEN IN 2005 AT THE NORTH DAKOTA BUSCH FARM

For probably the entire 100 year history of the Busch farm, the large garden has been an annual fixture, always in the same place, perhaps 100 yards to the east of the house, alongside the old lane the milk cows used to get to and from the barn.

According to Vincent, the plot is about one acre in size.

By Mary Busch  
July 16, 2005

Every year I receive a letter in the middle of the late winter stating that Vince has ordered the seeds. Somehow the sigh of relief that winter can be completed arrives with that statement. Edithe says that Vince does more in the garden now that the cows were sold [during the terrible winter of 1996-97]. Last summer they reported that 30+ Swallows keep the garden clear of flying bothersome insects. Vince recommends the tree shading the garden as a prime nap spot after some hot work. The tree belt protects the current spot from ever present winds.

I also have a long-ago memory of another garden location, which was just west of the house.

Vince and Edithe rarely have fewer than four vegetables at any meal. Vince expressed disappointment that they are not able to contribute surplus to the local nursing home because of some new state rule. A neighbor expressed admiration for the garden.

Edithe's garden rule is to pick in the morning when dew is on the veggies (this was confirmed by my Aunt Edith Lerfald.) If the lettuce is bitter, soak it in salt water to redeem it. Peas must be plump before picking – no baby peas!

I recently discovered another rule: don't pick produce in 'flip flops' after a rain. The organic matter was so intense it converted to a quicksand-like muck and collected in inches full on my sandals, which I abandoned to escape, bare foot. No simple stream of water had any effect on the inches of earth layered on my feet or sandals. I spent 15 minutes scrubbing and admiring the organic encrustation. The final scrub, a day or two later, required a whole lake and the attentions of my farm-raised cousin Arden...I just affirm the minerals available to these glorious garden goods.

My Aunt Edithe wears a truly antique pink cotton hat not unlike the covered wagon bonnets. Gingham laced with cardboard stays tunnel her face and protect from the sun. Edithe says it's the only bonnet that works. If you look down the bonnet tunnel you can see brown twinkly eyes belonging to Edithe. At 85, she can bend from the waist and pull a weed and has arms that could wrestle.

This year she started lots of plants inside and invested in just a little more expensive kohlrabi plants with good results. The garden's organic because no blights have made their way to its straight rows. Some dusting of cabbage does occur. Peas, lettuce, radishes, tomatoes, peppers, squashes, pumpkins, spinach, Swiss chard, carrots, beets, turnips, potatoes, onions...horseradish, dill, basil... From my other side, an Uncle said that his Norwegian immigrant elders suffered skin diseases on beans, potatoes and corn, until they learned from the Germans a broader variety of garden crops helping complete the needed vitamin complements. (The Norwegians planted few varieties:)

For years, I have received harvest offerings from the farm in the fall – Dick imports a trunk-full and distributes them between cities relative households...refreshing to have unique sized potatoes and the smell of the earth joined to the unique taste of this gift. Depending on the conditions, it varies: some years apples are abundant, others onions. It is the best gift anyone can give.

Thanks, Vince and Edithe.

By Flo Hedeem  
July 17, 2005

Aunt Edith insists that the garden has gotten smaller over the years, but year by year the long rows of [see Mary's list of vegetables, above] and more extend from one end to the other for nearly 50 yards. Rich, black North Dakota soil yields an amazing amount of produce, depending on the weather conditions and insect infestations for a particular growing season. There are the flowers, gladiolus in profusion, for example. Horseradish, rhubarb, dill and other "volunteers" add interest and a taste treat to the North Dakota trained palate.

When the garden is good, hours are invested in putting away the yield, picking, shucking or snipping, blanching, packing in bags or jars and freezing or processing for the long months when the garden is dormant. The farm table is always "gifted" with veggies made better with a little bit of onion, butter, and salt and pepper. Sometimes a cream sauce is added. Jams, pickles, apple sauce and cider (from Uncle Vince's apple trees!) accompanied by Aunt Edith's homemade bread add to the reward of keeping a garden. Pies and desserts of apples and rhubarb frequently top off a meal.

Visitors always leave the farm with armloads to trunkloads of fruits of the earth, tended day in and day out by Edith – 85 – and Vince – 80. They gratefully accept any help they can get from the benefactors, even if untrained eyes and hands might miss or mess up some of the crop. Occasionally the fresh produce travels several hundred miles to grateful recipients in "the cities".

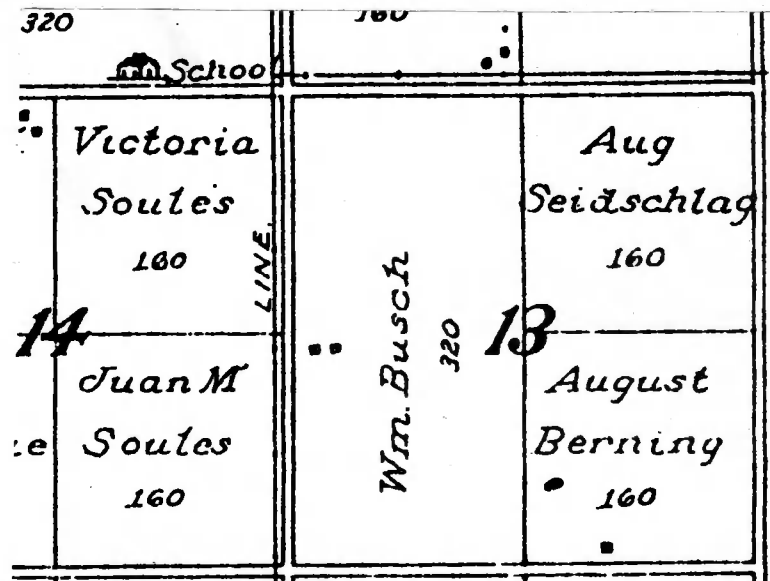
Even with modern tools to assist, gardening is mostly done by hand, as it has been over the ages. Aunt Edith has been heard to say, "I don't think I'll garden next year." Everyone will understand when that happens, but no one will believe when next year is the year!

## HENRIETTA SCHOOL #1 And Country School in General

As I write, I am 65 years old. My entire life has been wrapped up in public education, up until the present day. Both my parents were public school teachers in tiny North Dakota schools in many places (my graduation class included eight seniors). The first six years of my education was in small town Catholic Schools. From eighth grade through high school graduation, my primary teachers were either my mother or my dad, so in some sense I was almost home-schooled, though in a public school context.

I never went to a one-room rural school, though during my first year in college, 1958-59, Aunt Mary Brehmer almost convinced me to get a one-year credential and take a job in a country school...this was still possible then. The temptation passed, and here I am, looking back at my Mom's one-room school, and celebrating her granddaughter Joni's now beginning an appointment as an associate principal of a large middle school in suburban St. Paul. The tradition of Busch's in public education continues.

All of the Busch kids, and some of the Berning kids went to the first eight grades of grammar school across the fields at Henrietta #1. For the Busch kids, the jaunt was at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile; for the Bernings, at minimum  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The below map shows the relative locations. The photo shows Dorothy Gates' Henrietta class in 1914-15. In the front row, from left, are Esther Busch, Irene Berning and Lucina Busch.



There are thousands of stories about what country school was like, and this small essay is not about teaching and learning there. Each person has their own story. The schools sprang up where there were sufficient kids to warrant them. The enrollment varied from year to year, and cooperative learning was an asset and a necessity: the older kids helped the younger; if you were bright, and there was no one in the next grade, you might miss a grade 'just cuz'. My Mom was one of those who missed a grade.

It may seem surprising, but there was an in depth discussion of country school education going on 'back then' in the old days. Appendix F at the end of this book includes two long commentaries, from 1906 and 1910, on country school architecture and country children and their education. The reader may find them of interest.

Three pieces of 'evidence' suggest aspects of the one-room school at Henrietta.

On a following page is a photo copy of a little booklet teacher Mark Stinchfield gave to his Henrietta charges in 1908. At that time, the oldest Busch, Lucina, was only a year old. The class roster shows 16 students from 7 families. Seven years later, the 1915 Henrietta school photo shows 9 students with teacher Dorothy Gates.

Because this was a farm-oriented school, the terms were short by today's standards. One of Esther Busch's later contracts for a neighboring school (which is now the Museum School in the Grand Rapids Park), shows the school year began on September 17 and went on for eight months with a few legal holidays, and perhaps more days off when kids were needed at home. By mid-May, the kids were at home, engaged in certain aspects of farm work.

There are millions of stories about country school. Mom remembered her first year at a country school, and it was by her own admission, a disaster. She began teaching at the minimum age, I believe it was then 18, and her first school, not far from Harvey ND, greeted her with a large class, which included an unusually large number of older and disruptive boys. To make a long story very short, her year of employment ended at Christmas time. Lucky for later generations of students, her sour experience that year did not deter her from continuing a long career in classrooms across North Dakota, and, one year, in Canada.

## CHIPS FROM THE NORTHERN BRANCH

From somewhere in the deep recesses of my mind, I have plucked a Christmas memory which will be forever important to me.

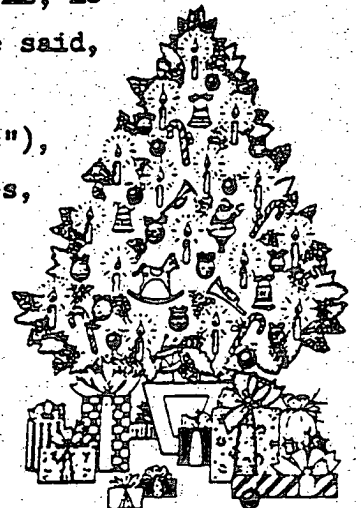
Christmas on the North Dakota prairie was a time of anticipation and joy, a welcome respite from the hard times and unrelenting toil of everyday existence. Families were extremely impoverished and no "store-bought" gifts were imminent for most of the children who attended Souris #1. Excitement filled the air as mothers baked once-a-year "goodies" and sewed and baked and built gifts to be opened on Christmas morning.

The Christmas program at school was a yearly social event for the entire community. No special lights or decorations were needed to enhance the appreciation of this day. The kids had planned, practiced and revised every noon hour for a month and were ready. A tree fashioned from prairie junipers decorated with strings of popcorn and thorn apples, and various homemade decorations was in place and a few small packages were already under it.

All year I had tried to get Frederic, a reticent second grader, to talk to me. An unusually polite youngster, he always had his work done but spoke to no one if it could be avoided. After the program was over, gifts were distributed and I was singularly impressed with the ingenuity displayed in the homemade gifts which were given to me. Coffee, hot cocoa and cookies were now being enjoyed by all. At this point, I felt a tug at my sleeve and found Frederic looking up at me. As I knelt down, he quickly placed a package in my hand. While he looked on, I opened it and found a sling shot and a bag of smooth stones. As I held out my arms, he hesitated only a moment before coming to me. Then he said, "I made it for you because I love you."

In my cedar chest (which holds all my "treasures"), I have a box which holds a sling shot, a bag of stones, and the memory of a very special little boy.

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS to June Johnson, Bigfork MN  
(This story first appeared in the December, 1985,  
Top of the Range, Iron Range MEA. June was then  
a teacher at Bigfork High School. She has since  
retired.



Triplicate (For Teacher)

### TEACHER'S CONTRACT

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA,

County of Grand Forks }  
Allendale School District No. 60 } ss.

THIS AGREEMENT, Made and entered into this 12 day of April A. D. 1929, between W. L. Bernard a duly qualified teacher, of \_\_\_\_\_ County, State of North Dakota, and the School Board of Allendale School District No. 60 County of Grand Forks State of North Dakota.

WITNESSETH: That the said W. L. Bernard is to teach School No. 1 in said School District for a term of 9 months, beginning on the 2 day of Sept A. D. 1929, for which services truly rendered the School Board of said School District agrees to pay said W. L. Bernard at the expiration of each month of service the sum of 80.00 Dollars.

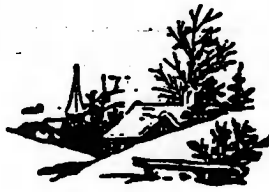
Provided, That the salary of the last month in the term shall not be paid until the term report shall be made, filed with and be approved by the County Superintendent of Schools, as provided by Section 1381, Compiled Laws of 1913.  
PROVIDED FURTHER, That the school may be discontinued at any time, as provided by Sec. 1189, Compiled Laws of 1913, and that no compensation shall be received by said teacher from the date of such discontinuance.  
\*The teacher named herein being a member of the Teachers' Retirement Fund, authorizes the school board to retain 7 per cent of his salary at the end of each month and remit same to the county treasurer as required by law. See Sec. 1506, Compiled Laws of 1913.

†FURTHER PROVIDED That teacher must scrub floors once a month and do own janitor work

By Order of the District School Board

Henry L. Bernard Teacher.  
W. L. Bernard President.  
W. L. Bernard Clerk.

NOTE—This Contract must be made and signed in triplicate before school begins, and one copy delivered to the teacher, one copy filed with the Clerk of the District School Board, and one copy filed with the County Superintendent.  
NOTE—If teacher is to do janitor work, same should be provided for in the Contract.  
†Board may here insert any other provision deemed advisable.  
\*If teacher is not a member of Fund, strike out this provision. One who becomes a teacher in the public schools after Jan. 1, 1914, must pay this assessment.



**PUBLIC SCHOOL**

District No. 1

Henrietta Twp., LaMoure County, N. Dak.

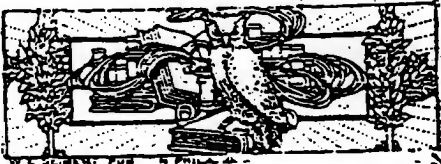
MARK STINCHFIELD, Teacher

**Pupils**

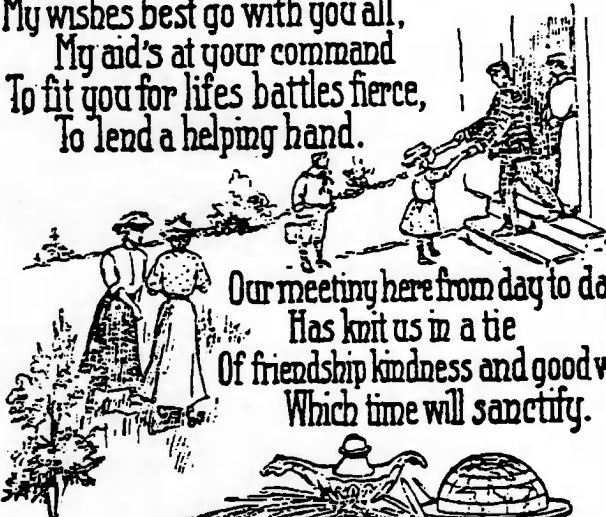
Marjorie Crist	Marion Crist
Raymond Foster	Raymond Freese
Thresia Freese	Clara Freese
Lizzie Freese	Esther Hoffman
Henry Hoffman	Katie Kercher
Jack Kercher	Ernest Muske
Albert Muske	Lena Muske
Frieda Tetsloff	Lao Tetzloff



In memory of days spent  
 together in the school-  
 room, this token is pre-  
 sented with the compliments of  
**YOUR TEACHER**

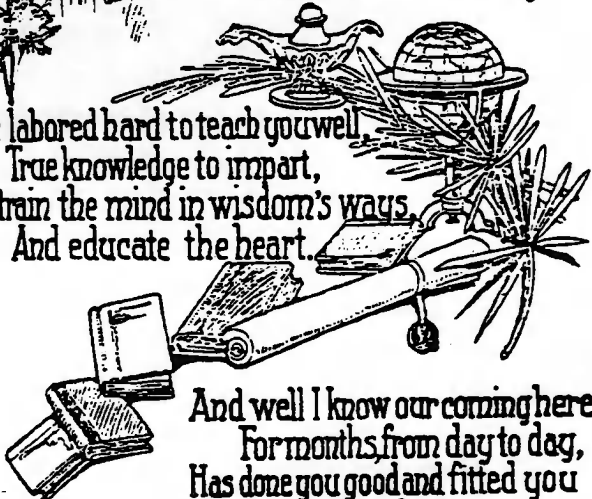


My wishes best go with you all,  
 My aid's at your command  
 To fit you for life's battles fierce,  
 To lend a helping hand.



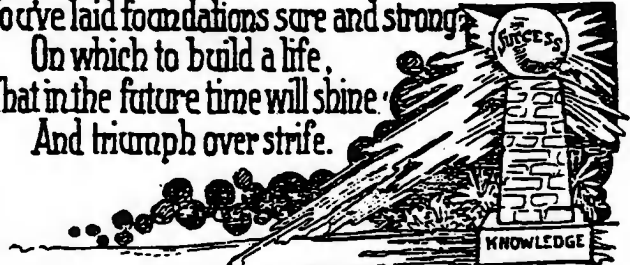
Our meeting here from day to day,  
 Has knit us in a tie  
 Of friendship kindness and good will,  
 Which time will sanctify.

I've labored hard to teach you well,  
 True knowledge to impart,  
 To train the mind in wisdom's ways,  
 And educate the heart.

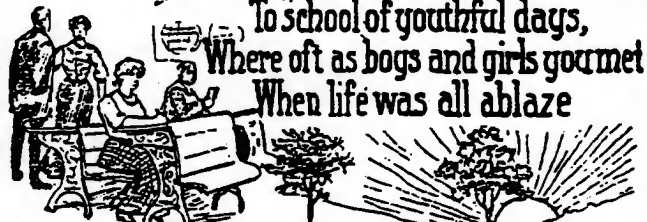


And well I know our coming here  
 For months from day to day,  
 Has done you good and fitted you  
 To find life's better way.

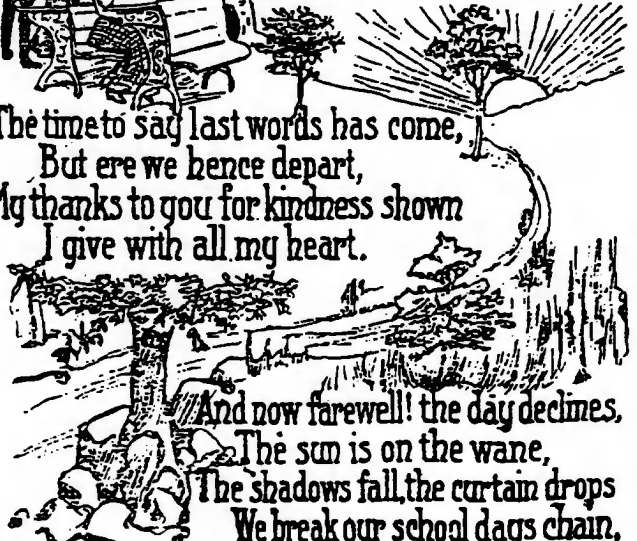
You've laid foundations sure and strong,  
 On which to build a life,  
 That in the future time will shine  
 And triumph over strife.



But oft your thoughts will backward turn  
 To school of youthful days,  
 Where oft as boys and girls gourmet  
 When life was all ablaze



The time to say last words has come,  
 But ere we hence depart,  
 My thanks to you for kindness shown  
 I give with all my heart.



And now farewell! the day declines,  
 The sun is on the wane,  
 The shadows fall, the curtain drops  
 We break our school days chain.

Found at the farm:  
 A small souvenir booklet  
 Given by teacher  
 Mark Stanchfield to his  
 Charges in 1908.  
 One of the 1905-06 letters  
 Mentions a "Mark" who  
 Is helping at the farm.  
 Could this be the same person?



The school is out and now we part  
 And go our several ways  
 To mingle in life's busy mart  
 And spend vacation days.



## THE CLOSE OF SCHOOL.

My pupils, 'tis the end of school.  
 The term has reached its close;  
 We'll say our farewells, go our ways,  
 And get an earned repose.

The bell no more will ring for you,  
 Until we meet again.  
 And sweet may your enjoyment be  
 Between this time and then.

Our separation's long or short,  
 There's only One can tell,  
 But what He does is always best  
 As you all know full well.

But oft I'll think as days go by  
 Of all my pupils dear;  
 My thoughts will wander back to you  
 Thro' all the coming year.

## **WAR. The Busch's and Berning's** **By Dick Bernard**

**“HURRAH! The old war is over.”** With these words in a letter to her Navy Lieutenant son George Busch, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1945, Grandma Busch expressed relief at the official end of WWII. (The original first page of this letter can be found on page 156.)

Backward to the Wisconsin-North Dakota era around 1900: someone in the Busch or Berning family of our era seemed to have an unusual interest in the general topic of War.

In the Busch home, before it was deconstructed in 2000, I found a 592 page book published in 1898 about the Spanish-American War, entitled “America’s War for Humanity”, so someone was interested in the topic at the time, though no evidence has yet surfaced that any Busch or Berning actually served in that war.

In my most recent trip to the farm, August 2, 2005, I found a box in the old granary that had another book of 956 pages with an 1899 copyright entitled Famous and Decisive Battles of the World, The Essence of History for 2500 years, written by an Army Brigadier General, Charles King, and including a battle in the Spanish-American War. 52 battles are chronicled in this book.

I can only surmise that Grandpa Busch was the person who had an interest in these ancient military histories.

Whatever the case, this is a family which was aware of war.

Elsewhere in this book is found a very long paragraph near the end of Heinrich Busch’s Feb 14, 1924, letter, in his native German, to his German relatives also speaks volumes, as much for its passion as its content (Heinrich was Wilhelm Busch’s younger brother): “I will never forget how, each year on slaughter day, as we cut the fat pigs and cows apart, dear grandmother would say if only the dear Lord will let us eat it in peace and good health, and then, each time, she would tell how the French took everything of hers, in addition to all of the oppression they had to endure, and dear grandfather would tell how the French and the Russians took him and his father with [their] horses and wagon to drive under orders for weeks and, how the horses couldn’t go anymore, and how they were then whipped and left by the wayside [to die] and that the Busch’s homestead had been their lawful property but was taken away by the French, no wonder that my father left his home with his sons. France’s history has always been full of war and revolution for the last three hundred years and Germany was always the oppressed, if they will ever become peaceful?”

The “dear grandmother” narrative above brings to light a fact likely little known in the family: the district in which the Busch’s lived, Westphalia, was from about 1806 through 1813 part of Napoleon Bonaparte’s French empire. They were ruled by

Napoleon's brother, Jerome. Heinrich's recollections were likely very factual, as were his grandmother and grandfather's memories. In a sense, then, during the early 1800s the Busch's would have been subjects of France, and subject to laws, conscription and other regulations of the French regime. (Five of the 52 'decisive' battles chronicled in the aforementioned book involved Napoleon Bonaparte. It was not a happy time in history for our German ancestors. In the end, Napoleon was exiled and died on a remote island in the Atlantic. So much for dreams of grandeur.)

Of course, this brief essay is not intended to give a complete history of Germany. But for anyone interested in the Busch family in particular, it is worthwhile to read the portion of the political history of France from the French revolution of 1789 through Napoleon Bonaparte's fall in 1815. For both the Busch and Berning families, the political history between about 1800 and 1875, of the states which became Germany, is very useful reading. (At the time of their immigration to the U.S., Busch's and Berning's came from the adjoining regions of Westphalia and Hanover in what was then called Prussia. The consolidation of territory into what finally became present day Germany was still evolving.)

A consistent narrative in the Busch and Berning family stories is that they left Germany when they did because of some aspect of the threat of some kind of war at home. Ruby Berning Fitzgerald, in her recollections elsewhere in this book, says this: "Both families left Germany because of the everlasting wars and conflicts going on over there. They wanted a better life. I remember Dad [August Berning] saying that the Civil War started shortly after [the family's] arrival in the States and that some of the men of the family went up to Canada to avoid jumping from the frying pan into the fire, so to speak. They had had enough of wars.

Fast forward to WWI: in her memories, Mary Busch Brehmer recalled that anti-German sentiment was evident against German-Americans at that time "so the [German] language [sometimes used in the family] was kept quiet".

Heinrich Busch verifies this in his November 5, 1923, to Germany (the original German translated into English). "The American millionaires and the government had loaned the Allies so many millions that against the will of the common folk, president Wilson was pulled into the War [World War I]. England had nine million for newspaper propaganda [for war] in American newspapers about the brutal Germans and the German-Americans had come to suffer under it, they were held for unpatriotic and were required to come before the court for little things as if they were pro-German. The damned war was a revenge and a millionaire's war and the common people had to bleed in this bloody gladiator battle. Yes, until now the world still has no peace because of the revenge of France."

Heinrich died about 1936. History does not record his feelings about Hitler and the Third Reich.

Heinrich goes further in the next paragraph of his letter: "It would be desirable for the strong God of the warring armies to let justice reign here and give the whole world the peace so that, at Christmas, the world can experience peace and good will to all. We Americans must now bear the war debt of fifty billion through taxes and it make me happy that you do not need help us pay the war debt." He predicts the future a bit later: "If Germany will become more divided through loss of the Rhinelands and the revolution of the socialists and communists then there is still a crisis to get through, and we very surely hope that the whole confusion is soon rectified and order comes." Little more than nine years after Henrich writes this letter, Hitler comes to power in Germany.... Heinrich lived several years after Hitler and the Third Reich came to power in 1933. No commentary has been found concerning his opinions on this regime.

Even given the tension around WWI, Vincent Busch mentioned recently that when one of Grandpa Busch's hired men was killed in WWI, Grandpa wanted to enlist...at age 38.

The writer of this essay is a peace activist, an active one, proud of it. But I'm also a military veteran, and a member of this family. "Patriot" does not end with supporting War.

To me, there is absolutely no contradiction in being for peace, against war, and respecting those who served...and, for that matter, those who did not..

In the two families who comprise this book, there is a very long military history: August Berning Jr left the Civilian Conservation Corps to join the Marines in the 1930s, becoming a Marine officer in the Pacific, ending the war as a Captain.

\*One of the first American casualties in WWII was Esther Busch's brother-in-law, my uncle Frank Peter Bernard, who, like August Berning, left the CCC, only to join the U.S. Navy in 1935. Frank's entire tour of duty was on the USS Arizona, which became his tomb at Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

Uncle Frank had been at the farm at least once, when his brother Henry Bernard married Esther Busch in August, 1937.

It is likely only because of his occupation – teacher – and the fact that he was the sole surviving son of his parents, and a married man with a child, me, that Frank's brother, my Dad, was not called up, though he always mentioned he had flat feet and failed the physical when called to Ft. Snelling.

George Busch completed college in the spring of 1942 and after a summer at home went for Naval officer training and thence to three years of service on the USS Woodworth in the Pacific. The end of the war found him anchored in Tokyo Bay September 11, 1945. On October 20, 1945, his ship docked at Portland OR and from there he returned home.

George's brother Art was drafted for the service after graduating from high school in 1945 and served in the Army ski troops..

August Berning's brother Mel served in the Korea campaign, and earlier had been in the Air Force for a time. He graduated with Art in 1945..

Vincent Busch was subject to the draft but not called up, probably because he was the only adult male other than his Dad left on the farm, and farm help was very hard to come by.

Rose Berning's husband, George Molitor, was shot down and killed over Italy one month before VE day – April 4, 1945. They had been married four years, and had two children.

Without question, I am missing the names of many others who served in WWII and Korea, but this gives an idea.

And that was just the American Busch's and Bernings.

We only know a bit about the German Busch's role in WWII. Without doubt, other German relatives of the Bernings, Heims, Vosbergs, etc., had roles in this war, and WWI. They were on the opposing side. The four Busch boys at home in Germany probably conscripts from the farm to the military. They all returned safely after the war, but none to our knowledge ever told their story to their children's generation. At this writing, we don't know about other German ancestors in WWII or WWI.

In the fall of 2000, I chose to ask one of our German relatives: "would you tell us about WWII?" Margaretha (Busch) Langer, whose home I had visited in 1998, responded. Her letter, both in her German and translated into English, is on the following pages, and speaks for itself.

WWII ended finally, of course, with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945) with immense loss of life. Sixty years ago September 2, 1945, WWII officially ended.

The Busch and Berning families are uniquely privileged to have extensive contemporary records of 'real person' communication during WWII. Both Jean Tannahill Busch and her husband-to-be and then husband George Busch kept all of their many letters back-and-forth during 1941-45. Many of these are reprinted in this book.

This book is intended to honor the memories of the Pioneers at the Henrietta Township farms. The record of service for the families would be much expanded if written to include family members who later served. Until 1973, service for males was more obligatory than voluntary – "the draft". Since then, fewer men., and proportionately more women, have become part of the voluntary armed forces...though

fewer people volunteer. People are of diverse, and legitimate, opinions about the value of military service, and the value of War.

My own most recent opinion, an essay published in the August 6, 2005, Minneapolis Star Tribune, is reprinted in this section. It recalls a portion of the family reaction to WWII.

The writer of this brief essay is an honorably discharged Army veteran proud of his service in 1962-63. This writer is also, however, currently president of a statewide alliance which would accurately be called anti-war: the Minnesota Alliance of Peacemakers [www.mapm.org](http://www.mapm.org), and maintains a website that in part is dedicated to the causes of Peace and Justice [www.chez-nous.net/peace.html](http://www.chez-nous.net/peace.html). My own personal photos from Army service in 1962-63 are at <http://one-six-one.fifthinfantrydivision.com/161pg6x.htm>. All are welcome to visit.

We got around to the subject of war again and I said that, contrary to his attitude, I did not think that the common people are very thankful for leaders who bring them war and destruction.

"Why, of course, the people don't want war," Goering shrugged. "Why would some poor slob on a farm want to risk his life in a war when the best that he can get out of it is to come back to his farm in one piece. Naturally, the common people don't want war; neither in Russia nor in England nor in America, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But, after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship or a Parliament or a Communist dictatorship."

"There is one difference," I pointed out. "In a democracy the people have some say in the matter through their elected representatives, and in the United States only Congress can declare war."

"Oh, that is all well and good, but, voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same way in any country."

Psychiatrist Gustave Gilbert quoting Reichmarshall Hermann Goering in his cell at Nuremberg in 1946.

From the 1947 book:  
Nuremberg Diary  
by Gustave Gilbert

**NOTE: The books were printed and mostly bound before this event occurred, but I think it is relevant to the chapter on War and our Families.**

### **AN EMOTIONAL AND INSPIRING AFTERNOON.**

Sunday, August 28, 2005

Dick Bernard

I just spent an hour and a half listening to a Jap.

At 11:02 a.m. on August 9, 1945, Sachiko Yasui was 6 years old, and playing house with four little friends in Nagasaki Japan. She was the Jap I was listening to.

Her brother and her four friends were killed instantly by the Atomic Bomb. Two brothers died within the next two weeks, and within one month 23 relatives were dead. By the time she was 20, she was the only family member left. Sooner or later, the survivors died from one or another type of cancer, and she herself had cancer for which she is still being treated.

Radiation sickness took its devastating toll on all of them who survived.

They lived not far from the hypocenter of the Bomb. It is miraculous that anyone survived at all, much less most of them, for a little while at least.

She described the horror of the days after her city was destroyed.

She was a radiant and peaceful person, this 66 year old Jap, speaking Japanese through her interpreter. War is created by the human heart, she said, and the solution – peace and justice – is within that same heart. We must be courageous enough to help and love other people. She was an embodiment of her words.

Her inspiration to commit to a better world, to peace, came when she was 12 years old, when Helen Keller visited Nagasaki.

She spoke directly to the 100 or so of us in her presence. She was impressed with the fact that we engaged with her, personally, looking at her, not away.

She said we must all believe that there is at least a one percent possibility of success in working for peace, and abolition of atomic weapons.

I was among the last to talk with her after the last question was asked.

I told her about my Uncle Frank, and his death on the U.S.S. Arizona. He was one of the first U.S. casualties of WW II; her family was one of the last Japanese to feel the horror of destruction of that War – all killed by bombs.

She wanted to know how I felt. We clasped hands tightly and I simply said we have to work together so that war never happens again. She agreed with that.

We called her people ‘Japs’ in WWII. So would she have been, then, just another ‘Jap’. War dehumanizes the supposed enemy, making ‘it’ – them – easier to kill. We were, I suppose in the heat of war, the same to them – something less than human. Everyone loses from war, I said. She agreed.

Her translator and I exchanged addresses.

Ms. Yasui and I will be in touch with each other long term, I think.

Peace. Now.

**The next day, August 29, 2005:** I had second thoughts about referring to Sachiko as a ‘Jap’: the awfully negative term is so dissonant with her person and her story. But my intention was to stun, and I’ll stay with it. The very language, and teaching, of War is to eliminate the reality of the victims, who are humans like ourselves. Knowing the

personal stories of the people about to be killed would make the killing more difficult. Thus, 'collateral damage' substitutes for 'death and unimaginable human suffering'. War, especially in recent years, has become almost a video-game, abstract, distant. It is not so distant when a wonderful lady, Japanese, from Nagasaki, speaking no English, recalls she and her four little friends playing house when unimaginable violence destroyed their world August 9, 1945.

I think that is why the insanity of 'shock and awe' over Baghdad in March, 2003, so profoundly affected me. I have been unable, ever since, to attend 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks displays with any enthusiasm: "Bombs bursting in air", even fireworks, has become a symbol of something evil.

I sent the August 28 message to perhaps 130 people around the country. One of them, the Minnesota lady who translated Wilhelm Busch's letters for this book, nearing 80, who grew up in Hitler's Germany, and married a U.S. soldier after the war, wrote this: "How long will humanity go on killing and maiming each other because the heads of governments tell us to do so. If someone, in almost any country, kills someone in anger or hate, the person is sentenced to die or faces incarceration for life.

However, in the name of freedom, democracies or dictatorships alike face up against each other and teach their young to kill. The young are taught and trained to kill someone they have never met, they do not know of their existence and their dreams of a future.

Yet throughout centuries, it has become evident a thousand fold that the 'average' persons wants to get along and live side by side with their fellow man – in peace. Dick, even our own experiences confirm that fact. Although you and the Japanese woman lost loved ones because you were on opposing sides – now, decades later, you pause and listen to each other, and instead of becoming each others enemy, you clasp hands and wish for peace. In my own experience, I fell in love with the enemy soldier because of his goodness. I came to this country and became friends with one and worked with another former enemy – both had frequently bombed the city I live in. Now we have families, and we are friends. Our children played together, and we lived and worked side by side.

I have the good fortune to meet you. We are friends. I feel blessed."

Annelee Woodstrom  
705 E 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave  
Ada MN 56510  
Author of  
War Child: Growing up in Adolf Hitler's Germany

I include Annelee's address, as her book is still available, if you are interested. It is an excellent book, published in 2003. Total cost (including shipping) \$22.00. Order direct from her.

Maineapolis Star Tribune  
 60 years <sup>Sat.</sup>  
 after A-bomb <sup>Aug 6, 2005</sup>

*WWII remembered in letters*

By Dick Bernard

"Hurrah, the old war is over!"

With these exultant words in August 1945, Grandma Rosa Busch, writing at the farm near Berlin, N.D., began her letter to her son, and my uncle, Navy Lt. George W. Busch.

As she wrote her "Hurrah," the deck officer of the USS Woodworth, George Busch's home for the preceding three years, recorded that the ship was "underway with Task Unit 38.3.9 consisting of 4 heavy units and 6 escorts."

Later, the deck log for Sept. 11, 1945, reported that the ship had anchored a few hours earlier in Tokyo Bay. Indeed, "the old war [was] over."

The USS Woodworth docked in Portland, Ore., on Oct. 20, 1945, and Uncle George began his return to civilian life.

One Navy man who didn't return was my Uncle Frank Bernard, brother-in-law of Rosa's daughter, Esther. Frank went down with the USS Arizona Dec. 7, 1941, one of the first of hundreds of thousands of U.S. casualties in World War II and one of perhaps 50 million total casualties.

Uncle George and Aunt Jean, his wife, wrote hundreds of letters to each other from 1941 to 1945, and they saved every one.

On Aug. 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, though thousands of miles apart, the two wrote almost identical words.

Aunt Jean, from near Grand Forks, N.D.: "The news that excited everyone is Russia's declaration of war on Japan. Surely Japan will crumble now under the combined pressure, new atomic bomb and repeated attacks."

Uncle George, from somewhere in the Pacific: "Good news! Good news! Comrade Joe came through with a declaration of war against Japan. That should step up VJ day considerably. This plus the new bomb might even convince the Japs that the struggle is futile. Surely they can't be ignorant enough to believe that they can whip the world."

With Jean's Aug. 9 letter came an unidentified newspaper clipping, probably from the previous day's Grand Forks Herald. "1st Test Made in Desert" read the headline, and the story told of the July 1945 test of a new extremely powerful bomb "in New Mexico's desert" near Alamogordo.

The U.S. War Department, quoted in the article, said: "A revolutionary weapon designed to change war as we know it, or which may even be the instrumentality to end all wars was set off with an impact which signaled man's entrance into a new physical world."

In none of the many letters from George's family or from George himself is there evidence that anyone really knew the incredible destructive power, or even the human consequences for innocent "Japs," of the bomb they were cheering. Neither could they know how history would assess the War Department's optimistic prediction that the atom bomb would bring freedom from future war.

In all of their letters was evidence of the polarities of war: To them, the war was very personal, in the person of their brother, their son, their nephew, their neighbor; those on the other side were simply "the Japs."

In her Aug. 26 letter, right af-



An atomic bomb exploding over Japan in 1945: At the time experts predicted that the weapon would change war as we know it.

ter she wrote "Hurrah, the old war is over," Grandma Rosa, as saintly a person as I'll likely ever know, told her son then steaming toward Japan, "I went rite to my statue and lit a candle and prayed."

History doesn't record the subject of her prayer.

Neither does history record what happened at the grotto in the farmyard of the ancestral home in Germany — a grotto built by our German relatives in gratitude that four sons returned safely from the war that had all but destroyed their country.

Those four sons, I'm told, never talked about what they did in the war. They give silent

witness to Reichmarshall Hermann Goering's oft-quoted statement, as he talked with psychiatrist Gustave Gilbert in his cell at Nuremberg in 1946:

"Why, of course, the people don't want war," Goering shrugged. "Why would some poor slob on a farm want to risk his life in a war when the best that he can get out of it is to come back to his farm in one piece. It is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along."

When will we ever learn?

Dick Bernard lives in Woodbury.

Margaretha and Karl Langer  
Osterwick, Vredestr. 3  
Tel. 02547/1205  
48720 Rosendahl  
Germany

13 August 2001

Dear Cathy, dear Dick!

Thank you so much for your letter.

Since I am sure you want to plan your European trip, I want to tell you that we'll be very happy if you come visit us.

The best time for us would be before November 2. You are most heartily welcome.

The letter about your trip to the places of the Holocaust touched us very deeply. Like you, we ourselves were not alive during this period.

Everything we learned in school and from the media was very shattering for us. We have often wondered how such a terrible thing could be done by our nation. Unfortunately we cannot undo the atrocities. Today we cannot even imagine circumstances during the Nazi period, so as to be able to judge the actions of the many people who were the Nazis' accomplices and fellow travelers. There's also the actions of those who resisted the Nazis --we can only judge those from the perspective of our own time.

In every case, very different motives were important for all these people that caused them to act as they did.

As parents and teachers we continually strive to educate the young generation to respect and tolerate other nations. Young people must learn to respect the dignity of other human beings.

I well remember a visit in the Dachau concentration camp in 1961. It was very depressing.

Our children Christoph and Maria have also visited concentration camps on school trips; it also made a strong impression on them. At school the children are shown films and again and again they are told what happened. People must not forget the crimes of that period.

My four uncles -- my father's brothers -- did not tell us a lot about their wartime experiences. I think the time was very terrible for them, so that they hate being reminded of it.

In Münster at the time the Catholic Bishop Galen publicly preached and spoke about the crimes. He knew that this was very dangerous for him. Nevertheless he resisted in this way. The last time you visited here, Dick, we gave you the text of these famous sermons to take with you. I'm sure you still have it.

I hope my thoughts have been helpful to you.  
When you visit I am sure we can talk more about this topic.

We wish you a good trip to Europe!  
Tell us on what dates you will be in Europe and in Rosendahl-Osterwick.

Lots of love,

Margaretha and Karl

My four uncles -- my father's brothers -- did not tell us a lot about their wartime experiences. I think the time was very terrible for them, so that they hate being reminded of it.

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Lots of love,

Margaretha and Karl

Margaretha und Karl Langer  
Osterwick, Vredestr.3  
Tel. 02547/1205

48720 Rosendahl

den 13.08.2001

Germany

Liebe Cathy, lieber Dick!

Für Euren Brief danken wir Euch herzlich.

Da Ihr sicherlich Eure Reise nach Europa planen wollt, möchte ich Euch mitteilen, dass wir uns sehr freuen, wenn Ihr uns besuchen kommt.

Wir haben am besten vor dem 2. November Zeit. Wir laden Euch herzlich ein.

Der Brief über Eure Fahrt zu den Stätten des Holocausts hat uns sehr berührt. Wir selbst haben diese Zeit so wie Ihr auch nicht miterlebt.

Alles, was wir in der Schule und aus den Medien erfahren haben, hat uns sehr erschüttert. Wir haben uns oft gefragt, wie konnte so etwas Schreckliches durch unser Volk geschehen? Leider können wir die Greuelthaten nicht ungeschehen machen. Heute können wir uns auch nicht die Verhältnisse während der Nazi-Zeit vergegenwärtigen, dass über das Handeln der vielen Mittäter und Mitläufer urteilen können. Auch das Handeln von denen, die Widerstand geleistet haben, können wir nur aus unserer Zeit heraus urteilen..

Es waren bei allen sehr unterschiedliche Motive wichtig, aus denen heraus sie gehandelt haben.

Als Eltern und Lehrer versuchen wir die junge Generation immer wieder zu Achtung und Toleranz anderen Völkern gegenüber zu erziehen. Die jungen Menschen sollen lernen, die Würde eines anderen Menschen zu achten.

Ich kann mich gut erinnern an einen Besuch im KZ Dachau im Jahre 1961. Es war sehr bedrückend.

Unsere Kinder Christoph und Maria haben auch schon mit ihrer Schule Konzentrationslager besucht; sie waren auch sehr beeindruckt. In der Schule werden den Kindern Filme gezeigt und es wird ihnen immer wieder erklärt, was geschehen ist, damit sie wissen, was geschehen ist. Die Menschen dürfen die Verbrechen der damaligen Zeit nicht vergessen.

Von dem, was meine vier Onkel - die Brüder meines Vaters - im Krieg erlebten, haben sie uns nicht viel erzählt. Die Zeit muss für sie wohl sehr schrecklich gewesen sein., dass sich nicht gerne daran erinnert werden wollten.

In Münster hat damals der katholische Bischof Galen öffentlich gepredigt und von den Verbrechen gesprochen. Er wußte, dass das für ihn sehr gefährlich war. Er hat trotzdem auf diese Art Widerstand geleistet. Den Text dieser berühmten Predigten hatten wir Dir, Dick, bei Deinem letzten Besuch mitgegeben. Sicher wirst Du ihn noch haben.

Ich hoffe, dass Euch diese Gedanken etwas weiterhelfen.

Bei Eurem Besuch könne wir uns ja sicherlich auch noch über das Thema weiter unterhalten.

Wir wünschen Euch eine gute Reise nach Europa!

Teilt uns bitte mit, wann Ihr in Europa und in Rosendahl-Osterwick sein werdet.

Herzliche Grüße

*Margaretha und Karl*

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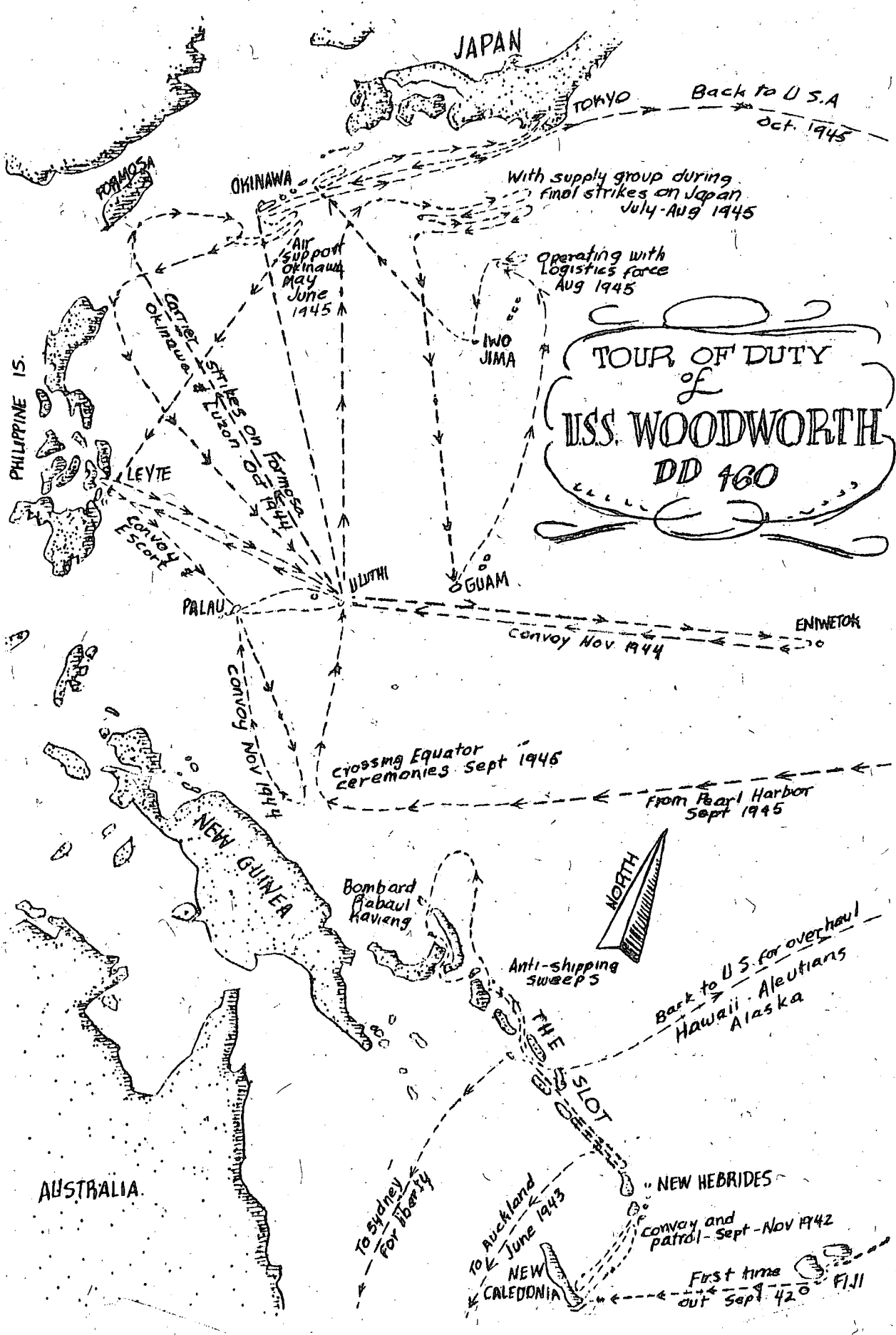
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*Margaretha und Karl*



TOUR OF DUTY  
of  
**USS WOODWORTH**  
DD 460

# Destroyers Here Boast Mighty Battle Scores

By LARRY SMYTH

There is something about a destroyer. It's a something all its own but you find it out when you go aboard the two fighting ships, Taylor and Woodworth, which are tied up at the foot of SW Main street.

One look at the "scoreboards" shows the two little ships had quite a part in the merry chase of the Japs from their ill-gotten possessions back to Tokyo.

The Taylor is commanded by Lt. Comdr. J. H. deLaureal. He comes from Lafayette, La. With a name like that he is known to the crew as "Mr. D." Her executive officer is Lt. Comdr. J. F. Gustafson of Conneaut, Ohio. He is known to the crew as "Mr. Gus."

The Taylor was used to carry the Allied correspondents from Yokohama to the battleship Missouri for the Jap surrender. Aboard the ship is Subic, a dog the crew picked up at Subic bay in the Philippines.

### MASCOT EARNS NOTE

Now, Subic is a story in himself. He was found on the beach and was only one week old when they got him, but now he is full grown and has 14 points to his credit. He roams the ship and apparently is master of all he surveys. He has been in battle action time and again and has his share of commendations.

When the Allied correspondents boarded the destroyer in Yokohama Subic let them all aboard without trouble but he gave four

Domei correspondents a bad time, hitting at their heels until he was called off. He showed the same lack of regard for Jap prisoners at Borneo.

Over on the Woodworth, which lies alongside the Taylor, is another dog, Leyte, swapped for a blanket in a deal with a boatman in Leyte gulf. Leyte was small enough to hold in your hand, the crew will tell you.

Leyte slept during battle, the crew says.

The Taylor, one of the larger destroyers, started operations against the Japs at Guadalcanal, being in on the capture of the island and the defense, in the course of which she aided in repelling an attack of 100 Jap planes.

Then came Rennell Island, New Georgia, New Guinea, Gilbert islands, Marshall Islands, Leyte gulf, Luzon, Zamboanga, Cebu, Borneo, Okinawa and finally Honshu.

Her "scoreboard" shows a light cruiser, destroyer, gunboat, two submarines and numerous troop barges sunk and three damaged. She shot down four planes and assisted in downing four others. She rescued 20 pilots and captured five Japs. The probabilities do not show in the record as only the complete destruction of enemy craft are counted. She made 11 landings on Jap-held islands.

### MUCH SLEEP LOST

She carries three area ribbons and 14 engagement stars and her record closes with "missed 241 nights of sleep."

The Woodworth saw action at Guadalcanal, too. She was rammed by another fleet vessel and went to Tulagi for repairs. She was maneuvering for a torpedo run at the time. She was with a task force that raided New Britain and Bougainville and spent much time in patrol work in the Solomons.

She ranged all through the South Pacific and returned to the States in 1944 when she was in the group which escorted President Roosevelt to the Aleutians. She was one of the ships which escorted the cruisers Houston (new one) and Canberra to Ulithi harbor after they had been put out of action by the Japs off Formosa.

She was in on the kill in the final days of Tokyo.



George Busch's ship, the USS Woodworth



TRADED FOR A BLANKET is Leyte, mascot of the destroyer Woodworth, in harbor for Navy day. The crew swapped a blanket for the dog, which has seen some hot battle action. He is shown with S I/C Charles Stackhouse of Philadelphia. How many points Leyte has is a mystery because no one knows his exact age.

# Negro Problem Solution, Goal

To work out a far-reaching program to integrate Negro population with the white community and solve the race problem of the world is the goal of the Negro Problem Solution, Goal.

## 4 Warships Drop Anchor

(More Pictures Wirephoto Paper)  
A triumphal procession of four battle-scarred navy vessels, including the cruiser Topeka, the medium carrier Independence and the destroyers Taylor and Woodworth, slipped into Portland harbor Friday afternoon, the second group of an eight-vessel flotilla to help this city celebrate Navy day, Oct. 31. Another group of four ships, the USS Independence, USS Topeka and USS Taylor, were docked at terminal No. 1 at 3 P. M. The weather was clear and happy.

### We See

Go to the radio and you will find the U.S. Navy will be the Columbia might navy!

### Han Still

RICH (AP) - at this time...



August 15, 2005

**SEX  
RELIGION  
POLITICS**

Recently I was at a small family dinner where everyone knew each other. One husband edged towards a political topic. His wife jumped in immediately, "we agreed we wouldn't talk about politics". Back we went to safe topics.

Sex, religion, politics: these are important topics, among others, that are often 'no talk', but should not be. They cover only one page in this history, but they permeate every family. One way or another they occupy the lives of every one of us.

**SEX:** The two Busch's and two Berning's who are the parents of this book, had 22 children. The 19 members of their families who survived childhood became parents of 88 children. In the 100 years since two of their ancestors moved to the very strange new world of North Dakota in 1905, over 500 living descendants of the ND Busch's and Berning's live all over the United States. Recently, our 9<sup>th</sup> grand child was born, and in my own Busch-Berning line there are four children, three in-laws and six grandkids, so I'm a participant in these numbers. It is not shocking to observe that sex was not invented in the 1960s, and will not go out of existence any time soon. Still I managed to grow to adulthood kept completely naïve about sex, and succeeded in almost totally avoiding talk about it with my own children. Sex lives. Why be silent?

**RELIGION:** We all spring from what seems to have been Catholic Catholic families (the double words intentional). Among those 500 living descendants today are likely all shades of belief, denomination, unbelief, reverence, disgust about religion. Like Sex, Religion is a reality, worthy of discussion and understanding. I choose to be a very active Catholic, but by no means am I an ideologic one. Some Catholics may prefer to label me as not even a Catholic, and in their interpretation of Catholic belief, they may be correct. So be it. Our ancestors seem to have inhabited what was basically a black and white world when it came to faith. Their world was as imperfect as ours, but we never learned that. One Right Way still seems in fashion, but there are too many variations of what 'black and white' means today for One Way of Belief to even be a possibility. But some think so. We need to be able to talk about and understand other ways of believing.

**POLITICS:** We have degenerated into a country where too many have, it seems, disengaged from responsibility for the political process which is, in my opinion, very dangerous. Politics is not "them", it is every one of us, and we are personally responsible for our future, which politics is largely responsible for creating. My ideology is not important, or yours, but we should be open to discuss and argue and truly listen. The best description I ever heard about the political spectrum was a few months ago when a speaker described our political organism as like an Eagle, which needs both a Left Wing, and a Right Wing to fly. There needs to be balance. Our country has, in my opinion, degenerated into a winner-loser mentality, in which we all are losers. We can't fly with a single 'wing' in charge, much less, just a tip of that wing, as some may feel is desirable.

## ESTHER BERNARD REMEMBERS GROWING UP IN THE BUSCH FAMILY

These recollections were written in January, 1981, and recall growing up (1909-1927) on the farm between Berlin and Grand Rapids in LaMoure County, ND, as well as attending high school at St. Johns Academy in Jamestown, ND..

My mother **Rosa Berning** was born on a farm near Sinsinawa, WI, and my dad **Ferd Busch** was born about six miles away on a farm near Cuba City, WI. My mother finished eighth grade at the Mound - A Catholic school about four miles from the home farm. There were no High Schools nearby in those days so neither went to High School. Both parents read a lot and my dad had some natural talent and played the violin - mostly the type of tunes that were popular for dancing.

Dad came to North Dakota on an emigrant train with his brother **Leonard**. I think they brought some livestock and farm equipment with them. Leonard settled on a farm about twenty miles north of us in the Montpelier area. We would sometimes go with horse and buggy to visit them. It was a long drive with horses but I don't think we stayed overnight. We just left early in the morning. Leonard had extra problems with hail and drought and went back to Wisconsin after about fifteen years in North Dakota.

My dad bought a 320 acre farm in North Dakota from his father about 1905. At that time the land was virgin prairie and there were no trees anywhere in the area except a few along the rivers. The creeks and small streams dried up during the summer and because the area was semiarid it was not easy to grow trees. The severe winters would cause them to freeze and the deep snow broke many young trees and the branches from older trees.

My mother and dad were married on February 26, 1905, in the church at the Mound near Sinsinawa WI. After the wedding mother stayed with her family while dad went to North Dakota to build a house on the prairie for them. He hauled lumber with horse and wagon for forty miles from Oakes, North Dakota, and neighbors helped him put up a four room frame house that is still the central part of the house on the farm. There were two rooms downstairs and two unfinished bedrooms upstairs. The upstairs rooms weren't finished for a number of years.

My dad broke the prairies land and planted some crops the first year. In the fall my mother brought a few household possessions. The winters were very cold and mother said she knew there was such a thing as frozen bread because the bread often froze in the pan in the kitchen overnight. The only heat the first few years was the kitchen range and it supplied heat and a place to cook. A reservoir on one end of the stove supplied hot water.

They dug a well, about fifty foot deep, quite a distance from the house and close to the barn so they could water the livestock. The water from this well was very hard and the soap would curdle instead of becoming suds. Mother used every available utensil to catch rain water for washing and cooking dried beans. The beans just would not get soft in the well water.

**Lucina** was born in the farm house on January 3, 1907. The doctor came by horse and buggy, from LaMoure to assist in the delivery. All of mother's children were born in the bedroom of the farm house and in each instance the doctor from LaMoure would come when he was called. Neighbors came to help out for a few days, especially the Freese girls who lived about a mile and a half from our house.

Doctors Ribble and Salvage both had offices in LaMoure and I can still remember how dirty and unkempt those offices were. We went to the doctor if possible but many times they came to our house to take care of the sick member. In the winter time they would make the ten mile trip in buggy or sleigh depending on the amount of snow and they usually had a big fur robe over their knees that they brought in the house with them so it would be warm when they started back to LaMoure. The robes were usually made of horsehide and were often the gifts of patients. My dad had at least two horse hides tanned and made into robes. He sent the raw hides to companies that did that type of thing for about twenty dollars. The hides came from horses that died of some cause or other, quite often because there was no veterinarians around to treat the colds or digestive upsets they sometimes had.

I was born on July 27, 1909. My July birthday was often celebrated by mother making homemade ice cream. It was a real hassle to get the ice from town and keep it from melting so we had the party whenever the ice cream was ready. There was very little store-bought ice cream in the early days because refrigeration was a real problem and most stores kept meat in ice boxes. The ice was cut from the river during the winter months and stored with saw dust in large ice houses for use as long as it would last in the summer.

During my early years Lucina and I slept in a trundle bed that was pushed under the big bed during the day. The upstairs of the house was still unfinished. Our mattress was ticking stuffed with corn husks. We covered with a feather bed - a huge amount of chicken and goose feathers stuffed into ticking. The feathers would sometimes collect in one corner and we would be chilly until we scattered them again - later people sewed rows of stitching about six inches apart to keep the feathers in place. We used feather beds almost as long as I was at home and there may still be some in the attic on the farm. Mother raised chicken, geese, ducks and even turkeys once in awhile, but the turkeys were hard to raise. She always picked all poultry dry so she would have the feathers for pillows and feather ticks. Chickens supplied our year round meat but ducks and geese were saved for the big holidays like Christmas. They quite often sold poultry and eggs to get money to buy flour and cooked cereals like oatmeal and cream of wheat.

I am reminded of another type of bedding we made on the farm. My dad raised a few sheep. They would shear the sheep in the spring. Mother would wash some of the fleece when the weather was hot and dry. It was always very greasy and dirty but looked quite white and fluffy after it was washed in warm rain water with homemade soap. After it was thoroughly dry we had to card the wool so it would lay in flat pieces about four by eight inches in size. These pieces were carefully laid on some type of cotton quilt materials and the quilt was put on a frame. We would tie the pieces of cloth and the wool together with bright yarn threads about every six inches. After the pieces were tied together the edges were secured and we had a warm lightweight quilt. Grandma gave us some of these quilts after we were married. We used one for a mattress on our bed in Amidon as we had no mattress because the one we got at a sale had bedbugs in it. We had to burn the mattress and treated the frame to a dose of kerosene which we burned off. Bedbugs came out of the hollow bedstead. We must have got them all as we had no problem with bedbugs after that.

We needed the warm wool quilts and feather beds after we moved into the poorly insulated upstairs bedrooms. On cold winter mornings there would be frost on the bedding where we breathed. We would wear warm long sleeved nightgowns and on the coldest nights we slept with our underwear on. We would undress downstairs and go up to the bedroom with hot flat irons wrapped in towels. These warmed the bed until the

body heat took over. We sometimes slept three in a bed and that helped us keep warm too.

Every fall dad would come home with about eight hundred pound bags of flour that would last until spring. Bad storms often kept them out of town for long periods of time and sometimes the snow was so deep the horses couldn't get through. They had milk and meat at home so we never got really hungry.

The old Savage company had a food catalogue and dad would order 25 pound boxes of prunes and other dried fruit - peaches, apples, raisins, etc. Grandpa Busch, who lived on the farm in Wisconsin, would often send boxes of apples, and sacks of hickory nuts and hazel nuts that grew wild on the Wisconsin farm. My dad was especially fond of apples and would often bring home as many as eight forty pound boxes of fresh apples in the fall. He knew something about how well the different varieties would keep. I remember the good keepers, like Roman Beauties, were usually very solid and not as good eating as the Delicious. Fruit and vegetables were kept in an unheated basement with a dirt floor and they would sometimes freeze and that was a real disaster. Dad put a deep basement under the house when he built it, but there were no cement walls. Eventually the basement started to cave in and they decided to cement the walls many years later.

**Verena** was born March 21, 1912. I remember her as a very quiet sort of person. She was always willing to help and seldom complained about anything which is probably one of the reasons why she died at age fifteen because of a ruptured appendix. The doctor came from LaMoure in his car, in the middle of the night. He knew she had to have surgery right away and the doctor took her and mother to the Jamestown Hospital. Verena had surgery early in the morning the same day but her appendix had already ruptured and there was little that could be done to help her. Doctors told the folks she probably couldn't live. We visited her in the hospital during the week and I can remember how quiet she was and the very black circles under her eyes. She died a week after the surgery and was buried in the Berlin Cemetery. There were very few graves in the cemetery at that time and it was a lonely looking place. Dad and other parishioners tried to keep the grass mowed and it really was virgin prairie and still is.

Regarding my own medical history: I think one of the most traumatic experiences I had happened when I was about nine years old and got the World War I flu. Many people were very sick and some died. I had a very rough siege with that flu and remember when Dr. Salvage came out in some very cold winter weather, in the middle of the night, to keep me from bleeding to death. I don't remember what he did but I had a very high fever and was bleeding from the nose and I spit out chunks of blood. I think they thought I was gone for sure. I recovered though and it took a long while for me to regain my strength. I can remember having some wild dreams and nightmares and must have been out of my head at least part of the time.

I was seven years old when I got hepatitis and had a very rough time with that. There was no simple way to handle yellow jaundice and it had to work out of the system. I think they give blood transfusions now. I had an upset stomach for several years after that which is probably why I had such a rough time with the 1918 flu.

Another traumatic experience for me when I was a High School senior was a very painful abscess on one breast. It was about three months before I was to graduate and it seemed to me the most important thing was graduating so I tolerated the pain and

discomfort until school was out in June. I finally told mother and she decided to keep a hot water pack on the sorest spot until the abscess opened and a lot of pus drained out of it. I am sure if they had taken me to the doctor I would have had surgery about that time but somehow I got healed up again and was OK.

I had some very bad tonsils and had had several bouts with tonsillitis when I was in High School. I would run high temperatures and the Sister would put me in a tub of cold water to bring down the fever. Those bad experiences would be straightened out after I graduated when the folks took me to the hospital in Edgeley where Dr. Green removed my tonsils and adenoids. That took care of a good many health problems for me and I was feeling much better after that.

I haven't said much about our grade school days. We had a schoolhouse about a mile from our house and walked to and from school most of the time. When it was very cold or rainy dad would take us to school. We tried driving a single buggy with Old Nellie one rainy morning. Lucina and I were the only two going to school at that time. Nellie went as far as the end of the short road leading from the house and refused to go any further. Dad unhitched old Nellie and we were to take the umbrella and go to school. Mother brought the umbrella from Wisconsin where there was very little wind. It was one of her prized possessions. When Lucina and I started down the road the wind took the umbrella and it went rolling across the field. We would just about get up to it and another gust would start it rolling again. We finally went home crying because we couldn't get the umbrella. Dad got on a horse and picked the umbrella up in a tree claim about a mile and a half from home.

I remember walking through the melting snow on spring afternoons. There would be a crust on the top but it would break through and we would step into a puddle of water that had collected under the snow. Our overshoes would be full of water when we got home. We liked to go across the fields because it was a shorter route but finally had to stay on the road when the snow was melting.

Dad made a box sled to take us to school and church during the cold stormy winter weather. The box was completely enclosed with a window on the front end. There was straw on the floor to keep our feet warm and if the weather was really severe it was heated with a kerosene lantern. The lantern gave a lot of heat in that small area. We called it the bus.

During the summer months the bus was our playhouse but we usually preferred the barn loft as there was so much room up there. I must mention the huge potbellied spiders that made large webs in the barn doors and window. They were about one half to three fourths inches in diameter and looked very vicious. They caught quite a few flies in those big webs and when there was morning dew the webs were covered with dew and were very pretty in the sun.

By the time of Verena's death I had finished High School. When Lucina and I started High School there was no High School in either Berlin or Grand Rapids. The sisters of St. Joseph, who had established the Academy at Jamestown, came around in the fall visiting families with potential High School students. They encouraged our parents to send us to the Academy where we could get room and board for \$250 a year and that included tuition. If we were unable to pay that much we could work for half the amount. The folks arranged to have us work for part of our fee so I scrubbed and waxed lots of stairways and long halls and washed a great many dishes earning my way through High School. We waxed the floors with paraffin poured into buckets of gasoline and I think it must have been the grace of the almighty God that kept us from being blown to bits. The

sisters were very good managers and added a new part of the Academy. We were given a very complete High School education by dedicated teachers who worked for no salary. The meals were usually palatable and served at tables for eight in a big dining room in the basement of the old building. Sister Cortelia was the cook and she stayed there for many years. We sometimes helped to peel potatoes and other vegetables that the sisters went out to collect from the farms in the fall of the year.

When I was in High School we had study hours from five to six every evening and then again from seven to eight after supper. After supper we went to the chapel for evening prayers and sometimes Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. We helped sing the hymns for the services.

Soon after we went to bed the lights were turned out in the dormitories that were large rooms partitioned into six foot cubicles with a single bed and dresser in each. Draw sheets separated the rooms. The prefect in charge, had a room at the end of the dorm so we had to be especially careful when we opened boxed goodies from home, like cookies, candy, popcorn, even fried chicken and ham. If we giggled too much sister would turn on the dorm lights and give us a scolding for not going to sleep. sometimes she came to investigate and we would have to stuff the goodies under the sheets and pretend to be asleep till she went away and then we'd start all over again. I used to haul a bucket of warm water up to Sister Ebba's room every night so she could bathe herself as there was very little hot water in the building and sisters never seemed to use the bathrooms, at least they were careful not to be seen there.

I remember I had very bad tonsils when I was in High School and would often have severe sore throats with high temperatures. They would put me in a tub of cold water to bring down the fever. It didn't kill me and when I finished High School I had my tonsils and adenoids removed in the doctors offices in Edgeley. I can always remember how good I felt after that, especially how light and easy it was to walk. My feet had felt like chunks of lead before that.

We used to go to and from Jamestown by train to Grand Rapids when it was winter and too cold to drive in the early makes of cars. I got train sick almost every time. After we got to Grand Rapids my dad would take us and our baggage home in the sled.

When I was a senior in High School they started sending school busses out from LaMore and the folks wanted me to change schools and finish my senior year in LaMore but I was so adamant about it they decided to let me go back to the Academy to finish. I got the Ladylike conduct prize at graduation time - a wrist watch that was quite the thing. I might add that my mother was the one who pushed education for all of us. Dad would rather have had the extra help on the farm. Mother used to say we could always wash dishes and scrub floors but if we got an education we could still wash dishes and scrub floors but we would have more chances to pick the sort of thing we wanted to do.

The folks had four girls before George was born so all of us had to learn to operate horse drawn machinery. It took a long time to plow a field with a two bottom plow but if enough people were around to drive the horses it finally got done. I have used every type of horsedrawn equipment that was used on our farm but never did learn to drive the tractor as they didn't get one until after I spent most of my time away from home.

My folks believed in diversified farming and we had several milk cows. I learned to milk when I was about five years old and the women were expected to do all of the

milking and chores during the harvest season especially. We would separate the cream with the hand operated separator and then had to wash the separator at least once a day.

We sold the cream for cash to buy groceries and household items. Most of the skim milk was mixed with ground feed for the big pigs. We poured the mash over the fence so they wouldn't run us down. The mash was kept in a big barrel and sometimes got to smelling pretty sour. The more it fermented the better the pigs liked it. There were lots of flies around the mash barrel too. Flies were a big problem in the milkhouse and around the farm as there were very few effective sprays in the early days.

The first barn the folks had was quite a small building and a distance from the house. They used the barn for cattle until 1916 when they were able to build a much bigger and better barn. The old barn was then used as a pig shed. By that time they had some fencing and I remember how the big and young calves shared a fenced in pasture on one side of the garden.

That garden was something else. My mother tried very hard to raise vegetables as that was really the only way you could get them unless you had generous neighbors who were good gardeners. We had no way to irrigate and many times the plants dried up in the hot late summer weather. The carrots and beets often had a bitter taste from the heat and drouth and many times the potatoes just didn't get very big and there weren't very many. After the family was grown and gone they seemed to have better luck with garden and always had the big garden with lots more vegetables than they could eat. They gave the surplus to others but much of the produce spoiled in the basement and had to be hauled out again in the spring. The chickens got a lot of vegetables as did the pigs.

Speaking of vegetables reminds me of the time when I was about seven years old. My mother bought the nice juicy kind of muscat raisins for baking. One day I got the raisin box out of the cupboard, took it over to the granary, and ate them all by myself. I had a very upset stomach that day and mother missed the raisins besides.

Another recollection of life on the farm was ploughing fire breaks every fall. North Dakota had some serious prairie fires over a period of years and some say that is one of the reasons why there were so few trees on the prairie. Fire would burn the young trees. There was still great danger of fire when my dad came to North Dakota. We always had ploughed strips around all hay stacks, straw stacks and farm buildings. This was the first plowing done in the fall. The strips were about twenty feet wide. Even tree claims were protected by fire breaks. When a prairie fire did start it was almost impossible to stop it unless it came to a natural barrier like a river.

My dad planted trees many times only to have them dry out or freeze out. He had grown up among trees in Wisconsin and was determined to have trees in North Dakota. At first he planted mostly poplar trees that grow fast but don't live to be more than 50 years old. Later he learned to plant cottonwoods but put other kinds, like maple, elm and boxelder in with the fast growing trees. By 1916 he had a grove of trees about four feet high and he was very proud of them.

He tried repeatedly to plant orchard trees, like apples, but that was a disaster as they really didn't get started. There was an abundance of wild plum and chokecherry trees along the river and we planted some of those on the farm too. Conservationists did what they could to get more trees growing and would supply young trees to any farmer who would plant them. My dad made good use of this program and finally got a grove growing around the house and other parts of the farm. They discovered that Siberian pea trees withstood the drouth and made a very good hedge. The folks planted a hedge of

Siberian pea trees around the yard and it did hold the snow so the grass would stay much greener during dry parts of the summer. There are a lot of trees on the farm now but at one time it was all prairie.

Rural entertainment was something else. We used to have a Yoeman club dances in the Yoeman building in Grand Rapids once a month during the winter time. We would go with sled or buggy, bring a box lunch and dance until two o'clock in the morning. Many of the dances were square dances and quadrilles. My dad was always the fiddler with some assistance from other musicians in the area. I even played the banjo one night, along with the dance band. There was always a good piano player, at least good at chording and rhythm. If the children got sleepy they slept on piles of coats in the club kitchen and many slept the whole night long.

The Ladies Aid sometimes sponsored card parties and made a little money that way. It seems there was always some church being built that needed extra funds. My dad was a church trustee, which meant that he counted the collection on Sunday, and kept track of the money with other dedicated church members. After being called on for donations for a third new church he said in desperation "if they build any more churches I'm going to quit going to church" My mother and the children, boys and girls in our family, sang in the choir. We had an old pump organ and during my growing up years I remember Mrs. Sullivan (the Berlin bankers wife) was the organist. She used to complain about how hard it was to pump the old organ that was really falling apart, but somehow we made music.

When I was growing up we made frequent trips to visit relatives in Wisconsin. These were really big deals. Mother and dad never went together as one of the other stayed to take care of the farm. At first we went by train but later by car. We would stay overnight in hotels along the way when we went by car and one night we stopped at a hotel that was lousy with bedbugs. We didn't sleep much and had lots of bedbug bites in the morning. One time when Uncle Gus Berning and I were going to Wisconsin in a Model T Ford we had car trouble along the way. Uncle Gus looked under the hood of the car and decided he needed a piece of wire. I was wearing some thin wire hairpins in my hair at the time so he fixed the car with a wire hairpin and we continued our journey. That same trip I was helping drive along Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. It was already a several lane highway and somehow I crossed two lanes and drove into a library parking lot to get my head on straight. A policeman came up to the car, took one look, shook his head and walked away. We got through town with no further problems and fortunately there was no accident.

When we got to Wisconsin and were teenagers we would often go to dances with relatives. Mother had made me a black satin dress with a brilliant orange collar and trim. It was quite something but I perspired a great deal and so did the obese man I was dancing with. When the dance was over there was a huge blackish purplish spot on the front of his spotless white shirt. I guess that indicated that we were dancing pretty close together. We were both embarrassed but danced the evening away with other partners. I kept my distance and warned the fellow about the possible disaster.

One time when we got to Wisconsin in a Model T we were driving along some rough country road and the whole engine fell out of the Ford. The men lifted and fastened it enough so we could get to our destination and then they did a more secure repair job.

Another time another teacher and I were going home for the weekend in a Model A. There was a big slough on either side of the rather narrow, graded road. We hit a

skunk and had to inhale a lot of the odor because just as we hit the skunk the lights on the car went out. It was so hard to see we had to move very slowly until we got across the water.

**Mary** Busch was born in September, 1913. At that time Verena was a year and a half. I was already old enough to help with the diaper washing. There was no such thing as disposable diapers so keeping the flannel and other diapers made of rags clean was quite a chore. Grandma usually got dark gray flannel so stains weren't much to worry about but there still was a lot of diaper washing. Mary was the first blond, blue-eyed baby and created quite a stir. Her hair was really white and her eyes were really blue.

There were four of us so there was no lack of entertainment - plenty of people to play with. There was never a dull moment and mother had one of the neighbors, Teresa Freese, or her sister Clara, come to help with chores and housework especially during haying, harvesting and threshing.

Threshing reminds me of the big cook car that the farmers in the neighborhood bought to go with the threshing rig. They hired a cook to cook for the crews of twenty or more men on the steam threshing rig. This rig was owned by several farmers in the area and they went from farm to farm to get the threshing done. All grain was shocked in the early days of the binder and bundle haulers, and usually six or eight wagons hauled the shocks to the machine and men pitched them into the thresher feeder. The threshing rig stirred up a lot of dust but it was fun to watch the straw, chaff and wheat come out of different parts of the machine. We often drove the team and wagon to help haul the grain to the granary on the farm or to the elevator in town.

Mother liked to have her children look nice. She had a sewing machine that they had ordered from Sears Roebuck and mother sewed a lot of bedding and clothes for all of us on the machine. Almost all materials were ordered from the catalogue plus a lot of household goods.

She worked hard to keep our hair looking neat, especially for church on Sunday and for visits to the neighbors. All of the girls had hair that was quite straight except Lucina - hers was very fine and inclined to curl. My hair was coarse and thick with flecks of gold in it. There is a sample of my hair in the attic on the farm. Anyway mother often did our hair up in rags on Saturday, after she had shampooed it. She took pieces of rag about one inch wide and a foot long. She wrapped strands of hair by starting at the bottom of the hair and rolling it on the rag towards our heads. When the roll was secure she tied the two ends of the rag together in a knot. By the time she had done all the hair our heads were covered with rag knots and we went to bed. The knots weren't too comfortable for sleeping but in the morning, after she untied the knots, unrolled the curls and very deftly combed them around her finger, we had numerous corkscrew curls decorated with a bright ribbon bow. We didn't start cutting our hair short until I was about fifteen and a junior in High School. It was almost a national disgrace for a girl to cut her hair at that time.

Finally, after having four girls, dad had a boy to help with the farm work. **George** was born on January 11, 1916. He started driving horses and operating farm machinery when he was five years old and from then on spent a good deal of time helping dad with the farm work. He would stay out of school until a month after school started to help with the fall plowing and was taken out early in the spring to help with the spring seeding, etc. Fortunately he was intelligent and was able to finish High School with no big problems but some frustrations about missing so much school. Mother insisted that all of us have an education. After college at Mayville, George joined the Navy and the

ship in front of him and the one behind him were bombed and destroyed. His destroyer escaped all damage and when World War II ended he came home and started teaching High School science.

**Florence** was born the year World War I ended. The hired girl and I were out in the snow chasing chickens into the coop so they wouldn't freeze when there was a great long train whistle from the Grand Rapids railroad track. In the house there was a long, long telephone ringing to signify the end of World War I.

**Edith** was born in July, 1920. **Vincent** was born in January, 1925, and grew up to be more help on the farm. I remember one morning when there was a shortage of stockings in the house and Vince was terribly upset because he had to wear a pair of white stockings to grade school in the country. I am sure he was justified as some of the boys were much older than he and would be inclined to tease him about his white stockings. It was midwinter though, and he had to wear something to keep his feet and legs warm.

At one time Vincent wanted to study for the priesthood but the pressure of farm work and his inclination to do as he was told kept him on the farm.

We found lots of ways to entertain each other on the farm. A family of eleven double cousins - the **August Berning** family - lived just a mile away until I finished the eighth grade, at which time they moved to Dubuque, Iowa. The older Berning children visited us and we visited them almost daily. We played in the haymows as both had big barns. Once in a while we would get a bit reckless and fall through the hay holes into mangers below where cows and horses might be feeding. Once when Lucina fell through a hay hole she had to go to the doctor and have several stitches in here head as she had cut it on a sharp edge. I got sick to my stomach one time because I struck my head on something other than hay when I fell. the animals in the stalls didn't usually get upset when we came tumbling down but we had to do some maneuvering to get out of the manger. Sometimes we climbed back up through the hay hole.

My dad was a member of the local school board for as long as I can remember. He had access to the old double seats when the single seats came into use. He brought the double seats home and put them in the hayloft. We also got some old textbooks and we were all set up for a real school situation. We played school many times and probably learned a little bit about teaching then.

We also liked to play store. We would get the old dresses - very worn - that had been discarded, and we would tear them into strips for material and ribbons. We would wrap the strips around sticks of wood or tree twigs for bolts of cloth. Mud pies and cakes were sold in the bakery department. We tried to make toy money. We also had wild plum pits and chokecherry pits in our store when they were in season. We played store in the barn but also in the grove of trees that was growing quite fast. We would set up benches of old wood on apple or orange crates for the counter.

Every planting season an Austrian emigrant by the name of **Joe Marge** came to help on the farm. Dad gave him the minimum wage and he worked for us until harvest season was over and old Joe headed for the south country by way of the railroad track. He was a bum during the winter months. One spring Joe didn't come back and we never heard of him again so assume that he died. When he worked on the farm he had a bed in the granary as all available sleeping space in the house was used by the family. Old Joe was very careful to keep the granary door shut so the chickens wouldn't get in to dirty up his living quarters. One day we left the granary door open. That night Old Joe was very

excited and angry and came in to tell the folks, "the chickens shat all over my bed because somebody left the granary door open". Joe was very kind hearted and good to us and every time he got to town, which wasn't often, he would bring a big bag of bulk candy. Twenty five cents bought a lot of candy in those days. We were always anxious to know what Joe would bring when he came from town.

We seldom had hail storms on our farms but the neighbors one and a half mile north of us were often hailed out. The ground would look as though it had been plowed after a big hail storm and they usually came about the time the grain was ready for harvest. This was a big loss then as now.

Art was born in October, 1928. Mother was forty eight years old, there were two pre-schoolers and five others still going to school. She was tired and not feeling so well so she wanted me to stay home and help her, at least until after Art was born. I didn't want to do that as I was anxious to start teaching. Lucina was already teaching and I had gone to school in Valley City during the winter quarter in 1927 but wasn't old enough to teach until the following July.

Art, being the baby of the family, had things a little more his way. By the time he was ready for college Vince and Edith were ready to help on the farm and in the house and Art was free to go on to college. Art started his college career at Wahpeton School of Science and finished the two year course there and then went to the University. He was drafted into the Army and spent all of his time learning to ski in case we got involved in a war with Russia. He never saw active duty but spent two years in the service. He went to the University in Grand Forks and got a degree in electrical engineering. I was away from home most of the time when Art was growing up so know very little about his growing up years.

My dad had a great hankering to get off the farm and move to town - any town. Mother was very insistent that they stay on the farm where they were reasonably sure of making a living. Dad liked to socialize and was often away at various sorts of meetings - elevator, school board, township, etc. He enjoyed his drinks and never passed up a chance to have a beer with his buddies. Mother was a dyed in the wool WCTU [Womens Christian Temperance Union] sort of person and had no use for alcoholic beverages, homemade or otherwise. Her father had given them a lot of problems because of his love of liquor so she wanted none of it. Dad tried numerous kinds of wine - chokecherry, dandelion, etc. He also made and bottled beer. Some of it tasted pretty good but often it was pretty bum stuff. We even picked hops along the river to make beer. They grew wild and would cover the vines in the fall of the year. Dad usually had his bottles stowed in out of the way places, behind the fruit jars in the basement, or under the rafters in the shop.

Mother's father, my **Grandpa Berning**, I remember as a very mild mannered person and as long as I knew him he lived in a wheelchair. I'm not too sure how the family handled the drinking problems but mother was quite adamant about the use of alcohol. He had what was called Dropsy at that time and his legs were very swollen and huge. I think most parents during that time expected the children in the family to do the lion's share of the work while the parents were the disciplinarians and overseers of the family operations in the home and on the farm. Most were assigned tasks that had to be done in a responsible way - probably like the Hutterites do to this day.

In our High School English classes we would write poems and stories. Some of these were published in our quarterly High School magazine, called the "Gleaner" I still

have copies of the magazine and quite a few issues have contributions of mine. I was always rather pleased to find that my poem or story had been selected for publication.

When I finished High School I tried writing poems for publication. I finally got one published in the "Farmer" or "Dakota Farmer" - I am not sure which as dad subscribed to both papers, which were published in Aberdeen SD.

The poem went something like this: "As I walked across the pasture one eve in late July, I heard the blackbirds chirping as they flew o'er grasses high. I saw the tiger lilies, Peeping through the grass. I heard the crickets chirping, in brushes as I passed." [See "A Walk" p 74]. And on and on for about fifteen four line verses. That was the extent of my literary career.

After I started teaching I sometimes found extra work during the long vacation as the school term was just seven or eight months and the pay was fifty dollars a month. All contracts stipulated that the teacher must do the janitor work and scrub a certain number of times during the school year. We usually started school in the rainy season and although schoolhouses were usually clean when we started the mud was soon all over the place.

One summer I worked in the country store in Grand Rapids. We had meat and cheese in the icebox so it didn't keep too well. We wiped the summer sausage and bologna with a vinegar cloth to keep the mold from forming and we often trimmed the mold off the chunks of cheese before we got rid of it. There was a lot of homemade butter in stone crocks that we bought from farmers in exchange for groceries etc. We bought eggs in the store too and had a makeshift candling device with a kerosene light underneath. Candling eggs was a tiresome job but we often found eggs with baby chicks in them or indications of spoilage. The eggs and cream were shipped on the train to the nearest produce market. I learned to use a Babcock cream tester that summer too as we were paid according to the amount of butterfat there was in the farmers cream.

The store went out of business during the depression. My dad and a few others tried to help by loaning the proprietor \$500 but they never got their money back although the proprietor seemed to have plenty to live on after the store went broke.

There was a post office in the store, too, and we had to be very careful to make no mistakes on money orders as that was a national disaster if we had to pitch the ones that were not properly filled in.

My dad did a lot of ice fishing during the winter months and would sometimes come home with pike, pickerel, suckers, carp, and bullheads that he and the neighbors speared through the holes they made in the ice. They set their kerosene lanterns near the holes to help keep them warm and to attract the fish. A fishhouse on the ice was a luxury they couldn't afford. Fish supplied at least part of our sustenance especially during the winter months. They sometimes smoked fish but didn't start pickling them until years later.

It was a church regulation at that time that we could have only one meal of meat five days a week. Wednesday and Friday were fish days during Lent and that was clearly marked on the church calendar.

After I left home the folks acquired a rather badly worn piano but it was a real boost to the musically inclined in the family. **Lucina** had taken piano lessons at the Academy and she would chord or play the melody while dad played the violin and the rest

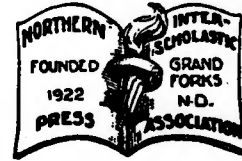
of us sang, both hymns and popular songs. Dad bought a lot of sheet music and seemed to have most of the current songs in his repertoire. He could read notes and that helped with the violin.

Fourth of July was always a big day. We got a nickle or a dime to spend on goodies and we sometimes had a few firecrackers. We earned spending money by catching gophers and cutting off the tails. During the peak season tails would bring five cents apiece and we had to take them to LaMoure to sell them before a certain date. Gophers played havoc with the grain crops and farmers were anxious to get rid of them. Sometimes we snared the gophers as they came out of the hole or we poured a big bucket of water down the hole and a half drowned gopher came to the top and was killed with clubs before he got rid of enough water to run away. We set lots of traps too. The pasture was full of gophers and a good place to hunt.

The men sometimes had rabbit hunts in winter but jackrabbits got some sort of contagious disease and became very scarce. Farmers would ride horseback and approach from all side of a section of land chasing the rabbit into the center where they were shot. This was a bit dangerous but there were no shooting accidents.



# The Gleaner



Published by  
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III

SUMMER, 1926

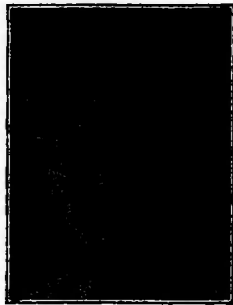
NO. 4

The Gleaner:  
Esther's poems, on the  
following pages, appear-  
ed in various issues in  
1925-26.

## The Gleaner Staff

Literary	- - - -	Frank Szarkowski, '27, Esther Busch, '26
Finance	- - - -	Mary Haut, '26
The Winnowing	- - - -	Madelyn McCurry, '27
Gleanings	- - - -	Lucille Manning, '27
Chaff in the Wheat	- - - -	Erwin Farrington, '27
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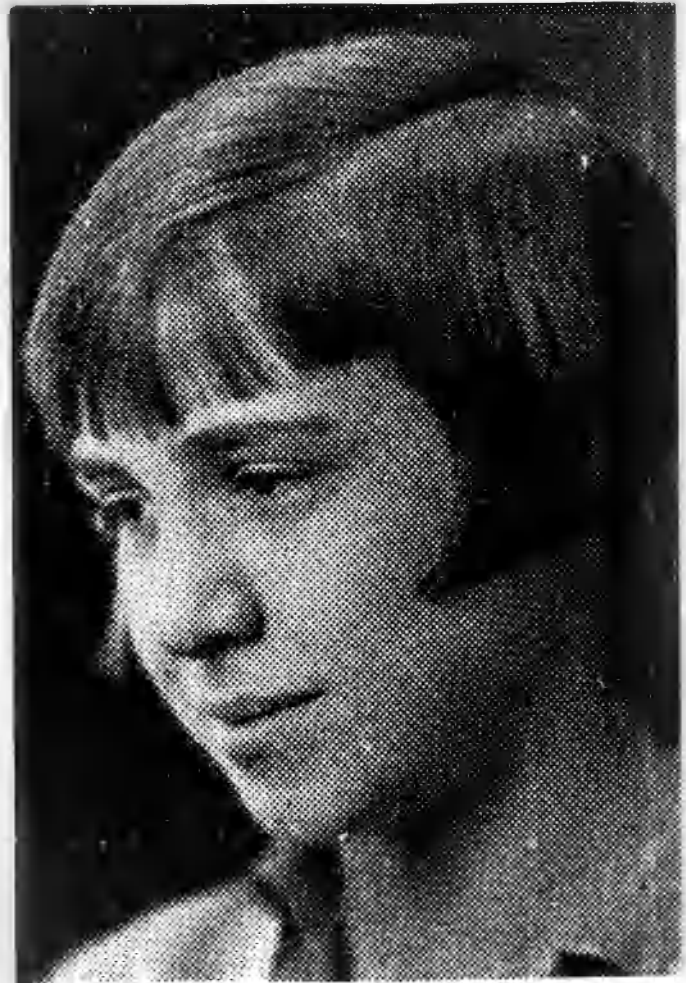
A blithesome girl of happiness and love  
 With self-same smiles of joy for everyone.  
 She loves to tease and will be teased by all.  
 This girl with sparkling eyes of deepest brown,  
 Lights many a dark and weary path for you,  
 With helping hand and sympathetic smile.



*Esther Busch*

How comforting that cheery lass will be  
 With those dear children gathered all around,  
 Within that quaint brick school-house red,  
 Those very eyes with gaiety will sing  
 The love which comes with each enticing smile.

Esther's biography at  
 St. John's Academy. (The  
 black square is a photo of  
 Esther in 1926. It appears,  
 enlarged, at right).



Esther Busches senior picture at St.  
 Johns Academy, Jamestown, 1926.  
 Esther wrote the poem, "A Walk", plus  
 many others, while a student at the  
 Academy. The poem was later printed  
 in the Dakota Farmer. Esther's sister  
 Lucina also graduated from the Academy.

## Sakakawea

She cared not for the forest,  
She dared the western wild,  
She was a faithful leader—  
This noted Indian child.

Her name—Sakakawea—  
Has been published far and wide,  
For wasn't she the maiden,  
Who helped the men that hied  
O'er western plains and forests?

When she led them o'er the prairies,  
Of our own Dakota land,  
And met a brother chieftain,  
Who would feign destroy the band,

Her words and kind entreaties  
Made the warlike murmurs cease,  
And Lewis, Clark, and Indians,  
Smoked a friendly pipe of peace.

Then, following the prairies,  
They climbed the mountain's height,  
And, crossing o'er the snowy peaks,  
Reached the ocean just at night.

Esther Busch, '26

### A TALK ABOUT CAESAR

I wish my Caesar book wasn't so large  
And that the lessons in it weren't so hard,  
I just can't make the lines read right  
And with almost every word I have to fight.

What do I care about camps and a war  
About ships that land on a sandless shore,  
Caesar never mentions green trees or grass  
By all swamps and hills he seems to pass.

He always talks about the cavalry's strength,  
Or about that wonderful legion he calls the Tenth,  
But I guess teacher'll insist he's a genius yet  
And if everything else, him I'll never forget.

Esther Busch, '26

### A SECOND JACK STUBBINS

The Senior was a timid lad.  
Who hadn't much to say.  
They asked him little, told him less,  
And so one school year day  
He up and joined the football team  
And marched with them away.

He marched away to Lover's Lane  
And stood quite near the track;  
The darkening clouds that fell at dusk  
Sent shivers down his back.

Esther Busch, '26

## Lincoln

Many hours of many days,  
Many years ago,  
Mr. Lincoln spent at study,  
In his humble studio.

Winds were not forbidden,  
Nor the pounding drops of rain—  
They entered ev'ry crack and crevice,  
In his study's small domain.

Libraries were hardly known,  
And books were mighty few,  
So all he had to work with  
Was a borrowed one or two.

Yet from these he learned to seek  
The things he hadn't found,  
And from them he gained his knowledge  
Of the world, so large and round.

He learned of dear America,  
From the forests broad and free  
And saw a land, just full of sunshine,  
And of wealth from sea to sea.

To keep liberty and union  
Was his very highest aim;  
So the Civil War was fought and won,  
To save a nation's name.

Such were his high ambitions—  
Throughout his fateful reign,  
But death came only after  
Unity returned again.

Esther Busch, '26

### Experiments

That poor old acid bottle  
Had seen its day and more,  
After losing half its stopper,  
It lost  $H^2SO^4$ .

We broke its neck right off  
And cracked it down the side,  
Because in making  $SO^2$   
By  $H^2SO^4$  we bide.

After acid had been taken  
From its prison bars of glass,  
We mixed it up with copper  
Which gave a scented gas.

We collected pungent substance  
In a bottle standing straight,  
And dropped a red rose in it  
With results sad to relate.

Because of piercing odor  
The red rose turned quite pale,  
But after adding acid  
It did not look so frail.

Esther Busch, '26

### A WALK—

As I walked across the pasture  
One eve in late July,  
I heard the night bugs humming  
As they flew o'er grasses high.

I saw the tiger lily  
Rising from the grass;  
I heard the blackbird chirping  
In the bushes, as I passed.

The grass was green and pleasant,  
A soft breeze cooled the land;  
The little blades moved to and fro  
As though touched by magic hand.

The cattle grazed full peacefully  
Undisturbed by hound or man;  
The wild ducks chose a guard  
To protect them as they swam.

In the middle of a pond  
That was large and clear and blue;  
Floated a white water-lily—  
It seemed an island for the dew.

The owl flew o'er her nest—  
'Twas but a hole beneath the ground—  
Still she guarded it right tenderly  
As the hawk soared round and round.

The sun sank slowly in the west  
And breathed its good-night prayer  
Though 'twas many, many minutes 'til  
Of its parting I was 'ware.

I heard the cuckoo calling  
In a distant little hollow;  
As I trod my homeward path  
With ne'er a thought of sorrow.

*Esther Busch, '26*

### Spring

In the dark of the night,  
A soft voice called to me,  
From the pine on the top of the hill.  
'Twas the song of Sweet Spring,  
As she hurried along  
To the brooklet, that ran past the mill.  
She whispered to me a hurried hello,  
Then rushed to the prisoner's gate;  
She crushed all the ice,  
And the brooklet escaped,  
From the clutch of the winter—and snow.

*Esther Busch, '26*

### June

Days of sunshine, days of joy  
Leaves all green and grasses coy,  
Calling us to lovely mirth,  
Breezes whispering summer's birth,  
That is June.

Roses fresh, of varied hue,  
Lilies pure, that catch the dew,  
Robin's song in green leaved bowers,  
Heaven's warmest, sweetest showers,  
Such is June.

Blushing maidens dressed in white,  
Roses red are holding tight,  
Boys beside them shyly stand,  
Graduates on every hand,  
Just in June.

*Esther Busch, '26*

### A Thought

Rippling crystal streamlets  
Racing down the hills,  
Join to make the brooklets  
That fill the nooks with rills.

Slightly larger brooklets  
Flow across the sand,  
And make the many rivers  
Of our own Dakota land.

Streamlets, brooklets, rivers,  
All increase the tide,  
And together make the ocean  
So broad and deep and wide.

*Esther Busch, '26*

### To the Autumn Wind

Oh, Autumn Wind, that on thy bonny trail  
Didst meet with heat and cold and forest green,  
Thy cruel hopes have made the leaves a scene  
Of red and gold and rarer beauties frail;  
Your voice has called all through the night. Assail  
Not objects weaker than your own unseen  
And yet bewildering power and mien,  
For they are only like a haunted sail  
Which knows no other refuge but to flee  
Until 'tis dashed against some rugged steep  
Or distant isle upon the lonely sea.  
Go forth—but wake not infants from their restful sleep  
With thy loud roar and mournful reverie,  
As you ascend from out the briny deep.

*Esther Busch, '26*

## The Mountain

As I stand on the top of a mountain—  
What thoughts it can bestow—  
I see the moving figures  
Of thousands of people below.

I see the stalwart pine and spruce,  
With their needles sharp and green;  
I see the dusky housetops  
As the sun unfurls its beam.

I note the velvet hillsides,  
The fields and meadows rare;  
I see the silky cobwebs  
As they float about the air.

I feel the mountain breezes  
So soft and fresh and sweet;  
I note the green and grassy plot  
Like a carpet at my feet.

I stand and wonder, and listen  
To the tune the sweet breeze sings,  
And think of the birds and bees—  
How could God make such things?

I watch the river below me  
As it follows its narrow bed;  
On the banks are the sheltering tree-tops  
Where thousands of birds rest their heads.

Among the hazelnut bushes,  
A little distance away,  
I watch the squirrels romping  
As they frolic and dance and play.

When the sun calls out his departure,  
By strips of purple and yellow,  
I start on my homeward journey  
With a heart that is light and mellow.

Before I arrive at the fireside,  
The moon appears round and red;  
The wolf comes out for one last howl  
And I know it is time for bed.

*Esther Busch, '26*

**AS I REMEMBER**  
by Mary (Busch) Brehmer  
March, 1993

We had many things to do to fill our time all year around.

In spring the crops and garden were put in, there were young calves to feed, little pigs to watch, little chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese all made for extra chores. The little calves had to be taught to drink skim milk out of a pail. You did that by holding the calf between your legs and putting the fingers from one of your hands into the calves mouth and using the other hand to push its head into the one-fourth pail of milk. The little calf would gurgle and fuss the first few times and would then settle down to drinking on its own. Dad made a calf pen in one of the stalls with the boards far enough apart to allow just the calves head to come through. They would smell the milk, find an opening in the board fence, and gulp down the milk. The pail had to be hung onto or they'd butt it over. This was done everytime the milking was done. It took time.

The little pigs weren't that much extra work. The mother pigs were fed extra rations of chops. The chops were mixed in a barrel and soaked in water and the extra skim milk. Chops were made from the ground up wild oats and weed seeds cleaned out of the seed grain. If Dad "ran short" he ground up oats and barley. This mixture was given the name "slop". Very seldom did any one ask "did you feed the pigs" but "did you slop the hogs". A new mixture had to be made after each feeding.

The hogs also got corn on the cob. The dry cobs would be gathered and used to heat the kitchen range. One heaping bushel of cobs was enough to bake one batch of bread. Cobs provided quick, steady heat. Very few went to waste.

The potato peelings and other leftover vegetables were fed to the chickens.

Dad usually did the horse chores, feeding, harnessing and turning them out to pasture. Two horses were in a stall that was equipped with a manger for hay, two oats boxes and two tie-up chains.

There were usually thirteen sheep to take care of. The biggest problem with them was to watch for holes in the woven wire fence. It seems they could crawl through a knot hole. You had to make sure they didn't eat the grass too close to the ground. If they did the grass wouldn't come back, and all you'd have was a pasture of weeds. The sheep were raised mostly for wool. The extra bucks and old ewes were sold. They didn't bring in that much income but it all helped. Mother washed, dried and carded enough wool to make many warm quilts. We girls all helped with the wool preparation.

We had a big iron kettle to make soap in. All of the fat meat drippings, pork rinds and lard that got rancid along with some lye were put in the five gallon kettle and left to stand overnight. The kettle was hung far enough from the ground to build a fire under it. We gathered sticks and wood to boil it down. Mother knew just how long to cook it. After it was cooked it was left overnight to cool, cut into bars, and put on boards to dry. After it was dry it was packed in a box. Enough was made for use the year around. I wish I could remember the right proportions of lye and lard. It made good soap anyway.

Meat processing was a big job. Mother made a lot of extra cookies and bread before "butchering day". Three or four families would come to help take care of six or seven 150 pound hogs. The men would kill them, put them in a scalding barrel and then scrape the hair off. After they were gutted they were hung up till after supper, when they

were brought into the house, cut into hams, spare ribs, shoulders and sausage meat. Everything was put out to freeze except the sausage meat which was stuffed into the clean casings and then frozen.

The women prepared two big meals, dinner and supper, along with morning and afternoon lunch. While the men were cutting up the meat the women cleaned the casings and heads. The cheeks were cut off the head for bacon. The rest of the head and ears were cooked in the boiler and made into head cheese. Many times it was 3:00 a.m. before all the sausage was made. The men always got in a few games of cards. When the neighbors went home they were given a meal of sausage to take along. When they butchered Dad and Mom would help them.

In the spring, the bacon, head cheese and sausage that was left was thoroughly fried, packed in 2 or 3 gallon crocks and covered with hot lard. It would keep all summer.

The hams and shoulders were smoked and packed in a huge wooden box between layers of salt. Before it was eaten it was soaked in water overnight and then cooked until tender. You can't buy better tasting bacon.

Spare ribs were also canned in two quart jars and processed in the oven.

To raise 200 black Minorcas, Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds every spring took more work than anything. Mother had a 100 egg kerosene heated incubator that had to be watched day and night. If it got too hot or too cold the eggs wouldn't hatch. Only the best, cleanest and biggest eggs were used. An 85% hatch would be good. Besides the incubator, part of the chicken coop was shut off for a "cluck house" where ten to fifteen old clucking hens would be set on 15 eggs apiece. They also had to be carefully watched. They would all be taken off their nests in the morning to feed, dust in ashes, and get a drink. They didn't always go back to their nests right away or they might crawl into another hens nest. Some one had to check a number of times during the day and before going to bed to see that all of the eggs were covered by an old hen. After the little chicks hatched the real work began. We had one large brooder house that held about 75 chicks and Dad made a number of small coops to accomodate two old hens with about 15 little chicks apiece. Each coop had an opening large enough for the old hen to crawl out. This opening had lathes far enough apart to let the little chicks to go in and out.

At night these doorways were covered with a board which was held in place with a rock. After the door was open in the morning the old clucks and chicks were left out to pick up sand, eat bugs and green grass. sour milk or cottage cheese. Ground grain and chick feed or oatmeal was left by the coop morning, noon and night. The old hen got a couple of hands full of whole grain. Lice were a problem. A couple times during the summer we'd have to catch each little chick and smear lard around its little comb and under its wings. The old hen got the same treatment. All told, enough chicks survived for plenty of meat and eggs, both to eat and sell.

Chicken stories: One summer a weasel killed about 50 half grown chicks. Another time an old hog got out, upturned all the little coops, feed and water dishes, and even gobbled up some little chicks.

We had a lot of vegetables. The potatoes, carrots and beets kept as good as new in the dirt basement until spring. There were always some left over to carry out in spring. Peas, beans, tomatoes and spinach were canned. We had no end of dill pickles and other kinds of pickles.

Mother always fixed up a bedroom in one of the bins in the granary for the hired mans bedroom, which we had to keep clean, the floor scrubbed and clean sheets every week along with a wash stand, towel, etc. One day someone forgot to shut the door. The chickens got in looking for kernels of grain. That night old Joe came in for supper and exclaimed how the chickens "shat" all over his bed. We all got a first class scolding. No more doors were left open.

One day Esther was left in charge of the family while the folks went to town. A salesman for the "Farmer" showed up. He talked Esther into buying a one year subscription along with an egg beater for a premium. The price was two old hens. Esther called for us to help catch two old hens. We ran them down. The salesman put them in his crate and was off. When Ma came home, Esther got a red hot lecture on buying things from salesmen. I'm sure that's the last time my sister ever bought anything from a travelling salesman especially using old hens for pay.

A typical menu for breakfast was fried potatoes, some kind of meat (pork or beef), a cooked cereal and milk or coffee.

For dinner there was meat, potatoes, a vegetable and dessert. A dessert was always a must. Dad had to have his sweets.

For supper there was that all important potato dish, meat or fish, a dessert, milk and tea.

Usually during the winter we would have an apple or snack before going to bed. No one went to bed hungry.

We spent a lot of time in the evening playing cards or other board games. Checkers and dominoes were favorites.

When it came to health and hygiene there wasn't that much fuss made. We all had a Saturday night bath and the rest of the week we had to keep our hands, face and feet clean. No one went to bed with dirty feet. There was a special wash basin that accomodated everyone.

We always had to bundle up in the winter, long legged underwear and socks were a must, also a cap, scarf and mittens. In spite of all the warm clothes we usually had two or three fever colds every winter. I think everyone at one time or another had measles, mumps, chicken pox and scarlet fever. Yellow jaundice was also common. Every ailment meant two weeks in bed with the curtains shut to keep out the light to protect our eyes.

Yes, brothers and sisters argued over little work jobs, clothes, etc., nothing serious. We did have private possessions that were usually kept in a bureau drawer. Large closets were not necessary. There wasn't a lot of extra clothes.

I wasn't at home the time the barn blew down [1949]. We were lucky and had very few accidents. One time George was riding "Old George" as he was called. He was one of the faster horses. He was thrown off, landed on the barbed wire ence and cut a big gash in his lip. He didn't get up right away and we all ran down to the end of the cow lane to help pick him up. He was stunned and had blood all over his face. Otherwise he was OK. One morning Dad was cranking the threshing machine engine. It backfired and the crank caught the inside of his hand and just about tore the big thumb muscle off. He

was taken to LaMoure and had a number of stitches in it. The muscle grew back in place. It was very painful he said. It didn't stop him from working.

"Going to town" was a special occasion. The eggs and cream were taken in once a week, sometimes more often. They were exchanged for groceries and clothes. If you were lucky you got to go along. There just wasn't room for everybody in the Model T. When mother and dad went alone we all anxiously waited for their return.. Dad always brought a sack of candy home. For 5 cents he got enough cream candy, hard candy, jelly beans, etc., to satisfy everyone. Once in a great while he brought a candy bar which was divided. What a treat!

Normal "store bought" things for eating were salt, sugar, flour, spices, syrups, dried apricots, raisin, and prunes. The dried fruit came in 25 pound wooden boxes.

Mother did a lot of sewing. Shoes, hats, mens overalls, Sunday suits and shirts were about the only ready-made clothes. They came from a catalogue.

My mother probably had more stamina than anyone. She just never wore out. We all more or less inherited a sense of humor. Looking on the bright side was good therapy.

Our first lights were kerosene burning. They were a headache - wicks had to be trimmed, smoked up chimneys cleaned and polished. The shinier the chimney the brighter the light. The Coleman gas lights were a big improvement. You needed a mantel cloth bag and a pump to put air in the gas tank. More than once these lamps were carried out in the yard when they flared up to keep the house from burning down.

We always had a lot of reading material. The Catholic Daily News, The Minneapolis Star Tribune along with numerous farm magazines were all enjoyed. I can remember looking forward to reading the funnies after school. Barney Google, Jiggs and Maggie and Tillie the Toiler were my favorites. A colored edition of them came on Fridays.

Five members of our family won honorary scholastic awards.

We all learned what "no" meant. No amount of coaxing changed anybody's mind. "No" was "no". Yes, we could say what we felt but not with our hands, feet or hair pulling.

Every year there was the school closing picnic, July 4th, Pioneer Day and Labor Day picnics. At all of these events we took a picnic lunch. There would be a baseball game between two local towns, running, jumping and baseball throws for the pre-teens and always a political speaker in the auditorium. Such excitement. We all practiced for the running and jumping.

Pioneer Day, or Old Settlers Day as it was sometimes called, came in June. It was mostly just a gettogether. There was always a ball game and special "speaker".

We had an all around good time in the Grand Rapids park. There were huge swings, a little slide and a big slide, a merry-go-round, teeter-totter and a giant stride. All but the giant stride were homemade. Uncle Art Parker helped build them along with open pit fireplaces and outdoor "privies". They weren't called rest rooms then. Later on there was a large bath house built with indoor toilets. That is closed now, all but the rest area. The water was too polluted to swim in. There were sandboxes for the little kids.

For the grown ups there were three sets of horse shoe pegs. Dad spent all of his time there. He loved the game and won many of those he played.

Probably the biggest attraction was the concession stand where you could buy a 5 cent ice cream cone, a 5 cent package of gum or a bottle of pop for 10 cents and many different kinds of candy. Dad gave each of us a nickel to spend on whatever we wanted. I usually got a package of Juicy Fruit or Spearmint gum. I'd break each stick in three pieces which made fresh flavored gum to chew all week.

When and where Art & Lena (Berning) Parker were married I don't know. They lived in the park during the twenties. Uncle Art helped clean up the park grounds, helped build the playground equipment and the outhouses. He and Aunt Lena planted many beautiful flowers. Their new house and the auditorium were built while he was there. I remember visiting them quite often. Aunt Lena kept her house spotlessly clean. She didn't have any children of her own. We had to be real careful not to mess up the house. I remember Uncle Art made a doll bed for me out of an old wooden apple box. I still have it.

Mail order catalogs were a lifeline. From them came most of our clothes, shoes, furniture, etc. There were the Spiegel, Savage, Sears Roebuck, Montgomery Ward, Belles Hess, Penneys and Chicago Mail Order. When the new catalogs came the old ones were used for toilet paper. According to todays health standards we should all be dead from poisonous rashes.

Growing up we played "anti-i-over""run sheep run""pull away", many different tag games, baseball, softball and drop the handkerchief. There were few idle moments.

Dad kept about 30 head of cattle. We milked ten or more the year round. Some were easy to milk and some you worked for every drop of milk you got. I never timed how long it took to milk one cow. It must have been from 5 to 10 minutes. When the flies were bad the little kids were given a willow switch to chase them off when you milked as fast as you could. More than one pail of milk was kicked over by cows kicking at flies.

Sunday was "visiting day". We either had company or visited the neighbors. No one ever went visiting without having supper before going home. Many times we kids walked to the neighbors to play. We didn't dare stay for a meal on those trips. We had to be home by chore time, 4:00 p.m.

Longs, Freeses, Bernings, Shobers and Hoffmans were all visiting friends. Many families from church came to visit and vice versa. We kids walked across the field to Bernings many, many times. They came to visit us just as often. That was fun.

As long as I can remember we had a telephone. Dad helped build and maintain the first telephone line out of Berlin. It was a lot of work. There were no machines to dig the holes for the poles or string the lines. Maintaining the line wasn't simple either. It seemed that every thunderstorm shattered a pole putting the whole line out of commission. One man threatened to sue Dad because his sheep barn caught on fire and burned to the ground. His telephone was out and he couldn't call for help. He figured Dad was responsible.

We got our first radio in the early thirties. It came with earphones. Two people could listen at one time.

I don't know just when we got the dinner bell or where it was purchased. I do know, when it rang it could be heard in all the farm buildings and nearby fields. It was rung when dinner and supper were ready. No one ate until everyone was at the table. Once in awhile it was rung for a telephone call or for help. I can still hear Ma say "ring the bell".

Religion is very important in my life. I don't understand people but do understand the blessings that come from believing in and trusting our dear Lord's decisions. "He made and loveth all". It turned out that our family belongs to six different Christian denominations and can all hold hands and pray together. They have a deep respect for each other.

I remember growing up, regardless of weather we all got to church every Sunday. We also said the rosary every night during Lent. Prayer was a big part of our life.

There was a lot of music. Dad loved to play the "fiddle". Lucina played the clarinet and George could play the sax. I learned to chord on the piano and would accompany them. Later I played with Dad when he played for dances, sometimes as many as three a week. Dad was what you called an "old time fiddler". A saxophone, piano, violin and drum made up his orchestra. I don't know for sure all the names of the people who played with Dad's orchestra. Francis Kraft played the saxophone for awhile, Mrs. Sullivan, the bankers wife from Berlin, and Lucina played the piano besides me. A lot of times Dad played the drums along with the violin. For awhile a retired slide trombone player from a large orchestra played. He had extra rhythm and practically brought the roof down when he played "Whispering". What his name was I don't remember. Dancers liked him.

"Red Wing" "Beautiful Dreamer" "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountains" "Home on the Range" and "Pennies from Heaven" were my favorites. All of the popular songs of the 30's were played. Mother had a beautiful voice and would lead the singing. But more often she went into the dining room, closed the door to shut out the noise, and read.

Esther ordered a piano course in music from the New York School of Music. She wasn't home too much so never finished it. She always said she just didn't have the inner rhythm. I made more use of it than she did. I got to grade 4, enough to accompany the "Glee Club" in Wales and school programs.

Our dog was also a musician. He would sit by the parlor window and howl.

The Yoemens, Farmers Union and Ladies Aid all sponsored dances the year around. Cards, whist, would be played until 11 p.m., lunch was served and then you danced till 2 to 3 a.m. or until the crowd thinned out. We went to the dances in Berlin, Grand Rapids, Dickey and once in a great while to Edgeley or LaMoure. There were also barn dances and house parties. No one lacked getting acquainted with their neighbors. Only the men paid 25 cents for a dance ticket. The girls didn't have to pay.

I met Allen at a dance in Dresden. He was a marvelous dancer. Anyway, to make a long story short we were married and have seen 47 years together and a seven member family who are all married and making their own way in this life of hard knocks.

Our son, Carl, has inherited Dad's love for music. He spends all his spare time playing the guitar and singing. He has entertained at nursing homes, colleges, and etc., in

Tucson and other places in Arizona. He's made a violin, guitar and banjo from scratch. He's learning to play the violin besides the guitar and banjo

Most of our uncles and aunts came to N. Dak because of the Homestead Act. The land that Dad got was virgin land. He broke it up with a one blade breaking plow. The first crops were wheat, flax and some oats. The breaking plow was pulled by two horses. Later came the two bladed plow called a gang plow. It was pulled by five horses. And then he got a triple plow. It had three blades or sheers and was pulled by eight horses. To feed, harness and hook up these animals was no easy task.

The first pieces of motorized machinery I can remember were the huge steam engines, used to run the threshing machines. Then there were the little gasoline engines that Dad used on the fanning mill for cleaning the grain seed and running the home made elevator for unloading grain.

Threshing crews varied in numbers. The steam engine crews used 15 or more able bodied men. Later the smaller threshing crews were made up of eight workers to haul bundles of grain, do odd jobs, and keep the machinery running. Two or three farmers usually went into partnership to buy the threshing machine and tractor. There were many arguments about wages, time and upkeep. Dad ended up having his own outfit.

It took an hour more or less to take a load of grain to Berlin. An adult would go alone. Two of the younger family members would take a load. Until we were at least 16 years old we couldn't go alone just in case we had trouble with the horses or wagon. There were troubles - harnesses would break as well as wagon wheels. The flies caused a lot of problems.

I don't remember a great deal about political discussions. I do remember Dad had no time for F.D.Roosevelt because he kept his taxes paid. He had no chance to get a WPA job for extra cash which he could have used. I guess the main reason Dad got upset over FDRoosevelt was that loafers who were capable of earning a living got the paying jobs, such as foreman of the road crews.

Dad was active in local businesses. He served for years on both the township and school boards.

Dad ran for county commissioner in the late 20's. That was almost a tragedy. He had to keep all of the electioneering materials in the car. It wasn't going to clutter up the house. There was almost a family breakup when he ran for county commissioner. [He actually ran for County Auditor. See Appendix for results] Mother insisted she would not move to LaMoure, the county seat, if he won. There were more hard looks than words exchanged. He didn't win. If he had I don't know what the outcome would have been.

We voted in Berlin. We heard the folks talk a lot of German. I learned how to count to ten, the names of the farm animals, and a few swear words. There was a lot of prejudice against Germany at that time so the language was kept quiet. Being called a "kraut" wasn't the nicest thing to hear. Most of the neighbors had German ancestors. Most of them came to the U.S. to avoid compulsory military training.

There was very little said about Native Americans or Negroes.

Lucina and Esther taught just out of high school. They may have gone to summer school for six weeks, I don't know. George worked at home for a few years before going to Mayville. He served as a Navy Lieutenant for a number of years in WWII and then started teaching. I had a scholarship to Jamestown College and a place to work for my room and board but only went for two weeks when the folks came to get me - no money. I worked as an apprentice at a LaMoure hairdresser shop for one year. I earned my diploma. I never liked it. I worked at Trinity Hospital for two years and then went to Valley City to get my teaching certificate. It was my life's dream to be a teacher. I taught for 25 years both before and after getting married. I loved it.

The year we went to Wisconsin will always be the most memorable time of my life. I think I was ten years old when we went to Wisconsin. George was eight. We went only once. Also along in a second car was John Fradet and his two young boys. He and Dad figured out which roads to take. None of them were good.

We drove down in a Model A and came back in a Dodge Touring car. It took three days to get there. We spent two nights in hotels. One was over run with bed bugs. The next morning we all had bites to scratch. Dad brought bread and meat for sandwiches along with some candy. It was too expensive to eat in a restaurant.

My mother and dad's folks all lived in the same neighborhood in Wisconsin. We were entertained royally. I can still taste all the good food and sleeping in lovely bedrooms. There were a lot of tears shed when we all left for "Dakota".

Mother stayed home with Florence and Edith. She wasn't too pleased when Dad came home with a \$900 car. She figured he could have gotten a cheaper one. Later on she enjoyed it. It had glass windows instead of flapping curtains to keep the wind, snow and rain out.

The Busches and Bernings from Wisconsin came on special occasions, mostly funerals. I remember a number of relatives came for Verena's funeral (1927). There were no end of tears shed.

In answer to your question about the kitchen on the two different sides of the house, I don't remember the summer kitchen on the west side of the house but do remember hearing them talk about it. The summer kitchen as it was called wasn't built onto the house, but was later moved and built on to the east side. The kitchen door was made where the first window was. The second window is still the bedroom window. Dad made another door into the dining room, built on the porch and later built on a front room and bedroom in the later 1920s. He made improvements as money allowed.

Mother did a lot of sewing: shoes, hats, mens overalls, Sunday suits and shirts were about the only ready made clothes. They came from a catalogue.

It never ceases to amaze me how young kids do not know one bird from another or one tree from another. If something flies, it's a bird, a tree is a tree. We learned the names of all the birds, where they built their nests and the color and size of their eggs. Many times I remember watching a mother bird feeding her young. They all had such big mouths.

This is sort of fun remembering.

**Chapter II:**  
**GROWING UP IN NORTH DAKOTA**  
**By Mary Busch Brehmer**  
**1913-1920 and 1920-1930**  
**written in late 1990s**

My life began on September 26, 1913. I'm told the Dr. from LaMoure, North Dakota, which is 10 miles from the farm, came out with a horse and buggy, a couple hours' drive, and stayed until I arrived and everything and everybody involved was O.K. Mrs. Kosse who lived about two miles away came and stayed for a week. Mother in turn took care of Mrs. Kosse when her babies came. At that time, new mothers had to stay in bed for a week. They could then get up and sit on a chair for a couple of hours. If everything went well, they could start taking care of the baby and house chores on the seventh day.

There really aren't a lot of things remembered the first seven years of a person's life. I started school and the First World War was fought. The thing that I remember about the war was the Asian Flu. Everyone in the neighborhood had it. They were either really sick, or just had a slight case. Dad had it, but was able to do the chores, get groceries, etc. He even helped a few neighbors.

Esther and Ma were really sick. They had high fevers, stomach-aches, vomited, and had nose bleeds. Mrs. Freese came and helped. After she helped Lucina make something to eat for all of us, she would sit in the bedroom with Ma and Esther. Both were 'out of their heads', didn't know what they were doing, so had to be kept in bed and kept warm.

One night the dog started to howl right by the bedroom window. I was scared and ran and stood by Mrs. Freese. She was crying, so I cried also. She took me on her lap and told me, "when a dog howls like that, someone is going to die." We said some prayers and she put me back in bed. The next morning everyone was still alive, the fevers broke and the danger of death from Flu was over in our house. That was scary!

The fun part of the Flu was that Dad brought down all of the mattresses from the two beds upstairs and made beds for us on the dining room floor. Boy did Lucina, Esther, Florence, and Verena, George and I have fun jumping, tumbling and turning somersaults on them. Lucina was under the table and held her hands out to protect the table legs from getting scuffed. That exercise must have helped us get over the flu with no aftereffects. A number of people died in the community. All of my family survived, even if it did take Ma and Esther awhile to completely recover.

There aren't a lot of chores a little kid can do, outside of keeping out of everyone's way. I must have learned how to hang up my clothes, help with dishes, sweep, etc. I know I helped gather eggs from the lower nests, even if I was deathly afraid of the hens. They weren't too excited about having their eggs taken away.

I always liked going to church, partly because we got our hair fixed, wore our Sunday clothes, and got to ride in the double-seated, four-wheeled buggy in the warm weather and the sleigh in the winter. It was six miles to Berlin, North Dakota. That was a good hour's drive. We sang songs, talked and kept each other from falling out of the buggy or sleigh.

My first communion was a big event. Learning everything in the little Catechism wasn't that easy. I attribute my first reading skills to that little book.

Making my first confession was enough to scare me out of my wits. We were all shown the inside of the confessional, a little cubby hole built in the back of the church with a curtain in front to cover the door, a kneeling bench, in front of a shelf, above which was a cloth-covered window. Behind this window sat the priest. You couldn't see him, but could hear him. Anyway, I went into the cubby hole and knelt down; my head didn't go over the shelf, so I stared at the board wall beneath, repeated the act of contrition and the sins I had committed. I heard the priest saying "God forgives you". He then gave me two 'Our Fathers' to say for a penance and then said, "God bless you child. Go in peace". Believe it or not, I walked out on my own two feet. From then on confessions weren't scary.

My first communion outfit was a white veil with a wreath of artificial flowers that my two older sisters had worn, a beautiful white dress, (Ma had made) and long white stockings with white shoes. Aunt Tina and Uncle Gus, my Godmother and Godfather and their family were invited over for dinner to help celebrate. Quite a memorial day, one to always remember.

The folks gave me a prayer book and white rosary. My Godparents gave me a gold locket and chain. The locket was about the size of a quarter with the letter "M" engraved on it. My first piece of jewelry. It was beautiful.

Starting school was a big event. I don't remember the name of my teacher, but I got to sit in a double desk with Stella Freese, who turned out to be a life-long friend.

Ma had made two cotton dresses, one plaid and one a flowered print. Which-ever one I wore I had to take it off the minute I got home. I had to put on my every-day dress. The school dress would last longer that way.

One afternoon when school let out, a thunderstorm came up. It was a mile walk on the road and much shorter to cut across the field and through a pasture. My sister held the barbed wires on the fence so I could get through. My dress got caught on the barbed wire and tore a square-cornered hole in the skirt. I cried. We made it home before it rained, but I had to wear that patched dress until it was worn out. We also got a royal scolding, especially my older sisters. We could have all been killed by lightning going through the fence. We should have walked home on the road, even if we'd gotten wet.

1920-1930

These were my growing-up years (8-14). I learned right from wrong and the difference between work and play. Work meant things that had to be done; play was just enjoying yourself. If you like what you're doing, work becomes play. Anyway, I had to help with the farm chores, help keep the house clean, clothes washed etc. There was no TV to watch or radio to listen to, so there was lots of time to play.

Poultry was the woman's job. Turkeys were probably the hardest to raise. They hid their nests in unbelievable places, some as far as a quarter-mile from the farm buildings. If a fox or other wild animal found the nest, they'd eat the eggs. We gathered all the eggs we could find and have an old cluck hatch them and raise them. The eggs the old hens hatched were the most trouble. They were put in a coop with the old hens where the hens were given chopped grain, cottage cheese, oatmeal and plenty of water. They weren't let out of the coop for the first couple weeks until most of the dew was off of the grass. If turkeys got wet they had a tendency to get sick and die. I don't know how the mother turkeys managed to keep them dry, but they were always healthier. She must have gathered them under her feathers every once in awhile to dry them off and warm them up.

When the chicks were big enough to fly, they roosted in the trees where they were out of danger of being eaten by a fox. There were plenty of them looking for a good meal.

In the fall, when they were big enough to sell, they were put in wooden crates, loaded on a trailer that Dad had made and were taken to LaMoure where there were hired turkey pickers and dressers, people who took out the insides or guts. You were paid for the weight of the dressed turkey. I don't remember how much they were a pound. It wasn't much.

Most every farmer raised a few turkeys, so it took alot of pickers and dressers. It was a messy job. There were always enough pickers looking for extra cash, which was hard to come by.

I remember one fall we all helped crate and load about 25 turkeys on the trailer that Dad was taking to LaMoure in the morning. He went to town that night. About 11:00 p.m. that night we heard Ma holler "Stop! Stop!" We jumped out of bed, looked out the upstairs window and could barely see our crated turkeys disappear down the road, a whole summer of hard work! Dad came home shortly after the turkeys were stolen, but it was too late to trace the car and turkeys. Mom and Dad had a pretty good idea who took them, but could never prove it. Such a lazy, low-down creature! About \$50. worth, a small fortune at that time. Whoever it was, was nice enough to leave Dad's home-made car trailer.

Ma always tried to raise at least 200 chickens. That gave us plenty of eggs, chickens to eat, and some to sell. In the spring and summer there were always enough eggs sold to buy the groceries and money left over for other necessities.

Chickens weren't as hard to raise as turkeys, but required a lot of daily work from the time they hatched until they laid eggs and produced meat. The eggs were hatched by old clucks or in a kerosene-heated incubator. A part of the chicken coop was divided to make what was called the cluck house where there were special nests big enough for a hen to sit on fifteen eggs.

It took three weeks for a chicken to hatch. Every morning someone would take the old hens off the nests so they could eat grain and get a drink. It took them about 15 to 20 minutes to eat and go back on their nests. Sometimes two old hens would sit on the same nest, so we always had to check in half-an-hour to see that there was a hen on every nest of eggs. If they let the eggs get chilled, they wouldn't hatch. This same procedure went on in the early evening.

We had a hundred-egg kerosene incubator. Into this was put the best even-sized, clean eggs. Sometimes there would be a batch of poor kerosene or burned-out wicks that generated the heat. If it was too hot or too cold, the eggs wouldn't hatch.

The hatched little chicks were left in the incubator until they were dry and fluffy. They were then taken out and put in a box lined with newspaper and kept warm. It took a few days before all of the eggs hatched. The last ones usually had to have help getting out of the egg; a little gentle squeezing and peeling freed it from the eggshell. What lovable, soft puffballs they were! But what a deafening, peeping noise they made if they got chilled or were hungry.

There was usually about a 90% hatch. Once there was a failure. The incubator over-heated and must have cooked the unhatched eggs and then you had to start from the beginning with fresh eggs.

There were no heated brooder houses. They, the chickens, were divided up with 15 little chicks to a hen and put in individual coops and fed, watered, locked up at night and let out in the morning. The old hen wasn't left out with the little chicks for two weeks. After that when she and the chicks were let out she and her brood would come back to the same coop. When they got too big for the little coop and the old hen deserted them, they were put in a bigger shed and locked up every night. Weasels, foxes and minks liked chicken. Weasels were the worst enemies. They just caught the chicken and sucked the blood. They didn't eat the meat. One weasel could kill a half-dozen chickens in one night. Fox would do their feasting just after sunrise. They liked foggy mornings the best.

Chicken lice and mites were also enemies. The mites weren't a big problem. They stayed on the roost and came out to suck blood at night. They were controlled by keeping the roosts clean. If the manure was scraped from the roost and brushed with

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[REDACTED]

kerosene, that took care of the mites. Lice were different. They stayed on the chicken. A box of wood ashes was kept in the hen house. The old hen would get in and dust her whole body. The dust must have smothered the lice. There was no commercial powder. The little chicks were caught and greased with lard under their wings and around their combs. This was done once. The grease killed the lice.

One more thing about chickens; they didn't always lay their eggs in the chicken coop. Some would sneak their nests in the trees, weeds, old junk piles or barn. This made egg gathering a real chore. Their favorite place was in the horse mangers underneath the grain feed boxes. The nests in the trees and junk piles were harder to find. Chickens were a bit stupid when it came to hiding their nest. As soon as they laid an egg, they'd cackle, "cut-cut-cut-da-cut", for at least a minute or more and you'd seek the hen that was cackling and sure enough, with a little searching, her nest could be found. I think that's where the old saying, "what are you cackling about" or "you're cackling like an old hen" came from, when someone got excited and talked a lot.

Dad really got excited when they'd try making a nest in his workshop. They'd fly up on the work bench and leave droppings on his tools. If Dad happened to see one in his shop, they'd better take off. Their life wasn't worth two hoots. More than one old hen came flying out of there to save its life.

Old Joe, a hobo who walked from the freight car in Berlin helped Dad harvest. There wasn't an extra room in the house so Ma fixed up a room with a bed, wash stand, towels, etc. in the granary. Everyday we had to make his bed and straighten up his room. One day the one who cleaned up the room had to be sure and close the door so the chickens wouldn't get in. They forgot and didn't close the door and a couple of chickens got in and messed on his bed. When he came in for supper that night he was really boiling. He told mother in no uncertain terms the chickens had 'shit' all over his bed. He threatened to quit. Ma gave us all a royal scolding. No one ever left the door open again.

Esther and I were gathering eggs in the barn one evening. We found quite a few eggs. For a little excitement we started playing catch with a couple eggs. The shells are fragile and had to be thrown gently. That wasn't too exciting so we threw them a little harder. Esther pitched a fast one to me. I caught it. With a little extra speed, I threw it back. She missed catching it, but it hit the rim of her glasses. They fell to the hay-covered floor and didn't break the lens, but it hit the rim where it fastens onto the ear stem and broke the little hinge. That's one time Esther told a little white lie about how they got broken. Yes, I learned a lot about chickens and how to raise them. All of this knowledge helped me have success raising my flock.

Mother also had a few ducks and geese. We always had a goose for Christmas and roast duck for other special occasions. Ducks and geese required little work. They practically raised themselves. Dad built a little shed onto the side of the hen house where the pairs of ducks and geese were kept. We called it the 'goose house'.

As long as the geese had plenty of green grass and water during the summer, they were satisfied. No one went near the goslings. If the old gander caught you he'd be at you with his wings. More than once he flew over the fence to chase, to chase man or beast, very protective.

Ducks were different. As long as they had pails of grain to eat and water to drink, they'd waddle around minding their own business. Both ducks and geese had a lot of down feathers on their breasts. We dry-picked the down; and small feathers were saved to fill sleeping pillows. The bigger feathers were burned.

The feather picking was done in the kitchen with the door closed so that the little fluffy feathers didn't get all over the house. Regardless of how careful we were, some would get spread around. They were hard to clean up.

We always had to wear a cap or wrap a scarf over our hair. The little feathers were hard to comb out. These little down feathers were also used to fill feather beds. They were as warm, if not warmer, than the wool quilts! They settled all around your body. Our bedrooms upstairs weren't heated. Many times when we woke up in the morning, there would be frost on the covers next to our heads.

Just thought of one more chicken story. One Saturday Mom and Dad took the cream and eggs to town to buy groceries and other things they needed. Esther was the oldest at home that day. Lucina was in college. Esther was to see that we all behaved. We had to listen to her or "else". A Dakota Farmer salesman drove into the yard. He asked for Dad or Mom. Esther told him they weren't home. He asked her if she was interested in subscribing to the Dakota Farmer and showed her a number of premiums to pick from. One of the premiums was an egg beater! Ours was worn out. Guess she thought Ma would be pleased to have it, along with the magazine. She told him she had no money. He said he'd take a few chickens. He was sure her mother wouldn't mind. Esther, Verena, George and I ran down and caught four laying hens. He gave Esther a receipt along with the egg beater, put the old hens in a wooden crate, I believe there were four in the back seat of his car and he was off.

We all waited for Mom and Dad to come home and show them the beater. Ma wasn't a bit pleased. She gave us all a royal tongue-lashing. We were never, never to buy anything from a salesman, let alone paying for his wares with laying hens. I'm sure Esther never did. Anyway, the eggbeater was a good one and the magazine came.

I learned a lot about poultry and how they were taken care of, but liked the farm animals the best. We had horses, cows, pigs and sheep. Horses were my favorite animals. Dad didn't have any favorite breed, but a mixture of big work horses and some smaller faster-moving riding horses. However, they were all used to pull farm machinery. Each horse had a name.

King and Queen were big, strong squarely-built dependable animals. They were always used to haul grain to town or used to haul rocks and fix fences. They waited patiently until someone got in the wagon and said 'get-up'. I don't remember all the names of the other heavy horses, but Old Kernal and Sally were the names of two.

Nelly was a small animal and dependable. She was used mostly for pulling the two-wheeled buggy. She had one fault. When we kids drove, she would only go so far, turn around and go home. No amount of whipping could make her turn around. If Mom or Dad were driving, she went until reined in to stop.

Old Sylvia was the horse Dad used to break in colts that were big enough to work. He'd hitch her up to the wagon and then bring in the harnessed colt beside her to hitch to the wagon. Some colts were no problem, others were hopeless. Regardless, Old Sylvia never moved an inch until Dad got in the wagon and said "go". Invariably the colt would try to run free, but Sylvia stood her ground. One time they did start to run away, dad got them headed back home. They got in the yard and Old Sylvia stopped dead still. Dad just about went headfirst out of the wagon. The colt tried to break loose, but Sylvia held her ground. She had run far enough. There were one or two colts to break in every year.

I think Old George and Nigger were part bronco. They were fast, nervous and high-spirited. They were always used for raking hay and lead horses on the plow. They always had to be first. They could not be left alone unattended.

Prince and Lady were beautiful. Dad got them at Uncle Gus' sale. He must have hated to sell them. They must have been part Arabian - both the same size, jet-black, beautiful manes and long hairy tails that almost reached the ground. The tails had to be trimmed. When they were curried and brushed, they almost sparkled, the horse that is. After Dad got them, they were the only ones he drove to town.

Knots were sometimes tied in a horse's tail. This made the tail shorter and mud couldn't be switched all over the horse and driver.

As big as work horses were, they didn't eat that much. A manger full of hay and a half-gallon of oats was enough feed for a day. Of course they were left out to pasture when they weren't working. They were left out in the fields to feed around the straw piles and sloughs. They always came home for a drink. It was amazing how they all stayed together.

Horses loved to have their manes and bodies curried. They stood perfectly still while having that done!

The halters and harness were taken off after the day's work and hung on a peg at the foot of the stall. The harness was heavy. Dad or the hired man would sling it over his shoulder and put it back on when they were going to use them.

The collar had to fit perfectly or the horse would get a sore shoulder. The rest of the harness was fastened to it. The horse pushed against it to pull whatever was fastened to the tugs. By the time I was 12, I could harness and hook up a team of horses by myself. I thought it was a real accomplishment.

Horses very seldom got sick. Colic, a stomach problem, was the most common ailment. The horse wouldn't eat; he would roll and kick. Dad had a big hook above the manger he'd fasten, a wire stretcher, and fasten it to the horse's halter and pull on it, pull the horse's head up, put ginger water in a long-necked pop bottle, force it into the horse's mouth and pour it down the horse's throat. In an hour, more or less, the horse would be up and ready to go. Amazing!

One summer just about all of our horses had what they called 'sleeping sickness'. They'd run a high temperature and be listless. It affected the brain. They'd drink gallons of water and stand with their heads almost touching the ground. When they walked they staggered as if drunk. I can't remember if any of ours died. Many in the neighborhood did. Sleeping sickness was carried by mosquitoes. That summer was the only out-break I knew of.

Guess this is enough about horses. These animals deserve a lot of respect. They carried the early settlers from coast to coast, did the heavy work in building roads and railroads. They pulled the machinery that prepared the virgin land for planting and raising all sorts of crops. Some mules and oxen were used. They couldn't be compared to the faithful horses.

One more thing, Dad always brought his harness repair equipment into the kitchen, where it was warm, a couple weeks or a month, every winter. Harness wears out like all other usable things and has to be repaired.

The equipment, I can't remember all of it, consisted of a saw horse with a vise on one end and a seat on the other where Dad sat or who-ever did the riveting. There were a number of pieces of raw leather, some heavy and thick, for tugs; other pieces were thinner that were used for smaller straps, like the halter.

Harness was riveted together. To do this there was a punch, a riveting tool, hammer and brass rivets of most every size. Many times we would have to help hold the piece being riveted on the anvil so the rivet could be flattened out to make it stronger and the leather patch stronger. Our kitchen wasn't large. With harness and fixing equipment in it, there wasn't much room left to make meals, but we managed. The harness got mended without Dad freezing his hands and feet.

Medication for horses was simple. A box of powdered ginger for colic and a jar of salve to rub on sore shoulders or cuts were always kept in the barn.

There were three kinds of flies that bothered, sucking blood from horses. The most bothersome was a medium-sized one that bit the horse's body. A fly blanket, which

could be bought or one made of two gunny sacks, could be fastened over the horse's back to keep most of them from biting. Then there were the nose flies. They were much bigger than the body fly, but preferred feeding around the mouth. They were controlled by nose baskets that were made of screen wire and held in place by twine that was put over the horse's ears. The third fly bit and fed around the top of the horse's hooves. There was nothing to control them. The horse would either stomp his feet, or reach down and brush them off with his nose.

I said a few paragraphs back I'd written enough about horses, but I keep remembering so many little things about them and their care.

Cows were the next important animals I learned how to help take care of. Their milk and beef brought in a big share of the family's income and food. We always had plenty of beef, milk, cream, butter and cottage cheese. Milking the six to ten cows every morning and night was the biggest job. If they weren't milked regularly, they'd dry up (quit producing milk).

Sometimes when the weather was nice you could milk outside. With the milk pail and stool in hand you could walk up to a cow, talk to it in a quiet voice, or lay a hand on it. It seemed to know it was time to be milked and would stand still.

Usually we put the cows in the barn for milking. There was a long stall with stanchions. On each side of the middle lane was a little hay in each manger and each cow was trained to go in the same stall. After they were in place, you clamp the cow's head in so it couldn't get out - then you could milk each one. Each cow was named. Blackie, Whitie, Daisy, Spotty were a few.

Flies were the worst pests, especially in the fall. Many times before milking, we'd cut off a small willow branch before milking, give it to a younger family member and they would brush it over the cow's back and stomach to chase the flies away. Many pails of milk were lost by cows kicking at flies. It made milking much easier when fly spray was invented.

There was a milk house or room in the barn where the separator and cream cans were kept. The separator had to be washed every day. Hot water was brought from the house to do this. No soap was used. It made the water slimy.

Most of the skim milk was fed to the little calves. The rest was mixed with hops to make slop for the hogs. The little calves learned to drink from a pail by putting your fingers in the milk and letting them suck on your fingers and slowly lowering your hand down into the milk pail. It was surprising how quickly they learned to drink without your fingers to suck on.

Cows ate a lot of hay. Dad planted a field of timothy and some alfalfa that was cut for hay. The slough bottoms and roadsides would be cut. Most of this hay was hauled into the barn's big hayloft.

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Hauling the hay to the barn was always fun. One of us got to drive the horses over the windrows so the hayloader could pick it up and elevate the hay onto the hayrack. As it came on the wagon, Dad would spread it evenly over the sling. When the sling was full enough, he'd lay another one on top. Three sling loads would make a big load of hay. We'd take the load to the barn underneath the hayloft door. One sling at a time would be hung on a heavy rope, a team of horses would pull it to the long track near the roof and pull it up into the barn. A trip-rope would be pulled wherever the hay was to be dumped. The process used in putting the hay in the barn is hard to explain. Regardless, we got enough hay in the loft to feed the livestock all winter.

Calving time was about the only time a veterinarian would be called to help save the calf or cow. Salve was kept on hand to rub on chapped tits or cuts.

The fence around the pasture seemed to need fixing every few days. Dad would hitch a team of horse to the flat rack, a shallow-wagon bed where he'd put some barbed wire, the post hole digger, a post mall (large hammer), wire stretcher, staples and wire clipper. With this equipment, fence posts could be replaced and broken wire patched together.

Some cows would reach between the wires to get long grass outside the fence. In the process they'd break off a couple of partially-rotten posts. Some of the young stock learned if they followed the fence and found a weak spot, they could crawl out. These were called fence creepers and were sold the next spring. No way could they be broken of this habit.

When there was grass in the pasture, someone always would have to get the cows every morning and night for milking. We always had a dog to chase those that got out of line. We didn't dare make the cows run too much. They wouldn't give as much milk. There was sort of a crick that held water most of the summer in the far end of the pasture ½ mile from the barn. Naturally this is where the cows would be, water and more grass.

This was a fun trip in late spring and early summer. We'd try to catch a few gophers, tease a pair of screech owls who had their nests on the side of a little cliff, play around in what must have been a buffalo wallow (a perfectly round hallow), watch the sand swallows and pick hands-full of wild flowers, little violets (blue and yellow), buttercups, May-bells, blue-bells, crocuses, wild roses etc. Once we found a lady-slipper. I could never sleep early in the morning; I'd get up. If the cows weren't in the corral, I'd call the dog and we'd get the cows.. There aren't many mosquitoes in the morning and the air was always so clean and fresh. That trip always made me feel good. A few meadowlarks would be perched on fence posts singing their hearts out. Prairie chickens would be booming in the distance. These sounds are seldom heard anymore.

The third farm animals were the pigs. They were raised for meat to eat and to sell. Dad usually raised from six to eight brood sows. Each ad a litter of six to ten

piglets. Once in a great while there would be only four and sometimes as many as 12 or 13 in a litter.

Pigs weren't too hard to take care of. They were both dirty and clean. They disposed of their body wastes in one corner of their pen and had a dry clean straw bed in another corner. There wasn't a lot of manure, but what there was smelled to high heavens. This was pitched out the barn window in their pen and later pitched on the manure spreader and spread on the field for fertilizer. Fresh straw was put in the sleeping bed about once a week.

Pigs were fed slop (a mixture of ground grain, mostly screenings, milk and water), also corn on the cob. In between feedings, water was kept in the trough. They loved to wallow in mud puddles in the corral in the outside pen and root up the grass. They ate some of the grass and roots. They also crunched on shale.

Very seldom did they get out of the woven wire fenced-in pen. They sure made a mess when they did. They'd head for the little chicken coops and the hen house where they'd find grain and water. They not only ate the grain, but overturned every container that held it.

Dad always had thirteen (more or less) sheep. They were kept in a small pasture fenced in by woven wire. They required very little attention. Once in awhile when the weather was dry, hay would be put in the pasture. They didn't eat that much.

Lambing time required the most work. If the mother sheep didn't get to smell the new-born lamb, she'd disown it. Then the lamb would have to be bottle fed until it could eat grass.

When it warmed up in the spring, a sheep shearer would come. He set the sheep on its hind end, held it against him with one hand and the wool clippers in the other. Starting just behind the ears, he'd circle around the sheep to its bottom. In no time he'd have all of the wool on a clean canvas or gunny sack, packed into a sack that held about a hundred pounds of wool and ready to sell. It was fascinating to watch! Dad had a wool shears and clipped a few himself, but it took too long, so he hired a man to do it. He let George and I try to clip. One of us would hold the sheep while the other clipped. If you weren't real careful you'd clip the sheep's skin and make what they called a buttonhole, which would bleed. Naturally the poor animal would try to escape. A sheep set on its haunches is sort of helpless and can't escape. We took turns holding and clipping the poor animal. George got to be pretty good at it. I never was.

About the only insect that sheep were bothered by were wool ticks. They looked a lot like the big wood ticks but would never stay on a human body. They were partially controlled by dunking the lambs and newly-shorn sheep in a barrel of sheep dip, a mixture of water and strong smelling solution. I don't remember the name of it.

One more thing. They are all born with long tails that are cut off soon after the lambs are born. Ma always kept the wool from one sheep to make warm lined quilts. There was a trick to cleaning wool. Ma always used rain water and Naptha soap. Home-made had too much lye in it. It was washed in lukewarm rainwater with Naptha soap, rinsed in lukewarm water and was then washed and rinsed again in lukewarm water. You didn't dare wring out the wet wool for fear of getting a tangled mass of wool that was hard to comb. The pressed-out wool was spread on a screen to dry. You can't imagine all the dirt that washed out of it. It was almost snow white when dried.

The washed dry wool was put into a sack and set in the corner in the dining room with an empty cardboard box, the wool cards and chair. Anyone who cared to, would card or comb the wool into oblong patches and place them in the cardboard box. The carding also combed out weed seeds, bits of dry straw and hay.

The wool pad for inside the quilt was then made. A piece of cheesecloth was stretched on the quilt frame. Two layers of carded wool pads were placed on the cheesecloth in opposite directions as: ( ) Another piece of cheesecloth was placed on top of these layers and tied. The ties would be about two inches apart so the wool would not bunch up between the ties. Over this was placed the quilt top, usually made of patches of dress material. Many quilt tops were made of beautiful patterns. The back was just a plain or flowered piece of material.

The wool pad would be taken off the quilt frame and the piece of cloth for the back would be pinned on-to the frame. The wool pad would be laid on next and then the quilt top would be pinned on that, it was ready to tie with bright-colored yarn. These ties would be about four or five inches apart. The tie had to be a square knot or it would come loose. After the whole quilt was tied, it was taken off of the quilting frame and the front and back would be stitched together by hand or on the sewing machine.

A couple times Ma invited a few neighbor ladies over to help put the quilt together. There was always a lunch of sandwiches, cake or cookies and coffee. Afterwards all of the preschoolers were gathered up and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the lunch. Baby-sitters were never heard of in those days.

Our upstairs bedrooms weren't very well heated. Many times there would be frost on the blankets where we breathed. No one ever got cold under those warm, homemade wool quilts.

This covers, or partially covers what I learned about outdoor chores and farm animals. I loved every minute outside. Indoor chores were different. Personally, I hated them. It just seemed like I was fenced in. Regardless, we girls all had our work to do. Saturday was housecleaning day. Everything was dusted and all the floors washed on your knees. The dining room, front room and spare bedroom got a coat of wax. The wax was homemade. A half cake of melted paraffin was mixed with a half gallon of gas. The windows were always opened to let the gas fumes out. Miracle of miracles, it never caught on fire and blew the house up. This is what Lucina and Esther were given to wax

the floors at St. John's Academy in Jamestown. They both worked for their room and board. It really kept the floors nice and shiny. The kitchen floor was scrubbed every day, never waxed.

There were always stacks of dishes. I guess what made this such a horrible job was the hard water. The homemade soap would curdle in it if the water wasn't hot and it got a little greasy. There was always one person who washed the dishes and one or two who dried them and put them away in the cupboard. There were three big meals besides lunch dishes, which made dish washing an endless job. Every day was dish washing day.

On Mondays, rain or shine, the clothes were washed. If it rained, the clean, washed clothes were left in the basket and hung out to dry the next day.

Rain, or water from melted snow would be used. In the spring, Dad would put a barrel on the stone boat and haul water from a slough. The hard water from the well would make the clothes gray. It was used for rinse water, however.

The water was heated on a boiler on the kitchen range, dipped out and put in the hand-powered washing machine. Homemade soap was added and the dirty clothes. Somehow a wooden stick was attached to a wheel and chain which activated the four-pegged wooden agitator. The wooden stick had to be pulled back and forth by hand. Each load of clothes, depending how dirty, took five to ten minutes to clean. The clean clothes were put through a hand-turned wringer into a tub of rinse water. The wringer could be swung out over the rinse tub and the clothes wrung into a basket. They were then ready to hang on the line. Running the clothes through the wringer went much faster if one person turned the crank and another one put it through.

The overalls were washed in a tub on a scrub board. The dirtiest spots, like the knees, would be flattened out on the scrub board, extra soap rubbed on the dirty parts and then scrubbed with a scrub brush. In no time the spots were gone. Those heavy clothes were partially rung out by hand and hung over the yard fence. No clothespins were needed. The barbed wire kept them from falling off.

The sheets were hung on the clothesline, along with good clothes and stockings. If the wind was in the right direction, most of the wrinkles blew out and didn't have to be ironed. The dresses, aprons, and white shirts were always starched and had to be ironed.

Ironing was done on Tuesday. The sheets, everyday pillow cases, dishtowels and underwear were never ironed. The dresses, etc, were sprinkled, rolled into a ball so they wouldn't dry out. They were packed in a washbasket covered with a towel so they wouldn't dry out. The next morning they were ready to iron.

The "sad irons", as they were called, were heated on the range. This made the kitchen real warm so the ironing board was set up in the dining room with the kitchen door shut and dining-room window open. This made ironing a fairly cool job during the summer months. Heat was no problem in winter, fall and spring. If you ironed fast, one

heated iron would press two dresses, shirts, etc. before it had to be replaced with a hot one from the range. Three irons were usually heated at one time. One iron was really hot at all times.

How simple washing is today. The washer and drier do all the hard work. Perma-press clothes almost eliminate ironing. One more thing about ironing, if the irons weren't wiped off before using, they would leave an ugly black mark on the clothes. It didn't matter too much if the spot was on a dark or everyday piece of clothes, but invariably it would land on a white shirt collar or on the front. That piece would have to be washed over. Once in awhile a piece would be scorched. The miracle of an electric iron!

Wednesdays and Thursdays the sewing and mending were done. I learned to sew on Mom's cabinet Sears Roebuck machine. Sewing to me was fascinating. At this time I didn't do much more than hem dishtowels and sew four flour sacks together to make a sheet. I got so I could sew and even hem and do a flat seam without re-sewing the spots I missed. Also I did endless patching. Nothing was discarded if it could be patched. Ma also taught me how to tat and crochet; I never did learn how to knit. I did a lot of crocheting but never really became interested in tatting.

Fridays and Saturdays were cleaning and baking days. All of the floors were scrubbed on hands and knees and then waxed. Most of the rooms had linoleum rugs. They didn't reach from wall to wall, so we had to lift the edges and wipe underneath them. They were then waxed with a gasoline and paraffin mixture. The windows and doors were always opened to let the gas fumes out. How come the house never blew up, I'll never know. It did make a beautiful shiny floor, also slippery.

Dad laid a hardwood floor in the dining room which was the hardest to clean. It had to be scrubbed with extra soap and a scrub brush every week to get the spots and old wax off. It did look nice when finished.

Everything was dusted with a damp cloth. The corners were cleaned with the tip of a dried goose wing. I hated housework but this had to be done every week.

Enough baking was done to last at least until the next Tuesday. Usually a big batch of bread, a couple dozen buns, coffee cake, coffee kooggen, a big pan of cinnamon rolls, a cake and a double batch of cookies were made. One thing I didn't like about baking was the fact that Ma would never let us use more than one cup of sugar for cake frosting. I made up my mind when I had my own house and did my own baking, I'd use at least two cups of sugar like Stella's mother did. Her cakes really tasted good. Now nutritionists have found out that sugar isn't good for you. Ma didn't use less sugar because of that. It was the simple fact that it cost too much to use two cups. I still like cake with lots of frosting regardless of whether it costs too much or isn't healthy. All of us must have inherited Dad's love for sweets. It's strange that no one was diabetic.

We had a lot of playtime. During the warm months we played outside. A lot of times we'd sit in the shade of the trees when it was hot or behind the house in the shade.

Behind the house we'd play mumbely peg with a pocket knife or just talk. In the trees we watched the birds. We learned their names, where they built their nests and the size and color of their eggs.

There were robins, goldfinch, canaries, purple martins, etc. Each bird had a different style nest. Most of them had horse hair and grass woven together, fastened to a fork in a tree. They were lined with feathers either plucked from their breasts or from the chicken yard. The oriole nests were really different. They were built like a basket and hung way up on a tree branch. The only way we found how they were made was when a strong wind blew them down. We knew what the eggs looked like from the egg shells the mother oriole threw out when the chicks hatched. Orioles had beautiful singing voices.

Field birds, like the meadowlark, bob-o-link, various song sparrows, snips, ducks, etc. made their nests similar to the birds who lived in trees. The big difference was, they were built on the ground. Snips had the most unique nests. They just made a shallow dugout, usually in a slightly graveled spot in the field. Their eggs looked almost like gravel stones. You knew a nest was near when the bird started to limp and act like it had broken wings and couldn't fly. The nest could be easily found where the bird put on his crippled act. Dad moved many duck nests when putting in the crops. A lot of birds would abandon their nests if they were moved or disturbed; not ducks.

We also had fun picking bouquets of wild flowers. Most of them grew around a slough. They'd usually wilt before we got them home and put them in a vase, small matter; they were still pretty. The first flowers to bloom were the crocuses, then came the blue and yellow tiny pansies or violets, wax flowers, bleeding hearts, bluebells, roses, black-eyed Susans, goldenrod, gentians and many more. Once we found a lady-slipper in the pasture but didn't dare pick it. There were too rare. The wild tiger lilies made the best bouquets. They didn't wilt right away. Wild roses kept too. Their aroma filled the whole house with a sweet heavenly smell. Once or twice in mid summer we'd make a king and queen throne in the oats bin. We swept it and set up a couple wooden boxes for a throne. Whoever was chosen to be king and queen got to sit on it. They would wear crowns, necklaces and wrist bands made of flowers. The throne was covered with rag weed and king weed, also grass. After everything was decorated we sang a couple royal songs for the king and queen and then we abandoned the place, leaving all the weeds and flowers to dry up. Dad gave us a real scolding one time for not cleaning up the mess.

Our playhouse was set up in the smokehouse. Here is where our imaginations ran wild. We cut out magazine pictures to hang on the wall, wooden boxes and old milk pails were covered with rags and were used for furniture and cupboards. Our one doll buggy and crib were used to put the dolls in. Our play aluminum pots and pans and tea sets were packed in the cupboard. We served our guests delicious meals made of weed seeds, grass and whatever came to mind. We were sure to close the door when we left. The chickens were sure to mess things up if it wasn't closed.

Down the grove a few yards we'd set up a general store under a shady tree. In reality the counter was stocked with different sizes and lengths of tree twigs, old cans and broken dishes, bottles, every kind of grain Dad grew etc. In our imagination these became meat, candy, and hardware, breakfast food, salt, sugar, dry goods, etc. Each was labeled and priced. The dry-goods department was the most prized. We'd sneak worn-out dresses, aprons and shirts from the rag bag, tear them, wrap them around a tree twig, and we'd have bolts of dress material to sell. Mothers made most of their own clothes for the family. Dry goods was a big seller. Anyway the play store was special. When Ma found her best dust cloths were missing from the rag bag, we didn't make any more bolts of cloth to sell in our wonderful make-believe store.

We also had an opera house in the hay loft of the barn. For our one-and-only barn dance, dad had built a raised platform for the orchestra. This was our stage. Esther was the manager and director. We had to memorize poems, sing a few songs, and take part in a couple of short plays. She even had one of us be a ticket seller. Those that weren't acting on the stage were spectators, along with hundreds of imaginary people who came to watch us perform.

To my dying day I'll never forget one piece I had to practice over and over to get it just right. Esther dressed me in an old raggedy dress, put a few dabs of dirt on my face and arms, and had me hang my head and act bashful. This is what I had to say:

Here I stand  
All ragged and dirty  
If the boys look at me  
I'll run like a turkey.

After this was said, I was supposed to do a wobbly turkey trot off the bandstand. I tried but never did it just right to please my sister. This was supposed to be a funny part. If nothing else, it burnt a lasting memory in my mind.

We also set up a school in a corner of the barns lean-too. One of the country schools bought new desks and gave the old furniture to anyone who came and got it. Dad brought a number of desks home. They were the pupils desks. The teacher's desk was a wooden apple box stood on end, and a rickety old kitchen chair with no back was the teachers domain. With a few old books, color crayons, scraps of paper and a few pencils, we had endless school sessions. Lucina very seldom played with us. She always found something to do in the house. Personally I don't think she liked to get dirty.

In the evening when it cooled off we played endless tag games, softball, anti-i-over, run she run, etc. Dad loved horseshoe and taught us all how to throw an open face shoe. If you held the shoe just right and twisted it just a little when throwing it, it would go right on the peg. The horse-shoe court was outside the fence along the driveway. The pegs were moved at least once every summer. Every time a shoe was thrown, it dug the hole around the peg a little deeper. I never could beat Dad but learned to make a lot of

[REDACTED]

ringers. 'Horseshoe' was the main reason we hurried to eat dinner and get to the park. Three of Dad's friends would be waiting for him to play horseshoe all afternoon.

All of the neighbor kids would be there too. We'd all get together and make the rounds playing on the oversize slide, merry-go-round, huge swings and giant stride. Uncle Art and another man made all of the playground equipment. It was all a little bigger than normal. We usually took a waxed bread wrapper along to sit on going down the slide. That really made you fly. The pile of fine sand at the bottom made a perfect landing spot. As far as I know no one ever sprained an ankle. The giant stride was my second favorite thing to play. If you got it going fast enough, the chain you were hanging onto would straighten out even at a rectangle from the middle pole. What a thrill to go flying through the air.

Uncle Art was the first overseer of the park. He, along with a few other men, made all of the picnic tables and benches, playground equipment and outhouses. They cleaned up the whole park area, trimmed the trees and cut the grass and weeds. It was beautiful. The park board built a modern home for Uncle Art and Aunt Lena. Aunt Lena planted and took care of all sorts of flowers around the house and yard. It was like a picture taken from a seed catalog.

The reason I remember this place so well is because at least once a month they would invite my whole family down for a Sunday dinner. Aunt Lena and Uncle Art didn't have a family of their own, so really went all out to entertain us. I think Aunt Lena must have been the best cook in the world. Everything tasted special. It was served on a snow-white tablecloth with her wedding-gift dinnerware. Everybody had to have their hair combed and hands washed before sitting down to eat. Aunt Lena's house was spotless.

Aunt Lena and Uncle Art Parker moved to Dubuque, Iowa, when I was nine years old. It wasn't as much fun to go to the park. By no means did it keep us from looking forward to our Sunday trips to the park. Besides going to the playground, Dad gave each of us a nickel or a dime to spend at the concession stand to buy anything we wanted. I usually got a package of gum, usually Spearmint or Juicy Fruit. By dividing each stick into three pieces, I had fresh gum to chew all week.

Hunting gophers was another fun thing. We drowned, snared or shot them. Dad did the shooting. None of us dared use the gun. We also used traps. Drowning them out of their holes was the most successful. Their tails were sold at a local store. The most I ever made was 45 cents. I saved all my gopher-tail money for the Fourth of July. They sold for 5 cents a tail. The way you got a gopher was, if you see it going in a hole, you would pour water into it and when the gopher came out, you'd hit it with a stick.

## **FLORENCE WIELAND REMEMBERS GROWING UP IN THE BUSCH FAMILY**

These recollections were written in 1990 and 1991, and recall growing up (1918-36) on the Busch farm between Berlin and Grand Rapids, LaMoure County, North Dakota..

**MEMORIES** - Seems they are the things life is made of. They certainly enrich our lives by making us appreciate the different life style we have now. Better? Maybe. In many ways yes - but it would be difficult or impossible to revert back to them. Seems the biggest influence in my life was the size of our family. In fact the family was our life as there were not a lot of outside activities. Seems we didn't need all of this summer "rec" and sundry things to take us out of our home. We had plenty of chores and playmates after chores were done. We were nine in all. Nine healthy children and farm chores to keep us busy - maybe not always happy but we did have things to do. I really can't say I ever remember anyone saying they were "bored" but I guess that's what we probably would say if we had used the word when we would be half through the carrot rows in the garden.

**Lucina** was first born. Always congenial and helpful but not with the garden or milking the cows! **Esther** was probably the most outspoken. I remember more than one venture in the salesmanship field but I don't remember that they were a major success for her.

**Verena**, God rest her soul, died of peritonitis due to appendicitis in 1927. At that time there was no penicillin. After being very sick at home for a week Dr. Salvage sent her to Jamestown to the hospital. I think she went on the train from Grand Rapids. she was a sophomore in high school in Grand Rapids. I have been forever grateful to her teacher, Walter Eggert, for taking me to Jamestown to see her. He had a good car at that time. I also got very sick to my stomach from the hospital smells. In less than a week she returned home in a coffin. At that time the coffin was kept at home in a back bedroom until the funeral. Mother was very broken hearted. She was buried at the Berlin Cemetery.

**Mary** was our blonde sister who would get very upset when remarks were made about her peroxide bleached hair which she never did peroxide. She would always have to wash it when she got home from helping in the hay field. Sunburn always plagued her in the summertime.

Dad was happy when, after four girls, a boy was born, **George**.

I, **Florence**, followed in line. Then **Edith, Vincent and Art**. We all had a college education except Vincent and Edith who stayed at home to work on the farm. It is amazing to realize that it was possible to educate five of us on our small farm.

Mother and Dad came from the Cuba City and Sinsinawa WI area in 1905. I visited both of these farms in 1990 with Mary Kay Busch. Dad often told of his coming out to North Dakota on an immigrant train with his plow, cow and the little he owned. They lived in a cook car until the original 4-room house was built. Mother would tell about her bread freezing in the pan overnight so forget the idea that frozen bread dough is something new. They had their own meat, milk, butter and eggs and those, along with produce from the a garden, were the bulk of their food.

Mother always had a big garden. We had lots of chores in the garden. I dare to say that we learned to stick to jobs that weren't our favorite. Still, those fresh peas, carrots and potatoes were enjoyed more because of the time we had spent with them.

We always had an abundance of potatoes and carrots to put in the basement as well as other canned vegetables. When we shelled peas mother would have each of us fill cups and see who could be first - psychology without a degree! To this day Vincent and Edith have many vegetables to put away. I particularly enjoy the sweet corn and tomatoes. I do believe the abundance of natural fertilizer (from the corral at the top of the hill) helps provide good crops.

Having come from apple country in Wisconsin, Dad would buy quite a few boxes of apples to put in the basement for the winter. They kept well because it was dirt with a stone foundation and stayed cool. This didn't work so well after the furnace was installed.

Dad's father was a great one for grafting and working in his orchard and Dad seemed to take up on that but the Wisconsin varieties were not developed for North Dakota climate. How Dad would enjoy the apples Vincent has been raising now. George was also an ardent hobby gardener.

Besides the apples the folks would also order dried apricots, prunes and raisins in 15 or 25 pound lugs from Savage, a mail order catalogue, for their winter supply. This produce would go into the attic. You must understand that the only groceries we bought were paid for by the eggs and cream the farm produced. Butter was churned either in the barrel churn or a stomping churn. Believe me that was a monotonous chore.

For a long time we had a washing machine with a square copper tub and that was operated by a push and pull handle. The hand turned wringer was also used. Mother usually tried to have soft water from the rain barrel or from melted snow in the winter. Sometimes mother would fill a copper boiler full of hot soft water with homemade lye soap and boil the white clothes. They were taken out of the boiler with a wooden wash stick. Sometimes they would be laid out on the green grass to bleach. The smell of that air dried wash has no equal in modern day concoctions! Our only running water we had before 1950 was what we carried in from the well and I'll tell you we would run when the weather got cold enough. That's another story. When I think of all the water we hauled up that hill from the windmill for all our household use, there would be no water shortage anywhere if we still used that system, but who wants that - NOT I!

Mother always saved all the fried out lard, cooking skimmings, bacon grease and the fried out "creefings" from the excess fat from the pork. With that and lye and water we would have a day of soap making with our big 20 gallon kettle over wood fire. When it all cooked to a certain degree of clarity they would pour it into wood lined boxes to cool over night. Soap was truly a test of your homemaking abilities.

Our butchering days were excitement for us because the neighbors would come to help. Dad had made a tank with tin big enough for scalding a hog. That was always near the windmill because of the large amount of water used. It was placed over a wood fire until the right temperature to scald the hair off of the pig. Then they were scraped clean. They usually did about six pigs a day. Mother made head cheese and the best sausage I've tasted to this day (may be prejudiced). The small intestines were turned inside out in lots of water and scraped to a thin casing. The stomach was scraped in the same way and filled with head cheese. The sausage was fried and we liked to dip our homemade bread in the drippings in the fry pan and spread it with syrup. Um good! Maybe your don't think so but then you haven't tried it. The hams and bacons were salted for future use.

They were smoked with wood smoke. Remember there were no refrigerators at that time. The side pork was sometimes "fried" down and put in a crock. This was covered with the hot lard and stored in the cool basement. We liked that but it had to be eaten in a limited time.

We always had geese on the farm for our Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners until turkeys started to be raised. The geese furnished pillows for all of us as well as feather beds that felt real good under those frosty blankets in the winter.

I don't know of any time we didn't have milk cows. I always did my share of milking when I got old enough. Many times we would take our stools out in the corral when it was so stifling hot in the barn. Then too there was the constant battle with flies. No sprays either. We would separate the cream and take it to town to pay for groceries. Dad would always bring candy or something special home. Even if it was a candy bar that had to be portioned in 6 or 8 pieces. The bars were somewhat bigger then.

Chickens were also part of our life. Those hens with the little chickens would really fly at you. They weren't one bit concerned if they got some of your skin. We did have an incubator that mother used for a long time in the basement. It was heated with kerosene and we usually got a pretty good hatch. Mother always had a few hens setting at the same time so they would get all the chickens to watch over and take care of them. Boy, how good they tasted when they were big enough to eat. I'd bet on it that mother could butcher one and have it ready for the pan in five minutes. A pail full of cold well water to cool them and they were soon in the fry pan. Another thing I remember about mother was how very fine she could cut cabbage for salad. The dressing would always be cream, vinegar and sugar.

One thing I will never understand was how we could wax a snowy white hard wood floor with parafine in warm gasoline in the dining room. That I would say was living dangerously! Especially when the main source of heat was a wood burning stove.

Dad was always very patient when taking his children to school, college and getting us home for vacations and weekends when we were teaching. One time when I was teaching at Dazey I took the train from Valley City to Grand Rapids. Mary met me in Valley City and we had a good time. Dad met us at the depot in Grand Rapids, I believe he came with the team and sled.

One ride I always remember was in our touring car. With curtains flapping and rain getting in every place it had a chance, and driving over next to impassable roads (remember the model cars then were much higher off the ground than our cars are now), Dad took Vincent, Edith and I to spend the night at our neighbors. It was weather we didn't usually leave home in. Never the less when we got home our brand new brother Art had been added to our family. As far as I know all of the children were born at home.

Getting back to teaching, jobs were a bit of a worry but we made it. One time while I was teaching in Sherbrooke district near Hope, Mary and I wanted to get home for Easter. We had a Model A and George was in College at Mayville so we thought he could drive. Believe me by the time we got home we were sorry we started out because the car was dragging in the mud past Hastings on highway 18. George really told us what he thought of our idea and we never asked him again. We did get back to our jobs eventually. That was the year of the severe March 15th blizzard. Many people lost their lives. The farmer at the place I was staying was in the barn when it hit. He said the cattle just went wild on him. He started for the house but he was past it before he saw the light from the back window.

Lucina and Esther taught after a term of summer school but they both got a BA in Education as time went on. Mary tried her hand at hair dressing but that was finally abandoned to get a life certificate in teaching which she used for twenty years as a teacher.

Getting back to the business of hair dressing. That was at the time of the big machines with heavy clamps that often ended in burnt spots on the scalp. This is quite a change from today's permanent. And of course a much bigger change from the old curling and marcel irons that Lucina and Esther used after heating them in the chimney of our kerosene lamps. Of the two oldest sisters, Lucina was very fussy about having her hair done. As for me, I loved wind blowing through my hair. It always looked like it too. My hair was naturally straight and did not stay very curly even if I curled it. It was cut in a length about long enough to cover my ears.

We all finished the first eight grades in Henrietta #3. It was about 1 1/2 miles from home. It had to be very inclement weather before Dad would take us to school. I lived with chilblains in my feet during most of the winter. The big toe in particular would be red and itch without relief when it got warm. To itch or even touch them they were sore. We really didn't complain about our walk to school because everyone else had to do it too. We left home every morning with our syrup pail dinner pail. I still remember one girl who was an only child and she even had a banana in her pail!

Happiness was when we could shed our winter clothes. Our recesses were spent playing pump, pump, pull away, "anti I over" the school house, Prisoner's base tag, and who ever thought of having someone entertain us? We even had permission to drown out gophers in the pasture across the road. The tails were worth a nickle apiece which we saved for the 4th of July spending money. Really a nickle was worth quite a bit at that time. Then in the spring we would go "rubber icing" in the spring when the snow melted puddles would be lightly frozen over and we would try running across them without breaking through. It was no fun sitting with a wet feet for the rest of the day.

I remember one day going to school and running the last short while. The first ones there got the swings. One of the other pupils asked me why my stocking was bloody. It was bruised so I didn't feel anything for awhile. I had fallen on some sharp ice in the grass. I'm sure the heavy cotton stocking protected it some. However I had to have some stitches in it. I still have the scar to show for it. I had some proud flesh in it too and that had to be burned out. Dr. Salvage wasn't the gentlest doctor either.

Lucina taught in our school one year. I often marvel at our idea of school. Our only thought was to get the best marks we could. It has stood us in good stead for our lives. Perhaps part of it was the fact that we always had chores to do at home and the folks worked so hard to provide for the rest of us. Seems like mother was always on the run, she never just walked from chore to chore.

Lucina and Esther both went to St. John's Academy in Jamestown. However by the time we were old enough for high school the 1929 stock market crashed and on top of that we had a series of drought years so we went to the public school in Berlin. Dad made a bus on sleigh runners so George could drive a team to school. It was 5 1/2 miles so we did need plenty of blankets. The sad irons that we heated on the stove to iron clothes were sometimes used to keep our feet warm.

After George finished school I rode to school with some neighbors. They had a very fast team under ordinary circumstances. One night one of the neighbor boys helped

hitch up the team and the two outside lines were not snapped on. As a result the boys had no control of the team. Leonard noticed it and jumped out to hook them and the team took off for home full speed ahead. Needless to say he had to walk home. The good Lord was with us because one corner on a new deep ditch road was taken much too short but we didn't tip the bus. We got home OK.

Sunday when we went to church mother noticed the tracks in the ditch around the corner and wondered whose tracks they were. We were very quiet about the whole thing. [the following section in brackets was written as part of Florence's Christmas greeting letter in 1986: I thought you might be interested in some of my memories of past Christmases. As a child we always waited with anticipation for our package from Aunt Cecilia Lang. It was as sure as the season to be here by the second week in December. We were never allowed to open it but we always had to shake and rattle. It seems foolish now because without fail it always contained long stockings for each of us and some hard candy. Edith would get something extra because she was their God child. We always had a Christmas tree and I wish I had some of the old decorations. They were mostly made of tinsel garland on wire with small balls in different arrangements. The only lights were real candles in little clip on holders. They were lit only on Christmas eve. Then we opened our gifts. We would go to Midnight Mass if it was possible. We really always bundled in blankets as there were no car heaters. If we went in the sleigh it would be on Christmas day. Dad had built a closed in bus for us to drive to school but it was still b-r-r cold. We had a horse hide lined with felt for a warm cover when we went in the bus.

I remember especially one night we heard paper rattling down stairs and were going to see if Santa was really there but we never did open the door! In place of stockings we put our plates on the table for our gifts. I will be always grateful to my oldest sister because she was teaching would always see that we got a gift. She gave me a doll that opened her eyes and some dishes another time. There really wasn't much money for anything but essentials but we still enjoyed whatever we got. Our dinner was mostly home-grown including the turkey or geese which we had quite often as mother made all of her own bed pillows of down. Dad always got about five big boxes of apples. He had grown up in Wisconsin and considered them essential. As we got older the economy did improve. it was always fun when we all got together.

The high light of the Christmas season as far as school was concerned was the Christmas program. We would carry sheets from home to make curtains on one end of the school room. One memorable play was "Christmas in the Mousehole". We were all costumed as mice too. Plenty of gray flannel was available at that time, probably at 25 cents a yard. We would either have coffee and lunch or sometimes a box social after the program. The older girls would decorate boxes and pack a good lunch for the person that was the highest bidder for the box. No one was supposed to know who brought the box but there were ways of finding out!

One year when I was quite small Edith and I pooled our 50 cents to get a gift for everyone in the family. We spent the better part of the afternoon deciding which 5 or 10 cent item to get for each one. Some of the family got "Leaping Lena" bars wrapped for them. They were about three times the size of our Mars bars today. At least we thought they were big after we had spent all our money.

I don't remember ever feeling left out as far as gifts were concerned because no one else got anything more than we did. Then too we had each other to play with, sliding down haystacks and climbing up on a low roof to slide down on the snow. Sleigh rides weren't a pasttime at that time, they were a part of life. If we were snowed in that was our means of getting to town and church.

I was especially glad to get home the first year at the College of St. Benedict because it had been my very first stay away from home and I knew I wouldn't get home again until the end of the term.]

When it was time for me to go to college Lucina and Esther were teaching so I got some money from Lucina and went to the college of St. Benedict at St. Joseph MN for a year. I often think our college students of today wouldn't even go if they had the wardrobe I went with. So what, there were rich and poor at that time too as there are today. Truthfully I can say that the one year at St. Ben's was one of the highlights of my life. I did get to daily Mass and I had to study hard even though I was high school valedictorian. I was not among the brilliant students. One dear friend, Marie Woeste, now sister Mary Sharon, completed the second year of college at Valley City with me. We lived with a Winkler couple. I had to complete some extra courses at summer school so I worked for my board and room at MacDonalds who lived in the Sheyenne Apartments. I must say I did not enjoy that but such is life and I completed my required credits for a life certificate in teaching. That is no longer sufficient, but it was all I needed.

## MORE MEMORIES FROM FLORENCE (BUSCH) WIELAND

Written October, 1992

**A typical day in spring.** Naturally school took up most of our time, but on the way we made use of every puddle to go "rubber icing" on. (That was simply running fast across thin ice and hoping one didn't fall through and get wet feet.) Nothing was too deep to worry about more than wet feet, but our feet were cold if they had to be put up with all day because the school was not that warm.

Then too on Sunday afternoons we would often go for a couple miles walk on the prairie roads or regular car roads. Believe me they were only dirt roads built up a bit with a scoop pulled by a horse and guided by a man.

There was always the excitement of baby calves, chickens, ducks and geese. Believe me you steered clear of the old geese with babies as they'd just as soon pull your clothes off, maybe with a bit of skin too. After they'd get hold of you they could really beat you with their wings. The mother hens would maybe fly at you and give you a peck but we liked to feed them and watch the little ones grow. Occasionally the ducks would lay more eggs than they could cover to hatch so mother would set an old cluck (chicken) on a nest full of duck eggs. You can't imagine the distress there was when the ducklings would swim in the water pan instead of drinking it. That old chicken would run around and around that pan clucking excitedly.

There were always chores to do. With a large family we would mostly wait to see if someone else would do it but each one seemed to find his or her niche. I don't remember how early I started milking but that was the women's job as there were few boys until the last ones. There was the old separator to turn and wash which everyone avoided as long as they could. This may sound yucky to most of you but I usually had a cup or so of skim milk as it came out of the spout. That cream was used in everything - cakes, vegetables, coffee and anything else it would go with. It also paid for the grocery supplements along with the egg money. That was even the gas money.

We would go out to the pasture to drown out gophers. After all they paid a nickle for every tail when we took them in. I'm not sure who paid it but it was our fourth of July money.

Dad liked to fix machinery and I would often have to help by getting things for him. Edithe had a doll buggy and I had the doll. We would go out for a walk or play house with that. The doll was a glass one with eyes that would open and close. One day I found it with the eyes poked in. I was quite heartbroken.

When we were old enough, and that was pretty young, we had to help plant the garden and weed it. That produced a good deal of our food. We were hard pressed during 1935 because the drouth didn't give us a garden. Don't know for sure what year it was but the grasshoppers had even eaten the part of the onions that were above the

ground. Somehow we did make it and it was good experience because you do find out that one can get along without many things.

Seems like we always had oatmeal for breakfast. Also eggs with bacon. Mother cured the bacon in dry salt and it would keep by hanging it up. The ham was made in the same way. If a bit of mold was on it we just trimmed it off. According to modern eating we should all have been dead years ago. We had a lot of fried potatoes, sometimes three times a day.

The chickens were mostly company food. If we had it during the week mother would go out and catch and clean it and have it in the frying pan within the hour. Only trouble with them was that you would end up with the neck if you got the platter last! We did all live thru it and I wouldn't want it another way. That isn't quite right. I always wished I could have a banana in my lunch pail like one of the neighbor girls did. However she died about ten years ago. We did eat a lot of cornbread with syrup. That's why there were so many gallon syrup pails up in our attic!

Mother used to make milk soup too. It was simply made with a soft noodle dough dropped into boiling milk. That would be for supper. We knew nothing of store butter as we always had to make butter from our cream. We had a barrel butter churn, also one with a dasher that was pushed up and down. Mother usually mixed the butter to be sure it was washed in cold water so the butter milk would not sour it. Bread was also home made, about a dozen loaves at a time because the family had come from Wisconsin and they had lunch at 1 a.m. and 3 p.m. besides our regular meals. With all the hard work that started 6 a.m. and lasted till 7 p.m. we didn't gain weight until we got older and had more modern equipment.

We looked forward to the days when the parish priest came for dinner because that was always special. Then too, Thanksgiving and Christmas menus haven't changed much thru the years. We always had geese or ducks for Christmas and in between often. We had to pluck enough feathers for pillows and feather beds. Of course mother raised enough turkeys so that was always on the dinner table at Thanksgiving. They were very touchy to raise as they got sick easily if they got wet and there were diseases that bothered them that would never hurt the chickens.

When we would bring home the cows from the pasture we always tried to be first to find wild violets and buttercups in the pasture around the sloughs. School ended with a play day at the park and for a while we had a county 8th grade graduation there too.

Summertime was a time for barefeet, stubbed toes and all that went with it. We had a lot of play time in the trees or around the machinery. We had a clump of plum trees quite close to the house where we would play but there were some little bats that claimed them as home so we would soon leave if we saw one of them. They always slept during the daylight hours.

We always got into the washing that was done on Monday. I remember one old machine that had a push-pull handle to make the clothes agitate. That got very tiresome before the job was done even when we would take turns. We would help hang clothes on the lines then we would always have socks to hang on the fence to dry. We had to wash the sheared wool in the summer to make quilts in the winter. Mother always got that ready as the water had to be the right temperature. That was done in a wash tub full of water and gentle soap, probably Fels Naptha. The first liquid soap I remember was when I went to college. Otherwise mother made most of her soap with grease and lye. Between boiling the white clothes in the boiler and letting them hang on the line all day they were kept nice and white. Only rain water could be used for washing as the well water was very hard.

Summertime also meant milking cows and being bit by flies. We took our milk stools out in the barnyard and milked out in the open. Most of the cows were gentle. Of course separating milk to take to town was a year round job. There was gardening to do and a lot of canning. sometimes I think we were probably more trouble than we were worth but it did get done eventually. When the men were in the field we always had to take lunch out. During harvesting our legs would really get scratched by the stubble. Then threshing time was the time of a lot of cooking. Seldom was there a dinner without pie. Supper included cake for dessert. That all went in a meal.

Sundays were spent at Memorial Park which was a real treat for us. Of course that was after Mass. There was usually a local team playing baseball too. The county fair was always held in LaMoure. I don't remember that we ever exhibited anything there though. We did enjoy seeing the nice vegetables. Towards the fourth of July the red prairie lilies would bloom in the native sod of the pasture. There were also blue bells and many wild roses in the pastureland and roadsides. When the glue gentians started to bloom and the goldenrod opened we knew it was getting close to school time. In August we would take a day off to pick chokecherries. Sometimes milkpails full if it was a good year. Mother would make pancake syrup and dad would use some for homemade wine. As we got older we would help shock grain but I guess Mary got into that more than I did as Vincent and Art had to do it when I got older.

## ARTHUR BUSCH REMEMBERS GROWING UP

written July, 1993

Following are a few of my recollections of the "good old days" on the Busch farm in Berlin, North Dakota.

I was born October 16, 1927, so I spent all my years through high school on the farm including the years of drought and depression of the 1930s.

I'll never forget the panting birds of all local species which would come during the drought to the large livestock watering trough to get a drink and cool off since there wasn't even dew on the grass and weeds for them to get some moisture. We would put wood blocks into the tank for the birds to sit on and drink. Occasionally one of them would get knocked into the water and drown. As a preschooler I would go to the garden with Mother and occasionally a bird suffering from the heat would land in the plum tree close to me as if begging for water. Several times Mother had to replant the garden a couple of times each summer because of lack of rain.

The heat was also a major concern for the farm animals, particularly the horses which were used exclusively for field work during the thirties. Heat stroke was a threat to animal and man, and eating lots of salt and drinking lots of water was essential. It seemed that when we got enough rain for the crops, the grasshoppers would come in droves and do major damage. There were several years that the swarms of grasshoppers were so great that they were considered a "plague". Hail was also more prevalent during those years. Because of the dryness of the soil, high winds also caused much damage as well as the discomfort to man and horse from the clouds of dust during plowing and dragging. These were the so-called "Dust Bowl" years. After a few decent crops in the late thirties, Dad was able to get a used tractor to do the heavy plowing and gradually the horse was phased out in the forties.

To supplement the family income, milk cows were essential. Before milking machines came along, milking the cows by hand was the worst of the chores. Much of the milking and chores were done by the younger children while Dad and the older boys did the field work. The most cows I can recall milking at one time by myself was 17 - a sure way to develop strong hands. After milking, the milk had to be run through the hand-cranked cream separator. Skim milk was fed to the calves, cats and pigs. The cream was picked up and taken to the LaMoure creamery twice a week. Enough cream was kept for butter making and home use, and the whole milk and cream for family consumption was kept in cans with lids and submersed in the livestock watering tank to keep it as cool as possible.

Vince ceased the milking operation quite a few years ago and has only beef cattle now. These require much less work.

Threshing season was the apex of the farming year. As long as I can remember, Dad had his own threshing rig. The crew of 10 people frequently threshed August Berning's crop also. I was proud to be in charge of running the rigs the last couple of years before going into the service in 1946, even though the hours were long. Getting inside the hot, dusty machine to fix it was horrendous. In the late forties, combines took over which eliminated the need for shocking the grain, bundle wagons, etc.

On a typical summer day Mom and Dad would arise before 6 a.m. and wake the kids shortly thereafter. Usually the poultry and livestock feeding and milking was done before a large breakfast of pancakes, eggs, toast, fried potatoes and usually a meat. The mid-day meal (dinner) was meat, potatoes, vegetables, salad, and always a dessert. The evening meal (supper) was very similar to the noon meal. At about 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. there was a lunch of sandwiches and dessert brought to the fields or at the house depending on the day's activity. After supper everyone did their own thing - reading, listening to the radio, playing cards and games, gathering around the piano for a song fest (sometimes), or just "pot around" outdoors. Saturday night was "go to town" night - to Berlin or LaMoure and seen an occasional movie, shop for necessities and socialize with friends and neighbors who were usually there also.

Sunday was a day of rest and spent going to church in the morning and visiting friends and neighbors in the afternoon - sometimes this was prearranged but frequently just "drop in". Usually the adults would play cards while the kids played games inside or outside depending on the weather. Horseback riding and soft ball games were common. Sandwiches and dessert were served in the late afternoon.

Hunting and trapping was pursued by Dad and the boys in the fall and winter and in the summer we hunted gophers. For many years there was a bounty of 1 to 5 cents for a gopher tail, paid by the county. This was a source of spending money for us kids, along with sales of muskrat, skunk, rabbit and fox pelts in the fall. Dad would sometimes pay us a small amount for picking potato bugs off the potato plants. This duty was necessary since the bugs would kill the plants.

I spent grades one through five at Henrietta township school located about 3/4 mile northwest of the farm. Most of the time we walked with lunch pail and books in hand. In very inclement weather Dad would drive us there. Due to the drought and poor crops, money was scarce so we usually got a new pair of shoes, pants and shirt for the school year. We had to change from back to the "grubbies" as soon as we got home from school. Since I was the youngest of the family most of my clothes were "hand me downs" from Vince and George. Just about everything was worn out before it was discarded. Mom and Dad were very serious about education so skipping class or homework was completely out of the question. After my fifth grade, the country school was closed and I went to the Berlin school sixth through twelfth grades. There were three in my high school graduating class - all boys. Because of lack of students the high school was closed the following year and the students went to LaMoure or Edgeley schools. Berlin was five

miles away so we went by horse drawn wagon or sleigh and the last couple of years by car or bus.

The first family car I can remember was a big 1926 Dodge four-door sedan which required a lot of maintenance and gas but it usually got us there. Next Dad bought a second hand 1931 Ford Model A which lasted a long time. It had to last since no new cars were available during World War II. After the war Dad bought a new 1947 Plymouth which we were all very proud of. When I started college at Wahpeton State School of Science in 1949 I took over the Model A until it fell apart. I then got a 1939 Chevrolet for \$125 to get me to the last two years of college at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks.

Dad always enjoyed fixing things so practically always he bought used cars and machinery and tractors. He loved to do blacksmithing and as a kid I remember spending a lot of time with him in the farm shop pumping the hand blower on the forge so he could heat the metal to bend and shape it to replace broken parts of machinery. Only as a last resort would he go into town to buy a new replacement part. Shoeing the horses was also an ongoing challenge. At one time there were about 25 work horses on the farm. They were also used for riding.

Being tied down seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day was not my idea of an ideal life so I decided to go to college, and got a Bachelors degree in Electrical Engineering. I spent a career of 35 years with General Electric Company in technical sales to commercial and industrial accounts. My customers were mostly in the Chicago area. I found this very challenging and rewarding. I retired at 60 and spend my winters in Florida and my summers in Michigan.

I've always felt I was very fortunate to have been born and raised on a farm and then able to change to a different lifestyle in the city and with travel giving me a very diversified life. I was blessed with a family of four boys and three girls by my first wife, Mary Eileen, who died of cancer in 1977. I was remarried to Barbara in 1979 who had two boys from her first marriage, which ended with her husbands death also from cancer. Barb and I are looking forward to many more years of retired bliss thanks to our wonderful family heritage.

**SOME MORE MEMORIES FROM THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM  
FOR GEORGE AND JEAN BUSCH, MAY 20, 1979**

From Florence Wieland: "We would go five and one-half miles to church with the team. The front warmer and the robe of horse hide was very necessary. One time we got there and no one had started the furnace. We stayed for Mass, though all bundled up in robes and blankets.

Remember:

Those plates we set for Santa Claus to put our gifts on  
The times we were lucky enough to get to

midnight Mass

Those crowded rides in the Ford Model T with the  
sliding side curtains

Sliding down the haystacks (which was a no-no!)  
The grasshoppers and the hot hay stacking."

From Mary Busch Brehmer and Allen Brehmer: "George was about ten when he bridled one of Dad's fastest horses and went for a ride. George followed the pasture fence where the horse dumped him on the barbed wire fence. He ended up with a cut on his lip, and mighty scared! When George and Jean were going to college, they borrowed the Model A which Florence and I were driving, for the weekend. Florence and I were going to bring it back to where we were teaching and it wouldn't start. Jean, George, Florence and I pushed to get it started. We got it started but George's hand slipped and he cut a gash in the palm of his hand. We were lucky to find the doctor home, and it was patched with a number of stitches. I'm sure he'll never forget that particular Model A."

From Esther Busch Bernard: "George, do you remember when the blankets were covered with frost when we got up in the morning?

- We did all the farm work with horses and it took several days to put in the crop and still longer to harvest and thresh the grain?

- Do you remember when the grasshoppers looked like a cloud in the sky, hollowed out the tomatoes and onions and there was little or no feed except thistles and cactus with molasses for the cattle?

- George and Jean lived above the Ed Richters [in Sykeston] when Mary Kay was born and then moved to Rugby where living quarters and salary were a bit better?"

From Henry L. Bernard: "THIS I REMEMBER ABOUT GEORGE... When he taught in Sykeston, North Dakota, after his discharge from the Navy, Mary Kay was born. George had spent the night at the hospital in Carrington and got back to school just before nine a.m. The students were ready when George stepped into the room. We all sang the HAPPY BIRTHDAY song for him."

From Vincent Busch: "George being my older brother was someone to look up to and take his good advice. His success as a Naval Officer and teacher were much admired."

From Lucina Busch Pinkney: "You were the only boy, George, with four older sisters. You used to be a real source of teasing. Duane and I came from Munich for your wedding. You looked so gallant and handsome in your white suit. Jean made a pretty bride in her bridal dress. It's hard to believe it's been 35 years since that day."

## MEMORIES OF RUBY (BERNING) FITZGERALD

Written May, 1993

In the springtime planting would be the main concern. I remember especially cutting up potatoes for seed. There would have to be at least one "eye" in each hunk of potato. We had a cellar, no cement walls, but it was deep enough for storing potatoes without danger of freezing. Dad told us he had dug the whole thing by hand. It must have been a back-breaking job. I suppose the basement was at least ten feet square and six feet deep or more. Mom kept her canned jars of jelly and preserves on a hanging shelf. Also pickles and various vegetables. We learned to be wary of getting up potatoes for meals without a light, as it was known to happen that once in awhile one could grab ahold of a salamander in the dark bin of potatoes.

After planting and sprouting a very large patch of potatoes would have to be hoed. We would each have to do a certain number of rows each day. Then when all were hoed we'd start all over again at the beginning and do it again. At least two or three times.

First of all, in the morning Mom would make oatmeal or cornmeal mush with raisins or cracked wheat cereal. This happened after Dad had got up and started the big, black iron range with kindling and lignite coal. When he came in from feeding the animals, milking the cows and watering all the animals we'd all have breakfast with big slices of homemade bread and butter and all the milk we could drink.

As we got a little older and learned how, we'd help with the milking and also pumping the water. Oh yes, at least once a week we'd have pancakes with syrup and butter. Mom was a good cook. She cared about her cooking and took special pains to make it tasty. Made wonderful bread. Baked 6 or 7 loaves at least three times a week. Dad had nothing but contempt for store-bought bread.

Our dinners and suppers were very similar. Big meals of potatoes and meat and various vegetables. Dinner was at noon when Dad and whoever was helping in the fields came in. Supper was at six and in-between times a little lunch would be sent out to the fields.

After supper and chores were over we'd often play whist. We'd have sing-a-longs where everyone would join in to the accompaniment of a guitar (mail order from Wards). We always had lots of books to read.

Dad often referred to Franklin D. Roosevelt as the man who saved the farmers. I have no idea where they voted or even if they voted. Probably at a school house. Both Mom and Dad could speak and understand some German. I remember then singing *Stille Nacht Heilige Nacht* on Christmas eve. When there was an influx of German Russians at the Berlin Catholic Church congregation they spoke together in a foreign language that Dad could not understand, although he did try to converse with them. They

spoke English also which helped, but he said their German was very different from the High German that he knew.

According to Dad, his mother's father had been very poor in Germany, herding cows and living on black bread. I believe Mom's folks were better off. She and her people spoke Low German. I believe the distinction was north and south [Germany]. Both families left Germany because of the everlasting wars and conflicts going on over there. They wanted a better life.

I remember Dad saying that the Civil War started shortly after [the families] arrival in the States and that some of the men of the family went up to Canada to avoid jumping from the frying pan into the fire, so to speak. They had had enough of wars.

We bathed mostly with "sponge" baths. A big pan of water a bar of soap, wash cloth and towel. Start at the top and work on down. We kept clean. We studied hygiene in the schools. Sex and reproduction were big secrets, but living on the farm was a natural lesson in the facts of life. It was all around us. As I remember, people were mostly normal, except for a little overindulgence at some of the bars - only one each in Grand Rapids and Berlin.

Uncle Ferdie had a tractor. It was the first I remember. George drove it all day long. I believe he called it "poppin' Johnny". I believe he bought it new about middle of the thirties. Uncle Ferdie was quite mechanically inclined. I remember the big threshing machine he pulled into neighboring fields as well as Dad and kept the whole conglomeration of pulleys, wheels and belts running right along. He always had an oil can in his hands. He always made a sure to position the blower so that the chaff blew with the prevailing wind. Itchy stuff, that chaff.

We all got along well, although we did argue, especially about who did the dishes last. After my brother Gussie left for the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] I helped Dad with outside chores. Every month a check came for \$25.00 from the CCC's. It was a godsend in those depression days.

We went to town to buy salt, sugar, and kerosene for the summer stove and the lamps. We went to LaMoure, Berlin and Grand Rapids. At least once a month there was a Farmers Union dance at Grand Rapids and we usually attended. Everyone bought a lunch and at the intermission all would sit and visit. The Farmer's Union would make the coffee. People would bring all the family and when the little ones went to sleep they would lie among the coats on the benches lining the dance hall, and sleep peacefully the rest of the dance.

I remember Dad hitching up the team to the grain wagon and going to Grand Rapids to get loads of lignite coal for the winter. It was at least a ten mile round trip journey. Lignite coal was mined in western North Dakota. I understood that it could be easily loosened from the top of the ground. It was a "cross" between wood and coal. It

would come in huge chunks that when stood on end and hit with the blunt end of an ax would break in to many thinner hunks, and they in turn had to be broken so as to fit in the coal stove. There was a trick to burning it to get the most constant heat and that was to move all the glowing embers at the height of heat to one side of the heat box and then filling the empty side with fresh lignite. By the time the glowing embers started dying down, the fresh lignite would be starting nicely and so on and on. The best thing about lignite was it was cheap.

Whenever we went over to Busch's we'd have sing-a-longs. Usually Lucina would play the piano, Uncle Ferdy played the fiddle and George the Saxophone. We loved it. We sang "Shine on Harvest Moon" "There's An Old Spinning Wheel in the Parlor" "Rain, when you gonna rain again, Rain?" "Red Wing". Dad sent for a guitar from Ward's catalog (Mom's idea). It came with instructions and I learned to play enough to strumming along to many songs. Gussie was real good at it.

I don't remember any serious prairie fires. Dad would some times "burn off" a field of stubble. He was very careful of which way the wind was blowing. We'd all have buckets of water and burlap sacks handy to beat out any strong fires. Burning made fields much easier to plow. Usually as Gussie was "dragging" the field after plowing he'd find arrowheads. We also picked up several Indian hammers. Big rounded stones with a groove around the middle where it had been fastened to thongs and wood. In our pasture there were several hollowed out places that Mom and Dad said were buffalo wallows. They also spoke of coyotes and wolves around when they first came to Dakota back in 1906. They could hear them at night. Mom said the coyotes would sometimes try to lure the farm dog away at night, and Dad told about one evening almost dusk when he was finishing plowing for the day he looked back and saw four wolves following. Said it gave him the creeps.

We had kerosene lamps and lanterns for light. They seemed to cast a warm, cozy glow and we read many books and played many card games by their light.

We had many blizzards but none so bad that we couldn't get out to the barn to tend the animals or to the coal shed. Several times the road past our farm would be blocked with snow for weeks at a time. The mail would be left at a neighbors mail box about a mile away. It was a cold walk, but we'd bundle up. We would see pheasants sitting in the lee of a snow bank, frozen solid.

We received the LaMoure Chronicle once a week. Once a month The Dakota Farmer would come. During the summer months Tony Swanson from Berlin would stop by with Watkins products. He had a crate on the back of his car for chickens that farmers wives would trade for spices and flavorings.

I remember Gus had a write up in the LaMoure Chronicle when he made captain in the Marines during the 2nd World War. We thought it was quite an accomplishment in view of the fact he hadn't even gone to high school, and it wasn't until after the War and

his marriage that Gus got his G.E.D. and went on to become a printer in the newspaper business.

The neighbors all pitched in at harvest time. There would be at least four or five men beside Dad and all us kids helping to pitch bundles and shovel grain. As I mentioned before, Uncle Ferdy would have the thrashing machine and be in charge of keeping it going. We had some wonderful huge dinners then.

When we first moved back to N. Dak. in 1933 we had to get our water from Busch's until Dad had cleaned and repaired the well on our farm. He also bought a Hereford cow from Uncle Ferdy - we called her Brownie. I think Dad got a real good deal from Uncle Ferdy for her. Seems like it was around ten dollars, and she was always a good milk cow. The Busch's were always helpful good neighbors and relatives. I can remember some wonderful Sunday dinners that Aunt Rose prepared.

I think Dad took his grain to Grand Rapids. It was a little closer than Berlin. It was about a nine or ten mile round trip. When my brother Gus was home he'd ride along. I don't believe the grain wagon was covered. Dad would only take it to town when the weather was nice. Kept it stored in the granary.

The folks really never mentioned anything about other races. I suppose because there weren't any around. I never heard a racist remark at home.

The mail order catalogs were a godsend to the farmers families. They were our department stores, our wish books and finally wound up in the outhouse. It was always a day of great excitement and joy when a package would arrive in the mail from Sears or Wards. Sometimes if clothes or shoes didn't fit right they'd have to be sent back - reordered and then the waiting would begin all over.

We always had a telephone. It was a crank telephone. Everyone on the line had a certain number of rings. I think ours was two rings. You could pick up the phone and listen in on conversations. We very seldom did, but every once in a while it was fun to listen in. Of course everyone was pretty careful what they said anyway. If there was a reason for a general call, there would be a series of about seven or eight rings in a row. Mom said that when Halley's Comet was seen someone gave a general ring and said "the world will end at noon today." Created quite a stir. Uncle Ferdy kept the telephone lines in good repair. I remember one of several bad snow storms when the drifts piled so high that we could easily jump over the telephone wires alongside the house in the southwest corner by the trees.

Aunt Ceil and Uncle Frank Lange and Aunt Bertie and Aunt Julie came to visit all at one time. I still have a picture of all the group at a picnic at Grand Rapids Park. It was a lot of fun.

Mom & Dad never hit or spanked any of us, but with a "look" they could make you tremble. We could argue with Mom about whose turn it was to do what, but never with Dad. We always had birthday cakes and presents and spent the 4th of July usually at a picnic at Grand Rapids. When we were at the park, almost every Sunday during the Summer Dad would carefully open his old coin purse and give us each a nickle to spend as we liked. The nickle bought an ice cream cone or a bottle of pop or a candy bar back then.

We played card games, we jumped rope, played hop scotch, hide the button, hide and go seek, soft ball.

We only had a small herd of cows. We milked maybe five or six at the most. It took about fifteen minutes to milk a cow. I usually milked two.. They were tied up at a long wooden manger. They each had their own place and always went there. There were hay holes in the floor above when we'd fork down hay for the cows and horses. One year after a miserable hay crop Dad had to buy bales of hay and straw for the animals and it was of very poor quality.

Our neighbors to the south, the Seidschlags, would drop in every once in awhile to play cards in the evening. Quite often neighboring families would have evening parties for the young people. We'd dance and visit and have a lunch. Someone would play the violin or accordion. I especially recall the Quinlans and the Kaufmans. One of the Kaufmans was blind, but he'd play whist with marked cards and was very good at it. Everyone would have to call out the suit and number of the card they played and he could remember them all. The Seidschlags had a hired man who was blind also, and he could play cards the same way. His name was Chester Peck. He was also a very good guitar player. He could ride a horse very well - he'd keep snapping his fingers as he rode and could keep his directions that way. He helped with milking and other every day chores.

Dad's sisters sent us a battery radio along about 1937. We had to be careful how long we'd listen or the battery would go dead. I think it ran on a car battery. It was the first radio we ever had and I can still remember the wonder it inspired listening to music in that lamplit parlor so long ago.

I believe that Busch's got their dinner bell at an auction but whose I have no idea. Aunt Rose would ring it to bring in the men folk at noon time for dinner. When we'd go over to visit we'd ring it until certain looks would tell us "enough". Not everyone was as enamored of its sound as we kids were. Not continually anyway.

Miles and I met our first year in high school, but it wasn't until seven years after the war that we met again and decided to marry. We did not discuss it with anyone. We went down to Aberdeen and got married by a justice of the peace. My folks were quite upset about it. Perhaps five or six years later we had our marriage "blessed" by the church.

When the WWII came along an organization was formed to encourage girls to become nurses. It was called the Cadet Nursing Corps. The government paid for all expenses plus \$15.00 a month spending money. I saw it as a good chance to get an education as well as a vocation so I joined. It was a three year course and I lasted two years before I went home for vacation and met Miles.

The folks were good Catholics and were quite faithful about attending Mass on Sundays, except for some of the very cold days in winter. Then we'd all be sure and say the rosary to make up for missing Mass. Aunt Rose would sing, maybe she'd play the organ too, I can't be sure. We'd all sing the church songs up in the choir loft. There was an Altar Society that would meet once a month at the different members homes. Their lunches were neat.

The Berlin Church [St. Johns] had stained glass windows that had been donated by members of the parish. One of those bore the legend "donated by F. Busch and A. Berning".

When we were in high school my sister Rufina and I played on the girls basketball team. We won several trophies mainly for second place. The team at Verona always won first place. They were the best. We also played kitten ball in the spring and had competition with other teams.

The prairies are quite beautiful in their way. The sky is like a blue bowl with a panorama of clouds inside. The sunsets and sunrise are spectacular. Sometimes at night the Northern Lights dance from all around the horizon right into the middle of the sky. In the summer time wildflowers abound as well as all kinds of birds and wildlife. There is always a wind blowing and if you want to see for miles and miles its the place to be.

## ANITA (BERNING) CRANFIELD RECALLS GROWING UP

written Spring, 1993

My grandparents George and Christine Berning lived on a farm not far from the Sinsinawa Mound in Wisconsin. I visited their farm one time that I can remember. I was very small. I can recall two huge dogs running toward me. They knocked me over and I thought I was done for, but all they did was lick my face. In my mind they were Great Danes.

Dad, August Berning, was born November 12, 1879, and married mom, Christine Mary Busch, who was born March 26, 1886, on November 13, 1906. They moved to a house just outside of Berlin ND, and lived there only long enough to build a house on the homestead farm about six miles from Berlin. The farm was one mile from the farm of dad's sister, Rosa, and mom's brother Ferdinand, who had preceded them by a year and were already settled on their farm. Mom and Dad arrived in ND about the first of the year in 1907 and lived on the farm for 13 years, until 1920.

While in North Dakota, Irene, Lillian, Cecelia, Rose, and August were born. (I believe Irene, Lillian and Cecilia were actually born at the Busch farm in Wisconsin, which would make Rose the first (after Irwin) to actually be born in North Dakota. I would guess that losing their first child Irwin made my parents very wary of having the children so far from doctors. Turned out right because when Rose was born Dad delivered her and then the doctor got there.)

In 1920, we moved to Dubuque IA. There, Hyacinth, Ruby and Ruth (twins) were born. Ruth died at about 18 months of diphtheria. [Note: this differs slightly from Rose's account] They were born at Grandpa and Grandma Busch's farm in Wisconsin. The rest of us, Rufine, Agnes, myself (Anita), and Melvin were born in Dubuque IA.

Dad had a job as a fine finisher in a piano and furniture factory. Irene married at age 19 to Carl (Butch) Langkamp in about 1928. Irene taught me the first song I ever learned and I remember it to this day. "A Tahitian Love Song". I don't remember a time when Butch was not a part of the family. I was about three when they married and he called me "Whitie" because of my blond hair.

I don't remember what education Irene had above the 8th grade, but I know that Lillian, Cecelia, Rose and Gus went to a business school of some sort.

Lillian married Walter McFadden, I'm not sure when. As I remember it, they kept their marriage a secret for a while because Lillian would have lost her job if her employer found out that she was married. I remember finding out about it shortly before we moved in 1933. By that time Irene and Butch had two children, Dorothy and Donald. Cecelia was working in an office when mom and dad decided, because of the depression, and losing the house in Dubuque, to move back to the farm in 1933. I was 7 years old and had just finished second grade. I think mom said that the house on Lincoln Ave was all

paid for except \$275 when the woman they bought it from repossessed it. What a blow for them, and what a great boon that they still had the farm in ND still in their name and being farmed by renters. They called in a moving company (Waltzers) and packed us all and headed for North Dakota. Ever after that move, whenever dad came into the house and it was a mess he would ask "when are the Waltzers coming?"

When we left Dubuque in 1933, Dad was driving a Ford Model T (I think it was a 1927), which had removable cloth and isinglass side panels. Dad had built a storage box onto the running board on the drivers side. Dad, mom, Rose, Agnes, Melvin, and me, Anita, went up to North Dakota in the car. Gus, Rufine and Ruby rode in the moving van with the furniture. Hyacinth stayed in Dubuque with Rene and Butch Langkamp and their two children, Dorothy and Don. Lillian was married to Walter McFadden and Ceil had an office job, so they stayed behind in Dubuque.

It took two days to get to the farm. I don't remember the names of any towns, but I do remember that we stayed in two cabins at the roadside during the one night on the road. I also remember topping a high hill and the road appeared to run right into a large lake. I cried and cried because I was sure we were going into the lake. I was 7 years old and riding in a car for the first time. Fortunately the road turned and ran right alongside the lake at the bottom of the hill. Guess I was the only dummy because I don't remember anyone else being petrified!

Another highlight of the trip was being stopped by a patrolman. Again I cried and raised Cain because I thought Dad was going to be taken away. The patrolman stopped dad because there was no license plate on the car, but dad had a license application, or temporary license, taped to the rear window. Again my fears were for nothing. I remember also almost the same minute dad said "we're in Dakota" a really strong, hot, hot wind came surging through the car and was with us until we reached the farm in the afternoon. I don't remember that Model T ever stopping that a well aimed kick or a hairpin from mom's hair didn't get it going again.

The farm in North Dakota was 160 acres, 1/4 section of land. The house was small, two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs, and a glassed in porch to the east which was used as a kitchen during the summer and early fall. Otherwise all living went on in the largest downstairs room. It has a large wood and coal burning range, a dining room table, buffet, and easy chair. Behind the door were hooks for coats and jackets to hang on. The other downstairs room was mothers bedroom. she was sick a lot and needed warmth and care. With her asthma and lung problems every cold was a serious threat of pneumonia. I don't remember Mom ever being really well, but we always had two large garden plots and she always helped with the gardening. One plot was to the west of the house and one was on the south. We always canned quart after quart of beans, carrots, peas, beets, corn, pickles, tomatoes, and had a big crock for sauerkraut. Also, a large potato bin. Mom always saw to the making of root beer and dad was the beer expert. You could always tell when the beer was ready. All the neighbor men would find their way to our house.

Also, when it got cold in the fall, there was a big butchering day. Uncle Ferd and George would help dad and Gus butcher four hogs. There followed a very busy day of making sausage, head cheese, frying down jowl meat, making bacon and ham, (salting it down to be smoked later). Rendering lard took several days. Sausage was fried and put into gallon syrup tins then covered with rendered lard and sealed with paraffin. The same was done with jowl meat. And of course there was butter making, and bread baking days and wash day.

The water from our well was so hard that it made the clothes look yellow, so on wash day, water was hauled from a neighbor's artesian well during the spring, summer and fall. Also, we collected any rain water in barrels placed under the eaves of the house. During the winter we melted snow for washing hair, bathing, and washing clothes. During the summer the wash was done outside, and during the winter we dressed warm and did the family wash on the enclosed porch. A big boiler of water was put on the kerosene stove on the porch, a couple of bars of Fels Naptha soap sliced into it, then the white clothes were put in and boiled. From there the laundry went to tubs for scrubbing on a wash board and into another tub for rinsing. Wash day was hard work. As I remember it, Rose helped mother in the house. The rest of us worked where work was necessary, milking cows, feeding chickens, swilling the pigs, pumping water for the animals, weeding, and hoeing the garden, picking potato bugs, pitching hay, shocking grain, cleaning the barn, and all the other chores that go along with farming. The Busches had a windmill, which was a convenience that we didn't have, so our water was all pumped by hand labor.

During canning time all hands were busy hulling peas, picking and cutting beans, cutting corn off the cob, and doing whatever had to be done to ensure that there would be food on the table during the winter. Again the copper boiler was called into service for canning. There was no pressure canner on the farm until I was about to leave home. The fellows did all the plowing, disking and planting. After that some of the girls helped to cultivate. Dad and Gus did the hay cutting, but raking the hay into windrows for drying, and pitching the hay required help from the girls. The only time there was help with the planting was in case of illness. Then many of the neighbors would help. but harvesting was another story. Busches threshing machine went from farm to farm and everyone helped to get the harvesting done. Then the women were busy cooking for the threshers and doing the chores.

One really outstanding memory was one night when Rufine, Ag, and I were milking cows. I was milking Brownie. Rufine was milking Whitie, and Ag was milking a cow a bit further down from us. A wee kitten came up to Brownie and started sharpening her claws on Brownie's back leg. Brownie kicked, skinning my leg and then, off balance, she fell on Rufine, who was milking next to me. Both buckets of milk were lost and while Rufine and I were laughing and crying in the aisle the kitten walked off, switching her tail and looking smug about the whole incident.

One incident involving the pigs: dad usually kept two or three hogs for breeding, and three or four for butchering, and would send the rest to market. The last time I was home to help load the pigs on the truck, the truckers had the pigs going up the ramp when one decided she didn't like the idea, turned around, and ran right between one of the truckers legs. There he was, riding backward on that big hog around the pen until she dumped him in the worst spot in the pen. I've never seen anything funnier, but couldn't even laugh, for I've never seen anyone so mad!

Mel was kind of late entering the family work force because of his age, but he made up for it by helping dad until he was old enough to go away to school. Horses were used on the farm until Mel told dad that he had to get a tractor or lose a helper. That was about 1942 or 1943. Dad would never have gone into mechanized farming without that push. Dad's horses were special to him, and he had some beautiful teams. There were usually five or six milk cows and six horses.

The crops generally raised on the farm were wheat, oats, barley and corn.

The only trees in the area were planted by WPA (Works Progress Administration) workers. The trees were supplied by the government, as was the labor to plant them. There were rows of trees north of the Busches and west of our farm. The land was donated by the owners, and I believe that Uncle Ferd and Dad went half and half on that. The other trees on our farmstead were hand planted by Dad and the rest of us, and many a bucket of water was hauled to keep them going during the drought years. I think the government supplied the trees also, but we did the work. We always took great pride in the many trees around our place when many of the other farms had none. To the best of my recollection those trees to the west were planted in the late '30s. Finally, also in the late '30s we got an engine for pumping water from our well. That was a great asset because it was a hard pump to work. There were periods during the winter that were so cold that water had to be hand carried to the barn for the animals because it was too cold for them to get out.

During the long winter months there was a lot of cards played, bridge, whist, five hundred, solo. The kids would play 21, using tooth picks to bet with. Ruby played the guitar, as did Rose and Gus, but mostly Ruby played and we would all sing. Many a comb was covered with tissue paper and played. Dad played his harmonica. We didn't get him to play often, so it was a real treat when he did.

Some of my best memories are of us all gathering around the piano at Busch's house and singing.

We had bible study clubs that met once a month at Busch's, Long's, Freese's, and our house. Our place was really too small to lend itself to entertaining, so the big get togethers were the barn dances we had when the hay loft got empty and before the new crop would go in. Uncle Ferd played his fiddle, and Mary played an organ which

someone hauled in, and sometimes George, Vince, and Art on the sax and clarinet. All the neighbors would come from the whole countryside.

When the Shockman's barn burned down there was a neighborhood barn raising, and a barn dance in the new barn loft. I remember all of us going to Grand Rapids to dances at the Grange Hall from the time I was 9 or 10 years old. They were family affairs. Another big day was July 4th in Memorial Park with firecrackers, political speeches, ball games and a neighborhood picnic with Busches, Freeses, Long and Bernings all meeting at the park and having a combined picnic dinner. If we were really lucky we would each get a nickel and get ourselves an ice cream cone or pop sickle. Nickels were hard to come by.

I have never been able to swim, and I blame that on the fact that on our first 4th of July in Memorial Park a boy of 16 was swimming in the James River and got a cramp and drowned. They worked for so long trying to get him to start breathing giving him artificial respiration. That left a lasting memory.

Most of our trips to and from church, or visiting or fishing, were spent with everyone singing.

That first Model T was our transportation for about four years, then dad brought another Model T with windows that rolled up.

I had just finished 2nd grade at Holy Trinity School in Dubuque when we moved back to North Dakota. All of us, Ruby, Rufine, Ag, Mel and I, went to Henrietta #2 country school, which was 1 1/2 miles as the crow flies from home. We walked until the weather became so cold and snowy that we couldn't make it, then Dad borrowed an enclosed sleigh from Uncle Ferds and took us to school and returned in the afternoon to pick us up. That meant a long, cold ride for Dad twice a day. The rides were for only the coldest weather. I remember walking many days that were sunny, on top of high mounds of snow and breaking through the crust occasionally and getting a boot full of snow. During blizzards, of course, we missed school.

I think I was in 5th grade when the country schools were consolidated and everyone went to Berlin to school. Then we drove during decent weather, but when it got too cold and the snow was too deep mom and dad rented two rooms in Berlin, first at Reys, and then at another house, and we did light housekeeping. Ruby and Rufine were in high school by then, and considered old enough to take care of everything. We had a living area where we cooked and studied, and then there was a bedroom where the five of us slept. Ruby and Rufine in one bed and Ag, Mel, and me in another. After a few years of that the township had a school bus come around and pick us up.

All of us loved basketball and most of us were on the team. Ruby and Rufine were stars on the basketball team and I remember me playing from the 7th grade on. I had the height and got several letters, but never figured that I was nearly the player that

either Ruby or Rufine was. The girls teams were always good. The boys teams, as I remember, were mediocre.

Next to basketball we loved dancing. We had high school dances every so often, and for a long while there were Saturday night dances at the hall below the "Oasis", the local pub in Berlin run by the Shockmans. Sometimes there was live music and sometimes it was the juke box music. I'm sure I must have learned to dance from my older sisters, but I remember passing my talent on to Mel and to Art Busch. They passed up the teacher in a hurry, but we had lots of fun. Any dance anywhere in the area would find us there "cutting a rug".

I don't remember going back to visit in the Dubuque area while we lived on the farm, but remember Dad and aunt Rose's sisters and brother-in-laws coming to visit and a few visits from the older sisters. Lil and Ceil came up in a car with a rumble seat (Lil had Phillip, her oldest child, along with her. He was a toddler at the time). Then Ceil came up a couple of times at pheasant hunting time. By that time she was seriously interested in Don Thimmisch and he had introduced her to the world of guns. She married him, and between the two of them they got all kinds of honors at shooting meets. One year Ceil was the national champion rifle woman and one of the ten best pistol shots in the country including both men and women. somehow the pheasants sensed that she had come because they all disappeared from the trees around the house and never showed up again until she left!

Irene and Butch Langkamp came up to the farm one time with their youngest son, Tommy, but I don't remember any visits from any of mom's and Uncle Ferd's brothers and sisters. My memories of them were all from when I was little and lived in Dubuque. Uncle Frank and Aunt Addie and four children, and Uncle Bill all lived on the farm with Grandpa Busch until he died, and then Uncle Frank took it over. Uncle Leonard and Aunt Stella lived in Dubuque and not too far from where we lived. Aunt Cecelia and Uncle Aldo Chinburg lived in Dubuque with their kids until aunt Celia died. Then uncle Aldo moved the family to California. Aunt Hyacinth and uncle Theodore Chase lived in Dubuque also.

Dad and aunt Rose's sisters were aunt Julia, aunt Lena (and uncle Art) Parker, aunt Bertie (and uncle Otto) Hoppmann, aunt Kate (and uncle Herman) Placke, aunt Lydia (I never met her husband but his last name was Buckingham and he was called uncle Buck). [There was also aunt Cecilia, who married Frank Lang and lived and farmed in Wisconsin].

I know that mom went back for funerals, as did dad, but the trips were always made by train, as were any trips made from Dubuque to North Dakota to check on tenants and crops on the farm.

I finished high school in 1943 at Berlin. There were seven in my class. Francis Long went directly into service and was killed shortly thereafter at Iwo Jima. I took

TREES

FIELDS

TO F.W. BUSCH'S

CORN CRIB



CHICKEN COOP

PUMP

CRAB APPLE

SMOKE HOUSE

BARN

GATE

PLUM GROVE

GARDEN

LILAC

FLOWERS

OUT HOUSE

HEDGE

TREES

TO GRAND RAPIDS ROAD

HOUSE

PIG PEN

ANITA'S VIEW OF THE BERNING FARM.

PIG HOUSE

GRANARY

GARAGE

CURRENT/GOOSEBERRY ASPARAGUS

ROSE HEDGE

LILAC

179A

TO BERLIN

ROAD

**DAKOTA**  
**ne VOSBERG**

na Busch

1886

950

-1906

teachers exams and taught for two years, one outside of Edgeley, and one year close to Dickey, then applied for nurses training under the Nurse Cadet Corps, was accepted and went into training in 1945. Gus was in the Marines since before the war, having joined early in 1941. He was sent to the south Pacific before supply lines were set up and went from staff sergeant to first lieutenant in the field [a July 25, 1945, letter from Rosa to George Busch says that Gus was a Captain in the Marines. See 1944-45 letters in a later section] Mel had to finish high school and then help dad on the farm. That was when the tractor was bought and the farm started to make money.

Not only did the farmers have the Depression and drought to contend with, but one year the rust ruined all the grain. Another year the grasshoppers ate everything. They were so plentiful that one could look towards the sun and see a whole layer of them shading the sun. Also there was the violent wind to contend with. One year the crops were so short they could not be harvested. Dad thought he would use the crops as hay to feed the animals during the winter. He had to buy hay and straw during the bad years. He cut the wheat and oats with the mower, and raked them into windrows to dry. That night one of the infamous winds came up and blew all the hay into the next county.

The one good thing, if anything good can be attributed to the war, is that it took us out of the Depression. The big drought started letting up in about 1938. One thing we never had to worry about in going to school was rain. There just wasn't any while we were going to the country school.

I got out of nursing school in 1948 and went home in January of 1949 because Mom was sick and dad needed help. Gus was helping farm by then because Mel had gone to college and then tried for the Air Corps. Mom died April 22, 1950. There was a snowfall the day she was buried but just as the coffin was lowered the sun peeked out for just a few minutes. I always felt that was God's way of saying all was well.

Sister Mary Katherine (Agnes) had joined the Sister Servants of Christ the King in Edgeley. Mel went into the Army in the Korean War and spent some time in Korea. Dad kept the farm going for a year or two, and then sold it to Glenn Witt, and stayed at Ruby's and Mile's house in Berlin until he remarried at the age of 72 to Grace McGregor. When she became sick her girls notified us they were closing up the house and Dale and I got Dad and brought him to Rochelle IL with us. He was in Rochelle until a place opened up for him at the Manor in Edgeley where Sister Mary Katherine served in the convent.

We soon moved to St. Petersburg, FL and it was while there that I received a telegram advising that dad had died. Our kids had chicken pox and I had gone into the hospital to have a small breast tumor removed, so I didn't get to the funeral, which I hated. He and mom are buried in the Berlin St. Johns cemetery.

## MEMORIES OF MELVIN BERNING

written July, 1993 and August, 2005

**AUGUST, 2005:** After high school in '45, I stayed on the farm, farming until the fall of '48 when I went to Carroll College in Helena, Montana. After my freshman year, I worked for the Department of Water Conservation in Montana. In '49 I enrolled at Montana State College (MSC) in Bozeman in the Engineering Department only to find out that I had been accepted as a Cadet in the Air Force. I withdrew from MSC after a week of classes and returned to the farm until November when I went to Randolph Field in San Antonio, Texas, where I was introduced to the T-6. By March, the Air Force dropped my franchise, as they figured I wasn't cut out to fly. I returned to the farm for the summer and went back to MSC in the fall of '50. After enrollment and two weeks of class "MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS" decided I should be in the Army. Again I left the higher halls of learning to put on the uniform of my country and after a year in a Combat Engineer Battalion and rising to the rank of Sergeant. I took a delay in route to Korea and also got married to my sweet wife in San Francisco. After a short tour of six months in the lovely country of Japan and the not so lovely or friendly tour in Korea I returned to my wife with my final discharge in hand from the military.

After a short honeymoon in New Orleans we went back across the country to Seattle where I worked on the XB-52, which became the work horse of the AF. Six months sitting at a drafting stool convinced me to return to MSC in the fall of '53 where I earned my BS in Civil Engineering graduating in '56. With our first born, John, we returned to California as a permanent base and have lived here ever since. We moved to our present house in 1964 and have settled in with apple trees of my own grafting, pear trees, blue berries, figs, grapes and Kiwi vines.

I retired from state service in '78 and worked for consultants until '84 when I opened my own firm as a registered hospital and school inspector. In '94 retired for the last time. Lee not only was a great housewife and mother, she also was a Registered Nurse and worked full time when I was in college and part-time after the family started. She retired in '82.

During my pre-college days I spent many hours listening to stories from mom and dad about their early lives together and about their childhood years. Mom taught me how to graft trees and I have been quite successful at it in my later years as every apple tree that is on our yard was grafted by me. Mom had a lot of stories of her childhood days. Among one of the interesting ones was that during the DRY [prohibition] years, Grandpa [Wilhelm] Busch made his own beer, hard cider wine and whiskey. Grandpa liked his nip now and then but he was always a gentleman and never over imbibed besides why should he not have his nightly nip even though it was illegal. He was the only grandparent I met at at the age of 90 he still was mentally bright. He died at the ripe old age of 94.

Dad also had many stories to tell of his growing up years. He had a hard life as at the age of about 8. and achieving reading and writing skills at the third primer level he graduated to the handles of a plow and finished his academic career at that point [Ruby suggests he had a fourth grade education]. [In Wisconsin] Dad liked to play baseball and box with his friends on Sunday afternoon, [all enjoying] a keg of beer and bread and cheese. The results of one boxing match was a cancer of the nose which was successfully removed leaving a large permanent scar on his large Berning nose. In his later [adult] years [in Wisconsin] he mined for lead with his uncle Joe Vosberg. Dad knew where to mine from his experience on the farm plowing, as the horses would sometimes sink to their bellies while plowing which indicated a crevice below ground. It was at one of these places that dad and uncle Joe struck a rich lode of lead ore. He said that the Galena ore was square and getting as big as your fist when the water chased them out of the shaft. He and his partner sold out to a large company providing dad with enough dough to start his own family and buy a quarter section in Dakota next to his sister Rose and brother in law Uncle Ferdie.

**JULY, 1993:** My youth time up to teenager was spent in pursuit of visiting with my neighbors whenever I could talk Mom or Dad into letting me go either to Siedschlags or to the Buschs. I enjoyed the compay of Donald Siedschlag and of course, Art and Vince Busch. Vince was two or three years older and graduated into the heavier farm work, so that left Art and I to ourselves except for occasional chores of feeding the animals hay, or grain to the pigs and chickens.

After the teens were reached I was needed to help in the field with plowing, cultivating, harrowing, making hay, binding grain, shocking and harvesting. In the morning Dad generally had the animals fed, but I would milk two or three cows, turn the separator for skimming cream from the milk before going to school in Berlin. After school was out in May, the heavy work of farming would begin and continue until fall, with the exception of two weeks of catechism or bible study held in the Berlin Elementary School or at St. John's Catholic Church.

We farmed with horses and continued to do so until 1946 when Dad purchased an F-20 Farmall tractor. All the same work was necessary except for feeding and currying the horses which was replaced by servicing and maintaining the tractor. With the advent of the tractor, we rented a second quarter of ground from the Siedschlags and proceeded to double our production of grain and hay.

When Ann left for nurses training and Ag to the convent, my tasks were increased to include housework chores, light cooking, washing dishes and doing laundry when Mom was incapacitated. Dad was not too great at housework, but he was a hard worker and did a full man's work every day. By the time I left for Carroll College in 1948, my brother Gus was back from service and would help with the farm in my absence.

Farming in the thirties was very hard due to the drought, and many of our neighbors sold out and left Dakota. I remember reading of several auction sales a week

and attending some of them. Fortunately, the war years brought back good economics and an end to the drought. The Berning farm was heavily mortgaged since [after?] our return from Dubuque. It was actually owned by the bank in the late thirties and then was finally free and clear and once again completely owned by Dad.

Dad sold the farm in the mid-fifties to a neighbor, Glen Witt, and all that remains of the farmstead are a few trees just to the north of where our house once stood.

Dad was an out-and-out isolationist and I guess some of his conservative Republican tendencies rubbed off on me. We used to have long talks about politics and Dad followed every word of Senator Wheeler from Montana and Senator Nye from North Dakota. Both were staunch isolationists and against the participation in the War. Dad had no use for President Roosevelt and his comment on the announcement of Pearl Harbor was "He (Roosevelt) finally got us into the War." I don't believe Dad ever voted for FDR on any of his numerous elections to the presidency. My closest involvement in politics was a letter of reference from Senator Milton Young when I entered the cadet program in 1948 in San Antonio TX.

Mom and Dad could not speak English until they went to school, and spoke and read German, but they forgot most of it except for singing occasional songs at the Busch farm. (I can still recall most of the words and tunes, but I never knew the meanings.) By the time Dad passed away, Dad would answer queries made to him in German, "Ich canst nicht verste" which would translate "I can't understand". (Pardon the poor German spelling). He always did maintain a rich heritage in German when he became angry and did not wish to be understood by us kids.

I went to Wisconsin with Mom once, and as I recall, the train trip via Jamestown, Fargo, Minneapolis-St. Paul, to Dubuque took about a day. We went two weeks on the Busch farm where I met Grandpa Busch, the only grandparent I ever met. I believe that he was 90 years old or so and I was impressed by his age and I guess more scared than in awe of him. We also met Mom and Dad's brothers and sisters in the area. I don't remember much of our trip up to Dakota in the Model T, but I do recall being scared of the bearded, hungry people all around us as we camped during the several days it took to travel to the farm.

Health was of importance growing up, but I don't remember too much about teaching health per se. I do remember sulphur blown through a straw onto my frequent sore throats. Mom's need for mustard plasters through her bouts with pneumonia and bronchitis and I also remember one time I had a long thorn in one of the joints of my big toe. I couldn't get it out so Mom wrapped my toe in salt pork with sticky tape one evening and the following morning when I unwrapped my toe, the offending thorn was quite visible and I removed it with a tweezers quite easily. As I remember, it was one fourth to one half inch long. I also remember being steamed with spirits of camphor when I had a bad cold. Actually, my childhood and adulthood have been relatively free of sickness. In fact, I don't remember any broken bones in Dakota for any in our family.

As I mentioned earlier, our tractor was the first piece of motorized equipment we had and other than a tractor-drawn plow we jury-rigged our binder and disk from horse power to tractor-towed. We always cultivated corn with horses, as well as making hay and hauling grain to town. In 1949, I converted the old Model T to a trailer and we then could haul grain to town with our tractor or automobile. I do remember quite vividly that Dad had no flair for mechanics. Any repair work on the binder, tractor or car was done by me.

We did all of our grain hauling by wagon until the advent of the Model T trailer. A trip to Grand Rapids would take about three hours for a round trip - loading 60 bushels of wheat or 90 bushels of oats on the wagon from the granary would take a half hour so two trips per day would be a full day's labor, especially since we would return with a ton or two of lignite coal on some occasions. Berlin took even longer, as it was at least two and one half hours each way, plus loading the grain made it a one-day trip. On rare occasions we would pick up coal in Berlin.

In 1947, we had a severe blizzard to such a degree that we couldn't get a wagon into Grand Rapids to pick up coal because of drifted snow. I borrowed Uncle Ferd's bobsled the previous evening and then I waited until the following day to go to Grand Rapids for coal, as we were nearly out of this precious commodity. The day dawned, cold and clear and with a brisk northwest wind and more drifting snow but no new snow. I put on Dad's old fur coat and headed to Grand Rapids. I managed to load a half ton on the sled and returned home much to Mom and Dads joy. This coal lasted until the roads were plowed and we could go again with the wagon. I was one cold eskimo when I got home from that sleigh ride!

Electricity came to our farm when I was at Carroll College in 1948; prior to that it was the old kerosene lamp routine after dark. In later years we acquired a lamp with a glowing mantle which aided night reading greatly. Running water was obtained by running to the well and pumping a bucket full of cold, magnesium laden water which caused frequent trips to the little house behind the house.

Catalogs were very important for school clothes and tools, but most of all, the last years catalogs were consigned to that little house behind the house and were put to their final rest, page by page. We received Montgomery Wards, Sears and Roebuck, and occasionally Speigels, which were all excellent for two years. Dad also ordered Wills Seed Catalog and Gurney's Seed Catalog, from which were ordered our vegetable seeds, and some fruit trees and vines. These catalogs were all glossy print and never suffered the ignominious end that the mail order catalogs always received.

A major chore on the farm was pumping water for the livestock. During the summer we could start our little gas engine and pump our water with power, but winter was something else. I remember pumping water for the cattle twice a day and it was as much of an ordeal for me and Dad as it was for the cows on blizzard and cold days. I

would pump for two or three cows and trade off with Dad while he pumped and I would turn the cows out to drink. It was one of the hardest jobs in winter but it did develop strong shoulder and back muscles.

We had three nationalities in Berlin - German, Norwegian and Swedes - with only a trace of Irish. No Italian, Spanish or Blacks were encountered. I remember a group of Black singers arrived for a concert in the Methodist Church and all of the school kids followed them around in complete disbelief. We had a family of Indian ancestry in our area and they fit in like the rest of the inhabitants in our community.

Discipline was accomplished by the presence of the old razor strap hung behind the door. The closest it ever came to actual use was Dad taking it down and snapping the two straps together making an awful noise, and all of us would straighten up real quick. I don't ever remember it being used for anything but sharpening Dad's straight razor and the above loud-popping sound. I do remember us siblings as having our own squabbles which never got too violent. Discipline was not required when you worked hard enough not to get into trouble.

My earliest memories were of dances at the Farmers Union Hall in Grand Rapids. As a child I would slide across the floor when the music stopped and promptly go to sleep on Mom or Dad's coat as the evening progressed. I learned to dance at the tender age of seven or eight and got much practice of the art at dances with Mom, my sisters and occasionally a local girl. This changed in my teen years as my sisters left home and I discovered "girls". Art and I would go to all the dances at Grand Rapids, Edgeley and Saturday dances to the Nickelodeon at the Oasis in Berlin. We would on occasion get as far as Jamestown and Peckham's barn for a dance. This branching out was aided considerably when Uncle Ferdie acquired a 1946 Plymouth after the War. My old Model "T", Arts Model "A" and Dad's Chevy did a lot to aid these dance runs.

During the winter time, after the chores were done and homework if any was complete, we would play cards. We played Rummy, "500", Solo, Whist, some Bridge and Euchre, Pitch and some Casino. Our first radio was acquired in 1936-37 and was listened to attentively. I remember clearly the announcement of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Neighbors would drop in on occasion and would always be invited to a meal if it was near meal time. As a general rule Sundays and holidays were spent at our home or at a neighbors. Mom would on occasion make beer or root beer and when this happened there would be additional visiting by our neighbors. The beer that didn't blow up in the cellar while brewing was really quite good.

As far as special activities for the family, there was always Mass on Sundays, Holidays, Lent. Most of the Berning kids sang in the choir while still at home and this took some additional time for practice. There were card parties, occasional movies, fourth of July celebrations, school plays, carnivals and graduations from grade and high

school. Graduations from higher institutions were limited and personal. Rufine and Ann received nursing diplomas and I in good time, after receiving two discharges from military service, graduated from college with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.

All of the elementary grades participated in county play day and we did manage to place in many events. During high school, Ruby, Rufine, Anita and myself participated in basketball and softball. I will be truthful and admit that the girls teams did better on the average than the boys teams. After the War I participated in a county league in baseball, travelling to LaMoure, Grand Rapids and Edgeley. We won a few games but again were never outstanding.

My decision to become an engineer arrived simultaneously with the upgrading of the county road system past our house. I knew that I wanted to be part of the design and construction team on large construction projects. I was impressed with the men surveying and staking out the project, the machinery to build it and most of all the transition from a narrow two wheeled set of tracks to an elevated highway with an all weather gravel surface.

I met Lee while I was away in service and after a short period of courtship we were married in San Francisco just prior to being shipped to Korea. We had a small afternoon ceremony with the Priest presiding and Lee's sister as the only family member attending. After returning from service, completing college and starting a family, we had our vows blessed in a Nuptial Mass here in Eureka. With the exception of John, all the kids were born and educated through high school here in Eureka, and received baccalaureate degrees from various colleges across the country.