

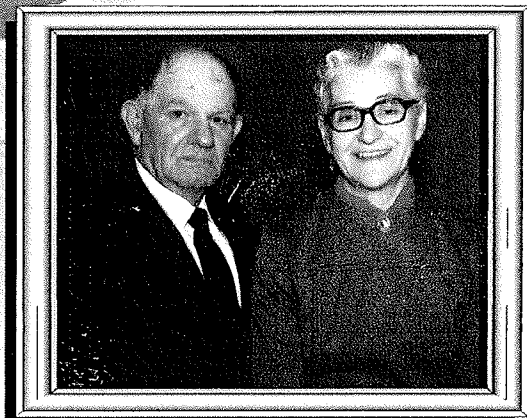
Emma (Feucht) Gerber's Memory Book



March
2005



Wedding Day
Nov. 8, 1932

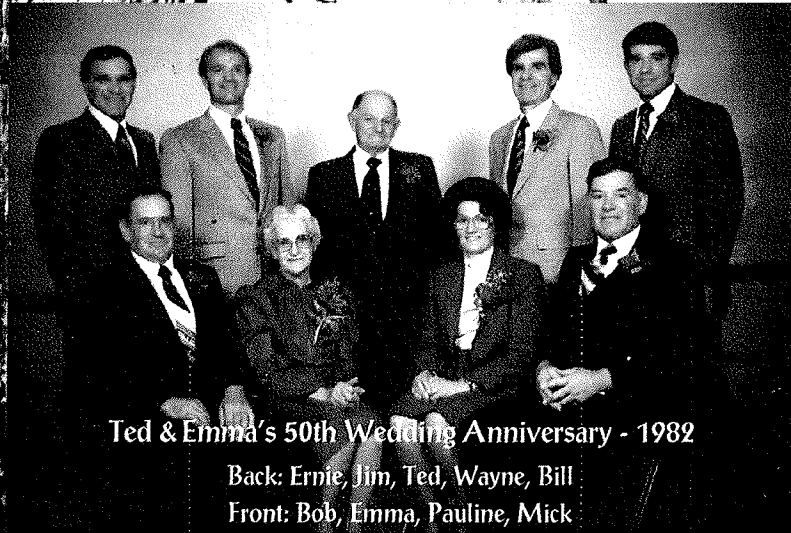


Ted
&
Emma

40th Wedding Anniversary



Back: Ernie, Pauline, Wayne, Bob, Mick
Front: Jim, Bill



Ted & Emma's 50th Wedding Anniversary - 1982

Back: Ernie, Jim, Ted, Wayne, Bill
Front: Bob, Emma, Pauline, Mick



Back: Jim, Bill, Wayne, Ernie, Mick, Bob
Front: Emma, Pauline



Theodore Roosevelt Gerber Birth: October 8, 1909 Death: August 14, 1999
Emma Marie Feucht Gerber January 13, 1910
Married: November 8, 1932

Children:

Robert Leroy (Bob) May 16, 1933
John Gilbert (Mick) July 21, 1934
Ernest Carl (Ernie) January 12, 1936
Wayne Leo July 12, 1938
Pauline Marie January 31, 1940
William Earl (Bill) January 7, 1943
James Ronald (Jim) April 15, 1944

Grandma had filled out a Memory book that Ginger had given her. Also wanting some memories of Grandma, I was hoping to get it copied but couldn't because of copyright laws. I then took the liberty to type it up and make copies as I thought other family members would also enjoy reading about Grandma's life. While typing I struggled to find a balance in editing. I wanted the document to be more readable but also wanted to preserve Grandma's language and personality that shines through. So please overlook where it is still "wordy". May all that read this enjoy it as much as I have. God Bless.

Emma Gerber's Memories

Family History

Where did our family come from?

Grandpa Ernest Gerber, originally came from Switzerland (which would be your great grandpa). He came to America first and then his brother, Fred, followed. Grandpa Ernest Gerber did not want to live at home in Switzerland because his real mother died, and he didn't want to live with a step mother. Because of that him and his Dad didn't see eye to eye so he came to America. Soon his brother Fred followed. Fred had one son George, lives in AZ. Fred's wife died in Onieda, KS. They also had one daughter, died at birth or soon after. Grandpa Ernest was very protective of Grandma Clara, he treated her like a queen. He felt sorry for her because she didn't have a daughter.

Did you spend the night at your Grandma and Grandpa's house?

Yes, I did at my Grandma Knoblochs house. I walked 2 1/2 miles sometimes in the evening. And their house was cold! She would fill a metal bed warmer with hot water and it was cozy! And plenty of homemade wool comforters from their sheep. They sheared the sheep, washed the wool, carded it by hand, and made comforters. Grandma Knobloch washed the wool. She had a spinning wheel and knitted woolen stockings. Itchy ugly old things.

What is your fondest memory of Grandpa/Grandma?

I didn't have real fond memories of Grandpa Knobloch. They had an apple orchard, if we threw an apple core away he would pick it & scold us for wasting one out of thousands of apples. We would help him & Grandma make gallons of cider. We did not dare to waste one apple core unless we threw it somewhere that he didn't find it. We soon learned & caught on. We must do them away good, so they can't be found!

What physical characteristics, personality traits or skills have you seen run through generations of our family?

I have seen in Grandpa Ted traits that followed Grandpa Ernest Gerber. One thing: not to reach out into the world too far, it may cost you a little money. It was good to be important but not in anything that would cost you a little money. That was a no no. Traits of wood working definitely followed grandsons. They farmed, raised beautiful horses.

What did your grandparents do? (for a living)

My Grandpa Knobloch farmed and he raised horses, he had some beautiful horses! Sometimes the baby horse had to run along side of the mother when working in the field the baby horse had to nurse. And it all worked out well! His horses were very special. They had special care!

What is the best lesson you learned from your parents?

My best lesson was we were taught to save! Don't you throw bread crumbs in the cob box, throw them out for the birds to feed on or when the chickens were running out in the yard so they can pick up. I also was taught special care in laundry! Be sure all stains & spots are removed before they were tossed in the washer. Never to use too much soap in the laundry, it is almost worse than none. We always used homemade soap. It was excellent. It took care of a lot of greasy clothes from farm machinery, etc. and it was so much fun & interesting to make. We used all our scrap fat from meat trimmings. (no waste)

When & where were you born?

I was born on Jan 13, 1910. On a farm 1 mile west and 1 ¼ south of Lester, IA in a farm house that was just newly built, and I am 90 years old and the place has been in the family ever since. 5 rooms upstairs, 15 of us, what a bunch. We had fun.

Were you named after anyone in particular?

Yes. I was named after my mother's sister that passed away from her 2nd child delivery. Her name was Emma. So my Dad married my mother which was her sister. She had 2 little boys which were my oldest Bros. Ernie & Ben. They were very special brothers to us. Ernie had curly hair as I was told like his mother.

Did you get along with your siblings?

Yes! We got along very well. Like all normal families we had our spats and our quarrels but we also made up some good old home spun fun. And it was & has brought many laughs & filled many memorable moments. There were lots of us so we could have lots of fun. And we did!

Did you have family activities you did together? (Explain)

We had no family activities outside of work, school, and church was the extent of it! School programs & picnics which were a big highlight in our life in later years. We had several family reunions, which were a great event and fun! But seems to be fading. Hope they keep up.

Childhood Years

Where did you live when you were little?

I lived on a farm 1 ¼ mile south of Lester, IA. That's where we grew up and had our family fun. I lived there until I got married. It still seems like my home! I was the 1st one of 15 to get married.

Did you have a big backyard when you were little?

Yes, and we had to mow the grass with a push mower. Maybe it sounds like fun, but on hot days it wasn't that great of a treat. (usually the grass was too long)

Did you have crayons?

Yes, and they were nice. We enjoyed using them but be careful not to overdo and use them up too fast. They cost money.

Did you have your own room when you were little?

No. Sometimes we slept 3 in a bed and 2 beds in a room, but we did always sleep right away. We also had some homespun fun, sometime the beds were kind of thrashed over and hard to put together like mother had them. Sometimes went down. Sometimes we heard a voice come up the stairs "What's going on up there?"

Did you ever jump on your bed when you were little?

Oh, definitely! That was the going thing! And oh so much fun, especially when there were feather beds. We wanted to see who would sink in the bed the deepest!

What was your favorite meal & who fixed it?

Mother usually fixed breakfast and it was a huge kettle of oatmeal or cream of wheat. Sometimes we had pancakes too, but had to start an hour ahead to have enough. to go around once. We had a huge skillet that made 15 to 20 pancakes at one time. It helped a lot. Also had applesauce, liver sausage, homemade fried potatoes.

Did you eat carrots when you were 7 years old?

Yes! But not an overdone amount. There were things I liked a little better than carrots, were good for you. My dad didn't like carrots so when they were passed at the table my dad said he didn't like them, my mom bumped under the table & said "hush"!

Did you have Popsicle's when you were little?

Oh no! We didn't know what Popsicle were, for us that was for people who were wealthy. Anyway we couldn't afford Popsicle's.

Did you ever go out to dinner or did you eat at home?

We only got to go out to dinner one time. A big department store hosted all 15 kids & Mom & Dad to a dinner because we had such a big family. They gave Ray his first suit & as a little boy that was a high treat. We could have anything we wanted. What a treat! We ate at home most of the time.

What did you look like when you were little?

Actually I don't know. We didn't have pictures until we got older, then that was a rarity. I think Mother said I had black hair, and long hair when I was born. The hired man wasn't interested in babies, but he did say I was the prettiest baby he has ever seen! Ha! Ha!

Did you ever play card games?

No. My dad didn't like cards so he didn't let us play cards. We played some kind of game with buttons on a board. And if I remember we also had some kind of marble game. I don't remember what it was called.

What was your favorite game?

In later years we played Carom or Monopoly, that was fun too. I think Carom was our favorite. The board we have came from Grandma & Grandpa Ernest Gerber, so it is very old as Grandpa Ted & his brothers played on it! It was interesting and something to do sometimes on a winter evening.

What did you do for fun?

We did anything we could think of for fun. Sometimes we would go out into the grove & play house. We would make mud pies & decorate them with corn kernels or whatever we could think up to do. I know it was something that didn't cost a thing!

Did you play any sports?

No. We used to try and play some ball. If we got away from a little work to be done. In school we played Andi-over the school house with the ball which was fun. Sometime if there was a sizable patch of ice we would skate over the noon hour at school.

Did you build forts & things?

Yes, and most anything we could think of to get out of a lot of work, usually we built forts out of snow when we had plenty of snow. That worked so well as we could pack the walls real well, and they would stand up.

How did you make friends?

In school and in church, we didn't get to go to town. Sometimes some folks would come from away on the train and stay all night at my parents home so we got acquainted with some people that way. Sometimes we would go to someone's place after church especially Grandma Knobloch's.

Did you ever do anything really bad when you were a kid?

Yes! One time I lied to my Dad. I don't remember about what it was, not much, anyway he lifted my skirt & gave me a good swat. It hurt so bad. I thought his hand was a mighty big hand. I didn't do that again. Outside of that I do not remember a spanking. I did get knuckled on the head.

What pranks do you remember from childhood?

Sometimes we would go to bed before the boys did. We had some big fur mittens they used to wear when driving horses on a sled or box wagon. We would pretend we went to bed, but instead we put on those big black fur mittens & crawled under their bed, grabbed their legs when they got into the bed. All at once there was a mighty scream. All at once there was a strong voice come upstairs, "What's going on up there. Shall I come up with a strap & settle you down?" "Oh no no, everything is OK!"

Did you ever get in trouble for lying?

I think my Dad lifted my skirt & gave me a good hard swat. Oh! What a big hand he had. I'm sure never again. I don't remember what about, it was minor.

Did your parents ever fight?

No, but oh my they did argue. About the smallest things, that I thought it was not worth it. About such minor things you wouldn't think of.

Were you happy as a kid?

Sometimes I was happy, but not all the time. There was always so much work to do. Never had time to play or anything else.

What was the greatest hardship you endured as a child?

Not having any money. When I was 21 yrs old someone sent me \$1.00 and I had to give it to my folks. We always had more than enough to eat, good food & nutritious food. Very few oranges, rarely no grapefruit. Mother used to buy grapefruit or oranges & we had to walk almost 2 miles to take them to our Grandma Knobloch, drooling over them ourselves.

Who was your childhood hero? Why?

I think my Bro. August was my favorite childhood hero. He was 11 months younger than I but I depended on him for good judgment & defense. I needed a lot of defense with 3 brothers above me. After I was married my mother said, "Aren't you coming to church this morning. I said "no" we are coming this p.m." My mother go upset & said we should go in the morning too. My older brother said "well, she is married now she should make up her own mind."

What is your favorite childhood memory?

Christmas programs at school. Also the picnics the last day of school when we had picnics at somebody's lawn. It was so nice and all the good food. My mother usually made the buns & I thought they were the best. We had a may-pole at school which was a neat thing. Also I was an old woman in the program, they had powdered my hair. What a mess!

What kind of pets did you have when you were younger?

I didn't have a pet. I didn't like cats. They were cute to look at but that was enough. Afraid of dogs. That was enough. I didn't like cats at all, as my mother never did let us handle cats and especially not when they had sore eyes. Oh no!

What did you always want to be when you "grow up"? What did you turn out to be?

I really wanted to be a nurse, and to this day. I wish I would have had the opportunity. I just loved to patch up some injury & watch it get better or worse. For infection, always a bread & milk poultice- if that didn't work then it went to soaking in epsom salt water & to a flax seed poultice. And it usually worked. No one died from infection. I turned out to be a farmer's wife or a dairyman's wife and mother of 6 boys & 1 girl.

What is your favorite holiday?

My favorite holiday is Easter. There isn't such a big ado as Christmas, etc. and it's spring, a new beginning. When I was a girl we had our first spring dress & our Easter bonnet. Coloring the eggs & hiding them which was exciting. We would color eggs with black walnut shells and onion skins. We would also color the hats from the year before.

What are some of your favorite foods at Thanksgiving?

Yes, we had cranberries, rolls, no turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, dressing. Either goose or chicken and sometimes ducks, and pumpkin or mincemeat pies, freshly baked bread (serks girl). We had our own canned mince meat for pie.

What was it like to trick-or-treat at Halloween?

I did not trick or treat, it was not allowed to go out tricking- when the boys got older they would go and do some bad tricks like push over some outhouses. Sometimes the 2nd bunch would come along and they would step into the mush!

What was your favorite costume?

I didn't have any, that was only for big guys, tipped over outhouses.

What was the best present you received as a child?

Some tin doll & dishes and mother made me a doll house out of a huge box. A friend gave me a beautiful doll & I never played with it. Martha played with it & broke it. So for our 50th Anniv she gave me a doll. What a deal. Nobody to play dad with.

Did you get lots of Christmas presents?

No! I did not! I had gotten a doll from my aunt and every year Mother would make some new clothes for my doll.

When did you open your Christmas presents?

We didn't have presents to open. We got some pencils & tablets for school. We thought "what a gift".

Did Santa come to visit you?

Sure did! He was quite real! Yes Santa came to visit but we were deadly scared of him. We were told if we weren't good Santa would bring his stick. I crawled under my Mother's bed so far as I could get, to see Santa go through the room not finding me. Ho Ho Ho.

School Years

What time did you get up for school? Any chores?

Not me we had enough boys to take care of chores. I had no chores, outside of cleaning the dishes off the table. We had to hurry and get walking to school and many times we were late to school. Sometimes I would cry because we had to hurry, run and then get late anyway. We didn't always have running water to do dishes, so many times they were left for mother to do. Until mother combed our long hair it was high time to get going & run over a mile to school. Sometimes in the winter dad would take us with

sleigh or wagon when the weather was bad. High 5 buckle overshoes, mens sheep skin coats, long stockings (woolen ones that Grandma Knobloch knitted, itchy wool), long underwear & high shoes.

Did girls just wear dresses?

Yes, girls mainly wore dresses, and it was cold in the wintertime walking to school. Home knitted woolen socks and we did hate those itchy things. But we had to wear them with 3 or 4 buckle overshoes in the winter time. And men's sheep skin coats, sometimes because they were warm. It was no fun because we hated to wear them. Sometimes my dad had to take us to school with horses and wagon when it was snow & cold, that was a cold ride!

What did you do in your spare time as a teenager?

I don't remember ever having spare time, once in a while we would play house in the grove and that seemed quite nice as we took the time to do it. Not that mother gave us permission but we took it or else we would never have gotten to play. We just dared to do it, regardless of the scolding.

Did you really walk five miles to school? (front of book)

No, 1 ½ miles. It was fun. We could spend more time on the road in order to skip some work at home! That was the nice part about it!! (At the end of the day in school we would sing- "Another day is over and closing time is here, we say good night to teacher and playmates dear")

Did you really walk five miles to school? (school section of book)

No we did not walk 5 miles, we walked 1 ½ miles one way! That was enough. Sometimes we met the neighbors to walk with which we enjoyed. We knew if they were walking we wouldn't be late.

Where did you go to school?

We went to country school 1 ½ miles from our home. What an advantage kids have now to be picked up at the door & left off at the door, what a privilege!

When you went to school was it kids of all ages in the same or different classrooms?

It was kids of all ages. In one classroom from primary to 8th grade and in the 8th grade there were 20 year olds quite often, big guys. They were quite domineering over the younger ones & sometimes the teacher could not control them, had to call the parents or send them home until the teacher "said" they could come back.

What was your favorite subject?

Spelling, reading, writing, and drawing. I loved to draw, write, and spell. I used to draw pictures or write something in empty pages in my books.

What type of grades in school did you get?

I got good grades in spelling, reading & writing. I hated arithmetic. Some other grades were mediocre, but I didn't like arithmetic at all. Grammar was OK, Physiology OK.

Was education important to you?

No, it wasn't that important as my parents didn't make it that important. It was more important to stay home & work, that is the story of my life. I even had to do some sewing when I had measles, which was the worst thing I could do for my eyes, which I didn't know.

What was your favorite game at recess?

We would play 'pomp pomp pull away' and 'Andy I over' the school house roof. We also had a board swing between 2 trees which we used a lot. The boys usually played some ball, kept them out of other mischief, which usually was guys about 20 years old.

What is your best memory of a favorite teacher?

My best memory was when I started school. Esther Schnepf, she was married, but so kind, helpful & considerate. She was a real sweet person. We also had some duzies. A man teacher once. I had a real dislike for him and was very afraid of him. He would whip some of the older boys. We called him father stumfer. What a name. But it was good for him and he was good for those big guys that controlled the younger ones & sometimes mean.

Who was your best friend in high school?

I did not go to high school. I had to stay home and work. (How fun) My mother was 83 when she died of cancer. My dad was 68, died following surgery, cancer of the stomach. (Too Young)

In what activities did you participate in high school?

I did not go to high school, but I participated in Christmas programs & some other functions we had in school. Sometimes we had a may pole which was so nice & school picnics at the end of the year. Sometimes we went to the park & sometimes we had our picnic at somebody's backyard which also was nice and enjoyable.

Did you play any musical instrument?

No

What was your favorite movie as a teenager?

Amos & Andy

How much was it to go to the movies?

It was 25 cents to go to the movies, lots of money

What kind of dances did you do as a teenager?

None

Did you go to the prom?

No prom. The boys went roller skating sometimes and ice skating.

Where was your favorite hangout as a kid?

Home, school & church!

What clothes did you wear?

No slacks, some jumpers. Always supposed to wear an apron. I hated aprons & most of all had to iron them & thought that was unnecessary.

How did you entertain yourself without many (or any) electronic toys?

There was lots of homespun fun we made up. 2 or 3 of us and we had many ideas. We would go into the grove & play house. We thought that was pretty neat to get out of work.

Did your parents give you curfews and what time was it?

We seldom got to go away, so there were no curfews. As the boys got older midnight was the limit.

How old were you when you were allowed to have your first boyfriend?

I was 20, that was too young. We had our girl friends and boy friends but not to go away with them. Mainly neighbors.

What were dates like?

Not much to do, not much fun. Go to some skimpy movie & get a bag of popcorn, maybe a candy bar. How good! Be sure to get home in time or else??

What was your first car?

Ted's first car was an Overland. Our first car was a Model A Ford. It was a dandy and it was new. Took us where we wanted to go and that was to Kansas & back to see Grandma & Grandpa Ernst Gerber & fam.

Did you have an after school job?

Oh yes many jobs! I had an after school job filling the lamps & lanterns with kerosene and clean the glass chimneys on them. Also fill the reservoirs on the cook stove for hot water, always fill that! That was an ongoing job. Sometimes carry out the ashes from cook stove & carry in cobs & wood. Fill the cob box. Also sweep the side walk. Also empty the potties, each room had a pot. They always had to be cleaned. Plenty of jobs (dirty jobs)

Work, Love & Family**What was your first job?**

My first job was helping all my aunts. I thought it was a treat to get away from home! When they had threshers, company coming, or someone sick I did not dare to come home with pay! That was made known before I even went.

How much did you get paid for your first job?

Nothing, maybe a little handkerchief box with a little hankie. My first job for pay, I was 68 years old. I got paid \$3.75/hour. I thought it was really good just to get paid! (Doing housework in Sioux Falls)

What is the "toughest" job you have ever had?

Washing diapers by hand, washing cream separator, and carrying all the wash water from the well to the house and for bath. For everything, cleaning, canning, & cooling the milk or whatever needed cooling. (How fun) Keeps you active.

What was your favorite job that you had?

I would rather clean than do that humongous pile of dishes a couple times a day. I would rather bake something or do a whole bunch of ironing. I did like to sew, but my mother didn't trust me.

When did you leave home? To go where?

I really didn't go away. I kept house for my brothers. I was 18-19 years old. I didn't really like that either. I wanted to work in town somewhere. Like my sister Martha got to go to Peoria & work for wealthy people.

How expensive was college when you were young?

I do not know. I was not involved. I knew I wasn't going so was not interested.

How did you and Grandpa meet?

Grandpa Ted came from Kansas to pick corn by hand with some other guys and he met up with me in church. He was wearing a heavy maroon colored sweater with a shawl collar. It looked kind of funny to me to see a man come to church in a sweater. But he came to work & not to visit. But I met him, and I liked him & so it went.

What was your wedding like?

Our wedding was very quiet. We got married in Sioux Falls, SD on a Tuesday when President Roosevelt was elected, Nov 8, 1932, by a judge in a Sioux Falls courthouse. He had only 1 finger on one hand. Martha Wagenbach was Maid of Honor. Ed Gerber was Best Man. After we left Sioux Falls we had a severe snowstorm and was snow bound for a long time. Snow-Snow-Snow. Anyway, we got married & chivered a couple of weeks later.

How old were you when you were married?

I was 23 years old. A good age to get married. I loved all my children, naughty & good.

Where did you go on your honeymoon?

The depression had a deciding factor on going on a honeymoon. There was no money to be spent for a honeymoon. Banks closed. It was very hard.

When did you buy your first house?

We bought our first home in 1936, on the farm & we loved it. It was not convenient. Kerosene heat or first it was coal to burn in the heaters then kerosene later.

How much was a home?

I really don't remember.

Did any wars affect your life?

Yes, the world war did affect our lives. We had sugar rationing, flour rationing, gas rationing, and many other things. We had to have stamps for a lot of things. Sometimes we had to buy something we really didn't need to get sugar, flour, and other things. We had our milk, butter, eggs, pork, beef & chicken. So we had plenty to eat for a family of 15 children. As long as we could get flour to bake bread it was good.

If you were ever in a war, how old were you then?

I remember WWI, I really don't remember how old I was but very young.

How did the Great Depression affect the way you spent/saved your money?

It taught us and many others how to do without. That it can be done & get along very well. It was a lesson for many.

How old were you when you had your first child?

I was 24 when I had my first child.

Were you nervous about being parents?

Yes! I was nervous. I wanted to be the best mother my children could have. I worked hard at it, but I don't know if I was the best??

Was it hard to raise your children?

It was hard without the conveniences, but we never had them. So it wasn't too hard, as we didn't ever have the nice things. This was the way of life and so it all worked out very well. We lived and stayed well. We lived a plain & simple life, a life which was nice.

What kind of trouble did your kids get into as teenager?

All kids get into some mischief, nothing bad, things that we all need to lighten the burdens of life & have a good laugh and sometimes a good scolding to change the boredom. Set them straight so these things wouldn't happen again. Sometimes a few tears!

Was it hard when you started driving?

I never did drive. I tried and it was fun, believe me I would have had fun right now at the age of 90 years I would still like to. But, WOW! Most everybody would need to give me the right away. I would feel bad if I would crowd some one off the road because they need the road as much as I do.

Did you ever find yourself saying things as a parent, that you said you never would?

I really can't say that. I just used my own words & my own opinion, because things were different raising my kids then when I was young. Some things I didn't want to do the same as my parents. I never used a strap on my kids to spank. I couldn't do it.

When were you proudest of your children?

I felt very proud to see them graduate. I was proud to have them get married to such nice girls. I felt very proud, such good homemakers & mothers. And that they were & are respectful dads to their children. We knew that they married respectful girls, somewhat of a good nature & homemakers, good wives & good mothers.

Have you ever been on a train?

Yes, I was on my first train ride from Lester to Rock Rapids. It was to go to a dentist & Dad was harvesting, didn't have time to take me. I was scared to death. I'm surprised I handled it.

When was your first airplane trip?

To Ohio, to help Dorothy, my daughter-in-law, she was dying of that awful stuff called cancer. She was a gem & we had to give her up!

What did you do when the first man landed on the moon?

It was kind of scary. I didn't know how to feel about that. I thought it was far beyond my knowledge.

How much was a cheeseburger when you were younger?

I do not know. We never did buy one so I can't say! I don't think my parents bought any either.

Do you remember when stores were closed on Sundays?

Yes, I do remember no store was open for business on Sunday. My parents never, never worked on Sunday. Sometimes we girls would embroider, but they didn't like for us to do that either.

When did they say smoking is bad?

I always "said" smoking was bad. I did not want my children to smoke at all. Expensive and a bad habit. And bad for your health.

How much was a bottle of Coke when you were a kid?

I would say a dime. I do not know, as we never had coke. In later years my mother made Root Beer, so did I.

If you could keep one thing from your childhood the same, what would it be?

It would be a slower pace of living. Stop and smell the roses, once in a while. And take time to talk & visit with your neighbor over the fence. Stop to ask if he is having a good day or come on over for lunch. My Dad was very hospitable. He had many friends.

Was life as fast as it is now?

No! No! In no way, horse & buggy days people wouldn't run & hitch up some horses to go somewhere. That was work not fun. But a very valuable time of life, even though it was a much slower pace of life. We appreciated when we would get to go someplace. Now it's run here or there.

How much did your first TV cost?

Our first TV didn't cost much and it is still our TV and will be as Grandpa used to watch it a lot. But since he died it isn't used much. Sometimes I watch the news.

What did you do without air conditioning?

We didn't miss it as no one had it. We didn't even have a fan. During the day we would pull the shades & leave the window open about 1-2 inches all day until it cooled off. Then we would open them in the evening. Sometimes wash up the floor with cold water and it was remarkably comfortable. The water we used to wash up the floor got warm.

What invention has impressed you most in the 20th century?

All these machines & big huge tractors and building equipment just has blown my mind. A machine to do most every thing possible. I just have to stand in amazement. These huge machines, how much more can be had. It's unreal to me. Amazing.

How do you feel about computers?

I don't know. I can't answer that. I have no experience with, so I can't comment.

Life Questions

Who was your role model?

I don't know who was my role model. I just had to do the best I knew how & go on from there. And learn through others. Take the best that I knew or thought was the best. I grabbed ideas from whoever I could that I thought was good ideas.

When did you decide what you wanted to be in life?

When I got married I wanted to be a good wife and also a good mother to my children. I wanted to be the best mother they ever had, but I don't know if I was!

What was your biggest dream in life?

I had a lot of dreams. I wanted to be a nurse, but of course the money wasn't available so I had to do other things the hard way. I kept house for my brothers for \$3.00 a week & then they didn't have the money so when I got married I had to take corn, hay, and oats. Make oats in place as Ted & I got 12 Holstein cows from Grandpa Gerber. \$3.00 a week was not available.

What would you do over?

I don't know what I would do over. Of course times now are so different than when I was young: so I don't know what I would change. I helped milk cows by lantern & separated milk turning separator. Milked cows by lantern light. (how fun)

Do you miss anything that is no longer available now?

Yes. I miss the real cream & real butter. I miss our meat: beef, pork & chicken. We always had that available to whip cream when we needed whipped cream. I miss our own chicken a lot, also pork which was always available.

What hobbies do you enjoy?

I enjoy crocheting, tatting, embroidery work & sewing. I also enjoy ironing, baking, canning & freezing fruit & vegetables. Since I'm 91 years old baking is not as interesting as when the children were around to eat it!

What is your favorite place to visit?

My favorite place to visit was Illinois! That's were my dad's brothers and sisters lived. Once a year we got to go to IL before school started.

What is your favorite book?

My favorite book is the Bible! Etc. others too

What clubs have you belonged to?

I have not belonged to any one group except 4-H.

What are all the places you have lived or traveled to?

I have lived near Hills, MN one year then next to Lester on the farm. Next to Lester in town, the final stop. (Grandma also lived at the Assisted Living and Tuff Home in Hills) I have traveled to Phoenix, AZ to Portland, OR; to Mansfield, OH to Taylor, MO to Sabetha, KS to Morris, MN to Peoria, IL and West Bend, IA.

What have you always wanted to do that you never got to do?

I always wanted to be a nurse that I didn't get to do. For one thing my parents didn't have the money to send me to school. Another thing I was the oldest girl and I had to stay home & work as hired girl wages was \$15.00 a week.

What were the best times of your life?

The best times in my life were when my family was growing up. It put a lot of interest into my life. Of the boys growing up it was a real education. I taught them things but I learned much too, each one in their own way. Then there was Pauline the only girl, so I had to be Mom but also sister. I don't know how much of a sister I was. I tried, she said I was too old. I tried to teach her as much as I could and it was during the depression years. I made coats for them out of other old coats & used the inside for the outside, so it would look new and it worked fine. I felt very proud to make a new coat out of an old coat. Many of them!

What values were most important to you?

The values of honesty, the value of health, the values of being able to work & also considering others if they need help in some way or somewhere. To love their church and be faithful to living up to their instructions & their fellow men. To love their family & friends is so important. To help someone in need. As long as you are able to lift up someone that is down.

What is your most cherished possession?

My cherished possession is my family. I treasure them and I love them all in their own way & habits. They all mean something to me as they are a part of me. I love them all dearly, as they are.

What was the most difficult transition in your life?

The most difficult transition was learning home when I got married. I was the 1st one out of the nest of 15. It was kind of hard, but I soon got over it. When the work piles up you forget about yourself and get on with the program and do what has to be done in the beginning of your new life. How interesting.

What is the most embarrassing thing you ever did?

Pick up corncobs in the hog lot (Yug!) to burn in the cookstove. That about turned my stomach inside out. What a smell. Yug!

Life as a Grandparent

How did you feel when you first found out you were going to be a grandparent?

When I was first called Grandma I always looked at my mother thinking it meant her, until I finally had to work with myself that I was the Grandma. And I loved to be Grandma but I played with the grandchildren as if I was a young girl! Playing with them. How fun.

Did you want your child to raise your grandkids the same way you raised them?

Yes, I do in many ways the very simple ways of life, which was made up of the simple things to enjoy. Not the things that would cost money, things put together to make entertainment without cost of money as we didn't have it! And had to save it for the things we really needed, clothing and food were the essentials. We had our own meat, milk, egg, chicken, and butter (sparingly). Made our own cottage cheese & bread.

Who do you look like?

I do not know who I looked like. I think some of my Dad's sisters more so than my Mother's family. I know I have some of their traits. Also, my voice is like them.

Do you see a change in children today compared to when your own children were young?

Yes I do. Seems children now always need to go somewhere for entertainment, where we made our own and so did my kids a lot. But they had more things to go to than I ever did. I went to very few movies. Never to a ball game, went to the Christmas program at school. Once to a box social.

What did you learn from your grandparents that you incorporate into your grandparenting style?

I can't say I learned anything to incorporate in our life style today for our family. I did learn from my parents but not grandparents. I can't share of my grandparents. Both grandpa's liked their beer & wine too well!

What's your favorite thing about being a grandparent?

Sometimes Grandma is recognized quicker than Mom. In today's world I think Grandma gives in quicker than Mom. In our family grandma played with the grandchildren much more than grandpa so therefore it was more grandma to listen too.

What have you learned most about life from being a grandparent?

I learned to give and give of myself without complaining. To do things with the grandchildren that they enjoy. While playing with them you soon learn what their likes & dislikes are, and what they enjoy the most.

Special Questions for Grandma & Grandpa**What did Grandpa do to win you over?**

He acted pretty nice – Ha! He was the best guy he could be. He gave me an engagement ring & bought me a fake fur jacket. It was nice, believe me. We were engaged a year before we got married as we needed the money. When we got married the bank had closed and we couldn't buy a thing. We got some cows from Grandpa Gerber so we lived off the milk check and just bought what we had to & no more than that. It was tough, took eggs to town & bought only what the eggs brought. Nothing extra.

Did you want to go to work or stay home and take care of children?

I wanted to stay home with my children. I was very selfish with my children. I wanted them to myself. I did not want to go to work and leave the children for someone else's responsibility. I wanted it myself.

What has been your biggest thrill as a grandfather?

I think grandpa's biggest thrill was to milk those Holstein cows, he was in love with them. He spent much time taking care of them, so their feed was right and check them over for different things and many times he found something that he enjoyed doing. When we had horses for work he took very good care of them. Tamed their hooves and got their feet in good shape.

Did you ever play with your dolls?

No, I didn't play with my dolls. Very little. I wanted to keep them nice. So my sister played with them & broke my doll. I had a lovely brunette doll & a blonde doll with a leather body. Some how or somewhere they got broke. But my brothers did not like to mess with dolls. They messed them up whenever they got a chance.

Did you go fishing?

Yes, we went fishing in our later years. Not while milking cows, in no way.

Did you have a collection when you were a little boy?

No, not that I know of. Ernie had a collection of worms & bugs. He even loved young snakes, he would put them in a wire cage & tease them with a wire. He loved to see them stick their sticky red tongue at him.

Did you ever play baseball?

Yes! Your Grandpa Ted played baseball and he thoroughly loved it. He was a good ball player. He also exercised in boxing which he also did as a young man. But Grandma didn't like to see it.

The Older Generation

How old were you when your hair started turning color?

In my 50th years. I didn't like it at all but it happened.

Were you afraid to be old?

Yes. Ha. No, I was not afraid to be old but I would have rather stayed younger. A few more years to be younger with my children as I enjoyed doing things with them and for them. Sometimes age interferes.

Do you still feel young?

No, I don't feel young. But at age 90 I feel very fortunate to be able to live alone & do all my work myself. I feel very fortunate.

When did you feel you were starting to get older? Do you like being older than younger?

In my 70th years I felt I was getting older. No, I don't like being older. I'd rather be younger and be able to do most everything I'd like to do.

How does it feel to watch your children become old & have children on their own?

I really can't explain that. I have so many different thoughts about that. I just don't know. Lots of mixed emotions.

What do you think happens when we die?

I do not know what happens when we die. My foremost hopes are that we all meet in heaven someday. It would be wonderful.

The Future

Do you have any special skills or traits that you could teach me or that I could learn?

If someone asks you to do something do it, regardless what you had planned, for there usually is another day. If not you need not worry. I always loved to help someone in need.

What is your advice for me as I am getting ready for college?

Put in your all and do the very best you can. It will pay off. It may seem hard but it will be rewarding in the end and real valuable in your life after.

If you could give me one gift (not literal), what would it be?

The greatest gift I can give you is my love and if you give me your love! It's the greatest gift you can give me. Not everyone shares their love with one another. But I need the love of my family and friends.

In your opinion, what really matters in life?

In my opinion what matters most in life is to love one another. Forgive one another if and when there has been hurts, which can easily happen! To me, to love one another is the greatest gift of life. Doesn't cost a thing and is free to give and to keep and I hope this will grow & stay in our families and your families in your lives!

What do you want your great-grandchildren to know about you?

I had a good life but it was hard. No money. I had to stay home from school & help mother because they couldn't afford a hired girl. So therefore I didn't complete any one grade in school.

What do you want to get out of the rest of your life?

I want to try and not be a burden to anyone. I hope I can maintain my health until I close my eyes. How wonderful that would be but I don't know what God has planned for me.

What hopes do you have for your children & grandchildren?

I do not know. I have mixed emotions. I feel my grandchildren are the nicest, cleanest grandchildren any grandmother can have. I feel so fortunate to be able to say that! I hope they can all stay that way.

More By Grandma

My Dad passed away at the age of 68 (what a blow!) when he died following surgery from a blood clot. He was a fun dad & loved people. He was a people person. He loved to go to Sioux Falls & he loved cars. My mother had a huge garden. She died at the age of 83 from cancer of the stomach. Cancer has been the leading cause of deaths in our family so far, 5 brothers and 2 sisters all had cancer. So far Arthur (arthritis) has gotten kind of a hold on me, but I try not to let him control if I can help it. I hope none of my children have this cancer inheritance, only God will control that. Hope he is merciful in all things.

Brian & Brent Teubel. We went on an ice skating spree. We had visualized it as a fun event and it was. The untold story until later. I fell & broke my arm but I didn't tell the kids. Until they saw I had a cast on my arm. Oh! What did you do?? I fell the other day skating the ice was too slick! And I couldn't handle that slick stuff.

My Dad used to do a lot of shopping for clothes for the boys (mostly) but if he got a good deal the girls also had to wear somethings. Grocery stores used to carry dry goods & clothes, overshoes, shoes, thread lace stocking & some under clothes. He bought some high top shoes that buttoned up the side (boys). But we had to wear them too if they fit. We cried, we didn't want to wear boy's shoes. My mom made me a khaki & black straight long coat to wear to school. I hated that ugly thing. I cried & cried, I didn't want to go to school with that coat (ugly). I done everything I could to wear it out!

When it was corn picking time to pick corn by hand, 100 bushels a day was a very good turn out, but the men wore corn husking mittens so they had to be patched too. Also, we didn't have an indoor toilet. We would sit out in that cold thing. Out house! It was called. Fresh air using peach papers for toilet paper & Sears Roebuck Catalog. Good past time.