

## CONVERSATIONS



## Boyhood Antics

By L.E. Buchholz

**J**acob Buchholz and Maggy Bertsch were married in February 1917 in a Lutheran country church east of Ashley, North Dakota. At the time, their ages were 23 and 21.

They moved to a farm located directly on the north shore of the mighty Mundt Lake. This was one of the very best farms. Everything was in close, all in one piece, and everything was very convenient.

Five sons were born there to those people. Three of the boys served a term or two in the CCC during the 1930s. Later, the two youngest were in the service in the 1940s (three of the boys are still living).

Jacob and his wife were farmers and housekeepers supreme. Everything had to be just so. He only kept the finest of the top quality work horses, a small herd of big, heavy shorthorn cattle, and some Hampshire show-type sheep. He pointed to those as being able to outdo three or four of the ordinary kind. He also had a few Saanen white dairy goats which gave birth to three and four young in a season.

**T**his family kept a flock of English S.C. brown Leghorn hens that laid dozens of premium, large brown eggs. A creek ran through the full length of the farm, and this was the home of a flock of exhibition-type gray dewlap African geese (which left an impression on me to last a lifetime). Hens and geese like those are not to be seen easily. The Buchholzes also attempted to raise white King pigeons and giant Chin-chilla rabbits.

While the above is only a bird's-eye view, to Jacob's credit he likewise had a few strong forbiddings. His sons were not allowed to keep a pony or saddle horse. But such advice was to prove ill advice because those boys would begin to ride every horse on the place. And since they were only allowed to ride one horse at a time, three of them would use the one horse at the same time.

Jacob also refused to own a stallion. He sent his mares many miles down the road to be mated with a select and approved sire.

But Jacob was the first of the four brothers to die.



**A** bundle-hauling scene: here Jacob holds the lines over one of his teams of fine mares. The two were sired by the Dobler stallion.

It was in May 1946. His wife then moved to town. Later, she resided at the Manor in Edgeley, North Dakota, where she eventually died. She was nearly blind the latter part of her life. My folks took the youngest son in at birth and raised him until he was about four years of age since his mother was hospitalized then for some time. The father and his sons often carried on alone and had to fend for themselves. It worked an extreme hardship on them then.

Esther Buchholz of Hazen, North Dakota, was the wife of one of those boys. The well-known auctioneer,

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Stan Buchholz, is one of the grandsons. Marlys Scherbenske is Stan's sister; she and her husband, Marlo, now operate the Angus ranch on the north side of Lehr, North Dakota.

Jacob and his wife attended church services at the German country Evangelical church, located about four miles east from their farm. There was no road across the prairie, maybe only a trail.

The five boys had an older bay mare named Polly. They drove to school with her hitched to a single buggy. They drove her everywhere, often coming on down to our place. It did not take those boys long to harness and hitch the mare any time of the day or night. But no mistake was to be made about one thing. Only the oldest of the boys could drive. Not once did I ever see any of the other boys holding the lines.

A joke about them stands out in my mind, once here at our farm. They asked Dad to lead out the jack and let them ride him. All of them wanted to ride at the same time. As the jack was lead around the first corner, he perked up his ears and brayed, strutting his stuff, inhaling and exhaling, making a tremendous racket. By the time he was done, each of the boys had fallen off. There was nothing to hang on to. They were good riders but they could not stay on. The boys yelled to the top of their voices. But so did that ornery



*Jacob's five sons.*

jack, outdoing them.

It seems to me that people who were born and raised in the country went to a little one-room school, attended country church services, and shopped at a country store. Those kind of small places are becoming a rare breed, indeed. □