The article below was sent by Bunny Bouvette to many of her relatives and friends. With her permission and urging I am publishing the article in this newsletter for those who did not receive her original mailing.

THIS ARTICLE IS THE RESULT OF BARRY KNOWLES PRESENTING QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE ON THE FARM TO HIS AUNT ALICE (KRAFT) CHARBONEAU.

Alice Kraft was born in Strasburg, ND on June, 1916 to Anton S. Kraft and Barbara Wald. She is the oldest of their eleven children and the only one left alive who would remember living on the farm in Strasburg. She is presently ninety eight years old and residing in Vancouver, British Columbia. The following are her answers to questions about farm life in Strasburg, N.D.

ALICE CHARBONEAU’S RECOLLECTION OF HER EARLY CHILDHOOD  
(Questions submitted to her by Barry Knowles)

1) Did your mom (Barbara) really get up every morning and make bread?  
   Not every morning, just whenever we ran out of bread.

2) How big was their house?  
   It was two stories – only a kitchen and front room on bottom and an attic on top

3) How many bedrooms?  
   The attic was used as a bedroom and had one double bed and 2 single beds. The front room was where mom and a baby slept and one bed was in the closet.

4) Did three kids sleep in one bed?  
   In double beds in attic – there slept 5 kids (2 on top and 3 on bottom-their heads at each end of the bed) with a single bed on each side and 2 slept in one single bed and I had the other single bed to myself as I was the oldest.

5) How much land did they have?  
   I don’t know the size but they had lots of land with many acres spread over different areas of Strasburg.

6) Outhouse?  
   Yes, and at night they didn’t go outside to the bathroom as it was too cold so we used a bucket which was placed in the enclosed front porch. Everyone had outhouses on the farm and no one had inside plumbing. There never was inside plumbing on the farm.

7) Chicken, Cows, Horses?  
   We had 10 cows and calves, 8 horses and at least 100 chickens.

8) Electricity  
   No, we had one kerosene lamp in the kitchen and one in the front room. No one had electricity.

9) How was the house heated?
We had a wood and coal stove and a kitchen stove but we had very little wood. Dad used to go into town and pick up coal. To start the stove we also used corn cobs and sometimes cow dung which I had to pick up when it was dry.

10) Crops they raised?
We had fields of wheat, corn, barley and also a number of gardens that had almost every vegetable and we grew watermelon and cantaloupe in a separate garden on another part of our land.

11) How long did they have their farm before moving to Portland?
Mom and dad got married in Strasburg and went to live with dad’s parents and that is where I was born. When I was about 4 years old we moved to the hotel in Strasburg which mom and dad were managing. A couple of years later, we moved to the farm in Strasburg and after the farm, we moved in with dad’s parents for about a year and after that we moved into Grand Forks where dad had rented a house with indoor plumbing (except toilet) and electricity because he had a job at the flour mill. Around 1942, after the war started, mom, dad and the kids moved to Portland. I had moved to Canada in 1938 to get married.

12) Was their farm a “Homestead”?
No, the farm was not a homestead. Dad bought the farm and we built a barn on it. We also had two houses on the farm – one for summer and one for winter.

13) Did they sell the farm?
No, as the depression was on, I think they just walked away from it.

14) How far did they live from the city?
It was 7 miles from the farm to the city of Strasburg.

15) Alice’s first recollection of her childhood
My first recollection of my childhood was on the farm when mom had to go out and work in the fields and I had to stay home and look after my siblings and milk the cows. As I was only 11 years old, I only worked a little bit out in the fields. When I was 10 years old I was making bread, working a little bit in the fields and also drove the wagon by myself into town full of flax to the grain elevator.

16) Who went to school and how far away was it?
The school was one mile from the farm but I don’t remember who went to school as I was about 14 when I left the farm to go work in Linton, N.D. so I could send money home for the folks.

17) Any funny recollections?
A couple of things I remember. When we lived in the hotel in Strasburg, every morning after getting up I would come downstairs rubbing my eyes saying “I want pancakes” and mom and dad used to laugh about this. I also remember sometimes taking my sister Agnes to school with me and she would sit beside me and I was so proud of her.

18) The music history in our family – Grandpa, Uncle Lawrence?
Dad taught himself to play the piano, accordion, trumpet and clarinet and played in a band with Lawrence Welk’s brother. Dad knew Lawrence Welk’s brother better than Lawrence. We lived on the farm and Lawrence Welk lived 2 miles out of town and he used to come over and practice accordion with dad as dad could play accordion better than he. I don’t remember dad playing after we left the farm as he was getting pretty old by that time.
19) Joe Gefroe, Wickenhausers?
   I knew them very little in Portland as they were dad’s friends.

20) Did grandma smoke? Did she ever go to town and have a fun evening? Dancing, maybe tip a few drinks?
   Mom did not smoke that I am aware of. They used to have dances for birthdays and weddings on the different farms and mom used to go to them as dad played in the band. She might have taken a drink but she never went to town for dancing or anything like that. She pretty well stayed on the farm.

19) Did any of the family go to church?
   Absolutely; everybody went to the Catholic Church.
Alice enjoying a recent visit with her deceased sister Agnes (Kraft) Stevens daughters – Marie Fairchild, Shirley Davis and Betty Robinson.

KRAFT FARM CHILDREN. LAWRENCE, ALICE, TONY, FRANCIS AND AGNES. CIRCA 1925.

ALICE (KRAFT) CHARBONEAU - AGE 2

ALICE KRAFT FIRST COMMUNION - 1926
TIRASPOL CEMETERY IS OUTSIDE OF STRASBURG, ND. ALICE CHARBONEAU’S GREAT GRANDFATHER, PETER KRAFT, SR. WAS ORIGINALLY BURIED HERE IN 1912 BUT HIS REMAINS AND OTHERS WERE LATER MOVED INTO THE GRAVEYARD AT ST. PETER AND PAUL’S CHURCH IN STRASBURG. THE FEW REMAINS STILL BURIED IN TIRASPOL WERE NOT MOVED INTO STRASBURG BECAUSE THEY HAD NO LIVING RELATIVES TO APPROVE THE MOVE. THE NAME “TIRASPOL” COMES FROM THE DIOCESE THE SETTLERS CAME FROM IN RUSSIA “TIRASPOL-SARATOV”. (OUR THANKS TO DISTANT Cousin Jim Schmucher FOR THE PHOTO)