

## Interview with Theodore Lang (TL)

Conducted by Erica Lang Wangler (EW), and Arlyn Lang (AL)

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Transcription by Amanda Swenson

**AL:** This is, Arlyn Lang. It's Sunday, November 7th, 1999, and the purpose of this tape is to interview Theodore Lang. I am the youngest of six children, Theodore Lang's son, born January 26th, 1961. Joining me is my sister Erica Wangler.

**EW:** Hi, my name is Erica Wangler, I was born (Lang) to Ted and Louise, or Theodore and Louise (Gums) Lang. I was born in Jamestown, N.D.

**AL:** Joining us today, of course, is Theodore Lang. Thanks for doing this for us. A lot of the Germans from Russian Heritage Collection people will be listening to this and reading the things you brought here to the NDSU- GRHC oral history interviews. And, I know, a lot of people there, including Michael Miller, appreciate the time the people take to do this sort of thing, and Michael has given us these interview questions, which are very thorough, and I don't think that we'll be able to get through the whole thing today, because there's a lot of information here that needs to be conveyed, and much too much for one sitting. And he realizes that, so, we may pick it up at another time, some time in the future here. We'll see how far we get today though.

**AL:** We're starting with the interview questions, part I, and question # 1, just some basic information. What is your name, date of birth, and where were you born?

**TL:** My name is Theodore Lang, my parents were Fred and Rose (Roesch) Lang, and I was born in an earth-rammed, or adobe (sod) house, on October 17, 1916, in Kidder County, North Dakota.

**EW:** Okay, we're just going to ask you about; you already said your father's name, but we'd like to find out where he was born, where your father was born?

**TL:** My father, Fred Lang, was born October 28th, 1893, in Friedenstal (at that time in Russia), which later became Bessarabia, and it became Romania after WWI.

**EW:** So the village you said was Friedenstal, Russia, in what is now the Ukraine.

**AL:** The question, #3, is: When and where did he die, and where is Fred Lang buried?

**TL:** My father died June 23rd, 1974, in the Wishek, North Dakota Hospital, and he is buried by a country church, south of Tappen, North Dakota, also in Kidder County, in Peace Township, located on Section 18, NE ¼ 137, is the township number, and range 71.

**EW:** And we'd like to know, what was your mother's name? And where was she born?

**TL:** My mother's name is Rose (Rosina) Roesch. She was born on December 24th, 1897, in Gluckstal, South Russia. She died April 5th, 1993, at the Napoleon Senior Citizen's Care Center, and she is buried where my father

is buried, in the Glueckstal country (rural) cemetery. My father and mother were married on December 30, 1915, at the Kidder County Courthouse, in Steele, N.D.

**AL:** How many brothers and sisters did you have in your family, and if you could give their names in the order of birth, that would be perfect?

**TL:** Well there were five brothers, including of course, me: Ted (Theodore), Leo, Edwin, Reuben, and Gilbert. And then the sisters, which were interwoven, but Ella was the oldest, she was born in 1920, Rose, Adella, Laura, Gertie; I didn't say how many now.

Note: by EW, there were 11 children born to Fred and Rose Lang; their birth order is as follows: Theodore, Leo, Ellena, Edwin, Reuben, Rose, Adella, Gilbert, Laura, Gertrude, a stillborn girl.

**AL:** Gertie is short for Gertrude. When did your immediate family come to North America?

**TL:** My mother, Rose Roesch, and her mother and step- father (Christina (nee Rott) & Christian Roesler) came to America in 1905 on a ship from Bremen, Germany, to the New York harbor. They had left the "dorf" (village) of Gluckstal in Russia, and came to New York's Ellis Island, and then traveled by train to Tripp, South Dakota. They then moved up to Rose's uncle's (Joseph Rott) farmstead, which was their first stop in North Dakota. Joseph Rott's farmstead was located in south central North Dakota, near the border of Kidder and Logan counties. My mother was eight years old. My father, Fred Lang, came to America with his parents in 1907, in May, when he was 14 years old. They had crossed the Atlantic Ocean and, they ended up in Delmont, South Dakota. Fred's parents were Karl Jr. and Elizabeth (Humann) Lang. Fred's brothers were already in Delmont, South Dakota, and one of his sisters. They had previously come to America. The brothers' names were, Jacob, Gottlieb, and Benjamin, and the sister's name was Katherina. My father, Fred, worked in South Dakota and stayed with his sister in S.D. for 2 years, and earned money, while his parents and Margaret were building an adobe (sod) house on their homestead in Kidder County in North Dakota. My grandparents, Karl Jr. and Elizabeth Lang, homesteaded in 1908. They had also built a sod house for their daughter and son-in-law, Mary (Lang) and Jacob Winkler. The Karl Lang family, and the Jacob Winkler family, had almost identical houses, and barns. That was all done in 1908. My Dad, Fred, traveled to, and had his first Christmas in North Dakota, in 1909.

**Note by EW:** Karl Jr. and Elizabeth's daughter, Martha, had also made the journey to America with her family.

**AL:** You touched on this a little bit, but let's back up. Do you know how they traveled to this country? Just to clarify that...

**TL:** Well, they (Karl Lang family) got on the train at Arzis, a village in Bessarabia, and ended up in Germany at a seaport, evidently. I know my mother and her folks (parents) came to Bremen, Germany, which was the harbor, and they sailed on the Kaiser Wilhelm II, then, they ended up in New York, seeing the tower, the Liberty, what's the name of it?

**AL:** Statue of Liberty.

**TL:** Statue of Liberty. My mother remembered that real well. They went by railroad to Tripp, South Dakota. After a brief stay in Tripp, SD, they took a rail again, to Napoleon, ND. Then they took a wagon to the homestead of Joseph Rott, a farmer, who took them to his home. This was in the fall of 1905.

**AL:** Kind of one of the bigger questions I suppose, is part of question 8, is why did they come to America?

**TL:** Well the big thing was, of course, serving in the Russian army, because, the Germans got the “lower” jobs in the army. They all dreaded the Russian Army, so they left, mostly and strictly, because of the army. The men folk (left Russia), and brought their wives and brought their parents to America, and of course their sisters and whatever.....a chain reaction

**EW:** Okay, you had mentioned about your father’s, excuse me, your mother’s family that came over. You said it was her step-father, her mother, and herself. Now, who came over on your Dad’s side of the family?

**TL:** Well, Grandfather Karl Lang Jr. and his wife, my grandmother Elizabeth (Humann) Lang, and their son Fred, and daughter Martha, and daughter Margaret. So there were five in the party that came to America in 1907. They went to homestead, three of them, Karl, Elizabeth, and Margaret, in the spring of 1908, is when they went homesteading in North Dakota~ also their son-in-law, Jacob Winkler, and his wife Mary, and their daughter Mary Winkler, they were.....(homesteaders too).

**AL:** They were... with?

**TL:** There were six, there were six in the homestead-pack, (laughs) two remained (in South Dakota) son Fred, and daughter Martha, stayed in South Dakota and earned money, while the rest were homesteading up here.

**EW:** Can you tell me when your parents were married, and where?

**TL:** They were married on December 30, 1915 at the Kidder Co. Courthouse, by the county judge. They drove with buggy and along with them were the witnesses, Jacob Winkler and a cousin, Grandpa Karl’s cousin, Conrad. They rode a buggy to Dawson, ND- then took the train to Steele, ND, got married and then, of course, earlier, they had left the team of horses at the livery barn in Dawson. On the way home, on one of the shortest days of the year, it was quite foggy, as they were going home. They arrived back home, which was about 20 miles from Dawson, to the Lang and Winkler homesteads.

**EW:** Okay, do you remember any stories that your dad, Fred and/or your grandpa Karl, told you about the village where they came from in Russia? What are some of the memories they had of their village over there, maybe about the church or about the land, or how people lived, those kinds of things?

**TL:** Well, my grandpa Karl was a blacksmith, so uh, as the situation was, when this land was given to be organized in 1834, the Lang “hof”, the Lang yard, got divided amongst the Lang sons. My grandpa Karl had really only part ownership, so he more or less gave a quick claim deed, when he left to America, to his cousin Conrad Lang, the follower (following owner) of the blacksmith shop.

**EW:** So that one son took over the Blacksmith shop?

**TL:** A cousin.

**EW:** Oh, a cousin. What’s his name?

**TL:** Conrad.

**EW:** Conrad took over the blacksmith shop, and then Karl left the country because there wasn’t work for him?

**TL:** Well, there was land over here which was a big thing. He was very proud that he had his 160 acre homestead. What uh, as his life was in Russia, they had to go, they (the blacksmiths) had to go to Arzis to get the iron. It was a railroad station, where the iron was. And the woodworker did the lumber work on the wheels of the wagons. The blacksmith did the, i.e. put the rims on the wheels (the iron work). He, Grandpa Karl, the

blacksmith went to Arzis and got a supply for e.g. three wagons or whatever he had ordered for the customers, then he worked in the blacksmith shop to get the job done, along with his sons, Jacob, Gottlieb, and Benjamin, all the sons of Karl and Elizabeth.

**EW:** Did your dad, Fred, help in the blacksmith shop?

**TL:** Well, he was quite young, but one of his first jobs was herding geese, (laughter) and of course at six, or seven years old, that's quite a job.

**EW:** Will you tell us now about your mother's side of the family, over in Russia, what memories she had and told you about her village. Maybe about her church, what her father did, his occupation, those types of things.

**TL:** Well, uh, the Roesch family, were land owners; they had property and were farmers, but, my grandfather, Johann Roesch Jr. was drafted into the army. He was a cavalryman and cavalrymen had to be six- footers. So anyway, he had to serve at least four years- plus, or maybe five or six years; I don't think it was seven years. When he was in the army, he got consumption (tuberculosis of the lungs) but he came home, and of course, got married. He married Christina (nee Dutt), and then he died in 1898, in June. And my mother was born December 24, 1897, so she was 6 months old when my Roesch grandfather died.

But then Grandmother Christina Roesch remarried, she married Christian Roesler, and they were laborers in the Gluckstal village. The good thing about Gluckstal was they had this rock quarry (building rock) and this, my step-grandfather , Christian Roesler, told me in person. In the summer they worked in the fields and in the wintertime, they had this job in the quarry. So that's why it was call "lucky valley", Gluckstal, and it was a big village, it had 2 streets, and even another little street, the other street, "die Hindergasse" they called it. The village grew due to employment. Christian Roesler served in the equivalent to the national guard in Russia, in Kishinev. It was kind of.... within walking distance. He served a year or two, maybe just on weekends or something like that. Some of these Gluckstal men walked home on weekends from Kishinev; those that were married. Anyway, the big thing was also that they get away from future army service, so that's why the Roesler family came to America too, to dodge the army. Another party which, left was the Kemmet family, a cousin (to Christina), that were on the same ship as the Roesler family; they were the Christ Kemmet Sr. family.

**AL:** We're still kind of on question 15, just recalling any memories that your parents or grandparents told you about the respective villages that they came from, anything of the things that they did, i.e. social events, or church or that sort of thing.

**TL:** Well, my grandmother Elizabeth talked about entertainment for the young people, which was uh, Sunday p.m., dancing. For other things, my mother Rose talked about when she was a girl, (she remembered) tramping, stomping the grapes, with their feet for the grape juice, which of course eventually turned into wine, and she had mentioned about my dad Fred being a goose herder and errand boy. Dad mentioned about conflicts with a classmate, John Wieland in school; of course, Dad having older brothers knew what to do with somebody who offended him, which was something they call a fight.

**EW:** And you said about your mother, some memories in her village were that:

**TL:** The grape harvest.

**EW:** And what else?

**TL:** Well, uh, going to school, she must have gone to school one year in the Gluckstal “dorf” school before they left for America.

**EW:** Okay, did your parents or grandparents, or any of their other relatives ever mention about going back to the old country; that they would have ever liked to go back, or wish they were back there?

**TL:** Not really, oh, memories, of course they talked about youth, you know, there wasn't I suppose a day they didn't think about it, and not many more or less days they didn't talk about living in Russia, but, the prairies were bare; they started from scratch coming into the Homestead days and lands, in our North Dakota area.

**EW:** Did they ever wish to go back?

**TL:** Not that I can recall; the good things, no doubt, they never forgot them either. (laughs)

**EW:** The relatives, missing the relatives, maybe that kind of thing?

**TL:** Well, uh, the Lang family left only one sister/daughter behind, Elizabeth, daughter of Karl and Elizabeth, who was the sister to Fred and the others (siblings). It was Elizabeth, who married Johann Zimmerman, and they never came (to America), then even up to this day none of these relatives have come to America yet, for a visit.

**EW:** And she (Elizabeth) stayed behind because?

**TL:** Her husband was the only son, and he had inheritance to the Zimmerman “hof” (yard), and there were rumors about different churches and sects (in America), so he preferred to stay where he was. For one thing he took his brothers-in-law, Benjamin and Gottlieb, to the station, to the railroad station when they left for America, and it was so hard, he said, “Never again am I going to take anybody, haul somebody away; somebody else will have to do that from now on”.

**EW:** Oh, Really!

**TL:** It was really a heart breaker, to haul his brothers-in-law, and of course then later in-laws (grandparents), and some more of the brothers and sisters, and my Dad Fred.

**AL:** On that video, Children of the Steppe, it said it was “treated like a death in the family”, to take somebody to the train station, to send somebody over, because they knew that they would never see them again. Chances were, pretty good, that they would never see them again. I can understand what he was going through, forget it!

**TL:** Now after we (Ted and Louise) had visited in Germany, and heard from the relatives of this Aunt Elizabeth, this sister, daughter; that she never saw her parents, her brothers and sisters, and not even us, because she...(died before this was to be) and now that we've been visiting (in Germany with some of these relatives) in the 1980's, (we came to know) that she always wished, to meet them once again, in this life of course, but it never happened for this Aunt Elizabeth Zimmerman, that she met any of her parents, brothers, and sisters in person (again).

**EW:** Did your family ever receive letters from people back home, like your mother's family, your dad's family?

**TL:** Oh yes, oh yeah, there was correspondence. Mail was quite.....in America of course, with the moving around (here in America), their (my grandparents and parents) first address was Streeter, ND, which was more or less a German town, (and they) living closer to Napoleon, and finally it (address) got switched to Napoleon, and living in a different county, at that, Stutsman County was Streeter, Napoleon was Logan County, but they

lived in Kidder County, and Steele (Kidder County seat) was thirty miles from them. So, mail was quite a....(difficulty), to get the address over to the old country, and to get it transferred into the right category over here, Napoleon or Streeter, etc. But, they got letters, and my step-grandfather, Christ Roesler wrote; he had 2 brothers at least in Russia, and he wrote Russian letters later on. Another thing about Gluckstal village, and other villages too, they had to teach Russian. In Gluckstal, there was half day German, and half day Russian, while at Friedenstal they had one hour of Russian every day, which was a law passed by the Russian government, the Czar, so to some extent the Russian people insisted (on it) too, you know. The Russians may have reasoned, (side note by EW).....all these people living here all these years (Germans in Russia) and they were not learning and knowing the Russian (language). Then the army got so deeply into drafting the Germans.

**AL:** We need to back up a little bit to question 12 and 13; we kind of missed a little information there. Do you know where our ancestors came from in Germany before they went to Russia?

**TL:** Yes, uh, Grunau, in Germany, is where the Lang family left from to go to South Russia, and uh it's quite a distance with a covered wagon, and maybe oxen and so on. The weather (was a factor) you know, some ended up in Poland and stayed during a winter or two, till the land deals got cleared in Russia and the village got established. Given (related to) the question 13, to live in Russia they arrived at Friedenstal in 1833, and of course that's when that (village) was established and settled for the Langs and others.

**AL:** You pronounce that town, uh, Grunau?

**TL:** Grunau, Grunau

**AL:** And that's near where?

**TL:** It's uh, north of Steinheim am Murr, between Cleversulzbach and Steinheim in Germany.

**AL:** Just to the north of Stuttgart?

**TL:** Right (correct), north of Stuttgart, not too many kilometers, not too many miles, oh, maybe about 40 or so.

**AL:** Now the easy questions. Moving up to 18, so what language or languages did you speak at home? Obviously German, but any others?

**TL:** Not , uh, my dad didn't have any English, American, except during WWI, they had night schools, and he attended some of that, some sessions, during WWI, but my mother, she, got quite a bit of American schooling, of course she was uh, by the time school started she was 12 or 13 ,14 years old. But that was one advantage I had (over the other scholars in our school at Grant School #3), my mother could read, teach, speak English, American, and of course, with all the different villages (i.e. the various dialects represented from the respective villages of those who immigrated from the various villages in Russia), in our neighborhood, there was the Friedenstal version, the Worms, and the Neudorf, and the Kassel. So I felt pretty much at home speaking with people and these different (dialects), especially the Worms (dialect) because at our school there were a lot of Remmicks, who came from Worms, and a lot of people notice that right away that it didn't jive (fit in) with the Friedenstal language (dialect) or the Gluckstal (dialect). In Friedenstal it was said Hauyhner/ Hoohn (rooster), or Hauyschoova (haystack), and in Gluckstal they had (the word for rooster was pronounced) Gickler, and huehner(chickens). In Worms and Neudorf, they had a more high pitch (to the pronunciation) like flaaesch or flaisch (meat).

**AL:** For meat, fleisch.

**TL:** For meat, yeah.

**EW:** So you're speaking about different dialects of German (that) were spoken in your area where you grew up?

**TL:** Right!

**AL:** How would you identify what you spoke at your home?

**TL:** Well, it was strictly German because the grandparents didn't know any of the language (English), and of course we were young.

**AL:** But for dialect, could you narrow that down?

**TL:** Well that was another thing, my mother was a Gluckstaler, and my father was a Friedenstaler, so we were bi-partisan already, e.g. Kartoffel (potatoes) vs. Grundberre (potatoes). Kartoffel was Friedenstal dialect and Grundberre was Gluckstal dialect.

**AL:** The people in Germany identified it as Schwabisch, they say that's what we speak, and it's very similar to what those people speak, so it's amazing, even though the separation occurred a long, long, time ago, we understood each other perfectly. (laughs). Um, so can you still speak German fluently today?

**TL:** Yes.

**AL:** Silly question.

**TL:** Yes, I'd say so. With me learning (German) by these learned pastors, which were pastors from Germany, German missionaries, they spoke the true German (high- German) called by some low-German because it was the language of the North, north Germany along the sea shore which are the low-lying lands. Some of these pastors were Pastor Nagel, Pastor Grill, and so many others, also Pastor Baderschneider. I even got to know about gothic script, I could read the paper from cover to cover, except for the romances; the romances were not understandable (understood), by a prairie lad (growing up on the prairie).

**AL:** So you just skipped over them pretty much?

**TL:** Yeah, now I couldn't get any sense out of the romances.

**AL:** But you can, uh, read and obviously write German fluently still today, as well?

**TL:** Yes, I'd say so; I do a lot of translating.

**AL:** Was there any Russian spoken?

**TL:** Not amongst my immediate family. There were some Russians, there was a Jakob Perevesnoschenko, who married a German girl, a Grenz, and so there were very few genuine Russian people.

**AL:** Mm, Uh, the area around the Lang homestead obviously was settled by most all German, or just German-speaking people. Was there anybody in the immediate neighborhood who did not know how to speak German?

**TL:** Oh yes, there was just to the south, in Logan County, there was more of a Scandinavian area. They came in 1906, these Scandinavians, and of course our Germans came in 1907, and Roeslers came in 1906, but they ended up in Kidder County. There were settlements of Finns over by Kintyre, & there was a Finn township in Gackle, and so, there were all of these different nationalities that settled in North Dakota.

**AL:** So the dialect we talked about earlier, do you have a story or a poem or a prayer that you can maybe repeat (recite) for us.

**TL:** Well, the Lord's Prayer, and of course, the meal time prayer. The night prayer (going to sleep) is a bedtime prayer: Mude bin ich geh zu ruh, Schliese meine Augen zu, Vater lass die Augen dein, Uber meine Bette sein. ~ Amen. The meal-time prayer: Segne uns und diese Speise, uns zu Kraft, und dir zum preise. ~ Amen.

**EW:** Okay, you already told us that you're comfortable speaking German and that you know how to read it, and know how to write it, and understand it when it's spoken. Have you taught your children or grandchildren how to speak German?

**TL:** Well, none of us, if any, because, they had a big job learning the American language and with school, being busier than ever, esp. in this modern day and age, you really (have) got to be determined to study the language before you can get into understanding it at all. So, that's pretty much a "no-no".

**EW:** Well, but we did speak German as our first language at home, so, I guess in that sense, you taught us; especially your children, maybe not the grandchildren, but your children learned it because it was spoken all the time at home.

**TL:** Especially because of the Grandmothers and Grandfathers, that's where all my children, even Arlyn knew German only until he/they (the children) started school, and they (the younger children) overheard us talk the American language with their older brothers and sisters: Myrle, Bernie, Dora, but they never got going on the American language until they went to school. Like I mentioned before, I was blessed because my mother knew some American language, because she attended American schools after 1910.

**EW:** Yes, I remember you telling us and teaching us a lot of different phrases and rhymes that were presented in the family, even by our grandparents, uncles, and aunts, and besides the ones you taught us from the home. We're also interested in knowing about other dialects that were spoken in the area, and I'm thinking of uncle August; what

was his dialect?

**TL:** Kassel.

**EW:** And he grew up in Wishek; was it just his family or were there a lot of other Kassel people in that area?

**TL:** Well there were quite a few uncles, aunts, and other relatives, cousins etc.

**EW:** Kind of merged with other family members, because some married into your family and some of these other dialects were heard and spoken in our area. We're just going to talk about family life for a bit again. What were some of the childhood chores that you were responsible for?

**TL:** Well, there is this thing I learned not too long ago, thank God, (a riddle) "What is the cow to the human race?" It is the "foster mother"! Milk, how many babies got saved by cow's milk? So, cows, cow herding, cow watching, that was the first job for boys on the prairie, and girls too, and with no fences... and well, barbed wire fence was only 30-40 years old (at that time). Barbed wire got invented when Gilfinnin (by TL his first name was James) made the first fence in 1906 to protect the homesteaders.

**EW:** Now, who was Gilfinnin?

**TL:** He was a rancher that came in the 1800s and the first big project was horses, but after that kind of fizzled out, he was a cattle rancher. Later, there were more settlers, and he would need to protect the settlers. Laws were passed to protect the settlers, so he had to fence (the land), so he fenced 3 sections, one in our area, Section #1, in Glendale in Logan Co., and Section #33 in Kidder Co. and Cokato in Logan Co. The rancher was only 3 miles west from the Lang and Roesch homesteads. Cow herding was every kid's job, as soon as they could run, and there were the horses (to care for). My mother got a dowry of sheep, and I remember them (sheep) picking (eating) the crocuses, everything was crocuses, and, the sheep.. I had to round them up and bring them home. Sheep are these kind of animals, thy come home; they'll go out and feed and go back (home). They don't need fences until they get to be a bigger herd, but, otherwise they know that their life is at home; they come home to rest and chew cud.

**EW:** Were there any other chores that you did, like chickens or eggs, or milking?

**TL:** Milking, butter making, separating the cream.

**EW:** Did you have to help in the garden at all?

**TL:** Yeah, especially as we got bigger, the hoeing part, and potato digging; we lived off the land.

**EW:** Which chore did you like the most, and which did you dislike the most?

**TL:** Well, we didn't have much choice; what had to be done had to be done, so, we had to do it.

**EW:** Well, did you like something better than something else maybe?

**TL:** Well, I liked to go to school. (laughs)

**EW:** That wasn't a chore, but, maybe it was. Okay, so it was all work, is basically what you were saying?

**TL:** (I did) a lot of babysitting, being the oldest in the family; babysitting was a big job of mine.

**EW:** What happened when you were told to do something and you didn't do it, what was expected of you?

**TL:** Well, my mother told me, when I was small, that my hearing is poor. I remember another job which was the washing, operating the washing machine, cranking/ pushing the machine (lever),that was a hard job. I remember hauling the water, bringing it in (to the house), and warming it up for washing.

**EW:** How were you disciplined when you didn't do what you were told to do, and who did the disciplining?

**TL:** Well, the oldest one in the family got most of the instructions, and the disciplining. The younger brothers and sisters, learned from the older ones. (In the case of) my wife Louise, she recalls she got the instructions and the blame, and the sisters learned from her. She had two sisters, but only one brother, Edward.

**EW:** Did you get spankings?

**TL:** Well, Dad didn't spank much, but he went a little bit more out of control when he got started. But, then Ma had a rougher voice than Dad, so that soaked in more. (laughs)

**EW:** Oh, that's interesting, so, basically you got a spanking when you needed it, and they probably disciplined you more with their voice?

**TL:** To some extent yeah, but then as I got older, I realized that I got “by” lots of times, and when I got disciplined, I kind of “took” it, for the same reason, I missed (got by) so many others. (laughs)

**EW:** Do you think the boys and girls were disciplined differently in your family?

**TL:** No, I wouldn’t say. Mother would give a whack or whatever, but, Dad didn’t do any serious spanking.

**AL:** So there was no difference between the boys and the girls?

**TL:** No, not in our family.

**\*\*Note by EW. \*This section did not appear in the original transcription and is added to this interview, transcribed by EW. It is Tape #3, side I (A), dated November 30, 1999, & July 30, 2000.**

**EW:** This section is about courting and marriage and relationships, we were wondering what you parents or other older folks, maybe teachers or whoever was important in your life, what did they told you about marriage?

**TL:** Well, responsibility for your actions, that’s about what I learned, what I was told, be responsible for your actions.

**EW:** What did you learn about marriage from seeing your own parents in their marriage?

**TL:** Well, there is give and take, take and give, that’s about marriage (what marriage is about).

**EW:** Was your marriage pretty similar to your parents’ marriage, in what you lived out?

**TL:** I would say so, we were in a farm life; it was pretty much like the parents, farm work and raising children, although we had a powered washing machine. The bottle gas stove we got in 1948 and the dryer we got after 1950.

**EW:** Did that make the work easier, you mean?

**TL:** It made the wife’s work easier, oh yeah. The wash line drying was like this: by the time the wash was done, then the sun was gone, then the wind would come up and you got it (the wash) out, well it got a fresh smell, but you had to bring it in and dry it anyway, especially in the winter months.

**EW:** Do you know if your parents’ marriage or your grandparents’ marriage were arranged marriages?

**TL:** No, I don’t think so, I don’t believe so. My mother and father were neighbors, and the same way with me and Louise, we were neighbors within 3 miles; still at that time there were no roads especially with the terrain, the lakes, sloughs, the fresh water lake, and creeks, but, everything was pretty well home-centered, the church was only 3 miles away, even school and government was pretty home-centered until the automobile came.

**EW:** So people met each other through community and threshing crews etc.?

**TL:** Threshing events were a big meeting time and place; it got all the neighbors, the boys and whatever, together. The boys wanted to be men, to do the work of men.

**EW:** Did you ever hear of kuppling or kuplei, maybe not in your generation so much?

**TL:** Oh yes, there was some. Well, maybe for John Remmick and Emelia Lang. I think they got brought together (kuppel). She lived in Lehr & John lived in our area, & that was maybe one case.

**EW:** Who arranged that marriage?

**TL:** I think even the Uncle Gottlieb Zimmerman did, as far as I know, the uncle of Emelia Lang. I believe this Mrs. Remmick came and said, "Would you know of a girl for John?" Then, evidently it came into being.

**EW:** Okay, I guess that's all for that part, the next is family life.

**AL:** What did your parents teach you about raising children, specifically, any advice for raising kids?

**TL:** Well, take care of them, of course, and diaper work, diapers needed changing. I was pretty much always with my parents; Leo was home doing babysitting more than I was, babysitting for (our) brother Edwin. Edwin had this heart condition, and Leo was more of a babysitter, but there were occasions where the folks were gone and I had to do babysitting.

**AL:** Did husbands and wives at that time have equal authority in making big decisions?

**TL:** Well, in government and church, that was pretty much only men's work; they (the men) heard about what the women thought after they came home and told them what was going on, then they got instructions, the men folks did, for governing the church, from the wives, the women.

**AL:** Was there competition between girls and boys for various things?

**TL:** No, not really, there were women who worked on the threshing machine, especially in earlier days, not so much any more after tractors came, but, in the time of horse power. I remember hearing about my brother-in-law's mother working (on the horse-powered threshing machine); then, there was this Mrs. Grad who talked about working on the horse-powered threshing machine as a women and girl.

**AL:** Is there any way, you could say that children were disciplined, I guess speaking for several families in that area, was there any standard?

**TL:** Spanking was about the only thing; that was pretty much the rule.

**AL:** Do you know of any changes of child raising standards, from, say your grandparents as opposed to your parents?

**TL:** I'd say at school, the teacher was the ruler, she had authority, whatever she proposed, whatever she mediated out, was perfectly okay with the parents; there was no resistance to the teacher's authority or discipline.

**AL:** Did you or your family ever seek advice from the older people on certain things, maybe on farming tricks or financial planning or something like that?

**TL:** Well, yeah, there were people that liked to borrow money and it was pretty much the same standard.

**AL:** I thought this was kind of an interesting question, how were grown up children treated when they had conflicting ideas, maybe about marriage decisions or religion, something to just go against the grain a little bit?

**TL:** What ever you do, you would have to act out in your life. One good thing I'd say is with more inter-marriage, the blood or inbreeding isn't as much, where previously, marriage of cousins was kind of prevalent in the villages (in Russia). Well, transportation was a problem so there were too many cousins and second cousins marrying.

**AL:** Question #27, did your grandparents or parents select friends from outside of your family, that they could share things with, how they were feeling etc.?

**TL:** Pastors, that's about it I suppose.

**AL:** Did your German-Russian friends form a clique or group for dancing, eating, food, accordion music, or drinking of alcohol, or things like that?

**TL:** No, no, it was a busy life, there was very little (time). The Fourth of July, Dad didn't like to miss, but, otherwise, it was pretty much a "life-support program" (living to support life).

**AL:** Too busy working to have much free time, like that. How did your parents view "freundschaft"?

**TL:** Well, my father, Fred, was a good arbitrator to collect bad debts and loans for him self and others, and for the church dues. He was good at making arrangements with the young couples after the 1930's, after things started getting better; he and August Geist went out and visited with each of them and asked what they'd be able to donate for the pastor and church services, for the year.

**AL:** Who made most of the money decisions in your family?

**TL:** I suppose that was pretty well talked over, and my parents each had their own input.

**AL:** What were the most important religious teachings in your home? What was really strived or driven home, you could say?

**TL:** Well, daily devotions and church services. Dad was a Sunday school teacher and a back-up deacon for reading church services if the elected deacon happened to not be there.

**AL:** Now, were most of your friends or parents' and grandparents' friends German-Russian, or was it a mixture?

**TL:** Well, the grandparents were only able to speak the German language, but Dad communicated with the people of other languages; he went to school during WWI, night school, then he was also an avid reader, so the learned the English language. He had friends who were natives and other immigrants.

**AL:** So he could speak English a little better than some of the other people?

**TL:** Yeah, I'd say so, and mother went to American school after age 10 or so, maybe she was 13 in 1910, when they built the school. There was school at the Kemmet house, so she was 9 or 10 before she got to go to American school.

**AL:** Was there ever a time that you were afraid to say that you were of German heritage?

**TL:** No, we had a small circle of school and church, and the town. We got to go along (to town), we each one had his/her turn; Dad would take along one (child) then we had to rotate, me, Leo, and Ella.

**AL:** Did speaking German ever affect your relationship with people in Napoleon or any of the surrounding towns or at church or anything like that?

**TL:** One time August Wanner and I went to a Christmas program at Bunker-Belden school; I could get along with English, but August didn't so we were talking German and Mr. Wesley Nicholson Sr. told us, "this is America, speak the language of the land".

**AL:** Yup, so, do your children and /or you grandchildren speak German as well?

**TL:** Yes, as long as the grandparents were alive they kept the practice up and then we spoke it at home, and I still do with people that I know are able to understand it.

**AL:** Do you think they speak German as part of their everyday lives, the children and grandchildren?

**TL:** I don't think so, not now, not in the year 2000, they are pretty oriented to the American language with going to school all these years, they are pretty well engrained with the spoken language of America.

**AL:** I try to think about it like once a day, just to keep it fresh, yeah, I definitely try. Were you parents interested in politics at all?

**TL:** Yeah, Dad was the first supervisor when Peace Township was organized, that was in 1921. Then of course, voting and elections were a good way of settling things. Then a man came over and talked Dad into being a Democrat judge in the elections. I was an election clerk and to get an election over quickly, it was as this, if everybody voted Republican, then we didn't have to fill out the Democratic books, i.e., put no names in it or anything, then we were done. If there was a two-party (poll) then it took twice as long. Mr. Mertz and maybe others, wanted to be done in a hurry on election evening, after 7:00 o'clock. He talked Dad into being a Democrat judge, from there on Dad was as a rule a Democrat judge; even Gil got the job even into the 1990's, until they reorganized the townships again, where now voting is done in the Tappen Center, instead of the Tanner school. That happened during the 1990's when that changed, even for the last election, I believe.

**AL:** So, what sort of political issues were your parents interested in, what was on their minds a lot?

**TL:** Well, Dad favored Langer in WWI, because, in South Dakota a law passed that you couldn't use German, Armour-is it Armour? Then the business people were enforcing it, then all the German customers went to the other town at Delmont, SD, then Armour went broke because they didn't have the trade. Langer said, "These German people are good citizens, only they can't speak the American language", so Langer had a resolution or law passed that you were able to speak German; there was no restriction in North Dakota.

**AL:** Schools or roads or anything, was that of interest?

**TL:** Roads were a big issue, and schools, these needed attention and unity (of the people); they needed to get teachers, yeah, it was very necessary.

**AL:** How often did you vote?

**TL:** Well, I voted in every election ever since I was 21.

**AL:** Which was the voting age at the time, before they moved it to age 18, so do you normally vote these days?

**TL:** Oh yes, yeah, I do. Voting is very important, maybe one vote doesn't mean too much in the Presidential election, but in local, city, and local areas, one vote decides a lot of things.

**AL:** So you vote in local, state, and national elections?

**TL:** Yes, yeah, I believe in voting, it is very important and I encourage the younger generation to keep doing it too; I've insisted on it too.

**AL:** Where was the polling place?

**TL:** There was one school in the township out of four, and that is where the voting was done in our immediate area.

**AL:** Was there a president that you remember that the people didn't like or particularly agree with?

**TL:** Yeah, being it was WWI, Woodrow Wilson, the country was against Germany, and he was the president at the time.

**AL:** He got the blame?

**TL:** Well, anyway he was instrumental in whatever happened, no doubt.

**AL:** So, was there a political party that your parents were in support of, any Republican or Democrat, do you remember?

**TL:** Like I said a month ago, this fellow came over to Dad and said, "We need a Democratic judge for the election". From there on Dad was a Democrat & to make it more interesting, I've followed suit so far; this was for the general November election.

**AL:** So what different kinds of churches or denominations were there aside from Lutheran of course, which was for most all of the Lang family, but, were there other kinds of churches around?

**TL:** The Reformed Church was only a half mile from Glueckstal and of course my step-grandfather and real grandmother were Seventh Day Adventists. Dad would go along with them, maybe once a year, and I remember twice I went along with the Roesler family to the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Napoleon. I remember going down to the church on "The Flat"; it was in the early 1920's. We came home one evening, across the east pasture, and I had been tired and then woke up. I still remember that day. One interesting thing I've been telling here lately is about attending church services in Napoleon at the Seventh Day Church, we had a Pentecostal service; Ned Rott was the organist/pianist, he was playing the piano, but notes are the same in every language, but there were English speaking people, Russian, and German too. The Russian speaking person was Jakob Peres, and they all sang this one song in their own languages. Even to this day I remember and am telling this, that I was at a Pentecostal church service a long time ago. It was not at the time though when Peter and them (the apostles) in the Bible, had their "tongues twisted" (spoke in their own tongues) at Pentecost.

**AL:** So what were your memories, I'm sure there are lots of memories of the one-room school house, how far away was it from the farm?

**TL:** Three quarter mile, that's about all it was, luckily.

**AL:** Is that the only school you attended?

**TL:** Yup, yeah, 8 grades.

**AL:** What do you remember the most about that experience?

**TL:** Oh, well, my mother had gone to American school so we knew some English, but others like the Remmick family didn't get much help in English, I was lucky that mother could help with homework and I always took homework along and I got a special book-carrying thing from the auction sale at the Gilfinnin Ranch. I suppose that was in 1923, it was khaki colored and I treasured that when carrying my books home.

**AL:** So what sort of things did you do over the recess and lunch-hour break, any sort of games or anything?

**TL:** Oh yeah, Pom, Pom Pull Away, there were goal lines on both ends, and you got tagged. There was Ante-Over and Drop the Handkerchief was played inside the school in the winter time. That is about all that comes to memory.

**AL:** How many kids were in that school at that time, and how many grades?

**TL:** Eight grades, but the school could seat about 30. My brother was school age, but with his health condition he only attended limited classes. John Remmick was another guy who was to school for one day and developed rheumatic fever, it must have been rheumatic fever, so he skipped another whole year. The teacher combined 4th and 5th grade to get the all grades in. The ability of the student was considered too e.g. John Remmick was 15 or 16 years old, but he was with the 4th graders, because of the language. With Gottlieb Lang and Jake Neumiller, when they were in 3rd or 4th grade, I remember it well, Jake left for Montana in the spring of 1929.

**AL:** The brother you were referring to was Edwin, who died when he was 9 years old.

**TL:** Yeah, my brother Edwin, 9 years old.

**AL:** So, his school attendance was limited?

**TL:** Yeah, he didn't attend school because of health reasons; he couldn't attend school.

**AL:** Anything that you remember about people bringing stuff to recess or school that was interesting or unusual, pets, or something like that?

**TL:** Well, the Kidder County school superintendent, Mrs. Haibeck, visited the school, I presume it was in 1925, and Dr. Pryce stopped by too; there was diphtheria in school #1 and then one Brophy boy died, he was a twin. There was Floyd and Lloyd; I think it was Lloyd who died from the disease.

**AL:** Diphtheria.

**TL:** It must have been diphtheria, yeah. Then one time a stray cat happened to come to school, and one of the Remmick boys threw it down the outhouse opening, and it got messed up. The teacher made him wash the cat. Dogs would come along too, with the teams of horses, like the Remmick family and Uncle Ben's family. They drove to school and lived 2 ½ -3 miles away, they never walked. We usually walked being the school was only ¾ mile from our house. We always walked. If we could see the farm upon leaving school (weather related), then we walked southeast and with the northwest wind to our backs, it made it easier to walk and we very seldom got picked up (from school by our parents)

**AL:** So your ancestors made their living as farmers in Russia?

**TL:** Yeah, they lived off of the land like we did in the homestead days.

**AL:** So did they have orchards or vineyards, or I would imagine gardens and the "bestands"?

**TL:** Oh yeah, but to prepare a vineyard, they spaded the ground, the "black earth" region in south Russia, it got spaded 3-4 feet deep, then the vineyard got planted, like plowed, that wasn't just the surface, it was like summer fallow. That's where the vineyards were planted. There were grapes growing and other fruit too; it was not such a harsh climate as in North Dakota.

**AL:** Do you remember them talking about any successful farming practices or how to handle animals or harvesting tips, or anything like that?

**TL:** Yes, there was quite a bit of rotation, the land got planted, I believe, for 3 years and then for 1 year it was pastured for cattle. In Guldendorf especially, there was a dairy herd, so they planted the different grain fields, barley, wheat, and corn, and after that it was left for pasture for 1 year. That was kind of the rule; yeah, there was crop rotation, that was strongly emphasized in that village for sure. In Gluckstal dorf, my step-grandfather related that there was a quarry, and in the summer they worked in the fields and in the winter they worked in the quarry. That's why they had year round employment and that's why it was called Gluckstal (lucky valley). The rock they could saw, because, it was soft rock; I'm sure they didn't have diamond-pointed saws. Grandfather Roesler also talked about threshing by using wind, early in the morning the breeze was real steady, before sunrise or with early sunrise; they tossed the grain sheaves in the air and let the chaff blow away and let the wheat pile up. There were steam threshers in Russia, bought by the village in common, like a co-op. The threshers were not moved from place to place, people brought/hailed their grain sheaves in to the threshing area. They had to ration (time slots) like, today you bring your grain in. the next day the next guy brought his in, there had to be organization.

**AL:** So what family members helped out in the village fields?

**TL:** Well, there was always work. The first thing was watching or herding geese. That was my Dad's first job in the village, watching geese for a group of neighbors, and then there were graduations, the next brother or sister got the job. They had to herd cattle and horses. They went out for bids for herding the work horses. The villagers turned the horses out at night, especially the ones that weren't needed for work, like colts, and those that weren't able to work, and they had to be watched pretty much, 24 hours a day. John Albrecht and his sons had the job of caring for and herding horses, day and night.

**AL:** Did they ever talk about people stealing stuff or burglary?

**TL:** Stealing horses was like stealing cars now-a-day. If you had 2 horses and a wagon, it was like our modern day trucking. You could haul stuff and earn money. Yeah, horses were a big item and they were locked in solid at night. There were smart guys too, you know, especially one guy, he would keep the owner interested in talking (distracted) and the other guys (his accomplices) would be in the barn. When the thief figured they (the accomplices and the stolen horses) were well down the road, he would cut off the conversation and if the owner didn't think to check his barn, ja, by the next morning the horses had gone quite a distance and they couldn't be traced. They had places too, like in Guldendorf or Odessa where no ordinary citizen could walk in, and if they did, they never came out alive. There were underground gangsters and like gangsters are, if one of them tried to keep it (loot) for himself, even the gangster's life was wiped off the map.

**AL:** So what was the penalty for stealing, did you hear anything like that?

**TL:** I heard neighbor John Littau talking about whenever they (youngsters) got into mischief, they went to jail with no bathroom, and that was suffering for them, not having a men's room. They had a secluded place to keep them until they had court proceedings where penalties and fines were given. Yeah, as soon as 2 persons come together, there is always a problem that somebody else has to help solve or help settle, to decide who is right, e.g. considering a person's age, or who was there the longest, or who was closest to the property etc.

**AL:** Now, were your grandparents homesteaders or were they pioneer settlers?

**TL:** Grandpa Karl Lang was an original homesteader and Grandpa and Grandma Roesler too. They had a 5 year homestead term. They were the first people on the land as homesteaders.

**AL:** Where exactly did they homestead?

**TL:** Well, the Roesler grandparents homesteaded on the southeast half of the SE and on the south half of the southwest, this was the Roesler land, it was a mile long. Karl Lang's homestead was the north half of the SE which was 80 acres and the east half of the NE1/4, that made 160 acres, which was a "boot". Fischer, the first homesteader on the section, tried to pick the best land in the section, so he made his claim a "boot", and of course the others had to follow suit. So on Section #32, the Winkler family land was a square quarter of land; they had the half of the NW and half of the NE; that made 160 acres for them.

**AL:** Part II, question #118 of the interview questions. How did the summer kitchen get used at your place? Did most everybody have one?

**TL:** The strife was, how to keep the main house cool, washing etc; it was a nice thing to have too, to keep an orderly house in the main house.

**AL:** Is that where a lot of the canning and summer stuff was done?

**TL:** Yeah, that's where the work was done for canning, preparing food and meat etc.

**AL:** So how did your family prepare the "mischt" blocks for heating fuel-the manure blocks; what was the process involved there?

**TL:** Well, cleaning the barn everyday, you had that much manure, according to the number of cows you had, then it was put on a stone boat/slip and you unloaded it to the manure bed and added to it every day. You had to level it out according to the amount of snow and when spring came, you put salt blocks on the pile, and the cattle stomped the pile and packed it down, then you moved it around and if it wasn't packed quite well enough, then the horses were hitched together and walked in circles over the pile to further pack it. You could mix horse and cow manure, but horse manure only, wasn't sticky enough, so you had to watch the consistency, if you had many horses, you couldn't use all of this manure. If you had more cows and not so many horses, it worked better. Then when it was packed and spring's work was over, it was time to make it into blocks. You used a spade and made a straight line, two lines as a rule, and you made it into blocks, which were between 12-15 inches square. The blocks after they were cut were set up so they would air and dry. They needed about the same amount of space to dry as they were big. After a few days, they had to be turned around, bottom up, and after they were dried completely, if it rained, they wouldn't get so wet after they had been turned. They were made into a bundle like a shock; you started with 4 and kept on building to air it out like you see how they dried grain in Germany. You made racks; then after it was well dried, it got carried to the winter storage area, which was the "mischt sheeva". A Mrs. Becker, who made the Becker book, stated that if a farmer had a big fuel stack, then you knew he was a good/big farmer, because, if he had only a few cows or livestock, the fuel stack wasn't big, but, if he had a big stack, he had a lot of cows and needed more hay.

**AL;** It was quite the status symbol!

**TL:** It was a good measure, when you drove in the yard, if you could see the size of the stack, you knew what kind of farmer he was; that's what she claimed, and I admit it too, I believe it, I know it, the evidence was there.

**AL:** That's funny, so how were the roads to your farm from the different towns?

**TL:** Oh there were trails pretty much until after the war, then finally we had machinery. The Tappen road got graded in 1920, maybe not, but that was the time they organized the township, the commissioner put that in.

The road lead to 15 miles due south of Tappen. There was some grading done in 1928 and 1929, but it got done only down to the Zimmerman corner, and we didn't have grading east and west past our place until 1938.

**AL:** Whose job was it to work the grain crop, fields, and hay fields; who participated in that?

**TL:** Well, it was a family ordeal, it was husband and wife, in-laws, and parents. Raking and packing (stomping a haystack) it was down, was pretty much the first job I had. We never stomped down the hay in the hayracks as a rule, but topped it off. We tried to keep the haystacks low so we wouldn't have to lift the hay so much with the pitchfork; it settled by itself so we could get more hay on the rack.

**AL:** So, who took care of the barnyard chores, watering and feeding livestock and chickens etc.? Whose responsibility was that?

**TL:** That was pretty much a family thing; Dad never tended to the chickens, that was Ma's and the kids' job; they were told to do it. Dad did barn cleaning before we (children) were able to. Filling the hayloft was all hand work. There were no slings or cables, it was a family thing. I remember Grandpa Karl helped fill the hayloft; Dad pitched it into the floor opening of the stairs (ladder steps) and mother pushed it back, to fill the back end of the loft. Grandpa Karl helped until he got tired, then Dad and Mom had to see how they got along again.

**AL:** So everybody was needed for that stuff?

**TL:** Oh yeah, they were all candidates, whoever could work.

**AL:** Who did most of the cooking or the laundry, or raising the kids?

**TL:** In our family it was mother's job, and Dad was a big help for Edwin. Dad helped during the night hours because mother had other babies too. I never knew that Edwin was so sick until after Grandpa died in 1924 (and Edwin was born in 1922). I had stayed with Grandma Elizabeth until 1927, and when I got back to living in the house, I realized how sick Edwin was. Dad was tired of coming over to Grandma's house early in the morning to wake me up to get the horses and cattle, then Leo had to come over to wake me so Dad wouldn't have to go outside, over to the sod house. Then I knew how sick Edwin was, he would cough and get out of breath and involuntarily moan, but really didn't wake up. Dad would get up and say, "What can I do for you?" It was just comforting for Dad to go up to him, then, Edwin would fall asleep again, or rest anyway. That's when I knew how sick he was. Dad and Mom had a big item (load) taking care of Edwin, that maybe the Zimmerman family or other neighbors didn't have, not having an invalid child. It was a big load and stress for my parents.

**AL:** Who was most often found in the garden doing the gardening?

**TL:** Oh, Dad would help with the plowing and the potatoes. It was pretty much shared; mother was more instrumental in seeing to the garden, being she was at home more and Dad had to be out more like going to town hauling grain, helping with election days, and with he being a supervisor he had look at and prioritize jobs on roads grades and rock work etc.

**AL:** What kinds of animals did you butcher on the farm, what different varieties?

**TL:** Pork was the main thing and later on we added beef, because the Roesler grandparents never had porkers because of the religious thing. The Gums family usually had pork, chickens, ducks, and geese too. The geese and ducks never got sold as a rule, but the turkeys were strictly for market; we never had turkey (to eat) except for the wee, baby turkeys that were hatched in July; they never got big and when winter came they were too small (for market) and that was the only turkey we ever had. They were strictly a cash crop.

**AL:** What about sheep, any mutton?

**TL:** Yes, my mother inherited a dowry, she got some sheep. Sheep are very good animals; they'll go out to feed and always come back, they always come back unless they get chased, then they're lost. We had them until 1925, then evidently they strayed, got chased into the big lake. My parents couldn't find them for a long time, then Dad noticed there were some that had run into the lake-there were more sheep there; he checked it out and sure enough he found one that was still alive. It was a black sheep or a "marker sheep" and Dad brought it home but it died anyway. That was the last of the sheep from the dowry. The Gilfinnin ranch early on (during the late 1800's and early 1900's) up to 1907, 1908, 1909, was a horse ranch and when horses became more plentiful it became a cattle ranch. When the cattle operation went broke, they sold out in about 1922 or 1923; the bank sold out the Gilfinnin ranch so it belonged to the bankers. The bankers ran cattle for a bit, but later turned it into a sheep operation and hired Mr. Herman Nader and his family as caretakers, he was a sheep man. Herman knew how to handle sheep; there were close to 1000 sheep at the ranch. If you've got a herd and some sheep have twin lambs, they can't care for them, sheep can handle only 1 lamb, so the ranch gave away these "doubles" to the neighbors. Our road to town went through the ranch, so did Uncle Ben's, the Zimmerman's, and the Remmick's road, even the north bunch, the Schauer's Job's, John and Christ Neumiller's road. The John Neumiller family was from Dawson/Streeter area. The ranch gave these lambs away to Uncle Ben, bottle lambs they were called; we had to feed them by bottle, then we got into the sheep business again, until the 1930's came, during the bad drought years. I remember well Leo and Ella had a sheep buck. The buck didn't bother me; I taught him a lesson, when he got after me I whacked him one, then, he always respected me. When Leo and Ella came home from school they first always looked around and said, "Where's the buck, where's the buck?" They would sneak around behind the hill, but the buck had his head up too; he was on the watch. They couldn't be out in the yard either, Ella and Leo, the buck knew them, but I never had any trouble. Like animals are, they know the ones they got to respect: horses, dogs, geese especially.

**AL:** Everyone helped out when butchering time came around?

**TL:** Yeah, I even helped and got my hand into the meat chopper which my uncle cranked; he was the power source. I was glad to help, I was glad to do it; that was a lesson I learned like everything else; I never got hurt much with my hands ever since, a life-long lesson.

**AL:** What was the usual number of livestock you had on your farm in the early days?

**TL:** Well, when Dad was younger, he had a lean-to. I just talked to Leo about it. The lean-to had shiplap boards, and it had no wooden roof; it had hog wire and straw was put on it. Dad had it until, let's say, 1925, so they had the younger animals up until that time, which was 10 years. Then he took that shed down; it was a big job cleaning that shed; he tried with a horse scraper, but there was hay mixed in (the animal waste). He took the boards off of the shed on the north side and pulled the scraper into the barn, but it didn't work too well, so, he finally got tired of that and took the shed down and built a garage and our first chicken barn, that was in 1925, when we got the car, and that's when the Fred Lang family got the first chickens too. We went to the Ole Kleppe farm and got eggs. They talked about "laying" chickens that don't brood; they were Monarkie chickens, and these and Leghorns don't brood. Grandmother Christina and mother hatched out the chickens; those were the first chickens we had. From there on Dad timed it pretty close, he made just so much hay for so many milk cows and that was it; if he had 11 or 12 stacks he quit making hay and rotated the hay land.

**AL:** What about numbers for cattle or horses?

**TL:** We had 12-15 cows and replacements, 4-5 heifers; that was the going rate until I was able to work, which was in the early 1930's. We got rides to school; we took the hayrack along and after school we went up to the north lake and loaded the hay, then, we had a ride home from school, Leo and me. We had a lot of experiences too, I suppose we were tired and we got stuck one time with the hayrack, in the spring. We were too close to water and the frost had soaked up/thawed the ground, and we got stuck.

**AL:** How many horses do you think you generally had over the years, I mean at one time?

**TL:** Dad had 8, until he knew the boys needed power, then, we got to training horses. After I had them trained, he sold them, which I didn't like one bit. He sold to the mail carrier and to Gottlieb Reuer, and then, of course, we needed more horses too, after Leo got to be of working age. We never had more than 20 horses, I'd say, we had maybe 16-17 and the colts had to be 2-3 years old before you could use some of them.

**AL:** So they (horses) did all the work basically?

**TL:** Oh yeah, it was strictly horse work until 1948 when I got my first tractor; I was totally on my own. I had Sam Kinsley come and plow some summer fallow, I still have the check; I paid him for plowing 23 acres of summer fallow.

**AL:** So what about dogs and cats involved on the farm, were they valuable, did you have them?

**TL:** Oh yeah, a dog was very important for a cattle, for a herd of milk cows. If you had no dog, the cattle wouldn't move, but if you had a dog, where he'd bark, then, the cows knew we got to move. Rats were a big problem in the sod houses; there were mice and rats, like the G. Gums family lived on the homestead and the rats lifted the lids on the stove or on the cupboards and got into the food, so they had to move out of their sod house.

**EW:** How did you get rid of them?

**TL:** DE-CON, I'd still move into a sod house, they were cool in summer and warm in winter. Grandma Lang had 300-400 lbs. of hard coal, that's about it and she heated only 1 room except for her baking room once a week. Otherwise she used native fuel, which was called "Russian Coal", that's what the Polish called the Russian manure pile or fuel stack, it was Russian coal.

**AL:** So cats were used for, to control those.....

**TL:** Yes, for rodent control, gophers especially, the flickertail gophers that were around the yard. Some of the cats did a real good job, but then they had to learn the trade too, like animals do, you know.

**AL:** So you had milk cows, you were referring to that earlier, milk and cheese; you made that yourselves, the butter and cheese of course.

**TL:** That was the lucky thing, everything was home grown and if the potato crop was big, then we had lots of potatoes to eat, and if crop was weak, then we had more grain foods, baked goods, white flour, and Johnny cake, and malai, and porridge, grits as they call it in the south.

**AL:** Did you have a bestand on a regular basis?

**TL:** Yes it was very necessary and important, then as the years matured (passed) the prairies got saturated with pigeon grass and Russian thistles, then it (bestand) didn't work very well. The policy was if you put a bestand in new ground, then no weeding was needed, especially in the early days. After the drought in the 1930's the soil

was so saturated with weeds the land was all like “gone back” prairie. The east pasture, all of that was just like it had been plowed, due to the dust that was brought in from the wind during 1934-36.

**AL:** When did you start to get the newer farming implements, the multi-bottom plows, the tractors, and things like that; when did that start moving in?

**TL:** Well, there was some tractor plowing in the later 1920’s, but in the 1930’s that fizzled out. After the war, rubber tires came along and that’s when we got mechanized and we got our first tractor in 1948, the H tractor along with the farmhand. It was used for stacking hay only. I got the grapple fork in 1958 for feeding the cattle. So for us it was in 1948.

**AL:** That’s when it started?

**TL:** There were tractors, but in the very early years, late 1800’s –early 1900’s, they had horse-powered threshing machines and feed grinders. Uncle Ben, the Winkler family, and the Werre family used horse-power for threshing.

**AL:** Speaking of threshing, that was obviously a pretty big deal when that came around; describe that scene a little bit.

**TL:** Threshing was the “cream of the crop”, very interesting and everybody tried to help, and the help was needed too. When the crops were good, all the help had to try to get the grain in the bins.

**AL:** How long would that take normally, I suppose it depended on the size of the farm, but for you guys?

**TL:** Well, we weren’t really grain farmers, our area was cattle farming of course, with all the rocks, hills, gravel hills, low spots, and gumbo. It depended on the crop; I heard that Phillip Fettig threshed until Christmas in 1925 with Pius Reis’ machine and tractor. They didn’t get done until Christmas; the crops were good and the weather was also a factor. Otto Graf talked about threshing for 30 days. In the lean years, less threshing was done and smaller threshing machines came along.

**AL:** A longer process than today anyway?

**TL:** Then of course they had to form co-ops too, the first threshing at my folk’s place was in 1922; it was Fred Lang, Gottlieb Zimmerman, Uncle Ben Lang, and George Remmick. They bought the threshing machine and the tractor; it worked for about 5-6 years, until the Remmick family connected up with the other Remmicks and got a different tractor.

**AL:** Do you remember your first car that you got?

**TL:** Oh yes, in 1925 in the spring. We got the first Model T; it was a second hand car, a 1924 model touring car.

**AL:** You made a note here, a canvas enclosure, what is that?

**TL:** Well curtains, like your Geo Tracker, it was the same material, but they started making sedans in 1923, and they were 2-doors in the middle of the Model T. Later on they made the 4-door sedans too. Dad traded for one of those cars, that, was the only car I needed or used for my courting days, a 4-door Model T sedan.

**AL:** Do you remember who had the very first car in the region, the area there?

**TL:** Well, Uncle Ben was one of the first ones; he claimed he could go to town and come back and still do a half days work. If you went to town with a team of horses, it was an all day job. The Werre, Mertz, and Oster families had some of the first cars. The Oster family had a touring Dodge, and The Mertz family had a Model T.

**AL:** So a lot of people got them in a short amount of time?

**TL:** Yeah, in the 1920's. The Roeslers had one, maybe in the late 19-teens or early 1920's; they didn't have a car for a spell until 1925 when they bought a new Model T Ford. Of course they went to church 14 miles away, down to the "Flat", unless they, the Seventh Day Adventists, had neighboring assemblies for services. We had our regular Glueckstal church which was 3-1/2 miles from our place, and the school was ¾ mile away. The community was pretty centered, we didn't travel too many miles except we went to town for the 4th of July, and the chance for us to go along was rotated amongst the children.

**AL:** Did Model T's have odometers, could you tell how many miles were on it?

**TL:** No, but you could buy an accessory, some put it on. I had a wheel that was added to the front wheel, it was brass. I don't think I have it anymore.

**AL:** Those lights were electric, were they not?

**TL:** Not the first ones, they had kerosene lamps and magneto driven headlights. Roeslers, when they bought their Model T, had taillights that were kerosene and the headlights were magnetic. Dad always had a car with a battery; he didn't believe in cranking that much; he was a small man.

**AL:** So it had an electric starter, but the one you got in 1925, that had electric lights and electric start?

**TL:** Yeah, the one in 1925, the one folks bought, had electric start and lights. For the magnetic lights you had to have a very alternating bulb, because, if you speeded up in low gear, it would burn out the headlight bulbs. This was a big problem with magneto-driven Model T's.

**AL:** Yeah, we were basically at the conclusion of the questions of Part II here, we still have a little bit of time on the tape so we might fill it up a little bit. I guess there was one other question, what was the accessibility to building materials for, let's say, you wanted to build a new building, or somebody else did, was it readily available, lumber etc.?

**TL:** Well, when the homesteaders came in the 1800's, Dawson and Medina were on the NP route. That is where the wood came from for the homestead shanty. The Freiers got the lumber for their house from Dawson. There was the Keppler family, and I was thinking there were two names, they had their businesses, the bank for money; the settlers needed banking, the lumber yard, the merchandise store, the clothing store, like that, so it was a trading center, Dawson, ND, until Streeter got the railroad in 1905. Napoleon had the railroad in 1898. Streeter was a more German oriented town, so our Lang family got their mail in Streeter, until they became more accustomed to Napoleon. The Roeslers hauled their grain and got their mail at Streeter, after 1905. I don't know if they had any mail (service) before that. Of course, then we got settled into Napoleon (to do business) because it was only 14 miles; Streeter was 17 miles from our place and Dawson was 20 miles, as the crow flies, and Tappen was 18 miles.

**AL:** In the early days, say in the 1920's, was the mail actually delivered out or how did you have to collect it?

**TL:** No, like going to Napoleon and going through the ranch, the first place on route was Uncle Ben's house, so these people had arrangements made, Uncle Ben, the Zimmermans, and my parents, the Langs, that if one of

the families went to town, they would call on the telephone that there was mail and we'd have to get it. Normally they didn't bring it to us. If the Zimmerman family went to town, they brought the mail. The Littau family were strictly Streeter people; they didn't get their mail with the neighboring people, they had their mail in Streeter until the mail route started in 1929 out of Tappen, from there on we had rural route delivery. The mail came every other day, or 3 times a week for a good spell.

**AL:** That's pretty often actually.

**TL:** Yeah, it was 3 times a week, but then it finally became a daily route after the roads got better.

**AL:** After the mid-1950's when they graveled a lot of them, you said.

**TL:** In Napoleon, for the Gums family, they had a rural route started a little earlier, maybe in 1925 or so; it only came up to the Himmerich place. The Gums family had to go 2 miles to the mailbox.

**AL:** Talk about the telephone a little bit; how did that work, now this was before the actual installation of telephone lines and things?

**TL:** Yes, this was a four-party thing.

**AL:** Who paid for that?

**TL:** Well, they bought the telephone and ran the wires along the fence line; there were overhead wires between the Zimmerman place and our place, we had a wire on our north gate for the Littau family. There were 2 x 4's up, and then at our house we had a pole on the fence line and the steel wire ran into the house into the bedroom where the telephone was.

**AL:** So, you each had to buy one of those telephones and just make sure it was hooked up to the right fence line. When did you get that?

**TL:** I'd like to know, but it must have been in 1920, it was as long as I can remember though, but then lightning became a factor, it knocked some of the phones out, and then the people were scared that they'd get electrocuted. Then with cars and better travel these phones fizzled out. The Roesler family had their mailbox way down by the farm-to-market road. Jake Roesler was seeing girls and the Spotts family lived down there. He was the hired man down there, so he had more access to the mail. He was only 3 miles from the Halvorson family, which was 5 miles from the Roesler place. I still have the mailbox in the garage today, July 30, 2000.

**AL:** We're almost out of tape now, one quick question yet, did you ever have to hire out help or was anyone in your family hired out?

**TL:** Not really, Grandma Gums saw to it that her girls had to work at home; she'd been a hired girl and that was a no-no for her family, they could stay home. An advantage for me was I didn't have to hire out as a must. There was a lot of experience one could get by going out trying to earn money, but that was pretty meager pay, you know.

**AL:** Is there anything else you want to add before we run out of tape here, anything else?

**TL:** Cars were more or less only for summer use because there was no winter oil and no antifreeze. It was always horse traveling in the winter time. There were muddy roads. The horses were even used in the 1960's, for raking hay, until we had the wheel rake.

**AL:** I was born in 1961, and I remember dump raking with horses too.

**TL:** You needed 2 tractors; one advantage was having more horses, you could use two horses on one mower and two on the rake, then also on the buckler. There was only one tractor. J. Fettig and our family changed off from moving hay with the tractor then put the farmhand back on again to stack hay. There was a tractor shortage you could call it; that's why we relied on horses.

**AL:** Moving on to the "School" section, where did you go to school?

**TL:** In Grant School #3, it was  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (from our home). We walked. It was a one-room school. Then, I had my uncles, (who also went to school there); their home was a little beyond from where I lived, about a half mile or so. So I had Uncle Jake, he went to school some, Uncle Sam Roesler, Gideon Roesler, but, it was mostly walking.

**EW:** Did they go to school at the same time you did, is that what you're saying?

**TL:** Yeah.

**EW:** Oh, and they walked with you?

**TL:** They did some driving.

**EW:** With what, a car?

**TL:** Oh no, a horsedrawn "jumper" sled, that's about the only thing, otherwise, in the fall and spring it was walking; in the winter there was some sled riding going to school.

**EW:** How many years did you go to school there?

**TL:** I passed 8th grade, which, of course, was 8 years, but, at that time they had 7th and 8th grade examinations. In the 7th grade (the classes and exams) was agriculture, physiology, or hygiene, geography. There were just 3 in the 7th grade. The others were math, language (English), what is it called?

**AL:** Grammar?

**TL:** Grammar, grammar, we studied grammar later on it (was called) language, and I wrote the 7th - grade examinations, and 8th grade, and you were relieved if you passed all of the 7th. We had only 7 months of school. So, we/I never got to (learn) square root, and that was the only thing I ever missed. I couldn't square an acre; I knew how many square feet, I never learned square root, and that was about the only thing I ever missed in my agriculture, or farming jobs (classes).

**AL:** So, did you go to school the full terms of the year, those 7 months, or were there times you stayed home and helped with work?

**TL:** No, with my parents, school was number one; we went to school, work or no work.

**AL:** Were there students of other nationalities at that school?

**TL:** There were Worms (dialects) and the Remmicks (spoke this dialect).

**AL:** Pretty much all German,

**TL:** Oh yes, they were very much German, because their parents never knew the English language. Like I said it before, my mother and father had some English/American, in night school and my mother went to school for 3-4-5 years, so she was a big help in my schooling, with the American language.

**AL:** Any special memories about that school that you can think of? We'll do some more details here with the other questions, but generally speaking.

**TL:** Playing, playing on the playground, we played (spoke German while we played) in German, but, when we went in the schoolhouse, then we tried to speak English. Whispering was in German at that, I suppose, especially amongst the older scholars.

**EW:** Did you have any other memories about what games you played at recess?

**TL:** "Pom -Pom Pull Away", that was one big thing (game), which was, if you were tagged, then you had to join that party, and after the last one was caught, we got divided up again and started over again. "Ante- I- Over", we played over the schoolhouse. Hide and seek, to some extent, I remember playing in school, behind the buildings, behind the barn, behind the coal bin, those were the hiding places.

**EW:/AL:** Did you play baseball? I was wondering about baseball too?

**TL:** We played baseball, but we never had a bat though, so we used a coal shovel for a bat, (laughs) but, that was pretty new, a newer game. Later, I played baseball with my cousins, particularly Eva Lang.

**EW:** So, we kind of covered travel to and from school, you either walked or went with the sled in the wintertime. Did you ride the horse sometimes?

**TL:** Not in my school, because, we were only  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile and in storms we didn't get picked up, because we lived ...the farm was southeast of the school, and if we could see the farm, then Dad depended upon that, that we could find home.

**EW:** What memories do you have of your teachers?

**TL:** Oh, we had one teacher, Flora Harrison. She grew up at Austin, MN, that's where her father was a blacksmith, and she came out to homestead, she and her brother, Harry Dugan. She had married, evidently, a Harrison. Flora E. Harrison was the teacher for 5 years, my first years of school, and then later on, we had Ann Whiteness, and Esther Olson. My last teacher Helen Rada, grew up in Fullerton, ND. She went to school at Ellendale Normal School. She was a Czech or Bulgarian, her ancestry. RADA, was her name.

**EW:** How did you heat the school, and what did you have for lunch, and what were your washing facilities to wash your hands, that kind of thing?

**TL:** Well, this Flora Harrison boarded at the school and she hired a family, the Remmicks to bring her the water, a 10 gallon can, also the Lang family & my older cousins, helped. She (the teacher) paid 50 cents a month, maybe (for) 4 cans or something, a month, and we drank that water too, that the teacher furnished in school. For a meal, we had a gallon syrup pail, about a gallon size, that was the common dinner pail, and there was bread and butter, and if there was no butter, then it was sour cream, and an apple. That was about the only fruit; vegetables we ate at home.

**AL:** Did you set your lunch pails beside your desk? Where were they?

**TL:** They had a line up/ shelf, where the dinner pails got put.

**AL:** So it must have had your name on it or something.

**TL:** Yeah, evidently, the bigger families, like the Remmicks, they had a three-gallon pail, and Uncle Ben's (children), the boys had their own dinner (pail) and the girls had their own, i.e. Fred, Lewie, and Gottlieb, they were the boys. Johanna, Martha, and Eva, they had their own dinner pail. The heating part was strictly a coal stove without a jacket (surrounding it), and being it was a one-room school, (later on they took the wall out to the entry, which was only 6-7 ft. wide) so it was a little bigger. So it was very crowded with 30 or so pupils, in this one-room school, and there were 8 grades. For discipline, Harrison had a ruler; she used a ruler, especially on the older students that got kind of out of hand.

**EW:** What did you have to do wrongly when you got disciplined? What was it usually that you were doing, was it talking, or chewing gum, or I mean...I'm trying to think of different things, of why you might be disciplined?

**TL:** Well, being a bit too noisy, I suppose, whispering or so. Later on, I remember the teachers made you write a certain thing 50 times or a 100 times, especially when the Aipperspachs came to school. Otherwise, it was pretty much.... we understood what the teacher meant, so there wasn't too much discipline needed.

**AL:** Well, I just want to add one thing, I remember you telling a story once about the methods of discipline, I don't know if it was at your school or not, but, they had a little box of gravel, and you have to kneel on the gravel.

**TL:** That was said about the neighbors, the Aipperspach family.

**AL:** That wasn't at school?

**TL:** That wasn't at school.

**AL:** Oh, I see, okay, I just wanted to clarify that. If you've ever tried that, it doesn't feel good. (laughs)

**EW:** I can imagine.

**TL:** One more thing about discipline in school, Flora Harrison had a rod, a birch rod, or whatever; she whacked it on the desk, and that got attention, period. (laughs)

**AL:** Well, we'll move onto the next section and the question #38. Was the religion in church education in your upbringing?

**TL:** Yes it was. With church, the truth is, homesteaders, being away from the villages (of their homeland in Russia) and friends, (during the week) , that (church) was a visiting weekly meeting, and with living (life), trials and debts occur, so that was pretty much one of the first things (established) was church, & religious education. (Note by EW. Church was a place of socializing and solace).

**AL:** What were some of the religious activities you experienced in your daily life? Things you did every day?

**TL:** Table prayer, morning devotions, and if there was bad weather and one was unable to travel, then the sermon book was handy, and it was read at home, by my Grandfather Karl, and later my Dad did some of that too. The worship services were in German, until sometime in the 1940s, and we had this Glueckstal rural country church, 3 miles from the Lang homestead.

**AL:** Just deviating from the questions here, if the weather was kind of bad, and there was no church, how did the word get around, or did you just assume that before the weather was a certain condition, chances are, nobody was going to be there?

**TL:** The officials (church) saw to it that they were there, and every fifth Sunday when the pastor came, Glueckstal church was filled, pretty much to capacity. There were five churches in the parish (the area the pastor had to cover). Sometimes, especially with Christmas programs, there was standing room only, and even that was limited. Even some of the younger people in the neighborhood came to this (event), whether they were from a Reformed Church, etc.

**AL:** So what languages were the church services in?

**TL:** In German. In German, until the 1940s sometime

**AL:** Sometime in the 1940s is when they switched to English?

**TL:** Confirmation.

**AL:** After the war?

**TL:** Yeah.

**AL:** So, what did your parents think of that, switching to English?

**TL:** Well, that was somewhat like I stated before, they were young when they came to America, they spoke the American language, but some of the elders, like my mother-in-law Elizabeth Maier Gums, knew no English. So it was a really big problem for these older people. But you've got to favor the young people too, because that's who keeps the church growing, it's not the older people that keep it going, they're the decliners (on the decline).

**AL:** Can you tell us a little bit about when you were baptized, obviously that (story) would have been passed along to you, and was there any truth about how you got your name on the way to that service?

**TL:** Yes, I was told that my parents didn't have a name, even when going to church on January 7, 1917, and Grandma Elizabeth must have stated, "name him Theodore (Ted)", and that got to be my name.

**AL:** So, you didn't really have officially, a name for over 2 months?

**TL:** Well, I suppose, and I was "the boy", and....

**AL:** Two months, and 2 weeks. (laughs).

**TL:** Then, my confirmation was on June 26, 1931, and that was at the Streeter church (Lutheran), which was the "center" of the parish, (of a five- point parish by EW). That was where the pastor lived.

**AL:** And his name was?

**TL:** My pastor was Johannes Grill.

**AL:** Grill. Any special plans or things (activities) that went along with baptisms in those days, or confirmations; was there a supper or picnic, or..?

**TL:** No with the (busy) days and busy seasons i.e. winter, harvest, seeding, etc. it was pretty much, there was no play. For the sponsors, whoever was at church that Sunday got picked (as a sponsor). I remember well when my

sisters and brothers, when the pastor was here, and mother was able to come to church with the baby, there was baptism every fifth Sunday, so Dad would pick whoever was in church, a friend, a relative if possible, and especially for my brother Edwin, I remember well, when Dad picked Martha Lang, daughter of Konrad Lang.

**AL:** Do you know who your sponsors were?

**TL:** My uncle Jacob Winkler and his second wife, because his first wife, Mary Lang died in January 1916, and my baptism was in January 1917, so, Jacob Winkler had remarried and they were my sponsors.

**AL:** Do you have your framed certificates for baptism or.....?

**TL:** Yes, we had them. My mother saw to it that they were framed.

**AL:** Do you still have them today?

**TL:** I wonder if they're at the farm yet (still). I think there's a box down there with frames; I don't have any place to store them here, you know.

**AL:** They should probably be retrieved.

**EW:** I would think it's a good idea, yes. Were your parents & grandparents involved in founding a church, starting up the church, or did they just join in with some neighborhood church?

**TL:** Well, a sod church, Glueckstal, was built in 1908, and they (my grandparents) had come (to ND) to homestead that spring. They evidently attended (church), but, they were busy doing their own building. The sod church was too small for all these settlers and their bigger families, so it only lasted five years, until 1913, then, the frame church was built, and that was roomier. I'd say they (my grandparents) knew about the sod church being built, but in my thinking, they had plenty to do on their own building while building the two-room rammed- dirt houses and the barn; they were built out of sod and rock, then they had to clear the land. They were doing double duty.

**EW:** How did you family respond and react toward death? There were a lot of deaths I'm sure that you experienced.

**TL:** Well, there were some, my Grandfather's death, that very deeply affected me, because we lived with him, and then kind of got into grandpa's way and did things, (to displease Grandpa EW), so I felt really bad; I was broken-hearted when Grandpa died in 1924, I was 8 years and 1 week old (birthday was October 17) and he died October the 24th, 1924. I'll add yet that I was informed and I remember well that he was the first body (for a funeral) for which a motor vehicle was used and that was John Hoffer's truck, it was used as the hearse; they came and picked it (the body) up at the sod house (earth-rammed), and drove to church, but we followed with the horse and buggy. But, Grandpa (his body) was on the motor vehicle, and my Uncle Jake Roesler and John Kopp were protecting the coffin from (moving), they kept it in the center of the grain box of that truck.

**AL:** They rode on the back?

**TL:** They were on back, riding, when they left for church, that I remember well.

**AL:** Was there a person designated, as like, the undertaker, in the neighborhood?

**TL:** Well, I know my step-grandfather, Roesler, took care of the needs for Grandpa Karl. We called him (Roesler) and whatever needed to be done, he did, so, he was more or less the undertaker. The first real undertaker in

Glueckstal, was in 1935, and that was Elmo Nickisch, but he was just out of mortuary science school; he was from Wishek. This Dewald boy was 7 or so, and he died in an accidental death, and he, Nickisch was the undertaker for this funeral, and that was in 1935, I believe.

**EW:** Okay, during times of trial or when deaths occurred in the family, were there certain songs or Holy Scriptures or verses or anything that you particularly remember that were recited, because of a death, or trial in your family, a hard time, especially like even during the '30s, probably?

**TL:** Well, there was church service every week, and especially this "Allgemeinde Gebet" in the German songbook, which dealt with (had prayers for) drought and fires, I remember that well, it said, guard us from fire and drought (Wasser's Not) in that prayer, so it was kind of a weekly thing to say it, and I remember that well, Grandmother Elizabeth saying her morning prayers, kneeling when saying the evening prayer, after Grandpa Karl was gone; I was 8 years old when I experienced that with my grandmother, having morning and evening prayers, because I stayed at her house after Grandpa died, for a year or two.

**EW:** Was that her consolation, prayers?

**TL:** I would say so.

**EW:** How did people generally express their grief? Was it more on word prayers or were there other ways?

**TL:** Well, there were some like the Hufts (Mrs. Magdalena Huft), who was a widow and it was very, very hard for this widow; I remember the events at the cemetery especially. The Huft daughter had gotten and died of pneumonia. The teacher, Flora Harrison, arranged for us (students) to sing a song at Katherine Huft's funeral, I believe it was in 1923. We sang "Home Sweet Home" at the cemetery, the school (students) and the teacher. {Addendum by **EW:** Mr. John Huft died of an thigh bone fracture which later resulted in an infection according to Ted's recollection, also Ted recalls that at the Huft child's funeral, he could not sing much because of the deep sadness and emotion he felt; he was about 7 years old at the time.}

**EW:** So you sang songs as a community and prayed together, and those were some of the ways you expressed your grief. I'm sure there was crying and tears too?

**TL:** Oh yes, very tearful.

**EW:** What traditional funeral songs were sung?

**TL:** Well, they had this worship song book and I remember well in Grandfather's songbook, song #577, translating it, "Gehen nun hin und grab mein grab", meaning, dig my grave, I'm tired of this wandering/this pilgrimage. Those are the first two lines of that song.

**EW:** Are you familiar with any wrought-iron crosses, was that something used in your heritage or community?

**TL:** Yes, there are two, at Glueckstal Lutheran Country Church, and they were made by this Konrad Lang, the blacksmith, the same Konrad who took over Grandpa Karl Lang's blacksmith shop in Russia, Bessarabia. This Konrad came to America too, shortly after my Grandpa Karl and his family came. He made those two crosses, i.e., one for his daughter and one for my cousin, a Neumiller, and they (the crosses), are still there to this day, at Glueckstal.

**EW:** Okay, do you know if there was any special meaning to a particular shape or anything, or wasn't that of special meaning?

**TL:** No, I wouldn't say so, they are identical in design, there was one thing about Glueckstal, the confirmed (deceased) had a separate section (in the cemetery) and the non-confirmed had a different section; the south section was non-confirmed and the north half of the cemetery was for the confirmed people.

**EW:** So if a baby or a child died, they were buried on the south side of the cemetery.

**TL:** Which (this) was very unusual to some of the pastors that came later. They couldn't see it, why that was that way, but it was a thing that was brought over (from Russia) some how.

**EW:** So it was a tradition, but they didn't really agree with it?

**TL:** Well, these later pastors really thought it was out of the ordinary, but, there were other cemeteries that had that (same tradition), so, it was something that was brought over from Russia.

**EW:** So, they didn't necessarily disagree with doing it that way, they just found it unusual.

**TL:** Right.

**EW:** Okay, what kind of markers were used, if there weren't iron crosses, what, maybe head stones?

**TL:** Well, with the 1920s, and then the depression years in the '30s, if there was a marker of any kind, it was the name and the date of birth, so they were pretty economical.

**EW:** Like wooden?

**GL:** There were some wooden crosses put up, they wouldn't last. Over in the other cemetery where Mom (Louise) was buried, there were some, but over here, I can't remember (there being any).

**EW:** Some granite or marble?

**TL:** Well, there were marble; there were head stones, more or less, only.

**AL:** When did Grandpa Karl get his headstone put up? Was that well after his death or not that shortly after?

**TL:** Shortly after, Grandma saw to it that he got this marker; this traveling salesman, John J. Hochhalter got the franchise to sell Watkins, in Kidder County and he sold grave markers, and anything else as a sideline, and that's where Grandpa Karl's marker was bought from, this John Hochhalter.

**AL:** Was he the optometrist in Steele?

**TL:** Yeah.

**EW:** Oh, was there anything else about your spiritual upbringing that you were going to tell us, maybe some other special points that you remember or call to mind? Pause. Okay, how about Christmas, how was Christmas celebrated in your family? What was Christmas like during the depression?

**TL:** Well, in the church there was always a bag with peanuts for the youngsters that had their recitation, and that was pretty much all during the depression too. The sponsors (baptismal) of my sister and my brother always gave my brother and sister bags (of goodies), but my sponsor had died shortly after I was baptized, so I got only 1 bag for Christmas. And now getting to Easter, (we had) colored eggs and some baked goods, maybe cookies (cut out with a cutter) and that was about it for Easter.

**AL:** I would imagine you had to buy the dye for the eggs in the store, or would you make some?

**TL:** I think my Grandmother Elizabeth used onion leaves and whatever, maybe some flowers from the garden. Mother, I'd say, bought the coloring at the stores/markets.

**AL:** Yep, um, does the term Belzenikel ring a bell, i.e. for Christmas, and what was that to you?

**TL:** I heard it said, but there never was a dressed- up Belzenikel in my memories, when I was small. There was talk about the Belzenikel and "die Nacht grabbe" (equivalent to a Boogey Man or Scarecrow) and that was like the "darkness", like the spooks that'll "get " you and the fear was what the problem was, I suppose, you got so deeply involved you (actually) felt you were grabbed.

**EW:** Like if you were a bad boy, the "night scarecrow" would come?

**TL:** I suppose, (it was said), "Dich holt "der Nachtgrab"! Translated is: the night grabber will get you.

**AL:** When somebody got married, what happened there, where did it happen, and what happened afterward, how long did it last?

**TL:** The first wedding I attended was for August Remmick and Cecilia Bommberger, and that was in 1924, then there was the Conrad Stadel and Hannah Buchholz wedding, that was in 1927. Otherwise there was no big hall, except for the barn.

**EL:** The barns for what? Not for the marriage, but the celebration?

**TL:** Celebration.

**AL:** So, was the wedding at the church?

**TL:** Pretty much at the parsonage and, like for my parents, they got married by the county judge in Steele.

**AL:** So there were maybe dances in the barn afterwards?

**TL:** There were some barn dances, when Henry Rau and Malida Mertz were married in 1932; there was a dance in the "summer kitchen", but, otherwise there were no big buildings.

**AL:** Were there any "money" dances, equivalent to the dollar dance, I suppose?

**TL:** No. Not that I...(remember).

**AL:** Did the wedding guests ever sing German songs at the celebration?

**TL:** Yes, I remember well at the Conrad and Hannah (nee Buchholz) Stadel wedding, there was singing, which was very much appreciated by the groom's father. He really enjoyed that singing, and which was also, no doubt, a big thing (a common tradition) in the old country, Russia. Ted Lang adds: It was Andreas Kelsch and Fred Lang who sang at this wedding.

**EW:** Was it like a blessing on the couple or something?

**TL:** Well, they sang nice songs.

**AL:** You don't remember?

**TL:** (I) don't remember.

**AL:** Was there such a thing as a chivaree for the married couple?

**TL:** Well, that one in 1932 for Henry and Mathilda Rau, I wasn't in it, but they came with a truck and had a chivaree for Henry and Mathilda (Mertz) Rau.

**AL:** So what did they do with that?

**TL:** For Henry and Mathilda, it was 1932, and they invited them in for the party, the chivaree guys, and there was a big crowd, hardly any room for anybody.

**AL:** They just had a little party for them at somebody's house?

**TL:** Yeah, in the summer kitchen.

**AL:** What sort of foods were served at special events?

**TL:** Well, I suppose bratwurst and liverwurst and bread and cookies, no doubt.

**AL:** Seasoned meats and pastries?

**TL:** Seasoned meats.

**AL:** Any homemade wine that you know of or any homemade beer?

**TL:** Yeah, there was some. There was homemade beer and some distilled (liquor).

**EW:** Schnapps, whiskey, or something like that? Who mostly helped with the food preparation?

**TL:** Oh, the women, (our relatives), the grandmas and the families, the children, the brothers and sisters. Like I said, I really only attended maybe two weddings and that was in the evening only, so I wasn't aware of how preparations were made, but there was some food: sausages and cake, and cookies, and that was pretty much the total menu as far as I know.

**EW:** What did the bride wear and were there any decorations?

**TL:** Well, they had a veil, a veil.

**EW:** How about ribbons?

**TL:** There were some ribbons.

**EW:** Did they usually have a full gown, a veil and gown, or just a veil?

**TL:** Just mostly a veil. I remember getting invited for the August Remmick and Cecilia Bommberger wedding. As was likely customary, two men riding on horseback came to the Lang homestead and invited the Lang household. It was Rudolph Mertz and Jacob P. Remmick who were on horseback that day. My Grandma Elizabeth tied a ribbon to a cane that the riders had with them. This was a way of giving invitation, ~ riding around in the area on horseback, carrying a cane. Someone at the household that they stopped at would put a ribbon on the cane, which meant this household had indeed been invited, and when the riders arrived back home they knew how many households had been invited by counting the number of ribbons on the cane. From each family they got a ribbon and knew how many (were invited); this was the checklist. This took place in 1924.

**EW:** Subject: men in weddings. I remember a picture of Grandpa Fred Lang, he had a ribbon on his suit coat (on his wedding picture), was that a common tradition?

**TL:** That was when they took that wedding picture, later on, that was not on the wedding day.

**EW:** Oh, so somebody usually made those ribbons for the men?

**TL:** Oh, that was at John J. Hochhalter's studio in Streeter, and the studio provided the equipment (the props) for the picture, and maybe some people brought (their own) to put on (the suit coat).

**EW:** Was there such a thing as a "Liebsband" that you know of, some kind of sash? You're not familiar with that? There were some photos taken of the bride and groom quite often.

**TL:** Yes, there were some photographers. There were some people that developed the pictures themselves, and there was one of these photographers living up where later Reinhold Mertz lived, who took the Jacob Winkler-Mary Lang, and Conrad Lang & spouse, wedding pictures.

**EW:** Who was the other photographer?

**TL:** I don't know his name, but, he was from the Dawson, ND area and he lived on his homestead where Reinhold Mertz later lived and where presently Alvin Mertz lives.

**EW:** How did you meet your spouse?

**TL:** Well, I suppose it was because our parents were visiting each other's homes, which was one of the first times I met Louise. The Gums family, Philipp, Elizabeth, Edward, and Louise, came to visit the Lang family. I remember my sister Ella had a cast iron stove that was gifted to her by her Grandmother Christina Roesler, and Louise was very fond of that stove.

**EW:** What year was this?

**TL:** This was in about 1928.

**EW:** So this was not an arranged courtship?

**TL:** No.

**EW:** It was a courtship from meeting each other.

**TL:** It was 3 miles (to the Gums farmstead), and there were no roads, just trails, you know. One thing about it, we had our own school, we had our own church, & towns like Gackle or Wishek, were 30 miles away. I never got to those places until I was 40 years old, and when I got to go anyplace, my family & I usually went to Jamestown because we had aunts and cousins there, but, otherwise we didn't get to distant towns. Bismarck, (that) was a no-no, (meaning we didn't go there because we had no relatives there).

**EW:** So what kind of social event did they usually have where young men could meet young women?

**TL:** Well, in my younger days, as with old tradition from the old country, they had Sunday afternoon barn dances, I remember that. That was a big social thing for the young people, and at the schools, we had basket socials and programs that the teachers put on, in the spring or with Christmas programs. Otherwise it was just neighbors visiting neighbors.

**EW:** "Chance" meeting that way?

**TL:** That's about the only way.

**AL:** It kind of runs into the next section about what sort of music and entertainment was at home?

**TL:** Well, our family had card playing and games, one game was called "Numbers". We made our own cards (playing cards) from Corn Flakes boxes, and we played dominoes, which were a big plus, for it taught us math, our arithmetic; we learned to add. Accordion was about the only instrument, and they were the real smaller kinds, the cheaper kinds. The first time I saw a key accordion was at Lake Isabel, and I believe it was Lawrence Welk's, which was in the early 1920's; our family had gone up to Lake Isabel for the "Old Settler's" meeting and picnic. The Old Settlers had meetings every year in June in Kidder County and we drove up a couple of times with the horse buggy after church services; I remember well seeing Indians for the first time there, evidently they brought some Indians for the entertainment attraction.

**Addendum 1:**

Lawrence Welk Hair Style

Apparently, when Lawrence Welk played at this event at Lake Isabel, he started a new hair style trend with the young men in the audience, which was the slicked straight back look.

**AL:** So the accordion was about the only instrument that anybody ever played in the family?

**TL:** Harmonica, harmonica was played in more than one barn dance, then, when it came to the stepping (rhythm/beat), everybody kept in step with that, and the music wasn't as loud as now-a-days.

**AL:** So, were you encouraged to play an instrument by anybody?

**TL:** No, I don't know, it was at your own interest, your own volition, otherwise there was no music teacher around, & no money for organs and pianos you know.

**AL:** Did you take lessons for the accordion or how did you....?

**TL:** No. I remember playing my first tune "Das war im Baumerwald", which I played for my cousins, demonstrated with one finger, and my cousin, Art Neumiller, really listened, and by golly, later he bought an accordion; that was when he still lived in North Dakota. Later, in 1929, he moved to Montana, but I had gotten him interested in playing, by playing this tune with one finger.

**AL:** So did you play by ear- all the time?

**TL:** Yes, by ear, all the time.

**AL:** For question # 70, it says if possible, could you sing one of your favorite songs that you sang as a child?

**TL:** Well, "Red Wing", that was a tune that was played a lot, it was a nice...what is it?

**EW:** A ballad type song?

**TL:** What step? Was it a polka? It's not a waltz.

**AL:** No, it's more of a Texas swing, because that was Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, and that was a Texas swing thing.

**TL:** They played some of the older tunes like "Du, Du, Liegst mir im Herzen", "So Wie Du Mich Liebst, So Liebe Ich Auch Dich" and "Oh Du Lieber Augustin". At this time on the tape Ted sings "Oh Du Lieber Augustin"

**EW:** Oh, okay, good, that's a good record of (an old tune).

**TL:** Then I remember when Eva, my cousin graduated, at that time the song- Have You Ever Been Lonely? was sung and popular.

**EW:** Did she graduate high school?

**TL:** No, she went to 8th grade, only.

**EW:** And that was a popular song of the day?

**TL:** "Among My Souvenirs" was another early song I remember.

**EW:** Did you learn to do any dancing, and what kind, if you did?

**TL:** No, not really, because there were no dance floors and we didn't really learn dancing.

**EW:** Was it allowed in your family?

**TL:** It would have, I suppose, if there had been room, but, there was no room, no places.

**EW:** So, dancing was not really something that a lot of your family did, but what kind of dances did they dance at the barn dances?

**TL:** Well, they had waltzes and polkas, and two- steps and one- steps.

**EW:** Did some of these dances come out of Russia, (that) your families probably did or brought over?

**TL:** Well, they (relatives) talked about the Russian "Katlachook" but, nobody did the dancing I guess, if they did, they were practicing.

**EW:** So the main places you went for dances was maybe like a barn?

**TL:** Yes, after I got bigger, after I was a teenager, I attended barn dances. There was the Gold Room and the Miller Theatre at Napoleon, and on Saturday evenings we would get rides with the Remmicks(teens). When (cousin) Fred Lang built the barn, and that was even before he was married, dann sind wir hinunter geridda gewaszt, ich und the Leo, and I was at the first Farmer's Union dance and that was at John Baltzer's barn, and Christ Marquart, was playing, I don't remember, but I wish I'd know how I got down there. Bin ich au h'unter geridda gewaszt? I don't know who went down from that area

**EW:** So, young people attended these dances generally, or older people or who?

**TL:** Young people.

**EW:** Young people generally, not couples with children?

**TL:** Well, uh, the Himmerichs, they were a dancing family, they brought their family, and there were no babysitters so they took the kids along too.

**EW:** What was the attitude of some of the older generation towards dance halls or dancing?

**TL:** Well, I suppose "poor" and "calm", but, quite naturally people, young people need entertainment and socializing, so it's just one of those things in life.

**AL:** Did the barn dances ever get kind of wild?

**TL:** Later on, yeah, they kind of had to discontinue them because there was too much fighting going on, but the earlier ones, they were nice.

**EW:** So, was there a different kind of community meeting place ever, where people socialized, maybe besides church and barn dances?

**TL:** Salt Lake and Lake Isabel, these were about the only socializing places; they had a pavilion at both places, so these were bigger places for dances. At Salt Lake is where I went to see Bill Langer when he was running for governor. As I mentioned before, they had the Old Settlers picnic at these places. The first rodeo (in the area) was at Salt Lake, that I remember.

**Note:** Salt Lake is named Lake George on ND maps. It's just to the northwest of Streeter, ND.

**AL:** You said some people, some German-Russian people, had a bad attitude toward rodeos?

**TL:** Well, by having a spoiled (uncurbed) horse, a bucking horse, and then train them (horses) to buck, that didn't go over with the horse people, so that was a no-no, the rodeos.

**AL:** So they thought they were mistreating the animals?

**TL:** In a way, and if it was a spoiled horse, that was all it was good for anyway.

**AL:** Do you also, (remember) there was an air show, it wasn't necessarily an air show, but a guy in an airplane, who came to Salt Lake once.

**TL:** Canfield, yeah, and they talked about some parachuting, and then the pilot flew over Salt Lake, and let out a parachute with a dummy, I remember well and the people, these ladies, saying, "He's going to drown, he's going to drown".

**EW:** So, it was just a joke, huh? Oh my.

**TL:** It was a joke. (Laughs) That happened at Salt Lake.

**AL:** Do you know where he flew in from, Bismarck or Jamestown maybe?

**TL:** It was northwest of Bismarck, I wish I knew (exactly where), but they did this for Persian Lake too, where there was a pavilion, I was told. Lake Isabel didn't have a landing place, but Salt Lake had this landing area, which was sand and gravel, but they landed and took off and gave rides, "barnstorming" was what it was called.

**AL:** Well, we touched on this a little bit earlier, about some of the games that you played, I guess it was dominoes, and you made your own playing cards, is there anything else that you remember?

**TL:** Checkerboard.

**AL:** Checkers too?

**TL:** "Damebrett". That's what it was called in German and it was also called the "fighting board" by the Albrechts. (Laughs)

**AL:** Why did they call it that?

**TL:** Well, you would move, they (other players) you saw that you'd get jumped, and you would want to move back, but you moved already and.....

**EW:** It started a fight.

**TL:** That was the "fighting board". (Laughs)

**AL:** Do you have any childhood stories that Grandpa and Grandma or your parents told you, fairy tales, that sort of thing?

**TL:** Not my parents, but then there were some neighbors, they told some tall stories, and later on there were "Gedichte", which is more like this imaginary i.e. you imagine something, you think about something and then you imagine it and then it kind of seems real. Finally by just thinking about it all the time, you finally get confused yourself. Okay.

**AL:** Were there any superstitions or scary stories, ghosts or anything like that, that were a part of the...

**TL:** Well, I think all these stories are told to the younger guys, to kids, to kind of scare them, you know, so they would stay home, otherwise, not that I know of.

**AL:** So, the "brauche", the folk medicine, was that....?

**TL:** That was used quite a bit, I'd say, by my Grandmother Elizabeth and there were the other older ladies like the Daschle grossle, in Napoleon, she was a midwife, and there was Mrs. Tom Schwartzenger, and Mrs. Oberlander; they were all midwives in conjunction. My mother-in-law's mother was one of these "brauchers". My mother-in-law being the oldest child had to be the babysitter and had to do all the housework (in Russia); she didn't want to have any part of that "brauche". She was glad to get away from all of that when coming to America, but then, when she left Russia, her mother (secretly) stuffed some of the "brauche" sayings in her suitcase. They were barely here (mother-in-law and husband) in America and she needed those sayings for "the wurm", which Philipp got, a germ which turned into a boil. When this occurred she had wished she knew more of that stuff, brauching. I think there is good and bad, so, it can be used for good, and of course, you can use it for bad too. In the Garden of Eden there was God, but, there was also the other fellow there. (Laughs)

**EW:** Can you list or recall any specific home remedies, you probably don't have to say a lot about them, just, basically what some of them were, some of the "cures" you used.

**TL:** Well, sweet cream and flour mixed "Teigle", which was very much used by my Dad and by/for me. That cured many infections for me. Vinegar was also used, and Green Drops were always on the shelf, and carbol and camphor salves were used, also later rosebud salve was used. Watkins Liniment was used, and Alpen Krauter (was an herbal laxative) was pretty much standard in most households.

**AL:** What about tea, chamomile?

**TL:** Oh yes, chamomile tea (flowers grown in the area for chamomile tea) was about the only thing that grew and that was a big way of getting your liquids if nothing else, 8 cups of liquid a day, and chamomile was served, 3-4 cups a day, at least.

**EW:** Was it supposed to have any particular healing effect?

**TL:** Yes, according to Grandma Stadel, another mid-wife. If somebody came to her with a rash or something like that, the first thing she did was bathe it with chamomile tea, and they usually got better.

**AL:** I just found out from my wife that it can help settle your stomach, that it can take away some of the acidity as well.

**EW:** For digestion, this herb....

**AL:** Exactly, today for that as well.

**EW:** I went to a workshop recently where I found out that many of these herbal medicines, traditional ones, which came out of Germany and that area, are being used today, again. We have a whole formulary, PDR, for herbs, so, that's quite interesting that the cures used back then are making a "comeback", and probably doing just as well as some of the other medicines/techniques of late. Do you think there is any different sickness today, as compared to illness in generations past?

**TL:** Well, I suppose they get diagnosed more, but otherwise, I suppose it's pretty much the same sickness, but, the operations are getting so common; that has saved many lives since the 1900- teens (1913-1919).

**EW:** You were born before penicillin was even introduced.

**TL:** Oh yes, oh yes.

**EW:** So, sicknesses related to infection are quite different now than they were then, I'm sure.

**TL:** Anyway the treatments for sickness. Smallpox was about the only thing that was vaccinated for, and later, came diphtheria, but that was in the 1920's. For smallpox, my father was vaccinated in Russia, he had these marks.

**AL:** What about cancer, was there prevalence to that at all?

**TL:** Yes, in 1931, my confirmation friend, boarding classmate, Ferdinand Martel's mother was sick with cancer. She died in 1932; she was maybe in her 50's or 60's, breast cancer it was for her.

**EW:** They knew it was cancer or identified it as cancer?

**TL:** Yeah.

**AL:** I'm sure the treatment was rather limited though.

**EW:** What do you remember about the role of mid-wives? You said in those days mid-wives were often the "brauchers" too, but what about mid-wives in the roles of delivering babies?

**TL:** Well, the only ones around in my younger days (were the ones I mentioned), even then our oldest son and oldest daughter were delivered by mid-wives, but for the second daughter, or third child, we had a doctor, Dr. Stokes from Streeter and it was a good thing according to what the Doctor said. Marian Zimmerman was delivered by Dr. Simon, that was about the closest to home that I remember, where the doctor came, even in the times when we were married in the 1940's.

**EW:** What about in your mother's time when she delivered her children, who helped with that and how were they paid, generally?

**TL:** Well, my Grandma Elizabeth was the mid-wife and then she left the area in 1928, she ran into a problem with a wound (that wouldn't heal); from there on there were other mid-wives such as Mrs. Hagel, Mrs.

Schumacher, and like for our oldest son there was Mrs. Oberlander, who was also the mid-wife for the Elizabeth Gums and for my wife, Louise.

**AL:** How did they get paid?

**TL:** Well, my grandmother got paid with maybe a little cash money, or maybe some food or a gift, this was a common thing.

**TL:** Hagels, the family, could use food anytime, they had a big family.

**AL:** Well, we'll wrap it up there for today, November 7, 1999; we finished up about 5 minutes after 6 o'clock in the evening.

**AL:** First things first, resuming the interview on Sunday, November 21, 1999, back here in Bismarck at Erica Wangler's place, we left off with question #83, and resuming with #84, under the heading, "Dramatic Survival in America". I know for a fact there were a lot of Russian phrases that were used in addition to German, in the household when you were young; any you can recall specifically, any sort of Russian phrases?

**TL:** Not so much in our family, but there were families that were more Russian e.g. with the officers. In Russia, there was one hour of school (taught in Russian) in Bessarabia, in Friedenstal, but in Gluckstal, it (learning Russian) was half and half, half day German and half day Russian. There were some carry-overs (phrases) to take over to America.

**AL:** I guess on the Gums side, Lillie remembers a lot more Russian phrases, or whatever, than I've heard from other people, so, on my mother's side they probably did a lot more of that. Did you get newspapers out there, on occasion?

**TL:** On the farm? Oh yes, the "Statts Anzeiger", the "Eureka Rundschau" and, the "Dakota Frei Press" (Aberdeen, SD), they were the three, the ones I remember well.

**AL:** Were they mailed out?

**TL:** Oh, yes they were mailed out, this was a party mail route, you could call it, which my Uncle Ben, and cousin, Mrs. Gottlieb Zimmerman, and my family were on. When my folks (parents) went to town, they brought the mail, everybody's mail, and dropped it off. When they (other parties) got to town (to bring the mail to our area), we had to go over and get the mail, at my Uncle Ben's place or at the Zimmerman's (place), as with my folks.

**AL:** Were those papers shared with other families?

**TL:** Not, well, maybe Grandpa Karl and our family shared the paper, the two Lang families shared this one paper, but otherwise, each had their own.

**AL:** And those were obviously in German?

**TL:** Yeah, yeah.

**AL:** All of them?

**TL:** There was the "Kidder County Farmer's Press", and that was the Kidder County news; that was about the only English paper we had, which was the county seat reports for Kidder County.

**AL:** So in a paper like the Dakota Frei Press, what sort of information was in there? What did they print?

**TL:** Oh, there was up-to-date world news, U.S. news, and I know the “Statts Anzeiger” had the “Bericht” that people sent in from certain areas. There were some (writers) that were better, more fluent, than others; they reported more, they reported the activities, if somebody died, and if somebody was born, and reported new arrivals, i.e. from Russia. The Wolt family members were regular writers and there was a Mrs. Bender from maybe Beulah or Zap. Mrs. Bender was kind of a regular who wrote maybe once a month or so. There was a Montana writer, a Schmidt, who put some of these Berichte in the paper.

**AL:** Do you know where they were printed?

**TL:** Well, Eureka, SD was pretty much the center, for the Rundschau, then, later on there was a printing press in Bismarck, and the printing finally ended up in Winona, Minnesota, I guess. They had a man named Brandt who was the editor, who arranged the Berichte, and had them printed in Winona. The Finnish, Norwegian, and Scandinavian papers, they were pretty much under one roof (printed) because they used the same kind of Gothic letters.

**AL:** Type setting?

**TL:** Type setting.

**AL:** Did they print any comics in those papers?

**TL:** Oh, yeah, yeah, there were the “Saurumpel”. (laughs)

**AL:** What was that?

**TL:** That was a joking thing you know, kind of true to life but it was pretty much like Amos and Andy, somebody was always more right, and one fellow was a little one-sided (dense), and didn’t catch on that fast, you had to explain it better. So, I enjoyed reading the “Saurumpel”, but didn’t like the romances; I couldn’t understand them, the romances in Germany, you know, about Hugel, Geberge, Flusse. Otherwise, I enjoyed the local news, the Berichte, and the world news.

**AL:** The romance tales?

**TL:** Were a no-no for me. (laughs)

**EW:** Just because you weren’t interested mostly, huh?

**TL:** Well, maybe not, but I couldn’t understand the geography in Germany, and then they had the sayings you know, but the geography was the big thing I would think.

**EW:** Okay, what do you remember about when your family got their first modern conveniences, like what do you remember about electricity?

**TL:** Well, there was a neighbor, Fred Hoffer, whose yard light was on the windmill tower, and the light shone through the valley, and they were the first lights (electric). I’d say the lights came in the later teens, I suppose 1918-1920. We then got our first light plant in 1931, which was a 32 volt battery set; this was for lights and for the washing machine, and was that ever a blessing for me. I didn’t have to turn the washing machine anymore or pump or whatever the old time works were. At that time I was 11 or 12 years old. We had an iron, the folks (parents) had an electric iron but, that never got used because that would have taken too much energy.

**EW:** Lot’s of juice.

**TL:** Lot's of electricity, then of course, we didn't have a radio until 1934. That was the first radio in the Fred Lang residence, which was a 32 volt that fit in with the electric system.

**AL:** The first yard light that you were talking about, was that wind generated or?

**TL:** No, it was evidently a gas powered generator.

**EW:** So it wasn't really electric at that point?

**TL:** Well, it drove an electric dynamo (motor), an electric generator, they had a battery set too, and when the Fairbanks-Morris light plant gave out, our folks switched to a wind generator which had a battery set too. I don't remember the year that much.

**AL:** The first power plant you were talking about in '31 though, that was gas?

**TL:** Gasoline.

**AL:** Yup.

**TL:** Yeah.

**AL:** Then they switched to the wind generators.

**TL:** Yeah, after the battery set wore out, you had to get new batteries, and you've got the wind charger to top it off.

**EW:** What do you remember about your first car in your family?

**TL:** Oh yeah, I remember that well; it was in the spring of '25, it was a Model T, touring car. Because Dad was a small man, the starting (was a problem), so he got a starter and a battery right away,

**EW:** He couldn't crank, you mean?

**TL:** Well, he could crank but uh.

**EW:** Not well?

**TL:** They needed a lot of crank on magneto; the battery was a sure fire, sure start.

**EW:** What about the telephone?

**TL:** Telephone we had as long as I can remember, and that was a full party (line) and it was run on the barbed wire fences, from Uncle Ben Lang's place to Zimmerman's place, to the Lang residence, and then to John Littau's place. There was over-head wiring, well, the first one was across the section line, half of a mile exactly between Zimmerman's place and our place; it was 2x4's with barbed wire and the Zimmermans had one that went over to the Lang's place, and then we had one too, that was overhead barbed wire, that went over to the Littau place.

**EW:** Was it the old crank?

**TL:** Oh yes, it was the crank type.

**EW:** One ring, two ring?

**TL:** Yeah, that's another thing, ours was a short and a long ring, Zimmermans's was a long and a short ring, and Uncle Ben had just a long ring, and Littau's , I couldn't even remember now, but I know....

**AL:** Probably two short ones.

**TL:** Maybe two short rings.

**EW:** So then, the more modern telephone lines came about when?

**TL:** They came in the '50s

**EW:** In the '50s?

**TL:** Yeah, that's when we finally (got modern telephone) but, the big thing was electricity of course. Tape #2, Side 2 starts here.

**TL:** I'll start out with modern electricity coming. It was in maybe, well, it was in the early 1940s and my cousin had sign-ups and there was this deal, four dollars was the minimum where you could get 40 Kilowatts. I signed up for \$5.00, so my electricity bill was never less than \$5.00, for which I/we could use 50 kilowatts. It didn't take very long, I don't think it was more than a year, before we had the 50 used up. The electricity came December 20, 1950, is when KEM Electric hooked up our farm. We had the house fully wired in '52 or '53, no, sorry, it was built in '49. We had it wired in the summer of '50, so we were ready to go; Floyd Miller was the agent. Swede Thompson was the electrician; he authorized/signed the papers, so we were ready, except, to turn the switch on by the highline pole.

**AL:** So, December 20, 1950, was electricity. Was that the first organized telephone service after that, or just about the same time?

**TL:** That was later. It was in the '50s maybe, '55, '56, or '57.

**AL:** Okay and that was a cooperative, wasn't it?

**TL:** The same as the...yeah, BEK (telephone).

**AL:** BEK?

**TL:** BEK Telephone centered in Steele (ND), where as KEM Electric was centered in Linton (ND).

**AL:** BEK, I believe, stood for Burleigh, Emmons, and Kidder.

**TL:** So does KEM, Kidder, Emmons, and McIntosh. There would have been an L on (there, on the acronym) but Logan County was very leery about stuff like that, so they didn't go in with it, but after we had it going/organized, they jacked in too.

**AL:** Fell behind a little bit.

**TL:** Two years, like for my brother-in-law and mother-in-law, their families got electricity in '52; that got delayed for a couple of years in Logan County. It (the acronym) should have been, KELM.

**EW:** What about windmills? What do you remember about windmills?

**TL:** Oh, windmills were very important with (because of) our deep wells; wells were all 100 ft. or more, which were drilled by Ed Caffrey who came from Cokato, MN. Thank God for Ed Caffrey. He was a big, husky man, and

that's what was needed (to drill wells). The Lang well was drilled in the later part November. They put the pump on, on in December 1, 1913. My cousin Eva Lang was born on the same day and I've never forgotten that day, neither my dad, he always remembered when the well was tapped/pumped.

**EW:** So he told you about this, because you weren't born yet then.

**TL:** Oh, yeah.

**EW:** A memorable family event, shared.

**AL:** Happened on the same day as Eva's birthday, so it made it made it extra memorable, I suppose.

**TL:** I'm going to call my cousin's son, Allen Lang, to remind him about this event, on Dec. 1, 1999.

**EW:** So you mentioned the radio earlier, with the coming of electricity, etc. What were some of the programs you listened to, or what were some of your favorites?

**TL:** It was nice music for 50 minutes from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**EW:** What kind of music was it?

**TL:** Country music.

**EW:** Country.

**TL:** That was on in the evening; I don't know how they could beam it up here from Albuquerque, and we got that in Montana too, when I spent some time (lived) in Montana. We had WNAX from Yankton, and that was the "House of Gurney" radio show, sponsored by a seed catalogs business, trees etc. a big advertisement, and what I liked about WNAX is they mentioned the town, then they mentioned what was going on instead of saying the news first, then mentioning the town. You could zero in right away, if it (the news was about) was close to home.

**AL:** They said the name of the town first before the news story.

**TL:** And now the news from this town etc.

**AL:** From Brookings, or Sioux Falls, or...

**EW:** Was the Grand Ole Opry aired at that time or was there something like that?

**TL:** 'Lem Hawkins radio show from Fargo, (listening to it )that was a must! It was an hour long radio show; it was country music and 'Lem was a traveling musician. I even met him at the Salt Lake pavilion, just before we got married; I suppose maybe in '37 or '38. He came to Salt Lake and played; there were two accordion players and he had about 12 people in the band. They had their own bus.

**AL:** That would have been on WDAY out of Fargo, 970. Just kind of an addendum, the reason you could get an Albuquerque, New Mexico radio station back then was because the transmitters were a lot stronger than they are now. It wasn't so closely regulated so you could really crank up the power on them, and you could cover basically the whole United States at that frequency. There were a lot fewer radio stations than there are now, so it wasn't so crowded and you could have a really strong transmitter.

**TL:** Otherwise, the John Hoffer had the first radio in the area, which he had gotten in 1924, that was powered by 2 A batteries, two storage six-volt batteries, the radio was more or less like a chest, a big outfit. Minneapolis was the only station that was on at that time, and there was WLS (in Chicago) promoting Sears Roebuck; people could get that (station) with earphones (antennas). There was a lot of static from the clouds and sun and whatever, but Uncle Ben got a radio when KFYZ started up; I believe it was in 1926, and it was in the fall of 1925-26 that KFYZ got started. I'll just add that with the station WNAX, this is where I saw my first television (programs broadcast from there), and this was at the Jerke home, near where my brother lived; he was a minister at this town, which was about 40 miles northwest of Yankton. We were visiting (the Jerke family) and they had television, and they were playing (watching) this television, pretty much all afternoon. There was really no picture, no local (broadcasting) or anything, but, I remember the first song that I heard on this television. It was, "You, You, You, No Else but You". (Laughs)

**AL:** The Mills Brothers.

**TL:** That was in '53, I believe.

**AL:** That was kind of the Mills Brothers' hey-day at that time; as a matter of fact, a bit of trivia, the last Mills brother just died here, about three or four days ago, last of the four.

**EW:** What other kinds of programs did you watch in the earliest years of television?

**TL:** We were kind of in a situation (our farmstead was located) behind the hills, so it was pretty poor reception, until we got a booster (antenna), then the reception was as good as cable. The people on the other side of the ridge, of the hills, never needed a special antenna. I was told that if you drive on Highway 34 from Napoleon west, you could see towers (for television), and like FM radio, the television waves go in a straight line.

**AL:** Touching on television a little bit, I remember you were telling me about Ken Kennedy, I believe at some point. He's the first person locally that you remember seeing on the television, from WDAY-Fargo, is that right?

**TL:** You mean when we were down in South Dakota?

**AL:** No, I think it was locally, or was he on the radio before he was on television? I think that's what his name was.

**TL:** I couldn't recall.

**EW:** And you watched Lawrence Welk, I'm sure?

**TL:** He wasn't on that much, but, we watched the news and there was always this German, four- party singing group from Hebron, ND; they were on every week I believe, then, we heard the Strasburg accordion players, Tom Guttenberger and JR.

**EW:** Mike Dosch?

**TL:** Mike Dosch (and his accordion group), oh yeah, we never missed them when they were on; I didn't anyway.

**AL:** So which family member do you remember best from way back, in the early part of your life?

**TL:** Well, I suppose Grandfather Karl and Grandmother (Elizabeth); they were the oldest (people in the family). When I was born, Grandfather Karl was about 60 years old.

**AL:** Who did you admire the most from the group of people that you grew up with? Was it a grandfather, grandmother, aunt, (or) uncle?

**TL:** I'll have to add, I got to know the other grandfather too; he was a step-grandfather. Grandmother Christina was my real (blood- related grandmother). My Grandfather Roesch died when my mother was 6 months old and Grandmother Christina remarried, she married Christian Roesler. I remember him well too. He was born in 1874, and there was his wife Christina (Dutt), Dutt was her maiden name; she who was born in 1874 too.

**AL:** I remember your brother, my uncle Reuben saying about when she (Grandma Roesler) hurt herself, I guess it was a leg injury that side-lined her, Grandma Roesler.

**TL:** That was Grandma Elizabeth Lang.

**AL:** Elizabeth rather, but, I remember Reuben relaying a story- that when she hurt herself she went to live with a family in Tappen.

**TL:** They took her to the doctor, Dr. Whitson, and after she was up there (in Tappen) she never came back (to the homestead farm); it was quite a process to get the injury healing.

**AL:** Reuben said you were all pretty upset with that family for.....

**TL:** Stealing.

**AL:** "Die h'in unser Grossmutter gestolen!" Yeah, so they weren't too happy about that!

**TL:** Not brother Reuben (anyway).

**AL:** Obviously not. So how did she affect your life, any one thing you could point out?

**TL:** Grandma? Oh yes, prayer life was very superseding (in her life), she knelt for prayer, mornings and evenings. After Grandpa was gone in 1924, she stayed on the homestead farm for four more years and left for Tappen in 1928. She had stories (told them to me) about her youth (in Russia) that I still remember. Anyway, well, like it was in those days, all hands were in the field when there was field work, seeding and harvest. Anyway, this family Elizabeth was working for, had a hired man, and of course, boys are always boys and girls are girls. Grandma related she couldn't eat grapes without bread and this hired boy withheld bread from the hired girl (her), for teasing, no doubt, so she told the mistress, and from that day on there were no more problems; she got her bread for lunch in the fields! She also mentioned about entertainment; there was dancing on Sunday afternoons, except during Lent and Advent, I suppose. This one youngster, young man, evidently liked dancing and he'd sing this song: "Heute ist's mir wiesele wohl, Morgen wann ich schaffe soll, sagt mein Vater, Gell du fauler Hund, gestert war's dir wohl". Translated it meant, When he was out in the fields on Mondays, he was tired and his father would point that out, (side note by **EW:** yesterday he was all full of energy at the dance, like restless feet, now it is time to work and he was all tired out). He sang it on the dance floor on Sundays.

**EW:** Now, do you know of any women that took up a homestead and proved up their land?

**TL:** Oh yes, there was Mrs. Christian Kopp, she took a homestead. She was a (maiden name) Dutt before she married Christ Kopp; she had a homestead in the Schmidt hills, and there was Mrs. Steinhaus, she and her husband were our depot agent in Napoleon. She had the homestead on which, later, Jacob Kopp moved to, and this homestead was close to the Roesler and Lang homesteads; this was in 1911. After she (Mrs. Steinhaus)

proved up the land, she got married~ the couple left the homestead. If people were age 21, they could sign up for a homestead.

**EW:** I suppose it was by far not the majority, of people that were women, who did that?

**TL:** That was another thing, the Oster family took up homesteads, the Grandfather, Christ Oster Sr., and there was Christ Oster II, and his sister, who was a single woman, who was blind, called by my mother, "Blind Boss". She became blind because of small pox when she was 12 or 13 years old. Grandpa Oster (Sr.) and the blind lady had their homesteads in Section 26; Christ Oster II had his homestead in Section 34. Our Lang and Roesler homesteads were in Section 32.

**EW:** Was she ever married (the blind lady)?

**TL:** No, no.

**EW:** What kinds of things did the women mostly do? What were their outdoor jobs, tasks?

**TL:** Oh well, as long as there was work outside, the women were hired men (worked like hired men) and it depended on the family, like my Dad was small and a little on the sickly side, so Mom was really the hard worker. She did the pitching of the hay onto the haystacks and into the header box, and in the Zimmerman family, it was kind of the reverse. Each one was gifted (differently) a little bit more, could work harder, or able to take more. My mother didn't need much food. My Dad needed more food some how.

**EW:** Okay, do you remember any special German foods that your grandmother or mother cooked or baked, that were special things?

**TL:** Well, I would say Russian (foods), like "Mammaleeka", corn porridge, and "Mallai", that was Johnny Cake. Maize is corn; it was the original Indian word. So mammaleeka and mallai are Russian words for maize. Otherwise, my Grandmother Elizabeth cooked the weekly menu; there was one day of baked bread, and on that day there were "Dampfnudla" made, then there was a certain day for "Strudla", and for "Knoephla". My mother wasn't that routine with a weekly/daily menu, due to working in the field and taking care of the family. Another food was "Stirrum" which was a fast meal.

**EW:** Fast food, huh?

**TL:** Fast food was stirrum, it was made when coming home for noon (the noon meal), by stirring up flour, eggs, and milk, and frying it in a pan, that was stirrum.

**EW:** Kind of sounds like pan cakes, only it was chopped up into little bits, wasn't it?

**TL:** Yeah, so it could get cooked (done) earlier. We always had dried food, and mail order was a big thing for sending in hundred pound orders, like 25 lb boxes of prunes, 25 lbs. of apricots, and pears, so, it didn't take long and then you had 100 lbs. It was shipped from MW Savage, or from Montgomery Ward or Sears. Later on we got the Spiegel (catalog), but MW Savage, was pretty much what we stocked our pantry with, where we got our fruits. We ordered our clothing. You had a (an earlier) question about what women did, they sewed a lot of their own clothing, especially dresses. I never had store-bought overalls until I had gone to school, my mother had always made the overalls.

**EW:** Have the recipes that your grandmother or mother made been written down or recorded somewhere, so that they have been passed down the line.

**TL:** Oh, I'd say so, there are a lot of cookbooks by the churches so the recipes are in there, and then it was simple foods, like strudla and blachinda, which was pumpkin and kase blachinda, and fruit blachinda, if fruit was handy.

**EW:** Fruit was put inside dough, right, a type of dough?

**TL:** Yeah, like blachinda.

**EW:** I have recipes that I have mostly kept in my head (can recall to memory) and mom Louise Lang, did write down some of our recipes, but, I don't really know if Grandma Rose ever really wrote down any recipes.

**TL:** No, I wouldn't think so.

**EW:** But I know she made those little Schlitzkuekla.

**TL:** My mother didn't write any (recipes) down, that I can recall, because pencils and paper were in pretty short supply, and where to keep them with the small houses etc., was a question. The recipes are well preserved in cookbooks that were later put out by the churches and ladies aid (organizations). Schlitzkuekla and Schmutzkuekla are bread dough that is fried, fry bread. With Schlitzkuekla, it was a little bit of a special dough, I suppose with a little flavoring, peppermint or so. Otherwise the flour bin was the root, the start of the recipes, then eggs and cream were added; separated cream was always on hand. We milked the cows first hand (did our own milking).

**AL:** Those were the basic things that everything was created from (the foods)?

**TL:** Right.

**EW:** Flour, eggs, cream.

**TL:** Cottage cheese.

**AL:** And maybe butter.

**TL:** And sauer milch and salad`, salad` was real good with sauer milch.

**EW:** What was salad`? to

**TL:** Lettuce, lettuce from the garden. That was a quick fast food too, an addition (to the meal).

**AL:** Was there anybody in the family that had particularly good craft skills, i.e. had a knack for making something, a talent for constructing or repairing things, or making things?

**TL:** Well, the blacksmiths were really the first mechanics. They knew what iron could do, especially with the steam engine, so I'd say the blacksmiths were the iron- age starters.

**EW:** But who in your family had any special skills?

**TL:** Oh, my grandfather was a blacksmith, he did forge welding, as did all the blacksmiths in the neighborhood, until the acetylene (welding) came in, and that was in the '20s maybe. They didn't know how to weld cast iron; that was a special technique that took quite a while to catch on to.

**AL:** How about something like knitting or crocheting or something like that? Was that done a lot?

**TL:** Well, my grandmother (Elizabeth) was always a rug crocheter; she got clothing rags from different families. That was a big past time for her, even until her final days. She didn't sew the ribbons (strips of rags), she tied a knot. She tore them and then tied a knot and crocheted the rug so the knots were on the bottom, on top they (the rugs) were nice.

**AL:** Had a smooth side and a rough side.

**TL:** Right, yeah.

**AL:** Have you ever heard of Scherenschnitte; did anybody have skills in that? It says here Scherenschnitte, the paper cut-outs.

**TL:** Well, my cousin Gottlieb was a free hand drawer, and he could cut out most anything e.g. animals, in paper too. I can still do some of the rough stuff; I learned it from my grandfather, as a toy (playtime activity), but they were pretty basic.

**AL:** Okay, you talked about clothing a littler earlier, so most of the clothes, that you knew of, up to a certain age, were made at home, for everybody? Or?

**TL:** Well no, clothing could be bought at stores, for men. I knew two persons, and they were Grandpa Wangler, Erica's husband Al's grandfather, also my grandfather who wore homemade pants, the Russian style. They were the only two persons that I remember who wore these Russian pants. When Grandpa Karl needed new pair, he got the material from the store and Grandma sewed them. That I remember well.

**AL:** So that's where they got the fabric usually?

**TL:** Yeah, yeah, the merchandise stores had fabric.

**AL:** That would have been Napoleon, closest by?

**TL:** Napoleon, Streeter.

**AL:** Streeter?

**TL:** Yes, Streeter.

**AL:** What did you do with the old clothes, were they just thrown away or were they used?

**TL:** No, they were used, ended up in rugs or whatever, they wore out.

**AL:** Used to the last.

**TL:** From the oldest to the youngest, by the third youngest they were pretty well worn, for sure.

**AL:** Hand- me- downs.

**TL:** Hand-me-downs, yes.

**AL:** You betcha. Do you remember anybody having quilting parties, were they a regular thing, or wasn't that too common.

**TL:** No, it was pretty much that all families were busy raising their families. I remember going down to the Roesler's farm and husking corn, my dad and me. The corn was picked with the husks on it and then were

thrown into storage. We were down there a couple of times in the evening, getting husks off, I remember. My uncle in South Dakota had the first corn picker; he was a blacksmith's son too and he made a power unit out of a hay loader for the dogs to run the washing machine. The dogs weren't all the same size, and the heavier, bigger dog .....when the water was heated up the night before (washing day) , anyway what happened is the dog would go and hide, so they had to tie up the dog, otherwise they would have to do their own cranking of the washing machine.

**AL:** The dog knew what was coming.

**TL:** The dog knew what was up the next day.

**EW:** And the dog didn't want to do it either.

**TL:** It was a three-dog powered unit.

**AL:** What, did they walk in circles?

**TL:** (They climbed) Climb, there was a climber that worked the chain.

**AL:** Oh! Interesting!

**EW:** Wow!

**TL:** He made the pulley out of wood, carved the pulley, the power transferring wheel, & manufactured it out of hard wood, to reduce the speed or whatever.

**EW:** Well at least the dog was good for something, huh?

**TL:** Oh yeah, the dogs were essential for cattle, for the milk cows. They were very important and saved a lot of... A nice trained dog was a life saver, work saver. We had some good ones.

**AL:** Do you remember getting a magazine called "Dakota Farmer"?

**TL:** Yeah, that was one, and that was after we were married when that came into being. Otherwise it was pretty much the German papers only, and like I said , the Kidder County Farmers Press.

**AL:** Was there anything in that magazine you may have used at that point? Do you remember any agricultural tips or something like that, maybe.

**TL:** Yeah, we had a magazine and in there was this calendar; it was a real short version, and I saved it. You could figure out so easily what day you were born, e.g. on a Thursday or Friday, it didn't matter if it was a 100 years ago or whatever. It was real simple (calculation) and I lost it. I remember that clipping out of one of the earlier English magazines.

**EW:** Do you remember "The Song of the Lazy Farmer"?

**TL:** Oh yeah, after we were married, of course.

**EW:** I loved that one. I read it a lot and it always rhymed, that's what I liked about it.

**AL:** Do you remember what day of the week you were born?

**TL:** Thursday.

**AL:** Thursday, the same as me.

**EW:** Really, you were a Thursday child, huh? What things, character, qualities, or achievements do you want to be remembered for by the next generation? What do you want people to remember you for?

**TL:** Learning patience, of course.

**EW:** That's good.

**TL:** That's a big, hard job. Usually it'll (things) turn out, just have patience, and work is good for making a living, and good for exercise, which we have to do, should do, to stay healthy. There is nothing better than a good nights rest after you've worked quite hard or accomplished something. Church life (is important too), church is where there is peace for one hour, one day, in a week. Being good examples as parents and being teachers.

**EW:** Is there any one thing that you feel that you've achieved in life that you are especially proud of?

**TL:** Just hanging in there, everyday, I suppose. Take on day at a time.

**EW:** You never got too worried about future things, you tried to live day to day, is that it, pretty much?

**TL:** Pretty much every day, day to day.

**EW:** So just to kind of summarize, you want to be remembered by how you learned patient endurance, and you've hoped for future generations, you've set an example, also modeling Christian life and learning to endure day to day. Basically that's it huh? Okay, do you think there is anything else you'd like to add to anything we have asked you or talked about?

**TL:** Well, I filled the report out pretty thoroughly, what isn't said I would think the questions (would answer) are filled out quite thoroughly, it's something to back on the report I made; I worked on it for 3 solid days, on the last section

**EW:** On your written report?

**AL:** On the second part. The interview questions part 2, which we'll resume with, we'll switch to a new tape, because this is getting near the end. This is only phase 1, so we'll start phase two shortly, stay tuned;

**\*\*Note by EW. \*This section did not appear in the original transcription and is added to this interview, transcribed by EW. It is Tape #3, side I (A), dated November 30, 1999, & July 30, 2000.**

**EW:** This section is about courting and marriage and relationships, we were wondering what you parents or other older folks, maybe teachers or whoever was important in your life, what did they told you about marriage?

**TL:** Well, responsibility for your actions, that's about what I learned, what I was told, be responsible for your actions.

**EW:** What did you learn about marriage from seeing your own parents in their marriage?

**TL:** Well, there is give and take, take and give, that's about marriage (what marriage is about).

**EW:** Was your marriage pretty similar to your parents' marriage, in what you lived out?

**TL:** I would say so, we were in a farm life; it was pretty much like the parents, farm work and raising children, although we had a powered washing machine. The bottle gas stove we got in 1948 and the dryer we got after 1950.

**EW:** Did that make the work easier, you mean?

**TL:** It made the wife's work easier, oh yeah. The wash line drying was like this: by the time the wash was done, then the sun was gone, then the wind would come up and you got it (the wash) out, well it got a fresh smell, but you had to bring it in and dry it anyway, especially in the winter months.

**EW:** Do you know if your parents' marriage or your grandparents' marriage were arranged marriages?

**TL:** No, I don't think so, I don't believe so. My mother and father were neighbors, and the same way with me and Louise, we were neighbors within 3 miles; still at that time there were no roads especially with the terrain, the lakes, sloughs, the fresh water lake, and creeks, but, everything was pretty well home-centered, the church was only 3 miles away, even school and government was pretty home-centered until the automobile came.

**EW:** So people met each other through community and threshing crews etc.?

**TL:** Threshing events were a big meeting time and place; it got all the neighbors, the boys and whatever, together. The boys wanted to be men, to do the work of men.

**EW:** Did you ever hear of kuppling or kupplei, maybe not in your generation so much?

**TL:** Oh yes, there was some. Well, maybe for John Remmick and Emelia Lang. I think they got brought together (kuppel). She lived in Lehr & John lived in our area, & that was maybe one case.

**EW:** Who arranged that marriage?

**TL:** I think even the Uncle Gottlieb Zimmerman did, as far as I know, the uncle of Emelia Lang. I believe this Mrs. Remmick came and said, "Would you know of a girl for John?" Then, evidently it came into being.

**EW:** Okay, I guess that's all for that part, the next is family life.

**AL:** What did your parents teach you about raising children, specifically, any advice for raising kids?

**TL:** Well, take care of them, of course, and diaper work, diapers needed changing. I was pretty much always with my parents; Leo was home doing babysitting more than I was, babysitting for (our) brother Edwin. Edwin had this heart condition, and Leo was more of a babysitter, but there were occasions where the folks were gone and I had to do babysitting.

**AL:** Did husbands and wives at that time have equal authority in making big decisions?

**TL:** Well, in government and church, that was pretty much only men's work; they (the men) heard about what the women thought after they came home and told them what was going on, then they got instructions, the men folks did, for governing the church, from the wives, the women.

**AL:** Was there competition between girls and boys for various things?

**TL:** No, not really, there were women who worked on the threshing machine, especially in earlier days, not so much any more after tractors came, but, in the time of horse power. I remember hearing about my brother-in-

law's mother working (on the horse-powered threshing machine); then, there was this Mrs. Grad who talked about working on the horse-powered threshing machine as a women and girl.

**AL:** Is there any way, you could say that children were disciplined, I guess speaking for several families in that area, was there any standard?

**TL:** Spanking was about the only thing; that was pretty much the rule.

**AL:** Do you know of any changes of child raising standards, from, say your grandparents as opposed to your parents?

**TL:** I'd say at school, the teacher was the ruler, she had authority, whatever she proposed, whatever she mediated out, was perfectly okay with the parents; there was no resistance to the teacher's authority or discipline.

**AL:** Did you or your family ever seek advice from the older people on certain things, maybe on farming tricks or financial planning or something like that?

**TL:** Well, yeah, there were people that liked to borrow money and it was pretty much the same standard.

**AL:** I thought this was kind of an interesting question, how were grown up children treated when they had conflicting ideas, maybe about marriage decisions or religion, something to just go against the grain a little bit?

**TL:** What ever you do, you would have to act out in your life. One good thing I'd say is with more inter-marriage, the blood or inbreeding isn't as much, where previously, marriage of cousins was kind of prevalent in the villages (in Russia). Well, transportation was a problem so there were too many cousins and second cousins marrying.

**AL:** Question #27, did your grandparents or parents select friends from outside of your family, that they could share things with, how they were feeling etc.?

**TL:** Pastors, that's about it I suppose.

**AL:** Did your German-Russian friends form a clique or group for dancing, eating, food, accordion music, or drinking of alcohol, or things like that?

**TL:** No, no, it was a busy life, there was very little (time). The Fourth of July, Dad didn't like to miss, but, otherwise, it was pretty much a "life-support program" (living to support life).

**AL:** Too busy working to have much free time, like that. How did your parents view "freundschaft"?

**TL:** Well, my father, Fred, was a good arbitrator to collect bad debts and loans for him self and others, and for the church dues. He was good at making arrangements with the young couples after the 1930's, after things started getting better; he and August Geist went out and visited with each of them and asked what they'd be able to donate for the pastor and church services, for the year.

**AL:** Who made most of the money decisions in your family?

**TL:** I suppose that was pretty well talked over, and my parents each had their own input.

**AL:** What were the most important religious teachings in your home? What was really strived or driven home, you could say?

**TL:** Well, daily devotions and church services. Dad was a Sunday school teacher and a back-up deacon for reading church services if the elected deacon happened to not be there.

**AL:** Now, were most of your friends or parents' and grandparents' friends German-Russian, or was it a mixture?

**TL:** Well, the grandparents were only able to speak the German language, but Dad communicated with the people of other languages; he went to school during WWI, night school, then he was also an avid reader, so the learned the English language. He had friends who were natives and other immigrants.

**AL:** So he could speak English a little better than some of the other people?

**TL:** Yeah, I'd say so, and mother went to American school after age 10 or so, maybe she was 13 in 1910, when they built the school. There was school at the Kemmet house, so she was 9 or 10 before she got to go to American school.

**AL:** Was there ever a time that you were afraid to say that you were of German heritage?

**TL:** No, we had a small circle of school and church, and the town. We got to go along (to town), we each one had his/her turn; Dad would take along one (child) then we had to rotate, me, Leo, and Ella.

**AL:** Did speaking German ever affect your relationship with people in Napoleon or any of the surrounding towns or at church or anything like that?

**TL:** One time August Wanner and I went to a Christmas program at Bunker-Belden school; I could get along with English, but August didn't so we were talking German and Mr. Wesley Nicholson Sr. told us, "this is America, speak the language of the land".

**AL:** Yup, so, do your children and /or you grandchildren speak German as well?

**TL:** Yes, as long as the grandparents were alive they kept the practice up and then we spoke it at home, and I still do with people that I know are able to understand it.

**AL:** Do you think they speak German as part of their everyday lives, the children and grandchildren?

**TL:** I don't think so, not now, not in the year 2000, they are pretty oriented to the American language with going to school all these years, they are pretty well engrained with the spoken language of America.

**AL:** I try to think about it like once a day, just to keep it fresh, yeah, I definitely try. Were you parents interested in politics at all?

**TL:** Yeah, Dad was the first supervisor when Peace Township was organized, that was in 1921. Then of course, voting and elections were a good way of settling things. Then a man came over and talked Dad into being a Democrat judge in the elections. I was an election clerk and to get an election over quickly, it was as this, if everybody voted Republican, then we didn't have to fill out the Democratic books, i.e., put no names in it or anything, then we were done. If there was a two-party (poll) then it took twice as long. Mr. Mertz and maybe others, wanted to be done in a hurry on election evening, after 7:00 o'clock. He talked Dad into being a Democrat judge, from there on Dad was as a rule a Democrat judge; even Gil (Gilbert Lang, Ted's Brother) got the job even into the 1990's, until they reorganized the townships again, where now voting is done in the Tappen Center, instead of the Tanner school. That happened during the 1990's when that changed, even for the last election, I believe.

**AL:** So, what sort of political issues were your parents interested in, what was on their minds a lot?

**TL:** Well, Dad favored Langer in WWI, because, in South Dakota a law passed that you couldn't use German, Armour-is it Armour? Then the business people were enforcing it, then all the German customers went to the other town at Delmont, SD, then Armour went broke because they didn't have the trade. Langer said, "These German people are good citizens, only they can't speak the American language", so Langer had a resolution or law passed that you were able to speak German; there was no restriction in North Dakota.

**AL:** Schools or roads or anything, was that of interest?

**TL:** Roads were a big issue, and schools, these needed attention and unity (of the people); they needed to get teachers, yeah, it was very necessary.

**AL:** How often did you vote?

**TL:** Well, I voted in every election ever since I was 21.

**AL:** Which was the voting age at the time, before they moved it to age 18, so do you normally vote these days?

**TL:** Oh yes, yeah, I do. Voting is very important, maybe one vote doesn't mean too much in the Presidential election, but in local, city, and local areas, one vote decides a lot of things.

**AL:** So you vote in local, state, and national elections?

**TL:** Yes, yeah, I believe in voting, it is very important and I encourage the younger generation to keep doing it too; I've insisted on it too.

**AL:** Where was the polling place?

**TL:** There was one school in the township out of four, and that is where the voting was done in our immediate area.

**AL:** Was there a president that you remember that the people didn't like or particularly agree with?

**TL:** Yeah, being it was WWI, Woodrow Wilson, the country was against Germany, and he was the president at the time.

**AL:** He got the blame?

**TL:** Well, anyway he was instrumental in whatever happened, no doubt.

**AL:** So, was there a political party that your parents were in support of, any Republican or Democrat, do you remember?

**TL:** Like I said a month ago, this fellow came over to Dad and said, "We need a Democratic judge for the election". From there on Dad was a Democrat & to make it more interesting, I've followed suit so far; this was for the general November election.

**AL:** So what different kinds of churches or denominations were there aside from Lutheran of course, which was for most all of the Lang family, but, were there other kinds of churches around?

**TL:** The Reformed Church was only a half mile from Glueckstal and of course my step-grandfather and real grandmother were Seventh Day Adventists. Dad would go along with them, maybe once a year, and I remember

twice I went along with the Roesler family to the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Napoleon. I remember going down to the church on "The Flat"; it was in the early 1920's. We came home one evening, across the east pasture, and I had been tired and then woke up. I still remember that day. One interesting thing I've been telling here lately is about attending church services in Napoleon at the Seventh Day Church, we had a Pentecostal service; Ned Rott was the organist/pianist, he was playing the piano, but notes are the same in every language, but there were English speaking people, Russian, and German too. The Russian speaking person was Jakob Peres, and they all sang this one song in their own languages. Even to this day I remember and am telling this, that I was at a Pentecostal church service a long time ago. It was not at the time though when Peter and them (the apostles) in the Bible, had their "tongues twisted" (spoke in their own tongues) at Pentecost.

**AL:** So what were your memories, I'm sure there are lots of memories of the one-room school house, how far away was it from the farm?

**TL:** Three quarter mile, that's about all it was, luckily.

**AL:** Is that the only school you attended?

**TL:** Yup, yeah, 8 grades.

**AL:** What do you remember the most about that experience?

**TL:** Oh, well, my mother had gone to American school so we knew some English, but others like the Remmick family didn't get much help in English, I was lucky that mother could help with homework and I always took homework along and I got a special book-carrying thing from the auction sale at the Gilfinnin Ranch. I suppose that was in 1923, it was khaki colored and I treasured that when carrying my books home.

**AL:** So what sort of things did you do over the recess and lunch-hour break, any sort of games or anything?

**TL:** Oh yeah, Pom, Pom Pull Away, there were goal lines on both ends, and you got tagged. There was Ante-Over and Drop the Handkerchief was played inside the school in the winter time. That is about all that comes to memory.

**AL:** How many kids were in that school at that time, and how many grades?

**TL:** Eight grades, but the school could seat about 30. My brother was school age, but with his health condition he only attended limited classes. John Remmick was another guy who was to school for one day and developed rheumatic fever, it must have been rheumatic fever, so he skipped another whole year. The teacher combined 4th and 5th grade to get the all grades in. The ability of the student was considered too e.g. John Remmick was 15 or 16 years old, but he was with the 4th graders, because of the language. With Gottlieb Lang and Jake Neumiller, when they were in 3rd or 4th grade, I remember it well, Jake left for Montana in the spring of 1929.

**AL:** The brother you were referring to was Edwin, who died when he was 9 years old.

**TL:** Yeah, my brother Edwin, 9 years old.

**AL:** So, his school attendance was limited?

**TL:** Yeah, he didn't attend school because of health reasons; he couldn't attend school.

**AL:** Anything that you remember about people bringing stuff to recess or school that was interesting or unusual, pets, or something like that?

**TL:** Well, the Kidder County school superintendent, Mrs. Haibeck, visited the school, I presume it was in 1925, and Dr. Pryce stopped by too; there was diphtheria in school #1 and then one Brophy boy died, he was a twin. There was Floyd and Lloyd; I think it was Lloyd who died from the disease.

**AL:** Diphtheria.

**TL:** It must have been diphtheria, yeah. Then one time a stray cat happened to come to school, and one of the Remmick boys threw it down the outhouse opening, and it got messed up. The teacher made him wash the cat. Dogs would come along too, with the teams of horses, like the Remmick family and Uncle Ben's family. They drove to school and lived 2 ½ -3 miles away, they never walked. We usually walked being the school was only ¾ mile from our house. We always walked. If we could see the farm upon leaving school (weather related), then we walked southeast and with the northwest wind to our backs, it made it easier to walk and we very seldom got picked up (from school by our parents)

**AL:** So your ancestors made their living as farmers in Russia?

**TL:** Yeah, they lived off of the land like we did in the homestead days.

**AL:** So did they have orchards or vineyards, or I would imagine gardens and the "bestands"?

**TL:** Oh yeah, but to prepare a vineyard, they spaded the ground, the "black earth" region in south Russia, it got spaded 3-4 feet deep, then the vineyard got planted, like plowed, that wasn't just the surface, it was like summer fallow. That's where the vineyards were planted. There were grapes growing and other fruit too; it was not such a harsh climate as in North Dakota.

**AL:** Do you remember them talking about any successful farming practices or how to handle animals or harvesting tips, or anything like that?

**TL:** Yes, there was quite a bit of rotation, the land got planted, I believe, for 3 years and then for 1 year it was pastured for cattle. In Guldendorf especially, there was a dairy herd, so they planted the different grain fields, barley, wheat, and corn, and after that it was left for pasture for 1 year. That was kind of the rule; yeah, there was crop rotation, that was strongly emphasized in that village for sure. In Gluckstal dorf, my step-grandfather related that there was a quarry, and in the summer they worked in the fields and in the winter they worked in the quarry. That's why they had year round employment and that's why it was called Gluckstal (lucky valley). The rock they could saw, because, it was soft rock; I'm sure they didn't have diamond-pointed saws. Grandfather Roesler also talked about threshing by using wind, early in the morning the breeze was real steady, before sunrise or with early sunrise; they tossed the grain sheaves in the air and let the chaff blow away and let the wheat pile up. There were steam threshers in Russia, bought by the village in common, like a co-op. The threshers were not moved from place to place, people brought/hailed their grain sheaves in to the threshing area. They had to ration (time slots) like, today you bring your grain in. the next day the next guy brought his in, there had to be organization.

**AL:** So what family members helped out in the village fields?

**TL:** Well, there was always work. The first thing was watching or herding geese. That was my Dad's first job in the village, watching geese for a group of neighbors, and then there were graduations, the next brother or sister got the job. They had to herd cattle and horses. They went out for bids for herding the work horses. The villagers turned the horses out at night, especially the ones that weren't needed for work, like colts, and those that

weren't able to work, and they had to be watched pretty much, 24 hours a day. John Albrecht and his sons had the job of caring for and herding horses, day and night.

**AL:** Did they ever talk about people stealing stuff or burglary?

**TL:** Stealing horses was like stealing cars now-a-day. If you had 2 horses and a wagon, it was like our modern day trucking. You could haul stuff and earn money. Yeah, horses were a big item and they were locked in solid at night. There were smart guys too, you know, especially one guy, he would keep the owner interested in talking (distracted) and the other guys (his accomplices) would be in the barn. When the thief figured they (the accomplices and the stolen horses) were well down the road, he would cut off the conversation and if the owner didn't think to check his barn, ja, by the next morning the horses had gone quite a distance and they couldn't be traced. They had places too, like in Guldendorf or Odessa where no ordinary citizen could walk in, and if they did, they never came out alive. There were underground gangsters and like gangsters are, if one of them tried to keep it (loot) for himself, even the gangster's life was wiped off the map.

**AL:** So what was the penalty for stealing, did you hear anything like that?

**TL:** I heard neighbor John Littau talking about whenever they (youngsters) got into mischief, they went to jail with no bathroom, and that was suffering for them, not having a men's room. They had a secluded place to keep them until they had court proceedings where penalties and fines were given. Yeah, as soon as 2 persons come together, there is always a problem that somebody else has to help solve or help settle, to decide who is right, e.g. considering a person's age, or who was there the longest, or who was closest to the property etc.

**AL:** Now, were your grandparents homesteaders or were they pioneer settlers?

**TL:** Grandpa Karl Lang was an original homesteader and Grandpa and Grandma Roesler too. They had a 5 year homestead term. They were the first people on the land as homesteaders.

**AL:** Where exactly did they homestead?

**TL:** Well, the Roesler grandparents homesteaded on the southeast half of the SE and on the south half of the southwest, this was the Roesler land, it was a mile long. Karl Lang's homestead was the north half of the SE which was 80 acres and the east half of the NE1/4, that made 160 acres, which was a "boot". Fischer, the first homesteader on the section, tried to pick the best land in the section, so he made his claim a "boot", and of course the others had to follow suit. So on Section #32, the Winkler family land was a square quarter of land; they had the half of the NW and half of the NE; that made 160 acres for them.

**AL:** Part II, question #118 of the interview questions. How did the summer kitchen get used at your place? Did most everybody have one?

**TL:** The strife was, how to keep the main house cool, washing etc; it was a nice thing to have too, to keep an orderly house in the main house.

**AL:** Is that where a lot of the canning and summer stuff was done?

**TL:** Yeah, that's where the work was done for canning, preparing food and meat etc.

**AL:** So how did your family prepare the "misch" blocks for heating fuel-the manure blocks; what was the process involved there?

**TL:** Well, cleaning the barn everyday, you had that much manure, according to the number of cows you had, then it was put on a stone boat/slip and you unloaded it to the manure bed and added to it every day. You had to level it out according to the amount of snow and when spring came, you put salt blocks on the pile, and the cattle stomped the pile and packed it down, then you moved it around and if it wasn't packed quite well enough, then the horses were hitched together and walked in circles over the pile to further pack it. You could mix horse and cow manure, but horse manure only, wasn't sticky enough, so you had to watch the consistency, if you had many horses, you couldn't use all of this manure. If you had more cows and not so many horses, it worked better. Then when it was packed and spring's work was over, it was time to make it into blocks. You used a spade and made a straight line, two lines as a rule, and you made it into blocks, which were between 12-15 inches square. The blocks after they were cut were set up so they would air and dry. They needed about the same amount of space to dry as they were big. After a few days, they had to be turned around, bottom up, and after they were dried completely, if it rained, they wouldn't get so wet after they had been turned. They were made into a bundle like a shock; you started with 4 and kept on building to air it out like you see how they dried grain in Germany. You made racks; then after it was well dried, it got carried to the winter storage area, which was the "misch sheeva". A Mrs. Becker, who made the Becker book, stated that if a farmer had a big fuel stack, then you knew he was a good/big farmer, because, if he had only a few cows or livestock, the fuel stack wasn't big, but, if he had a big stack, he had a lot of cows and needed more hay.

**AL:** It was quite the status symbol!

**TL:** It was a good measure, when you drove in the yard, if you could see the size of the stack, you knew what kind of farmer he was; that's what she claimed, and I admit it too, I believe it, I know it, the evidence was there.

**AL:** That's funny, so how were the roads to your farm from the different towns?

**TL:** Oh there were trails pretty much until after the war, then finally we had machinery. The Tappen road got graded in 1920, maybe not, but that was the time they organized the township, the commissioner put that in. The road lead to 15 miles due south of Tappen. There was some grading done in 1928 and 1929, but it got done only down to the Zimmerman corner, and we didn't have grading east and west past our place until 1938.

**AL:** Whose job was it to work the grain crop, fields, and hay fields; who participated in that?

**TL:** Well, it was a family ordeal, it was husband and wife, in-laws, and parents. Raking and packing (stomping a haystack) it was down, was pretty much the first job I had. We never stomped down the hay in the hayracks as a rule, but topped it off. We tried to keep the haystacks low so we wouldn't have to lift the hay so much with the pitchfork; it settled by itself so we could get more hay on the rack.

**AL:** So, who took care of the barnyard chores, watering and feeding livestock and chickens etc.? Whose responsibility was that?

**TL:** That was pretty much a family thing; Dad never tended to the chickens, that was Ma's and the kids' job; they were told to do it. Dad did barn cleaning before we (children) were able to. Filling the hayloft was all hand work. There were no slings or cables, it was a family thing. I remember Grandpa Karl helped fill the hayloft; Dad pitched it into the floor opening of the stairs (ladder steps) and mother pushed it back, to fill the back end of the loft. Grandpa Karl helped until he got tired, then Dad and Mom had to see how they got along again.

**AL:** So everybody was needed for that stuff?

**TL:** Oh yeah, they were all candidates, whoever could work.

**AL:** Who did most of the cooking or the laundry, or raising the kids?

**TL:** In our family it was mother's job, and Dad was a big help for Edwin. Dad helped during the night hours because mother had other babies too. I never knew that Edwin was so sick until after Grandpa died in 1924 (and Edwin was born in 1922). I had stayed with Grandma Elizabeth until 1927, and when I got back to living in the house, I realized how sick Edwin was. Dad was tired of coming over to Grandma's house early in the morning to wake me up to get the horses and cattle, then Leo had to come over to wake me so Dad wouldn't have to go outside, over to the sod house. Then I knew how sick Edwin was, he would cough and get out of breath and involuntarily moan, but really didn't wake up. Dad would get up and say, "What can I do for you?" It was just comforting for Dad to go up to him, then, Edwin would fall asleep again, or rest anyway. That's when I knew how sick he was. Dad and Mom had a big item (load) taking care of Edwin, that maybe the Zimmerman family or other neighbors didn't have, not having an invalid child. It was a big load and stress for my parents.

**AL:** Who was most often found in the garden doing the gardening?

**TL:** Oh, Dad would help with the plowing and the potatoes. It was pretty much shared; mother was more instrumental in seeing to the garden, being she was at home more and Dad had to be out more like going to town hauling grain, helping with election days, and with he being a supervisor he had look at and prioritize jobs on roads grades and rock work etc.

**AL:** What kinds of animals did you butcher on the farm, what different varieties?

**TL:** Pork was the main thing and later on we added beef, because the Roesler grandparents never had porkers because of the religious thing. The Gums family usually had pork, chickens, ducks, and geese too. The geese and ducks never got sold as a rule, but the turkeys were strictly for market; we never had turkey (to eat) except for the wee, baby turkeys that were hatched in July; they never got big and when winter came they were too small (for market) and that was the only turkey we ever had. They were strictly a cash crop.

**AL:** What about sheep, any mutton?

**TL:** Yes, my mother inherited a dowry, she got some sheep. Sheep are very good animals; they'll go out to feed and always come back, they always come back unless they get chased, then they're lost. We had them until 1925, then evidently they strayed, got chased into the big lake. My parents couldn't find them for a long time, then Dad noticed there were some that had run into the lake-there were more sheep there; he checked it out and sure enough he found one that was still alive. It was a black sheep or a "marker sheep" and Dad brought it home but it died anyway. That was the last of the sheep from the dowry. The Gilfinnin ranch early on (during the late 1800's and early 1900's) up to 1907, 1908, 1909, was a horse ranch and when horses became more plentiful it became a cattle ranch. When the cattle operation went broke, they sold out in about 1922 or 1923; the bank sold out the Gilfinnin ranch so it belonged to the bankers. The bankers ran cattle for a bit, but later turned it into a sheep operation and hired Mr. Herman Nader and his family as caretakers, he was a sheep man. Herman knew how to handle sheep; there were close to 1000 sheep at the ranch. If you've got a herd and some sheep have twin lambs, they can't care for them, sheep can handle only 1 lamb, so the ranch gave away these "doubles" to the neighbors. Our road to town went through the ranch, so did Uncle Ben's, the Zimmerman's, and the Remmick's road, even the north bunch, the Schauer's Job's, John and Christ Neumiller's road. The John Neumiller family was from Dawson/Streeter area. The ranch gave these lambs away to Uncle Ben, bottle lambs they were called; we had to feed them by bottle, then we got into the sheep business again, until the 1930's came, during the bad drought years. I remember well Leo and Ella had a sheep buck. The buck didn't bother me;

I taught him a lesson, when he got after me I whacked him one, then, he always respected me. When Leo and Ella came home from school they first always looked around and said, "Where's the buck, where's the buck?" They would sneak around behind the hill, but the buck had his head up too; he was on the watch. They couldn't be out in the yard either, Ella and Leo, the buck knew them, but I never had any trouble. Like animals are, they know the ones they got to respect: horses, dogs, geese especially.

**AL:** Everyone helped out when butchering time came around?

**TL:** Yeah, I even helped and got my hand into the meat chopper which my uncle cranked; he was the power source. I was glad to help, I was glad to do it; that was a lesson I learned like everything else; I never got hurt much with my hands ever since, a life-long lesson.

**AL:** What was the usual number of livestock you had on your farm in the early days?

**TL:** Well, when Dad was younger, he had a lean-to. I just talked to Leo about it. The lean-to had shiplap boards, and it had no wooden roof; it had hog wire and straw was put on it. Dad had it until, let's say, 1925, so they had the younger animals up until that time, which was 10 years. Then he took that shed down; it was a big job cleaning that shed; he tried with a horse scraper, but there was hay mixed in (the animal waste). He took the boards off of the shed on the north side and pulled the scraper into the barn, but it didn't work too well, so, he finally got tired of that and took the shed down and built a garage and our first chicken barn, that was in 1925, when we got the car, and that's when the Fred Lang family got the first chickens too. We went to the Ole Kleppe farm and got eggs. They talked about "laying" chickens that don't brood; they were Monarkie chickens, and these and Leghorns don't brood. Grandmother Christina and mother hatched out the chickens; those were the first chickens we had. From there on Dad timed it pretty close, he made just so much hay for so many milk cows and that was it; if he had 11 or 12 stacks he quit making hay and rotated the hay land.

**AL:** What about numbers for cattle or horses?

**TL:** We had 12-15 cows and replacements, 4-5 heifers; that was the going rate until I was able to work, which was in the early 1930's. We got rides to school; we took the hayrack along and after school we went up to the north lake and loaded the hay, then, we had a ride home from school, Leo and me. We had a lot of experiences too, I suppose we were tired and we got stuck one time with the hayrack, in the spring. We were too close to water and the frost had soaked up/thawed the ground, and we got stuck.

**AL:** How many horses do you think you generally had over the years, I mean at one time?

**TL:** Dad had 8, until he knew the boys needed power, then, we got to training horses. After I had them trained, he sold them, which I didn't like one bit. He sold to the mail carrier and to Gottlieb Reuer, and then, of course, we needed more horses too, after Leo got to be of working age. We never had more than 20 horses, I'd say, we had maybe 16-17 and the colts had to be 2-3 years old before you could use some of them.

**AL:** So they (horses) did all the work basically?

**TL:** Oh yeah, it was strictly horse work until 1948 when I got my first tractor; I was totally on my own. I had Sam Kinsley come and plow some summer fallow, I still have the check; I paid him for plowing 23 acres of summer fallow.

**AL:** So what about dogs and cats involved on the farm, were they valuable, did you have them?

**TL:** Oh yeah, a dog was very important for a cattle, for a herd of milk cows. If you had no dog, the cattle wouldn't move, but if you had a dog, where he'd bark, then, the cows knew we got to move. Rats were a big problem in the sod houses; there were mice and rats, like the G. Gums family lived on the homestead and the rats lifted the lids on the stove or on the cupboards and got into the food, so they had to move out of their sod house.

**EW:** How did you get rid of them?

**TL:** DE-CON, I'd still move into a sod house, they were cool in summer and warm in winter. Grandma Lang had 300-400 lbs. of hard coal, that's about it and she heated only 1 room except for her baking room once a week. Otherwise she used native fuel, which was called "Russian Coal", that's what the Polish called the Russian manure pile or fuel stack, it was Russian coal.

**AL:** So cats were used for, to control those.....

**TL:** Yes, for rodent control, gophers especially, the flickertail gophers that were around the yard. Some of the cats did a real good job, but then they had to learn the trade too, like animals do, you know.

**AL:** So you had milk cows, you were referring to that earlier, milk and cheese; you made that yourselves, the butter and cheese of course.

**TL:** That was the lucky thing, everything was home grown and if the potato crop was big, then we had lots of potatoes to eat, and if crop was weak, then we had more grain foods, baked goods, white flour, and Johnny cake, and malai, and porridge, grits as they call it in the south.

**AL:** Did you have a bestand on a regular basis?

**TL:** Yes it was very necessary and important, then as the years matured (passed) the prairies got saturated with pigeon grass and Russian thistles, then it (bestand) didn't work very well. The policy was if you put a bestand in new ground, then no weeding was needed, especially in the early days. After the drought in the 1930's the soil was so saturated with weeds the land was all like "gone back" prairie. The east pasture, all of that was just like it had been plowed, due to the dust that was brought in from the wind during 1934-36.

**AL:** When did you start to get the newer farming implements, the multi-bottom plows, the tractors, and things like that; when did that start moving in?

**TL:** Well, there was some tractor plowing in the later 1920's, but in the 1930's that fizzled out. After the war, rubber tires came along and that's when we got mechanized and we got our first tractor in 1948, the H tractor along with the farmhand. It was used for stacking hay only. I got the grapple fork in 1958 for feeding the cattle. So for us it was in 1948.

**AL:** That's when it started?

**TL:** There were tractors, but in the very early years, late 1800's—early 1900's, they had horse-powered threshing machines and feed grinders. Uncle Ben, the Winkler family, and the Werre family used horse-power for threshing.

**AL:** Speaking of threshing, that was obviously a pretty big deal when that came around; describe that scene a little bit.

**TL:** Threshing was the "cream of the crop", very interesting and everybody tried to help, and the help was needed too. When the crops were good, all the help had to try to get the grain in the bins.

**AL:** How long would that take normally, I suppose it depended on the size of the farm, but for you guys?

**TL:** Well, we weren't really grain farmers, our area was cattle farming of course, with all the rocks, hills, gravel hills, low spots, and gumbo. It depended on the crop; I heard that Phillip Fettig threshed until Christmas in 1925 with Pius Reis' machine and tractor. They didn't get done until Christmas; the crops were good and the weather was also a factor. Otto Graf talked about threshing for 30 days. In the lean years, less threshing was done and smaller threshing machines came along.

**AL:** A longer process than today anyway?

**TL:** Then of course they had to form co-ops too, the first threshing at my folk's place was in 1922; it was Fred Lang, Gottlieb Zimmerman, Uncle Ben Lang, and George Remmick. They bought the threshing machine and the tractor; it worked for about 5-6 years, until the Remmick family connected up with the other Remmicks and got a different tractor.

**AL:** Do you remember your first car that you got?

**TL:** Oh yes, in 1925 in the spring. We got the first Model T; it was a second hand car, a 1924 model touring car.

**AL:** You made a note here, a canvas enclosure, what is that?

**TL:** Well curtains, like your Geo Tracker, it was the same material, but they started making sedans in 1923, and they were 2-doors in the middle of the Model T. Later on they made the 4-door sedans too. Dad traded for one of those cars, that, was the only car I needed or used for my courting days, a 4-door Model T sedan.

**AL:** Do you remember who had the very first car in the region, the area there?

**TL:** Well, Uncle Ben was one of the first ones; he claimed he could go to town and come back and still do a half days work. If you went to town with a team of horses, it was an all day job. The Werre, Mertz, and Oster families had some of the first cars. The Oster family had a touring Dodge, and The Mertz family had a Model T.

**AL:** So a lot of people got them in a short amount of time?

**TL:** Yeah, in the 1920's. The Roeslers had one, maybe in the late 19-teens or early 1920's; they didn't have a car for a spell until 1925 when they bought a new Model T Ford. Of course they went to church 14 miles away, down to the "Flat", unless they, the Seventh Day Adventists, had neighboring assemblies for services. We had our regular Glueckstal church which was 3-1/2 miles from our place, and the school was 3/4 mile away. The community was pretty centered, we didn't travel too many miles except we went to town for the 4th of July, and the chance for us to go along was rotated amongst the children.

**AL:** Did Model T's have odometers, could you tell how many miles were on it?

**TL:** No, but you could buy an accessory, some put it on. I had a wheel that was added to the front wheel, it was brass. I don't think I have it anymore.

#### **Addendum 2:**

##### Odometer Reference

Apparently, the Model T had an optional odometer that one could purchase. The installation of which included taking off one of the Model T's front wheels and mounting a brass gear wheel, which is referenced in my father's

talk, that he had a transfer gear that, in turn, transferred the mileage information to a special dash mounted gauge. For some reason, he had held on to that particular brass wheel for a number of years.

**AL:** Those lights were electric, were they not?

**TL:** Not the first ones, they had kerosene lamps and magneto driven headlights. Roeslers, when they bought their Model T, had taillights that were kerosene and the headlights were magnetic. Dad always had a car with a battery; he didn't believe in cranking that much; he was a small man.

**AL:** So it had an electric starter, but the one you got in 1925, that had electric lights and electric start?

**TL:** Yeah, the one in 1925, the one folks bought, had electric start and lights. For the magnetic lights you had to have a very alternating bulb, because, if you speeded up in low gear, it would burn out the headlight bulbs. This was a big problem with magneto-driven Model T's.

**AL:** Yeah, we were basically at the conclusion of the questions of Part II here, we still have a little bit of time on the tape so we might fill it up a little bit. I guess there was one other question, what was the accessibility to building materials for, let's say, you wanted to build a new building, or somebody else did, was it readily available, lumber etc.?

**TL:** Well, when the homesteaders came in the 1800's, Dawson and Medina were on the NP route. That is where the wood came from for the homestead shanty. The Freiers got the lumber for their house from Dawson. There was the Keppler family, and I was thinking there were two names, they had their businesses, the bank for money; the settlers needed banking, the lumber yard, the merchandise store, the clothing store, like that, so it was a trading center, Dawson, ND, until Streeter got the railroad in 1905. Napoleon had the railroad in 1898. Streeter was a more German oriented town, so our Lang family got their mail in Streeter, until they became more accustomed to Napoleon. The Roeslers hauled their grain and got their mail at Streeter, after 1905. I don't know if they had any mail (service) before that. Of course, then we got settled into Napoleon (to do business) because it was only 14 miles; Streeter was 17 miles from our place and Dawson was 20 miles, as the crow flies, and Tappen was 18 miles.

**AL:** In the early days, say in the 1920's, was the mail actually delivered out or how did you have to collect it?

**TL:** No, like going to Napoleon and going through the ranch, the first place on route was Uncle Ben's house, so these people had arrangements made, Uncle Ben, the Zimmermans, and my parents, the Langs, that if one of the families went to town, they would call on the telephone that there was mail and we'd have to get it. Normally they didn't bring it to us. If the Zimmerman family went to town, they brought the mail. The Littau family were strictly Streeter people; they didn't get their mail with the neighboring people, they had their mail in Streeter until the mail route started in 1929 out of Tappen, from there on we had rural route delivery. The mail came every other day, or 3 times a week for a good spell.

**AL:** That's pretty often actually.

**TL:** Yeah, it was 3 times a week, but then it finally became a daily route after the roads got better.

**AL:** After the mid-1950's when they graveled a lot of them, you said.

**TL:** In Napoleon, for the Gums family, they had a rural route started a little earlier, maybe in 1925 or so; it only came up to the Himmerich place. The Gums family had to go 2 miles to the mailbox.

**AL:** Talk about the telephone a little bit; how did that work, now this was before the actual installation of telephone lines and things?

**TL:** Yes, this was a four-party thing.

**AL:** Who paid for that?

**TL:** Well, they bought the telephone and ran the wires along the fence line; there were overhead wires between the Zimmerman place and our place, we had a wire on our north gate for the Littau family. There were 2 x 4's up, and then at our house we had a pole on the fence line and the steel wire ran into the house into the bedroom where the telephone was.

**AL:** So, you each had to buy one of those telephones and just make sure it was hooked up to the right fence line. When did you get that?

**TL:** I'd like to know, but it must have been in 1920, it was as long as I can remember though, but then lightning became a factor, it knocked some of the phones out, and then the people were scared that they'd get electrocuted. Then with cars and better travel these phones fizzled out. The Roesler family had their mailbox way down by the farm-to-market road. Jake Roesler was seeing girls and the Spotts family lived down there. He was the hired man down there, so he had more access to the mail. He was only 3 miles from the Halvorson family, which was 5 miles from the Roesler place. I still have the mailbox in the garage today, July 30, 2000.

**AL:** We're almost out of tape now, one quick question yet, did you ever have to hire out help or was anyone in your family hired out?

**TL:** Not really, Grandma Gums saw to it that her girls had to work at home; she'd been a hired girl and that was a no-no for her family, they could stay home. An advantage for me was I didn't have to hire out as a must. There was a lot of experience one could get by going out trying to earn money, but that was pretty meager pay, you know.

**AL:** Is there anything else you want to add before we run out of tape here, anything else?

**TL:** Cars were more or less only for summer use because there was no winter oil and no antifreeze. It was always horse traveling in the winter time. There were muddy roads. The horses were even used in the 1960's, for raking hay, until we had the wheel rake.

**AL:** I was born in 1961, and I remember dump raking with horses too.

**TL:** You needed 2 tractors; one advantage was having more horses, you could use two horses on one mower and two on the rake, then also on the buckler. There was only one tractor. J. Fettig and our family changed off from moving hay with the tractor then put the farmhand back on again to stack hay. There was a tractor shortage you could call it; that's why we relied on horses.