

Interview with Wendelin J. Vetter (VW)

Conducted by Betty & Chris Maier (BM & CM)

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- BM:** Today is October 16, 1995. I am Betty Maier, a volunteer interviewer for the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection at North Dakota State University Libraries in Fargo, and it's a pleasure to be visiting with Wendelin Vetter today in Linton, where this interview is going to be taking place. So we're going to start with you, Wendelin, will you give me your name and birth date, and where you were born.
- WV:** My name is Wendelin, and I use a J for the initial, Vetter, and I was born in Emmons County on October 3rd 1922, on a farm east of Linton.
- BM:** What is the name of your father, and in what village in South Russia did your father's family once live?
- WV:** My father's name is Joseph and his grandfather and dad lived in Selz, South Russia.
- BM:** Where did he die?
- WV:** My dad died in a Linton hospital in 1980.
- BM:** Where is he buried?
- WV:** In St. Joseph's Cemetery, 17 miles east of Linton, close to the Vetter farm.
- BM:** What was the name of your mother, and we're going to ask the same question pretty much. What village did that family come from, and where did she die, and where is he buried?
- WV:** My mother was born in [030], South Russia. She came to the United States in...she was born in 1902 and he came to the United States in 1912. She died July 20th 1968 in a hospital in Bismarck.
- BM:** Where is she buried?
- WV:** She's also buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery.
- BM:** How many brothers and sister did you have in your family, and can you answer that in the order they were born? That's quite an order, because I don't know if I could do it.
- WV:** There were 13 children and I'm the oldest. Then Mary, then Elisabeth, then John, then Catherine, then August, Christine, Valentine, Adam, Joe Jr., Benjamin, then Tony and Leo.
- BM:** Do you have any recollection of your mother or your father telling you stories from the old country?
- WV:** Well, my dad was born in the United States, but my mother was born in the old country. She told us some of the things; how they lived in a little village, and how they would take the cattle out to graze during the day and bring them back in. But she remembered some of the trip coming over on the boat.

She said they had a lot of fun but her dad was always sick. He was sick from the day they got on until they got off. And one day he got a little too close to the edge, and she fell over and a lady grabbed her by her clothes and pulled her back in. Otherwise she probably would have been lost in the ocean. And she remembered where they buried one person on the way in.

BM: Do you remember, were there times when your ancestor wished they were back in the old country or the home land?

WV: I can't remember anybody ever saying they would rather be back, but I think my grandfather on the Wangler side was never very happy here.

BM: Because he was probably the only one that came over?

WV: No, he had about four or five that never came. And his mother, he stayed back too.

BM: What was the name of your Grandfather Wangler?

WV: It was Wendelin, just like my name.

BM: And they didn't come over until 1912?

WV: 1912 is probably right.

BM: They were among the late comers, then. Many of the people came before that, too. What language did you speak as a child?

WV: We always spoke German. And I was able to say the 1, 2, 3's in Russian. My mother and my grandpa taught me how to count in Russian.

BM: What was the name of the dialect?

WV: Gee, I really don't know.

BM: With 13 children in that family, you must have had some childhood chore that you had to do. Some you enjoyed more than others, some maybe you did not enjoy. Can you tell us a little bit about those?

WV: There were all kinds of chores, but I can't really say what I didn't like at all. I think the hardest thing, maybe was to go out and pick corn when there was snow on the ground. I never liked to go outside when it was dark.

BM: You were the oldest one, so you must have had quite a bit of responsibility. What would happen if you didn't do your work? Were you disciplined?

WV: I think we were, but I can't tell you just how. I know that we got lickings, but then I suppose we were told [106].

BM: Who was the disciplinarian in your house, your mom or your dad?

WV: Well, I suppose when my dad said something it meant a little bit more, because Mom was around us more.

BM: What was it like? Did you go to school?

- WV:** Yes, I went to school. I started to school when I was six, I guess. I went 8th grade and then I stayed home for two years, and then I had high school for one year. I went as far as the 9th grade in school.
- BM:** And you went to a one-room school?
- WV:** A one-room school with as many as 25 kids sometimes. Then I went to school in Linton and boarded in town, in winter, for that year.
- BM:** Was there a great difference between the country school, or the farm school and the town school?
- WV:** There was a big difference. Many more kids and nobody that I hardly knew. Just maybe one or two that I knew in the whole school.
- BM:** Let's go back to the one-room school again. I'm always curious about them. Do you remember some of your teachers, and was there discipline? What are some of the games that you played?
- WV:** I remember my first teacher was an old man. During the noon hour, he would walk a mile and a half to get the paper and the mail. He was a good disciplinarian. We had some that weren't good, but I suppose we didn't learn that good either. Of course the language was a problem sometimes because we didn't know how to speak English, so we had to start learning English.
- BM:** Were you allowed to speak German when you were in school?
- WV:** No, not when the teacher heard it. Some of the earlier teachers, maybe, but after about 3rd grade we had some teachers that wouldn't let us talk in German.
- BM:** Could you speak it out on the playground then?
- WV:** Oh, no. I suppose we did when the teacher wasn't around.
- BM:** Do you remember some of the games that you played during recess?
- WV:** Oh yes . [143] and [?]. Over. We played a lot of ball, especially when we got a little bit older.
- BM:** In what way was religion and the church, was it a part of your upbringing?
- WV:** For us it was. For one thing, we only lived a half mile from the church. And it was one of the place where we could get together too.
- BM:** So, what language was the church service and the prayers in?
- WV:** It was in Latin. Church was in Latin, the Mass was. The rosary was in German and the prayers were in German.
- BM:** When did it switch to English, do you remember?
- WV:** The changes were maybe in the early '50s. Then later on Mass became English also.
- BM:** Your parents would have been living when the change came about. How did they feel about those changes, leaving the German language and going to English?
- WV:** I think my folks accepted it pretty well. It wasn't too hard for them. They could read in English, maybe better than German.

- BM:** You were baptized at St. Joseph's church, then, and how about confirmation?
- WV:** I was baptized in St. Michael's church, which is where the pastor was, the priest, and confirmation and 1st communion was at St. Joseph's church.
- BM:** Were there any festivities when you were baptized and confirmed, do you remember?
- WV:** Oh yes, there were some. My grandparents were there at special times like confirmation and 1st communion.
- BM:** Were your parents or your grandparents involved in the founding of the church out there?
- WV:** Yes, my great grandfather donated the land where the church was built, and they helped build it. For us it was kind of handy. We were able to walk to church from then on, where before they had to go eight miles. That's probably why St. Joseph's church was started.
- BM:** Now St. Joseph's is the Catholic church out there.
- WV:** Yes.
- BM:** How did the family deal with death? Was there any special way that people grieved during those times? For example, funerals.
- WV:** I think it was much harder, because for one thing the dead people were not embalmed, and sometimes it didn't work out that good. I think most people feared death because of that.
- BM:** Were there any iron crosses at that cemetery?
- WV:** There used to be before, and later on they were replaced with marble markers.
- BM:** So there are none left at St. Joseph's out there then. They've been removed.
- WV:** There were four and now there are three.
- BM:** Do you know anything about those? Do the shapes have a meaning to them?
- WV:** Not necessarily. They were all the same size. All the same style, and they were molded iron, I would say. They weren't made by hand, like a blacksmith would put together.
- BM:** It wasn't a family design then.
- WV:** No, I don't think so. I think they were ordered that way with the name on them. In 1919 and during the flu epidemic, my dad was telling us how one person had died, and in the meantime they'd have another one die. So they had one grave dug and they just dug in the side at the bottom and moved one over and then put the other one down. So there were two people actually buried in that one grave. They were not related.
- BM:** Okay, we're going to switch subject a little bit unless there is something else you can recall about the grieving and death.
- WV:** Well, yes, I think the family said they had so many that had died they would mourn for a whole year. They wouldn't dance, for one thing, I guess, and they would wear black, as I remember. And one thing I

remember when people were buried, there were no undertaker and they just took some leather line and that's how they put them down into the grave.

BM: Did they make their own coffin then, for the family members?

WV: There was one person in the community that usually did that, I guess. And some people, for the little ones, I guess they did their own.

BM: Okay, we're going to move on and talk about some of the thing that were handed down in your family. Were there any things such as heirlooms and sentimental objects that were in your family that was handed down?

WV: I don't know of very many, but I think my sister has a black shawl that was passed on. She got it from my mother, but I think my mother had gotten it from her mother-in-law. I'm not too sure, but I think that's the way it is.

BM: Do they know where it originally came from and what line, what generation it came through? If it was your great grandmother's, then?

WV: I believe it was my grandmother's, but I'm not too sure. I think there are some other families that have some, but I don't know of any other one .

BM: Was Christmas celebrated in your family?

WV: Oh yes, very much so. We always had a Christkindel, and before Christmas came, there was always a sign that it was coming. There would be maybe peanuts or something scattered around the yard. My mother really made a big effort to have the doll clothed with new dresses and so on, and I remember I had a little boy doll. I haven't seen one since. It was made out of tin, and she would dress that up, too, every year. I'm still looking for that.

BM: You're still wondering who has that little doll, huh? What other celebrations did you have during Christmas?

WV: When Christkindel came, of course, there was also Belzenickel outside, but we had Christkindel in [280] and the children had to sing. In our family, we had to sing. In some places they had to pray when the Christkindel came. Then there was little donations that we gave to the Christkindel and asked that he would come back next year. Some of the other celebrations, as far as during Christmas vacation, we would go to all the neighbors. There were as many as five families living in our yard, and we would get up early and we would go and wish them a Merry Christmas, and of course we expected to get a little something. We had another neighbor that lived about a quarter of a mile away and we would go to see them also. During New Year we would do the same thing. Each family wanted to be the first ones there.

BM: Did you do a lot of singing at Christmastime and Easter? Can you remember some of the songs?

WV: Oh yes, when we got together we'd sing all kinds of songs; *Silent Night* and *O, Come All Ye Faithful*, and then some English songs later on. School songs.

BM: Did you have any German songs that you sang?

WV: Yes, we had some Names Day songs, and all kinds of church songs that we sang. When we'd get together we'd sing a lot. At New Years, after the families were scattered out, we'd go one day during

Christmas to visit the Grosses, and the Warners the next day, and the next day we went to the Wolfs, and the next day to the Bumstarks, and we'd go with sleds or with horses. We celebrated for a whole week.

BM: Now that you had Christmas, what kind of Easter activities did you have? That must have been centered around the church.

WV: Well, first of all there was Lent for 40 days, then there was no dancing and not much other fun things to do. We would have weekly devotions, and then Holy Week in our parish, my dad would have services during Holy Week. Later on, when we started going to St. Michael's, we would have Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and Holy Saturday at St. Michael's. At St. Joseph's we had Holy Saturday resurrection celebration, was another one. One thing about celebrating the kids when they were small, we would actually go from family to family and make ourselves little nests for the Easter Bunny to lay. I still can't believe what we did. We used the patching remnant that each one of the mother had and we made ourselves little nests, then on Easter Day we'd run and get what was in those nests.

BM: Were there eggs in there?

WV: There were eggs, mostly eggs, and not too many candies.

BM: But not too much candy. That's why you all have good teeth.

WV: Well, for the beginning of Lent we had Ash Wednesday, but before that, the day before that we had what we called [357] and there was maybe some special kind of [359], whatever they would be. It's kind of a dough, made with strips and fried. We probably had a little bit better food than we did during Lent. We would have ice cream, and of course during Lent we would probably usually have ice cream on Sunday.

BM: Okay. With 13 children, there should be some weddings. Was there a special marriage ceremony, and hall we talk about yours?

WV: Our wedding was at home. The wedding was at church, of course, at St. Michael's. Katie and I knew each other from when we were about 12 years old. And it was because of the church that we went to. Then later on it was discussion clubs that we had, and we knew each other during dances. And during wedding dance.

BM: When were you allowed to go to wedding dances? How old were you, do you remember?

WV: Maybe at 16. If it was somebody close, and maybe 18 after that.

BM: What kind of music did you have?

WV: Accordion and clarinets and banjo and drum. At our wedding there was just the accordion.

BM: Do you remember who it was that played the accordion?

WV: Yes, Larry Fischer was the one that played for our dance. Then for the dance he also had drums and we went to the Napoleon for the wedding dance. But the wedding dinner was at my folks' house, and I suppose one reason was because our house was bigger. Of course they had to clean out the front room and that's where the dance was during the day. There were two front rooms in our house and the other end was where they had the dinner.

- BM:** How many days did this wedding last?
- WV:** Ours lasted one day only. The next day was clean up. The day before was getting ready. But there was no celebration. It was right during harvest, or doing thrashing, and the next day they all went back to thrashing. But the day of the wedding it was real windy so it was okay to stop thrashing and they came to the wedding.
- BM:** Was there a chivare?
- WV:** Not at ours.
- BM:** What kind of food was served?
- WV:** Chicken soup and for the evening I think there was potato salad and chicken feet for the afternoon; for the evening there was sausage and I suppose there was some roasted apples, maybe, and some more potato salad. And of course kuchen, and there was some schnapps, and maybe some beer.
- BM:** Did you have a wedding cake?
- WV:** Yes there was one. Not as big as they are now days.
- BM:** Did you get a new suit for your wedding?
- WV:** Yes, I had a new suit for my wedding.
- BM:** Did your wife have a white dress?
- WV:** Yes.
- BM:** Do you have a picture?
- WV:** Yes we have picture and we have the wedding dress.
- BM:** How did you meet? You already told me that. Can I ask...
- WV:** We met a long time before we got married, but we actually started dating in December 8th, and we decided the following August 15 that we were going to get married on September 16th. That was about as long as it took.
- BM:** I'm going to ask something about your parents, though. You two met so that wasn't arranged. You chose each other. Was there any, for example your father and your mother, were they elected by their parents?
- WV:** No, my dad got to know my mom from.... my dad did some thrashing for my mom's folks and got to know my mother because she was cooking. That's what they say. He thought she was a good cook and he must have known her from some other places because he knew she was a good singer. I think they only knew each other maybe a year. They thrashed in October and the following October they got married.
- BM:** Did your family do a lot of singing? Was there anybody in your family who played accordion or other instruments?

- WV:** My dad played the organ, and he played church music. He played everything by notes, and he wanted us to learn the piano too, and the organ. Nobody really did get very far.
- BM:** But you all sing beautifully. I saw Ben playing the accordion, and I also saw him doing this coffee can trick, so they must have learned something. Did they learn that later on in life?
- WV:** Well, when they went to high school, I suppose. Some of them went to high school, so maybe they took up lessons. And, of course they did a lot on their own at home too. When I left those guys didn't play it. I think all the boys now play accordion or piano or organ.
- BM:** Do they play by ear, or did they learn the note too?
- WV:** Some by note , but mostly by ear. Our singing, we did a lot of singing. In our family when they get together, they sing instead of playing games.
- BM:** I've heard you and Augie sing, and I know there is a lot of harmony going on in your family when you sing. When did you learn how to dance?
- WV:** I was nine years old, I guess, when my uncle got married. That's the first time I danced, I guess.
- BM:** What were the dances? Waltzes, or what?
- WV:** Waltzes and polkas, and square dancing.
- BM:** What kind of an attitude did the older generation have towards these dance ? Were they for them or were they against them?
- WV:** I think most of the older generation danced. I was told that my grandfather Wangler was a really good dancer. My mom was and my dad was. I don't remember my grandpa Vetter ever dancing, because he was quite a bit older than we were.
- BM:** Did you have barn dances?
- WV:** Not in our area that much. There were some, but most dances were in houses or in some buildings.
- BM:** So the young people in the community, did they have a special place to meet?
- WV:** Well, some of them met at school houses I guess, and there were some place in town that we could dance. The young people got together, we got together at the school sometimes, I guess. They had discussion clubs and religion discussions. Then we'd get together and we'd dance afterwards.
- BM:** Were your parents and your grandparent superstitious of certain aspects of life?
- WV:** I don't think my parents were that much. But there were people that were more, I think. I can't say. My dad wasn't superstitious. I don't think he was.
- BM:** Did he plant according to the moon or anything like that?
- WV:** He would mention it, but I don't think he went by it.
- BM:** Were there any specific healing techniques that were used in your family?

- WV:** A lot of home remedies. There was [572]. They used different herbs, like chamomile and [575] and for boils they would make some hot bread... put milk in the bread, then they would put that on, and that helped draw it out, I guess.
- BM:** Brauche?
- WV:** Yes, there was some brauche. Not too much in my family, I don't think. I really don't know if my dad or mom ever went. I went to my aunt one time because I had ringworm, and it went away but I had to keep on putting some pork rind on everyday and rub it, and it went away.
- BM:** Do you think there are different illnesses or sicknesses today as compared to the past?
- WV:** I'm sure there is, maybe, but we didn't know at that time. Maybe then there were just as many.
- BM:** If you don't want to answer this, that's alright. Maybe you don't know, but were there midwives? Do you remember if your mother... since you were the oldest, were you delivered by a midwife?
- WV:** Yes, I think all of the eight oldest ones were. There was a midwife there, and two other ones, a doctor was called, and the two youngest ones were born in Linton Hospital.
- BM:** Do you remember if a midwife was paid? Were there any stories told about that?
- WV:** I suppose she probably got a little money and maybe something else, I don't know.
- BM:** Some kind of farm product, huh? Did your parents use any expressions in other languages, like in Russian or German?
- WV:** I really don't know. I remember my grandpa used Russian words. Being as we were German, I suppose we started using the English ones.
- BM:** But the Russian, you didn't know what it meant. Do you remember, was there a newspaper in your home? Was there a German newspaper in your home?
- WV:** I remember two of them. The *Nord Dakota Herold* and the *Der Staatxanzeiger*. Maybe there were some others but I don't know.
- BM:** What kind of information did they get from these newspapers?
- WV:** Well, they got, I suppose, like most newspapers. I know that the *Herold* used to get some letters from the home country and there were some of those in there that I remember.
- BM:** And I suppose obituaries.
- WV:** Yes. That's one thing that is just like now.
- BM:** Were there any funnies or any comics in it?
- WV:** Not that I know of.
- BM:** Do you remember when your family got modern day conveniences?

WV: We got electricity before my folks did, actually. Well they went from kerosene lamps to... finally we had some gasoline lamps, and then sometimes candles were used. Then we got electricity in '29. And my folks got it the same year but we got it a few days before they did.

BM: How about your first car?

WV: The first car my dad had was in 1919. [683] Then they had a 1925 truck, a Ford. Then we had a '29 Model A. The Model A was bought in '29 and I got married in '46, and that was the only car I had for three years.

BM: Do you remember when you got a telephone?

WV: We had a telephone before I... I don't remember when we got it, but we had it when I was young. I was maybe even years old; I remember the telephone. It was a community telephone. Not too many people on, but they had an outlet that they could call to a station, and they would call into Napoleon and they could get the message that way.

BM: I'm not familiar with that one. Do you remember the early days of radio?

WV: Yes, we had that... we must have gotten a battery radio maybe in '37. Not too many people had many at that time.

BM: What were some of your favorite programs, do you remember?

WV: *Amos and Andy*, maybe, and some of the music that was on.

BM: Do you remember when television came in?

WV: Oh yes. Television. We got ours, I guess, in '56. Some other people had some before that.

BM: What were some of the first television programs that you watched?

WV: Lawrence Welk, maybe, but I don't recall some of the other ones. Seems a long time. Can't even remember.

BM: Which family member do you remember best, and which person did you look up to?

WV: I think I remember them all, but I suppose maybe I looked up to my dad more.

End of Side One

WV: [he is speaking in German here with Chris Maier 000-106]

BM: I know there are a lot of stories that you could tell us, Wendelin, but let me give you a little clue here. What are some of the ways that your family has kept your family history alive for the next younger generations, and maybe for some of us older generations too?

WV: Well, the Vetter family, being as there were so many living in the same place, they did a lot of celebrations and we'd get together, and that's probably what led up to it. We still get together every 4th of July. It's been pretty much since 1939, I guess, when we'd meet. In earlier years my great grandpa was still there but people would come from Canada. He had some daughters living in Canada and they would come down. Then the whole community was invited, and it's still pretty much that way when

some people come. That's the way it was in my dad's time. Somebody would come, and they would gather there because it was the home place. Since '37 we get together on the 4th of July all the time. First it was my cousins and now it's my nieces and nephews and my brothers and sisters and their families. We get together on the 4th of July every year.

BM: How many did you have last year?

WV: This last year I think we had close to 300. It depends sometimes what time of the week it is. If it falls on the weekend, we have bigger crowd. Everybody brings their food.

Some of the nephews prepare the meat. Sometimes there might be roast pork, or it might be deep pit barbeque beef. Sometimes turkeys or maybe a combination, and every year we try to do something special so the young kids can understand how life was. Sometimes we'd go out with a plow and plowed the field, then we'd go over it with a cultivator, and some of the years they had horse races, and all the kids have all kinds of games during the day. In the last 12 or 15 years, we usually started with Mass. We used to have a Mass at St. Michael's church, and then we started having it right on the farm. We have a tent which we use for that, for the priests to have Mass. Some of the younger people, like my nieces and nephews, they think that we just absolutely have to keep on doing this because of the good times that they've had and they want their kids to experience the same kind of celebrations. The crick is right close. Some years they go boating, and they have all kinds of things like crafts; they target shoot, things like that. They have a tractor pull. See how many men it takes to haul a little John Deere tractor back. And all kinds of things. We go and visit the cemetery sometimes, and most of the time there are some buggy rides. The kids that don't get off, they get more rides than the other one. One of our granddaughters said, "I got lots of rides." And I said, "How did you do that?" She says, "I just never went off." And I suppose there are a lot of kids like that, but I don't know. I have 96 nieces and nephews, so if half of those come, that enough for a celebration. In Katie and my family, we have altogether 50 of us. We have 30 grandchildren.

BM: How many children do you have?

WV: We have ten children.

BM: Can you name those from the oldest? Maybe it would be better to have Katie do that.

WV: Ray, Kay, Verna, and Joe, Teresa, Josephine, Elisabeth, Anita, Leonard, or Diane and Leonard and Gerald. [There is something wrong here... he has given 11 separate names the way I hear it (repeating Leonard twice)] They all live in North Dakota except one lives in California. And she usually makes it home once a year. In the last three years we've been going to see her once a year.

CM: Give us a little bit of the history on the founding and the starting of the Prairie Bells.

WV: The Prairie Bells just happened. One of my nephews was a bell collector, and one day he decided that maybe they should put some bells up out on the prairie. We call it the Prairie Bells. In the meantime, my nephews - that's Leyland - and then his brother Mike and some more of his brothers, I think they went over to the Holy Land and some other countries and they seen a lot of grottoes. And they thought they should add a grotto along with it. So they bought some land from Ben; five acres, and smoothed out the hill a little bit and they put up the bells in the middle of the winter. They had the foundation poured, and in the middle of the winter between Christmas and New Years we put the bells up and it was 20 below

zero and the wind was blowing about 20 miles an hour. There are three bells up there. Two of them from Zeeland, from the Zeeland church, I believe, and one of them is a church bell. Now they've bought another bell from Holy Trinity church and that bell will go up next year. The grotto was built - I think they used 35 yards of cement for the foundation, and they built the grotto with all prairie rock from the area. Different farmers brought some in, and then when Father Austin was in Italy, or in Rome, then they ordered a statue of Jesus and Mary and Joseph. Life sized. And they got it from Italy. It was shipped over here in 1994. It was dedicated by the bishop of Bismarck. And the bells are there for everybody to ring and the grotto is there for people to come and meditate and pray. It's on top of a hill and you can see farms around and Beaver Crick Valley. It's a nice place to go and see.

BM: I need to go back, Wendelin, to a greeting that we talked about earlier. Could you say it slowly and give us some understanding of it?

WV: In olden years when people would get together, especially young people, would greet an older person. And of course, especially children to their parents, when they would get together, the greeting was [236], which means "Praise be Jesus Christ." They would answer, [238], "Forever and ever." I remember my aunt, they lived about two blocks from our place and she would come over every morning, and come in the house.

My grandpa lived with us, and she would say, [242], then she would say, [243], and Grandpa would say everything is okay. Then she would go home.

BM: We're going through some clarification here. Who were some of the five families that lived on the Vetter farm there, that you said were close neighbors? And were they family, or were they neighbors, and if they were neighbors, can you name some of the neighbors?

WV: My great grandfather was Valentine and Francisca. [254] was her maiden name. They lived in the wooden house that they built when they moved out. My grandfather lived in a different house and they had a family, and when my dad got married, Mom and Dad lived with Grandpa and Grandma, and also two of my aunts and my uncle. They soon got married and one of the aunts moved into the main house, the original house.

Her and her husband, so that was her grandfather. They lived together until my great grandfather died in '25, and my great grandma died in '29. My aunt was married to Andrew Werner. They had, I think, eight children before they moved to a different part. Then there was another house further back, which was [270 Balser?] Vetter, which was the brother to my grandfather and as on to Valentine, and his wife was a [272 Choat ?].

They lived there for about five years, I believe, then they moved south of the farm to a different farm. Then Adam [275 Bumstark?] got married to Julia, my dad's sister, so they lived in another house. We called it the back house, and the one is the middle house. Then my uncle, Matt Wolf, that was married to my Aunt [280], they lived a quarter mile west of the farm. Some of the neighbor living in that area were Morris Wahl lived a mile and a half east; to the south there was the [285]; and further to the west, about a mile and a half west there was Antone Vetter, which was a 2nd cousin to my grandpa. There were Oberles, and there were Muellers, and Schumachers. One thing I will mention. The mail that they got, they had to go two miles south of their place and there was a place where the mail was dropped off, I think twice a week, and they would pick it up. That was the Schumacher farm. When my dad

started school, there was only four children, I guess, so my Aunt Magdalen, she was four years old and they took her to school, and that way they had five children and they would get a teacher. The school was in my great grandfather's house for a number of years, and later on it was in [303] house, the ones I had mentioned. Then finally they built a school a mile and a half from the farm. Later on that school... there was another school built which was a half a mile from our farm, and it was there until in the '60 . About À À60. At least the first few years they had school, it was only like four months at a time, and later on it was six months, and then when I started going to school it was seven months of school.

BM: Who lives on your original farm now?

WV: Right now my brother, Ben, which is toward the youngest of the boys, and his wife, Delphine. She was an Earhardt, and their son, Andrew, live in the house where my dad lived, where we lived. And in the grandpa's house there's 5th generation, August's son - August, my brother – his son, Danny, and his wife, Marie, and three children live on the great grandpa's place. And the other house way on the other end, it's not there anymore. So there's only two families living there right now.

Evidently this is the end of the tape [328]