



# Tales and Trails Newsletter

From Denton, NE, and surrounding areas...Sponsored by the Denton Community Historical Society

January, 2012



## HAPPY 2012 From the DCCHS Board

There have been some changes in the board of directors for 2012. We are happy to have Dave Loos and JoAnn Benes join us and we want to thank Don Daniel and Mary Slepicka for their years of service. We will try to represent you, the members, in all that we do. But we would really like to have you tell us what we do wrong and what we could do better. And don't hesitate to give a pat on the back for something you like.

Do you like the hospitality hour before meetings? Do you look forward to our monthly programs? Do you like the newsletter? Do you feel that you are part of the Society? If you do not get the newsletter by e-mail, would you like to get it that way?

Marilynne Kinner, the editor, would gladly add your name to the list. And she needs a pat on the back for the excellent work that she does.

We are still accepting your treasures for a some-day museum and more importantly accepting your memories of bygone days. The newsletter could certainly use your recollections of those memories.

We have lost members this year i.e. Carol Borgman Allen, Ervin Haase, Carroll Hudson, Jessie Culp O'Donnell, Marjorie Berryman Pillard, Voline Templeton Steinhausen, Samuel Troutt and Clara Haase. Unfortunately we have not added a lot of new members. Please talk to your family members and others that you know from the area that would be interested in joining us.

We continue to add to our website. Kathie Harrison does a superb job of graphics to make it always pleasing. That web site is [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nedchs/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nedchs/) and also check out her Lancaster County site. [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nelancas/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nelancas/)

You will find a number of school censuses for the area on that site. If you have something you would like to see on either website, just e-mail [dsull88075@aol.com](mailto:dsull88075@aol.com)

**2012 Dues are Due—If you are not a Lifetime Member, 2012 dues are now due—\$15.**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Feb 28**—Charles Batterson who owns a “Marble Store” in York NE will do a presentation on “Marbles” at 2 pm, following a hospitality hour at 1 pm.

**March 27**--- We will gather at the Denton Community Center at 2 pm to set up the room for a soup supper on the following night.

**March 28**---Chili and Chicken Noodle soup served from 4:30 to 7 pm. Call Marilyn at 797-2050 to volunteer your help.

**April 24**---We will tour the William Jennings Bryan home in Lincoln at 1 pm and will have Tea at the home about 2 or 2:30 pm. Sorry, only members may attend. Marilyn will need to make reservations arrangements by April 1, so call her at 797-2050 if you plan on attending.



## Want to know about current area news?

The *Martell Messinger* is a quarterly paper. Subscription for a year is \$3. Can be obtained by writing to Joan Wittstruck at 10700 SW 56 Denton 68339.

*The Denton Town Talk* can be obtained for \$12. for the monthly paper. Sent requests to Marilyn Giles at 7045 SW 91 Denton 68339.



Ken and Karen Sherwood

**Your Own Museum**—Teresa Sullivan

Wouldn't it be neat to have your own museum? Ken Sherwood thought so and he decided about 1980 that he wanted one. So he made a trip to the Everett Giles farm and moved a small outbuilding to his farm on Rokeby Road. Then he decided that that was too small and he got another building from Mrs. Borchers and combined the two buildings. The old pump he retrieved from the Melvin Sittler farm. His museum was his hobby for many years. It was furnished with an iron bed and an old stove and many, many small items. But Mr. Sherwood and his wife Karen have decided it was time to simplify their lives and so they donated many items to DCHS. Thank You Ken and Karen.



The ironing board, clothespin apron and Blue Barrell Soap was from the Sherwoods.

The little camisole thing was from Marie Beck.

**Marie (Kersten) Beck—Donates Heirloom Corset Cover**

Sarah Elizabeth Werger was born August 12, 1889 to Charles and Ida Werger. This family was of German descent. On March 2, 1916 Sarah Married John W. Kersten who was born in the Netherlands and came to the United States in 1913. His Lancaster County naturalization record says his name was Jan Wellem Kersten and says he was born Aug 10, 1894. John W. and Sarah Werger Kersten had three children, Marie, Leonard and Ida.

Marie Kersten married Harvey Beck and they operated the Martell Grocery Store for many years.

Recently Joan Wittstruck told DCHS that Marie had a “corset cover” worn by her Mother Sarah Kersten at about age 16 or 1905. Sarah had done the crochet work by herself. Marie donated this item to DCHS in honor of her Mother. She said Sarah enjoyed working out of doors. She liked her garden and baby chicks. She canned a lot of food for the family.

Thank you Marie for this donation. We will treasure it.

**Some Things Never Change** - Teresa Sullivan

In searching through the Lancaster County Citizen newspapers, I found this cartoon. It was in the June 19, 1916 issue of that paper. The picture quality is not great but except for the mailman delivering the “vote for me” ads with horse and buggy, it is very appropriate for today.



## TRACING OUR ANCESTORS - ONE FAMILY STORY

By Teresa Sullivan

The history of any area is by and large a composite picture of the history of the individual families living there. Lucky is the family that has great grandmother's diary of her early days of marriage to great grandpa or even grandma's family ethnic recipe book. But unfortunately in many cases such items were destroyed or passed on to family members that do not share or the census records show our ancestor could not read or write.

But one way of learning of the past is searching out legal documents for our ancestor. Naturalization records after 1906 give a lot of details of family and even physical descriptions of the new citizen. Another legal document that is often very interesting is a probate record. Perhaps a probate record will show that the deceased was estranged from some family member and so gave them little or nothing from the estate. Probates show what the estate consisted of, which of course, includes real estate, but also such mundane things such as rolling pins and wash basins. My husband's great grandfather's probate shows that great grandma charged \$4.50 worth of sattine, 45 cents of salicia, 15 cents of thread, and 30 cents of buttons at the H.P. King Dealer in Dry Goods, Boots, Shoes etc. store in Friend Ne. The bill said it was to be paid by the first of the month.

One of the Irish families that arrived in Lancaster County in 1879 was the Enright family. Frank and John purchased Burlington and Missouri Railroad Land on January 17 of that year in Yankee Hill precinct. Besides Frank and John there was a brother Patrick and a sister Mary and their mother, Mary.

The railroad contract says that they had just arrived here from Cranston, R.I. and were of course originally from Ireland. The tombstone of the mother Mary, says that she was from County Carlow. Various descendants have been to Ireland searching for something more definite to verify the tombstone.

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1893 Patrick was driving a team from Lincoln and on the outskirts of the town was hit by a train near Gooch's Mill. (a grain elevator near 7<sup>th</sup> and South St.). The newspaper at the time carried the gruesome details of his death. His team was taken to a livery stable and Patrick was taken to the funeral parlor. His brother Frank was following him with another team at the time of the accident.

This summer when volunteering with the Lincoln Lancaster County Genealogical Society, I became aware that there was a probate record for Patrick. I mentioned it to Frank's great, great granddaughter; Mary Slepicka and she asked me to get a copy for her Mother, Cathy Soucie Sullivan's July 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In addition to the original survivors mentioned in the probate, somehow another brother, James, found out about Patrick's death. James still lived in Ireland. The letters back and forth were indeed interesting but in a stroke of luck, it was apparent that James lived in Baltinglass in County Wicklow. Also in the group of letters was a letter from the parish priest in Rathduff in County Carlow stating that all the Enright children were baptized in the church there. James did come to America to collect his share of the estate, but the 1901 census of Ireland proves that he did return to the "Old Sod". So Mary's tombstone was correct.

I have obtained permission from Mary Slepicka to tell this story and to present a partial listing of the bills claimed against the estate.

1893			
Sept	5	RR and Steamship ticket for Jas Enright from Dublin Ireland to Lincoln	\$ 52.45
Sept	25	Money paid to Jas Enright for expenses from Dublin to Lincoln	\$ 35.00
Dec	8	Monument for Patrick Enright, set up St. Theresa's cemetery	\$ 120.00
Nov	9	Lamb, Adams, and Scott, Atty fees for estate	\$ 50.00
Mch	17	W.G. Roberts for undertaking at funeral	\$ 100.00
Sept	30	W.G. Roberts for removing remains	\$ 20.00
Sept	30	W.G. Roberts for 2 lots in St. Theresa's cemetery	\$ 15.00
Mch	13	67 pounds meat for sale	\$ 5.35
Mch	18	Cad. Pace, auctioneer at sale	\$ 25.00
Mch	18	Funeral expenses for Pat Enright	\$ 19.80
Mch	17	Printers, Lincoln Printing Co for sale bills	\$ 3.00
Febr	24	Butter furnished men in charge the real est. Pat Enright died	\$ 0.50
Mch	18	Board bill hired man on est. Pat Enright dead	\$ 2.30
Mch	14	Clerk sale	\$ 4.00
Mch	13	Buns for sale	\$ 3.25

NOTE St. Theresa's cemetery now called Calvary Cemetery.  
Jas is short for James.

## Dr. Glenn Turner

Dr. Glenn Turner was well known in the Rokeby area and in Lancaster County. Several months ago, David Loos, his nephew, presented to DCHS a portion of Dr. Turner's biography written in 1991 as it pertains to his years at Rokeby High School. (David's father was Merrill Loos, and Dr. Turner married Merrill's sister Elizabeth). We are pleased to present a small portion of the biography and also an entertaining article by David.

### **GLENN EVERETT TURNER - RECOLLECTIONS/REFLECTIONS - By David G Loos, Nephew - April 23, 2011**

Born: 10 Aug 1903 Plymouth, Jefferson County, Nebraska, USA

Death: 28 Jul 1999 Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, USA

Burial: Lincoln Memorial Park Cemetery, Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, USA

Marriage: Elizabeth Josephine Loos 26 Dec 1933

Son: Roger Skiles born 10 Oct 1934

Rokeby School: Fall 1929 to Nov 1940

Lancaster County School Superintendent: Jan 1943 to Jan 1983

I had read Uncle Glenn's life story several years ago and felt there was considerable information about the Rokeby School that could be shared with the Denton Historical Society. While waiting for the scanner to complete its process, I remembered several things about my Uncle Glenn that I thought I would also share.

I do not remember much about Uncle Glenn when I was very young. I suppose because Cousin Roger was around to entertain me. I do know that he was very proud of us. He usually took a quieter role at family get-to-gathers, unless he was telling a story.

There was always considerable laughter especially at Christmas with all of the gag gifts most of which had a PG-rating. Being born in 1940, presents were scarce during the war years. Except for a few of Roger's hand-me-down toys, almost all of my toys were made of wood. After the war, the quantity and quality of presents greatly improved. However, gifts from Mom and Dad always seemed to be clothes. I mention this as I always looked forward to the presents Uncle Glenn and Aunt Elizabeth gave me for my birthday and Christmas because they were never clothes.

One of my first recollections of Uncle Glenn's involvement was the Fourth of July probably about 1946 or 1947. That was the first time I can remember the nighttime fireworks displays. He really enjoyed the fireworks. We had so many fireworks that Roger and I rarely were able to set them all off in one day.

When we lived north of Emerald in the early 50s, Uncle Glenn and Aunt Elizabeth would come to visit and Roger would shoot up everything in our trash pile. I was not big enough to hold a rifle by myself, so Uncle Glenn would lay the barrel across his shoulder and then I could target shoot. We would keep shooting until out of ammunition which probably helped to explain his loss of hearing in his later years.

About this same time, I had one very trying year at school. This was during the fourth or fifth grade. There were a half dozen of us older boys and we all got along very well. My best friend, Leon, and I were the only two boys that lived north of the school and all of the others lived south. We had a coal-burning stove in the school. It was a job of the boys to fill the cob basket and coal bucket each morning. We usually did this project together and we were always getting coal dust on our gloves. One morning, we got to running after each other trying to wipe coal dust on each other's faces. Well, we all got it quickly cleaned off when the school bell rang, except Leon. The teacher took one look at Leon and inquired as to who had wiped the coal dust on his face. As I was the primary depositor, she sent me home. Mom and Dad got the story and nothing happened to me. The Superintendent of Schools, Uncle Glenn, and the School Board had to decide whether to let me back into school. In any case, I went back to school the next day.

## Dr. Glenn Turner (Continued)

All went well, until spring. It was toward the end of the year and we were at recess one afternoon. One of the boys, not me, found a dead mouse. This poor mouse looked more like a piece of rawhide and was as stiff as a board. As could be expected, we started to chase each other around throwing the mouse at each other. Just before the bell rang, I had the mouse and ran by Virgil, an eighth grader, and whipped it on his head. Well, of all things, it went right into his mouth. He was still spitting when the bell rang. When the teacher was with another class, we had a code we used if we needed to go to the bathroom, which I might add was an outhouse. We would raise one finger or two fingers. I never did understand why they wanted to know which one we were doing. Did they keep a record? Did they put the totals on our report card? "During the last reporting period David did three number ones and one number two." After a time, Virgil raised his hand but he did not raise any fingers. Normally she would just nod giving permission. As Virgil did not have any fingers raised, she finally had to stop and ask what he wanted. Virgil says, "I need to go spit." Of course, that just broke up all of the boys. She finally got to the bottom of why he needed to spit and off I went biking my way home. Again, nothing happened to me. Another Superintendent and School Board telethon and I was back in school the next day. She had trouble with other students, but never any boys of the School Board. Hmmm!!

Things worked out better for me than it did the schoolteacher. That spring she had a boyfriend who would come to visit. On one of his visits, right at the end of the year, the door to the school was locked and our recess lasted until just time to go home. I am sure a number of the kids went home and talked about the long recess. The worm had turned and I knew that she was going to have more than a telethon with the Superintendent and the School Board. I was disappointed she was not sent home. In any case, we had a new teacher the next year. As I look back, I have often wondered what Uncle Glenn thought that year when his nephew could not seem to stay in school. I am probably lucky he did not come out and beat me to death.

During high school, whenever I was in the courthouse, I always went up to visit. Uncle Glenn would bring me into his office and ask me what I had been doing and was always glad I stopped. Of course, he might have been just checking to see if he was going to be getting any more calls about my school adventures.

He prized an education and was glad I went on to college and disappointed when I quit to farm. He told me one time how glad he was that I went back. When I had graduated and was working as an agricultural statistician, I occasionally had to go to the courthouse for work. Then he would take me down to meet all of the elected Lancaster County officials, to tell them all about me, that I had a degree in math and statistics, and have me tell them about my job. It also gave them a good chance to catch up on their PG-rated stories. He always made sure they knew I had the degree in math and statistics. I know he was very proud of my accomplishments or possibly just amazed.

As so often happens, my job took me all over the country and I did not get to visit with him much during the last 25 years of his life and that was my loss.

The following excerpt was taken from his Life Story dated December 25, 1991

### FOREWARD

Several years ago Elizabeth asked me to write something about my life for the benefit of my descendants. She said that too often descendants know very little about a parent, a grandparent, or a great grandparent. After giving it some thought I realized she was right and I agreed to do it.

At present my descendants are my son Roger, my granddaughters Kathy Lowman, Kris Norvell, and Kari Turner. My great granddaughters are Kim Norvell and Jessica Lowman and my great grandsons, Jeff Norvell and Joshua Glenn Lowman. I love them all. We have had many good times together and I treasure the memories.

Much can happen in a period of eighty-eight years. In the following one hundred seventy-nine pages, I have attempted to tell most of what has happened to me that might be of interest to others. Elizabeth told me to do it in my own handwriting and I have

December 25, 1991



EDITOR'S NOTE: I hope within a month or two to have all of the 15 pages of his handwritten biography on the DCHS website.

## More Bits and Pieces from the Lancaster County Citizen

Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 1920

### BURNHAM BOOSTERS

Mr. and Mrs. William Haase attended a reception given in honor of the “newlyweds” at Denton—Mr. and Mrs. Harry Burgess

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mills formerly of Burnham are the proud parents of their second pair of twin boys. Congratulations

### EMERALD EARTHQUAKES

Arthur Deinert had his toenails removed Monday.

Charles Wells is building a garage for Harry Danley

### ROKEBY RATTLE

The Ladies Aid met Thursday afternoon at the home of Mrs. G.E. Finney.

George William’s new home has been completed and they moved in last week. They have a handsome all modern bungalow delightfully planned and beautifully furnished. A home such as anyone would be proud to own.

Nov 18, 1920

### SPRAGUE SPIELS

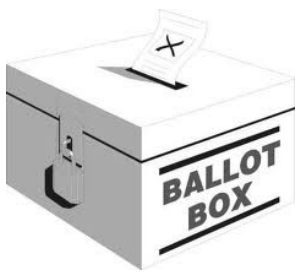
There was a taffy pull and fudge party held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Frohn last week, Thursday night, by the high school students in honor of Mrs. Morton who had been teaching at high school at Centerville until they could get a teacher. Miss Jones took charge Monday.

### EMERALD EPISTLES

Mrs. Robert Cameron who had been sick quite a number of years passed away last Thursday at 3 o’clock at her home near Emerald. Burial was in Yankee Hill Cemetery. She leaves to mourn, one daughter, and one son and brothers and sisters.

## MORE JOHN GEISLER STORIES - Teresa Sullivan

The last issue of Tales and Trails contained a story by John Geisler about carrying the Nebraska state records from Omaha to Lincoln. I have visited with Jim McKee, a noted Lincoln historian and it is his belief that this story was “made up” by Mr. Geisler. So the following stories may also be “made up” but I believe entertaining



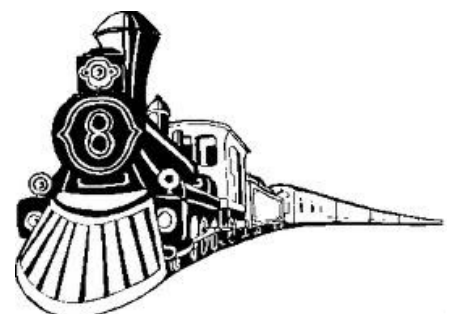
### This is the story of three Germans, the thirteen ballots and a boy’s vote

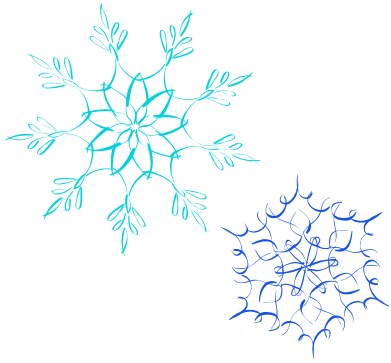
Young Geisler came from Muscatine Iowa, where he was born, to Rokeby when he was 19. Shortly after he came to Nebraska he rode one election day to Olive Branch, now called Kramer.

Neither of the two judges of elections nor the clerk could write a word of English so they were keeping the record in German. Well, they couldn’t turn it in that way so they asked me to translate it into English. I did and they noticed that there were thirteen votes. Thirteen! Thirteen! Terrible. Why that would bring bad luck. They became very much worried over it and they insisted that I vote. I told them I wasn’t old enough, and didn’t want to, but they insisted so I finally did.

### This is the story of the first train, the dead cow, and the railroad schedule.

Mr. Geisler was one of the passengers on the first train that ran between Lincoln and Omaha. The train got to Omaha all right. On the way back, though, the engineer, Mr. Bignell, hit a cow with the fiery chariot. Bignell stopped the train and the passengers got out and skinned the cow. No use wasting a perfectly good hide. In addition, they kept what meat they wanted. And the train got into Lincoln on time.





We recently received announcements of past deaths that we were not aware of at the time we published the Oct 2011 issue. Also it appears that all the deaths in that time period were not in the finished newsletter. Our apologies.

**Phyllis Burgess Olson** passed away in 2010. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Burgess and graduated from Rokeby High School in 1935

**Lois Burgess Larson Jeglum** died May 20, 2011 in Rochester, Mn. She was the daughter of Harry and Leona Haase Burgess. She was 85 years old.

**Luci Patzel** age 44, a resident of Humboldt died August 31, 2011. She was the daughter of George and Marcia Stewart of Denton.

**Eva Maynard** a resident of Lincoln passed away Sept 10, 2011. She was 101. Area survivor is her brother Bob Shea of Lincoln. She was from Denton originally.

**Neva B. Bentzinger** of Martell age 84 passed away on Sept 27. Her parents were Dewey and Emma Bogle. Services were held in the Sprague Community Church

**Bettie Lou Perkins Simpkins**, a resident of Beatrice died Oct 12<sup>th</sup>. She was 80 years old and had graduated from Rokeby High School in 1948. Area survivors include her twin sister, Shirley Honvlez and her family.

**Annabel M. Peterson** passed away at age 98 on Oct 12<sup>th</sup>. She graduated from Rokeby High School in 1934. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. George Loos.

**Glenn H. Harms**, a resident of Yankee Hill passed away Oct 15<sup>th</sup>, at age 81. His survivors include his wife LaReta and three sons and their families. One son Mike lives in rural Denton and another son, John lives in rural Martell.

**Gaylord C. Wassung** age 87 died Oct 21<sup>st</sup>. He and wife Bert lived in the Yankee Hill area. Area survivors include his daughter Diane Steinhausen.

**Jack A. Evans** age 89 a resident of Beatrice Ne. passed away October 25<sup>th</sup>. Jack graduated from Rokeby High School in 1940. His widow is the former Harriett Brandt, also a graduate of Rokeby.

**Ervin W. Haase** age 92 passed away November 4<sup>th</sup>. His parents were Walter and Maude Burgess Haase. Ervin was also a Rokeby High graduate; graduating in 1938. His wife **Clara Damm Haase** passed away December 31<sup>st</sup>. Ervin and Clara were DCHS members for many years.

**Evelyn Thompson Lee**, a Rokeby graduate in 1931 passed away November 17<sup>th</sup> in San Antonio, Tx. at the home of her son. She had lived many years in Oregon. She was the widow of Vinton Lee, who also attended Rokeby High School.

**Ralph E. Borgman** age 79 passed away Dec 25<sup>th</sup> in Lincoln. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, two daughters and one son and their families. He was the son of Chris and Clara Jones Borgman and grew up in the Emerald area.

**Helene M. Kalkwarf** age 92 passed away on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>. She was the daughter of Fred and Agnes Sieck and grew up on a farm near Martell. She graduated from Sprague-Martell High School. Her home was in Crete.

**Laverne Lostroh**, age 90, died in Longmont Co. on Jan 4th. Her parents were Arthur and Ida Lostroh. Funeral was at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church. She was born in rural Emerald.



Denton Community Historical Society  
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