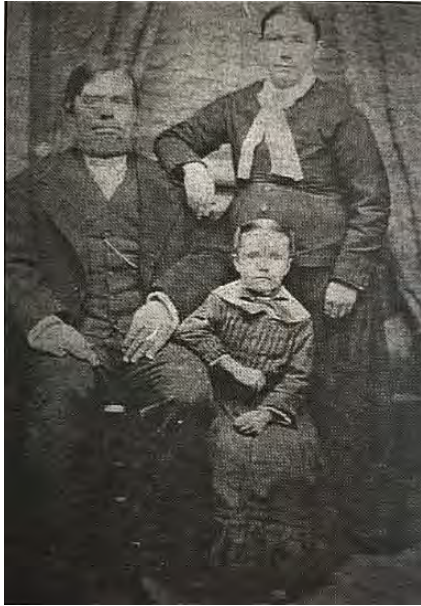


## 29. Family Photos and Records

Let's look now at some photos we have of my family. As we know, Heinrich and Maria had five children all together: Mary Sebers, born March 17, 1848 in Cincinnati, Ohio, died July 8, 1901 in Halbur, Iowa; Sophia Sebers, born October 4, 1850 in Cincinnati, Ohio, died April 19, 1919 in New Vienna, Iowa; Henry Sabers, born November 25, 1853 in Cincinnati, Ohio, died November 12, 1934 in New Vienna, Iowa; John Sebers, born December 6, 1855 in New Vienna, Iowa, died May 15, 1891; William Segbers/Sebers, born August 22, 1859 in New Vienna, Iowa, died May 6, 1928 in Waterloo, Iowa.



This photo, taken about 1885, is Heinrich Halbur and Mary Sebers Halbur (my aunt) with their daughter Anna, my cousin. They married October 3, 1865 in Dubuque, Iowa and in 1872 moved to the Halbur area and settled on a farm. In late 1873 Heinrich purchased several parcels of land that included the 160 acres still owned by William Halbur's heirs. Their farm was declared a Century Farm in 1976. Heinrich originally bought the land from Jess Parthon for \$12.00 an acre. In 1898 he sold it to his oldest son Henry. Heinrich and Mary had eleven children, but seven of their children died in infancy. Nevertheless, the remaining three sons and a daughter had large families of 8, 10, 11, and 11 children, so there are many Halbur descendants. I did not see these cousins often because they lived in Halbur. Heinrich and Maria were married 33 years when Heinrich died of kidney disease in 1898. Mary died of a stroke in her buggy on the way home from church in 1901, two years after her mother Maria died.



The photo on the left is my aunt Sophia Sebers with her husband Casper Riesberg. They were married January 17, 1871, and farmed about three and a half miles northwest of New Vienna, so we saw them often, but their eight children were older than I was, their youngest being born five years before I was born. Their third child, Mary, married Frederick Roling, the son of my mother's father John Roling and his second wife

Theresia Halbur. Frederick became a prominent farmer and businessman in the Remsen, Iowa area. The third photo is my mother's father John Bernard B. Roling and his second wife Theresia

Halbur Roling. We do not have a photo of my mother's mother, Elizabeth Schwabe, who died when my mother was 6 years old.



This wonderful photo is the wedding picture of my parents, Henry Sabers and Mary Roling Sabers on June 1, 1875, in New Vienna, Iowa. My father was 21 years old and my mother had just turned 18. I think my father was already farming the land that Heinrich had bought from the Beckmans, so he would have brought his bride there to begin their married life. As the oldest daughter in the Roling family, and a girl who had lost her mother at age 6, Mary would have been very used to the hard work of managing a farm household. Sylveria: "Henry and Mary Roling Sabers were married by the Rev. Conrad Schulte. They farmed about four miles northwest of New Vienna, Iowa in Dubuque County. The land was purchased by Heinrich and wife from Bernard and Elizabeth Beckmann for the sum of thirty-nine-hundred and fifty dollars. Heinrich and Maria Segbers, Sr., then sold this land to their son Heinrich Segbers, Jr., for \$4000.00. The deeds for this farm were filed for record on March 1, 1877, at 4:20 P.M. Henry and Mary Roling Sabers farmed this

land until their son Arthur and Elizabeth Ploesst Sabers bought the land at the time of their marriage." Arthur and Elizabeth were married January 20, 1920.



This photo shows John Crubel, Jr., and Josephine Hoefler, Johnnie's father and mother, on their wedding day March 2, 1886. John was 22 years old and Josephine was 20. John was born in Petersburg May 5, 1864, and Josephine was born in Westphalia, Germany, October 21, 1865 and came to America at age 11 with her family. They settled near Petersburg. It seems that John and Josephine did not become acquainted until they were young adults. Josephine's brother was a wagon maker and brought John to the Hoefler home one evening, and young John called on Josephine a month later. They lived on the farm with John's father and produced eleven children between 1887 and 1912, my Johnnie being the oldest of the eleven. John died on September 27, 1959, at age 95 and Josephine died May 7, 1957, at age 91. They died in Bloomington, Wisconsin, where they had moved in 1914 after Johnnie and I moved there in 1910.





This photo of my parents may have been taken for their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in June of 1900, or it may have been taken at the time the family photo was taken in front of their brick home, in late summer of 1899. My mother seems to be wearing the same dress in both photos. This would have been shortly after her last child Andrew was born in March 1899.

As we have seen, in 1867 Heinrich bought 97 ½ acres from the Beckmans for \$3950, 80 acres in section 30 and 17.5 acres of timber in NW ¼ of NW of Section 8. This was the land that Henry bought from his father January 30, 1877, for \$4000, and this land had a homestead farmhouse on the northeast corner of the 80-acre piece. We do not have a picture of this homestead. Two years after my parents bought this land from my grandparents, they bought an adjacent farm for \$5000. The records show that in 1879, my father, identified as Herman Heinrich Sebers, bought the land adjoining his farm to the west, from Stephen

and Catherine Willenborg, on February. 20, 1879, for \$5,000. The properties are the West 1/2 of NW 1/4 (this being a fractional quarter, containing 88 acres), the South 1/2 of the SW 1/4 of the fractional quarter of Sec. 19, containing 21.71 acres, the W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of the SW fractional quarter of Sec. 7, containing 20.63 acres (timber), containing in all 130.37 acres.

Henry and Mary now owned a 228-acre farm, a significant accomplishment for a 25-year-old man and his 21-year-old bride! It was in the northwest corner of the new land purchase, the former Willenborg farm, that my parents built their new brick home, the one in which I grew up. We are not certain exactly when the house was built. What we do know is that the new house was built after 1874 but before 1885. There was no house in section 19 on the 1874 Plat Map, and the location of the house was identified in Section 19 on the 1885 Iowa State Special Census. The house on the original, east 80 acres that Henry and Mary lived on in 1874 is not in the 1885 special census.

Here is information from Fred:

Yes, the black squares on the Plat Maps are farmsteads (where the buildings are located), and they tended to be as close to the road as possible. In Iowa, farmsteads tended to be on the highest spot on the farm. This seemed different to me in SW Wisconsin, where I noticed farms were often tucked in valleys or low spots, but I'm wondering if living in the lowlands of northern Germany affected location choices here...maybe it was important in Germany to build on the highest ground. The original farmstead was in the NE corner, on the Klas lane and across the road from the Detten farm

that separated Heinrich's farm from Henry's farm. Basically, they moved the homestead to the other side of the farm...and from Pine Hollow Rd/Klas Lane (past the Klas farm) to Hosch Rd.

The White Pine Hollow Rd that ran through the Klas farmstead and between the Detten Farm and Henry's first 80 acres was never a highly maintained road, probably because Colony Road on the east was a ridge and military road, and Hosch Road on the west was a county line rd. It was always a mud road. So I can see why Henry wanted to live along Hosch Rd. But that still doesn't answer the question of why the Willenborg farmstead was moved from the middle of the farm to the north end added parcel.

We know that the black dot on the 80 acres (E 1/2 of NW of Section 30) is a farmstead. This is the farm that Heinrich bought from Bernard and Elizabeth Beckman in 1867 for \$3,950. The Beckman family is on the census as living on the farm. I think Heinrich rented this out, or farmed it with his home farm until Henry started farming, and I definitely think that Henry and Mary Roling Sabers lived there. Heinrich sold it to Henry and Mary in 1877. Henry and Mary bought the W 1/2 of Section 30 and the 21.73 acres in Section 19 from Stephen and Catherine Willenborg in 1879. They did not buy the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Sec. 30. That became part of one of the Riesburg farms. To me the real question is when the new farmstead was built. It is the current farmstead and is located in the 21.73 parcel in Section 19. The new farmstead is not on the 1874 map, but the old Willenborg farmstead is on the map, located midway on the west side of the 80 on Hosch Rd. As I have mentioned before, it is interesting that with two farmsteads on the expanded Henry and Mary Sabers farm (Beckman and Willenborg farmsteads) a new farmstead with a brick house was built. But there was a brick manufacturing company in New Vienna in the 1850-60's. The house does look like the post Civil War era brick homes.

The well and the windmill over it usually established a permanent location for the farmstead. That's why I think the building of Henry's new home on the 21-acre parcel on the north end of his farm is so unusual. There were already two farmsteads on his 181 acres (marked on the 1874 map). But maybe there was a well at the new location. There was an 'artesian well' on my Oberbroeckling ancestor farm. The water in the land is under pressure and gushes out of a pipe driven into the land. No well digging/drilling or pump or windmill is needed. Often a small building was built over the pipe and the water flowed into a tank that was used for cooling, and then was directed outside to water the livestock and was the beginning of a creek. These ran all year long, and were considered a real gift, but usually helped determine the location of the farmstead, just as a well did. The farmstead sits on the highest hill on the farm. Windmills were often on hills to "catch the wind", and people often wanted the well close to the house, so maybe that is what he had in mind. If there was not a spring on a farm, the farms had wells for water. A well and a windmill were usually the first investments in starting a farm without a spring. Heinrich's farm was on a hill, and I don't think there was a spring, so I believe they had a well. Maybe water was a factor in moving the Willenborg homestead north to the hilltop. At first they may have located nearer to the creek, but eventually wanted a supply of well water. Usually homesteads were in the center, and often on a hill (windy hill!!!)

And I wonder what happened to Henry's original farmstead in the NE corner of the 80. The farmstead of the Detten farm was removed when my great grandfather bought it in 1884 to add to the Klas farm. The house was moved to another farm, where it became a corn crib, which makes me think it might have been a log home. (I remember my mother's family talking about finding broken dishes, etc. at that location for many years.). Maybe the best buildings of the two farmsteads were moved to build Henry's

new farmstead. And maybe the reason was a better water supply with a new well on the highest hill on the farm! Lots of maybes!

The "new house" location on Henry's expanded farm would be closer to the school in the Dixon Settlement area or to Colony School in Delaware County. I think we found some place that Mathilda attended St. Boniface. But I think Heinrich's children went to St. Mary's school, as it was so close.

The distance from the Henry Sabers original 80 (Beckman farm in E 1/2 of NW 1/4 of Section 3) would have been better to walk to St. Mary's School. I think they would have walked across the north edge of Heinrich's farm to get to school. Fences were rails and easy to cross, and I don't think they "plowed" right up to the fences, as the horses/oxen needed turn-around space. The area around the outside of the land was often used for hay. And the fields were not nicely divided into squares, etc. as they are today (rail fences were never straight!). They farmed the hilltops, and the rest was hay and pasture. And cattle were herded in the early days (I think Anna Deppe Bruggeman writes about this), as a herd was not very big. Even in the early to mid-1900's, the rule of thumb was 1:10, one cow per 10 acres of land, i.e. a 160 acre farm might have 16 cows.

Bernard & Elizabeth Beckmann  
To  
Henry Leghers.-

Warranty Deeds

Know all men by these Presents,

That we Bernard Beckmann and Elizabeth Beckmann of Dubuque County, State of Iowa in consideration of the sum of Thirty nine hundred and fifty \$00 Dollars, in hand paid to Henry Leghers of Dubuque County, State of Iowa do hereby sell and convey unto the said Henry Leghers and to his heirs and assigns, the following described premises, situated in the County of Dubuque and State of Iowa, to-wit:

The East half of the North West quarter of Section Number Thirty (30) also the West part of North West quarter of the North West quarter of Section Number Eight (8) to extend equal distance from the West end to the South West corner of said quarter to make up the number of seven-tenths and 7/100 acres of Land all in Township Number Ninety (90) North of Range Number two (2) West of the fifth Principal Meridian containing in all Ninety seven one half acres be the same more or less.

And we do hereby covenant with the said Henry Leghers that we are lawfully seized of said premises, that they are free from incumbrance, that we have good right and lawful authority to sell and convey the same, and we do hereby warrant and defend the said premises, against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever; and the grantor aforesaid relinquish all contingent rights, including right of Dower, which Elizabeth Beckmann has in and to the said described premises.

Signed the Twenty fifth day of January A. D. 1867.

In presence of } (1000 in 21. State) Leonard Beckmann  
John Christoph } (200 11-1/2 in 21. State) Elizabeth Beckmann

State of Iowa, }  
Dubuque County, } On this 20th day of January A. D. 1867,  
before me, John Christoph a Notary Public in and for said County, personally came Bernard Beckmann and Elizabeth Beckmann to me personally known to be the identical persons whose names are affixed to the above Deed as grantors and acknowledged the same to be their voluntary act and deed.

Witness my hand and Notarial Seal the date last above written.



John Christoph  
Notary Public.

Here is the Warranty Deed showing the original land purchase that Heinrich made in 1867 from Bernard and Elizabeth Beckman for \$3950. The following Warranty Deed shows the same farm when Heinrich sold it to his son Henry in 1877 for \$4000.



Heinrich Segbers, Sen., et ux.

Heinrich Segbers, Junr.

Warranty Deeds

Know all Men by these Pres-

ents: That we, Heinrich Segbers, Senr and, Maria Segbers his wife of Dubuque County and State of Iowa in consideration of the sum of four Thousand (\$4000.00) Dollars, in hand paid by Heinrich Segbers, Junr. of Dubuque County, State of Iowa do hereby sell and convey unto the said Heinrich Segbers, Junr. the following described premises, situated in the County of Dubuque and State of Iowa, to-wit:

The East half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the North West quarter of Section Number Thirty (30). Containing Eighty (80) acres. Also the West part of North West quarter of the North West quarter of Section Number Eight (8) to extend equal distance from the West end to the South West corner of said quarter, so as to make up the Number of Seventeen and a half ( $17\frac{1}{2}$ )

acres of land, all in Township Number Ninety (90) N. of Range Number two (2) West of the fifth Principal Meridian, in the County of Dubuque and State of Iowa. Containing in all Ninety seven and a half ( $97\frac{1}{2}$ ) acres, be the same more or less.

And we hereby covenant with the said Heinrich Segbers, Junr that we hold said premises by good and perfect title that we have good right and lawful authority to sell and convey the same; that they are free and clear of all liens and encumbrances whatsoever; and we covenant to warrant and defend the said premises against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever. And the said Maria Segbers hereby relinquished her right of dower in and to the above described premises.

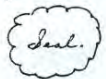
Signed this 30<sup>th</sup> day of January A.D. 1877.

In presence of  
Joseph Schummel

Heinrich Segbers Senr  
Maria Segbers

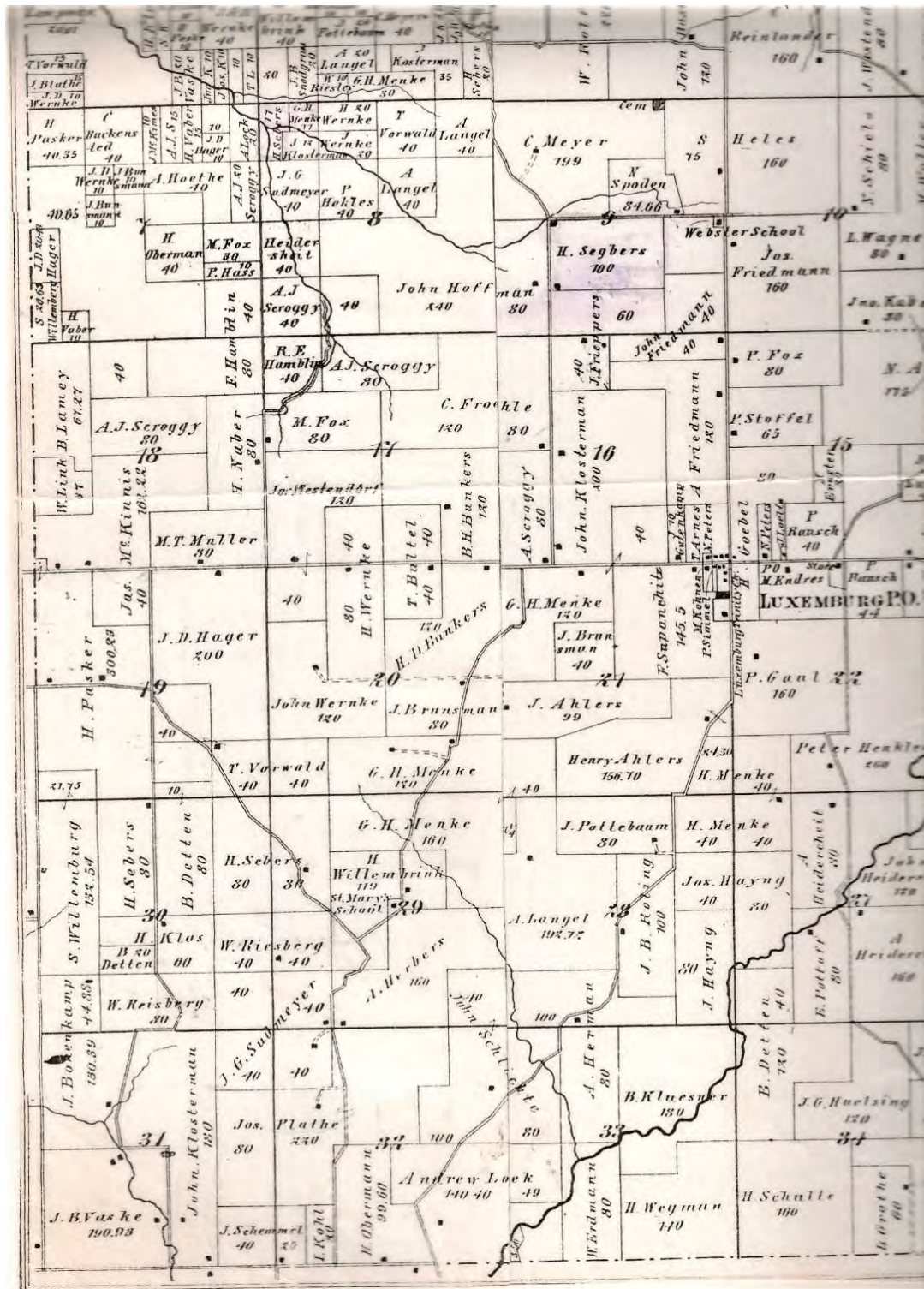
State of Iowa, }  
Dubuque County. } ss.- On this 30<sup>th</sup> day of January A.D. 1877 before me Joseph Schummel a Notary Public within and of said County, personally came Heinrich Segbers Senr + Maria Segbers, his wife to me personally known to be the identical persons whose names are affixed to the above instrument as grantors, and acknowledged the execution of the same to be a voluntary act and deed.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my official seal at New Vienna, Iowa on the above written



Joseph Schummel  
Notary Public





On this 1874 Plat Map we can clearly see the Heinrich Segbers/Sebers farm on the Military Road and the H. Sebers farm of 80 acres with the house in the northeast corner of the property. The Willenborg property that Henry has not yet bought is adjacent on the left, and the Willenborg farmstead is visible near the left midpoint on the road. Henry and Mary will eventually build their new brick house in the northernmost extension of that property, above the Section line.



We do not have a photo of the house my parents moved into on the Beckman farm, but we are lucky to have this photo of the new house they built on the Willenborg farm. It shows up first on the 1892 Plat Map and on the 1885 Iowa State Special Census, so it was built before 1885, within the six years after Henry and Mary bought the Willenborg farm in 1879. To my way of thinking, this was a tremendous outlay of money for the young Henry and Mary: \$4000 to buy their first farmland in 1877, \$5000 two years later to buy the Willenborg farm, and then within six years they built this big brick house.



This precious photo was taken in front of that house about August or September of 1899, when my baby brother Andrew was a few months old. From the left: the woman with two young children on the side of the house are unknown; the next group of three includes possibly John's fiancée Agnes Raue, with my sisters Regina 3 and Anna 19; the next group of five includes my sister Elizabeth 16, my mother Mary holding my baby brother Andrew 2 months old, me (Mathilda) 8, and my oldest sister Mary 21 holding her six-month-old son Cornelius Von Lehmden. The last group of seven includes Andrew Von Lehmden (Mary's husband) holding their two-year old daughter Frances Henrietta Von Lehmden, my sister Katharine 9, an unknown man, my brother Arthur 5, my father Henry and my brother Joseph 12. The three boys on the roof are my brothers John 22, William 18, and Anton 14.

This house was still standing in 2018, when it was over 130 years old. It was at that time being renovated by Marty Krapfl, a relative by marriage. His grandfather's brother married Melania Sabers, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Crubel Sabers. She was born in Bloomington November 16,

1918, six days before I came here, so I think it is nice that her relative now owns the house I grew up in. We have on the following pages some photos of the house at the time Marty was beginning the renovations.





We see the backhoe on the left being used for the renovations, and on the right under the porch we see two entrances, the one farthest to the right and mostly hidden being the original “mud kitchen” entrance we used most of the time to keep the farm mud out of the house. In the lower photo we see that the original porch from that side of the house has been removed and plastic sheeting is over all.





Within 24 years of their wedding day, Henry and Mary had 14 children, of which I was tenth. Two of my brothers died as infants. Here are the children in my family:

**Henry** February 29, 1876 –April 6, 1876, died in infancy

**John** April 8, 1877 - May 3, 1958, Married Agnes Raue January 21, 1903, 10 children

**Mary** Sept. 7, 1878 - January 8, 1966, Married Henry VonLehmden January 13, 1897, 10 children

**Anna** January 7, 1880 - September 5, 1948, Married Henry Tuschen January 21, 1903, 2 children

**William** November 29, 1881 - September 2, 1957, Married Anna Osterhaus January 19, 1904, 12 children

**Elizabeth** October 25, 1883 - August 11, 1975, Married Andrew Puetz January 19, 1904, 10 children

**Anton** September 9, 1885 - January 29, 1966, Married Adelheid Lies January 12, 1910, 5 children

**Joseph** September 7, 1887 - April 16, 1934, Married Elizabeth Crubel November 22, 1910, 11 children

**Katherine** September 1, 1890 - January 18, 1951, Married Chris Forster January 12, 1910, 9 children

**Mathilda** July 29, 1891 - November 22, 1918, Married John Crubel November 22, 1910, 4 children

**George** January 30, 1894 - January 30, 1894, died in infancy

**Arthur** November 12, 1894 - May 21, 1970, Married Elizabeth Ploessl January 20, 1920, 8 children

**Regina** April 3, 1896 - May 16, 1965, Married Louis Ketelsleger February 7, 1922, 2 children

**Andrew** March 7, 1899 - June 4, 1993, Married Florence Meek February 2, 1921, 2 children

So you see, I had a very large family, and many of my brothers and sisters had a lot of children, so I had 85 first cousins, of all ages, many of them older than I, but some exactly my age or younger. When I look at this chart of my brothers and sisters, I can't help noticing how many of them were born in the fall, with four of them born in September alone. And as you can see, eight of us had double weddings, which is no longer common today.

Another interesting thing to note as we look at the early photos of my ancestors is the kind of clothes they wore, and how the styles changed in the two generations from my grandparents to my own generation. In *Roots and Wings* Delores Neuhaus recounted a story from Herman Abeln about women's pioneer clothes. "When Katerina Rolfes came to New Vienna from Germany she had a trunk full of beautiful silk and satin dresses that she seldom wore because the people of New Vienna were of simpler styles and fabrics, and out of graciousness and good taste, she set aside her beautiful clothes." In the photos we are looking at, we can see that the somber colors and styles of the middle to late 1800s are changing to brighter colors and better fabrics. This trend is especially noticeable in the style of wedding dresses, which we shall see shortly. We see In the family photo below, taken in 1904, that Mary is wearing a dress of shiny fabric, perhaps silk or satin, that Elizabeth and Regina have an amazing amount of decoration on the bodices of their dresses, that Katharine is wearing a light-colored dress, that I am wearing a dress with a large, ruffled collar, and that baby Andrew is dressed in the manner of popular images of Little Lord Fauntleroy! The men's suits are equally all well-tailored and the men are wearing vests, ties and polished leather shoes, in contrast to leather farm boots or wooden clogs.



Here is a really good photo of my whole family together, taken in 1904 when I was thirteen. I am the one in the top row, second from the left. Top row: William, Mathilda, Mary, Joseph, Katharine, Anna, Elizabeth. Bottom row: Andrew, Henry, Anton, Arthur, John, Regina, Mary. Baby Andrew, the last child in the family, was four years old.



And here is a photo Fred found of a Solemn Communion class from 1905-1906 that includes me, just before I turned 14. I am the third girl from the right in the top row. I think my sister Katharine, age 15, is the first girl on the right, the tallest one, and I think my young brother Arthur, age 9, may have been the fourth boy from the left in the first row. Katharine was always tall and sort of elegant.



Here are some close-ups from the photo where we can be identified more easily. I am in the photo on the left; my sister Katharine and I are in the middle photo, back row; and my brother Arthur may be the fourth boy from the left in the bottom row.



This would mean that three Sabers children had Solemn Communion at the same time, which was a little unusual. But it was an exceptionally busy time for the family. There were four new grandchildren and there had been two double weddings within two years. The oldest daughter Mary had married Joseph Von Lehmden in January of 1897 and already had four small children; the oldest son John had married Agnes Raue in January 1903; Anna had married Henry Tuschen in January 1903; William had married Anna Osterhaus in January 1904; and Elizabeth had married Andrew Puetz in January 1904. Perhaps the family decided to have several children celebrate their important day of Solemn First Communion together. This Solemn Communion photo would be from the year after the family photo of 1904.

Fred: "I was going through some old pictures and ran across this picture of a Solemn Communion class at St. Boniface. My great uncle, Leo Oberbroeckling, is in the front row standing next to a girl. Leo was born Jan 8, 1892. It appears that there are a variety of ages in the picture, probably because some, who had gone to the country schools, would have to complete their two-year 'residency' at St. Boniface School to make their Communion. There was usually an age range in a Solemn Communion class because sometimes two in a family would go through the rite at the same time. I think it just depended where they went to school. St. Boniface was more structured with grades, etc. Country schools were more ungraded, with kids going to school until they were about 12-14. Their education level (which is on some census data) was determined by the last reading book they completed. So there is probably an age range on this photo, as well as the developmental range that goes with 12-14 year olds. I looked up Solemn Communion ages for some other relatives and they were usually 13-14 when they made their Solemn Communion. So I'm guessing the picture is from 1905-06. I checked the original, and the back row of girls are standing on the grass, just like the front row, and the land by church is flat, so I think the variation in heights is real."

With a family as large as ours, it seemed we were always celebrating something, which made for happy times and happy years. Nevertheless, changes were coming. The family were all very sad when our patriarch, Heinrich, died at 2:00 a.m. October 4, 1884, at age 65, perhaps from complications from a leg amputation the night before. I was not yet born when he died, but I remember always visiting his grave and placing flowers there. My grandmother Maria, his wife and the family matriarch, lived for 14 more years, and we would visit her nearly every Sunday at the old homestead, where my uncle William now farmed. When she died on August 16, 1899, at age 84, I was 8 years old and it was even harder for everyone. I was especially sad and confused because it

was my first experience with death. After she died my father said, "It is the end of an era. The 1900s will be very different." And he was right.