

MEMORIES OF  
ADOLPH ALEXANDER LOBNER AND  
MILDRED INA SEIBERT

TOLD IN 2003 FOR THEIR FAMILY

Alex & Millie





On October 14, 1942, Adolph Alexander (Alex) and Mildred Ina (Millie) Seibert were married in Ogallala, Nebraska by justice of the peace Judge Tillinghouse. It was raining hard that day; they couldn't do any work, so they took Alex's father Herman's car, picked up Alfred Brooks and went to Ogallala to get married. The clerk and Alfred signed as witnesses to the marriage. Alex and Millie got a motel in Ogallala that night and went home and worked the next day. At that time they lived in the bunkhouse and ate in the house with Alex's folks, Herman and Frances.

In a few months after cleaning up the McCoy house south of Herman's, and buying some furniture, the couple moved into their own home. On August 29, 1944, a daughter Garnet Magdalene was born at the hospital in Lewellen. The following year, October 25, 1945, a son Aaron Alexander was born also in Lewellen. However, Alex wasn't there for that birth. Grandpa Herman and Alex were selling calves that day and they had to load the calves. Alex took Millie to the hospital during the night but had to leave before the baby was born. The family moved to where Alex and Millie now live in 1947. Then on April 13, 1948, a son Conrad George was born to the couple.

In 2002 they celebrated 60 years of marriage with all of their children, their eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren present. In order to preserve all of their favorite memories and important milestones throughout their lives this book of memories has been compiled. We hope you have fun reliving all of the events in these pages and that you enjoy reading them as much as Alex and Millie enjoyed telling them!

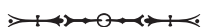


Alex and  
Millie were  
speedy  
corn  
pickers - by  
hand.





Karl Lobner and his horse Elsie sometime in the 1930's



## *Alex's Family History*

### **Herman Lobner**

Alex's father was born in Germany March 17, 1878 to Henrietta Christina and Karl Gottlieb Heinrich Lobner. He was the fourth son of seven children who grew to adulthood. After he graduated from school at age 14, he apprenticed on a large dairy in Schleswig Holstein, Germany. He decided he didn't really like that job so he returned home and joined the army where he spent the entire two years of service as a drummer in the drum and fife corps. He then returned to his widowed mother's farm of 28 acres where they grew a little bit of everything. His father had died at the age of 45 so his mother had to raise the family on her own. The house, barn and everything were all under one roof including the liquid manure pits. To spread



the liquid manure, a hollowed out tree was pulled behind a team and wagon. Herman stayed on the farm until he went to work on a Baron's large estate as the manager of all the grain transactions, the imports, exports, and what was consumed by the livestock or used in any other way. They even fed carp to the livestock.

When Herman and his brother Adolph heard of the large acreage one could get for almost nothing in Nebraska, they were greatly impressed and had to come and see it. Adolph had been courting a girl who was corresponding with her Uncles Paul and Gus Rentzsch who wrote about the Kincaid Act that entitled a man to 640 acres. To acquire 640 acres for so little (Herman paid \$400 for the relinquishment he bought) was almost unbelievable and a dream come true. However, the American Consulate in Germany had told Herman that he didn't want to go to Nebraska because it was the "Great American Desert".

Herman's brother Adolph came to America in November 1906. Herman worked out his contract time at the Baron's place, boarded the S.S. Bismarck, and headed to America where he arrived in May 1907. Herman stayed in the Cody Hotel in North Platte, Nebraska on his way out to Lewellen and was able to meet Buffalo Bill Cody who shook hands with him and wished him luck,

Adolph bought a relinquishment that was in the McCoy range north of Lewellen. The brothers lived in the little one room shack that came with the property. There was also a well on the place.

Herman bought a team of horses and a lumber wagon from Roy Brown who owned the lumberyard. He hauled lumber from Big Springs two times a week to pay for the team. Lewellen was building the town at this time and lots of lumber was needed. There was no wagon box on the wagon. He would sit on the wagon going out and on the lumber going



Alex once  
upset the  
tractor  
while  
stacking  
hay





Karl Lobner and Francis (Adams) Lobner in 1942



Lobner Homestead North of Lewellen



home. He would stop in Ash Hollow at the school to give the horses a break and play the gramophone that he had brought from Germany for them.

Herman was eventually fortunate enough to buy a relinquishment. The Myers (or Miers) bothers had filed on two sections that joined Adolph's. They intended to prove up on them, but while they were gone to get lumber and other supplies, a prairie fire swept over the land; and when they saw the blackened prairie and desolation, they were so disheartened; they packed up and left, never to return. His dream had come true. Herman hauled freight and farmed. The first field on Adolph's land was 30 acres. Herman plowed 2 ½ acres a day by hand with a team of horses. Adolph followed and planted the seed by hand. At one point they accidentally planted ½ of the crop on the neighbor's

ground because there was no line to mark the boundary.

Friends and neighbors helped Herman build his three- room sod house. The land had been surveyed but not accurately, so he unknowingly broke some of the sod for his house on his brother Adolph's land. When the final survey was made, the boundary ran right through his house, so he had to buy a strip of land from his brother to correct the error. This house was located where Teresa and Connie Lobner's house is now.

Herman later bought Adolph's house when Alex was 11 years old. Adolph was moving on and sold the house to his brother. The rest of the farm was sold to an insurance company that was purchasing land. The farm sold for \$20 an acre and that was too much for Herman to afford. Adolph went to Bethany, Oklahoma and was a manager of an orphanage there for a long time. He saved his money and went to New Mexico to dig for gold in the Zicarella Mts. Adolph never married.

On November 12, 1912, Herman took out his naturalization papers, and he seldom missed going to vote on Election Day. He considered it a privilege and his duty to cast his ballot.

His mother Henrietta came to Nebraska and kept house for the brothers until Herman got married. She was born on August 18, 1844 and passed away on July 14, 1915. Herman passed away on May 23, 1968 of heart failure. He was 90 years old.

It is believed that there is still Lobner relation in Germany. At one time they were part of Communist East Berlin. There are also family rumors that one of Henrietta's relatives marched with Napoleon's army in Russia and walked home after Napoleon was beaten. It was everyone for himself at that point if they wanted to get home, so he burned his uniform and obtained peasant clothes from a peasant in Russia to get home.



Millie  
has been  
chased by a  
turkey tom  
and a sheep





Francis Adams at her high school graduation or confirmation around 1908



Adams Family  
Francis, Bill, William, Rosa, Chris, Lucy

## Frances Magdalene Adams

Alex's mother was one of four children of Rosa and William Adams. She was born in Latrobe, Penn. on January 2, 1892. She spent most of her youth in Ohio in different towns where her father's railroad work took him. After grade school, she attended business school to study shorthand, typing and related subjects. She worked in an office as a stenographer; and being able to speak German fluently, she was called upon to interpret. Hearing about Nebraska from her brother Bill who had been out for a visit and said that there was "nothing but sagebrush and jackrabbits and lots of eligible bachelors" she met Herman by mail and they corresponded for a couple of years. She and her mother later decided to check things out. They traveled to Nebraska

to meet Herman. They returned home to Ohio and sometime in early December of 1913, she came by train back to Lewellen. On December 10, 1913, Herman hired Frank Taylor to drive them to Oshkosh where they were married by Judge Gumaer. They went home to the little sod house. Herman had scooped out the corn he had stored in the bedroom to make room. At one point a bad storm blew the roof off of one room and it was never put back on. The couple farmed, raised cattle, hogs, and had a few horses. Frances raised chickens and later had large flocks of turkeys. They had a few ducks, geese, guineas, rabbits, and pigeons.

When her father died, Frances had a dream during the night. She was a very superstitious person. She saw her father in her dream and he beckoned for her to come, but she said she wasn't ready and he disappeared. When she got up the next morning, she came out of her room and said, "Father died last night". Later a telegram came telling them that he had, indeed, died that night.

Frances died May 12, 1962 at the age of 70 after suffering with rheumatoid arthritis for ten years.

### **Alex's Brothers and Sisters**

Herman and Frances's first child, Erma Elizabeth, was born Nov. 14, 1914. She passed away in 1990 after suffering with arthritis for many years. Three boys followed: Adolph Alexander on Sept. 15, 1916, Karl Herman, Jr. on May 31, 1920, and Almond Constantine born July 6, 1924. He died in 1981 from lung cancer.



Alex and  
Millie  
snatched a  
purse off  
another  
woman's  
arm as  
they were  
dancing





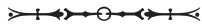
## *Alex*

School District #16 Alex is next to the teacher and age 9. Taken in 1925



Alex's earliest memory is his brother Karl's birth. He remembers the Doctor being there and that Mrs. Rogers came to the house. He remembers hearing his mother yell and he and his older sister Erma trying to watch in the windows to see what was happening.

Another early memory is at about four years of age. The windmill's tower was too short and it needed to be let down and legs added. Alex was wearing little blue pants that kept falling down. He cried, trying to run and hold up his pants at the same time. His mother pinned them up for him so they would stay on.



School District #16, now a part of Connie and Teresa Lobner's House  
Taken in the 1920's

## **School Days**

Alex wasn't in school a lot as a child. Usually he stayed home to herd turkeys. This went on during the spring, summer, and fall. The turkeys were herded

two times a day every day. When the grasshoppers died off, he was able to attend school.

Alex went to school at 7 years of age. He started in November because he was doing chores and helping with farm work during the summer and fall. Philip Samuelson was his first teacher and Philip lived in Adolph's rented house. It was 3 ½ miles to school and he went to school in the teacher's car. Alex remembers riding to school one time when the door of the car flew off.

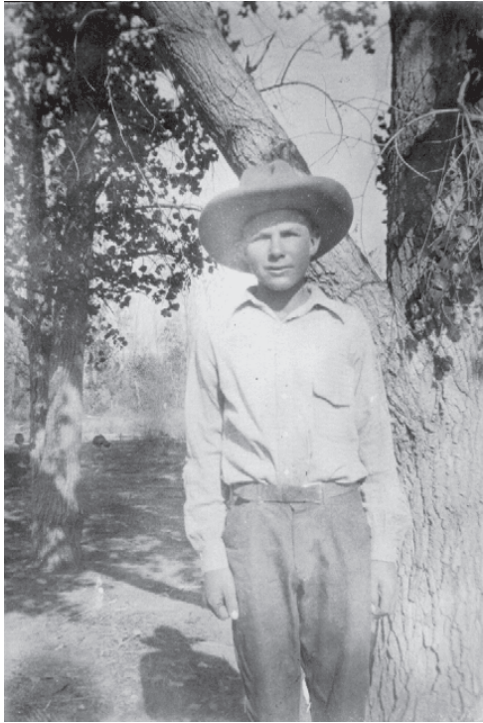
Alex went 8 years to school and never had a good buddy in class. If he missed a day of school it didn't matter. He was promoted every year and even graduated out of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There was a test that needed to be passed at that time to graduate out of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Alex also remembers that he couldn't read very well. He didn't know his ABC's for a long time. He couldn't read until the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Each day they were assigned some reading that they would have to read to the teacher the next day. He would sit with his mother and she would help him read the assignment to her. Then he was able to read it to the teacher once the next day, but is sure that he never could have read it again. Alex never regretted not going on to high school. He says, "I wasn't that smart" and he enjoyed working.

Alex remembers speaking mostly German at home, and his parents spoke German to each other. However, he does remember that Herman learned English right away and did most of his studying from the captions under the pictures. Alex spoke some German at school and apparently it was too much because he was razzed about it and often ending up crying. He describes himself as a crybaby as a child.



Alex was  
knocked  
out while  
loading  
bulls in  
a trailer  
when one  
decided to  
come back  
out, hit the  
gate of the  
trailer and  
knocked  
him out





Alex around 1930



Alex and Coyote 1920

Alex's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher was only 17 and he had a lot of fun with the 16 year- old girls. However, no one learned much about the three 'R's that year.

During playtime in one of George Scamel's fields the boys played war in two forts. They would carry ashes in a bag, throw it and pretend it was a bomb. He also remembers trying to smoke sage rolled in newspaper in the outhouse. Another favorite game at school in the spring was marbles. In the winter they played fox and goose in the snow.

## Chores

They never did get to play too long as Alex had to be home to tend to the turkeys. The hens were the main responsibility for herding. They needed to be kept in a bunch. The little ones would bunch with the hens; but as they grew older and left the hens,

there was even more herding to be done. Alex and Erma ran a lot chasing the hens. A black shepherd dog used to help and he also killed snakes. This was a big help because there were a lot of rattlesnakes around. One was found nearly every day. After finding a rattlesnake one day, the dog was bitten and died. Erma and Alex buried the dog in the canvas buggy top. Their father hunted for the buggy top for quite a while and never did find it. Alex admits that his father never did know what happened to that buggy top.

The other danger to the turkeys was coyotes. If Alex and Erma were not paying attention, coyotes would get the turkeys even during the day. This did not mean one turkey, but normally several that were all off together in a little bunch. Alex and Erma picked these turkeys up if they found them and took them home. Alex isn't sure what happened to them from there, but he assumes that they were fried and eaten. To help protect the turkeys Alex caught coyotes and received \$3 for each hide.

Sometimes they would have to run a mile or two away from home chasing turkeys. They sometimes had a hard time getting the turkeys to come back especially if the wind was blowing, as the turkeys would go with the wind. At one point their mother was helping herd the turkeys, and she laid their younger brother Connie down in the grass. Later, they couldn't remember where they had laid him and spent quite a bit of time looking in valleys and yelling for Connie before they found him. Normally they would raise between 100 and 150 turkeys.

Even though there were always turkeys around, Alex says that they hardly ever ate turkey because it was too expensive and they didn't eat much beef. They did eat pork because they needed the lard and then ate the other things they raised. Alex always remembers having good eating.



A bull  
cornered  
Millie on  
the rafters  
of the  
garage





## Selling Turkeys



Alex and Beaver Pelts from his trapping



They would clean about 40-50 of the turkeys at a time during butchering season. At butchering time they would hang the turkeys up by the feet and by going through the mouth, they would cut the brain of the turkey. This was done so that the turkey wouldn't feel anything else. It would also loosen the feathers and make them easier to pluck. The turkeys would then be pinned and would hang until they were cool. The heads and legs were left on and the guts of the turkeys were never cleaned out. For packing the turkey would have paper wrapped around the head and legs and then they were packed in an apple barrel. A gunnysack would be placed on top of all of them and the hoop put down. The turkeys didn't spoil as butchering was usually done in the fall or winter. The



apple barrels were taken to the train station and shipped to the buyers. Peter Fox Brothers retail in Chicago normally bought them. The other option was Jurpees in Omaha. Peter Fox normally paid more, even if the freight charge was slightly higher, so most of the turkeys went to him.

Once one of the Peter brothers came to visit and see if Herman wanted to buy turkeys for them. While he was there, the sheriff and deputy stopped by. They had heard that Herman made and sold wine and spirits and wanted to arrest him. The big car of the Peter brother made them curious. Herman did make wine but he had never sold any and when he told the sheriff that they left him alone. Later Bill Wiedman told Herman that George Scamel had turned him in. Because the road went through Herman's place, the next time he saw George and his wife coming through his yard, he commented to George, "You made a big mistake, that was the best rhubarb wine you ever tasted." Then he smacked the horse. George and his wife were in a spring wagon and when Herman smacked the horse, George's wife went backwards over the top of the seat, her feet flew up, and she landed in the back of the wagon.

## Mowing Hay

Alex remembers going out one time to mow hay with his father. It looked like a big gulley washer was coming up as they watched the clouds, so they stopped the mower and headed home. Earlier, as they were mowing another wagon had come by the field. The next morning they went out to mow and the mower had no gears. The trail leading east was visible because the rain had not come but it indicated who the culprit was. Herman headed towards the cemetery where he picked up George Scamel who lived at the Rittenhouse place. He also picked up Clod Smith



Alex  
whirled  
Millie  
around  
during  
a polka  
dance and  
her skirt  
wrapped  
around a  
pole and  
caught her  
tightly





Alex, 1942



and Bill Wiedman who were working in a field near the school section where Herman was haying. They followed the tracks to the wagon of Charlie Lynch. Alex's mother didn't want to prosecute Charlie because he was poor, and the gears were recovered anyway. Charlie later pulled out of the area leaving his wife and kids behind. Alex was not sure what the reason was.

### **Social Events**

He enjoyed going to dances regularly at the Brooks' place. He would ride the horse over to the Braden School and then take a wagon and go to the dance. He also often rode horses and played in the blowouts in the hills.

### **Christmas Time**

Alex always received a little something on Christmas Eve. One time as a child he caught his mother stuffing the stockings and that took away the mystery

of Santa for him. He also remembers receiving a bag of candy from the teacher and a gift from Adolph and from his mom's folks. They always had a Christmas program. Other holidays were not too important to the family.

## **Farm Work**

Alex was out of school at 14. Then he says he really started working. Herman started paying him at a rate of \$25 a day. He had to take care of the cattle and fields like a hired man. He also helped dig potatoes and pick corn. Alex would get in trouble if anything went wrong. If the cow lost a calf, Herman said he should have been watching closer. The problem with the cows that he remembers is that one bull threw calves with large heads. The cows would have a lot of trouble calving. They might or might not lose their calves.



Alex was involved in an accident while chasing coyotes in the Jeep with Welby and ended up with stitches in his head



Harry and Garnet (Peron) Seibert 1940's



Harry and Garnet (Peron) Seibert, 1967

## ***Millie's Family History***

### **Harry Jonas Seibert**

Millie's father was born November 18, 1888 at Ida Grove, Iowa to George Seibert and Mary Ambler. His younger brother Mark was born in 1890 and their mother Mary passed away in 1891. Their father George was a rover and always off trying to make a quick dollar gold mining. He owned a mine or so in Nevada. He wasn't around much when the boys were growing up but their grandparents helped raise the boys.

On December 4, 1907, Harry married Garnet Peron. Harry and Garnet farmed around Laurel and Coleridge Nebraska. After Harry and Garnet were married at the ages of 18 and 17, George lived with them on their farm for a while. While working on the barn, the scaffolding broke. He

fell and it killed him. He was weak and ill at the time because he had just had the measles.

They raised lots of potatoes and always had a big garden. They sold things from the garden and had apples and other fruits to sell. Harry worked for a John Deere dealer and for a farm elevator for a time. He was a mechanic and fixed the broken machinery. He said that he probably should have stayed there. He went into the hog business and had a huge hog operation with about 1000 hogs. Prices started to go down and he continued to hold the hogs. Eventually prices went so low he had to get rid of them. That was what finally broke him. They had just built a new house in Coleridge because things looked so good. He lost everything. They had only lived in the new house for a very short time. The house cost around \$4000 at that time.

In 1928 the family moved to Lewellen and resided with an aunt and uncle, the Jack Heywoods, and worked the farm for Jack and his wife as they were getting older and needed someone to help take care of them and the farm. Harry and Garnet and their family stayed with the Heywoods for five years. They resided on several other farms until 1942, when the Heywood farm became their permanent home. Harry had a small dairy and milked cows, selling the cream, etc.. They raised big gardens and sold produce from them to help make ends meet. Harry did custom farm work as well as his own farm work and that was how he made the living for his family. He suffered from heart trouble a lot of his life, but continued to work hard and provide for his family as best he could.

Harry and Garnet retired in 1963 and moved into Lewellen, where they remained most of the rest of their lives. In 1967 the Seiberts celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with an open house. Garnet died at the age



Millie was  
accused of  
letting the  
minnows  
die and  
even had  
a poem  
written  
about it  
called "The  
Day Millie  
Let the  
Minnows  
Die"





#### Seibert Family 1927

We are uncertain who the older ladies are but in the back row are:  
Stella, Edith, Verna and another young girl who is unidentified  
Front Row: Les, Millie, Jack and George



#### Seibert Family

Back Row: Les Seibert, Jack Seibert, Stella Brenneman, George Seibert  
Front Row: Millie Lobner, Edith Steward, Verna Steward

of 78 on November 12, 1968

after being ill for a few weeks.

Harry passed away the following  
year on June 7, 1969.

#### Garnet Hazel Peron

Millie's mother was the  
youngest of nine children born  
to James and Esther Peron of  
Menville, Iowa. She was born on  
May 31, 1890. Her mother died  
when she was about four years  
old and at the age of 10 she was  
orphaned when her father died.  
No one really wanted her so she  
was shuffled from one sibling to  
another. Finally until she was  
married, she made her home with  
her sister, Mrs. Stella Sommers.  
Her schooling was received in  
the Logan Center school of Cedar  
county, Nebraska.

Eight children were born to  
the couple. The couple raised  
seven of the eight children born  
to them. Stella (1909 - 1991)  
who married Dan Brenneman,

Edith (1910 - 2002) who married Harry Steward, Verna (1912 - 1983) who married Gordon Steward , George (1914 - 1972) who married Erma Lobner, Jack (1918 - 1998) who married Janice Burke, Mildred (1921 - ) who married Alex Lobner, Leslie (1924 - ) who married Verla Jenewein, and Carol (1934 - 1935).

## ***Millie***

Mildred Ina Seibert was born on August 17, 1921 in Laurel, Nebraska.

### **Early Memories**

Millie's earliest memories are when she was around four years old. One time she climbed to the top of the corncrib. When she started to go back down, her foot slipped and she fell. There was a pitchfork at the bottom. She fell on it and ran it through her foot. Her brother Leslie was climbing also even though he was younger. She has been afraid of heights since that accident. Millie remembers the place they lived on near Laurel. A neighbor's boy would come over to their place. One time when she was about four he came over. He had a knife and he cut her legs with it. Her father went to the boy's father and told him not to let his son come over to the Seiberts any more. It was thought the boy had mental problems.

### **Family Living**

Millie liked playing house and playing in the snow in snowshoes made of oilcloth. Her clothes were all hand sewn by her mother, and they were pretty. She remembers starting school in Laurel. At that time gypsies were common in the area and would often stay in the tree groves nearby. Millie had been told that if she ever saw the wagons coming, she should hide. One day when she was coming home from school, she saw



Alex had both eyes blackened when a cow hit a gate he was close to.





Millie, 1934



the wagons on the road coming toward her. She hurried and lay down in a ditch to hide, but she fell asleep. Everyone in the family became worried when she didn't come home and started looking for her. Finally she woke up and started for home.

### **Christmas Time**

Millie can't ever remember not having a doll for Christmas. She recalls having one every year. The bodies of these dolls were made of cloth and they would wear out. Millie said that the boys contributed a lot to the dolls wearing out. There was always a big family get together at Christmas every year. Her Uncle Jack and Anna would come over.

### **Moving to Lewellen**

When Millie was around five years old, the family made a trip to Lewellen to see if they would move to the area. Her father had

heart trouble and it was too cold and humid in Laurel for him. An older lady was riding in the car with them and Millie remembers riding down Ash Hollow Hill and being scrunched against the side of the car because the lady was trying to stay as far from the edge of the car as possible. Millie and Les felt that they were just about pushed out of the car. When they returned to Laurel, it was decided that the family would make the move to Lewellen.

## School Days

Millie didn't finish her first year of school because they moved. She started again at seven years of age. At the new schoolhouse in Lewellen, the students sat on benches and held their tablets in their laps. At recess they played ball, tag, ring around the rosie, andy, andy over, and other typical kid games. Millie enjoyed school when she was young. When she was older, she remembers a man teacher who had them scared to death. He was mean to the boys, and if they didn't do something right, they might be paddled. She didn't finish school here either. Before she graduated from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the family moved to Lutherville where she graduated. From there she went to two years of high school in Oshkosh.

When she was a junior in high school, she knew her father needed help on the farm. The boys were on their own or were working out and there was no one to help. She knew she would never be able to afford to go to beauty school like she wanted to, so she talked her dad into letting her quit school and work as his hired hand – no pay other than her keep. They worked together until Millie married Alex in 1942. Alex was also known to help Harry with milking and they were known to spend hours talking on nights that Harry was unable to sleep because of a tic in his



Millie  
chased the  
kids with  
willow  
switches.  
That's why  
the boys  
are soooo  
fast.





Alex and Millie, Early 1950's



face that was very painful and made his entire face go numb. Eventually the nerve had to be cut.

## ***Alex and Millie***

Alex remembers seeing Millie around town, but at one point she was “just a kid”. He does remember meeting her at a dance at Dilley’s. Her parents had brought her and Alex bet his friend Alfred that he could have more dances with her than Alfred could. Alex won that bet. They do also remember that they got along well from the start.

## **Box Social**

In those days, Box Socials were held where women and girls would prepare a meal in a box, decorate the box, and it would be auctioned off to the highest bidder at the social. Alex wanted to buy her box at one of these but



wasn't sure which one was hers. Her dad bought the box and then Alex bought it from him.

## Dating

They dated for five years but didn't think they had enough money to get married. The war was also going on, and Alex wasn't sure if he would have to go or not. He, Alfred, and Millie drove to Crawford, NE before they were married so he and Alfred could have their physicals and join the cavalry if they passed. On the way there, the car quit. They were lucky and found someone to fix it. Alfred passed the physical but Alex did not.

Millie never had many nice clothes, but Alex had his mother pick out two dresses for her before they were married. Millie liked them and they were the right size. Later, after they were married, Connie bought her a dress.

## Wedding Bells

Finally, on October 14, 1942, they were married. Her wedding dress was a pretty brown dress with white daisies for trim. Garnet later played in the dress and finally wore it out. They didn't go on a honeymoon at that time, but much later they took a trip to Yellowstone with George and Erma and had a great time.

## Changing Times

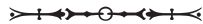
Many things have changed over the years since they were youngsters. One thing that has really changed is the price of land. When they first bought the lease on some school ground, it cost \$500. Now the rent for that same ground is \$3600. This has been turned over to their son Aaron who runs his cattle with Alex and Millie's.



Alex was  
slammed  
into a feed  
wagon by  
a bulls rear  
end.



Garnet, Conrad and Aaron, about 1949



Alex and Millie at Ron and Garnet's Wedding 1966

When they were first married, they went to the movies in Lewellen about every weekend. They went to town every Saturday and sometimes on Wednesday as the stores were always open later on those days. Everyone went to town then and Lewellen was very busy. There were several grocery stores, a variety store, hardware store, soda fountain, movie theater, lumberyard, shoe shop, café, and many other places of business. Now the only places open at night are the bars and there are very few businesses on Main Street. Now Saturday night is just another night, nothing special.

## Vehicles

One of the first vehicles Herman had was a 1929 Overland Whippit, and one of their first cars Alex and Millie had was a 1937 Ford. Alex and

Alfred Brooks went to North Platte and bought this two-year old used car for \$410. They ran this car until the doors nearly fell off. Their daughter Garnet remembers her dad driving it to the fields without a hood on it. Sometimes it wouldn't start. It was during the war, and they couldn't buy another car so they continued to drive this one.

Herman's first tractor was a 1942 CAT D2 tractor. Alex used it to do the farming. Later, Alex bought his first tractor that was a 900 series Ford that he bought on loan.

Millie remembers an interesting experience she had with the CAT tractor. She was helping Alex clean corrals and was looking back behind the tractor. When she looked forward, she was already starting into the barn. She pulled everything there was to pull to stop the tractor but she couldn't stop it. Alex came running up, pulled the clutch, and stopped the tractor before it went through the back of the building. Herman just laughed when he saw it and said, "Oh, that can be fixed." This was a good farm tractor. They also used it for several other things around the farm. During the war years, this tractor was especially handy. They liked it so much that it was later traded in for a 54 model. This new tractor cost \$3000. Herman also had a 1942 Ford Ferguson and a John Deere G that seemed pretty large at that time. None of these tractors had cabs so the drivers were very dirty when they came in at night.

One year when Alex was using the CAT to farm the corn, there were bumblebees living under the seat of the tractor. These bumblebees went wherever the tractor went and would even crawl on Alex while he was farming. He didn't bother the bees and they didn't bother him. He does admit that he never lifted the seat to look under it.



Millie  
upset the  
car in the  
irrigation  
ditch



## Inventions and Improvements

One of the inventions that Alex and Millie remember that made life easier was electricity that they finally got in 1952.

Then they had a telephone put in when Garnet went to college so she could call home. (She threatened that she would not go if they didn't get a phone.)

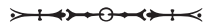
Roads were a big improvement.

With better equipment the county could make roads and not just trails. Of course, paving of the major roads was a huge improvement. Highway 26 was paved when Millie was in high school.

For Millie, the washing machine was a real lifesaver even though Alex's mother preferred the washboard. Alex enjoyed the feed grinders and hydraulics. Before they got electricity, they did have a refrigerator but it was a kerosene burner. They do remember starting to use propane



Millie, Garnet and Aaron about 1946



in the 1940's or 1950's. Before that they used a wood and coal stove for heat. The chimney of this stove went through one of the bedrooms and there was one time that it caught the floor of the bedroom on fire. Alex also remembers using propane for the Minneapolis Moline tractors.

## Pets

Alex and Millie always had a dog. Alex is a real dog lover and very good with animals. They even had a turkey tom that was mean and would chase people and flog them. The kids were especially afraid of him. Later when Conrad was in upper elementary school, Ron Storer gave him a bum lamb. This poor sheep got sheared on one half of its body **one** time. It grew to be huge. Later it became difficult probably from the teasing it got. Alex would put his hand on its head and push against it. It soon began to run up behind people, especially Garnet and Millie, and brush past them not hard but enough to get them off balance. Later, it wouldn't let Millie alone. She would go to town or to get the mail and when she got home, she would have to crawl out the window of the car and over the fence to get to the house. It was finally given away.

Another pet that the family remembers well was the pet rooster that Herman had. He named the bantee rooster Hans. All the grandkids were afraid of it because it would chase them and jump on them. The only time it was safe for them to be outside with it was when Grandpa Herman gave it beer. Hans would drink the beer until he got drunk. He would flap his wings and crow drunkenly until he finally passed out. Then the kids would come out of the house.

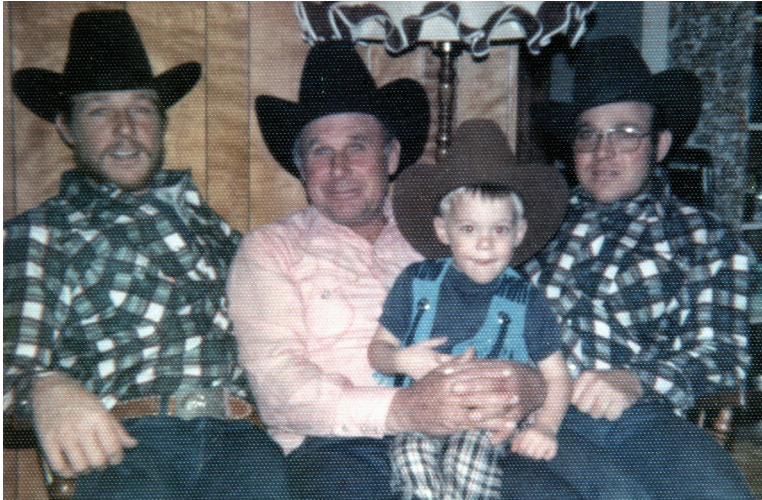
Alex's mother Frances also had a pet that was unusual. It was a badger. The badger was named Oscar. Connie and Welby had dug him out



When  
Millie  
upset the  
car Conrad  
ended up  
under a  
washtub  
with a ball  
of twine  
around his  
neck







Conrad, Alex, Cameron and Aaron, 1976



Garnet, Millie and Alex 2002



Alex and Tony Bullhead Fishing at Sandhill Lake 1976

of his home under the woodpile. He was about a year old and to get him to come out from the woodpile, they would tap on the wood. Every morning early, Oscar would go to the house and scratch on the door. Frances would let him in and feed him hamburger and raw eggs. One night Oscar killed about 40 chickens, dug a hole and buried them. When the chickens were found and pulled out of the hole, there was a live rooster in the pile. After this Oscar was hauled away and turned loose on the south table. There were six other badgers under the chicken house and these were also hauled away.

## Trapping

Alex trapped coyotes and one day he found an eagle caught by it's toes in the trap. He didn't hurt the eagle, but took him out of the trap and took him home. He remembers that the

eagle grabbed hold of his shirt with his good foot and Alex had to pry the claws away from his shirt. When he got the eagle home, he kept him in a building and the eagle became tame. After a while he wouldn't grab you anymore and when he was offered something he would take it gently. You could also pet this eagle if you wanted to. The eagle took a rabbit about every day and stayed for over a year. He was brought home in the fall and stayed to the next fall and the following spring. At that point there weren't enough rabbits and they released him. The eagle stayed around for about two weeks and then was gone.

When Alex and Millie were first married, Alex took Millie around the traps he had set so she could check them while he was doing other chores. She was carrying a gun so she could shoot whatever she found. Once there was a coyote in the trap. She tried to shoot him "between the eyes" like instructed, but she somehow only stunned the coyote and didn't kill him. She decided that she just couldn't kill him, so she ran to get Alex who then killed the coyote. At that time, coyote hides were worth \$10 so they were able to buy some little extras that winter.

## **Blizzard of 1949**

Alex and Millie moved to their current residence in 1948 before the blizzard of 1949. During the blizzard, they had to go out and try to bring the cattle in. They left the children in the house. Aaron was put in a cardboard box and Garnet was given instructions not to let him out because he would climb on things. There were kerosene lamps and they worried that one would get knocked over and burn the house down. Conrad was just a baby at the time. It was starting to get dark and they hadn't returned to the house. Garnet opened the door and began yelling



Alex and  
Millie won  
trophies for  
their polka  
dancing



Alex and Millie in their Polka Clothes, 1970's



Alex and Millie Dancing, 1980's

“Mom”, “Dad” but the wind was the only answer. The cows were down along the creek and hard to move because of the terrible wind. Alex and Millie carried some of the calves and the cows would follow. It was not unusual to have calves at that time because the bull was never taken away from the cows. When the cows were out of the wind they would drive easier, but it was a long process. Alex lost a couple of cattle. The blizzard itself wasn’t so bad for them; it was after the blizzard. It was hard to keep cattle in because all the fences were snowed under and, of course, all the roads were blocked.

## Weather

There used to be a lot more snow than there is now days. Usually there was at least one blizzard every year. To get to town for groceries, they would sometimes have to take the team



of horses and wagon to the main road where they had left the car, tie the team there, go to town and get groceries. On the way home, the car would be left at the road and they would return to the house in the wagon. Once during the summer there was a huge prairie fire that Alex had gone to help fight. Millie hooked up the team, put the kids in the wagon, and went to her parents' place a few miles away.

## **Farming**

Alex and Millie used the team and wagon to pick corn by hand. Garnet and Aaron would ride in the front of the wagon. When the corn was thrown into the wagon, the ears of corn would strike the kids. Trying to find a safe place to sit was nearly impossible. At that time, corn sold for 50 cents a bushel.

Besides corn, they raised a little wheat on the farm, but it never amounted to much. It was normally planted after the corn. They raised a little rye and used it for hog slop after it fermented. For many years Alex raised hogs as well as cattle. In later years when the hogs started getting into Millie's pretty yard, the hogs had to go. Besides, they were getting to be a lot of extra work.

## **Friends and Family**

The important people that Alex and Millie remember were mostly family. They did state that there really weren't many other people around, but that sometimes there were neighbors that were almost like members of the family.



Alex ,  
Millie,  
Erma and  
George  
used to go  
fishing at  
the lake a  
lot - later  
they never  
went



Alex and Millie's Home



Home Place Remodeling 1954

## Church

They didn't go to church as children because it was too far to go. Alex remembered when the minister came out to his parents' place to hunt one day and he was going to baptize Alex while he was there. Alex didn't know what baptize meant, so he ran and hid in the cellar. His sister Erma finally found him and drug him back to the house. Millie went to church with her sister Stella at the Mennonite church north of Lewellen (no longer there). However, after the kids were born they started going to church more regularly. Alex states that the only Bible reading he remembers doing before this point was when he was in second grade visiting his grandparents in Ohio for six weeks. He also remembers that it was a German Bible.



## Entertainment

For enjoyment they would go fishing at Lake McConaughy before it was so developed. They used cane poles and had pretty good luck. Herman bought some small motorboats, but they didn't catch much in them. Occasionally they went to the sand hills to catch bullheads. One of the activities they did and really enjoyed was arrowhead hunting in the sand hills on Sundays. They would leave at 4 or 5 in the morning and return at dark. Millie packed a lunch and the family took off in the old Ford. They stopped at every blowout to look for arrowheads. Alex has collected a lot of arrowheads and at one time with all of them he figures he must have had about 500 and 95% were perfect. His brother Connie had taken some of these. He can spot a Yuma arrowhead because it is balanced so perfectly. It has fine chips all the way around and some are worth about \$400 to \$500. A Folsom arrowhead has a sliver cut down the side supposedly to let the blood run off. A Pawnee arrowhead has a notch in the middle back. Most of his collection was found around the Lewellen area but he also has some from Ohio and a tomahawk from Indiana. They are not as easy to find anymore. These expeditions were usually very successful. Alex knew where to go because he rode through the cattle on his horse and had ridden over most of the area.

It was not always safe on these expeditions. One time he started going down a hill, not realizing how steep it was until he had started down it. He turned the key off and let the car slide down the hill. Another time, he was driving along a bank in the Jeep and trying to scare Millie. There was a turn in the road and it was steep. Millie tried to get him to slow down, but he wouldn't so she jumped out of the Jeep. She just knew that he was



Millie  
wanted  
to be a  
ballerina,  
hairdresser,  
or teacher  
as a girl



# Alex and Millie's 60th Anniversary



Tony Storer, Jessica Storer, Nicole Storer, Amber Storer, Millie, Alex, Garnet Storer, Ron Storer, Nicole Mauser-Storer, Cory Storer



Josh Lobner, Melinda Lobner, Andrea Lobner, Millie, Alex, Terrie Lobner, Aaron Lobner



Cameron Lobner, Gentry Lobner, Peggy Lobner, Millie, Alex, Stephanie Lobner, Conrad Lobner

going to roll the Jeep. When she landed, she hit on some cactus but luckily, none of it stuck in her.

Alex and Millie have always enjoyed dancing. For several years, they sponsored square dances at District #39 schoolhouse. These were well attended. Even young children learned to square dance and polka. Later, in the 1960's they joined a polka club in Ogallala and traveled all over Nebraska and other states to polka festivals. They won several trophies for their polka dancing. For their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary they celebrated with an open house and a polka dance. But, by the late 1990's, Alex's knees had worn out and he could no longer dance. They do miss the dancing and all the friends they made on their trips to all the festivals.

## Current Life

They celebrated their 60th anniversary (2002) with an open house and an evening meal in Lewellen. Many friends and relatives joined them at that time. Both are still going strong but have slowed down somewhat.

Alex still works around the farm doing some fieldwork, raking hay, and irrigating. Millie keeps very busy with her home, yard, and, of course, keeping track of Alex. They enjoy company and have the “Country Kitchen” open most of the time. Friends know that if they stop in, Millie will have something good for them to sample before they leave. They love having their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren come to visit. This group is made up of: Garnet and Ron Storer with their children Tony Storer, his wife Nicole (Brabec) Storer, Cory Storer, his wife Nicole Mauser-Storer and Tony and Nicole's children Jessica, Amber and Trevor; Aaron and Terrie (Dormann) Lobner with their children Melinda, Josh and Andrea; Conrad and Peggy (Frahm) Lobner and their children Stephanie, Cameron and Jentry;

They really enjoy their three little great grandchildren, Tony's kids Jessica, Amber, & Trevor Storer who can't wait to go see Grandma and Grandpa Lobner when they get to Lewellen. I think we can all agree that toast, butter, and jelly always seem so much better at Grandma's house than at any other place.



Alex and  
Millie  
have eight  
grand-  
children  
and three  
great-  
grand  
children

