

Benjamin Mauser

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Tilly Mauser

Otto Mauser

Muri

Mildred

Caroline

Benjamin Mauser

Blanche Pocock

Harold

Lillian Mauser

Gottlob Mauser

Anna Molaer

From the Trees

Benjamin Mauser

Benjamin Gottlob Mauser is my oldest living relative. He was born in 1905 just north of Big Springs, NE. His father came to America when he, his father, Gottlob Mauser, was twenty-one. His father was in the services in Germany, but was sent to America after a short time. When Gottlob moved west to Big Springs he became a blacksmith. He had the first blacksmith shop around this area. Gottlob married a woman by the name of Anna Moler.

After a few years of marriage Gottlob and Anna had their first child. My grandfather, who is Benjamin "Ben" Mauser was the sixth child. There were two older brothers, three older sisters, and one younger. During this time Gottlob and Anna had lost three other children. One of the older brothers, Otto, was the only child never to marry.

During my grandfather's younger years he went to school in a country school just outside of Big Springs. He did not go to High School because in those days you could either go to High School or work. He chose to work.

The problem he had most was the time it took to work. They did not have the equipment that we have today, everything was man or horse power. He recalls that if a man had a good team of horses he could do about eight acres a day. Today people can do about eighty acres in one day.

He can recall the time that people respected the idea to rest on Sunday. Few people did work, or if they did it was only because they were far behind. If during the week everything went well on the farm everyone would get together on Saturday nights and trade and socialize.

A few social things they might have done would be barn dances in

which the dance was held in someone's barn and somebody would play the piano or organ. Another event might have been the basket social. This basket social was where the women would decorate a box or basket and fill it with food. The basket would be brought to a gathering of the towns people and auctioned off. Whomever would buy the basket would get to have supper with that family. During the winter the barn dances were held almost every Saturday evening.

After working for five years he married a woman by the name of Blanche Pocock. He was twenty-one when they were married. They were married in Sidney, Nebraska and the only people, other than the two of them and the minister, was one of his brothers and her two sisters.

The two of them lived on a small farm just outside of Big Springs. In 1927, their first child was born, this was Murl Mauser. Following, was Mildred in 1928, Harold in '31, and Carolanne in '40. Ben and Blanche were not wealthy but they were able to make a living and keep food on the table.

Grandpa had often spoke to the children of his first car when they asked for one. He said prices were outrageous for an automobile. He told them he bought his first car in 1923, it was a second-hand, Ford Model-T. He paid \$250 for it and he bought a brand new one in '25 for \$570. After a short time though he got an automobile for the boys. He stated that he did not buy a car for the girls because they really had no use for them since they did not work as the boys did.

They all worked very hard during the week and when things were finished for the day on the farm Grandpa would go into town with the guys. Not only did they enjoy to play cards, but when the weather

was right all the men and even boys would play on a baseball team. During these years, in Big Springs alone, there were eight teams.

The worst years of farming were in the "Dirty '30's", in these years if you didn't have a milk cow and some chickens you sometimes may not have had a source of food. During these years the winds were bad and brought in the red soil from the Sand Hills. Grandpa stated, "I remember going out to my car one afternoon when the wind wasn't really blowing, I brushed by hand across the car and there must have been an inch of dirt on that old thing."

Harold, his second son, recalls most his dad's favorite stories. He recalls two stories clearly, one was about his grandfather, Gottlob's, pride and joy. He said, "Dad often stated that the best horse around was the one his dad bought from Bridgeport. That was the biggest horse around." Another one was, his favorite, the story of Day Town, Nebraska. Day was located nine miles north of Big Springs in 1890. It consisted of a store, post office, cream station and a picture gallery. There were only four families that lived there and one of the original houses still stands.

When Grandpa was old enough to enter one of the services he was not able to. He was too young during World War I and during World War II he was claimed exempt because he had a family. So during this time he worked but supported any community families of troops.

When his children started school he wanted to take part as much as possible in their activities. Along with keeping up on the farm work, he joined the Big Springs School Board. For the first few years there were three members but shortly decided on more, Grandpa did not agree with that decision. He felt that it was easier to hold meetings with just three rather than six or seven. Grandpa served on the school board for twelve years, and was President for about three of those years.

During these twelve years he did one thing that he will never forget. There was a teacher on the Big Springs staff that in his opinion was a very good teacher, but the rest of the school board did not feel the same way. The hardest thing he ever had to do was to tell this teacher that they had to let him go. He felt like that was the biggest mistake ever made during those years he was on the school board.

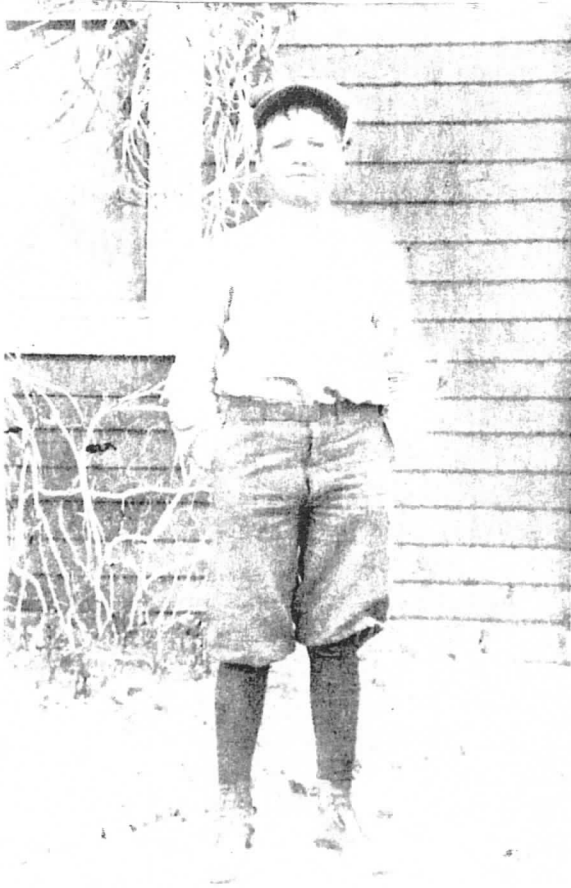
After all the children were through school he quit the school board and worked only on the farm. Grandpa Ben and Grandma Blanche moved to town, but Grandpa kept working on the farm.

In 1948 the kids started getting married, the last was Harold in 1950. Grandpa's first grandchild was born late in 1948 and, next to when his first child was born that was one of the happiest moments in his life. Over the years he and Blanche had thirteen grandchildren and twenty-six great-grandchildren. Grandma Blanch died of cancer shortly after seeing her first great-grandchild, Jason Polk. Of the great grandchildren the ages range from twenty-one to the age of two.

Over the years Grandpa has taken great part in all of his grandchildren and great-grandchildrens' activities. His health is very good and he often enjoys walking to where ever it is he is wanting to go. Even though he enjoys walking most of the time he still drives. He curently owns a 1985 red Buick Park Avenue. The thing I can't get over most is how he never forgets a birthday and is never late in sending a card and money.

Throughout all his experiences during his life the biggest lesson he learned was to be conservative. During all the hardships he felt he along with just about everyone else learned how to make the best out of everything.

Left: A photograph taken in Day, Nebraska. This is a picture of Grandpa on a Sunday afternoon just after church.



Below: A photograph of Grandpa's Dad's pride and joy. This horse was a one ton horse that he purchased from a man in Bridgeport. This horse rode in a box car by itself all the way from Bridgeport.



Gottlob in his blacksmith's apron.

Gottlob Mauser in his blacksmith's apron with the tools of his trade.



Bibliography

Benjamin Mauser, Personal interview

Benjamin Mauser
April 6, 1905 – April 5, 1993

Monica Lynn Jimenez
October 2, 1974 – June 13, 1992

This is a report Monica did as a senior. There are a few errors, but it is an account of some of Grandpa's memories. We had trouble finding some of the pictures Monica had borrowed from Grandpa for the report, then returned to him. The last picture, taken at Carole Anne's wedding in November 1961, I added.

Back row: Carole, Harold, Murl and Mildred. Front row: Blanche and Ben.

Mary