

## BENJAMIN GOTTLOB MAUSER

Ben was born on April 6, 1905 in Big Springs, Deuel County, Nebraska according to his delayed birth certificate, death certificate, Social Security death index, and World War II Draft card. Notes from the family mention that he was born in Day Town, however Day Town is no longer incorporated and I'm not sure at what point it was unincorporated. Ben was the 9<sup>th</sup> of 11 children born in Day / Big Springs to Gottlob Christian Mauser and Anna C Moeller. Four of the 11 children did not live past infancy.

In the 1910 census the family is recorded in District 0111 in Big Springs, Deuel NE and are listed as farmers. In the 1920 census Ben is still recorded living with his parents and siblings in District 0119, Big Springs, Deuel, NE and has attended school during the past year. His father Gottlob now lists his occupation as blacksmith instead of farmer as it was listed in the prior census.

Ben did not graduate from High School, as most people did not finish much more than an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education before going to work either on the farm, or other trade.

On May 1, 1926 Ben was married to Blanche Opal Pocock in Sidney, Cheyenne County, Nebraska according to their marriage license. A paper written by Monica Jiminez, a great granddaughter of Ben and Blanche, after an interview with Ben for a High School paper on her oldest living relative, states that the only people present at their wedding were the two of them, the minister, one of Ben's brothers and two of Blanche's sisters.

After getting married the couple lived on a small farm North of Big Springs and as stated by Monica in her paper, they had enough to make a living, but were not wealthy. After their marriage the country entered into the "dirty thirties" or the Great Depression. Ben stated that if you didn't have a milk cow or some chickens that you may not have a source of food.

In the interview with Monica Ben also stated that his first car was bought in 1923. It was a second hand Ford Model-T. He paid \$250 for it and thought that was outrageous. In 1925 he



*Ben as a child*



bought a new car for \$570. Kent Mauser shared that after that Ben always bought new cars as he found that it was easier to trade the car in before it needed an overhaul than to hassle with spending the money and time to do the overhaul.

In 1930, Ben and his family are listed in the census in District 0002, Big Springs, Deuel County. Ben is listed as a farmer and renting his house. They also report not owning a radio set. In the 1940 census Ben and his family are listed in District 25-2, Big Springs, Deuel County. They are farming, are living in the same house as in 1935 and Ben reports working 60 hours a week. They report renting their home, and Ben records having attended school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade while Blanche reports having attended through four years of High School.

While the family may have worked hard, they also had some time for fun. Monica's interview shares that they would go into town to play cards some days after the work was done and that baseball was also a popular pastime. Big Springs alone had 8 baseball teams.



*Ben (Center) on the School Board*

Ben was a part of the Big Springs School board for 12 years and was president for three of them. For the first few years there were only three people on the school board, but it was expanded to six or seven, and Ben was sure it was easier to have meetings with just a few people rather than so many. After his children were out of school he no longer served on the school board. The Deuel County Herald reported a story on Oct 31, 1946 where the students walked out of school in protest

of a grading system. In a conversation with Harold Mauser, Ben and Blanche's son, in the fall of 2020 after finding this story in the newspaper Harold said that absolutely he had participated in the walkout. Ben was on the committee to investigate and "iron out the trouble".

The Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren of Ben remember how kind he was, how active he was in all activities and how he always sent a birthday card and money. Big Springs was such a small town, that Grandpa Ben would address birthday cards to me as Nicole, C/O Kent and it would arrive every time. Ben gave the grandkids and great-grandkids a \$100 savings bond each Christmas. He was also always present at as many school activities, grandparents days, or other events as he could attend.



*Ben and Blanche Wedding Photo*



*Ben and Blanche Unknown Date*

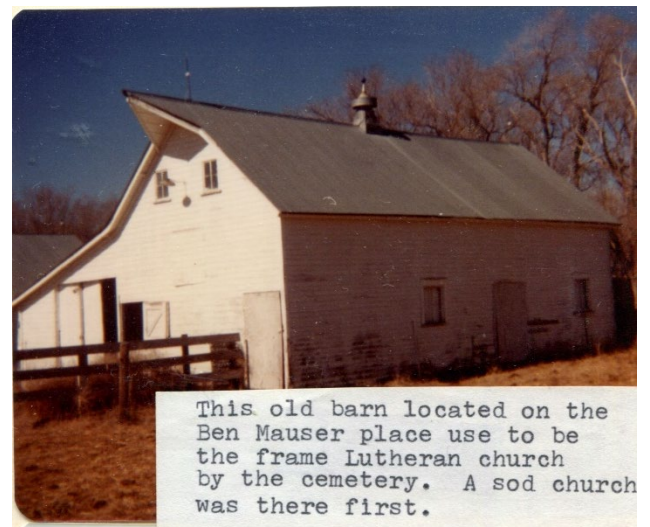
There is also a story that Ben, Blanche and the family were good athletes. Murl Mauser, Ben's son, told the story as part of a video project for Murl's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday that one summer there was a OddFellows Picnic in Ovid that included foot races. Ben won the men's race and a new hat, Blanche won the women's race and a gift certificate for a new dress, Murl won the children's race and a baseball glove at 11 years old. There was a protest after the results as some people didn't think it was quite fair. I can't find a reference in newspapers, but the relevant papers aren't currently online and searchable.

Ben moved to town in 1952 after all of the children were through school and later moved into the Mauser family home by the water tower.

Ben was an active member of the Methodist Church. The booklet put together for the Q125 celebration of the Methodist Church in Big Springs, shows Ben Mauser as a received member in 1916 and Blanche in 1923. Ben does not have a baptismal record, or funeral record in this book.

The barn that was on Ben Mauser's property was at one point the German Lutheran Church. In 2020 that building is still on the Kent Mauser property and continues to be used as a barn.

Ben died on May, 5 1993 according to his death certificate and is buried in the Big Springs, Nebraska Cemetery.







Ben and Blanche had four children

- **Murl Irvin Mauser (1927 - 2017 )**
- **Mildred Mae Mauser (1928 - )**
- **Harold Glen Mauser (1931 - )**
- **Carole Anne Mauser (1940 - )**

*Front Row Carole Anne, Middle Harold and Murl, Back Row Mildred*



*Carole Anne' Wedding 1961 - Blanche and Ben, Back row Carole, Harold, Murl, Mildred*

## BLANCHE OPAL POCOCK



*Blanche Pocock as a child - unknown date*

Blanche Opal Pocock was born on September 7, 1906 in Nance County, Nebraska according to her death certificate as birth certificates weren't yet required in the state of Nebraska. She was the 5<sup>th</sup> of 9 children born to Glenn Elias Pocock and Ada Blanche Albright.

In the 1910 census, Blanche is listed with her parents and family in District 0162, Prairie Creek, Nance, Nebraska. Glen is listed as a farmer who owns his own farm. In the 1920 census Blanche is listed with her parents and family in District 0258, North Loup, Valley, Nebraska where Glen is listed as a farmer and owning his own farm. The children are in school.

The family must have moved to Big Springs between 1920 and 1926 as Ben and Blanche were married in 1926 and Blanche graduated in the class of 1925 from Big Springs High School. That fall she taught in a country school north of town and when

Ben and Blanche were married she listed her occupation as a teacher on their marriage license.

Documents found in the possession of Kent and Danielle Mauser that must have been written by family, but there is no identification of who wrote the details, state the following about Blanche. As a youngster she enjoyed riding bareback on her family's horses. She loved to cook, growing up as her mother's helper in the kitchen. Blanche did handiwork, enjoyed playing scrabble and card games. Blanche helped organize the Home Circle Club and was a charter member of the Pioneer Rebekah Lodge #407. Ben and Blanche loved to travel and took a number of trips to the west coast and later to Texas to visit family.

While living on the farm, most Saturday nights were spent coming into town to the Farmers co-op to sell eggs and cream, and buying the week's groceries.

Blanche died on May 15, 1970 and is buried in the Big Springs, Nebraska cemetery.