

Mr and Mrs Henry F Kallsen

Henry F. Kallsen was born in Schleswig Holstein, Germany in 1855. He came to the United States by ship and settled near Atlantic, Iowa in 1884, here he farmed for a year or two before coming to Deuel county Nebr., and filing on a homestead, seven and a half miles northwest of Big Springs in 1885. He returned to Atlantic, Iowa for the winter and in the spring returned with a team of horses, wagon and a plow. His companion Bill Dube (some times pronounced Dewey) had filed on the quarter just west of Mr Kallsen's. These two men had their possessions shipped out from Iowa by U.P. railroad to Big Springs. they began at once to build a sod house on the quarter section line. each having their bed room on their own land and sharing the kitchen. Thus they broke the prairie and planted their crops. During these years Anna Mageline Roh (pronounced Ray) sail from the same part of Germany to United States and worked at Davenport, Iowa. Lena as she was lovingly known by her many friends became the wife of Henry Kallsen and came to live the sod house on this homestead. Mr and Mrs Kallsen were short stout, happy, friendly, christian people, who had a heart full of love for all mankind.

Their elder daughter Laura was born in the sod house in 1891. Before their eldest son Walter was born in 1893, Mr Kallsen had built a frame house about the middle on the east line of their farm and dug a well to supply water. Here daughter Alma was born in Oct. 31, 1895 and Sons Carl in 1898 and Herman in 1901. As the family grew more roomes were built to the house, a porch with colonial trim and lattice banister. About a mile and half north of the Kallsen home was the church of their Faith, a German Luthern. Mr Kallsen was a charter member, and helped build this church. It was a white frame building with a row of windows on the east and west, An entrance door to the South adorned with a tall steeple, and topped with a cross pointing to the heavens. The church yard contained a burial ground to the west, this being all fenced in, against the cattle of the free range. A row of hitching posts in front of the church is where the teams of horses, and saddle ponys were tied during the services.

Laura remembers of the family being on their way to church they were met with a swarm of grasshoppers, the father turned the team around and for home, quickly piling up manure with a lot of straw and setting it a fire to either burn the hoppers wings or smoke drive them away from their crops.

Laura also remembers attending school in a sod school house on the south east corner of section five, school was also held in the Kallsen home, for their own children and neighborhood children a few months out of the year. Laura decided she wanted to become a teacher, so when the short term ended in the country she come to Big Springs school for the rest of their term, boarding with Mamie Zimmerman. Later a white frame school house was built near the the church, which provided education for the children of that community for many years. Some children walked 2 or 3 miles carrying their dinner in a syrup pail, others rode a horse and if possible some drove a team hitch to a spring wagon, even bobsleighs were used to get to school when the ground insisted to stay covered with snow. In later years the school district provided a barn on the school yard for the horses. School houses were heated with a potbellied stove in the center of the room. Fire was kindled each morning by teacher, some times the school house was starting to get warm by the the pupils arrived, and some times the wore their coats untill noon before the room was warm enough, many a child would stand to close to the heater and scorch their clothing. Coal was used for fuel, and corn cobs or wood for kindling.

Terms of school were from 5 to 7 month, Older children Came after the crops were gathered, sometime they only attended only 3 month of the term.



When Laura was a young lady and teaching school, she and a neighbor friend Mame Zimmerman attended a teachers' institute at Bridge Port, Nebr. Upon their return home they saw that the whole north table was black. A man named Ruby, lived where *Ruby Kuehn (1 1/2 miles west of Delmont Splitter house)* Delmont Splitter lives now, had set a remaining straw stack on fire, a strong March came up and fanned the sparks to the dry prairie, burning every thing in it's path untill it reached the north river befor it stopped. This fire destroyed Kallsens' barn and all smaller buildings, their house was saved with the help of neighbors bringing water and helping keep the building wet. Alto many neighbors had taken their own house hold belongings to their caves or cellars, incase the wind should change, and take over their farm dewellings.

This was about the time Rev. Potritz (Luthern Minister) came to Deuel Co. He said I have seen a White Easter and a Green Easter, but never a black Easter untill I look at this.

Mr. Kallsen had bought insurance on his building but the agent had'nt turned it into the company yet. So no insurance could be collected.

Mrs Kallen Served the community as a midwife, many babies were born and cared for under her supervision the first week of their lives.

Mr And Mrs Kallen Loved people, On Sundays After church he was always inviting people to stop and have dinner with them. Sometimes that got to quite a crowd. But there always seemed to be room for one more person.

Laura was married in Dec 1910 to *John* William Mohr at the little Luthern country church, Every one in the congeration was there to the wedding. Mr And Mrs Mohr were taken to the train that evening in a spring wagon on their way to their new home at Avoca Iowa.

Walter Married Meta Dehning: Alma married Eddie Dehning and Carl never married, Herman married Ruth *Simpson* and they now own the land home steaded by his father and built a nice modern country home.

Compiled from Interviews with Laura

By Katherine Southard.

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