

## Our Story Continues . . . The Klitz Family in Nebraska

### CHAPTER 10

#### **JOHN CASPER KLITZ and MARY ANN SCHRAGE**

*1881-1958; 1881-1965*

*To give credit where credit is due, this chapter has a different format than the previous chapters. The information for this chapter comes from many sources including:*

*The Klitz Family Cookbook, published in 1995 by Joseph Klitz's children;*

*Responses of a request sent out in 2010 to all Klitz cousins to help fill in the Klitz timeline;*

*Interview with Aunt Sally Fangman Klitz on 31 January 2010;*

*The Book "Dodge, Nebraska 1886-1986 A Century of Integrity";*

*The Book "125 Years of God's Faithful Love" Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church Olean, Nebraska 1874-1999.*

John Casper Klitz was born on 15 December 1881 in Colfax County, Nebraska. His father, Johann Engelbert Klitz, died in 1900 when John Casper was 18 years old. With his mother, Angela Kluthe Klitz, and younger brother, Henry (15), they continued the farming operation. At the time of Johann Engelbert's death, the farm consisted of 120 acres with the value of the land at \$2,880.00 and the value of the farm equipment and household goods at \$275.00.

On 10 October 1903, Angela purchased 160 acres, minus 1 acre for an existing cemetery, the Norwegian Lutheran Cemetery, from Carl and Caroline Retke for two mortgages of \$9,699.00 and \$4,100.00 (a total of \$13,799.00). On 28 March 1908, Angela deeded to her son, Henry, 160 acres, minus the 1-acre cemetery plot, for \$16,000.00. This is the present Mrs. David Klitz farm. On 20 March 1908, Angela and Henry deeded to John, 80 acres for \$8,000.00. This is the present Robert and Deb Klitz farm.

John Casper Klitz and Mary Schrage were married on 10 May 1905. They lived on the farm that was homesteaded by his father, Johann, in 1871. We think the house was expanded when John and Mary married to accommodate John's mother who

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lived with them until her death in 1920. The census of 1910 states John Casper had a hired helper (Joseph Klement). Joseph was born in Nebraska, but both his parents were born in Missouri. He could read and write, and he attended school at some time after 1 September 1909.

Mary Schrage Klitz was born on 23 December 1881, in Rebbeke, Westphalia, Germany. We visited the village of Rebbeke and all that remains is a very old church, the doors of which were locked. It appeared that the church was not in use anymore. Not far from the church was a large barn still in use and two houses, neither of them lived in anymore. It reminded me of the small rural parishes that we find here in Nebraska like Olean, Saint Charles, and Aloys.

Frank Schrage, along with his wife, Katherine Eikmeier, and their children (Frank, Mary, and Anna) immigrated to America on 5 June 1885 aboard the ship S.S. Elbe. They settled in Howard County, Nebraska, near the village of Saint Libory. Frank and his family travelled on the same ship as Frank's sister, Gertud Boehle, and her family (husband – Franz, children – Fransiska, Frank, and Benjamin). Gertrud and Franz Boehle are buried in the St. Libory Catholic Cemetery. Stephan Schrage was the brother to Frank and Gertrud, and he was the first of the Schrage family to leave Germany for the United States. He emigrated in 1882, spent two years in St. Louis, Missouri and Wichita, Kansas, before moving to St. Libory, Nebraska in 1884. He moved around northeast Nebraska, living at times near Oakland and Raiville. He died in 1929 and is buried in Raeville, Nebraska.

The Schrages moved to Colfax County, Nebraska, in 1900. The men moved the livestock and farm equipment by wagon while the ladies and children rode the train. Mary Schrage would have been 18 or 19 years old at this time. The Schrage family settled on a farm south of Olean and the father, Frank, helped build the new church at Olean and was the first person to be buried from the new church.

### **STORIES FROM GRANDMA AND GRANDPA**

Grandma Mary told Mary Kay Hensley that she went to the World Fair in Saint Louis in 1904. We have heard different stories concerning where Mary worked after they moved to Olean. One story is that she worked for a doctor in Dodge. Maybe the doctor's family took her along to Saint Louis. In those days, if there was need for a patient to stay overnight, the patient would stay in the beds provided for them on the second floor of the doctor's home. Taking care of the

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overnight patients could have been one of Mary's tasks. There is also the story that Grandma Mary worked in a café in Dodge, while still other say she worked in the hotel in Dodge. Grandma Mary could have met her husband, Grandpa John Casper, in Dodge or through the church in Olean.

Grandma Mary, as long as all can remember, had white hair worn in a bun on the back of her head. The Spanish Flu in 1918 did cause some people's hair to turn white. On Mary's wedding photo of 1905, her hair seems to look a dark color.

Grandma Mary was a saint. Everything I have heard or seen written would back up our belief that she was a saint. Gentle, kind, never said a bad or harsh word about anyone, unconditional love, knew the sorrow of losing her only daughter in a farm accident, hard-working, wonderful baker, super mother and grandmother, raised 5 sons to be pillars of our Klitz family, sorrow of losing her husband of almost 60 years.

### **Timeline of John Caspar and Mary Schrage Klitz**

1849	23 June	John Henry Engelbert Klitz born in Schöppingen, Prussia
1850	19 Feb	Angela Kluthe Grovijohn Klitz born in Haaren, Prussia
1853	26 Oct	Franz Bernard "Frank" Schrage born in Salzkotten, Prussia
1855	22 Feb	Katherine Eikmeier born in Mastholte, Prussia
1878	13 Jan	John Henry Klitz and Angela Kluthe marry at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Olean
	5 Nov	Frank Schrage and Katherine Eikmeier marry in St. Jakobus Catholic Church, Mastholte, Germany
1881	15 Dec	John Casper Klitz born in Olean
	23 Dec	Mary Ann Schrage born in Rebbeke, Germany
1885	1 Jun	The Schrage family immigrate aboard ship "S.S. Elbe" from Bremen, Germany, to New York: Franz 33 years, worker; Catharine 29 years, wife; Franz 5 years, Marie 2 years, Anna 9 mos.
1891	23 Mar	Elizabeth Pieper Klitz Miekman dies (64 years old)



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1899		Schrages move from Howard County, Nebraska to Colfax County, Nebraska
1900	13 Jan	John Engelbert Klitz dies (50 years old)
1905	10 May	John Casper Klitz and Mary Ann Schrage marry at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Olean
1906	29 Sept	Frank Joseph Klitz born
1908	12 July	Bernard Meikmann dies (75 years old)
	10 Sept	Alphonse Henry Klitz born
1910	12 Oct	Joseph Leo Klitz born
1912		St. Joseph Catholic Church, Dodge, Nebraska built. John Casper and Henry Klitz donate the bell for the new church.
1913	22 Feb	Leonard Steve Klitz born
1915	23 July	Kathryn Marie Klitz born
1917	21 Dec	Rudolph Frank Klitz born
1920	18 Mar	Angela Kluthe Klitz dies
1924		Alphonse Klitz graduates St. Wenceslaus School, Dodge
1926	15 Apr	Katherine Eikmeier Schrage dies (71 years old)
1929	5 July	Frank Schrage dies (75 years old)
		Leonard Klitz graduates from St. Wenceslaus School, Dodge
1930		Kathryn Klitz graduates from St. Wenceslaus School, Dodge
	16 Sept	Frank Klitz and Gertrude Kaup marry in St. Boniface Catholic Church, Monterey
1932		Rudy Klitz graduates from St. Wenceslaus School, Dodge
1934	28 Nov	Alphonse Klitz marries Leona Mary Miller in St. Patrick Catholic Church, Holyoke, Colorado
1936		Barn burns down on the Klitz Homestead

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- 1941 17 Feb Kathryn Klitz marries Leonard Dirkschneider in St. Joseph Catholic Church, Dodge
- 1943 10 Oct Mary Ellen Dirkschniedner dies (8 months old)
- 1944 29 Nov Joseph Klitz marries Sally Fangman in St. Bonaventure Catholic Church, Raeville
- 1945 15 Oct JoAnn Dirkschnieder dies (5 months old)
- 1946 1 Apr Kathryn Dirkschnieder dies (30 years old)
- 1947 2 Jan Henry Bernard Klitz dies (62 years old)
- 1948 24 June Leonard Klitz marries Jeannine Stigge in St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, Dodge
- 1949 Oct John Casper moves from south of Webster to Dodge
- 1950 12 April Rudolph Klitz marries Amelia Kaup in St. Joseph Catholic Church, Dodge
- 1954 Saint Joseph and Saint Wenceslaus Catholic Churches merge
- 1955 15 May John Casper and Mary Klitz celebrate Golden Wedding
- 1956 24 Nov Leonard Dirkschnieder dies (40 years old)
- 1958 21 Dec John Casper Klitz dies (77 years old)
- 1961 23 Dec Mary Schrage (Grandma) Klitz's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday
- May/June Grandma Klitz breaks her hip.
- New home built on Klitz Homestead
- 1962 Summer Grandma Klitz holds her household goods sale
- 1965 11 Mar Mary Ann Schrage (Grandma) Klitz dies (83 years old)

### **From the Klitz Family Cookbook**

*Lisa Stotts [Charlotte-Al]*

I guess our first recipe is Grandma Klitz's kolache recipe. Whenever possible Grandma and Grandpa came for Christmas, Easter, etc. she would almost always

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bring these with her. My Mom, Charlotte, and Uncle Ken would always “fight” over them. Whoever got the most kolaches or the biggest kolache was the one that Grandma loved best.

Grandma Klitz never had a canister set. She kept her sugar in a glass water pitcher that was set on the self in the pantry. The measuring cup stayed inside.

*RoseMary Stander [Frank]*

I do remember Grandma Klitz doing her ironing. She did the white shirts in addition to everything else including bed linens. She did not have an ironing board; the kitchen table was her ironing board, well padded.

I remember a roaster full of creamed chicken-and I do mean cream, not a white sauce. It was great.

*Aunt Jeannine Klitz*

In 1948 Joe, Jerry, Dorothy and Eleanor Deppe came from California to visit. When the car arrived and the doors opened, the first words exchanged were, “Mary, are we going to have homemade bread and dry beef for lunch?” Grandma was out of bread, so she sent Grandpa to Uncle Joe’s to get a loaf from Aunt Sally.

*Bob Deppe*

Mary always made the best homemade bread. She never sliced it off the end; she always cut full slices from the side. Of course, we always had it with the best homemade butter.

*Chuck Klitz [Frank]*

Grandpa Klitz never drank his coffee from a cup. He always poured the coffee in the saucer and drank it from there.

*Mary Kay Hensley [Joe]*

When I was 7 or 8, I remember always opening the door of Grandpa Klitz’s refrigerator with caution. Inside one would maybe find a glass bowl with pig tails and pork hocks in vinegar brine or a glass jar of pig ears ready for a quick snack. Another find was a loaf of head cheese glistening under a layer of congealed gelatin. This was his version of sandwich meat usually eaten with fresh baked bread.

*Jean Crider [Joe]*

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I remember Grandma Klitz helping mother peel potatoes and slice apples when at our house. She would roll her wheelchair up to the kitchen table and put the bowl in her lap and began working. I would be sitting at the table doing homework and visiting with her. Grandma always wanted to be useful and lend a helping hand.

Fresh dill always reminds me of the way the basement in Grandpa and Grandma Klitz's house in Dodge smelled. A great memory.

I remember once that Grandma took me upstairs in her house in Dodge to show me the quilt she had stretched in the large quilting frame. That was very special to me, since we never got to go upstairs with her. She continued to quilt on a large lap frame when she would stay with us, times I always looked forward to. Mary Kay sewed a quilt top together for her and Grandma spent many hours in the green rocking chair quilting. I lovingly cherish these memories and maybe that's why I enjoy quilting today.

*Mrs. Sally Klitz [Joe]*

### Sixty-minute rolls

This was a Saturday recipe at our house after Grandpa went to heaven. Grandma Klitz was at our house lots of Saturday mornings. She put the poppy seed and sesame seeds on the horns. Each one was perfect. She must have counted each seed. After that, it was a shampoo and curl job for her helping in the kitchen.

Grandma Klitz always had a large strawberry patch on the farm. When the berries were ripe, she would pick a large white dishpan full. The berries were made into jelly and enjoyed fresh. They were always a treat for the relatives who came to visit on Sunday afternoon.

Grandma Klitz only did the grocery shopping on special occasions-in anticipation of holiday baking or if company was coming for a special meal. Most weeks it was Grandpa who took care of securing the basic supplies. Before leaving to take the cream and eggs to town to sell, he would sit down at the kitchen table and make a list of things Grandma was in need of. He would often bring home other things not on the list-fresh fruit that was available that week-grapefruit, bananas etc. If he brought bananas that usually meant he was hungry for banana cream pudding. Grandma would not make a pie, but rather slice the bananas in a large oval bowl and then put the cooked pudding over the top.

*Aunt Sally Klitz*

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### **Blood Sausage**

Cook head of hog, cut up in sizes to fit kettle. After meat is done, remove the bones. The heart and tongue can also be cooked and added to above meat. Grind all the cooked meat. Use a fine blade when grinding the meat. Measure your meat about a gallon more or less Cook rice in water. You need about the same amount of cooked rice as meat. Measure 1 to 1 ½ cups of rice and cook. The rice does not have to be really soft as it will cook more in the oven. Mix cooked meat and cooked rice in a large enameled dishpan. Then add 3 to 4 cups of blood and also some of the juice that the head was cooked in. The mixture should be about the consistency of “Sloppy Joe’s”. Add salt. If salt was added to the head and other meats while they were cooking it needs less now. Salt and pepper to taste. Also add 2 teaspoons of allspice.

Grease loaf bread pans, 6 by 10 inches and fill ¾ full of meat mixture. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 45 to 55 minutes. The juice will cook clear and then it is baked.

Cool and remove from the pans. Can be kept in refrigerator. We never froze it. Cut in ½ to ¾ inch slices and fry in a skillet for a few minutes on each side. Serve with syrup.

Where does the blood come from? In the later years from Wimmer’s Locker in Dodge. When I was home in Raeville, three to four men helped butcher hogs. One caught the blood when the hog was killed. Then he kept stirring it until cooled. This was done by holding the gallon bucket in the stock tank and then it was brought to the house and kept cool until we used it. My mother would cut 10 pound sugar bags in half the length way. Then she sewed the side seams shut and we turned it inside out so the seams were on the outside and we filled the sack ¾ full of meat and tied it shut. Then these were dropped 2 at a time in the water left over from the cooking the head in. This water had a little grease in and that sealed the outside of the sack. The sack was rolled off as we cut it to fry. I used the bread pans as I never sewed on a machine, but the flavor was the same.

### **Stir Soap**

4 quarts water in a large dish pan

8 quarts of lard [usually this was old bacon grease strained] or half lard and half tallow



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2 cans Lewis lye

Add the cold water to the dish pan. Have a long wooden stick or paddle to stir with. Open the can of lye and slowly add to water. Stir continuously. Add second can of lye the same way. The water will be very hot from the lye. Leave cool until the outside of your dishpan feels cool. Use an enameled dishpan. Soften your lard, but not completely melted. When the lye water is cool add the fat slowly. Stir until it looks honey like, about 20 minutes. Let set till hard. Then cut and let dry. This soap keeps good and gives lots of suds in the machine. The suds even lasted until the overalls.

### **Butchering**

In the winter the Klitz's usually butchered two hogs and one beef to serve their need for meat in the months ahead. A 250 to 300-pound hog was used for this. Water was heated in the wash house and then poured into a large barrel. After the hog was bled, it was hung by block and tackle in the corn crib driveway. The hog would be lowered into the hot water to scald it. The hog would then be scraped to remove the hair. It was not skinned. A similar process was used to scald the beef, but it was then laid on the ground to skin. The hogs and beef were then hung in the driveway overnight to cool. It was best if it could be kept from freezing. The hide from the cow was sold to be used for leather. The next day the hogs and beef were ready to be cut up. The Klitz's had a two foot by four-foot smoke house where they cured hams and bacon. Other cuts of pork and beef were ground and made into sausage. Roasts and steaks were cut but had to be used before warm weather. Some of the meat was cut up and fried by Grandma. This was placed into a crock and covered with lard. It would be stored in the cellar. They would often butcher another hog in the spring, but only one beef was processed each year. In the summer the Klitz's could add fresh chicken to the menu.

After Great Grandma Schrage died in April of 1928, Great Grandpa Schrage would come to John and Mary's for dinner two to three time a week. Joe Klitz said, "I can still see him come on to the place with that buggy pulled by his black horse, Kit." Grandpa Schrage had to hold Kit back all the way from Olean because the horse knew he would get oats at the farm. By the time they got to John and Mary's he would be all foamed from sweat where the harness rubbed.

**From Interview with Aunt Sally Fangman Klitz, 31 Jan. 2010**

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Joe did not graduate from Saint Wenceslaus in Dodge. He was sick for a period of time and missed having enough days by 1 or 2 days. School wanted him to take the 8<sup>th</sup> grade over again, but Grandma Mary said no.

Angela Kluthe Klitz lived with Grandpa and Grandma Klitz for most of 20 years. John's brother, Henry, also lived with them until he married. Angela died of blood poisoning. They had way too many cats, so Angela was catching the cats to put them in a gunny sack to drown them. One of the cats scratched her and she got blood poisoning from the scratch. The records from the Humlicek Funeral Home in Dodge, says she died of pneumonia.

Shortly after Joe got home from the military, Grandpa, Grandma, Joe and Sally went shopping in Fremont. Sally purchased a new dress and Grandpa said "Here, let me pay for that."

Sally took Grandma to Fremont shopping for a new dress, shoes and purse for Grandpa and Grandma Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Joe and Sally lived with Grandpa and Grandma from the time they got married till January. Joe and Sally could not find a stove to purchase because of the war rationing. A dealer in Howells heard of the problem and set aside a stove for them.

At Kathryn's funeral the casket was in the bedroom of their home. When it came time to close the casket and proceed to church, they had a hard time getting Grandpa to step back from the casket. Grandpa took Kathryn's death very hard.

Grandma broke her hip when she fell in the kitchen while watering her African Violets.

When the Schrages moved from Howard County to Olean, part of the family came by train, the other part by horse and wagons, driving their livestock along the way. We assume that the women and children rode the train.

Grandma could not write but Grandpa could. Grandpa would set at the kitchen table and make the list as Grandma told him what she needed. After Grandpa died Grandma had to write the checks and her handwriting was difficult to read.

When Grandma went to stay with Al, someone would take her to meet Al in North Platte. Grandma had asthma so she spent a lot of time with Al's in the summertime.



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Grandpa and Grandma's house in Dodge was moved from a farm place 2 miles south of Webster. Grandpa paid \$500.00 for the house. Tonjes House Movers from Scribner moved the house and Sally thought that the cost of the house, moving it and the foundation work was somewhat less than \$1,000.00.

There was not a phone in the house in Dodge. Grandma had a large card that she would put in the bathroom window and then Mrs. Parr, her next-door neighbor, would come over to see what Grandma needed.

Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Dodge was built in 1912, and Grandpa and his brother, Henry, helped build the church. John and Henry Klitz gave the money for the bell that hung in the tower.

Grandpa belonged to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Olean from birth (1881) to 1912, when Saint Joseph's Catholic Church was founded. From 1912 to 1954, he belonged to Saint Joseph's. Saint Joseph's and Saint Wenceslaus' churches merged 1 March 1954. Grandpa belonged to Saint Wenceslaus from 1954 till his death in 1958.

Joe and Sally started going to Olean when their children started school. Their neighbor's kids went to Olean and the families took turns driving the kids to school.

Grandma visits to her sons after Grandpa died lasted about 6 weeks.

It would seem that the Klitz boys, Joe, Leonard and Rudy took their parish priest lots of places whenever they need a ride.

Mary Kay remembers that Grandma told her that she went to the World's Fair in 1904. Aunt Sally and I believe Grandma was working for Dr. Gottingor at that time. She probably went along with Dr. Gorringer family to Saint Louis and took care of the Doctor's children while there. I read in the Dodge book that while the Trans-Mississippi Exposition of 1898 was going on in Omaha, the railroads rates were reduced to one cent a mile for all points within 150 miles of Omaha.

Grandma loved to listen to the radio station from Grand Island, KMAG; I believe the call letters were. She listened to "As The World Turns" and she watched wrestling on the old black and white TV. When TV first appeared on the scene about all that was on the TV was wrestling.

Aunt Sally says Grandma was a very, very kind person. She never demanded anything. She was sweet.

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Aunt Sally does not remember Grandpa or Grandma ever speaking German.

The blacksmith shop of Grandpa's was used to do work for the farm and a few neighbors, but not as a business.

The few months that Joe and Sally lived with Grandpa and Grandma –Grandpa would spend his afternoons in the blacksmith shop cracking black walnuts. He had husked them earlier so they would dry out. He put the nut in the jaws of the vise and screw the vise until the nut cracked. My dad did not teach me that trick...we had to use the hammer to crack them.

None of John and Mary's children had a high school education, but all had a Catholic elementary education.

Kathryn, before she was married, did a lot of very fancy needle work. After she married, she loved to be outside with Leonard helping him with chores like milking the cows.

The old farm house.....we do not know when it was built, but in 1905 when Grandpa and Grandma married, they added on to the house, probably because Angela, John's mother, was living with them.

Kathryn and Sally went to Fort Dix to see Joe who was in the hospital because of too many salt pills. His unit was sent overseas while Joe was in the hospital, so Joe never went overseas. They got to see Joe the first night, but during the night the hospital was quarantined for 14 days.

Kathryn and Sally, because of a kind nurse, got to see Joe the next morning in a separate office. Kathryn did not want to spend the 14 days there waiting to see Joe as she had just lost her baby a few months before.

The new barn that was built in 1936 was built by Pitzmeier's of Howells.

### **ALL OF THOSE OTHER TIBITS OF INFORMATION FLYING AROUND**

Grandma Klitz loved going to the Drive-in-Theatre with Bob Greene and especially liked Western Movies and buttered popcorn. Bob had several special dates doing that. It is a special memory of Grandma for Bob.

Mary Kay Hensley remembers washing and styled Grandma's hair many times, it was white. Not salt and pepper. No color whatsoever. The movie a few years ago

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about the Spanish Flu [1918] highlighted white hair and bluish skin. She would have been married and with a house full of kids, however this flu was known to strike people in her age range rather than the very young or old.

Grandpa church membership...First Olean, then Saint Joseph in Dodge, and then Saint Wenceslaus in Dodge. Mary Kay remembers how very angry Grandpa was when the bishop announced the consolidation of the churches in Dodge. He was in our kitchen on the farm. Saint Wenceslaus was always referred to as the Bohemian church. Grandpa referred to them as the 'damn Bo-Hunks' I did not realize until I was older that the Bohemian church was also Catholic. He said he was never going to church again but that changed over the years. I guess this just sticks in my memory because I had never seen him so angry and using so much strong language. But remember, the farmers [German] needed the Bohemians/Czechs [storekeepers] and vice versa. And when the duck supper came around everyone ate at the same table.

Grandpa Klitz was very protective of Kathryn as she was growing up.

Grandpa Klitz and his brother, Henry, did not visit very often although they did work together and did own some farm machines together.

Grandpa Klitz did not talk very much about his father nor his grandfather.

Grandpa Klitz made a milk stool out of iron using his forge in his blacksmith shop to heat the iron and shape the stool as he wanted.

Frank Klitz remember that Grandpa and Grandma and kids would go to Saint Charles staying overnight at Grandma's sister, Elizabeth Maly.

The morning that the barn burned down at Grandpa Klitz's farm is remembered by Francis and Rosie. It was early in the morning and both remember being there. They remember the horses trying to get out of the barn but do not know if any horses perished. After the fire, every time that Grandpa left the farm, he would pull the electrical switch in the barn.

One could always find Grandpa in his blacksmith shop. I was amazed how if you turned the handle on the forge, the coals would turn red and glow.

Per Chuck, Sunday afternoon lunch at Grandma's would be homemade bread-with large holes in it, homemade dried beef, and homemade dill pickles-cut very thick and homemade butter. Most Sunday mornings, after church, we would stop at Grandpa and Grandma Klitz's for lunch. As we pulled up to the house Grandpa

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would come running out to greet all of us. My mom said he would grab us kids and take us in the house before Dad and Mom had a chance to get out of the car.

Whenever Grandpa would come to visit us, he would give each of us kids a nickel. There were a lot of us so did he have to stop at the bank before coming to visit to have enough nickels?

Grandpa Klitz was always in charge of the thrashing machine and the large tractor that ran it. I never did see him pitch any bundles into the machine. Francis remembers that he and Rudy were working on the same wagon picking up bundles. When noon came and all went to the house to eat dinner, Rudy would let the horses run as fast as they wanted. Rudy told Francis not to look at Grandpa who was shaking his fist at Rudy for letting the horses run so fast. If you did not look, Grandpa could not get angry because Rudy could claim he never saw Grandpa's signs.

Grandpa would take all of the fat that other people would not eat and eat it. Remember, the animal was home butcher so there was no trimming of the fat from the meat.

Grandpa hooked an electric drill to the butter churn and Chuck would set on the south porch watching the cream become butter. My job was to let Grandma know when I thought the butter was finished.

Grandpa made a green grain wagon, made out of 2-inch flooring, for Dad [Frank]. All the boards were riveted not bolted and my job was to set inside the wagon and hold a heavy hammer on the rivet that Grandpa was working on so Grandpa could rivet the boards.

Red Man Cigar Clippings was the favorite chew of Grandpa. One Sunday afternoon we stole some of Grandpa's chew and took it behind the barn. I needed to know what it tasted like.....Very Bad....Rudy caught me and after that I was called Smokey.

Grandpa and his brother, Henry, purchased a thrashing machine together and then built a new shed on Henry's farm to store the machine.

Grandpa always wore a hat. In the summer it was a straw and the rest of the year it was felt. Hats all had a very large rim.



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### **THRESHING...from the Klitz cookbook**

July and August were threshing time and it was a very busy time of the year. Many neighbors waited for a threshing crew to come to their place, but Henry Klitz and John Klitz owned their own threshing machine. An Avery tractor was used to run the threshing machine. The tractor was powered by kerosene. Joe Klitz recalled the day the new threshing machine and tractor arrived in Dodge by rail direct from the factory. He said the machine was stored at Henry Klitz's in a new shed built just for the new equipment.

A binder pulled by two teams of horses was used to cut and tie bundles of oats. These bundles were about the size of a trash can. The boys would walk behind and set up five or six of these bundles into a shock to dry. When the bundles were dry enough to thresh, the neighbors came to help. The bundles were loaded on hay racks, stacked high. The team and hay rack pulled alongside the threshing machine one group on each side and men pitched one bundle at a time into the machine. Some neighbors or helpers hauled the grain to the farm. The oats was stored in the bin until needed for the animals and the straw was piled into huge stacks using a pitch fork to move it to the right spot.

When the threshing work was done at your farm, it was time to move on to help your neighbors.

When the men were threshing, the ladies of the house were busy too. Lunch was served in the field at 10:00AM and 3:00PM. The men got gallons of coffee, meat sandwiches, cookies and cake. As soon as the lunch was on its way, dinner was next. Fried chicken or roast beef, lots of potatoes and gravy, vegetables and salads. Jello wasn't a salad in those days - no refrigerator, so it was coleslaw or macaroni. Dessert was usually pie, as cake was on the lunch menu. Coffee and lemonade were served at noon. Usually a crock was in the dining room for the lemonade and we'd try to have ice in it. In the fields, it was just water.

Bread of some kind was baked each day. Sometimes it was 10 o'clock in the evening when the buns for lunch the next day went in the oven.

As the threshing crew moved from farm to farm, some of the ladies went to help the neighbor lady, if her children were small. Threshing took several weeks in July and if the rain came it could last into August.

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Many times, when threshing was over, all the threshing crew and their families would gather at one farm and everyone enjoyed homemade ice cream and cake and a little beer too!

### **SNOW PLOWING...from the Klitz cookbook**

The day after a blizzard wasn't a day to wait for the county to send out the snowplow to open the roads. It was a day to work with the neighbors to dig yourself out. The Piepers and Klitzes worked together to clear the road to the north from the Klitz farm to the corner. They had built a snowplow from two large bridge planks formed into a "v" shape. This plow was pulled by a team of six to eight horses to break through the drifts. The boys' job was to ride on the plow to give it more weight and power. Of course, each man was equipped with a shovel. Joe Klitz recalled that the drifts by the Kemp place were so high that they climbed to the top of the bank and started scooping it down. Others were on the ground to clear away the shoveled snow. The snowplow had a floor in it and boards were placed across the top of the planks to form a seat. When it was really cold, Grandpa would take the dog along to keep his feet warm.

