

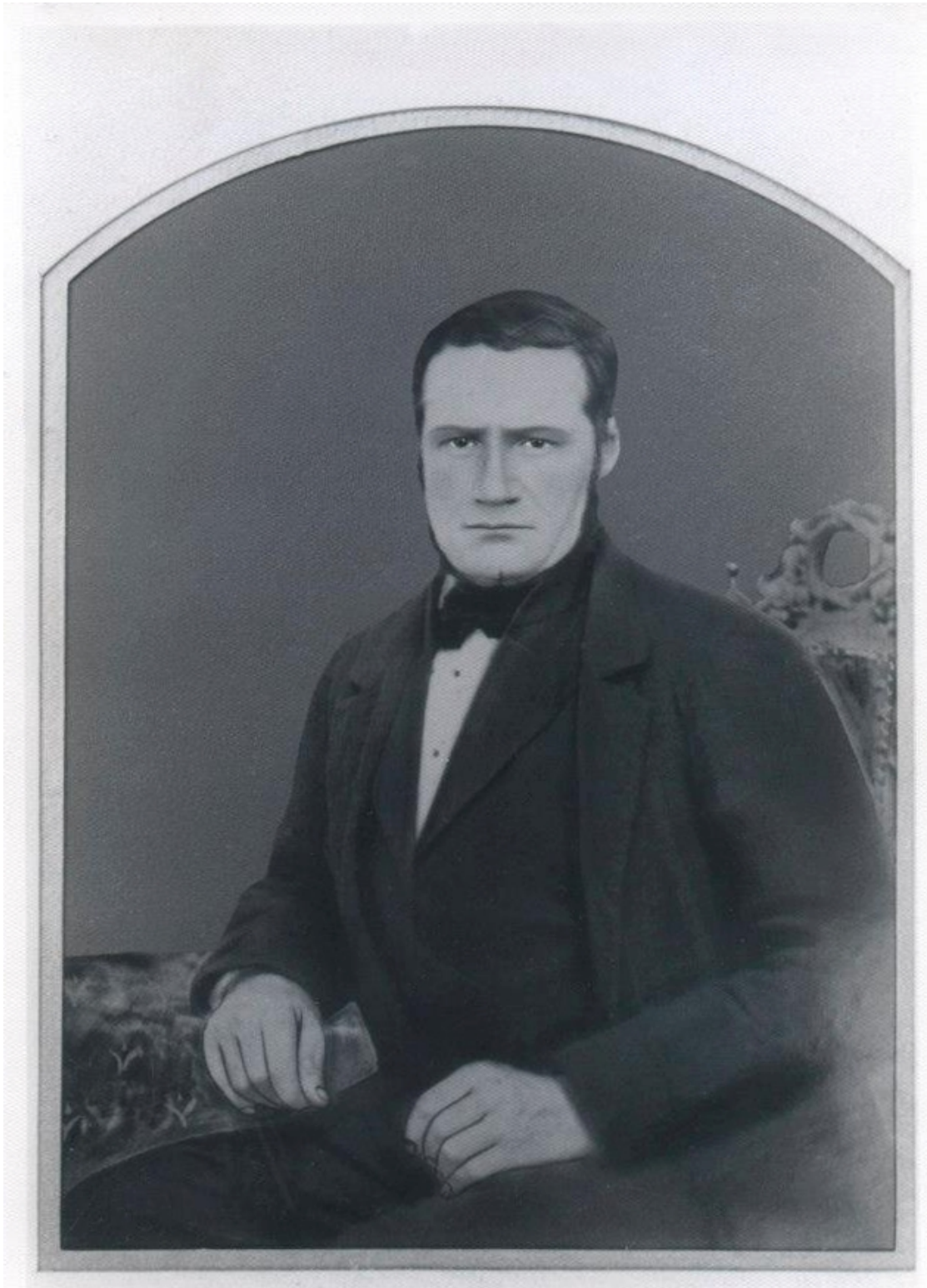
GERIG & CONRAD

MEMORIES

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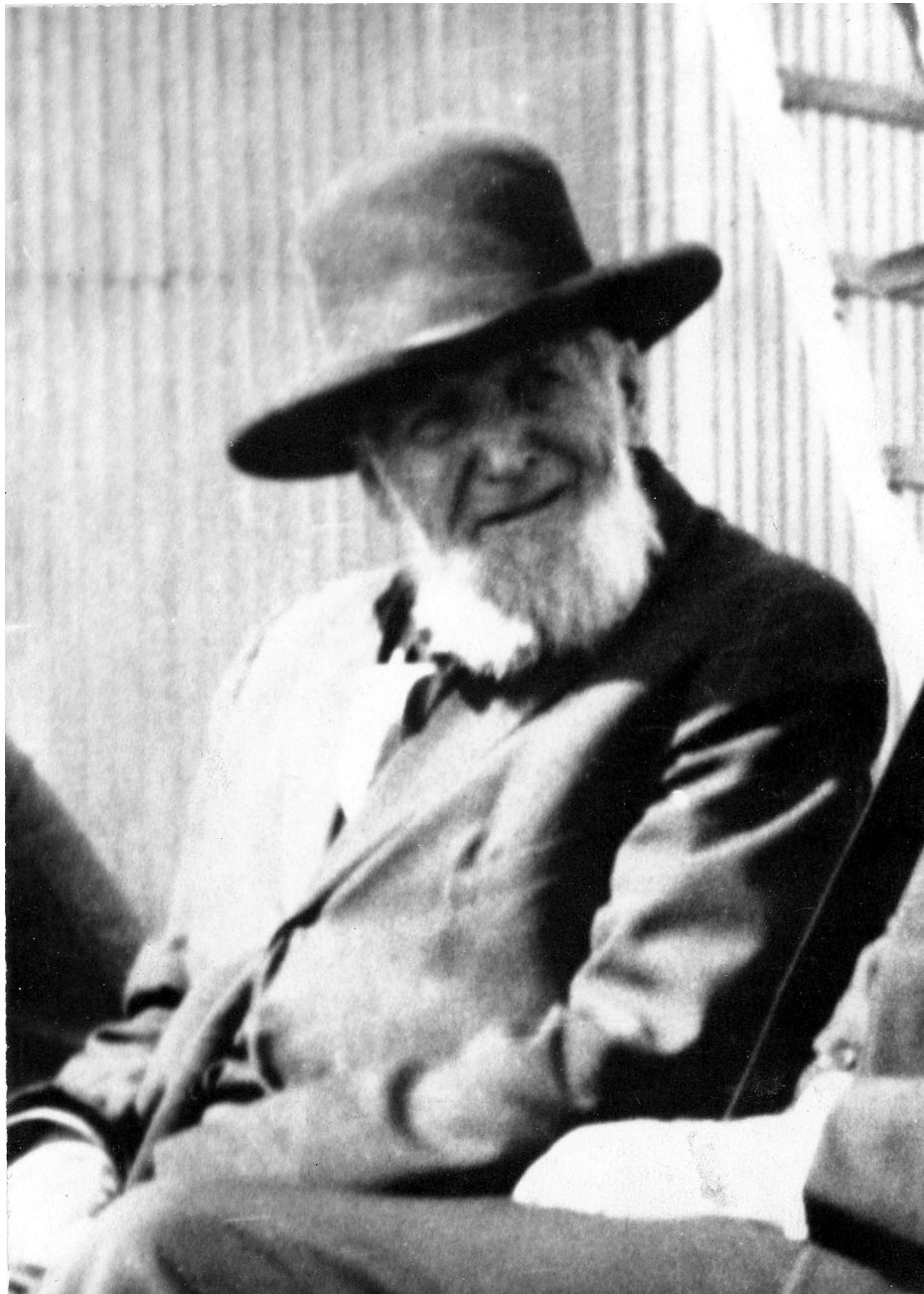
ROOTS

Compiled by Marjorie Gerig Nofziger
July, 1999



Christian Z. Gerig

Born Nov. 15, 1819 ---- Died Feb 23, 1874
married March 6, 1848 to Barbe Reck
at Pfastatt Commune, Alsace Lorraine, France
This is a copy of a tintype



Christian Reck Gerig

Born Aug. 4, 1855 ---- Died Apr. 9, 1942
Married Feb. 7, 1878 to Mary Boshart Conrad
in Henry County, Iowa



Mary Boshart Conrad

Born Sept. 4, 1857 ---- Died March 5, 1914

Introduction

I have desired to know of our lineage and have spent time talking with some of my cousins and attempting to put down their memories to preserve them for our children and grandchildren, so we can tell them of their Godly heritage. Tell them their ancestors came here to America for conscience's sake and to avoid serving in the military. Christian Z. Gerig,¹ sent his Meyer nephew a \$10.00 gold piece in some sealing wax on a letter, so that he could also avoid the military. C.R. Gerig was a firm and strong believer that Jesus Christ taught peace and that Christians are to avoid war.

Time passes and we call into memory things of the past. Some people remember one thing and others remember other things of the same incident. As we remember our loved ones, images that comes to our mind often help us on our own journey. A story I read was about two cousins who made connections after 18 years. As they exchanged memories from childhood they said it helped them understand the dynamics and problems in their family of origin.

It has been said that when we don't learn from the past, we tend to repeat the same mistakes. God often told his people to teach what he has done for his people to their children and to their grandchildren. We know that God led our ancestors to this land and that they followed God to the best of their ability. If we are as faithful following God as they were, I think we will have done well.

We also know that God has no grandchildren and that he calls each and every one of us to follow Him. We also know that when a child receives godly training that the child is more apt to follow God although we each can say no, because God has also given free will and doesn't force any one of us to follow Him.

I want to thank those who that have been gracious with your interviews or responded in writing, some of you, even quite a number of years ago.

There will be mistakes you will find and I beg forgiveness and invite your corrections or additions. I have not had the time I'd intended to work at this and I find the deadline looming amazingly fast. *Whenever you see something in italics with M. N., that is my addition.*

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July -1999

Some Ancestor History

¹ I have inserted Z. to keep from confusing the Christian Gerig's and also because his mother was Elizabeth Zimmerman.

The history that I will include here is very limited, and I found it hard to choose what to also include since I interviewed Ben Gerig on six occasions in the 1980s using a tape recorder. He was comfortable talking into it, and I have those all transcribed. Then I have Ben's interview with Norman Gerig, that has been transcribed from tape. I can't begin to include all of the material.

We know that we have been very blessed to have had godly ancestors from parents as far back on the Gerig line to Christian Gerig about 1760 who married Elizabeth Goldschmidt. Elizabeth's grandfather Heinrich Goldschmidt was born January 15, 1691 in Switzerland and was baptized as an infant, probably either a Catholic or a Lutheran, but died as an Anabaptist in 1755 in France. ²

On the Conrad side we can go back in records to Hans Kunradt 1725 who married Margaret Rich and was the first marriage registered in the Mennonite Church register at Montbeliard, France by Jacob Roth. ³

The ancestors, Gerig's, Conrad's, and Goldschmidt's, all were Anabaptists. Some of the family records I have date back to the 1800s and they are from Alsace, France. All three families originated in Switzerland. We presume they left there because of persecution for their religious beliefs. There are some who think the Gerig's left Switzerland in 1660.⁴

I am now in my mid-70's and I have developed some diseases that tend to be inherited, so I am also trying to collect some medical history. Could you help by letting me know what your parents or siblings died from? Some of the Gerig history is of strokes and heart disease, diabetes, familial tremors, macular degeneration, possibly Charcot Marie Tooth disease (CMT) a peripheral neuropathy, and more. Quite a few Gerig cousins have had hip or knee replacements. An unusual disease was amyloid neuropathy, a rare inherited degenerative nerve disease, common only to Switzerland and Poland. The late Orie Conrad a gr-grandson of Martin Conrad inherited this one.

Christian Z. Gerig and sister Elizabeth

Because of the poverty of the Gerig family, Elizabeth and her brother, Christian worked in a large woolen-cloth factory about two miles from their home when they were thirteen and eleven respectively. One evening as they, tired and hungry, were wending their way home through the twilight, they came to the bridge near their home. A wolf had come out of the forest and was sleeping on the ridge right in their pathway. He seemed to be asleep, but they decided not to find out. Tired though they were, they retraced their steps and went home another way. As they neared their home, Christian declared, "I will say my prayers before I get into the house so I can eat immediately when I get to the table, as I am so hungry." Many years later in Wayne County, Ohio, Elizabeth—now Grandmother Meyer—would end the story by saying to her

²*Joseph Goldsmith 1796-1876 and his descendants published 1955 by Mrs. Jacob Graber and John W. Gingerich*

³*This may be the Amish-Mennonite church since I haven't located my original information.*

⁴*J.C. Meyer paper*

grandchildren, “You are very fortunate and must always be grateful to God that you live in a land of plenty and do not need to go hungry.”

Another of her stories told about the birth of her youngest brother, Benjamin. Elizabeth had passed her 25th birthday when this brother was born. Her mother confided to her that she feared older son Christian resented having another child born into the already large family. Elizabeth felt sorry for her mother and spoke privately with Christian about the matter. When the baby came, big brother Christian, age 23, took Benjamin into his arms and made a big fuss over him. The scene caused their mother to shed tears of joy in her relief.⁵

Christian Z. and Barbe Reck Gerig our gr-grandparents, immigrated to Smithville, Ohio, Wayne County, in 1864, from Mulhausen, Alsace Lorraine, France. They traveled to where Benjamin, his youngest brother lived, with their two young children Barbara and Christian Reck Gerig. Catherine, their first born, had died at six years of age.

They settled there, in Wayne County, Ohio. Christian R. Gerig at the age of 14 years, was baptized at Oak Grove during this time. They moved to Leo, Indiana and C.R. never left any record about the move or of living there.⁶ The father died in Indiana at age 55 in 1874.⁷

We assume it was only a short number of years they lived there for Christian took sick and died at Leo, Indiana from appendicitis, that developed into peritonitis. The family then returned to Ohio.

I am also assuming that the Gerig’s had cousins there, and that may have been one reason to move to Indiana. When we first visited the area the one thing I noticed was a Gerig Road and the Gerig name on mail boxes. Then some of the different cemeteries had many Gerig graves. Old Order Mennonites are still populating the Grabill, Indiana,⁸ area nearby and have Gerig’s buried in their cemeteries also. About 20 years ago, Dale Kropf put me in touch with a Zenas Gerig, of that area and Zenas did a lot of genealogy research and we haven’t made any direct connections.

We spent many hours in Fort Wayne, Indiana area searching for records of our gr-grandfather Christian Z. Gerig and we aren’t the only ones to have done so. Martin and his son, Melvin Gerig at one time went there also, to search for the grave. None of us had any success.

Martin Conrad was about five years of age when came to America with his parents and family from France. They settled in Ohio where Conrad’s are still residing but Martin and some of his brothers moved to Iowa in the Wayland area. In the 1870 Henry County census, Martin, age 53, was listed as having been born in Switzerland.

Fannie Boshart was born 20 JAN 1829 in Europe. She emigrated to America in 1855, sailing from Havre, on the ship SWITZERLAND and arrived in New York on 7 June, 1855. She was 25 years of age and her occupation was unknown. Her sister, Catherine was also aboard the ship.

⁵*Mennonite Women: A story of God’s faithfulness –Elizabeth Gerig Meyer, by Elaine Sommers Rich 1983 pages 60,61.*

⁶*Uncle Ben stated the fact that they moved to Indiana and settled there in his 1984 interview with Norman Gerig*

⁷*Benjamin Gerig and Lydia Schrock: Their Lives and Times by Roy Wenger, 1976, page 13*

⁸*This area is a real interesting very small town to visit. Our daughter came through there in July 1999 and would like to return when they aren’t pressed for time.*

Catherine was 29 years old and her occupation was listed as farmer. No other (Rosserts) Bosserts were named on the ship's list but other Mennonites may have been relatives.

Other Mennonite names recognized on the same ship list were Roth, Beck, Stauffer, Lehmann, Kuntz, Meyer, Bauman, Schweitzer, Stauffer, Ernst, Albrucht, Amstutz, Eicher, Klopenstein, Schnek, Weidmer, Rich, Kaufmann, Schultz, Funck, Neuenschwander, Lugenbuehl, Oswald, Becker, Fischer, Richard, Kropp, Reiser. A total of 83 persons who may have been Mennonites out of the 561 traveling on the ship.

There may have been more Mennonites but I don't recognize the name as such. There were 19 single men whose ages ranged from 17 to 46 and 11 single women all in their 20's except one who was 57. There were two children without parents aged 5 and 3 year old. A large family totaling 13 were also on the ship. A total of 10 families and three of the couples did not have children and two families were without men listed. There were 10 men and 5 women whose occupation were listed as farmers.

Emigration reasons given in the book for the Germans leaving their homeland was a variety of factors, including crop failures, a lack of industrial employment, overpopulation, social discontent and political repression and upheaval. Also the lure of cheap land and the chance to make a fresh start in a new country.⁹

What little we know of Fannie is gathered from two pieces of evidence she left behind. A German Confession of Faith, and a church letter she brought with her. The book printed in 1822 is covered in brown leather and is four inches by six inches and three-fourths inches thick with two clasps to hold it closed. The book is a bit worn but in good condition for 177 years since it was printed in 1822.

When she was 19 years of age she wrote inside the front cover, " This lovely Confession of Faith belongs to me Veronika out of which I pray of God for faith and blessing and firstly for eternal life." Written January 1, 1848.

The *Title page reads*, "Christian Confession of Faith of the defenseless (non-resistant), and particularly in the Netherlands (under the name Mennonisten) well known Christians; as well as some Christian prayers of these same confessors of the faith: In addition seven spiritual Praise and other songs from a number of 400, gathered by a godly teacher of the same confession and adjoined for approval; Also an appendix for the incontestable proof that the said confessors of the faith in their life and teaching, are to be found much different, then has hitherto, through false tiding's been wanted to be judged of them.

(On page 32 are the names of the cities and towns of the Netherlands in which different men gave their signatures as well as those signing this Confession Pages 35 and 36 has the acceptance of the confession and approval thereof by the Elsave Lorraine Brethren and their signatures. Second part, page 3 - a forward from the Brethren from Prussia."

Veronika evidently treasured this book and was almost 19 years of age when she wrote in it.

It accompanied her to the new land. The other document Veronika brought with her was her church letter from Birkenhof in Alsace, France. Both of these documents give evidence of a strong faith in God and a love for him and his church.

The church letter she brought with her reads,

Birgenhoft, the 18th day of April, 1855

⁹Information obtained from *Germans to America, Lists of passengers arriving at U.S. Ports, 1850-1855. Volume 9, Edited by Ira A. Glazier and P. William Filby.*

Through God's Grace we wish you the best to your heart-friendly greetings to all who have seldom written – with that as a request for prayer for us to pray of the dear God. We were in that like-minded to do for you in continuing in as much as the dear God helps in order that during this very grievous time may notify all of the rest of you dear servants and _____ That Verena Bossert _____ and is a sister in God's Christian Church and so we are giving them the present note (letter) hereto for them for whom it will be necessary to leave the Birgenhoft District Altkirch and we greet (you) all yet many times and commit you and ourselves all in the shelter of God the Most High. Amen Signed Christian Hirschy Burr Ropp Johanes Spraler ¹⁰

The blanks spaces were not interpreted and we have some unanswered questions: What were the grievous times referred to? Why was it necessary for them to leave? Who are the them referred to? What are the untranslated names or words in the letter? M. N.

She evidently soon traveled to Iowa after arriving in New York, because she became the wife of Martin Conrad, Henry Co., Iowa on 27th of November 1856.

After she married Martin H. Conrad of Henry County, Iowa, her husband used the book also as a family register, when he wrote on next page opposite the title page to record the birth of their children.

It reads, "*Family Register of Martin Conrad.*

My first child was born the 4th of September 1857 about 2 o'clock in the morning in the sign of the fish and shall be named Maria.

My second child was born the 20th of February about 11:30 o'clock in the evening and shall be named Amos. In the sign of the scabs.

Their marriage was of short duration when she died at childbirth on 21 Feb. 1859 at the time of Amos birth, leaving Martin with the infant and Maria only a small child of 17 months. ¹¹

In May 1862 Martin was married to Marie Smucker and she became the mother to Mary and Amos. A fragile booklet, printed 1825 in German, left by Marie contains the Lord's prayer, the Holy Ten Commandments and a few lovely prayers. Title page reads, "Booklet for the instruction of Young Children" and has inscribed in it, "This booklet belongs to me, Marie Schmucker. Written in the year 1837," when she would have been about 14 years of age. ¹²

Both of Martin Conrad's wives give indication of godliness and Martin's grandfather was a Amish bishop in the Montbeliard Amish Congregation, Alsace, France.

Fannie also went by the name Verena.

¹⁰*Translator is unknown, but both letter and translation were in possession of Henry Gerig, when he died in 1982. With it was a note that it was his Grandmother's church letter. His daughter Marjorie Gerig Nofziger has it in her possession..*

¹¹*One record says 20 Feb. 1859. Tombstone and some other genealogies say 21 Feb. 1859. Amos was born 20th of Feb. 1859 about 11:30 p.m. and since Fannie died because of childbirth, either date could be correct but it is likely that the 21st is correct.*

¹²*Was Henry Gerig's and now Marjorie Gerig Nofziger has the booklet*

Boshart has also been spelled Bossert.

Martin and Marie Conrad's estates were both probated and they are listed in an index at the Mt. Pleasant Court House but they are both missing and the clerk said that somebody must have taken them.

Court house records showed that Martin and Mary Conrad sold 80 acres to Christian R. Gerig, C.R. (Sec 29, T 73, R.7) on Oct 31, 1881 for \$1,000.00. C. R. sold the same acreage, with approximately one acre less, that was for a school, on Jan 23, 1906 to a Kauffman for \$5,332.50. I have recently learned that Fannie had a sister by the name of Maria that married Jacob Kauffman.

Christian Z. Gerig died in 1874 and the family moved back to Ohio. They had some property there, and C.R. worked pretty hard to pay off the mortgage on the place. His sister Barbara Gerig was married in 1876 to Joseph Maurer, and then Barbe Reck Gerig married a Conrad in Ohio.¹³

It was because of C.R. Gerig's mother's planned wedding that he left home and walked to Iowa. He was now 21 years of age and his Uncle Sebastian Gerig was living there. *Interview with Henry C. Gerig 1979, by Rick Martin, his son-in-law. M. N.*

After Conrad died Barbe went to live with her daughter in Iowa and then moved with the family to Oregon in 1887, the first Amish Mennonite family to locate in the mid-Willamette Valley. She is buried in the old part of Lebanon's Cemetery beside Joseph and Barbara Maurer.

Researched by Marjorie Gerig Nofziger

After the ad for the August 8, 1999, Gerig & Conrad Reunion appeared in the MENNONITE WEEKLY REVIEW, I received four contacts about the Gerig & Conrad relation.

Willard Conrad, Colorado Springs, CO. wrote me that he is doubly related, both on the Conrad side as his gr-grandfather was a brother to Martin our gr-grandfather and his gr-grandmother Maria Boshart Kauffman was a sister to our gr-grandmother Fanny Boshart Conrad.

He says there were two more in the family, a Christian Boshart married to Catherine Swartendruber and they are one of two clans of Boshart's in Wayland, Iowa area. Catherine, the sister that came on the ship with Fanny, is thought to have married a Hostetler. Their father was possibly a David Boshart, but that is yet to be verified. A fifth person in the family was Josef, (Geppi) Boshart who never married.

I am exchanging genealogy information with all four people that contacted me. M. N.

Christian Gerig married Barbe Reck Martin Conrad married Fannie Boshart

¹³I believe his name was Christian C. because I found the index to a will of his, and he left a widow named Barb. John Zimmerman and Ben Gehrig, Barbe's brother-in-law, were named as ones to help settle the estate. If this is correct Christian had 12 children. The probate papers were not in the library when we were there and I haven't sent for copies yet. M. N.

iron with a cord that she plugged into the light socket that hung from the ceiling with a cloth cord, the light had one bulb and a metal shade on it. We didn't have any such modern conveniences at our home. Another modern thing was the long wooden sidewalk to the barn and the small building near the barn that was a "necessary" building like our bathrooms now. At our home we had a beaten dirt path.

I also remember the Sunday Aunt Lizzie was married in the special room that we were seldom in. Mary and I felt bad she was leaving, she always had cookies for us. After Aunt Lizzie left, Annie Roth came to keep house for Grandpa, then one day Grandpa and her were married.

Whenever Aunt Fanny came to visit, the last evening at Grandpa's we would sing, "God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again". Tears were shed when the goodbyes were said.

I have seen and known Grandpa as a jolly person, a good visitor, also I have seen him shed tears when preaching from back of the pulpit. He was very hurt when there was discord within the congregation. He was an emotional person. I heard him say there is one person he has so much trouble with, and that person is himself. I find how true that is in my own life. I have so much trouble keeping me where I should be and want to be.

Written by Martha Eicher, August 1988

Annie Gerig Yoder Memories of C.R. Gerig

"I liked Grandpa Gerig but I was kind of afraid of him. He had big sharp eyes and when he preached it seemed he could see right through you. But I liked him. Living only a short distance from Grandpa and his wife Annie made me appreciate them and I have good memories of both of them. I remember seeing him whittle when sitting on his porch. I still have a cane that he made out of an apple branch. The folks would write notes and write telephone messages and I would deliver them to Grandpa. We lived about a quarter of a mile south of their house on the Brickyard Road. (Waverly Drive) Grandpa's Annie was always nice to us and very generous. She gave me a doll one time but she fussed about Ag's gold watch when she saw it and also when us girls fixed up our hair. To Annie it was worldly.

Our Grandpa would go to town with our Dad by car every Saturday to buy groceries. When Simon couldn't go, then Grandpa would hitch up Billy to the buggy and go to town.

When Grandpa's would go to the coast then we would do their chores. Grandpa had a good garden and he shared his ice cream watermelon with us. He also shared the fruit from his trees.

We had a neighbor that always worked on Sunday and that bothered Grandpa so one Monday he went over there and told him, "You know you will never catch any fish working on Sunday." And the neighbor said, "Mr. Gerig I'm not fishing. I am putting the roof on my chicken house." Grandpa walked off and said, "You will never get anywhere talking with him." And as far as I know that neighbor never went to church. Our Grandpa certainly lived up to what he believed.

Interview with Annie Gerig Yoder, 1999

Annie's Family Memories

I was born the youngest of four daughters of Simon and Mary (Erb) Gerig on a farm about five miles southeast of Albany that was owned by my grandfather. I loved this farm and thought it was an ideal home with a big orchard and a creek where our mother would take us craw-daddy fishing. My fishing pole was a twig from an apple tree with a string tied to the end and a bent pin for a hook. My mother usually took a Bible story book with her to read to us while we were

fishing. My mother would cook them, and we would eat the tail and pinchers. This was quite a delicacy, but I could never understand why my sister, Ag, never liked them.

Every school year we would walk the 1½ miles to Price School to go to school. We were well prepared for the weather as we used galoshes, umbrellas, and plenty of warm clothing. For several years of our education my sister, Ag, and I had perfect school attendance, and we were rewarded with a diploma at the end of the term.

When I was young, on winter evenings, I would sit on my father's lap while he read a book and my mother would knit stockings or make a quilt. All the while, my older sisters, Martha, Mary, and Ag would be studying for school the next day. Some evenings were devoted to games. Many times I would watch my sisters and my father play dominoes with a set of dominoes that was handmade by my father. Our family did many things together, and we never sat down to a meal until everyone was there.

When I was eight years old, my parents bought 20 acres and existing buildings on Brickyard Road, which is now known as Waverly Drive. My father bought the land from my grandfather, and my grandfather bought five acres from my father's land which was across the road and a half mile from us. The move meant that Ag and I would have to change schools. As I remember, this was a major adjustment as Grand Prairie wasn't the one room school that Price School was. Grand Prairie, not only had two rooms, but it also had two teachers. It did have its advantages though, as it was closer and we had better roads to walk on. The farm was another major adjustment. This farm had no orchard, no creek, and we had more neighbors, most of whom did not attend church. Some would even work on Sundays.

At about this time, my oldest sister, Martha, could be found working in homes. Her services were needed when a family was expecting a new arrival or they had a new baby in the home. Martha would be at home between jobs. My sisters and I were always glad when Martha was at home because she would usually be baking or making something.

My second oldest sister, Mary, started working soon after Martha did. Mary usually worked steady in a home and later she spent a number of years in California. When she came home, Mary would always bring me something. I was very close to my sisters, and I think they were protective of me.

Since my father was secretary—treasurer of the Fairview Church for many years and both of my parents served as Sunday school teachers, my mother for almost 40 years, going to church and Sunday school were the first priorities in our home. On Saturday evening, the chores were finished early, even during the busy season, so we could all study our Sunday school lesson and prepare for the Sunday services together.

Being to church early was another high priority. My sisters remembered being late on only one occasion and that was when they had trouble with the livestock.

Since we always arrived early to church, it meant getting up early. This was especially true when we would get a lot of rain and water crossed the already muddy road. While going to church in our horse and buggy I would pull the curtains back so I could see the tracks and watch the buggy wheels go through the water.

On Sunday afternoons, we either had company or we would go visiting pull the curtains back so I could see the tracks in the mud and watch the buggy wheels go through the water. My parents taught me many things. They taught me to love, to work, to play and to be prompt.

My parents also taught me to put Christ first in my life, and they taught me how to live the life of a Christian. They also taught me that Sunday was the Lord's Day and that any work not absolutely necessary was forbidden on that day.

In December 1938, Mary and I went to Hesston for the six-week short term. At the end of short term Mary insisted that I go to Iowa and see Uncle Joe's and Uncle Martin's. After much persuasion, I went to Iowa, and Mary went to California.

I got a job in Iowa City, and that is where I met Glenn Yoder. I came back to Oregon in August 1939 and worked in Albany. Glenn came to Oregon in January, and we were married March 31, 1940.

Soon after we were married, we went back to Iowa so Glenn could work for his father running a sawmill and hauling logs. It was during this time that, I became acquainted with Glenn's family and appreciated them very much for what they did for us in the first years of our marriage. His Grandpa Aaron Burr was a very special person in our lives.

My sisters, Mary and Ag, came to Iowa in September 1941, at about the same time that our oldest son, Richard, was born and they worked in Iowa City for several years. I was again glad to have part of my family close to me.

We lived in Iowa for over six years, and then moved to Oregon to farm the home place. My father Simon, died of a cerebral hemorrhage, on February 12, 1948. This turned out to be a traumatic experience, as this was the first death in our immediate family. After my father's death, all of the land was sold except for the buildings and 20 acres, which we purchased and lived there for nine years. After we sold the farm, we moved to Lehigh, which was formerly my father's land. We lived there for two years, and then decided it was no place for our youngest son. We then bought two acres on Geary Street and are currently living in this home.

One of our sons had rheumatic fever and was bedfast for a year. During this time, he was in Doernbecher Children's Hospital for three months and in and out of Salem General five different times.

During his sickness, we had no medical insurance, and we are so thankful to my mother for all of her help through those years. Losing my parents and sisters to illnesses and a daughter-in-law in a tragic car accident were also trying times, but we are so thankful for the strength and guidance that God has given us to go through these times together. It is good to know that we have the Lord to go to in times of need.

On March 31, 1990, Glenn and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. Throughout these 50 years we have had trying times together, but the trying times help us to appreciate the good times.

Written by Annie Gerig, 1990

Annie's Memories of Stories Told about Her Folks.

Simon left home when his mother was pregnant with Henry. Simon was the oldest and Henry was the youngest of twelve children. He thought the family was large enough, so he went to

California and worked in the oranges. His sister Fannie postponed her wedding to help take care of Henry.

Henry was born February 13, 1902. Fannie married Joe J. Roth the next year on March 3, 1903. Simon must have left California to come up to Oregon where his paternal Grandma was living with her daughter Barbara Maurer, because he purchased the farm that C.R. Gerig bought in March 1903. C.R. paid \$9,500.00 for 380 acres from the Dickson Family. C.R. and family moved to Oregon in March 1904. This move was very difficult for Mary because her first grandchild Mary Roth had just been born. In fact they waited until Mary was born and left for Oregon the next day. M. N.

“My Dad met Mary Erb and she persuaded him to come back to the Amish Mennonite Church which he did and lived a very committed Christian life.

I remember one Sunday when a new calf had been born and he needed to put up a box stall for the calf and mother. He waited until the close neighbors, the Norman Lind family, left for church, so he could pound a nail into the box stall and nobody would hear it and think he was working on Sunday. He never did unnecessary work on a Sunday.”

“My Dad was a very independent man but was also affectionate with his daughters. He played dominoes and other games with the four of us.”

My mother always spoke very highly of her mother-in-law Mary. Uncle Ben Gerig always attributed Grandpa’s success to his wife Mary.”

Interview with Annie Yoder 1999

Fannie Conrad Gerig Roth

B. Fannie C. Gerig married to Joseph J. Roth

1. Mary Swartendruber
2. Levi Roth
3. Helen Roth Beachy
4. Orie Roth
5. Elsie Roth Yoder
6. Ray Roth

Joseph J. Roth, a farmer 25 years old and Fannie Gerig 23 years old were married 3 March 1903, at the bride’s home, C.R. and Mary Conrad Gerig, at Wayland Iowa by Bishop Sebastian Gerig, a Great-uncle of the bride.

They moved into a log cabin on a farm where Mary and Levi were born and where Fannie had been born also, as well as where her mother Mary Conrad Gerig was born. The log cabin had been built onto some time over the years. The J. J. Roth family moved to Oregon but after a short time decided Oregon was not for them and so returned to Iowa.

On March 15, 1914 Fannie’s mother died so Fannie took the train to Oregon taking Orie with her. Martha & Mary Gerig enjoyed toting their baby cousin around. It must have been hard for

Fannie to handle Orié alone on the train since he was such a large baby.

Mary Swartzendruber Memories

I remember when Grandpa Gerig's came to visit us and when Grandma passed away my Mother went to the funeral and Orié was the baby, four months old, and she took him and he was so big when he was born and was really very heavy, I'm sure it was very hard on her to travel alone with him.

I can't tell you very much about Grandpa Gerig but I will never forget that when we came to Oregon he would have all his jugs filled with spring mineral water and put them in an old wood house. I can still see that in my mind's eye. Grandpa liked mineral water so well and I did too and still do.

My Dad Joseph J. Roth married Fannie Gerig on March 3rd, 1903 and the first house they lived was southwest of Wayland, Iowa where I was born and so was brother Levi, and my mother and also my Grandma (Conrad) Gerig. Brother Orié bought the place with that house on and he rented it out for a couple of years, then finally was getting into bad shape. I think he finally used it to put feed and such things in and hasn't been too many years (*About 1985*) since he tore it down. Levi and I wasn't quite a year apart. I remember so well we had an old wooden trough, that mother had to pump full of water several times a day for two cows and maybe horses. I don't remember if it was for horses or not.

I don't remember how many years we lived there, (*where Fannie was born*) but not many then Dad bought a farm just about one half mile west of the Sugar Creek Mennonite Church but didn't live there too long and he bought a farm west of Wayland, I'd say about three or four miles and I started to school there, Nick Leichty as teacher and I couldn't talk no English and the kids were all English and sit around me to listen to me talk German and one boy in school threatened he was going to chop my toes off and I was so scared at recess I would sit under the seats and I went home for dinner, just downhill and a bridge at the bottom and up a hill. There was times I'd sit under the bridge all afternoon so afraid to go back to school.

So finally the folks found out about all this, I wasn't getting no where so they kept me home. Then the next year the folks bought the place about 6 miles east of Wayland where they lived many years. Dad built a new house on that farm. I remember so well we had our beds put up in the corn crib and one night when I wanted to go to bed, seven mice jumped out of my bed and I couldn't think of going to bed right away and the cats came on Levi's bed and purred and kept him awake and he threw them against the wall. It was really tough living until they got the house built. They lived there until they retired, then we bought the place. My folks were farmers all their life and when they moved to Wayland Dad would still go out on the farm almost every day, my brother Ray was living on it.

But anyway Levi and I was in school together the next year in the same class, went to school together through the eighth grade, as far as they let us go. High school and college wasn't important to the folks. (*All the J. J. Roth children received their schooling at the Prospect School near Wayland.*)

Then Levi hired out that summer to Pete Graber, a farmer and I don't know what he got, but I worked at a nearby place where they had babies in the house and lots of work at \$5.00 a week. I'd have to do garden work and take care of baby chicks that setting hens had hatched out and I even had to milk cows besides taking care of the mother, who stayed in bed for ten days after the baby was born and generally other children also to care for. We had to give our money home too.

Going to church was very important to my folks lives. My Grandpa Nicholas Roth was a minister. We had about seven miles to church by horse and carriage. We had to get up early on Sunday morn to hitch up the horses on the carriage and Dad would tie their tails up so they wouldn't get them muddy. No hard roads of no kind and sometimes terrible mud.

Our carriage was getting old and rickety so Dad bought a new one and was we really proud of that new carriage as if it was a Cadillac, Ha. Then we almost upset it the first time we went to church was so muddy when we went to church and Dad drove on a bank to get out of mud and here we run into a very slanting place on the bank and couldn't get off cause was too high so near we upset. Of course everything was in German. In Sunday School we had our little German A B C books. I think I still have mine somewhere.

Every time Mom washed, I had to stay home from school in the morning and take care of the baby, then eat dinner and run to school. There was a lot of work to washing then I helped a lot in the field, sometimes drove five horses on a harrow, had to walk all day. Then go home and get six to eight cows and milk and then run the separator (to separate the cream from the milk.) That was a big day.

Levi and I had to get up first in the morning and get the fires going in the kitchen stove, then go and milk. Come in and Levi separated while I made breakfast. We knew how to work. Levi and I each had to miss a couple of weeks of school to help Dad get the corn out too.

We bought our first new Ford in 1916 and was we ever proud of that. He paid around \$500.00 for it. We got it on a Saturday morn and Dad told us now if we get the walks all scrubbed and Saturday work done he would take us around the section and we really worked.

Well, we went for our first ride and when we passed a house we really looked to see anybody seeing us. It had side curtains which we put on in the winter and took them off in the summer and folded them carefully and put them under the back seat. It had a tool box on the running board. And it had icing glass in back and of course had to crank it. Many people broke their arms cranking cars.

Several years after that Earl and I began going together and we had nothing but horse and buggy. Went together around three or four years and got married in 1925 and Earl bought a second hand Ford just before we got married and went to Simon Gingerich to get married and the road was so muddy and had a big hill to go up and hardly made it. We got stuck, Levi and Mayme was along, our standbys. Came home, Earl and I ate a dish of peaches, then had a reception. Earl was down in the basement freezing ice cream all day and I was making angel food cake for the reception. Just the young folks of the church. The neighbors also had a big SHIVAREE.

The next morning, Dad had a little old pickup truck and moving what we had, not much. Everything secondhand except I said I wanted a new kitchen cook stove, and us kids each had a sheep and got the money from the lambs we sold and Dad would get the wool for the keep of the sheep. Earl borrowed \$2000.00 to buy his horses and all his secondhand implements and we thought that was the national debt, didn't see how we was ever going to pay that back.

Earl and I enjoyed each other and liked to work together in the fields. I helped a lot in the field of corn husking. Earl was such a good shucker, we had to each take a wagon. Now Marge, take out what you want. I don't care what you take out and I know I made plenty of mistakes and poor writing. You know I just had an eighth grade education. I feel like I wrote too much about myself but take out or leave.

This is written 1989 & 1990, from two separate letters that Mary wrote to me after I wrote to her and asked for these types of memories. I am inter-weaving the letters. One can almost hear her talking and this makes her memories more precious. Mary and Earl visited Oregon a number of times and I remember getting acquainted with her at those times. We corresponded some also, and when we lived in Chicago area 1983-85, she was living near Goshen, Indiana with her son and we made several trips to visit her.

Fannie Roth had a stroke causing her to fall and break her ankle. She only lived a day or two after the fall. Joe Roth got blood poison which caused his death. He had a spot on his leg about the size of a dime and wore new unwashed overalls which caused infection. His legs and lower part of his body turned black and it was very painful for him.

Elsie Roth Yoder had bone cancer. Levi Roth had a stroke, and Helen Roth Beachy had a heart attack and died after surgery for 2 valves and triple by pass.

Another story Mary remembers is when she was about ten. Fannie had a wedding ring that Joe bought for her. Mary put it on and wore it to the pasture to get the cows. She lost it and felt so bad for losing it, but her mother didn't seem to be perturbed about it. Mary doesn't think that C. R. ever knew about it but one of Mary's siblings think that is one reason C.R. moved to Oregon. *C.R. wrote in his memoirs that they moved for health reasons. M. N.*

Mary told me that Amos Gerig came to visit them in Iowa before he was married. Their upstairs bedrooms were so cold in the winter time that the blankets would get frosty. Amos would wander around of a night and it could have been dangerous because he could have fallen down the stairs. One morning he announced, "I, a darned fool. Hung all my covers on a nail and I about froze to death."

Mary also told the story of Martin Gerig being so particular before he was married. He wouldn't wear a shirt if it wasn't ironed the way he wanted it. He'd just throw them in the wash without wearing them. Fannie was so perturbed that she would have to do his laundry over again. Fannie said after he was married that Martin was glad if he got his shirt ironed. Martin had a gold watch with a wide fob which hung out and Fannie admired that fob which she thought was very pretty. Mary said she worked for the Martin Gerig family when Melvin and when Minnie were born and Mary was a little girl at the time.

Orie Roth Memories

“I remember only seeing my Grandpa Gerig once. After Grandpa C.R. married my Aunt Annie Roth in December 1916 they came to visit us in Iowa. He preached on a Sunday morning at the Sugar Creek Amish Mennonite meetinghouse. I don’t remember the sermon but I remember tears rolling down his cheeks when he preached.

They came to dinner at our house and Dan Graber, a Roth relative, and a friend of C.R. Gerig’s was there for dinner also. Grandpa and Dan began arguing hooks and eyes versus the buttons, and they both had tears in their eyes.” Dan used buttons and Grandpa held out for hook and eyes.”

For the Amish, buttons was a symbol of the military, as was the mustache and round toed shoes, all of which they rejected. M. N.

Stories of Home & Stories Orie Remembers Hearing

There was the time doctor came to see his Grandmother Mary Conrad Gerig when she was ill. Mary decided it would be a good idea for the doctor to look at Fannie while he was there, but Fannie overheard the comment and decided to hide. She hid in a cellar window that had a deep ledge and the family couldn’t find her so the doctor left without seeing her.

Another story the family remembers was when their mother Fannie was a girl. It was winter and her father, C.R. Gerig told her that if she got up all winter to build the fire in the stove each morning he would buy her some shoes. She did this and after she had her new shoes she put them on top of the dresser in her Grandma Conrad’s room so when people had to pass through the room they would see them.

Fannie also broke her arm at school when someone pushed her and caused her to fall. She had to wait all day for somebody to come and get her. It was her left arm with a compound fracture and her arm never was straight after that. It took so very long for the doctor to come and she suffered a lot of pain from the break.

Some of the favorite family food was Rivel* soup, and a rhubarb “Stufflen”. For this Fannie would make a funnel cake and serve rhubarb sauce with it. Sometimes milk and corn mush was served for an evening meal and the next morning they would have fried mush for breakfast. One of the pies made was shoo-fly pie. Homemade cottage cheese as well as other cheeses were made. At butchering time head cheese was made and enjoyed. In the depression years, (the 1930's), they ate what they could raise, and Orie remembered that his sister Mary would fry the corn mush while he was milking the cows, and then the rest of the family would get up for breakfast. All the water was pumped by hand which went into a big tank in the basement. The tank had a pressure gauge on it. They got electricity in 1914 which helped make things easier for them.

* **Potato Rivel Soup** (*similar to rivel soups of that day, chicken broth was sometimes used instead of potatoes and sometimes only milk*) About 2 cups of diced potatoes, a small onion chopped, 1 ½ to 2 cups of water. Cook until tender. To make the rivels, mix 1 small egg and approximately ½ cup of flour and a bit of salt and mix with a fork into little stringy lumps. Add to the cooked potatoes, cover and cook 7 minutes. Add 4 cups of milk, 1 tablespoon of butter, salt as needed, and 1/8 teaspoon of celery seed if desired. Heat to the boiling point. If soup is desired thicker, flour mixed with additional milk can be used to thicken it. Garnish with crumbled bacon. Does anyone have a funnel cake recipe?

Grandpa Gerig had a double barreled shot gun which he gave to Levi. It had a wrapped barrel and Levi used it to hunt rabbits. In 1925, a bunch of fellows were out hunting. Levi had just shot a rabbit and had climbed into the back of the pickup. Another fella threw his shotgun into the back of the pickup and it discharged and shot Levi in the right hand. The doctor constructed his hand so that his little finger and thumb were saved and were useful.

Orie and Wilma lived and farmed for 33 years on the same property where his siblings Fannie and Levi had been born. Orie's moved into Wayland in 1977. This was the Conrad farm where C. R. Gerig had helped cut the large logs and helped build the big barn. The barn has a date cut into the wood. It had to be before 1877 and the barn was still standing in 1995.

Interview with Orie Roth, Wayland, Iowa by Marjorie Nofziger, May 1995
Orie Roth born 1913, is in a nursing home in the Wayland, Iowa area, July 1999

Ray Roth Memories

“I remember going on a trip to Oregon with the folks, and Helen, my sister went along. But Helen decided to stay in Oregon and Blanch Kennel returned to Iowa with us.”

The folks always had a big truck patch and grew lots of potatoes. Mom and Aunt Lizzie made the best fried potatoes and sausage that they had fried down and kept in a crock covered with lard until needed. I think that kind of sausage is still the best sausage.

I persuaded Dad to buy a tractor, but it had to have skeleton wheels in front. It was a John Deere 37. I got one of my Dad's teams for farming. I took the team of mules and used the team for a number of years. We picked our corn by hand.

Interview with Ray Roth, May 1995

Barbara Gerig

C. Barbara Conrad Gerig

Those of us that knew Barb, knew she was handicapped. I remember Barb in the anteroom of the Fairview Mennonite Church Building tilting her head back, so her stepmother Annie could tie her head covering beneath her chin, and then she followed Annie down the aisle to the benches in the corner, on the women's side of the church building, facing the rostrums where the ministers preached from behind the pulpit. They had a good side view.

I knew she helped around the house and gathered the eggs when they loved on the edge of town.

I asked my Dad and Uncle Ben why Barb was the way she was and they didn't know why. When I asked Mary Swartzendruber in 1995, I found the answer. Barb was attending school in the lower grades when she got sick with spinal meningitis and that is what caused her problem. Mary also said some of the other children died from spinal meningitis. I failed to ask her if she meant siblings of Barb, because three of the siblings died as infants but all at different times, and not at the time that Barb was sick.

Marjorie Gerig Nofziger July 1999

Martin Conrad Gerig

D. Martin C. Gerig married Emma Nofziger

1. Elsie Gerig, deceased
2. Mabel Gerig Miller, deceased
3. Christian Emanuel Gerig
4. Frances Gerig Yutzy
5. Mary Gerig
6. Melvin Gerig
7. Minnie Gerig Chaffee
8. Allen Gerig
9. Eldon Lavern Gerig
10. Elmer Gerig
11. Willard Gerig
12. Emery Gerig, deceased

Martin Gerig and Emma Nofziger were married in Oregon. Their fathers, C.R. Gerig and C.G. Nofziger, together bought some property for them to farm near Tallman, Oregon, but Martin had difficulty hearing and went to Portland and then California to get help with his hearing but wasn't helped. They then decided to move to Iowa in 1917 and farm there.

Mabel Gerig Miller's Memories

"When I was about two years old, my mother had left the sausage grinder set on the cupboard after using it. Elsie and I played with it and I tried to catch the inside cutter. It cut off part of my forefinger. Mom took the piece and me down to Dr. Irvine. He took the piece and threw it away and told Mom that it wouldn't grow back but asked her where she got me because he didn't deliver me. I was delivered without a doctor.

The folks went to California when I was five or six years old to doctor for Dad's hard hearing. We stayed at the Los Angeles Mission. I don't remember very much, but one thing stayed with me, but Emanuel Staley was there at the Mission and his wife taught the Bible class of we little children and one song stuck with me. It was "Brighten the Corner Where You Are". I always tried to get in the corner. I felt I could sing better and be brighter and I always wanted to sing that song. We went to Iowa in the fall of 1917 by train. I enjoyed that and most of all always wanted to go to the rest room whether I needed to or not. The reason was I wanted to look down the hole and watch the tracks go by.

Pop didn't do any doctoring for his hearing anymore. I don't remember of knowing him to hear us talk, only to talk into his ear. He got worse until he couldn't hear at all.

My school days were kind of hit and miss, because I was the second oldest of twelve children and was needed to help. When Elsie and I were both in the fourth grade, Mom wanted us both to quit. Elsie did but I refused to quit school. We had dishes and chores to do before school and so we were tardy for school quite a bit beside miss some days. When I was in the sixth grade, I worked extra speed and got to school on time, because I didn't want to miss schooling.

The best teacher I had was Lester Krabill when I was in the seventh and eighth grade. My grades were above average except history and civics, I just hated them studies. I was determined to go to high school but Mom said, none of the children are going to high school. I wanted to be a nurse. Mary Swartentruber, a first cousin, told Mom she would buy my clothes and send me to high school. I could stay at her place and she would pay me for helping her. I was denied that and had to begin working away from home at the age of thirteen and give my wages home until I was twenty one. I worked in others homes and I never grew up with my sisters and brothers.

When I was twenty-one, I worked long enough to pay my way to Oregon. Another cousin, IdaBelle Nofziger and I had corresponded regularly and she said that pay for hired girls was better than \$3.00 a week which was what I was getting. I took her at her word and arrived at Uncle Dan's with \$2.00. I wanted to get a job right away but Ida Belle insisted I go to the Oregon Coast with them first, so I did. I worked at Frank Glassers' for \$3.00 a week for about a year.

Mabel Conrad was sick and wanted help so I went to help her and then stayed on in the Lester Conrad home and picked berries and hops. Lester and Paul Conrad wanted to climb Mt Hood and invited me to go along. It was worth the climb above the clouds but we didn't get to see the valley.

Dorothy Gahler, Elnora Miller and I then decided to go to Washington and pick cranberries. We hadn't expected the picking to be so difficult as we had to crawl on the ground to pick them. We quit before the season was over as it rained us out. We took a boat ride from Astoria, Washington to Portland, Oregon in returning, and when I got back to Lester Conrad's I had a new pair of shoes and \$2.00 left from my cranberry picking job.

I decided to come to Albany to see my cousins and stay with my Nofziger grandparents. I soon got tired of running around and took the bus to Portland and stayed at the Portland Mission while I looked for a job. I found one for \$20.00 per month and was there six months when they moved to New York. Instead of looking for work I went to Lester Conrad's and made more at picking berries than doing housework. That fall, 1936 I decided to go to Hesston School. Lyle King drove taking Edward Kenagy, Dorthy and Lilly Lais and myself. We drove day and night until we got to Hesston Kansas. I worked in the kitchen and baked their bread to pay my way through school. When I was at home I made the bread and liked to play with the dough and one time Pop said, "Let Mabel make the bread, she makes the better bread".

After that year of schooling I went home to Iowa. My brothers and sisters sure had grown.

Lester Conrad's were in Iowa and asked me to go back to Oregon with them. I did and picked berries again.

Mennonite General Conference was at Turner, Oregon and there I met Ben Miller. I didn't intend to go with him very much as my plans were to return to Hesston, Kansas

I got a job in Portland for \$30.00 a month and worked up to \$40.00. After working there eighteen months I changed to another job and started at \$40.00 but received \$45.00 after the first month. I never had enough money to go back to school and besides the friendship between Ben and I grew serious until December 24, 1939 we got married and are happily married.

We went to Colorado and lived there the first year. Daniel was born there. In December 1940 we moved back to Oregon and moved six times before we settled near Lebanon and raised six children. We enjoy our grandchildren, every one of them, really more than we did our own. We have more time for them and don't have to worry about spoiling them.

We enjoy going to the coast, clamming and sightseeing with them. Janet once said she remembers us going to the coast at least once a year for a week and will never forget the good times we had.

On our forty-seventh wedding anniversary in 1986 we moved to the Mennonite Village at Albany as we were not able to do much gardening or take care of the lawn anymore. Ben had major surgery in 1985 and I had gallstone surgery in 1978. In 1982 I was papering the bedroom, the stool slipped and I fell and broke my right leg below the knee. In 1984 I slipped on the wet garage floor and broke my leg five inches above the knee. Now I have a twelve-inch plate and thirteen pins so it ought to be secure but it affects my walking.

We celebrated our fiftieth anniversary in 1989. We had so many guests, I didn't realize we had so many friends. I am so thankful for what the children did for us, and still are. The children and grandchildren made a quilt top which is so interesting. Each made a block of their own interest in life.

What would we do without all of them? God has blessed us with a wonderful family.

Written by Mabel Gerig Miller, 1990

Frances Gerig Yutzy Memories

"I was born in Oregon and was about one year old when the family moved to a farm south of Wayland, Iowa. Later they moved to another farm where my folks built a house in about 1930. One of the carpenters told Bertha DeHerrera, our daughter, in 1995 that her grandparents were so poor that they paid for the building of the house in hogs, cattle and grain. I remember going with them to a little town west of Wayland to tear down an elevator for the 2 by 4's they used in construction of the home.

We children attended Maple Grove School close to home and walked across the fields to school. Each day we could see the progress on the building of the house, and we were so glad to see the

completion of our home.

My husband, Roman, died from heart surgery, he had a bad heart. We lived west of Wellman, Iowa on a farm in an iceberg of a house but we only lived there one year. Then he was drafted and Roman went into Civilian Public Service (C.P.S.) in South Dakota building roads and a dam for 21 months. He received \$5.00 for himself and \$15.00 monthly for myself and two children. Roman had sold cattle and property before he was drafted. The first year in C.P.S. we were in Hill City, in one to two room cabins, until we moved a trailer into the field for us to live in. At the close of WWII the camp was closed, and we went to a place in Iowa for the last few months before his release. After C.P.S. we moved to Roman's folks farm."

Interview with Frances Gerig Yutzy, May, 1995

Immanuel Gerig's Memories

When our family traveled to Oregon to see our Grandparents we would take a tent and folding cots fastened to the car and would stop and camp nights at campgrounds.

I moved to Oregon in 1936 when I was 21 one years old. I had asthma in Iowa. Ida Belle and Esther Nofziger were in Iowa and wanted to return to Oregon so they helped pay the way to Oregon.

I picked turkeys, sold magazines house to house. Worked at the Veal Chair Factory and I went to Portland and sold Hoover vacuum cleaners. Oliver Schmucker called and asked if I wanted to work for \$ 2.50 a day plus room and board, and I also worked for Uncle Henry Gerig, helping cut out the hedge row and putting in fence.

I painted a house for Grandpa Gerig, and I made a mistake and told him about it. He said, "He that doesn't make a mistake, never does anything, but he that makes too many mistakes loses his job."

I enjoyed both of my grandpa's. My Grandpa C.R. taught me how to whittle.

Interview with Immanuel Gerig, 1999

Melvin Gerig Memories

Iowa was my birthplace and I remember at the end of the depression a company came along and offered the folks either 3 or 6 cents a pound for our hogs, which were running all over the place. So Immanuel and I rounded them up for sale.

When I was home I remember we lived on corn meal. We raised field corn that we gathered, dried, shelled and ground. Corn bread and molasses and milk is what we had to eat a lot of the time. We raised sorgum and had it made for 15 cents a gallon and we stored it in all kind of containers. We'd have corn mush at night and fried corn with molasses for breakfast. I can remember the folks taking eggs to the A&P store and dickering to trade them for aged grapefruit.

We had a truck patch and raised everything. We raised our own meat and had lots of milk.

I'll never forget one time while Imanuel was still home, before he went to Oregon, he invited a neighbor to go to church with him. The neighbor wore a pair of brand new overalls. "Is that all you have to wear?", was the comment, but none of Imanuel's suits fit him. The fella never went again.

The folks always went to church on Sundays. And we entertained lots of visitors in our home on Sundays for Sunday dinner.

A funny incident happened at home. We were overhauling a Model A or a Model T under a shade tree in the yard. We had a watermelon patch down the hill and we saw two fellows with guns in the patch. "Look down there," someone said. And Pop run in the house and got his shotgun. When they saw someone run in the house they ran off. Pop fired over their heads into the air and a bit later the gun shot echoed back."

Orie Roth memory of Uncle Mart - "Uncle Martin Gerig had a sandy place on his farm, near Wayland, Iowa where he grew watermelons. One Sunday Levi and one of his friends, Ezra Conrad went to Martins place to buy a watermelon. When Levi asked his Uncle Martin to buy a watermelon he just shook his head negatively and smiled. They couldn't convince him to sell them a watermelon on Sunday even though they offered to put the quarter on a stump and told him he could wait until Monday to pick it up. Levi told Orie the story more than once and Orie said, "I can still envision Uncle Mart smiling and shaking his head. Uncle Mart was a man of conviction." *1995 interview with Orie Roth*

"During the war I was drafted and chose to go into Civilian Public Service (CPS). During CPS I made a visit to Oregon to visit Martha and other cousins.

After the war I married Wanetta Nofziger. I started farming by helping my Dad-in-law and renting and going into debt. I didn't like the idea of going into debt. I bought a tractor, mower, disc, drill and corn planter. The mower, drill and corn planter cost me \$700.00."

Interview with Melvin Gerig, 1995

Allen Gerig's Memories

I remember that we had a pretty good home life. We had chores to do and sometimes I had so many chores to do that I would have to run to school to get there on time.

Willard, Lavern, Elmer and I all slept in the same room. Mom would take the tubes out of the radio so we couldn't listen to it.

In the winter time we would go sledding on a road seldom traveled and we'd stay out until midnight sometimes. We would also like to go hunting. Emanuel shot 21 rabbits one time. And we would hunt coon. Mom could fix coon and you couldn't tell it was coon". (At this comment Al Nofziger remarked, "It was in 1940 that I was visiting in your home we were eating dinner and Aunt Emma said, "Do you know what kind of meat you are eating?" I said, "No." and she

said, "It's raccoon!". And Al said, "It didn't taste quite as good after that."

The day before the dinner, Minnie, Melvin and Al had gone up to Kalona, Iowa and when they returned, every thing was fixed up grand – beds were short sheeted, marbles rolled down the stairs, etc

Allen continued, "We always had company for dinner on Sundays. And then we'd have a ball game. Now days kids can't make their own fun like we did.

We had fun when we were married too. One Halloween, Ray and Edna Roth and I and Mary Kay decided to all dress up like women. We went to Mary Swartzendruber and borrowed dresses for us men and then we went to visit friends. We'd knock on the door and then silently walk in and sit down to the table and play, Old Maids, not say a word, get up and walk out leaving candy on the table. One couple we went to visit, said "They're none of my friends", and the other replied, "They're none of mine either."

"My sister Elsie died from an incurable blood disease. She was very meek, and had a concern for everyone. She never felt good but was always concerned about others.

Martin died in his sleep from a heart attack. Mom and he had been visiting earlier in the night in bed, in spite of his deafness. So his passing was peaceful. Emma had a couple of strokes and she was found on the floor of the trailer then she was in the Mennonite Nursing home and she wouldn't take her medicine for her heart. She would hide it.

Interview with Allen Gerig, May 1995

E. Menno Conrad Gerig, lived 2 months.

F. Sarah Conrad Gerig, lived 4 months

Amos Conrad Gerig

G. Amos C. Gerig married Lydia Boshart, a widow with four children. Dortha Stutzman Detweiler, Blanche Stutzman Neuschwander, Daniel and Gordon Stutzman.

1. Harry B. Gerig
2. Mary B. Gerig Krabill
3. Amos B. Gerig
4. Clara B. Gerig Krabill
5. Wilma B. Gerig Sanderson
6. Wayne B. Gerig, deceased
7. Percy Gerig

Amos had wed Lydia Boshart Stutzman 22 May 1920. Amos moved onto the "home place" after his marriage.

Amos was handicapped by the loss of his hearing in his teens. He had a total loss at the time of

his death. He was a Sunday School Secretary for a number of years. Even with his hearing loss he advocated regular church attendance, and to be on time.

Amos Gerig Accident with Samson Tractor

Wanting to know more about a serious accident that Amos had I asked Harry in March, 1999 about his Dad's accident and this is what he remembered. M. N.

Amos wanted to show Simon how easy the tractor started and so Simon got on the seat and so Amos proceeded to crank it. Simon didn't know how to stop the tractor which was in gear. The barn had a log for a bottom beam which the tractor pushed on up and the tractor pinned Amos to the wall of the barn.

Harry couldn't remember more about it so I then interviewed Annie Yoder in April, 1999, M. N.

Annie's memories of the incident with the tractor.

The Simon Gerig family was invited to the Amos Gerig home for Sunday dinner in about 1924/26. While the children were playing and Lydia was making the dinner with Mary helping, the men folk went to the barn to see the Samson tractor that Amos had just recently overhauled.

Amos wanted to show Simon how it ran, since the overhaul. Amos had to go to the front of the tractor to crank it to get it running and he was unaware that the tractor was in gear. As soon as he cranked it, the tractor went forward and pinned Amos between the tractor and the barn.

They had to tear the boards off the barn to release Amos. He was taken to the Albany General hospital by Simon and became one of their first patients. Simon stayed with him through-out the surgery and returned back to Amos's home that evening. Fortunately there were no internal injuries but Amos had a bad leg break and was hospitalized for quite some time.

Interview with Annie Gerig Yoder, April 1999

Harry B. Gerig's Memories of C. R. Gerig

C.R. had a horse he called Billy that he continued to use even after he had a car. Since he was living on a very small acreage near Albany on what is now Waverly Drive he needed hay for Billy. Since the Amos Gerig family provided some of the hay it was a yearly task to mow the clover and grass and then load the loose hay and deliver it by the team of horses and a wagon.

On one trip returning home along Highway 20, Harry was sitting on the wagon bed with his legs hanging down over the side of the wagon on the side opposite the traffic. But as they crossed a bridge one of the bolts on the bridge tore a piece out of his leg. Amos galloped the horses to Jacob Boshart's, who was Harry's other Grandpa who lived just down the road a short distance. Grandma Mary Boshart bandaged it for him. That was all that was needed to care for the wound which then healed.

Another incident Harry remembers also involved the wagon and making and hauling hay. He

was riding on top of the load of hay when the horses stopped pulling. On investigation a nut had come off of the wheel axle. Amos walked back the road about three miles and found the nut they had lost.

And then there was another incident involving the team of horses on the road when there was a motor vehicle coming toward them and a man was loudly shouting, **"Get off the road, get off the road, I don't have any brakes!"** Fortunately they were able to get out of the way of the car.

Harry's memories of growing up years at home

On the "home place" there was quite a bit of timber which was cut to make wood for heating and cooking purposes. Using a Ford Model T truck which had no doors. Harry and his father were going to haul wood for their use. There was a large drainage ditch to cross to get to the wood shed. Evidently Amos backed across the ditch at an angle and hit the ditch in such a way and speed which caused the Model T to tip over on its side. As it was going over Harry jumped out but Amos hung on and Harry received a scolding for making the jump. Harry doesn't remember how they got the truck up- right.

Interview with Harry B. Gerig, March 12, 1999

Harry married Fern Stutzman and they have farmed, raising chickens and turkeys for many years. Harry also worked for Linn Gear and Lebanon Machine Shop. He enjoys fishing and has caught King Salmon in Alaska, a bonus when visiting his daughter and grand children. Since his retirement he has spent many hours at his congregation, Lebanon Mennonite Church, doing maintenance work. He also assists as needed for repair at the MCC Et Cetera Shop in Lebanon and makes wood craft articles to sell there for the mission of helping the needy overseas.

Mary B. Gerig Krabill Memories

Dave and Mary began housekeeping during the war. David did alternative service at a CPS camp in Stockton, San Joaquin Co., CA on a dairy farm at the county hospital. In July 1946 after his term was served they moved Griggs, east of Lebanon and began farming. David farmed and worked at Albany Frozen Foods in maintenance for many years. They moved to a farm on Hwy 20 five miles east of Albany and lived there until 1974 when they quit farming and bought a place at Hilltop Drive, east of Lebanon.

The family took a lot of good trips as they loved to travel, visiting most scenic sights in Oregon. Some times they took a trailer. The Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico was a memorable trip. Dave enjoyed the sports of hunting game and taught his sons to hunt. Mary enjoyed gardening and canning the produce she raised.

Once when Bertha & Shirley Gerig stopped by she had just baked ten pie. Bertha called Shirley to come see "all of these pies". She also enjoyed planting her flower beds and sewing. Mary made and sold several thousand pajama dolls that enabled her and Dave to go to Europe twice taking four children with them each time. In her later years she is enjoying handcrafts of bead baskets and other bead work. She made a plastic doll house her grandchildren enjoy very much. Her creative work also appears in oil paintings

Interview with Mary B. Gerig Krabill in the 1990s.

Clara B. Gerig Krabill Memories

I was born and raised on a farm near Albany, Oregon. I remember shocking bundles and sometimes hanging sacks on the threshing machine which my father owned. I also helped in the large garden we always had, and learned how to can vegetable and fruit at an early age.

During the depression we would pick the first green and yellow beans and my father would take them to town to sell at the grocery store. Also the cases of eggs and five gallons of cream to sell at the local creamery. It was part of the way to buy groceries that couldn't be raised on the farm. My father would take the wheat that he raised down to the Thompson Flouring Mill in Shedd, Oregon to be milled into flour. I learned to bake bread at an early age. I also learned the art of sewing on a treadle sewing machine. Since those days I have an electric one and I enjoy sewing very much.

I went to the same grade school my father did, as we lived on the C.R. Gerig home place. We were too far from town and did not have the privilege to go to high school. In those days it was not compulsory to go. If you rode the bus you had to pay and money was scarce.

We also raised turkeys, ducks and geese for a few years. Just before Thanksgiving and Christmas we would have slaughter days and dress out a large number them and my father would then take them to Portland, Oregon to sell them to the open air markets on Union Avenue. They would hang them up and the customers would pick out the ones they wanted. We had removed all the feathers but left the feet and head and did not draw them. We would wrap the heads in butcher paper. My mother would take the soft downy feathers and make bed pillows. She sold many pairs that went for wedding presents. We children also received them.

We didn't have a lot of toys, but nearly always got a new red wagon for Christmas. Evenings we would play table games, so we all learned math pretty well. We always had to add our own scores. Also had good books to read.

On Dec 25, 1945 I was married to Kenneth K. Krabill. We lived on the Krabill home place on Fry Road near Albany, Oregon, and farmed it until retirement. Many changes have taken place since childhood. We have winrowers and combines for harvest and nearly every thing is done by machines.

Our three children all went to Grand Prairie School where their father had attended. All three children had much farm work experience in their growing up years.

Our house was set away off the main road, down the hill in front of the house was a small creek which ran most of the year in those days. It is dry now. In the winter time when it rained hard and for a long time we would be stranded for a few days by high water. We had to cross it to get to the main road. In the summer time we would play in the creek and push each other down the hill in the wagon, rolled old tires down, also old buggy wheels.

I enjoy working with flowers, for a number of years I made the flower arrangements for the Fairview Mennonite Church where we are members and attend regularly. I also attend the Women's Missionary and Service Commission which is held monthly. I have done lots of sewing, knitting, crocheting, and various other types of crafts. I am at the present time crocheting on my third bedspread. I have made a number of quilts.

We are enjoying retirement, but retirement does not mean we are sitting idle. Seems we are as busy as ever, only in a different way.

Written by Clara B. Gerig Krabill, 1990

Wilma B. Gerig Sanderson Memories

I grew up on a farm 8 miles east of Albany, Oregon. My brothers and sisters and I walked to a small one room schoolhouse, "Lakeview". Three generations of Gerig's attended this school. Years prior, our father and later Percy's children. When I was in the fourth grade it became a two room schoolhouse. The building is still standing and has become a country church.

August 11, 1951 I married Orval Sanderson at the Lebanon Christian Church. All of our married life we have lived in S.E. Portland, Oregon. All of our four children were born here.

When our children were young we spent most of our vacations camping. Usually we would vacation, alternately going to the beach, or mountains with the high lakes. We did lots of fishing. Usually we had a couple of big fish fries before we left for home.

When the youngest daughter Denise entered first grade, I also decided to go back to school. I attended Mt. Hood Community College, enrolled in the practical nursing program. This was a 12 month course. I graduated in 1969. I'm currently licensed to practice in Oregon as a Licenced Practical Nurse.

Orval retired in 1984 from Sears Roebuck after 32 years in service. I retired in 1987 from Milwaukie Community Hospital.

In our retirement we both enjoy traveling, fishing, gardening, and reading. I enjoy my hobbies, needlepoint, knitting and quilt making.

We have three grandchildren, all currently living in California.

Written by Wilma B. Gerig Sanderson, 1990

Elizabeth Conrad Gerig Roth

H. Elizabeth C. "Lizzie" Gerig married Daniel Roth

1. Lloyd Roth
2. Glenn Roth
3. Orie Roth
4. Wilmer Roth
5. Ivan Roth

Glenn Roth Memories

C.R. Gerig couldn't find work in Ohio so he wrote to his Uncle Sebastian Gerig in Iowa. He would be able to cut wood in the winter time in Iowa so he walked from Ohio to Iowa. He said, "It was the best walk I ever took". Because in Iowa he met and married Mary Boshart Conrad, daughter of a wealthy Amish Mennonite farmer.

C.R. began farming with two horses, one was blind and the other one had only one good eye. With this team he farmed around Oak tree stumps and then planted corn.

Interview with Glen Roth 1992. Glen doesn't remember who told him about C.R.'s walk to Iowa.

C. R. Gerig told Glen that he made money raising vetch and also made a lot of money on clover. He also thought of buying the Doughton property to the east of the farm but Mary told him that she thought he had enough property. C.R. gave property to Mary that joined on the west of the home place so she would be taken care of in case anything ever happened to him. He probably did the same thing for Annie as she also had property.

Fannie told C.R. that Lizzie had too much to do on the farm with all of the boys and thought it would be a good idea if they moved to town. *He already owned the town property. M. N.*

March, 1997 interview with Glen Roth

Orie Roth Memories

Orie remembered when Granddad invited a group of grandchildren, probably in their teens, to his house one Sunday for dinner and then in the afternoon played a Bible game with them from a stack of cards. If you didn't know the answer Granddad did, as he knew the answers to all of them. Orie has the stack of cards and doesn't quite remember how he is the one that ended up with them.

His memories include playing with Granddad's buggy when the family went to visit them. He recalls that Granddad decided he wasn't going to drive his Dodge car anymore and returned to using the horse and buggy and one Sunday Orie and Glen rode home with Granddad from the Fairview Mennonite Church to their place in the buggy. But it wasn't very long until Granddad was driving the Dodge again.

Ivan Roth Memories

Ivan only has the memory of his Grandpa's later days when he was in bed all of the time but when I asked about memories of his home he had several. I said I supposed he could remember when the boys in the family would [sic] their dog onto his cousins. With a laugh he said, "Yeah, George, our dog, we would get him to jump the fence after you." "That was very scary for us," I told him.

I enjoyed Aunt Lizzie's dinner of fried-down sausage and hash browned spuds and always pies

for dessert. So I asked Ivan, "Did your mother always bake pies for your family?" And his reply was, "Yes, she baked pies for us every week. Lots of fruit pies and also lemon and chocolate, all kinds of pies. I don't think she liked to bake cake, it was always pies."

"What are some other things you remember about your home life?" I enquired. "Dad was a livestock person. We milked 12 cows by hand, fed hogs, had chickens and had to clean the chicken house every Saturday in the winter. In the summer they were out to range and it didn't need cleaning as often. We sold hatching eggs too since there was more money in that."

One of the things we did every year was rent a cabin at the coast for a week." I asked, "Were you ever out at the coast at the same time as Grandpa Gerig was?" "Yes, I was little but I don't remember much about it." "Well," I continued, "I know about that time because you were on the picture that Mom sneaked of Grandpa and that's the picture that is used of him for the Pacific Coast Conference History that Hope Lind wrote."

It was when Grandpa's relative, a first cousin, Jacob Gerig and wife from Ohio were visiting and the folks went out to the coast for a day and left me in charge of my six siblings. I got into trouble that day because we attempted to build a play house using some of Dad's fence boards."

Interview with Ori and Ivan Roth, May 23, 1999

Christian Conrad Gerig

I. Christian C. "Chris" Gerig married to Ida Boshart

1. Irvin Gerig
2. Evelyn Gerig lived to age six. Died of Bright's disease
3. Hazel Gerig Eby
4. Ruth Gerig Birky
5. Clarence Gerig
6. Laura Gerig Rhodes
7. Norman Gerig
8. Dean Gerig

Irvin Gerig & Hazel Gerig Eby Memories

Irvin Gerig drove his 1927 Chevy coupe to attend Albany High School. He recalls that one day he decided to stop at C. R. Gerig's home at Third and Main Street. He found his grandfather in the woodshed. He told Irvin, "I'm trying to make something out of nothing and the only one that can do that is God." C. R. was trying to make a wheel barrow without the proper parts.

Hazel, his sister said, "Well, I remember that Grandpa had a 1924 Dodge." "Yes," Irvin said and it had a tilting steering wheel but it was not for steering the car. It was to move the wheel out of the way so a heavy-set person could get in the car."

C. R. Gerig liked to spend time at Newport and go fishing so Henry and Chris, his sons, would take turns driving C. R. and Annie to the coast and the other person would then go get them. Irvin said, "One time I rode along and Annie would be pushing on the seat going uphill and

pulling back on the seat going down hill." I went fishing with Grandpa and he would sit at the edge of the dock and fish and he had me sit by a little hole in the dock and fish through the hole. But I caught a lot of little fish and more than he did."

When C. R. was ready to get rid of the car he wanted Chris to buy the car so Irvin could drive it.

Harry Gerig must have had a lot of fun when he attended Lakeview School near Cottonwoods, Oregon east of Albany because Irvin & Hazel both had some memories of those days. Both the Chris and Amos Gerig families attended this school which their parents had also attended themselves when they were children.

Hazel recalls the day the teacher caught her with a note that Harry had passed down the row of desks. The teacher read the message, "He stuck his nose in his ear and blew his head off." She probably wondered from which subject Harry learned that "profound truth."

Irvin then added the story of the time he took his cap gun to school but he didn't have any caps for it. Harry had caps in his pocket so he put some in and wanted to test them. The explosion caught the teacher's attention and she took the gun away from him. Now what was Irvin going to do? After school he went to the teacher and told her it was his gun. She replied, "I know that it is yours, take it home and don't bring it back."

Interview with Irvin & Hazel, January 16, 1999

Clarence Gerig Memories

"I remember Grandpa had a deep hearty laugh and when he laughed he shook all over.

When Grandpa was living on those four acres on Brickyard Road, (now Waverly Drive) we would pull his buggy out of the shed and pull each other up and down the road in it and Grandpa never would say anything about it. Grandma would give us soda crackers when we went to visit them.

Grandpa had a dog named Jip that my Dad used to tease and have a good time with Jip and then both Dad and Grandpa would laugh.

I remember one time when he came to our place by horse and buggy and while he was there Norman got his arm caught in the washing machine wringer right up to his arm pits. It was bad, it could have torn his arm off. Grandpa left and my folks took Norm to Lebanon to the Doctor.

Another time he came to our place he just sat and watched us build a straw shed. Once Dad and I took a load of oats to Albany to sell. We left home early driving our team and wagon and we had to wait almost all day before we could get them unloaded. Grandpa was living on Main Street between 3rd & 4th Street and we stopped at Grandpa's place on the way home to water the horses.

When Grandpa live on Main Street in Albany he would sit on the porch and watch the traffic come from both Highway 20 and from the Old Salem Road to Main. One time when Dad and I stopped in to see him he gave Dad the money to pay the electric bill since we were going that

direction. When we returned Dad sent me in the house with the quarter change. Grandpa wanted me to keep it but I just laid it down and left. I should have kept it because he wanted me to have it but, I guess I didn't think it was polite to keep it."

Clarence Gerig Memories of Home

Well, we couldn't afford it but we always went to the coast every fall after harvest, and rented a cabin out there for 2 or 3 days. We would have to take our own bedding which we would sit on, in the crowded car. And we would have to take dishes and everything we needed.

And Dad was a crack shot with a shot gun. Of all the times I hunted with him, I only remember him missing his target once. One time Uncle Ben came over and Dad nailed a can on the cross arm of the wash line. The next time Mom went to hang up her clothes to dry, the cross arm broke in two.

I kept after Dad to rent more ground to farm when we were living there close to Cottonwoods and he would tell me. "I've got all I want to farm."

Marjorie commented, "After Grandpa Gerig died, you moved to Crabtree Oregon, didn't you?" "Yes, and I got so tired of cleaning up at that place," was Clarence's answer.

(Henry, Chris and Amos all rented farms from their Dad C.R. Gerig).

My Dad was never sick but it seemed like Mom was never well, at least she didn't feel good.

Hazel joined our conversation and asked if I remembered that little old man, Jake Gingerich that used to help in harvest time? Yes, I did and also John Meinert who also helped in harvest. He was a older bachelor with red hair and generally gave a testimony in church almost every Sunday but one week he missed and went to church on Monday. He had lost track of the days of the week, which we kids thought was very funny.

So I, Marj, will add some of my reminiscing to this also.

Chris and Henry worked together to do their threshing every year and when the threshing crew was at your place you cooked the meal for the whole crew which was quite a few men. There were three team of horses with wagons and a bundle pitcher for every wagon, then some one to sew sacks full of wheat, barley or oats or other seed and someone to keep things under control and someone to stack the sacks, I believe. Eight to ten men worked together and we girls had to work all morning getting dinner ready for the hungry men. We would also have to pump the water troughs full of water for the horses to drink at noon and everyone ate and rested so the horses would get their rest also.

Interview May 23, 1999 by Marjorie Nofziger

J. Catherine Conrad Gerig lived 3 months.

Benjamin Conrad Gerig

K. Benjamin C. Gerig married Sylvia Dubois

Ben and Sylvia married in 1939, and lived in Albany, Oregon until 1945 when they moved to California. He worked in various insurance agencies in California, continuing the type of work he had done in Oregon. After Ben and Sylvia both retired they decided to return to Oregon in May 1983, where their many relatives lived.

September 4, 1983 Marjorie recorded the following interview with Ben. The Interview gives much more information than what I am including But this part reveals a little about Mary, who we know very little about.

M: Do you remember living in Iowa?

B: I have a very faint memory of a few events there. I remember going to school on a couple occasions. We had a little creek we had to cross with a footbridge and it scared me to death. I remember that. And I remember being on the school grounds there - but it's just a faint memory - for a day or so - I don't remember regular attendance there.

M: Do you remember the farm or where you lived or anything like that?

B: I have a faint memory of the house and one windstorm - I guess it was a tornado coming and we all were scared in the house. And Amos - we had a door like that leading to the basement - Amos stood at the door with his hand on the doorknob, ready to open the door and we could all go down the stairway down to the basement but we didn't do that. It blew and when the morning came, I remember a lot of fruit trees around the house were blown over. I remember that.

And I remember Chris and I used to go through the cornfield to see Fanny after she was married. They were married a year or two before we moved out to Oregon. And Chris and I would go through the cornfield to visit them. They lived just, oh, I suppose, a half-mile from where we lived. And I got lost in that cornfield one time. I remember that occasion - but it wasn't too big of a cornfield and I got out - or they got me out - I don't remember how I got out but I remember being lost in it. That's about all my memories of Iowa, other than the train ride out to Oregon when we came out.

I have a faint memory of that. Particularly one night, when we were crossing the Rocky Mountains. Chris and I were sleeping in an upper berth, maybe somebody else was there - I don't remember. But either Chris or I got a nose bleed up there - I don't remember whether it was me or him. But I remember my dad coming up there and getting me out of there. That's all I remember of that. I know it was a nosebleed and one of us kids, and my dad came to get us out.

M: What year was it when you left Iowa?

B: I think it was in 1903 when we came out here. I was about four or five. I remember arriving in Portland, and waiting in the Union depot in Portland for the train to Albany. We had an hour or two layover up there. So I remember being in that depot and time passing slow. I don't remember getting on the train in Portland to come to Albany, but I remember the ride from

Albany out to Joe Maurer's place. It was in the dead of night. And Maurer was there with his surrey, and Dan Erb was there with a rig, too, to take our big family from the depot in Albany down to Maurer's place in Tennessee there, you know. So I remember that ride out there in the surrey and it was raining, oh it was raining, all the way. And that's all about that I remember. They'd put me to bed somewhere at Maurer's, and I don't know where. The next day we moved over to where we lived on the Gerig Drive.

M: Do you know why Grandpa came to Oregon and what his reason was?

B: I really don't know. I think he was sort of a venturesome sort of a fellow. I think he had a pioneering instinct he wanted to move west. Like the old immigrants, a generation or so before him.

M: His sister lived here, didn't she?

B: Yeah, that was another drawing card - his sister lived here. His only sister. And my mother's brother lived in - up at Gresham - her only brother, see. Otherwise, I don't believe my mother would have agreed to come out west. I think she just came because of the fact that her only brother was in the west. She was born in Iowa. She was an old Iowan and I don't believe he'd have ever convinced her to come out if it weren't for that.

M: Do you remember much about your mother? You must have been about 15 when she died.

B: Yes, I remember about my mother a lot. She, of course, like most mothers of that day, she had a large family and she devoted her time to her family. She didn't try to gain any public recognition for herself. That was the least she would have thought of. She devoted her whole time to her family and I think she did a good job of it. She was fair I don't think she had any favorites. I never felt that way. I never heard any of the rest mention it. She treated them all alike.

M: I had the impression that Dad held her in high regard.

B: Well, I certainly did. She took care of me when I had polio (Ben began crying and he sobbed and sobbed and still weeping he said)... she would have done the same thing for any of the rest of them-

M: Were you sick with polio quite awhile?

B: I crawled on the floor on my hands and knees for a couple of months. I was awful-sick for about a week and then I gradually got better. But I couldn't walk with crutches for two or three months. Finally got so I could stand on crutches leaning against the wall and I kept at it and I got so that I could shove them around and then I kept getting better on them all the time. Finally I got so good on them I could walk across the room and back using my arms entirely - I didn't need to touch the floor with my feet at all.

But getting back to my mother - I know she'd have done the same thing for any of the rest of the kids what she did for me. And I think it was through her care that I survived polio. And in our big family, I never heard any of them ever proclaim that my mother was showing preference to

anyone else. It just never entered our minds.

M: That says a lot about what kind of a person she was. Did you think she was pretty?

B: Oh, I never thought of her as being beautiful, no, but I just thought of her as just being a wonderful mother. She meant everything to me at that period of my life, of course.

M: Did she seem to have a lot of friends among other church women?

B: She wasn't a very talkative woman. She didn't want to, she had no desire to create any kind of a public image. She preferred to remain more or less in the background, in any public meeting. But she didn't have a lot of close personal friends - I don't think, she didn't have time to get involved it seems like. But I think they all respected her as far as I know. She had a few friends - yes, but I wouldn't say she had many intimate friends.

M: Did your parents do much entertaining or have company for meals?

B: Not a great amount of it. We had various families from church that would come on Sundays for Sunday dinner. But other than that, we didn't have a lot of visitors. I don't think the ministry at that time was so involved with the membership as they are now.

M: Do you remember when Grandpa was ordained?

B: I remember when he was ordained the bishop. He was a minister, I think, before I was ever born. I don't know when he was ordained to the ministry. But I remember when he was ordained bishop, I think it was at the old Dunkard church. I think it was there, where they held their meetings and is still standing now as a residence. Well, it was in that church house.

I don't know the year but I was around 8 or 9 years old. And they took me to that ordination service. My dad and mother and I were the only members of our family that were there. And Sebastian Gerig and Benjamin Gerig, bishops from Iowa. Bishop A.P. Troyer was the officiating bishop and I was there just as a kid, you know, but I remember it. I think it must have been about 1906 or 1907.

M: What did your family like to do together? And what did you kids like to do?

B: Well, we liked to get together on Sundays with some of the other kids in the church and a lot of the favorites, I never got in on it because I was on crutches by that time. But one of the favorite games of those days was pitching horseshoes. I remember (laughs), I remember Chris was quite a horseshoe player, and he'd get together with a bunch of the fellows and they'd spend Sunday afternoon someplace all times and hours - just pitching horseshoes. The Schrock boys and some of the other fellas, some of the Kennels I think.

Interview with Uncle Ben Gerig by Marjorie Gerig Nofziger, September 4, 1983

More Memories of Ben Gerig

Norman Gerig interviewed Ben Gerig May 20, 1984. This is from the last part of the interview.

N: Can you think of anything more to add to this interview that would be of interest to us.

B: There is one occasion that I remember quite well. After I had polio at age 11, my parents decided they were going to take me to a chiropractor. And I went twice a week, all of one summer, after that polio, to a chiropractor in Albany. My dad took me most of the time with the horse and buggy.

And I remember one occasion, we were coming home from a visit to the chiropractor, it was in the summer, a warm summer day, and a horsefly started bothering the buggy horse. My dad had a whip in his hand and that horsefly lit on the back of the buggy horse, and my dad just took a gentle tap with the whip, and he caught the horsefly dead center. And the horsefly rolled off the back of that horse dead.

And my dad, I'm tellin' ya, it tickled him, he just laughed and laughed about that, and he thought it was a great feat. I, myself being a kid, couldn't believe it, but it actually did happen.

I can think of another occasion involving my dad: As I said, he used to grow, a couple of years there, he had the farm in clover. And in those days, they used to put land plaster on it, as a fertilizer. He had a land plaster machine, it was like a grain drill, though it was built lighter and wider. I think it was about 10 feet wide or so, it was drawn by a team of horses. And you filled the hopper with land plaster and the auger in there ground it out and spread it evenly over the land.

He'd just bought this thing new. He was taking it out for the first time. And he had the team of horses, going through the gate into the field and was ready to turn the machine on. And when he turned it on, the horses were unfamiliar with the sound of that ogre grounding out that land plaster.

They took the bit in their mouths and started running away. And he couldn't hold them and they got loose. They made a big circle, they came back towards the gate they went out of, to go towards the field. And the horses got through the gate alright, but they weren't centered right, and one wheel of the land plaster machine hit the gate post and knocked the wheel off and it went flying in the air.

The horses broke free from the rest of the machine and they galloped into the barnyard. It tore the land plaster machine pretty much to pieces. The horses came in the barnyard and stopped there. They were home then, tamed down.

But, (Ben laughs) I was in the yard, (chuckles) and he yelled at me, "Get out of the way! Get out of the way!" from out in the field. And I got away from the gate and started up for the house but I wasn't in any danger because they went right through the gate right into the barnyard and stopped there. He rebuilt the machine. Got new boards and got the auger in the thing straightened out and patched the wheel so it was okay again, and we used it after that. But it was certainly torn to pieces at that time.

I remember one occasion out on the farm, shortly after we were here in Oregon. I think it was after a couple years after we were here. A fellow came by our place. I think he was a veteran of the Spanish American war that was in 1898 or thereabouts, the year I was born. But anyway, he came to our place and he wanted to buy a couple of farm horses. And my dad made a deal with him and sold him two horses. The fellow paid for them and took the horses and in two or three weeks, I can't remember exactly the time, maybe it was a month. He came back with those horses and he said they weren't what he wanted and he said he wanted my dad to take them and give him his money back.

In the meantime, he had used those horses to put in his spring crop and he had worked them half to death and hadn't taken care of them. They were poor as crows and in bad shape from lack of feed, more than anything else. And my dad pointed it out to them.

He had no intention, whatever, of buying back those horses. But the fellow pleaded with him and he finally convinced my dad and he took back the horses and gave him his money.

Henry Conrad Gerig

L. Henry Conrad Gerig married Bertha Boshart.

1. Sherman Gerig, premature, lived one day.
2. Marjorie Gerig Nofziger
3. Shirley Gerig Call
4. Virginia Gerig
5. Henry Gerig
6. Grace Gerig Miller
7. Paul Gerig
8. Rex Gerig

The eight children of Henry and Bertha were born at home except Shirley, who was born at her Boshart grandparent's home in Albany, and Virginia born at Dr. Beachamps home in Albany.

Henry came to Linn County Oregon with his parents when 2 years of age. They settled on a large farm about midway between Albany and Lebanon. Henry attended Lakeview School through the sixth grade. His father retired from farming in 1915 moving to a small acreage 1 mile east of Albany which is now Waverly Drive. Henry started to high school at Albany, Oregon but didn't like school so he quit.

His Dad said he had to get a job if he wasn't going to go to school so at 16 years of age Henry began working at the Veal Chair factory in Albany for one year. He worked at some other jobs and even "batched" with two of his brothers for more than a year. In February, 1919 Bertha came with her family to Oregon at 13 years of age. It wasn't long until Henry took a special interest in her and they were married at 19 and 16 years of age in 1921.

After the folks married, Henry again worked at the chair factory for two years. They lived in Albany and then moved to his mother Mary's 40 acre farm next to where he had grown up. They farmed there until the fall of 1927 when they moved to a 80 acre farm closer to Albany. This is the place best remembered as home. Since the family was getting more able to help, he rented some acreage from neighbors.

In 1934 when our brother, Paul, was four days old, on August 26, Henry was ordained to the ministry at Fairview Mennonite Church where he served faithfully for 30 years. None of the family was able to attend the ordination services conducted by bishops N.A. Lind, Amos P. Troyer, and Fred Gingerich.

Since ministers at that time served without pay, he continued to farm and Henry farmed for 35 years. Then Henry began buying a home and fixing it up and selling when someone would offer him a fair price for it. Mom got tired of the moving but she would get busy and help fix up the houses until finally she built one in 1959 and Bertha built the cupboard and did the electrical wiring. She was always good at

repairing and fixing things whether appliances or furniture, or making a fine garment.

Marjorie Gerig Memories of C.R. Gerig

My memories of Grandpa could repeat some of the memories already given - the mineral water, Billy, Jip, and playing with the buggy, the coast, threshing time and others so I will go to memory of something different.

A large tent, at least in my estimation as a child, it was large, was set up in the yard during the summer time and they slept in it. It was hot and stuffy in the day time but with our cool evening breezes from the Pacific Coast it would cool down.. I've wondered since, was that a pioneering spirit, the culture of the day because of warm houses, or to get out of the small house? It seems to me that their home on the Brickyard Road was about one of the smallest houses I know of and I wish I had a picture of it. (Does anyone have a picture to share with me?)

His Last Days

C.R. Gerig was becoming infirm and Annie was unable to take care of him by herself so the families began taking turns at night to be there when needed. They were living in their home on Main Street in Albany, where the present Whitaker's Store is.

Harry Gerig remembers going with his Dad, Amos, when their turn came but the bedroom where C.R. slept was so cold and still Grandpa would be sweating.¹⁴

Eventually it became very wearing on the families and the decision was made for C.R. and Annie to move to the Henry and Bertha Gerig home.

I remember this happening in the summertime and C. R. was bedfast. Annie could now be with him during the nighttime since she was relieved of household duties. No matter what kind of weather there was, he would want his bedroom window open and he would complain that he was not able to get enough air to breathe. Years later, after we knew more about some diseases, Mom said, "I wonder if he had emphysema."

I also remember when the family would take turns sitting with Grandpa giving Annie a break during the evening hours. One evening when I did it, it became a memorable night for me. It was shortly before Grandpa died and he gave me a blessing. I do not recall the exact words, but the feeling has remained with me ever since then. I associate it to the Biblical blessing that Jacob gave his sons and grandsons. I remember being allowed to sleep late that next morning and being woke up and told that Grandpa had died.

According to his death certificate Dr. Irvine must have come out to the house before midnight since it states that he saw him alive on 9 March and that he died at 12:30 a.m. March 9, 1942. His death followed a prolonged illness caused by the infirmities of old age according to an obituary and the death certificate states myocarditis, as immediate cause. He was 86 years

¹⁴Interview with Harry Gerig, 12 March 1999

eleven months and one day of age.

The body was prepared by Fisher Funeral Home and returned to the Henry Gerig home where family members came to take turns staying with the body until the day of the funeral. C. R. had requested in his December 25, 1932 three page handwritten autobiography that, “at my departure I want a Plain Burial, absolutely no eulogy nor flowers.”¹⁵

One plant came to our house and it was left behind when the body was taken to the church for the funeral, after a brief service at our home.

Written July 1999

Henry “Hank” Gerig’s Early Memories of Grandpa Gerig

In the harvest time when threshing time came, my Grandpa would drive “Billy”, his buggy horse the four miles to our place. I would sit out by the road watching for him. I could hardly wait to see him turn onto our road off Highway 20.

Mom would have a couple of gallon jugs filled with cold water and wrapped in burlap. She would wet the burlap and it helped keep it cool. We would load the jugs and me in besides Grandpa, I felt real important helping Grandpa. Off we’d go to the threshing machine. Everything stopped for a while, so they could drink cold water and visit. This happened almost every day during threshing time.

Dad and Uncle Chris did their threshing together for quite a number of years and took turns doing their threshing. They would have teams of horses to bring the bundles to the threshing machine and it took quite a large crew to do all the work. All the men ate dinner at the farm where they were threshing making lots of work for the women and girls.

I liked to look at the pictures in Grandpa’s MARTYR’S MIRROR and I remember especially Jonah and the whale picture. When we went to visit, he always said, “Annie, go get some crackers and bananas for the children.” When they moved to town, I would help him carry in wood he split. I wondered how he could cut wood as good as he did because he was so old. The last part of his life when he lived with us, I would many times sit besides his bed and help him drink. He drank with a glass straw. He didn’t talk a lot and I didn’t ask him things I would now if I had a chance. I admired his pocket watch that hung on the bedstead. He would ask me the time many times and I would take the watch and tell him the time. One time I said, I’d sure like to have a watch like this some time. He said, “I want you to have this some day.” I now have that very watch.

I also have the cane that he gave to my father. By the way, one reunion when Ben was sitting at our table, I had the cane. Ben said to me, “I think my father wanted me to use that cane when I had polio, but I never got well enough to use a cane.” He continued, “It also had a little knot or crack at the bottom, let’s see it, yep, there it is.” Now that’s quite a memory Ben had. He hadn’t

¹⁵Emphasis and spelling as written on his paper.

seen that cane for many years.

It's a wonder Grandpa had any time to spend with each of his many grandchildren, he had so many. My impression was comparing me and my father to him was how could my father have such an old father. I guess it was his white beard that made me think he was so old. I loved him though.

Written by Henry Clyde "Hank" Gerig — July 1999

Rex Gerig Memories

After Grandpa came to live at our home, he always had horehound cough drops by his bed. Annie would break up the horehound and us kids could have the chips. I learned to love horehound and still suck on it.

I also remember that everything Grandpa painted was gray. He would mix all kind of colored paints together with gray resulting for his color.

My Mom also told me that Grandpa was very tender-hearted. He cried whenever Bertha had her babies.

Interview with Rex Gerig., June, 1999