

Roger Miller

1923 street interview of **Sebastian Gerig** by a newspaper reporter. Very short but fun to read. It is titled, "A Very Interesting Man". His son Jake is with him. Jake is the man visiting with C R Gerig in our only photo of him.

The town was Davenport, Iowa on June 11, 1923 about 11 months before he died.

A Very Interesting Man.

Today, Rev. Sebastian Gerig and his son Jake were in town. He came up to consult an ear specialist, as he has home aural disturbance. Rev. Gerig has been pastor of the Sugar Creek church near Wayland for 52 years and he is now aged 85. He is hale and hearty and mentally as fine as silk. He preaches when he feels like it, but he says he lets younger men do the most of it. He speaks English quite well but he preaches wholly in German. That was his first language. He says the younger generation do not speak German, nor even understand it. When the writer was a kid, these folks had all their services, both church and Sunday school, in German. Now it is practically all in English. They have two classes in Sunday school, where they still stick to the

German language and to the German Bible.

Rev. Gerig raised two boys and eight girls, one boy and one girl being deceased. He has a splendid family, and the old couple are going down in their old age, surrounded by their children, all of whom live within a mile of Wayland. One son, Joe, lives in Arkansas, but he is also coming back. It is an unusual family and Mr. Gerig is an unusual man. He built up a great church, the Mennonite, and if there is a saint among men, he is one of them. His daughter, who was married to Dannie Lechty, recently sold her farm to Elmer Freienberger and bought the Joe Koebei farm near Wayland.

And while this writer was talking with these men, we walked another Mennonite from Johnson county. His name was Henry Yoder. He lives five miles from Kalona and is a member of what is known as the East Union church, where they recently wrecked a brick church and built a beautiful \$15,000 frame building. The pastors of the church are Revs. Sanford Yoder, Joseph Brennerman and Daniel Fisher. The first named is a brother-in-law to our Dr. E. E. Stutsman. They are a mighty fine community. Mr. Yoder inquired the way out to Ralph Livingston's farm, not to ask him whether he should vote the Republican ticket, but on some stock business. He said he knew Ralph, but he did not know where he lived and this scribe was glad to inform him.

