

a train anyway."

The Northern Pacific was building a branchline from Mandan toward what was to become the town of Killdeer.

Some of the Manning businessmen went to the new town area. They didn't know quite where the railroad would be located. They erected shacks with the idea that when the land was platted and sold, they would be on the ground floor by moving their shacks to the right location.

Morris Ruder had the first general store in Killdeer. He moved his shack to the land he purchased, and immediately had a larger business place built, with a full basement, and adjacent cream station. Neighbors were Tom Johnson, attorney at law, and the Ed Jones Drug Store.

Our son, Melvin Harvey Ruder was born in Manning, January 19, 1915. Our Manning home was comfortable and we didn't move to Killdeer until Mel was six weeks old. Our daughter, Arlyne Ruder Lansburg was born in Minneapolis, Dec. 13, 1918. It was during the 1918 flu epidemic and Dr. Oscar Smith felt I should go to Minneapolis.

I recall our first movie in Killdeer. Sometimes the picture wouldn't go on, and we'd go home for a half hour or so, and then return to see the rest of the picture. Our dances also took place in this community hall. Quite a few former Manning people were located in Killdeer, and it was good to have these friends in the same community.

Mel was graduated from the University of North Dakota, taught there, worked for the Westinghouse Electric, served for three years in the U.S. Navy and after a brief time in New York, started the Hungry Horse News in Columbia Falls, Montana in 1946. He became the first Montana newspaperman to win a Pulitzer Prize. This was in 1965. He is married to Ruth Morris, a University of Montana graduate and their daughter, Patricia, also graduated from the U. of Montana.

Arlyne attended the U. of Minnesota, served as an American Red Cross recreational worker during World War II, including a year or so in Japan. She is married to Saul Garrison Lansburg, and lives in Sioux City, Iowa. They have two sons, Robert Morris and William Ruder, teen-agers.

Our Killdeer home of five rooms with a large screened porch was attached to the store. It was 36 degrees below on December 8, 1919, when a fire broke out from an overheated stove. The town water pipes were frozen and nothing could be done to stop the fire. We were fortunate in saving our two children, but our worldly goods went up in smoke. Bismarck then became our home. As a teen-ager, Mel spent a number of summer months with the John Stein family on their farm near Killdeer during the time the Stein family lived there and we lived in Bismarck.

Morris M. Ruder passed away July 11, 1940. He always had a warm spot in his heart for Dunn County and its people, as do all the Ruders.

### THE W. S. REEMS FAMILY

In the spring of 1906 the family of Joseph Reems homesteaded in the Oakdale area. The family consisted of Joseph, Mary, eight children and Joseph's brother, John. Of the three boys and five girls all took homesteads but Mable, who married before being of age to file on a quarter of land.

W. S. (Sam) Reems married Mabel Berthiaume at Elk River, Minnesota in 1902 and they came with their two children, Joe and Mildred to homestead on SE¼-12-146-93. This location gave them the advantage of being near Oakdale where they could buy the staples: salt, sugar, rice, prunes, coal oil, rubbers, slickers, buggy whips, yard goods, thread, brooms, get the mail, have the horses shod, and get a haircut. However, Sam did the hair-cutting and horseshoeing at his home. Usually the smith made the first set of shoes for the horse and from then on the owner bought corks and replaced the shoes each fall.

Sam and Mabel's hospitable home was 'the house by the side of the road'. All relatives and friends stopped by coming and going. The section line was supposed to serve as a guideline for roads angled across the country as

trails to make the shortest route to the store and the best creek crossings.

Joseph Reems organized the Oakdale Cemetery Association together with Judge Charlie Bugbee, and Tom Davis and Mike Cuskelly donated the first acre of land. It was divided into a Catholic and Protestant side and a Catholic Church in Dickinson had the deed to their side. During World War I a group of ladies in a U. S. Women's Federated Club raised money for another acre.

They hauled their grain to Dickinson and stocked up on winter supplies. A big outfit from Montana shipped in horses to Dickinson to be sold through a sales ring. The sale lasted two days and Sam helped at these sales when they were held.

When the government sanctioned another quarter of land, Sam acquired one in the Badlands. One day Sam was riding up in the hills with his brother-in-law, Ralph Davis. It was slick and he was leading his horse along a narrow trail when the dirt gave way, dropping the horse to a ledge 50 feet below, where it was caught by a bush. The men had to go back for a rope and then eased the horse safely down to the bottom of the Butte.



This picture is of the first Dunn County Commissioners meeting at the John Stein home. Commissioners: William Connolly, Joseph Hushka, Paul Ziner, Judge, Chas. Bugbee. The meeting was in early fall of 1908. Visitors: Chris Lee, Sam Reems, Joseph Reems.

Mabel helped many new-born babies into the world, and both she and Sam helped in 'laying out' the dead, as undertakers or morticians were not always available. The body was washed, dressed and laid out for three days in the coolest room.

On the other hand, they were always ready for a good time with friends and family. Sam built a bob-sled and they all had many a spill and thrill on Turkey hill. They skated on the creek in the winter and dug out a dam for a 'swimmin' hole in the summer. Sam was an excellent swimmer and dived for and helped recover the body of a man who had drowned in the swollen Knife River. They also participated in the community 'shindigs' that started at eight o'clock in the evening and lasted until four A.M. They passed the hat for the mouth harp and fiddle players and the ladies served, sandwiches, cake and coffee at midnite.

One of the first teachers in the territory was Alice Ross, who taught Oakdale School No. 1, the first school in the first organized district in Dunn County. Alice taught for many years, retired and spent her remaining years in Washington.

Alfred and Jennie Reems and their 4 children lived about five miles from Sam's. He provided land for the first school in Mt. View School District and his family was fortunate in having the school in their yard! Alfred raised sorgum and started a syrup business, which was not too flourishing. They later left and went to Arizona where they still reside.

Roy was the youngest brother; he had a homestead in the brakes and enlisted in the Army during World War I. He has spent the rest of his life traveling around the world.

Sam, Roy, Mable and Harold attended checker tournaments around the county and were a formidable team.



On December 26, 1942 Sam died and Mrs. Reems sold the farm to her son, Harold, who married the former Thelma Bang. They have four children: Terry, engaged in farming with his father; Mavis, Mrs. Gary Jepson, living in the Whetstone area; Wanda, in California; and Rick, who attends the State School of Science at Wahpeton.

The other children born to Sam and Mabel Reems are: Wildie, born in Minnesota, who died at the age of three; Joe Reems, who married the former Lillie Mae Scott and lives in Vancouver, Washington; Mildred, Mrs. Elmer Borstad, living at Devils Lake, N. Dak.; Jennie, Mrs. Hartvik Anderson, Halliday, N. Dak.; Marie, Mrs. L. D. Stevens, Portland, Oregon, and Nellie Mae, Mrs. Leslie Fischer, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

#### ARTHUR E. ROESSL

I came to western North Dakota in 1903 west of the big Missouri River near Garrison Dam.

I homesteaded in Dunn County in 1922. My first cabin was built by a Mr. Mickelson. Mr. Mickelson had filed on the homestead after August Lauser had let it go back to the government or sold his relinquishment to Mickelson.

Mr. Mickelson then sold to Sherman Christianson and he relinquished back to the government.

I then filed on the homestead and bought the cabin. The cabin was located on a lot in section 2-147-97.

Some of the land I filed on was in Section 32-148-97 containing 382.24 acres.

A few years later Mike Cuskelly of Oakdale, N. Dak. relinquished land north of my land. I filed on this land also. It gave me 247.79 additional acres, which made nearly a section of grazing land. I was able to file on this land through a stock grazing homestead law which former President Theodore Roosevelt helped put through.

In the drought year of 1936 the Little Missouri River was bone dry. I sold the few horses I had left, also the four head of milk cows and called it quits. In the fall of 1936 I moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, although I hated to leave good old North Dakota.

With the help of my good friend, Gordon Olson, I managed to keep the land. In the fall of 1958 I sold it to Gordon and his wife.

#### CARL ROKNES

By Carl Roknes

I came from near Bergen, Norway to my brother Anders' place on the second of April, 1912. Anders lived about 8 miles south and ½ mile east of Halliday. My other brother Askel Roknes was renting the farm at that time. I worked for my brother and for farmers in that neighborhood that summer until after threshing. Then I went with Anders to a place near the south end of the Killdeer Mountains where I located my homestead. Filed on same in Manning about October 20. Worked near Marshall until December 22.

The next spring about April 10, Askel and I started out with team and wagon with some lumber and supplies to go to the homestead to build my shack on Sec. 2-145-97.

My sister, Ingeborg Roknes, filed on a homestead in November, 1912. Her quarter is in Sec. 14-145-97. There was a house on her homestead. In the springs of 1913, 1914, and 1915 I worked for my neighbors. In 1915 Askel and I started farming on the home place. We both farmed there until early in 1918. On June 5, I registered for military service. Was called in by draft board in February 1918. Was then deferred to a later date. I put in the crop on the place alone in the spring of '18. Askel went to help Anders who was sick at the time. About August 20, I got a card of greetings from Woodrow Wilson. Started on the way to Camp Grant on Sept. 5. Was there 'til Sept. 28 and from there to Camp Hancock, Ga. Was there 'til March 13 when I got discharged from military duties. Farmed at home from then until the spring of 1923. Then rented out my farm to Jerome Johnson. I went to work for farmers south of Killdeer. In 1924 I farmed with Ole Bergelie.

In 1925 I worked for George Lathrop on the Beckert Ranch. In spring of 1926 I went to farm at the home place again and farmed there until 1938. Crops were on the up and down those years. From 1929 to 1938 depression and dry years made it tough sledding. In spring of '34 I had over 30 cattle. Had to sell all except 9 head to government for \$8.00 to \$20.00 per head. Sold cattle and machinery in spring of '38 to Marion Hovden. Then I loaded up household goods on a trailer and pulled out to a farm near Canton, S. Dak. Worked in that neighborhood 'til March 20, 1939. Then I went back to N. Dak. and applied for a F. H. A. loan. That didn't get approved. Went back to South Dakota and Minnesota for harvest and threshing. Picked spuds near Barnesville, Minnesota. In 1940 I worked on Beckert Ranch 'til July 4, 1941. John Grande farmed the home place in 1940. Got hailed out slick and clean. Had in some crop for myself and some field rented out in '41 and had good crop. In '42 I farmed again and got hailed out 75 to 100 per cent. I also got a job working for State Highway Department. Got partly hailed out in '43. Sold the homestead and cattle in 1947 to Marion Hovden. Quit on highway in May of '48. In 1949 I built house and barn and dug a well on Ingeborg's quarter. Farmed and worked for neighbors 'til 1965.

December 15, 1964 was when we had the big blizzard. I didn't loose any cattle but shoveled lots of snow. On October 1, 1965 I rented a house in Killdeer. In July 1966 I bought a house in Killdeer where I am living now. Ingeborg lived with me in Killdeer until she passed away in October, 1967.

#### FRED ROQUETTE

By Henry Llewellyn Roquette

We are still pioneering behind the Killdeer Mountains. My father, Fred Lawrence Roquette, was born July 21, 1869, at Freemont, Iowa. He came to Dickinson in 1890 and took a job with the N. P. Railroad. He worked for about six months, then returned to Freemont, Iowa. He came back to Dickinson May 3, 1891, in an immigrant car with his brother, George Roquette. In the car was a team of horses, wagon, two milk cows, chickens, and household furniture. (A meager amount of furniture I am sure.)

George Roquette homesteaded on land known as the Twin Butte area and more specifically in the Horse Shoe Bend on Crooked Creek. His mother and Frank Roquette (brother) came out a few months later.

Frank, his mother, and brother George operated this ranch until 1901-1902 when they sold to V. A. Baker and then moved to Dickinson and went into the mercantile business with his brother Frank Roquette. The firm was known as the Roquette Brothers Store. It was located next to the Green Drug Store. They continued business in this location until 1912. They moved when the Elk's Building was completed to this location, but my father had purchased his brothers interests and the new firm was known as F. L. Roquette and Company. This business was continued until 1924 when he closed out the firm.

Fred married Mabel Virginia Klinefelter in 1893. I was born March 17, 1894. Mother came to Dickinson in 1889 or 1890. Her parents, three sisters, and a brother came here from St. Paul when Dickinson was about the end of the line on the railroad. Of course, it continued on. My grandfather, Charley Klinefelter was a carpenter and it was he who built the first hotel in Dickinson, The Villard Hotel. He sold it and then built the old St. Charles Hotel—also the Dickinson Opera House, which in the early days sat next to the St. Charles Hotel, on the east side of the hotel where the filling station now is located.

After selling the F. L. Roquette Company, my father moved to Minneapolis with his mother where he could be near my oldest sister, La Verne. She was married to Mr. R. B. Rathbum, who was associated with the First National Bank of Minneapolis. La Verne was stricken with multiple sclerosis, lingered for ten years and passed away in 1934.

I purchased this ranch in 1935 and my dad came out and ran this place until 1942 when my mother passed