

BIRR, CARL AND JOANNA (WEIZIG)

F41



Front row (L to R): Carl and Joanne Birr. Back row: Bertha Birr (Mrs. William Meyer of Kasota) and Eliza Birr (Mrs. William Hawker of St. Clair).



Left to right are: Oscar Birr, Bertha (Birr) Meyer, Eliza (Birr) Hawker and Augusta (Birr) Meyer.

Carl Birr was born in the Province of Pommerin, Germany on June 11, 1832. Carl was a wagon-maker in Germany. He followed this trade for a number of years and in his later years he fulfilled his dream and came to America in 1884, with his wife, Joanna, to make a home for his growing family. Carl, at the age of 53, and his wife, Joanna, 43, and their children, Oscar, 19; Charles, 15; Herman, 9; Mary, 7; Gusta, 4; and baby Bertha; the family set out for America. The family located in LeSueur County. It was here that Eliza was born on July 4, 1887. Four years after they came to LeSueur County, Carl and Joanna purchased the A. Guthier farm and moved to Medo Township in 1889. The family lived on the farm for a number of years.

Joanna (Weizig) Birr was born on May 24, 1842, in Schmolzin, Germany and married Carl Birr in 1863. To this union, 11 children were born, four of which preceded them in death. Carl, Joanna, and family, were members of the Union Church of Medo, and

Reverend Kilian of Mapleton was their Pastor. Joanna died on June 20, 1905, and Carl died on November 5, 1913, and are buried at the Morrow Cemetery near Mapleton. After Joanna's death, Carl spent his remaining years living with his children.

Description of the Carl Birr Farm — Section 7 South $\frac{1}{2}$ of Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$. North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$. 153.2 acres.

(See history of Mary Birr (Mrs. Carl Schull).)

by Carol A. More

BISHMAN, LOUIS AND HERMYNA (KALOR)

F42

Louis Bishman, senior, came to Mankato in 1867 after a long journey with his wife and small family from Monee, Illinois. He was born in Hesse, Darmstadt, Germany, but the family came to America to settle the new world and find farm land. There was a rather large settlement of German people in Illinois at that time and it seemed a good place to start. After a few years there, an older brother came to Waseca, and finding it to his liking, urged his younger brother to come too. Louis, and his wife Hermyna Kalor, formerly of Saxony, Germany, moved on to the growing city of Mankato. This was in 1867. He bought land on the east side of what is now Lime Street and raised a garden, a cow for milk, and spent much of his time at common labor and as a sodder.

Their family consisted of Elizabeth, who married Herman Hesse and had four children, before she died in 1898 at age 38. Charles married Emma Schippel and, with his brothers Louis and Herman established a contracting business as bricklayers. Many of the brick buildings in the Mankato area were the work of the Bishman brothers. Louis and Herman never married, but Charles and Emma had a son who died early and a daughter, Esther, who grew up in the old home, later married Percy Randall. Their daughter, Sylvia, Mrs. Lee Gunsolus, still lives in Pemberton. Their old home on Broad Street (with the "onion" on top as was popular at the time) still stands. Louis became a draftsman, having studied at Mankato Commercial College, but later became a city mail carrier. Minnie married William Strobel, raised two boys in Mankato and moved to St. Paul. Ida married Frank Pixley, moved to South Dakota for a time, and later returned to Mankato with their family: Grace, a teacher, who married Fred Harms; Hermyna (Haugen, Siebenbrunner) who still lives in Mankato as her son Kenneth; and Harold who married Hattie Moeri. Harold's son Frank is the only one who remains in Mankato. The youngest child of Louis Bishman senior was Luella who became a teacher and married Burton Ackerman, a rural mail carrier from Mapleton. Their children were Elizabeth (Mrs. Harvey Andrews) of Delavan and Alice Gerth who still lives in Mapleton.

by Alice A. Gerth

BISHOP, DR. IRA AND MARY JANE (BERRY)

F43

Ira Bishop was a native of Wisconsin and was born on the 27th day of December 1849 in Waukesha County. His father was a native of Vermont and was a school teacher as well as engaged in agriculture, so it is not surprising Ira became interested in a higher education.

Ira Bishop began his higher education by attending Whitewater Normal School in Wisconsin. After three years at Normal School, he taught for a short time. In 1870 he made a trip to Blue Earth County with the Richard Credicott family, nearby neighbors who came here to settle.

He returned to Wisconsin that fall, and in 1874 entered Rush Medical College at Chicago and began to study for his profession. After graduation he worked in Palmyra, Wisconsin, for a short time.

He had pleasant memories of his stay in Minnesota and decided to start out for himself in Blue Earth County. It took his last penny to make the trip. He stayed with his friends the Credicotts until he could establish himself in a practice in Mapleton. Dr. Bishop opened the first doctors office in the village, and built a thriving practice which lasted nearly fifty years.

Noted surgeons have said that Dr. Bishop had a natural gift for surgery and he could have risen to prominence in that line but he was content to do the work of the country doctor, administering to the sick and needy of the community.

On May 10, 1880, Dr. Bishop married Mary Jane Berry. They established a home on the west side of Mapleton (the Klein home) where he engaged in dairy farming with a herd of Jerseys.

Dr. Bishop was active in many civic organizations. He served as a member of the school board for years. He was also a member of the public library board. He was a member of the Baptist Church, serving for years as teacher of the men's Bible class. He was a member of the Modern Woodmen of America and the Odd Fellows.

Dr. and Mrs. Bishop had seven children, one son and six daughters. His son, Ira, Jr., became manager of the Clyde Iron Works in Duluth.

Two of his daughters married sons of pioneer David Will. Kathryn married Dr. Melville Will and lived in Bertha. Marianne married Dr. William Will and also lived in Bertha. Three more of his daughters retired to the Bertha area: Mrs. Elizabeth Beckman, Mrs. Ruth Bottemiller, now deceased, and Clare Bishop. The other daughter Mrs. Bernice Otte lived in Florida.

by Jane Eichler

