

The Journey of the Kassien Family
From Germany to Boulder Junction, Wisconsin
1880 – 2007



By Dorothy Kassien Boudreau

Forward

The writing of this story began with the Kassien Family reunion held in Boulder Junction, Wisconsin in June 2007. Eighty people gathered that day to celebrate the 85th birthday of my Mother, Dorothy Kassien Boudreau, and to share the common bond that unites us as a family. With a little encouraging Dorothy agreed to write the story of the Kassien Family to share with all the descendants of Louis and Lena Kassien and anyone else who enjoys great history.

You will see by the happy faces in the next few pages of pictures how much everyone enjoyed the reunion. In the text that follows a wonderful story unfolds that makes all of us "Kassiens" proud and humbled by the hard work and love of family that is the common theme of Louis and Lena's story. Forgive me for being the history geek but the Kassien story is symbolic of what it took to build America. Louis and Lena's generation and their children lived through some awful, tough times (World War I, the Northern Plains dustbowl, the Great Depression, World War II and the Korean War) persevering despite the odds. Their story is America's story.

Best wishes to all of you,
Bonnie Boudreau Cassel
Louis and Lena's granddaughter

*For Connie Christopherson
and family
as you carry on our Heritage,
Best Wishes,
Aunt Dorothy*

THE LOUIS & LENA KASSIEN FAMILY REUNION - 2007



RICHARD & DOROTHY



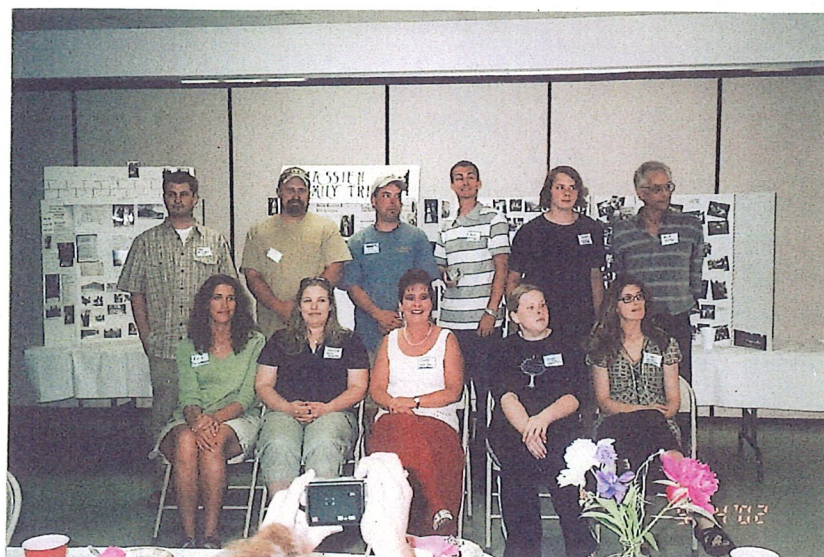
GRANDCHILDREN

STANDING

SHAWN KASSIEN, BOBBY KASSIEN, TOM KASSIEN, JIM KASSIEN, CHARLES KNOX, EDWARD REIBLE,
JOAN BOUDREAU COOK, BONNIE BOUDREAU CASSEL, JERRY BOUDREAU, LOUIS KASSIEN,
RICHARD KASSIEN II

SEATED

JEANETTE KASSIEN OMEN, LYN KASSIEN LADE, JANET KASSIEN KLUXDAL, MARION KASSIEN
WALKER, VIVIAN KASSIEN HUNT



GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN

STANDING

PETER REIBLE, JAY KASSIEN, CHARLES KNOX, AARON REIBLE, MATT KASSIEN, MARK WALKER

SEATED

KRISTI KASSIEN, JANELLE KASSIEN, BETTY KNOX HAMILTON, MICHELLE KASSIEN, CHERI DUPREE



GREAT GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN

AVA REIBLE
K.C. KASSIEN



LOUIS KASSIEN AND EVELYN WIESE FAMILY TREE

MARION

WAYNE

KANDACE

KRISTEN

CRYSTAL

DOMINIC

JADYN

AMBER

APRIL

JUDY

MATTHEW

MARK

JUSTIN

LUCAS

MELODY

WILLIAM (BILLY)

SALLY

KENNETH

LAUREN

RACHEL

VIVIAN

KATHY

JONI LEE

CAROLYN

CONNIE

BRANDT

CHASE

CINDY

STEVE

NICOLE

AMBER



KASSIEN FAMILY REUNION - 2007
MARION KASSIEN WALKER



HANK KASSIEN AND ELLA LOVELESS FAMILY TREE

BOBBY

RENE

ZACHARY

TYLER

JEFF

JASON

SARA

MELVIN

JEANETTE

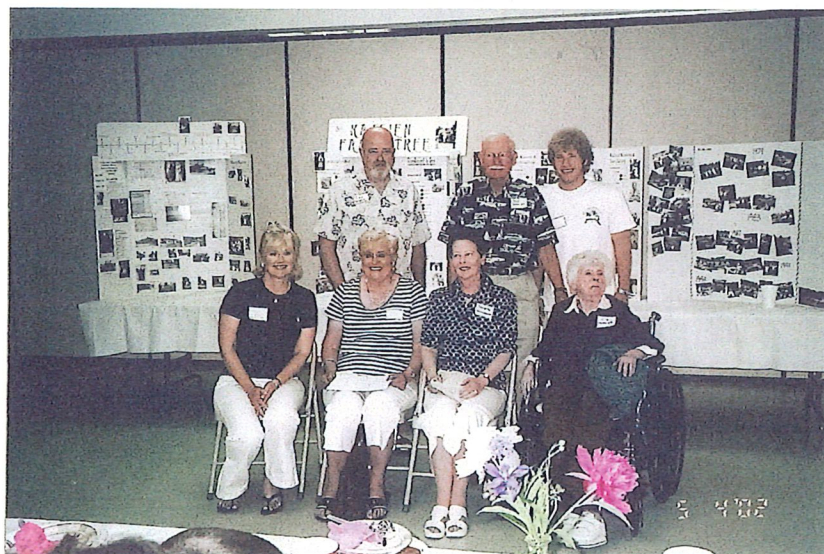
MINDY

GARY

MICHELLE

NICOLE

TIMOTHY



KASSIEN FAMILY REUNION - 2007

STANDING

IRV OMEN, BOBBY KASSIEN, TYLER ROSE

SEATED

RENE KASSIEN ROSE, DARLENE KASSIEN, JEANETTE KASSIEN
OMEN, ELLA LOVELESS KASSIEN



HELEN KASSIEN AND JOE KNOX FAMILY TREE

LEONARD

CHARLES

RICHARD

CHARLES

JESSICA

ASHLEY

BRIAN

AUSTIN

TROY

BETTY JEAN

JAMES, JR.

FRANK

CRYSTAL

BOBBY

ROBERT JOHN

KAITLYN

CHARLES, JR.

JUSTIN

JEREMY

FRANK

HELEN KASSIEN AND JOE REIBLE FAMILY TREE

EDWARD

PETER

AVA

AARON

ANNE MARIE

AURORA

SHAWN



Kassien Family reunion – 2007

Standing

Peter Reible, Jennifer Reible, Ed Reible, Aaron Reible,
Jean Knox, Jim Hamilton

Seated

Ava Reible, Linda Reible, Betty Jean Hamilton, Chuck Knox,
Charlie Knox, Cheryl Knox

ROBERT KASSIEN AND DOROTHY HARRIS FAMILY TREE



JANET

ROBERT (JIM)

JAY

KRISTI

CASEY

DONALD

JANELLE

JARED

THOMAS



KASSIEN FAMILY REUNION - 2007

STANDING

JAY KASSIEN, TOM KASSIEN, JIM KASSIEN

SEATED

KRISTI AND TJ KASSIEN, NANCY KASSIEN, JANET KASSIEN KLUXDAL,
DIANE KASSIEN, JANELLE KASSIEN



DOROTHY KASSIEN AND GORDON BOUDREAU FAMILY TREE

GERALD
SHAWN
LUKE

BONITA
JENNIFER
CLAIRE
AVA
OWEN
GREGORY
THOMAS
ABIGAIL
ZACHARY
DANIEL

JOAN
LORRIE
CARLY
JAKE
LEAH
LISA
MEGAN
MATTHEW
BRIAN
JILLIAN

DEAN
JASON
KAYLA
ERIC
STEPHAN
SHEILA
MELISA
TALA
ALTHEA
EMILY



KASSIEN FAMILY REUNION - 2007
DOROTHY BOUDREAU, JERRY BOUDREAU,
JOAN BOUDREAU COOK, BONNIE BOUDREAU CASSEL

RICHARD KASSIEN AND JOAN LARSON FAMILY TREE



LUANNE

BILLY

CODY

MELISSA

SHERI

LOUIS

MATTHEW

MICHELLE

LYNN

GARY, JR.

WILLIE JO

RICHARD II

RICHARD III

JESSIE

SHAWN



Kassien Family Reunion – 2007

Standing

Louis Kassien, Emily Kassien, Shawn Kassien, Richard Kassien III

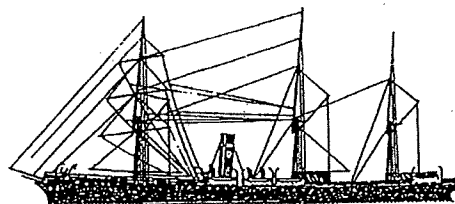
Seated

Shawn Egan, Cheri Dupree Egan, Lynn Kassien Lade, Richard Kassien I,
Rhonda Kassien

The Kassien Family Germany – Illinois – Montana – Wisconsin

Louis Henry Kassien was born in Germany on June 27, 1880, the first born of Louis Sr. and Dorthia Maria Sophia Oldenburg. Two years later his sister Anna arrived. At that time, the Kassien's made plans to move their family to the United States.

THE KASSIEN'S BOOKED PASSAGE FROM
GERMANY TO PHILADELPHIA ON THE
S.S. LORD CLIVE



They arrived in Philadelphia and then boarded a train for Illinois to live among other German people. Records show them living in Turner Jct., which later became West Chicago. This was an area of small farms supplying food and other products for the insatiable appetite of the fast growing city of Chicago. Three more children joined this family: August, Elizabeth and Frank. All of the children attended German schools and the Lutheran Church. When Louis Jr. had finished 5th grade his formal education ended and he joined the work force to help provide for the younger children. He was a farmer at heart, a good-sized young man and a willing worker. He soon found employment on neighborhood farms. He told of buying a bicycle for transportation. Having been raised in a devout Lutheran family, the Sabbath was a day of rest but also a day to ride his bicycle to see the area. Lena, whose given name was Caroline, was the youngest in a family of ten children born to John and Dora Bremer in 1884. Only six of these children lived to adulthood. Census records of 1900 show Dora Bremer a widow living in Bloomingdale, Illinois with small children still at home. Lena attended school, an apt student until 5th grade and then had to join the workforce too.

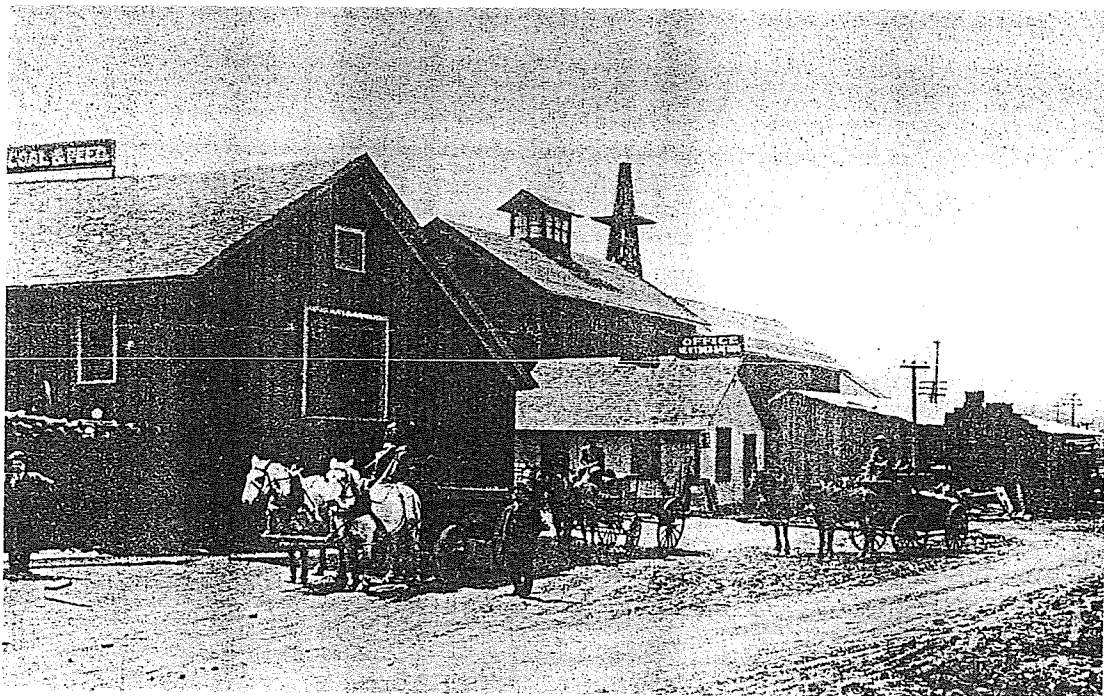
It is unknown how Louis and Lena met but in these German communities and their churches there was quite a bit of social life. They were married on November 2, 1902 in Bloomingdale, Illinois. They lived in the five-corner area where Louie (my Mother always called him Louie) drove a team of horses to deliver lumber and building supplies for the Newton-Betke Lumber Co. Marion was born in 1903, Louis Jr. in 1905, Henry in 1908 and Helen in 1910. This growing family made Louie's idea of becoming a farmer dimmer and dimmer and in the meantime land prices in the area went up and up. His father Louis Sr. continued to rent a small farm in the area where he managed to make a living with an apple orchard, producing honey and raising canaries.

In the meantime the "Dryland Homestead" movement had begun in 1900. Between 1909 and 1913 the railroads, agricultural colleges, State Immigration Bureaus and even the Department of Agriculture "propagandized" the dryland method of farming in the Dakotas and Montana areas. This caused contagious enthusiasm among city dwellers, immigrants and hired hands. From 1911 – 1916 unusual moisture fell in the area encouraging more and more families to become homesteaders including the Kassien family.



LOUIS
&
LENA
KASSIEN

NOVEMBER 2, 1902
BLOOMINGDALE, ILLINOIS



LOUIE'S FIRST JOB
NEWTON - BAETHKE MATERIAL YARD
1905

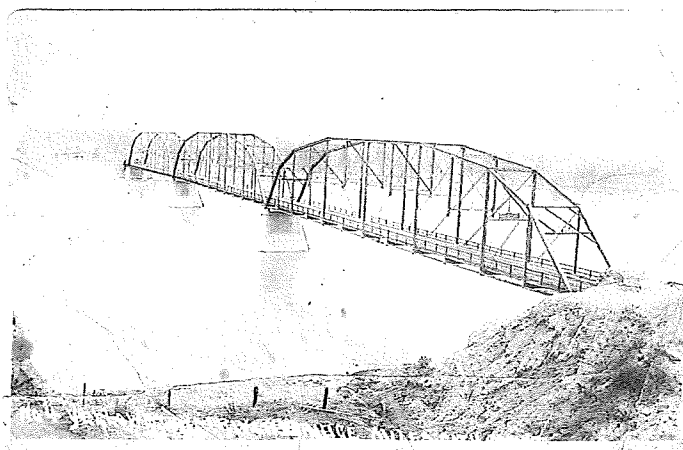
In 1912 Louie's adventuresome brother August and his sister Anna's husband, Fred Zook, journeyed to Montana to look around. Fred was a licensed barber who had developed health problems and had been advised to seek employment in a dryer climate. These two men arrived in Montana, rented horses and began an inspection trip to see the available land. As a result, they chose side-by-side "homesteads" on Frozen Dog Creek in Eastern Montana, 50 miles north of Miles City. In 1913 August and Fred moved to Montana to start "proving up" on the homestead which included digging a well by hand and building a sod house. The youngest Kassien, Frank, went west with August and Fred Zook to work on the homestead. In 1913 Louie's sister Anna and her two children made the move to join her husband Fred and the August Kassien's. Frank Kassien went back to Illinois having found out that homesteading was not for him.

Mother Nature was kind, ample moisture provided bumper crops and good grazing. Letters from the homesteaders to the folks back home proved to be more and more tantalizing especially to Louis Kassien who had such high hopes for land of his own.

In 1915 another son was born to Louie and Lena, this was Robert. When Robert was less than a year old Louie and Lena joined the westward movement and took a 320 acre homestead six miles north of Fred and Anna Zook and August and Ella Kassien. They quickly built the typical sod house and this was to be home for 13-year-old Marion, 11 year old Louis Jr., 9 year Henry (Hank), 7-year-old Helen and 1-year-old Robert. Louis Jr. (Lutch) and Hank quickly became westerners but 13 year old Marion was the malcontent having had to give up a city home and a circle of friends for this place on the prairie, living in a "sodie," water hauled by the barrel and lots of farm chores. Louie and Lena worked as a good team, planted crops, bought a band of sheep and built a small house determined to be good homesteaders. My Mother told of the 6 or 7 homesteads being close enough together that they could see each other's lights at night. They were neighborly and helped with farm chores, shared their knowledge and experiences of living in this western world as all were "imports." The women especially found strength and wisdom in time of childbirth and illnesses.

1917 proved to be a dry year, 1918 even dryer and 1919 the driest. Fred Zook took up his barber shears and gave haircuts for extra income. August Kassien gathered up wild horses to ship back to Illinois; often he had broken them to be workhorses. The struggle to live off the land became nearly impossible. Marion made life miserable for everyone so when she was 16 my Dad took her in to Miles City, found her a room and a job and left her there. This must have been a difficult thing for the whole family but most of all for my Mother. Marion survived and had the opportunity to develop a life of her own. The family visited her when they went in to Miles City.

In 1921 another child was on the way to arrive in January of the next year. Lena was 35 years old and problems were anticipated. At Christmas time Lena left her boys on the ranch, Louie, Helen and Robert moved into Miles City to await the birth of the child. They rented a house across the street from a grade school so Helen and Robert could go to school. Louie had a small size truck so he was going to mine coal from the surrounding countryside and sell coal door to door. Eastern Montana has beautiful "badlands" where the colorful bands of sandstone are interspersed with bands of coal making it very spectacular. This coal is low grade, easily accessible and saleable. All very good but early on Louie broke his ankle so that ended the coal mining. On a cold winter day, January 17th, Dorothy was born, Louie and Lena's sixth child. The family stayed in town until the new baby was 3 months old and then returned to the ranch. Lena found her boys had survived, Hank had curly hair so he looked wooly with no haircut



A POSTCARD FROM LENA TO HER FATHER-IN-LAW.
(THE BRIDGE OVER YELLOWSTONE RIVER - 1920)

POST CARD

Dear Father
Just as time we
have showers every day. W. Louis Kasson
Crops are doing. Seen
Anna's yesterday. We
are well. We have made
up our mind to stay
here for some time.

Loverdale
Ill.

SERIAL No. 822774		NAME Louis Kasson	
ADDRESS Glenn Ellyn Ill. Warren State, Montana			
DESCRIPTION OF LAND 82	SECTION 26	TOWNSHIP 15N	RANGE 43E
			AREA 320
DATE 1927	NOTATIONS.		
Jan 5	Entry filed act 1-22-10 Suspended for evidence of citizenship		
May 16	Entry allowed 1979119		
June 28	Zigzag brook June 16-1920 E. J. Wheeler American		
June 28	F.P. filed. Fee No. 2452817-\$17.00 Suspended for App. Pub.		
June 28	F.P. issued		
Oct. 30	Pat. 779002 dated 10/20/20 Notified		

HOMESTEAD APPLICATION

Miles City 033774.

The United States of America,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting,

WHEREAS, a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Miles City, Montana, has been deposited in the General Land Office, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress of May 20, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of Louis Kasson has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the south half of Section twenty-six in Township fifteen north of Range forty-three east of the Montana Meridian, Montana, containing three hundred twenty acres,

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor-General:

NOW KNOW YE, That there is, therefore, granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said claimant the tract of Land above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereto, unto the said claimant and to the heirs and assigns of the said claimant forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts; and there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States; reserving, also, to the United States all coal in the lands so granted, and to it, or persons authorized by it, the right to prospect for, mine, and remove coal from the same upon compliance with the conditions of and subject to the limitations of the Act of June 22, 1910 (36 Stat., 583).

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, Woodrow Wilson,

President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, in the District of Columbia, the TWENTY-FIFTH day of OCTOBER In the year of our Lord one thousand

also hundred and TWENTY and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and FORTY-FIFTH.

By the President, Woodrow Wilson
M. O. LeRoy, Secretary.

By John O'Connell, Acting Recorder of the General Land Office.

RECORD OF PATENTS: Patent Number 779002

APPROVED CLAIM

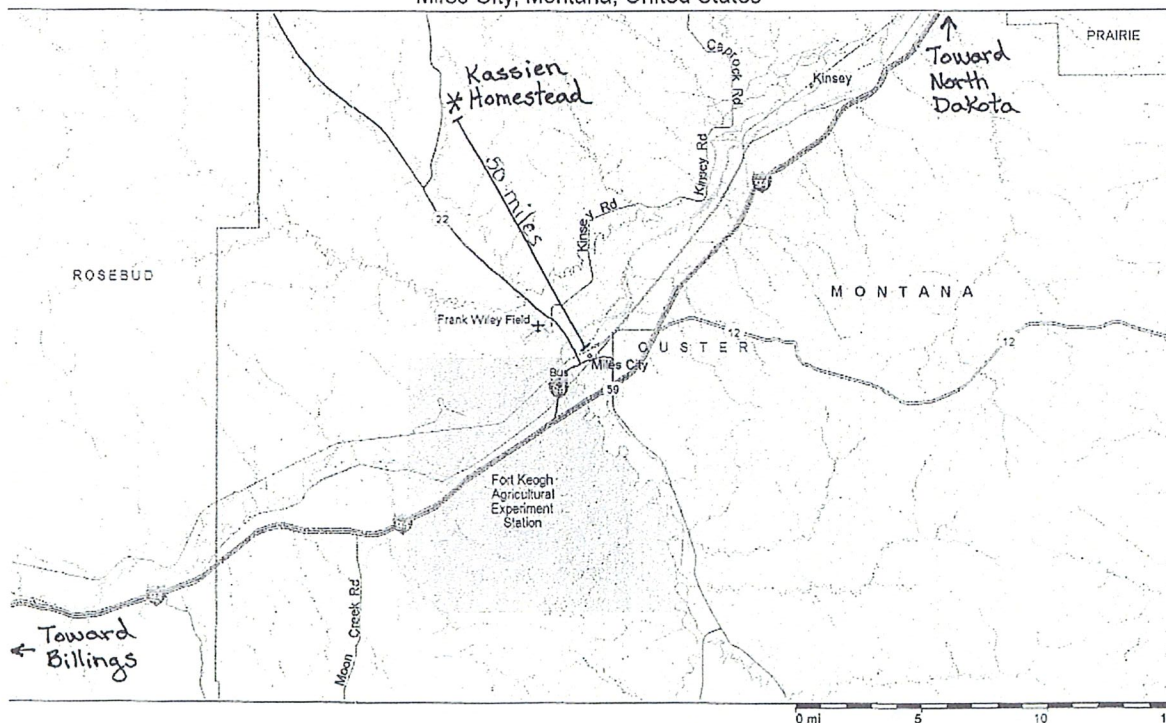
1920 CENSUS

NAME OF INSTITUTION		NAME		RELATION	
NAME OF INSTITUTION		NAME		RELATION	
73	73	Ogilvie, Alex	Head	1	0
✓		Anna E.	Wife		
✓		John E.	Son		
✓		Thelma J.	Daughter		
✓		Thomas J.	Son		
74	74	Garred, Charles	Head	1	0
✓		Nancy	Wife		
✓		Donald	Son		
75	75	Smith, Walter L.	Head	1	0
✓		Olson	Wife		
✓		Donald W.	Son		
✓		Thelma	Daughter		
76	76	Pisa, Thomas	Head	1	0
✓		Hilda A.	Wife		
77	77	Jensen, Abraham	Head	1	0
✓		Anna K.	Wife		
✓		Arthur	Son		
✓		Edna E.	Daughter		
✓		Jennie K.	Daughter		
✓		Clara K.	Daughter		
✓		Willie E.	Daughter		
✓		Edward E.	Son		
✓		Emma A.	Daughter		
✓		Arnold R.	Son		
78	78	Howard, Arthur	Head	1	R
✓		Clara	Wife		
✓		Robert	Son		
✓		Arthur	Son		
79	79	Lawson, Harry J.	Head	1	0
✓		Anna H.	Wife		
80	80	Smith, William A.	Head	1	0
✓		Harold	Son		
81	81	Smith, Andrew	Head	1	0
✓		John	Son		
✓		Anna V.	Daughter		
82	82	Kassien, James	Head	1	0
✓		Anna	Wife		
✓		William H.	Daughter		
✓		Leola A.	Son		
✓		Henry F.	Son		
✓		Thelma	Daughter		
✓		Robert	Son		
83	83	Living, Aris	Head	1	0
✓		Wildred	Son		
✓		Edna	Son		
✓		Edward E.	Son		
✓		Donald	Daughter		
✓		Anna S.	Son		
✓		Edward H.	Son		
✓		David A.	Son		



HOMESTEAD LAND (2000)

Miles City, Montana, United States



MAP PROVIDED BY BONNIE CASSEL WHILE VISITING THE AREA IN 2000.

but Louis had straight black hair and looked like an Indian. Haircuts fixed that.

Meanwhile Marion had become a very pretty young woman and met a man who was in the logging business – Art Christie. They were married in Miles City. Soon after Art and Marion moved to Northern Wisconsin with his job. Marion stayed in touch with the family through letters. She was quite impressed with Wisconsin and wrote that jobs were available and land was cheap. Louie and Lena had to take another chance, as things were not working out in Montana. In the spring of 1922 they loaded the family up and headed for Boulder Jct., Wisconsin. This was Hank, Helen, Robert and 6-month-old Dorothy. Louis was left on the ranch to take care of things.

Marion and Art were living in an abandoned logging camp on Street Lake with ample room for the family to join them for the summer. She had written directions to find Boulder Jct. The Freund family, who lived in the State House provided with Mr. Freund's State job, would direct them to Street Lake, which was 1 mile south of the State House. We arrived in the yard and the entire Freund family came out to greet us lead by a robust red-haired mother. Four overall-clad boys climbed aboard the fenders since there was no room in the over crowded car and directed us to Street Lake. Robert was aghast since our Dad would never allow any of us to ride on the fender! The 2 wheel-track road to Street Lake was rough but we made it. Marion was waiting for us. The Freund boys walked back home but we felt like they were old friends already.

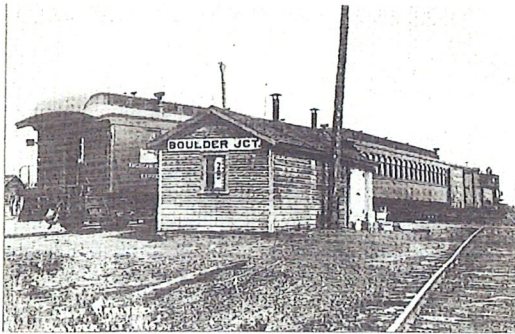
The kids from the Freund family and my family constructed a footbridge across the Manitowish River. We all became well balanced and could cross this bridge with great ability. It consisted of a huge 12" x 12" piece of timber that extended out to about midstream, two smaller sections extended from the other side with a 6 foot movable piece in the center. How wise we were to not block a navigable river! But since Mr. Freund was a game warden I'm sure we were warned to build it in this manner. Parts of that bridge are still there today.

The summer went by very quickly. Before we had to leave Louie and Lena were able to purchase a 40 acre parcel of land across the river from the Freund family. Once again the government gave false hopes for people to be able to produce 2 crops a year from this land once it was finally ready for production. The 40 acres had hundreds of stumps left behind by the loggers, the soil was very sandy and the growing season very short. But my Father was a landowner now! We headed back to Montana to sell out and relocate in Wisconsin.

We all left Street Lake at the same time. Art's job had ended in the area and he was being sent to the East Coast. We traveled together to Illinois for a visit with the Kassien relatives there before we headed back west, Marion and Art to the East Coast. We had the winter months to rearrange our life. Needless to say Lutch and Hank, both teenagers who had become very attached to life in Montana, loved their saddle horses and were reluctant to leave. The band of sheep had to be sold and the sheepdog went with the band much to Robert's disappointment. The decision was made to rent a boxcar from the Milwaukee Road; farm machinery and the boys' saddle horses carried in one end of the boxcar, household items in the other end. One person could travel with the animals to feed and water them. This boxcar was to be sent to Minocqua. Hank was the one left with the animals, to load and care for them as they traveled up north after the family had arrived. It all took some coordination.

We said goodbye to our relatives there, my Dad's sister Anna and her family and Dad's brother August who were still able to hang on to their homesteads. At least this time we had a destination and a little knowledge of what was ahead. The car was full – my parents, Lutch, Helen, Robert, and year old Dorothy and a little black dog who had survived so many rattlesnake bites she was immune! We went back out to Street Lake to await the arrival of the boxcar. It didn't come and didn't come. Stubborn Hank had decided not to leave! My parents finally had to send Lutch back to get him! This worked out all right – the two boys looked so much alike, one would hide while the other one dealt with the horses and the railroad people. They arrived in Minocqua, horses unloaded, wagons re-assembled and household goods loaded up and onto Old Highway 10 approaching Street Lake from the south and then onto the 40 acres on the Manitowish River with lots of work to be done before the winter set in.

In 1923 the little town within the confines of the railroad tracks consisted of the Milwaukee Road Depot, a freight shed, a Section Foreman's house, several other railroad buildings, Bill Paquette's Hotel, Bar and grocery store, Sam William's grocery store with the Post Office, the school house, Jim Blaisdell's Bar and Canoe Shop, Brooks Ross Lumber Co., and a few dwellings of various sizes and shapes. A few automobiles were being used but people mostly traveled with horses, the roads were 2 rut wagon trails. The YMCA Camp Manitowish on Boulder Lake was in operation as were a few other places located in abandoned logging camps that were being used as fishing camps for the few hardy fisherman. Work was available in these places but the railroad was a place for steady employment. My Dad got a job there, Lutch and Hank worked wherever they could. The logging was about over with, the beautiful forests had been depleted.



BOULDER JUNCTION TRAIN DEPOT
1915



BOULDER JUNCTION POST OFFICE
1919-1940

We found a few rather elaborate houses built by groups of pioneers who had arrived well before us. There was one place known as "Birshank." It was built into a steep hillside with a southern exposure about where Karl's Electric place is now. Another was "Skylers" at the north end of Wool Lake. Another was the Allen Log Cabin on what is now Allen Road. We also knew about the Stevenson house on Stevenson Creek. These houses appeared to have just been abandoned and eventually all that remained were foundations.

We also found hardy pioneer families seeking a place to make a living and we joined them; the Haags, Knashes, Kosiroskies, Hammonds, Engstroms, Michauds, Wieses, the Alts, Budreaus, Knoxes, Bests, and Carrys.

By the end of that first summer a few outbuildings had been built on the river to store equipment etc. We had to rent a rather shabby place known as the Hobbin house for that first winter. It was in town and allowed Helen and Robert to go to school in the small one room school house that stood where the Community Church parking lot is now. This was a rough and tumble school with an attendance of sometimes up to 60 kids and one teacher. Concerned parents prompted the building of the High Lake School north of town and the Bekken School west of town. These smaller neighborhood schools operated until Bill Paquette donated land at the east end of town where the Boulder Jct. Grade School was built in 1926. Both small schools were closed and students made their way to the school house in town. Living in town that winter allowed my Dad to go to his job on the railroad which consisted of maintaining the tracks, cleaning the tracks and keeping the switches clear of snow in the winter. When the tracks were extended west to Buswell and north to Bluebill the miles of tracks to maintain increased considerably. This job was covered by the "Benefits for Railroad Employees" consisting of life insurance, some health coverage and free passes on the railroad for family members. Toward the end of my Dad's employment with the railroad he was given the job of maintaining the coaling station that was in town. The steam engine had to take on additional coal when they went north or west of town. A coal shed had been built about where Schaus's Boat shop is now, across from the newly built school house. My Dad's job was to refill the large coal buckets so the fireman could transfer coal from the shed to the coal car. These buckets were about 3 feet tall and 30 inches in diameter and handled by a hand cranked crane. When I was in 2nd or 3rd grade at school I used to get permission to cross the road and see my Dad. He often looked like a black man from the coal dust. This was a miserable job, especially in the winter, it was an open shed with no protection from the winter winds and then at the end of the day he had to walk home. But it did provide a steady income and a few times my Mother was able to get a free pass and go to see the relatives in the Chicago area. I remember one trip we made, apparently at Christmas time. We had to go into the Grand Central Station to get the trains to take us to Bloomingdale, Wheaton, etc. All the shops had their toys on display – I could hardly believe my eyes!

Our family had been well received into the little town, perhaps like a breath of fresh air. My 2 oldest brothers continued to ride their Montana saddle horses in their black 10 gallon western hats and boots. They were friendly, handsome fellows with bright blue eyes. Helen was just beginning to blossom, she found friends in the Knox family. Walter Knox was the section foreman on the railroad and occupied the foreman's house in town. There were 4 daughters in that family, all around Helen's age. This was the mid 1920s when the girls shocked their parents and everyone else with short skirts, bobbed hair and red, red lipstick. Boulder Jct. was at the end of the line but fashions had found their way even into the North Woods. Of course these girls had a few brothers too, including the oldest one who was already working for the railroad on his father's crew.

In September of 1926 my youngest brother Richard joined our family. The farm out on the river was developing. My Dad had built the first house from mostly local material, perpendicular logs, windows salvaged from many places, celotex interior wall board long before the days of insulation. My Mother had wanted a "sun porch" and her request was granted. It was on the east side of the house, windows all around. Sun filled in on sunny days but very impractical and the roof always leaked.

These were also the days of the "Charleston" dance craze. The house did not have a really substantial floor – Helen and her friends would gather, crank up the old phonograph and dance while the floor swayed.

The house became crowded so a "bunkhouse" was built for my older brothers. This was a Montana carryover but proved to be a good idea; their friends, the older Haag brothers, Porter Dean, a few of the Waller brothers, could come and play cards and dream of fast cars that were becoming popular. This also afforded a place for my Grandpa Kassien to stay when he joined our family after his wife died. My Mother had a table full!

An icehouse had been built so when ice-making season came around we could make ice. Up until this event we stored our milk, butter, cheese, etc., in the "spring" down in the river near the house. Some one had discovered this spring, had anchored a barrel into the river bottom, put a cover on it and in the warm summer months we made use of the cold spring water to store our food. Of course this added a chore for someone, most always myself, to have to run down to the spring and get what we needed for the meal.

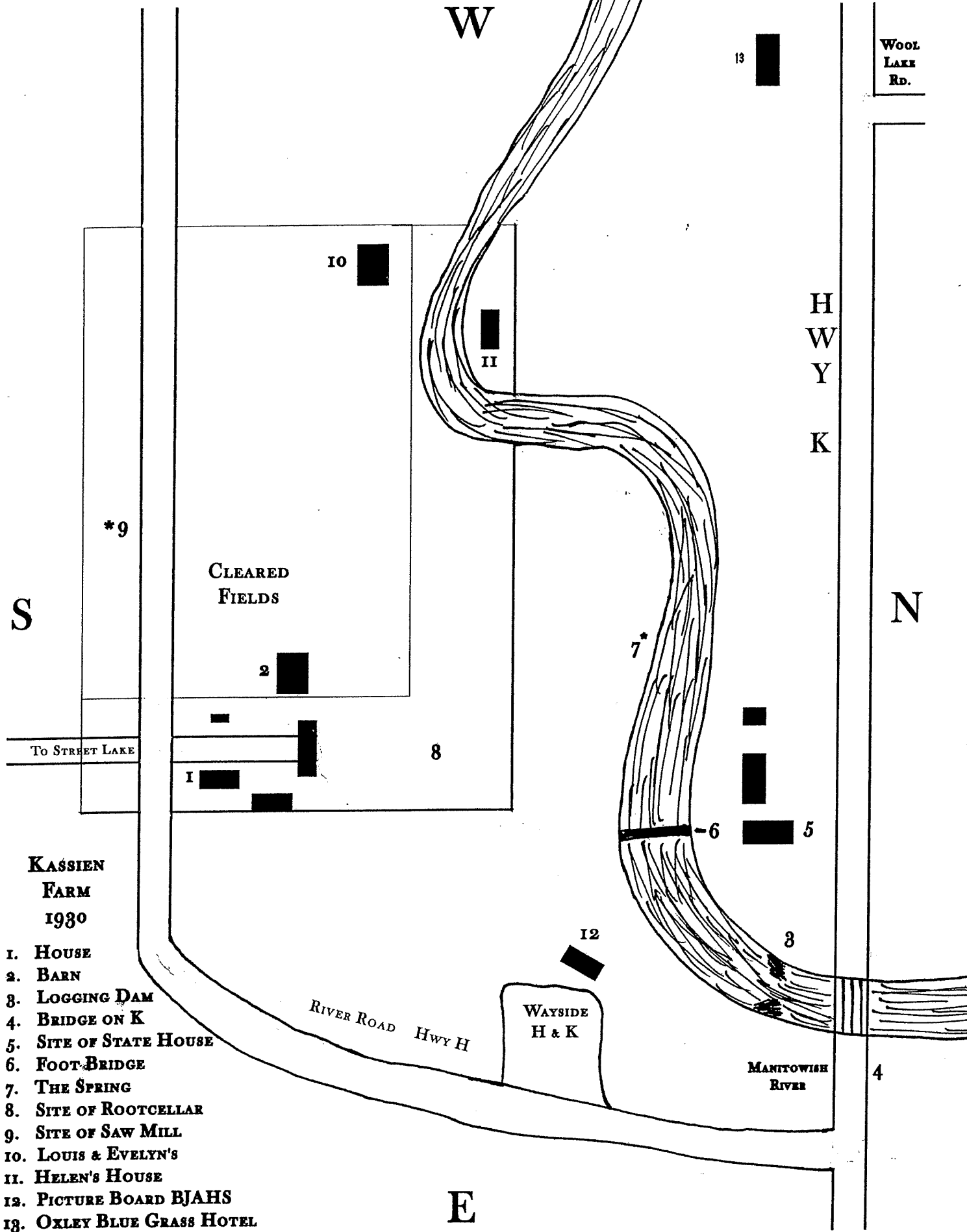
The 40 acres of stumps were cleared a bit at a time. Some of these stumps were huge and well preserved with pitch. Even though my Dad dreaded using dynamite this was a necessity. A small charge would break the stump apart and then the saddle horses became workhorses with harnesses used to pull the stump out. These same horses learned to pull a plough, a cultivator, a mower, a hayrake and the hay wagon. By now we had a few milk cows, a few sheep and some chickens. My Mother had a garden close to the house that produced an amazing amount of produce to be used daily and the excess to be canned. Wild berries were to be harvested in season. Over time we produced more than we could use so this would be offered for sale, mostly to people who had summer homes in the area. This was for cold cash, always in short supply and greatly needed.

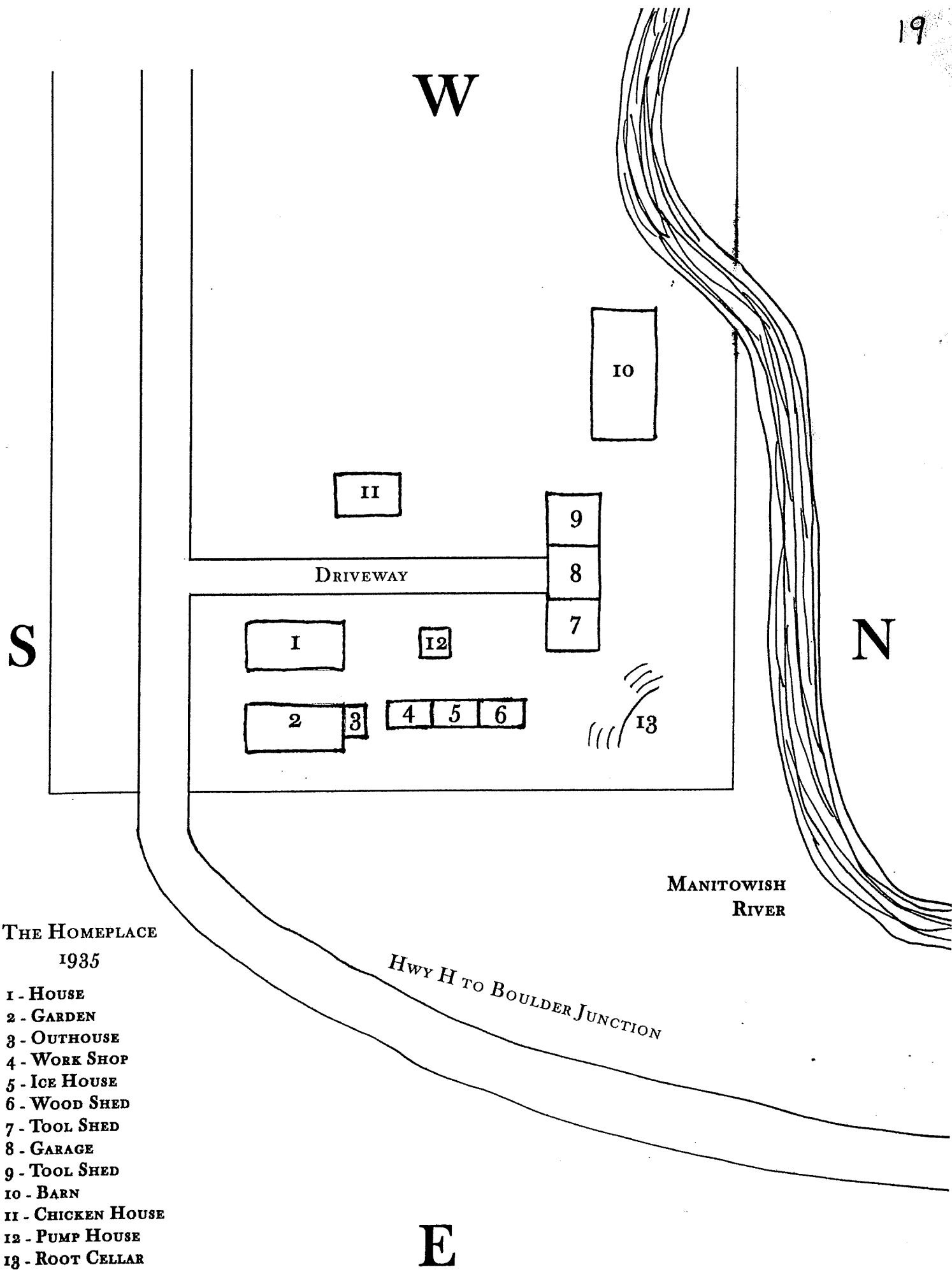
The house had a small porch area on the west side. As the fields were cleared and leveled my Dad's dream of a farm materialized. Each springtime acres were planted with potatoes or corn and my Dad would spend a little time each evening sitting on that porch waiting for warm weather, a little rain, no hail or wind. It was marginally successful most of the time but we quickly learned that the short growing season was far from ideal.

It was in 1927 that Boulder Jct. became a separate township. A Town Board was elected and we could move forward as a community. Tax money was used to build roads a few miles at a time. Bill and Kate Newcomb arrived in the area seeking a healthy climate for Bill to recover from breathing problems. We did not know that Kate was a doctor.

Families were beginning to yearn for some organized religion in the area. The High Lake School building could be used for public gatherings. An English couple living on Grassy Lake (the Bests) and Fred Haag Sr. organized a Sunday School group who met in the old school house. It served well as many families were within walking distance. The Kassiens made their way into this organization too and it became the nucleus for the Community Church. My Dad had been raised in a strict Lutheran family. He read the Bible frequently, always observed the Sabbath as a day of rest. He would make it until about 3 PM on Sunday afternoon and then he would take his cane pole and a can of angleworms and go fishing – this was acceptable! We often had fish supper on Sunday night.

1927 was also the year that my brother Louis married Evelyn Wiese, daughter of Ted and Mary Wiese, who lived on Oswego Lake north of Boulder. That same year my sister





THE HOMEPLACE
1935

- I - HOUSE**
- 2 - GARDEN**
- 3 - outhouse**
- 4 - WORK SHOP**
- 5 - ICE HOUSE**
- 6 - WOOD SHED**
- 7 - TOOL SHED**
- 8 - GARAGE**
- 9 - TOOL SHED**
- 10 - BARN**
- 11 - CHICKEN HOUSE**
- 12 - PUMP HOUSE**
- 13 - ROOT CELLAR**



ROBERT & DOROTHY
KASSIEN FARM, 1925



ICE HOUSE, 1926



LOUIS & EVELYN'S WEDDING
SEPTEMBER 2, 1927



RICHARD & DOROTHY
1927



LOUIS KASSIEN, 1930



HANK & ELLA WEDDING, 1932



DOROTHY
KASSIEN FARM



LENNY, DOROTHY, RICHARD, ROBERT

Helen married Joe Knox, son of Walter and Delia Knox. My Dad gave Louis some land at the west-end of the 40-acre farm where Louis and Evelyn built a small house. Two of their children were born there, a nice experience for us all. We had a well-worn path between the two places.

Helen and Joe rented a house in Sayner because the railroad was shutting down in Boulder. Most all the timber had been cut and hauled out by this time. There wasn't that much activity that far north and the railroad was pulling out so Joe had to live where the work was. We saw them often, especially after their son, Lenny was born. He was my parents' first grandchild, arriving prematurely, small and weak. My Mother and Joe's Mother used all their skills to keep him alive under primitive conditions. He made it and lived to be 50 years old. He was never able to walk but made all our lives richer with his will to live a useful life. My brother Richard, just a year older than Len, always served as his arms and legs. We included Len in our play.

These years were also bad forest fire years. The logging companies had moved on leaving behind unbelievable slashings. Careless campers or lighting strikes would set this all ablaze. Every available person would fight the flames with rakes and shovels to protect houses and barns often putting themselves in danger. My Dad told of having to seek refuge in the swamps along with all the animals, fleeing the flames. It seemed that all summer long a portion of the horizon would be aglow after dark. Only a good rain would put the fire out. This was also a time for bad storms. My Dad would often sit on the little porch and watch the storm clouds gather. We had the traditional "root cellar" on the far side of the yard where we stored canned goods, fruit and vegetables during the winter months. If the storm looked bad we would all troop across the yard to seek shelter there. My Dad was a tall man and took giant strides, he would have me by the hand and about every third step my feet would touch the ground! While overhead the trees were badly bent, boards and other debris flying through the air. When the storm had passed we never knew how much damage had been done or crops ruined.

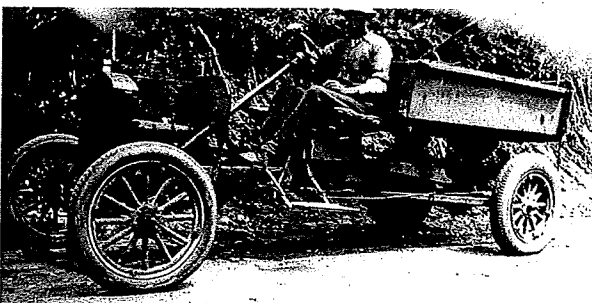
As the railroad closed down steady employment was a thing of the past. Jobs were available in the summer months but the wintertime was very inactive. By February we were generally out of cash. We always shopped at William's store so then we would have to ask for our groceries to be put on a charge account. Very humiliating for my parents – we didn't charge anything we could possibly live without. By spring the total was quite large but as soon as jobs became available and money started to come in, this indebtedness needed to be paid off. We had our own credit bureau – the store owners soon knew who could be trusted. Years later when I took the job as a postal clerk I had to have someone post a bond for me. Sam Williams responded immediately due to my parents' good credit rating.

I should have started school in 1927 but did not go until the following year when school bus service was provided. That was also the first year that the roads were plowed most of the time. I loved school. My Mother generally would not have a chance to meet the new schoolteacher until mid-year. She always said she felt acquainted with the person already since I would have adopted so many of that person's habits and ways of speaking! Almost always a good thing I'm sure! The pay was poor so we had quite a few first-year teachers, one of these was Rose Dent from Crandon. She taught just one year then married Eric Ohllson and settled down in our town. It has been such a pleasure to have her as part of our lives. Bill Winsauer started first grade with me and we went all eight grades together, alone until Peter Anderson joined us for grades 6,7, and 8. (It was a great surprise to me to find Billy serving as Boulder Jct's policeman on one of my infrequent

trips home. He served for quite a few years and did a good job. His wife Audry was the postmistress for a while).

When I was halfway through the 5th grade our teacher had to leave due to health problems. A new caretaker had been hired at Camp Manitowish, his wife and small son were with him. His wife was a schoolteacher and was hired to finish out the school year. Lolita Gravelle was a tall no-nonsense person, an experienced teacher. In no time at all we had new textbooks, workbooks, music and artwork books, etc. She taught us handwriting with hours of practice. Very soon we were involved in County-wide programs for physical education, spelling bees, etc. Her experience changed our quality of education for the better. By the time I was in 8th grade we were taken on the first 8th grade graduation trip to see the capital at Madison. We also visited a paper mill, a state prison where we saw inmates making license plates, stayed in a hotel and visited the Wisconsin Dells – a trip I have never forgotten! Mrs. Gravelle stayed on to teach many students in Boulder Jct. Her son and his family still reside in the area.

In 1930 my Dad and brother Hank took a County job maintaining Highway B, this connected what is now Presque Isle (at that time, Winegar) with Land o Lakes. They maintained the section within Boulder Jct., a very crooked, rough piece of road. My Dad had worked for the Town of Boulder Jct. maintaining roads so he was familiar with the equipment. Both he and Hank were very dependable people so they worked with very little supervision from the County with headquarters in Eagle River. It was in 1932 that Hank married Ella Loveless, daughter of Bob and Hulda Lovelass from what was then known as Spider Lake, a community 10 miles west of Boulder Jct. Bob owned a dance pavilion on Old Highway 10 named "Virgin Forest Pavilion." This was a popular spot as was the pavilion on Trout Lake and also at Plum Lake. Roads were quite improved by now, automobiles affordable so young people could drive from one dance pavilion to another. Ella had a 2-year-old son, who my brother adopted.

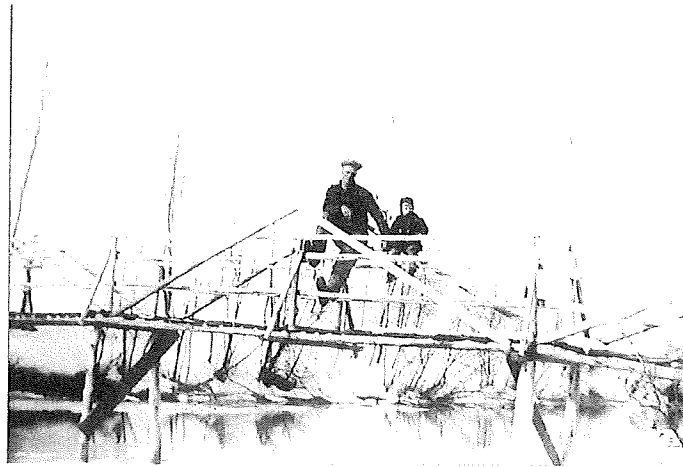


LOUIS ON THE COUNTY TRUCK.
1930

The Loveless' gave Hank and Ella a piece of land from their property, where the Manitowish River formed a boundary for a few miles. This was about 10 miles downstream from where our place was on the river. Hank quickly built a small house for his little family; he later built a much larger place that still stands today. During this time my Dad built a house for Helen on the parcel of land on the far side of the river. She enjoyed living there, close to us but with her own privacy. There was a road into it off of the Tower Road.

Having some time on his hands my Dad built a beautiful arched footbridge from our side of the river to hers. It was high enough off the water for canoes to go under it. The very

first winter it was there the ice took it out! He was disappointed but undaunted he rebuilt it. The following winter the ice took it out again.



HANK AND BOBBY ON THE FOOT BRIDGE. 1933

Our Grandpa Kassien died in 1933, he had lived with us since his wife died in 1927. His body was shipped by railroad back to Illinois where he was buried next to his wife.

Soon after this the Milwaukee Road abandoned its lease on land in Boulder Jct. and the railroad property was all disposed of. Some of the buildings were moved off, some buildings torn down. The section foreman's house, quite a nice building, was sold to Sam Williams, an adjacent property owner. For a few years this was used by Dr. Newcomb as a medical office. Kate had lived in our town for several years before she was encouraged to resume her medical career since we were so remote and so badly in need of a doctor. She was our "Angel on Snowshoes," a red flag tied to your gatepost indicated the need for the Doctor to stop. She not only maintained her office in town but also one north of town too. This continued until she set up her practice in Woodruff.

One small building remains from the railroad, in its original place. It is currently being used as an art gallery. The Williams had purchased it too, along with the depot and the outhouse. They had used it for a "wash house" while they were operating their vacation rental cabins on Boulder Lake in the 1930s and 1940s. They had moved the depot and outhouse over to Boulder Lake and incorporated each of them into rental cabins at that time. In recent years the two buildings were given to the Historical Society, moved back into town, restored and are being enjoyed as part of our heritage.

The Williams also purchased the railroad water tower and the trestle bridge north of town. These substantial structures were built of dimension redwood lumber worth saving. The structures were torn down, the huge timbers had to be sawed into useable lumber. This material was brought out to our sawmill and processed. The lumber went into the cabins that Sam was building on Boulder Lake. I'm sure this was done by the barter system and several years of our grocery bills were paid off at his store. My Dad and brother Robert, who had grown to manhood and developed considerable mechanical ability just keeping automotive things running, had built and was operating a sawmill on our land. This sawmill had already produced material used to build the second more substantial set of buildings on the farm, a new house, a big barn, a new ice house, tool shed and a garage. The old buildings had been torn down including the bunkhouse.



KASSIEN FARM, 1938
ROBERT, LENA, LOUIS SR.,
RICHARD



LOUIS KASSIEN
1939



CAROLINE KASSIEN



1942

After the death of my grandfather and the marriages of two brothers the additional sleeping space was no longer needed.

This sawmill also created hours of agony for my Mother. It was a hobbled together piece of machinery, run by a belt driven by a wheel of a disabled vehicle. This in turn drove the circular saw through a series of belts and pulleys, with no safety devices. My Mother could hear this operation, always in dread of a horrible injury. She had great nursing skills that were often called upon in the growing family. Not only for the normal childbirth episodes but an ongoing problem with Robert who was prone to blood poisoning and always had cuts or scratches from his mechanical endeavors. We always had an ample supply of chlorosene, diluted in water and used to soak and cleanse injuries. I had bad tonsils and many sore throats and nosebleeds. One hot summer day Hank's faithful horse brought him back into the yard just as he collapsed and fell from the saddle frothing at the mouth – he had apparently eaten a few poison berries along with our popular blueberries. Warm milk nursed him back to life just as it had done for our dog in Montana when she was bitten by rattlesnakes. Of course Lenny was an ongoing problem, for us all to learn to live with a severely handicapped person. Then when our Grandpa's pipe full of tobacco had overturned and set his long beard on fire – he panicked and raced across the yard to my Mother for help. She had an ever-present dishtowel that smothered the flame but his chest had a plate-size burn area. Dr. Newcomb was available and started him on a long series of treatments that eventually healed the area. I'm sure it shortened his life. When Hank and Ella were in a head-on collision Ella was thrown through the windshield. Her injuries were treated in the hospital but then she was brought to our living room to be nursed back to health. Once again Dr. Newcomb made many house calls. And then, of course, to get us all through the many childhood diseases and we had them all – chicken pox, measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever was the worst! We were under quarantine with a huge red banner across the front of the door. Mom's nursing skills were often put to a test.

Mom had never learned to swim and since the Manitowish River was our playground she must have worried many hours away. The river was relatively safe, not too deep nor too swift. We often talked her into going to Street Lake, especially on a hot day. This lake was clear and cold with a distinctive drop-off about 10 feet off of shore. She did insist that we all learn to swim early and we did, older brothers and sisters teaching the younger ones.

As the roads were black topped the job with the County ended for my Dad. Fortunately by now Robert had developed enough skill and knowledge to keep a ~~small old dump~~ truck running. Little by little he and my Dad developed a sand and gravel business, all of the loading and unloading done by hand. By now Richard was able to help, he remembers being handed a half-worn out shovel to use, just his size. Gravel was available in the banks along the river and creeks, he would help them load and then while they went to unload he would take a swim or go fishing.

The sand and gravel business proved to be a good business. My Dad and Robert worked well together and quickly gained the trust of their customers. By now they were both well acquainted with the area, could lay out building sites and roads and give advice about weather conditions, etc. My Dad, who had always ~~been~~ very thin, finally put on a little weight and became quite a large man. Life was good for a few years.

By now brother Louis bought land 3 miles west of us on Highway K. He moved his little house out there and added to it. He had always wanted to raise sheep, which he did for awhile. Since all of my brothers were real Northwoods people they always carried on a fur trapping business on the side. This was done during the winter months when the hides were in a prime condition. Other men and boys from the community trapped also so there was a sort of gentlemen's agreement as to territory and an absolute understanding that no one touched traps other than their own. They were all competent at skinning and preparing the fur for shipment. Fur companies offered competitive prices, some better than others. It was an excellent way to earn extra money during the winter when other types of employment were slow. One fur company published handsome calendars each year – I still have a framed wolf picture from that era.

One of my Mother's sisters and her husband, Ida and Walter Gathmen and son Harvey moved up north from Illinois. They bought a piece of land from Louis, cleared part of it for farming and built a house. It was nice to have relatives to share holidays with. Quite a few relatives from Illinois would visit us in the summer time, enjoy our fresh air and good water and complain about mosquitoes.

I graduated from grade school in 1936, all of us who wished to go on the high school had to make our own arrangements. I was the first one from my family to go on to high school. My sister Helen was living in Sayner, she and Joe had 2 more boys, Chuck and Frank Knox. They provided a place for me to stay during the school week. Sayner had added the 9th and 10th grades to their school. I made it until Thanksgiving and then gave up, I was homesick and the Sayner kids were mean! Fortunately Mrs. Gravelle needed help in the Boulder School. I was allowed to ride the bus and spend my time in that manner. I really enjoyed it, she appreciated it and it kept me in the school atmosphere. That next fall I enrolled in the Minocqua High School, found a job working for my room and board and was reasonably happy. I was a year older, more prepared for the world and there were other students from Boulder attending school there. I never felt that the "Island" kids accepted us but we were there. Soon after enrollment I learned that if I could maintain the highest grade point average I could win a year's scholarship and go on to college! This would be a dream!

Electricity had been brought to Boulder in 1930 serving a very limited area. The village did have 5 streetlights! More customers were served as the lines were extended. We knew that power would not come out as far as we were for quite some time. In 1938 Robert purchased land from Jim Blaisdell at the edge of town where we could have electricity. More equipment had been added to the sand and gravel business and it all used gasoline. So tanks were put in, 2 gas pumps were installed. My Dad and Robert built a small cement block building and we obtained a license to operate a Texaco filling station while buying gas for the equipment.



DOROTHY AT THE TEXACO STATION
1939



ROBERT, DOROTHY, LENA, RICHARD,
LOUIS SR.
1940

It didn't take long for an addition to be put on to the block building and the family gradually moved into town. I was going to high school so I didn't spend much time there but my Mom was living where she could walk to town to get the mail and groceries and to socialize a bit. She had never learned to drive a car, living out in the river was acceptable while she had a large family to care for, but as we began to leave home she had some spare time – she really enjoyed being in town.

My brother Robert had met Dorothy Harris from Ontonagon, Michigan and they were married on November 15, 1940 in the home of Fred and Jennie Blaisdell where Dorothy was working. The place out on the river had stood vacant for a while. It provided a nice first home for them.

More and more interest was shown in building a church. Sunday School classes were being held in the Town Hall, visiting preachers provided for us at various times. Sam and Ida Williams donated land adjacent to the Town Hall where a church building could be built. A ground-breaking ceremony was held in 1940, my niece Marion Kassien Walker remembers it well since both of her Grandpas were there; Louis Kassien Sr. and Ted Wiese! Neither of these men would live to see the church built.

It was in 1940 that my Dad's health began to fail. He lost weight and even with visits to Dr. Newcomb he continued to ail. Diagnosis of an illness was difficult for even the best of doctors. Dr. Newcomb finally recommended exploratory surgery to be done in the Rhinelander Hospital just after Thanksgiving. I went with my Mom to be with him. When the surgeon came out he told us he was full of cancer, there was nothing they could do for him. They had closed him up and told us he had about 6 months to live.

What a shock to the whole family but especially my Mother since she had married her Louie when she was 17 years old, this was 38 years ago. By now their family consisted of 3 married sons and their wives, my sister Helen in Saynor and her husband. I was in school in Minocqua and Richard was still at home. There were eight grandchildren at this time all living in the immediate area. My oldest sister Marion, who had lived on the East Coast for a while had moved back to Chicago and was working there. She visited us periodically and came to visit soon after she learned of his illness. We all rallied around. But on May 19, 1941 he passed away. Boulder did not have a cemetery at that time so he was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery between Minocqua and Woodruff. The Benefit Association for Railroad Employees (BARE) paid off on his life insurance policy, barely

enough to pay his medical and funeral expenses. My mother and Richard qualified for some income for dependent children and some county aide. We all contributed what we could. It was especially tough for Richard to lose his father at that age.

Life does go on. One week after my Dad passed away I graduated from high school. It was a bittersweet time. I did have the highest grade point, I did earn the scholarship and all I had to do was decide which college to go to. I chose Superior State Teachers College in Superior. I had the summer to earn enough money for books, etc. Once again I would work for my room and board.

The Boulder Jct. Chamber of Commerce had been established. A small portable log building had been built for an information booth. This was open for the summer months, staffed by 1 person seven days a week. Equipment consisted of 1 typewriter, maps and brochures. Henry Haag was the first employee, I was the second; it was an enjoyable job in general. People stopped to pick up maps and get directions, they often returned to report their fishing success or some experience they had enjoyed. A few complaints too, mostly about the rain! I had to remind them that it took a lot of rain to keep all the greenery and the bright blue water. The booth was right in the middle of town, this served the area until the new building was built at the south end of town.

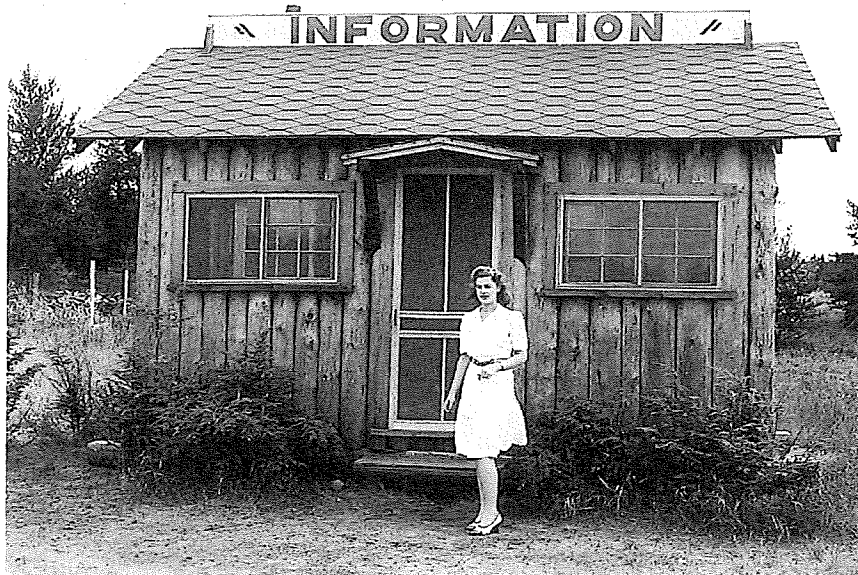
In late September I took the train from Ironwood to Superior to start my year in college. It had been such a sad year for our family, it seemed that it was difficult to feel happy. We all knew that World War II was imminent too.

But more sadness was to come our way. In late November my sister Helen's husband Joe Knox died suddenly from a heart attack leaving her with Lenny and the other 2 little boys. Joe had a large family too, so many family members were there to lend a hand.

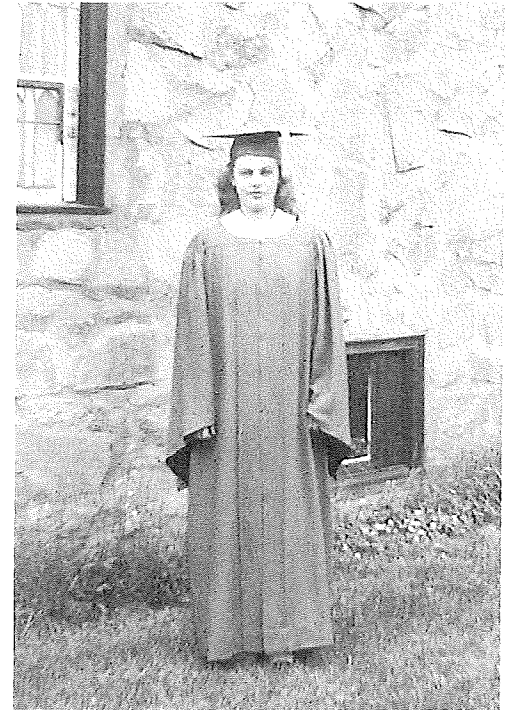
December 7, 1941 occurred, Pearl Harbor Day. War was no longer a threat. It was the real thing. My college classes suddenly were all female, boys either were drafted or they enlisted and then we began to hear of the casualties.

Robert and Dorothy had moved back into town so my Mom wouldn't be alone, they were expecting their first child. My Aunt Ida Gathman had also died from cancer, Uncle Walter sold their place and went to work at the Trout Lake Headquarters. Many of the farms were sold to the State and planted back into trees. We had all learned that trees were the one crop that did well in the North Woods.

In the fall I went back to Superior for another semester but then had to give it up. I was out of money and energy. My sister Helen and I went to Chicago and did war work for the rest of that winter. By the time we paid our expenses there wasn't much left. The war changed everything, gasoline was rationed so the tourist travel just about shut down. Building was curtailed with many products unavailable for civilian use. Robert's business slowed down too. He was of draft age but was married and had a child so he was not taken immediately. His number came up and he had to go, My Mother had a Gold star in the window and once again U.S. cousins were fighting against German cousins just as they had in WWI. These were dark days for all of us.



DOROTHY KASSIEN
BOULDER JUNCTION
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 1940



DOROTHY KASSIEN
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
1941



MARION (KASSIEN) CHRISTIE
1943



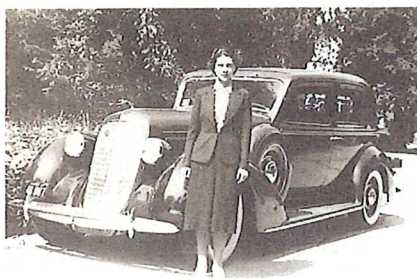
THE KASSIEN SISTERS
HELEN KNOX,
DOROTHY KASSIEN, MARION CHRISTIE
1943



MARION IN
LOS ANGELES



ROBERT KASSIEN



MARION IN CHICAGO

After my Dad was gone Marion decided she had enough of the cold weather. She moved to Los Angeles where she spent the rest of her life. Uncle Walter was still working at Trout Lake and living in the dormitory there and my Mom was struggling along trying to make ends meet. They decided that he needed a home and she needed some one to make a living for her; marriage was a good idea. They were married and this worked out well for all concerned. They bought Alice Budreau's log cabin between Budreau's house and a house Norm Drewsen had built. It was picturesque but like all log houses, hard to heat. They added rooms that were well insulated and they were comfortable. Walter retired from the State, busied himself with janitor work at the Town Hall and the church. Richard had a home and Lenny spent a lot of time with them. Helen had remarried, another Joe – this was Joe Reible, brother to Tippy Reible who had bought Paquette's Bar and Store. Joe and Helen had one son, Edward Reible. Joe worked for Tippy, Chuck and Frank were still at home, they enlisted in the Air Force and they were off to war. Joe died unexpectedly and Helen was left widowed again. Helen worked for Mrs. Williams and was given a piece of land across from Robert and a small house. She added onto it and had a nice home.

Lucy Richardson had been appointed Post Mistress in Boulder Jct. in 1943. She needed a postal clerk. I applied for the job and was hired. I liked the work and I was welcome to live at home. Uncle Walter inherited a big family when he married my Mom, he was always very nice to all of us – we never felt he was a "stepfather," he was still "Uncle Walter" to us.

My career at the Post Office was short-lived! I had grown up with the Budreau family. They often spoke of their cousin Gordon Boudreau (spelled and pronounced differently). He was about the same age as the Budreau boys, had grown up in Milwaukee, sailed the Great Lakes on the freighters, worked on a sheep ranch in Montana, had been working in a gold mine in South Dakota when war came along and closed down all the gold mines. He had returned to Milwaukee and was in war work. I had been working in the Post Office a few months when deer hunting season opened. One quiet afternoon a handsome hunter came in and asked for mail for Gordon Boudreau! Wow – here he was in person! He did not have any mail but did have time to visit. It wasn't long before I learned that he was indeed the fascinating cousin and the rest is history! We did not have a telephone, but there was a public phone in Sam Williams's store across the way. After he returned to Milwaukee we corresponded by mail and I was able to call him collect from the phone booth, a rather public way to carry on a courtship! He proposed and I accepted and we were married in 1944. We lived in a tiny apartment, as that was all that was available in Milwaukee. Everything was rationed so our furnishings were mostly donated items. His family all lived in Milwaukee so we were not lonely.

As the war drew to a close the McCulloch Engineering Company my husband worked for made plans to move to southern California. They selected 25 key employees and he was one of them chosen to go. I'm sure this was not good news for my Mother knowing that we would be so far away. We had our first child by then, had been able to visit my family up in Boulder and Mom and Uncle Walter had visited us. All our expenses involved in the move were to be paid. There was no hesitation on my husband's part, he had already lived in the West and much preferred it over Wisconsin. My sister Marion had been out there a few years and liked it. By the fall of 1945 we were packing up to go.

The war had ended and the soldiers were being released. Robert stopped to see us on his way home, he had come through the toughest part of the fighting with no injuries – we were so grateful! I'm sure it was difficult for him to adjust to civilian life, pick up the pieces of his life and get the business going again. So as I was moving 2500 miles away Robert had come back home safely. My Mother's family had grown; Louis and Evelyn had 3 daughters, Hank and Ella had 3 children, Helen had 3 children, Robert and Dorothy had two children. They were all living in the area.

It could have been a lonely time for us in a new area but all the small families had apartments waiting for them, 4 apartments to a building and 4 buildings in a row so there were 16 young families getting used to California. Only one couple turned right around and went back to Milwaukee. They had no children and apparently the adjustment was too great.

I really missed Boulder. This was an exciting time in the development of the community. Blue-collar workers were given regular paid vacations so housekeeping cottages sprang up everywhere. My Mother wrote to me regularly so I stayed in touch though many miles away.

The 40 acres of land out on the river became a place we visited from time to time. The house was rented out at times, but basically none of the family wanted to live there – it brought back too many memories of our struggle to exist. In about 1950 my Mother sold the place to her brother Conrad Bremer, he planned to retire there. He spent a few vacations there with his grown daughters and their children. Just short of his retirement time he was involved in an automobile accident. He didn't appear to be badly hurt but apparently suffered broken ribs that punctured his lung and he died. His wife sold the place soon after – she had never liked it up there.





LOUIS JR., UNCLE WALTER, EVELYN, BOBBY, RICHARD, HELEN, HANK
CHUCK & MELVIN, CAROLYN, DOROTHY KASSIEN, LENA, ELLA
JEANETTE & JANET, JIM, LENNY, FRANK, DOROTHY BOUDREAU & JERRY

1945

Now the 40 acres has been parceled off to 7 or 8 individuals, trees have been planted on the open fields. The house survived until 2005 when it was taken down to make room for a new modular home. I was so pleased to be given the "garden doors" my Dad had created by hand.

Our second child, Bonnie, was born in 1946. We had a boy and a girl. My sister Marion had married a man whose name was Leo. They owned a small house in old downtown Los Angeles. Every once in a while they would take the "Big Red" streetcar and ride out to Inglewood to see us. Two small kids in an apartment was hard for Marion to handle, Leo enjoyed them. They never stayed long.

In 1950 I took my 2 little kids on the train back to visit in Boulder. I found my brother Richard married to Joan Larson. Some of my older nieces and nephews had children of their own. My Mom had not changed that much in the 5 years I had been gone. As we traveled eastward my mind always went on ahead wondering how many changes I would find! With children of my own I had to prepare them for a very different life style and meeting many new people and, of course, hoping they would be good and make me proud of them which they nearly always did.

I also had to prepare them to meet my nephew Lenny who by then was spending most of his time with Mom and Uncle Walter. All the children up there were accustomed to Len's strange looks and way of speaking – he could be very frightening to an outsider. I carefully explained his conditions and that they need not be afraid. They were pretty "wide-eyed" to begin with but once they saw how everyone else accepted him they did too. Each time we went up north we always had a refresher course on how to behave. In later years when we visited up there they helped Len paint the birdhouses he was building. I think their experiences with Len prepared them well for handicapped people in general.



LENA & UNCLE WALTER



RICHARD & JOAN KASSIEN
1949



JERRY & BONNIE BOUDREAU
1950

In 1950 we were involved in another war, the Korean War. My youngest brother Richard had been rejected for service in World War II due to health reasons. He was called up again for the Korean War – he passed with flying colors even though he was married and had a child. He was sent overseas and saw service in the armored transport so once again he was driving truck. He served two years and was discharged on his birthday, September 10, 1952. He settled down in Boulder Jct. again, several years later he went to

work for the Schneider Trucking Co. out of Green Bay. He held this job for 30 years, retired in 1983.

In 1951 we had another daughter and moved down to Phoenix. I never thought I could make that adjustment, as I had always hated hot weather. My Mother and I continued our correspondence. She always kept me in touch.

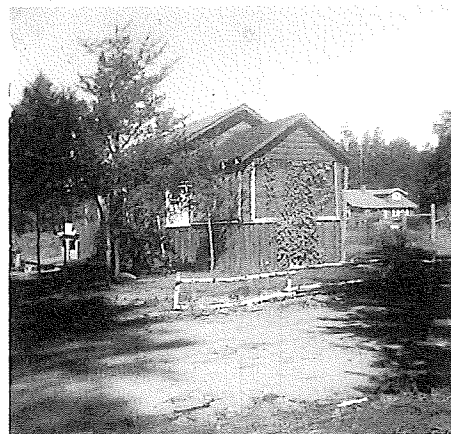


LENA KASSIEN
1950

In 1951 we made a trip back to Wisconsin by automobile, this time a great experience to drive cross-country. The kids kept checking the rivers until we were finally crossing rivers that had water in them! The number of cousins had increased and they all had a good time together. Our visit went by quickly and it was time to return to the West.

We had another son in 1956. Phoenix proved to be a nice place to raise kids. The schools were good. The area was growing rapidly and when our oldest was ready for high school, a new high school was built in our area. He graduated and then was able to continue right on into college, a branch of the University of Arizona.

In 1957 we were able to spend more time in Boulder. Of course by now we had 4 kids so my Mother's house was over full! My Mom and Uncle Walter were given one of the original YMCA cabins, they moved it in behind their log house and had it ready for us to stay in. My husband wired it for electricity, drilled a well and we had a summer cabin. We stayed a month.



We returned the next summer. My Mom had started to fail. She was 73 years old and just wearing out. By the next spring she was in and out of the hospital and died in April of 1959. I flew back to attend her funeral knowing that life would never be the same again. Uncle Walter lived only 6 more weeks.

By now my brother Louis and Evelyn, their daughter Vivian and John Walker had purchased the Pine Cone Restaurant and Motel. They were still living out on their place on Hwy. K, and driving into town to conduct their business. Louis decided to buy my Mother's place, remove those buildings and build a new house there and be closer to their businesses. He offered me the land the little cabin sat on; my Mother had given me the cabin already. We had the land surveyed and the proper papers were drawn up. Louis built the first house, they moved into it and then he built the second house, turning the first one into a rental. The landscape had changed! It was nice to have the little cabin to use even though I missed my Mom so much I still had considerable family there. My sister Helen had picked up the letter writing from my Mom and I still received a letter every week so I stayed in touch. However the cabin suffered during our long absences, we always had to replace window glass and one time we came back to find a whole car engine abandoned in the yard. Furnishings disappeared so we never knew what we would find when we got back. Our trips became less frequent.

Louis was the first of my siblings to die. This was in 1965. Marion died in 1968 in Los Angeles, Hank in 1977 and Helen in 1978. This left only us 3 younger ones. Robert continued to live in Boulder but Richard was in Green Bay. *

In 1965 my husband had become involved in problem birds that were detrimental to crops. He felt that California would be a better place to carry on this endeavor. We sold out in 1965 and moved to Northern California, quite a different life style than down south. The kids were able to continue on in school and their roots went deep into California. The oldest one had stayed in Arizona and eventually married an Arizona girl, the other 3 all married Californians. My husband's work eventually led him to full time employment with Almaden Vineyards until his retirement in 1975. He carried on his work as a consultant and made several trips to Midway Island where the Navy was having trouble with the gooney birds.

I had been a stay-at-home Mom until my youngest child was in 5th grade. Then I took a part-time job in a Montgomery Ward catalog agency. I found the work interesting always adding more hours until by the time my youngest son graduated from high school and went into the Coast Guard, I was working almost full time. By the time my grandchildren began to arrive I cut back on the hours to have more time to spend with them.

I retired in 1984 and we moved again. Back to the mountains, this time to a small town halfway between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe. My husband loved it there – we even had a little snow in the winter. It proved to be a delightful place to live until his health began to fail. After 3 major surgeries, the final diagnosis was cancer. He was given chemotherapy by visiting nurses in our home, for a time but eventually lost the battle in the fall of 1990. I stayed up in the mountains until the next spring. Then I sold out, moved my belongings into storage.

Richard and Joan came out West to help me drive the 1978 GMC pickup up to Boulder Junction. First we drove to the west coast so Joan would visit her sister Lorraine who was in convalescent care in Coos Bay, Oregon. Then we headed for Miles City, Montana, the place of my birth. I had been many places in the west, but never to Miles City. Robert and Dorothy met us there. Robert remembered the house where I was born. I snapped a few pictures. We met up with an older cousin who was able to guide us out the 50 miles to show us the location of the homestead. It is all wheat fields now. We had

a nice visit with him. That whole family of cousins remained in Montana engaged in many different occupations. He had been a government trapper until his retirement. We were so grateful for the time he spent with us. He returned to Miles City and we continued on to Wisconsin.

Richard had been using my cabin since his retirement. He bought a place in Mercer, so the cabin was mine to use. I spent the summer and grew accustomed to being alone. I made the decision to return to Boulder again in the spring. Jerry offered to build a small house for me while he vacationed up there. He had it framed and enclosed before he left at the end of August. I had to hire an electrician, plumber, etc. I moved in on October 1, 1992 and stayed through Thanksgiving. I then returned to my growing family in California.

This was the pattern of my life for the next 14 years. I became involved in the Community Church again, the Chamber of Commerce, helped organize the Boulder Junction Area Historical Society and served as president for several years. I collaborated with Shirley Doolittle and Paul Bremer to publish the first history book of the area and then wrote the second volume a few years later. We acquired the original railroad depot, moved it back into town and restored it to be used for a railroad museum. Land was donated to the society that became Blaisdell Park. These were busy years. I really enjoyed spending time with family. Several afternoons each week I walked down the lane and visited with Evelyn. Several times each summer I drove out to spend the day with Ella. I hope I made life a little easier for Robert and Tom when Dorothy was overtaken by her illness. In between I spent time with Richard.

In the winter of 2006 Janet Kluxdal visited with us out west. We talked about having a reunion in the summer. The date was set and plans were made. We had over 80 people, so it was successful. Thank all of you for coming. Connie Christopherson summed it all up when she said it was exciting to be in a room so full of people that were mostly related to her.

I hope you enjoy reading the saga of the Kassien Family. If you have any questions, I shall be happy to try to answer. Enjoy!

Acknowledgements:

The Reunion –

- To Janet for the request
- To Bonnie, Joan, and Janet for the planning and hosting
- To all who brought food
- To Jerry for acting as the M.C. for the afternoon
- To Joan for the picture boards, time line and family trees

The Booklet –

- To Bonnie for typing the initial manuscript
- To Lorrie Regehr for scanning the pictures, the lay-out and editing

*Addendum – Marion's Story, please see the last page

After Marion moved away she became distant from the lives of the family in Boulder Jct. but I want to add the following information since she deserves her place in the family history.

While Marion and Art Christie were living on the East Coast they adopted a baby boy whose mother had been placed in a TB sanitarium, his name was Kenneth. He was about Richard's age. When Art and Marion separated Marion and Kenneth moved to Chicago, a bit closer to us and each summer Kenneth would come to live with us. When he was about 7 years old his biological mother was released from the sanitarium, the family requested that he be allowed to rejoin the family. After a lot of consideration Marion decided that he would be better off with his own parents and siblings, a tough decision I'm sure. Kenneth always stayed in touch with Marion with Mother's Day cards, graduation invitations and eventually an invitation to his wedding.

Marion was the only one of the siblings who learned to speak the German language, also to read and write it. We continued to get letters from distant cousins living in Germany. My Mother could respond to them, but after she was gone we had to send those letters out to Marion to carry on the correspondence. By this time the Iron Curtain had gone up and these people had very severe living conditions. Eventually the correspondence stopped.

Marion made her way to Los Angeles where she met and married a Hispanic man of her age. (This is where I was reunited with her when my husband was transferred to Los Angeles from Milwaukee during World War II.) It was a good marriage and I think they were very happy. She worked in LA in a big chain drug store for many years. We never knew of her illness until she was gone. Leo wrote a lengthy letter telling of the end of her life and that she was buried there by her choice. This was in 1968. All the departed siblings are buried north either in the Boulder Cemetery or the Woodruff Cemetery. So once again, even in death she is separated from us.