

# historically speaking

A quarterly newsletter from THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1021 Sixth Street, St. Paul NE 68873

email: [marion@cornhusker.net](mailto:marion@cornhusker.net)

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[www.cornhusker.net/~mine/hchs.htm](http://www.cornhusker.net/~mine/hchs.htm)

**THREADS OF HISTORY: Lenise Cook in California and Marion Bahensky, in Nebraska, discovered that their pioneer ancestors were neighbors in the Boelus area in the 1870s and that two cousins of Marion graduated from Boelus High School with Lenise's grandmother, Viola Kruse Hansen in 1925. Following are Viola's memories of her Nebraska childhood, typical for that place and time. A brief summary of the later lives of classmates Viola, Earl Hald, and Andy Jensen follows that. Marion and Lenise met on the Internet while researching county history.**

## A NEBRASKA CHILDHOOD by Viola Kruse Hansen

**My Family** - I was born near Boelus on September 6, 1907, to Henry and Anna Berck Kruse. I was one of seven children. My grandparents were all born in Germany. The only grandparent I knew lived in a small house on our farm. He spoke German and died when I was 18. We lived in a two-story house on 300 acres in the hills north of Boelus.

**The Fire** - When I was five years old, our house caught fire. We had a little summer kitchen next to the house where we heated the water on washdays to keep the big house cooler. My sister had put some kindling too close to the stove. The fire spread quickly to the big house and in no time it was up in flames. My father was a mile away, saw the flames, and came running home. Neighbors came from as far as four miles away to join a bucket brigade. I remember being taken to a nearby plowed field and placed on a pile of bedding with baby Alvina and 7-1/2 year old Harold; we were given the job of guarding that bedding. We were to throw dirt on sparks. There we sat while the house burned to the ground. We lost almost everything in the house because so much time was spent trying to get the organ out. It was the most expensive piece of furniture we owned, and was so big it blocked the door so no one could get anything else out. Just before the roof caved in my father rushed in and rescued his insurance papers from the upstairs back bedroom. They managed to save the outbuildings and Grandpa's small house, but most everything else was gone.

**Rebuilding** - With the insurance money Dad built a house with electricity and indoor plumbing. He put in a little light plant with 32 big glass batteries charged by a little gasoline engine. With that, we were able to have a light in each room of the house -- just a bare light bulb. We even had one out at the barn. He also added a bathtub, sink, and running water, with a 500-gallon supply tank in the basement.

We didn't have a refrigerator, but we did have a "milk tank," which was next to the windmill that pumped water from the well. The water was cold because our well was about 300 feet deep. The water went to the milk tank and then through an outlet into the horse tank. Containers of food were hung on wires down in the cool water. This food kept cool if there was enough wind to keep the windmill pumping. We also had an icebox but we didn't always have ice. An icehouse about ten feet square was dug four feet into the ground. In winter the ice on the pond was sometimes thick enough to cut. Then it was sawed into blocks, stacked in the icehouse, and insulated with layers of straw. Then we had ice for the icebox for several months.

**Home Cooking** - Mother was a really good cook. She considered it a disgrace to buy anything that you could grow or make yourself. You weren't a good housewife if you bought things in cans. She would buy only salmon, huge boxes of soda crackers, cheese, and sausage besides flour and sugar. We grew and/or canned or dried all our fruits and vegetables. Mother never tolerated waste, so we canned endless jars of applesauce and cherries, and dried apples on screens on the porch roof. We gathered gooseberries by the bucketful to can for pies. We bought bushels of Colorado peaches each summer to can. We also canned tomatoes, beans, peas, and corn. There were ten of us to cook for, every day all year long. We lost about 400 jars of fruit and vegetables when our house burned.

When we butchered a steer, Mother cut the beef up and cooked it in glass jars that we sealed with rubber washers. This meat made a fine Sunday dinner along with fried potatoes. It didn't take long after you got home from church to open the jar and heat it up while you fried the potatoes.

Mother baked both white and wheat bread every Saturday and about three coffeecakes. She had to bake during the week, too, because the ten of us ate three loaves a day. We made our own butter. Mother would churn about eight pounds at a time. It was quite a job, even after we converted the churn to run on electricity. We loved to come home from school on a cold winter day and find piping hot baked Hubbard squash, which we slathered in butter.

We kids loved threshing time, but Mother didn't. A dozen or more men would go from farm to farm, staying at each one until the harvest was in. During those three days the women of the family were expected to feed the entire crew.

Food had to be ready when they came, but sometimes weather or mechanical problems delayed the crew. Food spoiled quickly. Mother was glad when threshing was over.

There was one huge threshing machine in our area, which was pulled by a steam tractor. It couldn't go up and down the hills on the road, so it was pulled across the fields. It moved five miles an hour and had a big whistle to announce its coming. We kids loved to run out and meet it. Then the crew would arrive. Neighbors would come with their hay wagons to help with our harvest and then we helped with theirs. All the grain had been cut and bundled and shocked to ripen and dry in preparation for the threshing machine. The men with their pitchforks would throw those bundles of dried grain into wagons to take to the threshing machine. There they were carefully placed on a long conveyor belt and fed to the thresher, which beat and chopped and spit the grain out a pipe in the side of the machine into a grain wagon that hauled it to the granary. The hay shot out a big blower on the other side into a big haystack.

At 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mother sent us out to the field with dishpans full of sandwiches made on her delicious homemade buns. We loved that part, because we got to eat anything left over. At noon the men all came in for fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, homemade bread and rolls, pies, and treats like that. We sometimes thought the crews stayed longer at our house because of the good food.

**Washday** - Washing was an all-day job. We filled the boiler with water and heated it on the wood stove to almost boiling. Then we put a tablespoon of lye in it to bring the lime up. Our well water was so hard that a crust of white lime would form on top. We had to scrape that all off, and then the water was soft. Teakettles became unusable because they were filled with lime. Mother made all our soap by cooking lard and lye together. That product was then cut into bars, and later thinly sliced into the boiler. Without softening the water first, you could not get any suds. When we had nice soft, sudsy water, we put nearly boiling water into the washing machine, and then we could start. We never emptied the machine the whole day. First we put the white clothes in, ran them through, rinsed them in the two big galvanized tubs of cold water, and hung them on the line outside. Then we put in the next lighter color, and so on, and the water got cooler and dirtier as we went on, but we had to use it until we got the overalls, which were the last to wash.

We took the clothes out to the lines and hung them with two-legged clothespins, not the modern kind with springs. We had to watch the weather all day. If the wind came up the clothes would be blown off the line. We could keep pinning them back up or bring them in. In summer we had many thunderstorms. We'd see the clouds coming and then have to decide if it was going to rain or not. If rain was coming, we had to hurry and bring the clothes in before they got wet.

If a dust storm was on the way, you had to bring the wet clothes in quickly or they would get all dusty. In winter the wet clothes would freeze. Our hands turned to ice when hanging them out. If the day was long enough and nothing else happened, the wash would freeze dry, except for the place where the clothespin was. When the pins were removed, the clothes would stay frozen on the line. We had to leave them for a while with the pins off to let that last part dry. If you hurried too much, the corners of the towels might tear off where they were frozen to the line.

**Butchering** - We didn't consider buying meat in a store. We had no place to keep fresh meat, anyway. We butchered a hog two or three times a year and beef maybe once a year. Dad used a sledgehammer to hit the hog in a certain spot on the head that knocked it out. Then he cut its throat and hung it by pulleys and ropes on the front of the barn to keep it at the right height to work on. Then he skinned it, cut its head off, and cut it up. He never let us watch him do the killing

He would bring in the pieces of lard and all the fat and we kids ran the lard through the sausage grinder. Mother put that lard on the stove and cooked it until the oily part of the fat separated from the lard and formed "cracklings" on the top. We strained the cracklings and poured the lard into large stone jars for cooking and baking. Mother took some of the cracklings and cooked them with apples and sugar and made what we called "apple schmaltz." It was a kind of marmalade that we had only at butchering time.

Some of the meat was ground up and made into sausage, which Dad would cure in his smokehouse. Some would be cooked and canned in glass jars, and the rest of the meat was cut into chunks, fried, and put in stone jars with lard poured on top to preserve it. Nothing went to waste but, without refrigeration, we had to work fast. The entire animal had to be taken care of in a day or two at the most. It made butchering time very busy.

**My Parents** were both born in February 1871. They lived about three miles from each other in their teenage years and attended the same school. They were the only people in the area that went to college. My mother said, "I went to school as far as it went and I would have gone further if I could have." My father read whenever he had time to sit. Any time that he was at home, in the house, he was reading. He was well educated and was sort of the advisor for the whole area. He was president of a bank and a county assessor. Anyone that wanted any legal advice would come to him, because he was so well read. The older I get the more I admire him. He really lived a Christian life and I don't recall him ever doing anything that was questionable. He was our lay minister when the minister couldn't come and he taught a Sunday school class his entire life. He was respected and loved by everyone in the area. He was a man who lived as he taught. We kids really respected him.

Dad was never rough. He spanked me once in my life and I never forgot it. It was because I called my brother a name; I don't know to this day what I called him, but it was enough to earn me a spanking. We had devotions every day. Dad would read the Bible to us, generally Proverbs, and always got down on his knees and prayed with us before we went to bed. He was such an example to his family that he never had any trouble with any of his kids.

My mother was a very moral person and a hard worker, perhaps too hardworking. I felt she never really lived; she worked day and night. I never saw her sit down and relax, except on Sundays, when she might take an afternoon nap. Otherwise she was up with the dawn and on her feet all day, except to eat a meal. She was still working when we went to bed. She had a huge garden and she raised 300 chickens. Alvina and I shared a bed in a little hallway at the top of the stairs and I remember my mother standing near our bed on stormy nights, watching out the west window, ready to sound the alarm should a funnel cloud appear. My mother's mother died when my mother was only eleven, leaving her to cook and clean for her father and several brothers. I guess she just never got out of the habit.

**Church** - We went to the Ebenezer Methodist church. We were in church every Sunday unless the weather was so bad that we just couldn't make it. There was always one other family there, too, the Bernhagens who were such good friends. Their family matched our family in ages. Until I was ten our church service was in German, so I didn't understand any of it. I did learn to read German and learned the German alphabet. Then, in 1918, we weren't allowed to have German services any more. The change to English was very hard on some of the older folks who didn't understand English, but I finally got Sunday school lessons in English.

**Country School** - Our little school, District #25, was a one-room building with a picture of George Washington on one wall, Abraham Lincoln on another, and a clock. That was it. The school was painted dark green inside and had a big round stove in the center for heat. Our library consisted of 25 books and I read them all over and over again. The kids ranged from first grade through eighth grade. Those eighth graders were big boys; farm boys missed a lot of school because of work so they could be quite old before they got through grade school.

You had to be 16 or graduate from eighth grade to quit school. A lot of kids didn't go to high school. My two older sisters started but didn't finish. Luella went one year and then took work as an apprentice nurse. Esther went two years and found out she could become a teacher with just a summer more at a teachers' college, so she quit. Baldwin wanted to farm and thought he didn't need high school. Harold went to trade school where he learned to repair cars. So I was the first one in the family to graduate from high

school. I wanted to be a teacher. By that time you had to graduate from high school and go to summer school to be a teacher. I went to the University of Nebraska and got a three-year certificate to teach. Alvina and Helen both went through high school. Alvina loved the farm, so didn't go into any profession. Helen went on to the University of Nebraska and got a degree. Our parents wanted us to be well-educated so we all went as far in school as we wanted.

**Transportation** - Until we had a car we used a buggy which was pulled by two horses, but sometimes we had to take a wagon to get to church if the weather was bad. We put straw in it and hot bricks and blankets to keep our feet warm on the two miles to church. When we got a car the roads were still very bad and, in winter we often still had to take the wagon because the oil in the crankcase would get so thick you couldn't crank the engine by hand. My dad would soak a gallon pail of corn cobs in kerosene and set it under the car. Shortly before time to leave for church he set the cobs on fire, which heated the crankcase and thinned the oil so he could crank it. Many people had their arms broken in those days when the crank would kick back.

Tires were so bad that we often had a flat tire on the two-mile drive to church. Every car had a little tire-fixing kit on the running board. You had to take out the inner tube, put a patch on it, put it back in the tire and inflate it with a hand pump. One time we were driving to church and a wheel came off the car and started rolling in front of the car. It just rolled ahead of us down the road. The roads were often muddy and changing a tire in mud was no picnic.

With gravity-fed gasoline, you couldn't go up a big hill unless you got a good running start; otherwise the carburetor ran out of gas. Then you either had to push the car up the hill or have someone blow in the gas tank. The gas tank was under the front seat, so you had to take the cushion off and take the cap off the gas tank. If you blew in the tank it would send enough gas to the carburetor to keep the car going up the hill.

One Thanksgiving we drove about 100 miles to get my sister who was then teaching in Callaway. It had rained at home, so Dad called to check on the weather there. Despite static, he understood my sister to say it was all right. We started out at 5 a.m. in our Model T Ford. Every hill was muddy enough that the car ran out of gas and Luella or Harold would have to blow in the tank. Luella and Harold were older than I was, so they were doing the blowing. They finally said it was my turn. I had never done it before and didn't realize that after you blew you had to turn your head away before inhaling. I got so deathly sick from the gasoline fumes that to this day I cannot stand the smell of gasoline. It took us from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. to go that 100 miles and coming home wasn't much better.

After we got a car we made the 30-mile trip to Grand Island once a year for our Christmas shopping. Such an event! We took our lunch along and put hot bricks on the floor so our feet wouldn't freeze, because cars didn't have heaters. We put a buffalo robe across our laps. Everybody had a blanket but the driver. We had no windows. Cars came with black canvas side curtains with "windows" made of squares of isinglass inserted. I am not exactly sure what isinglass is or where it came from, but it was a yellow colored material, which you couldn't see through. It did let in a little bit of light. It cracked and broke from the road vibrations so the windows didn't last very long. The curtains were some protection from the cold and rain, however.

Besides the tire repair kit, you always had to take a shovel. The roads were so bad that they were often just a set of two ruts. If you met a car coming the other way, one of the cars had to back up until there was a place he could get out of the ruts and let the other car pass. There was often mud or sand at the side of the road and you would need to dig your way out. If the ruts got too deep your car might get caught "high center," and you would need the shovel for that, too. In those days most women didn't drive cars. Keeping a car running even for a short trip was a big job and it was dangerous besides. No woman wanted to be out alone on a muddy hill with no one to push the car if needed, or be faced with a flat tire. A neighbor was killed by a Ford. She cranked it with no one inside to keep a foot on the brake and it moved forward, crushing her between the car and the garage. A couple of bachelor neighbors bought a car and put it in their garage. We never saw it again. When they died many years later there sat their car in the garage, jacked up with the wheels off the ground. Maybe they were afraid to drive. Most of the people around there had Fords, but one family had an Oldsmobile. Then the tops were all just canvas with wooden braces across the top. This Oldsmobile had the brace in the wrong spot and one time when they hit a big bump the passenger in the back seat bounced up and broke his nose.

Cars took a little getting used to. Looking back, they really weren't very good, but we didn't know any better and that was the best we had, so we were really excited about a car. They were much faster than a horse-drawn buggy and they didn't run away when they got scared.

**Farm Animals** - Horses were my favorite. I just loved them. We had about eight of them and two of them could be ridden. The riding horses were smaller and prettier than the workhorses. They were shiny black with curved necks. They were a driving team but we also rode them. Kate, the mare, was the one I rode to school. She was real skittish and could be dangerous because anything out of the ordinary would scare her, even a rabbit jumping. She was deathly afraid of cars. She had a colt my freshman year of high school and, of course, I had to drag him along to school with a long rope. He was just as ornery as she was. He would run ahead of her

and pull and then he would lay back and make her drag him. He was an all-around big nuisance. I was determined to break that colt to ride, but I was too big so I got little sister, Alvina, to get on him. I made the mistake of turning him loose and he bucked her off. Luckily she wasn't hurt, but we didn't tell Mother because she might forbid us to ride. There could be no worse punishment.

We had another horse called Prince, whose former owner had used him in racing. He couldn't stand to have another horse overtake him. If he heard another horse behind him, he would take off running and he was fast. I was riding him one day in the rain and he slipped. I flew off him, but I didn't dare tell my mother. I was real crazy about horses. I just about lived on horseback until I got married. It really was hard to leave the horses and move to town.

Dogs are important animals on the farm. Pigs were the bane of my mother's life. They were forever getting into her garden. Grandpa would fix the fence and they would get out. He would fix the fence again and they would get out again. When they did, Mother called the three dogs. They had a system. The two large ones would each take an ear and the small one would grab the tail and they would pull those pigs back to their pen. My dad always said he was embarrassed to sell those pigs because they didn't have any tails or ears by the time they got old enough to go to market. But they never did learn. They kept coming back for more.

Our little dog, "Puppy," was called when chickens flew over the fence into the yard. The chickens could never find the gate to leave, so Puppy would trap them in the corner and put one foot on each side of the chicken's neck. Then she would take her hind feet and kick the chicken and keep pushing it with her hind feet. Mother would open the gate and Puppy would push the chicken ahead of her out the gate. As long as we had her, Puppy had a full-time job guiding stray chickens out of the yard. She never hurt or frightened the chickens, but made quite a show of her job.

**Cows** - I loved the kittens and dogs, but the cows and pigs were a necessary evil. We had 21 milk cows and I had to milk five of those every day and twice a day in summer. I had wanted to learn how to milk and that was a mistake because from that time on I was stuck with the job. It was so frustrating we never could go anywhere and stay any length of time because we always had to come home and milk the cows. In the winter it was so cold my hands almost froze, and the smell was bad. We had to keep the cows in the barn; we'd keep throwing straw on top of the mess. By spring there was a foot-deep mass of dirty straw that had to be spread out over the fields with the manure spreader, kind of like a large horse-drawn fertilizer spreader, a wagon with a revolving reel in back that scattered the straw evenly in the field.

In summer the flies were awful. I sat on a one-legged milk stool, like a "T" and milked those cows. I had to pinch the cow's tail between my knee and the cow's leg so she couldn't slap me in the face with it. I didn't like having my face slapped. I took a little branch and waved it under her stomach to chase the flies away, otherwise she would kick and knock the bucket over, since I had her "fly swatter" tail pinned down. Between keeping the tail out of my face and her feet out of my bucket, it was quite a project to milk five cows.

**Chores** - Every night Harold and I had to gather five bushels of corncobs for stove fuel. One of us had to bring the cows in from the pasture. I could ride the horse for that.

Of course there were always dishes to wash. We put two big pans on the table, one to wash in and the other to rinse. We turned the dishes upside down in a big square pan to drain, and then someone had to wipe them. It was hard to wash them because we had poor soap and the water was so hard. The outsides of the kettles were black from the smoke of the cob fire. The soot got thicker and thicker on the bottom and we just washed the inside.

Hunting eggs was another everyday chore. Our chickens weren't confined so we had to hunt all through the barn and orchard and chicken house. I loved to read so I would usually take a book with me while I hunted eggs. 300 chickens meant it took quite a while. We had about 80 pigs and my poor dad would carry water and slop to them every night. It's no wonder that he was stoop-shouldered. He carried two cans back and forth and back and forth until they were all taken care of. Then he would go out and feed the calves. After we milked the cows, the milk was put in a separator to separate the cream from the skim milk. This was given to the calves.

**Shenanigans** - My brothers shared a bedroom. When they were teenagers they used to roughhouse in the morning. The first one up would pull the other one out of bed. The lazybones would hold onto the wire bed frame and a major tug-of-war would result. The bed frame was all twisted out of shape and finally the legs of the bed wore a hole through the soft pine flooring. The floor had to be patched. I don't remember what their punishment was, but Dad was not too happy.

Halloween was a time for more malicious mischief. The older boys and young men went around to see how much trouble they could stir up. They would turn over outhouses and generally cause trouble. Any farm equipment left in the field (and there usually was some because farmers didn't have room to store all their machinery) would be relocated, sometimes to another farm, or sometimes to an odd place, such as on top of a haystack. One year a neighbor decided he would teach those hoodlums a lesson if they tried anything

at his farm. He lay in wait, with his shotgun, in a wagon. The pranksters got wind of it, sneaked up behind him, and pushed the wagon down a hill. One of the crueller tricks I heard about was when a poor milk cow was hidden in our town hall, which we called the "Opera House." She wasn't found for three days and by that time she was miserable from not being milked. She survived, but that was unkind.

**Entertainment at Home** - We had no radio or television. My dad bought a piano and my sister learned to play it. She would buy every sheet of music that came out and then she would play while we sang. I loved to sing around the house and all over the farm and nobody seemed to care. When I was about ten years old one of our neighbors got a Victrola. They invited all the neighbors to come and hear it, so we went. I remember I sat just as close to it as I could and was completely enthralled for the whole evening. Later, when radios got better, I listened whenever it was on.

Finally, when I was almost grown up, we got a radio. Our first one was a little bigger than a shoebox and had a horn on it like the old Victrolas. We could get only one station at first. There was so much static that we listened only to the weather and market reports.

**County Fair** - All of our outside entertainment was as a family because we had only one car. One of the big events of the year was the County Fair held in September for a whole week. My dad always got season tickets for us and we went several days. There were always parades. There were sideshows and sometimes balloons. Later they had an airplane that men did stunts in. People could pay to take a ride. Of course every school had an exhibit of students' work. We got ribbons, but no prize money. Every night there was a show in front of the grandstands. The last night of the fair was always a fireworks show. I've never seen better fireworks, even to this day. Every day each of us was given a quarter to spend, which would last all day. Rides cost a nickel. We could buy a hamburger for a nickel. It was just a bun and big piece of meat, not even an onion.

**Entertainment in Town** - Once in a while, a travelling group would put up a big tent and hold a "chautauqua." It lasted about a week. One night there might be a speaker about astronomy and the next a musical group. Tickets were sold in advance. The group would come to any town that sold enough tickets.

There was a large community hall in town that held about 200 people. Travelling drama teams would come and put on a different play every week. I was part of a community theater group that put on several plays. We rehearsed in the Souville schoolhouse, made costumes, and sold tickets for 35 cents. The whole town would come for the performance in our Opera House. A couple of times we put the play on in a neighboring town, too. That was fun.

Later we had movies. Most of them were cowboy westerns with some comedies, too. Whenever anyone in the neighborhood had a birthday, everybody, old and young, spent the evening together. They all brought sandwiches, cakes and cookies. The women sat indoors; the men sat outdoors, and the kids played running games in the yard. There was a basket social once a year, to raise money for library books. The teenage girls packed a nice lunch in a decorated box, which was auctioned off to a young man, who then got to eat it with you. Lunches of the popular girls brought as much as \$20, a lot of money then. . . . . My childhood holds many pleasant memories. I have seen many changes in the world. My parents' love and example has stood me in good stead and I am thankful for the family God blessed me with.

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Viola married Arnold Hansen, 1923 graduate of Boelus High School, in Ebenezer Church in June, 1928. Hansen was a banker who was recruited by the Bank of America to move to Hawthorne, CA, where Northrop Aircraft was a major employer. Hansen decided that banking in California was too stressful so he went to work for Northrop. He died in 1954. Viola also worked at Northrop, retiring in 1974. They had children Gerald (1929) and Adorae (1933). Viola has lived with Adorae in Huntington Beach since 1974. She has been active in public life and enjoys visits with the foreign exchange students her family has hosted. Lenise Cook is the daughter of Adorae and granddaughter of Viola.

### CONNECTIONS, 1870-1925 and UPDATE to 2002

By Marion Bahensky

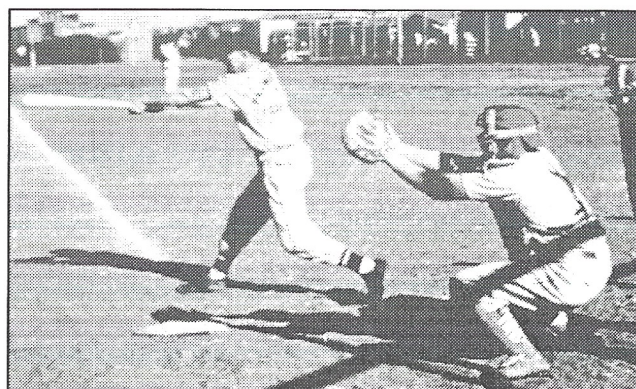
Pedar Hald, (1835-1905) my great-grandfather, proved up his homestead claim in 1884 on land which adjoined Berck and Kruse land. None of them spoke English. Pedar Hald had been in the Danish army, which lost Schleswig-Holstein to the Germans in 1864. Grandpa Hald was described as irascible, so they may not have been good neighbors. Grandpa Hald had come to the U.S. in 1869 to raise money to bring his family over. Wife Ane and two daughters, Mary and Karen, sailed to New York and took a train to Chicago, where Pedar had a job as carpenter after the disastrous fire. The family then went on by train to Grand Island, arriving there in 1873. Pedar built a sod house on his claim near Boelus to receive his family. He sometimes worked for the railroad to finance his farming, walking to Grand Island every Sunday and home again on Saturday. He also walked 60 miles to Ft. Hartsuff to work at one time.

My mother's father, Chris Jensen, (1856-1932) and his brothers were agents for the Union Pacific Railroad to recruit settlers from Denmark, escort them here, and help them get started. When Pedar Hald brought his family to the new land near Boelus, a young man rode out to meet them and said to Pedar, "Have you brought your family out here to die of loneliness?" Daughter Mary, now seven, thought

this young man (Chris Jensen) was very handsome. Thus began the connection between the Jensens and Halds, who each had a descendant in the Boelus high-school class of 1925. Chris Jensen married Mary Hald in 1888.

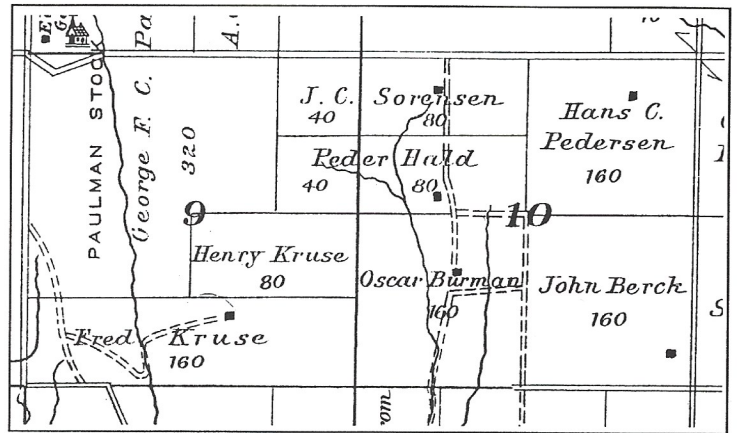
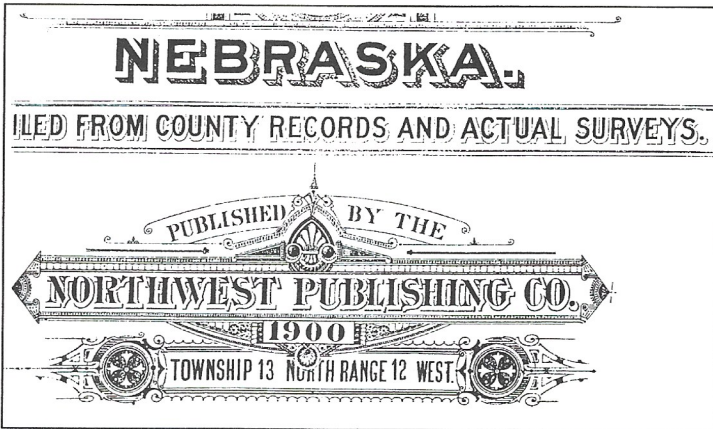
Pedar and Ane Hald had a third child, Andrew, in 1875. Andrew married Elsie Carlsen. Their second child, Earl (1909-1990), graduated from high school with Viola Kruse. Earl worked his way through the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and received a Ph.D. in economics at Berkeley in 1939. During WWII he worked for the Office of Price Stabilization in Washington, D.C. He was named a Regional Director of the O.P.S. before becoming an economics professor at the University of Washington. He later took work with the United Nations, and was posted to Libya, Cyprus, and Fiji, successively. He retired to England, and later moved to Spain. He died in 1990, leaving three generations of Halds in California.

Chris Jensen had two older brothers who came to America before him. Oldest brother Nels established the store in Boelus which is now Whitefoot's. Second brother, Anders, who was Andy Jensen's grandfather, bought the Boelus State Bank in 1905. The bank has had Jensens in its management ever since. The first Anders was succeeded by son, Pete, Andy's father. Andy took over after Pete. Andy's son, Russ, is now in charge. Stoney Berck says, in the Boelus history book (1985), "The Boelus State Bank for the last one hundred years has served the members of this community. It has withstood the crash of 1929, the great depression ... I believe that, without our bank, the town would dry up and blow away." Mr. Berck is even prouder of Boelus baseball and says, "I cannot go on here without mentioning the tremendous part that the Jensen family has in the continuance of baseball in this community. When Jensen Field was dedicated there were three generations of Jensens in the ceremony. Andy was not only a good hitter but a smart sound second baseman, who could also lay down a good bunt if that is what it took to win the game. In 1983 he was elected to the Nebraska Baseball Hall of Fame which is not easy for a player from a community as small as Boelus." Andy Jensen graduated from Boelus High School in 1925 with Viola Kruse and Earl Hald. Though he lived in town, his childhood was not much different from theirs.

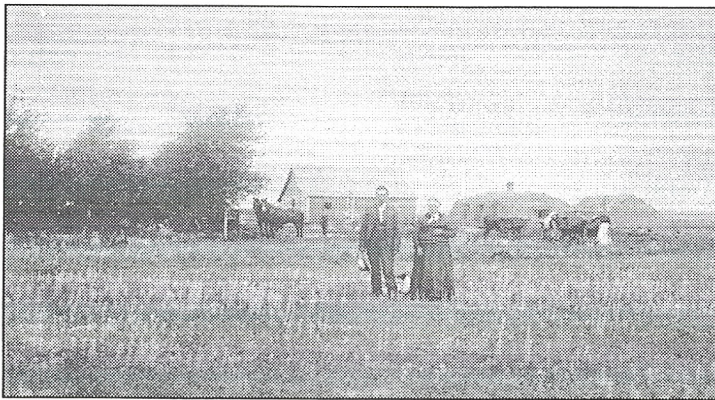


Sticker on photo reads, "Andy Jensen, King of Swat."

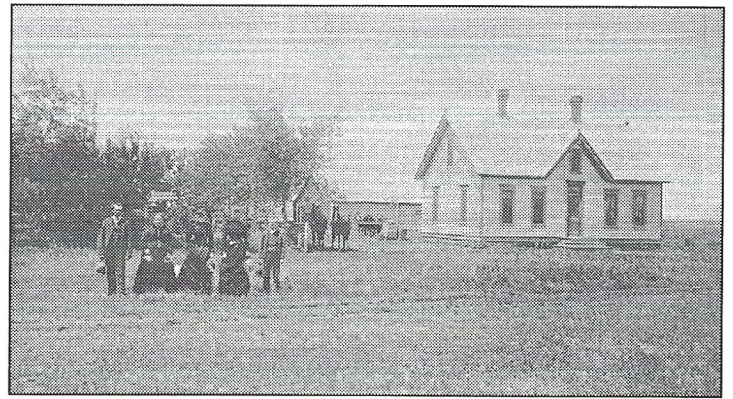
— Photo courtesy of Russ Jensen



See “Peder” Hald’s 120 acres in Sections 9 & 10. See also Kruse and Berck land in sale Sections from this plat map of 1900.



Pedar and Ane Hald stand in front of their sod house. Son Andrew holds horses. Daughter Karen (Carrie) holds cattle. Note wooden barn. Daughter May had to go out to work to help with farm expenses.  
— Photo courtesy of Marion Bahensky



1889: Fortunes have improved. Pedar, Ane, Mary, Carrie, and Andrew stand proudly in front of their new wooden house. Mary had married Chris Jensen in 1888.  
— Photo courtesy of Helen Hald Christensen



1925 BOELUS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: Andy Jensen, who stayed in Boelus. Earl Hald, who traveled the world and died in Spain. Viola Kruse, now living in Huntington Beach, CA. — Photos courtesy of Russ Jensen, Helen Christensen, and Lenise Cook.

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*historically speaking*

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