

## CHAPTER 6

One winter Jarjus took the time to make felt slippers for everyone of the children. He had a wooden "last" made for each child's size. The sole was made of many layers of heavy woolen cloth, the outer layer being of denim material. It wore a little better. The upper part was made of woolen material and lined with flannel. These slippers kept the feet good and warm. Since the children couldn't go outside to play, they naturally ran around in the house. When he finished the last pair of slippers, he said: "Now run, you won't make so much noise." The younger children enjoyed running about the house with them on.

He also had a last made of his own foot's size, and made a pair for himself. He didn't have much chance to wear his slippers until after supper.

Jarjus enjoyed fishing at his brother, Fred's farm, located about two miles southeast of Hadar, where there is a rather wide deep creek. Fred's children went swimming there also.

Jarjus would hitch up his old gray mare, "Flory" to his buggy and drive to the farm. He would tie her near his fishing hole, sitting and fishing all day without ever getting a bite. That didn't discourage him. He went fishing there whenever the mood struck him. He would take sandwiches along to eat while fishing. A jug of water satisfied his thirst at the same time.

Sometimes old Flory would get tired of standing and waiting for Jarjus. He would loosen the hitching strap himself and go home without his driver. The Hadar townsfolk thought it quite amusing to see old Flory come trotting along without his driver. She would go straight home. Then, one of the boys would go after their Dad. Sometimes his youngest son, Martin, would go along to keep an eye on Flory so she wouldn't leave without them. He usually used earth worms for bait. He had a few places where he could find a lot of good earth worms for fishing. There were times when the ducks and chickens, standing by, would grab the worms while he was digging for them. Because of that, he had Martin standing by to keep the fowl away long enough to get all the worms they would need for fishing.

Fishing was a great delight to him and was a good diversion from his work. When he would catch a pretty good mess of fish, he always cleaned them himself before bringing them home. If a rain storm would come up while he was fishing, he would stay overnight at his brother's house. Mathilda didn't worry about his welfare as she knew where he was.

Jarjus had one hobby that took a lot of his time during the middle and latter part of the summer. It was taking care of honey bees. He started with only one beehive, spreading a white bedsheet on the ground under the branch where the bees were clustered and swarming. He usually asked one of the children to help him with this task. He would set a bee box in the middle of the sheet, cut the tree branch and lay it on the sheet. The queen bee would find the box in about an hour's time and lead them into it. Toward evening, he and his helper would carry the box into the bee shed, a three-sided building with the open side to the south to offer plenty of fresh air for them.

During the winter season he kept watch over them and always supplied them with a pan of water. When the hive seemed to have too many drones, he disposed of them by cutting off their heads with his pocket knife. He said that the drones ate more honey than the workers could bring in. At one time there were six hives to care for. After a blizzard he removed the blown snow from the hives to provide plenty of air for them. The hives made plenty of honey for the family's use and also for his friends. He discontinued the hobby in later years.

Another favorite hobby of his was reading. He spent a lot of time reading the one daily local and two German newspapers. He enjoyed the stories, discussing them with his daughter, Lillie, who had also read them. Mathilda enjoyed reading also. There was always a lot of reading material around the house.

One winter, Jarjus hired a man especially to take the children to school, about two miles, and then go after them in the afternoons. If there was work yet to be done in the cornfield and it was on the way to school, he took them that far, and they walked the rest of the way.

In the spring of 1917, one of Jarjus' sons, Arnold, reached the age for serving in the Military. His name appeared first on the draft list of the community, and was called into the United States Army. Another son, Hellmuth, was also of draft age, but was excused from being drafted as his father needed his help on the farm. The draft call cast a shadow of sorrow over the entire family. In September of that year, Arnold went with a trainload of recruits to Camp Funstun, Arkansas.

After being there a couple of months, Arnold developed a physical problem requiring an operation. The Surgeon, upon examination, suggested that he be sent to the Army Medical



Center in Maryland. Enroute overseas, Arnold entered the Center and underwent surgery. When fully recuperated, he was sent overseas with about one thousand men, who had recovered from some kind of surgery. His original Company had gone on before him. He was reunited with his group, and was given the duty of cleaning up the field after a battle on the warfront in Germany. It was an unpleasant job, but it had to be done. He was not required to carry a gun.

The following year, Arnold returned home from overseas. His health was better than when he had left for the Army. When Arnold married, his father gave him his best quarter section of land because he had served in the Army. Jarjus' first house was moved to this land where Arnold wanted his yard.

Jarjus desired very much to have his sons take up farming for themselves. He bought more land at every opportunity, looking to the future of his sons. As the herd of cattle was increasing in number, the need for more pasture land arose. He heard that a quarter section of prairie land was for sale in the Southbranch Precinct of Pierce County. It was adjoining some school land which was to be for sale later. Jarjus could not resist buying it.

During the summer months extra cattle were needed to fill the pasture. He pastured some of his neighbor's cattle, the term being from the fifteenth of May until the fifteenth of October, and the charge a certain amount for each head of cattle. Jarjus had a well drilled for supplying the cattle with water. He also set up a large supply tank and a small drinking tank for use in this pasture. A homemade patent, of a large block of wood fastened to the wire, shut off the windmill. When the water level was low, the block of wood was heavy enough to make it set the mill in gear for pumping. As the water level rose in the tank, a ratchet wheel near the pump gradually shut off the mill. When the tank was full, the pump had shut itself off. As the cattle drank the water from the small tank, the level of water would lower, and the patent would set the mill in gear again. A three-strand wire fence enclosed the entire quarter section of land.

A few years later Jarjus bought another quarter section of land about eight miles east of his farm. He moved his cattle over to it and rented out the first pasture land to a family for cultivating. Corn and grain were raised and harvested on a "share crop" basis, the terms being one-third for rent and the remaining rent for cash due in October.

The school land, west of this quarter section was for sale at a reasonable price. It had been occupied by some uninterested people. The land was covered with cockleburrs. The following years different renters lived on the two farms. They did not do much better than the first occupants. It seemed like it was hard to find good farmers anymore. He then rented that part of the land to the neighbors. That worked much better. Jarjus' boys had planted eighty acres of corn on one of the farms. The crop was so good that the 2000-bushel corncrib and the 600-bushel crib were full. Corn, piled up on the yard, was shelled and sold just as soon as corn picking season finished. Needless to say, the boys had plenty to do that year.

At that time Mathilda, Arnold and Helmuth picked only two loads of corn a day because they had a distance of two miles to drive to and from the field. That Thanksgiving Day they came home about 12:30 noon. A family had stopped in after church expecting dinner. Everyone was sitting around the table when Mathilda came into the house. The wife said to her: "Where are your ducks?" Mathilda replied: "In the coup where they belong. When we pick corn we don't take time to clean and serve duck. Now we're picking corn." Expecting duck, they received, instead, salt pork, cabbage and potatoes to eat. That afternoon Mathilda and the boys had a much-appreciated rest.

With the passing of time, a "Top Buggy" was manufactured for comfort while travelling. It was a joyous time for the family when Jarjus purchased one! How nice it was that the top kept the hot sun from beating down on their heads. Many times they drove in the rain on a lengthy trip and the top kept them from getting soaked.

Then, the day arrived when Jarjus could afford a double-seated carriage and came home with one! It was fashioned with side curtains that could be snapped on to the top and taken off to be folded up and kept in a box when not needed. It was a welcome addition for the family's use.

In a few years the first automobile came into use on the level roads. Jarjus lived in the hills about two miles from one of these roads where the automobiles passed. Mathilda said: "I'm really glad we are not living next to that road; we need not be bothered by the noise of the passing cars." The horses, naturally, were frightened by the moving object coming near them. They would try to get away and, therefore, headed for the ditch. The driver of the team had to stop, get out of the buggy, and hold



them by the bit to quiet the horses until the car passed. In time the horses got over their shyness of cars and became used to travelling on the same road with the passing autos.

When the automobiles were made sturdier for driving in the high country hills and on dirt roads, Jarjus bought a Ford. On one of his first trips to Norfolk with it, an on-coming driver, apparently under the influence of liquor, hit the Mittelstaedt car head-on, ruining the front end of the car. The road was just wide enough for two-way traffic. One side was an embankment and the other side a deep ditch, so it was head-on. There were no injuries, but all were "shook up" as neither car was going very fast.

Jarjus smoked a pipe only indoors. He was afraid of setting fire to something outdoors by accident. He didn't approve of smoking cigarettes, and never smoked one in his life. He did smoke a cigar at times. His son, Otto, gave him a box of cigars to smoke, but he gave them to friends when they came to visit him. Birthdays were usually celebrated, and friends called on him then.

His brother, Ernest, often came to stay with Jarjus and family for several days. Ernest raised tobacco. He knew just when to cut the plants and cure them for use. He would cut the tobacco very fine for pipe smoking. When it was ready for use, Ernest gave some to both Fred and Jarjus.



Ernest Mittelstaedt and Dr. Lingefelter

There was chewing tobacco on the market, the brand name being "Horseshoe". Jarjus would break off a piece of it, as large as a pea, and hold it in his mouth. He did not spit it out, while working outdoors, as most of the tobacco-chewing people did.

Jarjus was hard of hearing for a long time. Everyone had to talk very loud to him to make themselves understood. There was an advertisement in a magazine for a "hearing aid", and Jarjus sent for one. But, alas, it was unsatisfactory to him and he sent it back to the company! Friends advised him to have his doctor check his hearing and fit him with a proper hearing aid. But - Jarjus didn't want one bad enough, and continued living without it. Total deafness overcame him by the time he was eighty years of age. It was necessary that Mathilda take over the full management of his affairs, which she did very well.

He lost interest in fishing, and preferred staying home. He like to play "solitary" with cards and passed much of his time that way. His children and grandchildren frequented the home, and especially for special events. His eyesight gradually waned, and his pass-time was sitting in his rocking chair and smoking his pipe. Nevertheless, he was able to take care of his own needs up until his last illness.

Jarjus was not bedfast long during his last illness. It was during a severe blizzard on January 2, 1937, that he fell and broke his right hip. He was put to bed and made comfortable as possible. Due to the storm, the telephone was out of order, and Martin had to wait until the following day to summon a Doctor. Since the roads were blown shut, the last end of the Doctor's trip had to be made by team and wagon. Old-age pneumonia set in, and after three days, on January 5, 1937, Jarjus passed away at the age of 88 years. Since the roads were still closed, kind neighbors and friends scooped snow to make it possible for the Mortician to get through to the farm house. Another snow storm forced the funeral date to be postponed from Friday until Sunday, January 10, just one month before the planned Golden Wedding Anniversary of Jarjus and Mathilda. Service were held that day at one o'clock at the home and at two o'clock at the Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Interment was made at the new Lutheran Cemetery at Norfolk, Nebraska. He was survived by his wife, nine children, twenty-two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.





Jarjus and Mathilda Mittelstaedt - 1934

## THE HISTORY OF MATHILDA AND EACH OF THE NINE CHILDREN IS AS FOLLOWS:

### **Mathilda**

Born July 10, 1871. Died July 6, 1950

### **Otto**

Born July 30, 1888. Married Marie Gehm January, 1910. They had four children: One daughter, Dorothea; three sons, Arthur, Elwin and Roland. Died December 10, 1949. Marie died November, 1969.

### **Walter**

Born May 21, 1889. Married Clara Heidemann November 1914. They had two sons: Lawrence and Loyd. Died February 17, 1964. Clara is still living at this writing.

### **Hugo**

Born February 4, 1890. Married Meta Iuch July 1914. They had one daughter, Olga and one son, Rueben. Died October 6, 1957. Meta died June 12, 1969.

### **Clara**

Born December 14, 1892. Married Paul Geske, November 1914. They had one son Franklin and one daughter, Edith. She is still living at this writing. Paul died November 17, 1965.

### **Arnold**

Born March 8, 1895. Married Nettie Heidemann January 1923. They had no children. Died May 15, 1968. Nettie died June 13, 1973.

### **Hellmuth**

Born November 25, 1896. Married Rosa Leitske November, 1918. They had three daughters: Evelyn, Deliene and Doris, and one son, Harry. Died February 8, 1970. Rosa is still living at this writing.

### **Erich**

Born August 31, 1898. Married Fern Smith July 1931. They had four daughters: Pearl, Zelda, Lois and Shirley, and five sons: Ralph, Richard, Robert, Roy and Randall. He and his wife are still living at this writing.



### **Lillie**

Born January 2, 1900. Married John Grothe May, 1919. They had two daughters: Vera and Gladys, and two sons, Arnold and Darrell. She is still living at this writing. John died April 23, 1970.

### **Martin**

Born June 1, 1902. Married Leota Sieffert 1935. They had no children. Martin died June 24, 1964. Leota died March 15, 1935.



LILLIE, ERICH, & CLARA MITTELSTAEDT  
July 6, 1976

### **"JARJUS, THE LITTLE HOMESTEADER"**

#### **ADDENDUM**

"WALTER" ..... Clara died January 5, 1984  
"CLARA" ..... died June 4, 1986  
"HELLMUTH" ..... ROSA died January 15, 1985  
"ERICH" ..... died December 1, 1985  
"LILLIE" ..... died March 29, 1986



JARJUS & MATHILDA MARTHA (Spreeman) MITTELSTAEDT  
Married February 10, 1887  
in Pierce, Nebraska



## FAMILY PHOTOS



Ernest Mittelstaedt  
(brother of Jarjus)



Ernest Mittelstaedt's wife



Lillie and Clara Mittelstaedt  
with mother Mathilda seated in front.



Lawrence Mittelstaedt and  
Franklin Geske.



Ralph Mittelstaedt receiving the  
100 Year Homestead Plaque.

## EPILOGUE

The homestead has been occupied by Jarjus' family. Erich, the sixth son, inherited it and lived on it for many years. It is now owned by Erich's oldest son, Ralph, who bought it from his father. He is living on it at this writing.

Ralph had the honor of receiving a plaque for living on the farm which had been occupied by the family of Jarjus for one hundred years or more.

Up to this time most of the buildings have been torn down. The large barn, with a huge hayloft, has been replaced by a modern milking parlor, milk storage, etc. The house still stands but has been remodeled.



**MATHILDA MARTHA  
(SPREEMAN) MITTELSTAEDT**



Mathilda Martha Spreeman (Gaudlip Julius Spreeman) was born July 10, 1871 in Gollnow, Pommern, Poland, and died July 5, 1950 in Norfolk, Nebraska.

She married Otto Jarjus Mittelstaedt, February 10, 1887 in Pierce, Nebraska, son of Martin Mittelstaedt and Dora Schultz.



Mathilda as a child

## DECENDANTS OF GAUDLIP JULIUS SPREEMAN

Gaudlip Julius Spreeman was born in 1845. He married Caroline Wilhelmina Stahl, daughter of Carl Stahl and Anna Kirshbaum. She was born May 28, 1835 in Gollnow, Prussia (Pommern), and died in 1903. Gaudlip Julius Spreeman died of measles in Germany.

Children of Gaudlip Julius Spreeman and Caroline Stahl are:

Albert Spreeman, born about 1867; died September 16, 1954.

Mathilda Martha Spreeman, born July 10, 1871, Gollnow

Pommern; died July 5, 1950, Norfolk, Nebraska.

Bertha Spreeman, no birth date or death date. She died of smallpox in Germany.

Albert Spreeman (Gaudlip Julius) was born about 1867, and died September 16, 1954. He married Anna Ahlmann December 25, 1894 in Pierce County, Nebraska in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Anna, the daughter of Albert Ahlmann and Bertha. She was born about 1877 in Germany. Anna Ahlmann died July 19, 1964.

Children of Albert Spreeman and Anna Ahlmann are:

Bertha Spreeman, born June 21, 1905; died 1986.

Hattie (Spreeman) Heckman, born December 19, 1897;  
died June 15, 1980.

Martha (Spreeman) Droescher, born November 16, 1896;  
died April 12, 1982.

Ernest Spreeman, born September 14, 1901;  
died May 13, 1985.

Herbert Spreeman, born December 15, 1911;  
died April 10, 1982.

Bill (William) Spreeman, born January 17, 1899;  
married Lorna Wachter; died November 6, 1978.

Erna Spreeman, married Ulrich; born January 19, 1903;  
died June 1, 1982.

Julius Spreeman, born 1896; married Rosette Heidemann,  
April 24, 1918; Pierce County, Nebraska; born 1900

Otto Spreeman, born 1901, Hadar, Pierce County, Nebraska;  
married Mathilda Ulrich; born 1904, Lincoln, Nebraska

Alfred Spreeman, born 1904, Hadar, Pierce County,  
Nebraska; married Minnie Fix; born 1907.

Herman Spreeman, born October 3, 1907;  
died September 24, 1983.



## DESCENDANTS OF GOTTLIEB BORCHARDT



GOTTLIEB  
BORCHARDT

Gottlieb Borchardt was born April 16, 1829 in Gollnow, Prussia, Pommern, and died September 3, 1920 in Hadar, Nebraska. He married (1) Frederika Stahl. Then he married Caroline Wilhelmina Stahl, daughter of Carl Stahl and Anna Kirschbaum. She was born May 28, 1835 in Gollnow, Prussia, Pommern, and died in 1903.

Child of Gottlieb Borchardt and Caroline Stahl is:

Robert Borchardt, born February 10, 1876, Gollnow, Prussia, Pommern; died April 27, 1958, Yankton, South Dakota.

Robert Borchardt married Sophia Margaretha Faubel, April 11, 1899 in Hadar, Nebraska. Daughter of John Faubel and Sophie Dederman. She was born September 15, 1881 in Wisner, Nebraska and died January 16, 1922 in Dallas, South Dakota.

Children of Robert Borchardt and Sophia Faubel are:

Walter Gustaf Borchardt, born July 27, 1901; died 1950, Dallas, South Dakota.

Irene Borchardt, born August 15, 1905, Hadar, Nebraska, died 1997, Renton, Washington.

Irene Borchardt married Ralph Frank Otto Tiegs, November 4, 1922 in Norfolk, Nebraska, son of Ernest Tiegs and Katherine Donner. He was born February 6, 1906 in Norfolk, Nebraska and died June 14, 1967 in Fremont, Nebraska.

Children of Irene Borchardt and Ralph Tiegs are:

Robert Ralph Tiegs, born March 26, 1924, Dallas, South Dakota; died January 14, 1993, Wayne, Nebraska.

Shirley Mae Tiegs, born December 2, 1925, Dallas, South Dakota; died April 8, 1978, Omaha hospital.

Ralph Tiegs, born March 31, 1929.

Marian Tiegs, born June 4, 1934.

Robert Ralph Tiegs married Florence Wilma Fox November 1945 in Yankton, South Dakota, daughter of John Fox and Myrtle Hoffman. She was born August 25, 1927 in Yankton, South Dakota, and died February 4, 2001 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Children of Robert Tiegs and Florence Fox are:

Jackie Lee Tiegs, born July 12, 1946, Yankton, SD; died April 17, 1968, Omaha, Nebraska

James Richard Tiegs, born February 15, 1948, Yankton, SD; May 25, 1974 ordained a priest in Omaha, NE.

Robert Gerald Tiegs, born July 6, 1950, Yankton, SD.

Thomas Donald Tiegs, born October 5, 1961, Yankton, SD.



**ROBERT BORCHARDT AND SOPHIE FAUBEL**  
**Married April 11, 1899**  
**in Hadar, Nebraska**

Robert was born February 10, 1876, Gallnow, Prussia/  
Pomerania; died April 27, 1958, Yankton, South, Dakota  
Sophie was born September 15, 1881, Wisner, Nebraska;  
died January 16, 1922, Dallas, South Dakota.





**ALBERT AND ANNA (Ahlman) SPREEMAN**  
Married December 25, 1894  
in Pierce, Nebraska

**CHILDREN OF  
ALBERT & ANNA SPREEMAN**



(l-r)  
Martha, Hattie  
and Julius

**SPREEMAN GIRLS**  
(l-r) Martha, Hattie,  
Erna & Bertha

