

Your Opa (Arrel Toews) Grew Up On a Farm



This pictorial history of my childhood days on our family farm near Kremlin Oklahoma was written for my grandchildren (and my daughters) to give them an understanding of the importance, to me, of the farms where I grew up and where they now go to visit. I hope it will give them some appreciation and desire for learning about my family history and for how different things were when their Opa and his brothers Myron and Galen were growing up.

This work is based on a similar story prepared by my younger brother Myron, with modifications and personalization to fit me rather than him. He was very gracious in allowing me to use it for my own children and grandchildren. He is a good brother to me! Thanks, Myron!

Our [David A-Rosa M Toews Farmstead.pptx](#) file, which has additional information on our farmstead - diagrams of the yard, floor plans of house and barn, more photos and commentary, is also well worth looking at. I think it is a nice supplement to this slide set, providing interesting details. Please ask for it!

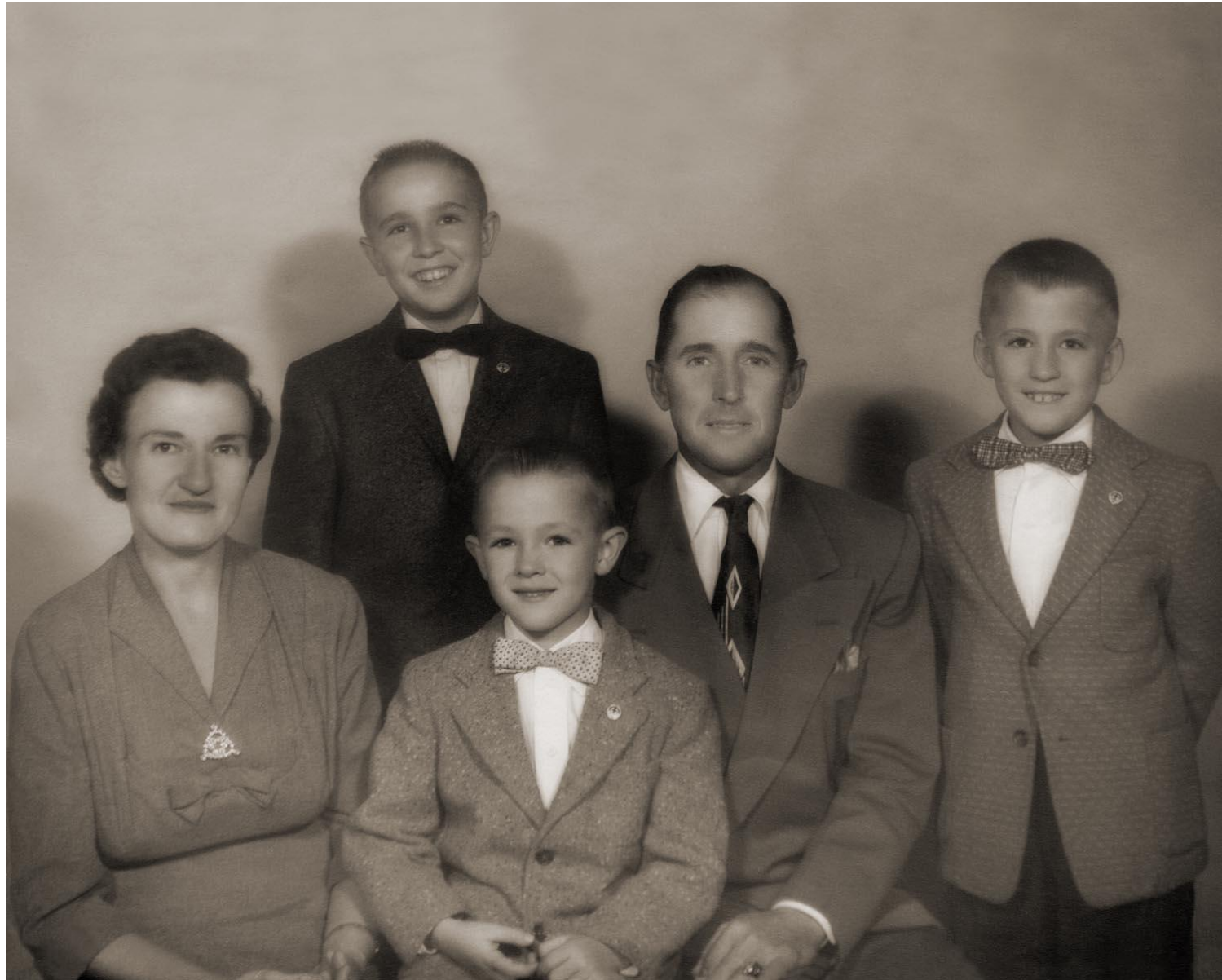
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Prepared for Austin & Benjamin Lemon and Barron III & Ellie Martin, and for my daughters Erin Toews Lemon and Laura Toews Martin. Of course, for my dear wife Kathy too!

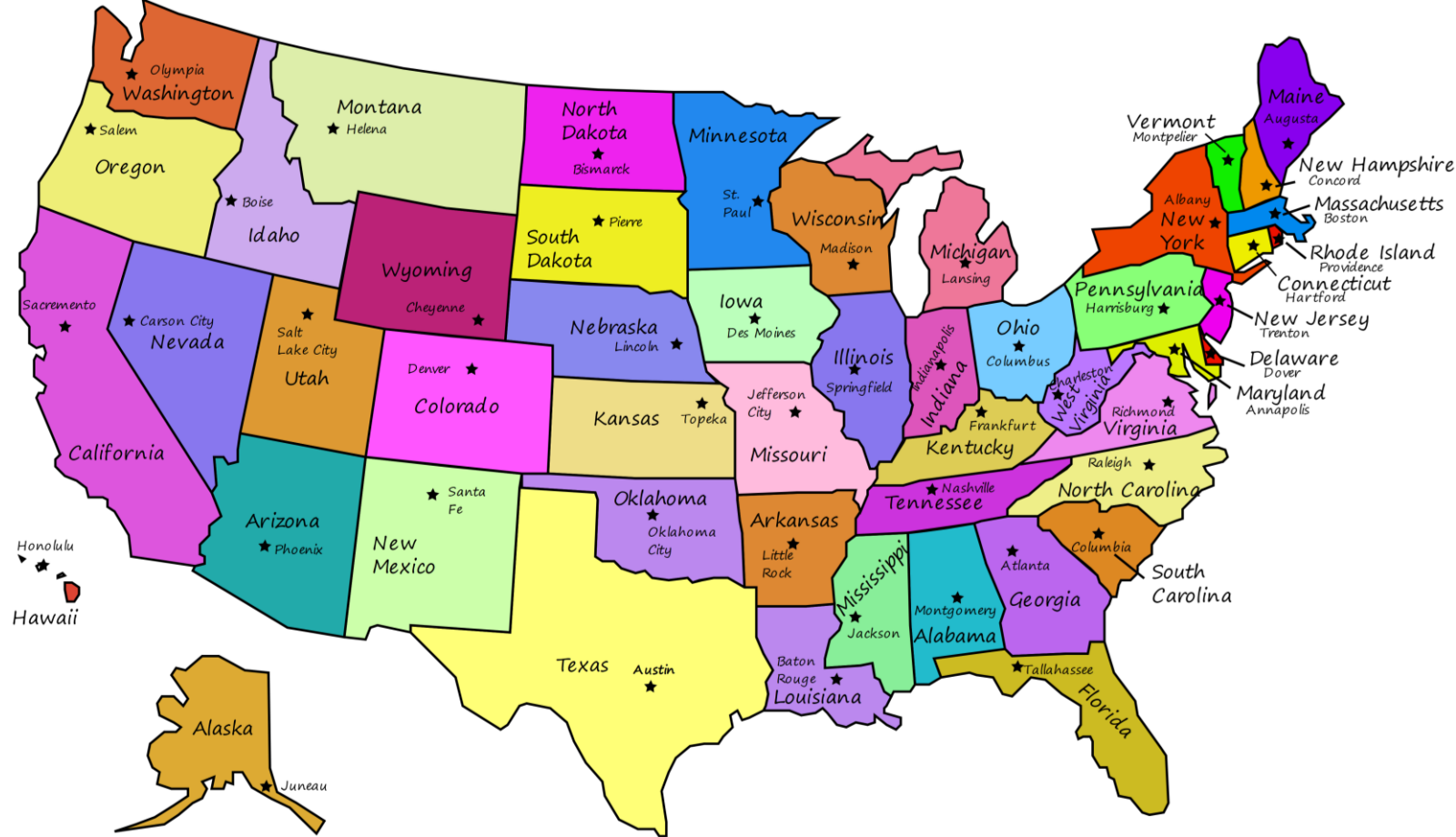
[Myron prepared his original version for his grandchildren, Riley and Elise Johnson, on the occasion of Riley's 12th birthday]

1. My Childhood Days on the Farm

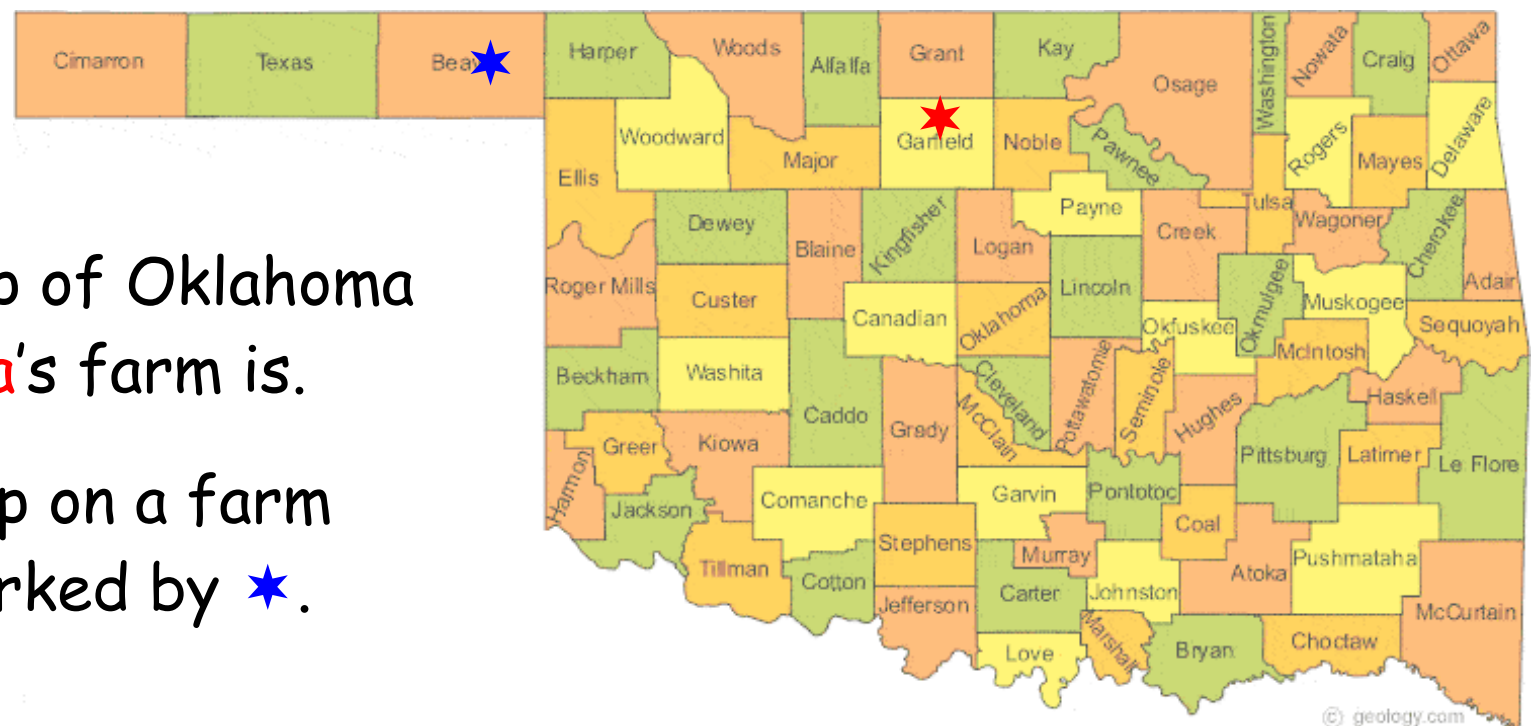


When I was a boy, I lived and grew up on a farm in Oklahoma with my parents and my two brothers, Galen, 3 years older than me, and Myron, three years younger than me. I was right in the middle! I hope you like my bowtie!

My father was David A. Toews and my mother was Rosa M. Toews, who was a Voth before she got married. This is a favorite early photo of my family, from when I was about 8 or 9 years old.



Our farms are a long ways from North Carolina where Oma and Opa live now.
 Can you find Oklahoma, Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina in the map above?



The ★ in the map of Oklahoma shows where **Opa's** farm is.

Oma also grew up on a farm in Oklahoma, marked by ★.



This is the farmhouse I lived in for my early childhood, until I was almost 13 years old. The house was about a mile and a half west of Kremlin on the "half-section road", a dirt road. It was a big two-story house with a wide porch on two sides. The bedrooms were upstairs, one for my mom and dad and one that all three boys shared (front corner). It did not have an indoor toilet, running water, air conditioning, or even one TV! It was "the good old days!"

Rainwater that fell on the roof of the house was collected in two large cisterns under the porch. There was a crank pump on each cistern, and we boys would often be the ones to crank up the water into buckets and carry them into the house to use for washing and cooking and drinking. There was a water bucket with a dipper on the kitchen counter for drinking.



My childhood farmhouse belonged to my Grandpa and Grandma Toews, back when my dad was a boy. This was in the early 1900s, over 100 years ago! Here is an old photo of my grandfather Toews in his car in front of the house.

That house was the Toews family house for three generations - my grandfather and grandmother (George P & Anna Toews), then my Mom and Dad (David & Rosa Toews), and then me and my brothers (Galen, Arrel, Myron). I did not know my Toews grandparents; they both died before I was born. But I heard many stories about them and even earlier days on the farm from my Dad. Opa will be happy to tell you some of these stories sometime - just ask.



Here is the colorized version of the old farm photo that hangs on the wall in Oma & Opa's home in North Carolina and in our house on the farm in Oklahoma. The little white building between the house and the "car shed" is the "summer kitchen," which had the washing machine, but no dryer - clothes were hung on a clothesline to dry in the sun and wind. It also had the "separator," used to separate cream (for selling in town) from the "skim milk" without the cream, that we used for drinking, baking, and on cereal. Sometimes we kept some of the cream and used it to crank home-made ice cream. We fed most of the skim milk to our pigs!



This is an old photo of my Toews grandparents and their children in front of the same house when it was much newer. My Grandmother *Anna Buller Toews* and Grandfather *George P. Toews* are in the middle row. Back right is their oldest son *Henry*, then *Peter*, then *Jacob*. The youngest boy in front is my dad (and your great-grandfather), *David A. Toews*, beside his sister *Anna*, who died when she was young, years before I was born. My dad's oldest sister *Clara* is already married and not shown in this photo.

There is a nice view of the cistern pump to the right, and the "downspout" for rainwater from the roof, which is set up here to run water into a tub on the porch instead of down into the cistern.



Our house in the snow

Easter Sunday afternoon - a nice view of our farmstead.

Both probably late 1940s



These are the earliest photos of me that I know of, taken on the S side of our house. My Mom Rosa is holding me on the left and my Dad David on the right, with Galen also. I am only a few months old. 1948

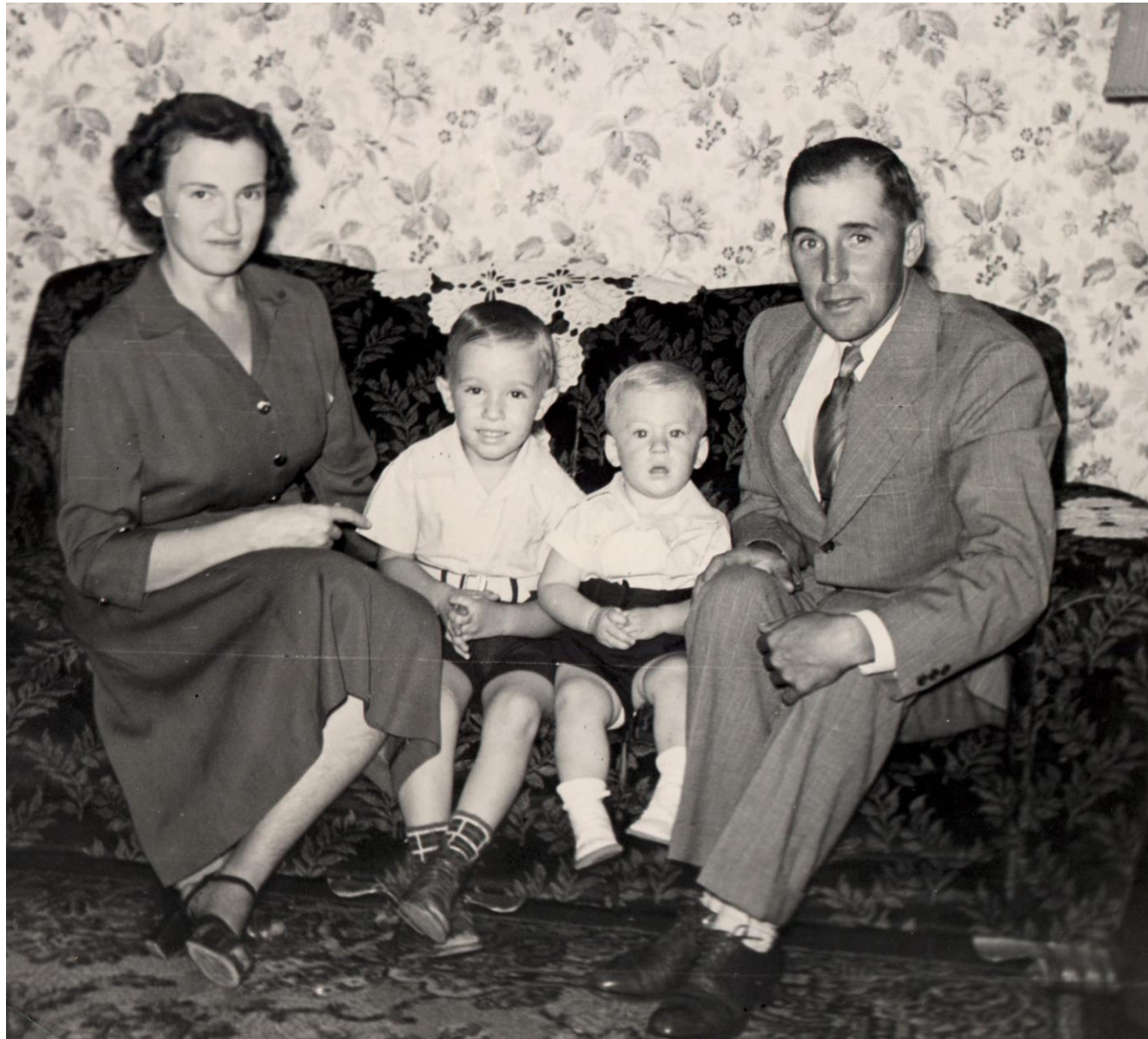




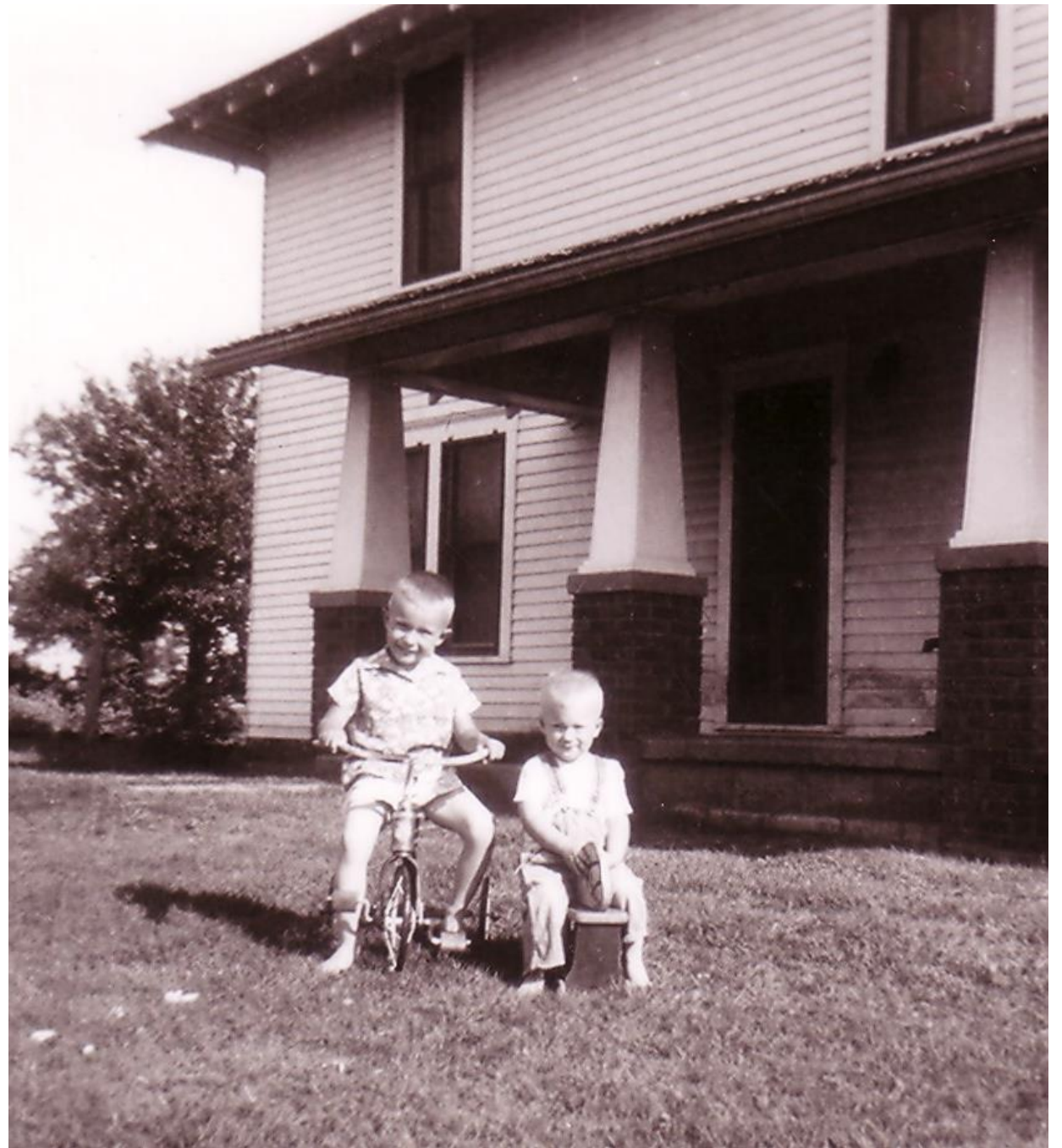
Arrel's first birthday (top 2 photos; 22 July 1949); Arrel & Galen with new scooter; Arrel with our scooter ~1950. All taken in front of our house; note the car and barn at back



My Mom and Dad, Rosa and David Toews with Galen and me, taken at my Grandparents Voth's house, a year or so before Myron was born (~1950)



A glamour shot of Arrel & Galen ~1950; Galen on his tricycle and Arrel on his wooden horse coaster in front of our house, also ~1950.





This is Arrel & Galen with Myron on his first birthday, 15 May 1952, taken on the south side of our house. Myron still has that highchair!



This is a nice portrait photo of me and my brothers a year or two later. Opa is about 5 years old. (~1953)

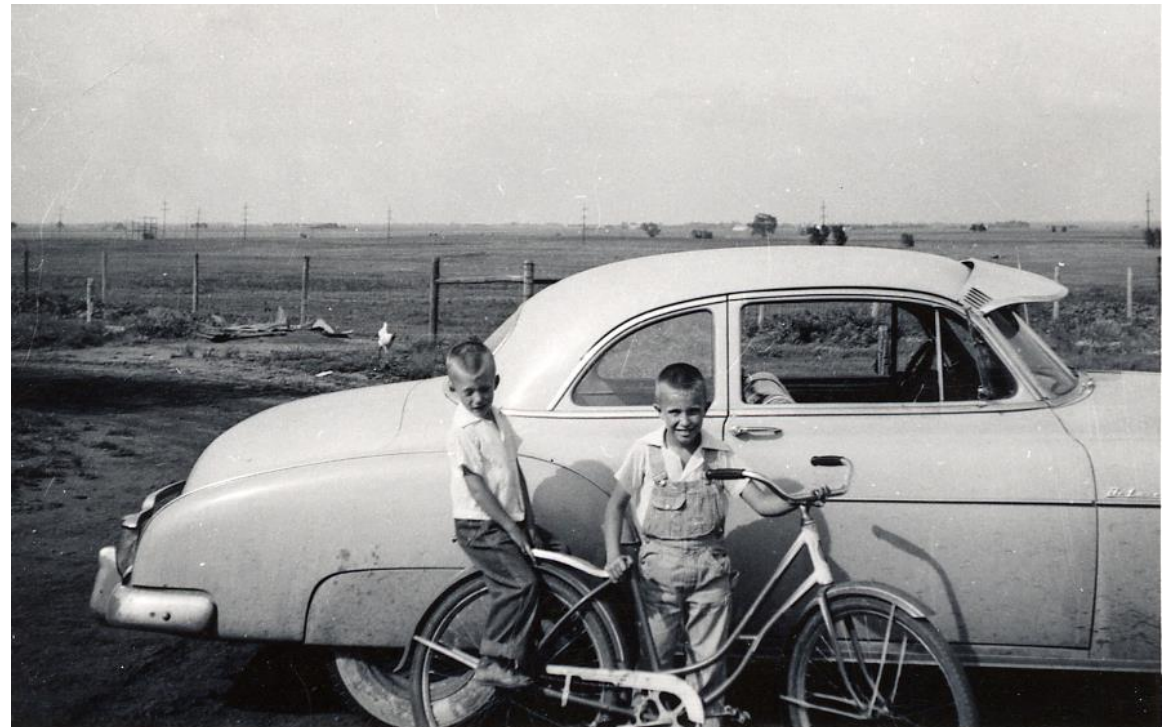


Above: Galen and Arrel in snow, Arrel & Galen with new wagon and old iron tricycle, all 3 Toews Brothers on their tricycles, & in their new wagon - all in front of S side of our house. Early 1950s

Here is Galen with our family dog, Spot, pulling Myron & Arrel in our new coaster wagon. ~1953

A few more photos from when I was young

From top left: Arrel & Galen at Berthoud Pass in Rocky Mountain National Park CO, July 1954;
Arrel with his Grandparents Voth, Christmas 1955; Arrel in a school music play, January 1957;
Arrel with Galen on his bike in front of our 1951 Chevrolet De Luxe on our farmyard ~1956





Here is a picture of me (middle) with Myron and Galen south of our house, dressed in our "Sunday best" for going to church on a Sunday morning.



Our farm had cows and sheep and chickens and pigs. But when I was a little boy, my favorite animals were our dog Spot and lots of cats and kittens. Opa had to hold Spot because he did not want his picture taken!



Almost all of my relatives lived nearby, so I got to see them all many times each year. This is one of my early Christmases at my Grandpa and Grandma Voth's house, with my cousins. Everyone got a toy truck for Christmas, even my girl cousin - no dolls or unicorns! Opa is second from the right with his brand-new trash truck! [1955]



This is me (right side) with some of my cousins visiting my Uncle Pete and Aunt Clara Voth's farm just west of Kremlin. Each of the kids has a cat or kitten.



Our family went to Colorado for vacation in 1954, when I was 6 years old. We drove and Myron, Arrel and Galen were all crammed into the back seat of our 1951 Chevrolet. The left photo of Myron sitting on the back of our car in Garden of the Gods, with Pikes Peak in the background, is a family favorite.

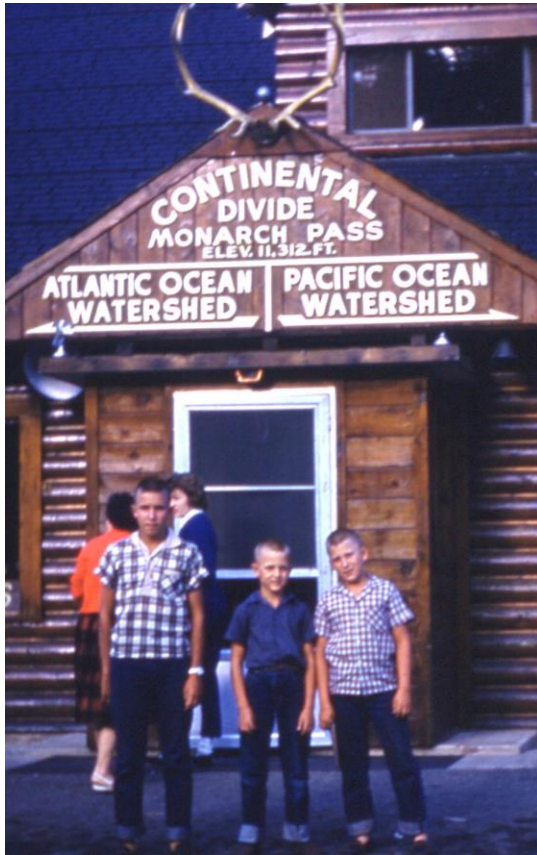


My dad was in Civilian Public Service camp in Colorado in the early 1940s, and Galen was born in Colorado Springs, so we often went back to Colorado. Toews Brothers with their Mom at upper right.



This photo shows the Toews Brothers in the alpine meadows along Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park CO, Summer 1954. We stayed in a cabin along the Big Thompson River east of Estes Park CO.

Here are more Toews Brothers vacation photos in later years that show us growing up!



My brothers and I all had work to do on the farm, even when we were young, like feeding chickens and gathering eggs, and milking cows and feeding our pigs. But there was time to play too. In fact, my brothers and cousins and I all played on the very same swing set that is set up beside the bunkhouse now! You can all enjoy it too!



2. The Toews Brothers Raised Sheep



Almost every farm in the area raised both cattle and wheat. Something that made my childhood farm unique is that my brothers and I raised sheep - "Toews Brothers Registered Hampshire Sheep." Here are Galen and Arrel (Opa) and Myron with our sheep in the sheep pen in front of our house and by our barn.

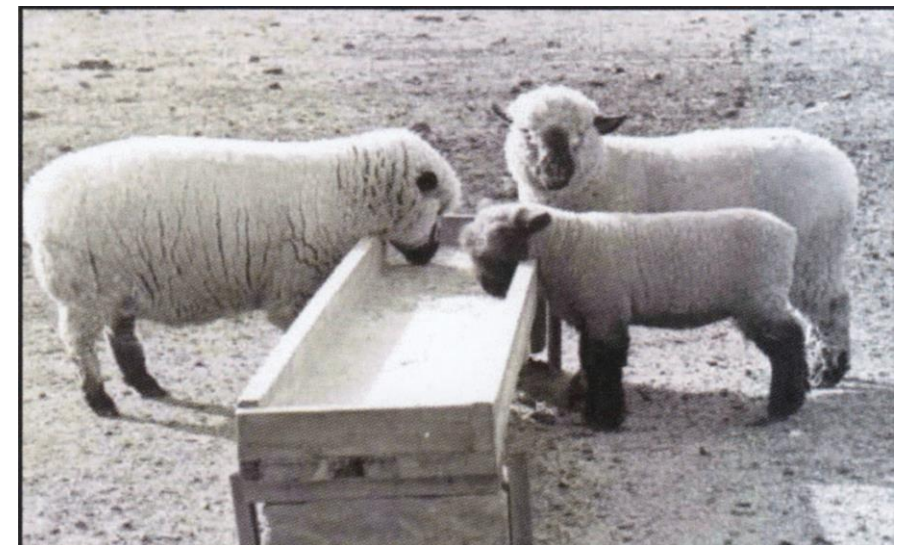
Here is one of the few good pictures of Arrel, Galen, and Myron showing our sheep at the Garfield County Fair.



This is Galen and Arrel (Opa) with their sheep and the ribbons they won at the Garfield County Fair, in front of the barn on the farm. This is also the barn where my parents and brothers and I all milked our cows.



Here is a good picture of some of the first of the Toews Brothers sheep grazing the grass on our farm.



Here the sheep are eating grain from a feed trough. We had to carry buckets of water from the windmill for the sheep to drink.



This is a Toews Brothers sheep ear tag put into each lamb's ear to keep track of which was which.

Toews Brothers sheep were registered Hampshire sheep - white sheep with black noses, ears and feet.

Here is a registration form for one of the Toews Brothers sheep. The sire is the father sheep, and the dam is the mother sheep. The red number was also on the ear tag.

American Hampshire Sheep Association		Ewe	
72 Woodland Avenue, Detroit 2, Michigan			
Certificate of Registry		No. 655220	
Name	TB 3	Born	2-21-57
Sire	315104	Dam	606455
Breeder	Arrel Toews, Kremlin, Okla.		
Owner	Same		
Date of Entry	1-30-58	<i>Helen Belote</i> SECY.	



Here are samples of our sheep ribbons we won at the Garfield County Fair. Blue was first, red second, white third; best was to get purple for Champion or Reserve Champion - the best (& 2nd best) among all the blue-ribbon winners.

3. My Kremlin School Days (1954-66)

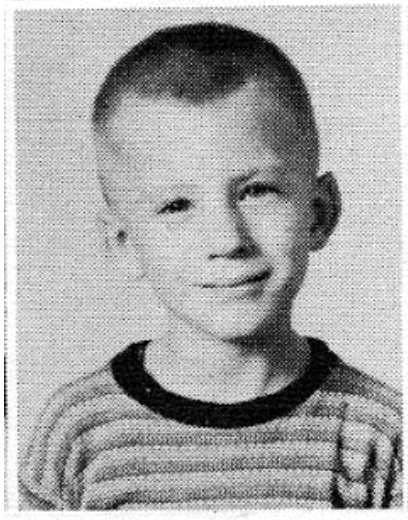


My brothers and I went to school in Kremlin, a couple of miles away, and we rode the bus to school and back home every day. This photo may be from Myron's first day of school, with Spot coming out to the road to say good-bye to his boys for the day.

This was our school building in Kremlin. There were not very many students, so there were two grades in each classroom - 1st and 2nd together, 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th, and 7th and 8th. The high school was in the same building. There were only 12 students in my first-grade class and 15 in my senior class.



Here are some photos of my Kremlin School days. See how much I changed over the years!



Kremlin School Days
1954-55
1st Grade - 6 years old



KREMLIN
SCHOOL DAYS 1956-57
3rd Grade - 8 years old



1961-62
8th Grade - 13 years old

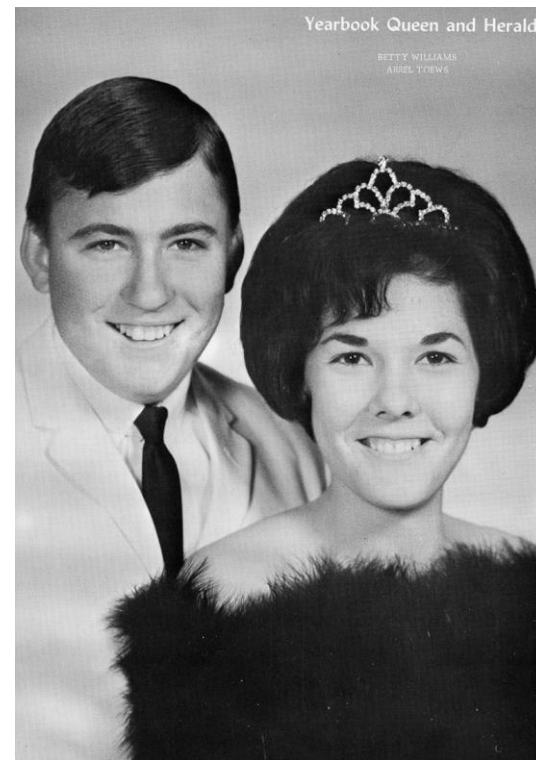


1963-64
10th Grade - 15 years old



1965-66
12th Grade - 17 years old
Senior Picture

I was a Basketball Queen Attendant in first grade (can you find me?)
and Herald for Yearbook Queen my Senior year.



Below are photos of the inside of my school building and me standing in front of my school the day before it was torn down in 2015 so a new school building could be built.





Our family went to church every Sunday, and church was a big part of my education also. This is the North Enid Mennonite Brethren Church that we attended when I was a boy. My ancestors were Mennonite farmers who moved from South Russia to Nebraska and Kansas in the 1870s and 1880s and then to Oklahoma in 1901.



This is the Methodist Church in Kremlin that our family attended from about 1960 onwards.

4. A Tornado That Changed Our Farm and Lives

These are photos of a tornado only about 3 miles from our house in 1966.
When I was in the 7th grade (May 1961), another tornado struck our home!





My life and childhood changed dramatically on May 7, 1961, a few months before my 12th birthday. I was in the 7th grade. In the middle of the night, a tornado hit our house and barn and destroyed most of what I had known as my childhood home. Fortunately, no one was at home that night, so none of us were hurt. But our lives were changed in many ways.



The second floor of the house was open to the sky and everything inside was soaking wet. This room with the maps on the walls is the Toews Brothers bedroom after the tornado. It was a real **Twister!**



The big barn was completely gone, with only a big pile of haybales and straw from the hayloft. Many neighbors came over to help clean up. The car shed was blown away also.

Some of the sheep were buried under the hay bales from the hayloft, but most of them were OK when they finally got uncovered and rescued.



This is what was left of the machine shed, a building that was still there on the old farmyard until a few years ago. You can see our old pull-type combine and grain bins in the background.



The top half of the silo where we go to see the owls was blown away; the lower part that was full of silage, food for the cattle, was mostly OK.



We then built a new brick house at the other end of the farm, on the highway instead of on a dirt road. That is the house where I lived until I went to college and then got married and started my own life and family. Some of that new house was built from lumber that was rescued from the old house and barn that got hit by the tornado. You can see the old boards on the roof. My job each day after school as a 13-year-old was to pull nails out of the old house boards to get them ready to use in building our new house.



While the new house was being built, our family lived in one of my Uncle Henry Toews' rental houses in Kremlin. So for over a year, I was a "city boy" instead of a "farm boy!" I could walk to and from school each day instead of riding the school bus.

This is a picture of Myron with Spot at our house in Kremlin shortly before we moved into the new house on the farm.



Here is the new house when it was just finished. You can see the highway in front of the house, and our mailbox. The lawn has not been planted yet.

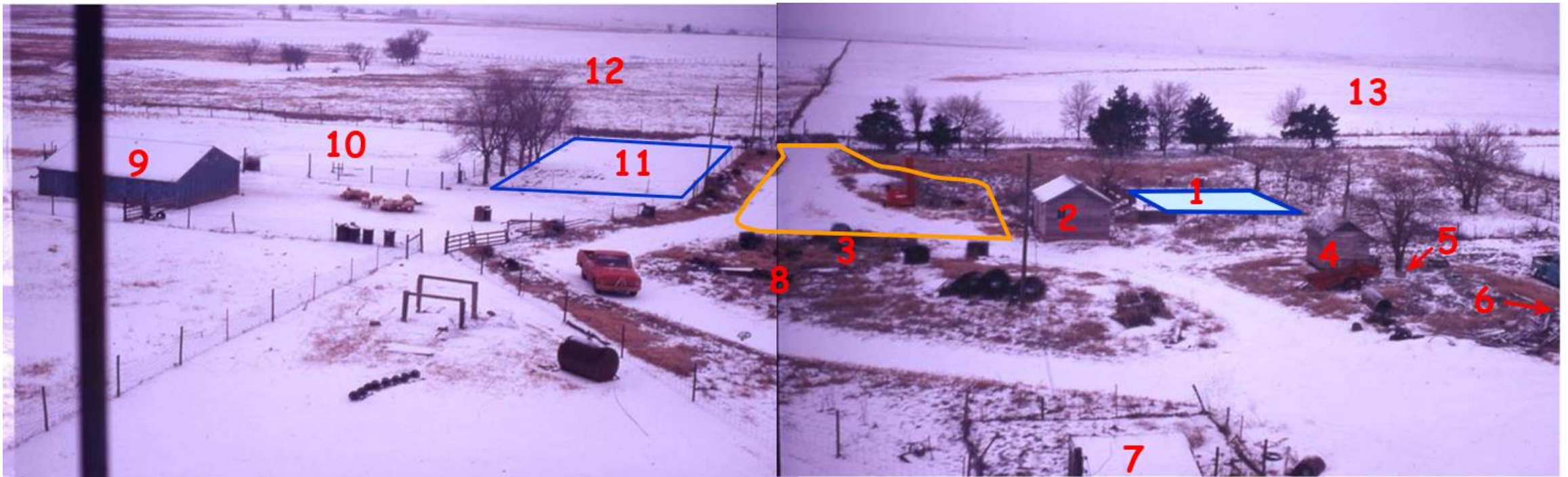
From the back you can see the two-car garage and a two-car covered "carport." The two cistern pumps were moved to the new house, which had cisterns to collect rainwater also; the patio behind the house was the top of the two big cisterns for the new house. But this house had modern running water - no more pumping and carrying buckets of water! And even a TV!



Here is the new house a few years after it was finished. It had a 2-car garage, a fireplace, running hot and cold water, and two indoor toilets, one with a shower! We felt so modern; but we missed our old family house and farmyard also.



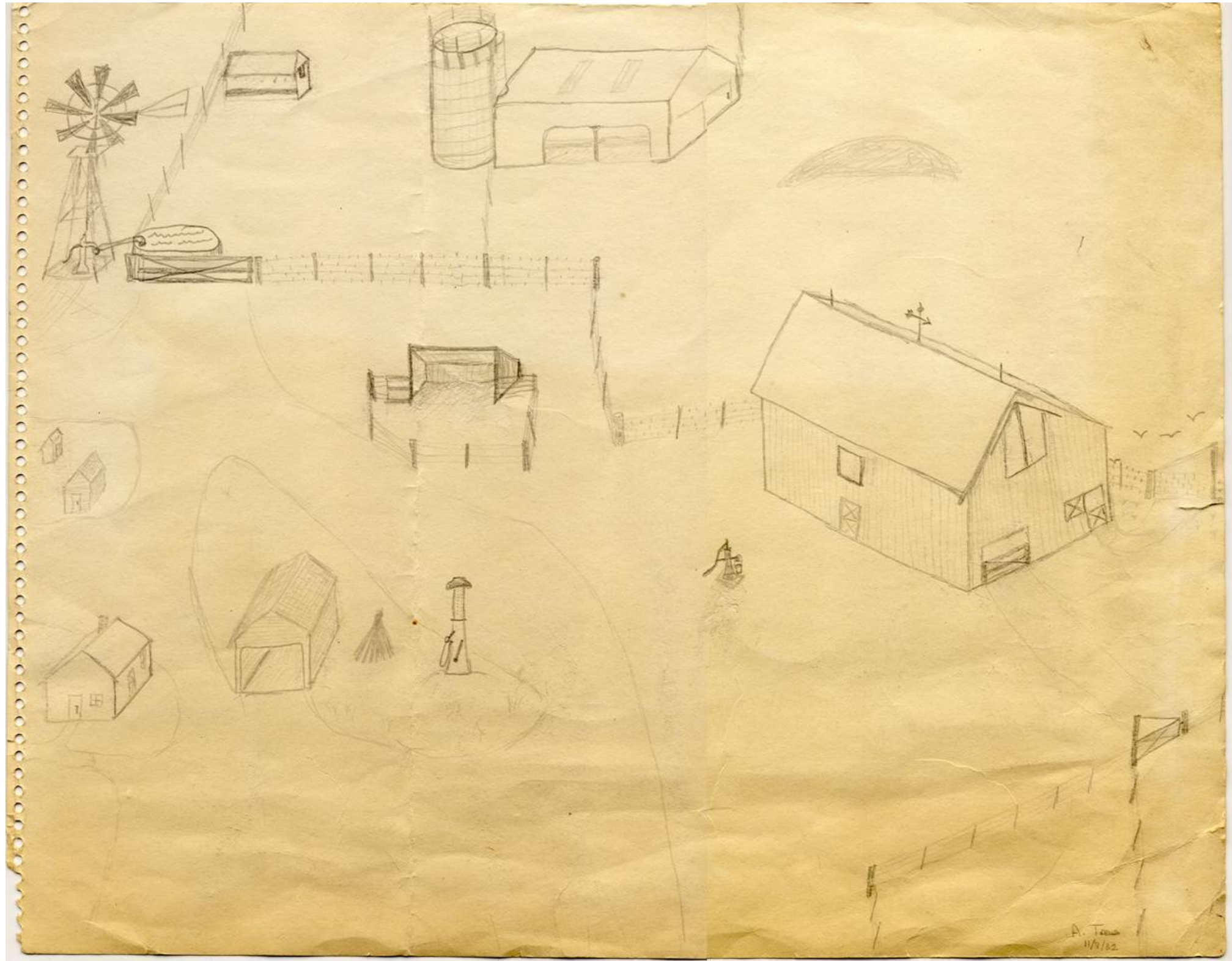
Here are all of Opa's family in front of their house in 1968, soon after Galen and Anita were married. Opa was in his second year of college.



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. House footprint | 2. Summer kitchen/wash house | 3. Garage | 4. "Mouse house" |
| 5. Outhouse seat/floor | 6. Machine shed to R | 7. Pig pen and sty | 8. Gas pump/tank/post pile |
| 9. Sheep barn (old barn foundation) | 10. Corral | 11. Garden patch | 12. George Ediger pasture |
| 13. Georgy Janzen Homeplace | Orange line denotes approx limits of our "driveway" - visible loop originally used infrequently | | |

Even with the new house, the old farmyard continued to be used. Here you can see the new smaller sheep barn that was built on the old barn foundation by moving an old chicken house there and adding on to make it larger (9). This is a merger of two photos that Myron took in 1974 from the top of the silo, and Arrel (Opa) marked it to show where the original farm buildings were. Our house was in the blue box with a 1

We don't have any photos of our farmyard like it was when we were growing up, so I tried to sketch what it looked like. I did this from memory in 1982, 3 years after Erin was born and 3 years before Laura! Our house, brooder & chicken houses, & machine shed are to the left (W). My drawing is very primitive.



Later on, a new barn was built close to the new house so that my dad and I didn't have to drive to the old farmyard to take care of the sheep. Hampshire sheep are white with black faces, but their lambs were all black and gray when they were born.



Our second dog, Mitzi, was a border collie who knew how to herd sheep. Here she is sitting on an interesting patio bench that Myron built as one of his woodworking projects.



The new sheep barn and feeding hay to the sheep in the winter.



5. Raising Animals on My Childhood Farm



This is a picture of our family's cows from 1954 when I was 6 years old. Besides the sheep, our family mostly raised cattle, but we also had some pigs and chickens that we used for food.

This is a nice picture of one of my dad's "white-face" bulls, with the farm in the background. You can see his brand, the "Backwards-D Bar". The back of the D and the bar make the letter "T", to show that these cows belonged to David Toews. Opa has one of his Dad's branding irons used to mark the cattle.





Here is a mother cow with her new-born twin calves. The mama cow was brown with a white face, but the daddy cow, the bull, was all black, so the baby calves were mostly black from their dad, with white faces from their mom!

The cattle on our farm were both to sell for meat and for milking. My mom and all of us boys helped with feeding and taking care of the cows and with milking and separating cream from the milk, to sell the cream to the Gold Spot Dairy in Enid. There are several Gold Spot souvenirs in the current farmhouse. Our family's cream can number was 7337. This picture of one of their cream cans was taken on the foundation of the barn where the cows were milked when I was a boy.



My dad farmed two farms that he rented from his brother, my Uncle Pete Toews, and one from another brother, my Uncle Henry Toews. These are our cows by the old barn on Uncle Pete's north farm. Uncle Pete's farms were about 8 miles away; Uncle Henry's farm was just across the road from our home farm.



The cows ate grass from the pasture during the summer. But in the winter, they had to be fed hay and sometimes cattle cubes, the same kind we feed to the longhorns now. Here are the cows being fed their hay in the winter, with our dog Mitzi in the back of the pickup. Mitzi always went with us whenever we worked with cows or sheep.

Before the tornado hit our farm, we also raised pigs and chickens. Here is an old photo of our pigs. There are no good photos of the chickens or the chicken sheds.



When I was a young boy, almost all our food came from our own farm. Our pigs, cows, and chickens provided the meat that we ate. Our milk came from our own cows and our eggs were gathered from our chicken nests every day. We had a garden for summer vegetables, especially potatoes, green beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, and leaf lettuce, and my mom baked fresh bread every weekend.



For just a little while, not at the same time, we also had a donkey and a rabbit. We even still had a horse yet when Opa was a little boy. Opa is petting the donkey's nose!



6. *Growing Wheat on My Childhood Farm*

The major crop on our farm was wheat, which grew fairly well, even in the not-very-rich "red dirt" on our farm.



When I was a little boy, my dad harvested his own wheat with a combine pulled behind a tractor, like the one shown here, in front of the barn on our farm.



But for most of my childhood, my dad hired "custom cutters" to harvest his wheat for him.





Here are two nice photos of custom cutters harvesting wheat on Uncle Pete's farm on a beautiful summer day. It is a dusty dirty job. They are leaving the straw in "wind rows" so that it can be baled and used for the farm animals later.



Here are my Mom and Dad standing in their wheat, not yet ripe, with the old farm buildings in the background. Beside my mom is the drill used to sow the wheat.

After I went off to college, my dad bought his own dump truck and self-propelled combine and harvested his own wheat again. All of us boys knew how to run these combines from working for other farmers and could help our dad as well.



Even after I had grown up, gotten married, and moved away, I sometimes came home to help my Dad with the wheat harvest. These photos were taken June 1985 on our Houghtaling Farm, where the house and bunkhouse are now.





Farmers Grain Company, the "Kremlin Co-op," is where the wheat was hauled and stored in tall grain elevators until train cars came to haul it away. The tin building in front of the elevators is the feed mill that mixed cattle feed for my dad and other farmers, and also made cattle cubes.

The sun is breaking through onto the golden wheat field after a storm rolled over. You can see part of the truck and combine and the old farmyard with the silo in the background.



Some wheat was stored in grain bins on the farm to use as seed wheat for the next year.



This is what the wheat harvest looks like now. The combine is unloading wheat into a grain cart pulled by the tractor while still harvesting wheat. The wheat is then loaded into a big semi-trailer truck to be hauled to the grain elevator. The semi holds more than 5 times as much as my Dad's wheat truck did.



These photos taken on our Houghtaling Farm
June 2011

The Co-op elevators on the left are where we hauled our wheat after harvesting it. It was loaded onto railroad cars and taken to even bigger elevators. Most of the wheat was made into flour for baking bread.

"Cream of Wheat" and the macaroni in mac-cheese is made from wheat too!



You can see boxcars on the siding waiting to be loaded with wheat at left in the photo below.



Opa worked at the Kremlin Co-op the summer before his Jr college year, unloading trucks of wheat into the tall elevators and then loading it into railroad boxcars.

7. When I Visited MY Grandpa's Farm



I did not know my Grandma and Grandpa Toews, my dad's parents. But I knew my Mom's parents really well. They were my Grandma and Grandpa Voth, Jacob A. Voth, Sr. and Elizabeth Schmidt Voth. They lived in the house where Aunt Beverly lives now. My Grandpa Voth loved flowers so much that his house did not have a lawn - it was all one big flower patch!



My Grandpa Voth had a big farm also. He was famous for his Red Poll dairy cattle. Here is a fun picture of one of his cows with a new baby calf getting a ride on his Ford tractor, with his new ranch house and the old two-story farmhouse still beside it, before it was torn down. We have a Ford tractor just like this on our farm now.



Here are some very old photos of my grandpa (left) with his cows in front of his barn. Below (left) is a photo of my grandpa and my Uncle Jake Voth, Jr., who was Beverly's husband, getting ready to put the automatic milkers onto the cows in their fancy new "milking parlor".

Below (right) is the "milk house" with the milking buckets, milk cans, and the cooler for keeping the milk cold until the truck came to haul it to town.

In the summer, Grandpa Voth also kept icy-cold watermelons in his milk cooler!





It wasn't just my grandpa and grandma that I visited at their farm -- it was my grandpa and grandma AND Tena. Tena was my mom's youngest sister who was sick as a child; she never got married and lived with her parents her whole life. Tena spent lots of her time taking care of Myron while our mom was working in Enid before Myron was old enough to do farm work with his dad.

This is an early photo of my family at Grandpa and Grandma and Tena's house in 1960, when I was twelve years old.





Here is an early photo of my Grandpa and Grandma's farm taken from an airplane.



Here is a later color photo of the same farm; several buildings have changed. My farm is circled in the background to show how close we lived to my Grandpa and Grandma and my Aunt Tena.



There were lots of family gatherings at my grandparents' house, often with all of their children and grandchildren. Thanksgiving, Christmas, 4th of July and lots of other times too.

Here are my Grandma Elizabeth and Grandpa Jacob Voth at a big family dinner at their house.

Here are me and my brothers with all of my Voth cousins except Pam, eating at the "kids' table" at Grandma and Grandpa Voth's house.

Can you find Opa? How about Myron?





My grandparents always had a big family Christmas celebration for their entire family. Here are some pictures with my Voth family cousins.



This is my Voth grandparents with their entire family on their 50th wedding anniversary in 1966, including their first great-grandchild.

Opa and Myron are in all the photos - can you find them?

Our farm with the red house and bunkhouse that we visit now was one of my Grandpa Voth's farms when I was a boy. My parents did not own this farm until many years later. That farm is called the Houghtaling Place, because a Mr. Houghtaling owned it before my grandfather bought it from him.

Here are two of my uncles baling and loading hay on the Houghtaling Place. You can see the barn in the pasture in the background. Now the bales from that farm are much bigger and usually round.



The original barn in the pasture on the Houghtaling Place burned to the ground when I was about 15 years old. Myron is holding our sheep dog Mitzi on the barn foundation, with the burned hay still smoking. The barn that is there now was built to replace the one that burned.

8. *Getting Away From the Farm*

I did not spend ALL of my time on our farm or my grandparents' farm. Sometimes we would take a break to go somewhere else, to get away from the farm, to relax, or to visit other interesting places and people.



Going to one of the parks in Enid for a family picnic was the closest. Here are some pictures at those parks with my Voth relatives.

My grandpa loved trains even more than I do now. Here are my grandpa (wearing a hat) and Tena (behind him) and some of my other relatives riding the train at Meadowlake Park. We still ride the newer version of this same train when we visit our farms now. Do you remember the Ferris wheel and cars and planes to ride there?



The Great Salt Plains Dam and Reservoir was less than an hour away, and my family went there once or twice every year in the summertime. Here we are with lots of my relatives, cooling off from a hot Oklahoma summer in the water at the Salt Plains.

My family took a major vacation trip every year that we could. These were long drives in a car full of boys and without air-conditioning, but they are fun memories for me. We got to visit some interesting places and relatives who lived far away.

There were several trips to Colorado because of my parents' strong memories of living there when they were first married. Here are pictures of me and my brothers on an early trip and then a later trip, both to the Royal Gorge near Cañon City, Colorado.



This is me and my brothers on an early family trip through Oklahoma and Arkansas, with a lake in the back.



This is a later and longer trip to a much larger body of water, my first time to see the Pacific Ocean.

Galen and Myron are in the middle, with me on the right, along with some of our Oregon Voth relatives that we were visiting, enjoying the sand and surf.

When we went on vacation trips, we always filled the trunk of the car with food, and we would fix and eat our own meals at roadside picnic areas. In both photos, my Mom is cooking breakfast and making coffee over a wood fire or on our camp stove.



We always took our wicker picnic basket, thermos jugs, ice chests, camp stove and a big box of food

We took vacations to Colorado, Black Hills, Yellowstone, Oregon and Washington, and to California for Galen & Anita's wedding in 1967.



9. *My Later Years on the Farm*



When I was in high school, I started driving tractor to help my Dad on the farm. Here I am driving our Case 930 Comfort King tractor. I spent many hours and days and weeks driving the tractor around and around and up and down the fields, getting them ready for the next year's wheat crop. I also drove the combine to harvest wheat and the truck and knew about all kinds of farm machinery. [1966]

Although I learned how to farm from my dad, during my high school and college summers, I worked for my cousins, the "Voth Brothers" - Ernie, Bob & John. They farmed many farms, and each had a tractor, combine and wheat truck. Tractors were all Case 930 Comfort Kings like above, and combines were Gleaner Baldwins, like my Dad's.



Here are the pickup and the tractor that I first learned to drive. Mitzi liked to sit on top of the pickup. You can see our old first farmyard in the background.



Left: Cutting the hay crop on our 12-Acres with a "swather." When the hay has dried, it will be baled and used to feed our cattle during the winter. Right: Myron on Grandpa Voth's Ford tractor is mowing the edges, just like we do now with our own Ford tractor.

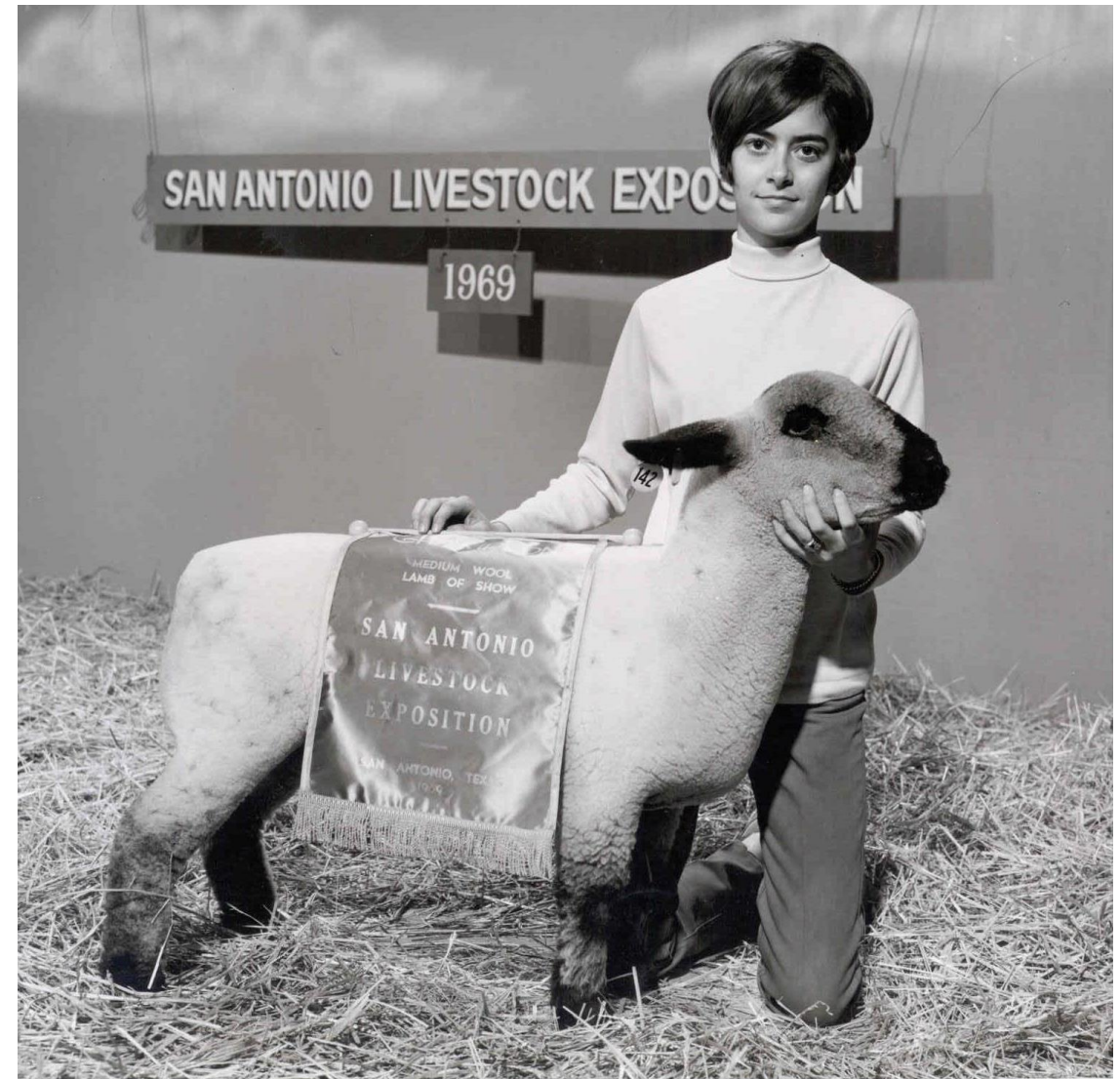
This is the view from the tractor as it discs under the stubble from the wheat crop that has just been harvested. You can see our childhood farmyard straight ahead.





This was a year when we had raised lots of sheep.

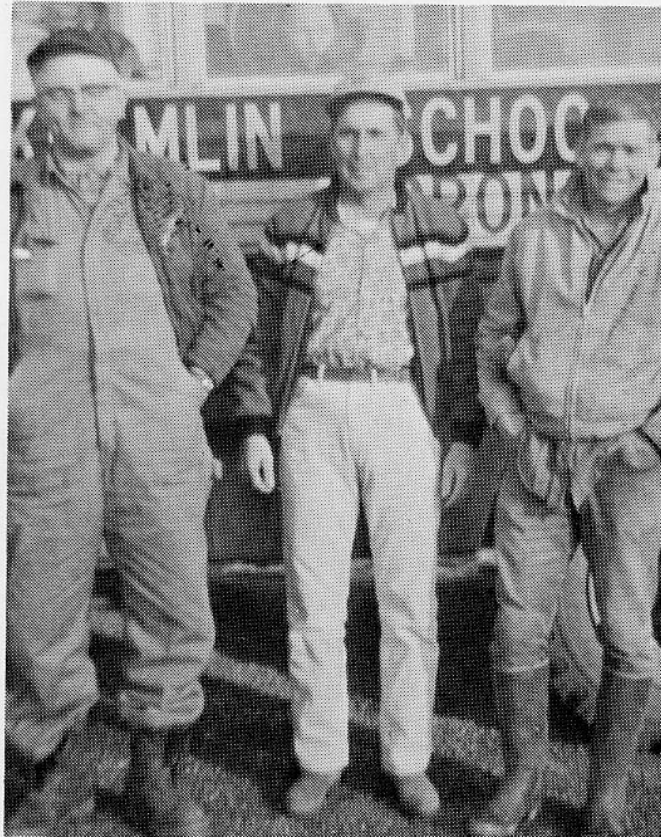
In later years, we sold all our sheep as lambs for other 4-H kids in Texas to raise and prepare for showing at livestock shows. Here is one of those Toews Brothers lambs that won a big prize for "Lamb of Show" at the San Antonio Livestock Exposition in Texas. Lots of people knew about Toews Brothers sheep from Kremlin, Oklahoma.



My Dad - your great-grandfather David Toews - gave each grandchild a lamb they could call their very own! It grew up on the farm with the other sheep. The photos below show Erin with her new lamb and her Dad (Opa) and her Grandpa Toews; the other with Grandpa Toews when her lamb was grown up.



BUS DRIVERS



After my brothers and I were old enough to help with the farm work, our Dad drove one of the Kremlin school buses to make some extra money.



Here are two of my favorite later photos of my Dad, driving his pickup to check on the wheat and the cows, and at the Co-op getting cattle cubes or maybe getting a flat tire fixed.

Opa worked at this Co-op one summer.





My Mom worked for many years as legal secretary and legal assistant at the law offices of Belcher, Belcher and Collins in Enid. Here she is at work.

Many favorite memories of my Mom are about her cooking and baking. Fixing good food for her family and friends was very important to her. In fact, Anita made an entire book about her cooking that has many photos and stories, plus her favorite recipes.

Both Mom and Dad were very good cooks and my love for cooking and eating is largely because of this. I learned lots from them.





Here are 2 of Opa's favorite photos of Laura when she was a young girl

Baking Christmas cookies with her Grandma Rosa Toews

In her Grandpa David Toews' pickup truck on Uncle Pete's farms in Oklahoma



10. Now My Grandchildren Get to Visit Our Family Farms!



This is a photo of Speckles & Stormy when they were just young calves. Their horns are not very long yet!

You can see our farmhouse in back; the bunkhouse hasn't been built yet.

Below are Doc and Rosie, just after they were born. Doc is nursing on his mother Stormy





This photo of our longhorns eating a big round hay bale in the snow is one of Opa's favorites!



These are 2 of Opa's favorite photos of our farms as they look today

Our farmhouse in winter

Our bunkhouse and flower bed in springtime



It's always fun to have our grandchildren visit the farm. They can help Opa drive his Ford tractor & mow some weeds, go on a hayrack ride in the pasture with Uncle Myron driving the tractor, or ride on the Kawasaki.



Here are more nice memories of Benjamin and Austin on the farm with Opa. Our longhorns will eat those big round bales in the wintertime when the grass in the pasture isn't green.



I feel really lucky and am very happy that I grew up on a farm. My own children, Erin and Laura, got to go to the farm where I grew up, so that they could visit their grandparents, who were my parents. And now there is a nice house and a bunkhouse on our Houghtaling Place, so that we all have a place to stay when we go to see the farms where I grew up, and to have fun with our relatives there.

Oma and Opa (Kathy & Arrel) live in Carrboro North Carolina now, but our children (Erin and Laura) and grandchildren (Benjamin, Austin, Barron III & Ellie) are also part of the long history of my family and our farms in Oklahoma. So is my brother Myron and his family. We are making new memories every time we go there, with stories that my children and grandchildren will be able to pass on to THEIR children and grandchildren into the future!





**A big thanks to Arrel's brother Myron for allowing him to use his slide set
and to make it fit for Opa's children and grandchildren.
Thanks again, Myron!!**