

The Werner Family History

This story was told by Theresa Roth Werner to her daughter Clara Werner Oster and Clara wrote the following history:

Life in Russia

Kathrine the great, the Russian Czarist was a German Princess. She gave an invitation to the German people to move to Russia to help the Russian economy. The Germans were promised free land and no German young man was to serve in the Russian Army until a hundred years had passed when this act of Kathrine was written. To this arrangement several generations of forefathers had migrated to Russia from Germany. My relatives were among this group of Russian peasants of German extraction. My Great Grandpa and Grandma Werner settled on the Volga River area in central Russia. The German people lived in colonies and didn't mingle much with the Russian people. They had their own churches and schools. Most of them never learned the Russian language. Many of the Germans were very disappointed after they moved to Russia. The "free" land was actually land under lease which eventually went back to the government. They didn't fare as well as promised.

There was no such a thing as jails in any of the colonies. If someone was caught stealing or any such thing, they were whipped. Once and awhile the mayor of the colony would have the offender locked up by the family he stole from. One man was locked in a man's granary and while he was in the granary he discovered that bread was stored in a box. He ate as much bread as he wanted and fed the rest to the pigeons. There was hole in the roof where the pigeons could get in. Usually the offender was locked up only one or two days. The evening that the offender was set free the owners came to get some bread for supper and it was all gone.

A man named Tabias stole some grain from the Schmit family. Tabias was locked up in the lean-to where the straw was stored. The straw was used for fuel. It was stored close to the house because of the extreme cold during the winter. Schmits also had a keg of heavy weight oil (called yoga) stored in the lean-to. Tabias took off his boots and filled them with the oil. When he was set free in the evening he carried the boots out. Mr. Schmit asked him why he didn't wear his boots and Tabias answered he liked walking

barefooted. It took awhile before the Schmits discovered the oil missing. The oil was used to grease the wagon wheels.

My Father - Solomon Werner Sr.

Solomon Werner Sr. was born August 4, 1868, in Susannental, Samara, Russia. His parents were Henry and Charlotte Rieffer Werner. He was a weak child and his parents thought he would die very soon so he was given an emergency baptism. They were of the Lutheran faith but apparently adhered to the Catholic belief that an infant must be baptized or it would not get to heaven. When Solomon was four years old his grandma told him to smoke a pipe to satisfy his hunger. There just wasn't enough food to go around. At the age of six the children started school. After confirmation there was no more formal schooling. Solomon was confirmed when he was 14 years old. This confirmation took place in October. In January he became an apprentice to a blacksmith. He got his board and room and if he finished the course he was to get wages. However the man that he was working for had him work the bellows and when he would do welding, sand was used in the process. The iron was heated red hot and the iron was pounded. The man was ugly to all of his apprentices and would accidentally on purpose throw sand so it would get into the eyes of the boys thus their eyes were irritated and they would quit before they finished the course. Solomon was no exception, he had to home. He went to another blacksmith. In fact, he went several places. One blacksmith was Mr. Epple. Unknown to Solomon this was to be his future uncle-in-law. Mr. Epple was a good man and treated his students with respect. His mother lived with them and Grandma Epple was very kind to the men too. Mr. Epple paid Solomon good wages. It was customary to rest for an hour after dinner. Solomon was allowed the use of the blacksmith shop during this hour and made himself a gun. From the time Solomon was a small boy he had the desire to make a gun and learn to shoot. Later in his life when he worked for the Lipperts he also made a gun but he was told to destroy it. At that time there was fear that there would be a revolution and maybe the Germans would revolt against the Russians.

Solomon studied and worked three years for the Epples. Mrs. Epple was a sister to Grandma Roth. After three years were up he went into business for himself. The first thing he made was chains for horses. Horse thieves were plentiful in Russia so people had to put hobbles on the two front feet. He made ten of these each weighing 20 pounds. Solomon peddled in the

Colonies carrying them on his back. He had to walk about 25 miles before he was able to sell all of them. One time when he came back home for a visit he found his mother crying. He asked her why she was crying. She told him that his brother Fred was going to sell their last horse so they would be able to buy flour for bread.

The grasshopper plague of 1886 happened on a Sunday. The colony had a good grain crop and went out to the field to see if it was ripe enough to harvest. They found that the gophers had increased a lot. So the men began gopher hunting. There were so many gophers that they were harming the crops. The men took barrels of water to the field and poured it in the holes to make the gophers come out. When they came out they caught them with hooks and killed them. The tails were cut off and taken to the mayor of the colony and he paid them for each tail. If they didn't destroy the gophers they were fined. While they were out getting the gophers a cloud came up and the men thought it was going to rain. They ate their lunch and rested after eating and watched the cloud become bigger and move closer. As it got closer they realized that it wasn't rain but a plague of grasshoppers. Most of the hurried and hitched up their wagons to get away. Those that didn't leave right away couldn't out run the swarm. The locust came down on the field and in a short time the grain that was to be harvested the following day was consumed. The locust also ate up the harnesses of the horses. It was impossible to kill very many of the grasshoppers.....it was a losing battle. After the crops were destroyed the grasshoppers left just as mysteriously as they came. The crops across the road were not destroyed. The people of the Winkleman Colony were greatly impoverished for a number of years by this calamity. Since there was no harvest there was no food or seed or feed for the livestock. They did get a little relief from the United States. Most of the people barely had enough to eat. Solomon was a witness to this misfortune.

Solomon was 21 when he had to report for army service. They had to draw numbers and if they got a certain number they did not have to go into the service. Solomon drew one of the lucky numbers and did not have to serve.

While Solomon was still living at home, his Great Uncle Gottfried was hungry for some eggs so he went into Solomon's father's chicken coop and gathered the eggs. He was wearing a large fur cap. Not wanting to be caught, Gottfried put the eggs in the large fur cap and put the cap on his head.

Just as he was going out of the gate Solomon's father came back from talking to one of the neighbors. Solomon's dad noticed the cap was looking odd. He tapped Uncle Gottfried cap and asked him what he had under his cap. The eggs broke and came running down his face and neck!

Solomon was just a young man when his parents died during an epidemic. His mother died the last week of January and three weeks later his dad passed away. Solomon was not able to attend the funeral because he had a bad case of typhoid fever.

My Mother - Theresa Roth Werner

Theresa Roth Werner was born December 5, 1873 to Andrew and Anna Marie Jung Roth. Like Solomon's ancestors, her ancestors also came from Germany. Andrew Roth was a blacksmith in Susanonthau, Russia in the village where they lived. Theresa's mother passed away when she was about 18 months old.

Russian funerals were held as soon as possible because they didn't have funeral homes nor did they embalm the bodies. The bodies had to be kept two nights to be sure they were dead. The body was kept in the home until the funeral. The casket was made by the villagers and they also dug the grave. The cemetery was near the village and holding with German tradition a cross was carried ahead of the casket by a man who was fairly near the age of the deceased. The schoolmaster usually conducted the service and he walked behind the cross bearer and then came the casket. It rested on a platform with bars that protruded so the pall bearers could carry the casket on their shoulders. Walking behind the casket were the relatives, friends and neighbors of the deceased person.

Theresa was being carried by her Grandpa Jung and as the family was leaving the cemetery where her mother's funeral was held Theresa began calling for her mother and crying. She couldn't understand why her mother was left at the cemetery. Her Grandparents raised and educated Theresa.

When the children in Russia reached the age of 6 years they started to school. There was only one teacher for the whole village or colony. The teacher would assign lessons & the parents would help the child. The next day the child would have to recite their lessons. Mr. Attle was the name of Theresa's teacher. He seemed to be a very angry man and if the children

didn't know their lessons he would punish them severely. In fact, he hit one young teenager so hard on the head that he died that evening. After that incident Mr. Attle quit as a school master and left the colony and started a store in another colony.

Solomon Werner and Theresa Roth Werner's Life as Husband & Wife

Grandpa and Grandma Werner and Grandpa and Grandma Roth farmed their land together. They lived next door to each other and Grandpa Roth helped Solomon learn the blacksmith trade as he was a blacksmith as well as a farmer so Solomon and Theresa saw a lot of each other growing up and fell in love.

Solomon and Theresa were married by the minister of the colony on July 12, 1892. For their honeymoon they went to work in the wheat field. This land was owned by the Kielman's who farmed and ranched with two of his brothers. Solomon and Theresa moved to Kielman in February of 1895. There Solomon bought a cow for 12 rupples and he also purchased some milk goats. Solomon cut the wheat with a scythe and Theresa tied it in bundles and shocked it. Solomon took a job as a blacksmith on a large farm. He made wheels, sharpened plow shears, etc. He also made locks. Solomon had made Theresa a wedding ring from some silver coins. It was a nice ring.

Theresa helped Solomon a lot in the blacksmith shop. After the iron was heated red hot Solomon would take it out with his tongs and he would hold it while Theresa would pound the iron with a five pound hammer. It was hard work for both of them. The heavy iron had to be turned quite often during all of the pounding. Whenever they could they would hire a young man to do the pounding but very few wanted such jobs so it was quite often Theresa did the pounding. One elderly man would many times come and take Theresa's place in the shop. She appreciated this kind deed so much that it was her favorite story that she would tell in her old age. She would always say he earned the kingdom of heaven just by the kindness he showed her.

Solomon and Theresa had five daughters and four sons born to them in Russia. Anna Elizabeth was their first baby born in 1893. Amelia was born next and died at the age of six months of complications of smallpox. Amelia II was the next daughter born. Two more daughters Alvina and Theresa were

born in Russia. Their first son was Henry born in 1896. Richard was born 18 months later in 1898. Henry and Richard were good pals and seldom quarreled. Henry died of perhaps hernia strangulation. He had been sick and his parents took him to the only doctor (Boltz) at Katouenstact. All he said was, "Das ist fersetzung" and sent him home. In Russia medical aid was free. Henry died at the age of 5. At Henry's funeral Richard threw himself on the grave and cried bitterly. His father took him off the grave but he held tightly to the cross that marked the grave. Soon after the funeral Richard lay down on a bench and told his father to make his casket the length of the bench. Solomon & Theresa were surprised at his remark but it came true a week later. He was almost four. Solomon Jr. was born June 17, 1900. Their fourth son was Carl who died at the age of about 13 months.

In 1899 during the month of February the Werner's and their family moved to Liberto. There Solomon built their own house on their farm. It was an adobe house. The blacksmith shop was joined to the house on the north side of the house. The forge was near the south end of the shop and when Solomon had a fire going in it the heat of the forge helped heat the house. At Liberto they did blacksmith work & farming. The farm consisted of about 45 acres. Solomon raised wheat, sunflowers, potatoes, rye, and corn. They had some pigs, cow, horses, sheep, and goats. They cut the native grass for hay and used the straw for heating.

For their meat supply they would fatten a couple of hogs. They rendered the lard and smoked the meat. The beef was chopped on a chopping block. It was hard work and time consuming. The cow hides were tanned and the leather used to patch up harnesses.

The first year Solomon and Theresa lived at Liberto and had a very hard year and a lot of bad luck. They had 3 horses, a colt, and one cow. One of horses and the colt died. They had bought a couple of sheep and one of them died. That summer a tick bit Theresa and she got tick fever and had to stay in bed during the harvest. Solomon cut and shocked the grain alone. The next few years' things were better and they were able to hire a man and a maid.

When they moved from Kielman to Liberto they had a sleigh, one horse, a wagon and a water wagon. They put the one horse wagon on the sleigh because it was so cold that the grease in the wagon wheels was frozen and the wheels wouldn't turn. They also had all the furniture in the sleigh. They

had two beds, a cradle, table, several benches, and a couple of backless chairs. The stoves were built in every house in the kiva style. They also brought along a trunk. Dad bought four camels which he used for farming. They were better than horses. During the winter the camels were much better for hauling grain to market.

Solomon and his hired man were caught in a blizzard on the way home from Boulagova, a Russian town, where he sold grain. He was trying to drive the camel but the camel just decided to take its own fast pace home. Solomon had a sleigh and the hired man had a sleigh. The camels called to each other during the blizzard. Solomon had decided the camels were as anxious to get home as they were so he wrapped the lines around the sleigh and let them go. Before long they were home. Both Solomon and his hired man were able to keep warm while making trips by wrapping in sheep skin coats or caftans made of heavy wool.

During a blizzard no one was to close their shutters on their homes. A light was to be set in the window to give light to anyone caught in a blizzard. Also the colony bell had to be pulled to give the wayfarer some knowledge of a colony when the blizzard was so severe that the lights didn't show through the windows.

People did not go out at night because of the wolf packs. There were usually 20-30 in a pack. The hungry wolves would attack and kill the horses. The wolves were protected by law to keep down the gophers and rabbits. Once in a great while a pack of wolves would invade a colony. One such pack got into a hole in a barn and attacked and killed some of Theresa's uncle's sheep. The whole pack didn't crawl through but the ones that did devour the horses. They were too full to get back out of the small hole. In the morning my great uncle discovered the wolves and killed them.

Early every morning all the cattle, goats and sheep were taken to a pasture outside of the Colony. A young man herded them all day and would round them up in the evening and bring them back to the Colony. Every yard was fenced with board fences to keep the livestock in at night. The cattle, goats, and sheep knew which gate to turn in. The women folk usually were out and watched for the livestock and opened the gates for them. Solomon Jr. who was only four or five immediately could tell by the bleating of the lambs that one lamb had gone to the neighbor's. He insisted that these lambs should be in their right stalls. After the lambs were exchanged the bleating ceased.

Living conditions were getting worse, along with the hardship of finding enough to eat. Catherine the Great's promise about young men being drafted was broken. The German people found out they didn't own the land they had. It had just been leased to them. Solomon began thinking about America, the land of opportunity. Dreaming of a new life, he and Theresa knelt at the foot of the bed every night and prayed together. Should we leave for America? Theresa didn't like the idea of moving to America as all of her family was near her but still their prayers continued. Finally, they decided if it were God's will they come to America Solomon would be able to sell the house for the price he would ask. The first man he approached and asked to buy their house accepted the offer without any questions so they made arrangements to come to the United States. They left Russia in May on the ship Nort Deutcher Lloyd Brehman and arrived in Baltimore, Maryland in June.

Theresa made a little bag and sewed it inside her skirt to carry extra money to the United States. They had been told they wouldn't need very much money but Solomon knew the extra money would be needed. When Solomon and Theresa left the United States they had almost 1200 rupples of gold. It equaled only \$600 in U.S. money.

According to the list or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the U.S. Immigration Office at Port of Arrival, Solomon and Theresa Werner with their five children, Anna eleven, Amelia II eight, Solomon Jr. four, Theresa one and a half, and Alvina three years old arrived on the ship RRRR Kanis in Baltimore, Maryland, May 25, 1905.

After arriving in Maryland they boarded a train to Blissfield, Michigan where Theresa had relatives. There were three additional families who were in the same colony as the Werners and they traveled with them. One family was Solomon Corbert and his wife who was a cousin of Theresa's mother. The Schmit family also traveled with them.

While in Michigan they were sheltered in a barn. A farmer allowed them and the other three families the use of his hay loft until they found something better.

The Werners didn't like the Michigan climate and decided to leave and travel to Colorado because of a friend of Solomon's, Conrad Miller. Mr.

Miller lived in Ft. Collins and had written to Solomon while he was in Russia and urged him to come to the U.S.. Conrad had written letters depicting the U.S. as the land of promise. He wrote how much he had amassed in the short time he was in the U.S.. The Werners later found out that he was working for a farmer as a day laborer and had written that everything that belonged to him had in reality belonged to the farmer he was working for. Solomon bought the train tickets to Ft. Collins and it cost him almost as much to go by train from Maryland to Ft. Collins as it did to come on the ship from Russia to Maryland. Most of their money was gone by the time they got to Ft. Collins on Sunday, June 17, 1905.

They stayed one night with the Millers and the next morning Solomon bought a cow for \$35.00 (75 ruples in Russian money). Then Solomon got a job with the Great Western Sugar Company thinning beets on the Moore farm. Mr. Moore furnished the pasture for Solomon's one cow. They lived all that summer in a beet shack on the Moore's farm.

Now that they had a job, Solomon and Mr. Miller (who spoke English) went to the grocery store and Solomon bought 100 pounds of rye flour for a little over \$1.50, 100 pounds of white flour for \$1.50, 100 pounds of sugar, a box of crackers that was as large as a 30 dozen egg crate, and a pound of coffee (brand name was "Wedding Breakfast") for 25 cents. He also bought a box of oatmeal which contained a pretty plate but they didn't use the oatmeal because they didn't like it. They didn't have oatmeal in Russia. Solomon later bought Cream of Wheat which they all liked for their breakfast. They also had a diet of rice which they liked even in Russia and it was always cooked in milk. The family didn't care for food in America except for bananas. They thought the bread tasted terrible, the apples didn't have any flavor nor did the potatoes. When Solomon got a job on the thrashing machine he also got his meals at the place where they were thrashing for the farmer. He couldn't believe his eyes when he saw them serving corn on the cob or even corn cut off of the cob. In Russia that food was only for the hogs. He soon learned to like it and the whole family soon enjoyed the treat.

Anna and Amelia would go to the sugar factory dump and pick up beer bottles. They got a penny a piece for them. They always gave the money to their dad.

The Moore farm was three miles south and one mile west of the college in Ft. Collins. Solomon and Theresa worked seven acres of beets. The whole

field was 15 acres. The other nine acres had been thinned by some other people but they left because the ground was very rocky and hard to work. Solomon and Theresa hoed the beets twice after thinning them and then topped them in the fall. The price for the work for the summer was \$20.00 per acre.

The Great Western Sugar Company gave lots to foreign people that worked for them and they could build a shack. So after the summer was over on the Moore farm the Werners moved into a shack that took only several days for Solomon to build because so many people helped build it. The shack had one large room. Solomon also built a cow barn and a chicken coop. They lived in this shack for about two years. The "Shack City" area was called "The Jungle."

The first fall in Ft. Collins after the beet topping was done, Anna and Amelia started school. They had to walk a mile. The school was located in the main part of Ft. Collins that the Germans called "Sarratoff."

In February of 1906 young Theresa had pneumonia and died. She was buried in Ft. Collins. Three weeks later in March Alvina also died of pneumonia and was buried in Ft. Collins. On April 2, Fred was born in the "Jungle" shack. He was an unusually large baby. He was an instrument baby and weighed 12 pounds. Two doctors attended the birth. Theresa surely would have died in childbirth had any of her previous children who were born in Russia had been that large. Theresa was in bed a long time after the birth and Anna had to miss a lot of school to help take care of her mother. The truant officer came more than once. The school children called him the hooky bull. He usually found several boys at the factory dump rummaging around for beer bottles and gunny sacks. The sacks brought five cents each and the bottles one cent each.

That summer of 1906 they worked beets for Mr. Miller who had rented some land east of the Ft. Collins hospital. The beets were thinned and after the first hoeing, Solomon and Theresa, Anna and Amelia would cut cherries. The cherries had to have the stems on them. These cherries were shipped out by rail to various places. Every two or three days the railroad cars were loaded. There was no refrigeration in those days so care had to be taken so the fruit wouldn't get moldy.

Theresa cut more cherries than anyone else. She cut eight crates per day at 25 cents a crate. The best Solomon cut was 6 or 7 crates a day. The cherry orchard covered a whole section of land and was owned by Mr. McClellan. Cutting cherries didn't pay as well for Solomon as the times when he worked at the thrashing machine where he received \$3.00 per day. Solomon and Anna would also cut down trees for firewood and sell it.

In November of 1906 they sold their "Jungle" shack and moved to Loveland. Solomon spent his last 300 gold rupples (\$150) for two lots. On these lots he built a two room shack. Solomon wanted to move to Loveland because of the new church brethren he had gotten acquainted with. He was a devout Christian and liked going to church. They became members of the Congregational Church the first year they lived in Loveland. The next year they went to the Reformed Lutheran Church. Anna liked the Congregational Church better and continued going there. She was confirmed in that church at the age of 14. Most are confirmed at the age of 14.

In March of 1907 Solomon's brother Chris and his two children came to the U.S. and lived with Solomon and Theresa. Sophie, Chris's daughter was hard to handle. She had her own ideas. Simeon her brother had a more calm spirit. Sophie would get into scraps with the other children and would leave without permission, etc. Chris's wife, Rosilee, couldn't enter the U.S. because of an eye disease. Twice she boarded a ship but was turned away from the U.S. shores. Finally someone told Chris to take out citizenship papers and if he became a citizen the U.S. would have to let his wife come. Solomon and Chris walked from Loveland to Ft. Collins to take out citizenship papers so Rosilee could come to the U.S. The third time Rosilee boarded a ship the U.S. had to let her stay. It was a happy day for all concerned.

In the summer of 1907 Solomon and Theresa got a job working beets near Elwell which is only about two or three miles from Johnstown. They lived in a beet shack on the farm during this time. The shack was infested with bed bugs. They had never heard of bed bugs. Some of their friends told them that they could get an insecticide in the grocery store. Solomon didn't know what to call it in English, nor did he know what to look for in the store. So he got a bright idea. He wrapped up some bed bugs in a cloth and took them to the store. He unwrapped the cloth and let the bugs crawl on the counter and pointed to them and said, "I want something for dis to eat." The grocer quickly smashed them and got the insecticide!

Alex was born during that summer, July 30, 1907. Theresa was busy hoeing beets when she went into labor.

After the beets were topped in the fall, they moved from the beet shack on the farm back to their two room shack in Loveland. There in Loveland Anna earned extra money by doing housework for ladies and Solomon did extra work for farmers.

Since Anna earned extra money doing housework, Amelia also wanted a job. Solomon and Theresa were against her working but finally gave in. She found a job with the Clay family doing housework and babysitting for their five year old child, Charley. Since Amelia didn't know the English language very well, she was in the first grade. Amelia didn't like going to school and being in the first grade with five and six year olds. She was almost 12 years old at this time. She would ride the school bus with Charley to his home and lived with the Clays. Amelia found this job one week before Christmas. During Christmas vacation, on the 30th of December, Mrs. Clay went to a party in the afternoon and left Charley with Amelia to care for. Amelia was sitting at the piano and Charley went into his parent's bedroom and got a loaded pistol from under his parent's pillow. He went to the living room where Amelia was sitting and shot her in the temple. She, of course, fell off the piano bench. Charley ran across the street and told the neighbors that he shot the Russian girl. The neighbor called the police and then ran over to where Amelia was lying. A man found out where the Werner's lived (on Washington E. 13th St. and Clays lived on Lincoln St.) and went for them. Solomon, Theresa and Anna all rushed to the house. Solomon reached her first and she was able to mumble something and cry out, but she soon died. The coroner had to come from Ft. Collins. After the mortician had taken care of the body and she was laid in the casket, she was brought to their house. On New Year's Day, 1908 the funeral was held in the Congregational Church at 2:00 p.m. The pastor of the Congregational Church and the pastor of the Reformed Lutheran Church had the services. The Clays paid for the funeral. Amelia lacked 14 days of being 12 years old.

While living in Loveland, Solomon began to attend some Seventh Day Adventist Evangelistic Meetings conducted by Peter Grade and others such as Elder Hondardt and Elder Aufterhaer. Solomon was a devoted Lutheran but was still interested in the meetings. Another devoted Lutheran by the name of Mr. Schneman stood on the outside the SDA meeting hall and tried

to prevent people from entering. He told Solomon that if he would go in, he wouldn't be counted as a Lutheran brother. Solomon said he was going in any way. Mr. Schneman was a large tall man and tried to be very forceful but Solomon wasn't afraid.

Solomon heard of some land for homesteading in the Briggsdale-Grover area of Colorado. Quite a few of the German people homesteaded there. So in August of 1908, Solomon and George Lesser set out for the Briggsdale-Grover area to make claims. To make the trip, Solomon furnished a horse and George furnished a wagon and a horse. They took provisions of bread, eggs, flour and potatoes. One had a kettle and another a frying pan. Every day they would stop and make a campfire and pick up cow chips for the fuel. They took turns making kardaffel and glace. A Mr. Brumgardt also traveled with them and when it was his turn to make the meal, he made his glace small and Solomon made his large. They had a lot of fun teasing each other about their cooking. When they reached their destination each man got a quarter section of land. They had to put some improvements on the land and live there three years. At the end of the three years they could go to the court house and prove up the land and get an abstract. The law in 1908 was that a family could homestead only a quarter section. The following year the law changed and then the head of household could homestead a half section. If the land that joins yours isn't homesteaded you could homestead it. Solomon Werner's were very lucky in that the quarter that joined their homestead to the west had not been homesteaded so they filed on it and had a half a section or 320 acres. It was seven years before Solomon got his abstract for the homestead. The Solomon and Theresa Werner homestead was 10 miles north and 4 miles west of Briggsdale, Colo., and is now owned by the Jim Konig family.

Ben was born January 8, 1909 in Loveland shortly before the Werners moved to Briggsdale.

Before moving the family to Briggsdale, Solomon needed to build a house. In order to provide shelter for himself while building the house, he built a little shack over the wagon. The house he built was made up of two rooms. Solomon's livestock consisted of two horses, one had a bad leg and the other was blind in one eye.

Solomon and Theresa brought the family to the homestead which consisted of a new two room shack and five children, Anna, Solomon Jr., Fred, Alex and Ben. They also had \$300.00. When Theresa saw the place she asked

Solomon why he moved his family out there and said, "A louse couldn't even make a living on this land."

Solomon broke sod and got a few chickens. The chickens had to live off of grasshoppers. Since the chickens only had a diet of grasshopper's their eggs were of poor quality and the egg yolks were almost like blood. He planted beans, potatoes, wheat and corn.

Chris and Rosalee Werner also had a quarter section land near Solomon and Theresa. Rosalee had some beans that needed cleaning and she asked Solomon Jr., Fred and Alex to pick out the rocks, etc. They helped her and for their payment she gave them about three pounds of beans. Theresa saved these beans for planting and from year to year they increased until they had enough for seed, eating and selling.

Sam was the first child born to them on the homestead. He was born March 30, 1910 and in a terrible snow storm. Theresa nearly died during his birth. At this time Solomon had strong convictions about keeping the Sabbath and he promised the Lord that if both the baby and Theresa lived they would start keeping the Sabbath. Theresa and Samuel lived. Years later Sam became a medical doctor. Theresa wasn't ready to embrace the new SDA religion. She insisted Sam would have to be baptized in the Lutheran faith.

It had been several years since Solomon first went to the SDA Evangelistic Meetings and about a year after Sam was born, the whole family started keeping the Sabbath. They were baptized in Willow Creek near the homestead. It was winter when the baptism took place took place and the ice had to be broken. Elder Aufterhoor baptized the family.

Philip Warner homesteaded a half section of land near Solomon Werner's. He built a two room shack but didn't stay there long so his shack was used for the first schoolhouse. Mrs. Nelson was the teacher there. Anna, Solomon Jr. and the Lesser children went to school there.

While on the homestead the last four children were born: Emma, who died of pneumonia as an infant, Marie, born May 3, 1913, Clara, born March 12, 1915 and Dave born January 3, 1917. Marie lived to be 99 yrs. old and passed away in August of 2012. Altogether Theresa Roth Werner had 17 children.

A highlight for Solomon and Theresa was getting their naturalization papers. On May 13, 1914 Solomon and Theresa and the children went to the court house in Greeley, Colorado, and became citizens of the United States of America.

Life got better for Theresa and she learned to love the prairie. In 1917 Solomon had a house built. There were four rooms downstairs and one room upstairs. They also bought their first car and acquired more land. Another move came in 1920 when Solomon and Theresa leased the Oasis Ranch eight miles west of Grover. It had been a tree claim and had many trees and Theresa was very happy. By now their oldest daughter Anna had married Martin Wonenberg and moved into the homestead house.

Solomon and Theresa decided to retire and moved to Greeley, Colo. Their son Ben and his family moved into the Oasis Ranch and continued with the farming operation. In 1940 Ben was struck by lightning while shutting off the thrashing machine.

On July 12, 1942, Solomon and Theresa celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with eight of their living children and part of their 33 grandchildren present.

Solomon Werner died on July 13, 1960, the day after their 68th wedding anniversary and left the legacy of becoming the first Werner to come to the United States. He is buried at the Beebe Draw cemetery near LaSalle, Colo.

Theresa Roth Werner died October 5, 1963, and was laid to rest next to her beloved husband Solomon in the Beebe Draw cemetery.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Lola Werner Nussbaum for giving our family the genealogy of Solomon and Theresa Werner. This story is included in the genealogy book. My great grandparents were Solomon and Theresa and my grandmother was their first born child Anna.

Louanne Hallock Timm

