

THE RUNGE FAMILY

Gustav Runge was born in Germany in 1851. As a young man he came to America, and lived New York for a time. In 1871 he and A. Solomonson came to Sidney. Alvina Dumka came to Sidney in 1879 with her brothers who were headed for the Black Hills. Alvina and Gustav met, liked what they saw and were married in the home of A. Solomonson by Judge Neubauer in 1884.

Gustav Runge's mother, Emma Julia Runge, born in Prussia, came to Sidney a widow, and married Phillip Musheid, a sheep rancher, in 1879. They too, were married in the house of Solomonson by Judge Neubauer. She was 45. He was 42. Witnesses were C.D. Essig, John Zobel, and Mrs. M. Neubauer.

On September 21, 1880 Phillip and Julia Musheid sold to Gustav Runge 240 acres four miles west of Sidney on Lodgepole Creek for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars. When Gustav and Alvina were married in 1884, they moved to this farm, living in a separate house about a quarter mile away from the Musheids, who continued to live on the farm after selling it to Gustav.

One of the oldest water rights on Lodgepole Creek was taken By Phillip Musheid. He built the diversion dam and dug the ditches to irrigate several hundred acres of hay land and a big garden. The original frame house burned down in 1890 and was replaced by a substantial stone house which still stands and is still in use (1970). Some of the trees which Phillip Musheid planted along an irrigation ditch are still there-over a hundred years old.

Gustav and his mother, Julia Musheid, bought more land from the Union Pacific Railroad for five dollars per acre, making about twelve hundred acres of deeded land besides a school section. Grace Runge Riggs was born on this farm, the third child, in 1887. She remembers walking over to visit Grandmother Julia Musheid. She was a hearty, hospitable German Hausfrau, Many groups from Sidney came in summertime to picnic on the "Musheid Place" for there was a lake and shade trees -and shade trees were mighty scarce in those days. Grandmother Musheid loved to circulate amongst the picnic people laughing and talking in her broken English.

About 1889 the family moved to Sidney, living on the North Side. Gustav for several years had a small store and cobbler shop. His business was mostly repairing footwear, but he was a skillful shoe maker, and did some custom work for special customers.

Ten children were born. Eight raised to maturity. Big families of big people were the rule, Bismark, next to the oldest, took over when his father died and managed to keep the land together. His family, eight big boys and two girls mostly lived in this community. George, Lester, and Glenn lived or is now living on a part of the original Musheid land.

This was told to Clark Fuller by Grace Runge Riggs.