

A Brief, But Incomplete History of St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund Inc.

November 16, 2022



*“My Redeemer Lives”
Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery*

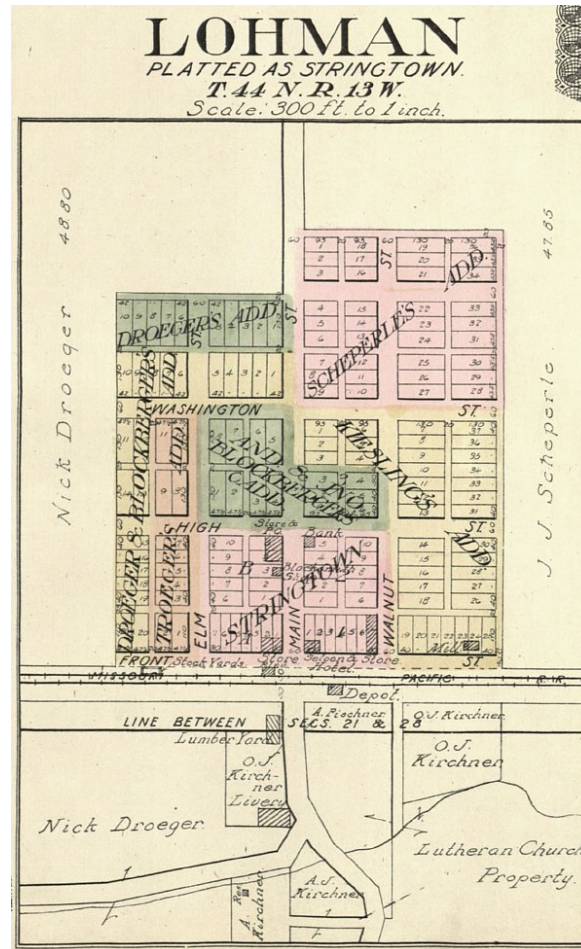
Consider the timing of the arrival of many German Immigrants to this area during the 1840's. Missouri became a state in 1821 and it was only about 20-25 years later that settlers from the Bavarian region of Germany began arriving here. This was only 35-40 years after President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark to explore this area in 1804 following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Our people truly did come to a new land.

These immigrants were hardy souls who mostly engaged in the occupation of farming as that was the way of life they knew in Germany. Equipment was primitive and scarce, and power was provided by horses, mules, oxen and their own muscles. Life was hard. Shelter was provided by timber and rocks harvested from their own land. It was backbreaking work, but they persevered and carved out a home for their families. Roads were little more than wagon paths between farms and markets for their produce.

While these new immigrants were dealing with the hardships of life in the “new country” and getting established, they were also concerned with rumors of conflict between the states. What if a war erupted between the North and the South? How would they be affected? Here in Missouri they could be caught in the middle and have to endure battles on their land. Their lives or possessions could be destroyed. They had just left their homes in Germany to escape economic hardships caused by poor agricultural harvests, very poor economic conditions, revolts among the people, and government upheavals. The result was that many Germans were hungry, out of work, saw no future for themselves and families, and were willing to risk it all for a new beginning in America. Would they now have to suffer some of the same problems here? It must have been a scary time in many ways.

You probably would not want to experience the inconveniences of our forefathers during that period of time, but it is interesting to visualize why they would build St. Paul's Church on the spot where it stands today. First, we must understand that the area called LOHMAN was not here. All the action was in the bustling stage coach route community named STRINGTOWN about a mile south. (Lohman came into existence when the St. Louis-Jefferson City-Kansas Railroad [later to become the Bagnell Branch of the Missouri Pacific Railroad] surveyed and constructed through the present Lohman town-site in 1881-1882. It was then when Charles Lohman moved his general store and post office to be near the railroad tracks.)

LOHMAN AS PLATTED 1884



Source: *Illustrated Sketch Book AND DIRECTORY OF JEFFERSON CITY AND COLE COUNTY*
 J. W. JOHNSTON, Editor.

Lohman, the new name given to Stringtown about 1884, is twelve miles southwest of the capital. C. W. LOHMAN (postmaster), N. DOHLER and LOHMAN & Co. were the general dealers; KIRCHNER & SHEPERLY operated a flouring and saw-mill; N. LINHARDT a saw-mill, and George RAINES a flouring-mill. Two Lutheran Church societies were organized, George FIGNSCHER presiding over one and J. A. PROFH over the other.

It is situated at Sec. 21, Twp. 44 N, Range 13 West on Highway D north of C.

Stringtown, on the southwest quarter of Section 21, Township 44, Range 13, was surveyed by W. VOGDT, and acknowledged by John and Andrew BLOCKBERGER February 11, 1882. Front Street parallels the railroad, with High Street north, both intersected by Elm, Main and Walnut Streets.

CLASSIFIED BUSINESS DIRECTORY OF COLE COUNTY

Lohman, on the Lebanon Branch of the Missouri Pacific Railway, in Moreau township, 13 miles southwest of Jefferson City, the county seat and banking point. Mail daily. Population 200.

Baumau, Ed., saw mill.
Berger, Jos., hotel keeper and livery stable.
Beumel, H. A., wagon maker and painter.
Blochberger, F. W., blacksmith and painter.
Dochla, Mary, dressmaker.
Fikensher, Otto, Physician.
German Lutheran church.
Hoffman, A., carpenter.
Hohuber, Mathias, shoemaker.
Huettenmeyer, John, carpenter.
Kautsch & Linhardt, general merchant.
Kautsch, Henry, blacksmith.
Laemmliein, Wm., tie and timber contractor.
Linhardt, Otto, stock breeder.
Lohman, C. W., general merchant and express agent.
Lutheran school.
Peetz, A., harness.
Public school.
Strobel Bros., stone masons.
Sinclair, John, stock dealer.
Walser, A. N., stock dealer.
Welsh, J., carpenter.

*Source: Illustrated Sketch Book AND DIRECTORY OF JEFFERSON CITY AND COLE COUNTY
J. W. JOHNSTON, Editor.*

From 1852 to 2022, those hearty German families who came together, established and built a church which has endured for 170 years. Throughout those years, in Cole County and in the surrounding counties of mid-central Missouri, German immigrants, inspired by Gottfield Duden's 1829 writings praising the life that Missouri could afford, flock to Hermann, to Cole Camp, to Jefferson City, and to the outlying areas of Moreau Township. Here they settled their families and began to create their new life on the Missouri frontier.

There were multiple reasons in the minds of the founders why this area needed a local place of worship. Travel to Jefferson City was an infrequent event due to the slow pace of horse and wagon travel. Visits of Lutheran clergy to the home of area families were irregular at best. It was in the year 1852 that the desire to perpetuate the Lutheran faith brought together the heads of seven emigrant families. These emigrants, Bavarians, Westphalians, Saxons, and Austrians, dreamed of the establishment of a real church, one in which the catechism could be taught, marriages and burials celebrated in a traditional manner, and

in which there firmly held beliefs in Grace and Justification would find expression. So seven families gathered together and searched for property for the church's location.

These families found assistance through the Reverend J.P. Kalb, who was at the time serving as the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church near Jefferson City, in addition to providing spiritual guidance to several locations in the outlying rural areas.

In the Stringtown area lived Johann Jacob Kautsch. He had purchased quite a large acreage by land grant during the presidency of Millard Fillmore. The land on which the church presently stands was probably the "back forty" and was not the best for farming. He and his wife, Magadeline, transferred 40 acres of land to his brother Andrew Kautsch and John Adam Plochberger for the sum of \$50 on August 17, 1853. Kautsch and Plochberger became trustees of the German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, unaltered Augsburg Confession, and St. Paul's Church.

The organizing members of St. Paul's Church in 1852 were:

Andrew Kautsch Born January 1, 1819 – Died August 23, 1862
Spouse: Margarethe Barbara Hertrich

Johan Jacob Kautsch Born September 2, 1823 – Died April 2, 1909
Spouse: Magadeline B. Regis

John Nicol Koehler Born March 5, 1810 – Died April 29, 1900
Spouse: Elizabeth Margaretha Poehlmann

John Adam Plochberger Born January 24, 1802 – Died October 3, 1875
Spouse: Anna Margarethe Poehlmann

John Jacob Ritter Born December 18, 1816 – Died January 7, 1868
Spouse: Anna Margarethe Lochner

John Schatz No record of birth or death
Spouse: Fredericke Geisser

John Schmidt Born November 8, 1790 – Died August 20, 1869
Spouse: Anna Catherine Strobel

How different the physical appearance of St. Paul's Church today would appear to the founding fathers of 1852. In what precise year the first church and parsonage were built has not been pinpointed in earlier histories of the congregation. It was a construction of log walls and was built on the western slope of the hill, near the grass hillside parking area north of the present day Church Hill Drive. In the corner of the tree line that parallels the Drive and turns sharply back towards Church Hill Drive lays a stone well and the foundation of an early structure that may have been the first church.



The first structure served the congregation as a place of worship until 1871. This original structure was turned into a school for grades 1 through 8. This school facility was used until 1880. It is interesting to consider how the people came to church in those early days. There was no Route D built at that time. The road to the church property came from the south, about at the spot where the LeRoy Plochberger home is located, continued east, wound around the hill past the Marie Scheperle home, continued north, passing behind the present church, and down the hill, crossing the creek into the future Lohman town site.

Beginning in 1871-1872, on the crest of the hill where the present church stands, a new edifice of stone, facing north, was constructed. The stones used to build the second church were quarried in the Lohman area and members of the congregation did most of the construction. The cost of this 1872 church building was reported to be \$4,716. At that time, 63 families comprised St. Paul's congregation and it took several years to pay off the cost of the construction. In 1890, a new parsonage with a full basement and cistern was built for the pastor. The first pipe organ was an addition to the church during this time at a cost of \$603, the funds being raised by the youth of the church by pledge subscriptions. Four towers bell were a 1910 addition with funds raised by the congregation through pledges.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

This stone church erected during 1871-1872 served the congregation until 1923, when the decision was made to construct a new building. Oral tradition maintains that a fire caused so much smoke damage that a new structure was needed. However, the following is an excerpt from the 100th anniversary booklet: *'As time goes on buildings need to be renovated.'*

That was the case with our church in 1923. Since more seating room was also needed a committee went around with 2 lists. One was for building a new church and the other for renovating the old. A very small sum was subscribed for renovating the old, so the congregation was encouraged to take steps toward building a new church facing towards the west. It was at that time the present structure was raised, being dedicated on November 16, 1924, with the cost of the building and furnishings reaching an estimated \$25,000.

This massive project was directed by member Gus Linsenbardt, who led volunteer members in the demolition of the old church and the erection of the new. The total construction time was estimated to have been only 9 months duration. Furnishings were again provided by the hard work and generous giving of individuals and organizations within the church. The youth raised the funds for the pulpit; the women provided the carpets, and the Sunday school the baptismal font. The Ladies Aid members assisted with the painting of the interior. The church will seat more than 290 persons when filled to capacity. The Carillon bells were added in 1946 in memory of those members who served in World War II. Five St. Paul's members gave their lives during that conflict.

***Taken from "A History of St. Paul's Lutheran Church" dated October, 2012
Courtesy of Jeannette Fischer and Gertrude Strobel***

From its beginnings as a simple log structure on the hillside to the present red brick structure dominating the hilltop skyline, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church has endured through 170 years of history and changes. The members of St. Paul's are proud of the beautiful, well maintained cemetery surrounding the church on its northern and eastern sides that was established to meet the burial needs of the congregation.

Should you visit the cemetery, you may wish to view the oldest grave. The memorial marker bears the inscription "Anna Margareta Plochberger", Sec. A, Row 22/Plot 16, who died in 1857. The next oldest is that of "Paul Jungmaier", Sec. A, Row 22/ Plot 17, born in 1797, died in 1858.

An unmarked grave, Sec. A, Row 15/Plot 16, became known as the "lost Koestner grave". After diligent research, it was revealed to be the grave of Emma Koestner, born on January 1, 1849, died August 23, 1862. The Scrivner-Morrow Funeral Home, Russellville, MO prepared and generously donated a small grave marker for this gravesite in late 2002. This area is the oldest part of the cemetery. The upper area bordering the open field was the infant/children section due to a layer of bedrock several feet below the surface.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

Throughout the past 170 years, St. Paul's has seen its sons and daughters answer our nation's call for service. And one member, Otto John Strobel, had a dream.

The following information is taken from parts of "Walking Veteran of WWI" written by Jeremy P. Amick, a military historian who writes on behalf of the Silver Stars Families of America and the recollections of local historian and relative, Gertrude Strobel, affectionately known as Gert.

According to Gert, it was customary for males to have the same first name to include members in the immediate household. So the men and boys were often called by their middle names. Jeremy Amick's article refers to him as John Otto Strobel while church records to include his memorial marker, refers to him as Otto John Strobel. To eliminate confusion, this history will refer to him as Otto Strobel.

Otto Strobel was born on May 9, 1889, the son of Henry P. and Anna Maria (Lochner) Strobel, on a farm approximately one mile west of Lohman. According Gert, *"He spent his entire life in Lohman, except for the time he was in the army. He was also very dedicated to his faith and enjoyed being a member of St. Paul's."*

After the United States' entry into World War I, Otto enlisted into the U.S. Army on September 20, 1917, leaving Lohman for the first time in his life. His departure from Lohman took him 280 miles west to Camp Funston, located on the present site of today's Fort Riley, Kansas. Here was spent a short-lived time training as an infantryman. In November, 1917, Otto was sent to Camp Pike, Arkansas (located in present day North Little Rock) as a replacement to train as an artilleryman and with his artillery training completed, he soon found himself aboard a troopship bound for the battlefields of France. He participated in six major campaigns and was awarded five medals for valor.

Otto returned from the war in April 1919. Gert recalls stories of Otto returning to his family's farm and living there with his only sibling, his sister Elizabeth Antonia (Donie) Strobel. Otto gained a reputation as a hard worker though the Lohman community's perceptions of him often limited his employment opportunities.

“He was not very good at communicating with people, “said Gert, “which led many people to believe that because of the way he expressed himself” he might have some type of mental impairment.” She added, ***“All he was ever really given was menial work around town, but he was really a very bright man, an avid reader who was truly self-educated.”***

Newspaper accounts note that the former artillery soldier became an active member of the VFW Post 1003 in Jefferson City in the mid-1930s and even served as the post surgeon, although the duties associated with this position were not clearly described.

The most interesting of the veteran’s post-war endeavors is his journey to the VFW post’s bi-monthly meetings, utilizing the railroad tracks of the former Bagnell Branch of the Missouri Pacific Railroad that once lay between Lohman and Jefferson City.

“Every two weeks for the last 28 months he has awakened around 3 a.m., garbed himself in his uniform cap and trod the 14 miles from his home to the city,” as was explained in the April 25, 1937 edition of The Sunday News and Tribune.

The article further noted that Otto, a self-described ***“astute student of political science”*** would arrive in the city several hours prior to the meeting so that he could spend time at the library reading books in both English and German.

“He loved to talk about his military service and when he got to the VFW, he felt right at home.” said Gert. ***“After some of the meetings, the people at the Capitol knew he was coming and would let him spend the night on one of the benches inside. The next morning, he would get up and walk back to Lohman along the railroad tracks.”***

Otto Strobel passed away at the Veterans’ Hospital in St. Louis on December 20, 1962, at 73 years of age and was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, where he had been a lifelong member, Row G/Plot 18. A simple white marble standard-issued military monument adorns his gravesite. Even in his passing, this often-misunderstood veteran was able to help provide for his community.

He and his sister never made a lot of money in their lives but they never spent anything either, if they had ten cents they would save nine cents of it,” said Gert. ***“When both he and his sister died, they gave their entire estate, a pretty good sum of money, to the church so that a perpetual cemetery could be established.”***

Gert continued, ***“Nobody ever paid much attention to him but he gave a lot to both his country and this community. Since neither he nor his sister ever married or had any children, there has really been no one to carry on his memory, and that is a shame considering what he did for the community and his service in the war.”***



Courtesy of Gertrude Strobel



Courtesy of St. Paul’s Cemetery

Indeed it was Otto's dream to have perpetual care for the cemetery bordering his beloved church. Though he had a final resting place in the National Cemetery in Jefferson City, he fulfilled his desire to be buried in his own church cemetery, though it was not of perpetual care. Upon his death, his share of the Strobel estate was willed to a perpetual care fund. However, with his sister Donie still residing on the farm, it could not be sold until her death.

At the 1963 annual meeting of the congregation, a planning committee was appointed to look into the matter of a perpetual care fund. On August 20, 1963, the first minutes of the St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund, Inc. of Lohman, Missouri were recorded. The Cemetery Fund Planning committee selected five charter officers, Irlee Linhardt (President), Otto Linsenhardt (1st Vice-President), Henry Woehrer (2nd Vice-President), A.A. Raithel (Treasurer), and O.W. Soell (Secretary).

The committee began the task of organizing a corporation to ***“run, operate, manage and control the presently existing cemetery and burial grounds connected with St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Lohman, Missouri, by providing a perpetual care and organized method of the operation of said cemetery, including the establishment of a method of perpetual care for the cemetery, the grave spaces, monuments and tombstones and by providing for the orderly process of the operation of said cemetery in the laying out and platting of future lots as a non-profit organization for the benefit of the people of Lohman, Missouri, community and others who might be acceptable and in particular members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Lohman, Missouri and to provide funds for said purpose.”***

It was indeed a huge undertaking. However, tragedy soon struck. A.A. Raithel suffered a heart attack and died during the early morning hours of September 25, 1963. Oscar M. Gemeinhardt was nominated as his replacement on the committee.

With an unmatched perseverance, the committee pushed forward to fulfill Otto's dream and A.A. Raithel commitment to that goal. On January 13, 1964, the Certificate of Incorporation was received from the State of Missouri, making it a not-for-profit corporation. It was agreed that the endowment fund must reach \$3000 before the corporation could accept control and maintenance of the cemetery.

By the latter part of 1966, the \$3000 goal was met and the corporation was ready to accept the cemetery maintenance responsibilities. At the 1967 annual congregational meeting, a resolution was approved that the St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund, Inc. accept all the responsibilities of the cemetery. By the latter part of 1966, the \$3000 goal was met and the corporation was ready to accept the cemetery maintenance responsibilities. During the next several months, the transitional process was discussed, implemented and completed on May 8, 1968, when the corporation took responsibility for the 4 acres of the existing cemetery.

The next several years saw significant improvements. In 1969, a road was constructed through the cemetery on the north and east side of the church with 300 feet of the road finished with a layer of asphalt.

By July 1970, there were sufficient funds to complete and pave the remainder of the circular drive around the south side of the parsonage.

In September 1971, Donie Strobel willed her one half of the 90 acre farm to the cemetery fund. In gratitude, the Board of Directors approved a motion to furnish the ***“farm dwelling with electric power and a cook stove and heater and refrigerator and also look after her water supply.”***

Also in September 1971, the President of the Board of Directors entered into discussion with the St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church council concerning expansion of the cemetery. On September 21, 1973, in



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

... were added to the existing cemetery. This is the portion of the cemetery currently being used for new interments.



Cemetery

The concrete pad is all that remains of those childhood memories.

Omar Heidbreder dedicated much time on the new part of the cemetery. He drew a blueprint and platted the new section. During the following years, other improvements were made. Concrete benches were placed in various locations, and though no longer standing, a small utility shed was erected north of the present day outdoor directory. Several lawn mowers to include riding mowers were purchased as needed and stored in the shed. The church youths were hired to do the mowing. A former member of the church council fondly recalled memories of grass cutting. ***“You started out with a push mower hoping to graduate to a riding mower.”*** And he did after three years of pushing a mower.

Courtesy of St. Paul’s

After the death of Donie Strobel in late 1973, the Board of Directors held a discussion concerning the settlement of the Strobel estate. The Board decided to sell the property at auction at the Cole County Courthouse on January 26, 1974. Also, to provide an additional source of income for perpetual care, the Board established pricing on grave plots in the newly acquired cemetery addition. The completion of Otto and Donie Strobel’s dream occurred in December 1974 when the cemetery corporation received a \$15,134.70 check for the sale of the Strobel property.



Courtesy of St. Paul’s Cemetery

The next significant event occurred in June 1977 when the William Linsenhardt family requested permission to erect a cross as a memorial to their parents, William J. and A. Mathilda Linsenhardt. The agreed location was the northeast curve of the circular drive where today a magnificent white wrought iron cross stands as a focal point of a beautiful, well-maintained cemetery.

When approached by the Ladies Aid during September 1983, the corporation agreed to participate financially in the building of a new garage and storage building. In return, the corporation received storage space in the new building upon completion eliminating the need for the storage building on the north side of the cemetery.

During early 1987, several discussions were held concerning the cemetery and church property lines. It was discovered that the old description of the lines were not where everyone thought they were. A portion of the church rested on the property that was deeded to the cemetery corporation. A motion was made to change the lines by trading property with the church. After resurveying the properties to be traded, the transfer was completed by early March 1990.

By late 1991, a series of year-long discussions were being held on the subject of cremations and should the cemetery make spots available for inurnments. The furthest eastward row in the newly developed portion of the cemetery as well as the use of a regular grave plot was discussed as solutions. However since no resolution was reached, cremations continued to be a subject of discussion until late 2008.

It was also during this time period, during the 1992 annual meeting, it was decided that on jointed grave sites, while standing at the foot of the site, the male will be interred on the right and the female will be interred on the left. The 1995 annual meeting saw the abolishment of the infant burial row. And in October 1995, the cemetery corporation received a generous \$11,677.51 gift from the estate of Helen Pauline Koestner to be ***“used for the upkeep of the Church cemetery.”***

By the late 1990's, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church began a major expansion on the east side of the church. As the work neared completion, the cemetery Board of Directors authorized replacing the asphalt cemetery drive with a concrete cemetery drive that is presently being used.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

By 2005 and following years, the main topic at the annual membership meeting was a mausoleum, columbarium, or a memorial garden for the placement of urns. The need for future cemetery expansion and replacement of the rules sign board were also discussed.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

By late 2008 significant progress began in these areas. An area a few feet northwest of the white cross was chosen as the site for a columbarium and sign/directory board. Plans were presented for a double-sided columbarium with 63 double urn niches on each side. It was decided to build the columbarium structure with the niche sides facing east/west and the first set of niches, at a cost of \$11,277, installed on the west side. Bee Seen Signs was contracted for plans for a new sign/directory. By the September 2009 annual meeting, the information for the new sign was in the final stage of design and name checking while the Board awaited the final columbarium layout plans from the columbarium supplier.

It was also reported at the September 2009 meeting that the 5 exploratory holes dug in the area north of the cemetery revealed that it was not suited for cemetery expansion due to the closeness of underlying bedrock to the surface. The holes could only be dug about 4 feet before hitting solid rock. A minimum of 6 feet is used for a grave site.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

LeRoy Plochberger and Marie Scheperle offered an area of approximately .7 acres south of the existing cemetery for future expansion. The offer was graciously accepted by the corporation with the land transfer completed on February 27, 2010.



On December 12, 2009 the Board accepted a \$2,500 bid for the foundation excavation, concrete work and materials with the block and the laying of the brick to be done by others. The work was to begin as soon as the weather permitted. Melvin Stubinger made a trip to Phoenix, AZ and brought back the columbarium niches and framework. Work continued throughout 2010.

By the September 18, 2011 annual meeting the columbarium has been completed with Mitch Anderson donating his time in completing the exterior brickwork. During the meeting, Joan Stubinger reported that only a few more names needed to be added and the sign should be completed soon. Extensive research and comprehensive planning occurred for the design of the new sign/directory. Until the mid-1940's, all church records were kept in German so the accurate translation of the records was a time-consuming task. All known gravesites with the corresponding interments are plotted on the directory. When facing the directory and looking east

(downhill), you are viewing the newer portion of the cemetery. Facing west (uphill), the directory displays the layout of the older part of the cemetery.

Previously, Joan and Melvin donated money to help cover part of the cost for the new sign/directory. Joan now asked that when the cemetery board receives the final bill, they would like to donate the remaining amount needed to cover the cost. As a final touch, Joan and Melvin completed the landscaping around the columbarium and sign/directory foundation. Through their generosity, St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery has a beautiful sign/directory that complements the beauty of the cemetery. It will serve the needs of the cemetery for many years.

Many others have contributed their time, talents and efforts throughout the years especially those who have served on the Board of Directors. A special "thank you" is extended to Leon Pistel and Marvin Bubach for their many years of work laying out the grave plots when those sad occasions arose.

During the spring of 2016, Delores and Robert Vlach requested permission to beautify and landscape the area surrounding the old carriage gateway at the northwest entrance to the cemetery. The carriage gateway was repainted, stones were set, shrubs and flowers were planted. Through their hard work, this beautiful garden area compliments the decor of the cemetery.

In late 2017, work began to on the north side of the original cemetery to reclaim land taken over by secondary forest growth. The work is still continuing, with the intent to push the tree line back 50 feet northward and creating pathways for walking and meditation. The taller mature trees will be left and the underbrush and smaller trees removed. Ideas are continually being solicited for this development.

During the fall of 2018, the cross was taken down for maintenance and a much need cleaning. A very special "thank you" is extended to the owners of Xtreme Body and Paint, Liz and Chris Russell for completing this huge task. Replaced at its original location, it continues to enhance the beauty of the cemetery.

A discussion was held at the September 2019 annual meeting concern the feasibility of adding additional grave plots to Row K and creating a partial Row L. An additional 22 plots were added in Row K and 13 more were added in the newly created Row L. It was decided to use these two rows for the "in-rotation" plots. The addition of these 35 plots will allow the cemetery to keep the February 2010 land donation in an undeveloped status for several more years.



Courtesy of St. Paul's Cemetery

A flagpole, donated by Carol and Gary Elliot, erected at the entrance of the cemetery, serves as a testimony to the patriotism of the congregation of St. Paul's Evangelical Church.

The Memorial Day Outdoor Service salutes the honored veterans who served in our military during the many wars to keep our nation safe and free. In preparation for the annual outdoor Memorial Day remembrance services, Pastor David Viles annually conducts an extensive research for the names of past military veterans who are "Resting in St. Paul's Cemetery.

The first veteran interred in the cemetery is John Fleagel, who was born August 24, 1844 and died on February 15, 1863 at the age of 18 years, 5 months and 21 days. He served as a Private, Company B, 33rd Missouri Infantry Regiment, Union Army.

By the early 1940's, St. Paul's Lutheran Church was one of the largest rural Lutheran churches in mid-Missouri with a membership of 400 to 450 confirmed members. During his 18 years as pastor, the Reverend John Schiller

led the church and the community of Lohman through the loss of five of its young men in the military service of their country during World War II.

There were 3 families that had 3 sons serving in the military: Gus/Flora Linsenbardt (Albin, Rupert, and Aldo), Fred/Bertha Fluegel (Oscar, Walter, and Edgar), and William/Catherine Jungmeyer (Lorenz, Alfred, and Ernest). Additionally, there were 8 families who had 2 sons serving in the military.

Wilbert G. Linsenbardt enlisted in the Army on January 8, 1942. After basic training and some earlier assignments, he was assigned as an infantryman in the 128th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Infantry Division, part of the Allied forces preparing to invade the island of New Guinea. While overseas, his wife, Louise, gave birth to their child, Wilberta. Because of the intensity of the fighting in the Pacific Theater, Wilbert was not given leave and never had the opportunity to see his daughter. On December 5, 1942, Wilbert was killed in action shortly after storming the beach and entering the dense jungle terrain of the island. Wilbert was buried with full military honors in a temporary cemetery on the island of New Guinea shortly after his death. He was the first of the 5 Lohman men to die in the war. The Allied graves at his temporary cemetery were later disinterred and reburied at the Manila American Cemetery. The American Battle Monuments Commission, established by Congress in 1923, is the preeminent guardian of this country's commemorative military cemeteries and memorials worldwide. Their records lists: **Linsenbardt, Walter G., Private First Class, 37130686, Missouri, MIA, Memorialized: "Walls of the Missing", Manila American Cemetery.**

Wilbert's official Missing in Action status can be attributed to the many temporary gravesites lost in the jungle during the intense fighting that occurred on New Guinea.

About 4 months later, the parents of **Everett Knernschield** were notified that he had died during training at Camp Crowder near Neosho, MO. Everett was a farmer prior to enlisting in the Army. While undergoing basic training, he contracted measles but also was discovered to be suffering from a brain tumor. Medical examinations and physicals prior to entering military service failed to detect this condition. On April 4, 1943, Everett was buried at St. Paul's cemetery with full military honors.

Alfred O. Jungmeyer was the youngest of 3 brothers who served during the war. During April, 1942, while in his final year of high school, Alfred enlisted in the Navy. He explained to his father, (his mother Catherine had died while giving birth to Alfred), that he would be of greater service to his country if he enlisted and he would complete his final year of high school when the war was over. Alfred, assigned to the Naval Air Corps, completed his training in radio communications, transferred to the Pacific Theater, and was assigned to an air squadron on *USS Lexington*. His last mission was an attack against enemy installations near Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands. His aircraft never returned and more than 3 years would elapse before Alfred's family received official confirmation of his death. The War Department thought there may have been a slight chance that he may have rescued and taken to a prisoner of war camp. After the war officially ended in 1945 and all prison camps were liberated, Alfred's name did not appear on any lists of liberated personnel. At age 18, Alfred was the youngest member of the Lohman community to die in the war. The memorial service held on January 9, 1946 at St. Paul's was attended by his father, William, 2 sisters, and 3 brothers. The American Battle Monuments Commission record lists: **Jungmeyer, Alfred O, Aviation Radioman 3rd Class, 6684995, Missouri, MIA, Memorialized: "Courts of the Missing, Court 3", Honolulu Memorial.**

Clarence N. Doehla, born near Lohman, attended grade school here and later attended high school in Jefferson City. He worked as a printer and paper hanger. Clarence enlisted in the Army and was assigned to the 315th Infantry Regiment, 79th Infantry Division as an infantryman. Shortly after the June 6, 1944 D-Day invasion, Clarence landed near the strategic port city of Cherbourg, France. Cherbourg and the surrounding area was heavily defended and saw some of the fiercest fighting in the European Theater. After Cherbourg's capture, Allied forces battled northward toward the next objective, Caen, France. During the successful third assault to capture Caen, Clarence was killed in action on July 9, 1944. . He was buried at a

temporarily cemetery near Blossville, France. On September 10, 1944, a memorial service was held at St. Paul's.

The temporary cemetery contained over 6,000 Allied graves. They were later disinterred and reburied at the huge American Military Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer, atop the bluff overlooking Omaha Beach. The American Battle Monuments Commission record lists: **Doehla, Clarence N, Private First Class, 37186705, Missouri, KIA, Plot C, Row 26, Grave 13.**

Chester Strobel, the only child of Louis and Emma Strobel, enlisted in the Navy in 1942. After completion of basic training and machinist training, he was assigned to the cruiser, *USS Augusta*. Serving aboard *USS Augusta*, and later, *USS Ludlow*, Chester participated in patrol and escort duties and combined operations with the British Home Fleet during the remainder of 1942. In April 1943, Chester was introduced to operations in the Pacific Theater when transferred to *USS Isherwood*, a newly commissioned destroyer. Aboard *USS Isherwood*, Chester participated in antisubmarine patrols in the cold Alaskan waters. During his 2 year length of duty in the Pacific, Chester traveled more than 115,000 miles. On October 20, 1944, *USS Isherwood* steamed into Leyte Gulf and participated in the Battle of Leyte Gulf, in which the enemy surface fleet was all but annihilated. During the early spring of 1945, *USS Isherwood* steamed towards Okinawa for preparation of the invasion of that island. On April 22, 1945, according to an unconfirmed report, Chester had just gone topside when a kamikaze pilot made a dusk attack and crashed his plane in the vicinity where Chester and several of his shipmates were standing, killing him instantly, one of over 80 men killed, wounded, or missing out of a crew of 336 sailors. On July 8, 1945 a memorial service was held at St. Paul's for Chester. In his sermon, Reverend Schiller stated that though Chester was gone for almost 3 years, he never lost touch with his church, pastor, mother, and his wife, Florence, who he married 12 days before leaving for basic training. Chester had been an outstanding baseball player who apparently had received offers from professional teams to include the Yankees, but chose to enlist and serve his country. The Department of Veterans Affairs records list: **Strobel, Chester Everett, MM2 US Navy, Section N, Site 961, National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.**

The following is a listing of the veterans interred or remembered in St. Paul's cemetery.

LOCATION	CONFLICT	NAME	BRANCH
Sec. A, 14-7	Civil War	Fleagel, John	Army
Sec. A, 14-8	Civil War	Fleuegel, Frederick	Army
Sec. A, 14-9	Civil War	Kautsch, Erhardt	Army
Sec. A, 14-10	Civil War	Strobel, Friedrich	Army
Columbarium	World War II	Ogilvie, Earl	Army
Sec. B, 5-7	World War II	Strobel, Chester* (1)	Navy
Sec. B, 7-18	World War II	Knernshield, Everett (died in camp)	Army
Sec. C, C-12	World War II	Linsenbardt, Armond	Army
Sec. C, C-14	World War II	Linsenbardt, Wilbert* (2)	Army
Sec. C, C-19	World War II	Knernshield, George	(?)
Sec. C, D-17	World War I	Hubbard, Clarence	Army
Sec. C, E-2	World War I	Linsenbardt, Edward	Army
Sec. C, E-20	World War II	Doehla, Clarence (KIA)	Army
Sec. C, F-20	World War I	Raitel, Alfred	Army
Sec. C, G-4	World War I	Hubbard, August	Army
Sec. C, G-7	World War II	Jungmeyer, Alfred (MIA)	Navy Air Corps
Sec. C, G-10	Vietnam	Linsenbardt, Marvin	Army
Sec. C, G-18	World War I	Strobel, Otto John	Army
Sec. C, G-24	World War I	Fleugel, August	Army
Sec. C, H-11	World War I	Linsenbardt, Theodore (Tate)	Army

Sec. C, H-25	World War I	Horak, William	Army
Sec. C, J-10	World War II	Kirchner, T.A.	Army
Sec. D, C-1	World War I	Niederwimmer, Albert	Army
Sec. D, C-16	Vietnam	Buchta, Roger	Army
Sec. D, C-19	World War II	Weber, Roy	Army
Sec. D, C-21	Vietnam	Hake, Dan	Army
Sec. D, C-27	World War II	Loesch, Daniel	Army
Sec. D, D-1	Peace Time	Stubinger, Theodore J.	Army
Sec. D, D-3	World War II	Bubach, Oscar	Navy
Sec. D, D-9	Korea	Woehrer, Elmer	Marine
Sec. D, D-10	World War II	Brunner, Paul	Army
Sec. D, D-12	Korea	Strobel, Herb	Army
Sec. D, D-14	Peace Time	Strobel, Hugo	Army
Sec. D, D-16	World War II	Blakeman, Wyman	Army
Sec. D, E-1	Korea	Fischer, William* (3)	Air Force
Sec. D, E-5	World War II	Linhardt, Francis (Franz)	Navy
Sec. D, E-7	World War II	Jungmeyer, Edwin (Eddie)	Army
Sec. D, F-1	World War II	Linsenbardt, Albin	Army Air Corps
Sec. D, F-3	World War II	Linsenbardt, Rupert	Army
Sec. D, G-1	Peace Time	Lister, Raymond	Air Force
Sec. D, H-1	World War II	Horak, Marvin H.	Army
Sec. D, H-4	Korea	Gordon, Don	Army
Sec. D, H-14	Peace Time	Carlson, Earl	Air Force
Sec. D, H-24	Korea	Kiesling, Ralph	Air Force
Sec. D, H-27	Peace Time	Case, Elliott G.	Army
Sec. D, H-28	World War II	Strobel, Lorenz	Army
Sec. D, I-8	Peace Time	Renfrow, Jerome	Marine
Sec. D, I-9	World War II	Kirchner, Raymond	Navy
Sec. D, I-20	Peace Time	Stubinger, Ralph	Army
Sec. D, I-26	World War II	Heidbreder, Omar	Army
Sec. D, I-28	Korea	Fischer, Alvin	Army
Sec. D, J-5	Vietnam	Neal, James	Marine
Sec. D, J-11	Peace Time	Zink, William (Billy)	Army
Sec. D, J-13	World War II	Russell, David (D.D.)	Army
Sec. D, J-15	World War II	Fischer, Rudolph	Army
Sec. D, J-17	Peace Time	Scheperle, John O.	Navy
Sec. D, K-2	Peace Time	Kiesling, Elmer O.	Army

- Note (1) Strobel, Chester Noted on the back of Louis/Emma Strobel's memorial stone
Note (2) Linsenbardt, Wilbert Noted on the back of William/Mathilda Linsenbardt's memorial stone
Note (3) Fischer, William Noted at the foot of Freddie/Martha Fischer' memorial stone

These honored veterans assured our freedom to gather in worship to praise God in the faith we choose to follow. Through their sacrifices, the citizens of this great nation are also free to live our lives in respect and value of all men and women regardless of religion or any other difference from ourselves. To further honor our veterans, Ellen and Lorenz Strobel began placing American flags on the gravesites of the veterans prior to the Memorial Day service. They continued doing this ritual until 2014 when Carol and Gary Elliott assumed the rendering of these honors.

On the evening of June 29, 2022, the Jr. Lutheran's of St. Paul's gathered at the cemetery to give their honor and respect by placing the flags on the gravesites prior to the annual Patriotic Services that is held the last Sunday before Independence Day celebrations.

The placing of these flags has led to the creation of a St. Paul's Cemetery Patriotic Season the first observance beginning the third Saturday of May, 2023. On this day, known as Armed Forces Day, we share an unending appreciation for the proud patriots who answered the call to serve, taking the sacred oath to defend the Constitution of the United States.



Courtesy of Pastor David Viles

A few days later, Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day), is observed for the mourning of U.S. military personnel who have died while serving in our country's armed forces. It is observed on the last Monday of May by placing flowers and American flags on graves of military personnel.

June 14 is the date of 2 significant events. It is celebrated every year as a remembrance of the country's first flag as the official American flag by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777. But often overlooked is the second historical event on this date that occurred 2 years earlier. The United States Army was born on June 14, 1775 when the Continental Congress, meeting at Independence Hall in Philadelphia authorized the enlistment of soldiers for a Continental Army to fight for the independence of the 13 colonies.

A year and 20 days after the creation of the Continental Army, the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776 solidifying the American colonies' resolve to fight for their independence from Britain.

The memorial flags will be left in place until after the traditional Independence Day celebration activities are over. All members of the congregation and the surrounding community are invited to participate in helping the youth of St. Paul's Church place the flags on the veterans gravesites. All veterans are highly encouraged to relate their military service experience to the younger generation in order to raise their understanding and patriotic commitment to God and country.

We must always remember that the early immigrants to this country came seeking religious freedom and often sacrificed much for that freedom. The modern motto of the United States of America, as established in a 1956 law signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, is "***In God We Trust.***" "The 1956 law was the first establishment of an official motto for the country, although "***E Pluribus Unum***" (*'from many, one'*) was adopted by an Act of Congress in 1782 as the motto for the Seal of the United States and has been used on coins and paper money since 1795.

A phrase similar to "***In God We Trust***" appears in the final stanza of the "Star Spangled Banner". Written in 1814 by Frances Scott Key (and later adopted as the U.S. national anthem on March 3, 1931 by President Herbert Hoover), the song contains an early reference to a variation of the phrase: "***And this be our motto, In God is our trust.***"

As stated earlier, this is only a brief and very incomplete history of our cemetery. Much of what is printed here was taken or interpreted from the past minutes and commemorative documents. The corporation's minutes only go back in time to the mid 1960's. Our church and cemetery histories go back to the 1850's. There are many stories that still needs to be told, more pictures to be added, plus the hard work and dedication of others still needs to be recognized. As families research their genealogical history, we ask that it be shared to honor the founders of St. Paul's Church and the community of Lohman.

The Board of Directors wishes to make this a "Living History" so future generations will continue to learn from our ancestors. Any stories, articles, or pictures you would like to add will be appreciated.

Family lineages can be added linking today's family with their ancestral roots. Any omissions or errors in this history need to be corrected.

A very generous *'Thank You'* is extended to Jeremy P. Ämick, who writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America and whose many articles appearing in this cemetery's history are shared as **"REMEMBERANCE LEGACY's"**,

Over the years, the St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund, Inc. has been blessed by the many gifts, donations and bequeaths it has received to support our operations. Your generosity and support is appreciated. Though the cemetery is closely associated with St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lohman, Missouri, the cemetery operates as a separate entity and has met the requirements of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of Missouri. The date of incorporation was January 13, 1964. **Any gifts, donations and bequeaths should be made payable to St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund, Inc.**

Comments and questions can be directed to the Board President or any Board member.

Sincerely,

The St. Paul's Perpetual Cemetery Fund, Inc.
Board of Directors



Courtesy of Pastor David Viles

REMEMBERANCE LEGACY: A. A. RAITHEL

U.S. Army veteran of WWI remembered for work at Lohman Farmer's Exchange

Jeremy P. Ämick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.



Several years ago, Gertrude "Gert" Strobel, of Lohman, began sharing stories, pictures and documents regarding the legacy of her father -- the late Alfred Raithel.

Possessing many titles during his life to include World War I veteran, manager of the Lohman Producer's Exchange and active member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, her father left an influence she strived to share before it passed into the fog of history.

Alfred Raithel was born Nov. 23, 1895, and was raised on a small farm near St. Martins. His father, Adam, became father to 11 children, was a hardscrabble and respected farmer and is considered one of the pioneer residents of Cole County.

"Although my father was raised in the St. Martins area, he moved to Lohman when he was a young man," Strobel said in a 2013 interview. "His entire life, he attended St. Paul's Lutheran Church and was confirmed in 1909."

For many years, Raithel was employed at the Linhardt and Fischer General Store in Lohman, but was later toiling as a local farm laborer when he was drafted into military service because of World War I.

Strobel said her father never shared many details about his wartime service, but records reveal he was 21 years old when he was inducted into the U.S. Army on June 20, 1917, and initially assigned to Company M, 356th Infantry. This company was a component of the 89th Infantry Division and completed its initial training at Camp Funston, Kansas.

Raithel would go on to serve as a cook overseas from July 31, 1918, through June 14, 1919, and was able to capture several dozen photographs with his camera, chronicling the good, bad and deadly facets of war.

Included in the collection were photographs of American and French flying aces, damaged biplanes, and French and German tanks. Raithel also snapped a photograph of the grave of Quentin Roosevelt -- an American aviator and the youngest son of President Theodore Roosevelt, who lost his life July 14, 1918, when his plane was shot down behind German lines.

Rather than allow the snapshots to lie stored away in a musty drawer and shrouded from inquisitive eyes, Strobel donated the photographs to the Museum of Missouri Military History, where they have been catalogued, maintained and enjoyed by others.

"My father was reassigned to Headquarters Company, 323rd Infantry, with whom he continued to serve as a cook and remained with them until his discharge on June 24, 1919," Strobel said. "He then returned to Lohman and began working for the Lohman Producer's Exchange when it was established the following year."

According to a booklet printed in 1976 that highlights segments of Lohman history, it was noted, "On July 29, 1920, the Lohman Producer's Exchange was formed by a number of interested clubs and local producers. The original five-man board consisted of William Scheperle, president, John J. Scheperle, William Niederwimmer, G.F. Sauerhage and Otto Linsenhardt, secretary."

Albert Heidbreder became the initial manager of the exchange beginning in 1920, while Raithel was hired to serve as his assistant manager. In 1943, Raithel was promoted to the position of manager.

"Cream, poultry and eggs were bought by the Exchange from the farmers, also wool, which was packed in big wool bags loaned to farmers and later returned," noted the book printed for the Russellville sesquicentennial in 1988. "The wages were \$65 per month for assistant manager and \$75 per month for manager," the book noted of the exchange's early history."

"Not long after he returned from the war and began working at the exchange, my father married my mother, Antonia," Strobel said. "I was their only child, born in 1924."

In the early weeks of 1929, Raithel discovered the dangers of working around a grain elevator when he suffered a serious fall, but soon recovered from his injuries. Several years later, the exchange purchased a building that had once housed a restaurant and added a brick structure to the back of it, using the new area as a retail business where they sold items ranging from appliances to cereal.

In addition to his full-time employment, Raithel and his family remained active members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman. In December 1960, after 40 years working for the Lohman Producer's Exchange, he retired.

Raithel was 67 years old when he died Sept. 25, 1963, from a heart condition that had plagued him since his retirement. He was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Paul's Lutheran Church; his beloved wife died nearly 31 years later.

Many decades have passed since the death of the local World War I veteran, while his daughter, Gert Strobel, lived until Nov. 25, 2020, dying at 96. In an interview prior to her death, Strobel expressed her appreciation for being able to share the history of not only her father's military legacy, but his service to the community as well.

"I just want history to be preserved because it was part of the time during which my dad grew up and included many fascinating moments," Strobel said. "Dad's story is so interesting and I am glad that it can now be shared with so many other people who are interested in our past."



REMEMBRANCE LEGACY: JOHN “OTTO” STROBEL

“Walking Veteran of WWI” – The WWI Veteran Who Hiked to Monthly Veterans Meetings in Jefferson City

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.

It could be said of the late John “Otto” Strobel that he was a man that gave of himself in both life and death. Not only did he serve his country honorably during WWI, but after his passing, he donated his entire estate to ensure a perpetual cemetery at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in his hometown of Lohman, Mo.

Yet, despite all of this benevolence, Strobel is perhaps best remembered for the trips he made to Jefferson City, Mo., to participate in meetings with the local Veterans of Foreign War Post—a 28-mile round trip he made by walking.

“The history of Strobel’s walking feat actually got its start on the battlefields of France in 1918,” reported *The Sunday News and Tribune* in their April 25, 1937, edition. “Marching was nothing unusual for the soldiers in those stirring days, and Strobel performed his duties so well he returned to America after the war with five medals for valor.”

Prior to the veteran gaining attention because of his lengthy strolls to Jefferson City, his life story begins on a small farm in the Lohman area where he was born on May 9, 1889.

“He spent his entire life in Lohman—except for the time he was in the Army,” said Lohman historian Gert Strobel. “He was also very dedicated to his faith and really enjoyed being part of St. Paul’s (Lutheran Church),” she added.



John “Otto” Strobel was raised in the Lohman community and served in France during WWI. After the war, he gained a level of local notoriety for walking from Lohman to Jefferson City to attend VFW meetings.

Courtesy of Gert Strobel.

Months after America's declaration of war against Germany in 1917, a 28-year-old Strobel made the commitment to serve his country and was inducted into the U.S. Army in Jefferson City on September 20, 1917, leaving his Mid-Missouri home for the first time in his life.

According to his service card accessed through the Missouri State Archives, the recruit spent less than two months at Camp Funston, Kan., where he trained with Company M, 356th Infantry—a company that drafted several men from the Cole County area.

Though he was among acquaintances from the Lohman area during his initial training, Strobel's tenure with the company was brief since he was transferred as a replacement to Battery B, 335th Field Artillery at Camp Pike, Ark., on November 6, 1917.

In March 1918, he again said farewell to whatever friends he had made while at Camp Pike when he joined Battery D, 102nd Field Artillery Regiment and traveled to Camp Merritt, N.J. Shortly after his arrival, he was aboard a troopship bound for service in an overseas warzone.

Now part of the 26th Division, Strobel and the soldiers of the 102nd were members of “the first complete American Division to be committed in France in 1918,” as was noted in “The Unit History of the 26th Division,” which was accessed through the website of the 26th Infantry “Yankee” Division. The website also notes that the division took part in six major campaigns of the war and “was cited (for their performance in combat) thirteen times by France, and three times by American Army Headquarters” in addition to spending 210 days fighting—the longest of all the American infantry divisions.

Returning from the war in April 1919, Gert Strobel notes that the combat-hardened soldier lived on his family's farm along with his only sibling—a sister named Antonia. In the years after the war, Strobel gained a reputation as being a hard worker although the community's perceptions of him often limited the type of employment he was provided.

“He was not very good at communicating with people,” said Gert Strobel, “which led many people to believe that because of the way he expressed himself, he might have some type of mental impairment.” She added, “All he was ever really given was menial work around town, but he was really a very bright man—an avid reader who was truly self-educated.”

Newspaper accounts note that the former artillery soldier became an active member of the VFW Post 1003 in Jefferson City in the mid-1930s and even served as the post surgeon, although the duties associated with this position were not clearly described.

The most interesting of the veteran's post-war endeavors is his journey to the VFW post's bi-monthly meetings, utilizing the railroad tracks of the former Bagnell Branch of the Missouri Pacific Railroad that once lay between Lohman and Jefferson City.

“Every two weeks for the last 28 months he has awakened around 3 a.m., garbed himself in his uniform cap and trod the 14 miles from his home to the city,” as was explained in the April 25, 1937 edition of *The Sunday News and Tribune*.

The article further noted that Strobel—a self-described “astute student of political science”—would arrive in the city several hours prior to the meeting so that he could spend time at the library reading books in both English and German.

“He loved to talk about his military service and when he got to the VFW, he felt right at home,” said Gert Strobel. “After some of the meetings, the people at the Capitol knew he was coming and would

let him spend the night on one of the benches inside. The next morning, he would get up and walk back to Lohman along the railroad tracks.”

Strobel passed away at the Veterans’ Hospital in St. Louis on December 20, 1962, at 73 years of age and was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, where he had been a lifelong member. Even in his passing, this often-misunderstood veteran was able to help provide for his community.

“He and his sister never made a lot of money in their lives but they never spent anything either— if they had ten cents they would save nine cents of it,” said Gert Strobel. “When both he and his sister died, they gave their entire estate—a pretty good sum of money—to the church so that a perpetual cemetery could be established.”

She continued, “Nobody ever paid much attention to him but he gave a lot to both his country and this community. Since neither he nor his sister ever married or had any children, there has really been no one to carry on his memory, and that is a shame considering what he did for the community and his service in the war.”



*Strobel is pictured in uniform at Camp Funston, Kan., in 1917. Initially inducted into an Army unit comprised of many local residents, he went on to serve as a replacement in a field artillery regiment.
Courtesy of Audrey Scheperle.*

REMEMBERANCE LEGACY: JOHN 'GUS' FISCHER, SR

Son of German immigrant built life on Lohman farm

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.



The late Oscar Handlin, noted American historian and professor of history at Harvard University, intuitively stated, "Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history."

These words describe groups of men and women clinging to the promise of opportunities in America, leaving the difficulties of their ancestral homelands with little to their name other than an entrenched work ethic and a dedication to providing for their families.

"My grandfather, John Fischer -- he didn't have a middle name -- was born in Germany on March 7, 1856," said Gus Fischer Jr., of Lohman. "He immigrated to the Millbrook area with his parents in 1865, when he was only 9 years old."

Like many young German immigrants toiling the farmland in the vicinity, his grandfather met a young woman, the former Margarethe Rockelman, and married in 1880. He embarked upon his own life of farming while raising eight children, including John Gustav Fischer.

"My father, John 'Gus' Fischer Sr., was born in 1893 and grew up on a farm south of Millbrook," Fischer Jr. said. "He worked hard from an early age and had three brothers and four sisters. Back then, farmers didn't have the benefit of tractors and other farm equipment."

"There weren't many opportunities for education and he talked about attending a one-room schoolhouse in Pleasant Hill. He only went there for about five years and said he could only go to class if he was able to cross the Moreau River ... sometimes the water was too high," he continued.

The family brought with them from Germany their Lutheran faith and after settling near Millbrook, began attending St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman. This religious tradition has carried forward with the Fischer family for more than four generations, with Gus Fischer Jr. and his wife members of the same congregation as his great-grandparents.

"Eventually, my grandfather gave all of his sons a farm," Fischer Jr. said. "I was told that his daughters, instead of receiving farms, were given \$5,000 each when they married."

He recalled the farm given to his father stretched across 133 acres between Stringtown and Lohman. In 1917, his father married the former Erma Linsenhardt and the couple focused on building a home, raising a family and working to extract a living from their farm.

Jeannette, wife of Gus Fischer Jr., said, "My father-in-law built a cement house on the farm after he was married. We were told that they found some type of rock or slate here on the farm that they would burn for several days and it could then be used for the cement." "The holes from where they dug the rock can still be seen here on the farm," she added.

Pausing, Fischer Jr. added, "My father said that his dad helped him build the house; it was a two-story structure, and he talked about having to climb up a ladder with buckets full of cement to pour into the forms."

This became the home where Gus Fischer Jr. and his eight siblings -- seven of whom made it into adulthood -- were raised. His parents, though lacking a disposable income, demonstrated a stalwart work ethic and ensured their children were never wanting for the necessities.

"Farming became a family effort -- we planted those rocky hills outside Lohman with an alternating schedule of corn, wheat and oats," Fischer Jr. said. "Sometimes, heavy rains would come and wash all of the seeds away that we had planted."

Growing up in a concrete house, Fischer explained, though certainly a stable structure, frequently offered its own set of challenges.

"We had a wood stove and because there was no insulation, you had the one room that was warm in the winters and all the others were freezing," he recalled. "There was a woodstove in the kitchen for cooking, too, so it wasn't too bad in there, either."

In addition to raising crops, his parents maintained around 15 cows -- six for milking and the rest for beef. Additionally, his father was for several years the treasurer for the German Mutual Insurance Company, which continues to serve the insurance needs of policyholders throughout Mid-Missouri.

In 1931, Gus Fischer Sr. was re-elected to the board of the Stringtown District School. The following year, he built a service station/tavern on his farm near the junction of routes C & D south of Lohman. He rented the building for several years and later added an outdoor wooden dance floor. Musical entertainment was provided by local musicians Vic and Oscar Linsenbardt.

"My parents often spoke German around the house and with others in the community because that was really their first language," Fischer Jr. said. "He also had the saying, 'You have to know what you can do.'"

Gus Fischer Sr. welcomed progress when electricity came to the Lohman area in 1947. In later years, he purchased a small tractor to replace the earlier reliance on mules and horses. The first-generation U.S. citizen died in 1968 and was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Paul's Lutheran Church; his wife joined him in rest 13 years later.

Living on a section of the farm once owned by his parents, Fischer Jr. recognizes the tireless labors of early immigrants to the area have helped provide a more comfortable lifestyle currently enjoyed by their descendants.

"My great grandparents, grandparents and parents toiled all of their lives and all experienced hard times," Fischer Jr. said. "My mother lost two of her daughters -- my sisters -- at a young age, and that had to be very trying for her." "Theirs might not be a unique story coming from early Lohman and Stringtown history, but they all struggled to survive one day at a time and built a better life for others," he said.



Son of German immigrant built life on Lohman farm

REMEMBRANCE LEGACY: CHESTER E. STROBEL

‘Never to part again’- Lohman sailor killed during Japanese kamikaze attack in WWII

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.



*Chester Strobel is pictured with his mother, Emma, in front of the general store they once operated in Lohman, Mo. Chester enlisted in the Navy during World War II and was later killed in action.
Courtesy of Gert Strobel*

A mother’s love for a child can be an abstract and unwavering force that yields to no person or object. Few would argue that such fondness often transitions to a protective instinct, which then encourages the parent to defend their child from all threat or harm. So when a child leaves a mother’s warm embrace to join the military under the threat of war—or, in some cases, death—it must certainly be the height of stress or worry for the doting elder left behind. Yet during World War II, one local mother experienced the unfortunate reality of sending her son off to war, not realizing that she would spend the next several years struggling to cope with the unexpected loss.

Born in Lohman, Missouri, on February 15, 1913, Chester Everett Strobel was the only child of Louis and Emma Strobel and grew up watching his parents engaged in mercantile endeavors. However, the young couple’s son would soon step up to fill in for his departed father.

“When Chester was 16 years old his father died and he became the mainstay of his mother,” Strobel’s obituary explained. “With loving devotion he was attached to his mother who in turn bestowed upon her son the fullness of her motherly love and affection”.

For many years, “Chetty”—as Lohman resident Gert Strobel notes was Chester’s nickname—helped his mother operate their store that was located in what is now the front section of the MFA Exchange building in Lohman.

“They had everything (in the store)—candy, flour, oatmeal, beer,” said Gert Strobel. “It was all in bulk, there was nothing in packages”.

As is often the case with young men, Chester developed affections for a young woman, Florence Meister of Jefferson City, and the two were married on September 26, 1942—twelve days following “Chetty’s” enlistment in the U.S. Navy. The young sailor soon said his goodbyes to the two women who meant the world to him and departed for naval training at Great Lakes, Illinois. Several months later, he began his first active duty assignment performing operations in the Atlantic aboard *USS Augusta*. Strobel continued his Atlantic-based service while later serving aboard *USS Ludlow*, but in April 1943, he was introduced to operations in the Pacific Theater when transferred to *USS Isherwood*—a recently commissioned destroyer.

“During the next two years of its operations, *USS Isherwood*, traveled more than 115,000 miles” and took part in combat operations in locations including the Kurile Islands and the Philippines, as Strobel’s obituary described. But, as noted on the website for The National Association of Destroyer Veterans (NADV), an unfortunate event on April 22, 1945 robbed a community of one of its native sons.

With little warning, *USS Isherwood* came under attack by three Japanese planes while operating near the Ryukur Islands off the coast of Okinawa. All hands reported to their battle stations, but not in time to prevent the deadly consequences that soon followed. An article on the NADV website explains that one of the planes was on a kamikaze (suicide) run and “hit squarely on the No. 3 five-inch gun mount, killing or wounding most of the men on duty within the mount and its ammunition handling room.”

What followed was certainly pure bedlam when a depth charge exploded 25 minutes later, killing many more crew members. It is believed that the 32-year-old Strobel was killed instantly when the kamikaze plane struck *USS Isherwood*. A Western Union telegram received near the end of April 1945 notified Strobel’s wife that her “husband Chester Everett Strobel ... was killed in action while in service of his country.”

Fellow church and community members celebrated Strobel’s life during a memorial service held on July 8, 1945 at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Lohman, where the young sailor had been a member. The veteran’s remains were interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

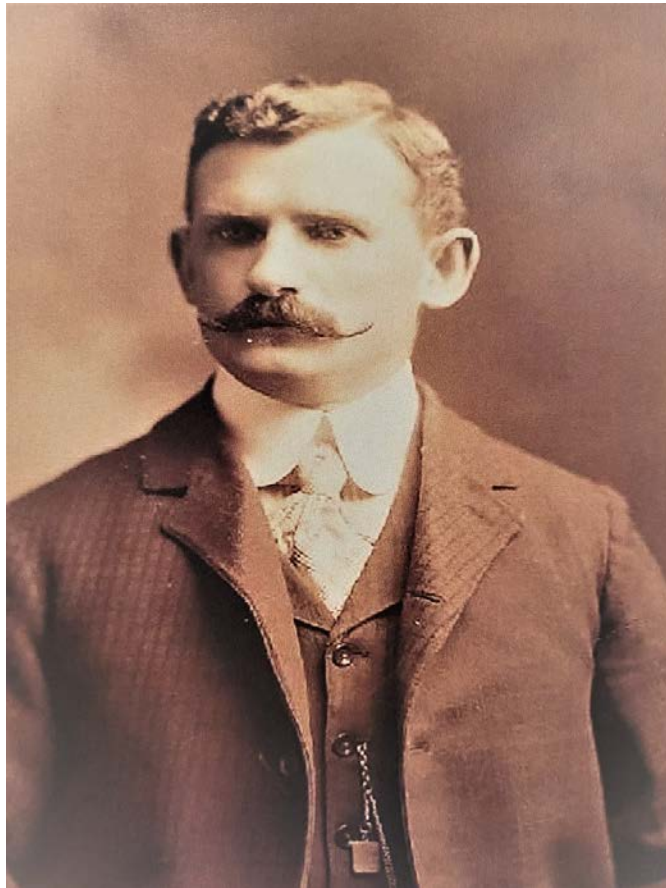
Though Chetty’s wife later remarried and moved to Barnett, Missouri, where she lived until her death in 1990, his mother (who passed away in 1966) never lost hope that her only child might somehow have survived the deadly encounter described in a brief telegram. Many in the Lohman community continue to share the story of Strobel’s mother leaving her porch light on at night, clinging to the belief her son might return home; yet a tribute published in the April 20, 1947 edition of the *Sunday News and Tribune* provides a glimmer of what appears to have been her acceptance of the loss of her son.

“His smiling way and pleasant face are a pleasure to recall; he had a kindly word for each and died beloved by all,” wrote his mother, adding, “Some day we hope to meet him, some day we know not when, to clasp his hand in the better land, never to part again....”

REMEMBERANCE LEGACY: AUGUST SAUER

German immigrant turned Russellville businessman killed in accident in 1929

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.



Born in 1869 in Germany, August Sauer would accompany one of his four brothers who made the bold decision to leave their ancestral homeland and immigrate to the United States, the land of opportunity. Once arriving in his newly adopted country, he went on to gain notoriety in the local agricultural industry, but later met with an unexpected and unfortunate end.

"Family lore states that when he came here, he had some 'old family money' from Germany, which he used to buy a 160-acre farm near Millbrook," said his great-grandson, David Sauer.

For August Sauer, 1904 became one of the most memorable years of his young life. First, he purchased the Russellville Roller Mills from businessman Jacob Ritchie. Then, he married his fiancée, the former Anna Katherina Hitz, whose family lived in a home across the road from the mill.

He operated the mill for a brief time in partnership with Herman Brunning, before purchasing all shares of the business. With an eye to the future, he ensured the mill had the capacity to take on more product than ever before while also purchasing interest in other area flour mills.

"His family lived in a large, beautiful home below the mill that had been built for the previous mill owner," David Sauer said. "He and his wife became parents to two sons and three daughters." A perennial advocate of identifying ways to update milling operations that would help him rise above competition, Sauer eventually sold his interest in the other mills and focused his attention and efforts solely on his Russellville Roller Mills.

"Many of the other mills were getting old and phasing out," David Sauer said. "He recognized that you either spent the money to update or you closed."

He soon marketed his signature brand of quality flour known as "Snow Bank" and negotiated deals in St. Louis to have the product shipped throughout the United States. He also supplied flour for institutions within the Missouri prison system. This benefitted the local economy since he purchased and processed wheat grown by farmers in the Russellville area.

Andrew and Mike Doehla, of Lohman, eventually purchased interest in the Russellville Roller Mills while Sauer coordinated for the provision of another service in the late 1920s, one that would help set him apart from his competitors -- deliveries made by truck.

David Sauer said, "He contracted with Adam Kirchner in Lohman, who owned a Ford Model AA truck. Weber could pick up the product from the mill and deliver to businesses in the area, rather than them having to come to pick it up themselves."

Also, during this timeframe, Sauer began to realize that an evolution in milling was occurring with electricity coming to Russellville. His foresight led him to believe the steam engines used to power mills in the area would become outdated and replaced by electricity.

One of the ways those in the milling industry shared ideas related to emerging processes and technologies was at events such as the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia. On Aug. 20, 1929, Sauer and his wife rode to the fair with one of their sons, Carl.

"August was at the fair on business to promote the mill and bring back information on converting the mill to electric power while Carl was there to enjoy the fair," David Sauer said. "Toward the end of the day, August and his wife were ready to come home, but Carl was going to stay there for a while."

"Andrew Kirchner, who made deliveries for August, was getting ready to return to Lohman with a group of people on his truck. August and his wife were able to catch a ride back with him," he continued.

Kirchner's vehicle was outfitted with bench seats attached to each side of the truck bed, allowing passengers to lean back against the stock racks. Sometime around 6 p.m., the group departed Sedalia bound for Lohman.

"Three men were killed, a fourth may die, and three others are seriously injured as a result of a collision between two trucks, 2½ miles east of Tipton," the Sedalia Weekly Democrat reported on Aug. 23, 1929. The accident occurred around 7:30 p.m., when the stock racks of a westbound truck carrying a load of peaches struck the stock racks of the eastbound truck of Kirchner's, ejecting all of the passengers.

"I was told that it was a huge mess with crates of peaches strewn all over the road along with the passengers of Kirchner's truck," David Sauer said. "Apparently, the mess also included a bunch of August's paperwork covered in blood."

August was killed immediately in the collision along with Andrew Weber and Robert Hoffman, of Lohman. All three were buried in the cemetery of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman. The shares of ownership in Russellville Roller Mills were transferred to Adam and Mike Doehla following Sauer's death.

The mill closed in 1933, the result of a drought and the onslaught of the economic distresses of the Great Depression.

"The wife of August Sauer, my great-grandmother, survived the accident," David Sauer said. "It was an extremely trying time for the Sauer family, both financially and emotionally. "They lost him, his investment in the mill while at the same time the country was falling apart. All the hardships on the farm didn't seem to stop, either.

"We, as a family, are proud of August's accomplishments and through the efforts of his children, the family persevered and many of his descendants remain in the Russellville and Lohman areas," he said.



Jeremy P. Ämick is writing a series of articles highlighting the history of the Russellville area in honor of Missouri's bicentennial.

REMEMBRANCE LEGACY: HELEN A. (FISCHER) LAUGHLIN

Eulogy to a farm girl

Taken from excerpts of Stephanie Mueller's eulogy and Pastor David Viles sermon, August 7, 2022



Helen was born to John Henry and Caroline Hulda (Goldammer) Fischer on March 28, 1931, in Lohman, Missouri at the Fischer farm which was in the family since the mid 1800's. From the time Helen could first walk, she spent time strolling through the orchards on the family farm. Helen enjoyed the smell of freshly cut hay and spending the cool mornings in the garden with her mother and sisters.

This relationship with God's creation was essential as to what defined Helen throughout her life. Her faith began at St. Paul's Lutheran Church when she was baptized on May 1, 1931. Her faith development was a life-long process beginning with the memorization of scripture, a year-long process of confirmation, and being an active member of Lutheran parish education. Helen was confirmed on April 14, 1946.

Helen was valedictorian of the 1950 class of Russellville High School. Before marriage she enjoyed traveling with friends around the USA. As a young woman in Lohman, MO, Helen ran with the notorious 'Lohman Three Gang', (companions: Gertrude Strobel and Erna Raithel). She loved her fashions and clothes; the city life; and getting out. One of the most famous stories comes from Helen's nephew, Eugene Strobel: *Helen and Gert decided to take a road trip to the country of Mexico. When they arrived at the border of Mexico late in the evening, the crossing guard warned them to turn around and get to a hotel in the United States instead of crossing into Mexico while it was dark. It was 20 miles back to the closest US hotel and only 2 miles to the Mexican hotel where they had planned to spend the night. The 2 beautiful ladies shrugged off the border guard and continued to their destination in Mexico. Though more than a little intimidating and a little more scarier, they were fine. Their faith and trust in our Lord and Savior was a great help in keeping them safe.*

Helen had many careers over her lifetime. During this time she contributed to the establishment of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Jefferson City. She was employed by the Cole County Library, Mitzie's Hat Shop, the Missouri Division of Employment Security, and GMAC.

But if you asked what her career was though, this high school valedictorian would say that it was of service to her family and others. It was in this job that Helen excelled, and her love impacted so many people.

Her first job as a daughter was helping her mother and sisters on the farm. Helen loved to play with her ducks; get eggs from the coup; help her mother prepare food for the threshers; help her father feed the animals; and wait patiently for the door to the Christmas tree to open, a tree alit with real candles. Helen would say it was so magical on the farm. She was a farm girl and she wasn't afraid to tell you that. Sharing memories about her farm life with family and friends was a source of joy for her throughout her life.

Helen learned about a man named Reverend Walter George Laughlin through their work in the ALC Parish Education Committee and went on a bowling blind date as a result. They united in marriage on April 11, 1964, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman, MO. Helen wore a wedding dress she made herself. This was the beginning of a family of her own, full of picnics, camping, evening walks, and other pleasant memories. Their love and commitment was an inspiration for many.

Helen was so creative and innovative. She would get up at the crack of dawn to work in her huge farm garden while her daughters would play with their dolls in the cardboard doll houses Helen created for them to help their imaginations run wild.

When came time for harvest Helen was ready to go, whether from her garden or neighbors who had fruit growing abundantly from their trees or farmers who allowed her to wander their fields looking for leftover 'popcorn'.

The bliss of picking the first of the year's harvest was a source of renewed energy to Helen. Her garden taught others that it was more than a source of food. It provided the healing and therapy, so essential to a person throughout their life.

Helen responded to God's grace by working besides her husband in service to the church and later inviting her children into that way of life. She was a partner in ministry with Walter at parishes in Cushing and Oklahoma City, OK; Dannebrog, Hampton, and Byron, NE; and Concordia, KS. She participated in the life of the church at St. Paul's in Lohman, MO; Trinity in Topeka, KS; and Joy Lutheran in Tulsa, OK, in addition to the above parishes Helen was involved in quilting, bible study, WELCA, Sunday school, volunteering, and choir.

Walter and Helen launched a community garden at Trinity. Helen was a skilled and creative gardener and seamstress. She shared her knowledge and fruits of her labor and tenacious work ethic with her children, grandchildren, and others.

As a pastor's wife, she could be found working closely with Lutheran World Relief; having Vietnamese refugees over for Thanksgiving dinner; fixing food or visiting those in crisis; or simply listening attentively to someone hurting and in need of comfort. Helen was the quiet presence behind the scenes for her husband, supporting countless families and individuals who were grieving.

Helen loved others as Jesus Christ had loved and accepted her.

REMEMBRANCE LEGACY: LORENZ STROBEL

Lohman area farmer served with Army engineers in WWII

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.



Courtesy of Ellen Strobel

Lorenz Strobel grew up on a farm in the Lohman, Mo., area and was one of three brothers drafted into the Army. During World War II, Strobel served overseas as a construction foreman with an engineer company. In the years after the war, he farmed in partnership with his brother, Hugo.

Food production became a critical component to the United States' success during World War II. Yet there were many farm families that not only struggled to produce the staples necessary on the home front and in overseas combat zones, but frequently did so without the assistance of children who had been drafted to serve in the Armed Forces.

Lorenz Strobel fell into such circumstances during his youth.

Born in 1924 and growing up on his family's farm northwest of Lohman, he was the fourth-oldest in a family of three boys and three girls. In addition to the hard days engaged in farm work, he attended the nearby St. Paul's Lutheran Church with his family, becoming a confirmed member in 1939.

"He attended the old Lohman School, which is now being used as the Community Center," said his wife, Ellen Strobel. "Since it didn't have high-school classes, he and several others from the area traveled to the high school in Jefferson City."

She continued, "But after two years, he quit school so that he could stay home to help his parents on the farm."

While involved in his agricultural work, Strobel, like many others, was reading the newspapers and listening to conversations in the community regarding the U.S. entering World War II following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Soon, his older brother, Oscar, left home after he was drafted into the U.S. Army in December 1942.

"Lorenz and I had met in the community, mostly through church, and then began dating," Ellen Strobel said. "But then he received his draft notice and left for the Army in February 1945."

This left only one brother, 7-year-old Hugo, along with three sisters, to help their parents keep the farm afloat. Fortunately, in December 1945, his older brother Oscar was released from the Army after serving in the Marshall Islands with a signal company, and returned to the Lohman area.

Following his induction at Jefferson Barracks, Lorenz Strobel was sent to Fort Hood, Texas, for several weeks of basic combat training. This was followed by six weeks of engineer school during which he was instructed on the operation of different tractors and bulldozers.

Assigned to Company A, 47th Engineers Construction Battalion, Strobel was first deployed to the Philippines, departing the U.S. aboard a troop ship on Sept. 9, 1945, seven days after the surrender of Japan.

"There wasn't a lot that he said about his service, but he did talk about building roads in the Philippines," his wife recalled. "He mentioned about being in a hurricane while he was there and having to seek cover in some buildings that ended up being damaged."

Discharge records indicate Strobel served as a construction foreman with the engineer company and later transferred to Okinawa. It was here that the 47th Engineers were engaged in a number of projects to include the construction of Quonset huts that were used as housing.

In October 1946, he left Okinawa and sailed back to the United States. He was eventually sent to Fort Sheridan, Illinois, where he received his discharge as a staff sergeant on Dec. 9, 1946.

"Whenever he came home from the service, he worked a couple of years with his brother-in-law building houses," Ellen Strobel said. "And in 1948, we were married at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman."

The couple went on to raise two sons and a daughter, but sadly lost one child at only 5 years of age.

Strobel quickly returned to his pre-service focus by assisting his father on their farm. When his father died in 1951, Strobel took over the farm and later operated it in partnership with his brother, Hugo, who was the youngest son of the family. Hugo was drafted into the Army in 1958 and served two years in Germany with an ordnance company.

Lorenz Strobel's military service became but a footnote in his greater legacy as he continued to embrace public service that included 50 years on the board of Farmer's Bank of Lohman, many of which were spent as board president. Additionally, he was a member of the board of his local MFA.

He volunteered as a leader of the 4-H board, the Cole County Extension Council and actively participated in a number of offices within St. Paul's Lutheran Church, such as several decades as the Sunday

school superintendent. For many years, he and his wife placed flags on the graves of veterans buried in their church cemetery.

"One thing that he really enjoyed was being able to go fishing," said his wife, Ellen, in mirthful reflection. "He would come home from church on Sunday and want to have lunch as quickly as possible so that he could get back outdoors."

She continued, "He also enjoyed cooking molasses with several of the Heidbreder brothers."

On March 11, 2014, the 89-year-old veteran died. He was laid to rest with full military honors in the cemetery of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

He was a longtime member of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Ellen Strobel noted that prior to his passing, her husband truly enjoyed his visit to the nation's military memorials as part of the Central Missouri Honor Flight.

She said, "He didn't say much about his service, but was very patriotic and enjoyed being around other veterans. I know that he thought a lot of his country and would always take things as they came while letting God take care of the rest."



Lorenz Strobel completed his basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, and was later assigned to Company A, 47th Engineers.
(Courtesy of Ellen Strobel)

REMEMBERANCE LEGACY: CLARENCE HUBBARD

The Man That He Was – Local farmer served with National Guard unit federalized in WWI

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.

Distinction is a term that, when used to describe the men and women who served in the First World War, applies to a small list of individuals and includes such leaders as General John J. Pershing, who went on to serve as commander of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

Under Pershing's command were millions of anonymous soldiers from throughout the United States who did not collect accolades for their battlefield performance, but did their duty and returned home to preserve their experiences by sharing stories of their service with their families.

Born in Kansas City, Kansas, on May 9, 1896, Clarence Hubbard became one such veteran who chose to pass down his WWI experiences. He left his Kansas home at a young age to work for a farm family in the Brazito area but was thrust into combat shortly after the United States declared war against Germany on April 6 1917.

"He made the decision to go ahead and enlist in the Army; he wasn't drafted," said Steve Jannings, the veteran's nephew.

According to Hubbard's WWI service card, he enlisted in Company L, 2nd Missouri Infantry Regiment of the Missouri National Guard in Jefferson City on May 15, 1917. Less than three months later, the 2nd Missouri was federalized and the various companies of the regiment assembled at Camp Clark in Nevada, Missouri.

Hubbard and the soldiers of the regiment soon learned their "federalization" would change their National Guard company's designation to Company C, 130th Machine Gun Battalion under the 35th Infantry Division. The battalion then traveled to Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma, spending nearly six months in training before departing for France in May 1918.

"(Hubbard) never really talked much about the battles and things that they went through overseas," said Jannings, "but he did share with me many of events he found interesting and humorous."

The book "History of the Missouri National Guard" notes that the 130th Machine Gun Battalion arrived in England on May 15, 1918 and was sent to Le Havre, France days later. They were eventually sent to a French village where, the book notes, "they received a full complement of French Hotchkiss machine guns ... and training with them (was) instituted."

Jannings remarked, "A lot of the stuff they did back then was done with mules. He talked about it taking two men to set up the machine guns, and ammunition for them was then brought in by mules." He added, "One man carried a tripod and the other carried the machine gun and each one weighed 85 pounds, he told me."

The 130th participated in some of the most gruesome engagements of the war, the most notable of which was the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in late September 1918. This battle took the lives of more than 26,000 American soldiers within six weeks' time including fellow Company C member, Roscoe Enloe, for whom the American Legion Post in Jefferson City is named.

As a machine gunner, Hubbard often had a front row seat to many of the bloody onslaughts and spent a fair amount of time living in the squalor of trenches; however, Jannings explained, it was the humorous situations he truly found joy in sharing.



Clarence Hubbard enlisted with a Missouri National Guard company shortly after the U.S. entered WWI. The company was later federalized and Hubbard served as a machine-gunner in France. Courtesy of Audrey Scheperle

“The French made cognac and they hauled it in big containers on flat rail cars,” Jannings said, recalling past conversations he had with Hubbard. “One day, they got wind a train was going to come through hauling cognac so the boys got together, sized up the situation, and when the train arrived, they poked a hole in a barrel and filled their canteens or anything else they could find to hold liquid.”

With a chuckle, Jannings added, “Then they had one heck of a big party.”

When the war ended with the armistice on November 11, 1918, the 130th Machine Gun Battalion incurred the battle loss of 26 enlisted soldiers, 11 officers and 176 men wounded. The battalion remained in France for several months and returned to the United States in April 1919. Hubbard received his honorable discharge on May 7, 1919.

The month following his discharge, Hubbard married Cecelia Ritter of Lohman and the couple began working the farm that for years had been in his wife’s family. However, Jannings said, a few years later Hubbard chose to increase his income through a questionable opportunity.

“During Prohibition, he purchased a 1929 Chevrolet and would pick up moonshine made by a guy in Lohman and another guy in Russellville and deliver it to a speak-easy in Jefferson City. He was never caught, but the guys making the moonshine were and spent some time in the penitentiary.”

In the years after the war, Hubbard gained a level of local attention for an immense collection of arrowheads and Native American artifacts found on his farm, which he chose to display in the front room of his house. For years, Jannings explained, people would come from all around to view his collection.

Hubbard passed away on January 21, 1971 and was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Lohman. His service in the war may have appeared trifling within an army of more than four million men, but Jannings is content knowing his uncle’s story has been preserved through retellings.

“I’m not sure that we have a lot of men like that anymore—he was tough and of rough character but he was also very kind, a hard worker and a good farmer. Many people don’t realize the atrocities that happened in the war but he talked about the Argonne forest and said that the firepower was so intense that after they left, there wasn’t even a bush left standing.”

He added, “None of the WWI guys are with us anymore and their stories are gone. When (Hubbard) spoke about some of the things he remembered from over there, it helped me to know the man that he was and what all he experienced.”

REMEMBRANCE LEGACY: ROGER BUCHTA

Veteran Worked at Military Hospital in Vietnam During Famed Tet Offensive Out of action” – Medic details hospital move from Lai Khe to Quang Tri in Vietnam War

Jeremy P. Amick writes on behalf of the Silver Star Families of America.

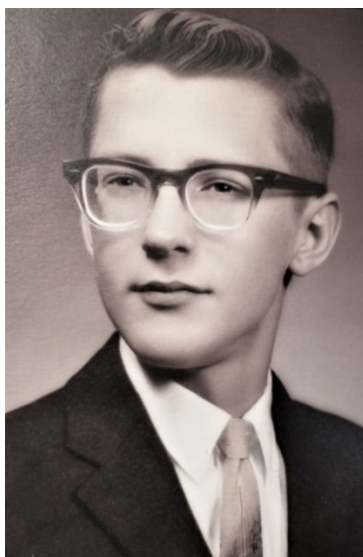
In the fall of 1944, with a number of battles unfolding throughout Europe and the Pacific, Roger Dean Buchta quietly entered the world at a time when the turmoil of World War II consumed newspaper headlines in virtually every corner of the globe.

Born on his family’s farm near the rural community of Lohman, Missouri, the newborn’s inauspicious arrival was facilitated by a thirty-year-old Dr. Elbert Meredith Eberhart, a country physician originally from Pennsylvania who went on to practice medicine for decades from his office in the nearby town of Russellville.

Buchta’s early years were similar to many who grew up on farms during this era since he and his older brother, Don, would help their father, William, with tasks around the property. As they grew older, they also assisted their mother, the former Alma Koestner, with planting and cultivating a large garden.

“There was about twenty-seven of us in our class and we started school at the first grade—there was no kindergarten back then,” said Lohman resident Marvin Heidbreder, who began elementary school with Buchta in nearby Russellville in 1950.

Spending all twelve years of their schooling together, and in the same grade, Heidbreder recalls a few basic details of the personality of his former neighbor. “Roger was also a very quiet one, kind of stayed to himself most of the time and was on the high side of average in his classes. He always enjoyed the outdoors but never was an athletic one that was involved in sports or anything like that,” he added.



*Roger Buchta is pictured in his graduating photograph from Russellville High School (Russellville, Missouri) in 1962. He went on to earn his degree from Lincoln University in 1966 and was drafted into the U.S. Army months later.
Courtesy of Don Buchta*

Buchta's brother, Don, explained that whenever Roger was not involved in chores around the house or engaged in various activities outdoors, he could be found inside the house reading and writing, often enjoying books and articles related to both world history and German history.

He was very studious and became a great student during his elementary and high school years. To be honest with you, nothing much about him really stands out from his early years because he never was involved in a lot of exciting things during that time in his life." Don further noted, "Even though he was often known to be very quiet and reserved in public, he was really quite talkative at home and around his close friends."

Shortly after graduating from Russellville High School in May 1962, Buchta made the decision to enroll in classes at Lincoln University to pursue his interest in becoming a teacher. While there, he studied the German language, having grown up hearing his mother and others in the Lohman community converse in the dialect of their ancestors.

His classes and part-time work were supplemented by an introductory level of military training through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), which at the time was a compulsory program for men during the first two years they attended a state college or university.

Upon his graduation in the spring of 1966, Buchta was presented his bachelor's degree in social science with a minor in German in addition to having earned his certification to teach at the elementary and secondary level. This career, he discovered, would have to wait since he was compelled into a different type of public service.

The year 1966 was a busy time for the Selective Service System since a grand total of 382,010 young men were drafted into the military in support of the growing U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, including the recently graduated Buchta.

Several weeks after graduating from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, in late spring 1966, Buchta was drafted into the U.S. Army and sent to Texas for both his basic combat training and to become a combat medic.

"Everybody was going (to war) back then; there were so many being drafted," said Roger during a 2014 interview, describing his reaction upon the receipt of his draft letter. "It was something that I just expected to happen."

The quiet, reclusive recruit traveled to Ft. Hood, Texas, in the latter weeks of 1966, undergoing basic training and learning the intricacies of serving as a soldier. During the latter days of his initial training cycle, the U.S. Army made a decision regarding the occupational specialty that would best suit the young private—a combat medic.

"The only medical training I ever received was delivering calves, kittens and puppies once in a while on the farm when I was growing up," Roger once jokingly remarked when discussing his past military service.

He transferred to Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, spending the next several weeks in advanced training. There he received classes on basic anatomy, physiology, the treatment of shock and administering an IV in addition to carrying the injured, applying tourniquets and morphine.

In the spring of 1967, after completing his training as a medical specialist, he was assigned to an ambulance platoon with Company A, 47th Medical Battalion under the 1st Armored Division back at Fort

Hood. The letters written home by the 22-year-old soldier described the integration into his new unit and exercises preparing them for Vietnam.

On August 19, 1967, he wrote, “I suppose I better begin by relating some rather unexpected news. I am going to Vietnam. A levy came down this week and took five of us who had basic and AIT (Advanced Individual Training) together...”

A week later, his letter home revealed the realistic training he was receiving, which would help prepare him for the next step of his military journey. “This last week I worked at a surgical clinic at the hospital. It was very interesting work,” he wrote. “All I had to do was assist the doctors when they performed minor surgery. I had to prepare the patients, assist the doctors and then clean up.” He sagely concluded, “I really learned a great deal [during] the four weeks that I’ve been at the hospital. The acquired knowledge should come in handy in Nam.”



*Roger Buchta completed his basic training at Ft. Hood, Texas, followed by training as a combat medic at Ft. Sam Houston. In late summer 1967, he received notice he would deploy to Vietnam.
Courtesy of Don Buchta*

Although the military delayed his aspirations of becoming a teacher, the young soldier never complained about the circumstances that befell him even when preparing to deploy to Vietnam.

Arriving at a military base located near Qui Nhon—a coastal city in central Vietnam—during the second week of October 1967, Buchta wrote home to his family in Lohman, Missouri, the following month describing his assignment to a U.S. Army ambulance company that supported a military hospital.

“Our duties consist mostly of transporting patients and supplies.... We are also on ambulance commitments at the pier and at the air field in case of a crash. So, between calls, if there are any, we sleep,” penned Buchta on November 1, 1967.

Nine days later he wrote, “Qui Nhon is mostly a supply area. Through its port come the supplies that are used by units in the northern part of Vietnam. There is also a large airport here. About twenty miles south of Qui Nhon they are building an airstrip that can and will be used for commercial airlines on which the military heavily depends for transporting troops from the states.”

The 542nd Medical Company, to which the medic was attached, transferred to Cu Chi, Vietnam, in early December 1967.

The holidays came and went, during which Buchta assisted with the emergency delivery of Vietnamese twins on Christmas Eve, whom he had the honor of naming Mary and Margaret. Christmas miracles notwithstanding, one of the most interesting events came the following month after his unit moved to Lai Khe, a military base located on a rubber plantation near Saigon.



*In the weeks following his arrival in Vietnam in October 1967, Roger Buchta's medical company transferred to Cu Chi, an area that became well known for complex network of underground tunnels built by the North Vietnamese Army.
Courtesy of Don Buchta*

It was here that he witnessed one of the most intense moments of the war—the Tet Offensive. Shortly after his arrival at Lai Khe and his subsequent attachment to the 18th Surgical Hospital, Buchta informed his family in a letter dated January 13, 1968, that an element of danger had developed.

“The first part of the week there was quite a bit of activity in the area,” he wrote. “One night about 3:00 a.m. the VC (Viet Cong) lobbed a few mortars on one side of the camp. Then they tried a ground attack. It was a futile effort. There was no one hurt during the mortar barrage and very few during the ground attack.”

Several days later, he wrote of his work duties, “In a surgical hospital, you deal with casualties directly from the field aid stations who require emergency surgery. After recovering from the operation, the casualties are evacuated to larger hospitals. Some of the more serious are sent to Japan and back to the states.”

Enemy activity and casualty levels dissipated for a few days, a moment that could be considered the calm before the storm. When the opening stages of the Tet Offensive began to evolve on January 30 and 31, 1968, enemy forces nearly overwhelmed several U.S. bases, creating great cause for concern even for those in a non-infantry capacity.

Reports indicate that when the Tet Offensive ended, the base camp at Lai Khe endured more than 980 rocket and mortar rounds. Fortunately for medics, the camp had been well protected by the gallant soldiers of the First Infantry Division. As the words written by Buchta to his family a couple of days later reveal, he realized the significance of the event he had recently survived and his bewilderment with the resolve of the enemy.

“As you undoubtedly heard in the news, the VC and NVA (North Vietnamese Army) have been kicking up their heels a bit. They have a strange way of celebrating their new year. I can’t understand sometimes how these people can absorb the tremendous losses that they suffer and still continue fighting.”

In letters home, Buchta sought to avoid alarming his mother with regard to his own exposure to rocket and mortar attacks; instead, he shared vague details of the overall circumstances of the offensive and quickly transitioned to lighter subjects, such as the letter he had written to his local radio station back in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The Sunday News Tribune reported on January 21, 1968, one of the local radio stations had received a letter from Buchta stating, “In Lai Khe where I am presently stationed, the Armed Forces Radio Station is known as KLIK... It was a surprise when I first listened to this station and heard station identification.”

His letter continued, “For a moment I thought I was back home. But the sound of helicopters overhead and the almost constant roar of artillery told me this was not so. Nevertheless, it is still good to hear station KLIK, even though it is not in Jefferson City, but more than 10,000 miles away.” (KLIK is a news and talk radio station that continues to serve the central Missouri area. The KLIK station that Buchta mentioned listening to in Vietnam was part of the Armed Forces Radio Network Vietnam (AFVN), which was also referred to as “Radio Lai Khe.”)

On February 5, 1968, Buchta wrote his family in Lohman, “There were rumors that the enemy was planning a ground attack on Lai Khe. As a result, the 18th Surgical and the 542nd have been on alert to retreat to the center of the camp in the event of a ground attack.” He added, “But nothing has developed.”

Enemy activity slowly subsided in the area and the hospital began to treat more civilians and South Vietnamese troops than U.S. casualties. By the end of February 1968, the hospital received word they would once again be moving and, in the first week of March, they were packing up and headed to their new duty location.

By March 11, 1968, Buchta and his fellow soldiers were at a military base a few miles south of the city of Quang Tri and making all the necessary preparations to get the hospital up and running to receive the influx of casualties from the field.

The northernmost province of South Vietnam near the demilitarized zone, Quang Tri was located along the Thach Han River and, during the Vietnam War, became “one of the most contested areas in South Vietnam where Hanoi troops constantly tried to infiltrate across the borders from Laos and North Vietnam,” noted the Vietnam War Travel website.

Writing home on March 14, 1968, Buchta explained that “the hospital is up and is supposed to begin receiving patients Friday, March 15th. The hospital won’t be fully operational for about two more weeks. There is the problem of getting supplies. Many of the supplies are still at the airstrip, which is about a mile from our campsite. So, it will be awhile before the hospital begins to function smoothly.”

Skirmishing in the Quang Tri Province would continue for the next several weeks. However, as Buchta explained, many of the casualties brought into the hospital for treatment were not always the result of enemy contact.

“The other evening, for instance, a helicopter came in with seven wounded GIs and ARVNs (soldiers of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam),” wrote Buchta on March 31, 1968. “It seems that the men were warming themselves around a fire when a hand grenade was accidentally shoved into the fire.”

He bluntly added, “It’s really surprising sometimes to hear how many soldiers suffer non-combat injuries that just put them out of action.”



*Buchta remarked in several of his letters that helicopters, most notably the UH-1 Iroquois, referred to as the “Huey,” were used to transport wounded service members from the field to their hospital for treatment.
Courtesy of Don Buchta*