



## *Jakob Bauder's Homestead Sale to Johann Jacober*

On December 16th, 1905 Jacob relinquished his homestead claim to land in Sec. 27 T. 6 S., R. 44 W. on the Landsman Creek. Prior to this relinquishment, Jakob had made a deal with his good friend Johann Jacober to purchase his homestead improvements for \$200. This allowed Johann to then immediately make an application for Jakob's homestead claim. Johann Jacober was born in the German colony of Gluckstal, which was about 20 mi. West of Hoffnungstal. There was a Bauder who had moved to Gluckstal, so Jacob and Johann may have known each other when they lived in South Russia. The following story gives us some insight into what Jakob Bauder and his family (wife Pauline and son Rudolph and daughter Bertha) would have experienced if they had stayed on this land.

Following is an interview conducted in the mid 1930s by Civil Works Administration employees who gathered reminiscences from citizens who had lived in the county since the early days. All interviews are on file at the Colorado Historical Society's library, 1300 Broadway St., Denver, CO, (303) 866-2305.

“I, Johann Jacober, was born in South Russia on March 12, 1860, and came direct from Russia to this new country, arriving in Burlington, Colorado on April 20, 1892. It took us just one month from the time we left our home in Russia until we reached Burlington. We left home with two thousand rubles, and when we got to Burlington we had One Dollar.

Our first meal in Colorado was given to us by Frank Mann, one of the early settlers who at that time had a small butcher shop and two sets of harness. Then a man who was to be our neighbor came into town driving a team of oxen, and we got into his wagon and he took us to where we filed on our homestead. We built a sod house and plastered it with native lime, and every Saturday my wife would get fresh lime and whitewash the walls so the house would always look fresh and clean. And she made a floor, not with boards, we were too poor to buy lumber, but she took clay and mixed it with straw to hold it together, and then plastered the floor with that, and when it was dry it was very hard and could hardly be broken with a hatchet. Then she would put a layer of clay over the top of that, and let it dry and in this way we had a nice clean warm floor.

We got water from a creek about one-quarter of a mile away, carrying it to the house in buckets. We found springs in this creek, so were fortunate to get good water.

I at once tried to find work, as we had no money to buy anything, either to eat or to fix up our home. So I went to work for T. G. Price as a cattle herder. He furnished me a saddle pony, and paid me twenty-five cents a day and I boarded myself. On Saturday nights I would have to walk home the fifteen miles from Burlington, and then walk back on Monday morning to resume my work. I worked for him some months, then I left and tried to find work of any kind that I could do, and managed to get a little work among the neighbors. Then I went to work for Edw. McCrillis of the McCrillis Ranch outfit, and he paid me in flour and a little calico, which was used to make clothes for my children.

Money was so scarce and wages so small that oftentimes we were unable to get what my wife and children needed. We would buy three sacks of flour and some corn meal and that would have to do us for the entire winter. And I know that for months my wife and children have lived on corn meal mush made without salt and eaten without milk. We had no eggs, butter, meat, or lard. We shall never forget the year 1894, for that was the worst year we ever experienced. There had not been a drop of moisture in the country for almost eighteen months, and in summer the prairie got green in little low spots here and there. There was no feed for the stock, and no crops. I was working at the MCrillis ranch that year and got my flour otherwise I do not know how we could have gotten along at all, for it was pretty bad as it was. We never tasted coffee, and my wife made tea from the Indian tea herb growing on the prairies. We could get coffee two pounds for twenty-five cents, but we never had the twenty-five cents. It was a year before I could tell the difference between a nickel and a quarter: I never saw enough money to learn the difference.

By the very severest stinting and saving, I managed to buy a team of very light ponies with which I tried to do a little farming. The year 1895 was a pretty good crop year, and I raised a little corn, but not nearly enough to do for very long. We got a few chickens and my wife saved the eggs and took them to town and sold them for five cents per dozen. Later, we got a cow, and my wife made butter and tried to take it home and grease the wagon with it, as there was no sale for butter. So we used it at home.

For a long time we had no meat, and my wife and children used to chase the young rabbits into their burrows, then she would take a barbed wire and put it into the hole and in some way work it around the rabbit, then pull him out, kill and dress it, and have rabbit meat for a meal. But a rabbit did not go far among a bunch of hungry children.

In 1896 we left the homestead and went to Denver, and I got work in the Globe Smelter Company plant, and worked there for two years. Then we went to Brighton and bought a truck garden, and raised garden truck for the Kuner Pickle Company. Many a time my wife has loaded the wagon with garden produce, and driven into Denver, leaving home about twelve o'clock at night, and getting to Denver for the early morning markets.

We never liked the water in Brighton, and we decided to move back to eastern Colorado, so we returned to Burlington and took up a homestead in 1906 (the Jakob Bauder place). We proved up on this piece of land, and then sold it. Then we bought our home in the town of Burlington and have lived here for some years. Our grandson, David, lives with us. He is in High school now.

People talk about depression, hard times, no money. I often wonder if they know just what that means. If people were more contented with a little and would be willing to work for what they can get, so many would not need relief. In the early days we were glad to get any kind of work at the pay that was offered us, and would do the very best we could with what we earned, and none of it was wasted.

I remember that in the fall of 1894 we needed some chicken feed, and I came to town with two other farmers who were in need of feed too. So between us we managed to scrape up enough coin to get a quarter's worth of chicken feed and took it home and divided it. My wife then mixed our portion with a little flour and gravel, and fed that to the chickens. One day when she got real

meat hungry she thought she would kill a couple of these chickens, and when she dressed them she found they were too poor to even cook.

The one hog we had was not gaining any; in fact, it was getting poorer, for what it got it took from the prairies. We had not had meat for so long that my wife asked me to kill the hog. I was busy and could not do the job that day, and when I returned home I found my wife had the hog killed and dressed and was frying meat for our next meal. And maybe you think it didn't taste good to us.

My wife washed for one year without soap of any kind; we were too poor to buy it. She cut up all the dresses she had brought from the old Country and made clothes for the children, and when she washed, the children had to stay in bed until the clothes were dried on the prairies. And while the clothes were drying on the grass, my wife had to watch the hog so it would not eat the clothes, it got so hungry. I am wondering if the girls of today could do the things and endure the hardships their pioneer mothers endured.