

*The
Kerr County Historical Commission
presents*

An ORAL HISTORY

of

Walter Poppe

Kerrville, Texas 2018

Kerr County Historical Commission

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Walter Eric Poppe
Interviewers: Francelle Robison Collins
Bonnie Pipes Flory
Date: November 6, 2018
Place: Kerr County Courthouse
Kerrville, Texas

*The Oral History Project is a project of
The Kerr County Historical Commission,
a volunteer organization. Oral History
Committee chair is Francelle Robison Collins.*

Transcribed and Edited by Rita Edington Odom

Kerr County Historical Commission

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Name: Walter Poppe

Date of Birth: May 10, 1941

Place of Birth: Gollnow, Germany

Education: Tivy High School
U.S. Navy
Schreiner College (2 Years)

Father: Eric Willie Poppe

Mother: Hildegard Ross Ross Poppe

Spouse: Wynona Janice Dommert Poppe

Children: Shawn Poppe (Deceased)
Jason Poppe
Irene Poppe White

SUMMARY

Walter Poppe was born on May 10, 1941 in Gollnow, Germany. He and his parents and brother, Hans, immigrated to the United States in 1952. They arrived at Ellis Island and traveled by train to San Antonio. They were sponsored by the Riesel family who lived in Kerrville, Texas. Walter's father was a metal worker and assisted Mr. Riesel in some of his extraordinary metal work in Kerr County. He and his brother attended Tivy Elementary and he was comfortable with the English language in about 6 months. Walter graduated from Tivy High School and enlisted in the Navy. He was stationed in California and, after marrying, moved back to Kerrville. He served on the police force and then worked in construction. He had a son who is deceased and

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has one other son and a daughter. His experience in the United States has been a positive one and he continues to live in Kerrville, Texas.

An Oral History of Walter Poppe

My name is Francelle Robison Collins and I am with the Kerr County Historical Commission, Oral History Project. Today is November 6, 2018, and I am here at the Kerr County Courthouse in Kerrville, Texas, with Bonnie Pipes Floury. We are talking with Raymond Hardee, who understands that we are making audio and video recordings of this interview and that a typewritten transcript of this interview will be provided so that changes can be made. The audio and video tapes, however, cannot be edited. This information along with copies of any family pictures and documents provided by you will then be turned over to the Kerr Regional History Center, Schreiner University, and the University of North Texas' Portals to Texas History, where they will be available to the public unless specific restrictions are placed on them by you. These restrictions will be noted in the Release form after you have had a chance to review your manuscript. Are you clear on what we are doing today?

WALTER: Yes ma'am.

FRANCELLE: What is your given name?

WALTER: Walter Erich Poppe

FRANCELLE: When and where were you born?

WALTER: I was born May 10, 1941 in Golnow, Germany, which is now part of Poland. (After WWII, the borders changed).

FRANCELLE: Were you born at home or in a hospital?

WALTER: I was born at home.

FRANCELLE: Do you have any siblings?

WALTER: I had a brother, 4 years older, Hans, who passed away last August. I'm the only Poppe left in Kerrville.

FRANCELLE: What was your father's name?

WALTER: Erich Willie Poppe.

FRANCELLE: Was he born in Germany?

WALTER: Yes, he was.

FRANCELLE: What was your mother's name?

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WALTER: Hildegard Ida Ross Poppe

FRANCELLE: What did your father do, as an occupation?

WALTER: He worked with metal. He worked in a metal shop, wrought iron work and stuff like that.

FRANCELLE: How was he trained for that?

WALTER: As a youngster, attended an apprentice school.

FRANCELLE: Did you know your grandparents?

WALTER: Knew my grandmothers on both sides. I didn't know my grandfathers as They had passed away before I was born.

FRANCELLE: We know that you immigrated to the United States and that you came to Kerrville. What year was that?

WALTER: Nineteen fifty-two.

FRANCELLE: What brought you here?

WALTER: Mom decided that we needed to be in a different place when Dad returned from prison camp after the war. In nineteen forty-eight Mom started the process to immigrate. Dad still wasn't home yet and she wasn't sure what was going to happen. Finally, at the end of nineteen forty-eight she got news from the Red Cross that Dad was alive, and he was going to come home. He was in Stalingrad in Russia and he finally came home. Scared me to death. He was emaciated and had a beard infection.

FRANCELLE: How long was he gone.

WALTER: He left in nineteen forty-one. He was in the Army in nineteen thirty-nine but he was gone all during the war. He spent 2½ years in Stalingrad as a prisoner. When Dad left, we were living in Golnow. But, when I was around 2, Mama dug a hole in our barn floor and buried their valuables. Then, she packed backpacks for Hans and herself and we started walking towards Berlin. She had to carry me alot and we hitched rides on wagons, etc. It was about 200 miles, mostly walking. The trip took us almost two weeks, dodging bombs, enemy aircraft, etc. When we arrived at my aunt's, my mama unpacked Hans' backpack. In it, she had put a one burner electric stove top to make sure we ate. However, there was no electricity in Berlin! We lived in Berlin with my mother's sister and family until about 1948, when we all moved to Stadthagen, Germany. My dad came home not too long after that.

FRANCELLE: Your sponsors, I think, were the Riesels.

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WALTER: Yes.

FRANCELLE: How did they find out about you?

WALTER: Through the Lutheran Church. I guess the names of people that wanted to immigrate were sent over to Lutheran churches across the country and Mr. and Mrs. Riesel picked our name.

FRANCELLE: And your dad was an artisan that he needed?

WALTER: I think he knew that Dad was a metal worker. That was good.

FRANCELLE: He was wonderful at it.

WALTER: Mr. Riesel? Oh yes.

FRANCELLE: He did so much around town. Inn of the Hills and some of the camps.

WALTER: Camp Crystal and Mo Ranch have his work. Between he and my dad I don't know who was the most perfect at doing that work. It was just amazing, those 2 guys working together.

FRANCELLE: There's a lot of his work at the Lutheran Church too.

WALTER: Pretty much all over Kerr County.

FRANCELLE: What age were you when you came over?

WALTER: I thought I was eleven, Hans said I was twelve. We always hashed that out and I still think I was eleven.

FRANCELLE: Did you fly over or come on a ship?

WALTER: We came on an old Navy transporter; USS General Muir, and we picked the worst time of the year to come over, too. It was rock and roll all the way over.

FRANCELLE: Was that winter?

WALTER: No. It was the early part of spring, but it was still cold. The weather was terrible. They closed down two decks above the main deck because the waves were coming over. There were so many sick people.

FRANCELLE: There were other immigrants with you?

WALTER: Oh, yes. The whole ship was full of immigrants.

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FRANCELLE: How long did it take?

WALTER: Probably close to a week. There was another family that came over that we became very good friends with (Mr. and Mrs. Bartos) that moved to Fredericksburg. He was a cabinet maker, sponsored by Borchers Cabinet Shop. He and Dad always got together and traded trades. Dad would build something for him...

FRANCELLE: And vice versa. Where did you land?

WALTER: Ellis Island. We went right by the Statue of Liberty. That was an awesome sight. Little old eleven-year-old kid all eyes!

FRANCELLE: Did you know you were coming right on to Kerrville?

WALTER: My parents did, I'm sure. I was just along for the ride.

FRANCELLE: How did you get to Kerrville from there?

WALTER: By train. New York to San Antonio.

FRANCELLE: Did Mr. Riesel have a place for you to stay when you got here?

WALTER: He did. He had a little apartment right next to the welding shop.

FRANCELLE: On Broadway?

WALTER: No. Park Street. It used to be the main street to Schreiner Institute. It was a little 1 bedroom kitchenette. Then we found a little apartment that was 2 bedroom, almost a full kitchen, a little better, also on Park Street. They took good care of us when we came over. A short time later, we moved across the street into a duplex owned by Mrs. Myrtle Brick, a retired school teacher (a super nice lady).

FRANCELLE: Could any of you speak English in your family?

WALTER: Nein.

FRANCELLE: I remember when y'all came. It seemed like all the kids in your class took care of you.

WALTER: Oh yeah. We were taught the English language right off the start. A lot of times we ended up in the Principal's office for the things we learned.

FRANCELLE: So, there were no ESL classes, so I guess you just sat in class and absorbed.

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WALTER: Our savior was Herman Billnitzer, Visual Ed teacher. He found out about the shenanigans going on and he said, "No, no, don't listen."

FRANCELLE: How long do you think it took for you to learn English enough to be comfortable?

WALTER: About 6 months.. It's all you hear, and you ask about what did it mean. It didn't take too long.

FRANCELLE: When the teacher would write on the board, would someone help you?

WALTER: No one spoke German. Well, there was one girl, Geraldine Hertel, that spoke German and she kind of coached me along. She was in my class.

FRANCELLE: What did you participate in? Sports?

WALTER: In the free period in elementary I played baseball and stuff. I didn't really care for baseball. Then later on I tried football and I got my knee hurt a little bit, so I thought I would just wait on that for a while. I took it back up my Sophomore, Junior and Senior years and did a little track.

FRANCELLE: I think your grandparents came over, or did they come with you?

WALTER: My paternal Grandmother came over in fifty-nine, 7 years after we did and lived to be ninety-two. My mother's sister, her family and my maternal grandmother immigrated to Canada around 1955.

FRANCELLE: I bet your mother and grandmother were good cooks, good German cooks.

WALTER: Aaah. I wish I had all of her recipes. But I bet she had eighty percent of her recipes in her head. Homemade bread and cheesecakes.

FRANCELLE: Were you just in awe when you first came here?

WALTER: I was like an owl in a tree. It was fantastic.

FRANCELLE: What was the big difference from being here and in Germany.

WALTER: Well, here it was so advanced. The little town we were in was just like Ingram or Comfort in the fifties. I mean, Ingram's a great town but not like Kerrville then.

FRANCELLE: There was a lot going on.

WALTER: We left out of Grand Central Station and took the train down here. That was something else.

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FRANCELLE: Just everything you saw out of the windows. What else can you tell us about being in Kerrville at that time?

WALTER: Well, living conditions were a lot better. We didn't have to rummage through the garbage cans and stuff.

FRANCELLE: Did you have to do that in Germany?

WALTER: Oh yes. After the war we lived next to a restaurant, pub like, and a hotel. Conditions were very bleak for us as Dad was gone and Mom wasn't employed. We'd sneak over there and look through their garbage cans. There were some nice bread crumbs once in a while. I was friends with the little lady across the street that had a bakery and I'd go over there and look hungry. Occasionally, she would give me a slice of bread. I remember after school, many times, Hans and I would go out in the farmers' fields and pick a few carrots, strawberries and whatever they were growing. But after I went to school here in America for a while I found out what they fertilized the fields with. Oh, I'm glad I don't have to do that again. My favorite thing when we came over here was apple butter sandwiches. I loved apple butter sandwiches. I could eat that all day long.

FRANCELLE: Did your mother work too or was she a homemaker?

WALTER: At first Dad went to work at the State Hospital. That was about 3 or 4 years after we came here. After that Mom went to work at the State Hospital. So, they both retired from there.

FRANCELLE: So, he did the metal work on the side?

WALTER: Actually, he did handywork. He built these cake trays out at the Schlunegger place. The big trays with the mirrors on them that she used to put the cakes on. He made all that and the serving line cabinets. He kept busy.

FRANCELLE: What friendships did you make at Tivy?

WALTER: Well, I'm not like my wife. My wife has 2 girlfriends from grade school, one from high school and one from college that she has continued her friendships with. I'd call Charlie Wagner every now and then. He and I were pretty good friends in high school.

FRANCELLE: Did you ever go back to Germany?

WALTER: No. I haven't yet. The only way I've gone back is by Google to look up the city. I kind of browse around. I found a couple of the places where we used to go swimming.

FRANCELLE: Has it changed a lot there?

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WALTER: Oh, yes. It's about the size of Kerrville now. All new houses. The place where we lived in the apartment house is an attorney's office now. It's interesting. One thing that really hasn't changed is the train station. I guess it's not very busy there.

FRANCELLE: So, that hasn't been something that you really wanted to do?

WALTER: Oh, yes. I definitely want to go back, Lord willing. I'd like to see it one more time.

FRANCELLE: To take your children back to see it?

- WALTER: I'm not sure they're interested. They may be. I don't know. They have things to do now and families of their own. Of course, my wife and I have traveled this country a lot in the last years. There are so many beautiful sights, why would you want to go anywhere else? I was going over the U.S. map at one time, and found we had driven through 46 states in our traveling.

FRANCELLE: What year did you graduate from Tivy?

WALTER: Nineteen fifty-nine.

FRANCELLE: What did you do then?

WALTER: I went into the Navy. I started to go to college. I had a tentative football scholarship down at Wharton Jr. College but I said, "Walter, your grades weren't that good in high school." I went into the service and spent 4 years in the service. I didn't make a career of it. I probably should have, but, I don't know, everything changed so much. You could see the changes coming. Later I did attend Schreiner College.

FRANCELLE: Did you go overseas?

WALTER: No. I was swimming instructor for 3½ years, really rough duty at Coronado Islands just across the bay from San Diego. The first year there is when I ran into Hans again, my brother. He was in the Seal Teams. We horsed around on the beach, went diving.

FRANCELLE: I bet you didn't expect that you would run into each other.

WALTER: No. Really didn't. We were talking one day, and Hans tried to talk me into going into the Seals. I had to get a permission slip from my Mother and Dad and they said, "Nix. One's enough." I told Hans a couple of months before he passed away, "Hans, remember when I was trying to get into the Seals? I don't think I could have made it." He said, "What do you mean? You were always in better shape than I was." I said, "I cannot stand cold water on my chest. It just freezes me up." Even with those wetsuits they have. I'd swim by him and he'd pull my wetsuit collar and let the cold water in. I guess I just don't have the right DNA. I enjoyed myself in the

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swimming pool. You work until 5 and then you had dependent swimming and we got paid for that. It was all right.

FRANCELLE: Did you use your German at all in the Navy?

WALTER: No. When I was in boot camp I tried to go into some specialized schools like sonar or radio, which were my highest scores on the tests that they give out and said that's what I would like to do. They came back a week later and said "You can't. You're somewhat of a security risk." I wasn't a citizen yet. I had to pay \$5 to go into the Navy. I signed a paper of intent and it cost me \$5. And then I would become a citizen. But nobody paid any attention to that in the service and I was just a young kid but I liked the services. But when they turned me down, I would have thought that someone would have taken me down to the courthouse to get my citizenship. But, no, it didn't happen, so I got a little discouraged.

FRANCELLE: I would think that is a little lax, letting you in the service when you weren't a citizen.

WALTER: Well, they still do that. A couple of years ago over in Afghanistan they had a big ceremony, naturalization ceremony, where soldiers were sworn in.

FRANCELLE: Are you still fluent in German?

WALTER: Yes. Well, I left Germany in the fifth grade so I'm up to the fifth-grade level. But there was a lady here in Kerrville, Mrs. Hudson, that spoke German and was a real good friend of my Mother's. After my mother passed away I would go over there and we would have coffee and speak German. She tickled me. She would say, "Ya, your mama always told me you were her trouble child," Hans and I would chat most of the time in German. I ran into some folks in the Brookdale Nursing Home that spoke German. This one fella speaks German like he was born there, and he was born in Oklahoma.

FRANCELLE: After the service, what happened next?

WALTER: I stayed out in California for 9 years. I was married out there. And, like Mama told me, I was too young to get married. We had a son. He passed away in 2017.

I came back to Kerrville and married again. She liked horses, dogs and new cars. That was more than this ole boy could afford. We were married for seventeen years and had a son and daughter.

FRANCELLE: So, she came back to Kerrville with you?

WALTER: Yes. And we too divorced. And then there's that little lady I met and we've been together thirty-one years now. She was the one. I should have met her way back then. She was newly divorced. Her parents had moved here, her father had passed away, so she moved here, from Florida, with her children. Funniest thing, at the suggestion of some friends, I went down to my attorney's office to draw up a new Will and she was working there. How convenient. She knew my

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son. Before she started working there she worked a year in Ingram and my son was in school there. She knew all the football players, going to all the games and everything, and she thought she recognized me, and she said, "Is Jason your son?" I said, "Yes, ma'am" and we ended up talking about an hour. I asked her if she wanted to go to a scrimmage game that afternoon. She had to finish the work day.

We dated for fourteen years and finally I got a ring and got on my knee and I said, "Will you marry me? You have thirty seconds to answer." We've been married nineteen years now.

FRANCELLE: What is her name?

WALTER: Janice Dommert Poppe.

FRANCELLE: What year did you become a citizen?

WALTER: Right after I got out of the service, Nineteen sixty-three. There was an article even in the San Diego paper. I was shaking hands with the judge.

FRANCELLE: What did you do after you came back to Kerrville?

WALTER: I got involved in law enforcement. I was with the city for 5 or 6 years but that wasn't for me.

FRANCELLE: What were you doing in law enforcement?

WALTER: I was a police officer.

FRANCELLE: You probably had too many friends here and didn't want to give them a ticket.

WALTER: That's one thing they teach you in the academy. When friends act up, you have to be serious. And friends don't like that. It was so political back then. For instance, I stopped O.C. Fisher one time going fifty-five in a thirty down Main Street. I wrote him a ticket and I thought I recognized him. (He was a U.S. congressman) He paid the fine. He said he didn't have his driver's license because he said he left it back in Washington.

FRANCELLE: He was a senator?

WALTER: Congressman. He sent the fine in an envelope in dollar bills and change. And you aren't going to believe this, but a couple of months later, a different car, someone else was driving, and he was in the back seat and I pulled them over. He rolled the window down and he said, "I plead congressional immunity." And I said, "Have a good day, sir."

FRANCELLE: He really said that?

WALTER: Yes. And because of some of the local politics, I just didn't feel that was for me. So, I just went into contracting, roofing and remodeling. Eventually, I became employed at

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Kerrville State Hospital but continued contracting part time, until I retired in 2003. Well, I'm tired and I'm retired. I'm cutting firewood now. You have to keep doing something. I thought I would really like it because you meet a lot of people. It's made a lot of difference in my life. When I was in high school I could hardly talk to anybody. Now I can talk to strangers. I'm almost as bad as my wife. You can get on the elevator with her and by the tenth floor she'll know everything about you.

FRANCELLE: So, it made you what you are today?

WALTER: That and the service. It's when I realized what my parents were trying to do, which I thought at the time was too strong. But I appreciate every bit of it.

FRANCELLE: Do you have family back in Germany?

WALTER: There may be some distant cousins, but I was too young when we left to know who was back there. The only one I knew was my grandmother.

FRANCELLE: Was that a good experience for your parents and grandmother living here or did they ever want to go back?

WALTER: No. They enjoyed it. When my grandmother came here they were all back together. After grandmother passed away, Mom and Dad went back to Germany one time. Dad said he enjoyed going back but he didn't want to visit his cousins in East Germany for some reason. He didn't want to get near the Russians. But they had a good time. He said he couldn't believe the changes.

FRANCELLE: What do you think has been the greatest thing about living in the United States or living in Kerrville?

WALTER: Well, the opportunities in America are there if you go after them. You don't have somebody looking over you or having to give someone half your paycheck. But it's getting tighter.

FRANCELLE: The Riesels, Evelyn was in our class, didn't they sponsor other families?

WALTER: I think they brought one more. I can't remember their names. They had 2 or 3 children.

FRANCELLE: I remember the Schulacks too. Did you know them?

WALTER: Yes. The Schulacks, they both died here in Kerrville. Edmund went to New York and both of the twins went to Houston and one of them was working construction and was on a high rise building and fell down the elevator shaft. Ruth moved to Houston after that twin passed away.

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FRANCELLE: I remember Ruth coming to school with her woolen stockings up to her knees and her woolen cap and the woolen cap left, and the stockings left and the kids became more Americanized.

WALTER: In Germany it was nothing for the boys to wear shorts with stockings up under them with a garter belt. When we came to America, Hans and I revolted. It was the stockings. We said, "Mama, we don't do that in America."

FRANCELLE: Karl Reimer was in our class. His parents seemed older.

WALTER: Oh, yes. Mr. and Mrs. Reimer. They lived up there behind the stadium.

WALTER: Oh, yeah. He had some stories to tell. And the little man who used to walk to Kerrville all the time from halfway to Medina used to be an engineer out at Mooney. His name was Roseman. But I think he paid his own way over here.

FRANCELLE: Would you change anything in your life if you had to do it over?

WALTER: I wouldn't change a thing, Francelle, or I wouldn't have my present wife.

FRANCELLE: Jason is your only son.

WALTER: My only living son. He has 2 daughters, both out of college. One is a nurse and the other has her masters and is also a nurse. My son has a granddaughter and is expecting a grandson this Fall. I also have a daughter in Abilene. She has 3 children, 2 sons and a daughter And a granddaughter.

FRANCELLE: What is her name?

WALTER: Irene. She went to Tivy. A while ago I said there were no more Poppes. There are more Poppes (Hans' children: Tamara, Tiffany and Jeremy).

FRANCELLE: Does Poppe mean flower?

WALTER: No. It has an "e" on the end. People are always calling and asking for Mr. Pope. I got so tired of that over the years. If you speak English you should know that "pp" is not pope. I always tell them the Pope lives in Italy.

FRANCELLE: Did you do home building?

WALTER: No. Roofing and remodeling, shingling.

FRANCELLE: Shingling goes back to the beginning of Kerr County.

WALTER: Brown, wasn't it? As a matter of fact, I saw a picture of shingling.

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FRANCELLE: Do you want to talk a little bit about Hans. We wanted to have him in this interview.

WALTER: Hans, my brother.

FRANCELLE: How tall was he?

WALTER: He was a couple of inches taller than me. Six four or five.. He had a pretty interesting life I think. He was in the Seals and that was the last time I saw him for a long time until sixty-nine. And when I came back he was working part time at the Kerrville Funeral Home and full time on the police force. (Right after he got out of the service). He left the police force in seventy, I believe, and went to work full time at the Kerrville Funeral Home. After that he went to the Western Art Museum and was there until he retired. There wasn't anything he didn't know about that museum. He knew all the artists and where the paintings were, who belonged to each painting. I think he really enjoyed that job. Hans was married before and had one daughter.

Then he married Dianne Honea. They were married almost 46 years and had the three children. As far as I am concerned, he was one of a kind. I miss him. The last year or so we would drink coffee at the Del Norte. That's when we really got back together. Of course, he had his things to do, traveling with the Art Museum; pieces going to different places, California, etc. I wasn't a fisherman and he loved to fish so he and Dad fished a lot.

FRANCELLE: Thank you. Do you have any more you would like to add?

WALTER: I don't remember as much about the German trip as Hans did. When we came over we had one trunk with all the family belongings. Mom, of course, had to have her china, her German china.

FRANCELLE: Do you still have that?

WALTER: That's where my second wife and my mother went on the outs. She decided to trade that German china to get some of that red glassware. And when my mother found out about that I thought she was going to run us all off. That trunk contained her china, and Daddy's brand new accordion when we left Germany. And I'm surprised we stayed here because this young dock worker had no idea how to move trunks and he kept dropping it all the time. My dad became furious picked it up and asked where the kid wanted it. The other thing was the name, the M.H. Hohner, on that brand new accordion, they stripped that off of it at Ellis Island. I have no idea why. It made it worthless almost. He bought it special. He was going to bring it to America and play it.

FRANCELLE: Was that a German brand?

WALTER: Yes.

FRANCELLE: Do you still have it?

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WALTER: No. I don't know what they did with it. I think he gave it to a man in one of the German families we were friends with, because he played. When we used to go to Fredericksburg all the time, New Years and holidays, all the Germans would get together and have a little party. Some of the pictures, you would think we were winos. When those Germans get together, they party.

FRANCELLE: Did your mother make strudel?

WALTER: apple strudel, cherry strudel, plum strudel, cheesecake and that honey covered cake, homemade bread, made her own doughnuts.

FRANCELLE: Did you eat herring?

WALTER: Quite often at lunchtime. Let me tell you something we did in Germany when I was about 6. Hans was almost 10. We were anemic. No food. The doctor gave mom a prescription. The prescription was raw liver between 2 pieces of bread.

FRANCELLE: That's going to get that iron in you fast. Could you eat it?

WALTER: Well, yeah. She put a little onion on it. People don't believe that. Dad always loved homemade bread, thick layer of butter and some limburger cheese. That mother of ours was some cook.

FRANCELLE: Thank you. I've enjoyed this. Reminiscing about Germany.

WALTER: Yes. I could do this all day, what I remember. The early days are very limited for me. Just what I heard.

FRANCELLE: Did your mother make your clothes when you lived in Germany?

WALTER: No. They would buy them but if you had a tear, grandma would sew it up. If it was bigger, they would put a patch on it.

FRANCELLE: Your parents must have spoken English if they worked at the State Hospital.

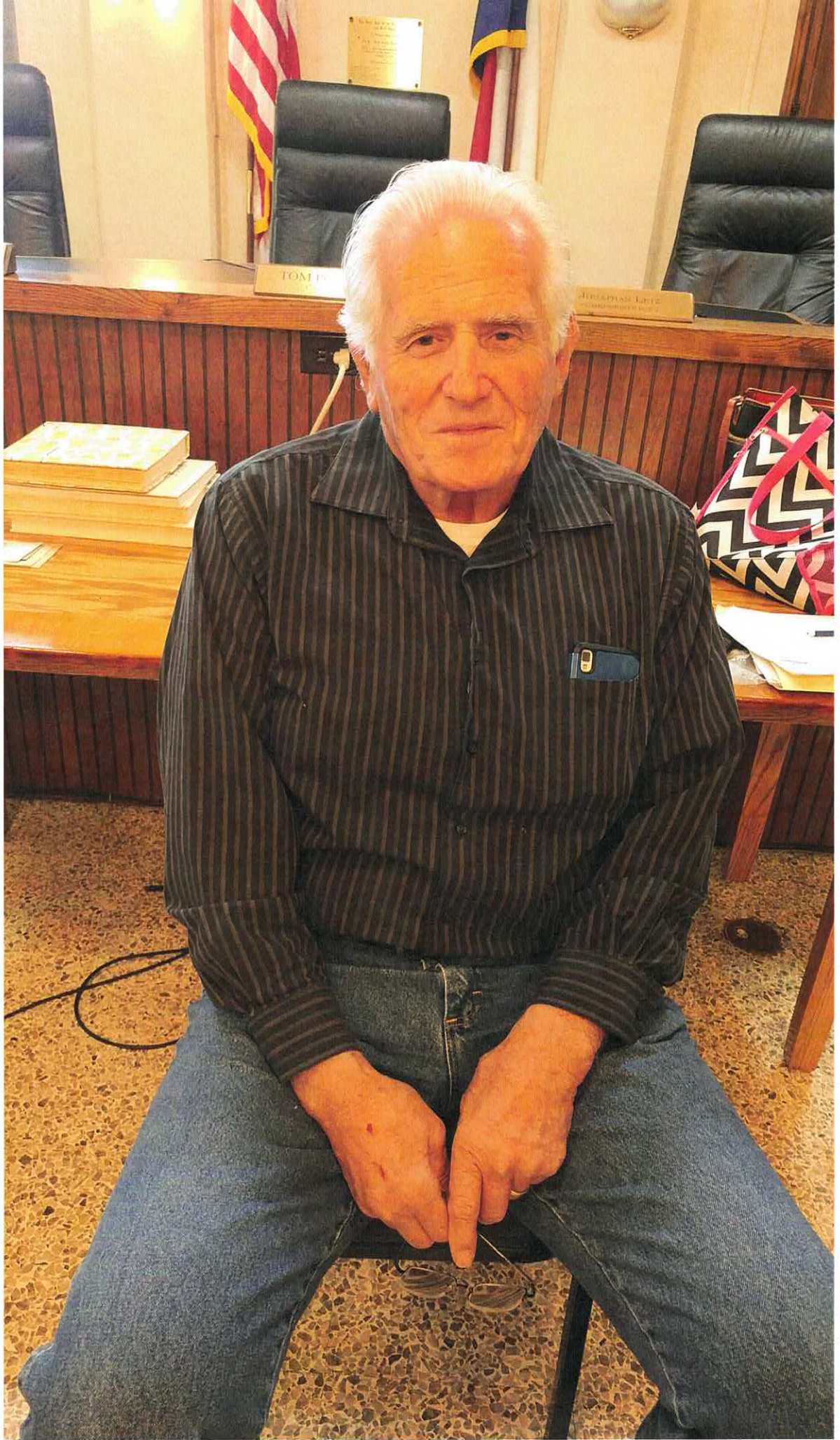
WALTER: Yes. But Mama spoke very broken English. And Dad would say, "Now, Hilda, speak English." And she would say, "Well, Erich, especka English." If you want to hear something funny, I called Mom out at the State Hospital one day, she worked in the laundry and I picked up the phone and the operator came on and I said I wanted the State Hospital, such and such number, and the hospital answered and I asked for the laundry because I'd like to speak to my mother. She transferred me and Mom came on and I started speaking German to her and I heard a click. So, I called back and said I was disconnected and could I speak to my mother again? She said, "When you call out here you speak English". I didn't know there was a law against speaking German. We had some things like that happen. But it's all in the past.

FRANCELLE: Thank you. I enjoyed seeing you again.

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WALTER: Thank you. Enjoyed it.

END





GRANDMOTHER AND
HER 2 SONS



POPPE'S AND POLIKA
FAMILIES



POPPE, ROSS AND
KARNS FAMILY



WALTER'S mom & DAD'S
WEDDING



WALTER'S MOM & DAD'S
WEDDING RECEPTION



WALTER'S DAD
GOING OFF TO WAR



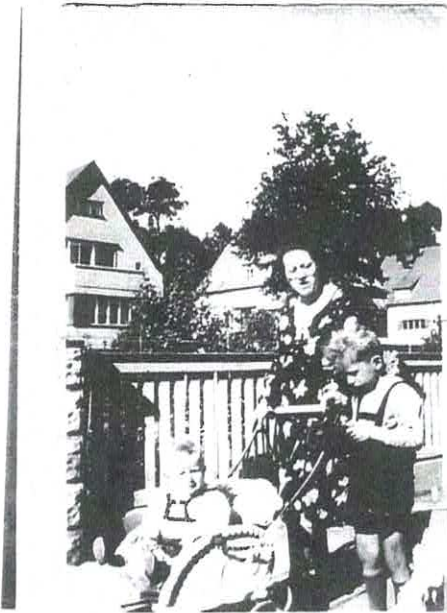
WALTER'S UNCLE WALTER (FOR WHOM
HE WAS NAMED) SHOWN IN NAVY
UNIFORM. HE WENT DOWN WITH
THE GERMAN BATTLESHIP TIRPITZ
WHEN IT WAS SUNK.



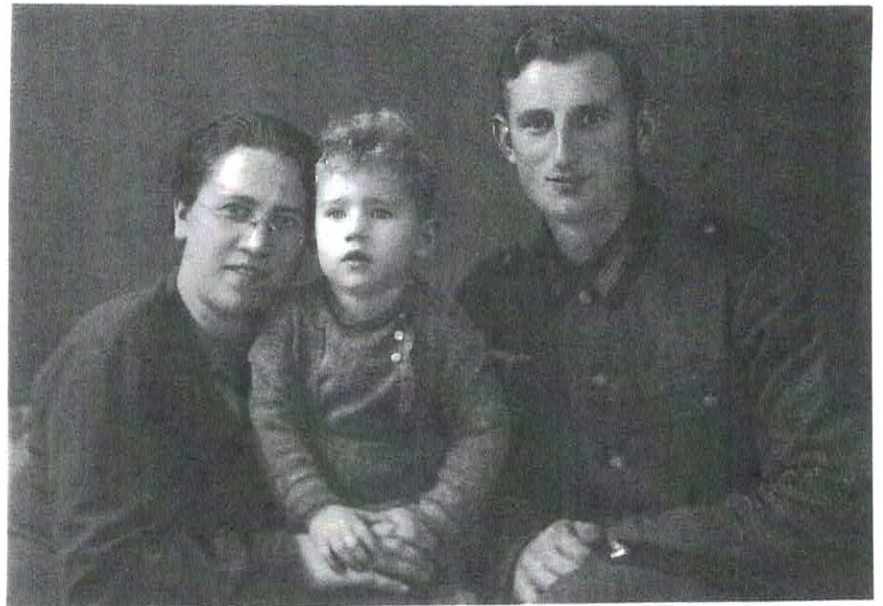
ROSS & KARIUS FAMILY
WALTER'S MOM'S FAMILY &
HANS



WALT'S DAD IN
UNIFORM



WALT'S MOM AND
KIDS IN GOLDSBORO



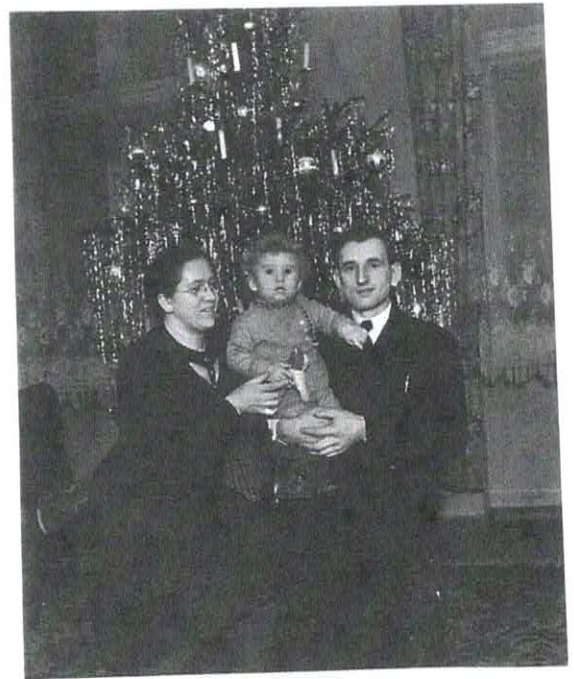
THE YOUNG POPPE'S
AND HANS



MRS. POPPE, WALTER AND HANS WHILE
DAD IS AWAY AT WAR



MR. POPPE WALKING
SONS ON LEAVE FROM
ARMY



HANS AND PARENTS
BEFORE DAD LEAVES
FOR ARMY



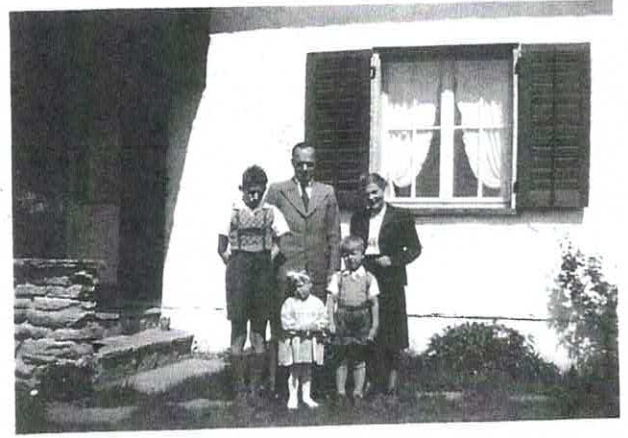
MAY 1952, WALTERS 1ST BIRTHDAY
PARTY IN AMERICA



THE POPPES



HANS 1ST DAY OF
SCHOOL IN GOLB NOW



HANS LIVING WITH FAMILY
IN SWITZERLAND. WENT
THERE FOR CURE FOR ASTHMA



MOM & KIDS WAITING
FOR DAD TO COME HOME
FROM STALINGRAD
PRISON CAMP.



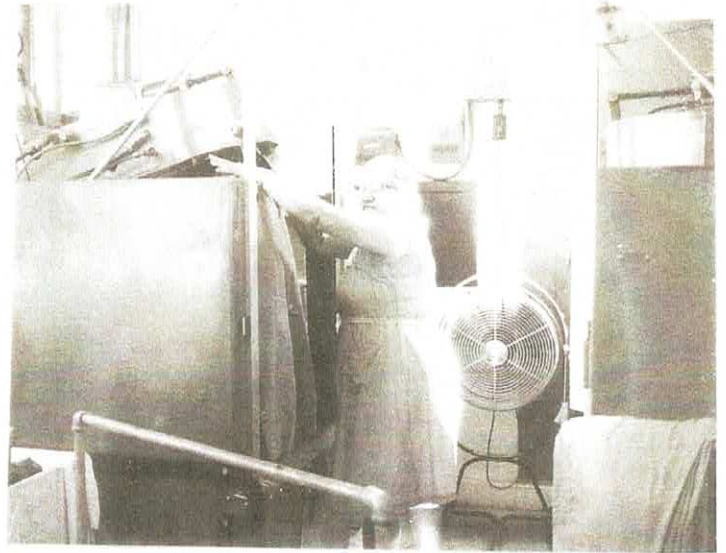
THE POPPES AND THE
RIESELS (THE SPONSOR
FOR THE POPPE FAMILY
IN KERRYVILLE)



WALTER'S AMERICAN BIRTHDAY
PARTY. (1.R.) HANS, WALTER, TOMMY DANIELS
(2.R.) EVELYN RIESEL, KATCHY BENNETT
(3.R.) MR. POPPE



HANS: NAVY SEAL



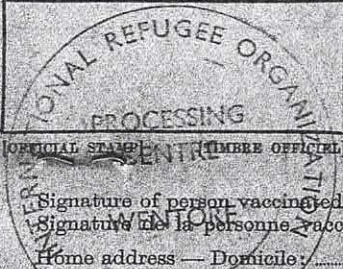
POPPES WERE EMPLOYED AT KERRVILLE STATE
HOSPITAL. MR. POPPE IN MAINTENANCE AND
MRS. POPPE IN LAUNDRY



WALTERS CHILDREN JASON + IRENE

- 2 -
International Certificate of Vaccination against Smallpox
Certificat international de vaccination contre la variole

This is to certify that
 Le présent document certifie que POPPE, Walter
 (age: sex(e): M), whose signature appears below, has this day been vaccinated
 10.5.41 (age: sex(e):), dont la signature apparaît ci-dessous, a été vacciné(e) aujourd'hui
 by me against smallpox. (Origin and Batch No. of vaccine }
 par moi contre la variole. (Origine du vaccin et numéro du lot }



Signature of vaccinator:
 Signature de la personne pratiquant la vaccination:
 Official position }
 Fonction officielle } 502 IRO
Resettlement Centre
 Place — Lieu: WENTORF, B.A.O.R. 3 Date: 25 OCT 1951
Medical Department

Signature of person vaccinated }
 Signature de la personne vaccinée }
 Home address — Domicile: Walter Poppe

IMPORTANT: In the case of primary vaccination, the person vaccinated should be warned to report to a medical practitioner between the 8th and 14th days, in order that the result of the vaccination may be recorded on this certificate. In the case of revaccination, the person should report within 48 hours for first inspection in order that any immune reaction which has developed may be recorded.
OBSERVATION IMPORTANTE: Dans le cas d'une première vaccination, la personne vaccinée doit être invitée à se présenter à un médecin entre le 8e et le 14e jour, afin que le résultat de cette vaccination puisse être porté sur le certificat. Dans le cas d'une revaccination, la personne vaccinée doit se présenter dans les 48 heures pour un premier examen, afin que toute réaction d'immunité qui se serait produite puisse être constatée.

- 3 -

This is to certify that the above vaccination was inspected by me on the date(s) and with the result(s) shown hereunder:

Le présent document certifie que la vaccination mentionnée ci-dessus a été contrôlée par moi à la date ou aux dates suivantes, et avec les résultats suivants:

Date of inspection: 29.10.51 Result* — Resultats*
 Date du contrôle: **Reaction of immunity**



Signature of Doctor }
 Signature du médecin }
 Official position } 502 IRO Documentation Office
 Fonction officielle } Resettlement Processing Centre
WENTORF, B.A.O.R. 3
Medical Department

Place — Lieu: Date: 25 NOV 1951

Use one of the following terms in stating the result, viz. — 'Reaction of immunity', 'Accelerated Reaction (vaccinoid)', 'Typical primary vaccinia'. A certificate of 'No Reaction' will not be accepted.
 *Employer les termes suivants pour indiquer les résultats: »Reaction d'immunité«, »Réaction accélérée (vaccinoïde)«, »Réaction vaccinale typique« (de primo-vaccination). Un certificat portant »Sans réaction« ne sera pas valable.

Signature of person vaccinated }
 Signature de la personne vaccinée }
Walter Poppe

N.B. This certificate is not valid for more than 3 years from date of issue.
 NOTE: Ce certificat n'est valable que pour trois ans à compter de la date de délivrance.

I.R.O. Processing Card

NORTH-RHINE WESTPHALIA

LAND NIEDERSACHSEN

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

Name POPPE Walter

EE No. 521 836

Date of Arrival _____

From _____ D.P.A.C.S. _____ Camp

Area Team _____

C.M. 1 No. _____

Group _____

Block No. _____

Room No. _____

R.M.s Rec'd _____



LAND NIEDERSACHSEN

Flüchtlings-Ausweis

zu Nummer _____

des Personalausweises der Britischen Zone
(nur gültig bei dessen gleichzeitiger Vorlage)

Vor- und Zuname _____

(bei Frauen auch Mädchenname)

(Wohnort - Aufnahmegemeinde)

Industriest. 1

(Straße und Haus-Nr.)

(Kreis)

HANNOVER

(Regierungsbezirk)

Flüchtl.-Gruppe

A

Ausweisliste Nr.

Verlust des Ausweises ist sofort zu melden

United Nations — Nations Unies

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

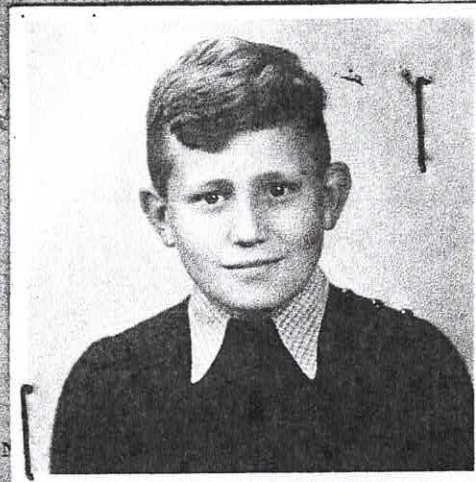
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE

checked

KATHY BROWN
22 MAR
SPRING VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**International Certificate
of Inoculation and Vaccination**

**Certificat international
de Vaccination**



INTERNATIONAL