

## Albert Barthel and Magdalena Kasper

They were married in St. Michael's Church in St. Michael, Minnesota on May 1, 1912.

They both were born in St. Michael.

Albert was born on September 2, 1879, the youngest of eleven. Magdalena was born on August 7, 1889, the eldest of six.

Albert was 32 years old and an established farmer at the time of their marriage.

Magdalene was 22 years old and a beautiful bride. Although Magdalena was her proper name, she was always called Lena, even on her gravestone.

Albert's father was William Barthel born 1830, died 1895. Mother Catherine (Ehr) born 1835, died 1921. Both born in Germany and died in St. Michael.



In the lower right photo, Lena with her parents, Henry Kasper and Cecilia Vetsch, and younger sister Theresa, circa 1892.

Henry Kasper was born in 1861. He died in 1954. Pa took me to Henry's funeral. Cecilia (Vetsch) was born in 1869 and died in 1900.

Albert was an established farmer, and ten years older than Lena when they married in 1912.

### Albert, hardworking at 17

He also earned 'off the farm income as a butcher.

Albert's 80-acre farm was two miles south of St. Michael.

Lena's home farm was 2.5 miles southwest of St. Michael.



Lena is on the right.



Henry's 90th birthday.

On the left, Albert (on the right) was part of a crew digging the basement for the Corner Bar in 1897. I don't know the names of the other workmen, but I recognize their faces in their descents I have known. That bar stood for more than a century across the main intersection, diagonally from St. Michael Church. In the picture on the right, the Corner Bar Crew is taking a break for the photographer.



**This great photo to the right is likely from about 1920. I never realized Grandma Lena was so beautiful.**

In 1927 Albert and Lena bought a 160-acre farm two miles east of Albertville. This new farm had much more potential than the hilly and rocky St. Michael farm. The Albertville farm is relatively level and has rich soil which is better suited to farming. As was normal for the time, the new farm was half wooded. Initially the uncleared 80 acres were used as rough pasture. The land needed to be cleared and drained to reach its maximum potential as cropland. By 1939 the family had cleared and ditched another 20 acres. Land clearing and ditching continued through the 1960s. By then almost 150 acres were productive. Less than ten acres were wooded or swampy.



Horses were used well into the 1940s. Four to six work horses would be needed. The photo to the right from 1928-29 shows how comfortable Albert's sons were with the work horses. Albert must have been good at training horses and farm boys.



**Clarence, Ernie, and Alois.**



**1937 Aerial Photo**

**The aerial photo on the page was taken in 1937.**

It shows the square, 160-acre, Albertville farm entirely with a small strip of neighboring land to identify edge features.

The county road is on the bottom (south), the farmstead is in the bottom center, and the wooded land is on the top right.

The ditch work, easily visible from the air, was begun around 1920 and continually improved through the 1960s.

Sometime in 1930s the house was expanded. That was done before 1937, the house has a full roof in this photo.

The granary, hog barn, chicken coup, smoke house, wood silo, and huge, beautiful barn with two cupolas are all there.

The concrete block shop is not in the photo as it was built in 1949 or 50.

**The lower aerial photo below was taken in 1960.**

In October of 1949 Louie and Sylvia were married. Initially they lived on the second floor of the big house.

Sylvia had a small kitchen at the top of the stairway.

In 1950 Albert and Lena retired and moved to Albertville.

From 1950 until 1955 the farm was called "The Barthel Brother's Farm". Louie, Norman, Alois were the brothers. Around 1955 Louie bought out his brothers.

A close view of the 1960 farmstead shows the shop, large quonset shaped machinery shed, milk room addition to barn, the absence of the two cupolas from dairy barn, a concrete silo, loafing shed toward the road, circular wire crib near the pig barn.

The smoke house which also was used for dynamite storage disappeared under the footprint of the quonset machinery shed.



**1960 Aerial Photo**

These fields and buildings are well known to me. I have plowed, disced, harrowed, mowed, raked, cultivated, harvested corn, hay, oats, straw, milked the cows, cleaned gutters, spread manure, castrated pigs, butchered hogs, and hunted many times on this farm. I have many stories.

Bob Zahler, the St. Michael historian, helped with a lot of information. Bob is my first cousin. Bob interviewed our Uncle Donald. Donald was born in May 1924. My Father, Ernest, was born in September 1920. My Pa told me that they moved when he was six years old.

That would most likely be 1927. Donald recalled the move with livestock, machinery and goods in detail.

Donald said that Louie was a baby at the time. Louie was not born until January 1928.

Donald told Bob the family stopped in St. Micheal to buy lanterns because the Albertville farm did not have electricity.

The St. Michael farm got electricity in 1926 from the line that powered the town.

The Albertville farm did not get electricity until 1946.

That same year my parents got electricity in eastern Otsego township.

Power distribution was delayed 20 years by the depression and WWII.

Phone service was simpler and could be set up and maintained with minimal training.

Many rural areas local phone service via "Party Lines", which often came five to ten years before electricity.



**1937 Albert's Farmstead**



**1960 Louie's Farmstead**

Written on the bottom of this photo to the right is "ERNEST BARTHEL @ HENRY SCHROEPFER HUSKING CORN."

The photo was taken around 1931. Both boys are wearing Newsboy caps in this posed picture. From the early 1930s until mid-1940s, two of George's younger brothers, Henry and Frank, spent a lot of time with the Barthel Family. This photo was not taken on Albert's farm.

Most of the corn shocks have been taken off this field and hauled to the farmstead for winter feed.

The grain was often ground, then fed to hogs or dairy cows.

The much less nutritious stalks were fed to horses or beef cattle.

The next two pictures on the right came from Cecilia's photos provided by Pat Fish. In the first photo the family is standing on a blanket laid out for a picnic.

This **late 1928** picture was not taken at the Albertville farm.

The sloping area behind them is wooded. Clearly the family was on a Sunday holiday. Clarence and Alois are wearing dapper "Newsboy" caps that popular in the 1920s and 30s. All the then extant children are there, including the baby Louis.

Norman, who was then normal size, is seated behind and supporting baby Louis.

The bottom-right photo has "Gang eating watermelon" written on the bottom.

Clarence is on the left spitting seeds, Florence is next. I cannot identify the three boys standing on the porch.

George Schroepfer and Alicestine are sitting on the porch.

They were married in 1932.

This Sunday photo was possibly taken at the farm George rented near Albertville in 1933.

George's younger brothers, and neighbor kids may be in this picture also.



**Henry on the left, younger Ernie on the right.**



**Cecelia, Alicestine, Norman, Benno, Florence, Louie, Donald, Clarence, Ernie, Alois.**



The picture to the right was taken on a Sunday in the summer of 1939.

The house needs paint, but the Great Depression did end until 1940.

Pa told me during the drought that came in the 1930s, they planted potatoes in a dry swamp. The potato crop grew terrifically.

Just before they harvested the potatoes, rain refilled the swamp. Albert was an old man at 59.

Uncle Donald told Bob that the family gathered cattails from Pelican Lake to feed their animals. I asked Louie about Albert years ago.

Louie told me that he never saw his father work in the barn or in the field. Albert's knees were worn out by 50.

All Grandpa Albert could do was hoe the garden and take care of the chickens.

Louie said that his oldest brothers, Clarence and Alois, ran the farm. Ernie was the best educated farmer.

Ernie was the first in the family to attend High School.

The Elk River school bus went by their farm.

Pa told me that going to High School was the biggest disagreement he ever had with his father.

Elk River had an excellent modern agriculture program.

This photo of the thirteen offspring and Albert and Lena was taken around 1940.

Not at their home.

Notice the woman looking out the window.



**Cecilia, Florence, Louie, Albert, Verena, Benno, Lena, Catherine, Betty, Ernie, Donald, Alicestine, Norman, Clarence, Alois.**



**October 1941, Albert, Lena, Ernie, Joyce (DeMars) Barthel, Stella (Ebner) DeMars, Tommy DeMars.**

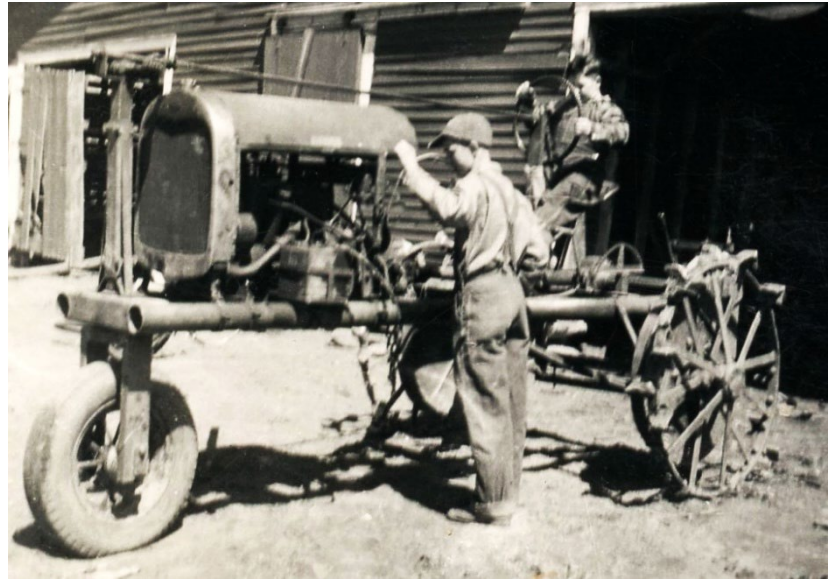
The inscription on the 1942 tractor photo reads, "Our first tractor."

Norman is seated; Louie is standing. They are in front of the large granary-shed building that stood until recently. In about 1950 I explored the storage space above the sliding door to the left. There was a beautiful one-horse sleigh up there. The sleigh was full of old eggs and covered with chicken and sparrow droppings.

The well used tractor was a cheap off brand. Notice the tube frame, small steel wheels, the automotive engine and radiator, the added battery box, and the overall simple design.

I don't imagine this tractor being used very long at the farm.

By the early 50s the farm had a fully modern Farmall M and Farmall H.



The picture on the lower-right has a 1940s-style black car parked beside the closed porch.

The porch was open in 1941. The porch was enclosed by the mid-1940s.

Jersey heifers and cows are in the barnyard.

The big, beautiful dairy and horse barn is to the left, not in this photo.

Grandpa Albert's chicken house is on the upper right.

The large building behind the chicken coup that runs off to the right was the magnificent pig barn.

Notice the brick chimney on the hog barn.

Albert was an expert butcher. He worked at least seasonally in Leonard Kasper's butcher shop in Albertville. Leonard was Lena's uncle.

Albert's hog barn had a huge cast iron cauldron for scalding whole hogs.

The cauldron was raised off the floor so a wood fire could heat the water. It was skirted with metal panels that connected to stove pipes that ran the smoke to the brick chimney. There was a chain hoist on a track for lifting pigs from the cement and dipping them into the scalding water.

In the early 1950s I was part of a crew that in the Fall converted five or six pigs into sausage.

The hogs were stunned, one at a time by Al with a 22. The blood collected in pan for blood sausage. Then the carcass was lowered into the cauldron so we could scrape the hair off. Next the carcasses were opened and disemboweled. The small intestines were cleaned with water from a garden and scraped on a smooth board with dull knives. They were later used as sausage casings. The livers were used for liver sausage. The heads were removed and boiled in large pots. All the soft material, including the boiled heart and tongues, was put in the blood and liver sausage.



Florence and Gilbert Isenberg were married in May of 1947.

She was thirty years old, and only had one child, Charles.

The entire Barthel family only knew Gilbert as "Pete". That was odd as Charles told me the Isenberg family never called his father Pete and knew him only as Gilbert. Pete was a successful crop farmer near Lafayette MN.

Grandma Lena and I stayed at their farm for a week when I was around four years old. I have clear memories from that visit. One Friday evening we went to town to hear a German band in the bandshell. Another evening, we visited Pete's brother who was digging ditches with a dragline.

I selected this June 1948 photo primarily for its view of the main barn.

The occasion is Verena's marriage to Norbert Zachman. Norbert's -----, Father Zachman, is in the foreground. The barn was over 80 feet long and 35 feet wide, with thick concrete-boulder walls. The huge haymow was framed beautifully with mortise and tenon logs.



Albert and Lena moved to this spacious Albertville house in 1950. At various times some of their children lived with them.

A single car garage is visible beyond the house on the right.

I was five or six and the size to serve as water boy when we mixed the concrete for that garage. My job was to pour a two-gallon pail of water into each mixer batch.



Christmas at Albert and Lena's Albertville home but which year?  
 Early 1950s. I was there, a little boy.  
 Grandma Lena gave all the boys white shirts.  
 A previous year, she gave us all Rockford sock dolls.  
 The house had a full, but largely unfinished basement. The basement had an exterior exit on the north, with sloping doors. Grandma had a space walled off to store her canning jars.



**Cecelia, Verena, Benno, Betty, Alois, Alicestine, Lena, Ernie, Catherine, Albert, Clarence, Louis, Norman, Florence, Donald.**

May 1957, 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.  
 I don't know where this was.



**Albert and Lena**

May 1957, 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.  
 I don't know where this was.



Fishes were home.  
Around 1970  
Grandma Lena is in this photo.



**Verena, Lena, Donald, Cecelia, Betty, Alois, Benno, Ernie, Louie.**

**The photo on right** was taken outside the new Albertville Church in 1982, during the celebration of Alicestine and George Schroefer's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.



Grandma died in July 1977.  
**Below is possibly her last photo.** This photo was taken in Monticello Nursing Home, near the end, when her mind was foggy.

Grandma died when she was 87, grandpa did at 78 years of age.  
**Albert and Lena are buried in the Albertville Cemetery. Tom.**



WHO DIED WHEN?

**HUSBAND** Albertus Hubertus BARTHEL K  
 Born 2 Sep 1879 Place St. Michael, Wright Co., Minnesota  
 Chr. 3 Sep 1879 Place " " "  
 Marr. 1 May 1912 Place " " "  
 Died 22 Dec 1957 Place Albertville, " "  
 Bur. 24 Dec 1957 Place " " "  
 HUSBAND'S FATHER Wilhelmus BARTHEL HUSBAND'S MOTHER Catharina EHR  
 HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES

**WIFE** Lena KASPER  
 Born 7 Aug 1889 Place St. Michael, Wright Co., Minnesota  
 Chr. " " " Place " " "  
 Died 16 Jul 1977 Place Monticello, " "  
 Bur. 19 Jul 1977 Place Albertville, " "  
 WIFE'S FATHER Henry KASPER WIFE'S MOTHER Cecilia VETSCH  
 WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth		WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE	WHEN DIE	
	Given Names	Surname	DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY	TO WHOM	DAY	MONTH
1 F	Alicetine Anna	BARTHEL	5	Oct	1913	St. Michael,	Wright Co.,	Minnesota	5 Oct 1932		
2 M	Clarence Peter	"	26	Nov	1914	"	"	"	George SCHROEPFER		
3 M	Alois Bernard	"	26	Mar	1916	"	"	"	17 Nov 1956		
4 F	Florence Aurelia	"	23	Aug	1917	"	"	"	Helen WEBER SCHERBER		
5 F	Cecelia Barbara	"	2	May	1919	"	"	"	10 May 1947		
6 M	Ernest Marcus	"	14	Sep	1920	"	"	"	Gilbert Hjalmar ISENBERG		
7 M	Benno Anton	"	22	Jan	1923	"	"	"	21 Aug 1952		
8 M	Donald George	"	25	May	1924	"	"	"	Delbert Bert FISH		
9 M	Norman Jacob	"	23	Mar	1926	"	"	"	21 Oct 1941		
10 M	Louis Paul	"	21	Jan	1928	"	"	"	Mary Joyce DeMARS		
11 F	Verena Marcella	"	10	Nov	1929	Rogers,	Hennepin Co.,	Minnesota	17 Oct 1945		
F	Catherine Georgia	"	7	Jan	1933	Albertville,	Wright Co.,	Minnesota	23 Sep 1961		
F	Elizabeth Ann	"	26	Jul	1936	"	"	"	Betty Lou SCHWEIGERT		
									30 Jun 1972		
									Agnes LOVLEIN		
									8 Oct 1949		
									Sylvia Marie SCHERBER		
									15 Jun 1948		
									Norbert A. ZACIMAN		
									28 Apr 1962		
									Clifford ELSERPETER		
									1 Sep 1956		
									Harvey ZAHLER		