

*February 7, 2015*

*For my future generations:*

*The legal description of this farm is: “The East half of the Southeast Quarter and the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 30, Township 78 North, Range 39 West of the 5th P.M., Shelby County Iowa, containing 120 acres more or less, according to the tax list in the office of the County Treasurer and Subject to Public Roads.” The farm house address is 1044 St. F 66, Avoca, Iowa.*

*I moved onto this farm in 1955 with my parents, Ernest Walter Mohr and Leona Emma (Krems) Mohr, as sharecroppers. I was eight years old. This farm was infested with cockleburs! The Fall of 1954 we walked this farm with burlap bags on our belts, pulled cockleburs, stuffed them into the bags (since the burs were ripe), hauled them to a tank in front of the barn and burned them to destroy the seeds.*

*The farm house had a bathroom with fixtures upstairs, but with no running water. The land manager (Carl Nieman) was the owner’s (Margaret Blomer) nephew. He said after the first harvest that this was the most money he had ever made off this farm. As a reward he then installed water to the house from the upper well.*

*We sharecropped this land until the owner passed and it went up for auction on December 30, 1964. My parents purchased the land for $306 per acre.*

*I have abstracts on portions of this property dated from 1855 to 1965 when my parents paid for the farm! This property is currently owned by The Ernest W. Mohr Trust with my children Darren, Amber and Laura as trustees.*

*The farm house also has some family history, as my great-grandfather, Johann Mohr, saw the farmhouse and built a house with the same floor plan in Valley Township Southeast of Avoca.*

*When we moved there, you could sit on the sidewalk and dangle your legs! Previous tenants had allowed hogs to root around the house foundation and grounds. My dad hired Donald Heileg with his bulldozer to move earth back around the house. There were two barns on the property. The small one east of the big one was struck by lightning and burned to the ground around 1968.*

*My parents raised cattle, both for dairy and meat, also chickens, hogs and sometimes sheep. They raised corn, oats, soybeans, milo and alfalfa and clover for both hay and pasture. They had a huge strawberry patch and garden with all kinds of vegetables, which Mom canned and froze.*

*There were a lot more outbuildings in the “60’s” as livestock flourished. The machine shed, which is still there, was Fairview #9 Schoolhouse. It was purchased and moved northeast (70 or 90 feet) to the present location. In 2014 we built a two-car garage. This replaced the single garage that formerly was the summer kitchen at one time.*

*My parents shared the family car until Dad purchased in 1959 a 1949 Chevy 3/4 ton pick-up with stock racks. We still have on the farm a 1952 Ford 8 N tractor that Dad purchased new!*

*I remember the good smells of fresh cut hay, fresh turned soil and also the smell of livestock (not always pleasant). I also remember the taste of fresh strawberries, mulberries, rhubarb, walnuts, asparagus, tomatoes, parsley and peas. I remember the roughness of the hay and straw bales wearing out your jeans and the vibrations of a rusty old Farmall F-14 tractor.*

*Currently my daughter Amber and her husband Jeremy with their children Ernie, Lenora and Walden live in the farmhouse and farm the five acres there. The remaining 115 acres are cash rented. They moved there in January 2014 and are raising chickens, (for eggs and meat), turkeys and all kinds of vegetables. They market through a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) group.*

*Hopefully Amber’s family will flourish and expand on the property with well wishes from her siblings.  I want all my heirs to receive the best equal economic value from the farmland. I hope their decisions are made in harmony with what is good for everyone.  I feel conservation and improvement of soil and water is important to all farm land.*

***--Darrell Ernest Mohr***