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Willing, Frank W. (1875 -)

Tresa Gruber

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WILLING, FRANK W.

File No. B-1474

Frank W. Willing, was born September 13, 1857 in Illinois, and there received his education. When fifteen years old he came with his parents and settled on a farm near St. Joseph, Minnesota.

He married on June 20, 1882 to Mary E. Benning daughter of John Henry and Theresa Benning. John Benning, Mary's father, came from Germany and settled in Stillwater for a short time, later he bought a farm in Jacobs Prairie, Wakefield County, Minnesota. They endured many hardships, but the first real calamity occurred in 1873. Coming out of church one Sunday morning they found grass hoppers by the millions, the sound of their wings was nearly deafening. These pests had devoured every green thing in the fields and gardens. The settlers used every method possible to rid themselves of these insects, but without success until in 1877, when they finally got a crop.

Frank and Mary E. (Benning) Willing lived on the Bridgman farm where he was foreman for eight years. In 1883 they lost their entire crop, which was destroyed by hail. This hail storm was so terrific it beat all the grain to the ground and everything was lost that year.

They moved to Maine Prairie and in 1889 their buildings were burned completely to the ground, this happened two days before Christmas.

They have four children. Theresa, born in 1885 is married to Joe Prem, they own a Grocery Store on Fourth Avenue South. They have two children Virgil and Coneld. Henry John, born in 1887, married Catherine Walters they live on Fourth Avenue South. Henry is a salesman. Frank was born in 1889, he is married to Helen Crosier and they have one son Donald. Frank is manager and salesman for the Rumpfort Baking Company. Arthur was born in 1894, he married Elizabeth Kohler and they have one daughter, Mildred. Arthur is a salesman for the Auto Supply Company.

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Frank and Mary E. (Benning) Willing celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary June 20, 1932. They are living at 318 Ninth Avenue South.

Interviewed: Mary(Benning) Willing
Date: June 9, 1936
By: Tresa Gruber