

## I. JACOB and MARY ANN STEINMAN & FAMILY

J. Jacob Steinmann was the third child of Jacob and Margaret Steinmann. He was actually named John Jacob but commonly went by Jacob or J. Jacob to distinguish him from his father. Perhaps this is why, later, a younger brother was given the name John. We know nothing of his childhood except that he grew up on the family farm on the Ridge Road in Bertie.

In 1879 he married Mary Ann Martin of Pelham, daughter of David and Catharine Martin. It is understood in the family that the marriage was engineered by Mary Ann's mother. Presumably the Steinmann and Burger families in Bertie were at least acquaintances, if not friends. Since David Martin, Mary Ann's father, had just died the year before, the young couple stayed on with the widowed mother for some time. Their first two children, George David and Mabel Cornelia, were born there.

In 1883 they purchased a farm in Bertie Township, Lot 2, Concession 6, on the corner of Bertie Road and what is now Sunset Drive. The cost was \$3000.00 and records in the Welland Registry indicate that Catharine Burger <sup>MARTIN</sup> paid for the farm for her daughter. At the time of writing, a grandson, Oliver Benner, still lives in the family home.

J. Jacob's picture shows him to be a handsome young man, and he was very energetic and hard working. We are told he would have his team hitched, waiting for daylight, to go to the field, ignoring inclement weather. This may have been a contributing factor to his becoming ill with what was called galloping consumption in those days and after a brief illness died on Feb. 9, 1891, just 32 years old. His tombstone in St. John's cemetery at Snyder is well preserved. Twenty years later his younger brother, John, also was to die of T.B. while still a young man. J. Jacob's two sons, George and Norman, suffered severely from emphysema in their later years. One would suspect a family respiratory weakness.

Mary Ann needed all the habits of thrift and hard work, learned from her German mother, to cope with the struggle of running a farm and raising her young family. George, not yet 12 when his father died, soon shouldered a man's work in helping with the farm work, Mabel, soon to be 10, learned at an early age to help with household duties.

Extra income was earned by boarding Miss Rose Seaton, the teacher at S.S.#4, the school attended by the Steinmann children, and later by Mabel and Flossie's children. It is believed that Mary Ann's mother also gave financial assistance during those difficult years. Mabel always extolled the virtues of this grandmother. Perhaps as a child she had often benefited from her kindness.

Mabel wanted to be a tailoress but since there was no money for training, she took employment as a domestic with a Buffalo family by the name of Baker. She was so fond of their little boy, Merritt, that a few years later she gave her own son that name. While still a little girl, through her friend and neighbour, Ida Benner, she met and became good friends with relatives of the latter, Eda and Ida Michael, who were twins from Sherkston. Little did she dream then that one day her son would marry Eda's daughter. It was also through Ida Benner, who married Jacob Sauer, that Mabel met and married George Sauer. Eventually they were to live next door to Mary Ann Steinman.

George Steinman bought his own house in Fort Erie long before he was married. Ma Steinman, as she was called by all her family, kept house for him there until he was married. Merritt boarded with them in the winter months during high school days. George would chide Merritt that his writing in his books looked as though chickens with dirty feet had walked on the page. He had a ridiculous sense of humor, but never offended with his outrageous comments.

Norman married beautiful Pearl Church and went to live in Buffalo, N.Y. where Alan was born. They came back to Fort Erie and Norman worked as chief electrician at Horton Steel until his retirement. He was an ingenious workman and should have patented some of his inventions. He was Merritt's supervisor and demanding teacher when he apprenticed there. His motto was "anything worth doing, must be done right". Pearl was the outgoing, hospitable aunt. Merritt "baby sat" for Alan so was often in their home. They suffered a tragic blow when their five year old daughter Norma died, and again when Alan suffered a severe case of polio.

In the intervening years Flossie and husband Albert Benner had taken over the home farm and raised their family there. There was always a close warm relationship between the two sisters and the cousins next door. When George married Nellie Spear in 1923, Ma Steinman came back to live out her years with *Flossie in the home place. Even when she was older, she maintained a well-ordered vegetable and flower garden, which raised both vegetables in abundance and* where no weeds dared grow.

She died following a stroke at 75 years of age in 1936. She had lived to see the family she had struggled to raise during the early, difficult years, now all happily settled in homes of their own. Her children and grandchildren all gave her the love and respect she deserved.

When Mary Ann died, her estate was willed to her two sons, George and Norman Steinman. This was in accordance with the wishes of her mother, Catharine Martin Howald, who, during her lifetime, had purchased a farm for each of her three daughters, and, upon her death, had left cash legacies to each of her six granddaughters. The grandsons were to inherit the farm or equivalent from each of their respective mothers. Even from beyond the grave, the matriarch's power was exercised.

Gradually, over the years, the Canadian Steinman families dropped the final "n" from the spelling of their name, whereas the American families continued to use the double "n".

Merritt George Sauer B. Nov. 16, 1907 D.  
M June 7, 1934 to  
Hazel Elizabeth Chambers B. Apr. 24, 1912 D.  
2 children - Rodney and Ronald Sauer

Rodney Merritt Sauer B. Dec. 15, 1936 D. Dec. 15, 1936

Ronald Steinman Sauer B. Jan. 15, 1940  
M Sept. 1, 1962 to  
Judith Ann Newman B. Mar. 16, 1942  
Divorced Dec. 22, 1972  
M June 29, 1973 to  
Margaret Jean Collins B. Dec. 13, 1943

Norman John Steinman B. Jan. 1, 1888 D. July 29, 1972  
M Sept. 2, 1914 to  
Sarah Pearl Church B. Nov. 27, 1890 D. Nov. 17, 1976  
2 children - Alan and Norma Steinman

~~Alan Howard Steinman~~ B. June 25, 1915  
M Aug. 10, 1938 to  
Vera Hopley B. Aug. 10, 1914

Norma Theo Steinman B. Apr. 20, 1930  
D. Sept. 19, 1935

Flossie May Steinman B. Apr. 20, 1892 D. Aug. 15, 1961  
M Sept. 12, 1915 to  
Albert March Benner B. Mar. 26, 1889 D. Oct. 26, 1975  
5 children - Marion, Oliver, Alma, Kenneth & Sheldon Benner

Marion Benner B. Aug. 14, 1916 D. Sept. 18, 1968  
M Dec. 25, 1942 to  
Philo Harry Dean B. Jan. 11, 1912 D.  
4 children - Sheldon, Gwendolyn, Karen & Kenneth Dean

Sheldon Harry Dean B. Apr. 5, 1950  
M to SEPT. 9, 1978  
Jillian Howie B. Sept. 1, 1948  
1 child - Kiri Dean B. AUG.

Gwendolyn May Dean B. Apr. 5, 1952  
M to  
James Grilz B.  
1 child - Jamie Grilz

Karen Ann Dean B. Oct. 22, 1956  
M to SEPT. 3, 1977  
James Drittle B. SEPT. 29  
1 child - Keri Lyn Drittle B. DEC. 7, 1978

Kenneth Albert Dean B. May 25, 1958

Lawrence Oliver Benner B. Sept. 29, 1918 - unmarried

Alma Rose Benner B. Nov. 1, 1922  
M July 31, 1948 to  
Wilfred Gilmour B. Nov. 25, 1922  
2 children - Lynn and Beverley Gilmour

Lynn Wilfred Gilmour B. Apr. 30, 1961

Beverley Jean Gilmour B. Mar. 6, 1964

Kenneth Royal Benner B. Aug. 19, 1930  
M June 12, 1954 to  
Norma Possinger B. Nov. 30, 1929  
2 children - Carl & Glen Benner

Carl Albert Benner B. June 6, 1959

Glen Howard Benner B. Sept. 16, 1961  
M to 1981

Marilyn Gibbons B. APR. 24. 1963  
1 child - Terry Benner B. SEPT. 18, 1981

Sheldon Dean Benner B. July 10, 1935 - unmarried