



Henry and Hannah Gensicke

Friedrich Heinrich "Henry"¹ Gensicke, the youngest son of Christian and Elisabeth Gensicke, married Johannah Carolyn "Hannah" Krueger, the daughter of Friedrich Ottomar "Otto" and Caroline Krueger on August 17, 1885. They settled into routine married life, as Henry¹ took over his parents' Benton County, Iowa farm, and he and Hannah started their family. In 1903, they moved to their own farm just west of Cedar Rapids in Linn County. Over the years, they amassed four good-sized farms and other properties in the Cedar Rapids area, much of which remained in the family well into the 1930s. We are direct descendants of Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke through their daughter Esther.



Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke, 1920

Henry¹ Gensicke

Friedrich Heinrich “Henry¹” Gensicke was born to Johann Christian Gensicke and Anna Elisabeth Hartwich on November 4, 1864 in Wilton Junction (today’s Wilton), Iowa. He was the sixth of their seven children. When he was three years old, his family moved to a farm in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa.

Henry¹ attended school for eight years. Although he was baptized as a Lutheran, and attended a Lutheran church in his early years, in March 1880 Henry¹ and three of his siblings were brought into the Blairstown Moravian Church, an affiliation he claimed long after that church closed.

In February 1885, Henry¹ attended the World’s Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans with family friends.

- For more about Henry¹ Gensicke’s family, see [Christian and Elisabeth Gensicke](#).

Hannah Krueger

Johannah Carolyn “Hannah” Krueger was born to Friedrich Ottomar “Otto” Krueger and Caroline Hoffman on July 11, 1866 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was the second of their three children, but Otto had been married and widowed twice before and Caroline had been married and widowed once before, so Hannah was one of ten children in this large blended family.

- For more about Hannah Gensicke’s family, see [Otto and Caroline Krueger](#).

Marriage

Henry¹ Gensicke married Hannah Krueger on August 17, 1887 at the farm of her parents between Luzerne and Blairstown in Le Roy Township. The marriage was recorded with the St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Luzerne.

The image shows a handwritten marriage record on a grid. The text is written in cursive and includes the names of the bride and groom, their parents, and the date and location of the marriage. The record is dated August 17, 1887, and took place in Le Roy Township, Benton County, Iowa. The bride is Hannah Krueger, daughter of Friedrich Ottomar Krueger and Caroline Hoffman. The groom is Henry Gensicke, son of Johann Christian Gensicke and Anna Elisabeth Hartwich. The record is signed by the officiant, Rev. C. F. Krueger.

Marriage record for Henry¹ Gensicke and Hannah Krueger, August 17, 1887



F.H. "Henry¹" Gensicke married Johannah "Hannah" Krueger in 1885. We are direct descendants of Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke through their daughter Esther.

Children

Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke had six children, including the following:

- Edna Olive Gensicke, born May 5, 1888, in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa
- Henry² Frederick Gensicke, born May 16, 1889, in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa
- Carolyn Sophia Gensicke, born January 2, 1891, in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa
- Eldred William Gensicke, born July 4, 1894, in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa
- Esther Elizabeth Valentina Gensicke, born February 14, 1900, in St. Clair Township, Benton County, Iowa
- Everett Lynn Gensicke, born October 28, 1903 in Clinton Township, Linn County, Iowa



Edna (left), Henry² and Carolyn



Eldred (left), Esther and Everett

We are direct descendants of Henry¹ and Hannah's daughter Esther.

Research Notes

The six-year gap between the births of Eldred and Esther might suggest that there may have been one or more children who did not survive. However, both the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Census asked mothers to report both the number of births and the number of living children. Hannah's responses both times showed that there were no children other than these six.

Married Life

After they married, the couple settled on the St. Clair Township, Benton County farm of Henry¹'s parents where Henry¹ was raised. Henry¹ soon took over the operation of the farm, which he rented from his parents.



The house on the Christian Gensicke farm has been updated since it was first built. Christian and Elisabeth Gensicke finished raising their family here. Henry¹ and Hannah started their family here.

Hannah may have been pregnant at the time of their marriage, as their first child, daughter Edna, was born eight and a half months after the wedding. Their first four children were born in the first seven years of their marriage.

Although Henry¹, at least three of his siblings and his parents had joined the Blairstown Moravian Church, and Henry¹ and his parents reported Moravian as their religion as late as the 1895 Iowa Census, Hannah was Lutheran, and the family attended St. Martin's Lutheran Church, a.k.a. the German Lutheran Church. The baptisms of Henry¹ and Hannah's four oldest children were recorded in St. Martin's records. Fifth child Esther's baptism likely took place there as well, but available church records only go up to 1899. Son Everett was born after the family moved to Cedar Rapids, and he was likely baptized at the Lutheran church that the family attended there.

In addition to raising their children, managing the farm and participating in their church, Henry¹ was active in a Watkins debating society, where he argued in favor of positions including that a man's mind is not superior to that of a woman's, that intemperance causes more crime and poverty than war, and that legislation ought to tend more toward free trade than protectionism. Henry¹'s speaking on the issues of the day continued for years after they moved to Linn County in 1903.

In 1893, Henry¹ and Hannah traveled with his sister Sophia, her husband William Reisser and others to the Chicago World's Fair.

Henry¹ served as St. Clair Township justice of the peace in both 1898 and 1899.

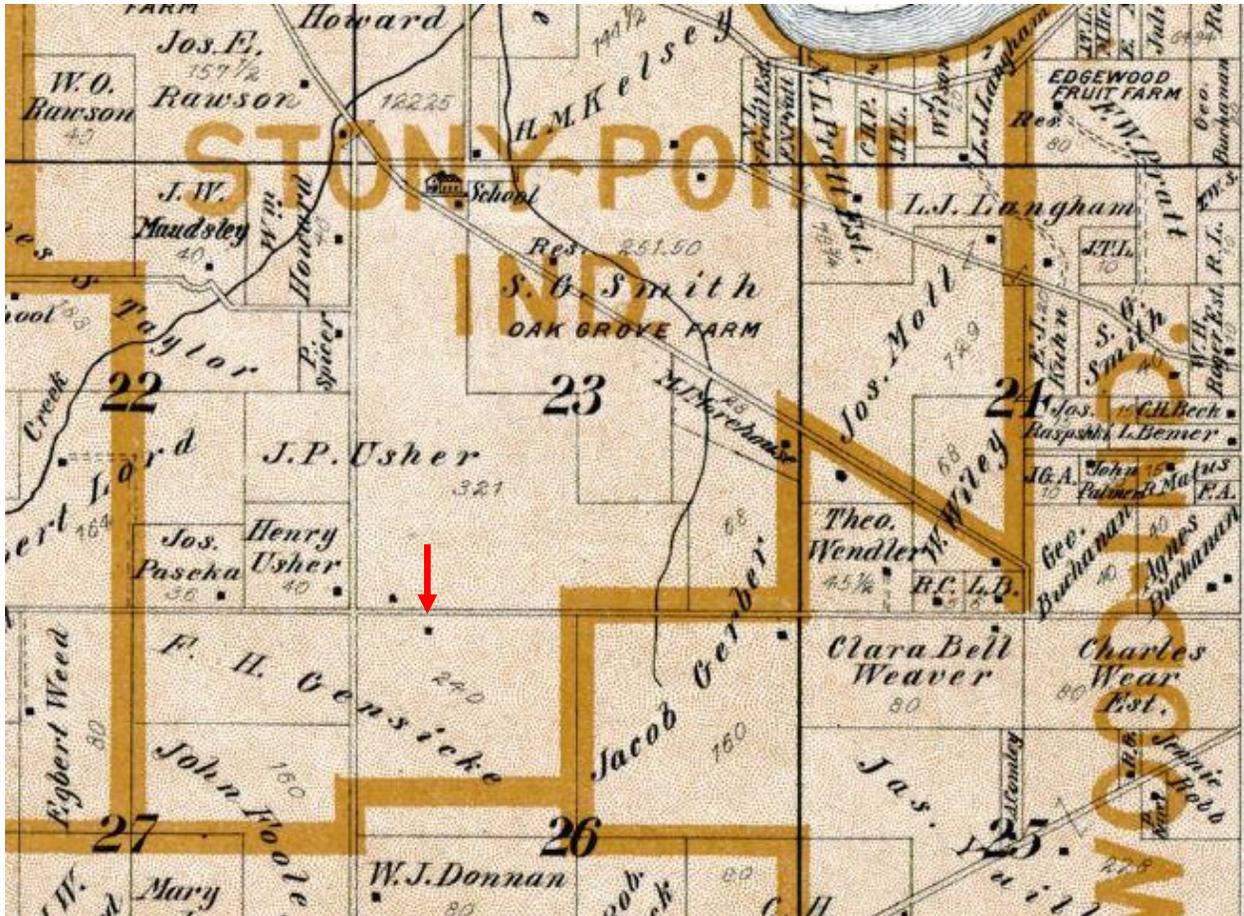
Although Henry¹ and Hannah continued to rent the farm from his father after his mother Elisabeth died in 1897, Henry¹ and Hannah began trading in residential real estate in neighboring Linn County, Iowa.

Moving to Linn County

By 1903, the family decided to move to Linn County. Christian Gensicke sold the St. Clair Township farm in Benton County that he had been renting to his son, and Henry¹ and Hannah purchased a farm in Clinton Township, west of Cedar Rapids in Linn County. The family moved to their new farm in March 1903. This farm would become known as Sunny Dale Farm, and the house still stands on E Avenue NW in Cedar Rapids.



Sunny Dale Farm, 2010



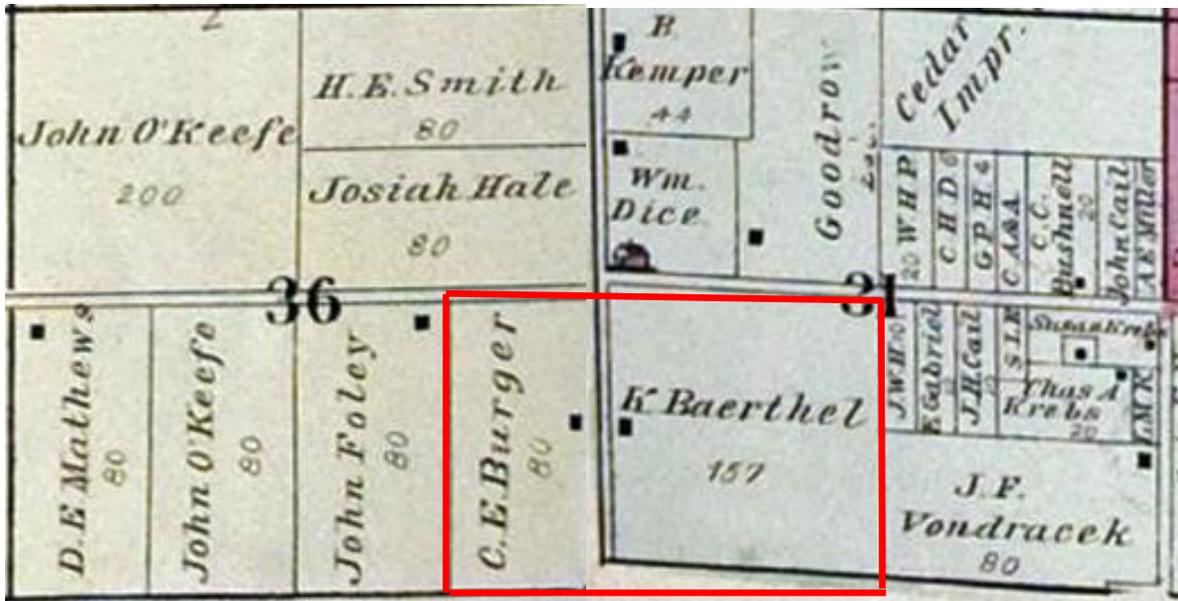
The Gensickes bought a farm just west of Cedar Rapids in 1903. By 1907 it consisted of 240 acres in Sections 26 and 27 of Clinton Township, Linn County, Iowa along the road known then as the Atkins Road, later the Red Ball Road and Vinton Road, and today's E Ave NW. Forty acres in Section 27 were sold in December 1907, and another 40 acres in that section were sold in March 1920, leaving Sunny Dale Farm with 160 acres in section 26.

- For more about Sunny Dale Farm, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa](#).

Son Everett was born on the farm in October 1903.

Henry¹ and Hannah's land purchases did not stop there. In July 1903, they purchased the Bunger 80, an 80-acre farm in the southeast corner of Clinton Township, where Westdale Mall was built on the west side of today's Edgewood Road years later in the 1970s. They rented this farm out for the next few years.

In 1907, they purchased a 160-acre farm across the road from the Bunger 80, and combined the two farms into what they called the Fairfield Farm.



The Gensickes' Fairfield Farm combined the Burger 80 and Baerthel Farms into a 240-acre farm that straddled today's Edgewood Road to the south of 23rd Avenue, today's Wilson Avenue. It included two houses, two orchards and assorted farm buildings from the two homesteads.

In 1908, Henry¹, Hannah and their three youngest children, Eldred, Esther and Everett, moved to the Fairfield Farm. Daughter Edna, 19, left home to be married to Charles Henry Stark. Son Henry², 18, and daughter Carolyn, 17, remained on Sunny Dale Farm. The two farms were run as a combined operation, sharing labor and equipment. Carolyn moved off the farm when she married James Morton Wiley in 1913. Henry² married Lillian Armstrong in 1916, and they raised their family on Sunny Dale Farm, eventually purchasing the farm from Henry²'s parents.



Henry¹ Gensicke and his son Eldred plow a field at the Fairfield Farm, with the houses, barns and outbuildings in the background, as seen looking toward the southwest from near 23rd (Wilson) Avenue.

For 1914, Henry¹ reported \$3,600 in income from Fairfield Farm, there was no mortgage on the farm, and the 240-acre farm was worth \$48,000, or \$200 per acre.

With son Eldred coming of age, Henry¹ Gensicke made plans to retire from farming and focus more on real estate trading and other interests. Eldred took over the operations at Fairfield Farm. He married Gertrud Falkenau in 1917, and they started their family on Fairfield Farm.

- For more about Fairfield Farm, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa.](#)

Life on Sunny Dale and Fairfield Farms

In their years on these farms, Henry¹ Gensicke raised and traded in corn, wheat, oats, apples, clover, straw, cattle, hogs, horses, lamb and sheep,

The Gensickes joined the German Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids, today's Trinity Lutheran Church. In addition to attending services there, at least some of the Gensicke children were confirmed there.

When they lived on Sunny Dale Farm, the Gensicke children attended Stony Point School, a one-room school about a mile away. After moving to Fairfield Farm, the Gensicke children attended Edgewood School No. 2, located across 23rd Avenue from Fairfield Farm.



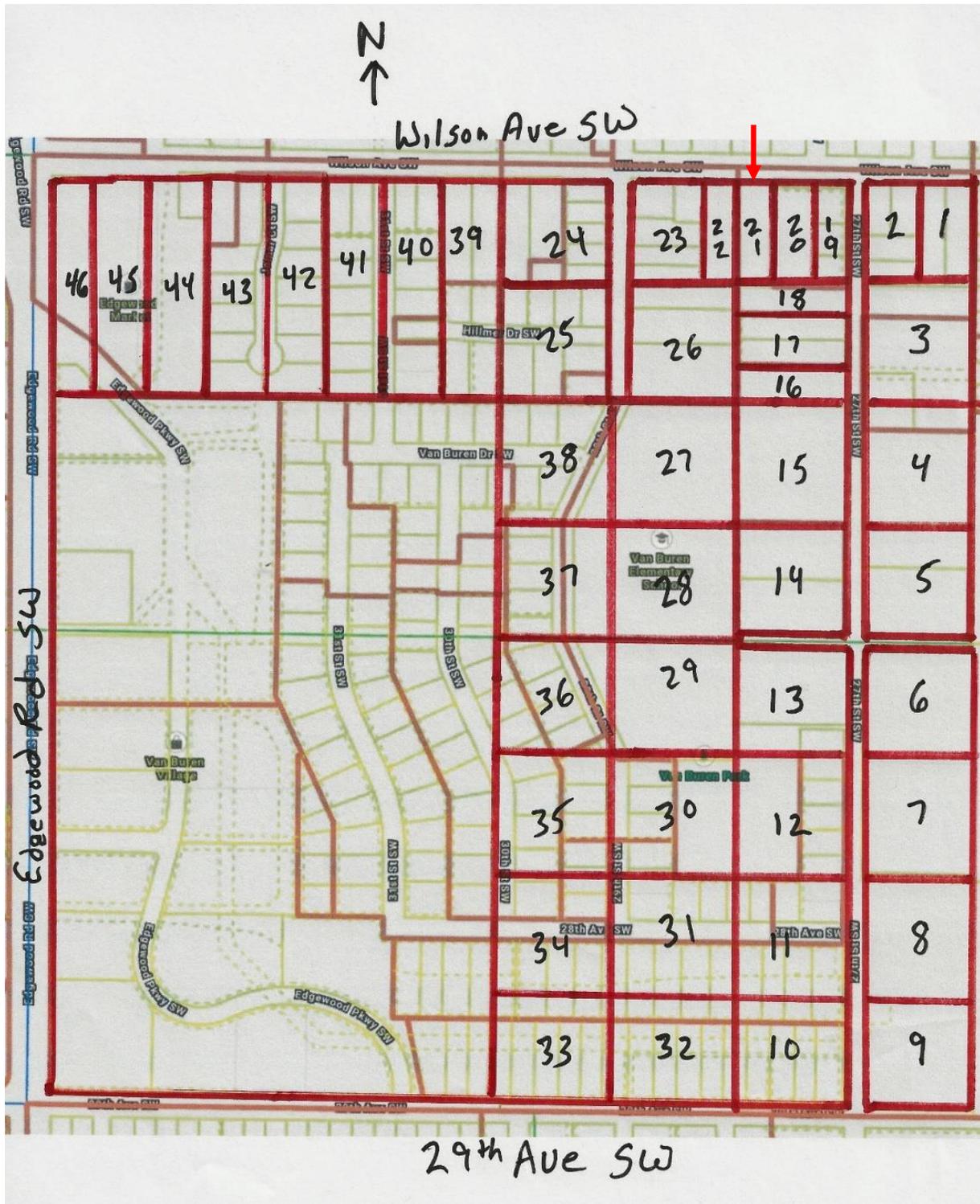
Stony Point School in 2015; Edgewood School No. 2 was replaced with a new building in the early 1920s and has long since been torn down.

Henry¹ served for a time as a trustee for the Modern Woodmen Association.

The Retirement Years

With son Henry² managing Sunny Dale Farm and son Eldred managing Fairfield Farm, Henry¹ could retire from farm work and focus more on real estate trading and other interests.

This began in 1915, when Henry¹ took 100 acres of the 160-acre quarter section of Fairfield Farm east of today's Edgewood Road and began platting them into 46 "garden farm" lots that ranged from about one to five (later two and one-half) acres each, leaving Fairfield Farm with about 140 acres.



Fairfield Gardens lots boundaries (red) are imposed on a current plat map. Several of the original lots were combined and/or re-platted in the years since the Gensickes sold this land (boundary lines for lots 27-38 are educated guesses, but these lots added up to 30 acres). The Gensicke retirement residence was built on lot 21 (red arrow)

Jackson Realty Co.
FAIRFIELD GARDENS

Located on Twenty-Third Avenue West.
 Less Than Ten Minutes Walk West of the
 Iowa City Interurban Railway.

1 Acre to 5 Acre Gardens
 THESE LITTLE GARDENS WILL BE
 PLACED ON THE MARKET ON OR BE-
 FORE MAY 1ST.

You are too good a judge of SOIL, LOCA-
 TION AND LAND VALUES to buy before
 you look these over.

For Complete Information Ask Us.

Jackson Realty Co.
 708 Security Bank Building. Tel. 2742

Jackson Realty Co.

Advertising for Fairfield Garden lots was underway in early 1915 before they went on sale on May 1 of that year. Cedar Rapids Gazette, April 17, 1915

Fairfield Gardens was heavily advertised through 1915, but apparently there were few sales. Advertising was pulled for much of 1916, returning late that year with a different realtor. As of January 1917, only four lots had been sold. As a development venture, Fairfield Gardens was a failure, with many lots still unsold into the 1930s.

However, Henry¹ and Hannah built their "retirement" home on one of the lots, Lot 21, which fronted 23rd Avenue, today's Wilson Avenue SW. They moved in with daughter Esther, son Everett and recently divorced daughter Carolyn. The house remained in the family well into the 1930s, and it still stands today.



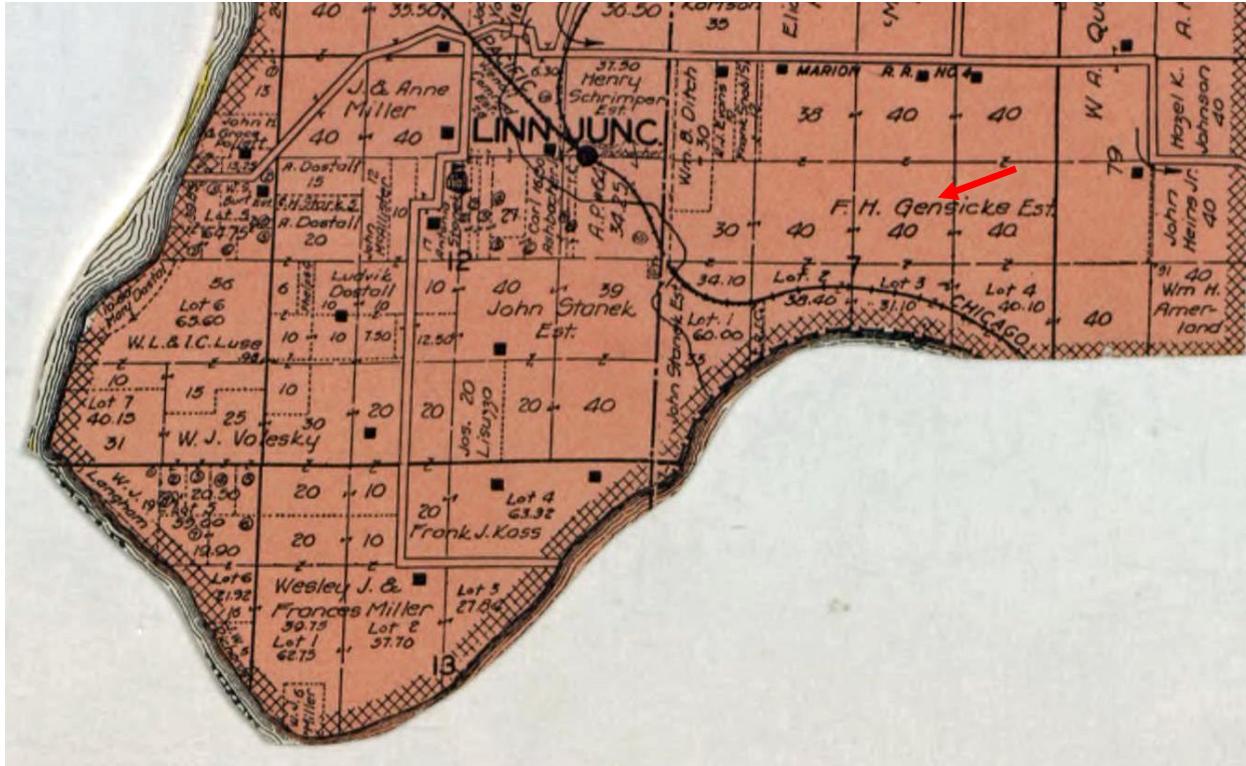
In 1917, the Gensickes built their “retirement residence” on 23rd Avenue, today’s Wilson Avenue, on lot 21 in Fairfield Gardens.



Hannah and Henry¹ Gensicke at their “retirement” residence

- For more about Fairfield Gardens and the Gensickes' retirement residence, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa.](#)

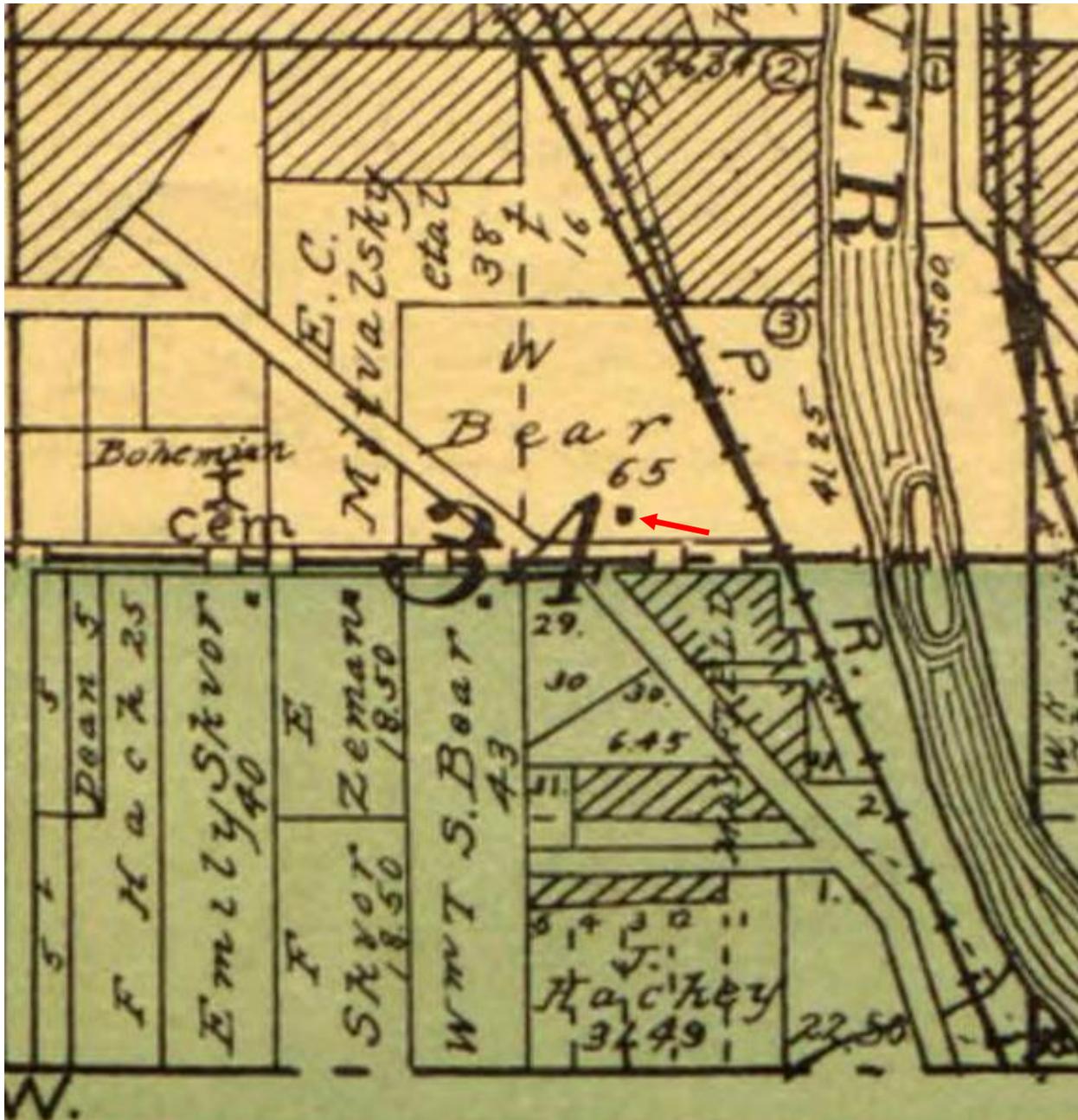
In the early 1920s, the Gensickes acquired the John Heins Farm, a sizeable farm of well over 400 acres between today's 42nd Street NE to the north and the Cedar River to the south, and straddling today's Edgewood Road. There's no evidence that any of the Gensickes ever lived on the Heins Farm. Rather, they rented the land out.



The John Heins Farm, the Gensicke's third Linn County Farm, in 1930.

- For more about the John Heins Farm, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa.](#)

Son Everett attended Iowa State College, today's Iowa State University, where he graduated in 1927 with a degree in dairy husbandry. In 1926, the Gensickes purchased the Bear Farm, which a William Bear established as one of the top dairy farms in the area. When Everett finished school, he took over management of the Bear Farm. Although the Gensickes still owned their retirement residence down the street on 23rd Avenue, Henry¹ and Hannah moved onto Bear Farm with Everett. Everett married Marjorie Elizabeth Miller in 1929, and they began their married life on this farm. Much of the farm has since been redeveloped as housing and today's Tanager Place, a children's human services agency.



The Bear Farm, 1921. The main house and dairy barn were located at the red arrow. The impressive dairy barn still stands on Tanager Place property.



Hannah (standing, left) and Henry¹ Gensicke with their daughter Esther, her sons Douglas, Walter and Glenn, and other family members



Henry¹ Gensicke with his daughter Esther and some of his grandchildren at Bear Farm, about 1928



Hannah Gensicke, and Douglas and Esther Wasson at Bear Farm, about 1928

- For more about the Bear Farm, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa.](#)

In addition to the four farms, Henry¹ and Hannah bought and sold several residential lots all over the city. Among them, the downtown post office sits on one property, Roosevelt School sits on another, and a third was paved over when I-380 was built.

- For the locations of several of the residential properties they bought and sold, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa.](#)

In 1916, Henry¹ Gensicke sought political office, running as a Republican for Linn County first district county supervisor, although he lost in the primary.



For Supervisor F. H. GENSICKE

Good Roads Candidate For
Supervisor of the First
District.

Subject to the will of the republican voters, June 5th.

Competition in office is the life of all civil progress. And by being impartial and making use of tried methods of Road Building we can have better roads without raising our taxes.

By 30 years of good business management — economy and hard work—I have become the owner of a large farm one-half mile west of Cedar Rapids. And this, my friends believe, shows sufficient ability to fill the office.

If the \$80,000.00 collected in Linn County as road poll, and automobile tax are used in a prompt, aggressive and economic way, the public will not be obliged to suffer from neglected culverts and want of drainage on our main roads for six months or longer every year. And above is the kind of service the public and taxpayers are entitled to, and such is the service I will give if elected.

Henry¹ Gensicke runs for county supervisor, Cedar Rapids Gazette June 3, 1916

In 1920, Henry¹ Gensicke and a number of other Cedar Rapids-area farmers and businessmen joined together to organize and fund a new bank, what would become the Farmers & City Saving Bank. Henry¹ was among those elected to the bank's board of directors. The state authorized the bank's operations in January 1921. However, the bank failed, and its assets were taken over by another bank a few years later.

Opening Announcement

Farmers & City Savings Bank

Located at No. 106 Masonic Temple

Is Now Open for Business

The Officers and Directors cordially invite the people to come in and get acquainted with the Officers of this bank.

Realizing that the people of this community have contributed in a large measure to the success of the banking business it will be our aim to give them first and proper consideration of their needs. Such consideration should bring benefits to the community as well as to ourselves and therefore be mutual.

The money and securities will be safely protected by a modern burglar-proof safe, which carries lowest burglary insurance. The bank will be also well protected by a liberal amount of "hold up" and burglary insurance. The bank is organized under the state banking laws and is subject to the banking supervision.

Knowing our responsibility, we desire to serve you and welcome you to our bank at No. 106 Masonic Temple.

| | | |
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| <p>LOUIS WOUKON, President G. A. PESTAL, Cashier</p> | <p>C. C. UPTON, Vice-President A. G. KAMPMEIER, Vice-President</p> | |
| <p>J. C. Loomis John N. Hughes S. E. Marash Louis Smid</p> | <p>Adolph Troyak F. H. Gensicke M. E. Tanner</p> | <p>Henry P. Usher Wencil Trachta Robert E. MacDaniel Chas. W. Van Note</p> |

SHERIFF'S SALE NOTICE.

By virtue of a special execution, direct to me from the Clerk of the District Court of Linn County, Iowa, on a judgment obtained in said Court, on the 10th day of July, 1924, in favor of Corn Belt Savings Bank and against Farmers & City Savings Bank for the sum of One Hundred Thousand Four Hundred Seventy-four Dollars and Ninety-one Cents, and costs taxed at Six Hundred Seventy-eight Dollars and Fifteen Cents, and accruing costs, I have levied upon the following Personal Property, taken as the property of said Defendant, Farmers & City Savings Bank to satisfy said execution, to-wit: All the assets and property of the defendant, Farmers & City Savings Bank, including all notes and accounts receivable and all choses in action.

And will offer the same for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash in hand on the 9th day of August A. D. 1924, in front of the Court House door, in Marion, Linn County, Iowa, at the hour of 10 o'clock A. M., of said day, when and where due attendance will be given by the undersigned.

Dated at my office in Marion, Iowa, this 11th day of July, 1924.

THOMAS AVERY,
Sheriff Linn County, Iowa.
By Roy Radebaugh, Deputy.
Johnson, Donnelly & Lynch, Attys.

The beginning (left, Cedar Rapids Gazette, January 13, 1921) and end (right, Cedar Rapids Gazette, July 23, 1924) of the Farmers & City Savings Bank



Henry¹ Gensicke and his grandson Walter (left); Hannah Gensicke and Walter (right), 1924



Hannah (left) and Henry¹ (right) Gensicke, about 1929



Hannah (fourth) and Henry¹ (right) Gensicke, about 1929

In 1928, the city of Cedar Rapids proposed building boulevards that connected all the major parks in the city. Henry¹ Gensicke offered free to the city a 100-foot wide and 1 ½-mile long right of way through the Heins Farm for the boulevard section that would connect Shaver Park to Ellis Park. This would have benefited the Gensickes by improving access from Heins Farm to the heart of the city, which in turn would support developing the Heins Farm as a residential area.

That same year, Henry¹ Gensicke proposed providing some Bear Farm land to the city of Cedar Rapids for a park. The boulevard was never developed, and the city chose a different site for the park.

Hannah Gensicke was mentioned in the news a lot less during these years, mostly in the context of social visits and family gatherings, as a partner with Henry¹ in some real estate transactions, and her active participation in the Suburban Co-Workers. Founded in 1917, the Suburban Co-Workers used sewing to assist with the World War I effort, and later to make items for needy children, St. Luke's Hospital and the Red Cross. Over the years, other members of the Suburban Co-Workers included daughter-in-law Marjorie Gensicke and neighbor/in-law Jessie Wasson Orr.

On Sunday August 18, 1929, 63 friends and relatives of Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke, including all of their children met for a picnic in Ellis Park to commemorate Henry¹ and Hannah's 42nd anniversary, which occurred the day before.



Hannah and Henry¹ Gensicke (seated) and their six children, Carrie, Esther, Edna, Everett, Eldred and Henry² (standing, from left to right), likely from an August 1929 Gensicke family reunion picnic at Ellis Park, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

HONORED ON ANNIVERSARY.
 Sixty-three relatives and friends of Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Gensicke gave a picnic in their honor on their forty-second anniversary Sunday at the duck pond in Ellis park. The picnic also served as a family reunion. Those attending included Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Gensicke, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Gensicke, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Stark and their families, Mary Matilda and Elizabeth Stark, Everett L. Gensicke of Cedar Rapids, Mr. and Mrs. William Reisser, Walter, Arthur and Florence Reisser, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Reisser and their family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Reisser and their family, of Vinton, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Wasson and their family of Onslow, Mr. and Mrs. William Wiley of Walker, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Krueger and their family of Blairstown, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hogan, sr., Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hogan, jr., and their family, and Daniel Kirk of Van Horne, and Mr. and Mrs. Will Clark of Mount Vernon.

Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke celebrate their 42nd anniversary with a family gathering at Ellis Park, Cedar Rapids Gazette, August 21, 1929

Henry¹ Gensicke's Final Months and Death

On October 31, 1929, Henry¹ Gensicke and Virgil M. Lacock signed a contract for a land deal in which Lacock agreed to deed 631 acres of land in Fallon County in eastern Montana to Gensicke, and in exchange, Gensicke would deed two properties in northeast Cedar Rapids to Lacock and also pay Lacock \$3500. They agreed to this deal immediately after the stock market crash of 1929 that marked the onset of the Great Depression.

About a month later on December 3, Henry¹ transferred ownership of Fairfield Farm including unsold parts of Fairfield Gardens into wife Hannah's name.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS

Fredrick H. Gensicke to Hannah Gensicke, my wife, W. D. W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 31 (except lots 39 to 46 incl. Aud. Plat 143 and also except public highway lying between lots 40 and 41 and also except public highway lying between 44 and 45 in sd. W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 31) Lots 27 to 38 incl. in E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW, being a part of Aud. Plat 143, a part of section 31-83-7. \$1. natural love and affection. 12-3-29.

Henry¹ transfers ownership of Fairfield Farm and parts of Fairfield Gardens to Hannah, Cedar Rapids Gazette, December 23, 1929

On December 13, Hannah noted that Henry¹ was acting strangely and had remained downtown all day. Henry¹ rose early the morning of December 14, and after hanging around the house for a while, he went out to the back yard. At about 7AM, his grandson Andrew Stark was sent out to look for him. Andrew found his body on the floor of the chicken coop. Henry¹ had killed himself, having swallowed some strychnine and then shooting himself in the head.

Family lore suggested that Henry¹ had suffered huge losses at the start of the Great Depression, and that was his motivation to commit suicide. But Hannah told the coroner that she was not aware that he was in any financial straits.

F. H. Gensicke, 65, Kills Self With Bullet In Head

(CEDAR RAPIDS NEWS.)

F. H. Gensicke, 65, well known farmer who for years has owned a farm at Bowling hill near Twenty-third avenue and C street west, took his own life early this morning in a chicken house back of his home. He shot himself in the right temple with a 32-caliber revolver, the bullet passing completely through his head. A glass on the floor beside his body contained traces of strychnine and a partly emptied half-ounce bottle of the same drug found in his pocket indicated that he had taken poison before he shot himself.

Gensicke had been acting strangely and remained downtown all day yesterday, Mrs. Gensicke told Coroner R. A. Vorpahl. He arose early this morning and after being around the house for some time, went out in the back yard. When he did not return to the house by about 7 a.m., his grandson, Arnold Stark, went out to the barn to look for him. Not finding him in the barn, Stark glanced in the chicken house and discovered the body lying on the floor.

Mrs. Gensicke told the coroner that although Gensicke had suffered some financial losses last summer, he was not in financial straits so far as she knew. A note found in Gensicke's vest pocket may throw some light on his action.

The body was taken to the West Side mortuary pending funeral arrangements. No inquest will be held, the coroner said, death being obviously self-inflicted.

Henry¹ Gensicke's death, Cedar Rapids Gazette, December 14, 1929

Funeral For F. H. Gensicke Tuesday Will Be Private

Private funeral service for Frederick Henry Gensicke will be held in the West Side chapel at 2 p.m. Tuesday. The Rev. P. L. Bornhoeft will be in charge and burial will be in Linwood cemetery.

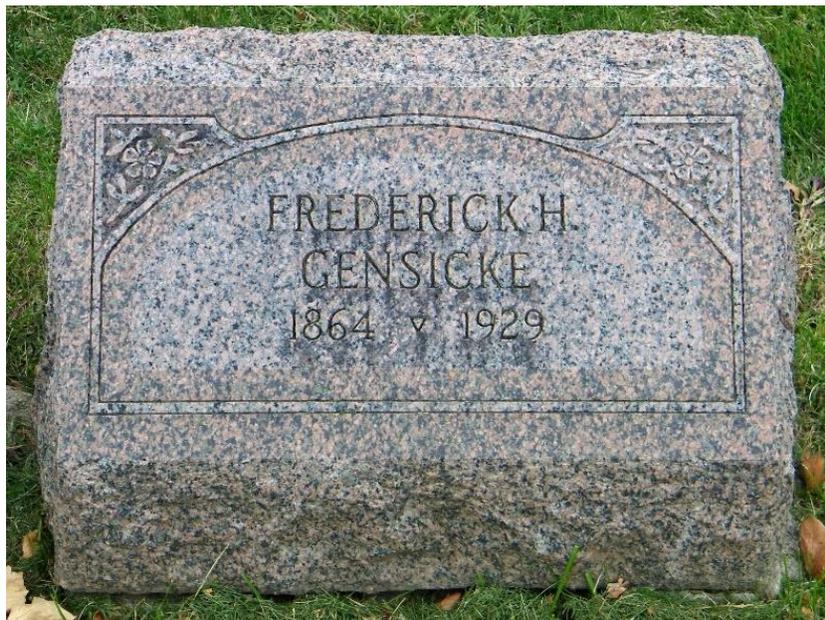
Mr. Gensicke was born in Wilton Junction Nov. 4, 1864, and had been a resident of Cedar Rapids and vicinity for the last twenty-six years. Besides his wife, Johannah, he is survived by six children: Henry, Eldred, Everett, Mrs. Edna Stark, all of Cedar Rapids; Mrs. Carolyn Lang, Chillicothe, Mo; Mrs. Esther Wasson of Onslow, and twenty-one grandchildren. For many years he was a member of the Trinity Lutheran church.

CARD OF THANKS 2

GENSICKE, Frederick Henry—We wish to thank our friends and neighbors for their floral offerings and sympathy received during our recent bereavement. Mrs. F. H. Gensicke and family.

Henry¹ Gensicke's funeral, Cedar Rapids Gazette, December 15, 1929; Cedar Rapids Gazette, December 24, 1929

Henry¹ was buried in Linwood Cemetery on 23rd Avenue (today's Wilson Avenue) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa between Fairfield Farm and Bear Farm.



Marker for Henry¹ Gensicke, Linwood Cemetery, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

I Frederick H. Gensicke, of RFD #2 Cedar Rapids in the County of Linn and State of Iowa being of sound mind and memory, and considering the uncertainty of this frail and transitory life, do therefore, make, ordain, publish and declare, this to be my last WILL AND TESTAMENT.

FIRST. I order and direct that my Executrix hereinafter named, pay all my just debts and funeral expenses as soon after my decease as conveniently may be.

SECOND. After the payment of such funeral expenses and debts, I give, devise and bequeath unto my wife Hannah Gensicke - One third of my entire estate. The balance of two-thirds to be divided equally among my children, namely- Mrs. Edna Gensicke Stark - Henry F. Gensicke - Eldred W. Gensicke - Carolyn S. Gensicke - Mrs. Esther Gensicke Wasson and Everett L. Gensicke.

In case that any of the above children shall have died before me, it is my wish that his or her part of my estate to be divided as provided by law.

LASTLY. I make, constitute and appoint my wife Hannah Gensicke to be Executrix of this my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me made.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my seal, the 31st day of March, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and twenty-two.

FREDERICK H. GENSICKE (SEAL)

THIS INDENTURE was, on the day of the date thereof, signed, published and declared by said testator, Frederick H. Gensicke, to be his last Will and Testament, in the presence of us, who at his request, have subscribed our names thereto as witnesses, in his presence and in the presence of each other

PAUL H. HUSTON

WM. RINDERKNECHT Jr.

Henry¹ Gensicke's will. Although the will was dated March 31, 1922, it was still in effect when he died in December 1929, and it applied to the final sale of his estate's real estate holdings in 1938. Its terms were straightforward: after paying off any funeral expenses and debts, his wife Hannah would get one-third of the estate, and the remaining two-thirds would be divided equally among his six children.

Research Notes

The contents of the note found in Henry¹'s pocket are not known, so I can only speculate on what may have weighed so heavily on Henry¹ when he took his own life.

Before he died, Henry¹ fulfilled part of the Gensicke-Lacock land deal, having deeded the two Cedar Rapids properties over to Lacock. However, he had not yet paid Lacock the \$3500. With the stock market crash, Henry¹ may not have been able to get a loan for \$3500, which could have prompted Lacock to try to force the sale of some Gensicke land in order to get what he was owed. By putting Fairfield Farm in Hannah's name, Henry¹ would have protected that land and his wife from any claims from Lacock. The courts would later uphold this land transfer and the protection it afforded Hannah Gensicke.

At the time of Henry¹'s death, Hannah may not have known about the \$3500 owed to Lacock, which might explain her comments to the coroner about their financial situation.

Lacock indeed took legal action against the Gensicke Estate in 1930, although Lacock himself died from a stroke shortly before that trial was to begin. The estates continued to fight, and in 1932 the Lacock Estate appeared to win a financial judgment against the Gensicke Estate. The courts ordered the sale of two Gensicke farms – the Bear Farm and the John Heins Farm – but these sales were put on hold as the legal fight continued.

The legal fight between the estates lasted until 1938 when the Lacock Estate lost its last legal battle. It does not appear that the Gensickes ever paid the \$3500 to the Lacock family, and the Montana land was never deeded over to the Gensickes.

The Heins and Bear Farms carried significant mortgages, so when the family finally sold them in 1938, there may have been little left to distribute to the family after the mortgages, taxes and any other estate debts were paid.

- For more about the Gensicke-Lacock land deal and subsequent legal action, see [The Gensicke Farms, Linn County, Iowa](#).

The Depression Years

As the Great Depression took hold, the Gensickes owned four farms totaling more than 900 acres, although at this point Henry² and Lillian Gensicke had taken ownership of the 160-acre Sunny Dale Farm from his parents. Hannah drew rental income from the other farms. Some of Hannah's properties were periodically threatened with tax sales, but that was common during the Great Depression.

Henry², Eldred and Everett regularly made the news because of their productive dairy cattle herds and their successes and involvement in the local farming community. Henry² even became

president of the Linn County Guernsey Breeder's Association. The next generation of Gensickes increasingly made the newspaper for their school and youth farm-related activities.

The family continued to gather for birthdays and other celebrations, and in the summer of 1933, Hannah hosted a family reunion at her home that was attended by all of her children and their families as well as other relatives.



Hannah Gensicke (right), with her sister Wilhelmina "Minnie" and Minnie's husband Carl Otto Webert, 1933



The Krueger sisters, including Minnie Webert, Hannah Gensicke, Paulina Lechtenberg, Amelia "Molly" Will and Emma Grote, about 1933

In early 1935, Eldred retired from farming. After selling off his livestock, equipment and grain, he moved into town and worked as a salesman for a while. He and his family then moved to California by 1937. In 1936, Hannah sold what had been the Bunger 80, the 80 acres west of today's Edgewood Road where Westdale Mall now stands, but for the time being retained ownership of the rest of her Fairfield Farm and Fairfield Gardens land, about 90 acres. However, it appears that she lost the farm at some point, as it was People Savings Bank that sold the farm in early 1939.

In 1938, Henry² and Lillian Gensicke and their son Robert established Sunny Dale Dairy at Sunny Dale Farm.

In 1932, Henry² and Everett Gensicke as administrators of their father's estate put Bear Farm up for a court-ordered sale. But the sale was put on hold, and it wasn't until late 1938 when the

family sold it. In the meantime, Everett left Bear Farm and moved first to the Low Moor/Camanche area and then to Davenport, Iowa to manage dairy farms.

Similarly, in 1932, the Heins Farm was put up for a court-ordered sale. But this sale was also put on hold. The family finally sold this farm in late 1938, closing out Henry¹ Gensicke's estate.

Hannah Gensicke's Final Years and Death

With the sale of the Fairfield Farm and Gardens, the Bear Farm and the Heins Farm, Hannah Gensicke appeared to be left without a permanent home. She made extended stays of as much as a year with her various children in the Cedar Rapids area, Davenport and Onslow, Iowa, Chillicothe, Missouri, and the greater Los Angeles, California area starting in 1938.



Hannah on the Wasson farm near Onslow with grandsons Glenn and Walt, about 1940

Hannah was staying with daughter Carolyn in Chillicothe, Missouri, when she became ill. She died on April 9, 1942. Hannah was buried in Linwood Cemetery next to her husband.

Mrs. Hannah Gensicke.

Mrs. Hannah Gensicke, widow of F. H. Gensicke, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Frank Lang, Chillicothe, Mo., at 4:30 p.m. Thursday after a long illness. She was born July 11, 1865 in Milwaukee. The family moved to a farm in Benton county and on Aug. 17, 1887 she was married to F. H. Gensicke at Luzerne. She

had been a resident of Cedar Rapids for the last 39 years.

Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. C. H. Stark, Cedar Rapids; Mrs. Frank Lang in Missouri; Mrs. D. J. Wasson of Onslow; three sons, Henry Gensicke of Cedar Rapids; Eldred of Norwalk, Calif.; Everett of Davenport; four sisters, a brother, 21 grandchildren and a great-grandchild. The body will be brought to the Rohn chapel Saturday evening. Services will be held at the Trinity Lutheran church at a time to be announced later.

Hannah Gensicke's death, Cedar Rapids Gazette, April 10, 1942

Funeral For Mrs. Gensicke.

Funeral services for Mrs. Hannah Gensicke, who died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Frank Lang, in Chillicothe, Mo. Thursday, will be conducted by the Rev. P. L. Bornhoeft in the Trinity Lutheran church at 1 p.m. Sunday. Burial will be in Linwood cemetery. Friends may call at the Rohn chapel after 7:30 this evening.

Hannah Gensicke's funeral, Cedar Rapids Gazette, April 11, 1942



Marker for Hannah Gensicke, Linwood Cemetery, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Edna Olive Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's daughter)

Edna converted to Catholicism and married Charles Henry Stark in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1908, and moved in with him on the Stark farm, about three miles west of Sunny Dale Farm, where they lived for most of the rest of their lives. Edna and Henry had eleven children, one of whom was killed in World War II. Edna died in the Shane Nursing Home, Cedar Rapids on November 19, 1966. Henry and Edna were buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery near Atkins, Iowa.



The Stark Farm, 1910



Marker for Charles Henry and Edna Stark, St. Joseph's Cemetery, Atkins, Iowa

Henry² Frederick Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's son)

As a young man, Henry² took over management of Sunny Dale Farm from his parents. He married Lillian Armstrong on January 5, 1916, and she moved onto the farm with him. They had five children, although son Wilbur died at 13 when he drowned in the Cedar River. Henry² and Lillian eventually purchased Sunny Dale Farm from his parents. They and their son Robert established Sunny Dale Dairy in 1938. The Gensickes were routinely recognized for the productivity of their dairy herd, and both Henry² and Lillian were active in a number of organizations over the years, both agriculture and social.



Lillian and Henry² Gensicke with sons Hugo and Bob at Sunny Dale Farm, Cedar Rapids Gazette Aug 31, 1922

After a 1955 fire destroyed the dairy's milk-bottling plant, the dairy was shut down. Robert became a Cedar Rapids realtor, and Henry² and Lillian were retired on the farm. Much of the farm was then sold off to become part of the then-new Cedar Hills subdivision of Cedar Rapids.

Henry² and Lillian moved to 1403 Ellis Blvd, although they continued to own what was left of Sunny Dale Farm. After celebrating their 50th anniversary with a family reunion at Sunny Dale Farm in early 1966, the Gensicke's apparently sold the remainder of the farm. The farmhouse and several out-buildings still stand.

Henry² died in Maple Lawn Nursing Home, Marion, Iowa on December 12, 1967. Henry² and Lillian were buried in Cedar Memorial Park Cemetery in Cedar Rapids.



Marker for Henry² and Lillian Gensicke, Cedar Memorial Park Cemetery, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Carolyn Sophia Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's daughter)

Carolyn was living on Sunny Dale farm with her brother Henry² when she married James Morton Wiley in her parents' home on May 19, 1913. They settled on the Wiley farm near Blairstown, Iowa. The marriage was short-lived, however, with Morton reporting that he was single in 1917 on his WWI draft registration card. Carrie moved back with her parents.

Carrie then married widower Frank Lang on June 17, 1926 at the home of her parents. Carrie and Frank settled in Chillicothe, Missouri, where Frank was in the clothing business. Carrie had one stepson through husband Frank. They lived most of the rest of their lives in Chillicothe. Several years after Frank died, for a time Carrie lived with her sister Esther in Cedar Rapids, and then in a nursing home near her stepson in Essex, Iowa.



Carrie and Frank Lang, date unknown



Carrie and Frank Lang, 1956

Carrie died in Shenandoah, Iowa near the home of her stepson on November 22, 1984. Frank and Carrie were buried in Resthaven Memorial Gardens in Chillicothe.



Marker for Carolyn and Frank Lang, Resthaven Memorial Gardens, Chillicothe, Missouri

Research Notes

Because Frank and Carrie's marriage license reported that this was Carrie's first marriage, it is possible that her marriage to James Wiley ended with an annulment rather than a divorce.

Eldred William Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's son)

Eldred took over the management of Fairfield Farm when his parents retired. He married Gertrud Falkenau at the German Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on September 27, 1917. Gertrud moved onto Fairfield Farm with her husband. They had two children while living there.

At the start of 1935, Eldred retired from farming. He and his family moved to a house in Cedar Rapids, where Eldred worked in sales.



Eldred and Gertrud Gensicke's home at 624 4th Avenue SW in Cedar Rapids in 1935

By 1937 they had moved to Pomona, California. He was working in carpentry in 1940 in Ontario, California, and later worked as a machinist in aircraft manufacturing. They eventually settled in Norwalk, Whittier and finally in Alhambra, all in suburban Los Angeles, California.

Eldred died in Alhambra on January 8, 1966. Eldred and Gertrud were buried in Loma Vista Memorial Park, Fullerton, California.



Marker for Eldred and Gertrud Gensicke, Loma Vista Memorial Park, Fullerton, California

Esther Elisabeth Valentina Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's daughter)

Esther wrote a biography that focused on the years leading up to her marriage to Duncan James Wasson on October 6, 1920 in Galena, Illinois.

- For more about Esther's early years, see [My Story by Esther Gensicke Wasson.](#)
- For more about Esther's life after she married Duncan, see [Duncan and Esther Wasson.](#)

Everett Lynn Gensicke (Henry¹ and Hannah Gensicke's son)

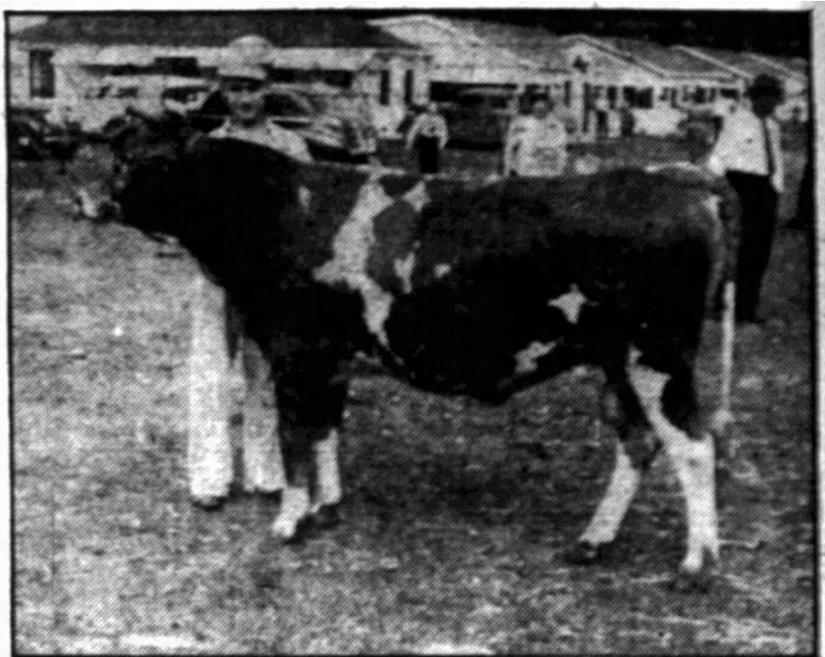
After finishing high school, Everett attended Iowa State College where he majored in dairy husbandry. As a student, he ran track and cross country, he was a member of the Dairy Cattle Club and the Agriculture Club, and he was a member of Sigma Pi fraternity. After college, he returned to Cedar Rapids, where he took over the management of his family's recently purchased Bear dairy farm.

On December 29, 1929, Everett married Marjorie Miller in Folletts, Iowa, and she moved onto Bear Farm. They had one child.



Hannah Gensicke and her son Everett

The court ordered the sale of the Bear Farm in 1932, although the sale was put on hold until 1938. It was at this time that Everett and Marjorie left Bear Farm and moved to Clinton County, Iowa, possibly in with her parents, where Everett managed a farm. He later became the manager of Wyonet Farms in the Davenport, Iowa area.



Wyanet farms of Davenport, Everett Gensicke, manager, won the junior championship Tuesday in the Guernsey show with this senior yearling bull.

Everett Gensicke and a prize-winning bull, Cedar Rapids Gazette, Aug 16, 1939

The family later lived in Libertyville, Illinois and Lake Geneva, Wisconsin before settling in Waukesha, Wisconsin, where Everett worked as the agriculture teacher in the local high school. His last reported residence was in nearby Milwaukee, where Everett died on December 18, 1968. Everett and Marjorie were buried in Prairie Home Cemetery in Waukesha.



Marker for Everett and Marjorie Gensicke, Prairie Home Cemetery, Waukesha, Wisconsin

Prepared by Mark David Wasson
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