

Paul Gerhard Zoch

Paul Gerhard Zoch was born January 19th 1924 in Warda, Texas. He was the sixteenth child of Karl and Anna (Hanusch) Zoch. In those days the only language that was spoken was Wendish. Then as times changed so did the language. By the time Paul was born Wendish was being phased out and German was being spoken. Being the last child of Karl and Anna he did not remember a lot about some of the older Zoch children. Some of them were already married, had children and were not living at home. Back in those days they always had time to visit family on Sunday afternoons and on birthdays. Alvin, Wilhelmina, Alma and Ella were already married when Paul was born. Three children, Martin, Anton and Martha died at a very young age. The first time Paul saw his Ella was when he was 12 years old. Ella was living in Vernon and came for a visit. He remembers when his sister Tillie got married in 1927. He was very young and got a whipping for playing with matches under the house when she got married. Walter married in 1929 and lived in Warda on the Pietsch place in a house that Paul's father built. When Arthur ran away from home the family was very upset. Later they found out he was working at the Kasper Gin and was hauling milk. All the area farmers shipped milk in those years. Arthur also stayed with Walter and helped him on his farm. Later when they had a bad year Arthur moved to Houston to become a barber. He got married in 1938. Carl got married in 1934 and lived in Fayette County. Rosalie worked in Copeland as a housekeeper. She got married in 1933. Rosalie, Gertrude, and Ann all lived in Houston at different times in their lives. Gertrude got married in 1942. Ann lived at home with her son Ludwig. Later she also got married. Gus married in 1945 and lived in the Warda area. Paul married Esther Becker in 1947 and lived on the home place for a while.

When Paul was little the children did not go to church very much because they did not have shoes to wear. They went to school at Warda barefooted. They had to walk 5 miles to school barefooted, so when it was very cold they didn't go to school. One time when it was lightning and thundering and pouring down rain the teacher picked up Gus and Paul and took them home. Sometimes Mr. Durrenberger would give them a ride. They had to cross three creeks to get to school. Now days children complain if they have to walk anywhere. Paul remembers carrying Herbert Foerster, Bernice Foerster and Lillian Teinert across the creeks when the water was high. Up until the time Herbert died he and Paul always talked about those days. One time they got trapped between two creeks and didn't know what to do. Paul listened for the rattle of the bridge. Then they walked in that direction, crossed the creek on the bridge and they continued to go home. One Friday the Pin Oak Creek was too high they had to walk a mile back to Bamsch's and spend the night with them. On Saturday they had to walk home all the way around Teinert's School to get home.

The week before Christmas Karl would put the tree up. He had already picked the tree out during the summer time. They would put the tree in a room decorate it and then the room that was closed off and a Santa Clause would sit in the window. They would put the santa mask on a stick in a 1 gallon molasses bucket. On Christmas morning the door would be open. The tree had candles, apples, popcorn strings, oranges, stick candy, garlands and ornaments. The Christmas tree would stay up until the 6th of January or Epiphany.

When the Zoch children were growing up times were very hard. Their father, Karl was a carpenter and built many houses but, he did not teach the boys how to build. Rosie did not have to work in the fields much but, stayed at the house to work. The other children had to work in the fields with their mother, Anna. Once when Anna was picking cow manure up in the cow pen she lost her wedding ring. 14 years

later they found her ring in the garden. Anna was also a midwife and Paul remembers going with her to the creek when he was about 5 years old and helping her pick herbs so she could make medicines. Paul remembers that when he and Gussie were too young to work in the fields they had to peel potatoes and put them on to cook at 10:30 every day for lunch. One time Alvin came back from church in a heck (buggy) and Arthur jumped out of the tree to scare him and got caught on a limb. The limb tore a hole in his abdomen and Anna had got out her little skillet and fried some possum fat and put it in the hole and wrapped in shut with bandages. Paul said that the hole was so deep you could see Arthur intestines. After a couple of weeks the hole was healed up.

In 1929 when Grandpa Hanusch died Paulie was playing with a black widow and got bit. He very sick, Martin Prellop had gotten bit by a black widow at that time as well, he died but, Paulie lived.

When Paul was about 5 years old Grandpa Hanusch came for a visit. He lived in The Grove. When it was time for him to go back home Gussie and Paul went on a very long trip. Grandpa Hanusch, Gussie and Paulie went all the way to Elgin where Grandpa Hanusch caught a train to go back home to The Grove. Paul and Gus had to ride in the trunk of their 1924 Chevrolet because there was not room for them in the car

Paul also remembers going possum, skunk and raccoon hunting at night. They would get anywhere from 3 to 15 cents for every hide they brought in. He remembers going hunting on New Year's Eve night while everyone else was at church. He didn't get anything that night. He said he was laying down resting when he heard the church bell ringing and he remembers hearing all of the whooping and hollering when the people went to Warda Store. That was how they made their living when they lived at home. Paul bought a 1929 Model A coupe car and paid \$75 for it. Karl wouldn't let them drive his car and Paul said they got tired of walking everywhere that's why he bought the car. He remembers teaching Gussie how to drive in the Model A. Gussie could drive a Model T but not a Model A. He would use Paul's car to go see his girlfriend.

Paul lived at home until he went into the Army in 1945. He did his training at Camp Fannin in Tyler, Texas. He then went to San Antonio to catch the train to go to Camp Stowman in California. From California he went overseas to the Philippines. He was stationed in Manila. When he joined the Army they wanted him to become a cook but he decided there was no future in being a cook. So Paul trained to be a M.P. He was discharged in 1946. Paul worked in Houston for a while and then moved back home to the farm in Warda.

On June 8, 1947 Paul married Esther Becker at St Paul Serbin, Texas. Back then when you got married the wedding party would go to the bride's house before the wedding and sing a song, have a scripture reading, have the Lord's Prayer sing another song and then go to the church for the wedding. This was a typical Wendish wedding. After the wedding they would go back to the bride's parents and on the way back there would be kids holding a rope across the road and people had to either give them a nickel or a piece a gum and the kids would let the people pass. For Paul and Esther's honeymoon they went to visit Paul's brother, Walter in Levelland to pull cotton and they got home right before Christmas.

Paul and Esther lived on the home place at Warda and he farmed the land. Carolyn and Ralph were both born while they lived at Warda. Paul remembers that when Ralph was born he was so tiny that he fit in a shoebox. Paul and Esther and the babies moved to Houston for a while where Paul worked as a carpenter. They then moved back to Lee County where Larry was born.

In the meantime Paul's father sold the home place at Warda to Dr. Robert Burns. Paul was very upset about this because he wanted to buy the farm. Paul's parents then bought a house in Giddings. Anna, Paul's mother died suddenly on February 8 1952. After that Paul and Esther moved into that house so Esther could take care of Karl since he could not take care of his personal needs. She took care of her father-in-law from 1952 until 1958 when he died November 19, 1958. Paul remembers when he brought home a television for the first time. Karl didn't like it, he said it was disturbing the peace. They had to move everything into two bedrooms so, Paul and Esther were in one room and the kids were in the other room and they would watch the television in their bedroom. He also didn't like the telephone either. Linda was born when they were living in Giddings. Paul worked as a carpenter while Esther took care of his father their children and did the house hold chores and cooking for everyone. The family went to church at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Giddings. Karl continued going to church at Warda with Esther taking him to church. Paul was head usher at Immanuel. Paul remembered that as head usher he would escort all the parents and new babies to the altar for baptism.

After Karl died the Zoch Family sold the house in Giddings. Paul, Esther and their children then moved to Serbin, Northrup and then back to Giddings when they bought Zoch's Laundry.

Paul and Esther and their children joined St Paul Lutheran Church in Serbin when they moved to Serbin. Paul and Esther were very involved in the church. Paul held many offices at St Paul including head usher trustee school board elder finance chairman and chairman of several different positions at the Serbin Picnic. He is also a member of the American Legion. Esther was a member of the LWML, the American Legion auxiliary and Extension Homemaker. Paul and Esther owned and operated Zoch's Laundry until 1987 when they sold the business to their daughter and son-in-law Carolyn and Royce Noack. Paul and Esther enjoyed living on their farm in Bastrop County during their retirement years. In 2001 Esther's health began declining. Paul took care of Esther at home after several heart surgeries and strokes. Eventually, he reluctantly had to admit her to Giddings Health Care where his daughter Linda was in charge of the nursing staff. Esther went her heavenly home on March 3, 2011.

At the present time July 2012 at the age of 88 years, Paul goes to church at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Serbin every Sunday rain or shine. He is in generally good health after undergoing surgery in the first part of the year to implant a pace maker and then in May to replace his aortic valve in his heart. He lives by himself on his farm with his dogs and cats to keep him company. He continues to drive to church and to Giddings and does his own cooking.

At the present time July 2012, Gus 90 years old and Paul 88 years old are the last of Karl and Anna Zoch's children that are still living.

God has blessed the Zoch Family all these years.