

Frank Freeman 5/11/56

Charley Cruver of Eagleville

People
Cruver, Charley
5-11-1956

Eagle Town Clerk for Over 40 Years Has Lived in House Built by Senator

EAGLE — Living in the house built by Isaac Walker, one of the first state senators, and taking care of about 400 chickens, doesn't seem to be an interesting life.

But those who know Charley Cruver, Eagle route 2, who lives in the house on the hill on highway NNN south of highway 99, know he has lived an interesting and full life.

Charley will be 82 years old on May 15, and he has been town clerk, with the exception of one year, since 1912. He first ran for office in 1897.

"I got beat that first time," said Charley, "but I can't find a record of the election. I ran for town clerk against John C. Wilton. I cast my first vote in 1896, and have been voting ever since."

The old-timer often looks over the old record books, but he can't find any town records since 1868. "They were either mislaid or destroyed in a fire," he said.

Charley recalls when L. E. Hall was first elected town chairman. "Why he ran all over town looking for votes, and in those early days votes really counted."

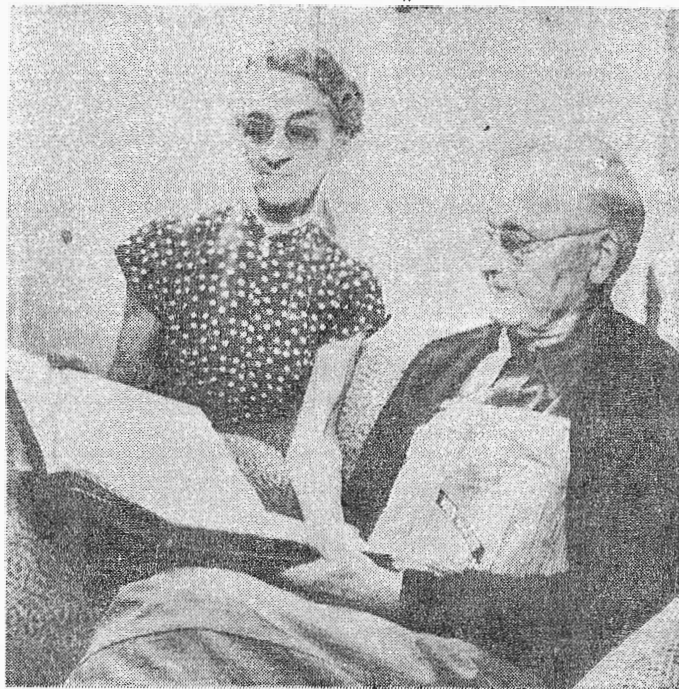
He remembers when Frank V. Faestel was town clerk, and Henry Loibl, deputy clerk. Loibl, who later became a banker in Eagle, started Charley out in town government.

"I used to help the deputy clerk with the tax roll," Charley remarked, and "then ran for town clerk in 1912 against Elare Shearer, and I won. I was also clerk of the Eagleville school board for a number of years."

Charles Cruver was born on a farm near Elkhorn in a family of three girls and one boy. His mother was the former Elsie Kilts, and his father, James B. Cruver.

Charley came to the Eagle area when he was 15 years old to live with his grandfather John Kilts. As a young boy Charley attended school at Elkhorn, Whitewater, and Merton.

He lived in Milwaukee for a while, but most of his time was spent in the Eagle area where he operated local creameries. He was secretary of the Jericho creamery for several years.



(Freeman Staff Photo)

Charley shows town record books dating back to 1868 to his wife.

In 1901, he married Carrie Burton, an Eagle girl, at Palmyra. "Charley used to come courting on a bicycle all the way from Elkhorn," Mrs. Cruver recalls.

The Cruvers had eight children, and all of them are living. Perhaps the son they are most proud of is Harry, an army colonel at the Hamilton airfield in California. He often visits them.

John works for Borden's in Connecticut, Robert is at Lake Geneva, and Myron and Warren in Milwaukee. In addition to the five sons, there are three daughters.

Harriet is a supervising teacher in Milwaukee, Marguerite Smart lives at Mukwonago, and Betty Munger at Delavan. Charley is sure proud of his entire family.

The Cruvers lived in the Isaac Walker home from the early 1900's. The state senator lived at the place for about eight years, then returned to Milwaukee in 1864 to resume the practice of law.

Charley said Marvin Bovee owned the property during Walker's time, and the abstract shows the senator was in possession of the home from 1851 to 1862. Old masonry bannisters still stand in the home on the stairway leading to upper floors.

Charley said he often reads articles about Isaac Walker, like the one when Walker had the floor during Daniel Webster's great speech, or when Walker defeated Lincoln for presiden-

tial elector on the Van Buren ticket in 1840.

In his own work, Charley recalls how the simple tax roll has changed considerably since the early years. "We carried on our own politics, discussing candidates when the board got together."

Charley said it would take a week or two at the most to make out "road warrants" and tell property owners on how much they could spend on particular road improvements.

"Now, we have special assessments to take care of constantly. But I like keeping the records," said Charley. "Life would be monotonous without having something to do. It keeps my mind active."

Charley has been active most of his life. He joined the Eagle Masonic lodge in 1898, and still is a member. He was a dairy farmer and raised Guernseys for about 20 years. He is also vice president of the Mukwonago Insurance co.

He used to like to fish at Lulu lake in his younger days, "but now it's too much work to hold a fishpole," he said. He still has "his chickens to take care of, and the town records must be kept straight." 5/11/56