

GEORGE MEISSNER, SR. FAMILY

George born: 4/15/1874

Pfreimd, Bavaria, Germany

Margaret Eckert born: 4/23/1889

Pfreimd, Bavaria, Germany

Children: George, Frank, Joe Ernest,

Lawrence, Margaret and Paul

George Meissner, Sr. was born in Pfreimd, Bavaria, Germany on April 15, 1874. He served in the German army for about 2 years and after he had been out for about a year, he decided to come to the United States (America). He made the trip by steamship from Rotterdam to New York and arrived at Ellis Island on July 19, 1897. The winters of 1897 and 1898 were spent as a lumberman in Michigan and Wisconsin. In the winter of 1898 the snow was so deep in the timber that it was impossible for the men to work and he was laid off. After that, he secured employment on the Great Northern and worked his way west to Havre, Montana. He had started in Minnesota. After working on the "section" for about two years, the white men were laid off and Japanese were hired so he was once again out of a job.

After this he went to work for "Dutch Ed" Trommer and during this time he took up a homestead on part of what is now the Laas ranch. He also worked for the Prescott Ranch and Morrison Spangler. From there he went to work for the Pugsley Ranch on the Marias River where he was employed for about 9 years and was foreman there for about 4 years.

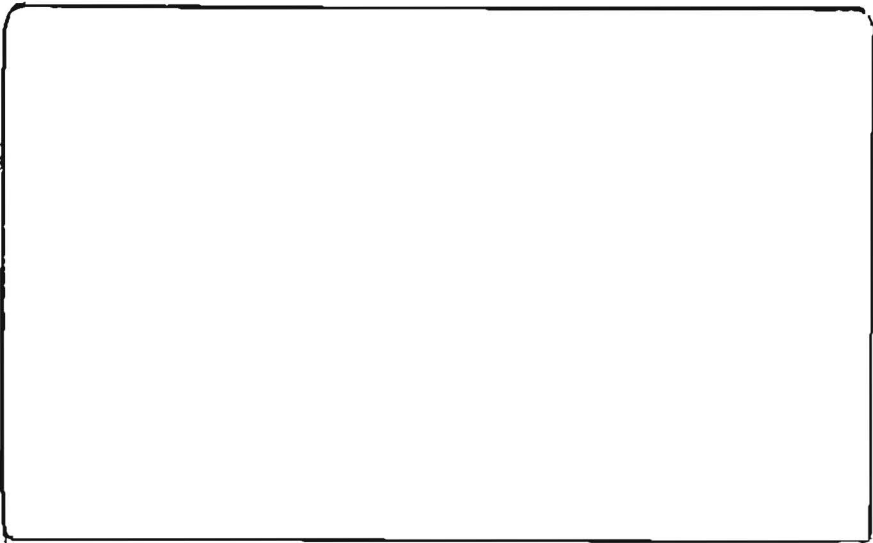
From there he returned to Germany and married Margaret Eckert of Pfreimd, She was born there on April 23, 1889. In 1912 they both came to Montana and bought the home place on the Marias River. It was previously owned by Adolph Stipman.

MR. AND MRS. GEORGE MEISSNER SR.
1949

The Meissners experienced the usual hardships and hard times most of the people who arrived in Montana during the homestead days did. They had 7 children: George, Frank, Joe, Ernest, Lawrence, Margaret and Paul.

George Meissner enjoyed reasonably good health until the last few years of his life. He was a patient at the Liberty County Rest Home for about a year when he suffered a broken hip and passed away shortly after- on June 8, 1968 at the age of 94. Mrs. Meissner continued to live at their home on the Marias River until her health prevented it. She spent the last two years of her life at the Liberty County Hospital and Rest Home in Chester and passed away on August 24, 1973.

A short distance down the river from the Meissner home there was a "ford" where people crossed the river until a bridge was built just above the buildings, in 1929. This made traveling from one side of the river to the other much easier. In the early days the Meissner home was often a 1/2 way house providing lodging for both people and animals and nearly always "free gratis."



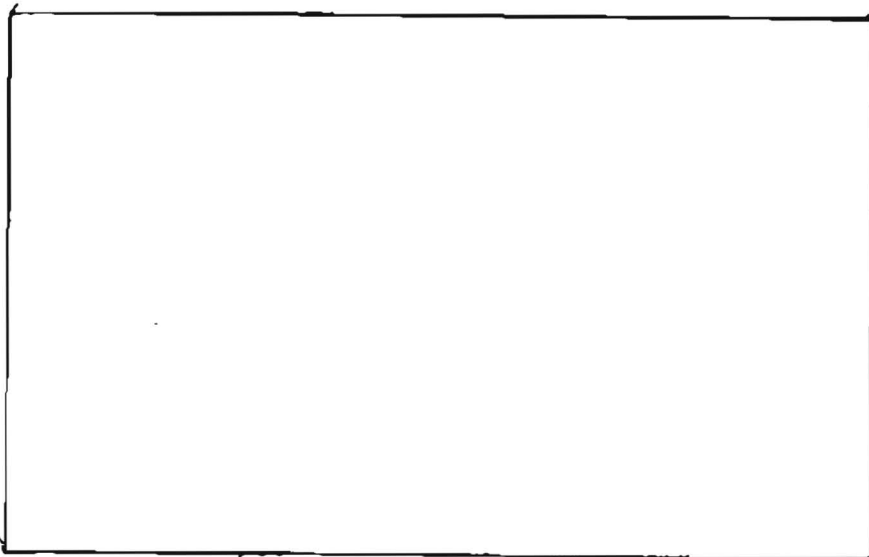
Crossing the river at "ford" east of Meissner's when river was high.

Much progress has been made in the mode of making a living on the ranch and it does not seem necessary to go into detail because nearly all the "oldtimers" experienced the same things in their lifetimes from the graveling of roads to the oiled roads of the present day, the using of horses for farming and the modern machinery used for farming and ranching today. Those who were able to "hang tough" were able in the later years to enjoy an easier life at least for awhile until problems of old age came upon them.

NOTE: This history of the Meissner family was taken from "Our Heritage" published by Liberty County Museum. The following pages were written by the Meissner daughter, Margaret. Thank You.

FLOODS

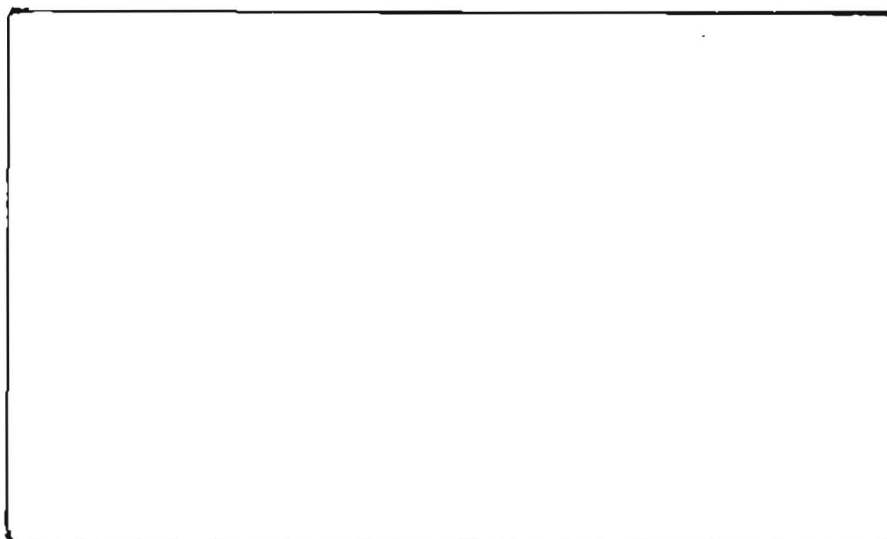
These pictures were taken of the flood on the Marias River which reached its crest on June 8, 1948. The river was at flood stage for about 3 days afterward. The big house has just been moved in the year before and the basement was filled over two thirds with water causing considerable damage to everything in it.



Since it was an almost new basement it was suggested that the water not be drained out too rapidly so it was allowed to remain for sometime afterward and then the work of draining and the cleanup after that was begun and took considerable time but there was no permanent damage to the basement itself. All other buildings were inundated with mud and debris everywhere which made for a terrific cleanup job around the whole place.

George Meissner Sr. recalled that a similar flood occurred forty years to the day on June 8, 1908, when he was working for L.D.Pugsley. It too, caused considerable damage to their buildings and the river bottoms.

The Marias River almost reached flood stage in 1953 when Tiber Reservoir was



not yet completed but it didnot get into any buildings. A dike was built between the buildings and the trees along the river and is still visible. This no doubt saved most of the place from being inundated once again. When the flood occurred in 1964 which took out all of the dams

above Tiber, Meissner were once again apprehensive; however Tiber was able to contain the vast amount of water from farther above.