**Jurend "Jerry" Miller (1832–1908)**

Jurend Miller, born on January 24, 1832, in Ostfriesland (then part of Germany or Holland), was the son of Ailt Miller and Alberta Klut. Originally spelled "Mueller" in German, the family name became "Miller" after immigration to America, a change that remained consistent through generations.

In 1851, at the age of 19, Jurend immigrated to the United States with his brother Martin. The two young men settled in Ridott Township, near Freeport, Illinois. No other members of their family made the journey from Europe. Martin eventually married and lived in Lennox, South Dakota, with his wife, Lena. Though they had no children, they were fondly remembered by later generations for their kindness and simple hospitality.

While in Ridott Township, Jurend met **Ecke Bohning**, a young immigrant girl who had also come from Holland or Ostfriesland. Born on November 23, 1842, Ecke immigrated at the age of 14 with her parents, Joe (Göhe) and Wilhelminia Bohning. Tragically, Wilhelminia died during their arduous 13-week sea voyage and was buried at sea. Ecke and her father eventually settled in Ridott, where she met Jurend. They were married in 1860 when Ecke was 18.

Jurend and Ecke began their life together in Ridott, where their first three children were born. In 1868, the family moved west to Grundy County, Iowa, where they lived for thirteen years and welcomed six more children. Then in 1881, seeking new opportunities, they moved once again—this time to the Dakota Territory. They homesteaded a farm six miles southwest of Lennox, South Dakota, where their final four children were born.

Jurend and Ecke were hardworking pioneers who raised thirteen children—all of whom survived to adulthood, married, and had families of their own. The couple’s deep bond and devotion to family defined their lives. After Ecke’s passing on March 23, 1904, from breast cancer at age 61, Jurend moved into the town of Lennox with their youngest daughter, Annie. He lived there until his own death on September 1, 1908, at age 76, due to a heart condition.

Jurend was remembered as cheerful, sociable, and warm-hearted—always ready for a bit of fun with his children and grandchildren. According to family stories, he was much like several of his sons: full of humor, affection, and easy conversation. Ecke, in contrast, was known for her quiet strength, gentle spirit, and unwavering devotion to her family. She lived a modest life, always content with what she had, never complaining, and never spending on herself.

The legacy of Jurend and Ecke Miller lives on not only through their many descendants but also through the memories they left behind. Their tenth child, **Jurena Miller Temple**, authored "The Miller Book," preserving the stories of her parents and siblings for future generations. Their homestead, once a modest pioneer farm, became the Klinkhagen farm in later years. Though the original buildings and schoolhouse are gone, the land they once cultivated continues to be a symbol of their hard work and enduring family values.

Jurend and Ecke’s thirteen children were:

1. **Ailt “Al J”** – b. 1862, Ridott IL; d. 1936
2. **Wilhelmina “Minnie”** – b. 1863, Ridott IL; d. 1948; m. George Lubbers
3. **Albertha “Bertha”** – b. 1867, Ridott IL; d. 1938; m. John Burns
4. **Joe** – b. 1869, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1942; m. Hattie Buus
5. **Albert** – b. 1871, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1936; m. Grace Okken
6. **Martin** – b. 1874, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1945; m. Hilke Smith
7. **Hannah** – b. 1876, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1955; m. John Kuper
8. **Andrew** – b. 1878, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1963; m. Kate Smith
9. **Helmer** – b. 1880, Grundy Co. IA; d. 1963; m. Minnie Bower
10. **Jurena** – b. 1882, Turner Co. SD; d. 1969; m. Adolph Temple
11. **William** – b. 1884, Turner Co. SD; d. 1951; m. Anna Van Brocken
12. **Eiko** – b. 1886, Turner Co. SD; d. 1963; m. Kate Bunger
13. **Annie** – b. 1889, Turner Co. SD; d. 1964; m. Harm Cramer

The first four children were named after their grandparents, while Jurena and Eiko were named after their parents—a touching tribute to family heritage.

Jurend and Ecke Miller were, as one granddaughter wrote, “the salt of the earth.” Their lives were built on love, faith, resilience, and joy. They left behind a legacy of character, warmth, and unity—a true blessing to the generations that followed.