

Kandi Express

County News . . .
With a Historical Train of Thought

Kandiyohi County Historical Society
Willmar, Minnesota
Quarterly **March 2013**



Multi-Purpose Community Room Open House Saturday, May 4



The Kandiyohi County Historical Society would like to invite you and your family to celebrate the grand opening of our Multi-Purpose Community Room. The open house will be held on Saturday, May 4 from 2pm-5pm at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society. We will have the museum, Sperry House, Engine #2523, log cabin and schoolhouse open for all the visitors to check out. We will show a slideshow of the construction progress and completion. The staff and volunteers are going to set up a guessing game as well. We are going to dig into our archives and find artifacts that people don't see everyday. We want to see if you can guess what we have on display. The person who guesses the most correctly will win a prize! Refreshments will be served.

KCHS would like to take this time to open the room up for the public to see all the hard work that has been done over the winter here at the Society. KCHS would also like to thank all of the dedicated people who helped make this room possible. We hope you are able to join us for this great day! Feel free to stop by any day to check out our new addition!!!

We hope to see you there!

Inside . . .
Christian Hennings Conclusion
Sperry House Tea
East Lake Lillian School Districts
Upcoming Events
. . . and more news of local history.



Kandiyohi County Historical Society

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E-Mail: kandhist@msn.com
Website:
www.kandiyohicountyhistory.com

Board of Directors

2012-2013

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Vice President - Dennis Peterson
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Kandi Express

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society. March 2013, Vol. 50, Issue 1. Non-profit postage paid at Willmar, MN. Reprints with permission, please. Membership in the Kandiyohi County Historical Society carries with it a subscription to the *Kandi Express*. Stories about local history can be submitted to Jill Wahnoutka-editor, KCHS.

*Discovering, Preserving,
and Sharing the Story of*

Volunteers

Archives/Office: Carolyn Kneisl, Molly Larson, Dorothy Olson, Terry Stein, Marilyn Johnson, Linda Maurer, Aaron Jensen

Building/Painting/Thursday Crew: Elmond Ekblad, Pinky Fostervold, Elroy Gast, Dale Johnson, Jerry Johnson, Don Niece, Loren Luschen, Rollie Boll, Gayle Larson and Loretta Fenske.

In-Kind Donations

Kandiyohi Co. Community Service - Grounds Work/Snow Removal

Engan Associates P.A. - Architectural Services

Kandiyohi County Historical Society's Wish List

- 8 1/2" x 11" white office copy paper
- Stamps -regular and post card
- 2- four drawer file cabinets
- 1- two drawer file cabinets

Professional/Business Members

Atwater State Bank
Corneil-Elkjer Agency
Elmquist Jewelers
Engan Associates, P. A.
Home State Bank
House of Jacobs
Insurance by Strehlow
Jennie-O Turkey Store
Long Lake Antiques
Peterson Brothers Funeral Home
and Cremation Service
Ridgewater College
RMS Investments
United Prairie Bank

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!

We are looking for people to help with a couple different projects:

1. Need people to dress up and portray Civil War Veterans or the family members for our Cemetery Walk this fall.
2. Need one or two people to help with decorating the Sperry House throughout the year.
Please contact Jill at 235-1881 if you are interested.



Newsletter Email List

Please let us know if you would like to receive your newsletter over email by sending your request to kandhist@msn.com. Remember if you want to be included on our email list for upcoming news and programs, please let us know.



Thank you

Your gifts help preserve our heritage for future generations!

New and Renewal Members:

Benefactor:

Jennie-O Turkey Store, Willmar, MN

Supporter:

New London American Legion,
Corneil-Elkjer Agency, Willmar, MN
Harold & Yvonne Natvig, Pennock, MN
Rand & Donna Middleton, Willmar, MN
Insurance by Strehlow, Willmar, MN
Sandra Curran, Jacksonville, FL
Peterson Brothers Funeral Home, Willmar, MN
Bernice Grabber-Tintes, Willmar, MN
Craig & Renee Johnson, Sunburg, MN
Bea Ourada, Spicer, MN
Jon Pederson, Spicer, MN

Friend:

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Peter & Emilie Poss, Willmar, MN
Burt & Toots Lundberg, New London, MN
Phil Hahn, Willmar, MN
Ann Hendershott & Dennis Schaeffbauer, Willmar, MN

Family:

Lois Ellinger, Albuquerque, NM
Steven & Shelly Erickson, Spicer, MN
Paul & Marion Nordin, Willmar, MN
Dennis & Karen Peterson, Spicer, MN
Carol & Warron Matson, Spicer, MN
Long Lake Antiques, Spicer, MN
Carole Vennerstrom, Willmar, MN
Pat & Gordon Hauge, Sunburg, MN
Bob & Phyllis Williams, Willmar, MN
Allan & Carol Rambow, Willmar, MN
Jeannette Bish, Norco, CA
Arlen & Shelia Sjerven, Willmar, MN
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John & Janet Helin, Willmar, MN
Don & Janet Dokken, Willmar, MN
Milton Tollefson, Sunburg, MN
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Steve & Jennifer Molenaar, Willmar, MN
Carolyn & John Swanson, Spicer, MN
Tom & Catherine Bonde, Spicer, MN
Harlow & Marlene Anderson, Golden Valley, MN
Greg & Maggie Harp, New London, MN
Hazel & Bob Niedermuller, Melbourne, FL
Carl & Betty Deisting, Willmar, MN
Daryl & Bonetta Hoogeveen, Willmar, MN
Milton & Betty Huff, Federal Way, WA
Walter & Jackie McRae, Athens, GA
Gary & Diane Fortney, Spicer, MN

Individual:

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Robert Okland, Willmar, MN
Lois Hurley, Willmar, MN
Gladys Palm, Willmar, MN
Bud Johnson, Willmar, MN
Lyle Stai, Kerkhoven, MN
Luella Behm, Atwater, MN
Wendell Holmgren, Edina, MN
Bonnie Smith-Yackel, Minneapolis, MN
Helen Pederson, Willmar, MN
Dean Johnson, Roseville, MN
Beverly Wolfe, Fridley, MN
Lorraine Johnson, Willmar, MN
Rev. Douglas Mankell, Logansport, IN
Doralyn Foster, Willmar, MN
Carolyn Sowinski, Germantown, MD
Marie Janssen, Sunburg, MN
Linda Klinghagen, Willmar, MN
Virginia Ansorge, Willmar, MN
Virginia Homme, Granite Falls, MN
Alice Van Ort, Willmar, MN
Karen Smith, Brainerd, MN
Kim Curran Fletcher, NC
Kay Hempel, Marine on St. Croix, MN
Connie Wanner, Willmar, MN
Margit Erickson, Willmar, MN
Don Smith, Bismarck, ND

Special Donations:

Member Contributions:

For Operating Support
Harlow & Marlene Anderson
Janet & Rick Olson

Endreson Cabin

Dr. Linda Tweto-Johnson

Mona Nelson Endowment Fund

Sandra Curran

Engine #2523

Howard & Verna Patrick

Our Sympathy To Family and Friends-

- **Muriel Vick Madsen**, 94, KCHS lifetime member since 1964, passed away on December 5, 2012. She is survived by two sons, six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.
- **Greg Swalin**, 62, KCHS member since 1996, passed away on December 11, 2012. He is survived by his wife, Linda, son, Lafe and two granddaughters.
- **Nick Curtis**, 89, KCHS Lifetime member since 1966, passed away on December 30, 2012. He is survived by two daughters, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.
- **Margaret Carlson Trulson Mueller**, 90, KCHS member since 2006, passed away on August 19, 2012. She is survived by one son, four step-children, one granddaughter, two step-grandchildren, one great granddaughter and three step-great-grandchildren.
- **June Bergman Adams**, 94, KCHS lifetime member since 1981, passed away on January 20, 2013. She is survived two daughters, five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.
- **Verlene Summerlet Huisinga**, 87, KCHS lifetime member since 1982, passed away on January 30, 2013. She is survived by five sons, fourteen grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.
- **Dorothy Wagner Hawkins**, 92, KCHS lifetime member since 1981, passed away on February 2, 2013. She is survived by five children, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Donations to the Multi-Purpose Room:

Thanks to all of the donors who have given a donation to the KCHS Building Fund. With your support, we will be able to build a room for the entire community. We are looking to facilitate a place for young and old to gather and share the stories of Kandiyohi County.

Individuals:

Clifford & Yvonne Anderson

Curt Engstrom

Marion Erickson

Russel Finstrom

Lowell & Lois Fostervold

Wayne Fostervold

-In memory of Muriel Madsen &

Greg Swalin

Roger Gorres

Edward & Katherine Green

William Hutchinson

Earl Habben

Wayne Hagen

Robert & Pauline Halvorson

Virginia Homme

Ronald & Susan Honken

Elroy and Sharon Jones

Loren & Smitty Luschen

Anthony Mahn

Howard McAdams

Don McGrath

Daniel Mohs

David Moody

Arlene Mrzena

Curtis Norskog

Ken & Dorothy Peterson

Mary Pieh

Peter & Emilie Poss

Cleve & Jackie Powell

-In memory of Muriel Madsen

Glen & Signe Rambow

Karen Rosenquist

Donald & Phyllis Shaw

Lyle Stai

Randy Van Der Pol

Mary Lou Werner

Businesses/

Organizations:

Athenian Study Club

Kandiyohi County Fair

Corneil-Elkjer Agency

Loren Schultz Excavating

Swenson & Sons Constructions, Inc.

Local Government:

City of New London

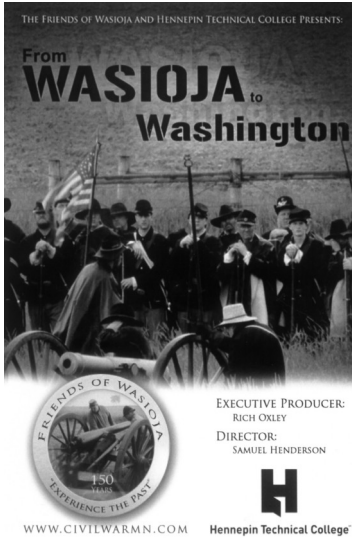
Roseland Township



Round Table History

The Multi-Purpose Community Room was built for the community and to be used by the community. One of the first projects KCHS will be starting is a history gathering project. KCHS would like to record the memories of the residents of Kandiyohi County. We are going to start with Willmar. We need volunteers to come and look at photos and tell us what Willmar used to be. The session will be recorded and in a group format. Please contact Jill at 235-1881 if you are interested in sharing your memories of Willmar. The date is yet to be determined. Thanks for helping us further our mission of gathering, preserving and telling the story of Kandiyohi County!

Upcoming Programs and Events



**Thursday, April 25th
6:30pm**

From Wasioja to Washington: A Civil War Story Free Movie Screening

This Civil War documentary tells the story of what happened to the men and boys from Wasioja and Dodge County. Wasioja is a small town in South Eastern Minnesota about 20 miles west of Rochester. This film tells how "The Boys of Wasioja" were recruited from Northwestern College Seminary to muster at Fort Snelling as the Second Minnesota Company C. The film follows the men and boys through the Battle of Mill Springs, The Battle of Chickamauga, the march to Atlanta and the march to the sea with General Sherman, the routing of South Carolina to the Grand March at wars end. The film then follows these brave men as they mustered out at Fort Snelling. The documentary production is a partnership between the Friends of Wasioja and Hennepin Technical College. DVDs will be available for purchase that night.

For more information and DVDs available for purchase – go to www.civilwarmn.com

Background:

- The documentary is under the direction of Hennepin Technical College video student Samuel Henderson. Sam brought this idea to the HTC Media Storm video club and the response has been amazing.
- Where's Wasioja? Wasioja Minnesota is 20 miles west of Rochester very close to Kasson and Mantorville.
- Why Wasioja? This historic little town had one of the first colleges in Minnesota - Northwestern Baptist Seminary.
- The headmaster from the college recruited many of the boys from the college and Dodge County. The town today has the ruins of the college and,
- The only still-standing recruiting station west of the Mississippi River.
- The documentary will follow the boys and men of Wasioja from recruitment to muster at Fort Snelling to the Grand Parade in Washington D.C. at wars end.
- Even though only two boys died in battle, many boys did not return which devastated the town. The boys were part of the 2nd Minnesota Company C and fought at Chickamauga and Sherman's March to Atlanta, the March to the sea and the routing of South Carolina.

Ninth Annual Tea at the Sperry House

Friday, June 7, 2013 ~ 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m.

The ninth annual "Tea at the Sperry House" will be held Friday, June 7, 2013, serving at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. A variety of tea and authentic treats made from century-old recipes will be served. This year we will be honoring the Sperry Family as the Sperry House turns 120 years old in 2013.

Cost is \$20 per person (adults only), with proceeds to benefit KCHS. Only 16 people will be served for each of the two teas, so reservations will fill



Upcoming Programs and Events

Thursday, June 13

7:00 pm

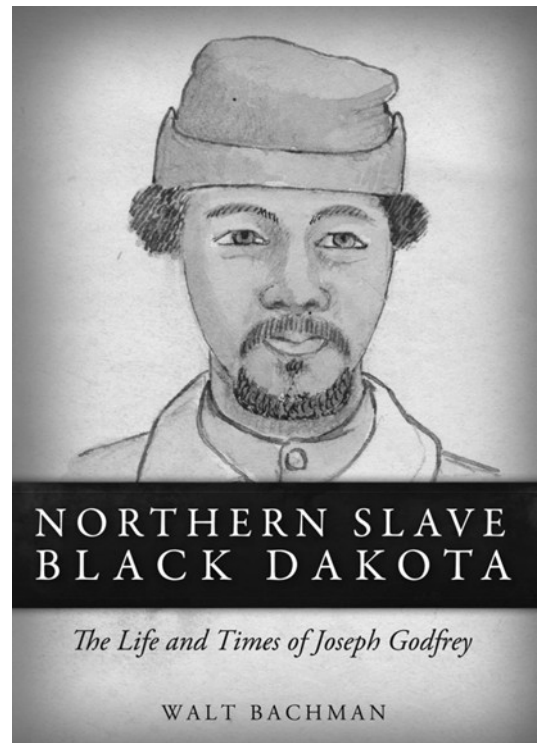
**Northern Slave Black Dakota: The Life and Times of Joseph Godfrey
by Walt Bachman**

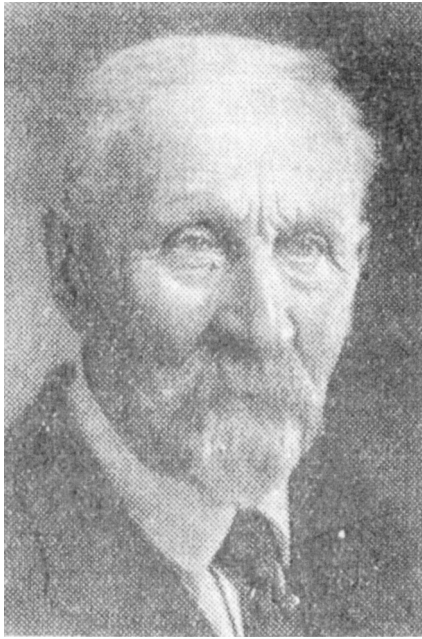
Born a slave in free territory, Joseph Godfrey died widely reviled for his controversial role in the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.

Walt Bachman will be giving a presentation on his new book, *Northern Slave Black Dakota: the Life and Times of Joseph Godfrey*. There will be copies of his book available to purchase in our gift shop starting that night.

Separated from his mother at age five when their master sold her, Joseph Godfrey was kept in bondage, serving Minnesota's fur-trade elite. To escape his masters' beatings and abuse, Godfrey sought refuge among the Dakota people he'd befriended as a child slave. Godfrey married a Dakota woman and was living with his family on the Lower Sioux Reservation in 1862. Conscripted to don war paint and join Dakota warriors who killed defenseless settlers in the opening days of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, he became the first of hundreds of men tried by a military court when the six-week war ended in late September. Commander Henry Sibley, who created the court, was one of his former masters. Sibley approved death sentences for Godfrey and 302 other Dakota soldiers. In this riveting, first-ever biography, historian and retired trial lawyer Walt Bachman untangles the thorny questions that haunt Godfrey's story to this day: How was he enslaved in free territory? Did he murder the frontier settlers for which the Dakota dubbed him "Many Kills"? Did he turn traitor on his Dakota kinsmen to save his own skin? Did his testimony during the post-war trials send 38 Dakota men – including his father-in-law – to the gallows? Why did President Abraham Lincoln remove Godfrey's name from the execution list? In this carefully researched, stunning historical debut, Bachman reveals how Godfrey escaped from slavery and how he has been miscast as a villain by whites and Dakotas alike, arguing that the 1862 war trials that ended with the largest mass execution in U.S. history, were both more unjust, and more unfair than we've ever guessed.

Walt Bachman, was born and raised in Minneapolis and is a 1966 Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota. As a Rhodes Scholar, Bachman received an English law degree from Oxford University in 1968; he subsequently earned a J.D. from Stanford University. For more than 20 years, he was a trial lawyer in Minneapolis, pursuing a widely varying career that ranged from practice in large and small private law firms to criminal prosecution for Hennepin County (Minneapolis and suburbs) to the instigation of disbarment and other legal ethics proceedings. Minnesota readers, in particular, will be familiar with his family: Bachman's, Inc., now the nation's largest retail florist, was founded by his great-grandfather Henry Bachman, who married Hattie Dietrich, the daughter of uprising victim Ernst Dietrich. (The story of Dietrich's death is the opening scene in the book.) Bachman retired from Minnesota to New York City, where he lives with his wife, Elizabeth. His forthcoming book documents the U.S. army's role in fostering the spread of slavery via a pay system that rewarded federal officers for using slaves as servants in free states and territories.





***MEMOIRS OF
CHRISTIAN HENNINGS
G.A.R.
Conclusion***

The war was over, and we could lie there to rest. You can imagine what a looking army we were! Out a year without renewal, uniforms ragged and dirty, but full of courage still. It was such a bad looking army that the General in command in Washington forbade Sherman to march his army through the city. Sherman told him his army had never yet been stopped from going where it wanted to go, and they were not going to stop there. We marched across the bridge over the Potomac into Washington. We were in the Grand Review, marched down Pennsylvania Avenue, reviewed by the high in office in the grandstand, -with all kinds of things on our bayonets, -chickens, rabbits, etc., and all in rags, but no one could stop us. We camped in the northwestern part of Washington for some time. One day when I was on guard duty at camp I got an order to report to Brigadier General Ewing's headquarters. I fixed myself up as presentably as I could, took my rifle, and reported. I was appointed General Ewing's personal orderly, was given a revolver and saber, and my duty was to attend General Ewing on his trips reviewing the army, and other places. He was a brother-in-law of General Sherman. General Ewing was a wild cuss, -detailed from the regular army to command this Volunteer Brigade. I had to fol-

low him around.

He usually stayed out late and would visit friends until late at night. When the time came to start, he rode like the wind; he had a good horse. One night he was riding very fast, and turned a sharp corner. My horse stepped on the iron cover of a manhole and slipped for some distance on my leg, nearly crushing it. But the horse got to his feet, and we caught up with the General.

We were ordered to Harrisburg from Washington, and from there took a steamboat to Louisville, Kentucky, where we went into camp for several weeks, until July 16, 1865, we all received our discharge from the United States army and went home. And that ends the Civil War.

From the time I enlisted in the 12th Wisconsin I kept a diary; kept it on the march, and in camp. It had many stories and incidents that would be valuable. I always thought I left it in Sauk City with my saber and revolver. I remember some little things that might be worth recording. After the battle of July 22, 1864, at Atlanta, the 17th corps, General Frank Blair in command, was ordered to march to the rear of the whole circle, where the rebels tried to make a break in the center of the Yankee army, but failed because Sherman had the forethought to send plenty of reinforcements. While there, our regiment and company were ordered up to the front to support the battery. We were entrenched and had a brush covering over the trenches because it was so hot. Humphrey, a Pierce County man, a drafted man that had come in later, had a little fire with a pot of beans and a chunk of sowbelly that he kept boiling, and he would get out and stir it every little while. He had a briar pipe in his mouth. But the last time he went out a piece of shell hit him, his bean-pot was upset and his pipe was sent away off . . . later we buried him about half a mile back in the woods, in a rough coffin that we put together.

It was fearfully hot. There was a spring of water about half a mile to the rear, and I volunteered to take as many canteens as I could, and went down to the spring to fill them. The spring was all muddy so that I had to press the canteens down into the mud and let the water seep in . . . there was heavy fire, and while I was there I saw a horse shot and killed under an officer, who was not hurt at all. I got all my canteens filled and carried them back through shot and shell without being hit, and it was a great relief to the boys to get a drink of water . . . I went without fear . . . I kept pretty busy in a lot of ways. When we started on a campaign, the boys would all want to get a shave and

hair-cut. Now and then when we would have a half-day or so, I was busy all the time with razor and shears. I got quite proficient at it, and everyone wanted to be next! They had to sit on a stump to be barbered. The hardest part for me was keeping my razor sharp. I had a strop and a whetstone! I was also the company tailor. I sewed on the straps for the non-commissioned officers, mended the pockets, and even made drawers, etc., for the boys, from cloth that we would get from the houses, and I did their mending of all kinds. I had a little roll with pockets which contained needles, threads, scissors, and so on, that I kept ready, and I also sold stationery with pictures on it, for them to send home. Indeed, I never drew a dollar of my pay until I came out of the army, when I had \$500 coming.

Once in Georgia we became so exhausted from the want of meat and vegetables that we took dysentery, a terrible scourge. A few of us sighted an old razor-back hog and caught and cooked it . . . we ate it to the last particle, even scraping the fat from the inside of the hide. It made us much worse. I went to a sutler and asked if he had any Hennessey brandy. He said he had none, but after a deal of persuasion, he let me have a bottle. I guarded that bottle jealously,-the boys would have taken it away from me if they had known I had it. Finally I got some vegetables from a Negro woman, and they with the brandy and crackers, saved me from death. A good many of the boys died,-they did not know how to take care of themselves, and the pills the surgeon gave them were no good at all.

My little book told all about those long hard marches through Georgia, and how tired we were, and how often when we did get to camp, we would have to go back and help some over-loaded wagon out of the mud. Once everyone was dead tired after hour and hours marching in the rain. We had orders not to take more than the top rails of the fences for our fires. But every rail was a top rail . . . I built a bunk on three rails and went to sleep. In the morning there was thick fog, and very hot, no air. As we marched through the woods, everyone kept throwing away things that we simply could not carry in the heat and that we wanted badly later on. Another time, I remember, there was a heavy rain. We had those little pup tents built for two. We built our bunks the best we could, but it rained and rained, and I kept piling things up under myself,-I had a Bible and some other books, and my canteen, and so on,-we had to do everything we could think of to keep

us out of the water.

After we disbanded in Madison, I went over to Sauk City to stay until I could get work. One day Father, who was building a foundry, asked me to help him with some heavy timbers. We were raising one when it slipped and fell on my leg; they carried me home, about two blocks, and I lay there suffering for many days. All they did for me was to put on some white liniment. When I could get around, I started for Prescott. My brother John, poor fellow, had a serious accident; he reached into the gearing of a threshing machine and his hand was badly mangled. They took him to Lake Crystal, and after many weeks of terrible suffering, he lost his right hand. It seemed hard that after going through the whole of the Civil War, he should come home and lose his right hand in peaceful work.

When I got to Prescott, an old farmer was at the levee, looking for harvest hands. I told him I was afraid I could not stand harvest work, but he said I could drive a team. Mr. Bolton took me out seven miles into the country that evening, and next morning when I saw him hitch four great horses to an old McCormick reaper, I decided to let Theo. Danforth do the driving. I bound grain for nine days and earned \$27.00. Mr. Danforth offered me a job to go with his threshing rig from place to place in the neighborhood, to drive a team and rack, to haul grain to the machine. We agreed on the price, I got acquainted, and began to like the country. The work lasted for several weeks. When it rained, we would plow or do other work at the farm. By the time all the threshing was done it was cold and winter upon us. I had earned \$137.00. Mr. Danforth asked me what I was going to do next. I replied that I would go to Prescott,-that I could probably find work there. "I'll tell you," he said, "now that you are acquainted around here, we would like to have you stay. I have two girls that must go to school over at Black River Falls. If you will stay I will rig up a team and sleigh, with hay and robes to make it comfortable, and I will build a shanty at the school for the horses, so you three could go to school." I thanked him for the chance, for nothing could have been better for me. He gave me a three-year-old colt and an old blind race-horse that could go like a streak, and he had a long-runner sled, a "jumper,"-and it did just jump!

We had to go through half a mile of timber, but

“Once in Georgia we became so exhausted from the want of meat and vegetables that we took dysentery, a terrible scourge.”

once through that there were houses all along the road, and in every house a kid or two that had to go to school, so we would have a good load by the time we got to school house. We had a good teacher, Miss Emma Nichols; she was awfully strict, but fair. There were two others, Baird and Gallagher, that went to school, who were my age, and Houston, who was not a soldier. After school I would hitch up the team and everyone would pile into the sleigh. We had a lot of snow that winter and the roads were full of it. The horses got so they knew just where to stop, and they would jump and start off so the children would roll off into the snow. By the time we reached our switch in the road, we were by ourselves.

We had spelling school and singing school, and we could take the team to go to similar schools in other districts. Over in Glass Valley they had a Methodist revival, and of course we had to go to that. We took Mr. Danforth, and also a Mrs. Duncan, and Ariana Atkins,-we always had a full load. The revival was the old-fashioned kind where people would go crazy, and Mr. Danworth “got religion” about the hardest of anyone.

That was a wonderful winter to me, and when spring came, there was something else to do. There was a tract of 160 acres of land near by, with a good spring on it, and timber. It had once been donated to a railroad company that had never built its road. I wrote to the authorities at Madison, making application to preempt that land, and I got it. I hired a Mr. Barnes, a tall slim-raw-boned Maineite, to help me take out the trees by the roots. We left the red oak, for they had such huge roots. We cleared twenty acres in one spring. I hired Mr. Atkins to break it at \$7 per acre. He used six yoke of oxen, and plowed the furrow twenty-four inches wide and sixteen inches deep. Then I rented it to him to put in wheat. The trees that we had dug out we hauled with oxen, and built fence with them, roots and all; but the deer could jump almost anything. There was a splendid crop of wheat which was sold to a Mr. Redmond at \$1.38 at the machine, he to haul it.

There was a stone quarry on the tract from which I cut stone, and a spring to which people came from all around for water. I always thought there might be oil there, but never did anything about it. All this time I lived with the Danforths, who made it a real home for me. Their children were Susan, Dora, Josephine, and Theodore; one son did not come back from war. They were good to me, and I tried to be good to them.

That winter I went to Prescott and took a con-

tract to quarry forty cords of sandstone in the hills about three miles from town. Mr. Atkins had been a miner in the west, and he and I dug a hole in the side of the hill, dug the rock out and pushed it out; but when we got in far enough, we built a little track and car; and teams would haul the rock down to Prescott.

In the spring I went to Prescott to live, and all that summer I worked with Bill Williams at painting and paper-hanging, at good wages. And then it was that I got acquainted with Mamma,-a young girl at the hotel where I boarded. In the fall of 1868 I had a team and hired a little light wagon, and Anna Bartel and I

“Then we sold out and I started for Willmar, Minnesota. The railroad had been built the year before, and Willmar was to be a Division point, and it seemed promising.”

went to her father’s house near Martel and were married by a justice of the peace named Hudson.

When we got back we rented a house and started house-keeping. I hauled cordwood that winter, thirteen miles, and sold it for \$4.50 a cord. In the spring I went to work at my trade of painting and paper-hanging again, and in the fall I bought a shanty for \$60, down near the shore, in the south part of Prescott, and there is where Alice was born. We lived there until spring and then rented the Mondell House which we ran about a year. Then we sold out and I started for Willmar, Minnesota. The railroad had been built the year before, and Willmar was to be a Division point, and it seemed promising.

When I reached Willmar I found the depot had burned the day before. I stood looking around and saw a little hotel across the street, and felt almost acquainted. I was standing out on the platform that evening when a man came up and said, “Are you the young man who has come to town as a painter?” “Yes,” I replied. “Well, my name is A. B. Robbins; I am the station agent. I am building a house over here and the cornices and casing are ready to be painted. Come over tomorrow at nine o’clock.” The next morning I got supplies and directions from C. F. Clark, who had a drug store on Third Street. So there I had a good job the very first evening I was in town! Mr. Robbins’ house was the best in town, the rooms papered, and all the glass set. Meanwhile I was picking up jobs all around, for I was the only painter there. I lived at the

Herrick House. Much building was going on, and everyone wanted painting, papering, and glazing done, - and I was the busiest man in town. Mamma and Alice came November 6th, and we stayed at the hotel. We had some furniture shipped from Prescott.

A Mr. Chittenden, an Episcopalian, who later built Mr. Spicer's house, had built the Presbyterian Church, and late in the fall he got me to paint it. He offered me a lot on Fourth Street, -and there I had some real estate! Later on that fall, Mr. Herrick said to me, "Chris, I want to go east this fall to get my sister out here from Massachusetts, to invest her money out here. I must have someone to run this hotel while I am gone, -will you do it?" So we ran the hotel for a while and he returned with his sister about the middle of February. About a week after his return, the hotel took fire. Everyone had had breakfast and had gone, and mamma took the baby and got out safely. The hotel was like tinder and very little was saved . . . I found a little house on Fifth Street that happened to be empty, and we got a few things to put in it and started housekeeping there.

In order to keep the fire from taking the whole block, a millinery shop owned by Mrs. Johnson was torn down, and I bought the lumber as it lay. I hauled it to my lot on Fourth Street, and I also bought an immigrant's house. Then a carpenter named Flocken, -Mrs. Brem's father, -helped me to build a house. We laid blocks for the foundation. That was the house Dr. Rains lived in for so many years. It was a story and a half, and had two windows in the north and south. We got it ready for lathing and plastering, and Mr. Thompson and C. K. Lund, -(who died last week, January, 1929) did these and built the chimney. We had that house built and ready to move into the first of May. I got a drayman to haul our stuff over on Sunday, for I had no time on other days. That was in the spring of 1871. I kept very busy. Alice played and tumbled about in the grass growing in the street. We had to get water from a well owned by Mr. Price . . . Alice used to say when she was thirsty, "Gibbee wallee" . . . Later I had a good well put in.

In the spring of 1873 I took a homestead by Lake Milton, in Whitefield township. Bernice was born there. We lived there for three years. There is no trace now left of either the lake or the trees that we set out. We moved back to town, where I had a feed store for some time.

In the nearly sixty years that we have lived in Willmar, our lives have been quite uneventful. I served



Whitefield Township 1900

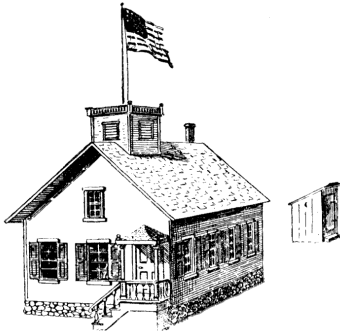
several terms as alderman of the First Ward on the Village Council in the 90's, and during that time the Council put into successful operation a city water system and electric light system, in spite of the strenuous opposition of some of the leading men of the town. I have been a member of Col. Heg Post of the G. A. R. since its organization, and am one of the three members left.

Of our family, one of our daughters, Julia Anna, died at the age of twelve, in 1887. Minnie, the youngest, was born in Willmar, and now lives in Idaho; she is Mrs. A. C. Carlson, and she has one son. Alice is Mrs. F. H. Vail, of Willmar, and she has five children. Bernice is Mrs. J. B. Irwin, of Minneapolis, and she has one son. Harold came to us in the fall of 1892, and we three, Harold, Mamma and I, have kept our home fires burning and our garden blooming during the years that have passed. I shall complete my 88th year on the 28th of April, this year of 1929, and with the poet I may say

“Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made. Our times are in His hand who saith, “A whole I planned, Youth shows but half; trust God; see all, nor be afraid.”

Willmar, Minnesota, January, 1929.

RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF KANDIYOHI COUNTY



EAST LAKE LILLIAN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICTS Written by Carolyn Kneisl

DISTRICT NO. 40

On a petition by George W. Hart and others, commissioners in 1866 established a school district including all the present towns of Lake Lillian and East Lake Lillian and sections, 25 to 36, inclusive, in town of Fahlun. The district was established as district No. 4 and after the union of the two counties it was renumbered 40.

The organization meeting wasn't held until March 26, 1870. It was then held at J. A. J. Bomsta's residence. J. A. Johnson was elected clerk; J. A. J. Bomsta, Director; and A. P. Quist, treasurer. A tax of \$20.00 was levied for building of the schoolhouse. It is stated by old residents that two terms of school had been taught by J. M. Pitman in Rev. Bomsta's first log house before the schoolhouse was built. Others maintain that the first term was taught by Mr. Hoyt. The money for paying the teacher the first year was probably raised by the parents by private assessment or subscription, as no order was ever issued by the district for his services, though the house rent, order No. 1 being issued for that purpose on June 25, 1870.



District 40

The schoolhouse was built in the spring of 1870 at a cost of about \$900 dollars. It was without doubt the largest county schoolhouse in the county at that time. It was built on the southwest corner of section 5, present day 165th Avenue and County Road 4, East Lake Lillian. Then in 1887 it was moved to the southwest corner of section 3, present day 165th Avenue SE and 165th Street SE, of the same town.

The district at that time was one of the most progressive in the county, maintaining six months of school in the early seventies, mostly winter school, and obtaining the best teachers obtainable, paying them \$36 to \$40 a month at a time when the average teachers' wages hardly exceeded \$20 a month. An organ was purchased for the school in 1875. In 1877 the apparatus of the school was valued at \$290. In 1930 the schoolhouse was leveled by fire. The school was closed in 1955.

DISTRICT NO. 81 NORTH & SOUTH

A petition dated at Lake Lillian, May 25, 1885, asked for the formation of a new school district in what is now the town of East Lake Lillian. The petition bore the following signatures: H. E. Anderson, Hans K. Sand, Andrew Nielson, William Waters, Anna Marshall, B. E. Nelson, Anna Hanson, Soren M. Hanson, Iver Aspaas, Christopher Johnson, Nils A. Nielson, Hans Owre. The matter came up before the county commissioners for



District 81 North

final action on Jan. 6, 1886, and the petition was granted and the new district established as No. 81. The district was organized at a special school meeting held Jan. 21, 1886. H. E. Anderson was elected director; Nils A. Nielson, treasurer; Hans Owre, clerk. A tax of \$125 for schoolhouse and \$25 for site was levied. The first school was held in the residence of H. E. Anderson in the fall of 1886. The same place was used for the spring school in 1887. At the annual meeting in 1887 the site for the schoolhouse was fixed at the northeast corner of lot 4, section 18. It was voted to issue bonds for \$600 for building schoolhouse. The building was erected that summer, at a cost of \$514.86. Furniture was bought for \$187.45; apparatus for \$70.45.

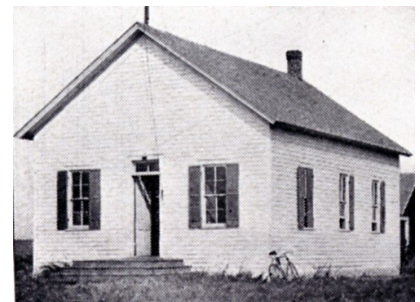
At a special school meeting held on March 22, 1902, it was decided by a vote of 19 to 13 to build another schoolhouse in the south half of the district, and to move the old schoolhouse. The site for the old schoolhouse, District 81 North, was fixed at the northwest corner of NE 1/4 section 20, present day on State Hwy 7 a 1/2 mile east of 135th Street SE. The new schoolhouse, District 81 South site was on the northwest corner of NE 1/4 section 32, present day on County Road 77 a 1/2 mile east of 135th Street SE. Bonds for \$1,000 were issued. The contract for building the new schoolhouse was let to Nils Erickson for \$137. The building was 20 x 28, 10 feet high, and cost in all \$693. The contract for moving the old schoolhouse was let to Lars Turnquist for \$100. Some repairs were made to the old building, costing \$52. For furniture for the new building \$176.20 was expended. Both schools are splendidly equipped with modern furniture and apparatus, including a library for each school. The free text book system has been in force since 1895.

On 29 January 1912 fire destroyed the North District 81 schoolhouse in East Lake Lillian. The school board met on the 16th of April 1912 and set the date of 21 April as the date for the people in District 81 to vote on issuing to the State of Minnesota the bonds of that municipality in the aggregate sum of \$1000 bearing interest at the rate of 4% per annum; the proceeds will be used for the purpose of building a new schoolhouse in the place of the one that burned down.

According to school board clerk's records the north school closed for an undecided period on account of diphtheria being in the district. (10 March 1914) The school district was closed in 1955.

DISTRICT NO. 89

District No. 89 was established on July 11, 1892, with the following territory: Sections 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35, and 36 town of East Lake Lillian. The district was organized at a special school meeting held on July 29, 1892. The site for the schoolhouse was fixed at the southeast corner of the SW 1/4 of section 23, present day location at 210th Avenue SE a 1/2 mile east of 180th Street SE, where a plat of one acre was obtained for grounds. It was voted to issue bonds for \$950 for building and equipping a schoolhouse. The contract for erecting the building was let to Mr. Windhorst of Olivia for \$200, he to furnish all materials. The building was 24 x 26, and built in the best modern style. Furniture was purchased for \$146.75 and apparatus for \$63.25. The free text book system was adopted the following year, and library was purchased in 1897. Since that year the district has maintained eight months of school per year, and received the special state aid. The school was closed in 1954.



District 89

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