The Winter Shows
1910-1985
Crookston, Minnesota

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Preface

Writing the history of the 75-year old Red River Valley Winter Shows proved to be much more than a mere chronological recording of dates and events. How does one do justice to recording the dreams, efforts, successes, and failures of people on the land of northwestern Minnesota, of the institutions that were born to service that rich agricultural scene? A complete compilation of all events and happenings at the shows for 75 years, including the thousands of people in the Red River Basin who planned and helped, would require several volumes rather than one.

The need for a one-volume historical publication aimed at recording significant events and preserving a celebration became a reality in the spring of 1983. Needless to say, a very busy several months ensued with communications via letter, telephone, personal interviews, and digging into volumes of premium books, program booklets and other publications dating back to 1910. Finally, pictures with cut lines, appendices material and twelve chapters sampling that glorious 75 years were delivered to the printer on August 2, 1984. Time was too short to eliminate all inadvertent errors. Your indulgence as a reader to the misspelled name or other mishap is begged.

One strives to record happenings as best understood. The historically close relationship between the University and the Winter Shows proved to be very helpful. Certainly the scene has changed from that first Winter Shows in 1910 to the 75th anniversary show in 1985. The reader is cautioned that only a sampling of events and documentation could be recorded for that period. The writer drew on 27 years of experience as president of the board of managers and upon the rich resource of hundreds of first-hand experiences with the volunteer doers and shakers who have already written the 75 years history with their lives carried out in the Red River Basin.