FOOTPRINTS
OF
YESTERDAY

CENTENNIAL 1879-1979
Crockston, Minnesota
The purpose of this publication is to create a nostalgic viewpoint regarding the history of Crookston. Limited space, time allowed, and length of period covered do not, and cannot, allow for the comprehensive history. The Polk County Historical Society's publication in 1976 provided a thorough coverage of area history including that of pioneer families in surrounding communities.

In the few months allotted our committee to compile information, a concerted effort was made by a committee of five to research city records, accomplish interviews, and study a vast amount of literature. It is the hope of the Centennial Committee that sometime in the future a group could be found willing to donate at least two years of their time to compile a complete historical account of Crookston. Somehow, even though time allowed us to only tap the surface, we're convinced a follow-up team of volunteers would thoroughly enjoy their two year dedication.

In order to avoid unauthorized duplication of material the Crookston Centennial Committee has requested acknowledgement for any material used from this book.

For what has been accomplished in these 120 pages, we are deeply grateful to a number of people who, like ourselves, volunteered their time towards one specific goal...a nostalgic return to the past. We hope you enjoy your journey.

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Maybelle Anderson
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In The Beginning

People come and go, but the town remains. Cowing Avenue becomes Holly and Oak is later called Broadway, but the geography stays the same. The serpentine river continues to wind around itself, separating addition from addition, much to the confusion of newcomers. A few old buildings remind one of the past, but that thing called progress has come in and applied the wrecking ball to many others. Still more have died by fire or time. Yet, basically, Crookston is the same - railroad tracks as they were in the 1870's, streets running north and south, east and west, houses built along the river banks, roads leading out in all directions to farms and other towns, except that these are no longer rutty trails but paved highways. Yet probably Ed Walsh and Tom Morris could still find their way around.

Early Settlements

In the early 1870's the influx of settlers was rather slow due to the ravages of grasshoppers and the unsettled condition of railroad building. The settlement of the surrounding areas was mainly along the streams, the Red River, Sand Hill, and Red Lake rivers as far as a few miles above Crookston. The unoccupied prairie was still in the wild stage of nature's development.

Lands were not surveyed until 1874. Up until that time settlers were merely squatters. It soon became known where they were "at", and from that time on government regulations followed.

The railroad company had a grant of every odd section for twenty miles from the Red River East, extending from the March River to the Canadian line. During a dispute on the validity of the grant, applications to purchase land were duly acknowledged on post cards informing squatters that theirs would be the first considered.

With the end of the dispute, railroad land went on the market at $5 per acre, rebated at rate of $2.50 per acre for breaking three-fourths of it, with an additional rebate of fifty cents per acre for cropping it. Therefore a quarter section of land cost only $440, and no residence was required.

At first the Valley was mainly stock country because of the natural conditions. Transportation was the crudest kind, mostly by ox teams over poor roads and across unbridged streams. The early settler lived snugly along the river bank, well sheltered by tall timber, in which he had a cluster of log buildings used for dwelling and stables. He had a large herd of fat cattle fed exclusively on prairie hay which had been gathered with a hand scythe and pitchfork.

Unrestricted freedom was enjoyed by the pioneer. There was no encroachment by near neighbors, and he had unlimited range for his cattle in summer, with plenty of timber to choose from for building and for firewood in winter.

Then a change came. The prairie began to be settled, and opportunities for raising stock began to diminish. Claim shanties appeared on former meadows and pasture lands. Soon men were driving two ox teams abreast before a breaking plow, turning down the green grass and turning up the black soil. In time the vast open prairie became dotted with shacks and was well-covered by fenced fields.

Farmers began producing large wheat crops which were hauled into Crookston by ox drawn wagons at the speed of two miles an hour. Grain elevators sprang up to take care of the huge crops appearing at railroad loading stations.

Poor drainage in the area often interrupted the farmer's trip to town because he got stuck in the mire every forty rods for a distance of more than six miles. A drainage convention was soon called for and held in Crookston in 1880 at which J.J. Hill, representing the railroad, pledged one-third of the cost of a drainage survey. At the next legislative session, drainage appropriation was made, and in due time a system was installed which produced incalculable benefits to the area.

Waiting for the stage. Note the muddy streets. The setting is the Scandia Hotel.

The Joseph O. Sargents. He was a Civil War veteran who lived near Northfield before moving to Crookston in 1893 to farm and was one of the posse' who trailed and captured the James and Younger brothers. He exchanged farming for building contracting and erected many of the city's public buildings. Married at age 24, the couple had two children who did not survive.
Platting of Additions Began in 1875

It was an eventful day, September 14, 1872 that the steamboat, Dakota, operated by Jim Hill and Norman Kittson landed on the bank of the river near the end of West Third Street. Captain Fred A. Bill's log read: "There were a couple hundred people there then and most of them in tents and structures with board sides and canvas roofs. About a public square were several stores, both wet and dry, and a number of hotels, the main ones being Our House and Ellsworth House, all very crude and rough."

A short three years later, in September 1875, the townsite was platted. It is interesting to note on this plat that the street we know as Broadway was named Oak Street; otherwise only a few changes have been made.

As more people arrived, the town had to expand, and the next area to be platted was Fletcher and Houston's Addition, July 7, 1877, an area from Fletcher Street south to Houston Avenue laid out by Loren Fletcher, C.M. Loring, and Robert Houston. Streets were duly named after them. These locations enjoyed a lower altitude above sea level than the surrounding prairies which protected them from the cold wintry blasts of northern Minnesota. Then too, an abundance of trees kept them cool in summer.

South of Houston Ave. in what is known now as the Woods Addition, a section was platted as Fletcher's Addition on September 15, 1879. Later, the Woods also acquired Hurlbut's and Clement's Additions, and Cromb and Sletton's subdivision.

What is known as the "Flats" had two mappings. An area on either side of Maple Street was called C.M. Loring's Addition on June 2, 1879, and the remainder became Chase's Addition on August 26, 1884. Chase Addition was a prime spot located at the end of West Robert St., an area west of the Great Northern tracks surrounded on three sides by the Red Lake River. Many of the early railroad men, as well as business men, located in this area. Tom Nelson built and operated a boarding house on Maple St. to board the many men involved in railroad construction.

Sampson's Addition was laid out April 14, 1883, by Julius and Sarah Bjernstad, with B. Sampson as Attorney in Fact. Jerome's Addition dates back to April 19, 1883, with the work done by Jerome and Co. and an area near the entrance to Central Park was named A.C. Loring's Addition, June 23, 1880.

Carman, in the early days, was a separate townsite with its own government, fire department, waterwells, and school. The town was platted September 4, 1884, by E.D. Childs, Ellwood Carson, James Hill, Walter Bailey, N.P. Stone, and Joseph Netzer. It was named for a Baptist minister, Rev. John Carman, who served this area. Carman in later years became the fifth ward of Crookston.

Walsh's Addition was platted April 19, 1883 by E.M. and Emma Walsh and is located adjacent to Highland Park. On July 10, 1909, the Norcross Addition in south Crookston was mapped out by Strander Abstract and Investment Company, with C.C. Strander as president and O.W. Peterson as secretary.

Crookston continued to expand in the 1900's. Recorded were Highland Park, Darkow's Groveland, 1st and 2nd Country Club, Golf Terrace, Davis, Norton's and Sunnyside Additions, Grand View Place, Benedict Addition, and Eickhofs sub-division. An area near the cemetery has recently been called the Pembina Trail Addition, with streets named Rollette Road and Oxcart Lane.
In order to encourage settlement, the
government would donate every odd
numbered section of land for ten miles
each side of the railroad right-of-way to
the railroad company, upon completion
through a designated area. The railroad
company in turn could place such land
on the market, a common price being
$2.50 per acre.

The firm of Childs and Hill purchased
quite a number of such sections. In the
purchase was section I in Andover
Township, a part of which section was
later platted and recorded as Carman
Townsite.

In the early 80’s, Carman had one
ambition; to rival Crookston. One argu-
ment advanced was that the expense of
building a city on level land, a reason-
able distance from a river, would be but
a small part of the cost it would take to
grade streets, level off lots, meet the
problem of bridges, sewage, etc., on
such uneven river bottom land as the
site Crookston was being expanded
upon. It would be subject to floods,
maybe devastating ones. As a result of
this determined campaign, it was some
time before people had the courage to
build on such low parts of South Ash
Street or “The Woods” addition as it is
known.

Mr. Childs was ambitious and re-
sourceful in promoting the interests of
Carman. He saw to it that traffic to and
from the east was mainly via the Car-
man bridge and the county developed
the road along the saw mill. Mr. Childs
later observed the interference the traf-

fic was to the two-wheel hand-pushed
lumber carts crossing to and from the
lumber yard, and so the county commis-
sioners were prevailed upon to develop
a road south of the lumber yard, thus
bringing traffic to within a block or two
of the Carman stores.

That last road was the straw which
aroused the Crookston people to sense
an “influence” which was causing the
delay in having a more substantial road
and connection to the east via Jerome’s
Addition.

From 1879 to the time of the construc-
tion of the Great Northern branch line to
Fosston about 1888, Carman was the
main market for all that eastern terri-
tory. It was known for its three flourish-
ing hotels, besides two or three board-
houses, three grain elevators, three
saloons, three blacksmith shops, three
general stores, a hardware store, feed
store, millinery store, harness shop and
others, besides a large retail machinery
business, Bates lumber yard, creamery
and cheese factory, sash and door fac-
tory, and other enterprises.

The dairy farm of E.D. Childs Co. was
pretty much of a monopoly as a source
of supply to milk users in both Carman
and Crookston. The cows numbered as
many as 125, and as many as three de-

delivery carts were used. Any extra milk
was delivered to the Childs’ cheese fac-
tory.

The T.B. Walker Saw Mill was locat-
ed between Carman and the river,
and the large and active Vance brick
yard was located to the east of the saw-
mill. The saw-mill, running day and
night from the time ice went out until
ice came in the fall, gave employment to
hundreds of men.

In those days Carman was also an
Indian trading point. The W.D. Bailey
General Store catered to that trade, Mr.
Bailey having mastered the Chippewa
language. His chief clerk, Joe Beaveux,
was a half breed. A general slaughter
house was located in the woods along
the river bank east of the brick yard and
the favorite camping ground of the
Indians was in the woods near the
slaughterhouse.

**Streets-City Services**

Hard-surfaced streets were unheard of
in Crookston during its first thirty
years of life as a city. Though the town
had a city engineer named George
Ralph as early as 1892, streets, curbs,
and gutters were not his major worry.

The first paved residential streets, ac-
ccording to R.W. Hussey, were in the
Woods Addition and were completed in
1911. They were concrete with bitumi-
ous topping. Most of the uptown area
was improved by paving before 1920.
Hunter Street from Houston to Crob
was hard-surfaced in 1923, and Sixth
from Broadway to University in 1922.

It was a joyous day at the N.W.
School and Experiment Station in 1921
when Highway 2 was paved from Crook-
ston to the U. property. This was the
first concrete pavement in what was
then the Ninth Congressional District.

Curb and gutter work and street light-
ing came along in 1913-14. A concrete
driveway could be built then for 16 cents
a square foot! The first ornamental
street lighting was bid in April, 1913.

Horses, of course, did a lot of the
city’s work. All city sidewalks were kept
clean of snow by a team and a wooden
V-shaped plow. Garbage pickup was by
horses and wagon, and streets were
flushed down twice a week by a team
pulling a wooden barrel-like tank of
water mounted on wheels. Crane Dray
and Transfer and the Fink Dray Line
performed some of these services.

Enterprising citizens made several
attempts at establishing a bus line in
the city after automobile transportation
was common. One, started in 1935, last-
ed only one year. The others were
equally unsuccessful. In the early days
of cars, gas pumps were on the side-
walks at the curbs.

By the way, Jerome’s Addition had
the foresight to establish a dike fund as
early as 1920!
In 1875, the population was 150, with 197 persons in the entire district. Very early, schools, literary societies and a philharmonic society were established. The literary society used its surplus funds to support a circulating library which speaks well for the young county and city. They began to feel conscious of their prairie type of town so one citizen had his house painted to indicate the end of pioneer conditions. Pigs, though, were still allowed to run around a bit, and this was hard on the citizens who planted flowers and gardens. Drinking water was taken from the Red Lake River.

In 1878 the population jumped to 300 and boasted one drug store, three lawyers, two physicians and a Union Church.

Bjoen and Carlson's livery stable was an important business in pre-automobile days.

The Crookston Steam Laundry was located across from the present Otter Tail office.

Fred Reyer, blacksmith, (center) operated his shop in the early 1900's across from the present M & H Gas station.

Let's Call Them "The Originals"

It wasn't the empire builders or the captains of industry or the land scalpers. It wasn't the rich-quick adventurers or the pampered easy-livers or what we call today the jet-setters. Quite the opposite.

The settlers who first came to Crookston between 1871 and 1880 were a group of men and women resolute enough to tackle living in a land never before occupied by whites. Polk County in 1871 had one white settler, according to the U.S. Census.

Where did they come from, these people? You can call early Crookston a cosmopolitan center, for they were Scottish, Irish, English, French, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, German, Canadian, Yankee [N.H., Vt., Mass., Pa., and N.Y.] -- and Minnesotan, too. Many were Civil War veterans looking for a new life in a new place. Glowing ads in the St. Paul papers attracted them. They read about the fertile countryside, the good lands for sale, the opportunities railroad and building construction offered. They represented all professions. Many were versatile enough to occupy several posts in the new settlement. Most brought their families with them, an indication of stability. Others sent for theirs as soon as they were resolved enough to tackle living in a new environment.

Let's call them "The Originals", that small group of people way back in 1872, who first founded a town to be called Crookston. Though there were other small groups of people way back in 1872, for their sakes as soon as they were versatile enough to occupy several construction offered. They represented all professions. Many were Civil War veterans looking for a new life in a new place. Glowing ads in the St. Paul papers attracted them. They read about the fertile countryside, the good lands for sale, the opportunities railroad and building construction offered. They represented all professions. Many were versatile enough to occupy several posts in the new settlement. Most brought their families with them, an indication of stability. Others sent for theirs as soon as they were resolved enough to tackle living in a new environment.

C.S. Spendley, Mary Carlson, Reuben Reynolds, Ellery Davis, Henry Shephard, Jake Myers, Frank Jerome, Louis Johnson, and Henry Mitchell. Shephard was often called "Pioneer of the Northwest."

Walsh also lists J.R. Barb, Munro and H.G. Palmer, E.H. Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Cornelius, David Wilkins, Sam Honeywell, and Christ Sathre as among the earliest in the settlement. Others were Mark Rauenbuehler, and Frederick Moeckel.

James Greenhalgh staked a claim on the Red Lake River in 1872, three miles from the city of Crookston. His quarter was on the odd-numbered sections that the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad Company laid claim to. A long and costly contest was waged, but Mr. Greenhalgh won, and the case was the means of winning many other similar cases for poor settlers who had unwittingly located upon railroad claimed property.

In 1873 N.K. Olson, Peter Heydt, E.F. Kelley, the Richard Hutchinsons, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Kelley, nee Ella Fleming, (Crookston Township) arrived. Mr. and Mrs. John Saugstad also came in '73.

By 1874 when the railroad was assured, there was an influx of more people: Walter Bailey, Nels Woodstrom, Casper Sand, H.J. Kertson, Ole Sundet, Clara Cochrane, Mrs. George Flaten, all in 1874.

Ole Hoven, Carl Aarnes, P.R. Sampson, and Frank Lerum settled here in 1875 followed by Elias Steenerson, Norbert Barrett, August Wentzel, Mrs.

Edmund M. Walsh, Crookston's first postmaster (1872). He also held office as county auditor, clerk of the district court, mayor, first city council member, and first school board member. Occupation...tinsmith.

E.B. Durdahl, and Kelsey D. Chase in 1876.

Listed in 1877 are Ellsworth Childs, M.R. Brown, Peter Eide, H.E. Cooke, Joseph LeBlanc, Edward Barrette, Thomas Harris, Wilbur C. Lyle, O.K. Quamme, Mr. and Mrs. C.J. Casmey, Louis Wentzel, the Thos. Thysgesons, William Lobb, John Patnode, and Hans Clausen (Fairfax).


Among the '79ers were W.A. Marin, Nathan P. Stone, Charles E. Dampier, August Akerlund, Thomas Shapleigh, Mark Rauenbuehler, John Crambs, James and Thomas Morrissey, John Saugstad, James Muir, John McGrew, Alberic Chabot, the Ed Mossefinis, J.O. Sargent, the Stanhope Collinses, August Walters, Hugh R. Robertson, A.J. McKinnon, Alex McKinnon, Milton B. Hayes, Oscar Hamery, Walter Latta, John McPhee. In the townships: Eric Samuelson (Andover); Ole Christianson (Lowell); and Hans Johnson (Euclid), O. Mercil, E. Mercil, the A.M. Siertsons, Chas. Brouillard, Jebedee Lusia, Mrs. Wm. Watts, Gertrude Watts, the August Munns, Mr. and Mrs. O.E. Urness, Frank Brunner,
In these groups, and those that follow were merchants of food, dry goods, machinery, jewelry, hardware, and clothing; clergy men; a veterinarian, an undertaker, surveyors, a photographer, butchers, hotel keepers, shoemakers, bankers, farmers, saloon keepers, lawyers, doctors, real estate salesmen, grain dealers, railroad employees, editors, brewers, livery men, lumber workers, and a teacher or two. Others who came prior to or in 1880 but for whom no definite dates could be found include: W.B. Hurlbut, Davis Brower, Henry Watts, George Crocker, W.J. Harthorn, Loren Fletcher and G.W. Tanson.


Up to 1885 these new citizens were welcomed. The dates of arrival are listed after their names. R.J. Montague ('81); William McKenzie ('81); Andrew Eicken ('81); Oscar and Mena Brustad ('81); Albert O. Espe ('81); and B.J. McLorin an, H.H. Holte, Mrs. I.W. ('81); Alber t O. Espe ('81); and B.J.

Sometime in the '80's came a large group of residents for whom there is no accurate date. These people include Jack McLaren, Spencer Kimball, Jacob and Anna Kohler, Prof. Kimball, Henry Stone, D.N. Taylor, D.H. Bates, Anson Bancroft, D.A. Darley, B.F. Zwichey, John Patterson, J.N. Milne, Rodney Smith, G.W. Banks, O. Viau, Archie David, and Tom McCleary, I. Bougie, Dan Hughes, Samuel Currie, Jacob Francis, Ellen Jane Kyle, Hannah Miller, and Louisa Dodds Miller.

The population had grown extensively by the 90's -- in fact, it would be impossible to name or even locate the names of persons living here in that decade. A few, however, can be listed here: William Anderson, John Freeberg, Emil Lundeen, W.H. Olds, Emil Thoverson -- all in 1890; William Gustafson and wife Alma, John Laughlin, Lorenzo Miller and Nelson and Tisha Hannah Miller. Frank Stainbrook, John Letnes (Andover) -- all in '91; T.T. Morken ('92) and Halvor Holte ('93), Medric Collin ('92).


There were three more Kiewels here in '98: John, Nicholous, and Peter, as well as Olaf Hanson of Lowell township and Thomas Owens of Euclid township. Julius Spokely moved here in 1899.

Louis Fontaine, partner of W.S. Anglim in a general merchandising store purchased from W.D. Bailey in 1878, was an early Crookston merchant and a charter member of St. Anne’s Church. He also had another claim to fame. His son, George, married Mrs. DeHaviland, mother of Joan Fontaine and Olivia DeHaviland. Olivia kept the name of her father, but Joan adopted that of her step-father, Fontaine.

NOTE: The staff has spent many hours of research, talked to many individuals who are descendants of these early residents, and from our radio and newspaper requests received some information by mail. Records of early Crookston are, at best, rather sketchy. If your favorite ancestor is not listed, we are sorry. We have had to confine ourselves to the city of Crookston and townships that are close-in.

**Gust Swenson and Sons, Inc.**

**North**

4th and Main

**GUST SWENSEN & SONS**

8
No man probably had more impact on early Crookston than Edmund M. Walsh who came here in 1872 as first postmaster. A popular citizen, he was entrusted with some public office during most of his life. He was county auditor, clerk of the district court, mayor, first city council member, first school board member. His trade was that of tinsmith. His father was Thomas Walsh, a Civil War veteran who came to Grand Forks in 1870.

Connecticut-born Henry Shephard, 1872 pioneer, was Crookston’s first justice of the peace. In 1882 he was elected constable and also held the post of coroner. A popular, respected man he was endorsed by Republicans, Democrats, and Prohibitionists. He was also commissioned as a deputy U.S. Marshal.

Captain Ellery C. Davis, Crookston’s first mayor, was a captain in the army during the Civil War. After the war he moved to this area in 1874, and homesteaded in the part of the city now known as Davis Addition. The Davis home is located at 406 Grant St.

A meeting was held on January 8, 1879, in the school house of the early settlement. Articles of incorporation were set up to create a town with a municipal government. A charter was approved, the townsite platted, and on March 18, 1879, Captain Davis was elected as first mayor. He later served as county commissioner.

Norbert Barrett, pioneer shoemaker, arrived in Crookston in 1876. He was a son-in-law of Joseph Beaudette, pioneer of Gentilly. His shop, which he erected, was located on Robert Street. He was also the owner of a farm, two houses, and a store building, all of which he rented.

C.H. Mix, captain in the Minnesota Volunteer Cavalry, came to the city in 1879 as station agent for the St. Paul, Mpls. and Manitoba. Before settling here his career had included serving as secretary to Gov. William German, working as an Indian trader, and being commandant at Fort Abercrombie and adjutant general at Fort Snelling.

One of the city’s famous sons was Charles Loring, who located here in 1890 at the age of 27 upon graduation from law school and a brief interval as assistant to Judge Nye of Moorhead. For several years he was associated with Halvor Steenerson and G.A. Youngquist, attorneys. In 1930 Loring was appointed a justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court, a post in which he served for many years.

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Nathan P. Stone

At the age of 41, Nathan P. Stone arrived in Crookston and in 1879 established himself as a merchant in the farm implement trade. Nathan Stone served as alderman on Crookston’s city council for five terms, as a school board member and treasurer for two terms, and was also a member of the charter commission of the city. In 1900 his two sons, William M. and Walter P. Stone, joined their father in partnership and conducted the business under the name of N.P. Stone & Co. at 3rd and Main for over 75 years.

W.G. Murphy and Thomas R. Walker

Two men associated with the history of Minneapolis played major roles in the growth and development of Crookston.

The first was W.G. Murphy, a lawyer, who in 1880 began practicing in Grand Forks. Within a couple of years he took over the Grand Forks “Plain Dealer” and made an influential newspaper out of it, as well as establishing a book bindery and job printing office. His next venture was taking control of the G.F. gas company (after selling the newspaper), and this new field brought him to purchase the almost bankrupt Crookston Water Works, Power, and Light Company in 1890. He rebuilt the plant entirely in 1892. In 1898 he decided to install a central station steam-heated power plant and in 1912 constructed a dam and water power five miles east of town. (All this time he was living in Minneapolis and coming here about once a month. In 1891 he had planned to return to law practice in New York but he then was asked to take charge of the business affairs of the Minneapolis Tribune, which was in financial straits. Eventually he took complete control of the Tribune and was associated with it until his death.)

The second was Thomas B. Walker, a member of the United States surveying party. During his years in this work he helped survey and divide into townships much of this region. With other men as partners he began purchasing large areas of pine on the headwaters of the Red Lake and Clearwater rivers, beginning in 1880. He and his son, Gilbert, then established mills at Crookston and Grand Forks. Walker became one of the leading lumbermen of the U.S. Today his name is associated with the famous art center he established in Minneapolis. To Crookston he gave a thriving industry which operated for about 13 years and then was taken over by Shevlin-Carpenter, who ran it until late in the first decade of this century.

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Halvor Steenerson

Halvor Steenerson arrived in Crookston in 1880 and within six months was elected county attorney. Two years later he was elected State Senator and was the youngest member of the Senate, serving on the Judiciary Committee. When his term ended in 1887, he devoted himself to general practice, and his reputation extended throughout the Northwest. In 1901 he was elected to the House of Representatives and was one of the most dedicated congressmen in areas of progressive legislation and liberal laws to aid pioneer settlers with their hardships.

Founded 1934

Farmers Union Oil Co.

(Cenex Products)

Highway 2 East
Annie Colter Laschapelle

The male animal is predominant in all accounts of early life in Crookston. A search through pages of history and memoirs hardly turns up the name of one female considered important enough to have her life and activities recorded, even though she may have borne sixteen children, fought Indians, plowed a quarter section, and shot buffalos.

An example to the contrary, however, is Annie Colter Laschapelle, one of the earliest and pluckiest women settlers in Minnesota. She arrived in St. Paul from New England in 1850. She was the first to have battled her way in a man's world.

In 1870 she married Pascal Laschapelle, and they moved to Ottertail Lake, where she financed and he ran a grocery and liquor business. Here she held off drunken Indians and white marauders and won the respect and friendship of many Indians, who, on one occasion, saved her life.

In June, 1872, she and her husband and nephew (Richard Hussey) came to Crookston and opened a boarding house for the railroad surveyors. After an interval of hotel-keeping in Fisher's Landing, she returned here and built the Lakeview Hotel, located where the old armory now stands. It was called "Lakeview" because at the time there was a small lake behind it.

Mrs. Laschapelle was the great aunt of Robert and Everett Hussey. At 60 she owned a block and a quarter of the city, plus six houses and two 160-acre farms.

Tom Morris

Tom Morris - mayor of Crookston and pioneer businessman. He formed a partnership with W.W. Houghton and established the first jewelry store in Crookston. Morris was involved in the development and rapid expansion of Crookston and the formation of its first fire department in 1880, and served as fire chief until 1883. He was state president of the Fire Fighters Association. In 1881 he was elected alderman and in 1912, mayor.

Peter J. Eide

Born in 1878 of early pioneer parents, Peter J. Eide obtained his education at the public school and business college in Crookston. At the age of 24 he established one of the most successful ice cream and confectionery stores in Crookston. In 1903 he became a private in Company I, Third Minnesota National Guard and in due time rose to the rank of Captain. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Crookston Armory through persistent efforts in the face of many discouragements and difficulties.

A Disgraceful Affair

NOTE: This story and headline, a rather obvious attempt at irony, is a good example of a 19th century reporter's fondness for personal comment in the news.

One day last week as two ladies, the wife and niece of a farmer living near the city, were driving home from the city in a buggy, they were overtaken by two men in a lumber wagon drawn by a span of mules. Upon seeing the ladies, the driver whipped his mules into a run but made no effort to turn out to pass the buggy. The ladies turned out into the ditch to avoid a collision when this semblance of a man turned his team toward them with the evident intention of tipping their buggy over when one of the men in the wagon caught hold of the lines and turned the team in time to prevent a collision. But so close did they come that one of the mule's head struck one of the ladies. Seeing that he had failed to collide with the buggy, the drunken brute, as he passed, raised his whip and struck the horse the ladies were driving but fortunately did not succeed in his nefarious attempt to wreck the buggy. He then drove on very slowly not allowing the ladies to pass until upon reaching the house of a neighboring farmer, the ladies stopped for protection and the brave man (?) drove on. What a grand and manly act was that for a great stout man to thus terrorize two defenseless women. The great cowardly brute who could so far forget what is due to manhood as to descend to do such an action deserves a term in state's prison until he can learn how to act in a civilized community. That he was drunk is no excuse, for a brave man, though drunk, would never think of making war on defenseless women.

FROM POLK COUNTY JOURNAL, May 1, 1890 - courtesy Polk County Museum
Bernhard Sampson—One of Earliest Homesteaders

Bernhard Sampson homesteaded a claim on June 12, 1872, for 275 acres along the Red Lake River. On this land he erected a log cabin, topped off with a sod roof that was considered to be one of the first in this part of the valley. After the sawmill was built in 1880, Mr. Sampson built his family home to replace the log cabin, setting it on a high hill. It was the first place weary travelers saw as they approached from the south.

Many Indians camped in the area and frequented the farm to observe the family. Several attempts were made to burn down the original log cabin dwelling.

The Sampson home hosted the first church services in the area and was the scene of baptism for the early settlers’ children. A charter was drawn up in the log cabin on June 7, 1874, creating the Red Lake River Evangelical Lutheran Church. This, and a group of other Lutheran churches, eventually merged, becoming the forerunner of the present Trinity Lutheran Church.

Because Bernhard Sampson owned railroad contracts in Ada, Crookston, and Fisher, he and James J. Hill worked closely together and from the first they formed a lasting friendship that benefited Crookston for many years. Some of the 275 acres of land Sampson homesteaded along the Red Lake River in 1872 had been donated to the railroad for a road bed, which helped to alter the railroad’s plans for a road bed east of Crookston. Without the railroads in the late 1800’s, Crookston would not have had the greater advantage over other surrounding small communities and, therefore, no real opportunity to flourish as it did.

Landmarks still on the original property include, to name a few, Glenmore, Riverview Hospital, and Eugene Field School. He eventually owned approximately 900 acres, all of which surrounded Crookston, except for 252 owned near Lake Sarah and Union Lake.

The Sampson dairy farm produced much of the milk supply for the growing community. (A later Sampson business venture was the first flour mill in Crookston in 1881.) When the Crookston Improvement Company was organized, about 1880, Sampson was chosen president because of his community involvement.

In 1878 Mr. Sampson served as first clerk of district court for Polk County. In 1880 he was elected a member of the Minnesota State Legislature and in 1885, to the State Senate. Working hard to secure drainage in the area, he was publicly recognized for his efforts by James J. Hill at the Farmers’ Institute meeting, October 31, 1902, held to achieve support on the drainage issue.

Bernhard Sampson, a widely recognized successful businessman and statesman, who homesteaded in 1872. Sampson’s Addition bears his name.
Whether dancing should be permitted at occasional school functions by the pupils in the high school was the subject of discussion, and a matter of the moral welfare of the community, at last evening's public meeting held at the Armory.

Over 700 citizens attended. Arguments on both sides were weighty and clothed with lofty sentiments. Conclusions reached by speakers on one side were that danger lurked behind the dreamy waltz or seductive two-step to drag down to perdition the budding womanhood and manhood of our fair city.

The other viewpoint proposed was that these pleasures if permitted in the schools, under supervision, would preserve youth from real dangers that might be lurking elsewhere. One of the clergy in attendance said no person could be a Christian and indulge in dancing.

Charles Loring said he indulged in the practice since he was knee-high-to-a-grasshopper, and was still a Christian.

After the discussion, a rising vote was taken. The count showed 232 opposed and 213 in favor.

The Bella Coola Sage

Financial depression and the severe winter weather in 1894 created discontent among the Norwegian farmers who had settled in the Crookston area. As a result, the Rev. Christian Saugstad and A. Stortroen were selected to go to the West coast to investigate a site for a new settlement. Pastor Saugstad was minister of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in Crookston and Stortroen, a parishioner.

In British Columbia they visited the Bella Coola Valley, 400 miles north of Vancouver, an area which resembled Norway, from which many of the Red River Valley settlers had emigrated. The Canadian government, through the Minister of Immigration, promised that a part of this valley would be reserved for these settlers if at least thirty families would come. They would build roads and give each family 160 acres free as a homestead. This offer sounded attractive, and a colony was organized, with Saugstad as president and Peter Boukind as vice president.

On October 17, 1894, the expedition of 83 men, women, and children left Crookston for Winnipeg, traveled west on the Canadian Pacific in two large sleeping cars, and arrived in Victoria on October 20. On October 27 the party boarded the steamboat Princess Louise and went north to Bella Coola. There some friendly Indians transported them to shore in canoes.

In November, 1895, the Saugstad family, including a married daughter, Mrs. S.O. Bangen and her seven children arrived. Mr. Bangen joined them on March 6, 1896, and served as photographer for the colony. The Canadian government opened a school in 1895, and the group built a church.

Though many settlers left this area for Bella Coola, many also returned to Crookston to an easier way of making a living than fishing, lumbering, and roadbuilding. When Pastor Saugstad died March 17, 1897, the Bangens and their children came back to Crookston. The sole survivor of the Bangen family, who spent 18 months in Bella Coola as a child, is Mrs. A.E. Morck, now 90 years old and a resident of Riverview Nursing Home.

In memory of the Crookston pioneer and missionary, the Canadian government gave the name, Mt. Saugstad, to the highest peak in the Rockies that is visible from Bella Coola. Its height is 10,000 feet.

Founded 1948

Otto J. Eickhof & Sons

209 North Main
Home is a Storehouse of Memories

If one defines the word "home" by what it connotes, then "a shelter that provides the usual residence of a person" is an empty definition indeed. For home is a storehouse of memories, happy and sad, of family, of celebrations, foods, sounds, odors, feelings - even furnishings and clothing. House can be a shanty, a log cabin, a boxy, gabled frame house, a small upstairs apartment, or a brick mansion on a fashionable street, provided the recollections are warm and loving.

There is an old pioneer ballad about a sodbuster on the western prairies which describes the first type of home constructed by the settler in this valley.

"The hinges are of leather and the windows have no glass. While the board roof lets the howling blizzards in - And I hear the hungry Kiyote (sic) as he slinks up through the grass. Round my little old sod shanty on my claim."

The fastest way to get a good house when you arrived was to dig a cellar, then pile slices of turf around the cellar line. Wooden crosspoles held up the walls and the elm bark and sod roof that you put on last. If you were tall, you had a high ceiling; if you were short, a low one. Where you had plenty of timber, you could build a log cabin and chink it with mud or paint, sometimes out of necessity, there was sometimes straw was used for extra elegance if there was a woman around.

The rough unpeeled log walls in cabins grew unattractive to the women in time, and they sometimes covered them with muslin and then a coat of whitewash.

Usually it wasn't too many years before a real house could be built, usually of frame, but frequently the old sod shanty remained on the farm property for some utilitarian purpose.

In town the homes of the gentry became more and more elegant as the family acquired wealth. Someone once said people in the Victorian era "couldn't leave a room alone". Windows were hung with heavy draperies plus lace curtains, always closed to keep out the sun. Portieres with fringe and tassels were hung in doorways. Antimacassars and tidies were draped on chairs, and doilies and fancy cloths on tables. Every available spot, plus a whatnot, had a collection of knicknacks. Wallpaper was generally pretty garish. Pictures were suspended on wires near the ceiling. Usually there was a gramaphone with a horn and maybe a piano or pump organ.

The large kitchen, however, was a horror of inconvenience with its huge wood or coal range, cast iron sink that never looked clean, its oak ice chest serviced every day or two by the iceman, who dripped water and sawdust from the cakes of ice onto the floor that you'd just scrubbed. Milk was delivered from gallon containers and transferred by the milkman with pint and quart measures to the housewives' bowls or pitchers. (A bowl was best because there was more top surface on which the cream could rise and be skimmed off.) Of course, there was no pasteurization.

No house was complete without the ubiquitous "Rag Bag". Every well-ordered family had one in more thrifty days. Since every scrap of material and all serviceable old clothes were saved, sometimes out of necessity, there was always a source of supply for the creation of "made-over" clothing and even an occasional gift. If you were good, you might get a scrap for a doll dress.

About 1900 came the first hand-cranked wash machines - fun to operate by the youngest kid for about two minutes! (Before that time it was the wash-board and two or three tubs for Mama.) It was common for houses to have cisterns to catch rain and provide soft water for laundry.

At housecleaning time everything was in an upheaval as the mother and willing or unwilling aides scoured the place. Rugs of all sizes were taken out and whacked vigorously with an implement called a carpet beater. Mattresses received the same treatment. Floors were scrubbed, as were cupboards and all their contents. Curtains were washed and then put on a finger pricker called a stretcher where they were dried in a warm spot out of the sun. Men usually spent long hours away from home when this earthquake took place.

Many Crookston homes had porches where you sat in the hammock or on a chair and watched the neighbors. Maybe you shelled peas or cut up beans or crocheted. If Papa was a real sport about spending money, the porch was no doubt screened so that he could spend his evenings there reading the paper without being chewed by mosquitoes.

Most designs for houses in the 80's and 90's came from pattern books or from the ideas of local carpenters and builders. By the early 1900's stucco was popular as an outside finish, as were bungalows and box-style two-story houses. Crookston residences were generally of wood and stucco, with a few

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brick homes like the former E.C. Davis residence at 406 Grant Street (now owned by Keith Ramberg), the bricks for which were manufactured on the place. You'll find examples of all these types if you tour the older residential sections of town.

Certainly there was no overpopulation in Crookston in the 1870's because of a baby boom. But there are records, both verified by the individuals themselves, of the births of the two first white children.

The first to open her eyes here was Anna I. Gembe, (born 1874), a daughter of F.M. and Josephine Ricklake Gembe. In 1901 Anna married William Walsh, son of Edmund and Emma Walsh. She and Will were living in Seattle in 1954 when she sent this information to her former parish, Christ Episcopal Church.

The second white baby was a boy, Charles Woodstrom, (born 1879), whose birthplace was upstairs in an apartment in a building where Erickson's Meat Market now stands. He was a son of Nels Woodstrom. This information comes from a short biography which he wrote.

The E.W. Eagle home at 508 Holly was formerly the home of Dr. O.E. Locken in the early 1900's.

The general store. All small towns had them, and Crookston was no exception. There you could buy everything from yard goods to horse collars. Many called themselves "department" stores, even though each department might be only a counter or two. They sold groceries, household items, hardware, crockery, shoes, ready-to-wear clothing for men, women, and children, dry goods, meats, and fresh fruits and vegetables in season. For large quantity buying, especially for people living out in the country, mail order houses like Montgomery-Ward and Sears-Roebuck, and the large wholesale houses in St. Paul and Minneapolis provided supplies if your credit was good and rural free delivery was available.

Fontaine and Anglim started their general store in a rough log building in 1878, a business they purchased from W.D. Bailey. After two years they erected a brick building and then in a short time added two more rooms so they had three fronts.

No Fast Food Establishments

Almost all food was grown locally because of difficulty of transporting perishables over long distances, and food was prepared at home. There was an absence of fresh fruit and vegetables in the winter. Home preserves were the main source of food during winter months. Since sugar was difficult to obtain, sweetening usually consisted of molasses, honey and maple or brown sugar.

Coffee was common but was often adulterated with such substitutes as burned corn, burned bread crusts, or burned barley. Tea was common and was used with milk rather than lemon. Apple cider was a frequent beverage consumed.

Bread was coarse and brown. "White" bread was not very white. Cornbread was eaten every day when meal could be obtained. Baking powder biscuits and soda biscuits were popular and could be turned out quickly if company came unexpectedly. Salt-rising bread was often made. Crackers were obtainable and eaten with cheese.

Butter was also homemade, served in a generous pat, often having a figure stamped on the top with a wooden mold.

Meats were often made into pies.

Pies were favorites: apple, mince and pumpkin. Dark cakes were made more often than light ones. Applesauce cake with banana, molasses cakes and spice cake with raisins were often baked.

Other forms of sweets included dried fruits, molasses candy, hard candies, maple sugar chunks, raisins, jams, jellies, and fresh fruits in season.
Homemaking Skills of Early Pioneers

When the very first people who moved into what is Crookston today, what do you suppose they discovered? If they came in the spring they found lush green trees, shrubs, wild flowers in a completely wild and roadless area. This healthy growth of plants indicated a very fertile soil on which to begin a new life. The river winding through the forest promised not only an abundance of water but a route for boat travel as well. The abundance of wild game, deer, moose, elk, rabbits, waterfowl and fish must indeed have looked promising as a place to build a home.

Let's suppose this particular newcomer to the area came by covered wagon, drawn by a team of plodding oxen. A cow and calf, perhaps a couple of sheep, a pig, and a few chickens, along with some tools and household utensils filled the wagon to overflowing. The animals, of course, trailed on behind the slow moving home on wheels. A supply of such staples as flour, sugar, salt, dried fruits, peas and beans, salt pork to last for some time were a must, for the nearest source of such supplies was many miles away and there was no means of transportation except foot power.

Very likely it took that whole first summer to cut the logs and build that first small log house. Planks laid on blocks cut from logs served as chairs as more planks made a table. Very likely a small stove for cooking was a part of the covered wagon's contents.

Let's say the enthusiastic and energetic young couple with their two children have now moved their belongings into the new log cabin. Their very first small log house. Planks laid on and some to water chickens, pigs, and they no longer need to continue cooking down to the water's edge for their daily covered wagon's contents. Enough for cooking, was washing, more planks made a table. Very likely a summer to cut the logs and build that small stove for cooking was a part of the

What a family tree this adds up to. Scene is a reunion sometime around 1898.

Fresh fruit in season must have really been a treat. The edges of the forest and the open areas had an abundance of wild strawberries in late June and early July. Then came wild raspberries, which continued to ripen every other day for some weeks in July. Juneberries also hung heavy on the bushes in July. Later in the summer wild gooseberries, blackberries, and black currants were not hard to find if one didn't mind traipsing through the tangled underbrush. Finally in late fall the wild grapes, the luscious juicy wild plums, and highbush cranberries were ripe. These delicious fresh fruits provided desserts fit for a king all summer long. Unfortunately, there was as yet no way to preserve them for winter use. That must come later when the wife has learned how to dry the fruit or when she could buy jars for canning.

When night came, where did they sleep? Very likely on the dirt floor where dried grasses or hay cushioned the quilts they had brought. Discomfort was endured by this courageous family at first while the hope of better things to come buoyed their spirits. Eventually too, ways to control and eliminate mosquitoes and flies would come. Soon regular household chores would become routine.

Washday was one of the routines. It went something like this: first cut-wood must be brought in to keep the fire in the stove while the water brought up in buckets from the river was heated in the standard copper washboiler. Next the hot water in the boiler was dipped out by bucket and poured into the wooden wash tub. A corrugated washboard was the implement used for rubbing the soiled clothes after a bar of homemade soap had been rubbed over the board. This scrubbing of the soiled clothing lasted for a good part of the day. The heating of water was a continuous process, since the water must be emptied from the tub and replaced with fresh hot water from the boiler. Next came the clothes rinsing. This was accomplished by swishing the clothes up and down in the warm water to remove the harsh soap and dirty water from the washing process. Generally two or three rinses were necessary! While all this was going on, the stove must be kept fed with wood, dirty water carried out and emptied, and clean water replenished.

Rope clotheslines hung between trees to take care of the drying. In summer this took little time except on rainy days. In winter it was a very different story. The clothes soon froze stiff and must be carried indoors and again hung up to dry. Fabrics were either cotton, linen, or wool and all outerwear must be sprinkled, rolled up, and put aside for the next day's ironing.

Heavy cast iron was the material used for flat irons, which generally came in sets of three. These were placed on top of the wood-burning stove and exchanged for a hot one as soon as they cooled. The fire had to be kept fed with wood until the tedious task was done. More than likely a kettle of meat was kept simmering on the back of the stove as the irons were kept hot. Maybe too, a big crock of beans was baking in the oven.

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Bread-making, an important part of homemaking, was generally a weekly event, with ten or twelve loaves baked at one time. A yeast starter, originally brought in the covered wagon, had to be kept alive by starting a new batch from time to time. To a small amount of this starter was added water, salt, and flour on the evening before baking. This mixture was placed in a warm spot, covered, and left over night. The next day it was added to the other ingredients to make the bread. The bread was baked in large black breadpans which held from 4 to 6 loaves. The aroma emanating from the oven was as tantalizing then as it is today.

Milk from the cow was left to stand long enough for the cream to rise to the top and then skimmed off and saved until a gallon or two could be placed in the churn. Stomping this dasher up and down until butter formed took anywhere from an hour to what seemed an eternity. Fresh butter spread on freshly baked bread and served with buttermilk was ambrosia indeed.

The wool sheared from the sheep last spring must now be very gently washed, dried and carded for either the making of yarn for next winter’s mittens or a wool quilt. Feathers from the game birds were all saved for pillows. Maybe there would soon be enough feathers for a feather-tick to be used on the bed. By now there was, no doubt, enough hay to make a mattress to sleep on. A large bag resembling an oversized pillow case was used as a mattress after being filled with hay. By now a loft in the log cabin had been fashioned for a place for the children to sleep come winter.

Roughly twenty-five years after the first settler arrived, seeking free land, five thousand people had settled in Crookston, with thousands more having moved into the farming areas of the county. The primitive kind of living described was similar for most of the earliest settlers the first few years. They must first of all build a home and then provide a means of support for the family. Now Crookston has grown to a prosperous small city with lovely homes, lighted streets, and bustling business establishments lining the streets uptown. All but forgotten are the primitive log cabins of those very first settlers.

Founded 1917

Grand Theatre

124 East 2nd Street

Originally constructed in 1912.
Home Fashions By Mme. De Moorest

It's Spring, 1879. When it comes to making fashion news - and who doesn't want to be a headline - here's the newest, a full-skirted day-time frock. The new silhouette is bell-shaped and worn over a three-quarter and wide at the bottom with lace ruffles or braid or gathered at the bottom.

For street wear, a bonnet is essential, a small one framing the face and worn far back on the head. Flowers trim the inside of the brim. Some fashion designers are pushing ostrich feathers and lace ruffles, but limit yourself as to decoration. The bonnet should be tied with a bright ribbon that harmonizes or complements the frock.

The most stylish shoes are high-button, with laced shoes second. Stockings should be black lisle.

For home-wear a simple gingham, calico, or muslin dress with flounces or ruffles, very full and tight-waisted is preferred. The blouse may be enhanced with a lacy bertha if it buttons in the back. Otherwise a jabot is good. Several petticoats are essential.

For sports we recommend simple high-necked white shirtwaists and heavy black cotton full skirts, ankle length. For the beach, of course, the bathing suit must be modest. At least four yards of material will be needed for the long-sleeved suit and over-skirt. Never go bathing without your corset and long stockings. Canvas bathing shoes are desirable.

A proper evening dress can be created from bombazine or velvet over taffeta; again you must add ruffles or flounces in tiers. Much fullness is gathered to the back.

Your hair? Part it in the middle, draw it smoothly down on the sides, and make dainty ringlets over the ears. If they suit your facial contour, cut small, fluffy bangs. The back should be styled with curls. If you prefer braids, coil them around the head and hold them in place with a silk net. It is fashionable to use an ornate back comb for dressy occasions.

The children? Little ladies, which they must be, also wear the popular flounces and ruffles adopted by their mothers. Skirts are well below the knee. Practical fabrics are best for their frocks, although there should be at least one dainty dress in white or pastel for a birthday party or Sunday School. Long black stockings and button or laced high shoes are suitable. Tennis shoes are high and laced and for play only. Be sure your daughter has a ferris waist or garter belt to keep her stockings straight and smooth. Pig tails and hair ribbons are best for little girls' hair.

The boys should wear knee length knickers this season, accompanied by black stockings and high black shoes. Shirts can have simple sailor collars or bertha-type ruffles around the neck. Cuffs are wide and stiffly starched. Hair: short and neatly combed.

Back in the days when Crookston was young all prominent citizens (males, of course, women were seldom mentioned) were "solid", "substantial", "respected", "honored". "Sterling" was a favorite adjective, too: "sterling integrity", "sterling manhood". They could also be "public-spirited" and progressive", and if you belonged to a political party, you were either a "staunch Republican" or a "staunch Democrat", but always "staunch". No namby-pamby Independents in our town! A good speaker was "a leading forensic light", by the way. Would your candidate have that quality?

You didn't just "die" in the 1880's - "The Death Angel summoned" you away. Of course, before this happen you had been "united in marriage" or "assumed the yoke of Matrimony" and "the union had been blessed" with any number of children.

One "worthy disciple of Hippocrates and Galen" came to the "small village of Crookston" where "his sagacity had discovered the germ of its future size and thrift". That smart medic knew a good place to practice when he saw it! He had been graduated from "a celebrated and noble institution of learning" just the year before.

In discussing the education of a certain professional man, the writer says: "....the foundation of his education was laid in the common schools of the district, 'those rough cradles of learning, to whose halcyon walls the memory of so many of our eminent men reverts in fond remembrance'".

Many had "crossed the wide ocean" to settle here, but one man "showed the rugged independence of his New England heritage". Another bragged in his biography he was "a direct descendant of pure Puritan stock that planted on 'the wild New England shore' the banner of religious and civil liberty, the germ of this great republic."

Did you know that there is a town in Scotland, a suburb of Glasgow, named Crookston? It is famous for its castle, [also called Crookstoun], originally built in the Twelfth Century.
These belles, Em, Tillie, and Olive, are modeling their newest costumes. Very attractive, girls.

Railroad engineer Duke Jewell and his wife, about 1901. Their daughter, a telephone operator was married to John Boh, a postal worker with many years of service in Crookston.

A typical women’s apparel shop in early 1900’s.
Eat your heart out, girls. He married her in 1901.

If you took any wooden nickels August 8-14 in 1954 at the town's 75th anniversary celebration, the tokens were not counterfeit coins meant to fleece you. They were produced to honor the last surviving area pioneer, who spent his last years in Crookston and died here at the age of 95. The man so honored was Esten Estenson, who first settled in the Valley, north of Climax, 108 years ago.

The "nickels", which are not round but rectangular, are stamped with Estenson's picture. They were redeemable in trade at any business place in the city until noon on August 11, 1954. Mr. Estenson walked the whole distance at the age of 94 in the Diamond Jubilee parade during the festivities.

The Estenson family have all been generous with gifts and artifacts to the Polk County Historical Society.

Ever wonder what some of these women's clubs do? The American Library Association gives the Federation of Women's Clubs credit for establishment of 75 percent of the libraries in the United States.
NOTE: Newspapers a century ago, especially in the small town, were frequently written in flowery language and steeped in the reporter’s personal opinions. This obituary of a Crookston citizen, with name deleted, is typical.

POLK COUNTY JOURNAL - May 15, 1890 [courtesy Polk County Museum]

SUDDEN DEATH

On Thursday morning of last week the sheriff returned from a trip to the Thirteen Towns and at once went to bed -- a very sick man. The doctor was summoned who did all that he could for him and on Saturday a physician was summoned from Grand Forks but to no avail. He continued to grow steadily worse and passed away about one o’clock on Sunday. His disease was inflammation of the bowels complicated by heart failure. He was conscious up to within two hours of death and talked calmly and naturally with his friends. On Monday a large concourse of his friends and neighbors gathered at the Church on Ash Street to pay the last sad tribute of respect. Services were conducted by the Rev. C. Saugstad, assisted by the Rev. C.F. Sharpe.

Before he died, the deceased requested his friends to bury him on the old farm, and in accordance with that wish the body was taken to his old home on Tuesday morning.

The sheriff was a very prominent man, very popular with his people, a very large hearted man, generous to a fault. He leaves a wife and eight children to mourn the loss of a kind father and affectionate husband. He was a strong, rugged man, apparently the picture of health and yet suddenly and almost without warning he was cut down in the prime of life, illustrating how true it is that in life we are in death - how thin the veil that separates time from eternity.

Ladies, is this becoming conduct for women your age? The “athletic” event is at Demarais Grove in 1899.
Anytime you find people in groups in a single area and living in dwellings side by side, you have a village, or town, or city, depending on how thickly populated. This situation calls for regulatory supervision and measures for the common good, and you call the supervision, government, and the measurers, services. These services call for funds and those funds come from taxes. [Everyone knows what those are]. So in 1879, when Crookston was incorporated as a city, a government was set up legally, and the public services were officially organized and plans adopted to pay for them.

EARLY CROOKSTON GOVERNMENT
By Harold Thomforde

Until 1879 Crookston had no official municipal government, and though most of the citizens were an earnest, law-abiding lot, the town, like any other frontier town, had its quota of drifters, gamblers, drunks, and the like.

As we read of those early days going back into the late 1870’s, we learn that while there was no organized local government, there was actually an unofficial government. We find in those early day readings that a stockade was built not long after people started to settle in this area. Seemingly drunkenness was one of the major problems that had to be contended with. It seems apparent after their stay in the stockade for sobering, they were told to be on their way when released.

The initial step toward incorporation into a town took place at a mass meeting in the school house January 8, 1879, with Frank Ives, William Watts, J.D. Ball, and C. Greenhalgh signing notice of the meeting. The committee named to draft a city charter was composed of Ives, William Ross, L. Fontaine, H.G. Palmer, Wm. Box, E.C. Davis, and Watts. About a month later the charter was approved, the townsite platted, and the “Queen City”, as it was then dubbed, was ready for its first municipal election.

Nominated by caucus (called corkus by the old timers) on March 18, 1879, the city officers chosen by the people on April 1 were E.C. Davis, mayor; D. Jacobus, E.M. Walsh, A. Yvemault, K.D. Snyder, alderman; W. Norcross, marshal; P.B. Snyder, street commissioner; W.D. Hurlbut, assessor. When Hurlbut failed to qualify, the council appointed Thomas Harris in his place. They also named W.F. Arnold as city engineer; Croke and Sargent were the justices.

Though the council’s first plans were concerned with building a jail, actually their initial piece of business had to be the establishment of a “pest house”, the old name for a detention hospital for contagion. Fate had sent the town of 987 a case of smallpox, a dread disease in those days before anti-toxins. By the end of 1879 the little town had some graded streets, a jail and other new buildings, a few plank sidewalks, thanks to this first council.

Muddy streets with board walks, sidewalks made of wooden planks...the good old days??? The old City Hall, Fletcher and South Broadway, was built in 1899 at an approximate cost of $16,000.
While not related to the government of Crookston, it may be interesting to give some details on how Crookston was named. That Crookston should be named for a rugged soldier, railroad builder, and pathfinder, is appropriate. According to the late Judge Watts, the name was given to the postoffice (previously called Hawley), then to the township; and finally to the city. When the time came to choose a suitable appellation, naturally there were numerous suggestions. The names of Ames and Aetna were both proffered, as well as Crooksbury. An unauthenticated story about the christening says one faction thought the town should be named in honor of Crooks and the other thought it should carry the surname of the first mayor, a railroad surveyor, Mr. Davis. While this has not and possibly cannot be documented, the two are said to have flipped a coin to see which could be honored by having the town named after him. It's evident who won the flip.

Col. Crooks was the son of Ramsey Crooks, who was associated with John Jacob Astor in fur trading. His mother was the daughter of an early fur trader. He came to Minnesota in 1857 as an assistant engineer with the Minnesota and Pacific Railroad. He was chief engineer from 1859 to 1862. In 1861 he purchased in New Jersey the first locomotive used in Minnesota. This famous old engine was named "Wm. Crooks" in his honor. Later it was placed on display at the St. Paul Depot. It is now in Duluth.

Capt. Ellery Davis, elected Crookston's first mayor on March 18, 1879.

This writer, some years ago, had the honor of talking with Col. Crooks' daughter. Through radio station KROX, the daughter was located in a rest home in Wisconsin. The radio station asked me to interview her, that interview to be broadcast over KROX and then to be saved for posterity. I had a visit with her over the telephone, and our conversation was taped. She, however, had a very weak voice and it was nearly impossible to get that recorded strongly enough to be of much value. At that time she told me that she remembered Crookston and that she hoped to visit here the following year. I confirmed our conversation with her by mail, but I never heard anything further.

Ellery C. Davis, the city's first mayor, was a captain in the Civil War and one of Crookston's first settlers. Educated in the East as a civil engineer, Mr. Davis came to Crookston in the interests of the Northern Pacific railroad. When the county was organized in 1872, he was chosen first chairman of the Board of County Commissioners.

It is rather odd how those early records of Crookston and city government seemed to ignore women in the development of our city. We are sure that women in those days, just as in this day, were very important in building and trying to keep everything in balance.

We should list a few of those early settlers that had a hand in shaping the future of our city.

Bernhard Sampson seemed to be interested in many things, city government, Crookston Improvement Association, and operator of the Crookston Roller Mill, one of the better ones in the valley. His business could turn out 250 barrels of flour per day. Sampson also served as clerk of court, state representative, state senator, and school board member.

Charles Spendley, from the time of his arrival in 1872, held many civic offices. Dr. C.E. Dampier, one of the first surgeons and physicians, was active in government. Louis Gonyea was the chief of police and later sheriff.

We spent considerable time going through the records in the City Clerk's office, and for the remainder of this article my purpose will be to give information as taken from the records. As we have stated, the first election was held in 1879. There were two candidates for mayor, E.C. Davis, who was the winner with 82 votes, and F. Ives, with 55 votes. Councilmen elected were D. Jacobs, E.M. Walsh and A. Yvermaul. Justice of Peace was John Lev.; Wm. Norcross, marshal; and W.D. Huriburt, city recorder.
The name of "Norcross" was of interest to me because we have an addition in the northeast section of our city by that name. If my memory serves me correctly, the name was chosen as the developer of that area was a Mr. Norcross, undoubtedly a relative of that early city official. In going through the business minutes of the City Council we found one item allowed, "$2.30 for spitoons to C.C. Utzinger."

As we read the minutes it seems that the term of office under that original charter was for only one year. Mayor Davis served until April 9, 1882. At that time a Mr. A. Allen was elected mayor. Councilmen elected were John Moses and Isadore Fortier. New names entered into the picture at this time, with Wm. Ross being elected city treasurer. Other new names were F.C. Shapleigh as justice of peace and Henry Shepard constable.

In 1883 Wm. Stewart was elected mayor, and as we read the minutes of this period no major things happened, good or bad. In 1884 E.M. Walsh was elected mayor serving for one year. This name for many years was tied into the progress and development of our community.

On April 8, 1885, R.J. Montague was chosen mayor. This is the first time we found that name in the city records, but of course that name is well known in our community and has been since 1879. In fact one of our district judges was Jim Montague. Previous to that he served as county attorney. His son "Bud" was a court reporter in our community for many years for Judges Sylvestre and Swenson. Bud's son, Bill, operates a florist shop in our city, and son, Bob, is also a court reporter.

Some new names again appeared as city officials including Halvor Steenerson, Ed Charboneau, J.H. Lakes, John McLean, and "Old" Bang. As we go through the minutes, we do find on occasion last names preceded by "Old, Young, Limp" and other informal titles.

On April 6th, 1886, two former mayors ran for office of mayor again: E.C. Davis, who won with 584, votes, and E.M. Walsh with 282 votes. Again new names appeared in the city records, names that are still active in our community, and we would guess direct relatives of these early builders of the community - such names as Felix Fournet, C.S. Spendley, George Becker, and Frank Jerome. The name of Frank Jerome was of particular interest because we have an addition of our city called, "Jerome's Addition", and if my memory serves me correctly, this is the man it was named after.

On April 12, 1887, W.D. Hurlbut became mayor, and, of course, we have a street named after him. A name, common to our city for many years entered into the city records for the first time, W.E. McKenzie. He was awarded a bid for some printing.
Why all these men are posed here on the Polk County Court House steps is obscure. Man #4 in the middle row resembles Judge Watts, but what the others are doing there is lost in the annals of history.

In 1889 James D. Lilley was mayor, and he was succeeded in 1890 by Alex McKinnon. The McKinnon name has been a Crookston name ever since and to this day. It was interesting to see the wages that city employees were paid in those days. The chief of police received $60 per month. There were two police officers, each of whom were paid $55 monthly. The city attorney and city treasurer got $300 per year, and the city clerk $400.

As we read the minutes from the 1890's we discovered more activity. New names with which many are acquainted started to get into the records: J.E. O'Brien, M.E. Kirsch, John Cromb, A.C. Schmidt, C.H. Mix.

In 1892 Wm. Anglim was elected mayor and was active in many civic affairs. The name of C.C. Hoch entered into the records at this time. Hoch was the grandfather of Bill Reynolds.

For the next few years the records show: A.D. Stephens elected mayor 1893, John Cromb, 1894, John R. McKinnon, 1895, M.R. Brown, 1896, and Andrew Stephens, 1899.

In April, 1900, Nate Campbell was mayor. Apparently that period from 1900 for the next dozen years was quite an active period. The saw mill came into our city and continued for several years. While operating, it added much to the economy, for at peak periods several hundred men were employed.


The period around 1930 started slow because of the great depression, but we do find that many of the city's top business people became more active in city government. Dr. O.E. Locken was elected mayor and Bergetta M. Loken was the city clerk. Miss Loken served as city clerk for some years. Actually it was a pleasure to study this period for the minutes in the record books were now being typed in place of hand written, and I found some good and some bad going through the long history of our city. Miss Loken's minutes are beautiful records.

Some of the prominent names coming into the picture during the next dozen or so years were those of J.J. Flynn, J.J. Padden, Joe Linster, Otto Eickhof, Carl Emmerich, R.T. McCulla, E.E. Turnquist, Sherm Daniels, and Harry Ness. One name that needs special mention is that of George Widman, who was an alderman for many years. It was my good fortune to have served with him for some years, and he has a solid place in my mind as one of the outstanding Crookston public officials.

William Kirkwood was mayor in the 1940's and he was much interested in airport construction and development. Our local airport carries his name. Dr. M.O. Oppegaard followed as mayor. Mayor Oppegaard was opposed to municipal liquor stores. He made it his goal to eliminate the municipal stores in our city and have private liquor establishments, and few will argue now, 25 years later, that this was not a good decision by our local citizens.
Taking a back seat in the early 1900's to the imposing new court house structure on the left, the old court house (center), built in 1881, and the adjacent jail, seem miniature in comparison. The newer structure in the photo was demolished and replaced with a modern court house in 1968.

Harold Thomforde followed Oppegard as mayor and served most of the 1950's. During this period there was a great deal of highway development in and around Crookston. These were also the years that American Crystal Sugar Company, after many meetings, decided they would construct a refinery in our city. This was dedicated in 1955.

Harold Thomforde was followed as mayor by A.E. Myrold, Bill Nimens, H.V. Sommer, Olaf C. Soine, Lloyd Hughes, Harold Thomforde for 12 years and Don Osborne.

The late 1950's and early 1960's were important to Crookston. The city government was still operating under the 1906 City Charter, long outmoded. Several efforts had been made to have elections for a new charter and all failed. In 1959 District Court Judge Sylvestre appointed Harold Thomforde to the Charter Commission and asked that a new Charter Commission be organized to work out a new charter for the city. Reorganization took place, and the Charter Commission met every two weeks for almost two years to draw up a new document, with the help of Attorney Leonard Erickson. The new proposed charter was completed, all service clubs and other groups were visited to present arguments in favor of the new charter. In 1961 the citizens voted and passed the issue by about an 88% vote. That charter is still in effect today, and very few changes have been needed to keep it current.

The future now, as it has always been, is in the hands of citizens. We can make of our community what we want it to be.

John Gleason, County Auditor, 1895-1900.

Minnie I. Boe - Clerk of the District Court, 1923-1935.

City Officials


Early scenes involving Crookston’s growth were inundated with lively recreational outlets in the form of saloons, saloons, and more saloons.

A stockade was the earliest form of reprimand for the barley-corn crowd who, after sobering up in the contraption, usually sought relief from this public embarrassment through another elbow-bending session.

At the urging of sober-minded citizens, who recognized that establishing law and order was top priority, a police force was formed in 1884. A chief of police was appointed at a salary of $60 per month. Two officers were hired to complete the town’s early roster. Louis Gonyea served fourteen years on the police force, eleven of which were as chief.

By 1906, the roster read: Chief Aaron Eck; Patrolmen Emil Vonderbeck, William Muench, George Roberts, Alphonse Lalonde, and D.D. Horton. Any one of the six could have supplied colorful accounts regarding a favorite area of recreation frequented by lumberjacks who invaded the town on pay day. The area was a red light district in the Gorgas Avenue section of town overseen by a Madame Stella Hamilton. It was not unusual for loggers to spend their entire pay in one weekend at Madame Stella’s establishment, amid a chaotic pattern of pleasure, drunken brawls, and suspect card games that erupted into fights.

Rowdy lumberjacks were the first to acknowledge the “strong” dedication of the stalwart blue serge members of the town’s early police force. They often returned to the lumber camps bearing these marks of dedication.

The policemen of yesteryear were conspicuous with their prominent helmets, night sticks, and well-groomed mustaches. They dutifully walked their beats, and, in contrast to some of their more physically demanding duties, often performed such sundry duties as turning carbon street lamps on and off and collecting monthly water samples to be analyzed by the city health inspector.

Hours were long (12-hour shifts, seven days a week) minus the convenience of patrol cars. By 1928 a policeman’s pay envelope amounted to $125 a month. According to Harry Dillabough, who served as police chief from 1958 to 1969, the 1930’s saw three shifts being incorporated into a 24-hour day. His father, Milton Dillabough, served as captain from 1928 to approximately 1948. During that time a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, with a side car, was the first mechanized vehicle used. Taxi service was also employed whenever necessary. (The first patrol car was introduced about 1938).

In 1940 the department consisted of eight men: Chief J.A. McCaffrey (appointed in 1928), Captain Milton Dillabough (appointed as patrolman in 1924 and captain in 1928), Patrolman Arthur Ray (1930), Edmond F. McWaters (1937), Darwin Krogman (1939), Homer A. Stephens (1940) Night Desk Sargeant Lawrence E. Regan (1930) and Day Desk Sargeant Peter Cramb (1937).

Formal training was not required during the 30’s and 40’s, but FBI schools were intermittently attended by the staff. By 1960 the police roster stood at ten members. Today it numbers twelve, with Dennis (Ben) Hogenson as chief.

The department is now under the jurisdiction of the local Civil Service Board, and candidates must take a written and oral test in addition to a physical and psychological exam.

**POLICE CHIEFS SINCE 1884:**

Louis Gonyea, Aaron Eck, John Cramer, Bert Caunate, Sam Goodvue, Dave Sanders, J.A. McCaffrey, C.P. Kerner, Gale Regan, Harry Dillabough, Gale Regan, and Dennis Hogenson.
The 1940 Crookston Police Department, all spiffied up for inspection, are (l to r) Police Chief J.A. McCaffrey, Patrolmen Homer Stephens, Darwin Krogman, Ed McWaters, Art Roy, Desk Sergeant, Pete Cram, and Captain Milton Dillabough.

### Sheriffs Department

The sheriff's department dates back to 1873 when T. Jenkins was appointed as the first Polk County sheriff. During the following years eighteen men served in that office until 1975 when the current Sheriff of Polk County, Earl Mosher, took office. When he began as a deputy in 1963, all three deputies had to be on call 24 hours a day. The two jailers worked shifts of 24 hours on and 24 hours off. Mosher's work schedule involved seven days a week and his wife served as matron for female prisoners. Today's deputies are licensed, work 8-hour shifts and are on call. As of July 1, 1979, they are required to pay fees for license renewal and to attend 48 hours of training classes, over a three-year period, to keep their certification active. Today's roster number 12 deputies and four dispatchers.

#### POLK COUNTY SHERIFFS

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<td>1893-89</td>
<td>Arne Grundyson</td>
<td>1895-1901</td>
<td>Thomas Lawrence</td>
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<td>Ed S. Sullivan</td>
<td>1905-1907</td>
<td>Louis Gonyea</td>
<td>1913-1919</td>
<td>E.F. Kelly</td>
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Sheriff Thomas Lawrence - 1895-1901.
Ira L. Haaven - Polk County Sheriff, 1925-1935.
"Every which way but loose"...the fourteen members of Crookston's Fire Department (1900) hold a champion's pose to illustrate their prowess as the Running Team Champions...a record held from 1898-1900.

**Disastrous Fires Lead to Formation of Fire Department**

On a cold frosty night in December 1879, the City received its baptism of fire. Four buildings in a main block of the city were destroyed at a loss of $5,600. Without the help of the railroad, the fire undoubtedly would have burned out of control. The river was solidly frozen and its banks so steep it was impossible to reach any water. The superintendent of the railroad ran two engines to the scene, with tanks filled with water. The lesson learned was "Get fire protection."

The following notice appeared in the Northern Tier of January 10, 1880: "There will be a meeting at Lawrence's Hall next Saturday evening at 7:30 sharp. Object: organization of some kind of fire department. Be there! Turn out! By order of City Council."

Pursuant to call, a large number of citizens met. With Alderman Kelsey Chase presiding and V.D. Carruth acting as secretary, a resolution was passed asking the council to purchase three ladders, twelve axes, two hundred buckets, six harpoons and picks, two fire hooks and chains and 200 feet of rope. These were Crookston's first fire fighting tools.

Noted for his record of service as fire chief, Tom Morris' career in the late 1800's and early 1900's was unequaled by anyone in the department.

E.B. Ellsworth was appointed Fire Chief, with Tom Morris as assistant. Mr. Ellsworth never qualified as chief and the duties were absorbed by Morris. On April 30, 1880, he was unanimously and officially elected as Fire Chief. In this capacity he served with great credit to himself and the city until the new organization of the department on November 12, 1883.

On March 19, 1880, a new 100 gallon chemical engine was purchased by the council. This purchase pleased the firemen so much that they felt equal to any emergency.

On April 30, Chief Morris appointed a committee to draw up by-laws and to secure new members. Serving were Messrs. E.M. Walsh, W.F. Arnold and A. McKinnon. They picked the name Crookston Fire Company No. I for their new chemical engine.

In 1882 a system of water-works was inaugurated and added to from time to time. Crookston had as good a waterwork system as any city of its size in the state, with 75 hydrants and an elevated tank. In connection with the Jumbo pump important pressure could be
maintained for any length of time, using the river for its water source.

On November 12, 1883, M.B. Hayes was elected chief, with A.C. Schmidt as assistant. Chief Hayes held office until June 5, 1884 when John R. McKinnon was elected chief, with A.C. Schmidt as assistant. Chief Hayes held office until June 5, 1884 when John R. McKinnon was elected and served until December, than “Jimmie” as he was known. He was elected to an honorary life membership in the State Firemen’s Association.

Chief O’Brien served until December 1887 and was succeeded by E.W. Wile who also had a remarkable record as chief. When Wile left the city, A.A. McKinnon succeeded him as chief and served with great credit until October 1893. In October 1893 F.G. Rauch was elected chief. It was during his term of office that the St. Louis Hotel burned. Chief Rauch served one year and was succeeded in 1894 by A.C. (Gus) Schmidt, a painter by trade. It was deemed necessary to chain and padlock the ladders to a large tree in front of the Merchant’s National Bank otherwise the firemen would have to hunt up the painter to get their ladder for a fire call.

In October of 1896 Tom Morris was unanimously re-elected and subsequently was chosen nine more consecutive times. Chief Morris’s career as a fireman was unequalled by anyone in the department or city. He was one of the old 79er’s and had been the first active chief of the original fire department. He completed a quarter of a century of service to the city’s fire department.

The Crookston Fire Department has maintained an excellent record for having dedicated firemen and for efficiency. Charles F. Brennan, appointed assistant chief in 1903 and fire chief in 1905, was responsible for initiating a city building information file that has been an asset to fire fighters.

In 1900 Chief Morris was elected president of the State Firemen’s Association when Crookston was host to the convention. In 1903 he appointed Charles F. Brennan as assistant chief. He was a capable and brave fireman as proved by the manner in which he handled the New York Store fire in the absence of his chief. In 1905 Brennan took the post of chief and compiled a file of information on buildings in the city.

A.J. Barrette was picked as the next chief in 1908. He had served as treasurer of the department previous to his appointment and was also known as the principal harness maker of the city. In 1909 Thomas R. Johnstone served as chief, as secretary for the city and also for the Relief Association. In 1910 A.J. Barrette was again voted head of the department, followed again by Tom Morris, 1911; Fred Harris, 1912-1914; A.C. Schmidt, 1914-1915. John Risch served from 1916 through 1926. His son, Ed Risch, also was a very active volunteer fireman.

In 1926 Ross Schmidt was elected to head the fire squad. Chief Ross headed the department from 1926 to 1946. During his term Ross had his work cut out for him, for the town had a rash of big fires during his term. The Crookston Brewery burned down and in 1936 both Our Savior’s Lutheran Church and the Norwegian Lutheran Church experienced fires. In 1936 the old Winter Shows building had a fire where the Central school garage is now located.
Chief Ross was respected and loved by his firemen and the whole city of Crookston. Succeeding Chief Ross, Bill Herbert was elected chief and served from 1946 to 1965. Chief Bill appointed H.T. (Doc) Welter as his assistant. It was during Herbert's term that Crookston had three disastrous fires - the Crookston Milling Company, the Crookston Times and apartments, the Northwood Inn and several fires at what is now Diamond's. Chief Herbert retired in 1965 and H.T. (Doc) Welter was chosen to replace him and is still serving in that capacity. His assistants have been Gerry Granger and Duane Rade.

Today a modern 33-man department that includes six full-time firefighters and 27 volunteers affords fire protection to Crookston as well as 16 outlying townships in Polk County. Residents approved a $255,000 bond issue for a new fire hall in 1968. The brick and concrete block building is 134 x 86 feet and contains three rural and four city trucks, as well as a rescue truck and two boats with trailers. The new building houses a 30 foot hose tower, a dormitory to sleep 12 men, showers, clean-up and maintenance areas, a communications room, and a meeting room. Firemen enjoy complete kitchen facilities and a recreation area.

March 1971 the Crookston Firefighters Auxiliary was organized, with a present membership of 35 wives of active and retired men.

Communication

Post was

"Big Cottonwood"

Early communication in this area began at the "Big Cottonwood" in Huot Park. Information relates that early travelers placed their messages in the tree for their friends or business correspondents to pick up.

Records in 1906 indicate that the first post office in Crookston was located at 105 West Second Street (present location of Bob Smerud's Office Products). Hours were from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Carrier deliveries were made three times daily to business establishments and twice in the residential areas.

The Crookston Post Office building, located at South Broadway and Fletcher, had its origin in 1909. Each piece of building material was hand-crafted and placed manually. The only mechanization was a pulley and beam. This structure was expanded in 1938 to the west as the result of a PWA project. All federal, agricultural, and civil offices were housed in the local building until stair climbing required ground floor service and entrance.

Postal service in the Crookston area has consisted of as many as seven rural routes. All were horse-drawn, and many winter routes were overnight excursions. Today's rural routes are vehicle-mounted and consolidated into three local routes encompassing Huot and Gentilly.

During the days of hand-fired heating plants, services were required of four full-time custodial people, who manned shovels and cleaned the structure. One person today covers the entire building, with the aid of automatic gas-fired heating and air conditioning. Flower beds are planted by courtesy of the Crookston Garden Club.

The Crookston Post Office serves a population of 16,000, with only three full and part-time employees. This office had over thirty employees when each passenger train carried mail, and at that time Crookston was a mail-processing sectional center.

The office now delivers mail to over four thousand places each day and dispatches approximately nine thousand pieces daily. Sunday and holiday collection is by Metro Star Route Service.


The construction of Crookston's present post office at South Broadway and Fletcher in 1909 is shown. The three-story Times building at right was then the Grand Central Hotel. The hotel was owned by the Marette family.
## POLK COUNTY OFFICERS

### Auditor
- **E. M. Walsh** 1872-1875
- **A. J. Yvernault** 1875-1876
- **John Christianson** 1879-1881
- **P. J. McGuire** 1881-1890
- **C. U. Webster** 1893-1894
- **John Gleason** 1895-1900
- **Nels Hoffard** 1903-1908
- **Henry J. Welte** 1908-1914
- **Martin L. Vanseth** 1954-1978

**Died in office**
- **Lawrence H. Fontaine** 1978-

### Treasurer
- **William Ross** 1872
- **John Christianson** 1878
- **O. H. Lucken** 1888
- **J. T. Beaudry** 1893-1895
- **M. G. Peterson** 1899-1901
- **M. G. Peterson** 1901-1903
- **W. L. Vannet** 1904-1909
- **George L. Flaten** 1910-1931
- **Lewis G. Hancock** 1932 to 4/1/38

**Died in office**
- **Pualine Lindberg** App't. April, 1938

Elected 42/12/31/51
- **Robert Risch** 1/12 to 59
- **Mrs. V. E. Watts** 1959-1971
- **Florence Rood** 1971-

### Register of Deeds
- **Jacob Myers** 1/1/12-12/31/74
- **G. S. Spendley** 1/1/75-12/31/84
- **John Paterson** 1/1/85-12/31/86
- **Andrew Eiken** 1/1/87-10/15/91
- **John Locken** 10/16/91-12/31/92
- **John Amundson** 1/1/93-12/31/94
- **Albert Wickstrom** 1895-12/31/97
- **John S. Dyer** 1/1/98-12/31/00

### Sheriff
- **T. Jenkins** 1873
- **A. R. Russel** 1877-1880
- **B. F. Zarracher** 1880-1882
- **W. F. Wickey** 1883-1887
- **N. O. Paulsrud** 1889
- **Arne Grundyzen** 1893-1895
- **Thomas Lawrence** 1895-1901
- **Ed. S. Sullivan** 1901-1905
- **Lois Gonya** 1905-1907
- **Orin Daniels** 1907-1913
- **E. F. Kelly** 1913-1919
- **O. K. Bolstad** 1919-1923
- **Anton Nelson** 1923-1925
- **Ira Haaven** 1925-1935
- **Julius Spokely** 1935-1943
- **Torel Knutson** 1943-1951
- **Vernon Espe** 1951-1955
- **Carl Knutson** 1955-1963
- **Paul Caouette** 1963-1975
- **Earl Mosher** 1975-

### Clerk of Court
- **Richard Hussey** 1872-1874
- **J. H. Barb** 1874-1877
- **Bernhard Sampson** 1878
- **R. Reynolds** 1879
- **Christopher Steenerson** 1880-1882
- **Arne Hidgem** 1882
- **Thomas Shapleigh** 1882-1886
- **E. M. Walsh** 1887-1891
- **Nels Maus** 1891-1895
- **John Vig** 1895-1898
- **E. E. Lommen** 1899-1903
- **Wm. Lanctot** 1903-1915
- **Hans L. Wagge** 1915-1923
- **Minnie E. Boe** 1923-1935
- **Raymond Espe** 1935-1974
- **Doris Morberg** 1974-

### Judge of District Court
- **Frank Ives** 1893-1899
- **William Watts** 1899-1934
- **J.E. Montague** 1934-1949
- **J.H. Sylvestre** 1949-1965
- **Harley Swenson** 1965-1975
- **Robert A. Peterson** 1975-

### County Attorney
- **W. C. Woodruff** 1872
- **John McLean** 1878
- **Halvor Steenerson** 1880
- **William Watts** 1882-1888
- **D. P. Williams** 1888
- **A. R. Holsten** 1893-1895
- **A. R. Holsten** 1901
- **W. E. Rowe** 1901-1905
- **James H. Maybury** 1905-1909
- **E. O. Hagen** 1910-1915
- **G. A. Youngquist** 1915-1919
- **J. E. Montague** 1919-1931
- **George Hagen** 1931-1935
- **F. H. Stavold** 1935-1965
- **Robert Peterson** 1965-1972
- **John Winters** 1972-1978
- **Wayne Swanson** 1979-

### Coroner
- **G. D. Wilkins** 1873-1878
- **L. Beaupre** 1878-1881
- **Dr. M. Watts** 1881-1885
- **N. Van Dyke** 1885-1887
- **H. Shepard** 1887-1891
- **A. McEachron** 1891-1896
- **G. H. Palmer** 1897-1899
- **Ole R. Miller** 1900-1903
- **G. S. Chesterman** 1903-1909
- **Nels Stensholt** 1909-1913
- **Dr. H. E. Nelson** 1913-1971
- **Dr. R. O. Sather** 1971-1976
- **Dr. John A. Cesnik** 1977-1978
- **Dr. John K. Wood** 1978-

### Judge of Probate
- **S. Fjoser** 1878
- **R. J. Montague** 1882-1890
- **C. O. Christianson** 1890-1894
- **C.M. Benson** 1894-1902
- **O.A. Thoreson** 1902-1906
- **T. T. Morken** 1906-1912
- **A. L. Howland** 1912-1922
- **Eric O. Hagen** 1922-1926
- **Myrtle Hovland** 1926-1934
- **Nels Ben Hansen** 1934-1946
- **Phillip A. Andderson** 1947-1970
- **Milton Klutd** 1972-1975
- **Phillip D. Nelson** 1975-

### Clerk
- **W. C. Woodruff** 1873
- **W. C. Nash** 1879
- **H. E. Cooke** 1879-1881
- **John Leo** 1882-1885
- **D. E. Hatleslad** 1885-1891
- **Wm. Averill** 1891-1895
- **John S. Dwyer** 1895-1897
- **George Palmer** 1897-1905
- **J. A. Hendrickis** 1905-1907
- **John McLean**, 1915-1917
- **Aaron Youngquist** 1909-1915
- **A. J. Johnson** 1915-1917
- **L. S. Miller** 1917-1919
- **O. K. Bergot** 1919-1923
- **L. S. Miller** 1923-1931
- **Hans L. Waage** 1931-1951
- **Martin Vanseth** 1951-1954
- **Winnie Laurent** 1954-1978

### Surveyor
- **R. E. Hussey** 1873-1878
- **Wm. Arnold** 1875-1881
- **John Hunt** 1881-1883
- **C. L. Brainard** 1883-1884
- **A. L. Hamery** 1885-1895
- **W. F. Arnold** 1889-1891
- **A. L. Hamery** 1891-1903
- **Alex Gray** 1903-1905
- **George Ralph** 1905-1909
- **Steener Steenerson** 1909-1913
- **Johannes E. Beim** 1913-1915
- **Leslie Raff** 1915-1917
- **Steener Steenerson** 1917-1953
- **Lloyd Ofstedal** 1954-1976
- **Consulting Surveyors, Widseth, Smith & Nolan** 1976-
Front row, [left to right] Mary Boone, Cherry Bivens, Sonja Lillquist, Carolyn Nelson, Debbie Dickel, Julie Regimbald, Chris Olson, Annette Erickson, Bill Ericson; Second Row: Connie Meier, Gail Schroeder, Debbie Sondrol, Chris Reynolds, Don Hass, Vicki Lundin, Lester Audette; Third Row: Karen Hanson, Mae Morgan, Rita Trandem, Jim Wilson, Gunder Moe, Jeannine Windels, Carol O’Neil, Clifford Zaffke, Marie Nelson. Not Pictured: Carol Hoiseth.
Onward and Upward with Education

The schoolhouse. It was never the first building erected, nor was it the most beautiful architecturally. Sometimes it was just a tar paper shack or a room in the home of a pioneer woman. But it was the center where the American dream could become a reality — education for everyone. This desire and respect for the acquisition of learning was innate in the American settler though many had had little formal schooling themselves, they were determined that their children have what they had been denied. The schools, therefore, have always been and still are a community and parental responsibility, and the public has seldom balked at paying the cost of education, especially when Crookston was young.

Crookston’s first school was a small cabin of logs, lumber, and tar paper near the edge of a wood. The building had been constructed by railroad engineers as their headquarters and was located on what is now Fourth street between Main and Broadway. The date was 1873, only a year after the first settlers came into the area. The first teacher, according to E.M. Walsh in his reminiscences, was Mrs. Munroe Palmer, who had arrived with her husband shortly after Walsh.

By 1874 two gentlemen named D. Jacobson and P. Porger formed a committee to raise funds to pay a teacher, and Miss Luella Thompson of St. Paul was hired. (It would appear that Mrs. Palmer had donated her services.) By December, 1875, Miss Thompson had apparently fallen in love with a Hugh Thompson of Fisher’s Landing, for she married and moved to that town, leaving the school without a teacher. Fortunately, the wife of an 1873 settler, Mrs. Kelsey D. Chase, accepted the job.

Sixty-eight students appeared when school opened in the fall of 1878. Confusing attendance reports follow thereafter: December 13, 84; December 27, 105. One account states that a total of 157 had been enrolled during the year. Obviously not all these children attended the full nine months. The editor of the local paper bragged that Crookston had only six fewer students than Fargo!

The pupils were divided into first and second grades and, according to one report, the equipment consisted mainly of “benches and switches”. The only two teachers mentioned as being in charge of this transitory crew of 100 or more were V.D. Carruth, the first principal, and Miss Amy Box, assistant. Since no school was complete without a bell, the civic-minded Mr. Porger sponsored a dance to raise money to buy one. Well-attended, they say. Anyway, they bought a bell!

Expansion was the key word in 1880. The town was growing and needed more (Continued on Page 34)
schools. On May 8 the district voted to issue bonds for $6,000 at 10% interest over a period of ten years to build three schools. A contract was let to Mr. Netzer to construct a brick structure, 48 x 32 feet and two stories high, on the northeast corner of Schoolhouse Square. Cost: $3,200. For a frame building in Carman, 30 x 24, specifications called for a brick foundation. The third, finally completed in 1882, was erected on the hill. It housed first, second and third grades who lived north of Seventh street, and was similar to Carman's. The total school budget for 1880-81 was $4345.

By this time the school system was divided into four departments: primary, intermediate, grammar, and high school. Schools were in session nine months and the teachers were paid $35 a month. The principal earned $75 for 14 weeks. There were fall, winter, and spring terms, and the 359 children were taught by the principal and four teachers. Tuition fees for those out of the district were $1 and $1.50.

For heating all the school houses that year, sixty cords of wood were bought at $5 a cord. For many years each school board member had the responsibility for a school building, to inspect it and be aware of its current needs.

When S.A. Farnsworth became principal in 1883 (at $90 a month for 10 months), bonds were again voted for a new central school, $15,000 this time. To make room on School House Square, the old frame building was moved to the corner of South Ash and Spendley for the children in the 4th ward, living south of Loring and east of the railroad tracks. The annual report of 1884 states that $34,022 had been paid for new schools and sites. By the way, it took seven stoves to heat this new Central structure.

By 1885 Sampson's Addition needed an educational center. Another $2,000 bond issue. John Moore had been elected superintendent in 1884 at $1,350 for nine months, a job he held until 1899. During his tenure the school system burgeoned. By 1889 there were 941 students between the ages of 5 and 21, and 25 over the age of 26. Of these, 70 were in high school. The first high school class was graduated in 1891 with the four young people all delivering orations. They were William Marin, James E. Montague, G.E. Finlayson, and William Vannett. The first three became attorneys and the fourth, an insurance man. Marin, Montague and Vannett all settled here. Finlayson was a track and football star at the University of Minnesota. In 1892 Central graduated three, among whom was Minnie Walker, the first girl to earn her diploma. The class size had increased to seven by 1893.

Teachers' salaries during this period allowed for experience. First-year teachers received $45 a month; second-year, $47.50; three-year, $50! Janitors were paid about $10 a month.

In 1895-96 a new brick high school was built on School House Square at a cost of $14,710. By 1905 it was necessary to build an annex of two rooms and a basement on the northwest corner.

SUPERINTENDENTS OF CROOKSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1883 S.A. Farnsworth
1884-1899 John Moore
1899-1901 R.W. Hitchcock
1901-1903 W.F. Sellick
1903-1911 E.E. McIntire
1912-1914 A.B. Hess
1915-1925 G.H. Sandberg
1925-1936 Arnold Gloor
1936-1950 L.M. Wikre
1950-1957 Farley Bright
1958-1965 C.P. Mickelson
1966-1969 Roy Anderson
1970-1975 Dr. Delton Roelofs
1975-1979 Charles Potter
1979- Randall H. Patton

Northwest Electric
Route 2
Founded 1974

Wearing their best outfits, complete with black stockings and high boots, are a class of Carman School children in 1893.
Because the area anticipated an enrollment of 80 students in grades 1 to 4, in 1900 Jerome’s Addition requested a new school. In fact, all schools were overcrowded. The vote on the bonds of $10,000 for this four-room structure was passed, 65 to 1.

The Eugene Field was enlarged in 1904 by a brick addition of two rooms. Cost: $6,000. Vote: 56-2. By 1907 a new building had to be erected on the Washington site, a two-story brick with four rooms, the second story to be left unfinished. The cost was $6,500, plus heating and plumbing. The second story was completed in 1910 at a cost of $1,310. Though Crookston parents were frequently asking for schools for their children, the bond issues always passed by a large margin.

The kids’ imaginations must have been smothered somewhere along the line, for when asked during this period to name their alma maters, they chose Lincoln (the Central School), Washington (Hill), McKinley (Jerome’s), Franklin (Woods), and Eugene Field (Sampson’s). So it was and is and ever shall be!

Now all seemed under control with the schools and their plans. Then on Saturday, March 7, 1908, the Franklin School was destroyed by fire, fulfilling every student’s dream. But the following Monday, bitter blow, the teacher and pupils reported for classes in the Methodist church and the I.O.O.F. Hall on Ash and Robert. Not only did the fire give impetus to the purchase of fire escapes, gongs, and fire drills for all schools, but it also forced the school board to call for another bond issue of $20,000 for a new building. This one passed by a vote of 139-5. The final cost was $27,950. Occupation took place in January, 1909, and it is still in limited use in 1979 but will be closed this fall.

During the early years of the second decade of the 20th century, athletic activities were somewhat limited by the lack of a gymnasium. The Crookston auditorium at 216-18 North Main was rented at $10, and later, in 1911, the Germania Hall on the southwest corner of Sixth and Front was available four days a week until seven p.m. “for those who did not smoke”. Later the athletic teams used the Methodist church gym and the Armory.

The year 1911 marked the election of two women to the Crookston School Board, Mrs. Charles Loring, who was chosen president, and Mrs. H.H. Hodgson, clerk. Central High added art, agricultural and commercial departments and hired both a vocal music and a part-time orchestra instructor who also directed the city band.

The school debate team had joined the State Debating League in 1910. In 1912 the team, coached by Mrs. Faith Grey, won the State championship. The members of the victorious squad were Harry Sylvestre, Leslie Lee, and Walter Baumgarth. Their topic was: Resolved that the United States should establish Parcel Post.

The big news in 1912 was the decision to build a new brick high school, which is the core of today’s building. The bond issue in the amount of $150,000 at 4½% interest passed by a vote of 779 to 145. To construct it in the center of School House Square it was necessary to raze the Lincoln and move the old high school to that location. A heating plant that took care of both Central and Lincoln was built at a cost of $15,844.69. The school cost $126,481.26. Plans included the addition of a gymnasium and auditorium, but it wasn’t until 1933 that a bond issue for this purpose passed. A 1925 vote met defeat. Added to Central in 1956 was a wing that included a larger gym, library, cafeteria, and industrial arts, business education, and music departments.

The Crookston Public Schools today have 2,027 students and 139 teachers. State Aid per pupil over the years has increased astonishingly. In 1873 it was 96 cents; 1904 - $2.65; 1906 - $3.80; 1914 - $5.80; 1978 - $115.5. Because of decreasing enrollment, the Crookston School District, now known as 593, at present has three elementary schools (Washington, Lincoln, and Carman) in full operation, all with kindergartens; one Middle School (Highland) for grades 6, 7 and 8; and a high school (grades 9, 10, 11 and 12). McKinley houses the Agassiz Valley Vocational Center, and Eugene Field is the site of the Community Education Center.
When, in 1910, Bishop Timothy Corbett, D.D., was ordained Bishop of the newly founded Diocese of Crookston in northwestern Minnesota, his first work was the building of a Catholic grade and high school in Crookston. With the funds that were slowly trickling in, he purchased a site for the Cathedral Church, the school, and the episcopal residence on North Ash Street.

Ground was broken and the foundation and basement of the school building was built. When the time came to lay the cornerstone, Bishop Corbett decided to have a private ceremony, lest the work should have to be discontinued because of lack of money. Late at night, he and Father Joseph Wurm, and the janitor put the cornerstone in place.

Funds became larger, the work on the building progressed, and the school was in full swing for fifty-one years.

In the fall of 1911 Cathedral Grade and High school opened with the eight grades and two years of high school. There were 125 pupils. The school was staffed by Sisters of St. Benedict from Villa St. Scholastica, Duluth. Among the teachers that first year was a postulant, Miss Marjorie Murray, who later became Sister M. Blandina.

Grades 11 and 12 were added to the school in 1915 and the first seniors were graduated in June, 1917. Margaret Knox of Fisher, a member of this class, entered the Crookston Benedictines on October 17, 1919, and became Sister M. Timothy.

Until 1939, the high school and the grades continued to be housed in one building. In 1931 St. Joseph’s House had been built as a shelter for orphan boys in the diocese and also had a wing used as a convent for the teaching Sisters. In 1937 the first and second grade pupils moved from the Cathedral High school building to this structure, and it became known as the Cathedral Grade School. The Cathedral parish eventually bought the building from the diocese.

Both high school and elementary school were administered under one principal until 1949. In the fall of that year Sister Mary John Flynn became principal of the high school, and Sister Hyacinthe Subject, principal of the grades. In succeeding years, principals of the grades were: Sr. Florentine Goulet, 1951-1952; Sr. Baptiste LaCour.

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Central High's 1912 orchestra. They have either just struck a sour note or else Professor Arthur Wasshausen's presence as orchestra director demands somber attention.

(Continued from Page 36)


The grade school reached its highest enrollment in the school term 1957-1958, with 385 pupils in grades one through eight. In 1968 the two Catholic grade schools in Crookston, Cathedral and St. Joseph's Academy, were reorganized with the result that the four lower grades were enrolled at St. Joseph's Primary School on Houston Avenue, and grades five through eight attended the Cathedral Middle School. Sisters of St. Joseph joined the Cathedral faculty and likewise Sisters of St. Benedict taught in the Cathedral High School from which 903 students had been graduated. Of the graduates, ten have become priests, one a Jesuit lay brother. Several are doctors, scientists, lawyers, nurses; many are teachers and many more are homemakers.

From the fall of 1919 to the spring of 1967, Sister Augustine, Clement, Josepha, Marcella, Cyprian, Emmanuel, Thecla, Mary John, Patricia, and Hiltrudis served as principals.

The Cathedral High School building remained vacant until it was razed in the fall of 1969 to make room for a parking lot for the Cathedral Church and the Catholic Elementary School.

What the Alumni Were Doing in 1909

Courtesy of the C.H.S. The Shadow, November, 1909.


Oscar Locken is attending Carleton College... Will Montague, president of the class, is a private stenographer for the superintendent of the Great Northern offices here in Crookston... Ray Larsen is taking an academic course at the Minnesota University. Ray Smith is attending the Minnesota University this year, and along with him is Adrian St. Marie.... Merrian Stephens, vice president of the class, is taking an academic course at Oberlin College this year... Will Jerome is teaching in one of the rural schools near Grand Forks... James Lowham is taking a business course at the Crookston Business College and is reported as one of the fastest that ever attended the college... John Hughes is teaching school at Eldred... Ignatius Hamel is taking an academic course at Holy Cross College... Harold Anglim is taking an academic course at Holy Cross College... Lynn Robertson and Carl Erdman, the two guiding stars of the class of 1909, were in for the convention... Rose Becker is now Mrs. V. Morland and resides in her pleasant home on North Front.

Founded 1975

Dustin's for Men

107 North Broadway

"Wear Fashion Starts"

Bruce Mjoen
63 Years of Education at St. Joseph's Academy

The year 1905 was probably not much different from any preceding year for ethnic groups who had arrived to establish homes in the not yet 30-year-old city of Crookston. But for the large French-speaking population the year was special, for it marked the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who had been urged by Bishop McGolrick of Duluth to open a parochial school in Crookston.

Mother Marie Jeanne Humbert came down from Argyle (where the Sisters had arrived from France in 1903) and found a small frame house to be used as a school at 436 South Ash Street. Sisters Marie Valentine Bouaillet, St. Ange Godard, and Aimee Bourgeois joined her and the lay teacher, Miss Antonine Lepine, who was engaged to teach English. On March 4, 1905, the four of them welcomed one pupil, Edna Brosseau. By the end of May that year, the number of pupils had increased to 17.

Mother Marie Jeanne then purchased the Clement property on Houston Avenue with its French provincial style home with dormer windows, and this served as the Sisters' school until 1912 when the first two floors of the new brick school were constructed at 314 Houston Avenue and the institution incorporated as St. Joseph's Academy.

The school register of 1911-12 included names of 108 Crookstonites, a number of whom are still in the vicinity in 1979 -- Victor Cardin, Louis Munn, Henriette Sylvestre, Clarence Capistran, Marian O'Brien, Alice Couvrette (Vick), and Hormisdas Brunelle.

The first school term in the new Academy, 1912-13, proved that Catholic parents in Crookston cared about educating their children in the faith as well as in all other areas. The enrollment of 141 was the highest since the first three Sisters had arrived only seven years before.

In 1916 Eva Lanctot received the first high school diploma from St. Joseph's Academy. In the work of educating, the Sisters of St. Joseph placed great stress on the teaching of religion, of personal growth, of assuming responsibility in home and civic life, and of appreciating literary and aesthetic arts. In their curriculum planning they not only included four years of English but also four years of French and Latin. In addition to the regular subjects in math, history, and science, they added business courses as early as 1918 and homemaking in 1925.

The high school curriculum of 1915-16 at the Academy included religion, senior grammar, French I, II, III, senior arithmetic, elementary and higher algebra, plane and solid geometry, modern history, senior American history, civil government, senior geography, physiology, physiography, botany, chemistry. Six Sisters taught one or more of these subjects. One Sister of the 1915-16 faculty is still alive in 1979. She is Sister Marie Nativity Richard, now retired at St. Joseph's Provincial House but vitally interested in everything around her -- from local politics to the latest course in theology.

St. Joseph's Academy continued to expand and keep up with new demands in education. Curriculum offerings and the size of the faculty grew through the years. In 1949 the school introduced an integrated program of study called Christian Family Living. It had as its objective "to form educated Christians -- mature Christian women who are aware of their identity and are prepared to live up to their role in today's world."

The Sisters of St. Joseph taught this course from 1949 to 1968 until the school was absorbed into the Crookston Catholic School system.

In 1949 the Academy reached its peak enrollment of 273 students, for the school progressively attracted students from the tri-state area and even Illinois and Texas.

As an educational institution in Crookston, St. Joseph's Academy was accredited by the University of Minnesota through all the years of its existence. The school magazine DAWN repeatedly won national honors as a literary magazine.
When Mount Saint Benedict opened its doors in the fall of 1968, it found another group of students entering, the girls from St. Joseph’s Academy. Now Crookston’s three private high schools were combined into one. Not only did the students from St. Joseph’s Academy come to the Mount but so did some of the members of St. Joseph’s faculty. Under the leadership of Sister Eleanor Mueller, O.S.B. and Sister Elaine Dufrene, C.S.J., the school continued to progress. With a capacity enrollment of 315 the faculty and students found themselves completely involved in a crowded academic and activity program.

Sister Mary Ann Welsch succeeded Sister Eleanor Mueller as the seventh principal of the school in 1976.

The Academy has an innovative program of studies with a variety of choices in electives as well as basics. Its extra-curricular program is well-rounded and appealing to both boys and girls. The school is directed by a 13-member school board.

Mother Marie Jeanne Humbert (1858-1917), founder of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Crookston, was responsible for the building of St. Joseph’s Academy.

Sisters of St. Joseph who served as principals of St. Joseph’s Academy successively from 1912 to 1968 include Sister Agnes Godet, Sister Anne Ferland, Sister Agnes Lanctot, Sister Anne Martin Ganser, Sister Marie Anthony Micka, and Sister Mary Edward Dufresne.

In 1968 when the Academy became a part of the Crookston Catholic School System and ceased to operate as a private boarding school and parochial school for children of St. Anne’s Parish, it brought to a close a sixty-three-year history of education to a total of 12,130 students.

Mount St. Benedict Academy

When, in 1923, the Sisters of Mount Saint Benedict decided to open their doors to young people with whom they wished to share their vision and ideals, Mount Saint Benedict Academy came into existence. The date was September 5.

Sister Clement Dorsey was the first principal of the school. Later she was succeeded by Sister Thecla Schmitz who guided the destiny of the school until 1938. The first year’s enrollment in 1923 listed 70 pupils: 29 resident and 41 day students. The girls attending the Cathedral High School transferred to Mount Saint Benedict Academy that year.

The first graduates to receive diplomas from the school included Agnes Noesen; Eleanor Sherry, Mrs. Marlen Judge; Margaret Gramer, Mrs. Frank Wiese; Maureen Kelly, Mrs. William Olson; Julia Ike, Mrs. Carlton Shane; Alice Fitzpatrick, Sister M. Patricia; Christine Arends, Sister M. Digna; and Elizabeth Kirsch, Mrs. Al Burgess.

The construction involved in the Academy’s growth was further developed in 1925 when the cement walks were laid, the curbing was put in, and the retaining wall was built. There were 90 students that year and the foundations were being laid among them for what is commonly known as “school spirit”.

The members of the senior class that year organized a staff and published the first MSBA school paper, the Senior Courier. They also presented their first play, in honor of Mother Eustacia Beyenka, on her nameday. In 1930 the students published another school paper, the Buzzets. Five years later, 1935, MOUNT BELLES made its first appearance as the academy school paper. The present school publication is THE DOVE, started in January, 1943.

Sister Mary John Flynn succeeded Sister Thecla Schmitz in 1938. However, at the end of the 1939 spring term, Mount Saint Benedict Academy closed at the request of Bishop Peschges. He wanted a coeducational school; so in the fall of 1939 the Mount girls reversed the 1923 transfer and became students of the Cathedral High School. During this (Continued on Page 40)

(From old issue of a Crookston paper, probably in 90's)

Yesterday afternoon several hundred people gathered at the track on the river and watched a number of very interesting brush-es between some of the fast nags. Among the fast ones there was Joe Eckert with Mixer; D.H. Miller with Friday from Black Nell and Gordon V, former horses owned by W.S. Lycan; C.F. Mitchell with his high strung and promising colt; Ben Capistran with Uncle Sam; Dan McKinnon, one of Bjorn and Carlson’s new horses, driven by Ed Ralston, and a number of others.

There were some lively heats, D.H. Miller’s Friday being the sensation of the day. This colt gives great promise of being a race horse, and with Mixer as pace maker the two came down the stretch in great shape. From now on during the balance of the winter there promises to be some great racing stunts.
time Sister Mary John was prefect of the Mount resident students and teacher at Cathedral High.

On September 5, 1942, the Mount initiated a new educational program - an exclusive school for prospective members of the community. High school and post graduate courses were offered. Sister Marcella Nolan was principal.

In September, 1944, Mount Saint Benedict Academy reopened with a full four-year academic program. The girls living in Crookston continued to attend the Cathedral High School; the Mount Academy enrolled only its resident students. Sister Marcella headed the faculty. The staff included the Right Rev. Michael Ott, Sister M. Blandina, Sister M. Josepha, Sister M. Secunda, Sister M. Laurentia, Sister M. Amata, and Sister M. Bernadine.

The Rev. Roger Schoenbechler from St. John's University joined the academy staff in September, 1946, a religion teacher and chaplain. He continued in this position until the summer of 1967 when he was recalled to become assistant to the Abbot at St. John's Abbey.

Sister Mary Magdalene Mulvey acted as principal during the 1947-1948 school year. In 1948 Sister Mary John Flynn became the principal and directress. On December 20 of that year, "Christmas Dawn", selected by Sister Mary John, was given for the first time. This pageant was presented with variations for the next twenty years.

To encourage young people to teach in rural schools, the state set up what were called Normal Training Departments in some high schools as part of the high school's 4th year curriculum. Crookston's program began in 1904. Immediately, many seniors shifted from their regular classes to the new department, where they received a year's training in teaching methods. The state furnished $750 a year to help defray the expenses of the program.

Miss Kate Kenely, the first normal training instructor here, had 14 out of a total of 41 graduating seniors that first spring. In 1909, 45 one-year teachers were turned out. Practice teaching was done in designated rural schools. The program was finally phased out by the State Education Department in 1936, and elementary teachers were then required to have two years of training beyond high school. In the 1960's teachers at all levels were required to earn a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

In the fall of 1960 Sister Eleanor Mueller became principal. At that time the facilities of the school were being taxed to capacity and every year girls were being turned away. Under the leadership of Mother Mary John Flynn, the faculty turned its attention to plans for a new building. Four new buildings, a residence hall, administrative and classroom buildings, and a gymnasium, were dedicated on May 23, 1963. In September the Cathedral High School girls transferred to this new $2,000,000 complex. This plan worked fine for four years. Then in 1967 it was decided to bring the Cathedral boys up to the new school. Under the leadership of Sister Joan LaCoursiere and Sister Eleanor Mueller, co-principals during 1967-68, the school flourished, leaving little to be desired.

In 1949 Sister Austin Deemer headed the school. That year the annex on the south end of the main building was remodeled and the academy library was moved into the area on the first floor. Sister Austin continued as principal until 1960, accomplishing many things that helped to make the Mount Academy what it is today. The achievement that gave Sister Austin the most satisfaction was the admission of Chinese, Black, and Indian girls to Mount St. Benedict Academy through the offering of complete scholarships. This program was established through the offices of Mother Blandina and the Archbishop of Taiwan, but was later carried forward by Sister Austin. The first Chinese girls graduated from the Mount in 1953, the first Blacks in 1954, and the first Indians in 1955. Since then many girls of other races have attended and been graduated.

On a typical spring day in Crookston - note the muffers - the class of 1914 posed for its picture.
Northwest Experiment Station
Founded 1895

In 1895, the Minnesota State Legislature created the Northwest Experiment Station in Crookston, a part of the University of Minnesota. The tract of land used for the Northwest Experiment Farm contained 476.61 acres and had been donated by the Great Northern Railway through the generosity of James J. Hill and Samuel Hill. Work at the experiment farm began in 1895 when the city of Crookston and Polk County each gave $1000 which was used for drainage and building roads around and through the property. Professor W. M. Hays was placed in charge of the Experiment Station. He served until 1905.

In that year, the Legislature appropriated $15,000 to establish a branch school of agriculture at Crookston. William Robertson was appointed the first superintendent of the Northwest School of Agriculture and the Experiment Station. Since the state had neglected to vote any funds for maintenance, a sum of $2500 was privately subscribed by concerned citizens of Crookston and vicinity. This fund and assistance from Northwest Experiment Station funds made it possible for the school to open in 1906.

The first building was a three-story structure simply called the School Building, later known as the Home Economics Building. It was a combination dormitory and classrooms. The boys were housed on the third floor.

Thirty-one students were enrolled, all that the school could accommodate at that time. It might be interesting to name these first students, since many of them have relatives living in the area. They were Emma Augusta Anderson, Hallock; Agnes Bjoen, Crookston; Henry L. Blackmore, Baggs, Wyoming; Carl Carlson, Kennedy; William Dewar, Crookston; Walter Dewar, Crookston; John Distad, Perley; Hans Forseth, Climax; Christopher, Lewis and Molly Fossbakken, Fosston; Clara Hagan, Hendrum; Christian Hanson, Beltrami; Floyd Ingersoll, Crookston; Thor Lonne, Crookston; Christian Lindberg, Beltrami; Leroy Lytle, Crookston; Gustaf Nelson, Northland; Olaf F. Nelson, St. Hilaire; Simon Nelson, Climax; Carl Nordrum, Beltrami; Lena Opdahl, Beltrami; Elmer Oslund, Beltrami; Albert Petterson, Crookston; William H. Rager, Crookston; Lewis Regimbala, Crookston; Carl Seeger, Red Lake Falls; Joseph Skala, Red Lake Falls; Julie Swisse, Faribault; Nels A. Thompson, Birkholz, and Ida Thompson, Beltrami.

Christopher, Lewis and Mollie Fossbakken, Fosston; Olaf and Olivia Nelson, St. Hilaire; Len Opdahl, Alden; and Albert Petterson and Louis Regeimal, Crookston, made up the first graduating class - 1909.

The school continued to grow rapidly. The enrollment in the second year was 41, and in the third year, 101. By 1938 there were about 400 students from all over the region.

The school was a technical agricultural school whose objective was to train farm boys and girls to be successful in the operation of farms in their own communities. It offered a three-year course of six months each, from October through March, and served as a live-in high school for rural students.

In 1907 the legislature provided the funds for two new buildings, and in 1908 Stephens Hall, a dormitory for boys, and the Industrial Building, later named Owen Hall, were built. The legislature, in addition to providing funds for maintenance, also appropriated $2500 to reimburse the citizens who had contributed money to make the first year possible. James J. Hill spoke at the dedication of Stephens Hall.

Mr. Robertson died in 1910, and C.G. Selvig became the new superintendent. Two new buildings were constructed that year - Robertson Hall, a girls’ dormitory, and the Kiehle Building, which contained a gymnasium, auditorium, (considered one of the most beautiful rooms in the state), administrative

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offices, and the library. In 1913 a central heating plant was constructed, and in 1914, a second men's dormitory. The enrollment reached 200 in that year and ultimately attained an average figure of about 400.

During the school's early years a student paid $15 a month for room, board, lights, and laundry, a sum that many admitted was "cheaper than folks could live at home".

An innovative program (1913-19) was a teacher training department where students completed courses in teaching and directing household arts and domestic science in rural and consolidated schools. Qualified students were allowed by this post-graduate work at NWSA to prepare for college.

Mud, plain old Red River Valley gumbo, was a major problem on campus for more than ten years. Though Supt. Selvig campaigned for hard-surfaced roads, none were forthcoming until the late 1920's, and everyone continued to get stuck in potholes and mud. The main reason for the delay was that the Twin Cities' campuses had little or no paving.

T.M. McCall describes the early transportation problem thus: "The school relied on horse and buggy and horse-drawn bus transportation through the early years until the first bus was put into service in 1918. For transportation to and from Crookston, the faculty were given the privilege of driving their own farm team hitched to a two-seated spring wagon. Where the roads were open, the same vehicle was winterized by putting runners on the axles, instead of wheels, as soon as the snow fell in the fall.....Students came to spend the entire term with us; each student was provided with a large trunk and a number of suitcases".

In 1926 Selvig ran for Congress and was elected. The vacancy at the school was filled by Austin A. Dowell. When he resigned in 1937, he was succeeded by Mr. McCall, who had taught horticulture at the school for 25 years. Upon his retirement in 1956, the Board of Regents appointed Bernard E. Youngquist.

One Northwest School graduate, Herman Skyberg '16, was elected a regent of the University of Minnesota and held that post from 1949 until his death in the late '60's.

In 1953, 3-year diplomas were no longer granted, and the Northwest School became a 4-year high school. During its 63-year history, the Crookston school graduated 5,433 students.

In 1965 the University of Minnesota, with the sanction of the legislature, decided to conduct the school on a college level, and the institution opened as a college in the fall of 1966 with 185 students. The Northwest School graduated its final class in March, 1968.

In the early 1900's there were two wholesale grocery companies, three wholesale meat distributors, one creamery, two brickyards, one brewery, several beer distributors, about twenty saloons and a well patronized red-light district. There were several grade schools, one junior high, one senior high school and two business colleges which attracted many students from a large rural area. The Northwest School of Agriculture, a division of the University of Minnesota, was located just outside the city limits with students from all of northwestern Minnesota. The Great Northern was the principal industry of Crookston, the next largest being the Crookston Lumber Company. There were several grain elevators and the Crookston Milling Company ground flour the year round, much of which was exported. Crookston also had a few state and many area conventions held here each year.

In 1965 the University of Minnesota, with the sanction of the legislature, decided to conduct the school on a college level, and the institution opened as a college in the fall of 1966 with 185 students. The Northwest School graduated its final class in March, 1968.

During its early history Crookston had at least five business colleges. J.A. Button first taught shorthand in his home at 355 South Broadway before 1902, and then in 1904 established Button's Business College at 611 North Broadway. Later the school was located at 111½ West Robert. Button's advertisement in one of the early high school newspapers states that commercial subjects, shorthand, typing, telegraphy, music, and a teacher's course were offered.

About 1900 there was a Crookston Business College located at 101 South Ash. The president was J.C. Sathre, whose school was in existence for many years. In the early years English was taught to Norwegian immigrants. Some time prior to 1930 this large two-story building became the Sathre Apartments, 200-210 East Robert and 101 South Ash.

The city directory of 1906 lists the Queen City Business College at the corner of Robert and Broadway. O.J. Hanson was the director. In 1908 there was an "Eclectic Business College" at 105 West 2nd Street. Mrs. Julia Hughes was the principal. Later this institution was moved to the Hughes residence at 423 Pleasant Avenue, where it existed until about 1935. In 1911 the National Business College was located on the upper story of 424 North Broadway. The directors were S.O. Mithun and Wallace Henry.

These people all were attending Hughes Business College in 1929. In the first row are: unidentified, Claire Nelson, Mildred Leinan, Mrs. Julia Hughes, (owner) Gladys Schlichter, unidentified, and Lola Sampson. In the middle row are Clarence Arnold, Emma Anderson, Robert Nelson, Oswald Kvennes, Marian Flemino, and Olav Vaule. In the back row are Maybelle Rasmussen, Mrs. Celeste Nelson, unidentified, Florence Dufault, and Anne Haller.

42
University of Minnesota
Founded in 1906

Ever since 1906 the University of Minnesota has had a campus, an agricultural high school and research station in Crookston. In 1965, however, the State Legislature decreed that the high school facility should be phased out and a two-year post-secondary institution be set up in its place. The new school, which was then called the University of Minnesota Technical Institute, opened its doors in September, 1966, with 185 students enrolled. Dr. Stanley Sahlstrom was appointed director. Courses offered were in agriculture and business. The first class was graduated in June, 1968, with 70 men and women receiving associate degrees.

In 1968 a third division of study was added to the curriculum, Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management. A fourth was offered in 1973, Home and Family Services, which conducts a Children's Center as part of its program. Arts and sciences undergird all the technical programs and have since the school started.

Coordinate campus status was given to the college in 1969, and its name was changed by the Board of Regents to the University of Minnesota Technical College. Dr. Sahlstrom has remained as head of the school under the title of Provost. As a coordinate campus the University of Minnesota, Crookston, one of four out-state branches of the University, is closely allied with the Twin Cities' campuses administratively.

From its small enrollment of 185 twelve years ago, UMC has now grown into a college of more than a thousand students. From a campus of older buildings which had housed the secondary school, the property has evolved into an attractive cluster of buildings consisting of the sturdy old and the functional new.

For the past five years the college has also provided continuing education services to people in northwestern Minnesota by offering low-cost educational experiences that make it possible for adults to get an Associate degree or prepare to transfer to a four-year college or that are designed for enrichment or career development. UMC also sponsors workshops and conferences and in many other ways offers the resources and help of the University to everyone.

In 1979 the college has seventy full-time and fifteen part-time faculty.

The students above were among the first to be enrolled in the University of Minnesota-Crookston's (circa 1966) business machines class. In the background is Adolph Beich, one of the earliest UMC faculty members and still on the teaching staff. (UMC Photo)
First National Bank Board of Directors are, seated (left to right) William J. Kiewel, L.A. Erickson, Leonard Bergan; Standing David G. Bang, L.M. Engen, Edward Reitmeier and Gene H. Sipe.
When Gulik Spokely of Houston County urged his oxen northwestward into this area, he was using a means of transportation common in the settlement of the Red and Red Lake River valleys. All travel facilities were slow and undependable, even in the seven or eight ice-free months. Though Minnesota had some 2000 miles of steel a few years after Spokely’s arrival, Crookston was not completely linked by rail to the rest of the country until the next decade. Besides the ox cart and its covered wagon, there were river boats, horses, horse-drawn vehicles, stage coaches, dog teams, and ice trains. People traveling to this part of Minnesota from their former homes in the East or South or from points of debarkation often used many modes of transportation before they reached here. Some even walked!

As soon as the settlers had established themselves here, better and faster transportation became indispensable for the goods they needed and the commodities they had for sale. Snow-shoes, skis, sleighs, and dog teams were fine for personal trips, and even the bumpy stage coach was a way to get someplace or to carry mail, but to ship your produce you needed something more substantial.

Further railroad construction, however, collapsed in 1872 because of a national financial depression, called the Panic of 1873. This event was a blow to the infant Crookston, whose residents had been anticipating the extension of the St. Paul and Pacific from Glyndon to St. Vincent. The railroad crossing of the Red Lake River was, they had heard, to be made at the site of what is now Crookston.

But in 1874-75 when the extension was completed to Crookston, two astute men named J.J. Hill and Norman Kittson, both of whom had had financial interests in the Red River steamboat operations from about 1870, made Crookston a river port! Since the Red Lake river proved navigable from here to its mouth, the Red River steamboats ran to Crookston, loaded freight that had come by rail from St. Paul on Hill’s railroad, and carried it to the junction with the Red at Grand Forks and thence north to Winnipeg. The boat landing, according to Captain Fred A. Bill of the steamboat company, was at the foot of Third Street.

Though even steamboats were slow transportation for passengers, the farmers on both rivers along the route sold wood to the crews and made a little extra income. It took five cords every twelve hours to keep the engines running. As for speed, R.M. Probstfield reports in his diaries that it took him eight days plus three hours to make the round trip from Moorhead to Pembina on the Red River. (This information comes from Drache’s “The Challenge of the Prairie.”) Crookston residents will be interested to know that the Probstfield mentioned was the grandfather of Evelyn Probstfield (Gesell), who taught at Central for many years.

A second blow hit the little village in 1875 when what was then called the R.R.V. railroad was extended to Fisher’s Landing and that settlement became the terminus for river transportation and the important town in this section. Thus ended Crookston’s history as a river port and began a few depressing years. Only about 150 people stayed on in the town after this unhappy event in the march of progress.

The very name of the city reflects the long association the town has had with the Burlington Northern Railway. Honored by the designation is Colonel William Crooks, who was chief engineer of the Burlington Northern’s predecessor, Great Northern, when it was building its pioneering line into the area in 1872. At (Continued on Page 46)
that time the line was called the St. Paul and Pacific. It was reaching out as rapidly as possible for the then-small communities which now are the Twin Cities. One goal, and the more immediate, was to head for the Red River Valley and its trade as far north as Winnipeg. With hope, too, the builders eyed westward expansion to the Pacific Coast. The latter objective, realized considerably later, had caused them to adopt “St. Paul and Pacific” as a company name.

Colonel Crooks’ name lives on in history, not only through the name of this thriving city, but also through his distinguished record as a colonel of the Sixth Minnesota Regiment in the Civil War. He is remembered, too, as a representative in the state legislature, and later as a senator there.

The first locomotive operated in Minnesota and a large adjacent territory was named for him. The William Crooks, a wood-burning steam locomotive, later converted to coal, arrived in St. Paul by Mississippi river boat in 1861. In 1862 it inaugurated train service on the St. Paul and Pacific’s first line. This was ten miles long, between St. Paul and St. Anthony.

The William Crooks served well the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad, which James J. Hill, the “Empire Builder”, created in 1878 to succeed the St. Paul and Pacific. When the Great Northern itself began in 1890 and took over the Manitoba, the work of the William Crooks and similar small locomotives was largely done. Bigger and stronger locomotives were available.

The venerable small steamer has continued as a prized Great Northern possession all through the decades. Still

One cold wintry night, the Great Northern special agent found a man riding on the open end of the baggage section of Train No. 8 when it arrived in Crookston.

The special agent called to the man to get down. When there was no response, he climbed up on the back of the engine to talk to the man. He was shocked to find him covered with ice from head to foot which was caused by the blowing snow and steam from the engine. He was just barely alive and said he could not move.

It was necessary to uncouple the engine and bring up an express truck. With his frozen wet clothing, the man was as stiff as a board. The local police were there also. They arranged to have him taken to a hospital to thaw out.

After a few days, relatives sent him money to pay his hospital bill and get out of town as a regular passenger.

(Continued on Page 47)
A cool autumn day and a buggy ride through the woods in 1918.

(Continued from Page 46)

Manitoba completed the basic network of which Crookston was the hub, by constructing the 32 miles from Halstad to Crookston Junction.

In 1905 the Northern division of the Great Northern was created, with Crookston as administrative headquarters, located a block from the depot opposite the main line. Effective in 1922 the Dakota Division, headquartering at Grand Forks, was extended to include lines formerly in the Northern division. Superintendents in charge of the Northern divisions during those 17 years were, successively, C.H. Jenks, T.F. Lowry, F.S. Elliott, P.C. Allen, R.L. Knebel, T.B. Degnan, L.M. Davis, and C.A. Manthe.

Hill, founder of the railway and its guiding genius for many years, was impressed with the Red River Valley country from the start. As a young man, he had arrived in St. Paul in 1856 from his Canadian birthplace, and was destined to stay.

In 1865 Hill had entered the transportation business in St. Paul on his own. He represented a Mississippi river steamboat firm. By 1870 he was interested in steamboat operation on the Red River. On an early journey to Fort Garry, he observed the surprising growth of wheat sprouting from grain that fell into soil churned by ox cart wheels. He foresaw agricultural and allied greatness for the Red River Valley.

When Hill and his associates acquired the St. Paul and Pacific and created the Manitoba, the first aim was to provide railway service into that area. Some of the mileage in the Crookston territory had been constructed previously, but great impetus came from Hill. Achieving his goal here preceded construction westward and later to the Pacific Coast.

Hill laid his rails first, then labored tirelessly to create traffic for his trains. He encouraged settlement, then helped the settler make good. Well did he know that a territory had to be productive or his trains would lack freight and passengers to carry. He showed farmers how to improve their methods, instituted experimental farms of his own to help them along, preached crop diversification, imported purebred stock, and helped in establishment of experimental stations and schools teaching agriculture.
"The Hub of a Wheel"

At one time, Crookston was like the hub of a wheel with lines in six different directions from Crookston on the Great Northern, plus the Northern Pacific which operated a passenger train in each direction between Winnipeg and Manitoba Junction.

In his book, "The Face of Minnesota", John Szarkowski says: "Many men built the railroads that Minnesota needed, but the giant among them was Jim Hill, who was perhaps the most praised, most insulted, most sung-about and joked about in Minnesota history.

All of the jokes and other apocrypha meant only that even if the people couldn't decide whether or not they approved of him, they were sure he was a very big man and had done something very important; he had filled Western Minnesota and the Dakotas and Manitoba with settlers and then sweet-talked and bullied them into producing fantastically big harvests for his road to carry Eastward."

The second transportation giant was Henry Villard, a German immigrant who completed his Northern Pacific Transcontinental route in 1883. The N.P. had reached the Red River and Moorhead by 1871, but in 1873 had experienced financial problems which delayed its progress northward. In 1889, however, the line was completed both to Crookston and from Winnipeg to Grand Forks. The route from Crookston to Grand Forks followed in 1890, giving the public a through line from St. Paul to Winnipeg via Crookston.

Railroad fare from Moorhead to Crookston and back was $4.10 in 1881. For a time Crookston had as many as twelve passenger trains running in and out of town. Today the one railroad carries only freight.

The American love of the horseless carriage turned out to be the nemesis of the railroad as a means of human transportation. Cars were not common in Crookston too early in this century, but there were about 500 registered in the state by 1907, the year in which the first license plates were issued. The need for better roads called for the appointment of a state highway commission by 1906, later called the Minnesota Highway Department. The first commissioner was Charles M. Babcock, who served until 1933 and was the originator of Minnesota's excellent road system.

Established streets and better roads meant more travel on wheels or horseback for everybody. The livery stables, with horses and rigs to rent, and dray and taxi service, were common sights in Crookston in 1879 and until the days of the car. If you were wealthy enough, of course, you had your own buggy and animal, and a few even had their own barns and carriage houses. Stables were run by such early settlers as Stanhope Collins (he bought the first hearse, too),

(Continued on Page 49)
T.H. Bjorn, and John Alderman. And, of course you could ride a bike. You could buy one in 1908 for as little as $11 to $15 from a mail order house, but earlier their cost was almost prohibitive for the average income - $85 to $145, before the turn of the century. Despite the cost, bicycling was popular with both men and women, and youngsters.

With limited road and street improvements came the buses. Crookston had its own entrepreneur in this business, Ed Carlson, who, with two partners, one an electrical and the other a tire salesman, started the Triangle Transportation Company with headquarters here. The date was April, 1921, according to Mrs. Carlson, who, at the age 95, is a charming, alert resident of Villa St. Vincent. She is the daughter of Walter Latta, pioneer settler in Crookston township.

The enterprise began with two 18-passenger, heated buses running between Crookston and Fargo, and soon also to Detroit Lakes. Hence, the name “Triangle”. Later the firm expanded to include more routes and more vehicles: Thief River to Baudette, Bemidji to Duluth and Detroit Lakes to the Twin Cities. Via Triangle bus a passenger at one time could get a round trip excursion fare of $7.70 from Crookston to Minneapolis.

Mr. Carlson retired in the 1950's, selling his individual lines to his drivers, one of whom was Grover Kalbfleisch of this city who began his employment with Carlson in 1924.

Traveling by train from St. Paul to Moorhead in 1872 was hardly a luxury tour, according to Charles Spendley, one of Crookston’s founders. The roadbed was “new and indifferent”, so much so that the trains never ran at night.

On his first day’s journey, May 1, the destination was a place called Minnesota Junction. To reach it they had bucked snow all day. The next day (more snow) they arrived in Brainerd at nightfall. On the third, en route to Moorhead, the passengers had to get out of the coaches frequently and hold them up so that they wouldn’t tip over! The world looked more like spring as they got within 100 miles of Moorhead.

Six miles out of that town, Spendley viewed “emerald green” prairie and early wild flowers. In Moorhead he heard the news that the Manitoba railroad would be built and a town would be laid out at the crossing of the Red Lake River. Excited, he started the next day via Grand Forks for that crossing point, found the site, and staked his claim. And so we have Spendley Street!
Early Settlers Experienced Isolation from Lack of Communication

The old saw, "Distance lends enchantment" may apply to romance, but don't ever believe it lent anything but disenchantment to settlers alone on a wild trackless prairie in the 70's. And distance wasn't the only communication handicap for those early homesteaders. Unless they lived close to some other family who spoke their language, they were equally isolated. Thus, there were frequent huddles of nationality groups in the area, and these were suspicious of anyone who didn't speak the same tongue.

Even in towns where people lived close together and could chat among themselves, news of the outside world was infrequent, brought only by travelers and newcomers and garnered from publications that arrived weeks or months late. Of course, the post office received an occasional letter either by stage or train and what was a letter for one was a bit of news for all - when shared.

By 100 years ago all this had changed with the extension of the telephone and telegraph lines, the improvement of roads, and the local printing of newspapers. Even those far outside the town limits were now in communication with other people.

Finally, in the early 20's there was radio and in the 50's, television. Fast transportation made the delivery of newspapers and magazines as speedy in rural areas as in the urban centers. Sometimes today, in our noisy world, we still say, "Distance lends enchantment", and we all want to rush off to a wilderness area or a mountain top.

In the early history of area newspapers, the final proofs and contest notices were the chief support upon which the pioneer publisher leaned.

Wherever there was a post office, and considerable quantities of Government land posted officially for public notice, industrious editors would pitch their tents equipped with a big case of non-pareil type for setting land notices and a cigarbox full of long primer for setting the two or three inches of news and editorial.
Three dollars for final proof notices and five dollars for contest notices was the rate allowed by the government. The notices had to be published in the newspapers nearest the land. Some of the newspapers carried as high as two or three pages of land notices, set in solid nonpareil, and their incomes from this source ran as high as $150 or $200 a week.

E.M. Walsh established the Crookston Plaindealer in 1874, becoming Polk County's first editor and publisher. It was printed in Grand Forks at the Grand Forks Plaindealer, established and conducted by his brother, George.

Involved in many other activities at the time (postmaster, storekeeper, real estate dealer and land locater), Walsh gladly transferred the burden of journalism to John McLean, a competitor who had arrived from Audubon to establish the Polk County Journal. The Plaindealer ceased operation about 1876.

The Journal, like the Plaindealer, was at the time a branch of another publication. It was the offspring of the Audubon Journal, published by Harvey E. Cooke. The Polk County Journal was printed in Audubon for several months after it was established here.

The Crookston offspring soon reached a stature where it over-topped its parent in subscriptions, according to W.E. McKenzie in the 1916 edition of Polk County History.

About that time Crookston began to assume the airs of a civilized community. Settlers were coming in, the trees had been chopped out of the ground on Main Street, one or two stores had been established; the Pioneer Hotel had been erected, and the tin horn gambler, the tent saloon and the dance hall were established institutions.

It looked as if Crookston was to be "some town" and Mr. Cooke wisely decided to leave Audubon and move his plant here. The Polk County Journal, the first paper to be printed and published in the county, was established in 1878.

Cooke was not as good a business manager as he was an editor, and while the Journal prospered fairly well, it did not make any big fortune for its owner. (When he died in 1900, Mrs. Cooke took charge for a short while and then sold it to N.S. Gordon. Gordon began a daily edition, which continued with ups and downs under various managements until 1910 when it was finally discontinued. The plant was purchased and the paper merged with the Times.)

An interesting visitor to the arena of journalism arrived about 1880, "Broadaxe Brown," the only name he was known by, was editor of a publication known as "The Broadaxe".

The motto of the newspaper was "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." And so they did.

The line was a rather crooked one in Brown's case, but the chips were plentiful and many was the good citizen who was banged in the neck because of one of them.

Holding an issue of his Crookston Times, no doubt, Publisher W.E. McKenzie contemplates the muck and mire of Crookston streets in 1879.
Holcomb, Knudson & Co.
Certified Public Accountants
Member of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
117 South Broadway

Stephen A. Wright - 1968 - Resident Partner - Crookston, MN.

Gerald C. Knudson - 1954 - Grand Forks, N.D.
Boyd D. Holcomb - 1957 - Alexandria, MN.
Robert T. Poissant - 1968 - Thief River Falls, MN.
Terrance J. McKenna - 1971 - Grand Forks, N.D.
Richard W. Anderson - 1975 - Thief River Falls, MN.
Henry S. Krigbaum - 1978 - Bemidji, MN.
Collin C. Peterson - 1978 - Detroit Lakes, MN.
Gary E. Ankerfelt - 1978 - Detroit Lakes, MN.
Thomas A. Culmer - 1978 - Devils Lake, N.D.
Jeffrey W. Dinham - 1978 - Alexandria, MN.
Lloyd C. Berryman - 1978 - Bemidji, MN.

1954-1974

1974-1979
As an offensive scandal sheet of its day, it never made the popularity polls and its career was a short but exciting one. Begun in the spring of 1880, the Broadaxe ceased to "hew" in the fall. The last issue, printed on butcher's wrapping paper, contained Brown's frank, if not overly elegant opinion of the town and a lot of the leading citizens. Following this, he made a hasty exit, during the dark of night, leaving behind unpaid bills and many citizens with grievances to avenge.

In 1881, W.R. Dunn, a young newspaper man in search of a location, drifted in this direction. He found Crookston a thriving town of over 1,000 people, the county seat of the County big enough, and rich enough in natural resources, to support a nation. Cooke, with his Polk County Journal, was fighting the battle for education and reform all alone. Dunn decided to join the battle and opened the Crookston Chronicle.

The Chronicle was newsy, well-edited and Dunn was an able writer, straight forward in his convictions and admired for his business methods. The Chronicle prospered and in short time, became the leading paper in Northern Minnesota. Due to the ill health of the editor in 1884, the Chronicle was sold to J.G. McGrew. Dunn moved to Washington, D.C. where he eventually secured a government appointment in the census bureau.

McGrew, a lawyer, had been practicing in Crookston several years prior to his purchase of the Chronicle. He was not a success as a newspaper man. He was a profound and able editorial writer but not a good news gatherer or business manager. He soon realized this and turned the paper over to a nephew, who was even more proficient in his inability to make ends meet in a financial way.

W.H. Palmer and his son, Harry, were the next to try to rejuvenate the paper. They tried it as a daily, unsuccessfully, and in a month or two discontinued it for good.

In 1885, T.J. Rothpletz, a Southern fire-eating Democrat, began the Red Lake Falls Democrat, but the surroundings were not congenial to one of his fiery temperament. The Chronicle was then on its downward journey to oblivion, and he came to Crookston in the summer of 1885 to launch a Democratic paper, naming it the Times. Everything went fine until he experienced the icy blasts of Minnesota winters. Longing for the sunny southern climate, he sold the paper to his chief newsman and writer, W.E. McKenzie, who launched the Daily Times in 1887.

In 1887, two of Crookston's residents were mentioned in two leading national weeklies, Danny Boone, owner-manager of the Crookston Pirates, was mentioned in an article in Collier's. And in the Saturday Evening Post V.L. MacGregor had his picture in a full page Nash Motors advertisement. Boone was mentioned in an article on Casey Stengel, major league manager and former player. Stengel was one of the great scrapers of his day and in the course of describing his battles, a scrap with Danny Boone was mentioned. In commenting on the article Boone says it wasn't much of a scrap as only two blows were struck. The first blow was when Casey Stengel hit Danny and the second was when Danny hit the ground.

The Crookston Chronicle gave up the ghost in 1885, the plant was taken over by C.C. and Harry Knappin - the latter a well known political writer who worked on Twin City papers for many years. They published Crookston's People's Press. This was in the days when Populism was rampant in the political bull ring. From then it passed to A.R. Holston, a socialistic attorney. He was succeeded by C.T. Hagen (later publisher of the Vasterheimen who added a prohibition hue to its editorial policy. Elias Steenerson, then postmaster, had it wished on him and it became the distinguished exponent of pure and undefiled Republicanism. It was later purchased by Crawford and Egley and became a semi-weekly.
The Vasterheimen was a Scandinavian paper started in Crookston in the early nineties by Adolph Bydol. A.J. Johnson and C.T. Hagen were later publishers. It had an extensive circulation and much influence among the Scandinavian readers and continued as a weekly until the mid 1900’s.

In addition to the Vasterheimen, published at 221 N. Broadway (near Emerson Ins. location), a 1906 Telephone Directory also listed the following newspapers: Bud og Hilsen, a weekly published at 413 W. Robert St. (no information available); Crookston Daily Times (evening) published at 109 W. 2nd St. (site of Shoes ‘N Such); the Polk County Journal (weekly) and Crookston Press (weekly) published at 115 W. Robert St. (site of Montagues Flower Shop) and the Crookston Press, a weekly (no information available) also published at 221 N. Broadway.

F.L. Flack, editor of the Crookston Daily Tribune, a staunch Republican newspaper whose motto was "All the news for all the people...fairness in politics."

Crystal Sets for a Dollar

In the fall of 1920 the hour-by-hour returns of the Harding-Cox presidential election were broadcast from Pittsburgh, the very first commercial radio broadcast in the U.S.A. Although Crookston was in its 41st year, nobody here heard that program.

But two years later, in May of 1922, WDAY in Fargo came on the air and was heard by a few Crookston residents. Many used simple home-made "crystal sets", made for a dollar or so with a small lump of the mineral "galena", a coil of wire and an antenna and a ground. Although no power of any kind was required, the Fargo station could be heard clearly on headphones. At that time the idea of voices through the air was magic!

Other stations came on the air monthly all over the nation during the early and mid-twenties, and Crookston people bought hundreds of battery-operated radios featuring the loudspeaker to permit whole families to listen without using headphones. But those sets were expensive so about a dozen Crookston radio "hams" built their own radio sets. They included Rene Vaudrin, Lyle Borkenhagen, Bill Farley, Clayton Crosier, Bill Kiewel, Louis Jenkins, Frank Thompson, Ed Boh, and Bud Nelson. The overwhelming fascination of the new science, and the grip it took on the minds of young men in those days is demonstrated by the fact that each and everyone of those named were

Founded 1926

Munn’s Jewelers

109
North Broadway

Ivan Fisher
later to adopt radio or electronics as a profession.

All of the same experimenters shared in a bonanza in the mid-1930's when electric radios were invented to replace the sets that required cumbersome, expensive, smelly sets of wet and dry cells. Almost overnight battery operated radios became worthless. Local experimenters bought them, many in large, handsome, hardwood consoles for as little as 25c, just to dismantle for parts. Some parts were used for radio transmitting by local "ham" operators, who talked to friends all over the world.

By 1940 almost everyone in Crookston had at least one radio and a choice of a dozen stations, but the really clear ones remained WDAY in Fargo and KILO in Grand Forks (which came on the air that year). In 1946 KTRF in Thief River Falls went on the air and built a secondary studio in Crookston on the top floor of the Eagles hall where the Eagles formerly had their bar and lodge room. Radio broadcasts from Crookston began, through KTRF, in 1947.

In that same year four far-sighted Crookston men realized that Crookston needed its own radio station and formed a corporation to build KROX. They were D.A. McKenzie, publisher of the Crookston Daily Times, R.J. DeWaard, manager of Bridgeman Creameries, Arnold Jensen, who operated an electric appliance store, and Roger Briden, an area farmer. They acquired the studios KTRF had built in the Eagles building for the use of KROX and put KROX on the air on April 25, 1948, with a staff of five and broadcast hours limited to sun-up to sundown.

Live broadcasts were popular at that time and Crookston people came to the KROX studios to watch such artists as "Lillian and Her Westerners", who are Lillian and Bill Kelly, still in Crookston, and "Tex and His Bronco Busters", Homer Reese and Harvey Beteen. (Harvey still lives here). Rosita Ellingson sang sultry songs and played the piano from the KROX studio some evenings.

In 1949 the original owners sold the business to four of their KROX employees: Jerry Dahlberg, Bill Kiewel, Ed Boh, and Gary Fox. At about the same time F.C.C. authorization was received to operate the station day and night provided another tower was built next to the existing one ½ miles north of Crookston and the frequency was changed from 1050Kc to 1260Kc. All of that was done, more staff was hired, and a decision was made to open remote studios in eight small towns around Crookston so that residents of those towns could have their personal voice on the air. It was a novel idea, conceived at KROX by Butch Melbye, and since copied throughout the nation. Remote studios were soon opened in Ada, Bagley, Fertile, Fosston, Hallock, McIntosh, Red Lake Falls, and Warren, and news was broadcast from each town each day.

In the 1950's all four new owners worked actively at KROX, but by October of 1961 only Dahlberg and Kiewel remained. They had acquired the stock of the others and today are co-owners of the station. Both have worked there full time since 1948, Dahlberg as program and sports director, and Kiewel as manager and technical director. Two others who have been with KROX from its beginning are Butch Melbye, sales manager, and Don Mulvaney, chief announcer.

Using this first transmitter, KROX went on the air for the first time on April 25, 1948.

Ingenuity was a resource common to most pioneers and certainly not lacking among those who had settled in Crookston. When winter came on strong and the railroad did not run, merchants in the community had to devise some method of bringing their freight from Glyndon, the nearest rail point. Undaunted, the citizens fitted up a flat car with platforms, mast, and sail, with which they sailed down and back, bringing goods from the termination of the road to the town. These contraptions were called "sail cars" or "car-yachts". Anyway, they did the job. Both E.M. Walsh and Delos Jacobus, in their memoirs, recall their use between 1873 and 1875, and even as late as 1877, Jacobus writes. Jacobus says the rigs sometimes carried passengers. When the snow became too deep, sleighs drawn by oxen or dog teams replaced the "yachts".

If you've ever wondered about the usefulness of the Valley's turbulent winds, that's your answer!
Industry and business in the city have, almost from the beginning, been generally agriculturally oriented; in fact, the coinage of the word "agri-business" probably originated in communities like Crookston. Of course, the city has always had businesses that one finds in any town -- those that take care of basic human needs. In addition, though, there are those that are indigenous to the climate and general topography; manufacturers and distributors of drainage supplies, building requirements, machinery, recreational equipment, and cars and accessories.

EARLY CROOKSTON BUSINESS INDUSTRY
- by Harold Thomforde

As we look at the early history it appears that the city was destined right from the beginning to become a business and trade center. One of these early indications is the fact that Crookston was on the early routes of the fur traders traveling between Winnipeg and St. Paul. Likewise, many of the early railroad locations were favorable for rail development into the area. Steamships ran up the Red Lake River to Crookston, loading and unloading freight, thence on to Fisher, Grand Forks, and Winnipeg. Even the early land "squatters" helped. They only located where the grass was thick and lush, indicating a rich soil. Therefore they not only helped to develop the land in our area but they made available man power needed for work in the city.

It was in 1878 that the proverbial corner was turned, and Crookston, a city of approximately 300 people, started to grow with better times and progress following. Railroad land was opened for sale to those who would farm, and 4100 homestead entries were made here.

Some of the earliest business houses in Crookston sold harnesses, groceries and meats, and tin supplies. There were repair shops for wheels and carts used in hauling freight. One of the first major firms to be established was a large general store run by William Anglim and Louis Fontaine. In the '80's there was a cigar factory opened by H.T. Brown, which had a successful operation for some years. Tom and Jim Morrissey had a machine and welding shop across the street from the present Otter Tail Power Co. office. This business continued into the 1930's. W.D. Bailey and W.E. Walker ran a planing mill and sash and door factory.

Burkhardt and Walters established the first brewery in the city. The Kiewel family came later with a good sized brewery, and this continued to operate until prohibition forced its closing, never to reopen. Crookston had two pop factories at one time, Bang's and Becker's. With Becker's death, the business was closed. The Bang enterprise went from the founders to George Bang and his brothers.

As early as 1878 Martin Hoover started a flour mill in Crookston and advertised that the Crookston Flouring Mills would start operation on Nov. 4, 1878. Shortly after the turn of the century, the Crookston Milling Company was organized by Marcus Johnson, S.M. Sivertson, and J.J. Padden. This company continued to grow from manufacturing just bread flour to the milling of durum and semolina, flours used in the manufacturing of macaroni. The firm manufactured as much as 1500 barrels of flour per day. Later a feed plant was added. The buildings were destroyed by fire in 1964. Harold Thomforde was the last manager.

The Miller Tanning Company was established in the late 1890's and was the first tannery north of the Twin Cities. It continued for many years.

Crookston was a city of many hotels. In the 1890's the Commercial Hotel was rated as the most important. Others were the Cleveland House, the St. Louis Hotel, Germania Hotel, Lennox, the Minnesota House, the Hotel Crookston, the Montreal House, and the Palace Hotel.

He really belongs to Minneapolis, but he did a lot for Crookston with his saw mill. His name was Thomas B. Walker.
1904 CITY DIRECTORY

It's 1904, folks, and here's the new city directory. Population is 7,377. Let's see what the town provides. Well, we have six elementary schools and one high school. Should be getting educated. Fifteen churches—and the Salvation Army. Great! Eight newspapers, two of them Norwegian. Everyone should know what's going on. Sixteen hotels for conventioners and weary travelers and thirty-eight lodges and clubs, where, they say “the good fellows (and girls) get together”. Of course, four breweries and 29 saloons. What a thirsty crew in this town!

Well, here's something more sober - four banks! Someone around here is thrifty. The Bank of Crookston is at 102 West 2nd, later called Crookston State Bank (razed); the First National Bank, at 124 No. Broadway (1883); the Merchant's National (1884), at 201 No. Main (Janecky Building); and the Scandia National Bank (1887), 124 West Robert (former Erickson, Erie and Odland offices).

Here's the Crookston Public Library and the Gymnasium Association, both at 123 East Robert. Healthy minds and healthy bodies, you know. Sorry, building was torn down.

The Oyster Bay Lunch Room at Main and Robert (southwest corner) was run by Gilbert Bang and his wife. Note the ads for "An Irishman's Troubles" to be given at the Opera House on July 17.

An Early Abstract - Title Firm

In 1889, an abstract of title business known as the Christian Brothers hired Christian C. Strander, a citizen who had arrived in 1888 and obtained work as a clerk in the Register of Deeds office.

Because of the fast growth of the area, with settlers and newcomers desiring proof of title to their land, business boomed and Christian Strander became a partner in 1894. In 1907 the business was incorporated as Strander Abstract and Investment Company with C.C. Strander, who held the controlling interest, president (until his death in 1976); O.O. Christianson, vice president, and O.W. Peterson, secretary-treasurer. In 1910 Adolph Morck became secretary and later secretary-treasurer until his retirement in 1958.

Herman Strander, son of Christian C. worked periodically for the firm from 1915 until he became vice-president and treasurer about 1927. With the death of his father in 1936, he became president and held that position until his death in 1973.

The firm is owned today by Leonard Erickson and Kenneth Erie with Reed Bennen as president, Leonard Erickson, secretary, and Kenneth Erie, treasurer.

Ability Concrete & Construction Co. Inc.
1427 Foskett St.
Box 501
Founded 1977

One of the earlier cleaning establishments in Crookston was Pantorium Cleaners, formerly located at 104 West Second Street. Founded in 1914 by Harry and Ray Dickel, it was later managed by their son, AI. The business was sold in 1976 and Mrs. Ray Dickel remains a very active, well-known resident at the age of 86.

The Crookston Roller Mill was owned by M. Hoover. It began operations on Nov. 4, 1878, with the first class miller and new machines. Bernhard Sampson was part owner.
Crookston Industry was Important to Growth

A.O. Espe, who in 1899 established a machine shop and implement business in Crookston, employed his unusual inventive genius, and developed a gas tractor, introduced in 1907. In 1909 he built his new shop in Crookston, a four-plow tractor to manufacture and market, and a company was formed here. Later the machinery was built in Minneapolis on a contract basis. The patent was sold to the Avery Co. He also built a disc harrow, a land roller, and a beet loader.

Shortly after the turn of the century a large lumber saw mill was constructed and operated for some years by T.B. Walker, but eventually had to cease operation due to a lack of pine trees for lumber upstream on the river. History writers seem to question why this mill was ever started when there was such a scanty lumber supply. While it operated it was good for Crookston. Up to 700 people were employed at one time.

Established in Crookston in 1919, the Elk River Concrete Products Co. had P.H. Gramer of this city as its first salesman, followed by his son Earl.

Associated with the firm for 40 years is Leonard M. Svedahl of Crookston, who retired in 1972 as superintendent of the company. All types of concrete pipe and other concrete products are manufactured by the firm, used for culverts, highways and bridges, the largest being 108 inches in diameter, according to Svedahl.

The Red River Alfalfa Dehydrating Company was established by Earl Saul in the 1950's. With his death the firm passed into the hands of his daughter and son-in-law, Betty and Ralph Eickhof. They are large processors of alfalfa and hay products, and distribute not only throughout the United States but to several foreign markets.

In 1952 plans were made by the American Crystal Sugar Co. to construct a large sugar refinery here. This plant was completed in 1955, and that was the year the first crop was processed.
In 1960 a group of local businessmen and Vern Hagen of East Grand Forks completed negotiations to construct a potato chip processing plant here. This industry continued for some years and then was sold to Foremost-McKesson Dairy Corporation. They continued this business for several years and then sold to the J.R. Simplot Company. The firm grew remarkably under their management. Then in May, 1978, the company had a disastrous fire here, resulting in a loss of over $5,000,000, and at present has no plans to rebuild.

Presently Crookston is fortunate to have two firms manufacturing needed equipment and implements for farm use. Gust Swenson and Sons, Inc. have had several outstanding developments for beet growers as well as for general farming. The Red River Distributing Co. has been a fast-growing company, manufacturing a number of implements for farming and fertilizer needs. They also distribute through a good part of the United States and into Canada.

The Dahlgren Company started a sunflower plant in the middle 1960's. This firm has continued to grow locally and in national importance, becoming one of the largest sunflower processing plants in the nation. They process both oil and confectionery seeds. About 1963 the firm was sold to Beatrice Foods, Inc. which continues to operate it.

Crookston, because of its agriculturally oriented importance, has a number of very fine seed-cleaning plants, fertilizer-blending operations, and farm implement dealers with all major farm implement lines distributed locally.

Crookston has come a long way in the establishment of a good business community because there have been men and women over the past 100 years with the real pioneer ambition to make things better. With its location, in the very heart of the Red River Valley on important transcontinental highways, there is no reason why the city cannot continue to grow and develop.

Massey Ferguson Inc.
1201 South Main
Founded 1932

Some biggies on the way to the Walker Saw Mill.

Crookston Chamber of Commerce

Forerunners of the Crookston Chamber of Commerce were active in the same capacity as far back as the 1880's in attempting to advertise Crookston and the area. Among some of these early promoters were: E.M. Walsh, E.C. Davis, Richard Hussey, John Darkow, Bernhard Sampson, Peter Cornelius, Robert Houston, W.M. Ross, Alex MacGregor and Bert Childs.

Among their early accomplishments was securing a Post Office, a general store, a tin and hardware store and horseshoeing establishments. Always endeavoring to keep Crookston on the main route for fur trading from Canada to St. Paul, civic leaders promoted railroads through the area.

According to Harold Thomforde, who retired as Executive Vice President of the Chamber this year (1979) the present day Chamber was not in organization form until the late 1920's. Earlier promotional groups were known as the Commercial Club, Crookston Civic Assn., Businessmen's Club and Crookston Assn. Public Affairs, among others.

Early day Chamber secretaries were part-time workers or semi-retired businessmen, among them Charles F. Bundy, a former banker. In the 1940's Dan Wiley took an active part as Chamber Secretary, and was followed in 1951 by James Basham, who became Executive Vice President and actually the first trained professional leader of the organization.
Basham started many new programs here, among them tourism. During the 1950's, transportation and highway construction were of major interest, the promotional committee including: S.S. (Sherm) Daniels, Joe Sekula, Al Harold, Harold Thomforde and Phil Hamre. This group gained a major victory in the location of highway 75 into Canada on the east side of the Red River and through Crookston. The committee twice appeared before the Manitoba Legislature to plead its case. Their success resulted in the Pine to Palm Highway, from the pines of Manitoba to the palms of Mexico.

The Chamber Highway committee also spent much time to keep Highway as a U.S. Trans-Continental Highway.

Other progress in the 1950's was the first time a Crookston member, George Campbell was named to the Agricultural committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and held the position for several years. Later, Campbell, was appointed, to the Duluth Port Authority when it was organized in 1955.

Harold Thomforde, a lifelong Crookston resident and former mayor, became the executive vice president in 1973 and remained until his retirement this year (1979).

Under his regime the Chamber helped to get the Northwest Regional Development Center office to locate in Crookston. Always interested in dam and flood control he continued working with the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers; and too, much effort was given to highway improvement in the area working closely with the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Bob Gustafsen succeeded him as executive vice president.

**Eickhof Construction**

Chris Eickhof arrived in Crookston in 1882. During his youth in Germany he was apprentice to a contractor for three years and studied architecture at a technical school in Buxtehude.

He established the Chris Eickhof Construction Company in 1882, and many homes and buildings in Crookston were constructed in the years that followed. His son, Otto, became a partner in 1910 and the firm was renamed Chris Eickhof and Son. Chris died in 1934 and the Eickhof Construction Company continued under Otto's leadership. His sons, Ralph and John, have operated the business since his death in 1974.

**Walker & Sons**

The Walkers, father and son, were the operators of a flourishing planing mill, established in 1882. The father, Walter, was originally in partnership with W.J. Bailey for a year and then with Joseph Netzer, but within another twelve months Netzer retired and the son, William E., became the partner under the firm name of Walker & Son. The senior Mr. Walker retired in 1888, passing the business to his son. The mill turned out sash, doors, molding, other building materials, cedar posts, and telephone and telegraph poles. It employed about 20. The plant was located at Elm and Fifth Streets.

Charles Ross, a leading contractor in early 1900's, constructed the Carnegie Library at 120 North Ash.

Nathan P. Stone, pioneer implement dealer.
Founded 1906

Stenshoel Funeral Home

303 South Main

Nels P. Stenshoel
1906-1941

Emma Stenshoel
1941-1968
Dean Jacobsen, 1968-1975

Jim Bredman
1975-present

Founded 1906

1979 View
In 1898 Jacob Kiewel and his son, Charles, came to Crookston from Little Falls. They purchased a small brewery at the south end of Front Street. Part of the same building is now occupied by Torkelson Repair.

Charles borrowed $3,000 from his father and together they bought all stock and organized the Kiewel Brewing Co. Within a few years they had built a barn for the horses and wagons used for local deliveries and increased their shipments by rail to six states. A new well was dug from which "water was boiled for ten hours to make it perfectly pure" according to an existing label.

A large variety of alcoholic drinks were produced in different flavors. They included "White Seal Beer", "Creamo", "Echo", "Cream of Malt Tonic", "Red Ribbon Beer" and "Kiewel's Sunset". When prohibition began in 1920, the factory was moved across the border to Winnipeg and is still operating there.

William T. Carlisle was a very enterprising merchant associated with a well-known wholesale grocery firm in Crookston in 1905. The grocery stores in Crookston, service by wholesale houses, would take orders by phone and deliver them by horse-drawn wagons or by cutters in the winter.

W.J. Murphy completely rebuilt the Crookston Water Works, Power, and Light Company in 1892.

Alexander MacGregor, grandfather of Janet and Lester, turned out a machine to kill quack grass.

Gust Swenson, who arrived in Crookston in 1931, was employed by A.O. Espe from 1933 to 1945. Establishing a small business in a garage behind his home in 1946, (later expanded into Gust Swenson & Sons) he proceeded to develop the first folding 12 row beet cultivator used in the area.

Did you know???? In the late 1800's, Main Street in Crookston was the alleyway that runs north and south behind Rock's Jewelry? That today Crookston has an "A" street which runs north and south in front of Gust Swenson & Sons?
The operators came equipped with long arms! A 1929 view of the city's telephone exchange.

**Crookston**

**Telephone History**

The telephone was a failure the first time it was introduced in Crookston, but electric lights succeeded. Both were introduced in 1882 by the Crookston Telephone, Telegraph Exchange and Electric Light Company, under the direction of Delos Jacobus. Then a new company was formed to provide electric service. It ultimately developed into the company which provides electric service today.

The telephone exchange was not so successful. It started with fewer than a dozen customers and a long distance line to Red Lake Falls. The exchange closed for lack of business. Service was re-established in 1894 by the Crookston Telephone Company when 50 customers promised to subscribe for at least one year. By 1900, the number of customers had increased to 180.

In 1901, the exchange was sold to the Iron Range Electric Company, which also operated telephone exchanges in Bemidji, Cass Lake, Grand Rapids, and Hibbing. The new company immediately installed a new switchboard which was capable of serving up to 400 customers.

In 1905, the properties of the Iron Range Company, including Crookston, were sold to the Northwestern Telephone Exchange Company, the forerunner of Northwestern Bell.

In 1907 the new company changed the Crookston telephone exchange from a magneto system with crank type phones to a common battery system with lift-the-receiver type instruments.

In March of 1958 the manual system was changed to dial operation. Direct Distance Dialing (DDD) was introduced in November, 1972, and Crookston telephone customers had the nation at their fingertips.

**Town Undertakers**

During the early years of the city's growth, many individuals were called upon to fill in at jobs requiring certain services still absent in Crookston.

Burial of the deceased was one in particular and the undertaking profession was often an adjunct to the furniture business.

Three of the earliest undertakers found in an old 1884 hotel directory were: Ruebin Woodham who operated the Crookston Furniture Store, M.C. Malone, a dealer in furniture and household goods and Paul Bataglia, who owned a home furnishing goods store.

Another pre-1900 undertaker in Crookston was G.S. Chesterman. His establishment was located at 106½ North Broadway in the area of the Polk County State Bank parking lot and later at 218 North Broadway. It was purchased by Joseph Houske (1929) who had previously established his funeral home in the Opera Block on Main Street (1926). He retired in 1966 and his son Glenn, who operated and enlarged the business, sold it in 1977 to Gary Nathan. Jorgen Nokelberg purchased it in 1978 and is the current owner.

In 1906 Neis P. Stenshoel began the Stenshoel Funeral Home and in 1920 introduced Crookston’s first motorized funeral carriage. In later years he invented and patented equipment for embalmers’ use and provided the city with its first ambulance. In the mid 1930’s his daughter Emma Stenshoel operated the funeral home until her retirement in 1968. The funeral home was purchased then by Dean Jacobsen and in 1975 by James Bredman, the present owner.
Widman Candy Company

Don’t go into the candy business. You’ll never have any time to yourself. That was George Widman’s advice to his daughter Margaret and his son George. So they ignored his counsel, and now the fourth generation of candy makers named Widman is learning the business.

The Widman Candy Co. was established here in 1911 by George, who had been making sweets of a large St. Paul department store. The shop and kitchen were first located in the small frame building next to the Times. Then in 1917 George moved into and purchased the present building. Mr. Widman had learned the art from his father, a resident of Dubuque, la. George in turn taught Margaret candy making, and she now is teaching her nephew (another George).

Widman Candies are not just a local product. Many pounds are shipped each year to other parts of the country to candy lovers who have tasted them.

This year, Margaret Widman was the BPW’s choice of Woman of the Year.

Coca-Cola Bottling Company

In 1906, Gilbert H. and Charles L. Bang purchased the Crookston Bottling Works from J.M. Peterson. Gilbert and Charles were the sons of Tore Bang who had arrived in Crookston in 1881 and was appointed as Crookston’s U.S. Marshal in 1890.

The Bottling Works at 106 Maple Street consisted of some old style bottle-washing and bottle-filling equipment and a horse-drawn delivery wagon. Customers included about 30 saloons, some restaurants, a few neighborhood and confectionery stores. Out-of-town shipments, made in unheated cars, had to be temporarily discontinued from September until spring.

Edmund H. Bang, son of Gilbert H., joined the firm in 1933. Another son, George D., became associated with the business in 1936, two years after his father’s death. A modern truck, ice cooler, and the first six-bottle carton for take-home use were all added in 1936.

On April 1, 1938, the company became known as the Crookston Coca-Cola Bottling Company with Edmund H. as president; Charles R., vice president; and George D., secretary-treasurer. It enlarged to five truck routes, a new automatic cooler and a six-flavor vending machine. Plant enlargement and additional modern equipment followed in 1974.

David Bang joined the firm in 1968 and was elected president following his father’s retirement. Donald Bang, son of Edmund H., joined the firm in 1972 as sales manager.

These are ads placed in an early business directory, about 1910. Note the telephone numbers.
A horse-drawn derrick, incorporating two 20-foot poles, a two-inch reel bar, pulley blocks, and guy ropes, was used by the telephone company in placing and removing poles while engaged in construction work in April, 1907. Fifty poles a day were removed by this primitive-type derrick that was designed and constructed by the telephone work crew pictured.

American Crystal Sugar

Though the American Crystal Sugar Company began its Crookston operation in 1954, the first sugar beet crop consisting of five acres, was actually grown in 1919 by an experiment by Crookston farmer, Carl Wigand.

A speculative group in East Grand Forks helped to finance the first sugar beet plant by forming the Red River Sugar Company in association with the Minnesota Sugar Company in Chaska.

Additional financial resources were obtained from area commercial clubs and from a loan obtained through the Agriculture Credit Corporation, resulting in the construction of the first area plant in 1926 at East Grand Forks. In its first year of production, almost 2,200 acres of beets were contracted for production.

The earliest form of beet cultivator was a 2-row machine pulled by a horse which was replaced by a 4-row cultivator pulled by two horses. Hoeing and thinning were manually accomplished and when harvest time arrived, a horse drawn lifter partially lifted the beets out of the ground. In later years a mechanical loader was employed to elevate the beets into a truck after they were lifted, topped and piled.

Today Crookston's American Crystal Sugar plant, on Highway 75 South, receives about 50,000 tons of beets every 24 hours during harvest time. Hydraulic hoists rapidly unload beets at dumping stations and the piling stations receive beets on a 24-hour-a-day schedule.

In 1973 the Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association purchased the American Crystal Sugar Company for $66 million. The company is a farmer-owned cooperative with Jerry Claassen serving as agricultural manager.

Dahlgren Company

Clark Dahlgren is a gentleman who has contributed much to the economic development of Crookston. In 1955, in partnership with Lyle Kiel, Dahlgren's opened with one elevator where they processed and distributed certified seeds.

In 1962 Kiel sold his interest to Dahlgren, and the company was re-organized. Seeing the importance of sunflowers in the future of the Valley, the company began to concentrate on sunflower research, cultivation, experimentation for new products, and processing. Today Dahlgren & Co. has expanded to more than four times its 1962 size. The company has greenhouses and nurseries both here and in Florida. It employs more than 150 people.

Dahlgren was honored in 1971 by being named Outstanding Small Businessman in Minnesota. In national competition he took second place.

Dahlgren's famous bird feed and feeders are available from New England to the Midwest and are marketed by large Eastern food chains such as Grand Union stores.

Nordlum Equipment Company
Highway 75 South
Founded 1946

George's Trailer Sales
Highway 75 South
Recreational Vehicles
Founded 1977

Crookston Farmers Co-Op Elevator
1220 South Main
Founded 1939

Crookston Iron and Metal
120 West Loring
Founded 1966

Anderson Beverages, Inc.
500 Marin Avenue
Founded 1954
Seven Banks Established By 1915

Rapidly assuming importance in Minnesota’s northwest area as an industrial, agricultural, educational, and cultural center, Crookston, in 1915, boasted the presence of five banks, representing a capital stock of $280,000.

Deposits recorded in these banks on December 1, 1915, aggregated the sum of $3,885,000. The banks involved were the Crookston State, First National, Merchants National, Scandia American, and the Polk County State Banks.

First National Bank-1881

The First National Bank was one of the earliest founded in northern Minnesota. Located at 124 N. Broadway, it was established in 1881, with a capital stock of $50,000. The first directors named were Ansell Bates, William Anglim, Conrad Utzimer, Morris Brown, J.I. Case, and R.H. Baker. Mr. Baker became its first president; Brown, vice president; and Bates, cashier. In 1883 the capital stock was doubled, and George Q. Erskine succeeded Baker as president, with K.D. Chase succeeding Brown as vice president. Jerome W. Wheeler became cashier in 1895, and in 1905 was made president.

In 1925 Otto Bremer of St. Paul became the major stockholder through purchase of the Wheeler estate interest. The Bremer Foundation remains the major stockholder with more than 100 local people also owning stock.

The original bank building was replaced in 1956 by a one-story structure. The new building provided modern banking features, including a drive-in teller window, night depository, and a large meeting room for the community. A 25 x 110 foot addition to the bank along with complete remodeling and refurbishing of the building was undertaken in 1970. Included in the expansion features was a new auto bank.

In 1974 a new bank building was planned, a result of continued growth. The new complex, located at 201 North Broadway, was completed in 1978. The same year First National opened a detached facility in Fisher.


Current members of the board of directors are Sipe, chairman; L.A. Erickson, vice-chairman; David C. Bang, Leonard Bergan, L.M. Engen, William J. Kiewel, and Edward Reitmeier.

Scandia America-1887

Organized in the summer and fall of 1887, the Scandia American Bank opened its doors for business on the first day of December of 1887 with a paid-in capital of $40,000. It was located at 125 West Robert Street. Carl Hendrickson of Grafton, N.D., was president; G.M. Barker of Crookston, vice president; A.G. Gallasch, cashier; and L. Ellington, assistant cashier. In February, 1913, a firm known as Miller and Foote retained controlling interest in the stock and the official board consisted of J.P. Foote, H. Steenerson, C.C. Strander, Oscar Fredricks, George F. Van Pelt, and H.H. Clapp. The bank closed about 1924.

Crookston State-1909

The Crookston State Bank was organized May 1, 1909. Located at 102 West Second Street, it had operated for a number of years as a private bank, having been incorporated as such May 1, 1902, with a capital of $20,000. L.E. Jones was elected president; J.A. Northrop, vice president; and L.D. Foskett, cashier. Upon its reorganization into the Crookston State Bank, the Capital Stock was increased to $40,000. Northrop became president; S.C. Johnson, vice president; and Foskett, retained as cashier. These officers, with E.A. Mills and L. Sargent, were the first directors.

Merchant National-1884

The Merchants National Bank, organized in 1884, was located at 201 No. Main St. (the Janecky building). Holding office were John Cromb, president; John Moor, vice president; A.D. Stephens, cashier, and V.L. MacGregor, assistant cashier. Board members were John Cromb, Stephens, W.E. McKenzie, J.H. Peterson, A. Braley, John Moore, and MacGregor. The bank closed in 1924, due to actions that some believed involved political chicanery.

Veronica M. Horton
Agent
Federal Crop Insurance Corp.
406 North Broadway
Founded 1938

The Scandia American Bank, located on the site of today’s Hair & Things Boutique, was organized in 1887 and closed in 1924.
First Federal
Savings and Loan - 1904

The Crookston Building and Loan Association, later to become the First Federal Savings and Loan Association, held its first meeting on March 1, 1904. Officers elected were P.M. Ringdal, president; Harry L. Falk, vice president; A.D. Stephens, secretary; James E. O'Brien, treasurer; and James H. Mayberry, attorney.

The Savings and Loan industry came into being primarily because of the need for financing housing, which was unavailable through commercial banks. It operated out of the rear teller window in what was then the Crookston Trust Company (now the Crookston National Bank).

Board meetings and annual meetings were sometimes held at the Merchants National Bank (the site of the Janecky Building). In 1967, the Crookston Savings and Loan Association adopted the Federal charter and changed its name to First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Crookston.

Virgil MacGregor became the association's second secretary, succeeded by Carmie L. Skjei, and in 1972, by Donald Thoreson, who was named secretary-treasurer and managing officer. In 1974 he was elected president of the association.

Polk County
State Bank - 1913

The Polk County State Bank of Crookston was chartered August 27, 1913, with a capital of $40,000. The present Total Capital Structure is $2,720,000. The first officers were: Peter M. Ringdal, president; L.W. Larsen, vice president; G.O. Hage, cashier. These officers, together with G.A. Aubol and A.J. Peterson, formed the first board of directors.

Otto Bremer bought an interest in the bank in 1918; the majority control is still with the Otto Bremer Company, and the remainder of the shares are held by local stockholders.

There have been five presidents -- Peter Ringdal, Charles E. Kiewel, W.S. Ericson, Gunnar E. Kronholm, and Clif-

(Continued on Page 68)
The present Board of Directors consists of Chin. Zaffke, Lyle Kiel, Russell Maves, Armin Ross and Lee Wall. The present officers are Zaffke, president; vice presidents W.L. Ericson, Gunder Moe, Lester P. Audette, and Don R. Hass; Marie Nelson, assistant vice president and cashier; James C. Wilson, assistant vice president; assistant cashiers, Mae Morgan, Sonja Lilliquist, and Carol J. O'Neil.

The first banking house was a two-story structure constructed by the Eickhof Construction Company. This same building is still being used, after several extensive remodelings. From the time the bank was built, it furnished Crookston with a city restroom at no cost for space, heating, lights, and supplies until 1977 when the city purchased a different building for City Hall. Before the first extensive remodeling in 1960, the first story was partially used by Zitzer's Floral, and prior to that by the Sweet Shop Cafe. The second floor was rented by attorneys. Now, nineteen years later, it has become necessary for the bank to utilize both stories, and it has provided three drive-up and one walk-up window.

The Polk County State Bank, serving eight communities, is a full-service bank, and for the convenience of the public, has an outside Time & Temperature sign, and also furnishes the time and temperature on a special telephone line - 281-6300, 24 hours a day.

Future plans include consideration of detached facilities in surrounding areas. The bank serves a farm loan area that includes Crookston, Red Lake, Pennington, and Polk Counties.

Present bank officers include Donald T. Lawler, president; Loren W. Cofell, vice-president; Charles E. Jost, installment loan officer; Connie Grivno, cashier; and Margaret Keller, assistant cashier.

Bank directors are Lawler, and son, D.J. Lawler, George M. Campbell, Morris Dickel, R.A. Mason, R.O. Sather, and William Johnson.

Latest newcomer to the banking institutions of Crookston is American Federal, located at 5th Street and Broadway. They have served the Crookston trade area since December 27, 1974, and the Red River Valley since 1890, providing home loans, home improvement loans, and savings departments. Ed Henricksen is vice president and branch manager.

Other Financial Institutions

In addition, other financial institutions in Crookston are the Federal Land Bank, the PCA, and the American Federal. Located at 1226 University Avenue, the Federal Land Bank began in 1933 as the Polk County National Farm Loan Association. (NFLA). It was established as a cooperative lending institution to provide long term farm real estate loans at a reasonable cost. Mark Behrends is manager.

The Production Credit Association (PCA) also formed in 1933, provides farm credit loans for financing of farm operating expenses. PCA, also located at 1226 University Avenue, is a farmer owned cooperative credit association that has developed several services (financial, insurance and record keeping) to assist the farmers. Mark Gullickson is manager.

The Climax Credit Union, located at 107 East 2nd Street, was founded in 1953. A state chartered credit union, Climax Credit is a member-owned lending and savings institution. Manager of the Crookston office of Climax Credit Union is George Keller.
A rapid increase in settlers in the area during the late 1800's brought about marked changes in farming.

Broadening upon a basic wheat crop, farmers became involved in diversified farming which led to the need for barns, sheds, corn cribs and granaries.

Market outlets for growing supplies of grains, milk, butter, poultry, eggs, and other farm products were limited. Farmers' fruit and vegetable markets operated only during the limited fruit and vegetable production periods. Certain grain marketing and railroad problems were experienced and partially solved.

The settlers' unrest lent encouragement to the development of cooperatives in Minnesota in the years that followed. Encouragement also came from the young land-grant colleges of the Upper Midwest and other states, which fulfilled a need that proved of exceptional benefit to pioneer farmers in the Red River Valley.

One of the first problems investigated by the new soils division at the University of Minnesota was that of the effect of, and need for, phosphorous fertilizer. The study led to the location of the phosphorus deficient area in western Minnesota and the explanation of the prevalence of the phosphorus deficiency disease in cattle. This common disease was remedied by applying phosphorus fertilizers to the land, or feeding mineral feeds high in bone meal. Crop yields were greatly increased.

The founding of the University of Minnesota's Northwest Experiment Station in Crookston in 1895, was one of the most important steps in providing technological forces to help develop improved methods of farming on the raw prairie.

In 1879, the amount of wheat acreage in Polk County totaled 31,000 acres, producing 535,000 bushels of wheat or an average of 17 bushels to the acre.

In 1890 the amount had increased to 237,439 acres of wheat with 3,013,361 bushels; 44,215 acres of oats with 226,221 bushels; 16,474 acres of barley with 300,439 bushels; 153 acres of corn with 4,100 bushels; 2,393 acres of potatoes with 283,382 bushels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Av. Size</th>
<th>Val. of land and bldgs.</th>
<th>Av. val. per acre land and bldgs.</th>
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<td>1890</td>
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<td>1900</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>252.2 Acres</td>
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</table>

Horse power was a key factor in the development of the Northwest Experiment Station during the first 30 years of this century.
These photographs are of the N. W. Experiment Station in its infancy.

**Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station**

(The following history of the Northwest Agricultural Experiment Station is made possible thanks to information supplied by Dr. Bernard E. Youngquist, Superintendent of the Experiment Station. For reasons of space, it has been condensed from the original).

Farming in the late 1800's in the Red River Valley was difficult. Farmers and others who lived here began to talk about an agricultural experiment station as early as the 1880's.

In the early 1890's James J. Hill gave a piece of land to the State of Minnesota for the purpose of establishing an agricultural experiment station. With the gift, he also required that a school of agriculture be founded there within a few years (actually begun in 1905).

Temporary buildings were constructed and the station got underway in 1895 under the supervision of the first superintendent, T.A. Hoverstad, who arrived by train with some pieces of farm machinery, including a plow, harrow, wagon, team of horses and several cows.

The land was wet and soggy, used by duck hunters, and not good farm land at that time. The first buildings were a farm house and a barn for horses and a few cattle. There were no trees on the building site. The farm house was located just north and a bit west of the present Hill building. The barn was located just west of Selvig Hall, partially on the existing campus roadway which goes around the mall. (The first building for the new School of Agriculture was the old Home Economics building which was completed in 1906 and served as a classroom-dormitory and office building. It was located at the present site of Dowell Hall.)

Those early years were very difficult because of the need for drainage. It was the number one problem in the Red River Basin in terms of increasing agricultural production.

The first piece of research work was to learn how to drain the soggy sod of the Red River Basin so it could be farmed. They could not use drain tile in these tight soils as one could in the more porous soils of other parts of the nation. The most successful way to drain the

(Continued on Page 71)
land was to dig large ditches to appropriate outlets and ditch the production fields with laterals to the major ditches. This is the major water management drainage mechanism still used today in the Red River Basin.

At the turn of the century, farm people were hungry for research information. The first extension meetings of any significance were held at the Experiment Station beginning about 1908 under the leadership of Superintendent William Robertson.

Superintendent C.G. Selvig began his duties in 1910. Farmers began to come to extension meetings on trains to spend a day or two learning about improved ways in which to grow crops. These early crops meetings grew into what is now known as the Red River Valley Winter Shows.

The fast-growing School of Agriculture needed more space. In 1911 it became clear that the farm house and barns had been located in the wrong place. An architectural and landscape plan was developed and the farm house and barns were moved to the present location. Many additional structures were added between 1906 and 1920. McCall Hall and the gymnasium were built by the 1950’s. The entire farmstead was rebuilt or remodeled after 1957.

Sweet clover was studied by the early agronomic scientists and found useful during the years of animal power. The experiment station researchers found that the common white biennial (Bokhara) was the most satisfactory for general use in the region. Alfalfa was introduced by the experiment station in the second decade. Wheat proved more satisfactory as a companion crop than oats, barley or flax.

Gopher and Anthony oats and Minedum wheat bred at the central station and a line of corn called Northwestern Dent corn, selected at the N.W. station, was distributed to farmers and became common in northwestern Minnesota. More than 30,000 bushels of registered seed of recommended varieties were produced for foundation seed from 1921 to 1934.

In the early 1930’s when wheat had a very low market value and it was used in different trials for fattening beef, wheat was found to be equal to barley for cattle rations. Feeding wheat, however, depended largely on the price of that grain compared to barley. Using rye was successful; yet the amount of ergot present was a limiting factor. Molasses beet pulp proved equal to barley on beef fattening. The Northwest Experiment Station experimented extensively with the use of surplus potatoes as beef cattle feed. Hauling potatoes out on the range and freeze-drying for beef cattle was pioneered at the Northwest Station.

By 1935 the station scientists became more involved in regional problems relating to the production of field crops, the maintenance of soil fertility, the establishment and maintenance of windbreaks, ornamental shrubs, flowers and fruit trees, the production of bush and small fruits, potatoes, sugar beets, and garden vegetables, and the breeding and feeding of livestock and poultry.

The major thrust at the Experiment Station since its founding in 1895 has been to develop acceptable varieties of major crops for the valley and the development of good cultural methods and fertilizer management for the major farm crops. The development of crops new to the area has been a significant part of this thrust—an example is sunflowers. Every major cropping practice now used in the Red River Valley has either been developed or tested at the Experiment Station.

**SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE NORTHWEST EXPERIMENT STATION**

- Toger A. Hoverstad: 1895-1905
- William Robertson: 1905-1910
- Conrad G. Selvig: 1910-1927
- Austin A. Dowell, Ph.D.: 1927-1937
- Thomas M. McCall: 1937-1956
- Bernard E. Youngquist, Ph.D.: 1956 to present

**CURRENT RESEARCH PERSONNEL**

*in order of tenure*

- Mr. E.C. Miller, Agricultural Engineer and Assistant for Public Relations
- Dr. B.E. Youngquist, Superintendent
- Dr. G.D. Marx, Dairy Management and Dairy Breeding
- Dr. H.F. Windels, Sheep Management and Beef Nutritionist
- Mr. M.C. Jacobson, Assistant Scientist-Dairy
- Dr. L.J. Smith, Agronomist-Sugar beets
- Dr. W.D. Svedarsky, (¼ time) Natural History Studies
- Mr. R.K. Severson, Assistant Scientist-Soils
- Dr. G.E. Varson, Soil Scientist
- Dr. J.V. Wiersma, Agronomist-General Field Crops

**EXTENSION PERSONNEL:**

- Mr. M.O. Johnson, Area Extension Agent, Crops and Soils
- Mr. M.D. Hutter, Area Extension Agent, Crop Pest Management

Try harvesting the crops with this contraption today... yet it served its purpose in the 1920's.
Early Farming

Methods

Soil was prepared for planting crops in earlier days by using the spade and hoe to create more suitable ground for sowing the grain. An old fashioned plow consisted of one plowshare and two long handles. Farmers drove oxen or horses on these plows, held in the ground by walking behind, holding onto the handles.

With a sack fastened to their shoulders, they would disperse the seed by hand. When the grain was ripe, it was cut with sickles or scythes. Falling into rows, it was then racked together by handrackers.

If the farmer lacked big threshing floors, he would do his threshing in the winter. A piece of ground would be leveled and water poured over it to form ice. The bundles of wheat would be placed in circles and flailed. The flail was made by taking two pieces of wood and connecting them with a leather strap. One piece was used as a handle; the other to pound the grain. The grain was then hauled by wagons to the mills to be ground.

The earliest grain harvested was cut loose and stacked. These stacks were placed so that a threshing rig could be parked between two stacks and the threshing crew could pitch the bundles right into the machine. Formerly two of the crew would have to cut the bands that held the grain together. The "separator man" would grab the bundles, shake them loose, and throw them into the feeder. At the other end of the threshing machine the "strawbucker man" moved the emerging straw away from the separator, with great risk to his fingers.

Since a crew of 20 or more were often employed to thresh the grain much harvesting was done by custom threshing rigs which went from farm to farm. Long hours were involved for these large crews and also for the farmer's wife, who had to feed them. Extra kitchen help was often employed, since the project went on from early morning until late at night.

The blessings of progress have replaced the horse-drawn bundle racks with twin-screw tandem trucks, threshing machines with large self propelled combines and single shared plows with eight-bottoms pulled by powerful four-wheel drive diesel tractors. But somehow the old threshing rig is still a fond memory in the minds of many old timers today.

These are poor little lambs that have gone astray. What are they doing on North Broadway at Sixth?
Early Hours and Long Days

Recollections of farm life in the early part of the 1900's include memories of mornings beginning at 5 a.m. to accomplish chores before the arrival of the "school bus". The bus was a horse drawn wagon that managed to deliver you at school in an hour or so, depending on the mood of the weather, the driver and, very often, the horse.

Beginning in spring, wintered-over potatoes were removed from a cave built in the ground. Split oak posts formed the framework for the roof of the cave. Four-foot swamp grass was laid upon the logs followed by dirt and straw. This kept the potatoes above freezing in the winter and cool in the summer.

Potato planting began in May. Because of the moist rich mineral content of Red River Valley soil, only a little "barnyard fertilizer" was required. The single row planter, cultivator, sprayer, and digger were all horse-drawn. With the fields averaging one-half mile in length, horses were given a rest after every two rounds. A fresh team was harnessed for the afternoon's work. Belgian and Percheron horses were favored by farmers because of their strength and steady gait. Planting straight rows required a steady gait. After potatoes were sacked into 100-120 pound bags, they would be loaded into boxcars kept cool with ice. Crookston had several ice companies that supplied the railroad with this vital commodity.

Ice blocks were cut from the Red Lake River and stored in the railroad company's massive ice house until they were needed during winter months. Piles of straw acted as insulation.

During harvest time, neighbors always pooled their horses and resources. Five or six neighbors would get together and each farmer would supply a bundle team. Working in rounds, each team would pick up the bundles in the field and carry them to a stationary separator for threshing.

At threshing time, with neighbors cooperating, there was always plenty of food supplied for the occasion. The farmers would gather around big tables in the living room and kitchen that were heaped with plates of potatoes, meat, pastries, pies, cakes, cookies, and bread prepared by the wives.

Hard work, non-mechanized equipment, long hours and the spirit of sharing the harvest with neighbors were all part of Crookston's agricultural pattern in the early 1900's.

WINTER SHOWS

Prior to the building of the armory in 1920, the Farm Crops Show, later called the Red River Valley Winter Shows, was held at the Northwest School and Experiment Station and later in private facilities in Crookston. Capacity crowds each year taxed the facilities at the school and it was decided to hold the shows in the city using vacant buildings for the exhibits and the Grand Theater for meetings.

Implement dealers, manufacturers of farm commodities, and merchants enthusiastically supported the first crops and baking and sewing exhibitions by donating fabulous sweepstakes prizes for wheat, other small grains, and corn. Concrete stave silos, valued at $300 and $400 were given in consecutive years for grand champion small grain samples. Farm implements, valued up to $100, were offered as first prizes in other classes.

A more permanent location began to take shape with the construction of the Pavilion Building in 1919 plus two other major buildings all adjacent to the old armory. A regional financial drive funds for building.

At the 1918 Red River Valley Winter Show a song was introduced called the "Farm Crops Show Song" (sung to the tune of "John Brown's Body").

We're here again assembled at another Farm Crops Show;
We're here again to see and learn and not to brag and blow;
Northwestern Minnesota is the banner place we know;
Our fame spreads near and far,
Hurrah! Hurrah! Red River Valley,
Beautiful Red River Valley,
Bountiful Red River Valley
To you our praises ring.

Alfalfa, clover, wheat, and corn, the best that we can grow;
Of all the species that you find, we have the best to show;
And after this most glorious time, back to our farms we'll go.
Our fame goes marching on.

With the expansion of agriculture, new developments in farm machinery and technological growth in the industry, it was soon necessary to consider a new location to house the Winter Shows. The Winter Shows Board of Managers decided to erect a huge modern exhibition arena on Highway 2 and 75 north, naming it the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Dedication ceremonies were held on February 15, 1962.
From Remedies to Radiology

Big Man in Town! No one was regarded with more admiration and respect [unless it be the clergyman] than the town physician in the early days. Usually called “Doc”, he had an aura about him that was awe-some. Not that he was unapproachable and unsympathetic -- quite the opposite. It was just that learned manner in which he used words [Latin, sometimes] that you’d never heard before.

The second Big Man was the lawyer. Equally learned and possessing an equally impressive vocabulary, he was not regarded with quite the same esteem. The uneducated settler was a trifle suspicious of this profession. But just let this citizen have an altercation with his neighbor over a boundary or a wandering cow, and he’d rush to the law office.

The Early Medical Scene

Between 1860-69 there was an absence of medical care by regular practitioners in the Red River Valley. When the area had its flood of settlers during the decade 1870-1880, some doctors arrived to homestead while others settled in towns.

Many of these early doctors, some of them suffering from tuberculosis, came to Minnesota because the climate was spoken of as being “very healthy”. Practically all were very young, some were married, some arrived with fami-

Self medication was common among the settlers, such as Cherry Pectoral for colds, pneumonia or “consumption”, Hoods Sarsaparilla and Hostetter’s Bitters had quite a vogue (the latter more popular since one of the ingredients was a low grade whiskey).

Drug firms published very interesting almanacs which were welcome and which the young boys would read from cover to cover. They learned that some of these medicines were “good for man or beast”. For young boys, at a time when books were scarce, much advice on non-medical subjects was absorbed.

During the early settlement of the area, the quality of medical care was often poor. Many of the settlers resorted to self-medication, using patent medicines, charms, amulets, or talismans. Should a settler get a laceration from a scythe or puncture from a nail, he would lay a talisman, salve or even raw pork on the wound. Later there would be laudable pus and a hot poultice would be applied consisting of bread, milk, flaxseed, or cabbage or other leaf poultices. Some terrible infections occurred, but at the time it was often the only method available because of the limited and poor quality of medical help available.

At this period it was common to know of “consumption” families. Perhaps the mother was tuberculose; soon a child would come down with it, and many died. Often they all lived in a small house with perhaps several in one room.

W.A. Marin, one of Crookston’s pioneer lawyers, kept an interesting account of the early health care in the growing town. Maternal care is well described by him, because his mother was an intelligent woman who acted as a midwife for her neighbors. He tells of a wagon driving up at night and his mother going out, to return some days later; some neighborhood wife had been helped at the birth of her child.

An example of such help by a practical nurse was that of Grandma Tierney, who was an early pioneer. Her active life dated from 1870 to 1885. She would not accept payment for her help, and would insist on a doctor’s being present if she thought the labor was making slow progress. After delivery, she cleaned up the baby and laid out the baby’s freshly prepared clothes, then asked for a piece of white “linien”. This she placed in the oven until it was browned, and covered the navel with it, resulting in few infections.

Dr. A.H. Dunlop - 1882.

Dr. G.A. Morley - 1897.

Founded 1965

Northwest Lumber

111 South Main

Myle Madigan
Many of these practical helpers were clean, using soap and water, and there was a low infant mortality until the baby’s first summer on artificial feeding, when the mortality became high. In that same period pioneer doctors had a high maternal mortality and prolonged morbidity, for which often he was not to blame. Some physicians were too quick to use forceps, with scant use of cleansing agents.

As the area was further settled by many citizens from the East; Irish and Scotch from the Dominion of Canada; French Canadians from Quebec; and Europeans from Germany, Scandinavia and Great Britain, increasing numbers of physicians arrived. Educated in the East or in European medical schools, they were better educated than their predecessors. Medical care continued to improve, and soon physicians in the Red River Valley were associated with other physicians of Minnesota through the State Medical Society.

The first report of physicians in Polk County is that of Doctors Waterman and Welch, who reported a case of smallpox in Crookston May 2, 1879. A pest house was built and one Theodore Binder was admitted. According to the medical log book of the day, "he was very well taken care of".

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the doctors of Minnesota were in the midst of a universal renaissance. The practice of medicine was regulated by the Medical Practice Act of 1883. Emphasis was placed on preventive medicine, especially the prevention of contagious diseases. Vaccination was mandatory for such diseases as responded to such immunization efforts.

With the presence of medical schools in the state after 1888, Minnesota trained physicians soon spread over the state in larger numbers to the great advantage of the people...and progress was on its way.

The indifference, often antagonism, of lumber camp owners to the State Department of Health’s rule of mandatory vaccination, in the late 1880’s, was a great problem. The men did nothing to use preventive measures and avoided vaccination. Smallpox was a common problem. An example was an incident in 1885 when a smallpox case from T.B. Walker’s lumber camp, about 70 miles east of Crookston on the Clearwater River, drifted into the city. He went into the Merchant’s Hotel where the physician diagnosed the case as smallpox.

The hotel landlord doubted the diagnosis. He later came down with variloid. Dr. Brown of the State Board of Health was sent north and found two cases in Fosston, One lumberjack became delirious with the disease and is supposed to have perished in the woods. The entire village of Fosston was quarantined. Trains were not allowed to stop. Mail was pushed off the train but none picked up. In due time, all non-immunized persons were rounded up and vaccinated and the epidemic was soon under control.
Founded 1920

Northwestern Clinic, P.A.

400 South Minnesota

220 South Broadway - 1968 view

400 South Minnesota - 1979 view
A County Hospital Preceded Bethesda

The pioneer physicians did most of their work in their offices or in homes. This work included whatever surgery was attempted, and, of course, all obstetric cases. The citizens of Crookston, realizing that facilities for proper medical care were lacking, began to stress the need for a hospital.

The County Commissioners at their meeting on July 25, 1891, voted to establish a hospital to be known as the Polk County Hospital in Crookston. While it was to be a county hospital mainly for indigents, provision was made for paying patients. There is no evidence available that this hospital had facilities for surgery. Most of the work involved consisted in bedside nursing of medical cases. It was located at 420 West Fifth Street.

The Commissioners' record of Polk County (July 25, 1891) shows the following report: "Resolved that the amount of three thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated out of the General Revenue Fund of the county for the purpose of purchasing, and/or erecting in the City of Crookston, a County Hospital." On motion the County Auditor was instructed to advertise for bids from a physician to attend to the Polk County Hospital, all bids to be filed in the County Auditor's office on or before January 6, 1892.

On July 26, 1898, the county Auditor was instructed to balance and discontinue the Hospital Fund by charging the county Revenue Fund the amount overdrawn on the Hospital Fund. Later, the County Auditor was instructed to advertise for bids for the sale of the Polk County Hospital, building and grounds. A bid of Z. Giroux for $1,500 was accepted September 5, 1902.

Thus ended the life of the first hospital in Polk County, after a rough time during its few years of existence.

(From History of Medicine in Polk County, by J.F. Norman, M.D.)

The only bid, that of C.E. Dampier at eleven hundred and fifty-two ($1,152) dollars per year, including medicine, was rejected. "Moved and seconded that when the services of a physician or surgeon are required at the County Hospital, in the City of Crookston, Mathew Watts of said city be called upon to render such services." This was unanimously approved.

At the December, 1895, meeting, the rules of the County Hospital were amended as follows: "Moved by Commissioner Norland that the rules governing the county hospital be so amended as to authorize the issuance of tickets of admission to said hospital, the uniform price of such ticket to be $10 each and that 500 of such tickets be at once printed and placed on sale, the style and conditions of such tickets to be prescribed by the hospital committee." (This is an interesting instance of very early hospital insurance.)

On July 26, 1899, the county Auditor was instructed to advertise for bids from a physician to attend to the Polk County Hospital, all bids to be filed in the County Auditor's office on or before January 6, 1892.

Here is Dr. Dampier, obviously saving ENERGY as he makes his calls in 1899.
"Holte's Dream" - The Founding of a Hospital - 1893

During the era of bustles and bows, derbies and mustaches, boardwalks and mud roads, another hospital in Crookston was founded by Dr. H.H. Holte in 1893.

It was a simple two-story frame building located on Woodland Avenue, in the area now occupied by the Northwest Regional Development Commission. It was named Bethesda, which means pool of healing.

On March 31, 1898, the Bethesda Hospital Association was organized. The first board of directors included the Rev. Theodore Larsen and P.O. Onstad of Ada; Nils Muus, Nielsville; J.T. Burseth, Dr. H.H. Holte and P.L. Renne of Crookston; Professor H.H. Aaker, Moorhead; H.C. Hendricks, Twin Valley; O.A. Solem, Halstad; Rev. L.M. Skunes, Warren; Rev. A.H. Gjvrev, Fertile, and Rev. T.A. Hagen of Gary. All were members of the existing United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

At first the Association rented Dr. Holte's frame building for $25 a month. Within a year they purchased the hospital plus three adjoining lots for $4,000.

In 1904 plans were made to build a brick building to replace the two-story frame hospital. At the cost of $11,000 the new hospital was constructed and equipped in 1906. By 1912, the amount of space was inadequate but a fund-raising campaign for expansion failed. Within ten years Dr. M.O. Oppegard realized enlargement was not the answer for the growing needs of the hospital. He furthered the idea for an entirely new structure.

In the late 1940's another campaign was begun, and the people of Crookston and the surrounding area raised a total of $587,243. Ground breaking ceremonies took place on October 28, 1951, and the new Bethesda Hospital, located on the current site of Riverview Hospital, was dedicated. A new wing was added in 1957 and an addition in 1960 for the enclosed ambulance entrance.

Through determined campaign efforts by the association and Sister Anna Forlie (deaconess of the Lutheran Deaconess Home in Chicago who, in 1911, had arrived in Crookston to become superintendent of Bethesda Hospital), the new wing was added.

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During 1920, $50,000 was pledged for the hospital's expansion costs, which reached $90,000 due to rising costs.

The following report was issued by the County Hospital of Crookston for the year ending December 31, 1894: "Admissions, 42 patients with 12 deaths. Of these deaths there were 4 due to consumption and 2 due to typhoid; 3 due to heart diseases; 1 liver complaint; 1 pneumonia and 1 tumor. Number of charity patients admitted during this year: male 34, female, 8, total 42. Number of private patients admitted during the year: male 6, female 5, total 11. Total 53. Number of deaths during the year: male 11, female 1. Total 12. Number of visitors during the year 1,663. There were 6 deaths for the year 1895: consumption 1, dropsey 2, typhoid 2 and blood poisoning 1. One of the typhoid deaths was that of Dr. Mathew Watts."

The Board of Directors of Bethesda Hospital Association decided to change its corporate structure in 1970 and also

(Continued on Page 79)
to re-name the hospital. Riverview Hospital Association was chosen, and a new board of fifteen members took office in March, 1970.

In the spring of 1974, Riverview Hospital Association launched a building and remodeling project. A new 100-bed nursing home, attached to the 100-bed hospital, was built to replace Bethesda Nursing Home. Today, Riverview is recognized as one of the most modern hospitals in northwestern Minnesota.

During World War II, when small hospitals were hit so hard by a nursing shortage, the National Cadet Nurses program was started at Bethesda Hospital in April, 1943. Mrs. Eva Brown was the director of the local program which lasted until April, 1948.

A total of 192 students, who came from nursing schools in hospitals in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester, St. Cloud and Duluth, took the three month course which was offered in Crookston.

Primary purpose of the program was to provide service to small hospitals and give students experience working in rural areas. The students themselves chose to take the course as part of their three years nurses' training program. For a period of three months the Cadets provided nursing services at Bethesda, went on trips with the county nurse (Josephine Boomgarden) into rural areas to provide health care, and also accompanied welfare workers into the community.

Dr. H.E. Nelson, a Crookston physician in the early to mid 1900's, also held the distinction of serving as Polk County Coroner for 57 years. In 1904 he received his medical degree from the University of Illinois (College of Physicians and Surgeons.)

In the early 1900's horse and buggy was the transportation of the day. In the cold, severe Minnesota winters of old, a cutter with a team of horses (that covered only four miles an hour) was Dr. Nelson's method of travel over snow packed fields and frozen steams. Wearing a buffalo fur coat and hat, heavy overshoes and weighted down with blankets in the cutter, the doctor was a familiar sight to the townspeople and a most welcome one on many occasions.

During those "pre-antibiotic" days when a physician was on call at any hour; when boiling water instead of drugs was the usual standby in confinement cases; when the sick and expectant in surrounding rural areas never worried about 30-40 degrees below temperatures or snow storms cancelling out the doctor's arrival --- he was always there, often overlooking payment from the poor for his services.

In 1958 he was the recipient of gold plaques and acknowledgement pins honoring his fifty-year medical service from the Minnesota State Medical Association, Masons, Eagles, Historical Society and various groups in the community. In 1970 a recognition dinner was held, co-sponsored by the Polk County Peace Officers Association and the Eagles Lodge, to honor him upon his retirement as Polk County Coroner for 57 years.
Crookston Clinic

About 1910 or 1911, three general practitioners combined their medical skills and began the Crookston Clinic. On the attending staff were Drs. John F. Norman, Ralph L. Kirsch, and Franklin Dryden. Dr. T.L. Stickney, D.D.S., joined the group in 1924 and later, Dr. C.J. Reseland, D.D.S.

In 1926 the staff was reorganized with Dr. Victor Hodgson, (eye, ear, nose and throat specialist) and Dr. Arthur C. Dean replacing Drs. Kirsch and Dryden. The clinic was also moved into offices over the Eagle Drug Store in what was known as the Wallace block.

Dr. Hodgson retired in 1932 and Dr. Alan Reff became associated with the clinic, followed by Dr. O.K. Behr in 1937. Dr. Robert Siman, D.D.S., joined the clinic after World War II. (In the late 1950's he joined the Red River Valley Dental Clinic, then opened a private office on Route 2.) In 1949, Dr. Donald E. Pohl also became a member of the staff, followed by Drs. Harold Thysell in 1952, Norman C. Haugen in 1954 and John A. Jensen in 1955.

In December of 1956, after 25 years of location over Eagle Drug, the clinic moved to new facilities at 410 North Broadway. Physicians who joined the staff after 1956 were: 1967 - Dr. Clifford J. Stadem, 1969 - Dr. Samuel Parra (also affiliated with Northwestern Clinic in 1971).

Crookston Clinic and Northwestern Clinic merged in 1975 and the Crookston Clinic staff moved into Northwestern Clinic, then located at 220 South Broadway.

Clara Couette had served the Crookston Clinic as business manager from 1926 to 1967 when Dolores Larson replaced her as business manager until 1975.

Northwestern Clinic about 1924.

Northwestern Clinic

Crookston's Northwestern Clinic was organized October 10, 1920. Founders were Dr. M.O. Oppegaard, Dr. O.E. Locken and Dr. C.D. Mitchell.

Dr. H.H. Holte, whose white frame hospital became the original Bethesda Hospital in 1898, was also associated with Northwestern Clinic in its first year of operation. His residence at 220 South Broadway was purchased by the clinic early in its history and remodeled to adapt it to its new purpose.


Others who served in the medical community were: Drs. Leon Flancher, Russell R. Hendrickson, R.E. Johnson,

(Continued on Page 81)

Crookston people will have the opportunity of being entertained by a moving picture machine Monday night which has a phonographic accompaniment. The machine is being installed in the Auditorium today by Louis Johnson and Sons at the expense of several thousand dollars. There are only four of the machines giving exhibitions in the entire United States and the people of this city are especially fortunate in being among the first to have this opportunity of seeing such entertainment as they give. The phonographic connection follows the action of the picture and it is said that it is the best substitute for the performances yet devised. (April 3, 1908).

Currently serving in the medical community, in addition to clinic staff already listed are: Dr. Robert Baab (anesthesiologist), Dr. Richard Lamphere (pathologist), Dr. Lorne McKay (ophthalmologist), Drs. Earl Dagg, Robert Carter and Phillip Murray (radiologist), Drs. Donald A. and David C. Peterson, (podiatrists), Drs. W.L. Lamb and W.F. Hardt (optometrists), Drs. James Johnson, Bradtord A. Ames and Lonnie Berger (chiropractors), Dr. Janet MacGregor (orthopedist), Dr. Anthony Fiore (psychologist), Duane Dale, (M.S. C.C.C. certified speech pathologist), Gary D. Anderson, (M.A. C.C.C. certified audiologist), Sister Anita Wahlen (dentist).

Presently, medical staff at Northwestern Clinic (in its new location at 400 South Minnesota since January, 1978) consists of: Family Practice: Dr. J.A. Jensen and C.J. Stadem; Pediatrics: Dr. R.F. Schnabel; Surgery: Drs. R.N. DeNiord, and D.E. Stewart; Obstetrics & Gynecology: Drs. H.C. Choithani, H.D. Clapp, W.F. Mercili; Internal Medicine: Drs. S.A. Hirsh, R.O. Sather, H.M. Wikoff; Urology: Dr. C.M Choithani; Allergy: Dr. N.S. Schnabel.

Northwestern Clinic now operates a satellite clinic in Fertile on Tuesdays and Fridays. Business manager is June Shaver, a position held since 1953 when Mae Rideout retired after 25 years of service.

One of the earliest druggists in Crookston was A.C. Andersen, who arrived in Crookston February 11, 1888. He established the Norsk Drug Store, later renamed Andersen Drug, located at 120 West Robert where the former Woolworth store was located. In 1922, the drug store was sold to N.C. Schreier, who moved the business to the corner of Robert and Main where Osmo Drug is located today.

Samuel A. Wallace was another prominent Crookston druggist from before the turn of the century until his death in 1941. He owned the Wallace building, present home of Eagle Drug Company, corner of Broadway and Second streets. It was called Medical Hall in those days.

Mr. Wallace's many charitable endeavors to Crookston and its residents always remained unknown, since he demanded complete anonymity in his gifts. Longtime associates were familiar with his desire for no publicity whatever, and his bequests and good deeds remained anonymous even after his death at age 81.

Bill Eagle, an employee of Samuel Wallace's, took over ownership in 1941, changed the name of Eagle Drug and maintained the business in the same location for 33 years until 1974 when it was sold to Dick Maves, current owner.

The Crookston Drug Company was formed by Sherman S. Daniels in 1916. It was sold to a partnership consisting of H.J. Brunelle, Harold Simpson, and W.A. Johnson on March 1, 1948 and occupied space now used by the Thimble. Johnson purchased his partners' interest in 1955, changed the name to Johnson Drug and moved the business to its present location in June of 1965.
Bethesda Hospital nursing staff, resplendent in their billowing uniforms, about the year 1910.

The Nursing Profession - Need Exceeded Supply

In 1947 the Bethesda hospital board of trustees and Miss Ruby Gregerson, Bethesda administrator at that time, arrived at the conclusion that, although there were more registered nurses than ever before, the demands for nursing services far exceeded the supply.

A decision was reached at that time to establish a school of practical nursing at Crookston’s Bethesda hospital. The purpose which motivated this decision was to provide a group of trained personnel who could relieve the registered nurses of many routine duties, therefore providing better nursing care for the patient and for the community which Bethesda serves.

Registered nurses on many occasions found themselves handicapped by duties that could be performed by trained practical nurses. The registered nurses were unable to fully utilize the special abilities for which they were prepared.

In March, 1948, Mrs. Philip Thorson was employed at Bethesda to organize and direct a Bethesda Hospital School of Practical Nursing. The first class was admitted April 12, 1948, with four students. Three other classes were admitted that year.

The Minnesota state board of examiners of nurses officially recognized the school when they granted accreditation in 1949. Bethesda Hospital School of Practical Nursing was the sixth school in Minnesota to receive accreditation and the third in rural areas, making it a state pioneer in its field.

In 1954, when Farley Bright was superintendent, the public schools system began its association with the Crookston school system. Since that time, only one class a year has been admitted. In recent years class admission has been about 25 students.

In 1957 St. Francis Hospital School of Practical Nursing was established, representing a new venture in the apostolate of the Sisters of St. Benedict. Nursing education was not new to the Sisters since a school of professional nursing had been conducted by the Sisters of St. Vincent’s Hospital for many years. But education of practical nurses was new.

During and immediately following World War II the scope of nursing practice enlarged and the demand for more professional nurses rapidly exceeded the number of nurses being prepared.

The admission of eleven women to St. Francis Hospital School of Practical Nursing on September 23, 1957, was the commencement of the dream and efforts of Sister Charitas, administrator, of St. Francis Hospital. Mrs. Virginia Norman began her work as the first director of the program early in 1957.

Because her husband was transferred, Mrs. Norman left Crookston in the fall of 1958. Sister Petronilla was appointed director in 1958 and served until 1970. Eight women completed the one-year course in September, 1958; all passed state board examinations earning the title L.P.N.

Virginia Norman, first director of St. Francis School of Nursing, 1957-58.

Sister Petronilla Hoffman, director of St. Francis School of Nursing, 1958-70, and Agassiz Valley School of Practical Nursing, 1971-79.

John's TV
119 South Main
Founded 1976
In October, 1969, the Bethesda school facilities were moved from Bethesda Hospital to the former Randers dormitory adjacent to the hospital, to provide expansion for the physical therapy department. Mrs. Nadine Carlson, Fisher, accepted the position of director of the school and two new instructors, Mrs. Dona Rae Rutherford and Mrs. Mary Van Campen, were hired as part-time instructors (three days each) per week. The school year was shortened from 48 to 46 weeks.

St. Francis Hospital and Bethesda Hospital made reciprocal agreements to open their obstetric-newborn clinical facilities to students of each school. It further served to promote a working together of the faculties of both schools.

The Crookston School of Practical Nursing and the St. Francis School of Practical Nursing, organized in 1950, agreed to combine the schools before the 1971 school year.

On April 4, the Minnesota Board of Nursing granted permission for the de facto merger and, as requested, to close both existing programs and to form a new school of practical nursing operated by the public school district #593, named the Agassiz School of Practical Nursing.

Additional instructors who had served at the Bethesda School of Practical Nursing were: Elsie Thorson, Nadine Turnquist, Eletha Clapp, Lou Ceil Myrold, Mary Vattendahl, Dorothy Montague, Betty Heldstab, Vivian Forseth, Karen Sandberg, Susan Bentzenger, and Nadine Carlson.

Instructors in the St. Francis Hospital program included the following registered nurses: Eva Anderson, Marlene Henre, Janice Huoey, Ruth Kruta, Sandra Morgan, Betty Munn, Darlene Mushel, Patricia Romuld, Roberta Pierce, and Sister Mary David Spain.

Agassiz Valley School of Practical Nursing

The Agassiz Valley School of Practical Nursing is a satellite program of the Area Vocational Technical Institute at East Grand Forks, Mn. Facilities are located in Robertson Hall at the University of Minnesota in Crookston. All program instruction and student activities are at the Crookston location.

Administrative control was transferred January 1, 1976 from School District #593 to School District #595, AVTI in East Grand Forks. Director of the AVTI is Russell Beier, Sister Petronilla, director since the Crookston programs merged in 1970, continued in that position with the transfer of administrative control. Instructors since that time have included the following R.N.'s: Nadine Carlson, Frances Nelson, Dona Rae Rutherford, Alice Thompson, Diane Bachmeier, Shirley Brekken, and Sandy Smith. School secretary since 1970 has been Mrs. Juneth Palmer.

Recognize any faces? Mrs. Elsie Thorson (in white) was the first director of the Bethesda School of Nursing.
Dickel, Johannson, Wall and Taylor

Attorneys At Law

Law Building

407 North Broadway

John W. Padden - 1932-1957
Padden & Dickel - 1957-1966
Padden, Dickel, Johannson - 1966-1970
Padden, Dickel, Johannson, & Wall - 1970-1975
Padden, Dickel, Johannson, Wall, & Taylor - 1975-1976
Dickel, Johannson, Wall & Taylor - 1977-

Office staff [from left to right] Diane Magnuson, Vickie Dahl, Ruthie Wilder, Vera Gelen, Judy Amiot, Veda Olson, Lois Bagley and Marge Moe.
Fillings, Extractions . . . .
It All Began in 1885

About 1895, an area newspaper carried the following ad regarding dental service available: "Simple filling - $1; extraction without anaesthesia - $3; extraction with ether - $5; full upper and lower set of teeth - $15."

According to records, George G. Henault was the first dentist to establish an office in Crookston in 1885. He was followed by Drs. Thomas Spence, W.A. Robertson and J.F. Bole circa 1899, and Drs. Henry Remele and Paul Hagen by 1914, according to a newspaper report of a district meeting held in 1914 in Dr. Bole's office. By 1920, they were joined by Drs. Elmer Bertelson, Truman Stickney, Clifford Mitchell, a local dentist for 52 years and one of the founders of Northwestern Clinic, and a Dr. Walker, who was followed in 1922 by Dr. Arthur Lucian. Within a few years, a Dr. Lewis and Dr. Tibosar also joined the dental ranks, followed by Dr. C.J. Reseland.

Today, in addition to the office of Dr. Robert Siman, located on Route 2, Crookston is serviced by seven dentists and an orthodontist. Six are located in the Red River Valley Dental Building, established 1958; Drs. Harper Jung, Gary Thomas, Robert Tjossem, Tedd Ostrem, Dan Lysne, Richard Carlson, and orthodontist, Frank Jung. Dr. Brad Clark has established his office at the Northwestern Clinic.

William Jung, a dental technician in his 33rd year of practice, operates the Red River Dental Lab and works in cooperation with a number of area dentists.

Working solely on a prescription basis, Jung fashions full dentures, bridges, and crowns for dental patients. The work is a methodical process that begins with a cast from a dentist. As a wax cast it is fitted to the patient, transformed into acrylic, cured in a special water bath, finished, ground with pumice and then to a high polish.

In the earlier years of dentistry, nitrous oxide (commonly known as laughing gas) was the forerunner of today's novocaine. The dentist's cumbersome drill machine was inconveniently foot-powered instead of electrically operated. Vulcanite (hard rubber) gave denture wearers irritating moments. Bridgework today is made from very comfortable plastic material and has an attractive porcelain appearance compared to the unnatural coloring of yesteryear.

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The apprehensive approach to a dental visit has been replaced by methods developed to encourage relaxation. Included in these are piped-in music to replace the sound of the drill; and sophisticated equipment that has reduced the amount of time and discomfort for the patient.
Agassiz Family Health Care was initiated by Riverview Hospital in Crookston to deal with the declining number of primary care physicians in their service area. They were aided in this by a grant from the Public Health Service of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The hospital received funding for this effort in July, 1976. The organization that developed from this effort, Agassiz Family Health Care, incorporated separately from the hospital on October 1, 1978. Its main office is now located at the Crookston Professional Center at 223 East Seventh Street.

During the period that the organization was growing as part of Riverview Hospital, they recruited three physicians to the Agassiz staff. The first of these was Dr. John A. Cesnik, who began practice with the organization in September, 1977. He first started working out of the out-patient department at Riverview Hospital and in October the organization established a satellite clinic in Erskine which Dr. Cesnik worked at two days per week.

Dr. Cesnik was joined in February of 1978 by Drs. Louise A. Kwan and John K. Wood. They are a husband and wife team from Canada. In April of 1978 a clinic was opened in Ada two days per week, which was covered by Dr. Kwan.

Dr. Cesnik left the organization in June of 1978 to join his father in practice. In October of 1978 Richard Karn, P.A., joined the staff at Erskine. With his recruitment, Erskine hours were expanded to a full Monday through Friday clinic schedule. In March of 1979, Dr. M.C. Entena joined the Ada staff and hours expanded to a full Monday through Friday schedule. Dr. Clifford Robinson will be joining the organization in July. The entire staff is family-practice oriented.

Almost from its inception, the organization has had a community board that, until its incorporation, served in an advisory capacity. This board has been made up of representatives from the counties of Polk, Red Lake, Mahnomen, and Norman. Membership on this board has been fairly consistent from its inception. Its officers are: chairman, George Flaskanrud (Fosston), vice-chairman, Joe Sandberg (Erskine), and secretary, Howard C. Smith (Crookston). The board has been actively involved in assessing the health care needs of the communities in this service area and in determining in what ways the organization can meet those needs.
Sisters of St. Benedict Established  
St. Vincent’s Hospital in 1902

A small group of Sisters of St. Benedict of Duluth under the leadership of the late Mother Scholastica Kerst came in the fall of 1900 to open a hospital in Crookston. They began work in the Riverside Hospital located on Pine Street on the bank of the Red Lake River, west of the Great Northern railroad. The first patient, William Walsworth, was admitted December 28, 1900. From this date until December 12, 1902, patients received care in this building; the total number during this time was 116. In the meantime the Sisters had ample opportunity to learn the sentiment of the community towards the work they had undertaken and were encouraged by many of the leading business men to establish here permanently.

After the decision was final, the Sisters purchased the property on which the present Professional Center stands. There they built St. Vincent’s Hospital. The contractor was Edward Jackson of Bemidji. The building was ready for occupancy in December, 1902. Because of the fast-growing community many new doctors moved into the area to form a clinic. This growth, together with the growth of the religious community of Benedictine Sisters, made it necessary in 1919 to add to St. Vincent’s.

Plans for a new and larger hospital to replace the overcrowded St. Vincent were initiated in the 1940’s. In 1950 the 150-bed St. Francis Hospital was completed at a cost of $2,000,000. The patients from St. Vincent’s were transferred to St. Francis on June 16, 1950. Dr. Hendrickson, director of the Sunnyrest Sanitorium in Crookston, was the first patient to be transferred to the new St. Francis.

St. Vincent’s Hospital was then converted into a home for the elderly and those who were terminally ill or incapacitated and needed nursing care. It became evident in the 70’s, however, that a new nursing home was needed. In

St. Francis Residence, which opened in 1972, was formerly St. Francis Hospital.
Sunnyrest Sanitorium
Established 1917

Sunnyrest Sanitorium, at one time considered one of the finest tuberculosis sanatoriums in the state, opened its doors in 1917. The total number of sanatoriums operating in Minnesota during the early 1900's was seventeen.

Sunnyrest was owned and operated solely by Norman and Polk Counties until 1954. With the introduction of new, effective anti-tuberculosis drugs after World War II, case-loads in all TB institutions became reduced dramatically. As a result, Oakland Park Sanatorium in Thief River Falls was closed in 1954 and its remaining patients and some staff were transferred to the Crookston facility. Administration of the combined operation was governed by a board of directors comprised of representatives from the owner-counties, Norman and Polk, plus the five additional counties which the institution now served.

Sunnyrest continued to provide in-patient service under this combined management until 1967. By that time the treatment of tuberculosis was so successful that hospitalization was rarely required and Sunnyrest was closed as an in-treatment facility. The main building was vacated, later to become an alcoholic treatment center; however the Board retained space on the ground floor and continued to provide services to the seven counties through their establishment of the Northwest Tuberculosis Outpatient Clinic in July of 1967. Dr. R.O. Sather served as its medical director throughout its existence, until December of 1977 when the Clinic was closed. Polk County Commissioner Alfon Hanson of Crookston served on the governing board of both the Sanatorium and the Outpatient Clinic for many years.

Glenmore Foundation

Crookston has always had its share of people who have had problems with alcohol--In Crookston's youth, many of these people were called just plain "drunks." They aroused disgust or anger, depending on the point of view and generally were regarded as hopeless. Few people before the modern era viewed chemical dependency as an illness. Addiction to drugs other than alcohol was not common, especially in small communities like Crookston, and people involved in these other drugs were generally found in larger cities.

Today many communities offer help for persons who are chemically dependent. Modern treatment programs bring together psychological, social, and spiritual aid to complement the services provided by medical doctors. The Glenmore Treatment Center in Crookston offers both in-patient and out-patient care under medical supervision. Recently, Glenmore also opened a new family treatment program.

The Glenmore treatment programs are operated by the Glenmore Foundation, which is directed by Robert C. Wittenstrom, the Foundation's executive director. The Glenmore Treatment Center at 600 College Avenue opened its doors in 1973. The building in which the program is housed is the former Sunnyrest Sanatorium. Glenmore operates a 14-bed detox unit, a 35-bed primary treatment unit, its family program, and an out-patient clinic in this building.

The Glenmore programs now provide services to patients from all over Minnesota as well as from other states. In addition to the executive director, the staff consists of: Dr. Clifford J. Stadem, medical director; Allen Pedersen, supervisor of support services; Willard Kotts, supervisor of alumni, field services and public relations; Rev. Howard Schuett, chaplain; Edroy Anderson, supervisor of treatment services; Ruth Nepper, director of nursing; William Eleson, senior chemical dependency therapist; Mindy Johnson, chemical dependency therapist; Dr. Dennis Brekke, adolescent chemical dependency therapist; Diane Markel, family therapist; Vickie Heckman, receiving center counselor; Margaret Osmondson, intake and aftercare coordinator; Debra Peterson, quality assurance coordinator.

A forerunner of Glenmore in Crookston was the Sunnyrest Treatment Center which was begun by Merv Wick and a number of other area businessmen and professionals in 1967.

Glenmore Foundation

1500 University

Miller's Fairway

1500 University

Northland Computer Service
515 East Robert
Founded 1979

88
Northwestern Mental Health

The Northwestern Mental Health Center in Crookston had its beginnings in 1957 at an organizational meeting planned by Emil Bagley, Dr. Howard Wikoff and Judge Philip Anderson.

In 1957 the Minnesota Legislature passed enabling legislation which provided a partnership program with local government and others to establish and develop community mental health programs to serve the needs of the mentally ill, developmentally disabled and chemically dependent.

In September, 1957, county commissioners, judges, physicians, welfare directors and other interested citizens from eight counties held a study meeting.

Consultants from the mental health services of the Department of Public Welfare spoke to the group about funding a community mental health center.

Dr. Wikoff served as chairman and Bagley as executive secretary.

The first board meeting was held October 21, 1957. Members of the original board included Rev. Raymond Heglin and Bagley of Polk County, Armand Benoit of Red Lake County, Dr. Clifford Stadem of Norman County, Warren Saetre and Peter Grant of Marshall County, Vernon Strandemo of Mahnomen County, Norman Peterson of Pennington County, Clifford Skime of Roseau County and George Sele of Kittson County.

Operations began July 1, 1958, located on the second floor of Sunnyrest Sanitarium with a staff of three.

Since the Center opened its doors, the seven counties have become a nationally acclaimed leader in developing innovative programs that provide a broad scope of services to the community.

The Center is now located on College Avenue in what was the nurses' dormitory for Sunnyrest. A branch office in Karlstad opened in 1978. A study is being conducted about opening a branch in Mahnomen.

The major portion of staff time is devoted to outpatient services, direct services to individuals and families.

The present staff includes: Roy Waters, area program director; Ken Barkman, psychiatric social worker; Allen Fannin, David Shuller, Sally Hirsh, Kathryn Zoff Seivert, Jim Clark, and John Tyler, consulting clinical psychologists; RoseMary Henderson, psychiatric nurse; Richard Ramey, chemical dependency coordinator; Daniel Wilson, mental health coordinator; Jim Froseth, chemical dependency counselor; Mary Holman, psychometrist; Mary Ann Simmons, mental health educator; Steve Pories, developmental disabilities specialist; Renae Nyhus, social worker; Oscar Elshaug, mental health consultant; Herb Schneider, business manager; JoAnn Russell, Jeanine Kotsworth, and Richard Vogel, psychology residents.

Northwestern Mental Health

Paddy and Paul "66" Service

519 East Robert

Founded 1931
Fees Once Paid With Produce

There were four law offices with six practitioners established in Crookston when it was incorporated as a city 100 years ago: W.A. Marin, Charles S. Loring, Halvor Steenerson, William Watts, R.J. Montague and George H. Palmer. Crookston has had two Charles Loring. The Minnesota Supreme Court Justice began practice here in 1900.

The century has seen upwards of 100 names representing the legal profession, many throughout long life spans, several with brilliance and distinction, some with enviable records in the field of public service as well as law. Practically all of these men have been active in community affairs and have contributed measurably to the growth and progress of the city. Through their state and national bar associations, a number have had major impact in the improvement and refinement of their profession.

Three distinguished District Court Judges and one Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court have come from their ranks. William Watts, Judge of the District Court from 1898 to 1934 is believed to hold the state record for tenure on the bench. J.H. Sylvestre and James E. Montague served as District Judges with such distinction that each man, following his retirement from the bench, was called upon by the State Supreme Court for service in judicial roles outside their district. Charles Loring served on the Supreme Court for 23 years, as Justice from 1930 to 1944 and thereafter as Chief Justice until his retirement in 1953. Mr. Loring died in 1961 at age 87. The Crookston bar also produced the current Judge of District Court, Robert A. Peterson.

At testing to the esteem in which they were held by their fellow practitioners, two Crookston attorneys have been chosen as president of the Minnesota State Bar Association, A.C. Wilkinson in 1895 and John W. Padden in 1970. Throughout the years Crookston's jurists have served in roles of great responsibility in the bar associations. Judge Loring and Mr. Padden each served for a number of years as members of the State Board of Bar Examiners, and each served as chairman of the board. Crookston lawyer, Morris Dickel, now serves on this board, to which he was appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court in the year 1971. Crookston attorney Leonard A. Erickson has served as a member and has been state chairman of the Minnesota State Board of Professional Responsibility, the board which polices the legal ethics of Minnesota lawyers. It has attained a position of national prominence because of the influence of these men and of many others before them in seeking high standards of excellence and integrity in the practice of law and the administration of justice. Mr. Padden is a present member and past president of the Minnesota State Board of Judicial Standards, charged with the responsibility of maintaining the veracity of the Judiciary in Minnesota.

In the political arena, Halvor Steenerson brought honor to the community and to the profession through his long years of service in Congress. Among the more brilliant legal careers was that of G. Aaron Youngquist, who became Attorney General of the State of Minnesota and thereafter Special Assistant United States Attorney General, and who is generally credited with conducting the investigation which led to the conviction and imprisonment of notorious Chicago gangster Al Capone on income tax evasion charges. Also among the more colorful careers was that of George Hagen, now residing in Maryland, who left Crookston for the Attorney General's office and became involved in war criminal proceedings in both Germany and Japan.

Despite the growth in the population of the city in the past 30 years, the number of legal personalities has not varied greatly. Today, the active practitioners number 16, plus 2 judges and 2 retired attorneys. There have been periods in the city's history when the number was larger. Deaths and the lure of war-related jobs reduced the number to a low point in the early 1940's, but by the latter part of that decade, others were joining the scene. Throughout the century, the legal profession has attracted "back home" a number of its native sons, who, by establishing themselves here have given testimony to their faith in and regard for the community.

The roster of officers of Crookston's civic and fraternal organizations as well as its business corporations in the past 100 years would reveal few which did not include the name of an attorney. They have been and continue to be involved in the community's growth and progress, extending themselves beyond their professions for the well being of their town.

Early day lawyers have been heard to reminisce about taking farm produce in payment of fees. Many of the earlier documents were hand written, and it was a rare practitioner who started out with both a secretary and a typewriter. Many were their own clerk typists. A law library of 400 volumes valued at $1200 was regarded with awe at the turn of the century. Yesterday's fee of a side of pork is a far cry from today's percentage of settlements or verdicts which can and do run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is a far cry from a law book costing $3 to today's costs, often at 20 times that figure. It is a far cry from being one's own typist and secretary to the well-staffed and equipped offices of today's legal firms. But things have changed in the century since Crookston began.

William Watts, Judge of the District Court from 1898-1934, is believed to have held the state record for tenure on the bench.
Erickson, Erie and Odland
Attorneys At Law

First National Bank Building
201 North Broadway

Leonard Erickson
Ken Erie
Ed Odland
Charles Fitzgerald
Charles Reynolds

Office staff - Pam Swenson, Kathy Pinsonneault and Rosanne Nesvold. Not pictured: Colleen Bjerke and Kathy Pawlik.
A Centennial Salute to -

Harry Sylvestre

One of Crookston’s most respected citizens is J. Harry Sylvestre, retired Judge of the District Court, a position he held from 1949 to 1965. The judge is a native and life-long resident here, a graduate of Central High and Notre Dame University, and a distinguished Minnesota jurist.

He was born in the city in 1893, the son of Isaiah and Georgianna Sauve Sylvestre, pioneers. His hobby is Polk County history, especially the story of how the land was surveyed and divided into acreage and townships. Over the years he has accumulated an invaluable library dealing with the background, the events, and the people of this area.

During World War I he served in the United States Army. He was admitted to the practice of law as an attorney in Minnesota in 1920 and was thereafter engaged in the general practice of law at Crookston for 29 years, serving eleven years as City Attorney. On November 23, 1949 he was appointed as a judge of the District Court of Minnesota with chamber at Crookston and was elected to the office at the 1950, 1954, and 1962 general elections.

In 1962 he was a member of the panel of three district court judges who presided and made the final determination in the proceedings for the statewide recount of the ballots cast for Governor at the general election in the Anderson-Rolvaag election contest. Facts regarding the case can be found in “Recount”, a publication by authors Ronald F. Stinnett and Charles H. Backstrom. He retired as a district judge of the Ninth Judicial District on April 30, 1965. Thereafter, on assignments of the Chief Justice of The Supreme Court he served as a Referee of that court and as a trial judge in the work of the District Court in various counties of the state. In 1975 he retired from all work of a legal or judicial nature.

Occupied in his favorite diversion of research, Harry Sylvestre, a former Judge of the District Court, has built an informative library regarding Crookston’s history.

In a recent interview the Judge recalled some details from his past. “My dad and Mr. O. Mercil and Nap Dufault had a general store where Erickson Electric is now. That was before the telephone was in general use. Everyone working in the store would go to the different homes (customers) and take orders. Then they’d fill the orders and deliver them that day with horse and rig. (Free!)”

“We had places in town where youngsters could get work in the summer back them, too. There were two brickyards and a saw mill.

“I worked in the saw mill in 1912, not as a laborer but as a piece worker when I was in high school. If the two of us boys worked from 6.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. with a half-hour for lunch, we could make 400 grain doors at two cents a-piece, a total of $4 for each of us. We thought we were living in clover because the wages then for day labor were $2.50 a day for a ten-hour day.”

“I do feel we’ve lost quite a bit as a transportation center. Good heavens, we were a railroad center and then a bus center for a while. I can remember when there must have been three or four passenger trains daily on the Northern Pacific, besides all the others that would come on the Great Northern.

These are 1925 city officials. In row one are O. Mercil, John Saugstad, Jacob Kohler, Sr., The sixth man is Emil Rossberg. In row two the fourth person is Harry Sylvestre. (Sorry about the rest. We tried!)
Is There Any Culture in Grover’s Corner?

If you think the life of the Crookston pioneers was a humdrum of plowing, battling grasshoppers, worrying over business or crops, freezing in winter, and, in general, being plagued by boredom, you are dead wrong. They had fun. Certainly they worked hard to make a living and had many privations, but if outside entertainment wasn’t provided, they had enough imagination, ingenuity, and wit to entertain themselves. And they did. By the mid-eighties and nineties and the early years of this century, of course, they were fortunate enough to enjoy top performers and performances in the local opera houses, to have clubs and lodges, fairs, lyceums, dances, horse races, sports, a library, as well as musical organizations and the annual Chautauqua. Most early citizens, in the accounts of their existence here, declared that life was usually pleasant and happy.

Visiting your neighbors and having them come to see you—these were probably the principal social activities in the early 70’s. The women chatted and gossiped as they sewed or knitted; the men discussed their problems and played a few hands of cards. (Playing-cards were cheap, only ten cents a pack.) Hunting and fishing, though an economic necessity, were pleasant recreation, and gathering berries, nuts, and wild fruits occupied the women and helped fill the larder, too.

Walsh says that in 1875, despite great loss of population to Fisher’s Landing, the remaining settlers “had fun holding dances, giving theatricals, and attending clubs, debates, and surprise parties.”

Women in the town established what they called a reading room in the old school building as early as 1879. There they kept as many as 20 newspapers for the citizens to read. In 1882 books were lent by the populace so that a circulating library could be set up. By 1883 several large donations had been made. A Mr. Ayers was the first librarian. The old Baptist Church was chosen to house the books, and when this site was sold, the town chose a location where the Ben Franklin now stands. Mrs. Sadie Hussey was selected as assistant librarian.

With the intent of establishing a larger, more permanent library, several influential people in the community held a book shower in 1902. The result was 500 books which became the basis for the city library. Two rooms in the Odd Fellows Hall at Robert and Ash were rented to hold the acquisitions.

The first appointed librarian, a Mrs. Van Arnun, served for only a short time before moving from the city. On May 1, 1902, she was replaced by Elizabeth Lommen, whose salary of $20 a month was increased in a year to $25. A director was soon hired at $100 a month, but because there were no funds to pay him, contributions were solicited monthly.

Still pursuing the dream of a permanent library site, the board appealed to Andrew Carnegie, renowned philanthropist. The resulting contribution was $17,500 for the present building, which was completed in 1909. Library board members, Judge William Watts, Mrs. Adolph Just, and J.W. Wheeler, headed the list of subscribers to raise funds to purchase the site on Robert and Ash.

Following the dedication, numerous gifts were received to help furnish the building. D.F. Turner provided six hammered copper jardinieres and vases. Current Events Club sponsored a lecture course and also gave additional funds to purchase books and a piano. Woman’s Club donated books and paintings. J.P. Foote presented an oil painting in memory of his mother. Miss Lommen herself donated 100 books she had won in a contest, and the Young Men’s Debating Club gave portraits of Washington and Lincoln.
Librarians who served over the years were: Elizabeth Lommen (1902-1924); Virginia Heston (1924-1926); introduced children's story hour and reading club; Clara Bordwell (1926-1930); Claire (Winzenberg) Madden (1931-1954); Leonard Stasney (1954-1955); Cleo McDonald (1955-1972); Cheryl Bjorn (1972-1978). Warren Phillips is currently director of Crookston's Polk County Library.

UPDATE: In 1959 the county commissioners levied a one mill tax to finance the establishment of the county library, a project decided upon following a vote of the people. The project had been spearheaded by Cleo McDonald, librarian at the time. Fosston and McIntosh libraries joined the Polk County System, resulting in better service and cooperation between neighboring public libraries.

The Library Board became a county board in 1959 with nine city and county members. Four of its members now serve on the 19-member Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board.

A $70,000 donation from the Rosenthal Foundation will be used towards the cost of constructing Crookston's new underground library, to be located next to the post office and completed by the summer or fall of 1981.

Upstairs in this impressive building, in the right center, was Crookston's beautiful Opera House built in 1891 on Main between Robert and Fletcher.

Nothing was too melodramatic or difficult for Crookston's amateur actors to undertake in the eighties and nineties. Plays were a good source of entertainment for everyone. These early Thespians even put on Shakespeare. A local playwright named Palmer wrote a drama called "The Rebellion" in 1890. This serious work starred Messrs. R.J. Montague and W.A. Marin. Like many another amateur production, there was a goof at the climax that brought giggles instead of groans from the audience. Marin, shot in a tense moment of tragedy, fell in the wrong spot on the stage and had to be dragged off before the climactic curtain could be lowered.

"Ten Nights in a Bar Room" was a popular vehicle for both amateurs and professionals, and the town was treated to a number of performances by both types. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as a popular traveling show was going strong well into this century.

The construction of Crookston's famous Opera House in 1891, which seated 500, made possible the presentation of more sophisticated legitimate drama in the community. These shows frequently starred top-ranked stage personalities. The theater was housed upstairs in what is still called the Opera Block at 115½ So. Main. It was built by Thomas H. Bjorn, father of Mrs. Agnes Nelson. Though it is reputed to have been a beautiful theater, stricter fire laws in the end of the first decade of this century, forced its closing as a playhouse because it was on the second floor.

A second fine Crookston theater was built about 1912 - the Grand, at 124 E. Second Street. This architectural gem with its ornate decor, box seats, and splendid acoustics was the victim of arson when first constructed, but by August 31, 1913, its manager, A.J. Cavanaugh, had the damage repaired and the theater reopened. Its stage, too, spotlighted many famous people. The Grand was purchased by the Hiller family in 1918 and is still owned by them.

Unfortunately, neither playhouse kept good historic records of names of plays or of performers or lecturers - only the recollections of a few older citizens give sketchy accounts of what the theater-goer saw and heard back then.
Well recorded and documented, however, is the appearance of one famous man; the great American author, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain). He arrived here for a lecture, via Great Northern, on July 29, 1895, and left town again on July 30, en route to the West, "the greatest tour of the century". He talked to a capacity audience at the Opera House, an audience that was made up of people coming by train from as far east as Fosston and as far north as Hallock - as well as from Crookston, of course. Lake people even came in from Maple and Union Lakes in those days of no cars.

Twain was said to have been so impressed with his reception from the audience that he stepped down from the stage and shook hands. Everybody loved it.


By the way, this celebrity and his family were the first guests to stay at the newly built Hotel Crookston, even though it didn't open officially until July 30, commented the Minnesota Historian in the same issue.

Tom Thumb (Charles Sherwood Stratton) made an appearance here about 1899. Jeannette Fournet recalls her mother, Laura Brown Fournet, telling about meeting him and attending his show when she was a young teenager.

The gentleman sitting on the baggage cart is Mark Twain, who lectured in Crookston on July 29, 1895. The women are his wife and daughter.

Crookston's splendid theatrical fare during the early years of this century was largely due to the cooperation of C.P. Walker of Fargo, manager and owner of the Fargo Opera House. Walker booked shows and attractions for theaters in five towns which he called the "Bread Basket Circuit". The dates were from about 1906 to 1912 and the towns were Fargo, Grand Forks, Crookston, Winnipeg, and Brainerd, the itinerary being in that order. The Circuit made possible the booking of many fine shows at the Opera House at that time because the five theaters provided a week's work with a relatively small number of miles for companies which traveled off the beaten path from East to West.

The admission to these performances was relatively cheap: 50 cents to $3 for the highest price seat, depending on the attraction. Ruth Walker Harvey, daughter of Mr. Walker, in her book "The Curtain" explains: "Theatre going was not expensive. A $2.50 top was a high-priced scale. My father believed in keeping prices down, and you could always get into the gallery...". The price there was a quarter.

Although Fargo had numerous shows - musicals, drama, comedy, during the period - it has been impossible to determine which ones were on the Bread Basket Circuit and were brought to Crookston and the other three towns. The same is true for the famous actors and actresses. Some of those who probably appeared here were Maude Adams, James O'Neill (father of Eugene), Mrs. Leslie Carter, Marguerite Clark, Louis James, Alla Nazimova, David Warfield, Dustin Farnum, C. Aubrey Smith, May Robson, John Barrymore, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Maxine Elliott, William Faversham, Minnie Maddern Fiske, J.H. Stoddard, and Tom, William, and Joseph Jefferson, Jr.

Esten Estenson, in his 90's, marched in the Diamond Jubilee parade in Crookston in 1954. He had been honored that year by having a wooden nickel issued with his picture on it.
High's industrial arts department addition and the school parking lot now are. Throughout the country this was the set-up.

A typical program would usually include several inspirational and informative speeches, a band concert, singers, a play or musical or both, a string group, and maybe a pet show for the kids. Prices were cheap. A season ticket was as low as $1, and individual admissions were fifty and twenty-five cents. You sat on hard folding chairs, and sometimes it was devilishly hot, but you still liked it.

Swedish-American plays were popular at the turn of the century in this area. The star of at least some of these were Emily Erickson Greene, who became the wife of William Muench, local game warden. The Muench home was located in Sampson's Addition where the high-rise now stands. Two of Mrs. Muench's plays were "That Little Swede" (1904-5) and "Tilly Olson" (1908).

A dance group called the Winnipeg Kiddies was a regular visitor at the Grand for several years in the second decade of this century. Crookston also saw Blackstone the Magician, heard William Jennings Bryan, and listened to Sousa's Band. For the performance of the latter, the school board, according to its minutes, denied the teachers' request for a half-day holiday so that they could attend. The date was February 28, 1900.

Music played an important role in the city in the early 1900's. In 1902 the city directory lists the 27 member Crookston Band, directed by G. Oliver Riggs. In 1911 the group was renamed the Citizen's Band of Crookston and was directed by A. Waushausen, who was also the high school band director. The Carman Concert Club was in existence in 1902 at 1609 So. Main. Other music groups included the Crookston Mandolin Club, the Crookston Stringed Orchestra, the Riggs Orchestra, and the Up-to-Date School of Music at 104 No. Main. By 1911 there were three other orchestras listed: Burkhardt's, Merth's, and Walker's.

Anyone over the age of 60 should remember Chautauqua, that great summer entertainment which came to small towns every year for a week and presented wholesome programs that were suited to the rank and file of patrons. There were many troupes in all sections of the United States who traveled all over a large area every summer.

Crookston's Chautauqua, like all the others, was always under the sponsorship of a local underwriting committee. Programs were held in a tent 48 x 36 feet on the property where Central

Horse racing was a favorite sport in the late '90's and early 1900's. This handsome thoroughbred, owned and driven by Ben Capistran, won many races in his day. His name was Hamnut.
Though Chautauqua retained its popularity until the '30’s in some parts of the country, it probably was most successful in this area from about 1907-1915.

By the end of the second decade of this century the silent movie had replaced the legitimate theater in the small town. Many were excellent; others corny by our standards. The audience sat spell-bound as the spurned villain tied Pauline to the railroad track. The piano player (every movie house had a piano player) added excitement with crescendo added to crescendo (Poet & Peasant Overture, probably) as the train drew near. But just then Honest Harry peddled up breathlessly on his bicycle (Hearts and Flowers), untied the ropes binding her slender frame, snatched her up in his arms, and escaped with her just as the locomotive steamed by at twenty miles an hour. But, alas, the foiled villain would still try to get his revenge. Continued next week. (Pauline never had a quiet moment!)

Of course, all the early silent movie fare was not of this ilk - there were some that are considered masterpieces today in spite of the handicaps in a budding industry. With the advent of the talkies in the 30’s, the film as entertainment took on new dimensions, for better or worse. For a time Crookston had an abundance of movie houses: the Grand; the Bejou (1911) at 205 No. Main; the Lyric on South Main in the McKinnon Block, the Lyceum, 1908; the Royal, in the Fournet Block; and the Gopher, now the location of Emerson Insurance. Tom Mix and other Hollywood stars are said to have made frequent appearances at the Lyric.

Vaudeville shows were popular; too, and many good bills reached Crookston. Mrs. Hiller says that the Grand had vaudeville every weekend in the early 20’s. During the week the motion picture was changed two or three times.

Holidays like the Fourth of July were occasions for town celebrations. The main streets were decorated with flags and bunting, and there was always a parade, a band, a picnic, private or public, and a patriotic speech or two. The more ambitious mothers garbed their girls in red, white, and blue costumes, which, by day’s end, were in shreds like Mama’s nerves. Patriotism ran strong in the blood of the small town resident. Often there were night fireworks for everyone as a climax to the day. Kids, of course, had their own bags of treasures to be lit surreptitiously near unwaried grownups. The family dog spent the day under a bed!

Gather round, folks!....the show will soon begin. Traveling tent shows were a popular form of entertainment from 1907-1915. They featured vaudeville acts and much, much more...all for the price of a 25-50-cent ticket. Third from left in back row is Walter Ohm, whose mother is a resident of Riverview Nursing Home.
The Crookston Community Theatre is a group of amateurs who hold a mutual interest in the theatrical and visual arts, and volunteer their time and energy to bring to the public theatrical productions of quality and distinction. The current Community Theatre is a non-profit corporation that began in 1976. Their season now consists of three productions produced from July to June. Productions so far have included children’s theatre, melodrama, mystery drama, comedy, dinner theatre and musicals. Musicals given have been “My Fair Lady”, “Oliver!”, “Cinderella” and “The Music Man”.

The Crookston Community Theatre has been recognized as a local arts endeavor worthy of receiving grants from both the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Regional Arts Task Force. Grants have been used to fund, in part, the musicals, “Cinderella” and “The Music Man”, which have drawn audiences of over 2000 from the area. The size of audiences for all productions steadily increases with each season, proving the need to continue some type of visual arts program in the area.

April 9, 1955, was significant for a hundred or more Crookston musicians and for their fans at home. The group appeared on a national hookup for a presentation of Dubois’ “The Seven Last Words of Christ”. The hour-long program was televised over KXJB-TV. The director? You guessed it - T.W. Thorson. The narrator? Jerry Dahlberg. The accompanists? Almira Eagle, piano, and Alpha Morek, organ.

Practicing with T.W. Thorson for the “Seven Last Words” are Marlene Hitchcock, Jean Ann Hanson, Albert Fylling, Elmer Thompson, Henry Espe, and Dr. C.L. Oppegaard.

“Mr. Music Man”

Known to his students and contemporaries as “T.W.”, Theodore W. Thorson was, and in memory is, a legend in this town. He came here from Fertile as director of the city band in 1929 and thereafter was involved in Crookston musical activities until his death in 1973.

In 1932 he became music director in the Crookston Public Schools, where his influence on students was profound. A firm task master who demanded the best of his musicians, he yet was respected and loved by those whom he taught. Besides his school work he organized and conducted a male chorus of men from the area, known as the Northwest Singers, was leader of the Ninth District Band and the Drum and Bugle Corps, both state champions, and led forty performances of Crookston’s Good Friday cantatas. Thorson also served his church as choir director for many years.

Almira Eagle served as accompanist for many groups. Here she is rehearsing with part of the cantata orchestra: Merle Miller, Elaine Boyer, Karen Brown, and Ken Wold.

Founded 1958

Sunset’s Craft and Hobby Shop

214 North Broadway

Shoes N Such

111 West 2nd Street

Founded 1934
Clubs Galore . . . . .
And Then Some More

Crookston for many years has organizations number in the scores, and scheduling events without too much conflict sometimes becomes an impossibility. This listing-incomplete, by the way, proves why.

Information received by the staff of this book could easily fill another volume devoted to clubs, but the editors have had to curtail these accounts for lack of space. We have kept copies of material submitted in hopes some group feels ambitious enough to compile such a record.

Crookston Masonic Lodge

Crookston Masonic Lodge No. 141 was chartered January 15, 1880, and held their meetings in a building owned by Felix Fournet, a lodge hall they occupied until January, 1899. In April, 1898, they entered into an agreement with Sam Wallace to build a third floor on the Wallace Drug Store, now known as the Eagle Drug. The building was completed and dedicated as a Masonic Temple on October 25, 1899, by Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons of Minnesota Brother A. G. Gibbins, Rochester, Minnesota, and Deputy Grand Master H. Brandenburg of Rochester, Minnesota, and Deputy Grand Master H. Brandenburg of

About 1915 the roof burned, but through an agreement between Wallace and the Masons, Wallace replaced the roof and bought the third floor from the lodge. The Masons then rented the third floor from 1915 until September, 1978. On July 1, 1978, the group bought what has recently been known as the First Federal Savings and Loan building at 112 West Robert Street and moved in September, 1978. An open house and reception were held November 19, 1978, with several Grand Lodge officers in attendance.

Crookston Masonic Lodge has had several outstanding Masons in its membership, among them Mr. Morris, who was Master of his lodge from 1895 to 1904 and again in 1908 and 1909. In 1906 he was elected Grand Master of the State of Minnesota. In 1918 he was Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Minnesota, and in 1926 was Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons of Minnesota. In 1926 he was chosen Grand Sentinel of the Grand Chapter of Eastern Star of Minnesota. Crookston Lodge was again honored when Sam Erickson of Crookston was elected to the post of Grand Master of Minnesota.

Elks Lodge

Crookston Lodge No. 342 Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was chartered July 7, 1896, with 27 members and F.X. Gravel as the first exalted ruler. Meetings were held in the I.O.O.F. Hall until 1899 when the old Masonic Hall in the Fournet Block was leased.

In January, 1912, the new Elks Home at 111 No. Main Street was dedicated at a total cost of $45,000. That same year the lodge voted to prohibit liquor on the premises. A few years later, however, it was allowed at the exalted ruler’s discretion.

Many charitable projects have been sponsored, including the annual children’s Christmas party, started in 1914 at the Grand Theatre and still continued, with the Grand Theatre and Hiller families as hosts. Annual Christmas baskets have also been delivered.

In the late 1960’s private liquor licenses were introduced in Crookston, and the added competition made it difficult to maintain the Elks Home on North Main Street. At the same time Minakwa Country Club had similar financial problems. Since many were members of both organizations, the two merged and maintained Elks’ facilities at the Country Club. Additional facilities were added in 1973 to the former Minakwa Club to provide a lodge room, a sauna, a golf pro shop, and storage and locker rooms. The kitchen was enlarged, and new carpeting and air conditioning installed.

In 1969 the Elks Home was sold to the Upper Deck, and the Crookston Lodge became the first Elks in Minnesota to be proprietors of a golf course.

In its 83-year history, 3,305 persons have been members of the lodge. The present membership is 800, with 230 golfers using the nine-hole course. The new two-court racquetball facility, opened in 1977, is limited to 120 members and families. Over-50-year members number 24, with one having attained 69 years membership.

W.D. (Bill) Reynolds, head of the lodge, is the 74th Exalted Ruler.
Sons of Norway and Daughters

Although the Daughters of Norway, Morgensole Lodge No. 68, has been organized here since Sept. 27, 1927, it was by order of the Supreme Lodge that the Sons and Daughters of Norway merged as one organization. On May 7, 1951, this group henceforth was to be known as Morgensole 458, Sons of Norway. Ellen Walters was president at that time.

First president of the Daughters of Norway in 1927 was Mrs. Sophie Svissdal, assisted by Mrs. Lillie Waage, vice president; and Mrs. Mina Saugstad, secretary.

Its national founders stressed mutual assistance to its members, to perpetuate their connection with the home land, its tradition and culture, and to help Norwegian immigrants become adjusted to life and customs of the new land. The date was Jan. 16, 1895.

On Jan. 3, 1966, Omar Bain was installed as the first man to be president of the local lodge, together with Clifford Brevik, vice president; Mrs. Esther Sorum, financial secretary; and Mrs. Joe Toutges, secretary. Meetings were in Knights of Columbus Hall. In 1969 meetings were moved to the Eagles Hall, where they have continued the first Monday of each month.

Editor's Footnote - In a 1906 history of organizations here the Sons of Norway listed the following officers: P.J. Tronrud, president; Christian Arnegberg, vice president; P. Boukind, financial secretary; A.O. Busterud, judge; A.M. Svisterson, treasurer; and T. Randers, secretary. Meetings were held at Woodmen Hall twice monthly.

Royal Neighbors of America

Royal Neighbor Camp 798 was charted at Crookston on November 16, 1897, with 21 members, including nine beneficial and 12 social members. The Camp was named "Golden Rod" at the time of charter.

A Junior Camp was organized here on February 18, 1922, with 30 members. Lillian Vonderbeck was recorder, and Lucinda Canute the first Junior Director. With Neighbor M. Miller as the first oracle in 1897, charter members included Emma Vine, Emma Saake, Anna Arris, Hilda Rood, Clara Leicke, Anna Shanssen, Ida Misner, Katherine Theurer, Mrs. Filiatrault, M.A. Bratrud, Harry Faulk, O.C. Rood, C. Maxner, Dr. A. Just, O. Mercil, F. Arris, M.E. Malone, W.A. Bray, W.H. Verity and E. Desmarais.

Women's Club

The Woman's Club of Crookston was organized in 1898, the oldest study club in Crookston and one of the oldest in the state. May, 1974, on the Club's 75th anniversary, three members were especially honored: Ann Laughlin, a member for 46 years, Myrtle Wilson for 37 years, and Jane Houske for 35 years. Mrs. Wilson is still an active member.

At the golden jubilee party of Woman's Club Mrs. H.L. Carpenter presented medals of honor to Mrs. H.L. Marsh representing her mother, Mrs. A.A. Miller, as a charter member, to Mrs. Bert Levins for the longest membership, and to Mrs. I.W. Kinder for her outstanding leadership.

Ten years ago Daisy Schmidt and Ruth Lyddon presented a history of Woman's Club. One interesting quotation: "In the early days most of the meetings were in the home, but minutes of 1906 read, "Woman's Club met on the grand staircase in the spacious corridor of the magnificent Carnegie Library."

The club has been very active in community affairs, helping to start the Boy Scouts organization, sponsoring Camp Fire groups, petitioning the park board for supervision of children's playgrounds, and similar civic projects. In 1911, the club sponsored a lecture by Miss Maria Sanford. During World War I there was an Americanization committee to work with foreigners. In 1924, members were urged to vote. In 1927, Woman's Club, with two other clubs, was hostess to the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

At the conventions during the twenties and thirties, 9th District Women's Clubs had exciting choral contests. Woman's Club participated wholeheartedly. As the closing feature of the Winter Shows week women's meetings in 1935, several one-act plays were presented: a well-written satire by Mrs. H.H. Hodgson; "Kitchen Philosophy" by Mrs. Myrtle Wilson; and a peace pageant by Mrs. Bert Levins. The latter two won prize winning awards in Federation competition. All three were members of Woman's Club at one time. Mrs. Henrietta Holte, long time member, wrote some very fine Indian pageants. She was district chairman of Indian welfare and owned an extensive collection of Indian paraphernalia.

The club has had the honor of producing three district presidents, Mrs. I.W. Kinder, Mrs. Arnold Johnson, and Mrs. Norman Arneson. Mrs. Arneson has also served as state secretary.

The success of Woman's Club can be attributed to the love of study that has been its principle purpose all though the years. The club has always had a definite search for self enrichment in educational, cultural, and spiritual spheres.

RED RIVER VALLEY
DENTAL BUILDING
310 SOUTH BROADWAY
FOUNDED 1958

DEGREE OF HONOR
CROOKSTON LODGE NO. 101

The following information is taken from a 1906 record of organizations in Crookston. Officers listed were: Miss Augusta Ziebeck, C. of H.; Mrs. Gustave Johnson, C. of C.; Miss Amelia Page, financier; Mrs. Maud Bolton, L. of H.; Mrs. Minnie Collins, treasurer; and Mrs. Bertha Odett, recorder.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
CROOKSTON
JULY 2-8, 1979

Founded 1958
Current Events Club

The Current Events Club of Crookston was organized on October 2, 1899, and became affiliated with the general Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1905.

Many of its early members had known a cultured life-style in the East, from which they came, and the club provided a means for personal development and for social, cultural and civic activities in this frontier town. For many years, membership was limited to 30 active members and 30 inactive members, plus a waiting list. Annual dues were $1 to provide magazines and study materials for the members.

Over the years, city beautification projects and clean-up drives were sponsored, the club actively promoted the park system.

In 1907, the club sponsored a $25,000 week-long art exhibit in Crookston, open to the public, and when the Carnegie Library was opened, the Current Events Club donated $550 to its book fund. They provided a piano and other furnishings for the library’s lower auditorium and this became the club’s meeting place for almost 50 years.

In 1919, the Current Events Club fostered the organization of the Business and Professional Club in Crookston, and in 1926, when the State Convention of the Federated Women’s Clubs was held in Crookston, the Current Events Club hosted this important event in cooperation with other area clubs.

As a unit, and as individuals, members have contributed their time, energy and money assisting other service organizations as well as the Red Cross, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Salvation Army, Sunnyrest Sanatorium, and the schools.

Large social functions were a regular feature of the Club for many years. Today’s monthly meetings combine interesting studies on a wide variety of current events, such as solar and atomic energy, with a continuing interest and involvement in civic improvement projects.

This year (1979) the club has the great honor of having a member “Mrs. Randall (Thelma) Barnes” chosen as Minnesota Mother of the Year. Club president Mrs. Vickie Irwin and Mrs. Mathilda Moe were also honored as Merit Mothers of Minnesota.

In 1928 Sam Erickson had the honor of being elected Masonic Grand Master of Minnesota.

Fairfax Andover Club

March 22, 1911, marked the birth of the Fairfax Andover Club, a Federated Women’s Club of rural Crookston. At the meeting, Mrs. George Schuck was elected president and Miss Irene Slyter became secretary. The name is a combination of the two townships in which the original members lived. The club motto is “Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself.”

The club’s history shows that meetings were held in the homes and that in winter the husbands attended as honorary members.

From its very beginning the club has been actively involved in community service. In 1920, its history notes the club successfully petitioned the County Commissioners for a rural school nurse, and thereafter sponsored children’s health clinics annually. The Fairfax Andover club was instrumental in the organization of the Women’s Camp at the Northwest School of Agriculture. They sponsored seven 4-H clubs, which they continued to support, have been active in the Civic Music League, participated in the expansion of the school district, and have been actively involved in city of Crookston celebrations and events. Many hours of volunteer service and various other supports have been donated to Winter Shows activities and to the two hospitals, the old Bethesda and the new Riverview.

Current membership stands at 14, some of whom are second-generation members, including Mrs. William Hoerner, who is a daughter of Mrs. Walter Morgan (Irene Slyter), the club’s first secretary. Mrs. Willard Heydt is current president. Mrs. Ralph Finkenbinder is a granddaughter of Mrs. R.E. Smith, on the charter roll.

Crookston Chapter 137 Order of Eastern Star

The Grand Chapter of the Minnesota Order of Eastern Star will be 101 years old in May of this year, 1979. The local chapter marks its 80th.

The Order of Eastern Star is the largest fraternal organization in the world to which both men and women may belong. Though not a part of the Masonic fraternity, it is related by the closest family ties. Eligibility for membership requires Masonic affiliation, a minimum age of 18, and a belief in a supreme being.

The first meeting place was in the Masonic Hall above the Fournet Block, and later in the Masonic Hall in the Eagle Drug building until 1978. First Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron were Molly Faulk Rosenthal and John Cromb, 1899-1900. Sister Love Braley was the first Crookston woman to be elected Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Minnesota, an office she held in 1910 and 1911. This remarkable woman had a great love for the order and served with distinction until she and her husband moved to California. There she was honored on her 100th birthday, July 29, 1950. She lived to be 102. Other Grand officers included Tom Morris, Grand Sentinel in 1927 and Maurit Mink, Grand Warden in 1937.

The Knights of Columbus Crookston Council Number 1216

Crookston Council 1216 of the Knights of Columbus has been organized for 72 years. The oldest living member is Medard Merrell, born 1885. Today, a spry 94-year young, Med joined in 1909.

The names of 45 members are listed on the Council’s charter, which was received at a banquet in honor of the occasion on April 21, 1907. Today the membership stands at 256.

First officers included Grand Knight, J.E. O’Brien; Deputy Grand Knight, J.M. Schweizer; Chancellor, N.B. Moran; Lecture, Thomas J. Malone; Recorder, Fred J. Homyer; Financial Secretary, J.J. Flynn; Treasurer, F.R. Hamel; Advocate, L.E. Gossman; Warden, James Powers; Inside Guard, Daniel Hughes; Outside Guard, J.R. Morin; and Trustees, John R. McKinnon, Wm. Anglim and R.J. Montague.

Louis LaBonte, Leroy Cournia, John Beaudry, and Philip Miller of Council 1216 have served as State officers.
The 1930 depression days didn’t stop the American Legion and Auxiliary from organizing a Women’s Drum and Bugle Corps, which went on to win many state championships as well as bring national acclaim to Crookston at several National and Canadian conventions.

The VFW Post men’s emergency life-saving equipment, used during World War II, is displayed by: (bottom row, 1 to r) (unidentified), Lee Theroux, and Ed Chochrane. Standing - Christian Fischer, (unidentified).

American Legion

Pvt. Nels T. Wold, a World War I hero from Winger, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously here in July, 1919, was the inspiration for the name of Crookston’s American Legion Post No. 20.

At the age of 23, Pvt. Wold was killed Sept. 26, 1918, at Cheppy, France. He was cited for his gallantry in aiding the advance of his company in capturing several machine gun nests and eleven prisoners single-handed and later for saving the life of a comrade from a German officer, all beyond the call of duty. He is buried at Winger, and each year on Nov. 11 and Veterans Day, members from here hold memorial services at his gravesite.

Crookston’s American Legion was organized here March 13, 1919, with R.A. Rossberg as charter commander. P.J. Eid, a Crookston native and longtime proprietor of a confectionery store here on Robert St., was the second commander.

Crookston Legion and Auxiliary entertained the Minnesota State convention here in 1930 when Wm. C. Sumpmann was commander. Many of the state groups brought with them several drum and bugle corps to advertise their communities. So impressed were the hosts that they decided with the women to form and sponsor in 1931 Crookston’s Drum and Bugle Corps, which went on to win many state and national honors in the 1930’s.

During the depression era of the late 1920’s and the 1930’s, to help raise fund for the 1930 state convention and to purchase the present building at 107 W. 2nd St., the post sponsored many annual three-day celebrations in the former armory on North Broadway. These events featured orchestras and dancing, bingo, games of chance, and other types of carnival entertainment, plus refreshment stands.

Like most organizations the group sponsors and supports many community and patriotic services, including representatives to Boys’ State and school patrol members to Legionville (22 this year). Members decorate service persons’ graves in the area each Memorial Day.

This year, 1979, on the 60th anniversary Post 20 was honored at a birthday party, March 14, sponsored by the auxiliary members. A special invited guest was Olander Wold of Crookston, a brother of Nels T. Wold.
Matron's Club

On December 7, 1901, a number of Crookston brides who were guests at an afternoon party at the home of Mrs. Alden Braley, decided to form a club and name it Matrons' Club. The original number of 12 in 1908 was increased to 24, which is the present membership. Only mothers are eligible.

Because the club motto is the "Betterment of the Home", the club has always realized the conditions surrounding the home are of utmost importance. Members have taken an active interest in civic affairs. In 1908 they petitioned the school board for music instruction in the schools. They have supported the public library in the form of book donations and volunteer labor and in 1912 sponsored an Art and Craft Exhibit.

Other early projects included support of a legislative bill for better sanitation, cooperation with the city council in obtaining a police matron, a petition for hot lunches in the schools, and planting of shrubs at the swimming pool. During two world wars the group aided the Red Cross as well as participated in other volunteer work.

During its first 75 active years, this club has entered on its membership rolls only 185 members. Three dedicated ones have been honored for 50 years as "Matrons": Mrs. C.M. Lohn, a charter member; Mrs. Otto Eickhof, and Mrs. A.R. McKinnon.

In the early days of the club the meetings were very informal, with members discussing home problems and cooking. When the babies arrived, they too, attended. Repeatedly the early minutes mentioned there was a good attendance of children, despite blizzards, cold, and deep snow. Husbands were entertained at banquets, dinner dances, and fun fests. In 1922 an elaborate dinner party was given by the husbands. Depression days saw the club dispensing with social activities and fancy lunches, the money used instead for needy children. From that time on the minutes never again mention entertainment of husbands.
Eagles Aerie 873

Crookston Aerie 873 of the Fraternal Order of Eagles was instituted on October 20, 1904, and received a charter from the grand lodge dated February 7, 1905. There were 52 charter members.

Aerie 873 met in various upstairs locations around the downtown area until property on the corner of Broadway and Robert was obtained. Plans were drawn up for a building, and construction was started in about 1925. The first floor was used by two retail shops and the Eagles lodge home was on the second and third floors.

The lodge eventually required more room to take care of a growing membership and so property to the south of the original structure was purchased and a two-story addition was built about 1941.

Membership in Aerie 873 has climbed to a present day total of 1350.

4-H Clubs

Early history of 4-H clubs reveals the year 1914 as the start of the groups in this area, first known as Boys’ and Girls’ Club work. Conducted were 25-egg-laying contests, cow testing, and corn clubs.

In 1968 the Polk County Federation was organized with a new 4-H leadership concept under county project chairmen.

Because of lack of space, only the oldest organizations have had special write-ups. All others who submitted information are listed below. The first and the 1979 presiding officers are named in that order.

1921 - Crookston Business & Professional Women’s Club - Ida Twedten - Jane Brueske
1922 - Crookston Rotary Club - Hug Torrance - Don Sargeant
1922 - Polk County Historical Society - Henrietta Holte - Bruno Jurchen
1925 - Daughters of American Revolution - Lou Morlan
1930 - Chapter AX of PEO - Marjorie Dillenburg
1930 - Crookston Civic Music League - Mrs. Cliff Zaffke
1936 - Veterans of Foreign War Post #1902 - William Eickhof - Nick Boerger, Jr.
1936 - Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary - Esther Eickhof - Pauline Theroux
1936 - Ken Study Club - Fran Kiewel
1938 - Crookston Lions Club - Dale Amundson
1943 - Crookston Jaycees - Vernon Weaver - Don Cavalier
1947 - Agassiz Study Club - Mary Ann Odland
1948 - Crookston Toastmasters - Bob Stone

1948 - Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary - Olive Kleven - Amanda Mann
1948 - Crookston Conservation Club (formerly Sportsmen’s Club)
1951 - Eagles Auxiliary - Ellen Pfeifer - Dorothy Gilbertson
1952 - American Ass’n of University Women - Helen Oppegarda - Lynnette Mullins
1953 - Mathem Study Club - Ann Atkins - Francine Olson
1958 - Mrs. Jaycees (now Crookston Jaycee Women) - Pat Millard
1959 - Crookston Squarenaders - Don Ferrie - David Muir
1961 - Crookston Pioneer Days Association - Don Myrold - Ruth Ross
1961 - Polk County Auxiliary to WWI Barracks - Mabel Fischer - Hazel Winger
1963 - Crookston Garden Club (Re-activated) - Ethel Grove
1966 - UMC Faculty Women - Donna Ramberg
1970 - Riverview Hospital Auxiliary (Re-organized) - Sharon Wall - Marion Heydt
1975 - Dawn to Dusk Lions club - Truman Tilleraas - Bill Holman
1976 - Valley Ridge Chapter of National Secretaries Assn. (International)
1976 - Crookston Community Theatre - Dean Brown

Diamonds

324 North Main

Don Osborne

Founded 1968
Pioneer Days Association

The Crookston Pioneer Days Association was organized in 1961 to promote the historical heritage of Crookston and the area, with a parade and other events promoted every year by the association. The association has also undertaken the fireworks display each year during the celebration with the Crookston Fire Department in charge of the colorful spectacle.


Several service groups have held their convention in the city during Pioneer Days to draw more people to the celebration.

The Pioneer Days Association is a volunteer organization with the members putting in many long hours to make each celebration better than the last. The organization is in charge of Crookston’s Centennial celebration.

A Crookston woman, Love Braley, was elected Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Minnesota, an office she held in 1910 and 1911. This picture was taken in California on her 100th birthday, July 29, 1950. She lived to be 102.

Polk County Historical Society

The foresight of early pioneers in the area in preserving relics, equipment and newspapers among them, telling of their lives more than 100 years ago, made it possible for the establishment of the Polk County Historical Society and Museum in Crookston.

According to Bruno Jurchen, 1979 president of the Society and curator of the Museum, it was about in 1922 that several interested citizens were given the use of a small room in the basement of Polk County Courthouse for the unofficial beginning of the Pioneer Museum.

Instrumental in preserving such early day artifacts, among other area residents, was Mrs. Henrietta Holte, wife of Dr. H.H. Holte, long a collector of Indian history and displays together with other historical items.

When the courthouse was to be demolished to make room for the present structure, museum items were boxed and stored. Later they were displayed for a time at the Winter Shows building, until the former McKinley School in Jerome’s Addition became available.

There, through the help of organizations and many volunteers, the rooms were redecorated and remodeled and used to display the historical relics. It was then known as the Holte Museum. But since no heating was available it had limited use. In 1974 the old schoolhouse was declared unsafe for public use and once again the Historical Society began its search for a new home.

The new Pioneer Museum was established along Highway 2, east of Crookston, becoming a fine location for the 76 x 120 foot one story building to provide a permanent home for many historic displays.

Through the countless efforts of many volunteers, the Polk County Historical Society hopes the Museum will help those in the future -- learn from the past.
These well-groomed ladies were members of the Current Events Club in the 1920's.

Founded 1910

Red River Valley Winter Shows

Highway 2 and 75 North
1892 Water Plant

1905 - Crookston's source of power was the Otter Tail plant at the old dam in Crookston.

(Electric Service was first introduced in Crookston in 1882 by the Crookston Telephone, Telephone Exchange and Electric Light Company)
Ta ke Me Ou t to th e Ba l l Ga m e!

Sports? We love 'em! Yes, from the days of the dusty field to those of the green sod or the plush gymnasium, this town has always had a passion for sports, whether you "spectated" or took part. Over the years the favorites have been football, baseball, hockey, tennis, wrestling, horses, skating...you name it...somebody loves it. Community and scholastic sports came early to this town, as you will observe by the historical accounts.

Athletics at Crookston
Central 1902-1944

Athletics and physical training received an early start in the life of Crookston Central students. Football and basketball teams were organized in 1902 under Coach Keinholtz. The 1902 team had the distinction of keeping their goal line from being crossed. N.A. Thorson, who later became Polk County school superintendent, coached the Central football team 1905 to 1910. Under Coach Smith in 1912 the Crookston team won the Northwestern Minnesota football championship. Their 1914 and 1920 teams were runners-up for this title. During the twenties Central had average success in football. In 1933, under Coach Lloyd Ostrander, they won the championship with a 4-2 record. Ten years later they again won the football conference, defeating Thief River Falls, 13-7, in the final game for the championship under the guidance of Coach Herschel H. Lysaker.

Track was started at Central in 1910, and baseball, under Coach Smith, in 1912. Central had its first undefeated baseball team in 1933, under Coach Lloyd Ostrander. 1912 marks the year when Central's first lettermen's club was organized.

In 1921 a 26-mile relay race between Grand Forks and Crookston was initiated, and competition in this run went on for several years. Each runner ran a mile in this relay. In 1922 "Tubby" Daniels of Crookston set a record by running his mile in 4 minutes and 38 seconds. Track continued as an important team sport, and by the late thirties Crookston had gained the reputation of being a strong track school. Central won four straight district track titles starting in 1939 under Coach Lloyd Osborne.

Competition in girls' athletics also got an early start, with their first basketball team performing satisfactorily in 1905. The next year tennis was added to their program. In 1933 the girls organized Central's first G.A.A. to stimulate interest in good health and clean sports and to improve participation.

In the early twenties the Crookston Central basketball team, for the first time, made it to the state tournament two years in a row under Coach M.O. Jackson. In 1922 the team had a record of 15 wins and 2 losses. This team entered the tenth annual Minnesota State tournament held at Carleton College in Northfield. In the quarter final of this tourney Red Wing defeated this strong Crookston team in a close battle and then went on to win the state title. Members of this first state tournament team were Captain Truman Daniels, Martin Gronvold, Willis Carlisle, Orville Lindell, Ray Cochrane, Tony Johnson, Alton McRae, and Harlan Nelson.

The next year Coach Jackson's basketball squad won 16 out of 17 games, losing out to Blue Earth in the quarter finals at the state, held at the Kenwood Armory in Minneapolis. He also had a district winner in 1925 and 1929.

After the Minnesota high schools were reorganized in 1933, Crookston Central won its first district 31 basketball title in 1944. This team set a record of winning seventeen straight basketball games. Another honor during the previous fall was Central winning the conference football championship under the same coach, defeating Thief River Falls in the final game of the season 13-7 for the title.

Northwest Minnesota football champs of 1911. "Judge" Harry Sylvestre is in the front row at left.
Athletics at Crookston
Central 1945-1979

By 1945 the Minnesota public high schools were aligned into a one-class system for competition. The state was divided into eight geographic regions. Each region then sub-divided into four districts. Crookston Central was a member of District 31 with other area schools. This alignment provided basis for competition until 1976.

In 1955 Central joined Bemidji, Thief River Falls, and East Grand Forks in forming the Northwest Conference. Originally it was organized for football, but track, golf, baseball, basketball, hockey, tennis and wrestling were added as conference sports in the first ten years of the conference’s existence. Hockey and wrestling since have been dropped from the conference.

In 1959 Roseau joined to make the Northwest Conference a five-team conference. Roseau dropped out in 1971, and Breckenridge and Fergus Falls were admitted officially in all sports except football the fall of 1972. Previous contract commitments postponed the new schools’ competing in football until the 1973 season. By 1975 Breckenridge withdrew from the conference leaving a five-team league again.

In 1976 the Minnesota State High School League adopted a two-class plan as recommended by a committee selected by the parent organization. The plan went into operation by placing the top 128 schools according to enrollment figures into a “AA” class and the remaining schools into the “A” class. By enrollment Central was classified into the “AA” group. Central found itself in a new Region 8AA encompassing a larger geographic area.

BOYS ATHLETICS AT CENTRAL HIGH

FOOTBALL. Since Northwest Conference’s inception, Crookston Central has won football championships in 1957, ’58 and ’61. It has shared the title with Thief River Falls in 1969; Thief River Falls and Bemidji in 1972; and Fergus Falls in 1973.

In the early to mid fifties - a North South All Star Football game was inaugurated on a state level. Pepper Lysaker, Bill Taylor, and John Lysaker represented Central in games, for all three had made the all state team.

The 1957 football team’s notable contribution to the annals of Central’s history has been its unbeaten season record. Under Coach DeWayne Sundby’s leadership, the 1957 team amassed a total of 235 points to the oppositions’ 53 in eight victories.

Central’s 1973 football team won eight games with one loss - scoring 183 points while holding its opponents to a measly 29 points in nine games. The ’73 team was coached by L.E. Drechsel.

CROSS COUNTRY. Cross Country began in 1949, with meets scheduled with the Northwest School of Agriculture. Since 1949 a total of twenty-four runners have represented Crookston in the state. Five of the twenty-four were repeaters, qualifying two consecutive years. Todd Peterson competed in three state cross country meets, as a sophomore in 1969, returning in 1970 and 1971. Murray Warren in 19 years as cross country coach has taken fifteen runners to the state.


Henry “Hank” Hulst scored 47 points in the Red Lake Falls game in 1954. The 1956 team had a 19-1 win and four loss record. Al Dronen-coached teams captured four district championships.

WRESTLING. Wrestling was introduced into the program at Central in 1960. District championships were won in 1971, 1972, 1973, and 1975 under the coaching of Richard Kramchuck.

District Basketball Champs in 1929 who placed third in the regionals were (l to r) front row: Frank Hoyt, Ray Simpson, Bob Thorp, Homer Stephens, and Buzzer Hagen; back row: Principal C.M. Chapman, Eddie McWaters, Clarence Anderson, Edwin Romuld, and Coach Sherm Miller.

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Of the numerous wrestlers qualifying for the region wrestling tournament a total of eleven have represented Central at the state. Murray Tiedeman in 1971-72 was the only wrestler making the trip to state more than once. Rod Hanson in 1973 had the best season record with 25 wins against 2 losses.

HOCKEY. Crookston has shown considerable hockey interest since the construction of the city indoor arena built in the thirties. In the 1948-49 school year, a club team was formed at Central to play a seven-game schedule. The team was not affiliated with the Minnesota State High School League. The following school year, 1949-50, Central under the affiliation of the League, competed in Region 8 for the first time. At the end of 1951 season the Board of Education made a decision to discontinue the program at the high school level.

The sport was re-instated in 1960. Central played a "B" schedule of games primarily with underclassmen. The 1961 team was the only team one game away from entering the state tournament competition. The '61 Pirates defeated the Region 8 top-rated team, Warroad, in the first round; then they suffered a defeat from Hallock in sudden-death overtime, blocking their path to state. The team was coached by Bob Strand. The best overall season won - lost record was the 1976 team with 14 wins, 5 losses, and 1 tie. The team’s coach was Mike Lundby.


The 1960 Pirates defeated North St. Paul, 3 to 0, in the first game in state. After losses to Washburn and Hutchinson, the team finished in 4th place. Linton Lehrer coached the 1960 team.

The 1975 team lost to Bloomington Kennedy, the eventual state champion, in the first game. The Pirates bounced back to edge out Northfield, 2 to 1 in the first round of the consolation series. In the consolation championship the team lost to Montevideo to finish in 6th place.

Jim Simon's coaching record includes the 1979 state entry and four district championships. Jim Lindell played on the teams winning district titles in '70, '71, '72, and '73.

TRACK. The years from 1945 to 1978 produced several outstanding track teams at Central. The 1957 team claimed both district and region championships. Meier Snell coached the 1957 squad. Pepper Lysaker qualified in four events at the state track meet -- 100 yard dash, high hurdles, low hurdles, and broad jump.

The 1959 team won regional honors. Bill Taylor captured a state championship in the high jump in 1959. The 1974 Pirate track team won the state Class A championship scoring 40 points. Don Moore placed first in the 100-yard dash and the 220-yard dash. Nate Hanson won the 880-yard run. The mile relay team of Robert Ranum, Mike Ranum, Hanson, and Jon Burkhardt garnered a first place - as did the half-mile relay team of Moore, Jeff Radi, Jeff Potter, and Burkhardt. Jon Burkhardt placed 2nd in the 220-yard dash. Len Devo rounded out the scoring by placing third in both the discus and shot put. Coach Al Droen and his ten-man state championship team proudly carried the trophy back to Crookston.

BOYS' TENNIS. The tennis program at Central has been the number one sport in producing college players. Ten Central grads have played in the college ranks since the mid-fifties. District championships were won in 1956, '57, '58, '62 and '73. Region championships gained in 1962 and 1973.

Roger Parkin participated in the state tournament three years -- 1962, '63 and '64. Bob Miller in three state tourneys. 1959 and '60 with Dale Johnson-doubles; 1961 in singles. The 1962 team coached by Stan Osborne was led by Parkin and Berger Anderson in their quest to the district and region titles.

District Basketball Champs in 1944, coached by Hersh Lysaker (left) were (l to r) Dick Sprague, Bill Reynolds, Bob Sellberg, Bob Lewin, Fred Harris, Howard Casmey, Don Youngquist, Toddy Johnson, and David Wilson.

Founded 1967

Brost Chevrolet, Inc.

1600
University Avenue

Hilmer Brost

Allen Brost

Coach Ed Nelson's 1972 team had a 14 wins, 2 losses dual meet record; won the Northwest Conference championship and the regional title. Brent Reichert began playing varsity tennis as a seventh grader in 1970. By his senior year, 1975, Reichert had compiled 103 wins against 27 losses in all competition. He competed in four state tournaments by winning regional championships his freshmen to his senior year.

BOYS' GOLF. Since 1945 numerous golfers have represented Crookston Central in the state meet. Don Steenerson ('45, '47); Glenn Hansen ('50, '52); Paul Reiergord ('55, '56); Keith Sanders ('63, '64); Greg Klein ('64, '66); Gregg Anderson ('66, '67); John Kalin ('70, '71) each represented Central two years at state. Three-year state competitors were George Boyer in 1955, '56, '57; and Len Gumlia in 1971, '72, and '73.

District championships were won 12 different years beginning in 1945. Regional championships were gained in 1946, 1949 and 1955. In their respective seven-year coaching stints - Al Droen sent nine golfers to state and Ron Thompson eight state competitors.

GIRLS' ATHLETICS AT CENTRAL HIGH. Until 1969 school-sponsored athletic programs for girls in Minnesota had been limited, if not non-existent. In March, 1969, the Representative Assembly of the Minnesota State High School League voted to add girls' athletics to the existing program for boys.

Prior to the 1970's sport activities for Central girls were either on a recreational or intramural basis. The programs were administered through the G.R.A. or G.A.A. A great variety of activities were offered but not on an interscholastic level.

Beginning in 1971 an extramural program was introduced for girls. A limited schedule with area schools was arranged for volleyball, basketball, softball, and track. The 1971-72 school year two girls team had undefeated seasons. The volleyball team won nine games, while the basketball team gained their perfect record after a six-game schedule. The program received its greatest impetus under the direction of Marge Milne Nestor at this period.

By the 1974 season, volleyball, basketball, track, golf, and tennis teams competed on an interscholastic level. It was the 1975 season that girls' athletics at Central came of age. The 1975 volleyball team, coached by Bette Jacobson, defeated Bagley in the regionals to advance to state competition. Losing to Virginia in the first game at state, the Pirates defeated Redwood Falls and Rochester Mayo for the consolation championship. The same year Central's first tennis team advanced three players to state. The 1975 girls basketball team with Lynn Dorn at the helm also headed for the state tourney after compiling a 13-1 season record. The team won the first-round game by defeating Duluth Denfeld, but they lost in the semis to Holy Angels, 36 to 38.

In 1977 Meg Schnabel and T.C. Sullivan qualified for the state tennis tournament in doubles play. Crookston defeated Virginia in the first round. Rochester Lourdes, the runner-up in state, then ousted the girls from state competition 7-5; 7-5. Coach Mary Hinkley guided the 1977 team.

The 1978 girls' basketball team gathered an overall season record of 16-6, defeating Bemidji and Thief River Falls for the sub-region crown. Entering into the Region 8AA tournament, the Pirates also defeated Detroit Lakes, but just fell short of state competition by losing to St. Cloud Apollo in the championship game. Harlen Stahlecker coached the 1978 team.

**Cathedral**

**High School Hockey**

In 1934 Father Victor Cardin organized high school hockey at the Cathedral High School and in 1936 played the first real schedule. The team was named the Blue Wave in 1938. Jim Alexander was coach and in December of that year, the team began playing Canadian teams. The season ended with 15 wins, 4 losses, and 1 tie.

In the early 1940's the American Legion in Thief River Falls started sponsoring hockey tournaments. In the 40's Father William Keefe took on the duties of coach with such stars as Doc Welter, Alf Sullivan, and Bud Schraeder.

The 1943-44 aggregation, coached by Don Norman, compiled a record of 11 wins and 1 loss. John Noah played and developed skill at Cathedral High school during the period. Later John was to win All-American honors at UND and to play in the Olympics in Helsinki, Finland, on the U.S. team in 1952.

In 1948-1955 Sergio Gambucci coached the Blue Wave with one of his best hockey teams (1951-52), winning 12 and losing 2.

During the next quarter of a century, Cathedral won many honors under Bill Sullivan. Eddie Desrosier assisted Bill in the early sixties. Some of the honors won were 1960, placed first in Devil's Lake Invitational; 1965, placed first in the Twin City Catholic hockey tourney; 1969 placed third in Fargo North Tournament and won the Sportsmanship trophy in the State Catholic tournament held in Duluth. They lost to St. Paul Hill in an overtime game in this tournament. In 1972 the Blue Wave was top of State champs.

In 1976 Mount St. Benedict joined the Minnesota State high school league and were runners-up in Region 8 in 1977.

Some of the hockey stars during this period were Barry Bergan, all-conference team in 1972, and Phil Breken, Pat Sullivan and Leonard Przybylski, all-conference teams in 1976.

**Baseball**

Baseball was started at Cathedral High School in 1939 with several coaches spanning a ten-year period: Phil Miller, Larry Martin, Father Pakisko.
Dr. Robert Baab took over as head coach in 1968 and has produced several very presentable teams. In 1970 they were District 31 and Region I champs. They placed second in the District 31 tourney in 1975; were Pola Conference champs in 1976; District runner-up in 1977, and District 31 champs in 1978.

**Football**

Cathedral started junior football under Father Victor Cardin in 1932. Their first schedule was played in 1935 against Red Lake Falls, St. James and East Grand Forks.

In 1937 the Grand Forks Herald made mention of Cathedral’s team saying the right side of the line was from the Old Testament - Isaac, Noah, and Jacobson.

Father William Keefe took over as coach in 1938 and in 1942 was succeeded by Don Norman with Father Keefe assisting. The best team in the 40’s played in 1943 with a 6-1 record with such stars as Bud Salem and John Noah.

The Blue Wave’s first undefeated and unscored upon season came in 1951.

In 1955 Bill Sullivan began his career as Cathedral head coach. His 1969 team was undefeated and won the top of state conference; top State champs in 1971 and in 1973. In 1974 Vince Repesh replaced Bill Sullivan as coach. His team placed second in top this State Conference in 1974 and 1975. Mike Finco coached the Blue Wave gridders this past season.

The young years of Mt. St. Benedict saw the girls playing croquet, softball, and tennis and going skating and tobogganing and doing lots of hiking. Exercise and athletics have always been an important part of every girl’s life at MSB.

In 1962, a new school building at MSB included a beautiful gymnasium. This allowed for many more kinds of activities for the girls. In the fall of 1963, Mrs. Joyce Reynolds, a certified physical education teacher, was hired, and a full schedule of intramural activities was begun, including basketball, volleyball, tumbling, gymnastics, swim-

(Continued on Page 114)
Continued from Page 113)

ming, and bowling. The Girls' Recreational Association activities included picnics, parties, and dances as well as the competitive sports. For a few years, playdays were held with several area schools participating. This was the prelude to the full participation of girls in interscholastic competition in Minnesota, which was allowed after 1974.

An enthusiastic but inexperienced group of girls began practicing volleyball in the fall of 1974 under an inexperienced coach, Mrs. Reynolds. The varsity had a 3-win, 6-loss season, with the B squad doing better at 5-5. Things began to look up the next year and by the third year of competition, Diane Charron was placed on the all-conference team.

The spring of '75 saw 25 girls work out at track and field. Janet Zidon won the district long jump championship as a freshman in '75. The next season the track squad placed second in District 31 competition and sent nine girls in eleven events to the regional. None went on to state from that group. However, in the spring of 1978, two girls won the right to enter state competition, Mary Biermaier in the mile run and Denise Bullocks, a boarding student from Chicago, in the 220 and the 440. Denise set a new state record by winning the 220-yard run in 25.8 seconds and placed second in the state in the 440 competition.

Basketball competition began for the girls at the Mount in the 1975-76 school year. The team is progressing and the year of 1978-79 placed one girl, Julie Deml, on the all-conference squad at district level.


**The Northwest School Athletic Program**

The Northwest School of Agriculture in its seventy years of existence had a strong, well-rounded program in physical education and athletics. It was always the feeling of the administration in charge that by its very nature, physical education and athletics' chief contribution to the education of an individual is in the area of the physical. Their definition of physical fitness meant the ability to carry one's work load with strength, to participate in recreation with ease and enjoyment, and to have a reservoir of endurance to meet all the emergencies of life. It was their feeling that in any occupation or profession, there are many areas that demand extra effort, and there should be adequate physical endowment to meet them.

All students at the Northwest School were required to take five days per week of physical education and swimming classes. One of the graduation requirements was to swim three lengths of the pool. All students were encouraged to participate in at least one interscholastic sport. Sports programs were organized for both the boys and girls.

The Northwest School was fortunate to have dedicated coaches over the years, training their young farm boys in football and basketball. The following men coached these two sports for the Aggies: 1911-13 N.E. Schwartz and Ed Johnson; 1914 O.L. Buhr; 1915-16 Martinus Stenseth; 1917-1920 T.M. McCall; 1921 R.R. Smith; 1922 Arnold Foker; 1923 H.P. Constans; 1924-1929 Delmar LaVoii; D.A. Milligan, assistant; 1930-1937, 1940-42, R.J. Christgau; 1938-39 Stub Evans; 1943 Harry Roese; 1944-1966 Herschel Lysaker; 1967-1968 Joe Mazzitelli.

Coach Ed Bennett started cross-country, wrestling and swimming at the N.W. School, directing these sports from 1938-1945. Hockey was also started in 1938 under Coach Wish Robin.

**Grove Heating and Air Conditioning**

510 North Front

Founded 1978
Interscholastic competition was held in the following sports: football, cross-country, basketball, wrestling, swimming, indoor track and hockey. The Northwest School was the first high school in Northern Minnesota to introduce wrestling, having had good wrestling teams since the early 30's. Every year a high percentage of the Northwest School graduates went on to college where they enjoyed successful athletic careers. Fans always remember and look to Ed Widseth with pride, who went on to the University of Minnesota and won All-American honors in football.

Accurate records were kept in athletics for the last 25 years of the Northwest School's existence. Statistics show that the various NWSA athletic teams earned a 700% plus win percentage during that quarter of a century.

UMC Athletic Program

The athletic program at UMC is divided into two phases to encourage participation of as many students as possible in intramural and intercollegiate athletics. The UMC administration was confident that it would have good athletic teams when it opened its doors in 1966. The athletic director had arranged football, basketball and wrestling schedules even before the college had a student body enrolled.

UMC intercollegiate athletic program started with a twenty-three man football squad in the fall of 1966. In its first football game against Itasca State, UMC halfback Clem Zack took the opening kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown. Coach Hersch Lysaker, who had coached and directed athletics at the Northwest School since 1944, took over the same program at UMC in 1966. To start with he served as athletic director and coached all sports at UMC with the exception of wrestling. His football team in their third year of UMC's existence won the conference title in 1968. The football program has been strong ever since, winning the conference championship in 1968, 1973, 1974, 1976 and 1978. The state title was won in 1976 under Coach Deryl Ramey. The 1978 football team was coached by Jim Sims.

Two UMC athletes made it into NFL football. Jim LeCair of South St. Paul who played on UMC's 1968 first championship team is in his eighth season with the Cincinnati Bengals, playing as their regular middle linebacker. This past season he played in the all-star pro game. Tom Watkins from Middlesex, New Jersey, also played on this UMC 1968 championship team. He was drafted by the New Orleans Saints after he graduated from Weber State.

The UMC basketball teams also have been very respectable. The first year of the College's existence, the basketball team won the Brandon, Manitoba Invitational Tournament, playing against Canadian four-year colleges. The 1966-67 team also qualified for regional playoffs in 1970, 1973, 1975 and 1976. In 1970 and 1976 they competed in the State College Tournament under Coach Marv Bachmeier.

UMC's wrestling program, under the expert guidance of Rodney Mosher, who was a wrestler at the Northwest School, has always been better than average. The UMC wrestling teams have won their Conference title six out of the last twelve years and have had qualified wrestlers for the National Tournament every year since 1967.

Hockey is another exciting sport at UMC. The hockey team won the State title in 1973 and competed in the National Hockey Tournament at the Olympic Arena in Lake Placid, New York, winning second place in the nation under coach Dale Stinar. This past season the team finished second in the state.

UMC also has a strong intramural and extramural sports program for both men and women in which over fifty percent of the student body takes part. UMC has also competed in cross-country, track and baseball.

A UMC women's athletic program started in 1976 includes intercollegiate competition in volleyball, track and basketball. Incorporated into the intramural program has been extramural competition between the Community State Colleges of Northern Minnesota. Intramural activities for men and women include: flag football, basketball, volleyball, water basketball, hockeyball, softball, table tennis, badminton, track, foosball, chess and billiards.

W.S. Lycan placed an order this morning for a large touring car and he expects that it will arrive in short order. Mr. Lycan says that while he is a lover of horses and has always maintained that the horse was the only proper means of transportation, he has finally succumbed to the automobile fever and is anticipating some great trips through the section as soon as his car arrives. (July 13).

Founded 1919

J.E. Schraeder

Company

301

North Broadway
Independent Athletic Groups

After the close of the first world war many soldiers returned who had had experience playing basketball in army camps both in this country and overseas. This group of veterans, naturally very active men, wanted to continue their sports activities in basketball. This interest resulted in the organizing of the Crookston Gunners, who played their first schedule of games in 1921.

Many interesting games were played with teams from neighboring towns; good competition was also received from many traveling teams. One of the most interesting home and home series was developed with Thief River Falls. Whenever these two teams played, a special train consisting of a locomotive and one passenger car was always arranged for. Another interesting series was played for several years with the Two Harbors Independents, who had a salaried team of ex-collegians.

In 1922 the Gunner basketball team lost the state championship to the Minneapolis 151st artillery team in the tournament played in the cities. After this tournament the 151st championship artillery team made a return visit to Crookston. In this game the Gunners gained their revenge by soundly defeating their visitors.

Members of this outstanding Crookston Gunner team were: Central Coach Al Miller, playing standing guard; Ben Sampson, a Luther College star, playing forward; Mark Weber, Crookston athlete; Max Raines from Grand Forks Central at center; Ira Haaven, a Hamline star from McIntosh, playing forward; Skinny Sinclair, a Hallock native who had played for the University of North Dakota, and Deutch Hanson from Bismarck, who had also been a good athlete at UND.

When the team decided to retire, they were later replaced by a younger Gunner team who, after reorganization, participated both in basketball and softball.

Sorry: There was no material contributed to us by press time on independent hockey.

Northwest Experiment Station
Founded 1895
Northwest School of Agriculture
Founded 1906
University of Minnesota Technical College
Founded 1966

University of Minnesota
Highway 2 and 75 North
In the spring of 1950, at a regular meeting of the Elks Lodge, a resolution was presented by Willis Eide, passed unanimously, to provide outdoor basketball standards for the youth of the city.

Before the program was officially activated in the community, Eide was killed in a one-car automobile accident. At this point it was decided by the lodge to dedicate the program to his memory.

This Centennial year also marks the beginning of 30 continuous year that the Elks Lodge has had this program. In that time around 200 locations have been served.

**Baseball**

Earliest references to baseball teams in Crookston date from 1878 when the Red Stockings took the field. These early efforts were organized by the re­doubtable Lawrence “Trinky” Mc­Linden, who probably, like too many early players, acquired his interest in the game during military service in the Civil War.

Over the ensuing 22 years, a succession of teams flickered on and off the scene, bearing such names as “The Growlers”, but mostly just “the town team”. Their efforts seemed to be confined to special occasions for the most part, and they were often accompanied by sizable crowds traveling via special excursion cars on the railroad or by horse-drawn conveyances to distant points such as Red Lake Falls, Grand Forks, and Eldred.

In 1902 a professional team was organized and entered in the Northern League under the leadership of Manager Lycan. This aggregation, referred to occasionally as the Colts but more often as the Crooks, played their games in Central Park. Insolvency forced the team out of the league after the 1905 season, and Crookston baseball reverted to its former sporadic nature.

In 1913 a team was organized to perform on a more regular basis. Its success was largely attributable to the pitching of former Ohio State University star, Stanley Duggan. By 1914 Duggan was pitching for Winnipeg and was subsequently sold to Cincinnati.

The “Old Town” team continued to entertain local fans for many more years, frequently with the aid of hired pitchers and catchers to support the home town boys.

In 1933, Crookston returned to professional baseball as a member of the Class D Northern League. Danny Boone, a former Pittsburgh Pirate farmhand, was hired as player-manager and was also elected league president. At his suggestion the name of the team was changed from Red Sox, which had been its designation for some time, to Pirates. That name was subsequently adopted and maintained by Central High School and by amateur teams which have represented Crookston in a variety of sporting endeavors. The Pirates stayed in the Northern League until the end of the 1941 season but dropped out at the start of World War II.

By this time a covered wooden grandstand had been constructed and the entire ball park enclosed by a high board fence. A set of lights was added later to make night baseball possible. The grandstand was located at Highland Park in the general area of the present-day tennis courts. The stands extended down the first and third base lines and had a seating capacity of several thousand. The third base section fell victim to a windstorm in the late forties, and the remainder was demolished in 1964.

Some of the organizers of the Crookston Pirates were Ole Ogg, William Stone, Bert Ruettell, M.O. Oppegaard, Bill Eagle, John Cowley, and John Heldstab. Many others were involved as well.

Crookston baseball returned to the Northern Minny league after the war with such players as Roy Lindell, Bob Siman, Andy Carey and Glen Gumlia. In 1947 and ’48 the Pirates competed at the NBC national tournament in Wichita.
Indebtedness caused the local club to founder in the mid '50's, but it was re-organized on a strictly local basis in 1961 as a member of the Norman-Polk
League. Crookston has continued to field strong baseball teams from that
time to the present, though they had to move the base of their operations to the
U.M.C. field from 1970-74 while the old
Highland Park field was being obliter­
ated and the present, professional qual­
ity playing field was constructed.

Crookston's amateur team continued
to be known as the Pirates until 1973,
when the name was changed to the Reds.
In 1974 the Pirates were revived
as a second team, which died in 1978.
In 1979, the newest unit, the Blues, took
the field along with the Reds.

At lower levels of proficiency, Crook­
ston is represented by American Le­
gen, Babe Ruth, and Midget teams in
intercity play. A recreational program
sponsored by the park board serves as
the feeder system for these teams.

Crookston baseball has produced a
host of players who progressed to play
at college level. Several local athletes
have had the opportunity to play pro­
fessionally. Turner played in the 60's
and Gary Royal spent a couple of years
with the N.Y. Mets' organiza­tion in the
60's.

By far the most successful Crookston
player was Wes Westrum, a Clearbrook
native, who played with the Northern
League team, and then spent many
years playing and managing in the
major leagues, mostly for the N.Y.
Giants and Mets.

Softball

Back in 1921 Paul Schmidt, physical
instructor in the local school system, in­
roduced softball to Crookston. The
sport was played between classes since
leagues were not in existence and with­
in two to three years the sport was dis­
continued.

F.J. Lipovitz was then hired by the
Park Board to supervise recreational
activities and softball was reactivated.
Under Lipovitz' guidance, a total of
sixty-eight men's and boy's teams were
formed in addition to a large number of
women's and girls' teams. The game
was played from early morning until
dark, five days a week. Rivalry was
close and, with competition as keen as it
was, it was not uncommon to have
crowds of three and four thousand at­
tending the games. Crookston was host
to the State Tournament on two occa­
sions during the 30's.

There were ten men on a team, the
tenth being a short-fielder who played
somewhere between the base paths and
the outfielders. Bases were only forty­
five feet long, and the pitching mound
was only thirty-three and a half feet
from the batter's box. With all the fast
pitching at this time, batters had little
time to decide whether to hit or pass.
Most of the games ended in low scores.
After a few years the distance was in­
creased to sixty feet between bases, and
placement of the pitcher's mound to its
present position was initiated.

Outstanding teams sponsored by
many business firms of the day in­
cluded: Co. M, National Guard, San­
itary Dairy, DeMolay, Firemen, Minne­
sota Highway Department, Rotary,
Crookston Times, Crookston Milling
Co., and Hansen Tires.

Softball had been introduced in
Crookston under the name of kitten­
ball. The ball used was larger than th
present one but just as hard. The name
of the game was changed to diamond­
ball, which name prevailed for some
time until it was changed to the current
term of softball.

Stars of the day were plentiful, and
each team had its share. One of the out­
standing teams of the 30's was the Co.
M team. It won the championship four
years in a row. After this achievement
the rest of the league voted not to let
this team play. The only way any of th
players could participate was to discon­
tinue the team and involve the members
in other league teams.

If any All-Star team were to be chosen
from those years, some feel the follow­
ing would deserve the honor, with two
named at each position except for the
pitcher, which has five: Catcher - Roy
Lindell, Mike Morin; First base - Glen
Gumlia, Robert McWaters; Second base
- Ed McWaters, Bunny Holtz; Short
stop - Halvor Tvedten, Charlie Sannes;
Third base - Andy Carey, Randolph
Saugsstad; Outfielders - Irving Brun­
elle, Ted Parenteau, Dave LeBlanc,
Toddy Johnson, Tony Schmidt; Short
fielder - Gil Berquam, Lyle Francis;
Pitcher - Ed Romuld, Bill Bates, Ed
McWaters, Bud Quist, and George
Charboneau.

Oldtimers will recall such names as
Dr. Neblung, Emil Romuld, Ray Oppe­
gard, Milan Espe, Bob O'Boyle, Lowell
Francis, Lowell Grady, Frank Sherak,
Joe Malone, Al Prudhomme, Mike
Bang, Albert Acker, Lawrence Ande­
erson, and Stewart Saver. Bill McWaters,
who participated in league play for 30
years, umpired for fifteen.

In 1969 Crookston appointed Ray
Eklund as a full-time city recreational
director. The Highland Park Complex,
which has five softball fields, one base­
ball diamond, four tennis courts, and
parking for ninety cars, has been in
existence since 1971. Today fast pitch
has been phased out because of the lack
of pitchers and slow pitch has taken
over.

Presently there are twenty-two men's
teams and twelve girls' teams. The men
play a total of 322 games and the women
play 96, not including tournament games.
A Journey Back Into The Early 1900's...........
Come Back With Us

The following accounts are memories contributed by Mrs. Isabelle [Gramer] Popenbagen.

When...railroading was "big business" in Crookston; it provided not only great economic stability by employing many people at good pay...plus reliable transportation...but beyond that...it furnished a charisma of exciting activity...with the bustling crowds at the Great Northern and Northern Pacific depots. In addition to the "paying customer"...there were those who "rode the rods"...and "hobo camps" were scattered all along the train routes.

Railroad families I recall as living "on the hill" near my home...were "the Laughlins"..."the Juhls"..."the Jim Byrnes" on North Main Street..."the Jim Lemens" and "the Mullins" on North Broadway...for the first half of this century and for some years before, the railroad men...in their handsome navy blue uniforms...with gold trim and buttons on their coats and caps...were a common sight.

I suppose many youngsters growing up in that era...enjoyed the game of "make believe train" as I did...we had a big wood swing in our yard, with facing bench seats. I would get my playmates to occupy the seats as passengers and I was "conductor and engineer" sitting on the wooden slat floor...furnishing the "locomotion"...I rigged up a bell on the support post of the swing...and took my passengers to the most outlandish sounding places...hoping their imagination matched my own...

Vandermark

Back in the 1918 era of Crookston...a lovely white haired lady known to everyone as "Auntie Vandermark"...a midwife who helped usher many a Crookstonite into life. She kept her black satchel packed, ready to go at an instant's notice...and stay for as long as she was needed...which sometimes meant not only looking after the new baby and mother, but the household as well.

"Auntie" and her son Harold lived in a white frame house on the west side of the old overhead N.P. Bridge "on the Hill" and several blocks north of the bridge. The yard around the house was very large and filled with fruit trees and flowering shrubs and there was a small greenhouse at the rear of the lot.

Auntie Vandermark was always glad to have her "children" as she called them, come to see her, and I'll never forget one sunny summer afternoon when a companion and I...we were about eight years old...were in the neighborhood and decided to call on her...she beamed like a ray of sunshine and made each of us feel like we were something special. After showing us her beautiful flowers and garden, we felt very grown-up to be served milk and cookies in her cozy kitchen...what a happy memory from a carefree, sunny childhood in Crookston...to me, she will always symbolize that famous line, "Let me live in a house by the side of the road, and be a friend to man".

The Rhubarb Lady

Back in the 20's..."The Rhubarb Lady"...so-called by the kids who would spot her coming down the neighborhood alleys...about once a week in the summers...selling fresh vegetable and fruits...from her wagon...pulled by her faithful horse "Old Charley"...she would usually arrive at our place about noon...hot and weary...and was often invited to share our noon meal...the wagon and Charley rested in the shade of a large oak and I loved to fetch him water and a bite to eat...I think my love of horses stemmed from this period...Old Charley was so patient as he stood waiting for his mistress...swishing his tail about to keep off the flies...occasionally looking with his big brown eyes at the house...

The real name of the lady was "Mary Savery", and she had come to this country from England. She lived on a farm five miles west of Crookston...it was a lovely place...the little white house was on top of a hill which sloped gently down toward the Red Lake River, with a wide pasture circling a wooden area at the left...Early in their marriage, the husband died in the big influenza epidemic...and Mary was left along to carry on...which was why she turned to truck gardening. I think she was an example to me and everyone else of the dignity of hard work, and the whole town admired her charm, dignity and courage.

On Sundays, Mary, who was a devout Episcopalian, would drive her fancy black...single seated buggy to church...pulled by "Old Charley" duded up for the occasion with some sort of a fancy red knotted blanket over his flanks. Mary was a pretty, slightly built woman and she made quite a picture sitting erect in her buggy, dressed in a long black taffeta dress with white lace at the collar and cuffs...I always think of her as a real classy lady.

"I remember, I remember".............
"I Remember"

In the 20's...the covered wagons...of the Gypsies, that is...in the summers...news of their appearance spreading like wildfire through the town...the wagons with their tops swaying...filled with women and children and stuff...pots and pans and whatnot dangling on the outside. When they were sighted in a neighborhood, kids were summoned or yanked inside their homes...blinds pulled...and doors locked. The rumor had persisted in the town that early in the 1900's a girl about ten years old, with long black curly hair, had been kidnapped by the Gypsies in Central Park. She had at first, been presumed to have drowned in the Red Lake River, but no body was ever recovered and the Gypsies were in town at the time of her disappearance.

The wagons would stop in the neighbor-hoods...while the Gypsy fortune tellers would go door-to-door asking to have their palms crossed with silver in exchange for a fortune told by palm or tea leaves...some foolish clients parted not only with silver but some things they hadn't counted on. The only thing in their favor that could be said, was that they created a certain amount of excitement in a time that had no diversions such as radio or television. I do not recollect seeing much of the gypsies in the thirties, - most likely they acquired cars and sought greener pastures, - I do not know what caused their disappearance from the local scene, other than the chilly reception they received.

Signs of the Times

I remember...in the twenties...when there were diseases like scarlet fever and smallpox prevalent...seeing homes marked with signs near the door or in a window "Scarlet Fever"..."Smallpox"...which meant the place was quarantined. I do not recall our family having anything but the usual mumps and measles. I recall the fifth and sixth grades at the old Cathedral School receiving a patch test for tuberculosis...If the test indicated...then our chests were x-rayed by the family doctor. "T.B." as it was called...was quite prevalent...Sunnyrest was the sanatorium at Crookston...Doctors I recall practicing in Crookston at the time of the "signs" were: Dr. Norman, Dr. Hodgson...Dr. Holte...Dr. Nelson...later on there was Dr. M.O. Oppegaard, Dr. C.L. Oppegaard, Dr. Locken, and others whose names I do not recall.

Then there were...in the time before refrigerators were manufactured..."ice boxes"...usually wooden...with a metal lined compartment for the ice...surrounded by shelves for food...the iceman would know how many pounds of ice a household wanted by a sign placed on the front door or window...on a hot summer day it was great to see him drive up...hoist a big hunk of ice with hugh calipers over his shoulder (he wore a heavy black rubber tunic) and put it in our "ice box"...we could usually count on mother making a big freezer of vanilla ice cream that day, and was it good!

Echoes of the Past

I remember...the low, steady humming of the "old dam" in Sampson's Addition...on quiet summer evenings;

Sunday afternoons, when the sound of music was the Band Concert in Central Park...with T.W. Thorson "Mr. Music Man" as conductor; the sound of the morning doves in early morning...followed by the clatter of horse-drawn delivery trucks mingled with the loud bangs and horns of "the automobiles"; the sound of milk cans being rattled around at the creamery on North Broadway; the spring and fall sounds of cars and southeasterly winds blowing through Sampson's Addition...on quiet summer evenings; the almost constant sounds from the busy Great Northern and Northern Pacific Railroads...the clatter of the big wheels on the steel rails...the lonesome sound of train whistles during the night; the church bells ringing out for Sunday services; the startling wail of the fire siren...Winters were accompanied by the sound of coal being shoveled down metal shoots into basement bins...the scrunchy sounds of vehicles and people on icy streets...the rhythmic sounds of the bells on the huge draft horses pulling the long, low wooden sleds of ice blocks taken from the Red Lake River near Central Park to the large storage barn near the east side of the Northern Pacific Overpass; the ringing of the bells at the neighborhood schoolhouses, announcing the start of school and calling students in from "Recess"...the sounds of "Radio" in the later twenties...the familiar theme song of the "Ma Perkins" show...the hilarious conversa-tions of "Amos and Andy"...the beautiful music of the Big Name Bands...Tommy Dorsey, Wayne King, Artie Shaw, Guy Lombardo...many originating in the famous Trianon Ballroom in Chicago and the New Yorker in New York.

"The Talkies"

Back in the late twenties, when radio created a new dimension in our lives...also talking movies...Al Jolson in the first talking movie "The Jazz Singer" was shown at the Grand Theatre...was that a sensation! Gone from the scene was the piano player who had provided mood music for the "silents"...

On reflection, it is good we had a comparatively tranquil "twenties" because we did not of course know it then, but we were to face the traumatic "thirties" with the Big Depression and Dirt Storms and the Big War in the "forties" and the following years with unbelievable advances on so many technical and scientific fronts...which have occasioned so many different "life styles" from the time when I was young.