Chapter I

POLK COUNTY PREPARES FOR STATE AND COUNTY CENTENNIAL

Phillip Anderson, Judge of Probate, Chairman of Polk County Centennial Committee

“As a result of a meeting held in the summer of 1957, the following persons were named to make plans for the Polk County Statehood Centennial: Judge Phillip Anderson, chairman, Crookston, Minnesota; Dr. B. E. Youngquist, vice chairman, Crookston, Minnesota; T. M. McCall, secretary, Crookston, Minnesota; Oscar Larson, treasurer, Erskine, Minnesota. Other members were Hjalmer Erickson, Fertile; Franklin Vikan, Fosston; Almer Bakken, Fosston; William Kiewel, Crookston; Mrs. Elmer Bredlie, Eldred; Mrs. Charles Pester, Crookston; Henry Tweten, East Grand Forks; Clara Berg, Crookston. This committee met several times during the fall of 1957 to develop plans for Polk County's part in the statewide celebration of the centennial.

The first project of this committee was to arrange for financial support for the projects. This was adequately taken care of by an appropriation by the County Board of Commissioners. The first centennial event in Polk County took place in February when a centennial pageant, under the direction of Fred Shrimpton, was presented at the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Several committees and organizations prepared historical episodes based on events which had taken place in Polk County during the past 100 years. The pageant was well done and well received by the capacity crowd in attendance as the several hundred persons who participated in the pageant recreated scenes in which their parents and grandparents had been the original actors and actresses.

The next event took place in East Grand Forks on May 8, 9 and 10 when this county honored the old settlers at a luncheon which featured the Honorable Edward J. Devitt, Federal District Judge and former resident of East Grand Forks, as speaker. This centennial program continued on May 9, with the crowning of the Centennial Days Queen, Janice Skovlem. On Saturday, May 10, which was the official Statehood Day in Minnesota, East Grand Forks staged the biggest parade ever assembled in that city. It was composed of so many units that it was necessary to have some units assemble across the river in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Your chairman had the honor of carrying, as a passenger in his 1927 Chevrolet sedan, the honored centennial pioneer, Jerry Driscoll, who celebrated his 100th birthday on April 19, 1958. Mr. Driscoll took an active interest in the parade and pointed out the many changes that had taken place during his residence in the East Grand Forks community.

Also on May 10, Polk County was represented in the Statehood Centennial Parade in Saint Paul. The Polk County Cen-