him into buying. Regina was upset but the girls got some new dresses with the help of one of the older girls.

Threshing was a big affair, with three tables filled with hungry men, starting with breakfast! Anyone who wasn't a Scandinavian was considered a "foreigner". The Olson's were the first to build a new house. Gene recalls plenty of food with the meat stored in the granary, deep in the oats' bin to keep it cool. Eggs were kept in brine during slack seasons and always there was a big garden. There was much teasing of the oldest girl during her "courting" days and the remembrance of crates of oranges the groom brought for everyone on the wedding day. It was a beautiful outdoor wedding! One of the bride's attendants became quite upset when a puppy chewed up her fancy brown shoes.

John and Regina had nine children: Hannah, a teacher in Helgeland Township and an excellent tailoress; Otto, a well drilled man whose wells are still in use on many farms in the community; Arthur, who farmed the homestead until his death. The farm is still in his family; Alma, a nurse; Inga, a teacher in Helgeland Township; Gina, a teacher in Helgeland Township. She and her husband and niece visited her parents' homeland in Meloy, Norway in 1973; Martin, a barber; Leonard, a tailor; and Melville and Evelyn who both died in infancy.

BENNIE ROOD

Bennie Rood was born in Emmet County, Iowa in 1902 to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rood. His parents died a week apart from pneumonia in 1911. He then went to live with an aunt and uncle in Argyle, Wisconsin until 1927. In 1927, he and his brother Lewis moved back to his parents' farm which they had bought. They farmed this land until 1936. In 1937, Bennie moved to Brislet Township in Polk County, Minnesota. He had a team of horses and two hundred head of sheep when he came to his undeveloped farm in Brislet. He had some machinery, and with this he worked up the farm, he also built the buildings that are still there.

He met and married Dorothy Halso in 1940. They continued on the farm. He later went into more dairy and grain farming, he also raised a few beef cattle.

They have one daughter who attended the Warren high school and is now married and lives in San Bernadino, California. They have one grandson, Michael.

Bennie was active in Community affairs. He was a Brislet Township supervisor and chairman of the Town Board for many years. He and his wife are both retired now and still live in Brislet Township.

Bygland Township History

Bygland Township Polk County No. 150 Range 49 West. Population: 356. Bygland Township consists of 25 full sections and 7 part sections of land because the Red River runs on the west side of the township. According to the early pioneers, Bygland Township may have been formed in 1877. No definite date can be established. The first birth recorded in the township is a boy born to Mr. and Mrs. Tarald Gunderson on January 13, 1880. Township records also show that state, township and general elections were held at school houses or homes within the township. Most town board meetings were held at the clerk's home or at the S. K. Flaat Store. The township purchased the present town hall, which was an old church, from the Bygland Lutheran Congregation for $350. It was moved across the road to the south on a site leased from Arne Flaat, Section 10.

The first record of an annual town meeting was March 10, 1890. The officers of the township were: Supervisors: Anton Lindem, Sven Sveningson, Feder Grunderson; Town Clerk, Halvor Grunderson; Treasurer, Jacob Jorgenson; Assessor, August Jorgenson, Justice of Peace, A. C. Asselin and Tom Benson; Constables, Edward Monson and Fred Wurden.

ROADS: The Minnesota State Highway 220 is a paved concrete road which runs the length of the township from north to south. It divides the township in half from east to west. Bygland has approximately 23 miles of Polk County roads with state and federal aid. There are approximately 22 miles of improved gravel township roads to maintain. The Town Board of Supervisors hire contractors with modern equipment to maintain these roads. All roads must be kept in good condition for the school buses. School District 595 of East Grand Forks, Minnesota picks up most of the school children. However, in the east side of the township, School District 600 from Fisher, Minnesota serves that part of the township. All the township has mail service from East Grand Forks, Minnesota, R.R. 1 and Fisher, Minnesota, R.R. 1A. Both areas are served by the same mail carrier.

DITCH DRAINAGE: There are approximately 12 miles of County ditches. There are several miles of ditching done by the farmers on their own land. There are several coulees within the township, some of which empty into the Red Lake River on the east of the township. There are others that empty into the Red Lake River on the west side of the township.

FLOOD CONTROL: The Township had a problem with flood waters from the Red River backing up into the coulees. During the spring flood of 1969, the whole community helped to sand bag. This prevented serious damage to coulee crossings. When the flood waters receded, the Town Board hired a contractor to build the old dikes higher and build a new dike in Section 33 at the south end of the township. In 1970, the Township erected a huge dike on the coulee crossing between Section 8 and 17 near the Arnold Moe farm. To keep flood waters from backing up into the coulees, there is a 36-inch culvert with a trap door on the north side of the dike for drainage.

RURAL FIRE PROTECTION: In 1961, Bygland, Huntsville, Rhinehart, Grand Forks, Sullivan and Keystone Townships formed a Rural Fire Department. They purchased a fire truck and signed a contract with the East Grand Forks Fire Department to furnish Rural Fire Protection. Since that time, another truck for additional protection and a 3,000-gallon tank has been purchased. This equipment is housed in the East Grand Forks Fire Department.

LIGHT AND POWER: The entire township receives its power from the R.E.A. of Halstad, Minnesota. The east side of the township has had R.E.A. power since 1940; but because of World War II, those living in the west of the township had to wait until February, 1947 for electric power.

TELEPHONE SERVICE: The R.T.A. Phone Company of Halstad, Minnesota, serves most of the township with buried-line private phones. However, the Northwestern Bell of Grand Forks, North Dakota, serves the western corner of the township with the same type of service. The R.E.A. from Halstad, Minnesota, also have a high tower and exchange building to serve the Mobile Phone Customers in a large area. This tower is located near the old Bygland Store, Section 16. At the annual town meeting March 11, 1975, the voters approved authorization to the Town Board Supervisors to adopt a Bygland Township Zoning Ordinance and to adopt the Polk County Zoning Ordinance.

The present Bygland Township Officers are: Supervisors Oscar Bestland, with twenty-four years of service; Manvel Krostue, with twenty-two years of service; and Chairman Ernest Engleland with ten years of service; Town Clerk, Ansel Bridgeford with twenty-three years of service; Treasurer Helmer Rystad with twelve years of service; and Constables, Ray Bestland and Ray Anderson.

BYGLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Bygland Lutheran Church, located nine miles west of Fisher, was organized on November 8, 1874 by a small group of Norwegians who had immigrated to the area two years prior to that date. Most of them had come from a parish called Bygland in Norway, so they chose that name for their new congregation. The charter members were Halvor and Osmund Thar-