women could leave their children while they shopped. It became a meeting place and a social center, especially for the farm women. The location made it an ideal place for the many food sales that were conducted there. Policemen, always on foot, used it for a resting place at night and later had a telephone installed with a flashing red signal light over the street outside. Malicious vandalism was no problem at that time and the building was never locked. Once in a while during the night it would be a haven for some of the town characters like little “Peaches” in his long flowing overcoat, stuffing in and flopping into one of the rockers or “Wheel 'Em Pete” who once pulled a pair of pliers from his overall pocket and prevailed on Oscar Norlin to pull an aching tooth on the bank steps.

The women from the country churches came to George to get their supply of pop, candy and whatever was necessary for the refreshment stand at their annual Ladies Aid Auction every summer. This was a gala day. Many of the people from town attended these auctions enjoying the sumptuous dinners they had served on long tables outdoors, eating the home-made ice cream and buying home-made articles, the most popular items being the woolen mitts and socks the women had knitted from wool that they had carded and spun at their meetings. These meetings began in the morning and even though the homes were small they brought their spinning wheels and wool and worked all day, the hostess furnishing the noon meal and lunches.

George had unlimited energy and met each day with zest. What was good for the town was what he wanted. He laughed and joked and enjoyed business for almost fifty years. When the store was temporarily closed in July during the Second World War, because it was not an essential business, George went openly and so did many children. Charles became an essential milkman until the Minnesota Dairy found a man for the city route and later an essential worker during campaign at the beet sugar factory. He found it a novelty to work just twelve hours a day instead of seventeen or eighteen and fully enjoyed being able to stay home on Sundays and holidays. George kept in touch with his city by selling popcorn in front of the store and selling war bonds on DeMers Avenue. When the cold drove him indoors he enclosed a small area in front of the store, where he sold popcorn and whatever merchandise he could beg and buy from the wholesale houses. By the next midsummer the store was again in full operation. When the city celebrated V.J. Day, George rushed to buy American flags, remembering the clamor for flags and how he had sold hundreds of them when the First World War ended. The next day he was dismayed to find that only a few flags had been sold and he wondered what had happened to patriotism and flag waving.

There were fine years and there were lean years, but George found all of them worth living. When both George and Charles were finally spent and the store was closed forever, it was a sad day for those who had known the gay happy place they had found there. The young people today missed a fine era, an era that produced men like George or perhaps it was an era produced by men like George. He and his store were so much a part of the past history of East Grand Forks! Twenty-five years have passed since George entered into rest on May 21, 1951. Even though he may not have agreed with some of it, he would have been proud of the progress made by the city in that quarter century.

EICKHOF CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Three sons were born to Daniel and Magdalene Meier Eickhof of Wohlesbussen, Germany. Chris, the oldest son, was born September 25, 1849, and attended school for eight years at Holstensted, Germany. He was rejected from military service because of ill health, and became an apprentice to a contractor for three years, receiving board, room and clothing, plus seven dollars a year. After this, he studied architecture at a technical school in Buxtehude, Germany.

On May 9, 1875, Maria Kathina Christina Johanna Dammon was married to Christain (Chris) Eickhof in Holstensted, Germany. Maria (called Johanna) Dammon was the youngest daughter of Heinrich and Magrata Harms Dammon and was born in Alkoster, Buxtehude, Germany, on November 19, 1854. She had six sisters and one brother, namely Anna (Mrs. Bartell Heinrichs), Magrata (Mrs. Morris George), Gisa or Bertha (Mrs. Otto Wallman and later Mrs. John Kann), Elizabeth (Mrs. Carl Billig), Dorothea (Mrs. William Eggers), and Heinrich Dammon.

Johanna’s father was a shoemaker and she had a very good education. She could read and write Latin fluently and was confirmed in the Lutheran faith on March 2, 1868. Her father died when she was seventeen years old and her mother died when she was nineteen years old. After that she lived with her sisters until her marriage to Chris Eickhof. Johanna and three of her sisters later came to America to live.

Chris inherited the Eickhof estate because he was the oldest son. His father lived with them for six years. Three children were born to them in Germany — Bertha, Johanna, and Dora. They sold their home in the spring of 1881 and came to America to live. They stopped ten days at Liverpool and were on the ship for twelve days in crossing the Atlantic. Chris’s brother, John, also came to America with them and the fare was three hundred dollars each. Johanna had two sisters living in Red Wing and Chris had a brother, Fred, living at St. Hilaire, Minnesota. They visited in Red Wing when they arrived in Minnesota and came to Crookston the following spring. They lived on the hill until their home at 510 North Front Street was completed on September 24.

Eight children were born in America — Henry, Laura, Flo, Grace, Anna, Nettie, Frances and William.

Chris had his own business and named it “Chris Eickhof Construction Company.” Many houses and buildings still stand as a monument of his work.

Chris and Johanna celebrated their Silver and Golden Wedding anniversaries with all the living children and their families present. They took many trips, and in December, 1908, they returned to Germany to visit relatives and friends. Johanna’s sisters and brother were still living at that time. One winter they spent in California, attended the World’s Fair and visited the Panama Canal Zone. Every Christmas their children, their in-laws and grandchildren would come home. This was an occasion that no one would miss.

Chris would not allow any of his girls to work with him, and in 1910 he took Otto in as a partner. The firm was then named “Chris Eickhof and Sons.” Henry passed away in 1885 and when William returned home after World War I he was not interested in the business. Chris retired in 1921, leaving the business to Otto.

Chris and Johanna enjoyed good health until the summer of 1927 when Chris was very ill. He was ill again in 1930 and was never very strong after that. They enjoyed each other’s company and played a game of cards called “Sixty-Six.” Chris would help Johanna with the dishes so they could return to their card game. The days were also spent reading the daily papers and when Johanna’s eyesight failed, Chris read the papers to her. The reading also included a German paper with a serial story.

On December 24, 1934, when everyone was home for Christmas, Chris passed away. The family came to celebrate, but stayed to mourn.