the Sand Hill Lutheran Church or Neby Church as many preferred to call it. After their marriage, they lived at Neby where Mr. Stortroen served as postmaster and they also operated the general store from 1892 to 1896. Mrs. Andrew Stortroen said that there was no salary for the postmaster then, but he could keep the money from the sale of postage stamps, registered letters and money orders. Mrs. Minerd Larson, née Bereth Stortroen who presently lives in Fisher, Minnesota, was born at Neby. The living quarters were above the store. Mrs. Andrew Stortroen also told that many agents, peddlers and travelers who stopped there all had to be given free meals and often overnight lodging.

Sam Dolgaard came to this country from Norway in 1896. Shortly after his arrival he bought the store which included the postoffice. He mentions that the railroad came to Climax, Minnesota in 1896, and that after that there was talk of rural delivery but no mention is made as to what date the mail delivery to the Neby Postoffice discontinued.

The store was closed in 1902 by Sam Dolgaard, when he moved to Saum, Minnesota. There may have been others who operated the store and postoffice during this early era and possibly later than 1902 but so far we have found no other positive data.

The store contained supplies consisting of food, material, clothes, hardware and other articles needed by the pioneers. This merchandise was brought to the area by steambound on the Red River.

During this era, a large building also on the Neby site, was used for community gatherings. Dances were held there, also Norwegian plays all home talent and produced by the local people.

The store building stood many years as a memory of the by-gone years but now it has been demolished.

Several families lived on the site and farmed the acreage for a number of years. Mr. and Mrs. Ed Runenberg, Mr. and Mrs. George Helgeson, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Larson, Mr. and Mrs. Emmett Kleven. Mrs. Bill Gorter of Eldred, Minnesota is the present owner of this property. Mr. Arnold Wolden and Miss Maria Krogsgen of Saum, Minnesota have been most helpful in supplying facts for this history.

Mr. Arnold Wolden’s grandfather, Ole Wolden operated the Neby store and postoffice for a period of time, he also farmed in the vicinity a short time. Mr. Arnold Wolden has 4 to 5 items from his grandfather’s Neby store, and he says several other items they brought from Neby were lost in a fire they had in 1945.

Miss Maria Krogsgen is the daughter of Peter Krogsgen and his wife Anne Thoresen, a sister of Helge Thoresen. From old letters and other information, Maria found that Mrs. Peter Krogsgen and Ole J. Wolden came to this country in 1880 and 1881.

MINNESOTA MAN, NUMBER TWO
by E. Boh

The discovery in Minnesota of a partly mummified body, believed to be that of an ancient man, set off an archaeological controversy that lasted for years. In the days before our present-day social standards, such a find was looked upon by the populace in amazement. Today, we take such a find as a matter of fact.

The late P. T. Barnum, who lived in this early era, made a fortune by taking advantage of this curiosity found in people. In that bygone era, newspapers sold thousands of extra copies just by printing a photo of such a find as the mummified man. In today’s world, the edge has been taken off of the powerful sword of the ever-present radio, television and improved communications. Entertainment is now always at hand, and the advantage “P. T.” had for instant entertainment is gone. This change in our social behavior led to the downfall of the medicine show, the stage show, vaudeville and all other forms of personal contact types of entertainment.

When a traveling show played in a community, having attendance was never a serious matter, as people paid the admission of ten or fifteen cents, eagerly seeking entertainment. Crookston wasn’t to be outdone. We had in our midst in this “Golden Era,” a home-grown P. T. Barnum. Here was an enterprising gentleman who also sought riches along the path of least resistance. Our homespun enterprising gentleman was known as Lucius “Lucky” O’Brien. The story that I am about to relate was given to me by my mother, Mrs. Katherine Boh. She had seen “Lucky” many times, as she had been given piano lessons in his home by Mrs. O’Brien.

“Lucky”, according to my mother, had a home at the corner of Ash and Fifth streets. She said that she never knew of his exact employment, but suspected that he lived by his wits. Mother often stated that she would never forget “Lucky” as he attended church on Sundays, dressed in a manner unlike the ways of our rural community. It was Mother’s contention that he had the time of his arrival at church timed to the “Nth Degree.” It was always timed to be just a few minutes or so late. He used this late entry to draw a maximum of personal attention.

As the seats were generally filled on his arrival, “Lucky” was always escorted to his seat by an usher. This was part of his act. When the usher reached the pew with empty seats, he would stop, and those seated would rise to make room for “Lucky”. This disturbance was the “cue” for “Lucky” to go into his act. When “Lucky” figured all eyes were on him, he would bow slightly to the usher, as if to say, “Thank you, my good man!” From this moment on, everyone’s eyes were glued to view “Lucky”, as he went into his performance. Although it was a repeat showing each Sunday, it still provided a moment of excitement due to what was to be seen and solemn service. And there, for a brief moment, stood “Lucky” in all his radiant Glory! His attire was something to behold! His suit was what might be described as modified opera clothes! A jet black tuxedo jacket, accent with bright red lapels, an immaculate white shirt, with large white ruffles, topped with a huge black satin bow tie. His pants were dark black, each leg was accent with shiny two-inch wide satin stripes, extending from his waist down to his ankles. Resting at just past his pubic angle over “Lucky”’s shorts, was a black cane, attached to his wrists by small straps. The inner side of the cape was lined with bright red satin, as if to match the lapels on his coat. In his right hand was a bright silver walking stick, topped with a golden ball, its edges studded with clear shiny stones. Held in his left hand, and tilted to the correct angle, so as to cover his forearm, was what is often called a “plug hat.”

“Lucky” was a master at timing. He assumed this pose for a few moments, as he waited for a bit of applause, which almost never failed to follow his entrance. While his spellbound audience scanned him from head to foot, and as if by magic, when the eye had completed one cycle of scanning his image, “Lucky” moved to take his seat. Methodically, the dark image, accent by the red lining of the cape, moved silently to take his seat. Once again, the master paused. What was the second necessary to gather the further attention of his admirers, and in one absolute synchronous motion, “Lucky” collapsed his plug hat, bent his knees and descended into a sitting position. As “Lucky’s” posterior touched the seat, he would thump the floor with the walking stick, as if to signal that his portion of the performance had ended. “Lucky” had made his usual Sunday entrance into the church.

The exodus was a little different matter, and was a little more complicated, for if he left early, tongues would wag, so “Lucky” would remain after services, his head bent over the cane, as if he were in deep meditation. As the sound of the last worshipers’ footsteps shuffled across the doorstep between the vestibule and the main sanctuary, “Lucky” would rise, and walk in a quiet and dignified manner towards the front door. With the same uncanny skill for perfect timing, always exhibited by “Lucky,” he waited until the last heel cleared the top step descending from the church, then he stepped from the church, to become the only figure on the top step. This put “Lucky” on a podium, higher than the surrounding people. He would wait until the descending people were several steps below him, and at this point, he would “pop” his collapsible top hat, with a sound that reverberated between the church and the building across the street. The sound caused heads to turn in the direction of the sound, and there standing on the top step was “Lucky”; his head was cocked slightly to the