sanitorium.

"Miss Carey, state organizer of the library commission, made a card catalog file for the library. She came here and worked four days, free of charge, and her catalog answered the purpose beautifully for many years. Eventually the library board decided to have a new one which was put in by a lady from South Dakota. This cost the city over $500. This lady discarded about 1,000 books which Miss Lommen got permission to distribute as she pleased, so she gave most of them to the "White Elephant," where they were loaned to people who live out of town.

The traveling library proved a godsend as two were rented every year of 50 books each, and as the library got little else Miss Lommen was glad to get them. It was quite a task to run a library with no money. These traveling libraries cost $2.50 each and she managed so they paid for themselves.

"Miss Lommen was librarian from 1902-1924 — 22 years, during which she kept a struggling library at first alive and helped it then grow stronger. Miss Lommen was a tall, slender lady, quite austere in appearance. She wore glasses, often dressed in a white shirtwaist with high collar and a long black skirt. Outwardly she was very stern — one look over the top of her glasses or occasionally one shout of "quiet!" kept perfect order in the library. There were no problems of discipline in those days when Miss Lommen was about. Inwardly she was a very kind-hearted person.

"Miss Virginia Heston was the librarian from June 1924- June 1926. She introduced the children's story hour and the children's vocational reading club. A prize was given to the girl and boy reading the most children's non-fiction books during the summer — and the first prizes were won by Gladys Garvin and Lea Spring (still a good library user in 1976)."

From 1926 to 1930, Mrs. Clara Bordwell was librarian. One interesting event during her term of office was the attempt made by the city council in 1929 to reduce the library budget by $1/10 mill. The mayor, Dr. Locken, vetoed the measure saying "while the reduction of taxes is a worthy ideal, I personally do not believe that it is our obligation to reach that effort by sacrificing the work of the center of our culture in this community."

In 1931, Miss Claire Winzenburg became librarian. She served for 23 years and retired in 1954 as Mrs. Claire Madden. During her time the library continued its gradual growth in circulation, increased its equipment, and made many building improvements.

Mr. Leonard Stasney was then librarian for one year. From 1955-1972, Cleo McDonald was librarian. In November 1958, it was decided by a vote of the people to establish a county library. In 1959 the county commissioners levied a one mill tax to raise money for the project. Existing libraries in Fosston and McIntosh joined the Polk County system. Other branches were started in Climax, Fertile, and East Grand Forks. Through the addition of new branches and a bookmobile, library service for all residents of the county became a reality.

In 1972, Cheryl Bjorn became librarian. In 1975 the Polk County — Crookston Library became part of the Lake Agassiz Regional Library, which is headquartered in Moorhead. Lake Agassiz now serves Polk (excluding East Grand Forks) Norman, Becker, and Clay counties and the city of Breckenridge. The majority of Minnesota libraries now belong to some type of a regional library system, allowing for closer cooperation of neighboring public libraries and thus better service. Regionalizing has also given Polk County access to a much larger book collection and access to the staff expertise of a major Minnesota library.

In 1959 the Library Board became a county board with 9 city and county members. In 1975, the county board appointed four of its members to serve on the 19 member Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board. The city-county board also still meets on a regular basis.

It would be impossible to name all of the Library Board members who have given so generously of their time to serve throughout the years. But, to them goes a special thanks for their sound leadership and direction of the Polk County-Crookston Library.

This history covers the history of the Polk County-Crookston Library from 1882 to 1976. In 1908, its first and only permanent home given by Andrew Carnegie was dedicated. At that time the library housed 5,000 volumes. It now houses over 37,000 volumes in the very same building. The Polk County system now owns over 47,000 volumes housed throughout the County in Climax, Fertile, Fosston, McIntosh, and Crookston. The headquarters library in Crookston is bursting at the seams, but the future looks bright that the need for a new home for the library will be realized.

Neby

Neby was the name given to a place which contained a store, post office, dance hall and blacksmith shop. It was located on the southwest corner of Section 36, Tynsid township. If it were in existence today, it would be approximately one-half mile south and five miles west of Eldred, Minnesota.

In the 1870's to early 1900's as far as we apprehend, this location was used as a distribution place for the mail which had been brought from Fisher's Landing. We have found from the history and biography of Polk County, page 414, that Helge Thoreson was one who carried the mail for two years between Fisher's Landing and Neby. The second year he also delivered the mail.

Mr. Helge Thoreson was the first person paid by the government to carry mail in this area. He received a salary of $340 the first year and $375 the second year. It is also reported that later Halvor Grove and Donald Hamilton were carriers of mail from Fisher's Landing to Neby, Climax and as far as Nielsville, Minnesota.

We also have a letter from Maria Krogseng of Saum, Minnesota with the following facts taken from an old letter and document left by her parents. She says, "I have a very worn official document from the post office department February 14, 1882 that states: 'I, Postmaster General have appointed you postmaster of Neby, county of Polk, state of Minnesota'. It is signed by Peter Krogseng and the assistant Postmaster General.

We have no positive record as to who was postmaster at Neby after Peter Krogseng left for Norway in 1885. Possibly Ole Wolden took over the job. Andrew Sand is another name mentioned but this writer has no proof or facts at this time as to when or if he was postmaster there.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stortroen were married June 1892 at

Old Neby Store (Tynsid Township).
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 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, clothing, hardware and other articles needed by the pioneers. This merchandise was brought to the area by steamboat 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 Ruthenberg, 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 Krog- seng 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 there in 1945.

Miss Maria Krog- seng is the daughter of Peter Krog- seng and his wife Anne Thoreson, a sister of Helge Thoreson. From old letters and other information, Maria found that Mrs. Peter Krog- seng 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 mumified 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 mumified 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 of “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 entertain-

ment. 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 genuine excitement due to the disguised 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, accented by 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 by shiny two-inch wide satin stripes, extending from his waist down to his ankles. Resting at just above the pocket angle over “Lucky’s” shoulder, 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 forearms, was what is often called a “plug hat.”

“Lucky” was a master at timing. He assumed this pose for a few seconds, a masterful secret to instant, while his spellbound audience scanned him from head to foot, and as by magic, when the eye had completed one cycle of scanning his image, “Lucky” moved to take his seat. Methodically, the dark image, accented by the red lining of the cape, moved silently to take his seat. Once again, the master paused for that fraction of a 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