miles from Storm Lake, renting the land.

In 1903 the Erdmanns all came to Crookston, Minnesota to farm twelve Northeast in Parnell Township. A farm of 320 acres was bought from Mr. Sam Blueh for $23.50 an acre. Half of the land was prairie. They came here from Storm Lake, Iowa, on an immigrant train bringing cows, horses, pigs, chickens, a dog, machinery and household goods. The train stopped in Crookston, Minnesota, and the cows were driven to the farm. Emil and Henry took care of the animals and chickens on the train, which took four days to get here. The rest of the family came by passenger train.

In 1934, Henry and Fred took over the farming. The farm was sold to Vance Schipper in 1942. Henry and Fred and Emma then bought a home in Crookston, Minnesota. To the Erdmann union there were born eighteen grandchild, forty-two great-grandchildren and twenty-three great-great-grandchildren.

Anna Erdmann married Emil Pankonin. They had eight children: Elsie, Ernest, Fred, Alfred, Walter, Emil, Esther and Arthur. Mr. and Mrs. Pankonin have passed away. Emil Erdmann married Louise Heydt of Crookston, Minnesota January 20, 1909. They lived on what was then known as the Vance farm two miles south of Crookston, Minnesota. In 1914, they bought a 160 acre farm four miles south of Crookston, Minnesota Section 13 in Andover Township. They had five children: Martha, Edna, Walter, Harold and Loren. Harold and family are now living on the home farm. Emil passed away March 1, 1956. Rudolph married Marie Neilsen of Euclid, Minnesota. They bought a farm southwest of Crookston, Minnesota in Andover Township. They had three boys: Albert, Elmer and Irwin. Rudolph, Marie and Irwin have passed away.

Martha married Albert Krentzel. Albert lived in Parnell Township and after marriage they made their home in St. Paul, Minnesota. They had two children: Donald and Ardella. Albert and Ardella have passed away.

The Erdmann families have contributed much in the way of producing food by having large dairy herds, flocks of chickens, and by the raising of all small grains and sugar beets.

VANCE SCHIPPER

Vance Schipper was born in Crookston, Minnesota and attended country school in Parnell Township, near the home of his parents, Edward and Sylvia Frisbee Schipper. He graduated from Central High School in 1948 and was called into active duty with the 47th Viking Division in 1951. While at Fort Rucker, Alabama, he met June Segler of Dothan, Alabama, whom he married in 1954. They bought the old Erdmann homestead in Parnell Township that year and have lived and farmed there ever since.

Their daughter, Ila, is married to Charles Pahlen, and they live in a new home in Parnell Township. Quinn Schipper, son of Vance and June, is a student at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture in Scottsdale, Arizona. Their daughter, Vana, is a student at Central High School in Crookston, Minnesota and Leah is at Highland Middle School. Vance has served eleven years as Parnell Township assessor. June worked as a copywriter at KROX Radio from 1966 to 1976.

Beltrami Village and Reis Township

The village of Beltrami owes its place on the map today to the farmers of the community. Even now a building housing a mill and business center is near completion, having been constructed by Cenex, the cooperative farmers' organization so well known in the Midwest.

There are fifty-four homes in Beltrami, all occupied. Fifteen of these family units are gainfully employed in the village half of them by Cenex.

Three adults live in the house in which they were born: Oscar Aanden, Andrew Anderson and Gladys Johnson. Other adults who have lived in Beltrami since birth are Mrs. Luther Erikson (Lois Johnson), Frank Regdal, Mrs. Norman Mjelde (Hulda Olson Skaug), Jack Webster, Mrs. Clifford Webster (Elmira Johnson), and Keith Webster and children.

People began settling in the Beltrami area about 1870 and by 1885 it had become a thriving community with the Great Northern Railroad built through the center of the town. The post office, however, was three miles south of the train station and was called Edna, named after the postmistress, Edna Webb. Not until 1900, was the post office moved to its present location and named Beltrami. The village was incorporated in 1902.

At the turn of the century, Beltrami boasted a business section comparable to many larger communities today: three hotels; the Regdal, the Staving, and the North Star, managed originally by J. P. Johnson; two department stores, the Kimberley and the Mott; several saloons; three elevators; the Thorpe, the St. Anthony and Dakota, and one individually owned; and three banks. There was also a bustling newspaper, drug store, shoemaker's shop, blacksmith shop, barber shop, photography shop, millinery store, creamery, meat market, hardware store, lumber yard, livery stable, a dentist, and a doctor. Of these businesses and professions only the hardware store has run continuously. Originated by James Regedal and Henry Budd, it was subsequently owned by Louis Johnnesehn (who also was the village photographer), Knemhus and Kise, Hamburg Brothers, Tom Logan and Luther Erikson, who recently retired after forty years in the business.

The department store owned by Mott was later sold to Charlie Ford, a thrifty and ingenious business man. He willed the store to his son, Charlie, who lacked his father's interest in the business, and soon sold it to Budd and Elwood. E. W. Johnson, a young clerk in the store, eventually bought the business, along with his brother, Herman, and Carl Lekue. Later Herman bought Lekue's share, and Lekue built and operated a grain elevator which stood at the site of the present Farmers Union Elevator. In 1914, E. W. Johnson and Company burned to the ground. A new store was set up in the theater building at the north end of town. This store burned in 1918, along with the Lekue elevator, a bank, barber shop, shoemaker shop, warehouses, and Boyer's Store, established by Theodore Boyer and his brother, Milt, in 1908. Both E. W. Johnson and Company and Boyers began Johnson again in a new theater on the site of the original store, and Boyers in the recently vacated postoffice on the corner of Highways 9 and County Road 1.

A pioneer business man in Beltrami was Knute Flakne. He
was a buyer of land and owned several businesses. His grandson, Gary Flakne, is a well-known attorney in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Flakne helped his widowed sister, Mary Hafsal, and her six children immigrate from Norway to Beltrami, Minnesota. The Hafslans were rugged pioneers who helped settle and shape northern Minnesota. Tom Hafslan was president of the First State Bank in Beltrami, which served the community for many years. He is remembered for his integrity and human concern for his clients. One of the early, and for many years a flourishing, business in Beltrami was the Farmers Cooperative Creamery, which opened in 1905 with Ernest Denison as buttermaker. He served until his retirement and won many awards for his excellent butter. Later buttermakers were Krogh and Miller. In 1959 the creamery was forced to close as a result of milk pick-up in the farming area. William Boud operated the first meat market in Beltrami. He butchered and prepared his own meat for sale, and one could purchase good, lean ground beef for ten cents (10e) a pound. Mr. Boud also cut his own ice and operated a large ice-house behind his market.

Fires took much of the business section over the years. The only original buildings still standing on Main Street are the Pederson Garage, the Doyea Tavern and the Cenex Warehouse. The rural mail carriers giving longest years of service to the community were Peter and Alfred Regadal and the present carrier, Helmer Nornes. Carrying the mail before Mr. Regadal was Nels Byington, who had prior to this been a farmer in the community.

The first section boss on the Great Northern through Beltrami was Mr. Price, then William Street, followed by Andrew Olson. Mr. Olson faithfully and well performed this duty until his retirement. Pete Olson and then Melvin Strom followed Andrew Olson. Until about mid-century there were four passenger trains daily through Beltrami. The recently closed station was last served by James Jensen as station agent.

The first school in Beltrami was a typical one-room rural building. An early teacher of note was Miss Truesdell, an elderly lady who despite her age, taught the children in one short term to read fluently, write legibly, and work simple arithmetic. Many pupils were unable to speak English at the beginning of the term. Other early teachers were Olive Reis, Petra Lenes, Mr. Wishard, Mary Vanette, and Joseph Ball (father of Joseph Ball, the Senator). Later teachers included Josephine and Emma Regadal. As the village grew the school became inadequate and in 1900 a three-room building was erected to replace it. The first teachers were Alma Skoor (Mrs. Tom Hafslan), Naomi Dahlquist, and Margaret Weir. In 1918 the children of Beltrami proudly moved to a new brick school housing all elementary and secondary pupils. In 1942 the high school was closed and the students bussed to Fertile. A blow to the community was the closing of the elementary school in 1972, even though there are advantages in a larger school system. A winning baseball team with such names as Reep, Lee, Hafslan, Regadal, Heath, MacNamee, Budd, and Sullivan were prominent, and a fine concert band that performed weekly and on special occasions were both a source of pride in early community life. Former band members still living in the community are Rudy Drivold, Clifford and Allen Webster, Loyal Gust, Warren Carlson, Virgil Gullikson, and Harold Olson.

Warren Welter built the Methodist Episcopal Church (now replaced by the New United Methodist Church building), and the residences now occupied by Roy Logan, Lyle Moteberg, Jerry Nelson, and James Jensen. The Jerry Nelson residence was originally owned and occupied by the Henry Budd family and at that time was the showplace in Beltrami. The Budds came from the East. Mrs. Buss was an Olds, but her mother had remarried a Mr. Harriet before moving to Beltrami to the farm now owned by the Harold Helwegs. Mrs. Budd's brother, Edward, in the East was extremely wealthy, and very generous in offering financial help when it was needed. Another brother, Charlie Olds, had a small store in Beltrami. Mrs. Budd's sister, Jessie, was married to the famous criminal lawyer, Clarence Darrow. They often visited the Budds in Beltrami, as did many
other prominent people from Chicago and points East.

The township of Reis was named for a family who lived on the farm first occupied by ‘Doc’ Mosher when he came to Beltrami. The buildings have since been demolished. Olive Reis was the village school teacher in 1886-87. Just west of the Reis farm lived the Webbs. They had a married daughter in Minneapolis, two sons, Ike and Dick; and three younger daughters: Susie, Dorothy, and Mable. Mable died while the Webbs lived there and was buried on the farm. Ike returned once to locate the grave but it is unmarked.

The Hallocks lived on the farm that is now owned by James Page. There were three sons and a daughter, Olive, who was a teacher. She died while they lived in Beltrami. No one ever knew where the Hallocks came from or where they went. They were known far and wide for their gorgeous flower gardens. The McMillans built a home on the farm where Forest Mosher now lives. The original house is gone. The McMillans were very aristocratic. They had several servants who had their own quarters. On top of the main house was a tower with windows looking in all directions where Mrs. McMillan would watch the farm hands to see if anyone was shirking his duty. Many people think of Beltrami as originally a Norwegian settlement, but with such names as Allen, Bush, Carey, Ford, Enad, Hentey, Kimbrelly, Love, McCue, Olds, Price, Reis, Sullivan, Webb — one knows that many nationalities contributed to its settlement and growth.

In 1894, a group of unemployed marched through Beltrami on their way to join Coxey’s Army in Ohio on its way to Washington D.C. to demand work. By the time they reached the capitol the men numbered only a fraction of the original group. They were advised to get off the lawn and go back home — which they did!

Kerosene lanterns lighted the way after dark in Beltrami until 1914, when three gas street lights were installed: one on Main Street, and one on each side of the track in the residential areas. The lamplighter was Otto Berg. In 1918, the village was wired for electricity.

One of the first treasurers absconded with the village funds, but it obviously did not cause the village to default. To date, Josephine Regedal Johnson lived in the village longer than any other person, arriving in 1886 at the age of eight and living there until her death in 1971 at the age of ninety-three. At the end of World War One a two-day celebration was held in Beltrami to honor those who served their country. A huge beef was barbecued in an open pit, and there were parades, games and a pavilion dance. Everyone in the community participated. Patriotism was more keenly felt and openly displayed than it is today. There are those who have predicted that Beltrami will eventually become a ghost town; however, the citizens do not believe in ghosts. They believe in Beltrami.

HISTORY OF THE BELTRAMI POST OFFICE

The railroad was built through Beltrami in 1871 and 1872. Eleven years later, on July 1, 1883, the first post office in this vicinity was established. It was named Edna and was located a mile and one-half south of Beltrami. It was located at this place for just a short time and then moved to Beltrami railroad station. For a number of years it was called Edna post office to distinguish it from Beltrami station. On April 1, 1900, the name of the post office was changed to Beltrami. Beltrami was named in honor of Giacomo Costantino Beltrami (born 1779, died 1855), an Italian exile, who traveled to the Red River and the upper Mississippi River in 1823.

The first postmasters had the post office located in their places of business, which in each case was a general merchandise store. It was not until 1920, when J.N. Peterson became postmaster, that the post office was located in a building of its own.

The first postmaster was Edna Webb and she served from July 1, 1883 to May 12, 1884. The next postmaster was C.M. Ohl, who evidently moved the post office to Beltrami station. He was postmaster from May 13, 1884 to April 1, 1888. Then Charles E. Ford became postmaster, and he served until September 1, 1893. Ed. Ford had Charles E. Ford in his General Merchandise Store. Later E.W. Johnson acquired his own business and served as postmaster for a while. The next postmaster was K.O. Flakne. He served from October 1, 1893 to April 1, 1897. Then T.W. Welker became postmaster. He served until June 1, 1901. E.W. Johnson succeeded Welker and served until May 31, 1904. On June 1, 1904, Iver Johnson took over. He was postmaster for fifteen years. On August 9, 1919, a fire burned down a block of business places. So Theodore M. Boyer and Company store burned down, and Theodore M. Boyer bought out Iver Johnson and became acting postmaster. After a civil service examination, J.W. Peterson was appointed postmaster March 1, 1920. He served as postmaster for twenty years, and when he became seventy years of age he retired January 31, 1940. Evelyn E. Scott became the next postmaster and she served until June 30, 1945. P.B. Boyer discontinued his general merchandise business to become the next postmaster, beginning July 1, 1945.

Most of the time the Beltrami post office has been a fourth class office. On July 1, 1922, it was advanced to a third class office, and continued in that class until July 1, 1934. Due to the 1930s Depression, sales fell off and the office was relegated to fourth class. On July 1, 1943, while Evelyn E. Scott was postmaster, it was again advanced to a third class office. To remain a third class office the sale of postage stamps has to be above $1500.00. And the salary of a postmaster is also determined by the sale of postage stamps. The rural route system was started by the post office department in 1896, fifty-nine years ago. At first it was in the experimental stage. But after 1900, it expanded rapidly.

In 1904, the first rural route was started at Beltrami. The route was thirty-two miles long and covered the territory north and east of Beltrami. The first rural carrier was Charles Lenz. Then N. S. Byington was carrier for a year or so. In 1911, Peter A. Patterson took over the mail until 1920, when he retired after thirty years of service. Ivel Hanson was the substitute carrier until April 1943. Then Helmer B. Nornes was appointed, after a civil service examination.

In 1916, Rural Route Number 2 was established. This route was thirty miles long and covered the south and west territory of Beltrami. Now, practically all the farmers in the Beltrami vicinity had free delivery service of the United States Mail. Orley Oldlund was the first rural carrier of this route. He carried mail for a year or so, until he went into the army in World War I. Next Darwin Bodahl took over. After that there were several who carried the mail for a short time each. Among them were Joe Patterson, Oscar Larson, Adolph Swenson and Aleck Scott. Then in April 1920, John D. Dewar became the regular rural carrier. He continued until June 1944, when he retired after twenty-four years of service. The first years the rural carrier used horses to haul the mail. Later, as cars became more prevalent, the carriers used both horses and cars. When the roads were open and good they used cars, and in the winter when the roads were blocked with snow or ice, they used horses.

It is the policy of the Post Office Department to consolidate rural routes whenever possible. This is accomplished, especially when a rural route carrier retires. So when John D. Dewar retired in 1944, Rural Route Number 1 and Rural Route Number 2 were combined, and Helmer B. Nornes
became the rural carrier of the combined routes. It is a motorized rural route 62 miles long.

Percy B. Boyer died November 29, 1965, while in his twentieth year of service as Beltrami, Minnesota, postmaster. His family received from the post office department the following: “Honorary recognition is accorded Percy B. Boyer for devotion to duty in the course of an honorable career in the United States Postal Service.” This posthumous citation conveys an official commendation and an expression of sympathy to the family issued at Washington, D.C., on January 5, 1966. Lawrence F. O’Brien, Postmaster General.

Nellie Reep served twenty years as a clerk in the Beltrami post office. She is now retired and living in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. Evelyn E. Boyer worked in the Beltrami post office as postmaster and as a clerk. She retired on July 4, 1975, and received a service award for her twenty-six years of service to the Government of the United States from the United States Postal Service on the occasion of her retirement. It was signed by Clarence B. Gels, Regional Postmaster General. She now lives in Crookston, Minnesota, in 1976.

In 1976, Helmer B. Nornes is serving his thirty-fourth year as rural carrier from the Beltrami, Minnesota post office, having been appointed April 1, 1943. Shirley Anderson was appointed a clerk in the Beltrami post office on October 25, 1968, and is still serving in that capacity in 1976. Other substitute rural carriers in the past have been Warren Carlson, Ivel Hanson, Oscar Aanden and Frank Regedal, who in 1976 is serving as substitute rural carrier at the Beltrami post office.

After the death of Percy Boyer, Lucille Sykes, a clerk from the Mentor post office, was appointed acting postmaster. She resigned after a few months, and John C. Webster was appointed acting postmaster, April 8, 1966, and he was confirmed as postmaster on October 5, 1967, and is still serving as Beltrami postmaster in 1976. The post office was moved in March of 1976 into the new Beltrami Mall.

HISTORY OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BELTRAMI, MINNESOTA

82 years ago a group of Scandinavian Lutherans settled in the area now known as Beltrami, Minnesota. Desiring to continue in the faith of their forefathers, general invitation was sent to all Norwegians in this area to meet at the Flakne and Onstad store in Beltrami. On December 20, 1893 several people met and decided to organize a Lutheran Church. A total of 26 adults and 39 children comprised the entire congregation. Immediately they began to search for a pastor and first choice fell to John T. Krogstad. As he lived in Ada this meant that services could be conducted only once a month, so meetings were held in a schoolhouse at Edna, Minnesota. Andrew Mjelde served as first secretary of the congregation. Three years later the congregation voted to erect a church building. Located on the west side of the Great Northern railway tracks, a church was put up having a chancel 14 feet deep and a bell tower 12 by 12 feet. This also housed the entrance.

After nine years of service, Pastor Krogstad resigned and

was replaced by Reverend Thosten Boe, who became the first resident pastor. His stay was brief and Reverend Oddmund Omdalsrad came to fill the vacancy. Changes were made frequently and in 1904, Reverend John Brono, who lived in Crookston, served the congregation for two years. In 1906, Reverend Peder Steen was installed as spiritual guide. His home was at Fosston and he encountered many hardships while making the long trips to Beltrami with horse and buggy. On June 17, 1914 services were conducted by John Hjelmeland, a student of theology at the Free Church Seminary. After being ordained he was called to serve in four congregations in the Gudbrandsdal area. He married Ethel Sykes and returned to Beltrami where he was appointed as pastor. Reverend Otto Lutnes succeeded Pastor Hjelmeland. Though he served only one-half year his ministry was one of distinction. On May 7th, 1916, he preached the first English sermon ever heard in the church. During his short tenure, the congregation decided to build a new church home appointing Reverend Lutnes as architect for the new building. It was decided to erect the structure on a plot of land donated by Mr. Theodore Boyer, where the church now stands. On October 7, 1917 the new building was dedicated by Reverend J. M. Sundheim, president of the Northern District of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. It was about this time that they joined the American Lutheran Church of America. One year later Reverend Moen terminated his services as pastor and Reverend N. L. Otterstad accepted the call. He also served Bethel and Hofslø and Scandia. The home built and owned by Anton Aanden served as a parsonage. In November, 1924 a three point parish was formed which included Beltrami, Hofslø and Scandia. The Staining house was purchased for a parsonage and on July 31, 1955 Reverend L. S. Gjerde was installed as pastor. A resident pastor greatly benefited the congregation. His ministry was marked by greater attendance at worship; a Junior Luther League was formed, a Junior choir organized and a Prayer Fellowship group met each week.

You have read a short history of this church located at Beltrami. In the words of Pastor Berger, “By itself it may seem insignificant but you must read between the lines. There, hidden behind cold, dead facts you will catch fleeting glimpses of the excitement and the despair, the history and the defeat, the joy and the sorrow that characterizes the people of God. But always the church moves onward, because it follows in the steps of Christ. Christ is far out in front.”

OSCAR AANDEN

Oscar's father, Anton Aanden, was born December 29, 1870 in Gudbrandsdal, Norway. This is a very steep, wooded valley and the Aanden place was situated quite far up where very little land was tillable. They had a small farm with a few cows and sheep. All the buildings were built from logs with homemade furniture. Logs had to be cut and brought down from the mountain. It was Anton's job to ride the horse that pulled the
logs. It got very cold in the winter and there were no snowshoes or snow boots in those days so there were many frost bitten fingers and toes. Wood for the fireplace was also cut up in the mountain and carried down on their backs.

There were five children in the family: Anton, Nels, Marie, Oline and Hannah. They all attended a country school not too far from home. It had one class room, one room where the teacher lived and a room for the teacher's free use. They learned to read and write and their penmanship was the finest.

Anton was the first one to come to America, arriving in 1889. He came first to Wisconsin, later to Rothsay, Minnesota and then to Beltrami, Minnesota, where he began to do carpenter work. During the winter, when there was no building going, he worked on a farm for his room and board. After two years he went back to Norway. At that time his folks sold their farm and came to America with him. Anton bought a farm two miles to the east of Beltrami, where Ray Carlson now lives. His folks lived near by. A year later he sold that and bought a farm a half mile east of Beltrami, Minnesota. The only building was a small barn, so he built a shanty that they lived in the first winter and the following spring built a comfortable house. He was married to Anna Andreasen, who came to Beltrami, Minnesota from Bodo, Norway.

Anton’s sister, Hannah, married Mr. Moen and they lived at what is now the Drivold place. Hannah became ill and died at the age of twenty. She had a son, Julius, and after her death Anton’s folks, Oline, Mr. Olson and Julius all went back to Norway. Marie married Thomas Kiltie and had six children. Thomas died when the youngest child was six months old.

Anton had three children, Oscar, Mary and Josephine. When Oscar was ten years old, Mary eight and Josephine four, their mother died. They now had to depend on housekeepers, the first one being Mrs. Kulseth, whom they called Grandma. Anton continued to do carpenter work and farmed with the help of John Didriksen, who was also from Bodo, Norway. As Mrs. Kulseth grew older, she was replaced by Mrs. Derby as housekeeper until the girls were old enough to take over. In 1909 a severe storm swept the farm, demolishing the barn and killing two horses. Salvaging lumber for rebuilding began and it was Oscar’s job to pull out nails. The children attended Beltrami school and graduated from the new high school, which was completed in 1917. Oscar joined the Home Guard and served during the war years of 1918. Both Mary and Josephine continued to do business in the store. Mary worked for the National Cash Register Company in Fargo, North Dakota for many years and Josephine was employed in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She married Yale Rosy in 1928. He died in 1955. Josephine still lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota and works in a real estate office. Mary moved to Minneapolis, where she did secretarial work until she became ill and passed away in 1953. When Anton wanted to retire from farming, he rented the place to Oscar. He farmed in partnership with John Didriksen for eleven years. In July 1932 he married Agnes Nornes who was a school teacher, also from the Beltrami, Minnesota area. They were married during the Depression, when cattle sold for two and a half cents a pound, potatoes were fifteen cents a bushel and eggs were ten cents a dozen. There was very little money but lots of good food and wood to burn. I had saved a few dollars but a month before our wedding I had to have an appendectomy. There went my savings. By way of contrast, I was in the hospital for twenty-one days and my bill was seventy-five dollars.

We have three children. In 1958, it was our privilege to go to Norway by boat and see the birth place of Anton Aanden and his wife’s also. There were many aunts, uncles and cousins, a most rewarding experience. We are grateful for the heritage handed down to us from Norwegian forefathers, who were not afraid of hard work. Because of this we have been able to carry on where they left off and hope that our children also will be proud of their heritage and have many pleasant, happy memories from their home in Polk County.

PERCY B. BOYER

Percival Baldwin Boyer was born May 9, 1900, at Eldred, Minnesota. When he was six years old he moved to Beltrami with his father and mother, Theodore and Angeline Boyer, and family. Percy received his education in the Beltrami school where he graduated with high scholastic ratings. He was one of three who were the first graduates of the Beltrami High School from 1919 through 1921. He attended St. Olaf College with the intention of some day being a pharmacist. Percy’s eyes gave out from the strain of study and he returned to Beltrami to help run his father’s general store. Percy liked to play golf and was a good dancer, so he did not lack for friends. At the age of forty-one years, Evelyn Scott, who was then postmistress at Beltrami, Minnesota.

Evelyn Boyer was born in Crookston, Minnesota on September 6, 1906, to John and Helen Scott, who were from the Isle of Whithorn, Scotland, a summer resort town. Evelyn’s great grandfather was a sea captain there, and her other great grandfather was a gentleman farmer. When Evelyn was seven years old, her mother died and her father remarried when she was twelve years old. She graduated from Maddock, N. Dak. High School and when she was eighteen years old began teaching in the rural schools of North Dakota, where she taught ten and one half years. In the summer, she attended Ellendale or Mayville Teacher’s Colleges. The wages were $75.00 a month and board and room were $12.00 a month. It seemed that Evelyn had a destiny of sorts with people who worked for the postal department; as a young teacher, one boy friend was the Wishan, North Dakota postmaster and another one was a rural carrier from Ashley, North Dakota.

In December of 1940, Evelyn was commissioned postmaster at Beltrami by Postmaster General Frank Walker. There she served in that capacity till her husband Percy was appointed postmaster at Beltrami on May 7, 1946 by President Harry Truman. Later, besides his own duties, he was chosen to teach people who were newly appointed postmasters within a radius of one hundred miles of Beltrami. He served the Postal Service of the United States Government twenty years and Evelyn served twenty-six years as postmaster and clerk. Needless to say, she and Percy played “Post Office” in more ways than one! Two children were born to Percy and Evelyn; Nancy Helen Boyer on December 8, 1942. She graduated from the Fertile High School and went on to become a licensed practical nurse. After that, she worked five years at St. Francis Hospital in Crookston. In 1966, she married John Gary Letness. They now have two children: Lisa, nine years and David, seven years old. They own and operate a farm southwest of Crookston.

Scott Theodore Boyer was born to Percy and Evelyn on September 8, 1945. He graduated from the high school in Fertile, Minnesota, and spent the next three years in the United States Navy in the Viet Nam conflict. Later, he graduated from Bemidji State College with a Bachelor of Science in Education. He is now married to Linda Boyer and they reside in Crookston, Minnesota.

Both Percy and Evelyn were active in community affairs. He served as clerk of the village, was treasurer of the Lutheran church, president of the board of directors of the Beltrami Co-op Store, was a member of the volunteer fire department and the municipal band. Evelyn served seventeen years on the Beltrami school board, was president and secretary of the Beltrami Garden Club, 4-H Leader and chairman of the cancer crusade. Percy Boyer died while still postmaster on November 29, 1965. Evelyn retired from the postal service July 4, 1975, and now resides in Crookston, Minnesota.

THEODORE M. BOYER

The Theodore M. Boyer family lived in Beltrami, Minnesota during the years 1907 to 1975. Theodore Boyer was born in Wisconsin in 1870. His parents were farmers from Gudbrandsdalen, Norway, who came to the United States in 1869. In 1871 they traveled by covered wagon drawn by oxen from that state to Becker County in Minnesota to claim a 160-acre farm given to them by the government under the Homestead Act. Theodore lived and worked on his parents’ farm, attending rural school and high school at Audubon, Minnesota. He also attended business college in Duluth and the Agricultural College in Fargo, North Dakota. Then he began to look for a retail store business in the Red River Valley. He took the train to Buxton.
Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Boyer 1949
Golden Anniversary.

Matt Boyer eventually joined his brother and also a cousin, Ole Kolden. From 1912 Theodore operated the store alone with the help of the family. A home was bought and also a tract of land on the east edge of town. It was surveyed into lots and streets and this became known as the Boyer Addition. Lots not sold were used for growing gardens and fruit and berries. Both husband and wife were avid gardeners. Mr. Boyer was active in civic affairs, serving as mayor and as a member of the school board. He took part in the building of the Lutheran church. Mr. Boyer passed away in 1950 and his wife in 1964.

Two more children had been born in Beltrami, Lucille and Jerome. All the Boyer children graduated from the Beltrami school. Percy Boyer, with Bert Bond and Julian H. Heath, made up the first graduating class in 1918. Percy attended St. Olaf college for two years and then joined his father in the store. The original store burned down in 1919. Since it was only partially insured, they took a great loss. The old post office building was purchased and the store located there until it closed in 1945.

That year Percy became postmaster, a position he held until his death in 1965. His wife Evelyn who had been postmistress before Percy took over, worked there again after his death. In 1975 the Boyer home was sold and Evelyn and son Scott moved to Crookston, Minnesota. That ended the 68 years that there had been Boyers in Beltrami. Her daughter Nancy (Mrs. Gary Letnes) lives on a farm near Crookston. Her children, Lisa and David, are the fourth generation of the family in the county.

The other five children of Theodore and Angeline are still living. Alexander, who graduated from the University of Oregon and taught in Alaska, lives in Portland, Oregon. Theobald, a graduate of the University of North Dakota, after teaching for many years, bought a farm south of Mentor, Minnesota, in 1928 and lives there in retirement; Ruth, Mrs. O. G. Norbeck, a registered nurse, graduated from the Bethesda School of Nursing and now lives in West Fargo, North Dakota; Lucille, Mrs. Louis Lushine, graduated from the University of Minnesota, taught school, and now lives in Greenbelt, Maryland; Jerome, a veteran of World War I and a graduate of the University of Minnesota, teaches in the Minneapolis school system and lives in Edina, Minnesota.

**JOHN DRIVOLD**

John Drivold and Beret Haugan were married on November 12, 1888, at Selbu, Norway, and after their marriage they boarded a sailing ship at Trondheim, Norway, for the United States. When they arrived at New York after three months on the ocean, they were quarantined for six weeks on Ellis Island, because a contagious sickness had spread among the passengers. After that unhappy delay, Mr. and Mrs. Drivold went by train to Osseo, Minnesota, where they lived for eighteen years. While they lived there, the State of Wisconsin had opened up some land for homesteads near Milwaukee. The Drivolds went to Milwaukee and found a quarter section close to the center of Milwaukee at that time, upon which someone had staked a claim and built a "hytte," but had decided it was not worth the effort to stay. The authorities in charge advised Dad and Mother to move in and take over the claim, which they did. But as time went on, they saw how much work it would take to get the land in production, so they went back to Osseo, and then up to Beltrami. They started farming with very little money; but with determination and trust in God! They managed to continue farming and made a living for themselves and their three sons.

Dad was told the name Drivold should be changed as Drivold was "too much Norwegian." As his first name was John, all he had to do was to add son to John and call himself Johnson. As there was no law at that time saying it could not be done, Dad changed his name. In Beltrami there were already two John Johnsons, and Dad made three. This caused difficulties in mail mixups and other problems, so Dad decided that the name Drivold was the name for him. John Drivold died in May of 1907, leaving his widow and three boys. Martin, the oldest was fifteen, Gunerius was twelve and Rudolph was seven. With more determination and Faith, they milked cows and raised animals and grain to keep the family together. The family has farmed in the Beltrami area up to the present time. They purchased their farm in 1916.

In 1927, Gunerius, known as Gunner, was suddenly taken ill and died. In 1946, Martin passed away after a year and a half of illness. Mother passed away in 1947 after several years as a semi-invalid.

Rudolph Drivold was married to Frances McNerney, and they have lived on the home farm up to the present time. In 1971, we decided we would visit our relatives in Norway. As I did not have a record of my birth and baptism, I had to go to the Polk County Superintendent's office for proof of who I am. The school records showed a Rudolph Johnson in 1907, and listed the names of my parents and two brothers as Johnson. From that listing I did get a passport to go to Norway. There we slept in the homes where my Dad and Mother were born, and visited their churches and schools. We enjoyed every minute of our visit there.

**LUTHER ERIKSON**

A family history — could that interest anyone but the family? Whether or not, it certainly aroused a challenge for the Luther Erickson family of Beltrami to research and submit the following with a resolve to pursue material available at greater length for posterity!

John Amos Erickson and Caroline Oehler Erickson, parents of Luther Erickson, were pioneer residents of Fertile, Minnesota. John had a hardware store and implement business. The Erickson family has been traced to John Hemmingson Aunet of Neraker, Norway, 1744.

Caroline Oehler Erickson was of German ancestry, which traced back to Hans George Oehler, an attorney, in Battenheim, Germany. Caroline's parents, Gottfried and Katherine Muellar Oehler, came to New York from Germany in 1850 and settled in McGregor, Iowa. In 1869, they moved to Morristown, Minnesota and in 1880 came to Dugdale, Minnesota. Here Gottfried farmed and clerk and
assessor of Tilden. Eight children were born to the Oehlers and now all are deceased. Caroline, the youngest, born February 29, 1868, was twelve when they came to Dugdale. Gottfried died in 1883, age 56. Katherine died in 1912, age 84. Caroline worked in the post office in Fertile before her marriage to John Erickson in Faribault, Minnesota on June 2, 1902. The Ericksons had two sons, Earl, of Fertile and Luther now of Beltrami. John died in 1932, age 64 and Caroline died in 1958, age 90. Luther graduated from Fertile High School, attended Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, worked in First State Bank of Fertile; and in 1934, he established a hardware store in Beltrami. In August 1939, he married Lois Johnson of Beltrami where they still reside. After completing 41 years in the store, Luther plans to retire in 1976.

Lois Johnson Erickson was the fourth of five children born to Herman Johnson and Josephine Regedal Johnson. Herman was the twelfth of the fourteen children born to John Johnson and Gunhild Dahl Johnson. John and Gunhild were born in Hallingdal, Norway; John in June, 1838 and Gunhild in April, 1839. In 1861, they were married in Goll Stave Kirke which of late was restored and relocated near Oslo, Norway. Three children were born in Norway. In May 1866, they traveled by sailboat for America, arriving in New York in October. Countless hardships were endured en route, not the least the lack of food and drinking water. From New York they traveled to Waukon, Iowa, living there thirteen years. In 1879, they traveled by covered wagon to Reis Township, Polk County, where they homesteaded. Here in a sod house, with meager possessions they endured the trials and tribulations of typical pioneers. In 1911, they moved into Beltrami. John died in September, 1914 at the age of 76. Gunhild died in January, 1936, age 96. One of their children lived to be 100 and five lived to be over 90 years. All are now deceased. Herman operated a general store and implement business in Beltrami with his brother, Edward. Herman died in June, 1921, age 47, and Josephine died in January, 1971, age 93. Lois Johnson Erickson graduated from Beltrami High School, attended Concordia College, Moorhead, and graduated from Moorhead State College. She taught school in Beltrami. Luther Erickson and Lois Johnson Erickson have two children, Lynn and Rolf.

Lynn, a graduate of Fertile High School, attended Concordia College and graduated from Moorhead State University. She married Gerald Jacobson of Fertile in June 1963. Gerald has advertising publications in Grand Forks, North Dakota and Thief River Falls, Minnesota and also farms near Fertile. Lynn is a tutor in the Fertile-Beltrami school. Lynn and Gerald Jacobson have three children: Geoffrey, eleven; Steven, ten; and Amy, five.

Rolf Erickson graduated from Fertile High School, received his A. degree from Concordia College, Moorhead and his master's degree from Stout University, Menomonie, Wisconsin. After teaching art and German at Taylor Falls, Minnesota for five years, he is now Media Consultant at the Middle School in North Branch, Minnesota.

Writing this history rekindled the value of our heritage. We cherish the religious instruction and guiding example of devoted parents which we have received through the years. We give glory and praise to our Savior for keeping us always in His care!

**HERMAN AND JOSEPHINE REGEDAL JOHNSON**

Herman Johnson was born in Lansing, Iowa, on August 11, 1875, the son of Gunhild and John Johnson, who immigrated to the United States from Gulbransdal, Norway, in 1866. In 1878, John and Gunhild with eleven children came by covered wagon to the Beltrami, Minnesota in Polk County.

Mrs. Herman (Josephine) Johnson, Son Roald, Daughters L. to R.: Gladys, Adelaide and Lois.

Josephine Regedal was born in Egersund, Norway, on January 1, 1878, to Jakob and Sophia Orsland Regedal. In 1880 Jakob left his bakery business, and they sailed to America, eventually settling in the Shelly, Minnesota area. A lighted homemade candle in the window on Christmas Eve was about the only luxury the children could recall from the six hardship farming years that followed. In 1886, the Regedals moved to Edna, Minnesota later called Beltrami, Minnesota, having purchased a hotel. Three hotels were doing a flourishing business in the village at that time. Rooms were fifty cents (50¢), a night, and meals twenty-five cents (25¢).

Jakob Regedal froze to death in a snowstorm on February 3, 1898, leaving his wife with eight children ranging in age from one to twenty years. For eighteen years, with the help of her children, Ellen Sophia continued to manage the hotel, a rough responsibility for a widow in more ways than one. She took a firm stand against foul talk and drunkenness, and those who would not comply went elsewhere. In 1916, Ellen Sophia sold the hotel and built a home in Beltrami, Minnesota, the home now owned by the John Webster family. She lived to enjoy it only one year, and died in April, 1917. Hers was the first funeral in the newly built Trinity Lutheran Church, of which congregation she and her family were members. Ellen Sophia's deep religious faith had given her the strength and courage necessary to provide physical and spiritual needs for her five daughters and three sons and had helped suppress her life-long loneliness for her family in Norway.

Of the eight Regedal children, only Josephine and Peter Alfred lived out their lives in Beltrami, Minnesota. In 1905, after teaching school for twelve years, Josephine married Herman Johnson, who was in partnership with his brother, Edward, in the general store business. Five children were born to the Johnsons between the years 1906 and 1920. Gladys, the eldest is a retired school teacher, having taught forty-four years in Kelliher, Belle Plaine, and Thief River Falls, Minnesota. William, born in 1907, died in 1929 while attending Detroit University at Detroit, Michigan. Roald, born in 1908, recently retired from the Senior High principalship in Wayzata, Minnesota. He also served schools at Perham, Minnesota, Shakopee, Minnesota, Ceylon, and Granite Falls, Minnesota. He and his wife, Della, have two children: Bruce, a major
in the Marine Corps who with his wife, Etsuko, resides in San Diego, California, and Julie, Mrs. Gerald Carisch, of Wayzata, Minnesota. The Carishes have three children: Michael, Heather, and Cristina. Lois, Mrs. Luther Erickson of Beltrami, Minnesota, was born in 1912. Prior to her marriage, she taught school in Beltrami, Minnesota. A son, Rolf is on the teaching staff at North Branch. Lynn, daughter of the Eriksons, is married to Gerald Jacobson of Fertile, Minnesota. Their children are Geoffrey, Steven and Amy. Adelaide, born in 1920, is the wife of James Kelley of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Adelaide was Polk County nurse in the early 1940's and served overseas three years in World War II. Adelaide and James have three children: John, of Dallas, Texas, and Susan and Richard at home.

Herman Johnson died on June 21, 1921, and Josephine took up the task of supporting her family. There was no aid or welfare. With a deep faith in God and much unselfish sacrifice and hard work, she saw her children through the Depression years and the struggle for college degrees. On January 29, 1971, Josephine Johnson died at the age of ninety-three. Alert and active until the end, she had spent the last twenty years of her life with her daughter, Gladys, in Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Blessed be the memory of these pioneer ancestors, whose lives were occupied with unselfish service to God and country!

**LEIRAN**

Leonard Leiran was born on November 7, 1883, to Mr. and Mrs. Eric Leiran of Waukon, Iowa. When he was a young man, he came to visit the Ole Balstads and other relatives, and he remained to work as a hired man in the area. He met Evangeline Johnson, and they were married on November 10, 1909.

Evangeline Johnson, the youngest of fourteen children born to Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson, was born on January 25, 1886. After their marriage, they moved to the farm east of Beltrami, Minnesota, where they spent all of their life until poor health made it necessary for Leonard to have professional care. They moved to the Fair Meadow Nursing Home in June, 1967. Leonard died on July 22, 1967. Evangeline continued her residency there until her death on January 6, 1974.

Leonard and Evangeline had one son, Dennis, born on September 18, 1910. On March 4, 1934, Dennis married Helen Beier. Helen was born in Britt, Iowa, to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Beier. After the death of her mother, the family moved to Beltrami, Minnesota, living on the Skaug farm. After their marriage, Dennis and Helen made their home with his parents, and they lived together as one family for thirty-three years. Dennis drove the local school bus for most of these years. They have five children.

In June, 1935, Gerald was born. He married Phyllis Kocowski, and they now live in Badger, Minnesota. They have five children. In June, 1938, Francis was born. He married Doreen Paulson, and they now live in Devils Lake, North Dakota. They have three children. Donald was born on April 13, 1940. He married Bernice Behrns, and they live in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Alan was born November 4, 1947. He married Mary Scully, and they live in Ada, Minnesota, and have three children. Darlene was born on January 20, 1952. She married Willard Swenby and they live in Fertile, Minnesota. The children were active in 4-H as well as church activities of the Beltrami Methodist Church.

In 1948, Leonard and Evangeline made a trip to Tacoma, Washington to visit Leonard's brother, Ole, and family, and to Los Angeles to visit Evangeline's sister and husband, the John Torgersons.

In 1949, the family decided to build a new house, as the little home was fairly bursting at the seams. This was truly a family project, as all helped. John Dewar was the main builder, but Alvin Richards, George Gast Jr., Leonard, Dennis and boys all helped, as did Evangeline and Helen. In September the family moved in and they really had enough room for all. Dennis and Helen continue to reside on the family farm, although the land is rented to the Mosher Brothers.

**MR. AND MRS. OLE G. OLSON**

Ole G. Olson, a native of Selubu, Norway, was born September 25, 1880. Mr. Olson came to America with his parents when he was six months old. The family resided for nine years in Minneapolis. Then his family returned to Norway. His father passed away in Norway and the family again returned to the United States in 1895. In 1896 the family moved from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Beltrami, Minnesota.

Mary Hafdahl was born in Trondheim, Norway, May 9, 1886 to Ole Simonson Hafdahl and Marit Flakne. She spent the first nine years of her life living on a Norwegian farm where her parents, and brothers and sister worked as tenant farmers.

In 1895, her oldest brother Ole Hafdahl, already in America,
sent Mother fare for the trip to America. She arrived with her mother, three brothers and one sister. She worked for a time in the hotel in Beltrami and a short time as a nurse's aid in Bethesda Hospital in Crookston, Minnesota. She was married to Ole G. Olson in Beltrami, October 15, 1905. There they raised four children: Harold, who farms the old farm one mile west of Beltrami; Alvina (Mrs. Arthur M. Underdahl), who farms south of Fosston, Minnesota; Henry, who lives in Idaho Springs, Colorado and Elna (Mrs. Eddie Vavrinia) of Pico River, California. Two sons died in infancy.

Ole, who farmed, also served on the townboard and creamery board and worked as a road maintainer for a number of years. Ole and Mary loved to travel a lot, and in their later years both traveled quite a lot. One such trip was the chance for the two of them to fly on an airplane to Washington, D.C. after World War II in order to be present when their son, Henry, was honored for his services in the Army Air Corps. They leave behind them seven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

CHRIS STAUNING

Chris Stauning, at the age of three, was the youngest child in the family of Peter and Anna Stauning in the year 1888 — the year the decision was made to gather up their family and earthly belongings, leave their home in Jylland, Denmark — destination America. Besides Chris' parents, the family that boarded the ship for this venture were his five brothers and sisters: Mary (who later became Mrs. Hans Hanson), Hans, Andrew, Mariane (Mrs. Pete Hustad) and Carl. Coming to the United States by way of the Hudson Bay and Winnipeg, Manitoba, the family settled in Crookston, Minnesota where they remained for almost ten years. Two more children joined the family, namely, Annie (Mrs. Charles Sinclair) and Emma (Mrs. Harrington). In 1898 they took a homestead in Reis Township on section six and later the family engaged in running the North Star Hotel in Beltrami, Minnesota for several years.

In 1911 Chris married Jessie Halvorson of Fertile, Minnesota, who passed away following the birth of a son, Jesse. By the year 1909, Chris purchased and operated his own hay press, powered by a large International one-cylinder gas engine mounted on a wagon and moved from stack to stack with four horses. In 1915 he also bought a C.O.D. Tractor, which he used until 1918, when he invested in a 14-28 Avery Tractor and a 26-38 Minneapolis Separator. He continued to operate this rig until the separator burned while threshing wheat on the Andrew Stauning farm in 1930.

In the meantime, Chris once again married. The bride this time was Matilda Jerde of Fertile, Minnesota. Matilda had been living with her parents, Andrew and Sina Jerde, on their Liberty Township farm. She was an accomplished dressmaker, pursuing this work as an occupation for several years prior to her marriage. She also organized the Varnes Luther League, serving as its first president. The newly-weds became associated with Trinity Church in Beltrami, Minnesota, in which each of the children in turn was baptized and confirmed and was involved in Sunday School and Luther League. Chris and Matilda Stauning lived on and farmed Dr. Searles' farm for seven years, being the first occupants of the new buildings. Three sons, Maurice, Fred and Wallace were born to the couple while they were on this farm.

In 1925, the family moved from the Searles' farm to the farm the Stauning Brothers own and operate today. At the time of the move, which was accomplished by horses and wagon: Maurice was six, Fred, four and Wallace just two. One more child, their only daughter, Frances, joined the family after they settled on the new farm.

Chris bought his first car, a 1916 Ford, in that year. He was a charter member of the Beltrami Farmers Union Oil Company as well as the Beltrami Elevator.

In the year 1944 Matilda Stauning passed away, and in 1946 Chris likewise departed from this life.

The three Stauning Brothers purchased the farm in 1946 and have since that date continuously farmed it specializing in Purebred Polled Hereford cattle and small grains. Maurice served in the army for four years during World War II. Fred spent one season playing baseball with the Grand Forks Chiefs and the Minneapolis Millers. For sixty years now the Stauning family has resided in Scandia Township.

In 1961 Maurice married LaVine Skog of Cannon Falls, who, along with Wallace, resides on the farm. Fred married Deloris Monson Mjelde in 1966, and they presently reside in Beltrami. Francis married Cyril Carpeniter of Sauk Centre in 1958. Beside raising an adopted daughter and son, they have one daughter of their own, Kris, a namesake of her grandmother. They are residents of Bloomingtom, where Cy is affiliated with the Minnesota Farmers Union.

JOHN R. WALLACE

In 1920. John R. Wallace, a farmer living southwest of Williamsburg, Iowa, bought eight hundred acres of Minnesota land, practically sight unseen: all of section 35 and the southeast quarter of Section 34, Reis Township, on the south line of Polk county, two miles south and two miles east of Beltrami. Originally, this land was certified by the federal government to the State of Minnesota on March 20, 1878, and sold the same day to the St. Paul and Pacific Railway Company. Several owners later, Johanna and David Roth, bought the land in 1914; William Wallace acquired title from them in 1917 as payment for legal services.

1944—Lunch break in harvest field. John and Mary Ellen Wallace beside International Harvester tractor.

In March 1920, John moved his wife (the former Ora Stover), their four small children (Trevor, Donald, Virginia, and Ellen), and mother's helper, Mary Ellen Bucher, by train to Beltrami, Minnesota, arriving in 30° below zero weather. The only house on his property, located on the quarter section 34, was occupied at the time. John installed his family in a small house south of Beltrami, rented for the period which a three-story house with modern facilities was built, and a well was drilled, in the center of section 35.

The snow that melted was heavy that spring, the dam at
Crookston (25 miles away) broke, flooding the country for miles around. As the water ran off, the soggy land required immediate attention. 800 acres of flat, untouched prairie. There were no fences. By day, Donald and Treva, six and eight years old, herded sheep, which by night were penned in temporary corrals around which lanterns were hung to ward off coyotes and wolves that nosed the fences.

By September 1920, the house and barns were partially finished. The children entered a country school one-half mile north of the house, and George was born and brought to the new home. In 1923, Ora Mae was born in Iowa; seven months later, the mother passed away. In 1925, John married Mary Ellen Bucher. To that union were born Maude, Juanita and Carolyn.

The years were hard: Depression years, crop failures, little ready cash. Everyone did his part, but it wasn’t easy. Building barns and sheds took time, as did development of the land. In 1938, John bought “The Blow-Out” in Norman County — a tree- and grass-covered quarter section of land which once had been blown rough by high winds — good grazing land.

Eventually, the prairie lands were transformed into a diversified farm, which supported, in addition to a large family and several hired hands, twenty to forty-five milking cows, beef cattle, up to one thousand sheep, breeding horses, hundreds of chickens, ducks, turkeys and geese. It was a matter of patience and skill to coax box elders and willows to grow as windbreaks for the house and outbuildings against ferocious seasonal winds that blew uninterrupted across the mile-wide land. Hauling hay in horsedrawn hayracks from rented land to the east, in temperatures far below zero, was no small chore. Moreover, the children brought home all sorts of dread diseases: smallpox, scarlet fever, mumps, the itch. The nearest neighbors were one to two miles away.

One by one, the children grew older, married and left to establish their own homes. In 1957, John and Mary Ellen moved to town, to a house on the old Iverson property across from the school. In 1964 and 1967, they sold the 960-acre farm in three portions. Life became a little easier. John passed away in 1968. Donald in 1963, Ellen in 1975. Mrs. Wallace and Virginia live in the family home in the town of Beltrami, Minnesota.

CLIFFORD WEBSTER

My father was the son of John G. Johnson and wife Gunel, who came from Norway in 1866 and lived in Iowa before coming to Beltrami, Minnesota where they homesteaded in 1879. They had fourteen children. My father was born in 1867 in Lansing, Iowa. He was engaged as a store-keeper in Beltrami for sixty-five years. He married my mother, Caroline Halvorson, in 1899. She was born in Oda, Norway in 1879 and came to Iowa at the age of eight years. They married and had seven children, five of whom survived: Edwin C. Johnson, Dr. M. G. Johnson, Merle Johnson, two daughters, Mrs. Clifford Webster and Mrs. Fred Palin. Clifford’s father, R. T. Webster, was born in 1859 at Edgington, Illinois. He was married in 1890 to Margaret Kane in Buffalo County, Wisconsin. He was engaged in farming in Fisher, Minnesota until they moved to Beltrami County in 1913. He died in 1944, and she died in 1947. They had five children born in Fisher, Minnesota: Ruy, Zuela, Clifford (1895), Mary and Allen. Clifford and Elmira Webster were married November 14, 1919 in Crookston, Minnesota. They farmed in Beltrami, Minnesota and had three children, Ralph Terrence born November 24, 1922, Keith Daniel born September 6, 1924; and John Clifford born June 5, 1929.

Ralph Terrence was in Germany during World War II. He attended the University of Nevada for six years and received a B.S. degree in metallurgical engineering. He is now with a Corporation in Albany, Oregon as a Plant Material Consultant. He married Eileen Carrou in 1947. They have four children, Paul David, 1958; Kathleen Mary 1951; twins, Keith Clifford and Richard Terrence, 1952. Paul has two boys, David and Adam. Kathleen has one daughter, Rebecca.

Keith David was married November 30, 1946 to Margaret Hamre. He is a farmer on his father’s farm in partnership with his son, Gregory Webster. They have five children: Kay Louise 1948, Gregory Keith 1951, Mary Jo 1953, Elizabeth 1955. Lynn Ann 1960. Kay married David Coburn, Gregory married Gaye Bitner, Mary Jo and Elizabeth are attending Moorhead State University. Lynn Ann is a freshman at Fertile High School.

John Clifford was married June 7, 1957 to Bonnie Jean Billing. He was engaged in farming until 1966. Since then he has been postmaster in Beltrami. He was in the United States Medical Corps in Austria during the Korean War. They have four children, Timothy John 1958, Dan Kenin 1961, Daniel Allen 1963 and Stenin Billing 1968. Clifford and Elmira Webster are still living on the family farm in Beltrami.

WILLIAM WILL

The William Will family moved to Reis Township, section 6, near Beltrami, Minnesota in 1903. Mr. and Mrs. Will had both been immigrants from Germany. Fredericka Fiedgensa was born March 18, 1855 in Delve, Germany, coming to the Rock Island, Illinois area. She had been a seamstress in her native land. William Will was born in Hilde, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, June 3, 1860. His twin brother, neither married, nor did either Mr. or Mrs. Will return. They were married in 1884 and lived temporarily at Davenport, Iowa. To this union were born: Hugo John Henry, October 29, 1884; Emil Julius, February 9, 1887; Otto Albert, July 7, 1889; Ella Wilhelmina, August 1, 1892. A daughter, Annie, died at birth.

The family lived at Davenport, Iowa; Holland, Minnesota and Alvor, Iowa before coming to Reis Township where some of the family lived until 1961. Mr. Will was one of the first “bus drivers” when the school district consolidated in district 591. He drove a team of mules: Jack and Jenny, Mr. Will died June 15, 1933. Mrs. Will passed away Thanksgiving Day, November, 1934.

Hugo Will went to the Frement, Nebraska area where he was a young man. He had several cousins, aunts and uncles living there. Hugo and Nellie Christine Rasmussen were married February 22, 1911. Evelyn was born November 23, 1911. They lived near Scribnes, Nebraska until 1913, when they moved to the Parker, Marian, South Dakota community. Their daughter, Helen, died at birth in 1918. In March, 1925, the Hugo Will’s moved to the Northeast quarter of section six, Reis Township and lived there until Hugo’s death. Nellie lived in Crookston, Minnesota from 1946 until February 1962.

Emil Will never married, but lived with his parents on the farm. He was employed by the state highway department for several years, later owning his own truck. He later moved into Beltrami, passing away November 7, 1969, at eighty-two years. Otto Will taught many years in Polk County. He later became chairman of the Polk County A.S.C. office. He married Mrs. Clara Nelson Torgerson, who had a son, Marvin and a daughter, Norma. To this union was born a son Orlin Albert, January 15, 1941. In 1961, they moved to Moorhead, Minnesota. He passed away in January 1975.

Ella Wilhelmina Will married Alfred Larson in June 1926. They lived in Section 2, Scandia Township where Lawrence William was born, passing away almost immediately. James
LeRoy was born September 8, 1930. Magus Larson, Alfred's brother, lived with them a few years until he bought "The Ranch", section 10, Scandia Township. In September 1946, the Alfred Larsons sold their land, Section 2 and moved to "The Ranch". Alfred died in July 1967 and Ella passed away in May 1970.

Evelyn Will married Gunnard M. Hermodson, September 23, 1931. They lived in the Beltrami area, where three daughters were born: Deloryce Elaine was born June 21, 1932 and married Vernor Bertils. They made their home in Crookston, Minnesota. They are parents of six children: Ruth, Philip, Daniel, Lois, Ann and John. Gloria Mae was born June 6, 1933 and married Reverend James Thvedt of Crosby, North Dakota. They are parents of James Junior, Kristin, Jonathan, Karen, Joel and Joseph. Janet Diane was born November 23, 1946 and married Dale Hoiberg of Devils Lake, North Dakota. They are currently living in Taipei, Taiwan. James Larson married Phylis Melin of Grand Forks, North Dakota in October 1960. They lived in a short time in Beltrami, Minnesota; later moved to "The Ranch". They have four sons: David, Allen, Gary and Craig. They have two adopted daughters, Wendy and Beth. Orlin Will married Julie Lall and lives in Jamestown, North Dakota where he is teaching.

### Rhinehart Township History

Rhinehart Township was originally organized in 1874. Officers in 1891 were Oscar Wick, clerk; Joseph Kirk, chairman of the board; Hans J. Rohalt and Knut Woldal as supervisors; B. Denny, assessor. The main road was graded up by J. O'Leary.

In April of 1905 residents of Rhinehart Township started to build a board sidewalk from the city limits of East Grand Forks to section 13. The city of East Grand Forks contributed $40 and the remainder was contributed by the citizens involved. The township gave $125. Citizens also contributed free labor of building the sidewalk.

On November 2, 1920, 48 ballots were cast, of which 17 were women votes. This was the largest poll of votes yet cast in this township, probably being partly accounted for by the fact of its being the first year of women voting at a Presidential election. Polls were opened from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thirty cents an hour was paid during elections.

On March 22, 1932, the township named the main road the Rhinehart Township Rhinehart Drive. Mr. Frank Gorman headed the petition. Section 11 and 12 went into the City of East Grand Forks in August, 1974. Rhinehart now has sections 13, 24, and 25, with 35 residential or dwellings in agricultural land.

**JOHN A. CROY**

John A. Croy was born on September 5, 1897, in a two room log house in what is now Rhinehart Township, Polk County, Minnesota.

He was the second child of a family of five children born to Joseph and Anna (Stearns) Croy, born in Iowa and later of near Chamberline, South Dakota, where they had filed on a pre-emption claim. However, because of drought conditions there at that time they came to this Red River Valley location.

John attended the country school for two years, and then the family moved to near the city of East Grand Forks, Minnesota where he attended elementary and high school. In the country school there was an enrollment as high as fifty-three at one time, in all grades, with one teacher, who in one instance, rode out from town on horseback.

John missed registering for World War I by four days, as his birthday was September 5, and he was not of eligible age until September 5 and the war ended the next year.

John was married to Mollie N. Johnson on May 4, 1918. She was one of eight children born to John H. and Maren (Mørben) Johnson of Winger, Minnesota. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson were both in Norway, the former having served in the Norwegian Navy. Mrs. Croy's father came to America and Minnesota in 1876; her mother came in 1881. They married and filed on a homestead at what is now Winger, Polk County, Minnesota.

They farmed there until retirement some time in the 1920's. At that time they started farming there were no roads, school, churches or village of Winger. Children were taught at home and religious services were held in the homes.

The John A. Croys became the parents of three children: Joseph Clayton, who farmed with his father until John A. retired. He died in July, 1975; Donald John, who served three years in the Army, mostly overseas; was graduated from the University of North Dakota with a degree in accounting and now resides in Hood River, Oregon; Carolee Jean Lovcik, a resident of East Grand Forks, Minnesota attended the University of Minnesota at Duluth, the University of North Dakota and the Union Commercial College of Grand Forks, North Dakota. Joseph Clayton took post-graduate courses in agriculture at Crookston, Minnesota.

The John Croys started farming in a partnership with Joseph Croy in 1917 and did so until Joseph's death in 1928. John continued to farm his father's land, and at times bought land in the area. Progress was steady through the 1920's and a new home was built in East Grand Forks, Minnesota in 1928.

The 1930's and 1940's period was different, as there were depression, drought, poor prices, and a serious sickness and surgery at Rochester, Minnesota for John. During that time there was no progress and it was just a question of hanging on and trying to keep from losing what you had. John comments, "I think I saved my farming future by going into debt and buying a portable irrigation system in 1934. With this, one of the driest years, I was able, by running it twenty-four hours a day, to grow a good crop of vegetables on about twenty-five acres of land and marketing them in Grand Forks and selling to truckers who came in from all over North Dakota for supplies that were non-existent, also operating a vegetable market of my own for five years.

When the drought was over and World War I started, demand and prices became better and the Croy farm grew in size and trivial gardening was taken over by larger acreages and carlot shipments of potatoes, onions and grain. Croy further comments, "Some of the prices received in the early thirties were as follows: Potatoes, 20¢ per bushel, onions 50¢ per 50-lb. bag; cabbage, 65¢ per 100-lb. bag and as cows and hogs were a part of the farm then, I can remember when the market on hogs was 2 1/2¢ per pound at the local Armour Plant; and at one time I received 97¢ for a five-gallon can of rich cream, much better than the shipping cream we now buy."

"The going wages for labor were 15¢ per hour in the early 1930 period." Many young men employed by Croy at that time were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one and had never before had employment. They were eager to find a job where they could earn one dollar and fifty cents for ten hours work. Of course, it was correspondingly as difficult to pay these wages from the profits of products sold at the prices obtained at that time.

Approximately thirty-five acres of land farmed by the Croys during that time has now been platted and sold as residential sites, and twenty-eight acres rented from others is now taken over by the Crestwood Elementary School and a large super-market. A church and residences also occupy some of this land.

Approximately two hundred acres of Polk County land remain in the Croy name. John comments: "As I look back over the period of the last sixty years or more, I think I can see where during the Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the legislation of that time did more to raise the standard of living for more of the people of this country than at any time before or since that time. I am referring to such acts as the Bank Guarantee of deposits, the Rural Electric Act, the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Wagoner Labor Act. The former