Roome Township

Roome Township was organized in 1879 and was named in honor of J. B. Roome, who was one of Polk County’s pioneers. Mr. Roome was born in New Jersey in 1829. In 1854 he came to Wisconsin and later to Wabasha County, Minnesota. In 1877 he contracted with the Manitoba Railroad Company for a half-section of land in Polk County, Minnesota. In March of the following year he “squatted” on the land which is located in the west half of section 13. His wife died in Wabasha County in June of 1878 and Mr. Roome then moved the family of four children — William, Frank, Mary, and Orilla — to Polk County. He was a carpenter by trade and built his own house on the farm, as well as the other buildings. Roads were so bad it was almost impossible to haul a load of supplies out from Crookston most of the time, so he constructed a corduroy road west of Burnham Creek for a distance of 25 rods. He had charge of much of the road work and grading done in his township. Mr. Roome was a leader in township matters and was instrumental in organizing this township.

A petition to organize township 149-48 was brought before the county commissioners and was granted in March of 1879. The meeting was held in the home of J. B. Roome, W. C. Roome and Andrew Fenseth were appointed judges and Peter Larson and Peter Karstad were appointed clerks. The new township was to be named Elm Creek, but later the name was changed to Roome.

The first officials who took office in 1880 were: J. B. Roome, Ole Knudson, and Peter Boukind — supervisors; W. C. Roome — town clerk; Peter Berg — constable; J. B. Roome — justice of the peace; Ole Knudson — assessor; Frank Roome — treasurer.

The original papers, which were found in the original home of J. B. Roome when the house was remodeled in 1965, state that the supervisors and their successors were to be paid the sum of $50. These papers have the official seal and are dated March 31, 1880. They were in an envelope with a one-cent stamp on it and it was postmarked Crookston, March 18, 1880.

The following were people that lived on the farm J. B. Roome homesteaded: Sid Lytle (Mary Lytle was a daughter of J. B. Roome), Rowe Morford, Ernes Rolsh. and Anton Peterson. Peterson moved there in March, 1916. Clarence and Albert, sons of Anton, now reside there.

The present officers of the town board are: Alton Arness, John Brower, Vernon Ostgaard — supervisors; Mrs. Irvin Beiswinger — clerk; Roger Odegard — treasurer; George Irvin and Vernon Buness — justice of the peace; Dale Charras and Loren Wollin — constables; Ingman Thoreson — assessor.

THE ROOME RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANY

In the spring of 1908 a group of men met at the Andrew Malmbarg home to organize a rural telephone company. The following men were present: Wendel Stucky, Christ Wallerbeck, Andrew Malmbarg, Halvar Breivik, Pat Murphy, L. H. Locken, Axel Erickson, Jules Boucher, Ole Knudson, Charles Matson, Erick Samuelson, Nels Malmbarg, P. M. Aune, and Ole O. Knudsen. On April 6, 1908 they voted to form the Roome Rural Telephone Company. The first officers elected were: President — William Malmbarg; Vice President — L. H. Locken; Secretary — Peter Aune; Treasurer — Wendel Stucky; Directors — Halvor Breivik, Erick Samuelson, and Christ Wallerbeck.

The manager of the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company was present at the meeting and said his company would allow the use of their poles at a fee of five cents per pole and the cost of connections at $2.50 per phone.

The main line was to go west from Crookston along the county road, then branch off north and south. Wendel Stucky was construction manager and the phone patrons were to help build the line, salary of construction work being $1.50 per hour or a share in the company for six days of work. The company voted to expand on March 1, 1912 and build a line from Kathmans’ corner two miles south, then three miles west to Kroegens’ corner, then one mile south to Mariners’ place.

The first linemen for the company were Youngve Samuelson and Peter Aune. Their salary was set at 20 cents an hour. Other linemen through the years were Henry Helgeson, C. J. Rodal, George Helgeson, Clifford Breivik, Hans Aune, Wilbur Ryan, Charles Pester, Andy Dragseth, and Clarence Peterson. Arthur Arness was secretary of the company from 1934 through 1938.

Roome Rural Telephone Company continued until the early 1950’s, when it was taken over by Northwestern Bell Telephone Company. The last officers were: President — Youngve Samuelson; Vice President — Wilfred Boucher; Sec.-Treas. — Clarence Peterson.

Bardo Church 1886-1939.

BARDO NORWEGIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Bardo Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church was named for a community in northern Norway. On July 17, 1877 a meeting conducted by Pastor Hagbøe initiated the organization of the congregation. On December 1, 1878, at the district 18 schoolhouse in Fisher Township, organization was completed by Pastor C. Saugstad. Services led by various laymen were held at the school until a church was built. The charter members were Mathias Christianson, O. K. Quamme, Ole Olson, John J. Bonnes, Jens F. Aspaas, Aners B. Anderson, Martin Finseth, John P. Olson, Samson G. Hilde, Christian M.
Urseth, Jens C. Peterson, Nels M. Kaarstad, Hans O. Urseth, S. M. Christenson, Ole Nelson, John B. Anderson, and Jens Peterson. Total membership was 45.

In 1886 construction of a church at a cost of $3,865 was completed in a wooded area about seven miles west and one mile south of Crookston in Roome Township. Labor was furnished by Hans Olai Hanson and other volunteers. Pastors who served over the years were C. Saugstad, 1882-94; M. Mickelson, 1894-96; B. L. Sundal, 1896-1901; P. S. Vang, 1901-05; Peter Steen, 1905-14; John Hjelmeland, 1914-18; H.A.B. Winther, 1919-20; I. Hovland, 1920-27; C. J. Christenson, 1927-31; and Louis Olson, 1931-39. The pastor's salary was noted to be $90.00 a year in 1878, and $150.00 in 1914. No records are available concerning organists prior to 1901, but subsequently Julie Aune, Emma Matson, Alpha and Martha Brevik served in that capacity. The first child to be baptized in the church was Hans J. Aune, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Aune, who were early members, and whose funeral services were the last services to be held in the church.

Local residents who are descendants of pastors of Bardo Church are grandchildren of Pastor Saugstad: Belva and Olaf Saugstad, Mrs. A. E. Morck and Mrs. Thorsten Morken, and a great-granddaughter, Alpha Morck: and the daughter of Pastor Vang, Henrietta Vang.

In 1939 the church became inactive with members joining other congregations. As a result the church building and cemetery became deteriorated, and former members decided to put the building up for bids. It was bought by J. C. Brevik and the building was dismantled. The altar was bought by George Knutson, who donated it to the Fisher Lutheran church. Mr. Brevik landscaped the area and mounted the bell on a mound on the original site of the church. Since that time Mr. and Mrs. Brevik have continued the care of the cemetery, a beautiful peaceful spot serving as a memorial to the pioneers who founded the congregation and to those who followed faithfully in the work they had begun.

THE FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH — ELDRED

The Eldred church was dedicated on December 14, 1930. This little congregation had been looking forward to this day ever since June 17, 1914. It was then that an organization was completed, bearing the name: “First Lutheran Community Church of Eldred,” with J. O. Ensrud as pastor. At this time it was the wish of all members that some day in the near future a church building be erected.

The charter members of this first organization were: B. E. Bredlie, R. Carlson, A. A. Dragseth, J. E. Elg, C. J. Gilbert, Hans Glasrud, T. E. Johnson, O. M. Kasberg, J. O. Nyberg, Anton Petersson, M. O. Sivle, P. H. Solstad, E. W. Swanson, A. F. Thorson and George E. Wise.

The congregation was served by Rev. J. O. Ensrud from 1914 to 1916. Rev. H. M. Tjernagel served from 1917 until March 1918 and Rev. J. N. Dordal from 1918 until 1921. From 1921 until May 27, 1927 the church activities in Eldred were at a standstill.

Seværg were resumed in May, 1927 by Rev. E. A. Schuett, pastor of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church of Crookston, under whose leadership a re-organization of the congregation took place on August 3, 1928.

The charter members of this organization are: J. E. Elg, M. A. Helgeson, Henry Jobe, August Jurchen, Willie Jurchen, O. M. Kasberg, and G. C. Rife. The first officers of the congregation were: C. G. Rife, Henry Jobe, and August Jurchen as trustees, and O. M. Kasberg as secretary-treasurer.

At a meeting of all members February 16, 1930, the congregation decided to build a church to the glory of Christ Jesus. This already created such happiness in the hearts of many that it was not unusual to see tears of joy flowing freely when the unanimous decision was reached. However, the joy was still greater when on June 29 the congregation marched in a body to the place of the new church for the purpose of laying the cornerstone.

The pastor said in his sermon that “The cornerstone of every true Christian congregation must be the stone which the builders refused, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.”

The Eldred Church is 30 x 46 feet in the main building, with a 14-foot altar niche, joined by a room on each side. The size of the rooms is 7 x 9 feet. The steeple is 12 x 12 feet, towering up 77 feet with a clock and bell thereon. The church was designed and built by Mr. August Jurchen of Eldred. As far as could be done the building was carried out in the Gothic style, displaying wherever possible the Trinity. We have seating room in the main auditorium for 140 adults and for 50 more in the balcony.

The church was taxed to the limit for the dedication services Sunday, December 14, 1930. Some 320 people were “pressed” into the building. It was certainly a day of exceeding joy for the Eldred people, waiting for all these years for a little church to be erected and now to find that their prayers were heard, the church is completed!

 Practically all building materials were furnished by the Wilcox Lumber Company through their Eldred office. The first furnace and the hardware was furnished by Emil Marvin. We certainly want to express our thanks to Mr. Larum and Mr. Marvin for their helping hearts and hands during the period of construction.

The corner-stone for the church was donated by the Crookston Granite Company, 411 North Broadway, Crookston, Minnesota.

The Rev. J. C. Meyer, Director of Mission in the state of Minnesota, delivered the sermon at the morning services; and our pastor, E. A. Schuett, delivered the sermon in the afternoon. The mixed choir as well as the men’s octette from Crookston rendered several selections at each of the services. Both speakers urged the congregation to stay true and loyal to their church, built on Jesus Christ and Him crucified. They also pointed out that a church must be what it is built for: “A house in which people assemble to worship God. The God of this church is and always should be the God of the Bible, The Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Ghost.”

Pastor E. A. Schuett served the First Lutheran Church of Eldred for 34 fruitful dedicated years. The Rev. H. E. Sieving took over the pastorate in 1952 and served the congregation till 1961. The Rev. W. E. Eicker served from 1961, and his wife Ester and family of six children were with us for twelve years. Installation ceremonies took place August 19, 1973 for the present pastor. The Rev. David L. Anderson, who also serves Our Saviors of Crookston. The Eldred Church has a membership of seventy persons from about twenty-four families.

Church services are held every Sunday at 9:30 A.M. Sunday School and Bible Class at 8:30 A.M.

Organists are Mrs. Charles Sylvester, Mrs. Elmer Bredlie, and Mrs. Wayne Johnson. The late Mrs. Ted Jobe was organist for many years. The present Sunday School teachers are Mrs. Russell Sylvester, Mrs. Allan Dragseth, Mrs. Orvis Hegge, Mrs. Charles Sylvester and Allan Dragseth, Bible Class teacher. Present church board is Ted Jobe, Roger Odegaard, Charles and Russell Sylvester and Myron Peterson. Allan Dragseth is head usher.
The Village of Eldred

The village of Eldred, Minnesota — located in Roome Township — was founded and platted in 1897 by Mr. John Elg, for whom it was named. The first name chosen was “Eldridge” but it was learned that there was another town by that name in Minnesota the name of Eldred was chosen. When the railroad came through this area Mr. Elg donated the right-of-way for one mile and thereby induced them to establish a station at Eldred. Later he laid out 28 acres as the site for the village. Of this, he sold about one-fourth to residents.

The first building erected was the Northwestern Elevator, built in 1898. The first store put up was that of Mr. T. M. Boyer, who was the first merchant. Mr. Boyer had been appointed the first postmaster of Eldred, having received that appointment in May, 1897. He had $1,500 with which to build the store and stock it with supplies. He kept the store for 12 years. Mr. Boyer also served as treasurer of Roome Township for two years.

Mr. John Elg ran a confectionery store for many years and for three years he was also postmaster of the village. In 1915, Mr. Elg built a new store building, which was destroyed by fire in 1924. John Elg passed away November 8, 1928. On his deathbed he designated certain lots to be reserved for the church and cemetery. He felt this would create interest in building a church in this small, thriving community. Various pastors had conducted services in the schoolhouse since 1914. Mr. John Nyberg contacted Rev. E. A. Schuett of Crookston and requested that he come to Eldred and conduct church services. As a result of this request, plus Mr. Elg’s offer, the First English Lutheran Church was built and dedicated December 14, 1930.

Many other thriving businesses sprang up in those early days. Two years after the village was platted, Christ and Ed Manson opened a hardware store. The St. Anthony and Dakota Elevator was built and a harness shop opened with Alfred Eckstrom as owner. By 1900, Eldred also boasted of a hotel, a blacksmith shop (Eric Palm), a second general store (Andrew Elby), and a lumber-yard.

Hans Larum came to Eldred about 1884. He left to spend some time in the army, returned later, and was married to Anna Halstenson in 1904. He managed the St. Anthony Elevator and lumber-yard for some time. About 1920 he became manager of the Ireland Lumber Yard in Eldred. Hans Valor ran a confectionery where the present post office is located. H. E. Elseth ran the creamery. There was also a pool hall, barber shop, two potato warehouses, and a stock-yard. Mr. and Mrs. August Buness were the hotel keepers for a time and Emil Manby was a hardware store for many years. Olga Frederickson became postmistress in 1948 and operated a grocery store in the same building for many years. There were many other enterprising merchants, too numerous to mention, who were instrumental in the history and growth of the village.

A. A. Dragseth was the rural mail carrier out of Eldred for 30 years. The old-timers tell that Mr. Dragseth delivered mail with horses while his substitute carrier, Anton Furu went along to walk where the roads were blocked. He was an excellent walker and would meet up with Mr. Dragseth on another part of the route and they would continue on.

The State Bank of Eldred was founded February 29, 1908 by Messrs. Roshalt and Larson. It was founded as a private institution with a capital of $10,000 and Mr. Skver Thompson as cashier. After six months Mr. T. E. Johnson took over these duties, which he continued to handle for ten years until his death. Mr. Johnson was to become one of Eldred’s most enterprising men and was instrumental in organizing the Farmers Elevator and also the consolidated school.

On October 22, 1911 there was a robbery and the safe was dynamited and robbed of $1,400. Mr. Helmer Glasserud recalls that he and Mrs. Anna Larum were employed at the hotel, which was next door. The robbers operated very quietly or they used some form of gas to put them to sleep, because they did not hear anything. The robbers stole a pony and cart from the Mariners to make their get-away. It was presumed that...
they went west to the Red River and hid in the woods, because the pony and cart returned home from that direction. The robbers were never found but the loss was fully covered by insurance.

The Farmers Elevator and Trading Company was organized in February 1917 with Mr. Tosten Johnson and Mr. B. E. Bredlie instrumental in its organization. A salesman from Fargo had come to Eldred trying to sell stock in a Farmers Equity Exchange. Mr. Bredlie told him “What we need is a farmers elevator,” so the salesman returned at a later date and helped them to organize the elevator.

The present building was built from the ground and finished in 1918. On July 3, 1935 the elevator was extensively damaged by a tornado. In July, 1938 the elevator was reorganized and the name was changed to The Farmers Elevator Company. A 50,000 bushel annex was added in 1943. The Girard elevator was purchased March 15, 1954 and in August of 1958 the board authorized another 100,000 bushel annex. In 1972 they purchased the G.T.A. Elevator in Eldred and continue to operate both at this date.

John Nyberg was the first manager, serving from 1917-1926. T. P. Smidesang served from 1926-1938; J. J. Johnson from 1938-1943; T. P. Smidesang from 1943-1949. Hillard Mykleby from that date. Past presidents of the Farmers Elevator include: Ole Bruin, John Thoreson, Helmer Glaserud, Art Arness, Clarence Charais, Elmer Bredlie and Alton Arness.


SCHOOLS OF ROOME TOWNSHIP

It is interesting to note that the early settlers were deeply concerned with the education of their children, because within a very short time country schools sprang up all over the county. Six of these were located in Roome Township. Later district 281 of Eldred was organized and became the second consolidated school in the State of Minnesota. It can also be noted that as modern roads and transportation came into being, the school districts gradually joined with the larger schools, and at this writing there are no longer any rural school sections in Polk County. The office of county superintendent was abolished as of July 1, 1970. Superintendent Myrtle Paulson was acting superintendent at that time, and Mr. Martin Vanseth was appointed in charge of all existing records.

A brief history, together with a few pictures of some of the school districts in Roome Township follows. Space does not permit changes that took place over the years as the residents found it more convenient to transfer their land into other districts.

School district number 18 was organized in 1879 and contained sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of Roome Township. The district paid a sum of $10.00 to Mr. A. B. Anderson for one acre of land on which the school was built. The location was along the south edge of section 35, Fisher Township. Minutes of the meeting of July 1, 1885 show that it was voted to have five months of school during the following term — 2½ months in winter commencing on the first day of November, and 2½ months in summer, commencing on the first day of May. Later this was increased by one month, a practice which continued several years. Ole Knudson was treasurer, and Peter Larson was clerk. The minutes of a school meeting on July 1, 1891 show that it was decided to put a brick foundation under the schoolhouse, which up to this time had been sitting on wood blocks. It was also decided at this time to dig a well. Some of the other officers were H. B. Christenson, Peter Larson, A. M. Malmberg, P. B. Anderson, Jens Aune.

Some of the early teachers were Nellie Aldrich, Emma Johnson, Emma Hope, Ella Wollin, Martha Crookshanks, Kirke Davis, P. J. Christenson, H. A. Urseth, and S. A. Gooler.

There was a large attendance at this school for many years. Church services were also held in the school before the Bardo church was built. The school was closed, and in February 1955 the district was dissolved. All of the school's territory was
transferred to the Fisher district. Number 13. The building is still in use at this time on the farm of Henning Malmberg.

District number 39 was organized in 1893, and located in Section 8, Roome Township, and contained sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, and 17. Albert Arness had been settled on his new farm just one year when he, with several of his neighbors, decided that the district must build and maintain a school so that their children could be properly educated. Albert offered free of charge a parcel of land that might be used as a building site. This was accepted in the summer of 1898, the building was completed. Later one of the teachers was to be his sister, Ingeborg Arness. Usually the teacher roomed and boarded at the Arness home, and during the entire period from 1898 to 1940, when the school was discontinued, there was an Arness on the school board. In 1952 the district was dissolved and consolidated with District 13, at Fisher.

Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Gordon, of Climax, purchased the school building and made it into a home. It is still in use. Some of the teachers who taught there were Ingeborg Arness, Carrie Hegg, Gladys Wastewell, Edith Gast, Mildred Peterson, and Katherine Horde.

School district number 110, located in the southeast corner of Section 1, Roome Township, was organized in 1884, and contained Sections 13 and 14 of Roome Township, and 6, 7, 18, and 19 of Andover Township. The school was called the Burnham Creek School because of its location near Burnham Creek. Alexander Burnham, for whom this creek was named, was the first settler in Andover Township.

Records show that Mr. R. B. Gates built the school, and Mr. Charles Mattson was the first treasurer. Clerk was Mr. G. Davis, with A. W. Peterson as director. The teachers' salary was $25.00 per month. Teachers were also the janitors, and oftentimes it was impossible to get the school room warm enough for students to remain in their seats, so they would gather around the stove with its big metal jacket to hold class discussions. Teachers sometimes sent out a keg of hot soup or a hot dish (enough to feed everyone) to supplement the cold sandwiches. This was heated on top of the stove, and the aroma was most pleasant.

School District 110 closed in 1953, and the pupils were transported to Crookston. In 1955 it was dissolved and attached to district 1, Crookston. The building is still in use at this time on the farm of Ernest Radi, who purchased it and moved it to his farm yard.


School district number 150, known as the Krogan School, was organized in 1885. It was located in the southeast quarter of section 22, Roome Township, near the present Allam Draggseth homestead. Only a few records were available, but we found some of the early teachers at this school: Anna G. Wilson, John Saugstad, S. P. Boughman, H. P. Boukind, Florence Martine, Emma Nyen, Hannah Bennen, Agnes Bardson, Pauline E. Hanson, Anna Eickhoff.

A great many of the area families were represented in the students roll call: Arness, Bangen, Davis, Eide, Krogan, Peterson, Thoreson, Paulson, Elg, Leikness, Hansell, Gustavson, Lonne, Jobe, Draggseth, Boucher, Glaserud, Stubson, Bergland, Vigan, Gilbert, and Mariner — to name a few. The school was consolidated on March 16, 1912 with the Eldred School, so it was actually in operation only 27 years.

District number 41 was organized May 7, 1889, and contained sections 17, 19, 20, 29, 30, 31, and 32 of Roome Township. The officers chosen at this meeting were: director, H. H. Thoreson, treasurer, T. Boukind; and clerk, A. Elby. These officers served only until July, and at that time Oliver Bones was elected director, H. H. Thoreson treasurer, and T. Boukind clerk.

It was decided that the school should be built on the southwest corner of the Northwest Quarter of section 29, and the sum of $20.00 was paid to K. H. Valor for one square acre of land. Mr. F. Hamilton of Fisher, Minnesota, furnished the lumber and built the schoolhouse for the sum of $375.00. Fixtures in the school cost $27.40. It was resolved that school begin January 6, 1890 for a period of two months, weather permitting. Teacher's salary was to be $35.00 per month. The first teacher was J. Walseth. Julie Brunner was the second instructor. Others who taught there in the early days were E. A. Marigard, Mathilda Johnson, Peter Finseth, Mary N. Krudon, T. J. Malone, J. Saugstad, H. F. Boukind, P. H. Solstad, Otto F. Neuman, Julia F. Thompson, Olga Skyberg, Ellen B. Merrill, and Hansen.

An interesting item noted in the minutes of the July 15, 1900 meeting stated as follows: "Resolved to have the board put in a bridge to the schoolhouse, and have four 12-foot cracker posts put down at the schoolhouse for horses."

In March of 1912, all of district 41 was consolidated with school district 281 of Eldred, under strong opposition from some of the school board members. Consequently, on July 9 of the same year, several sections of the land were withdrawn from district 281, and returned to district 41. The school continued to operate until 1954 when the district was dissolved and all of the territory thereof attached to district 245 of Climax. Vernon Ostgaard purchased the building and moved it to his farm, where it is still in use.

School district 33 was located along the western edge of Roome Township. Organized in 1895, it contained sections 6, 7, and 18 of Roome Township, and sections 1, 12, and 13 of Tynsid Township. Known as the Gudvangen School, it was located in the northwest corner of the southwest Quarter of Section 7, Roome Township. We were unable to locate any records or pictures of the school. However, in 1952 the district was consolidated with district 13 of Fisher, and the building was sold to Telbert Grove. Later it was purchased by Gerald Brun and moved to his farm where it is now a part of his home.

School district 281, Eldred, organized March 16, 1912, was the second consolidated school in the state of Minnesota. Districts 41 and 150 of Roome Township, 254 of Vineland, and 68 of Andover were included in this consolidation. One of the main instigators of this venture was Tosten Johnson, and he was assisted by C. J. Gilbert, H. P. Boukind, and others. There was strong opposition to this move, but the school was built and dedicated January 31, 1914. A modern building, equipped with a fan ventilation system, indoor flush toilets, pressure water fountains, and an electric lighting system was built in Eldred. The school, with its large auditorium and modern lunch room was to become an important center, not only for school, but for many community activities such as church, 4-H meetings, Farm Bureau, Homemakers, and many other activities.

Eldred Consolidated School First Consolidated School in Minnesota. About 1912.
At the time of the dedication a special train came out from Crookston and an all-day celebration was held, with dinner being served. George Vincent, president of the University of Minnesota, was the dedication speaker.

Members of the first school board were Joe Boucher, C. J. Gilberl, Tosten Johnson, B. E. Bredlie, and G. W. Mariner.

The first teachers in the new school were J. A. Sonquist, principal; Clara Kolstad, upper grades; Helinda Messelt, intermediate grades; and Nobel Stowe, primary grades. Besides the three R’s, courses in domestic science, manual training, and agriculture were offered.

The 12-grade system was first disrupted in 1932 when grades nine through twelve were taken to a consolidated high school. In 1954 grades seven and eight were taken out also. The school closed in May of 1968, since only ten students were left in the six lower grades.

The large bell tower of the school was blown down and destroyed by a tornado on July 3, 1935. In June of 1968 this district was dissolved and the land therein attached to Crookston and Fisher. Since the building was deteriorating, it was decided to take it down rather than attempt to repair it; so, on December 3, 1968, this familiar landmark to the area residents for 56 years was torn down and burned.

THE ARNESS HISTORY

Alexander Arness was of the first generation on the Arness farm. The Arnesses are the Teutons of the purest quality, coming from Bodo, Norway, in 1883. The first generation on the Arness farm was Alexander Cornelius Arness, born in 1841, in Bodo, Norway; he died in 1924. He married Radine Adriene Anderson in 1865. She was born in 1843, also in Bodo, Norway, and died in 1916. Alexander was a master fisherman and farmer, a man of sharp intellect, and a good manager. The family consisted of the parents, the oldest son, Albert, born in 1868; Olaf born in 1870; Conrad born in 1873; Angelene born in 1875; Ingeborg born in 1878; Ole born in 1882; and Nicolina born in 1886. Mrs. Nicolina Kolden, the only living member of this family, lives at Erskine, Minnesota, and is still active at the age of 89 years. Alexander’s active farming years lasted from 1883 to 1902, about 20 years. He remained true to his Lutheran faith to the last, insisting on family prayer with each meal, and an hour of devotions and Bible reading every Sunday morning. Both during devotional periods and at other times as well, he sang loudly and lustily his favorite hymns from the hymnary. Dancing, card playing, and the like, were sinful and not to be tolerated. The family attended church services regularly every Sunday morning at the country church known as the Bardo church, located some five miles east and north of the Arness farm. Alexander and Radine are buried in the Bardo cemetery.

Albert Christian Arness and Christine Anderson were married in 1894, and were the second generation on the Arness farm in Roome Township, Norway. He had been the land of his birth, all of his education, and his early experiences. From the very start, Albert prospered as a farmer. The price of the land he bought varied from as low as five dollars per acre, to twenty-five. Now this same land is valued at from $200 to $250 per acre.

Born to the family during these years were Arthur Roy, born in 1896; Constance, born in 1897; Gustave Adolph, born in 1901; and Carl Alvin, born in 1906. Constance lived to be only five years old. He, brought up in the Lutheran faith, also attended the Bardo Church, as did their ancestors. Albert built a larger and more modern home on the farm. The total cost for this spacious home was only $1500.00 for labor and materials.

In 1918 Arthur took over the farming operations. Gustave went to Minneapolis, where he was employed with the Metropolitan Building and Loan Association. Carl was employed in Crookston with a produce company. The three boys died within a short span of years. Arthur died in 1961. Carl passed away five months later. Gustave died in 1965. There are such men as Albert Arness who are an asset to our society and to our nation. As he said many times, “Human beings, not property, should be the first consideration in a democracy.”

Arthur Roy Arness and Clara Marie Larson were married October 3, 1918, the third generation to be on the Arness farm. In addition to being a farmer, Arthur was a talented musician. He played the violin, trumpet, and trombone. He had his own dance band, called “The Arness Orchestra.” This orchestra was in existence from 1924 until 1941, and played at a great many functions. He played with great warmth and feeling, whether it was a selection from Edward Greig, or a lively Norwegian schottische. Arthur Arness was also involved in many community services; he held offices on the town board of Roome Township, was director of the Roome telephone company; was director and president of the Farmers Elevator Company of Eldred. He was a member of the Fisher Lutheran Church. He received his education from the Fisher grade school, and from the Northwest School of Agriculture, now known as the University of Minnesota Technical College, Crookston, Minnesota.

Clara Marie Arness was a member of the Fisher Lutheran Church, American Legion Auxiliary, Ladies Aid, and Homemaker Group, in addition to being a housewife and mother. She was born in 1897 and died in 1972. Born to the family during these farming years were Alton Lowell, born in 1921, and Duane Arthur, born in 1932. Alton and Duane are both talented musicians. Alton became the farmer. Duane is an accountant for Peter Schmitz Paper Company at Windom, Minnesota. Duane was also a member of the Army European Theater Band.

Alton Lowell Arness and Georgine Elaine Wehus were married September 19, 1942 at Climax, Minnesota, the fourth generation on the Arness farm. They have one son, Craig Arden, born March 8, 1948. He is now with the State Department. Alton Arness, of Fisher, Minnesota, was selected for the state
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Arnness
Duane and Alton.

Mr. and Mrs. Alton Arnness.

Craig Arnness.

edition of “Who’s Who”, 1975, having contributed notably to the betterment of his community. Some of his community services have been serving as chairman of the town board of Roome Township for several years; president of the Farmers Elevator Company of Eldred for the past three years, also on the board of directors; and county 4-H president; He is a leader; president of the Fisher Lutheran Church Council, and also secretary and head usher of the church; president of its Family Fellowship; and secretary of its Men’s Club. Alton has also served as secretary of the Fisher Chamber of Commerce; clerk of school district No. 39; and is a member of the Eagles Lodge, Sons of Norway, and the Farm Bureau.

Alton is a talented musician and plays the piano, trumpet, and saxophone, and has boundless ambition for dancing and music. He played in his father’s dance band, “The Arnness Orchestra,” for several years. He has served as a judge in several musical contests throughout the area. Alton Arnness has lived and farmed in the Fisher area all his life. He graduated from the Northwest School of Agriculture at Crookston, now the University of Minnesota Technical College.

Georgine Arnness has also been active in community affairs. She was a teacher in the Fisher Lutheran Church Sunday School for sixteen years. She served on the board of education. She was secretary of the Ladies Aid. She was a leader of the “Lutheran Children of the Reformation.” She was president of the Fisher Music Boosters for two years. She was secretary and treasurer and the Eldred 4-H Club leader for 10 years. She was a member of the Sons of Norway Lodge and the Farm Bureau. Her hobbies are music, and she plays the piano, trombone, and violin, and has boundless ambition for dancing and square dancing. She graduated as an honor student from the Climax High School in 1941. Georgine also enjoys art work, ceramics, painting, and Norwegian Rosemaling. (She has her own kiln for firing ceramics.) She has won several ribbons in exhibitions. She enjoys interior decorating, and has used a pink and purple color scheme throughout her home. Flower gardening is also one of her hobbies.

Craig Arden Arnness, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alton Arnness, of Fisher, has been active in school, church, and community affairs for many years. He has held several class offices. He is a talented musician, and is president of the 4-H Club. He was active in band, mixed chorus, boys’ club, boys’ quartette, and pep band. He played in the dance band and in the Dixieland band. He has been a letterman in basketball and football; he played a double role in the junior class play. He worked in the FFA, taking part in the crop judging contest. He also played in the All State Band. Craig has worked and held offices in the 4-H Club. He was a four-time winner of the 4-H Home and Yard Improvement Pin Award for West Polk County. He participated in the State Fair 4-H Share the Fun Festival; he was a Red River Valley Winter Shows top talent winner and guest artist. State piano contest winner: Minnesota Music Teachers Association ten grand piano State Honor Student Concert at the University of Minnesota, State Farm Bureau talent contest. At the International Music Camp he was selected for the “Mountie Band,” the “Dance Band,” and the “Honor Band.”

Craig was consistently on the “A” honor roll at school. He played in the Crookston Municipal Band. He was active in the Teen-Age Republicans. Craig is a member of the Fisher Lutheran Church, and of the choir. He is an accompanist for the Sunday school and Luther League. He was a voting delegate to the International Lutheran League Convention in Detroit, Michigan. He has appeared on many area programs, and on television in area cities. He was a delegate to Boys’ State at St. Paul,

where he was awarded a plaque for State Champion on the written Minnesota government test. The test was taken by 408 boys. Craig was also awarded the highest score for his “City” on a government written test, and was awarded a second plaque for this honor. He received the Outstanding History Award for 1965 from the Historical Society. He was valedictorian of the Fisher High School in 1966. He was a National Merit Scholarship finalist.

In 1968 he was one of twenty-five selected from the nation to participate in a Russian Study Tour. The tour included a four-week intensive study of the Russian language at Moscow State University, and a two-week study course in Czechoslovakia. He was in Brezslav, Czechoslovakia, when the Soviet-led invasion occurred in 1968. He has traveled extensively in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Craig graduated from Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, on June 11, 1970, magna cum laude, with distinction in his major, Russian and European area studies. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated from Yale University in 1971, with a master’s degree in Russian and European studies. He was employed in Washington, D.C. for a year and a half, and is now on assignment to Madras, India, in the State Department.

B. E. AND ELMER BREDLIE

Bernt Bredlie immigrated in 1885 from Fresvik, Norway to Fisher’s Landing, Minnesota. There he worked as a farm laborer until 1900, when he purchased land near Eldred. In 1901 he married Louise Gulseth. Their marriage produced two offspring, Elmer and Lillian Bredlie Gorter. The Bredlie family tree dates back to Halfdan the Svart and Harald Harfagre.

Mrs. Bredlie died in December, 1907. In 1912 Bernt married Martha Gimse and they had one daughter, Edna (Mrs. George Helgesen).

Bernt was a pioneer in the true sense of the word. He was among the first Red River Valley beet growers, producing his first crop in 1923. In 1917, Bernt helped organize the Eldred Farmers’ Elevator. The Eldred Consolidated School was built during one of Bernt’s terms as a school board member. He was also a charter member of the First English Lutheran Church of Eldred. In addition to sugar beets, Bernt also grew certified seed crops of small grain and potatoes. He was among the first Polk County members of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

His wife died in 1937 and Bernt in 1955.

Elmer Bredlie was born November 5, 1903. He attended the Northwest School of Agriculture in Crookston, completing their advanced course in 1922. In 1930 Elmer married Elizabeth Ranger from Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. The Ranger grandparents had emigrated from England in 1816. Elizabeth’s maternal grandparents had come from Norway in 1876 where her grandmother had graduated from the University of Christiansana in present-day Oslo, and had worked as a teacher and well-known organist. Elizabeth, a graduate of Moorhead State University, and Elmer have both been involved in many community activities in addition to raising three children — Joan (Mrs. Kenneth Osterberg), B.S. Nursing, University of North Dakota; Eric, counselor at St. Cloud Apollo High School, B.S., University of North Dakota and M.S.; St. Cloud State Univer-

B. E. Bredlie. Age 89 Yrs.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Bredlie.
sity; and Ruth (Mrs. Gary Hanson), instructor, St. Luke's School of Nursing, B.S., in Nursing, University of North Dakota. Elmer is perhaps best known in agricultural circles as a premier grower of registered and certified seed. He has received numerous awards from the Minnesota State Fair, receiving championship ribbons in 1964 and 1968. Agricultural organizations Elmer has served in include the Farmers Elevator, Eldred (president and director); Farmers' Elevator Association of Minnesota (director); Minnesota Crop Improvement (director); Polk County Beet Growers Association (treasurer); Minnesota State Agriculture Stabilization Committee (chairman); Crookston Liquid Fertilizer (director); Farm Bureau (county chairman). Elmer has also been active in many community organizations. Among these are the Polk County State Bank (director); Bethesda Hospital Board (director); Crookston Chamber of Commerce; Civil Defense — State of Minnesota Governor's Commission; School Board (chairman); Township clerk and assessor; First English Lutheran Church, Eldred (treasurer for 25 years); Rotary Club: American Red Cross. Elmer is listed in Who's Who in Minnesota and Who's Who in the Midwest.

Mrs. Bredlie has also been very active in the Eldred community where they reside. and in the Crookston community. She has held local, county, and state offices in the P.T.A. She has been an organist at the First English Lutheran Church for more years than is decent to report. She also has taught Sunday school and release-time classes as well as serving in all offices of the Ladies' Aid. Mrs. Bredlie has served as Polk County Chairwoman of the G.O.P., as clerk of the Eldred school board, and is a member of the Matrons' Club.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Bredlie have been honored as recipients of the Red River Valley Homemakers Award, the Farm Bureau Community Service Award, and the Polk County Pioneer Seed Grower Award.

HALVOR J. BREVIK AND JORGINE BREVIK

Halvor Brevik, born in Sigdal, Norway immigrated at age 20 to the United States, motivated by a desire to see this land of opportunity. His destination was Crookston, Minnesota where he found employment, and worked diligently. Though often earning only shelter and minimal board, experiencing homesickness and loneliness, with tenacious appreciation for every opportunity he was finally able to purchase a farm adjacent to Bardo Lutheran Church in Roome township.

Jorgine, the eldest daughter of Christian Urseth (a teacher and lay-preacher) and Anne Urseth, was age six when her parents, she and her brothers and sisters immigrated from Tromso, Norway to Dalton, Minnesota. Later they moved to the Crookston community, where her father had purchased a farm.

Halvor and Jorgine were married at Bardo Church, December 31, 1890. The winter had been unusually mild, but a few snowflakes fell as the bridal pair and guests proceeded from church (some walking, others using horses and buggies) to the reception in the new home Halvor had ready for his bride.

To this union were born six children: Mrs. Peter (Alpha) Ovesen, Detroit, Michigan; Mrs. Theodore (Gudrun) Level- ton, Bella Coola, British Columbia; Mrs. William (Harriet) Berg, Fargo, North Dakota; Clifford, who married Mona Evenson, Crookston, Minnesota; Mrs. Edward (Martha) Whalen, Troy, New York; and Ralph, who married Helen Nord of Louisville, Kentucky. Clifford and Martha are the remaining members of the immediate family. The farm and homestead still remain, now the property of Clifford, who is retired. Martha lives in Grand Forks, North Dakota, since the death of her husband in 1972.

Jorgine's eldest brother, Hans Urseth, attended Augsburg Seminary (College), becoming an ordained minister. He soon became one of the professors, teaching Theology and English. He also translated Professor Sverdrup's Norwegian Catechism and Bible History into English. A "welcoming committee of one," he made things easier for many new students from Nor-

Mr. and Mrs. Halvor Brevik.

Hans had a poetic bent and, as students at Augsburg, he and his friend Melsus Christiansen (Dr. F. Melsu Christiansen, noted director of the far-famed St. Olaf Choir) "collaborated," Christiansen setting to music religious verse written by Hans. Some of these songs still appear in hymnals.

Peter Urseth, a younger brother, was instrumental in organizing a community band, the "Burham Creek Band" existing from 1905 to 1916. Directors from Crookston led rehearsals and performances. It played at Polk County fairs, and gave an annual concert and picnic at the Aune Grove. This, and the Bardo Ladies Aid annual picnic and sale were highlights of the summer, greatly anticipated by the youngsters. (The "Ice Cream Stand" was a delight, where purchases of "goodies" required much deliberation). These summer events attracted many people from both the surrounding community and from Crookston, a few owners of early automobiles proudly motoring out at amazing speeds of 20-25 miles per hour.

There are five grandchildren: Clifford Levelton in Ottawa, Director of Regional Operations, Fisheries Service, of all of Canada; Dr. Bruce Levelton an Erosion Consultant, Vancouver, British Columbia; and Ralph Brevik, Jr., president of Benchmark Group Inc., Fullerton, California. Clifford's two daughters, Mrs. James (Patricia) Robinson, and Mrs. Joe (Jennifer) Houke reside in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Halvor, Jorgine, Alpha, Grandmother Urseth, and Great-grandparents Urseth are buried at Bardo cemetery.

Injecting a personal note, I wish to pay tribute to our wonderful parents, treasuring the heritage of their strong spiritual faith, their uprightness and charity, which they passed on to us. Although Norway was dear to them, they dearly loved their new country. They instilled in us a strong sense of patriotism and loyalty to our country, and an appreciation for the environment they helped to create.

GEORGE AND CLARA BROLSMA

Polk County was the location picked by Mr. George Brolsa when he came from his native land and birthplace, Oudebildt, Holland. In order to emigrate they had to have their ticket to their destination and $25.00 in cash. In August of 1913 George Brolsa came to the United States with his future brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Andringa. He worked on the Wentzel farm near Fisher, Minnesota, until the fall of 1915.

In 1914, Clara DeJong, the girl of his dreams that he had left behind in Holland the year before, arrived in this area. At first she worked for the John Perry family and then for R. T. Bucker, Congressman from this district, and later for the Slyter family.

In the meantime homesteads were available in Alberta, Canada. In the fall of 1915 George joined his brother Herman on a farm in southern Alberta. In March of 1916, in 35 degrees below zero weather, Clara and her sister, Tjaltje, left for Alberta, where both couples were married.

In 1919, due to several crop failures and heartaches, they returned to Polk County with their two sons, George, Jr., and
Allen and their year-old niece, Edna, daughter of Herman and Tjaltje. Tjaltje died during the 1918 flu epidemic and Herman remained on the homestead. Shortly after their arrival Clarence was born.

After working for others in the Crookston area, they started farming for themselves on a farm near Eldred. They lived there for nine years. This is where Herman, Agnes and Sadie were born. In the fall of 1929 they moved near Beltrami and rented the farm of Dr. Thomas Spence. This was where their youngest son, John, was born in 1932. They had a sale in the fall of 1942. George Jr. was married and farming for himself. Allen was drafted for the army. Herman was scheduled to go shortly, and George Sr. was unable to farm alone. After the sale, they moved to a little farm north of Crookston, now known as North Front Street with many new homes in the area. Shortly after moving, George entered the hospital for surgery, developed a blood clot and died very suddenly on February 12, 1943, at the age of 51.

After George Sr.’s death Clara purchased a small home at 304 Elm Street and continued to live there with her son John. During this period she worked at the Crookston Hotel for 11 years and at Central High School for five and one-half years, returning in 1959. She was a very active member of the Christian Reformed Church. Clara continued to live at 304 Elm Street until she suffered a stroke and died very suddenly on December 7, 1970.

This article is written by the Brolsma family in tribute to their parents. As of 1976 George Jr. (wife — Jessie Epema), Allen (wife — Leah Seaton), Herman (wife — Lillian Brandwick) all live in the city of Crookston. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Terpestra (Charlene) live on Rt. 2, Crookston. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Newell (Sadie) live in Fertile, Minnesota. Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Johnstone (Agnes Brolsma Cowell) live at Browerville, Minnesota, and John (wife — Margaret Duval) live in Bloomington, Minnesota.

CLARENCE AND LELIA CHARAIS

We came to Polk County when we were very young — Clarence with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lemuel Charais, from Fowler, Indiana in 1916, and Lelia with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Steiner, from Nauvoo, Illinois in 1915. Clarence lived with his family three miles east of Climax and attended grade school at Climax. In 1926 the family moved three miles southeast of Eldred to section 10, Vineyard township, where they farmed. Lelia’s family lived in Hammond township for a short time and they then moved to section 12, Roome Township in 1917. Lelia attended school in Eldred for two months and then the family moved a half-mile northwest to section 11. She attended school at district 110, graduating from eighth grade in 1927.

We were married September 9, 1934 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Steiner with Reverend E. A. Schuett officiating. Our first home was a small house two miles south of Eldred, owned by Amos Kasberg. Clarence drove the school bus for district 254, bringing the children in to the Eldred school. In the spring of 1935 we moved to a set of vacant buildings owned by Louis Letses, four miles southeast of Eldred. We couldn’t use the well on this place, so we hauled water from Clarence’s folks’ place. In the winter this meant pulling the 10-gallon cream cans over the snow on a sled. so we learned to be very economical with water! We had no electricity, telephone, nor radio and oftentimes the roads were blocked for long periods of time, since there were no snow plows to open them. Travel was by horse and sleigh, so a trip to Eldred for groceries became a big event. During the summer Clarence helped his dad on the farm and also worked at the sugar beet dump at Eldred during the harvest season. He enjoyed carpentry and during the long winter months he made several small pieces of furniture, some of which we still use, and also doll furniture for Delsie, our first child, born in May, 1936.

On July 3, 1935 we were in the path of a tornado and our house was the only building left standing. Most of our 200 chickens and turkeys were killed. In 1941 heavy rains caused water to stand all around our buildings from June until October, so we learned why the area was called “The Swamp.” It was at this time that we had an opportunity to rent the west half of section 12, Roome Township, where we presently reside, and where Lelia had formerly lived. We started farming in 1942 with a $250 International tractor, two cows, and borrowed machinery. We bought a nice team of horses, which we had for about 20 years until they died.

Truly one of the greatest events occurred in January, 1943 when we acquired electricity through the R.E.A. It would be impossible to describe the night when the lights were turned on and we could stop stumbling around in the barn with a kerosene lantern! Shortly after this our County Agent, Mr. Carl Ash, began a campaign to get running water and bathroom facilities into every rural home in West Polk County. Ours was installed in 1951, another wonderful convenience.

We purchased this half-section from Mrs. Thora Ringdahl Hovet in 1952 and we added another 160 acres in 1965, when we bought the northeast quarter of section 32, Andover township, from the Letses estate.

Carole Faye was born in September, 1942 but she was with us only six months. She passed away March 8, 1943 from a rare throat infection. Dale was born in May of 1944 and Corrine in February of 1949.

We are members of the First English Lutheran Church of Eldred, the Farm Bureau, and the children belonged to Eldred 4-H. Clarence served on the board of the Farmers’ Elevator and Lelia has been a member of the Eldred Homemaker Club.

Delsie and Dale attended school at district 110 until it closed in 1953. Then attended school in Crookston. Delsie is teaching kindergarten at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls. Dale is married and farming in Polk County and Corrine just finished obtaining her M.A. in English at Greeley, Colorado.
DALE AND LAURA CHARAIS

Dale Marlow was born in Crookston in May, 1944, and lived with his parents Clarence and Leila Charais, and his sisters, Delsie and Corrine, at their farm home on section 12, Roome township, Polk county. Dale attended district #110 until the rural school closed in 1953. He then transferred to Crookston and continued from grade four at Franklin Elementary School. After his first two years at Central High School he transferred to the Northwest School of Agriculture, graduating in 1962. Dale enlisted in the National Guard in the fall of 1964 and served basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. He later transferred to the Air National Guard in Fargo, North Dakota, and received his discharge in 1972. In November of 1966, Dale Charais and Laura Ann Munion were married at the Methodist Church in Crookston, with her father officiating.

Laura was born in New Jersey in January of 1946. She came to Minneapolis in 1960 with her family, graduated from high school in 1964, and attended Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa. Laura moved to Polk county in 1964 with her parents, Paul and Naomi Munion, and her brother, Richard, when her father was appointed minister to Wesley United Methodist Church in Crookston. After graduating from Aaker's Business College in Grand Forks, North Dakota, she was employed in Crookston as secretary at the Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, and the Agriculture Division at the University of Minnesota Technical College, Crookston.

We lived in Eldred, Minnesota from 1966 to 1974 and moved to our present home at section 12, Roome township, in December, 1974. Dale has been engaged in farming since 1962. We have two sons, Alec, born in May, 1973, and Brad, whom we adopted in October of 1975 at three weeks of age.

MR. AND MRS. LEMUEL CHARAIS

Lemuel and Evelina Charais, together with their four children — Viola, Clarence, Helen, and Lillian — came to Polk County in 1916 from Fowler, Indiana. Evelina's brother, Lee Besse, also came with them. David Besse, Evelina's father, had purchased a section of land three miles east of Climax, Minnesota and felt that tilling would be the answer to the wet lands. This had worked well in Indiana but the colder winters of Minnesota caused the ground to freeze more deeply and break the tiles. Lee Besse returned to Indiana after two years on the farm but the Charais family remained there for ten years during which the children attended school in Climax.

Mr. Charais bought a threshing machine and did custom threshing for the neighbors. He also played the violin for barn dances in the area.

In 1927, they rented a half-section three miles south of Eldred, 160 acres in section 10, Vineland township where they resided, and 160 acres in section 14. The house on this farm was built of logs. The land was wet, the crops were poor, and fatal sleeping sickness among their best work horses added to the problems of the unfruitful years. In the early 30's Mr. Charais purchased an International F-12 tractor, his first. A few years later he bought one of the first small combines to be used in the area — an Allis Chalmers. Also at this time he purchased his farm from the State of Minnesota for the sum of $3000 — less than $10 per acre.

Mr. Charais served on the town board of Vineland township and also on the school board of district 254. Evelina was a member of the Eldred Homemakers Club. Helen married Ordean Estenson in 1933 and they were the parents of four children. Clarence married Lelia Steiner in 1936 and they also had four children. Viola married Nilmor Wahl of Climax and they later moved to Mentor, Minnesota. They had five children. Lillian was married to Carl Amundson of Shelly and they had four children.

In 1945 Mr. and Mrs. Charais moved into Eldred, where they purchased a home from Olga Frederickson. They raised chickens and Mr. Charais did carpenter work. He later sold the farm to Alvin Suldahl. Lemuel Charais passed away in 1956. Evelina continued to live in Eldred and was active with her yard and garden work until her death in 1973.

JOHN CONNERAN SENIOR

This fine gentleman was for years one of the most enterprising and extensive farmers in Polk County, having owned 920 acres of land, most of which was under cultivation. The land is still in the family, but has been given to his sons, and in turn passed on to his grandsons.

John Conneran Sr. was born in County Galway, Ireland, on November 10, 1844, and came to the United States to join his brother, Lawrence, in New Jersey. He arrived in New York City on May 2, 1862. Two years later his father came over, and they moved up into New York State, where they lived for a time before returning to New Jersey. John Conneran worked as a brakeman on a railroad for awhile, and then as a conductor.

He met and married Ann Logan in Manchester, New Jersey, in 1872. Ann Logan was of Irish stock also, having been born in Belfast, Ireland, on September 25, 1854. She had immigrated with her family to America, arriving in this country the night of President Lincoln's assassination, April 14, 1865. She lived with her family at Red Bank, New Jersey.

After his marriage, Mr. Conneran became a section boss on the railroad. He held that job for seven years, during which time he saved $1,000 of his earnings as a stake for his contemplated venture to the distant West. By this time they had three children: John Jr., Mary, and Katherine, all of whom were born at Red Bank, New Jersey. His wife longed to be with her people, the Logans, and Mrs. Barney Haggerty, who had already moved to the Red River area near Fisher. So, later in 1879 he brought his family to Fisher's Landing, which was still the railroad terminus and head of navigation at that date.

In the earlier days Fisher's Landing was better known as Shrift Tail Bend, a name given during the log-driving days when a lumberjack hung his shirt on a stake to mark the sand bar on the bend. Hence the name stuck for a long time.

As a homestead, he settled on a quarter section of prairie land in Section 6 of Roome Township about six and one-half miles southwest of Fisher. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Kate Logan, had a claim on it for a time, but she allowed him to file on it, which he did in the spring of 1888. By May 15, 1888 he had his house built and was occupying it. Mr. Conneran bought 160 acres more in section 6, and 160 acres in section 32, 80 acres in section 8, all in Roome Township; and 40 acres in section 7 of Fisher township. He also owned 320 acres in Woodside Township. The Woodside property was only a quarter of a mile south of Maple Lake, and a few miles south of Mentor.

At one time Mr. Conneran spent four or five years on his Woodside farm getting out cordwood, which he shipped to Crookston and Grand Forks, employing 10 to 12 wood choppers, and sending off 1,000 to 3,000 cords a year. One winter his shipment was a car load every day.

His farming operations were also carried on in a large scale. At the height of his business he planted 400 to 500 acres in wheat, and also kept 50 to 75 head of cattle when he had range for them. But about 1916 he cut his herd down to 25 head, in addition to 10 to 12 milk cows, which he kept for butter.
although they had milked 18 to 20 cows some years. Mrs. Conneran churned the butter at home, and it was taken to Crookston, where it sold mostly to private customers.

Mr. Conneran served in several township offices, especially those having to do with road work. His railroad section supervision had been of great help, and, as a result, Room Township had good roads. He also had a great deal of land drained, and worked hard to get the establishment of a general system of ditches. All the best ditches in and near his locality were provided largely through his strenuous efforts.

Mr. and Mrs. John Conneran, Sr., were the parents of nine children: John Jr. (1873-1925) who never married. He farmed in Fisher township until his death at 52 years of age. Mary (1875-1935), wife of James Powers of Byeland township, was the mother of eight children: Teresa, James Jr., Rose, Margaret, Gertrude, William, Madonna and Raymond. Katherine (Katie) (1887-1950), wife of Eric LaVelle of Grand Forks County, North Dakota, was the mother of eight children: Thomas, Jay, Mary, Lillian, Estelle, Leo, Fern and Marcella. James (1886-1957), farmed near Fisher, married Helen Gavin in 1910 and had four children: Haltrud, Mildred, Lloyd, and Howard. His first wife died in 1922. He was re-married in 1929 to Cora Normandieu of Red Lake Falls, Minnesota, and they had one son, James, Jr. Anna (1882-1949), wife of Albany (Ben) Capistran, Sr., who farmed in Lowell Township near Crookston. She was the mother of five children: Ella, Albany, Jr., Alice, Aurora and Virgil. Delia (1885-1949) who never married. She had a dress-making establishment in Grand Forks in the early years. She clerked in several millinery and dry good stores. She cared for her parents in their declining years. Ella (1887-1947), wife of A. P. Roberts of Crookston, was a rural school teacher in Polk County for 20 years. They had a daughter, Evelyn. After having been widowed for several years, Ella married William Handry of Crookston, in 1943. William (1891-1966) farmed his father’s home farm near Fisher. He married Margaret Majeres of Red Lake Falls in 1915. They had nine children: Lester, Bernard, Margaret, Jeanne, Eraine, Francis, Michael, Joan, and William, Jr.

Jennie (1893-1956) was married in 1917 to Peter Sullivan, who farmed in Nisbit township. They had five children: Ralph, Peter, Jr., Joseph, Patricia, and Dennis. Mr. Sullivan passed away in 1928. In 1949 she married Louis Cournia, Sr., of Crookston.

Mr. and Mrs. Conneran lived on their farm home near Fisher until 1918. They then moved into a house at 520 North Main Street in Crookston, which they purchased.

Mr. John Conneran, Sr., died at home on January 20, 1925, at the age of 80 years, after having been an invalid for about two years. Mrs. Ann Conneran also died at her home in Crookston on November 6, 1935, at the age of 81 years. She too, had been an invalid for nearly four years before her death. Both Mr. and Mrs. Conneran were laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery in Fisher, Minnesota. They will be remembered as another courageous couple who ventured West and helped to make Polk County a better place in which to live.

ANDREW A. DRAGSETH

Andrew A. Dragseth was born on his father’s farm in Innvik, Nordjord, Norway, November 28, 1873, the third of seven children. As was the custom at that time, the oldest son inherited all the property. Feeling he had no future there, Andrew decided to come to the United States, leaving home at the age of 15. He came to the Eldred area as he had a cousin, Andrew Roseth, living there.

He worked for area farmers for several years before buying a farm in 1893 of 160 acres for $1,900, from Ole Rosenwater, who had homesteaded it in 1872.

Sarah Locken, born in Gjora, Sundal, Norway, on June 7, 1867, was the first child of her father’s second marriage. She was followed by eleven brothers and sisters, six of whom came to the Crookston area. Sarah was requested to come to the United States by Mr. Jacob Eide, a former neighbor in Norway, to care for his wife who had become ill shortly after their arrival here. Sarah came to this country in 1892. She was also employed by the Fred Davis family. While there she met Andrew Dragseth, and they were married in December 1894 at the Peter Berg farm.

Andrew and Sarah were the parents of eight children: Mary (Mrs. John Jossund), deceased, parent of two children, Arnold and Clarice; Julia, deceased; Emma (Mrs. Earl Secord), who had one child, Arvid; Andy, deceased had three children: Allan, Judith, and Jane; Anne (Mrs. Richard Schmidt), two children. James and Sarah; Clifford, deceased; had three children: Ethel, Curtis, and Donald; Randolph, deceased. Alfred, who died in infancy.

All the children of Andrew and Sarah were born in the original house, which still stands on the farm. They were delivered by a midwife. Sarah also served as a midwife. In 1914 a new house was built. In 1915 carbide lights were installed and were in use until electricity became available in 1941.

Andrew was actively engaged in farming, growing small grains, and certified seed potatoes. He was one of the early growers of sugar beets in 1925, and has continued to grow them from his farm since that time.

In 1905 he was appointed rural mail carrier, a service he continued for 30 years, retiring in June 1935. His son, Andy, was the substitute carrier. In one of the early winters of mail delivery, he was caught in a blizzard. He was unable to see, so he let the horses have free rein, and they brought him safely home.

In 1936 he retired and turned the farming operation over to his son. Randolph. Randolph and Clifford, who had land in Vineland Township, worked together in operation of both farms until Randolph passed away in 1963.

The farm was bought by Curtis L. Dragseth from the estate in 1963. The family of Curtis Dragseth consists of his mother; his sister Ethel, who is presently teaching school at International Falls, Minnesota; a brother, Donald, and his wife, the former Dana Eisert, and sons Steven and Scott. He is the man-
ANDY DRAGSETH

Andy Dragseth and Victoria Wollin were married June 30, 1937 by the Rev. E. A. Schuett in the parsonage at Our Savior's Church. This was during the Depression, and church weddings were not held. They lived on a farm one and one-fourth miles north of Eldred, on the "Krogan place", as it was called.

They raised small grain and sugar beets. At first there was no profit in beets, but the field man would beg them to try it one more year. They also had both the milking strain and feeder cattle. Had it not been for the cattle, there would not have been any money to pay bills with those first years.

Andy was assistant mail carrier for many years with his dad Andrew. He served on the Farmers Elevator board, school board, First United Church of Eldred, rural telephone line, Farmers Union Oil board, and a member of the Farm Bureau organization.

Victoria was active as Sunday School teacher, in Eldred Ladies Aid, Eldred Parents and Teachers organization, Eldred Homemakers, and a 4-H leader. She was president of the Riverview Hospital Auxiliary for three years and is now co-man-ager of the hospital gift shop. She has served in the Polk County Historical Society as treasurer for seven years. She enjoys belonging to the Crookston Garden Club.

To this union a son, Allan, was born on Good Friday, April 7, 1939. He was the first grandson on the Wollin side. Judy, joined the family on December 21, 1941, and five years later, on January 13, Jane Marie put in her appearance.

They attended church and Sunday school at the First Lutheran Church of Eldred.

The children attended grade school at Eldred, which their parents had attended before them. They have many happy memories of programs, school sports, and parties. They were very active in the Eldred 4-H Club, demonstrating, winning numerous trips to county and state fairs. Allan showed his pure-bred white-faced Hereford cattle, with the help of his sisters, Judy and Jane, at the Winter Shows in Crookston.

Judy, and especially Jane, loved animals, and maybe their horses were first in line. Jane trained one horse, Apalonna, to ride, and drove Rex on a buggy that her parents bought for her. She was always followed by cats, dogs, a pet lamb, Corky the crow, and her pet rooster.

In 1948 the Dragseths built a new house just south of the old one, which they later tore down. In 1950 they bought some property near Maple Lake, and built a cottage near the Elmer Bredlie and the Roy Gorter cottages. The children, and now the grandchildren, learned to swim there.

Allan assisted his father in farming following his graduation from the Northwest School of Agriculture, now the University of Minnesota, Technical College. He also attended schools at St. Paul and Fargo, North Dakota. In 1959 he married Judy Hanson, and they resided in a smaller house on the same farm. Later they built a large split-level house for their growing family.

Two daughters: Tracy, 15 years old; Jennifer, 13 years old; and two sons, Paul, 10, and John, 7, were born to this family. There were some anxious days when the oldest son Paul, age six at the time, had open-heart surgery at the Mayo Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. With the prayers and good wishes of family, relatives, and friends, he recovered and is a very active 10-year old boy.

Judy and her husband, Leland Ellingson, now live on their Quarter Horse Ranch northeast of Crookston. They have a daughter, Mary, age 14, Todd, age 11, and Daniel Lee, a 6-year old. They raise horses and feeder calves. The children enjoy helping with the chores. Mr. Ellingson is principal of the Highland Middle School in Crookston. The family is very active in St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Crookston.

Jane, the youngest daughter, married Robert Sandberg, and they have a son, Christopher, age 10, and Kimberly Ann, age 6. They live near the Gentlely bridge.

Robert is foreman of the Crookston Coca Cola Plant. Jane is busy being a housewife, carpenter, painter, and helping her brother Allan on the farm.

Their father, Andy, died in 1966. Their mother, Victoria, better known as Vicki, re-married in 1973 to George Irwin, and they reside on the Dragseth farm north of Eldred, Minnesota.

JOHN, ROY AND WILLIAM GORTER

John and Gertrude Van D. Ploeg Gorter were born in Beilen, Holland, and immigrated to Goodland, Indiana, in the early 1880's. They had four children: Louise, George, Roy and William. Louise died in infancy, George passed away in his early 20's. Mrs. John Gorter passed away in 1918. They are all buried in the Goodland cemetery.

In the spring of 1920, Mr. Gorter and sons purchased a farm, the north half of section 35 in Roome township. All of their farm equipment, including the horses and a steam threshing rig, was shipped from Indiana to Eldred by rail. Mr. Gorter passed away December 15, 1925. The boys farmed in partnership until the marriage of Roy to Sena Thorson on December 12, 1927.
Bill was married to Lillian Bredlie on December 15, 1932 at Eldred. Lillian has the distinction of being the first high school graduate from the Eldred Consolidated School. Those were the days when credits were earned by passing State Board examinations. She graduated from Moorhead State Teachers' College, and taught school in Albert Lea, Breckenridge, and Eldred.

Bill and Lillian had two daughters: Bethel Joan, born April 5, 1934; and Marilyn G., born June 24, 1939. Bethel graduated from the Climax High School, and attended the University of North Dakota, and an airline school in Kansas City. She was employed by the North Central Airlines in Milwaukee, where she met James Kriegl, also an employee. They were married at Eldred on March 24, 1956.

Following their marriage they were stationed at Duluth, and as he received promotions, they moved to Thief River Falls: Minot, North Dakota; Cleveland, Ohio; and Bloomington, Minnesota. They have four children: Lisa, Kelly, Jim and John. Mr. Kriegl worked 23 years for the North Central Airlines, until his untimely death on August 27, 1975.

Marilyn graduated from the Crookston High School and the University of North Dakota with a Bachelor of Science in nursing. Shortly after graduation she married Stuart Lundberg, of Grafton, also a graduate of the University of North Dakota. They live in Grand Forks, where Mr. Lundberg is associate professor at the University of North Dakota. They have three children: Scott, William, and Mark.

**THOR K. GROVE**

Thor K. Grove was born in Treungen Telemarken, Norway, to Mr. and Mrs. Kjostav Groven. His parents owned a small farm that belonged to his grandparents, Eiven Groven. Thor's father died in 1886 in Norway, leaving his mother alone with seven children and very little money. The eldest son, Eiven, had left Norway as a young man and had come to America, where he found work and saved enough money to buy three tickets plus twenty-five dollars, enough to bring his mother, three brothers and three sisters to America. They arrived in America on July 1st, 1887 but they had to come in two different ships, one docked in New York, and the other in Montreal, Canada.

They arrived in Grand Forks, North Dakota by train, but their tickets read Reynolds, North Dakota. The conductor was to have left them off at Reynolds, and he forgot: they could not speak any English, so it was very hard to communicate with them. The depot agent knew a Mr. Knutson who owned a hotel nearby, so they took them in and gave them supper and breakfast. The next morning they put them on a train to Reynolds, North Dakota. How frightening it must have been to arrive in a new country and not know anyone, nor how to speak the language!

The mother died in 1911 and is buried at the Sand Hill Cemetery near Climax, Minnesota. Thor Grove grew up in the Climax area, where he married Clara Berg. In 1909 they moved to Roosevelt, Minnesota in the Lake of the Woods county. They homesteaded the W\(\frac{1}{2}\) of SW\(\frac{1}{2}\) of section 27 and the N\(\frac{1}{2}\) of NE\(\frac{1}{4}\) of section 34. This was 160 acres. In earlier days the county seat was located in Bemidji, Minnesota, so the people from the Lake of the Woods would have to travel by train to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and then to Crookston and over to Bemidji, Minnesota to file a claim, a three-day trip in all. Later the Groves sold their homestead and moved to Crookston, Minnesota, where they rented a farm in Lowell township, section 30. Sometime later they moved to Fisher township, where they farmed in section 25. In 1918 they moved to Climax, Minnesota and rented a farm in section 2. In 1921 they bought a farm in Roome township, section 30. Thor's son Telbert now lives there. His wife died on July 13, 1962; he died December 28, 1970. They both are buried in Sandhill Cemetery, near Climax, Minnesota. They are survived by five daughters and two sons. They are Mrs. Alvin (Bernice) Wanberg of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Mrs. Paul (Adeline) Capps of Stanton, California; Mrs. Luverne Wachman of St. Paul, Minnesota; Raymond Grove of Crookston, Minnesota; Mrs. Archie (Verna) Hanna of Fallbrook, California; Harriet Grove of Denver, Colorado and Telbert Grove of Climax, Minnesota. There are also 13 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**THE GUDVANGEN HOMESTEAD**

The Gudvangen saga originated in Gudvangen, Norway, in 1875: Johannes M. Gudvangen with his wife Berte and two small children, John Martin, age four, and Britta, age two, left Norway for America. In Norway people could never hope to own farms as they could in America, offered free for homesteading on 160 acres, farming and declaring to become citizens. After five years they would own it.

Arriving in America they migrated to Decorah, Iowa, a Norwegian settlement, and farmed there three years. They heard about the treeless, lush fertile grasslands in the Red River Valley of the North, and having the pioneering spirit the family boarded a train for Northwestern Minnesota in the spring of 1878 and traveled to what was then called Fisher's Landing. Supplies were brought here by boat and train. The town later was named Fisher.

Emma and John Gudvangen.

Grandfather staked a claim of 160 acres seven miles southwest from Fisher, which is still in the family. The prairie was sparsely settled, but smoke could be seen rising against the horizon from settlements here and there. There were no roads, only oxcart trails in the tall buffalo grass. During rains, travel was almost impossible because the wheels would sink in the mud and get stuck. Oxcarts were constructed entirely of wood, wheels had no lubrication and as they moved along there were loud, creaking, grinding noises.

Getting started on the homestead meant many hours of strenuous labor from daylight to dusk, breaking the grassland with a walking plow pulled by a team of oxen, preparing the virgin soil for seeding, building shelter for family and animals. They bought a cow for milk, cream and butter for family use; later butter was used in barter for groceries. Their first home
was a sod shanty, later a log cabin, and these gave way when lumber was available; and when they could afford it, a house was built. Breaking sod was slow and difficult, and the first spring a small field of corn and a vegetable garden were planted. Each year more land was readied for cultivation and seeded with hard wheat and other small grains. A copper Indian spearhead has been found on the farm.

During the winter Grandfather trapped and hunted wild game, which was abundant, and fresh meat was plentiful. He sold the furs.

The grandparents were a God-fearing people and put their trust in God to guide them through hardships, poverty and grinding toil that they encountered during their early pioneering days. Their spirits and hopes were not dimmed by their hardships but held high with great anticipation of harvesting the fruits of the land. The land produced a hard wheat crop of high quality and yield, and therefore the Red River Valley became known as one of the three richest lands in the world and one of the bread baskets.

In 1896 there was a terrible drought. Crop failure and no feed forced them to sell cattle for less than cost. Calves sold for fifty cents each. In later years, droves of grasshoppers came, devoured the fields, and left as quickly as they came. The long, bitter cold winters also took their toll. Fierce blizzards stopped everything and nothing moved for days. Trains were snow bound and coal was in short supply! Even father said he would never forget the terrible blizzard of 1898, for he almost lost his way from the barn to the house in the swirling, drifting snow, a distance of only thirty yards. The snow drifts were as high as the two-story house!

Three more children were born to our grandparents: a son, Henry, and two daughters, Martha and Josie. Father was the only one who remained on the farm and he later inherited it. In 1907 Father married Emma Moe of Fosston and they raised thirteen children: Mrs. Donald (Bertha) Bliss and Esther, Minneapolis — Mrs. Melvin (Ages) Stenson, Grand Forks, North Dakota — and Edwin, Arthur, Crookston — Mrs. Willard (Magdalene) Owens, St. Paul — Mrs. Millie Arness and Mrs. Lawrence (Helen) Wagner, Palisade — Mrs. Warren (Florence) Baker, Lake Park — John, Mae and Milton, Climax — Kermit, deceased January 1975.

We attended a one-room rural school, District 33, with 18 pupils. One teacher taught all grades, one through eighth, and one class in Norwegian. She was nurse, janitor and tended the heating-stove, keeping it stoked with fuel.

Father bought an additional 160 acres of land adjoining the farm for additional income. But during World War I and the Depression years our family encountered difficult times with rationing, shortages, and low farm prices on products for sale. I can remember working on a farm for one dollar per week plus board and room. In the fall we children, ages ten to fourteen years, picked potatoes for two cents a bushel. One year hail destroyed the crops, so with part of our earnings we helped pay the farm taxes, and were glad we could help.

In Norway nearly all Norwegian immigrants to America had belonged to the State Church of Norway and when Grandparents came here they later joined the Fisher Evangelical Lutheran church which still remains the family church.

The farm is now owned by John E., Mae and Milton who live on it and raise small grains and sugar beets.

Our family is grateful to our grandparents and parents, who have gone to their eternal rest, for the great heritage they have left us; their toil, sweat and trials have not been in vain.

KLEMMET O. AND RACHAEL HEGGE
Klemmet Hegge was born at Adams, Minnesota on June 14, 1887 to parents Ole and Beret Hegge. He had three brothers and three sisters. He was baptized and confirmed in the Adams Lutheran Church and attended a rural school near Adams. He worked on his father’s farm helping with grain and cattle until 1909, when he married Rachael Hippe.

Rachael was born on September 14, 1887 to Mr. and Mrs. Ole Hippe and was the twin sister of John Hippe. There were two other brothers and sisters. She was baptized and confirmed at the Lutheran church near Adams and attended a rural school. She moved with her parents to Roseau in 1904, where they lived for a year. They then moved to Grand Forks, North Dakota, traveling by oxen and wagon. The parents lived in Grand Forks the remainder of their lives and a sister Nettie still resides in this house.

After marriage, Klemmet and Rachael Hegge moved to a farm near Adams where they farmed until 1920, when they purchased a farm one mile from Eldred. None of the ground was plowed at the time, so with the help of a nephew the land was plowed. All this work was done with horses. Wood had to be hauled to their home for cooking and heating; and hay and feed had to be hauled for their cattle and horses for the coming winter.

Mr. and Mrs. K. O Hegge.

The Hegges were the parents of eleven children: Orris of Eldred; Mrs. Andrew (Angelina) Stinar of Warren; Mrs. Ruben (Ruth) Farnquist of Litchfield; Clifford of Oklee; Ervin of East Grand Forks; Mrs. Henry (Myrtle) Moen of Climax; Floyd of Fisher; Mrs. Ed (Lorraine) Davis of Kennedy; Glen of Bagley and Mrs. Marvin (Else) Higgins of Kansas City. Another daughter, Gladys, died at the age of 15.

The Hegge family attended Church at the Sand Hill Lutheran church where the three older children were confirmed. Then in December 1930, the First Lutheran Church was dedicated at Eldred and the family joined the church. There the younger children were baptized and confirmed. The children all attended school at Eldred.

Mr. and Mrs. Hegge moved to Minneapolis in the 1950’s, where Mr. Hegge worked at the Mt. Sinai Hospital for several years. They then moved back to Crookston, and purchased a house there where they resided until the time of their death.

ORRIS AND ALICE HEGGE
Orris Hegge was born in 1909 to Klemmet and Rachael Hegge. He was the oldest of eleven children. He lived in southern Minnesota until 1920, when his parents purchased a farm in Roome township.

Being the oldest, Orris had to earn his spending money and clothes at a very early age, as did the other children as soon as they were able. Any money left over had to help feed the rest of the family. As a youth, Orris worked for wages as a farm laborer in the summer; in the winter he sometimes worked just
MR. AND MRS. JOHN HOLM

John Holm settled in Roome township, Polk county, Minnesota, in 1912 and farmed until retirement in 1947. He was born August 4, 1884 on an island in Lake Savalan near Tynset in the Osterdalen valley in Norway. He had three sisters and eight brothers. In 1904 he immigrated to America, to the Red River Valley, where he worked as a farmhand and later in lumbering in Wisconsin. Later he went to Duluth, Minnesota where he was a street-car conductor.

In 1910 John returned to the Red River Valley and married Christine Thoreson, daughter of Helge Thoreson, a valley homesteader. Mr. and Mrs. Holm moved to Crookston, Minnesota where he worked for the T.T. Morken Grocery and the Ole Norseth painting business. Mr. Holm also attended the Crookston Business College. In 1912 they returned to Roome township and rented a farm two miles west of Eldred. In 1915 they purchased the farm known as the Saugstad homestead, five miles northwest of Eldred, where they farmed until retiring in 1947.

John and Christine Holm had nine children — five died in infancy. The four living children are as follows: Mrs. Earnest Eissner (Alice) of West Fargo, North Dakota; Mrs. Homer Collison (Belva) of Modesto, California; Hillard (married to Grace Roberts of Mentor, Minnesota) — Grace passed away and Hillard now resides in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Walter (married Lorraine Bouck of Crookston, Minnesota. John Holm passed away June 16, 1952 and is buried at the Sand Hill cemetery north of Climax, Minnesota. Mrs. Holm moved to Crookston, Minnesota the fall of 1952 and she lived there until fall of 1968, when she moved to the Bethany Nursing Home in Fargo, North Dakota. Besides her four children, she has thirteen grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren.

GEORGE IRWIN

William Irwin, the father of George Irwin, had pioneered in Dakota Territory, coming from Ontario, Canada, with his older brother in 1880 when he was 15 years old. He worked at many jobs until he was old enough to file on land. As a boy he drove a stagecoach from Pembina to Walhalla, North Dakota. The country was then full of Indians. In 1892 he married Sarah Hodgson, who had come with her parents as a girl from Ontario, Canada, in 1882. To this marriage seven children were born: six girls and one boy, George.

The George Irwin Family.
About 1950.

George Irwin married Johanna Johnson in 1936. Her folks had come from Iceland in the late 1880's, and settled in Gardner, North Dakota. George and Johanna had four children, one girl and three boys. The George Irwins moved to Minnesota. In 1946 they moved to Eldred, Minnesota. George was manager of the Farmers Union G.T.A. Elevator there until his retirement in 1969.

Janice Irwin is married to Delano Thoreson, who farms near Climax, Minnesota. They raise mainly grain and sugar beets. Jon married Margaret Kolta of Grand Forks, North Dakota, and they now live in Concord, California. They have two girls. Jon is an accountant and head coordinator for the Simpson Lee Paper Company, of San Francisco, California. They also

Mr. and Mrs. Orris Hegge.

for his room and board.

Mr. Hegge was educated in the Eldred School. He attended the Sand Hill Lutheran church, where he was confirmed. When it was organized, the family joined the First English Lutheran church in Eldred.

In 1930 Mr. Hegge was married to Alice Thompson, the daughter of Arthur and Emma Thompson of Climax. The young couple set up housekeeping on a farm one-half mile from his parents' farm. Mr. Hegge had purchased a quarter section of land which he rented out on shares. He worked at odd jobs for about $45 a month. With this money he made payments on his land, paid his taxes, made payments on his car, his life insurance, plus other living expenses.

In 1942 bad luck struck. Their house burned, and the Heggis lost their home and all their possessions. Mrs. Hegge was able to get the two children out, but three-month old Dennis was hospitalized for three weeks for treatment of burns. Good friends and neighbors showered the Heggises with money, clothing, and furniture to help replace what they lost.

They farmed in the area until 1946 when they purchased a farm at Oklee, Minnesota. But in 1951 they sold this farm and moved back to Eldred. They purchased the home farm, and with the help of Mrs. Hegge's father, a carpenter by trade, they built a three-bed-room house. They still reside in this home.

Mr. and Mrs. Hegge are members of the First Lutheran church at Eldred, where their six children were baptized and confirmed. The children attended school at Eldred. Kenneth and Dennis graduated from the Crookston High School. Shortly thereafter the Eldred school closed, and the district was re-organized. The family joined the Climax school district, where Donald, Carol, and Elizabeth graduated. David is an eighth grade student there.

Kenneth received a Master's degree from Portland State University, and is presently a chemist at the American Crystal Sugar Beet Company at East Grand Forks. Dennis attended Wahpeton State College, and is living in Grand Forks, where he is employed. Carol is now Mrs. Roger Beiswenger, and is living on a farm near Fisher. She graduated from the Thief River Falls Area Vocational School as an L.P.N. Elizabeth is now Mrs. Larry Overgaard. She graduated from Aaker's Business College in Grand Forks. She is employed by the Tweten and German Law Firm in East Grand Forks, where she resides. Donald drowned the day after he graduated from high school.

Mr. and Mrs. Hegge have been active in church and community affairs. Mrs. Hegge is president of the Eldred unit of the hospital auxiliary, as well as the Sunday School superintendent, and teacher in the Sunday School. Mr. Hegge has served as clerk of the school district, treasurer of Roome township, justice of the peace, deacon of the church, and is on the A.S.C.S. Board, and cemetery board. Mrs. Hegge's grandparents, Hans Berg and Per Thompson, were among the early pioneers who settled in Vineland township, arriving in 1773.
have two girls. Ronald married Judith Krous, of Halstad, Minnesota, and they live in San Diego, California. They had two daughters. Ronald is chief program writer for Univac Company. Robert married Sharon Paseka, of Moorhead, Minnesota, and they now live in Sioux City, Iowa. They have two boys. Robert is a pharmacist, and at present is manager of Walgren Drug in Sioux City.

After George retired as elevator manager, he was postmaster in Eldred, Minnesota for one year. Mrs. Irwin passed away in 1970. In 1973 George and Victoria Dragseth were married, and reside on Victoria’s farm at Eldred, Minnesota.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Jobe 1964.

MR. AND MRS. HENRY JOBE
Rudolph Jobe, with his wife, the former Emma Radke, and their three sons, Henry, Walter, and Theodore, moved to Polk County from Yellow Medicine County in 1904, to live on the land which had been homesteaded by his father-in-law, Frederick Otto Radke. They farmed in Roome township near Eldred, Minnesota, until 1910, when they moved to Alexandria, Minnesota, Douglas County. Four more children were born to the Jobes in Alexandria: two boys and two girls.

Their oldest son, Henry, grew up in Alexandria and on February 10, 1924 he married a hometown girl, Irene Wachtler. Together they moved back to Roome township, near Eldred, Minnesota, where he farmed his father’s land. He had continued to farm there up to the present time.

Six children were born to them: Maxine, who married Alvin Wagner, lives on a farm near Crookston, and they have four sons. Laurice married Charlton Holtz, and they live in Crookston. They have one daughter, Eldo married Emily Welch. They live in Crookston, and Eldo farms near Eldred. Arlyn married Mary Jo Gunderson, and they have one son. They live in Crookston, and farm near Eldred. Joyce married Richard Zahler. They have one daughter, and they live in St. Michael, Minnesota. LaVonne married Newman Hinkle. They have one son and one daughter, and live at East Grand Forks, Minnesota. They also have one daughter deceased. Henry and Irene Jobe have nine grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

They have been very active in community affairs. Henry is a charter member of the First English Lutheran Church of Eldred, which was built in 1930. He was a member of the school board of district 281 of Eldred for many years. Both Henry and Irene were active in the Farm Bureau. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on February 10, 1974.

AUGUST JURCHEN
In 1902 August Jurchen came from Germany, settling in Nebraska with his wife Anna and five children: Selma, Arthur, Willie, Freda and Elsie. Many hardships joined them in the sand hills of Knox County, Nebraska. Sandburs and cockle-burs were ready assailants to the bare feet of the Jurchen family as they hacked out a living on the several rented farms in Nebraska. During the next ten years after landing in the United States, three more children were born to the Jurchen family. Louise, Gertrude and Bruno. A spring buggy, a two-seater, was the main conveyance to take the family eight miles to the church in Bazil Mills, Nebraska. A county school, Sand Hill, three miles from the farm was attended by the last three of the family. Walking was the main conveyance to school, both winter and summer.

In 1914 war clouds were gathering over Europe. In a short time war was on in Europe, and the August Jurchen family was thankful to God that they were in America. During this year, August Jurchen boarded a train at Winnebago, Nebraska, to travel to the Red River Valley in northwestern Minnesota, choosing the city of Crookston as a stopping-off place. August had answered an "ad" from the Wheeler Land and Loan Company of Crookston. They had proudly stated in this "ad" that it was truly the "Land of Milk and Honey." After careful inspection of all the land the company had to offer; August found that east of Crookston the so-called "hay piles" covered under two feet of snow were rocks. Through his broken English he advised them that it was difficult to feed these hay piles to horses and upon this statement he was taken to a 160-acre piece of prairie two miles east of Eldred, Minnesota in Roome township. August felt this was the place both for farming and raising a family.

In 1919 the Jurchen family migrated to Eldred, Minnesota, landing there on December 9, 1919. Snow was almost as high as the depot. Horse and sleigh was the only way available to travel over the ten-foot snow banks. It was a very severe winter. During the next few years the farmstead was built on the 160 acres of prairie. Wet weather, poor prices, and mosquitoes were around to round out the Jurchen family that it was not the "Land of Milk and Honey." One by one the older Jurchen children left home and were married. In the late 1920's only Gertrude and Bruno remained at home on the farm. Gertrude married Ted Jobe of Eldred and they farmed near the Jurchen place. Depression was ruling the roost — oats sold for 6¢ per bushel, butterfat at Bridgeman Russell Creamery in Crookston was 10¢ per pound; hogs were $2.25 per hundred-weight; and one cow sold to McFarlin Cattle Company was $6, short of paying the freight to St. Paul.

August went into semi-retirement in 1934 and for the next 10 years lived at Tulaby Lake, east of Waubun, Minnesota.

William Jurchen married Alice Hoppe of Crookston and raised a fine family. Bruno Jurchen married Lydia Glanz of St. Paul, Minnesota and farmed near his sister Gertrude for 25 years. This farm was just east of Eldred, Minnesota. Later Bruno joined the Minnesota Farm Bureau and managed with the Farm Bureau for the next 25 years. It must be said that the good Lord has truly blessed the Red River Valley and made it the "Land of Milk and Honey."

HANS C. AND ANNA LARUM
Hans C. Larum was born in Oslo, Norway, on December 17, 1864, and was a resident of Polk County for 54 years. Between 1889 and 1895, during this period of residence, he was a corporal in the Third Cavalry under General Custer. He was manager of the Ireland Lumber Company in Eldred, and later at Climax, for many years.

After coming to this area, he met Anna Halstensen, who had been born in Eldred on December 23, 1882. They were married in Crookston on June 25, 1903. There were four children in the family. The eldest was Clifford M., a long-time rural mail carrier for the Crookston Post Office. He was married to Andrea Gilbert, and they were the parents of four children: Beverly, John, Roger, and David. Andrea died in 1953. Clifford later married Noella (St. Ives) Boucher.

Mayme was born May 24, 1906. She was married to Morris Hansen, of Crookston, who was in the tire business for many years. They have one son, Glenn, who is married and lives in Bloomington, Minnesota. Mayme worked at the Albertson Clinic for many years.

Hazel was born September 26, 1916. She was married to
During these years, Hillard has been active in many community and county organizations. He has served six years on the Eldred school board; thirteen years as clerk of Roome township; and twelve years as county commissioner of Polk County, with two years as chairman of that board. He has also been on the Polk County welfare board for twelve years, serving three years as chairman. He is at present a member of the Polk County Fair Board, a member of the Northwest Minnesota Housing Authority and a member of the Tri-Valley Opportunity Council. He has served as chairman for six years on the Tri-Valley Opportunity Council.

The Mykleby family have a cottage at Rocky Point off Lake of the Woods and hope to spend more time at this retreat upon Hillard's retirement. Hillard enjoys boating, fishing, photography and travel, so he will have no trouble keeping busy.

**MINNIE MYKLEBY**

Minnie Mykleby, 85 years old this bicentennial year, has been a part of the Polk county community from the time she was born on the family homestead three miles west of Eldred, Minnesota. Minnie, born December 25, 1890, was the youngest of seven children born to Peder Boukind and Maria (Glaser-rud) Boukind, two of the pioneer settlers of Roome township. Peder Boukind was a member of the first board of supervisors of Roome township when it was organized March 30, 1880.

At the age of five, she, along with her parents, migrated to Bella Coola, British Columbia. They and a number of Norwegian settlers were a part of a migration that homesteaded this land of promise. After seven years of struggle and hardship in this wild frontier, the Boukinds were glad to return to the flat, fertile prairie land of the Red River Valley. Minnie, during this period, suffered homesickness, an encounter with a bear, and remembers especially the formidable mountains that separated her from home and brothers and sisters. After five years, Minnie's brother, Halbert Boukind, traveled to Bella Coola to bring her back to Polk county for treatment for an eye condition.

The years after her return to Polk county were spent on the parents' homestead where she continued her grade school education. Her mother passed away in 1913 after a few months' illness.

In 1915 Minnie married Olaf Mykleby who, after leaving Armed Forces, lived all of his life in the Eldred area. During his years of service in World War II he saw service in the European theater of operation.

Since his return from the service in 1945 Hillard has been employed by the Farmers Elevator of Eldred, Minnesota, as manager of that company from 1949 to the present time.

In 1943 he was married to Katherine Sullivan of Fisher, Minnesota. They have four children: James of Leadville, Colorado; Joyce of Chicago, Illinois; Gary and Leslie both at home. They also have one grandson.

**HILLARD MYKLEBY**

Hillard Mykleby, born in 1916 to Olaf and Minnie Mykleby, has, with the exception of four years in the United States...
Norway at the age of twenty-one for America, worked his way westward to this area. The greater part of their married life was spent on the Boukind farm near Eldred, Minnesota where they raised a family of seven children, surviving years of war and depression, good crops and bad, sickness and health, happy times and sad. Along with her duties as housewife and mother, Minnie also cared for her invalid father until he died in 1925.

The seven children born to this marriage are: Hillard of Eldred, Minnesota; Raymond; Opal (Mrs. Marlin Hedberg); Mildred (Mrs. Melvin Pearson) of St. Paul; Forrest of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Donald of Bloomington, Minnesota; and Laurie of Chicago, Illinois. At this time there are twenty grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

In 1941 the Mykleby family left the farm and moved to Eldred, where they undertook the operation of Mykleby’s Cafe. Minnie continued this operation alone after Olaf’s death in 1956 at age 72. One can only wonder how many cups of coffee she has perked, cookies she has baked, and doughnuts she has fried in the thirty-three years before her retirement in 1974 because of ill health. And how many people, one wonders, have stopped and been greeted at Mykleby’s Cafe through these years — some stop one time; many, a thousand and one. At age 85 Minnie is making her home at Riverview Nursing Home in Crookston, Minnesota.

ANTON PETERSON

Anton Peterson was born in Ottertail County, Minnesota on September 17, 1878 to August and Gunhild Peterson. His mother passed away when he was nine years old. Anton and his brothers and sister were cared for by neighbors. At the age of twelve, Anton decided he was old enough to be on his own, so he left Ottertail county and came to Crookston by train. He made his home with Pete Berg, father of the late John Berg, where he worked for his room and board. Anton’s father came to Roome township some years later. He and Anton built a sod shanty, which was their home for a time. Anton told of winter hardships such as waking up after a stormy night to find the sod shanty completely covered with snow. Another of his stories told of the journeys to get supplies: first by horse and wagon five miles to the railroad, and then by handcar the rest of the way into Crookston to pick up what they needed.

In 1904 Anton married Lena Borgos. Lena was born in Sweden and came to southern Minnesota with her parents at the age of three. In 1900 the family moved to Roome township and settled on a farm north of Eldred.

Lena and Anton’s first home was on the Jake Eide farm. In 1916 they moved to a farm in section 13 where they lived the rest of their lives. This farm is still the Peterson family farm. Lena died in 1959 and Anton in 1974.

Anton and Lena had seven children: George, Clarence, Mildred, Harold, Wilbur, Albert, and Anita.

Wilbur served in the Air Force and was killed in a plane crash in 1943 while on his way overseas.

George died in 1972; he spent his entire life on the family farm and was never married.

Clarence and Albert are presently living on the family farm and are farming it in partnership with their brother, Harold. Albert served in the army for three years during World War II, spending two years in the South Pacific. Clarence was secretary-treasurer, bookkeeper, lineman, and phone installer for the Roome Township Telephone Company from 1932 until it was acquired by the Northwestern Bell Company in 1952.

All the Peterson children attended Eldred Consolidated School District 281. For many years, the Petersens drove the school bus, using an enclosed three seat buggy. In the winter the three-seater was put on a sled, and foot warmers were used to keep warm.

Anita married Clarence Larson of Grand Forks in 1947. They live in Grand Forks and have two children, Dennis and Carol.

Mildred married Trygve Odegaard in 1941. They live in Crookston and have four children.

Harold married Alma Anderson of Warwick, N.D. in 1948. Alma is the daughter of Michael and Anna Anderson, who now live at the Oak Court Apartments in Crookston.

Harold and Alma have made their home on a farm north of Eldred since 1948. Harold farms with his brothers. They have two children, Myron and Ruth.

Myron is farming with his father and uncles. He graduated from Central High School in Crookston in 1967 and from North Dakota State University in 1971 with a B.S. degree in agricultural economics. He served three years in the army, stationed in Frankfurt, Germany.

Ruth graduated from Central High School in 1972, and is presently a senior at Moorhead State University. She will graduate in May 1976 with a degree in elementary education.

MR. AND MRS. OTTO STEINER

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Steiner and their two year old daughter, Lelia, came to Polk country from Nauvoo, Illinois in 1915. Reports of the fertile farmland prompted them and another couple to set out to a new area 800 miles north — the Red River Valley. There were two positions including their horses and cattle by train, settling first on a farm in Hammond township. The area proved to be very wet, so they moved to a farm one mile east of Crookston for a short time and later moved to section 12, Roome township in 1917.

A son, Glenn, was born to them in 1919 followed by a daughter, Fern, in 1921 and a son, Merle, in 1924.

In 1920 they rented the neighboring section — section 11 in Roome township. There were two creeks going through this section; many wild fruit trees such as chokecherries, plums, and juneberries grew along the banks. The rather large old house was the scene of many neighborhood parties as neighbors gathered to pick huge quantities of the delicious fruit. Farming 640 acres with horses meant several hired men, especially during harvest, as they cut and shocked the grain. Later the big threshing crews would move from farm to farm and neighbors helped each other thresh their grain. Mrs. Steiner delighted in the large quantities of food that had to be prepared. Dishpans of sandwiches, cake, cookies or doughnuts, and gallons of coffee were taken out to the straw stack to feed the hungry crews at lunch time. Dinners were eaten in the house with dining room tables stretched out full length.

In the winter-time we’d travel by bobsled, which was covered over with boards or a canvas. The family huddled on the thick straw and covered themselves with fur robes for the ride to the neighbors for a delicious supper. Steiners were members of the Maple Leaf Community Club — a very active group which met in the homes of the members to hear speakers and exchange fellowship.

The children attended school at district 110 and later transferred to district 18. The school programs and picnics bring fond memories, as there was a great deal of excitement connected with these annual events.

Lelia enjoyed music and took piano lessons from Alpha Brevik, a neighbor. The children all participated in 4-H Club. In 1932 Lelia was a delegate to the National 4-H Camp at Washington, D.C. Fern attended school at the Northwest School of Agriculture. Glenn served in the Air Force of the United
States Army for four years as an aeroplane engine mechanic. He received his discharge in 1946 at Lowry Field, Colorado, married Esther Fundingsland a year later, and they had four children. Glenn was killed in an auto accident in 1965. Fern married Wilfred Emard and they live at Ventura, California. They have three children. Merle married Dorothy Severin and they have seven children, including twin girls. They reside at New Brighton, Minnesota, where Merle is employed by Glen-denneng.

The family were members of the First English Lutheran church of Eldred, where Mrs. Steiner was very active in the Eldred Ladies Aid. Otto served as a director on the board of the Farmers’ Elevator for many years.

In 1947 Mr. and Mrs. Steiner held an auction sale and moved into Crookston, where they purchased a home at 413 Crescent Avenue. Mr. Steiner continued to farm, purchasing 120 acres near Eldred from Minnie Lokken. He later sold this farmland to Orris Hegge. In 1968 their house on Crescent was destroyed by fire and they purchased a home at 316 Summit Avenue. They celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary December 29, 1974. Mr. Steiner passed away March 1, 1975 and Mrs. Steiner resides at a nursing home.

**ALFRED THORSON**

Alf Thorson was born in Aurland Sogn, Norway, in 1845, and came to the United States in 1867, locating near Decorah, Iowa, where his brother, Thomas, was living. Thomas had served in the Union army during the Civil War.

Alf bought 160 acres of land in Iowa, but the land did not produce well. After several years of poor crops and low prices, plus an outbreak of chinch bugs, Mr. Thorson decided to seek a better location. After traveling around, he came to Minnesota in a covered wagon in 1879, settling near the Eldred community.

Only two other men, Ole P. Krogen and Martin Leikness, were living in the neighborhood. Mr. Thorson spent the first winter with his two neighbors in a log house which they had built. The winter was very severe, and they had a difficult time to get firewood and supplies. In the spring they helped to build a new house for Mr. Thorson, hauling logs from the Red River.

He was married to Ida Gudvangen, who was born in Norway. Two sons and five daughters were born to them. One son died in childhood. Alvin, the surviving son, now resides in Crookston, as do three of the daughters: Dana Thorson, Sena Gorter, and Edith Schuler. Another daughter, Mable Norby, lives in Barnesville, Minnesota. Two daughters are deceased: Tillie, who died in 1969; and Martha Foss, who died in 1973.

In 1905 Mr. Thorson built a new home where his family were raised, located in section 26, Roome township. Mr. Thorson helped to organize Roome township and worked hard to improve the roads in the area.

Mr. Thorson died in 1927, and Mrs. Thorson in 1948.

**DELANO L. THORESON**

Delano and his twin sister, Delores, were born on September 7, 1934 to Ingman and Emma Thoreson.

Delano was married to Janice Irwin on June 17, 1956. Janice was born May 24, 1937, at Bowesmont, North Dakota, the daughter of Jo and George Irwin of Eldred, Minnesota. They lived in a trailer house on the farm until 1961, when they moved into their present home. Delano farmed with his father until 1966, at which time Ingman retired from active farming. Delano and Janice are parents of four living children: Coleen, born April 6, 1957; Leland, born April 13, 1959; Paula, born September 7, 1966; and Holly, born December 14, 1970. One son, Bradley, born November 9, 1961, passed away October 13, 1964.

These children are the fourth generation to live in the original farm home built by Helge H. (Eidet) Thoreson, in 1897. The family are all active members of the Sand Hill Lutheran church, and take part in community affairs.

**INGMAN THORESON, SR.**

Ingman Thoreson is the youngest of nine children born to Helge H. and Anna (Bangen) Thoreson on December 11, 1902. He has lived all his life on this same farm, homesteaded by his father, Helge H. Thoreson.

Ingman’s grandfather, Helge Eidet, died, leaving a young widow with two children, Helge and Anna. In 1867 she married Helge Thoreson, a cousin of her first husband. A year later they came to America and settled in Fillmore County, Minnesota. In 1871 they took the things they had accumulated — a team of oxen, a wagon, their clothes, and two more children — and traveled to Ottertail County, Minnesota. Here four more children were born. In 1878 they sold their home, loaded their belongings in covered wagons, and with oxen and cows as pulling power, traveled north to Polk County, where they bought prairie and railroad land at $3.00 an acre. They built the first frame house on the prairie in Tynsid township, section 13, the present farmsite of I. E. Thoreson, Jr. Here three more children were born. There are now five boys and six girls, and they own 680 acres.

Helge Thoreson was a member and one of the founders of the Sand Hill Lutheran Church. At the young age of 55, Helge Thoreson died. His wife carried on and reared the family until she passed away on December 5, 1904 at the age of 65.

The eldest son, Helge Eidet, had assumed the name of his stepfather as a young child. He was married to Anna Bangen,
daughter of Ole and Caroline Bangen, in 1878. They moved to section 19 of Roome township, the present home of Ingman, Sr. and Delano Thorson, and engaged in farming. He purchased the land for $9.00 an acre. In 1897 they built a large frame house for their family of five daughters and four sons: Josephine (Mrs. Martin Larson); Christine (Mrs. John Holm); Amanda (Mrs. Carl Olson); Helge; Thilda (Mrs. Hans Hansstad); Olga (Mrs. Hans Berg); Ole, Eddie, and Ingman.

Mr. Thoreson was the first rural mail carrier paid by the government. His route was from Neby to Fisher three times a week. His salary was $340 the first year, and $375 the second year. Mr. Thoreson served as county commissioner for 16 consecutive years; as township supervisor for nine years; and as township treasurer and assessor each for four years. After 41 years they retired and moved to Crookston.

They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1937, with seven living children, 31 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren present.

In 1944, at the age of 79, Mrs. Thoreson passed away. Mr. Thoreson died at the age of 81 in 1945.

Their youngest son, Ingman, married Emma Eken, daughter of Hans and Leve Eken, of Buxton, North Dakota, on June 6, 1926. The Eken family had lived in the Climax area prior to moving to the Buxton area, and it was then that Ingman met Emma Eken. Following their marriage they moved to the home farm, and after the retirement of Helge H. Thoreson, they assumed the farming operation. They are the parents of five children: Ingman Thoreson, Jr.; Arlene (Mrs. Marvin Cymbaluk, of Crookston); twins — Delano and Delores (Mrs. Warren Smith, of Litchville, North Dakota); and Jo Ann (Mrs. Gerald W. Johnson, of East Grand Forks, Minnesota). There are 23 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Thoreson has been the county assessor for 30 years, and also treasurer of the Sand Hill Lutheran church for 31 years, of which they are members.

Mr. and Mrs. Thoreson built a smaller home on the farm in 1961 and retired from active farming in 1966. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on June 6, 1976.

**WARNER WENTZEL**

The early family history of the Warner Wentzel family, now living in Roome township, Polk County, is found in records of his grandfather, Michael Wentzel, Sr., who was born in Germany in 1836. At the age of 25 years, he journeyed to Canada, and later to Detroit, Michigan. In 1865 he moved to Reedsville, Wisconsin, where he married Henrietta Klinger. In the spring of 1875 he bought land along the north bank of the Red Lake River six miles west of Crookston and three miles east of Fisher’s Landing. He first constructed a sod and log house. In 1885 he built a brick house, which still stands. They had 11 children.

One of the children, William Frederick Wentzel, Warner’s father, was married to Selma Pauline Widenhoefer in 1917. Their home, also a brick structure, was built one-half mile east of the homestead. They had three sons: Noel Walter, Werner William, and Walton Herbert. The three sons have continued farming the homestead and other tracts of land which have been in the family for many years.

Warner served in the United States Army from January 1945 to April 1947. He was stationed in the Philippines with an infantry division, and arrived in Japan with the first occupation forces. He then returned to the United States on furlough, and was re-assigned to a veterinary food inspection detachment at Wels, Austria. After traveling through much of Europe, he was discharged from the army at Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

In 1945, while Warner was still overseas, his parents purchased a section of land in Roome township from Mr. Henry Audette, a resident of Florida. Warner assisted with the farm work during the summer months, and attended the North Dakota State University, and later Aaker’s Business College in Grand Forks.

Following his marriage in 1952 to Florence Mildred Wagner, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Wagner, he built a new home in the northeast quarter of section 11 of Roome township. Warner and Florence moved into the home in February of 1953.

**THE WARNER WENTZEL FAMILY**

They have three children: Rebecca Joan, Robert Warner, and Jerald William. The family are members of Trinity Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. Fischer. Rebecca graduated from Fisher High School in 1972, and from St. Luke’s Hospital School of Nursing in August 1974. Two weeks following graduation she married Roger David Moe, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thorvald Moe, of Bygland township, rural East Grand Forks.

Rebecca and Roger live adjacent to his parents’ farm home, where he assists his father in a sizeable cattle feed-lot operation. Rebecca is employed as a registered nurse at Riverview Hospital in Crookston.

Robert is a 1973 graduate of Fisher High School, and is presently enrolled at North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota.

Jerald will graduate from the Fisher High School in 1976, and plans to enroll in agricultural-related courses at the University of Minnesota Technical College at Crookston. The year 1976 marks the beginning of the second century and the fourth generation of farming for the Wentzels in the Red River Valley.

**MILTON WILLIAMS**

The Milton “Mickey” Williams family began February 21, 1950, when they were married in the Trinity Lutheran Church in Fisher, Minnesota. They have lived on the same farm for twenty-five years and farmed 900 acres of beets and grain.

Milton is the son of Peter and Sella Williams of Scandinavian ancestry. Irene is the daughter of Ernest and Caroline Radi, of German descent.

We live on the farm where Milton was born. We had cows,
pigs, a horse named Rex, chickens, dogs and cats. The boys raised Mallard ducks for a Future Farmers of America project.

We are members of Trinity Lutheran Church, P.T.A., Music Boosters, American Legion and Auxiliary. We are both active in church and community affairs, and serve on various boards of the Eldred Elevator and Red River Valley Sugar Beet Growers Association.

Our hobbies are bowling, snowmobiling and knitting. Our family consists of four boys and one girl. Steven, who attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He married Janis Nentl of New Ulm. They have two daughters, Heather, three years old, and Melissa, six months old. Steve is manager of Fisher Farm and Home Supply in Fisher, Treasurer of Chamber of Commerce, and gives the Fisher news over KROX radio. Jan teaches baton and tap dancing.

Michael, graduate of the College of Liberal Arts, at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He is employed by Vern Hagen Trucking, before returning to law school.

Jeffery is engaged to Karen Morken of Sabin, Minnesota. They will be married in April 1976. Jeff is a graduate of Moorhead State University and is employed by the Fargo Police Department. Karen attended Moorhead State University and is now attending North Dakota State University.

A daughter, Susan, Mrs. Bruce Horgen a graduate of Moorhead Tech as a legal secretary now lives in Warren, Minnesota with her husband. She has baton students and is active in church and community affairs.

James, our youngest, is a senior at Fisher High School. He is active in football, basketball, bowling, tennis, golf and music, and helps with farming. He will attend Moorhead State University in the fall.

ERNEST WOLLIN

Ernest Wollin and Emma kuntz were married June 17, 1912, at a small country church near Comfrey, Minnesota where Mrs. Wollin was the church organist.

The couple made their home on a farm about four miles from Comfrey, where they lived for several years.

In the fall of 1915, Ernest, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Charles Kuntz, loaded most of their worldly belongings in a large freight car and came north about 400 miles near Eldred, Minnesota which took about two or three days. He sold his cows and most of his machinery and grain before leaving the southern town. In the box car were four horses, harnesses, a binder for cutting grain, which he had taken apart so it would take less room, a two-bottom gang plow and seven sacks of potatoes. The irony of it all was that the northern potatoes were so much better and only cost $0.60 a bushel. So he fed his to the pigs, ducks and chickens. All their household goods were packed in large wooden crates, very heavy and hard to handle. Ernest remarked on the rough ride they experienced. A plank brace was put up behind the horses to steady

them but more than once they fell down as the train started up.

Emma Wollin, with her daughter Victoria, two months old on her lap and daughter Luella, two and one-half years old arrived by the Great Northern passenger train, which brought them together to their new home near the town of Eldred, Minnesota. Here they were met by Ernest's younger brother, Edwin Wollin, who already was farming two and one-half miles southeast of Eldred. Here is where they made their home on the prairie for some 20 years. Eldred was a fair-sized village, where they traded eggs for groceries at the John Elg, and Jack Brink Stores. Milking some 20 cows, they were able to ship their cream in eight-gallon cans by the passenger train to a creamery in Crookston. About every ten days they would drive a team of fast horses hitched to a buggy, and shop in Crookston. They'll always remember the most faithful horse, named Duke, a bay with a white star on his forehead. He was the lead horse of six on a gang plow. Without his high spirited willingness, plowing would have been slower. Ernest's arms ached from doing him back.

Ernest and Emma Wollin.
50th Anniversary 1962.


A son, Loren, arrived one very cold winter evening on December 14, 1916, at the farm home. Tillie Thoreson, a neighbor, served as mid-wife. Dr. Dryden arrived two hours later from Crookston coming twelve miles in an open cutter drawn by horses owned by a livery stable man in Crookston. Franklin, a second son was born on March 7, 1918, at the first Bethesda Hospital in Crookston. The family was blessed with another daughter, Lucille born on July 18, 1921, with Dr. Brown in attendance. The sixth child, another son, whom they called Lloyd, joined the family on September 17, 1926.

Many blessings and hardships alike came to this family. They raised most of their food on the farm: butchered, can-
ned, and smoked all their bacon, hams and sausages. Their farm was the scene of many happy times. Neighbors would gather on Sunday afternoon to throw horse shoes or play volleyball. Ernest loved baseball, with Loren playing on the team. Many a game was won by his side line coaching and cheering. The children attended school at Eldred, the first consolidated school in the northwest. The Wollins drove one of the big buses for four years with a team of two horses.

The first English Lutheran Church of Eldred was built in 1930, where the families worshipped. Now at the age of 84 years they are attending church as regularly as possible and are proud of the fact that four generations are there. They have survived tornadoes, crop failures, and floods. What a thrill when a second-hand Model T Ford came to serve the family.

After Ernest discontinued farming for himself he worked for his son-in-law, Andy Dragseth, husband of Victoria, and several other farmers. In 1949 they moved into their own home on Gorgas Avenue in Crookston, where they reside at the present time. They have six married children, 15 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Ernest enjoys coming out to the Dragseth farm in the summer and watching his grandson, Allen, farm with his big tractors and machinery, quite a big difference from when he farmed.

Ernest and Emma celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary June 17, 1976.

Russia Township History

March 15, 1884 appears to have been the date of the first town meeting. The first officers were: Ole Olson Jr., supervisor, Peter Noesen, John J. Urness, H. F. Hoff. Oren Simmons was the town clerk. These men were sworn into office March 9, 1886. by Fred Baatz, who was then justice of the peace. B. O. Lindberg was another justice of the peace and was also assessor for many years until his death. The town meetings were held at the O. Simons farm.

On July 26, 1886, there was a town meeting to divide the town lines between Fairfax and Russia townships. Owners of land in Russia Township on July 26, 1886 were: O. Simmons, E-s of N.E.-4, E-2 of S.E.-4; Peter Noesen, N.E.-4; Fred Baatz, S½ of N.-4; O. S. Johnson, S-2; Thom Wallace, N.½; Hans Clausen, S.W.-4; John Amundsen, N.W.-4. On May 12, 1889, a meeting was held to consider an act for the protection of public health by providing for inspection before slaughter of cattle, sheep and swine, desired for human food. O. Simmons, C. O. Espe and F. Cheapeus were appointed meat inspectors. On March 7, 1892, expenses for the year were $70.00. More Russia township owners of land on July 23, 1894 were: John Aaorg, Johannes Aaorg, A. M. Gamee, John Thompson, Ole Olete, B. O. Sindberg, and Cornelius Hansen. Russia township supervisors on July 23, 1894 were: Peter Noesen, Ole Olesen Jr., and Ben Geroux.

HAFSLO LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

The first Lutheran settlers came to Russia Township as early as 1875. They built a church for there was an urgent need for a place to worship and a bell to call them to worship. The Hafsl Olson Lutheran Congregation was organized in 1887. The first meeting was held July 14, 1887. Hafsl Olson is named after Hafsl, Norway. With forty-five members the first meeting was held. The first officers were: H. J. Hoff, John Urness and Christ Baarnes. The church was built on the S. Sylvester farm, one and one half miles east of Marin Station (later changed to Harold Station).

VINCENT BAATZ

Starting with "Shorty" his parents came from Luxembourg and Germany. Mrs. Baatz came at the age of sixteen and lived with her brother, Mark Rauenbuhlker until she married John Baatz. They homesteaded land just southeast of the Station of Russia which is now Greenview. To them were born seven boys and one girl. They then bought a house and moved just southeast of the Homestead. The boys were all raised on that place. The oldest boy was killed by a horse at the age of eighteen. The girl died at the age of two. She was the youngest. Mr. Baatz died in 1926 and Mrs. Baatz in 1956.

Now, for my family, my dad, the former Joe Ingvalson, was born and raised in Durand, Illinois to Julius and Ragna Ingvalson, who came from Norway. My mother, Ellen Bloom, was born in Chicago, Illinois. The family then came to Shiland, Illinois. Her family came from Seden. She lived at Shiland, Illinois until she and her dad were married in 1907, when they moved to Rockford, Illinois. In 1914 they moved to Minnesota, half a mile east of Greenview Station. They had four children: Evelyn, Julius, Betty and Lyle. In 1940 they moved to Badger, Minnesota and in 1962 moved back here and lived in a trailer house on our son's place east of Nielsville. Dad died in 1967 and Mother in 1972.

I was born at Rockford, Illinois and at the age of six years, I came to Minnesota. "Shorty" was the youngest of his family. He and I went to school together south of Greenview in District 160. Then I went east to District 289. We were married in January 1936 and for ten years we owned land with no buildings. Often we moved every year and sometimes twice a year. In 1946 we bought the place where we live now. To us was born a son, Raymond, who is now farming three miles east of Nielsville, Minnesota, since 1962 when he got out of the Army. He has three children: two boys and one girl. They are doing fine.

Six and a half years after Raymond, our JoAnn was born. She is married and now lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We have been blessed by the Good Lord, even with our sorrows but mostly with happiness. In 1948, a tractor tipped over on Raymond. He was pronounced dead, but again the Lord was with us and he recovered. In 1944, JoAnn had meningitis and was pronounced dead. Again we were blessed by her recovery.

BERNT LINDBERG

Bernt Lindberg was born in Hedemarken, Norway August 21, 1864 and was the eldest of five children born to Ole B. and Astrid Lindberg. His father died from a tree hitting him that he