Edmund Huderle and live northeast of East Grand Forks, Minnesota; and Gladys, the youngest, married Roy Lautl and they still live on my parent’s farm in Sandia township.

GEORGE RITOCH

Out in Sandia Township, along highway 220, in a little white farm house lives Julia Ritoch, a widow, all by herself now. George Ritoch, her husband, passed away in July of 1968. Their children, grown up, have long since gone from the vicinity.

The first George Ritoch with his wife, Mary, and son, John, emigrated from Slovakia in the 1880’s and found work in Minneapolis, where they lived among Slovak friends until they moved to a forty acre farm near Tabor, but in Northland township. While in Minneapolis they lost their first son, but got two daughters, Mary and Annie. In 1893, they came to their farm in Polk county and a year later another son was born to them. They named him, George, after his father.

The Ritochs helped build the Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church of Tabor and were faithful members of that church all of their lives. The girls grew up and Mary married George Ferencek at an early age and they made their home in Farley township. Annie married John Evin and they too farmed in both Polk and Marshall counties for many years before moving to Warren. When George Junior was fifteen, his father passed away after a lingering illness. Left alone with his mother, he took over the farming operations and later bought more land with a set of good buildings on the place where they were going to live. He loved horses and took good care of them in doing his farm work. All the farming was done with horses then.

George also loved “schoolarms” when the country was dotted with little white school houses. He took them to dances, for which Tabor was famous and he usually showed the girls a good time. So it was not strange that he fell in love with a school teacher, Julia Covlin, from Erskine, and they were married on August 2, 1926. His mother continued to live with them. In a few years they acquired a family of three girls and one boy. His mother passed away in 1936.

In 1935, they bought the farm in Sandia township and moved there in March. The children got their education in an Alvarado school. Dorothy, Mrs. Duane Mauch, lives in St. Croix Beach where the family is engaged in real estate business. Shirley, Mrs. William Langston, is in San Francisco and is employed by the United States Government. Betty, Mrs. Kenneth White, lives in Kent, Washington, and has a purse-making business from her home. Thomas looks after the farm and his mother, but also does business in Minneapolis. While living in Northland township, George Ritoch served on the school board in their district. In Sandia township, he served as town treasurer for a number of years. He also served on the education board in the Alvarado school.

The Ritoch Family 1950.

Brief History of Scandia Township

The first meeting of the Scandia township, Polk county was held on October 6, 1896. The meeting was called to order by John Stromstad. The following board was elected: chairman, Gust Christianson; supervisors, Tom Sandem, John Stromstad; treasurer, Gitle Stromstad; assessor, A. N. Mjelde; town clerk, John Clementsen; constables, B. O. Roem, Gust Linder; justice of the peace, Thor. Anderson.

All were elected unanimously with fifteen votes being cast. Their first item of business was to vote to buy road equipment, including a reversible road machine and road plow and six slush scrapers: they were to purchase them as soon as possible. At their next meeting, it seemed that the treasurer and the justice of the peace had declined their positions so two other men were appointed to fill those positions. A. N. Mjelde was appointed as treasurer and John Clementsen as justice of the peace. Bonds were fixed for all offices. Thirty-three names were registered for voting.

It is interesting to note how they carefully used their road taxes to build and maintain the roads. We also see where medicine for a family was paid for by the township. And at another meeting, a member was reimbursed for burying some horses. In May 1906, it was decided to build a new bridge over the state ditch. The job went to T. J. Berg. He was to get $600 for the job.

The business of Scandia township is carried on at this time by the following members: chairman, Bert Tollefson; township clerk, James Larson; treasurer, Roger Larson; and supervisors, Rolland Hamre and LeRoy Opdahl.

THE SCANDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Scandia Lutheran Church was organized on November 20, 1893 as Helland Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church and located in Scandia township, Polk County. The first officers were Johan Stromstad, Nils Veen, Gust Christianson, Gitle Stromstad, and Tom Sandem. The Reverend Brynildson was the first pastor.

The congregation met until 1915 in the schoolhouse. On February 9, 1915. at the annual meeting at the home of the Christianson Brothers, members decided to build a church structure. Location selected was the northeast corner of section 27 on land owned by Tom Sandem. Alfred Christianson, G. G. Eia, Theodore Stromstad, and the Reverend O. J. Lutnes were elected to serve as the building committee.

The cost of the new church was approximately $1,400. Most of the labor was donated by members of the congregation and friends. Many sacrificed their limited means and valuable time in order that the church could be built.

One of the most disastrous material catastrophes to strike Scandia congregation occurred on Sunday afternoon at approximately 4:30 p.m., August 1, 1937, when lightning struck the church spire and the church was consumed by flames in less than an hour! An eyewitness to the crash promptly spread the alarm throughout the neighborhood. To extinguish the flames was hopeless; consequently efforts were concentrated on saving the fixtures, which was done both swiftly and efficiently. The altar, the altar rail, the pulpits, the pews, the organ, and everything detachable, including a calen-

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...dar, were removed. The insurance company policy was paid in full in the amount of $2200. The new and present building was constructed at a cost of approximately $3900. The cost was reduced considerably by volunteer labor by members of the congregation and kind neighbors and friends. The weather made it possible for all to help, because it commenced raining as soon as the building was started and it kept on raining just enough practically every day so that the farmers could not get into their fields, but they could build a church!

The name was changed from Helland to Scandia in 1921 and after several changes and mergers throughout the years, Scandia Lutheran Church is now a member of the Beltrami parish and of the American Lutheran Church. The pastor is the Reverend Raymond A. Holter.

Other pastors who have served the congregation include the Reverend B. L. Sundal, the Reverend O. H. Brodlund, who served approximately 25 years; the Reverend Jacob N. Dor-dal, the Reverend N. J. Otterstad, the Reverend Ole Belsaas, the Reverend Karl Stromme, the Reverend Hans N. Finstad, the Reverend Orlando Lee, the Reverend L. S. Gjerde, the Reverend B. L. Duckstad, the Reverend Lloyd Berger, Jr., and the Reverend Glenn C. Hetland.

One member of the congregation was ordained at the church on June 3, 1962. He is the Reverend Arlen Dewar Hermodson.

ROLLAND BENJAMIN HAMRE

Rolland Benjamin Hamre and Arlene Smith were united in marriage July 22, 1950 at the St. Petri Lutheran Church, Nielsville, Minnesota by the Rev. Orlando A. Lee. Thus began the history of their family, who reside in Scandia township rural Beltrami, Minnesota. This was the home farm of Rolland's parents, BJ and Josephine Hamre. Mr. Hamre passed away on January 28, 1954. Mrs. Hamre has resided in Fertile since 1950. The B. J. Hamres have nine children.

Arlene's parents were Soren and Anna Smith, who farmed for many years in Hubbard Township in Polk county. They passed away in 1956 and 1959. They had seven children, all of whom reside in Minnesota.

Rolland has lived in Scandia all his life and is owner-operator of the home farm of his parents. His wife, Arlene, taught in the rural schools for three years before their marriage.

The family consists of Steven, who was married November 28, 1969 to the former Jane Hoff of Fertile, Minnesota. They have two sons Troy, age five, and Trevor, eight months old. Steven is a graduate of North Dakota State University at Fargo, North Dakota, with a major in mechanized agriculture. They own and operate the former N. J. Mjelde farm in Scandia township.

The oldest daughter, Valerie, is a licensed practical nurse, married to Lynn Sulerud of Fertile, Minnesota. They now live in Forest Grove, Oregon where Lynn is a student of optometry and Valerie works as a nurse in the medical clinic. They are graduates of Fertile-Beltrami High School. They were married May 25, 1974.

After Nancy graduated from Fertile-Beltrami High School, she attended college in Moorhead. She is a secretary and at the present time works as secretary in the chemistry department at Concordia College in Moorhead.

Rory Dean is a student at Minnesota Technical College in Crookston, taking courses of study in crop production. When not in school, he helps with the farming operations with his father and brother Steve.

In September, 1959, daughter Marcia was added to the family, and in January 1962 Marla, the youngest, was born. Marcia is a sophomore and Marla in the eighth grade at Fertile-Beltrami High School. They ride the school bus all those miles to Fertile. The family are members of the Scandia Lutheran Church, served by Rev. Ray Holter who was installed in September of 1975.

In January, 1969 the family moved into their new home, which was built in the summer of 1968. The old house was sold to the George Christiansons of Fertile who moved it to their farm north of Fertile.

"Praise the Lord! What an honor has been ours to be so privileged to live in this great land. We thank God that He has blessed us with a heritage even here in Polk county."

AUGUST HERMODSON

August Hermodson migrated to the United States in 1905, coming to Balaton, Minnesota. Here he found work on a farm enabling him to send tickets the following year to his wife and children, Gunnard, Anna and Esther, whom he had left behind in southern Sweden. Mr. and Mrs. Nels Anderson, parents of Emma, accompanied the family to the United States.

The first disappointment the family had was the fact that their trunks and boxes, which contained their clothing and bedding, were lost and never did arrive.

They lived in a small house within a mile of where Mr. Hermodson worked for a year. Then, he had saved enough money to enable him to buy a team of horses and some old machinery. He rented a farm and started farming for himself. He farmed in Murray County, Minnesota, until the end of 1914. At that time, there was a "land boom" in Polk County and he with several other farmers bought land in the Red River Valley, south of Crookston.

They shipped their livestock, machinery and furniture via the Great Northern railroad, accompanied by Alfred and Magnus Larson. The Hermodson family took the train from Murray County on December 26, arriving in Beltrami on December 28, on a very cold blustery day. Arriving at the house in Scandia township which was to be their home, they found many of the window panes out and much cleaning was

Family of Rolland and Arlene Hamre: Back row: Lynn Sulerud, Mar-}

25th Anniversary of Rolland and Arlene Hamre: Steve and Jane Hamre, Troy and Trevor; Lynn and Valerie Sulerud, Nancy, Rory, Marcia and Marla Hamre.

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needed. By this time, there were five children in the family. The Larson Brothers also lived with them the first year. It wasn’t easy for that many living in a small house, but in those days everyone made the best of the facilities they had.

Scandia Lutheran Church became their house of worship, where all the children were confirmed and some of them baptized, too.

Mr. Hermodson continued farming until his death in 1942. His wife died in 1954. Children were Gunnard (deceased), who married Evelyn Wil of Beltrami, parents of Deloyce, Gloria and Janet; Anna, married Nels Swan of Balaton, Minnesota, parents of Dennis, Donald, Daryl and Marilyn; Esther, deceased; Arvid married Alta Dewar of Crookston; parents of Arlen, Alden and Arvadelle; Harry, single; Amy married Delmar D. Brown of Aledo, Illinois; Nels, deceased; married Irene Maurtison of Shelly, Minnesota; parents of Mark, Warren, Kathleen, Lucille and Verna; Alma married Leonard Dawson of Gary, South Dakota; parents of Irine and Carolyn; Arthur married Katherine Stimac of Whiting, Indiana; parents of Rosine.

RAYMOND STROMSTAD
Raymond Stromstad and Marilyn Vesledahl were united in marriage on July 15, 1950 at the Winger Lutheran Church. Marilyn is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Vesledahl of Winger and Raymond is the son of Mrs. Helen Stromstad of Fertile and the late Theodore Stromstad. Marilyn, better known as Marvie, comes from a family of five, three sisters and a brother. They are Mrs. Duane Crowser of Hendricks, Minnesota; Mrs. Marvin Zuhl of Winger; Mrs. Charles Holquist of Crookston; and Alden Vesledahl of Fertile. Raymond is the youngest in a family of seven. He has three brothers and two sisters. Another sister, Edna, died in 1964. The brothers are Melvin, John and Walter, all of Beltrami, and Mrs. Dora Opdahl of Fertile, and Mrs. Calmer Johnson of rural Beltrami.

Raymond Stromstad Family.

Raymond entered into full-time farming with his brother, Walter, upon graduation from the Northwest School of Agriculture at Crookston. They were dairy farmers as well as grain farmers. They milked up to 26 cows and sold grade “A” milk. We spent the first five years of our married life in the house where Ray’s parents had spent their married life.

In 1955 we bought a piece of land just across the field and decided that there was where we wanted our home. So that spring we started in a plowed field, to plan our "homestead". That year we built the house and the barn, and little by little, as the years went by, other buildings were added and the trees grew and that bare piece of field has become a farmstead that we call home. We have six children which helped very much in making this farmstead a "home". Susan, our oldest daughter, is working at present at the Polk county library. Cindy, next in line, is a student at Concordia College at Moorhead. She is studying Spanish and art. Ron, who is 19 years old, is attending Moorhead Tech, studying diesel mechanics. Right now we have the other three attending school at Fertile. Todd is a junior, Tim is in 7th grade and Lisa, our seven year old, is in second grade. So you see, we will belong to PTA for a long time yet.

This past summer many friends and relatives came to help us celebrate our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. It was a day we will always remember.

JOHN OSCAR SWENSON
My folks were born in Sweden. John Oscar Swenson was born June 24, 1857. Josephine Johnson was born March 9, 1859. They were married in 1880. My dad was a miller. They lived a few years in Sweden. In 1891 Dad came to Polk county and worked at the South Superior farm and in 1892 my mother, five children and her sister, Selma, came. They settled on a farm near Beltrami in Scandia township. They were charter members of the Scandia Lutheran Church. At that time services were held in the school house.

They farmed for a few years. Dad didn’t like farming, so in 1901 they sold the farm and moved to Beltrami, where he worked as a carpenter until 1908, when the family moved to Goodridge.

Children born in Sweden were: Gerda Sandelia, born December 25, 1881, in 1902 she married John Lamportier. He was a farmer and had a meat market in Beltrami. In 1904 they moved to Goodridge, where they farmed and had a "stopping place" for many years. They had one adopted daughter, Pearl. Gerda died August 24, 1943.

Jennie Victoria, born November 2, 1883, in 1910 she married Carl Olson, a blacksmith in Beltrami. They had one son, Edwin, five girls, Agnes, Hazel, and Wilma. Two girls died in infancy, Mabel and Helen. After Carl died, the family moved to Holt, Minnesota and then to Montana. Jennie died December 1, 1948.

Frank Ludvik was born August 24, 1885 and in 1905 he went to Seattle, Washington. There he was a street car conductor for many years. He married there. They had one daughter, Gloria. Frank died July 2, 1934.

Mary Elizabeth was born August 27, 1887 and in 1906 she married Albert Cox, who was the depot agent in Beltrami. They moved to Oregon. They had one son born April 7, 1907. Mary died April 14, 1907.

Anna Emelia was born December 26, 1889 and in 1911 she married Ralph Cady. They farmed in Goodridge for a few years. They had five children: Dorothy, Phyllis, Lester, Robert and Harry. Harry died when he was eighteen months old. In 1916 they moved to Beltrami, where they had the restaurant and telephone office a few years. They then moved to Colorado. Anna Emelia died September 2, 1948.

Julius Sigfred was born July 11, 1893 in Beltrami, Minnesota. He was a carpenter. He married Martina Stromstad of Shelly, Minnesota in 1920. They had one son, Harold. They lived in Beltrami until Julius died, June 29, 1941.

Olga Josephine was born January 30, 1895 in Beltrami. She married Charles Sheridan in Warren, Minnesota, January 14, 1914. They farmed at Nielsville, Minnesota for 50 years and then moved to Climax after retirement. They had three girls: Blanche, Berenice, and Doris; and four boys Charles, Glenn, Leslie and Donald.

Alma Molly was born December 12, 1896 in Beltrami. She married Melvin Mjdele October 20, 1917. They had four girls Mabel, Edna, Clara and Joyce and three boys Lionel, Gerald and Myres who died at the age of fifteen. They lived in Seattle, Washington for many years.

Mabel Cecelia was born January 21, 1898 in Beltrami. She married George Gustafson in 1917. She died in October 1918. They had no children.

Carl Oscar Swenson was born December 10, 1899 in Beltrami. He lives in Sacramento, California and never married.

My dad died in 1915 and my mother died in 1933. They are buried at Goodridge, Minnesota.
Sullivan Township

CLARENCE AND INEZ AMUNDSON

Clarence and Inez Amundson are very active farmers and members of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. Clarence serves on the board of directors of the First National Bank of East Grand Forks, the township board, and has served on the church board and many others.

Inez is a partner in the farming. She is the homemaker, active in church and 4-H Club leadership. They have two sons: Michael who is married (wife, Jullie) and has a son (Michael Cris). Their home is also in the southeast quarter of section 18. Curtiss is active in 4-H Club local, county and state and is active in church and is in Senior High School. Both are active with their parents in the farming operations.

The farm consists of 760 acres owned by Clarence and Inez, who also rent 600 acres from Clarence's brother (John), who has retired and lives in a mobile home on the farm. Certified seed potatoes and grain are grown on the farm today. At one time, cattle, chickens and hogs were raised.

Clarence's grandfather (Amund Christianson) came to Renville county from Norway in 1878. He later left there and came to Polk county with a team of oxen and wagon and built a dug-out on the banks of the Grand Marais in the southeast quarter of section 18, which he homesteaded. His son, Christian Amundson, (Clarence's father) soon followed to Polk county from Norway. Christian bought the northwest quarter and part of the northeast quarter of section 18 from his father.

Christian Amundson married Sena Hotvedt of Rosholt, Wisconsin. Six children were born to them here on the farm: Eleanor, John, Alice, Harold, Clara, and Clarence. Clarence graduated from East Grand Forks High School and attended Northwest School of Agriculture at Crookston.

Many of Clarence's mother's family came from Rosholt, Wisconsin to Sullivan township and made their homes. Clarence married Inez McKenzie of Wombold, North Dakota. She was born at Kimball, Minnesota of early Minnesota settlers. Her mother's parents came from Sweden in 1871. On her father's side, Grandfather McKenzie, came from Kentucky at the end of the Civil War. Grandmother McKenzie's maiden name was Vadnas. The Vadnases came to the St. Paul area before St. Paul was a city. A Peter Vadnas owned the land where the State Capitol now stands. He traded this land for an oxen team and wagon saying all it was good for was trapping and he wanted to farm. Vadnas Lake was named for another Vadnas whose log house stood by the lake until a few years ago. Many relatives of both Clarence and Inez still live in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

THOMAS DRISCOLL

Although the icy winter winds blow chill, and the chimney smoke curls skyward, and the spring is late and dry, and the summer winds bring heat and drought, and the stubble fields gleam silver in the sunlight, and the autumn leaves crunch underfoot, there's nothing like my valley home.

The Thomas Driscoll family grew to love their valley home. Thomas Driscoll (1879-1950) and his two daughters have rounded out 100 years on the same valley farm in 1979.

The time is a sunny day in April, 1879 and the place is Fisher's Landing. A father and mother and five young husky sons reached their new home after a long tiresome trip from Almont, Ontario. Their immediate concern was shelter. After some confusion they loaded their household goods in a wagon, harnessed the horses and tied the cows to the wagon and set out for the Richard Enright home along the Red River, their only road. The mother, Mrs. Johanna Driscoll, and her husband James, bought a quarter of railroad land in section 33, in Sullivan township, for $400. Lumber was hauled from Fisher's Landing, and a house was built on a hill overlooking the Grand Marais. This was at the insistence of Mrs. Driscoll. The first thing the father did was to buy oxen. The horses could not cope with the heavy grassy soil. Young willow trees, cottonwood and box elder were dug along the river. Potatoes and a garden were planted between the rows of trees. A transcendent crab apple tree which he planted still bears bushes of apples each year, and is at least 85 years old.

There were many problems such as, grasshoppers, blight, army worm and the mosquitoes, which plagued both man and beast. There were miles of walking behind the plows but these people were not dismayed. They had come from Ireland exhausted by scurvy, fever, malnutrition and a potato famine. This is why they left Ireland in 1849. One of the most tedious jobs of the women of 1890 was milking the cows out in the open, then cooling and skimming the cream from the milk. The cream was soured and churned in a tub or dash churn. The Irish had stories about the banshees who would prevent cream from turning to butter. The older women churned and smoked pipes as they churned.

A log barn was built the first fall. Logs were hauled from the banks of the Red River. In the winter a rope was strung from the house to the log barn so the people would find their way during the winter storms.

### Photos:

- The original James and Johanna Driscoll Home 1879.
- Original Home added to in 1900. Mrs. Thomas Driscoll with paper in hand.

Johanna Ahearn Driscoll, the youngest of ten children, left County Kerry at the age of fourteen for America. It took six weeks and seven days to cross the Atlantic. At the age of nineteen she married James Driscoll at Almont, Ontario. James Driscoll came from Cork. An Irish priest told me they were known as great horsemen of Southern Ireland. This love of horses came with the Driscolls to Polk county as they had beautiful Percherons. Two of James' brothers came with him. They were separated in New York and never saw each other again. In 1900. Mrs. Driscoll moved to East Grand Forks, where the present post office stands. A barn and chicken house stood at the back of the lot. In 1912 she passed away. Mr. Driscoll died in 1894 at age 90.

In 1898, Thomas married Mary Ellen Liston. Her mother, Maria Hogan Liston, came from Limerick. Her brother was a Brother at Notre Dame University. Maria spent two years at St. Mary's, South Bend, and earned a teaching certificate. Thomas and Mary Ellen Driscoll have five children: Beatrice, a teacher; Vincent and Shanley, who each farmed a quarter in section 34. Shanley also worked at the Grand Forks school system and Vincent managed one of the Reynolds Aluminum Farms, in Portland, Oregon. Angela has been a buyer at Dayton's for many years. Marie kept the home fires burning. Mrs. Driscoll died in 1919 and Thomas Driscoll passed away in 1950 at age 87. During his lifetime he served for many years on the township and school boards. But the heritage this pioneer left us can be summed up this way: personal integrity, honesty, determination, a love of the land, good stewardship and faith in God and his fellow man.

IVER HOYE

Mr. and Mrs. Iver Ho ye moved to section 8, Sullivan township, in 1895. They had previously lived in Northland township, Honeyford, North Dakota, and in Winneshiek county, Iowa. They were both born in Norway, but left there in 1878.