A TALE OF TWO VALLEYS
Justin Bergh

Conrad G. Selig
A TALE OF TWO VALLEYS

An Autobiography by

Conrad G. Selvig

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Introduction

This is, briefly told, a story of my life begun in the Root River Valley in Southeastern Minnesota and continued mainly in the Red River Valley of the North in the same state.

It deals with early struggles, aspirations and happy times that led to endeavors in several fields.

It touches upon events in my life and work that later proved significant in the unfolding drama of life.

Its inspiration came principally from friends who wanted me to set down growth and development of the University of Minnesota’s Northwest School of Agriculture and Experiment Station during its early formative years and events that followed.

It has been written with a profound feeling of gratitude for opportunity offered there of constructive service and in some aspects of leadership. It would have been impossible to carry out that assignment excepting for whole-hearted encouragement and support of many, many persons in the state and particularly in the Northwestern part commonly referred to as the Red River Valley.

I wish I could list names of them all but this is clearly impossible. Friendships were formed which are the most cherished of all my experiences.

In writing my autobiography it was necessary to refer to countless sources mainly among my accumulated papers, correspondence, newspaper clippings and reports.

I am particularly indebted to Thorval Tunheim, NWSA, 1916, and University of Minnesota, 1921, who read the manuscript and presented many helpful suggestions. To Willis I. Lindquist, author, New York City; Alfred D. Stedman, editor of St. Paul Pioneer Press-Dispatch and his wife who read the manuscript and gave helpful suggestions. The faults of the book are mine. They all helped avoid some.

Harold H. Grandy, Detroit, Michigan, also a graduate of the Northwest School and of other institutions and now art director for a leading commercial art firm graciously furnished the art work in this volume. “A gift to the institution.” For this I am truly grateful. He has won a distinguished place in his profession.
To the Northwest School group, including alumni, former and present students, former and present members of the faculty I am greatly indebted for their invaluable assistance in making the publication of this volume possible. In this connection, I am particularly indebted to Ole A. Flaat, Bygland, and his associates.

I am grateful to all. My life has been a happy one from childhood days and on. I liked to work and was especially blessed in having at my side for 46 years my dearly beloved wife who was always ready to join in whatever needed to be done. Our children, too, all did their part with devotion and joy.

Conrad C. Selvig,
November, 1950.
I THE HERITAGE....

My father, Gunnar Kristofferson Selvig, nearly lost his life when he emigrated from Norway in 1871. Had the vessel, on which he brought his bride to this country, sunk, as it nearly did, this book would not have been written. The vessel actually foundered and sank on the return voyage with all on board lost.

Father was a seaman, first mate, at the time of his marriage. He often spoke of voyages to Archangel, to Mediterranean ports and to "Rio", as he called it, Rio Janerio, Brazil. His closest escape from a watery grave, we children finally managed to learn from him after many importunities and requests, occured in a dense fog.

"Providence was with us that day, that's certain", he said. The ship was moving slowly in the iceberg area so thick a fog one could see only a few yards ahead. Nothing could be seen or heard. Suddenly, the fog lifted! The ship had almost reached a towering iceberg that loomed before them. There was time only for a split-second veering away to avoid a fatal head-on crash. He could not tell us how it happened but the ship swung clear, crashing lightly against the mass without damage. Then fell the fog again! It was beyond human means and skill that the ship was saved and that father lived to sail another day.

The sea took its toll frequently among sea-faring folk of south-western Norway and claimed his father when father was eleven. This left his mother with a brood of nine children, four boys and five girls. Father was the seventh child. His mother Siri Gunnardsdatter Ovstebo, was an indomitable character.

It was of no uncommon experience that a sailor's wife became a widow. My wife and I visited the home place in Norway, Selvig, in 1931 and heard from the neighbors stories of her fortitude and leadership. She went by the name of Siri Aune. She became the community's counselor, mid-wife, nurse, conciliator, gardener, fruit grower and in modern parlance, psychiatrist. She was strong. Her own sense of duty and her devotion to God led her through an active life. Up to the time of her passing, at 83, she read her Bible without aid of glasses and her dark, almost black, hair was unstreaked with gray.

We also visited Hognestad, some thirty miles south of Stavanger, whence came mother's people. We secured family records back to 1666, the earlier ones being not immediately available. I remembered my maternal grandfather and saw a marked resemblance to him among the folks we met at Hognestad. Sandy hair, full bearded man. Blue eyes.

During our sojourn, the Stavanger "Tidende" published a story of one of my maternal ancestors, Hans Torson, born in 1757. He ran away from home and resided in foreign lands many years. When he returned he said he had fought in seven countries and by the side of three kings, besides having been on a whaling voyage to Greenland. In 1795 he married Ane Bertha Gregorius, nineteen years of age, when he was almost twice her age. They had nineteen children. A twentieth would
would bring the family a premium from the King. This never occurred. She attained the age of 94.

![Father, Mother and Infant Child.](image)

"No land in the world offers people the opportunity for a good life that does America."

Mother was the first born of seven, three boys and four girls. Her father and mother lived in Stavanger until they sailed on the "Undine" on the 26th of April, 1871 and reached New York about July 10, 1871. Father and mother went to Chicago where he found work as a sailor on the Great Lakes. They must have lived in Chicago during the Great Fire of October 9, 1871, but I do not recall talk of that catastrophe. Later they moved to Rushford, Minnesota where two of mother’s sisters also lived.
In June, 1854, two ox-teams wound their way through the hills of what is now Fillmore county, in southeastern Minnesota, seeking a spot where their drivers might establish a home. At the bottom of the valley they found what they were looking for and so came the first settlement on the present site of Rushford.

In the wagons were the families of Duncan Cameron and Roderick McLeod, and they built cabins and settled down to live in the wilderness. The nearest neighbors were many miles away and Indians still roamed the country. The McLeods had several children, among them a son, John, and after three quarters of a century John helped celebrate Rushford's Diamond Jubilee in 1929.

I recall John McLeod as Master of the local Masonic Lodge when I became a member. He was a tall, powerfully built man whose stentorian voice carried authority in everything connected with the settlement's growth and progress. He became, later, a leader in the city of Rushford.

After the Camerons and McLeods it was not long before other families arrived. Soon there was a goodly number of people there, including Rev. W. W. Snell and Solomon and George West from Massachusetts. They built homes and Rev. Snell, whom, I remember well, conducted the first religious service at the Cameron home.

Otis Bathrick arrived in 1856 and T. J. Fladeland and George G. Stevens the following year. Drs. H. H. Everts and H. C. Grover, Rushford's first physicians, arrived a little later. Dr. Grover was our family physician. He attended our family when nearly all my brothers and sisters were down with scarlet fever. Our living room resembled a hospital ward. I had had my siege and was washing dishes when Dr. Grover suddenly appeared at the kitchen door. The front door opened directly into the "hospital ward".

I did not like being caught washing dishes and was somewhat abashed. He noted my embarrassment and said: "That's right, my boy, always help your mother. I often washed the dishes in my early days." I felt relieved. Years later when he gave me a physical examination preparatory to my trip to the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, he recalled this incident.

Other families, including Valentine, Pease, Endicott and Iverson soon arrived. Mail in 1856 was brought by wagon from La Crosse, Wisconsin, 35 miles distant. C. J. Hulbert became Rushford's first postmaster in 1857. The winter of 1856 had been unusually severe and for the greater part of that season the settlers subsisted on johnny cake alone.

Nine pupils attended the school opened in 1857 with Miss Martha Emery, the first teacher. The next year twenty-four pupils attended school with Miss Jane Walker as teacher. She was paid $15.00 a month. One of her pupils was John McLeod. The name Walker, is familiar. Father bought his home site in Walker's Addition.
Rushford men responded patriotically to Lincoln's call for volunteers during the Civil War. Thirty-one were mustered in from Rushford community. The railroad reached the village in 1867. The Congregational Church was the first church in the village. William Cullen Bryant contributed towards the building fund and the church bell which was used for the first time, Christmas Eve, 1860. The Methodist Church was organized in 1860.

3.

Eighty persons attended the first Fourth of July celebration in 1856. In 1857 the Rushford Gazette made its initial bow. Rushford had received its name at a Christmas party in 1854 when Mrs. C. Walker had suggested it. The name came to mind, she said, from the abundance of rushes growing along Rush Creek and from the fords of the creek and Root River nearby. Other names were proposed but Rushford it was.

During later years swarms of settlers came to occupy the fertile valleys and prairies surrounding Rushford. The area to the east became known as Irish Ridge. To the north Germans came in large groups, with Bohemians nearby. Norwegians homesteaded along Root River to the east and west and settled the prairies to the west and south. The settlements rapidly expanded Rushford's trading area, population and wealth. A new city had been built.

4.

A huge “bluff” dominated the site. “Bluff” simply meant the valley’s wall. At its top was the edge of the prairie 500 feet above the level of the valley. The valleys of Root River and Rush Creek converged at Rushford which caused the huge bluff, named Magellsen’s Bluff which separated the valleys, to be seen first by anyone approaching the city.

RUSHFORD, MINNESOTA

“The valleys of Root River and Rush Creek converged—
the huge bluff rose majestically.”
Stevens Avenue curved around the base of the bluff. It was lined with substantial and in some instances quite impressive homes of the well-to-do. It was a broad avenue forming almost a semi-circle, extending nearly to Pheiffer's Brewery and Tew's Mill, located near Rush Creek. It was lined with beautiful elm trees that were already almost full-grown when I first saw them. This avenue was laid out in the grand manner.

Near its central point, Rushford Avenue began, forming a right angle with Stevens Avenue and extended almost a mile eastwardly across Rush Creek through Brooklyn (the name afterwards given to East Rushford) to the bluff on the eastern border of the city. These two avenues dominated the city. There were two roadways on Rushford Avenue. The first dual highway of my recollection. Between them were parks which extended from bluff to bluff with a single roadway at the Rush Creek bridge. Elms placed in four straight rows lined the parks. Here was a well-planned park system bearing testimony to the foresight and vision of the city's founders.

Here was space for playgrounds laid out long before play facilities were even mentioned in many places. They were for both young and old. Croquet was a favorite game with the elders. Each afternoon or early evening found its devotees playing that fascinating game, judging angles in approaching the arches, musing often and long on the strategic blocking of the opposition and deeply weighing the exact amount of strength to use on the mallet in propelling the ball just the right distance.

By some quirk, or something, the city's main school building was located far from the city's center. I might say the farthest possible distance from it. What ideas or manipulations caused this to be done rest unwritten, undisclosed in the history of the city. It meant a two mile walk from North Rushford and more than a mile from the center of the city. Good exercise in walking, of course. On rainy days and during the winter months there was discomfort. No school busses those days. A year or two after the city celebrated its Diamond Jubilee a new building centrally located was built.

The Root River valley in southeastern Minnesota has won acclaim for its charm and beauty. It was almost impossible during early days to follow the river as due to frequent floods, roads were built mainly along the base of the bluffs. When improved highways were built this valley came into its own. Trees cover the bluff sides which are broken, in turn, by gorges and valleys. There is infinite variety of scenes which change every second as the car advances. Southeastern Minnesota escaped the last glacial thrust from the north. Its valleys, hills, bluffs and prairies are in the state's oldest geologic area. In fall the view presents a breathtaking panorama of form and color. The early settlers had made a wise choice.
THERE WERE FOUR OF US.

"It was not all work and no play—my sister caught the biggest fish."
Early impressions can be vivid. I was about four years old and wore a skirt of light-colored material. Mother took me to visit Aunt Ellen who lived near-by. While they were visiting I slipped away as I had seen a small pool of water near the walk that appeared particularly enticing. Soon I was the color of mud from neck to foot. Aunt Ellen saw me and exclaimed, “There Conrad has got himself wet and dirty”. I recall my mother looked straight at me. She had worked hard to wash and iron my dress but I do not recall any expression of displeasure. There may have been dismay. Back to our home I must go to be refitted in clean clothes.

An earlier memory finds the family in an upstairs apartment. I remembered its location. The family lived there temporarily during the time our home was being built. In December, 1882, when I was five, mother became seriously ill of pneumonia. There were no “wonder” drugs then. Our home was as silent as a tomb. There were visitors, there was the doctor, there was father who looked as though his heart would break.

One morning father called the four children together. We were to visit mother. We did not know it was to be for the last time. I was just over five. As we entered the room there lay mother thin, wan, her features marked by pain and with an inexpressible agony in her eyes. Father was in tears. She clasped our hands in the last farewell. We silently left.

The day of the funeral, December 14, 1882, was very cold. There was a deep snow on the ground. The services were held in church but I was left at home with friends. I saw bob-sleighs leave the yard. Late in the afternoon the people returned. The last sad rites were over. The house was snug and warm. Friends had prepared supper. I was tired and sleepy and there the scene ends.

There were four of us besides father. A brother and sister older and a brother younger than I. Relatives, including my two aunts cared for the family until a housekeeper was secured. After a period of two or three years Rachel Byberg became my step-mother. I recall the wedding. The house was filled with guests. There was an indefinable feeling within me. That I remember but nothing much else. There was food, music and dancing. It was the first time I had seen my father dance. It was his duty to his new wife. He was about 40 at the time.

From the beginning our new mother did her full duty by the four of us. We liked her. She faced a difficult task. Soon she had three children of her own. She was a delightful conversationalist and enjoyed “company”. She lived a happy life.

In her later years she often said, “I have been blessed with loving children of my own and with affection of four who were not my own. All have been devoted children. I loved them all.” I said to her later many times, “You have been a good mother to us. We have often tried your patience, but at heart we are all one family.”

Father worked hard and made headway. He soon became foreman in the job he held with the railroad. He acquired two acres of land on which he built our
home. Later, in two separate additions, the home was enlarged to provide rooms for the children. He purchased ten or eleven acres of land lying between Rush Creek and Root River and then we had a small farm inside the city limits. It was mainly pasture and we kept two or three cows which had to be milked and tended. Work for the boys. Additional source of money for a growing family. There were nearly fifty huge black walnut trees in the newly acquired tract. I cannot depict the fights these led to. Marauders sought the nuts which we boys knew belonged to us. There was excitement enough to keep us happy and content.

The deed to our land which bordered on Rush Creek and Root River provided that the division line separating our land from the owners of the adjacent tracts was to be a line in “the center of Rush Creek and proceeding from there to the point where this line intersects the center line of Root River, then easterly in said center of said river to the north and south line which was the eastern boundary of our land,” or words to that effect.

This center line boundary gave rise to a controversy that persisted for years. The course of the river had changed over the years, resulting in additional acres on our side. “It’s in the deed,” father invariably would reply to complaints. Finally, a new line was set and mirabile dictu! the river changed its course no more. The tract was very productive, producing good yields of corn and alfalfa.

3.

There were always jobs to do at home so my education began early. I learned how to work. Daily tasks were set. Father and mother never spared themselves. We were not overburdened. Father would say, “Now, there’s that cornfield. The weeds are coming up. That’s the job tomorrow. It will take you two boys a half day. The afternoon will be yours.”

Here was both an opportunity and a challenge. Usually, the work was done on schedule. In later years I often said to him, “You taught me the most valuable lesson of all, you taught me to work. It is an essential lesson.” It pleased him to have me tell him that.

Even during the fall and winter there were jobs to do. Father always took the lead. We would help him an hour or two in early morning before he went to his regular work. In the evening by lantern-light we would “pile” the wood in the shed. We had timber on our land, soft wood, we called it. Oak cord wood cut in 4 foot lengths supplemented our own supply. It was bought at $8.00 a cord those days. Why did he work so hard? Invariably the reply was my five boys and two girls must get an education. They must all have the chance to go through high school and if they show promise, to college. He was working for us.

4.

When I was thirteen years old I accepted vacation period job on a large farm in Winona County where my older brother was already at work. I hired out for $8.00 a month and in the fall proudly handed father $81.00. I needed a new suit. It was purchased with my own money. I felt very proud as we walked home from the store that evening.

The first week away from home was the hardest. I spoke to no one that week, not even to my brother. In short I was “home-sick”. Rosie, daughter of the farm’s owner, returned from a week’s visit. She was of my own age. Suddenly the world looked different. We fell to talking. My tongue was unloosed. She was gay and friendly. No more “home-sickness” after that.
Boyhood Days

During the next four summers I vacationed doing farm work. Three of the summers were spent on this Winona County farm so it may be assumed that I made good. I received the grand total of $128.00 for five summers work. I learned to do all the various kinds of summer farm work but never handled a plough as ploughing was done during spring and fall. I consider the training and experience were invaluable. I could hold my own with anyone my age. This inspired confidence. I paid for my own clothes and had my own earned pocket money. This inspired self-reliance.

5.

It was not all work and no play. Play, baseball, picnicking, fishing, climbing the bluffs, picking flowers, hunting and winter sports, one followed after the other. Berrying was a favorite activity. In the near-by woods, wild blackberries and red raspberries were abundant. On the prairie land beginning at the top of the bluffs, wild strawberries grew in profusion if you knew where to look for them.

In season there were flowers to pick, Indian feathers, Jack-in-the-pulpit, crocuses, sandflowers, lady’s slippers, blue bells and many others. We children were in luck. We tramped up and down the bluffs, mostly barefoot. We heeded no dangers although an encounter with a rattle-snake could happen.

It did happen and I don’t want it to happen again. A party of boys and girls including my sister, went to pick wild raspberries at a patch near our home and began to fill our tin pails. My sister was approaching a berry bush when she saw a rattle-snake slithering along a low tree branch overhanging the very berry-bush where she stood. The inevitable rattle sounded. The good Lord must have foreseen this emergency for had there been no warning rattle, sister would have thrust her hand almost into the snake’s jaw as both were reaching for the same cluster of berries.

Before the snake could coil for the thrust, my sister leapt out of reach. The rest of us stood spell-bound. Then away we rushed towards home and safety. It took years before we mustered courage to revisit this berry-patch.

Rattle snakes lived mostly on the sunny side of the bluffs. They were not often encountered on the valley bottom. Father had a close call when he stepped on a huge rattler. The snake repeatedly drove his head to the sides of the high boot father was wearing. The poisoned fangs could not penetrate the thick leather. Father’s associate standing nearby dispatched the snake. Father never said much about this harrowing incident. “I had him under my boot. What could he do?”

My personal encounter with a rattler took place the second summer I was on a farm. I was 14. My job for the day was to pick wild oats found here and there in a wheat field. The farm owner wanted, he said, a clean field, freed from weeds. It was an easy job walking from one small patch to another. Suddenly at my very feet came a loud, crisp rattle. It was menacing and I knew what it was. I saw the coiled rattler with his head held back ready to strike.

Afraid, I nearly died from fright. I never had qualified as a long distance jumper but jump I did on that bright, sunny July noon. It’s distance would have qualified me as an entrant in any high school match. The jump was high, as well as long. I grieve now I did not have the presence of mind, later, to measure the distance.
N.W. School, Crookston
Kiehle Building
Campus View
Dining Hall
Sunken Garden
"A duck area converted—"
My fellow worker called out, "I saw you jump, just like a jack-rabbit. What's the matter." I told him and then said, "Let's find him, he can't be very far away." Armed with stout sticks we traversed the area which lay near the field's border adjoining an orchard. Near the old log fence we found the rattler. Its eleven rattles were carefully removed and I have them still.

It was during these years that the Brooklyn Gang flourished. It could not be called terroristic but it was deeply mischievous. About a dozen boys made up the gang. I was one of the leaders. We played ball till dusk but it was then too early to go home. "Now for some fun", someone suggested. It might have been myself. "Let's play tick-tack on Haakon Larson's window." No sooner mentioned than done. The necessary string, bent pin and nail were part of the gang's paraphernalia. The pin was fastened to the end of the string and a nail tied on near the pin. Someone who had to be brave, of course, crept up to the house and fastened the pin to the window frame where the nail would strike the pane. Then run away, jerk the string from a safe distance and the tick-tack operated. It was as simple as that.

Old Haakon heard it. He had had enough of this tom-foolery. He came forth in great rage and shouted, "God-Faen, I'll shoot." And shoot he did, but it was into the air. That was enough for us. We did not even try to salvage our apparatus. This was the first time we had met with so direct and effective reception. Haakon Larson was not again molested by the gang.

I can only say the boys were merely active lads bursting with life and vigor. Today Boy Scouts and Boys' Clubs direct youthful energies into better channels.

An incident occurred at about this time which involved the members of a gang of older boys, called the Macomber Gang. My play-mate, Hans Strand to whom I was greatly attached had been persuaded by this gang to shoot and kill a robin. He was told it was a canary and no law prohibited his act. With the dead robin in his hands he was then confronted with the gang and accused of killing a robin. The encounter took place on Rush Creek's Brooklyn Bridge. Hans protested in words that became an oft repeated anecdote for years, "I did na know vad de var", he said, "but Ben Macomber said it var a kanari fugl (bird)."

Members of our gang frequently went to the city across Brooklyn Bridge. We enjoyed playing in Tew's then vacant cooper shop. Evidently there had been some damage done to the machinery which was stored there but not by our gang. We enjoyed playing there. It was as large as a gymnasium. On one occasion who should enter but Mr. Tew himself. "Now I've caught you boys and you will all go to jail. I have posted a notice to that effect. What have you to say for yourselves?"

We were thunderstruck and for a time speechless. Finally someone said, "We were just playing. We intended no damage and had never done any." The upshot was that he believed in our innocence for he was a kindly man. He warned us against trespassing on property which belonged to someone else. We made a mad rush for home. "Jail" was a sinister word. It took many years before we could view the old cooper shop with equanimity.

The big fire produced excitement never to be forgotten. The Rushford Wagon works were burned to the ground. No one knows to this day the cause of the fire. Rushford's entire population surged about excitedly and with dire forebodings as
to the future. This plant employed many skilled workers. It was important to the community as its chief local industry. Rushford wagons were in use in many states. Would the factory be rebuilt?

It was not. The owners moved to Winona. Later, from the ashes and ruins of the Rushford plant a smaller shop was built and wagons were made. Later, this industry gave way to the automobile and to farm machinery.

There were frequent floods, too, to attract us. Root River and Rush Creek during those floods joined as one stream covering most of the city streets and extending over the entire valley. The causeways between Rushford and Brooklyn and between Rushford and South Rushford overflowed. Boats had to be used. Our house was on high land and not even our basement was flooded. There was distress in other areas. At one time the river was more than two miles wide, we youngsters, of course, were enthralled. We called the flood area our ocean.

8.

Fishing was a popular sport for young and old. My sister caught the biggest fish and became the champion in our family. To the chagrin of my younger brother and me, she caught it while fishing from a space right there between us. She had a willow pole, a poor line we had discarded, a hook and bait. And she hauled in a red horse she could only with difficulty carry home. She teased us, “You call yourself fishermen!” It was a tough blow.

There is one fishing trip I’ll never forget. It may be that it was an important event in my life because it might have terminated fatally. At least, this was the view of my parents. My play-mate, Hans Strand and I decided to try winter-fishing at Clark Johnson’s Slough, the name given to a small but deep lake two miles east of Rushford. It held an abundance of black bass, pickerel and bullheads. On arrival we found the slough covered with ice. I set out to chop a hole in the ice near the center of the Slough. Hans was to follow me with the fishing gear. Suddenly the ice gave way and I was up to my neck in freezing water. I started to climb out, on every attempt the ice broke with my weight. I was repeatedly ducked up to my neck.

I looked to the shore where I beheld a fantastic scene. Hans was yelling at the top of his voice, “Help! help! Conrad is drowning,” or words like that. The nearest farmhouse was a half-mile away. I realized all this but laughed. It was a comical scene. I had no sense of impending danger. I called, “Find a post, a big branch or something and lay it close to me.” He went in search and in the meantime I kept trying to lift myself on the ice. This was finally done when I reached a place where the ice held.

I was wet through. What to do? We then made a very foolish decision. We would build a fire to dry my clothes and continue fishing. Water filled my shoes but I did not mind that. We ate our lunch, began fishing but had no luck. Soon we realized it was past mid-afternoon. A cold wind began to blow. My clothes froze to my body. It was time to return home. The brisk walk helped but I was a sorry looking boy when we reached home.

I had thought there was no danger but father and mother had other ideas. Home treatment began which was I might state, summary. My frozen clothes were removed. A hot bath followed. Bed, next, with an enormous covering to draw a good sweat. The next morning I was all right.
9.

There were many outlets for our youthful energies during winter as well as summer. Rushford was surrounded by bluffs and on their sides were hills ready-made for coasting. Magellsen's Hill was the most popular place. Here gathered the youth from all families, rich and poor, native-born and from immigrants' families, those with ornate sleds and toboggans and those with a cracker-box set on runners. Here all were equal as play is universal. Hundreds would gather here on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and during moon-lit evenings. It was fun. We trudged up hill and slid down, on one round-trip after the other. Our favorite girl friend was invited "to take a ride with me". When she did so, my cup of happiness was overflowing. Such good times we had.

When we were older and more experienced we hazarded our lives coasting down a mile-long, hill-side roadway, northeast of town. This road was little used during winter but there was always the danger of meeting a team coming up. The road was narrow. There would be no place to turn out. Coasting on this hill was dangerous but no mishaps occurred. The sport was exhilarating. Danger lurked but who thought of that? We were having a high old time.

Skating on the old mill pond located behind Tew's mill on Rush Creek afforded greater fun. Every boy and girl could skate. Many became skillful figure skaters. The main attraction, however, was to take a girl 'a-skating. That was the lure. On a pleasant afternoon, or a moon-lit evening hundreds were there. The ice was flawless. The area was not large but there was always ample space. It is delightful to recall those scenes and events of a happy boyhood in Minnesota.

10.

Baseball in the summer. "One 'ol cat" when two full regular teams could not be mustered. Our high school team had three good pitchers, Sid Erickson, Pete Kierland and George (Lengthy) Hourne. I played first base. We frequently played out-of-town teams. These trips became events. One was to play the Yucatan team at the Eiken farm, in Houston County. This team had sent us a challenge. The Yucatan boys were confident their star pitcher, Gerhard Eiken, would show up "them city fellers". He was a very good pitcher. Later he played on the University of Minnesota baseball team and was, also, a star half back on the varsity football team.

The drive took three merry hours. Mrs. Eiken had prepared a dinner fit for kings. We recall everything with delight excepting the game in which we were soundly drubbed. We just couldn't "hit" the fast ones Gerhard whizzed over the plate. Our pitchers were good but we needed runs to win and we couldn't get them. The score, however, did not mar the occasion.

My thoughts just now go back to the boys on our team. Three became doctors, one gained prominence as a big-game hunter in Canada and as editor of a magazine devoted to big game hunting. One was elected to Congress. Two served in the Spanish-American war. Two became successful Rushford business men.

11.

Another pastime engaged the interest of a group of young folks. It was stamp-collecting. The stamp "bug" hit us hard. All my spare pennies were spent for stamps. We soon had a club which we sonorously named "The Rushford Stamp Collectors Association". It met at our homes. We held annually a banquet. Our parents encouraged us.
I began correspondence when I was thirteen with collectors in many countries. Purpose was to "swap" stamps. From China, Spain, Norway, England, France, Holland, Canada, Australia and South America came letters many of which I could not read. Our high school teachers and even our University professors, were called to service. It was fun. It was more than that. It was a means of broadening our interests, our horizons. It helped us to realize there was a world outside our own country. My original stamp album which I still have bears the dates, 1890-1896.

Envelopes I used during this period bore the following return address:

Return in 10 days to
CONRAD G. SELVIG
Box 64, Rushford, Minn.

Charter Member R. S. C. A. Member P. S. of A., and
L. A. P., and Librarian W. P. A.

Correspondence solicited with Stamp Collectors, and especially those interested in Stamps of the Scandinavian Countries.

On the opposite side the envelope had an advertisement of Hamlin's Wizard Oil, good for every ailment. I was still in precarious economic status.
Some events of importance in my development took place right in our home or front yard. On Sunday afternoons father's cronies would come to talk and debate. It seemed almost a ritual to this group. In winter they would gather in our living room.

One person was Louis Norem, owner of what we termed our store for we did most of our trading there. He was my god-father. Anders Hendrickson, owner of the largest farm near Rushford, was almost always present. Others were John Green, Frank Smith, Jon Johnson, Ludvig Tagland and G. G. Grossfield. The latter two crossed the Atlantic with my parents on the ill-fated "Undine", in 1871.

There was interesting talk. One main feature was father's insistence on always standing up for America, as United States was called. He was an ardent patriot. "There is no land in the world that offers people the opportunity for a good life as does America", he often said. This sank deep into my consciousness. This was the land of opportunity, even for the poor.

Discussions were held about city affairs. For years there had been talk of providing Rushford with safe water supply and fire protection. One group favored building a huge tank on the bluff-side on Magellsen's Hill. This provoked discussion. It seemed endless but the project was finally voted and built.

Chinch bugs was a topic for years. They laid waste grain fields and were particularly destructive against wheat. Anders Hendrickson one Sunday said, "I am through with wheat. I shall raise stock". Soon he built the biggest barn in this part of Fillmore County. It still stands.

Patriotism reached unwonted heights on Fourth of July. There were big celebrations every year. The G. A. R. led the parade. It was impressive to a youngster. How proud we were of the soldiers in blue! How we looked up to them, the preservers of our Union! Circus Days were a delight and joy. Like all the rest of Young America I toiled for hours at heavy tasks necessary to earn a ticket. No sleep the night before, or very little, because we had to see the cars unloaded. We just had to watch the elephants push the wagons into place. What a world of wonder and glory!

There were parties, programs, lyceum attractions and occasional plays presented in Rushford Opera House. This was located on the second floor of a store building. Later roller-skating became the vogue and the rink, as it was called, was built. My parents had been brought up to distrust the theatre as being a part of the devil's own program. We, children, studied plays in school. We even participated in juvenile performances. So when Joseph Jefferson, himself, was billed to play "The Old Homestead", my younger brother and I decided to attend.
This decision encountered difficulties at the start. Permission was not granted. There was a lamentable lack of silver, also, that made the prospects dim. These obstacles faded away when we left home unobserved and, next, entered the Opera House via a second story window conveniently located near an outside “fire-escape” stairway.

We were there. We sat enthralled during the performance. It opened a new world to us. Jefferson at the close appeared, talked and, in closing, gave his famous toast: “Here’s to your health, to your family’s good health, and may you all live long and prosper.”

It was an unforgettable occasion, not marred at its close when we quietly entered our second-floor bedroom, through its window, undiscovered, without awakening anyone.

Boys’ clubs are to be found in many cities now. Back in the late 80’s and early 90’s they were uncommon. Mrs. George G. Stevens organized a club which met in her home. Her husband was the president of the local bank. She was a gracious woman, a leader in Rushford’s social life. The home was Rushford’s finest. My younger brother and I were invited.

Mrs. Stevens met each boy at the door and pinned a card bearing his name on his lapel. The evening was spent playing parlor games, singing and other entertainment. She found time to talk to each one. This club exerted a marked influence upon me. It led me to favor extension of services for the underprivileged which is what she most desired.

Church was important in our home. We regularly attended services following father in a row to his accustomed place on the church’s right side. Mother and the girls sat with the women on the other side. As we grew older this custom was changed.

Vacation school was taught by the pastor. I learned to read and write Norwegian which was of great use to me later when at the University of Minnesota, where I enrolled in Prof. Carlson’s classes in Norwegian Grammar, Literature and one course in Old Norse. It was in this course that I read some of the old sagas in the original. Jake Preus, later governor of Minnesota, was a classmate in the Literature and Old Norse courses.

Christmas was a marked holiday at our home in Rushford. It took some time before I could solve Santa Claus’ unerring exactitude in discerning my inmost desires. I wanted a pair of boots edged in front with a copper strip. Lo, and on Christmas morning Santa had brought them to me! This was beyond my comprehension. I fled to mother and covered my head in her lap, tears of joy running over.

Christmas eve at the church was filled with a supreme gladness that could not be expressed in words. The beautiful music, the songs in which we all joined, the tree, the gifts, the pastor’s brief talk. What could be more beautiful and wonderful? There was a present for each member of the Sunday School. “Do not open the packages now,” the pastor said. “Do that at home. God bless you all. May you all have a Happy and a Blessed Christmas!”
Education held a high place with my father and mother. While the children were growing up they became more and more determined all should graduate from high school. Five did and of the two older children, instead of completing their high school courses, one attended business school and the other normal school thereby getting what they preferred. Four graduated from the University of Minnesota, one with an advanced degree. Father would provide for the schooling in the grades and high school and help as much as he could for post-high school costs.

The primary department was located in the "little school house", one mile and a half from our home. Miss Edith Stewart was my teacher. I recall no incidents. My report card showed average grades.

A re-converted church building near the "little school house" housed the intermediate grades. The pupils had fun there. The room was heated from a stove in the basement through inch wide openings between the floor boards. Currents of hot air rose from the basement carrying at almost anytime of the day bits of paper. "Who did it?", was never answered and seldom discovered. It was fun.

The same openings in the floor served another very useful purpose. Through them all the waste paper could conveniently be dropped. This, of course, also concerned teacher but what of that?

Then came promotion to the three-story old stone building located as has previously been cited. Pupils living in Brooklyn had no cause for complaint. I acquired a reputation for being quick to anger while in the grades. Why, I do not know to this day only that I hated to be pushed around. I do recall two or three fights because I was stubborn and refused to give up my rights. The battlers remained friends so the issues could not have been too serious.

During this period William F. Webster was school principal. He later attained prominence as one of Minnesota's foremost school administrators. He was superintendent of the Minneapolis schools for many years. In Rushford he played baseball with the boys. As I recall it, he played at the hot second base spot. He was seriously injured in one game when a player collided with him which resulted in fracture of Webster's collarbone. This injury pained him during life. He was beloved by all his pupils and was held in highest esteem by the community. Later, he invited me to join his teaching staff at East High School, Minneapolis.

2.

An incident which was heralded over Minnesota as Schmitz's "pen" story originated with me while I was in the eighth grade with Miss Anna Wright as my teacher. She later became one of the most popular school principals in Minneapolis.

William J. Schmitz was the superintendent at Rushford when the "pen" incident occurred. My penmanship was the issue. Apparently I was not interested in improving
A Tale of Two Valleys

it or I was downright obstinate, probably the latter. Evidently teacher believed that. One day she reported to the superintendent that I refused to improve my penmanship. "I can't do a thing with him". "Send him to my office," was his reply.

Then I was in real trouble. An unwritten rule at our home was strict obedience to the teacher. Being sent to the "office" meant not only punishment by the superintendent but an extra dose, likely to be more severe, at home. No explanations would avert the stiff licking I would get there. My sister had repeatedly urged me to try to meet teacher's wishes. She would be the first to tell the folks. I was, as you will note, in dire straits, as I walked pen in hand to the office. I even recall I had to use the hand-railing on the stairs to steady myself. I expected the worst right then and contemplated an even more disastrous encounter at home, later.

Professor Schmitz entered his office. I noted there was no anger evident. Instead I saw a bland expression which told me nothing. "Do you have your pen with you, as requested?" he asked. I nodded. "Write something on this paper." I tremblingly did so. He inspected the scribbling, but said nothing. Then he tried the pen himself and said, "No one can write with a pen like that." He procured a new one and said, "Conrad, take this pen and see what you can do. Report in two weeks. Remember me to your father" and I was dismissed.

Conrad Selvig waged a valiant fight the next two weeks. My penmanship improved incredibly. Professor Schmitz with a twinkle in his eye was satisfied. We both won.

Years later I recalled this incident to him. He was a good story teller. Soon the story spread over the state. He was a master school administrator and rose high in the inner circle of school men in Minnesota.

3.

What events stand out after a lapse of nearly sixty years? Successes or failures, or both? Learning to creep, so to speak, in the educational field, before attempting to walk? Perhaps this was it. Miss Minnie Rockwell, daughter of a local attorney and leader, was Latin and English teacher. To her credit let it be said was proficient in both. She also served as high school principal and nothing escaped her eagle eyes. I do not believe she had any high regard for me nor that I had any special future, but she was fair and I greatly respected her.

I was enrolled in her "Essay" class which stood for English composition. An essay contest was announced open to all high schools in the First Congressional District of Minnesota. An award was offered for the best essay on subject chosen by the writer. Miss Rockwell suggested class members enter. The pupils must do their own writing with no help from outside.

I had just read Anna Sewall's book "Black Beauty", a story about horses which carried pleas for humane treatment of animals. The book moved me. I decided to write about it under title of "The Book I Liked Best and Why." I loved Black Beauty and Miss Sewall's theme.

She approved the title and outline and I set to work. The essay was rewritten several times in response to suggestions for more of the story, more inspiration, more sympathy. "Try to enter into the thoughts of the writer", was one suggestion, but I had to do the actual writing myself. I noted teacher was becoming more interested in the essay with each re-writing. I have the several drafts and also the final hand-written copy which received first place in the contest.
From this little incident confidence in myself took root and grew. There always has to be a beginning. I felt a new life was opening before me. The high school course was assuming an importance above and beyond earlier notions. There was now a world of glory before me. I must prepare myself for participation. I was awakening at last.

4.

Going up the stairs to be seated in the high school room was in itself an item of note. Studying Kellogg's Advanced English Grammar held my attention. Pupils from homes where a foreign language was commonly used needed extra drill in English. I needed it and dug in as it were to learn what I could.

Home study was not held in disrepute during the late nineties. It was encouraged at our home. In fact, questions were pointedly asked if we carried no books home. There was no radio to distract, no television to take hours of time. Ours was the simple life and we children were benefited. Good wholesome play until dark, of course, after the daily chores were done. Nothing ever could excuse us from doing them. They were not onerous.

Our next superintendent was Professor J. J. Trask whose personality rubbed the students the wrong way. He made decisions arbitrarily, even to negating ancient customs prized by the student body. The junior and senior classes one Friday afternoon walked out in a body. It lasted a week but by that time it was known there would be a new superintendent the next term. As a face-saver for the administration each student who had "walked out" was required to offer an apology before he could return to his classes. I sought a job in the town instead and finally received the offer of a clerk-ship at $5.00 a week. I intended to be free from the dictatorial school head.

I reckoned without knowing what father would think or say. He knew I had been "suspended" from school. He knew about the apology required for return to classes. He, also, knew of my stubborn nature which I had inherited from him. What to do?

No scolding, no fault-finding. Instead he called me for a talk. He told of his early days and deprivation of school advantages. He had to go to sea to help support the family. His earnestness touched my heart. "Continue in school, Conrad, and graduate. Do not quit school now for a clerk-ship. Be somebody". I yielded to his persuasion and in so doing met one of the crises of my life. I often mentioned the incident to him in later years.

5.

Shall Latin be taught in high schools? If left for me to decide, the answer would be in the affirmative. I regret missing Cicero. This happened because I finished the high school course in three years. I did get a chance at Virgil and I am glad of that to this day. Virgil's Aeneid fascinated me. I was not a brilliant Latin scholar, let me say. The girls in the Virgil class beat me by a mile. I might add I carried a very heavy schedule, which left me insufficient time for thorough preparation.

One evening at home study I had for the next day's lesson in Virgil what to me was the most interesting part of his masterpiece. It was the love story of Aeneas and Queen Dido. I read and reread it until I almost knew the Latin lines by heart. It was so lovely, so entrancing. I was wafted from the little valley in Minnesota to the great inland sea.
The next morning at class Miss Rockwell called on me to recite. I fear she had never secured from me a really satisfactory translation during the term. The girls could do it but usually I could not. But this was my day and I went to work. I was absorbed in the task. Once when I looked up I saw she was smiling. Her face was beaming. My classmates looked on in wonder. "What's happened to Conrad?", I could almost hear them say. For the first time I received a "very good, Conrad". Years later when my teacher was Mrs. Henry Smith, I recalled this incident to her, she said: "I knew right along you had it in you but you were hard to awaken". That was, perhaps, a shrewd judgment.

6.

A great man in the making became Rushford's school superintendent at the beginning of my junior high school year in 1893. His name is not so well known to the public as that of Sinclair Lewis, also from Sauk Centre, Minnesota, but Dr. Henry Johnson belongs to the same galaxy. They are today the two shining lights from that city known world over as Main Street. The one became a Nobel prize winner in literature and Dr. Johnson as a brilliant professor of history at Columbia University.

School work didn't seem to be work any more. There was a new era. New horizons appeared as if by magic. Henry Johnson's inspiring leadership was felt by all the students. There was a vibrancy in his tone that held our attention. He was approachable and friendly. He entered into the lives of the students.

I recall one morning when I was near the corner of the high school room which served as library quarters. He approached and asked what book I sought. I mumbled a reply because I was not looking for a book, at least, not in that library. I had books, as the Boston lady said when asked what style of new hat was she planning to get for spring. "We have hats", was her reply. No more need be said.

The books most familiar to me up to this time bore such titles as Old Sleuth Library, Nick Carter and the like, with a sprinkling of juveniles, Robinson Crusoe, Dog Crusoe and Swiss Family Robinson. For some years I had kept a record of all books read. I greatly regret it cannot now be found. It would not show much excepting worthless trash.

I evidently confessed to Mr. Johnson the nature of the books I had read. "You are wasting your time, Conrad, when you read Old Sleuth and the like. There is a treasure of books on these shelves. You could not do better than to become acquainted with the great books of the past." This was the first time I had heard of the Great Books, but it was not to be the last.

He offered to direct my reading if I wished to have him do so. That led to the beginning of another era for me. He was true to his promise. Book after book, I read at his suggestion. I can never thank him enough for his wise, friendly, skillful guidance. Henry Johnson grew into a legendary figure with me the two years he was at Rushford.

I leave to the last the history classes he taught. One was "The History of Greece and Rome". I will never forget how he inspired us. When in the mood he would recite Lord Byron's glorious poems, which sang and were music to our ears. To every point touched in our textbook, he added something which we never forgot. He taught history. He also taught me how to teach history. But that is to anticipate.

Rushford could not retain his services for longer than two glorious years.
he went to Moorhead, Minnesota, State Normal School, where Dr. Livingstone C. Lord was president. He went next to Charleston, Illinois, Normal, with Dr. Lord. In 1906 he became instructor in history at Teachers College, Columbia University. He remained at Columbia until he reached retirement. He became internationally known.

7.

There were only three in our graduation class of 1895. I was salutatorian and chose for my oration, "Education and Citizenship". It was a requirement those years for each graduate to speak a piece. Fortunately, for the audience, the classes were small. The evening came. Father, mother and the family had reserved seats. It was a great occasion for them because I was the first Selvig to graduate.

My name was called. The faces in the audience appeared as a blue haze to me at first but I recognized the upturned face of father who appeared not disturbed at all. In fact, he was smiling. Mother's face showed anxiety and concern. While she knew my oration as well as myself from hearing me rehearse with myself at home, she sat there in a state of tenseness until I was through. Then came a glad smile on her face which was my reward.

Graduation was another mile post. I walked home that evening, not on solid earth, but in thin air. I was lifted up by what had occurred. I recall I clutched hungrily my precious diploma. It would open other gates for me to enter. It would cause me to reach other mile posts on my journey through life. I felt I could face the world and conquer all obstacles.

8.

The next day I donned working clothes for I had accepted a job at the Stevens home. Mr. Stevens was there to show me what to do. He offered his congratulations. Yes, he had attended the exercises the evening before. "You did very well, my boy, success to you. Do not be afraid of any kind of work! You'll need to earn and save some money. Good luck".

A little later that week I passed in front of Colonel N. P. Colburn's law office just as he stepped through the door. He was our most distinguished citizen. A sound lawyer, a public spirited person, a Civil War officer and besides an imposing figure. I never even dreamed he would accost me and was taken entirely by surprise when he did. "Conrad, wait a bit: I wish to congratulate you on completing the high school course. Do not let this be the end of your education. Persevere and you will gain success." Let no one underestimate what these words meant to me.

After completing the Stevens' job, I worked a month on farms, and earned $25.00. Then I joined the steel gang laying new 63 pound steel on the Milwaukee Railroad which passed through our city. I was sweeper, water boy and timekeeper in succession. Being sweeper was to remove sand, pebbles and dirt from the space on the ties, or sleepers, where the new rails would be placed. This month of ten hours a day enriched me to the tune of $40.00!

I began to think about securing a position as rural school teacher. The steel gang was opposite Money Creek Station, eight miles east of Rushford. Graduates from our school had secured positions there the past fourteen years. I decided to apply in person. The school was not far from the railroad so in my work clothes, perhaps somewhat unkempt from the nature of the job, I went to interview the members of the School Board. I was a steel gang employee, I would tell them.
Honest labor was dignified in my judgment. I secured a promise of the school if I could secure a certificate to teach. The salary was to be $26.00 a month. The term six months. The certificate was easily secured and I secured the position.

Most of the time I walked the eight miles home and back during weekends. The walks were a pleasure! I had time to view the shifting scenes as the railroad curved around the numerous bends of Root River on this eight mile stretch. I had time to think. The future appeared bright and promising.
Rural schools of more than a half century ago belonged properly to the "horse-and-buggy" days. Communities were more or less set off from each other. Influence of city life was less than now. One would say that rural communities could develop high levels of distinction in being largely left to themselves. Alas, the rural schools were not geared to this higher development. They were poorly taught in most instances by persons who were not adequately prepared and lacked specific training for teaching.

2.

At Money Creek Station, Houston County, Minnesota, the community consisted of cultured families possessing adequate means. The district was number eight, indicating it was among the earliest organized. High school graduates from Rushford in steady succession, a new one each year, had been employed as teachers, all at the same uniform salary of $26.00 per month. Now there were many good teachers among them which was indicated by the attainments of the pupils.

The pupils who assembled the first morning were bright and interesting. They crowded around the desk to exhibit last year's report cards and promotion certificates. I had never even entered a rural school building until that morning. I was amazed at the number of classes, almost as many as there were pupils, which was twenty. They were all anxious to tell me how far they had gone in their book or that subject. Some gave evidence of being coached at home to insist on being placed in the highest class possible.

The beginner's class was my chief problem. The primer as the reading book used was called had hesitatingly included a few pictures, like cat, dog, boy, girl and apple, with word printed beneath. I started with that and was surprised how readily they got the idea. The pupils were helped at home. Besides they had natural curiosity and wanted to learn.

At about this time school text-book publishers were vieing with each other in preparing sets of school readers embodying new ideas to facilitate teaching reading. I secured a copy of each of the new primers and first readers as they appeared. I must have acquired a dozen. These I distributed to my beginners. The books were full of pictures. An enterprising publisher of that period actually printed pictures in colors. Interest was aroused. The other classes presented no problem. The pupils were diligent. The parents were helpful. Soon the school was a going concern.

The young people of Money Creek were continuously having parties, dances, basket-socials and the like. There were many pretty girls and fine outstanding young men in the community. Soon my Rushford friends were invited to these social gatherings where there was a chance to have so much fun. Bidding at basket-socials soon established new "highs". Competition was keen. As much as five dollars was paid for a "basket" in one instance, an unheard of sum, but the buyer was in dead earnest. No other fellow was to get his girl.
In April of 1896 I read a notice that a competitive examination was shortly to be held to select a candidate who would receive an appointment as cadet to the United States Military Academy at West Point. This was Congressman James A. Tawney's method of selecting candidates. The winner would be appointed. I went to Winona and became one of twelve young men to take the examination.

On April 26th Congressman Tawney informed me I stood highest. He wrote, "I therefore take pleasure in offering you the appointment." On May 5th orders were received to report at West Point, June 13, to take the physical and scholastic examinations. I did not note the numeral 13 at that time.

Problems involving money needed for the trip to West Point now came to the fore. I had no money and I could not ask my father to obligate himself. I wanted to go. I would require about $400.00. The citizens of Rushford were interested in having one of their boys attend West Point. They considered the appointment an honor to the community.

Fortunately for me John A. Hanson, of English descent, son of one of Rushford's pioneers, was at home at this time. He devised a plan that proved to be successful. Leading citizens of my home city loaned me $200.00 on my personal notes, varying from $5.00 to $25.00, without interest. No security was asked. Father provided the balance. I still have those notes which I repaid within a short time.

Preparations began for the journey to West Point. I had previously journeyed by train no farther than to La Crosse, Wisconsin, 35 miles away, so going east would certainly be a new experience for me. The first night on the train was via chair-car from La Crosse to Chicago.

The occupant of the seat beside me was a prosperous appearing person whose name was Wilbur, of Milwaukee. We talked half the night. He learned of my errand. He was well informed. He had a sound philosophy. He seemed interested in me and my prospects. I have never forgotten that conversation because I learned so much from him of what I needed to know.

I arrived at Highland Falls, New York, to enroll in Col. Braden's National Preparatory Academy. There were 26 at the school, all preparing for the West Point entrance examinations. I soon discovered I was "short" in Algebra. Evidently my high school course had been too easy.

The boys at Col. Braden's school had organized a "fun" club which was called, "The Ancient Order of Royal Hod Carriers." The fun was for them at the initiation of new members. My turn came. Insurmountable difficulties had to be overcome before the initiatory tests were concluded. This initiation gave a hint of what would befall a "plebe" at the Academy. I had read Captain King's book on "West Point Days" and was thus partially informed about hazing. I did not mind it. It was all in fun.

One question was, "What is the difference between this and that?" A ponderous query which required ponderous thought! I was ordered to sing a song. "Paradise Alley" was going the rounds those days and I sang it. The boys joined in the chorus. The initiation was soon concluded and I met all the members. Those who completed the course became members of the Class of 1900. I have the names of all of them. Those who lived up to World War II were Major Generals in that war.
The night preceding our entrance to the Military Academy's examination rooms was spent in "high jinks." Sutherland, of Virginia, led in singing, "Twinkle-twinkle, little star." We were all very gay.

5.

We attended graduation exercises the next day and saw the Academy in all its glory. Major General Nelson A. Miles gave the chief address and presented diplomas to the members of the class of 1896. It was an impressive occasion. Afterwards I met Cadet Captain Alvin C. Heiberg, whose brother was a physician in my home city. He lost his life in Italy in World War I. He made a brilliant record at the Point and in the service.

The candidates were lodged at the Academy's barracks. It was rumored that the quarters assigned to Soliliac, Thompson and myself were used by General Sherman when he was a cadet. The story goes on to say that when he was Inspector-General of U.S. Army he entered this room. The two cadets stood at stiff attention. He approached the open fireplace and thrust his scabbard upwards. A shelf and various forbidden supplies, glasses and the like tumbled to the floor. The cadets were terror stricken. This meant instant dismissal. But General Sherman said not a word. He walked out, giving the indication of a wink to one of the cadets. He was on familiar ground. This was the end of the incident. Anyway, this is the story told to the three who now occupied that historic room.

During the days of the examinations the candidates were under military discipline. Sergeant Munro was in command of the squad of upper-classmen that had us in charge. Repeatedly, he asked me, "Who am I?" I did not know. How was I to know? I'd never seen him before. After inquiry I learned his name and his state. He was Cadet Munro, from Minneapolis. He, later, had a distinguished career in the Army. Sergeant Munro took pains to give me all the assistance he could but it was never disclosed that it came from him.

6.

The candidates had their meals with the cadets in the Academy's large dining room. The walls were covered with portraits of distinguished graduates. One injunction to candidates and plebes alike was, "Keep your eyes, right here," pointing to a spot on the tablecloth directly in front. No candidate, or plebe, when admitted, was ever to set his eyes on the portraits during the plebe year. That was the law. I do not know to this day what possessed me but I did take a look once, and saw General Grant's portrait. Immediately, the upper classmen at the table pounced upon me, "Keep your --- eyes, right here," they all hissed into my ears. I felt as though I was about to be led out and shot.

Other incidents happened during those exciting days. Cadet officers pounced upon the candidates at all times. "Thin out," "Keep your --- eyes to the front." If "sir" was omitted in answering a question, the word would be hurled at one in a thunderous voice. This was hazing. Personally, I took it in good grace. It was a valuable means of making outstanding officers out of material gathered from all over the country.

There were excesses, of course, but hazing did not disturb me. Each examinee or plebe when admitted hoped for a chance later. Traditions had been instituted during the years. The nation is rightly proud of its Military and Naval Academies.

As I had expected when I learned at Braden's School the nature of examination in Algebra, I found myself among the group that failed to gain admission. I was
disappointed, who wouldn't be? But I felt I had gained a great deal during the summer of 1896. There was the spontaneous support given me by my home city's leading citizens. The journey to the east vastly enlarged my field of interests and increased my determination to make something of myself. The experiences gained became a factor in my life. "To smile in victory is easy; in defeat heroic." But I did not admit defeat. Youth is resilient. He stumbles or he is temporarily stopped, but a driving force urges him onward.

I joined a group of "busted candidates" for several days' sightseeing in New York. Life still was of absorbing interest.

7.

There was another journey east that summer. Congressman Tawney offered me an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy and I set out for Annapolis, hoping that my "jinx" had departed. There was no time for adequate preparation for the examination. In fact, I was ordered by telegraph to report at the Academy, September 1. I suffered there the same fate as at West Point. I took this second failure more to heart.

The Cuban Revolutionary Junta had emissaries at Annapolis offering opportunity to join General Funston to help the Cubans gain independence by aiding the militant revolutionists who were at this time very active. The opportunity appealed to me. I felt, however, I must ask my father's advice. I had debts to repay. If anything happened to me those debts would fall on him. I wrote him painting in glowing colors the service I might join. I minimized the dangers, but his telegram stated, "Best to come home." After seeing the sights in Washington I returned home. Another defeat for me.

Congressman Tawney was persistent. Perhaps that is why he rose to prominence as a Congressman, heading the powerful Committee on Appropriations. He offered me a second appointment, effective in June next year, provided I would attend a Naval Academy preparatory school. This letter from him was dated November 17, 1896. My fervor, however, had left me. I wrote him I deeply appreciated the opportunity but declined the appointment. My father had been a seaman but I was not particularly interested.

8.

It was to be country school teaching again. I had a richer background now and felt surer of myself. New ambitions were budding. I would continue teaching and eventually graduate from the University of Minnesota. In the meantime, home-study and do a good job teaching.

Vinegar Hill school, on Irish Ridge, six miles northeast of Rushford, needed a teacher. Would I accept? I did. The school was rumored to be a "tough" one but that only aroused my curiosity. I was nearly 6 feet tall, was physically fit and strong. I had no misgivings. The pupils were nearly evenly divided between Irish and German families. There was no love lost between them, as I was to learn. The school had been named after William Sandrock, farmer and apple-grower. His specialties were cider and vinegar.

My first test came when I stepped between Willie McCormick, as large as I, and Will Cordes, shorter but tough as hickory, who were set to fight. "No fighting on the school grounds, nor on the way to or from school." I had laid down the law on opening day. "Absolutely, no fighting."

Both of the lads nearly as old and perhaps hardened by farm work, stronger, looked at me. They appeared to be surprised. I told them, "The first one who strikes..."
will have to fight me.” They decided to call it a day. Years afterwards, Will McCormick said to me, “You will never know how close you were to receiving a blow between your eyes, that noon period. I liked you and my father and mother liked you. I just couldn’t do it.”

His mother, dear soul, has gone to her eternal rest. Several times during the school term she sent word by Willie to ask me to come home with him to stay overnight. We were good friends. Her husband liked to play “euchre” and especially enjoyed the games which he and I won over Dan and Will. He would roar with joy. “We licked them cubs again. They’ll be learning to play soon. Give ’em time!”

A nice hot soapstone to warm my bed, a breakfast like those you read about, a cheery “Come again” from them both, left me with pleasantest memories.

The next fall I taught in Fillmore County for the first time. The salary was a new high for me. I read and studied a great deal during that term. On February 15 came the fateful message that the U. S. battleship “Maine” was sunk in Havana harbor. That was enough for me. I decided then and there to join the U.S. Army if war was declared. At the close of a spring term at Bratsberg, Minnesota, I went to Spring Valley to offer my services as a member of Co. F, Twelfth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry.

I was a minor. Captain Roy Viall informed me I had to secure father’s consent. I returned home to get it. He was not disposed to grant it. I informed him I was determined to enlist and that I did not want to misstate my age. He finally signed the letter. I still have it.

There were nine volunteers from Rushford who served in Co. F. The regiment reached Chickamauga Park, July 1. We soon received uniforms and were dismayed
A Tale of Two Valleys

to find we were issued heavy blue woolen shirts, and heavy, blue trousers. Only the blouse was made of lighter weight material. The khaki uniforms were not issued until in September. This meant two daily drill periods and dress parade wearing these so unsuitable clothes in Georgia where the temperature in the shade often was 116°. We had to wring the water from our clothes as we returned from drill or parade. Nearly all the days were insufferably hot.

Major T. C. Clark, chief medical officer of the 12th Minnesota Regiment wrote about the conditions. He said, “The weather was hot and the food was heavy. The water supply was poor and sanitation inadequate. The first night at camp the only water obtainable was from the creek and it must have been contaminated, as it drained an area on which there were hundreds of typhoid cases. The principal causes of infection, however, were flies and dust. The flies and dust were everywhere and sinks were uncovered.”

Hospital facilities were woefully inadequate. Veterans in state of coma were moved from the cots they occupied to make room for new cases. Hundreds died. “These men were just as dead as any of the men who were killed in action,” Major Clark said, “and they should share no less in the honor that comes to the soldier who dies for his country.”

There were camp incidents, of course. When one asked, “How far to Chattanooga?”, the reply almost invariably would be, “a smart ways,” “three-and-a-half looks” or “it is a right - smart number of miles.” On the night of July Fourth, following the news of the surrender of Admiral Cervera’s fleet, pandemonium broke loose. Our Brigade had held a joint celebration during the day. Col. Tillman spoke for the First Carolina Regiment, Lt. John Lind for the Twelfth Minnesota and someone for the Fifth Pennsylvania. The main theme was the reunion of the North and the South. All night long there was shouting. The sound would momentarily be stilled and then as the regiments nearer ours took it up the sound would grow in a wild crescendo. Suddenly it would stop and then begin again. It was an unforgettable night.

Beauchamp, who was called Bush by everybody, hailed from Rushford. We served on fatigue duty as bread detail early the morning of the grand review of all troops at Camp Thomas. We returned to camp too late to be with our company. Instead, we donned our smartest uniform and took our places on a knoll to the rear' of the reviewing stand. I was inspired by the showing made by an army numbering nearly 60,000 troops.

It is always thus. The glory of war is uppermost in men’s minds. Its ravages are ignored or forgotten.

When peace was declared our regiment was ordered to a new camp near Lexington, Kentucky. Later, we were furloughed for a month, preceding mustering out. This took place on November 6, at New Ulm, Minnesota, which was the home city of the 12th Minnesota’s commander, Colonel Joseph Bobletter.

Soon after returning home from this experience in the southland, I, again, became a rural school teacher, this time in the township of York, in southwestern Fillmore County. I was there two years. I boarded at the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Knapp. He had been a logger at a lumber camp on the St. Croix River. His stories were original and his sayings quaint. I could have gathered material for a book. We
could never know when he just now-remembered some interesting incident. "The sheep are the darnedest hogs to eat punkins," he said on day. "Those kind of oats people—the Quakers," was his ingenious way of recalling the word Quakers. He was a source of enjoyment every day. Time passed quickly.

During the Christmas holidays I made inquiry regarding the scholastic requirement for a professional state teacher's certificate which would enable me to qualify for a school principalship. The list astounded me. It appeared as if an impossible barrier was in my way. Here is the list: chemistry, trigonometry, geology, zoology, botany, English literature, general history, political economy, intellectual philosophy, moral philosophy, logic, astronomy, civil government, history of education and theory and art of education.

"Fools tread where angels fear to go," came to my mind. Of course a systematic grasp of all these subjects could be acquired only during a lifetime of study. I noted, however, that such certificates were issued from time to time. What others could do I, at least, could attempt.

So I went to work. I expected to attend summer sessions at the University to secure credits in some of the subjects. The others I would tackle through home study. I therefore set myself the task of putting in three hours of study six days each week. If I missed an evening or two, I would make that up on Saturdays and Sundays.

I held to the home study project for several years. Do not let anyone say it was a light task. It was not. The flesh tempted. So did the moon-lit evenings. It was a hard fight but I had to win. The self-discipline did me good. I enjoyed social gatherings all the more because their number was limited. There are always two bests: the ideal best and the best possible. I set out to follow the latter and liked it.

During April, 1899, I was employed as railway mail service "mail-weigher" between Austin, Minnesota, and Calmar, Iowa. The school board kindly deferred opening of the spring term to accommodate me. I was still repaying my expenses occasioned by the West Point and Annapolis trips and, as the saying goes, I needed the money.

II.

On my twenty-second birthday, October 11, my brother, Will Knapp, Bert Buck and I went to Minneapolis to witness the return of the 13th Minnesota Regiment from the Philippines. Chauncey Olcott was playing, "The Romance of Athlone," at the Metropolitan Theatre, where we spent the first evening. We heard him sing, "My Wild Irish Rose" and the lovely "Lullaby." For country boys this was a delight.

The next day we journeyed to St. Paul to watch the regiment arrive. We gazed with unabashed admiration at their bronzed features. We were proud Minnesota had such stalwart and sturdy sons. We hurried back to Minneapolis and saw President and Mrs. McKinley alight from their special car. We were out to see everything.

An imposing triumphal arch had been built on Hennepin Avenue. Beyond it was the reviewing stand. We were lively and soon found space in the jammed crowd opposite the Presidential stand. We took turns in hoisting each other to view the passing soldiers. Who can adequately describe our emotions at the moment? Hysterical women wept. Oldsters furtively wiped away their tears. Men called huzzas and all was excitement.

On the stand right before us were the President; Governor John Lind; the Secretary of the Treasury, Lyman Gage; the Secretary of War, John D. Long and many others. I do not recall whether Mrs. McKinley was there. I saw the President plainly.
He appeared weary but was visibly happy. Later we attended the mass meeting in Exposition Hall, across the Mississippi River, and heard his address which is one of our country's principal state papers to this day.

The school term closed. My younger brother was elected to teach there the next year. I attended summer teachers' training school at Rushford and there met Miss Marion Wilcox of whom more anon. After this session I became a participant in my first political activity. It was a contest for nomination for county auditor. Alfred Kingsford and I were anxious to have J. F. Jones secure the nomination. The Republican county organization supported the incumbent. Here were two young neophites presuming to battle the old guard. We gave them a close run in Rushford but lost the city, 69 to 51. At the county convention our man was nominated.

12.

During April I had been elected to teach at Granger, Minnesota, during the next school year at a salary of $55.00 per month. Fifty-five pupils were enrolled, classified from beginners to the ninth grade. What was I to do for this multitude? I was baffled. One person could not possibly teach classes in all those grades.

A solution was found. School for some classes would open at 8:30 and close at 4:30. That helped somewhat. Among the ninth grade pupils were two young women who were willing to take the primary grade classes during the day, by holding their classes each in a separate corner of the room while I had my class in front. It worked. Absolute quiet was demanded and attained. All the pupils were cooperative. This was something new. The pupils wanted to help. This schedule was continued throughout the school year.

I was carrying a heavy home-study schedule. "We never see the professor (as I was called)," said many. "He is too busy." I did find time to take long walks. The valley surrounding Granger presented wondrous colorings in the fall. The scene was inexpressively beautiful.

There were dinners and social gatherings. The year was happily spent. Then came Christmas eve and day at home. I recall that Christmas vividly. Candlelight, songs, hearts carefree, pure spirit of devotion and thanks from grateful hearts to the One on High. Thus our family spent Christmas together.

Following the Christmas holidays I attended my first meetings of the Minnesota Educational Association, St. Paul. Here I met Dr. Richard Burton, Congressman J. Adam Bede, Dr. David L. Kiehle, Dr. Sarah Brooks, Dr. J. F. Millspough, Dr. Weir Mitchell and formed many new acquaintances with Minnesota educators. It was like coming into a new world. At last, I felt I was on my way but I had still a long, a very long distance to go.

Evenings during the convention were spent with Marion Wilcox who was a student at the University of Minnesota. Rosy prospects loomed before me. The tempo of life had been accelerated during the past year, but I was impatient over the slow progress. During the following summer, I attended the summer session classes of the University where I studied chemistry and botany receiving credits in both. The next summer, University algebra in Dr. Bauer's class. My grade was 85% which consoled me no end. It was my lack of preparation back in 1896 that aborted my attempt to enter West Point and later Annapolis. I was glad it was not inherent dumbness in mathematics. "The wheels of the gods grind slowly," I thought, "but they grind to powder."
Early in April 1901 I was elected principal of the Harmony, Minnesota, schools at a salary of $75.00 a month. An event took place at Granger the day I set out for Harmony, eleven miles away. The Granger Board held an early morning meeting at John O. Jones' store. I was asked to stop by as the Board members wished to see me. A letter was handed me stating I had been re-elected at Granger with a salary of $75.00 a month. It was signed by David M. Hunt, John O. Jones and John Michel.

It was a big surprise. I still have this letter. The Board's action was a very great compliment. I was set on becoming a village school principal, of course, and informed the Granger Board that if I failed to secure the position at Harmony I planned to enter the University.

At Harmony two of the Board members took me with them to Mr. Daniels' farm. He was the other member. I recall he was ploughing and that the Board meeting was brief. I did not get to meet Mr. Daniels that day and I thought this strange. When told of my election as principal, I noted what I conceived to be a look of dismay on the faces of the two men as we returned to town. The reason for this I did not at the time understand.

After spending the summer at the University where I earned credits that counted toward my degree, I moved to Harmony late in August. Mr. and Mrs. Tollef Sanderson kindly offered me a room in their spacious home. He was president of the local bank and chairman of the school Board. I thereby got off to a good start. We became fast friends.

Mr. Sanderson and I spent many pleasant hours discussing public questions and history. He would knock at the door of my room and ask if I was busy. If not, we'd have a talk. He was a great reader and had a remarkable memory. We discussed books we had read. We talked of the impact upon civilization made by Aurelius, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Confucius and Christ. At the time Archbishop John Ireland was much in the news and we discussed his addresses and views. These visits were not only a release from the daily routine but they contributed to mental growth and development.

The school was poorly equipped. There was much to be done before all would be in readiness for the pupils and teachers. To me the outlook was gloomy and I was frankly discouraged.

The board met at Aaberg's store Saturday evening before school was to open on Monday. I then met Mr. Daniels, the third member of the Board, for the first time. I submitted to the board a list of 49 items needed. Nearly all were inexpensive items. The last two were a large dictionary and stand and a set of encyclopedias. I stubbed my toe right there. The 47 items, all right, but the last two items cost too much. The treasurer voiced this objection. He was quite emphatic about it, too. The school had been run without big dictionaries and things. I had better not begin a
spending spree. Mr. Daniels seem interested for some reason or other but said nothing. I later was enlightened on this point.

As I recall this incident now I am afraid I lost or partially lost my temper. I had worked hard for several days to get everything in readiness for the opening of school. Building care-takers do this now. When the haggling over a mere dictionary and reference books occurred I became unimpressed by the position I had accepted. I flatly informed the Board that if they were unwilling to supply needed materials, library books, a suitable dictionary and reference works, I was perfectly willing to resign right then and there. They could look for someone else. I wanted to attend the University, anyway.

I noted a sparkle in Mr. Daniels' eyes. Mr. Sanderson, conciliator, came to the rescue. It was true as the treasurer had said the money voted at the annual meeting in July was limited but if I would cooperate he believed a solution could be found. He favored the purchases I had suggested as he deemed the items absolutely necessary. Would I be willing to raise some money through holding school entertainments, programs and debates, to which a small admission fee would be charged? This was acceptable to me. Training for the programs, debates and contests would be educative and the public would be interested. The dove of peace settled in our midst. It was continuously present during my entire five years' tenure.

When the school opened on Monday eleven enrolled in the freshman high school class. An additional teacher had been engaged and she and I shared teaching the classes in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades. This was an overload for us but we were young and enthusiastic persons who seldom glanced at the clock. The building had only four rooms for five teachers. We improvised somehow but how it was done I do not remember.

I had been informed that during the preceding year one boy was a trouble-maker. He was over-age for his grade, large and burly, and totally uninterested in school work. He had raised all the havoc he could in molesting, tripping and in other ways, bothering the other children. I soon learned he was up to his old tricks this year.

During the noon-period one day I approached him casually and informed him I was too busy to be present on the school grounds during intermissions and the noon recess. Would he be willing to lend a hand to see that all conducted themselves properly? He looked at me in surprise and wonder. He knew he was a suspect. He expected me to bear down on him and here was asking him, of all persons, to help keep order.

My approach was based on the fact you can't expect good from those you suspect of evil. You can expect good only from those in whom you repose trust and responsibility. I told him I was very busy and that I felt he had great capacity for doing good.

I mentioned that his three sisters were outstanding students. We all wanted to get a high school started in Harmony for him and them which was no easy task. I asked him again if he would help. He was not a bad boy but he bore the brunt of being misunderstood and his feelings were hurt.

Wonder of wonders, he actually became my best helper. We met in later years. He admitted he had been accused and pounced upon so often in his earlier years that in retaliation he became the bad boy he was suspected to be. He added then, "I felt you were interested in me."

Another incident had its inception in Harmony in 1902 and its conclusion at
Chisholm, Minnesota, thirty years later. The joke was on me in 1932. It happened that Harmony’s primary grade teacher had been repeatedly disobeyed by four or five pupils who persisted in “catching-on” bob-sleighs that passed the school grounds. There was grave danger of serious accidents as the drivers sped up their teams to evade the boys.

It finally came to a pass where I was called in. The teacher had informed the boys that the next act of disobedience would result in their being punished by the principal. I had no other course before me so I gave each one at least a fair imitation of what was termed a licking. One of the boys was Ethan Steffensrud.

In the fall of 1932 I was the honor guest at a Masonic Dinner at Chisholm. Steffensrud was the master of ceremonies. He was a very popular school principal who had been there many years. He was to introduce me. I learned later this pleased him very much. I also learned why before he had spoken very many words. “This man,” he said, “who is now seeking your votes to re-elect him to Congress, gave me a right smart licking when he was my school principal. There he is! Are you whom I count my devoted friends going to stand for that?” It was a put-up job, of course, and the banqueters enjoyed it.

My turn came. I recalled those whippings administered 30 years ago that the distinguished toastmaster had brought to the attention of the audience and that he was punished. Now he is a big handsome man, the favorite of his community. “What else could I do, my friends?”, I told the group. “I desired to save Ethan for the position he holds here. I did it for your sake, people of Chisholm. I wanted him to live to become your beloved school principal.”

5.

On November 11, 1901, Harmony became a “broad-gauge town.” Heretofore the trains on the Preston-Reno branch had run on a narrow gauge track. It happened I was a passenger on the first “broad-gauge” train. This gave me an idea. Harmony must become a broad-gauge community. The article expounding this theme was published in the Harmony News.

Harmony village has lived up to that exhortation. It has grown in population. A new school building was added to supplement the frame building addition constructed in 1902. During the late thirties the Board of Education took advantage of W.P.A. funds and built a new, spacious building, costing $142,000, which required a bond issue of only $60,000. My brother, Carlus served continuously on the school Board thirty-three years. He was the Board’s president twenty-seven years.

The people of Harmony are proud of their schools. Each year the graduating class numbers up to one hundred. The Minnesota Educational Association awarded the annual citation for distinguished school Board membership service to my brother. He accepted it not as a mark of personal distinction, but in behalf of the community as a whole. The recognition was bestowed because the people of Harmony embraced and held to a broad-gauge policy during the half century since the high school department was organized.

6.

The November Board meeting was decisive. Should Harmony attempt to become a high school providing the entire four years’ course? I presented four definite recommendations, as follows: first, that the present building be doubled in size; second, that an additional instructor be added during each of the next three years; third, that the district should become an independent district; and fourth, that elec-
tions be held to secure the community's sanctions. After full discussion the recommendations were approved by the Board.

7.

Shortly afterward I met Mr. Daniels one evening at K. D. Olson's drugstore. He called me to one side and said, much to my surprise, "Mr. Selvig, I owe you an apology." "How come?" I replied, "For goodness sake, tell me why." Then he said, "At the April Board meeting held on my farm you were elected principal by a 2 to 1 vote. I voted against you. I feared you would ally yourself with the anti-high school contingent in Harmony. I was very anxious that our school should become a high school."

"At the first Board meeting, I realized I had made a mistake in not voting for you. At the recent meeting I became convinced I was wrong. I decided to offer you my apology. As long as I am on the Board and you are at the head of our school, you can count upon my loyal support."

I was dumbfounded. This was news to me. I have already mentioned the look of dismay on the faces of the two who voted for me, which I could not understand. My respect for Mr. Daniels for his honesty and frankness rose to a high point. He remained a loyal supporter and friend throughout the remainder of his life. I felt greatly strengthened because he was the leader of a considerable group.

8.

The vote for an addition to the building was narrowly carried, 30 to 28. As so often happens, the discussion drifted to plans for the building. This accounts for the close vote. During the discussion I had been asked for my views. The building plan I suggested was vigorously opposed by a non-Board member who rated himself, unknown to me, as an amateur architect.

The vote on the bond issue later was 69 to 25. The vote to form an independent school district excited little interest. It was favorable, 34 to 16. When school opened the next fall we had an eight-room building and six teachers. The second year's high school work was begun. The entering class that fall numbered, as I recall it, about 30. Opposition to the high school project vanished into thin air.

There was a dissident minority, of course. The Board took no notice of this but faithfully and loyally supported the administration. It came to my attention that I was dubbed a "czar" which I did not mind at all. This happened several times during my life.

The graded school inspector, Albert W. Rankin, visited the school in the spring of 1902 and conferred with the Board. He learned of the steps already taken and informed the Board he would recommend to the State High School Board that Harmony be designated as a high school, beginning the ensuing year.

That fall George B. Aiton, state high school inspector, came to Harmony and announced our school would be placed on the high school list that year and receive regular state aid as such. It amounted to $1050.00. The graded school aid had been $400.00. In 1903-04, the high school aid was increased to $1365.00. We were on our way.

9.

Minnesota state-aid policies encouraged communities to attain desired objectives for themselves. President Cyrus Northrop, of the University of Minnesota, was the chairman of the High School Board. Dr. David L. Kiehle, state superintendent of public instruction, was its secretary. To these two men Minnesota owes a great deal.
The two inspectors, Aiton and Rankin, were able, active, scholarly, inspiring supporters of progress in Minnesota's educational field embracing elementary and secondary schools. Here was a fine team and perfect teamwork.

The local school tax, of course, increased. In Harmony district I observed to the Board at my last session with them in 1906 that during the past five years (a) the school enrollment had doubled; (b) the building had been doubled; (d) my salary had been doubled and (e) the local school tax levy had been doubled. The state aid policy was sound.

10.

In June 17, 1903, Marion Wilcox and I were married. We lived three years in Harmony, sharing each other's joys and sorrows. On the last day of July, the ensuing year we became proud parents of a darling girl whom we named Helen Marion. We were a very happy family.

I have always been proud of the staff of teachers that brought Harmony high school into existence. They all did good work, cheerfully and willingly. They became enthusiastic. We formed a very happy group. There was joy in seeing the school make progress. It was an exhilarating experience.

My colleagues at the head of schools in Fillmore county were men of ability who made outstanding records in the field of education. William G. Shirer, "Bill" to all of us, was principal at Fountain. He was one of the liveliest and most enthusiastic men I have ever known. He was an accomplished tenor. When he spent a week-end at our home and on Sunday accompanied us to church, it was a joy to hear him sing. My wife and I felt truly uplifted.

He became the Chicago manager of Henry Holt Company. On his way on a July third with his wife to their cottage in Northern Minnesota he was killed in an automobile accident. All Minnesota school men mourned the passing of a dynamic character. He was the life of every party he attended.

Raymond A. Kent was superintendent at Mabel, Minnesota. He was a scholar and a prodigious worker who rapidly rose in his profession. By successive steps he became a member of the faculty of the Winona State Normal School, an official in the State Department of Public Instruction and held other important positions. He took his doctor's degree at Columbia and was chosen president of Louisville University in 1929 which position he held until his death.

My home city, Rushford had a succession of outstanding school superintendents. After Henry Johnson left in 1895, came Clarence B. Miller who later entered law practice and served several terms as a member of Congress from the Duluth district. Edwin T. Reed followed Miller. His book of poems, "The Inland Windfalls," earned for him a place among the literary lights. He was an efficient school administrator. Later he became a member of the faculty of Oregon State College, Corvallis, and made a brilliant record there.

In 1904, a letter was received from George E. Kirkpatrick, publisher of the Rushford Star, stating he and his friends desired me to become a candidate for the office of county superintendent of Fillmore county. I replied I was not interested and shortly expected to attend the University and secure my degree. That same summer I was asked to teach at the summer session of the State Normal School, Mankato, which I greatly enjoyed.

The first class to graduate from Harmony high school, numbering nine, received
OUR FAMILY: u.l., Conrad and Marion; u.r., Helen; c.l., Margaret; c.r., George and Lilli; at right, Conrad George III.
their diplomas in 1905. The exercises were of unusual interest to the community. The graduates were above the average age of high school graduates due to the waiting period before high school subjects were taught. They were able students who readily made their way in the world of life and action.

During this period it was the custom in small high schools for the graduates to do their stuff by providing the program for the Class Day exercises usually held the evening before the graduating exercises. One of the graduates, Ole Wolsted, wanted to be excused from taking part. He informed me he never could bear to face that crowd. He was a tall, well-built young man, of commanding appearance. He was also, pitcher for the baseball team. He said he would donate $25.00 to the class memorial fund if he could be excused.

I informed him no one would be excused and that he'd be surprised to learn that appearing before the public would prove to be no ordeal at all. I reminded him I would not be doing my duty if he were permitted to evade this test. It is a test of your own courage, I informed him. He would have to face many situations in life. Begin here by showing your determination to face the issues as they arose. He selected Theodore Roosevelt as subject of his oration and brought down the house at the exercises.

Teddy Ryan was one of the stars in the class of 1906. He was older than the average. I was especially delighted with his recitations in history classes. We followed the topical method in teaching history. It was new in those days. The regular textbooks provided the thread which was followed but the students were required to read as widely as their time permitted in other histories, biographies and in historical novels to learn what was happening throughout the world during the particular period under study.

Several members of the class vied with Teddy. He was older, of course, but it was his insatiable love of learning that spurred him on. I frequently had to remind him that he must not occupy the entire forty minute class period himself. But it was a joy to be the teacher of that class. My heart is warm with affection for them all.

When Inspector Rankin visited the school he sat through a history class period. There was no slavish following word-for-word, page after page of a single textbook. The class followed the topical outline encouraged at that time by Professor Willis M. West, head of the University's department of history. Rankin reported his impressions to Professor West.

Soon I received West's invitation to discuss procedures and results in teaching history to the seniors in his class at the University and to the members of the Twin Cities History Teachers group. I prepared a paper which I still have. Two sessions were devoted to the topic. I saw nothing unusual and felt I was just following common sense in this method of teaching. I desired my pupils should have a well-rounded, balanced set of facts dealing with the past. I also felt that other activities than wars comprised history.

In 1905, the Harmony baseball team mowed down all opposition within the county. Winona was tackled next, and lost by a one-sided score. Thomas R. Cole, principal of Winona high school, now professor at University of Washington, Seattle, informed me after that game that our team was unbeatable by any high school team in the state. We knew it was a good team but hardly dared to set our sights as high as he suggested.
Central High School, Minneapolis, had a baseball team that had won all its games. With typical city airs, they boldly proclaimed themselves state “champs.” Our lads did not believe the city boys were as good as that. I was the team’s manager. Would I send a challenge to Central High’s team to come to Harmony, winner to take the championship? I conferred with our business men as we would need funds to provide the necessary transportation costs.

The game was scheduled. The players felt that Ole Wolsted’s fast ones and the team’s good batters would turn the tide. The day was perfect and the attendance large. Both teams played well, but the city lads could not hit Ole’s offerings and his curved pitches puzzled them. I overheard Julius, his brother, the catcher, say, “Now, Ole, you’re letting down. Push them through here; we’ve got these fellers on the run.” Harmony won, 9 to 5. It was a glorious day for the little village.

My good friend, Charley McCarthy insisted, in and out of season, I was the best “professor” Harmony ever had. “Look at the baseball team! They won the state championship.” Thus does erring fame form a myth. It was the team that won the game. The boys on it were a good lot. Ole Wolsted became a star pitcher at the University. Old-timers still talk about the Minnesota-Purdue game which went extra innings. Score 1 to 0. Ole was the winning pitcher.

13.

If I were to single out the most important factor that influenced me during the five years at Harmony, aside from our happy married life and the coming of our first child, it would be participation in and attendance at district and state programs of the Minnesota Education Association. I was asked to prepare papers. This was good training though I am quite certain the listeners were not as happy as I. It took some time for me to acquire the self confidence to make a speech.

I was greatly interested and was given a mite of encouragement when on one occasion President Northrop, great personage and orator that he was, confessed he never arose from his chair on the stage to walk to the rostrum to speak without having chills run up and down his back. “Did it do that to him?” I said to myself. “Perhaps, then, there’s indeed hope for others.”

Back in 1901, when I attended my first state educational meeting in St. Paul I was with Miss Wilcox and we heard Brooker T. Washington. We never forgot his impassioned address. We saw Irving and Terry in “The Merchant of Venice” and David Warfield in “Peer Gynt.” We also enjoyed the privilege of being together to hear Dr. David Starr Jordan on “Agassiz” and on “Education.” I recall one sentence in the latter address: “Live that the man you ought to be is the man you are,” which has remained with me all through a half century.

The most impressive gathering was that of the National Education Association which followed the G.A.R. in Minneapolis in July. I can only list the names of the speakers. These left imperishable impressions upon me. The world is not the same after one has been moved emotionally or broadened and lifted, intellectually, by a great speech.

The speakers were Presidents Harper, of Chicago; Eliot, of Harvard and Butler, of Columbia; Dr. Emerson E. White, noted educator; Dr. John Dewey, then of Chicago University; President Cyrus Northrop; Superintendent Foshay, of Los Angeles; Dr. Alexander Graham Bell; Archbishop John Ireland, St. Paul; Hon. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture; Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt; Dr. James Schurman, of Cornell University and Dr. John H. Finley. A galaxy of great men and women.
outh is a time for optimism. The next four years swept quickly by. They were filled with new activities and new ventures that brought me into the full flow of life’s stream. I was young, my physical vigor left little to be desired. I could work fourteen hours daily and feel no fatigue that a good night’s rest did not dissipate. Life was good. Opportunities for advancement lay at every side. No one faced the future with greater hopes. I was realizing what it meant to be born in this glorious land of freedom.

Many of my colleagues in the field of education wondered why I would take time out to attend the University. I was short with them. I wanted an even chance to move forward and the training on a University level was necessary.

2.

I had already earned a considerable number of University credits at summer sessions in subjects requiring laboratory work I could not very well pursue by myself. I was encouraged by several University professors to present myself for examinations in certain introductory, or general courses, which they felt my studies and experience qualified me to attempt. I passed these examinations and thereby secured University credits.

I recall especially two of these examinations, in Psychology and Rhetoric. I spent nearly a day writing on the former subject which was based upon Dr. William James’ Psychology. The questions were prepared by Dr. Norman Wilde, head of the University’s Psychology department, and Dr. David F. Swenson, associate professor. I appreciated Dr. Wilde’s comments on my examination paper which I felt rewarded me for the years I had devoted to this study.

Professor Maria Sanford, head of the Rhetoric department, was kind in her comments, also. She wrote she hoped I would enroll in one of the advanced courses and said she would be pleased to have me in one of her own classes.

Because I was older than the average student and was a teacher myself, I appreciated my professors at the University to the fullest degree. They contributed much to me. Especially do I feel grateful to George F. James, Albert W. Rankin, Willis M. West, Richard Burton and Franklin L. McVey.

3.

During the year the College of Education was formally organized and I became a member of its first graduating class. Secretary of War, William H. Taft, was the University’s commencement speaker. When the members of the class marched to the platform it was seen there were four large and husky men, three of whom had already been successful school superintendents. Due no doubt to the fact this was the new College’s first class, there was a burst of applause. Secretary Taft, I noted, turned smilingly to President Northrop, his former teacher at Yale, and whispered to him. Northrop’s face indicated pleasure and pride.

Years later I met Chief Justice Taft in the ante-room adjoining the House of Representatives’ chamber in the national Capitol, when I was a member of Congress.
He was showing members a large sketch of the proposed Supreme Court building. I asked him if he remembered the commencement address he gave at the University of Minnesota in 1907. He did and paid an earnest tribute to his former teacher, President Northrop. I then asked him if he recalled the four men who received diplomas as graduates of the College of Education and said I was one of them. He chuckled a bit and then informed me he recalled telling President Northrop that judging by the physical size of the members of the class the new College had started out well.

4.

There was ever before my wife and me the matter of living expenses. On July 5, 1907 our second daughter was born. She, too, was a beautiful baby girl whom we named Margaret Elizabeth. To help out our budget I accepted an appointment as instructor at the summer teachers' training school held at the University. I was associated with Dr. J. S. Young of Mankato Normal School in teaching civics and we, two, formed a team that continued during four summer sessions there.

Mid-year the superintendency at Red Wing, Minnesota, became open and I was urged by friends to seek the position. I had my doubts about doing this as there were already more than 100 applicants, but I went to Red Wing, conferred with the Board and learned within a few days that three persons, including myself, survived the first screening.

A committee of the Board was authorized to confer with the state high school inspector, George B. Aiton whose judgment would be accepted by the Board. They conferred with him and he telephoned me what happened. He had informed the Committee to take Selvig's name off the list to permit him to complete his University course, stating this would be the best for him. Aiton's home was near the campus, I went there and thanked him for his decision.

I felt he was right. In view of what happened later, Aiton's decision now appears as a direct intervention of fate in my behalf. John Silvernale, one of my closest friends, was elected. His service there won him promotion to one of the largest school systems in Michigan where he remained until he reached retirement age.

5.

In April, 1907, I was invited to interview the school authorities at Glencoe, Minnesota, 50 miles west of Minneapolis. I went there and found two Boards in charge. One was the Stevens Seminary Board. If elected I would be designated principal of Stevens Seminary and receive my salary from the Stevens Seminary trustees. The local Board of Education would then elect me as city superintendent of schools.

My readers may well ask about the situation at Glencoe. Stevens Seminary received a fairly large grant of land from the state to compensate Glencoe for withdrawal of the site of the State Agricultural College, previously voted to be located at Glencoe, to St. Paul. This land was placed in hands of three trustees appointed by the County Commissioners of McLeod County in which Glencoe was located. These trustees did an outstanding job of withholding sale of the land until values increased thus building up a fair-sized fund.

Income from this fund was sufficient when I became principal to pay both the high school principal's salary and mine. M. A. Thoeney served as treasurer for many years and much credit is due him for his highly efficient efforts in building up the fund. When I was at Glencoe the other two Seminary Trustees were Dr. J. H. Dorsey and F. R. Allen.
Then Comes The City

Stevens Seminary (Glencoe high school) had attained high rank under my predecessors, E. E. McIntire and H. C. Hess, both known as outstanding educators. In August our family now mustering four took up our abode in what proved to be a most hospitable and friendly city.

6.

The school was excellently organized. It had an outstanding library which was used by the citizens as well as by the high school students. The science laboratories were superbly equipped. I had informed the trustees I wished to work towards my Master's degree at the University during my first year at Glencoe.

I had already begun on a project in Educational Measurements under Dr. J. B. Miner of the Psychology Department and in Seminar Courses with Dean James and Professor Rankin. It would be necessary for me to attend University classes each Saturday and, in addition, devote my spare time to study. Instead of objecting, as well they might, all heartily approved the plan. In fact, as I learned later from Mr. Allen, who became an intimate and well-loved friend, they were proud of my decision.

So school moved in its regular routine and I labored away on the University work. The course with Dr. Miner included conducting local school tests in which were applied Dr. Thorndike's Educational measurements. There were questionnaires, tables, computations, mean square deviations, Pearson's coefficient of correlation, emotion intensity, emotion deviation, action intensity, action deviation, thought quickness, motion quickness, accuracy, suggestibility, good judgment and many more problems to be studied or measured. To me it was the opening of a new world. Dr. Miner was a member of a group seeking new methods of school tests and I was on the firing line in his corps.

Every Saturday morning I took the six o'clock train for Minneapolis and returned on the evening train at nine. There was very little time to spend happily at home with my beloved wife and children. Walking was the main recreation. Evenings were in the main spent in study. It seemed as if I could never escape the daily grind but I was interested in every phase. The desire for advancement was too strong to resist.

Shortly after New Year's I was informed by Dean James to begin to consider the subject of my Master's thesis. I selected, "National Aid to Education" because I felt then as I do now that educational opportunities should be equalized over the entire nation.

The thesis was completed and typed by myself on my Oliver typewriter. I submitted it with fear and trembling, I recall, but I had done my best. I have no record of the date when Graduate College Dean H. T. Eddy informed me the thesis had been approved. I was directed to have a new copy typed and bound in accordance with the regulations. It was then placed (and interred) in the University library.

The work in two other departments progressed favorably and my name was included in the list awarded M.A. degrees in 1908.

7.

I did not altogether neglect the community in which we lived and the opportunity of getting acquainted with its people. I found Frank R. Allen, attorney, a graduate of Amherst College, to be a very congenial person. We took long walks together. He would come to our home and say, "Time to stretch your legs a bit, Mr. Selvig," and off we would go. He was president of Glencoe Library Board and I soon found myself its secretary. We set ourselves the task of cataloguing the books. I had learned to do this at Harmony. Mrs. Allen and his sister Delia became my wife's fast friends.
G. K. Gilbert, president of the Bank of Glencoe, was a distinguished citizen who had served 43 years continuously as a member of the Board of Education. He was "G. K." to all the citizens. We often met at the school house. The school was his hobby. His views were conservative but he was always willing to listen to new ideas and plans. He never commented at once but after deliberation at our next meeting he would give his views. We became close friends.

The editor of the local weekly paper was F. A. J. Tudhope, born in England. He was interested in the schools. He drew his own cartoons. Without fail in late August he would draw a picture of a doleful boy carrying his books to school, captioned, "School on Monday. Don't I know it?" In June, the same lad but now with his face wreathed in smiles, happy and free as a lark, for "School's out!" The editor always wanted school news and helped in keeping the public informed.

There were many other outstanding citizens who became devoted friends. The school "professor" was called upon to deliver an address each year at the annual dinner meeting of the local Commercial Club. They were called "banquets" in those days. In my first address on "Guilds and Guides," I traced development of business groups.

The next year it was "Practical Education." The name was a misnomer but its subject matter is still pertinent. The editor published it in full and gave it editorial endorsement based, he informed me, on the reaction of the community. This heartened me, no end, and encouraged me to move ahead. The Trustees of the Seminary Board assured me of their continued support.

I greatly desired that the Glencoe Schools introduce courses in manual training, home economics and agriculture. I often broached the subject at Board meetings and was listened to with respect if not with great interest in the beginning. My address on "Practical Education" before 200 of the citizens who attended the Commercial Club dinner seemed to have aroused interest and created a favorable opinion in the community which was reflected by the Board of Education.

Glencoe should not lag. At least five members of the Board appeared receptive but Mr. Gilbert was not convinced at first. He sought information as to need of classroom space, kitchen, wood work-shop, and costs. His was intelligent opposition. He delayed definite commitment.

This went on until early in 1908. I recommended introducing sewing 80 minutes a week for the seventh and eighth grade girls. The teachers would use the Margaret Blair manuals. Mr. Gilbert spoke up, "What will the boys in those grades do when the girls are attending the sewing class?" I replied, "Mr. Gilbert, the boys in those two grades need to improve their penmanship and spelling. I propose to teach those classes myself."

Instantly, Mr. Gilbert moved that lessons in sewing be introduced for the girls. He explained, with a twinkle in his eye, that he offered the motion, principally because he wanted the "professor" to give those boys a few greatly needed lessons in penmanship and spelling.

This is the true story of how the new departments, like the head of the camel that was thrust under the tent, came into being. The initial decision had now been made. It probably would have come in less dramatic manner, anyway, because the other Board members were favorable, and had been so, for several months. I also felt Mr. Gilbert did not wish to let me down.
The kitchen for the class in cooking, and a room for the classes in sewing were ready when school opened the next fall (1908). Miss Rankin was engaged as home economics teacher. A well equipped carpentry shop for the manual training department was provided and Arthur D. Bailey, a skilled pattern-maker from St. Paul was engaged as teacher. He did excellent work. He and Mr. Gilbert were soon close friends. He met Mr. Gilbert's exacting standards which required perfection in execution. A pattern-maker had to be an expert in wood work. Mr. Gilbert thought well of the lessons the boys learned of keeping tools in perfect state, of learning mechanical drawing and of interpreting drawings in actual construction. He became a frequent visitor in the school shop.

The third new course was agriculture. A few schools in the state had already established this course. I urged it and urged it. The two other new departments became popular. The citizens of Glencoe manifested their approval and encouraged me to continue to press for the addition of agriculture. Finally I was authorized to seek a teacher for the agricultural department. There was no one available at Minnesota College of Agriculture.

The Board authorized me to go to Iowa State College, Ames, and there I interviewed William F. Schnaidt who was a member of the senior class. He came from a farm, had taken a well-rounded college course, and was interested in the position. He was elected. He proved to be very efficient both as an instructor and as an organizer. He began his work at Glencoe at the close of the college year.

Now comes another phase which had important repercussions all over the state. There was much interest in the legislature regarding agricultural education. Speaker Lawrence H. Johnson, a Minneapolis business man, secured approval of the House of Representatives of the State Legislature for his bill providing for a system of County Agricultural Schools, based on the county schools established in Wisconsin.

At this time Minnesota University had its School of Agriculture, established in 1888 and located at the College of Agriculture, St. Paul. A similar school was established at Crookston in 1905. There was strong support for these two special schools. Opposition was voiced against the County Schools which would create a parallel system of schools in the state.*

A small group of school superintendents circularized the state in favor of granting special state aid ($2,500.00 a year) to ten high schools maintaining industrial, home economics and agricultural departments. I was a member of that committee. We urged the enactment of the bill which was introduced by Senator Frank E. Putnam, Blue Earth, on January 28, 1909. The following letter sent out by the committee gives the reasons for supporting the Putnam Bill.

Board of Education—Gentlemen:

Much interest is being shown by the members of the present legislature in the subject of Agricultural Education. Three general plans are proposed. First—County—L. H. Johnson Bill; Second—Congressional—Stephens Bill; Third—Agricultural—

*The Minneapolis Journal, page 9, February 19, 1909, published a 1500-word article entitled "Teaching Farming in the High Schools.—Minnesota Educators against the Special School in Counties," by C. G. Selvig, superintendent of schools, Glencoe, Minnesota. It was well received over the state and had part in crystallizing support for the Putnam bill.
ized High Schools—Putnam Bill in the Senate and Mork Bill in the House. (The term "agriculturalized" was commonly used. It proved to be a misnomer. C.G.S.)

The Johnson Bill provides for small County schools parallel with our present system and is thought by some to be dangerous as promoting class lines in society. County schools have been proved expensive and ineffective.

The Congressional Plan provides for the location of an agricultural high school in each congressional district similar to the one at Crookston.

The Putnam Bill provides for agriculturalizing our present high and graded schools in communities where this is desirable, and for consolidating rural schools. It uses the buildings, equipment and teaching force that we already have. It aids places wishing to install manual training, domestic science and school gardens. It provides for special classes for the winter months when necessary. Where a school is not so situated as to carry on the work in agriculture to advantage, it allows for the substitution of elementary work in metallurgy and mining. It leaves the work in charge of the State High School Board where it belongs, and opens the way for the better training of rural teachers through High School Normal Departments established in the same schools.

Out of 66 prominent educators, state superintendents and agricultural college deans and principals, heard from on the subject of agricultural education 11 favored the county plan, 14 the congressional and 41 the agriculturalized high school. The same persons are quite united in saying there is danger in a parallel system of schools.

If you can see your way clear to support this measure kindly send official communication at once direct to your legislators. It is time for school men and school boards to act as a unit if anything is to be accomplished.

Very truly yours,

E. M. PHILLIPS, Albert Lea
E. C. HIGBIE, Canby
C. G. SELVIG, Glencoe
C. H. BARNES, Wells

II.

The Legislature passed this bill in April, 1909. The campaign had succeeded. The Legislature also created another special School of Agriculture at Morris, Minnesota, by accepting the Indian School buildings there from the government and increased the appropriation for the school at Crookston.

Senator Putnam wrote me a letter on April 20, 1909 (which I still have), telling of the fight. He added, "I wish to extend my hearty thanks to you and others for the support you gave me in passing the bill." This letter was followed by one from Senator Burdett Thayer who represented my home county, Fillmore. He said, "I voted for the Putnam Law and against the final passage of the Johnson Bill as amended by the Senate. I did this largely on your recommendation and the opinion of Dr. D. L. Kiehle."

Glencoe High School which already had established the three new departments formally sought to be named as one of the ten schools under the Putnam law. The ten schools named are listed with the name of the superintendent, as follows:

Superintendents E. M. Phillips (Albert Lea), Edgar C. Higbie (Canby), C. E. Young (Wells), John L. Silvernale (Red Wing), W. P. Dyer (Alexandria), A. E. Pickard (Hinckley), A. C. Loomis (Lewiston), A. W. Hargrave (Cokato), A. M. Dunton (McIntosh) and C. G. Selvig (Glencoe).
Then Comes The City

So we had won that one. Our citizens were delighted. I had made several trips to the capitol in behalf of the bill. I did this on my own, as they say, and decided I would bear the expense personally if the bill was not enacted or, if Glencoe was not named as one of the ten schools. When I mentioned the expense bill at a Board meeting, the Board unanimously voted to reimburse me. The bill was $65.00. Said one, "It is the best investment this Board ever made."

A. H. Reed, one of the pioneer citizens of Glencoe, wrote on April 30, 1909. "I noticed by last evening's Minneapolis Journal that Glencoe has been designated as one of the high schools to receive state aid under the act to encourage special education in agriculture. I not only want to congratulate you, but thank you for helping to bring about this recognition. The Stevens Seminary trustees, the city and school district owe you much for your untiring and successful efforts in this matter."

The conference on Agricultural Education held at the University, July 29 and 30, 1910, indicated clearly the great advances made in a single year. This conference lasted two whole days and scheduled speakers were President Cyrus Northrop; Governor A. O. Eberhart; State Superintendent C. G. Schulz; Dean of Agricultural College, Albert F. Woods; Professor K. L. Hatch, Director of Agricultural Extension (Madison, Wisconsin); Presidents F. A. Weld (Moorhead Normal) and Waite Shoemaker (St. Cloud Normal); Principal D. D. Mayne; High School Inspector, George B. Aiton; Dean George F. James; Dick Crosby (Washington, D. C.); Professor Albert W. Rankin; George F. Howard of Extension Department (Minnesota Agricultural College) and Superintendents Phillips, Selvig, Dunton and T. A. Erickson, County Superintendent of Douglas county (Alexandria).

This conference exercised a vital influence in the fast-moving progress of the Putnam Act schools.

Agricultural extension work at Glencoe was organized with Mr. Schnaidt in charge. Conferences with the farmers of our community were held. It was decided to hold township meetings where topics of timely interest to the farmers would be presented by experts. The meetings proved very successful. The heads of departments of the Minnesota College of Agriculture spoke at some of the meetings during the winter. I recall particularly, Profs. Green, Boss, Wilson and Haecker.

State Farmers' Institutes had been held for years in Minnesota and had a very successful record. There now arose a need to supplement the Institute's service on a year-round basis. The Agricultural Extension Division was created as a part of the Agricultural College, with A. D. Wilson as director.

As the years went on the number of state-aided high school agricultural departments was increased to over one hundred. Following this came County Agricultural Agents jointly financed by county commissioners, the state extension service and the federal department of agriculture. The genesis and development of the farm extension services would make a very interesting story but it's outside the purview of this tale.

The school work at Glencoe proceeded smoothly and efficiently. We had an excellent staff of teachers. The enrollment grew. I retained my interest in the teaching of history and embraced an opportunity to present my views thereon when Henry Johnson, professor of History, Teachers College, Columbia University published in Teachers College Record in 1908 an article on "History in the Elementary School."
This article interested me very much and I wrote a review of it which was published in "The Elementary School Teacher" issued by the University of Chicago Press in February, 1909 (p.p. 334-337).

When the review came to Prof. Johnson's attention he wrote me a letter stating that it "has given me greater pleasure than you can know and I want to thank you most sincerely." It happened that I was present at the University of Minnesota commencement exercises when the University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I was more proud of him than he could ever know.

During my three years at Glencoe it was my privilege to attend the meetings of the Minnesota Education Association, the School Superintendents' annual spring meetings and the February meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Educational Association. Noted speakers included Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus, U.S. Senator Albert J. Beveridge, William J. Bryan, U.S. Senator Robert F. LaFollette and others. These meetings added both richness to life and inspiration for educational work. Their influence lasted throughout the years.

I received a letter dated in July, 1910 from Dean A. F. Woods, head of the Agricultural College, St. Paul, offering me the superintendency of the Crookston School of Agriculture, which was a part of the University. I was under contract with the Stevens Seminary and asked Dean Woods for a brief period for considering his letter. The Trustees of Stevens Seminary were willing to release me. They felt I should accept the Crookston position as it was a definite advancement both in responsibility and salary.

I finally wrote Dean Woods I wished to confer with him. He made it plain to me I had President Northrop's full endorsement and also that of the University's Board of Regents. What was of great weight with me was Dean Woods' assurance that the Board wanted to build up the school there. He pledged his undivided support. I decided to accept the position. My classmate at the University, Edgar C. Higbie, accepted the superintendency of the Morris Agricultural School.

While still at Glencoe we became parents of a lively, husky son whom his mother wished to have the name Conrad George II. We now had a family of three children and it was a happy group.
made my first trip to the Red River Valley in mid-July, 1910. On July 11 a telegram was received from Dean Albert F. Woods stating my appointment as superintendent of the Crookston School of Agriculture (as it was then called) and Northwest Experiment Station had been approved by President Cyrus Northrop of the University of Minnesota and the Board of Regents. Dean Woods suggested I go to Crookston at an early date and informed me Regent A. E. Rice, Willmar, chairman of the Regents' Agricultural Committee, had agreed to make his annual visit to the School and Station at the same time.

Dean Woods gave me a letter of introduction to former State Senator, Andrew D. Stephens, stating I had decided to accept the superintendency and that, "Mr. Selvig is a man who can secure the hearty cooperation of all our workers here in the various departments. He is an excellent organizer and administrator and is in sympathy with the development of this school."

I met former Lieutenant-Governor A. E. Rice for the first time on this visit to Crookston. He was deeply interested in the Agricultural College and the Schools of Agriculture. He gave me much good advice and continued to be my trusted friend as long as he lived. I have at times felt he has not been given full credit for his valuable services to Minnesota. He never put himself forward but remained in the background with unswerving loyalty to the University and particularly to its Department of Agriculture. He died in 1921 after a long service as a member of the University's Board of Regents.

There had been various attempts to separate the Agricultural College from the University but President Northrop successfully resisted these moves. In this he was abundantly justified as was definitely proved by the events of the next few years.

From Crookston I went to visit the Grand Rapids Station where Arthur J. McGuire was superintendent. We became fast friends. He was a leader in the organization of cooperative creameries and of the now famous Minnesota Land - o - Lakes central organization of cooperative creameries. He was a graduate of the Central School of Agriculture, St. Paul, and of the Minnesota College of Agriculture. He wielded great influence in the state and the northwest.

I found myself confronted with new responsibilities. There were moments of doubt as to whether I could successfully meet them. Yet here I was. I could only do my best. Faint heart never won anything. I would go to work and grapple with the problems. I hoped Lady Luck would attend me.

2.

In physical characteristics the Red River Valley, 250 miles long and about 100 miles wide on the Minnesota side of the Red River of the North, south of the Canadian border, in many respects is unique. Only in a few areas of the world has nature been so prodigal with her gifts.

There is no space for a scientific treatise as to how the valley was formed. Much has already been written about it. Suffice it to say it was made by one of nature's
great plows—a glacier—which slid down from the north. The glacier—"Nature’s chilled plow"—as The Country Gentleman’s associate editor, John E. Pickett*, termed it, began melting and as the ice retreated northward the land behind it filled with water and became the glacial Lake Agazziz. The old lake bed is now the Red River Valley. The old shorelines which mark the successive borders of the lake can easily be recognized when crossed.

Those who know me will readily agree Selvig has practiced restraint at this point by writing so little about the valley’s soil, its richness, its productivity and so on. The fact is that during my seventeen years at the school and station it came about one could always count on a few words about this wonderful valley from Selvig on any and all occasions.

This reminds me of an incident which happened when my son, George, was about twelve years old. I had been scheduled to speak over radio station WCCO, Minneapolis, on “The Red River Valley.” We had no radio in our home at that time so George ever anxious to try out a new thing, trudged down to the home of Professor and Mrs. Arnold M. Foker, on faculty row at the school to hear the speech. At 7:30 o’clock, sharp, he pulled the ear-phones over his head and listened. Then he said, “It’s pop, all right, and it’s the same old stuff.”

3.

It was in 1892 that the idea of having an experiment station and subsequently an agricultural school in the Red River Valley came to that brilliant and indefatigable leader in agriculture, Professor Willett M. Hays, who was the father of the Crookston Station.** His first public mention of the plan for regional agricultural high schools was made in New Orleans, in 1893, before the American Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations. Later, as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, he was a strong advocate of the regional agricultural high school project which Alabama had adopted in 1888.

This led to establishment of such institutions in a number of states, notably, during the early years, in Alabama, Georgia and Oklahoma. The Minnesota School of Agriculture, at St. Anthony Park, St. Paul, was opened in 1888. The school at Crookston opened in 1906 was the first in Minnesota located away from the Agricultural College.

It was while Mr. Hays was a student at Drake University, 1882-83, he became convinced that education should be made more practical, or as we later came to say, “in closer coordination with the vocational life the person is to lead.” He changed to Iowa State College, Ames, in 1883-84 and entered the agricultural course. There, under the leadership of Dr. S. A. Knapp (later president of Iowa State College, and during 1905-11, the definitive leader in founding the county farm bureau plan), Prof. J. L. Budd, Dr. C. E. Bessy, and, later James Wilson (who became U.S. Secretary of Agriculture) a group gained ascendancy which resulted in that Iowa State College became one of the leading strongholds of education of “farm youth for the farms” as well as for professional agriculture.

*John E. Pickett, in the Country Gentleman, on The Red River Valley, April 10, 24 and May 1, 1920. See article in the appendix.

**From letter author received from Professor Willett M. Hays, Eldora, Iowa, dated April 28, 1926. At the same time he sent me his notes dealing with his activities in connection with the Northwest Station. I have the letter and notes in my library.
To The Valley

4.

Professor Hays came to the University of Minnesota, March 1, 1888, as assistant in agriculture under Dr. Edward D. Porter, then Professor of Agriculture and Director of the Experiment Station. The Department of Agriculture of the University of Minnesota, had a single student in agriculture. The School of Agriculture was in its period of incubation. Dr. Porter was one of the great pioneers, according to Professor Hays.

Out of discussions during this period a temporary experiment station was started at Lynd, Minnesota, in cooperation with Rev. O. C. Gregg, Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes, and to the establishment of branch experiment farms in northwestern and in northeastern Minnesota.

While Hays was Professor of Agriculture and Agriculturist of the experiment station of North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo, in 1892 and 1893, he traveled widely on both sides of the Red River Valley. He also visited the branch station at Brandon, Manitoba, accompanied by Dr. William Saunders of Ottawa. He became greatly impressed by the idea of "spreading the University" to parts of the state then securing but little benefit from its resources and courses in education. The plan of having regional agricultural high schools to be established at the branch experiment stations went further than the Dominion "experimental farms," Mr. Hays states.

5.

As a condition of Mr. Hays' returning to Minnesota in 1893 he received a general consent from the Agricultural Committee (a very powerful group) of the Board of Regents to make a survey of the state with a view to beginning the development of regional stations and schools.

In 1894 he traveled extensively in an effort to secure legislative authority under which the University would establish such regional institutions. On one of his trips he met by appointment with James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railway at his office in St. Paul. Mr. Hill had on his desk the company's land book in which was recorded the description, and a map, of the section of land owned by the G.N. Railway adjoining the city of Crookston.

Mr. Hill said he would give 3/4 of this section to the state for the purpose of an institution such as Mr. Hays proposed. Mr. Hays stated he was in no position to consider gifts of land as the Board of Regents had not even formally considered this project. Mr. Hill placed his hand on Mr. Hays' shoulder and said, "Young man, you go ahead."

The Legislature in 1895 created two branch experiment stations in Minnesota. Mr. Hill helped, also, to secure legislation establishing courses for farm girls at the Central School, St. Anthony Park. He helped stop a movement to dismiss Mr. Hays for having helped secure the enactment of that measure, in spite of opposition within the Board of Regents. Co-education began from the first in both the Crookston and Morris Schools of Agriculture, subsequently established.

Mr. Hays accompanied the University Regents' Committee on Agriculture, consisting of Col. Wm. M. Liggett, Hon. S. M. Owen and Ex-Lieutenant-Governor A. Barto, to Crookston to inspect the farm offered by James J. Hill. The committee's favorable report was ratified, title to the property was acquired by gift from Mr. Hill which was formally accepted by the Board of Regents on October 4, 1896, 3 months and 4 days after the law establishing the Northwest Station went into effect.
Before the law could go into effect it had to be passed, of course. This proved to be no easy task. Polk County's Senator at that time was Peter M. Ringdal, Crookston, who later became a member of the Minnesota Board of Control. He, too, had a vision as to the benefits that would accrue to the farmers of the Red River Valley by the establishment of the Northwest Station. Naturally, he wanted it near Crookston. When Mr. Ringdal, in 1924, learned I had made some inquiries as to the legislative history of the bill establishing stations in northeastern and northwestern Minnesota during the session of 1895, he wrote me a letter* from his home in Santa Cruz, California.

I had attempted several times during my residence at Crookston to secure the facts regarding the establishment of the Northwest Station. Mr. Ringdal was a very able and conscientious legislator and his letter tells for the first time the complete story of this legislative proposal. It begins by referring to an interview published in the Crookston Times after his election as state senator in November, 1894. Senator-elect Ringdal stated he would introduce a bill for the establishment of an Experiment Station to be located near Crookston. He did this soon after the senate convened.

M. E. Craig, representing the 38th legislative district in the House of Representatives introduced a bill to establish an experiment station in the northeastern part of the state.

Senator Ringdal had a conference with Prof. Hays a few days later. As a result of this conference the Ringdal bill and the Craig bill were dropped and in their stead two identical bills were introduced which included both stations in both bills. There were no definite locations named and this touchy detail was left to be decided by the University's Board of Regents. Prof. Hays and two or three members of the Board stated they would favor location of one of the stations at Crookston. The plan adopted united the friends of the two bills.

Mr. Craig was a member of the majority party and all, therefore, put their main efforts behind the House bill, using the Ringdal bill "as a road-breaker through the mazes of the Senate" as Ringdal described it, "in order to clear the way for the House measure when it should come over from the House." The plan worked out according to calculations, but only after a long and arduous campaign. When the House bill late in the session made its appearance in the Senate, Senator Ringdal moved its substitution for his own (the Senate) bill and the motion prevailed. The bill became a law.

Senator Ringdal specifically names Prof. Hays, Prof. Hoverstad, N. P. Clark, Col. Liggett, S. M. Owen and Lieutenant Governor Barto as deserving a great deal of credit in securing the bill's enactment. He also commented on choice of the site and agreed the decision, though criticized at the time, was a wise one. He mentions a proposal to establish simultaneously an agricultural school in connection with the station, but decided if too much was asked, at one time, the whole plan would be defeated.

It was generally believed that the experiment farm, once established and successfully conducted for a few years, the school would follow as a natural sequence. Subsequent events proved the correctness of this view.

*Former State Senator Peter M. Ringdal, October 15, 1924 to the author.
The first superintendent of the newly created Northwest Experiment Farm was Torger A. Hoverstad. His was the task of converting a veritable swamp, north of Crookston, that raised nothing much besides ducks, into an institution that was to benefit Minnesota farming immeasurably. The idea was conceived in the astute mind of Prof. Willett M. Hays and carried out by the vigorous and successful legislative service of Senator Ringdal.

Superintendent Hoverstad made his first visit to the Red River Valley during the winter of 1890-91. Minnesota’s Governor, William R. Merriam, had sent a communication to Professor C. D. Smith, director of the State Experiment Station, St. Paul, asking him to do something to eradicate smut from the wheat fields of the Red River Valley. Professor Smith asked Mr. Hoverstad to accompany him to a public meeting to be held at McIntosh, east of Crookston. Mr. Hoverstad, in reporting on this meeting in 1923, gave the following version of that conference.

"Prof. Smith asked me to accompany him, not that I knew anything about smut, but because I knew something about Norwegian. In order to save time, he suggested we both speak from the same platform at the same time; that I talk in Norwegian and he would talk in English. We did, with the result that the one who spoke in Norwegian got the entire audience. I may not have killed any smut on that occasion, but I did kill a speech prepared in the language of the country. I did this in all innocence."

He began his work at Crookston on July 1, 1895 which date marks the birth of the Northwest Experiment Station. The state appropriated $15,000.00 for the first two years. This fund was supplemented by donations of $1000.60 each from the citizens of Crookston and from Polk County. During the first year a barn, a dwelling house, a farm shop and a pasture fence were erected. 175 acres of land were broken and backset the first year.

An interesting sidelight on the first season’s operations comes from a letter sent me by Professor Andrew Boss of the Minnesota Experiment Station.

"In the early spring of 1895 Professor W. M. Hays, who had assisted in the establishment of the station, and who was charged with responsibility in investigational work, collected together at University Farm, four horses, one or two cows, and possibly other livestock, also implements, machinery and seed for the new station. These were all loaded in an immigrant car and shipped under the care of James Boss, brother of the writer, who had, that winter, been a student at the School of Agriculture.

"The carload, with Mr. Boss in charge, arrived at Crookston in due season, the implements unloaded, the horses hitched to one of the wagons, and as much material as possible hauled out to the farm. An old barn was on the place when donated, with room for the livestock, and a loft for hay above. James arrived at the farm in the evening, stabled his horses, and retired to the loft for a night’s rest.

"During the night a heavy rain fell, and the next morning upon looking out of the loft door, James could see only one or two spots of the so-called Crookston Farm above water. He said it looked like a discouraging proposition for farming, and a very much better one for ducks. Later in the season, however, the land dried sufficiently to put in crops."

What James Boss discovered that morning when looking out of the barn-loft door was an old story to the citizens of Crookston. "Why that was my favorite duck pond," Tom Morris of Crookston often said. "We would hunt ducks a few miles
northeast of the farm, and return home through the farm and there were almost certain to bag a few ducks.”

8.

The area did provide for a good experimental drainage project which was not, however, established until 1908, 13 years after the station’s birth. Superintendent Hoverstad’s own published reports present vividly his trials and tribulations during the first ten years of that doleful period. Always, there were messages of hope and idealism backed by a firm faith in ultimate success. We talked about his service as superintendent many, many times. I informed him his patience must have made him kin to the angels.

The farmers grew dissatisfied but Hoverstad’s patience supported by his faith in the Red River Valley was sublime. This outlying unit of the University, however, appeared for years to be an unwanted waif. It was the state’s “white elephant,” a member of the Board of Regents termed it when we discussed the new position I assumed on August 1, 1910.

A meeting called to consider farm drainage in the Red River Valley was held at Breckenridge in 1895. At this meeting Mr. Valentine, of that city, made a remarkable address which created much discussion and led to action. Very soon the U.S. Bureau of Soils undertook to make a topographical survey of the Crookston area.

Mr. Hoverstad had been a member of the State Farmers’ Institute corps. He continued this work during his superintendency at Crookston. Many experimental projects were established at the station and in years of normal rainfall valuable information was secured. He was both missionary and apostle. He preached dairying and poultry, and talked of crops, even if it was impossible to raise crops at the station, or even drive there, during the frequent wet seasons. Diversified farming was his main theme.

“Poultry Culture in Minnesota” by Charles S. Greene, was the first bulletin published by the Northwestern Experimental Farm. Annual reports were included in the report of the Minnesota Experiment Station, St. Paul. Trees for a windbreak were planted and fruits, vegetables, root crops, grasses and clovers were successfully grown.

9.

An important organization was formed in 1903 in the area where Colonel R. A. Wilkinson once said when he came to the Red River Valley there was only one cow between Crookston and Grand Forks, North Dakota, and that single specimen was tied on the windward side of a barbed wire fence out on the prairie. This organization was named the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association.

At a later meeting of this organization Superintendent Hoverstad told the story of that meeting. His statement follows:

“The organization of the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association was a very brief and simple affair. We held a Farmers’ Institute in the Bjoin’s Opera House in Crookston. When the morning session adjourned I announced that all who were interested in the organization of a Dairymen’s Association should meet in the Opera House at one o’clock. There were only three persons that reported. We thought that we did not need a constitution or by-laws. All we needed would be a name and officers. Levi Steenerson, Climax, suggested that the name be ‘Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association.’ This was adopted.”

“The officers elected were T. A. Hoverstad, President, Levi Steenerson of Climax, Secretary. I do not remember that any record of the meeting was made. The following
year we called the first meeting of the Association. A program was prepared. The attendance and interest were all that could be expected. 'Dad' Cort, in his usual effective way, undertook to write-up memberships and collect membership fees. The later history of the association is a matter of record. It has grown in strength and influence beyond the dreams of its founders. It has become an agency for good because the members as well as officers have worked faithfully to put the dairy and creamery industry on a high plane.”

10.

During Superintendent William Robertson's administration (1905-1910) the main drainage ditch leading to the Red Lake River in a course running northwesterly from the Station was completed; the Station land was drained; an experimental installation of tile drainage was included for several fields; crop tests were begun and varietal tests of alfalfa from five different seed sources was started.

Reference has already been made to the proposal suggested to Senator Ringdal that he include both School and Station in his bill offered in 1895. He wisely decided to confine his efforts to the establishment of the Station only. On January 10, 1904, the Polk County Farmers' Exchange, of which Elias Steenerson was president, held a meeting to discuss the establishment of a branch school of agriculture at the Northwest Station. Mr. Steenerson, some years ago, furnished me with a copy of the minutes of that meeting, which indicates the members of that group went to work in earnest.

At the January 1904 meeting, the Exchange members were informed James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railway, had been requested to provide free transportation for a delegation to visit the State Agricultural College at St. Paul. Mr. Hill agreed. Mr. Steenerson, president of the Exchange, urged that a large delegation take advantage of the trip. He urged the members to strike for securing a branch School of Agriculture at the Northwest Station.

At a meeting held on February 13, 1904, the committee appointed at the January meeting made its report. Mr. Steenerson acted as spokesman for it and said, as reported in the minutes “that the officials at the Agricultural College did not appear to be interested in the proposal to establish the Crookston School of Agriculture; that they seemed mainly interested in the affairs under their own charge at the College, but that they could give no good reason why the School should not be established at the Northwest Station.”

Superintendent Hoverstad then spoke in favor of the proposal to establish a branch school at Crookston. He gave most liberal encouragement and predicted success if the proposal received the proper support from this area.

On March, 1909, the members of the Exchange met in the same hall where five years earlier they had met to organize support for the School. They then decided to visit the school that afternoon to celebrate the successful outcome. All present voted to do so.

11.

Agitation, largely led by Prof. Hays had continued since the establishment at Crookston of the Northwest Experiment Farm in 1895, to urge the establishment of a School there. Professor William Robertson, a member of the faculty at the Central School, St. Paul, had faith in the possibilities of such a so-called “regional” school. He worked in and out of season for it.

Here statecraft enters. The members of the Legislature from the Red River Valley were naturally interested in the project as has been noted. When A. D. Stephens was elected State Senator the campaign began in full force. He was chairman
of the powerful Senate Committee on Finance which was a position of great importance to this project. His interest went deeper than merely to use this position as a motivating influence.

I have spent many pleasant hours with Mr. Stephens. He was deeply interested in education, in young people on farms and had a vision of things to be, in his views as to the services an agricultural school could provide.

On one occasion at a meeting he asked me, "How many are there on your school faculty?" I informed him. "Now, how many students are enrolled at the school?" I informed him of the number. "Now let's add those two figures together (he was good at figuring for he was a bank president)." I do not recall the exact number but it was nearly 200. "You have 200 in your faculty. The teachers teach at the school and at meetings. The students teach every day on their return home at their farms and in their homes." He was right.

12.

The Legislature voted $15,000.00 for a building in 1905. When this had been voted, I am informed Lieutenant Governor A. E. Rice, later University Regent, informed one of the senators, "You would save the state hundreds of thousands of dollars, if you would give 'Andy' Stephens the $15,000.00, just voted for the Crookston farm school, and then send him back to Sweden." Andy Stephens chuckled often when told this story. It, too, would have been true.

The so-called "School Building" the first school building provided, had three floors. The first floor was devoted to the school's dining hall, cooks' quarters and the heating plant; second, the school's assembly room (used also as a class room), a second class room, an office for the superintendent and secretary and a library room; third, nine dormitory rooms and a bathroom. Eat on first, teach on second, and sleep on the third floor. The girls' dormitory was located at the farm house. Thus the Crookston School of Agriculture made its debut in the fall of 1906. Thirty-one students were enrolled that year.

Crookston citizens provided $2,500.00 as a loan to the school for maintenance during the first school year, 1906-07. Some of the instructors were members of the Station staff with payment of salaries from station funds.

The school considering everything made good progress during its first year. Mrs. Robertson was of great help. The undaunted faith and the tireless energy of Superintendent Robertson and his wife made an impression on the students, on Crookston citizens and elsewhere. Soon local committees were formed to acquaint the people of the Valley with the facilities provided for farm youth at the school.

Every student I have met of those who attended the first four years before my arrival in 1910, recall the days spent at the school with genuine pleasure. "We were a happy family and had many, many pleasant hours together," they all said.

The second year 41 students enrolled. The Legislature voted funds for maintenance, for a boys' dormitory (later named Stephens Hall), a science building (later named Owen Hall) and for miscellaneous Station structures. The completion of the Station drainage project facilitated operations and led to inauguration of experimental projects. Alfalfa trials were begun in 1908.

Superintendent Robertson died suddenly in January, 1910, while on a train to St. Paul where he had been called to confer regarding the needs of the institution. During the four years he was the administrative head the School which had been established. He had fought a good fight and left a rich heritage in the work he, his wife and the staff had done so well.
Sometimes we get better objectivity in thumbing through the pages of the past. This thought occurs, as I recall the events of the next seventeen years. On July 15, 1935, my successor, Superintendent A. A. Dowell, arranged a program for the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Northwest Experiment Station. I was asked to participate.

The exercises were held in the auditorium seating about 800, recently formed by uniting the former auditorium, completed in 1910, with the former gymnasium then located across the hall. It made a splendid room. Symbolical murals had been provided by the W.P.A. It seemed glorious. When I came to the school in 1910, the "auditorium" was a regular classroom, seating perhaps 50 or 60 at the most, located on the second floor of what is now the Home Economics building.

I said on this occasion, "Two main objectives were firmly implanted in my purpose when I accepted the position at Crookston twenty-five years ago this month. First, to help build an outstanding School of Agriculture for Northwestern Minnesota. Second, to help promote greater diversification on the farms in the Red River Valley."

"I had been officially informed by the president of the Board of Regents of the University that they would give full and undivided support to me, the faculty and staff in building the School and Station. I had this pledge. Without it, I am very certain I would not have been interested in the position.

"Four University presidents (Northrop, Vincent, Burton and Coffman) and three deans of agriculture (Woods, Thatcher, Coffey), including the distinguished scientist, scholar and leader, Dean Walter C. Coffey, who now occupies that responsible position, and is here today, at all times and with sincerity maintained that pledge. Without this cooperation, the task would have been impossible."

2.

The first three years were not easy ones. The school was located two and a half miles north of Crookston. Our means of mass conveyance was a covered "bus" drawn by a team of farm horses. Our faculty took this all in stride. It was just like living on a farm. If the top-heavy conveyance tipped over in a snow-drift, well and good. It was sport. If the weather was minus forty degrees with a sharp breeze heralding arctic cold, well just bundle up, that's all.

I often said there was no barrier or mountain chain between the North Pole and the Northwest School. Even so, in those halycon days I enjoyed walking to or from Crookston, being always mindful of the direction whence came the icy blasts. I would walk with the wind and ride against it.

Water from two deep wells was adequate for a time. In mid-winter, one year, one of the wells ran dry. The dormitories were three-story structures. No water reached above the first floor. This created an emergency. Fortunately, the Legislature was in session. Quick action came in providing funds for a new well.

The lawmakers, also, at my urgent suggestion, provided funds available the next summer to install a water main from the campus to connect with Crookston's water
supply. Until the new well was completed, however, I was in constant dread. School was in session. The dormitories were filled. The students were under strict discipline as to fire-drills and precautionary measures. I retain a vivid memory of this crisis.

3.

It was necessary at the start to secure faculty members adequately trained for the different departments. Expansion of the School’s curriculum and placing the Station work on a firmer foundation necessitated securing additional staff members. On one of my trips to confer with Dean Woods I mentioned it would be necessary to secure an almost entirely new faculty for the second year of the school. He smiled and said, “I expected that. I did not wish to make any suggestions as to your staff. You will be held responsible. You will form your own faculty.”

It was thus throughout my tenure. I sought the best teachers and Station staff members procurable. Most of them were young but they were well prepared. They grew in stature with the years. To them is due full credit. The work was hard. During the early years salaries were low.

The Legislature provided homes on the campus for the married men. The others lived in the dormitories and had supervisory duties there in addition to full-time teaching schedules. I estimated they as well as myself worked overtime. There were no regulations against this during the early years. It was accepted as a part of the job.

The members of the staff all know they were held in highest esteem by their students, their colleagues, myself, the dean and the president of the University. They knew they were doing important work. They knew, also, it was appreciated by the students and the people all over the Valley. There was that indefinable something which bound them together in the great task of building a “School of Service,” for the Red River Valley.

4.

The first important task centered on securing a “campus plan.” An experienced firm undertook to prepare such a plan which would indicate the locations of future buildings. To do so it was necessary to visualize future growth. Dean Woods proved to be almost a seer in this respect. Early in 1911 the firm presented a plan that was approved by the Regents and has been followed with minor modifications to this day.

I referred to Dean Woods’ vision. He was deeply interested in country life. He fully recognized the place of what he termed Technological Schools of Agriculture and Home-making.* Without his guidance and wise judgment our plans might have proved far inadequate.

It became necessary to move nearly all of the Station buildings to new locations to provide space for future expansion of the school campus. While this was being done in 1911 the entire campus was one vast scene of confusion worse confounded. It was a nightmare to me.

Adding to the disorder was a projected lake that presumably had been authorized the year before I arrived on the scene although I never found anyone who accepted responsibility for it. The vast hole had been dug. It didn’t hold water. A layer of gravel was uncovered near it. This acted as a sieve. One of my first decisions was to order the hole to be filled.

*Manuscript article by Dr. Albert F. Woods, on Schools of Agricultural Technology, in author’s library.
It was the custom during the early years for the Legislature to vote specific sums for each project at the various state institutions, as for example, "$200.00 shall be appropriated for a poultry-house." The estimates for moving farm buildings and other needs proved to be too low. Wet weather hampered operations. The first summer in the Red River Valley was far from being an idyll.

The next important improvement was the establishment of a new flood-water outlet to Red Lake River to facilitate drainage particularly of the fields on the east half-section of the Station. Farmers living south and east of the Station joined in petitioning for this new ditch which was soon established. This completed the Station drainage project with the exception of providing protection during a flash flood. This was remedied in time by making a connection with the recently constructed sewer line from the campus to Crookston. So at long last the old boggy faced by Superintendent Hoverstad was laid to rest.

5.

The experimental work in agronomy under J. D. Bilsborrow, as Station agronomist, was established on a broader and more inclusive basis in 1912, with Professor Andrew Boss of the Central Station, as adviser. When Bilsborrow accepted a position at the Illinois Agricultural College, Otto I. Bergh became agronomist at Crookston. Both of these men were born in the Red River Valley, Bilsborrow near Wolverton and Bergh near Hendrum. They lost no time at all in getting projects started. An excellent state-wide plan was inaugurated unifying experimental work throughout the state and encouraging original planning with respect to regional problems. This assured such problems both attention and support.

It has been interesting to follow this development during the past four decades. Many will recall that President George E. Vincent and Dean A. F. Woods laid great stress upon the necessity of viewing all problems from the standpoint of the state at large. "The state is our campus," declared Vincent. "We who are connected with the University are servants of the state. We must fit our projects together so all in the state benefit." I fully adhered to this lofty view. There should be no room for small views and narrow objectives.

Demonstrational and experimental projects at the Northwest Station soon increased to include farm crops tests, soils work, rotation trials, control of weeds and of plant diseases, production of wilt-resistant flax varieties, potato culture, sugar beet growing, alfalfa and sweet clover tests, pasture mixtures, live stock and poultry feeding projects, vegetable varietal tests, growing fruits, and ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers.

In response to demands of farmers on peat lands, a "peat-farm project" was established at Golden Valley, near Grygla, in eastern Marshall county, bordering on the Red River Valley. Dean Woods had brought Dr. F. J. Alway to Minnesota. Work at Golden Valley was undertaken with the Northwest Station agronomist, R. O. Westly, acting as Dr. Alway's assistant. The experimental work of the Station was greatly extended during the administrations of my successors, Superintendents, A. A. Dowell (1927-1937) and Thomas M. McCall (1937-). Were Professor Hays alive today he would joyfully acclaim that his dreams had come true.

The Northwest Station early developed herds of registered Shorthorns and Holsteins, a flock of purebred Shropshire sheep and usually two different breeds of swine. Percheron mares were used for Station work. Later, feeding and breeding experiments were carried on in cooperation with the Central Station and still later
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in very important swine breeding experiments with both the Central Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The poultry department was functioning before 1910, the year I came to Crookston. Since then numerous reports and bulletins attest to the splendid work carried on by that department. This work has been under the direction of A. M. Pilkey for many years.

The work in the farm mechanics department has been of great value to the farmers in the Red River Valley. It included a large number of projects carried on by Thomas R. Sewall and later by A. M. Foker who is the present head of the department.

6. Alfalfa growing has become important in the Red River Valley as well as in the state. Superintendent Robertson began varietal tests of alfalfa at the Station in 1908. After five years' trial Minnesota grown Grimm alfalfa produced highest yields, followed closely by Grimm alfalfa seed produced in South Dakota.

There was in 1914 a small acreage of alfalfa being grown for seed production by Johannes Lade, on his farm near Fosston. I tried to secure seed from him but all he could spare had been promised to his neighbors.

The Station tests proved conclusively alfalfa would grow in the Valley. In 1914, I went to A. D. Stephens' bank and requested a personal loan to pay for a carload of Grimm alfalfa seed* grown in South Dakota. Quotations had previously been received as considerable alfalfa seed was produced in that state at the time. Mr. Stephens agreed to make the loan and a carload of seed (41,000 pounds) was ordered.

In a very short time 629 farmers bought this seed in lots varying from ten to one hundred pounds which was the maximum that could be ordered. With the seed went instructions regarding preparation of the land, scarifying the seed, seeding and care. Also, blanks to be filled out and sent to the Station's Agronomy Department during the succeeding five years.

The seed was sold for twenty cents a pound. It was purchased for fifteen cents a pound at the point of shipment. Freight and cost of handling and postage amounted to 2½ cents a pound. Oscar L. Buhr, my secretary, refunded to each buyer 2½ cents a pound, doing this work mainly on his own time, as he was greatly interested in the project. Many farmers wrote to him this was the first refund they had ever received.

The reports received during the next three and four years indicated 98 percent of the growers reported success in their trial seeding. It was not necessary to continue this demonstration. Alfalfa had won the recognition it deserved.

7. Sweet clover was first grown at the Station in 1896, according to Superintendent Hoverstad's report. It was quite generally introduced after having been successfully grown by Reverend Mr. Solum on his farm near Halstad for many years. The Northwest Station has carried on many projects with both alfalfa and sweet clover, greatly extending knowledge concerning them.

I later found myself talking about a record made of using sweet clover as a pasture crop. The speech was made at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Dairymen's Association held at Brainerd on January 19, 1926 where I called it a wonderful

*See appendix for story of Grimm's alfalfa.
crop. I quote from this address which was published in the proceedings of the Association.

"During 1924 we had at the Northwest Station, Crookston, a 28-acre field of sweet clover. We first planned on using all of it for pasture for 32 cows. We thought we would need that 28 acres for 32 cows. I came from Fillmore County and down there we used to figure we needed about one acre per head.

Well, just about the 20th of May we took a look at this field. The sweet clover was up eight to ten inches, and it was growing so fast you could almost see it grow. The live stock man at the Station said he did not think we needed the whole field for the summer's pasture. He suggested that we fence off one third of the field and have about nine acres or so for hay and the remaining for pasture.

About five days later the live stock man again inspected the field. He thought possibly it would be all right to put the fence in the middle of the field and leave 14 acres for hay and 14 for pasture. This was done. On that day he asked me to go there with him to take a look at the field again. This was about the 29th of May and the sweet clover was so high I thought the 32 head could never eat what would grow on the 14 acres, so he divided the field into two parts, leaving 7 acres for pasture and 21 for hay.

On the 17th of July, Professor Andrew Boss and Dean Walter C. Coffey came to make us a visit. We went to see the sweet clover pasture. The 32 head had been in there since the 31st day of May. When we entered the field Prof. Boss remarked the cattle had eaten it down pretty closely at that particular place. I agreed they had, but that we had better walk to the south part of the field, also. On that day, the 17th of July, when we reached the south part of the field we were in sweet clover up to our knees.

The cattle remained there until about the 25th or 26th of August. They had had nothing else except that seven acres of pasture the entire season. I challenge any state to produce a better record. Almost five head of full-grown cattle pasturing on one acre during an entire season. And this is what is taking place in the Red River Valley. We have the largest acreage of sweet clover per farm in the State of Minnesota, or any other state."

I am a little amused now over what I said, but it reflected optimism that was justified. I had great faith in the Red River Valley and was accustomed to set forth its advantages on every occasion. Love your work and esteem your fellow-workers. Encourage them to do their best. Good results follow.

8.

The members of the staff of the Northwest Station early were concerned with the huge toll taken annually by the black stem rust of wheat. The Minnesota Red River Development Association composed of farmers and business men lent their efforts to enlisting the aid of the Federal Government in a campaign to eradicate the common barberry bush as one means of circumventing the rust menace. A nationwide campaign to this end was given strong impetus at a meeting held in Crookston. P. K. Haselrud and Joseph Ball were among the leaders. It was followed by a delegation being sent to Washington to enlist the support of the United States Department of Agriculture.

I was delegated to represent the Station and the Valley at that conference. Dr. H. L. Bolley, of North Dakota Agricultural College, Dr. E. C. Stakman of Minnesota and Dr. Melhus, of Ames, were the other members. The Grain Exchanges of the
Middle West joined in this movement. Gradually the campaign attained momentum. Dr. Stakman became a leader in this work. He gradually attained the highest distinction and became an international authority on wheat rust and other plant diseases. Very soon the Central Station intensified its work in plant-breeding, looking towards development of rust-resistant wheat varieties under the leadership of Dr. H. K. Hayes. Eminent success was attained.

9.

A major project at the Northwest Station has been the production and distribution to farmers of purebred seed grain and hardy varieties of seed corn. The local part of this work was started by the first agronomist and has increased in volume and importance throughout the years. The Station was located in a Valley adapted to grain-growing.

Thousands of farmers have benefited greatly by procuring their pure seed stocks produced at the Northwest Station. Varietal tests in rows and plots, and later in "increase" fields carried on by the agronomy department, in cooperation with the Central Station, brought out varieties peculiarly adapted to this area.

A. M. Christensen was Northwest Station's first pure-seed specialist doing extension work. He was an enthusiastic worker and soon made notable progress in his work. He moved to Minot later and established a commercial seed firm there in which he attained success. E. R. Clark followed him at the Northwest Station. R. S. Dunham became head of the agronomy department and these two staff members made a great team.

Soon the Red River Valley Crops and Soils Association was organized consisting of farmers who raised purebred seed. This association worked closely with the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association. It would be difficult to over-emphasize the results attained. Mr. Clark, after spending many years at the School and Station became a member of the staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture where he has attained enviable recognition. Professor R. S. Dunham is now agronomist at the Central Station, St. Paul.

10.

The head of the horticultural department, Mr. Thomas M. McCall, was one of the first scientists secured for the enlarged staff of the Northwest Station, in 1911. He is a graduate and post-graduate of Iowa State College, Ames. Superintendent E. C. Higbie, of the West Central School and Station, established in 1910 and I went together to Ames. He was looking for an agronomist and I, a horticulturist. What we accomplished that day was to invite two future farm leaders to venture into Minnesota. Mr. Higbie secured Paul E. Miller and I secured T. M. McCall. Mr. Miller became superintendent of the West Central School and Station, Morris, when Higbie left for Columbia University to study for his doctorate.

Mr. McCall became superintendent of the Northwest School and Station, in 1937, following Dr. A. A. Dowell, who succeeded me in 1927. Later Mr. Miller became director of Agricultural Extension Division of the University's Department of Agriculture. It is but a human trait to be rather pleased over the subsequent success of persons appointed to responsible positions. I proudly confess to harboring that trait.

For twenty-six years McCall directed the program of the horticultural department brilliantly. For a time, also, he was in charge of the field work at the Station. During Mr. Dowell's sabbatical year he was named acting-superintendent of the School
and Station. A great deal more could be written of his service record and fine character.

The work of the horticultural department, as well as of the other departments, has been fully reported from time to time in the Station reports and in special bulletins. Space does not permit making a full list. In particular, the horticultural department gave early attention to potato growing. The Red River Valley has attained eminence in this field.

Experimental tests with sugar beet production developed the fact that in Red River Valley soil could grow superior sugar beets. In 1926, the American Beet Sugar Company began operating its plant at East Grand Forks. A second factory is now being built at Moorhead.

Mr. McCall has had charge of the campus planting ever since he joined the Station staff in 1911. In addition great impetus has been given to farm wind-break plantings and to aiding the Red River Valley Horticultural Society which owes its origin to him.

Of the present members of the staff O. M. Kiser, animal husbandman and Arnold M. Foker, head of the farm mechanics department and superintendent of Buildings and Grounds have served continuously over thirty years. Alvey M. Pilkey, poultry man at the Station when I left has continued in that capacity since. He has also been active in connection with the Northern Minnesota Poultry Association which was organized in 1908.

Former State Senator John Saugstad, Crookston, was an enthusiastic leader of this group. The Association is a cooperating member of the Red River Valley Shows. Others who were at the School when I left in 1927 include Miss Retta Bede, Miss Fae Hughbanks and Miss Kate Bedard, accountant. All rendered signal service.

The Red River Dairymen's Association which was organized in 1903 held annual meetings. Professor T. L. Haecker, famous for his original work on feeding dairy cows, was a speaker at its seventh annual convention held in Crookston, 1907. He said, in part on that occasion.

"In 1904 I came to the Red River Valley for the first time. I was very anxious to see it. I had wondered what kind of a place it was. I gave a little talk, as I remember it, over at the Opera House on the subject of The Management and Feeding of Dairy Cows."

"What do I see today? A wonderful change. Sentiment is different. Education is beginning to show its influence. It is the impression this School of Agriculture is making upon this valley." Much is due Professor Haecker for his work in the state.

Another person comes to mind when I recall the early years of the dairying industry in the Red River Valley. He wielded a potent pen and spoke with charm and persuasiveness. He was a young man, A. J. Glover, by name, who later became editor of Hoard's Dairyman published in Wisconsin. Mr. Glover spoke often in the Red River Valley. In fact, it could be said he had for many years a permanent place on the program for the annual "round-up" and convention of the Red River Dairymen's Association. I counted him among my most cherished friends.

In 1916, as president of the Red River Valley Dairymen's Association, I presented figures showing the growth of dairying in the valley. In 1914, there were 137 creameries, with 19,292 patrons receiving $2,478,206.23. In 1860, the census reported
only 1932 head of cattle in the valley counties. In 1910, that number had increased to 337,587 of which 45 percent were dairy cows.

I mentioned the Valley's great wealth of soil. After the last glacial streams had slowly withdrawn to the north, a fertile prairie sprang out to meet the sun, the winds and the gentle rains of heaven. What a heritage! Men and women of the Red River Valley, do you realize the wonders of it all? Do you know the potent powers of this soil and the wonders it can perform? It will respond richly to your labors. It will grow grains to feed you and millions besides. Its fields will welcome herds of browsing kine and grow more productive as they graze over them.

All the secrets of the Red River Valley are not yet ours. Nature demands her own way to unlock her treasures, but you may be sure the key is not hidden away. We are the stewards for a short time. Shall we use these treasures wisely and honestly, or shall we waste and destroy? We come to the annual meetings of this Association to renew our faith in ourselves, to gather information that will aid us and to get added inspiration for our work. In cooperation with each other, the greatest results will come.

This Association celebrated its twentieth anniversary at an evening meeting held in the Opera House, Crookston, in the fall of 1923. The founder, former Superintendent Hoverstad was the guest of honor. Nothing short of a pageant would do for such an occasion. I was commissioned to write it, the fee would be paid in coin of appreciation if the venture proved a success. It did. It was a colorful event. The Opera House was filled.

The teaching staffs of the Northwest School and of Crookston high school, students of both schools and representatives of clubs and groups in Crookston cooperated enthusiastically in putting on this pageant.
More than forty years have passed since the Northwest School of Agriculture held its first annual short course, the forerunner of its annual Farmers' Week and Women's Meetings and of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. It was held the last week of December, 1910.

Successful short courses had been held at Glencoe, Minnesota, by the high school agricultural department there during my superintendency. I visioned a larger field at Crookston and the faculty determinedly put their shoulders to the wheel to give the vision life and form. Dean Woods gave the plan his unstinted approval.

The date of the first meeting was set during the Christmas holidays in order not to interfere with the regular school work. A farm crops exhibit was planned. The first task was to secure suitable prizes to be offered as awards. Farm machinery firms came generously to our aid. The local dealers and Crookston business firms generally assisted. A premium list was issued. A program for the meetings was prepared. It was a new undertaking for us all but the same loyal cooperation which has since its founding sustained this enterprise was forthcoming, and the first short course and grain exhibit became a reality.

The newly constructed building with its assembly room and gymnasium really made the venture possible. The short course and show were the first events held in that building, now called the Kiehle Building, as it was completed only a few days before the holiday season of the year 1910.

Many anxious days and hours were spent in planning this first venture. Would it attract enough people to make it worth while? Would there be any exhibits? I do not have access to the newspapers to learn their comments but I do recall we were agreeably surprised at the interest shown and the attendance.

Transportation to the school in those days presented a real problem. The Northwest Station had no motor bus. At times there were no open highways in the winter. Old "Colonel" and "Dick" had to trudge wearily to and fro hauling an open bob-sled bedded with straw for warmth. Every available stall was used for the teams that brought the visitors. Everyone at the school had burdens of responsibility for this and other things that had to be done.

I distinctly recall that my southern Minnesota notions regarding quality of grains were markedly changed when I saw the fine, golden wheat and other grains placed in exhibition. No such sight had I seen before. I am sure there grew in me the firm conviction that the Red River Valley must have another annual crops show.

The interest in the meetings concerned grain growing mainly. That wasn't quite my idea for the future. The valley needed something else, too, but the new things had to be brought in slowly. A demand had to be created and it was the Northwest School's duty and high privilege to foster this demand.

At the first short course and grain exhibit, the University's College of Agriculture gave yeoman service. Dean Woods had promised support and gave it. During the
seventeen years when it was my privilege to be associated in this work, the Central institution never faltered. The success of the “infant” in the valley became the concern of the deans who succeeded Dr. Woods, and of the State Experiment Station staff as well. It is a pleasure to record this evidence of cooperation. Other institutions contributed, as for example, North Dakota Agricultural College, Manitoba Agricultural College and others.

3.

The next two short courses in 1912 and 1913 were held during January at the school. The weather was cold which limited the attendance. The venture grew, however, from year to year. Magnificent donations for premiums were received. Silos, road graders, mowers, gasoline engines—the list represented real interest on the part of the donors. The number of exhibits increased. The grain show became Valley-wide.

The meetings brought large crowds. The evening meetings held in the school auditorium took on the aspect of a general community gathering where current problems of broader aspect than primarily of the farm were discussed. Farm crops and live-stock judging events were begun.

Soon it became evident that the distance from the city and the lack of accommodations during the day for man and beast were factors that limited growth and development of the week. The Great Northern Railway provided special train service to the school’s spur track, stopped its regular trains at the school, and showed fullest cooperation, but the problem of caring for large crowds at the school remained unsolved.

Up to this time the Crookston Commercial Club, as the business men’s association was then called, had taken an active part. I wish it were possible for me to list all the men and women who did so much to help make this Valley event an institution. Following a series of conferences with the Club’s officers, the decision came to move the short course and the “Farms Crop Show,” as it had come to be called to the city.

The station agronomist, Otto I. Bergh, first suggested the title, “Farm Crops Show.” We were discussing the need of a short, crisp name for Harold Grandy, Northwest School student, our artist, to inscribe on the poster he was designing. The old timers will recall the sheaf of wheat and alfalfa, nicely colored, that formed the main motif in the early publicity. (See illustration.) The name “Farm Crops Show” took from the start.

4.

The Grand Opera House in the city was secured for the meetings. J. W. Wheeler, president of the First National Bank, consented to the use of the then unoccupied quarters (now the Commercial Hotel) for the farm crops exhibits.

Moving to the city gave the meetings and farm crops show a tremendous impetus. Visitors could find accommodations in the city and it became increasingly evident that the week was emerging to become an important event. Instead of special local train service from Crookston to the school spur, special trains were scheduled from the far points in the Valley during the week.

The evening meetings held in the Opera House attracted crowds beyond its capacity. The day meetings and the women’s meetings were well attended. The number of farm crops exhibits increased each year. The Crookston Commercial Club in 1916 had inaugurated its policy of providing $1,000.00 annually, for expenses and has continued to do so ever since. President George E. Vincent and other notable
Third Annual Northwestern Minnesota

FARM CROPS SHOW

CROOKSTON, FEB. 18-19-20, 1914

PREMIUMS

Valued at Nearly $2,000.00

3 Big Days

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18
FARM CROPS SHOW

3 BIG DAYS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

FREE TRIP TO STATE FAIR

Two Silver Cups will be Awarded

Rural School Spelling Contest

LOUIS W. HILL SILVER CUP, Grand Champion Premium, for Best Peck (15 Pounds) Potatoes

Farm Crops Show

Farmers from any of the following Northwestern Minnesota Counties may enter the Farm Crops Show: Kittson, Marshall, Roseau, Pembina, Red Lake, Polk, Clearwater, Beltrami, Norman, Mahnomen, Clay, Becker and Hubbard.

Playford Cement Silo, 12x30, Value $225.00, as Sweepstakes Premium

FARM CROPS SHOW POSTER, 1914.
speakers gave addresses that lingered long in the minds of those who came. It began to look as though a new life had come into being.

Up to this time the unenviable job of securing premiums for the farm crops show had fallen largely, if not solely, upon one person and that was myself. I didn’t exactly tire of the job because the victims were mild, gentle and generous, but the thought came that the counties themselves might contribute a small sum each to finance the awards made to exhibitors from their county.

The Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association was formed, duly incorporated and officered with a director from each Valley county. Leslie Welter, Moorhead, was its first president and he did yeoman service for the Association. He was succeeded by leading men of the Valley, all of whom proved their worth.

But no law existed whereby the County Commissioners could appropriate money for such an association. Well, a bill had to be drafted and it fell to State Representative John H. Boyd, our farmer neighbor across the road from the Northwest Station, to introduce the bill in the Legislature. It passed but with a provision inserted by a cautious legislator requiring a unanimous vote of the County Board, instead of the usual majority. Later this law was amended to require but a majority vote. All the counties made annual grants to assist the farm crops show.

As business manager we were very fortunate in securing the interest and services of L. R. Boyd, Crookston. He also served as superintendent of the farm crops exhibits which in itself was an arduous task for the number of exhibits of grain, corn, grass seeds and potatoes grew yearly almost alarmingly. We were always hard put to find space. Raymond A. Rossberg, Crookston, proved an able assistant in connection with the meetings. Both served until they joined “the colors” as commissioned officers in 1917 but resumed their respective places on their return.

There were many others who helped. I can name only a few. S. M. Sivertson, C. C. Strander, State Senator John Saugstad, J. M. Cathcart, C. H. Zealand, E. W. Spring, Joseph Ball, W. R. Low and many others, including a host of workers from all the counties in the Valley.

From its founding the Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association has remained active. Late last year its treasurer, H. C. Strander, Crookston, sent me a copy of a letter addressed to the Commissioners of the counties of the Minnesota Red River Valley, submitting budget requests for the Winter Crops Show financed by the counties. Each county has one representative on the Association’s board.

The current president of the association is Superintendent Thomas M. McCall, Crookston. Directors-at-large are former presidents and leaders including names of persons with whom I worked during early years in the Valley. They builted well and doubtless now find great satisfaction in what they have achieved.

Very soon after moving the “Farmers’ Week” to Crookston, came the problem of finding a place to accommodate the large crowds that wanted to attend the meetings, and of having a suitable place for the farm crops exhibits. The citizens of Crookston had previously rejected a bond issue for an armory. With this new need pressing for a solution, another election was held, and the bonds for the armory were voted.

Then began the big days and evenings for the “Northwest School’s Farmers’ Week and Women’s Meetings” and the “Red River Valley Farm Crops Show,” which was the new name duly emblazoned on huge multi-colored posters displayed throughout the entire Valley. The Valley Week had arrived!
Outstanding events crowded those eventful years. Kittson County's "Alfalfa Gang" and their songs emanating from the top-most rows in the rear of the Armory, where the evening meetings were held. The songfests, led by Miss M. Lucille Holliday. The zeal and the enthusiasm of all. The living, breathing Red River Valley spirit which filled the air, but the list would be unending. Hundreds of men and women thronged the city during the "Weeks."

They were receiving something that made them happier and better. They told me so. The meetings were purposely scheduled to fall midway between the holidays and the beginning of spring work in the fields. They were hungry for new contacts, to see something, to hear inspiring addresses, to hear the magnificent male chorus of 150 voices, and themselves join in singing, "Here we are again at another Farm Crops Show."

6.

Something has been written about a "divine discontent" that isn't satisfied with things as they are. This came into evidence at about this time. I recall it was hard work at first to get anyone interested. From the beginning everything centered on farm crops, on producing grains. This didn't set so very well with a Southern Minnesotan who often mentioned that from his little home town in that part of the state, the weekly stock train bound for Chicago, frequently added on twenty carloads of stock. True farm husbandry required live-stock.

Something did happen, it appears. Very well I recall at the first short course week how intently the farmers listened to the talks on grain-raising and how, oh how, reluctantly they wended their way to witness a live stock judging demonstration at the school's stock pavilion. Here was a new species of agricultural educator who had come to the Red River Valley, of all places! A livestock professor!

By 1915 or so something had happened. I came to know personally many who attended the first few short courses. They expressed their views frankly to me on "our" farm crops show and kindred subjects. They began calling for livestock talks. Said a Mr. Miller, Warren, one day: "Let's have one-half day for horses, one-half day for dairy cattle, one half-day for swine, one-half day for sheep. We must get posted on the problems of livestock farming for the Red River Valley. We'll soon be the greatest livestock section in the country." Mr. Miller told me this with all the earnestness and fire that makes for success.

After reading so much of late about United States and Texas winning the war, I glimpse a sort of relationship between Texans and Red River Valleyites!

Gradually, livestock problems had been included in the programs at the farmers' week meetings. More and more people volunteered their advice in recommending that such subjects be given prominence. The Red River Valley Livestock Breeders' Association had been organized with Frank Jeffers as president. The poultry people held their annual show at the same time as the farm crops show. Why not have a livestock show, too?

7.

No need to have many animals at the show. No, just a few representative head of the leading breeds of cattle, sheep and hogs. It would be interesting to have such an exhibit, if only once, to try it out. Why, let's rent Sathre's Garage and try it anyway. I'm simply mentioning some of the suggestions thrown out here and there, and everywhere. I'd studied Dr. William James' psychology. He was strong on the potency of suggestion.
Money would be required to finance it. The limit was placed at $300.00 for the first annual livestock show held in Sathre's garage in connection with the 1917 farm crops show and meetings. The number of head exhibited was 67, or was it 87? In 1918 the livestock show was held in Torrance's Garage which was roomier. The idea took.

In the spring a delegation visited the Brandon, Manitoba Winter Livestock Show. The visit was made by C. C. Strander, Lee R. Boyd and myself from Crookston, Prof. W. H. Peters, of Minnesota Agricultural College and W. E. Morris of the Agricultural College's extension service, St. Paul. (Incidentally, on the journey to and from Brandon it was always possible to find four of the delegation at whist.)

At Brandon the province of Manitoba and the municipality of Brandon had achieved a big success. They'd spent over $200,000 for their buildings. Undismayed, a small group in the Red River Valley decided they, too, would try and see what could be done.

The Brandon visit played an important part in the developments that followed. While there we met Hon. Duncan Marshall, Commissioner of Agriculture, and J. D. McGregor, well-known breeder of Angus cattle. Naturally during our three days' stay we had many talks together. They said: "We'll do anything we can to help you." And they did.

The Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association held a big meeting in Warren, Minnesota, June 20, 1918. A pageant was presented and Miss M. Lucille Holliday, song leader, was formally named "Miss Pep." Mr. Marshall gave a stirring address featuring the scene in the House of Commons when Lord Grey announced the fateful decision, "It is war."

On the train from Crookston Warren that morning Mr. Marshall turned to me to ask, "What shall I talk about today?" I had thought about that, too. My instant answer was, "The Will to Win!" I could see the response in that great patriot's face. There were tears in his eyes. His breast heaved. By afternoon he had formed one of the greatest speeches it has ever been my experience to hear. He had a large audience that hung on his every word. This speech had a profound influence throughout Northwestern Minnesota and in Dakota.

The newly organized livestock association met the same day. Prof. William A. McKerrow of University Farm, J. D. McGregor, Duncan Marshall and our local leaders made forceful addresses. Highest enthusiasm reigned. When we all returned home we felt we were ready for business.

An organization that could acquire and own property was needed. The Red River Valley Livestock Association was organized and incorporated. Elected as officers of the association were C. G. Selvig, president; Frank Jeffers, Red Lake Falls, vice-president; Ward V. Gousseff, head of the Northwest School’s livestock department, secretary, and M. E. Dahl, Twin Valley, treasurer.

Shares were $10.00 each. A building was planned. It would cost $15,000. Up to this time the farm crops exhibits were placed on shelves along the inside walls of the armory. Too much space was taken that people wanted for seats. Hundreds couldn't get into the armory for the evening meetings.

The upshot was that money should be sought for one livestock exhibit building, only one!—to house the farm crops exhibits, on first and second floors in front; have a livestock judging room in the rear; and to provide quarters for the livestock
Conrad G. Selvy of Minnesota.

Sir:

As draws to a close this EIGHTH ANNUAL GATHERING of the people of northwestern Minnesota's—
as we must know it until a more embructive and comprehensive designation offers—
THE FARM CROPS SHOW,
we wish to say to you, and in saying, believe we speak for all, that to your enthusiasm, your energy and perseverance in the larger measure is due the gratifying and encouraging success that the gathering has proven.

TRUE, you have had the co-operation to the utmost of many, but that they have as gladly contributed their efforts can be but a tribute to your leadership.

THE LIVE STOCK PAVILION,
the opening of which has been a feature and factor in the success of the meeting and which bids well to do much to promote our welfare and prosperity stands—act, we would say, as a monument, but as the cornerstone or the foundation of a monument which will rise to the the vision, the self-sacrifice and the integrity of yourself and they who have labored with you in the achievement.

Dated at Crookston, Minnesota February 11, 1919.

Scroll presented in behalf of audience at evening session of the Northwest School's Farmers' and Women's Meeting, 1919. (See appendix for typed copy.)

"A great surprise which overwhelmed the recipient."
in the basement area of 50x140 feet. Besides this, to build a small frame building on the lot across the alley for sheep and hogs.

Right here I'd like to proclaim a roll of honor. It would include every last one of the men and women, too, who went right to work to raise $15,000.00 (and later $50,000 additional) by selling shares at $10.00 each for a livestock exhibit building to be located next to the armory at Crookston. M. R. Hussey, Crookston, accepted a contract to build without our having a penny, or thereabouts, in the treasury. But the thing was done.

The first exhibit held in February, 1919, filled every nook and corner. The attendance ran into the thousands during the week. Chas. J. Gullekson, Beltrami, who had sold a share or more to each of his Reis township neighbors, excepting four, for a total of $475.00 from one township, received the keys to the building from the contractor, made a prophetic speech that was cheered to the rafters and the Livestock Show was an established institution.

Leaders of the pavilion's building fund were livestock breeders from every county in the valley and scores of other farmers who recognized the importance of this project. The Association's secretary, W. V. Gousseff, worked zealously and with great success in the drive. Aiding in every possible way were community leaders who canvassed townships specifically assigned them.

Business men from Crookston, Warren, Red Lake Falls, Thief River Falls, Ada, Argyle, Hallock, Roseau, East Grand Forks, Detroit Lakes and many other places figuratively "took their coats off" and went to work to secure funds for this project.

I do not now recall the names of all the persons who were among the most active fund-raisers. The list must include Frank Jeffers, Dr. N. M. Watson, Sam E. Hunt, C. C. Strander, S. M. Sivertson, A. D. Stephens, John Saugstad, J. W. Wheeler, W. S. Lycan, S. A. Wallace, W. T. Carlisle, W. E. McKenzie, A. A. Miller, J. P. Foote, W. V. Gousseff, O. M. Kiser, E. C. Schroeder, N. P. Hanson, M. L. Enright, M. E. Dahl, W. V. Longley, A. E. Phiffner, C. L. Spaulding, L Lamberson, H. A. Morkassel, L. Jenson, William Ash, Peter Englestad, J. J. Sinclair, B. E. Sundberg, county agents in all the counties, and many, many others. These names bring back memories of cherished friendships. A great many more should be added and would be but for limitations of space.

9.

The St. Paul Association of Commerce donated $2000.00 and the Duluth Commercial Club, $1000.00. H. V. Jones, publisher of the Minneapolis Journal took it upon himself to raise $2000.00 in Minneapolis. I was in his office when he did it. He gave $500.00 himself and then phoned three of his friends who promptly made the total $2000.00.

There was some difficulty in securing funds for the third building. It cost more than the estimates. It was built in 1921, the first year of the post-war depression which hit our Valley farmers, banks and business firms right between the eyes.

One morning while in Crookston I met James M. Hanson, cashier of the bank which carried the association's account. He was an earnest worker but on that morning he was filled with gloom and despair. "Mr. Selvig, the Livestock Association will need to raise $23,000.00 to pay for the third building. How are you going to do it with the tide of falling farm prices, and resultant distress, facing the association? It can't be done," he said.
Well, this was exactly the opposite of the Red River Valley slogan, “It can be done,” which President Marion Leroy Burton saw on my desk at the school. He liked it and referred to it in his address before the packed armory audience attending the Farmers’ Week meeting the same evening. He referred to it quite often. We now had a real test.

Raising the funds for the first two buildings had not presented unusual difficulties but in 1921 it was different. But it had to be done. A renewed drive was organized. The livestock breeders donated choice breeding stock which were auctioned off at two “donation” sales. We did not quite reach the goal but the $7,000.00 mortgage loan was soon repaid.

In 1919 the Legislature voted for an annual appropriation of $2,000.00 to help pay premiums for the livestock exhibits. In 1927, this was increased to $5,700.00 a year. In the depression year of 1933, when all state appropriations were reduced, the amount became $4,700.00.

The 2600 or more stockholders of the Red River Valley Livestock Association now owned three substantial buildings located in the heart of Crookston’s business district adjoining the armory. When not used for exhibit or sale purposes the build-
ings are leased for commercial purposes and rentals received are used to help finance the annual exhibits and for maintenance of buildings.

All were two-story structures. Two were of brick and one of stucco. The sizes are (1) 50 by 142, (2) 73 by 141 and (3) 127 by 40. Total floor space is nearly two acres. It now houses the second to the largest livestock show in the state, being exceeded only by the Minnesota State Fair.

There were some unanswered questions at the start. Could winter livestock shows be held? Would weather conditions permit? After a few years experience the answer was in the affirmative. There have been a few blizzardly days. They are always remembered, of course, but, by far, fair weather prevailed.

President George E. Vincent of the University of Minnesota at one session made an open-air speech standing on a platform of bales of alfalfa hay. Then, as now, enterprising reporters gathered around to report his speech and to secure photographs as well. Result: nation-wide publicity on the salubrious climate of the Red River Valley in mid-February!

Stock, grain and potato judging contests had been instituted as a part of the farmers' short course program before the shows were moved to Crookston. Participants were judging teams from the special schools of agriculture located in Minnesota (3), North Dakota and South Dakota; from high school agricultural departments; from farm-clubs and later from 4-H and Future Farmers' clubs. These annual contests excited great interest. They were a year-round educative project.

A junior show was soon organized. It grew with the great expansion of boys' and girls' clubs, 4-H clubs and Future Farmers of America. A. J. Kittleson, boys' and girls' district club leader, was for years located at the Northwest School. He was succeeded by H. A. Pflughoeft. Later Mr. Kittleson became State Director of boys' and girls' clubs. I can only mention this activity. It has become a powerful educational movement full of promise for the future.

From the very beginning programs of special interest to women were provided. Leading experts presented topics of great variety year after year. Crookston's three Women's Clubs and the Fairfax-Andover Social Circle took turns, annually, a day each to act as hostesses. As the years went on these meetings at times attracted larger audiences than did the day meetings for the men. Music was featured. Usually the principal speaker at the evening session spoke before the women's meeting, also. It was inspiring to attend these meetings and I often was one of the audience.

The Opera House soon proved inadequate for the crowds that came from all over the Valley and from North Dakota as well. The completion of the Armory helped solve that problem. In it up to 1800 or more could be accommodated. Community singing became a feature. It can almost be said the story of the growth of the Valley's Week began with singing songs together, songs that stirred the Valley people to feel together, to think together and to plan together and which led them to act in concert.

Many years before I came to Crookston I had memorized Burk's trenchant saying: "No men can act with effect who do not act in concert; no men can act in concert who do not act with confidence, who are not bound together with common opinions, common affections and common interests."

Nothing serves as well to create "common affections" as song. I found among my papers the following which bears on this theme. "For when they sing together as they do in the Red River Valley at the annual Northwest School Farmers' Week
The Valley Comes To Life

meetings, where they really do sing; where the late Governor Winfield S. Hammond of Minnesota, said he had never received in his life greater inspiration; where President George Edgar Vincent has held spellbound 2400 people—all who could crowd in, all standing room taken, after addressing an overflow meeting of nearly equal size; where President Marion Leroy Burton taught the entire Valley how to live during the world's greatest (at that time) war. When folks who sing together and come to listen to such men decide to do something, even Atlas on his foundations begins to feel something is moving."

"The Valley's motto, 'It can be done,' is writ in the hearts of its people. It comes from the Valley, whether its source is the deep, rich, black soil of the earth, or the lovely purple of a thousand acre alfalfa field, or the golden gleams of sun-kissed wheat, or the serried rows of Red River Valley's Early Ohios—it doesn't matter. It is there."

12.

The meetings held annually as a part of the Northwest School's program always drew large crowds. The speakers at the evening sessions were men and women of state and national prominence. Music was featured. Community singing attained a popularity under the direction of the school's music teacher, Miss Lucille Holliday.

The homey melodious tunes which established a flavor for the World War I era reached onto the Northwest School campus and projected a Northwest School personality into the national limelight.

And Lucille Holliday, brimful of Michigan pep and lilting songs, became noted as the most famous community singing director of the entire Middle West.

Miss Holliday could elicit melody from the deadest audience. She used catchy tunes everybody knew and soon had everybody chirping merrily. Her fame spread rapidly around the Valley and before war's end she appeared before huge audiences in the Twin Cities and elsewhere.

The same magnetic appeal that made her a great director wrought similar magic on the Northwest School campus. She glamourized and dramatized her musical productions and everyone was anxious to get into her shows. She was a showman. The Northwest School had had other excellent music teachers. But when Lucille Holliday left the campus she took her own special formula with her. There's only one Lucille Holliday.

She was followed by Arthur H. Larson, also of the School's faculty who won acclaim as a dynamic and inspirational leader. One year Fred W. Carberry, Milwaukee, Rotarian's superb song-leader had the time of his life as the Valley's song leader. O. W. Peterson and later T. W. Thorson led the male chorus of 150 voices.

The members came from a dozen different communities and rehearsed regularly during the year for the annual program at the show. Frank W. Murphy, Wheaton, sat with President Lotus D. Coffman and me in the audience during one of their programs. He said, "Mr. Selvig, this is the most inspirational music I have ever heard. No wonder the Red River Valley folks are happy. They find joy and love in song."

13.

I have placed in the appendix the list of the principal speakers during the 1916 to 1930 meetings sent me by Superintendent A. A. Dowell. Each deserves special mention. Since 1930 there has been a succession of notable persons who have contributed greatly through presentation of their addresses. The interest continues, year by year.
One of the notable meetings attended by thousands occurred in February, 1926, when Governor Frank O. Lowden, of Illinois, came to Crookston. The Great Northern Railway tendered President Louis W. Hill's special car for the Governor's trip from St. Paul. The weather was mild, the roads were open. The largest crowd ever assembled greeted him. He spoke at the Women's meeting where there was a jam-packed church auditorium filled with eager listeners.

We knew the armory could not accommodate all who wished to attend so my good friend Arthur R. Fairbanks, manager of the local telephone exchange, fitted up a loudspeaker connected to the auditorium of the Methodist Church. I presided at the evening meeting. Governor Lowden spoke first to the 900 people assembled at the church so they might see the man they had come to hear.

We then went to the armory. It was difficult to reach this building as crowds jammed the streets. It was estimated over 5,000 persons failed to gain admittance to the armory. The crowds greeted him as he passed. The farmers felt they had in Governor Lowden a friend. This short trip to the armory affected him. When we reached there we had great difficulty in reaching the stage.

The room was packed full. His address was one of the most eloquent and sincere I have ever heard. He spoke of farming in terms the audience understood. He had himself been born on a small farm in Minnesota. He told of early days. He spoke with conviction his views regarding the plight of the farmers, stressing constructive solutions. He touched on no political issues. His address marked him as the great statesman he was. The audience rose as a man and gave him an ovation he said he would never forget.

Years later I became well acquainted with him. I came to regard him as one of the country's greatest leaders. We exchanged letters frequently. While I was in Congress, he came to Washington to attend a conference. As I was approaching the conference room, I was met by Congressman William E. Hull, of Illinois, escorting the Governor to the meeting place. "Governor, permit me to introduce to you, Congressman Selvig, of Minnesota," he said. Governor Lowden answered, "I knew Selvig years before he became a Congressman. He was superintendent of the finest agricultural school I've ever seen."

At a later date my wife and I visited him at his "Sinnissippi" farm near Oregon, Illinois. It was silo-filling time and the Governor was right there working with his men.

The Red River Valley Winter Shows had arrived. Thousands, instead of hundreds, came each year. The nation's leading speakers were heard. Outstanding specialists contributed to the programs. The women's meetings developed greatly. The pure seed growers were organized and assisted in staging the farm crops exhibit.

The Northern Minnesota Poultry Association held its annual poultry show during the "Week." Stock and grain judging contests assumed an important place. The Valley Dairymen's Association contributed materially. Boys' and girls' club activities played a vital part. There is no end to the activities centering in this undertaking.

Throughout all the years the several cooperating Valley-wide associations continued loyally to work together. This has been one of the finest fruits of the entire enterprise. Under Superintendents A. A. Dowell and T. M. McCall the Northwest School's Week and the Winter Shows have gone on and on to greater and better things. A changed economic era has failed to break down this solidly established institution. May it live long in the future is my sincere wish!
The University of Minnesota attained high rank during the administration of President Cyrus Northrop. It was my privilege to meet him several times. On one occasion while at Glencoe I served on a committee of school superintendents who discussed University entrance requirements with a faculty committee headed by Dean John F. Downey. Dr. Northrop was present. The suggestions made by the school men were adopted.

Later agitation favoring the establishment of a College of Education at the University led me to address a letter to President Northrop which is too long to include in this book. A dinner meeting followed attended by Dr. Northrop, the Board of Regents, many of the faculty and by a substantial group of school administrators. It was an impressive occasion which led later to the establishment of the College.

The students of the University seldom missed "Chapel" exercises, during his presidency. Whether he made the principal speech or merely introduced the speaker
made no difference. His reputation for eloquence and humor reached to every state. It was a delight to hear him. Oft-repeated is the story of the Cornell banquet where Chauncey Depew was toastmaster. Northrop was introduced as the tornado of the Northwest. Northrop said this reference was a new one to him but it must be true coming from a gentleman who is generally recognized authority on wind.

I attended the reception tendered his successor Dr. George E. Vincent and there much to my surprise Dr. Northrop recognized me and gave me a friendly smile and said, "I hear good reports about your work at the Crookston School, young man." The very fact that he recognized and spoke to me made a lasting impression.

Near the close of his long service as the University's president he said:

"I am an old man now and I have seen many things in the world. If there is anything that a man of 80 years of age could say to a people among whom he has spent the happiest days of his life, it is this:

"We live in the most blessed country in the world. The things that we have accomplished are only the beginning. As the years go on, and always we increase our strength, our power and our wealth, we must depart not from the simple teaching of our youth."

2.

Dean Albert F. Woods had a most important part in the development of the institution at Crookston. He was given a royal welcome to Minnesota and was accepted at once by all who wanted the University's Department of Agriculture to become a leader in that field. I think of him as a statesman in the field of agriculture. He served seven years as Dean and Director and during that period laid the foundations for the present Department of Agriculture of the University of Minnesota.

I owe my appointment to him. He was always firm in his support. He never interfered with details of administration. He placed responsibility on his staff and helped them in every way to attain their objectives. He served the University and the state greatly.

When Dr. George E. Vincent succeeded President Northrop as the University's president, both he and Woods envisioned the entire state as the University's campus. He was keenly aware of the importance of the state's agriculture. He bent every effort to support Dean Woods in his monumental task.

Before long the people of the state were thrilled over Vincent's rapid-fire speeches and his lightning-like responses to introductions. They are classics in our University lore.

It was my privilege to be present at his first appearance as president before the University's faculty. The institution's Registrar who also was secretary of the Alumni Association, E. Bird Johnson, was seated on the platform. Vincent began his address, "President Northrop, members of the Board of Regents, faculty members," and turning to Mr. Johnson, "and rara avis." This brought down the house, for the Registrar knew everyone by his or her first name. His memory was almost beyond belief. He was, indeed a rare bird. Vincent established himself at once as the man who would brilliantly occupy the position held for 27 years by the revered President Northrop.

On another occasion he was listed as the last speaker at one of the forenoon meetings of the Minnesota Education Association. The three preceding speakers occupied the time until five minutes of twelve. The audience was restless.
Then President Vincent was introduced. He rose and raced to the platform. “In conclusion” were his first words. Then in five minutes he gave a ringing speech that brought the audience on their toes. Then he stopped. The roof nearly fell in.

Another incident happened at the Opera House, Crookston, where the Northern Minnesota Development Association held a meeting, attended by a large delegation from St. Louis County, famous for the Iron Range and the peerless city of Duluth. C. M. King, father of Minnesota’s present state auditor was president of the Association and chairman of the meeting. He made a rather long speech, in which he repeatedly referred to and eulogized highly the delegation from St. Louis County.

Finally, he introduced President Vincent, who in his characteristic way strode rapidly to the front and said, “Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,” and turning to the Duluth delegation, “and benefactors from St. Louis County.” Those in the audience roared and none more than the delegation from that county.

President Vincent was interested in every movement for the benefit of the state. He came to Eldred, Minnesota, a small village 12 miles south of Crookston and encouraged that community to form a consolidated school. He won every person to the support of the project though it had been previously opposed by several influential persons in the community.

Later he and Mrs. Vincent attended the annual banquet of the Fairfax-Andover Social Circle, a pioneer farm club and spoke feelingly on the subject of rural social life. He and his wife were our guests on this occasion. He strongly advocated adding a fourth year, called the advanced course, to the three-years’ course at the state agricultural schools.

3.

The Northwest School owes much to its teaching staff. It was indeed fortunate in this respect. All were experienced teachers who quickly sensed the needs of the students. Many of the students needed intensive drills in English. The teachers rose
to the occasion. Drills, drills, drills. The students hummed the drills on the way to and from classes. Many of them later stated the courses in English were the most helpful of all they studied at the school.

A political phenomenon almost rare enough to be unique resulted from a friendship between two Minnesota Swedes.

And Mike Holm, Minnesota’s noted Secretary of State, has gone on almost like perpetual motion, to establish new records in office-holding and vote-getting because of the “Swedish” partnership.

When J. P. Bengtson was superintendent of schools at Roseau, Minnesota, Mr. Holm was a civic leader. The two men became fast friends. Then “J. P.,” already a name in Minnesota education, came to the Northwest School to become a preceptor and instructor.

When Mr. Holm was swept into state office in 1921 he took his friend with him as assistant. The astute Holm had a genius for pouring oil on troubled waters. His assistant was his efficiency expert. The Secretary of State’s Office became a model the nation over for effective administration. Holm became a byword in every hamlet, on every farm. The Holm-Bengtson team survived the Farmer-Labor era and broke all Minnesota vote-getting records when the Republicans came back in power. They are still at the St. Paul office, a remarkable example of efficient officialdom.

A stern disciplinarian, Mr. Bengtson quickly became known on the Northwest School campus as a great teacher. He originated a policy of “never letting lightning strike twice in the same place” and a student, who was subjected to the embarrassment of not knowing the answer to a question he had been asked maybe two weeks previously, never made that error again. Bengtson students generally became A students.

It is interesting to conjecture on what would have happened had Mr. Bengtson stayed in education. He was followed by another leader of youth, Arthur H. Larson, who was in addition, a skilled musician. He served in many capacities but a larger field beckoned. He is now at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York.

The former students will also talk of many others who were so helpful to them. Oscar L. Buhr, my secretary for five years. He is now vice-president of Detroit Trust Company, Detroit, Michigan. Thomas M. McCall, horticulturist, now superintendent of the Northwest School and Station. Otto I. Bergh, agronomist, who later became superintendent of the school and station, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

Miss Laura Franklin, preceptor and instructor, married. Miss Faith S. Brown, instructor of English, who originated her own methods to meet the special needs of her students. Mrs. Anna Funk Haig, instructor of English, who did the same. Miss Mabel H. Olsen, eminent instructor of Home Economics, who became principal of a special school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Miss Hazel Rockwood who succeeded her. Miss Grace B. Sherwood who had charge of the rural teachers training school.

I know I should not stop here but I am referring solely now to the teachers of the early days. Throughout all the years of its existence the Northwest School has attained distinction largely because of the caliber of its teaching staff. The fountain cannot rise higher than its source. Teachers are in the first priority in any school. They should always be persons of the highest ideals, finest character, abundant energy and possessed of the right spirit.

Buildings were voted by the Legislature at the rate of one or two each session until the immediate needs were met. I shall not enumerate them. They stand there on
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the campus for all to see. There were only three school buildings completed when I arrived in August, 1910. Two more were in the first stage of construction.

A much needed physical education building, including a swimming pool was built during Superintendent Dowell's tenure and in Superintendent McCall's tenure (up to now) a large dormitory for girls. There are eleven school buildings in addition to a central heating plant, a complete array of farm buildings. In addition, the state provided several cottages and two apartment dwellings for the faculty.

Enrollment increased each year. In 1916-17, the enrollment in the regular three years' course was 160; in the junior short course, 47; in the summer training school for rural teachers, 145 and in the farmers' short course, 1824 or a total of 2195. Later the number in the regular course increased to over 300. During recent years this number has increased to 450, which is regarded as a limit for the school.

JAMES J. HILL BUILDING.

"Death intervened to prevent the gift of another James J. Hill Building."

The classroom building named the Hill Building was dedicated on December 5, 1912. On the same day three buildings were officially named as follows: Owen Hall, for the Farm Engineering Building, tender of name in behalf of the Regents, Professor T. L. Haecker; Robertson Hall, dormitory, tender of name, Hon. B. F. Nelson, president of the Board of Regents, response by Mrs. William Robertson; Kiehle Building, tender of name, Superintendent Selvig; response by Regent C. G. Schulz, State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railway, was present at the main ceremony of the day when Hon. B. F. Nelson tendered the name, Hill Building, so designated in Mr. Hill's honor. He responded, giving early history of the Valley and stating why he had donated in 1895 the land now occupied by the Northwest School and Station. President Vincent's address closed the meeting.

A farm dinner was served the guests with Dean A. F. Woods, presiding at the program. Responses were made by Supt. A. J. McGuire, of Grand Rapids Station; Supt. E. C. Higbie, of West Central School and Station, Morris; L. A. Huntoon, Moorhead banker and leader; Supt. J. H. Hay, of the public schools, Thief River Falls; C. M. King, Deer River; Joseph Chapman, Jr., Minneapolis; W. A. McGonough, Duluth and on "The University" by President Vincent.
In the Red River Aggie for 1913, Mr. Hill wrote greetings to the class which shows the high regard in which he held the institution:

"Every institution engaged in giving instruction in modern farming methods is not only contributing to the advancement of an industry, which must always be the foundation of national prosperity and stability, but it is a guidepost pointing the way to what must and will be, for a majority of the young people of our country, the happiest and, if rightly followed, the most successful operation. In dignity and in practical worth, no department of the University outranks it.

I can wish no greater good fortune to the students of the School of Agriculture than that they may learn here to appreciate the dignity and the opportunities of the instruction open to them there, put it to good practical use by finding independent competence and happiness in work upon the farm, and achieve all the three ends of education that unite to make good manhood, good womanhood and good citizenship."

(Dated, St. Paul, January, 1913.)

Sometime later Mr. Hill was the guest of honor at the Northwestern Minnesota Agricultural Fair, Crookston, a combined fair and horse-racing event which attracted large crowds. The Great Northern Railway offered to donate young bulls of beef type to farmers who wished to establish herds. Before the grandstand crowd numbering thousands he spoke of the need of having livestock, of getting away from one-crop farming, of having home orchards and gardens and of installing home appliances to relieve the over-worked farm women.

That evening a dinner was tendered him at Hotel Crookston. Memory of it remains vivid. I had a seat near him and could watch his expression as he talked for nearly two hours after the dinner. He related his early experiences in the Valley. I recall one incident particularly. He and another man were camped near the Red River. They slept in a tent. In the morning they were awakened by a noise indicating some living creature was trying to crawl under the tent side. Upon opening the tent-flap Mr. Hill looked straight at a large gray wolf which was hungrily eyeing them.

Another of his reminiscenses stands out. There was no love lost between Mr. Hill and President Theodore Roosevelt whom he referred to several times as "King Theodore." The White House Conservation Congress which the President called in 1908, enrolled the nation’s leaders including among many both Mr. Hill and Andrew Carnegie, whom Hill spoke of as “Andy” Carnegie.

A photograph was planned. There was a great ado about where each one was to sit or stand. Mr. Hill chuckled when he told this incident. King Theodore wanted both “Jim” Hill and “Andy” Carnegie near him, but the canny Scotsmen had other ideas about that. “And we won that one against King Theodore,” he said exultingly.

Mr. Hill on the day of the dedication of the Hill Building said to me in the presence of J. W. Wheeler, president of the First National Bank, Crookston, and A. D. Stephens, president of the Merchants National Bank, Crookston, that when the state concluded its building program for the Northwest School and Station, “Come to see me at my office, and I’ll give this school a building or provide a fund for some unmet need.” I thanked him and informed him I had a long memory. His eyes twinkled and he said, “That’s all right young man; remember it, and you have two good witnesses.”

Not long afterwards, I accosted Mr. Stephens on the street and said, “Andy, when do we go to see Mr. Hill about that building?” “Just as soon as Mrs. Stephens
and I return from our trip to the Isle of Pines; I'll notify you.” During that interim Mr. Hill passed away. He left a legacy for Northwestern Minnesota even if fate intervened in regard to the promised building.

6.

Music, public speaking, debating, Y.M. and Y.W.C.A. activities (later a Newman Club was organized), athletics and other courses and activities were added at the school. Many scholarships and annual awards were provided by interested citizens, farm clubs and by the school's alumni.

A fourth year's course, called the Advanced Course was added when President Vincent declared there must be no blind alleys in our schools. This course was devoted solely to academic subjects. The students were compelled to work hard to maintain the standards set by the school.

"Summer practicums," the first name which was later changed to "home project work," became firmly established in 1912. At the fourth annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Teaching, in Washington, D.C., November 11, 1913, I presented outlines of our summer home work.*

Home project work made the school term twelve months, with six at school and six months on the farm or in the home. This became an established contribution to the agricultural school's program and exerted a strong influence nationally in the field of agricultural education.

It was in the course of visitations to the farm homes of our students that certain facts regarding country life during my first few years at Crookston became evident. Both Mr. Bengtson, school preceptor, and Mr. Larson, school registrar, reported there were many boys and girls on farms who never attended the nearest high school nor seem interested in proceeding beyond the seventh or eighth grade of rural school work.

In a general way this was common knowledge. I desired specific information and sought it in eight townships in the Valley, one in each of eight different areas. This "lag in school attendance" survey was made by Bengtson and Larson. The report is in the files of the school. They found a very large number of boys and girls under 18 in these eight townships at home; various reasons were given. It was an interesting report and both Dean Woods and President Vincent commended it highly.

Taking the figures from these rural townships in relation to the townships' population as a basis for estimating the number of boys and girls of school age who were not in school in the twelve Valley counties it was found that if only one third of them attended the Northwest School, its enrollment would be trebled. There existed a rural educational need to be met.

In this project as in many others Arthur H. Larson, preceptor, following Mr. Bengtson, proved to be the right man for the job. A graduate of Carleton College, Northfield, he was a musician, a gymnast, a group leader, an earnest Y.M.C.A. leader, an able instructor in debate (he led debate teams from the school all over the northwest) and a good organizer. During the last summer I was at the school he compiled four volumes of records of the Northwest School and Station, containing every printed program, bulletin and article issued from 1910 to April, 1927. The institution owes him much.

*See Agricultural Teaching, Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1914, No. 27, whole number 601, p. 49, pp. 27-84.
At about this time President Vincent resigned to become Executive-Secretary of the Rockefeller Foundation and Dean Woods to become the president of Maryland University. Later Dr. Woods became Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, followed by the Deanship of the Department's Graduate School. In all three positions he attained eminence.

During my service in Washington, 1927-1933, I often lunched with Dr. Woods. We enjoyed talking about the years at the University where he was my superior officer. I lauded his steadfastness and courage, his loyalty to the interests of the farmers. I informed him the most serious deficiency in a leader is lack of courage of his convictions. So many are afraid of losing their jobs. His work in behalf of agriculture deserve the encomium of a grateful nation.

President Vincent was succeeded as University president by Dr. Marion Leroy Burton, a graduate of Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. R. W. Thatcher, Chief of Bio-chemistry at the College of Agriculture was elected as Dean Woods’ successor. The press of that day reported several of the Regents voted to appoint me as Dean. I frankly stated I was very well satisfied to remain at Crookston and the deadlock came to an end. At about this time (1916) my name appeared in "Who’s Who". This was entirely unknown to me until I received the formal notice. The first number of “The Northwest Monthly” published by the School and Station was issued in 1916. It has continued to this day with a recent change in name to “The Northwest School News”.

The superintendents of the four state Schools of Agriculture became very well acquainted with the new University president and the new Dean of Agriculture. President Vincent had inaugurated quarterly conferences held at his home where subjects of interest to these Schools and Stations were informally discussed. This served to keep him abreast with developments, to learn first hand of needs and trends and gave us the benefit of his over-all view of the University. This plan was used by President Burton and Dean Thatcher, also, with benefit to all.

During this period the superintendents of the four state agricultural schools were: D. D. Mayne (designated principal) of the Central School, St. Paul; Paul E. Miller, West Central School, Morris; Otto I. Bergh, North Central School, Grand Rapids and the author. Mr. Mayne has passed away. He was a remarkable man. His leadership in agricultural education has not been adequately presented. It is my hope that a post-graduate student at the University of Minnesota will some day write a definitive account of his work and of his service to the state. He was prolific in new ideas. He was a real pioneer.

Paul E. Miller not only proved his administrative ability as superintendent at the Morris School but rose to assume the responsibilities of Director of the University’s Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service. In this work he has attained outstanding success.

We worked closely together for years. Our wives accompanied us the trip to Europe in 1931. Since then Mr. Miller has served one stretch as a member of the E. C. A. Committee dealing with agricultural problems in twelve European countries. At this writing he is on a “command” assignment as E. C. A. Director in Ireland. He works easily without fuss or feathers and gets things done. His work at the Morris School was outstanding.
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Otto I. Bergh was the junior member of the quartette that met at these quarterly conferences. He was promoted from agronomist at the Crookston School to become superintendent at Grand Rapids Station. There he organized the North Central School of Agriculture and established Station work of far-reaching importance to that vast area. Mr. Bergh proved to be a leader in North Central Minnesota’s farm projects and did much work that has proved of lasting benefit. He retired to Florida where he is now living. President Burton’s sincere interest in every phase of the University’s work inspired his colleagues. It was a glorious era.

The University’s building program was given great impetus during Burton’s administration. I noted in the press recently that former State Senator Albert J. Rockne, Zumbrota, died at the age of 82. He was for many years chairman of the Senate’s Committee on Finance. It was to him that President Burton made his plea. It was reported the meeting took place in the home of the University’s President and that the evening session lasted until 2:00 A. M. Burton impressed all with his high ideals and his powers of persuasion.

President Burton spent part of his summers on Star Island, Cass Lake, Minnesota which was close to our summer home there. After Dr. Burton left to become president of the University of Michigan we often met during August at Cass Lake. The last time I saw him he was approaching with his wife and a group of friends on one of the roadways in the interior of Star Island. It was autumn. This scene I shall always remember. His clothing and uncovered head matched the autumn colors. He trod the path in majesty. I can use no other term. He was one of the kindest, loftiest men I have known. I compared him in my mind with the lofty Norway Pines that surrounded us, well-rooted, firm, solid, unpretentious, swayed by no meanness, disturbed by no trouble, undismayed,—here was a man! He passed away in the prime of life. His picture among the pines in the glow of the setting sun will remain with me always.
During the World War I period additional duties were placed on the School and Station. I was appointed by the Governor to head the movement in the Red River Valley to help increase food production and a vigorous campaign followed. There is something tragic in this. The leaders of the nation urged increased food production and the farmers responded valiantly and patriotically. When the war was won those self-same leaders failed to recognize their duty to the farmers. They let the farmer down and I, with hundreds of thousands of others, felt this was nothing short of disaster. It did not happen after World War II which, in itself is evidence that the nation’s leaders had failed the farmers after World War I.

2.

There are events which leave so deep an impression that every detail is firmly etched. Such a one was the program held at the school when the service flag was dedicated. It was my duty to deliver an address at assembly. The days went by and I could not even outline my speech. Ideas simply would not come. All I saw was a sea of faces of the nearly two hundred students who were right at that moment on battle fields and in peril. What could I say? The night before the exercises I was still in the same condition. I could not even make any notes. Late that night perhaps in desperation I wrote “The Service Flag” which is printed in the appendix. It is not poetry. I am well aware of that. It is the outpouring of my heart to those boys.

3.

At the 1919 Home Coming Day program honoring returned soldiers, sailors and marines, many of them were in the audience. I sat next to one in the auditorium. I observed him as the program parts were given. I shared the emotion that shook him. He was living over again his experiences of army life. As a member of the First Division, he had been in the fiercest fighting in France. I shall never forget what I witnessed that memorable evening. We never gained even the faintest idea of what those boys suffered.

Letters were received on this occasion from the University’s President Marion Leroy Burton, Minnesota’s Governor J. A. A. Burnquist, the Ninth District’s Congressman Halvor Steenerson, General John J. Pershing and Secretary of Navy Josephus Daniels.

The following students told of their experiences: James Felber, Herbert Anderson, Martinue Stenseth (Brigadier-General, Air Corps, W. W. II), Walter Peterson, Magnus Spjut, Harold Borge, Conrad Clementson, Harold Schuck, Willard Johnston, Peter Ness and Clarence Lee.

4.

There was a two year’s delay in securing an appropriation for the dining hall building due to the Governor’s veto of several bills providing buildings on account of the country being engaged at war. It was voted, however, in 1919.
The problem of securing a concrete roadway from Crookston to the campus had been before the Board of Regents during this difficult period. Regent M. M. Williams, Little Falls, brought it to a head. He was chairman of the Agricultural Committee, and in that capacity usually paid the School a visit each year. One of his visits followed a heavy April rain which, of course, left the dirt roads practically impassable. When we emerged from the city’s paved streets and entered the gumbo highway to the School Mr. Williams thought we should return. The car swerved from one side of the road to the other. It was necessary to avoid the pot-holes. It frequently happened the cars landed in the ditch and had to be hauled out.

When we finally reached the school he said, “Why, that road is positively dangerous. I would never think of driving an auto on such a road”. I said we were accustomed to such road conditions. I heard nothing more of this until one day while at the University Comptroller A. J. Loeb said Regent Williams had at a recent Board meeting described dramatically his ride to the school. “We must do something about it,” he said.

It took some doing as they say, to secure action. The University was willing but the legislature would need to appropriate funds. On the route to the school there was an unpaved half mile of street within the city. There was a viaduct under the Great Northern Railway tracks that would have to be widened and strengthened. There were nearly two miles of roadway that would have to be paved. In all five groups must cooperate.

I am glad to state all did so. The County Board of Commissioners by a vote of 4 to 1 appropriated its share. The legislature voted $10,000.00 as the University’s share. The property owners on the unpaved street in Crookston voted nearly unanimously in favor of paving and the railroad company widened the viaduct. The roadway was completed in time for the dedication on October 5, 1920.

Paving the campus roads was done later. To secure the necessary funds was the problem. Those who have visited the campus know it is nearly as level as a floor. Vehicles of all kinds frequently “got stuck” and needed a tractor to pull them out. It was exasperating. The paving would cost about $40,000.00. I sent photographs of autos and trucks that were mired on the campus roads. Gravel surfacing was ineffective. The gravel simply sank out of sight after a few weeks. Paving was the only solution.

Finally A. J. Loeb, comptroller of the University came to the rescue. He reported to the Regents there was a sufficient sum in unexpended department funds for that year to defray the paving cost. There were many claimants for this money. Finally, perhaps to stop the “photograph” barrage, this fund was allocated to pave the Northwest School’s campus roadways.

5.

* Dedication Day exercises were held at the school on October 5, 1920. The exercises centered on the opening of the greatly needed paved road from Crookston to the campus, the dedication of the new $100,000.00 dining hall and the unveiling of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Memorial placed near the entrance to the campus. The $2200.00 for this memorial was raised by the alumni aided by the faculty and friends.

University Regent M. M. Williams in his address formally accepting the dining hall building for the Board of Regents gave a most interesting account of early days of the Valley and pointed out how marvelous had been its development.
At the unveiling of the Memorial, Ole A. Flaat, 1916, president of the Alumni Association, following his eloquent appeal for loyalty and service in appreciation of the sacrifice made by the honored dead, pulled aside the veil that revealed the beautiful granite monument with its honor roll of 163 names recorded on a large bronze plate. President L. D. Coffman made the principal address and Honorable Fred B. Snyder, president of the Board of Regents, formally accepted the Memorial in a most impressive address eulogizing the men both living and dead who offered their all in service to their country. It was a stirring exposition of our national ideals and a call for a new and truer American patriotism.

After the day's program I asked Thorval Tunheim, Northwest School, Class of 1916, then city editor of the Crookston Times to write the story of the day's events for the school's paper, The Northwest Monthly. Tunheim graduated from the University of Minnesota and then took up newspaper work. He was first with the Minneapolis Journal and then assistant city editor of the Pasadena Star News. Later he had his own paper in North Hollywood. His story follows:

Thousands of people from all sections of the Red River Valley flocked to the campus of the Northwest School of Agriculture at Crookston on Tuesday, October 5th to participate in the dedication of the Soldiers' and Sailors' memorial, the splendid new dining hall and the concrete paved roadway that will help to shorten the distance figuratively between Crookston and the school campus.

They came, they saw and they went—back to their homes and farms with a new respect for the Northwest School and its work. The old "grads" were there too, declaring that they would rather have missed ten years of their life than to have absented themselves from the campus on such a glorious day as the fifth
of October proved to be. Most of them expressed envy at the present generation of students, who as one "old timer" said, "were born with silver spoons in their mouths."

It was perhaps, the happiest meeting of the alumni of the still young "Aggie" school that ever took place. It was a real homecoming and one that they will not forget very soon.

Formal opening of the roadway came at 11:00 a.m., with the address of Marius Christianson, chairman of the Polk County board of Commissioners. "In ten years", he said, "Every county will have hard surfaced roads." He declared that the new road was the first hard-surfaced road in the ninth congressional district.

"The memorial", said President L. D. Coffman, of the University of Minnesota "is the product of loving hands. It is built from the contributions of students, former students and faculty. In the years to come it will bear silent witness to the patriotism of this school, to the fidelity and trust that the school has in the traditions and principles of true Americanism. It will be an inspiration as long as the school lives to thousands of students yet to come."

INDIAN CHIEF FROM RED LAKE CHIPPEWA RESERVATION,
(INTERPRETER AT RIGHT, STANDING.)
"His address was eloquent."
Memorable Days

“Our country entered the war because she wished to preserve for future generations the ideals upon which this country is founded . . . . Americans have always been dominated by a high degree of idealism . . . . The war was for justice and liberty and right and fraternity.”

“The safety of this republic lies in the vigilance and active patriotism of its people. The boys who have come back to us will be a bulwark of strength these trying days. They have been, still are, and will continue to be, instrumental in bringing about a wise solution to many of the problems that lie ahead of us.”

Three representatives of a band of Indians living along the shores of Red Lake added interest to the occasion. The activities of the day, they said, had opened their eyes to the many wonderful things their white brethren were doing. They entertained the visitors with their dances.

I have said that pride and happiness swelled in the breasts of former students. They were “chesty” and made no “bones” about concealing that fact. And the faculty? They were more than pleased, Superintendent C. G. Selvig was no exception. Since 1910 when he succeeded the late William Robertson, he has dreamed of such a day. Ask any of the leaders of public affairs in Crookston — or in Minnesota for that matter — if he has not worked and worked hard, and they will probably point to the school as proof of that fact.

The growth of the school, they will inform you, from a mere handful of students and faculty and meager equipment when Mr. Selvig came, to more than 300 students and a thoroughly trained staff of specialists; equipment which includes three buildings for class and laboratory work; one for the offices, library, auditorium and gymnasium; three splendid dormitories housing 250 students; a newly completed dining hall and service building; several cottages for the faculty; and a complete set of experiment station buildings fully outfitted for permanent service to the young men and women of northwestern Minnesota was not the result of an accident. It required hard constructive work and a vision.

On the night of the fourth of October there remained much to do to get ready for the morrow. I made the remark to one of the members of the station staff that it would be impossible to get things in shape in time for the celebration. “We have had several ‘impossibilities’ at the school,” was the reply. “Somehow or other they became possible. I don’t know just how things are accomplished but they are.” Witness the fact that everything was in place in time for the dedication.

That the school plays a leading role in the valley is attested to by the fact that hundreds of addresses are made annually by members of the staff at institute, farm club and other meetings; that county fairs look to the school for judges and for men and women capable of conducting agricultural and home demonstrations; that the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association, which was organized by the first superintendent of the station; that the school furnishes the president of two, the secretaries of two, and members of the directorate of others of the associations representing the valley horticulturalists, potato growers, pure seed breeders, live stock breeders; that the farm bureau of the northwestern part of the state looks to the Station for cooperation; that 85 percent of the students go back to the farm, brimful of enthusiasm, to put into practice what they learned and observed at the school; that the school started and fosters the great Farm Crops Show and Farmers’ Week meetings which are attracting attention everywhere.

Much has been said about these annual gatherings of real “dirt farmers”, but a
great deal more remains to be spoken. A $75,000 livestock pavilion has been built at Crookston by 2600 persons. It required more than two acres of space to house the livestock show and sales together with the farm crops show and poultry exhibits and every year means an increase. The 1921 show, it is expected will dwarf all the previous shows.

Crookston is interested in the school. The city is proud of it and more so now because the new road makes its so available. When your friends in Crookston take you for a ride, see if they do not strike for the campus. Crookston entertained on dedication day. It took a day off and came out to help officials of the agricultural school show the out-of-town folks a good time. It sent out its band on a magnificent float which headed a long parade of other floats and decorated automobiles — everything from “twin sixes to tin lizzies”. Warren and Fisher-Bygland sent their bands also.

Many alumni and former students “simply could not come.” They were in the midst of threshing, potato picking and other farm activities. Major Martinus Stenseth, a graduate of the school, who has the distinction of being Minnesota’s highest ace and who was to have appeared with his flying machine, telegraphed his regrets. He wired: “Hope this day will remain in lasting memory to the boys who died in the service of their country.”

To those who could not come an opportunity will be given to see in movie form the activities of the day. Two operators pictured the important events and these films will be scattered broadcast over the northwestern part of Minnesota and to a lesser extent over the entire United States.

The large crowd exhibited unusual interest in this feature. One old man came up to the truck that was carrying the two machines and asked one of the operators when the pictures would begin. Upon being told that they would start immediately he hurried into view of the cameras. At another place a group of young women begged to be “movied”. They were, and will no doubt eagerly await the appearance of the films.

The Dedication Day exercises were attended by thousands from all over the Valley. In the Northwest Monthly I wrote my appreciation and am including it here.

October fifth has come and gone. It was a beautiful day. Northwestern Minnesota had seen few more pleasant and inviting. The people who came to the Northwest School campus accepted the invitation that had been extended by the School and the Crookston Association of Public Affairs and so wholeheartedly seconded by the weather man. Never before had so many Valley folks spent a day together at an educational event. They enjoyed themselves thoroughly. From the opening of the roadway in the forenoon to the last play in the football game at dusk they filled the campus, a merry crowd of folks who seemed glad to be alive, and who radiated happiness to all they met.

It was an epochal day for the school. It is hard to realize that a real hard-surfaced roadway connects the school to the city and that one can really reach his destination there regardless of the weather. This may seem far-fetched to many but it is not so to those who have lived at the school. The school’s appreciation is due to the people of Polk county who through their Board of County Commissioners provided the paved roadway and to the city of Crookston for its part in providing paving on the streets that led from the roadway to the heart of the city.
The crowning event of the afternoon was the unveiling and dedication of the Northwest School Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial. It was fittingly done. It was an event that will not soon be forgotten.

As the memorial stands clear and white in the morning sun, or softly subdued in the light of the early evening it brings home to all the unselfish devotion of our brave boys. It will ever recall their bravery, their sacrifice. It will ever inspire the living to higher and nobler ambitions and a fuller reverence.

Walter C. Coffey was appointed Dean and Director of the University’s Department of Agriculture to succeed Dean Thatcher. Coffey was ideally fitted for the position. He had had a distinguished career at Illinois Agricultural College and Experiment Station. His book on sheep-raising was a standard text in all states and countries. He was a man of broad interests, deep culture, Christian principles and sound judgment. The people of Minnesota soon acclaimed him as their leader in agriculture. After his retirement he succeeded Dr. Guy S. Ford as president of the University, a position in which he served during World War II. Like all the others who were fortunate enough to serve under his leadership he won my devotion and affection.

Minnesota has been fortunate in the caliber of the men who served as presidents of the University. Dr. Lotus D. Coffman succeeded President Burton when he went to Michigan. I had known Dr. Coffman well during his successful deanship of the University’s College of Education. He had attained high rank in the United States as an educator and administrator. He set down principles in administering the high office to which he had been appointed. What was right, was right, in his book. Personalities were not permitted to displace principle. He made and retained friends.

After moving to California in 1934 I occasionally conferred with members of the staffs of U.C.L.A. and of Southern California University. I came to know the high regard in which President Coffman was held by University administrators and faculties. Many said he was the ablest of them all.

His labors as University president undermined his strength. He was in Phoenix a year but returned to his post too soon. I recall I attended the University graduation in June, 1937. At that commencement the honorary degree of Ph. D. was conferred my former history teacher and long-time friend, Henry Johnson, professor of history, Columbia University. As you will recall he was superintendent of Rushford High School during my junior and senior years. On the following morning my brother and I called on Dr. Johnson who was in Dr. Krey’s office at the University. We had a heart-warming pleasant visit.

Then I suggested that we call on President Coffman whom I had not seen for a number of years. His secretary who in years past had often made appointments for me to see him cancelled one appointment so we could have a few minutes to visit before President Coffman went to a luncheon meeting. When I saw him I was immediately struck by his appearance. I said at once, “President Coffman you have been working too hard. You appear very tired.” He admitted he was tired and mentioned he planned very soon to take a summer’s rest at his Battle Lake cottage. Within ten days he passed away and our University, our state and our nation lost a notable leader.
10.

When I was writing this tale of the period of growth of the Northwest School, I had the feeling I was the most fortunate person in the world. I was down right lucky. First, in my own stamina which bore up under hard work; second, in the woman I married; and, third, in our children. Also, that I had been given the opportunity for service tendered me by Dean Woods and President Northrop.

It was too much I often said when I visited with former state Senator A. D. Stephens, who secured his colleagues' votes for the first appropriation, in 1905, for the school. He was as enthusiastic as myself. It is fitting a building was named after him and that his portrait hangs in it for all to see. He has gone to the Great Beyond but is not forgotten.

At the 40th anniversary program he uttered prophetic words as to the future of the institution. There were many others all up and down the Valley and in the state who rendered valuable help during the early years. I feel I cannot complete this chapter without mentioning the names of A. A. Miller, Joseph Ball, Martin O'Brien, S. M. Sivertson, C. C. Strander, Charles Loring (now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota), W. S. Lycan, Thomas Morris and Wm. E. McKenzie. This list is incomplete. Tomorrow, when it is too late, I'll be very critical of myself for not extending it further.

11.

Before I close the school chapter there must be a few words about our former students and alumni. It is true that about 85 percent were farmers or farmers' wives. The work they have done gives eloquent tribute to them, and it is work done, and not conversation, that counts. There are several thousands of them now, most of whom reside in the Valley. Many entered the University or some college. Many have achieved distinction on the farm, in the home, in business and in the professions.

No list I could make would do justice to the group as a whole. Herman F. Skyberg now serves as a member of the University's Board of Regents. Oscar Knutson is an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota. Ole A. Flaat served many years as the vice-president of Minnesota's Farm Bureau Federation. He has attained national prominence as a large scale producer of certified seed potatoes and annually shipped, not car-loads, but train-loads of seed to southern and western markets.

Harold H. Grandy who came to the Station one day from his home in Wisconsin looking for work stayed until he had completed the advanced course. Later he attended the University and art schools. He became a distinguished artist, specializing in commercial art. His firm serves some of America's largest firms today. Thorval Tunheim, already mentioned, succeeded in the newspaper field. Many others of the boys I knew at school, became Ph.D's. Prominent among them are Dr. L. J. Regiembal, Dr. Harold P. Morris and Dr. Iver Johnson. The latter won A's in all his studies at Minnesota's College of Agriculture.

12.

There is one other event I must include. At the close of my service at the school in March, 1927, the Class of 1926 presented to the school an oil painting of myself and placed it on a wall of the building dedicated October 5, 1920.
Making friends and influencing people is about the best prescription for the full life. To this I would add being always reliable and showing courage to risk opinions. To hit the ball squarely could well be an aphorism for it expresses a point of view that is characteristically American.

There was no paucity of opportunities for making friends. There were speaking engagements in every county and I might venture to add in every city and village and in most every township in the Valley. Decisions had to be made every day. I earnestly sought to be guided by Polonius' advice to Laertes, "to thine own self be true." I very much wanted that there exist no question as to my sincerity of purpose.

2.

I became a member of several regional boards and an officer of various Valley groups. In 1912 Governor A. O. Eberhart appointed me as a member of Minnesota Conservation and Agricultural Development Congress. During World War I period, I was appointed a member of the State Committee on Food Production and Conservation, working as part of the powerful State Public Safety Commission.

In March, 1918, I became a member of the Permanent War Finance Committee which entailed the chairmanship of the United War Work Campaign in the 15 Northwestern Minnesota counties. It was during this period Joseph Ball dubbed me a "slave driver". We had our quota to meet. I recall the anxious days and weeks of that campaign. Our district raised its quota.

In 1923 I became a member of the Minnesota Historical Society. I was deeply interested in Minnesota history and did all I could to collect historical source material of value to the Society.

3.

A glance at the map of Minnesota will disclose why the Northwest School and Station was of importance to the state. In the first place Crookston was about 300 miles from the State Agricultural College. In the second place regional problems in the Red River Valley differed from those in other sections of the state.

One of the first steps taken was to have an annual visiting day at the Station. These soon became very popular. The farmers and their families found much of interest there. They brought their own lunch. A group of willow trees on the campus which were only about ten feet high in 1910 gradually attained size to provide shade for a good-sized group. After a brief program those assembled dispersed to the fields, experimental plots, to the livestock and poultry department, the garden and horticultural areas with the Station staff members in charge.

They gave the visitors an insight into methods used to provide information of value to the farmers. Likewise, later, livestock feeding experiments led to Valley-wide feeding trials visiting days. The number has increased since my tenure as new projects were developed.
Farm club visiting days followed the inauguration of the Station visiting days. The farmers themselves started this project. They informed us the crowds were too large on Station visiting days. They wanted more time to ask questions. The farm women wanted the home economics department to present topics of interest. They wanted to see the Station's flowers, shrubs, gardens and trees. To me this was sweet music. The institution was surely justifying itself as a School and Station of service. The people for whom it was established on their own initiative suggested what should be done.

The farm club visiting days became very popular. At one time there were 128 farm clubs in the valley, antedating the local Farm Bureau groups. The same procedure on these visiting days was followed as was carried on during Station visiting days. Many clubs returned year after year. It was very unusual if at least fifty clubs did not come each year. Two extension specialists were employed by the Station to speak at the local club meetings during the winter months. There were more requests than could be filled.

It was the women who came to the school on the various club visiting days who first broached the idea of having an annual farm women's camp at the School. "One day is not enough", they said, "We have to work so hard to put up lunch, get ready, drive many miles and after we get here, lo! it is soon time to go home. We'd like to come and stay in the dormitories, attend classes, have fun, listen to speakers and entertainers, have our meals at the dining hall and talk."

It was A. H. Larson, the school's registrar, who learned of the women's wishes and who broached the idea of organizing the camp. The school's physical plant should be in continual use, I often said. Here was an additional use that would be productive of much good. The first camp was held in 1926. They have continued to this day. As many as 200 attend each June. They have their own officers. It has become a Valley institution.
The Fairfax-Andover Social Circle won early recognition as one of the pioneer farm clubs of the Valley. My wife and I attended their first banquet and all the others as long as we lived in the Valley so we came to know the club's origin, plans and members well. This was a women’s club. They were the active members and the men folks the “honorary members”. Perhaps, after all, it is that way in most families. As one story goes the head of the house was to decide in all major disputes that arose and his wife in all minor matters. When after twenty years of happy wedded life he was asked how this worked, the husband replied, “There ain’t been no major matters come up yet.”

Be that as it may, this club whose members lived in Andover and Fairfax townships near Crookston formed a happy group. I asked President Vincent if he could spare the time to attend the annual banquet. Both he and his wife attended. His address was a plea for having such groups in every township in the state. Later President and Mrs. Burton were guests of the club. He spoke on quality in living and profoundly moved all present.

Mrs George H. Schuck, one of the club’s foremost leaders, and J. F. Ingersoll, one of the “honorary” members, contributed to an article in “The Farmer” which told of the club’s organization and programs. I was asked to write my views, also, which follow:

The men of this club are called the “honorary” members. Not a one but felt himself honored to belong. They sat at ease — contented, fully satisfied, with looks of pride, enjoyment and enthusiasm on their faces.

The women started this significant movement. They not only see visions, but they do things. The thought came to me time and again, as I listened to their program and noted the spirit shown, that here is a community that is realizing fully the possibilities of rural life. Here is an undefinable atmosphere of friendship, of good comradeship, of intelligent co-operation and a social spirit that warmed all hearts.

The farmer of the past has lived an isolated life. He has been too long in an economic position where it was impossible for him to have the leisure in which to expand and allow himself to dream. The work was hard and long, the load was heavy. This is all changing. We have passed through the “moon” stage of farming.

The pleasure that the people of Fairfax and Andover have secured during the first year of their Social Circle is, in a way, a surprise even to the members themselves. They have as it were, through this organization found both themselves and their neighbors. The men, who are the “honorary” members, discuss current questions with the insight and decision that marks the mind of the man who reads, studies and thinks. Nowhere better is exemplified the fact that farmers are the bulwark of the nation. Nowhere are men getting better training for their duties as citizens than at these club meetings where each one may be heard and where, in the “give-and-take” of open, free conference, opinions are moulded and decisions are formed.

The weak links in the chain of country life are its schools and its social life. When one community so ideally strengthens its esteem for itself and makes its contentment so secure, is it not a worthy incident?

The women were happy in their reminiscences of the pleasant times they had during the year. It was not selfish enjoyment. A spirit of social service permeated
the gathering. Frequently the thoughts came to the front that all are brothers and sisters and that the greatest of all things is brotherly charity and love.

5.

From the pen of W. E. Morris, Extension Animal Husbandman, University Farm, St. Paul, in a letter dated June, 1950, I received the following up-to-date information regarding agricultural growth and development in Red River Valley counties. He gave me the list of the first county agent and date of appointment in each of the Valley counties. The list follows:

Wilkin County, April 1, 1913, C. R. Billings; Norman County, August 18, 1913, B. A. Gray; Clay County, September 1, 1913, C. E. Brown; Polk County, November 1, 1914, A. R. Knutson; Kittson County, September 1, 1917, W. V. Longley; Pennington County, February 1, 1918, Ross P. White; Red Lake County, February 1, 1918, C. C. Lake; Marshall County, April 1, 1918, John Husby and Roseau County, April 1, 1918, O. M. Olson.

There were emergency county agents during World War I in all of the Valley counties. During the post-war depression only a few of the counties continued such work. In 1950 there are 19 county agents in 17 counties, 13 home agents and seven 4-H Club agents. The annual 4-H Club membership now approaches 10,000 boys and girls.

Mr. Morris traces the changes that have occurred in the Red River Valley Winter Shows. The most recent one is the junior futurity for beef and dairy calves which enrolled 37 entrants at the 1950 show. In the advanced futurity there were 14 entries, making a total of 54. This is a promising feature in the development of the Red River Valley Livestock Show.
In citing agricultural advances Mr. Morris also mentions sugar beet production, potato seed production, corn production, brome legume and brome legume mixtures production as outstanding evidence of the great forward strides in northwestern Minnesota. He has been a leader in the state extension service for many, many years and is well known to thousands of Valley folks.

He points out in his very interesting letter certain changes that have occurred and tells of current trends in agricultural practices in the Red River Valley. In 1937 at the Valley’s Winter Shows the number of dairy cattle and beef cattle exhibited was nearly even. In 1950 forty-five exhibitors had 239 head of beef cattle in the show while ten exhibitors showed 38 head of dairy cattle. “Some of this reduction may be due,” he says, “to the difficulty in showing dairy cattle in winter, but a lot of it is due to the interest which developed in the production of beef cattle in this territory.”

At the purebred livestock sales held during the Winter Shows and Northwest School’s Farm Week meetings there has been a notable increase in the number of animals sold from valley farms and purchased by others in the valley. Mr. Morris comments on this development.

“The result is many good herds of purebred beef cattle scattered through the area are producing breeding stock that go out for the development of commercial cattle in the district. This all shows a trend which has taken place in the life of the Winter Shows (started in 1910), the Northwest School and Station and the state’s Extension Service.”

In closing, Mr. Morris summarizes his views: “There is no doubt that the Northwest School’s Winter Shows and the meetings held during the Winter Shows have had a tremendous influence on the development of all major crops, the use of fertilizers to correct soil deficiencies, weed control methods, kinds of crops best adapted to the area. The same influence has extended to the livestock industry of the industry. The Livestock Show has stimulated interest in the development of better breeding herds as sources of seed stock for farms in the area. There’s not a doubt that agriculture is farther advanced in the area as a result of the Show, the programs conducted there, the cooperation that has existed between the Show, the Station, and the School and Extension Service.”

Whatever led me to become interested in writing and helping to produce and organize pageants I do not know to this day. There were always people who delighted to participate. The pageant appealed to their love of play and acting. We were all young and enthusiastic and needed nothing else than youthful exuberance to get us started. The pageant themes dealt with the Red River Valley, of course. The first one “The Valley Spirit Speaks” was presented before the Northern Minnesota Editors’ Association at the Northwest School.

Editor W. E. McKenzie of the Crookston Times unashamedly informed me later he was moved to tears when a very beautiful girl, Miss Neva Gibbons, Crookston, impersonating the Red River Valley Girl, said: “I do think and I think you’d think from what’s been said by Colonel Wheat, Corporal Potato, and my esteemed contemporary, Mr. I’m a Proud Boy, that they’re the whole Red River Valley.”

“But now, I need not even mention to men of your keen insight, they’ve left out the best the girls. We don’t intend to be left out, Rusted Wheat, Potato Scab, Moolie Cow, and even Naughty Boy—for, Good Spirit of the Valley, we are God’s fairest gift to brighten the darkest days with the light of love.”
"We came with the creaking ox-cart over the Pembina way. We lived in sod huts and braved the icy blasts. We suffered through the pioneer years to make this Valley fair."

"It has been done. Beautiful homes dot the prairies. Splendid cities are nestled close to the silvery streams that gurgle through the woodlands. Schools have been established. Our Red River Valley has come into its own. In this the winsome lasses have had their part. They are preparing for still greater service."

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**Pageant of Prosperity, 1923**

Miss Red River Valley (Anne Flekke) and her assistants (Amy Onneland), left, and (Mabel Rude). Major Stephen H. Long, (Sylvestor Adamski) and Party of Explorers, 1823. Miss Red River Valley greeting Major Long and party. Maidens representing the Seventeen Counties in Northwestern Minnesota.
Pageant of Prosperity, 1923
Parade of Red River Valley Products. Spirit of Prosperity, (Cora Walters), Spirit of the Earth (Howard Balk), Spirits of Earth, Red River Valley and Prosperity.
“In view of all this, esteemed editors, have I not a right to be proud that I'm a Red River Valley Girl?”

“I speak for the thousands of Valley girls in beautiful garb and graceful array, the welcome that the girls of this place extend to you today. Don't pay much attention to the boys, remember its b-b-beautiful K-K-Katy that you adore.” (All sing K-K-Katy, Beautiful K-K-Katy).

7.

The most pretentious effort in pageantry was staged at the 20th anniversary of the organization of the Red River Valley Dairymen's Association, held at the Opera House, Crookston, in 1923. It was entitled the “Pageant of Prosperity.” An idea of its scope can be gained from the characters portrayed. They were Miss Red River Valley, Spirit of Prosperity, Spirit of Earth, Faith and Hope in the prologue. In addition, Major Stephen H. Long and his group of explorers, and characters representing the counties and the valley products.

Episode One included scenes depicting pioneers, Indians, Governor Ramsey at Old Crossing Treaty Signing, the organizers of the first cooperative creamery in the valley, several dances, and a group impersonating the men who in 1903 organized the Red River Valley Dairymen's Association. The pageant had hundreds of participants, special music and was heightened by the presence of “Dad” Colt, creamery organizer, himself, and by former Superintendent Hoverstad, who organized the Association in 1903, both of whom appeared in the scenes. The effort made a very favorable impression. Participants worked hard to make every character and scene stand out.

8.

In all of the pageants the Red River Valley spirit essayed the principal role. It was a moody, reflective spirit that seemed to be hovering over the land. Perhaps it can best be understood by including here the foreword to the pageant.

THE RED RIVER VALLEY SPIRIT

Candidly, I love this theme.

It speaks a various language.

I think of this Spirit when this rich valley of ours emerging from primeval chaos was only a misty film of gray as intangible as is its Spirit today.

It see it when the icy giant of the north — the great plow — came from its frigid abode and cut a deep gash into solid rock grinding its way against all obstacles and leaving in its wake the basin immortalized by the name of Agassiz.

Later, the warm winds of kindlier climes met the plow of ice in successful combat and forced it to give way, showing another instance of the power of love, for under the caresses of these sun-kissed winds, the earth arose in its richness with its fruitful deposits of mineral salts dissolved and commuted into the thousand layer farm.

In succeeding epochs Indians roamed at will, followed by the white man, and in turn by the farms, cities and villages that thousands sing about each year. The Spirit of the Valley, its most cherished possession, thus found itself.

*It was presented at Crookston Opera House, Nov. 21, 1923. About 200 participated in it. It had special scenery, music and dances. It was presented under the auspices of the Northwest School of Agriculture, Crookston Public Schools, Crookston Business and Professional Women's Club and the Northwest Experiment Station. Author has complete copy of script in his library.
This Spirit is the sum of the ideals, ambitions and achievements of its people. All hail to the sturdy pioneers who slowly droned their way in the creaky ox·cart along Pembina way. They came filled with man's noblest aspirations to establish homes and thus to make use of nature's most lavishly bestowed gift, a fertile soil pregnant with life giving utilities, richer than the proverbial prodigality of the banks of the Nile.

They came to make use of this gift, to set new standards of production, to create new ideas of cooperation, but beyond all these, to teach the world that a community life in which all work together, all live happily together, all sing together, all achieve together and all dream together, life's most pressing problems fuse into a well ordered whole.

There are many evidences that Red River Valley folks are making a new epic. They are doing it on their farms and in their homes, in their everyday life, for each year we feel increasingly the influence of this intangible force.

Silently the Red River Valley Spirit passes from the north, where it feels the freshness of the unsurpassable Lake of the Woods, to the south where it reluctantly decides that it has reached its border where the Minnesota river issues from old Lake Traverse.

It radiates from the east where on the shores of a thousand lakes grow the tall conifers, the verdant harbingers of immortality, and passes to the west where Old Red River slowly moves to the regions beyond.

Over it all the Spirit makes its daily eternal journey watching over the people, guiding their thoughts, subduing their passions, awakening their desires for the best — for those things which help build up a strong body, give a clear mind, and leave a true conscience and contentment.

This is what the Red River Valley Spirit tells me and this is its story.

9.

The Red Lake Drainage and Conservancy District was organized in 1920 in response to a demand by the farmers in the Red Lake and the Clearwater River basins. Telephone calls from the area indicated the urgency. A disastrous flood occurred in 1919 and while the Northwest School and Station had no official responsibility relating to flood control the distress of the farmers in the flooded areas compelled me to call a mass meeting at Thief River Falls, on July 22, 1919, to consider what could be done.

Under a state law a Drainage and Conservancy District was formed. Judges Andrew Grindeland, Warren and C. W. Stanton, Bemidji appointed as members of the District's board Ed. A. Aubol, St. Hilaire; Axel Nelson, Holt; Andrew Johnson, Gonvick; William Paskewitz, Grygla and myself, who was elected its president.

Indian lands were involved which necessitated federal legislation. Congressman Harold C. Hagen, Crookston, furnished the information that bills relating to flood control in this area were first brought to the attention of Congress as early as August 14, 1876. On March 13, 1920, a hearing on the project recommended by the Red Lake Drainage and Conservancy District was arranged by Hon. Halvor Steenerson before the Committee on Flood Contro1 of the House of Representatives, in Washington, D. C.

In attendance were members of the Interim Flood Control Commission of the Minnesota Legislature, accompanied by E. V. Willard, state drainage commissioner
PAGEANT OF PROSPERITY, 1923

of Minnesota, and myself, representing the Red Lake Drainage District. The bill which was drafted following this hearing was passed by Congress, February 21, 1921, and signed by President Wilson.

The State of Minnesota appropriated $25,000.00 for surveys and the preparation of the necessary plans for the project. Viewers were appointed to apportion the costs which under Minnesota's statutes were to be borne by the parties benefitted. Federal legislation provided for payment of costs assessed against the Indian lands.

At the final hearing on the Red Lake project, however, residents of that area convinced Judge Stanton they would be unable to bear the costs. The agricultural depression had set in. The farmers were in no condition to assume the added obligations even though the payments were to be spread over a period of years.

There was also an unresolved controversy over payment by power companies for water available to them as a result of constructing and maintaining reservoirs for the control of flood waters whenever such plan was feasible and advisable. The law provided that whenever the waters stored within a reservoir can be released to benefit potential or actual power sites located on the streams below, the board had the right to assess benefits against the owners of such sites. It also had the right to construct power dams and power units and create power on their own initiative as a district enterprise and lease said powers.

While the law was clear on the subject there remained a doubt as to whether the project should be ordered. The project was rejected by the Court.

Since the enactment of the new federal flood control policy in the Mississippi Flood Control Act in 1927 which declared flood control a national responsibility, renewed efforts were made in Congress by Congressman R. T. Buckler and his successor, Congressman Hagen. I was a member of the House Committee on Flood Control during my first term in Congress, 1927-1929. A new principle was included in the law enacted in 1927 which recognized flood control as a national problem.

When the Red Lake River project was finally authorized by Congress, the original plans prepared in 1921 were used by the U. S. Army Engineers. Appropriations have been made during recent years to complete the project. It will take longer to provide the needed control in the Red River of the North basin but that, also, is going forward. The unprecedented flood of 1950 accentuated the urgent needs of that area.

10.

The Great Lakes — St. Lawrence Tidewater project appealed to the farmers of the Northwest. It is still a live issue and there are strong hopes it will be adopted. In 1920, I was asked by Charles P. Craig, Executive-Director of the Minnesota group working for the Deep-Sea Waterway to attend a meeting of the Commission which was gathering factual data in support of the project. I presented evidence of the current and potential agricultural production of the Northwestern Minnesota counties at that hearing.

The agricultural press was always helpful and influential in supporting the efforts of the Northwest School and Station. The principal farm journals during my tenure were: The Farmer; Farm, Stock and Home and The Country Gentleman. The Twin City press gave excellent coverage to Red River Valley farm topics as did the daily papers of Crookston, Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Grand Forks and Fargo. Informative articles appeared in Minnesota Alumni Weekly, Fort Dearborn Independent, Vocational Magazine, National School Digest and the Northwestern Miller and others.
As for the so-called rural press, the country weeklies, their willingness to help promote the best interests of the Valley deserve the highest praise. They were more than generous in their support.

In the fall of 1923, Sinclair Lewis, the author of “Main Street”, himself a native of Minnesota, wrote in an eastern magazine an article dealing with Minnesota’s Schools of Agriculture. The following comment on his article was published in the November, 1923 issue of The Northwest Monthly:

“Sound and Creative”. In these words Sinclair Lewis characterizes and describes the Schools of Agriculture in Minnesota, of which the Northwest School is one. This appeared in a recent article which is one of a series entitled “These United States”, which is being printed by an eastern magazine.

The article is written in the style and vein which mark the author’s books, “Main Street” and “Babbitt”, but there is naught of cynicism or sarcasm or exaggeration in his plain statement that Minnesota has a scientific body of farmers and that “the agricultural school of the huge University of Minnesota is sound and creative”. There is nothing stereotyped about the Lewis writeup of “Minnesota, the Norse State”. It is not a more or less tedious statement of the value of our dairy and cereal products and the number of our new schools.

Sinclair Lewis has agreed with the principle whose soundness is borne out by the thousands of graduates from the School of Agriculture at St. Paul, of the Northwest School of Crookston, and the West Central School at Morris, who are on the farms “back home” working with their neighbors and their community in progressive farming and broader education. Graduates from the schools of agriculture go back to their homes ready and equipped to take up the burden of leadership in their community and to blaze the trail for better farming.

II.

I am drawing to a close of what I term the Farm School era, comprising the years from 1910 to 1927. There are hundreds of incidents that leap to my mind. There are hundreds of men and women who had important parts in the development that took place in the Valley during the first quarter of the present century. The response received from all was gratifying. The team play that came into being was heart-warming.

President George E. Vincent and Dean A. F. Woods had sounded the tocsin and it had been heard and heeded over the entire state. Gone were sectionalism and narrow localism. I did what I could to promote state unity. I frequently said, “We are all working for the same ‘boss’, the state of Minnesota, and we should support and help each other and not decry others’ efforts nor minimize what they do. The big job was to learn new truths and then to apply new knowledge and the discovered truths for the betterment of humanity. All this required cooperation with others.”

12.

A very enjoyable event took place in Crookston during the fall of 1926. It was sponsored by the combined Women’s Clubs of the city. The members were Marion’s friends. She had served two terms as president of the Ninth District Federation of Women’s Clubs. I always maintained the dinner was tendered for her.

An author must perforce be permitted some leeway in arranging his tale. I am in a way anticipating the story of the next two chapters when I set down now the story of the dinner.
But this is the place for this generous outburst of friendliness and affection. I had never before been the subject of a "song". In this respect the occasion was unique. It was an eventful evening spent joyously among friends. It touched the hearts of us both.

SONG FOR SELVIG

Mister Selvig, we are proud of you,
    You were in the big fight and you came through
With a great big majority,
    And that's to your credit now.
You're going on the ChooChoo train
    To add new laurels to your name,
And we know how you'll play the game
    For the Red River Valley's fame.
What's more, what's more,
You know just what you're going to Congress for.
Some of the farmers were sort of mad,
But more of them are mighty glad
To know that you will be there
In a Representative's chair.
As honored guest you're here tonight
    Among us happy Crookstonites,
Which gives this club delight
    On such a gala night.
In Washington with your good wife
    Who aids you in all political life,
Our thoughts for your success will be
    Till you again we see.
What's more, what's more,
    We women know just what we voted for.
Our welfare you'll have at heart
    And rightly you will do your part
To vote for measures from the start
    Concerning womankind.

13.

At the close of my school service there were other "going-away" affairs. The following article which appeared in the Saint Paul Pioneer Press, April 3, 1921, tells of some of them. These pleasant dinners and gatherings warmed the hearts of Marion and myself.

STUDENTS HONOR C. G. SELVIG AS MAN

WHO MADE NORTHWEST FARM SCHOOL

Congressman-elect Given Silver Service; Painting of Him Unveiled;
    See Hope of Farm Relief in His Election
Crookston, Minn., April 2.—While C. G. Selvig, Congressman-elect from the Ninth district of Minnesota, has been preparing to take up his new duties, numerous
Coming of Age

tributes have been paid him during the past two weeks for his 17 years of service as superintendent of the University of Minnesota Northwest Farm school here.

As an evidence of the high esteem in which he was held by the students, a portrait of Representative Selvig was unveiled March 20 in the school dining hall. The portrait, painted by Arne Berger of Minneapolis, was presented to the school as a memorial by the class of 1926.

The work of Representative Selvig in building up the school from two buildings in 1910, when the institution was considered almost a liability, to its present status was lauded at the unveiling by R. S. Dunham, advisor of the class of 1926.

In response Representative Selvig said that the memorial should be considered as an institutional honor rather than as a personal one. He expressed his thanks for the loyalty and co-operation the students and faculty have given him during his years with the school.

Speaking of the future ideals of the school, he said that in the students should be inculcated the ideals of goodness, charity, energy, tolerance and service, and that the alumni should be a living embodiment of these ideals. The faculty should aim to build character, he said, and the school should strive to serve agriculture and the community.

The unveiling of the portrait was done by Naomi Forder of Middle River, Minn., and Doris Olson of Fertile, Minn., while the men's glee club sang a tribute to Representative Selvig.

Four days after the unveiling, on March 24, at the nineteenth annual commencement of the school, Representative Selvig was presented with a silver service by Arnold Aakre, president of the senior class, in behalf of the entire student body.

The silver service was of the same design as one presented to Representative Selvig a week earlier at a farewell reception given in his honor by the faculty at the Hotel Crookston.

At this reception, T. M. McCall, acting as toastmaster, eulogized Representative Selvig's accomplishments at the school. Professor A. M. Foker reviewed Representative Selvig's life.

Miss Ruth Sheldon, responding to a toast of the ladies of the faculty, pointed out that although Representative Selvig was leaving the school, he would still be a part of the Crookston community.

Other speakers were: E. W. Avery, Mrs. E. R. Clark, and A. H. Larson, the registrar, who presented the silver service for the faculty.

Responding to these addresses, Representative Selvig said that his 17 years at the Northwest school would always be pleasant memories and that the earnestness of the faculty and student body would ever be an inspiration to him, which he hoped would continue with him in Washington.

Representative Selvig, in the opinion of his friends, will make one of the Northwest's most able congressmen since he has detailed knowledge of the agricultural problem in all its phases, practical and theoretical, and since he is a member of the majority party, it is believed he will be able to use his expert knowledge to exert sufficient influence over other Congressmen to gain material relief for the farmers.
Scroll presented by Northwest School and Station Staff, 1927.

"A cherished document."
Between 1920 and 1930 more than 450,000 owners lost their farms; the value of farm property dropped $20,000,000,000 and tenancy increased by more than 200,000.

Between 1920 and 1930 more than 450,000 owners lost their farms; the value of farm property dropped $20,000,000,000 and tenancy increased by more than 200,000.

Between 1920 and 1930 the gross annual farm income dropped from $15,400,000,000 to $9,000,000,000 and there was an additional decline of $2,600,000,000 since 1930.

The agricultural population during that decade was not suffering alone.

The farmers' purchasing power at one time $16,000,000,000 became less than $5,000,000,000 a year. A market for $11,000,000,000 worth of the products of mine and factory disappeared during that momentous decade — more than twice our total exports at their peak.

In 1930, more than one-half the industrial workers of the nation depended for employment on materials supplied by the farms, according to reliable estimate published in the New York Times. When the farmers had a purchasing power of $16,000,000,000, it was conservatively estimated, they paid, indirectly, $2,500,000,000 in wages to city workers.

2.

I shall not trouble my readers with additional statistics. The people in the Red River Valley knew these facts from experience. John Perry living on one of the best farms in the Valley gave me first hand information regarding his farm. His farm operations were in the red. He owned a debt-free section of land, every acre tillable, substantial buildings, a large house, and all the necessary equipment. He practised mixed farming. He was acknowledged as being one of the best farmers in the Valley. And his farm operations were in the red!

What about all the rest of the farmers? What was happening in our happy Valley? This shouldn't have been allowed to happen. Where were our economists, farm marketing experts, governmental policy planners, anyway? I could not sit idly by during this crisis. The Valley was justifiably in revolt. Any red-blooded citizen would have been, too.

3.

Farm marketing problems were scheduled for the last day of 1924 Valley Farm Week's meetings. The Minnesota Red River Valley Development Association and the recently organized Minnesota Export Commission League met at the same time. I had been elected president of the latter. It had been organized to gain support for the McNary-Haugen bill as the best means for meeting the immediate need for farm relief.
Virgil MacGregor, Crookston, had suggested a similar plan and A. D. Stephens, had presented it to the Federal Reserve Board. In turn, it attracted the attention of Henry C. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture with whom Mr. MacGregor had been exchanging letters.

A reporter for the Minneapolis Journal told the story of the meeting held in Crookston, February 8, 1924. It is brief and covers the proceedings better than I can now recall them:

“It is well enough to advocate farm diversification in the Northwest, but that is not all,” Conrad G. Selvig, president of the Minnesota Export league and superintendent of the Northwest School of Agriculture here said today in a plea for support of the McNary-Haugen bill as the best means for meeting the immediate need for relief.

He presided at a meeting of the league which wound up the many meetings of a variety of organizations which have been a part of the program of the annual Winter Shows this week at Crookston.

“Diversification represents a desirable kind of farming, but it is a long time affair and not designed to meet the present emergency,” he said. “It will take years to effect the complete transformation. If nothing is done to help for a few years of emergency, half of our farmers may be lost.”

“The situation won’t be solved by co-operative marketing. That will help in the long run. The Coulter bill will yield benefit to some farmers in the future. Something should be done to meet the present emergency, and the best plan that has appeared on the legislative horizon is the McNary-Haugen bill.”

“This is not a measure to fix prices but a measure to give the farmer the advantage of a domestic market for his products, the advantage the manufacturer enjoys protected by a tariff. It proposes to take the surpluses that are bearing down farm prices to world levels out of the domestic market so that domestic supply and demand can operate to give American prices.”

“Moreover, it has within it a counteracting force against expansion of acreage, the bugaboo of the artificially made high price. If production is increased the surpluses will be increased and the cost of taking them out of the market will tend to wipe out the profit gained from the high domestic prices.”

“Everybody, realizing the need of help, ought to consider this bill in an open mind. We ask business men to study it carefully, not to condemn it before they read it over.”

As president of the Minnesota Export Commission league I was closely associated with its efficient and energetic secretary, C. H. Zealand, Crookston. It was necessary to secure funds and in this the Development association of which also he was secretary gave strong support. Contacts were established with other groups in the state. Also with groups in other states which led to mutual understanding and more effective work.

Bernard M. Baruch donated $500.00 to our organization. I wrote him, not long ago (in 1947) on another matter and mentioned incidentally he had aided the Minnesota Export Commission League back in 1924. In his reply he wrote, “You are evidently one of the very few who remember my fight for agriculture.” Then in his handwriting under the letter, “I never fear fighting for what is right, B. M. B.”
My views on the problem were stated in "Agriculture at the Crossroads"*. This became the text of several nation-wide radio addresses and was printed in the Congressional Record.

During this period there was a spirited campaign promoting diversified farming in the Dakotas and in the Red River Valley. The Coulter bill providing for federal loans to farmers for the purchase of livestock to be placed on farms was publicized.

There was strong opposition to the McNary-Haugen bill by certain interests and groups but the citizens in general in addition to the farmers realized something had to be done. The republican Congressmen from the Seventh and the Ninth districts, no less persons than Hon. A. J. Volstead, chairman of the House’s powerful Judiciary Committee and Hon. Halvor Steenerson, chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, had gone down to defeat in the current revolt of the farmers.

5.

The Valley farmers proposed sending me to Washington to urge substantial farm relief either through the McNary-Haugen bill or some effective modification thereof. I referred the request to my Chief, Dean W. C. Coffey. He discussed it with President L. D. Coffman who at a fraternity dinner we both attended on March 8, 1924 informed me I was the servant of my people. If they wished me to go to Washington at their expense, it was my duty to go. That settled it.

6.

My wife accompanied me to Washington where we remained three months that spring. I had made a brief trip there previously with credentials from the Minnesota Export League. During that visit I conferred with numerous senators and representatives as well as with various leaders of farm groups.

A mass meeting was held in one of Washington’s churches on a Sunday afternoon, with Senator Borah as the principal speaker. Charles J. Brand, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, was very active in providing facts and figures to support the farmers’ contentions. Senator Borah called a conference which I attended. At its close a committee on agricultural legislation was appointed. I ran across a copy of the list of members given me by the chairman. It is worthy of inclusion in this book.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL LEGISLATION

Senator William E. Borah, Chairman.
Fred Cummings
Milo Reno
John A. Simpson
J. S. Wanamaker
Senator Henrick Shipstead, Minnesota
Senator Elmer Thomas, Oklahoma
Senator Lynn Frazier, North Dakota
Senator Smith Brookhart, Iowa
Congressman Conrad G. Selvig, Minnesota
Congressman Victor Christgau, Minnesota

* "Agriculture at the Crossroads", Conrad G. Selvig, 1924.
When we arrived in Washington, I found there had been much activity since the previous visit already mentioned. There was a nation-wide movement which found expression in organizing Export Corporation Leagues in addition to rallying in support of the State Farm Bureau Federations, the National Grange, Grain Growers’ Marketing associations and bankers’ groups.

Many farm economists and members of both branches of Congress gave invaluable support. A new committee was formed which held frequent meetings to plan the strategy of the campaign. I was a member and teamed with former Governor Carl Gunderson, South Dakota, in our three months’ campaign to gain support for real “farm relief”.

History was in the making. We were not a “bunch of radicals.” Our listeners learned we represented the “grass-roots” farmers. If they were not convinced, at least, they became uneasy in their minds. “Equality for Agriculture” soon became the slogan of rural and many urban groups.

It is impossible to present the details of the fight for “Equality for Agriculture” in this book. The subject has been adequately handled by others.

7.

The work continued during 1925 and 1926. As will be stated anon the battle front changed in 1926. My views became more and more definite as will be seen in the following newspaper article which was published in the Fergus Falls Tribune, Democratic. It gives succinctly my views at the time which was mid-summer, 1926:

Mr. Selvig declared himself in detail for the export corporation idea as embodied in the Haugen bill. “Carry a big stick but don’t talk your head off, is my notion of how the legislation demanded by farmers is going to be secured,” he wrote. “It is a fundamental conviction with me that something must be done.”

It is not only the Haugen bill that is at issue. The farmers’ purchasing power is much below what it was in 1914. His farm debt has increased and he is unable, under present conditions, to reduce it. He buys in an artificially created market and is compelled to sell nearly all his products on a world market. Either the protective system must be extended to the farmer or it must be modified.

Transportation, taxation, credit problems, land tenure and honesty in labeling food products, are other problems that cry for amendment and change in the interests of agriculture. It’s going to be a long hard fight, but loyalty and persistence on the part of agriculture’s representatives and the spokesmen for farmers will win out in the end. All realize that agricultural well-being is of fundamental importance to the cities, to the industrial east, if you please, as well as to us out here in the producing regions.
The Valley In Revolt

The lines are forming for a real fight. Lines have formed before and victories for the people have been won. "Equality for Agriculture" is the battle-cry. United action is the weapon. An enlightened public opinion is the court. We shall win because we must win!

After it was all over the St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch published the following editorial:

AN APPRECIATION

Whatever happens to the McNary-Haugen bill from this point on, the victory which has been won in Congress furnished a proper occasion for calling attention to the heavy debt of gratitude which the West owes the men who have been responsible for it. It has been a long and stubborn fight. It has involved an industry in which more than thirty million persons are directly concerned. The men who have contributed to this victory naturally number by the hundreds. All are deserving of appreciation for the unselfish devotion with which they have applied themselves to the cause of agriculture.

But a few names may be singled out as worthy of particular notice. If among the comparatively small group of men who have carried the chief burden through the four years of the campaign, two may be selected for special credit for the triumph, they are Frank W. Murphy of Wheaton, Minnesota, who was in active charge of the campaign at Washington for the last three sessions, and George N. Peek of Moline, Illinois. These men have labored incessantly and with a persistence and determination which calls for the highest praise. They have been the chief inspirers of the movement.

Among the many others outside of Congress who have contributed greatly, either in their own communities or at Washington, should be mentioned such men as William Hirth of Columbia, Missouri; Thomas Cashman of Owatonna, Minnesota; J. F. Reed of the Minnesota, and Charles E. Hearst and William Settle of the Iowa and Indiana Farm Bureaus; James Manahan of St. Paul; Chester Davis, Frank D. Barton and Robert Cowles of the Illinois Agricultural association; C. G. Selvig of Crookston; H. G. Keeny of Omaha and a large number of other men who have been active in leadership. To them should also be added the Southern leaders, without whom the victory would have been impossible, and also such businessmen as C. Reinold Noyes, Bernard Baruch, Charles G. Dawes and Frank O. Lowden, who have made the fight for agriculture their fight.

During the four years the Pioneer Press and Dispatch have been taking an editorial leadership in this movement, we have come to have the highest admiration and regard for the men with whom we have found ourselves working shoulder to shoulder. The gracious expressions of congratulations which we have received from many of them, and which we print elsewhere in this issue are deeply gratifying.
MINNESOTA’S DELEGATION, 72nd CONGRESS. UPPER, L. TO R., CHRISTGAU, NOLAN, KVALE, MAAS, PITTENGER. LOWER L. TO R., GOODWIN, CLAGUE, KNUTSON, SELVIG, ANDRESEN.
In 1922, when the convention system was the means of nominating candidates for office, a "grass-roots" committee sent a circular letter throughout the Ninth District to the newspapers and party leaders advocating my nomination for Congress at the district Republican convention. There was no concerted campaign made. The proposal had not interested me particularly. I was on-the-fence. The incumbent Congressman was re-nominated but failed to be reelected in November.

In the 1924 campaign State Senator F. H. Peterson, attorney, Moorhead, was nominated by the Republicans to run against the Farm-Labor incumbent. Senator Peterson would have made a very efficient member of Congress. He understood farm problems and had high rank as a lawyer. But he was defeated.

The years rolled on. The farm depression remained in an acute stage as is indicated in the previous chapter. Two great needs confronted the farmers: first, that the farmers themselves seek to form large, national groups that could speak for the farmers; second, that groups be formed in every Congressional district to wake up the people and what is more, keep them awake. Iterate and reiterate and drive home the facts the people of the United States should know about the state of the nation's agriculture.

When in Washington in 1924 I took a look at what was being done by various groups in presenting their views to the House and Senate Committees. There down the street from the capitol I found the American Federation of Labor's home. Across the street from the capitol that of the Railroad Workers' Unions. Labor at that time, spoke with one voice, as these two groups worked together. Farther down the street directly across from the White House, stood the massive marble building housing the United States Chamber of Commerce. Business, industry, finance and commerce spoke with a single voice.

I looked in vain for any outstanding building housing the spokesmen for agriculture. I looked into a telephone directory and what I read astounded me. There were no less than 51 "national?" groups purporting to speak for the farmers!

I felt I could do two things: first, encourage and urge the farmers to organize; second, concentrate on the farmers' marketing problems and urge other groups to do the same. Follow this up with campaign of public education. Use as an illustration the need of adding one leg, agriculture, to the existing three legs of a table representing labor, industry and commerce to make a firm setting for our national economy.

By 1926, the conviction grew that the farm relief issue was emerging as a vital national problem. It would be solved only when the two major parties had been won to the cause.

Both before and after our three months' sojourn in Washington, I had attended many regional, state and national meetings and conventions where farm problems
were studied and discussed. I had come to know many of the national leaders. Increasing attention was devoted to farm prices in relation to the prices the farmer had to pay for what he needed.

Legislation was discussed particularly at meetings held in North Dakota, St. Paul, Des Moines and Chicago. The membership in the National Grange and the American Farm Bureau Federation was increasing by leaps and bounds. It did appear as though something might be achieved through legislation and there would be an opportunity for service if I were elected as a member of Congress.

My closest friends were all for it. The School and Station had been developed almost as fully as possible as a regional institution. In fact, I had begun to feel there wasn’t very much more on which to spend my energy there. I consulted frequently with my wife. She was happy at the Station but she knew the needs of the farmers, also.

Minnesota had recently adopted the primary election system to nominate party candidates for office. Four candidates filed for Congress on the Republican ticket in the Red River Valley (Ninth) District in 1926. I was one of them. The four candidates came from different counties. Before the June primary election my time for campaigning was limited to week-ends. No visits were made to the counties in which the other candidates lived.

It was a friendly contest among friends. Nothing was said or done to “dim” our friendship with each other. I carried all the counties excepting the home counties of the three other candidates. In one of these counties I was within a few dozen votes, as I recall it, of being the winner.

There was no presidential election in 1926 so Minnesota voters were mainly concerned with state and local issues. But the farm problem in several districts, including the Ninth, overshadowed all else.

During the summer I spent my vacation campaigning. I was not a stranger in most places. I found I had friends everywhere. I made no political speeches in the sense of the word that I was primarily seeking votes.

I stressed it was my ambition to serve the district more fully and if they wished to send me to Washington, well and good. I stated my conscience and judgment would determine my stand on all issues. I made no commitments in advance. I was happy in my work at Crookston but was willing to serve my district, state and nation if they decided to send me to Washington.

There were, of course, many exciting and interesting experiences during the ensuing campaign for which the University Regents gave me a month’s leave-of-absence, without salary in October. At the close of one meeting in western Marshall County a woman who sat near the front and listened intently was heard to remark as she left at the close of the meeting, “Ja, nu veit du!” (Yes, now you know), with strong emphasis.

A huge black bear, which had wandered from the Red Lake Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota added plenty of excitement during my 1930 campaign for reelection to Congress.

While giving an address at a political rally at the farm of R. S. Austin in Clearwater County near Clearbrook, Bruin ambled towards the open air meeting while 200 farmers scrambled desperately for the open spaces.
"It was a comical sight," said one man, whose nimble feet had carried him far enough away to become a spectator. "Some climbed trees; others displayed speed they had never known they possessed."

After Mr. Austin had obtained his shotgun the unwelcome visitor departed and the meeting was resumed.

But my audience during the rest of the meeting kept one eye on me, and other in the direction whence the bear had gone.

I was elected by a small majority in November. It was both a lively and a hard campaign. My supporters predicted victory but we knew it would be close. On Thursday afternoon the unofficial returns indicated I had a safe majority of nearly one thousand votes. My home county, Polk, and the banner Republican county, Ottertail, gave me leads which exceeded the opposition in several Farm-Labor counties. Col. Theodore Roosevelt made two speeches in the district for the Republican candidates.

3.

In Washington, which I had visited many times since 1896, I was welcomed by my Minnesota colleagues in both House and Senate. I had broadened my acquaintances among Congressman during our three months' sojourn there in 1924. Those interested in agriculture, the Great-Lakes Waterway and in the tariff as it affected agriculture became co-workers. Members of Congress must specialize. Committees hold hearings and develop the facts dealing with the bills presented. No one can follow, minutely, every measure but keeps informed through conferences and committee reports.

During my first term I teamed up with many on both sides of the aisle who were interested in the farm problem and worked closely with them. Today the names that come to mind include all the members of the Minnesota delegation; Ketcham, Michigan; Snow, Maine; Barbour, California; Hope, Kansas, who entered Congress when I did; Timberlake, Colorado; Summers, Washington; Haugen, Dickinson and the next Congress, Campbell, Iowa; Hall, Illinois; Brand, Ohio; Burtness and his colleagues from North Dakota and the South Dakota delegation. I have omitted, I realize, many names.

In social affairs, my wife and family, greatly enjoyed life in Washington. Dinners, luncheons, teas, receptions and social gatherings were numerous and enjoyable. My wife became a member of the Congressional Club and enjoyed many happy hours there. Our daughter, Margaret, and our son, George, attended George Washington University. Our daughter, Helen, who graduated from the University of Minnesota, and who had helped during the campaign, continued as my very efficient and helpful secretary. Before going to the University, she took up shorthand knowing that would be helpful later in her class work.

There were many Minnesotans in official life in Washington. Congressman Walter H. Newton resigned to become one of President Hoover's secretaries. Honorable Frank Kellogg was one of Minnesota's senators and Henrik Shipstead the other. William D. Mitchell was U.S. Attorney General and G. Aaron Youngquist, Crookston, one of his assistants. Col. C. H. March, Litchfield, was a member of the Federal Trade Commission and my former Dean, Dr. Albert F. Woods, was chief of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry. Later he was head of the graduate work division in the department.

We came to know Presidents Coolidge and Hoover, Speaker and Mrs. Longworth, Congressman Hull, Tennessee, later Secretary of State; Speaker John N. Garner and his wife, Senators Borah, Johnson, McNary and others.
An invitation was accepted by Congressman Harold Knutson and myself to represent Minnesota, August 10, 1927 at the dedication of Mount Rushmore Monument in the Black Hills, the first national memorial federally authorized. President Calvin Coolidge was vacationing at Rapid City at the time so we decided to call on him and accompany the group to the mountain top from which we could view the site where the heads of four Presidents would be sculptured on the solid rock face of Mount Rushmore. Accompanying us from Minnesota were C. C. Strander and Charles Loring, Crookston, and Mr. Peterson, register of deeds, Walker.

We enjoyed a pleasant chat with the President at his summer capitol. I recall that farm relief was discussed. He wanted to know what was the trouble. I had been elected in the previous fall so I was fresh from the hustings. It fell to me to inform him that the farmers were really on the warpath and that he'd better be doing something about it.

At the dedication exercises John Gutzon de la Mothe Borglum (Gutzon Borglum); Senator Fess, Ohio; Governor Bulow, South Dakota and the President made appropriate addresses. What I most vividly recall is this walk up the mountain in a broiling sun that I and many others unaccustomed to such a feat made to reach the speakers' platform at the top of the mountain. The President and Senator Fess rode horses. They were arrayed cowboy style and cut quite a figure. The President's hat was hard to balance because of its size, his boots were resplendent.
I was given good committee assignments for a freshman member. The Committee on Agriculture already had a member from my state. He is still a member being next to Congressman Hope, Kansas, in seniority. He has had a very important part in shaping agricultural legislation since he entered Congress in 1924. My committees were Flood Control, Roads, Census and Invalid Pensions.

Flood Control Committee had as its first problem consideration of the Mississippi River Flood Control Bill. The destructive flood of 1927 made it necessary to seek means to prevent damage from future floods. The hearings continued over six months. A bill was drafted which included two provisions which would increase considerably the eventual cost of the project.

I joined Congressman Frear, Wisconsin and four other members of the Committee in submitting a minority report which President Coolidge and the administration strongly endorsed. The bill as passed authorized the expenditure of $325,000,000 over a ten-year period. It was really the first over-all approach to the solution of the Mississippi River flood control problem.

As a member of the Roads Committee I voted to increase the federal appropriation for roads to the states from fifty to one hundred and twenty-five millions, annually. During that period appropriations for the Memorial Bridge and the Mount Vernon Parkway projects were authorized by this committee.

The Census Committee held protracted hearing on a re-apportionment bill which resulted in the enactment of the law currently in force. This provides for automatic apportionment of the number of members in the House of Representatives from each state based on its population as disclosed by each succeeding census.

I became a member of the Labor Committee in 1930, relinquishing membership on the Flood Control Committee. As a member of the Labor Committee I favored holding the first hearing ever held by Congress on Old Age Pensions and later addressed the Committee on the bill before the Committee. I find, also, in the Congressional Record, of July 1, 1930, the speech I made on Old Age Pensions.

5.

The main work lay in advocating the McNary-Haugen farm relief bill, with the equalization fee provision included. In the Congressional Record there are fourteen of my speeches on that subject. The bill was vetoed twice by President Coolidge and these vetoes caused the agricultural districts in the Midwest and Far West to seek farm relief through the medium of electing a Democrat for president. What has happened since is now history.

Before entering into any activity relating to the tariff schedules affecting agriculture I conferred with the leaders in the House. I have letters from Congressman Hawley, Oregon, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; Snell, New York, chairman of the powerful Rules Committee; Tilson, Connecticut, majority leader, and Timberlake, Colorado, member of the Ways and Means Committee. All of them favored upward revision of the schedules, known as the farm schedules.

Hawley wrote on May 18, 1928, “The agricultural schedules should be revised upward.” Snell, August 13, 1928, “Revise the agricultural schedules upward to such an extent that will absolutely protect the American market for the American farmer.” Tilson, May 19, 1928, “I am in complete accord with the conclusion of your argument in favor of legislation by the 71st Congress increasing the tariff rates on agricultural products.” Speaker Nicholas Longworth informed me he favored limiting tariff revision exclusively to agricultural schedules.
I conferred with many members of the House and Senate on this subject. Among them was Senator Shipstead of Minnesota. He favored increases in the agricultural schedules and the enactment of the McNary-Haugen bill or a satisfactory substitute. In his letter of February 2, 1928, he states, "I think the most important bill as far as agriculture is concerned is the McNary-Haugen bill including the equalization fee. ... In my opinion one (tariff adjustments) without the other (McNary-Haugen bill) would not be effective at least in numerous cases." This was my position.

I set myself the task to study the agricultural schedules with the intention of submitting new tariff rates to the Committee that would be comparable to the schedules dealing with other imports. This entailed a great deal of work which kept my secretary Martin Widsten, and myself busy for weeks. I was a new member of the House who desired above all, to get results. I therefore asked Representatives Timberlake, Colorado; Dickinson, Iowa and Manlove, Missouri to come to my office as I desired to confer with them regarding the revised schedules I placed before them.

They agreed these new rates were necessary. I then suggested that the schedules be divided among the four present, each to choose those of major importance to their sections of the country, and that individual bills be introduced. This was done.

During the next few months I placed in the Congressional Record facts and figures supporting the proposed changes in twelve extensions of remarks. It was a part of the program of education.

In 1928, the Republicans gained a majority of over 100 in the House. Immediately a movement began to revise the entire existing tariff law. The result was the rates on commodities the farmers needed were increased thus adding to the cost of farm operations. Because the schedules for farm products were increased, many urged us to vote for the bill.

Five members from Minnesota, including myself, and several from adjoining states did not do so, but this bill heavily weighed with increases in non-agricultural tariff schedules was passed by the House. A letter bearing the names of over 1100 economists from all parts of the nation urged President Hoover to veto the bill. He signed it. I have always felt I was right in voting against the Smoot-Hawley bill. Events since 1930 have firmly justified my stand.

There were other measures that I favored during my three terms as a member of Congress. I felt the St. Lawrence Deep Waterway would benefit the entire nation. I was against a federal sales tax. I favored federal participation in helping the states provide Old Age Pensions to rid our land of the ignominy of "poor-houses." I favored Philippine independence.

Matters of interest to my district and state were constantly before me. They were of minor importance as compared to farm relief but they were of importance to my constituents.

These included Lake of the Woods boundary project referred to the International Joint Boundary Commission; settlement of claims in the Mud Lake project; Roseau River flood problem, also involving the Joint Commission; bills relating to the Red Lake and Chippewa Indians in my district and procuring an appropriation for a monument commemorating the signing in 1851 of the "Old Crossing Treaty," with the Indians. This was unveiled at Old Crossing Park, in Red Lake County, with appropriate exercises on June 25, 1933. (See appendix.)
OLD CROSSING TREATY MEMORIAL LOCATED IN RED LAKE COUNTY NEAR VILLAGE OF HUOT. (See appendix.)

"Marks place Indian Treaty was signed."

In a bronze plaque at the base of the monument is the following inscription:

The Red River Valley of the North
Then included in the State of Minnesota and the Territory of Dakota
Was Ceded to the United States in a Treaty Signed Near this Spot on
October 2, 1863, Negotiated by Commissioners Alexander Ramsey and
Ashley C. Morrill and the Chiefs, Head Men and Warriors of the Red Lake and
Pembina Bands of Chippewa Indians.

Erected by The United States 1932.
Minnesota's governor in 1931 vetoed the bill providing for redistricting the congressional districts of the state. The census of 1930 reduced the state's representation from ten to nine. There were many disappointments over the bill which the Legislature passed. It was impossible to repass it over the veto by the Farm-Labor governor. The result was that in 1932 all the members of Congress in the state ran for election "at large," that is, by the state as a unit, instead of by districts.

Minnesota's population was heavily concentrated in the area of the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul). In an election "at large" it was inevitable that nearly all of the congressmen would be elected from that populous area. This proved to be true.

There were thirty-two candidates for Congress on the Republican ticket, with nine to be nominated. My district was in the northwestern corner of the state, from 200 to 400 miles from the Twin Cities. Among the 32 were a former governor and a former state auditor who were well and favorably known throughout the state. Both were Republicans.

The primary election took place at the crest of the strength of the Farm-Labor party. In the primary I ran eighth, thereby gaining a place on the November ballot. I made a state-wide campaign but was handicapped for the lack of funds and a state-wide acquaintance. Even so, received 304,848 votes, running eleventh, and only 8,373 votes behind the veteran member, Congressman Harold Knutson. I felt I had made a good "run," considering the circumstances.

Elected in November were five Farm-Labor candidates, one Democrat and three Republicans, including the former governor, the former state auditor and Harold Knutson. He was first elected in 1917 and continued in service until 1949. During his last term he was chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee. His total term of service was 32 years.

There is not much more to tell. I became seriously ill in February, 1933, from a severe attack of the "flu." This led to infection of my "good" ear which seriously impaired my hearing. Several of my colleagues were elected in 1934 in their districts but I was not a candidate. My physician advised against it.
My wife and I took a long-planned trip to Europe in 1931. Our traveling companions were our friends Paul and Margaret Miller. He was then in charge of the University’s Agricultural School and Station at Morris. The three months’ trip was marvelous. There were “Ah’s” and “Oh’s” a-plenty during the week spent in Paris, lovely Paris, and in other places. We had a delightful motor trip to Nice. Our driver, Marion Gray was a Chicago born World War I veteran who had married a French girl and remained in Paris. He spoke five languages. He knew all the highways and by-ways and could negotiate impossible corners in the narrow streets. He could turn on a dime, Miller often said. Best of all he could tell us of historic places, events and much else that he had found interested visitors.

After several days at Nice, we continued on to Genoa, Rome, Florence, Venice and Milan. We spent some days at Lucerne, Heidelberg, Amsterdam and Copenhagen before going to Norway.

That country was one of my main objectives as I wished to see where my parents lived before emigrating to America sixty years before. The Millers wished to spend more time in Scotland and England so we parted, temporarily, at Stavanger, where we remained a week before rejoining them in London.

As we neared the harbor at Stavanger I was on the deck, leaning against the rail with my eyes fixed on the city and the surrounding scene. I was filled with a strange emotion. Perhaps my countenance disclosed my inner feelings. At any rate an English woman who was near approached. She said, “I know what you are thinking of and how you feel. You are seeing for the first time your father’s land. I have had the same feelings.”

I located an eighty-odd year old friend of my mother’s at Egersund. She said my mother was her closest girlhood friend. Still straight and spry at her age she went to a commode in her room and in the left corner of the bottom drawer picked up a small blue-colored box, hand carved and covered with hand-painted flowers. From it she extracted a small scroll tied with a blue ribbon. This was mother’s gift to her girlhood friend. I was greatly moved.

We found father’s home had become a summer resort located in a beautiful valley where Hogsfjord bends its way towards the mainland. We saw raspberry bushes which might have been from the stock my paternal grandmother planted and tended nearly one hundred years ago. We learned much we never had known before of Norway’s history and of the great waves of emigrants that had gone forth to “America,” land of promise and opportunity.

I described in the book, “Glimpses of Europe,” which I wrote in 1931, what impressed me most, not only in the land of my ancestors, but everywhere we went. We were royally entertained at the homes of cousins, two of whom had resided in Minnesota many years. The visit was all too brief for both of us.
The passage to Newcastle on the S.S. Jupiter was not to be to my liking. We left Stavanger Saturday evening. The weather was fair. A pleasant voyage was in prospect. The American Consul had taken us in charge and we met the ship's Captain. He expressed a wish we might have a visit together seeing that my father came from Stavanger and had been a sailor for many years. He would come to our cabin on the morrow. He did but we had no visit.

During the night a terrific storm arose over the North Sea. Off the coast of France the next day a passenger steamer foundered and sank bearing nearly 400 passengers to their watery graves. The Jupiter was only about 100 miles from this spot, as I recall reading in the London papers the next day.

Thus a storm caused me to lose my sea-legs, if any, and the captain's visit was called off. Just before leaving the ship, however, he sought me out to inform me, "I was busy today but toward evening I called at your cabin. You see, I wanted to keep my promise."

I am tempted to indulge myself by writing a chapter or two on the delights experienced during the trip but must refrain. We were a busy quartette in England. It was lovely June when the countryside was at its best. I must leave it at that.

One of our delightful visits later was at Rochester, New York, where my wife and I were guests of our former Northwest School's registrar and preceptor, Arthur H. Larson and his family. He was Registrar and Secretary of Eastman School of Music and this led to a most interesting visit to the home of George Eastman.

We had been invited to attend a Sunday evening string quartette program in which all the performers were artists of first rank. It was a beautiful program. Following it, we were guests of Mr. Eastman at the "supper" which followed the Sunday programs. Knowing my hearing deficiency Mr. Larson arranged for me to sit next to Mr. Eastman. Our conversation ranged far and wide. He told of his earliest experiments in Kodak, North Dakota, and of progress. His interest in music led him to establish the Eastman School of Music. He said, "I consider this use of my money will lead to the least disadvantage of anyone. One can't go far wrong in music." It was a delightful evening for both my wife and me.

At the conclusion of my service in Congress, we visited Florida and the next year California. During the summers up to 1941 we lived at our cottage at Cass Lake, Minnesota. For a person with an acute allergy for hard work this was altogether too easy and quiet a life for me. I had begun to be re-interested in stamp-collecting about this time. I enjoyed seeing my friend Paul Miller's fine collection of the early issues of U.S. stamps. My son, George, had become interested, also. I needed something to keep my mind active.

Recently Grandma Moses said to a convalescing woman, "Just keep your mind active my dear, and you'll be all right." I found stamp collecting interesting and fascinating. Naturally, I turned to all available sources to learn what it was all about. My counsellors were Paul Miller, Gerald Burgess and A. B. Cassell, the latter two from Minneapolis.

Stamp collecting can be a means of losing money fast. It took two years before I ventured to acquire additions to my collection. My counsellors inspected them first. I needed to learn and soon became deeply immersed in the fascinating hobby. It was just what was needed. My hearing handicap greatly lessened social intercourse. Study and work overcame that in part. Soon I was exhibiting my early issues of U.S. stamps.
at stamp shows in Miami, St. Petersburg, Minneapolis, Santa Monica and Hollywood, where the collection was given full recognition by the judges.

My son, George and I visited prominent collectors in San Francisco, St. Paul, Washington, New Orleans and New York. There is a feeling of fraternity among hobbyists which heightens the pleasure. In San Francisco we called at the Crocker National Bank to talk stamps with its president, William H. Crocker, who had an unequaled collection of the early issues of Hawaii besides a well-known collection of early U.S. issues.

The vice-president informed us Mr. Crocker would not return until mid-afternoon, but if we'd leave a message the president would get it. "Oh, you'll see his stamps, all right. Come at four o'clock." We did. The book of the early Hawaiians was on his desk. To a collector it was a joy. Then he summoned one of his staff to escort us to the vaults where in two large safes were his stamps. We remained long after closing time.

4.

Reading was a favorite pastime during the fleeting years. For thirty years I had found very little time for reading as work occupied nearly all the time. I kept a record of books I wanted to read against the days I might have leisure. These days happily had arrived though I might have preferred the absence of a certain incumbrance (acoustic trauma). Hundreds of very delightful books were read. I started to make a list, but that chore soon became tiresome. I enjoyed re-reading Dickens' novels and others I had read in youth. On an evening when my wife was sitting by, I would read to her Dickens' incomparable descriptions or scenes. Those occasions are unforgettable.

It is a grave mistake ever to lose contact with friends if that can be prevented. Letter-writing in these days seems out-of-date and old-fashioned but that is not always true. I have not found it so. For many years I have enjoyed exchanging letters with friends and associates of long standing. I never became a writer-to-the-papers, but quite often have expressed my views to comment on utterances, opinions and views presented by the leading men and women of our country.

5.

When Honorable James R. Garfield, Cleveland, former secretary of Commerce, son of President James A. Garfield, was president of the American Hearing Society, I served for a brief period as vice-president and was assigned the national chairmanship of the Committee on Legislation.

A full account of activities then undertaken and later followed in California would require a book. My first step was to secure a syllabus or digest of existing state legislation relating to the deaf and the hard-of-hearing. I sought this from the Library of Congress where I had formed the habit of seeking similar information in other fields during my six years as a Congressman. My former colleague and friend for many, many years, Hon. Harold Knutson, later chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee, joined me officially in this request. It was granted. An employee who herself was hard-of-hearing, Miss Jennie Welland, prepared the digest.

Later Congressman Knutson at my request secured consent of the House of Representatives to have this digest of state laws affecting the acoustically handicapped printed as House Document No. 151. This was done on March 19, 1941. It was reprinted with up-to-date additions, as H.Doc. 154, March 27, 1943.

My wife and I traveled extensively over the United States in the interests of this
work. One evening we tried to recall the cities at which we spoke at meetings, luncheons or community dinners. The number added up to 45 meetings in 23 states. In 13 additional states, we had extensive correspondence with persons who were interested. This project required follow-up work. It really required the full-time efforts of at least one person, in addition to reimbursement for travel expenses. I could not give full-time service and was reluctant to be on the road all the time. The Society continued this project. Good progress has been made.

6.

The second World War period was one of anxiety at the Selvig home. Our three children were actively engaged abroad in three different services. Helen who had entered service in the State Department was transferred late in December, 1941 to the American Legation, Stockholm. This meant an Atlantic passage through enemy infested submarine area followed by air-flight from Edinburgh to Sweden, which was also extremely hazardous during that period. These were anxious days and nights for us. She served overseas three years.

Margaret became Red Cross Camp Director in northeastern India, near the western terminus of “The Hump” air flights. She was there nearly two years until the war ended. Later, she served in the same capacity with the Army Recreational Services in Korea. Long voyages in torpedo infested waters or long air flights did not contribute to her parents’ peace of mind.

George left in November, 1941, for a destination known only to his superior officers. It was strictly and absolutely, hush-hush. Bound for Singapore, he landed at Batavia, Java, and within two weeks was forced out by the attacking Japs.

The escape from Java smacked of adventure. A small group two days after the Jap invasion embarked for Perth, Australia on a 1200-ton vessel manned by refugee English sailors. He and his companions were finally allowed to come on board. They would sleep in the lifeboats on the deck. During one night the night-watch reported three torpedoes were fired at the ship. Two missed. The third came dead-center but it was too deep to hit the vessel’s hull.

From Perth he was ordered to Cairo and later served in Tunisia and Italy. He was promoted to captain at this time. From Italy he was transferred to join the Allied Mission to Yugoslavia under British Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean, of which Randolph Churchill, son of Winston Churchill, was also a member. We then learned George was with the O.S.S.

In Yugoslavia he became acquainted with Marshall Tito whom he describes as a magnetic leader. The Marshall entertained him at a Christmas dinner. A member of the Mission was author Evelyn Waugh. After the war he and his wife were guests of George and his wife in New York City. On that occasion George received a copy of Waugh’s “Scot-King’s Modern Europe,” his latest book at the time. I have George’s permission to quote what the author wrote on the fly-leaf:

“For George

an old-fashioned American
from Evelyn Waugh
an old-fashioned European.

To hell with Modern America,
To hell with Modern Europe.”

All the children returned safely from their service. Evenings at home during their visits were often spent in listening to their reminiscences. Whatever else war wrought it did bring more closely to us at home information from all parts of the world. If race prejudice can be smashed, probably there is hope for cooperation on a global basis. Lord Bryce once prophesied that a cure will be found for every social ailment except race prejudice. Recently a writer remarked that it is manifestly easier to smash an atom than a prejudice. Perhaps the millions of Americans who “have seen the world” will contribute to the creation of a better understanding of mutual problems amongst all peoples.

7.

An interesting incident occurred in Detroit, Michigan, far from Southern California, of which I was advised by my former secretary, Oscar L. Buhr, who for many years had been connected with the Detroit Trust Company. We have corresponded regularly during the intervening years. He wrote to tell me of a skit presented over radio WJM, Detroit, with characters representing him and me, two boys at school and a couple of men in the Detroit Trust Company.

From the script resume I gained that the story is of Oscar Buhr to whom I offered the job as secretary-registrar of the Northwest School of Agriculture in 1911. Oscar soon found his duties included coaching in basket ball, advising, and supervision of the boys, as well as being my secretary. He came upon all kinds of problems and all kinds of boys, helping and advising them with a warmth and understanding that was both wise and friendly, as well as inspiring to them. He found one boy at the school who presented a real problem. Oscar succeeded in leading him to become a splendid athlete, a fine student, and an all-around credit to everyone.

After five years at the school, the script continues, Oscar decided to follow Mr. Selvig’s advice and further his own education. He went to the University of Minnesota, and received a degree in business administration while working to support himself as secretary to President Marion L. Burton.

Later he became a clerk at Detroit Trust Company, was promoted again and again until in 1934, he became vice-president in charge of the investment department. The skit went across very well, Oscar wrote me. They put on some scenes including the basket ball scene, dormitory scene and convocation scene, which were quite entertaining. I was highly pleased, of course, to learn that episodes of school life at Crookston should be broadcast.

8.

I now come to an event where reticence must rule. My wife passed away suddenly in 1949 due to a stroke. We had been happily married for more than forty-six years and were looking forward to our golden wedding anniversary. But it was not to be. She had complained of heart trouble and had frequently consulted our physician, Dr. M. A. Desmond, Santa Monica, a fellow townsman and school mate from Rushford, Minnesota, in whom we both had explicit confidence. She was too active for her inherent strength. We often talked about her “slowing down a bit” to save her heart. Her enthusiasm for life and service won over caution. Thus it goes. My mind was unable to comprehend the profound event that had occured. I shall never forget the kindness of friends who came to our home to press my hand and to speak words of encouragement. She was loved by all. She won that love. She left us with a smile and a cheery word.
There is no poem that more clearly brings her to me these days than the one entitled “Orchestration” which appears on this page. It brings to me the music of her own words, her own voice. How I love to read this poem and to feel the old melodies “turn to break like silver on a beach.”

“There is no music that I have not heard moving
beneath our strange unquiet speech,
Old melodies that tremble toward a word,
And turn to break like silver on a beach.
It is no wonder, then, if we be found
Listening beyond the casual things we say,
To flute and horns again and the far sound
Of strings whose players all are hushed away.

There ghostly bugles, blowing thin refrains
Seek here again the long belated ease
From old despairs that stirred their troubled strains;
And still such lingering interludes as these
Wake with faint bells whose tolling out of time
Haunts through our speech like ghostly chime on chime.”

Poem by David Martin, in Santa Monica Outlook, January 24, 1950, in “Lookout” column.

Marion Elvira Wilcox was descended from early New England forbears. Her name is listed in Volume 5 of The Compendium of American Genealogy. Her father’s name was George A. Wilcox and her mother’s Mariette Minerva Rowe who died when Marion was four years old.

She lived with her uncle Benjamin J. Taber and her aunt Lottie until we were married at their pleasant country home named “Maple Shade Farm” near Mabel, Minnesota. She grew up with her cousin, Mary Taber. There could never be a person more lovable and understanding than Mary. The two girls played together. They hunted wild flowers together. Their home as a shrine to them and later to me.

I would like for my readers to know more about Mary Taber. I have a letter about “Tommie” which tells much about Mary Taber, also, she is now nearing eighty but she is young! She is indeed young!

TOMMIE

“Poor Tommie stopped breathing about 7 o’clock this eve. Old Tommie’s death isn’t just a common cat death. He was Vern’s cat and Vern was very fond of him. He sat on the arm of Vern’s chair when he read the evening paper.

“If all were away in the evening Vern would give Tommie the cream off the milk and that meant the coffee cream was used but Vern drank his coffee black. When Mrs. Antrim would take Vern to task for it he’d say, ‘Tommie likes cream’ and that was like Tommie’s whole life.

“To me Vern was a concrete illustration of Henry Van Dyke’s ‘The Other Wise Man’. It is said that there is always someone to take the place of those who leave us. No one has ever taken Marion’s, Min’s or Vern’s place (cousins) in my world. It has never been the same since they left.
The Fleeting Years

"Clifford is so upset over Tommie's death he can't study. He feels worse because he is afraid he gave Tommie too much liver the day before. Thinks he killed him with kindness. Well, that is a good way. I told him it wasn't that, Tommie has been very ill for a year.

"You know, I think my heart is about the best piece of anatomy I have. You see, I've never worried it any. I never get mad because I always figured that would only hurt me, and it wouldn't hurt the other fellow at all."

10.

I was led to read "Youth" by Joseph Conrad through a note in the Sunday New York Times recently. Perhaps you remember, "Oh Youth! The strength of it, the faith of it, the imagination of it! To me she was not an old rattletrap carting about the world a lot of coal for a freight — to me she was the endeavor, the test, the trial of life."

I felt that way in my youth. It was a wonderful period. I loved it. Joseph Conrad says more: "I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more — the feeling that I could last forever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort — to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires, too soon — before life itself."

11.

I am reminded, also, of a motto placed on my desk at Crookston, "It is better to wear out than to rust out," spoken by our great President, Theodore Roosevelt, whom I always admired. I am reminded of the words of Horace Mann, now permanently placed beneath his portrait at the National Education Building in Washington, "Be afraid to die until you have won some victory for humanity."

I am reminded of the prayer spoken by Reverend Peter Marshall when he was chaplain of the United States Senate: "When we cannot convince, let us be willing to persuade for small things done are better than great things planned."

Democracy will become a pitiful mockery if its offices are administered by people whose loftiest ambition is to make no mistakes. We need men and women with faith in God and in the goodness of men, undying devotion to our country and courage. Thus we may hope for the continuance of liberty, the cherished possession which escapes us if we cease our endeavors to secure and maintain it.

We cannot insure our own liberty except by insuring that of everyone else. If you wish to be happy you must yourself strive to making others, also, happy. A country lives or dies within the hearts of its own citizens.

"The harvest of old age", said Cicero, "is the recollection and abundance of blessings previously secured". Cicero wrote of the blessings of serenity achieved and of the philosophical mind.

Dr. Anton (Ajax) Carlson, internationally known physiologist must have had Cicero's words in mind when he recently gave his views on "abundance of blessings previously secured". On the eve of his seventy-fifth birthday he gave his philosophy, expressed pungently which is characteristic of him. He said, "The goal of current philosophy of the welfare state — security from cradle to grave whether you work or not — is both unscientific and unobtainable. The three W's and the three D's of living are work, work, work from diaper days til death." There is much to be
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said for his views. He knows the body’s needs. The mind and spirit, too, benefit from the body’s activity. We’ll let it go at that.

12.

Striving for supremacy has always been the bane of nations and the cause of their downfall in the past. Power is what each one wants. We hear less than we should about unselfish service. We do less than is necessary to place Christian principles upon a pedestal and strive to follow them. Christian humility and forbearance may well be set before us all to practice.

I recall my first visit to Washington. There stands the Washington Monument. It is majestic in its greatness. It personifies the stature of the man whom it honors. There stands, also, the beautiful temple dedicated to the memory of Abraham Lincoln. The shrine is visited by citizens of all nations. Two immortal messages are inscribed on its inner walls. Mural paintings point to epochal events. Then there is the life-like statue of the Great Emancipator. Thrills go through me every time I go there. He wrote of dedication to unfinished tasks. We need re-dedication every day of our lives for there is still much to be done.

Our trusted leaders cry out to the multitudes today as did the prophets of old. Many failed to listen then and met disaster. We can learn from the past and we must. We need now to renew our faith in ourselves and our government. Faith must be emphasized. It forms the foundation for decision, action, policy. We can’t buy peace. We must regain confidence in our spiritual heritage.
APPENDIX

THE RED RIVER VALLEY FEATURED BY THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN
By Thorval Tunheim

“A huge furrow dug by a glacial plow and filled with layers of deep, rich soil”. That's the way Country Gentleman, the top farm magazine of the nation, described the Red River Valley of Minnesota and North Dakota three decades ago after a roving writer, John E. Pickett, had visited one of the nation's most fertile regions.

Since the visit came just a few years after Conrad G. Selvig had assumed the superintendency of the Northwest School of Agriculture and simultaneously become the Valley's most ardent booster, his friends have a suspicion that he had a hand, however indirect, in the first national recognition this favored region had ever received.

The sow thistle was then in an expansion cycle but Valley Advocate Selvig suggested a soft-pedalling of any publicity about this troublesome weed.

“It's not a deadly thing, just a problem we have to meet and are meeting,” Mr. Selvig was quoted by the Country Gentleman . . . . “I have heard the sow thistle called a blessing in disguise.”

The Northwest School received wide publicity in the Pickett article and its superintendent was called “a mighty interesting and magnetic chap with an unusual following and an interesting school under his care”.

It is really not an agricultural college but a sort of high school farm, wrote Pickett, now publisher of an excellent farm paper in California. It takes the farm boys and girls from Red River Valley and adjoining counties when they have finished the eighth grade and gives them three years of agricultural or domestic science and academic training on a well-equipped, well-managed 640-acre farm.

During 1919, the article points out, the Northwest School had a gross income from livestock, seeds, crops and a few school fees of $19,000.

The famous Fossbakken family of five, of Fosston, who although orphaned, managed to attend the Northwest School, and then convert their fine farm into a profitable pure-bred stock enterprise, is featured in the article.

Pickett tells how the Selvig genius for organization was put to work conceiving the Red River Valley Livestock Association with its annual livestock show and sale. Also the Winter Shows.

“Ten years ago (1910)”, as Mr. Selvig puts it, “the Red River Valley farmer had nine horses, a cow and a half, a pig and a half, and a sheep and a half”, the article recalls. “Today there are 140 creameries in that part of Minnesota and a lot of beef cattle, hogs and sheep. A not very recent count listed 108 farmers’ clubs”.

The Northwest School was pushing corn for use as a regular silage crop after going back 38 years to discover that the average growing season of the valley is 122 days, Pickett wrote.

“I have checked yields of more than 100 bushels of corn on Red River Valley farms”, Mr. Selvig was quoted as saying.
Red River Valley farmers were described as "plungers who do things on a big scale" and E. C. Schroeder, Jerry D. Bacon, T. H. Skrei and others were listed as big-wig farmers of the era.

The Pickett article is of historical interest today in a region that has forged ahead fantastically with the help of farm mechanization and world conditions that made the farmers' products valuable. The article was like a debutante's coming-out party. A fertile farm region had flexed its muscles and come of age.

GRIMM'S ALFALFA

In an interesting article which appeared in the Northwest Monthly, August, 1939, the origin of Grimm alfalfa seed is told. The article follows:

The Northwest School and Station played a leading part in the introduction of Grimm alfalfa into the Red River Valley. Much of the prosperity in livestock farming, especially dairy production in the region, has been dependent for a large part on alfalfa. Alfalfa seed crops not only have built homes in the eastern part of the Valley but have been instrumental in giving many boys and girls educational opportunities they might otherwise have missed.

We are pleased to present Bob Hodgson's tribute to Wendelin Grimm, the discoverer and propagator of Grimm alfalfa. Bob Hodgson, as he is popularly known, is Superintendent R. E. Hodgson of the Southeast Expriment Station at Waseca, Minnesota.

"In 1857, Wendelin Grimm came from Germany and settled in Carver county, Minnesota. Little is known about him except that he brought along some alfalfa seed and planted it on his new farm. Practically all of it killed out the first winter, but by saving seed from the hardy plants which survived, Mr. Grimm finally developed a strain which could live through the extremes of heat and cold common to the state of his adoption.

Grimm called the new crop "ewiger klee" or everlasting clover. His neighbors got seed from him and grew alfalfa successfully. Finally, Professor Hays and his young assistant, Andrew Boss, drove a team from St. Paul to the Grimm farm to see this new crop they had heard so much about.

From than on everyone knows the story. Perhaps no single crop has ever meant so much to the livestock men of the northern states and Canada as this high yielding, deep rooted, hardy forage plant.

Today, every northern seed house sells alfalfa, and farmers are willing to pay a good premium for seed which can be traced back directly to Wendelin Grimm’s small field in Carver county. Every man who forks down fragrant green hay to eager cattle should have a bit of respect in his heart for this pioneer who wouldn't give up when the going was tough."

THE SERVICE FLAG

"In behalf of and with the fondest affection for our boys who have gone into the service of our country from this school . . . . and with pride in the service that our Northwest School boys are rendering their country, and ours.

We pledge our loyalty to them, and to the stars and stripes that float over them. We say to them:

Be brave; be strong of heart; be of good cheer . . . .

The cause is high, noble and just.

Loving thoughts and devoted prayers are yours . . . .

That you do your duty."
Firm in high resolve;
Noble in grandeur of purpose;
Composed in the dignity of unconquerable determination
Carry on,
Till the battle is won!

To you, our classmates true-... our school boys, whom we know and love.
To you, we dedicate this flag in your honor.

To every several one a star,
Which in its deep hue of blue reflects the loyalty
You feel for your country and for which
You offer your last full measure of devotion.

YOUR star's deep blue upon a field of white-...
    Clear, untarnished white, emblem of purity
Of mind, heart and body—your priceless heritage,
Which you will carry to beautiful France,
And not let suffer there.

YOUR star's deep blue-...fringed by a border of red-...
    Unflinching courage's bright sign.
YOU will not fail your country, boys,
You boys from the Northwest School.
Fight hard-...the star is yours-...-
And shall it come to pass
That bright gold its form o'ertakes.
We, in higher glory still,
Your name in memory shall hold."

FARM CROPS SHOW SCROLL

Conrad G. Selvig
of Minnesota
Sir:

As draws to a close this EIGHTH ANNUAL GATHERING of the people of Northwestern Minnesota at -.-.- as we must know it until a more embrace and comprehensive designation offers -.-.-
THE FARM CROPS SHOW,

we wish to say to you, and in saying, believe we speak for all, that to your enthusiasm, your energy and perseverance in the larger measure is due the gratifying and encouraging success that the gathering has proven.
TRUE, you have had the co-operation to the utmost of many, but that they have as gladly contributed their efforts can be but a tribute to your leadership.
THE LIVESTOCK PAVILION

the opening of which has been a feature and factor in the success of the meeting and which bids well to do much to promote our welfare and prosperity stands -.-.- not, we would say, as a monument, but as the cornerstone or the foundation of a movement which will arise to the vision, the self sacrifice and the integrity of yourself and they who have labored with you in the achievement.

Dated at Crookston, Minnesota, February 14, 1919.
PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS
NORTHWEST SCHOOL'S FARMERS' WEEK AND WOMEN'S MEETINGS
1916-1930 CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA

Honorable Henry J. Allen, Former Governor of Kansas
Honorable J. Adam Bede, Duluth, Minnesota
The Rt. Rev. G. G. Bennett, Duluth, Minnesota
Dr. Preston J. Bradley, Chicago
President M. L. Burton, University of Minnesota
Senator Arthur Capper, Kansas
Governor Theodore Christianson, State of Minnesota
Dean W. C. Coffey, University of Minnesota
President L. D. Coffman, University of Minnesota
President Donald J. Cowling, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota
Dr. Chas W. Gordon (Ralph Connor), Winnipeg
Honorable W. L. Harding, Former Governor of Iowa
Dr. John W. Holland, St. Paul, Minnesota
Judge Marcus A. Kavanagh, Chicago, Illinois
Chancellor E. H. Lindley, University of Kansas
Honorable Frank O. Lowden, Former Governor of Illinois
Honorable Duncan Marshall, Toronto, Canada
Honorable Arthur E. Nelson, St. Paul, Minnesota
Honorable W. I. Nolan, Minnesota
Reverend Phillips E. Osgood, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Honorable J. A. O. Preus, Former Governor of Minnesota
Dr. C. A. Prosser, Dunwoody Institute, Minnesota
Dr. Raymond Robins, Chicago
Dr. Roy L. Smith, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Mr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, New York
Honorable James C. Stone, Vice Chairman, Federal Farm Board, Washington, D. C.

Dr. J. A. Stub, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Dean W. R. Thatcher, University of Minnesota
Dr. George E. Vincent, University of Minnesota
Dr. Dudley Crafts Watson, Art Institute, Chicago
Dean Albert F. Woods, University of Minnesota

OLD CROSSING TREATY MEMORIAL

This monument was dedicated on June 25, 1933, with Conrad G. Selvig, president of Polk County Historical Society, acting as chairman. It was presented in behalf of the United States by Mark L. Burns, Cass Lake, and accepted in behalf of North Dakota by Joseph Robinovich, Grand Forks, and in behalf of Chippewa Indians by Edward L. Rogers, Walker.

The address of acceptance in behalf of Minnesota was made by Theodore C. Blegen, Superintendent, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, who delivered an inspiring address on “Monuments and History; The Background of Minnesota.”

At this site stands a magnificent bronze statue of a Chippewa Indian designed and executed by Carl C. Mose, sculptor, who is increasingly becoming recognized as one of our country's eminent artists.