

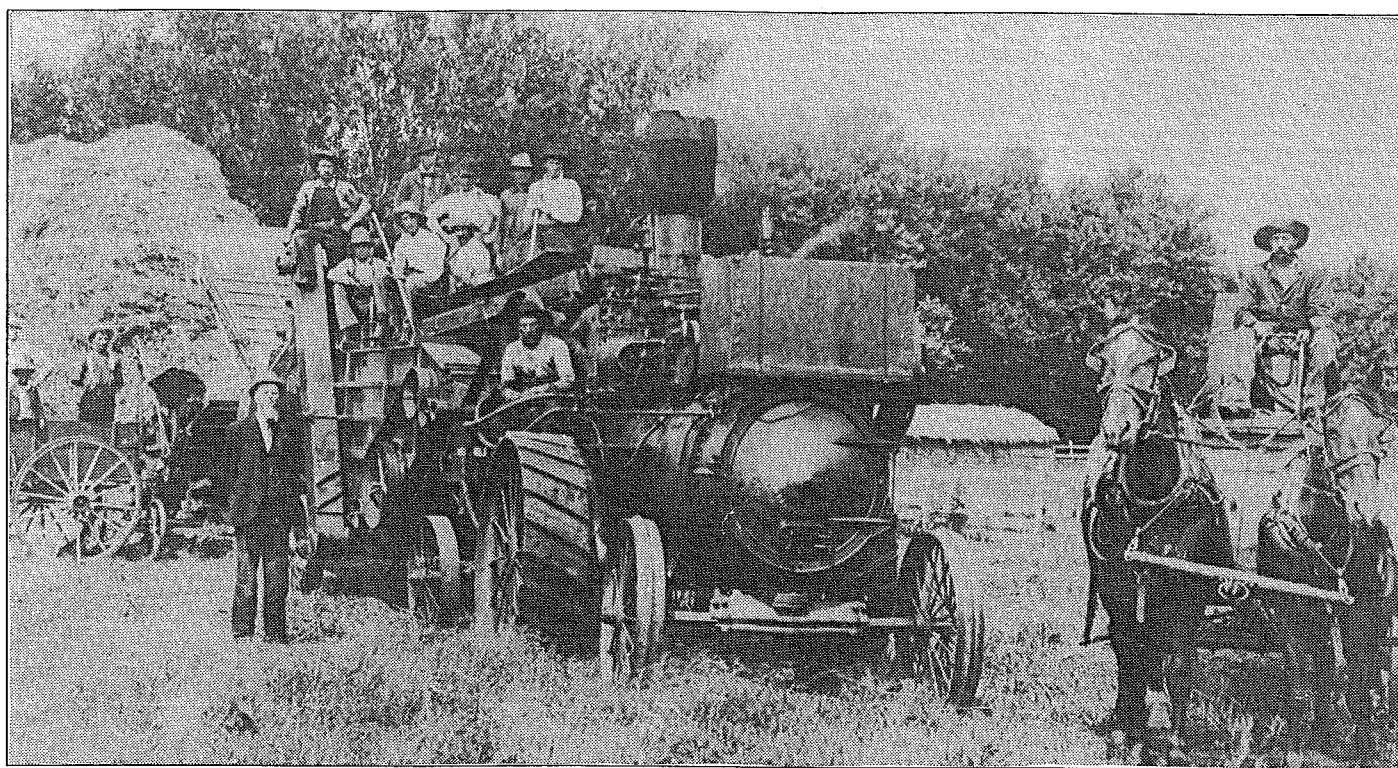
BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November/December 1994

Blue Earth County Historian

Notes About Farmers and Farm Conditions in Blue Earth County

W.W. Boyington



Nick Scherer and Nathan Day Threshing Crew on a tank wagon

inside...

What's New in the BECHS
Gift Shop.....6
Non-Profit Bake Sale.....7
Membership News.....7

Note: The following article is from the July 21, 1923, edition of the Free Press. Reprinted with permission.

We start out today to finish up work on Route 44, half of which we did yesterday. We had about a fifteen mile drive to go to the place where we left off

yesterday, but did not mind it so much as there was occasionally a good breeze. But as the day moved on the sun got hotter and the wind died down, making it very warm. The fields are beginning to show the effects of the dry weather. While they look good from the roadside, close inspection discloses the fact that



Blue Earth County Historian

The *Blue Earth County Historian* is published bimonthly by the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is a non-profit organization and has been collecting and preserving artifacts of historical value to the people of south central Minnesota since 1901.

BECHS is the only organization or institution entirely dedicated to the collection, preservation and exhibition of Blue Earth County History.

Blue Earth County Historian Staff

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Blue Earth County Historical Society
Heritage Center
415 Cherry St.
Mankato, MN 56001

BECHS also operates the historic R. D. Hubbard House. Built in 1871 by Rensselaer D. Hubbard, founder of Hubbard Milling Company, the elegant mansion and nearby brick carriage house contain many displays and artifacts which are open to the public.

The Hubbard House is owned by the city of Mankato and has been operated by BECHS since 1938.

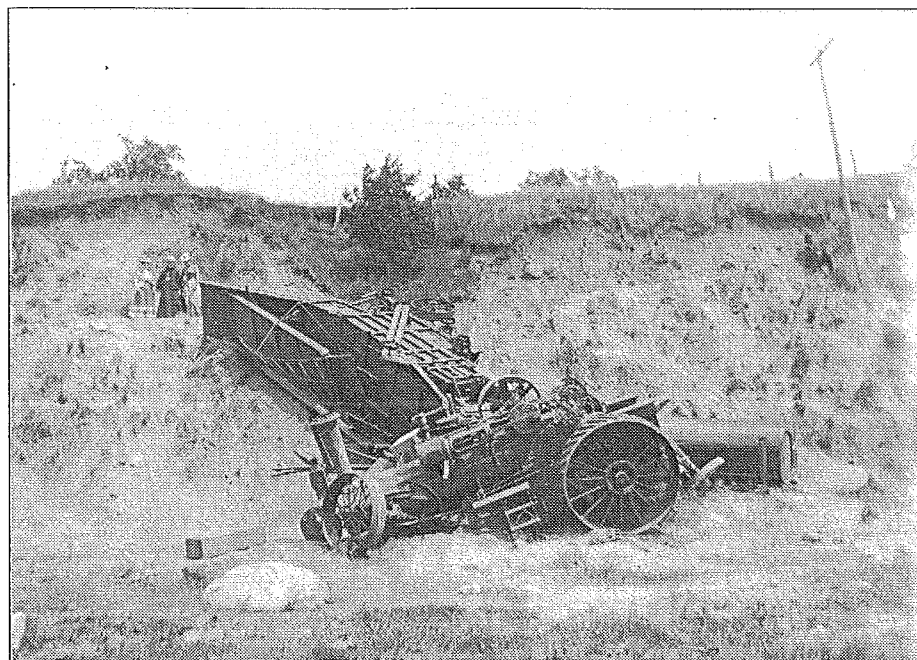
The Hubbard House is being restored. It is listed on the State Historical Record, as well as the National Register of Historic Places.

Hubbard House
606 S. Broad St.
Mankato, MN
Closed for restoration

the heat is getting some of the grain. The fields look real pretty in spite of the weather conditions, especially when you see a field of ripened oats or rye that has not been cut. This effect is making a veritable golden blanket for old mother earth. The corn too looks fine and in most cases has tassels out. A good gentle all night rain now and the corn crop can be figured as made. So let us all hope it will come soon, to save the farmers' grain, and for another reason, to cool the atmosphere for us poor mortals, who are not farmers but are among the suffering sweltering humanity of the cities. As I said before, we had to make a fifteen mile drive, drawing dear old Lizzie up to the home of George Hood. We walked out to the field where George was shocking barley. In order to get to talk to him he very kindly offered to put the writer

to work, helping him shock. We thanked him for his thoughtful attitude in regard to us, but declined. His hired man was cutting the barley today while he shocked. He is working a quarter section and milking ten cows. He has about sixty-five spring pigs of the Duroc breed and about one hundred and fifty spring chickens. He also has a dandy orchard of about twenty bearing apple and plum trees. They are loaded down with fruit. We left George after securing his subscription to the *Free Press* and admonishing him not to work too hard.

We drove down the road a piece and into the yard of J.A. Church. Mr. Church was not in when we called, but we had a very pleasant talk with Mrs. Church, who is a very interesting talker. She says they are farming ninety acres and that their son, Orlin, helps his father. They are milking



Threshing machine accident (circa 1900-15)

twelve cows at the present and have one hundred Duroc hogs and a nice flock of chickens. They have a fine orchard that was started by a

nursery man. They now have the benefit of the fruit of his toil. They are stacking their rye today, which is the first stacking day I have yet seen. I was pleased to secure Mr. Church's subscription to the *Free Press* before leaving. The

Church's little daughter, Edith, says she is crazy about "Bringing Up Father," one of our many comic features. After telling little "Nell" that Maggie and Jiggs would soon be with her to make her happy and bidding them goodbye, we rambled out on the road again.

The next man we talked to was Thomas J. Evans. He gave me a year's subscription. They all see the advantage of our news service, features and markets sooner or later. Mr. Evans says rain is needed badly. He is now milking nine cows and has a nice bunch of young pigs and chickens. He lives close to the beautiful Evergreen grove, a well-known landmark in this locality.

Fred Nokes was the next lucky

man. Mr. Nokes has a well-kept place, a new house, and about the average number of cows, hogs, and chickens.

stock. He has a dandy new barn which he finished last fall. It houses his fifteen cows, eight horses, and about thirty-five heads of

Holsteins. He also has about forty spring pigs of the Poland China breed and a nice bunch of one hundred and fifty spring chickens for Mrs. Rosenberg to worry about. Our "notes" are not many today, for the farmers are so busy



Edward J. Naylor's threshing rig water tank

Next, we drove up to the beautiful home of John B. Jones with its well-kept fenced-in lawn. With the help of his sons, Richard and Emil, Mr. Jones is farming two hundred and forty acres. Margaret, a daughter, helps with the housework. They have a radio set and the house is lighted by electricity. The work of installing both was done by their son, Cecil, who is an electrician and now is working at his trade in Mankato. They have seventeen cows which they are milking, about seventy spring pigs, and a nice flock of about two hundred chickens. They have taken the *Free Press* for over twenty years.

Sam Rosenberg, the next man we called on, was busy with his

in the fields that it is hard to see them. This is the busiest time of year for them.

Today we started out on Route 1 Lake Crystal. The country that is served by this route lies mostly south and west of Lake Crystal. At its most western point it goes within four miles of Madelia. I don't think that my notes today will be very interesting, as the heat which I have felt more than ever has about made me sick. But I will do my best, under the circumstances. At the present there are indications for rain, which we all need badly. The farmers especially need it, for their grain is very badly in need of water as the pastures are drying up.

Thomas B. Williams, whose farm is about a mile and a half from Lake Crystal, was the first place we called on today. Mr. Williams was in the field, as are ninety percent of the farmers these days, so we had a short talk with Mrs. Williams. Mr. Williams has a hired man who helps him in working his two hundred and forty acres. The small grain has been cut, so the men are haying today. Besides working in the field, Mr. Williams milks ten Guernsey cows, cares for about forty Duroc pigs, and tends to around one hundred chickens. Their beautiful home and well-kept lawn are about forty rods back from the road in a pretty grove. Everything looks clean and pleasant around here.

We next stopped at the home of Griff Evans. Griff happened to be home when we called. We were glad to

see him, as he is an old friend and a very pleasant fellow. He just got in from the field where he had

has about fifty young pigs, and owns over six hundred chickens. He has a dandy orchard of about

seventy-five trees, mostly apple. After telling me not to forget the place and call again, we left and drove south to the home of Earl J. Norman.

Earl also happened to be home when we called. He is an old *Free Press* reader, as is nearly every farmer in this neighborhood. He is working a quarter section with his nephew. He has a nice herd of nine thoroughbred Guernsey cows that he is milking. He also has a bunch of pigs, a flock of young chickens, and twenty young geese. He is cutting his oats today and says things need rain badly.

We stopped for a short call at the Clyde Smith farm. Clyde was cutting his grain today and was busy in the field. The eight



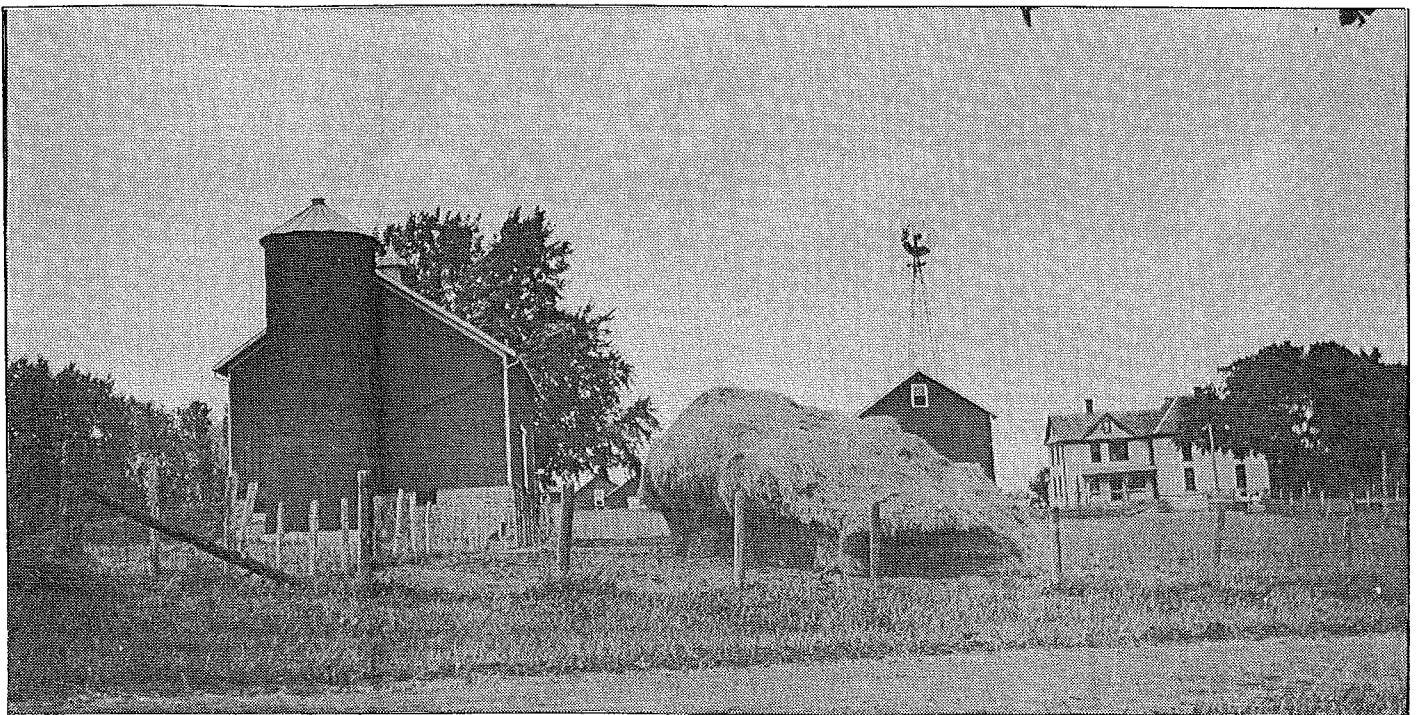
Louis Klingbeil on his farm near St. Clair



Straw-burning stream engine on the Leonard Beise farm

been shocking barley. All of his other small grain is cut and shocked. He is milking seven cows,

call at the Clyde Smith farm. Clyde was cutting his grain today and was busy in the field. The eight



Edward Severson farmstead in Medo township

cows he is milking are Holsteins, his pigs are Durocs, and he has a bunch of chickens.


When we called to see my old friend, W.G. Foster, we were disappointed that he was not home. I always enjoy talking with Bill, as he is a sensible fellow and very congenial. He has good, sensible ideas and "knows his stuff" when it comes to farming. He has lived in this neighborhood all of his life. His "pet peeve" is the "ditch" that runs through his place. Although we were disappointed in not seeing Bill, we were glad to have a talk with the rest of the family. We especially enjoyed visiting with little Dorothy, his small daughter, who is a sweet and a cute little piece of humanity. She made a particular hit with the writer. Bill is milking fourteen cows, has about fifty pigs, and about two hundred chickens.

After waving farewell to Dorothy and to the rest of the family, we drove to the home of Ben E. Fox.

Mr. Fox had not yet returned to the field from dinner, so we got to talk to him. He says that things are looking fair, but a good rain would do a world of good right now. He is milking twelve cows now, but usually has sixteen. He also has a herd of about thirty heads of yearling cattle, all Holsteins. His bunch of sixty Duroc pigs all look healthy. He has been a *Free Press* reader for a number of years.

Fred Baustian is practically working his two hundred and forty acres alone. He can only get help occasionally, so he is busy from daylight until way after dark. But he is a good natured fellow and smiles in the face of the hard work. He is milking fourteen short horn cows and has about forty

Dutch Belted pigs. These are the Hamshire breed, which are quite rare in these parts, but are a fine breed of hogs. Mrs. Baustian has a nice flock of two hundred young chicks to care for. Winfred, his son, is very proud of his nice flock of thirteen White Peking Ducks, which he owns and cares for himself. He called the writer's attention to them particularly. Here's hoping that you can raise them, Winfred, and get in a good market with them when you sell. He is sure a bright, ambitious-looking fellow.

W.L. Queen, whom we next talked to, is milking sixteen cows. He has a bunch of forty-five pigs and a few chicken. His son, who has been here since March, helps him with the work in the field. Before we left, we got his subscription to the *Free Press* 

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Lovelace*

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Goodbird the Indian: His Story. As told by Gilbert Wilson. This vivid memoir for young readers, first published in 1914, offers a unique look at the Hidatsa people in the early reservations. 78 pages. \$6.95

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Include the item name, quantity, and your name and address along with a check or money order. Make your check or money order out to the *Blue Earth County Historical Society*. Include \$4.00 for shipping and handling. Minnesota residents must also include 6.5% sales tax. No COD orders accepted.

Non-Profit Bake Sale

Support the BECHS by attending their non-profit bake sale on December 3 at Madison East Shopping Center.

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Heritage Center

415 Cherry St., Mankato
(507) 345-5566

Exhibit Gallery

Tuesday-Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

Research Center

Tuesday-Saturday, 1-4 p.m.

Hubbard House

606 S Broad St., Mankato
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Blue Earth County Historical Society
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Mankato, Minnesota 56001
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