

Curation Notes

Move to the Future

Our "Move to the Future" is underway! That fact was very evident to persons who visited the Museum during January. We accumulated well over 300 boxes and other packing materials thanks to the effort of our "Box Collecting Coordinator", Elmer Goodrich, and many of our members.

Georgia "Jo" Enfield Schultz, a descendant of an early county family who grew up locally but has lived in the Twin Cities for many years, retired to her Madison Lake home just in time to assist us with packing. We welcome Jo to our volunteer staff and thank her for the aid she has given us in preparing delicate archival materials for the move. A "team" from Amboy under the direction of board member Eldon Marks erected shelving in the storage and Archives area of the new facility prior to the move.

On Saturday and Sunday, January 30 and 31 "teams" of individuals from Lake Crystal, Madison Lake and Mapleton worked in 4-hour shifts, packing and moving the Archives and textile collections to our new building. The Archives furnishings and large items will be moved in February by the Ben Deike Transfer & Storage, Kato Moving & Storage, and Piepho Moving & Storage companies, who are donating this service to the Historical Society.

In order to implement this move, the Archives was closed to the public on January 18 and will remain closed until the materials are unpacked and made accessible again. We hope to reopen on March 1, but researchers should call the Archives at that time to confirm the opening date. The Archives is now located at 415 Cherry Street (the second floor of the Mankato Summit Center building) and the Archives phone number is 345-5566. We look forward to offering expanded research facilities to our members.

Long-time friend and supporter of BECHS, Mrs. Olga Mahowald, who passed away recently, had generously included us in her will. Through Mrs. Mahowald's bequest, a three-piece walnut and marble bedroom set from the Mahowald home has been transferred to the Society's collection. It was Mrs. Mahowald's wish to see the Hubbard House restored and furnished as a Victorian-period house museum. Through the years she has donated appropriate furniture and household accessories to the Society. The Mahowald family had purchased the Hubbard-Richter family's lake house from Mrs. Esther (Hubbard) Richter, the daughter of R.D. and Francis Hubbard, and included in that purchase were furnishings originally from the Hubbard House. This beautiful bedroom set may have been an original Hubbard House furnishing.

Whether original to the house or not, this bedroom set is one of the many late-19th century period pieces that will be necessary to furnish Hubbard House. The Society is grateful to Mrs. Mahowald and her family, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Frost, for this generous and worthwhile contribution to the people of Blue Earth County.

As we move forward in the transfer of the BECHS Archives, artifacts, and offices to the new facility, we are simultaneously studying and planning for the future use of Hubbard House and its adjacent Carriage House. These two buildings play a vital role in the Society's efforts to preserve Blue Earth County's heritage and, together with the new museum building, the Society will be better able to serve the needs of the public and better able to preserve that heritage.

Planning Ahead

As the Blue Earth County Historical Society embarks on a new era in its own history—new expanded facilities, major restoration projects, exciting programming for all ages—it is seeking new sources of funding to meet the demands of a public with high expectations.

Your very membership indicates interest in and support for the mission of the Society. There are a number of ways you can benefit the Society's future even more without jeopardizing your own capital or future.

You don't have to be a John D. Rockefeller to be a philanthropist. Planned or deferred giving is an area worthy of consideration. Many planned gifts are not exceptionally large. One reason for the growing popularity of planned giving is that many supporters who are not in an economic position to make sizable gifts now, since they need their money for retirement, find they can make meaningful contributions through estate planning.

If you have been involved in formal estate planning, you have a pretty clear idea of your worth. If you have not planned your estate, you may be surprised at the extent of your assets.

We encourage your members to explore with their attorneys or accountants such options as outright bequests, charitable remainder trusts, annuity trusts, life estates, deferred payment gifts, or other conveyances for benefitting the work of our Society.

Be assured, we are very grateful for all your support, financial and otherwise. Our members make possible the exciting prospects in our future.

Membership

Welcome to the following new members:

Mr. & Mrs. Warren A. Sylling
Kelton & Dorothy Gage
Donna L. Roesch

Thank You

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following Life members for their recent donations which totaled over \$2700.00

Emma Weicking	Mr. & Mrs. C.W. Pennington
Mr. & Mrs. L.G. Barott	Mildred M. Jones
Joanne Bierbauer DeWitt	Tom Hagen
Jane M. Eby	Lyle G. LaFavor
Ruth Engstrom	William Carlson
Grace M. Jefferson	Eleanor Annis
Ms. Elizabeth E. Jones	Harley & Janet Goff
Charlotte Farrish Luwe	Billings Sibley Fuess
Margaret E. Williams	Mae D. Buckeye
Colleen Mattsson	Margaret Buck
Judge & Mrs. Milton Mason	Mr. & Mrs. Roy Schulz
Mr. & Mrs. Richard L. Myers	Erwin & Arlaine Jones
Georgia Schultz	Karin I. Merkert
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Ernest & Dollis Hansen	Mrs. R. Frederiksen
Mary Pay Johnson	Mr. & Mrs. Ogden P. Confer

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BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

February 1988

Calendar of Events

- Jan. 30-31 **Volunteer moving weekend.**
- Feb. 8-12 **"Move to the Future,"** tentative schedule for professional movers.
- Feb. 15 **Washington Birthday Observed,** Museum Closed
- Feb. 20 **Young Historians Program**

Notes from the Director

The Historical Society is well into Phase I of our "Move to the Future." Crews of volunteers from throughout the county spent the weekend of January 30-31 moving some of the archives and textile materials to the new facility on Cherry Street. The professional movers will be moving the remainder of these items in mid February (see curation notes for details). We thank Julie Schrader for research and writing of this month's historic narrative on Early Mankato Hotels, which will be continued next month. Julie is currently collecting information for the Blue Earth County Heritage book of which this article will be included. For more information, please call Julie at 507-625-8056. Due to popular demand, we're starting to print recipes from the great food at December's Ethnic Tastes Festival. This month, Ethel Medalen's dark molasses cookies recipe is featured. As space allows, we will print the remainder of the tasty recipes. A special thanks for all of the letters and phone calls we've received from our members, we really appreciate hearing from you. Finally, as a special treat, Historical Society Board Member, John Christenson is scheduled to teach the Young Historians Class on February 20, 1988. John will be sharing his interest about Native American people, and where they lived in Blue Earth County. Please call 507-345-4154 to register, admission is free.

Early Mankato Hotels

During the days when Mankato was an early settlement, with mud rutted streets and Indian tepees standing nearby, the hotel played an important part in the city's growth. Before 1853, pioneers arriving in the settlement stayed in the home of James Hanna or if they were German, with Clements Kron.

Coming on steamboats, stage coaches or covered wagons drawn by oxen or horses, pioneers seeking opportunity poured in and out the doors of the early hotel which was a meeting place and on occasion served as a church. These were the days of board sidewalks and hitching posts, with traveler's horses put up in the hotel stables, and guests paying 10¢ a day to have the horses harnessed, unharnessed, groomed and fed.

Lobby of hotels in the early years was a combined kitchen and dining room. At mealtime all guests sat at one long table. One dollar a day in a hotel included three meals. Breakfast included bacon, ham, eggs, sausage, pancakes, fried potatoes, milk and coffee. For dinner there was always soup, fish, two kinds of meat, three or four kinds of vegetables, bread and butter, rolls, pickles, preserves, three kinds of pie, milk and coffee. Supper was a light meal usually consisting of pork chops or beef steak, fried potatoes, a side dish of cold meat and refills on pie.

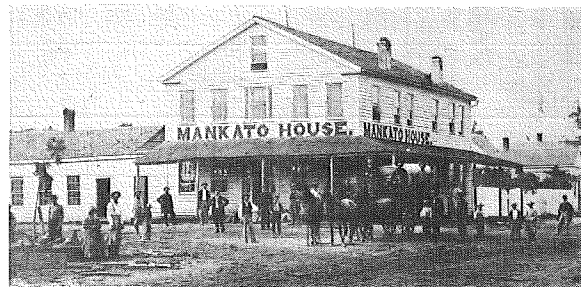
Hard wood at \$2.50 a cord was all that was used to warm the hotel, until coal was brought in. Low ceilings made it easier to heat and in the winter straw was heaped against the lower portion of the building to keep the cold out. There were no such things as spring mattresses, instead there were straw ticks made with straw or corn husks.

With the coming of the railroads, even more people were coming west. Bellboys from the hotel would meet every train and use a cart to carry trunks and baggage from the depot to the hotel. In those days, traveling salesmen would make the hotel a base for the week, making calls in the surrounding area. The disappearance of passenger trains, longer distance sales travel by cars and the coming of motels marked the end of the big hotel business in Mankato.

The first among Mankato's hotels was the Mankato City Hotel, opened in 1853 by Edwin Howe, the first sheriff of Blue Earth County. The hotel was situated on the quarry in the section of the settlement which had been platted as Mankato City and would be located on North Front Street in Mankato today, in 1853, Mankato City was a rival city of Mankato. As a rule, each guest had to provide his own bed and bedding. The hotel was a fair sized log house, but quite bare of furniture. There were no partitions. The men slept in the attic and the women slept downstairs.

In December 1852, the Mankato Townsite Company

contracted with Lewis H. Windslow to build a large frame



Mankato House Hotel, ca. 1860's.

hotel, the Mankato House, located on the corner of Front and Hickory Streets. General Samuel Leech was appointed to supervise the construction. Millwork for the building was done in St. Paul along with lumber and workmen being shipped by boat to Mankato, with the frame of the building being erected on July 6, 1853. On account of ill health, Leech left Mankato earlier than he had intended. Returning in the spring of 1854, Leech sold the building to Henry Shaubut. Even though it cost the Townsite Co. \$2,500 to build, the hotel and two lots were sold to Shaubut for \$1,200 if he agreed to complete the building and conduct it as a hotel.

Henry Shaubut arrived in Mankato, May, 1854 on the steamboat Clarion, several days before purchasing the Mankato House Hotel. During the summer months, Shaubut had the lower story plastered and completed. The hotel was a two story frame building, 32' x 50', with a wing 16' x 24'. Shaubut moved his family into the wing of the hotel in the spring of 1855, with a grand ball dedication on the 4th of July, 1855, with settlers coming in ox teams from surrounding counties to take part in the festivities.

The upper floor of Shaubut's hotel was finished off into one large room, called the "school section", and used as a sleeping apartment for teamsters, stage drivers, and when the hotel was crowded for transient guests. A large bell hung in a frame over the Mankato House, which was used to alert settlers of fires or call the people together for meetings. For many years the Mankato House was the center of considerable social and political activity and was the headquarters of the town, where the latest and most reliable news could be found.

Henry Shaubut operated his hotel until 1860 when he leased it to F.C. Roosevelt, who had been a clerk at the hotel. Grover C. Burt purchased the Mankato House in 1864 and in 1870 had it completely rebuilt and in 1881 another brick, three story addition was built.

Grover C. Burt was the sole proprietor of the Mankato House from 1865 through 1883, when he leased it to H.M. Hamilton for six years. He then resumed management until the spring of 1890 when the last dinner was served in the

Part I

Mankato House on March 23, 1890. During Burt's management, the Mankato House attained the reputation among travelers for its elaborate bills of fare where on Sundays, guests could choose from 100 to 150 delicious dishes on the menu.

Burt sold the Mankato House to D.S. Stern who planned to use the building for a clothing house in March, 1890. The National Citizen's Bank building is now standing where the Mankato House once stood.

Clements Kron, a German immigrant, arrived in Mankato by the steamboat Clarion in June, 1853 and built a log cabin on North Front St., where for three years he kept a frontier tavern. About 1855, Kron built a small frame structure on the corner and started a saddlery. This business proved to be unprofitable and he soon turned his attention to hotel keeping thus the Minnesota House was opened in 1858. A livery stable was added soon after Kron built the hotel and the horses he purchased at St. Paul were hired to settlers moving their goods. The Minnesota House was a very popular hostelry, especially among the Germans with Kron continuing as proprietor until his death on December 25, 1873.

Following Clements Kron's death, the hotel was operated by his daughter and son-in-law, Joseph and Anna Stahl, with the original log building being replaced in 1875 by a frame building. In 1893, the frame building was moved to the rear and the three story Stahl House was erected, having 41 sleeping rooms, a parlor, office, dining room, bath rooms on different floors and was heated with steam.

The old Minnesota House building was used as a barn until 1923, when it was torn down and the Stahl House enlarged. Various proprietors operated the Stahl House through the years, one of them being Clara Stahl (the granddaughter of Clements Kron) until 1983 when the Stahl House ceased operation as a hotel, later being renovated into an apartment building.

In 1856, John Quane built the Washington House Hotel on the corner of Main and Second St., where he was proprietor for 28 years. In 1889, he leased the hotel to Wm. Casey from St. Peter, who ran the hotel along with a livery stable.

The Union House Hotel was built by Mathias Ulman in the spring of 1857 and was located on North Front between Elm and Spring Streets with Ulman operating the hotel until 1880 when he sold it to Fred Rustermeier. The Union House burned down in December, 1885, with the fire starting in the rear of the building from a defect in the chimney or coals in the ash barrel and spread to the upper floor.

The Minneopa House Hotel was erected by the West Mankato Company in 1858 and was opened by Miner Porter, located on his farm a short distance west of South Bend village. He kept up the grounds as a summer resort for visitors to Minneopa falls with shrubbery, trees and flowers enclosed by an artistic fence and high arching gates.

In October, 1860, Marcus T.C. Flower opened the Clifton House Hotel, located in the 200 block of South Front St. between Hickory and Walnut Streets. The building was originally the Union Hall when Flower purchased it from Capt. Joseph Guenther. Flower was proprietor of the hotel until 1870, Capt. Henry H. Williams maintained operations through 1878. In 1882, the Clifton House Hotel was purchased by Conrad J. Klein, who conducted business until his death in July, 1910, which was followed by changes in ownership and management. The Clifton House Hotel was torn down in 1930 to make way for the new Northern States Power Company building, which was eventually torn down and replaced by a parking lot, still in existence today.

Sources

History of the Minnesota River Valley by Rev. Edward D. Neill, 1882

History of Blue Earth County by Thomas Hughes, 1909
Mankato—Its First Fifty Years 1903

Standard Atlas of Blue Earth County by George Ogle and Company, 1914

Various issues of the *Mankato Free Press and Review*
Mankato City Directories

by Julie Schrader

Part II will be continued next month.

Cookies

This is the first of several recipes we will be sharing with you from Ethnic Tastes: This recipe was given to us by Ethel Medalen, she received it from her mother-in-law. Ethel says, "the recipe *never* fails and always makes one want more".

Dark Molasses Cookies

1 1/2 C sugar
1 egg, beaten
1 C lard or Crisco
1 C dark molasses
1 tsp. soda dissolved in 1/2 C strong hot coffee.
1/2 tsp. each of ginger, cloves and black pepper.
4-5 C flour

Beat egg, add sugar and shortening and beat smooth, add molasses and soda in coffee, and flour one cup at a time. Remove beaters when to stiff and cont. with a spoon. Dough should be very stiff. Chill several hours, roll on pastry cloth, cut and bake at 350 degrees for 8 min. or until done.

Note The more flour you work in, the better they seem to be. Makes 80-100 cookies depending on the thickness and size of cutters.