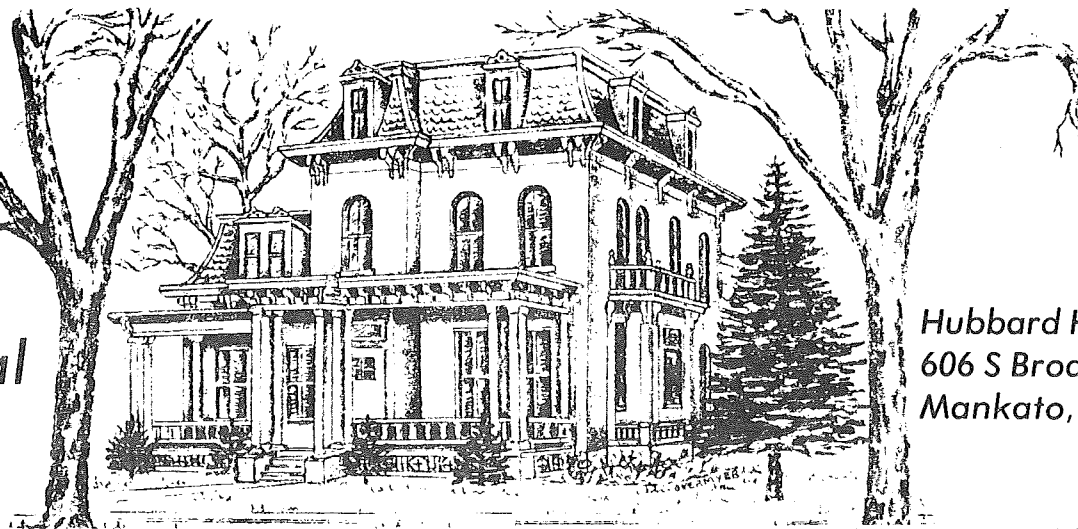


Blue Earth County Historical Society



Hubbard House
606 S Broad St.
Mankato, Minn.

Volume 7, Number 1

NEWS LETTER

April, 1978

COMING EVENTS

APRIL 19 (WED.) ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PLACE: THE ANSWER Restaurant (Corner of Main & Humphrey Streets,
Lake Crystal, MN)

TIME: Social Hour 6:00 pm; Dinner 6:30 pm.

PROGRAM: "Reflections of Norway in the Midwest" - Dr. Marion Nelson,
Director, Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, IA, and
Department of Art History, University of Minnesota

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICERS following
Dr. Nelson's talk

COST: Dinner \$6.25 per person. Reservation Form Enclosed.

JUNE 4 (SUNDAY) DEDICATION OF PALMER CENTENNIAL PLACE

PLACE: 604-606 South Broad Street, Mankato, Minnesota

TIME: 2:00 pm.

PROGRAM: Presentation of the Hubbard Milling Company Gift of Palmer
Centennial Place to the City of Mankato, and
Placing of the Historical Marker in the Formal Garden

JUNE 9 - 11 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION of the CITY OF MAPLETON, MINNESOTA

FRIDAY: HISTORICAL PAGEANT * 8:00 pm. * Mapleton High School

SATURDAY: SCOTTISH HERITAGE DAY

Day Events: Horse Show, Scottish Games, Dancing and
Entertainment

Evening: Historical Pageant - 8:00 pm. - High School

SUNDAY: PARADE - 1:00 pm.

NEW SOCIETY MEMBERS

ANNUAL: Mrs. Gordon Johnson, Spokane, Wash.
Mrs. Florence B. La hann, Mankato.

LIFE: Mrs. Daniel Scheurer, Mankato.
William Maher, Mankato.

PATRON: Miss Ruth Confer, Minneapolis

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CITIES AND TOWNSHIPS

Cambria Township	City of Mapleton
Judson Township	Mapleton Township
Lime Township	Rapidan Township
Lincoln Township	Vernon Center Township

A SEASON OF CENTENNIALS

Spring and early summer of this year 1978 will be marked in the history of Blue Earth County by the 100th anniversaries of its principal agribusiness, the Hubbard Milling Company, and its third largest municipality, the city of Mapleton.

According to plans announced some time ago, Hubbard's celebration will begin April 27th, the day on which the company was incorporated in 1878. The formal dedication of Palmer Centennial Place, the company's gift to the city of Mankato, will take place on June 4. (See Coming Events, Page 1.)

The Blue Earth County Historical Society will in a way be assisting in the observance of the centennial on both of these dates: We are lending back the famous steam whistle of the "big mill", which the company gave to the Museum in 1953. The whistle was made in Mankato in the early 1890's, and from that time until 1952 it served variously as the city's public timekeeper, fire alarm and curfew signal. It was also the announcer of times for general rejoicing, being blown to signal the end of two world wars. Mankatoans young and old alike should surely feel a thrill of excitement at the prospect of hearing it blow once again to celebrate the Hubbard Company's 100th birthday.

To further mark the event, the Museum will have a special exhibit of artifacts, memorabilia and archival materials related to the history of the Hubbard Milling Company and the careers of its co-founders, R. D. Hubbard and George M. Palmer.

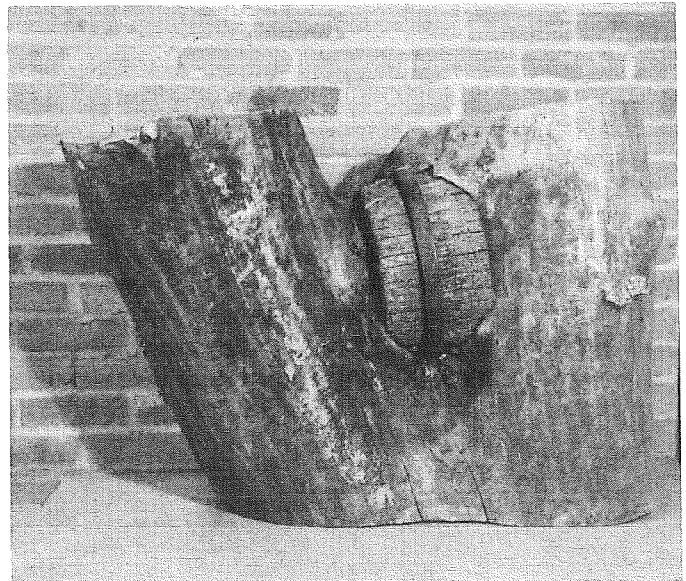
Mapleton will have a three-day celebration of its 100th birthday in the second week of June. The program includes an historical pageant written by Mrs. Olga Vaubel, of the Mapleton school faculty, a parade, and a community carnival day, with a horse show, games, contests and entertainment emphasizing the Scottish origins of Mapleton. (See Coming Events for schedule.)

By a fortunate coincidence, the Carriage House has two new exhibits which relate to the history of Mapleton and its Scottish traditions. One is a display of artifacts belonging to the history of curling in Mankato and Mapleton. (See "The Roaring Game", Pages 2 & 3.) The other exhibit is on the family of George Lang, a Scottish farmer of Mapleton Township. (See Page Six)

THE "ROARING GAME"

A third event of historical note this spring is the diamond jubilee of the Caledonian Curling Club of Mankato. Actually founded in September, 1903, the club is celebrating its 75th anniversary in April.

In honor of the occasion, Mr. Arnold Meyer, one of the many non-Scottish devotees of the "roaring game", has given the Historical Society his account of the club's history, part of his personal collection of team badges, and a number of pieces of equipment used in playing the game. Mr. Meyer's gift, together with items donated by Robert Lang of Mapleton, forms the newest addition to our Carriage House exhibits, and provides concrete illustration of the history of this unusual sport in Mankato and Mapleton.



THE STONE IN THE TREE

The Scottish settlers of the Mapleton area brought the tradition of their national game with them in 1856, but not the equipment needed to play it. So, with characteristic Scottish ingenuity, they improvised substitutes for the proper "stones" of Scotch granite. The Museum now possesses a most curious example of one such item, shown in the photograph above. The "Stone in the Tree" is a chunk of oak log, with holes drilled in its top and bottom surfaces, filled with lead to give additional weight. It is bound with an iron band, shrunk on to prevent it from splitting, and it originally had an iron handle. This "stone" was made in the 1870's

(Continued on Page 3)

THE "ROARING GAME" (Cont'd.)

by John Lang of Good Thunder (Lyra Township), uncle of George Lang of Mapleton. According to Robert Lang, it was put in the crotch of the tree in 1914 by Marion Ellis, while curling on a lake near Mapleton. Left there, it became embedded in the tree, and remained until Ellis re-discovered it. When he cut the tree down, he gave the piece to Mr. Lang.

Other substitute stones are shown in the photograph at the right. The largest is a more finished version of the wooden type, one of a pair given to the Museum by John Oger of Beauford, which presumably dates from the 1880's. The two smaller ones are solid metal, and were manufactured in Canada, probably at the Dore Foundry in Montreal, about 1880. Stones of both these types were used by Mapleton curlers as late as 1912, as seen in old photographs.

An announcement in the Blue Earth County Enterprise of November 24, 1899 says that it was in that year that the curlers of Mapleton obtained the "genuine curling stanes from bonnie Scotland," and planned a "rousing bonspiel" for January 24-25, 1900, in connection with the annual celebration of Robert Burns' birthday. Players from St. Paul and Winnebago were expected to take part in the contest on that occasion.

From Mr. Meyer we have a picture of the problems faced by the Caledonian enthusiasts in the early 1900's. The hardy sixteen who started the club in 1903 had the "genuine stanes" from the beginning. However, a permanent place to play and proper ice were more difficult to obtain. For some time the curlers used one or another frozen slough in the area along the river, or on the site of West High School's parking lot. A water supply to keep their ice in satisfactory playing condition was a major consideration in the choice of any location. It was the reason for the club's remaining at the old grounds of the Mankato Fair Association (site of Continental Can Company) for some twenty years, when they would have preferred to be closer to downtown Mankato.

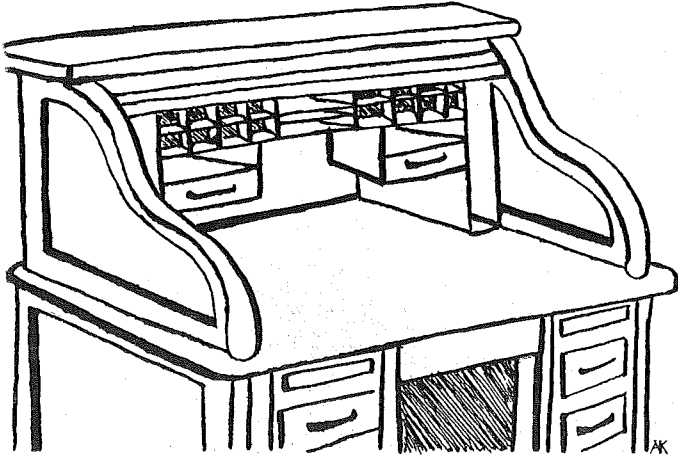


CURLING STONES, BROOMS AND HACK

Curlers in Mapleton had similar difficulties. Old newspaper accounts and the reminiscences of T. B. Taylor (Mapleton banker and also a leading curler) tell of bonspiels held at Lura Lake, "Mr. Knight's lake" (southeast of Mapleton) and at "Jim's Pond", a small lake just west of Mapleton, on property now owned by Larrie Maine, according to one informant. (Sec. 12, Sterling Twp.?) But by 1905, the Heather Curling Club, like the Caledonian Club, had an enclosed and covered rink; and Mapleton, as the "curling capital of Minnesota," could host such gatherings as the bonspiel of 1911, a three-day affair in which twelve rinks (teams) participated: three from Mapleton, two from Mankato, three from Winnebago and one each from Sterling, Beauford, Bass Lake and Vernon Center. The Enterprise (Jan. 26, 1911) states that "fully \$800. worth of curling stones were used, all imported from Scotland, and some of them very fine." The ice was equally satisfactory, being pronounced "the best in the history of the society." At this bonspiel John Oger, the donor of our pair of large wooden stones, was on the Beauford team. Taylors of Mapleton - T. B., J. S. and Ben - were skips (captains) of the three Mapleton teams.

The introduction of manufactured ice was very important in the recent history of curling, according to Mr. Meyer. Mapleton led the way, putting ice-making equipment into their building in 1955; and the Caledonian Club followed in 1956. Mr. Meyer says that as a consequence of this innovation, "the ladies became interested" in curling, their interest in turn "spurred more men to curl regularly," and "this was the real

(Continued on Page 8)



Spring is officially here, and, as always, the Hubbard House came through the winter gracefully. However, under the bright sun our "gingerbread" looks more rotted and more in need of paint and repair than ever. We were delighted to receive a \$15,000 grant-in-aid from the Minnesota Historical Society, to pay 50 % of the cost of overall planning for the restoration of the house as a house museum, and to pinpoint the repair and maintenance work most urgently needed. Repairing the exterior woodwork and re-wiring the entire house compete for top priority.

We are all looking forward to the dedication of Palmer Place on Sunday, June fourth, when friends from far and near will be on hand. We've heard reports about all the plans for the occasion, and know that it will be a most enjoyable afternoon.

The Museum Shop is pleased to announce that the long-awaited book by Vernard Lundin - The Hubbard Milling Company, A Past to Remember, A Future to Build - will be on sale at the Shop and also by mail, at the end of April. An order blank is enclosed with your Newsletter.

The cutting of our annual appropriation by 20 % by the County Commissioners (the entire appropriation has always been used for salaries of museum personnel) has confronted us with a major funding problem. We will need contributions of ideas, time and work from many Society members to make up this loss. A committee of the Board, chaired by Bert and Inella Burns, is considering various money-raising ideas. Please be alert to announcements about our

plans in the Newsletter and in area newspapers, and be prepared to help us over this financial difficulty.

One project suggested is to hold a Christmas bazaar in the Museum Shop. Details have not been completely worked out as yet, but we expect to ask Society members to donate their needlework, ceramics, macrame, wood-work, baked goods, etc., to be sold to the public, along with our regular Shop items, with all proceeds to go to the Museum. If each Society member were to give just one item, we would have well over 300 things to sell! Will you help us ?

(Incidentally, did you know that the Museum Shop brought us a profit of \$440.60 in 1977 ?)

We recently had an interesting visitor from Arlington, Minnesota - Mr. Floyd Hebeisen, who brought us corrections in our history of the 1926 Pontiac now in the Carriage House. Mr. Hebeisen worked for Pinske Motors in Arlington, and married Marie Pinske, whose father gave her the Pontiac. She and Mr. Hebeisen courted in that car !

The return of an original Hubbard family chair to the Museum brought us great pleasure. It is a lovely Victorian chair, but it is in need of some repair and re-upholstering. This gift makes us hope that other people who have Hubbard furniture will consider donating it to us when they no longer have need of it, so that when we restore the house itself, we will be able to furnish it entirely with original Hubbard pieces. One of the very appealing things about the Alexander Ramsey House in St. Paul is that it has all its original furnishings. The visitor derives a much greater sense of historic reality when he knows that a famous person did indeed sleep here !

Two volunteers have been with us recently. Mrs. Evelyn Weisgram works regularly two mornings a week in our Archives. Mrs. Weisgram is a former librarian , and worked at Loyola High School before her retirement. Byrne Smith of Wilson Community School helped us with cleaning for several weeks. We appreciate their help and their community spirit !

(Continued on Page 8)

ANOTHER HUBBARD HEIRLOOM

A recent acquisition, the chair shown at the right was given to the Historical Society by Martha Hansen (Mankato) and Edward Sorenson (St. Peter) from the estate of their mother, Olive Daby Sorenson (1894-1978). According to the donors the chair was given to their grandfather, Abraham L. Daby, by R.D. Hubbard about 1900, and has been in the family's possession ever since. The upholstery, which seems original, resembles very closely the upholstery of a three-piece set (settee, armchair and rocker) which was part of the Hubbard household furnishings at the time the Historical Society acquired the house. The parlor set appears to be mahogany, whereas this armchair is maple, a wood not often used for furniture of this period and type. Though, like the parlor set, it needs restoration before it is placed on display, it is a valuable addition to the Society's collection of authentic Hubbard family possessions.



HUBBARD FAMILY ARMCHAIR

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON AREA HISTORY

We wish to call attention to three books which will be of interest to Society members and other history-minded people.

In connection with the celebration of its centennial year, 1978, the Hubbard Milling Company is publishing an extensive illustrated history, which will appear at the end of the month. The author is former Mankato mayor Vernard Lundin, who was associated with the Hubbard Company for 32 years, until his retirement in 1974. The book traces the development of the company from its founding in 1878 to the present, and includes numerous photographs.

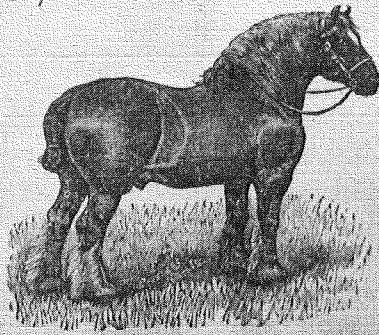
The company is presenting copies of the history to public libraries and schools in all communities where Hubbard enterprises are located. It will be available for purchase exclusively through the Blue Earth County Historical Society, at a price of \$6.95 (plus \$1.00 postage and handling), with profits going to the Historical Society. (Order form enclosed.)

A second centennial publication, a history of the city of Mapleton and surrounding area, appeared last month. Entitled Where the Winding Maple Flows, it was written by Ronald J. Newell and published by the Mapleton Centennial Committee, under the auspices of the Minnesota Historical Society. Mr. Newell, who has a B.A. in history from the College of St. Olaf (Northfield, MN) and has done graduate work at Mankato State University, teaches history in Mapleton. His work began with research into local history to develop study projects for his classes in American history. From that it grew into a full-size book, packed with information and generously illustrated with photographs and maps. Mapleton is to be congratulated on being the subject of the first extensive historical account on Blue Earth County to be produced since Thomas Hughes' work was published in 1906. Mr. Newell's book is available through the Mapleton Chamber of Commerce, Box 288, Mapleton, MN, 56065. The price is \$5.00, which includes postage and handling. (Checks payable to the Mapleton Centennial Committee.)

A comparable history of the city of Le Sueur was published in December, 1977 by the city's Bicentennial Book Committee. The title is Le Sueur: Town on the River. It is the work of a team of researchers, headed by Mr. Larry Randen, who (as we understand) is the principal author of the text. The Historical Society has received a numbered copy of the first printing as a gift, in return for our staff's assisting Mr. Randen with research. The book can be obtained through

April, 1978 Mrs. C.G. Sheppard, 228 South 2nd St., Le Sueur, MN, 56058.

Mapleton Clydesdale Horse Co. HAND



ST. GILES No. 10833

St. Giles is a genuine stamp of the draft horse, low down, heavy bone and wide as a wagon—is the kind buyers like to buy. He has proven to be an extra sure foal getter and his get give promise of being the kind that will top the market.

Farmers should profit by the experience of the past—that the best is none too good; and that you can't grade up by breeding to low grades.

St. Giles will make the season of 1907 as follows: Thursdays at J. E. Drews' Sterling; Fridays at Matt O'Connor's Beauford; Saturdays at Mapleton; the rest of the week at home.

Terms, \$15 for Standing Colt.

Geo. Lang, Manager

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NOTES ON A MAPLETON SCOTSMAN

The influence of Scotland in the history of Mapleton was not limited to the sport of curling and the social activities of the Burns Club. An illustration of how Scottish settlers carried on their special interests and knowledge is the effort of some farmers to keep the breed of horses for which their native land was famous. When, around the turn of the century, more farmers in Blue Earth County began to specialize in live-stock production, George Lang of Mapleton went into the business of raising purebred Clydesdales. According to his son, Robert Lang, he probably obtained his stock, as well as some equipment, from a fellow Scotsman, Alexander Galbraith, a noted importer and breeder of Clydesdales in Janesville, Wisconsin. Mr. Lang recently gave the Museum a feed cart which his father bought from Galbraith. (See photograph, Page 7.) It is an unusual item, produced in Glasgow, Scotland, about 1870. Made of heavy sheet iron, with a rounded bottom, it was used to mix and serve out to the horses a special ration of chopped hay, oats, bran, linseed meal and molasses.

George Lang seems to have operated his horse-breeding enterprise on a modest scale. Unlike his competitor in Mapleton, banker and businessman T. B. Taylor, Lang did not have a listing in the Blue Earth County business directory, and it seems that he advertised only in Mapleton's newspaper, the Blue Earth County Enterprise, and not in the Mankato papers. However, he consistently showed his stock at the Mankato Fair, rather than at the smaller and more local fair in

IN MEMORIAM: AGNES ALLEN, 1898 - 1978

Mrs. Allen was among those devoted "senior citizens" whose services enabled the Blue Earth County Historical Society to operate the Museum and Archives in years when its financial resources were very limited. After retiring from teaching in Eagle Lake, Mrs. Allen came to the Museum in 1966 as a volunteer in company with her husband Warren, who served as assistant to Curator Fred Cope. The Allens worked together, receiving visitors, conducting tours and giving library assistance. When, under Mrs. Shirley Broden, Cope's successor, the re-organization of Museum services was begun, Mrs. Allen was responsible for the tours for kindergarten and elementary school children, systematizing the program and preparing the first study materials offered by the Museum for teachers who brought their classes to the Museum. She continued to serve as kindergarten tour guide as recently as 1974, and always retained an interest in the Museum. Her last tour took place about a year ago, when she personally brought several grandchildren for a special visit to the Hubbard House.

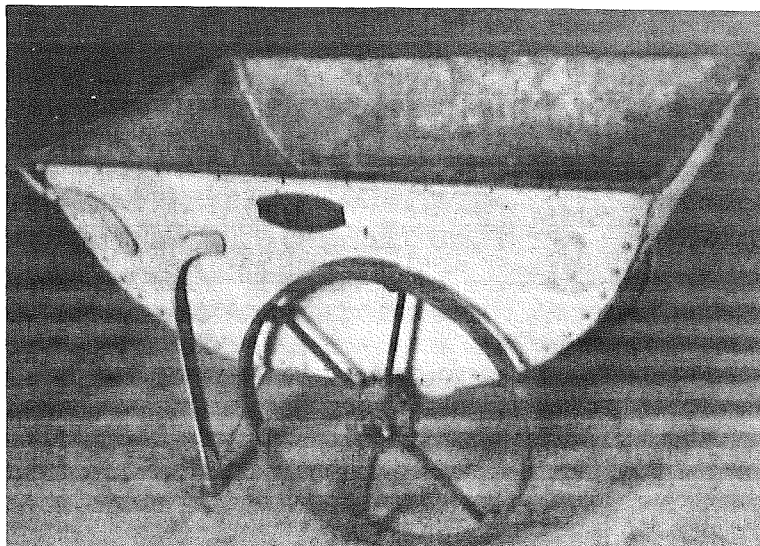
NEWSLETTER of the BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Published four times a year by the Blue Earth County Historical Society, at 606 South Broad Street, Mankato, MN 56001
Editor Jeanne D. Kress
Free to members of the Historical Society
Annual subscription (4 issues) - \$ 3.00

NOTES ON A MAPLETON SCOTSMAN (Cont'd.)

Garden City. From the newspaper reports, he had some fine animals to show. A reporter commented in 1898: "In heavy draft horses, George Lang of Mapleton possesses ... as good a stock as can be found anywhere. His favorite is, like that of every Scotchman, the Clydesdale, of which he has a number of registered animals." (Enterprise, Dec. 16, 1898). Several years before, one of Lang's purebred stallions took a first premium at the Mankato Fair of 1886. (Mankato Free Press Oct. 8, 1886). Twenty years later, another Fair writer reported: "This section (horses) contributed very largely to the stock exhibit, George Lang's showing of Clydesdales and Shetland ponies being the most prominent exhibit on the grounds, and that it was the best is evident by the awarding to it of sixteen first and second premiums and two sweepstakes." (Enterprise, Sept. 20, 1907).

Lang seems to have given up his horse-breeding operation soon after this success. The advertisement of his Clydesdale Horse Company's favorite stud, St. Giles No.10833, which had appeared for several years including 1907, shows a change in 1908. Instead of "George Lang, Manager," it reads "Jacob Morris, Manager." George Lang's name does not appear again; and by 1911 the name "Clydesdale Horse Company" also is gone. The much-reduced ad reads: The Clydesdale



FEED CART

MADE by WALLACE & SONS, GRAHAM SQUARE, GLASGOW

Stallion St. Giles No.10833 will stand the season as follows... O.W. Kellar, Manager." (Enterprise April 7, 1911)

We do not know what brought an end to George Lang's business. Perhaps the spreading use of steam and gasoline-powered engines for farm work had already made horse-breeding seem a losing affair. Now all that remains from a once thriving enterprise are the advertisements and lists of premium awards in old newspapers, and George Lang's feed cart on display in the Hubbard Carriage House, an interesting relic (as Mr. Robert Lang put it) to remind us of the original meaning of the words "horse power".

Jeanne Kress

RECENT ACCESSIONS - JANUARY - MARCH, 1978

1. "MANKATO 1970" - No. One of 80 prints. Signed by the artist, LeRoy B. Schwan, dated April, 1972. Collage of Mankato scenes.
Given by Mrs. Donald (Elizabeth H.) Harrer, Mankato.
2. CURLING BROOMS, STONES, HACK & MEASURING DEVICES; also BADGES & MEMORABILIA of the Caledonian Curling Club of Mankato.
Given by Arnold Meyer, Mankato.
3. WOMEN'S CLOTHING (Two dresses, hat, parasol and shoes), 1890's; and Mankato High School Diploma of Julia Hoerr (Mrs. Frank B. Clements), 1881.
Given by Mrs. Charles R. (Elizabeth Clements) Butler, Mankato.

4. MICROFILM COPY of MANKATO TOWNSITE RECORDS in the General Land Office, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
Given by Herman Radloff, St. Louis, MO.
5. UPHOLSTERED ARMCHAIR (Ca. 1890 ?) which belonged to the R.D. Hubbard family.
From the Estate of Olive Daby Sorenson
Given by Mrs. Martha Hansen, Mankato, and Edward Sorenson, St. Peter, MN.
6. SKETCH of the CONFLUENCE OF THE BLUE EARTH AND MINNESOTA RIVERS. Pencil and Chalk with Watercolor (?)
Given by Mr. Bud Melges, Altadena, CA.

ATTENTION
SOCIETY MEMBERS !

ANNUAL MEETING

APRIL 19

INFORMATION
and
RESERVATION FORM
ENCLOSED

NEWSLETTER
Blue Earth County
Historical Society
606 South Broad
Mankato, MN 56001



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MRS. KELSEY JOHNSON

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NEWS FROM LAKE CRYSTAL

The Lake Crystal Historical Society held its regular business meeting last February 27. Because no suitable facilities could be scheduled, the group laid aside earlier plans for a fund-raising supper.

Like all of us, members are waiting for spring. With the coming of warm weather they will be able to resume work on the interior of their Farm Home museum.

THE "ROARING GAME" (Cont'd.)

salvation" for the continuation of the sport.

The Mankato club now has a number of bonspiels each year, and draws contestants from places as far away as Illinois, Colorado and Manitoba. On the average, the club facilities are used by 416 player units per week, as well as by junior high and high school students in the afternoon, and by some college groups from time to time, according to Mr. Meyer.

The Heather Club of Mapleton seems equally active, and hosts visiting teams even from Scotland itself.

Altogether, the history of the "roaring game" in Blue Earth County over the past century is a striking example of how, in our diverse American society, the tradition of one ethnic group can broaden to provide a unifying interest for people of many different backgrounds.

Jeanne Kress

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP (Cont'd.)

Governor Perpich's recommendation (made last year) for a state-wide inventory of museum holdings is now being carried out by the Minnesota Historical Society. Their surveyors developed a method to list quickly the major holdings of all museums in the state, public and private. The one day they originally allotted to surveying our Museum had to be increased when they learned the extent of our Indian holdings. The results of the inventory will be computerized and will be available to researchers who need to know the contents of collections throughout the state.

Another on-going project is the historical survey of the city of Mankato. A class of Dr. H. Roger Smith at Mankato State University started with the Lincoln Park area. Dr. John Frey's Environmental Studies class followed, doing a part of the downtown area. Last summer Old Town did its part of the city. Currently Elaine Lilly, a CETA employee of the city, is continuing the survey. The Minnesota Historical Society is working closely with Mankato, as well as with other cities throughout the state. Mrs. Barbara Maher is coordinating the effort for the city of Mankato.

Be sure to mark your calendar for April 19, our Society Annual Meeting, and for June 4, Museum Sunday at Palmer Centennial Place !

Marcia T. Schuster