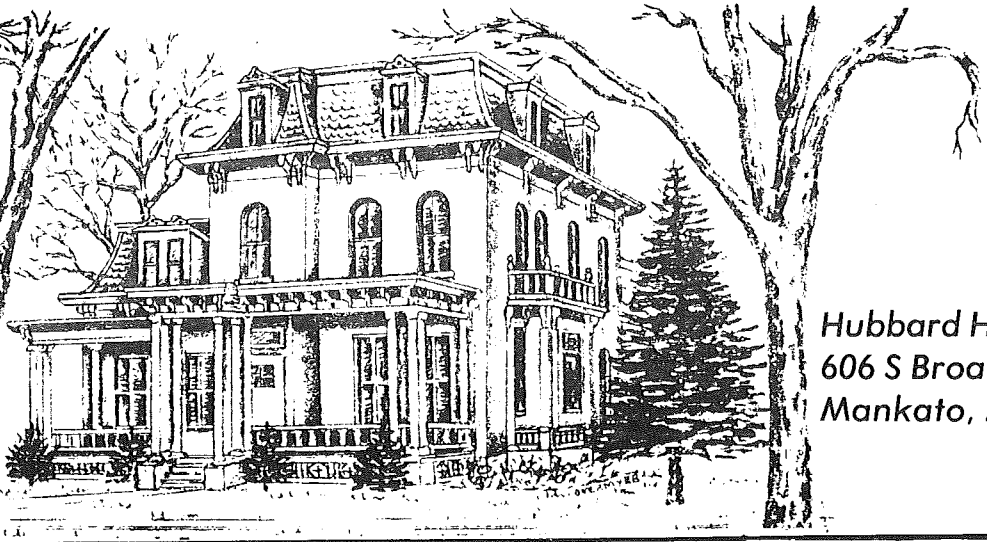


# Blue Earth County Historical Society



Hubbard House  
606 S Broad St.  
Mankato, Minn.

Volume 6, Number 4

## NEWS LETTER

January, 1978

### LIFE AT THE HUBBARD HOUSE \*\*\*\* THE YEAR IN REVIEW \*\*\*\* A SUMMARY

VISITORS to the Hubbard House during 1977 numbered 6,190, of whom 3,664, or almost 60%, were from Blue Earth County. The total number of visitors to the Carriage House since its opening in August was 2,052, again with 60% being Blue Earth County residents. A combined total (Hubbard House & Carriage House) of 2,106 visits by other Minnesotans was registered; and 1,185 by people from other places. Among the latter were persons from the Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Sweden and Taiwan. The only large group from outside the United States was from Australia.

CONDUCTED TOURS: As usual, groups of children and young people account for the largest number of conducted tours - 74 out of a total of 92, or slightly over 80%. Of these groups, 64% were from Blue Earth County schools. Adult groups numbered 18, one less than in the Bicentennial Year 1976. It is interesting to note that in this past year a much larger proportion of the adult groups came from outside Blue Earth County: 83%, as compared with 47% in 1976.

THE MUSEUM ARCHIVES received 245 requests for information and help with research. Approximately 50% of these requests (120) were made in person, the visitors being assisted in using our archives by a member of the Museum staff. Inquiries by telephone

account for 35%, and requests by mail for 15%. Slightly more than 13% of the total number of requests were from people outside of Minnesota. (Sixteen different states). Most were from former residents or descendants of residents of Blue Earth County.

ACCESSIONS received in 1977 numbered 57, as compared with 41 last year. (1976) Again, some gifts were single items, while others were collections varying in size. The largest accession was Harold Schmidt's collection of leather-working tools and equipment, 73 items in all. Accessions were about evenly divided as to type: 29 of artifacts and 20 of archival materials, with an additional eight containing items of both kinds. (See Page 5 for a list of accessions received during the second half of the year.)

AT THE MUSEUM SHOP business continued similar to last year's, with Hubbard House stationery, Victorian toys and children's books, and Donna Sandon's historical plates as the most popular items. The 1977 plate, third in the series, depicts the Bierbauer Brewery. The latest addition to the toy selection is a wooden Jacob's ladder. Items of a more serious nature - Carley's history of the Dakota Indian uprising of 1862 (a Minnesota Historical Society publication), and Anna Wiecking's history of Blue Earth County - were also in demand, as were Maud Hart Lovelace items - the Walking Tour of Mankato guide and Betsy-Tacy books.

(Continued on Page Two)

Page 1

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW (Cont'd.)

SPECIAL FINANCIAL GIFTS included donations from both government and private organizations and individuals. Blue Earth County townships which contributed were Garden City, Judson, Lime, Mankato, Mapleton, Shelby and Vernon Center. The City of Mapleton also made a special donation. The Harry Heidel Memorial Fund achieved its goal, receiving contributions sufficient to pay for the restoration of the Museum's antique square grand piano.

Gifts made in memory of Ann Courts, Mrs. George Draper, Alfred Meyer, Julie Erickson Miller, Amanda Salet and Louisa Spaulding reached the sum of \$142.00. Other special contributions, totalling \$130.00, were received from Mrs. William C. Blethen, Jean Carlstrom, the Day Family, Mr. & Mrs. George Schroeder and the Art History Club, Mankato.

NEW EXHIBITS: The principal exhibit of the year is, of course, our handsomely restored Carriage House. Since the opening in August, a number of items have been added to the displays: two horse-drawn vehicles which had been in storage since 1965, a two-wheeled road cart and a large sled built in 1898 by the firm of Carl and Ferdinand Kuehne, Mankato wagon makers, for Landkamer Brothers. It was used in winter to haul furniture and also as a hearse.

One of the Society's antique automobiles, a 1926 Pontiac coupe, is also on display. (See separate article, Page 3.) Upstairs, the theme of winter recreation is illustrated by two bob-sleds, the larger used

on Mankato's Main Street Hill in the early 1900's, two antique sleds made around the turn of the century, old wooden skis of the same period, and a small child's sleigh - a winter "baby buggy".

At the Hubbard House, older exhibits are being revised and new ones developed. In response to teachers' requests to have more Indian materials available for their students, Michael Scullin has selected examples of Dakota and Ojibway Indian ceremonial costumes and accessories for display. This exhibit of objects of the historic period is to be matched by one of prehistoric artifacts from Blue Earth County and related areas. At the suggestion of Dr. Marion Nelson, Director of the Norwegian-American Museum at Decorah, Iowa, we have made a beginning on refurbishing the Holberg Cabin with Norwegian objects already in our collection. Some have been on exhibit in various places in the Museum; others have been re-discovered through the inventory of the collections, now in its final stage. One such object, which has been in storage since 1965, is a large handmade wooden trunk of a type used by Scandinavian immigrants to this country. It has been restored by Mike Eigen and Geoff Roche, and placed in the cabin. The small 19th century American wood trunk, long used as part of the cabin furnishings, has been transferred to the Carriage House, where it is a suitable accessory for the stagecoach.

## THINGS TO COME !!

Co-Chairmen (ought we to say Co-Chairpersons ?) Howard Williams and Audrey Annis ask Society members to keep in mind the project of a Benefit Auction, to be held in late spring or early summer. Please save your surplus and no-longer-needed items, to donate for this event !

## NOTICE OF CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP FEES

As permitted by the change in the Society's By-laws, authorized by vote at the Annual Meeting of April 20, 1977, the Board of Directors has decided to raise membership dues, effective January 1, 1978. As of that date, the fee for annual membership (formerly \$5.00) is increased to \$8.00. Life membership (formerly \$25.00) is increased to \$40.00.

Marcia T. Schuster,  
Museum Director

## ANOTHER RESTORATION

The Pontiac coupe now on display in the Hubbard Carriage House was of the first line of Pontiacs manufactured and was purchased new in 1926. (Its early owners are as yet unknown, but investigation is under way.) It first came to local attention in 1956, when it was discovered in the used car lot of the Penske Pontiac agency in Arlington, Minnesota. Bernard Sjostrom, now of St. Peter, a well-known collector of special interest automobiles, traded in a 1953 Chevrolet in order to acquire it. Mr. Sjostrom later sold the car to Jim Gauker, a former Cadillac and Pontiac dealer in Mankato. Mr. Gauker in turn presented the automobile to the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

The car was severely damaged in the flooding of the Carriage House in 1968. It has been restored by members of the River Bend Chapter of the Antique Automobile Club of America. Since 1973, when they undertook the project, they have spent hundreds of hours working in garages and workshops scattered about Mankato, Blue Earth County, and even in Waseca, where the auto was stored for some time.

The car was completely disassembled and painstakingly cleaned, repaired and rebuilt. New wooden body sills were hand-made, a new top put on, and upholstery completely replaced. The motor was torn down and cleaned of mud and rust, and replacement parts made as needed. Cost of parts and materials was met from funds donated to the Historical Society by people interested in the project, as well as by the members of the River Bend group.

Particularly active in the long and difficult project were:

Ross Buckman	Jerry Orness
Jake Campbell (St. Peter)	LeRoy Thompson
Cliff Evjen	Jim Timmerman
Noel Freyberg	Tony Wacker
Harley & Janet Goff	Gary Zimmerman
(Waseca)	Roger Zimmerman
Viril Layton	
Al Mohr	

(All from Mankato or North Mankato, except as noted.)

Except for minor completions, which will be made by the auto club, the vehicle is now ready for the first trial run, some time in the spring.

Bert Burns

## NEWS FROM LAKE CRYSTAL

We learned from Mrs. John Norman, Secretary of the Lake Crystal Historical Society, that all the items given to the society since its organization (two years ago) have been cataloged. This is an achievement we can admire and envy!

Entrance steps and filling around the foundation of the Farm Home building have been completed. Work on the interior is being postponed during cold weather, as the building is unheated.

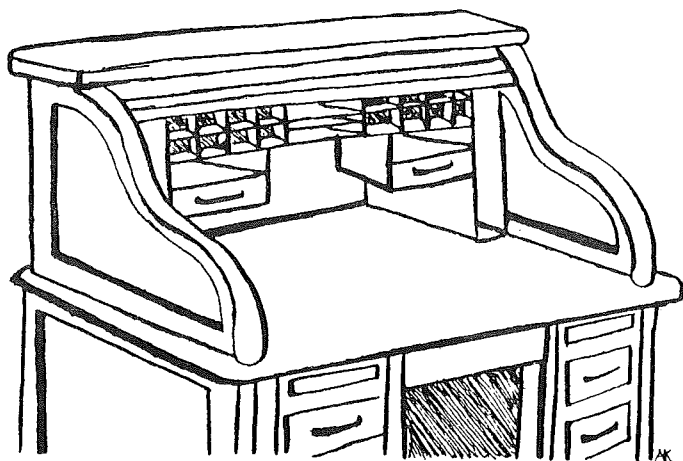
At their next meeting (February), members of the group expect to finalize arrangements for a spaghetti supper, planned as a fund-raising event.

## THANK-YOUS TO:

MR. EARLE WIGLEY, for restoring a mid-Victorian desk whose two sections have been separated since at least 1968! The lower section has been in the Museum; the upper section was identified in the course of the inventory this summer. The restored piece is now in the south parlor of the Hubbard House.

MR. CHARLES ATWOOD, for the gift of two movable coat racks. They were used for the first time at the Christmas Party, and will continue to be used whenever and wherever we need to provide coat-hanging space for visitors.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP



As we look back over 1977, the outstanding accomplishment was, of course, the opening of the restored Carriage House as a museum. Board and Society members, staff and interested citizens have contributed many many hours of time, talent, money and moral support to make this a reality. It is fun to see some of the Society's vehicles now out of storage and on display for the first time in many years.

The City of Mankato recognized this as a substantial community enterprise when they selected the Carriage House project as one example of community participation in their application for All American City designation. We feel very close to this competition, because we supplied so many photographs and so much background information. Mary Lofy, who made the presentation in Denver, visited us, studied our files, and questioned us closely on the history of the project. We anxiously await word of the final contest awards.

Installation of the copper weather vane on the cupola is the last piece of "frosting" on our Carriage House "cake". It is a magnificent piece of copper sculpture, handmade by an old-time craftsman. Mankato Plumbing and Heating employees braved minus 45-degree wind chill to attach it to the cupola. Have you seen it silhouetted against the setting sun?

We have recently submitted an application to the Minnesota Historical Society for a grant of funds over a three-year period, to enable us to complete the Carriage House (insulation, horse stalls, interior painting) and to repair and restore the Hubbard House. We are most appreciative of the hours and expertise contributed by Society member Peter Dahm, of Rieke, Carroll and Muller Associates, who prepared the application.

Have you noticed the ice sculpture on our back lawn? Children of the YWCA Latch Key program spent several hours constructing it - a lovely reminder that a cold Minnesota winter does have its compensations.

The Society Christmas party was held at the Carriage House, and offered sleigh rides as the afternoon's major activity. Unfortunately the weather man did not provide us with snow, but wheels, instead of runners, on Irv Nelson's sleigh kept us going. Thanks to Marion Harten and her committee for the fine party! A special thanks to Santa Claus, who made it to the Carriage House without snow for his reindeer, and to Hazel Faust, who led the caroling. Tom Schuster donated the Christmas tree from his tree farm - an FFA project of several years ago.

Our 20-below weather in December brought us boiler problems, but we were warmed by the generous contribution of off-duty time given us by Phil Stuve and John Butzer of Stuve Plumbing Company, who cancelled personal plans for Saturday night to assist us, and by Mike Eigen and Richard Wagner of our staff, along with Chuck Freitag of the Mankato City Park Department, who made periodic boiler checks on a Sunday morning and at midnight Sunday night. We are most fortunate that our only loss was one tropical house plant.

(Continued on Page Five)

### HUBBARD HISTORY

As part of the observance of its centennial year, Hubbard Milling Company will publish a history of the company. It will appear in spring, 1978, and will be available for purchase through the Historical Society.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP

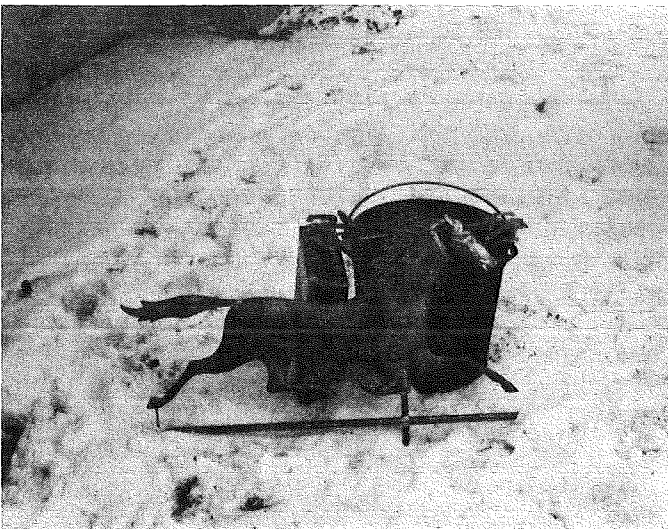
(Continued from Page Four)

The Museum Shop participated again in the YWCA Christmas tree festival and sale.

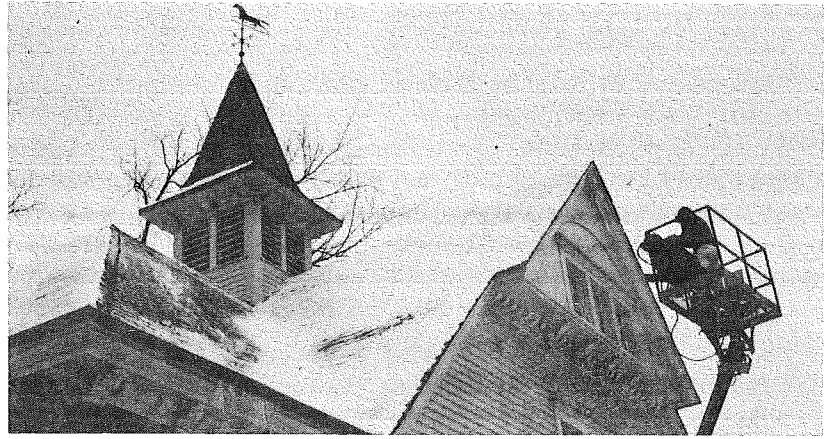
We are looking forward to June 4, when Palmer Centennial Place (the Museum's Victorian gardens) will be formally dedicated. 1978 is the Hubbard Milling Company's centennial year, and there will be many community events celebrating a century of achievement in Mankato. We feel very close to this centennial, since the Hubbard Milling Company was founded by R. D. Hubbard, whose fine home houses the Society Museum.

Happy New Year to all our members! Make it your resolution to visit us during the year, and to find us new members. Give a Society membership to someone on your gift list. Those who have received memberships as gifts tell us they greatly appreciate the opportunity to become acquainted with us.

Marcia T. Schuster



READY TO GO !



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED !

## RECENT ACCESSIONS (Not Listed Previously)

WEDDING SUIT worn by Albert Miller, at his marriage to Myrtle Ledbeter October 2, 1902, in Mapleton, MN.  
Given by Mrs. Fred Miller, RR 3, Mankato.

PHOTOGRAPH OF MAUD & KATHLEEN HART, at age 6 and 10, by Smith Photographers, Mankato.  
Given by Marion Hoffman, Mankato.

SILK APRON - SOUVENIR OF FRANCE, 1919.  
Belonged to Mrs. Louis R. Kresensky. (Mr. Kresensky was principal of Mankato High School, 1924 - 1950.)

MEMORABILIA of the ORPHEUM & other MANKATO THEATERS, 1918 - 1950's.  
Given by John P. Vogt, Gladstone, Mich.  
(Mr. Vogt began his career as a theater manager working at the Orpheum and also the Grand Theater.)

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING & SHEEPSKIN MITTENS, early 1900's. Belonged to Alfred Mauer of Beauford, MN.  
Given by Mrs. John Hengy & Mary Duncanson, Eagle Lake, MN.

COLLECTION of FARE TOKENS of the MANKATO CITY BUS LINES.  
Given by William L. Kuehl, Mankato.

MEMORABILIA of MANKATO & HUBBARD MILLING COMPANY, including a "MOTHER HUBBARD" pastry cloth & "YOUNG MOTHER HUBBARD'S BAKING DAY" Cook Book; AUTOGRAPH ALBUM, PILLOW SHAMS & SET of ROSETTE IRONS.  
Given by Mrs. E. Meredith Griffith, Mankato.

SANDON HISTORICAL SERIES PLATE No. 3 - THE BIERBAUER BREWERY.  
Given by the artist, Donna Sandon.  
(Continued on Page 8)

## NORWEGIANS IN BLUE EARTH COUNTY

Two visitors to the Museum are responsible for this essay! One was a junior high school student, asking for help with an assignment to find out about "ethnic patterns of settlement" in Mankato. The other was Dr. Marion Nelson, director of the Norse-American Museum at Decorah, Iowa.

Dr. Nelson's visit was arranged through the consultation service of the American Association for State and Local History, in response to our request for expert advice on items in the Museum collection which we believe to be of Scandinavian origin. Last October he spent an entire day examining dozens of articles gathered from all over the Museum or resurrected from storage in various places. He gave us a wealth of information on these items; and as he looked over our exhibits in general, he identified as Norwegian several others whose origin and use we had not even suspected.

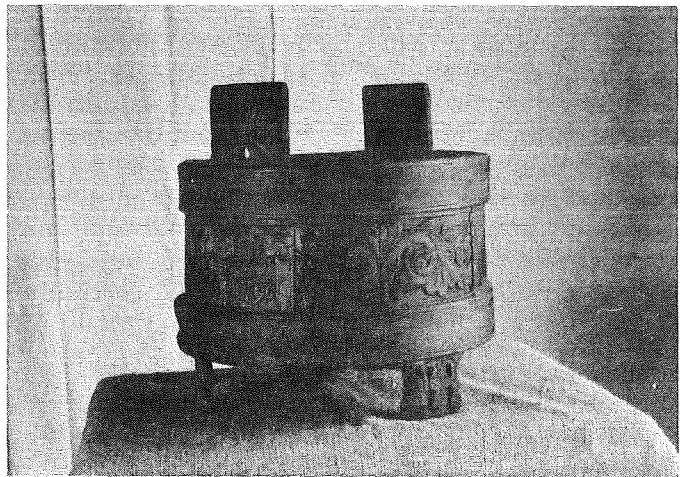
The young student's inquiry made me aware of how much there was to learn about the various ethnic elements which make up the population of our county, and Dr. Nelson's visit prompted me to start with the Norwegians.

As a native of Minneapolis, I was accustomed to think of the influx of Scandinavians into Minnesota as a phenomenon of the 1870's and 1880's. I quickly learned that both Swedes and Norwegians were among the earliest settlers in Blue Earth County, making their appearance in the 1850's. Furthermore, the Norwegians far outnumbered the Swedes.

It seems that some of the first Norwegians to arrive in the county settled farthest from its center of activity, the Mankato area. Strom Lake, on the very western edge of Butternut Valley Township, bears the name of the first settler in the township, Andrew Strom, born in Norway, who came in 1857. His son Odin was the first white child (born 1858), and his home served for the first school sessions and church services held in the township. Another area where Norwegians settled in the 1850's was the southern edge of the county, in Sterling and Shelby Townships. In 1857 Andrew Andersen and Abraham Eastvold settled on Jackson Lake, a body of water which once took up approximately four sections of land, about half on either side of the line between the two townships. These men, and others who followed soon

after, moved into Blue Earth County from northern Iowa, where sizable groups of Norwegians had settled earlier in the decade.

Settlement of the county was slowed by the Civil War and the Dakota Indian uprising of 1862. When the influx of settlers resumed in 1865, Norwegian immigrants arrived in large numbers. They settled in fairly definite concentrations, augmenting the Norwegian element in Shelby and Sterling townships, expanding into the northern part of Lincoln township, close to the older block of settlement in Butternut Valley, and also moving into townships which previously had been part of the Winnebago Indian reservation and thus closed to white settlers - Medo, Decoria and Rapidan.



PORRIDGE TUB (AMBAR) - 1796

The Lutheran faith seems to have been the strongest unifying influence in these Norwegian settlements. The holding of religious services and the organization of a congregation were among the first community endeavors. Eventually every one of the settlements had its own church building, its location often seeming to be determined by the gift of land for a building site by some member of the congregation. Of six churches, only two were located in or close to villages - the Butternut church and the one built near the settlement around Rapidan Dam, called Rapidan Mills in the old county atlases. Of the country churches, the one in Medo Township has continued to thrive in its original location. The church in Lincoln Township (Sec. 5) and the Jackson Lake church (Sec. 30, Sterling Township) are

(Continued on Page Seven)

## NORWEGIANS IN BLUE EARTH COUNTY (Cont'd.)

marked on today's maps only by their cemeteries. The Decorah "LeSueur Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation," whose church was in Section 7, combined in 1919 with two city congregations to form Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Mankato.

Throughout their history the country churches were served by pastors from Mankato. (Also Madelia, in the case of the Lincoln church.) Only the Medo church seems to have maintained its own parsonage, located next to the church. This church and the one at Jackson Lake also had parochial schools with separate buildings. The Lincoln Township church used the local public school house for a two-month session after regular school was over!

Here at the Museum we are re-discovering many things in our collection which are associated with the history of Norwegian settlement in the county. Some are linked to the churches, and tell us something of their customs in an earlier time. One such object is a set of crimping irons for ironing the starched ruffled collars which were part of the official attire worn by Norwegian Lutheran pastors when conducting services. This set, together with two collars, the round tin box which held them, and the tiny alcohol lamp used to heat the irons, was given to the Museum by Mrs. Jacob Thoen. (Her husband, the Reverend Jacob Thoen, was at Bethany College in Mankato in the 1930's.) Dr. Nelson characterized the set as an unusual one. The skill of using these irons, he told us, has really become a lost art. The collars in his museum at Decorah must be sent to Norway to be laundered and ironed!

Among the most interesting objects we have are articles of furniture and household use. One is a handmade high chair, with the name "Albert" and the date 1874 carved on the underside of the seat. It was given by Albert Eastvold, the son (or nephew) of Abraham Eastvold, who, we know, was one of the first Norwegians to settle in the Jackson Lake area. A group of household items came to us through Petra Lien, a teacher at Lincoln School in Mankato between 1936 and 1950. Her grandfather, Peder Brandlien, was among the first Norwegians in Rapidan Township. (1869). The Brandlien family later lived at Madelia and then moved to a farm near Hanska. Among their possessions was a large loom which Peder made. This loom and pieces of homespun cloth woven by Peder's wife Britt have long been in the Museum collection. The loom was formerly in the Sibley Park museum. Other articles given by Petra Lien are a wooden porridge tub, known as an ambar (see photograph, opposite page), a flour box and a wooden stirring stick, or tvaere. This last item had been mistakenly labelled a churn dasher. Dr. Nelson identified it for us and described how it was used. The porridge tub, he told us, is typical of the fine wood carving done in the Gudbrandsdal region of Norway. The date 1796 is carved on one side. The tub could perhaps have been brought to Rapidan by Britt Haugen, Petra Lien's grandmother, who came to this country to marry Peder Brandlien in 1872, after the death of his first wife. \*

Tracing the story of these few articles is only a beginning toward appreciating the role of Norwegian people in the history of Blue Earth County. There is so much more to find out!

Jeanne Kress

\* I am indebted to Mrs. A.E. Anderson of Hanska, a descendant of Peder Brandlien and his first wife, Marthe Avdem, for details of the family history.

NEWSLETTER  
of the  
BLUE EARTH COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Editor Jeanne D. Kress

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ATTENTION  
SOCIETY MEMBERS

THE NEW YEAR  
IS HERE

TIME TO RENEW  
ANNUAL  
MEMBERSHIPS

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



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Address Correction  
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#### RECENT ACCESSIONS, Cont'd.

DAY FAMILY CENTENNIAL REUNION QUILT (1976)  
Made by members and descendants of the Day  
Family.  
Presented by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Thompson,  
Amboy, MN.

WEDDING NECKLACE (1878)  
Worn by Inez Eddy at her wedding to the Rev.  
Peter Clare. Also a BLACK LACE DRESS.  
Given by Mrs. R. O. Eberhart, Mankato.

PHOTOGRAPHS of the MAXFIELD & WISER  
FAMILIES of MANKATO.  
Given by Mrs. Ella Morpew, Mankato.

LIMITED EDITION COLOR PRINT of a PAINTING  
"MANKATO: 125 YEARS OF PROGRESS", by Rodney  
L. Furan. Commissioned by DM PRINTING, INC.  
of Mankato, to commemorate the 125th anni-  
versary of the city and the 25th of the  
company.  
Given by Phyllis Rivard, Mankato.

POLK'S MANKATO & BLUE EARTH COUNTY  
DIRECTORY for 1974.  
Given by Williams Insurance Agency, Mankato.

VALENTINES & EMBROIDERY TRANSFER PATTERNS,  
early 1900's, which belonged to Mrs. Walter  
Tolzmann and Lydia Grawunder of St. Clair.  
Given by Don Klingbeil, Mankato.

PHOTOGRAPHS of KATHLEEN HART in Costume  
for Operatic & Theatrical Roles.  
Given by Maud Hart Lovelace.

1947 ADVERTISING CALENDAR: COMPLIMENTS of  
MANKATO CANDY KITCHEN.  
Given by Mrs. Erwin Preuss, Mankato.

KATO KOOK BOOK. Published by the Women's  
Guild of St. John's Episcopal Church,  
Mankato. First printing about 1918.  
Given by Esther Day Pearson, Mankato.

LARGE BOBSLED & SMALL (CHILDREN'S) BOB-  
SLED.

Given by Ben Jones, Mankato.

MAN'S KEY-WOUND POCKET WATCH. Belonged  
to the uncle of the donor,  
Miss Catherine Williams, Lake Crystal.

MAN'S POCKET WATCH & CHAIN (ca. 1903)  
Belonged to Otto Gerth, Mapleton.  
Given by Mrs. Mabel E. Gerth, Clackmas, OR

SCRAPBOOKS & RECORDS of the MANKATO  
CHAPTER of the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY WOMEN, 1968 - 1974.  
Given by the Mankato Chapter of the AAUW.

FAMILY GROUP PHOTOGRAPH taken at the  
Golden Wedding celebration of Edward &  
Pauline Kerndt Boeckh, Lansing, Iowa. 1906.  
Given by Miss Emma Wiecking, Mankato.

SOUVENIR CARD TRAY with photograph of the  
WELSH C. M. CHURCH of Mankato & Pastor, the  
Rev. William E. Evans.  
Given by Bruce Bell, Mankato.

CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES from the ESTATE  
of MARGIE HACKETT.  
Given by Mrs. Adelbert (Florence) La hann,  
Lake Washington, MN.

GLASS PAPERWEIGHT with photograph of  
FRONT STREET, MANKATO (ca. 1890?) and TWO  
SPOONS, one horn & one wood.  
Given by K. W. (Bud) Caswell, North Mankato.

TIN EGGBEATER (before 1890). Made by  
Julius Rieth, Lansing, Iowa.  
Given by Miss Emma Wiecking, Mankato.

CURLING STONES, two iron (ca. 1880) and  
two wood.  
Given by Robert Lang, Mapleton.