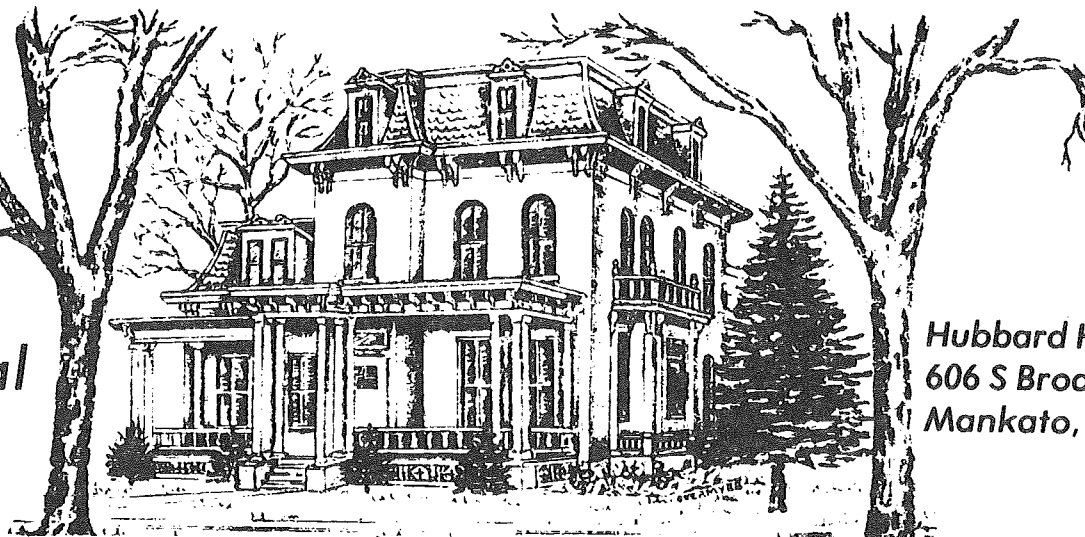


# Blue Earth County Historical Society



Hubbard House  
606 S Broad St.  
Mankato, Minn.

Volume 8, Number 3

## NEWS LETTER

October, 1979

### COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 4 - SUNDAY

MEMBERS' TEA and ADVANCE BAZAAR SALE

Time: 2 to 4 pm - Place: The Hubbard House

NOVEMBER 5 - MONDAY  
through

SECOND ANNUAL MUSEUM SHOP BAZAAR

Hours 10 am to 5 pm

NOVEMBER 11 - SUNDAY

The Hubbard House - 606 South Broad Street, Mankato.

### NEW IN THE MUSEUM SHOP

Sandon Limited Edition Plate for 1979

The Red Jacket Bridges  
Price \$12.50

Still available (and becoming rare):  
Minneopa Falls (1978) and The Bierbauer  
Brewery (1977), each \$15; The Lincoln  
Park Elm (1976), \$17.50; and Seppman  
Mill (1975), \$20.

### CENTURY FARMS, 1979

Among 176 farms recognized this year  
by the Minnesota State Fair Board and  
The Farmer magazine are two belonging  
to Blue Earth County residents:

Lester Anderson, Mapleton. (1872)

Bernita Barney Cumiskey, Good  
Thunder. (1868)

### THE MUSEUM'S CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

A 9 x 12 Rug (ideally, Oriental-type),  
to replace the one in the Hubbard House  
Parlor, a second-hand acquisition dating  
from 1939.

Folding Table(s), metal picnic-type.  
Needed for on-going work projects and  
for bazaar and other occasional displays.  
So we won't have to borrow !

CORRECTIONS and APOLOGIES from the Editor  
for ERRORS in the Newsletter of July!

1. Vi Panzram (not Betty Cords) gave the  
Rich Peterson soft drink bottle.
2. Margaret Williams was not on the Soci-  
ety's Board of Directors prior to her  
election in April, to fill out the  
term of Mike Scullin, leaving the  
Board upon his election to the post  
of Vice-President.
3. Incorrect Spelling: The 'a' was omit-  
ted from Miss Harriet MacDonald's name.

During the Bismarck regime in Germany, there was a flood of immigration to the New World. Thousands of people preferred to try out a new way of life, braving unknown dangers, rather than stay in Germany under a despotic system. They came, old and young, single men and single girls, and married men with families. As the years passed, many went, or tried to go where relatives or friends had preceded them. A large portion of this flood of immigrants came to the Midwestern states. Many were of rugged peasant stock, some with trades or crafts. Others had some education, and a few had money, to help them in their search for happiness and fortune.

Among these immigrants were my grandparents on both sides of the family. The Scherer family settled in the village of New Ulm; and my mother's family, the Manderfelds, homesteaded on a farm south of that settlement. Father received a grade school education in New Ulm. One of his teachers was a Mr. Brome, who in his old age lived on Byron Street (Mankato), where the Lincoln School playground now is. I know that classes were held in the German language, and I suspect that English was taught as a foreign language, much as French, German and Spanish are taught in this country today. Father continued his education at Mankato Normal School. He married my mother in New Ulm and came back to live in Mankato, where he spent the remainder of his life.

He must have been a most versatile man, for during his active career, he was in several business ventures.



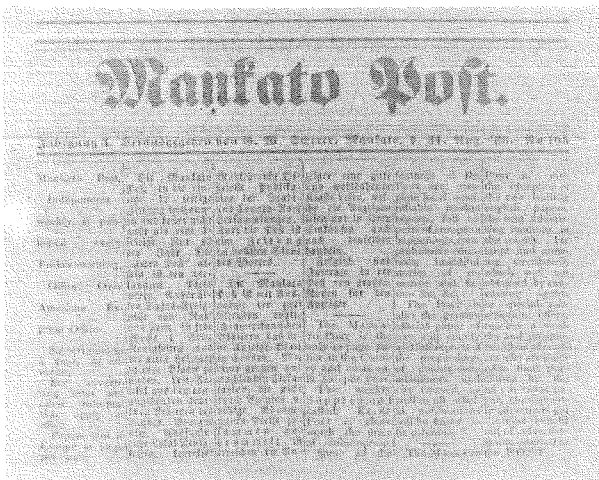
PORTRAIT ENGRAVING

1895 ATLAS of BLUE EARTH COUNTY

His earliest venture was the establishment of the Mankato Post. In the year 1880 (See note below) he set up shop in the basement of the Williams Building, on the corner of Front Street and West Hickory.

Father must have done what we know now as a "business survey". In Mankato he found a nearly solid German population living north of Main Street. It was called "Dutch Town" by those who confused the names of the two peoples, the Dutch and the German. I use this name "Dutch Town" with pride, as I was born there, on North Front Street, and lived there to the ripe young age of three months, when my parents moved to Clark Street.

(Continued on Page Three)



#### SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF THE MANKATO POST

The first listing of the Mankato Post, George W. Scherer, Proprietor, is in the Mankato directory of 1888. The photograph at the left, an advertisement showing an actual page of the paper, appears in the same directory. The banner reads (in German): "Mankato Post." "Year 3. Published by G. W. Scherer, Mankato. 31 Aug. '88 No. 105."

## REMINISCENCES (Cont'd.)

As Father looked farther afield, he found that most of Lime Township, Mankato Township and much of Nicollet County was populated by first or second-generation German people. They were literate, forward-looking people, whose contact with the outside world was limited by lack of communications. This was before Rural Free Delivery was established, so the only time farmers could get their mail was on creamery days or on other trips to town, when they called for it at the post office. Most of the early settlers could not read English easily. German-language newspapers came from far away and the news was old by the time the Beobachter and Staatszeitung reached them. Here, Father thought, was a market for a German-language newspaper printed and distributed locally.

No word has come down to me as to how he acquired a printing press, but I suspect it was a footpedal-powered Franklin press. He certainly did not have steam power in that basement; and electric motor-driven machinery was not common then.

Father was not a printer by trade, so he had to find and employ a German compositor. The paper was printed in German type, which resembled somewhat the ornate Old English typeface. He must have had wire service for outside news, which he had to translate into German. Father was well-educated in the two languages, and could translate freely from English to German and from German to English. The compositor had to be a smart man too. Father wrote all editorials, also in German, in longhand. I recall seeing some of the editorials, written on legal-size paper, in our family archives. They are long since gone, of course.

According to a news item in the Mankato Review, dated June 10, 1890, Father

sold the Post in 1889 to Mr. George Traub, and it was moved to East Hickory Street, where it stayed under several owners and a later change of name. In December of that year (see Notes below), he went to Germany to seek treatment for his congenital eye condition. At that time, and for many years later, Germany was the center of medicine and medical teaching. As one doctor wryly told me, "In Germany teaching starts with the autopsy."

Several stories of Father's trip come to mind. One, which had a sequel some years after his death, was about a clumsy bus boy who spilled soup on him in a restaurant. The head waiter berated the boy and would have discharged him, had Father not interceded in his behalf. About 1925, following World War I, a letter addressed to Father came from this same boy, now a man. He enclosed a cabinet photograph of himself. He appeared to be a very military type, arrogant-looking, with up-turned waxed mustachios nearly touching his eyes. In his letter he asked Father for money, presuming on the slight meeting many years previous. I wrote him, telling of Father's death, and saying that I could not send him money. I am sorry to relate that he wrote an abusive letter in return. That ended the story.

Another incident, also in a restaurant, cut short Father's stay in Germany. He was eating with a couple of chance acquaintances. They asked Father how much our President was paid. He said, "Fifty thousand dollars a year, I believe. How much does your Kaiser get paid?" His companions told him of the millions of marks, the palaces and the perquisites the Kaiser enjoyed. Father said, in German, "He isn't worth it." That evening he was visited by a policeman. The next day his passport was cancelled, and he was soon on his way home.

(Continued on Page Four)

---

## NOTES by JEANNE KRESS

Scherer's German compositor must have been one George J. Ehrler (or Ehler), named in Thomas Hughes' History of Blue Earth County as Scherer's associate, who is listed in the directory of 1888 as a printer.

As Mr. Scherer indicates, his father gave up the newspaper enterprise in 1890. His journey to Germany to seek medical treatment was made in June, 1890, and his stay abroad lasted four months, (Biography, 1895 Atlas of Blue Earth County), which, from Mr. Scherer's account, may have been less time than he intended to spend!

(Continued on Page Five)

## REMINISCENCES (Cont'd.)

My actual personal memories of the Post begin when the plant was on Hickory Street, where I was taken by my father. He may still have had an interest in it, or maybe he liked the smell of printer's ink. That was where I saw the editorials he wrote in longhand, in German, on yellow legal-size paper.

In our family, it was assumed that all people of German descent were Republicans. I am sure that the Post was ardently of that persuasion. In those days, there were many parades. I suppose entertainment was scarce, so people had to make their own diversions. It was probably a political parade for which Father and Mr. Traub built a life-sized Republican elephant. The framework of the body was made of hoops from a hogshead. It was covered with black cloth, and had a trunk and a tail. On its back was a howdah, in which rode a small boy, clad as they thought a Hindu might look. I was not that boy. Maybe Mr. Traub had one of his own. The legs of the elephant were large enough to accomodate a man, and wide enough for each man to walk. The four men inside the legs carried the body on shoulder straps. One of the men in front pulled a cord to animate the trunk, and a man in



PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH

1895 ATLAS OF BLUE EARTH COUNTY



GOLDEN JUBILEE EDITION OF THE POST  
Friday, June 27, 1902

From the original in the Archives of the  
Blue Earth County Historical Society

the hind leg did the same for the tail. On both sides of the elephant was a blanket with the words Mankato Post painted on it in large white letters. We had a good picture of the walking advertisement in our home for many years.

My memory skips then to the years when the paper was renamed the Mankato News and was owned and operated by Mr. August Blissenbach. (See NOTES, p. 5 ). It was then printed in English. The second and third generation of Germans had become predominant, and the demand for a wholly German newspaper had dropped off.

By this time the press was motorized and the Franklin press relegated to job printing. Handbills and fliers were common. Auction sales, attractions at the Opera House and merchants' sales all made use of that method of advertising. Hiring small boys to distribute them was cheap, if not always reliable.

No doubt too, the war in Europe had a profound effect on German-language newspapers. When sauerkraut was called "liberty cabbage" and German fried potatoes became Americanized, German newspapers became less than popular. It was rumored that German propagandists bought some of these newspapers, but in smaller cities such as Mankato, they could not exist as such.

(Continued on Page Five)

## REMINISCENCES (Cont'd.)

William Meixner was next to operate the News. He was a printer by trade and did very well with it. He was of German descent and had never lost his accent. He had a few expressions which we often quoted. One time Bill had been fishing at one of the lakes, using a horse and buggy for transportation. When he returned, we went over to admire his catch. Fishing must have been good that day. "But I had bad luck on the way home," he said. "The back of the buggy came open and I lost them pretty near half."

Mr. Paul Neff of Lake Crystal came to Mankato to take over the News. He came of a newspaper family and knew the business thoroughly. He was a gentleman and a scholar, and was well-liked by the businessmen in the neighborhood. Val Imm took over some time after World War I, when he came to Mankato with political ambitions. He ran a good newspaper and job-printing establishment; and, as we all know, his rise in politics was rapid. He made a good name for himself as State Senator for many years.

I left Mankato in 1958, so my knowledge and memory of the Mankato News ended abruptly then.

George W. Scherer



PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH

1895. ATLAS OF BLUE EARTH COUNTY



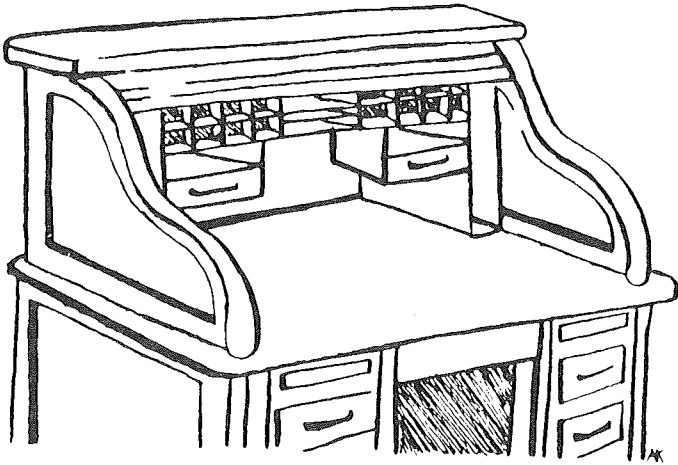
NORTHWEST CORNER, HICKORY & SECOND STREETS

The small building at the extreme left is 126 East Hickory Street, home of the Mankato Post from 1890 to its demise.

## NOTES - SUCCESSIVE STAGES, (Cont'd.)

Scherer's successor as owner and editor of the Mankato Post, George E. Traub, was a native of Mankato and a printer by trade. (1895 Atlas.) The directory of 1888 lists him as a printer, but does not indicate where he was employed. Was it perhaps with the Mankato Post? As Mr. Scherer says, his father continued to be interested in the Post. He may very well have been its principal writer, as Traub, a printer's apprentice at age 14, with only a sixth grade education, probably did not know German well enough to be a real editor. Scherer became county superintendent of schools in 1892 and consequently may not have had time to continue aiding Traub in producing the newspaper. In 1898, Traub hired a professional newspaper man, one August Marschner, brought up in New Ulm, educated at Martin Luther College, and with five years of experience as a printer and reporter in Kansas City and Winona. Young Marschner could produce a paper entirely in German, as is evidenced by the Jubilee issue of June 27, 1902. (See photograph, Page 4.)

(Continued on Page Seven)



Lovely fall weather finds us with a great sense of accomplishment. We have survived the rains of the summer; the Museum gardens and lawn have never looked better. The Hubbard House has been completely re-wired, and a halide light has now been installed in the Arbor, overlooking the Outdoor Room, to replace the small garden lights, which had been vandalized several times.

Our Outdoor Room was the setting for two weddings this summer: Linda Shinnick and Kevin Hibbard were married July 14, and Roxanne Wieman and Jeff Johnson on September first. Congratulations and best wishes to these two young couples.

We have received the following new memberships: Margaret Jahr, Jim Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Hibbard, Florence Standfest, Mrs. Comay Craver Wilson (Friday Harbor, WA), and Richard Kirby (Casper, WYO). Many of you will remember Mr. Kirby, whose father was minister of the First Presbyterian Church here for several years. He recalls delivering the Free Press to the Hubbard House when the paper cost only sixty-five cents per month.

Double congratulations to Janice Krueger, former intern and student employee at the Museum! She completed a one-year graduate course in Historical Administration at Eastern Illinois University, and became Mrs. Gary Brown on September 15.

The Blue Earth County Commissioners have confirmed plans to build during the

summer of 1980 an Agricultural Heritage Building at the Blue Earth County fairgrounds (Garden City), to house large antique agricultural equipment owned by the county Agricultural Society and the Historical Society.

Application for a grant to restore and/or replace rotting and missing exterior or woodwork of the Hubbard House has been made. The outlook for getting the money is very promising. As we work on restoring the Hubbard House to "good health", we look forward to restoring the interior as well and furnishing it with original Hubbard family pieces, if at all possible. This summer we were promised that two Hubbard chairs would be willed to us. We do hope that other persons who have original Hubbard furnishings will consider the opportunity to help in the restoration of this historic house. Original furnishings would add so much more to the authenticity of the restoration, compared to merely typical furniture of the period, which we would have to purchase.

While we're restoring and refurbishing the Hubbard House, we want to have the House and the Carriage House marked with suitable brass plaques reading: R. D. Hubbard House and R. D. Hubbard Carriage House. Will any Society member volunteer to head a drive to raise money for this? The Museum will of course be happy to receive any contributions to a fund for this purpose.

Jeanne Kress, our Newsletter editor, was honored to have her article on Little Crow (from the January, 1979 Newsletter) published in the Mankato Free Press, in connection with the September Pow-wow at Sibley Park.

Margaret Jahr has replaced Carol Kvale as Secretary-Receptionist at the Museum. Carol, who is still on the Board of Directors, is attending Mankato State University.

Thank-yous this month go to Evelyn Schmanski, who laundered curtains for the Museum and donated additional ones; and to Warner Zeno, for replacing the cracked glass tops of two show cases.

The Autumn Jaunt was a great success! We had to arrange for a larger bus, and still couldn't accomodate all who wanted to go.

(Continued on Page Seven)



### DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP (Cont'd.)

We have received word from the American Association for State and Local History that our request for a consultant has been granted. George Talbot of the Wisconsin State Historical Society will be here early in December, to survey our entire photographic collection and to make recommendations for proper cataloguing, storage, etc. He asks us to start collecting used manila envelopes (approximately 8" x 10"), to be used in the process of sorting. Please save such envelopes for us as you open your mail, for we will need a great many.

Our next big event is the Second Annual Bazaar, to be held November 5 through 11,

with a "Members Only" Tea and Advance Sale on November 4. Please send your questionnaire in, so we can reserve space for your hand-crafted specialties. The Museum Shop will be carrying a new line of Victorian gift wraps, Christmas cards and post cards. They are most attractive and unique. We also have Donna Sandon's new 1979 Historical Plate: the Red Jacket Bridges, as well as Lucille Sunderman's note paper and prints. Shop merchandise will be sold at the Bazaar, and will be available until Christmas.

See you at the Members' Tea !

Marcia T. Schuster

### SUCCESSIVE STAGES of the POST (Cont'd.)

1902 was the Post's sixteenth year of continuous publication. Two years later, it underwent considerable changes. It lost its professional editor, as Marschner moved to Winona when Traub sold the paper to a corporation headed by Henry F. Leonard, a "Dutch Town" real estate man. The photographer August Blissenbach was secretary-treasurer of the company and manager of the Post. It still retained this name and continued to be advertised as a German paper. But, as Mr. Scherer indicates, it ceased to be a German-language newspaper. It seems to have been written in English and printed in Roman type.

William Meixner's association with the Post began about 1907. He worked as foreman for the company. Blissenbach continued as managing editor, but the real business was job printing. By 1914 Meixner was advertising as a separate printing company. The Mankato Post, Inc. seems to have continued to exist until 1917. World War

anti-German feeling apparently finished it off by 1918. The company name disappeared, and August Blissenbach left Mankato for St. Paul.

However, the printing presses located at 124-126 East Hickory were still busy.

Meixner became manager of the Mankato Printing Company, address 126 East Hickory; and some sort of paper, called the Union News, was published at that address. Paul W. Neff had a business of his own, Neff Printing Co., at 124 East Hickory. It was in 1923 that Val Imm's father and brother bought Meixner's printing business, called it the Mankato Publishing Company, and apparently did job printing and published a weekly paper, now entitled the Mankato News. Val Imm took it over from them in 1926, and continued to publish it until the mid-1950's. This brings us down to the close of the time that Mr. Scherer deals with in his reminiscences.

Jeanne Kress

#### 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

#### THE THANKS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR:

MEMORIALS to: MRS. THOMAS EDWARDS  
WILLIAM RABE  
CHARLES FISCHER

SPECIAL GIFTS: ESTHER PEARSON  
PALMER FOUNDATION

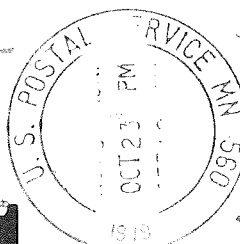
WEDDING DONATIONS:  
MR. & MRS. JEFF JOHNSON  
MR. & MRS. KEVIN HIBBARD

ATTENTION  
SOCIETY MEMBERS

MEMBERS TEA  
and  
ADVANCE BAZAAR SALE  
SUNDAY - NOVEMBER 4

(See Coming Events and  
Director's Rolltop)

NEWSLETTER  
BLUE EARTH COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
606 South Broad  
Mankato, MN 56001



Chief Ray Erlandson  
Mankato Fire Department  
300 East Madison Avenue  
Mankato, MN 56001

Address Correction  
Requested

#### HELP SOUGHT ON RESEARCH PROJECT

John J. Koblas, writing a biography of Sinclair Lewis, to be published by the Minnesota Historical Society, wants information on Lewis' stays in Mankato, & particularly on any appearance as a speaker at Mankato State. Call Marcia Schuster (345-4154), who will transmit information to Mr. Koblas.

#### ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED!

PLEASE let us know DIRECTLY (phone 345-4154) of ANY change of address. The Postal Service (!) charges us 25¢ for this information, plus 15¢ to re-mail.

#### ACCESSIONS JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1979: ARTIFACTS.

1. Trundle Bed with Folding Legs, from the estate of Elmo Nyquist, St. Clair.  
Gift of Malcolm Lang (son of Robert Lang, Mapleton).
2. Two-piece Dress, 1890's, which belonged to Neosha Randall Weber (mother of donor) and Family Group Photograph.  
Gift of Mrs. Alice Zieske, Mankato.
3. Pitcher, Goblet & Bowl, Pressed Glass. Belonged to Myrtle I. Halvorson, daughter of Halvor H. Halvorson, Butternut Valley Township.  
Gift of Mrs. H. G. Stangland, Mankato.
4. Early Farm Tools & Equipment: Single-row Cultivator; Posthole Digger; Potato Planter; Seed Corn Sieve; Buck Saw.  
Gift of H. G. Stangland, Mankato.
5. Wedding Dress of Bertha A. M. Uhlhorn, who married August Friedrich Dietrich Karl (Fred D.) Meyer, Nov. 28, 1901.  
Gift of their Children, by daughter Mrs. Peter Molmen, Minneapolis.
6. Two Red Cross Uniforms: Dresses, Caps and Insignia.  
Gift of the Blue Earth County Chapter of the American Red Cross.
7. Hand Tools: Cross-cut Saw & Saw Blade; Hay Knife; Brush Hook; and Frock Coat from a Uniform (?).  
Gift of Malcolm Lang (son of Robert Lang, Mapleton.)
8. Woman's Black Wool Coat, c. 1900 (?).  
Gift of Mrs. P. M. Ferguson, Mankato.
9. Oil Painting: Portrait of John R. Snow as President of the Photographers Association of America.  
Oil Painting: Hunting Dog in Landscape. Painted by Mrs. John R. Snow.  
Photographic Work of John R. Snow: Glass and Film Negatives and Prints.  
Gift of Mrs. Cecil J. Snow, Mankato.
10. United States Flag - 48 Stars. Women's Hats; Lady's Silk Umbrella; U. S. Army Uniform Hats & Caps, W.W.II.  
Gift of Mrs. Leo Kigin, Mankato.
11. Friendship Memento: Embroidered Linen in Wood Frame, with 46 signatures of Mankato people.  
Gift of Mr. William L. Edwards, Mankato.
12. Gamewell Fire Alarm System, used in Mankato 1890 - 1960. Display of Components constructed by the Firemen of Mankato.  
Gift of the City of Mankato.