

# CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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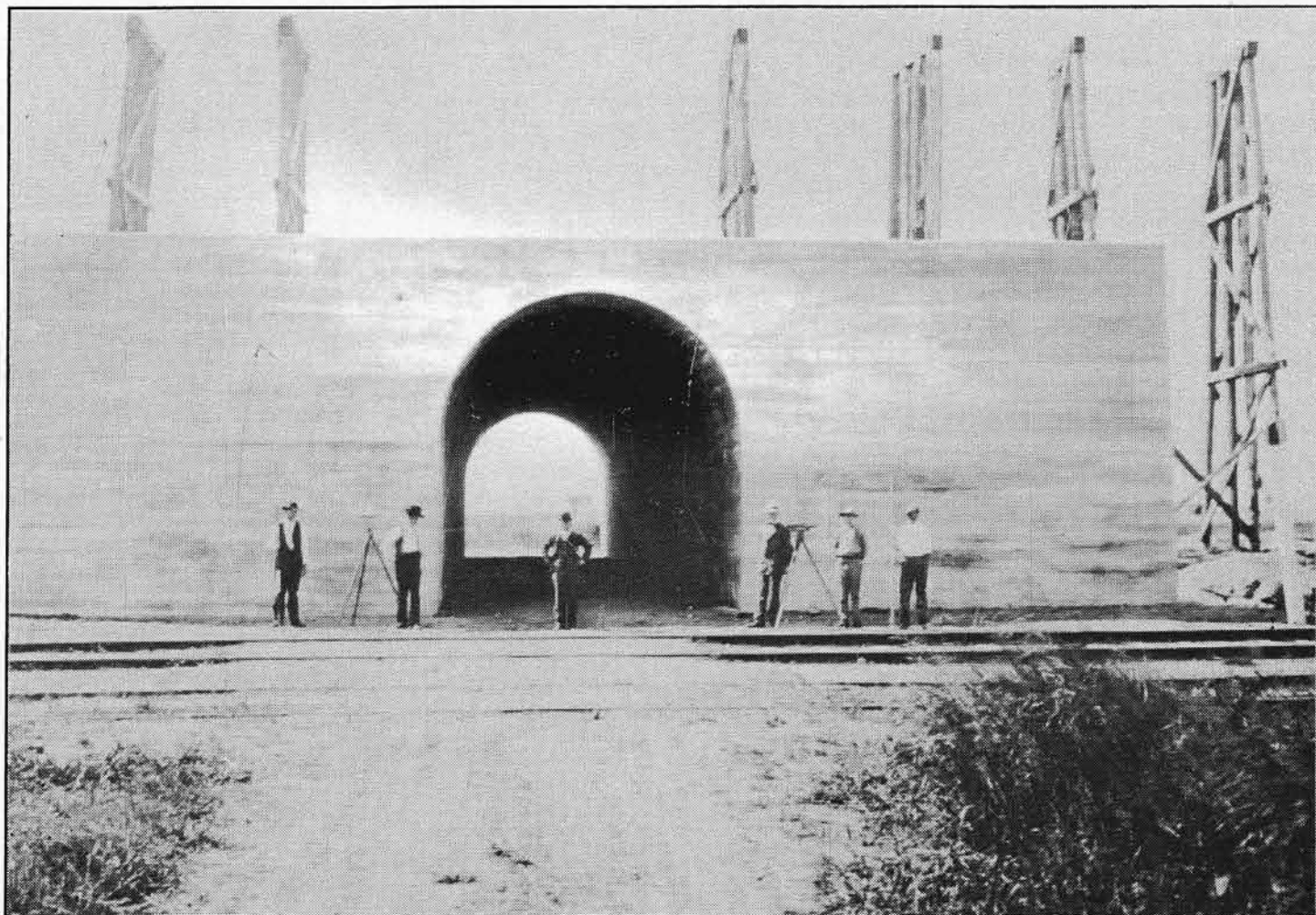
CCHS Newsletter

January/February 1998

Vol. XXI. No. 1

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Northern Pacific engineers stand proudly before their 125 foot long concrete archway (where Highway 9 passes under the fill). The man in the Center is probably S.A. McCoy. But, then what happened? See story on Pages 8-11.

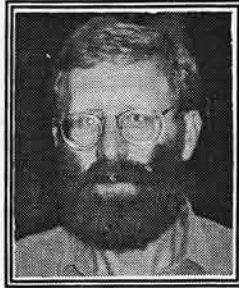
Flaten/Wange Collection

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## President's Report

By Paul Harris, President



I have never been big on making New Year's resolutions. Maybe it is because I have no bad habits (well, maybe not). I suppose Clay County Historical Society isn't perfect either, but I'll be darned if I can think of anything that seriously needs fixing. So my New Year's resolution as president of CCHS is to keep on moving in the direction we are already headed.

One direction we've been moving is toward greater visibility for CCHS. At the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center, we've tried to do that by adding new signs, especially the banner on 1st Avenue. We've tried to do more to promote ourselves in the public eye also. Our staff of Pam Burkhardt, Mark Peihl, and Margaret Ristvedt have done a great job of getting out into the community. Especially successful, I think, have been the weekly radio spots that Mark has been doing on KFGO.

During the upcoming year, we hope to take another dramatic step in this direction as a result of the expansion of the Center. If all goes as planned, we hope to move into new space down only one flight of stairs from the main entrance, which will make it much easier for visitors to find us. The presence of more people in the building, especially seniors, should also be very helpful in drawing visitors to our exhibits.

For this plan to succeed, we will have to keep moving in another direction on which we've embarked. A second long-term goal of CCHS is to expand our revenue base. Finishing new quarters in the Center will be expensive, and we can not expect local government to foot the entire bill. We will need to do more of the kinds of fund-raising we've been doing.

During the past year, we had an enormously successful membership drive. Coming on the heels of our renewal of business memberships in CCHS, we have greatly expanded our membership base in recent years. We must continue to do so, especially in the area of business memberships and perhaps some special grants from area businesses.

We had a couple of successful fund raisers thanks to Barnes and Noble and the Quilters Guild. If any of our members have suggestions for similar kinds of activities, we would welcome your suggestions.

One area that could really use a boost is our endowment campaign, which has yet to really get off the ground. The endowment committee has benefited greatly from the participation of Arnie Ellingson, who brings a wealth of experience to the work. Still, we are greatly in need of advice and assistance from people with public relations and advertising skills to help design a brochure and plan a campaign. Any volunteers?

My final resolution for the New Year is to continue supporting our excellent staff in the fine work that they are doing. If a happy board president is one who feels assured in putting confidence in staff members, then I am a happy board president. I hope Margaret, Pam, and Mark will keep me happy by sticking around through the remainder of my term.

### CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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# Yum, Yum - or "Could I have that recipe?"



On December 7, CCHS hosted a Christmas Open House at the Clay County Museum and Archives. There was entertainment, a chance to visit with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and homemade refreshments. They were good! Here in Minnesota when you like something, you serve up the ultimate compliment, you ask for the recipe. There were several recipes requested that day, and we decided to share them with our readers.

A favorite with the crowd were the "Jan Hagel" Cookies, made by Meredith Bloomquist. They were a thin, rectangular shaped, rich, butter cookie. According to Mrs. Bloomquist she got the recipe in the late 1940s from Emma (Redlund) Nelson of Mankato and has been baking them at least once a year ever since. [That's 50 years, folks!] The recipe is of Swedish origin.

The interest in the recipe precipitated some research on its origin which Mrs. Bloomquist reports as very rewarding. Here is a brief synopsis of the some of the information obtained.

Emma Redlund, of Swedish descent, was born in 1877 at Grove City. At one time she studied music at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. Her husband, Augustus Nelson, was born in Sweden in 1863 and immigrated at the age of 20. After graduating from Gustavus Adolphus in 1890, Augustus moved to Grove City where he was the high school principal and had charge of the Swedish Lutheran congregation. Emma was confirmed by Augustus. In 1896 Augustus enrolled at the Augustana Theological Seminary at Rock Island, Ill., graduating in June 1898. That fall he and Emma were married. They had five children.

In the late 1940s Emma was living with her daughter Ruth in Mankato. Mrs. Bloomquist was employed by Ruth's husband, Dr. Hobart Johnson, an ophthalmologist. She remembers visiting their home, and that it was full of music. It was during this time that she met Emma and received the recipe. Augustus died in 1949 and Emma in 1957.

Here is Emma's recipe. Note: Mrs. Nelson had marked her recipe card "excellent."

## JAN HAGEL COOKIES

1 cup butter	2 cups unsifted
1 cup sugar	all purpose flour
1 egg	½ tsp. cinnamon
1 cup walnuts, finely chopped.	

Cream butter, sugar and egg yolk. Combine flour and cinnamon with above. Knead with hands very well. Put dough on two cookie sheets (spread out with palm of hand). Add 1 tbsp. water to egg white and beat until frothy. Brush this over dough. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake at 300 degrees for 20 minutes. Cut 1" x 3" strips at once. Remove from pan at once.

\*\*\*

Another favorite, dubbed "Stained Glass Window" cookies, were made by Dorothy Dodds.

## BRILLIANT CANDY SLICES

Cream 1 cup butter  
 Add 1 cup sifted powdered sugar and cream well  
 Blend in 1 unbeaten egg and 1 tsp. vanilla  
 Add 2¼ cups sifted flour and mix well  
 Stir in 1 cup pecan halves  
       2 soft candied cherries, cut in half  
       (1 cup red and 1 cup green)  
 Chill 1 hour  
 Divide into thirds and shape into rolls 10" long. Wrap in wax paper and chill at least 3 hours. They can be frozen for any length of time. Cut 1/8" slices and place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 325 degrees for 12-15 minutes until delicately browned on edge.

\*\*\*

And finally a quick and easy modern day recipe - you can use the microwave. This is a one bowl, two step recipe. Marjorie Aakre provided these delicious treats.

## PLANTATION CRUNCH

Melt in microwave at medium setting  
       2 lbs. of white almond bark and  
       ¼ cup peanut butter  
 Add 1 cup Spanish salted peanuts  
       4 cups Rice Krispies (At Christmas time use the seasonal red and green Rice Krispies for a nice holiday look.)  
 Mix well and spread the mixture on aluminum foil (this works better than a plastic wrap). When mixture is cool, break up into serving size pieces. Note: You may add extra Rice Krispies if desired.

## Outreach Displays

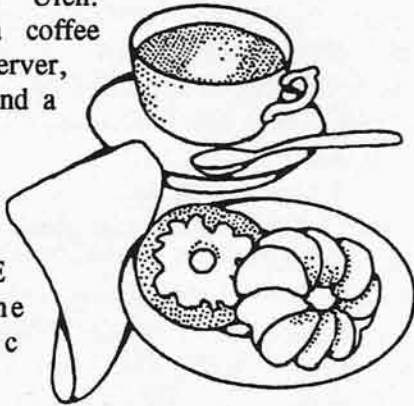
	Opens	Closes
Hitterdal Senior Center	Jan. 27	April 6
Ulen-Hitterdal High School	Jan. 27	April 6
Viking Manor, Ulen	Jan. 27	April 6
Hawley Public Library	Jan. 27	April 6
Glyndon Community Center	Jan. 28	April 7
Moorhead Public Library	Jan. 28	April 7
Barnesville Public Library	Jan. 28	April 7

The Hitterdal Senior Center features CHOCOLATE CENTERED. By the box or by the bar, this is a "sweet" display - and just in time for Valentine's Day!

Both the Ulen-Hitterdal High School library and Glyndon Community Center present JUST A WHITTLE BIT of woodcarving made in Scandinavia and Clay County.

LET'S HAVE COFFEE! at the Viking Manor in Ulen. Artifacts include a coffee grinder, coffee server, coffee pot, cups - and a little lunch.

Look, look! See, see! FUN WITH DICK AND JANE continues at the Hawley Public Library!



The Moorhead Public Library will display A SCANDINAVIAN SAMPLER (part II) featuring items from Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

The Barnesville Public Library presents A SCANDINAVIAN SAMPLER (part I) featuring items from Norway and Sweden.

ON LINE: *Then and Now* photo exhibit:  
[http://www.gps.com/pioneer\\_spirit/then/then.htm#intro](http://www.gps.com/pioneer_spirit/then/then.htm#intro) Thanks to Great Plains Software.Fgo

If you like local history, point your browser to:  
<http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/instruct/schwert/stockwd/stockwd.htm>  
 (By Dr. Don Schwert, NDSU and Mark Peihl, CCHS Archivist)

## Artifacts & Donors

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997

### Donors include:

Moorhead: Betty Swetland, Helen Erickson  
 Felton: Ethel Menholt  
 Hawley: Margaret Ristvedt, Ruth Moen  
 Borup, MN: Maxine Workman  
 Fargo, ND: Mark Peihl, Stende Family descendants of Ingeborg Stende, Family of Nelmer Nelson, Glen & Nora Melquist  
 Devils Lk, ND: Stanley Nicklay

**Artifacts include:** ca 1994 *Minnesota Atlas & Gazetteer*; *MS A History of Viding Township, Clay County, Minnesota 1881-1997* by Maxine Workman; 1917 school souvenir booklet; photo of 2nd Battalion-62nd Artillery at Camp Stuart, VA 1919; scrapbook from a member of the Humbolt [Twp, Clay Co.] 4-H Club 1946-1953 containing letters, photos, premium lists, entry forms, award ribbons, newspaper clippings, programs & a 1954 Dist. Basketball tour program; (2) Hawley Lutheran Church booklets; 1980-81 Clay Co. Plat book, scripts for the Hawley 125th pageant; (2) Hawley Nuggets sweaters, pompon & towel from 1984 tournament; labels from an apiary business at Manitoba Junction; Bible from the Union Church ca 1873 near Rollag; Fairmont cottage cheese container; ca 1936 Christmas tree stand with lights; rosmalled immigrant trunk and related family history; postcards from Kragnes, postcards from Trinity Church in Mhd; penmanship homework; envelope from the Felton Centennial 1880-1980; letter from WDAY radio "Tello Test Time" to listener at Felton with courtesy gift of four 25 cent war savings stamps; "Bergland" pinback button.

## Monetary Donations

November/December 1997

Roger Quam, Sioux Falls, SD

### Trivia:

The picture of Abraham Lincoln on the \$5 bill pictures him in 1864 at the age of 55. His birthday is Feb 12.

Theodore Roosevelt campaigned to make football less dangerous.





## entertaining and educational History tours to continue in 1998....

Many of us need something to look forward to to help us through the long dark winter. Plan now to join the spring CCHS History Tour. We will visit the Wabasha Street Caves and other hangouts of some very infamous gangsters in St. Paul. The "Gangster Tour" includes the hideouts of both the John Dillinger and Ma Barker Gangs, the site of the original Hamms Mansion (where a notorious kidnapping took place), and many other notable sites from St. Paul's "roaring hoodlum heyday." Other sites on the tentative itinerary are the Landmark Center, formerly a municipal courthouse, where many trials were held in the 1920s and 30s; the Minneapolis Star Tribune; the Minnesota History Center and a theatre production with a behind-the-scenes tour prior to the show.

Start making plans now to join us in June for a "CCHS History Tour." Call 233-4604 for more information.

## Weather Memories & Poems

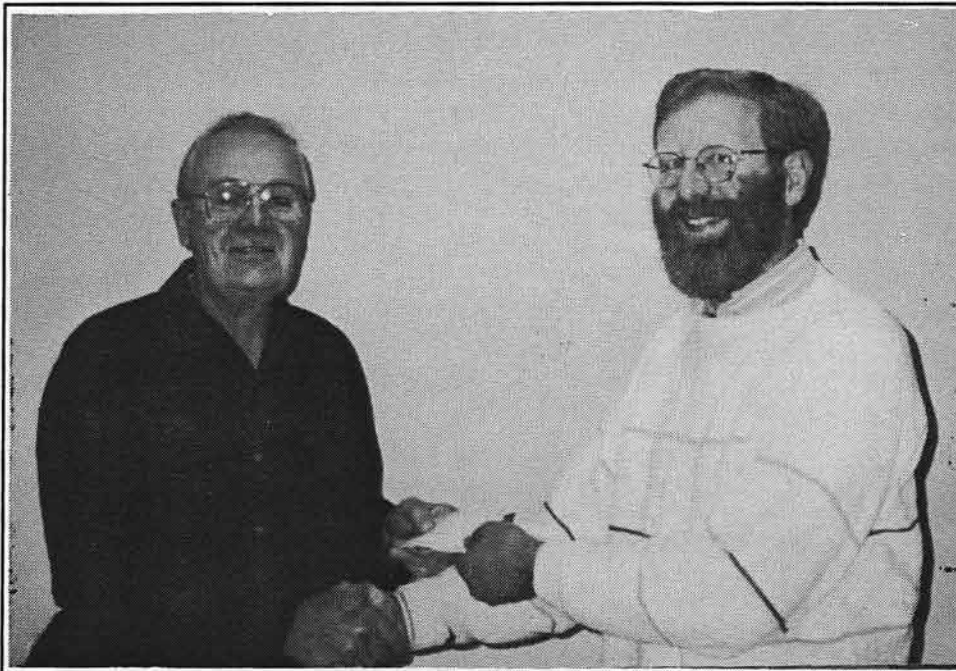
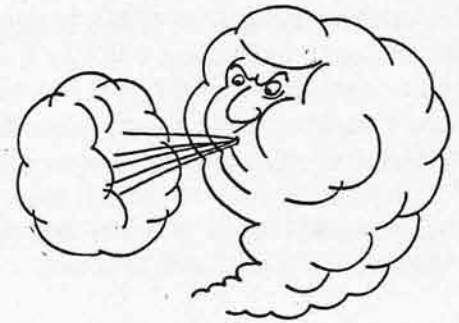
from the "How about that weather?" exhibit

A gentleman  
from Fargo  
writes:

"Spring 1997 -  
We worked day  
and night to fill  
and place  
sandbags to  
protect our  
neighborhood.

We woke up at 11:30 p.m. when we heard the thumping sound on the front door. It was a fireman, warning us of overland flooding to the north of our subdivision. We were exhausted from the days activities, yet we got up and moved our valuables from the basement - working all night while our daughter (3 years old) slept.

"It's not usually this \_\_\_\_\_ cold snowy windy etc.  
[Note the gentleman offered a multiple choice for you to fill in. He could have added an all of the above.]



Lloyd Paulson, former president of CCHS and current president of Lutheran Brotherhood Lake Agassiz Branch 8430, presented CCHS President Paul Harris (on right) with a matching grant check at the October 22 Board Meeting.

Lutheran Brotherhood offered CCHS matching funds up to \$2,000 for a membership drive. We made our goal with some to spare thanks to Paulson who led the recruiting by signing up over 50 new members.

## Two weather poems

(from the exhibit)

Wet, wet wetness  
Every single day  
At home and at FYC  
To the end of it I say  
Hate, I hate it, sometimes I love it  
Every, every, every single day!  
RIGHT © away!

Water, water everywhere  
Especially when the sun's not there  
After storms it seems so calm,  
Til lightning strikes and  
everything goes wrong!  
Heaving winds and pouring rains  
Every drop will soak my grains!  
Running inside just to stay dry,  
but then the sun comes out and  
everything is fine.

# Measuring Up! or What is pound cake ?

By Pam Burkhardt

*With two month's worth of fine eating under our belts (so to speak), let's take a quick look at recipes from an earlier age. The word recipe is derived from an older word "receipts" which meant a list of ingredients for medicine or cooking.*

Here is a sampling of measurements and/or directions in recipes from 1833 and 1877:

- ... one cup of suet (not too full) ...
- ... butter the size of an egg ...
- ... half a large spoon of fine sugar ...
- ... the weight of four eggs in sugar \* ...
- ... a glass of rose-water ...
- ... a little molasses ...
- ... one half coffee cup sweet milk ...
- ... three handfuls of flour ...
- ... flour should be stirred in till the spoon moves round with difficulty ...
- ... a little salt ...
- ... flavor to taste ...

\* This means to add enough sugar to equal the weight of four eggs.

Here are two old-style recipes as written:

**POUND CAKE** [Mrs. WH Ovington, from *The Home Cook Book*, 1877]

One pound of flour, one of sugar, ten eggs; beat the yolks and sugar together; add one pound of butter, putting in the whites beaten to a froth, and the flour last. Very nice baked in small patty pans and frosted.



**SUPERIOR BREAD**

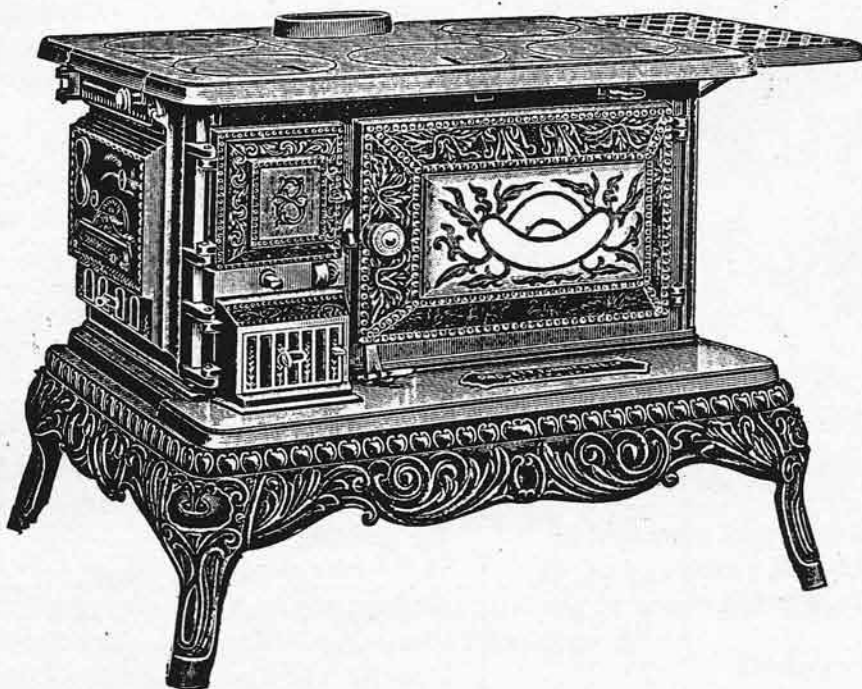
[Mrs. WH Ovington, from *The Home Cook Book*, 1877]

Scald one quart of sour milk; when cool enough, set your sponge with the whey; take about three quarts of flour, make a hole in the center, put in the whey about a good teaspoon of salt, one teacup of good hop yeast (homemade is best), and stir quite stiff with a spoon; wrap in a thick cloth so as to keep as warm as possible (in cold weather), in summer it is not necessary. In the morning knead well, adding flour until stiff enough, and keep warm until light; then set it in pans to rise; no saleratus [baking soda] is needed. Bread made in this way will never fail to be good if good flour and yeast are used.

■ ■ ■ ■

Cooking was an art learned at home. These days, we are not used to recipes like these with weights of ingredients, imprecise measures, no cooking temperatures, no times. How many cooks make their own yeast? Thanks to technology, and bread-making machines, cooking is more of science than art.

At the beginning of the 1800s many ingredients were weighed rather than measured by volume. This was more accurate since flour, especially, varied in bulk.



Cook stoves were a big improvement over open fireplaces.



# or How much is a wineglassful?

Accuracy depended on your judgement in flavorings, adding lumps of butter the size of a walnut (or egg) or cooking until done. As one recipe states "if properly done, this pudding is delicious." Mary Lincoln in the first *Boston Cook Book* (1883) allots over three pages for instruction on accurate measurement, i.e. "level off with the knife."

Recipes from the first half of the 19th century were plagiarized for the flood of new cookbooks published in the second half. One reason, suggested by *The Taste of America*, were improvements in technology which in turn revolutionized cooking. These ranged from the introduction of steel-cut flour to the new cook stove which replaced the open fire. Improvements in published recipes developed through the 19th century. Dr. William Kitchener, author of *The Cook's Oracle* (1818), was the first to list ingredients separate from the instructions. Eliza Acton in *Modern Cookery for Private Families* (1845) introduced precise weights and measures with cooking time listed at the ends of recipes. Mrs. Isabella Beeton's *Beeton's Book of Household Management* (1861) contained the first printed recipes all of which had been [at least theoretically] kitchen-tested. Mrs. Beeton, also, included costs and notes on seasonality of ingredients.

Fanny Farmer presented cooking as a science and promoted measurement by volume rather than weight. The kitchen became her laboratory. The art of cooking - treated scientifically - became home economics. Farmer was a student of Mary Lincoln's Boston Cooking school and, later, opened Miss Farmer's School of Cookery. Her cook book's instructions were simple and her measurements accurate.

Now might be a good time to go through those family recipes, faithfully copied, on file cards or on the backs of envelopes. Do you have any without cooking times or temperatures given? See if you can find one that calls for a lump of butter the size of a walnut!

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES [abridged, from *The Home Cook Book*, 1877]

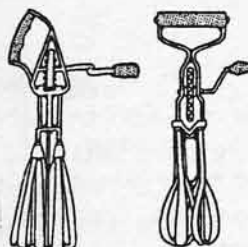
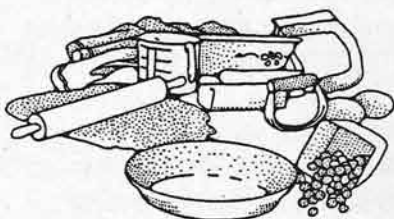
Ten eggs are equal to one pound.  
 One pound of brown sugar, one pound of white sugar, powdered or loaf sugar broken, is equal to one quart.  
 One pound of butter, when soft is equal to one quart.\*  
 One pound and two ounces of wheat flour is equal to one quart.  
 Four large tablespoons are equal to one-half gill.  
 Eight large tablespoons are equal [to] one gill.  
 Sixteen large tablespoons are equal to one-half pint.  
 A common sized wine glass holds half a gill.  
 A common sized tumbler holds half a pint.  
 Four ordinary teacups of liquid are equal to one quart.

\*One pound is in fact one pint. Interestingly, this same mistake appeared in a table of measures in Mrs. A.L. Webster's *The Improved Housewife* (1845).

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES [abridged, from *The White House Cook Book*, 1928 edition]

4 Tablespoonfuls equal 1 wine-glass, or half a gill.  
 2 Wine-glasses equal one gill or half a cup.  
 2 Gills equal 1 cupful, or 16 tablespoonfuls.  
 4 Cupfuls of sifted flour equal 1 pound.  
 1 Quart of unsifted flour equals 1 pound.  
 8 or 10 ordinary sized eggs equal 1 pound.  
 About 25 drops of any thin liquid will fill a common sized teaspoon.

Credits: *The American Frugal Housewife*, 1833 reprint, Applewood Books; *The Home Cook Book*, 1877, John C Buckbee & Co. Publishers; *The White House Cook Book*, 1928 edition, Saalfield Publishing Co.; *The Taste of America*, 1977 John L Hess & Karen Hess; *Mrs. Beeton's Victorian Cookbook*, 1987 Salem House Publishers; "American Cookery," Claire Hopley, *American History* magazine, Vol. 3, No. 2. May/June 1996 (Cowles History Group).



# Geology teaches railroad a

[For years CCHS has researched the problems faced by the Northern Pacific Railway in building the Stockwood Fill, the big railroad embankment paralleling US Highway 10 between Glyndon and the Buffalo River State Park. CCHS Archivist Mark Peihl has developed a popular slide show on the project. In 1996 Mark and NDSU Geologist Dr. Donald P. Schwert collaborated on a paper, "Toils Induced by Weak Soils: Geo-Historical Perspectives on Northern Pacific Railway's Construction of the Stockwood Fill." This article is a little less technical version of that paper. For further information contact CCHS for a copy of Don and Mark's paper or visit Don's website at:  
<http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/instruct/schwert/stockwd/stockwd.htm>.]

By Mark Peihl

## **Heavy objects a problem in Red River Valley.**

In the late 19th Century railroad construction allowed thousands of farmers to pour into the Red River Valley and transform the landscape from virgin prairie to rich farmland. But the same geologic forces which made the area a breadbasket created huge (and surprising) problems for the railroads and anyone else building large, heavy objects in the Red River Valley.

Clay County's surface was created by water and ice. Some two-million years ago the earth's climate cooled off by a few degrees. Not all of the snow that fell in winter melted the following summer. After thousands of years, the accumulated snow west of Hudson Bay was two miles thick. It was over 1,000 feet deep around here. The heavy ice pressed downward forcing the outside edges of this ice sheet to slide outward, like a spreading pile of toothpaste dumped on a table.

These glaciers scraped across Canada and the northern US bulldozing, picking up and carrying sand and gravel in its path. Eventually the earth warmed again. The glaciers melted like dirty snowbanks, leaving behind a veneer of rock and dirt debris called glacial till. At least four times, this cooling and thawing cycle repeated itself, each melting adding a layer of till.

The last time the glaciers melted (about 12,000 years ago), all the water tied up in the form of ice and snow had to go somewhere. Lots of it pooled in a low area in the till along what's now the Minnesota-North Dakota border and formed Glacial Lake Agassiz.

Blocked on either side by high ground and on the north by the retreating ice sheet, the lake grew huge.

## **Lake Agassiz strand lines visible along Hwy 10.**

The lake would remain at a certain level for perhaps several hundred years. Then drainage patterns would change and the lake level would drop. At each of these levels a shoreline formed around the lake. Two of these strand lines are still visible along Highway 10 near the Buffalo River State Park. They appear as terraces you climb as you drive east toward Hawley.

Melt-water rivers carried fine clay and silt particles out into the lake where they settled creating a soft, squishy lake bottom over a hundred feet thick. Closer to the shore, heavier sand and gravel sank quicker and mixed with the clay in a complex set of layers.

After the lake drained away, spruce forests spread across the soft lake bottom, followed by oak savannah and prairie grasses. Thousands of years of decaying vegetation created the rich topsoil we now prize.

## **Railroad arrives in Clay County, but steep grades are a problem.**

In 1870 the Northern Pacific Railway began laying track on their mainline running west from Duluth to Puget Sound. This strategically important railroad links the Great Lakes with the Pacific Ocean, paralleling US Highway 10 through Clay County. In their haste to reach the coast, the NP's tracks followed the lay of the land closely. This resulted in local areas of steep grades.

Two nasty ones were in central Clay County. West of Hawley, the road ran almost straight west up and out of the Buffalo River Valley. The east bound grade from Stockwood (where Minnesota Highway 9 passes beneath the tracks) up the Lake Agassiz beach lines also created problems. The NP needed helper or pusher engines to move trains over these spots. The railroad knew that increasing traffic would eventually require the leveling of these bottlenecks. By 1900 these two areas were the controlling grades on 550 miles of mainline.

In 1906 the NP finally acted. Officials ordered that all of the grades in the area be reduced to less than .3 percent to avoid the use of pushers. The NP solved the west bound grade problem out of Hawley by



# bitter lesson - at Stockwood

rerouting the line southwest along the natural lowland of the Buffalo River. This lengthened the line but made it more level.

## East bound Stockwood area tricky!

The east bound section at Stockwood was trickier. Making the grade would require building an earthen ramp 7.3 miles long to ease trains up from the flats at Glyndon to the top of the old lake shore. The NP created the ends of this huge fill by raising and filling. They jacked up track and ties a few inches, dumped gravel beneath the rails, tamped it solid then raised again.

But in the middle of the fill they planned to build a massive wooden trestle 4 3/4 miles long. They would push side opening cars loaded with sand and gravel out onto the trestle and dump the cars from above. Eventually, the level of the fill would reach the tracks and provide a solid fill to carry freight trains. The ramp would require over 2 million board feet of lumber, 4 million cubic yards of fill and would stand fifty feet high in places. Access through the fill would be through a 125 foot long, 16 foot high concrete archway located where today's Highway 9 runs beneath the tracks. The NP placed Samuel A. McCoy in charge of the project. It was expected to cost \$2,130,000 and take two years to complete. Pile driving began in April 1906.

## McCoy oversees building of impressive trestle, which ultimately sinks.

To McCoy, gazing west down from the lake shore, the flats below probably didn't look any different from level plains already crossed by the NP in other parts of Minnesota. He had no idea what he was getting into.

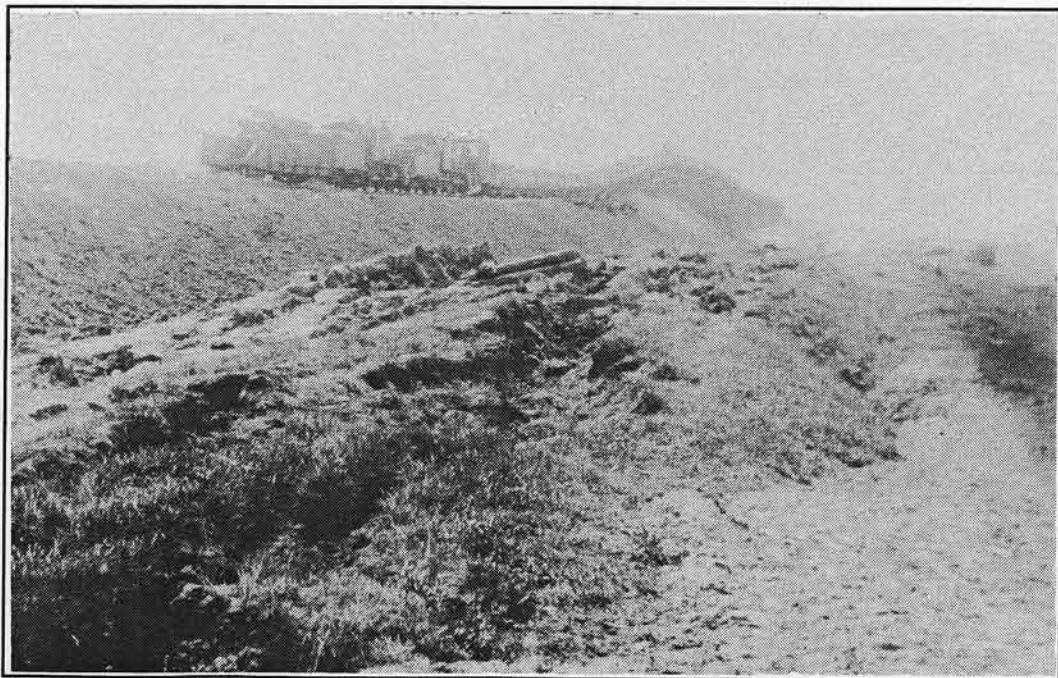
Everything went fine at first. The impressive trestle became a tourist attraction

standing proudly on the prairies. Filling progressed from the east working west toward Stockwood and the massive concrete archway.

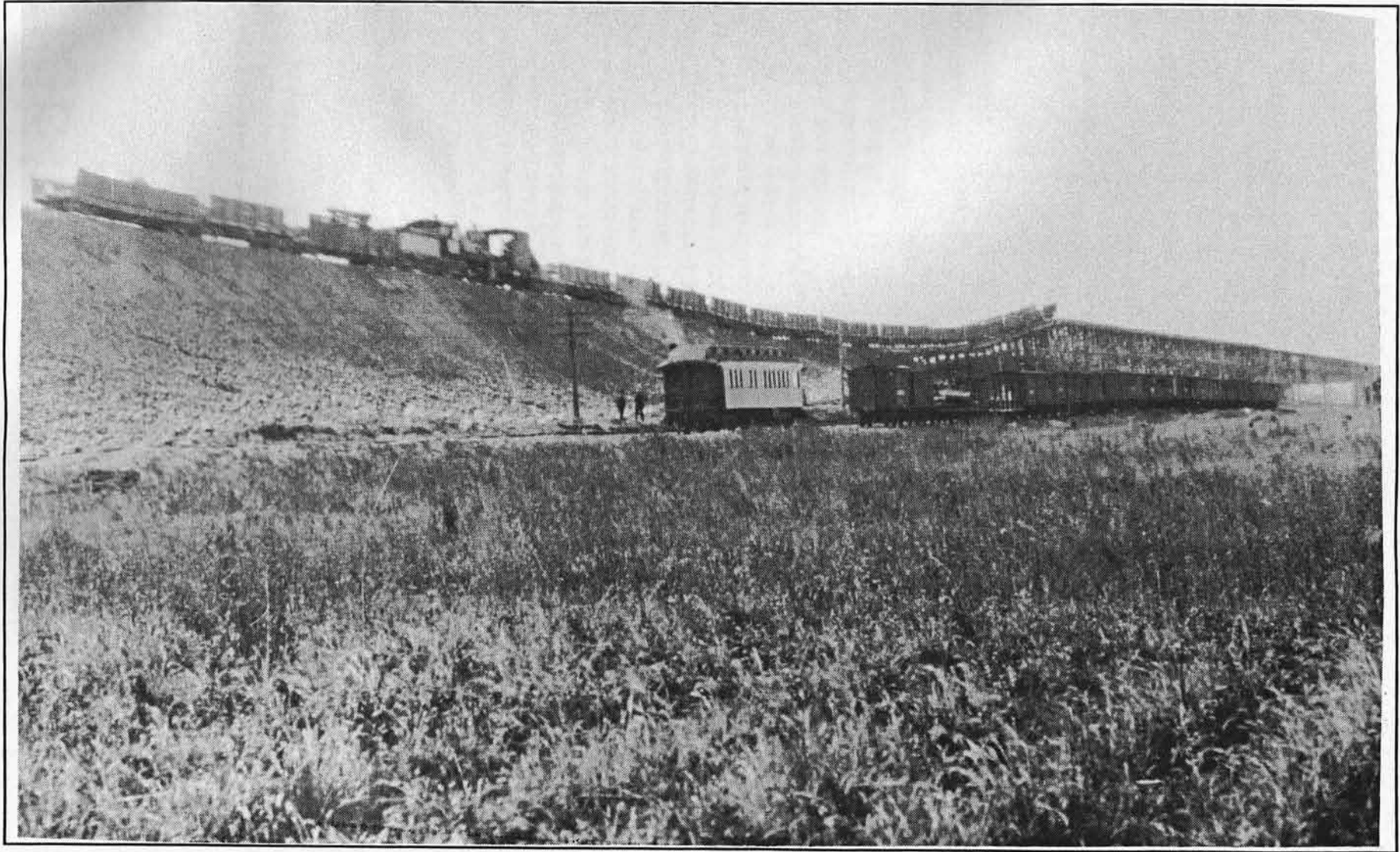
On August 1, 1907, things began to unravel. Three hundred yards east of the archway an 800 foot long section of the emplaced fill started to sink. It dropped two feet, then eight feet, then more. The ground along either side popped up the same distance. It was like placing a brick on a bowl of jello. A very deep bowl of jello.

McCoy conducted a series of "borings" or "soundings" to determine what sediments lay beneath the fill. He found complex layers of sand, clay and water saturated "quick sand." Not a good sign. But McCoy apparently believed the problems would soon end. On August 24, he wrote to his boss, "While the above soundings indicate that there is quicksand throughout the entire Stockwood area, I do not think that we need fear any serious results therefrom."

The sinking fill pulled that section of trestle down with it. By mid-month the incline of tracks at the ends of



The hump in the tracks is Birdsall's "permanent" bridge. Note that the rest of the fill has sunk. Soon after this picture was taken Birdsall filled the bridge, and it sank, too. Also note the ridges thrown up in the foreground by earth displaced by the sinking fill. The view is to the west.



Big Problems. This grade should be level. We are looking southwest toward today's Highway 9 crossing. The concrete archway and Stockwood Depot are visible at the extreme right.

*Flaten/Wange Collection*



## Stockwood (Continued from Page 9)

the sink was so steep trains couldn't run on them. McCoy built a new section of trestle over the sag but that too sank within days.

McCoy ignored suggestions to simply build a substantial, permanent bridge over the problem area and continue dumping to the west of the archway. Instead, he doggedly continued to dump on the sink, only to watch the fill disappear beneath the prairies.

By December, the project was no nearer completion than in August. McCoy sought employment elsewhere and the NP placed its Construction Superintendent, F. L. Birdsall, in charge.

### Birdsall takes over failed project.

In 1908 Birdsall built a 3,000 foot permanent bridge over the sink and the archway and began dumping fill to the west of the area. But in May sections of the fill to the west of the archway began to sink. Eight hundred feet of track sank 5 to 8 feet per day for a week. Birdsall widened the base of the fill, hoping the wider "mattress" would better support the weight. It worked for a few months. But in October cracks opened on either side of the widened western fill. Birdsall wrote to headquarters, "indications are now that the entire fill for this distance will go down as we widen it out."

On Halloween 1908 the NP received more bad news. Birdsall reported, "had to stop work this P.M. on account of the permanent bridge opposite the Stockwood Depot settling so badly that we were not able to get over it." This horrified the NP officials. The bridge was right over their \$11,000 concrete archway. Vibrations from work trains had damaged the bridge. Birdsall suggested that a permanent bridge would never work at the spot. He asked to fill in the bridge essentially writing off the archway. In 1909 the NP reluctantly agreed.

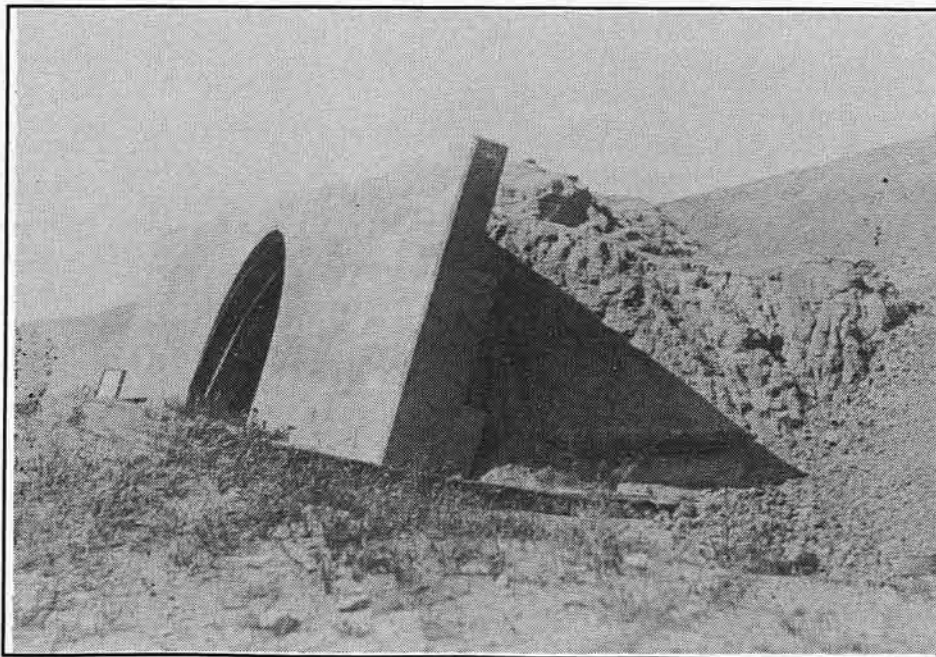
In July, with the fill over the arch nearly completed, a severe settlement occurred. The weight of the fill pressing down in the center and upward pressure on the ends of the long arch snapped it in the middle. For years it continued to sink, eventually disappearing, as Birdsall put it, "into the lower regions."

### NP gives up, grade remains at .75% at Stockwood sink hole.

It was a final straw for the railroad. In September, with the project two years behind schedule and nearly \$700,000 over budget, the harried NP officials announced that all east bound trains would run over the new tracks regardless of the grade. Settlement continued through the next decade. In the end, the NP made their .3 percent target except at the original Stockwood sink hole where .3 mile of track still stands at .75 percent. This required the continued use of helpers through the 1920s. At least seven men died working on the project.

In the mid teens, the NP graded a road through the fill over the buried arch. The Minnesota Department of Transportation reportedly dug out portions of the arch and leveled the highway bed in the 1950s.

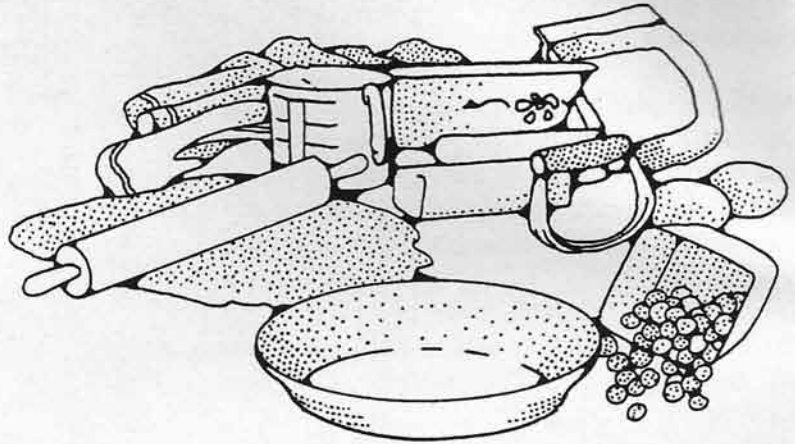
Burlington Northern Santa Fe reports no settlement problems with the fill today. But our unique geology still bedevils builders. Tall buildings like the MSU high rise dormitories or Fargo's Radisson Hotel stand on concrete stilts running over one hundred feet down through lake bottom sediments to firm ground. In 1986, a concrete elevator built at Kragnes was fitted with a plumb bob hanging from the top of the elevator to the bottom. For years the bob indicated which direction the granary leaned, telling workers which legs could be filled. In 1955 a huge concrete elevator near Fargo's Kelly Inn keeled over one night from unequal filling. They should have used a plumb bob!



A concrete arch heading for China. When covered with fill, the archway snapped and sank. Parts of it are probably still there under Hwy 9.

## Add one cup shortening?

Part of the pie crust recipe in the *American Frugal Housewife* (1833) reads, "Into the remainder of the flour rub butter thoroughly with your hands, until it is so *short* that a handful of it, clasped tight, will remain in a ball." Just what is *shortening*? Fat, mixed with flour and a little water, "shortens" the mixture, or, in the old sense, makes it workable. In the new sense, shortening is any fat that when mixed with flour (and liquid), develops the protein called gluten. You knead bread (which has a small amount of shortening) to develop the gluten - this is good for the bread. However, a pie crust (having large amounts of shortening in proportion to the flour) can only be worked a minimum amount of time - too much working of the dough develops the gluten and makes it tough. Just mix it until it is short!



## Looking back!

In an article in the *Fargo Forum*, January 2, 1955, written by Roy Johnson, there is a description of culinary delights served the stagecoach passengers and staff. "A pot of beans would be put in the fireplace to bake overnight. There would be hot beans for breakfast, warmed beans for dinner and cold beans for supper." Andrew Simmons, a well known stage driver, once told another "I will have to get out of this country before the spring rains come. I have eaten so many beans at Winship's hotel I am afraid that as soon as I get wet I will crack up the back."

[Reprinted from the Sept. 1979 CCHS Newsletter.]

## Christmas video memories last longer with proper care

To enhance the longevity of videotape, several tips are offered by Lotte Bailey, Deputy State Archivist with the State Historical Society of North Dakota. The following information was sent out by the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Christmas memories, once captured exclusively by photographs, now are also preserved and cherished on videotape, a fragile medium that requires some care.

"When purchasing videotape, you should select the highest quality tape that's available and ask for a hard shell shipper case to store the video after each use," said Bailey. "Tapes should be stored on end in their cases, like books on a shelf." Video heads on video

equipment should also be clean, said Bailey. This will reduce damage from each video use. Most video stores sell proper cleaning equipment.

Tapes should be stored in a comfortable climate where temperature and humidity don't change dramatically. High temperatures, high humidity and below freezing temperatures can cause permanent damage to magnetic tape. The best temperature and humidity conditions for use are below 74 degrees Fahrenheit and a maximum-40 percent relative humidity.

To ensure maximum protection when mailing or transporting a videotape on an airplane:

- seal the tape inside a plastic bag and inside a sturdy container
- if the tape is shipped with unknown cargo, pack the tape in a container that provides at least 12 inches of space between the tape and any adjacent packages
- try to minimize weather extremes during shipment, such as sitting for hours in a car or on a loading dock in the hot sun or freezing cold
- allow the tape to acclimate before playing
- airport security X-ray scan systems won't demagnetize tape; however, hand-held metal detectors *will* de-magnetize tape.

Many family photographers switch to video cameras because of convenience and instant entertainment. However, Bailey recommends also taking a few photographs, particularly in black-and-white, to preserve memories of this holiday season for generations to enjoy into the next century.





The Clay County Historical Society's Mission is the collection, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge of the history of Clay County. The CCHS Board of Directors is charged with establishing policies and directives to achieve these objectives. The Board, comprised of 11 elected directors and two ex officio members, meets monthly. Pictured above are: front (left to right) Al Bloomquist of Moorhead, Joyce Haug of Hawley, Dorothy Dodds of Moorhead, Marjorie Aakre of Moorhead; back row Lee Kolle of Borup, Marion Gee of Moorhead, Paul Harris of Moorhead, Galen Vaa of Moorhead, Mike McCarthy of Moorhead, and Arnie Ellingson of Fargo. Not pictured are Kenny Fox and Norm Roos of Hawley and Arvid Thompson of Barnesville.

## CCHS Memberships - New and Renewals

### November/December 1997

CCHS extends a very special thank you to the following individuals who have renewed their membership for another year.

#### RENEWALS

Davis & Hazel Scott, Moorhead  
 Zona Mathison, Moorhead  
 Hannaher's Inc., Moorhead  
 Clayton & Doris Jorgenson, Hawley  
 Denis Holen, Hawley  
 Fevig Oil Company, Inc., Felton  
 Carolyn & David Bowe, Fargo  
 Dorothy Sandvik, Moorhead  
 City of Hawley, Hawley  
 State Bank of Hawley, Hawley  
 Alden Knatterud, Moorhead  
 Mrs. Eldora Lunde, Ulen  
 Ellen & Chris Vellin, Torrance CA  
 Don & Dorothy Bentley, Hawley  
 Donald Markert, Moorhead  
 Wayne Gudmundson, Moorhead  
 Ward Muscatell Automotive Group, Inc., Mhd  
 E. Robert Olson, Moorhead  
 Michael & Kathy Farrell, Barnesville

Helen M. Anton, W Fargo  
 Cass Clay Creamery, Inc., Fargo  
 Ardis L. VanRoey, Terrytown LA  
 John Young Jr., Hawley  
 Hawley Independent School #150  
 Petermann Seeds Inc., Hawley  
 William Fay, Cocoa Beach FL  
 Lawrence Gilbery, Moorhead  
 Rapat Corporation, Hawley  
 Wright Funeral Home, Moorhead  
 Margaret Ahlness, Bowman ND  
 Sherwood Peterson, Baker  
 Joan S. Sprague, San Diego CA  
 Hornbachers Foods, Fargo  
 Fischer Farms, Glyndon  
 Tom Hall, Moorhead  
 Bev Woodward, Fargo  
 Mrs. Viola Mallory, Pasadena CA  
 Gladys Durensky, Barnesville  
 Darlene M. Rustad, W Fargo  
 John and Jyl Kolness, Hendrum  
 Morris & Ruth Lanning, Moorhead  
 Herbert & Clarice Aakre, Hawley  
 Bernice Peihl, Arthur ND  
 Diane Tweten Sylte, Benson  
 Vincent & Shirley Haugen, Moorhead

Sellin Brothers Inc., Hawley  
 Alvin Swanson, Moorhead  
 Stanley Skogen, Fargo  
 Jim and Chris Stenerson, Moorhead  
 Kalmer Ostby, Moorhead  
 Lawrence Smith, Moorhead  
 Miss Elvira M. Johnson, Moorhead  
 Robert Swenson, Moorhead  
 United Electric Service and Supply Inc., Fgo  
 Bentley & Bentley, DDS, Hawley  
 Gjevre, McLarnan, Hannaher,  
 Vaa & Skatvold, Atty., Moorhead

CCHS welcomes the following new members:

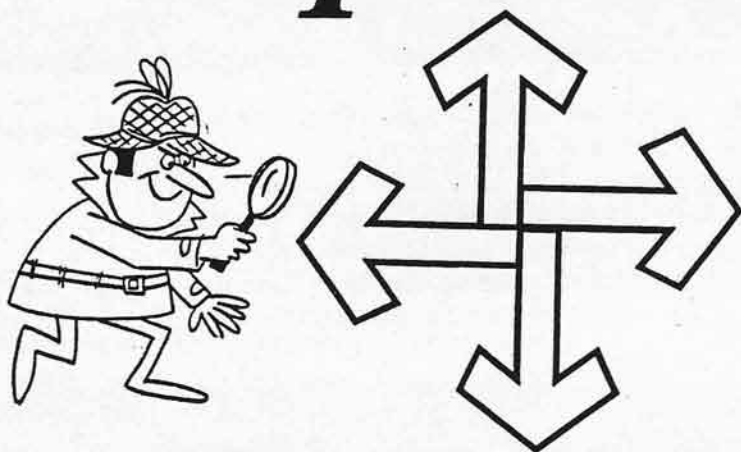
#### NEW MEMBERS

Phyllis W. Thysell, Moorhead  
 Arkansas State Univ.,  
 DB Ellis Library, State Univ., AR  
 Helen M. Hedelund, Moorhead  
 Kenneth & Mary Tangen, Moorhead  
 Hazel Haarstad, Moorhead  
 Waldo E. Hatledal, Hawley  
 Ann Zavoral, Fargo  
 Frederick Sprague, Washougal WA  
 Gregory Gillispie, Fargo

# CLAY COUNTY MUSEUM

New in  
1998

## *"Inside, Outside, Upside-Down"*



Look at our county and its artifacts from a new and different perspective.

***Grand Opening  
March 8.***

Watch for your invitation!

--- Free Admission ---

## *"How about that weather?"*

Last Chance to see our "Weather" exhibit which closes on February 1. What is unique about Clay County weather? How do folks cope with our weather extremes - both hot and cold? How do we predict weather? Our weather exhibit will try to answer these and many more questions.

PERMANENT EXHIBIT includes unique characterizations of one facet of the history of towns in the county. Together they form a chapter in the overall history of Clay County.

Hours are: 9-5 Mon.-Sat., 9-9 Thurs. 12-5 Sun.  
Lower level of Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave. N., Mhd. - FREE ADMISSION





Marion Bjordahl of Hawley beams over the log cabin quilt she won at the CCHS Christmas Open House.

## Quilt will stay in Clay County

Marion Bjordahl of Hawley was the lucky winner of a 1880s replica pleated log cabin quilt. The quilt, made for CCHS by volunteers under the direction of Kim Baird, was used as a fund raiser. Over 1,200 tickets were sold prior to the drawing at the CCHS Christmas Open House on Sunday, Dec. 7.

Marion has been a faithful supporter of CCHS for many years. Her late husband, Norm, served on the CCHS Board of Directors.

We congratulate Marion on winning the beautiful quilt.

## Membership Drive winner

Carol Schoff of Hawley was the winner of a \$20 gift certificate to Smokies (Hawley or West Fargo). The prize was part of the CCHS membership drive at the Clay County Fair.

# CCHS BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS

Thank You to the following businesses and organizations for their support!!!

### **PATRON (\$200 - \$499)**

Case Corporation, Fargo  
School Specialty, Fargo

### **SUSTAINING MEMBERS (\$100 to \$199)**

City of Hawley, Hawley  
Dilworth/Glyndon/Felton Schools  
Fargo Forum, Fargo  
First National Bank, Hawley  
Fischer Farms, Glyndon  
Hawley Public Schools  
Korsmo Funeral Service, Moorhead  
Moorhead Area Retired Educators Asso.  
Rapat Corporation, Hawley  
Sellin Brothers, Hawley

### **SUPPORTING MEMBER (\$50 to \$99)**

Arkansas State Univ., Arkansas  
Bentley & Bentley, DDS, Hawley  
Michael J. Burns Architects, Moorhead  
Cass-Clay Creamery, Inc., Fargo  
City of Barnesville, Barnesville  
Coast to Coast, Moorhead

### **SUPPORTING MEMBER (\$50 to \$99) Cont.**

Dilworth Wal-Mart, Dilworth  
Fevig Oil Company Inc., Felton  
F-M Printing, Moorhead  
Gjevre, McLarnan, Hannaher, Vaa, Skatvold  
& McLarnan, Attorneys, Moorhead  
Gunhus, Grinnell, Klinger, Swenson  
and Guy, Ltd, Moorhead  
Hannaher's Inc., Moorhead  
Hornbachers Foods, Moorhead  
Kirk's Super America, Hawley  
Mid-Day Lions, Moorhead  
Moorhead Trader & Trapper Inc., Mhd  
Norwest Bank MN, West N.A., Mhd  
Petermann Seed Farm, Hawley  
State Bank of Hawley, Hawley  
State Bank of Moorhead, Moorhead  
Tenneco Packaging, Moorhead  
United Electric Serv. & Supply, Inc, Fgo  
Wahl Drug Store/Gift Shop, Hawley  
Ward Muscatell Auto, Moorhead  
Wright Funeral Home, Moorhead

## CCHS Business Membership

- . \$ 50 to \$99 . Supporting Member
- . \$ 100 to \$199 Sustaining Member
- . \$ 200 to \$499 Patron
- . \$ 500 and up . Major Exhibit Sponsor

As a CCHS Business Member you will receive all benefits of an individual membership plus a certificate ready to frame and display, extra complimentary passes to the Hjemkomst Center's exhibits and a listing in all CCHS bi-monthly Newsletters. To become a CCHS Business Member please return this form or a facsimile to CCHS, Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561-0501 or call 233-4604.

Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

## CCHS - 1997 Membership

I would like to become a member of Clay County Historical Society.

- INDIVIDUAL \$15.00    FAMILY \$35.00    Donation

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- \* Support preservation of our heritage
- \* Bi-monthly newsletter
- \* Discount on Acid-Free Materials
- \* FREE Admission to Clay County Museum & Archives and two complimentary passes to the Center's Exhibits
- \* Discount on Photo Reproduction
- \* Voting Privileges
- \* Invitation to all CCHS events

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