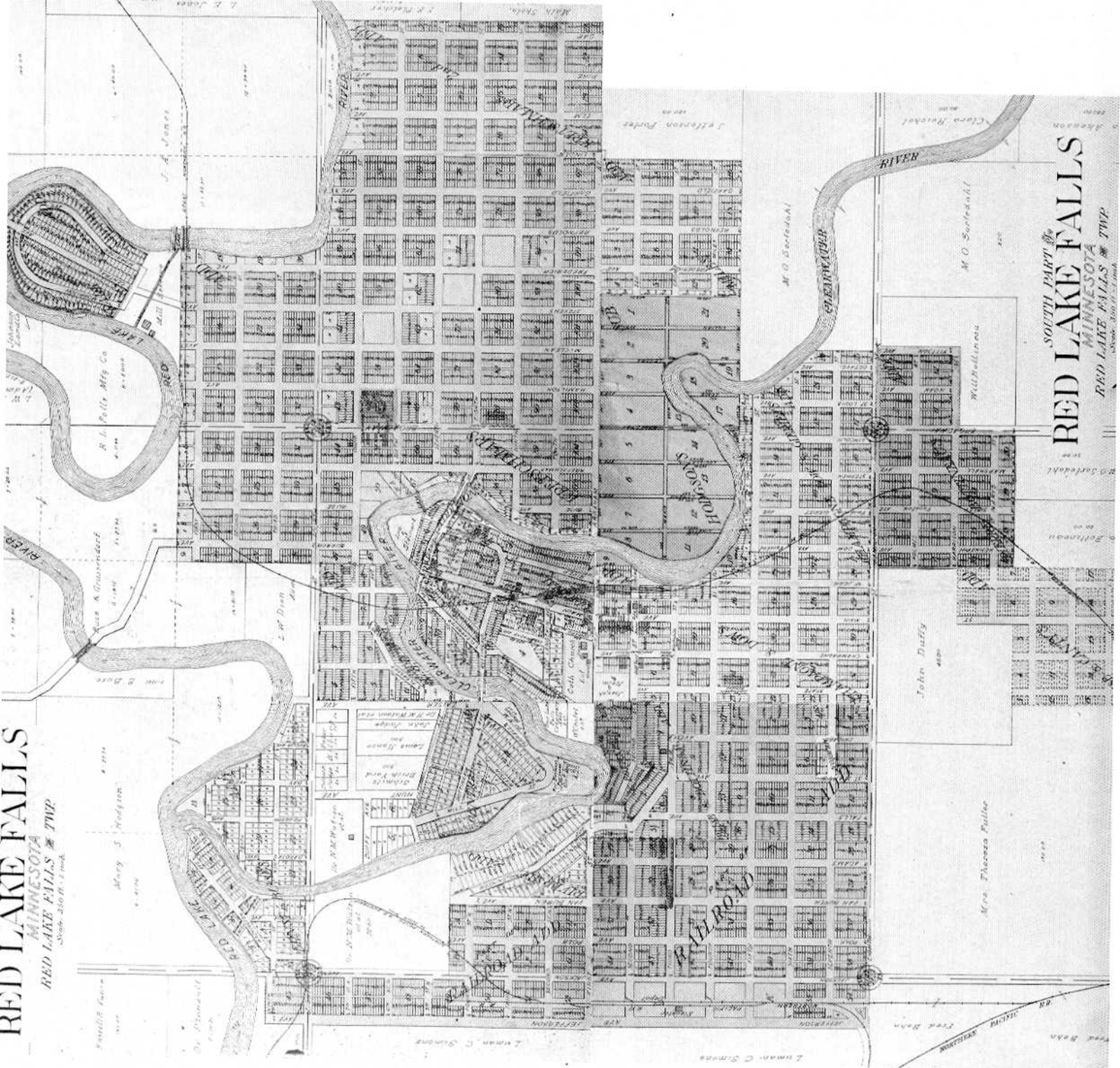


**RED LAKE FALLS**  
MINNESOTA  
RED LAKE FALLS TWP  
Scale 250 ft. = 1 inch



**SOUTH PART OF**  
**RED LAKE FALLS**  
MINNESOTA  
RED LAKE FALLS TWP  
Scale 250 ft. = 1 inch

# THE PIONEER DAYS OF RED LAKE FALLS

The stranger who, seeking a new home, enters a sleeper at St. Paul in the evening and awakening next morning finds himself drifting along between the fertile fields and well-built farm houses, and to the stirring scenes of Red Lake County, can scarcely realize the difficulties that confronted those pioneer home seekers, who, not so many years ago, first settled in this land of milk and honey. Where now are railways, telegraph and telephone lines, graded highways, drainage ditches and live towns, then stared them in the face only lonely, grass grown prairies, without even a wagon track where the old "Pembina rail" wound its way to the northwest.

The first settlers in Red Lake, then a part of Polk County, came here in May, 1876, just twenty-six years ago. No railroad train whirled along and deposited them and their household goods at a convenient station, with waiting friends ready to welcome them to their new homes. They left St. Paul with their families and the few things they could carry loaded into wagons and the clumsy old Red River carts drawn by horses or oxen — sometimes a horse and cow, or cow and ox. For days they wended their way just past little outlying settlements, through a wilderness of forests, swamps and marshes, wading rivers,

camping out nights, the silence unbroken save by their own merry laughter and shouting, or the howl of wolves, or drumming of partridges in the woods. Coming at length to Crookston, the county seat of Polk, they found it an assemblage of eight or ten rude log houses and three stores girt 'round by stumps and woods. Walsh and Ross kept the best store there, and that was not a department store you may be sure. The territory east and northeast of Crookston was as yet unsettled. No town-site boomer had discovered Red Lake Falls, St. Hilaire or Thief River Falls, and land in their present vicinity was at a discount. There were homesteads "to burn," and of the best kind, too.

Leaving Crookston, the home seekers followed up the Red Lake River, until, seventeen days after leaving St. Paul, arriving near the present site of Red Lake Falls, they decided that no better land could be found, and settled down.

The first colonists were French from Hennepin and Ramsey counties. These were Pierre Bottineau, then famous as guide, trapper and scout, with his sons: Isaiah Gervais, Joseph Belair, Thomas Belair, John B. Demarais, N. Pouliot, Pierre Audette, Benj. Gervais, Eli Lasha, Louis Paul, Paul Cyr, Elie Cyr, "Little" Joe Cyr,

Edward LaBree, Joe Beaudrow, and a few others. J. B. Bottineau had located about seven thousand acres of land here on Indian script, including the present site of Red Lake Falls, but his title proving defective, the land was homesteaded by the incoming settlers who set to work at once, built log cabins and prepared to farm with the limited means at their command. Food was scarce then and tales are still told of living all winter on a barrel of flour and jack rabbits.

To the east the settlement extended only as far as Badger Creek where a man named Heroux held forth as an outpost of civilization. To the west in what is now Louisville, a few settlers made their homes. Those were Michel Brouillette, Louis Huot, Simeon Patnode, Lizene Patnode, David Corbin, John Gaylord and others. North of the Red Lake River was a wilderness of tangled bush and grassy prairie, peopled only by deer, bears, wolves and Indians.

The following year a few more settlers came. Conditions were not yet such as to invite other than the hardiest of pioneers. There was no mill at Crookston and to get their grist ground, farmers were obliged to travel with horse or ox teams way down to Caledonia, near Fargo, the trip taking six days at the least. A railroad track had been





Main Avenue looking north from Second Street about 1912. Brick Block built in 1897 is to the left, the Kaus Block on the right.

laid from Glyndon up to Fisher's Landing, but trains only ran on it in the fall, business during the rest of the year not warranting train service. Several times during the winters the settlers rigged up flat cars with sails, loaded on their grists, and ran them down the line to the mill by wind.

In 1878 quite a colony of French settlers came from Upper Canada including the Brunelles, Perraults, LaBissonieres, Marchildons, Marchands, Robillardes, Latendresse, Ducharmes, Lizees, Legacys, and others. These settled south of the rivers. The Patnodes, Allards, Legacys, and others came from Fall River, Mass., and took homes east of Red Lake Falls between the Red Lake and Clearwater Rivers.

This year Ernest Buse, then as now, a great worker, and one who has left his mark upon the world wherever he has been, came to Red Lake Falls, discovered the waterpowers, realized the benefits to be derived from them and from the junction of the two rivers, and with Xavier Sohler took up the townsite and as soon as possible afterwards platted it.

Here in the same year, at the foot of what is now Main Street, Mr. Buse with Otto Kankel, built a grist mill and saw mill, erecting a dam a short distance up the river, the remains of which can still be seen in times of low water. The turbine wheel used to run the mill was brought from St. Anthony, having seen good service before as it was the first wheel used to generate power in Minnesota, dating back to 1849. The old wheel still lies in our courthouse yard — a relic of bygone days.

The building of the mill brought other settlers into the vicinity. About the first comers north of the Red Lake River were John Carlson and Ole Christofferson. Others soon followed, the country north of the river being settled mostly by Scandinavians, while south of the river the French were, as they still are, in the majority. A few Germans and English thrown in haphazard completed the making of a very good community. Around the mill the prospective village of Red Lake Falls soon centered. Frank E. Hunt kept the first store, located near the foot of Main Street. A few years afterward a log school house was built in the same locality and the first school taught by Miss Mamie Zeh. Soon after-

ward, also, Carl Kretzschmar, a man of enterprise and capital, appeared upon the scene, and built the Northside roller mill and the Kretzschmar brick block, by these means drawing the embryo village to an ideal location on the bank of the Clearwater, platted by Mr. Kretzschmar and called Kretzschmar's Addition. Prices of lots in this new and really beautiful location at once soared to the clouds. All adjoining lands, good and bad, and lots sold at speculative prices to parties all over the United States and in Europe. Many persons bought lots at from \$200 to \$500 each which they had never seen and haven't yet, and wouldn't have taken as a gift had they ever set eyes upon them. The writer remembers a stranger who, coming to the town some ten years later to see the lots he had bought in the "boom" days, was taken by a local real estate man to a hillside overlooking a watery swamp far from the business part of town, and told that his lots lay "out there," but he couldn't get to them except in winter when it froze up.

A massive oak tree, still standing near the residence of J. W. Rodgers on the Northside, was fitted up with a platform in its top and steps leading to it, and all prominent visitors were proudly escorted to this eminence by the mayor, whence they might view the glorious advantages of Red Lake Falls.

The city might still be clustered about the Kretzschmar Block, were it not for the fact that into this Eden crept a serpent, or, rather, two of them, in the shape of a pair of confidence sharpers named Coffin, who inveigled the ambitious but unsuspecting Kretzschmar into a number of schemes for capitalizing a company, secured his signature to important papers and decamped, leaving him financially stranded. Sympathetic citizens attempted to treat the Coffins to a lynching bee, but the birds flew and never returned. To this day they are held in deepest detestation by the old residents.

In the meantime the country south and east of town had become well settled. At one time there was a settler on every quarter section in Lambert and Poplar River Townships — a state of affairs which has never since existed.

The early residents came ill provided

with money or necessities and eagerly welcomed the first opportunity to "prove up" by making loans at high interest on their homesteads. Ten percent loans were rare, the more common rate of interest being two percent per month and a bonus to the agent. The homesteaders could scarcely keep up the interest payments, so that when the principal fell due, the mortgages were foreclosed and their farms taken from them because "company lands."

Transportation facilities were still very poor. The railroad having reached Crookston, all wheat had to be hauled there for shipment. Distance of the haul varied from twenty to forty miles. A regular wheat road was laid out and traveled, "kittercornering" across sections and this became in the fall and winter a well traveled highway. Upon it at short distances apart, saloons and stopping places were established whereat the weary traveler might refresh himself. As a consequence, the convivially-inclined wheat haulers often became more heavily loaded than were their sleighs, and their teams soberly traveled home alone, hours or even days ahead of their masters. Despite the roughness of it all, those were jolly days when cares were borne lightly and hardships were endured without complaining.

Relics of those times may still be seen in the square stone fronted buildings along the road. There were saloons at Gently, "Roux's Coulie," Looha's place, Badger Creek and other points.

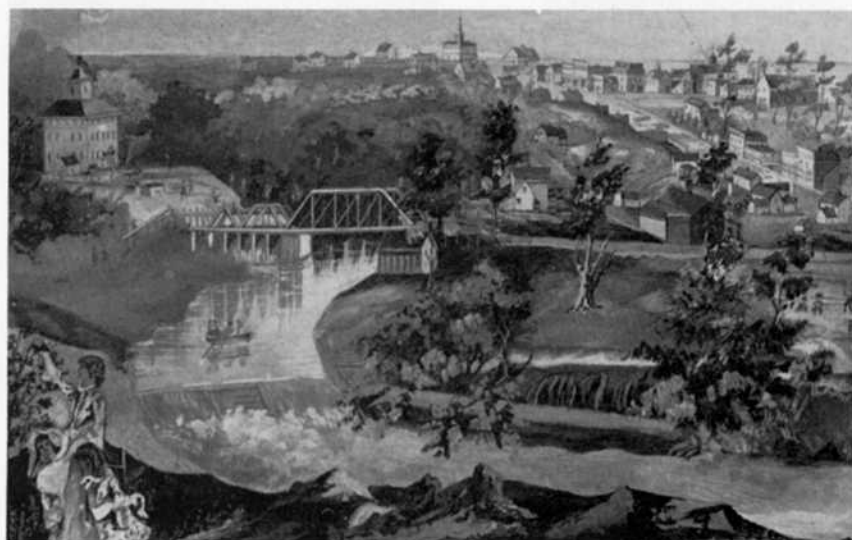
In 1882 St. Hilaire was platted, the railroad reaching there the following year. A train was run only once a week. Thief River Falls was also started about this time.

In 1886 the Northern Pacific built into Red Lake Falls, to be followed six years later by the Great Northern in 1892.

James B. Holmes, a promoter rather than a capitalist, was mainly instrumental in bringing the Northern Pacific into the city, and being desirous of making some money himself, located the depot at some distance from the rest of the town, platted the surrounding territory into "Railroad Addition" built several large store buildings and another mill near the depot and waited for the town to move. Happily he was in a great measure disappointed, and with the



coming of the Great Northern the city cen-  
 tralized itself about Main Street and settled  
 down to prepare for the prosperous future  
 that awaited it. The boom times were over.  
 False starts and inflated beginnings have  
 been succeeded by a steady, real and  
 prosperous growth, based upon the true  
 advantages and opportunities offered by  
 the city and its surrounding territory. But  
 the thing was needed to complete the situa-  
 tion, that it become the central point and  
 county seat of a county as prosperous as  
 itself. This happened in December, 1896,  
 and since then Red Lake Falls and Red  
 Lake County have made great strides in  
 progress. Their fame has spread through-  
 out the Northwestern states, and lo! many  
 strangers, lured by no fictitious values but  
 by real worth and golden opportunity, have  
 entered their gates to reap their bountiful  
 harvests and depart no more. What the  
 future shall bring forth, who shall say? Yet  
 the past has its merry reminiscences and  
 no man can say he is sorry to have lived in  
 these early, stirring days.



by Charles E. Boughton, Sr. 1902

Red Lake Falls from Kretschmar Avenue about 1880



Main Avenue 1890 looking northeast from First Street. Next to the Main Street Saloon is the City Meat Market. Three buildings down the street are a boot and shoe store, a drug store and a jewelry store.

## RED LAKE FALLS IN 1896

Red Lake Falls was incorporated as a village in 1881 and as a city in 1898. Like the county for which it is the seat, it takes its name from Red Lakes and the Red Lake River. It became a well-established transportation trade center of northwestern Minnesota. Large lumbering operations occurred, but farming soon became the premier economic activity. Small tract farming was followed by the opening of large grain farms, and a sizeable milling industry also grew up. Because of the water power available from the rapids and falls, Red Lake Falls was at the forefront in this movement. Today only the remains of one old mill race remain as reminders of this early industry.

Throughout the twentieth century the City of Red Lake Falls has remained primarily a service and trade center for a large rural agricultural district. The importance of its role as the county seat cannot be denied, and recent years have seen the development of important industries, including one of Minnesota's first and largest mobile home manufacturers.

Red Lake Falls reached its population peak as early as 1900 when the United States census reported that 1,885 persons were living in the young city. Since that time a fluctuation of about 500 persons has occurred from census to census. By 1930 the city's population reached its lowest recorded level, 1,386 persons. Ten years later the figure was 1,500. For the next two decades this level was maintained, but early 1970 census results showed an increase to 1,603 persons. Population projections reveal that the 1978 level could reach 1,890 persons and could surpass the 2,000 persons mark in 1988. In 1975, however, the unofficial population count is just over 2,000.

There are currently about seventy-two separate business enterprises in operation, and a healthy business climate exists. Significantly, over fifty percent of Red Lake Falls' business enterprises have been situated in the same location for at least ten years, and twenty-five per cent indicate at least a twenty-year tenure.

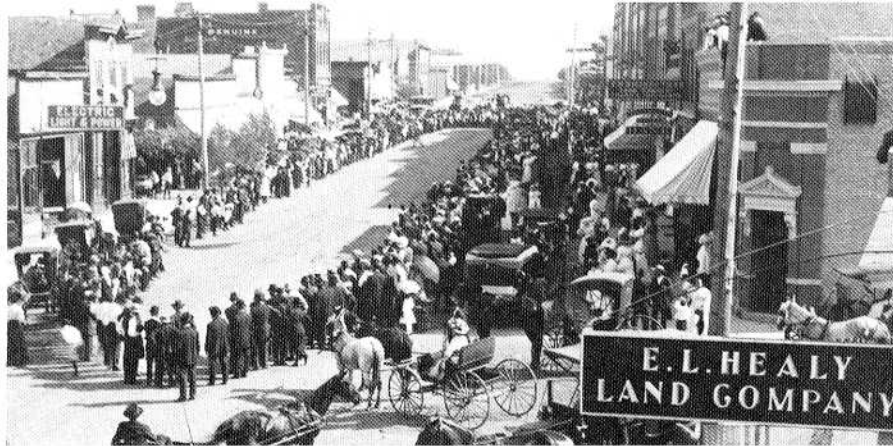
Red Lake Falls is like an oasis in the desert; situated as it is, between the Clearwater and Red Lake Rivers. Local attractions have been developed to take advantage of the geography including the golf course, the picnic area, the swimming beach, and the continually developing Sportsman's Park area.

In order to encourage new industry the city built an Industrial Park located in the southwest part of the city. The water and sewer facilities and paved access roads for the 134 acre area were completed in 1974.

Red Lake Falls City Planning Commission adopted a comprehensive planning charter in 1970, designed to provide for orderly future growth and development in the city. A hallmark of the 10-15 year guideline for physical development was the passing of a city zoning ordinance that same year. In its far reaching effects, priority was placed on improving aesthetics inside the city; landscaping of business areas and park improvements being among those concerns.

Red Lake Falls City Council members 1976: Mayor, Vaughn Thorfinnson; Alderman First Ward, Herb Johanneck; Alderman Second Ward, Lawrence Phillion; Alderman Third Ward, Edwin Etterman; Alderman at-Large, Roger Eckstein and Fred Violette.

Positions appointed by the mayor and approved by the Council: Clerk, Phil Cuno; Water Superintendent, Ray St. Marie;



Main Avenue, Fourth of July 1911



Champagne Avenue about 1890 from St. Joseph's steeple



North Side, Red Lake Falls, a painting by Rev. Ignatius Balluff. Carl Kretschmar was the builder of the fine opera house (Brick Block) dated 1882. The Smith Mercantile Co. was housed on the main level and Taylor's Meat Market to the east. Other buildings were the Theo. Schmitz Hotel, Joe Helm's Pioneer Paint Shop and the M. Skala North Side Sample Room. J. N. Nimesgern sold groceries, fancy furniture and funeral supplies. A second opera house was constructed in 1898 on Hamilton and served for many years for community gatherings. To be noted with wonder and almost disbelief is that these buildings, and the bridges that led to them, should be there at all in 1882, just six years after Pierre Bottineau brought his first party of permanent settlers to this area and helped lay out the town.



City Council 1976. Roger Eckstein, Lawrence Phillon, Ed Etterman, Herbert Johanneck, Fred Violette and Mayor Vaughn Thorfinnson.

Street Superintendent, Richard Knott; Park Superintendent, Noel Pearson; Manager Municipal Supply, Ken Hagl.

## ERNEST G. BUSE

Ernest G. Buse came to the Red Lake Falls area in the year 1877. He was seeking a site that could offer water power for industry. Upon his arrival he found that the Indians he had spoken to had directed him correctly. He sighted twelve distinct water power sites along the Red Lake and Clearwater Rivers, and decided immediately to settle and build a fortune to replace the one he had just lost.

Buse was born in Mecklenburg, Germany, on January 26, 1837, to Karl and Lisette Ohm Buse. In the year 1852, when Buse was sixteen, the family left Germany and came to America where they settled in Buffalo, New York. They stayed only two years during which time Buse was employed as a clerk in a shoe store.

The family came to Minnesota in 1854 with seventeen other families and settled about eight miles from Red Wing on Hay Creek. At this time the Sioux and the Chippewa were at war with each other and their warlike behavior along with wildness of the land finally scared ten families back to New York. Those who stayed weathered the Indian scares and the wilderness on their farms.

In 1857, the Sioux massacred some white settlers to the west of Red Wing and Indians all over western and northern Minnesota rose against the white settlers. These were terrifying times for the frontiersmen and their families. After the Minnesota River Massacre in 1862, Buse joined the settler's fight against the Indians. Armed by the government, Buse and the other settlers fought for more than two years to save their farms.

Finally in 1864, the settlers disbanded and Buse joined the Union army by enlisting in F Company of the Third Minnesota Regiment. While in the army, he was outfitted with old Belgian muskets and paid \$13.00 per month. At the close of the Civil War in 1866, Buse returned to Minnesota intending to go into business. In a 1913 interview, Buse states that he joined the army only for excitement.

He ended up settling in Fergus Falls where he was the first settler and founder of that community. While living at Fergus Falls, Buse was the only white man for miles and found that although he was surrounded on all sides by the Sioux and the Chippewa, he was able to live peacefully enough because they were more interested in each other than in him. Later in 1868, Buse was joined by a brother-in-law, C. Grussendorf. The present town of Fergus Falls was formed out of the town called



## ERNEST BUSE.

Buse, after its founder, and out of the acreage called Grussendorf's Addition, owned by Buse's brother-in-law. Eventually Buse owned 5,000 acres of what is now Fergus Falls, and was the possessor of a small fortune.

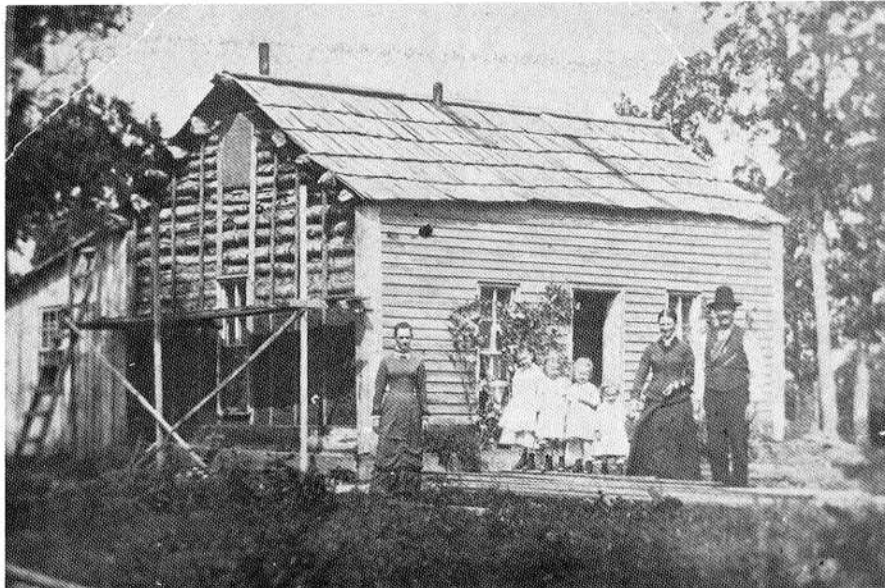
Successive economic disasters left Buse

without land or fortune in the late 1870's. It began when the railroad came to Fergus Falls. Ernest Buse was contracted to build homes for the railroad personnel. He had started five homes and nearly had them completed when the area was stricken by grasshoppers. The economics of the area went into severe decline and Buse was forced to borrow \$5,000.00 at 5% interest per month, which amounted to about 60% per year. The interest was compounded monthly, which raised the yearly rate to 100%. When the debt reached \$20,000.00 he said in an interview, "They closed me out."

In about the year 1877, Buse left his ruined business in Fergus Falls and headed northward seeking new enterprises. Indians he spoke to along the way had described the Red Lake River area to him, and when he saw it, he knew they were right. When he arrived he found that the area was already occupied by some French settlers, including Pierre Bottineau, who had brought his family and some of the rest of the settlers in the year before. In the year that Buse arrived, Bottineau brought another group in from Canada including the Brunelles, Perreaults, LaBissonieres, and others. At this time, Pierre Bottineau's son, John Baptiste Bottineau, who was a prominent St. Paul lawyer, owned about 7,000 acres in the area, including the Red Lake Falls townsite. His title, however, proved defective and the area was opened to homesteaders. Buse, along with Xavier Sohler, immediately took up the townsite and platted it a year later. In the meantime Buse chose his own homestead and built the first residence of Red Lake Falls.

In the spring of 1878, Otto Kankel took a claim that later became Kretzschmar's Addition. Buse and he went into partnership and built a grist and saw mill, and they erected a dam upstream on the river. The wheel used to turn the mill was a 72 inch turbine which dated back to 1849. It had been used to turn a grist mill in St. Anthony, which was later part of Minneapolis, and was the first wheel to be used in Minnesota.

In 1882, Buse left Red Lake Falls and lived in Minneapolis for several years. After the death of his first wife in May of 1885,



The Ernest Buse residence built in 1877 was located on the hill of the present Red Lake County court house.

he returned to Germany in 1886. While in Germany he remarried and when he returned to this country in 1886, he went to Vancouver, British Columbia where he made and lost another fortune.

Buse invested in lots in Vancouver at \$5.00 per lot. When the price rose to \$50.00 per lot, he quickly sold out and invested \$84,000 in a sash and door factory, a sawmill, and shingle mill. Shortly thereafter the price of lumber dropped to next to nothing and the mills in the area had no choice but to close. With the mills closed, Buse went to Chicago on a business trip. In his absence, his insurance expired and the factory and mills caught fire and burned to the ground. Buse returned to find his property and wealth gone. It was then, in about 1896, that he returned to Red Lake Falls, where he still owned considerable property.

Ernest Buse is known also as the "Father of County Division," having apparently first fostered and initiated the movement in 1886 at a cost of \$600.00 to himself. In later years he remained a prominent county supporter and furnished the first county courthouse. In 1904 he ran for sheriff in Red Lake County but was defeated, and he served as Red Lake Falls' first postmaster. In an interview from the year 1897, Buse extols the virtues of Red Lake Falls and its resource of water power. He genuinely believed that Red Lake Falls would become the source of power for all industry in Northern Minnesota.

Buse was married twice and had twelve children. His first marriage was in 1869 to Eliza Geenagle. There were eight children from this marriage: Eliza, who died in infancy, Ernest, who also died in infancy, Louisa, Pauline, May, Lillie, Alice, and Ernest. Buse's second marriage was in Germany in 1886 to Teresa Scholtz and they had four children: Walter, Olga, Teresa, who died in infancy, and Carl. (See Buse Family History).

Ernest Buse died in Lodi, California, on January 29, 1914. He is buried in Fergus Falls at the Oak Grove Cemetery. In the last years of his life, Buse was interviewed extensively about his frontier life and about his adventures. He recalled encounters with bears and with Indians, and he related his feelings about political issues. His statements show a modest man who tried to be realistic about his own abilities and about the experiences, both good and bad. Following are some excerpts from statements made in various interviews around the turn of the century.

An Indian encounter taken from Wheelock's Weekly, Thursday, December 21, 1899: "One day I went to town — Alexandria; it was fifty miles — to buy goods and do business, and on my way back home, in St. Olaf township, I saw all the farmers at work building a fort and throwing up breastworks. The settlers informed me that the Indians had broken out again, and that they had killed everybody in Fergus Falls. As my family was the only one that lived there, I was paralyzed. I put my horse to a full gallop, and the 15 miles were covered in a short time; but I found my family all right. I then went to an Indian tepee which was nearby and investigated the trouble. The chief told me that it was only between a Sioux tribe near Big Stone Lake and their tribe that the trouble was, and I need not be scared. He gave me his word of honor that he would let me know if I ought to leave."

A description of "better times" taken from the same issue of the Wheelock's

Weekly: "In a short time all the trouble was over, and times were good, for money was not in the country. Every business man made his own money on a piece of paper or cardboard. That was all the money we knew of. A gold dollar was worth from \$2 to \$3 in paper. (Times were good). About once a week we would go to a dance. We would take a yoke of oxen and a sleigh, put plenty of hay in the box, take our fiddler along, all get in and off we would go to some neighbor's and have a good time. Ten or fifteen years passed, and we looked back and saw what a lot of mistakes we made in not taking better advantage of frontier times. In 1865 the Civil War and Indian troubles were all over, and now was the time to frontier again and strike for a prospect of a new townsite. So a pair of ponies were hitched to a covered wagon, and revolvers were strapped on and a pocket compass headed us for the north-west again. Everything went all right. (For times were good). No bridges were across the streams and no roads across the beautiful prairies, and only Indian canoes were on the lakes, but there were plenty of fish and fine game, ducks, geese and deer. Bear and wild cats, lynx and rattlesnakes. (Times were good)."

A description of Red Lake Falls taken from Wheelock's Weekly, December 21, 1899. "Red Lake Falls is in most respects like Fergus Falls, with unlimited water powers, that will make thriving cities. I remember when the first railroad was built from St. Paul to St. Cloud, a little station was built about two miles east of Minneapolis. It was not worthwhile going to Minneapolis, but water power told them different when it got started. Water powers have made Minneapolis and water powers make cities all over the world. Water powers have built Minneapolis from nothing to over 150,000. Water powers have made Fergus Falls from nothing to 6,500 in thirty years. Water powers have made Red Lake Falls from nothing to 3,000 in 19 years. If we could see twenty-five years ahead I think it would astonish us to see what electricity and water power will bring us."

Opinion on the Indian question, Wheelock's Weekly, December 21, 1899. "I have a little to say about our Indian reserves. If the government would allow three white settlers and one Indian settler on each section of land our Indians would be loyal citi-

zens in less than ten years and Indian troubles would all be settled.

An Indian story from the Fergus Falls Daily Journal, Saturday, March 9, 1935. The quotes are taken from a 1913 interview. "There were not a great many Indians but they hunted and trapped all through here. The Sioux lived down towards Lake Traverse and the Chippewas up this way. The Sioux came up occasionally on their ponies to fight. I was on good terms with both and they would sometimes come to my house, where the Kaddatz residence now stands, to beg something to eat. The Sioux would ask me the whereabouts of the Chippewas and the Chippewas would ask me about the Sioux but I told them nothing, as I did not want to mix in their battles."

"There were two Chippewas, who remained as a sort of sentinels in what is now the eastern part of Fergus Falls. They stayed in a piece of woods and used to sleep between two logs. The Sioux caught one of them at one time and cut him to pieces."

## PUBLIC EDUCATION IN RED LAKE FALLS 1880-1976

From the log shanty in 1880 to the modern school facilities found in Red Lake Falls in 1976, there is ample evidence that this community has maintained a supportive interest in education.

Red Lake Falls' first school was a small log house called, "Buse's Shanty", located, in terms of present landmarks, as down the hill and to the north of the courthouse. The decision to open the school was made at a special meeting held at Schreiber's store in Red Lake Falls on September 4, 1880. Otto F. Buse was the first chairman of the school board and Dr. L. Lemieux was the first clerk of the district. Adam Zeh, W. A. Schreiber and John Wilkens were among the first trustees of School District No. 15 in Polk County. Red Lake County was a part of Polk County at that time.

Miss Mamie Zeh, age 16, yet considered a "legally qualified teacher", was hired as the first instructor. She began teaching in September 1880, had 20 pupils and a beginning salary of \$12.00 per month. After two months of satisfactory teaching her salary was raised to \$15.00 and for the



Buse's Shanty, the first school house in Red Lake Falls.

the three months of the term was paid \$20.00 per month. A janitor was hired for 30¢ per week in 1880.

The needs of the village soon demanded improved quarters and in 1881 a building was erected on the site of the original townsite on Bottineau Avenue. In 1882 an independent school district was organized and a pretentious frame building was erected at a cost of \$5,000.00. This building had four well lighted rooms and was located south of the present home of Dr. Jack Harris. This building was destroyed by fire in 1904. Until new facilities were built, classes were held in the opera house in the market square on the northside in Red Lake Falls.

The new elementary school built several months later was located on the present site of Hillcrest Nursing Home. This four-room, two-story brick building was named Washington School. In addition to the elementary grades, the Normal Training Department was located in this building for a time. This school was torn down in 1958.

In 1891, the board decided that more space was needed and a second school was built where the present Lafayette High School stands. This building was eventually used for a high school though at first it was primarily an elementary school.

The first actual high school was an experimental program organized by P. T. McNally in 1897-1898. Classes were held over what is now Thompson's Hardware Store. The first class was graduated in 1901. The three members were Josephine Kaus, Elizabeth McNeerthney and Elizabeth Hunt.

In 1897, the county superintendent's records show that the Lafayette-Washington schools employed eight teachers and the average wage was \$35.00 per month. Records from 1900 show that some of the teachers in the Lafayette-Washington School system were high school graduates but only one or two had attended college. It was not necessary for a teacher to be a high school graduate as long as he or she had passed a State examination.

A program was begun in conjunction with Lafayette High School in 1909 called a State Summer Training School. In this program, those wishing to teach rural elementary schools would read State specified books to earn credits toward their teaching certificates. This program was terminated in 1928.

A Normal Training department was started at Lafayette and graduated its first class in 1912. This one-year post high school program of training, prepared teachers for positions in rural elementary schools. This was a one-teacher department that included in its program a spring primary class conducted for about six weeks. These were the first primary classes held in Red Lake Falls. Sedate M. Brown was the first instructor in the Normal Training department. Others who each taught for extended periods included: Hulda Swedberg, Mrs. Stella R. Kelley and Mrs. Isabelle Gilbert. With the closing of many rural schools and the consolidating of school districts, fewer rural teachers were needed, thus, this department was discontinued about 1950.

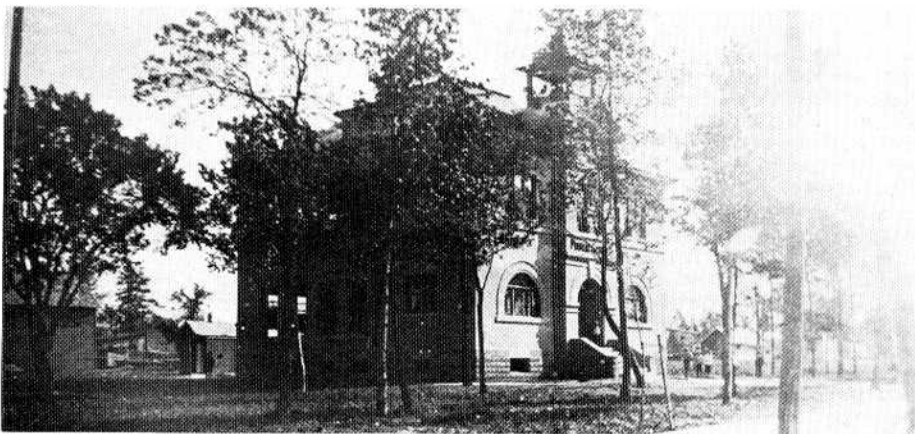
Tragedy struck the school system again in the spring of 1913 when the old Lafayette building burned to the ground. This building was insured for \$1,500.00. After the fire, classes were held in the basement of the court house, in the Woodman Hall and in the basement of the Presbyterian Church.



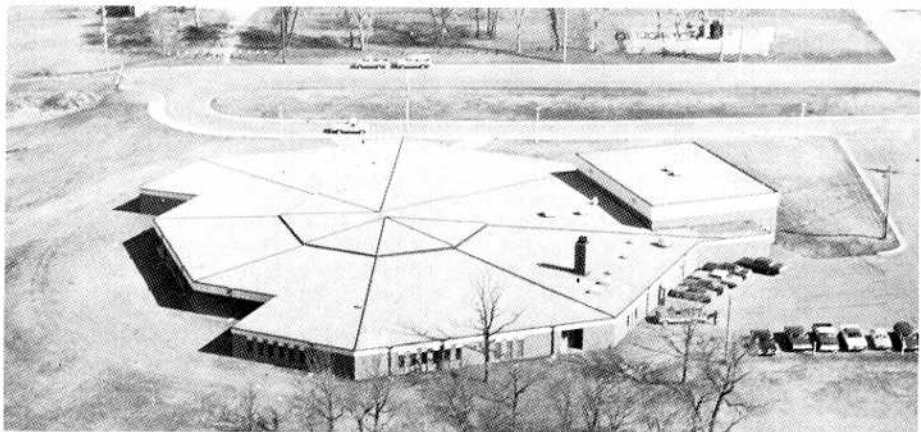
First Lafayette High School built in 1891



Lafayette High School erected in 1914



Washington School built in 1905



New Washington School completed in 1967



By September 1914 the two-story brick portion of the present Lafayette High School was completed, and classes began on schedule. Records show that this building and equipment cost \$65,000.00. By 1914 standards, this building was large and very modern. It included an assembly hall which could seat 350 people and had 16 classrooms. Two general courses of study were offered, one preparatory to further study in college, and the other designed for vocational training.

In 1915, five teachers were employed in the high school. The total enrollment at Washington and Lafayette schools that year was 354.

Looking after this new building, its students and faculty, was Michael Pinsonneault. "Mike" was engineer, janitor and general caretaker both inside and outside the Lafayette building. He had the respect of both students and faculty, and was a friend to all. In 1937 the students dedicated the annual to him. After serving the district faithfully for 35 years, "Mike" was presented with a watch during commencement exercises in 1942. He retired in 1943.

Although school enrollment dipped somewhat in the 1920's and 1930's, it came back to 356 in 1940. By this time, however, 15 teachers were employed in the high school. Wages had climbed from an average of \$100.00 per month in 1920 to \$124.00 per month in 1940.

Through the years, the curriculum in the high school has changed in keeping with State Department of Education requirements, the needs of the community and the space available.

Early records indicate that agriculture was taught for a time and for a number of years, Latin was offered. In the 1950's this was replaced with Spanish.

Domestic science, now called home economics, was offered before the 1913 fire with Mary Holland the first instructor. These classes were curtailed until the new building was completed in 1914. Manual training, now called industrial arts, was also offered before the fire. James Culhane, the first instructor, held classes temporarily in Mead's garage until the new building was completed.

Following a survey conducted in the late 1920's, a need for more vocational training was evident and commercial courses were added to the curriculum. Typing, shorthand and bookkeeping were taught by Margaret Rude. Others who taught for extended periods in the commercial department were Mary I. Fallon and Betty Brecto. This popular program of training has continued to grow and to change in keeping with modern office practices. Currently, training is offered in the use of a variety of business machines.

In the early 1940's, art and music classes at Lafayette were first offered only to seventh and eighth grade students. Later, both of these programs were expanded. Training in instrumental music came first. Following the completion of the 1963 addition to Lafayette, training in vocal music has been offered. This addition also provided space for an art department that currently offers training in a variety of art mediums. Michael Moen organized this new department.

Classes in special education began in the late 1950's with Dessie Smith as the first teacher. This program has been expanded with classes currently held at both Washington and Lafayette schools. It is now known as the S.L.B.P. program.

Evening adult classes have been offered

in Red Lake Falls for a number of years. Courses to be taught have been decided by community interest and have covered a broad range of subjects.

Extracurricular activities began in the early days of the high school. The senior class play in 1910 was "Hics Went to College". Lydia Gerlach (Mrs. Arnold Zutz) played the leading female role, and L. B. Koos, superintendent, directed the play. The setting was built by the senior class and the production staged in the movie theater. At least one class play was presented at the courthouse. There have been a variety of productions. There was a one-act play contest in 1914 in the new assembly hall at Lafayette. In 1923, an operetta, "The Bells of Beaujolais" was presented. J. A. Hughes, superintendent, directed Lafayette's stage productions for a number of years. Some others who have coached plays include: Fred Hackett, Arley Jonish, Lucille Brummer and James McConnell. Presently, Fred Sorensen and Rebecca Rinkenberger are directing the play productions at Lafayette.

Records indicate that there was a football team at Lafayette as early as 1904. "Bill" Ittner, who went on to become an All-American tackle at the University of Minnesota, was a member of that team. The old city fairgrounds, behind what is now the Detroit plant, was the football field in those early days. In the early 1930s, the playing field was moved to an area on the present golf course. Next, an area near the Clearwater River was developed for a practice and playing field. This is now known as the ball park. It is well-lighted and is used for both football and baseball.

Beginning in 1925, J. A. Hughes assisted by E. F. Kiland, coached the football teams. In 1936 Russell Monson was hired to coach football. Previous to this time, faculty or administrators did coaching in addition to their other duties. This was not because they had special training or skills, but because they were interested in developing an athletic program for the sports-minded students at Lafayette.

Basketball began at Lafayette in the early 1930's. The building used at that time has now burned, but it was located on Main Avenue just south of the present Dods Drug Store. E. F. Kiland (assisted by J. A. Hughes) coached these early basketball teams. When the Community Hall was completed in 1936, basketball moved to the hall and continued there until 1958, when the Lafayette gymnasium was completed. Russell Monson began coaching basketball in 1936. Orvin Richardson became the head basketball coach in 1938.

Track was the spring sport when there was sufficient student interest. J. A. Hughes coached those early track teams. Russell Monson began coaching track teams in 1937.

In 1937, George Christie, Robert Fellman, Warren Huot and Maurice Roy formed an active golf club. This foursome, coached by E. F. Kiland, took part in several golf meets. In 1958, golf was again organized at Lafayette with Roger Arvidson as the coach. Harold Spears began coaching golf in 1959 and continued in that capacity for a number of years.

In the early 1940's, Lafayette had organized tumbling teams for both boys and girls. Russell Monson coached the boys, and Rocelia Rud coached the girls group. These teams often provided entertainment during half-time at basketball games. In 1942, the girls team with Norma Beadles

as its star, performed at a Y.M.C.A. circus in Grand Forks.

Baseball began as an organized sport in 1952 with Harold Kraft as its first coach.

In 1955, hockey on the high school level was initiated in Red Lake Falls. Superintendent A. R. Ehrnst coached this first team. An out-door rink located on the site of the present tennis courts was used until the present city arena was completed in 1964.

An extracurricular program in speech, once called declamation, has been available for Lafayette students for more than half a century. At first, only memorized orations and memorized humorous or dramatic readings were entered in contests. Later, extemporaneous speaking and original speeches were included. J. A. Hughes directed the early speech activities. From 1937-1943, Alice Cockerill (Mrs. E. F. Kiland) coached declamation, with assistance from Alfred Mathews in 1942. Presently Rebecca Rinkenberger and Cheryl Matzke are the speech coaches at Lafayette.

Lafayette had debate teams in the 1930's, coached by J. A. Hughes. For some years, one-act plays have been produced and entered in competition with other schools in district 31.

The Lafayette Band was first organized in 1931. Before this time, there was a municipal band that included many high school students. Robert T. Reynolds was the first director. The simple dark capes worn by the city band became the uniform for the group. Lauren H. Amdahl directed the band from 1936-1947 and in 1937, there were 44 members from grades four through twelve. The band played at ball games, took part in parades and played weekly concerts in the park in the spring and summer. In 1940, new purple and gold military uniforms were purchased. Baton twirlers, both boys and girls, added color for this early band. A pep band of 20 members was organized in 1945. In 1949, under the direction of E. P. Rockswold, there were 35 members in the concert band and 23 members in the pep band.

In addition to participating at many local functions, the band has performed at numerous special functions in the area. They have marched in parades at a long list of celebrations, including some in Winnipeg, Fargo, Grand Forks and Detroit Lakes. In 1951 they performed at the Minnesota State Fair in St. Paul. The band, plus various instrumental groups and ensembles, have, through the years, participated in competition with other schools in district 31 music contests.

In 1962, while Kenneth Larsen was the band director, the black and gold uniforms were purchased. There were 50 members in the band at that time. When Edward Dahle, the present director, took over his duties in 1966, there were 44 members in the concert band, 40 members in the junior band and 30 members in the beginner's band. In 1975, new purple uniforms with white and gold braid trim were ordered. At the present time the band has 222 members performing in various groups such as concert band, stage band (jazz), German band and brass choir. Of these students, 64 are in 5th and 6th grades and 63 are in the 7th and 8th grades.

Vocal music groups were organized at different times. A girls' glee club was directed by J. A. Hughes and later by Lauren Amdahl, who also directed a boys' glee club. Offerings in vocal musical training were increased with the additions to Lafayette.

ete. Gerald Eggers, the first full-time vocal music instructor, directed the vocal groups in concerts and in contests for a number of years until he left the school system in 1975. Kim Mulvaney is the present director of vocal music at Lafayette.

Cheerleaders and pep squads have been active through the years, leading the cheering section at pep fests and at athletic events.

A Future Homemakers of America Chapter (F.H.A.) has been active since 1963. The local chapter is a part of the National F.H.A. organization and is sponsored by the home economics department. On several occasions, local members have been elected to district and state offices. Jean Hanson was the first chapter advisor. Doris Campbell is the current advisor, assisted by Marlys Anderson.

For a period in the 1930's and 1940's, the school carnival was an important activity at Lafayette. This was a one-night stand and an all-out effort to raise money to help support the extracurricular program. All available space at Lafayette and (after 1936) at the Community Hall, was used to provide entertainment for a small fee. In addition to the students, the normal training department, all the faculty and the administration had a part. Skits, minstrel shows and choruses varied from year to year, but the fish pond, boxing, wrestling and the refreshment stand appeared annually. After 1936, the program finale was a dance from 10 to 1 at the hall. Carnival proceeds ranged from \$95.00 in 1933 to \$275.00 in 1940.

In 1970, girls volleyball, track and basketball teams were organized. These teams, coached by Cheryl Matzke and Judy Jurgens, compete with other girls' teams in district 31.

Following the completion of the Community Hall in 1936, the schools used these facilities. Both boys and girls went to the hall for their physical education classes. The stage was used for plays, concerts, lyceum programs and for graduation exercises. The facilities in the basement were used for junior-senior banquets and for athletic recognition banquets. A number of proms and basketball games were held at the hall.

The first school bus to bring students to Lafayette was owned and operated by Theo. Clement who started in 1937 and transported high school students from the Terrebonne area. Mr. Clement continued to operate this bus route until 1957. During this period the district began to buy buses as the need developed, and hired drivers. In 1976, the school district owns and operates 12 buses with routes that traverse the district, transporting students from kindergarten through high school.

A noon lunch program began at Lafayette in the late 1930's. One hot food, such as cocoa or soup, was prepared in the home economics department and served in the assembly hall. A cook who worked a few hours daily did the preparation with student help in serving under the supervision of Alice Cockerill. This program has grown through the years. The lunchrooms and the kitchen now use nearly the entire north side of the basement at Lafayette, where two full-time and two part-time cooks are employed. There is a well-equipped kitchen and serving area at Washington school with two full-time cooks and one part-time helper preparing and serving the noon meal. Pamela Erickson is the present director of the lunch program.

Because the first records of the schools

are sketchy, information about the earliest administrators and the dates of their employment are incomplete. P. T. McNally is the first superintendent on record (1897) and is credited with organizing the high school. Some others who headed the schools in those first 25 years include; F. A. Whiteley, 1903; E. W. Chamberlain, 1904; L. B. Koo, 1910; Clyde Workman, 1913; Newton Speece, 1916; Walter B. Numbers, 1917; Leo DeLong, 1920; T. C. Ullereng, 1922; and J. W. McNeal, 1923.

When J. A. Hughes was hired in 1925, there were 12 teachers and 42 students in the high school. Early administrators taught classes, directed extra-curricular activities and performed numerous other duties not presently regarded as those of the superintendent. In 1935, with the guidance of Mr. Hughes, the senior class produced the first school paper. He was the advisor for the student staff who published the first annual in 1937 and for the first student council which was organized in 1940. In the spring of 1940, Margaret Meyer was hired as the first school secretary. When J. A. Hughes left the schools in 1950, after a record 25 years of service, a total of 20 teachers were employed, and there were 150 students enrolled in the high school.

E. J. Shukle was the superintendent from 1950-1955. He was followed by A. R. Ehrnst from 1955-1957. During this period, an increase in enrollment was projected and a need for more space in the near future was recognized. Studies were done; alternate plans and costs were considered. Finally, contracts were awarded and construction began on the gymnasium and classroom addition to the Lafayette building. Additional classroom space was planned for a future addition.

Harold C. Gulbrandson served as superintendent from 1957-1960 and Olger Olson from 1960-1964. These were years when there was extensive building, remodeling and moving at Lafayette. The new addition (completed in 1958) includes a modern gymnasium with a stage. There are locker and shower rooms for both boys and girls, a band room and a new industrial arts department. The entire series of classrooms on the west side of this addition was used by the elementary grades. The second addition to Lafayette was planned and constructed in 1963. This area included a new home economics department and additional classrooms.

When E. Dale Birkeland began his duties as superintendent in 1964, the elementary classrooms were becoming crowded, and a marked increase in the number of elementary students was projected. The need for a new building was recognized, but controversy regarding a suitable site prevailed. Studies were made and after some delay, a new elementary school was built on the north side at the end of Hamilton Avenue N.E. In 1965 and 1966, elementary enrollment increased greatly, making classroom space outside the school necessary. For about two years before the new building was completed, the basement of St. John's Church and the basement of the Community Hall were both used, with two classes held at each location. During the 1966-1967 school year, the total enrollment was 670. There were 24 high school and 11 elementary teachers receiving an average monthly salary of \$508.00.

The new Washington school was completed in 1967 at a cost of \$595,000.00. This spacious modern building is described as being library-centered. Six large rooms, each used for two classes,

surround the library. In addition there are rooms for special classes and counseling, a music room, two kindergarten rooms, a nurse's station, a faculty lounge and office space. The gymnasium, also used as the lunchroom, adjoins a modern kitchen. When Washington school opened, William Jackson, the present principal, was hired as the district's first elementary principal.

Lowell D. Larson succeeded Mr. Birkeland as superintendent in 1969 and held that position until 1975. Modular scheduling, a relatively new concept in education, had been started in the high school and under his guidance, this plan was developed and modified to meet the local needs.

Through the formation of the East Polk-Red Lake County Vocational Center in 1969, additional areas of vocational training became available for high school students. E. J. Shukle was the first director of this program which was made possible through the cooperation of several school districts in the two counties. Winton Gackstetter was the program director during the 1971-1972 school year. At the present time, the Mentor, Oklee and Red Lake Falls schools are participating in the program with classes held in Red Lake Falls. Current course offerings include: automotive tune-up, automotive repair, recreational vehicles, health occupations, educational occupations, foods occupations, consumer homemaking and buildings and trades. Three full-time and two part-time instructors are employed. Jean Hanson has directed the program since 1972.

Because the records are sketchy and memories sometimes vague, this list of early high school principals is incomplete. The first principal on record is Eleanor Hanson in 1906. Other early principals include: Erma Lewis, 1908; Louise Twinam, 1909; Marie L. Smith, 1912; Otto Reinhard, 1913; Stephen Bakalyar, 1914; Charles Boyer, 1915; C. J. Ekren, 1917; Vera Curtis, 1918; Hulda Hanson, 1922 and August Ehmke in 1925. For many years, the duties of the principal were in addition to a full teaching schedule, with his or her classroom serving as the principal's office.

After the first twenty years, the high school principals have been: Edwin F. Kiland, 1926-1938; Mary I. Fallon, 1938-1943; Lauren H. Amdahl, 1943-1946; E. J. Shukle, 1946-1950; Joseph H. Haller, 1950-1972 and Dennis D. Wahl beginning in 1972. Mr. Haller holds the record for long service. During his tenure, teaching duties were phased out of his schedule, allowing him to devote more time to guidance and counseling. As a full principal, he had an office on the second floor of Lafayette. In the mid 1960s, his office was moved to the newly remodeled space on the first floor that had formerly been used as part of the home economics department. A full-time secretary was hired, and later a part-time secretary was added.

Hundreds of people not mentioned in this history, have played a part in charting the course of the schools, and in shaping the lives of the youth in Red Lake Falls. Those who have served on the school boards have given many years of dedicated service to the school district. Serving on the present board of Independent District No. 630 are Donald Boutain, Ronald J. Brule, Patricia Mersy, Robert G. Miller (chairman), Robert Poirer and Willard Purath (clerk).

In 1976, Norman J. Chaffee is the superintendent of schools. There are 291 students enrolled at Washington school and

425 students at Lafayette. Eighteen teachers, a principal and a teachers's aid are on the staff at Washington school. At Lafayette, there are 34 teachers, a principal and two teacher's aids. These figures include a counselor at Lafayette, and a school nurse and a speech therapist who are shared with the Oklee schools. Four are employed full-time in the offices at Lafayette, and one secretary is employed at Washington school. Lafayette has three full-time and one part-time custodian; two full-time custodians are employed at Washington. Four full-time and three part-time employees work with the school lunch programs. The vocational program has a director, a clerk, three full-time and two part-time instructors. Bus drivers are hired on a part-time basis to drive the twelve district-owned buses. In 1976, Independent School District No. 630 has become one of the largest employers in Red Lake County.

In addition to the Washington and Lafayette schools, the district owns the brick building located on the corner of Champagne Avenue S.W. and 2nd Street, presently used for vocational classes. The insured value of district property is currently in excess of \$2,000,000. The present annual operating budget of the school district is \$1,160,013. From this total, \$59,000.00 pays the salary of the superintendent and the two principals, and \$511,821 goes for faculty salaries. The average annual salary for full-time faculty in the school system is approximately \$11,750. From, "Buses Shanty", with one teacher in 1880, public education in Red Lake Falls has grown into a big business in 1976.

Much of the material in this history has come from school records. Some has come from the files of the Red Lake Falls Gazette; some has come from a copy of the Lafayette Eagle, published on April 13, 1967. The remainder of this information came from the countless local people who had some records and/or good memories.

Alice Kiland

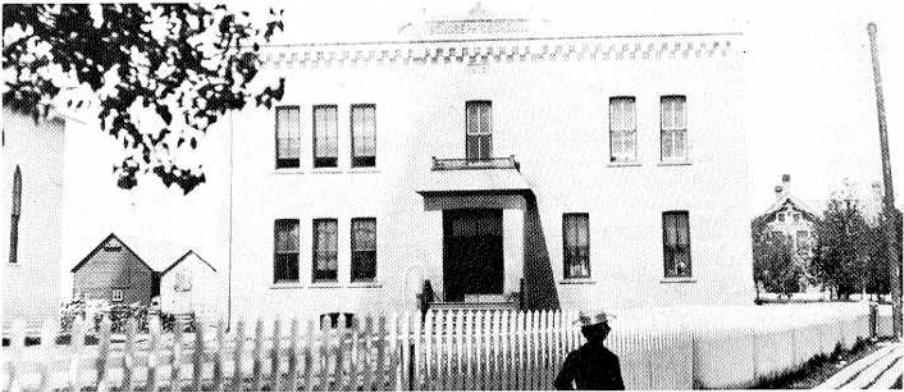
## ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL

The earliest reference to St. Joseph's School comes from an article in the Red Lake Falls "Gazette" dated December 22, 1904: "One of the newest, yet most successful of the Red Lake Falls enterprises is St. Joseph's parochial school, a beautiful brick structure built by the congregation of St. Joseph's Church two years ago at a cost of nearly \$8000.00. Since its establishment, the school has been very successful, and today nearly 300 scholars are enrolled there."

The school was built during the pastorate of Father Fayolle and, along with the regular course-work, featured classes in French, German, and other languages. Reference is made to "a most excellent music instructor" who had charge of the music department in the school, and to the fact that students attending St. Joseph's school were from all denominations.

In 1917, an addition was built which provided living quarters for the sisters and allowed the use of four rooms as additional classrooms. High School courses were introduced and were offered until 1930. Gradually, the passing years took their toll on the building, and in 1952 the parishioners held a parish meeting and, together with their pastor, Father William Keefe, arrived at a decision to build a new school along with a new convent and rectory.

On May 4, 1952, closing exercises were



St. Joseph's School 1913



New St. Joseph's School completed in 1952



In 1913 and 1914 classes were scattered all over town following a school fire. These fourth and fifth grades were housed in the Old Swedish Lutheran church on the river bank. Each pupil had two chairs, one for a seat and the other a desk. Heat was provided by a large stove. Some of these pupils were Lenora Febro, John and Ralph Sortedah, Gladys Converse, Vernon and George Pushinsky, William and Clara Jackson, Leora Krueger, Clarence Pouliot, Rose Sieff, and Minnie and Walter Patnode.

held and nine days later a wrecking company began disassembling the 50-year-old school building. The cornerstone for the new St. Joseph's School was blessed by Bishop Schenk and laid in place on June 1, 1952, and by September 2, 1952, the school was ready for occupancy. Dedication ceremonies took place on September 28, with tribute being paid to Father Keefe, the pastor, to the many men volunteers who supplied much of the labor, and to the women for their many work projects and fund-raising activities.

St. Joseph's School is a fully-accredited academic institution for students in grades one through eight. In addition, it provides

training in Christian values and liturgy, and accepts children of any faith heritage.

The Sisters of St. Benedict from Duluth and Crookston have been supplying the teachers since the school opened its doors. Lay-teachers are also presently employed.

Probably the best description of the work at St. Joseph's School can be found in the educational philosophy drawn up by the school faculty: "We believe that Christian Education at St. Joseph's School in Red Lake Falls means inspiring, directing, and drawing out of each student awareness of, and committed response to his or her God-given calling to wholeness.

project was completed in October of 1952. This project, the largest undertaking in the history of the parish, was accomplished through the hard work of many volunteers, the faithful contributions of parishioners, and the careful administration of Father Keefe. He also undertook a complete renovation of the church interior which was completed in time for the Easter season of 1964.

Assistant priests during Father Keefe's pastorate included Fathers Donald Archer, Edward Nistler, Stanley Bourassa, Gerald Noesen and Joseph Kieselbach.

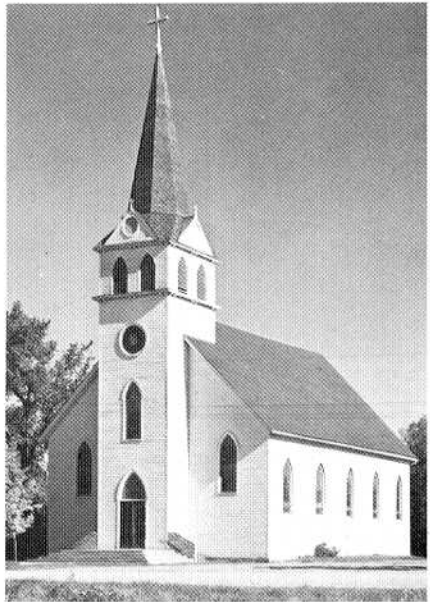
On June 24, 1971, Bishop Kenneth Povish reassigned Father Noesen to St. Joseph's as pastor. He currently holds that position. No assistant priest is assigned to the parish due to the shortage of vocations to the priesthood in the Diocese. The parish is comprised of 300 families in addition to about 45 guests at Hillcrest Nursing Home who come under the care of the local pastor.

Improvements in the past five years included a repainting of the interior and rearrangement of the sanctuary. A painting "bee" by parishioners accomplished the project. Other projects were a new five-rank organ, an addition of a mother's room and a reconciliation room in the church, new blacktopping on the parking lot and school playground, renovation of the parish hall, a redecoration of the rectory, and improvements in the convent.

The parish is administered through a parish council and has a parish school board and cemetery board. All board members have worked hard to implement the directives of the Second Vatican Council in all areas of parish life.

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH

In 1883, this congregation was separated from St. Joseph's Parish, which was predominantly French. On December 3, 1887, Reverend F.X.A. Stemper, Administrator of the Diocese of St. Cloud, appointed Rev. Bernard Sproll the first pastor of the new parish. He attended St. Hilaire and Euclid as missions. Reverend Ignatius Balluff took charge of the parish in 1889 to be succeeded by the following



St. Mary's Church

1916 — A sisters' home was erected; 1917 — The church interior was renovated and enlarged; 1919 — A new rectory was built; 1921 — The church interior was frescoed.

This church also burned and a new one, designed by a Benedictine priest from St. John's Abbey in Collegeville replaced it in 1929 under Father Lemire's administration. All of this parish work was undertaken at a time when the parish numbered about 250 families.

Father Lemire died on January 4, 1942, after 28 years of service to the parish and community.

It was during his pastorate that assistant priests were first assigned to this parish. The following names appear in the church records as assistant pastors: Father E. Grimonprez, E. J. Paquin, Victor Cardin, Henry Rousseau, Louis Sullivan, J. P. Flynn, W. F. Lemen and Paul Cardin.

One of these, Father Victor Cardin, was to take over the pastorate 15 days after the death of Father Lemire. This was in January of 1942.

A redecoration of the church was carried out in Father Cardin's pastorate, and was completed in May, 1948.

Assistant Priests in his time were Fathers Henry Monroe, Jerome Felion and Daniel Noah.

On March 1, 1952, Bishop Francis Schenk combined the parishes of St. Mary and St. Joseph. Father William Keefe, the pastor of St. Mary's Parish, became the pastor of the combined parishes under the name of St. Joseph.

Father Keefe undertook an extensive building program which included a new school, convent and rectory. The entire

St. Joseph's Churches

## ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH

The spiritual care of the first Catholic families of Red Lake Falls dates back to the beginning of the city itself.

In the year 1876, there were seven families of French-Canadian descent who were cared for by Father L'Hivers, the first priest to come into the vicinity. He offered Mass in the home of Isaiah Gervais.

It was in 1879 that Father Champagne founded the parish of St. Joseph. He built a small frame house which was intended to serve as a home for nuns in the course of the development of the parish. The material and work for this project were furnished mainly by Pierre Emard.

Father Pierre Champagne returned to Duluth in 1886. The street going south from the front of the present church still bears his name.

The parish was served by Father Marcil for three years, during which time, a rectory in old French colonial style was built. It stood until 1919. The first building used as a church burned in 1887.

Succeeding Father Marcil was Father S. Arpin in 1889. He built a new church. After him came Father Fayolle who was pastor from July, 1894 until August, 1911. During his pastorate, the first convent and school were built and completed in 1902. The Sisters of St. Benedict from Duluth came to teach in the school. At this time the parish numbered 300 families, many of whom were to leave for the state of Washington at a later date.

Father August Beyne became pastor in 1911 and remodeled the rectory.

Father Eugene Lemire was assigned as pastor of St. Joseph's on December 6, 1914. His was a long and busy pastorate:



Benedictine Fathers: Rev. Lawrence Steinkogler, 1894-99; Rev. Ansgar Osendorf, 1900-06; Rev. Ambrose Lethart, 1906-14; Rev. Eugene Woerdehoff, 1914-17. During Father Ansgar's administration, a winter chapel was built and a stone foundation was laid under the church. The rectory was built while Father Eugene was pastor of the parish. Rev. John P. Funk succeeded Father Eugene in April, 1917, and in September of the same year, Rev. James Hawks succeeded Father Funk. Towards the end of the year 1918, Father Hawks died. His successor was Rev. T. G. Merrill. Father Merrill was succeeded by Rev. H. Pelger on February 19, 1922.

Father Henry Pelger was the spiritual leader of St. Mary's Parish for 29 years, the longest pastorate in the history of Red Lake Falls. A native of Holland, he was ordained for missionary work in British East Africa. After 13 years with the Uganda natives, he came to Crookston in 1917. On taking over his first pastorate at St. Joseph's Church in Ada, he made plans for the building of a new church there. His support of the government during the First World War and his interest in civic affairs won for him the esteem of the Ada citizens. Appointed to St. Mary's Parish in February, 1922, Father Pelger reorganized the religion classes and parish devotions. He spent his retirement years in St. Vincent's Home at Crookston after his resignation from the parish in October, 1951. Father Henry Pelger died at the age of 81. One of the frequent quips of Father Pelger was to point out his church as the "Catholic Church" and St. Joseph's down below as the "French Church".

Father William Keefe replaced Father Pelger in 1951. In 1952, Bishop Schenk decided the Catholic population of Red Lake Falls could sustain only one parish so St. Mary's was closed and its congregation became one with St. Joseph's parish with Father Keefe as pastor of the combined group.

## BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

The building which was formerly Bethany Lutheran Church is located on the north end of Main Street in Red Lake Falls. It has a rather interesting background as does the congregation itself. Mr. and Mrs. Al Hanson purchased it from the church in 1967 and have remodeled it into a charming home. They have utilized the basic structure.

This building was originally built for a church by a few Norwegian Lutherans in the year of 1904. It was built on the Clear-

water River bank just east of the Great Northern depot and a little to the south. However, there were only a few families and as they were unable to maintain a pastor, the services were discontinued after a short time. The building was then used for basketball games and as a warehouse. In August of 1931, it was leased to the newly organized "First American Lutheran Church" and purchased by them in November of 1932. During this time, the few families that comprised the congregation were served by Pastor E. E. Domke who lived in Crookston and was pastor of St. Paul's American Lutheran Church there. In November, 1934, the building was moved to its present location where the congregation added the basement, chancel and narthex.

The little congregation worked hard and faithfully for the following fourteen years. It was quite a surprise to them when in May, 1948, they were informed at their morning worship that it was the last service to be conducted by the American Lutheran Church. The district president felt that sufficient time had elapsed without appreciable growth to warrant continuing services. The little group had a determination, however, and the total of 16 adults decided to contact Dr. Fjelstad of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to seek its support. A survey was conducted of potential ELC members and this report was favorable enough for the ELC, with the aid of its Home Mission Department, to begin work here just one month after the last service of the ALC. Rev. G. S. Thompson of Thief River Falls was hired to conduct services every other Sunday at 8 P.M. This was generally the pattern of services until the summer of 1950 when Mr. David Vaaler was hired to work in their midst as student pastor. In November of that year, Rev. O. L. Bolstad, a retired pastor, joined the group. Also that year, the congregation adopted the name Bethany.

Rev. Bolstad remained with the congregation "temporarily" until July, 1952, and Ernest Stadum, a junior at Concordia College, spent the summer months here.

In January of 1954, the Home Mission Department loaned Bethany congregation the money with which to purchase the present parsonage. Rev. and Mrs. J. M. Runestad arrived in February and the first resident pastor was installed on February 21, 1954. An almost seemingly impossible feat had been accomplished by a few!

After just three short months of service here, Pastor Runestad passed away suddenly of a heart attack and once again the congregation was perplexed. However, Dr. A. E. Hanson, the District President at the

time, had a special fondness for the group and secured a young Concordia student and his bride, Larry Dahlstrom and Connie, to serve for the summer. In October of that year, Rev. and Mrs. A. E. Berg came to serve the group.

Members were added more quickly now and Rev. Berg's slogan, "55 members to be added in '55", became a reality. The congregation was blessed by his continued service until May of 1961, which incidentally, also marked his "50 years of service in the ministry." Rev. Clinton Erickson was the resident pastor from July, 1961, until July, 1964, and the congregation continued adding members. March 1, 1965, Rev. James Boyd and his family moved here and joined the group. It was during his leadership that a new church was built on the east end of Red Lake Falls on Highway 32. It was constructed on a triangular piece of ground donated by George and Lenore Johnson. The church is built in the shape of a Greek cross. Paul Peterson, whose home was built just north of the church, donated and planted the trees and shrubs on the point just east of the church, adding much to the beauty of the location. Pastor Boyd and his family left December 31, 1968, to serve a parish in Menahga.

In June, 1969, Pastor Roy Seger and his wife, Mary, and daughter, Meredith, moved into Bethany's parsonage, following his graduation from the seminary. Some time later, they adopted a son, Michael. The Segers were with us for six years and during that time became an integral part of the community and church. In September, 1974, Pastor Seger and his family left Bethany to accept a call to the mission field in Bogota, Colombia.

Presently serving Bethany is Pastor David Putz. He and his wife, Erika, and daughter, Rachel, came here on January 1, 1975, from serving a parish in Gatzke.

Bethany has continued its growth over the years and presently there are approximately 80 families worshipping there.

## ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

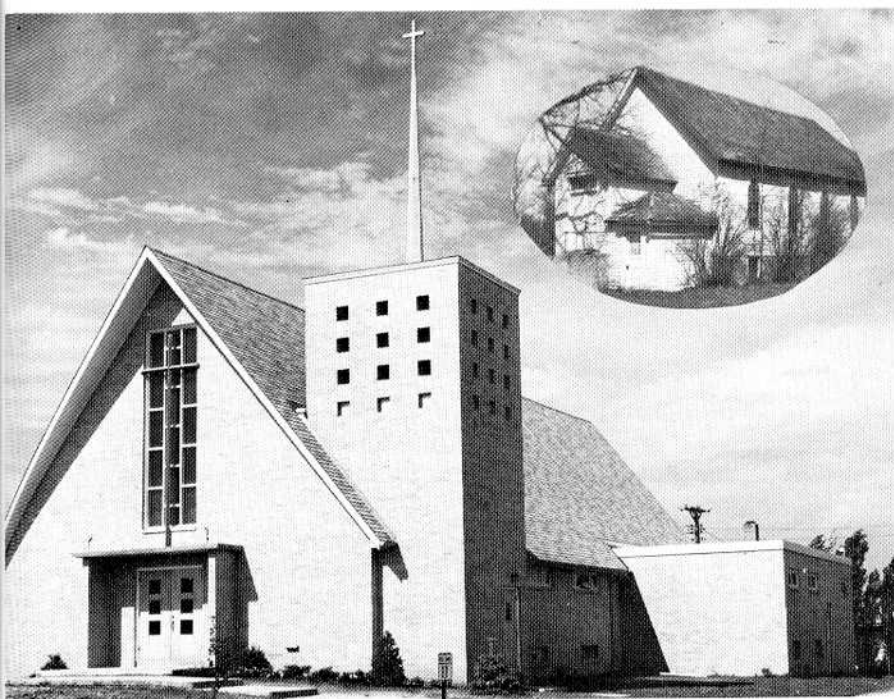
The history of St. John's Lutheran Church is actually a history of two Lutheran churches; that of Immanuel Lutheran, Wylie Township, and that of St. John's Lutheran, Kretzschmar's Addition, Red Lake Falls. In 1958, during the pastorate of the Reverend Orville Poellot, the two congregations merged and became a fellowship with its house of worship in south Red Lake Falls. In the merger, they retained the name of St. John's Lutheran.

The foundation of our congregation and of Lutheranism within the area was laid in 1882 when a band of Lutherans who had immigrated to Red Lake County decided to meet for religious services in the home of a blind and retired pastor, the Rev. C. F. L. Risch. For five years there services were held, until the pastor moved away. Then in 1888, Rev. L. Wichmann of Ada helped organize Immanuel Church and the Rev. G. Drews was called as their first pastor. In 1901, a church was built near Wylie.

In 1903, a group of Lutheran families living in the vicinity of Red Lake Falls organized and adopted Articles of Incorporation separate from that of Immanuel under the name of St. John's Lutheran Church and asked Rev. Val Kern, Immanuel's pastor, to come and serve them. The following year, a church was built on the north side of Red Lake Falls. Both church buildings were remodeled in 1921.



Bethany Lutheran Church



St. John's Lutheran Church

The pastors lived in the parsonage near Immanuel Church until 1941 when a new parsonage was built in the city of Red Lake Falls near St. John's Church. In 1968, they purchased the John Maier residence at 702 Champagne Avenue S.W. where the pastor now resides.

The following pastors served the parish: The Rev. G. Drews (1888-92), The Rev. A. Kuring (1892-97), The Rev. C. G. Seltz (1897-1900), The Rev. V. Kern (1900-06), The Rev. O. Rhode (1907-11), The Rev. Herman Am End (1912-20), The Rev. Ed Widenhoefer (1920-25), The Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf (1925-40), The Rev. J. W. Stehr (1940-48), The Rev. Im. Bade (1948-53), The Rev. R. Boerger (1953-55), The Rev. O. C. Poellot (1956-59), The Rev. J. Rolf (1960-65), and the present pastor, The Rev. Roger Raebel, who came in 1966.

In December of 1957, both the Immanuel Congregation and the St. John's Congregation merged to form one congregation under the name of St. John's Lutheran Church. Although a building fund was started under Pastor Boerger in 1955, it was not until February 21, 1958, when the combined membership group met, that it was definitely decided to build a new church large enough to accommodate the merged congregations.

On March 25, 1958, the contract was signed with Mr. Leo Schoenrock of Garretson, South Dakota, for a brick church to be built on the church's property on the south end of the city of Red Lake Falls at the cost of \$70,000. The architect underwriting the plans was Mr. Wm. Schaefer of Minneapolis.

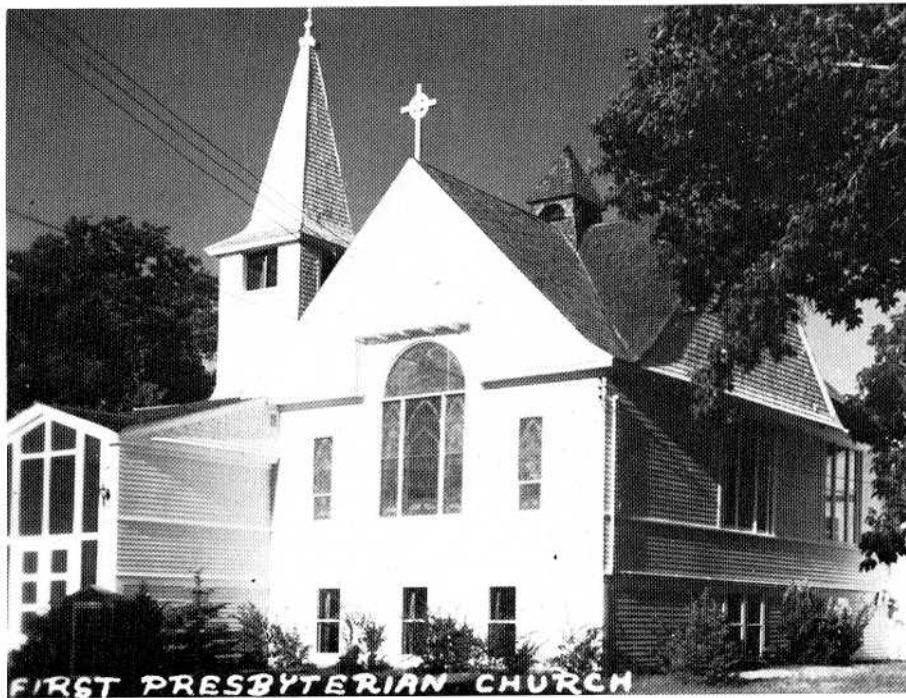
Ground breaking services were held on the new church site on April 6th, Easter Sunday, and the excavation was begun on the 16th. The following week the basement footings were poured and the actual construction began. The construction then continued very rapidly and on August 24th, the Cornerstone Laying Service was held. The dedication took place on December 14, 1958.

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HISTORY

In 1892 the decision to build a church was made. On April 18, J. D. Marshall was empowered to purchase lots not to exceed \$300.00. The officers voted to buy property in Kretschmar's Addition on the North Side. Marshall, along with H. H. Zaiser and J. W. Rogers, was appointed to a building committee. Finances were in poor shape but money was borrowed and Edward Healy, Charles Bourdon, and S. M. Sivertson signed the notes. James Brady con-

tracted to build the church for \$1750.00. The main part of the church today is that building. Red Lake Falls was changing and growing. Red Lake Falls was changing and before long the business section moved to the "Hollow" and the people of the congregation wanted to move the church with the town. James Wyer deeded the new site, across from the Steinert Mill, on the corner where the highway bends eastward. In 1903, a decision was made to move the church. Moving to the new location was a difficult adventure. Because the bridge was built with overhead construction, the church had to be moved across the ice. The weight proved too much and the church went through the ice. There was considerable excitement and a crowd collected to watch as workmen extricated the unwieldy structure. The cost of the move and the necessary changes were so great that the women were asked to help in soliciting funds.

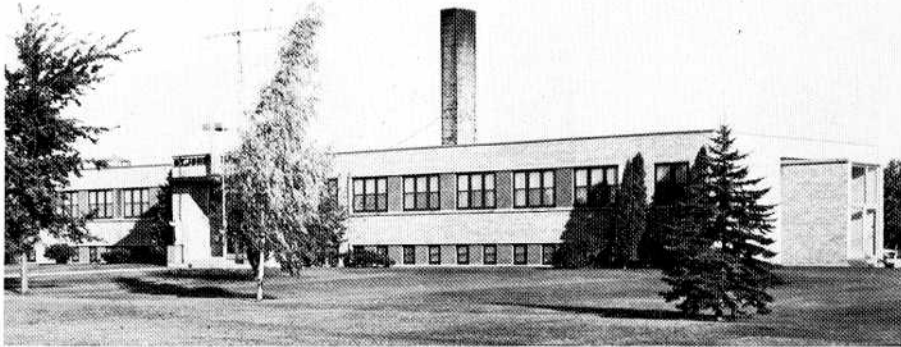
It was then that the first Ladies Aid was formed with Mrs. Gooding as secretary, and from that time on the women are credited with making contributions to the work of the church. Mrs. Marie Findeisen, Mrs. J. D. Marshall, and Mrs. Charles Bourdon were appointed the first committee of ladies to solicit the much needed money. It was in 1909 that a small house next to the church was purchased for a manse for \$200.00. The women made the first payment of \$50.00, they gave \$100.00 toward the minister's salary, and \$250.00 toward the cost of moving the church. Today the Aid is called the Women's Organization and is divided into three groups called circles. The entire group meets to work out budgets and programs of study. In 1940, the church property was condemned by the State Highway Department, and it became necessary to move again. The manse was sold and a house was purchased in the south part of the city. Lots were selected about a half block south of the corner on which the church stood. The business section of the city had changed to its present position and the church now is in about the central part of Red Lake Falls. During the tenure of Rever-



First Presbyterian Church

James Grant, the church was enlarged and remodeled. In 1955, an architect was engaged and the result was a large addition at the rear of the church, a more complete kitchen, a nursery, Sunday School rooms, and a suitable and handsome entrance to the front. The total cost of \$27,000.00 put the congregation back into debt. Pledges were made and four years later the church was again out of debt. There is always another task ahead, for it is in working together that the people of the congregation come to know and appreciate each other most fully.

Pastors who have served from 1887 to the present are Rev. Broit, J. S. McCarnack, Gust Drews, S. J. S. Moore, Andrew Walker, Herbert Knox, P. A. Schwartz, Lewis T. Hughes, Francis B. Stevenson, Rev. Richardson, S. M. Kelly, W. S. Evans, F. W. Hauser, Rev. Martin, R. H. Selway, Henry Lindholm, Merrill Nelson, James McCartney, Ernest Norquist, James Grant, Glen Atchison, E. A. Grueneich, Robert Villwock and Ron Geisman, the present pastor.



St. John's Hospital

## ST. JOHNS HOSPITAL

Discussion concerning the establishment of a hospital in Red Lake Falls started in 1944 when first contact was made with the Sisters of St. Benedict of Crookston, Minnesota, to see if they might be interested in building and staffing such a project. At that time the Sisters of St. Benedict had health institutions in Crookston and Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, and Dr. F. W. Petkevich was the only physician practicing in Red Lake County.

On May 29, 1945, the voters of Red Lake Falls passed an almost unanimous ballot to contribute the sum of \$20,000.00 towards the development of a new hospital building for their community. The county also contributed an additional \$10,000.00 towards this development. As time passed it was determined that an additional \$20,000.00 would be needed and on November 4, 1947, this issue was put to the voters and again passed showing the interest the community had in such a project. On June 7, 1948, the City Council passed a motion to sell the necessary land needed to the Sisters of St. Benedict to construct the new building.

Msg. Victor Cardin and Sam Hunt were very instrumental in the original ground work to establish a hospital in this community and numerous correspondence was continually going between architects, contractors, health planning agencies and the State Department of Health. After much red tape the hospital finally became a reality and officially opened its doors on November 1, 1951. The original cost of the project was \$350,000.00 of which approximately 45% was funded through Federal Aid Programs (Hill Burton — \$154,000.00). The remainder of the project was funded through the Sisters of St. Benedict.

The designer of the building was Samuel Teel DeRemer of Grand Forks, North Dakota, with the contractor being Otto J. Eickhof and Sons of Crookston, Minnesota. The original hospital was designed as a twenty-four bed unit, which was reduced to twenty-three beds in 1971. Altogether there are nineteen adult beds and four pediatrics beds along with four bassinets.

Official dedication of the hospital was held at the Community Hall on October 21, 1951. Glen Fellman was the Master of Ceremonies. Bishop Schenk, Bishop of the

Diocese of Crookston, was on hand to give the official dedication. Bishop Schenk also laid the cornerstone at the hospital earlier in July, 1951. Others on the program included Mayor H. B. Lane, Mother Blandina, Mother Superior of the Sisters of St. Benedict, Msg. Victor Cardin, pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Red Lake Falls, L. N. Dale, local physician and president of the R.R. Valley Medical Association, Dr. J. F. Norman, president of the Minnesota Medical Ass'n, Dr. R. N. Barr, Chief Section of Hospital Service, Minnesota Department of Health, Dr. Helen L. Knudsen, Director of the Division of Hospital Services, Minnesota Department of Health and Honorable J. H. Sylvester, Judge of District Court, who gave the dedication address. Also on the program were the American Legion and V.F.W. Clubs who presented the colors. The Lafayette High School Band was on hand to play the National Anthem.

First administrator at St. John's Hospital was Sr. M. Pancratius. She later was followed by Sr. Benita, Sr. Charitas, Sr. Fidelis, Sr. Andrea and Tony Schmitz. Mr. Schmitz was the first lay administrator to serve at St. John's Hospital. The hospital was incorporated in May, 1966.

The first patient admitted to St. John's Hospital was actually admitted on October 31, 1951, the day before the official opening. She was Mrs. H. J. Morin who lived at Marcoux Corner. The first baby born at the hospital was John Gaven, Jr., at 6:35 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, 1951. In the first two years of operation the hospital had 186 deliveries with eight babies being the highest at any one time in the nursery. During the years of 1951 to 1969, the hospital experienced a low of two patients to a high of thirty-two patients in the hospital on any one given day.

In May of 1969, Red Lake Falls was notified that the two local physicians would be leaving the community on August 1 and thus the hospital was forced to close its doors on August 1, 1969. The last patient was discharged on July 28, 1969.

At that point the community and hospital made a valiant effort to recruit physicians to the community hoping that the hospital would not have to remain closed on a permanent basis. Through the efforts of an active community group with excellent community support and the support of the Sisters of St. Benedict, the Sisters agreed to continue operating the hospital on an interim basis hoping that the search for new physicians would be successful and short lived. During this period of time the hospital received no patients, but merely kept its business office open and employed a skeleton crew to maintain the facility. It also kept its state license current, which was issued by the State Department of Health, hoping that the crisis would be over

soon.

In February, 1970, the good news broke over the news media that Dr. David J. Mersy would be coming to Red Lake Falls to start a practice and open a clinic in the community. With that the hospital reopened its doors on March 1, 1970 and since that time other physicians have joined its staff.

## ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

The first meeting of St. John's Hospital and Hillcrest Nursing Home Auxiliary was held on November 20th, 1958 at the Community Hall with Mrs. Gordon Steinert, President of the American Legion Auxiliary presiding. After an explanation of duties of a hospital auxiliary, Mrs. George Christie Sr. was appointed temporary chairwoman.

Evelyn Perras was elected first Hospital Auxiliary President and served in that capacity for eight years. Ninety women were in attendance at the first meeting which grew to approximately three hundred and fifty members from Red Lake Falls, Plummer, Dorothy, Brooks, Terrebonne and Oklee.

Sister Benita O.S.B., administrator of St. John's Hospital was desirous of organizing an auxiliary as there was a serious question as to whether St. John's Hospital would remain open. Sister Benita did not live to see the Auxiliary functioning to its full extent. She passed away March 17, 1960. The community suffered a loss in her death. She was a rare soul and was able to cheer and inspire all with whom she worked and nursed. Largely through her the Hospital Auxiliary was formed and many improvements were made at St. John's Hospital.

The Auxiliarians were active for eight years from 1958 through 1966.

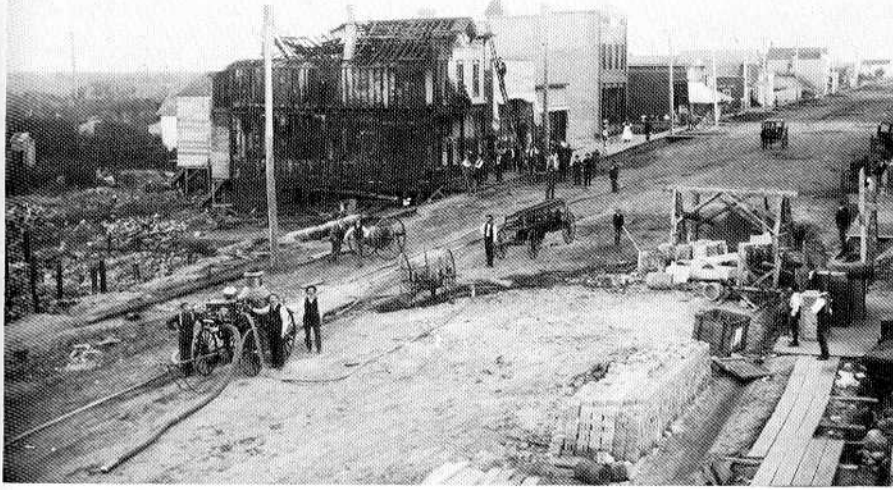
St. John's Hospital Auxiliary was reorganized in 1970 by Tony Schmitz, A.D.M. Administrator. Mrs. Lowell Larson was elected president of the organization.

The purpose of the Auxiliary is to promote health care in the hospital and through community services.

Some of the major projects through fund raising are the Staff Library at the Hospital, refurbishing the lounge furniture, and replacement of the kitchen stove. Other voluntary services are coffee cart, the stripper program, special clinics and community services.

## THE EARLY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The early fire department had a steam engine that pumped water for its hoses



Fire on the east side of Main in 1899 destroyed buildings between first and second streets.

ties and an enclosed tennis court. The north side, better known as the fairgrounds, is the site of the ice arena and combination football-baseball field, a natural bowl. Centrally located, Riverside park laces the awesome beauty of the Clearwater River.

Sportsman's Park, a rustic area at the confluence of the Red Lake and Clearwater Rivers, has facilities for camping and picnicking; a rifle range and trap shoot, an archery range and a boat landing constructed by the Department of Natural Resources in 1974. This park also has a maze of paths through the wooded area to use as hiking, snowmobiling and motorcycle trails.

There are also two areas designated as mini-parks, one east of Fairview Manor and one on the Northside at Sixth and Broadway. These are mainly used for neighborhood recreation.

The beach on the Clearwater River and the dam sites on both the Clearwater and

from a cistern in front of the fire hall, located in the square just south of today's post office. Ed Troumbly and Bill Krueger were volunteers in charge of the fire engine for many years. When the fire bell rang, Bill, as Mr. Krueger was known, immediately grabbed two buckets filled with kindling, paper and coal from a closet off the lobby of the Grand View Hotel and raced to the fire hall across the street. The engine was pushed out, fired up and, it is said, within six minutes the steam would be up thanks to the dry kindling and quick response of the two men in charge.

## RED LAKE FALLS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Records of the Red Lake Falls Fire Department indicate that formal organization of this group occurred in 1899. The fire hall in those days was located between the present post office and the VFW hall.

The first motorized vehicle, a 1921 Model T chemical truck, is still operational and owned by the department: Following the completion of the community hall in the 1930's, the fire department moved its headquarters there where it remained until a new fire hall was built in 1975. Both trucks were housed in the community hall with ample room for two cells used as the city jail.

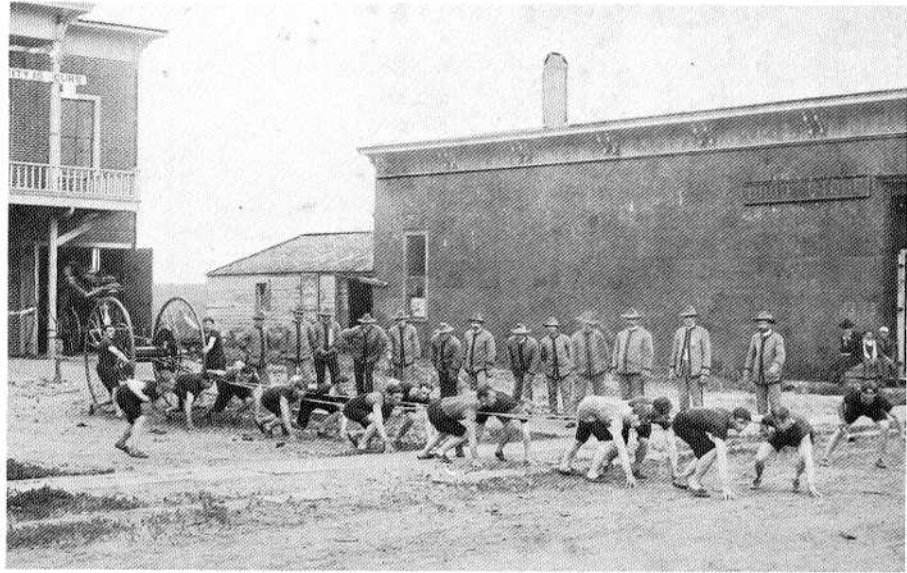
A Rural Fire Association was organized in 1954 to provide service to seven member townships: Red Lake Falls, Terrebonne, Lake Pleasant, Louisville, Wylie and Browns Creek, and a part of Gervais. A new rural fire truck has been purchased with financial assistance from the city.

The new fire hall on Champagne Avenue provides quarters for four fire trucks, and the ambulance. There is a spacious meeting room, office, kitchen, sleeping quarters, showers and clean-up area.

## RED LAKE FALLS AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Red Lake Falls Volunteer Ambulance Service was established in 1969 and a fully equipped vehicle purchased at that time for its use. Jerry Thibert was the first president, Mavis Arvidson, treasurer, and Shirley Swenson, secretary.

Approximately twenty-five persons enrolled for a twenty-eight hour training



The old fire hall burned in 1926. The drill team is lined up for a practice run.

session in first aid and qualified for service. The training periods have been repeated every two years and the requirements lengthened to eighty-four hours of required study.

At present there are forty-four volunteers with two persons on duty for twelve-hour shifts around the clock. The ambulance averages eleven patients transported each month.

Present officers are Clyde Ellefson, president; Mike Majeres, vice president; Dorothy Altepeter, secretary; Mavis Arvidson, treasurer; and Bev Gilbertson, bookkeeper.

## CITY PARKS

Red Lake Falls can boast of approximately 100 acres of parks and mini-parks scattered throughout the city.

The largest park acreage is the scenic Oak Knolls golf course situated in the southeast part of the city along the Clearwater River. The nine-hole course, maintained by the Golf Club, also features a comfortable clubhouse. It was also the first course in Minnesota to sport artificial greens.

Riverside Park complex has two areas, separated by Bottineau Avenue. The south side has a large picnic area, camping facilities

Red Rivers are favorite fishing spots. The areas are maintained by the city for public use.

The Park Board, appointed by the mayor, has been in existence since the first park, Riverside Memorial, was established in the early 1920's. Presently serving on the board are Howard Johnston, Ed Cuno, Blake Peterson, Harold Borg and Lyle Longtin.

## AMERICAN LEGION GUNDER AUSTAD POST 22

The American Legion Post in Red Lake Falls was formally organized at a meeting held June 13, 1919, with sixteen charter members, soldiers and sailors who served in the World War I. Dr. J. C. Wilkinson, captain of the medical corps, was elected chairman, and Mose H. Latendresse, first lieutenant with the 88th division, was elected secretary-treasurer. Eight more were added to the charter membership that named the following: Maurice Bray, David Cyr, Theo. M. Ducharme, Elmer Guillemette, Omer Guillemette, Gilbert Huot, R. H. Jackson, Jos. C. LaCoursiere, Henry Latendresse, Mose Latendresse, Peter Linnertz, A. E. Lucian, Louis Marchildon, W. J. Mathews, Fred Miller, Wm. Nie-





A natural bowl is the setting for football and baseball games. The hockey arena is nearby and part of the Riverside Park area.



land, Andre Patnode, Walter Patnode, Jos. S. Perusse, Eldage Robillard, H. J. Trudeau, J. C. Wilkinson, Leslie Wilkinson, and H. J. Willis.

Secretary Latendresse made a statement for the records, "We are going to make a campaign to get every soldier and sailor in the county to join the Post. Annual dues are only twenty-five cents and no one can say that they haven't got enough money to join."

Just six months later in January 1920, the name of the Post was changed to the Gunder Austad Post No. 22 of the American Legion in memory of Pvt. Gunder Austad of Oklee, he being the first Red Lake County soldier to offer the supreme sacrifice for his country. At this same meeting, the Post also took action to inform city officials, and all clubs and organizations, of

the imperative need of suitable quarters for public and social gatherings, recreation and gymnasium hall, and home for local fraternal organizations, and that a Community House should be provided in Red Lake Falls. So began the first steps for the building of the Community Hall. The basement was completed in 1929 with funds raised by the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary who later sold the building and the land to the city of Red Lake Falls for completion with use of WPA federal funding in 1936.

The first World War II veteran to become Commander of the Gunder Austad Post was Willard LaPlante in 1946. The present Legion Club rooms were rented above the "Big Store," and later the entire building purchased and major improvements made throughout the years.

The American Legion of Red Lake Falls has contributed generously to community projects, and foremost, the Junior Legion baseball team and its successful summer programs.

Now 57 years old, with its ranks composed of the wartime veterans of four conflicts, the aims and purposes of the American Legion Gunder Austad Post No. 22 are still to care for the veteran, his widow and orphan, his community, state and nation.



Gunder Austad, the first man from the county to give his life in World War I.

## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT #22

On January 13, 1926, seventeen women met at the Lincoln Hotel for the purpose of organizing an American Legion Auxiliary. Charles E. Boughton of the local Gunder Austad American Legion Post spoke to the group and encouraged the formation of the auxiliary unit. By March 12 of that first year, a charter was issued to 29 members who were: Mrs. Charles E. Boughton, Jr., Mrs. George Bourdon, Mrs. C. E. Brunelle, Mrs. H. G. Gray, Mrs. J. A. Hughes, Mrs. Nick Helm, Mrs. Rudolph Helm, Mrs. Gilbert Huot, Mrs. Mary Harren, Mrs. John Hendrickson, Mrs. H. B. Lane, Mrs. Joe LaCoursiere, Mrs. Ray Linnihan, Mrs. Mose H. Latendresse, Mrs. Sam Miller, Mrs. Carsten Mead, Mrs. Sarah Morin, Mrs. William Nieland, Miss Cora Normandeau, Mrs. Dan Paul, Mrs. Clayte Paul, Mrs. Henry Paquin, Miss Marie Patnode, Mrs. Harvey Page, Miss Louise Payment, Mrs. Paul Schirrick, Mrs. R. W. Tollefson, Mrs. Harvey Trudeau, and Miss Hazel Zaiser. Mrs. H. B. Lane was elected first president and served two years in that capacity. In

1930 she was elected to the office of Ninth District President. One of the early and main projects that the auxiliary initiated was the raising of funds for the construction of the Community Hall building in 1927.

In 1948 Gunder Austad Post and Auxiliary Unit hosted its first District Convention in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the City of Red Lake Falls in a three-day event. In 1951 the unit observed its silver anniversary, at which fourteen charter members were honored and past presidents were given recognition.

In 1953, Mrs. Elizabeth Boughton became the second member of the local unit to be elected Ninth District President. Due to her early interest in the Girl Scout Program, Elizabeth urged the unit to sponsor the Girl Scouts in Red Lake Falls. This has been done each year since 1940. During her year as district president, a new unit was organized at Euclid, at which she presented the charter and installed fourteen new members.

The Ninth District Legion and Auxiliary Convention was again held in Red Lake Falls in 1964.

The third member of the local Auxiliary unit to hold the office of Ninth District President was Mrs. Betty Radeke in 1969.

In 1976 the Auxiliary will observe its 50th Anniversary of dedicated service to God and Country with a present record membership of 200 members.

## VFW POST # 5628

The Red Lake Falls Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #5628 was chartered January 20, 1946 with one hundred members signed. Tom Payment and Nick Scheuring and several other WW I veterans made the necessary arrangements.

First officers installed by H. B. Ratteseth of Thief River Falls were Thomas Payment, commander; Lloyd Phillion and Cyril VonWald, senior and junior vice commanders, respectively; Bruce Higinbotham, quartermaster; Medore Benoit, post advocate; Charles Tischart, chaplain; John Bendel, surgeon; Nick Scheuring, trustee; and Bernard Columbus, adjutant.

The Post operated a club in the former Harold Dupont building at the corner of Third Street and Main Avenue for two years. During the late forties and early fifties, the Post sponsored an independent hockey and basketball team and then started the park board program in the city.

Post members have always been active in Memorial Day services and as parking supervisors at past Red Lake County fairs. Light-a-bike for the safety of bicyclists in Red Lake Falls was a project sponsored by the Post in the sixties. Recently, flags and flag poles were donated to St. Joseph's parochial school and Hillcrest Nursing Home. The post also installed the flag poles. Hospital beds and wheelchairs are owned by the Post and are available for use at no charge.

The Post held a grand opening of a new VFW Club in Red Lake Falls in February, 1976.

Present officers are Clinton Theroux, commander; Jerry St. Michel and James Schmitz, senior and junior vice commanders respectively; Louis Longtin, adjutant; Ray Schmidt, quartermaster, and Alton Beauchane, post advocate. Wayne Violette is chaplain and Phil Cuno, service officer. Trustees are Harry Kjaer, Phil Cuno and Paul Heng. Other house members are Clarence Marcotte, Howard Johnston, Frank Presnel and Ken Stokke. Donald

Fellman is surgeon.

## VFW AUXILIARY

Charter members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary in Red Lake Falls on April 11, 1946 were Mildred Thibodeau, Frances Marcotte, Josephine Linnihan, Florida Kuld, Nathalie Columbus, Mary Drees, Anne Hanson, Arline VonWald, Laura Goulet, Margaret Tischart, Agnes Lambert, Dora Scheuring, Mary Jane Benoit, Antoinette LaChance, Palmire Sauve, Eva Whalen, Rose Paradis Payment, Vina Scheuring, Rosina Longtin, Elenore Phillion, Agnes Nash, Frances Constant, Kate Musil, Emma Huot, Florence Cyr, Catherine Tischart, Betty Carl, Roseanna Thibodeau and Elaine Doughty.

Present officers are Pauline Theroux, president; senior vice president, Rose Thibert; treasurer, Pat Hagl; chaplain, Mary Drees, conductress, Harriet Loeffler; junior vice president, Janice Landman; guard, Della Henke; and trustee, Marilyn Wieland. Mrs. Elizabeth Sauve is the historian.

## MILLS

The Industrial potential in Red Lake Falls created by the abundant water power sources on the two rivers was a major factor in the rapid growth of this community.

Ernest Buse in partnership with Otto Kankel built the pioneer mill of this area on the Clearwater River at the north end of Main Avenue in 1878. Kankel sold his interest in the business to Buse in 1880, relocating in the fertile area. Buse sold the mill in 1882 when he moved to Minneapolis.

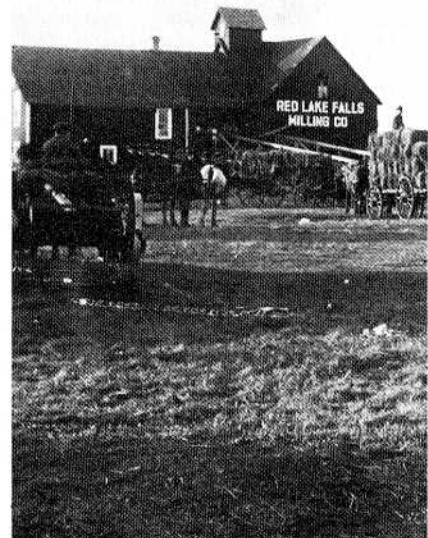
Carl Kretschmar erected the Northside Roller Mill about 1882 at the site on the Red Lake River which later became the power dam. This business became the Red Lake Falls Milling Co. in 1885 and was owned by Johnson and Marshall who manufactured "Mascot" and "Favorite" flour brands sold mostly in the eastern markets and Europe. The company which later owned the city electric light plant (see Northern States Power story) also operated a cooper shop in which all the barrels used by the mill were made.

Near this same site two brothers by the name of Meehan proposed to start a saw-

mill if they could get financial backing in the amount of \$3000. In those early days people would go to any lengths to encourage new industry and generous citizens put up the cash to be paid to the promoters when the mill began operation. The sawmill was completed, but saw only thirty minutes of action as the con-men immediately fled when the money exchanged hands. Production was halted and soon after the building was dismantled.

Another large dam and flour mill was located below the junction of the two rivers at the present site of the Central Bi-Products plant. This mill was owned by J. B. Holmes in 1889, followed by Gooding until 1901 when it was purchased by Healy and Bourdon. Partially destroyed by fire in 1908, the building and dam site were sold to the Red Lake Falls Water Power Co. in 1910.

Another sawmill and the first tow mill, located at the junction of the two rivers, and the Steinert Mill, established in 1911 at the bottom of the hill on Main Avenue, were other early industries utilizing the abundant water power of this community.



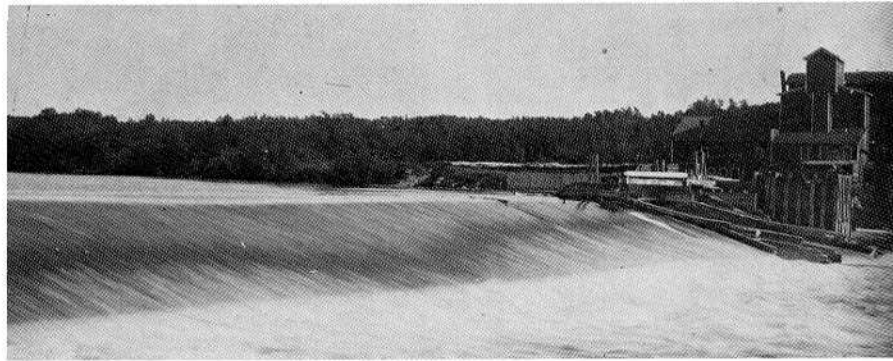
(More mill pictures on next page)



Building the road bed to the Red Lake Falls Milling Company.



Steinert Milling Company  
(see family history)



Healy Dam about 1904



Red Lake Falls Milling Company

## POTPOURRI

### PHIL SIEFF REMEMBERS RED LAKE FALLS

"It has been suggested that people have a tendency to live in the past. How well I remember Red Lake Falls, the most pleasant memories of my life. The Sieff family arrived there from Loney, Illinois in the year 1899. There were ten in all. Father, Mother, Louis, Joe, Jake, Sadie, Philip, Maurice, Rose, and Abe.

We were the only Jewish family in town. Most of the population were French of Canadian descent with names like: Pouliot, LaBissioniere, Gervais, LaTendresse, LaCoursiere, Hance, Manchildon, Paquin and others. The remainder of the population were German and Scandinavian.

The town was divided in sections. The uptown business area being the Main Street. Across the river and up the hill was the North Side, the Hollow, Little Canada, and Klondike.

The French kids were a strange lot. If you were part of a group it made no difference to them if you were unable to understand French — they carried on a conversation with a total disregard of you. It was not done purposely and the result was that you either learned to talk and understand French or you just didn't know what the conversation was all about. Incidentally, we eventually learned the language pretty well.

Our father was a horse trader dealing in wild horses and mules that were brought in from Montana by the carloads. This really made Red Lake Falls a sort of Wild West town. It was not an uncommon sight and always attended by many. When a sale was held, buyers came from near and far — from surrounding towns, St. Hilaire, Thief River Falls, Warren, Argyle, Plummer,

Fertile, and Crookston. It fell to the lot of brother Louie to rope and break in to drive and ride the wild horses, and he was as capable a bronco buster as ever lived. You can imagine the excitement, the bucking bronco going down Main Street trying to dislodge its rider. In later years race horses were added. The people of Red Lake Falls will remember two outstanding pacers, Signal Hal and Zoletta; they were winners at the fairs held in surrounding counties.

We owned a livery stable right on Main Street, which after a thaw in the spring became a bog. As the automobile came into use it was always unpredictable as to whether one could drive thru or not. Invariably after attaining a speed of 15 miles per hour, which in those days was considered speeding, some times they were successful and other times not. Always a group of bystanders would come forward to lend a heave ho and usually everyone would be covered with mud. It then resorted to a team of large draft horses to extricate the car to safety. The driver usually found a different roundabout way for his return.

A common sight was the LaCoursier herd of about 150 cows which were driven down the main street and out to pasture after milking in the morning and returned to their owner in the evening. How interesting to watch each cow leave the herd when it arrived at its owners home.

There was the annual log drive, where the men known as log drivers would guide the large logs down the Clearwater and Red Lake rivers to the saw mills for processing. When the log drivers, a really hardy tough lot, were in Red Lake Falls it was not an uncommon sight to see all hell popping and fights in the streets.

At that time a Mr. Swanson in charge of

the drive would come to town with the wanigan to feed the men as it progressed on down the river. I remember a big event which drew large crowds was to watch the wanigan jump the falls at the Healy dam. The big free bean feed Mr. Swanson held in the yard at Belair's and the peanut festival for the kids where large sacks of peanuts were thrown in the air for the kids to scramble after.

Spillane's store was a hangout for kids. Old man Spillane had a line drawn where the kids were not permitted to cross. It was known as the coupe. He was so kind and friendly the kids were always asking for something soft, an orange, banana, or any item unfit to sell, which he always gave free when available.

Another favorite pastime was to tie a wire about six inches high across the wooden sidewalks, lying in wait for some poor unsuspecting soul to come along. How well I remember 'Whistling' Pete Peterson who worked in the printing office coming home in the dark whistling as usual until he tripped head over heels and let out an exclamation of four letter words. Of course the kids were no where to be found.

The swimming hold on the Clearwater river, down the hill behind Duffy's and Linnehan's house! What pleasant memories, especially of the game called Charlow Beef, where some of the boys would return to dress only to find their clothes tied in knots and the mosquitoes on the rampage. The culprits somewhere out of reach would yell 'Charlow Beef, the beef was tough, and the poor little devils didn't get enough' and then they would scamper for all they were worth.

The falls and the rapids at the Healy dam bring fond memories. A beautiful park and



Phil and Maurice Sieff

wonderful fishing where I got my first start with walleyes, pickerel, suckers, rock bass, and sheephead. Nowhere could there be found a more delightful area for picnics and gatherings.

The beautiful white winters where at times the thermometer reached as much as fifty degrees below zero. This did not deter the populace from skating on the Clearwater River and sliding on sleds and skiing down the many hills that were part of Red Lake Falls.

Red Lake Falls with the voluntary fire department. When the bell in the City Hall rang every one in town no matter what time of the day or night was out to see what was happening.

The Red Lake Falls band led by Clem Brunelle, having its practice sessions in the City Hall, a gathering place for kids even though they were not members of the band, which incidentally had a fine reputation. Baseball, with its rivalries with neighboring towns — St. Hilaire, Plummer, Brooks, Crookston, and especially Thief River Falls where the competition was so intense it was not uncommon to see a fight break out among the spectators. And when you remember baseball, don't overlook the farmers who lived between the rivers and had a team known as the Jack Rabbits.

Of much interest was the Great Northern passenger train with daily morning arrivals from Crookston, destination to Warroad and return in the evening. The Northern Pacific train at the other end of town, always unpredictable as to its arrival. You could always expect a gathering there to meet the coming and going of friends and relatives, or just plain curious to see who was arriving and who was departing.

Important people to remember in the life of Red Lake Falls. Mrs. Emma Marshall, the Postmistress (she really ran the Post Office). Dr. Watson, Dr. I. Lemieux, Sam Huot, the Findieson and Helms Automobile and Implement Dealers, a real rivalry resulting in an annual motorcycle race between Herb Findieson and Oscar Helm. Crookston (Spike) Mead, a leading citizen involved in every phase of the community and John Duffy, the leading banker. Red Lake Falls! We will always be proud to call "Our Own Home Town!"

Sadie Sieff taught rural school at Belmore Station about four miles from Red Lake Falls. She rode horseback to school and often in weather that reached forty degrees below zero.

Abe worked as a switchboard operator in Red Lake Falls and later in Minneapolis when the Sieff family moved. Abe prided himself on his phenomenal ability to remember most of the telephone numbers of Red Lake Falls. Every year until his death Abe was a visitor in Red Lake Falls on Memorial Day, joining the veterans in Memorial Day services and visiting old

friends.

Phil Sieff and Sidney Marchildon started the well-known S and M Tire Company in Minneapolis. After Mr. Marchildon sold his business interests, Maurice Sieff joined the company. Phil and Maurice have retired from the company. Phil Sieff, his wife, Verna Mae, and Maurice live in Minneapolis. Sadie Sieff Bangs lives in Seattle, Washington.



## RED LAKE FALLS BRICK COMPANY

The Red Lake Falls Brick Company, owned and operated by John Schmitz and Company, was one of the important industries in Red Lake Falls about 1900. The company was established in 1889 by the Schmitz brothers, John, Joe, Herman and Henry, and later sold to John who continued to employ between thirty-five to fifty men. Up to two million bricks could be manufactured in one year and provided the materials for the construction of a high school in Thief River Falls, St. Joseph's Parochial School in Red Lake Falls, the Lemieux block, Kaus block, Borchers block and the huge electric light station among others.

Mr. Schmitz owned a large bank of the best clay in the state extending over two acres and twenty-six feet deep, located in the Klondike area in the northwest section of the city. The clay was exceptionally free of limestone and of good color.

The manufacture of brick was an interesting process that required more than average skill when taken from the bank, the clay was allowed to soak in water for twelve hours. It was then taken to the mauling machines which could mold six at a time in rapid succession. The soft bricks were then put on pallets to dry, requiring about four days to insure the best results. They were then ready for the kilns where they were burned for nine days. Mr. Schmitz had two kilns, each with a capacity of 325,000. The burning was quite an expensive process requiring 150 cords of wood to burn a single kiln. The bricks were then ready for grading, "select", "kiln", and "soft."

A heavy snowfall about 1905 caved in the drying racks and all the bricks were lost. This catastrophe plus competition in a neighboring town forced the Red Lake Falls Brick Company out of business, but fine buildings and homes in the city and the countryside still standing attest to the quality of the product manufactured and to the skill of the Schmitz brothers.



Old Tow Mill

## FIBRE PRODUCTS COMPANY

The Fibre Products Co., of Minneapolis has decided to locate their new \$130,000 factory in Red Lake Falls. After several months of investigation and personal visits to this city as well as to Thief River Falls and Crookston, the officials of the company decided that Red Lake Falls offered them the best location and they have accordingly started work. Red Lake Falls people are jubilant at having secured this big industry which will doubtless become one of the city's biggest assets.

Thru the Red Lake Falls Commercial club the company was offered a ten acre tract of land in the western part of the city just south of the fair grounds. A committee consisting of J. A. Duffy, E. G. Buse and L. E. Healy have been busily engaged in acquiring title to the lots in the tract and have secured practically all that is needed. Fifty Red Lake Falls business men have subscribed for fifty \$100 shares in the corporation as desired by the company, there being \$5,000 stock held locally.

The Northern Pacific officials are expected to arrive tomorrow to start the construction of the spur tracks which will be built right up to the doors of the plant to eliminate drayage in loading and unloading.

The new plant will manufacture flax tow for upholstering, building felt or insulation board. An enormous amount of water will be required for the operation of the works and hence it was necessary to build near a river in order to obtain an unlimited supply. A pump house will be built on the bank of the Clearwater river a few hundred feet below and the water will be elevated to a 50,000 gallon reservoir. After the water is used in the process it will flow back thru a sewer into the river. — Gazette 1929.

## THE GRAND VIEW HOTEL

The Grand View Hotel was built on the north side of the river sometime after 1882. In the 1890's when the Northern Pacific railroad came through town, the hotel was moved to the west end of town to be near the N.P. depot. The coming of the Great Northern Railroad serving Red Lake Falls with a daily train prompted a second move, to Main Avenue. A bar was added after the second move.

There was no indoor plumbing, water was hauled by a large tank in summer and in winter ice blocks were hauled from the river. Cooking was done on a large wood-burning range. The Hotel did its own laundry. At first bread was baked at the hotel, later it was shipped in from Crawford's Bakery in Crookston. Meals were served American style: breakfast from 6 to 9, din-



Grand View Hotel

ner from 12 to 2, and supper from 6 to 8. Meals were 25¢, later raised to 35¢ and 50¢. The dining room seated twenty-four people. Saturdays and Sundays were quiet days, the rest of the week busy because traveling salesmen were in town. Most travel was done by train. A horse drawn bus met the trains and took passengers and their grips to and from the hotel. Salesmen often brought trunks of merchandise to display to their customers. These were shown in a building known as the sample room located behind the hotel.

In the spring and fall there were court sessions and these were very busy and exciting. The judge, court reporter and lawyers stayed at the hotel. Another exciting time was in the spring when the logs came down the river, the logs were jammed and the lumberjacks had a short lay-over before continuing down river.

The Grand View Hotel closed in 1919 and the buildings have since been torn down.

## PROHIBITION

At a county option election Polk county went dry by a vote of 4,485 to 3,344. Twelve brewery distributing stations in East Grand Forks and two in East Grand Forks and two in Crookston will go out of business at once. Thirty-one saloons in East Grand Forks and twenty-one saloons in Crookston will have six month's time to go out of business. The brewery at East Grand Forks and one at Crookston continue the manufacture of beer but cannot sell it in the dry territory. It is reported that the office of the Kiewel brewery will be moved from Crookston to Red Lake Falls. — Gazette May 27, 1915

Red Lake Falls bids fair to become the liquor supply station for all northwestern Minnesota and for North Dakota thru the workings of the county option law and the Indian country "lid." Every other county in the Red River Valley is going dry as fast as elections are being held but no petitions have even been started in Red Lake county. A good part of its rural population is Canadian-French and sentiment of the county is against saloon closing. Moorhead and East Grand Forks have already

been put out of business as a distributing point. Breckenridge will be eliminated when Wilkin county goes dry, and the little town of Oslo in Marshall county will be out of business July 14 which will leave Red Lake Falls the nearest wet town to the North. — Gazette May 1915

The thirsty will not go unsatisfied. Only a few hours after the 13 year dry spell ended, large quantities of the 3.2 per cent beer was flowing in Red Lake Falls.

The appointed hour was one of excitement. It was 4 o'clock Friday afternoon when one of the Kiewel Products Co. trucks rolled into this city, loaded with a good supply of that beverage that people have been talking about for a long time. Anxious customers jammed the local parlors and judging from the smiles it was evident that the brewers had not forgotten their trade.

Since the first arrival of beer in the city on Friday, the business has been brisk, according to reports. Both "off sale" and "on sale" license holders have been kept busy supplying the demand. Truck loads of the new beverage have arrived in the city practically every day since the new law went into effect. — Gazette April 13, 1933

Red Lake county again started on a dry regime Monday night at 11 o'clock when the federal war prohibition act went into effect. Red Lake Falls has been the center



Paul Lizotte hauling kegs of beer. A. L. Roy is delivering whiskey in 1918.

of attraction especially for the part of the Northwest especially for the past two weeks. Saturday evening cars were parked on Main street for a distance of six blocks and on all the side streets. There was little disorder. This is the second time the county went dry, the first time being on August 13, 1918, when agents of the Minnesota Public Safety commission closed the saloons without warning. — Gazette July 15, 1937

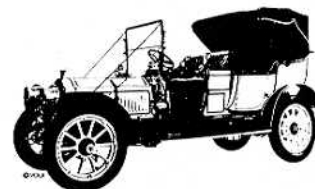
## L. J. SAVARD BRINGS FIRST OWNED AIRPLANE TO RED LAKE COUNTY

Lorenzo J. Savard of this city is the first owner of an airplane in Red Lake county. Last week he motored down to the Twin Cities where he closed the final deal for the plane and returned to Red Lake Falls Thursday evening with a new Spanish Hasco Waco plane. The trip from Minneapolis to Red Lake Falls was made in 2 hours and 55 minutes, a trifle less time than is made by the fastest automobile that has been driven between the Twin Cities and Red Lake Falls.

Roy Bouchart, a licensed pilot of Minneapolis, accompanied Mr. Savard to this city with the plane. Since the arrival here on Thursday evening the plane has been up in the air several times each day. The new machine is a two-passenger bi-plane.

Mr. Savard has during the past year spent months at a flying school taking flying lessons and intends to use his new machine for commercial flying. Last week a number of passengers were taken up at Bagley and other surrounding towns. He expects to have the plane here for passenger flying on July 4th, when the big celebration is on. He intends getting an airplane photograph of Red Lake Falls in the very near future. Those who have been over the city in a plane state that Red Lake Falls presents a most picturesque view with the two rivers and wooded lands surrounding.

The American Legion and the city recently made arrangements for the purchase of the old fair grounds and a portion of these grounds will be scraped and graded for a landing field. Mr. Savard contemplates erecting a hangar at the fair grounds for his plane. — Gazette June 20, 1929



## · AUTOMOBILE CLUB

In 1915 Red Lake county had 218 cars according to a report made by the then secretary of state, Julius Schmah. In those days the motorists were banded together in an automobile club for social enjoyment as well as highway improvement. Almost every town had a club and several times a year there would be tours to neighboring places. Red Lake Falls' club at one time had 101 members and was thereby entitled to two delegates (with expenses paid) to the annual state of the Minnesota Automobile Association. The Red Lake Falls club sponsored a tour to Red Lake and the Indian Reservation which was highly successful tho strenuous undertaking. In order to make the round trip in one day the start from Red Lake Falls was made at 5 o'clock in the morning. The Oklee Automobile club one year had a nail-picking bee under the direction of A. P. Toupin, a horde of small boys combed the streets of Oklee for nails, glass and other puncture-causing articles. It was surprising the amount of such stuff that was gathered.

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There are 204 automobiles in Red Lake county exclusive of those bought since May 1. The board of equalization report shows there were 80 owned in the city of Red Lake Falls 11 in Plummer and 17 in Oklee. Very soon the number of cars owned by farmers will exceed those owned in the city and villages combined.

\*\*\*\*\*

July 22, 1915. The Automobile club has this week been engaged in marking and putting up signs on all main roads leading to Red Lake Falls and to the surrounding towns. A uniform system of marking has been adopted with different colors for each road so that hereafter there should be no excuse for any person losing his way. The roads from Red Lake Falls to Gentilly, Fertile, Dugdale, Oklee, Plummer, St. Hilaire, Wylie and Dorothy have been marked by signs painted upon telephone poles or fence posts at every turn or road crossing. Blue and white signs with an arrow pointing the way to Red Lake Falls and the mileage to this city have been put up at proper places along the different routes so that weary travelers will be cheered by the knowledge that they are only a few miles from a good town. One hundred danger signs will be placed at different points throughout the county where trees or a turn in the road might hide approaching teams or automobiles from each other. — Gazette Sept. 7, 1933.

On Monday, May 6th, the date officially designated by the Red Lake Falls Automobile Club when club members would work on country roads about the city, several auto loads of enthusiasts went into the

county. They were armed with picks and shovels and much determination to do good work. They smoothed out uneven places in the roads, heaved heavy stones from the highways and made other minor repairs. The day's activities passed off without events of special interest except the experience of the occupants of one car. These people "worked their way" to Wylie putting the road in repair as they progressed. Returning to town over the same road late in the day they got stuck in the mud. They put the brawn and experience in roadbuilding that they had annexed earlier in the day to good use and after a half hour's strenuous effort got the car on solid ground.

## COL. AND MRS. CHARLES LINDBERGH VISIT RED LAKE FALLS

Colonel and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh paid a visit to Red Lake Falls. Flying here from North Haven, Maine, via Detroit, Mich., in a two passenger orange and black monocoque they circled around the city and landed their plane on the E. W. Kirschman field one and a half miles west of Trunk Highway No. 32, about 5:45 o'clock Thursday afternoon, August 29, 1927.

In a short time after they landed the word spread swiftly around and by the time the plane was securely anchored, the highway was jammed with cars and a good sized crowd had assembled.

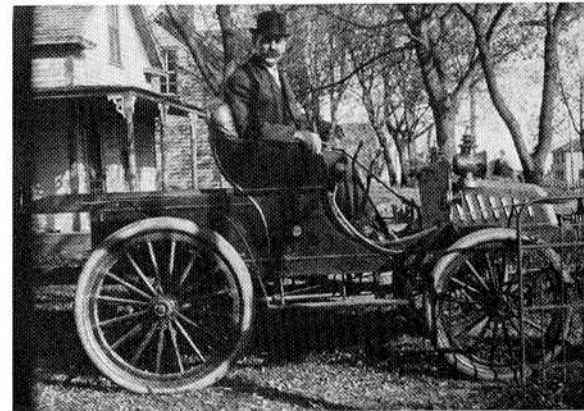
Col. and Mrs. Lindbergh were driven to the home of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Christie whose guests they were during their stay here. Mrs. Christie is his sister.

The Lindbergh plane was on the Kirschman field all day Sunday and Monday morning and during its stay here was under the watchful eye of Sheriff Carl A. Kankel who was assisted by Jos. C. Lacoursiere and others.

While here Col. and Mrs. Lindbergh met a few friends of the Christie family at the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Healy. Sunday the aviator and his wife were taken for a drive to Huot Memorial park and Crookston.

Monday morning Col. Lindbergh spent some little time in inspecting and adjusting his plane after which he made a few flights with members of the Christie family and Sheriff Kankel as passengers, and shortly before 2 o'clock he and Mrs. Lindbergh climbed into the plane and headed for Little Falls.

The people of Red Lake Falls were most considerate of their desire for privacy and rest, and the Lindberghs appreciated this fact as well as the vigilance of Sheriff Kankel and his helpers in guarding their plane, the kindness of Mr. Kirschman and



Samuel Gibeau in his 1907 Winton car

Mr. Ed Zins for the use of their fields and of County Engineer, R. W. Tollefson, who put up the fence around the plane. — Gazette Sept. 5, 1935

## NEW YEAR'S BALL WITH JAZZ — 1917

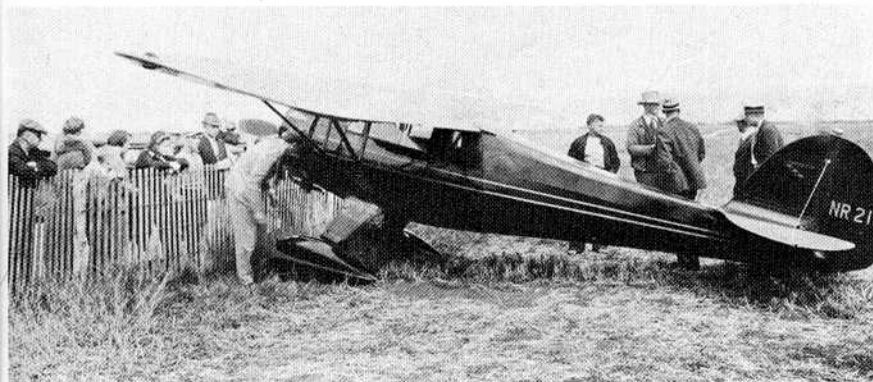
Red Lake Falls will be officially introduced to a jazz band on Monday evening, Dec. 31 at the gigantic New Year's ball to be given at the new Peoples Garage under the auspices of the entertainment committee of the Red Cross Society for the benefit of the Red Lake county soldier boys. The Red Lake Falls orchestra will be metamorphosed a good many times during the evening into just such a band.

The word "jazz" is of African origin we are told, and in the creole patois of New Orleans means "speeding up things." Jazz means ginger. To quote from the vaudeville critic, Walter Kingsley, "Jazz music is the delirium tremens of syncopation. It is strict rhythm without melody. Today the jazz bands take the popular tunes and rag them to death to make jazz. Beats are added as often as the delicacy of the player's ear will permit. It is an attempt to produce the marvelous syncopation of the African jungle. The highly gifted jazz artist can get away with five beats where there were but two before."

To play the jazz music the local orchestra will discard the string instruments and will have just the noise making kind — Butch Brunelle will beat the tom toms and traps, Lee Healy will wrestle with the saxophone, Bob Poirier will punish the clarinet, Omer Hall will stretch the trombone and Joe Harren will toot the cornet, and if the result isn't jazzy enough for the dancers we will be surprised indeed.

But listen, folks — that isn't all there is going to be at the New Year's ball. There will be waltzes, two steps, square dances — lots of them, one steps, polkas, schottisches, three steps, and fox trots. Val Dettling and Otto Zaiser will take in the money, Ernie Buse and Frank Jeffers will be floor managers. Dr. and Mrs. I. Lemieux will lead the grand march.

The reception committee will consist of Dr. and Mrs. I. Lemieux, Mrs. E. F. Marshall, Mrs. Wm. Findeisen, Theo. LaBissoniere, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Schreiter and Mr. and Mrs. Jos. J. Helm together with the entertainment committee, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Christie, Miss M. E. Strunk and Miss Rebecca Hunt.



# O. K. SALOON

Is the Place to Go for Choice

WINES,  
LIQUORS,  
CIGARS

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## J. E. BRAY

---

## W. A. REICHEL

ARTIST  
PHOTOGRAPHER

Picture Framing, Crayon and Pastel Work, Etc.

RED LAKE FALLS, MINN.

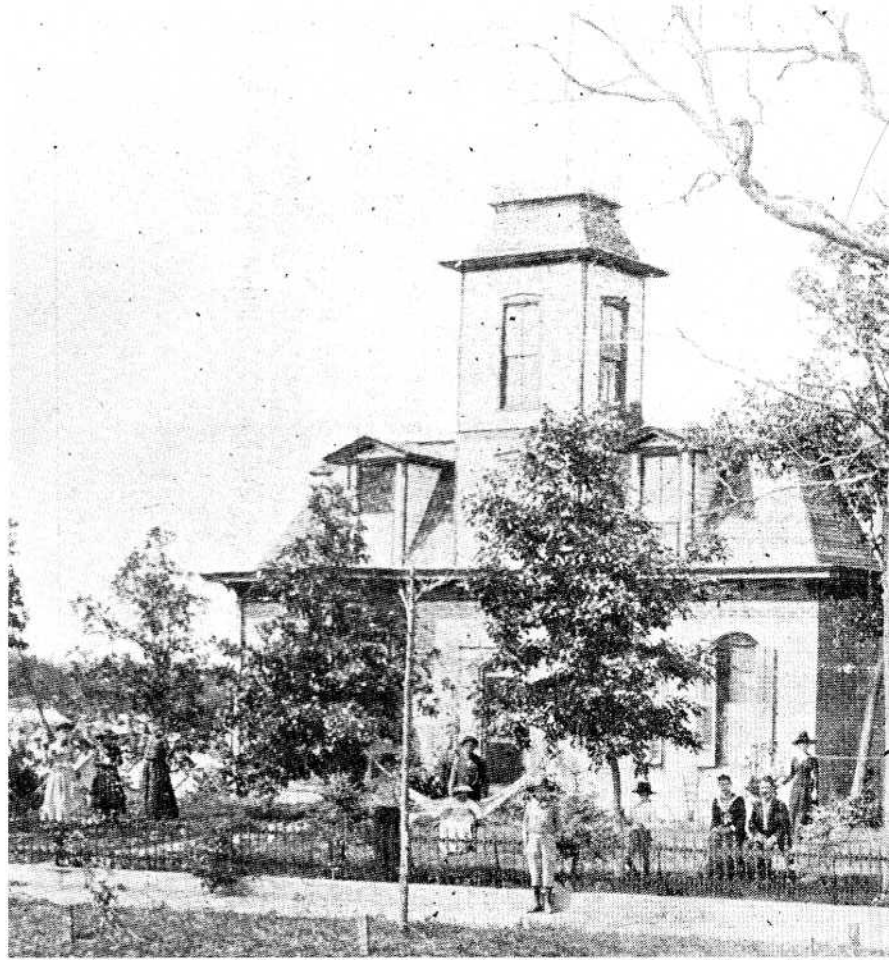
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## FRANZ F. FREUND

Bicycle  
Repairing  
and Painting

Agent for Columbia and Cleveland Wheels.  
Wheels to Rent.

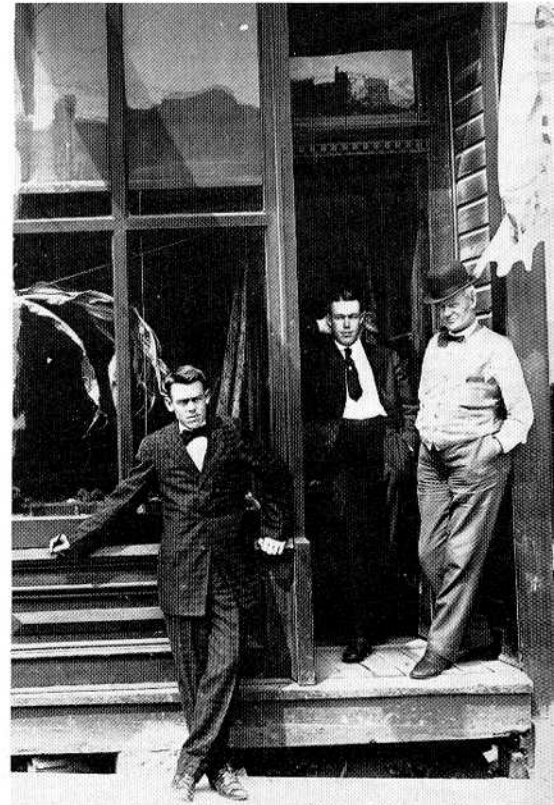
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Schreiter residence built in the 1880's by Carl Kretzschmar. For years the house was unoccupied and named the "castle" by the children who "haunted" the place. On the Northside.



Joseph Helm's business established in 1882.  
(See family history)



Healy Land Company. Ed Healy and sons, Lee and Vern.

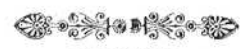


*Mr. Shala's*

DEALER IN

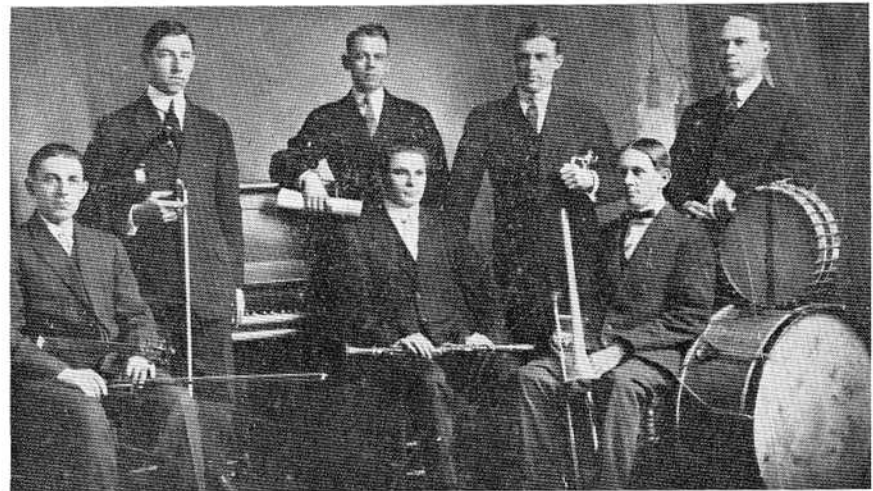
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**WHOLESALE AND RETAIL**

The best place to buy pure liquors for family and medicinal purposes. Old established and reliable brands only. Your orders solicited.



BROADWAY,

Red Lake Falls, Minn.



Red Lake Falls Orchestra 1915. Robert Poirier, Lee Healy, Clem Brunelle, Butch Brunelle, Theodore Garceau, Joe Harren and Omer Hall.



La Bissoniere's Store late 1920's. Employees Cecilia Bregier, Louise Berthiaume, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Tischart, and Mr. LaB in the rear.



# REGISTER OF BIRTHS, TOWN OF *Red Lake Falls*

Pioneer Press.

No.	DATE OF BIRTH.			NAME, IF ANY.	SEX. (And Condition, as Twins, Illegitimate, &c.)	COLOR.	PLACE OF BIRTH OF CHILD (TOWN OR CITY.)
	Month.	Day.	Year.				
1	Sept.	26	1876	Mary Martha Desmaris	French	white	Red Lake Falls
2	July	29	1876	Mary Leonine Patroide	French	White	Red Lake Falls
3	Febr.	18	1877	John B. Giroux	French	White	Red Lake Falls
4	Apr.	21	1877	Annie Powlotte	French	white	Red Lake Falls
5	June	11	1877	Agnes Virginie Bottinard	$\frac{3}{4}$ French	white	Red Lake Falls
6	July	4	1877	Henry Paul Lachar	French	white	Red Lake Falls
7	July	11	1877	Leticia Ellen Beaudro	French	white	Red Lake Falls
8	Feb.	20	1877	Mary Leonine Odette	French	white	Red Lake Falls
9	Sept.	2	1877	Charles Raiche	$\frac{3}{4}$ French	white	Red Lake Falls
10	Oct.	30	1877	Charles Napoleon Bourdieu	French	white	Red Lake Falls
11	Aug.	25	1877	Annie Celestie Gervais	French	white	Red Lake Falls
12	Oct.	1	1877	Louis Henry Barrette	French	white	Red Lake Falls
13	January	31	1878	Mary M. Labrie	French	white	Red Lake Falls
14	Feb.	26	1878	Annie Lynn	French	white	Red Lake Falls
15	May	15	1878	Annie Julie Grandbois	French	white	Red Lake Falls
16	June	10	1878	Charles Frenette	French	white	Red Lake Falls
17	March	15	1878	Mary Vitaline Gervais	French	white	Red Lake Falls
18	May	28	1878	Rose Bellaire	French	white	Red Lake Falls
19	June	18	1878	Mary Jessie Donat	French	white	Red Lake Falls
20	March	19	1878	Victor Ammanuel Patroide	French	white	Red Lake Falls
21	June	1	1878	William A. Labrie	$\frac{1}{2}$ French	white	Red Lake Falls
22	June	18	1878	Joseph W. Ducharme	French	white	Red Lake Falls
23	Aug.	25	1878	Philly Lambert	French	white	Red Lake Falls
24	Aug.	28	1878	Mary Dina Barrette	French	white	Red Lake Falls
25	Sept.	13	1878	Mary Ellen Ducharme	French	white	Red Lake Falls
26	Sept.	19	1878	Adolphe Champoux	French	white	Red Lake Falls
27	May	27	1878	Rosanna Richard	French	white	Red Lake Falls
28	Nov.	2	1878	Mary J. Labrie-Mire	French	white	Red Lake Falls
29	Nov.	9	1878	Charlotte Desmaris	French	white	Red Lake Falls
30	Dec.	5	1878	Joseph K. Brunelle	French	white	Red Lake Falls
31	Nov.	27	1878	Armand Patroide	French	white	Red Lake Falls
32	Apr.	23	1878	Louis Harry Gervais	French	white	Red Lake Falls

FULL CHRISTIAN NAME OF EACH PARENT.	BIRTH-PLACE OF EACH PARENT. (GIVE THE STATE OR NATION.)	OCCUPATION OF FATHER.	WHEN REGISTERED
John B. & Delina Quennaris	Canada	Farmer	
Leydie & Leclina Patnauder	Canada	Farmer	
Joseph & Felicitas Hinroy	Minnesota	Farmer	
Nicholas & Lucy Pavliotto	Canada	Farmer	
Peter & Martha G. Bottumam	Minnesota	Farmer	
Eli & Annie Laska	Minnesota	Farmer	
Joseph & Sarah Beaudart	Minnesota	Farmer	
Leon & Leardine Adette	Minnesota	Farmer	
David & Sophia Raicher	Minnesota	Farmer	
Peter & Mary Bourden	Minnesota	Farmer	
Henry & Maria Gervais	Minnesota	Farmer	
Norbert & Josephine Barrette	Canada	Farmer	
John & Sarah LaBrie	Canada & Missouri	Farmer	
Benoit-Christiana Gys	Canada	Farmer	
Prosper & Jane Grandbois	Canada	Farmer	
George & Delina Tremette	Canada	Farmer	
Benjamin & Henrietta Gervais	Minnesota	Farmer	
Thomas Jr & Sophia Belland	Minnesota	Farmer	
Frank & Delina Dora	Minnesota	Farmer	
Simon & Philomena Patnode	Minnesota	Farmer	
Adolph & Emma Faber	Wisconsin	Farmer	
Oruzimi & Catharine Ducharme	Canada	Farmer	
Michael & Sarah Lambert	Minnesota	Farmer	
Norbert & Josephine Barrette	Canada	Farmer	
Joseph & Philomena Ducharme	Canada	Farmer	
Adolph & Mary Champout	Canada	Farmer	
Thaddy & Emily Richard	Canada	Farmer	
Francis & Adeline Labissumier	Canada	Farmer	
J. B. & Delina Quennaris	Canada	Farmer	
George & M. J. C. Benmalle	Canada	Farmer	
Wesley & Philomena Patnode	Canada	Farmer	
Louis Henry & Sarah Gervais	Minnesota	Farmer	



## BUSINESS SCENE '76

**DMH COMPANY** purchased Alma Trailer Sales in 1961 and through continued growth and expansion presently employs approximately 150 full time persons with an annual payroll at peak employment of about a million and a half dollars. Over 17,000 units have been produced to date. Corwin C. Woodard is president.

**CENTRAL BI-PRODUCTS** The Red Lake Falls Rendering Plant was built on the Red Lake River in 1938 and sold to Central Bi-Products in 1962.

**RAFDORS, INC.** established in 1968 manufactures ratters for DMH and mobile home entries. LeRoy Audette, owner. **CAMERON & SULLIVAN ASSOCIATES, INC.** is the distributor for the entries.

**RED LAKE FALLS SILO CO.** in operation since 1962, formerly Westman Silo established in 1950. Eugene Radeke, owner.

**WHITESTONE DECOR PRODUCTS** manufactures and wholesales statues, plaques and figurines. Established in 1973 by Herbert Johannek.

**PETTERSON FUNERAL HOME** established in 1954 by Ralph and Mae Petterson is the only mortuary service in the county.

**RED LAKE FALLS CLINIC** The new building, located adjacent to the hospital, was completed in early 1974 and is staffed by Doctors David Mersy, Eric Mukand and Greg Magnuson.

**MICHAEL H. SPEARS, DDS** began dental practice here in 1969.

**EUGENE STELTER, DVM** opened his veterinary clinic in 1957.

### RED LAKE FALLS GAZETTE

Red Lake Falls' weekly newspaper, the Gazette, was established in 1883 by Olie and J. B. Holmes and sold to Philip A. Kauter in May 1892.

Another paper, the Red Lake Falls Era, preceded the Gazette but when it started or ended is not known. Only one copy dated August 10, 1882, has been preserved. During the 1898 presidential campaign, another periodical appeared, The Red Lake County Courier, established by Edward F. West in October 1898 as a Republican newspaper. Two months later, Frank Jeffers and C. E. Boughton took over this paper and switched its political sway to the Populist Party.

The Gazette continued to be published and was sold in 1916 to George W. Christie and Horace W. Cutten, a partnership. Cutten left the Gazette in 1949, and following George W. Christie's death in 1956, the editor was George Christie, Jr.

In 1967, Earl Anderson began the Record Printing Company. The two papers were consolidated in 1968 when Gazette publisher, Mrs. George Christie, Sr., sold to Harold Nelson. Nelson retained the Gazette until he sold to Miles Aakhus in 1971, bought the paper back and finally in July 1973 sold to F. Currie Tibbetts, the present publisher.

### KRUTA AND MULDOON ATTORNEYS

The first office was opened by Jaroslav Kruta here in 1968. He was joined by William Muldoon in 1970.

**NEIL (PETE) PRENEVOST** began his accounting practice here in 1952.

The **RED LAKE COUNTY STATE BANK** was established in Red Lake Falls June, 1933 when the charter of the Farmers State Bank of Middle River was moved to this community. O. P. Gjerdingen, O. B. Gjerdingen and Lorri Gjerdingen purchased the controlling bank stock in January 1966. O. P. Gjerdingen is president, Ray Perras, vice president.

**FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN** of Thief River Falls opened a branch office here in 1974. Beatrice Larson is branch manager.

The two local **BARBERS** are Leonard Lizotte and Bob Schafer. The community is served by five **BEAUTY SALONS**, Proprietors: Josephine Bendel, Dianna Senn, Joe Dennis, Margaret Adelman and Doris Pahlen.

**VOGUE CLEANERS** owned by Adolore and Lucille Cota since 1971 was established by Ben and Gertie Johanson in 1940.

**BENDEL PLUMBING** Leo Bendel has been a plumber here since 1934.

**PEPPERMINT SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER** opened for business in late 1975. Eckstein's Department Store, owned by Roger Eckstein, and Super Valu Supermarket, managed by Ken Brady, are located here.

**HARTZ STORE** Tom and Myrtle Tydlačka

purchased the Hartz store from Albert Halvorson in 1948.

The **COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION** organized in 1938 and purchased the stock of the former Skala General Merchandise Store on the north side. Kenneth Stokke is the present manager.

**HELM APPAREL** In 1956 Lois Helm purchased the Robertson Style Shop from the E. G. Robertsons who had operated the business in the Max Ingber building for thirty years.

**HANSON'S DEPARTMENT STORE** owned by Eunice and Goodwin Hanson was purchased from Ken Tischart in 1972.

**DODDS DRUG CO.** In 1954 Robert Dodds purchased this business from H. B. Lane who had been the local pharmacist since 1921.

**THOMPSON HARDWARE** Marne and Shirley Thompson acquired this store from the Bjerkes in 1966. Formerly Hunt's Hardware.

**WILCOX FURNITURE AND APPLIANCE CO.** The Wilcox family has been in business here since 1934. Their present store is one of the largest of its kind in northwestern Minnesota.

A branch of **MONTAGUES FLOWER SHOP** of Crookston opened for business in 1974 with Esther Cota as manager.

**VIOLETTE'S MEAT MARKET** was purchased from Maurice LaPlante by Fred Violette in 1972.

Mrs. Louis Proulx opened her **HOBBY SHOP** in late 1975.

**HOWARD E. JOHNSTON'S INSURANCE AGENCY** was started by him in 1954. He also operates a gravel business.

In 1968 the **RED LAKE COUNTY AGENCY** was founded by Norris Thune. Lewis Pfann became manager and president of this insurance business in 1973.

A new business on Main Street this year is the **RON T. PAULING INSURANCE AGENCY** located in the former Champeau building.

The **MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE** which has been in operation since 1934 is managed by Ken Hagl. In 1974 a second off-sale bottle shop was added at the Chateau Bottineau Motel.

**SULLIVAN'S**, a supper club, was opened in 1971 by Jerry and Emmy Sullivan.

The **AMERICAN LEGION CLUB** opened for business shortly after World War Two. Kent Spears is the present manager.

The new **VFW CLUB** began operating in late 1975.

**BLACKIE'S PALACE CAFE** and card room was opened for business in 1970 by Lawrence "Blackie" Casavan.

Harriet Violette has operated the **FALLS CAFE** since 1966.

In 1975 Francis and Sharon Lizotte became the owners of the **JEWEL CAFE**, formerly operated for over fifty years by "Kaiser" Savard.

Barb Bushee is the manager of the **TAS-TEE FREEZE** which is owned by Stover and Tretter. This business was started in 1958 by G. A. Benson.

**THE SPOT** tavern and cafe on the north side has been owned and operated by Harry and Carol Kjaer since 1972.

**MURPHY'S CAFE** also on the north side is owned by Chris and Mary Drees.

**THE CHARTREUSE MOOSE RECREATION** was opened this year by Bob Phillon.

**HOFIUS OIL CO.**, owned by Dalton and Leona Hofius, has operated as a bulk oil business selling Standard Oil products since 1966.

Ron Neiland has become the owner of the **STANDARD OIL STATION** since 1975.

Al Hanson became the **MOBIL BULK AGENT** in 1969 and Jim Boutain the owner of **JIM'S MOBIL** in 1972 when he purchased it from Harvey Mercil.

Harley Casavan recently became the operator of the service station on Highway 32 called **HARLEY'S SERVICE**.

**THE FARMERS UNION OIL CO. (CENEX)** in business since 1935 has been managed by Bob Tongen since 1968.

The **HEALY LAND COMPANY**, established in 1901, is the oldest business in continuous operation by one family. The company deals in real estate and insurance and is owned by Martin and Anne Healy.

**THIBERT CHEVROLET AND BUICK CO.** in business here since 1940 was founded by George Thibert and is presently owned and operated by his son, Roger Thibert.

Dorris and Georgia Miller own and operate **MILLER FORD SALES AND SERVICE** which they purchased in 1960.

The **FALLS EQUIPMENT CO.** which sells farm equipment and machinery was established in 1970 by William and Marian Krueger.

Dwight and Betty Thibert own the **THIBERT SPORTS CENTER**, a business they started in 1964.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY MOTORS** established in 1971 is owned by Dave Nelson.

A branch of the **WILSON BROS. CO.** of Thief River Falls which sells automotive parts opened in 1966. Merle Brevik is manager.

George Proulx's **ARCTIC INN**, in business since 1971, sells and services snowmobiles.

**BARRY'S WELDING AND MACHINE, INC.** owned by Barry Schultz opened in 1974, the first business established in the new industrial park.

**CHATEAU BOTTINEAU MOTEL** was built in 1972 by Paul and Ethel Petersen. Present owners are Duane and Marlene Berger.

The **FARMERS UNION GTA ELEVATOR,**

built in 1965, is managed by Steve Olson.

The **OAKS MOBILE COURT AND LAUNDRERETTE** was purchased from the Rollie Herolds by Dave and Betty Benson in 1969.

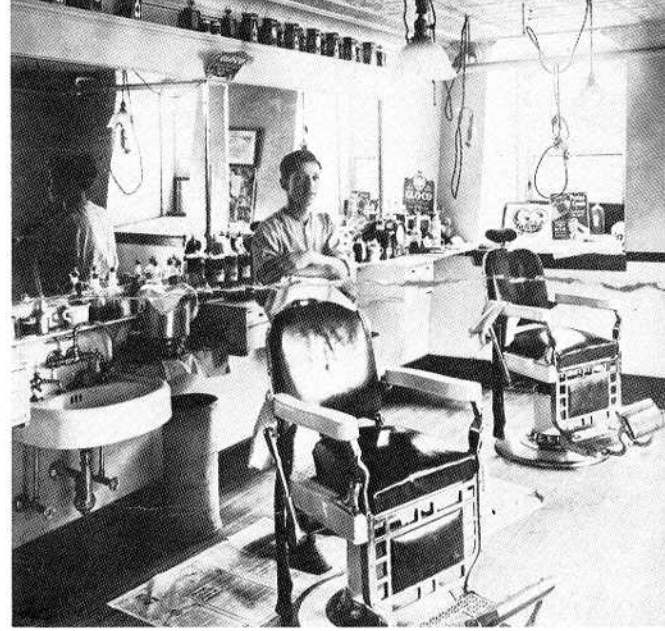
**OCCIDENTAL CHEMICAL CO.,** managed by Duane Whyte, started business in 1971.

A long established business, **ROBERTSON COMPANIES** lumber yard is managed by Joel Schmitz.

**LEO CARRIERE'S NURSERY** and **LARRY ECKSTEIN'S GREENHOUSE** are recent additions to this city's growing list of business enterprises.



Joseph LaPlante Meat Market 1925



Miller's Barber Shop 1925  
Wallace (Pete) Miller Age 17



LaBissoniere Store interior

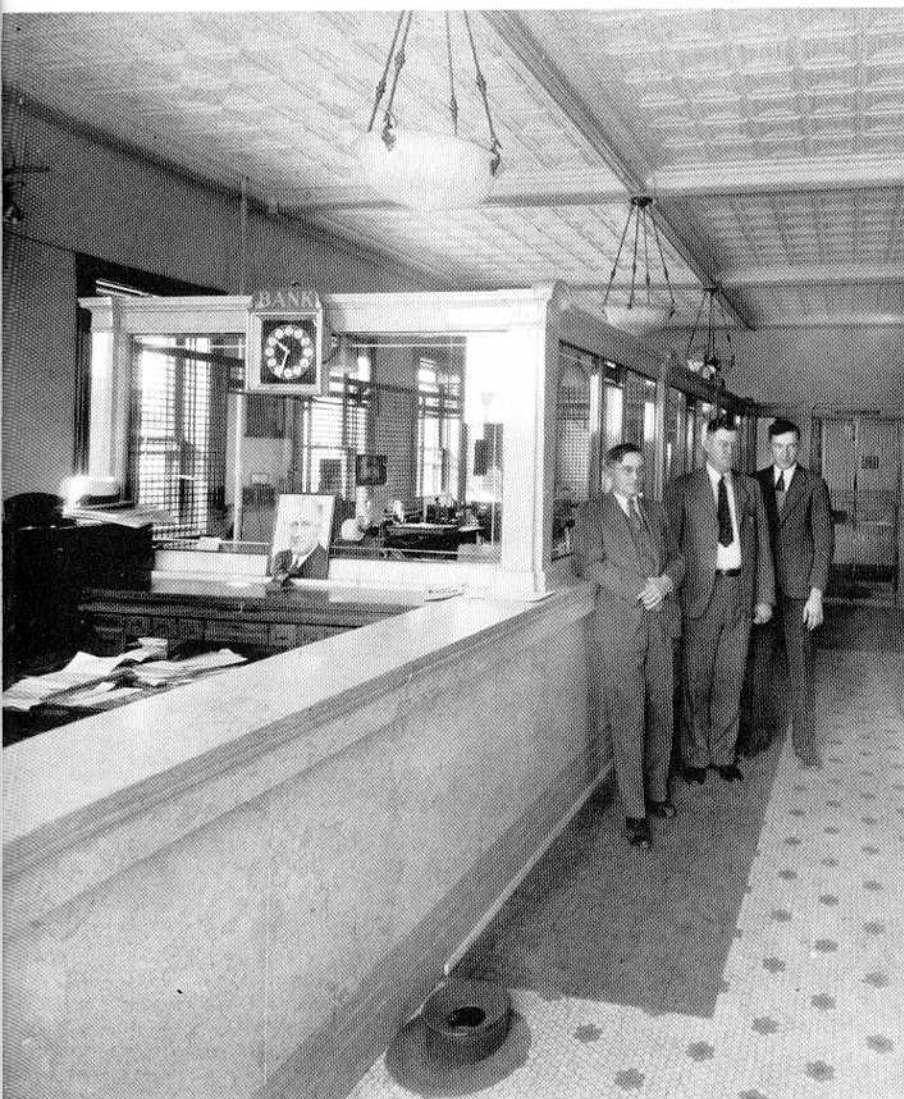


Deutschman Saloon North Side about 1910

Red Lake Falls will note one hundred years of existence in 1976, the anniversary of the first party to arrive in this area led by Pierre Bottineau.

The event is observed in a grand and glorious manner July 3, 4 and 5 with reunions, dances, concerts, ecumenical church service, parade and fireworks, threshing bee and the dedication of the Pierre Bottineau burial site. The downtown area in Red Lake Falls is a living museum and beards and centennial costumes very much a part of the scene.

The publication of the history of Red Lake County coincides with the Centennial celebration in Red Lake Falls and the bi-centennial observance of our country's birth.



Red Lake County State Bank 1934. Walter Johnson, Clarence Orr and Ray Perras.



Sorting mail in the Red Lake Falls postoffice in 1921. M. O. Sortedahl, postmaster.

The Red Lake Falls Post Office was established on March 25, 1878 in the part of Polk County that later became Red Lake County. Ernst Buse was the first postmaster. Other postmasters have been Frank Hunt, Carl Kretschmar, Oliver Holmes, Fred Taylor, Emma Marshall, A. L. Reichert, Martin Sortedahl, Raymond Linnihan, Celestine Proulx and the present postmaster Al Buse. Al is the grandson of the first postmaster, Ernest Buse, who also was one of the first settlers of the area.

