

# Kandi Express

County News . . .  
With a Historical Train of Thought

Kandiyohi County Historical Society  
Willmar, Minnesota  
Quarterly September 2012



You and your family are invited to the  
Kandiyohi County Historical Society's  
116th Annual Meeting & Program  
Thursday, October 18  
5:30pm-8:00pm  
Lake Lillian City Center  
Featuring  
*The Kingery Family*



A meatball supper will be served by The Food Garage starting at 5:45pm. The cost of the meal is \$10 per person. Following the meal, the annual meeting will be conducted. After the short annual meeting, The Kingery Family of At-water will entertain us with their musical talents at 7pm.

**Please RSVP by Wednesday, October 10th!** Please call 235-1881 or email us at [kandhist@msn.com](mailto:kandhist@msn.com) to reserve your spot! Prepayment is required. Our address is KCHS, 610 NE Hwy 71, Willmar, MN 56201.

*We hope to see you there!*

## **Minnesota History Center Bus Trip Thursday, September 27**

The Kandiyohi County Historical Society will sponsor a bus tour to the Minnesota Historical Society's History Center in St. Paul, MN on Thursday, September 27th. Spend the day at the History Center exploring their many exhibits, the two museum gift shops or spending time at the History Center's library doing research.

**Featured Exhibits:**  
**The U.S. Dakota War of 1862**  
**1934: A New Deal for Artists**  
**Minnesota's Greatest Generation**

### **Schedule:**

8:15am –Leave KCHS parking lot  
10:15am– Arrive at MN History Center  
3:30pm- Depart for Willmar  
6:00pm– Arrive at KCHS

Tickets will be \$25 per person, which includes admission to Minnesota History Center and all exhibits and bus ride. Lunch will be on your own. **Sign up by Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>.** Reservations and prepayment are required.

**For more information on the  
Minnesota History Center,  
visit: [www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)**

# Kandiyohi County Historical Society

610 NE Hwy 71  
Willmar, MN 56201  
Telephone: 320/235-1881  
Fax: 320/235-1881  
E-Mail: kandhist@msn.com  
Website: www.kandimuseum.com

## *Board of Directors*

2011-2012

President - Gerald (Jerry) Johnson

Vice President - Richard Falk

Secretary - Marilyn Johnson

Treasurer - Larry Macht

Board of Directors -

Connie Wanner

Shawn Mueske

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Bernice Grabber-Tintes

Mary Ryks

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Honorary - Richard Larson

## *Staff*

Executive Director - Jill Wahnoutka

Resident Caretaker - Andrea Maertens

Maintenance - Joel Bruse

Collections Assistant - Robert Larson

## *Kandi Express*

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society. September 2012, Vol. 49, Issue 3. Non-profit postage paid at Willmar, MN. Reprints with permission, please. Membership in the Kandiyohi County Historical Society carries with it a subscription to the *Kandi Express*. Stories about local history can be submitted to Jill Wahnoutka-editor, KCHS.

*Discovering, Preserving,  
and Sharing the Story of  
Kandiyohi County and Its People.*

## Volunteers

**Archives/Office:** Carolyn Kneisl, Molly Larson, Dorothy Olson, Terry Stein, Marilyn Johnson, Linda Maurer.

**Building/Painting/Thursday Crew:** Elmond Ekblad, Pinky Fostervold, Elroy Gast, Dale Johnson, Jerry Johnson, Don Niece, Loren Luschen, Rollie Boll, Gayle Larson and Loretta Fenske.

## In-Kind Donations

**Kandiyohi Co. Community Service** - Grounds Work/Snow Removal

**Engan Associates P.A.** - Architectural Services

## Weekend Museum Reception:

Evelyn Paulson, Charles & Marlene Brown, Bob, Mary & Molly Larson, Greg Harp, Don & Phyllis Shaw, Richard & Delores Hoglund, Roma Fostervold, Allen & Wanda Zaske, Kenneth & Carol Nielsen, Pinky Fostervold, Terry Stein, Ken & Dorothy Peterson, Marilyn Johnson, Linda Maurer.

## Guri Endreson Cabin Tours:

Bob Larson, Molly Larson, Jerry Johnson, Marilyn Johnson, Nancy Gustafson, Linda Maurer, Jessica Fortney

## Professional/Business Members

Atwater State Bank  
Corneil-Elkjer Agency  
Crown Floral & Gifts  
Elmquist Jewelers  
Engan Associates, P. A.  
Home State Bank  
House of Jacobs  
Insurance by Strehlow  
Jennie-O Turkey Store  
Long Lake Antiques  
Nelson International  
Peterson Brothers Funeral Home  
and Cremation Service  
Print Masters of Willmar  
Ridgewater College  
RMS Investments  
United Prairie Bank

## Kandiyohi County Historical Society's Wish List

- 8 1/2" x 11" white office copy paper
- Step stool for Sperry House
- Stamps -regular and post card
- Money towards Christmas Lights for Engine #2523

## Newsletter Email List

Please let us know if you would like to receive your newsletter over email by sending your request to kandhist@msn.com. Remember if you want to be included on our email list for upcoming news and programs, please let us know.

## Social Media

A reminder that Kandiyohi County Historical Society is on Facebook and Twitter! KCHS has also created a Facebook page for Great Northern Railway Engine #2523. Be sure to check it out by liking us or following us for updates and news!



# Thank you

*Your gifts help preserve our heritage for future generations!*

## New and Renewal Members:

### Friend:

Pete Rice, Newport, RI  
Raymond Embertson, Grand Rapids, MN  
Dale Boxrud, Willmar, MN  
Allen & Wanda Zaske, Spicer, MN  
Norway Lake Lutheran Historical Association  
Chuck & Sandy Roelofs, Willmar, MN  
Dr. George & Maxine Bergh, Mendota Heights, MN

### Family:

Monroe & Irene Wallin, Willmar, MN  
Rick & Darla Fagerlie, Willmar, MN  
Ralph & Judy Anderson, Willmar, MN  
Paul & Jane Hedin, New London, MN  
Darrel & Jeanette Larson, Willmar, MN  
Alan & Mary Quale, Henderson, NV  
Gordon & Betty Behm, Atwater, MN  
Bill & Pat Magnuson, Willmar, MN  
Janice Smith & Jim Reece, Columbia Heights, MN  
Jerry & Dixie Tilden, Montevideo, MN  
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Lyle & Gerry Nyberg, Willmar, MN  
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Loren & Judy Schultz, Willmar, MN  
Ethel Carlson, Willmar, MN  
Gayle & Linda Larson, Willmar, MN  
Don & Zona Niece, Willmar, MN  
Melville & Marie Linn, Minneapolis, MN  
Jon & Nancy Henslin, Willmar, MN  
Scott Kaercher, Blaine, MN  
Marvin & Mary Lou Olson, Willmar, MN  
James & Sandra Saulsbury, New London, MN  
Andy Berg, Willmar, MN  
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Vernice Gatewood, Svea, MN  
Ron & Dee Erpelding, Willmar, MN  
Werner & Myra Reining, Spicer, MN  
Robert Sogge, Spicer, MN  
Richard & Challis Ronning, Willmar, MN  
Kathryn & Max Petrick, Chanhassen, MN

### Individual:

Norma Holmgren, Atwater, MN  
Michael & Brenda Tait, Kandiyohi, MN  
Myron & Betty Larson, Willmar, MN  
Jerry Rice, New London, MN  
Maury Berg, Princeton, MN  
Nancy Synder, Willmar, MN  
Susan & Todd Stenson, Golden Valley, MN  
Kathy Johnson Fuchs, Richmond, MN  
D'Lynn Pickle, Atwater, MN  
Sharon Willen, New London, MN  
Mary Pieh, New London, MN  
Al Juhnke, Willmar, MN  
Steve Ellingboe, Willmar, MN  
Leonard Wickeraad, Willmar, MN  
Gary Nielsen, Willmar, MN  
Alden Vanderpol, Lake Lillian, MN  
Greg & Kathy Swenson, Atwater, MN  
Larry & Margellen Selchow, Willmar, MN  
Darrell Naber, Lake Lillian, MN  
Claire Juhnke, Willmar, MN  
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Daniel Fostervold, Atwater, MN  
Pete & Carla Fostervold, Willmar, MN  
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William Dowdell, Willmar, MN  
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Jack Huisinga, Bainbridge Island, WA  
Dan Liete, New London, MN

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Margherita Larmon, Willmar, MN  
Diane Ahlquist, Richfield, MN  
Floyd Perleberg, Willmar, MN  
Sue Morris, Willmar, MN  
Carolyn Kneisl, Willmar, MN  
Nancy Salmi, Grand Rapids, MN  
Judy Foley, Willmar, MN  
Howard McAdams, Pasadena, MD  
Carol Bragg, Fort Collins, CO  
Dave Ahlquist, Spicer, MN  
Odell Jacobson, St. Cloud, MN  
Mary Moehring, Taylor Falls, MN  
Mary Reins, Lake Lillian, MN

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## Special Donations:

### Member Contributions:

#### For Operating Support

Dr. Harris & Joan Hinderaker  
James & Sandra Saulsbury

### Memorials

In Memory of Adeline Gilbertson  
T.L. Asleson  
In Memory of Ed Mrzena  
Dale & Judy Johnson  
In Memory of Thurman Sagness  
Jackie & Cleve Powell  
John Sagness  
Dan & Pauline Reigstad  
Doug & Mariann Kobs

### Engine #2523

Robert Feichtinger  
Marvin & Mary Lou Olson

### Mona Nelson Endowment Fund

Ron & Dee Erpelding  
Jack Huisinga

thank you!





## Multi-Purpose Room Addition Update

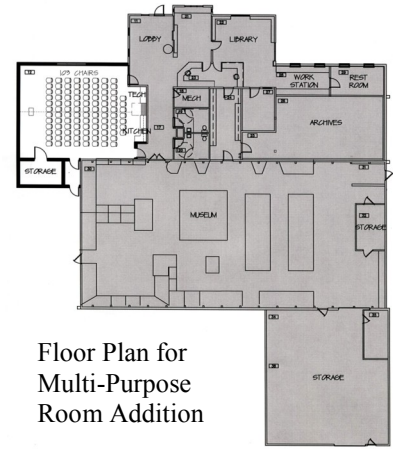
Thanks to all of the donors who have given a donation to the KCHS Building Fund. With your support, we will be able to build a room for the entire community. We are looking to facilitate a place for young and old to gather and share the stories of Kandiyohi County.

The KCHS board has accepted the bid for \$247,598 from Carlson Construction. The next step is to meet and step up a time table for construction.

Our fundraising efforts are ongoing. The committee is continually forming plans for raising the funds for this project. We are looking into grant and foundation programs as form of funding as well.

We are looking forward to wonderful community support KCHS has always received from its members and the community we live in. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact us at (320) 235-1881 or by emailing at [kandhist@msn.com](mailto:kandhist@msn.com). You can also go online to donate at [www.givemn.razoo.com/story/Multi-Purpose-Room-Addition](http://www.givemn.razoo.com/story/Multi-Purpose-Room-Addition).

Stayed tuned for more information in the coming months on the progress of this project. Thanks!



Floor Plan for  
Multi-Purpose  
Room Addition

### *Donations to Building Fund*

Tom & Catherine Bonde  
Jim & Sonia Collier  
Rick & Darla Fagerlie  
Wallace & Donna Gustafson  
Jerry & Ruby Johnson  
Larry Lohn  
Diane & Larry Macht  
Marlin Pauly  
Michael Pauly  
Ken & Dorothy Peterson  
Allan & Carol Rambow

***Thank You!***

### *Our Sympathy To Family and Friends-*

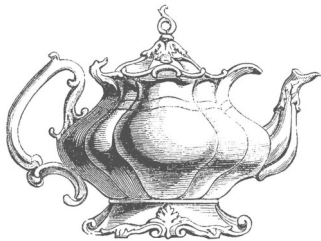
- **Ruth Hanson Anderson**, 89, KCHS lifetime member since 1981, passed away on May 31, 2012. She is survived by three children, eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.
- **Janet Gustafson Hagen**, 75, KCHS member since 2002, passed away on June 25, 2012. She is survived by husband, Bill, three children, six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.
- **Velma Wittman Swanson**, 100, Velma's Hat Display contributor, passed away on July 25, 2012. She is survived by two children, fifteen grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren.
- **Clark Budd**, 83, KCHS member since 2000, passed away on July 31, 2012. He is survived by six children, eight grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.
- **Thurman Sagness**, 96, KCHS lifetime member since 1980, passed away on July 31, 2012. He is survived by three children, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.
- **Ed Mrzena**, 88, KCHS lifetime member since 1981, passed away on August 2, 2012. He is survived by wife, Arlene, two children, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

# U.S. Dakota War of 1862 150th Anniversary Events

**Thursday, September 20th at 7pm**

## **Return to Shetek: the Courage of the Fool Soldiers Documentary and Discussion**

In 1862 ten young Lakota men, who became known as the "Fool Soldiers", rescued Lake Shetek white captives, including two women and six children. Here is their story, told through living descendants of the captives and their rescuers, who met after nearly 150 years of separation. A short discussion will follow the viewing of this video.



## *Eighth Annual Tea at the Sperry House*

**Friday, October 5, 2012 ~ 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m.**

The eighth annual "Tea at the Sperry House" will be held Friday, October 5, 2012, serving at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. A variety of tea and authentic treats made from century-old recipes will be served. The guest speaker, Jaclyn Theis, will speak on the History of the High Tea.

Cost is \$20 per person (adults only), with proceeds to benefit KCHS. Only 16 people will be served for each of the two teas, so reservations will fill quickly! Stop at the KCHS museum to register or call 320-235-1881.

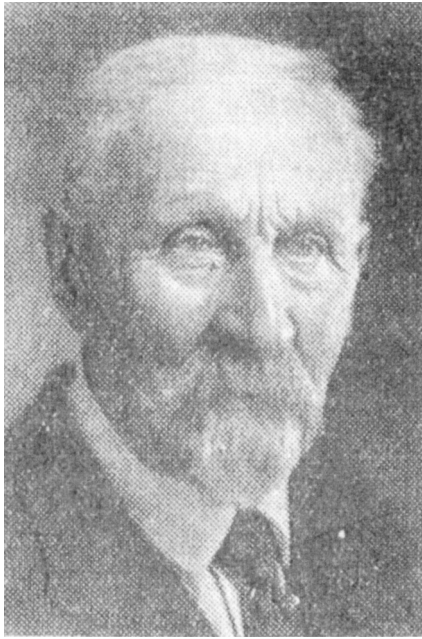
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## *Sperry House Dinner Friday, October 26*

Try for a chance to win an elegant dinner for two at the Sperry House, with Walleye and Bison catered by Keith Pattison and the 19th Avenue Grill & Lounge. Tickets are on sale at the Kandiyohi

County Historical Society for a suggested donation of \$5.00 per ticket, with the proceeds used for restoring the Victorian Sperry House. The drawing will be held at the KCHS Annual meeting. Stop by the KCHS Museum to buy your tickets or call for more information, (320) 235-1881.





***MEMOIRS OF  
CHRISTIAN HENNINGS  
G.A.R.  
Continued....***

We had enlisted to go south, but the Indians had broken out at New Ulm and Fort Ridgely. All the able bodied men were away at war, and only old men, woman, and children were left, and the Indians took advantage of this fact. It was August, and very hot, but we fitted out with good heavy winter uniforms of heavy wool suiting, winter trousers and blouses, poncho blankets, (rubber on one side), canteen, haversack, rifle, and ammunition; we were sent on as soon as we were equipped, with General Sibley in command, and Colonel Crooks of St. Paul in command of the Sixth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, of which our fifty boys from Blue Earth County, together with fifty more from Washington County -most of them from lumber camps near Stillwater, and a rough lot they were- constituted Company I of the Sixth Minnesota. Captain Brumely, who was a heavy drinker, Lieutenant Slaughter, Second Lieutenant Hastings, Orderly Sergeant D.O. O'Brien also a heavy drinker, were our officers. The Stillwater boys were hard drinkers, and there was much trouble. The first night out some of them got drunk, and the rest of us had to stand guard over them.

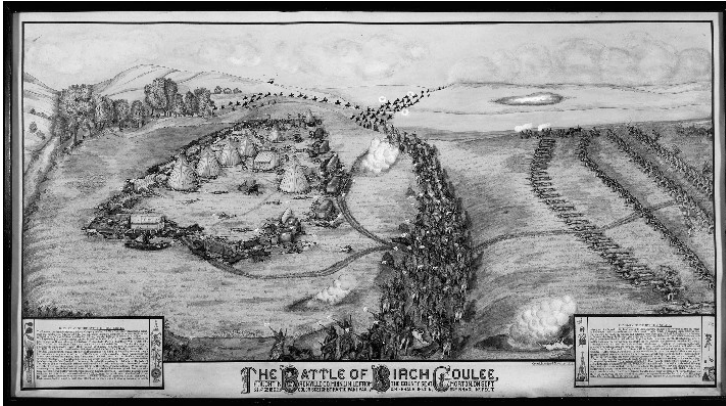
As we marched along we began to meet refugees from the prairies- cows, oxen, horses, mules- an-

thing that could pull hitched to anything that could be pulled, piled high with their possessions in a forlorn hope of saving something in their flight, the road was clogged so that the soldiers had to march outside and make a new road. At some point beyond Henderson we struck west towards Swan Lake, and then towards Fort Ridgely, which was besieged by the attack on New Ulm by the Sioux Indians. We found at the Fort hundreds of settlers that flocked there for help. They not only took the room, but ate up the provisions, and used the ammunition. The Indians had come from the Lower Sioux Agency, south of Fort Ridgely, where they had helped themselves from the government stores of ammunition, massacred most of the people at the agency, and attacked Fort Ridgely. They fled when the soldiers approached, and were driven toward Yellow Medicine, to the West where their headquarters were, with thousands of Little Crows warriors. Little Crow was chief leader of the uprising.

In a day or two after we reached Fort Ridgely, details from each company were sent to accompany a volunteer company that had been organized to go out to rescue the settlers. John Bean and I were detailed on that expedition from Company I. Next day we reached Birch Coulee and Beaver Falls. We had to bury the dead. Some say there were a hundred, but I remember only thirty two. That night after the Burial we marched back to Birch Coulee, a splendid place on Birch Creek, with fine water and plenty of fire wood in the grove. But all of us were inexperienced in military affairs, and we camped in front of the trees. Our hundred horses were tied in a circle outside the wagons that circled around the camp. All was quiet and we were very tired. At about four o'clock all was aroused by the shot of a rifle. A guard had fired upon an Indian that had crawled up. Five hundred Indians had watched the burial party all day, and thought that now all were asleep. They had surrounded the camp. There was a ravine in front, a slough behind, on the south timber, only the west was opened. They started up the creek and slough on the west. Their idea was to crawl up the creek and kill the guards, then rush and kill the whole encampment. The guard saw the first Indian and fired, rousing the whole camp in an instant. The Indians began shooting at once, from all sides into the camp, killing nearly all the horses in the first and second volleys. The tents were shot so they looked like colanders; some soldiers were killed in their tents before they had a chance to come out, and many more wounded. The dead horses were the only breast work we had; we dug up earth against the horses to protect us. That was the morning

of September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1862.

They kept us there all day, shooting once in a while, the soldiers unable to make any effective attack on them, because they were hidden the bushes. A woman that had been picked up at Beaver Creek the day before stayed in a covered wagon, all through that battle, covered by the bags, but the canvas over her



was shot to pieces. So they kept us all the next night, picking and killing. Finally General Sibley at Fort Ridgely came to our relief. They came within two miles of our camp and camped there overnight. The country was rough and if they had marched in by night they probably would have been annihilated. Early in the morning of September 3<sup>rd</sup> Sibley started towards Birch Coulee, came around from the North to our camp, and drove the Indians West, shooting at them with two little howitzers that picked off the Indians and kept them moving, up towards Morton, Redwood Falls, etc., along the river. When General Sibley had driven to a fair distance, they found twenty three dead and sixty wounded. These they took back to Fort Snelling, to the graveyard there, though some our probably buried in the cemetery near Fort Ridgely.

After a few days Sibley's army was reorganized and sent west, across the Minnesota River; but I can't remember the name of the place. Probably near the Lower Agency, where there was a ferry. I remember marching along the south side of the river, which was high, so we could see the beautiful river valley. We camped that night at Wood Lake, on the east side, and next morning when we were getting breakfast the Indians appeared over on the west side of the lake on horseback uttering their war cries. We had orders to fall in, and by that time Indians were streaming in from the south side of the lake, to surround us as they had done at Birch Coulee, and corner us between the lake and the river. We were sent out on the left to stop them.

The Third Minnesota, down south, had surrendered Corinth without a shot being fired; it was called cowardice, but I don't know, - it is hard to know all sides of a story. But they were exchanged on parole and sent up to Minnesota, and had arrived just the night before we needed them so badly. They were sent out on our extreme right. If they had come just as they did, we could not have stopped the Indians on the left, and there would not have any more of this story. The battle raged for two hours, when the Indians were driven off, and at noon we saw them gather in council on the hill, to decide whether to attack again, or to give up break camp. Finally they disappeared to the west, on their way back to Yellow Medicine. They had now been defeated at New Ulm, Fort Ridgely, and Wood Lake, and had decided to break camp at Yellow Medicine and go west.

Col. Crooks was determined to pursue the Indians that afternoon, a move that would look alright to most soldiers; but General Sibley held off that afternoon and all the next day, and everyone blamed Sibley for being friendly to the Indians. Afterwards history showed that Sibley was right. The Indians had two hundred white women and children prisoners that carried with them; after the battle of Wood Lake, the friendly Indians amount them took charge of these prisoners, and told Little Crow they would not fight any more; and they sent a private message to General Sibley to hold off and not pursue them, for the hostile Indians had warned them that if they were pursued they would murder the white women and children. But the country and the army did not know this until later.

When orders came to move, we went quickly, but at Yellow Medicine all was deserted. Afterwards, they moved to Camp Release, so named because the white prisoners were released there. There is a monument there now. When we got to this camp, the Indians were divided into two camps, the friendly Indians with the prisoners on the north, and the hostile band on the south. They all started off towards Big Stone Lake, and Sibley did not try to stop them, for he wanted to protect the friendly Indians and prisoners, and in the



*Camp Release*

morning all the hostile forces were gone. You can imagine the joy in the camp when the prisoners were released which was the first thing done after we occupied the grounds. Most of these women and children had lost their families, but afterwards some of them found their kin again.

After a day or so, a company of some of the soldiers was sent down to the river bottom to get logs, and in a few days they had built a big log jail, perhaps a hundred feet long. Parties were sent out over the prairie to catch the renegades, now scattered all over the country. We would bring in ten or twelve every evening, and they were put in the jail. Then the trouble was to feed them, for we had so pitifully little for ourselves. But somehow, we all lived. There were also all those friendly Indians, with their squaws and papooses who had made camp, and they had to be fed too. The country was new and poor, with few settlers, and scant supplies.

One day a party of us was out about twelve miles from Camp Release, on our way back with a few Indian prisoners. We stopped for lunch and were about to build a fire to make coffee when someone noticed a light to the northwest. The prairie was on fire! The grass was dry as timber, and soon the air was filled with smoke. Someone suggested a backfire, to meet the fire. But pretty soon the air was so thick with cinders that we could hardly breathe. There was terrific wind, so that we could hardly move, but we got to camp before dark, and found the tents blown down but nothing could be done until the wind went down. We got out prisoners into the jail, but anything else was impossible. That was one of our "glorious" trips!

It was now getting late in October, and already there were cold days. Our thick clothes that had made the summer a nightmare of suffering with the heat were now worn to rags; our shoes were broken and worn out; our blankets torn and poor, the ponchos also worn out. We were in a bad plight, almost out of provisions, and a hundred and fifty miles from supplies at Fort Snelling, which was the nearest place we could expect to get anything.

After our Indian prisoners had been court-martialed and given trial at the log jail, thirty-eight were condemned to death. The rest were pardoned. The thirty-eight were chained together, two and two, and when orders came to move, they were loaded into government wagons. We soldiers had to walk. Fifteen hundred friendly Indians, with their families, followed the army east. There was nothing in the country, and I do not know what they lived on, nor what we lived on!

The first day out from Camp Release with all this riff-raff, we got to Yellow Medicine in the evening. The government had put up buildings there to civilize the Indians, but they had destroyed them in August, so there was nothing but ruins. But the remnants of walls helped to break the fierce winds and the drifting snow. With our miserable clothes, the furious storm that night caused terrible suffering. We dug out next morning and marched to the Lower Agency. The weather moderated somewhat so it was not so cold, but very wet and our shoes were poor and food so scant that we were a miserable lot. Yet I remember they took us out, one morning at Lower Agency and drilled us for two hours in the snow. Perhaps it was good discipline, but it seemed hard.

From there we went to New Ulm, and as we approached the town, the Indian prisoners in the wagons began to shiver and crouch down in the wagons.

*We were in a bad plight, almost out of provisions, and a hundred and fifty miles from supplies at Fort Snelling, which was the nearest place we could expect to get anything.*

They knew how to the people of New Ulm felt, after the massacre there and they feared for their lives as the citizens came to stare at this expedition. But before we got to the city limits it was impossible to cross through the town. New Ulm is in a sort of basin and we had to make a detour along the south bank. The people came with all sorts of weapons, determined to revenge themselves on the Indians. I was on guard by one wagon and while I did not actually see any Indians killed, I think some were, but finally we got away and in two or three days made Mankato where we left the Indians in the jail and marched on our way through St. Peter, Henderson, Shakopee to Fort Snelling. All the friendly Indians came too, and camped on the flats between the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers until spring, and the government had to feed them. In the spring they were all shipped on the river-boats down to St. Louis, transferred there to the Missouri River up to the Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota and this is where they fought now and then afterwards.

My company, Company I, was stopped at Chaska instead of going on to Fort Snelling and in day or two we were ordered to Glencoe. We marched through the snow, passing through a little town, New America, in the woods; and when we got to Glencoe

our reception was certainly fine. Our quarters were an empty schoolhouse with no furniture at all, bare floors without either hay or straw, almost no food and our clothes mere rags. After a while they let us use a Catholic church that was partly open and was not plastered. They put in some huge stove which would take a cord of wood at a time; and we got along as best we could until we were ordered to Mankato to be present at the hanging of the thirty-eight condemned Indians. Soldiers have to obey orders and we marched. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, 1862, the coldest day I know of with a terrific wind, the Indians were marched out from the jail and up a runway to a platform that had been erected in front of the jail. A rope was placed around the neck of each Indian, a cap was pulled over each head; a priest was there; someone sprung a lever and the platform dropped leaving the Indians hanging. One fell, but he was hung again. We were all on guard. It was a cruel sight, but the citizens as well as the soldiers had suffered so much that there was no crying about it. They were buried in one long grave in two rows in the river bottom. A guard was posted there that night, but still a great many of those bodies were missing the next morning.

We marched back to Glencoe, to our cold quarters and were kept there as an out-post guard until April, when we were ordered back to Fort Snelling and then it was that my troubles began.

We had been expecting to go South, but I had had some spells of heart trouble and the doctor said I was unfit for service and recommended my discharge. Some of my comrades said they would jump at the chance, but I had nowhere to go, no prospects, no job—I did not want to be discharged. On May 9, 1863, my discharge arrived; I was out of the service and I cried. But no one had any sympathy for me except George Crippen of my company.

“What are you going to do, Chris?” he asked

“I don’t know. I have no place to live.” I replied

“I know one place you can go and I will write you a letter,” said George. “My father lived down near Cottage Grove in Washington County. My brother John is down south and his wife and two babies are living there with the old folks and my sister is there too, while her husband, Wallace Kelsey is south with John in the 12<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin. Father is old and it is hard

for him with us boys all in the army; so if you would help them, you are welcome to stay.”

I crossed the river on ferry and walked to St. Paul. George told me to follow Third Street to the depot. But back there was on great lake, so filled with logs that had drifted in from the Mississippi that I could walk across them clear to the other bank. It was twenty miles to Cottage Grove, and I made it that day. At Furbis’ store I asked if they knew Mr. Crippen. “I am a discharged soldier from Company I of the Sixth Minnesota and George Crippen and I were comrades,” I said, “and George has given me a letter to his father to ask if I may stay with them for a little while until I am stronger.”

They gave me directions and I got out there that evening. I told them who I was and gave them the letter from George. You would have thought I was their own son, they way they received me! George had explained that I was invalided and they seemed to be only too glad to take me in. The kindness people showed me in those days when I was in need! They were so good to me and my heart was not badly affected so I helped what I could with the work. Mr. Crippen was a good farmer and a hard workers; but he would plan so that we could drive around after work and see places of interest, so kind to a lonely boy!

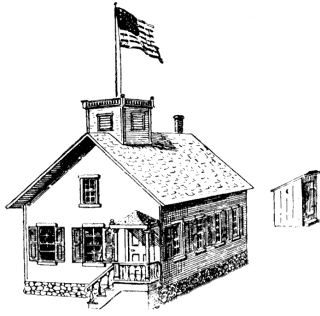
Later I worked for a man at Cottage Grove; his name was Pettit and he had been driven from his claim up north by Indians. He was too crippled with rheumatism to do much. I broke forty acres of land for him and he paid me off and I found work in Cottage Grove where I met John McCollum and where I joined the militia home guard.

John said to me, “Chris, let us go!”

“Well, John, I want to go, but I do not know whether I could, with my discharge.” But it came about that officers came to Prescott, Wisconsin, to enlist recruits for the 12th Wisconsin. Mr. Crippen was going down, with his daughter, to send messages to his son and son-in-law, and he took us with them. That same day we enlisted and went to Winona on the steamboat. I was in Company A of the 12th Wisconsin. We went to Madison on the railroad, and there we showed our enlistments and got our uniforms and transportations to Cairo by railroad, thence to Vicksburg by steamboat.

....Continued in December newsletter

*...and we got along as best we could until we were ordered to Mankato to be present at the hanging of the thirty-eight condemned Indians. Soldiers have to obey orders and we marched.*



# RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF KANDIYOHI COUNTY

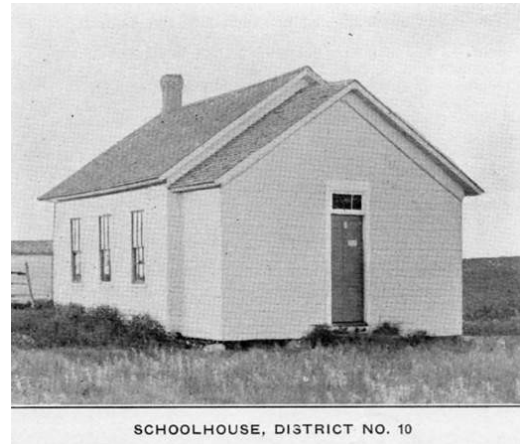
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## COLFAX TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICTS Written by Carolyn Kneisl

The school history of Colfax dates back to the very early period in the permanent organization of Monongalia County. Districts Number 10 and 12 were established at one of the first meetings of the County Commissioners in 1866. The schoolhouse in the former district was built in 1867 and in the latter in 1871. In 1869 district No. 31 was established and the schoolhouse was built in 1871. District No. 13, in the southwestern part of the township, was established in 1874 and a schoolhouse was built the same year. All of the first schoolhouses of Colfax were log structures. The first public school in the community was taught by Mrs. Matilda Randall in 1866.

## DISTRICT 10

The original petition for the formation of District No. 10 lacks a date, but it probably was established in the latter part of 1866. The signers were: E. V. Price, J. H. Stauffer, John Q. Andrews, Elijah Andrews, Rolla C. Hudson, James Fuller, George Jonson, J. L. Whitla, Michael Batterberry, L. B. Geer, Louis Olson. In 1873 the following portions of the original territory of the district were set off to form district No. 67: E ½ of E ½ of section 19; E ½ of sections 30 and 31; all of sections 20, 29, and 32. On August 13, 1879, the lands owned by Andrew Olson were set off to district 12. The lands owned by E. Dahlberg have been set off to district No. 13. On April 29, 1901, the lands owned by A. Olson were set off from district No. 12 to No. 10.



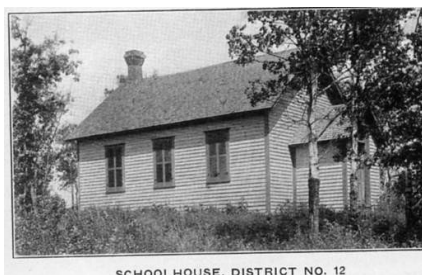
The first schoolhouse was built in 1867. It was a log structure and the citizens of the district joined in putting it up. This building was used until 1883, when a frame schoolhouse was built at a cost of \$205. Two years later there is a record of \$136.25 being spent for "repairs or improvements." The schoolhouse is 18 x 24 with an entry 18 x 10 feet. Since 1885 about \$100 was spent for repairs on schoolhouse and improvements on grounds. In 1894 the district adopted the free text book system. In 1897 a school library was established. The library had 61 volumes. The clerk's report of 1901 gives the value of school apparatus at \$75.

This district was probably one of the most progressive districts in the county. In 1870 they had six months of school, and the same in 1873. The result of this liberality towards the school is shown in the record of teachers in this county, District 10 having furnished more teachers than any other country district in the county. The first school was taught by Mrs. Mathilda Randall on her homestead on the NW ¼ of section 29 in 1866. This district was closed in 1966.

## DISTRICT 12

A petition dated at Burbank, Aug. 27, 1866, asked for the formation of a school district out of the following territory: Sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12 of what is now the town of Colfax. There is no record of the time the petition was granted, but it was probably at the meeting in August, when so many of the school districts in Monongalia County were established.

The first schoolhouse in the district was built in 1871. It was a log structure, and was built on the southeast corner of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  section 12, on land belonging to Andrew Larson. At a special meeting held Nov. 25, 1876, it was decided to move the building to the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  section 12. In 1889 a new schoolhouse was built on that site. The old log schoolhouse was sold to a Mr. Peterson, who tore it down, loaded the logs on a car and shipped them to Kenmore, N. D. in 1901. The new schoolhouse was a frame structure 18 x 26, 10 feet high with a hall, 6 x 8 feet.

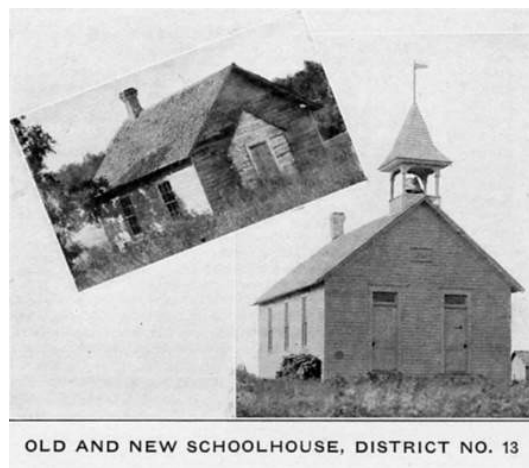


At a special meeting held February 24, 1894, it was decided to move the schoolhouse to section 11 upon an acre site, covered with a fine natural grove of poplar, oak and ash trees. This school, which was popularly known as the Lake Prairie School, has one of the finest locations for a country school in Kandiyohi County. Julia Nelson was the teacher in 1871. The school district was closed in 1952 and the building was sold.

## DISTRICT 13

At a meeting of the county commissioners on March 18, 1874, they accepted the petition of A. Norin and others, asking for the establishment of a new school district comprising the following territory: Sections 10, 20 21, 30, 29, 28, 31, 32, 33, west half of sections 22, 27 and 34. The petition was signed by A. Norin, Ole Halvorson, Peter Aslund, Erick Erickson, Olof Peterson, J. Lundquist, F. Lundgren, A. G. Lundgren, Petter Peterson and Erick Dahlberg. The district was established as district No. 13.

The district was organized at a meeting held at the residence of N. C. Highstrom on October 3, 1874. The following were elected officers: N. G. Highstrom, clerk; Nels Peterson, Treasurer; A. Nordin, director. Three months of school was voted. It was decided to build a log schoolhouse. Every resident freeholder voluntarily contributed some logs, and assisted in building the house. A large portion of the district consisted of timber lots belonging to non-residents, who thus contributed nothing to the building. A tax of \$175 was therefore levied, and the people who had assisted in the building had their share of the tax refunded. In this way the non-resident land owners were made to pay their share in the construction of the building. The old log schoolhouse standing on the old site on the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  section 29 was used until 1900, when a new frame structure, 20 x 30 feet, was built about forty rods east of the northwest corner of



section 33. J. L. Gustafson of Lake Andrew had the contract for building the schoolhouse, and was paid \$78 for his work. The new schoolhouse was well built and supplied with up-to-date furniture and apparatus. The school was consolidated with New London in 1959 but classes were held though 1960. The school building was sold in 1963 and became a dwelling house. The buyer was Mrs. Christine Korsmo.

## DISTRICT 31

The district was established by the board of county commissioners of Monongalia County on June 26, 1869, acting on the petition of J. C. Johnson et. al. Notice to organize was sent Sept. 8, 1869. The new district embraced the following territory: Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 17 and 18, town of Colfax (then a part of Burbank).

The first term of school was taught by Mrs. Simon Stone at her home, probably in 1869. Miss Carrie Berkey taught one term in Stephen Olson's house.

The first schoolhouse was probably built in 1871. It was a log structure, which in the clerk's report of 1872 is valued at \$200. This was evidently an overestimate, for the next year he cut down the value to \$50. This building was used until 1881 when a frame schoolhouse was built at a cost of \$400. In 1897 the building was repaired and enlarged, at a cost of \$383.33. The building was 24 x 30 feet, 12 feet high to the ceiling and is one of the best built schoolhouses in our country districts. It was equipped with a full line of modern furniture and apparatus. A library was established in 1890. The free text book system was adopted in 1901. The building was beautifully situated in a natural hardwood grove. This school was closed in the year 1963 and the old schoolhouse was sold.



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