

Baldwin Area News Briefs

1875 – If the potatoes were large, the grain yield wasn't. The Baldwin area averaged only eight to nine bushels per acre due to a dry June and July, a wet August, and an early frost. Grasshoppers were also a problem. On Bear Island alone they devoured five acres of corn and three acres of wheat.

1879 – Baldwin elected the following officers on town meeting day: Chairman – board of supervisors, Frank Knapp; supervisors, Sumner Patten and Jule Rowison; clerk, W.H. Shaw; treasurer, C.H. Chadbourne; assessor, Asa Love; justice of the peace, C.H. Chadbourne; constables, Sumner, Patten and Pierson.

1879 – The hill below Mr. Cravens on the Spencer and Baldwin road, is in an almost impassable condition.

1883 – When a man identified as Mr. Harrison was caught stealing horses, he told the judge that he was an agent for Abraham Lincoln who had sent him to Elk River to ferret out some stories. The judge discounted the tale and sentenced Harrison to Stillwater for three years.

1892 – Fire took the house of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Larson of Big Lake in February. R.N. Patchin of Baldwin lost his house but saved the contents.

1894 – Baldwin was the banner town of the county for the number of soldiers in the Spanish American War.

1901 – School District 10 in Baldwin opened with a blackboard as the teacher's only working tool. It was soon discovered that Henry Murphy, who had been elected school district clerk, had removed all of the textbooks. Murphy, apparently a stickler for the rules, thought the school was using the free textbooks without adopting the proper plan according to the law. The ensuing uproar was so great that Murphy had to replace the books.

1902 – A strange accident happened to Bart Healy of Baldwin when he watered his horses at a well. The well caved in and one of his horses fell 30 feet into six feet of water. A derrick was erected and the horse was brought out uninjured.

1902 – The first occupant of the new jail at Elk River was Will Nelson. He was arrested by Sheriff Brown when he stole a double harness from Joe Hulbert's store, sold it back to him, stole it again and then tried to sell it to M.L. Forth. He was given 60 days for petty larceny.

1904 – There were numerous cases of smallpox in Becker and the Towns of Blue Hill and Baldwin.

1904 – Max Merke was charged in Elk River with larceny for stealing 50 bushels of rye from B. Haley of Baldwin. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 90 days or a \$50 fine. He chose jail.

1909 – A water accident took the lives of Francis Doerner and Buy Peterson who drowned in Clear Lake. Doerner fell from the stern of the boat she and Peterson were riding in, and Peterson valiantly tried to rescue her. Both drowned in their attempts to reach safety. Dragging efforts found the bodies wrapped in each other's arms.

1919 – At district court, during November, seven persons became citizens: John Swanson of Big Lake, Toval Torsen of Blue Hill, John Tofte of Baldwin, Ole Hanson of Orrock, Carl Olson of Big Lake, Carl Nelson of Orrock and Jens Olsen of Blue Hill who changed his name to James Olsen Mayer.

1919 – Cars from Elk River to the Twin Cities area were stolen by three men believed to be the robbers. W. Johnson, a farmer living between Cambridge and Princeton, was shot and killed when he failed to stop at a roadblock. Orders had been given that no chances were to be taken.

1939 – Eighty 4-H members attended camp in July at Elk Lake in Baldwin.

1941 – A Baldwin couple became the parents of triplets in January. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Wark had three boys weighing from three pounds, three ounces to four pounds, one ounce. An incubator and a nurse were sent from the Child Hygiene Division to care for the babies.

1954 – Thursday evening about 9:15 a heavy rain and a high wind struck the Princeton area. It did no damage in the village, but it blew down a barn on the Ben O'Neil farm in Baldwin Township. The barn was moved about eight feet off its cement foundation and partly caved in.

1954 – About 470,000 trees were planted in the county as windbreaks. Grasshoppers infested the county. Palmer, Becker, Elk River, Baldwin and Livonia Townships were the hardest hit.

1956 – Baldwin Township farmer Merle Knipling started a system which enabled him to save time and work. With the new system, Merle could attach the milking machine while the cow stood in its own little "parlor". A movable feedbox was installed and could be filled by turning a crank. After the cow was milked, the box was shoved aside and the cow was then free to make her way out of the barn. The barn was able to accommodate eight cows at a time while others waited their turn in a special pen at the rear of the milking building.

1972 – Misty, a six-month-old collie saved the lives of the Lloyd Belanger family when their rural Zimmerman home burned. She was awarded a plaque from Hans W. Hall, a member of the Board of the American Humane Society and Fred Cady, president of the Hennepin County branch of the society/

(Found: The Growth of Sherburne County 1875 - 1975 by the Sherburne County Historical Society, Becker, MN.)