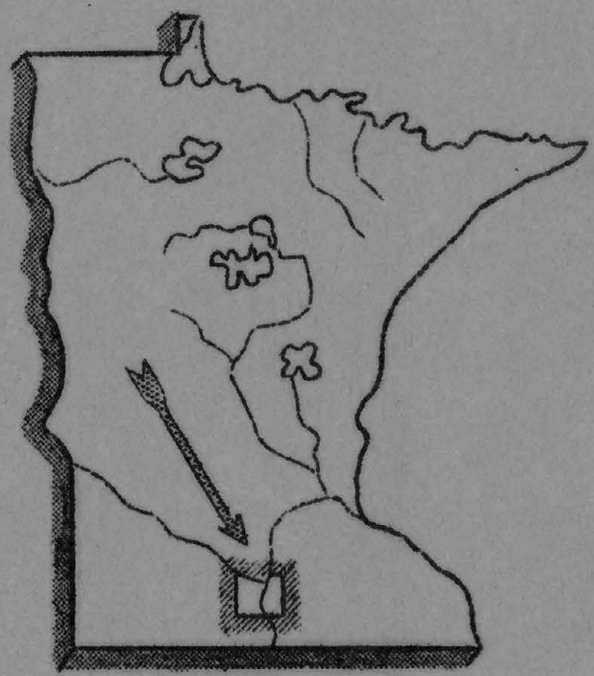
Minnesota Works Progress Administration: Writers Project Research Notes.

Copyright Notice:

Version 3
August 20, 2018

MINNESOTA
COUNTY
HISTORIES
SERIES

BLUE EARTH
COUNTY



MINNESOTA
FEDERAL
WRITERS
PROJECT

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This manuscript, representing a child's history of Blue Earth County, Minnesota, is a unit in a project to supply the schools of the State with historical material for each county of the State, this material to be so written that it will have distinct juvenile appeal.

The plan of such histories was originally conceived by Dr. Mabel Ulrich, former director of the Federal Writers' Project. At the time that Dr. Ulrich left the project (July, 1938), several histories were completed and approved for publication by the Department of Education. Others, begun by Dr. Ulrich, are currently being edited.

Certain editorial changes have been made in this manuscript since the withdrawal of Dr. Ulrich from the project. In the main, however, the style of writing, its adaptation to the younger age level, and the character of the content incorporated are substantially the same as were present in the completed manuscript which Dr. Ulrich left.

****

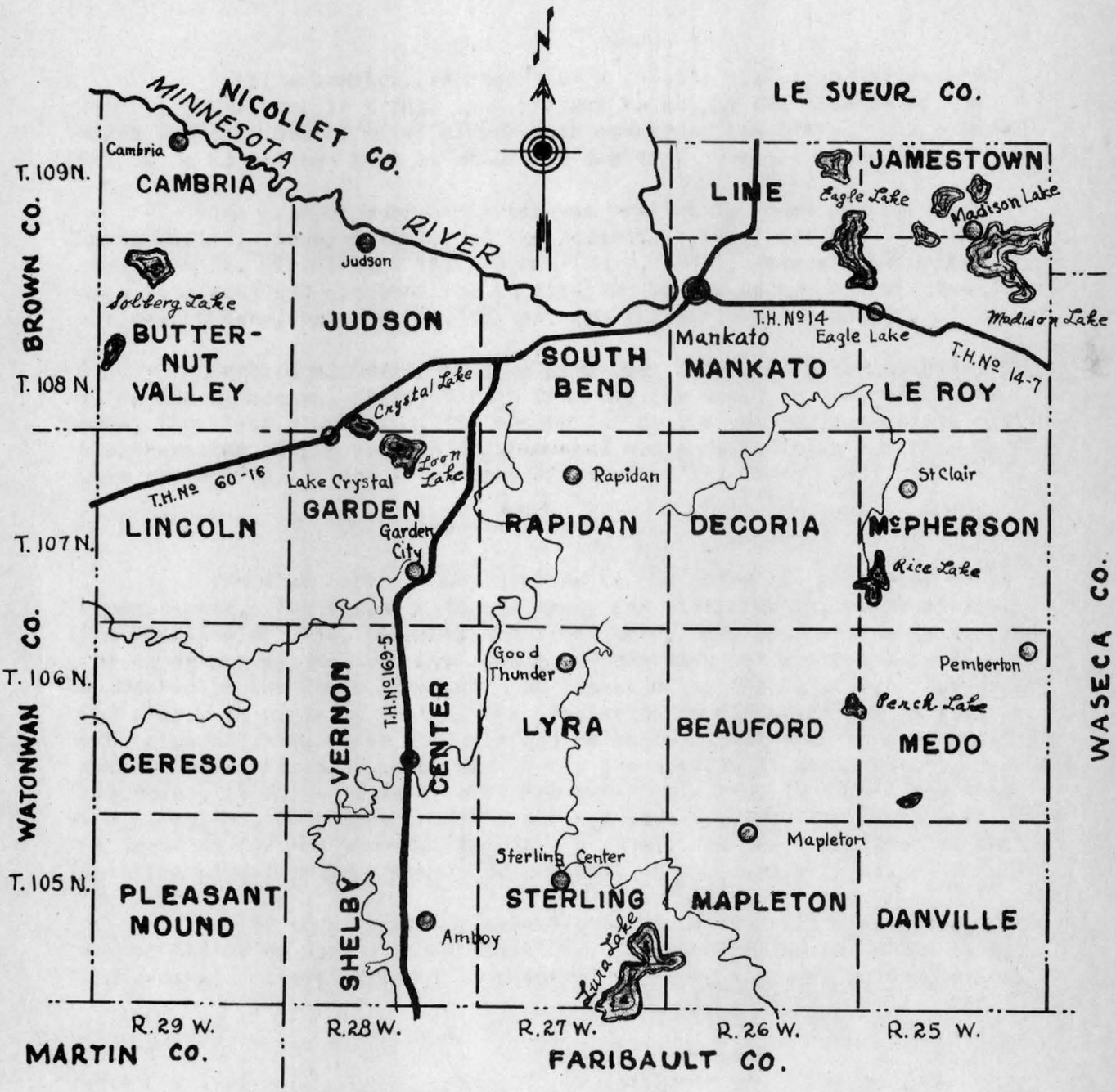
The Blue Earth County History is the third of the series to be mimeographed. The three units now ready for distribution, representing the counties of Rice, Wabasha, and Blue Earth, have been chosen as samples for experimental use and have been mimeographed under a special fund allocated to the State Department of Education by the S.E.R.A. They differ widely in style of writing and adaptation to different age levels. It was believed that, since no one could be certain just what type of writing and emphasis should be practiced in the preparation of these county histories, it might be well to experiment with a few, in such a way that the appeal could be made to different age levels. The Blue Earth unit is designed for the youngest school age level, and the style used is such that its appeal would probably be greatest at the earlier ages.

It is hoped that the teachers of Minnesota will find these county histories useful and stimulating. If such proves to be the case, the Federal Writers' Project is prepared to carry the work to completion.

November 1938

John G. Rockwell
Commissioner of Education

Parker T. Van de Mark
Acting State Director
Federal Writers' Project



BLUE EARTH COUNTY

Scale 1" = 5 Mi.

BLUE EARTH COUNTY

The-Man-In-The-Moon

Johnny looked up from the book in front of him, pushed his chair away from the table, and stretched as he said sleepily.

"Boy, oh boy, Dad! Robinson Crusoe and his Man Friday had a wonderful time on that island, didn't they? I wish I could get shipwrecked and find an island to live on like that without anyone to tell me all the time that I had to go to bed."

He added the last as his mother looked up from her sewing and shook a stern finger at the big old grandfather clock.

"I used to wish the same thing," his father said as he turned the page of the evening paper. "I remember that once when I had just finished reading old Robinson I got a friend of mine, Harry Clark, to camp with me for a week-end on a little island in the river that ran through our farm. We had a fine time until a storm came up and then we beat it for home." He laughed and glanced over at the book that Johnny had just laid down.

"Fred and I are going to do that tomorrow," Johnny replied, stretching broadly once again. "We're going to ask Uncle Dick for that old lumber he has stored behind the barn and make a raft, and then we're going out to that little island and build a shack and cook our meals and everything. I'm going to be Crusoe and Fred is going to be Friday."

"I'm afraid you won't get a chance to do any of that if you don't go to bed," his mother put in. She laid down her sewing and got up to draw the shades. "You know how Fred is," she added. "If you're not ready

tomorrow morning he won't wait even five minutes. Now run along because six o'clock will be here all too soon."

"All right, I'll go. Look, I'm almost in bed now!"

With one leap he cleared the room and landed on the bottom step of the stairs. Then there was a sound of brief, noisy thunder as his feet hit every two steps with a bang, and cleared the hall upstairs.

"Did that boy ever walk upstairs?" his father demanded, as he went out to the kitchen where Mrs. Reed was checking over the food in the refrigerator.

"Not that I can remember--you'll just have to be thankful that he isn't twins. I'm trying to find what I have for his lunch tomorrow," she finished, taking a dish of butter out to soften. "Do you think that sandwiches and fruit and baked beans will be enough?"

"If Fred takes everything I heard him talking about tonight that will be too much," Mr. Reed replied. "But you just wait and see. They think now that they won't come home until Sunday night, but mark my word, as soon as the sun goes down tomorrow night they'll come dragging home. That island is nice enough during the day, but they won't think it's so good after dark. Here, shall I let Towser out?"

The old Collie walked slowly across the room and stood expectantly at the door. In his younger days he had pawed eagerly when he heard the word "door," but now he stood patiently and waited while Mr. Reed patted his head and then unfastened the latch.

From where Johnny was lying he could hear the door open, and then the rustling sound of leaves being moved lightly as old Towser ran around the side of the house sniffing eagerly of the clear October night. I'll bet that old boy is going out to see all of his dog friends and have a good time poking around the alleys and streets, he thought enviously. There's such a

big moon tonight I probably can see him.

He rose upon his elbow and moved over closer to the window sill. Above the pine trees an enormous harvest moon was sitting. Its glittering face shone down on Mankato and made it look as though the sun had forgotten to go to bed. Johnny peered out sharply and saw his bicycle leaning against the tree. Gosh, it's so light I can almost count the spokes, he said to himself. And there goes old Towser poking around to see what's up. I'll take him with me tomorrow if Fred doesn't care, only we'll have to tie him to a tree so he doesn't eat our lunch.

Slowly the house settled down for the night with small creaks and groans. He heard his father and mother come upstairs to bed, and then the stillness was heavier than ever with only the ticking of the old grandfather clock sounding in the night. Johnny pulled up the blankets around his neck and turned so that he could keep his eye on the moon.

You've been up there a long time, he thought drowsily. You've looked down on Minnesota for years and years and I'll bet you've seen a lot. I wish I could have seen all that. I'd like to have sat up there and looked down on the Indians and pioneers and everything else that was exciting. I wonder how long he's been up there anyway. I wonder.....

"It's been millions of years," a voice said. "It's been much, much longer than you can imagine even if you think back until you think that there is no further to go."

"What!" Johnny exclaimed, rising up in bed and staring around the room. "Who spoke to me, anyway?"

"I spoke," the voice said again. "I said that I'd been up there millions of years. Here, look over this way."

Johnny turned towards the opposite window ans stared unbelievingly. Sure enough there was something, a big white gentleman who leaned back in the

chair and smiled. Why, who--why, could it be the Man-In-The-Moon?

"Are you Mr. Moon?" he asked in astonishment. "Are you really Mr. Moon, and if you are why did you come down here to see me? I thought you always stayed up in the sky."

"Oh, goodness no!" Mr. Moon laughed. "Don't you suppose that I get tired of doing nothing but climbing up when the sun goes to bed and sitting up there in the sky all night until he gets ready to get up in the morning? Don't you suppose I get tired of that and want a change once in a while?"

"Well, yes, I suppose you do," Johnny said thoughtfully. "But how did you get down here and why did you come to see me?"

"You see, it's like this," Mr. Moon said, after a moment. "How I got here is a secret and I can't tell you that, but why I came to see you is simple enough. I happened to be looking out over Mankato a few minutes ago and I saw you glance up at me and wonder how long I'd been there. Not that you expected an answer, of course," he added laughingly.

"I should say I didn't expect an answer," Johnny replied firmly. "Well, well," he shook his head wonderingly, "this is certainly a surprise. No one will believe it if I tell them tomorrow, will they?"

"I don't suppose they will," Mr. Moon replied. "Last night I went to see a boy in London who wanted to know something about the first kings they had in England--I suppose he had a history test coming up the next day. Well, do you know I told him everything that he wanted to know and what do you suppose he said?"

Johnny shook his head.

"Well, he said," Mr. Moon spoke very emphatically, "he said, 'No one will believe it. No one will believe that you really came to visit me and told me what you'd looked down on in England for thousands of years.' What do you thing of that?"

Johnny didn't answer for a minute. It was still hard for him to believe that Mr. Moon sat right there in his room, yet there he was, leaning back in the armchair with his feet propped on the window sill. He was huge, of course, and very white, but not so different after all from what you'd expect the moon to be. While Johnny was turning all of this over in his mind Mr. Moon leaned forward and said,

"Don't bother about what people will say when you tell them that I spent the night in your house. You can't expect them to believe it and it doesn't matter anyway. I'm here and I'll be glad to tell you anything that you want to know about Minnesota. After all I've been up in the sky longer than you can imagine and I've kept a sharp eye on everything that happened. Goodness, the things that I've seen from up there--more than I could tell you in a thousand years!" He sighed and shook his head slowly.

"Are you warm enough, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked politely. "There's a cover here on my bed that you could put around your shoulders if you need it. There's quite a wind coming through that window."

"Oh, I'm comfortable enough," Mr. Moon replied, "comfortable enough. You'd better lie down and get those blankets up around your neck or you'll have a cold in the morning--and that would upset your plans, wouldnIt it? I know your mother would never let you start out with Fred if you had a bad cold. Now," he turned his chair slightly and faced Johnny, "what would you like to know about what's happened in Minnesota?"

"I'd like to know <u>everything</u>," Johnny said quickly. "I'd like to know what this country was like in the beginning, first, and then I'd like to know everything that has happened since then."

Mr. Moon looked at him a minute and then said, "Well, that's a pretty big order all right, but I think I can get to most of it before I have to leave. You keep a sharp eye out for the sun, won't you, and if I

lose track of the time you remind me. Comfortable?"

Johnny nodded.

"All right. I'll get started then on what you want to know."

In The Beginning

"Once upon a time, many thousands of years ago, Johnny, this land of yours was a great icy waste. I know you find it hard to believe today, but Blue Earth County and the entire Minnesota River Valley were completely buried under snow and ice.

"Years and years went by, the ice began to melt, and the land itself underwent a great change. Rivers and lakes were formed, trees, bushes and grass began to grow. It was something like the coming of spring after a long, hard winter, but it took thousands of springs for this to happen.

"There was life here in those days, Johnny, but not the life that you have around you today."

"You mean that Indians were here, Mr. Man-In-The-Moon?" Johnny asked.

"Well, yes and no. The people who lived here then were forerunners of the Indian, but they were a different race from the Indians that you know about."

"Where did the Indians come from, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

"I'll have to say that no one really knows," the Man-In-The-Moon said thoughtfully. "When the first white men came here the Indians they met were the Dakota, a branch of the great Sioux family. They had then lived in Minnesota hundreds of years. Some people think that their ancestors were the ones who built the huge earth mounds in the Ohio Valley and then made their way down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi until they reached the beautiful prairies, lakes and forests which we now call Minnesota.

"These Indians were wanderers, Johnny; they were often on the move. They liked to fight, too, and were ever ready to attack any other Indian bands

they might meet on their travels. They built villages, but lived in them for only a part of the year. Game, wildrice and fish were about their only food, though they also ate nuts, wild fruit and roots. Sometimes the squaws raised a little corn and a few pumpkins and squash."

Explorers

"After seeing only the Indians here for so many years it was exciting when the first white man arrived, Johnny. Maybe you've read about him in your history books. He was Pierre Charles Le Sueur, who was born in France and was taken to Canada as a boy.

"He came here in the fall of 1700, thirty-two years before George Washington was born. I watched him start out from what is now New Orleans. He traveled by boat over the Mississippi River to the site of St. Paul, and from there he used the Minnesota River. He had quite a few men with him so they used three boats, a sailing and rowing vessel, and two canoes. And just imagine, Johnny, it took five long months to make that trip. Compare that to the time it would take to travel from Mankato to New Orleans today. Why, you could do it in three days or less by train!

"At the time of Le Sueur's visit here, the entire midwestern section of the United States belonged to France, and Le Sueur was one of several Frenchmen who came to this region to establish trading posts to get furs from the Indians. He was a pretty shrewd peacemaker among the fighting tribes of Indians, too, I can tell you."

"But didn't he come for anything else besides a trading post?" Johnny asked, rising on his elbow again to see his caller better.

"I'll tell you, Johnny," Mr. Moon said slowly, "Le Sueur was a shrewd man--he had his eye on business when he came here. Somehow he had heard that the Indians were digging bluish-green earth from the banks of the Blue Earth River near its junction with the Minnesota, and using it for paint.

'Bluish-green earth,' Le Sueur said to himself. 'I wonder if there might be copper in it?' So what did he do but make plans to mine this ground and get the copper, if it was there."

"But, Mr. Moon," Johnny put in, "there isn't any copper mined in our county now."

"No, Johnny, there isn't any copper here now, and there wasn't any copper here then. But let me tell you the whole story because it's interesting.

"From the junction of the Blue Earth and Minnesota Rivers, the party went up the Blue Earth River two miles. Here camp was made at a point where the Le Sueur River meets the Blue Earth.

"Shortly after they got here a group of nine Sioux Indians paid them a visit and asked Le Sueur to move his post to the mouth of the Minnesota. Several tribes of Indians had established a neutral ground there where it was agreed that no one would fight. Le Sueur's visitors told him that the Minnesota Valley was claimed as hunting ground by savage tribes to the west, and that the other tribes were in danger when they visited the post on the Blue Earth.

"Le Sueur, of course, was not going to leave until he got what he came for--copper; so he told the Indians that it was impossible for him to leave right away, and gave them presents of tobacco and knives.

"His party was then divided into two groups. Half of the men set to work building a fort, while the rest of them went off on a hunt so that food could be had for the coming winter.

"The men who built the fort had a pretty big job on their hands, for cabins were built to house members of the party, and there were also warehouses for the storage of food, supplies, guns and powder. When all of this was finished Le Sueur named it Fort L'Huillier.

"The hunters returned a few days later and what a tremendous load they

had! I could hardly believe my own eyes when I looked down that night and saw more than four hundred buffaloes piled up outside of the fort. It took every member of the party to skin and clean them and store them away.

"One day, shortly after the fort had been established, a group of seven naked and hungry men staggered up to the entrance of the post. When they told Le Sueur that they were a party of French traders from Canada who had been waylaid and robbed by Sioux Indians, he gave them food and clothing and invited them to stay at the fort for the rest of the winter.

"When the spring of 1701 arrived Le Sueur and his men became impatient to get at their mining venture, and it was hard for them to wait until the frost had left the ground. Early in April the men began digging, and in twenty-two days they had taken out fifteen tons of earth. Of this amount, Le Sueur selected two tons to take back to France with him."

"Why, Mr. Moon, do you mean that Mr. Le Sueur really planned to take some of that dirt over the ocean to France?"

"Yes, Johnny, that's exactly what I mean and that's exactly what he did. When he got the dirt to France and had it analyzed by mining men in his king's employ, he learned the sad truth that there was no copper in the dirt he had worked so hard to get here in Blue Earth County, Minnesota. I tell you when I looked down on France that night and saw Le Sueur I saw a mighty disappointed man."

"I'll bet he was!" Johnny exclaimed. "But what did Le Sueur do then? Did he ever come back here?"

"No, he didn't."

"Well, what happened to the fort and his men? Did they go to France with him, or what?"

"I forgot to tell you, Johnny, when he left Fort L'Huillier he left thirteen of his men there to guard it while he was away. At that time he was

sure that he would be coming back to mine copper on a big scale, you see. But the Indians attacked the fort and three of the men were killed. When month after month passed and Le Sueur failed to return, those who were left at the fort decided to go back to New Orleans.

"As for the fort itself, Johnny, there is nothing left of it. The place where it stood is now a farmer's field."

"Then what happened, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked curiously.

"Nothing much, for a number of years, because France ceded this land to Spain in 1762. However, it was just a transaction on paper and didn't mean anything as far as the development of Minnesota was concerned, for no Spaniards ever came to Blue Earth County.

"In the meantime, the British had got the land east of the Mississippi River from France and of course they wanted to learn all they could about their territory. For that reason they sent out a man named Jonathan Carver, a New Englander, to explore the region.

"He reached the mouth of the Minnesota River in November 1766, and spent the winter with the Indians farther up that river.

"Spain gave our land back to France in 1800, and France sold it to the United States in 1803. There you have the story, Johnny, of all the owners of this region since the time of Le Sueur's visit."

"My!" Johnny sighed, "Don't you think some of these countries that once owned us have wished many times that they could have us again?"

"Yes indeed,they would all like that, for since the United States has owned this land it has steadily improved and developed. You are a fortunate boy to be living in this fine country today."

"Yes, Mr. Moon, we <u>are</u> lucky, I know that, But tell me who came here next and what he did. Did you see all of that, too?"

"Yes, I did. In 1805 a young army officer named Pike came up the

Mississippi River and spent the winter exploring its upper course. This was the same man who discovered Pike's Peak in the Rocky Mountains. He did not come up the Minnesota River, but on Pike Island he made a treaty with the Indians for a military reservation which took in much of what is now St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"On this reservation a military post was established at Mendota in 1819, and soon afterward the soldiers started building what is now Fort Snelling. Yes, Johnny, progress was certainly getting nearer to Blue Earth County.

"To the fort came several famous explorers who examined the Minnesota River country, men like Long, Keating, Beltrami, Featherstonhaugh, Mather, Catlin, Nicollet and Fremont. Some day you ought to read about all of these men. They had plenty of exciting adventures.

"During the next few years more men sailed up the Minnesota River and this region became better known. By 1850, although our land here was still a wilderness, parts of our state were being settled; and the towns of St. Paul, St, Anthony (that's Minneapolis, you know), and Stillwater were beginning to grow. And of course, Johnny, there were no railroads as yet, so people had to travel overland in wagons, or by water in boats."

Beginning of White Settlement

"How long was it before white men began to come to Blue Earth County to stay, Mr. Moon?" Johnny then asked.

"Not very long, Johnny," his friend answered. "It all came about like this:

"Early in the summer of 1850, a steamboat named the Anthony Wayne, which was running on the Mississippi River out of St. Louis, Missouri, docked at St. Paul. Captain Able, who was in charge of the boat, had often thought of trying a trip on the Minnesota River, southwest from Fort Snelling, but

until this time no riverman had had enough courage to attempt such a trip. In those days no one thought boats could get up the Minnesota.

"When Captain Able talked with some of his passengers about this plan they encouraged him to go through with it, and so he decided to try it. Taking on more passengers for the excursion at St. Paul, the Anthony Wayne started for the Minnesota River, and got as far upstream as the present town of Carver.

"After this, other rivermen began running their boats on the Minnesota River. And, later that same summer, the Anthony Wayne tried againaand this time came to where we are; the boat got as far as three miles south of our present town of Mankato. And Johnny, that was the turning point, for as a result of this trip the wonders of Blue Earth County and the entire Minnesota Valley were talked about far and near.

"Among the passengers on the Anthony Wayne on its second trip were two St. Paul businessmen, Henry Jackson and Parsons King Johnson. Both of these men were far-sighted Minnesota pioneers, always on the look-out for new opportunities. They had had a lot to do with the early settlement at St. Paul, for Jackson opened the first store, hotel, post office and justice court, while Johnson, a tailor, was a member of Minnesota's first territorial legislature.

"When the two men returned from the excursion, they were excited over the possibilities of the rich Minnesota Valley. But they did not know just how to start developing this new country, and during the following winter the two got together again and again, usually in Jackson's store, to talk it all over.

"At that time the only people living on the land west of the Mississippi River were the Indians, and naturally they claimed it as theirs. In 1851 at Mendota and at Traverse des Sioux, on the outskirts of what is now St. Peter (only a few miles from here), the Sioux sold to our Government all their lands in Minnesota except a reservation along the upper Minnesota River where they agreed to live.

"White people were not allowed to settle here until after these treaties were approved by the Senate in 1853, but Jackson and Johnson wanted to get ahead of the others and not wait for the Government to open the lands.

"Early in the winter of 1851 they decided to come to our district and see what they could do about locating a place for a town--and that, Johnny, was the very first move toward settlement in our country.

"They hired two wood-choppers, Daniel Williams and John James, and a teamster named Louis De Moreau.

"The five left St. Paul on January 31, 1852, with Jackson and Johnson leading the way in their cutter, and the hired men following in De Moreau's sleigh. Travel was slow and tedious because it had become warm and only a little snow was left. Three days after leaving St. Paul, they made camp where the town of Belle Plaine now stands. While they were here Jackson got sick, and the following morning he started back alone for St. Paul. The rest of the party went on in the Frenchman's sleigh. They arrived here February 5th, Johnny, and camped at Sibley Mound--now Sibley Park."

"Gee, Mr. Moon--just think of that! It seems funny to think there wasn't any Sibley Park then."

"No, Johnny, there was no park then, but there were animals all right, except, of course, that they weren't in cages as they are now. You must remember that all of this county was wilderness."

"I'll bet they had an exciting time of it. Did the Indians bother them?"

"No, Johnny, they didn't," replied the Man-In-The-Moon. "The Indians who saw them arrive just stared at them in wonder, and went on about their business. And so did the members of the party, because they had much work to do.

"The day after they arrived here they went exploring, and decided

that Sibley Mound, where the Masonic Temple now stands in downtown Mankato, would make a better campsite, so they moved there. De Moreau, the teamster, started back to St. Paul for a load of provisions, and the others began building a log cabin.

"You should have seen that log cabin, Johnny! It was only twelve feet square, and without any floor at all. They used black loam for plaster, bark for the roof, and an opening in one end of the cabin had to serve as the window and door."

"Goodness, Mr. Moon, no floors, no windows--that must have been an awful place to live! What did they do for light at night?"

"They used candles, Johnny, but they had to be pretty careful with them. You see, there were not many conveniences in those days. Yes, they did have a pretty hard life." Mr. Moon shook his head thoughtfully and stared out of the window for a long while. Then he shook himself out of his memories and turned back as Johnny said, "Well, what happened after the cabin was built? Were there any Indian fights?"

"No, Johnny, there was no trouble between the white man and the Indian yet; that all came later when the Redmen and the settlers were no longer friends. Henry Jackson, in the meanwhile, was getting over his illness back in St. Paul, and as soon as he was able to go out he called on a number of his friends to tell them of our country here in the Minnesota Valley, and to talk them into forming a townsite company.

"His friends thought that there was a good chance to make money here, so on February 14, 1852, ten men got together and formed what they called the Blue Earth Settlement and Claim Association. These men were Henry Jackson, Parsons King Johnson, John S. Hinckley, Dan A. Robertson, Samuel Leech, J. C. Ramsey, John M. Castner, Robert Kennedy, William Hartshorn, and S. A. Browley. Each man paid $100 for his share.

"The next day Colonel Robertson, Jackson, Goodrich and Hinckley left St. Paul to come here. When they arrived they spent sixteen days looking over their townsite--the present site of Mankato. They were well pleased with--"

"Tell me, Mr. Moon," Johnny interrupted, "what was this 'townsite' you're talking about?"

"Well, Johnny, it was like this." Mr. Moon turned and settled more comfortably in his chair. "When these men came there was no one here except the Indians. They decided to claim the land because they were here first. 'Finders keepers,' I suppose they thought. Then, when new settlers arrived, these ten men planned to sell them lots so they could build homes and live here.

"And the settlers came, Johnny. Later the same spring (1852) another group of men came from St. Paul. There were five of them, all Germans, and they began their journey by sailboat. But the first day out from St. Paul, their sail caught in overhanging branches along the shore of the river and the boat turned over. One man drowned. They buried him on the shore and then the four others, Jacob Guenther, Peter Frenzel, Phipip Krummel and a Mr. Stultz pushed on and landed here in the latter part of May.

"More settlers came that same summer. The men who had formed the claim association were certainly busy advertising our county in St. Paul. And while they--"

"But where did these people come from, Mr. Moon, and just why did they come?" Johnny was so eager to know all of these things that he often forgot his manners and interrupted his kindly guest.

"They were young American men, for the most part," said Mr. Moon. "Many of them were adventurous and were keen to tackle a new country so they left their homes back East and came West to seek their fortunes. They were a hardy, daring lot.

"Some had money and they could buy land at low cost, or start up in business. To those who had little or no money, our district, in those days, offered all kinds of chances for jobs. There was work for everyone. If those first settlers could come back now, it would be hard for them to understand the unemployment that we have today.

"For instance, take the case of Jackson and Johnson, the first pioneers who built that cabin. When they first came, as I told you, it was with the plan of selling lots to other settlers and to make money. But they didn't stop there.

"Before leaving St. Paul, Jackson had persuaded the Indian Agent, a relative of his, to give him a license so he could trade with the Indians at Mankota. After a short time he and Johnson opened a store under the firm name of Jackson and Johnson. They didn't have much stock--probably altogether it never amounted to more than $300 worth--but it was enough to carry on trade with the Indians.

"So you see, Johnny, Jackson and Johnson had two businesses here, a townsite company and a store. There were others, too. Evans Goodrich came to our county as a surveyor, but he was also Justice of the Peace, and later put in several years as a soldier, farmer and liquor dealer; Marshall Comstock came here in 1853 and first worked as a carriage-maker, but later he sold country real estate and bought many farms; L. G. M. Fletcher arrived in 1854, and first worked as a surveyor. Later he became the first regular school teacher, and kept on teaching for many years.

"Jacob and William Bierbauer came here from Germany in 1856 to build up a brewery business; later they ran a woolen mill. H. L. Gude came here in 1856 and was Mankato's first tailor before he entered the saloon business; Henry Himmelman came in 1856 and first worked at his trade of wagon-making; later he entered the hotel business and established the Heinrich Hotel at

Mankato. J. W. Hoerr came in 1856 as a cabinet-maker, and later acted as county treasurer. Joseph Krause, who arrived in 1856, opened the first jewelry store in Mankato, and later gave it up to go into the liquor business. The list could continue indefinitely, Johnny, but this will show you that the pioneers did many things in the early day of settlement in your county."

"What was the first thing a settler did when he arrived, Mr. Moon?" Johnny wanted to know. Mr. Moon scratched his head for a minute before replying.

"Well, Johnny, the first thing he did was to pick out a piece of land. It might be a lot in the townsite, or it might be many acres for farming away from the townsite. In most cases the first comers settled in the town--Mankato. They felt safer when they were close together. You see, Johnny, these early pioneers--most of them, anyway--had never seen an Indian before coming to Minnesota and, while the Indians didn't bother them at that time, the white man didn't trust them.

"After the pioneer had his land the next thing on his program was putting up a log cabin. This was quite a task in itself, because first the settler had to cut trees to get his logs for the building, and then the logs had to be fitted together evenly in order to have a tight, warm shelter."

"Boy, oh boy! that was sure a lot harder than it is to get a home today, wasn't it, Mr. Moon?" Johnny said. "All my daddy had to do when he built our home was to hire a contractor and he did the rest."

"Yes, Johnny, the pioneers certainly had their problems and these didn't end with building log cabins either.

"One of the most pressing needs of our new district was roads, and it looked like a tremendously difficult task to build them because everywhere there was a heavy and dense growth of hard timber. This district was the southwestern edge of a vast forested region that used to be called the 'Big

Woods of Minnesota.' So it wasn't just a matter of digging and leveling, Johnny, but first of all a path had to be cut through a big, thick forest.

"In the summer of 1852 some surveyors platted a road which was to connect Winona, on the Mississippi River, with Mankato. A year later this first road in our county was built. It proved to be a great time-saver for after that incoming settlers could come straight from Winona without having to go up to St. Paul, as they did at first.

"In 1855 a road was built from Good Thunder to Kasota, and then with its connections our county people could go overland direct to St. Paul.

"Of course these early roads were nothing like the wide, paved highways that we have today, Johnny. They were little more than partly cleared pathways through the woods. But at least a team with wagon or a cutter could travel over them even if they had to go very slowly."

"What happened when they came to lakes or rivers, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

"There were no bridges, of course," Mr. Moon replied. "Travelers had to go around lakes, and when they came to rivers they looked for a low shallow spot that could be used as a ford.

"These rough roads were important not only because they helped the settlers to travel, but also because they made it possible for the mail to be brought in.

"You see, Johnny, when the pioneers came here to live they were shut off from the old places they had left, and there was no way of keeping in touch with friends or of knowing what was going on in the world except when a newspaper was brought here from St. Paul; or when new arrivals came.

"When the roads were built, the Government made a contract with George Marsh of Mankato and J. W. Babcock of Kasota to haul mail from St. Paul to Sioux City, Iowa, by way of Mankato. They made the trip only once a month,

each way, but even so, Johnny, it was a God-send to those pioneers.

"Our mail carriers today can be glad that they weren't working for the Government in those days, because the trip was very hard and even dangerous. To make the journey as easy as possible the contractors were allowed to pre-empt (take over for their own) a section of land every twenty miles along the route. Cabins were built on this land (they were known as stations) and here the carriers slept and cooked their meals when out on a trip."

"Well, what do you know about that, Man-In-The-Moon," said Johnny. "Now the mailman comes to everybody's home once a day anyway, and sometimes more."

Johnny shivered and pulled the blankets up around his neck. For several minutes he lay there thinking about the dangers of carrying mail in those early days. Then his eyes lighted on his geography book and he said suddenly.

"Tell me, Mr. Moon, were there any schools here then? When did they start and were they like ours?"

"I was just coming to that, Johnny. No, there were no schools in our county the first year of settlement. There were very few children, but even those few needed an education.

"For six months in the winter of 1853, school was held in the home of Mr, Hanna, here in Mankato. His daughter, Sarah Jane, was the teacher, and she had twenty-three pupils.

"You see, Johnny, the pioneers had very little money. They wanted their children to go to school, but at first they were unable to build schoolhouses; so school was held in homes and other buildings. There were no school taxes at first, and the parents collected what money they could to pay the teachers. This was usually very little. Children had to bring their own books from home. These books, which were the ones their parents and older brothers

and sisters had used, were all different. Some of the children did not have any books at all, and those who brought a tattered reader shared it with others."

"Gee, imagine that!" exclaimed Johnny.

"Yes," said Mr. Moon, "it wasn't much of a school compared with yours, but it was the seed from which your school grew.

"The next year Sarah Jane Hanna gave up her teaching and they hired Mary Ann Thompson in her place. She had her hands full all right with thirty pupils.

"Our first schoolhouse in Mankato was built in 1855, where the Union school stands today."

"Why, Mr. Moon!" Johnny said excitedly. "That's where I go to school! Say, wait 'til I tell the other kids tomorrow that our school stands on the same place where the first school in the county was built."

Mr. Moon said thoughtfully, "I only wish that you kids could have been up in the sky with me and looked down on that first school building. It was built entirely of logs, and that first winter classes were held only for three months."

"Gee! They had lots of time to skate and ski, didn't they?"

"Yes, but that was only the first winter. Starting the next year, the school was open all winter, and Mankato children were able to attend full-time, as you do now, Johnny. There were only ninety-seven books for use in the entire school, and the classes ran from the primary to the upper grades. Mr. L. G. M. Fletcher was the teacher, and his salary was $50 a month."

"Say," said Johnny, "I'll bet those kids would get the surprise of their lives if they could see some of our schools today with the libraries, and swell gymnasiums. They would certainly be sick they'd missed such a lot, wouldn't they?"

"I'm afraid they would," Mr. Moon sighed, "and not only in schools. Pretty nearly all the things you and your friends take for granted today meant a hard struggle for your grandfathers and grandmothers." For a minute Mr. Moon looked far away as though he were watching those early hardships again. Then he turned with a start as Johnny asked, "Did the kids go to Sunday-school in those days too?"

"Not during the first few years," Mr. Moon replied, "for they didn't even have churches then. However, even before the first settlers came, traveling missionaries had gone through here trying to make Christians of the Indians. They kept coming for the first year or two during settlement, and they held services for the pioneers, too.

"But it wasn't long before the settlers had ministers of their own. Reverend Chauncey Hobard, a Methodist, came in 1853; Reverend James Thomson, a Presbyterian, came in 1854; Father Augustine Ravoux, a Catholic, came in 1855. These clergymen traveled around and held services in private homes.

"The first church built here was dedicated by the Catholics in 1856; it was located on the present site of SS.Peter and Paul's Church on North Fifth Street in Mankato, and Father Valentine Sommereisen was the parish priest.

"Gradually other churches were built. In 1864 the Presbyterians put up their building, followed by the Baptists in 1867. Two years later the Lutherans, Methodists, and Episcopalians each built their first church, and then--"

"Tell me, Mr. Moon," Johnny interrupted, "where did the pioneers work to get the money to build all these things?"

"Well, you know how famous Mankato is for its limestone, but probably you don't know that quarrying was begun here in 1853, the year after settlement started. George Maxfield opened a stone quarry between Front and Second Streets in Mankato that year, and this gave work to a number of the

settlers. Soon after that, brick and cement plants were opened; these needed river clay and stone and gave further work to our people.

"Then, too, there were other industries such as sawmills, pump and wagon factories, flour mills, furniture and cabinet-making, and breweries."

"Gee, Mr. Moon," Johnny said in astonishment. "I had no idea that there was so much business here in the early days!"

"Yes, from the time that settlers first began to come here, Mankato has been a busy place. And don't forget that this is great farming country, the finest in the Northwest. In the early years it wasn't as it is today, but it did get started, and lots of our settlers made a living from their farms."

"How did the farmers do their work in those days, Mr. Moon? They didn't have much machinery, did they?" Johnny asked.

"No," Mr. Moon said, "they didn't have any. To pull and haul they used oxen, and for the rest of the work they had mostly homemade hand tools. On winter nights I used to look down and see the men making the tools that they would use in the summer. Even the plows were usually hammered out by hand."

"Well, goodness, they couldn't get very much done that way, could they?"

"It certainly was slow going, Johnny. I tell you I used to feel mighty sorry for those families who were still hard at work when I got up at night, and at it again in the morning before I went to bed. And it wasn't only that they had so few tools, but almost every acre they cultivated had to be cleared of trees and stumps. When you see the big farms today, it's hard to realize that these great fields just weren't here when the pioneers came.

"Then, too, the pioneer farmers didn't dare go far away from the

towns, for they were afraid to be alone in the country because of the Indians."

"Did the Indians kill any of the farmers, Mr. Moon?"

"Yes, my boy, but not at this time in history. The story of the Indian in our district is a story by itself.

"But now let's get back to our early farmers. Another reason they stayed close to the towns was because it was so hard to get around 'way off in the country. There were no automobiles and few horses in those days. Even the wagons for the most part were crude, homemade carts, but as long as a farmer was close to town, he could either walk or manage to get back and forth with his ox-team. It was hard traveling, believe me, and when I saw them joggling along I used to wish that I could make the oxen hurry."

Johnny thought of the farm where they were going the next day and wondered if it were one of the first. "Where were the first farms and what did they raise, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

"Well," Mr. Moon said, rubbing his head reflectively, "the first farm was owned by George Van Brunt. Today you wouldn't call it a farm for he only had a couple of acres where the Pleasant Grove School now stands, at Byron and Pleasant Streets, in Mankato."

"Why, there are houses built in that place now!" Johnny exclaimed.

"That will show you how small Mankato was in 1853. Another settler, Peter Frenzell, started farming in the northern part of the city (a couple of blocks from your Union school) that same year."

"It just doesn't seem true that this big city was ever like that!" Then he added, "Did they have a Mayor? Were there policemen and firemen?"

"I should say not!" said Mr. Moon emphatically. "There was no city government at all. In fact, there wasn't any Blue Earth County until March 5, 1853, when the Minnesota Territorial Legislature made one. Minnesota itself wasn't even a state then, you see.

"At first the county of Blue Earth, as they called it, covered a great deal more ground than it does now. All of southwestern Minnesota south of the Minnesota River and more besides were in it."

"My, was it that big?"

"Yes, there was a lot of it. But, remember, outside of Mankato it was nothing but wilderness--settlement hadn't even begun back on the prairies.

"The first county officers were appointed by the Governor at St. Paul. His first appointment was made in April 1853, when Edwin Perkins of St. Paul was made Register of Deeds. Mr. Perkins recorded his first deed on April 14th of that year, and on that same day J. McMahon Holland arrived to be the county attorney.

"In July of that year the Governor named the first board of county commissioners; they were James Hanna and John S. Hinckley of Mankato, and Joseph W. Babcock of Kasota."

"Why did the Governor appoint these men, Mr. Moon?" asked Johnny. "I thought Dad said those jobs were decided at elections."

"They are today, but then there weren't any elections in Mankato. The first one was held here in October 1853, and only eighteen votes were cast."

"Eighteen? Why, that's nothing compared to the number of votes at elections now," said Johnny.

"Of course not, but it was a beginning. After all, Mankato was only a little frontier village with but a handful of people. By the way, Johnny, what was the number of votes in Blue Earth County at its last election?"

"I don't know, Mr. Moon. I'll have to ask my dad or teacher. But how about the Indians--couldn't they vote? They were here before the settlers."

"Yes, they were here, all right, but the whites wouldn't let them vote. In fact, they wouldn't allow the Indian to do much of anything. By

the way, Johnny, I may as well tell you the story of Blue Earth County's troubles with the Indians because this was the place where some of the most tragic events happened. You know, of course, that Mankato was the town in which over thirty of the Indians were hanged. You'd like to hear the story, wouldn't you?"

"Of course, Mr. Moon," Johnny said enthusiastically. "Dad has told me about Indians lots of time, and I've read stories about them, but it's pretty hard to imagine them roaming about Mankato and the country around here."

"Well, Johnny, I'll tell you the real story. After all I guess I'm the only person who saw everything just as it happened," Mr. Moon said proudly.

"Of course you are," Johnny agreed. "Make yourself comfortable, won't you, and don't leave out a thing."

The Indian Story

"When the settlers first came in 1852," Mr. Moon began, "there were a number of roaming Indians hereabouts. This part of the country was a favorite haunt of theirs because of the good hunting and fishing. And then, too, after the treaties of 1851 the Sioux Indians began to move to the reservation, and a lot of them came through our county.

"During the first few years our settlers got along very well with the Indians. You see, Johnny, the red man had not begun to realize that the white men would want all their land and drive them farther and farther westward. And the white settlers brought with them things the Indians liked very much, such as tobacco, knives, and liquor, which they would trade for furs.

"Then in 1855, three years after the pioneers first came to our county, Congress passed a law establishing a reservation in our county. You see, the Government didn't want anything to interfere with the settlement of the West and so they wanted the Indians to stay in one district. The reservation--"

"Wasn't this the Winnebago Reservation that the town was named after?" Johnny interrupted.

"That's right, Johnny. This reservation was located in our county, except for a small part of the eastern section which extended into Waseca County--in fact, the northern boundary was within two miles of Mankato. Right in the reservation were many of the Blue Earth County townships: McPherson, Medo, Beauford, Decoria, Lyra, and Rapidan; also parts of Le Ray and South Bend."

"That took a big chunk out of our county, didn't it, Mr. Moon? How much did it make altogether?"

Mr. Moon stopped and thought a moment before he replied, "The reservation was thirty miles long and thirteen miles wide. You can see the settlers wouldn't like that at all, because they couldn't go into that part to live.

"They didn't mind much at first, because they wouldn't go so far from Mankato to live, but later when more of them kept pouring in and all of the land around Mankato was taken it made a lot of difference.

"Who were the Winnebago Indians, anyway? Were they different from the Sioux tribes?" Johnny asked.

"A good deal like them, Johnny. Originally they lived in Wisconsin. They were friendly to all the tribes and were much respected. The Government moved them from Wisconsin to a reservation in northwestern Iowa with the hopes that by sort of sandwiching them between the Sioux in Minnesota and the Sauk and Fox Indians in Iowa the constant fighting might stop. These Winnebago were shunted around a good deal. In 1848 the Government moved them again from the Iowa reservation to Long Prairie, Minnesota, and when they were not satisfied there they were moved once more.

"In August 1855, two-thousand, six-hundred of these Winnebago came to Mankato by steamboat from St. Paul. That was the occasion of a great Indian celebration, Johnny..."

"The Sioux Indians living around here learned that the Winnebago were coming, so they set up camp in West Mankato and thereabouts that they might be here to greet them.

"When the Winnebago began arriving, the Sioux were at the docks, and what a greeting they gave them! Echoes of their whooping and shouting rang through the streets of Mankato, and resounded for miles up and down the bluff-lined valley of the Minnesota River. Later a great pow-wow and feast was given in their honor at the Sioux camp.

"When the celebration was over, the Winnebago moved onto the reservation where General J. E. Fletcher was the agent. An Indian school under the direction of J. W. Cullen was started."

"You mean that the Indian children had a school of their own to go to?" Johnny asked.

"Yes, Johnny, and it was a fine school, too. The Government wanted to educate the Indian in the white man's way, and many different subjects were taught."

"Were the Winnebago satisfied? Did they like living on their reservation?"

"Yes, they really liked it, Johnny, for this county had plenty of the two things that were of the most importance to them--hunting and fishing.

"But the settlers didn't like it. The Winnebago certainly didn't bother them or cause them any harm, but there was a general feeling that no Indian could be trusted. And, too, the whites were angry because they felt that the land used for the reservation was much too valuable to be given to the Indians.

"The white men who had charge of the reservation had their troubles too. The worst was the problem of liquor. The average Indian loved whiskey, but he always drank too much and then he became wild and a danger to the

settlers. The Government tried to prevent the sale by passing an Indian liquor law, but there were always bootleggers (blind-piggers as they were called in those days) who managed to evade the officials and sell the stuff for a big price.

"As settlement spread throughout our county, Indian troubles increased. Raids by small roving bands (not Winnebago) were a constant source of worry to those settlers who had begun to leave the security of towns to live on farms.

"Then all the fear and hate that had been steadily growing came to a head in the historic Sioux uprising with its frightful killings and plundering and widespread terror."

"Did that take place in our county?" asked Johnny.

"No, Johnny--there was no actual fighting here, but Mankato and Blue Earth County played an important part in various ways. The final chapter of this Indian story was written here in Mankato when thirty-eight Indians were hanged. And that, Johnny, is the most famous event in the history of our county, and the largest, single, legal execution in the history of the United States!"

"Really, Mr. Moon? My daddy has told me about the hanging, and shown me the monument downtown that marks the place where it happened, but why was it so important?"

"Because it was talked about all over the nation, and the President of the United States had to take part."

"Tell me all about it, will you please, Mr. Moon? Gee, I'd like to hear what really happened. Whenever my grandfather and grandmother come to see us they still talk about it, but they never tell it from the beginning."

"I suppose they do talk about it," Mr. Moon sighed. "I don't believe anyone who saw it ever forgot it." He settled himself more comfortably and took up his story again.

Uprising

"When the Sioux outbreak first began in the summer of 1862, everyone believed all the southwestern section of our state was in danger. The people in our county were especially frightened because of the Winnebago Indians on their reservation; nearly everyone believed that they might join the Sioux.

"Settlers on farms far away from the towns gathered in one home, or locked their doors and hurried to nearby villages. When the danger seemed over, they returned--and what a struggle it was to make themselves go back to their lonely farms!

"In the meantime soldiers from St. Peter were sent into the northwestern part of our county in answer to an appeal from settlers there. At the town of Judson they built a sod fort ten feet high, and one-hundred and fifty feet square, to be used not only to house the soldiers but also as a refuge for settlers. This fort was built near the present railroad station in Judson and you can still see its ruins if you go there.

"While the outbreak was at its height, our people were busy not only protecting themselves, but also taking care of many settlers from outside. Citizens of Mankato and Blue Earth County volunteered to fight, and when the Battle of New Ulm took place a company of eight-two men from Mankato under Captain William Bierbauer marched there to help. Of this group two men were killed and five injured."

"How did the Indians do their fighting? Did they kill with bow and arrows?"asked Johnny.

"No, they used guns and knives."

"But where did they get guns and bullets?"

"Well, they bought guns and ammunition with the money the Government agreed to give them in regular payments when the Indian Treaties of 1851 were signed. They were--"

"How did they learn to use guns?" Johnny interrupted.

"They had learned their special kind of fighting long before this time, Johnny. In the days when they hunted buffalo with bows and arrows, they learned how to creep up on them in the tall grass and lie flat on their stomachs until there was a good chance to shoot. During the uprising they used the same methods, only this time they used guns, not bows and arrows, and they shot at men instead of at buffaloes.

"Our soldiers weren't used to that kind of fighting, of course, and many were killed for that reason."

"Why couldn't our soldiers fight the same way?"

"After enough experience they could, but they weren't trained in that method. Their style was to shoot from a standing position, or while kneeling on one knee.

"The Indians had another trick, too. After a raid on a farm or an attack on a town they usually set fire to the buildings. Then they took their prisoners and retreated to their camp, leaving destruction in their path."

"What did they do with the prisoners?"

"They kept them as captives, Johnny, until the end of the trouble."

"When did that happen, Mr. Moon?"

"The turning point of the Indian War came on September 23rd, when the Sioux were beaten at the Battle of Wood Lake near the Yellow Medicine River. Immediately after this, General Sibley declared that Indians who so wished could surrender to his troops and he promised to protect them from the settlers. Many Indians did surrender and brought with them hundreds of white women and children whom they had been holding in captivity. The place where they surrendered was named Camp Release.

"General Sibley then formed a military commission of five officers to serve as a trial court to judge the guilt or innocence of the Indians.

Three-hundred and ninety-two Indian prisoners were tried by this court and three-hundred and seven of them were sentenced to death on charges of murder, while sixteen were sentenced to imprisonment."

"Gee! Three hundred Indians! But you said only thirty-eight--"

"Wait a minute, Johnny, and I'll tell you about it, but don't be in such a hurry. While the trial was going on, it was decided to move the Indians from the massacre area. Those who had not been convicted were sent to a camp at Fort Snelling, and General Sibley marched the convicted ones to a military post named Camp Lincoln. Sibley Park is now located where Camp Lincoln stood.

"And that, Johnny, was the beginning of the incident that was to attract the attention of the entire country to Mankato. Our people wanted to punish the Indians so severely that they would never disturb the settlers again. But many people who lived in other sections of the United States felt that, after all, the Indians had not always been treated fairly and they objected to killing so many.

"The reports of the military court and the list of condemned men were sent to President Lincoln at Washington, and all executions were ordered held up until the President had studied the trials.

"During this period, the citizens of southwestern Minnesota felt as if they were sitting on a powder keg, Johnny. Most of our people wanted the condemned Indians hanged immediately. They were afraid that the Winnebago who were so near might stage an uprising because of sympathy for their friends.

"Major General John Pope of the United States Army, who had been sent to St. Paul to command all the military forces in the state, learned that citizens were being urged to massacre the imprisoned Indians so he begged President Lincoln to take instant action. At almost the same time, Governor Ramsey sent the same request to the White House."

"Do you think that the white people would really have lynched the

Indians, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

"Some of them wanted to, Johnny. Everybody in our part of the state wanted quick action, and when no word came from Washington quite a lot of people wanted to take the law into their own hands.

"While the people of Minnesota were becoming more and more impatient, Washington and the eastern part of the country were getting excited too. Newspapers began to defend the cause of the condemned Indians and even Congress became interested in the issue.

"In Minnesota there was one individual who took up the case for the Indians with sympathy and enthusiasm. This was Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota.

"Bishop Whipple, who had worked among the Indians and won their confidence, had always been their friend. He understood their problems better than almost any other white man of his time. He had fought for a governmental policy that would handle Indian affairs with fairness and honesty, and he believed that it was because they had not been treated fairly that the Sioux had rebelled.

"While President Lincoln was considering the fate of the condemned Indians, Bishop Whipple, accompanied by a cousin, General Halleck, called on him at the White House in Washington to tell him the truth of the situation in Minnesota. To the President he talked of the wrong way the Indians had been handled from the beginning and of the events that had led up to the terrible trouble and bloodshed. Then he urged that only those who had actually murdered defenseless white people should be executed. The others, he said, were not murderers but had fought in battle as soldiers and should be treated as prisoners of war.

"President Lincoln was evidently impressed by Bishop Whipple's plea, for he told a friend that he felt it clear down to his boots. Later

with his own hand he prepared the execution order in which only thirty-nine of the three hundred and seven condemned men were sentenced to death. The remaining number were to serve terms of imprisonment, and General Sibley was ordered to carry out the execution order on December 19th.

The Hanging

"After the execution order was received at Mankato, the Indians were moved from Camp Lincoln to a stone building on the corner of Front and Main Streets (the present site of Kron's Department Store).

"Colonel Miller took great care to protect the Indians from the chance of harm by the whites before the time of execution. He placed a heavy military guard over them, and also declared martial law in Mankato and for a radius of ten miles around the town.

"Companies and regiments of soldiers came to Mankato from all over the state, and there were one thousand, four hundred and nineteen enlisted men here to maintain order.

"In the meantime the date of execution had been postponed from December 19th to December 26th. On Christmas Day, a special order was received by Colonel Miller to spare the life of Ta-ti-mi-ma, one of the condemned Indians. This reduced the number of doomed men to thirty-eight.

"The hanging was to take place in the heart of downtown Mankato, and a gallows large enough to handle the entire execution at one time had been built on the northeast corner of Front and Main Streets.

"Christmas night in Mankato that year was different from any Christmas since, Johnny. People didn't stay at home to celebrate, nor did they go to church. They were too excited. Men, women, and children, all of them could think about one thing only, and that was the Indian hanging scheduled for the following morning.

"Streets in the downtown section were filled with a milling throng.

They paraded back and forth, crowded into hotels and restaurants, and kept a constant lookout for a good place from which to view the hanging. A steady flow of people arrived from out-of-town points all night long.

"When morning came, business was suspended and everybody declared a holiday. Soldiers and citizens rubbed elbows in Mankato's first traffic jam as the condemned Indians were brought forth from their prison.

"As the hanging was completed the crowd broke into a loud, deafening roar--many hurrahs rang throughout the streets. Two doctors examined the bodies, after which they were cut down and placed in wagons. Burial was made in a long low flat between the river and Front Street.

"Doctors from all over the country had requested that the bodies be turned over to them for the purposes of scientific study, but they did not obtain their wish. On that same night, unidentified groups of men went to the burial place and took the bodies away. Military authorities sent armed guards when they heard rumors but it was too late, for not one corpse was left. The white man had his own ways of being savage, you see."

Mr. Moon sighed deeply and looked so troubled that Johnny waited for a moment before he asked, "What became of the other Indians? They had been sentenced to prison, hadn't they?"

"Well, the other convicted Indians who remained in prison at Mankato were sent to military barracks near Davenport, Iowa, where they remained for several years. Then they were moved to a reservation on the upper Missouri.

"In the meantime the other Sioux in the state had been rounded up and sent to the same reservation. Others had fled. In less than a year after the uprising there were no Sioux left in the land where their ancestors had roved for centuries.

"And that was the end of Indian troubles in our county for some time, Johnny. People returned to work and were happy in their freedom from the

danger of attack. Of course, there were outlaws who formed together in small bands from time to time and bothered the settlers, but on the whole there was comparatively little trouble."

"How about the Winnebago on the reservation?" Johnny asked.

"Oh, yes, Johnny, I forgot to tell you about them. The spring after the hanging of the thirty-eight Sioux Indians, the Government decided to move the Winnebago away from our county. Orders for the removal came from Washington on April 25, 1863, and two weeks later the transfer was started.

"On the morning of May 9th, a large crowd gathered in downtown Mankato to see the first of the Winnebago leave. That day seven hundred and sixty of them were packed on steamboats, and within eight days they had all been sent away."

"Where were they sent?" Johnny asked.

"To another reservation in South Dakota. Their reservation was thrown open to white settlers after they left, and thousands then came into our county and into the entire southwestern part of the state.

"With the end of the Indian trouble citizens felt safe again. Those who had been almost ready to pack up and leave now settled down to stay. Men were glad to put money into new business enterprises and a lot of things were started that played a large part in the development of our county."

"What for instance, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

Banking

"Banking for one. Perhaps you think we have always had fine banks, but that is not the case. Banking was first tried here as early as 1854, but it was not successful at that time. Then Major Edward Parry tried it in 1875 and, although he had enough money to work with, he too had to give it up."

"What was the matter?" Johnny asked curiously.

Mr. Moon yawned and stretched before he said, "In the first place,

my friend, the bankers of that day wanted too much interest on the loans they made. Major Parry demanded thirty-six percent interest."

"Thirty-six percent--why, that's an awful lot! I heard my Dad say six percent was plenty. How could people pay that much?"

"They couldn't, Johnny, and very few of the settlers did any business with him. In those days there were no state banking laws and a banker had a pretty free hand to do as he wished. But Major Parry learned that our people wouldn't stand for his terms, and he had to go elsewhere.

"Several other men came here and tried banking; but it wasn't until 1868 when the First National Bank opened with a capital of $60,000, that anything like our present banking system was begun."

Newspapers

"Newspapers are always important in a new country and in Blue Earth County our settlers had their first one in 1857. That was five years after settlement began here. The business men of Mankato agreed to put up some money to help start a paper, and a couple of printers from the East, Clinton Hensley and Frank Gunning, came out here to investigate the possibilities.

"Eight hundred dollars was offered them in advance subcriptions for a start, and they felt that this was too good to refuse. So they returned East for their equipment, and opened up at Broadway and Walnut Streets. The name of their newspaper was the Mankato Independent, and it came out once a week.

"In 1859 the first issue of another weekly newspaper, the Mankato Record, was turned off the small press. The Record's editor was John C. Wise, a man who was to become one of Mankato's prominent newspaper publishers. He and his sons later published the Mankato Daily Review, which was merged with the present Free Press in 1919.

"During the '70's other weeklies came and went. In those days it

wasn't unusual for papers to appear several times and then die. They didn't have a long life such as we expect in our papers now."

"Our paper is the Free Press. When did it start?" Johnny asked.

"It began in 1880, when two weekly newspapers joined forces. Then it was called the Mankato Free Press. After seven years as a weekly, the publishers turned it into a daily. That was in 1887."

Transportation

When Mr. Moon had finished speaking, he rubbed his head thoughtfully for a few moments as though he were watching the little hand presses and comparing them with the great machinery for printing today. When he saw that Johnny was getting sleepy he went on more quickly.

"When you are flying along our paved roads at fifty miles an hour, did you ever think what it must have been like to travel with an oxcart, Johnny?"

"No, I never did!" answered Johnny, wide awake again. "But I'd love to drive oxen."

"You'd soon get sick of it. But by and by new ways of travel came to the frontier and, as it got easier for men to move their families here, settlers poured in faster and faster. It seemed to me that every time I got up at night, I looked down on a new group that had moved in during the day."

Steamboats

"First it was the river--the Minnesota River. There were no railroads then, Johnny, and the old steamboats were really quite the thing."

"Did steamboats come here to Mankato, Mr. Moon? Where did they come from? They couldn't run in winter, could they?"

"Minnesota River steamboats came from St. Paul, Johnny. They loaded many of their passengers and most of their freight at St. Paul, and then puffed up the Minnesota stopping at every town and village along the way to

unload freight and passengers, and pick up more. All the boats came as far as Mankato, and some of them went farther.

"I've told you about the first steamer that came here--you remember about the excursion trip when Parsons King Johnson and Henry Jackson first had their glimpse of our county, don't you? During the next few years steamboat came here occasionally, but they didn't have a regular service. There were only about four months during the year, you know, from spring until fall, when they could run, and even then in dry seasons the water was sometimes very low. The earliest date in spring on which a steamboat arrived at Mankato was March 22, 1858."

"How long did it take a boat to come from St. Paul to Mankato?" Johnny asked.

"Well, let's see," Mr. Moon replied, "that depended on the size and speed of the steamer. Because of the river current it took much longer to come here than to get back. I'd say that on the average a good pilot with any luck could come up the river in about nineteen hours and return to St. Paul in twelve.

"But it was a cheap way to travel, Johnny. When several different lines began operating steamers on the river, the price of a ticket from here to St. Paul was down to fifty cents. But it wasn't only that they gave a fine service to passengers, they also transported a great deal of wheat. In the summer of 1860 alone, there were sixty-two thousand bushels of wheat shipped from our docks here by steamer. And, of course, everything else from the outside that was needed by the settlers here came by steamboat, too.

"The arrival of steamboats was a great occasion in those days, I can tell you. When the whistle of an approaching boat was heard down the river, most everybody would drop what he was doing and rush to the landing. As travelers and new settlers walked down the gangplank they had hundreds

of questions hurled at them, for they brought news from the outside world. Until newspapers were started it was one way Blue Earth County citizens had of finding out what was happening here and abroad.

"The peak of steamboat travel was reached here in 1862, when the boats made more than four hundred round trips up and down the Minnesota River. Yes, sir," Mr. Moon repeated as Johnny's eyes bulged with astonishment, "more than four hundred. The men who piloted those boats were mighty skillful, too--there's no doubting that. They knew every inch of the river and, although they were daring enough, they were careful too. I don't recall that they took many chances.

"Yet I do remember one wreck near here that was quite serious. That was the steamer Julia. She was about a mile north of Mankato on her way to St. Paul when she struck a snag and sank. The minute the accident happened everyone began working, so that all fifteen of the passengers she carried were saved, as well as most of the freight.

"Steamboat transportation was a great thing while it lasted, Johnny, but when the railroads came to southern Minnesota it all changed. Now most boys and girls grow up without even seeing a boat."

Railroads

Mr. Moon got up and walked around the room. "I'd like to stretch my legs," he explained. "Sitting so long would make anyone tired. What time is it?"

Johnny turned his wrist in the moonlight until the figures on his watch stood out at 3:30.

"Look!" he said, holding his arm so that Mr. Moon could see. "You've been here for hours and it seems as though you came just a minute ago."

"I'll have to go very soon," Mr. Moon replied, stopping by the window to look out. "The sun will be nagging at me to go to bed--yes, I

have to go to bed too," he said looking around at Johnny slyly, "but before I go I want to tell you a few more things, for there's a lot we've skipped over. Well, it countn't all be done in one night."

He crossed back to his chair and sat down as Johnny said, "Be sure to tell me about the railroads before you go, Mr. Moon. I'd like to know how they were built and all about them."

"Well," Mr. Moon sighed, leaning back and crossing his legs, "the first railroad to enter our county was the old Minnesota Valley Railway, the one you know now as the Omaha. They started building it in St. Paul in 1865, and three years later the tracks were laid into Mankato. The first train pulled into the Mankato depot on October 3, 1868--and what an occasion that was, Johnny! Even the locomotive was named Mankato!"

"What kind of an engine was it?"

"Well, Johnny, it didn't look much like the locomotives that are in use today. It was very small--a 'two-wheeler,' people called it. The fire-box was piled full of wood, for that was the fuel that was used for engines in Minnesota in those days. When there were three cars jerking along behind the engine, the fastest it could go was about twenty miles an hour."

"Gee, some of ours go three times that fast now!"

"Of course it was slow, but that couldn't be helped. It was the beginning of railroading, and everything connected with the railroad was new --it was a big experiment. Even the rails were so light that if the trains had been bigger and faster, the tracks couldn't have supported them.

"The first railroad station in Mankato was at Fourth and Van Brunt Streets. The railroad came into the city between Plum and Elm Streets, and ran over Fourth Street, and I can remember that for a long time those streets were always lined with people when a train was due."

"Why did they change the tracks later, Mr. Moon?" Johnny asked.

"That's quite a story," the old gentlemen replied. "You see in those days, the railroads said to the townspeople, 'Now look here, you give us what we need or we'll run our tracks through towns that will. That will leave you without railroad service, but it will be your own fault.'

"They said something like this to the people of Mankato: 'Give us free trackage rights, a place for the depot and $15,000 in bonds or you won't have a railroad through here.' Well, Johnny, Mankato gave them all they asked for, and before long the tracks were laid and trains were puffing in and out of here.

"When other railroads came into our county a few years later they did the same thing. In 1873, five years after the Omaha first came, a railroad (now the Milwaukee Road) wanted to build a line from Mankato to Wells. For this line the company wanted Mankato to subscribe $70,000 and Mankato did.

"When a railroad first finished its tracks to a new town and started running, it was a great occasion, Johnny. Everybody made it a holiday and celebrated. I remember that the most exciting celebration was in October 1887, when the Cannon Valley Railroad (you know it as the Great Western now) opened its line from Faribault to Mankato. There were several special trains run from Mankato to St. Paul by way of Faribault, and more than five hundred people came to Mankato from nearby towns on the line. There hadn't been such a big crowd in town since the Indian hanging. After a day of speeches and concerts by the brass bands there was a big banquet at the Clifton House to finish the celebration."

"My," Johnny said wonderingly, "it seems funny to make such a fuss over just a railroad. But tell me, Mr. Moon," he added, "why did the railroads ask so much money from the towns? They make their money by hauling passengers and freight, don't they?"

"They do now, all right," Mr. Moon replied, "but in the beginning

it cost a lot to build the roads, and someone had to help put up money for the work. Many banking houses in Europe as well as the banks in our country raised money to build the lines, and the railroads thought that the towns should be willing to pay something too, if they were going to get the service. It did take a lot of money, but the men who owned the railroads made a great deal out of it, too. Some of the biggest fortunes in America were made in that way."

Ghost Towns

Johnny sat up in bed and looked at his guest intently as he said, "What happened if a town couldn't give a railroad the money they asked for?"

Mr. Moon tilted back in the chair, put his feet up on the radiator again and yawned. Then he said thoughtfully, "It worked like this: if a town couldn't or wouldn't give the railroad what it asked, there was no railroad service for the town. That's simple enough, isn't it?" Johnny nodded. "Then if there was no railroad service," Mr. Moon continued, "the town hadn't a chance when its neighbors had trains puffing in and out with passengers and freight. When their business men couldn't get their goods shipped, they moved where they could.

South Bend

"Take the case of South Bend, for instance. Shortly after--"

"South Bend, that's the place just south of Le Hillier, isn't it?" Johnny interrupted.

"Yes, South Bend was just across the Blue Earth River from Mankato. Once it was a town, but when the railroad came to Mankato and passed up South Bend the town died. I'll tell you the story if you'd like to hear it." Johnny nodded.

"Well, early in the summer of 1853," Mr. Moon began, "the steamer Clarion came up the Minnesota River and stopped at Mankato. After the freight

was unloaded, Captain Samuel Humbertson decided to go a little farther, for he was anxious to see what lay beyond.

"When he arrived at the mouth of the Blue Earth River, he steered his boat into it a short distance and went ashore. When he saw the level plain rising gradually from the riverbank and extending back a mile before it was cut by the bluffs, he thought it was the ideal place for a town. At once he decided to name the town 'South Bend' because that was what the Mankato people already called that part of the river. He was convinced that South Bend would someday be the biggest city in southern Minnesota.

"'I'll tell you what,' the Captain said to his nephew who had made the trip with him, 'you stay right here with this pile of boards to hold possession. If anyone comes along and wants to claim this land, you tell them that they're too late--it's already taken.' His nephew agreed to do this, so Captain Humbertson went back to his boat and steamed away, his head swimming with plans. As soon as he reached St. Paul he went to see his old friend Colonel Stoddard, a real estate man, to gain his help in promoting a town.

"At that time a young Welshman named Evans, from La Crosse, Wisconsin, was in St. Paul looking around for favorable opportunities in the new land open to settlement in Minnesota. He had met Colonel Stoddard earlier and, when the Colonel told him about Captain Humbertson and his plans for South Bend, Evans decided to go there with his friend Mathews. So the party started out.

"Once aboard the Clarion they found the river so low that they left the boat at St. Peter and continued on foot. When they got to South Bend, they found the J. S. Lyons family already there. (Lyons later became known as the first dairyman of the region, for he bought and imported to South Bend the first milch cow that was seen west of the Blue Earth River.)

"In November of that year (1853) a survey was made of the townsite, and settlers began coming to South Bend. Through Evans, the Welshman, an advertising campaign had been started to sell South Bend to the Welsh people.

"One year later, in August 1854, the town had six families. Aside from these twenty-six people and their five houses, there were one span of horses, four yoke of oxen, six cows, and two dogs. It would seem, you see, as if those twenty-six people were there to stay.

"During the next five years the town grew to a bustling trade center. In 1860 there were more than a hundred buildings in the town, and the population was about three hundred. It was on the way to becoming one of the leading business centers of this section.

"Then the railroad came in 1868, Johnny, and for a number of reasons the people of South Bend lost their fight to have the tracks laid into their town. That was the death knell for the village. If they could have secured railroad service, South Bend might have competed with Mankato as a business center, and, who knows, it might even have become larger and more important than Mankato. But the railroad missed it and so South Bend was doomed.

"Long before 1900 the town had disappeared. Only a stone house and a couple of frame houses mark what was once a bustling frontier town.

"There were several other little villages in our county that died the same way, but those cases weren't as serious as the one I've just told you about, for South Bend really had had a future before its disappointment over the railroad.

"Yes, the railroads hurt the steamboat and stagecoach business, but just the same they were the most important single factor in our county's progress. They brought many more settlers, new towns grew and developed, industry and agriculture advanced. Take the case of the farmer, for instance--"

"Yes," Johnny interrupted, "I've heard my grandfather say that it made a lot of difference when the railroad came, but he never said just why."

"It helped men like your grandfather in many ways. First, it helped to open up new farming land that the settlers had considered far too hard to reach. And it gave the farmer a way to get his stuff to market. It didn't do much good to raise big crops if you had no way of selling them. This settled that problem for a while, you see. Then the farmer could have his machinery shipped in, too. All of this made lands that were close to the railroad increase in value.

"But of course the important thing was that the railroad enabled the farmer to get his crops to market quickly. With St. Paul and Minneapolis only ninety to one hundred miles away, this meant a lot to those early farmers.

"I tell you, the way our farming land developed after the railroad came through was almost more than I could believe from one week to the next. People just poured in here. They came from sections of the United States where there weren't so many opportunities, and many made the long hard trip from European countries, too. A poor man could seldom hope to own a farm in any European country, but if he worked hard and had any luck at all in America he could have his own land in those days. Blue Earth County got her share of the new settlers, for, as I told you, the land that had once been used for the Indian reservation was now thrown open to farmers.

"With so many new farms our county developed faster and faster. Our land is very rich, you know, and those early settlers learned very soon that they could grow bumper grain crops."

"I've heard my grandfather tell about his first really fine stand of wheat," Johnny put in. "When it was ripe and ready for the threshers, he said they were almost afraid to go to bed at night for fear something would happen to spoil it."

"I know," Mr. Moon smiled, "many of them hardly enjoyed those first bumper crops they were so worried about them. Our farmers were progressive, you see, and they wanted to learn all the new things they could about improving their work. That was one of the reasons they organized a county fair in 1859. It was the first county fair in our section of the state.

"This first fair was held on a farm near the village of South Bend, and it was without question the greatest social event that had taken place here since the first settlers arrived. People came to it from all over our district, prizes were awarded for the finest displays, and everyone had a fine time."

"Tell me, Mr. Moon, did the farmers in the early days have to fight drouths and things that we hear about now? You should hear my Uncle Ben talk about the troubles he has trying to make a living these last few years!"

"I've heard him," Mr. Moon said smilingly, "but even at that he hasn't had some of the troubles that his father had on the farm. There was the Indian trouble first, of course, and I can tell you it was no fun to have to carry a gun and to keep looking over your shoulder whenever you went into a field.

"After that was over came the five-year grasshopper plague in the summers of 1873-77. Blue Earth County wasn't the only section that suffered, for the 'hoppers spread over great areas of the entire Northwest. I've looked down on a lot of trouble, but I don't believe that the farmers ever had anything much harder to face than those grasshoppers.

"They came in such numbers that often crops were entirely destroyed. A number of farm families packed up their belongings and fled to other places, while some who stayed became so destitute that state authorities or friends who were better off had to help them or they would have starved.

"It got so bad finally, Johnny, that some schools were closed.

Judson Jones, principal of the Garden City school, and all his pupils went from farm to farm helping farmers. Parents took their children with them to help destroy the insects, and everything they could think of was tried.

"One farmer harnessed a horse to two hayracks twenty feet apart, and attached a funnel-shaped net between them. The grasshoppers caught in the net in one day filled as many grain sacks as could be loaded on a hayrack.

"The county commissioners voted a bounty of ten cents a quart for grasshoppers. Soon so many quarts of insects were brought in that they reduced the price to five cents a quart, because they were afraid that they would have to pay out all the counties' funds for the grasshoppers!"

"That must have been terrible!" Johnny exclaimed. "What did they do with the grasshoppers once they were caught and put into the sacks?"

"Well, first the supervisor of the township measured them and when he was through with this job kerosene oil was poured over the sacks and they were set on fire. After this the charred bodies were buried in deep trenches."

"My, the county must have paid out a lot of money for dead grasshoppers, didn't it, Mr. Moon?"

"Indeed it did, Johnny. In one ten-day period alone, the county paid out $32,000. Just imagine how many dead grasshoppers that payment represented! Chris Arnold, the county commissioner, said it was about 16,000 bushels. Later, the state paid back to the county one-half of the sum paid in these bounties."

"Say, that must have been awful! We've never had such a plague since then, have we?"

"No, Johnny, nothing nearly as bad. I know that it took many years for the farmers to make up their losses suffered during that grasshopper invasion. If they hadn't been so determined to make a success of their farms, many would have been too discouraged to go on, I'm sure.

"As more and more land of the county was broken by the farmers plow,

it began to yield a fine profit in harvested crops. Towns began springing up here and there. Usually they followed the railroads as they were built, but a few of the towns in our county were established before the railroad came. Lake Crystal was one. It was settled first in 1854 by L. O. Hunt and W. R. Robinson. Is isn't hard to guess where a town gets such a name as Lake Crystal, is it?

"Well, this particular lake near the town was unusually clear and bright--in the sunlight the waters sparlked exactly like a crystal. When the railroad reached the town in 1869 the population took a sudden spurt, and a few years later a branch line, known as the Elmore line, was built from Lake Crystal to Elmore near the Iowa-Minnesota state line; this made Lake Crystal important as a railroad town, too.

"The other small towns in the county grew and prospered if they were fortunate enough to have the railroad laid out through them, and if the farmers around them were prosperous. But they were all destined to remain just a handful of small towns exactly like the thousands and thousands of other small towns that are scattered over the face of America. How many, many little towns I look down on at night," Mr. Moon said thoughtfully. "Sometimes they look very lonely.

"Mankato, of course, continued to grow. It was an important place in pioneer days, for it was the center of supplies for pioneers and immigrants. Some moved on, but they all stopped at Mankato for supplies. If Mankato couldn't furnish what they needed, then St. Paul and Minneapolis could, and these cities were close enough to ship their goods to Blue Earth County easily.

"Natural resources of the district have done a great deal, of course, to give people of Mankato a way to make a living. Men found that stone deposits all around the city contained a very fine quality of limestone, so they soon began quarrying it, as I told you. We speak of mining coal or gold,"

Mr. Moon explained, "but when we take stone out of the earth we speak of quarrying it.

"Mankato stone has been shipped to all parts of the world. When you grow up and travel about the country you'll ride over many bridges that have stone in them which was taken from your own town, and you'll see many big buildings made of fine limestone blocks that were chopped from the quarries right here in Mankato. I told you, too, that long ago men found they could make an excellent grade of cement and brick from the wonderful clay that is dug out of the river bottoms near here. Yes," the old gentlemen repeated, "you'll go in many houses, and pass many public buildings, and ride over many bridges that were made of products manufactured right under your very eyes."

Mr. Moon sighed and leaned back in his chair. "I'm tired," he said suddenly. "I've completely lost track of how long I've talked--must be five hours at least."

"It's longer than that," Johnny said. "The first thing you know it will be morning, and the story isn't finished either, is it?"

Mr. Moon shook his head. "What more do you want to know?" he asked after a moment. "There are thousands of things left that I could tell you about, but after all I knew I couldn't stay here very long so I just had to hit the top, you might say."

"Well, tell me something about robbers or ghosts--anything exciting like that. I've heard my Uncle Dick say that there <u>is</u> a ghost around the Haunted Mill. Is that true?"

"What do you think?"

"I think it isn't!" Johnny exclaimed promptly. "There <u>aren't</u> ghosts and everyone ought to know it, but some people are still afraid to go near that old mill. Tell me what happened there, will you?"

"You don't have a sandwich or an apple around up here, do you?" Mr. Moon asked, pawing around on the table which stood beside him. "I don't think I feel equal to any more stories until I get something in my stomach."

"There are some crackers in that sack on the windowsill," Johnny said. "I keep those here in case I wake up hungry. Help yourself."

Mr. Moon reached his hand in the sack and took out some crackers. Then he leaned back in his chair munching them and said, "I'll tell you about the mill, Johnny, if you promise me that you'll never be so silly as to think that there really was a devil around the place. Why, I've told boys stories about things such as you've asked me and what do you think...the very next night I've looked down right after I got up and there they were walking a mile out of their way to avoid something I'd warned them wasn't true, and likely as not whistling their lungs to pieces. You wouldn't be so foolish as that, I know."

"Of course not," Johnny said. "I wouldn't think of being so foolish."

"Well," Mr. Moon began, " way back in 1860 a young man named Gottlieb Shastag left his home in Holland and came to America. His father and grandfather had both been millers in Holland, and since Gottlieb knew the trade he decided to settled in Minnesota and build a mill.

"As soon as he had taken a claim on the shores of Minnesota Lake in Danville Township (that's in Blue Earth County, you know) he built himself a log home and then started work on the mill. It was to be a regular Dutch mill run by wind-power; probably you've seen pictures of them in your geography books.

"It took two years to build the mill, for Gottlieb had to go into the woods, cut the trees, trim them, and haul them home. That's considerably different from going to a lumber yard and putting in an order, you see. The settlers in that neighborhood were excited at the prospect of having a mill

so close, for until then they had been forced to haul their grain to South Bend or Mankato, and that was a long slow journey.

"They were so happy about the mill, in fact, that they tried to be especially friendly with the Dutchman. But Shastag was a peculiar man, and the only people he visited with at all were a few of his countrymen who lived in the district.

"One night while Gottlieb sat visiting with one of his friends, a terrific thunder storm broke. As the wind blew, and thunder and lightning split the heavens, Shastag's friend talked to him about the devil. 'The devil,' he said, 'sometimes raids mills, and at these times he turns himself into a big black rabbit. If the rabbit gets into a mill, all kinds of trouble sets in. If you can drive the rabbit out, however,' he concluded, 'the curse may be broken.'

"Shastag never forgot that conversation. Living by himself as he did he had too much time to brood and worry. Before long he was even more quiet and lonely, worrying as he did that the devil might take a notion to enter his mill.

"Then one day as Gottlieb was returning home he saw a black rabbit crossing the footpath in front of him! It's the devil! he thought and broke into a run, trying to head the animal off. But he wasn't quick enough. In a minute the rabbit had disappeared within the mill.

"The poor miller was beside himself with fear. Panic-stricken he rushed to see his friend who told him that he must allow no person other than himself to enter the mill; 'If anyone else enters the mill,' his friend said, 'terrible things will happen.'

"Still sick with fear he returned to his mill. Without any delay he printed signs warning people that under no conditions must they enter the mill. These were posted at different points on his property.

"After two weeks of constant effort to drive the animal out of the mill, he was finally rewarded one day, when he saw the rabbit dart out and go scurrying away. But, although the rabbit-devil never returned, it seemed to make no difference to the superstitious man. He was convinced that the mill was contaminated by an evil spirit, and sure enough, Johnny, in the days that followed things happened to make the poor man believe more firmly than ever that his mill was haunted.

"It wasn't long before Gottlieb was sure that the mill didn't work right. Things went wrong with the machinery. Even the wind didn't seem to blow as it had before the rabbit-devil's visit. Lying awake night after night, Gottlieb became certain that he heard strange noises. If anyone comes into this mill, he thought, something terrible will happen. Everyone must keep far away.

"He built a fence that completely encircled the mill. Settlers who brought their grain had to leave their wagons nearly a half mile away and carry the heavy sacks on their backs. His customers resented it and before long there was trouble.

"One day a settler named Mycue came with a load of corn to be ground. He stopped his team a half-mile from the mill, unloaded his sacks from the wagon, and carried them one at a time until he had the whole load placed at the entrance to the mill. When the miller finally came out and asked him what he wanted, Mycue told him that he wanted his corn ground. 'I think I can get it around for you in a month if God will make the wind blow,' Gottlieb replied.

"Mycue was dumbfounded! Certainly the old man must be trying to make a fool of him, he decided. Well, he'd show him what he thought of having to carry his heavy sacks back to his wagon again! He began arguing with the miller and soon they were actually fighting. Neither won, however, and Mycue had to carry his sacks back down the road. This is the last time,

he said to himself, that I'll ever come to Gottlieb Shastag's mill again.

"Things like this happened again and again between Shastag and his customers. On one occasion two settlers, disgusted with his way of doing business, decided on different action with the miller. They overpowered him and proceeded to tie a rope around the mill, determined to pull it into the lake. Their rope was too short for the purpose, so they released Shastag and went away.

"Gradual loss of his business wasn't the end of Shastag's trouble. Even the small boys of the section bothered the tormented man by throwing stones at his mill. And with each day he had less to do with people. Finally the settlers became so discouraged trying to do business with him that they began taking their grain to Waseca and Mankato. Of course, the end of this was that before long Shastag had no business at all.

"Whatever the curse of the black rabbit-devil was, Johnny, it had become a living, vital, doom-possessing nightmare for Gottlieb Shastag. Doom hung over his head like a threatening storm-cloud. Fate was surely weaving a dreadful pattern into his life.

"And then it happened! After long months of worry Shastag felt that the devil had caught up with him, for as he came out of his mill one day a blade on the wind-wheel struck him on the head. It didn't kill him instantly, but he died believing that the devil <u>did</u> haunt his mill.

"And there you are, Johnny, a real ghost story from your own county. Gottlieb Shastag's mill still stands, after eighty long years--and now there are people who say," and Mr. Moon smiled slyly, "that on black, stormy nights something that looks for all the world like a big rabbit can be seen slinking along in the direction of that mill. I've never seen anything of the kind," he concluded firmly, "and you'd think that if anyone could see such a sight I'd be the one. That sounds reasonable, doesn't it?"

"Yes," Johnny agreed, "that does sound reasonable. It's a good story any way, isn't it?"

Mr. Moon nodded.

"You know, I'd like to see that mill sometime."

"Well, why not, Johnny? Ask your daddy to take you down there some nice Sunday afternoon; it's only a short drive from here."

"I'm going to do that, Mr. Moon. Maybe we can go next Sunday. Do you know any more stories like that?"

"Not like that, Johnny. But I'll tell you one I know you'll think is mighty funny because even though I saw it years ago I still think it's funny. You've been to baseball games, haven't you, Johnny? You've seen the pitcher stand on the mound, take the signal from his catcher, look around the bases, wind up, and throw the ball? It's pretty thrilling, too, isn't it? Well, this story has to do with baseball and the science of pitching."

"Swell, Mr. Moon! Tell me all about it."

"All right, Johnny. The story opens in Mankato. The time is 1898. The Spanish-American War has just come to an end.

"The Saulpaugh Hotel is the scene of the story. I'm sure you've been inside the Saulpaugh with your daddy, haven't you, Johnny? Old as the building is now, it was then the newest and largest of Mankato's hotels, and many of the most gay and pleasant parties of the community took place there. Clarence Saulpaugh, the owner and host, was known around the countryside for his fine food and entertainment.

"He was a sociable man and nearly every night when the lobby thinned of guests he could be found off in some corner visiting with friends--telling the latest stories of the travelers, or discussing events of the day.

"Then came the time when his Mankato friends missed him on the evenings that they called at the hotel. At first they paid no special

attention, for they thought that some business had come up to take him away from their evening activities.

"After several weeks the word went around that Saulpaugh was acting strangely. As soon as he completed his daily work he rushed from his office, locked himself in his private rooms on the top floor of the hotel and there he remained, refusing to admit anyone or to come out when his friends knocked at the door.

"One evening a group of his friends sat in the lobby worriedly discussing his strange behavior. Can he have some terrible illness, they asked each other? Has he lost a great deal of money? Is he planning to leave Mankato? Just as one of the group offered to go up and knock at the door once again, they heard someone running in the second floor hall. As they all turned to look they saw Saulpaugh come dashing down the wide stairway to the lobby, his coat-tails flying. Clasping a box tightly under one arm, and waving the other wildly, he shouted: 'Boys, I've really got it! I've got it! I've actually done it!'

"'What have you done?' they demanded. 'What do you have in that box?'

"Saulpaugh held the box out in front of him and said, 'Boys, do you see this box? This is the greatest invention of the year, and it is going to change the game of baseball completely. See these buttons? Well, from now on you won't see the pitcher standing out there on the mound winding up.'

"'What's he going to do--pitch sitting down?' one of his friends asked, trying not to laugh.

"'Exactly,' answered Saulpaugh. 'When the pitcher takes the mound to begin his duties, he will take a chair with him. When he has comfortably seated himself he will put this box on his knees, drop the ball into the box, push one of the buttons and zingo!--the ball will be thrown across the diamond to the batter. It really works too--the delivery of the ball is

perfect--and the pitcher can deliver just the kind of ball he wants. There are different buttons here to use for different kinds of curves, too.'"

Johnny had to laugh--"Can you imagine that--a pitcher sitting out on the diamond! What did the box look like?"

"It was very small," Mr. Moon explained, "something like a shoe-box, I'd say. Buttons were arranged on one end of it, and the other contained the hole through which the ball was placed."

"What happened to this invention," asked Johnny.

"Nothing, Johnny. Simply nothing. Saulpaugh was sincere, however. He had spent a lot of time on his machine, and he really thought it was going to be practical. Of course it never was. He made a trip to Minneapolis to sell it to the baseball club there, but nobody would buy it."

"Well, say, that's really pretty good. Wait till I tell the gang that one--they'll sure have a good laugh. Have you got any more good stories?"

"Well, I don't know, Johnny," Mr. Moon rubbed his hand over his chin and thought for a moment. Then he said, "Have you ever heard about the James-Younger gang--the outlaws that terrorized the West in the early days--the gang that raided a bank at Northfield?"

"I'll say I have, Mr. Moon. Daddy has talked about them often."

"Did you know that they were here first, before going to Northfield? Did your dad say that they had intended to rob a bank here, and that part of the gang was captured near here?"

"Is that so? Daddy never mentioned that."

"Maybe he didn't know. Some of those facts are not generally known. However, that's the way it was."

"Were they really here in Mankato, Mr. Moon?"

"Yes, they were. It was a hot summer afternoon in August 1876 when they arrived. Mankato people went about their business without much pep, for

the heat was terrific.

"The town was booming. You see, when the farmlands of the county had been over-ridden with grasshoppers some of the farmers lost everything they had, and as a result much of the land could be bought at a bargain. A lot of people came here then to look over the farms that were for sale.

"With so many strangers in town, the men who arrived from the West that day did not arouse any suspicions, especially as they talked to different people about the land they wanted to buy.

"But there wasn't a farmer among them. They were just clever actors. In reality these men were the bandits famous as the James-Younger gang. Among them were Jesse James, Frank James, Thomas C. (Cole) Younger, James Younger, Robert Younger, William Miller, Bill Chadwell, and Charles Pitts.

"They had taken part in so many train robberies, bank robberies and murders in Missouri and other states that all of the officers in that part of the country were hot on their trail. When it got too hot for them they came north to hide, and to find fresh fields for their activities.

"While they were planning a robbery, the Mankato Board of Trade was preparing for a gala occasion, their annual meeting. Consequently there were many more people than usual in town. Most of them were armed for, after all, Mankato was still a frontier town and everybody believed in preparedness.

"It so happened that the morning of the Board of Trade's meeting was the very same time the gang had chosen for the raid on one of the town's three banks. As the gangsters sauntered downtown to take up their appointed stations and positions for the raid, they saw a crowd of men gathered on the corner nearest the bank they intended to rob. They didn't know, Johnny, about the meeting of the Board of Trade, and they immediately guessed that the citizens had found them out and had massed together to stop them in their tracks. And at that very moment something else happened to convince

them that their plans had been discovered. A brass band came marching down South Front Street and headed straight toward the bank!

"They lost no time getting out of town, I can tell you! The rest of the story--their appearance at St. Peter, their inspection of that town, their arrival at Northfield and the bank robbery--is a matter of history. You know the story, Johnny.

"When they left Northfield after the hold-up, they headed back for our county. They had to go slowly for so many posses were on their trail that they could only travel under cover of darkness. The second night away from Northfield they camped in a deserted farmhouse two miles east of Mankato, and stayed there two days and two nights.

"Word was brought to the townspeople that some of the gang had been seen in the vicinity. Additional posses were organized, and General E. M. Pope took charge of the search.

"The outlaws suspected that their hide-out would soon get too hot for them, so the gang divided to make a get-away. Both of the James brothers were able to get back to their old haunts, but the Youngers and Charlie Pitts had more trouble.

"On the twenty-first of September they were reported near Madelia, just across the Blue Earth County line in Brown County, and possemen hurried to the scene. A gun battle followed in which Pitts was killed, and the Youngers were injured. Captured, they were taken to Rice County (the scene of their crime) for trial, and convicted. That was the end of this gang as far as Minnesota is concerned, but there was so much excitement while they <u>were</u> here that it will be a long time before the story is forgotten."

"That was a swell story!" Johnny exclaimed. And then he added hurriedly, "Listen, there're just a few minutes left and then it will be daylight and you'll have to go. Do you know more stories that you can tell me right away?"

"Well, let me see now, hmmmmmm, I don't suppose you have ever seen a President of the United States, have you, Johnny?"

"No," Mr. Moon, "I've seen presidents in the newsreels, but that's all."

"Suppose I tell you about the time a presidential candidate--who was later elected--came to Mankato.

"It was in 1912 and William Howard Taft was President of the United States. Election-time was approaching, and the Republican party had been split when Theodore Roosevelt formed the 'Bull-Moose' party. The Democrats intended to take full advantage of this fact, and their candidate, Woodrow Wilson, was putting up a strong fight.

"The Democratic National Committee had sent Wilson on a tour to the Pacific coast states. On his return, he was to stop at St. Paul and Minneapolis to make a major campaign speech.

"When this became known, the leading Democrats of our county decided it would be very nice if Wilson's train could be routed via Mankato in order that he might make a platform appearance here.

"They set their wheels in motion, wrote to the important men in the Democratic party, and made their request. It was accepted. Woodrow Wilson's train would come through Mankato, and he would appear on the train platform and talk to the people!

"Yes, it was a warm campaign, Johnny, and even the Republican newspapers of the county encouraged everyone to turn out to hear the Democratic candidate for the presidency.

"The train carrying Mr. Wilson was due in Mankato at 5:30 a.m.--and that morning alarm clocks were set at a much earlier hour than usual. In almost every house there was great scurrying around for breakfast and wraps about five o'clock, and shortly after that men, women and children

hurried down to the Omaha station. Everyone wanted to be there first to get a good place near enough to the train that they could see and hear the famous man.

"Many were disappointed, for the space round the depot was filled with a milling throng of about three thousand people. Everyone tried to crowd into the railroad yards, for they wanted at least a look at the man they thought would be the next President of the United States.

"And then the train arrived. People pushed forward excitedly and children were tossed up on their father's shoulders that they might also see Woodrow Wilson. But, Woodrow Wilson was not to be seen. Something had gone wrong. He did not appear on the platform. All efforts to bring him out to talk to the crowd failed. The train whistled off, and slowly made its way through the yards northward to the Twin Cities.

"Residents of Mankato were peeved! They were downright angry. So Woodrow Wilson would snub them, would he? Men stopped on the streets of the town all during the day to discuss the episode. Feeling grew stronger and stronger. The Mankato Free Press in its first edition on the street described the unfortunate event in great detail.

"Woodrow Wilson then telegraphed the mayor of Mankato his personal apology for his failure to appear for the crowd. That helped soothe the feelings of the public somewhat, but there was still much irritation and annoyance. Never again would they get up before dawn to go to the station to see a celebrity! How many people in Mankato voted for him that fall I don't know, but he was elected President of the United States all right and held his office during the World War."

"Say, that't some story, Mr. Moon. Thanks for telling me about it. How did--say, where are you going?"

Mr. Moon had taken his feet off of the window sill and gotten out

of his chair. He stood by the window looking out at the eastern sky.

"I'm afraid I'll have to leave now," he answered Johnny. "You wouldn't want me to have the sun upset because I haven't gone to bed, would you?"

"Of course not," Johnny said quickly. "But I can't believe that it's morning yet and that you really have to go!"

"The night has gone fast," Mr. Moon replied, "but morning is really almost here. I'll come back again some time and tell you other things about your town and your county, for there are enough stories to keep me busy many nights. Have a good time tomorrow and watch me get up tomorrow night."

"Wait a minute, Mr. Moon!" Johnny cried. But it was too late. Before he had time to sit up in bed the room was empty. Not a soul was in sight.

"Mr. Moon," he called again. But there was no answer. Then from far away he heard a bell. Very, very faintly it rang. What can that be? he wondered, listening carefully. Then the bell rang as though it were in the room. Louder and louder it sounded, closer and closer. He put his hands up to cover his ears just as his mother shook him again and said--"Johnny, your alarm clock will have the whole neighborhood awake. Goodness! what a racket it was making."

"It sounded like a bell to me," he said sleepily. "The Moon was here talking to me and right after he left this bell began to ring."

"It was the clock, Johnny," his mother said, turning down the blankets. "I don't know who this was you talk about being here last night, but Fred rode into the yard on his bicycle a minute ago, and he won't wait long. Jump up now and I'll have your breakfast as soon as you dress. Its a beautiful day and you'll have a good time. Hurry now, and I'll tell Fred to wait."