

The following was taken from "The Twin Valley Community Story" prepared by committees from the Twin Valley area for the Diamond Jubilee of Twin Valley in 1961. This was written by Mrs. M.H. Brevik.

Village of Twin Valley

A settlement, in time to be called Twin Valley, was begun as early as 1874 when S.B. Olson chose the site for a flour mill. The name was derived from the fact that the valleys of the Wild Rice River and the Mashaug Creek came together at this place. It was an ideal location for a flour mill as the creek was only ten feet below the river bottom and it was only necessary to cut a canal through the river bank to get a good water fall. The mill was operated for some time before a settlement sprang up around it.

J.F. Heiberg arrived in 1881 and worked for Mr. Olson. Later he bought him out and in 1883 rebuilt the mill. Since the flour mill attracted farmers it proved to be a desirable location for a village. The first store was opened by the firm of Stortroen and Leath in the late '70's. The first post office was established in 1881 and Mr. Stortroen was the first postmaster.

In the meantime more settlers were coming into the region. Dr. John Froshaug, a veterinary surgeon from Norway, took a homestead in 1878 and, as the early records state, "Doctored both man and beast," until his death in 1899.

The later part of June 1880 a wagon train consisting of nine wagons arrived from the southern part of the state. Among these were the Nils Wolds, P.O. Herreids, Peter B. Olsons, Neresons, Hans Hanson, Christ Hanson, and Christ Olson. Several of these took homesteads just north and east of the present site of Twin Valley, some bought railroad land – others located in other townships. The trip took them six weeks and they brought their worldly goods in their covered wagons. They also brought several cows, pigs, chickens, etc.

In 1882 another group of settlers came consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Stenseth and two children, Mr. Stenseth's mother and three sisters-in-law. All the sisters married early settlers; Augusta married J.F. Heiberg, Amalia married Olaf Trandum and Ovidia, Ole Gunderson. When the village was moved to the new site, Mr. Stenseth purchased the Halvorson store and was appointed the postmaster of Heiberg until the post office was discontinued in 1916. He continued to operate the store until his death in 1942 at the age of 94 years.

Mrs. Stenseth was well known as a midwife and probably delivered more babies than an average doctor in her active life.

Various enterprises were opening up in the village in the valley, some of which were as follows: The Thorp Bros. Store in 1882; Johnson's boarding house in 1883; Olaf Trandum's blacksmith shop in 1885; Charles Hanson's notions store and restaurant in 1886; Other businessmen were John A. Jorgenson, harness maker; Iver Grimsrud, wagon maker; Bernard Hanson, carpenter; Alfred Anderson arrived in 1885 and clerked in the Thorp Store. In 1889 he was appointed local postmaster and served in that capacity off and on for many years. Mrs. Anderson was the former Karen Underland.

The first church in the community was organized Oct. 28, 1885. This was the Bethany Norwegian Lutheran or the Hauge Church as it was most commonly known. Among the leaders of this church were some of the settlers who had come with the wagon train – the Nils Wolds, Peder Herreids, and the P.B. Olsons. Their first pastor was Rev. B. Anderson. For a number of years they had no church building, but met in private homes or at the school house.

Records show that the first school district in the neighborhood was Number 37. The first school term was three months, and was conducted in the farm home of Hans Urdahl. A school house was built in 1883. The first teacher was Miss Nora Evans who later became Mrs. Knute Moe.

When the railroad was extended through the present site of Twin Valley, the village was literally moved from the old site to the new. The present landsite of the village was the homestead of Dr. John Froshaug, who had sold it to Mr. J.R. Holmes. Mr. Holmes platted the ground and presented the land to the village.

The town was incorporated on August 24, 1894. Two hundred and fifty signatures were on the original application. Charles Hanson was elected to be the first mayor. Other village mayors up to 1900 were J.K. Weium and C.P. Lysaker.

The first business establishment was a lumber yard founded by Wilcox Lumber Co. with Jacob Ness as the manager. Other early business places opening up were: General stores of Thorp Bros. And Frazee Bros.; notions store, Charles Hanson; restaurant and barber shop, W.C. Howe; hotel and boarding house, Soren Johnson; a Cargill elevator - all of these business places were here by the fall of 1886.

An article in a Northwest railroad magazine for Feb. 1887 states as follows: "At Twin Valley are also the beginnings of a smart country town in two elevators, two stores and a number of buildings and residences - all built too late in the fall to be painted." The station agent also reported he had shipped 102,000 bushels of wheat from this and the next station in the month of November.

The next year P.O. Hanson established a hardware store; Jacob Peterson, a hotel; A.T. Lee opened a restaurant; Daniel Swenson, a general store and P. Lynne a photograph gallery. T. Grimsrud had moved his wagon shop and Andrew J. Berg opened a livery barn; O.L. Aasgaard had established a farm machinery house and in the spring of 1888 C. P. Lysaker started a blacksmith shop.

January 1, 1887, the post office was transferred to the new site. The following is a list of postmasters who have served in that office: O. Stortroen, 1881-84; John Halvorson, 1884-88; C.R. Frazee, 1888-89; Alfred Anderson, 1889-94; John Bundy, 1984-95; Hans Burgess, 1895-99; Alfred Anderson, 1899-1915; J.J. Meighen, 1915-22; Alfred Anderson, 1922-40; and A. Elton Jones who is serving at the present time. Two rural routes serve the surrounding territory and some time ago the office achieved the status of second class.

The first electric plant was owned by J. F. Heiberg, who soon after he built his roller mill, installed electric equipment. He began furnishing light and power to the village and gradually increased the capacity of his plant until he was serving other towns as well. The original water works plant was established in 1905 at a cost of \$20,000 and secured its water from a well 160 ft. deep.

In 1899, Dr. Saxe J. Froshaug, son of Dr. John Froshaug located at Twin Valley and was the first medical doctor to serve the community. He also served for a time as county coroner and as a county physician to care for the needy.

The Twin Valley Times, the local weekly newspaper, was founded in 1895 by Lars Bjornson, and has been owned in succession by Lars Bjornson, E. Gunderson, H. Solomonson, J.D. Mason, W.C. Lee, Ray Lee, and the present owner, Morrell Lien.

The first bank of the town was the First National, founded in 1902. The officers who opened the bank were: A. L. Hanson, president; A. H. Froshaug, vice president; and C. E. Peterson, cashier. The following year, 1903, The Citizens State Bank was established by E. M. Niles, M.E. Dahl, H.C. Aamoth and others.

The Twin Valley Roller Mills were built in 1903, Mr. August Durling was part owner and manager until in 1904, when he became sole owner. In 1894 he was married to Bertha Bergeson.

Twin Valley continued to grow in the years to come and some of the outstanding additions to the town are as follows:

A fine co-operative creamery.

A public school which was improved from time to time -the latest addition was a large auditorium and extra classrooms.

In 1950 the Lutheran Memorial Home for the aged was built. To this particularly fine home a chapel has been added which is greatly enjoyed by the residents.

A medical center with all modern facilities was built in 1951.

A large G.T.A. elevator was built to replace one destroyed by fire.

The Twin Valley - Ulen Telephone Company, which serves several surrounding towns, has added an attractive new office building.

1960 showed a big improvement in the city water supply. A new well was dug to a depth of 242 feet. This brought in a water flow of 185 gallons a minute. A new building was erected to house all the apparatus, the total cost was about \$15,000.

Twin Valley has many other civic improvements and is served by trunk highways and excellent tributary roads. As is revealed elsewhere in this issue, its religious and educational welfare has not been neglected.