



The Carnegie Courier

Newsletter of

The Mitchell Area Historical Society (MAHS)
& The Mitchell Area Genealogical Society (MAGS)

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Winter 2021-22

The Taste of Christmas

Gingerbread seems to go with Christmas. There is no ceiling on the creativity that can emerge and the memories to be made while making a gingerbread family project to be enjoyed with a good cup of hot chocolate.

So where did all of this begin? Gingerbread has a long history dating as far back as the ancient Greeks and Egyptians who used it shaped into religious symbols. Crusaders returning from the Middle East brought ginger to Europe in the 11th century where it was used by the upper classes. Spices were expensive and only the wealthy could afford to play around with different tastes. Later when the prices of spice went down and they became more available, ginger was one of the spices to be more widely adopted by the common folks. In Europe gingerbread was sold outside churches as well as in specialty shops and seasonal markets. The making of gingerbread was limited to guilds because the shapes of the gingerbread were often religious in nature, and it was thought that the whole practice needed to be treated reverently.

However, during Christmas and Easter the guild requirement was suspended. Eventually, gingerbread became absorbed into the everyday culture, and it no longer was limited to guilds. Queen Elizabeth I (who reigned from 1533 to 1603) is credited with making the first gingerbread men. They resembled visitors coming to court and were given as a gift to the visitor. Gingerbread even had a role in courting. When exchanged and tied with a ribbon, it became a symbol of affection. In England to help her find her man a woman would consume a gingerbread man made and decorated in



This is Hansel and Gretel meeting the witch at the gingerbread house.

Public domain image from the book, Dramatic Reader For Lower Grades by Florence Holbrook, Copyright 1911, page 118. Search media – Wikimedia Commons

the likeness of the man she wanted for a husband. Gingerbread crumbs were also added to meat dishes to help mask the smell of rotting meat since refrigeration didn't exist.

There are many recipes for gingerbread from many countries. For example, England used stale breadcrumbs instead of flour in the early recipes along with rosewater, sugar, ground almonds and ginger. By the 16th century, eggs were also added to the English recipe.

This paste-like dough was formed into wooden molds often the shape of new dignitaries or symbols for the news of the day. The finished cookie could be decorated with edible gold paint or white frosting to bring out the features.

Germany is known for two kinds of gingerbread (lebkuchen), a soft version and a hard version. The harder

version was great for making gingerbread houses. By the 16th century gingerbread houses were making their debut particularly in Germany.

The making of gingerbread is considered an art form in Germany, Poland, Russia, Hungary, Czech Republic, and France. After the publication of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales, which included "Hansel and Gretel," in 1812 the popularity of a house made of bread covered with sugar decorations became more popular. Germany embraced the making of gingerbread houses more than England. German immigrants coming to America carried this tradition with them.

Many countries have their own twist on gingerbread. The use of gingerbread has run the gamut from use as a religious object to simply sitting with family and friends to enjoy a treat. There are so many differences and customs concerning this sweet that each nationality should explore its take on the sweet treat.

Gingerbread comes in many sizes, shapes, and consistencies from the hard wafer to a soft cake-like cookie. "A baked sweet that contains ginger, and sometimes cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom and anise, and sweetened with any combination of brown sugar, molasses, light or dark corn syrup, or honey," the spruce eats.com Traditionally gingerbread is a Christmas custom but it doesn't need to be limited. Today gingerbread can be enjoyed all year by those willing to take on the adventure. Make a Memory!

The History of Gingerbread - Cookies, Houses, and Everything in Between (alwaysstheholidays.com)

The History and Origin of Gingerbread (thespruceeats.com)

Genealogy Corner

By *Beth Vlasman Walz*
MAGS President

Hello Everyone!!

Just a quick note to let you know what is coming up for our group. First, we will not be having a program in December. We all seem to be so busy during Christmas time that we chose to forego a program. Programs are being worked to help everyone learn more about researching different nationalities, having a possible work night at the Carnegie for those needing help or wanting to help others get started. During each program we would like to highlight one additional resource at the Carnegie. If you have any ideas for programs, would like to present a program, or would like some help getting one ready, you can email us at info@mitchellcarnegie.com or call and leave a message for me at 605-996-3209.

If you like history or genealogy, we are looking for help to staff our facility. We need people willing to work one afternoon a week (or more if you are willing) to help us keep the doors open. Computer skills are not necessary as we are looking for people to help tourists or others check out our building and exhibits.

Like Computers? We are also looking for people willing to help with our projects and resources. Most of these require some computer work. You can work on these while you staff or at other times.

Our programs are the 4th Monday of the month at 7 pm. We are slowly getting back to normal after Covid and all the repairs that needed to be done at the CRC. We hope to see you soon!

Thanks, Beth



Winter on the Plains

Snowbanks as high as the roof, cattle that had to have the ice pulled from their eyes, dead stock by the hundreds lying in the field, neighbors lost in the blizzard, children trying to get home from school who never made it, toes and fingers lost to the cold can be the aftermath of the winter storms that ravage the plains.

Anyone who lives in this part of the United States knows that winter can bring many surprises and unwanted consequences. One of the most disastrous of winter storms hit

on January 12, 1888. This killer took 235 lives and destroyed many head of livestock. The winter season of 1887-1888 started with the Dakotas being hit in November with ice storms and below normal temperatures. December was no better and the snowfall measured around 40 inches.

January brought the same kind of weather with a major blizzard hitting the Mitchell area on January 3, 1888. To add to the trouble another storm on January 12th took many by surprise as the stories included will tell the tale.



We were still a Territory when this storm hit Mitchell on January 3, 1888. From November 1887 through January 1888, ice storms and sub-zero temperatures afflicted a wide area of the plains including the Dakotas. Sources say that the December snowfall measured up to 40 inches. Winter wasn't done with us yet. January 12, 1888, started as a normal winter day but quickly changed into a killer blizzard known as the "Children's Blizzard" that resulted in 235 deaths, many of them children trying to get home from school. This photo was taken looking north up Main Street from First Avenue; the building on the left is the former Long Horn Bar that was torn down. The Veterans Memorial Park is now on the corner.

The Century Studio Camera

This is a #7A Century Studio Camera made by the Folmer & Schwing Department of Eastman Kodak Company of Rochester, N.Y.

It was made circa 1917 and was donated by Photography Unlimited (Anne & Arlen Moke) to the Mitchell Area Historical Society in July 2021.

The Mokes came in possession of the camera when they purchased the Bob Brown studio in 1989 from him. It has been partially restored and looks like it could take your picture today!

Bob Brown started his studio in 1945 at 220 ½ N. Main. In 1949 he bought out the Klebe studio at 218 N. Main while Klebe bought the High Studio at 408 N. Main. Paul Q. High then retired. Kleble had previously bought the Eliason studio in 1948.

Paul High began his photography career in 1915 when he bought out Hoyt Cox. It must have been shortly after this that he bought this camera.



This is the camera on display at the Carnegie Resource Center.

The Century Camera Company began operations in 1900. In 1903 George Eastman bought a controlling interest in the company. In 1917 it became a division of EKC.

The Folmer & Schwing Manufacturing Company was founded in New York City in 1887 by William Folmer and William Schwing. They began making cameras

in 1896. George Eastman purchased this company in 1905 and moved it to Rochester, NY. In 1907 it was named a 'Division' of Eastman Kodak Company and later a 'Department' of EKC.

The Century Department and the Folmer & Schwing Dept. made up Kodak's professional apparatus division.

The Century Division made many models of View cam-

eras in the early 1900's. In 1912 the No. 7 Century Studio camera went into production.

This was replaced in 1917 by the No. 7A. The 'A' denotes a dark finish. In 1922 they were making the No. 8A and 9A.

This camera has an Ilex shutter with a 6 ¾ in. lens board. The Ilex Optical Company came into being in 1911 by Rudolph Klein and Theodor Brueck who had been working for Bausch & Lomb.

The lens is a 14 inch Goerz Celor f/5.6 Series Ib No. 7, serial no. 220977.

The camera stand is a No. 1A Semi-Centennial Stand made by Folmer & Schwing Dept. of EKC.

This camera used film. (This was before digital photography!)

Right now there is a roll film adaptor on the back of the camera. Without that, it would be used with sheet film in sizes such as 4x5, 5x7 or 8x10 inches.



1888 Blizzard - 2nd and Main St. west side of the street. L.O. Gale building. Sign in the window says, "Hardware." (201 N. Main St, Mitchell, SD)

THE GREAT BLIZZARD OF JAN. 12, 1888 - Taken from History of South Dakota by Doane Robinson.

The year of 1888 will always be remembered by Dakotans as well as by the people of the entire west as the year of the great blizzard. It fell unannounced on Jan. 12th, with a ferocity before undreamed of by the citizens of the plains. In the northern portion it began in early morning, but in the central portion it did not arrive until later in the day when people were scattered in their avocations, children were in school, farmers out with their stock, or enroute to or from market. It was a beautiful morning, warm and gracious, with soft variable breezes - just such a morning to draw the people into the open. One moment it was bright, warm, glorious; the next moment, and without the slightest premonitory warning, the terror fell with unexpected rage. For fifteen hours it continued, blinding impenetrable, intensely cold, the atmosphere filled with needles of ice driven by a furious gale, accompanied rear, then it was gone and nature smiled again. One hundred twelve citizens of South Dakota perished.

BLIZZARD OF 1888 - By Walter Mitchell of Twin Lake Township - We were living on my father's homestead in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ -18-106-62 when we experienced the blizzard of 1888. I was a boy of 12 years at that time but was not in school that day. December had been cold. January came in cold. Snow covered the ground and stock that had been shut in for a long time needed exercise. So when the morning of Jan. 12 opened warm and balmy, about 10 A.M. my father told my brother and I to turn the stock out to the straw stack south of the house. We looked to the north and saw what appeared to be a large cloud rolling over and over along the ground, covering

everything as with a blanket. My father called us to hurry and bring the cattle in. We had barely time to get the cattle in the barn when the storm struck. To get to the house, we crawled on our hands and knees. We could not stand upright in such a wind and the only way to see was near the ground. If we stood upright our faces were soon covered with ice, the eyes frozen shut, we could barely breathe. In the time it took us to reach the house, the fine particles of ice and snow were driven into our clothes and we were fairly encased in icy armor.

Our neighbor, McGinnis had turned his cattle out that morning. In trying to find them, was lost, stayed in a straw stack all night, was badly frozen on hands and knees. His entire herd of thirteen head of cattle we could see the next morning, standing frozen along the fence. Their bodies were encased in ice, their heads covered with such a weight of ice resting on the ground. McGinnis, formerly an old seaman used to ocean storms, was so discouraged he soon returned to his life on the ocean.

Another neighbor, Orin Van Dyke, had gone to Woonsocket for supplies. Returning, he was lost and stayed out all night. His feet were badly frozen. It was necessary to amputate some of his toes.

A boy of 18, Ernest Martin and his mother were coming home from Woonsocket. The sled hit a drift and turned over pinning the mother underneath. This was in the vicinity of Twin Lakes. He started out to walk for help and when morning came he had arrived at the Barrs home over in Jerauld County and fell helpless inside the house when the door was opened. He was so badly frozen that he later died from blood poisoning. His mother, however, survived.

The worst of the storm was over by dawn. Some of the children who were in school that day reported there was so much electricity in the storm that they amused themselves by putting the poker to the stove and watching the sparks fly.

From a collection of histories about Sanborn County, SD (Lies about 24 miles north of Mitchell. Woonsocket is the largest city and county seat) titled 1873-1963 Sanborn County History Pages 94-95
Available at the Carnegie Resource Center

STORM CASUALTIES.

Particulars of the Jensen Case— Other Matters.

Reports from Mt. Vernon and Plankinton indicate that the worst results of the storm have not yet been ascertained. John K. Jensen, who lives about ten miles north of the former place, was after a load of ice on the day of the storm, and being thinly clad and only a short distance from home, his wife started to take him his overcoat, leaving her two children, a babe of a few months and a boy of about three years in the house. She did not succeed in finding her husband, became lost and froze to death. The husband thinking all would be well at home and realizing the difficulty of finding the house in the blinding storm dug a hole in a snow bank and waited for the storm to cease. He escaped with comparatively little injury, to return home the next morning and find his wife absent and their oldest child frozen to death in the house. The faithful wife and mother was found a short time afterwards.

The young daughter of Mr. Fisher, who keeps the post office at Amboy, started to see her sister who lives a short distance away and her remains were found the next day within a few rods of her sister's house.

Parties who came down from Plankinton Saturday say that about twenty persons and about 400 head of cattle are reported to have perished in the vicinity of White Lake. This is no doubt somewhat exaggerated, and yet there is good reason to suppose that the list of fatalities will be much larger than was at first reported.

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SHORT BUT TERRIFIC.

The Storm of the Twelfth of January, 1888, Beats the Record of Atmospheric Disturbances.

[From Friday's Republican.]

The genuine blizzard which prevailed yesterday afternoon and last night was unparalleled in its ferocity, though of short duration. The following are some of the individual experiences so far as heard from:

The teachers and children of the city schools were ordered not to leave the buildings by members of the board of education, and some thirty remained on the west side and fifteen on the east. Provisions were sent to them, and they passed the night very comfortably. Quite a number got home early in the afternoon, the janitors or some of their parents seeing them safely through. Superintendent Kratz went home sick about 10 o'clock yesterday forenoon, before there were any signs of a storm, and was unable to give matters his personal attention. He was obliged to call a physician twice during the afternoon and evening in spite of the storm.

Miss Nelings remained alone at the west side school, and did her best to care for the children in her charge, but a few of whom belonged in her room. Capt. Beddoes and Mr. Sage who came for his children, and did not venture out again also spent the night in the building.

Miss Prime and the janitor looked after the children on the east side last night most faithfully.

Dr. Geo. P. Dix, who has not been off his bed for six weeks, became alarmed at the absence of his son, Ed., and in spite of his attendants got out of his room and went over on Main street to look for the boy. He was taken home with difficulty by two or three of the REPUBLICAN force, and it was ascertained that Ed. was safely ensconced at Capt. Ahern's.

H. B. Rogers was looking for two of his children this forenoon, who were also at Ahern's, having gone there from the west side school.

George Hunter went out to the fair grounds to look after his stock and had to stay there all night, but managed to make himself comfortable.

District Attorney Hannett started home once, but got bewildered, and the first he knew he was back at the Alex Mitchell hotel. He made a second attempt and got through after a hard struggle.

A telegram was sent from Ethan this afternoon for a physician to attend Mrs. Asa Dodds, who was out last night, and froze both her feet.

The biggest drift is at the court house corner.

The reception of the business college has been postponed.

A rumor was prevalent about noon that another big storm was on its way, but up to a late hour this afternoon it had not arrived.

The peculiar thing about the snow was that it drifted worse on the south and east sides of a building, although the wind was from the northwest.

Grant Cray did some valiant work on north Main street last evening, where he ran across a German on his way home from school with two children, and who was completely lost in the drifts.

Miss Page and Paul drove in this afternoon expecting to attend the Merymakers party, not knowing it had been postponed. The stock at Butte farm is all right.

The thermometer registered 28 below this morning at the Alex. Mitchell west door, but arose during the day.

It's hard to down those fellows. The 79ers say it is the same kind of a storm they had in October, 1880.

H. E. Gates, of Kimball, was on the freight which left Wolsey on Wednesday and got stuck about nine miles from here yesterday. This morning he got tired of waiting and walked down the track to this place, having had just two meals since leaving Huron Wednesday noon. There are seven section men beside the train men on the freight, who are also on short rations.

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06 Jan 1888, Fri Page 9

Salute to Law Enforcement

On September 11, Patriot Day, the Carnegie Resource Center hosted the 'Salute to Law Enforcement' event, showing our appreciation for the work law enforcement does daily to protect and keep us safe. Those attending viewed our law enforcement patch collection consisting of 325 patches. Thanks to the Davison County Sherriff's department for sharing items of the past including a section of the jail door when prisoners were housed at the Davison County Courthouse, a strait jacket and more. Thanks to those who attended to help us honor all law enforcement branches.





Survival

Laura Ingalls Wilder talked about the blizzard of January 12, 1888, in her book Pioneer Girl. The Ingalls were living in the De Smet area at the time, and she states that her family were able to get home safely with help from the horses and by following the road. However, not all were so lucky to arrive without incident. "At a country school eight miles north of DeSmet it, the teacher brought his children to school in a sleigh, stayed all day and drove home at night. The other children lived very near the schoolhouse. In this storm the nearby children got home safely, but the teacher, with his load, was lost on the prairie.

When he knew he couldn't find his way, he unhitched, and unharnessed the horses and turned them loose. Then he spread part of the robes on the ground had the children sit on them, wrapped the rest of the robes around them and turned the sleigh bottom up over them. Then he crawled underneath the sleigh himself and there they huddled together while the snow blew and drifted over the sled keeping out the wind. Their bodies warmed the air in their little cave and they all survived the storm. No one except the teacher whose hands and feet were frozen,

but not badly.

The horses found shelter beside a haystack several miles away and came through safely too." (Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography, page 315)

Historical records show that a teacher by the name of Orion E. Sterns homesteaded in Spirit Lake Township, seven miles north of DeSmet and that he and his wife Gertrude had three children of school age, Guy, fifteen; Nellie, about eleven; and Bessie, about eight who were pupils of their father's. This is the load to which Laura Ingalls referred that the teacher had on his sleigh. Orion and his son shoveled snow through-

out the night to keep an airway open for the trapped little band. The next day Sterns crawled for help. His feet were badly frozen, but he saved his family. ("The Grim Tally," Wessington Springs True Dakotan, Jan.12,1988 as reprinted in Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography, page 315)

"In Dakota Territory alone, 148 to 171 people, many of them children, froze to death or died of complications later. 'As a rule teachers had been warned against such a danger, and lost no time in dismissing school. Others delayed, expecting the storm would subside and when they ventured forth they were soon bewildered, lost, and fell easy victims to the relentless fury of the maelstrom.' " (Kingsbury, History of Dakota Territory, 2:1512 as reprinted in Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography, page 315)

The plains still see these killer storms and those living and traveling during these times must respect Mother Nature. With today's technology and advanced warning systems it is easy to think we have it figured out. These tools are very helpful but caution and awareness are still needed to give us the best chance of survival in these winter months.

Have a safe winter.

Casualties Reported.

News was received this afternoon that George Allen and his son Frank were caught in the storm while after hay at their farm on the Firesteel north, and the boy was frozen to death while the father will lose both his arms.

Wm. Koch reports that John Anderson started southwest after hay with two teams yesterday forenoon and has not been heard from.

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Carnegie needs your help

We have been working diligently during Covid 19 to repair and restore our Carnegie building.

We are excited about our newly installed wheelchair lift so all can enter safely.

It has been installed at the east entrance and will come up to the Corn Palace Room. We have only one file

room left to repair and then we will be done.

Needless to say this all costs money. We are asking for your support.

If you are able to send a donation (and your membership), please make your check payable to the Mitchell Area Historical Society and mail it to 119 West Third Ave., Mitchell, SD

57301.

Dues for 2022 remain the same, \$20 for individuals and \$30 for a couple for each organization (the Mitchell Area Historical Society and the Mitchell Area Genealogical Society).

We have enclosed a form with this newsletter. Thank you in advance for your support. It means a lot to us.

Support CRC by using Amazon Smile

When doing your Amazon online shopping, think of supporting the Mitchell Area Historical Society by visiting: smile.amazon.com Type Mitchell Area Historical Society in the search box and select it. You only have to logon once through Amazon Smile and each time you shop after that, the site will show that you support CRC. A portion of the proceeds from all you buy on Amazon will go to the Mitchell Area Historical Society! How cool is that? This one simple way to give back to your community is so simple, so spread the word! Our ability to serve the community relies on generous donations from the public. Thank you!

Genealogy for Kids (&Adults) fun websites

timeanddate.com - Learn what day you or your ancestors were born
coloringcastle.com -- print coloring pages – maps of US, States, some holiday
family search.org - Activities – various genealogy activities
family search.org -- Search – Research wiki - pick a country etc to learn about.
familytree.com – kids – word scramble, word search, forms for kids
familylocket.com -- #FHforChildren –family history ideas for children and teens – games, crafts, etc
pinterest.com – search genealogy for all sorts of interesting finds from scrapbooking to researching
duolingo.com -- learning a new language
growinglittleleaves.com – kid friendly activities
learningliftoff.com – 7 ways to teach your kids their family heritage

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