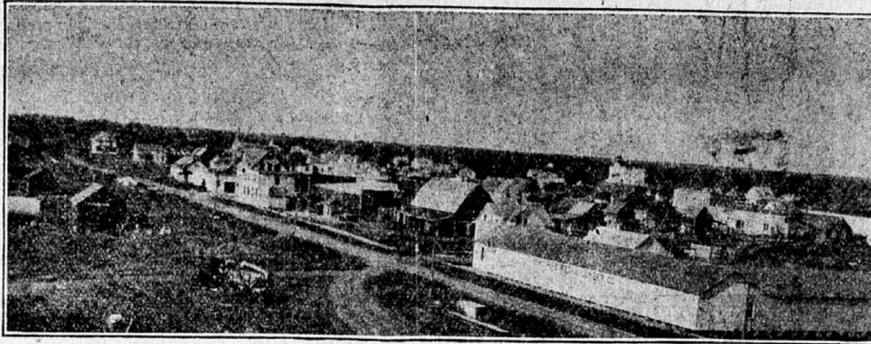


THE ROYAL ROAD TO FARM-LANDS BEST

FAR-FAMED MINNESOTA RED RIVER VALLEY

MIDDLE RIVER, METROPLIS OF EASTERN MARSHALL COUNTY

AFTER visiting every trading center in Marshall county, gathering the data for town building and resources of soil as it pertains to farm home building, we have come to the conclusion that Middle River holds third place in importance in Marshall county. First, we would name Warren, the county seat, then Argyle and third Middle River, not only today but in the prospective tomorrow, for it is located in the most fertile plateau of the deep, black alluvial soil section—Eastern Marshall County—where the Valley lands and timber are about evenly divided in area; that have been prepared for agricultural development by a well-defined system of judicial and county ditches, affording thorough drainage for what might be termed the low or wet lands, which are in truth the richest part of Northwestern Minnesota. The situation in this section is akin to that of what was termed the swamp lands in Iowa in 1860-75 when practically all of the lands were homestead entries, but when selected for homesteading, the swamp lands were passed over for the upland plateaus. Today these lowlands, or what was termed swamp lands, are the most valuable portion of the agricultural domain of Iowa, just as it will be in this section of eastern Marshall county, of which Middle River is the metropolis and a dreamland of civic beauty, with the Middle river coursing westward, its banks being well timbered with a setting of groves of native tamarack, balsam, spruce, ironwood, elm, birch, oak and basswood, reaching out on all sides, one of the most delightful spots to be found in the whole range of what has been fitly named "the Northland". It has been said, and truthfully, that one acre of cut-over land is equal to two acres of average prairie land. This will hold good, covering the soils of Iowa, Illinois, Kansas and Nebraska, but not so with the prairie lands of the Minnesota Red River Valley, as they comprise the very cream of fertility in soil, still, it must be borne in mind, that the brush and timber lands have been fertilized for so, these many centuries, with the autumnal crops of vegetation, giving these lands a top dressing of vegetable mould that is the very acme of soil fertilizer, and the very cheapness of these lands, as compared with those of the open prairie, gives them an especial lure to the agriculturalist of small means, for there is a difference in price of, say \$20 per acre, and when this marginal difference is applied to clearing up the land, the values per acre are identical. There are splendid natural groves for every farmstead, affording an abundance of firewood for all time. The reader must not, however, get the erroneous idea that all of this domain of eastern Marshall county is timber land,



BIRDSEYE VIEW OF MIDDLE RIVER.

Falls and Warroad line of the Great Northern system, 72 miles from Crookston and 22 miles North of Thief River Falls. Then there is the Middle River Telephone Company and both the Tri-State and Northwestern lines, connecting up the whole territory, with the outside world; two star mail routes out from Middle River, supplying post-offices at Gatzke, Rollis, Jane, Randen, Aspelin, Homolka and Woolery. The city is well built in business blocks, and is noted for its fine residence section, and has fifteen blocks cement laid walks in business and residence portion. In hotels there are two, the Northern Hotel, commercial men's headquarters, and the Scandia Hotel, making it a splendid place to live and do business in.

FARMER-DAIRYMEN.

Among the thirteen actively operated creameries in Marshall county, the Farmers' Co-Operative Creamery, owned and operated by the farmers tributary to Middle River, is one of the most prosperous, paying as it did to its patrons in 1914, \$14,000. This is one of the active agencies that tells the story of the prosperity on the farm, and why this section holds such a lure to the farmer-dairymen tributary to Middle River.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

The men who are doing things for the upbuild of this section are those that comprise the municipal government; such men as A. C. Kvennes, president of the council, and trustees R. D. V. Carr, Knute Nelson and John C. Nordlum; Louis Olson, clerk and C. A. Berg, treasurer.

MUNICIPALLY OWNED ELECTRIC LIGHT PLANT.

In 1914, the city built a power house, size 24x48, a steel building with concrete floors, equipped with a 35 horse power International engine, with storage batteries, to furnish electric lighting for the business and residence section.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Middle River is in school district No. 126 and has just finished a splendid consolidated school building of six rooms at a cost of \$20,000, modern in every respect, presided over by five teachers, Normal and University graduates. All grades are taught as also are four years of high school, including Domestic Science, Manual Training and Agriculture. There is a two-acre agricultural plot for experimental and demonstration purposes. In addition to the new school house there is the old two-room frame school building, that will be utilized as necessity requires. The officers of the school board are: director, J. B. Grobey; clerk, L. Olson; and treasurer, M. N. Gullikson; with Edward F. Johnson, superintendent.

PRIMARY GRAIN MARKET.

Middle River has two grain elevators, the Red Lake Falls Milling Company, a 20,000 bushel house, and the Hanson and Barzen Milling Company's elevator, also a 20,000 bushel house, while both of these elevators, handled 100,000 bushels of the 1914 crop year, while the 1915 year will show a large increase, owing to the larger acreage and greater yield per acre.

MIDDLE RIVER AS A BANKING CENTER.

To prove the fertility of the soil and its earning capacity we have only to make mention that the two banking houses, The State Bank of Middle River and the Security State Bank, have a combined capital of \$20,000, surplus and undivided profits of \$17,660 and deposits of \$215,000. This, for a new section, tells the story of the prosperity and frugality of its farm home-builders, for this capital represents the surplus savings after opening up the farms, erecting buildings and



SECURITY STATE BANK OF MIDDLE RIVER.

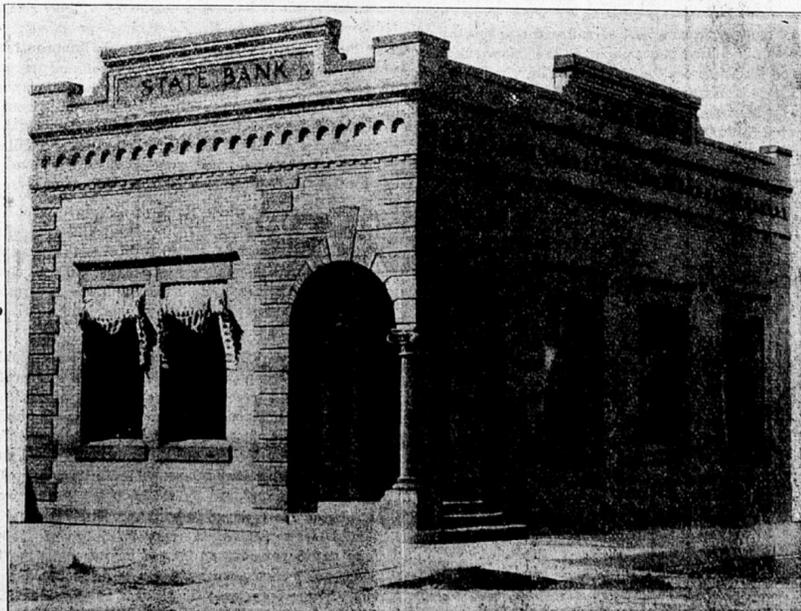
equipping and stocking the same. We doubt if any other section can make a better showing.

STATE BANK OF MIDDLE RIVER.

This bank was established in 1904 and is the oldest bank of eastern Marshall county. The bank is housed in its own building, built of St. Louis pressed brick, with Bedford, Indiana, stone trimmings, size 24x40 with full basement, built at a cost of \$5,000. It is steam heated and electrically lighted. There is a brick and concrete vault, size 8x10 with automatic time lock, making it fire and burglar proof; and it is fitted up with safety-deposit boxes for the use of patrons. The bank has a savings department and pays 5 per cent interest, writes all lines of insurance, makes farm loans and has a land department, where they have some splendid buys in the choicest of improved farms and wild lands. The State Bank of Middle River has a capital of \$10,000, surplus and profits of \$15,000 and average deposits of \$160,000. The officers are: H. L. Melgaard, president; A. D. Stephens, vice-president; A. C. Kvennes, cashier, with A. Skarstad, assistant cashier. Mr. Kvennes came to the State Bank of Middle River, as its cashier in 1907 from the Citizens' State Bank of Thief River Falls. He is one of the live wires, being mayor of the city, besides being an all-around hustler for everything pertaining to the growth of this section.

SECURITY STATE BANK.

This bank was established, October 22, 1912 and has a capital of \$10,000, surplus and profits of \$2,560, and deposits of \$55,000. The Security State Bank is housed in its own building, 80x120, of which the bank proper occupies 20x40 feet, has a brick and cement vault, automatic time locks and safety deposit boxes. They pay 6 per cent interest on time deposits, make collections on commercial paper and transact business for



STATE BANK OF MIDDLE RIVER.

non-residents, make farm-land loans and do a general banking business. There are twenty-one stockholders, covering business men and farmers of Middle River and this section, which makes it an exceedingly strong financial institution. The bank has a select number of improved farms that are priced at from \$20 to \$40 per acre and up. The officers of the Security State Bank of Middle River are: Jonas Sjoberg, president; A. N. Eckstrom, vice-president; E. P. Modin, cashier and L. H. Olson, assistant cashier; with the following board of directors: Jonas Sjoberg, A. N. Eckstrom, E. L. Leinan, L. H. Olson and E. P. Modin.

HOW MIDDLE RIVER GROWS.

During the building season of 1914-15, there were built the following splendid, up-to-date residences, which add another testimonial to the progressiveness of its citizens: Erick Anderson, \$1,500; Christ Rundtom, \$1,500; Lennie Olson, \$1,200; Henry Young, addition, \$1,600; Jonas Sjoberg, remodeled home, \$2,500; Emil Peterson, \$1,800; Mrs. Brahaug, \$800; Mike Sorum, \$600; Oscar Schankey \$1,000; K. O. Johnson, \$1,600; Lennie Pokala, \$900; Martin Sandberg, \$1,000; Middle River Fire Hall, \$1,000; Jens Offerdahl, \$1,300; J. B. Groby, \$2,000; Knute Nelson, \$1,000; Miss Regina Nelson, store building, \$1,200; Middle River Hardware Co., garage and machine shop, size 30x140, steel and concrete, \$3,000; Northern Hotel remodeled, \$1,200; Christian Hagen, \$1,000; Public school building, brick and concrete, \$20,000; E. P. Modin's modern bungalow, \$4,000, besides many other building improvements.

MIDDLE RIVER PIONEER.

The publisher of the Middle River Pioneer, is R. D. V. Carr, who came here on July 23, 1903. The Pioneer, under the masterful editorship of Mr. Carr, is a live exponent of this section and has done much to advertise its advantages to the outside world.

SJOBERG'S DEPARTMENT STORE.

This business was established in 1905 by Mr. Jonas Sjoberg, who came here from Roseau, where he was in the general merchandise business from 1888 to 1905. The Sjoberg department store is the great trading center of the Middle River district, and carries a complete stock of dry goods, ladies' ready-to-wear, furnishings, men's and boys' clothing, ladies' and misses', men's and boys' shoes, builders and shelf hardware, crockery and glassware, staple and fancy groceries, flour and feed and implements, all carried in its splendid store building, size 100x120 feet, built of concrete, with full basement, steam heated and electrically lighted.

Mr. Jonas Sjoberg is president of the Security State Bank, has served the city as mayor, is one of the Tuberculosis Sanitarium commission, comprising Marshall and Roseau counties, in fact, is one of the leading men of Northwestern Minnesota.

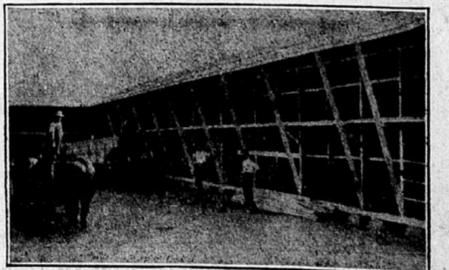
ST. HILAIRE RETAIL LUMBER COMPANY.

This business was established in 1904, and has the best stocked lumber yard in this section of Marshall county, size 140x150 feet. There are three lumber warehouses, sizes, 16x140, including the office; 16x80 feet and 16x30 feet. The local agent, Mr. A. W. Peterson, has been in the employ of the company five years in Middle River and with the company ten years, having been formerly located at Hallock and Stephen.

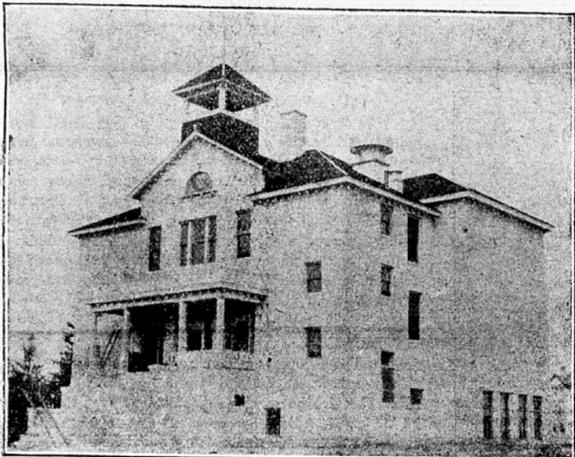
OTHER DESERVED MENTION.

John Phillipson, manager of the Hanson and Barzen Milling Company, came here in 1907 and in 1910 was appointed local manager of this company. He is native of Denmark, having been born there in 1848, coming to the States in 1865 and locating in Wisconsin, where he railroaded for ten years; he then went to South Dakota, where he farmed down to 1900 and then came to Middle River, where he farmed down to 1910, when he accepted his present position.

Mr. C. A. Berg, local agent for the Red Lake Falls Milling Company, came here in 1906 from Ada, where he was engaged in farming for twenty years. Mr. Berg is a native of Norway, born there in 1864, coming to the States in 1876, to Fillmore county, where he remained two years, removing to Ada in 1878, where he engaged in farming. Mr. Berg has served as clerk of the village board in 1913 and 1914 and mayor in 1912. He is one of Middle River's most progressive citizens.



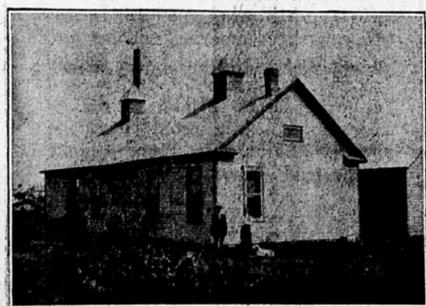
Section of St. Hilaire Retail Lumber Co. Warehouse.



Classy Public School Building, Middle River.

for the proportion is two acres to one of open or Valley land. In riding through the country over its splendid roads, we witnessed luxuriant fields on every side for miles and miles, of wheat that was harvested, and the shocks standing on an average of ten feet apart; the same of oats, barley and great fields of flax in bloom; wheat fields that yield from 35 to 40 bushels, oats 70 to 100, barley 30 to 40 bushels per acre; crops that will more than pay for the original cost of the land and the buildings, a great unfold of wealth reaped from the soil, the most prosperous section of this great, rich Valley, and what is more, in the good roads section, the best of schools and churches, nearby creameries and cash markets for everything produced on the farm, of which Middle River is the metropolis, with all blessings that benign nature has showered on any land, with incomparable climate, a dry atmosphere in summer and winter, out of the hailstone zone, with a bountiful rainfall during the season of propagation.

The United States census of 1910 gave Middle River 149 population, but today the village has a population of around 500, and there has been no boom—it has been a steady growth, made so by the development of the country tributary. It is on the Crookston, Thief River



Co-Operative Creamery, Middle River.