

## Side Tour 1A

Junction US 81 – Mayville – Portland – Hatton.

ND 7 & 18. Junction with US 81 to Hatton, 27 m.

G. N. Ry. branch line parallels route between Mayville and Hatton.

Graveled roadbed entire route.

Accommodations in principal towns.

This short route traversing a fertile farming area twice crosses the Goose River, which the French Canadians who first explored it called the Riviere Aux Outardes (*River of the Geese*), because of the great number of wild geese that nested on its banks. The route proceeds along the western edge of glacial Lake Agassiz. The rich, black soil—a sandless, clayey silt, peculiar to western States and locally known as gumbo—becomes a muggy, sticky mass when wet. Before the era of graveled highways, travel was virtually impossible after even the lightest rainfall, as wagon or automobile wheels became clogged with the heavy, gummy earth; even today this is true on unimproved roads.

ND 7 branches W. from US 81 (*see Tour 1*) 5 m. S. of Cummings.

MAYVILLE, **12 m.** (891 alt., 1199 pop.), was named for May Arnold, first white child born in the Hudson's Bay Co. trading post established near the present town site in the early 1870s. It is a small, tree-shaded, staid college town on the banks of the GOOSE RIVER. First settled in 1881, it was moved to the railroad which was built through here in 1883. In that year Mayville

and Portland conspired to win the county seat for a new town, Traill Center, platted midway between the two older towns, planning that if their candidate won the election the three towns would merge into one city. So brisk was the campaign that the ballots cast outnumbered the legal voters, and Traill Center won 2011 to 450. The election was contested, however, and while the case was in litigation the Territorial legislature transferred the two western tiers of townships in Traill County to Steele County. This lost Traill Center its strategic position and with it the county seat.

MAYVILLE STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE, in the northern part of the town, founded in 1889, held its first classes in 1893. When Gov. Roger Allin in 1895 vetoed funds for operating the colleges in North Dakota, enterprising citizens kept the schools open by popular subscription. Bud Reeves, wealthy Minneapolis man who pioneered at Buxton and later became a political figure in the State (see Tour 1), was one of the leaders in the drive for funds to support the schools. In one day he collected \$2000 from heads of large Minneapolis grain firms.

On the college campus is a log cabin built in 1879 and used as the first schoolhouse in the Mayville area.

ALM'S PARK, on the eastern edge of the city, is a tourist park and camp; ISLAND PARK, in the western part, is a recreational center. RAILROAD PARK, E. of the Great Northern depot, contains a tall marble pillar on which is a bronze plaque bearing a relief of Bjornstjerne Bjornson, famed Norwegian author. The plaque is the work of Paul Fjelde, who once attended the Valley City Teachers College (*see Tour 8*).

In Mayville is the home of Rev. and Mrs. A.M. West, parents of the etcher Levon West (1900- ), who has also won recognition for photography under the pseudonym of Ivan Dmitri.

At the western end of the long business street of PORTLAND, **14.5 m.** (987 alt., 500 pop.), is the gravel ridge of CAMPBELL'S BEACH, second hump of sand laid down in prehistoric times by the retreating waters of Lake Agassiz. Portland has four producers and consumers cooperatives-- an oil company, elevator, creamery, and store. Across the street from a large Lutheran church in the western part of the town stand the now unused buildings of BRUFLAT ACADEMY, one of the first private educational institutions in the State, established by the local Lutheran Church in 1889. Portland and vicinity were first settled in 1871, and the place became a boom town when the railroad arrived in 1881.

At **19 m.** is the junction (R) with ND 18, a graveled highway on which the route proceeds N.

At **24 m.** is the junction with a county dirt road.

Left on this road to the THORVAL STAVENS FARM, **1 m.**, where the success story of an outstanding but nevertheless typical Norwegian immigrant family is told by the buildings ranging from the lowly sod house of Hans Anderson Stavensbraaten, who homesteaded here in 1870, to the 15-room home and the airplane hangar of his grandson, Thorval Stavens. The original family home and its contents are preserved as a MUSEUM. Across the road is the first school in the district, built in 1879.

HATTON, **27 m.** (1085 alt., 804 pop.), named for Frank Hatton, Third Assistant Postmaster General when the town was founded in 1882, is at the southern end of the Elk River Delta, a rich, fertile deposit laid down in ancient times as the waters of the melting glacier flowed into Lake Agassiz.

Hatton was the birthplace and boyhood home of Col. Carl Ben Eielson (1897-1929), pioneer Alaskan aviator. Eielson left the University of Wisconsin to enlist in the Army Air Service in 1916. Following the World War he barnstormed in North Dakota and neighboring states in a plane purchased for him by friends in the vicinity of Hatton. In 1922 he went to Alaska where he pioneered in aviation and flew the first air mail in the Territory. His experience as an Arctic flyer drew the attention of the English explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins, and in 1928 the pair made their flight across the top of the world from Point Barrow to Spitzbergen. When Wilkins gave his attention to the Antarctic, Eielson piloted him on several flights over that continent. He returned to Alaska in 1929 and late that year was killed while attempting to save the passengers and cargo of the ice-bound ship *Nanuk* off North Cape, Siberia. He had already made one trip to the ship, bringing back six passengers and part of the fur cargo, when a fierce storm took its toll. Eielson and his mechanic, Earl Borland, crashed, and it was more than a month before their bodies were found in the wreckage of their plane. Eielson's body was returned with honors to Hatton, where it was interred in the family plot, marked with an unpretentious stone. In the CITY HALL is the *Alaskan*, a plane he used in his explorations with Wilkins in 1926, and at the ELMER HOSKING HOME is a collection of the many medals he received. A part of the fin of the Hamilton all-metal plane in which he died is displayed in the museum of the State historical

society (see BISMARCK).