



Buffalo Tales



Volume 25, No. 4

Buffalo County Historical Society

July-August, 2002

e-mail: bchs@kearney.net

website: bchs.kearney.net

The Love Letters of Bertha Alice Haug and Ora Oscar Hayman

Part IV

As summer of 1904 turns to Autumn, the correspondence between Shelton's Bertha Alice Haug and her fiance' in Holdrege, Ora Oscar Hayman, continues. Harvest festivals, football, classes at the Holdrege Business College, and considerations of a future home, highlight their letters.

**Letter #47 Mailed: Friday,
September 23, 1904**

**To: Mr. O. O. Hayman,
Holdrege, Nebraska**

From: Shelton, Neb.

My dear Boy:

I have been thinking that perhaps you so admired the paper in my last that you would enjoy another epistle from the same source.

I received your letters Tuesday and there wasn't a happier girl in Shelton for a little while but later on a little sadness stole in for I tho't of how nice it would be if my boy were only here. It may seem strange but you know that thought often comes in my mind. We were together so much the latter part of last year that even the 4 months we have been apart this summer has not reconciled me in the least. I get just as lonely at times as I ever did.

I don't believe I have told you anything about the festival (*Shelton Harvest Festival*) yet. Tuesday we went in about 4 oclock and stayed until about 11 oclock. James hunted up Tine and Jim and I tried to entertain him from about 7:30 to 9:00. I don't know how well we succeeded, for I must confess I got so interested in the street performances part of the time I almost forgot him. But Jim and he had quite a talk about how they would play tricks on us at Xmas time and so on. Of course I became terribly frightened. I don't know what time he left town for we did not go over to the train.

Wednesday forenoon we all went in and came home again about 3 oclock. Papa and mamma went in yesterday evening to bring Jim home but I stayed home all alone and worked on my chrysanthemum centerpiece. You can see how enthusiastic I am when I prefer to stay at home. Today is the last day. I had intended to go in this afternoon to the races and ball-game but it is so damp and misty that I did not go. We will go in this evening perhaps.

There have been good crowds for a town like Shelton and the Festival has been quite a success in some ways. The street performances were quite good.



WITH THE SOCIETY

A Note from the President:

Greetings! This is your new President of the Buffalo County Historical Society, Dora Day. As I begin my term, there has been quite a lot of transition going on at the museum. Our Director, Sherrie Dux-Ideus, has moved to Margaret Hohnholt's office. After twenty-plus years of loyal and dedicated service, Margaret has turned her attention to other tasks of family and friends. The gift shop has moved into the space where Sherrie had her office. The display cases have been reconfigured and more artifacts are on display. We have been doing quite a bit of house cleaning! We are also having a sale on the 6 volume set of Buffalo Tales. As we need to reduce our stock, and make room, a set is now only \$24.95. We have donated sets of the Buffalo Tales to every nursing home and assisted living home in Kearney and Gibbon. Repairs from the hail damage continue! Finally, a reminder that Living History Day is August 17. Please come by the museum and enjoy the experience.

- Dora Day, President

A Note from the Editor:

This is a special note of thanks to the Officers and members of the Historical Society. I was offered the privilege of editing the *Buffalo Tales* in January, 2000 and it has been an interesting and rewarding two and a half years. With the next edition of *Buffalo Tales*, I will be making way for a new editor. The new editor will be Dr. Mark Ellis of the History Department of UNK. Dr. Ellis graduated with his Ph.D. from UNL and is a specialist in Nebraska history and the history of the American West. You can learn more about Mark in the next edition of the journal. For now, a sincere thanks for the opportunity I have had working with the society and editing the *Buffalo Tales*. Keep working on those memoirs and historical vignettes!

Fund Raising Update - Brad Driml, Consultant, Museum Project:

Since March of this year we have been busy working towards the goal of a new museum facility for the Buffalo County Historical Society/Trails and Rails Museum. The board has held retreats to review and discuss the needs of the organization. The Board has hired Miller and Associates to complete the necessary tasks of initial surveys and schematic designs.

When entering into a project of this size it is important to have a clear vision of the goal and a clear practical plan of how that vision will be achieved. While the first step is to address the costs necessary to build a new facility, responsible planning must then address management and staff needs and the necessary ongoing investment to insure a vibrant and successful new museum complex. Raising the amount of funds necessary to build and maintain a new facility comes with a great responsibility. Seeking private or public funds for such a project requires planning, integrity, and most significantly, the genuine and enthusiastic support from the members of the Society as the foundation for success.

"Build it and they will come," sounded great in the movies, but what if they don't come? In our case the new museum-office facility is first and foremost an essential response to meet the present needs of the Society and surrounding Nebraska communities. In this case "they" are already here. It is also clear, however, that an upgraded and modernized facility will be an attractive destination for new generations of visitors and students. We are going to great lengths to insure that if this project is to succeed it is handled in a manner, which reflects professionalism and a promise kept.

We have initiated changes in the Depot and within the organization to prepare for the new building drive. I invite you to stop by the Depot and visit with the Director and officers to learn about the exciting plans on tap for the future, and how you can be a part of making this bright tomorrow come about.

Another thing that interested me was the Hamburger sandwich man. He was a homely old fellow with a voice like a frog.

Well, all of these things are very minor affairs now. They occupy little of my time and less of my attention.

Your loving little sweetheart
Bertha

Letter #48 Mailed: Saturday, September 24, 1904

**To: Mr. Ora O. Hayman
Holdrege, Nebraska**

From: Shelton, Neb.

My dear Boy:

Tonight my letter will be rather short as I am rather tired. We are having thrashers and it becomes a little wearisome cooking and baking for the thrashers. We also had company today for dinner. It never rains but it pours, you know.

The great carnival is over. Taking it all in all it was quite good. The town did not decorate as Holdrege did but they spent about \$1000 I was told in the free attractions. Some of them were very good, better than those we paid 10 cts. to see in Holdrege. Oh! Shelton is a wonderful town but it lacks for me the great attraction that Holdrege has. When the attraction occasionally gets over to Shelton I am perfectly satisfied with our little burgh for the time being.....

We canned 7 qts. of peaches this morning and I think during the day I have canned at least 1 qt. more! It seems nearer 2 qts. but of course I wouldn't for the world make you believe I ever eat much so I will just say 1.

Letter #51 Mailed: Wednesday, October 5, 1904

**To: Miss Bertha Haug
Shelton, Nebr.**

From: Holdrege, Neb.

Sweetheart I am thinking about buying the cottage next to Mr. Beal's, where Miss Henderson boarded and roomed last winter. Dont you think that would be a pretty nice place. It has six rooms three bedrooms, a kitchen, parlor, and setting room, also a good sized barn. I am just thinking about it and thought you knew as much about it as I. I would rather build though then it could be made to suit. This is a very pretty little cottage though and if we wanted to we could sell it after while and build.

The High School foot ball team is to play Wilcox next Saturday. Mr. Thompson is quite enthusiastic over foot ball. The Hastings High School team is to be here Thanksgiving day. So you see we are going to have some exciting times here. Season tickets are to be sold. We haven't lined up our boys but will after while. Some of the old players are not in yet.

There is quite a difference in the atmosphere to-day. It looks very much like snow off in the North. It makes a person think of winter and skating! but there will be none of that for me until after Xmas. Wont it be nice to go skating with you Sweetheart again as of old. All of those good old times come back to me as a dream. I long to go right back over all of them, there is only one thing that

keeps me from it and that is that my little darling isnt here to take part.

Sweetheart excuse this short letter this time and the next time I will do much better but remember the love is contained here in just the same.

With heaps of love,
Your Ora

Letter #52 Mailed: Friday, October 7, 1904

**To: Mr. O. O. Hayman,
Holdrege, Nebraska**

From: Shelton, Neb.

In your letter you spoke of buying the cottage near Mr. Beal's. It is quite a pretty little cottage. I have been in the front of it but never through it. Whatever you do will suit me, dearest, only don't ask me to room. I just hate the idea. I might like it after I got used to it but I don't anticipate much pleasure in living that way. Everytime I think of going out to my meals 3 meals every day in the week it gives me the horrors. You see I'd like to feel as though my soul were my own on Saturday & Sunday anyway. Then it looks so decidedly cheap to me and it isn't either. By the time you pay out \$28.00 for board, pay room rent, heat, light., wash bills etc it would cost quite a little. If we have a home of our own we can board ourselves for about 1/2 of the \$28 any way and we will need to be as economical as we can in those things. Just think of paying out between \$10 & \$20 to save me from cooking a little and washing 2 or 3 plates, etc. I do wish you were here so we could talk it over for I want to do just what will be the best for us in the long run.

We finished canning peaches Wednesday and I am glad.

Your Sweetheart,
Bertha Alice H.

Letter #55 Mailed: Tuesday, October 11, 1904

**To: Miss Bertha Haug
Shelton, Nebr**

From: Holdrege, Neb.

My dear little Sweetheart:-

Another of those good letters that no one-else than you can write, reached me this morning, it was full of good things from top to bottom. It deserves an immediate answer so here goes.

You spoke of going home with me Thanksgiving. Yes I feel that I ought to go home then because the family always tries to get together then if possible. I remember one thing the College (*i.e.*, Nebraska's Grand Island Baptist College) foot ball team went to Hastings to play ball. Mother didnt want me to go and seemed hurt because I would go when when (*sic*) she had made such elaborate preparations for the occasion. It would be ever so nice if we could go home then.

School is moving along very nicely. We commensed night school last night. I read the law down to the night students. I told them they would have to come every night or we would close down. Yes! Besse has her spent (*sic*) money. The Smith Premier man (*a typewriter salesman?*) was here this morning and he wanted to rent her a machine. the rent is to be paid in advance she said she

would take one but she couldn't pay for it until the 1th of November. Some people cannot keep money. It seems to burn in their pocket books. Miss Anderson saves some of hers. She is boarding herself so she can lay aside a little every month. She keeps a small set of books. So she knows every week what she is worth.

The High School foot ball team was defeated the other day by Wilcox. The H.B.C. (*i.e.*, *Holdrege Business College*) team will be out for a practice in the near future.

Please excuse this poor writing and poor paper. I am so very nervous that I can hardly write. If you can read this you can do much better than I, because it is almost impossible for me to read it after it is cold.

With heaps of love and a bushel of kisses, I remain

Your true lover
O. O. Hayman

Letter #57 Mailed: Saturday, October 15, 1904

**To: Mr. Ora O. Hayman,
Holdrege, Nebraska**

From: Shelton, Neb.

My own dear Boy:

You may not be able to read some of this for I must hurry tonight. It is 9:30 now and I am rather tired. I don't know when I ever worked as hard for a whole week. I began Monday morning and I suppose won't get to stop until the dinner dishes are washed Sunday.

I have not touched the piano since Monday eve so will not be able to take a lesson next week. Intend to try and practise a while tomorrow, though and get into mark in that line again.

The Dagoes are here again and kept us busy about half of the day picking tomatoes and apples for them. Mamma sold them \$3.75 worth. She says she is going to buy something for the house with her Dagoe money, a sort of souvenir, I suppose.

So your father and mother have gone to St. Louis. They will undoubtedly have a splendid time. I would like to take in the great fair but my finances are in a rather strained condition so I guess that can't be done. Maybe if I live until I am 75 there will be another I can go to. Bright outlook isn't it.

My letters lately have always contained a short history of the comforts, peaches, etc. So here goes.

(1) We made 6 comforts the first of the week, working until I was so worn out that I couldn't see straight.

(2) Peaches are gone

(3) Grandma is a little better again. She had a bad spell Monday but is much better since.

(4) The new preacher preached for us last Sunday eve. He is a Scotchman. I think we will like him very well. He was down after some tomatoes Wednesday and found us sewing with just 6 comforts piled up in the front room. We hadn't had time to hem the edges yet. I told him we were making our winter bedding but I told mamma he would conclude one of two things, either that we were crazy or something besides winter was coming. His wife is very nice. He has a daughter about 17. I have only seen her once so I don't know whether I will like her or not.

(5) We gathered some of the apples today. If we can we want to pick the rest tomorrow. We will have quite a few to put in the cellar.

(6) Mamma bought me a new apron the other day. I haven't made it yet.

Are these news items not intensely interesting?

Perhaps you being to realize that I am becoming a little sleepy. Tis about 10:30 now so I believe I will say, Sweet dreams for tonight dearest and will chat a little longer in the morning.

Your little girl, Bertha Alice

BUFFALO TALES is the official publication of the Buffalo County Historical Society, a non-profit organization, whose address is P.O. Box 523, Kearney, NE 68848-0523.

Dr. Roger P. Davis, Editor

2001 Annual dues, payable January 1, are:

- Basic Membership \$15.00
- Institutional Membership \$20.00
- Supporting Membership \$30.00+

Life memberships are \$150.00 for individual; \$200.00 for husband and wife.

Directors

Term expiring June 1, 2003: Dora Day, Jan Fern, Joyce Sullwold and Mitch Humphrey.

Term expiring June 1, 2004: Edward Anderson, Wilma Harder, John Shafer and Paul Brodine.

Term expiring June 1, 2005: Dan Speirs, Robert Goldenstein, Mary Henning and Larry Nansel.

Officers (1 year term)

- President Dora Day
- Vice-President Larry Nansel
- Secretary John Shafer
- Treasurer Joyce Sullwold

TRAILS & RAILS MUSEUM

As the Note from President Day indicates, there are many changes taking place at the Museum. On your next visit you will notice a new look. There will be more artifacts to draw your attention, and more space to move around. As we get settled in updates and further details will follow. For now, remember that Living History Day is August 17, and be sure to encourage those looking for an interesting day to come by and visit the Trails and Rails Museum.

Trails & Rails Museum 706 West 11th Street (308) 234-3041

Buffalo County Historical Society

Box 523

Kearney, NE 68848-0523

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Kearney, NE
Permit No. 7