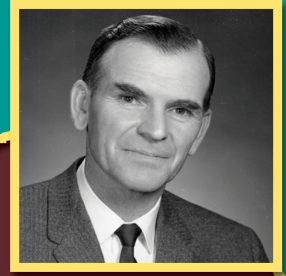


Guardian of the Land: Arthur A. Link

Edited by Gerald G. Newborg



An Autobiographical Account

I was born May 24, 1914, on the farm that was the homestead of my parents, **John and Anna Link**. [Among my earliest memories are] following my dad around the yard, doing whatever work he was engaged in, staying close to my mother, who was a full-time homemaker, and then trying to keep up with four sisters. I guess my earliest recollections are just a very busy farm life, very farm-oriented. All the emphasis was on getting the work done. It was always work, with time to play when the work was done. My sisters worked just as hard as I did.

[Some of my earliest chores were] feeding the chickens, feeding the pigs, and feeding the calves. As we got old enough to sit on a milk stool and hold a milk bucket between our knees and milk a cow, all of us learned to milk. We learned how to handle the animals, what makes a cow behave and what makes her not behave. There was a little danger once in a while. You might get kicked if

a cow was displeased over something. Of course, there was always a pretty good-size garden and a good-size potato patch. That's where child labor is very natural.

In the early days the farm was in the stages of development from the natural outdoors. Part of it didn't have any fenced enclosure, being native

Figure 1. John and Anna Link and children at their farm home near Alexander, North Dakota, 1925. Anna is third from left; the children (l to r) are Theresa, Annie, Frances, Mary, and Art. John Link was born in Bohemia, now the Czech Republic, in 1879. His family later moved to Germany, where they worked in the cotton mills and John met Anna Mencl. John and Anna came to America in 1900; they married and were employed in the weaving industry in Massachusetts. In 1906 John and Anna, their two daughters, the Mencl family, and several friends migrated to McKenzie County, North Dakota. In 1907 John and Anna filed on their homestead south of Alexander. In the picture, the wooden dance platform directly behind the family was built by John Link for his daughter Elizabeth's (not pictured) wedding. (SHSND 10943-56)



grass. We would herd the cows on the native prairie. As a homesteader, you were required to plow up and cultivate a certain number of acres each year to prove up on the land and acquire ownership. You raised crops: wheat, barley, oats, flax, and corn. We couldn't let the cattle into that because they would eat it and destroy it. So in the morning, after the cows were milked and we had our breakfast, our job was to herd those cows out of the gate. Two or three of us—me and one or two of my sisters—would follow those cows out across the prairie trail as much as a half-mile away from the house. There we would just sit around on the prairie while these cattle were grazing. When they got thirsty they would go down to the creek. At noon they would sort of relax and lie down—rest and chew their cud. We would come home to have lunch; sometimes we would pack a lunch with us. We would be out there all day in the sun.

We worked so close with our parents that it just sort of became natural. The first time that I began to do field work—I can remember the field that I was on—I was driving four horses and a three-section harrow. We walked behind the harrow to drive the team. I suppose [I was] about ten. I think my



Figure 2. Art Link at age twelve. (SHSND 10943-02)

mother sent my sister Mary out there with a little pail and a sandwich and some coffee. I felt so big. I got a feeling of importance—somebody brought me lunch while I was out there in the field.

Dad [was active in farm organizations] in the early days before the Farmers Union even started—the old **Equity Cooperative Exchange** and the **Farm Holiday Association**, those agrarian movements that were designed to better the economic status of the farmer. One of the early activities that I can remember being involved in was the consumer store in **Alexander**. That was a local cooperative where they did their buying of groceries and where they took their cream and eggs to sell; that was in business for a few years. They dissolved that probably before the Farmers Union days, and then the Farmers Union came along. It was quite an active, strong organization in terms of local cooperatives; it set up a local grain shipping association, local livestock shipping association, local creamery—there was a Farmers Union Cooperative Creamery in Williston, and then a few years later there was the Cooperative Credit Union. All these ventures were designed to keep the profits in the hands of the producers so they realized a better return on their work.

They [**Farmers Union**] were strong on cooperation, and that was the basis for the local oil companies and all the local organizations that gave service and things of that nature. It seems as though they attempted to treat legislation apart from politics, and I think they discovered as years went by that you didn't get good legislation unless you had people elected to the political system that agreed with your legislation. I don't know even today if they come right out and say, "We support the Democrats." They pick their candidates based on their philosophy, and it just happens to be that more Democrats and more Leaguers supported what they believed in. And when [Franklin] Roosevelt came along with programs that helped poor people and the farm program and all of these things, why, he became the choice of the majority of the Farmers Union. And the same thing happened at the state level, and to some extent at the local level.

Politics

Art Link was first elected to the North Dakota Legislature as a **Nonpartisan League Republican** in 1946. The actual step into running for the legislature happened at a meeting that I didn't even attend. It was in the spring of the year [1946], and the Nonpartisan League of McKenzie County was holding its annual caucus. The creek that ran right by our farm home was almost out of its banks, and when the creek was high we didn't leave the place because you couldn't cross the creek. So later that afternoon—and it was a fairly decent day—we saw this car come as far as it could on the road. It was a prairie trail that led to the farm home, and this man walked down the long hill because he knew he wouldn't get back up that hill if he came down with his car. I'd seen him from our place, so I went down to the edge of the creek, and he came as close as he could on the other side. The man had attended this county convention up at Watford City, and he said, "I just stopped, Art, to tell you that we nominated you for our candidate for the legislature up at the caucus today." So that's where it really started.

Link served in the state legislature from 1947 to 1970. By comparison with what is provided today, you'd almost say the support process [for members of the legislature] was practically nil. There was no **Legislative Council**. There was no real format for bill drafting established. There were certain legal requirements that had to be stated in the bill introduction, but nothing as uniform as we have today, and the service for getting bills drafted was just whoever had the time or the ability to do it. The session was sixty days, every day, not just weekdays. We held meetings and hearings six days out of the week. Very few Saturdays did we take off. And [we] did our work in sixty days.

In the 1950s and 1960s the oil production tax and the coal [severance] tax both became hotly debated taxes. I and Halvor Rolfsrud from McKenzie County [and] Iver Solberg, [Williams County,] decided that with the extensive oil drilling tearing up the roads in the western part of the state, the counties were entitled, and so we got a specified division of the oil severance tax. Part went to the

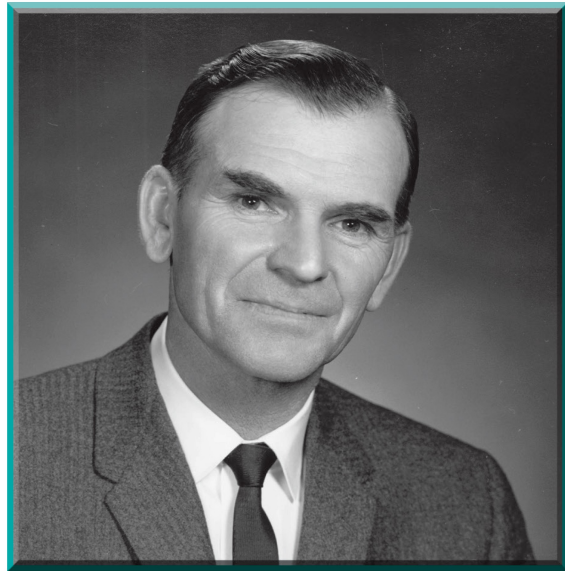


Figure 3. Art Link was elected to the North Dakota House of Representatives in 1946 and served there until 1970. Link described his years in the legislature as "my education in the whole process of government, public relations, speaking, and the whole bit." (SHSND 0011-0118)

schools of the county, part for roads, part to the cities in the counties, and part to the state. That created a lot of fire [with] counties that didn't have any oil development, so we were in the minority in terms of votes, but we fought for our position.

And it has proved its value, because if it hadn't been for that, we wouldn't have had [money for] the roads, the schools, or the oil impact and the coal impact offices. [If] a community was impacted adversely [by oil or coal development, a share of the tax] went into the coal and oil impact funds. The schools, the local communities, the townships, and the counties can make applications [for these funds] based on the costs of furnishing services in an area that has served the oil and coal development. The eastern people, they didn't have any of that [fund available] because it was confined to counties wherein there was this development; they wanted more of the money to go to the general fund, to the state. Most of it is still going to the general fund, but we were able to hold our troops and get a specified amount. And to this day it helps the counties out there that have a small population, lots of mileage, and big trucks

running all over the county and township roads, maybe tearing them up. What are you going to do if you don't get something back from it? That's what we did. That was a real fight. Those kind of things run through the whole session.

*In 1956, when the Nonpartisan League joined with the Democratic party, Link also became a Democrat. He served as minority leader—and one term as speaker of the House when the Democrats were the majority party in 1965—from 1957 to 1970. In 1970 he ran for Congress. [My opponent was] **Bob McCarney**. He never did concede to me, not to this day. It took about two weeks for us to find out that I'd won the election. I think [the margin] was something like five hundred votes. At that time North Dakota had two congressional districts. I ran in the **West District**, [which went] as far east as the west boundary of Stutsman County. So geographically, the West District was almost two-thirds of the state. **Mark Andrews** was from the East District, which had as many votes as my whole two-thirds. So I had a big area to campaign in.*

I served for two years, and then I would have had to run [again], but while North Dakota didn't lose any population, other states gained. As a result we were reduced to one congressman at large. Mark Andrews had already served two terms, or at least one before I was elected, in the East District. If I wanted to run for Congress again I would have had to run for that one seat and oppose him. Some of my friends in the Democratic party said I should go for governor because Bill Guy had just completed twelve years and was not seeking reelection.

*Art Link defeated the Republican candidate, Richard Larson, and was elected governor of North Dakota. He took office in January 1973. In October 1973 the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** cut oil production, announced a halt of sales to Western nations, and raised prices substantially. [The worldwide energy crisis that had developed led] North Dakota to reassess its place as a important player in exporting energy. This required much attention to water resources, coal and oil explora-*

tion, [the careful placement of] power plants, land reclamation, and the overall environmental impacts to our state—especially in western North Dakota. So it had a far-reaching effect.

[One of the earliest] key issues [was to] comply with the federal conservation mandates, such as the fifty-five-mile-per-hour speed limit. The federal government had decreed that by the fall [of 1974], [the speed limit for all] the states had to be fifty-five. So I [asked] Murray Sagsveen [legal counsel to the governor's office], "Can we implement the fifty-five-mile-an-hour speed limit earlier?" "Well," he said, "You can by [executive order]." We started it—the first state in the nation to enact the fifty-five-mile speed limit. [The order] was never challenged.

[We also] resisted the application by Michigan-Wisconsin Pipeline Company for water permits to build four coal gasification plants in North Dakota. As chairman of the State Water Commission, [which is responsible for issuing water permits,] I asked Murray Sagsveen to write a condition in the water permit that required all users of water for energy, both electric and gasification, to perform total reclamation of surface-mined land following removal of the coal. This was a long and hard-fought condition, but we prevailed. I was criticized for hindering progress and economic development. We approved one gasification plant permit and held the others on the side, telling them, well, we'll hold them for you if you need them later. These same rules also applied for coal-fired electric plants. These rules were never challenged and were adopted by the succeeding legislature. So what I did by executive order—establish rules for total reclamation—became law in the succeeding legislative session. I had campaigned on the slogan of cautious, orderly development. So when they would challenge me and say, you're slowing up economic development—[I was] not slowing it up, just being cautious, orderly. And it has stood the time.

The Michigan-Wisconsin Pipeline Company's [proposal] to construct a coal gasification plant using low-grade lignite coal was a major project

that to be successful required the fullest cooperation and various permits from many state regulatory agencies, including the governor's support. I tried to get the legislature to approve a Department of Natural Resources, but they shied away from it. They didn't want to expand government. I created by executive directive the Natural Resources Council. I named every agency and department that was affected in any way by the development of energy plants of any kind and set a schedule of meetings about once a month, or as often as development of significant events required.

Most scholars of government consider North Dakota as having a weak governor's office. I think if that is true—and by comparing with other states, it may be—it stems from the almost fierce determination of North Dakotans to defend their right to select by vote the various officeholders of state government. I think there is an ingrained determination that we're not going to give up the right to some individual, even if it is the governor, and make a kingdom or dictator—they don't use the words generally—that has too much authority. We resent—I'm speaking now as one of the people of North Dakota—we resent and reject the notion that one person should be granted that authority.

The greatest power that a governor has is the power of **veto**. A measure approved by a majority vote in each house, if vetoed by the governor, must be returned for the legislature either to support the governor's veto or override the veto. But that requires a two-thirds vote of the members, so in this case the governor holds a strong hand. The power of the budget, while quite strong, can be amended or rejected by a majority vote of the legislature. There seems to be constant disagreement between the governor's office and the legislative branch.

The governor is required to give a veto message, and you have that one opportunity to defend your position when writing the veto message and make your case. If you anticipate some criticism, it's one avenue by which you can defend your position. I did that in the case of defeating the **nineteen-year-old drinking bill**. It sure wasn't popular.

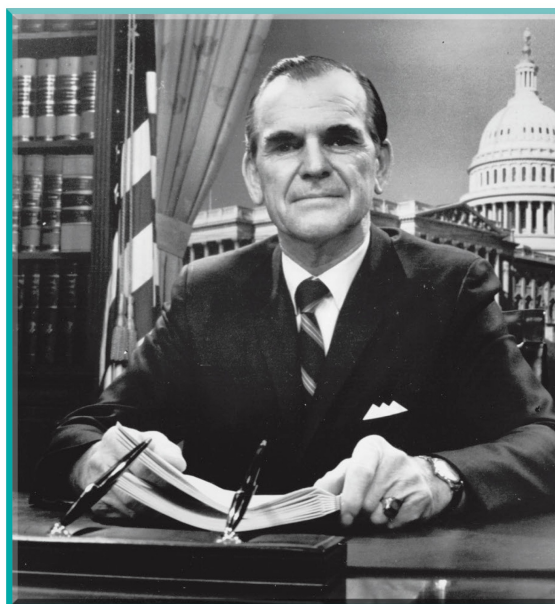


Figure 4. Art Link was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives in 1970 and served one term. He represented North Dakota's "West District" when the state had two representatives in Congress. (SHSND 10787-Box 44-folder 95-01)

I was invited to throw the basketball out at the state Class A tournament about a week or ten days after I vetoed that bill, and when they called my name out there was a boo. But they gave me the ball, and I threw it out, and at halftime two sophomore girls came over and apologized. I had so many more people come around and say, you did the right thing. But you've got to take some of that [criticism].

As a Democrat facing a Republican legislature, the partisanship can become very significant. However, if there is restraint and partisanship is set aside, there is much that can be accomplished. I believe in communication. On important major issues I would invite the leadership of both parties to a breakfast at the residence and lay my position on the table—open up the discussion and have an open forum so there was full understanding. Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn't.

In 1976 Link defeated the Republican nominee for governor, Richard Elkin. The second term began to show signs of maturity. We could see many of

our efforts coming to fruition. However, some of the most important projects were still coming into their own. The construction of the Heritage Center was not yet started. We were trying to save Cross Ranch park, which the legislature had approved, [but the legislation] was referred.

In retrospect we should have taken a more proactive role in resolving the issues [regarding treatment of the developmentally disabled]. When I think of the institutionalizing of our mentally and physically retarded, the condition we found them in, I regret that I didn't just speak out in outrage about how we treated them. It seemed we were just institutionalizing them. That's the way it was always done, and it took a court order to make the state change it. *In 1980 a lawsuit was filed in federal court challenging North Dakota's practices regarding institutionalization of individuals with developmental disabilities. This lawsuit resulted in the wholesale restructuring, under court supervision, of the state's programs for the developmentally disabled.* [The lawsuit] came after my term in office, so I can't claim a great deal of credit for it. I did support the effort to provide for their comfort and safety, but it wasn't really enough. So I'm frank to admit, in retrospect, we should have taken a more proactive role regarding this.

I was confident that I would win a third four-year term in 1980. I was completely engulfed with the duties of the office of the governor. **Allen Olson** spent all of his time campaigning in every town in the state. Governor Guy had served twelve years, and I had served eight years. Olson said, "Twenty is plenty." That was a catchy phrase meaning that twenty years of Democratic governors is plenty. Olson tied me to Carter, whom the Republicans blamed for the wheat embargo. Then there was the merciless Reagan landslide.

The **wheat embargo** by President Carter was a very traumatic world event. At the National Governors Association meeting [that year] in Denver, someone from Carter's office came to Denver to speak to the Democratic governors, imploring the governors to endorse a resolution of support for Carter's renomination for his second term, and I went along with it. And I didn't even get home before Al Olson had issued a statement that I had betrayed the trust of the farmers of North Dakota, because Carter had imposed the wheat embargo to Russia, which affected exports. Well, being a good, loyal Democrat, I [had] said to myself, I can't be down here and say I won't support Carter. We had worked with him on the coal gasification plant and stuff like that, and what kind of

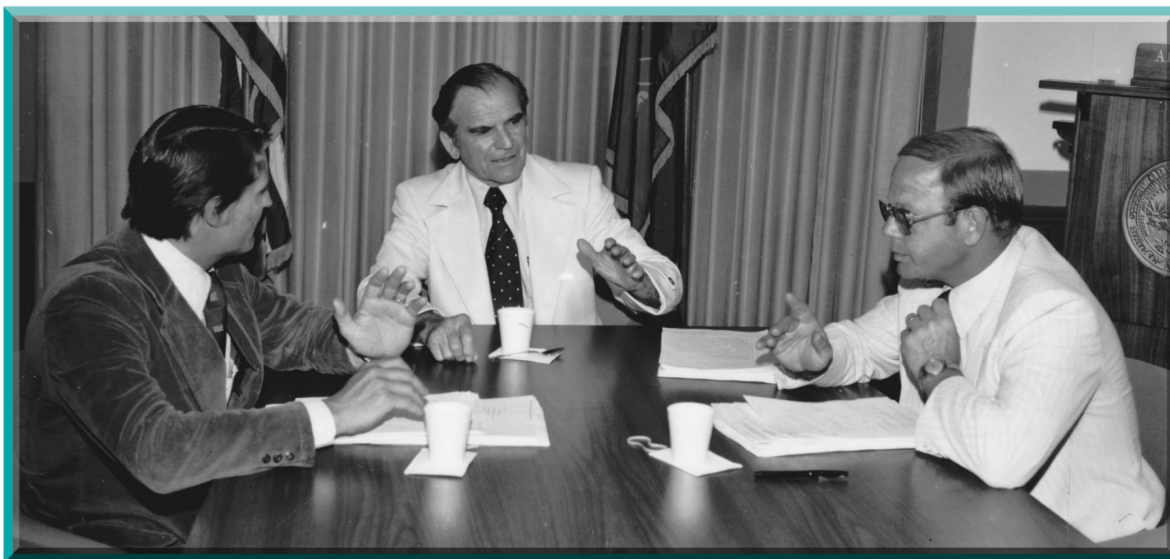


Figure 5. The State Industrial Commission, consisted of Governor Link, Attorney General Allen Olson (right), and Commissioner of Agriculture Myron Just (left). (SHSND 77-0477)

Democrat would I be if I played politics? So I went ahead. Well, the game lent Olson some ammunition to stoke his fire. That's why I say the wheat embargo by President Carter was a very traumatic event.

The **severance tax** for mining coal became a real contentious issue. It was considered [that] if you were for a higher severance tax you were against economic development. Those of us who were standing pat for a higher tax said [coal mining] is a one-time harvest. The people who were supporting the coal industry were hollering to high heaven that we'd drive them out of the state. We were able to get and put into law reclamation standards that became sort of a standard for other parts of the country. We required complete reclamation on mined land, which the mining companies were opposed to, but we held our ground, and they finally agreed that it was the only way to go.

[Another] issue was Measure Six. **Measure Six** provided for a higher oil tax, [which] would be allocated to schools and certain other designated services. There was strong opposition to it; oil companies were opposed to it. They said that we would drive the oil industry out of the state. That was a very contentious issue. *Measure Six passed in 1980 by a 60 percent majority of the voters.*

Al Olson and I had a good personal relationship. He was attorney general all the years that I was governor. As such, he handled his office in a competent manner. He was the official law arm for the governor's office, so any legal question that required more than the staff attorney that I had would go to him. He was strictly nonpolitical and very accommodating, and we had a good rapport. The governor, the attorney general, and the commissioner of agriculture serve on the Industrial Commission. We'd meet once a month [to oversee the activities of] the **Bank of North Dakota** and the **State Mill and Elevator**. We'd go up to Grand Forks [where the state mill is located] for meetings maybe every three or four months. Although we were of different political parties and he became an opponent when he ran for governor—and we



Figure 6. Elected governor in 1972, Art Link was re-elected in 1976. (SHSND TC3044)

had a spirited campaign, and I guess a few potshots were leveled from both sides—it was nothing of a permanent, damaging nature. We [Grace and I] had Al down to the house for a noon luncheon [after the election]; just the three of us sat at the table there and talked about things. I offered all of the assistance I could. So that was the human element of it.

From township, school board, legislature, Congress, and governor, 1980 was the only election I lost. [The loss] was traumatic. It was traumatic for the staff because all the predictions were that I would win. We were probably the recipients of overconfidence. It wasn't entirely our fault, but we should have been more conscious of that fact. I think the fact that Olson was in state government as attorney general and involved in these kinds of issues left a sense of continuity. It was tough to lose, but there is life after politics. I have many friends and much satisfaction over successes [since that election].

Life after the Governor's Office

Oil prices peaked in 1979 and rapidly fell during the early 1980s. Oil exploration in western North Dakota also declined as fast, or faster, than it had grown in the 1970s. We up here in North Dakota, particularly

those of us who live in the area where oil is scattered all around us, had not experienced [an oil boom and bust] in all our lives. We'd heard about the boom and bust in other parts of the country, but we hadn't experienced it here. This was North Dakota's first experience, and we happened to be the generation that were part of it. It was all a pretty high expectation of a continuing industry that would be here for many, many years to come. But then oil dropped down to a few dollars a barrel, and [it] was no longer financially possible to continue. That was your bust.

We were fed a bill of goods by the oil developers. They tried to convince landowners and the state officials and everybody that unless we made the tax rate and all the rules and regulations favorable to the oil industry, it would discourage them, and we'd lose that development, and therefore it would be to the disadvantage of the state. I don't think it was the taxation that hurt the oil industry in the state. It was the world price of oil.

George Sinner asked me to be chairman of the **North Dakota Centennial Commission**. That came within his first term of office, his first year [1985]. When I look back there isn't anything that could have happened that filled the void more



Figure 7. Art and Grace Link dressed in centennial costumes. Governor George Sinner named Art Link to be chairman of the North Dakota Centennial Commission. (SHSND 10943-47)

perfectly than being chairman of the centennial commission. There were almost five years with complete immersion with the people. One of the things that came to the surface was that they didn't vote against you because they didn't like you. They had personal reasons. They thought that I'd been there long enough and things like that. I think that can be the most stressful thing that an individual can experience, [when] you put yourself up to public examination and your whole life is on the line. They get a chance to judge your past experience, and they vote according to it. If you get turned out, why it's a feeling of, wow, that's a pretty hard sentence. But it kind of melted away.

I don't know [why I decided to take a high-profile role on the gambling issue]. I really honestly don't know. I think it's just the fact that I thought it was wrong. In order to win, someone must lose. It's as simple as that. Most people wouldn't think of taking something from a person across the table—say my dollar—[just] because [they were] strong enough to get it. But they'll go to a gambling joint and bet on winning a jackpot because it's invisible. You don't see the person that's losing. Then you go deeper in the business of legalized gambling, and where the state operates a lottery, [that] is by far the most vicious, unacceptable aspect of gambling. I abhor it. Because it's the state. It isn't the purpose of government to be in the business of encouraging people to gamble their money so that the state has money to operate with.

[**Charitable gambling** started] back in 1979. It was to keep grandmas off the streets and came about because North Dakota had an anti-gambling law, and yet they were playing poker and they were playing bingo, and by a strict interpretation that would be against the law. Allen Olson, the attorney general, said the only way we can settle this is to vote on it and legalize bingo and two or three little games—have “smokers” legalized. Smokers were where once or twice a year men would get together and have a gambling game, and that's all it amounted to. “They were doing it anyway. Let's decriminalize it.” And it sounded logical. Most of us went along with it. “Well, it won't do any harm. They're doing it anyway. Catholics were

Grace Link: “Very Much a Partnership”

Grace Johnson was born September 13, 1918, at the farm home of her parents, Roy N. Johnson and Margaret Alice Wood Johnson. I have two brothers and one sister. I was the youngest. Wherever the folks went, we went with them. My dad and mom liked to dance, and we kids went along. When we got tired, they fixed us up a bed—right behind the piano, the noisiest place they could find—and you lay down and went to sleep. But we learned to dance early.

I was fifteen [when I met Art]. We met at a dance when he was playing [violin]. We were married in 1939 in my folk's home. When I talked to Mom about when we were planning to get married, she said, “Oh, won't I get to make one of my daughters' wedding dinners?” And I said, “Well, Mom, if that's what you want, that's what we'll do.” We had about thirty guests, and Mom had a neighbor lady come in and help her. We were married at twelve o'clock noon, and she made a nice dinner for the thirty guests.

After Link was elected to the legislature the family accompanied him to Bismarck in 1947. There's me at home with three little boys and [being] six months pregnant. He said, “You're coming with me somehow.” We were having real trouble finding a place to stay. We lived in a fifteen-by-twenty, one-room cabin for sixty days with those 1½, 3½, and 5½ -year-old boys. It was a home—I mean, you could cook there. They had a three-burner hot plate. No refrigerator. I think they had a few cupboards above and then just a counter. We took along a big box of frozen meat and put it out under a snowbank, and I think we took a twelve-dozen crate of eggs with us. We did that until the 1955 session [and then the children and I stayed home]. There were two or three sessions after we stayed home where if Art wanted to get a message—there were no telephones—he'd call the school and talk to [our son] Walter, because he could be called during school hours. We didn't get a telephone [at home] until 1959.

[When Link was governor] I went with Art on almost all occasions, whatever it was. I went with him, because we had decided at that point that our family's grown now. If he's going to do this, we're going to be together. Our life together has been very much a partnership. But I guess with him as governor, I always



Figure 8. Art and Grace Link on a Cletrac tractor in 1939, the year of their marriage. Art Link recalls that when this photo was taken, the tractor was hooked to a Fresno scraper, which he was using to excavate the basement for the couple's farmhouse near Alexander, North Dakota. (SHSND 10943-30)

had the feeling he was the one that was elected, and it was up to me to support him in whatever. I could visit with him and maybe influence his decisions, but in the public it was him and his decisions. I guess that's kind of the way I grew up.

When Art became a congressman and then governor, I had to adjust to the role of not being his secretary and not having to do all of his things. Then when he got out of the governor's office, suddenly we didn't have that support staff, and it puts a lot of pressure on us again to try to keep up with things. Once again I am the secretary and the bookkeeper and scheduler. We are trying to see that we give our family a little more attention. There were a number of years there when they had to kind of take a backseat to what the needs of the state were, and now we are able to spend more time with family. We've got a big family to keep us busy.

having their weekly-monthly bingo parlor game and stuff, so let's make legal people out of all them that were conducting the event." But little by little it's crept up on us.

The greatest change that has occurred during my life is in the standard of living. This house we live in here, in the days that I was a kid growing up, would have looked like a mansion. We experience an affluence unknown to any people in recorded history. We have to be careful that we don't emphasize those aspects of life to the point where it will choke us off. In other words, if we demand so many of the amenities of life that we utilize more of the natural resources than we're entitled to or than we should take, eventually we will destroy the very thing that we want to maintain. That's the way I look at it. We've got to be careful.

In the political arena, I see a falling away of personal interest by the younger generation. Now maybe there weren't any greater percentages of them involved when I was in [my] early twenties or thirties. But it surely seems like it to me—that there is a lack of joining up, a lack of accepting the responsibility [to be] part of the political action. Economic influence on government is getting so heavy that it's becoming a disincentive for the average person to seek public office. I'm afraid what's happening is, the affluent and the people that are privileged with the most resources and have the access to the most financial resources have the upper hand right from the start—right from the minute that the campaign gate is open.

I think that a representative form of government is so precious, and anything that approaches it is denied to so many millions of people the world over. Far too few people in this country—I'm speaking of the country as a whole and including our state—are conscious of what it really means and what it has accomplished for us. When people lose confidence, we're heading for trouble. I wish I had the answer to it, but I guess I don't. I can

only hope—and I'm an eternal optimist—that we'll come to our senses just as we're coming to our senses in the use of tobacco, smoking. We'll have to come to our senses on liquor and eventually on gambling, but I don't want to harp on that, because I don't want to appear as a fanatic on it. Like a lady told me, "I have eternal hope that we're going to see a reverse of this trend." There has to be some resurgence that takes hold of this country and establishes a degree of responsibility for what's going on.

This article is based on a series of oral history interviews with Arthur A. Link conducted by Gerald Newborg in 1993 and 2002. The questions have been omitted, and the presentation has been reorganized and edited. Brief editorial explanations, in italics, are scattered throughout the text. The full interviews consist of approximately 11½ hours of tape and are available at the State Archives and Historical Research Library of the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

This is not intended to be a balanced historical account, but rather a personal perspective based on the narrator's own words.

About the Editor

Gerald G. Newborg was the North Dakota state archivist and director of the State Archives and Historical Research Library Division at the State Historical Society of North Dakota from 1981 until his retirement in 2007. He received his B.A. in history from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. He has an M.A. in history from the University of North Dakota and an M.B.A. from Ohio State University. In addition to editing a series of articles in *North Dakota History* that are based on interviews with recent governors of North Dakota, he also co-authored the book *North Dakota: A Pictorial History*.

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