

Papers of the Forty-Third Annual  
**DAKOTA CONFERENCE**

A National Conference on the Northern Plains

**“The Civil War & The Northern Plains:  
A Sesquicentennial Observance”**

Augustana College  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

April 29-30, 2011

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Major funding for the Forty-Third Annual Dakota Conference was provided by Loren and Mavis Amundson CWS Endowment/SFACF, Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission, Tony and Anne Haga, Carol Rae Hansen, Andrew Gilmour and Grace Hansen-Gilmour, Carol M. Mashek, Elaine Nelson McIntosh, Mellon Fund Committee of Augustana College, Rex Myers and Susan Richards, Rollyn H. Samp in Honor of Ardyce Samp, Roger and Shirley Schuller in Honor of Matthew Schuller, Jerry and Gail Simmons, Robert and Sharon Steensma, Blair and Linda Tremere, Richard and Michelle Van Demark, Jamie and Penny Volin, and the Center for Western Studies.

The Center for Western Studies  
Augustana College  
2011



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	v
Anderberg, Kat Sailing Across a Sea of Grass: Ecological Restoration and Conservation on the Great Plains .....	1
Anderson, Grant Sons of Dixie Defend Dakota .....	13
Benson, Bob The Americanization of Roslyn, South Dakota .....	27
Blake, Wayne and Woodard, Aaron The Grand Army of South Dakota – The Eternal Pockets.....	36
Carsrud, Rachel A Civil War Love Story .....	42
Daily, Dan \$5 for a Coffin: Trading at Papineauville, Dakota Territory.....	50
Gasque, Thomas J. The Legacy of the Civil War in the Place Names of the Upper Midwest .....	62
Grundmeier, Tim Acculturation in the First Generation of Norwegian-American Pastor's Wives: The Divergent Experiences of Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch.....	75
Gutch, Betty South Dakota State Medical Association 1880-1910 .....	84
Hill, Ordell A Profile of the American Experience in the lives of the Julson Brothers: Immigration, War, and Homesteading.....	90
Jenson, Amanda Robert Kemen's Tale: A Forgotten Soldier of the Korean War.....	98
Johnsson, Lillian Pretty Rainbow Woman: The Story of Marcella LeBeau and the French National Order of the Legion of Honor .....	107
Kangas, Alvin How Barbed Wire Settled the West.....	113

Knight, Brian	
The Immortal Man .....	118
Lee, Shebby	
The Cat Pioneers .....	131
Miller, John	
Recovering South Dakota's Leading Economic Thinker from Obscurity: Alvin Hansen of Viborg.....	144
Shearer, Garrett	
Trails of the Beef: Roads that Helped Feed Growth and Life on the Great Plains.....	154
Thompson, Clarissa	
Edwin McCook, Civil War General and McCook County Namesake .....	167
Thomsen, Josie	
Stronger Than the Plains .....	175
Timm, John	
Inside the Civil War with Arthur Mellette (Plight of a Substitute Soldier) .....	188
Trask, David	
The Presbyterian vs. The Bishop: Episcopal Church Administration of President Grant's Peace Policy among the Yankton and Santee People, 1869-1882 .....	199
Wittman, Kadyn	
Moving the Troops: the Actions Behind Two Civil War Regiments.....	213
Woodard, Aaron	
Afraid of Nothing-Personality Quirks of the Mountain Men.....	218

## PREFACE

Dedicated to examining contemporary issues in their historical and cultural contexts, the Dakota Conference on Northern Plains History, Literature, Art, and Archaeology is a signature event of the Center for Western Studies, which provides programming in Northern Plains studies at Augustana College.

In observance of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Civil War, the 2011 Dakota Conference chose as its theme “The Civil War and the Northern Plains: A Sesquicentennial Observance.” On April 12, 1861, the Confederate bombardment of Union-held Fort Sumter commenced, plunging the nation into a bloody and protracted conflict. Although largely an eastern conflict, the Civil War and its immediate aftermath changed the Northern Plains in significant ways. The Center for Western Studies sought papers addressing questions related to this conflict in a regional context. For example, we asked, what was life on the plains like during the 1860s and shortly thereafter? How did the Civil War impact the indigenous and immigrant peoples of the Northern Plains? Recognizing, also, Augustana College’s sesquicentennial, we welcomed proposals for papers or sessions on early Norwegian-American settlement in the plains.

The conference’s unique blend of academic and non-academic presenters has won the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which awarded a Challenge Grant to the Center for Western Studies, citing the conference specifically as deserving of support. If you, also, value learning about the past through the lively debate of a conference, there is still time to help CWS meet its NEH endowment match. Please contact the Executive Director.

Thanks to each presenter and session chair, whose dedication to research and writing made this conference possible. Thanks, also, to the major underwriters of this year’s conference, listed on the front cover.

Of the twenty-four sessions, eleven addressed some aspect of the Civil War or the Civil War era on the plains. Please note, however, that not all papers presented at the conference were submitted for inclusion here.

Harry F. Thompson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
The Center for Western Studies

Sailing Across a Sea of Grass:  
Ecological Restoration and Conservation on the Great Plains

Kat Anderberg  
Final Paper  
HIST 397A: Finding the Great Plains  
Dr. Harry F. Thompson  
26 January 2011

*“Over the last century the Great Plains region has been extensively modified to maximize agriculture production. Measures were taken to maximize crop production and forage production on rangeland sites. As a result, a tremendous strain has been placed on this landscape adversely affecting populations of priority species. The conservation community has actively been delivering conservation measures, but priority species continue to decline. Over the last 20 years advances in computer hardware, software, and analytical techniques have provided conservation practitioners with new tools to effectively deliver conservation, assess impacts of conservation actions, and evaluate habitat capacity to support target populations. Much conservation work has been accomplished, but there is much more that can be done.”*

-Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan, Opening Paragraph<sup>1</sup>

The Great Plains has an incredibly diverse landscape comprised of dozens of different habitats, and is home to an incredible variety of native species. However the history of intense agriculture and ecological destruction has left hundreds of native species in serious danger. Of the few bison herds in existence today, all have been interbred with cattle at some point in an effort to keep the species alive. The species is now at a point where it could not survive on its own without human interference. The use and overuse of the land for agricultural production has removed hundreds of plant species from parts of the Great Plains, simultaneously driving native wildlife populations out of their natural habitats. Only in the past few decades has the importance of ecological conservation come to the Great Plains' consciousness. While great stretches of land are still used for agricultural production and ranching, current programs encourage green farming and ranching techniques, making these businesses more environmentally invested. There are also a large number of large and small-scale conservation and restoration partnerships and programs

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<sup>1</sup> . “Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan.” December 2009.  
<http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/pdf/GreatPlains.pdf>, 1.

currently working in the Great Plains region. These programs focus on community participation and education as well as having a solid grounding in scientific observation. With the help of these groups and their communities, thousands of acres of the Great Plains will be restored and protected as both a habitat for hundreds of native species and an opportunity for observation, education, and research for scientists and students now and in the future. Restoration and conservation on the Great Plains is making great strides towards an environmentally aware and sustainable future for all of the residents of the Great Plains.

One of the largest government-sponsored programs for Great Plains conservation is the Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative. The geographical area of the GPLCC includes parts of New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming. The area also includes three formally recognized partnerships that help make up the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. It also includes Federal Lands such as the Bureau of Land Management public lands in New Mexico, 11 Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges, USDA Forest Service National Grasslands and National Forests in six states, as well as lands managed by the Department of Defense, Bureau of Reclamation, and National Park Service. State-owned lands are also expected to play an important role in the work of the GPLCC. The majority of the geological area of the GPLCC is privately owned, so offering incentives that encourage private landowners to manage their lands in ways that contribute to wildlife habitat values and providing tools that help strategically target those incentives will be important considerations in the near future.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> . "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan." December 2009. <http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/pdf/GreatPlains.pdf>, 3-4.

As of the end of 2010, the current participants in the GPLCC are the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife service.<sup>3</sup> This Cooperative is a new creation and released its preliminary action plan in December of 2009. The GPLCC has a precise outline for a course of action in regards to conservation. They identify different habitats within their geographical area and priority species within those habitats. They not only focus on the needs of the prairie, but also on the importance of every ecological system within the Great Plains, including the Playa Wetlands, which are the primary regenerative source of the Ogallala Aquifer. Since there are so many different conservation partnerships already operating within the GPLCC geographical area, the main purpose of the GPLCC is to unite its current partners with the other partnerships in the area to all work towards common conservation goals. It will be critical for the GPLCC to invite all these partners to establish a "rigorous science based conservation platform following the elements of Strategic Habitat Conservation...[which] include biological planning, conservation design, conservation delivery, and monitoring/research/evaluation."<sup>4</sup>

One of the primary areas of research for the GPLCC is climate change and its effect on different habitats as well as the adaptability of different species to climate change. They are also looking into expanding their capability for early detection and response to non-native species. Their primary focus for conservation in their 2010 Action Plan was on the lesser prairie chicken, with goals of formulating a population-viability model and a molecular genetic analysis to be able to genetically

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<sup>3</sup> US Department of the Interior. "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative." Last modified 4 March 2010. <http://www.doi.gov/whatwedo/climate/strategy/Great-Plains.cfm>

<sup>4</sup> . "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan." December 2009. <http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/pdf/GreatPlains.pdf>, 5.

differentiate between populations and determine which populations are most in need of conservation efforts.

Because the cooperative is such a young organization, the 2010 action plan doesn't outline an exact agenda. Rather, it points out areas where there is a documented need for concentrated conservation efforts where their resources could make a difference. These suggestions include the study of lesser prairie chicken habitat delineation (which their partners could then use to improve their efforts toward lesser prairie chicken restoration), impact of sediments in Playa wetlands (which can be used to create models outlining rates of sedimentation and its effect on wildlife in those areas), climate change scenario planning, and the collection of statistically valid monitoring data.<sup>5</sup>

The action plan then proposes some future projects that, while important to the mission of the GPLCC, are currently beyond their means. One of these projects focuses on bison herd management and genetics, with a special focus on bison gene diversity and limiting cattle gene introgression. Another looks to inventory native fish populations and habitat assessment, as native non-game fishes are monitored infrequently in Great Plains rivers and streams and many surveys are likely out of date. They also want to be able to finish the National Wetland Inventory for the area and produce projected climate induced habitat range shifts for lesser prairie chickens, furthering the current work and research underway in those areas.<sup>6</sup>

Instead of rushing headfirst into action, the GPLCC openly recognizes differences in opinion and approaches to problem-solving, and calls for open dialogue in face-to-face discussion and

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<sup>5</sup> . "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan." December 2009. <http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/pdf/GreatPlains.pdf>, 12-13.

<sup>6</sup> . "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan." December 2009. <http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/pdf/GreatPlains.pdf>, 15-18.

scientific analysis before major programs are put into effect.<sup>7</sup> They make reasonable goals and focus on the importance of research and analysis before action. While the case could be made for the importance of immediate conservation action, this approach demonstrates responsibility and awareness of ecological and financial concerns. The importance of recognizing the current state of the environment the importance of different factors in different habitats and their effect on priority species is understood and respected. The GPLCC could do more harm than good by rushing in and trying to change several things at once without a thorough understanding of Great Plains ecology and the state of priority species. While in some circumstances haste is admirable, in this case the cautious procession is the more desirable approach and should be encouraged.

Another organization currently working on conservation efforts in the Great Plains area is the Great Plains Restoration Council. The GPRC is a non-profit based out of Ft. Worth, Texas, with an additional operation on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, and its primary goal is to restore and protect the prairies and plains through developing youth leaders in Ecological Health. It is unique in that it focuses on social work along with ecological recovery protection. Through its award-winning Plains Youth InterACTION program, inner city and American Indian youth leaders work "to protect and restore new prairie wilderness, and learn to take care of their own health and that of our communities at the same time, all interconnected."<sup>8</sup>

Currently the GPRC protects two prairie and plains reserves. One protects critically endangered urban tall-grass prairie wilderness in Ft. Worth while the other lies adjacent to the Badlands National Park in South Dakota. The long-term goal for the Oglala Preserve in South Dakota

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<sup>7</sup> "Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative Action Plan." 9.

<sup>8</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council." Last modified November 2010. <http://www.gprc.org/>

is to help the National Park Service acquire the land and officially integrate it into the Badlands National Park. The Fort Worth Prairie Park serves as an on-location learning environment for students from Texas Christian University, University of Texas-Arlington, and the students involved with Plains Youth InterACTION. The GPRC is also heavily involved in the Cynthia Ann Parker Wilderness, a new reserve totaling more than 12000 acres in West Texas. The goal for this reserve is for wild buffalo and other native wildlife to be brought back and allowed to roam completely unmanaged. The reserve will be protected land, and a new local sustainable economy will be built around wilderness recovery, wildlife protection, nature tourism, conservation biology, green design, education, and research.<sup>9</sup>

The GRPC's South Dakota headquarters are also far more expansive than the Oglala Prairie Preserve. The South Dakota office is operated entirely by Oglala Lakota residents, furthering the GRPC's mission to involve communities in ecological awareness and restoration. They are also working on their Million-Acre Project, which is an overarching, multi-organizational, long-term effort anchored on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and expanding outward, and it is geared toward ultimately tying together and restoring one million acres of wild buffalo plains and badlands. This territory would include reservation lands, individual fee-simple lands from willing sellers, Buffalo Gap National Grassland, and the Badlands National Park. The South Dakota GRPC has also entered into a partnership with the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation. They work together on the Pine Ridge Reservation toward mutual Ecological Health goals of bringing buffalo, antelope, prairie dogs and other native wildlife back and building healthy sustainable communities by jointly running the Youth InterACTION leadership development program in the South Dakota location. They

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<sup>9</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council." Last modified November 2010. <http://www.gprc.org/>

are currently working to acquire and restore a new, several thousand acre former cattle ranch that has excellent connectivity to the South Unit of Badlands National Park and to build, on 200 already degraded areas, one of the greenest communities on the Great Plains. The goal for this community is to help Oglala Lakota folks build financial equity, healthier living conditions and live much healthier lives, while serving as an Oglala-led Ecological Health education lab where youth and adults relearn and reconnect with the natural world, their culture, and their place within it.<sup>10</sup>

The GRPC also has plans to spread out and work on creating preserves in three more locations. Their first new outreach will be a formal partnership with the Katy Prairie Conservancy together with the Harris County Attorney's Office to design and implement a program to help the Katy Prairie Conservancy restore several thousand acres of coastal prairie while providing special rehabilitative work opportunities to temporarily incarcerated individuals. The Conservancy currently owns or manages 18000 acres in the coastal prairie region just west of Houston and all of it is in need of some form of restoration. The conservancy's goal is to eventually be responsible for a 50000 acre connected reserve.<sup>11</sup>

They also want to partner with the 5000 acre Wind River Ranch in New Mexico to create a minimum of 100,000 refuge acres for wild buffalo, black-tailed prairie dogs, antelope, and other native wildlife in northeastern New Mexico that will eventually become a complete, functioning short-grass prairie ecosystem. The goal for this project is to protect native wildlife entering into the "extinction

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<sup>10</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council." Last modified November 2010. <http://gprc.org/>

<sup>11</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council." Last modified November 2010. <http://gprc.org/>

spiral" while also offering an economic and cultural driver based on green restoration and sustainability for a region where 22.4% of the population lives below the poverty line.<sup>12</sup>

Their third future project is a reintroduction of wild buffalo, pronghorn antelope, and maybe even critically endangered red wolves back to the few Texas reserves of long-grass coastal prairie that still remain. Padre Island National Seashore, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge/Matagorda Island Complex, Anahuac/McFaddin National Wildlife Refuges, and Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge are all offered as excellent locations to currently implement such a program. They also point out that restoring and rewilding these and other areas can offer Green Collar jobs and education opportunities.<sup>13</sup>

A great deal of the success of the GPRC comes from its unification of social and ecological needs and welfare. Its programs can be defended from both an ecological and a social standpoint. The GPRC is shown to have a positive effect on troubled youth and incarcerated individuals, educating them about the environment and giving them the skills needed to maintain an ecologically aware lifestyle. Simultaneously, it maintains or helps to maintain thousands of acres in preserves while restoring natural habitats and native species. It shows that using educational programs as a means of spreading ecological awareness is extremely effective.

In Grinnell, Iowa, Grinnell College is also contributing significantly to conservation efforts on the Great Plains. Their Center for Prairie Studies includes the Conard Environmental Research Area, a 365 acre preservation area used for teaching as well as for student and faculty research. CERA

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<sup>12</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council."

<sup>13</sup> "Great Plains Restoration Council." Last modified November 2010. <http://www.gprc.org>

“preserves, and through restoration recreates, a part of Iowa's vanishing natural heritage, providing a resource for the entire college, local schools, environmental groups, clubs, and the general public.”<sup>14</sup>

The landscape is comprised of woodland, savanna, restored prairie, and wetland habitats, and the Environmental Education Center is the first building in Iowa to have received a Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program. The mission of the Center for Prairie Studies is to promote a college-wide effort to “connect faculty and students with our prairie place -- geographically, biologically, historically, and aesthetically. It seeks to undermine our tendency to ignore the lessons of our own locales, and thus cultivate in ourselves an appreciation of place, wherever that may come to be.”<sup>15</sup>

As a research area, CERA is host to a wide assortment of faculty and student research projects. Several of their long-term research projects are focused around prairie fire. Faculty members from the biology department have focuses in a variety of different areas, from evolutionary ecology and animal behavior, spatial ecology, environmental microbiology and biogeochemistry to fungal and aquatic biology. CERA is a prime facility for observation and research, and its location offers a great deal of ecological and biological diversity. The Center offers paid positions for students interested in working on restoration projects during the summer. CERA acts as both an educational facility and an environmental preserve, preserving the native landscape while helping to train students to preserve and restore similar landscapes in other areas.

The success of these conservation and restoration programs relies heavily upon their dedicated focus on scientific observation, research, and education. Having a solid foundation of

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<sup>14</sup> Grinnell College. “Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA).” <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/cps/cera>

<sup>15</sup> “Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA).”

scientific observation and data enables them to develop achievable goals and create detailed plans of action that have a far greater likelihood of higher rates of success. Their efforts are not disappointing in the slightest, rather, they demonstrate great dedication and potential, and give the Great Plains a hope for the future beyond mega-corporate farms and a decided lack of biological diversity. With the help of these organizations and invested members of Great Plains communities, major sections of the Great Plains can be restored to their former glory of ecological diversity and kept that way for future generations. These preserves give students and researchers a place to study and learn, and the common goal of an ecological preserve unites Great Plains communities and helps heal social injuries. These areas allow native species that have been in decline for decades to come back and achieve stable populations. If it were not for these areas and the efforts of these organizations, the diversity and grandeur of the Great Plains would be lost, plowed under and farmed for corn or wheat. Thanks to these organizations, the bison have a presence on the Great Plains and diverse habitats are once again thriving and supporting life.

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## SONS OF DIXIE DEFEND DAKOTA

GRANT K ANDERSON

Dakota Territory entered the Union as eleven southern states were departing to establish the Confederacy. Distant as it was from the scene of sectional conflict, Dakota was occupied by soldiers of this new entity. These sons of Dixie were now wearing Union blue instead of secessionist gray. Once the flower of the Confederacy, they preferred the perils of Indian warfare on the Great Plains to the monotony and deprivation of a prisoner of war camp.

Hostilities of the Civil war relegated protection of frontier settlers to secondary importance. Troops were transferred to crucial theaters in Virginia leaving a vast expanse of the Minnesota-Dakota frontier virtually unprotected. On 18 August, 1862, the Santee uprising erupted in Minnesota. Within a week more than 300 settlers had been killed. The hostile Sioux fled west into Dakota Territory enveloping the entire upper Great Plains in Indian warfare.<sup>1</sup>

Regional political leaders beseeched Washington for military assistance lest "western Minnesota would be ablaze with Indian violence and the new Dakota frontier would be a shriveling thing in danger of dying at birth."<sup>2</sup> Dakota Territorial Governor William Jayne informed Washington, "we must have immediate aid...or else our territory will be depopulated."<sup>3</sup> "Dakota was left in a discouraging situation by the removal of federal troops," lamented the *Yankton Press and Dakotan* from the territorial capital.<sup>4</sup>

Secretary of War Edwin M Stanton reluctantly agreed to address the Indian problem despite recent Confederate successes. He created the Department of the North West---

encompassing Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, as well as Nebraska and Dakota territories, 6 September 1862. Major John Pope, recently demoted for his loss at the second battle of Bull Run, was appointed departmental commander.<sup>5</sup>

Union generals voiced a dire need for manpower. Many of their troops three year voluntary enlistments were nearing an end. Draft calls for replacements generated riots nationwide. Despite this, General Ulysses S Grant's logistics called for exerting the North's superior manpower to press the war to a successful end.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time Midwesterners were demanding additional troops although some congressmen felt they already had too many. General Pope disagreed. If his forces were reduced, operations against the Sioux would have to be restricted he argued.

The search for manpower gave credence to an idea championed by General Benjamin Butler. The North held thousands of Confederate soldiers as prisoners of war. Why not pardon those who agreed to enter the Union Army. Butler proposed they enlist for three years or until the Civil War ended. President Lincoln endorsed the experiment 2 January 1864 and authorized enlistment of rebel prisoners into units designated as United States Volunteer Infantry.<sup>7</sup>

Butler, as commander of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, controlled one of the Union's largest prison camps. Camp Hoffman, on Point Lookout in the southern tip of Maryland, was barely five feet above sea level. Per President Lincoln's directive, every prisoner was individually interviewed by recruiters seeking "erring brothers who were willing to repent." One thousand Confederates, one eighth of the prison's total, "swallowed the pill", and enrolled the first four months of 1864. Harsh prison conditions, and the use of Negro guards at Fort Hoffman, among other factors led to their switching sides Colonel Charles Augustus Ropes Dimon was placed in command by his fellow Salem, Massachusetts resident General Butler.<sup>8</sup>

The First United States Volunteer Infantry was labeled "a very excellent regiment" by General Ulysses S Grant. He ordered the regiment to Dakota instead of the South because "it is not right to expose them where, to be taken prisoner, they must surely suffer as deserters."<sup>9</sup> By virtue of Special Order 217, dated 6 August, 1864, the Union commander assigned it to Milwaukee, headquarters of the Department of the North West. The directive was countermanded as the regiment boarded a New York Central train for the trip westward. Only four companies would proceed to Milwaukee. The other six were rerouted to St Louis, hence up the Missouri River, for service in Dakota Territory. There they would serve with General Alfred A Sully's Northwest Indian expedition as replacements for the 30<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry.<sup>10</sup>

Colonel Dimon chose companies B, C, D, E,H, and I for deployment in Indian country. Subsequent orders assigned the 600 former prisoners of war and their youthful commander to Fort Rice in the far northern reaches of Dakota. An Indian trading boat, the Effie Deans, was retained to transport the unit.<sup>11</sup>

The vessel disembarked 27 August 1864 for its ascent of the Missouri River. At the helm was John LaBarge, a veteran steamboat pilot. His craft methodically chugged upriver at the tedious rate of 45 miles per day. Desertion had reduced the ranks by 5% prior to leaving St Louis. One would expect a higher rate in light of the regiment's unorthodox composition. Pro Union North Carolinians drafted into Confederate service accounted for 40% of the troops. Virginia, (26%), Georgia (10%), and Tennessee (8%), added substantial numbers of these white washed rebels. The remainder were categorized as "men of no principle and were as much at home under one flag as another," plus "foreigners, who found themselves by ....circumstances in the rebel army."<sup>12</sup>

Exactly a month out of St Louis the journey came to an abrupt end. A sandbar five miles below the mouth of the White Earth River, in present south central South Dakota beached the Effie Deans. The marooned Galvanized Yankees had no alternative but to march nearly 300 miles to their outpost.

Ill prepared for this development, Dimon moved his command "in heavy march order," toward Crow Creek Agency some 30 miles upriver. Rations were limited to "two hard crackers and two tablespoons of coffee grounds and sugar mixed daily," supplemented by "three fourths pound of pork every four days." This Spartan maneuver raised doubts whether life in frontier service surpassed that of a prisoner of war camp.<sup>13</sup>

The command reached Crow Creek Agency 30 September and bivouacked three days before continuing to Fort Sully, six miles below present Fort Pierre, South Dakota. By chance, Colonel Dimon's superior, General Alfred A Sully and his Northwest Indian expedition were camped nearby. Sully inspected his replacements and adjudged them "in poor condition to make a march at that time of the year without shelter or suitable transportation." He transferred supplies and 32 sets of six ox teams to Dimon with a directive to guard the livestock as these "pinto buffalo" were highly coveted by the Sioux.<sup>14</sup>

The following morning, 8 October, the transplanted Confederates set out on the final leg of their journey. The topography was portrayed as "...barren and desolate as land around the Dead Sea."<sup>15</sup> Colonel Dimon's diary reveals many troopers afflicted by "acute dysentery" or the "Dakota quickstep as it was branded. Four Galvanized Yankees perished from drinking stagnant water in creeks. Two more were killed by Indians when they strayed from the main column.<sup>16</sup>

Ten days of "hard and tedious marching" brought the First United States Volunteer Infantry to Fort Rice. Total elapsed time from Maryland to Fort Rice had been eight weeks.<sup>17</sup> The presidio, located on the west bank of the Missouri River eight miles above the mouth of Cannonball River in present east-central North Dakota, had been established the previous July by General Alfred A Sully. The facility covered five acres of land 100 feet above the river. "100 men, well provided, could hold it against all the Indians in Dakota Territory," boasted one military man.<sup>18</sup>

The 510 x 500 foot rectangular bastion was constructed by the 30<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry from cottonwood logs hewn 6 x 8 feet, one story high. Dimon estimated the facility only a quarter complete when they arrived.<sup>19</sup>

General Sully regarded the youthful commander "one of the best disciplinarians and most energetic men" he had encountered. Colonel Dimon needed both qualities to command his sons of Dixie deep in Indian country. They faced the prospect of garrisoning an unfinished outpost, under supplied, with winter approaching.<sup>20</sup>

The unit began its occupation of Dakota cutting timber, operating two sawmills, and providing themselves living quarters. These barracks were simple cottonwood huts with earthen roofs. Details of men, "perfectly insane on hunting," scoured the terrain for game.<sup>21</sup>

Life amidst "the civilization of the dark ages" as one Confederate dubbed it, quickly became mundane.<sup>22</sup> Although his battle tested troops "deemed an Indian and his warfare an object of sport and ridicule," their commander thought otherwise.<sup>23</sup> The death of Private George Townsend while on a hunting detail led to a 29 November 1864 directive declaring "all armed Indians...on the west side of the Missouri River will be regarded as enemies...and if possible killed." <sup>24</sup>

An autumn accentuated by "soft winds and dreary hazy skies" belied Dakota's environment.<sup>25</sup> The winter of 1864-65 would be the severest endured by the Galvanized Yankees. The most formidable foe they would battle was not the Sioux---it was winter's double edged sword of cold and disease.

December temperatures plunged to -34. February produced -40 readings. Guards were relieved every quarter hour but still suffered frostbite and frozen extremities. Severe blizzards compounded such misery. Snow engulfed Fort Rice necessitating sentry posts with stoves being mounted on top of the barracks.<sup>26</sup>

The struggle against extinction imprisoned soldiers in their quarters. An epidemic of cabin fever made even routine activities such as visiting outdoor sanitation trenches bothersome. Frigid temperatures notwithstanding, a directive stated "urinating in the immediate vicinity of the Fort" could result in arrest. Cold weather caused suffering but no member of the First United States Volunteer Infantry succumbed to it.<sup>27</sup>

A shortage of rations dogged the regiment from its' arrival in Dakota. Low water and later ice closed the Missouri to supply boats until spring. A 500 mile overland journey to Sioux City, nearest supply point, was unthinkable. Soldiers described as in poor condition that fall, were no match for a foe many left prison to avoid---disease. A meager, unsavory diet, devoid of variety occasioned scurvy to invade.

The gravity of the situation appears in Colonel Dimon's report to headquarters 1 March 1865. He requisitioned, "sour kraut, pickles, and desiccated potatoes," for his subordinates.<sup>28</sup> Fifty two men, including hospital steward William H Merriman, late of the 60<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Volunteers, were victims of the enervating disease. His only medical officer, an assistant surgeon, was among the 186 men stricken with scurvy. Since their arrival on the frontier, the galvanized Yankees had experience only hit and run attacks by small bands of Sioux. It was ironic that their first confrontation was to occur after the collapse of the Confederacy they had originally sworn to defend. 14 April 1865, the day Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, 200 mounted warriors attacked a herding detail within a quarter mile of Fort Rice. They succeeded in capturing 68 head of livestock before being repulsed. Two weeks later 300 hostiles attacked a horse herding detail within a mile of the post.

Dimon's post return for April 1865 illustrates the grim reality of frontier service. He painted Dakota as "an uncivilized, out of the world, country."<sup>29</sup> Eighty-eight percent of the casualties at Fort Rice that month were from natural causes. Indians killed two Galvanized Yankees whereas disease claimed 15. Departmental headquarters learned 223 troops, 48% of the remaining regiment, were sick and unfit for duty.<sup>30</sup>

Amidst these conditions, accusations of misconduct arose. Fool Dog, "who sensed the economic opportunities offered by an injection of federal money into the Dakota economy," operated a tepee of ill repute across the Missouri River from Fort Rice. It was charged the cooks were regular patrons exchanging foodstuffs for women's favors.<sup>31</sup> Dimon investigated but could not substantiate the charges. Nor could he explain the disappearance of nearly a thousand gallons of whiskey from the post over a six month period.

The gaunt regiment accomplished little more that winter than to defend its position and make peaceful overtures to the Indians. Their commandant, who knew "but little of Indian ways," assured his superiors the "war spirit among the Indians is broken." A few hostiles he felt were "incited by Confederate agents...coming by way of Canada and the Red River of the North" were all that remained. The changing seasons proved Dimon's hypothesis incorrect.<sup>32</sup>

The month of May was a mixed one for the garrison. Indian harassment was constant. But warm weather sprouted wild onions on the landscape. The Yellowstone, first steamboat of the 1865 season, reached Fort Rice 9 May. Aboard was a supply of potatoes for the withered men. A more balanced diet hastily emptied sick beds. Six weeks later only 11 cases of scurvy, all recovering, were noted by Post Surgeon George Herrick.<sup>33</sup>

As they returned to duty, members of the 1<sup>st</sup> USVI sought to ease their loneliness. A printing press left behind by the 30<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin was rejuvenated to publish a post newspaper. Volume I, Number 1 of the *Frontier Scout* appeared 15 June, 1865, making it one of the first newspapers published in northern Dakota Territory. Captain Enoch A Adams, Company B, a "frank, genial, pleasant gentlemen," served as editor.<sup>34</sup>

The *Frontier Scout* contained news of military affairs, steamboat traffic, original feature stories and poetry. Its columns offer a glimpse of how the Galvanized Yankees perceived themselves and their surrounding:

Why is Dacotah like the Missouri River? It is and never will be settled.

The only green thing in Dacotah? Those that go there.<sup>35</sup>

One southerner requested if killed he be buried deeply so that wolves, allegedly "as large as year old calves," could not reach his remains.<sup>36</sup> Other articles sought to dispel such fatalistic notions with thoughts of home and loved ones.

The hostile population in the vicinity swelled until Fort Rice was virtually under siege. The Indians, said one soldier, "knew as well as we that a mile from the post they may with the utmost audacity shout defiance."<sup>37</sup> Their gathering was occasioned by an invitation from General Sully to hold a conference in mid-July. An estimated 300 lodges assembled on both sides of the Missouri River by the time Sully arrived 13 July. Among those were several Hunkpapas, the most militant Sioux band. Over 100 other lodges of this band stayed several miles away fearing the powwow was a trap.

Colonel Dimon joined Sully at the council's opening session 16 July. That evening he ferried his superior across the Missouri for a banquet. As the craft landed, a ceremonial cannon salute Dimon ordered was discharged. This action, meant to honor Sully, drew his wrath. The Hunkpapas fled, certain the artillery was aimed at them.<sup>38</sup>

Sully had hoped to negotiate a settlement to avoid open warfare but Dimon's action made this impossible. It reinforced Sully's contention, voiced earlier to General Pope, that Dimon was "too young—to rash—for his position."<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, Dimon, "a down East Yankee", was dispatched to Washington and "an older and cooler head," Lt Colonel John Pattee of the 7<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry was placed in command.<sup>40</sup> A "moccasin shod frontiersmen", known to the Indians as "Big Heart", Pattee was a veteran Indian campaigner. He found "just dissatisfaction prevailed among the soldiers" under his command.<sup>41</sup>

Among the Hunpapas fleeing the council was Sitting Bull—who was just beginning his ascent to prominence. An advocate of all out war, he circulated among hostiles along the Knife River claiming the military had massacred those at the council and calling for the destruction of Fort Rice.

Sitting Bull and The Man That Has His Head Shaved gathered a war party of 500 to 2000 warriors dependent upon the source consulted. Early on the morning of 28 July 1865 they fell on Fort Rice.

John Pattee gathered his company commanders, "without knowing their names," and ordered skirmish lines established, "none to go more than 200 yards from the fort."<sup>42</sup> The ensuing "fight in its detail covered a field of over two miles" and was contested in typical Plains fashion of mounted Indians swirling around dismounted infantrymen. A veteran of frontal assaults on southern battlefields remarked, "they deem us without horses and proper arms, as only subjects of sport and derision".<sup>43</sup>

Artillery support was ordered by Pattee. The twelve pound guns "belched terror at the natives."<sup>44</sup> A well placed shell prompted one trooper to remark in his southern jargon the Sioux "dropped like a half cooked hoe cake from a darky's hand."<sup>45</sup> The attackers, who regarded artillery shells as "living, shrieking demons", sought safety behind Roaring Butte.<sup>46</sup>

The Galvanized Yankees repelled the "most vigorous battle ever fought by Indians in Dakota," boasted columns in the post newspaper.<sup>47</sup> This contention is difficult to accept in light of the fact the Army lost only two men while Indian casualties were estimated at 10 to 12. These figures hardly bear out Editor Adams' exhortation that "Fort Rice had added a day of glory to its calendar that will give it a name and fame in the annals of Indian warfare."<sup>48</sup>

The account may have read infamy instead of fame had General Sully not shuffled commanders at Fort Rice. The Galvanized Yankees prevailed by holding a defensive position and employing superior firepower as Lt Col John Pattee directed. Aware of the Sioux's love of ambush he ordered his troops not to proceed beyond Roaring Butte. Dimon had learned his military tactics on Civil War battlefields. This, plus his impulsive nature, suggests he would have given chase in hopes of defeating the hostiles. Had he done so, Dimon would have suffered a fate reserved for Colonel William Fetterman eighteen months later near Fort Phil Kearney.

Sitting Bull's role in the battle is open to controversy. Whereas the military accorded him high accolades, Hunkpapa headmen branded him a coward. Iron Horse and Grindstone contended Sitting Bull led the attack on the herders, stole two horses, and retired from the field. For this tactical error he counted no coups. Instead, Sitting Bull

was whipped and "only lived by the little end of his little finger."<sup>49</sup> This Teton court-martial chastised its assault leader for derelict of duty. The horses he claimed as plunder were killed by his disgruntled warriors.

Diminished hostilities spurred thoughts of mustering out. News of the Confederacy's defeat bred restlessness among the 1<sup>st</sup> USVI. Why must they languish in their "Siberian exile" while comrades left behind in Point Lookout had been released by Presidential order 6 June? The Secretary of War on 2 June, 1865 ordered all Galvanized Yankee units serving in the Department of the Missouri to be discharged at once. Major General John Pope was strongly opposed, arguing forts in Dakota would have to be abandoned as a result. General Grant concurred with Pope and on 15 June authorized retention of the former POW troops in Dakota.<sup>50</sup>

Those affected made their position known in a letter penned by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Herman Braun. A South Carolina veteran wounded at Gettysburg, the German immigrant requested he and his comrades be discharged so they could return home and tend to their families. Their plea fell on deaf ears and their deployment in Dakota was extended.

An editorial in the local press conveyed the mood among troops as "an ungovernable curiosity to visit the theater of this vast volcanic eruption (the Civil War) to see even the worst, to know whether their families have escaped the shock of whether their Penates are but blackened cinders on a desolate heart."<sup>51</sup>

Garrison life magnified its discomforts. A heavy thunderstorm saturated earthen barracks' roofs dripping mud on the inhabitants below. "Our food has been stolen, our coats and boots eaten, and our sleep disturbed," moaned a column in the *Scout*.<sup>52</sup> The villain was an ever increasing rat population which was eradicated post haste. On the other hand, troopers were powerless to repel a grasshopper invasion which consumed the post garden in five minutes.

Confirmation that their vexation was winding down arrived at Fort Rice 26 August 1865. A relief column was enroute from St Louis. The men of this forgotten fort became as happy as "the ancient Jews when they crossed into the Promised Land" on receipt of the dispatch.<sup>53</sup>

Morale swung from depression to anticipation and reflection. Their feelings were captured poetically in the "Song of the First United States Infantry:

We are going home, o'er Missouri foam,  
Where the ruddy sunlight flashes,  
To the sunny south, from the land of drouth  
For Rebellion burned to ashes.  
Not with grief, but with joy that hath no alloy  
No longer as traitor we're branded  
We have wiped all disgrace from our name and race  
We are soldiers with honor disbanded.<sup>54</sup>

The author branded them, "the first fruits of a reunited people...a link between the North and the South. Let us prove it is a golden line and not baser metal," he implored.<sup>55</sup>

A contemporary found them to be "...a much better class of men than I supposed. They have been schooled in the most thorough discipline of both armies, and are brave and even reckless. I have met with no troops whose deportment towards officers as well as each other was more gentlemanly, none who as much neatness in their personal appearance, none who discharged their duties with greater cheerfulness and alacrity," than the transplanted Confederates.<sup>56</sup>

The Galvanized Yankees took their long awaited departure of their prairie Devil's Island by steamboat 11 October. The ease of their exiting was in marked contrast to their entrance of a year earlier. They descended the Missouri River to Fort Leavenworth where the former Confederate prisoners of war terminated their commitment to the United States Army 27 November 1865.

The First United States Volunteer Infantry performed credible, albeit brief, service garrisoning the Great Plains. This deployment, in the words of the *Sioux City Registrar*, doomed the unit ...“to the bootless fate of seeking glory in border warfare, rather than upon the great national battlefields of the Civil War.”<sup>57</sup> The novel regiment’s obscurity notwithstanding, it fulfilled the need for which it was created.

Antagonism from a second foe necessitated the recycling of Rebel prisoners into Union infantrymen. Their mission was to hold a Dakota beachhead against the Sioux Nation. An assessment of the First United States Volunteer Infantry can be constructed from the adjectives contemporaries used to describe them. A composite of these gleanings would read: “excellent soldiers” whose “unadulterated patriotism” made them “brave and even reckless.” Led first by a political appointee, and later a veteran Dakota campaigner, these Galvanized Yankees exhibited the fortitude necessary for their tour of duty. Danger on the Plains transcended hostile Indians. Commendations are not given out for privation of battling disease. If they were, the 1<sup>st</sup> USVI would have been among the most decorated units in the Union Army. However, material rewards were few for the southerners who spent 13 months defending Fort Rice against the Sioux. That they were veterans of both Civil War armies is largely responsible. The South turned its back on these men and Yankees denied them membership in the Grand Army of the Republic. Their unique background, however, should not be allowed to obliterate the fact they served with honor, if not distinction, on the Dakota frontier.

#### FOOTNOTES: SONS OF DIXIE DEFEND DAKOTA

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6. Shannon, Fred A, The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1865, Peter Smith Press, (Gloucester, MA: 1965), II, 170.
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8. Butts, Michelle Tucker, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, University Press of Colorado, (Boulder, Colorado: 2003), 22-23. Point Lookout, established after the battle of Gettysburg, was the largest Union POW camp and one of the most secure. Descendents of Point Lookout POW Organization. Guards regularly shot at prisoners while they slept or cried out in pain. "Point Lookout Civil War Prison," [http://www.censusdiggers.com/prison\\_ptlookout.html](http://www.censusdiggers.com/prison_ptlookout.html)
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10. John Pope to Brig General Alfred Sully, 16 August 1864, OR. Vol 41 Pt 2, 736.
11. Brown, Galvanized Yankees, 73-74; Butts, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, 67-68.
12. Brown, Galvanized Yankees, 72; Butts, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, 243-244. See also Cuskey, Perry, "Confederate Blue in the American West: The Galvanized Yankees: Part II. <http://www.Suite101.com/article.cfm/civil-war/98999>.
13. Brown, Galvanized Yankees, 79. Dimon and several junior officers who brought their own horses with them rode at the column head. [www.ftambercrobie.org/1st%20US%volunteer.htm](http://www.ftambercrobie.org/1st%20US%volunteer.htm).
14. Athearn, Forts of the Upper Missouri, 159.
15. Frontier Scout, 10 August, 1865, 4.

16. Dimon Charles, Army Life Among the Hostile Indians in Dacotah Territory, 1864-1865, unpublished diary in possession of the Coe Collection, Western Americana Collections, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 5. Hereafter cited as Dimon Diary. Dimon was inexperienced in dealing with Native Americans. Museum News, 2.
17. GSA Microcopy 594, Roll 219, Company E Muster Roll, September—October 1864. Fort Rice was established by Executive Orders of September 2 1864 and January 22 1867. [http://www.history.ndgov/historical sites/ricel/index.html](http://www.history.ndgov/historical/sites/ricel/index.html).
18. Alfred Sully to John Pope, 10 June 1865, OR, Volume 48, Pt 2 851. Sully considered Fort Rice the most important base in Indian country. Butts, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, 117.
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22. Editorial, "Garrison Life," Frontier Scout, 29 June 1865, 2.
23. Frontier Scout, 14 September 1865, 1.
24. Brown, Galvanized Yankees, 83.
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26. Dimon Diary, 7.
27. Brown, Galvanized Yankees, 85.
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29. Dimon to "Lis", 22 September 1864, Dimon Diary.
30. Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780-1917, Returns for Fort Rice, April 1865. Hereafter cited as Returns.
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33. Dimon Diary, 7-8.
34. Frontier Scout, 17 August 1865, 4.
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36. IBID, 10 August 1865, 3.
37. Mattison, Ray H, "Fort Rice—North Dakota's First Missouri river Military Post," North Dakota History, Volume 20, 1953, 93.

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41. Utley, Robert M, Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army Among the Indians, 1848-1865, McMillan Company, (New York: 1967), 334.
42. Letter to the Editor, Frontier Scout, 10 August, 1865, 2.
43. Frontier Scout, 3 August, 1865, 3.
44. IBID.
45. IBID., 4. In this July 30 incident, the Sioux was "knocked to pieces" by the solid shot cannonball.
46. Frontier Scout, 3 August, 1865, 3.
47. Returns, Fort Rice, July, 1865.
48. Frontier Scout, 3 August, 1865, 3.
49. IBID., 12 October, 1865, 3.
50. Butts, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, 175.
51. Editorial "Home", Frontier Scout, 31 August, 1865, 3. Between September 6—20, 33 men deserted Fort Rice taking \$5000 worth of US government property with them. Butts, Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri, 212.
52. Frontier Scout, 14 September, 1865, 4.
53. IBID., 12 October 1865, 2.
54. IBID.
55. Editorial, "A Parting Word", Frontier Scout, 12 October 1865, 2.
56. Frontier Scout, 17 August 1865, 3.
57. IBID. The article was signed S.P.Y.

## Preface

I have decided to start my presentation with this ancient tale of the Coteau lake region in which Roslyn was situation and could be titled, "The Mystique of Pre-Roslyn."

In the South Dakota County - Volume II (pp.162, 163, 164) by Effie Florence Putney C.R. 1927, taken from the "Reporter and Farmer" May 5, 1926, the name 'Enemy Swim' suggests the legendary history of that lake. The story, told and retold for many generations around Dakota campfires has been changed sometimes in the telling, so there are a number of different legends.

Chief Checkpa, who had verified the legend by talking with older Indians, believed that the story had been handed down from father to son for four hundred years. Following is the Indian legend as he told it: During the early years of their westward journey, a band of Sisseton Dakota were encamped on the north shore of the lake near the bay now called Shepherd's Bay. A party of Chippewas were encamped "a days journey north". A scouting party of eight rode from the Chippewa camp to the high point of land north of the lake. From that point they could see only three tepees of Sissetons. The others were hidden in the ravine. Among the scouting party was an Indian who had lost his wife. It was the custom in those days that an Indian who lost his wife could not marry again unless he brought an enemy scalp into camp. The widowed brave was out looking for an enemy scalp so that he might take another bride. The three tepees of Sisseton Dakota looked like a good opportunity to secure the coveted scalp. The scouting party of Chippewas dismounted and advanced along the lake shore, but by the time they discovered that the whole ravine was filled with Sisseton tepees, the Sissetons had seen them and cut off the retreat to their homes. No hope of escape was left to the Chippewas except by the lake, so the eight braves plunged into the lake and swam to the island which lies toward the south. The Sissetons surrounded the island and killed seven Chippewas as they attempted to swim away. The eighth was captured alive and adopted by the Sissetons with whom he stayed the rest of his life. So the Sioux called the lake Enemy Swim and the settlers adopted the name, preferring it to Lake Parker,

the name given by the government surveyors in 1869. On the shore of Enemy Swim an Indian church now marks the spot where the Sisseton Dakota first met the white soldiers and made a peace pact.

My knowledge and experience of the northeastern South Dakota community of Roslyn spans a period of twenty years – 1941-1961. This period may represent the apex of the development of the community. In 1939 it had a population of 250, 85% of which were Norwegian-Americans.

### **The Americanization of Roslyn**

The migrations from Norway that began in earnest from 1850 on resulted in many Norwegian communities throughout the United States being formed. Norwegian boys who left Norway had "Amerika Feber" and could not tolerate the two or three year delay required for compulsory military service at age 18. From immigration embarking points in New York, Quebec City and Chicago many people left for the Midwest where ample land-possession opportunities were available. Taking advantage of the Homestead Act and unallotted railroad land, they pressed westward with these opportunities in mind. Most of the first settlers followed the Wadsworth trail west from the Mississippi River through Sauke Centre and Morris to Browns Valley, Minnesota. The area around Browns Valley was utilized because it was an easier transit route between Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake. Many moved from western Minnesotan communities to Dakota Territory by ox train. Family possessions were loaded in the wagons and the family members walked behind controlling the cattle, hogs, etc. After occupying some land, which was usually determined by a previous trip of the men, they walked to Watertown and filed on the land. Gradually, farms established and small centers of commerce were usually created near main trail intersections. The trading posts or stores consisted of a general store where cream was traded. Later country creameries collected cream which was processed and shipped out by wagon and later by railroad. Fort Wadsworth had been established in 1864 with the name changed to Fort Sisseton in 1876 because of a conflict with a fort by that name in New York. The pioneers also sometimes traded with the fort.

Taken from pages 110-111 of the "Roslyn Diamond Jubilee 1914-1989," in 1896 the promotion of Norwegian language and culture was a major project in our home and community. In summer, whenever a Norwegian language teacher was available, we would have six weeks of Norwegian school. We studied reading,

writing, dictation and Norway's history and cultures. Classes were usually held in the public school building which was otherwise unoccupied. If there were any concern about the ethics of this, such as now exists for use of Spanish in classrooms, we never heard of it. The church services were conducted in the Norwegian language. We used to say that, "there were no foreigners within 20 miles – they were all Norwegians."

The roads in those days were usually two well worn tracks with grass growing between. In 1912 Rev. Hammer purchased an automobile. It was the first car in the area and to pass a horse-drawn vehicle on the road was quite an experience. When the horses began to rear at our approach the driver would jump out and hold them by the bridle until we got by! But it wasn't long until the Model T's filled the church parking space, formerly occupied by horses with buggies or wagons. Later when RFD mail delivery began, farmers occasionally had to break open deep snow drifts so the mailman could make his rounds. In especially bad storms it sometimes required two days for mail delivery.

In the early years farmers paid their township taxes by working with their horses on road constructions, especially to build grades across nearby sloughs.

This nascent commercial activity was consolidated in Roslyn after 1914 when the Soo Railroad arrived from Veblen, South Dakota. The railroad engineers liked to construct on high ground because of the many sloughs in the region. This proved very adequate for a townsite. The Scenic Route Townsite Company purchased the townsite from Severin Farmen. On August 17, 1914 the land was surveyed and plotted into lots, blocks, streets and alleys. On August 20, 1914 lots were auctioned off. Before the end of the year, many buildings were moved in and a number of new ones were erected. A meeting was held to arrange for a town well. In October of 1914, drilling began on this well. The train depot was erected in the fall of 1914.

After the first well went dry in 1915, a new well was drilled and a cistern was added for storage, and a windmill for pumping. Roslyn's first light plant was installed in the town hall in November, 1916. Electricity was supplied from 6 p.m. until midnight daily and also on Monday forenoons. Continuous daily service became available on November 12, 1925 from Otter Tail Power Company of Fergus Falls, Minnesota. The buildings that were moved into the new town were sometimes fairly large. They were pulled inch by inch over fields, through fences and crossed other farmer's property. The moving was done with chains and pulleys and several teams of draft horses. It is

interesting that people lived in the building when it was being moved. The house would lean during the moving process which gave the feeling of sailors walking on a ship deck during rough seas. A person could watch the progress of other buildings being moved at the same time their building was moved. Many possible detours could occur if a farmer refused to let the building go through his land. A building could also get stuck in a slough leaving the owners with the possibility of cutting the building in two, move each half separately and join them back together in Roslyn. This happened to the Baukol Store. Imagine eating lunch with the building swaying hither and yawn.

Roslyn is an interesting study because it incorporates early pioneering activities and conditions such as shallow well-drilling, mud streets and temporary board sidewalks. Most of this activity occurred in 1914 and 1915, relatively late to have pioneer-like starting conditions. Because of the period, conditions improved quickly (from "Changes That Years Brought" History of Day County, 1981 P. 773). As Ruth Baukol Ogren, my aunt, and daughter of pioneer merchant Henry J. Baukol, recalls the Norwegian-Americans retained many dietary choices from the past. Barrels of herring, black cod, dried codfish and lutefisk were common items. Cheeses such as pult-ost, gjet-ost and primost were popular items. Tobacco products such as Plug, Brown's Mule, Horse Shoe and J.T. had to be cut when sold. Snuff was an important item which needed to be kept fresh, if possible. More than a few rolls of snuff were ordered by telephone and delivered by rural mail carriers. Longhorn cheese was kept in a case and cut in wedges by a cutter made to fit the large, round piece of cheese. Whole bean Peaberry coffee that was often ground in the store filled the building with a wonderful aroma on a busy Saturday afternoon. Beans, sugar, cranberries, macaroni, oatmeal, rice, tapioca, pearl barley, raisins, prunes, dried apples, sago, candy and pickles were items that had to be packaged before being sold. Bulk foods made much work for the clerks. As a child I was intrigued watching these products being purchased and used. I marveled at the "bachelor" houses which were extremely small evidently designed for one person's habitation. A number of single persons lived in Roslyn of both sexes; the females usually living with other family members. The first board of education met on November 9, 1915. At that time, Roslyn children were transported to District #194 southwest of town, where Olga Holman was the teacher. Four adjoining rural districts were consolidated. They were Raritan, Grenville, Nutley and Liberty. In 1916, a four-room brick building was erected. In the fall of 1916, Roslyn Consolidated School began its first term. The first teachers were John Olsen, Hilda Baukol, Anna Amundson and Manda Hustad. The first bus drivers were Hans Larsen, Carl Hanse, C.J. Wells

and Alfred Baukol. The buses were high with a chimney coming out through the side or top, drawn by horses. They also used wagons with canvas covered tops. These were used during the winter with runners so they could be driven through snow. In 1922 a four room addition to the school was added on the north to the original four rooms. At that time a four year high school began. From 1922 to 1942 the school mascot was the pheasant with the school colors being black and orange. From 1942-2009 the colors were red and white and the mascot was a Viking.

The red and white colors symbolize the complete Americanization of Roslyn.

To provide you with a feel for daily Roslyn life in the thirties and forties, I have included the following poem by Edwin Ronshaugen taken from page four of Webster's newspaper the "Reporter and Farmer" dated Wednesday, June 3, 1964.

### **Mail Carrier Task Reviewed in Rhyme**

#### **A Mail Carriers Poem**

(Written in 1937 by Edwin Ronshaugen,  
Mail Carrier on Roslyn Route One 1918-1950.

Mr. Ronshaugen died in March 1950.)

This early morning when I arose  
I washed my fingers and my nose  
My better half prepared the fare  
Which we in peace sat down to share  
The good old clock says half past eight  
Must hurry now or I'll be late  
To office I proceed with haste  
Go right to work, no time to waste  
There is Pearl & Hilda & Martin tall  
Prepared to answer every call  
We sort our mail with haste and skill  
Go out on the road each box to fill  
The weather for thirty years I've fought  
And many changes have been wrought  
Each lad and lassie who then said "I do"  
Now proudly boast a grandson or two  
As I get out to dear old Fron

Many a one lies neath the stone  
The other Fron has now burned down  
And the bell fell with a clanging sound  
But behold they made all things new  
Which will be the fate of me and you  
Time, each painful wound will heal  
So we its stinging pain won't feel  
But memory lingers with us all  
Until we get the final call  
Now I must go along the road  
With this interesting parcel load  
At last I arrive at Ole Strand  
Who a year ago lost his hand  
The others too all have their share  
Of joy and sorrow, grief and care  
At last a tribute I must pay  
To the good old trusty Model A  
Through rain and hail, sleet and snow  
It made it all; sometimes in low.

Two celebrities ate at the Waldowski Hotel and Café while pheasant hunting in 1940. They were Carole Lombard and Clark Gable. The avenue naming in Roslyn also showed an early trend to be "American." American literary figures from the nineteenth century such as Whittier, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Field and Lowell were named avenues. The avenues Carlton, Bjornson, and Ibsen retained the Norwegian heritage. These avenues were probably designated in the twenties when Americanization was at a fever pitch. I have found that other small Norwegian communities in South Dakota such as Beresford use inverse thorough-fare arrangements like Roslyn. Roslyn arranged streets north and south and avenues east and west. Beresford has all thorough-fares listed as streets both north and south. Maybe thorough-fare naming by Norwegian-Americans was a challenge! *Or*, possibly an interesting sense of humor was involved! I believe this following [POW Experience](#) by Corporal Sherman "Pete" Johnson (in his own words) taken from p. 52 of the Diamond Jubilee Book 1914-1989 is an example of American patriotism at its best:

## POW Experience

Corporal Sherman "Pete" Johnson has trouble talking about WWII. He says he'll never tell the whole story. Most of his friends died by his side during 42 months in prison camps. The Japanese marched thousands of captured soldiers away from the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines. Pete was one of those soldiers; a 19-year-old kid who had been in the Army only three months.

We had nothing to eat, nothing to drink. It was hot, and the only chance we had to drink was to run to grab a mouthful of water at roadside artesian wells. Those who tried it got stabbed or shot. The only food the soldiers got during the hot trek was an occasional egg thrown to them by the Filipinos. Pete remembers some Filipinos gave their lives to throw eggs to the soldiers.

Late in the march, the soldiers began to drop, dying from exhaustion and malnutrition.

Pete survived, and was returned to Bataan as a prisoner to clean up wreckage from the Japanese take-over. After a year there, he helped build an airfield using nothing but wheelbarrows and crude tools.

He was moved to another prison camp for a few months, and then shipped to Japan, where he spent the rest of the war.

The trip to Japan is something Pete will never forget. All the prisoners were crowded into a large hold on the ship, and each got a small amount of water to last him three days. They took turns sleeping because most didn't have room to lay down. When a soldier died, the body was thrown overboard.

At the prison camp in Japan, Pete worked about 10 hours a day mining coal 1,800 feet below the ground with only a small bowl of rice to eat each day.

The biggest fear for Pete was the constant threat of being shot. If one fellow tried to escape, they would shoot 10. They would just line us up, and shoot us.

Pete remembers the day the war ended. The Japanese commander called the prisoners together, and pronounced them "the conquerors". At that time Pete weighed 86 pounds.

At first Pete was bitter about his imprisonment. After his release, he stopped at Nagasaki, where an atomic bomb had been dropped, and he didn't feel remorse for the dead being hauled from the bomb site.

But Pete does remember seeing a little youngster, in his mother's arms. He was affected by the bomb, with his body deformed, just lying there, crying and dying. "This poor kid got to me," says Pete.

Of the original 155 who enlisted with Pete, only 25 lived through the ordeal of imprisonment and forced labor.

Pete was awarded the Asiatic-Pacific ribbon with one star; the Philippine Defense ribbon with one star; the American Defense ribbon with one star; the Presidential Citation with two clusters, and the Good Conduct Medal with clasp.

Pete's feelings today? "I'm really thankful that I'm alive."

Also serving with distinction in World War II were my aunt, Adeline Baukol Hines and my uncle Harmon Baukol. Adeline was a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps. Her tours of duty included North Africa and Italy. Harmon enlisted in the Navy and served in the Pacific theatre.

Another strong indication of the patriotism of Norwegian-Americans was demonstrated by my grandfather – Henry J. Baukol. During the cold war in the fifties he and other members of the Roslyn community manned an observation booth on the top of the town hall at regular designated intervals. My brother fondly remembers our grandfather's "Russian style" flap-down hat as slightly comical to a young person. The reason for the observation was to watch for Russian aircraft approaching from the north. It was thought, at the time, that Roslyn was on the direct route from Russia with the destination being "Offutt Air Base" at Omaha, Nebraska. It must have been assumed that the Russians would fly low to avoid radar detection. This evidently was before aircraft missiles gained ascendancy.

In summing up this paper on the "Americanization of Roslyn", I will close with this paragraph taken from the "A History of the Baukol Family – 1995" which was written about my great uncle – Rudolph Baukol.

Rudolph Baukol enlisted in the Army on May 1, 1917. He was sent to Camp Cody, New Mexico in September, 1917. He was married there to Rose Longen of Webster on January 5, 1918. Rudolph left for France in June, 1918, and went into action on the Vesle front in August. He was killed four days later, on August 14, 1918. Rudolph is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Minneapolis.

The Roslyn Legion Post is named in his honor – “Rudolph Baukol Post #253, Roslyn, South Dakota.”

Rudolph was one the first from Day County to die in WWI. Hopefully, a future tale of the uncompromising love and devotion of his young widow will be written in the future.

This paper would have been impossible without the information contained in The History of Roslyn, South Dakota, 1914-1939, and especially the book Roslyn, South Dakota Diamond Jubilee 1914-1989.

## The Grand Army of South Dakota- The Eternal Pockets

Wayne Blake

The focus of this conference is the effect that the American Civil War had upon the Great Plains, particularly upon South Dakota. Wars are fought by individuals; thus this paper will single out several individuals who share at least three things in common: 1) They fought in the Civil War, 2) They migrated to South Dakota and are buried here in Sioux Falls, and 3) they are members of the Grand Army of the Republic. The information in this paper is part of our research for an upcoming book that will examine Civil War Veterans living in South Dakota. We became interested in this topic due to our backgrounds. Dr. Blake is a 20 year army veteran with an interest in military history and veteran's issues and Dr. Woodard is interesting in military and South Dakota history. We feel that these individuals deserve our time and attention for their selfless service that helped preserve our nation in a dark time of rebellion. The Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Sioux Falls is a peaceful place, far removed from the hellish din of roaring cannons and musketry, screaming officers and dying men. It is here we find 181 members of the American Civil War Armies at rest. This paper will single out several of these men for closer analysis and investigation to illustrate the diversity of wartime service and experience represented in this tiny eternal pocket of American History.

We also chose to examine the veterans buried at Mount Pleasant because they are members to the Grand Army of the Republic. The GAR, as it is better known, was founded in Decatur Illinois of April 6<sup>th</sup> 1868. Its chief objects were to 'strengthen the fraternal spirit among the veterans of the Union armies in the Civil War, to perpetuate the memory of those who have died and to assist needy members and their widows and orphans.' When founded, 'any soldier or sailor of the Union Army who served between April 12 1861 and April 9 1865 and was honorably discharged, together with all members of state regiments who were subject to Federal officers' were admitted to membership. The society was organized into state and territorial departments, which in turn were supported by local societies of which there were in 1909 and 7000. In 1890 the membership for the GAR stood at 409,487 but by 1905 it was down to 232,055. The GAR used to hold annual meetings known as "encampments" named after the military camps of the veteran's memories. The GAR played an important role in a number of political elections at the end of

the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. They lobbied hard for pensions for Civil War veterans and were generally regarded as a solid bloc of Republicans voter for most national and local elections. Most GOP presidents catered to them-President Theodore Roosevelt raised the pension amounts for Civil War veterans substantially during his presidency and was criticized for rewarding a loyal GOP voting bloc.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862 was initially tied to a GOP strategy to try and ensure that new western states would be inhabited by good loyal GOP voters<sup>3</sup> and interestingly many of the immigrants who went to new western states were Union Civil War vets such as the men this paper examines. The strategy worked. In 1870 Dakota Territory had only about 14,000 residents but by 1900 the numbers grew to over 500,000.<sup>4</sup> Most political observers would probably also conclude that most of the states formed out of the Homestead Act such as North and South Dakota, Wyoming and Nebraska became so called "Red States", thus fulfilling the very long term plans of the GOP in the 1860s. The GAR was also very active in South Dakota. It was succeeded by the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). (Wikipedia). After the Civil War many organizations were formed for veterans to network and maintain connections with each other. For the State of South Dakota in was the Grand Army of the Republic. These posts of The Grand Army of the Republic were founded on the principles of "Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty". The Headquarters was located in Decatur Illinois and the birthday was on April 6, 1866. The Founder of the Grand Army of The Republic was Benjamin F. Stephenson. Let us start with the Salem Post No. 26 named for General John Sedgwick. This post was chartered on September 15. 1883, by Thomas S. free with 14<sup>th</sup> members. Its largest number was 36 members in 1892. The charter was surrendered in 1910 and no post records can be found after that date. (SD Historical Collections Vol.XVI par I 1932, p. 382) From Salem, South Dakota we turn to Scotland and the Heintzleman Post No. 10 this post was mustered in on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1884. The Post did not report the last year of its existence in 1887, at which time seven members were reported. (ibid. page 383) With two posts already examined, let us turn our attention to Sioux Falls, South Dakota which featured two GAR posts. The first post is the Joe Hooker Post, No. 10. This post was chartered on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1882 by the Department of Iowa with thirty-one members. (Ibid. p. 383) A longer look at

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<sup>1</sup> Info on GAR found by Dr. Woodard in, *The New Practical Reference Library* Vol. II, (Roach, Fowler and Swank, Chicago, 1909) under entry 'Grand Army of the Republic'.

<sup>2</sup> Info on this located in Cooper, *Warrior and the Priest*.

<sup>3</sup> See ed. Kennedy/Cohen, *American Pageant* Vol. I to 1877, (Houghton Mifflin, New York, 2006) p. 488.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Edward Barnard, *The Story of the Great American West*, (Readers Digest Press, New York, 1977) p.266.

this Post will be needed to see if any of our Mount Pleasant troopers were in Pos No. 10. A quick look has Andrew J. Wampler, and Henry W. Smith of the 77<sup>th</sup> Illinois infantry Company H as members. The second GAR post was the Colonel Campbell Post, No. 164. This was the last post organized in the State of South Dakota it was chartered in 1909 with 24 members. Its charter was surrendered June 30<sup>th</sup> 1915, with three members present.

The final Post was No. 161 the General John Gibbon Post in Sisseton, South Dakota. This Post had eleven charter members of which Andrew J. Wampler was a charter member. Andrew was a member of the 94<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry, Company D. (Adjutant General Report, Springfield, Ill, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1867.) Andrew was born in Indiana in 1847. He became a Corporal in company D and served from August 20<sup>th</sup> 1862 to August 20<sup>th</sup> 1865. We have no record of when Andrew moved from Sisseton, South Dakota to Sioux Falls and joined Post No 10. The last recorded meeting of this post was April 29<sup>th</sup> 1911, at which time three comrades were admitted as members. The dues on ten members were, however paid until January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1913 (Ibid, 401) Before we examine other members of the GAR buried at Mt. Pleasant, it may be useful to mention several points related to enlistment and physical characteristics of Civil War soldiers served usually for a period of 3 years or until relieved by military orders. Also, Civil War soldiers often elected their own officers-this makes sense when you realize that many times units were made up of people from the same towns or villages. In contrast, the term of service for WWI and II was for the duration. For Vietnam, it was an enlistment of three years and two years if drafted. Physically, Civil War vets were smaller than 20<sup>th</sup> century vets. They averaged 5' 7" to 5' 10" and weighed 165-195 lbs. Current vets are taller and heavier (5' 8" to 6' 2" and 180-200 lbs. are common). With that being said, we will return to more GAR vets from Mt. Pleasant.

We selected several GAR veterans for our preliminary research into this topic but perhaps the most interesting member of this group we have discovered thus far hails from the great state of Maine, Private George W. Ward. We learned from the Maine State Archives that Mr. Ward was a resident of Windham Maine and enlisted in

Augusta Maine on August 11 1862. The archives list his occupation as a farrier, meaning he shoed and serviced horses. This is appropriate since his unit was Co.D of the Maine 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Ward participated in a number of famous Civil War battles and was also involved in an ambush with Confederate forces and was subsequently captured. Ward describes this incident himself, "The night had shut in dark and cloudy. Col. Dahlgren, with a small force of 25 or 30 men was pushing rapidly on hoping to escape the rebel lines by way of the James River. The main object of the raid had failed and the gallant troopers of Kilpatrick's command, scattered throughout the country, were making their escape best they could. Col. Dahlgren was riding in the second set of fours from the front and I was one of the same set...Through the darkness Col. Dahlgren was a dismounted man standing in the road close behind him and at once cried out 'to what unit do you belong!'. The man, with the unmistakable accent of a Virginian, replied 'The tenth of New York'. 'You are a liar!' shouted Dahlgren at the same moment firing his revolver at the man's head. Then from the surrounding thickets which lined the road, a hundred rifles flashed a reply. Col. Dahlgren fell and the survivors of the little squad of Union soldiers, among whom were five of my company comrades and myself, cut their way through the Confederate line which surrounded them and endeavored to escape."<sup>6</sup>

Ward goes on to describe his capture at the hands of his Confederate pursuers and the Confederate looting of their weapons, horses and even his new pair of cavalry boots which he had just received from his home in Biddeford Maine. Ward notes that a Confederate surgeon of the 9<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry "appropriated" the boots and left Ward with a worn out pair of red dilapidated shoes.<sup>7</sup> Looting shoes was a fairly common Confederate practice and period accounts of the Battle of Gettysburg discuss the Confederate soldiers taking the time to steal shoes from stores in the town.

Ward was subsequently imprisoned. He was a prisoner at Richmond for 60 days and suffered from measles and mumps which almost killed him. He was later a prisoner at the Pemberton Building near Libby Prison. He notes that when he was captured he weighted 180 lbs. but after 60 days of confinement at which time he was released

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<sup>5</sup> George Ward's enlistment card obtained by Dr. Blake from the Maine State Archives, Augusta Maine.

<sup>6</sup> Maine State Archives, The First Maine Cavalry, p.239-240

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

through a prisoner exchanged, he had dwindled to 100 lbs., a net loss of 80 lbs. or almost ½ his total body weight. Mr. Ward survived this trauma and later relocated to South Dakota and is buried at the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

More detailed information about another New Englander buried at Mt. Pleasant was located from the state of Vermont. Eben C. Lord was a resident of the state of Vermont and served in Co. L of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry. He entered service on September 29 1862 and was released on June 21 1865. We know that Mr. Lord was a factory worker living with his parents when he entered the service. Mr. Lords after war life is well documented. He is first located in New York and his occupation is listed as cooper. Later, like thousands of his fellow Civil War vets, Mr. Lord headed west. Presumably, he took advantage of the provisions of the Homestead Act of 1862 to acquire farmland, although we do not yet have this information. He married and became a farmer in Dexter, Mower Co. Minnesota. By 1900 the Lords were relocated in Sioux Falls, Minnehaha County. Mr. Lord is listed as a blacksmith. His family included his wife, Cerinda, one son who was a barber, and three grandsons. In 1910, Mr. Lord is listed as living with his daughter, Emma (Lord) Stevenson and her husband in Sioux Falls. Mr. Lord died on July 7, 1917 and is buried at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery.<sup>8</sup>

Other internees at Mount Pleasant share equally valorous records of service with the Union armies. Private Warren Thayer served in the 15<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry, Co.M for approximately two years and participated in a variety of bloody encounters including the Shenandoah campaign and later the main Union Army of the Potomac. At the end of the war, the unit was consolidated into the 2<sup>nd</sup> New York Provisional Cavalry. Mr. Thayer was mustered out with his company on August 9<sup>th</sup> 1865. We later find Mr. Thayer located in Lee County Iowa in an 1885 of Civil War veterans in Iowa<sup>9</sup>. We are not yet sure as of yet when he arrived in Sioux Falls.

Another New York veteran buried at Mount Pleasant is George R. Price. Mr. Price served in the 185<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry, Co. F. he entered service on September 7<sup>th</sup> 1864 and left service on May 30 1865. The 185<sup>th</sup> was involved in most of the major battles and campaigns in the Eastern theater of operations including Petersburg, Burgess Farm, the Hicksford Raid, Hatcher's Run, Watkin's Farm and the famed Appomattox campaign in 1865.

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<sup>8</sup> Info on Mr. Lord obtained by Dr. Blake from Vermont State Library Reference Librarian, email dated Jun 9 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Info on Mr. Thayer obtained by Dr. Woodard from state of New York archives website and the following website <http://74.6239.185/search/srptcache?ei=UTF-8&p=w.g.+thayer+co.+m+2nd+new+york+c>

Also, from New York, we find private Abel F. Force. Mr. Force served in Battery D of the 1<sup>st</sup> New York Light Artillery. He was mustered into service on September 6 1861 for a three year hitch and mustered out on September 6 1864. Battery D was also in the thick of the fighting in the Eastern theater of war. The Battery first was stationed near Washington DC to protect the capital but was later transferred to the command of General Hooker in 1862 and still later it was transferred to the artillery reserved of the Army of the Potomac.<sup>10</sup>

We will continue our research because each of these veterans is special and deserving remembrance and by so doing these eternal pockets of American History will continue to live on. Thank you.

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<sup>10</sup> Information on Mr. Force obtained by Dr. Woodard from New York archives website

## A Civil War Love Story

Rachel Carsrud

Dakota Conference 2011

The Elizabeth (Libbie) Hall Collection is housed in the archives at the Center for Western Studies. I had the privilege of working with this collection in the summer of 2010 while I was a summer intern. The collection contains ninety-five pieces of correspondence between the years of 1849 and 1883. There are 21 letters from Libbie's father, Thomas W. Hall to her, 5 letters from Captain William N. Beer to Libbie while he was in the Civil War. Then there is a large selection of correspondence from her husband-to-be, Farlin Quigley Ball. The first letters he appears in are his letters to Thomas Hall asking permission to marry his daughter, which include a reply from Thomas. The 41 courtship letters start Christmas of 1867. The collection ends with letters to Bertie, one of Libbie and Farlin's children, from Farlin and Thomas. It is the courtship letters between Libbie and Farlin that I will focus on.

Elizabeth "Libbie" Hall was born December 2, 1842 to her parents, Thomas and Catherine. She grew up in Janesville, Wisconsin. She was one of the oldest of nine children in her family. In 1859 she attended Wesleyan Female College, which is now a part of Ohio Wesleyan University. It was very rare for women to attend college in the 1850's. While at Wesleyan College she completed the Classical Course (Welter & Huseboe, 1986).

Farlin Quigley Ball was born in Shelbyville, Ohio on March 28, 1838, to his parents James and Keturah. In 1849 his family moved to Monroe, Wisconsin and settled there. Then in 1861 he graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. A year later he enlisted in the 31<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry (Andreas, 1886). Historian Alfred T. Andreas (1886) wrote about his involvement in the civil war; it writes, he "was in active service on the Mississippi until after the battle of Chickamauga. In September, 1862, he was promoted to a first lieutenant, and in the following year received a captain's commission while

at Nashville, Tennessee. His command was a part of Sherman's army in its famous 'march to the sea,' during which he was advanced to the rank of major" (para. 1).

After the war Ball returned to Madison, Wisconsin and in 1865 he was admitted to the Wisconsin Bar. Then in 1866 he was elected as the State's Attorney of Dane County and was in that position for two terms. He also held the position of attorney for the town of Cicero for three years. In 1869 he made the move to Chicago after his marriage to Elizabeth, and was admitted into the Illinois Bar (Weber, 1917).

Andreas (1886) wrote "his standing in the Chicago Bar is one of the best, and he ranks among the foremost lawyers of Chicago" (para. 1). From 1871 to 1875 he was an associate with George A. Shufeldt and then he went and worked with Monroe & Bisbee for a period of time. Weber (1917) writes that in 1895 he was elected Judge Superior Court of Cook County, Illinois and he also served on the Appellate Court. He served both courts for sixteen years until he retired in 1911. At the time of his retirement he had earned the title of "the ideal jurist" by his colleagues of Cook County. At an honorary banquet they said, "He has always been correct in his judgment of the law, always patient and of the judicial temperament. His record as a man, a soldier, a lawyer, and a judge is without a blemish" (Weber, 1917 para. 2).

Weber (1911) also writes that he was the president of the Chicago Law Institute and the Chicago Bar Association. He was also a member of the Illinois State Bar Association, the Illinois State Historical Society, the Hamilton, Lincoln and Oak Park Clubs and was a Knight Templar which shows his commitment to law and his community. He also was the author of *The Law of National Banks*, 1881 (Marquis, 1911).

Elizabeth Hall and Farlin Ball were married on June 23, 1868. Elizabeth was at the time living in Chicago which is why Ball moved to Chicago in 1869 (Marquis, 1911). Together they had three children. Robin was born in 1870 but died less than a year later. In 1872 Farlin, Jr. was born and following 1877 was his brother Sydney.

The first of the letters from Ball are to Libbie's father, Thomas. It is written in December of 1867 and he is asking her father if he would give them permission to marry. He considers himself a poor man

and does not see himself worthy of marrying her. Ball writes, "You are aware that if she comes to me she will leave her home to be the wife of a poor man – but if you will let me have her I will try to so take care of her that she may never regret that she married me" (Ball Letter 1, 1867 para 2). Thomas Hall writes in reply a letter dated December 27<sup>th</sup> 1867 informing Farlin of his decision. He writes, "...I Shall not moralize here but when I See you we will talk & if you & Libbie are Sure you are not mistaken but understand eachother rightly – it will be all right with Mrs H & myself" (Hall Letter 1, 1867 para 1)

The first letter from Farlin to Libbie in the collection is dated Christmas 1867, which is a day after the letter to Libbie's father asking for permission to marry her. Farlin writes, "The only check to my pleasant imaginings was the fact I am taking you from such a home as you have to one of limited comforts. When I look back over my life and see how little I have accomplished I am ashamed" (Ball Letter 2, 1867 para 1). This once again shows that Farlin has such high goals for himself and is not satisfied with what he has accomplished thus far, though by this time in his life he has graduated from University of Wisconsin at Madison, fought years in the civil war, was admitted to the Wisconsin Bar, was elected as the State's Attorney of Dane County and held the position of attorney for the town of Cicero. I would personally consider all of those accomplishments to be highly successful, but he must not see himself as successful as he should be to marry a woman like Libbie. Her family was well off, known only because Libbie was sent to college. I can only make the assumption that Farlin does not feel he has accomplished as much as he should have in order to provide Libbie with the same lifestyle she currently has. He continues to write to Libbie that, "our love has been so slowly ripening, I think we shall be happy. If my life and health be spared I will try to so love you and so take care of you that you will never repeat the slip you have promised to take" (para 1). He also mentions the letter he wrote to her father and says he is very anxious for a reply.

Another letter to Libbie is dated December 29, 1867 and by this time Farlin has received the reply letter from Thomas Hall regarding his marriage to Libbie. Farlin writes, "It hardly seems possible that at this time last Sabbath evening we were only dear friends, and that now we are plighted lovers" (Ball Letter 3,

1867 para 1). He continues, "I must confess that I opened your fathers letters with many misgivings, but had hardly read three lines before the room was flooded with summer light and beauty, and the walls spread away into the future, and I saw many happy days in store for you and me" (para 2). A little further in the letter he again states how sorry he is that he cannot give her more than himself, he writes, "It seems mean in me to take you from your home when I am able to give you only myself (at the best a very questionable gift) but my darling you walked into the trap with your eyes open, and the door is as yet unclosed" (para 6).

A letter dated January 29, 1868 is supposed to be a "real" love letter to Libbie in which is shown by the postscript. This letter describes his way of writing which is intentional to show his love for Libbie. He also talks about their future together. The following excerpt is from this letter,

"I saw you last night in my sleep – your lips were not disfigured and you were not sick. I awoke with you in my mind and you have not been out since. My only way to send you out from the office so that I can work, is, to put you on paper and thus shame you away. How are you this morning? Much better, I hope. I wish that I was with you so that I might take the answer direct from your eyes, your cheeks, and your loving arms. If my love for you were not so absorbing and perfect it would be absurd to write such a letter as this; but I want to talk to you in this manner, my heart commands me todo so, and I do not propose to write it carefully, go back to cross my "ts" or dot the "is," or to strike out the nonsense. It is not nonsense – it is the thought of my heart chilled by the coldness of the paper and blackened by the ink it is time, but still relieving enough of its original warmth, I trust, to cause your heart to beat faster and your cheek flush while you read it.

I am sure that we shall be happy. We shall start with our own complete love and the wishes of our friends and relatives. Our day will dawn in unclouded splendor and the sun of life travel his short jorney undimmed, and when the night comes, we will go to sleep in peace and content, to awaken in that light which chases away all sorrow and tears. Libbie, life has grown

more hopeful and I have become stronger since I have certainly known that you had taken up your resting place in my heart and that you were content to come to me. May I be worthy of you. May I soon have you with me. My darling good bye

Quig

P.S. no love letter is complete without a postscript. I am sure that you will at once let me know how you are and 'love me a little.'

Q" (Ball Letter 6, 1868 para 2-4).

In another letter dated February 5, 1868, Farlin writes about being a villain for taking her from her comfortable home. He writes to Libbie,

"As I read the letter you wrote me two days ago I must confess that I felt that I was a good deal of a villain; for, my dear girl, I am totally unworthy of the love you lavish upon me, and think that at some time or other I have deceived you and am now obtaining your love by false pretenses. What you find in me to admire I know not - you who see every day men who surpass me in every thing calculated to attract you. I fear your affections are at fault in this matter. The attributes you clothe me in are a part of your own mind and no portion of myself.

May be my way of asking you was so novel that it is your duty to now move for delay upon account of surprise. If you choose to do so, I am sure that the court will grant the motion.

Had you said "No" to me last December I would not have complained, nor stormed, nor told you how lonely my life was. But as you said "yes", I almost distrust my happiness, knowing how unworthy I am to be your equal or servant, and that by no fiction of law or love am I entitled to be King in your pure womanly heart. Here is fair warning of my unfitness, so you can yet decide whether to turn your face towards me or from me. If towards me I hope that when you know me as I am you may not be disenchanted. Then

"I would say, O pure and perfect pearl, which I have dived so deep in life to find,  
Locked in my heart thou liest."

Libbie, I have written thus much to you because it is in my heart, and not from any desire to play the part of "Uriah Heep." I fear that some day my own unfitness may be visible to you and then I would be the most miserable of men. I am like a poor man who has found a most precious jewel which he hides within his rags next to his heart; and so great is his fear of losing it, that the terror follows him even in his sleep, and bids him tune uneasily upon his wretched couch" (Ball Letter 8, 1868 para 1-4).

Farlin continues being self-conscious about being able to provide adequately for Libbie. He wrote in a February 28, 1868 letter, "I cannot for the life of me understand why your heart approved of me, when so many men of ability [cuttine] and means flock around you. You seem to forget the fact that as yet I have done nothing - that I have yet a name, profession, and practice to obtain - that you have many advantages which I cannot reach - sometimes when I think of these things I am sorry (for your sake only) that I ever spoke to you, lest after years bring regret for all these things. If there be any feeling of this kind in your heart say so at once. My affection for you you know, but that is an accident for which I am to blame & not you further than the fact that you are attractive & good. I began to say all this when with you, but you stopped me and I remained silent. Now you have it. Write me what you really think and feel" (Ball Letter 12, 1868 para 3). He does not feel that at this point in his life he has accomplished anything to give himself a place in the world worth noting, or even worth marrying into in Libbie's case. He continues with this attitude in his March 4, 1868 letter in which he wrote, "Libbie you are the most unfortunate person I know. Compelled to refuse good & worthy men and fond of as poor a dog as myself" (Ball Letter 13, 1868 para 2).

He then calls Libbie a "blind little goose" for not seeing that she is the one losing something by marrying him. He writes, "When I came from Chicago in December last I was not near as happy as I was last night; my new relationship to you brought much perplexity with its pleasures - there seemed to be so

much lacking which I ought to give you, that I was glad and sorry every mile of the way. Glad for myself and sorry for you. But this last visit has so plainly shown to me that you are such a "blind little goose" that I have lost all pity for you, and only hope that your eyes may not be opened until it is too late" (Ball Letter 14, 1868 para 3).

While reading Farlin's letters to his soon-to-be-wife, I found it very interesting that he was so hard on himself and his accomplishments. Graduating from college and working in law and having some fairly prestigious positions would be quite an accomplishment, but not for Farlin. It is unknown what he needed to accomplish in order to feel worthy of calling Libbie his wife. It appears that he was not in debt or hard for money. In some later courtship letters they mention the house they will soon share together and that it needs to be furnished. He tells Libbie to pick out whatever she wants, do not pick anything cheap, make sure it has good quality. He then told her to let him know the price and he will send the money so she can buy it. Nowhere in the letters does he mention any financial hardships but he must just want to provide a more comfortable home than she currently lives in with her parents, and he doesn't feel he can do that at this point in his life. He eventually did become a very prestigious person, especially in Chicago and in law. Though we do not have Libbie's letters to Farlin, by Farlin's reply letters I did not find that Libbie ever questioned whether she should marry Farlin or not. She was willing to make the jump down to his societal level. She just knew she loved him and wanted to be with him and she followed her heart, and they had a very happy, successful life together.

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## \$5 for a Coffin: Trading at Papineauville, Dakota Territory

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A 'whiskey ranch' ledger from Charles Mix County evokes images of the southern Dakota Territory during the decade after the Civil War. Cuthbert DuCharme (1827-1903), a descendant of French-Canadian fur traders, kept the ledger between 1869 and 1872.<sup>1</sup> At one level, the ledger is page upon page of whiskey sales along with the sale of others goods. DuCharme sold copious amounts of alcohol and other items to French Americans<sup>2</sup> with surnames such as Barbier and Archambeau, as well as other settlers and wanderers from other ethnic groups. At another level, however, the trader's ledger provides a view on a way of life that lingered on after the close of fur trade. Arguably, the events of the 1860s corresponded to the prolonged transition of the southeastern Dakota economy from one characterized by remote trading posts to towns and farms. Dakota boosters envisioned the town and farm economy taking root with the Territorial status that Congress granted in 1861. Such a vision had to wait and endure the trials of the 1860s. Yet, some locales prospered despite the trials. Papineauville, located in Charles Mix County, was such a locale. A look at the ledger may deepen our appreciation of how the events of the 1860s affected life in one Missouri River town. Moreover, the ledger affords the opportunity to consider how DuCharme, who presumably penned some of the entries in the ledger, shaped and reacted to the culture or "steamboat civilization"<sup>3</sup> along the Missouri River.<sup>4</sup> Before discussing Cuthbert DuCharme and his ledger a summary of relevant conditions in the territory is needed.

### Dakota Territory in the 1860s

In 1861, about 70 miles downstream from DuCharme's whiskey ranch, Yankton residents rejoiced upon learning that President Buchanan signed the legislation that created the Dakota Territory. An early territorial booster,

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<sup>1</sup> Ledger, Dakota Territory, 1869-1872, Chilson Collection, Archives and Special Collections, The University of South Dakota.

<sup>2</sup> French Americans refers to those who came to Dakota Territory from Canada during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence in the ledger confirms DuCharme as the owner/creator of the ledger. It is less certain if he and/or employees maintained the ledger. Handwriting changes within the ledger suggest that one or more additional individuals recorded transactions of sales. "Steamboat civilization" is a term used by Stanley E. Votruba in *Upper Missouri and Charles Mix County Reminiscence*, [s.l., s.n, 1970?], 30.

<sup>4</sup> Without ignoring larger human and natural forces, individual choices are integral to understanding the records of the past, including the ledger. As David Hackett Fischer wrote, "An important key here is the idea of contingency ... An organizing assumption of this work is that contingency in central to any historical process, and vital to the success of our narrative strategies about the past. This is not to raise again ill-framed counterfactual questions about what might have happened in the past. It is rather to study historical events as a series of real choices that living people actually made." *Paul Revere's Ride*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 1994), xv.

Moses Armstrong, wrote that the Yankton residents greeted “the dawning future of the great northwest.”<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, the dawning of the 1860s brought a somewhat different future. One would expect that the establishment of the Dakota Territory in 1861 and the Homestead Act of the following year would have hastened a settlement boom. As will be examined below, however, events and conditions of the 1860s—war, drought and insect plagues, and limited transportation—postponed extensive white settlement. Moreover, events of the 1860s prolonged the way life in some locales that was associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century trading posts established by the fur companies.

First and foremost, Sioux military resistance, provoked by white settlement and travel in the regions west of the Minnesota River and Big Sioux River basins, defined the territory's prospects as it embarked on the new decade.<sup>6</sup> The Dakota War of 1862 drove many settlers away and deterred many others from coming. Those settlers who remained faced death and nearly 500 in Dakota and Minnesota died during the conflict. Hoover has noted that a legacy of the conflict is ongoing intercultural distrust.<sup>7</sup> The distrust was immediate. A sense of fear and foreboding, on the part of whites, followed the Dakota War. Though the federal government quelled most of the unrest in the eastern regions of the territory by 1866, whites both in and outside the territory remained fearful and wary of life in Dakota.<sup>8</sup> In 1871, the *New York Times* reflected the mood: “...the entire Sioux question will be brought to a head...[and] will only be solved by an Indian war of some magnitude.”<sup>9</sup> While immigrants and residents of states to the east would, in time, put aside fears and stream into the territory, such an influx would have to wait until the 1870s and 1880s. The conflict between the Sioux and the Army cast a long shadow.

Coupled with the Dakota War, drought and insect plagues reinforced the sentiment that the territory was inhospitable. Briggs wrote, “As a rule the newcomer to Dakota who has resisted settlement in states to East had heard many tales about Dakota.... The information was often given that Dakota was no place for a white man; nothing fit for

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<sup>5</sup> Moses K. Armstrong, *History and Resources of Dakota, Montana and Idaho*, in *South Dakota Historical Collections XIV* (Pierre, SD: State Publishing Company, 1928), 38. Also see Harold E. Briggs, “The Settlement and Economic Development of the Territory of Dakota” (Ph.D. diss., Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa, 1929), 17-33, for a summary of the early, hopeful prospects of the territory.

<sup>6</sup> The historiography of the Dakota War is extensive. See Herbert T. Hoover and John E. Miller Hoover, *A New South Dakota History* (Sioux Falls, SD: Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 2005), 89-91, for brief but balanced treatment of the conflict.

<sup>7</sup> Hoover and Miller, 91.

<sup>8</sup> Hebert S. Schell and John E. Miller, *History of South Dakota*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Pierre, SD: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2004), 80.

<sup>9</sup> *New York Times*, August 19, 1871.

the subsistence of civilized people could be grown on the arid plains of the territory."<sup>10</sup> Droughts and grasshopper plagues in the mid-1860s were not uncommon. Armstrong wrote, "The season of 1864 was unpropitious for the settlements of the Territory. Unremitting drought and clouds of grasshoppers swept the bloom of the fields and the verdure of the plains...the despondent farmers repaired with their teams to neighboring states to bring a supply of subsistence until another seed-time."<sup>11</sup> In contrast to the mid '60s, more favorable weather along with respite from the grasshoppers improved the prospects for the territory by 1868.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, along with the Dakota War, the environmental conditions of the 1860s had a discernable role in slowing the pace of settlement.

Westward travel into the Territory also remained limited throughout the 1860s. The Sioux City-Fort Randall Road and the Missouri River, both of which figure largely in the story of DuCharme and his trading post, were not sufficient to spur on the formation of a town and farm economy associated with the agrarian settlements to the east in Iowa. As Schell notes, the arrival of the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad in Sioux City in 1868 increased access to markets for farm goods and promised the coming of the railroad to the Territory, but five years passed before the Dakota Southern Railway between Sioux City and Yankton opened; thus delaying the hopes of Dakotans.<sup>13</sup> Rather, travel limited to the Missouri River and few of its tributaries, military roads, and branch roads perpetuated the isolation of southern Dakota locales.

One wonders if DuCharme and others in Papineauville were, perhaps, less perplexed by the 1860s—"the decade of uncertainty"<sup>14</sup>— than other Dakotans. War, drought, insect plagues, and limited transportation, all of which contributed to postponing white settlement, preserved, for a time, the trading post society that developed in the earlier part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The events of the 1860s prolonged the "steamboat civilization" that was familiar to the descendants of French-Canadian trappers and traders, as well as other Dakota frontier inhabitants. Unlike, Moses Armstrong, who is noted above, it seems likely that individuals such as DuCharme were not waiting for the dawning of a new future as the decade of the 1860s commenced.

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<sup>10</sup> Briggs, 60.

<sup>11</sup> Armstrong, 46.

<sup>12</sup> Schell and Miller, 109.

<sup>13</sup> Schell and Miller, 109-115.

<sup>14</sup> Schell, 78-92.

Yet, Harold Briggs, one of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century historians of the Territorial era, makes a different conclusion. He notes that by 1860 "...the advance guard of civilization had gained a foothold along the Missouri valley, and thin line of settlement had established itself along the Missouri River from Sioux City to Fort Randall." Moreover, he notes that this "advance guard of civilization" comprised hunters, trappers, and traders.<sup>15</sup> Through hindsight we know these trappers and traders preceded the coming of the town builders and farmers. Yet, it seems unlikely that these frontiersmen such as DuCharme considered themselves as bringing civilization to the frontier, or even welcomed the ideals and habits of civilization—education, organized religion, and law and order. Rather, the lawless 'LaMonte County' that included Ducharme's claim points to the contrary.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, by the boom of the 1880s, DuCharme moved further west to Gregory County. It is likely that DuCharme and many of his customers did not welcome a future filled with 'civilized' farm towns.

### **Cuthbert Ducharme and Papineauville**

Doane Robinson wrote that Ducharme was "a desperate frontiersman who resided in western Charles Mix County from 1857; he was drinker and [when] under the influence of intoxicants was a veritable demon; he died an inmate of the hospital for the insane at Yankton."<sup>17</sup> Ducharme's (1827-1903) North American ancestry is rooted in 17<sup>th</sup> century Quebec. The ancestors of Cuthbert DuCharme eventually migrated and lived in the region of present day Milwaukee. They sustained themselves as traders and voyagers. Jean Marie, who fathered Cuthbert DuCharme at Sault St. Marie, passed on to his son this way of life. The family's heritage in the fur trade would eventually bring Cuthbert to Dakota, though it is not exactly known when. In 1857 Cuthbert Ducharme made a claim in what would become Charles Mix County.<sup>18</sup> Cuthbert Ducharme would become known as "Old Pap" or "Old Papineau," and the nickname, for all practical purposes, became as common as his Christian name. The nickname, as is noted in various accounts about Ducharme, means "pap water" or whiskey. Discerning legendary accounts from verifiable accounts about Old Pap is difficult, but all accounts share in common his heavy drinking and violence, as well as his

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<sup>15</sup> Briggs, 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> Hoover and Miller, 82.

<sup>17</sup> Doane Robinson, *Doane Robinson's Encyclopedia of South Dakota* 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Pierre, SD. Published by the Author, 1925), 170.

<sup>18</sup> Votruba, 19-20.

trading post in Charles Mix County.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, evidence in external records as well as from the ledger locates DuCharme in Charles Mix County by 1861. The proceedings of the First Territorial Legislative Assembly record, "The county seat of said county of Charles Mix is hereby located and established at Papineau on the Missouri River, on the claim of Mr. Papineau."<sup>20</sup> And, in his own hand, Papineau recorded in the ledger: "The claim now occupied by C. Ducharme is situated on the Fort Randall [Reservation] (as claimed by the Military authorities at Ft. Randall), 18 miles above Ft. Randall on the Missouri River. [The] county known as Papineauville [same] containing 160 acres. The above claim was taken by me in the month of Dec. 7, 1857."<sup>21</sup>

### Ducharme's Ledger: A Record from the Missouri River Valley Culture, *circa* 1870

Entries in the ledger date from 1869 to 1872. DuCharme owned and operated the trading post from 1857 to 1880, the year he moved across the Missouri River to Gregory County.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the ledger from 1869 to 1872 is one among others. The other ledgers, most likely, are not extant. Likewise, Papineauville succumbed to the dammed up waters of the Missouri above Fort Randall Dam.<sup>23</sup> Thus, reconstructing Papineauville of the 1860s is a difficult task<sup>24</sup>, and by no means does a single ledger fill in the gaps of our historical knowledge. The ledger, however, does occasion a look at how one trading post locale of along the Missouri River Valley experienced the close of the 1860s.

Hoover writes, "The Missouri Valley Culture, which originated in the fur trade, grew in response to the creation of six U.S. Indian Agency jurisdictions and thrived mainly on business opportunities made available by the presence of tribal groups and U.S. Army installations..."<sup>25</sup> Papineauville and DuCharme's trading post belonged to the Missouri River Culture as it emerged from the 1860s. Unlike the Territorial boosters who looked ahead to an agricultural

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<sup>19</sup> Biographical information about Cuthbert Ducharme is limited, but among the accounts consulted the most helpful are Votruba, *Upper Missouri and Charles Mix County Reminiscence*. [s.l., s.n, 1970?] and Charles F. Hackett, "Along the Upper Missouri," in *South Dakota Historical Collections*, VIII (Pierre, SD: State Publishing Company, 1916), 27-55. Votruba notes that he interviewed grandchildren of DuCharme (page 1), while Hackett's account of his 1877 journey up the Missouri is contemporary to DuCharme's life and times. Both works lack the citations to sources, but do provide access to recollections of those who knew DuCharme. A later, but helpful work about DuCharme and his locale is Jim Nelson, "Western Charles Mix County," *Dakota West* 4, no. 4, (1978): 17-22. Herbert Hoover draws upon Nelson's article, in Herbert T. Hoover and John E. Miller, *A New South Dakota History*, 69-85.

<sup>20</sup> Dakota Territory. Legislative Assembly, *General Laws, and Memorials and Resolutions of the Territory of Dakota Passed at the First Session of the Legislative Assembly* (Yankton, D.T., 1862), 249.

<sup>21</sup> Ledger, 478.

<sup>22</sup> Nelson, 19.

<sup>23</sup> Papineau or Papineauville, as it is consistently designated in the ledger, is near current day Platte, SD. Also known as Papineau Bottom and now about 15 miles north of Fort Randall Dam, it would succumb to the waters of Lake Francis Case. The store, rebuilt/replicated, is now in Geddes, SD.

<sup>24</sup> Hoover and Miller, 69-85, describes the culture of the Missouri River Valley from Sioux City northward during the territorial era.

<sup>25</sup> Hoover, 69.

economy, Ducharme and his customers along the Missouri River looked backwards to the heyday of the fur trade. Men such as Amiable Gallineau, Joseph Laroche, and Felice Fellas, all who traded at Ducharme's post, settled in Territory at the end of the fur trade era.<sup>26</sup> They belonged to the fur trade era, even though the fur trade was passing as a basis for the local and regional economy. "As impermanent as the fur trade was, it had left its unmistakable imprint on the region."<sup>27</sup> DuCharme's trading post, established under the auspices of the American Fur Company in 1857 was one such imprint on the landscape.

DuCharme's trading post shared key features with the earlier trading posts of the fur trade era, including a strategic geographic location near the Missouri River, an outpost around which a settlement grew, and place at which European Americans and Native Americans sustained contact and commerce. Yet, new realities made the trading post distinct from its earlier counterparts. Quite simply, the trading post did not rely on the fur trade. Rather, the establishment of Fort Randall in 1857 and the Yankton Reservation in 1859 provided new economic opportunities for Old Pap to exploit. DuCharme used a historical model, the strategically located trading post, in an altered economy. He did not wait for farming to make its future imprint on Charles Mix County. Ducharme seized opportunities to make substantial amounts of money.

### **Ducharme, a "desperado" on the frontier?**

After his trip up the Missouri River, Charles Hackett stated that Ducharme was "a representative of the extreme type of frontier desperado of early days."<sup>28</sup> By all accounts, DuCharme was a volatile and violent man who abused both alcohol and women. Yet, both oral tradition and his ledger from 1869 to 1872 do not evoke an image of six-shooter toting desperado. While not trying to rehabilitate DuCharme's reputation, for that is certainly an ill-advised project, we can look at Old Pap as both shaping and being shaped by the realities that he encountered in Dakota from 1857 to the 1870s.

As noted above, DuCharme established his trading post on the Fort Randall Military Reservation, though about 15 miles northwest of the actual fort. Located north of the actual fort, the trading post was not on the actual

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<sup>26</sup> Dating the conclusion of the fur trade receives various treatments in South Dakota histories. For example, Hoover and Miller note that the trade in, what would become South Dakota, concluded by 1840, p. 49. Schell and Miller use a slightly later date of the 1850s, 56. Certainly, the heyday of the trade was from, roughly, the period between War of 1812 and the mid-nineteenth century. Mary K. Whelan in "Dakota Indian Economics and the Nineteenth-Century Fur Trade," *Ethnohistory*, 40:2 (Spring, 1993), 263, demonstrates that all outfits (Western, Northern, and Sioux) of the American Fur Company saw a decline in total harvest of pelts and furs by 1841.

<sup>27</sup> Schell and Miller, 64.

<sup>28</sup> Hackett, 32.

Sioux City-Fort Randall Military Road, but it was on an extension.<sup>29</sup> The distance of 15 miles did not, however, deter troopers from visiting the trading post for whiskey and, most likely, other distractions from military life.<sup>30</sup> Thus, while DuCharme did not have an official contract with the U.S. Army as did J.B.S. Todd, he benefitted from the soldiers.

In addition to its proximity to the fort, the trading post benefited from the nearby steamboat landing on the Missouri. Though the fur trade initiated steamboat travel up the Missouri, the decline of the fur trade in Dakota did not abate travel up and down the river. Mackinaw boats coming down river and carrying gold and furs from Montana steadily increased in the 1860s. Moreover, throughout the 1860s, steamboats on the river increased upwards to forty percent, annually.<sup>31</sup> Carrying supplies and passengers to northern forts, the crews and passengers of the steamers likely spent money at the trading post in Papineauville. Moreover, wood was needed as fuel for the steamboats. And, locals in places such as Papineauville supplied the wood for the steamers.<sup>32</sup> Tradition has DuCharme taking advantage of his location on the river and operating a “wooding station” where steamboats could take on wood for fuel.<sup>33</sup> DuCharme’s ledger includes at least one entry for the payment of cord wood, and quite possibly for resale at the “wooding station.”<sup>34</sup>

Location did not solely contribute to the brisk business carried out at the trading post. DuCharme demonstrated his business instincts by the goods he carried and sold. The variety of goods that he sold is remarkable. From expected items such as cloth, *tabac* (tobacco) and coffee to the unexpected—oysters, “water mellon,” strawberries, and ball tickets<sup>35</sup>—the ledger attests to the variety of goods and services that DuCharme supplied to his customers. Clothing, weapons, feed, utensils, and much more fill the pages of the ledger. The keeper of the ledger meticulously recorded in English or French, and often in graceful handwriting, the sale of thousands of items sold between 1869 and 1872. Clearly, DuCharme understood the financial resources of his customers and their

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<sup>29</sup> Maxine K. Schuurmans, *The Sioux City to Fort Randall Military Road, 1856-1892, Revisited* (Sioux Falls, SD: Pine Hill Press, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> See Hackett, 31-32, for an account of the night that two Iowa troopers spent in Papineauville.

<sup>31</sup> Armstrong, 59.

<sup>32</sup> Nelson, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Votruba, 26.

<sup>34</sup> Ledger, 29 May 1870, 147.

<sup>35</sup> There are numerous entries for the sale of oysters, as well as strawberries. The entry for watermelon (2 Aug. 1871, 423) is singular, it seems. See January 1870, various dates, for entries recording the sale of ball tickets.

needs and tastes. He took advantage of the location of the post to both acquire and sell goods and services, even a coffin and the related burial services.<sup>36</sup>

As the ledger demonstrates, the sale of whiskey and other spirits earned the trading post a reputation as a whiskey ranch. Rarely, did someone purchase an item without also purchasing a drink, often for 15 cents. Likewise, customers purchased kegs and bottles of alcohol, including ale and even champagne. For example, there is an entry for the sale of 3 bottles of “shamp pain.”<sup>37</sup> The substantial volume of alcohol traded at the post raises the question of its sources. Obviously, too much was sold, poured or otherwise distributed for it to be, solely, a local spirit or brew. Furthermore, as Votruba notes, DuCharme hauled whiskey from Yankton.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, it is likely some of the alcohol arrived by steamboat. The ubiquitous presence of the alcohol sales throughout the ledger attests to its pervasive role on the Dakota frontier and its relationship to the violence associated with DuCharme and others in the area.<sup>39</sup>

The trading post was, indeed, a whiskey ranch. Yet, it was more than the saloon of Wild West lore. DuCharme positioned the trading post so that it served a broad role in the community. In 1869, nearly 100 different individuals and families traded at the post. Men were the primary customers, but the post also served women and children. A set of entries from June 1870 indicates that several women—Mrs. Gallineau, Mrs. DeGray, and Mrs. Cournoyer—went shopping.<sup>40</sup> The ledger depicts women in a role other than as prostitutes, a role noted in written accounts of the era and later. Nevertheless, providing a gathering place or a pastime for men or women was merely accidental to DuCharme’s aim. That was, making money.

An examination of one month’s sales depicts the volume of business that DuCharme and his customers transacted. In January 1871, Old Pap posted approximately \$2,800 in gross sales.<sup>41</sup> While records or estimates of net profits are not available, the volume of business is substantial. The ledger, in January 1871 alone, records approximately 425 entries. Of these entries, about 150 entries record the sale of alcohol. Hence, alcohol sales

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<sup>36</sup> Ledger, 10 Dec. 1870, 289.

<sup>37</sup> Ledger, 11 Nov. 1870, 265. Generally, the spelling in the ledger attests to a high level of literacy among its keepers, but there are occasional improvised spellings.

<sup>38</sup> Votruba, 21.

<sup>39</sup> Votruba, p. 21-26, and the accounts he collected attest to DuCharme’s own violent behavior and others who lived in the area during the 1860s and 1870s.

<sup>40</sup> Ledger, 3 June 1870, 150. Spouses of Amicable Gallineau and Bruno Cournoyer?

<sup>41</sup> Ledger, January 1871. The historical price index formula at the Federal Reserve Bank for Minnesota [http://www.minneapolisfed.org/community\\_education/teacher/calc/hist1800.cfm](http://www.minneapolisfed.org/community_education/teacher/calc/hist1800.cfm) shows that DuCharme’s sales in January 1871 equate to approximately \$49,000 in 2011 rates.

served as the backbone of the business, but they don't solely account for the purpose or profitability of the business. Again, DuCharme's net profits are not ascertainable through the ledger, but tradition holds that he operated a profitable business for nearly 25 years.<sup>42</sup>

While authors such as Hackett and others have focused those on the volatile and violent aspects of DuCharme's character, and rightly so, the ledger attests to DuCharme's considerable business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit. By all accounts, he was a rogue. Nevertheless, he was more complex than some image of a Wild West desperado.

### **Native Americans and French Americans: Navigating the 1860s Together**

The ledger also provides the opportunity to consider the relationship between French Americans and Sioux tribes in Dakota. The ledger does not shed new light on the relationship, but it does reinforce the perspective that just as the fur trade brought both peoples to Dakota, the same trade, when it declined, left them facing an economic change.<sup>43</sup> Exploring the Siouan reaction to this economic change is beyond the scope of this paper, but the ledger does afford a vantage point on how one French American and Native American community faced the transition away from the fur trade economy.

As seen above, Old Pap strategically located his trading post along the Missouri River and near Fort Randall. Fort Randall would become a source of customers. Moreover, the establishment of the Yankton Agency (1859) in proximity to trading post, most likely, contributed to the success of the business. The proximity of the trading post to the Yankton Agency raises questions about the extent of trade between the residents of the reservation and DuCharme. While an examination of the ledger does not answer the question, it does provide some intriguing references.

Consider an entry for 17 January 1870. The ledger records that "Little Swan Indian Chief" traded at the post.<sup>44</sup> Use of traditional Native names is limited in the ledger, but this paucity does not suggest that the Sioux did not trade at the post. Rather, the use of the traditional name stands out among the many entries for sales to French

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<sup>42</sup> Nelson, 19.

<sup>43</sup> See Gary Clayton Anderson, "Early Dakota Migration and Intertribal War: A Revision," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 11:1 (Jan., 1980), 17-36, for discussion on the role of the fur trade in attracting Sioux tribes to the Dakotas. See Schell and Hoover, 49-64, for an overview of the fur trade in D.T.

<sup>44</sup> Ledger, 59.

Americans and Native Americans related through marriage. The mixed-marriage society of western Charles Mix County was considerable according to nineteenth century observers and confirmed by 20<sup>th</sup> century historians. For example, Hackett notes his time among the “squaw men” of Charles Mix County, and goes into some detail about the marriages of Felice Fellas to Native women.<sup>45</sup> While Anglo-American observers found the marriages outside societal norms, marriage between French-Canadians (French-Americans) and Native Americans had an important role in the development of regional economies and cultures throughout North America. Along the Missouri, Papineauville and the surrounding area was one such region. The unknown, interior reasons for the marriages may have been as varied as the individuals, but it is evident that the marriages contributed to the survival of both French and Native societies as white settlers pushed westward. Consider Lewis or Louie Archambeaux (Archambo) who frequented the trading post.<sup>46</sup> Lewis or Louie, as recorded in the ledger, is, mostly likely, the Louis Archambeau who married into the Yankton Sioux. Hence, through tribal membership he may have had access to annuities from the federal government.<sup>47</sup> In turn, Archambeau may have spent his income at DuCharme’s trading post.

Similarly, an entry for 19 November 1870, notes that Pier Pilliscene [Pierre Peliscien] purchased a hat[s?] for Indians.<sup>48</sup> Peliscien was among the French Canadians who settled in the region by 1850 and married a Native woman.<sup>49</sup> The entry seems to indicate that as winter set in on Missouri Peliscien was not buying warm clothing for immediate family members, but for others on the reservation.

Equally as terse and interesting as the above noted entry are the entries for the purchases by Antoin LeBeau on 17 January 1871. Evidence suggests that LeBeau had married a Native woman.<sup>50</sup> In January of 1871, he purchased approximately \$1,300 in goods, many of which were clothing items.<sup>51</sup> Did LeBeau make the purchase on behalf of several Yankton Sioux tribal members? Was he re-selling the goods on the reservation? Answers to such questions do not exist within the ledger. Yet, this entry and others depict French Americans and Native Americans in a post-fur trade economy buying goods and, perhaps, caring for others and/or profiting from others.

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<sup>45</sup> Hackett, 31-32; Hoover and Miller, 69-70.

<sup>46</sup> Ledger, 19 Sept. 1869, 22; 21 Feb. 1870, 79.

<sup>47</sup> Hoover, 81.

<sup>48</sup> Ledger, 19 Nov. 1870, p. 273.

<sup>49</sup> Hoover, 81.

<sup>50</sup> Conversation between author and daughter of Marcella LeBeau, 29 April 2011.

<sup>51</sup> Ledger, 17 Jan. 1871, 237-238.

Finally, the language used in the ledger poses the possibility that, to some extent, Sioux and French Americans formed an 'insider' community at Papineauville. At times, the keepers of the ledger used overt racial language for customers outside of the French-Native American community. For example, the ledger keeper recorded sales to Old Leon Mesican [Mexican?], Dutch Bill, and Manuel Spaniard.<sup>52</sup> Without pressing the observation too far, the ledger identified these occasional customers by race and ethnicity rather than by given names and surnames—the typical practice. Likewise, the ledger includes entries for "Black Dave." Was the ledger keeper referring to an African American? Was the ledger keeper noting those who he/she considered as an 'insider' as compared to an 'outsider'? The ledger raises the possibility that the "steamboat civilization" or "Missouri River Valley culture" of Charles Mix County had its own racial distinctions.

## Conclusions

By 1870, southeastern Dakota's neighbor, Iowa, had emerged from its settlement era. As Dorothy Schweider wrote, By the early 1870s the pioneer era had come to an end in the Hawkeye State; all parts of Iowa then had some settlement....<sup>53</sup> In 1861, Yanktonians, just up the Missouri River from Sioux City, Iowa, celebrated territorial status and looked forward to statehood and prosperity. The 1860s brought a different future, a future that delayed the hopes of the Dakota boosters such as Moses Armstrong and enabled others such as Cuthbert DuCharme to remain a little longer in an era that would soon pass.

As noted above, the climate, insect plagues, and the lack of railroads all contributed to delaying the future that boosters hoped for in 1861. Moreover, the conflict between Army troops and Sioux warriors made the decade one of uncertain and slow settlement. Yet, the scant historical records of the region surrounding DuCharme's trading post and Papineauville suggest that some whites remained sheltered from the conflict. As late as 1868, settlers along Brule Creek on the eastern border were killed by Sioux warriors. Moreover, after 1868, Territorial Governor Andrew Faulk called out troops from Fort Randall when settlers were alarmed by raids. And, as late as 1871, there was an

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<sup>52</sup> Ledger, 9 Sept. 1869, 26; 26 Aug. 1870, 184; and 26 May 1870, 143.

<sup>53</sup> Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1996), 51.

Indian raid on the fort itself.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, French Americans through marriage into Sioux families remained on the land while others fled. They remained together, Sioux and French.

Cuthbert DuCharme staked his claim on the land not as a post for “the advance guard of civilization [that] had gained a foothold along the Missouri valley.”<sup>55</sup> Rather, as son and grandson of traders who migrated westward with the fur trade, he looked back. He looked back to the fur trading era, but adapted to the shifting economic reality. Soldiers, frontier rovers and wanderers frequented the post, and often for alcohol. Yet, the trading post was more than a whiskey ranch. DuCharme created a place of contact between Native and European societies, but not in the fashion of the rendezvous found further west or the remote trading post of an earlier era. Rather, the ledger show traces of a community—families of French and Sioux ancestry. They went to balls, as well as ate foods typically enjoyed at holidays or during the summer season. The ledger gives us a glimpse of a place, Papineauville, that neither wholly belonged to the fur trade era of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century or the coming agricultural communities that would spring up in Charles Mix County by 1880s.

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<sup>54</sup> See Schell and Miller. Also, Jerome A. Greene, *Fort Randall on the Missouri, 1856-1892* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2005), 101.

<sup>55</sup> Briggs, 17-18.

## The Legacy of the Civil War in the Place Names of the Upper Midwest

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Place names are artifacts of the past, reminders of the lives and values of those generations who have gone before us. As settlers in America moved in waves across the land, they brought with them names that they scattered on the landscape, either to disappear or to remain as evidence of what these settlers considered important. As the Upper Midwest was settled, the Civil War was a central fact in the lives of many of those who came here, not the *only* fact, but a crucial one during and for many years after that great event in the history of this country.

The legacy of the Civil War in South Dakota, for example, can be clearly seen in the town of Gettysburg, in Potter County. Founded in 1883, the town was named for the Pennsylvania site of the decisive battle twenty years earlier, in July 1863. Many who settled in Potter County were veterans of the Civil War. Some had fought in the Battle of Gettysburg, and they hoped to establish a colony for Civil War veterans.<sup>1</sup> Further evidence of the War's influence in Potter County are townships named Appomattox, Lincoln, and Logan (for John A. Logan, about whom more later); and in adjoining Faulk County there is a Sherman Township. Until a few years ago, South Dakota's Gettysburg remembered its Civil War connections with an annual commemoration and re-enactment. But interest in the annual occasion diminished, and there has not been a commemoration in several years. The site where the events were held still bears the name Civil War Park.

Throughout the United States, as a reminder of that conflict which started 151 years ago this month, there are many towns, townships, and counties whose names honor those who fought in that war or who had an important influence on events during that time. Place names commemorate generals and officers of all other ranks, but I must set limits. Thus I have chosen **five states** and will discuss only one kind of feature, **county names**, and one major source of those names, **generals of the Union Army**. In many cases, I have discovered, it is difficult to determine if the county name was given because of Civil War service or for other contributions to national or state development.

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<sup>1</sup> Information from Kathleen Nagel, citing *Gettysburg 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book*, 1883-1958. One of the generals was Orrin L. Mann, who is listed as one of the 1,367 brevet generals in the Union Army in Warner (589). The other, a General Pearce, is not. Information about the Civil War commemoration came from Molly McRoberts of the Gettysburg Chamber of Commerce.

For a brief account of county name origins throughout the country, I have found the four-volume *American Place Dictionary* indispensable (Abate).

The five states are Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and I have somewhat arbitrarily labeled these states as the Upper Midwest. The total number of counties in these five states is 398, ranging from 99 in Iowa to 53 in North Dakota. In between are Nebraska, with 93; Minnesota, with 87; and South Dakota, with 66. The number of counties or county equivalents in the United States is 2,140 (County [United States]).

County names have a special place in the nomenclature of this country. Unlike the naming of states, which is a function of Congress, or of towns, which is done either by developers or by local citizens, as in Gettysburg, the naming of counties has almost always been done by territorial or state legislatures, at least in the territories and states that have come about since the original thirteen. In an introduction to the 1941 WPA book *South Dakota Place Names*, we find an interesting analysis of how names were assigned in South Dakota: "... when it came to thinking up names for the new political units [counties], the legislature evidently adopted the you-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours attitude, for the list of counties reads like a legislative roll-call" (Sneve 18). Many names which would otherwise be quite obscure are imprinted on the state for all time: Brown, Clark, Day, Hanson, Hughes, Hyde, Lyman, and Spink, to name just a few. In the words of a little ditty of the time,

Many a legislator's bid to fame  
Is a county born to bear his name. (Sneve 19)

As the country expanded westward after the Revolutionary War, the need for names of counties became intense. One important source was the list of participants in that war and in the founding of the nation. *Washington* was by far the most common, and currently there are 31 counties that bear his name. *Jefferson*, with 27, is not far behind. We also find counties named for James Madison, the Marquis de Lafayette, Francis Marion, and many other near-mythic figures of those founding years. Later, heroes of the War of 1812, such as Andrew Jackson and Oliver Hazard Perry were honored, and after the Mexican-American War, both heroes and battle locations were reminders of that event. Iowa, for example, has Cerro Gordo, Buena Vista, and Palo Alto, all battle locations in Mexico. You can trace the chronology of the United States by traveling east

to west and observing the names of counties you pass through. In the 398 counties of the five states I am considering, 22, or about 5.5%, are named for Union generals in the Civil War. As we shall see, in many cases it was not so much for their service during the War that the county names honored these men as for other contributions before or after the War.

To identify the generals, I have relied heavily on Ezra J. Warner's 1964 *Generals in Blue*, which provides brief sketches, with photographs, of 583 men who held the rank of general at some time during the war. These are the generals who held commissions signed by the President, but in addition to these, there were at least 1,367 men who were awarded the rank of brevet general, whom Warner lists without details in an appendix.

A brevet rank was considered temporary. During the War it was used for gallant action or meritorious service or for other, often unspecified reasons. Warner (xvi) says that "... brevet promotions had become almost as common as Good Conduct medals did later." So many were just political promotions that the rank was essentially meaningless for military purposes. To complicate the issue further, generalships were given in three other categories: Regular Army, Volunteer Service, and state militias (not recognized by the central government). "It was possible," says Warner, "to hold four separate and distinct ranks at one and the same time," and one officer at the end of the war, was "a full-rank brigadier of volunteers, a major general of volunteers by brevet, and a brigadier general by brevet in the Regular Army, although his substantive rank in the Regulars was captain of engineers" (Warner xvii-xviii).

Table 1 shows the generals for whom counties are named and the year in which each of those counties was created and named.

Table 1. Civil War Union Generals for Whom Counties are Named

<i>Counties named for</i>	<i>IA</i>	<i>MN</i>	<i>NE</i>	<i>ND</i>	<i>SD</i>
William H. H. BEADLE					1879
George Armstrong CUSTER			1877		1875
Ulysses Simpson GRANT		1868	1888	1916	1878
Joseph HOOKER			1889		
Oliver Otis HOWARD			1871		
Lucius F. HUBBARD		1883			
John Alexander LOGAN			1885	1873	
Nathaniel LYON	1862	1868			
William R. MARSHALL		1879			
Edwin Stanton McCOOK					1873
James Birdseye McPHERSON			1887		1873
George Gordon MEADE					1889
John POPE		1862			
Thomas E. G. RANSOM				1873	
Philip Henry SHERIDAN			1885	1873	
William Tecumseh SHERMAN			1871		
David Sloane STANLEY					1873
Isaac Ingalls STEVENS		1862			
Alfred SULLY					1873
John Milton THAYER			1871		
George Henry THOMAS			1887		
John Blair Smith TODD		1855			1909

The following pages give a brief sketch, in alphabetical order, of those generals who have been honored in one way or another by having counties named for them, starting with one—and ending with another—who had close connections to Dakota.

**William Henry Harrison Beadle** (1838-1915; South Dakota) was born in Indiana and graduated in 1861 from the University of Michigan with a degree in civil engineering. He immediately signed up in the Union Army as a first lieutenant. In 1863 he was made a lieutenant colonel in the First Michigan Sharpshooters and in March 1865 he commanded the honor guard when Lincoln gave his second inaugural address. He is listed among the brevet generals (Warner 582), but it is unclear when he was given that rank; it was either in March 1865, "for gallant and meritorious service during the war," or in March 1866, when he was mustered out of the army. Either way, the rank was more honorary than real, but he was referred to as General Beadle for the rest of his life. He was appointed surveyor general of South Dakota in 1869, and later was

superintendent of public instruction. He was responsible for insisting that two sections of every township, reserved as school lands, would never be sold for less than the market price or for less than ten dollars an acre, a condition written into the state constitution. His later years were spent president and professor at Madison Normal School, later called General Beadle State Teachers College and now Dakota State University. His statue stands in the state capitol building in Pierre and a copy of the same statue is in the Rotunda of the U. S. Capitol in Washington (Sneve 20-21; Gasque 154-55). The county which bears his name honors him more for his service to the state than for his Civil War service.

**George Armstrong Custer** (1839-1876; Nebraska, South Dakota) performed well during the Civil War but his name on counties in South Dakota and Nebraska probably owe more to his presence on the frontier after the war. He was a West Point graduate, 1861, and was at the bottom of his class. He went from first lieutenant to brigadier general of volunteers in June 1863, at the age of 24, and commanded a brigade at Gettysburg. In 1866 he was given a commission as lieutenant colonel of the newly authorized 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, and he held that rank in that unit for the ten years remaining of his life. Custer County, South Dakota, was created and named in 1875, a year after Custer led the expedition to explore the Black Hills, resulting in the gold-rush town which took his name, which is directly responsible for the county name. The county in Nebraska was named in 1877, most likely to commemorate the man who by that time had reached near mythological status after his adventures at the Battle of Little Big Horn (Warner 108-110; Fitzpatrick 45; Sneve 24).

**Ulysses S. Grant** (1822-1885; Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota) was in the West Point class of 1843. He fought in the Mexican War, but after that resigned his commission and between 1854 and 1860 became a farmer, a real estate salesman, candidate for county engineer, customhouse clerk, and clerk in a leather store—they sold harnesses—owned by his two brothers. He was not successful at any of them, but he found his calling again when the War broke out. He was made a brigadier general of volunteers on Aug 7, 1861, probably a political appointment. He defeated the confederates at Nashville and commanded the siege at Vicksburg, which surrendered on July 4, 1863. As a result he was appointed Major General. After the War Congress revised the rank of full general and gave it to Grant. He easily won the presidency in 1868 and 1872, and though he was personally honest, his administration was marked by corruption. In his last years he was broke, but in the last year of his life he finished

his memoirs (published by Mark Twain), which became a best seller and made a lot of money for his surviving family (Warner 183-86). All of the counties which carry his name were created during or after his presidency and that rather than his service during the War probably accounts for the naming, but without the Civil War he would likely be as unknown as he was before it (Upham 218; Fitzpatrick 68; Wick 222 ; Sneve 26).

**Joseph Hooker** (1814-1879; Nebraska) graduated from West Point in 1837 and performed outstanding service during the Mexican War, but his performance as a general in the Civil War has been hotly debated. He was named commander of the Army of the Potomac after Burnside was relieved of duty. He himself was relieved just before Gettysburg, then was with Sherman in Chattanooga. After the death of McPherson at Atlanta, Sherman appointed Howard over Hooker, and Hooker asked to be relieved of his command. An often-told story (Warner 235, for instance) is that Hooker's name is responsible for the word *hooker* meaning "prostitute," but there is documentary evidence that the word in that sense was in use as early as 1845 (Warner 233-35; Fitzpatrick 79; *American Heritage* 844).

**Oliver Otis Howard** (1820-1909; Nebraska), fourth in the West Point class of 1854, seemed to be basically incompetent, but he managed to come out ahead. At the First Battle of Bull Run, or Manassas, his troops ran away disorganized, but he was rewarded with a brigadier general's star, and at Gettysburg he "showed a conspicuous lack of decision" (Warner 238). After the war he was commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, which led to his strong support of African Americans, and he was one of the founders of Howard University, which was named in his honor (Warner 237-39; Fitzpatrick 80).

**Lucius Frederick Hubbard** (1836-1913, Minnesota), appears on the list of brevet generals (Warner 587), and his contribution to Minnesota nomenclature seems to be more from his connection to the state than to his military career. Born in the East, he came to Red Wing, Minnesota, at the age of 21 and became a printer and editor. He returned to Red Wing after the war, was involved in several business operations, and was a state senator and then governor for two terms, beginning in 1881 (Upham 248).

**John Alexander Logan** (1826-1886; Nebraska, North Dakota) may have been "the Union's premier civilian combat general" (Warner 281). He was born in southern Illinois, a secession-leaning area, and he supported

Stephen Douglas in the 1860 election. He was known as "Black Jack" because of his black eyes and hair and swarthy complexion. He was at Vicksburg with Grant and McPherson, after which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his valor. When McPherson was killed, Logan took over the Army of the Tennessee temporarily, but Sherman chose Oliver Howard as a permanent commander, since he and not Logan was a West Pointer, which made Logan permanently hate anything to do with West Point. After the War, until his death in 1886, he served as a representative and a senator from Illinois in the U.S. Congress and was the unsuccessful Republican candidate for Vice President in the election of 1884. (Warner 281-83; Fitzpatrick 97; Wick 223).

**Nathaniel Lyon** (1818-1861; Iowa, Minnesota) was in the West Point class of 1841, eleventh out of fifty-two. He was in the Seminole and Mexican Wars. From 1854 until 1861 he was stationed in Kansas and then commanded the arsenal in St. Louis. When that city threatened to support secession, Lyon seized the pro-Confederate encampment under General Daniel M. Frost, who incidentally had been in Dakota as a business partner with John Blair Smith Todd, who became a Union general. Early in the war Lyon was named brigadier general and worked to drive the Confederate supporters out of Missouri. At the decisive Battle of Wilson's Creek, August 10, 1861, his unit defeated the Confederates, but Lyon was killed. He is said to have saved Missouri for the Union (Warner 286-87; Dilts 22-23; Upham 334).

Lyon County, Iowa, which is just across the Sioux River from Sioux Falls, was originally named, in 1851, Buncombe County, a transfer name from the county in North Carolina whose seat is Asheville. When the war came, the citizens thought that it would not be appropriate to honor any aspect of the South, so agreed to change the name to honor General Lyon (Dilts 22).<sup>2</sup>

**William R. Marshall** (1825-1896, Minnesota) appears on Warner's brevet list (589). He was born in Illinois and moved to St. Paul in 1849. He was in the first territorial legislature and was chairman of the convention that saw the birth of Minnesota's Republican Party. He was in the Civil War, where he was brevetted brigadier general, and in the Dakota uprising of 1862. His military service was honorable but short, and it is most likely the fact that he was elected governor of Minnesota and 1865 and 1867 that resulted in a county bearing his name. (Upham 343).

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<sup>2</sup> Buncombe County, N. C., gives us our word *bunkum*, or *bunk*, meaning "nonsense." A senator from that county, in about 1820, was given to long, dull speeches, and when his colleagues objected, he responded by saying, "I'm speaking for Buncombe" (*American Heritage* 247).

**Edwin Stanton McCook** (1837-1873; South Dakota), like two of his brothers and several of his cousins, was a general in the War, but he does not make the brevet list in Warner's book. According to a website (Dodge), he was brevetted brigadier general in March 13, 1865, toward the end of the War, for "gallant and meritorious service." In 1872 he was appointed treasurer of Dakota Territory, and in 1873, in a dispute over railroad concerns, he was gunned down by Peter Wintermute, who was first convicted then later found not guilty of murder. (Sneve 29; Karolevitz 95-96). McCook County was created that same year, suggesting that the naming was more for his local fame than for his service during the War.

**James Birdseye McPherson** (1828-1864; Nebraska, South Dakota) ranked first in the 1853 West Point class, which included Phil Sheridan and John Bell Hood, later Union and Confederate generals respectively. He was with Sherman in Tennessee and Georgia and at one point, while returning from Sherman's headquarters to his own, he found himself facing a Confederate patrol under the command of his old classmate John Bell Hood. The Confederates demanded his surrender, but he wheeled his horse around and rode off. He was shot in the back. When General Sherman viewed his body laid on a door "torn from its hinges," his tears rolled through his beard and down on the floor" (Warner 306-08; Fitzpatrick 99; Sneve 29).

**George Gordon Meade** (1815-1872; South Dakota) was a West Point graduate in the class of 1835 and for most of his military career was a civil engineer engaged in building lighthouses and breakwaters and in coastal and geodetic surveys. He was made a brigadier general in 1861 and led a Pennsylvania brigade in the Peninsular Campaign of April through July 1862. As commander of the Army of the Potomac he defeated General Lee at Gettysburg, but was faulted for not pursuing the fleeing Confederates. After the war he remained in command of Divisions in the East. The important fort just east of the Black Hills was named in his honor when he died in 1872, and Meade County was named for the fort rather than directly for the general (Warner 315-17; Sneve 29-30).

**John Pope** (1822-1892, Minnesota) graduated from West Point in the class of 1842, a class that furnished seventeen full-rank generals to one side or another during the War. Made a general early in the summer of 1861, he had success in the Mississippi River campaign but at second Manassas in August 1862 he was driven back almost to Washington. He tended to blame others for his own misjudgments, earning him the contempt of his fellow officers.

As Warner puts it, "he was put on the shelf" in Minnesota and performed admirably during the Sioux uprising (Warner 377). The county honoring him recognizes that service more than his contributions to the Union effort in the East (Warner 376-77; Upham 463).

**Thomas Edward Greenfield Ransom** (1824-1864; North Dakota), like Lyon and McPherson, is remembered as a casualty to the War with no connection to the state whose county bears his name. He was a civil engineer in civilian life and organized and commanded an Illinois regiment. He was with Sherman in Tennessee, where he was seriously wounded, and at Atlanta, after which he pursued some of the fleeing rebels into Alabama. Suffering from his wounds and gravely ill, he died in October 1864 on his way back to Sherman's army (Warner 389-90; Wick 228).

**Philip Henry Sheridan** (1831-1888; Nebraska, North Dakota) was, in Warner's words, "one of the three Union generals who won the greatest fame in the Civil War (437). He began at West Point in the class of 1852 but was suspended for a year so graduated in 1853, in the bottom third of his class. At Chickamauga in September 1863 his unit lost 1,500 men (out of 4,000), including two of his three brigade commanders, but his unit took Missionary Ridge near Chattanooga. In the spring of 1864 Grant made him commander of cavalry in the Army of the Potomac. Accepting orders to destroy everything of potential use to the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley, he said that when he was done "a crow [flying across the valley] would be compelled to carry his own rations" (Warner 439). After the war he commanded units in Texas and Louisiana during Reconstruction. When Grant was elected president in 1868, he was named lieutenant general at the time that Sherman was named full general, and when Sherman retired in 1884, Sheridan was appointed commanding general of the Army and shortly before his death was awarded the rank of full general. Meanwhile, during the 1870s and early '80s he held posts on the Indian frontier, including the command of the Division of the Missouri (Warner 437-39; Fitzpatrick 132; Wick 230).

**William Tecumseh Sherman** (1820-1891; Nebraska) was sixth in his West Point class of 1840 and was in California during the Mexican War, where his service was unexceptional. He resigned his commission in 1853 to become a banker and then a lawyer in San Francisco and was not successful at either profession. He regained his commission as a colonel and then brigadier general at the outbreak of the War and was at Shiloh in April 1862; after that he was made a major general in command of all troops in the Western Theater. He was among the few who

believed that the War would be long and bloody, and he is mostly remembered, especially in the South, for introducing the concept of "modern warfare," where civilians were not to be spared the ravages of war. After burning Atlanta he began his famous March to the Sea, reaching Savannah in time for Christmas 1864. His post-war career included commander-in-chief of the Army (Warner 441-44; Fitzpatrick 135).

**David Sloane Stanley** (1828-1902; South Dakota) a West Pointer, class of 1852, spent most of his pre-war service in Oklahoma. He was offered a Confederate commission but turned it down and led his troops from Oklahoma to Ft. Leavenworth. He was at the Battle of Wilson's Creek in Missouri in 1861, after which he was made a brigadier general of Volunteers. He was at Corinth, Chattanooga, and Atlanta, and after the War was on the frontier for thirty-four years, including a long period as commander of Fort Sully, across the Missouri River from the South Dakota county named for him (Warner 470-71; Sneve 33).

**Isaac Ingalls Stevens** (1818-1862; Minnesota) was first in the class of 1839 at West Point. He served in Mexico with Winfield Scott and was severely wounded. In 1853 he was appointed governor of Washington Territory and worked his way there by commanding a survey party for a northern railway route, starting in St. Paul. He tended toward a pro-slavery position before the War, which caused concern when he joined the Union Army, but he proved himself at the First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run). He was killed at Chantilly during the Second Manassas Battle on September 1, 1862 (Warner 475-76; Upham 581).

**Alfred Sully** (1820-1879; South Dakota) was in the West Point class of 1841 and fought in the Seminole and Mexican Wars. He was first in Dakota in 1856 as a topographical engineer and returned during the War (in the fall of 1863) as commander of the First Military District of the Northwest, which established Fort Sully. Its first location, downstream from Pierre, was later moved to the area of the present Sully County. His service in the War in the East was minimal, though he was at Chancellorsville in May 1863 and other engagements in Virginia, where he achieved the rank of major general of volunteers. He spent the last few years of his life in Washington Territory (Warner 488-89; Sneve 33-34).

**John Milton Thayer** (1820-1906; Nebraska) was a graduate of Brown University and a lawyer. In 1854 he moved to Nebraska Territory and was a brigadier general of the territorial militia. When the War started, he was

made a colonel in the 1<sup>st</sup> Nebraska regiment and later a brigadier general. His combat service was at Fort Donelson and Shiloh in Tennessee and in the Vicksburg campaign. After the war he returned to Nebraska and was one of the first two senators when Nebraska became a state in 1867. He failed to be re-elected in 1871 and was appointed governor of Wyoming territory by his friend President Grant. In 1886, back in Nebraska, he was elected governor of that state and was re-elected in 1888. He didn't run in 1890, but brought suit against his successor on the grounds that he was not a U.S. citizen, so Thayer kept the governor's seat for nearly two more years until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against him and ousted him. He died in Lincoln in 1906. (Warner 499-500; Fitzpatrick 138)

**George Henry Thomas** (1816-1870; Nebraska) was born in Virginia and broke with his family when he supported the Union. He ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the 1840 West Point class; his classmate, William T. Sherman, was 6<sup>th</sup>. He was in the Seminole and Mexican wars and was mostly on the Indian frontier in Texas before the Civil War broke out. There his fellow officers included Sidney Johnston, Robert E. Lee, and William. J. Hardee, all to become Confederate generals. He was a hero at the Battle of Chickamauga (August and September 1863), where he stood his ground while other units were retreating, earning him the epithet "the Rock of Chickamauga." After the fall of Atlanta he took his troops to Nashville and destroyed John Bell Hood's Confederate forces, bringing on another nickname, "The Sledge of Nashville." He continued to command the Department of Tennessee after the War and in 1869 was assigned to San Francisco, where he died of a stroke a year later. (Warner 500-02; Fitzpatrick 139)

**John Blair Smith Todd** (1814-1872; Minnesota, South Dakota), born in Kentucky, may have been related by marriage to Abraham Lincoln. He was an 1832 West Point graduate, a class which included future generals Jubal Early and John C. Pemberton (CSA) and Joseph Hooker and John Sedgwick (USA). He was in the Seminole and Mexican Wars and at various Western posts, including Fort Ripley, and the Minnesota county named for him, not far from Fort Ripley, recognizes his pre-Civil War service. In 1856 but he resigned his commission to become sutler at Fort Randall. He then was a lawyer and merchant in Yankton, in partnership with Daniel M. Frost, also a West Point graduate, class of 1842, who, though born in New York, supported the Southern cause and became a general in the Confederate Army. Todd served as a brigadier general of Volunteers in the North Missouri District and in the Army of the Tennessee. Somehow, he also was able to serve as the territorial delegate to Congress. He spent the

remainder of his life in Yankton and is buried in the Yankton City Cemetery. The present Todd County shares its area with Rosebud Reservation, but there was an earlier paper county by that name in the area now occupied by Gregory County (Warner 507-08; Upham 589; Sneve 34).

This brief overview should give some idea of the legacy of the Civil War in the Midwest. There are many other features, especially towns and townships, that honor generals and other military men, political figures such as Lincoln, and abstractions, such as Union. Also, the deliberations that preceded naming might be examined through primary sources such as legislative records and newspaper accounts. But all of that must be left for another time.

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Acculturation in the First Generation of Norwegian-American Pastor's Wives:  
The Divergent Experiences of Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch

Tim Grundmeier

In the middle of the nineteenth century, thousands of Norwegians began to immigrate to the Midwestern United States, bringing with them their culture and religion. The majority of these settlers belonged to the Lutheran state church and soon they requested pastors from Norway. A number of younger pastors answered this call, leaving their homeland to bring God's Word to their fellow countrymen in America. But these pastors were not alone. Their young wives also left behind family, friends, and their former way of life to follow their husbands to America.

Various scholars have detailed the experiences and adjustments of these women. L. DeAne Lagerquist's groundbreaking study about the Americanization of Norwegian Lutheran women is by far the most comprehensive.<sup>1</sup> Though her focus is not exclusively on pastor's wives, several of these women receive extensive treatment, as she explains their changing roles in the home, society and the congregation. Scholars of housework and frontierswomen, such as Ruth Schwartz Cowan and Glenda Riley, have also explored the adjustments of these Norwegian women.<sup>2</sup> Other scholars have focused specifically on these pastor's wives. Both Peter A. Munch and Leigh D. Jordahl discuss on how the social and cultural changes applied to the Norwegian-American pioneer parsonage.<sup>3</sup>

One area of research that has yet to be fully explored is what factors led certain pastors' wives to more fully adapt to life in America than others. Two members of the first generation of Norwegian-American Lutheran pastors' wives—Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch—make an interesting case study in this regard. Though these women shared common backgrounds in Norway and similar experiences in America, they differed significantly in how they adjusted from their former life in Norway to their new life in the Midwestern United States. The Korens lived out the rest of their days in America, while the Munchs moved back to their homeland after four years.

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<sup>1</sup> DeAne L. Lagerquist, *In America the Men Milk the Cows: Gender, Ethnicity, and Religion in the Americanization of Norwegian-American Lutheran Women*, vol. 12 of *Chicago Studies in the History of American Religion*, ed. Jerald C. Brauer and Martin E. Marty (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); and Glenda Riley, *Frontierswomen: The Iowa Experience* (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Peter A. Munch, "Social Class and Acculturation," in *The Strange American Way*, trans. and ed. Helene Munch and Peter A. Munch (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 1970); and Leigh D. Jordahl, "The Gentry Tradition—Men and Women of a Leadership Class: How Shall the Faith and Human Culture Interrelate?" in *Church Roots: Stories of Nine Immigrant Groups that Became the American Lutheran Church*, ed. Charles P. Lutz, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1985): 101-116.

One solution is to ascribe these diverse reactions to mere differences in personality. Gracia Grindal says as much in her analysis of these women. According to her, Elisabeth Koren entered life in America with a more open mind than Caja Munch and therefore more readily embraced the changes that the frontier necessitated.<sup>4</sup> While there is certainly much truth to this analysis, this explanation does not fully account for the social and cultural biases held by both of these women upon their arrival in America. However, from the personal writings of Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch a more complete picture of their triumphs and struggles with American acculturation emerges. Each woman certainly had her own unique personality, but just as significant as the attitudes that they brought over to America were their distinctive experiences in America that molded and shaped their respective outlooks.

Both Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch grew up in a Norwegian social structure that maintained a distinct separation between the common people (*almuen*) and the professional elites (*conditioneret*). This separation was a product of historical development, where doctors, lawyers, businessmen and clergy filled the social and political vacuum left by a weak nobility. Though the *conditioneret* did not regard themselves as ruling class *per se*, that was in fact what they came to be. Long family lineages were intertwined, making rising up from the *almuen* nearly impossible. What separated these classes was an intangible quality called *dannelse*, frequently rendered "culture." Members of the *conditioneret* were expected to conduct themselves in a way that distinguished themselves as gentlemen and ladies. This included their dress, furnishings, manners and topics of conversation.<sup>5</sup> This carried over to life in the parish, where the parsonage was to be a cultural center, especially in rural areas.<sup>6</sup>

Norwegian women of the upper class were expected to be cultured housewives. This training began early in an apprenticeship in the home of a close relative or friend of the family. They learned to prepare meals, care for the animals, make clothes, and perform other household chores. Meanwhile they also became acquainted with elements

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<sup>4</sup> Gracia Grindal, "The Americanization of the Norwegian Pastors' Wives," *Norwegian-American Studies* 32 (1989): 206-7.

<sup>5</sup> Munch, "Social Class," 197-201; and Lagerquist, *In America*, 13-15.

<sup>6</sup> Jordahl, "The Gentry Tradition," 106-8.

of “culture.” They attended balls, played music, read books, drew and wrote. Already as teenagers, they were expected to be involved in courtship and eventually marry.<sup>7</sup>

Both the diary of Elisabeth Koren and the letters of Caja Munch reflect their privileged upbringing in the Norwegian upper class. Koren’s diary began as she and her newly married husband are about to embark on their voyage to America. She and her husband of a few months, Ulrik Vilhelm, were first-class passengers on this voyage. She spent most her time reading, enjoying fine meals and socializing with the other passengers. When they arrived in New York, she and her husband had dinner at an elegant restaurant. Throughout her travels to their parish in Iowa, she constantly showed marks of her cultured upbringing by commenting on the décor of trains, ferries, and other houses. The same concerns mark her arrival in Iowa as well.<sup>8</sup>

Like Koren’s diary, Munch’s letters reflect her privileged upbringing. She and her husband Johan Sturm were, like the Korens, first class passengers on their trip. Upon their arrival in America they visited “New York’s best restaurant.” Throughout their time in their parish in Wisconsin, she frequently commented on the importance of being with cultured people. Her description of their parsonage showed an eye for proper furnishing and decoration.<sup>9</sup>

Along with their common Norwegian upper class backgrounds, Koren and Munch shared similar experiences in their immigration and adjustment to life in America. Both married newly ordained pastors of the Norwegian Lutheran Church at a young age—Koren at 21 and Munch at 25—and left Norway within a month after their wedding. The Korens emigrated in 1853; the Munchs in 1855. Both settled in the Middle West of the United States—the Korens near Decorah, Iowa and the Munchs in Wiota, Wisconsin (south of Madison).

Both also shared similar adjustments to life on the Midwestern frontier. The most immediately apparent adjustment was doing without many of the comforts of home. When she and her husband Vilhelm arrived at the home of Pastor Adolph C. Preus in Koshkonong, Wisconsin, Koren noticed the plainness of the parsonage. “We found it rather strange in that little house to begin with... The parsonage is a fairly large log cabin with whitewashed

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<sup>7</sup> Grindal, *Americanization*, 199-205; and Lagerquist, *In America*, 15-19.

<sup>8</sup> Elisabeth Koren, *The Diary of Elisabeth Koren: 1853-1855*, trans. and ed. David T. Nelson (Decorah, IA: Norwegian-American Museum and Luther College, 1978), 3, 64, 98.

<sup>9</sup> Caja Munch, *The Strange American Way: Letters of Caja Munch from Wiota, Wisconsin, 1855-1859*, trans. and ed. Helene Munch, and Peter A. Munch (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), 8, 65-9.

walls and unbelievably simple furniture."<sup>10</sup> Coinciding with this lack of former luxuries were the new challenges in the area of homemaking. Both of these women had some help from hired servants, but were generally negative in their appraisal of their abilities. "America is so poorly supplied with help," wrote Caja Munch to her grandmother. "I have a young girl, who was confirmed by Munch last year, and who knows nothing."<sup>11</sup> Elisabeth Koren expressed similar sentiments and frequently commented on the lack of good servants in America. In one of her more exasperated moments, she lamented that the only reason she would return to Norway to live would be for decent household help.<sup>12</sup> These deficiencies in hired help forced them to work more than they were accustomed.

However, what these women truly missed were less the material things from Norway, but things of a more emotional value. Koren bemoaned the lack of natural beauty, "It always makes me sad when I hear that in America the birds do not sing, and the flowers have no fragrance. I feel as if something of the finest were lacking, as if no real joy could be felt in nature; and so my thoughts turn with added melancholy to the beautiful summer evenings at home."<sup>13</sup> Certainly these women's most poignant adjustment was dealing with the loneliness that they felt. Both Johan Munch and Vilhelm Koren served several parishes and spent much time away from home. This loneliness was especially strong for Elisabeth Koren. Often her husband would be gone for well over a week, and she would not know when exactly he would return. She was forced to confide her loneliness in her diary, "Well, I am alone again and will no doubt be alone all week. How I long for the time when there will be a little less traveling, a little more reasonable arrangement for this one is really all wrong, and, what is worse, is not likely to get better soon."<sup>14</sup> For Caja Munch, she was often able to accompany her husband on these journeys until they had their first child; then she usually had to stay behind.

It was not just the absence of these women's husbands that produced this loneliness, but also the absence of a social network like that which they had in Norway. Members of the Norwegian *conditioneret* partook in frequent social gatherings. In America, though the group of about a dozen immigrant Norwegian Lutheran pastors and their

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<sup>10</sup> Koren, 75.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>12</sup> Koren, 257. See also the discussion in Grindal, *Americanization*, 205-6

<sup>13</sup> Koren, 82.

<sup>14</sup> Koren., 158.

wives formed something of a cultured social club,<sup>15</sup> they did not meet nearly as frequently as had social circles back in Norway. Because of the infrequent contact with cultured women of the upper class, these pastors' wives often longed for more sophisticated company. Before their parsonage was built, the Korens stayed with a local family, and Elisabeth at times grew lonely in their company. "I can indeed talk to them," she wrote, "and do so, too, and it is probably my own fault that I find these conversations of so little interest. This is not always true, to be sure; but at times the wish to have a cultured person to talk to becomes very strong."<sup>16</sup> Caja Munch was happy to meet with more cultured people whenever possible. On one occasion she and her husband "drove directly to a small town called Linden, where a Norwegian office clerk from Drammen lives... These were cultured people, and believe me, we do appreciate meeting people like that in this country."<sup>17</sup>

Along with the shared Norwegian background and the similar adjustments to the life in the Midwest, both women immigrated to America with social and cultural prejudices. On her train travels in the Midwest, Elisabeth Koren remarked that "the coaches were filled with an unpleasant mixed company, which one must put up with here where there is only one class." Later, on a ferry from Chicago to Milwaukee, she complained that these people "should be forbidden to walk upon these lovely carpets."<sup>18</sup> After a few months into her time in Wisconsin, Caja Munch offered this analysis of the social situation, "Everything considered, we do not really miss anything except the company of cultured people instead of these silly peasants, who for the most part cannot comprehend at all that we are a step above them and have more requirements.... For example, many will simply call me Caja."<sup>19</sup>

Closely associated with their view of social superiority was their feeling of cultural superiority. These Norwegian women held a disdain for anything "Yankee." Caja Munch wrote, "The Yankee ladies are terribly lazy, if I can call them ladies; indeed, I hardly think there is a single cultured family to be found here until you get to the larger cities. Although they dress like court ladies, it is still obvious from their conduct and manners that they are of the crudest rabble."<sup>20</sup> These cultural prejudices showed through especially when their fellow countrymen adopted their

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<sup>15</sup> For a description of such a gathering, see Munch, *Letters*, 146-8.

<sup>16</sup> Koren, 159.

<sup>17</sup> Munch, *Letters*, 42-3.

<sup>18</sup> Koren, 73-4.

<sup>19</sup> Munch, *Letters*, 29-30.

<sup>20</sup> Munch, *Letters*, 73.

customs, as was common in the peasant class.<sup>21</sup> After being welcomed into the home of a Norwegian blacksmith on their journey to Iowa, Elisabeth Koren gave this appraisal, "They appeared to be good people but were, without a doubt, much 'Yankeefied.'"<sup>22</sup>

At first glance then, the stories of Elisabeth Koren and Caja Munch appear virtually identical. Both shared the same upper class background and similar adjustments to American frontier life. Both also immigrated with notions of social and cultural superiority. Yet, the way their stories unfolded could not be more different. Koren and her husband would remain in Iowa the rest of their days, while the Munchs would leave America in frustration after only four years in Wisconsin. One of the chief reasons for this divergence was how each woman bridged the social gap between herself and the lower-class parishioners. These two women may well have retained the same opinions on class had it not been for their different experiences in their social lives. For Elisabeth Koren, her experiences challenged her social biases, and helped her adapt more successfully to life in America. Caja Munch's experiences confirmed her prejudices and made her resent her plight in America.

Unlike the Munchs, the Korens did not have a parsonage ready soon after they arrived at their parish. Because of this, they stayed for several months in the home of the Egges, a lower-class farming family. Already less than two weeks into their stay, Elisabeth's attitude was beginning to change, "I soon wished myself home again, I cannot deny it; it was hot, there were so many children, and it is not always pleasant to watch Anne's naive, free and easy manners. At the same time, they are so friendly, these people, and in every way make it so comfortable for us that I am ashamed of being critical." When remembering the "Yankeefied" family with whom they stayed on their way to Iowa, she wrote with some regret, "At that time I was not yet accustomed to native rural hospitality." In less than two months of living in Iowa, the Egges and other parishioners had won her over, "We cannot say that we live so

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<sup>21</sup> Jon Gjerde notes that "the rural Norwegian-Americans produced by their behavior a curious mixture of tradition and change." Gjerde, *From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration from Balestrand, Norway, to the Upper Middle West* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 9.

<sup>22</sup> Koren, 84.

exceptionally well here... But our appetites seldom fail. And even though we might find food twice as good at many places, I have not found any other place where I would rather live."<sup>23</sup>

Such a statement does not imply a full assimilation of social classes. Koren still longed for the company of cultured people and grew tired of talking about "cattle and swine."<sup>24</sup> However, she made significant steps in bridging of the social gap between herself and the lowan parishioners. In her lonely times when her husband was away, she went on walks to visit one or more of the farmer's houses. After church services, she felt comfortable to talk to the parishioners. In conclusion, the experience of living in the Egges' home helped her adjust to the harsh living conditions and loneliness of the American frontier.

Caja Munch's experience was quite different. Though the Munchs were also put up in a member's home upon their arrival in Wisconsin, this living situation was only for a few months. Also it was in the farm home of Even Kronborg, a older bachelor who lived across the street from the church, so the Munchs had ample space and privacy in their temporary residence. Along with Kronborg, they befriended a few other congregation members, who did things for them, but, according to Caja Munch, these were only "the good ones." Soon she moved into the secluded parsonage, having never established a substantial number of connections with the congregation's members.<sup>25</sup>

A further hindrance to her bridging the social gap between herself and the parishioners was the proximity of several other pastors and their wives to the Munchs' parish. Caja became especially close to Pauline Dietrichson of Koshkonong, Wisconsin, whom she described as both a "mother and sister to me." She wrote to her mother, "Oh, how wonderful it is to meet such a person over here in America, we are so closely united that hardly any friendship could be tied any stronger between two families."<sup>26</sup> This socializing, though only somewhat frequent, removed the need to befriend any additional congregation members. With her nearby social club, Caja Munch, unlike Elisabeth Koren, was able to maintain what she considered an appropriate social distance from these "silly peasants." She maintained this attitude until her and her husband's move back to Norway.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 107, 84, 156.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>25</sup> Munch, *Letters*, 15-21.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 50.

Another aspect of her personal life that bears mentioning is that for the first year and a half in Wiota, Munch had the company of her younger brother Emil. Though he has been described as “a strange and reticent boy,”<sup>27</sup> Caja seems to have been rather fond of him, if almost in a motherly sort of way. She was the oldest of thirteen children and accustomed to such a role. In either case, Emil provided her with company for this first while, further insulating her from the lower-class parishioners.

Augmenting the divergent experiences in their home life were the different experiences in their congregational life. Though Koren was certainly a religious person before her emigration, the American frontier experience had the effect of strengthening her spiritual life. “Services here always seem peculiarly affecting and impressive to me. It is so wonderful to see our people in this foreign land streaming together from every direction, and to feel the devotion and attention with which they sing their hymns and listen to the pastor. It all has quite a different aspect from what I have been accustomed to.”<sup>28</sup>

Caja Munch’s congregational experience was much different. Her heavy-handed husband was in constant conflict with his parishioners. Much of the conflict surrounded the parishioners’ drinking habits, as one letter indicates, “There is, unfortunately, much drinking among the Norwegians in the congregation. You can imagine that it is unpleasant to be their minister, but one cannot exclude them entirely from the congregation. Munch is hoping that the condition will improve in time; besides the congregation is too weak to carry all the burdens that rest upon it without these drunkards.” Consequently she adopted a judgmental attitude toward religious life in America. “There is not, as we thought before we left Norway, an intense longing to hear the Word of the Lord and a craving to partake of His holy gifts.” At one time the congregational struggles turned so bitter that Caja thanked the Lord for the sudden death of one of their “opponents.”<sup>29</sup> On March 1, 1859, Caja Munch sent a letter to her parents announcing her and Johann’s return to Norway. Though she did not go into the details of why they were returning, her husband in the postscript did not mince any words, “In Wiota can no true servant of the Lord work any longer.”<sup>30</sup> The Munchs had failed to adapt to their new life in America.

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<sup>27</sup> Munch, *Social Class*, 242.

<sup>28</sup> Koren, 115.

<sup>29</sup> Munch, *Letters*, 57, 76, 97.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

For Caja Munch, her living situation and congregational struggles shaped her attitudes toward life in America. Ultimately, her only positive appraisal of her American experience was that it had tested her faith. She wrote her grandmother, "[I]n spite of all, I would not have missed this journey. Even though the body is not comfortable over here, I think our souls have had great benefit from the tour, and that we by mere grace have come closer to our God and Savior.... [But] I cannot comprehend the statement that I have heard from several of the ministers over here, that they intend to stay here for years, maybe even forever."<sup>31</sup>

Elisabeth Koren and her husband, however, did stay "forever." Her living situation and congregational life had modified her social and cultural notions. Despite the difficult adjustments to the Midwestern frontier, she was able to look back upon her life in America with fondness. She wrote before her diary's first publication in 1914, "With gratitude I look back on my long life here in this land, and think of the many now dead who received us with so much friendliness and surrounded us with love all our lives."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 61, 71

<sup>32</sup> Koren, 370. Riley, 103, also sees the sincerity in this quotation. One gathers the impression that her children also felt the same way. Her daughter, Caroline, recalls both the hardships, but more so, the joys of her years in the Little Iowa parsonage. Caroline M. K. Naeseth, "Memories from Little Iowa Parsonage" trans. and ed. Henriette C. K. Naeseth *Norwegian-American Studies* 13 (1943): 66-74.

**South Dakota State Medical Association 1880-1910**  
Elizabeth R. Gutch

We know of the rapid progress of medicine in the last few years, but do we know what it was like in 1880-1914 when the young medical school graduates came to the area we now know as South Dakota. There were all kinds of difficulties, the country sparsely settled, no hospitals, no drug stores, and one of the most difficult problem was they had no wives, they had to make enough money to support them. You can just hear the father of the young ladies "You cannot marry my daughter until you can support her in a manner to which she is accustomed." Luckily there was a great demand for their skills.

I have found stories about 10 of the early physicians who became Presidents of the South Dakota State Medical Association in George Kingsbury and Doane Robinson reference volumes. I will tell the stories and then describe the medical College for each doctor gathered from Google.

The first President in 1880 was ALEXANDER GRANT, M.D.<sup>1</sup> born in New York and graduated from Pennsylvania Medical College, who started a practice in Minnesota, and moved to Bath, South Dakota where he was elected President in 1880. His death was noted on May 9, 1907.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA was the first Medical School in the United States, established in 1765, with a faculty from Scotland. The physicians were listed as John Morgan (Founder) Benjamin Rush (Medicine) Philip Syng Physick (Surgery) Robert Hare (Chemistry) and around the 1850s William Pepper and Joseph Leidy. I tried to figure out why they had come to the United States. Research showed that although all of the doctors had graduated from the University of Eidenburg, all had been born in Philadelphia.

The President of the Association in 1890 was JOHN WILLIAM FREEMAN, M.D.<sup>2</sup> who was born December 13, 1853 in Virdon, Illinois and graduated from the University of New York in 1879. He then accepted a position as Assistant Surgeon of the United States Army, being sent to Ft. Meade, South Dakota. In 1883 he resigned from the Army to accept a position at the Homestake Mining Company in Lead. Here he had a hospital and patients from the mine, as well as private patients from Lead. He was married at Lead to Miss Hattie Dickinson in 1885.

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<sup>1</sup> Grant, Alexander – from 1907 minutes of SDSMA - 1880

<sup>2</sup> Freeman, John W. Kingsbury, George Washington, *History of Dakota Territory*, Vol. 5, pg. 40, 1890

The NEW YORK CITY MEDICAL COLLEGE was founded in 1860 by a group of civic leaders led by William Cullen Bryant, an editor of the New York Evening Post. His main concern was with some of the medical practices being used to treat disease, which included bleedings, purges and the administration of strong drugs in too large doses. The name was changed in 1869 and again in 1938 to the New York College and in 1978 they became affiliated with the Archdiocese of New York and now recognizes itself as in the Catholic tradition.

ROBERT T. DOTT, M.D. was the President of SDSMA in 1894.<sup>3</sup> He was born in Jones County, Iowa on October 26, 1859 and took up the study of medicine under the preceptorship of Dr. E.W. Gawley of Anamosa. He graduated from Rush Medical College in 1883. He took a post graduate course at Bellevue Medical College in New York City in 1885. He first practiced in Alexandria, removing to Mt. Vernon, and finally to Salem where he remains. On April 12, 1885 he married Miss Olive Booth of Sanborn County.

BELLEVUE HOSPITAL MEDICAL COLLEGE was founded in 1736. The oldest public hospital in the United States. It is open to patients of all backgrounds irrespective of ability to pay. They have many firsts such as the use of the hypodermic syringe in 1856, development of the city Sanitary Code, its psychiatric facilities and many other innovations.

FREDERICK A. SPAFFORD, M.D.<sup>4</sup> was President of the SDSMA in 1898 and 1913. He was born in Ludlow, Vermont on October 13, 1855 and graduated from Dartmouth Medical School in 1879. He went to Raleigh, North Carolina for one year to teach Latin and Greek at Shaw University and was professor of anatomy and chemistry in the Leonard Medical College of Raleigh, North Carolina. He arrived in South Dakota in 1884 and opened an office in Flandreau. It may be noted here that Dartmouth College was long a friend of the Dakota Indians, and that there was an Indian School in Flandreau. He was married to Miss Hatti Davis of Boston, Massachusetts in 1881.

DARTMOUTH MEDICAL COLLEGE in Hanover, New Hampshire was founded in 1797 and is the fourth oldest medical school in the United States following the University of Pennsylvania (1765), the Medical School of King's College (now Columbia University, 1767) and the Harvard Medical School (1782).

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<sup>3</sup> Dott, Robert T. Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol. 2. Pg 1321 - 1894

<sup>4</sup> Spafford, Frederick, Kingsbury, George Washington, *History of Dakota Territory*, Vol 5. Pg 94 - 1898

DR. CHARLES M. KEELING<sup>5</sup> was President of the SDSMA in 1900. He was born February 16, 1863 in Bartholomew County, Indiana. He engaged in reading medicine under the direction of his father. He then entered and graduated from the Medical College of the University of Indiana in Indianapolis in 1887 and soon afterwards he came to Springfield, S.D. He was married to Miss Viola S. Osburn on March 20, 1882.

THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE is part of Indiana University – Purdue, Indianapolis, established in 1903. As Dr. Keeling stated that he graduated in 1887 there is some confusion here.

CHENEY GROSS, M.D.<sup>6</sup> was President of SDSMA in 1901. He was born in Naperville, Illinois on February 15, 1868, was graduated from Northwestern in 1885. He was not married, his mother who was a strong, earnest Christian character, possessing unusual intellectual strength and ability, served as hostess of his home. He served as health officer of Yankton and superintendent of the county Board of Health which position he filled for six years. He was county coroner for two terms and for a number of years he has been surgeon for the Great Northern Railway at Yankton

NORTHWESTERN MEDICAL COLLEGE founded as Lind in 1859 and renamed Chicago Medical College in 1863 and affiliated with Northwestern University medical School in 1870. In 1891 the name was changed to Northwestern University medical School. A \$75 million donation from the Joseph and Bessie Feinberg Foundation changed the name again in 2002 to the Feinberg School of Medicine. It has a long standing reputation for excellence in medical education.

EARL V. BOBB, M.D.<sup>7</sup> was president of SDSMA in 1903. He was born August 2, 1873 in Richland, Wisconsin. He graduated from Northwestern Medical School in Evanston, Illinois with high honors in 1899. He soon opened an office in Sisseton, S.D. He has also been actively interested with the public and business affairs of Sisseton and Roberts County. In 1902 he purchased the leading drug store in Sisseton and is now conducting the same in connection with his practice. On September 25, 1900 he married Miss Elizabeth Morton of Chicago.

NORTHWESTERN MEDICAL UNIVERSITY has already been discussed.

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<sup>5</sup> Keeling, Charles M. Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol. 2, pg 1904, 1900

<sup>6</sup> Gross, Cheney, Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol 2. Pg 1808 1901

<sup>7</sup> Bobb, Early V. Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol 2. Par 1. 1903

ADELBERT H. BOWMAN, M.D.<sup>8</sup> was President of the SDSMA in 1905. He was born on October 27, 1851 in Rock County, Wisconsin. He studied medicine under Dr. McAlister of Spencer, Iowa. He graduated from Rush Medical College in Chicago on February 25, 1879 and then came to Deadwood, S.D. in 1887 to practice. On October 16, 1886 he married Miss Ida Potter.

RUSH MEDICAL COLLEGE was founded by Daniel Brainard in 1843 and named Rush, after one of the faculty of University of Pennsylvania.

In the nineteenth-century Chicago, a medical degree was not always needed to practice medicine. No licensing laws governed medical practice and doctors generally learned medical training by apprenticeship or by reading medical texts. Although most of the students who attended Rush were Midwestern white males this school did accept and graduate a few African American students. Women could enroll, but not graduate. In 1871, the newly established University Women's College provided women with access to formal medical education. Length of terms were required, but methods did not change until the acceptance of the germ theory introduced laboratory based training in bacteriology in the 1890s.

EDWIN T. RAMSEY, M.D.<sup>9</sup> was president of the SDSMA in 1906. He was born in London, Ontario, Canada on April 29, 1877. He graduated from the medical department of Western University of London, Canada in 1900. He came to Clark, S.D. For some years past he has spent a month or more in Chicago or Philadelphia every fall in the clinics of these medical centers. In 1919 he was married to Miss Harriet Bennett of Clark.

The UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO founded a medical school in 1881. It was given the name of Schulich School of Medicine in 2005 in recognition of a \$26 million donation from Seymour Schulich, the gift largely supports annual scholarships for Medicine, Dentistry and graduate students in medical science.

SAMUEL AUGUSTINE BROWN, M.D.<sup>10</sup> was president of SDSMA in 1908. He graduated from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1871. He applied to the naval department at Washington, D.C. and was appointed an assistant surgeon in the United States Navy. His naval career took him all over the world. He stayed in the Navy until 1884, when he came to Sioux Falls. He was married in 1886 in Portland, Maine to Miss Clara Cross who died in

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<sup>8</sup> Bowman, Adelber H. Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol 2 pg. 1391, 1905

<sup>9</sup> Ramsey, Edwin, Kingsbury, George Washington, *History of Dakota Territory*, Vol. 4, 1906

<sup>10</sup> Brown, Samuel A., Kingsbury, George Washington, *History of Dakota Territory*, Vol 4, pg. 166 - 1908

1889. In 1896 he married Miss Susan Ward. They have no children of their own, but two nieces of his first wife have shared the home while Charles E. Brown, aged seven and Elizabeth R. Brown, age four, orphan children of his brother, Rev. John C. Brown, came into his life in 1908.

The THOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY was founded in 1824 in Philadelphia after several attempts by the University of Pennsylvania alumni in opposition. A group of Philadelphia physicians led by Dr. George McClellan sent a letter to the trustee of Jefferson College in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania in 1824 asking the College to establish a medical department in Philadelphia. The trustees agreed, establishing a Medical Department of the Washington & Jefferson College in Philadelphia. The first class graduated in 1826. In January 2007 the University sold Thomas Eakins painting "The Gross Clinic" for \$68 million to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in association with the Philadelphia Museum of Art. A reproduction hangs in its place at Jefferson University

You may be interested in a few other doctors.

GEORGE A. PETTIGREW, M.D.<sup>11</sup> was born in Ludlow, Vermont April 26, 1858 and was graduated from the medical department of Dartmouth College in 1882. He began his practice of medicine in Flandreau, S.D. in 1883, entering a partnership with Dr. Stafford which lasted until February 1891 when he retired and entered into the real estate, loan and banking business.

JOSIAH LOCKE PHILLIPS, M.D.<sup>12</sup> was born in Farmington, Main June 8, 1835. He graduated from Rush College in 1856. He joined the party of Western Town Company when it came to Dakota Territory to locate at the Falls of the big Sioux River. He was one of the first settlers. In 1869 his family joined him. He had a large practice until his death in Sioux Falls, June 5, 1882.

DELORME W. ROBINSON, M.D.<sup>13</sup> was born at Pulaske, Pennsylvania on October 26, 1854. He graduated at Wooster University, Cleveland and at the Kentucky School of Medicine, Louisville. He located in Pierre, S.D. in 1882. He was the author of the first territorial law creating a board of health, and also the state board of health. He has served three terms on the Board of Health. His contributions of one hundred notes upon South Dakota including

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<sup>11</sup> Pettigrew, George A. Kingsbury, George Washington, *History of Dakota Territory*, Vol. 5, pg 106

<sup>12</sup> Phillips, Jonah L. Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota*, Vol. 2, Pg 1516

<sup>13</sup> Robinson, Delorme, Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota* Vol. 2 pg. 1482

careful studies of most of the Indians, to the field of the first volume of the collections of the State Historical Collections had won much praise from the scholars and critics.

RICHARD F. BROWN, M.D.<sup>14</sup> was born March 9, 1858 and was graduated from Starling Medical College of Columbus, Ohio in 1882. He practiced in Plankinton, S.D. from 1882 to 1891 when he retired and came to Sioux Falls to open the Brown Drug Store, at first a retail business until 1901 when he established a wholesale business. The trade territory comprised nearly all sections of the state

*Although many of the young doctors held a knowledge of drugs, this certainly solved the supply problem.*

The lack of hospitals was solved when the doctors opened a room in their own homes to care for patients who could not return home from surgery. Canton had a ten bed hospital in 1907, Geddes had a hospital in 1908, Wilmont in 1910, in Del Rapid there was a 35 bed hospital in 1914, Rapid City had a hospital in 1914, and Calome in 1915. There were undoubtedly many more.

You can also see that the lack of wives depended on time – seven were married in 2 or 3 years after graduation. Dr. Freeman's army service took 6 years.

The young doctors felt responsible for their patients, but also for their surroundings. They belonged to churches, served on Boards of Health, and School Boards, sanitary and historical committees. A few were active in politics and several helped to organize banks. They were leaders in their towns.

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<sup>14</sup> Brown, Richard F., Robinson, Doane, *History of South Dakota* Vol 2, pg 1235

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#### A Profile of the American Experience in the lives of the Julson Brothers: Immigration, War, and Homesteading

It is a privilege to be here today as part of the Sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War as well of Augustana College which hosts the Center for Western Studies. The subject of my paper is the Julson family, particularly two brothers of that family. They were not involved with the founding of Augustana, but their immigrant, military, and homesteading experience was part of the same westward-leaning experience that helped shape Augustana's history. In another venue, I intend to explore in greater depth that experience, but it is my intention here today to speak about three particular years in the lives of the brothers, James and Edwin, years that encapsulate so much of what we would call today the Westward Experience. In 1849 the young boys emigrated west from Valdres, Norway to the United States alongside other members of their large family; in 1864, the younger brother Edwin of the Western Union army, died in Chattanooga; and in 1878 the older brother James moved west to near Flandreau, Dakota Territory, where he claimed a homestead. Apart from a certain symmetry in the 30 years time spanning these events, there is a deeper significance that represents the larger experience of Norwegian immigrants in general and, even more broadly, the experience of tens of thousands of those who came to this country and moved west. And it is this significance I intend to focus on in this paper.

#### 1849<sup>1</sup>

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1849, Juel Knudson Svanheld Hoverud, his wife Marit Julsdatter Hoverud, and their six children Ole, Aaste, Astrid, Juel, Even and Gjertrud, were signed out of the Svennes Parish Book, signifying that they were emigrating from the area of Nord Aurdal, in the Valdres Valley of Norway. (Two older children, Knud and Astrid, had left the year before.) The reasons for a large family such as theirs choosing to leave Norway are complex, involving political, social, and economic aspects. On a political level, Norway was a long way from its proud Viking tradition of centuries past, and its economic well-being was dependent on Denmark until 1814, when Denmark, which had been allied with France during the Napoleonic wars, relinquished its rule. After Denmark, Sweden, which had been allied with England, took charge, a rule that lasted until 1905, leaving Norway in a subjected position that prevented forward-looking policies that would have benefitted the populace. Demographically, Norway's population had been affected by hardships caused by England's blockades, particularly in the years 1807 and 1812 when starvation occurred. Conditions improved thereafter, particularly with health care reforms and required vaccinations against small pox, the results of which were much better survival rates for children and larger families. Such success resulted, ironically, in more difficult conditions for individual families whose adult children in the agricultural economy were forced to live on smaller sub-divided farms. Thus it was that Juel and Marit Hoverud, along with their eight children, sold their small Hoverud farm in 1847 for 600 spd

(special dollars) and departed west for the new world. It was only 24 years after the voyage of the sloop *Restauration*, which brought the first organized immigrant group from Norway to America, but the Hoveruds were part of a large influx of Norwegians moving westward.

It is likely that the Hoveruds, or the Julsons as they would later be called, did not leave Nord Aurdal until March or even as late as April, but they had to have enough time to travel to Bergen, the port from which their ship, the *17 deMai* was scheduled to depart on May 12<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, if they had left much earlier, they would have travelled a dangerous road, particularly over the Filefjell mountain.

The road from Valdres to Bergen, the first part of the trip, was overland, most likely on foot, with possibly a horse to pull a cart or sledge. Some of the geographical features would not be much different from what they are now for the modern tourist, though the way in which the route was traversed was totally different. After leaving the Strandfjord area, they would have passed the medieval Slidredomen in Vestre Slidre, traversed the Nystova mountain range that could have been, in April, a real challenge, possibly stopped at the Borgund Stavekirke, and walked for many miles along the Laerdal river, until they reached the port of Laerdal, from which they embarked on the Sognefjord in order to reach Bergen. The trip along the Sognefjord is breathtakingly beautiful from a modern tourist's point of view, though the Julsons in 1849 undoubtedly had less reason to appreciate the scenery with the long sea journey and the uncertainties of the new life ahead of them. Nonetheless, they must have been poignantly aware that they were leaving Norway for good, a bittersweet thought tempered by the knowledge that a cholera epidemic had up until that time, April 1849, been raging in the Bergen area, their departure city Bergen, the old mercantile city might have been the largest city they had ever seen, and they stayed there for several days before boarding the *17 deMai*, which took them several weeks later to New York. And after New York, their journey west finally ended in Wisconsin, Perry township of Dane County, where they were among the earliest settlers in that region.

1849 was a propitious date for the immigration because to the far West, California, gold had been discovered, and the fever touched many Americans. Granted, most new immigrants had enough demands on their new life to stay in the Midwest, but some were affected. Within fiction, the Swedish writer Vilhelm Moberg describes the wanderlust of Robert, Karl Oskar's brother, and his disastrous attempt to go to California to fulfill his dreams. And in real life, Hans Heg, later to be commander of the Norwegian 15<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Regiment, went gold-digging before returning to Wisconsin where he engaged in public life prior to assuming command of the 15<sup>th</sup> in 1861. But the Julsons, like most of the newcomers, had reached the west of their dreams, at least for the time being. The two youngest brothers, James and Edwin, were still boys, not yet teenagers. But thirteen years later, they headed south as young men in the Union Army.

#### **1864:**

Edwin and James, young men by the time the Civil War broke out, responded to the call to arms in late 1861 and were then deployed in early 1862, serving in Colonel Heg's Union "Norwegian Regiment," the Wisconsin 15<sup>th</sup>, which fought in

Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia. The regiment distinguished itself in early 1862 battles, particularly at Perryville in Kentucky, where they suffered no casualties, and at Stone's River near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where casualties were heavy. Because the Confederates withdrew after each battle, both battles were strategic Union victories, though the casualty rates were high for both sides. But it was at Chickamauga in 1863 that the Army of the West (the "Cumberland" army) as a whole suffered a devastating defeat, and the 15<sup>th</sup> was decimated. James and Edwin survived Chickamauga, but they both suffered from disease that killed many more soldiers than did battlefield injuries. Edwin, who had fought in every battle throughout Chickamauga, died of chronic diarrhea on January 2, 1864, a few months after Chickamauga. He was 22 years old, still six months short of his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

To put Edwin's death into a larger context, one should note the overall casualties of the war. The Civil War was by far the most devastating of any American conflict, with about 620,000 casualties in both armies. Of the approximately 360,000 casualties in the Union Army, 110,000 died in battle or of battlefield wounds and 250,000 died of diseases,<sup>2</sup> most of which were in the Western Army due to the long, killing marches and the difficulty of maintaining adequate supply lines.<sup>3</sup> Of the five Wisconsin regiments mobilized for the Civil War, the 15<sup>th</sup> lost 299 out of 905 men to wounds and disease, the highest percentage loss (33.04%) of any of the regiments. Edwin's death was not unusual given the often terrible conditions of military life in the Civil War, especially on the western front.

Alfred Jay Bollett notes that "Acute diarrhea and dysentery . . . were the most common medical problems, related to spread of microorganisms because of abysmal sanitary practices, as well as to spoiled and poorly prepared foods."<sup>4</sup> One possibility for the origins of this illness may be traced to the early deployment, when the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment first went to war along the Mississippi River in early 1862. O. A. Buslett refers to the "terrible diarrhea" (which he identifies as chronic) common among the soldiers during the siege of Island Number 10. The main cause he identifies is the "stirred up river water" that was full of all kinds of pollution. He shrewdly notes that "the change of climate and way of life also had an effect" but he maintains that the water had its lasting effect long after the patients left the hospital and even well after their return home.<sup>5</sup> Such was likely the case with James who was ill throughout his service—in fact, he was hospitalized on five different occasions, according to his medical records—but James lived until he was 87 years old.

The only reference to Edwin's illness is his "being sick in Chattanooga on 28 November 1863,"<sup>6</sup> and then he died in Chattanooga five weeks later. Certainly bad water could have been a factor in Edwin's illness, especially during the Battle of Chickamauga in September. At the end of the first day of fighting on September 19, the day on which Colonel Heg was mortally wounded, the Union troops were parched from the total lack of water in the vicinity, due partly to the drought that had lasted over a month, in hot weather. (This was also a condition at Perryville during an extremely hot day in October 1862.) They had had no water during the entire day, much of it consisting of intense fighting. The closest water was a cattle pond near the Widow Glenn's house, the headquarters of General Rosecrans, which would have been in the very place where the 15<sup>th</sup> had to withdraw after the Confederate breakthrough (see earlier discussion on

Chickamauga). Apart from the usual pollution from animal wastes, the pond was on this day “streaked with blood” from all the wounded who crawled to the pond for water.<sup>7</sup> It would be no wonder that one would contract severe diarrhea, typhoid, or other waterborne diseases, illnesses that might be tolerated for a time but which would eventually cause severe illness and death.

But another, more severe problem in Chattanooga was the shortage of food. Following the defeat at Chickamauga, the Union Army withdrew into Chattanooga (escaped may be a better word) where they remained under siege for two months, from September until November, when the Union army finally defeated the Confederates at the battle of Missionary Ridge. From September till October, the Union soldiers were kept extremely busy building defenses, during which time they suffered from cold rain, poor clothing, lack of tents (though the 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment had been in trenches until October 11<sup>th</sup>), and no blankets, most of which had been lost at Chickamauga. Most distressing to those who were already in a weakened condition was a severe shortage of food. The only supply route for the Union Army was a long tortuous mountain route of 75 miles from Stevenson, Alabama, a route frequently attacked by the Confederate cavalry. Captain Mons Grinager describes the situation thus:

Because of the transportation difficulties, the soldiers’ rations had been cut to two-thirds, and they were now cut to less than half [and some accounts indicate quarter rations], so now the soldiers were really suffering from hunger. It was often touching to see, when a wagon train was expected, how the convalescent and the soldier who wasn’t on duty met the wagons some three or four miles outside of town in order to get a piece of cracker or collect crumbs that fell out of the wagons. At places where the wagons had overturned, and the cracker crumbs had been trampled into the mud, one could see soldiers down on their knees, scrambling for crumbs in order to quiet their hunger. When the wagons were unloaded by the commissary, as many soldiers as the wagons could hold jumped into them and as good as fought over the crumbs that fell out of the crates.<sup>8</sup>

Grinager goes on to note how the horses and mules had only corn to eat (no forage), but that the corn had to be guarded to prevent the soldiers from eating it instead.<sup>9</sup> The food supply crisis was partially alleviated on October 27<sup>th</sup> when General Grant (now replacing General Rosecrans who, though highly respected and admired by many of his men, including Colonel Heg, had proved inept in the aftermath of Chickamauga) opened up the so-called “cracker” line, a direct supply route into Chattanooga made possible by a new crossing of the Tennessee River at Brown’s Ferry.

The food being brought in by the new supply route was sufficient, but one can question its quality, not only for this time and place but for the army diet generally.<sup>10</sup> According to Bollet, the stipulated meat for a Union soldier (beef or pork) was often rancid and spoiled. The “desiccated vegetables,” full of husks and stalks, were so bad that, though

regarded by the authorities as prevention for scurvy, were generally not eaten. Finally, the hard bread called hardtack, usually in the form of "crackers" three inches square and a half inch thick, was so hard to eat that the crackers had to be soaked to be eaten, and they were often so infested with worms which, unsavory though they were, were only half facetiously regarded as protein, a substitute for meat. Nonetheless, the crackers for which the lifeline supply route was named, apparently was the food on which the army came to depend for over a month until the Battle of Chattanooga was won. One can only wonder how Norwegians such as Edwin and James, who had been immigrants only twelve years earlier, would have responded to such diets, and one can speculate that during their hungry marches, they may have dreamed of such foods as *lefse*, *rømmegrout*, or perhaps *lutefisk*.

In short, the conditions of water, wet and cold weather, and diet all contributed to an army that even in the best of conditions had serious attrition rates due to sickness but which, during the Chattanooga siege and shortly thereafter, suffered severely from debilitating illnesses like chronic diarrhea and scurvy. James's last reported illness was October 11 in Chattanooga, after which "he was moved to a hospital" in Nashville on November 11, about two weeks before the battle of Missionary Ridge. Apparently, Edwin participated in that battle, and three days after its successful conclusion, on November 28<sup>th</sup>, reported sick. A little over a month later, as the year 1864 began, Edwin died. Since his regiment was deployed (even the walking convalescents had been organized to guard a supply train relieving a besieged General Burnside in Knoxville), Edwin probably died alone, without the comfort and support of Norwegian companions in arms, or even of his own brother. He remained in Chattanooga, one of the first to be buried in the National Cemetery. The cemetery did not exist at the time of Edwin's death. His 15<sup>th</sup> Regiment, one of the first to reach the top of Missionary Ridge and rout the Confederate defenders, belonged to the Army of the Cumberland, 4<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, commanded by Major General George Thomas "The Rock of Chickamauga." During the actual assault on November 25<sup>th</sup>, General Thomas selected the site as a cemetery, 75 acres on a hill which early in the battle had served as General Grant's headquarters. But it was not until December 25<sup>th</sup>, eight days before Edwin's death, that General Thomas issued General Order 296 that formally established the cemetery. In 1867, the cemetery was officially designated the Chattanooga National Cemetery, and by 1870, more than 12,800 interments were complete.<sup>11</sup> It is fitting that Edwin is buried there.

All the graves are located in particular sections, each with a central monument site surrounded by plots for officers, around which are the graves of the enlisted men. Edwin's grave is located in one of the oldest central sites, on the side of a hill, with a single large tree at the top of the hill forming the backdrop for the stones around it. The stone itself is very simple; though weathered by over 140 years of time, the lettering is very legible, a tribute to the 22-year-old soldier who, at the time he died, was over 700 miles from his home in America, and 14 years away from his home in Valdres, Norway.

An Inventory of Edwin's effects was recorded in March, three months after he died. The list consists of 1 cap, 1 great coat, 1 blouse, 1 pair of shoes, 1 haversack, 1 knapsack, and 5 dollars, all of which were to be "disposed of" by the

Council of Administration. (The five dollars was undoubtedly what he had received on October 31<sup>st</sup>, his last pay day, money which he probably had no chance to spend given what had been going on in Chattanooga.) A later document (26 September), called the "final statement," lists the knapsack, the haversack, and, in addition, one canteen "considerably worn." Common soldiers in any time of war usually have few possessions, but the list is especially stark for a soldier whose last few months included the terrible battle of Chickamauga and the privations of Chattanooga under siege.<sup>12</sup>

### 1878:

James, who had been continually ill throughout the war, returned to Wisconsin in December, 1864, having served his full tour of duty. He had married Marthea Ålberg shortly after enlisting in early 1862, and they began raising their family in 1865 when he returned home, their first child born in 1865. A few years thereafter, they moved to Waseca, Minnesota, and then, in 1878, they went west to homestead in Dakota Territory, a few miles northeast of Flandreau, a trip that took the caravan of nine covered wagons, pulled by oxen, twelve days, though by modern standards, the trip would take less than four hours. Yet such a trip in 1878 might not have seemed egregious to the old soldier who had marched thousands of miles over a period of three years, with intervals in hospital over that period of time.

Several delays occurred during the trip: "One time they circled a big hill by mistake, another time the colts strayed and much time was lost in finding them. At Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, one of the wagons loaded with provisions tipped over. It took three oxen teams to right it before the caravan could proceed." At one point, a child playing with matches set fire to a wagon, and at New Ulm, a ferry not only had to transport the nine wagons across the river but had to make an extra trip when James's wife Marthea refused to cross at the same time with the wagons and the cattle. When they finally reached Flandreau, they were at first apprehensive when they were approached by Indians, but the Indians were not hostile, and the Julsons claimed a "relinquished" homestead, a quarter of land ideally located with the Flandreau Creek running through their farmyard and the Sioux River adjoining their land and separating them from the Santee Indian settlement.<sup>13</sup>

Flandreau itself was a progressive city. *The Moody County Enterprise*, a newspaper first published in 1878 about a month after the Julsons arrived (and, I might add, still in circulation), notes the population as 2000 citizens. On July 25, 1878, the paper idealistically observes that "Homesteaders in considerable numbers are gazing at the beauties of eastern Dakota even at this inopportune season." Still, there are snapshots of real life in some of the advertisements, e.g., that "Stages leave Sioux Falls for . . . Flandreau [and other towns] on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. . . . returning alternate days." Several issues publish numerous advertisements of forfeited homestead claims. And, in one item of September 19, 1878, the reporter comments on the popularity of hay stoves, a reference that might remind some readers of Laura Ingalls Wilder's *The Long Winter*.

James and Marthea his wife had nine children who survived infancy. Successful farmers who were prominent in their community, they lived long, James dying at 86 years in 1926, and Marthea living until 1933, 91 years old. Though he lived to be old, James was plagued by his Civil War illness all his life, a type of casualty not often counted but a casualty nevertheless.<sup>14</sup>

The Julson brothers took part in extraordinary events, the historical significance of which they themselves may not have been fully aware, yet their experiences were typical in the nineteenth century. Large families emigrated west, to a new world, the frontiers of which were constantly moving westward; brothers from those families fought together in an exhausting Civil War that radically changed the social and economic structure of the country; some of the newcomer immigrants died, but many of those who survived returned home and then took advantage of the homesteading possibilities to the West. The homesteaders for the most part succeeded and left behind many descendants who became inheritors of an American experience that began over 150 years ago. And it is this experience that we celebrate today at this conference.

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<sup>1</sup> I thank my Norwegian fourth cousin, Øyvind Bråten, for most of the information in the "1849" section.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.civilwarhome.com/casualties.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> *Chickamauga: Colonel Heg and His Boys: A Norwegian Regiment in the American Civil War*. Trans. Della Kittleson Catuna and Clarence A. Clausen (Northfield, MN: The Norwegian-American-Historical Association, 2000), p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> "Scurvy and Chronic Diarrhea in Civil War Troops: Were They Both Nutritional Deficiency Syndromes?" *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 47 (1992): 49.

<sup>5</sup> O. A. Buslett, *The Fifteenth Wisconsin*, trans. Barbara G. Scott (1894; Ripon, WI: 1999), 123

<sup>6</sup> Buslett, 381.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), 281.

<sup>8</sup> Buslett, p. 72.

<sup>9</sup> Buslett, p. 72.

<sup>10</sup> The basic army ration which Bollet cites (pp. 52-53) from the Surgeon General's *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870-88), Medical Volume, Part Third, p. 27, reads as follows: "Twelve ounces of pork or bacon, or one pound and four ounces of salt or fresh beef; one pound and six ounces of soft bread or flour, or one pound of hard bread, or one pound and four ounces of corn-meal; and to every one hundred rations, fifteen pounds of beans or peas, and ten pounds of rice or hominy; ten pounds of green coffee or eight pounds of roasted (or roasted and ground) coffee, or one pound eight ounces of tea; fifteen pounds of sugar; four quarts of vinegar; one pound and four ounces of adamantine or star candies; four pounds of soap; three pounds and twelve ounces of salt; four ounces of pepper; thirty pounds of potatoes, when practicable, and one quart of molasses. . . . Desiccated potatoes or desiccated compressed mixed vegetables, at the rate of ounce and a half of the former and once ounce of the latter, to the ration, may be substituted for the beans, peas, rice, hominy or fresh potatoes." It is no wonder that foraging, whether authorized or not, was common.

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<sup>11</sup> [Http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/chattanooga.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/chattanooga.asp). April 27, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> This document, courtesy of the Wisconsin State Archives, was forwarded to me by Marty Gale, a direct descendent of James Julson.

<sup>13</sup> Nora Julson Ellefson, "The Experiences of Mrs. James Julson, Pioneer Woman of South Dakota." Copied from Sardeson, Ekern, and Axdal, *Hoverud Connections*, p. 157. Used by Permission.

<sup>14</sup>As described to me by Marty Gale.

## Robert Kemen's Tale: A Forgotten Soldier of the Korean War

Two out of two hundred men came home from the Fox Company of the 279<sup>th</sup> Infantry during the Korean War. One of these men is Robert Kemen. As thousands of other men have done, he gave of his life to become known as a "Forgotten Soldier." Throughout America's history, the United States has been involved in nine wars. The Korean War ranks among the most important of these wars, yet is the least remembered. Many see the Korean War as the first great struggle of the Cold War, heightening already considerable tensions between the United States and Communists. Robert Kemen went into the Korean War without a backward glance at his family and friends.

Robert Kemen grew up on a small farm outside of Dawson, Minnesota. Born in 1925, as the oldest of six children, Robert grew up quickly, helping with the chores and his siblings daily. In 1940, Robert graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade, which would be his last year of school. That year proved to be difficult for farmers, so Robert decided to stay home to help his dad on the farm. He helped with everything, from milking the cows to thrashing hay and planting corn. Every now and then, Robert took the time to help a neighbor in need which usually consisted of shelling corn or milking cows. From these experiences, Robert knew that he wanted to be a farmer. At the same time in Korea, according to historian Christopher Anderson, "a struggle against Communist expansion was taking place."<sup>1</sup> In 1945, the Big Three, President Roosevelt, Premier Joseph Stalin and Prime Minister Winston Churchill made an agreement that Korea should become an allied trusteeship, administered by the victorious powers of World War II.<sup>2</sup> In May 1948, South Koreans elected a National Assembly, and established the Republic of Korea (ROK) with its capital in Seoul and Dr. Syngman Rhee as their president. After South Korea established themselves as their own country, North Korea did the same by creating a Soviet style government called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) with its capital in Pyongyang.<sup>3</sup> Kim Il Sung became the president of North Korea in the same year. The leaders had sharply contrasting ideologies and each vowed to reunite Korea under his own government.

In September 1948, American and Russian troops began withdrawing from North and South Korea, both sides leaving military equipment. The United States supplied strictly equipment: rifles, ammunition, mortars and

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher J. Anderson, *The War in Korea: The U.S. Army in Korea, 1950-1953* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea, 1950-1953* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1987), 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 43.

machine guns. Russia provided supplies: tanks, bombers and planes, to the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). As the United States watched the build up of the North Korean army, they refused to respond. Unfortunately, in the last six months of 1949, South Korea reported more than 400 "border incidents" consisting of heavy artillery duels, as if preparing for a full-scale invasion.

On June 25, 1950, the Korean War began with a surprise attack. Over 90,000 North Korean troops pushed across the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel into South Korea. South Korea suddenly became an area of vital importance, not strategically or militarily, but rather psychologically and symbolically.<sup>4</sup> Washington thought they needed to show Moscow that raw aggression would not be accepted and a line had to be drawn. The Korean War became more about "weakening the enemy's military power" rather than geographical objectives.<sup>5</sup>

Life on the front lines in Korea consisted of much brutality and horror. The summer months in Korea were hot and humid intermixed with many rainy, damp days.<sup>6</sup> The winter months provided the opposite extreme with such a numbing cold that it "often seemed to American troops an even greater enemy than the North Koreans or the Chinese."<sup>7</sup> Winters became so cold they could kill an unprepared soldier, and many of the soldiers fighting in Korea did not come prepared. They did not have enough clothing or the correct equipment to deal with the harsh winters.

In 1951, Robert began his service with the United States Army. He embarked on his journey arriving during the rainy season at Fort Riley in Kansas, training with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. The barracks that he had been assigned to had been completely flooded. Robert and the other soldiers slept in pop-tents in a field just outside of the Fort. "In a way, this was good for us; it hardened us and got us ready for what we would experience in Korea," said Robert.<sup>8</sup> He also noted that "the Army was in a hurry at that time, they needed replacements for the troops already in Korea."<sup>9</sup> The soldiers went through basic training quickly; learning how to use a rifle and hiking thirty miles a day.

Robert joined the 45<sup>th</sup> infantry division from Oklahoma. This division already had combat training as they had fought in World War II. The 45<sup>th</sup> infantry division stayed at former kamikaze training base, Camp Chitose. Here

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<sup>4</sup> James Brady, *The Coldest War: A Memoir of Korea* (New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books, 1990), 7.

<sup>5</sup> John McGrath, *The Korean War: Restoring the Balance* (Washington, D.C.: United States Military History, 2000), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 95.

<sup>7</sup> David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: American and Korean War* (New York, NY: Hyperion, 2007), 1.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Kemen, interview by author, Madison, MN, February 24, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

they received the assignment to defend the island against a Soviet invasion.<sup>10</sup> After obtaining their assignment, all of the men were organized in a short time and then split into regiments; Robert being placed with the 279<sup>th</sup> infantry. Shortly after, they boarded troop ships, which ferried them into Inchon Harbor.

Upon their arrival into Inchon Harbor an air alert became a serious problem. "We thought they might try to bomb us because of all of the troops coming in, but the Air Force protected us," Robert recalled.<sup>11</sup> While the troops got off the ships, the Air Force flew over head, protecting them from enemy attacks. After exiting the ships, they boarded landing barges that held approximately 200 men each. When the barges landed on the beach, the men started toward their base. "We fought our way into the Harbor in the night," said Robert.<sup>12</sup> After obtaining entrance into the harbor, the soldiers reorganized and moved to Chorwon Valley. Chorwon Valley, the most direct route to Seoul, is part of the Iron Triangle, located north of the city. After the division of Korea, Chorwon lay in North Korea, but throughout the course of the war, South Koreans retrieved the land. The battles in this part of Korea became some of the fiercest battles during the entire war.

Before they began fighting, the soldiers received the assignment to kill or destroy the enemy while moving forward and recapturing their fellow soldiers. As they moved across the Valley the North Koreans began a Human Sea Attack using artillery fire; firing until the barrels of their guns became red, upon which they would switch to their spare barrel. As waves of soldiers advanced into the murderous fire the dead began to accumulate. Deciding to wait until the attack ended, the Army left the dead bodies lay on the battle field. "We started burying the dead soldiers so that the animals would not get them," Robert recalled.<sup>13</sup> After two weeks of continuing further into the Valley, Robert's platoon had lost so many men that they left the front lines and a fresh platoon took their place. Robert recalled, "it was a big, long fight, but we secured it during the summer of 1952."<sup>14</sup>

After securing Chorwon, Robert moved on to fight at Hill 266, or Old Baldy. This nickname developed after artillery and mortar fire destroyed the trees on the crest. Old Baldy, holding strategic importance, continued to be an

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<sup>10</sup> William M. Donnelly, "Thunderbirds in Korea: The U.S. 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 1950-1953," *The Journal of Military History* 64 (October 2000): 1121.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Kemen.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

ongoing battle lasting ten months with five different engagements.<sup>15</sup> On June 9, 1952, American soldiers began air strikes on enemy strong points. The Chinese did not counter this attack and South Korean and American forces continued in their attempt to take the mountain. As the American soldiers moved up the mountain, they set up outposts. Each battalion took turns spending one week on the main line of resistance.

During one of these turns, Robert and his battalion had a run-in with a sniper who liked to sneak in and shoot at them. Robert recalled "there were five of us up there, and we had to spread out to see if we could see him or hear him."<sup>16</sup> On a peaceful day, the four other soldiers received a message that they should report to their battalions, leaving Robert on the main line of resistance alone. The sniper counted the soldiers as they left and knew there would only be one soldier in the outpost. He waited until Robert went to the bathroom to launch his attack, knowing that this would catch him off guard. "He fired his gun, every bullet in it. I felt them go by me, but I did not get hit," said Robert.<sup>17</sup> The sniper disappeared after his assault and the other soldiers quickly returned to make sure that he had not been hit. On August 4, 1952, the Battle of Old Baldy ended. South Korean and American soldiers, with the help of the United Nations, successfully secured the mountain.

From Old Baldy Robert moved to Inje, a town at the foot of Mount Seorak. Enemy fire had completely destroyed the town. Robert and the rest of his company walked across the valley in-between the Taebak Mountains so they could reach the 9<sup>th</sup> South Korean Division. Robert's company had been assigned to help the 9<sup>th</sup> Division who had been fighting at that location for two years. The South Korean Division pulled back to get replacements while Robert and his company continued to fight on the main line of resistance. They walked across the valley at night, so the enemy would not see them. To ensure that they remained unseen, the soldiers lit smoke barrels and walked under the smoke. The Air Force also helped in this battle, firing directly on the enemy and shooting up their trenches. This gave the South Koreans more time to leave the front lines and gave the American soldiers time to get into place and ready for combat.

That same night the North Koreans attacked. They threw smoke barrels on top of the mountain and into the trenches, confusing the soldiers on both sides as they could not tell who the others were in the trench with them. The

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<sup>15</sup> Dean Acheson, *The Korean War* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Incorporated, 1970), 135.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Kemen.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

United States Army had created a password system for the soldiers to use in situations such as this. A soldier yelled out the password three times and if the other soldiers in the trench did not answer, they began firing. Unfortunately, some American soldiers did not fully understand this system and were killed by their fellow combatants. Robert recalled "we were killing our own people that did not know how to use the password, it was a terrible night."<sup>18</sup>

A lack of coherence among the soldiers regarding basic warfare proved to have a disastrous affect on lives. The basic principles of cover, concealment and dispersion were not followed by many soldiers leading to unnecessary casualties.<sup>19</sup> The soldiers had not been trained to do these basic things, and panicked when an attack came. After that night, because of his experience, Robert became the acting platoon sergeant. The platoon held their ground for several days, until they ran out of ammunition and had to go back down the mountain to collect the supplies they needed. While descending the mountain, the soldiers covered themselves with sticks and grass for camouflage. This did not work and the enemy launched an attack following the trenches straight down the mountain. Robert led the men and most of the enemy fire landed behind him.

As they descended the mountain, fifteen soldiers lost their lives. When he reached the bottom of the mountain, Robert met the first lieutenant of the company. During the Korean War, the Army worked on a points system, when soldiers accumulated a set amount of points they could go home. They earned three points for a month in combat, two points for a month in a safe zone and one point for a month in an extremely safe zone. Soldiers had to receive 36 points to be able to leave combat.<sup>20</sup> Robert accrued 42 points and should not have been fighting at Inje. The first lieutenant knew that Robert should not have been in that battle. He looked at Robert and said "Son, I am giving you a direct order to get the hell out of here. When the first wounded truck comes by, you get on it."<sup>21</sup>

Robert did just that, he got on the wounded truck which transported him to the 777<sup>th</sup> mobile army surgical hospital or MASH. Upon his arrival at the MASH, Dr. Brandon, the doctor for his infantry throughout the war, found Robert. He gave Robert a check-up and then handed him a piece of paper that resembled a prescription. On that

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> William M. Donnelly, "Thunderbirds in Korea," 1131.

<sup>20</sup> Walter G. Hermes, *Truce Tent*, 374.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Kemen.

sheet of paper were orders that Robert should never return to the front line and should stay with the company quarter master. That same night, in late November 1952, a truck picked Robert up to take him home to America.

Before returning to the United States, Robert went through processing in Japan. All personal items, billfolds, pictures, and letters, went into a sealed box and soldiers turned in all of their clothes and equipment. None of the soldiers' belongings, except for their personal items could go home with them. It all had to be left in Korea because of the threat of disease. The soldiers had to walk through a high pressured alley that sprayed them with disinfectant. They received their personal items and a clean set of clothes at the far end of the tunnel. From Japan, Robert and five other overdue soldiers went to Fort Mason, San Francisco.

On the way to the San Francisco Bay, the soldier's boat took them around Alcatraz Prison and under the Golden Gate Bridge. "The first thing that I saw on land was a sign that said, 'Through this port pass the best damn fighting men in the world,'" Robert recalled.<sup>22</sup> They were processed again and received another set of new clothing. The soldiers also ate a meal of their choice. "I was really craving ham and ice cream, so that is what I ate," Robert said.<sup>23</sup> While at Fort Mason, it took Robert some time to adjust to life outside of the war. Robert recalled "I was always feeling for my gun, or taking cover when jets would fly over the base. It was automatic for me to take cover."<sup>24</sup> Robert arrived home just in time for Christmas. He stayed at home for four weeks.

After his break, Robert went to Fort Carson in Colorado where he served out the rest of his enlistment. Once he arrived in Fort Carson, he again went through processing. This time they went through Robert's combat record. They noticed that Robert had an outstanding record with no flaws. As a reward for this, Robert worked as a guard at the prison in Fort Carson. There, Robert received the soldier of the month award and accepted a three day trip into Denver. On March 10 1953, Robert, at twenty-seven years old, received his discharge papers from the army and once again returned home.

Robert's journey through Korea had come to an end, but many soldiers were still on the front lines. Fighting would continue for another two years amidst many negotiation attempts. On July 27, 1953 at 10:00 AM the chief

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

delegates signed the military armistice.<sup>25</sup> Twelve hours later all fighting ceased. The terms of the armistice stated that the line of demarcation between North and South Korea closely approximated the prewar division. It forbade either force to bring additional troops or new weapons into Korea. It established the Military Armistice Commission composed of an equal number of officers from the United Nations Command, China, North Korea and South Korea. In 1954, the United States signed a mutual defense treaty with the Republic of Korea.<sup>26</sup>

With the war over the soldiers now had to return to the United States and many harbored resentments. Some served in World War II and disliked being called away from their families and jobs again. The Korean War consisted of undermanned, poorly trained American units with faulty equipment from World War II, and surprisingly poor high-level command leadership.<sup>27</sup> The true brutality of the war never penetrated the American cultural consciousness which upset the soldiers.<sup>28</sup>

After soldiers returned from Korea, they felt cut off from their country men. They felt that their sacrifices remained unappreciated and that most Americans saw the Korean War as a far away war of little importance. There also came to be many bitter feelings towards President Truman after he labeled the Korean War a police action. Many of the letters that soldiers wrote home were filled with hatred and disdain towards the American powers that sent them to war.<sup>29</sup> The role of the G.I.s in what has become known as "The Forgotten War" has, until recently, been neglected.<sup>30</sup> According to General Lewis Walt, who fought in the Korean War, "for the first time in the history of the Republic, the American armed forces took the field and did not come home victorious."<sup>31</sup> This left many soldiers feeling that they were of second-class status compared to the men who had fought previous wars. They see themselves "sandwiched between the sheer size of World War II and the fierce controversies of the Vietnam War."<sup>32</sup>

After his discharge from the Army, Robert returned home to Dawson, Minnesota where his dad bought him a quarter of land to farm. In 1954, Robert purchased the farm site that he still lives on. He began farming that land

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 248.

<sup>27</sup> David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter*, 3.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Carroll, *War Letters: Extraordinary Correspondence from American Wars* (New York, NY: Scribner, 2001),

331

<sup>30</sup> Christopher J. Anderson, *The War in Korea*, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Lewis W. Walt, *The Eleventh Hour* (Ottawa, IL: Caroline House Publishers, Incorporated, 1979), 64.

<sup>32</sup> John McGrath, *The Korean War*, 1.

and the land that his father had given to him. Over the next couple of years, Robert kept acquiring land. In 1961, Robert met Phyllis Martenson and they began courting. Less than a year later, on December 29, 1962, Robert and Phyllis were married. Together, they have four children and run a successful farming operation that now includes land, cattle and pigs. For many years, Robert did not talk about his tour of duty in Korea. He suffers from extreme survivor's guilt, often wondering why he returned home and others did not. "I dream about the terrible things that happened in Korea," Robert recalled.<sup>33</sup> At eighty-four years old, Robert still manages to get into a tractor every year and do field work and is also active with the ever expanding cattle operation.

"If the best minds in the world had set out to find us the worst possible location to fight a war, the unanimous choice would have to be Korea," said Secretary of State Dean Acheson.<sup>34</sup> The Korean War turned into one of the bitterest kinds of war only supposed to last three weeks, not three years. The men that fought in Korea came back damaged and full of resentment. Robert Kemen is one of the damaged men. He is still dealing with the repercussions of his service in Korea. He knows firsthand the terrors that Korea brought to countless men, many of whom still do not talk about the war. "The modern world still lives with the consequences of a divided Korea and with a militarily strong, economically weak and unpredictable North Korea."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Kemen.

<sup>34</sup> Andrew Carroll, *War Letters*, 323.

<sup>35</sup> John McGrath, *The Korean War*, 1.

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Pretty Rainbow Woman: The Story of Marcella LeBeau and the  
French National Order of the Legion of Honor

By: Lillian Johnsson

Pretty Rainbow Woman is not history---yet. After hearing her story and that of the community she calls home, I hope you will agree she certainly deserves a place there.

Marcella Ryan was born in Promise, South Dakota, on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in Dewey County. If you are looking for Promise, it is not on the map. It is, however, located somewhere in the 4,200 square miles of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation.

Marcella is a member of the Two Kettle Band of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

As a member of this tribe she has some illustrious ancestors. For example, her Great Grandfather, Chief Joseph Fox Bear. Chief Fox Bear was one of the signers of the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868. This treaty was signed at Fort Laramie in the Wyoming Territory. It guaranteed to the Lakota ownership of the Black Hills and further land and hunting right in South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. It was the treaty that ended Red Cloud's War.

In 1874, General George A. Custer led an expedition into the Black Hills and discovered Gold. This violation of the Fort Laramie Treaty eventually led to the encounter with the Sioux and Cheyenne at the Little Big Horn River.

That encounter brings us to another of Marcella's extended family. Her Grandmother, Louise Bear Face was related to Rain In The Face who took part in the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Marcella's Father served in the Spanish-American War in 1898. This background gave Marcella an awareness of her Cultural heritage.

As a child as she attended the Indian Boarding Schools. She has Vived memories of the treatment of the native students.

At the age of 10 she lost her Mother. As the eldest daughter she helped her siblings with daily takes, made meals, and learned to sew their clothing. It was during this time she developed the care-giving skills she was to sue throughout her life.

She enrolled and completed courses at St. Mary's School for Nursing in Pierre. She was briefly employed before enlisting in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in World War II at the age of 24.

Marcella served with the Army Nurse Corps 76<sup>th</sup> General Hospital based in Minister, England.

After the Allis invaded Europe on June 6, 1944, she and her colleagues treated the first battle casualties from the beaches of Normandy. She also worked in hospitals in Belgium and France as the Allied Forces gained ground.

The closest she came to the front lines was in Liege, Belgium. While serving in the hospital there she was only a few miles from the battlefield. She says the closest she came to the front lines was when bombs fell on a nearby motor pool. The attack killed 21 soldiers and one civilian. The conclusions were felt at the hospital.

It wasn't until after the war that Marcella became aware of just how close she actually was to the front lines. The Germans had a 60-mile wide line that they broke through and overtook the Americans. The Germans were headed for the Port of Antwerp and the hospital was in between. At the time they were told only to be packed and ready to be evacuated on a moment's notice

Marcella also remembers an incident of a German plane firing at their camp. Just before it came to the hospital, it quit. They didn't know if the reason was the Red Crosses on their tents or if there was another reason. A long time afterwards they heard the pilot had crashed and ended up as a patient in their ward.

Marcella ended her career as an Army nurse as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant having served in Wales, England, Belgium, and France.

Returning to South Dakota after the war she married Gilbert Le Beau and raised a family of eight children.

While involved in her children's school and 4-H, she also pursued further education in health and supervisory training.

Throughout her civilian life, Eagle Butte was her home. Gil and I first visited that community in 1997. I was a guest of the Eagle Butte Women's Club. Gil came along to do a storytelling residency in the schools and at a youth center called The Main. My first look at The Main created many misgivings about what they might be doing here. It was a dilapidated old former bar surrounded by a chain link and barbed wire fence.

Actually The Main was part of the Cheyenne River Youth Project. That was begun in 1988 when local residents and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe came together to turn one of Eagle Butte's most notorious bars into a safe, alcohol and drug free, community center for the Reservation children.

It wasn't long before we learned of the great work The Main was doing in giving young Indian children a safe place to go after school, providing snacks and sometimes food to needy families. They took the children to events outside of Eagle Butte so they would know about the outside world. At Christmas Santa provided gifts for children who might not otherwise receive them. This was all done with volunteers and donations.

At my club meeting, we were taken on a tour of the Eagle Butte Public Library. Like many libraries in South Dakota, it was started and supported by the Women's Club. According to my resident librarian, "They did an excellent job of choosing usable books."

We next went out to a grouping of homes built by Habitat for Humanity. They had just recently been finished with the personal help of Jimmy and Roslyn Center.

We enjoyed the people we met, but I doubt most people would stop in Eagle Butte. For example, if you want lunch there is a Dairy Queen attached to a gas station, or, the local supermarket. For dinner, there is a bar-steak house. Don't dress up, it's a blue jean kind of place.

It was interesting to return to Eagle Butte a couple of times after our first visit. One big change was The Main. Billy Mills had returned and donated money for what was now a new Billy Mills Youth Center.

For those of you who are not sports fans, Billy Mills won the 10,000 meter race at the 1964 Olympic Games in Japan. He earned a gold medal in one of the greatest upsets in Olympic history. He set a new Olympic record time of 28 minutes 24 seconds. To date no other American has won a gold medal in the 10,000 meter race.

Mills was born in Pine Ridge, South Dakota and is an Oglala Sioux Indian.

While it is no longer called The Main, the work goes on. In 2007, a new Teen Center was added to the youth center.

One more bit of information. The Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation has no casino, no oil and no other natural resources!

This is the community Marcella calls home. In addition to raising her family, she continued her nursing career. She retired after 31 years as the Director of Nursing for the Indian Health Service in Eagle Butte.

Did Marcella have other interests? Oh, my, yes! There was the ban on smoking in the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal offices. As an elected Tribal official she felt it was her responsibility to protect the health of her people. It was eventually passed.

In 1992 and 1995, Marcella and her son, Richard, went to Glasgow, Scotland to the Kelvin Grove Museum. The reason and result of their trips was the return of the Ghost Dance shirt taken from Wounded Knee in 1890. George Craeger, a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, had sold it to the museum. It is now held at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

Marcella is a 35 year founding member of the North American Indian Women's Association. This organization urges women to promote betterment in their home life and community. It also stresses fellowship among all people as well as Inter-Tribal communication and awareness of Indian Culture.

Marcella was one of the main planners for a reunion of the descendants of the attack at Lake Shetak in southwestern Minnesota and the Fool Soldier Band.

In 1862, Chief White Lodge and his band of Sisseton attacked an advance settlement of eleven families at Lake Shetak. At least 15 of them were killed. Two women were captured along with six children. The Fool Soldier Band was asked to find a way to return the captives to their families.

The Fool Soldiers Band first appears in Lakota Lore at this time. The Band was formed in 1860 by Kills Game and Comes Back. Their society was based on non-violence and helping all people. In a Sioux warrior society they were ridiculed by their neighbors as "Fool Soldiers."

In reading their history I came across one of those Indian names that make you wonder. One of their original band was called "Don't Know How."

Anyway, the eight captives were ransomed in November, 1862, and did return to their families. It was the descendants of these two groups who came together at the reunion. As a result, the Lake Shetak descendants set up a scholarship fund for the education of the Fool Soldiers Band descendants.

What do you suppose Marcella did when she retired from the Indian Health Service? She opened her own sewing business with her Granddaughter, Bonnie. The shop is a machine quilting shop. They make a variety of quilts, especially those of the Star and Turtle patterns. My star quilt from Eagle Butte is one my personal treasures.

Marcella also has hobbies. They include Crocheting, knitting, sewing, and embroidery. She has interests which include health, walking—she walks one to five miles almost daily to enable her to participate in parades. She likes meetings, reading, traveling, craft shows, classes, concerts, musicals, plays and poetry—and, yes, she writes some.

One thing Marcella dislikes is afternoon napping!!

What she didn't include on her list of interests was writing. She wrote a paper entitled, "Cheyenne River Sioux—Lakota Culture." In it she talks about the effect of government boarding schools on the Lakota Culture. Among some of the Lakota Customs she explains are the importance of the handshake, listening, eye contact, shyness, humor, and generosity along with other bits of Lakota Culture.

If all this isn't enough to earn her a place in history, lets look at the year 2004.

As a result of her Army nursing career, Marcella received the French Legion of Honor medal on the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day.

Exactly what is the French Legion of Honor?

It is a French order established by Napoleon Bonaparte on May 19, 1802. The Order is the highest decoration in France.

In the French Revolution all French Orders of Chivalry were abolished. Napoleon wished to create an award to commend civilians and soldiers in recognition of merit. It was to be awarded for excellence in civil or military conduct. This was to be based only on official investigation.

The Order was the first modern order of merit. Unlike previous orders it was open to men—later women—of all ranks and professions. Only merit or bravery counted.

Marcella was one of 100 World War II veterans to receive the Legion of Honor on June 6, 2004, in Paris.

She has appeared at many Veteran events and parades. She speaks of her Military experience and displays her medals in elementary, high schools and colleges. Notice I said "medals." She has also received a medal from Belgium in addition to the French medal.

Her most notable quote from her speeches is: "Water is the best drink in the world." Good advice.

In 2006 Marcella was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame.

On August 7, 2009, she appeared on the Public Television program, "Dakota Digest."

In October, 2010, at the age of 90, she was on an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. to see the World War II Memorial.

She said the trip gave her some sense of closure to see the World War II Memorial. In a quote from a Keloland TV interview she says, "It was my privilege and my honor to be able to be there and to help in the manner I was able to help. They were and are my heroes. This is absolutely AWESOME!"

Well, Pretty Rainbow Woman, I think you're awesome.

## The Settlement of the Last West: 1865 to 1890

Alvin Kangas

My story is about How the Invention of Barbed Wire shaped the history of Americas Last Frontier or the Last West.

"After the Civil War, the last west, an area larger than all the territory settled since 1607, underwent a rapid and revolutionary transformation. The westward movement had advanced to the first tier of states west of the Mississippi by the 1840's. There it stopped and jumped 1500 miles to the Pacific Coast. The Great Plains which most Americans regarded as a desert wasteland, appeared to be an impossible barrier. Yet from 1865 to 1890 the settlement of this region was so rapid that most of it was carved into states of the Union.

This remarkable transformation occurred as a result of many forces. Eastern industrial growth stimulated the development of Western natural resources. Railroad builders dreamed dreams of connecting East Coast to West. Mining strikes enticed prospectors to come West and make their fortunes. The cattle industry drew investors, would-be ranchers, and cowboys to help it meet the food needs of a growing population. Finally, the prospect of new farmlands encouraged settlers from both the eastern states and Europe. The story of the Last West took place in the midst of some of the most unusual and magnificent scenery of the North American continent. The distinctive color and flavor of this story has made a permanent imprint upon the American mind."

I Acknowledge that I used the history book, "The Shaping of America" published in 1972 by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston as reference for my presentation. Historians define the Last West as an area between the 98<sup>th</sup> and 120<sup>th</sup> meridians. The eastern part of the last west is the Great Plains. This area presented the first great obstacle to the westward march of the American frontier. The Plains were flat, treeless, and semi-arid. The treeless land did not provide building materials for houses or barns. The first pioneers built houses of sod. The weather with the severe heat, cold, and winds was a hazard. In the ferocity of a prairie blizzard, a man could get lost trying to go from the house to the barn, and anyone lost in a blizzard faced almost certain death. Grasshoppers, or locusts, at times ate up most of the vegetation.

Mitchell, South Dakota is on the 98<sup>th</sup> meridian which also passes through Huron, and 12 miles west of Clark, and 50 miles west of Sioux Falls. According to a SD state historical marker at Huron, located on the James River, it claims that "The West begins at the James River."

### Plains Indians

If the land was uninviting, the Plains Indians were positively frightening. No single stereotype on the American Indian is possible because there were so many different tribes and cultures. They were fierce, determined, warriors who fought bitterly for their land against the invaders.

There were approximately 200,000 Indians in the Great Plains after the Civil War. They were divided into many tribes: the Blackfoot, Crow, Cheyenne, Mandan, Arikara, and Sioux of the north; Pawnee, Omaha, Oto, and Kansa of the central region; the Comanche, and Apache of the southwest, and many smaller groups. These tribes differ in language and customs, but they all had a fairly uniform stone age culture based on stone implements and tools. With the aid of a loose sling, Comanches and other Plains Indians could hang on the side of the horse, shoot and the neck with their bows and arrows with astonishing accuracy.

During the Civil War most of the regular Army troops were withdrawn from posts in Indian Territory. Encouraged by this withdrawal and by their own grievances, the Sioux, in 1862, began a campaign of violence in Minnesota which was unequalled in the entire history of the west. In 1867 the government adopted a new reservation policy. From 1869 to 1874 there were more than 200 battles and countless smaller skirmishes. In 1875 Custer and his army of 231 men were wiped out. The final incident of the Indian wars was the tragic battle of Wounded Knee in 1890.

The destruction of the buffalo was the decisive factor in the Indians' defeat. As long as the Indian could hunt buffalo, he had food, clothing and shelter. But the white intruders hunted buffalo in a different way. At first they looked upon buffalo hunting as a sport; railroads ran hunting excursions and even permitted firing from the cars. "Buffalo Bill Cody" became the most famous of the professional hunters. Sport changed to business enterprise in 1871 when a method was discovered to make commercial use to buffalo hides. In the next 3 years, about 9 million buffalo were slaughtered for the eastern market. By 1878, the immense southern herd was virtually wiped out, and by 1893 the

American buffalo was nearly extinct. When the buffalo was destroyed, the Plains Indians were forced to submit to reservation life.

Scotty Phillips, a Scottish immigrant, helped saved the buffalo from extinction. By 1889, the year South Dakota became a state, fewer than 100 wild buffalo roamed the United States. A side note, there will be a trial ride in honor of Scotty Phillips from Philip to Ft Pierre July 17 through the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, I am planning to be on this trail with my team and covered wagon.

Gold, Silver, and other Ores were scattered through the Rockies from Canada to Arizona. The Pikes Peak God Rush of 1859 attracted over 50,000 prospectors. Comstock Lode in Nevada drew 20,000 prospectors. In 1861 while other Americans were taking up Arms in the Civil War, miners responded to the cry of God in Idaho, again in 1864, Montana and Terr. And gold and silver strikes in Ariz, and New Mexico. In 1875, the famous Gold Strike in the Black Hills of Dakota Territory started. Silver and gold mined in the Last West helped finance the Civil War. In July 2008, I was an outrider on a Wagon train of 300 people that celebrated the Anniversary of the Fort Pierre to Deadwood Trail. Freight was hauled to supply the miners by Bull teams consisting of three wagons hitched together and carried 20,000 lbs, pulled by ten teams of oxen or bulls. This trail was closed when the railroad bridged the Missouri River in 1907. Soon after this trail was closed, the land was Homesteaded, and each property owner fenced with Barbed Wire. On this 225 mile, 17 day trip we crossed some 40 different land owners property, each one opened their Bared Wire fences to let us across.

Cattle drives had their beginning in the Nueces River Valley in lower Texas where, 1865, millions of Texas Longhorns ran wild. The breed was developed in Texas, by crossing English Shorthorns and Spanish Longhorns. Once these cattle were rounded up they could be bought for \$3 to \$4 per head; these same cattle would bring up to \$40 per head in the eastern markets. The attempt to connect the \$4 Texas Longhorns with the \$40 market created the cattlemans frontier, with its famous Trails, its wild cow towns, and the legendary cowboy. Abilene, Kansas, was the first important railhead, but the march of the railroads across the plains, cattle towns shifted farther west to Ellsworth, Newton, and Dodge City in Kansas, Ogallala in Nebraska, and Cheyenne in Wyoming. When it was discovered that cattle could over-winter on ranges farther north, it became feasible to raise herds on ranches nearer the railroads. From Kansas, cattle ranching spread into Wyoming and the northern plains. By 1880, the cattle industry

was established throughout the Great Plains and buffalo had been replaced by millions of Texas Longhorns from Texas to the Canadian border. During the great beef bonanza, from about 1865 to the mid-1880's, "Grass was King. The grass was lush and free. With the rush of thousands into the cattle business during the bonanza years of the 1880s, ranches became overstocked, and too many cattle brought prices down. The tragically severe winter to 1886-87 killed thousands of cattle. This was a major impact on the change from "open range" (where anyone has the right to grass or water), to "closed range" (where owners fenced their property) to keep other animals out and their animals inside the fence. Now with the buffalo gone, the Indians removed to reservations, the cattle bonanza nearly over, "Four Things" occurred that made things ready for the "development of the Last West."

1 Railroads began to multiply. Millions of acres of land were granted to railroads by the US government to expand across western public lands. This land was sold very cheap to new settlers 2. The repeating rifle and pistol were invented. 3. Water-pumping windmill came into existence around 1880. Prior to this people and cattle followed the water.

4. Barbed wire was invented. In 1868 New York blacksmith Michael Kelly patented the first successful barbed wire produced, "Kelly's Thorny". Joseph Glidden, Dekalb, Illinois, in 1874 was granted a patent on an improved wire, basically the same as it is made today. His first machinery for producing wire was a converted coffee grinder, a cold chisel, and an anvil.

The Homestead Act of 1862 made it possible for any citizen (or alien who intended to become a citizen) to claim 160 acres of public land, and after build on it and living on it for 5 years, to gain outright ownership. Or, the Homesteader could buy his land for \$1.25 an acre after filing claim. In view of the larger railroad grants, it is not surprising that for every settler who got his land free under the Homestead Act, five or six times as many bought their land from private parties. The railroad, alone, sold more land, at an average of \$5 per acre, than was taken up under the Homestead Act. Gradually the western farmer learned to deal with the problems of Plains. Since there was no wood, he had to live in sod houses. Without wood, he faced the problem of fencing, so essential to farming. The difficulty was solved by the invention of barbed wire. It was soon mass produced to meet the hungry demands of western farmers. Open-range cattlemen resented fencing bitterly, and to protect their way of life, they began cutting down barbed wire fences. It did not take long before fence cutters and Homesteaders began shooting at each other.

Defending ones right with firearms was a respected rule of conduct. In 1884 Texas Legislature made the act of fence cutting a felony punishable by 1 to 5 years in jail. Many cattlemen who once rode the open range, had slept under the open stars, and kept watch over free-roaming cattle turned themselves into ranchers. They began buying up land and fencing their pastures. It was the turning point in the cattle industry. The notion of private land ownership in the American West soon became as accepted among cattlemen as the changing of the seasons. Barbed wire turned a corner and there was no going back. The end of the open range and the establishment of agriculture changed the physical, economic, and social framework of the West. The simple invention of Barbed Wire had forever changed America... So much of the far West had filled up by 1890 that the Bureau of the Census declared in a report that a definite frontier no longer existed.

Barbed Wire Facts;

570 patented wires.

Less than 10% of all patented wires proved practical in actual use.

Over 2,000 wires have been found and cataloged to date.

I started collecting 8 years ago and have 475 different wires so far.

Memorable times are presenting at the Brookings Living History, Barbed Wire Show at The Devils Rope Museum, McLean TX., and selling Barb Wire placques at the Buffalo Round Up in Custer State Park.

Interested in more information? Pick up one of my hobby cards.

## The Immortal Man

By: Brian Knight

What drives a man to strive to the limits of life in an attempt to achieve immortal glory? What makes a man push for the impossible, knowing the consequences inevitably will usher in his doom? How can anyone look death in the face and smile? George Custer had the drive, the arrogance and the boyish persona that made him a hero in the United States Army and a legend on the Great Plains. Custer embraced the idea of being more than a man, or mere mortal, and converted himself into an immortal omnipresence that could not be matched by any other man. His successful, and quite frankly lucky career, has provided stories for historians and American cowboys for decades. General Custer's immortal view of himself caused his demise at Little Big Horn, raised public awareness and hatred toward the Indian people and has shrouded his true identity and motivation. His ego and sense of immortality have led to some of the most tragic and important events in Great Plains history. He created the illusion that the American man can succeed against all odds and has perhaps the most stunning, confusing and interesting downfalls in American history. Custer not only promoted the idea that he was the savior of The West, he attempted to prove it and therefore aided in the creation of the territory we see today.

George Armstrong Custer was born on December 5, 1839 in New Rumley, Ohio. Custer attended school in New Rumley but halted his own academic career to teach in a nearby township in 1856<sup>1</sup>. Eager to leave and join the military, Custer sought appointment to enter the United States Military Academy at West Point. He entered West Point in 1857 with an appointment from republican Representative John A. Bingham. Custer graduated from West Point in 1861 with an astoundingly disastrous track record. He had 726 demerits and graduated last in his class of 34 students. Three days after graduation, Custer was thrown into the heat of the Civil War and participated in the Battle of Bull Run<sup>2</sup>. The act of leading by example became synonymous with Custer's name as he led many successful charges throughout his prestigious military career.

Custer had a very specific quality that made men follow him everywhere: sheer bravery. Unlike most commanders who directed troop movements from safe positions, Custer would lead the charge, many times being

the first one to break enemy lines. His heroic actions helped him to rise through the military ranks and he became the youngest Brigadier General in Union history in 1863<sup>3</sup>. Custer's actions throughout the war resulted in the capture of thousands of enemy prisoners, flags, supply wagons and artillery – and laid the foundation of an unimaginable reputation. In two short years the young man who showed little to no promise at West Point had created a strong name for himself in the world's strongest army. The invincible man had been born.

There are many circumstances which fuel Custer's belief in his invincible or even God-like status. The boy general, as he was often called, received appointment to West Point from a representative who was aware of his families' opposing political background; he had survived gonorrhea while at West Point, a disease that could have easily taken his life; and he had fought in—and survived—the Civil War, despite leading numerous cavalry charges<sup>4</sup>. Reports of Custer's bravery, especially during Gettysburg, only strengthened the argument for his immortal persona as Edwin Havens describes: "He is a glorious fellow, full of energy, quick to plan and bold to execute and with us has never failed in any attempt he has yet made"<sup>1</sup>. His cool demeanor, courage and poise motivated troops to follow him anywhere. Lieutenant James Christiancy of the 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry elaborates on the young general, "through all the sharp and heavy firing the General gave his orders as though conducting a parade or review, so cool and indifferent that he inspired us all with something of his coolness and courage"<sup>5</sup>.

When reviewing these accounts, it is dumbfounding how the general escaped the war without a scratch. Was it luck? Or destiny? Custer had been court-martialed, demoted and criticized by his superiors and had escaped jail time and humiliation; in fact, Custer was suspended from the Army for his refusal to follow orders and his insistence that seventy-five men ride hard for supplies so he could see his wife. His rash actions resulted in two casualties. The suspension was lifted in nine months, however, and he was again called to lead an attack on an Indian tribe<sup>6</sup>.

If we were to evaluate Custer's past only, it becomes fairly obvious why this man assumed he was no ordinary general. Custer had luck on his side and he knew it. He instituted, although it was condemned by higher ranking military officials, new rules and regulations about deserters and when caught he refused to give them proper

medical treatment and rations<sup>7</sup>. Pushing the envelope and his constant attempt to expand his judicial and mortal boundaries became a defining feature of a “Custerian” command. It appears through some of his own writings and many of his actions that he did not fear death. In Custer’s book “My Life On The Plains” he describes an event in which he comes upon men who were sent to deliver a message to him. The men were murdered by Indians and Custer writes: “How painfully, almost despairingly exciting must have been this ride for life! A mere handful of brave men struggling to escape the bloody clutches of the hundreds of red-visaged demons who, mounted on their well-trained war ponies, were straining every muscle to reek their hands in the life-blood of their victims”<sup>8</sup>. Custer seems to enjoy the thrill of fighting for his life and he creates a vision of passion and honor in the act of fighting a force larger than one’s own.

Men wanted to take part in Custer’s egocentric journey—to victory and immortal fame. Custer successfully transformed himself into a God-like warrior that beat back the Indian savages, thereby glorifying life on the Great Plains. The illustrious career of Custer (until his demise at the Battle of Little Big Horn) had placed him on a pedestal above the normal man and politician. When on a presidential tour with Andrew Johnson, Custer would be cheered louder and received a much larger audience at his speeches<sup>9</sup>. It became quite evident to him that not only were his troops behind him, but the country was as well. Although he did not always approve of such crowd support in the presence of the President, it did enhance his ego to new limits. Personified views, created mostly by newspapers and magazines during the Civil War, had put his young career on an illustrious path to taming the Great Plains, and he believed and acted as if it was to duty to do so.

The Battle of Little Big Horn elicits vague and confusing theories concerning Custer’s actions. The “wise” military leader had plunged himself and 225 mounted troops into the waiting hands of thousands of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors. What was he thinking? If one were to look at it from a militaristic perspective it seemed quite normal from a “Custerian” standpoint. The battle plan was devised for a three-pronged attack with Custer leading a charge of men into the heart of the Indian village after an opening and unsuccessful attack by Major Reno which left thousands of troops ready and waiting for Custer<sup>10</sup>. Whether it was miscommunication, lack of understanding or sheer arrogance, Custer chose to charge his battalion into the Indian village.

Custer's attitude and invincible swagger played a very large role in his leadership skills. Creating an even larger mystery is how he rallied his men to follow him into battle. Desertion was very common at the time, as many men would receive their first paycheck and leave the following day. So how did he get 225 men to follow him straight into death's hands? An officer in the Third Cavalry Division wrote in his diary about Custer: "With Custer as leader we are all heroes and hankering for a fight. We always have the band playing on the front in an advance, and tooting defiantly in the rear on retreat". Custer made the men want to fight and win. Jeffery Wert says it perfectly in his book Custer that "He had given them confidence, both in him and in themselves"<sup>11</sup>.

Custer's ego is seen vividly here. This attack, although praised afterward, was nothing short of poor decision making and simple arrogance. Custer's elaborate battle plan used Reno's attack as a diversion so he could then slip down into the hopefully chaotic village and wreak havoc on its inhabitants. According to Reno, Custer claimed that he would be supported by the "whole outfit", but when Custer was nowhere in sight the terrified Reno chose to halt and eventually retreat<sup>12</sup>. Unfortunately, as Custer rode past Reno's men, who were in obvious retreat, he chose to continue the attack. What was his reasoning for continuing the fight? Obviously the great general was not known for retreating or backing down from any fight, he stayed the course on this fateful and historic day.

The Battle of Washita portrays a very different side of Custer. In his personal accounts of the battle he describes his plan of attack and the importance of sunrise to signal the attack. It was a great battle plan with excellent intelligence and coordination. So why did Little Big Horn lack these tactics, which in hindsight were so desperately needed? Perhaps at this point Custer's arrogance superseded the necessity for proper intelligence and planning. Custer carefully plotted and planned dozens of times, so why would this battle plan be so different? Secondly, at the battle of Washita, Custer notes in his book that it was not his desire to plunder villages; it simply to punish villagers for what they had done to settlers. He recalls killing all the Indians' horses, just to send a message<sup>13</sup>. Was this his motive for Little Big Horn? Was he trying to prove that he could not only conquer the massive gathering of Indian Warriors but also complete an unfinished act of punishment? This theory is plausible as Custer deliberately attacked a force that was nearly ten times larger than his own.

Mystery casts a large shadow over this event, because not one of the men under Custer's command returned from the Battle of Little Big Horn. Reno's men were able to see Custer's charge and get pushed back, but by that point Reno's contingent had already retreated across the Little Big Horn River and was seeking cover and aid themselves. There are accounts in both "The Custer Companion" and "Touched by Fire" that Custer did send a message back to Captain Benteen to "come quick---a big Indian camp", but it remains a mystery as to why Custer pursued his attack when the size of the village was known. With no regard to reinforcements, intelligence, and with poor performance by subordinate officers, Custer did in fact still charge, hoping either to become a war hero or die a legend. Fate chose the latter.

"Custer's luck had run out", says Norman in his book Great People of the Great Plains; and perhaps his ego had finally caught up with him; regardless the sun was setting on the illustrious career of Custer. His past had come back to haunt him: although he had evaded bullets, arrows and jail time, his immortal vision of himself was finally destroyed in death. General Sheridan was quoted afterward saying "Custer's actions were due neither to recklessness or want of judgment, but to a misapprehension of the situation and a superabundance of courage"<sup>14</sup>. Perhaps, at some conscience level, Custer knew that in order to achieve the glory he truly wanted, he needed to either win this battle or die trying to take down the largest Indian force in the West. We will never know, but what we can be certain of is that his actions have led to actions by Congress and other military branches to avenge the death of the popular general.

Stanley Vestal, an American Indian scholar, stated that Sitting Bull said the following to his warriors before the Battle of Little Big Horn, "Let them live, they are trying to live. They came against us and we have killed a few. If we kill them all, they will send a bigger army against us"<sup>15</sup>. Sitting Bull could not have been more right. The United States responded with extreme force and terror, branding into the Indians' memory the day they killed one of the most famous generals in American history. Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse were both present at the Battle of Little Big Horn, and their presence only added to the public hatred of the Indian people because they were both well known for militaristic actions in the West. Immediately following the defeat at Little Big Horn Congress authorized the creation of two new forts, one aptly named Custer, and Congress also enlisted 2,500 new cavalry men, many of whom called

themselves "Custer's Avengers". These actions were mandated not because the United States had lost a battle against the Sioux Indians; rather, they were an act of vengeance against the tribe that brought down an American hero. Custer had spent his whole career risking his life in the service of his country and he was well known, if not loved. The immortal and seemingly invincible man had been killed, or rather slaughtered, at the hands of an unpopular native population. In fact, Buffalo Bill Cody joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Calvary as a scout to partake in the new Great Sioux War and is quoted saying "This one's for Custer!" upon scalping an Indian<sup>16</sup>.

Custer's actions were violently defended by the military, especially General George B. McClellan who spoke of Custer's last battle as: "suddenly surrounded by overwhelming masses of well-armed warriors, against whom the heroic efforts of his command wasted themselves in vain". The military refused to believe, as did the general public, that his ego or self-image had shrouded his view of the situation. McClellan would accuse those who did not support Custer by stating "those who accused him of reckless rashness would, perhaps have been the first to accuse him of timidity if he had not attacked and thus allowed the enemy to escape unhurt"<sup>17</sup>. Major Reno was criticized heavily after the Battle of Little Big Horn and was critically evaluated regarding and command tactics. Many disagreed with him and after the proceedings he spiraled into bouts of public drunkenness and various charges were pressed against him.

Custer was more valuable dead than alive to the United States. With his death the United States could now pursue the Indian nation and attempt to force them off of their hunting grounds and release much of the pressure they put on miners in the Black Hills. In September of that year, Congress decreed an annual Indian appropriation act which denied them subsistence until all rights of hunting lands outside the reservations were relinquished as well as the transfer of ownership of the Black Hills to the United States<sup>18</sup>. Custer's deeds created land for the white pioneers and warranted the United States' new mission to take land from the natives and force them onto reservations. One can see the effects of Custer's ego today in many of the reservations throughout South Dakota, as Indians currently occupy land on which they were forcibly positioned. Ironically, Custer's defeat was his biggest victory: from a governmental standpoint the defeat provided protection to Dakota Territory settlers who were constant attack for their encroachment on Indian land. Is it possible that Custer could have known this? Could his bulging ego

have foreseen the glory ahead? It is plausible that Custer concluded that by pushing the Indians furtherwest, the Black Hills and its burgeoning mining business—would eventually become United States territory. Custer's actions were carried out for his own glory to feed his continually growing self-image.

The United States cavalry became relentless as they ravished the countryside, tracking and killing Indians in their path. The strong and famous leader Crazy Horse had surrendered in May of 1877 but was killed five months later. The Indian nation that had once controlled all of the Dakota Territory and Great Plains was being torn apart by the United States Army in retaliation for the death of their most popular general. The Ogala holy man Black Elk described the Great Sioux War: "Wherever we went, soldiers came to kill us"<sup>19</sup>. The continued wrath of Custer was creeping its way across the Great Plains as the Indian way of life was quickly coming to an end.

Custer's ego started a chain reaction, beginning with his death at the Battle of Little Big Horn, and ending with the demise of the Indian culture on the Great Plains. The push for expansion from the United States accelerated dramatically after the battle of Little Big Horn and Indians were corralled onto reservations and forced to partake in the "ways of the white man". In 1880 the Board of Indian Commissioners released this statement, "As a savage we cannot tolerate him any more than as a half-civilized parasite, wanderer or vagabond. The only alternative left is to fit him by education for civilized life". With this act began the deportation of many Indian children to boarding schools where they were schooled in the English language pioneer life style<sup>20</sup>. The Allotment Act of 1887 attempted to grant Indians new land to farm, with a maximum of 160 acres, but this proved futile as much of the available land was substandard for farming or raising livestock. Wooden Leg, a Cheyenne Indian who fought at Little Big Horn, described his peoples' reaction to the act: "All of our teachings and beliefs were that land was not made to be owned in separated pieces by persons and that the plowing up and destruction of vegetation place by the Great Medicine and the planting of other vegetation according to the ideas of men was an interference with the plans of the Above"<sup>21</sup>. The Indian victory celebration at Little Big Horn was certainly short-lived since the United States parlayed that battle into a gateway for the transformation and desecration of Indian life and culture.

Custer's egocentric life had caused a ripple effect of death and forced migration of Indians across the Great Plains almost overnight. As Indians were killed the countryside was raped up by new farmers on Indian land. History proves that Custer's feeling of "invincibility" caused more than the deaths of a few hundred cavalry men; it reshaped the Great Plains entirely.

Apart from his stumbling youth and heroic last stand, General Custer had an often overlooked and rather unknown side to his persona. George Custer was a ladies' man. With his good looks and quick-witted comments, he could woo women quite easily. There was one particular lady, however, for whom he fell head over heels. Her name was Libbie Bacon. It is hard to imagine Custer as a romantic, or someone who would write and speak eloquently in an attempt to win a wife. Libbie Bacon (later Libbie Custer), made her husband work to gain her affection. Custer would have to put his ego aside in order to secure her hand, and he did. Libbie wrote in her diary upon the first meeting of Custer that she did not think much of him. In fact, his name is only briefly mentioned before she continues elaborates about other men. George took a different approach the second time he met her: he proposed and although she said no, Custer continued to pursue her until the answer was favorable. Libbie recalls Custer saying to her, "I would sacrifice every earthly hope to gain your love"<sup>22</sup>. In Custer's letters to Libbie he writes with passion, "We may not have the means for enjoyment we now possess, but we shall have enough and to spare. Above all we shall have each other", and "I have sworn far less during the late battles than ever before on similar occasions—all owing to the influence of my beloved darling. During battles, while I was in the thickest, with bullets whistling by me and shells bursting all around me I thought of you. You are in my thoughts always, day and night"<sup>23</sup>. The rugged Custer often hides his charming self. The fact that Custer wrote love letters and spoke so romantically only makes his personal story that much more compelling. People can imagine Custer uttering something similar to General Patton during World War II, "my men can eat their belts, but my tanks need gas". The leather-skinned Custer did in fact have a surprisingly sentimental side—a side that is commonly kept under the radar. Custer's love story is not unlike that of the Greek hero Hercules, as they both had to commit themselves to a mortal, and upon doing so they became one as well. His marriage to Libbie foreshadowed his tragic shift to mortality and death. Custer died heroically on the field of battle, and his heart remained with his true love.

Custer is rarely considered on an equal plane with intellectuals. The common image of George Custer is riding western style on a formidable horse, six-shooters drawn and charging into battle with a menacing smile drawn across his face and yet he wrote and published several literary works. A classmate of Custer's at West Point once wrote "the greatest surprise in Custer's whole career in life was that he should turn out to be a literary man. If anyone had said in the four years before the Civil War that Cadet Custer would in fifteen years be a scholar of artistic tastes and writer of graphic contributions to the magazines, the prediction would have been derided". Custer did in fact contribute significantly to the literary world as he wrote fifteen letters to the journal "Turf, Field and Farm", wrote his own book titled "My Life on the Plains" and had his official report of the Yellowstone expedition published in the "New York Tribune" and the "Army and Navy Journal"<sup>24</sup>. His writing is both smooth and well versed, especially his Yellowstone report: "The Indians have long opposed all efforts of white men to enter the Black Hills and I feel confident that the Sioux will combine their entire strength and endeavor to oppose our progress"<sup>25</sup>. In 1874, the Minneapolis Tribune featured an article outlining and contrasting the pro's and con's of the Northern Pacific Railroad and one of Custer's letters was featured. This short essay was later published by the railroad, in part stating [that]: "The beneficial influence which the Northern Pacific Railroad is completed, would exercise in the final and peaceable solution to the Indian question, and which in this very region assumes its most serious aspect, might well warrant the general government in considering this enterprise one of National importance, and in giving to it at least its hearty encouragement"<sup>26</sup>. The intellectual Custer shines in most of his writing, and even his argumentative literary pieces were written with a guarded tolerance, general poise and a lack of battlefield arrogance. It appears that Custer had been living two completely different lives, one as a hopeless romantic and the other as a hard-nosed, seemingly invincible general who refused to quit. The latter is consistently portrayed, while much of his measured and sentimental writing is quietly ignored in order to further explore and herald his larger-than-life ego, gun fights and glorious battles.

George Armstrong Custer roamed the Great Plains for ten years as one of the most powerful men on horseback. The strong self-image and confidence of Custer placed him in the national spotlight and secured his position as one of the toughest, but most lucky men in the military service. His unflagging arrogance, is a weapon

which he wielded proficiently to survive the Civil War by fighting with bravery and bullet-dodging. Exploits of Custer point a distinct finger at his belief in his own immortality and invincibility. Custer fought as though he couldn't die, and stared death in the face multiple times with resolute poise and defiance. The life of Custer has had a lasting impact on the Great Plains as his final action of egocentrism proved disastrous for his men. Custer was worth more dead than alive—and in a sense, then, immortal. Custer's high self-image drove him to the limits and eventually aided in the downfall of the Indian nation, a job the United States had been waiting to do. The boy general's demise helped warrant many of the United State's future Western actions. Custer's ego often hinders people from seeing the whole man, however. He was both an intellectual and a loving husband. Custer's invincible view of himself ended his reign of the Great Plains at the Battle of Little Big Horn, had lasting negative effects on the Indian people and shrouded his complex identity in favor of the rough and tumble, God-like man. So, who was General George Armstrong Custer? He was a fighter, a lover, an intellectual, a leader and a symbol of the American West that will live forever. He truly is the immortal man.

## Notes

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4. Jeffrey D. Wert, *Custer: The Controversial Life of George Armstrong Custer* (New York: Simon & Schuster), 34
5. Quoted in Hatch, *The Custer Companion*, 16
6. Louise Barnett, *Touched by Fire: The Life, Death and Mythic Afterlife of George Armstrong Custer* (New York: Henry Holt and Company Inc), 137-140
7. Wert, *Custer*, 245
8. George Armstrong Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press), 109
9. Barnett, *Touched by Fire*, 126-127
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11. Quoted in Wert, *Custer*, 192
12. Hatch, *The Custer Companion*, 205-206
13. Custer, *My Life on the Plains*, 240
14. Quoted in Barnett, *Touched by Fire*, 313
15. Quoted in Barnett, *Touched by Fire*, 298
16. Hatch, *The Custer Companion*, 257-262
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18. Hatch, *The Custer Companion*, 260
19. Collin G. Calloway, *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indians Views of How the West Was Lost* (New York: Bedford Books), 12-13
20. Calloway, *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground*, 14
21. Quoted in Calloway, *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground*, 18
22. Quoted and Material Used in Barnett, *Touched by Fire*, 23-25
23. Marguerite Merington, *The Custer Story: The Life and Intimate Letters of General A. Custer and His Wife Elizabeth* (New York, Devin-Adair Company), 98, 143
24. Hatch, *The Custer Companion*, 70-71
25. Paul Andrew Hutton, *The Custer Reader* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press Lincoln & London), 131
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# The Cat Pioneers



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Shebby Lee

Presented at the  
Dakota Conference  
Sioux Falls, SD

April 29, 2011

# The Cat Pioneers

The dark was deep on hill and vale  
And I inclined to snore  
When I responded to a hail  
Outside my cabin door,  
And in there stalked from outer gloom  
A stately Thomas cat  
As black as Wind Cave's deepest room,  
With jaunty white cravat.

I bowed and, all impressed to see  
His grooming sleek as silk,  
With Western hospitality  
Offered a drink - of milk.  
He licked his chops with mien demure  
And then the silence broke.  
(I may have dozed, and yet I'm sure  
That lordly Thomas spoke.)

"Your garb, sir, and your rude life here  
In this sequestered heaven  
Are like those of a pioneer  
Of Eighteen Seventy-Seven.  
That year of cats! That year of fame!  
Of deathless memory!  
When fifty cats to Deadwood came  
From old Bismarck, D.T.

Ah, they were cats who feared no fate,  
Cats of adventurous blood,  
Real Western cats who'd emigrate  
Through hardships, fight and flood,  
Steamboating cats who voyaged far  
To reach that river port  
And trim and swagger cats of war  
Who served about the fort.

Four hundred miles by plan and slope  
They rode through dust and heat,  
And gristly scraps of antelope  
Were all they got to eat,  
Yet with a pluck that did not cease,  
That kept aloft each tail,  
They bravely risked nine lives apiece,  
Along the Black Hills trail.

When Deadwood town at last they made  
    Their welcome was not cold.  
Ten dollars each for them was paid  
    In glittering dust of gold,  
And they were drafted to afford  
    The homesick miners cheer  
Or guard the grocer's precious hoard  
    Bull-freighted out from Pierre.

One talented young tiger tom  
    Whose voice could charm the moon  
Forgot the teachings of his mom  
    And worked in a saloon.  
There with a dissipated bunch  
    Who swilled their midnight grogs,  
He lapped up Tom and Jerry punch  
    Till he went to the dogs.

But most soon won an honored place  
    And raised the social tone  
By that serene and subtle grace  
    Peculiarly our own.  
And swiftly grew their family trees.  
    For cats believed and dealt  
In large and frequent families  
    Long before Roosevelt.

The hairy miner on a spree,  
    Full of remorse and beer,  
Gazed at a kitten on his knee  
    And shed a scalding tear,  
Then vowed to quit the maddening cup  
    And mend his ragged life  
And get a shave and straighten up  
    And send and fetch his wife.

Thus were the wild Hills gentled, sir;  
    The wanderers ceased to roam,  
And round a cat's contented purr  
    Built many a happy home,  
And soon the Black Hills nights were gay  
    With cattish carolings  
From clothesline posts up Spearfish way  
    To fences in Hot springs.

No more important episode  
    Marked all those early years  
Than that historic wagonloan  
    Of feline pioneers,  
For though the horse and dog were prized  
    And praised for this and that,  
Who made the Black Hills civilized?  
    The cat, my friend, the cat!

I am the old breed down to date  
    For in that wagon's straw  
Rode my great-great-great-great-great-  
    Great-great-great-grandmaw and paw.  
Those Rovers I'm descended from  
    And their blood rules me yet,  
For though I am a gentle tom  
    I'll be no household pet.

Along beneath the mystic dark  
    I raid the pack rat's den  
And range the woods of Custer park  
    And shun the haunts of men,  
So, pardner, you and I are peers  
    And ere I leave you now,  
We'll give three cheers for pioneers.  
    Meeyow! Meeyow! Meeyow!"

**Badger Clark**  
*Skylines and Woodsmoke, 1935*

# Introduction

South Dakota's first poet laureate, Badger Clark, grew up in 1890's Deadwood, just two decades after the last great gold rush in America. By his day the streets were no longer a muddy quagmire, and the wooden shacks hastily thrown up in the heat of gold fever had been replaced with respectable - and hopefully fireproof - brick buildings. Still, there were charter members of the pioneer fraternity among the town's inhabitants who gladly related stories of the "bad old days" to eager young listeners who had missed all the fun. The poem relates a charming tale of historic Deadwood, but it seems that the story we have just heard is only one of many versions. Badger Clark knew better than most that yarns have a tendency to become embellished over the years. When describing the purported relationship between Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickock in Roderick Peattie's *The Black Hills*, he stated - perhaps somewhat ruefully - that "Just what kind of people they were, and what they were to each other doesn't matter. They are legends, and nobody worries about the factual details of a legend."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the truth of the matter is therefore irrelevant, but as a historian I felt compelled to at least try to sort out the facts. Discrepancies that I encountered relate to the reason for the enterprise, the name of the freighter, the date, and even the origin of those cat pioneers.

Some accounts list Charlie Utter, the indomitable Deadwood pioneer and pal of Wild Bill Hickock, as the wagonmaster. The fact that he was a freighter by trade, lends some credence to this scenario, though there seems to be no evidence one way or the other.

Cheyenne, Wyoming claims that the cats came from there, not Bismarck, as the poem relates. The city's website identifies the freighter as one Phatty Thompson but lists the year as 1887. An interesting twist from the folks

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<sup>1</sup> Roderick Peattie. *The Black Hills*. (New York, 1935) p. 19

at the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce: the cats arrived on the Deadwood Stage!<sup>2</sup>

The April 2006 issue of *Deadwood Magazine* has the date a year earlier than does Badger Clark = 1876<sup>3</sup> and even goes so far as crediting the episode for spawning the word "cathouse" - while acknowledging the total lack of proof for such an assertion.

The Dean of Black Hills historians, Watson Parker, doesn't mention the year but does identify Cheyenne as the point of origin and Phatty Thompson as the enterprising freighter.<sup>4</sup>

A September 3, 1879 obituary contradicts all of the above: "Alexander Davidson, of Denver, Col, died Aug. 24. Mr. D. will be remembered as the man who, during the fall of 1876, brought a load of cats from Denver to this place."<sup>5</sup>

In light of these discrepancies, it seems likely that the great cat migration of Badger Clark's poem occurred on several occasions and at the hands of more than one entrepreneur. But there is little doubt that *somebody* brought cats to Deadwood during the gold rush years, made a profit, and changed the history of the town.

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<sup>2</sup> *Cheyenne-Deadwood Stage*. [www.cheyenne.org](http://www.cheyenne.org)

<sup>3</sup> Dustin D. Floyd. *Busted!* *Deadwood Magazine*, May 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Watson Parker. *Deadwood, the Golden Years*. (Lincoln, NE. 1981) p. 95.

<sup>5</sup> *Black Hills Daily Times*. P. 4, Col. 2.

# The Cat Pioneers

During Deadwood's salad days, just about anything that could be had in the states was also available in Deadwood Gulch - for a price. With shipments of 150,000 pounds of freight bound for a single merchant in one day in 1878 (and over a million pounds delivered that same week)<sup>6</sup> one would think there might have been room for a few cats. Such was apparently not the case however. Feverish gold miners had no use for families, let alone pets, and didn't plan to stay anyway after making their big strike. But whether home-sickness or a local rat infestation were the deciding factors, the need for cats soon came to the fore. With shipments from Cheyenne taking anywhere from twenty to thirty days,<sup>7</sup> this was obviously a job for some wildcat freighter who could travel light and fast.

Unfortunately, solitary wagons setting out for the Hills from *any* direction in the summer of 1876 were subject to Indian attack, and most independents found it prudent to cool their heels in a likely staging area until enough wagons had accumulated to provide protection. This makes it unlikely that a lone wagonload of cats journeying to the Hills could have succeeded before the fall of 1876, when more miners were flowing out of the hills than into it. This date is corroborated by a nearly unimpeachable source: Deadwood's first sheriff.

Seth Bullock's account of Deadwood in 1876 places the arrival of a "spring wagon load of house cats" in October of that year. He identifies the freighter only as a "speculator from Cheyenne" who charged \$15 to \$25 apiece on the first crate-load of cats, but suffered the loss of the remaining cargo when an

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<sup>6</sup> Irma Klock. *All Roads Lead to Deadwood.* (Lead, SD. 1979) p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Agnes Wright Spring. *The Cheyenne and Deadwood Stage Routes.* (Lincoln, NE. 1948) p.

obvious cat-lover liberated those still awaiting the auction block.<sup>8</sup>

However uncommon this event must have been, it was not recorded in the local paper until long after the fact. The first mention came in the June 11, 1877 issue of the *Black Hills Daily Times*, when a letter to the editor suggested importing some cats. I quote the letter and the editor's response in full because the writing style is so delightfully florid, and the libel laws apparently quite forgiving in those days:

"We have sometimes wondered why some enterprising, speculative individual had not yet thought of importing a load of cats to the Black Hills.

An ordinary freight wagon could be partitioned off so as to carry with ease and safety two hundred cats. These cats could be obtained with little or no cost in any of the towns along the Missouri river, and they would find a ready market here at an average price of ten dollars each. The man who has the sagacity and nerve to bring a load of cats into the Black Hills can lay claim to having struck a rich feline lode. Champion.

"Mr. Champion you are behind the times. That enterprising individual imported a load of cats last fall, that were auctioned here to the highest bidder on Main Street. You say these cats could be procured in any town along the Missouri river. Ah, you have friends there in the cat trade, have you? Why not say that they could be procured in Denver, San Francisco, or New York? It is evident sir, that you have a corner on these cats, or else you have an interest in some boot-jack manufactory."<sup>9</sup>

Less than two months later, the Times reported that "there is a fellow on the road to Deadwood with a load of cats."<sup>10</sup>

But there is more to this story than meets the eye. The purported "letter to the editor", was apparently a reprint from the Black Hills *Champion* (published for about six months in 1877 by Sioux City

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<sup>8</sup> Seth Bullock. "An Account of Deadwood and the Northern Black Hills in 1876". (Pierre, 1962) p 357.

<sup>9</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. June 11, 1877. P. 1, Col. 3.

newspaperman and early Black Hills booster, Charles Collins)<sup>11</sup> and the response was a chance to take a dig at the competition's ignorance.

Collins got the last laugh, however. The August 6, 1877 edition of his own paper, trumpeted his successful campaign to attract cats with the following announcement,

"Mr. Tuller, of Sioux City, having read the CHAMPION article on the scarcity of cats in the Black Hills, and the speculations to be derived by importing them here, has loaded up one hundred of them of all ages, sizes and quality, and is now on his way here. Another party in Cheyenne also acted on our suggestion, and is bringing in a load. There'll be music in the air, and cat-er waul in hair when these feline marauding free lunchers arrive here."<sup>12</sup>

By September 14<sup>th</sup> of 1877 the cat population had apparently grown sufficiently to merit a headline in the paper referring to the "Mew-sic by the Band". Alas, only the tantalizing headline remains of this issue so we are left to merely ponder the content of the article.

Perhaps a clue is included in Watson Parker's delightful telling of the story:

"...Phatty betook himself to Cheyenne, built a crate on his wagon, and let it be known among the boys of the city that he would pay twenty-five cents for cats in sound and merchantable condition. He got eighty-two of them, miaowing and caterwauling, and set out for the Hills. All went well until he got past Hill City, where, on the first crossing of Spring Creek, the wagon tipped over and the cats escaped, but kindly prospectors assisted Phatty in recapturing them in return for a cat or two for themselves. When he got the load to Deadwood, he sold the animals to the merchants and dancehall girls for a ten dollar minimum, with fine Maltese cats going as high as twenty-five dollars. Stories that he trained a sextet of tomcats to sit on a fence and yodel by feeding them Swiss cheese were invented by George W. Stokes. Phatty's success, however, aroused much jealousy in the community, and after his first day's business some rascal liberated his remaining stock of

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<sup>10</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. August 1, 1877. P. 4, Col. 1

<sup>11</sup> Thadd Turner. <http://www.oldwestalive.com/id32.html>  
Bob Lee. Gold - Gals - Guns - Guts. (Deadwood. 1976) p. 61.

<sup>12</sup> Black Hills Champion. August 6, 1877. P. 1, Col. 4

cats, and they were never recovered.”<sup>13</sup>

Ellis T. Peirce in Brown and Willard's *Black Hills Trails* adds that in their zeal the boys of Cheyenne had confiscated at least one beloved family pet, with predictable results. When the cat's owner discovered her loss, she sent her husband, a hulking German brewer, to reclaim him. Phatty, apparently a good sized specimen himself, claimed to have paid for the cat fair and square and the two seemed bent on coming to blows when passers-by interfered. According to Peirce, the matter was settled when “a compromise was made whereby the German got his wife's pet and Phatty was out the purchase price.”

Apparently there was a similar cat shortage during the California gold rush. According to the Mount Shasta history website:

“a cat could be had for \$6. The price of cats says a great deal about the abundance of vermin. Mice and rats ate into profits ---literally--- and carried disease. A cat was a blessing in such a place, and kittens were frequent imports from the Eastern states, sometimes travelling (sic) by rail so long that they were nearly grown when they were finally sold.”<sup>14</sup>

Further proof of the importance of cats to early-day Deadwood appeared in the January 25, 1878 paper, in this tongue-in-cheek piece headlined “Corner on Cats”

“The prevalence of cats in the city of Deadwood, and the scarcity of the feline tribe has caused the latter to be much in demand, especially among our warehouse men and merchants. It is reported that the agent of N.S.S. &T. Co. not having the fear of man or God before his eyes, added a fine specimen of the tribe to his already large stock on hand. The

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<sup>13</sup> Parker. P. 95

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.siskiyouhistory.org/1875\\_story2.html](http://www.siskiyouhistory.org/1875_story2.html). Siskiyou County Sesquicentennial Committee. Mount Shasta, California

aforesaid feline in this case happened to belong to a lady well known in theatrical circles, who after searching for many days for her lost Thomas in vain, was informed this morning that it was in the possession of the aforesaid gentleman.

"She immediately hied her to his office and demanded her pet, but the soft impeachment was denied, and she went mournfully away, thinking to herself the biblical quotation, "All men are liars."<sup>15</sup>

A followup article was less bantering: "The company estimates that the mice, before the advent of the cats, destroyed from ten to twenty dollars worth of goods per day."<sup>16</sup>

Reports of cat shipments continued to appear throughout the gold rush period.

"The proprietors of the Big Horn store have a batch of little kittens, and they have already promised about two hundred of their customers each one of them, and now they don't know exactly what to do. There are only half-a-dozen kittens and two hundred owners, but Mr. Goldberg intends to get out of his dilemma by having the promised parties draw lots for them. The drawing will take place Saturday."<sup>17</sup>

I am inclined to believe that Jake Goldberg acquired his felines the old fashioned way rather than imported in crates, because a later newspaper notice (1880) stated,

"The enterprising firm of Mattheiseen & Goldberg, yesterday received a new invoice of cats. As soon as they get their first sight, the holiday of the playful mouse will come to an abrupt terminus."<sup>18</sup>

In January of 1878 a newspaper announcement read: "A couple of thoroughbred Maltese cats

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<sup>15</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. January 25, 1878. P. 4, Col. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. January 30, 1878. P. 4, Col. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. April 4, 1878. P. 1, Col. 4

<sup>18</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. August 26, 1880. P. 4, Col. 2

were among the freight on the Bismarck stage last night.”<sup>19</sup> Perhaps these felines were too high-toned for the rough and ready miners of Deadwood Gulch. Two weeks later they were still needing new homes. “A choice lot of cats at the Bismarck office. For age, size and color, call on the agent”.<sup>20</sup>

Could these have been the subject of Badger Clark’s poem? It’s the wrong year, but they did come from Bismarck. Or perhaps the cowboy poet was merely exercising a bit of poetic license, since “eight” is hard to rhyme with “heaven”.

In any case, there seems to be no question that cats played a role in early-day Deadwood. But it had been many years between the time Badger first heard the story and when he set it down on paper, and longer still since the event took place. Other chroniclers of Deadwood’s early days also suffered from the distance of time - and memory - in relating historic events.

So whether they came from Bismarck, Sioux City, Cheyenne or Denver, and whether the freighter was Alexander Davidson or Phatty Thompson, or some unnamed hero, the demand was met - on more than one occasion - and thus provided a service to early pioneers in Deadwood Gulch. But they also furnished a beguiling anecdote to add to the rich lore of Deadwood’s gold rush heritage.

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<sup>19</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. January 24, 1878. P. 4, Col. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Black Hills Daily Times. February 4, 1878. P. 4. Col 1.

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## Recovering South Dakota's Leading Economic Thinker from Obscurity: Alvin Hansen of Viborg

By John E. Miller

Over the years, South Dakota has generated a fair number of famous and influential academics, among them Nobel Prize-winning physicist Ernest O. Lawrence of Canton, who invented the cyclotron and played a major role in the development of atomic energy; historian John King Fairbank of Huron and Sioux Falls, who at Harvard became the United States' leading expert on Chinese history; Ethel Austin Martin, nutritionist from Bruce and Brookings, who taught at the University of Chicago; political scientist/historian George McGovern of Mitchell and forensics and debate teacher Karl Mundt of Madison, who both carved out large careers in the U.S. Senate; and Theodore Schultz of Badger, whose work as an agricultural economist at Iowa State and the University of Chicago also captured for him a Nobel Prize, his being in economics. One of the lesser-known of these academic stars was another economist, Alvin H. Hansen of Viborg, who after beginning his career at Brown and the University of Minnesota, spent nineteen eventful years at Harvard from 1937 through his retirement from active teaching in 1956.<sup>1</sup> In the process, he became the key American figure in developing and popularizing Keynesian economic theory and applying it in practice. As such, during the middle decades of the twentieth century, he emerged as one of the United States' most influential economists, and there were those in the profession who ranked him at the top in that respect, over and above names like Joseph Schumpeter, John Kenneth Galbraith, Milton Friedman, and Paul Samuelson. He was a colleague of the first two of these stars of the discipline, a rival of the third, and a teacher and mentor of the fourth.

One of the few honors Hansen failed to achieve was the Nobel Prize in Economics, but he retired from teaching and passed away too soon (in 1975) to become a major contender for it. However, his first graduate student at Harvard, Paul Samuelson, did emerge as the first American to win the award, in 1970, and many of Hanson's other students rose to the top ranks in the economics profession and the highest policy councils in government.

It is therefore a supreme irony that, among the general public at least and even among those calling themselves intellectuals, Hansen is largely forgotten today, even in his hometown of Viborg.<sup>2</sup> Despite the huge respect Alvin Hansen commanded within the economics profession, his frequent advising of government officials over the course of more than two decades, and his considerable presence in the public arena through the influence of his speeches, magazine articles, and books, the stature that he attained quickly dissipated during the late 1960s and afterwards, leaving him by the 1980s a long-forgotten public intellectual in the thinking of the general populace. South Dakotans' lack of knowledge about Hansen may have something to do with the fact that his ideas and advice did not go down particularly well among many of the people he had grown up with. He was, after all, an advanced liberal in his economic and political thinking, and South Dakota was and remains one of the most conservative states in the Union in its thinking and voting patterns. Also, Hanson retired from intellectual controversy and then was gone from the scene altogether at just the time when the liberal views that he had championed lost much of their luster during the late 1960s and 1970s, and then Reaganism ensconced itself nationally during the 1980s.

Three decades later, as we proceed into the second decade of the twenty-first century, economic orthodoxies, in the minds of many at least, have unraveled, and many theorists and practitioners in the field are searching for new directions. To those acolytes of Keynesianism such as Paul Krugman and Robert Reich who claim that, just as American prosperity during the generation after World War II derived from the wise application of the famous British economist's principles, we now can rely on federal government stimuluses to boost economic growth, William Voegli in a recent issue of *Commentary* replies that the "golden age" of American prosperity from the end of World War II to the oil crisis of 1973 "rested on a set of irreproducible economic circumstances more than it did upon the triumph of Keynesianism."<sup>3</sup> But if Keynesian ideas have undergone a roller-coaster ride full of ups and downs during the past several decades, free-market thinking, a la Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, and the whole Chicago School of economics, has become disconcertingly uncertain of the ground it stands on, itself. No less a defender of market fundamentalism than former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan was compelled to admit before a congressional committee in October 2008 that the "whole intellectual edifice [of rational markets] collapsed in the summer of last year."<sup>4</sup>

In fact, there was a growing feeling that not only were particular orthodoxies coming under fire, but that the entire intellectual project of economics as a discipline was in disarray. This suspicion infected practitioners located on all points of the ideological spectrum. In his Lionel Robbins lectures at the London School of Economics, Princeton's Paul Krugman expressed a concern that most of the macroeconomic theories of the past thirty years were "spectacularly useless at best, and positively harmful at worst."<sup>5</sup> In articles in the *Wall Street Journal*, Mark Whitehouse described how the economic crisis of 2008-9 had compelled economists to search for new paradigms to attempt to explain unpredicted economic phenomena which were only dimly understood.<sup>6</sup> The macroeconomic crisis stimulated by the housing bubble and the Wall Street meltdown had, in effect, precipitated a macroeconomics crisis, that is, a forced rethinking of the entire intellectual discipline. In many minds, at least, the pendulum seems to be in the process of swinging back toward Keynes, and books with titles like *The Return to Keynes*, *Keynes: The Return of the Master*, and *Keynes: The Rise, Fall, and Return of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's Most Influential Economist* appeared in 2009 and 2010.<sup>7</sup>

Hearing all of this probably would not have sounded too strange in the ears of Alvin Hansen, who, more than half a century earlier and more than any other single individual, was the founding father of macroeconomics in the United States. (Macroeconomics deals with the general national economy, focusing upon federal fiscal policy, i.e., taxing and spending, and its impact on economic growth and business cycles, while microeconomics concentrates on the theory of individual firms or industries.) Hansen, too, had confronted a social science discipline in crisis during the 1930s, and he had played a major role in shifting the paradigm. In his work as the single most important individual in bringing the Keynesian revolution to the United States, Hansen became, in the judgment of University of Michigan economist Paul McCracken, whose own approach to economics diverged significantly from the South Dakotan's, the single person whose views "influenced the nation's thinking about economic policy more profoundly than any other economist in this century."<sup>8</sup> When *Time* magazine ran a cover story on John Maynard Keynes in December 1965 (Keynes being the first economist ever to be so honored), Hansen was featured prominently in the article as America's "first great Keynesian teacher" for having taught hundreds of economists, many of them in high positions.<sup>9</sup> One of Hansen's former Harvard graduate students, James Tobin, sent Hansen a

note afterwards, writing, "I was glad to see that *Time* gave you credit for propagating the Keynesian revolution in the U.S. The success of fiscal policy in recent years is really your triumph, and the country owes a great debt to you."<sup>10</sup>

The notion that Hansen would engineer a liberal intellectual revolution within the economics profession would have astonished anyone acquainted with the guild, most of all Hansen himself, in the year 1937, when he moved from Minnesota to Harvard, after the latter lured him away with the promise of a higher salary and the opportunity to work with the best economic minds in America and presumably the best graduate students, too. British economist John Maynard Keynes's magnum opus, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, had appeared on the scene just the year before. In it, the brilliant but controversial polymath set forth in detail and in highly technical language a prescription for rescuing national economies from the malaise they had been suffering since the Wall Street Stock Market crash of 1929 had precipitated the worst international economic depression ever recorded. Keynes's diagnosis was that the national and world economies were suffering from a scarcity of purchasing power or consumption. Since the consumption function consisted primarily of individual and family consumer spending, on the one hand, and business investment, on the other, and neither of these seemed capable of stimulating the necessary recovery on their own (in contradiction to the orthodox economic theory of the time), he reasoned that a booster shot needed to be injected into the system from the outside. His prescription: national government fiscal stimulus in the form of spending increases ("compensatory spending") or tax cuts, in other words, deliberate deficit financing until sufficient economic recovery had occurred (otherwise known as "priming the pump").<sup>11</sup>

Paul Samuelson, Hansen's first graduate student at Harvard, once noted how ironical it was that Hansen emerged as Keynes's foremost champion in the United States, because when the instantly-famous *General Theory* first arrived on the scene in 1936, Hansen had expressed considerable skepticism about the book's premises upon a first reading. Assigned to write a review of it for *The Journal of Political Economy*, Hansen, who until then had earned a reputation for being conventional—if not conservative—in his economic thinking, expressed severe reservations about the ideas put forward in the book. "The book under review," he wrote, "is not a landmark in the sense that it lays a foundation for a 'new economics.'" It warns us once again, in a provocative manner, of the danger

of reasoning based on assumptions, which no longer fit the facts of economic life. . . . This book is more a symptom of economic trends than a foundation stone upon which a science can be built."<sup>12</sup>

But once established in Harvard Yard, Hansen soon experienced a change of heart. He began to think long and hard about the book, considering it within the context of the dreadful economic conditions of the 1930s, the trends of the times, the intellectual cul de sac that the economics profession appeared to have gotten itself into, and the economic and political prospects he perceived facing the country in the years ahead. Especially portentous, in his opinion, was the onset of a sharp economic downturn beginning just about the time he arrived in Cambridge—the recession of 1937-38, or, in the parlance of some, the “Roosevelt Recession.” It appeared obvious to him that unless the national government could do something decisive to stimulate demand, the country might well be in for a sustained period of what he referred to as “secular stagnation,” which he believed was a result of large historical forces, including the closing of the landed frontier, a decline in the rate of population growth, and a seeming lag in technological innovation, leading him and others to doubt that the development of new industries, such as automobiles and kitchen appliances, would continue to be a strong factor in economic growth in the future.<sup>13</sup> At this point, his thinking began to converge with that of the British master; both he and Keynes agreed that a new, more aggressive role for government fiscal (and, to a lesser degree, monetary) policy was called for.

Harvard proved to be much more conducive to this kind of thinking than Minnesota had been, in large part because so much high-powered intellect was gathered in one place there. The economics faculty remained largely conservative in orientation; Hansen and Seymour Harris were exceptions. During his early years in Cambridge, it was graduate students who proved most receptive to the fresh ideas wafting across the Atlantic. The conversion to Keynesianism was primarily a “revolution of the young.”<sup>14</sup> Hansen teamed up with John H. Williams, a confirmed conservative in his economic views, in what soon became a legendary fiscal policy seminar. Despite their different slants on the subject, the two found each other’s company congenial, and students discovered their opposing viewpoints to be wonderfully conducive to stimulating animated discussion and debate. Intellectual sparks flew in that seminar, and all were the better for it. “Students used to say that Hansen gave them lovely views of our society, and that I poked holes in them,” Williams later reminisced. “But, notwithstanding our differences,” he added, “I shall always think of Alvin as the closest friend I ever had.”<sup>15</sup>

Hansen's own experience as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin working with the legendary John R. Commons no doubt influenced him to run his seminars on an egalitarian basis and to push his students to be as diligent and creative as they were capable of being. Hansen liked to say he learned as much from his students as they did from him. Outsiders often dropped in on the group, making things even livelier. High ranking government officials and business executives frequently sat in. "Visitors from the Washington firing lines mixed with local students and faculty," recalled James Tobin of his student days at Harvard. "I had the feeling that history was being made in that room."<sup>16</sup>

Sometimes it was. Many of Hansen's students went on to important jobs in private business and the halls of government. Hansen's classes and seminars were heavily policy-oriented, so the lessons learned proved of high practical relevance to many of his students. His colleague John Kenneth Galbraith described Hansen as "a man for whom economic ideas had no standing apart from their use."<sup>17</sup> Graduates of his fiscal policy seminar included one chairman and three other members of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, four members of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, two Undersecretaries of the Treasury, and two Assistant Secretaries of State for Economic Affairs. Other seminar graduates filled slots as Secretary of Defense, Undersecretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, and as directors of many other government bureaus and agencies.<sup>18</sup>

Scores of Hansen's students fanned out into college and university classrooms from coast-to-coast. Some of them became renowned scholars; others less famous carried forward their mentor's ideas through their lectures and classroom discussions. Hansen's greatest impact as a scholar was not so much through the theoretical contributions he made, although these did have some impact. He was especially noted for elaborating the so-called "IS-LM" framework, first developed by British economist J.R. Hicks, describing relationships among interest rates, savings, investment, demand for money, and income.<sup>19</sup> Paul Samuelson was one person in the field who viewed his mentor as a creative economic theorist.<sup>20</sup>

Hansen's greater contribution, however, was as an explicator and popularizer of Keynes's theories and economic ideas in general through handbooks and textbooks that he wrote, articles in scholarly journals and popular periodicals, and talks, speeches, and lectures.<sup>21</sup> Publisher W. W. Norton admired his ability to "step right down from the professional rostrum and talk turkey to the man in the street."<sup>22</sup> Hansen was a prolific author, regularly writing for

publications from *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and *Fortune* to *Survey Graphic*, *New Republic*, and *Foreign Affairs*.

Beyond that, he had a direct impact on policy through consulting with government agencies, testifying before congressional committees, working with individuals and groups that wrote legislation, and talking with government officials and political operatives. Even before moving to Harvard, he commuted to Washington from the Twin Cities to assist in the shaping of the Social Security Act—whose key drafters included Edwin E. Witte, who had been a fellow graduate student with him at the University of Wisconsin—in the formulation of the Social Security Act.<sup>23</sup> After moving to Harvard, testimony in Washington in 1939 before the Temporary National Economic Committee, which was investigating the problem of excessive concentration in American business, helped turn the hearings, according to Herbert Stein, into a platform for Keynesianism.<sup>24</sup> During the early 1940s, Hansen commuted by train virtually every week down to Washington to advise officials in the Federal Reserve and at the National Resources Planning Board.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, he pushed vigorously during the war for the concept of full employment, which helped provide the basis for Congressional passage in 1946 of the Employment Act (admittedly a watered-down version of Hansen's original idea). This legislation, which established a government obligation to promote maximum "employment, production, and purchasing power," was, no doubt, Hansen's greatest policy legacy. More than anyone else, according to James Tobin, Hansen created the climate of opinion and understanding in Washington and the rest of the country that made possible the passage of this historic piece of legislation.<sup>26</sup> Finally, the famous Kennedy-Johnson tax cut of 1964 had Hansen's fingers written all over it, despite the fact that by the time it was enacted he had been retired from Harvard for eight years.<sup>27</sup> The economic team advising President Kennedy in the White House at the time was really Hansen's team. The three-person Council of Economic Advisers (a body created by the Employment Act of 1946), consisted of two of Hansen's former protégés, James Tobin and Kermit Gordon, while another of his students, Paul Samuelson, was serving as a major economic adviser to the President.<sup>28</sup> The third member of the CEA, chairman Walter Heller of the University of Minnesota, had not been a student of Hansen's, but he had learned so much from the generously giving economist that he called himself one of the South Dakotan's "intellectual godchildren."<sup>29</sup> *Time's* cover story on Keynes a year later identified Hansen as America's "first

great Keynesian teacher" for having served as mentor to hundreds of economists, many of whom had risen to high positions.<sup>30</sup>

Two years later, the premier economics organization in the United States, the American Economic Association, conferred on the man from Viborg its highest honor, the Walker Medal, referring to him as "a gentle revolutionary who has lived to see his cause triumphant and his heresies orthodox, an untiring scholar whose example and influence have fruitfully changed the directions of his science, a political economist who has reformed policies and institutions in his own country and elsewhere without any power save the force of his ideas. From his boyhood on the South Dakota prairie, Alvin Hansen has believed that knowledge can improve the condition of man."<sup>31</sup>

Hansen had reached the pinnacle of influence in his profession largely by dint of his own brilliance, hard work, and creativity. No doubt the benefits of the excellent education he received at an academy in Sioux Falls, Yankton College, and the University of Wisconsin also contributed to his success. His being able to work with outstanding colleagues and learn from eager students at Brown, Minnesota, and Harvard also provided fertile ground for his constant desire to expand the horizons of knowledge.

But much of his success needs also to be attributed to his farmstead and small-town origins in South Dakota during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Of course, not all small-town boys growing up during the period turned out the same way, but it can be safely assumed that much of the peculiar character and personality exhibited by Hansen derived from his family background and from the local milieu in which he grew to maturity. His attachment to home was so great that almost every year while he was teaching at Minnesota he returned home to South Dakota with his wife and two daughters to visit family and friends. He always took the time to get out and talk with farmers, main street businessmen, mechanics, and tradesmen—ordinary folks whom he knew and empathized with implicitly. One reason he understood economics so well is that he always kept the subject connected to real people, and he knew real people well because he was one of them. Speaking admiringly of the man who helped make him who he was, Paul Samuelson noted wonderingly that he had never heard Hansen utter a critical word about a colleague. "Hansen did not regard economics as an ego trip," the M.I.T. economist observed. "To him it was a fascinating study of how to improve the lot of humanity."<sup>32</sup>

Hansen's rural origins and the face he projected as a steady, common-sensical, practical Midwesterner served him well in the college classroom, the halls of Congress, business seminars, and anywhere he went. The green eyeshade he often wore to protect his sensitive eyes just enhanced the effect. At 5'8", a little pudgy around the middle, mild and pleasant in manner, he could fit no one's image of a radical, wild-eyed bomb-thrower. Yet, appearances could be deceiving. Richard Lee Strout wrote in the *New Republic* magazine, "Behind the mildest and most reasonable of exteriors he sometimes offers comments which are simply political dynamite."<sup>33</sup> But Hansen knew how to package radical ideas in unthreatening terms. Whether he would be able to defuse his opponents in today's toxic political environment poses an interesting question. The times have changed so drastically that it is hard to imagine that a small-town boy from the Midwest would make that much difference in a media-saturated world where one's origins matter less than the tone of voice with which he delivers his canned phrases and the certainty with which he addresses his ideological comrades. This would all seem so foreign to Alvin Hansen were he to come back now. Maybe there is something we can all learn from his example.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> There is no full-fledged biography of Hansen. Useful biographical materials include Perry G. Mehrling, "Alvin Harvey Hansen," *American National Biography* (1999), 10:20-22; Eli Schwartz, "Alvin Harvey Hansen," *Dictionary of American Biography*, supplement 9 (1994), 362-63; "Alvin Harvey Hansen," *National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (1984) N-63:304-5; Seymour E. Harris, "Alvin Hansen," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968), 6:319-23; "Alvin H. Hansen," *Current Biography* (1945), 264-67; "Alvin H. Hansen: The American Keynes," in William Breit and Roger L. Ransom, *The Academic Scribblers*, 3d ed. (Princeton, N.J., 1998), 81-104; Samuel Tenenbaum, "Dr. Alvin Hansen: Pioneer Economist," *American Mercury* 61 (July 1945), 55-63. The fullest exposition of Hansen's thought, with a specific focus on monetary policy, is Perry G. Mehrling, *The Money Interest and the Public Interest: American Monetary Thought, 1920-1970* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 85-156.

<sup>2</sup> While doing my initial research on Hansen several years ago, I spent a day in Viborg and stepped into the two cafes on the town's main street where the coffee drinkers regularly gathered in mid-afternoon. As I recall the day, I talked to perhaps two dozen people and asked them what they knew about Alvin Hansen. Only a handful recognized the name.

<sup>3</sup> William Voegeli, "Americans Don't Hate the Rich," *Commentary* 130 (December 2010), 21.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Justin Fox, "The Myth of the Rational Market," *Time* 173 (June 22, 2009), 45.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in "The other-worldly philosophers," *The Economist* 392 (July 18, 2009), 65.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Whitehouse, "Crisis Compels Economists to Reach for New Paradigm," *Wall Street Journal*, November 3, 2009; Whitehouse, "Economists' Grail: A Post-Crash Model," *ibid.*, November 30, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Bradley W. Bateman, Toshiaki Hirai, and Maria Cristina Marcuzzo, eds., *The Return to Keynes* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010); Robert Skidelsky, *Keynes: The Return of the Master* (New York, 2009); and Peter Clarke, *The Rise, Fall, and Return of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's Most Influential Economist* (New York, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Paul W. McCracken to Hansen, August 29, 1967, Alvin H. Hansen Papers, Pusey Library, Harvard University (hereinafter cited as Hansen Papers).

<sup>9</sup> "We Are All Keynesians Now," *Time* 86 (December 31, 1965), 67.

<sup>10</sup> James Tobin to Hansen, January 3, 1966, Hansen Papers.

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<sup>11</sup> To be certain, the process can work the other way, too. When the economy gets overheated and inflationary pressures increase, government can run planned surpluses (the opposite of planned deficits) in order to dampen inflation, but this aspect of the theory often gets overlooked, especially since in recent decades we have generally looked to monetary policy conducted by the Federal Reserve system to work in that area.

<sup>12</sup> Alvin H. Hansen, "Mr. Keynes on Underemployment Equilibrium," Journal of Political Economy 44 (October 1936), 686.

<sup>13</sup> Hansen, Full Recovery or Stagnation? (New York: W.W. Norton, 1938), 290, 302; Hansen, "Economic Progress and Declining Population Growth," American Economic Review, 29 (March 1939), 1-15; Theodore Rosenof, Economics in the Long Run: New Deal Theorists and Their Legacies, 1933-1993 (Chapel Hill, 1997), 53-65; Robert M. Collins, The Business Response to Keynes, 1929-1964 (New York, 1981), 10-11, 51-52; Kenneth Weiher, America's Search for Economic Stability: Monetary and Fiscal Policy Since 1913 (New York, 1992), 112-13.

<sup>14</sup> The term is that of David C. Colander and Harry Landreth in their The Coming of Keynesianism to America: Conversations with the Founders of Keynesian Economics (Cheltenham, UK, 1996), 9.

<sup>15</sup> John H. Williams, "Tribute," Quarterly Journal of Economics 90 (February 1976), 10.

<sup>16</sup> James Tobin, in Lives of the Laureates: Thirteen Nobel Economists, 3d. ed., ed. William Breit and Roger W. Spencer (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 119.

<sup>17</sup> John Kenneth Galbraith, A Contemporary Guide to Economics, Peace, and Laughter (Boston, 1971), 50.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Salant, "Alvin Hansen and the Fiscal Policy Seminar," Quarterly Journal of Economics 90 (February 1976), 22.

<sup>19</sup> Hiram P. Minsky, John Maynard Keynes (New York, 1975), 21-38; Breit and Ransom, The Academic Scribblers, 91-95, 102-4; The resulting hypothesis is sometimes referred to as the Hicks-Hansen Model. Schwartz, "Alvin Harvey Hansen," 363.

<sup>20</sup> Paul A. Samuelson, "Alvin Hansen as a Creative Economic Theorist," Quarterly Journal of Economics 90 (February 1976), 24-31; See also Harris, "Alvin Hansen," 322.

<sup>21</sup> For example, Hansen's A Guide to Keynes (New York, 1953) became the standard handbook for the study of Keynes in the United States. Many more students undoubtedly read it than actually read Keynes in the original.

<sup>22</sup> W. W. Norton to Hansen, Nov. 6, 1944, Hansen Papers.

<sup>23</sup> R. A. Stevenson to Hansen, January 22, 1935, and Herbert Heaton to Hansen, June 27, 1937, Hansen Papers.

<sup>24</sup> Herbert Stein, The Fiscal Revolution in America (Chicago, 1969), 167-68.

<sup>25</sup> John E. Miller, "From South Dakota Farm to Harvard Seminar: Alvin H. Hansen, America's Prophet of Keynesianism," The Historian, 64 (Spring/Summer 2002), 603-22.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Samuelson, "Alvin H. Hansen," Newsweek 85 (June 16, 1975), 72; James Tobin, "Hansen and Public Policy," Quarterly Journal of Economics 90 (February 1976), 34; Stein, The Fiscal Revolution in America, ch. 8; Robert Lekachman, The Age of Keynes (New York, 1966), ch. 6.

<sup>27</sup> Hansen continued lecturing and teaching part-time at colleges and universities around the United States and around the world for several years after officially retiring in 1956.

<sup>28</sup> "A Master Plan for the U.S. for the 1960s," U.S. News and World Report 50 (February 27, 1961), 59; Breit and Spencer, eds., Lives of the Laureates, 133-35.

<sup>29</sup> Walter and Johnnie Heller to Alvin Hansen, [1967], Hansen Papers.

<sup>30</sup> "We Are All Keynesians Now," Time 86 (December 31, 1965), 64-67B.

<sup>31</sup> "Award Citation to Alvin H. Hansen on His Receiving the Francis A. Walker Medal," American Economic Association, December 28, 1967, Hansen Papers.

<sup>32</sup> Paul A. Samuelson, "Alvin Hansen as Creative Economic Theorist," 31.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Lee Strout, "Hansen of Harvard," New Republic 105 (December 29, 1941), 890.

Trails of Beef:  
Roads that Helped Feed Growth and Life on the Great Plains  
By: Garrett Shearer

The Great Plains, an endless expanse of land dotted with rivers, hills, fields, and livestock. This grassy plain stretches from the Canadian border to the southern tip of Texas. This is a place where one would have trouble hiding a secret from the world seeing it as it would be quite visible for miles around. The Great Plains has a way of concealing the secrets of the past so that until someone seeks them out they would forever remain unknown to humanity. To people outside the Great Plains, the vast empty spaces of pastureland and wheat fields spell desolation, emptiness, and boredom. But to those of us submerged among these enormous plains it is quite the contrary. The Great Plains is teeming with life and that does not just mean people; wildlife such as deer, antelope, ducks, and meadowlarks, livestock and cattle, horses, pigs, and chickens all add to the hustle and bustle of life on the plains.

People who pass through South Dakota have expressed their opinion that the only thing the Great Plains is good for is growing wheat and cattle. Locals tell them they're wrong, it's a *great* place to grow cattle, as well as people. From Texas to North Dakota, the Great Plains still remains the Cattle Kingdom of the World. Of the top ten cattle producing states in the U.S., South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Montana, and Texas are among them producing roughly 52.7% of the value of the beef cattle industry today (About States.) This may not seem important to some but the Great Plains has a long history of bringing value to those who live here and the rest of the country.

The Great Plains as a cattle industry did not just happen overnight. A period of time passed that opened up the Great Plains to a vast world of progress, prosperity, people, and of course, cattle. Through an examination of past and present history, the Great Plains has had a history deeply rooted in the growth of the cattle industry and the progress of the people that began in the 1860's and continues to prosper and benefit the Great Plains to this day.

A common misconception about cattle is that they have been around since paleo-Indians, roaming the prairies with the woly buffalo and the wild mustang. However this is not the case. Like many of our modern animals on farms and ranches today that were introduced slowly throughout history, cattle were also introduced to the Americas. The first cattle to arrive in America were not brought as a source of trade, but rather a source of food.

Spanish explorers like Hernando Cortez brought the first cattle to Vera Cruz, Mexico in 1521 while looking for the Golden Cities of Cibola. The cattle consisted of a small herd of six heifers (young female cows) and a young bull that were said to be born of Andalusian stock. These were fast animals and wielded long-sharp horns. Another Spaniard, Don Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, entered America bringing with him the children of the original seven head, a herd that numbered over 500 head. Coronado was prepared to venture north of Mexico toward the Great Plains. Little did he know that centuries later descendants of the same herds would number in the millions roaming the ranges of the Great Plains (Brown 1.)

Before these massive herds could develop great efforts went in to their care and reproduction and thus, over a period of time the practice of ranching came about. Cattle and beef production are the largest segments of agriculture in the state, with 35 percent of ranches being classified as beef farms (South Dakota Beef Facts.) Cattle ranching today accounts for 48 percent of the 31,000 farms and ranches in South Dakota alone (Ag United.) my family has had a long history of raising cattle and ranching in South Dakota. Our current ranch is nestled in amongst the cedar trees of the Cheyenne River valley. One of the things about ranching in western South Dakota is that it is an industry frozen in time in some ways. This is not to say that cattle ranching has not improved and progressed over the last 100 years, but rather the way of life and some of the practices are yet the same as they were when the first herds came to the Dakotas. On our ranch we still use horses as a means of tending, checking, and gathering cattle. Through this may sound like an ancient practice, and some may think that there are certainly more modern means of working cattle, the horse and rider in our areas is still the dominant factor. Decades have been bred into cattle and horses that allow them to have this inherent relationship with one another and it's quite amazing to witness.

This evolution can be seen in the transformation of the longhorn. Spanish cattle began to evolve and the wrangler became known as the vaquero. Over a period of 300 years the Mexicans slowly moved northward towards Texas. They were in need of more grazing lands for their ever-increasing herds of cattle which then numbered in the thousands. In Mexico, the Spanish cattle were not only a means of food but they were a means of profit being prized for their hides to make leather for boots and saddles (Brown 1.) Here I would like to draw a parallel between then and now. The cattle raised today are not strictly destined to become hamburger, contrary to popular belief; some of the cattle will be sold to make leather. As many know, leather is a very popular material with which to make everything

from coats to saddles, bridles, and other useful products. In 2009 statistics released by International Trade Centre showed that exports of leather in the United States was worth \$146,671,693. This number was drastically reduced in 2008 when the economy plunged into oblivion. Since then the market trends have been slowly increasing with each year. Which is great news for those in the cattle industry.

When Texas won its independence from Mexico in 1836, there was a ratio of six cattle to one person in Texas. However large the numbers of cattle were, there was no market for cattle as a source of beef, the only uses sought were for their hides, tallow, hooves, and horns that were then sent to the east (Brown 1.) Fast-forwarding 100 years we find that these statistics are not all that different today. In South Dakota there are 4.5 head of cattle to every person in the state. As a state considerably smaller than Texas this is a large ratio, larger than many realize. South Dakota ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in production of cattle. This puts South Dakota's cattle production rate at 3.7 million (South Dakota Beef.)

This trend of large herds and small pastures changed in Texas dramatically. In the 1830's many Texans had expanded their pastures greatly and thus were in need of more cattle, which by this time had become known as the "longhorn". After a great deal of buying from the Mexicans, Texans were overrun with wild, fiery longhorns after a few generations of reproduction. This in turn pushed ranchers to look northward for grass and possibly emerging beef markets. In 1846, Edward Price became the first person to drive a herd of 1,000 longhorns to market in Ohio (Ward 26.)

By 1847 longhorns had become the predominant livestock of choice in Texas. They were considered a potential source of great wealth if only the market was present. In years previous to 1847, wild longhorns had been known to be living in great numbers among the mesquite of south Texas. Many considered these longhorns more dangerous and skittish than buffalo (Ward 26.) Longhorns though wild, were renowned for their strength, stamina, and muscle. Their narrow shoulders, sharp backbones, and long legs made them exceptionally good walkers for traveling long distances. A distinct characteristic of longhorns, besides their 6-8 foot horns, was the variety of colors they were bred in. Colors commonly found on longhorns included: pale red, dun, speckled, spotted, bay, yellow, blue, and calico (Vestal 88.) Longhorns truly are beautiful creatures. My family has raised longhorns for decades, though our herds are comprised primarily of Black Angus. Angus cattle are primarily bred for raising beef today,

coincidentally they replaced the longhorn only a few decades ago. An interesting thing about longhorns, from a personal observation, is that longhorn genes must be dominant in respect to crossbreeding with Angus. I say this because we don't own longhorn bulls, nor would we, their temperament and size make them a force no one wants to encounter. This aside, a longhorn calf will have the same coloration as its mother, even when the father is of a different breed and color. This, as I've been told by my family over the years, must be a side affect of their wild ancestors who were allowed to roam free and thus these traits became progressive in order to maintain the species.

Prior to 1860 and the beginning of the Civil War trade between north and south was very little, but then President Lincoln declared that all trade with the South should be stopped altogether and this shut Texans off from the northern markets. The Confederate army found a need for beef so longhorns were driven to places in the South to help feed the Confederates. Some drives were unsuccessful because Union forces would capture herds or Confederate soldiers would detain drivers for fear they were taking the longhorns to Union troops. When the Civil War ended, the paper currency in Texas became worthless, as did the cattle because no one could afford to buy longhorns. Ranchers then had to make the decision to drive cattle north to the more prosperous markets and vast empty prairies of the Great Plains (Ward 37.)

Many ranchers felt that with plentiful grass, the Great Plains of the north was the most natural place in the United States to raise cattle. The Great Plains of the U.S. contained over 1,650,000 square miles and over a billion acres of open plains. With the increase in cattle to the plains, ranchers believed it would bring 30,000,000 people to receive their beef from grass-fed cattle (Beef Bonanza 13.) The most obvious reason for taking cattle north was that the grass was considered "free" on prairies where various states or territories of Federal Government leased the land (Ward 74.)

Beef was needed on the northern Great Plains as well and would bring a fair price. Longhorns were also easier and cheaper to move than to kill and skin buffalo, which had been many ranchers previous profession. A steer from Texas to Dodge City cost 75 cents to move and one dollar to move to the Dakotas or Montana (Ward 87.) There were markets ready to receive longhorns by the hundreds. Places like Kansas City, Wichita, Dodge City, and Westport, Kansas became focal points for northern bound cattle drives. These cities were gateways for those headed west like freighters and pioneers bound for California who would no-doubt need meat to sustain their journey. Army

quartermasters, Indian agents would come to these cow towns to buy meat for the army and to be distributed out to the reservations. Some of the beef was destined for the east where in 1855 New York sold the first beef to enter New England (Ward 31.)

Longhorns, smart though they may be, didn't walk themselves to market, they had to be driven. Cowboys performed the primary means of driving. Cowboys were usually young men looking for a form of work to support families. They were paid \$25-40 a month to prepare, fight, and protect the herds of their employers. They bought all the things they needed with their money, which included clothes, guns, ammunitions, tack, saddles, and sleeping bags. Outfits hiring cowboys usually provided them with 6-12 horses (McDowell 25.) Cowboys had to be sharp, quick thinkers, fast reflexes, and could handle a rope. Their horses had to be equally talented (Brown 23.) Cowboys had to earn their keep on the trail, if they weren't able to work hard or take orders they would be let go. Many ranchers today who hire help to run cattle share this view. Ranchers need people who are not afraid to work and will get the job done in a timely manner, because as the adage goes, "time is money." If someone slacks in his or her duties they lose pay and so does the rancher. We've had several hired men over the years and they did what they were asked and they did a good job as well. However, the one thing people looking for work overlook is, running a ranch is not just work, it's hard work and there's lots of it. Never a day goes by that something doesn't go wrong like cows getting into the hay yards, tearing down fences, or just getting sick. These may sound like overwhelming obstacles but to a cattle producer it's just another day at work.

Trail drives are still a popular way to move cattle in the western region of South Dakota. During early spring cows begin to calve and the previous years calf crop, which are called yearlings, are usually sold or moved to summer grazing. Our ranch has several pastures in which we use to graze our heifers. In our area there are few roads and most of our summer pastures are miles from our big pastures. To truck 50 head would cost way more than necessary, so many times we drive them ourselves. Three or four riders, usually family and friends are called to help. Since time is of utter importance, when the day is set there's no getting out of it. The last time we moved heifers to our north pastures, it was 101 degrees and it had rained the night before so it was very humid. But there was really no sense in complaining. We had to cross creeks that were flooded and cattle didn't want to cross for fear of the high water. Some attempted to turn back towards home but we got them pointed in the direction we wanted them to go.

We finally forced them across the swampy march and then it was up the side of a bluff and into the cedar trees. Cattle love to get into cedar trees and hide and being black they are sometimes very difficult to see. Welsh Corgis, a short-stocky breed of dog, come in handy when chasing cattle out from under trees. A bullwhip was also used, not to strike the cattle because we've always lived by the rule that you respect your cattle, it was just a ploy to scare them out from their hiding places. Driving cattle is not an up-and-go-do-it job, it takes planning and consideration, though one could argue many things on a ranch have to be done this way. When a drive is planned it sometimes takes weeks or even a few months to get everything ready. Or week or month is nothing compared to time spent organizing the Texas cattle drives.

John Murray was the first to realize the importance of trail drives as an organized operation. He proposed that owners turn over what herds they wanted sold to a trusted person and the drivers would trail the cattle to market, sell them, and return with the profit. The beef scare of 1863 had many believing that if beef production didn't continue to increase then cities would consume all the current beef in four years because population was increasing faster than was cattle production (Beef Bonanza 14.) After the Civil War the longhorn population had multiplied because men were away at fighting and no one was around to contain the wild herds. It was estimated that 3 to 6 million longhorns were running loose in Texas in 1866 (Vestal 87.) To get longhorns out of the mesquite, cattle were coaxed out using decoy herds of domestic cattle. The longhorns were then put in a pen and held until a herd large enough was ready to go north (Brown 23.)

Thankfully here in the northern Great Plains we don't have mesquite to worry about, but this doesn't mean gathering cattle is easy. Most of the time when we gather cattle, it's for branding which is done in mid to late May. Our cattle are kept in amongst the cedars before branding because cedars provide excellent shelters for mothers and newborn calves. But gathering cattle in cedar forests is not easy, as I've previously mentioned. My family and I, as well as those who frequently ride in the cedar breaks, know how to get in between the sticky, thorny branches of cedars to remove cattle. One quality that many love about cattle is that where one goes usually the rest will follow, usually. If you manage to drive out a few head then eventually the rest will follow at some point. Cattle are good at following one another and one rider can do a lot of gathering all on their own because a cow has a natural tendency to play follow-the-leader.

For many of our neighbors who frequently join us for branding, it's difficult for some to work around the cedar trees because they live on the prairie where there are no trees. Gathering cattle on the prairies and in the cedar breaks are totally different and thus different tactics must be used as well. More often than not cattle get missed because riders don't see them and ride past them and we must go back and retrieve them later which makes for major annoyances in a cattle operation like ours.

The trail drives in 1860 would be in late April or early May as soon as the grass was high enough for cattle to graze on (Vestal 89.) Owners would put cattle together and choose a trail boss who would visit ranches and agree to move their cattle to central markets in the north. Cattle were then branded, as they are today, to indicate ownership.

Branding is a very important part of any cattle operation. Branding does more than identify cattle; it helps protect them and helps indicate quality. We brand our cattle using symbols that range anywhere from letters to numbers. My family's brand is made up of two letters, "Y" and "F". The F is inverted and upside down and placed to the right of the Y on the left rib on cattle. My personal brand is read as "lazy Y" and "4". Lazy means the Y is turned on its side to the right with its fork pointed to the 4. This is currently the used mode of identification, though some are moving towards electronic identification, but that's another matter entirely. Branding is important because it prevents unscrupulous goings-on and prevents theft, plain and simply. Western South Dakota is comprised of very good and honest people, but that's not to say that it's not without its dangers as well. A branded cow is less likely to be taken or lost. Every one of our neighbors raises cattle and so many times we have cattle across the fence from theirs. If our unbranded cattle were to get mixed in with someone else's it would be difficult to determine whose cattle they might actually be and this would cause unwanted tensions between neighbors, which is one thing we strive to avoid. People would lose money left and right because fences aren't walls and if unbranded cattle are sold with someone else's then you are out a significant amount of money.

Registered cattle are becoming a very popular practice in western South Dakota. Registered means that certain breeding standards are met and recorded that guarantee the highest quality of stock that one can buy. Selected mating of bulls and cows allow one to know exactly what kind of quality stock they are going to get and this is very, very important especially in an industry where Americans are constantly looking for a higher quality of animal

and beef. Many use their brands as a marketing symbol to say they have registered cattle, and in some cases the brand means everything.

Today we have hired men, back then employers had trail bosses. The trail boss was paid roughly \$125 a month while on the trail. Ranchers today have their own form of trail bosses to watch over cattle as they are taken to market. Men, equipment, and animals represent thousands of dollars in investments (Brown 23.)

Just like in the 1860's, modern ranchers also spend a significant amount of money on hiring people to work cattle, have cattle vaccinated and cared for, as well as the equipment that is used to maintain, raise, sell, and ship cattle. For many of the ranchers in my area, spending over 10,000 is not hard to do when it comes time to sell cattle. Not all cattle are sent to market at selling time however. Only mature cattle, ready for slaughter or breeding, are sent to market as is very much the cast today with cattle ranchers.

When the longhorns began trailing out of Texas the first few days on the trail they were pushed 25-30 miles from their home, simply because cattle have a tendency to turn back toward home and it is difficult to get them detoured. However, once on the trail the pace was slowed to 10 miles a day. Herds were often split into 2 groups which consisted of younger and stronger and weaker and slower (Ward 28.) A drover's aim was to arrive with as many cattle as he left with and maybe pick up a few strays that wandered away from previous herds. Herds were allowed to graze on the trail once they were "strung out" and were usually watered around noon. The path most chosen to trail longhorns was previously a trail used by Indians, traders, and pioneers which led north out of Texas. This, understandably, became known as the Texas Road (Ward 28.)

A typical cattle drive would consist of 2500-3500 cattle and in some cases even more. Herds usually varied as to whether they were steers or heifers being trailed. Cowboys preferred steers because they were considered better walkers, but wild 4-year olds were considered better for beef (Ward 38.) Many herds were driven to different cities throughout the Great Plains. Some cattle were driven to Sedalia, Missouri, where the Missouri Pacific railroad would haul cattle east. Then there were those herds that were driven to Denver by finding the Arkansas River and following it westward. In 1861, Denver saw 200,000 head of cattle driven into the small stockyards (Drago 37.)

Often, cowboys would choose a steer that seemed to be a natural leader and tie a bell around his neck so that cattle could follow the sound during a dust storm or a blizzard. If the steer proved to be useful then drivers would

use the same steer to lead herds to market several times (Vestal 54.) As the end of the day approached cattle came to a bedding ground that the trail boss had picked out. Once they were in a group cowboys waited until they began to lie down for the night. Horses were put in a rope corral or hobbled (their feet were tethered together to prevent their wandering or running off). The first night guard lasted until 10:00 pm, and watches were changed based on the North Star. Since cattle were skittish the trail boss required the camp be quiet and if cattle began to get restless watchmen would sing, hum, or whistle to calm cattle. It's rumored that some herds even preferred the sound of a fiddle playing a waltz (Drago 56.)

However simple and easy-going the trail drives may seem today, the opposite is many times the case. Trails were often guarded by cattle thieves who would steal cattle or stampede herds during the night, which created problems for cattle owners and drivers. Jayhawkers, as they came to be known, would stop herds and demand tolls of cash or cattle. Small groups of cowboys could not resist these tolls and were forced to pay them. There were a few instances where trail bosses were tied to trees and then flogged, along with the rest of the trail crew, to prevent their following the thieves. Indians had much the same tactic in Kansas, stopping herds going through their lands and demanding a steer or two so the herds could pass (Drago 37.)

Besides thieves and Indians, weather also caused problems on the trail. Deadly heat, freezing snow and rain, and blinding dust all added to the difficulties of trail life. Cattle couldn't travel in muddy rivers or tramp across soggy prairie. Rivers and dry landscapes were particular problems as those problems are just as present today (Ward 37.) Typically, South Dakota summers are pretty warm and working cattle in 98-degree heat is hard on animals and people. Each of our pastures has some sort of natural water resource, but from 2001 to 2008 I witnessed the first drought in my lifetime. I watched the summer sun bake grass and trees until there was nothing left to bake. Dams that had been full were empty, lush alfalfa fields turned to dust and blew away. This act of nature forced many, my family included, to reduce our herd sizes dramatically in order to conserve what feed and water we had. During this time many pipelines were dug and water tanks put in open pastures to help ease the burden of finding water. The Cheyenne River was running so little water that when the cattle drank it lowered the water level. A scientist from South Dakota State University was at the river on my granddad's place and he was measuring the flow of water in the river. The scientist said the usual flow was close to 2000 gallons a minute, and it was down to less

than 100 gallons a minute. This caused great concern among those of us who used the Cheyenne as a main source of watering our cattle.

Natural occurrences were not the only challenges faced by cattle producers. There was one enemy that Texas cattle drovers could not escape. It was a disease carried by ticks that fed off the blood of the longhorns coming north. These ticks would then fall off and infect domestic cattle that would die within a few short days after being infected. It became known as the Texas Fever and farmers and ranchers alike feared this disease above all others (Vestal 91.) When the disease started killing cattle, ranchers in Kansas and Missouri began resisting the entrance of Texas cattle into their territories (Ward 28.) On July, 21, 1885, the governor of Kansas issued a law forbidding all "through" Texas cattle from entering Kansas (Vestal 26.) Later, Missouri would issue similar laws but the herds were so large it was hard to stop them completely. This led locals to issue what they deemed "shotgun quarantine". Certain railroads were then forbidden to carry Texas cattle. Even places as far as way as New York were putting quarantines on all cattle coming from the West (Drago 55.)

Quarantines and disease scares are not a thing of the past like many would like to believe, they are a very real danger. One danger for which there was no vaccination or cure is *Trichomoniasis vaginalis* or *Trichomoniasis foetus*. "Trich" as it is commonly referred to, is a venereal disease that occurs in cattle. What it does is causes infertility in heifers and cows and will cause cattle to abort calves. It is a quickly spreading disease that can be devastating to herds if it is not caught quickly. Those of us in our area have been fortunate enough to escape its grasp but certain people were not so lucky. One diseased cow or bull can infect an entire herd in a very short period of time. If a cow or bull is discovered with the disease that animal as well as the herd it was in, are to be put under quarantine just like the longhorns suspected of carrying Texas Fever (Cattle Website Experts.) An "open" cow as they are called, means the cow is not pregnant, and this is one of the signs of Trich. This doesn't mean, however, that she is infected with the disease, but it does dictate some of the more modern culling practices that we use.

Once a cow or bull has been culled, for any reason, they are then shipped to market. Shipping cattle once they reached their destinations was an interesting undertaking in the 1800's. Unlike today where cattle are loaded onto trucks, cattle in the 1800's had to be loaded onto railcars. Longhorns that were 4 years old and older weighed 800-1600 pounds and may sell for \$10-70 depending on the area. Prices of beef today have risen in comparison to

the prices 100 years ago. In Philip, South Dakota, which is a livestock hub for western South Dakota, the cattle bargains and prices still reign supreme. As of statistics released January 11, 2011, a heifer weighing 577 pounds would bring about \$131.19 at sale. In that sale 52 percent were steers and 48 percent were heifers of which 15 percent were slaughter cattle and 85 percent were feeder cattle (Cattle.com.) These trends may seem like something that modern day times have devised, but in fact these trends are the same now as they were in the 1880's, the only difference being that people are able to afford more to produce more and thus help supply the market. All this is in response to America's appetite for quality cattle and beef. As of a 2006 statistic released by the Department of Commerce and Agriculture in Washington D.C., the beef supply in the United States was 29,816,000,000 pounds (Department of Commerce.) This is a much different number when looked at through dollar amounts. In 2008 the beef industry in the United States added \$66 billion to the economy (South Dakota Beef.)

These facts are barely known to the general public, except to those who depend and rely on beef prices to allow them to move forward. The Great Plains is on the rebound as far as cattle production goes. In 1867 the meat consumed in the United States was worth \$1,396,643,699. This may seem like a lot but a Beef Council report indicated that the U.S. consumers spent \$76 billion on beef in 2008 (South Dakota Beef Facts.) These are promising reports that indicate the present condition of beef demand and supply are healthy and on the rise, which is good news for cattle and beef producers. This year we have built our herds to the largest they have been in almost a decade, partly because of the end in the drought and the rising prices of cattle.

One thing people always misunderstand is that ranching is not just a living it's a business. All the families in my area have come from grassroots families that have been here for over a century and they are rooted to the ground they walk on. It's hard for people to appreciate the connection one can have with the land, and as sentimental as it sounds, it's true. Farming and ranching are industries that are more important to the success of the U.S. than anyone can imagine. Ranchers are further moving towards "green" practices in respect to raising cattle. In an article written by Brian Clark, he did a comparison from a 1977 study and found that for each pound of beef used today uses 10 percent less energy, 30 percent less land, and 9 percent less fossil fuel energy.

Many organizations have been formed to give ranchers and farmers alike a chance to help themselves. They come together with fellow beef producers and forge an alliance that has gained statewide and national

attention. The two organizations that are in our state are the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association and the South Dakota Cattlemens Association. These two organizations are paralleled in their efforts to aid ranchers and farmers in their efforts to maintain fair prices for their beef. In an article in the Rapid City Journal, the biggest concern about whether you belong to the Stockgrowers or the Cattlmens is a personal decision in which many people belong to one or the other, and in a few cases to both organizations. Though neither organization caters to one side of the Missouri River or the other, the Stockgrowers is mostly representative of West River issues and the Cattlemens is representative of East River issues. According to Jodie Hickman, executive director of the Cattlemens Association, *"You have to be to be successful in your chosen field as a beef producer,"* Hickman said. *"Because of that, we [cattle producers] oftentimes hold very strong opinions."* Sometimes opinions are shared by members of both organizations and they equally oppose things like the growth of the packing industry and large feedlots that are moving in and taking over small cattle producers. The worry is that if producers allow the feedlots to get too big then the feedlots will dictate the cattle market deciding on price for cattle instead of the market demand. These issues are a plight to all beef producers and both associations work very hard to keep such issues in check (Cook-Working Across the Fence.)

From the cattle drives of the 1800's to the beef market today, the cattle industry looks and feels the way it did 100 years ago, but in fact it has drastically changed and improved. The practices that were born by the vaqueros and ranching techniques developed on the Texas plains are still visible today on the 23 million acres of pastureland in South Dakota (South Dakota Farmers Feed Us.) Ranching is an industry full of history and technological innovations that are making beef production more affordable for consumers and more profitable for producers. For a person to truly appreciate the practices that ranchers use today, it's important to know where and why those practices got started. Many practices have been long disposed of because they became obsolete, but that can't alter the fact that ranchers are constantly on the lookout for new and improved ways of raising cattle. The Great Plains is not just a haven for cattle farms, it's a place where everyone knows everyone and neighbors are like family. Though each ranch is independent, owners pull together and become one unit that turns into a force of friendship and generosity. I've often been told that people are like the land; they can't change what has happened all they can do is go with it.

Through a look at the historical aspect of raising cattle and presenting some of my own experiences I hope to have unveiled some things in history that were previously a mystery and perhaps put support behind ranches and farmers of today. We owe a lot to those cowboys of the 1800's who helped bring beef to the Great Plains. They helped establish cities, packing plants, railroads, and even a highway or two. From the Texas Fever to Trichomoniasis raising cattle is a constantly changing occupation. Ranches have to adapt to changes in agriculture, society, weather; in order to produce the beef on people's dinner plates. I believe that the beef industry will continue to grow and improve as it has over the last 110 years. The Great Plains will always be place for great people and the cattle industry that dates back farther than any modern economic organization and it helps symbolize the integrity and fervor of life on the Great Plains. As the Great Plains continues to grow with people and infrastructure so too will the institution of ranching and raising cattle. In one form or another, echoes of the past will always remain in the present in life on the Great Plains.

Clarissa Thompson

“Edwin McCook, Civil War General and McCook County Namesake”

Brevet Major General Edwin Stanton McCook threw a mean punch. The spitting image of his grandfather, George McCook “The Whiskey Boy,” Edwin was a hard man to challenge. Achieving the honorary rank of Brevet Brigadier General of Volunteers for services rendered in the Civil War, this six-foot-one-inch, 250-pound man who fought alongside General and later President Ulysses S. Grant was shot down in South Dakota by a Yankton banker. The path that led Edwin to this moment in Yankton on September 11, 1873 was one of trial and a Scottish stubbornness that seemed to get him into trouble.

Born March 26, 1837 to Daniel and Martha McCook in Carrollton, Ohio, Edwin Stanton McCook was the seventh of nine sons and was named after the Secretary of War under Abraham Lincoln, Edwin McMasters Stanton, who was a close friend and former business partner of his father's. Edwin McCook was a member of the “Tribe of Dan” the nine sons of Daniel McCook. He was one of the “Fighting McCooks,” sixteen members of the McCook family who served in the Union Army or Navy during the course of the American Civil War.<sup>1</sup> Born into this fate Edwin McCook was nothing like the lawyerly Edwin McMasters Stanton and preferred boats to books.<sup>2</sup> And unlike his grandfather, who had fled British rule escaping a punishment of treason, he was not wholly invested in the concept and sacrifice of war.

The younger brother to military heroes like Robert Latimer McCook, Brigadier General of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ohio Calvary, and Alexander McDowell McCook, Major General in the Union Army, Edwin seemed destined for military life. And always eager to promote and encourage his sons to be great, Edwin's father Daniel secured an appointment for his son at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland in 1854. From 1854 to 1856 Edwin served as a midshipman, but military life it seemed was not for him.<sup>3</sup> According to *The Fighting McCooks*, a

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<sup>1</sup> Steven L. Ossad. *The Fighting McCooks* (Herndon, Oct. 2005),1.

<sup>2</sup> Charles W. Whalen and Barbara Whalen. *The Fighting McCooks: America's Famous Fighting Family* (Bethesda, MD: Westmoreland Press, 2006), 114.

<sup>3</sup> Ossad, *The Fighting McCooks*, 3.

book by Charles and Barbara Whalen, Edwin in the first year had “incurred 78 demerits” for offenses including: “skylarking at drill, inattention at battery exercises, using tobacco, and keeping oysters in his room.”<sup>4</sup> By the time his first year was over he had failed his examinations and had to repeat the year. During his second year Edwin had incurred 156 demerits. He then gave up the military life and resigned.

Edwin was an independent at heart and left the structures of military life for something he must have found more adventurous, life on the river. Hired as the riverboat pilot for the *Polar Star*, a ship that traveled the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, Edwin found freedom. Traveling up and down the rivers of the West, Edwin would have spent time with many people of varying character including gamblers, soldiers, missionaries, immigrant families, and drifters. As goods and people moved up and down the river Edwin would have spent time learning the highway of rivers that connected the northern cities to the ocean ports like New Orleans. Edwin enjoyed this life of travel, little structure, and the ability to move freely up and down the country. This time of freedom was short though as war loomed in the United States.

At the start of the Civil War in 1861 Edwin's dad, Daniel, tried once again to get him in the military. He hoped to get him an officer's commission in the regular U.S. Army. On June 1, 1861 the War Department received a memorandum that read:<sup>5</sup>

*Edwin S. McCook is excellently well recommended for a Lieutenancy in the Regular Army and I hope it can, without injustice to others, be given to him.*

*A. Lincoln  
President of the United States*

Even with such a stunning reference Edwin was not given an officer's commission. It was Daniel McCook's friend, Congressman and Colonel John A. Logan of Illinois, who helped secure Edwin a place in the U.S. Army. As Colonel of the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Logan announced that Company I would be commanded by Captain E.S. McCook.

McCook enlisted on October 8, 1861 at the age of 24. As a Captain he was commissioned into Company I of the 31<sup>st</sup>. He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on September 18, 1861. On February 16, 1862 he was

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<sup>4</sup> Charles W. Whalen. *The Fighting McCooks*, 114.

<sup>5</sup> Charles W. Whalen. *The Fighting McCooks*, 115.

promoted to full Colonel. After his enlistment he recruited a company and the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois was assigned to the First Brigade, District of Southeast Missouri Western Department commanded by Brigadier General John A. McClernand and ordered to Cairo, IL.<sup>6</sup> When the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois Regiment arrived in Cairo they found in command General Ulysses Simpson Grant. Whalen describes Grant, unlike McCook, as a "small man, standing five-feet-seven-inches in height. He was a silent man, uttering only a few terse words. He was a somber man, gazing on life gravely. But Grant was a fighting man, and quick to do so."<sup>7</sup>

Like McCook though Grant had been given a second chance in the military and used his position to sometimes overstep his post. Making a show of force on November 6, 1861, Grant took three thousand men on steamboats down the Mississippi River to a small Confederate camp at Belmont, Missouri. Victorious in their first encounter with the Confederates the men celebrated loudly forcing General Grant to burn the camp and making them an easy target for enemy fire.<sup>8</sup> Although surrounded, McCook led his regiment through the enemy lines carrying the flag of the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois not planning to let go unless he was killed. There were many lives lost during this encounter and since the attack had not been ordered there was controversy as to its necessity. The 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois lost 10 men at Belmont with 3 wounded and 2 POWs.

McCook's regiment stayed under General Grant's command for the next battles, Grant was confident he could take the Tennessee Forts Henry and Donelson and take control of the entrance to the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, opening up the heart of the South. It was during the battles of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson that McCook fell off his horse and bruised his kidney. There are varying accounts as to the seriousness of McCook's injuries but he was absent from the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois regiment in May and June of 1863.<sup>9</sup> In late 1863 and early 1864 he was also absent, supposedly to recruit for the regiment but he left to get married, according to a source found by Robert Steensma in his paper on McCook. McCook was married to Loraine Frances Whitney of Ohio on June 19, 1864 in Geneva, New York. They had one son Charlie, who was born June 9, 1864.

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<sup>6</sup> Charles W. Whalen. *The Fighting McCooks*, 115.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>9</sup> Robert C. Steensma. "For Gallant and Meritorious Service in the Field" *The Civil War Career of Edwin S. McCook, Dakota Territorial Secretary* (Sioux Falls, SD: Center for Western Studies: 1998) 595.

After Fort Donelson, McCook was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and led the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry in the Siege of Vicksburg. After this battle he replaced Colonel Logan as the Regimental commander of the 31<sup>st</sup> Illinois. McCook served in the Chattanooga and Atlanta campaigns and under William T. Sherman in the March to the Sea. After he resigned from military life September 26, 1864 he was promoted to the rank of Brevet Brigadier General of Volunteers March 13, 1865 for services rendered.<sup>10</sup> The book *Generals: Lives of Union Commanders*, lists Edwin S. McCook under the category of "Officers Brevetted as Major Generals or Brigadier General for services rendered during the Civil War, but not appointed to full rank."<sup>11</sup>

The time between when McCook resigned his military post and when he moved to Dakota Territory is unclear; the documentation is not readily available. But the next time McCook shows up in history is when he was appointed Secretary of Dakota Territory by President Grant on January 8, 1872.<sup>12</sup> After the war McCook had moved to Canton, Illinois and then to Pekin, Illinois where the 1870 census has his family listed.<sup>13</sup> Once he received his appointment he and his family moved to Yankton, which was the capitol of Dakota Territory. Accompanying the McCook family were his wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Whitney.<sup>14</sup> It was in Yankton that McCook faced the death he had escaped all during the war.

The summer of 1872 was a political season for Dakota Territory. Future South Dakota State Senator Richard Franklin Pettigrew decided "for some unaccountable reason...to run for the legislature which would convene in Yankton in January."<sup>15</sup> He wrote an article in *The Sunshine State in Progress Magazine* about an encounter he had with Edwin S. McCook. He talks about the factions that divided the town of Yankton, those that lived on Capital Street and the others on Broadway. Controversy started when each faction's newspaper wanted to have the contract to print for the legislature. It was the newly appointed Secretary of the Territory; Edwin S. McCook who took the position that he had the right to designate the newspaper that should do the printing. Pettigrew's opinion on this was

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<sup>10</sup> Francis B Heitman. *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965) 659.

<sup>11</sup> Ezra J. Warner. *Generals: Lives of Union Commanders* (Louisiana State University Press, 1964) 581.

<sup>12</sup> George W. Kingsbury. *History of Dakota Territory* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915) 721.

<sup>13</sup> Ancestry.com, *1870 United States Federal Census*. (Provo, UT: The Generations Network, Inc, 2003)

<sup>14</sup> George W. Kingsbury. *History of Dakota Territory*, 722.

<sup>15</sup> R.F. Pettigrew. "Pettigrew Pounds Big General McCook" (*The Sunshine State in Progress Magazine*, 1925) 2.

that the legislature should determine who did the printing. This controversy fueled an incident a few days later in which Pettigrew beat McCook up after being challenged by him when he said, "Well, you had your way, and now I am going to lick you."<sup>16</sup>

This aggressive attitude of McCook's was known in Yankton. Pettigrew describes him in his article as, "the secretary, who was a very liberal drinker, and liable to become quarrelsome when intoxicated, and as he was a very large man, his custom was to take to punching his enemies with his fists."<sup>17</sup> This aggression turned out to be a key factor in the next man he challenged.

Peter Wintermute was a Yankton banker who was born in the state of New York. He moved to Yankton with his family in 1871 and during the great railroad bond debates in the early 1870s he found himself in opposition to McCook. After an argument in a meeting in which McCook and his friends crashed, McCook and Wintermute had a confrontation and fought in a saloon. Pettigrew describes the incident as: "McCook walked up deliberately, and with his great big fist knocked him [Wintermute] down, striking him on the side of the head just as he was drinking; and as he lay upon the floor, McCook reached over and took Wintermute by the nape of the neck and seat of the breeches and wiped out a very filthy large spittoon with Wintermute's face, and then dropped him on the floor."<sup>18</sup>

The humiliation of this encounter is most likely what caused Wintermute to leave the saloon to retrieve a gun; he then walked back to the hall where the meeting was being held and waited for McCook to appear. When he did, Wintermute fired four shots and hit McCook at least once in the chest. Even injured McCook's fury was not tamed; he managed to almost throw Wintermute out a window. The shot McCook sustained was a fatal shot and it was clear to the doctors who examined him he would not survive for long. Dr. Walter Burleigh testified during the trial of Wintermute that McCook's last words were not ones of fear, but regret: "I am not afraid to die, Doctor." After sending for his family, he said "Charlie, be a good boy, and always mind your mother."<sup>19</sup> He told Doctor Burleigh that he went to his God with clean hands and that his accounts would be found all right, but that he had been "shot down

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<sup>16</sup> R.F. Pettigrew. "Pettigrew Pounds Big General McCook", 6.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>18</sup> R.F. Pettigrew. "Pettigrew Pounds Big General McCook", 9.

<sup>19</sup> George W. Kingsbury. *History of Dakota Territory*, 727.

like a dog" without getting a chance to defend himself.<sup>20</sup> McCook died the morning of September 12, 1873 around 7 A.M. according to Dr. Burleigh from a "hemorrhage caused by a pistol shot wound under the left clavicle and over the first rib."<sup>21</sup>

The *St. Paul Pioneer-Press* published an article about the incident and gives some background information on Wintermute. He had been in Yankton for 2 or 3 years "where he kept a small bank...aspired to become a political leader, and was alleged to have aspirations for an election as delegate to Congress."<sup>22</sup> The *Milwaukee News* published the following about Wintermute's character "a most amiable and genial gentleman, shrewd in business operations, accomplished and refined in his habits, and the farthest possible from an assassin in his disposition and manners."<sup>23</sup>

But for almost three years Wintermute stood trial over the killing of McCook. He was charged with murder, convicted for manslaughter, and later acquitted during his second trial. After the trials Wintermute moved with his family from Yankton to Chicago. The expense of the trials had depleted his fortune and his long confinement and the anxiety of the proceedings had impaired his health. A news dispatch from 1877 tells of his death:

Elmira, New York, January 29, 1877.

Peter P. Wintermute, who shot and killed General McCook at Yankton D.T. four years ago died of consumption at his father's home in Horse's Head, Chenango County, on Saturday last (January 27<sup>th</sup>).<sup>24</sup>

McCook is buried at Spring Grove Cemetery Section 10, Lot 1 in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was 36 years old when he died. It seems that while bravery was a staple of McCook's life so was tragedy. On February 12, 1909 McCook's widow Mrs. Loraine McCook was visiting her late husband's cousin, General Anson McCook, in New York City when she was struck by an automobile. The article the *New York Times* ran about the incident states she had been to services at the Christian Science Church with Nellie McCook, the widow of her only son Charles Morris

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 728.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 727.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 722.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 722.

<sup>24</sup>George W. Kingsbury. *History of Dakota Territory*, 743.

McCook.<sup>25</sup> After the service they parted and Mrs. McCook decided on a different route back to Anson McCook's home. While crossing the street she was struck by the mud-guard of a car driven by the chauffeur of Mr. and Mrs. H. Harris. After the accident the chauffeur drove Mrs. McCook back to where she was staying but left a false name and information, he later turned himself over to the police, but Mrs. McCook lapsed into unconsciousness and died that afternoon of internal injuries and fractured ribs.

Part of McCook's legacy still lives on in the South Dakota county named after him, McCook County, which is located in the southeast portion of the state and whose county seat is the town of Salem. A Civil War hero and member of the famous Ohio family "The Fighting McCooks" Edwin Stanton McCook is a part of the state of South Dakota. Honored for his service by the military it is only fitting that his name remain part of the territory and he be remembered for the role he played in South Dakota's beginnings.

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<sup>25</sup> *New York Times* "Strange Auto Kills Mrs. E.S. McCook," February 13, 1909. <http://www.proquest.com/>.

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Stronger than the  
Plains

Josephine Thomsen

*Finding the Great Plains*  
January 26, 2011

*But she asked no pity for her broken arches, her arching back, her poor gnarled hands, or for the wistful memories of a fairer youth in sweeter lands. She gave America the great Northwest and was too proud to grumble at the cost of the stalwart sons to whom she willed it. She mothered MEN.* –Mary A. Barnes Williams

Women that gave their lives and youth to the Great Plains in the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century are commonly overlooked in the history of the United States. Without these women, the Great Plains would have never become the Heartland of America that they are today. Many of them were caring mothers and wives, while other legends preferred a life of rebellion. No matter what path they chose on the Great Plains, they left a legacy, be it through their children, writing, or infamous stories told time and time again. These women were extraordinary, despite lack of publicity.

Even though many people have read the life of a prairie girl, Laura Ingalls Wilder, or heard stories about Calamity Jane, they don't fully understand the lives of countless women who lived on the prairie. These women had numerous roles besides the roles of mother and wife. Women on the range milked the cows, fed the horses, churned the butter, clothed the children, and even worked alongside men in the fields. On the other hand, the wild women of the west such as outlaws, prostitutes, and saloon girls tore up the town, gambled, drank, and were some of the sharpest shooters in the West. These two very different types of women with endless life stories add to the mystery and splendor of the Great Plains.

Harvey Dunn, a South Dakota born artist, produced a painting in 1950 titled *The Prairie is My Garden*. This exquisite piece of work depicts a pioneer woman with her homestead laid out behind her in the background. Her two children are with her in the foreground. She stands with scissors in one hand, and a bouquet of wildflowers in the other. The prairie wind rustles her hair as she looks off into the horizon. This memorable painting gives the romanticized view of a woman and her children on the Great Plains. So much can be read by the expression on the woman's face that the mind can wonder in many directions trying to understand what she is thinking and seeing. Is

there a distant storm approaching? Does she see a fire on the neighbor's homestead? Or is she simply wondering if she has enough food left to make supper for the family that night?

*The Prairie is My Garden* takes a small moment from a woman's life on the prairie in order to build emotion in the viewer. This moment reveals a brief break for the woman from all the work that she has been doing that day. An old saying goes, "A man's work is from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done." This statement can easily relate to the work of women on the Great Plains.

On May 20, 1862 President Abraham Lincoln signed a document putting the Homestead Act into place. The intent was to settle the Great Plains, once dubbed "The Great American Desert" due to its immense vastness and an expedition that happened to go through the barren Sand Hills of what is now Nebraska. The Homestead Act allowed any American citizen, or person with intent to become a citizen, "who had never borne arms against the U.S. Government" (Potter) to fill out an application that granted them 160 acres of surveyed government land. The homesteader was then required to live on the land for the next five years and improve said land by building a home and planting a crop. After those five years, the homesteader was then allowed to file for the deed to the land by supplying proof of improvement on the land. Once the homesteader's file was approved, then the land was his or hers for \$1.25 per acre. On January 1, 1863, Daniel Freeman and 417 other homesteaders filed their claims. Many other pioneers were to follow suit in years to come.

In 1869, the Railroad Act was passed which allowed for a transcontinental railroad to be built. The railroad was an easier and much faster way to travel to the Great Plains for those with few possessions in tow. However, for whole families that chose to go west, the covered wagon was the most practical and economical way to travel. Drawn by teams of oxen and horses, the wagons were packed with as much clothing, household utensils, guns, and food and water supplies as possible. Several homesteaders would join together to form a wagon train, and then begin the painstaking task of reaching the Great Plains.

"Excited by the cheap land and the new opportunities to be found there, [the homesteaders] bravely said goodbye to friends and family and abandoned every routine and comfort of their old lives." (Stratton, 34). Lives were changed drastically, especially for the women. Used to lives raising the children and caring for the home,

women were now expected to do much more, along with current childcare and house upkeep. The women left behind their sisters, mothers, and closest friends not knowing what lay ahead for them in the West. A biographer for Melora Epsy, a teacher who migrated to Kansas at the age of seventeen, wrote, "To leave permanently one's home and friends, parents, brothers and sisters; to journey a thousand miles, part of the way in an ox wagon, part of the way in a steamboat of the early time, to a strange land inhabited by savages, requires the greatest courage. To forsake culture, plenty, prosperity and peace, for crude living, poverty, adversity and way, requires a poise of soul few possess." (Stratton, 34). Strength and bravery were necessary personal qualities for any woman preparing to go to the Great Plains.

After making the long trip and finding their claim, the pioneers' first task was to build a dwelling that fit the requirements of the Homestead Act. Many of the homesteaders built houses made of sod. Sod houses are made from a certain kind of ground. Grass that had densely packed root systems best held the soil together. Settlers looked for fields of little blue stem, wire grass, buffalo grass, prairie cord grass, Indian grass, and wheat grass. The sod was then cut into bricks and laid, grass side down, into walls two feet thick. Door and window frames were made from wood, and the roof was usually made with a thinner layer of sod or, if possible, wood (Searching).

In the nineteenth century, the house was known to be the place where women belonged. Sod houses were no match for the houses left behind, but the women were still responsible to keep them clean. With a dirt floor and very leaky roof, women had to find creative ways to make the house dry and as neat as possible. Some put layers of straw on the floor and tacked tar paper to the ceiling in hopes of keeping everything dry. Sweeping and dusting were daily tasks. Making a dirt house into a home was difficult to do, but it was one of the first goals for a woman once she reached the Great Plains.

When the home was built, the pioneer family was then ready to start the heavy work of preparing virgin prairie soil into land fit for cultivation. The amount of work to do on a new homestead was never ending. This required the woman to leave the house and work with the husband in a partnership that combined their strengths and talents to provide food and clothing for the whole family. Women soon found themselves an equal level with their husbands. The men learned a new respect for their wives because, without them, the homestead would wither

and die out (Stratton, 57). Women had to assume an active role in daily farm work. There was an extreme shortage of labor on the frontier. Even if there were enough workers to hire, individual farmers didn't have enough money to pay for hired labor. Mothers and daughters were then required to do traditional male tasks such as planting, harvesting, tending livestock, hauling water, gathering fuel, and even hunting (Stratton, 61).

Water was always a necessity for the pioneer family. Hauling water was a regular part of daily household chores, which means that the women had to haul the water. Some collected rainwater from cisterns or drew bucket after bucket from a nearby well. On the plains, water can sometimes be hard to find, but pioneers couldn't live without it. The nearest stream could be a mile away, and women would have to walk to the stream, fill huge buckets to provide for the day, and start the trek back to the house.

Gathering fuel for fires was also a difficult task. Trees were extremely scarce, so using firewood wasn't an option. "Scouring the prairie for anything burnable, they relied on assortments of dried twigs, tufts of grass, hay twists, old corncobs, and woody sunflower stalks." (Stratton, 62). The most popular form of fuel came from animals. Dried dung left by herds of buffalo and cattle was easy to find on the plains. In dry weather, the pioneer wife and her children gathered cow and buffalo chips. The chips were kept in gunnysacks in the house and burned for warmth during the long winter season.

Gathering water and chips took time, but a majority of a prairie woman's time was spent doing household chores. She was required to do the cooking, cleaning, sewing, laundry, and gardening. Limited supplies made these chores even more difficult.

Household chores were a part of daily life for a pioneer woman. For small families and those short on work, the mothers and daughters would join the men in the fields especially during the planting and harvesting. They would control the plows or wield a reaper depending on the season.

The women were strong in the chores of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Such chores are not required in today's daily life, which made these women ever stronger than the women on the plains today. When supplies were scarce, women had to use their own ingenuity to solve problems. Their days were long and often monotonous. The work took a mental and physical toll daily, but day after day after day, women got up

before dawn to start a new day of excruciating work and worked well into the evening. Chores were endless, but, unfortunately, other factors also threw hardships into the lives of these prairie women.

The changing seasons typical of the Great Plains climate often created problems. Winters were unpredictable with long months of snow. Spring could bring flash thunderstorms. Summer sometimes had extreme heat and drought. Fall might be so short that it was hard to tell when summer ended and winter began. All seasons had wind, and there was no way of escaping the wind.

Winter was the hardest season to face. The cold, blowing wind cut through clothing during the day, and penetrated the houses all night. When a blizzard struck, visibility was poor, so ropes would be strung from the house to the barn. Vigilance was important. A good supply of fuel, tending the fires all night, and layers of warm clothing kept the family warm (Nelson, 34 and 35). Women, of course, were the ones who had collected the fuel in the previous summer, tended to the fires, and made the clothing and blankets for everyone. They were responsible for keeping the family warm all winter.

Spring arrived with warmer weather, but also carried violent thunderstorms. The rain, hail, and high winds from these storms took a toll on buildings, crops, and livestock. Lightning killed livestock as well as homesteaders. Springs winds rolled into the hot winds of summer that would dry up the crops (Nelson, 36).

These infamous winds led to a devastating hardship on the plains known as the prairie fire. "The smallest spark - from a passing train, careless smoker, or a homesteader's cookstove - could cause a conflagration, and the ceaseless winds drove the flames quickly over tremendous distances." (Nelson, 37). It was nearly impossible to stop a fire without interference from nature, but women, men, and children would try to beat them out with anything they could find. To lose a family member, house, barn, or crop in a fire was devastating. The family was quick to rebuild or leave depending on their financial state.

Weather hardships and fire were extreme problems that women often had to face. Getting through these problems and continuing on took great perseverance. Women, men, and children alike felt the effects of the radical weather of the Great Plains, and they persevered. This ability is amazing and a trait that should be respected by society today.

Women had perseverance with the weather, but they also had to persevere through years of childbearing. "Once married, most pioneer women began a period of pregnancy, and lactation that lasted up to twenty-five years." (Handy-Marchello, 35). Families with nine or more children were often common. Death rate was high, especially in children under the age of five. This was because of poor living conditions, poor healthcare, and random prairie consequences such as being run over by a horse or rattlesnake bite.

Continuous pregnancies and the demands of raising children took an extreme toll on the bodies of women. They realized that frequent pregnancies were inevitable in order to produce children for work on the homestead, but the women also had to realize the limitations that childbirth put on the women. The women would have to stay around the house for years until the children were old enough to take care of themselves and work in the fields. Years of giving birth and the stress of raising children quickly aged young women on the prairie and transformed them into women aged beyond their years (Handy-Marchello, 38) Raising big families of children was hard work with all the mouths to feed and bodies to cloth. It is very honorable for a woman to give her life and body to her family.

Another danger that the prairie raised was Native Americans. Angered by white hunters killing off natural gain and being pushed onto reservations, Native Americans began attack on the white settlers. Although attacks were rare, word spread to many pioneers. The worry of attacking Native Americans made many sleep with a rifle by their side. Aroused by stories of two young women abducted by the Sioux (Stratton, 124-126), women feared for themselves and their children being abducted. Fear of Native Americans was constant, but the women kept on working on the homestead. They were always aware of their surroundings, but kept everything in order.

The women who came to the prairie were brave for leaving behind all that they knew. They had to persevere through many years of bearing and raising children. Hard work was a constant for these women. Chores were hard no matter what, and they only got harder during extreme drought and blizzards. Hauling water and making a dirt house into a home only made these women stronger. On one day, they could run a plow, care for a sick child, and feed the animals all while living in fear of attacking Native Americans. High respect should be given

to these honorable women for the effort they put into their lives on the Great Plains. They changed the role of women in rural America, and some pushed the "ideal role of women" even farther.

The outlaw image is one that is often associated with the time during which the West was being settled. Legendary outlaws include Wild Bill Hickok, Bill the Kid, Butch Cassidy, and Jesse James. More outlaw men were known, but outlaw women, such as Calamity Jane and Cattle Kate Watson, were just as infamous. Some of women who are now known as outlaws rarely, if at all, spent time behind bars, and others simply chose to live a wild life without the strings of marriage and children to hold them down.

The life of a "Pistol Packing Mama" was rare to see, but the stories of these women spread far and wide. Driven by the need for money, women would leave the norms of marriage and enter a life that was considered to be unrespectable. Women, like Poker Alice, would entice men to a card game. Thinking they could win easily, the men agreed. Before the men had time to think, these women would swindle away their money.

Another outlaw woman chasing money was Cattle Kate Watson in Wyoming. She ran a shady house with prostitutes for the cowboys along the Sweetwater River. In exchange for use of her girls, cowboys would trade cattle with Kate. She soon had a considerable herd, but most of the cattle had been stolen from the larger ranchers in the vicinity. When the cattle were sold, unfavorable attention was attracted from the stockman's association. Kate and her lover were hanged on the edge of the river. Lynching a woman was practically unheard of, and that affair achieved national notoriety. The story has now drifted into folklore (Beebe and Clegg, 345).

Another story that is told time and time again is that of Annie Oakley. Her father died at a young age, and left her behind to hunt for her mother and sisters. Oakley's sharpshooting caught the attention of many people, and she was soon the main attraction for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. She was said to be able to shoot and dime thrown in the air at a distance of ninety feet, and set multiple sharpshooting records. As a woman, she is an icon. Annie Oakley overcame poverty as a young girl, and became a legend for her shooting abilities (Annie).

The definition of an outlaw woman is extremely broad. Outlaws could have been sharpshooters, women chasing a dollar in an unrespectable way, or simply attained an illegal herd of cattle. No matter the definition, these women led extremely interesting lives that often have a negative connotation. However, they were very brave in

overcoming the difficulties that life threw their way. Stories of outlaws, especially that of Annie Oakley, should be told as real life Cinderella stories. The main character faces a hardship, defeats it, and lives their life the way they wanted to. The heart and strength that these women had should be highlighted, not their ways that other people frowned upon.

Although the lives of outlaw women on the frontier were frowned upon, the lives of prostitutes were even less approved of. With the sudden populating of the Great Plains and discoveries of gold, cities were sprouting up all along the railroad tracks and at the gold mining camps. Most of these cities consisted mainly of men doing a lot of harsh manual labor. The men worked hard all day and were lonely at night. Many men went to saloons to drink their worries away, and others looked for pleasure from prostitutes. Both the saloon girls and prostitutes were considered bad girls.

Saloon girls were often girls off who grew up as strong country children, but weren't interested in following the lives that their mothers led. They were tempted by advertisements telling of easy work, high wages, and fine clothing. Saloon girls often wore brightly colored ruffled dresses of knee or mid-shin length. This was scandalously short for the time period. The colorful petticoats barely reached their boots, and their shoulders and arms were often bare. The bodices on the dress were cut low over their bosoms, and adorned with sequins and lace.

The girls would dance and flirt with many men, and often received gifts from their admirers. In one night, the girls would make enough money that they didn't even have to consider being a prostitute as a second job. They had an easy job, and couldn't imagine working their lives away like the women who looked down on them. In fact, they didn't see why more women weren't dance hall girls. While most men were respectful of the girls, there were many cases that involved the murdering of a saloon girl. They were very often beaten by men in a drunken rage, and many girls carried pistols or jeweled daggers in their boots or tucked between their breasts for personal protection (Legends, 1).

The second type of bad girls on the frontier was the prostitutes. Due to limited opportunities in the nineteenth century, many women were left with little choice if their husband was to die. Others were the daughters

of prostitutes. The saddest case of prostitution was of the young women who had been raped or given up their virginity. These women were considered tainted and didn't really have another choice.

By the 1860s, prostitution was a prospering business. It was illegal everywhere, but a crooked, male run local government rarely intervened. "Sheriffs and marshals expected personal gifts and favors" in exchange for not closing down a shady house (Butler and Siporin, 94). The houses and women were often fined as a form of taxation, but, other than that, the law rarely disrupted the activities of a brothel.

Most prostitute women worked out of parlor houses. These houses got their names because the first room of the house was often an elaborate parlor with many couches and chairs. There was usually a piano for the girls to play or sing requests for the clients. Larger places included a game room or dance hall (Legends, 2).

These women were prostitutes for the money, but pregnancy was inevitable. Birth control was primitive so most had to rely on abortions. Because of poor healthcare, the abortions were often unhealthy for the woman. Other women had no choice but to raise the child.

In the sad life of prostitution, women often died young. "Some dies from the results of long term abuse of their health, malnutrition, tuberculosis, or alcoholism. Others dies from mismanages abortions, murder or suicide." (Butler and Siporin, 95). Prostitutes weren't trusted, and men would kill them if they believed that they were stealing from him. If a woman happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, she could wind up dead as well. One of the biggest dangers though was men going into a drunken anger and beating the woman. Danger was a large factor in the life of a prostitute.

Prostitution can be glorified in legends told about the Old West. The reality is that the women were out of options, and turned to prostitution as a last resort. They were at the will of a man, and their lives were far from easy. Each day brought new troubles, and the continuous fear of being severely injured or possibly even killed. It took all the courage they had to keep themselves going night after night, and lose multiple children to abortion. There was little to no hope of getting married and raising a family. Other people looked down on them when they were around town, and pay could always fluctuate. Life was hard, and it was very unlikely to get any easier.

From pioneer women to prostitutes, women were valuable on the Great Plains. Each group is different from the other groups in obvious aspects. Pioneer women worked day in and day out to provide for their families. They had chores to do daily, many children to take care of, and fields to tend to. Everything that they had ever known was left behind them. Outlaws were wild, and lived lives that most people find intriguing, dangerous, and risky. In all reality, the outlaw women weren't nearly as bad as the men. The stories and rumors that surrounded them were expanded upon, and they soon became known as over-the-top rambunctious and wild women. Saloon girls were fun-loving women who didn't want to deal with the hardships that the prairie offered. They had seen their mothers work endless days, and they weren't interested in giving up their youth for minimal income. Saloon girls aren't to be confused with the prostitutes. Women entered into prostitution as a last resort for income. The life was hard, and they never really were able to break free from the lifestyle.

Despite all the differences that there was among women on the Great Plains in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, there were many similarities. The coinciding qualities weren't in the jobs that they held, but rather in their attitudes. Very few women had the opportunity to live a life of luxury or even get an education during this time period, so many were married off or found jobs at a young age. In order to make even enough money for living expenses, one had to work extremely hard. Frontier women, outlaws, saloon girls, and prostitutes all worked hard, whether it was to provide for a family, make a name for themselves, or earn a dollar. The women were all also very brave and courageous. Each went to different jobs every morning, but never really knew what to expect from the day that lay ahead. This took extreme bravery, and the intelligence to fight whatever battle they had to fight, be it a prairie fire or a drunken man. Women also had to persevere. Pioneer women had droughts, outlaws had to stay strong when facing the law, saloon girls had to make it through night after night of dancing and bar brawls, and prostitutes had survive through strange men every night hoping for a way out. Although they probably wouldn't have admitted it then, these women were more alike than they ever knew.

When thinking about the women from the early settlement of the Great Plains, it's filled with romantic images and mystery. Looking deeper, one will find that these women lived in a rough time. There was danger around every corner, but they kept working every day. A high level of respect should be given to these women.

Their intense drive for success is quite impressive, and people in today's world should look up to them as an example of people who never gave up, even when times got hard. The qualities of their character is quite honorable and shouldn't be forgotten.

Women made the Great Plains the area that it is today. Without their dedication and perseverance, the prairie would have died long ago. Men needed to women to work with them as equals, comfort them when times got hard, and raise more children to continue the inhabitation of the land. They had honorable characteristics, hard work ethics, and hearts that never quit dreaming. The Great Plains, once a barren wasteland, was catered to by these women, and soon became a prospering area that still continues to this day. Their lives are often hidden from history textbooks, but legends and tales remain of their selflessness. They never gave up, and put their hearts and soul into what they did. Prairie women were real life heroines, and they deserve to be revered as so. Willa Cather once said, "Where there is great love, there are always wishes." This is the way it was for women on the prairie, and their wishes shouldn't be forgotten.

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Inside the Civil War with  
Arthur Mellette  
(Plight of a Substitute Soldier)

By  
John Timm

The reason that Civil War history is so engaging, is because of its human drama. Its content is full of the real life stories of people and their struggle to survive. The vicious, devastating warfare, murderously divided family and friends. The war brought out the best and the worst in people. It exposed intense passions of jealousy, hatred, and love. For every story of heroism, there is one of cowardice. For every story of sacrifice and devotion to duty, there are other stories of corruption, money grubbing, ambition and double dealing. These tales serve to remind us that the Civil War was about real people.

Far more than just a bunch of dates, battles and speeches, it was a long, arduous, bloody, affair. The fighting left more than 620,000 American soldiers dead, and hundreds of thousands more crippled and maimed. As many as 50,000 civilians in the Confederacy may have died.(1) It wreaked utter havoc on a good portion of the South, and left half of the country smoldering. Recovery of the economic devastation took decades to overcome. The national psyche sustained deep wounds with scars still showing today.

The many reasons why men fought in the Civil War does not explain why there was a Civil War. A lot of young men picked up weapons back then for the same reasons that young men have gone to war for centuries—adventure, glory, duty, manhood, or “three squares” and a paycheck. Many of the men who served in the Civil War were not fighting for or against slavery. Even so, the Civil War was clearly fought over the issue of African slavery. All other justifications came down to political differences, reflecting the social and cultural gulf between the free and slave states. These might have been bridged if not for the deeply divisive issue of slavery. One way to look at that issue is to turn the question around: Without the division slavery caused, would the Confederate states still have left the Union.

As battles became more intense, the bodies piled up, and the war fatigue grew. To keep the war effort going, more men were needed to fill army ranks on both sides. The military draft was first employed during the Civil War in 1862 by the Confederacy. In 1863, the Union followed suit. It was known as the conscription act. By then, the Civil War was becoming very unpopular in the Northern states. The length of the war was dragging on longer than anyone anticipated. The costs and casualties were high, and the general public was discontent with the way the war was being waged. Growing weariness was sapping the enthusiasm for preserving the Union, much less to free slaves.

As tensions rose, draft riots broke out in several cities. In July of 1863, riots erupted throughout New York City. African Americans and army stations were targeted by rioters. The rioters, many of whom were immigrants, wanted no part of a war that would free slaves to compete with them in the job market. Eventually, Union soldiers fresh from the Battle of Gettysburg, were sent to restore order. In the end more than 1000 people were killed or wounded. (2)

The unpopular draft, led to the adoption of the "substitute system". This was a shameful scheme that did great harm to the military effort. Any man drafted could gain permanent exemption by hiring a substitute, if he could find one and pay the fee. Generally this practice brought the worst kind of men into the army. It created the very corrupt industry of the "substitute draftee brokers". These brokers, for a price, would locate substitutes for draftees. The hiring of substitutes may seem mercenary, but in many cases resulted in the substitute deserting. Too often, the brokers would engage in finding "substitutes" who were mental and/or physical wrecks. This loathsome and disgusting practice often led to the use of bribes to "persuade" government officials to accept these men as substitutes. In addition, political pressure was placed on the medical doctors to accept these men because of the ever increasing shortage of soldiers. As could be predicted, most substitutes were incompetent soldiers who did not improve the fighting quality of the Union Army. (3)

Our story begins with Arthur Calvin Mellette in 1850. He was only eight years old and living on a small family farm in central Indiana, with his parents, two brothers and two sisters. Arthur's family and friends called him "Cal" and so shall I. Cal was a bright child and had learned to read at the unusually early age of five. No one in the family really remembers teaching him how to read, it just seems as if he just started on his own. He probably followed along while being read to, and learned how to identify words.

Young Cal came across a copy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin", by Harriet Beecher Stowe.(4) The book so moved him that he reread it several times. The thought of families being separated, sold or traded upset him. The book challenged his thinking and he started developing a social conscience, and an interest in politics.(5)

Years later in 1860, Cal enrolled at Indiana University. A romance blossomed between Cal and Margaret Wylie. She was a daughter of Theophilus Wylie a professor at the University. We shall call her "Maggie" just as her friends and family did. They talked of marriage and had dreams for the future together. But plans for the future could not be made while the Civil War was raging. In fact the future of the entire country was in jeopardy.

Cal became restless with a burning desire to quit school and join the Union Army. He was driven by his strong beliefs in preserving the Union and fighting against slavery. On several occasions during his time at the University, his professors and friends had to argue with him to finish school first.

Just before Cal graduated in 1863, word reached the university campus that a recruiting and training camp was being organized. Colonel Thomas J. Brady (6) was the camp organizer and the camp was located in a forested area just outside of Indianapolis. His mission was to recruit and organize a regiment of men capable of assisting the Union war effort. Once trained, the regiment would be Brady's to command.

Immediately after graduation Cal made the forty mile trip, from Bloomington to Indianapolis. He was a young, strong, strapping farm boy anxious to join the fight. He fancied himself a loyal patriot, having no idea of the horrors awaiting him. None of the young men did.

Cal was excited and a little nervous when he reached the training camp location. Colonel Brady's huge tent was easy to find. Standing outside of the colonel's tent was a middle aged man with large sergeant strips on the arms of his uniform. Cal stated his business to the sergeant, and was then led into the tent. The sergeant made the introductions.

Cal was somewhat surprised to see that Brady was close to his own age. Brady was 24 years old, only three years older than Cal. He was indeed impressively attired in his uniform and spoke with a low, strong authoritative

voice. He exhibited a skilled vocabulary with impeccable command of the English language. Cal surmised him to be a lawyer.

Likewise, Cal made a favorable impression on Brady. Brady interviewed Cal with questions that were direct and to the point. Brady made note of Cal's self-confidence and quick wit. Upon learning that Cal had just graduated from Indiana University with honors, and could speak several languages, compelled him to offer Cal a commission of lieutenant. Cal was fully aware of the advantages of serving as an officer versus that of an enlisted man. Seizing the opportunity, Cal accepted the commission.

When their conversation ended, Colonel Brady ordered a horse be apportioned to Cal. Brady then directed Cal to return home, tend to any family business, say his goodbyes, and return to camp within two weeks. (7) Heading the steed homeward Cal had plenty of time to reflect on what he had done. He was anxious to see his family, but he knew his decision to enlist would not set well with them. He reasoned that with the arrangements already made, they would have to accept his decision. Little did he know that they also had some news for him, and their news would change everything!

Arriving home he found the family upset and in turmoil. His brother James had just received his draft notice. Since early childhood, James' physical and emotional health had never been stable. Mother Mary Mellette feared her first born would not be able to survive the rigors of war. (8) The family spent hours in conversation, desperately trying to devise a plan to raise \$1,000. The sum needed to hire a substitute broker and soldier for James. They did not have the means to raise that much money.

Mary Mellette was close to a nervous break down. Cal finally offered himself as a substitute soldier for James. After much debate, the family finally agreed to settle on Cal's offer. If they had fully realized the hardship of a substitute soldiers' life, they likely would not have agreed to place this burden on Cal's shoulders.

Reluctantly, Cal returned to Colonel Brady's campsite to announce his change of plans. Brady tried *desperately* to persuade Cal that he was making a big mistake that he would profoundly regret. Brady articulately described the treatment that Cal could expect when it was learned that he was a "substitute soldier".

Raising and organizing regiments of men was largely a state by state undertaking. This process resulted in a strong sense of state pride. Primarily made up of men from the same communities, they were family members, friends and neighbors. More often than not, they had been raised together. They were a tightly knit group which emphasized enthusiasm, patriotism, and bravery. Those "substitute soldiers" who were assigned to these regiments did not fit well, because they were outsiders and strangers! They were commonly regarded as incompetent, physically and/or mentally inept, or were slackers and cowards, and to a large degree it was true. A large percentage of the substitute soldiers did end up as deserters. Even though Cal was far superior to the description of a typical "substitute soldier", he would still have the distinction of wearing that label. Nevertheless, Cal stood firm by his family's decision. Colonel Brady did admire such loyalty to family and finally released Cal from their agreement.

Before reporting to the Provost's Marshalls office as a "substitute soldier" for James, Cal went down to Bloomington to see Maggie one more time. Maggie was terribly upset when she learned that Cal had chosen to be a substitute soldier over being an officer. Although they argued, Cal's decision was final and advised Maggie not to speak of the matter again. They vowed their love and devotion to each other, and decided to keep diaries. They believed it would keep their spirits united. They felt exchanging their diaries after the war would give them back some of the time they were apart.

Their diaries offer a first hand account of a very dramatic time in American history. The diaries give witness to the emotions, bitterness and morals of a nation ripped apart by war. Maggie's diary describes her daily experiences and observations in Indiana, which was within its own borders, torn apart by the differing views of the war. Cal's diary reveals the rigors of survival and combat as an infantry substitute soldier.

On October 13, 1864, Cal began his service in the enlisted ranks of the 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Indiana Volunteers at Richmond, Indiana. The first entry in his diary describes a positive attitude. He was determined to make the best of whatever he must face as a substitute soldier. However, as the diary progresses we see changes in Cal. The hardships of the war and treatment as a "substitute soldier" challenged his morale. He always put forth his best effort to be a good soldier, but in the end he does not talk fondly of his experiences. Many times in his later life he gives the opinion to anyone, "never join the army!" The following is his first entry into his diary:

*Wednesday, October 12, 1864, Richmond, Indiana: I resolve to keep a diary while in the Army both to while away the time, and to keep as a memento. If I shall not live to enjoy it, my friends may want to see it. I am glad I am Jim's substitute. It will seem like bearing the hardship for him will help cheer me. It is a satisfaction to know that if a man shall be slain by my hand, it is done at the call of my country instead of my brother. God grant success to our cause and help us to bear the success with thankfulness and humility.*

It seems as if Cal began having second thoughts during his first night in the barracks. His mind must have been on Colonel Brady's words of warning about being a substitute soldier. His next entry reflects the beginning of his uncertainty.

*Thursday, October 13, 1864, A hundred Blue Coats swarm all around me. The hum of their voices hangs in the air. If I tried to leave these miserable old barracks, I would be challenged by a guard. I am a Union soldier at last. The war has raged for over three years. I have long felt it my duty to serve a term in the defense of my struggling country. So many times while I studied my lessons, courted the lovely daughter of a professor, and enjoyed the collegiate atmosphere at Bloomington, my conscience urged me to join the noble war effort to preserve the Union. My friends and professors at Indiana University persuaded me to graduate first. Well.., graduation has come and gone. Duty clearly points to the path I must now follow. So, now I am here in this place. My God keep me from further sinning and restore me in due time to those I leave behind. But, if it be his will to end my unproductive life in my country's service, may I be saved by the blood of His atonement and enjoy Him forever."*

On Nov. 4, 1864, Cal was assigned to Company "H" under Captain Finley, which was under the command of General George Thomas. Prior to Cal's joining the ninth regiment, General Thomas' forces had soundly defeated Confederate General John Hood at the Battle of Nashville. After Cal joined the ninth regiment, other units were incorporated into General Thomas' command, creating a larger force that was to pursue the retreating General Hood.

Troop movement was usually done in two ways, by marching or when possible by rail. When they reached Huntsville, Alabama the pursuit was abandoned. The regiment was kept there from January 6, to March 13, 1865. Then they marched to Tennessee, beyond Bull's Gap and then back again, returning to Huntsville in May, 1865. Shortly thereafter, they were transferred to the vicinity of New Orleans and later to Texas. They remained in Texas as part of the army occupation until September, 1865. From there Cal was discharged as the war had ended. He returned home having served during the last year of the Civil War.

Living conditions were unimaginably unsanitary. Nearly everyone had body lice and suffered a low grade fever. The stench of infection and filth seemed ever present. Most soldiers suffered from diarrhea and dehydration. Army

physicians used the term "flux" when referring to the many general bowel ailments. More men died from bowel disorders, than were killed in battle. Soldiers referred to it as "quick step" and mentioned it in their letters more often than any other ailment. It was worse in the summer than in the winter.

Sleeping was most often in tents, but occasionally the troops were put up in old filthy barracks usually full of lice, rats, and other vermin. Mosquitoes swarmed in the early evening feasting on the soldiers, further spreading disease and adding more misery.

On November 4, 1864 Cal's unit arrived in Dalton, Georgia by rail. It was a dark, rainy night. Cal was suffering from a high fever, chills, severe flux and incontinence. He stumbled deliriously out of a railroad boxcar and wandered around the town incoherently. Being a substitute soldier, no one bothered to help him. He approached a shanty, forced his way through the door and collapsed into unconsciousness on the floor.

The startled residents notified the army. Two soldiers were dispatched to collect him. Soaking wet and covered in mud and diarrhea he was carried to an old church building, which had been converted into a makeshift army hospital. He was diagnosed with dehydration, severe weight loss, diarrhea, flux (intestinal disease) and lung fever (pneumonia). An army physician operated on Cal the next evening. By the following morning Cal's command received orders to move on again in pursuit of General Hood's retreating army. Being left behind, Cal felt disheartened and left alone to die. (9)

On the bunk to Cal's left lay a substitute soldier nearly dead from the same ailments as Cal. Three days later Cal wrote in his Diary:

*November 5, 1864..."It is a quarter past 2 o'clock. The man with diarrhea died. Oh God such a sight, merely skin and bones! No one here knew him or was even from Massachusetts. After he drew his last breath, he was stripped for burying. Oh, such a scent! They buried him in his blanket without washing. His hips were all black and worn through. God, be merciful to me a sinner. Oh, such a scent! They laid him out with jest and curses. (10)*

At the time of the Civil War little was known about the causes of disease, how to stop it from spreading, or how to cure it. Surgical techniques ranged from barbaric to barely competent. During the period just before the Civil War, a physician received minimal training. Nearly all older doctors had served as apprentice instead of acquiring a formal education. Even those who had attended one of the few medical schools were poorly trained.

By contrast in Europe, four year medical schools were common, laboratory training was widespread, and a greater understanding of disease and infection existed. The average medical student in the United States trained for two years or less, received practically no clinical experience, and was given virtually no laboratory instruction. Those doctors who taught at medical schools were paid by selling tickets to their lectures. The second year of medical school was primarily a review of the first year. Upon completion of that second year, training was finished.

A soldier had a one in four chance of not surviving the war. The sick and wounded were cared for by a woefully under-qualified, understaffed, and undersupplied medical corps. However, working against incredible odds, the medical corps increased in size every year that the war continued. Techniques were improved as a greater understanding of medicine and disease progressed.

Cal's recovery from surgery was slow. Too sick to fight, but too well to occupy a bed, he was assigned "attendant duties." Most attendants were substitute soldiers, which was not a position of respect. The work was dirty, involving heavy manual labor and long hours. Some of the chores consisted of: picking up waste, cleaning up enormous

amounts of blood, digging latrines, disposing of body parts, caring for patients, and transporting wounded in unreliable and overcrowded ambulances, which were two-wheeled carts or four-wheeled wagons. Unfortunately many of the attendants proved to be unsatisfactory and untrustworthy. They were undisciplined and might even steal from the patients. (11)

Although the hospital duty was not a pleasant experience, Cal did acquire some patient care skills and medical knowledge. This is clearly evident later on when he cared for Maggie through her periods of illness, care he gave to others in Watertown during the severe winter of 1880-1881, and the saving of Sam Elrod's life (the fifth governor of South Dakota.)

Eventually Cal's health recovered enough for him to return to his unit. He continued to suffer from severe flux, lung fever, and the abusive treatment as a substitute soldier for the duration of the war.

Cal was always well grounded in his faith with God. A big adjustment for him was Sunday in camp. How different they were from the Sundays at home or in college. There were many things in camp to demoralize and dull the spirit, yet the positive affects of a church service was always uplifting. (12)

A day Cal swore he would always remember was October 17, 1864. On that day his company destroyed a whorehouse, in fact two of them! Angered by the murder of three young union soldiers, the other troops in the company evolved into an angry mob and took care of business! They burned the houses down and ran off the hookers including the management. (13)

Cal complained that the lack of mail delivery was demoralizing. Although Maggie faithfully wrote letters and sent packages, mail delivery was greatly delayed. The mail he sent home was also unpredictable, but its delivery was somewhat better.

Cal, like most other soldiers, continued to suffer from severe intestinal symptoms. The overwhelming number of casualties and deaths due to "flux" could also be linked directly to poor diet and sanitary conditions. There was never enough to eat. Often the troops had to find food on their own. Sometimes the soldiers received loaves of bread, but more often their bread came in the form of crackers made of flour and water. It was commonly referred to as hardtack. The Commissary officials usually issued ten or twelve crackers as a full ration. Hardtack was indeed hard and some men called the crackers "teeth-dullers," others dubbed them "sheet-iron crackers." One soldier made a long-lasting violin bridge out of one of his pieces of hardtack. The soldiers repeatedly hit their crackers with the butts of their weapons to make them soft enough to eat. The crackers might also be stale, moldy, or crawling with insects: hence the nickname, "worm castle was also used." Cal once said he "did not mind picking out the hairs, but hated the *rat dung!* As the war moved on, the shortage of food increased. Soldiers on both sides grew increasingly hungry. The troops came more and more to appreciate hardtack as a source of food. They found various ways to make it more palatable. Hardtack was sometimes crushed and placed in coffee, milk, or soup. At other times it was toasted, fried in grease, mixed with rice and made into pancakes, and, on occasion, even converted into a pudding. (14)

One day Cal approached a cabin. He hadn't eaten in a long while and was famished. Upon entering the cabin he encountered a woman. He asked if she had something to spare. She said she had nothing and left the room for a moment. Cal was standing near a table and noticed some thin flakes or slices of what looked like fried potatoes. His hunger got the best of him and he quickly grabbed a generous handful. Just as he crammed them into his mouth, the woman returned. These potato chips proved to be thin flakes of tallow. His eyes watered and he fought back the

urge to vomit. Finally with one big gulp, he swallowed. Fighting hard to keep it down, he vowed then and there to never steal potato chips again. (15)

Cal made the following entries in his diary:

*Monday April 10, 1865—Lick Creek, eastern Tennessee... "Glorious news today! Lee (16) surrendered! Rumor circulated that evening, that General Johnson (17) had also surrendered. If it only proves true! How many hearts are glad tonight. What rejoicing in the North!"*

The national trauma suffered from the Civil War was not ended merely by General Lee's surrender. Strong Confederate armies remained in the field in North Carolina, Texas and elsewhere throughout the South. Those generals were not following Lee's example. Furthermore, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was still at large and he was urging the other generals to fight on.

*Friday April 14, 1865—Lick Creek, eastern Tennessee... "We had a holiday. Everyone was in the greatest of spirits! First Brigade had a meeting in the afternoon. It was a great treat! There was prayer, music, and celebration. It was moving to see the whole ground covered with uncovered soldiers receiving the preacher's benediction."*

*Saturday April 15, 1865... Lick Creek, eastern Tennessee... "The saddest news of the war arrived today. President Lincoln and Secretary Seward were assassinated. I dearly hope it is untrue, but it is official. What a disgrace to the nation! Its greatest benefactor and second father has been murdered. General Lee has advised other confederate generals to surrender."*

Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles was in attendance with President Lincoln after the President was shot. The following are entries taken from his diary:

*Friday, April 14, 1865... "The giant sufferer extended diagonally across the bed, which was not long enough for him. He had been stripped of his clothes. His large arms, which were occasionally exposed, were of a size which one could scarcely have expected from his sparse appearance. His slow, full respiration lifted the clothes with each breath that he took. His features were calm and striking. I had never seen him appear to better advantage than the first hour. After that, his right eye began to swell and that part of his face became discolored."*

*"...The room was small and overcrowded. The surgeons and members of the Cabinet were as many as should have been in the room, but there were many more, and the hall and other rooms in the front or main house were full. One of these rooms was occupied by Mrs. Lincoln and her attendants, with Mrs. Harris. Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Kinney came to her about twelve o'clock. About once an hour, Mrs. Lincoln would repair to the bedside of her dying husband and with lamentation and tears remain until overcome by emotion."*

*Saturday, April 15, 1865... "About 6a.m. I entered the room and by eleven past I began feeling faint. I left the room and the house and took a short walk in the open air. It was a dark and gloomy morning, and began raining before I returned to the house some fifteen minutes later. Large groups of people were gathering every ten or fifteen yards, all anxious and solicitous. One or more from each group stepped forward as I passed, to inquire into the condition of the President, and to ask if there was no hope. Intense grief was on every persons face when I replied that the President could survive but a short time. The colored people especially—and there were at this time more of them, perhaps, than of white—were overwhelmed with grief."*

*"A little before seven, I went into the room where the dying President was rapidly drawing near the closing moments. Soon after, Mrs. Lincoln made her last visit to him. The death struggle had begun. Robert, the President's son, stood with several others at the end of the bed. He bore himself well, but on two occasions gave way to overpowering grief and sobbed aloud, turning his head and leaning on the shoulder of Senator Sumner."*

Not everyone was similarly moved. Declining the honor of accompanying Lincoln's body back to Illinois, Zachariah Chandler, the radical republican senator from Michigan said, "*The almighty continued Mr. Lincoln in office as long as he was useful.*"

Another view of the aftermath came from a Union soldier, Sergeant Lucius Barber of Illinois (April 21, 1865). The Sergeant had been imprisoned at Andersonville as a prisoner of war. He had been captured while fighting in Georgia under General Sherman.

*"We marched at half past five. The news came today that President Lincoln, Secretary of state Seward and his son have been assassinated, resulting in the President's death and severely wounding others. And now, while the nation is rejoicing with unspeakable joy at its deliverance, it is suddenly plunged into the deepest sorrow by the most brutal murder of its beloved chief."*

*"We are now continually passing paroled men from Lee's Army on their way to their homes, or to where their homes were. Many found blackened ruins instead, and kindred and friends gone, they know not where. Oh how much misery, treason, and rebellion has been brought upon our land."*

General Sherman had always credited his devastatingly destructive war tactics as ultimately shortening the war and saving soldiers' lives. That reasoning was argued and unappreciated by the victims of his ruthlessness. General Sherman viewed his "scorched earth policy" as "justice" for treason. Sherman blazed through the confederacy leaving nothing to support life. Houses were looted, animals that were not taken by his Union troops were slaughtered.

Most of the South was devastated-physically, economically, even spiritually. Confederate soldiers returned home to find their houses burned. In some cases, Cities were destroyed, entire towns sacked, even whole counties had been evacuated. Fields lay fallow, many women and children hitched themselves to plows in the absence of field animals. The South was in a state of ruin and confusion. The main objective was survival. Thousands died of starvation. Reconstruction of the South would be a long and painful process.

From the time General Lee surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, until Cal was mustered out of the army in September of 1865, he continued serving under General Thomas. They moved through Tennessee, Louisiana, and finally into Texas as an occupational force. Their duty was to police and keep the peace amidst the devastation, hardship and turmoil. The politicians continued bickering over how Reconstruction should be accomplished.(19)

To make matter worse, Cal's health continued to present major problems. Cholera Morbus (20) continued to keep him weak and violently ill. He was exposed to small pox, but luckily escaped getting that disease. Nevertheless, he was usually too weak to complete most of the tasks assigned to him without the help of others. On September 28, 1865 Cal's unit was discharged and released to return home.

On Saturday, December 9, 1865, Maggie came downstairs for breakfast. She noticed the house was unusually quiet. She turned from the foot of the staircase and entered the dining room. Sitting at the large dining table was the whole family, including Cal. Cal was thin and sickly in appearance. Maggie's mouth dropped open, her eyes grew wide and flooded with tears, as did everyone's. The room filled with pure joy!

### End notes

1. "A People's History of the United States", by Howard Zinn. Pp. 185-186 Harper and Rowe Publishers, 1980.
2. In "The Atlas of the Civil War", James McPherson notes that if the proportion of Americans were killed in a war today, the number of dead would exceed 5 million.
3. "The Civil War Diary of Arthur Calvin Mellette" revised edition, edited by Gerald Wolff and Joanita Kant.
4. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe was met with mixed reviews when it appeared in book form in 1852, but soon became an international best seller. Although the American anti slavery movement had existed at least as long as the nation itself, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* galvanized public opinion as nothing had before. Its vivid dramatization of slavery's cruelties so aroused readers that Abraham Lincoln is said to have told Stowe her book had been a catalyst for the Civil War.
5. Transcript of biographical sketch of Arthur Calvin Mellette. Written by Margaret Wylie Mellette (Mrs. Arthur Calvin Mellette) in 1908. Sketch found in the Arthur C. Mellette Papers at the South Dakota State Historical Society. Transcript prepared by John C. Borst, Manuscripts Curator, South Dakota State Historical Archives.
6. Thomas J. Brady was a soldier, lawyer, journalist, public official, was born February 12, 1839, in Muncie Indiana. He received a common school education; taught school for several years in Muncie and vicinity; studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1860. He entered the union army in 1861 as captain; was promoted to major in 1862, and to the colonelcy in 1863; served throughout the Civil War, and was mustered out of service with the last regiment, in 1865, as brevet brigadier-general, for long and meritorious service. He resumed his law practice in Muncie with Cal as a law partner after the Civil War was over and Cal had completed his law degree at Indiana University. Together they bought the Muncie Weekly Times newspaper. In 1870 Brady was appointed United States consul at St. Thomas, West Indies. In 1874 he was made chairman of the republican state central committee of Indiana; in 1875 was appointed supervisor of internal revenue; and in 1876 was appointed second assistant post-master-general of the United States, and served until 1881, when he resigned. Brady and Cal were life time friends.
7. "The Civil War Diary of Margaret Wylie Mellette" revised edition, edited by Gerald Wolff and Joanita Kant.
8. During a time of illness, Charles Mellette (father to Cal) was restricted in his ability to do farming. He began engaging in distilling and selling moonshine. It was very profitable and a common undertaking in that part of Indiana. It came to a sudden stop though, when a small child drank some of the moonshine, went into convulsions and nearly died! This incident is mentioned in a biographical sketch written by Margaret Mellette. She does not mention who the small child was or any other information about the youngster. However, at the time of the incident James was the only child of Charles and Mary. Mary immediately and insistently put a stop to the distilling of moonshine. No other child was around and neighboring farms were some distance apart from each other. As the other siblings were born there was always a protectiveness extended by all family members towards James. As James grew to adulthood he was successful in graduating from Indiana University, but exhibited impulsive and often childish behavior. He married three times and seem to have difficulty with relationships. There are no other documents or health records to lend evidence that the child who suffered alcohol poisoning was James, but one wonders. When Cal practiced law in Muncie, Indiana, Watertown, South Dakota and Pittsburg, Kansas, he always took strong stands against liquor trafficking.
9. "The Civil War Diary of Arthur Mellette" revised edition, by Gerald Wolff and Joanita Kant. Pp. 24

10. Ibid

11. "Caring For the Men" (The History of Civil War Medicine), Internet  
<http://www.civilwarhome.com/medicnehistory.htm>

12. "The Civil War Diary of Arthur Mellette, revised edition, edited by Gerald W. Wolff and Joanita Kant., pp.11

13. Ibid, pp. 11

14. Ibid, pp. 17

15. *Transcript of "Biographical sketch of Arthur Calvin Mellette", by Margarette Mellette in 1908. South Dakota State Historical Society archives, Pierre, South Dakota*

16. Robert e. Lee (1807-1870) Considered to be one of the finest generals of all time. Demonstrating incredible tenacity of purpose and aggressiveness in battle, he was also known and respected for many acts of kindness and civility. His intellectual prowess and aura of serenity seemed to surround him. Born to a most distinguished Virginia family, he was second in his class at West Point. He distinguished himself in the Mexican War as being wounded and cited with three brevets for bravery. President Lincoln offered him the command of the Union Armies. Lee chose instead to take charge of Confederate troops in Virginia. In June, 1862 he was given the command of the Army of Northern Virginia, when Joseph E. Johnson was wounded. Greatly out numbered, Lee nonetheless performed brilliantly, protecting Richmond for almost three years, at the same time, leading two major invasions of the North.

17. Joseph Eggleston Johnson (1807-1891) A native Virginian, was a confederal general of considerable ability. Prior to the Civil War he had taken part in the Black Hawk War, Seminole War, and Mexican War, where he was wounded five times, brevetted three times and led a column in the attack on Chapultepec. Early in the Civil War, he was made the fourth ranking general in the Confederacy, which he found insulting and protested vigorously to President Jefferson Davis. The result was a bitter feud between the two men. Lee replaced Johnson as commander of the Department of the Potomac in June 1862, after Johnson was wounded two times at the Battle of Seven Pines. In November of 1862 he returned to duty as commander of the Department of the West. President Davis refused to accept Johnson's strategy which lead to a costly defeat for the South at Murfreesboro, Vicksburg, Chickamauga and Chattanooga. In February 1865, Johnson was given command of the Army of the Tennessee (where Cal was). On April 18, 1865, after a spirited effort, Johnson and General Sherman settled on an armistice, despite Presidents Davis' orders to take his forces south and continue fighting. Johnson surrendered on 26 April 1865. In the years that followed the war, Johnson was elected to Congress and became a railroad commissioner in Washington, D.C. Ironically, Johnson died of pneumonia, which he caught while standing in the rain at the funeral of General William Sherman.

18. Secretary of State William Seward was bedridden after a serious horse and carriage mishap. While at home and recuperating in bed, he was attacked by an assailant (Lewis Powell). Although suffering several life threatening stab wounds, he did finally survive. At first reports, the newspapers and telegraph reported that he was killed.

19. "Don't Know Much About The Civil War" by Kenneth C. Davis. Avon books, a division of the Hearst Corporation, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019

20. Characterized by nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, elevated temperature, etc. Could be appendicitis.

## Bibliography

"The Civil War Diary Arthur Calvin Mellette" Edited by Gerald W. Wolff and Joanita Kant. Copyright 1975 by the South Dakota State Historical Society, Memorial Building, Pierre, South Dakota 57501. Revisions, copyright 1983 by Mellette Memorial Association, Inc., Watertown, South Dakota 57201.

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The Mellette Papers, South Dakota State Archives, Pierre, SD

"The Presbyterian vs. The Bishop: Episcopal Church Administration of President Grant's Peace Policy among the Yankton and Santee People, 1869-1882"

David S. Trask

"Continuing, deponent [Hiram James] said that Mr. Hinman spoke to him of his (plaintiff's) trial on a previous occasion, and said, that he had been exonerated, the witnesses against him being Indians."<sup>1</sup>

William Hobart Hare, Bishop, and Samuel Dutton Hinman, Presbyterian, ended their protracted legal struggle in 1887.<sup>2</sup> By the time it was finished, this clash between the Episcopal Presbyterian to the Santee Indians and his Bishop had captured national attention. The *New York Times* detailed the direct testimony of numerous witnesses and the depositions of others during the five week trial held in New York in the spring of 1882. The published testimony opened the private processes of a prominent Protestant denomination to public scrutiny while simultaneously amusing New Yorkers with reports of depositions in the awkward English of some Indian witnesses. Furthermore the charges and countercharges drew comment in the correspondence of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and in religious publications "back east". The basis of the suit was the claim that Bishop Hare had libeled his presbyter by writing that Hinman had engaged in illicit sexual relations with Native American women. One result of these contacts was that Hinman allegedly contracted a venereal disease which he passed on to his wife who died as a result. These charges were made in private correspondence from the bishop to his governing board to justify his dismissal of the presbyter.

Analysts and interested bystanders of this conflict have most often focused on the personalities of the disputants whose differences quickly sank to the depths of bitterness. The arc of this narrative of personalities begins with the selection of William H. Hare as the bishop to direct the "Indian work" of the Episcopal Church in Dakota Territory; Presbyterian Samuel Hinman finished a close second in the ballot. Hare was a Philadelphian whose mission work involved directing the foreign missions of the national church.

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<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Hinman's Character", *New York Times*, March 31, 1882, 3

<sup>2</sup> "A Scandal Spared", *New York Times*, November 18, 1887, p. 8.

In contrast Hinman had lived and worked with the Santee Sioux and had accompanied them through the many stops in their diaspora from the aftermath of the Minnesota Outbreak to their Nebraska reservation just across the Missouri River from Springfield, (now South) Dakota. Hinman's national network of financial supporters emphasized his direct experience in the service of God and native man while simultaneously portraying Bishop Hare as weak and petty in the presence of a more deserving rival. They saw all of the charges against Hinman as made up from whole cloth by a cleric who had usurped the domain of another. Bishop Hare stood by his charges of philandering and financial irresponsibility while emphasizing that his comments were made in private, not public correspondence. The charges and countercharges about daily living encapsulated in the national trial in 1882 are nearly impenetrable. After the historian dissects the conflict, is persuaded by the rightness of one side or the other, and laments the injustices involved, what else can we learn from this line of inquiry?

The attempt to "civilize" Indians at the end of the Civil War through the operations of President Grant's Peace Policy provides a larger and more informative context for understanding the issues underlying the legal wrangling of the two clergymen.<sup>3</sup> The clerics comprised the core of the Episcopal Church's institutional response, initiated in 1873, to expand and organize the denomination's outreach to American Indians on seven reservations in Dakota Territory, the locale of the newly created Niobrara jurisdiction. The unifying assumption of the policy was that the moral force of Christianity could redirect the lives of dishonest whites and heathen Indians toward the behaviors and values of "civilized" people.

Christian missionaries were assigned two related tasks. First, they were to offset or eliminate the influence of what many in the post-Civil War years identified as the "Indian ring", a loose but ill-defined alliance of Indian Bureau employees, political appointees to reservation positions, merchants who filled contracts for the government's treaty agreements, and congressional allies who worked collectively to redirect federal tax dollars legally obligated for Indians to private citizens through fraudulent contracts. To

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<sup>3</sup> A standard reference on the Peace Policy is Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976, esp. ch. 2; see also Robert Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984, ch. 5; Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy*.

counteract this corruption, denominations were made responsible for selecting Indian agents. Second, the missionaries were to promote Indian assimilation into American society by accelerating the processes of "civilization" and Christianization. In short, the policy was designed to replace the collective identity of Indians as members of a tribe with individual success as rational maximizers in their economic dealings and Victorian Christians in pursuit of personal salvation. Grant's policy assigned Christian denominations to each reservation. The ideal outcome would be general peace between Indians and whites in the short run and the end of the "Indian problem" in the long run.

This plan solved a number of specific problems. By the end of the Civil War policy-makers had generally concluded that it was cheaper to feed Indians than to fight them.<sup>4</sup> Conflicts during the Civil War demonstrated the high financial and moral costs of a military solution to the Indian "problem". The 1862 Santee outbreak in Minnesota coupled with the forced closure of the Bozeman Trail to the Montana goldfields by the Lakota underscored the costs of war; Colorado's Sand Creek Massacre of 1864 demonstrated the savagery of local white responses to Native Americans. Furthermore the Jacksonian policy of removal was no longer viable because there were fewer and fewer places remaining to resettle Indians away from the path of settler advance. Indians would have to be contained peacefully in the vicinity of white settlements while the nation waited for its "wards" to adopt the ways of Euro-American society. The policy also reflected the desire of Americans to improve their national self-image because the country had to "account, in moral terms, for the fact that the nation was built on the graves of Indians."<sup>5</sup> This need was magnified by the carnage of the Civil War accompanying the elimination of slavery. Any policies which would bring Indians and African-Americans more fully into society would reaffirm the values of the Declaration of Independence and the morality of the citizenry.

Within this policy context, was Samuel Hinman part of the solution or part of the problem addressed by President Grant's Peace Policy? Hinman's status as an insider with relationships with the

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<sup>4</sup> Donald Fixico, "Federal and State Policies and American Indians" in Philip Deloria and Neal Salisbury, eds., *A Companion to American Indian History* Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 2002, 382

<sup>5</sup> Susan Scheckel, *The Insistence of the Indian Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998, 5.

Santees and friendships with local whites potentially connected him to the “Indian ring”. Furthermore the rumors of sexual impropriety meant he was not the model of moral behavior contemplated by the plan to sway both whites and Indians toward the “civilized” ideals of Victorian America. Hinman, as he emerged in his relationship with Bishop Hare, became part of the problem Hare had to address in order to achieve the goals of the Peace Policy. Although Hare’s approach to Hinman was moralistic, the Bishop had been selected to enact a moralistic policy.

The initial response of the Episcopal Church was the creation of an Indian Commission under the umbrella of its Committee on Domestic and Foreign Missions. This was followed by the selection of a bishop to oversee the field operations in late 1872. Prior to that moment Samuel Hinman, working on the Santee Reservation, represented the denomination’s *ad hoc* approach to Indian missions. His efforts consisted of his Santee base of operations, a formal mission to the Yanktons living across the Missouri River staffed by his own appointee, and occasional forays up the river. As late as 1873 his efforts had yielded no ongoing mission presence north of the Yankton Reservation.

Samuel Hinman recognized the opportunities available to him under Grant’s plan. He was already well known in the East as a protégée of Bishop Henry Whipple of Minnesota. Whipple was honored for his humanitarian approach to Indians as well as his intervention in the aftermath of the 1862 Minnesota Outbreak. He sought and obtained presidential pardons for 300 Indians sentenced to death in hasty trials for their suspected roles in the Outbreak. Hinman himself possessed a well-deserved reputation as a heroic missionary for his support of Christian Indians during the Outbreak.<sup>6</sup> This included his travel with them as they were moved from place to place by the U. S. government before winding up at their reservation in Nebraska where they were located during the events discussed in this paper. Dependent on well-heeled supporters to operate his mission, he published reports of how he ministered to unfortunate folk huddled in lodges and in need of life’s basics. As with many missionary stories, his reports highlighted the childlike

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<sup>6</sup> Roy W. Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967, 136-148.

devotion of Indians to Jesus and the beauty of their hymn singing set against the missionary's need for money to build a hospital or some other facility<sup>7</sup> These stories met eastern expectations of Indian life.

While the national church was just getting started into the Indian mission field, Sam Hinman called a convocation in 1870 to formalize the creation of the Niobrara Deanery which also publicized his stature and availability to lead a coordinated mission effort to Native Americans. The document produced by the gathering of Indians and white missionaries was subsequently printed for distribution. It praised President Grant for his efforts, included a call from Indians for help, and recommended Samuel Hinman for the position of Dean. Furthermore it indirectly stressed his missionary success by reporting that the native males in attendance hoped the new policy would change the status of men within Indian marriage. They wanted Indian wives to be subservient to their husbands.<sup>8</sup> Hinman seemed well positioned to be named to lead the Niobrara jurisdiction.

Hinman's resume did have some problems. His financial relations with the Board of Managers of the Indian Commission of the Episcopal Church (not to be confused with the one created by the President) were rocky. Presbyter Hinman struggled daily with cash flow difficulties exacerbated by financial extravagance which he sought to offset by finding additional sources of money rather than by trimming his spending. Although his financial problems were caused in part by the need to alleviate Indian needs for help, the missionary was personally extravagant. After arriving at Santee, he built a house for his mission which Joseph W. Cook, missionary to the neighboring Yanktons, described critically as having "turrets, gables, corners, pinnacles, [a] tower, and nooks which was the wonder of the Indians and the rude border people, and in which was sunk an untold sum of money."<sup>9</sup> Not surprisingly, Hinman's finances attracted the attention of the Board of Managers of the Episcopal Indian Commission. At their meeting of April 11, 1872,

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<sup>7</sup> "Journal of the Rev. S. D. Hinman to the Santee Sioux Indians and Taopi by Bishop Whipple" Philadelphia, McCalla & Stavelly, 1869. The reference to the hospital is p. 6. Available at the Archives of the Episcopal Church or at the Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD, Archives of the Episcopal Church of South Dakota.

<sup>8</sup> "Journal, Constitution and By-Laws of the Convocation of the Niobrara Held October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 1870. Mission Press, Yankton Agency Dakota Territory, 1870. The marriage reference is on 7-8. Copy located at the Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas, Domestic Missions, Publications D-M, Indians, General.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Cook, "Historical Sketch of the Growth of the Church in the Indian Field of South Dakota", 46. Quoted in Taylor Spence, "Exiled from Niobrara: The Fall of Samuel Hinman and the Civil War [and Reconstruction] in Sioux Country" 9. Paper in possession of the author.

they stopped payment on a draft Hinman made against the Board and ordered an examination of his accounts. On July 8<sup>th</sup> of that year they approved funds for a house of "moderate size" to be built for the missionary at Santee after the previous mansion had been destroyed by a tornado. At the same time they voted to restrict Hinman's duties to spiritual activities only.<sup>10</sup> At this point William Hare had not yet been selected as Niobrara bishop and Hinman had not yet been passed over for the post.

William Hobart Hare was elected Niobrara bishop in late 1872. His career to that point combined family connections within the Episcopal clerical hierarchy, service as a parish rector, and selection in 1870 as secretary for foreign missions for the Board of Domestic and Foreign Missions of the Episcopal Church. He was the grandson of Bishop John Henry Hobart of New York, a prominent Anglo-Catholic, who had worked with the Oneida Indians before they were relocated to Wisconsin. Hobart College in upstate New York is named for him. His father was a Biblical scholar who was a member of the Old Testament Committee under the Convocation of Canterbury.<sup>11</sup> Raised at the center of power in the Episcopal Church, he possessed the sense of rectitude to act as he did in his dealings with Samuel Hinman.

Bishop Hare's experiences with Indians were limited. During the 1860s William Hare traveled with his wife along the frontiers of Minnesota and Michigan in search of a healthier climate for his ailing wife.<sup>12</sup> On these trips he met both Bishop Whipple and Samuel Hinman and became at least somewhat acquainted with the issues involved in Indian work. Bishop Whipple, with knowledge of both clerics, nominated William H. Hare for Bishop of the Niobrara.

The importance of this narrative is that Bishop Hare, Presbyter Hinman and national leaders all knew each other well before Episcopal bishops selected the leader of the Niobrara jurisdiction in 1872. Hare was known as an administrator as well as a spiritual parish leader while Hinman, whatever his claim as rightful leader of Niobrara, was also known as a bad fiscal manager. In a world where funds were chronically short, this was not a trait that would be attractive to a board. For Hinman the selection of Hare

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<sup>10</sup> Minutes, Board of Managers, Indian Commission of the Episcopal Church, Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas.

<sup>11</sup> M. A. deW. Howe, *The Life and Labors of Bishop Hare Apostle to the Sioux*. New York: Sturgis & Walton, 1911, ch. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Howe, 14, 21.

meant that his days of independence from supervision and his ability to be the center of attention in the East were over. And he would have to live on a budget. For Hare it meant extending Episcopal missions up and down the Missouri River along the edge of the Great Sioux Reservation while dealing with a presbyter who tried to inject his own priorities into the Niobrara effort.. For example, just as Hare was being consecrated in early 1873 Presbyter Hinman sent a request directly to the Board of Managers to establish the schedule of publications for the Niobrara Diocese for the next two years.<sup>13</sup> The Board referred the matter to Hare for a decision.

It is unlikely that the Board of Managers was totally surprised by the conflict that led to the lawsuit. When the trial ended, they expressed their appreciation for Bishop Hare's ordeal and rejected his offer to resign if they felt it necessary. Instead they unanimously adopted the following resolution on June 13, 1882:

The Board of Managers . . . beg to assure Bishop Hare of their profound sympathy with him in this day of his trial, and their unshaken confidence in the fidelity and ability of his administration of his trust and the unsullied purity of his intention in his official acts.<sup>14</sup>

This statement does not have to mention that the Bishop lost the trial and that the call for a new trial from a higher court lay five years in the future. The phrase "purity of his intention" does not mean that the Managers' own actions would have duplicated Hare's. The reversal by the appeals court was based on many errors in the admission of testimony made by the trial judge that could have prejudiced the jury. The court suggested it would be wiser to submit the issues to arbitration because the fight was harming the work of Indian missions.<sup>15</sup>

This paper opened with a speculative question: To what extent was Samuel Hinman part of the problem of Indian-white relations which Bishop Hare was assigned to carry out? Trial testimony underscores ways in which Hinman was part of the problem. Although the Peace Policy was a national program, its implementation was on a community by community basis. The clusters of missionaries were to neutralize the impact of nearby white communities on reservation life while moving Indians as individuals

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<sup>13</sup> Minutes, Board of Managers, Episcopal Indian Commission, January 11, 1873. Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas.

<sup>14</sup> Minutes, Board of Managers, June 13, 1882.

<sup>15</sup> *Hinman v. Hare*, 10 N. E. 41 (N. Y. 1887), 48

“forward” along the path of civilization already traversed by whites. Given the era of this policy, one could say their task was to “reconstruct” frontier communities along “civilized” lines. This task required that missionaries be “in” but not “of” each community. From this perspective Hinman was a problematic missionary. While his language skills and experience with the Santee made him an asset to the missionary endeavor, his friendships with the white community as well as his financial problems were liabilities. Of course recurring charges of sexual impropriety with Indian women did not help allay concerns. What made these isolated local relationships noteworthy was the contrast between the aspirations of Grant’s policy and the alleged behavior of those responsible for carrying out the plan.

Samuel Hinman’s good relationships with area whites preceded the inauguration of the Peace Policy. His off-hand comment about Indian testimony, used as the epigraph for this paper, suggests his comfort with local prejudices against Indians. He stated that his previous “exonerations” in church trials (called presentiments in the language of the church) occurred because the witnesses against him were mostly Indians and were therefore seen as untrustworthy. Further, as Howard Lamar explained in his *Dakota Territory 1861-1889*, the relationship between reservation people and their near neighbors was complicated.<sup>16</sup> On the one hand whites wanted Indians removed in order to open more land to settlement; on the other, they realized that the reservation provided customers and markets needed to survive in areas of low population far from the centers of commerce. Based on his witness list, these folks regarded Hinman as one of their own in maintaining a working relationship with the reservation.

In the New York trial the sixty witnesses summoned to testify divided into two camps as different from one another as their understanding of the issues. All of the Indian clergy and most of the on-reservation witnesses supported Hare’s case while the bulk of the off-reservation whites, especially those in the immediate vicinity of the reservations, were called by Hinman. Overall, seven of Hare’s 24 witnesses (29%) were Indians compared to only four of Hinman’s 36 (11%). Hinman’s witnesses, especially ones affirming his character, were predominantly near-by, off-reservation whites. Overall Hinman called only eight witnesses who were clearly from the reservations—four whites and four Indians (22% of his witnesses)

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<sup>16</sup> Howard Lamar, *Dakota Territory 1861-1889*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1956, 97-104.

compared to the reservation residency of 21 of Hare's 24 witnesses (88%). Hinman's off-reservation witnesses were not a random cross sample of local folk; they were a roster of local boomers seeking to turn their lightly populated area into a bustling, prosperous community. These 28 witnesses included a former governor of Dakota Territory, an officer of the local U. S. Land Office, a former Indian agent (tried for corruption in the discharge of his duties), a county treasurer, the local newspaper publisher, two attorneys, four merchants, and three physicians.<sup>17</sup> These witnesses uniformly stated that they knew nothing suggesting that Hinman was morally impure. Of course, it can be noted that the incidents of unsuitable contact between Hinman and women, mostly Native American, occurred on the reservation while his character references were gathered from outside the reservation.

Trial testimony also suggests this tie. Many "friends of the Indian" in this period personified their national policy criticisms in the evanescent concept of a national "Indian Ring". Historians, however, have been more successful in identifying the operations of actual, local Indian rings (plural).<sup>18</sup> A local, Dakota ring revolved around Dr. Henry Livingston who successfully rose from physician to Indian agent at Crow Creek with the support of the Episcopal Church and its power to appoint Indian agents. Once appointed, Livingston moved quickly to create a ring in 1875, arranged for his agency to be separated into two separate administrative areas to maximize earnings, and located a suitable partner to manage the second portion of the reservation. Indian Inspector John H. Hammond unraveled the fraud in 1877, and the men were brought to trial but were found innocent because of Dakota antipathies toward Indians. Indian Commissioner Ezra Hayt called Livingston the most fraudulent agent in the Indian service.<sup>19</sup>

These same actors cropped up again during the 1882 Hinman v. Hare trial. Livingston testified at the presbyter's behest that "Mr. Hinman was known to the best citizens of Yankton [city] and his reputation for chastity was good." Under cross examination Livingston was forced to admit that he was under

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<sup>17</sup> This paper relies on the daily *New York Times* accounts of the trial available via the online archives of that paper, search terms Hare + Hinman. All references to specific testimony cites the date and title of article used.

<sup>18</sup> For rings in Dakota Territory, see Herbert Hoover, "Territorial Politics and Politicians" ch. 7 of Hoover and John Miller, *A New South Dakota History* Sioux Falls: The Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 2005, pp 101-103, 106-108..

<sup>19</sup> Hoover, 108

indictment for embezzlement for actions when he had been an Indian agent.<sup>20</sup> While Hinman's use of Dr. Livingston does not mean Hinman was part of a "ring", it does suggest that he was consorting with the enemy. This situation was likely long known to Hare and colored his evaluation of his colleague.

Former Indian Commissioner J. H. Hammond emerged in the trial as one of the sources of reports to Hare that Hinman's reputation for chastity was poor. Although Hammond was not a witness himself, Hinman identified the commissioner as someone who regularly defamed his character to get him removed as presbyter. He claimed that the former commissioner's motive was the desire to gain personal control of the agency "for the profits that would accrue therefrom" through the development of a ring. Hinman volunteered that he opposed dishonesty in the agencies and that made him widely disliked.<sup>21</sup>

Testimony during the trial, buried beneath the litanies of recrimination, reinforces the notion that Presbyter Hinman shared local attitudes toward Indians which reformers deplored as impeding progress toward civilization. Friends of the Indian feared that interactions between Indians and whites typically led to degradation of Indians who picked up the vices of whites rather than the virtues of civilization.<sup>22</sup> The issue of honesty played a central role in the trial as witness after witness was accused of lying or at least bending the truth to fit the preferences of a powerful sponsor. Did Indians lie by nature or did they learn if from off-reservation whites? In any case lying was something that Victorian gentlemen presumably did not do; it represented a character flaw.<sup>23</sup> The 1882 trial was littered with charges of lying, mostly made by Rev. Hinman or by his attorney on his behalf.

One of the charges directed at Samuel Hinman was that he visited, perhaps more than once, a young woman named Tipi Dutawin in her lodge late at night. The witness for this charge was Duncan Stone, a mixed-blood Indian, who stated he saw Hinman out walking late at night, followed the cleric, saw him enter the girl's lodge, and found them in a compromising state when he peered into the lodge with the aid of a lighted match. He further claimed that Hinman charged out of the tent, admonished him, and

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<sup>20</sup> "Wearying the Jurors", *New York Times*, April 1, 1882, 3

<sup>21</sup> "The Hinman-Hare Libel Suit", *New York Times*, March 14, 1882, 8

<sup>22</sup> Annual Report, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1870, 10.

<sup>23</sup> John Kucich, *The Power of Lies: Transgression in Victorian Literature* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994, 31.

offered a small payment in return for silence, and also reported he planned to marry the woman.<sup>24</sup> While it is not surprising that Hinman labeled Stone as a notorious liar in this example, the trial record is replete with claims that Indians lie and cannot be trusted. In contrast Hinman's most direct alibi was provided by Miss West, an older white woman who had shared Samuel Hinman's missionary efforts continuously since the Minnesota Outbreak.<sup>25</sup> She was regarded as a proper lady who was above reproach. Miss West reported that her diary made no reference to the presbyter leaving his house late on the evening of the reported Tipi Dutawin visit. She claimed that had he left, she would have noted it. Her relationship as housemother and nanny for the Hinman children was never brought into question by either side as a reason for her to shade the truth. No one asked to view the diary for themselves to see if she consistently noted the comings and goings of residents. She was simply presumed to be a person of good character.

Honesty was a preferred norm of the Victorian world. A world characterized by honesty was an orderly world while lying was seen as a challenge to the social order.<sup>26</sup> If Indians were perceived to lie regularly, this was proof that they had not yet fallen under the sway of the "civilizers". This judgment accorded with missionary notions of cultural evolution which saw all people on a single developmental path toward the idealized Victorian world. Duncan Stone could plausibly be called a liar because he was a mixed blood challenging the "order" of the Victorian world. Miss West could not be questioned because she was an exemplar of that same world.

What did the Peace Policy and its implementation mean in the lives of the Yanktons and Santees? Court testimony reveals that whites had little understanding of Indian customs; there is the distinct possibility that missionaries did not feel the need to understand the inner values of a people destined to die off or to become civilized within a Victorian world. The treatment of the five Indian clergy is instructive. During cross examination Hinman's attorney impugned their testimony by claiming that they needed Bishop Hare's approval to rise in the church's hierarchy. The attorney evaluated the testimony as Indian failure to live up to Victorian standards of honesty by accusing them of acting as calculating individuals in pursuit of personal

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<sup>24</sup> "Miscellaneous City News The Clerical Libel Suit", *New York Times*, March 18, 1882.

<sup>25</sup> "Drawing Toward a Close", *New York Times*, April 6, 1882, 7

<sup>26</sup> Kucich, 31.

success. They never considered that the Indian clergy were motivated by the desire to serve their tribal community.

Margaret Szasz offers the notion of the "culture broker" which points in the right direction. A culture broker stands between two cultures with the ability to explain reliably each group to the other.<sup>27</sup> Bishop Hare saw mixed blood Indians as potential culture brokers in his plans to use them, after conversion, to explain Christianity effectively to the rest of the tribe.<sup>28</sup> It is possible, however, that the Indian clergy were less than culture brokers in that their loyalties lay with their Indian relatives. From this perspective these clergy were cultural explorers who learned what they could of the white world in order to help their people deal with their new condition as imperialized people. This role included leverage at the Indian agency. Support for Bishop Hare was support for fellow Indians because Hare had the power to influence, fire or appoint Indian agents under the terms of the Peace Policy. They did not work for personal advancement in the white world and did not engage in "honest brokerage" in the Szasz sense. Instead their efforts reaffirmed the observation of Howard Harrod about Native American religions: Missionaries could never conquer the experiential territories of Native Americans.<sup>29</sup>

In the long run we know that many South Dakota Sioux became Episcopalians. What is less clear is the content of their Christian beliefs. Missionaries intent on stripping "heathens" of their old culture could evaluate little beyond verbal statements, personal conduct and external appearance as proof of successful conversion. They could not penetrate the inner world of Indians for a fuller understanding of what their communicants thought, of how they were blending what many missionaries thought were incompatible beliefs. Consider Philip Deloria, one of the earliest converts recorded by Joseph Cook, missionary to the Yanktons. Philip's father brought him to Rev. Cook who took the teenager into his home, cut his hair, provided him with citizen clothing, and tutored him personally along his path to a post in the Episcopal clergy. What the triumphant Cook did not know was that Philip's appearance at Cook's door was a result of

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<sup>27</sup> Margaret C. Szasz, *Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1994, 3-20

<sup>28</sup> "Miscellaneous City News: Episcopal Missionary Work", *New York Times*, December 15, 1881, 3

<sup>29</sup> Harrod, *Becoming and Remaining a People: Native American Religions on the Northern Plains* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995, 106.

his father's vision quest. That experience enjoined the Deloria family to follow white ways for four generations. The attraction of the Gospel did not play a role in this "conversion". In fact Vine Deloria, jr., tells us that it was hymn-singing which attracted the Dakota to church, not the theology.<sup>30</sup> Black Elk provides a second example of a blending of traditional and western ways. This man, honored for his teachings of the Great Mysteriousness to American readers, was also a Catholic catechist who worked with a series of Catholic Indian missions in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>31</sup> The biography of Harold Jones, the first Native American bishop of a Christian denomination, provides another example of cultural syncretism carried into later generations. Born in 1909 on the Santee reservation and raised by his grandparents, his family ties reached back to the world of the Minnesota Outbreak, the work of Presbyter Hinman and the leadership of Bishop Hare. While we do not know the inner mix of understandings of traditional Dakota beliefs and Christianity, both were important to him and served him well as a clergyman who directed work on the Pine Ridge reservation, served a 50-50 white-Indian congregation in North Dakota, represented the Episcopal church in Navajoland, and became the heir, briefly, to the role once held by William Hare as Episcopal Bishop of South Dakota.<sup>32</sup> The rise of the Native American Church on the Yankton Reservation is another example of unanticipated religious syncretism. Organized after the turn of the century, the church consumed peyote in ceremonies that paralleled Christian communion services.<sup>33</sup>

President Grant's Peace Plan has most often been analyzed as an expression of American values rather than as a substantive plan to address a specific national issue. In contrast the events surrounding the Hare-Hinman trial offer an opportunity to examine the impacts of the policy on participants, willing or unwilling, directly affected by the implementation of the policy in a single locale. This perspective reveals changes that can be directly attributed to the policy.

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<sup>30</sup> Vine Deloria, jr., *Singing for a Spirit A Portrait of the Dakota Sioux* Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers, 2000, Part I.

<sup>31</sup> Raymond DeMallie, *The Sixth Grandfather*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1984, Part One.

<sup>32</sup> Mary E. Cochran, *Dakota Cross-Bearer The Life and World of a Native American Bishop* Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2000. See esp. 158-211.

<sup>33</sup> Maroukis, *Peyote and the Yankton Sioux*. Norman, Oklahoma: Oklahoma University Press, 2004, 128-130.

For Presbyterian Hinman and Bishop Hare this episode redirected their lives. Samuel Hinman was a missionary entrepreneur who used his language skills and religious connections to craft an independent, honored life in a frontier setting he controlled. When faced with the power of the national church, he asserted that the Bishop had no authority over him rather than adapt to the new conditions.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand Bishop Hare used his missionary role to become a national hero to “friends of the Indian” through his contributions to the creation of the Indian Rights Association in the 1880s.<sup>35</sup> For the Santee and Yankton Indians the peace policy introduced new options in their ongoing efforts to make an Indian life in the presence of those who would stand in their way. For a brief moment white church leaders had the power to recommend removal of Indian agents under the terms of the Peace Plan. Participation in white religion transformed Indian clergy into culture brokers who could use their position between cultures to the advantage to the advantage of their people. For the Episcopal Church the effort paid off handsomely. Their religious domination of Dakota reservations created a world where half of all Sioux were Episcopalians by 1900.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Samuel D. Hinman, “A Statement of Samuel D. Hinman, Presbyterian and First Missionary to the Dakotas”. Friends of the Mission, 1879, Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas, 4.

<sup>35</sup> William T. Hagan, *The Indian Rights Association The Herbert Welsh Years*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985. Ch. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Howe, 231

## Moving the Troops: the Actions Behind Two Civil War Regiments

The American Civil war, also less commonly referred to as the “war between the **states**,” took place from 1861 to 1865. Eleven southern states declared their independence from the United States as a whole and seceded, forming what was known as the Confederate States of America, or more simply “the Confederacy.” The Confederacy was led by Jefferson David and fought to make it’s secession a permanent fixture in American history. The refusal of the Confederacy to give up their implementation and use of slaves in their society was a large majority of their motivation for secession and the subsequent war. Twenty mostly Northern states that had already abolished slavery were the clear supporters of the federal government, along with 5 slave states known as the Border States. These twenty five states came to be known as “**the Union**” and together they formed a formidable opponent to the South, largely attributed to their expanding industry and large population. After four years of bloody and catastrophic fighting, the majority of which was done on Southern soil, the Confederacy surrendered and slavery was abolished throughout the United States. However, that rough overview of the most devastating war our nation has ever fought fails to recognize the individual men and women who participated in it.

While working at my job as an intern for the Center for Western Studies I was assigned the task of transcribing a collection of Civil War documents. Transcribing is when you slowly and painstakingly read through every sentence and re-write it so that it can be considered legible for future researchers. And trust me, it is a lot harder than it sounds. The simple collection I was assigned to consisted of roughly ten letters and took me nearly a month. However, the stories I uncovered in the letters describe brave men who fought to keep our nation and all its inhabitants free. These men were part of a company in the army known as the 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, and they served under Captain Thomas P. Killen. The records that I transcribed are the only known records in existence regarding this company.

Captain Killen formed his brigade under the orders of Colonel Edward Lynde, who had first organized the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Cavalry. At that time there were twelve companies and Killen led and organized Company H, along with his first Lieutenant: James W. Christian and his second lieutenant: Horatio N. Reed. The organization of the ninth Kansas Volunteers, along with ten other companies, was completed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 1862 by the muster- in of

Colonel Alson C. David and Dr. George B. Wood, Assistant Surgeon, both of Wyandotte County in Kansas. A muster-in is when a company is formed by the remnants of others. In the case of the 9th Cavalry, they were organized by consolidating independent battalions, squadrons and detachments originally formed for other regiments. This was not an unusual course of action to take in the war when many companies and regiment's numbers were cut down due to massive loss of life. The company serving under Captain Thomas Killen continued to organize and train themselves for the fighting that would no doubt ensue in the war.

Then, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 1862, Major General Hunter, commanding department of Kansas, with consent of His Excellency Charles Robinson, the governor, issued an order assigning the 9th Kansas Volunteers to incorporate the following companies into their ranks: Company G, I, K, L and M. Although the last three squadrons (K, L and M) were transferred to another regiment on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March and were therefore only mentioned a few times in the transcribed letters. On that same 28<sup>th</sup> of February, the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers were inspected and mustered for pay by Lieutenant Colonel Basset. A mere two weeks later, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1862, Colonel Mitchell arrived in Quindaro, Kansas with companies G, H, and I along with six hundred horses, and he assumed command of the regiment. This movement was merely mentioned in passing within the transcribed letters, although it is made clear that only a day later the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers moved from Quindaro to Shawneetown, Kansas following orders issued by department headquarters. At this point the letters and information present in this collection halt for several months and then pick up again in July.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, we find company H on an expedition into Indian country under Major Bancroft. Their location is identified as Locust Grove, Cherokee Nation. Companies D, E, and F were also stationed under Bancroft in Locust Grove. They remained there until August of that same year, when they were called upon by department headquarters to pursue General Coffey and his force through western Missouri. Though they never came face to face with Coffey and his forces, the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers did finally see war on September 30<sup>th</sup> when Colonel Lynde was in the attack on General Cooper and General Rains near Newtonia, Missouri. The Union troops were defeated.

While it is not uncommon knowledge that the Union troops were defeated in this battle, what is uncommon is the fact that one of the letters I transcribed is dated October 2, 1862: three days after the battle. I would like to read you some excerpts from this letter describing the battle.

The letter opens as such: "While your columns are crowded with news from the more important fields of action a word from this part of Missouri may not be amiss and prove interesting to your many readers in Kansas." Colonel Lynd's disparaging remarks regarding the treatment of his troops as cannon fodder are evident within the next page as well. "About 200 of our cavalry had to cover the retreat and they did it nobly, making five fronts and receiving fire of our informed multitude on there sides, and continued to face into lines until the brush made it impossible to form in any order" ... "with desperate effort we saved our guns but not without the sacrifice of many noble soldiers." The fourth and final page of this letter offers some insight as to how the Rebel forces came to be so well prepared and supplied: "it is the home of Gen. Rains, and has furnished many men for the Rebel Army. It has a name abroad"... the enemy was "even found to occupy Newtonia 14 miles South, and in considerable strength." "On Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> (one day before the battle) four squadrons of 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas...went out for the purpose of...drawing out the enemy upon approaching the pickets were driven in." "A few shells soon determined the hiding place of the Rebels. A large stone barn and steam great will with a lot attached surrounded by a heavy stone fence also a stone fence running west from the farm half mile in length formed their fortifications." The letter ends after this information is presented and the next letter in the series does not appear until October 20<sup>th</sup>, and it is only a single page in which no **mention** of the previously fought battle is **mentioned**. Immediately afterwards the 9<sup>th</sup> was engaged in escort duty from Fort Scott, Kansas, to Cane Hill, Arkansas. It was also engaged in the duty of guarding General Blunt's supply train at Rhea's Mills. It was on the expedition to Van Buren and Fort Smith, after which it was again put on escort duty.

The next battle which the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers fought was in Prairie Grove, Arkansas. It took place on December 7 and they fought under the direction of General Samuel Curtis. Though this battle ended as a technical stalemate it is still viewed as a victory for the Union because it returned previously lost land and secured northern Arkansas for Union forces.

It is here that we lose track of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment until June of 1863. A letter dated June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1863 is sent to 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers from J. W. Hadley, Lieutenant General of the District of the Border. Hadley writes that he has been "instructed to order that you (Killen) proceed with your Company (Company H 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteers) forthwith to Kansas City Mo and report to Head Quarters District of the Border." Once they reach headquarters they are instructed to bring forth any prisoners that they may have taken. Another letter dated June 26<sup>th</sup> states that "a general court martial is hereby appointed to meet at these headquarters on Saturday, the 27<sup>th</sup> day of June 1863, or as soon thereafter as practicable, for the trial of such prisoners as may be brought before it." We learn no further details regarding prisoners that may or may not have been presented to the court by the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers but we do learn that they received orders to participate in operations against Quintrell and his raid on Kansas in August of that year.

The next letter in the collection is of little importance as a whole but it offers the names of several of the men who were transferred to serve under Captain Killen. Dated May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1864 it names ten men that will be transferred to the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers in Little Rock Arkansas. While in Little Rock, the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers spend the majority of June and July scouting and engaging in reconnaissance duty while also actively serving against numerous bands that constantly threaten the railroads leading to Little Rock from the North. However, the dissatisfaction of the troops is made evident in a letter dated August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1863 sent to the Governor of Kansas, Thomas Carney. In this letter we read about the irregularities in the training of the men and how they were deceived when they enlisted. It states "the men composing these companies were almost constantly in the saddle months previous to enlistment and upon every threatened invasion from the day General Price put his rebel hordes of Missouri in farms. Stock growing crops and firesides were left to repel the minions of disunion that threatened us at our very doors."... "When it became evident that the authorities were not able to protect us in the quiet enjoyment of our hard earned homes- the appeal to arms was made, and love of country over riding every other consideration of the people." The letter goes on **the remind** the governor and request that he present to the War Department that several of the men within the 9<sup>th</sup> Volunteers have finished their term of service and request that they may secure their discharge **from service (the army?)**. I found that the regiment remained on duty at Little Rock until its term of service expired. Some soldiers were mustered out at Duvall's Bluff, and a portion of the regiment was sent to Fort Leavenworth, where it was discharged.

It is here that the letters regarding the 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteer Cavalry end. The basics of many of these transcribed letters can be found within libraries or on the internet, but because these are the only surviving letters from that company there are many smaller details and personal revelations incorporated into that bigger information. I found, through research, that the final casualty tally of the 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteer Cavalry over the course of the four years of the war came to 195. One officer and fifty-two enlisted men were killed or mortally wounded in battle, and two officers and one hundred and forty men were killed by disease. When placed in the spectrum of the loss of life during the Civil War, this is better than many companies fared over the duration of the war.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Kansas Volunteer Cavalry was a company full of brave men who willingly gave up their livelihood to defend freedom in our country. I'm grateful that I was given the chance to transcribe these letters because by doing so I felt a connection to these men who, over 200 years ago, fought to defend the rights that I hold dear to me today. I am eternally thankful to the men, for because of them I am able to live in a country where we have unalienable rights and all men are created equal.

## Afraid of Nothing-Personality Quirks of the Mountain Men

Aaron Woodard

As we examined the American Fur trade of the 1830's, we come face to face with the main practitioner of this business, the mountain man. Mountain men shared many similar qualities that enabled them to endure and survive the harsh conditions of their chosen profession. This paper seeks to examine some of these characters in order to compile what in modern terms may be called a personality type.

### Vigilance

The first quality I wish to explore could be called vigilance, wariness or alertness. This was of course essential if a trapper was to survive amidst the many pitfalls and hazards of the American wilderness of the 1830's. Many observers of the mountain men commented on this characteristic of their behavior. The foremost (and greatest) chronicler of the American fur trade, Hiram Chittenden, left this memorable description of the physical, and to some degree, emotional qualities, possessed by the typical mountain man:

He was ordinarily gaunt and spare,  
browed with exposure, his hair long  
and unkempt, while his general  
makeup, with the queer dress which  
he wore, made it difficult to  
distinguish him from an Indian. The  
constant peril of his life and the  
necessity of unremitting vigilance  
gave him a kind of piercing look, his  
head slightly bent forward and his  
deep eyes peering from under a  
slouch hat, or whatever head-gear he  
might possess, as if studying the face  
of a stranger to learn whether friend  
or foe. <sup>1</sup>

Other writers have commented on the look of ceaseless vigilance that characterized the mountain man and fur trader. Most possessed woodcraft that was at least equal of the Indian; many were superior; They had to be to survive in the wild regions that they traveled in the never-ending quest for furs. Robert Glass Cleland noted, referring

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<sup>1</sup> Hiram Martin Chittenden History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West (New York, 1902) vol I, pp. 59-60. Quoted in Robert Glass Cleland, "This Reckless Breed of Men" (New York, Knopf Inc., 1950) p.52

to observations by Frederick Ruxton that mountain men were highly attuned to nature. They could read the behavior of animals and easily determined the meanings of the obscurest signals from the wild. <sup>2</sup>

These men had to also be able to anticipate their enemies, who, at most times were Indians. Ruxton observed an interesting scene that illustrates this quality. Ruxton was an English adventurer who had joined a group of American trappers traveling up the Platte River into South Dakota. His account is as follows:

"Our party crossed the south fork about ten miles from its juncture with the main stream, and then, passing the prairie, struck the north fork a day's travel from the other. At the mouth of an ash-timbered creek they came upon Indian 'sign' and, as now they were in the vicinity of the treacherous Sioux, they moved along with additional caution...Gonneville, old Luke and La Bonte' had started up the creek, and were carefully examining the banks for 'sign' when the former, who was in front, suddenly paused, and looking intently up the stream, held up his hand to his companions to signal them to stop. Luke and La Bonte' both followed the direction of the trapper's intent and fixed gaze. The former uttered in a suppressed tone the expressive exclamation 'Wagh!'-the latter saw nothing but a wood-ducking swimming swiftly down the stream, followed by her downy progeny. Gonneville turned his head, and extending his arm twice with a forward motion up the creek, whispered-'Les sauvages' 'Injuns sure and Sioux at that,' answered Luke...'Injuns?' (La Bonte') asked, 'Where are they?' 'Whar?' repeated old Luke, striking the flint of his rifle, and opening the pan to examine the priming. 'What brings a duck a-streaming it down the stream if humans ain't behind her/ and who's thar in these diggings but Injun's and the worst kind? Ane We'd better push to camp, I'm thinking, if we mean to save our hair.' 'Sign' sufficient indeed, it was to all the trappers who, on being apprized of it, instantly drove in their animals and picketed them; and hardly had they done so when a band of Indians made their appearance on the banks of the creek, from whence they galloped to the bluff which overlooked the camp at the distance of about 600 yards...The trappers had formed a little breastworks of their packs, forming a semi-circle, the chord of which was made by the animals standing in a line, side by side, closely picketed and hobbled...The Indians presently descended the bluff on foot...Then a chief advanced before the rest...Gonneville, who spoke the Sioux language, and was well acquainted with the nation. Affirmed that they belonged to a band called the Yank-taus

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<sup>2</sup> Cleland p.30 quoting Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains*, p. 235

(Yankton), well known to be the most evil disposed of that treacherous nation<sup>3</sup>...Divesting himself of all arms...he advanced toward the savage...'Howgh!' exclaimed both as they met, and after a silence of a few moments, the Indian spoke asking, 'Why the Longknives hid behind their packs when his band approached? Were they afraid or were they preparing a dog-feast to entertain their friends? The whites were passing through his country, burning his wood, drinking his water, and killing his game; but he knew they had now come to pay for the mischief they had done and that the mules and horses they had brought with them were intended as a present to their red friends'...The trapper answered shortly, 'The Longknives had brought the horses for themselves- their hearts were big but not towards the Yanka-Taus'...Saying this the trapper turned his back and rejoined his companions"<sup>4</sup>

### Contrarian

Some, but not all mountain men, exhibited signs of what might be called "contrariness", or a general dislike of authority. As historian Alpheus Favour relates, "The average mountain man resented every effort of the government to exercise any control over his actions. These men, in some instances, had come from parents who were opposed to the established order, or in a number of cases were in the mountains to avoid the consequences of law violations back in their home communities. This class of men as a rule gave little emphasis to government and none at all to law. They wanted to be left alone, and as long as the constituted authorities did not interfere with their life as mountain men, they were satisfied."<sup>5</sup>

### Capitalistic Drive

Despite these hermit hard cases, there were many other mountain men who exhibited traits of what has been labeled "Jacksonian Democracy". A Jacksonian was an American of the 1820's and 30's as defined by historian Richard Hofstadter as "an expectant capitalist, a hardworking ambitious person for whom enterprise was a kind of religion."<sup>6</sup> Many trappers, at least those who classed themselves as free trappers, fit this definition. They were interested in moving up the economic ladder of success. As William Goetzman notes, "there were many like William

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<sup>3</sup> Denig also noted that the Yanktons were considered to be treacherous. Edwin Denig "Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri" (University Oklahoma, Norman, 1961) p.31

<sup>4</sup> George Frederick Ruxton "Life in the Far West"(New York, Harper Brothers, 1859) pgs. 78-81

<sup>5</sup> Alpheus Favour "Old Bill Williams-Mountain Man"(Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, 1962) p.19.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Hofstadter quoted it William Goetzmann, "The Mountain Man as Jacksonian Man", (John Wilson (ed.), *Forging the American Character*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1997) p.158

Ashley or Thomas James who out of encouragement or desperation looked away to the Rocky Mountains, teeming with beaver and other hidden resources and saw a path to economic success and rapid upward mobility."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Ashley went on to accumulate a fortune and become a member of Congress. Another excellent example of this type of trapper is Jedediah Smith, who started out as a hired hunter for Ashley and "apprenticed" if you will, in the wilderness college and later went on to buy out Ashley with partners William Sublette and David Jackson.<sup>8</sup> Smith was perhaps the greatest American mountain man and explorer on record. His explorations were done for adventure, but also for economic gain. He was seeking new untrodden areas from which to reap a fortune in furs.<sup>9</sup> Jed sought material gain for himself but also for his family. As he wrote in a letter to his brother on Christmas eve 1829, "It is, that I may be able to help those who stand in need, that I face every danger-it is for this that I traverse the mountains covered with eternal snow...let it be the greatest pleasure that we can enjoy, the height of our ambition, now, when our parents are in the decline of life, to smooth the pillow of their age and as much as in us lies, take from them all cause of Trouble..."<sup>10</sup>

Smith and others who were desirous of capital gain also took an interest in international affairs, particularly the encroachments of the British government into American territory. The Convention of 1818 had set up a joint occupancy of the Oregon territory by both the United States and Great Britain. This agreement was renewed in 1827.<sup>11</sup> This joint occupation resulted in many complaints from American trappers that the Hudson's Bay Company was engaged in frenetic trapping below the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel designed to deplete fur bearing animals in this area that was viewed as potentially American soil. In a letter from Jedediah Smith to the Secretary of War, Smith mentions this issue: "The inequality of the convention with Great Britain in 1818 is most glaring and apparent, and its continuance is a great and manifest injury to the United States."<sup>12</sup> Smith, in a letter to the Secretary of War, also mentioned that

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Cleland, *"This Reckless Breed of Men"*, (New York, Knopf, 1963) p.63

<sup>9</sup> Goetzmann, p.158

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Jed Smith to brother Ralph Smith December 24, 1829 located in Dale Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Lincoln, University Nebraska Press, 1953) p.353-354

<sup>11</sup> Sam Haynes, *James K. Polk and the Expansionist Impulse* (New York, Pearson Inc., 2006), p.129

<sup>12</sup> James Smith, "Jed's Last Letter – a Point of View" quoting from letter from Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and William Sublette to Secretary of War, 29 October 1830 (*Castor Canadensis* – Newsletter of the Jedediah Smith Society, University of the Pacific, Stockton California, Fall 2008), pp.2-3

he felt obligated "to do all in my power to promote so desirable an object as that of developing the resources of extended Western Territory."<sup>13</sup> This remark certainly sounds capitalistic.

### Educated and Religious

Although many people associate mountain men with being ignorant savages possessing horrific manners and orgiastic appetites, I have not generally found this to be true in my research. There are many accounts regarding the education of these wilderness dwellers. Many observers commented on the well-read men they met in the fur trade. One trapper related that he had another trapper present him with a copy of an ancient and modern history that he carried with him. He also noted that most of the old mountain men were avid readers. He said that he thought it was humorous that mountain men were portrayed as savages because in his experience, they were as knowledgeable as anyone else.<sup>14</sup>

Other trappers commented in their own writings about their scholarly tendencies. Osborne Russel, another fur trapper, wrote that he and other trappers wiled away the winter nights by holding debates amongst themselves. He also noted that many of the trapper he met were, scholars, well read and very able to communicate their ideas and opinions. They even called their meetings "The Rocky Mountain College".<sup>15</sup> Other mountain men were well known for their love of the classics, such as Joseph Meek, who was known to quote Shakespeare. As historian Harvey Tobie noted, "During periods of enforced activity these men taught each other. They had access to the Bible, to the works of Shakespeare, Byron, Scott and many other writers. They talked about these priceless works, recited passages (quite inaccurately at times), named each other and their children after characters in literature and joked in warped literary idioms."<sup>16</sup> Religious tendencies are not usually commented on in regards to mountain men, but some of the most famous were also the most religious. Jedediah Smith was a noted Christian and frequently inserted Biblical quotes and references in his letters such as this, "Next my brother comes the subject for which we live, are we ungrateful to that God in whom we live and move and have our being how often ought we on our bended knees to

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<sup>13</sup> James Smith, "Jed's Last Letter-a Point of View" quoting from letter from Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and William Sublette to Secretary of War, 29 October 1830 *Castor Canadensis* – Newsletter of the Jedediah Smith Society, (Stockton California, University, University of the Pacific, Fall 2008), p.3

<sup>14</sup> Cleland, p. 50. Quoting W.T. Hamilton "My Sixty Years on the Plains" (New York, 1905) p.68

<sup>15</sup> Osborne Russell "Journal of a Trapper" (New York, University of Nebraska Press, 1955) p.51

<sup>16</sup> Harvey Tobie "Joseph Meek", (Leroy Hafen (ed.) *Mountain Men and Fur Traders of the Far West*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1982), p.158

offer up our grateful acknowledgements for the gift of His dear Son. Is it possible that God 'So loved the world that He have his only begotten son that whosoever believed on him Should have everlasting life" [this is a quote from John 3:16]. Then let us come forward with faith, nothing doubting and He will most unquestionably hear us."<sup>17</sup>

Jed Smith's second-in-command on his 1826 California trip, Harrison Rogers, left us a theological recitation what would do any seminarian proud. Rogers wrote the following in his diary as a New Year's greeting to the Catholic father at the mission where the group was staying, "...Our Savior sir, after having spent His life in untiring benevolence and before He ascended to His native heavens, probably in allusion to the twelve tribes of Israel, elected twelve apostles or missionaries. To these, after having properly qualified and instructed them he left a part of his legacy, a world to be converted. He directed that 'repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem'." Rogers goes on to give a complete history of the Christian church, quotes from Justin Martyr, and discusses the geography of the early Christian churches as well as the numbers of Christian missionaries active in the world at the time.<sup>18</sup> While it is of course true that Biblical literacy is perhaps at its lowest ebb in the United States since the nation was founded and it also true that if a child dares to utter a prayer in school the SWAT team will undoubtedly be deployed to quell this Constitutional violation, it is interesting to observe that supposedly ignorant mountain men had a better grasp of the main facets of the Christian faith than large numbers of our fellow citizens.

In conclusion then mountain men possessed unique personality characteristics that stood them in good stead as they plied their hazardous trade in the wild reaches of the American frontier. Certainly, as their conduct demonstrated, they were afraid of nothing.

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<sup>17</sup> Morgan, p.359

<sup>18</sup> Harrison Dale, *The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific 1822-1829*, (Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale CA, 1941), pp.210-212