



# Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

Volume 16

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Issue 1

## ELSHS Sixteenth Annual Meeting Program

Since its reorganization in 1918, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has been connected to world mission work in various ways. The list of countries in which the Synod has supported mission work is long and spans the globe from East Asia to Africa, to Europe, and to Latin America. It is important for us to remember the work of those who have gone before us in this aspect of church work.



***Pastor George O. & Bernice Lillegard***

The story of the involvement of one of the Synod's pastors in the work in China is an engaging story. That work took place against a backdrop of momentous events of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, events which have repercussions down to the present time. The names of George O. Lillegard and his wife Bernice are inseparably connected with the story.

Pastor Lillegard was among that little band of 13 pastors and about 200 lay people who gathered at Lime Creek Lutheran Church near Lake Mills, Iowa, in June, 1918, because they could not in good conscience participate in the Norwegian Lutheran merger movement of 1917. They recognized that essential teachings of the Lutheran heritage had been compromised away in the headlong rush to achieve an ethnically-based union, and they acted boldly to form a new church body.

The reorganized Synod quickly established fellowship connections with the Missouri Synod, at the very time when plans were taking shape in that church body to move into the China mission field. In George Lillegard they found a candidate for that field with prior experience. He had served in China under the auspices of the Old Norwegian Synod prior to the 1917 merger.

To bring this story to life for us we have a father and daughter team of presenters, Pastor Emeritus David Lillegard, son of George and Bernice Lillegard, and David's daughter, Deborah (Lillegard) Blumer. Pastor David Lillegard currently lives in retirement in Sebastian, Florida. Deborah resides in Lakewood, Colorado. She has put together a book which chronicles the experience of her grandparents in China through photographs, letters, and other documents. This collection

provides a rich source of material for what promises to be a captivating program.

We look forward to welcoming David and Deborah to our Annual Meeting, and to hearing their account of significant and interesting lives from Synod history.

*Mark O. Harstad*



**Deborah (Lillegard) Blumer and The Rev. David Lillegard,** presenters at the 2012 Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the ELS Historical Society being held in Honsey Hall on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN, June 16, 2012, 1 pm to 6 pm

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**Former ELSHS Board Member, Red Levorson, Passes Away**



Albin John (Red) Levorson Jr. of Northwood, Iowa, died Sunday, April 15, 2012, at the age of 76. His funeral was held April 18 at Lime Creek (Iowa) Evangelical Lutheran Church in rural Lake Mills. Red was a lifelong member of Somber Lutheran

Church where he served in various offices. For twenty-seven years he served on the ELS Board of Trustees and was an active

member of the ELS Historical Society, serving ten years as treasurer. He helped with ELS youth camps, coached Special Olympics at Lake Mills Elementary School, and served as a patient advocate at Opportunity Village in Clear Lake. Blessed be his memory.

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**Museum Displays During Synod Convention**

by Becky DeGarmeaux

In conjunction with the 2012 ELS Synod Convention and the ELS Historical Society's annual meeting, the Ottesen Museum will feature special displays focusing on the work of George and Bernice Lillegard in China. At the meeting, two of Bernice Lillegard's dresses will be displayed: her 1920 wedding dress, and her Chinese dress.



During Synod Convention, the Museum will have its display case in the Sports and Fitness Center of the College. The entire case will be devoted to some of the smaller donations made to the Museum in the past several months. Among these will be accessories that go with Bernice's wedding dress.

At the Museum itself there will be displays featuring Oliver and Nellie Honsey's (Prof. Rudy's parents) 1912 wedding clothes and articles from the archives concerning the Lillegard's work in China. Many of these items will be on display only during Synod Convention so plan to take time during convention week to stop by and see these and other new displays at the Museum.

During the Convention, the Ottesen Museum will have regular hours of Tuesday through Thursday from 1:30 to 4:30 pm. Or, talk to the Museum's Director of Programming, Rebecca DeGarmeaux, to visit the Museum other times during the week. ■

## The 100th Anniversary of the Madison Settlement

### 1912: "Opgjør," The Settlement That Didn't Settle Anything



by  
Rev. Jerry Gernander,  
Bethany Lutheran  
Church,  
Princeton, Minnesota

"Well, did you  
get what you  
wanted?"

"Not exactly  
..."

This exchange took place on February 22, 1912, as someone questioned one of the Norwegian Synod pastors who had taken part in some important intersynodical discussions in Madison, Wisconsin.

We know that this was only part of the story. We know how the story ended, with the merger of the Norwegian synods in 1917, the refusal of a hardy few to join the merger, and the beginnings of our beloved Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 1918, known at that time (until 1958) as the reorganized Norwegian Synod.

But they did not know that at the time. All they could see in front of them was the "settlement that didn't settle anything," known as the Madison Agreement, or, in Norwegian, "Opgjør." It was the result of the meeting in February 1912.

This went back to the so-called Election Controversy of the 1880s. The important point was the role of faith in the doctrine of election.

In the 1880s, under the leadership of President U.V. Koren, the Norwegian Synod came down on the side of the Lutheran Formula of Concord: that God has called or elected each person by grace, not in view of

faith, as if faith were the *cause* of each person's election. Rather, your faith is a *result* of being elected by grace. The Madison Settlement called this not one doctrine, but the "first form" of the doctrine.

At the same time that it reaffirmed its adherence to the confessional Lutheran position, the Norwegian Synod in the 1880s rejected what it considered the opposite view: that God has called or elected each person "in view of faith." This position would mean God saves a person by faith "in view of" a good quality in the person, not by grace alone. The Madison Settlement called this the "second form" of the doctrine.

The so-called "Settlement" placed these points side by side in the document. Paragraph 1 spoke of "that doctrine of election which is set forth in Article XI of the Formula of Concord, the so-called First Form" of the doctrine; "and [that doctrine of election which is set forth in] Pontoppidan's 'Truth Unto Godliness,' the so-called Second Form of Doctrine."

But the "first form" places faith *after* election, as the *result* of God's action. The "second form" places faith *before* election; faith is the *cause* of God's action. These two "forms" of the doctrine, however, are against each other. After the Madison Settlement was published, Dr. Franz Pieper of the Missouri Synod declared that these are "not two 'forms' of doctrine, but two doctrines, materially differing from one another."

But what happened to make it possible that in only 25 years the Norwegian Synod had gone from rejecting a false doctrine to accepting it as equally viable for its people to believe?

The first thing is that in 1900, the Norwegian Synod accepted an invitation from the United Norwegian Lutheran Church (the United Church) to meet for doctrinal discussion. However, F.A. Schmidt, the most vocal critic against the correct doctrine of election, had

helped form the synod and was a chief participant in these discussions! Schmidt even said: "Have I not accused the Synod people of false doctrine, and have they not still conferred with me?"

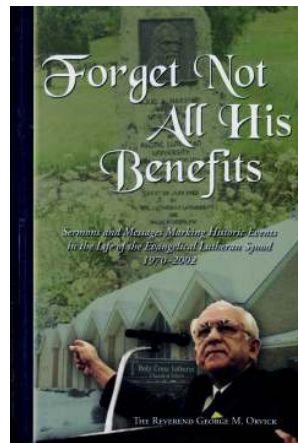
A second factor was the election of Rev. H.G. Stub to the vice president's position in 1905, and his election in 1911 to succeed Koren as president. He showed his true colors in 1910, when he read the ailing Koren's presidential essay to the convention, but omitted Koren's paragraph in which he cast doubt on the prospect of agreement on the doctrine of election.

Between 1908 and 1910, the committees of the two synods that were discussing the doctrinal differences could not agree. However, in 1911 Stub recommended that the synod continue negotiating with the United Church, and elect an entirely new committee, getting rid of the committee members who had concluded that the two synods did not agree. After this it did not take long for stalemate to turn into full doctrinal "agreement" – which we would consider a compromise.

Rev. Christian Anderson, who remained faithful to the true doctrine, summarizes the usefulness in reviewing this history: "Our purpose in considering these things is not chiefly to satisfy our curiosity and to evaluate the weaknesses of our fathers and former brethren. But it should serve as a lesson for us, who are still exposed to the same dangers as they were. History is sure to repeat itself in so many ways. The arch enemy of the saving truth will use pretty much the same tactics at all times, to rob us of this truth, though they may appear in somewhat different form as the occasion demands. The Lord protect us against his machinations." ■

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Editor's Note: Tying in with the above article, following is an excerpt from Rev. George M. Orvick's Address to the First Convention of the Federation for Authentic Lutheranism, Libertyville, Illinois, November 2, 1971, from Rev. Orvick's book, *Forget Not All His Benefits*, published in 2007 by The Evangelical Lutheran Synod.



...Dear Brethren. We of the ELS have been where you are today. We have experienced the same feeling that you are experiencing.

That little group of pastors that refused to go along with the grand church merger of 1917 had to reorganize their church body as you are doing.

When they met at Lime Creek for their organizational meeting it was sad in one respect, namely the thought of their past associations....

The little group had courage. Someone looked at this little group and said, "The Norwegian Synod is a plucked chicken." To which one of the laymen replied, "Yes, but if it is healthy the feathers will grow back."

And another of the fathers who was present at the meeting described the good feeling of freedom and happiness that was theirs after they had made their decision. "We were free, we were unafraid, and we were happy. We felt that the Lord was with us and that His grace was abundant."

And the Lord did bless that little group. The feathers did grow back.... His Word was preserved in its truth and its purity, and by His grace we still proclaim it today.

Therefore as messengers of old came to us and encouraged us in those days, so we come here today saying, "You can go on." God is your refuge and strength.

...We may not be able to boast of great numbers. We may not be able to speak of our impact upon the world. But we do have something to boast of: We boast of a Savior slain. We boast of the marvelous grace of God. We boast of His inerrant and infallible Word.

And with this, what more do we need. Amen.

Note: The FAL was formed by a group of pastors and laymen who left the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Numbering about 10,000 souls and 14 congregations, the FAL merged with the WELS in 1975. Seven of the congregations joined the ELS. ■

**Interview with Clarice Madson**  
**by David Reagles**  
**Mankato, MN, April 2010**



**Family Background**

Clarice Madson's father, Albert Huso, was born June 20, 1887, in Joyce, Iowa, the ninth of eleven children. His grandparents immigrated to northern Iowa from Norway. Albert was born and raised Lutheran and was baptized by T. A. Torgeson. Like many settlers in Iowa, Albert grew up on a farm, learning a hard work ethic. When he matured, however, Albert found farming was not for him and he pursued a career in business. First he worked at a hardware store and for the postal service, but only for a short time. Albert Huso's passion for cars drove him to open his own automobile dealership in the Riceville and Northwood area. He kept this job for fifty-two years, which earned him the title of "the oldest salesman for Ford in Iowa."

Two characteristics Clarice remembers well about her father were his quiet, stoic, Norwegian attitude, and that he was very kind. During the Great Depression, he was known to help struggling families financially. He sent all but one of his children to Bethany Lutheran College

and was a member of the Board of Regents for the college. Clarice remembers her father's lament about the "merger movement" among Norwegian Lutherans in 1917. Unity was an important issue for Albert. He was deeply affected at the loss of so many churches and property after the split. But he remained with the small group known today as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. He was at Lime Creek for the meeting there.

Clarice's mother, Edith Anonson, grew up in a Methodist background. Clarice remembers the influence of Methodism upon her. She remembers her mother's dislike for card games, alcohol, and work on worship days. Her mother's personality was very bubbly and talkative. Edith and Albert's unique personalities complemented each other well. Although Clarice did not remember how they met, she recalled hearing about their first date. Her father was a very polished and proper man. On their first date, he wore a black suit, long coat, and leather gloves. He owned a brand new Model T Ford and was ready to pick up Edith. Unfortunately for Albert's new car, the gravel roads to Edith's country home took their toll and caused it to break down. With no other way home, Edith hooked up the family horse and buggy to take Albert home. Edith laughed, telling Albert, "Well I sure hope you still want to pick me up the next time!"

**Early Life**

Clarice was born on February 14, 1926, in Riceville, Iowa. She was the second youngest of seven children; two boys and five girls. She was baptized March 17, 1926, by A. J. Torgeson. Even though the Huso family lived and attended church in Riceville, they traveled forty miles to Northwood about once a month and for the children's baptisms. While the church in Riceville was in fellowship with the Norwegian church in Northwood, Clarice's father found it important to support the small church body that had formed in 1918. At this point in history, pastors were few and far between, most of them centered in cities. For small towns and farming communities, pastors often had two or more congregations to serve. Clarice remembers taking communion only about once a month, as was common in the early days.

Growing up was a joy. Blessed by the musical talents of her parents, her family was raised on hymns and music which supported the weekly attendance at church. Each of her brothers and sisters played an instrument and Clarice

cultivated her talent of singing. She was involved with many choirs and was often asked to sing for special occasions.

Her father wished he could have daily devotions with the family, but it was difficult to get everyone together at one time. He worked at his Ford garage every night of the week except Sundays, which was normal in rural towns.

Clarice added, "My father had a house-keeper after my mother died so young; someone my mother knew too. After a couple of years, my dad asked us all if it was okay to marry Minnie—we gave our approval. He spent ten years with her before his death."

### **Adult Life**

When Clarice attended Bethany Lutheran College, her father would usually drive to Mankato to pick her up. However, in December of 1945, he was unable to because of busy times at work. In order to get home, her father told her to take the Greyhound Bus. "The Bus!" remarked Clarice, "But how do I do that?" (Since Clarice's father owned a car dealership, she never had to take the bus growing up.) Her father simply responded by saying, "Well, Clarice, you buy a ticket." After following her father's advice, Clarice found the bus and took a seat. A young man came up to her and asked her to save him a seat. He had to run to a store before the bus took off and pick up some black shoes he had purchased earlier. Once he came back and introduced himself, they found they had much in common. Talking the entire way, they learned that both of their families were connected with Bethany. Juul Madson had received a call from two congregations, in Northwood and Somber. He had enrolled in an accelerated seminary program with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Thiensville, Wisconsin. He did this because the Evangelical Lutheran Synod did not have a seminary of its own at the time. Due to the accelerated program, Juul did not have a vicar year. When they arrived at their destination in Northwood, Clarice took Juul home to meet her parents. As a pastor fresh out of the seminary, he did not possess any furniture or a car. The parsonage connected to his church was humbly accommodated to say the least. Albert Huso's kindness was shown as he invited him to stay for a few days. Juul did not own a car until Mr. Huso could get a new one for him. (Cars were rationed during the war years.) Juul and Clarice kept in touch through letters and poems. The relationship

eventually grew into marriage. They were married September 14, 1946 at Northwood by Norman A. Madson, Juul's father.

In the first year of marriage, Clarice and Juul were very busy with church. She participated in Ladies Aid, choir, and teaching Sunday school. The two churches at Northwood and Somber had a school, but there was no teacher on staff. Even though it was his first year in the parish, with two congregations and no vicar experience, Juul undertook the responsibilities as teacher. He said, "I have to teach this year because if I don't the school will close." Every morning, Monday through Friday, Juul taught all eight grades. Clarice recalls Juul was so busy that the only times they saw each other were early in the mornings and late in the evenings. But Juul was determined. He saw the importance of Christian education. Juul's perseverance and Clarice's patience paid off; the next year a full time teacher arrived to relieve Juul.



Juul and Clarice remained at these two congregations until 1954. Later Juul served at Lakewood Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington (1954-1960); First American Lutheran Church, Mayville, North Dakota (1960-1967); and English Lutheran Church, Cottonwood, Minnesota (1968-1970). He was also president of the Synod for over two years when he was called as professor of New Testament exegesis and Greek at Bethany Lutheran Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota (1970-1992).

Juul and Clarice had nine children; four were born in Iowa, two were born in Washington, and three were born in North Dakota.

### **Bethany Memorial Library**

Clarice enjoyed working at the Bethany Library for 25 years. "I helped move the library three times because of new buildings. Libraries went through big changes during those years. We went from Dewey Decimal to Library of Congress, started inter-library loans, and went to computers. I was a secretary, work study helper, tended the desk, and ordered books and periodicals, working under Sally Dale, Jerral Parrish,

and longest under Mary Birmingham who was a very knowledgeable librarian.

“I retired from my interesting years at the library when my hubby retired. We traveled a lot, both abroad and in this country; some for seminary teaching and some for pleasure.”

### **Involvement with the Ottesen Museum**

Clarice remembers the museum began in a little corner of the library basement at Bethany Lutheran College. Artifacts were not taken care of very well and were not displayed where people could enjoy them. Walter Gullixson was very instrumental in improving conditions. He photographed, numbered, and documented each artifact. He attended meetings to learn how other museums were set up. Eventually funds were raised to purchase the current museum. Clarice collected showcases and bins, and worked on many organizational projects. The museum was dedicated June 15, 2003. After Walter Gullixson left, George Orvick headed the museum board and Melvina Aaberg assumed responsibility for the documentation of newly-received artifacts. After the dedication, artifacts flooded into the museum. People were more apt to donate their precious pieces of history now that they would be properly preserved. Clarice remembers, “My years of developing the museum, together with Melvina, Rachel Anthony, and other board members was very fun but a lot of work.”

### **Religious Life and Message to Future Generations**

Each time Clarice taught vacation Bible school, lessons on hymns were always included. She said, “Most of our hymns are like little sermons...they are well worth learning by heart.” Her favorite hymns are *Like the Golden Sun Ascending* and *On My Heart Imprint Thine Image*. She and Juul taught their children hymns so well that after church, people often told Clarice they “could always tell which children were hers because they had the hymn book open and never looked at it, because they knew it by heart, just like their mom and dad.” Daily devotions were also an important part of their children’s education. Devotions were harder to have as the children grew older, but the devotions of their youth have stayed with them. Clarice believes that “to [have] learn[ed] a good hymn by heart is one of the best comforts we have.” She is concerned where some churches are headed with their music and is not convinced young people do not like to

sing hymns, as some advocate for contemporary worshippers. Clarice believes children will learn hymns if they are given them to learn.



Throughout their lives, Juul and Clarice remained strong in faith through the grace of God. God gave Clarice a loving husband who helped her raise their children in the faith. A son, Paul, died near Dubuque, Iowa, on a bicycle trip at age 50 in 2001. Juul Benjamin Madson passed away on April 3, 2008 at the age of 87.

Clarice feels very fortunate that all her children confess Christ crucified. She hopes future generations will stay in the faith and teach God’s Word to their children. Sending them to school or taking them to church is not enough. Parents must take an active role in the Christian education of their children. Teaching by living is how Clarice would describe the best education. She believes that reading Bible stories, having devotions, and praying together will keep families together. “Many European countries are examples of why people need to remain true to their heritage. In the past, they were blessed by God. But they rejected him and now it is almost impossible to get many of the younger generation to go to church.”

To sum up her philosophy of life, Clarice told a story about her son, Paul. He worked as an architect and soon hired some help. One of the new employees told him, “Mr. Madson, you seem different to me, different than anyone I have ever known.” Paul responded, “Maybe it’s because I’m a Christian.” The employee had noticed Paul’s faith through his deeds. She believes that the first verse of “In House and Home” summarizes how a Christian should live:

In house and home where man and wife  
Together lead a godly life,  
By deeds their faith confessing!  
There many a happy day is spent;  
There Jesus gladly will consent  
To tarry with His blessing.

(*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* #189) ■

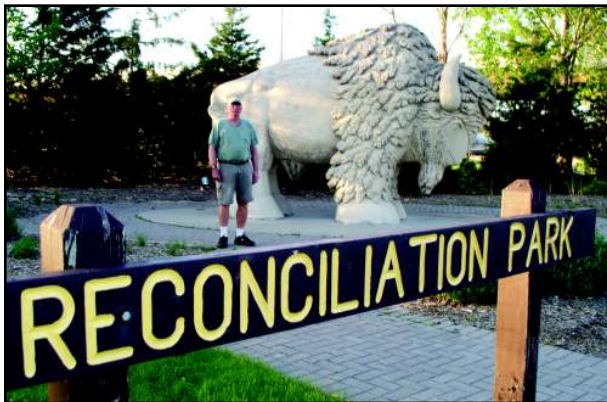
# The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 and Its Aftermath

by Herman Harstad

I arrived at Bethany in the fall of 1962 as a college freshman. While exploring downtown Mankato, I came across a memorial stone about four feet high and three feet wide that read: HERE WERE HANGED 38 SIOUX INDIANS DECEMBER 26, 1862. One of the first books I checked out of the Bethany Library was about the Great Sioux Uprising as it was referred to at that time. Fifty years later the memorial stone is gone and a statue of a bison stands at Reconciliation Park. This year we are observing the 150th anniversary of what is now referred to as the U.S.-Dakota War. County historical societies in South



U.S.-Dakota War. County historical societies in South



Central Minnesota are offering special lectures and events to commemorate this war that occurred during the American Civil War that overshadowed it. The passage of time has made it possible to form more objective views on the complicated circumstances that led to the violent deaths of an estimated 450 to 800 white settlers and soldiers, and 70 to 100 Indians in the summer of 1862. Now some of the descendants of the participants are meeting to promote healing and reconciliation.

Notes: One version of the origin of the name “Sioux” from MidwestWeekends.com is that it is “thought to have come from the French-Canadian *nadouessioux*, derived from an Ottawa word for ‘little snakes.’ Although the name Sioux was meant to be derogatory, it has become associated with courage and bravery over the years, and many Dakota, especially elders, still bear it proudly... it is best to use tribal affiliations, such as Dakota or Ojibwe, whenever possible.”

The number of Dakota deaths is highly speculative since they did not keep written records of the number killed or wounded. The 70 to 100 figure is an educated guess from Wikipedia.com. Hundreds died later in internment camps.

The Early Years...Long before white men made their way to the Upper Midwest, offspring of Spanish explorers’ horses moved north and were domesticated by Native Americans. Dakota, Arapaho, and Cheyenne tribes dominated the northern Plains following the bison herds. Their hunting, fishing, and gathering lifestyle required large amounts of land to support the population. After the War of 1812 the U.S. government decided to build a chain of forts to deal with Indian issues and to stop Canadians and British from encroachment. Fort Snelling was built on a high spot overlooking the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. It was completed in 1825. Coincidentally it was the same year that marked the beginning of a mass exodus from Norway to the new world. The first boat load of 52 Norwegians arrived in New York in October 1825 aboard a small sloop called “The Restoration.” These people are remembered in immigration history as “The Sloopers.” Between 1825 and 1925 nearly 800,000 Norwegian immigrants made their way to the United States.

The Mississippi River marked the border between the Northwest Territory on the east and the Louisiana Purchase on the west which was bought from France in 1803. The availability of land in the Midwest carried great appeal to landlocked Europeans.

Fort Snelling officials mediated conflicts between the Dakota in the south and the Ojibwa(y) (or Ojibwe; also called Chippewa) Indians in the north. Their mission was also to keep whites out of Indian lands until treaties could be negotiated.

The Traverse des Sioux Treaty of 1851...Just north of present day St. Peter, Minnesota, there is a shallow part of the Minnesota River with a solid bottom where the Dakota could safely ford the river on horseback. The early French trappers called the spot “traverse de Sioux” (crossing place of the Sioux). It was there, in July 1851, that a treaty was signed between the U.S. and the Dakota where the Dakota “sold” about 24 million acres of land in Minnesota Territory, Iowa, and South Dakota in exchange for \$3,075,000 to be paid over a period of 50 years in annual annuities of goods and cash. The price was about 12 cents per acre for some of the best farmland in the country. In addition, about 7,000 Dakota were to be placed on two reservations known as the Upper and Lower Sioux Agencies. Each was 70 miles long and 20 miles wide. The border extended ten miles out on each side of the Minnesota River. In 1858, when Minnesota became a state, several Dakota chiefs, led by Little Crow, traveled to Washington D.C. to talk about the enforcement of the existing treaty. Instead they were coerced and tricked into signing a modification of the 1851 treaty that took away the northern half of the reservation and the rights to quarry in Pipestone, Minnesota.

Treaty Provisions Not Honored...The Homestead Act was passed in May 1862. It granted 160 acres of public land to anyone who paid a small filing fee



and lived on the land for five years. People from Ireland, Germany, Norway, and Sweden took advantage of the free land and settled on what were once Indian hereditary lands. As the whites cleared the land for farming and hunted the wildlife consisting of bison, elk, and whitetail deer, the supply of game was greatly reduced. That situation coupled with a severe drought changed the long-established annual Indian cycle of farming, hunting, and fishing. As the summer of 1862 wore on, the situation became desperate for the Native Americans. The Civil War cut into the U.S. government's resources and they fell behind in the payment of cash and food to the Indians. Then in August some Indians who were on the brink of starvation demanded that the U.S. government and traders sell them food on credit at the Lower Sioux Agency. The representative of the government traders, Andrew Myrick, who was married to an Indian, refused the demand and said, "... let them eat grass." A few years later, President Hayes admitted, "Many if not most of the Indian wars have had their origin in broken promises and acts of injustice on our part."

**The Dogs of War Unleashed...**The first shots of the war were fired in Acton Township in Meeker County on August 17, 1862. Acton is located about thirty miles southwest of St. Cloud. One account of what happened on that day goes as follows: Four young Dakota tribesmen were returning empty handed from a hunting trip when they found some eggs near a fence on a white settler's homestead. They were drunk and argued about the morality of taking the eggs without permission. One of the hunters threw the eggs to the ground in a rage and called the others cowards. The others resolved to prove they were "brave warriors" by killing white settlers. They approached some settlers in a friendly-looking manner and asked for whiskey. After they were refused the Indians shot five white settlers including a 15-year-old girl. The five settlers from New England were buried at a Norwegian Lutheran cemetery southwest of Litchfield.

That night a council was held with Little Crow at the Lower Sioux Agency. Discussed were the lack of food, broken U.S. promises, Myrick's statement about eating grass, and the whites' possible response to the killing of the five settlers. They agreed to break into the agency's food supply and drive out the white settlers. One of the first victims of the war was Myrick whose body was found with his mouth stuffed with grass. Twenty-two other traders and government employees were also killed at the Lower Sioux Agency.

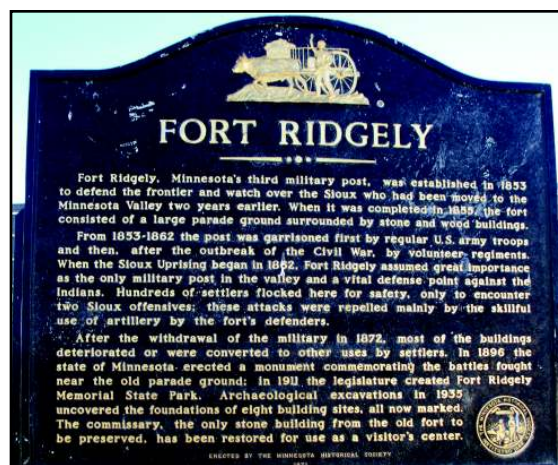
Like rabid dogs that lash out indiscriminately, the perpetrators of war sometimes attack innocent bystanders who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. That was true of some residents of a Norwegian settlement near the town of Willmar, about forty miles north of the Lower Sioux Agency. On August 20, Indians stealthily approached the farm of Lars and Guri Endreson Rosseland. They killed Lars and his

oldest son and daughter-in-law and wounded another son. They took two daughters hostage and torched the house and barn as Mrs. Rosseland and her youngest daughter hid trembling in a nearby cellar. When the Indians left, Mrs. Rosseland and her daughter found the wounded son and hitched up an ox cart and traveled 30 miles to safety. They later learned the two daughters taken hostage had escaped and were among the refugees in Forest City. Mrs. Rosseland, who was a woman of faith, later wrote her mother in Norway, "God permitted it to happen thus, and I have to accept my heavy fate and thank Him for having spared my life and those of some of my dear children."

Historian Odd Lovoll, who wrote *Norwegians on the Prairie* and *The Promise of America*, said stories like this temporarily slowed Norwegian emigration but the flow resumed after the Civil War.

**The War Expands...**A contingent of the Minnesota Voluntary Infantry Regiment sent to stop the uprising was defeated at the Battle of Redwood Ferry where Captain Marsh and twenty-three soldiers were killed. The Indians headed south toward Fort Ridgely, killing settlers along the way. White refugees poured into the unwallled fort for safety. On August 19 Dakota warriors decided not to attack Fort Ridgely for the time being, and proceeded sixteen miles further south along the river to New Ulm where they thought they could get more plunder. Word had reached New Ulm of the situation and citizens organized defenses in the center of town and were able to keep the attackers at bay. A thunderstorm temporarily halted the hostilities. Meanwhile soldiers from Fort Ridgely and militia from other towns came to New Ulm's aid.

On the same day, Governor Ramsey appointed Henry Sibley to head the state's military response. The forces assembled at Fort Snelling and headed south by steamboat on the Minnesota River. Then on August 20 Chief Little Crow led four hundred warriors on an attack on Fort Ridgely. They were held off by cannon fire from the fort. Two days later 800 Indians under the leadership of Little Crow, Big Eagle, and Mankato again attacked the fort but were again repulsed by the



defenders. However, the Indians had the fort surrounded out of cannon range to prevent soldiers from coming or going. They swept through farms and small settlements along the river, killing many whites.

On August 23, the Indians again attacked New Ulm with about 650 warriors. Twenty-eight defenders of the city lost their lives and about fifty were wounded. The exchange of gunfire was so intense it could be heard sixteen miles away at Fort Ridgely. Two days later New Ulm was evacuated and a caravan of about 150 wagons and 2,000 refugees headed to Mankato.

Meanwhile Colonel Sibley prepared his troops to relieve the people in New Ulm and Fort Ridgely. The cavalry was able to lift the siege of Fort Ridgely on August 27. The next day the main forces reached the fort. Colonel Sibley then sent a detachment of soldiers to aid the surviving settlers and to bury the dead. A chance meeting between the two forces on September 2 about sixteen miles from Fort Ridgely resulted in a three-hour firefight at what came to be called the Battle of Birch Coulee. Thirteen soldiers were killed and 47 were wounded. Only two Indians were killed. The fighting stopped when 240 relief soldiers arrived later in the afternoon.

In response to appeals for federal help, President Lincoln appointed General John Pope to spearhead the war's administration from St. Paul. By September 23 Colonel Sibley had 1,600 troops supplied and ready to move northwest to engage the hostiles. The final decisive battle took place south of Granite Falls at the Battle of Wood Lake near the Upper Sioux Agency. There, Little Crow, with 800 men, was defeated. Casualties were relatively light on both sides with the U.S. forces sustaining seven killed and 34 wounded. The Dakota casualties numbered seven to fourteen dead, including Chief Mankato who was killed by a cannon ball.

Other smaller engagements took place, too numerous to list here. It is important to keep in mind that many Indians remained neutral and some were kind and helpful to the whites. But the atrocities of body mutilations, rapes, and hostage taking grabbed the headlines. Those stories and subsequent panic caused some to call for the complete extermination of the Native Americans in Minnesota.

**The Aftermath in Minnesota...**On September 24 Little Crow and hundreds of warriors headed northwest to the Dakota Territory. Their departure guaranteed an end to large-scale hostilities. On September 26 Sibley reached a large Dakota camp that immediately surrendered. They had 162 white prisoners who were set free. Over the next few weeks numerous Indians surrendered. Sibley took 2,000 captive. Then on October 9 General Pope declared the war was over.

On November 5 a military commission completed its fact-finding hearings at the Lower Sioux Agency and announced 303 Indians had been sentenced to death. The procedures could hardly be called trials since many lasted only five minutes. The Indians were

transported to a holding area near Mankato to await execution. While the wagons carrying prisoners traveled through New Ulm, townspeople attacked them with fists and rocks. Several prisoners died as a result.

Meanwhile some people, like Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple, pleaded for compassion and reason especially toward the many non-hostile Christian converts. He wrote letters to the editor and even met with President Lincoln, explaining the injustices that led to war. After the meeting Lincoln said he was touched. "I felt it down to my boots," he said.

**The Hanging...**Believing justice delayed was justice denied, a group of whites demanded the death sentence of the 303 condemned prisoners be carried out immediately. But cooler heads prevailed. President



Lincoln ordered a review of the list of the condemned with instructions that only those who had sexually violated captive women (two cases) and those who participated in massacres as opposed to conventional military battles would be executed. With the sketchy information the reviewers had, they narrowed the list to 39 who were to be hanged. Later, the

sentence of one more of the condemned was commuted for lack of evidence. A gallows was built in downtown Mankato and the execution was scheduled for December 19. However, the army couldn't find enough heavy-duty rope so it was rescheduled to the day after Christmas. The gallows was surrounded by about 1,400 soldiers while thousands of citizens ringed the soldiers in the streets. Unconfirmed reports say some watched the execution from the hill where Bethany Lutheran College now stands. Three beats of a drum was the signal to cut the rope holding the scaffold at 10:15 AM. A cheer from the crowd went up. It was the largest mass execution in U.S. history.

**Bodies Not Treated with Respect...**Family members were not allowed to take the bodies—they were buried in a shallow mass grave. An army guard was bribed and the bodies were dug up that night and claimed by several doctors.

Dr. W.W. Mayo lived in Le Sueur, Minnesota at the time and had volunteered to treat the wounded in New Ulm. He claimed the body of a Dakota man named Cut Nose who was one of the most notorious fighters. Later, while treating patients with a broken leg for example, Dr. Mayo would show the corresponding bone of Cut Nose as a visual aid. Mayo's sons Charlie and Will were taught to identify and name human bones while playing with the skeleton of Cut

Nose. (Later, the bones were given to the Indian community and buried at the Lower Sioux Agency.) As strange as this sounds to us today, at that time it was common for doctors to dig up newly-buried bodies, especially of criminals or people with no family ties, to learn human anatomy. The father and sons later founded the famous Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

**Prisoners and Noncombatants Moved...**The 207 prisoners whose death sentences were commuted were moved from Mankato to Davenport, Iowa, where some died of diseases. The survivors were eventually released. Colonel Sibley's forces gathered the Dakota women, children, and elderly at the Lower Sioux Agency and prepared to move them to Ford Snelling starting November 8. The group of 1,700 people formed a three-to-four-mile column. When the caravan passed through Henderson, an attack by irate citizens resulted in the death of a Dakota baby. After a five day walk the group was placed in an internment camp on Pike Island near Fort Snelling. Because of poor living and sanitary conditions, three hundred Indians did not survive the winter. The U.S. Congress declared the previous treaties null and void in April 1863 and started measures to remove all the Dakota from Minnesota.

In May 1863 internment camp survivors were loaded on steamboats and moved down the Mississippi River and up the Missouri River to the Crow Creek Reservation in Dakota Territory near present-day Chamberlain, South Dakota. Many were again moved to the Niobrara Reservation in Nebraska three years later. Immediately after the Dakota Indians left Fort Snelling, Winnebago Indians living peacefully on a reservation in Blue Earth County were also moved to Fort Snelling, to South Dakota, and then to Nebraska.

**Little Crow**

**Killed...**After fleeing to Canada, Little Crow apparently felt a pull back to Minnesota, possibly to steal horses. On July 3, 1863, a father and son, Nathan and Chauncey Lamson, were looking for lost livestock at their farm located six miles north of Hutchinson. As there was a \$25 bounty for Indian scalps, when Lamson and his son saw two Indians, the father shot one in the hip but did not kill him. The Indian shot back, hitting Nathan in the shoulder. The Indian was Little Crow who was picking berries with his son. Then 27-year-old Chauncey exchanged shots with



Statue of Little Crow in Hutchinson, MN

Little Crow who was fatally hit in the chest. When Little Crow's remains were positively identified, Chauncey was paid an additional \$500 by the State of Minnesota for killing the man considered to be the main leader of the Indian cause. Little Crow's son was not killed. He later became a Christian and devoted his life to establishing and maintaining a Dakota Indian Y.M.C.A. at Flandreau, South Dakota.

I attended a series of lectures at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter in January 2012 about the U.S.-Dakota War. One attendee said she was a descendant of Little Crow. She said, "You may think of Sibley as a hero of the war but my hero was Little Crow!"

**Concluding Thoughts—God's Way is the Good Way...**What is a proper way to evaluate the war and its aftermath especially for those of us who now live on the former Dakota homeland? The Apostle Paul's sermon on the Areopagus in Athens sheds some light on the subject. He said in Acts 17:26&27, "And he made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and he determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us." Paul was preaching to Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. The Epicureans believed life was determined by random chance. Paul pointed out that human life did not evolve through a series of random accidents. God created the human race and determines the rise and fall of nations. He scattered the people at the Tower of Babel by confusing their languages and his hand was involved in the mass migrations from Europe to North America as well.

There is no question the war was preventable if the whites and Indians thought and acted as God intended by negotiating treaties in good faith, honoring those treaties, and showing compassion to those in need. Paul points out that all mankind is without excuse about God's existence from the testimony of the creation (Romans 1:20). God also wrote the law into men's hearts and gave them a conscience (Romans 2:15). Creation and conscience enable those not exposed to the revelation of God to mankind through the Apostles and Prophets to "grope for Him."

By God's grace the founding fathers of the present day Evangelical Lutheran Synod who lived at the time of the war were not just groping for God. They had found God's revelation of himself to mankind through the scriptures which they clung to by faith. Our generation does not need to grope for new paths to God. We are here at this time and place for the purpose of knowing and serving the Lord and walking by faith in Jesus Christ. The prophet Jeremiah had a message for the people of Jerusalem from God that applies to us today: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16). ■

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