

North Dakota

HISTORY

JOURNAL OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS

WINTER 2019/Vol. 84.2 \$14.95



North Dakota's Woman Suffrage Campaign 1912–20

Hidden History: The Apple River Trading Post

FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Rituals Mark Citizenship for Dakota Tribe Members

Just over a century ago, Frank Bennett Fiske photographed an event in Fort Yates, on the Standing Rock Reservation. The photograph is inscribed with the date "Dec. 18, '17." It shows members of the Dakota tribe carrying out a ceremony recognizing them as United States citizens.

Prior to Congress passing the Indian Citizen Act of 1924, the majority of Indigenous people were considered wards of the federal government and had no citizenship rights. Since most ceremonies of this type didn't occur until the 1920s, a staff member queried whether the inscribed date was accurate. The *Sioux County Pioneer* for December 20, 1917, provided the proof. "Many Indians Being Made U.S. Citizens" headlined the front-page story of how the former Indian agent and current chair of the competency commission, Major James McLaughlin, oversaw the ceremony conferring citizenship on thirty-four men and eleven women.

The elaborate ritual written by McLaughlin and Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane started with Francis Bullhead

shooting his last arrow to signify that he was "no longer to live the life of an Indian." Bullhead was then given a plow, for "from the earth we all must get our living." Next he was presented a purse "that the money you gain from labor must be wisely kept." Finally, he held a US flag, upon which he promised to "give my hands, my head and my heart to the doing of all that will make me a true American citizen." Bullhead then received patent in fee (title document) to his land.

Photographs are primary documents that record history the instant it happens. The story behind the photograph is as important as the photo itself. Often photographers write the dates on images to note when the event happened. Fiske understood his role as historian for the Standing Rock Reservation. With Fiske's business journals, newspaper microfilming, and digitization it has become easier to find the stories behind his images.

Sharon Silengo, photo archivist, State Archives





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This issue is dedicated in memory of D. Jerome Tweton, longtime member of our editorial advisory board.



North Dakota History is a membership publication of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, with funding support from the State Historical Society Foundation. Membership information is available at statehistoricalfoundation.org.

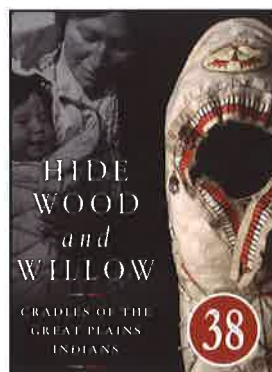
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On the cover: North Dakota Votes for Women League President Clara Darro takes the wheel in a Bismarck woman suffrage parade in 1914, six years before ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed women the right to vote. Read about Darro and North Dakota women who organized for suffrage on page 14. *NDSU Archives, Fargo*

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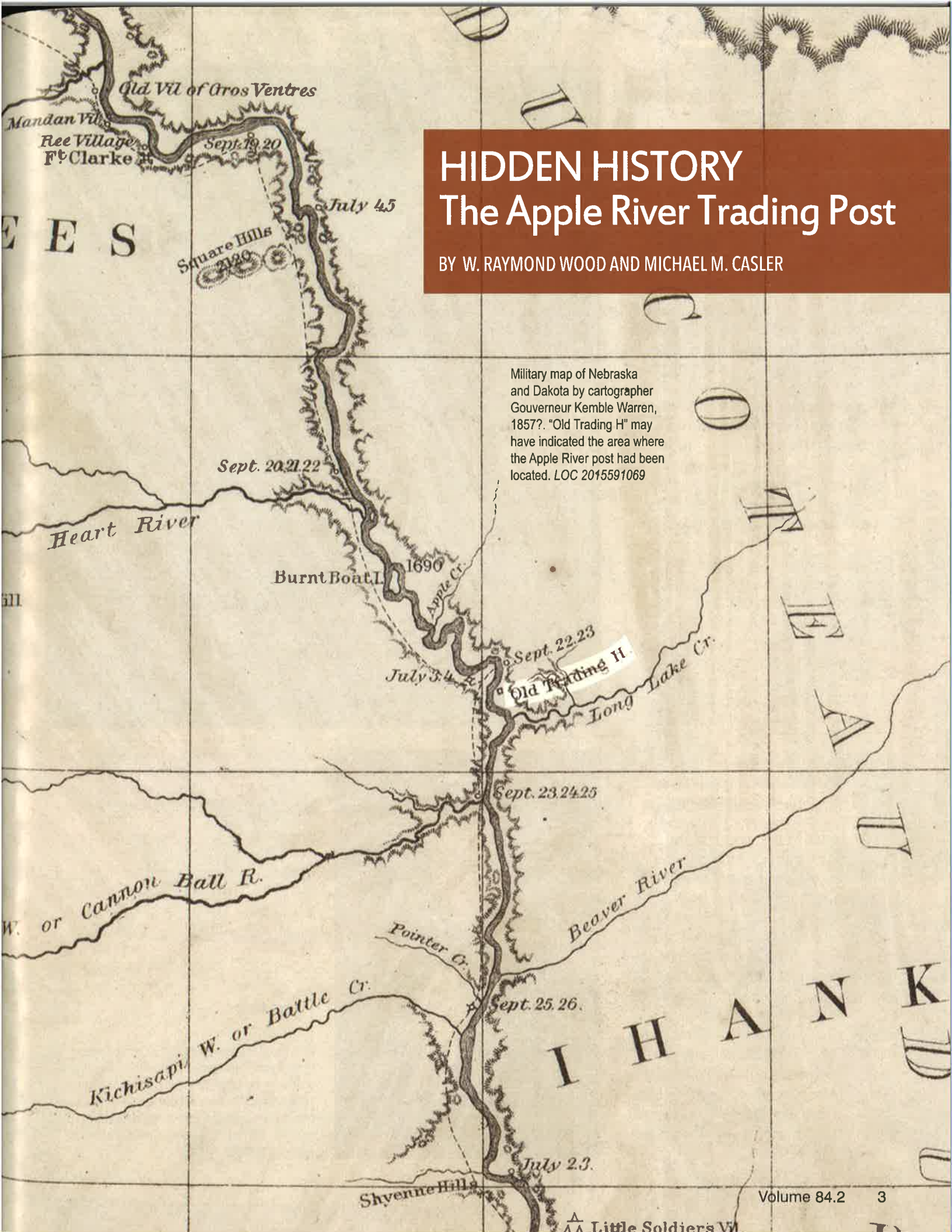
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HIDDEN HISTORY

The Apple River Trading Post

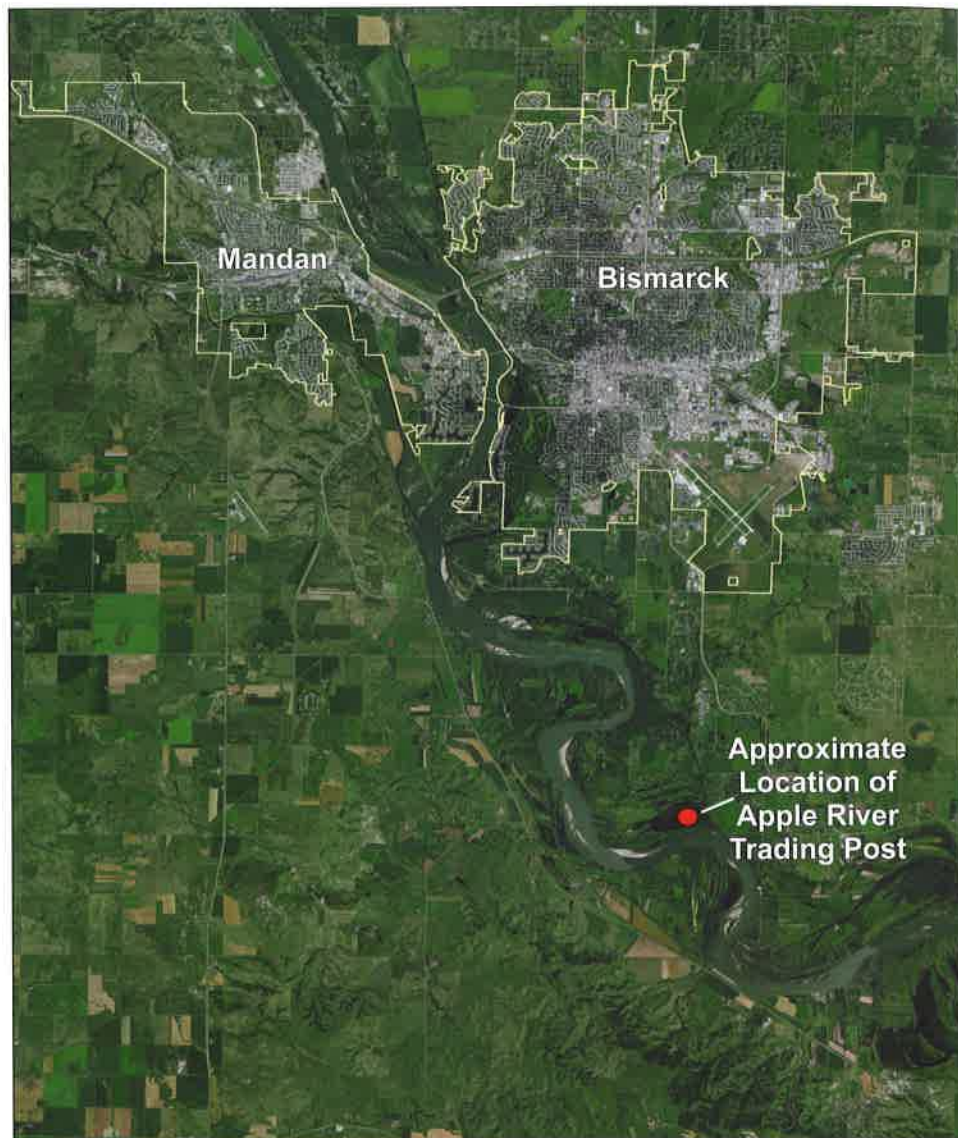
BY W. RAYMOND WOOD AND MICHAEL M. CASLER

Military map of Nebraska and Dakota by cartographer Gouverneur Kemble Warren, 1857?. "Old Trading H" may have indicated the area where the Apple River post had been located. LOC 2015591069

Among the lesser-known fur-trading posts lost to conventional history is one built somewhere near the mouth of Apple Creek, a small stream that enters the Missouri River from the east near Bismarck, North Dakota.¹ At one time the post was near what once was the heart of the Mandan nation, for in late prehistoric times numerous villages of the ancestral Mandans were scattered along the river to its north and south, although by the time the post was occupied the Mandans lived upstream near the mouth of the Knife River. During the 1830s the stream was known as Apple River among members of the American Fur Company's Upper Missouri Outfit, but it was demoted to the status of a creek in the years following the end of the fur trade. The locale was likely chosen because it was about midway between Forts Pierre and Clark, and because of the numerous Yanktonais that lived nearby.

In 1804 William Clark called Apple Creek "Shepherds Creek," as it appears on route map 28 in the atlas of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Clark based the name on its enigmatic designation "Shepherd & gard[en?]" on the John Thomas Evans map of 1796–97. This designation continued to be carried on many later maps.²

The locality may well have been a focus of trade as early as the fall of 1828, when Jacob Halsey and William Laidlaw took a keelboat of trade goods to the mouth of the Heart River. Halsey went on to the Mandans, whereas Laidlaw remained to trade with the Yanktonais who lived in the area. At the Heart River location Laidlaw was trading across the Missouri from the mouth of Apple Creek, and trade with the Yanktonais would prove to be a continuing event in this area.³ The first mention of Apple River as a specific trading locale is in February 1830, when Upper Missouri Outfit employees "[Francois] Roy & [Albert] Paquette with two dog trains arrived [at Fort Tecumseh] from Apple river, they brought ammunition, Scarlet, &c."⁴



Modern aerial image (above) and relief map (right) of the confluence of the Missouri River and Apple Creek. The Apple River post was somewhere south of the creek's junction with the Missouri River.
SHSND AHP

Left: David Dawson Mitchell (1806–61), founder of the Apple River trading post. Mitchell began as a clerk for the Upper Missouri Outfit in 1828. In 1830 Kenneth McKenzie, bourgeois at Fort Union, ordered him to build a post at Apple River for the trade with the Yanktonais. *Courtesy Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis*

0 1 2 3 Miles



Mandan

Heart River

Bismarck

Missouri River

Apple Creek

Approximate Location of
Apple River Trading Post

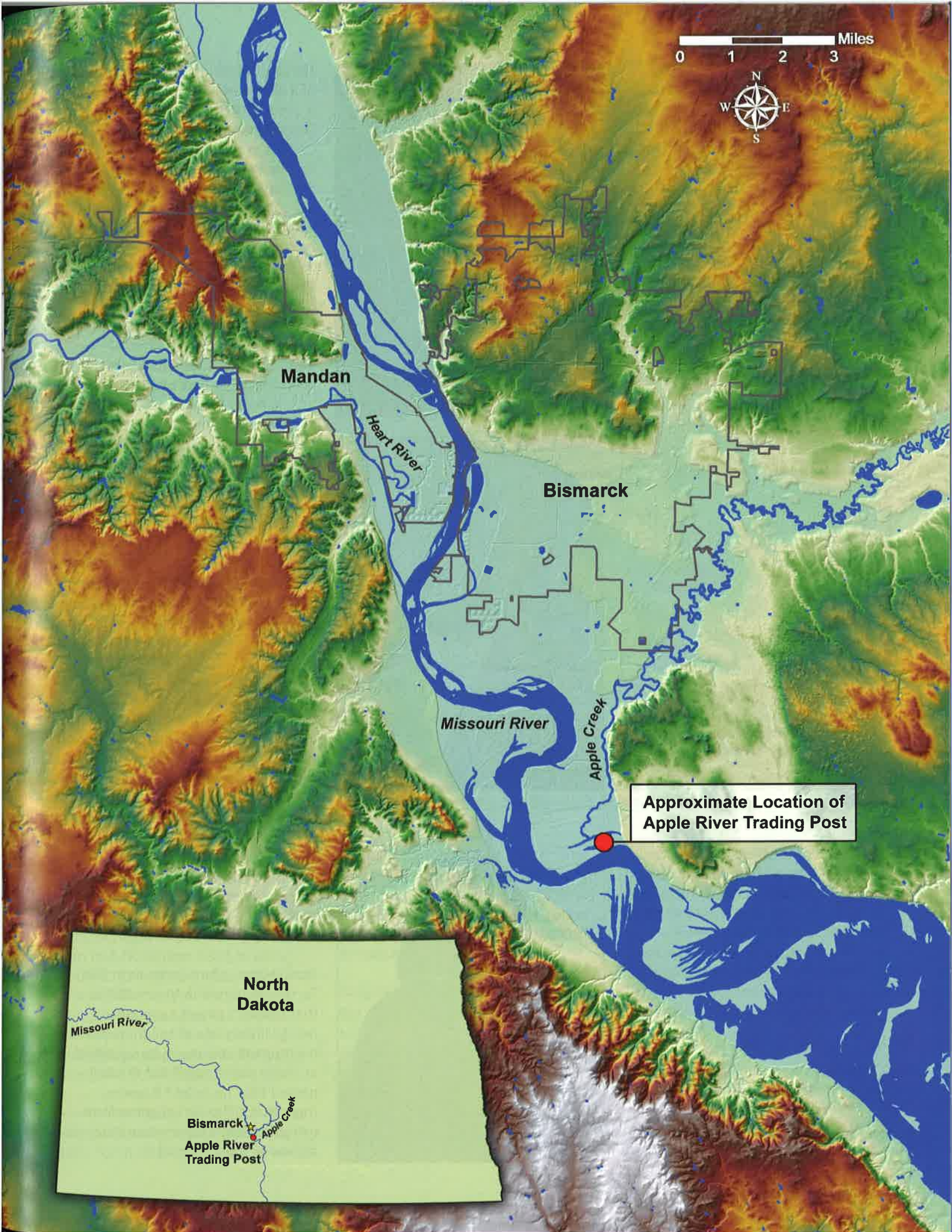
North
Dakota

Missouri River

Bismarck

Apple River
Trading Post

Apple Creek



Canadian Honoré Picotte (1796–1860) became the manager of the Apple River post in 1831 when David Dawson Mitchell was reassigned to oversee Fort Clark. Picotte served at Apple River in the winters of 1831–32 and 1834–35. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis beside his city wife, Therese. *Courtesy Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis*



Scottish-born Kenneth McKenzie (1797–1861), known as the “King of the Upper Missouri,” built Fort Union trading post in 1828 near the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers near present-day Williston. From here McKenzie managed the Upper Missouri Outfit of the American Fur Company until 1834, controlling a trade area larger than some European countries. *SHSND SAA3014-00001*



Karl Bodmer's January 1834 portrait of Psihdjä Sáhpa, a Yanktonai visitor at Fort Clark. He had come upriver from the Yanktonai wintering camp near the Apple River post. *Courtesy New York Public Library*



The date of the actual construction of a post on Apple Creek, however, is documented in a letter that David Dawson Mitchell wrote to Daniel Lamont at Fort Tecumseh later that year. Mitchell had arrived at Fort Union via keelboat early in the summer of 1830, and sometime later Kenneth McKenzie, the bourgeois (superintendent) at Fort Union, sent him downriver to build a post at Apple River.⁵

In a letter to Lamont at Fort Tecumseh dated December 14, 1830, Mitchell stated that he had been “instructed by Mr. McKinzie to build a post at this place.” He also complained of the lack of whipsaw files and asked that he be sent “one-fourth” dozen by return express. Equally urgent was his request for medicine for gonorrhea, as several of his men “have it very bad and we have no medicine of any kind.” Mitchell was nonetheless optimistic about the “prospects of a good trade at this place,” for apparently there were plenty of “bufalo” in the area.⁶

The nature and appearance of the post is unknown, but we know from the fact Mitchell was using sawn lumber in its construction that the post was intended for some permanence. Before Mitchell’s arrival, it is likely that trade at Apple Creek took place at one of the small winter posts that the scientist and explorer Prince Maximilian of Wied said were “manned only in winter [in] a poor log house set up just for this period of time. The neighboring Indians then bring [in] their hides for sale.”⁷

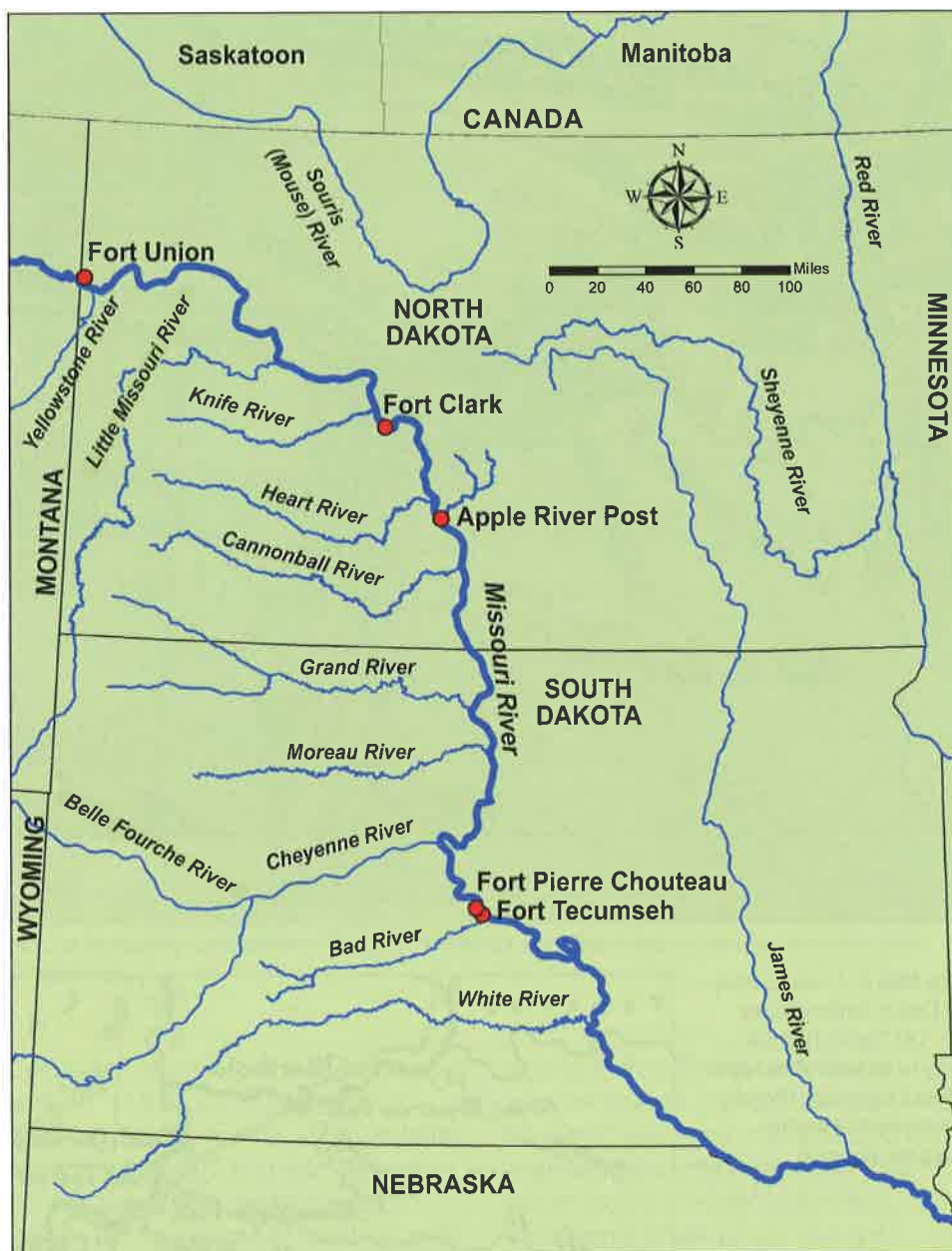
Jacob Halsey, the bourgeois at Fort Tecumseh, wrote in March 1830 that Daniel “Lamont came near being kill’d by one of the Indians at his [Apple River] place, he was fired at, in his own house,” but the ball passed over his head.⁸ It seems, then, that a “house” of some form existed at Apple River when Mitchell arrived to build his post.⁹

After serving the winter of 1830–31 at Apple River, Mitchell was sent to manage Fort Clark after McKenzie sent James Kipp upriver to establish Fort Piegan in Blackfeet country. Mitchell's successor at Apple River in the winters of 1831–32 to 1834–35 was Honoré Picotte, whose primary trading partners there were the Yanktonais, who were then occupying the prairies east of the Missouri River from a point near present-day Washburn to the mouth of the Cheyenne River in present South Dakota.¹⁰ Picotte's assumption of duty at Apple River is documented in a letter to P. D. Papin from William Laidlaw dated December 4, 1831: "Messrs. Picotte, [Gabriel Pascal] Cerré, and [Dominique] Lachapelle are all at our post at Apple River."¹¹ These men were old hands at the fur trade, and the Cerré brothers are often mentioned in other fur trade documents.

Picotte's Dakota interpreter at the post appears to have been Pierre Ortibise, who spent much of the year at Fort Tecumseh when he did not winter at Apple River. However, his service was sometimes impaired: in June 1832, for example, Jacob Halsey, at Fort Tecumseh, wrote that "Ortibise has got a Keg of Whisky and is continually drunk."¹² The Apple River post must have been well stocked with food and goods, since Maximilian noted that the post sometimes supplied James Kipp at Fort Clark with merchandise, dried meat, and fat.¹³

Prince Maximilian makes clear Picotte was in charge of the Yanktonai post during the time the prince visited Fort Clark, noting this fact in his journal from mid-November 1833 to early January 1834.¹⁴ Maximilian had a reliable informant at Fort Clark—bourgeois James Kipp. The prince also noted that a steady stream of messages passed between the posts during the time he was at the fort.

Kenneth McKenzie revealed that the post carried important trade items in stock, for in December 1833 he wrote



Upper Missouri River fur trading posts discussed in this article. SHSND AHP

to James Kipp from Fort Union, "The interest of the Company [is] suffering by your not having Sat. [satisfactory?] Chfs [Chiefs] Coats & Gr Blkts. [Green blankets] you know they are waiting for you at Apple river."¹⁵

Several documents also mention the Arikaras trading in the locality. Following Colonel Henry Leavenworth's aborted attack on their villages at the mouth of the Grand River in present-day South Dakota, the Arikaras left those villages on the night of August 12, 1823, and moved to a locality downriver from Fort Clark. The

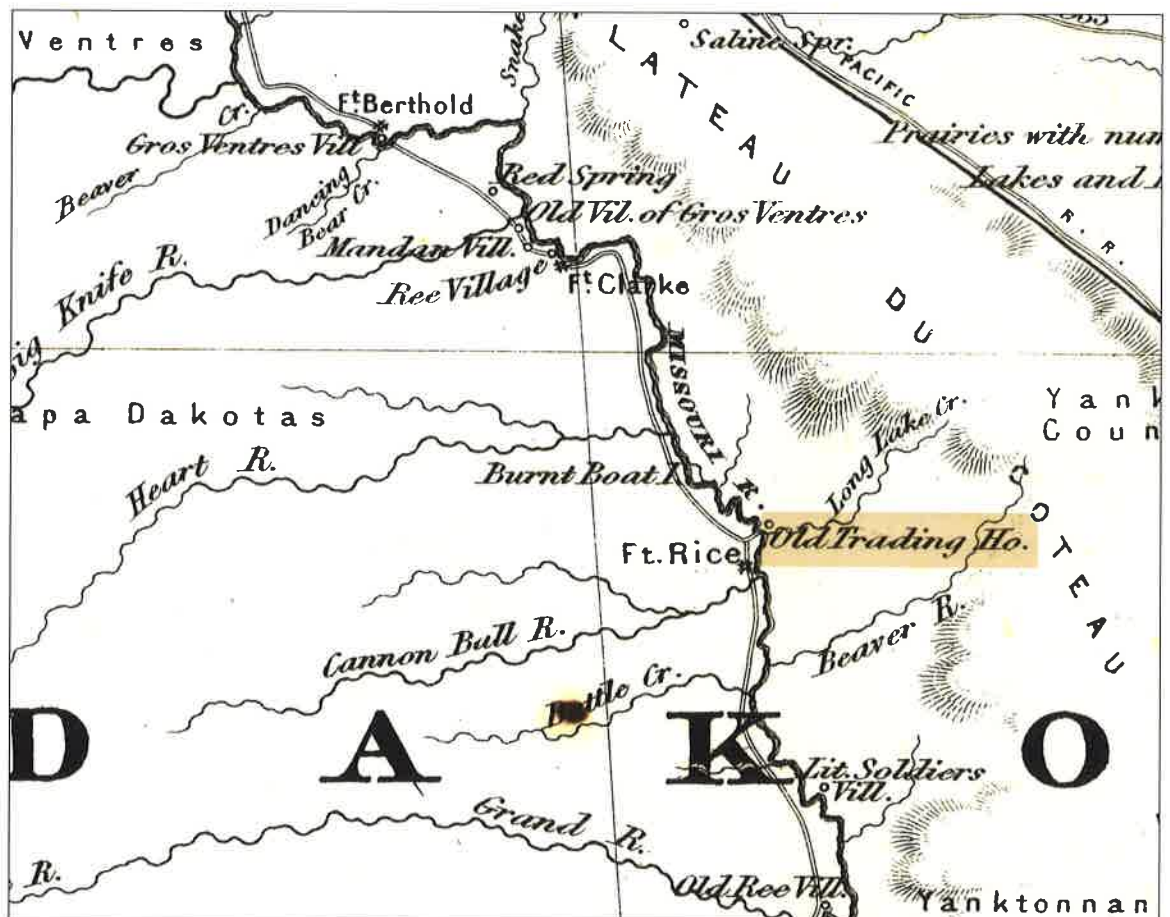
following spring some of them moved back to the Grand River and rebuilt homes there, while others went to live with the Cheyennes, the Mandans, or on the Platte River. Between 1833 and 1836 most of the Arikaras lived on the Loup River in today's Nebraska, but in 1837 they returned to the Missouri and again settled into a village below Fort Clark.¹⁶

Some of the Arikaras who remained near the Mandans may have wintered near the post in 1831, for in early December of that year three Upper Missouri Outfit employees, "Picotte,



William Clark's 1814 map of the Bismarck area, showing his Shepherd River. During the 1830s the stream was known as Apple River among fur traders and was demoted to its current status of creek in the years following the end of the fur trade. LOC 79692907

The 1865 A. J. Johnson map of Dakota Territory shows an "Old Trading Ho," that may be an echo of the Apple River trading post. Courtesy University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming





Fort Clark II and the Mandan village of *Mih-tutta-hang-kusch*, as depicted by Karl Bodmer in the winter of 1833–34. Fort Clark II was the next fort above the Apple River post. *Courtesy North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department*

Pascal Cerré, and Lachapelle,” were all trading with them at Apple River.¹⁷ William Laidlaw, then bourgeois at Fort Union, was disgusted by this practice, but by the end of the month hostilities by the Dakota ended trade with this group.¹⁸

McKenzie is our authority for the fact that Apple River was primarily a wintering post, for he wrote that in 1834 goods were sent to four different wintering grounds, in addition to the usual stations: [Colin] Campbell at the Chiaens, Pierre Didier Papin near the Moreau River, [Lewis] Crawford at la River Castor, and Picotte at Apple River.¹⁹

We know nothing further of the post’s role in the fur-trading business, and even less about the lives of the men that worked there, although Doane Robinson assumed from contemporaneous notes in the Fort

Tecumseh journal that several men served “at the post in Bismarck in 1830”; he also provides an improbably long list of men (23) at the Yanktonais for the year 1831, led by David D. Mitchell.²⁰ In December 1830 Kenneth McKenzie and his party were stopped near the post and robbed by a party of Arikaras: “the party was stopped in open day and their Saddles, Blkts. Tomahawks &c were forcibly taken from them.”²¹ We also learn that a Yanktonai killed Emelian Primeau a few miles below Apple River in the winter of 1836.²²

In 1836 Edwin Thompson Denig noted that a band of Yanktonais was stationed near the mouth of Apple River, with the rest of them stationed some fifty or sixty miles below. He reports there were small trading posts for them at each of these winter camps, but the following fall “the whole of the Yanktonais”

arrived at Fort Pierre to trade. He goes on to note that in 1855 the “Tete Coupees” sub-band of the Yanktonais generally wintered near Apple River.²³ It is probably no coincidence that a Yanktonai Creek enters Painted Woods Creek just east of the Missouri River and Painted Woods Lake, about thirty-five miles north of Apple Creek. Perhaps Denig is alluding to this locale, for the lower reaches of this creek would have been an ideal place for the group to winter.

The Apple River post remained open in 1836, a year in which food was so scarce on the Upper Missouri that Francis Chardon sent his men at Fort Clark out on the prairie to find food or starve. He also wrote, “Two Men came up from Apple River for corn. They say both Whites and Indians below are starving.”²⁴ Matters did not improve the following month, for “[Captain James] Dean came up from Apple

Apple River Aug 20th 1832

W^m Laidlaw Esq^r

Sir

The express from Fort Union arrived here a few minutes ago and I started it down to you immediately. as Mr^r McKenzie wishes it to lose no time on the way. In a letter from Mr^r McKenzie to Mr^r Picotte I see that he wishes that this Post should not give any liquor to the Indians, but it is too late to stop it now. I will however endeavor to keep what I have on hand.

Mr^r McKenzie wishes also that the goods remaining here in the Spring should go up to the Mandans with the Boat, and the boat to continue to Yellow Stone, so I will be left here without men or boat and how I am to get away from here I know not but I expect to hear from you before that time and will act accordingly to your orders.

I am very resp^t fully

Y^r ob^t s^t

G. P. Cerrie

NB) Please send my men back as soon as possible no news here prospect dull.

Apple River Janry. 20th 1832

Wm Laidlaw Esqr [William Laidlaw, Esquire]

Sir
The express from Fort Union arrived here a few minutes ago and I Starte it aour [down] to you immidiately as Mr McKenzie whises [wishes] it to lose no time on the way. In a letter from Mr McKenzie to Mr Picotte I see that he whises [wishes] that this Post shoul not give any liquor to the Indians, but it is too late to stop it now. I will however indivre [endeavor] to keep what I have on hand.

Mr McKenzie whises [wishes] also that the goods remaining here in the Spring Should go up to the Mandans with the Boat, and the boat to continue to Yellow Stone. So I will be left here without men or boat and how I am to git [get] away from here I know not but I expect to hear from you before that time and will act accordingly to your orders,

I am very respectfully
Yr Obt. St. [Your Obedient Servant]

G. P. Cerré

NB) Please send my men back as soon as possible
no newes [news] here prospects dull.



Left: The winter express was the means of communication among fur trade forts during the winter. In general, the post farthest up river (such as Fort McKenzie) would send letters, trade good orders, and requests downriver to the next fort by a trusted man on foot or dogsled until the letters eventually arrived in St. Louis. This is such a letter. Gabriel Pascal Cerré, in charge of the Apple River post in manager Honoré Picotte's absence, mentions reading a letter in the packet from "Mr. McKenzie" (Kenneth McKenzie, bourgeois at Fort Union) to "Mr. Picotte" about the liquor and trade goods, and sending the boat to Fort Union in the spring. Cerré is seeking direction from "Mr. Laidlaw" (William).
Courtesy Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis

Gabriel Pascal Cerré (1800–55) and his brother Michael Sylvester Cerré worked in the fur trade on the Upper Missouri. Cerré was serving as the head clerk at Apple River under Honoré Picotte when he wrote this letter to William Laidlaw, bourgeois at Fort Pierre Chouteau. *Courtesy Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis*



Fort Union was the largest fur trade fort on the Upper Missouri. From here Kenneth McKenzie directed the ebb and flow of men and goods along all the Upper Missouri forts and posts such as Apple River. SHSND SA 00239-00171

River for corn, all Starving below — neither Cattle nor Indians.”²⁵

In later years the mouth of Apple Creek was an important locale for a number of military and other events. By the mid-1800s, settlers were replacing fur traders, and the military were sent to protect them. Following the US-Dakota War of 1862, Brigadier General Henry Hastings Sibley and General Alfred Sully were sent to pursue the bands that were believed to be responsible for the attacks on the settlers there. Leading his troops in 1863, Sibley had a running battle with the Dakota on Apple Creek. The troops then set up camp for three days near what would later become General Sibley Park in Bismarck.²⁶

How long was the post occupied? We know only that it was between mid-December 1830 and sometime after February 1836. Just as there is no clue as to when the post closed, there no firm information as to where it was located, save for the fact that in 1846 Captain Joseph A. Sire wrote in his log for the steamboat *General Brook* that “the winter quarters of Picotte [were] below the entrance of the Apple River.”²⁷ But knowledge of a trading post in the locale may have

remained embedded in lore of the Upper Missouri for decades, although its name appears to have been forgotten. The 1865 A. J. Johnson map of Dakota Territory, for example, shows an “Old Trading Ho.” at the mouth of Long Lake Creek not far below Burnt Boat Island that may well be an echo of the Apple River Post. No fort is known to have existed at the mouth of Long Lake Creek.²⁸

Finding the ruins of the post would be especially challenging today because the mouth of Apple Creek has changed over time, and there has been much urban development in the area. In 1891 the creek entered the Missouri five miles south of the center of the growing city of Bismarck at the lower end of Assiniboine Island, named for the fact that the steamboat *Assiniboine* burned and sank there in 1835.²⁹ Today, the creek enters the Missouri about four miles south of the Bismarck Airport. No archaeological remains suggestive of the post are known in the area, and while its ruins may yet be found, the Apple River post remains an important, if elusive, historical feature of the Bismarck area.³⁰



Born in Nebraska, W. Raymond Wood obtained his master of arts at the University of Nebraska in 1954, and his PhD from the University of Oregon in 1961. After a brief stint at the State Historical Society of North

Dakota, he spent the most of his remaining time teaching anthropology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He retired in 1970, but has continued his research into the Upper Missouri River fur trade and its participants. He is the author, editor, or co-editor of numerous books and articles, including *Twilight of the Upper Missouri River Fur Trade: The Journals of Henry A. Boller* published in 2008 by the State Historical Society of North Dakota.



Michael M. Casler is an independent historical researcher from Williston, North Dakota. Now retired as a park ranger with the National Park Service, he is author of *Steamboats of the Fort Union Fur Trade*, editor of *The Original*

Journals of Charles Larpenteur, and co-editor with W. Raymond Wood of *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Chouteau Journal and Letter Books, 1830–1850*. He has also written numerous articles on the Upper Missouri fur trade.

We are deeply indebted to R. Bruce McMillan, University of Missouri-Columbia, for his research that contributed to this paper.

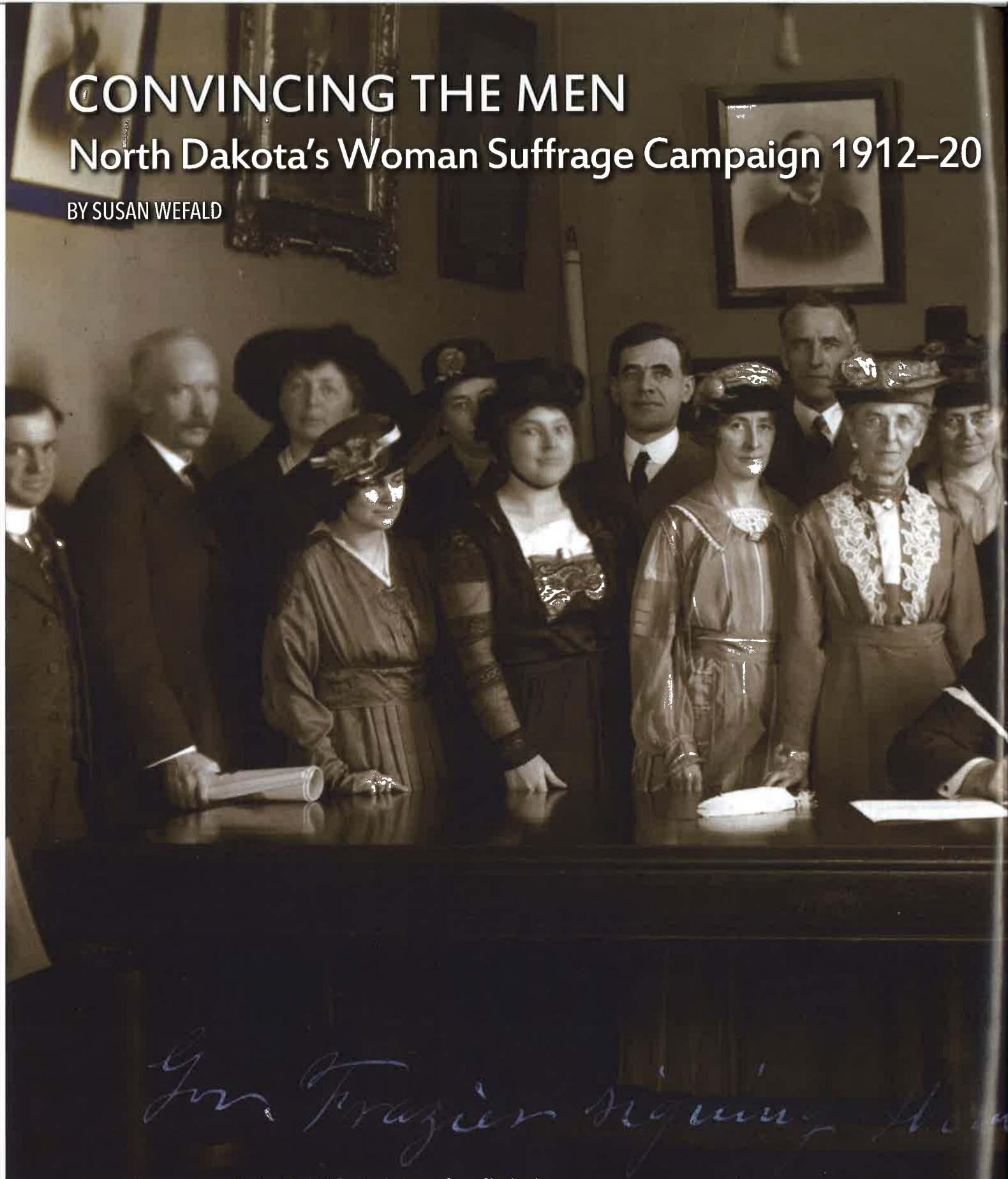
ENDNOTES

1. Mary Ann Barnes Williams, *Origins of North Dakota Place Names* (Washburn, ND: McLean County Historical Society, 1973), 47; Louis Garcia, "Hidatsa Place Names" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 5. Williams wrote that the "name 'Qui-Apelle' was given the creek by early French-Canadians for the many Red Haw or Thorn Apple thickets bordering its banks." Garcia suggests Apple Creek is an Americanization of its Dakota name, *Taspan Oju Wakpa* (Red Haw-Growing-River). Red haws are also known as hawthorns, a tree that grew in moist soils along the creek.
2. Gary E. Moulton, ed., *Atlas of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); W. Raymond Wood, "The John Evans 1796-97 Map of the Missouri River," *Great Plains Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Winter 1981): fig. 6.
3. Michael M. Casler and W. Raymond Wood, eds., *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Chouteau Journal and Letter Books 1830-1850* (Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2017), 10.
4. *Ibid.*, 8.
5. Mitchell's biography may be found in Paul E. Verdon, "David Dawson Mitchell: Virginian on the Wild Missouri," in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 27, no. 2 (1977): 2-5.
6. D. D. Mitchell to Daniel Lamont, 14 December 1830, Chouteau-Papin Collection, Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis. A whipsaw was also known as a pit saw, used to cut lumber with one of the saw men standing in a pit.
7. Prince Maximilian of Wied, *The North American Journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied*, vol. 2, April-September 1833, ed. Stephen S. Witte and Marsha V. Gallagher, trans. William J. Orr, Paul Schach, and Dieter Karch (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 242.
8. Casler and Wood, 12.
9. Doane Robinson, notes to *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Journal and Letter Books (1830-1848)*, ed. Charles E. DeLand, South Dakota Historical Collections (1918), 108n2. In this note Robinson asserts that Lamont's establishment was on Apple Creek, citing an 1850 report by Minnesota Governor Alexander Ramsey to the US Indian Commissioner. We have been unable to verify this citation.
10. Picotte's biography may be found in John S. Gray, "Honoré Picotte, Fur Trader," *South Dakota History* 6, no. 2 (1976): 186-202;
- Raymond J. DeMallie, "Yankton and Yanktonai," *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 13, pt. 2, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2001), 777; Robert E. Warren, "Ice Glider Faunal Remains and Yanktonai Ethnohistory," in *Ice Glider 32OL110: Papers in Northern Plains Prehistory and Ethnohistory*, Special Publication no. 10, ed. W. Raymond Wood (Sioux Falls: South Dakota Archaeological Society, 1986), fig. 45.
11. William Laidlaw to P. D. Papin, 4 December 1831, in Casler and Wood, 79.
12. Prince Maximilian of Wied, *The North American Journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied*, vol. 3, September 1833-August 1834, ed. Stephen S. Witte and Marsha V. Gallagher, trans. Dieter Karch (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 63; Casler and Wood, 41. In a biography of Charles Autobeas, Pierre Ortibise is said to be "a half-breed Sioux interpreter and trader" described as "a good young man; but he has one failing, he is fond of liquor." Janet Lecompte, "Charles Autobeas," in *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*, vol. 4, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark, 1966), 22.
13. Maximilian, *American Journals*, vol. 3, 236, 248, 251.
14. *Ibid.*, 62, 106, 113, 237.
15. Kenneth McKenzie to James Kipp, 17 December 1833, in W. Raymond Wood and Michael M. Casler, *Fort Union and Fort William: Letter Book and Journal, 1833-1835* (Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society Press, forthcoming 2020); Francis A. Chardon, *Chardon's Journal at Fort Clark, 1834-1839*, ed. Annie Heloise Abel (Pierre, SD: Department of History, 1932), 354.
16. W. Raymond Wood, William J. Hunt, and Randy H. Williams, *Fort Clark and Its Indian Neighbors: A Trading Post on the Upper Missouri* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 54-55.
17. William Laidlaw to P. D. Papin, 4 December 1831, in Casler and Wood, *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Chouteau*, 79.
18. William Laidlaw to Pierre Chouteau, 26 December 1831, in Casler and Wood, *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Chouteau*, 81.
19. Kenneth McKenzie to D. D. Mitchell, 21 January 1834, in *Ibid.* The Chiaens were the Cheyenne Indians, and River Castor was apparently Beaver Creek, an affluent of the Missouri entering it from the east about ten miles north of the present town of Fort Yates, North Dakota.
20. Robinson, notes to *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre*, 234, 236.
21. Casler and Wood, *Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Chouteau*, 28-29.
22. D. D. Mitchell reported the details of Primeau's death in a report to Indian agent William Fulkerson in June 1836. See Chardon, 56, 284-85.
23. Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arikaras, Assiniboines, Crees, and Crows*, ed. John C. Ewers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 33-34.
24. Chardon, January 20, 1836, in *Chardon's Journal*, 54.
25. Chardon, February 23, 1836, in *Chardon's Journal*, 59-60.
26. Rhoda Gilman, *Henry Hastings Sibley: Divided Heart* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 2004), 199-200. Brigadier General of volunteers (Minnesota militia) Henry Hastings Sibley is not to be confused with General Henry Hopkins Sibley, who was a Confederate cavalry brigade commander at this time.
27. Joseph A. Sire, *For Wood and Water: Steamboating on the Missouri River*, ed. Mark H. Bettis (Hermann, Mo., Wein Press, 2000), 124.
28. John A. Van Balen, *Dakota Place Names: Geographical Names on 18th and 19th Century Maps* (Vermillion: I. D. Weeks Library, University of South Dakota, 1998), 248.
29. Missouri River Commission, *Map of the Missouri River From its Mouth to Three Forks, Montana* (Washington, DC: Missouri River Commission, 1892-1895), map 49; Sire, 47, 74; Michael M. Casler, *Steamboats of the Fort Union Fur Trade* (Williston, No.Dak.: Fort Union Association, 1999), 18-19.
30. Paul R. Picha (chief archaeologist, State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck), telephone conversation with authors, 2017.

CONVINCING THE MEN

North Dakota's Woman Suffrage Campaign 1912–20

BY SUSAN WEFALD



Gov Frazier signing bills

North Dakota woman suffrage leaders Elizabeth Preston Anderson, Grace Clendenning, Mary Darrow Weible, and Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil are pictured left of Governor Lynn Frazier as he signs two suffrage bills into law in January 1917. Lottie Stafford Frazier is at the right of her husband, along with Bonita and Margaret Teenan Townley, daughter and wife of Nonpartisan League president A. C. Townley. *NDSU Archives, Fargo*



Suffrage Bills

Butler Studio
Bromwich Ave
1-20-11

From 1912 to 1920, a coalition of organized women's groups, led by women with an ambitious plan, pushed full voting rights for women in North Dakota. Elizabeth Preston Anderson of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Clara Darrow and Grace Clendenning of the North Dakota Votes for Women League, and Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil of the North Dakota Congressional Union were the leaders of the major woman suffrage organizations in North Dakota in the final campaigns.¹ They wanted North Dakota women to have political equality.

In 1912, under both the North Dakota Constitution and state laws, only males who were United States citizens and twenty-one years of age or older were entitled to vote. Few Native American men were permitted to vote, as most Native Americans, including women, were not considered US citizens.² Since 1889, the North Dakota Constitution authorized women citizens in the state to vote on school issues and for county and state superintendents of public instruction. To be able to vote for other elected officials, women had to convince male elected officials and voters to change either the state constitution or state election laws.

Both changes had been politically challenging since statehood. A proposed constitutional amendment had to be approved by two consecutive legislative assemblies and then receive a majority vote at a general election. When changing state law, only one legislative assembly had to approve a bill to expand woman suffrage, but it then had to be adopted "by a majority of the electors of the State voting at a general election."³ This was a much more difficult approach, because it required a majority of all those who voted at the election, rather than a majority of those who voted just on the referred measure. Women needed to convince the male legislature and voters that women deserved the right to vote. Since statehood in 1889, although woman suffrage bills had been introduced at several legislative sessions, all bills had been defeated. It was time to try something new.

Leaders of the suffrage movement joined forces with national woman suffrage organizations, including the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and the Congressional Union, which provided funding, speakers, and current information about successes and failures across the country. They incorporated lively campaign techniques, such as call-and-answer chants at meetings ("Who makes the laws? Men! Who gave men the right to make laws? Men! Do not laws concern women? They most certainly do!").⁴ They drafted petitions, carried banners and posters, held street rallies and parades, organized volunteers across state, lobbied the legislature, raised money from local sources, and bought full-page newspaper ads.



Elizabeth Preston Anderson (1861–1954) served as president of the North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) from 1893–1933 and national recording secretary from 1906–26. She strongly supported woman suffrage. The WCTU commissioned her life-size portrait in 1909, which hung in the rotunda of the North Dakota Capitol Building until the 1930 Capitol Building fire destroyed the painting. *NDSU Archives, Fargo*



Clara Darrow (1860–1915) was president of the North Dakota Votes for Women League from 1912–15. She directed the 1914 woman suffrage campaign and spoke throughout the state. Darrow served on the State Library Commission from 1909–15. *Cass County Historical Society Archives, West Fargo*



Grace Ingraham Clendenning (1876–1968), president of the North Dakota Votes for Women League from 1915–19, attended National American Woman Suffrage Association meetings on the East Coast and gave suffrage speeches throughout the state. In 1917, the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly recognized her legislative work, giving her a yellow (suffrage color) quill pen used for signing the suffrage legislation. *The Advocate*, May 4, 1917, p. 1

Using these techniques, the coalition of woman suffrage groups achieved victory by having a plan, perseverance, and working together. Inspired and supported by women throughout the nation who were laboring for and obtaining full suffrage, from 1912 to 1920 North Dakota suffragists found their own path to success.



The North Dakota Votes for Women League and Woman's Christian Temperance Union worked together to convince men to vote for equal suffrage. These suffragists, with children in tow at the 1914 Bottineau County Fair, raised money, distributed brochures, and worked the crowd. Flora Burr (far right) gave many speeches as the Ninth Suffrage District vice president of North Dakota Votes for Women League. SHSND SA 10204-00005

1912: Organizing for Success

The first woman suffrage organization in what would become the state of North Dakota organized in Grand Forks a year before statehood, in 1888.⁵ Encouraged by the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1895, the North Dakota Equal Suffrage Association held its first state convention in the Grand Forks Court House.⁶ However, there was no state organization in North Dakota dedicated exclusively to woman suffrage from 1901 to 1912.

The WCTU, led by Elizabeth Preston Anderson of Valley City, had been advocating for temperance, woman suffrage, and other issues since before statehood. Nonetheless, many people who supported woman suffrage were turned off by WCTU's stance advocating prohibition of alcohol. Also, North Dakota had been a "dry" state since statehood. Those who wanted to change that status thought that if women achieved the right to vote, the state would stay dry.

On February 4, 1912, English suffragist Sylvia Pankhurst spoke at the Fargo Theater.⁷ Inspired by her visit, two new local groups emerged.⁸ That same day, the Votes for Women League of Fargo was organized with

Clara L. Darrow as president, and on March 1, 1912, the Grand Forks Votes for Women Club held its first official meeting, electing Alice Nelson Page president.⁹

These women, and others from around the state, organized the North Dakota Votes for Women League (NDVWL) at a meeting in Fargo in June 1912. They elected Clara L. Darrow president, took steps to affiliate with the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and "decided to introduce a resolution for the submission of a state suffrage amendment to the voters at the next session of Legislature."¹⁰ North Dakota women were inspired by two states that had recently adopted constitutional equal suffrage: Washington in 1910 and California in 1911; Arizona, Kansas, and Oregon voters would soon approve amendments in November 1912.

NDVWL established its headquarters in the DeLendrecie Building in Fargo and directed all of its legislative and state campaigns from this office. Suffragist Helen DeLendrecie donated this space to the new organization.

It is important to note that in North Dakota, many of the new members of the NDVWL were also members of the WCTU. This led to a good working relationship between the two organizations.



Suffragists drove in parades to demonstrate independence and freedom. In 1914, when North Dakota Votes for Women League President Clara Darrow was at the wheel in this Bismarck parade, people marveled that a woman could drive and travel the countryside in a car. *NDSU Archives, Fargo*

National membership had its benefits. That fall, Jane Addams, nationally known social worker and vice president of NAWSA, visited Grand Forks and Fargo to speak for woman suffrage. Woman suffrage, she argued, "is in line with the other reforms for making government more responsive."¹¹

1913: Legislative Success

By the time the legislature arrived in Bismarck in early January 1913, members of NDVWL and WCTU had been busy advocating for woman suffrage. As the *Bismarck Daily Tribune* reported on January 2,

Every train is bringing members of the legislature to town. . . . Those who have arrived on the scene say every legislator has been approached either in person or by mail by emissaries of the [suffrage] movement in an endeavor to sign up the members in favor of the measure. The women are very aggressive and it is realized that they are a factor to be reckoned with. A strong lobby is promised by the fair sex.¹²

The Grand Forks *Evening Times* wrote,

This question of equal suffrage has come before practically every legislative assembly in the history of the state, but this is the first time the forces favoring the bill have been so thoroughly organized.¹³

The two bills favored by NDVWL and WCTU were both sponsored by Senator H. A. Bronson of Grand Forks, and suffragists encouraged their members to sign petitions in support of these bills. By the middle of January, petitions supporting suffrage started pouring in from around the state. Almost daily, as the Senate and House prepared to act, petitions arrived from their constituents (men and women) showing support: Bottineau, 110 signatures; Benson County, 47 signatures; Northwood, 110 signatures. Only 769 people lived in Northwood in 1910, so this petition was impressive. Former Lieutenant Governor Usher L. Burdick's name headed one petition of 264 signatures.¹⁴ Even the Minot Ladies Socialist Club gathered signatures for a woman suffrage petition.¹⁵ This petition may not have helped the cause, because conservative legislators thought all suffragists were socialists and therefore were against their proposals.

Clara L. Darrow, as president of NDVWL, issued a press release in early February 1913:

The demand for social justice will never be met until women have a right to express at the poll their views upon child labor, hours and conditions of labor, especially for women, minimum wage laws, mothers' pensions, white slavery, and every question that affects the home, and all that is sweetest and best in life.

Act for suffrage without delay. Write your representatives. Do it now.¹⁶

Opponents were vocal about the threat to the “destruction of the home.” In legislative debate on a woman suffrage bill, Representative J. E. Campbell of Morton County “called attention to the women who have been here during most of the session in the interests of the measure, pointing to their absence from their homes as the ‘proof of the pudding.’”¹⁷

The two bills favored by NDVWL and WCTU passed in the final days of the session. Senate bill number eight, the first “Bronson Bill” sponsored by Senator Bronson, included simple changes to election laws allowing most women to vote for all officials.¹⁸ The second bill, a resolution, proposed the same changes to the state constitution. Neither would go into effect until approved by male voters at a general election.

What may have assisted the North Dakota suffrage drive was publicity about the large woman suffrage march scheduled for the day before President Woodrow Wilson’s inauguration. Wilson was opposed to votes for women at this point. Leading suffragists wanted him to change his mind. Over eight thousand women from around the country marched in the parade on March 3, 1913.

On March 7, 1913, North Dakota Governor Louis B. Hanna arranged for a signing ceremony. These were the first woman suffrage bills that had passed the legislature since statehood, and he invited leaders of the movement to attend: Elizabeth Preston Anderson, WCTU president; Clara Darrow, NDVWL president; and two other volunteers from NDVWL, Mrs. J. E. Stevens of Grand Forks and Mrs. C.F. (Beulah) Amidon, Fargo.¹⁹ Anderson noted,

“The most cordial relations exist between these organizations, and this splendid victory was won by all forces working together in perfect harmony.”²⁰

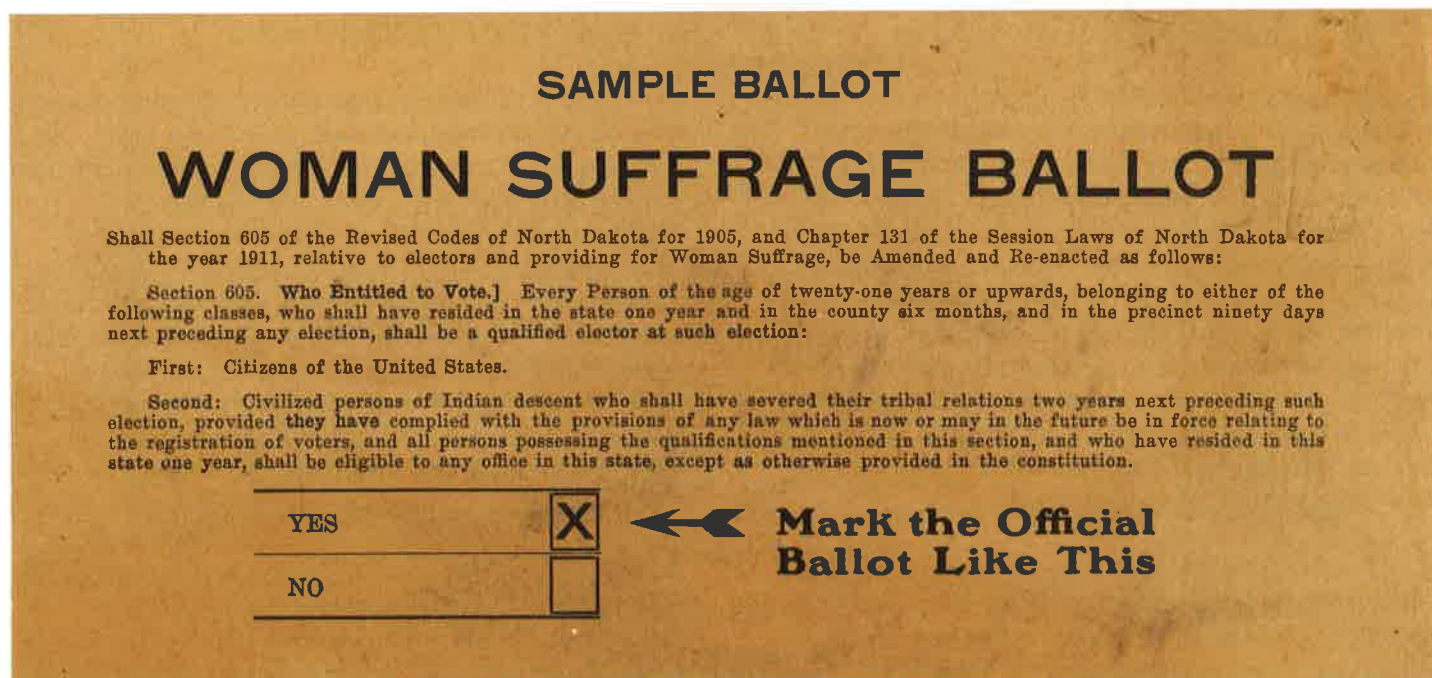
1914: Hope and Despair

On the national level, there were two main approaches for achieving suffrage for women. One approach was to pass an amendment to the federal Constitution. Another approach was to encourage states to take the lead and pass suffrage referendums for women. This two-pronged approach to full suffrage had a long history, since national advocates for woman suffrage had not always agreed on strategy and goals. From 1869 to 1889, one group worked for a national amendment, while the other focused on a state-by-state victory. In 1889, the groups united as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

In 1914, NAWSA continued to advocate both approaches and provided support to states pursuing the second approach, which at that time were North Dakota, Nevada, Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, and Ohio. Most of the western states had already voted for woman suffrage, and hopes were high these states would follow this trend.

Although both NDVWL and WCTU supported a “yes” vote on the state woman suffrage referendum in November 1914, NDVWL took the lead and spent the most resources on this effort. In North Dakota, the organizations supported each other’s efforts and worked together.

Imagine planning a political campaign in 1914 before radio, television, or the internet. Most people received



In 1914, North Dakota suffragists tried to convince male voters to change state law so that women could vote in municipal, state, and national elections. However, anti-suffragists were also active. The measure lost, 49,348 to 40,209. SHSND SA 11354-Womens_Suffrage-0001

information by attending meetings, talking to friends, and reading community newspapers. President Clara Darrow directed the 1914 NDVWL campaign for woman suffrage.²¹ Working with NAWSA, by February Darrow had a plan and a budget. She estimated they would need \$3,500 to maintain the campaign through November, including paying three to four field workers. NAWSA donated \$1,000, so NDVWL had to raise the remaining \$2,500.²² By the end of the campaign, actual costs increased to \$6,000, with \$3,000 contributed by NAWSA and other "outside sources."²³

As money was raised in state and the work increased, NAWSA sent six field workers and seven professional speakers to North Dakota, including the national president, Dr. Anna Shaw. The visitors inspired local volunteers, presented community programs, and organized local suffrage clubs.

Street meetings, where a speaker stood in an automobile decorated with woman suffrage banners to attract a crowd of men, were popular. Posters were used to advertise the rallies. Grand Forks suffragists noted in their June 30, 1914, minutes, "Very successful street meeting was held in evening at 8 o'clock from automobile. About 400 in audience, mostly men." And in September, "Three lectures were delivered by Miss Annie Kinney, formerly a militant suffragist of England. One lecture was delivered at the University Commons before the students — another was delivered at the city hall in the evening."²⁴

NDVWL speakers and officers were also working across the state. Clara Darrow was busy from spring through fall travelling North Dakota at her own expense, giving talks and encouraging her members. She was known for her "genius for inspiring cooperation."²⁵

Darrow accompanied NAWSA President Shaw on a ten-day whistle-stop train tour through the state in September, making speeches in towns along the route. In October, Darrow and W. H. Williams, former editor of the *Cando Record*, spoke at twenty-eight meetings in a four-day tour of Cass County targeted at men.²⁶ Mary Weible (Darrow's daughter) and Emma S. Pierce, both NDVWL officers, spent two weeks campaigning across the state, first on the Northern Pacific rail line in the southwest and then on the Soo mainline. Mrs. Frank J. Van Fleet of Larimore spent a week in Grand Forks. Large crowds came to hear these speakers. Newspapers of the time did not mention any hecklers or bad behavior by attendees.

By mid-September, state and national suffrage organizers had founded one hundred local suffrage clubs throughout the state.²⁷ These clubs were encouraged to raise funds and spread the suffrage message to the men voting on the measure in November. In Bismarck, members sold bread at the outdoor market next to an auto decorated with suffrage

banners. New Rockford volunteers organized a club with young men and women, and Wimbledon women distributed pencils and buttons to several hundred men, asking each to contribute 10 cents.²⁸ North Dakota campaign organizers wanted to show that there were suffragists all over the state, and hoped that this would build support for their cause.

WCTU suffrage campaign headquarters was in Jamestown. The campaign was directed by President Anderson, with assistance from Edna S. Salmon and Minnie B. Bowe. They announced, "This campaign is to be purely educational, without partisanship or bitterness toward the opposition; a campaign to which the moral value as well as the justice of the woman's vote is to be emphasized." Out-of-state WCTU speakers worked with the well-organized North Dakota volunteers. Often local WCTU volunteers were side by side with NDVWL volunteers working suffrage booths at community events.²⁹

The battle for the vote was not without its opponents. Ida Young of Fargo was the state leader of the North Dakota anti-suffrage group.³⁰ The Richland County Fair in Wahpeton scheduled a "Women's Suffrage Day" and quickly received letters asking whether the "Anti Suffrage" movement could also hold a rally that day. Fair officials agreed to the request.

Another Anti-Suffrage Day was held at the Bismarck Expo in October. One of the anti-suffrage volunteers, Mrs. E. B. Goss, organized the booth that included banners against suffrage, including "oceans of literature showing why the women do not want the ballot, and why it is not their place to indulge in politics."³¹

By the end of October feelings were running high across the state, which prompted a war of words in Devils Lake. The third week of October the Ramsey County courtroom was "filled to capacity" to hear a debate between Daniel V. Brennan, supporter of woman suffrage, and Devils Lake attorney F. T. Cuthbert, opponent of woman suffrage.³² Brennan noted the eight million women in the national workforce who should be able to vote. Cuthbert argued that the vote was not a right, but a privilege conferred by the government upon certain persons and withheld from others, and stated that the majority of women did not want to vote. On October 23 the *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean* included a full-page supplement, the "Suffrage Advocate," with the headline "Great Battle of Women Nearing Close." A full-page advertisement, "Read This! Why You Should Vote Against Woman Suffrage" was published on October 29 in the *Devils Lake World*. On October 30, more pro-suffrage articles under the "Suffrage Advocate" banner appeared in the *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean*.³³

CASS COUNTY TOUR FOR VOTES FOR WOMEN

SPEAKERS:
CLARA L. DARROW
W. H. WILLIAMS

MR. VOTER:

*This Question Must Be Settled by
YOU on November Third.*

*At Which of These Meetings Will You
Be Present?*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

Harwood at	8:30 A. M.
Argusville, at	10:00 A. M.
Gardner, at	11:30 A. M.
Grandin, Dinner, at	1:00 P. M.
Hunter, at	4:00 P. M.
Erie, Supper, at	8:00 P. M.
Arthur, at	8:30 P. M.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Amenia, at	8:30 A. M.
Wheatland, at	10:00 A. M.
Absaraka, at	11:30 A. M.
Ayr, Dinner, at	1:00 P. M.
Page, at	3:30 P. M.
Tower City, Supper, at	6:00 P. M.
Buffalo, at	8:30 P. M.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Embsden, at	8:30 A. M.
Alice, at	10:30 A. M.
Chaffee, Dinner, at	12:30 P. M.
Addison, at	3:00 P. M.
Davenport, at	4:00 P. M.
Leonard, Supper, at	6:00 P. M.
Kindred, at	8:30 P. M.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Hickson, at	8:30 A. M.
Wild Rice, at	10:00 A. M.
Horace, at	11:00 A. M.
Schaible, Dinner, at	1:30 P. M.
Durbin, at	3:00 P. M.
Mapleton, at	4:00 P. M.
Cassleton, Supper, at	8:30 P. M.

For Information Write

North Dakota State Headquarters Votes for Women League
de Lendrecie Block, FARGO, N. D.

Clara Darrow, president of the North Dakota Votes for Women League, and Mr. W. H. Williams, former editor of the *Cando Record*, gave twenty-eight speeches in four days to promote "Votes for Women" in October 1914. They wanted every man to vote "yes" on November 3. *UND Chester Fritz Library*

November 3, 1914, was election day. The men voted on a new governor, all other state officials, members of Congress, and on several measures including the woman suffrage referral. By separate ballot, the women voted only for state superintendent of public instruction. The referral on woman suffrage was defeated: 49,348 voted no, and 40,209 yes.³⁴

It was a hard loss. Annie Falger of Devils Lake expressed the feelings of many suffragists when she wrote on November 6: "It seems to be that the men of North Dakota were willing to let the women remain in the same political class with idiots, lunatics and felons." On November 13, Falger again did not mince words: "To win we must overcome the reactionary political machine of the state, and the liquor and vice elements which are striving night and day to fasten their fangs into the government of our fair state and nation. . . . WE MUST KEEP UP THE FIGHT, WIN OR LOSE."³⁵

In November 1914, woman suffrage referrals in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, and Missouri were defeated. They succeeded in Montana and Nevada.

On November 21, NDVWL issued a press release trying to comfort people and encouraging them to try again:

No state has yet won equal rights for women in its first campaign. North Dakota suffragists have every reason to be proud of the splendid showing made in the last election. . . . Indeed, if the western counties of North Dakota could have decided the question, North Dakota would be a suffrage state now. . . . There is little doubt . . . that in 1916 North Dakota will be a suffrage state.³⁶

Perhaps the counties that bordered Montana were influenced by Montana politics. Montana's suffrage referendum won by three thousand votes. Jeanette Rankin, who became the first woman elected to the US House of Representatives (1917-19), led the suffrage campaign in Montana.

1915: Defeat in the Legislature

The WCTU and NDVWL agreed on their woman suffrage strategy. Plan A was to win the referral in 1914, changing state law. That plan had failed. In order to maintain their momentum, they turned to Plan B: amend the North Dakota Constitution. A proposed constitutional amendment had to be approved by two consecutive legislative assemblies (1913 and 1915) and receive a majority vote at the November 1916 election. Women all over the state had been inspired by the woman suffrage message and were willing to try again.

In 1921, Emma S. Pierce of Fargo wrote a history of NDVWL, which explained how anti-suffragists used the political process to prevent a House vote on the suffrage measure during the 1915 legislative session:

It is a significant fact that of the nearly 800 bills introduced every one had honest treatment . . . except for the one which vitally affected

VOTES FOR

SUFFRAGE GRANTED:

**1869
WYOMING**

**1893
COLORADO**

**1896
IDAHO**

**1896
UTAH**

**1910
WASHINGTON**

**1911
CALIFORNIA**



**1913
Alaska**

White States, Full Suffrage

Would any of these States have

IMITATION IS

National W

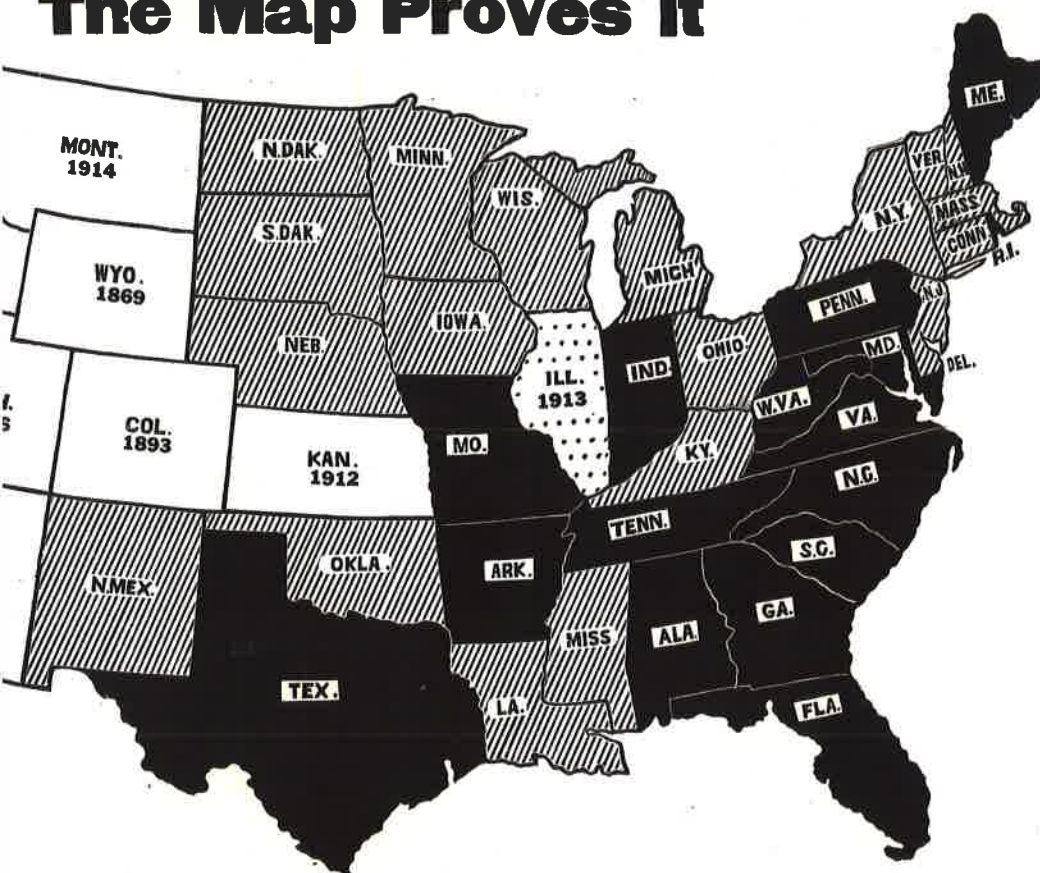
the women. . . . On Feb 18, five days after the measure had passed the Senate, Senator Jacobson moved that it be recalled from the House. . . . The opponents at once gathered their forces. Judge N. C. Young of Fargo, attorney for the Northern Pacific Railway, and Mrs. Young, president of the State Anti-Suffrage Association, arrived immediately and began lobbying, Judge Young

even appearing on the floor of the Senate chamber.³⁷

Although the Senate refused to reconsider their vote, the measure was held in the Senate and never sent again to the House. Pierce noted that a suffrage supporter heard a liquor lobbyist "send a long distance telephone message to Mrs. Young for her

R WOMEN A SUCCESS

The Map Proves It



SUFFRAGE GRANTED:

1912
ARIZONA

1912
KANSAS

1912
OREGON

1913
ILLINOIS

1914
MONTANA

1914
NEVADA

Shaded States, Partial Suffrage; Dotted State, Presidential, Partial County and State Suffrage; Black States, No Suffrage.

Adopted EQUAL SUFFRAGE if it had been a failure just across the border?

THE SINCEREST FLATTERY!

Suffrage Publishing Company, Inc., 171 Madison Avenue, New York



This 1915 map demonstrates how full voting rights for women moved from west to east. Many women in the South did not have voting rights until the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified in 1920. SHSND SA 11354 Womens_Suffrage_Map-00015-2

I PROMISE TO GIVE TO THE

NORTH DAKOTA SUFFRAGE CAMPAIGN

PER MONTH DURING 1917.

TO BE PAID ON THE _____ OF EACH MONTH.

OR A LUMP SUM OF _____ DOLLARS.

PAYABLE _____ 191 _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

As Emma Pierce, treasurer of North Dakota Votes for Women, noted in 1917, "It takes money to buy literature, stationery, postage and to pay expenses of speakers . . . No salaries are paid except to a stenographer when necessary." *The Advocate*, Fargo, May 4, 1917, p. 11
 SHSND SA 11354-Womens_Suffrage-00001

Suffrage Workers Busy in Fargo



The picture shows several woman suffrage leaders of national reputation, and North Dakota suffragists in an automobile in front of the Nonpartisan Leader office, the day the North Dakota branch of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage was formed in Fargo. The suffrage banner is being held aloft by Miss Elsie Hill of Connecticut in the back seat. Next to her is Mrs. A. F. Colwell of Fargo, and sitting on the near side in the rear seat is Mr. George Von Sein. At the wheel is Mrs. Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil of Fargo, and sitting beside her in the front seat is Miss Vivian Pierce of California.

Nonpartisan Leader, July 13, 1916, p. 13

and the Judge to come on the first train, as they were needed. She heard another one say: 'If the d—n women get the ballot there will be no chance of re-submitting the prohibition amendment.'"

The *Bismarck Tribune* did not support the woman suffrage measure. An editorial on February 19, 1914, commended the political shenanigans in the Senate, stating that the original action of the Senate violated "the voters' instructions."³⁸ They argued that since the measure had been defeated in the fall, the legislature should not approve legislation that would allow another vote on the issue in 1916.

Two weeks later, Elizabeth Preston Anderson of the WCTU and Clara Darrow of the NDLWV issued a joint statement to the press in response to the *Bismarck Tribune* editorial. After opening with statistics about other state legislatures taking positive action on woman suffrage, they noted,

The local daily of the Capital City has put forward the argument, and it sounds plausible, that the apparent large vote against woman suffrage at the last election makes it mandatory for this legislative assembly to vote down the current resolution providing for woman suffrage amendment. . . . The 40,000 votes cast for women suffrage we believe entitle it to fair and honest treatment by the legislative assembly.³⁹

Another group working against the proposed suffrage amendment was the Personal Liberty League of the German American Alliance of North Dakota. A political and cultural organization for Germans who had immigrated to the United States, they vigorously opposed prohibition and woman suffrage. At its 1915 annual conference in Bismarck, a press statement on woman suffrage stated they were proud of their role in defeating the measure at the polls in 1914 and the legislative measure in 1915:

The Personal Liberty League is entitled to some credit for assisting in bringing about the defeat of this measure at the polls: but above all we give credit to the sound judgment of the women of the state for this defeat. . . . We assume it is not the women of the state who want the ballot but only the "suffragettes."⁴⁰

Losing the fall 1914 election and suffering this major defeat in the 1915 legislature left woman suffrage supporters very frustrated and pessimistic. To make matters worse, talented NDVWL President Clara Darrow, age 55, died unexpectedly on April 23, 1915.⁴¹ It was a sad year for those supporting woman suffrage in North Dakota. Now the movement needed to find new ways to rebuild and move toward success.

1916: Moving Forward

From a national perspective, statewide votes on woman suffrage were costly and hard to win. States' rights advocates in the movement favored state action. Others were impatient

with that approach and wanted Congress to pass the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment," which was first introduced in Congress in 1872, and would enable women to vote in all states.

Both sides worked together under the umbrella of NAWSA until December 1913, when Alice Paul started the Congressional Union (CU), which focused on the federal amendment. Paul was convinced women needed to use tactics that would generate interest and pressure public officials, such as picketing the White House with signs that mocked President Wilson. The CU was more militant than NAWSA, whose leaders were afraid CU tactics would scare men, anger Congress, and discourage state legislatures from signing a national amendment.

By 1916, Paul had started another group, the National Women's Party. Women had full suffrage in many states in the West, and she encouraged these women, working within the National Women's Party, to make their vote count in the 1916 presidential election. North Dakota women were not recruited for the National Women's Party because they could not vote in presidential elections, but they could join the CU and assist by pressuring their senators and congressmen to vote for the Susan B. Anthony Amendment.

"Suffragists of the State claim that the hour for the enfranchisement of women via the federal route has now struck," stated the press release announcing the Congressional Union statewide woman's suffrage conference in early July in Fargo.⁴² The purpose of the conference was to organize the North Dakota branch of the Congressional Union (NDCU). Vivian Pierce of San Francisco, a national CU representative, toured the state for several days in June, recruiting members and assuring them NDVWL, WCTU, and NDCU could work together.⁴³

Her work was successful. One hundred forty men and women attended the conference, including Grace Clendenning of Wimbledon, the new president of NDVWL. Clendenning noted "both associations could work effectively together." Christine Pollock, a respected member of both WCTU and NDVWL stated, "Since woman suffrage had been defeated in a referendum in North Dakota . . . all women in this state should join the Congressional Union, which proposes to bring about an amendment to the national constitution."⁴⁴ Their words were effective. North Dakota suffragists did not feel they had to choose between membership in the NDCU and membership in NDVWL and/or WCTU.

Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil of Fargo, daughter of Clara Darrow, was elected NDCU chairman, and Minnie J. Neilson of Valley City was elected vice chairman.⁴⁵ The goal of the new suffrage organization was to ensure that all five members of the North Dakota Congressional delegation would vote for a woman suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution.⁴⁶

By fall 1916, NDVWL was making plans for the 1917 legislative session. President Clendenning was invited to the national NAWSA conference in Washington, DC. At this important meeting, national President Carrie Chapman Catt discussed her secret "winning plan" with state presidents. She announced a new commitment to the original federal amendment and endorsed further state work [state referendums] only where a very good chance of success existed. She called for more concentrated effort to have presidential suffrage bills passed in each state, and sought the active involvement of women in the equal suffrage states to pressure their representatives to call for the federal amendment.⁴⁷

Native American Women (and Men) Must Wait for Voting Rights

The 1920 North Dakota Supreme Court Case *Swift v. Leach* recognized the right to vote for 273 Native Americans living in Fort Yates who had abandoned their tribal affiliation and "adopted and observed the habits and mode of life of civilized people." Following that year's November election, the North Dakota Constitution enfranchised Native American men and women to vote who were "civilized persons of Indian descent who have severed their tribal relations two years next preceding such election."

In 1924, Congress enacted the Indian Citizenship Act, which declared that all non-citizen Native Americans born within the United States were United States citizens.

However, the US Constitution allows states to determine electors (voters) in *state* elections. The North Dakota Constitution's qualifications of electors continued to include the language "A civilized person of Indian descent who has severed his tribal relation two or more years next preceding such election."

In 1957, the North Dakota Legislative Assembly passed a concurrent resolution proposing to amend the state constitution, removing the above language. That September, the US Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1957. In 1958, North Dakotans voted to remove this language from the state constitution.

In 1916, NDVWL held a fall conference and did not alter its goals, believing it had a good chance of success. NDVWL planned to go to the state legislature and again lobby for a state constitutional amendment that now had to pass two consecutive legislative assemblies and then be voted on in November 1920. Two national field workers toured the state in December, raising money and making plans for the legislative session.⁴⁸ They interacted with the new governor, Lynn Frazier, and freshmen legislators, most of them members of the farmer-based political party called the Nonpartisan League (NPL). Suffragists hoped the NPL would be sympathetic to voting rights for women.⁴⁹ However, the North Dakota 1916 platforms of the NPL Party, Democratic Party, and Republican Party did not include any mention of woman suffrage, while the Progressive Party platform stated, "We believe in equal suffrage."⁵⁰

Meanwhile, WCTU President Elizabeth Preston Anderson was in Illinois for six weeks, completing work connected with her role as national WCTU recording secretary.⁵¹ In Illinois, she learned more about the presidential-municipal suffrage bill the Illinois legislature passed in 1913. This bill allowed the women of Illinois to vote for president of the United States and to vote for municipal offices. Since it did not allow women to vote for any state officials (including legislators) or for US senators or representatives, it was not as threatening to state legislators. State legislative assemblies could pass the bill, and it would go into effect without any referral vote. Since Illinois had passed this bill, it had been subject to numerous court challenges, but by the fall of 1916, it was a viable option across the country.

1917: The Winning Strategy

Anderson decided it was time to pass a presidential and municipal suffrage bill in North Dakota. She later recalled:

Last fall [1916] I wrote Catherine Waugh McCullough, legal advisor of the National WCTU, and author of the Illinois presidential suffrage law, for information concerning that law. The copy of the law she sent was put into the hands of Hon. Robt. M. Pollock of Fargo, who drew up a similar bill in harmony with the constitution of this state. On the first day of the session your president [Anderson] was in Bismarck with this bill and the regular constitutional amendment.⁵²

Leadership of WCTU, NDVWL, and NDCU worked to ensure the NPL members of the state House and Senate would vote for the presidential-municipal suffrage bill. Even if NPL members were on board, the suffragists' challenge was in getting their constitutional amendment bill and the presidential-municipal suffrage bill through the Senate, which had fewer NPL members. Senator Oscar Lindstrom



Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil (1883–1972), daughter of Clara Darrow, became actively involved in state suffrage work in 1913 and served as president of the NDCU from 1916–17 and congressional chairman of the North Dakota Votes for Women League from 1917–19. In July 1919, O'Neil urged Governor Frazier to call a special session of the legislature to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. He interviewed O'Neil in August 1919 to serve on the powerful State Board of Administration, but she did not receive the appointment. *The Suffragist*, Jan. 21, 1917, p. 7

of Burke County introduced both bills. After the suffragists' experience with the legislature in 1915, they took nothing for granted. The day of the vote, Grace Clendenning made a statement to the press:

We would like to see North Dakota become a suffrage state before the matter is made a distinctly national issue, because we want to see North Dakota numbered among the leaders in progressive thought and recognized as such. I am confident, therefore, women of this state will be awarded the right to vote by the present legislative assembly.⁵³

On January 11, 1917, the *Bismarck Tribune* reported, "Both suffrage measures passed the Senate this afternoon without any debate. . . . There were no demonstrations in the galleries when the vote was announced, although there was a large number of suffragists present."⁵⁴

Next the bills went to the House. All eighty-one NPL members voted as a block. The vote in the House on the presidential-municipal suffrage bill was 88 yes, 19 no. The proposed constitutional amendment giving full suffrage to women also passed the House, 86 to 21.⁵⁵

Anderson was delighted. She later wrote, "In ten days from the time they were introduced by Sen. Linstrom both bills had passed both houses. This, I think, breaks all records in suffrage legislation. . . . The North Dakota Votes for Women League co-operated with the WCTU in getting these bills through the Legislature."⁵⁶

This victory was the result of more than ten days' work. First, during the NDVWL and WCTU 1914 suffrage campaign, many North Dakotans decided to support voting rights for women. Second, Anderson made a smart move when she decided to pursue presidential-municipal suffrage for North Dakota, which was not threatening to legislators and state officials. Third, for over three months, the WCTU,



In 1917, suffragists from around the country picketed the White House in Washington, DC, carrying signs and maintaining a daily vigil on behalf of the woman suffrage movement. On March 4, 1917, Fargo suffragist Mary Darrow Weible (second from right) picketed for the National Woman's Party. *Courtesy National Woman's Party*

NDVWL, and NDCU worked side by side on separate but complementary plans to achieve legislative success. Fourth, the NPL wanted to demonstrate that they were open to new ideas.

On January 23, 1917, Governor Frazier held a bill-signing ceremony attended by suffrage movement leaders. These were the first bills he signed as governor.⁵⁷ The *Bismarck Tribune* noted, "An exceptional feature of the signing of the bills was the committee that conveyed them, being composed of the presidents of the WCTU, Votes for Women league and the Congressional Union, three organizations which seldom work in harmony for equal franchise."⁵⁸

Elizabeth O'Neil sent a telegram to CU headquarters:

Presidential and municipal suffrage bill has been signed by the Governor. North Dakota women hope

this small victory may contribute to the successful passage of the federal amendment.⁵⁹

This "small victory" did contribute to passage of the federal amendment. North Dakota US Senator Porter J. McCumber, who previously had been an opponent of woman suffrage, voted in favor of the national amendment as a result of the North Dakota legislature's action.⁶⁰

Now it was time to celebrate. The Bismarck Votes for Women League held a banquet the next night at the Hotel McKenzie attended by suffrage leaders, the governor's wife, and wives of legislators. Margaret Teenan Townley, wife of NPL president A. C. Townley, and her daughter were also present.⁶¹ President Wilson sent a congratulations message to Governor Frazier.⁶² Special "suffrage editions" were published in many newspapers that spring celebrating the victory.

The new law granting presidential and municipal suffrage would go into effect on July 1, 1917. However, on March 2, the anti-suffragists announced they would collect signatures to force a referendum on the new law. They claimed since the North Dakota Constitution required the people to vote upon any suffrage extension, the bill passed was not constitutional.⁶³ However, the new law passed by the legislative assembly extended woman suffrage only to those elected offices not included in the state constitution.

Women across the state in favor of woman suffrage were galvanized. NDVWL urged its members to work against the referral, and NPL urged its members not to sign the petitions.⁶⁴ On April 7, 1917, the United States entered World War I, and people suddenly had important new concerns on their minds. The anti-suffragists had ninety days to collect the signatures needed. As the WCTU *White Ribbon Bulletin* reported, "Notwithstanding the fact that they had paid workers who secured signers . . . they were unable to secure the small number of names required."⁶⁵

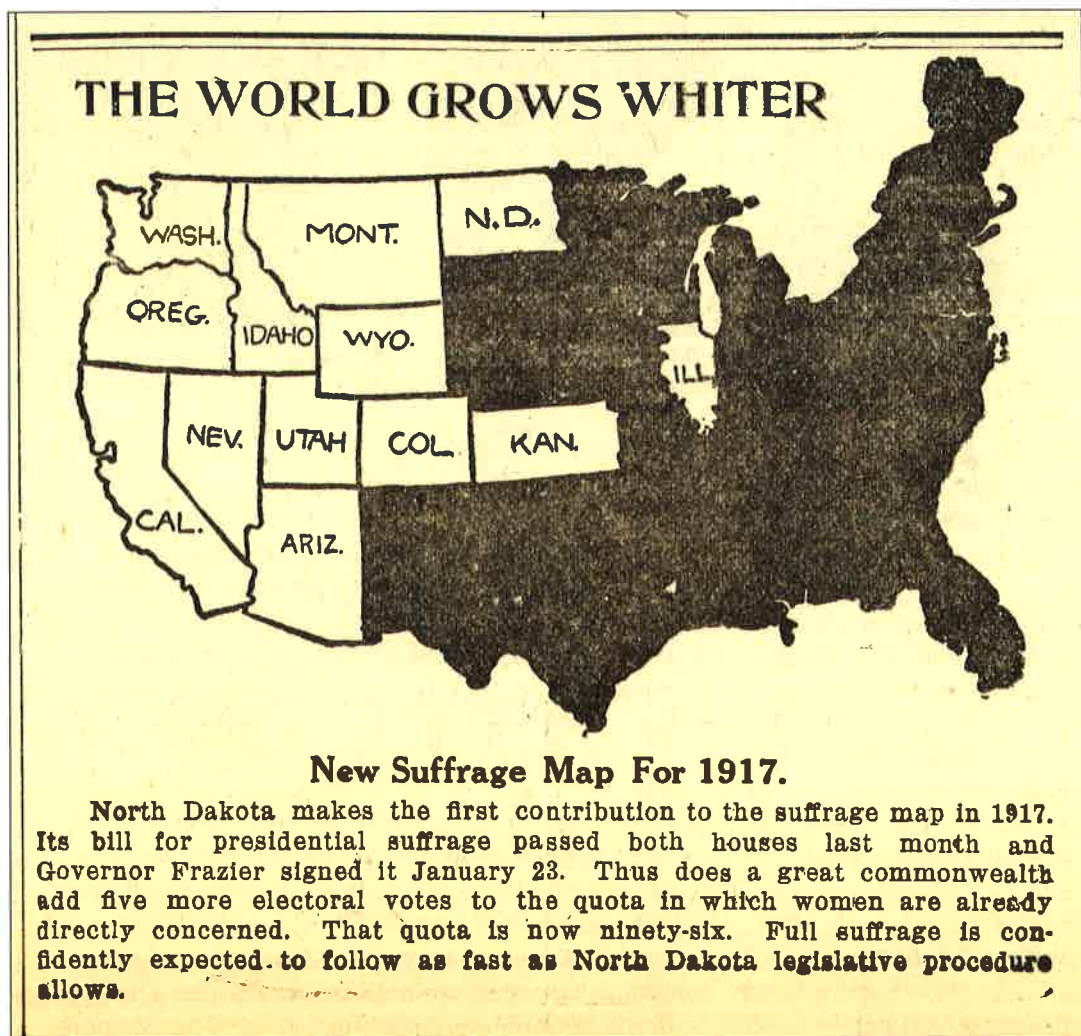
Two other states, Ohio and Nebraska, followed North Dakota's lead and passed presidential-municipal suffrage

laws in 1917. Indiana, Michigan, and Rhode Island passed presidential suffrage laws in 1917. The Minnesota legislative assembly did not grant Minnesota women presidential suffrage until 1919.

1918: Encouraging Women to Vote and the War Effort

After six full years of hard work, fundraising and organizing all over the state, suffragists in 1918 used their political talents to work on the war effort, to encourage women to vote in municipal elections for the first time, and to elect a sister suffragist, Minnie Nielson of Valley City, as state superintendent of public instruction.⁶⁶ The third woman to hold this office since statehood, Nielson had served for twelve years as Barnes County school superintendent and was president of the North Dakota Federation of Women's Clubs from 1914–18.

On the national level, South Dakota, Michigan, and Oklahoma achieved full suffrage in 1918. By 1918, there were fifteen equal suffrage states, four with presidential suffrage (including North Dakota), and two in which women could vote at primary elections. Ten million American women were now entitled to vote for president and vice president.⁶⁷



White was the symbolic color of the woman suffrage movement. Bottineau Courant, March 8, 1917

1919: Quiet Actions Lead to Success

The North Dakota Woman Suffrage Amendment attracted little attention during the 1919 legislative session, in contrast to previous years, when the amendment was front-page news. Senator Richard McCarten of Sargent County, president pro tempore of the Senate, sponsored Senate Bill 81, the concurrent resolution supporting an amendment to the state constitution. It was quietly passed by the legislative assembly.

This was probably due to three factors. First, the Nonpartisan League had a full agenda of bills it wanted to pass, including establishing the Bank of North Dakota, forming the North Dakota Mill and Elevator Association, enacting a workmen's compensation law, an

eight-hour work day, and a minimum-wage law for women.⁶⁸ Second, the North Dakota Woman Suffrage Amendment was part of the NPL agenda and was "old" news. Third, by early 1919, the nation was focused on the federal woman suffrage amendment to the US Constitution that appeared likely to pass Congress.

On June 4, 1919, Congress, including all five members of the North Dakota congressional delegation, voted to propose the following article as an amendment to the Constitution, which had to be ratified by three-fourths of the states:

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Now the work began to have thirty-six states ratify the proposed constitutional amendment. NAWSA and CU took the lead in encouraging states to ratify the amendment as soon as possible. Women across the country wanted to vote in the 1920 presidential election, which was less than a year and a half away. If North Dakota wanted to ratify the national amendment before November 1920, Governor Frazier had to call a special session of the legislature.

In June, Frazier met with national Congressional Union President Alice Paul. He informed her he would not call for a special session of the legislature "for the sole purpose of acting upon the national suffrage amendment."

Frazier sent a wire to Carrie Catt, president of NAWSA, with the same information.⁶⁹ Although several eastern states acted quickly to ratify, Catt was concerned western states were not acting. She noted,

In July, 1919, four envoys were sent out from the National Suffrage Association, two to visit the Republican States of Minnesota, North Dakota, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming and the other two to the Democratic States. . . . The mission of the envoys was to investigate the local political situation as it affected the call of a special session.⁷⁰

At the end of July, Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil, congressional chairman of the NDVWL, scheduled a meeting with Frazier. Accompanying her were Mrs. John South of Kentucky and Marjorie Schuler of New York City, NAWSA envoys. The goal was to confer with Frazier about convening a special session for

Women's Sample Ballot

First Ward, City of Grand Forks, N. D.
General City Election, Monday, April 1, 1918

Mark a ☒ in the square following the name of the Candidate you wish to vote for

OFFICE	INDIVIDUAL NOMINATION		PRINCIPLE
For Mayor	VOTE FOR ONE		
	H. M. WHEELER	☐	The Economical Business Administration of Municipal Affairs in the Interest of all the People.
		☐	
For City Treasurer	VOTE FOR ONE		
	JACOB WELSH	☐	
	J. D. JOHNSON	☐	
For Member Park Commission	VOTE FOR ONE		
	H. H. HEALY	☐	Economical Municipal Administration.
		☐	
For Alderman	VOTE FOR ONE		
	W. H. KELSEY	☐	Undivided Support for our Soldiers; Strict Economy in City Affairs; Complete Equality of Taxation.
	JOHN N. BATHGATE	☐	

Most North Dakota women were able to vote for the first time in city elections in 1918. Until 1917, women were only able to vote for school officials and on education issues. *UND Chester Fritz Library*

the ratification of the amendment.⁷¹ They had a successful meeting. In early August Frazier announced at a farmers' gathering in Williston he would call a special session for purposes of handling drought problems and address the suffrage ratification at that time.⁷² The press reported Frazier also met with Ella Reigel, a representative of the National Woman's Party, and spoke positively about the special session.⁷³

By August 10 the governor was having second thoughts and denied he had ever promised a special session. Some speculated it was because North Dakota women in 1918 had elected Minnie Nielson superintendent of public instruction rather than the NPL candidate.⁷⁴ However, NPL leaders had been advocates for woman suffrage for years, and they knew they must "take steps to bring North Dakota officially into line by calling the legislature in special session to ratify the amendment."⁷⁵

In late October, Frazier called for a special session of the legislature, which would begin November 25. In his message to the special session, he announced several items needing attention, with woman suffrage being first on his list:

Minnie Jean Nielson (1874–1958), who marched in the 1913 National Woman Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC, was an active suffragist when she was elected state superintendent of public instruction in 1918. Riding in parades contributed to her successful political campaigns in 1918, 1920, 1922, and 1924.
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Whereas, North Dakota stands foremost among the states of the Union for progressive legislation which insures square deal for all its citizens, I urgently recommend that you ratify this national amendment as your first act of this special session and demonstrate that North Dakota welcomes the opportunity to extend suffrage to the women of our state and nation.⁷⁶

The Senate voted in favor of ratification, 43 to 3, and the House, on December 1, followed with a vote of 102 to 6. On December 5, 1919, at 5:45 p.m. in the presence of about forty friends of woman suffrage, Frazier signed

the joint resolution ratifying the proposed Nineteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution.⁷⁷

Other states that ratified in November and December were California, Maine, South Dakota, and Colorado. Thirty-six states were needed for national ratification, and North Dakota was number twenty.

1920: Ratification of the National Amendment and Voting in the 1920 Election

On August 26, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment became part of the US Constitution, and twenty-six million women in the United States were now eligible for full suffrage.⁷⁸



That fall, North Dakota women again stepped forward to work on political campaigns, but this time with new purpose.⁷⁹ At an Independent Voters Association (IVA) meeting in Jamestown, women were welcomed to be an equal part of the executive committee. Mrs. F. M. Wanner spoke the feelings of many when she noted this was the first time men and women were “working together on full terms of equality in a political meeting. She said she had waited almost fifty years for this opportunity.”⁸⁰

Large numbers of North Dakota women went to the polls in November 1920. Finally, they were able

to vote on the “elective franchise” (woman suffrage) amendment to the North Dakota Constitution as well as all other measures and offices on the ballot. The vote on the “elective franchise” amendment to the North Dakota Constitution was 135,370 yes, and 60,772 no. Compare 1918 when ninety thousand men voted for governor to 1920, when two hundred thirty thousand men and women voted for governor.

Women were on the North Dakota ballot in 1920. Ruth Johnson (NPL Republican) and Minnie Nielson (IVA Republican) were running against each other for state superintendent of public instruction. Alfild Alfson (NPL



—Drawn expressly for the Leader by W. C. Morris.

After the North Dakota Legislative Assembly ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, "The Helping Hand" cartoon appeared in the *Nonpartisan Leader*. *Nonpartisan Leader*, Jan. 5, 1920, p. 7

Republican) was a candidate for secretary of state. One of the five Democratic presidential electors on the ballot was Anna H. Roach.

Most women in America had finally achieved voting rights, an important step in their pursuit of equality. One hundred years later, women continue to be involved in marches, petition drives, get out the vote campaigns, and other political actions to achieve their goals. Much has changed, but our North Dakota leaders for woman suffrage used a winning approach: They found ways to work successfully with people from different organizations on similar goals, and they persevered when faced with failure. These traits were a vital part of their success in the final push for woman suffrage.



Susan Wefald was the first woman to serve on the North Dakota Public Service Commission. Appointed in 1992, she served for sixteen years. Wefald is a graduate of the University of Michigan and holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of North Dakota. She is the author of *Important Voices, North Dakota's Women Elected State Officials Share Their Stories 1893-2013*.

ENDNOTES

- Elizabeth Preston Anderson served as president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) from 1893–1933; Clara Darrow was president of North Dakota Votes for Women League (NDVWL) from 1912–15; Grace Clendenning was president of NDVWL from 1915–19; and Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil was president of the North Dakota Congressional Union (NDCU) in 1916–17 and congressional chairman of NDVWL from 1917–19.
- Persons Who May Vote, H.B. 340, *Laws Passed at the Twelfth Session of the Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota* (Fargo: Knight Printing, 1911), 218.
- N.Dak. Const. of 1889, art. V, § 122.
- "Questions on Votes for Women," *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean*, October 23, 1914, 7.
- Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 4, 1883–1900 (New York: Arno & The New York Times, 1969), 546.
- Ibid.*, 546–47.
- "Fargo Has Suffragist Society," *Evening Times* (Grand Forks, ND), February 6, 1912, 6.
- "Society Page," *Evening Times*, March 16, 1912, 6.
- Grand Forks meeting minutes, March 1, 1912, Votes for Women Club Records 1912–1919, Orin G. Libby Manuscript Collection, OGLMC 80, Box 1, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota (hereafter UND), Grand Forks.
- Ibid.*, 502.
- "Jane Addams Pleads for the Progressives," *Evening Times*, October 30, 1912, 1.
- "Women of the State Expected to Put Up Campaign for Woman's Suffrage," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, January 2, 1913, 1.
- "Legislative Assembly Promises to Be Interesting, Many Important Questions," *Evening Times*, January 4, 1913, 1.
- "Bills Offered in Senate," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, January 18, 1913, 1; "Commission Must Pay Their Fare," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, February 7, 1913, 1; "Snuff Bill Passed in the Senate," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, February 5, 1913, 1.
- "Society Notes," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, January 25, 1913, 5.
- "Appeal of Votes for Women League," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, February 6, 1913, 2. Today, "white slavery" is known as sex trafficking.
- "Strong Opposition against Measure," *Evening Times*, March 8, 1913, 1.
- Laws Passed at the Thirteenth Session of the Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota* (Devils Lake: Journal Publishing, 1913), 200.
- "Hanna Signs Measure," *Evening Times*, March 8, 1913, 1.

20. Elizabeth Preston Anderson, "President's Corner," *White Ribbon Bulletin* (April 1913): 2. *White Ribbon Bulletin* was a WCTU publication.
21. "Death of Suffrage Leader," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, April 29, 1915, 7.
22. "To Citizens of North Dakota," *Devils Lake Weekly World*, February 13, 1914, 1.
23. Ida Husted Harper, ed., *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6, 1900–1920 (New York: Arno & The New York Times, 1969), 502. \$6,000 in 1914 is equivalent to \$148,000 in 2018.
24. Grand Forks meeting minutes, June 30, 1914, September 1914, Votes for Women Club Records 1912–1919, OGLMC 80, Box 1, Chester Fritz Library, UND.
25. "Death of Suffrage Leader," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, April 29, 1915, 7.
26. "Suffrage News," *Wahpeton Times*, October 1, 1914, 6; "Cass County Tour" poster, 1914, Women's Suffrage Movement Papers, 1908–1918, Orin G. Libby Manuscript Collection, OGLMC 787, Box 1, Chester Fritz Library, UND.
27. "Suffrage Notes," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, September 11, 1914, 6; "Hundred Clubs Boosting Cause," *Grand Forks Daily Herald*, September 21, 1914, 6.
28. "Women Give Saturday's over to the Cause of Suffrage," *Grand Forks Daily Herald and the Evening Times*, August 27, 1914, 3.
29. "Suffrage Notes," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, February 19, 1914, 3.
30. The official name of the North Dakota anti-suffragists was the North Dakota Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage.
31. "Anti-Suffrage Day at Expo," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, October 21, 1914, 6.
32. "Many Gather to Hear Debate on Woman Suffrage," *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean*, October 23, 1914, 1.
33. The "Suffrage Advocate" was edited by Annie E. M. Falger of Devils Lake, one of thirteen district vice presidents of NDVWL. NDVWL was encouraging their groups around the state to run full-page ads in the local newspapers. The Grand Forks club noted, "Our bill was \$103.00. State headquarters contributed \$50.00 for this political advertising." Grand Forks meeting minutes, October 1914, Votes for Women Club Records 1912–1919, UND.
34. To win this election, they needed to have a majority of all those who voted at the election or about 45,000 yes votes.
35. Annie Falger, "Suffrage Advocate," *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean*, November 6, 1914, 8, and November 13, 1914, 6.
36. "Suffragists Will Try Again in Two Years," *Oakes (ND) Times*, November 26, 1914, 1. Every county on the Montana border carried: Divide, Williams, McKenzie, Golden Valley, Billings, and Bowman, as well as Ward, Towner, Nelson, and Eddy.
37. Emma S. Pierce, "North Dakota," in *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6, 1900–1920, ed. Harper, 505–06.
38. "Instructions Are Clear," *Bismarck Tribune*, February 19, 1915, 4.
39. "A Statement Regarding the Suffrage Vote," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, March 4, 1915, 7.
40. "North Dakota Germans Are Loyal to This Country," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, June 17, 1915, 2.
41. "Death of Suffrage Leader," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, April 29, 1915, 7; Elizabeth Preston Anderson, "President's Corner," *White Ribbon Bulletin* (February 1913): 2.
42. "State Conference in Fargo," *Bottineau Courant*, June 29, 1916, 8.
43. "Suffrage Headquarters are Opened in Fargo," *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, July 5, 1916, 5.
44. "Suffragists Organize," *Nonpartisan Leader*, July 13, 1916, 18.
45. "N.D. Suffrage Union Elects Fargo Woman," *Sioux County Pioneer*, July 14, 1916, 3.
46. In 1916 there were three US representatives, plus two senators, from North Dakota. The representatives were reduced to two in 1933, and to the current single at-large representative in 1973.
47. Robert P. J. Cooney Jr., *Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement* (Santa Cruz, CA: American Graphic Press, 2005), 322. See also Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 263.
48. "Plans for Visit of Mrs. Benedict," *Grand Forks Herald*, November 20, 1916, 9.
49. In the November election, the NPL had "elected 81 of the 113 members of the house, but only 18 of the 49 members of the senate (24 senators were holdovers and did not stand for election)." Elwyn B. Robinson, *History of North Dakota* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 337.
50. Bureau of Governmental Affairs, University of North Dakota, ed., *A Compilation of North Dakota Political Party Platforms, 1884–1978* (Bismarck: North Dakota State Library, 1979), 81–88. Also, the NPL platform did not include support for woman suffrage in 1918.
51. "Mrs. Anderson Optimistic," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, December 28, 1916, 8.
52. "Presidential and Municipal Suffrage," *White Ribbon Bulletin* (October 1917), MSS 653, Box 2, NDSU Archives.
53. "Women after Right to Vote," *Grand Forks Herald*, January 11, 1917, 3.
54. "Suffrage Bills Slip Through Upper Body," *Bismarck Tribune*, January 11, 1917, 1.
55. This proposed constitutional amendment had to also pass the 1919 legislative assembly and then be approved by the voters in 1920.
56. "Presidential and Municipal Suffrage," *White Ribbon Bulletin*.
57. "Presidential Suffrage Won in North Dakota," *Suffragist*, January 31, 1917, 7.
58. "Frazier Signs Two 'Votes for Women' Bills," *Bismarck Tribune*, January 23, 1917, 2.
59. "Presidential Suffrage Won in North Dakota," *Suffragist*.
60. National American Suffrage Association, *Victory—How Women Won It* (New York: HW Wilson, 1940), 127.
61. "Suffragists Celebrate Victory at Banquet at Hotel McKenzie," *Bismarck Tribune*, January 25, 1917.
62. "In North Dakota," *Courier Democrat* (Langdon, ND), February 8, 1917, 2.
63. "Suffrage Bill Not Valid Says Its Opponents," *Bismarck Tribune*, March 2, 1917, 1.
64. "Insufficient Names on Petitions," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, June 7, 1917, 4.
65. "Presidential and Municipal Suffrage," *White Ribbon Bulletin*.
66. Susan E. Wefald, *Important Voices: North Dakota's Women Elected State Officials Share Their Stories, 1893–2013* (Fargo: Institute for Regional Studies, 2014), 211–34.
67. Ruth Gallaher, *Legal and Political Status of Women in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1918), 165–66.
68. Robinson, *History of North Dakota*, 342–43.
69. "26 States Offer Early Action in Suff Amendment," *Bismarck Tribune*, June 16, 1919, 2.
70. Catt and Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, 351.
71. "Prominent Suffrage Leaders Here to Interview Governor Frazier in Interest of National Amendment," *Bismarck Tribune*, July 31, 1919, 5.
72. "Frazier Confirms Special Session," *Bismarck Tribune*, August 4, 1919, 1.
73. "Governor May Call Assembly in September, He Tells Woman," *Fargo Forum*, August 7, 1919, 1.
74. Catt and Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, 361.
75. "Cahill Predicts Special Session Despite Frazier," *Bismarck Tribune*, August 21, 1919, 1, 4.
76. "Governor Calls for Investigators to Go into Official's Acts," *Bismarck Tribune*, November 25, 1919, 1.
77. *Laws Passed at the Special Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota* (Bismarck: Bismarck Tribune, 1920), 119. See also, "Governor Frazier Signs Suffrage Bill," *Nonpartisan Leader*, December 29, 1919, 3.
78. "26 Million Women Eligible to Vote in November Election," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 29, 1920, 4.
79. An era ended in April 1920 when NDVWL disbanded and their groups all over the state transitioned to become part of the North Dakota chapter of the League of Women Voters. The new league's work included an educational campaign for the new women voters.
80. "Independent Voters, Both Men and Women Organize Campaign," *Jamestown Weekly Alert*, October 14, 1920, 1.

FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Quilt Tells Story of Family and Friends

For many new brides traveling west in the 1800s, a gift of a friendship or signature quilt was a welcome reminder of the home they were leaving. For Linda Warfel Slaughter, who traveled to Dakota Territory in 1871, this quilt would have been such a reminder.

There is much we can learn from this quilt. The pattern, fabric, and signatures all tell a part of the larger story. Friendship or signature quilt

blocks were usually made by friends and family of the departing woman. Each person made a block and then signed or embroidered their name. Typically, a woman would make the block for her husband, father, or brother, though occasionally a man would make his own block. Linda probably then put the blocks together and quilted it on her own. We can guess at this because the fabric of the large white squares is different than the white fabric in the pieced blocks.

Also, the quilting is very consistent, suggesting only one person did it.

The quilt, which measures 81 inches by 68 inches, is pieced in a variation of the Album or Courthouse Square pattern. This was a common pattern for a signature quilt because the open area in the center was ideal for an inked or embroidered signature. There are small hourglass designs between the long arms of the blocks. A careful observer will see that three of the



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Linda Warfel Slaughter (1843–1911) came to Bismarck in 1872. She served as superintendent of schools for Burleigh County, deputy superintendent of public instruction for Dakota Territory, and Bismarck postmaster. She wrote for the *Bismarck Tribune* and other newspapers. An advocate for woman's suffrage, she became the first woman to vote in a national convention for a presidential candidate. Her organizing efforts created what is now the State Historical Society of North Dakota. SHSND SA 10003-00093

hourglass blocks in the lower left are missing the second red triangle, and along the right edge there are three random red triangles. One can only guess at how that mistake was made, but it obviously wasn't worth the trouble to correct.

The double sawtooth border is interesting in that it is applied from long strips of solid red fabric. The border fabric is known as a Turkey red, named for the country where the process for this colorfast red dye was developed. The blocks are pieced from a red and brown print. At close inspection, you can see that the brown in the print is missing in some places. This is unfortunately not uncommon with early brown dyes where iron was used in the dye process.

The white center cross left the perfect spot for an embroidered name or initials. The quilt is made up of thirty blocks, only two of which are blank. Names we can identify include "C. Warfel" (probably Charles) and Mary Warfel, Linda Slaughter's parents. Others we can only guess at: ALW, MJW, HLW, MLW, MAW, ABW. Could these be other Warfel relations? They were all done with the same black cross-stitch embroidery, suggesting some relationship between the individuals. Other names include Eliza Braden, Esther Braden, and Izabela Braden. Were these neighbors, friends, relations, or perhaps all three? Only one block has an addition to the name; below Anne E. Perry is "Forget me not." A poignant sentiment, but we will never know if they saw each other again.

*Jenny Yearous, curator of collections management,
Audience Engagement & Museum Division*



FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Tchung-kee: Interregional Connections through Game

Archaeology, by its nature, is local. Archaeologists will often focus on a piece of forgotten land to study the people who once lived there, through artifacts left behind, to provide insights often overlooked by the historical record. Despite this narrow focus, there are certain artifacts that tell a story of a larger world.

At first glance, this tchung-kee (sometimes spelled chunky or chunky) stone, found by local collector Kenneth J. Crawford in the early 1900s at Awatixa Xi'e (Lower Hidatsa) Village near Stanton, offers evidence of athletic competition played by the teenagers and young adults who lived at the village. Awatixa Xi'e Village is one of the Knife River Indian Villages, now a national historic site, occupied from the early 1500s until the late 1700s by the Hidatsa. Artist George Catlin observed tchung-kee in 1832 during a visit to a Mandan village. Similar to bocce ball, it is played with a stone disc and poles.¹ Along with examples of stones, a modern artistic rendering of tchung-kee, based on Catlin's drawings, can be found in the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum's Innovation Gallery: Early Peoples.



Tchung-kee stone found at Awatixa Xi'e Village in the early 1900s. Though it is broken, the complete stone would have been 10 centimeters (about 4 inches) in diameter, 3.5 centimeters (about 1.5 inches) thick, weighing 486 grams. Likely made from a hand-sized river cobble, the stone was ground and polished to get its shape. SHSND AHP 1736



Tchung-kee traces its origin to the southeastern United States and dates back more than one thousand years. Ancient Native American depictions of tchung-kee are found etched into shell, to be worn as a necklace, at Mississippian (ancient mound-building culture) sites across the Southeast and Midwest. These pieces of art, along with Mandan oral tradition, indicate tchung-kee was more than a kids' game, and was related to the supernatural and warfare. Common themes include depictions of birdmen and snakes, telling the story of ongoing rivalry between the powers of the upper and lower worlds.

Though their domain centers around the Missouri River, the impact of the Mandan and Hidatsa, both today and in years past, reaches far beyond the northern plains.

*Andrew J. Clark, chief archaeologist,
Archaeology & Historic Preservation Division*

1. George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians*, vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1973 [1844]), 132.



Depiction of tchung-kee player based on Mississippian culture shell gorget found near Eddyville, Kentucky. The gorget likely dates to the thirteenth century and now belongs to the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. SHSND AHP

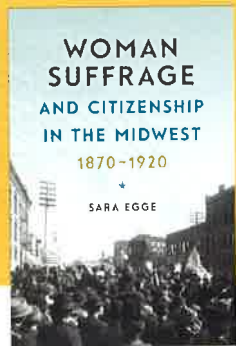


Artist Rob Evans' depiction of tchung-kee, based on George Catlin's 1844 drawing. This is part of a larger mural in the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum's Innovation Gallery: Early Peoples.

BOOK Reviews

Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest, 1870–1920

Sara Egge. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2018. xi + 233 pp. \$85.00 (paperback). Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.



Sara Egge has written an important contribution to the history of the woman suffrage (right to vote) movement in the United States. By concentrating on three counties located in South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa, she has put the woman suffrage movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries under a microscope that results in stronger, more complete histories for those states as well as for the national movement.

Egge argues compellingly that Midwestern suffragists were deeply engaged in a variety of civic events and responsibilities long before they adopted suffrage. Through these experiences they gradually positioned themselves as suffragists. They had been fully engaged citizens, lacking only voting privileges, because their communities needed their knowledge, skills, and labor to grow and mature.

The politics of suffrage, however, is more complicated than the simple exchange of community work for the vote. Egge digs into the politics of the states, often referring to the three counties as examples. She traces the path of suffragism through the historical developments that shape suffragists' arguments from individual rights and liberty to civic responsibility, to patriotism during World War I and, finally, to the power of women's public service during the First World War.

Her research illuminates community conflicts over ethnicity and race as elements of political power. In South Dakota, for example, national suffragists were inclined to disregard immigrant women and the votes of ethnic communities just as state political parties indicated a preference for immigrant votes over women's rights. It was a poor political decision on the part of suffrage leaders, which tended to harden the antipathy of the National American Woman Suffrage Association toward immigrants and people of color.

There are a few small oversights. Egge overlooks some useful resources and neglects to summarize earlier

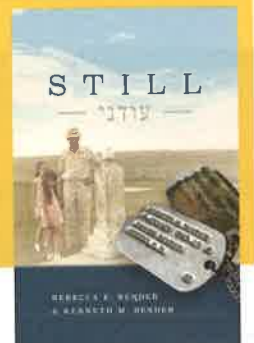
territorial suffrage histories. She uses the term "Yankee" to refer to the non-immigrant, white, Protestant community leaders in South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota. Yankee, however, obscures roots of suffragists in other Midwestern states where religious reforms, abolitionism, and pro-Union activism provided supporting ideals for an earlier generation of suffragists, just as war activism did in 1918. These shortcomings, while annoying, do not minimize the strength of Egge's work and the significance of her book among the historiography of American suffrage campaigns.

The timing of the book is, of course, perfect as states and communities celebrate the US centennial of the extension of full voting privileges to women in 1920. For readers looking for more information on how local political realities might impact national politics, or how woman suffrage was crafted in rural counties in three midwestern states, Egge's scholarly but accessible book is an excellent resource.

Barbara Handy-Marchello is a historian retired from the University of North Dakota and the State Historical Society. She has published books and articles on North Dakota history and has written curriculum for North Dakota Studies.

Still

Rebecca E. Bender and Kenneth M. Bender. Fargo: North Dakota State University Press, 2019. xvi + 328 pp. \$34.95 (hardcover). Map, illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index.



Rebecca Bender dramatically uses the history of her family to teach enduring lessons about faith, determination, survival, and the values associated with maintaining family history and traditions. A combination memoir, history, and biography, Bender coauthored *Still* with her late father, Kenneth.

Bender's family history is intricately woven together with historical evidence to illustrate the challenges her family faced to maintain and follow Jewish traditions and teachings from mid-nineteenth century Russia to contemporary times in the United States. Bender examines the factors that challenged her ancestors and her current family to "still" follow Jewish teachings. These factors appeared in many forms: political turmoil, economic instability, geographic location, war, and contemporary

social trappings that contradict thousands of years of Jewish traditions.

Bender begins the family story during the 1850s, when czarist Russian policies posed a horrific challenge for families like the Benderskys (Benders) to maintain Jewish traditions, faith, and even survive. Bender cites the pogroms (massacres) used against Jewish inhabitants in Odessa as the initial motive for the Bendersky family to emigrate from Russia in 1906 and to establish a new beginning in the United States. Along the way, an immigration official changed the family surname to Bender.

The author succinctly describes how determination, kindness, hard work, and a strong sense of loyalty to the nation that had accepted them as citizens were the tools the Bender family relied upon to address the challenges to “still” maintain their faith and traditions. These challenges came in the form of geographic isolation in North and South Dakota, economic obstacles of the Depression era, a Second World War fought against anti-Semitism, and contemporary American lifestyles.

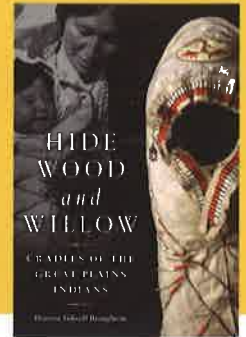
The author should be complimented on her research. The historical evidence that supports and flows with the personal story brings credibility and relevance to the Bender family history. The author’s in-depth research of primary source documentation from small-town newspapers, regional publications, and Jewish archives provides a high degree of compelling evidence for the context of *Still*. The use of Yiddish terms and Torah excerpts also provides non-Jewish readers excellent lessons concerning Jewish culture and traditions.

Still is a must-read for all families. Though the challenges Jewish people have faced throughout the ages surpass the difficulties faced by many people of non-Jewish faiths, the lessons Bender touches upon in *Still* will help families of all backgrounds focus on the importance of maintaining traditions, family heritage, and values to sustain the enduring human qualities of character, honor, respect, determination, kindness, and loyalty for future generations. Perhaps one of the most significant lessons Bender points out is that when people of different faiths and backgrounds are faced with common challenges, as was the case when her family settled in Ashley, North Dakota, and later Eureka, South Dakota, human differences are trumped by survival needs. Readers should be able to appreciate the challenges the Bendersky (Bender) family overcame to maintain their faith and heritage as life unfolded throughout two continents and five generations.

Carl Oberholtzer is a retired public school teacher, former North Dakota History Teacher of the Year, and a former adjunct instructor at North Dakota State University and Minnesota State University Moorhead. He is writer and co-producer of the documentaries The Road to Little Rock and The Mission of Herman Stern.

Hide, Wood, and Willow: Cradles of the Great Plains Indians

Deanna Tidwell Broughton. Norman:
University of Oklahoma Press, 2019.
xiv + 261 pp. \$32.95 (hardcover).
Illustrations, appendixes, notes,
glossary, bibliography.



Arguably all historical works begin as passion projects, but the creation story of *Hide, Wood, and Willow* is particularly endearing. Upon her retirement, educator and author Deanna Tidwell Broughton started sculpting Native American cradles. Seeking authenticity in her reproductions, Broughton meticulously researched infant carriers of Great Plains American Indians. She ultimately overcame immense physical hardship and compiled her findings into this reference work. With detailed descriptions and numerous photographs, Broughton breathes new life into these historical artifacts and encourages readers to imagine a child “wrapped up as if in a cocoon, watching, eyes wide, from a baby board, hide, or canvas soft cradle or laced up tightly on a cradleboard” (221).

In her study, Broughton details the style and construction of various cradleboards for more than thirty Indigenous communities of the Great Plains. For each tribe, she describes the birth customs, amulets, or other gifts given to honor the baby, and the symbolism of the quillwork or beadwork typically found on the cradles. Additionally, some chapters include personal stories, poems, or songs that further illustrate the practical and symbolic importance of the cradleboard. Accompanying her analysis, Broughton incorporates photographs that reveal the rich detail of Plains infant carriers, most of which were made at the turn of the twentieth century, including artifacts held by the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

As an object of scholarly inquiry, cradleboards provide a unique lens through which we can view Indigenous communities. Broughton explains, “In light of the fragility and helplessness of a newborn, the very existence of

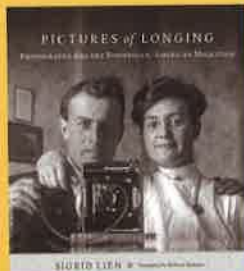
Plains Indians was a tribute to Native parents' ability to subsist in the harsh environment of the plains and to solve the problems involved in protecting and caring for their offspring" (21). In many ways, the cradleboard is a testament to the resilience of Plains Indians and their survival during some of the darkest days in the Indigenous past. Yet, the artifact itself is one that is largely overlooked by scholarly communities, relegated to museum exhibits across the region.

Designed to be a reference work, *Hide, Wood, and Willow* is accessible for a general audience. At times, academic readers will likely find Broughton's analysis short on historical documentation, but rich in cultural analysis. Additionally, while the scope of her study is expansive, the substance of some chapters is minimal. The Ponca chapter, for instance, is less than three pages long. Despite these criticisms, Broughton introduces readers to these historical artifacts and reminds them that "Cradle carriers were part of the everyday lives of Plains peoples, as utilitarian items, objects of beauty, and personal expressions of their makers" (5). *Hide, Wood, and Willow* is a tribute to the Native women who crafted infant cradles and to the author who brought these functional masterpieces to life.

Brandi Hilton-Hagemann is an associate professor of history at Doane University. She is a historian of the American West and is currently finishing a manuscript about community building on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming.

Pictures of Longing: Photography and the Norwegian-American Migration

Sigrid Lien; translated by Barbara Sjöholm. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. x + 290 pp. \$29.95 (paperback). Illustrations, list of Norwegian-American photographers, notes, bibliography, index.



Historical photographs are compelling documents of lives lived, cultures in transition, and the development of communities from time past. The author of this book makes clear, however, that she is interested in more than just a collection of reminiscences. The complexity of old photographs is realized in *Pictures of Longing*, and Sigrid Lien fully embraces the photographs of Norwegian-American migration across the Midwestern states as

primary source documents. A theoretical underpinning is woven through the text. Conceived of as "interventions," historical photographs, to Lien, do more than merely illustrate. They "complement, correct, challenge or disrupt" historical narratives (243).

Despite its academic bent, the chapters do provide that pleasure of peering into the past. Individual photographers from Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Minnesota are presented as case studies in addition to broader-themed chapters on communities, and even a chapter on the American photographs that made their way back to Norway. Overall, the reader gets a glimpse into nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century lives and communities that are expertly elucidated through historical insight and with a strong methodological framework.

One of the most compelling chapters, in this reviewer's opinion, is chapter three, "Last Seen Alone on the Prairie: Emigration and the Unseen Female Photographers." Lien discusses the Norwegian women who arrived in America claiming photography as a vocation. The section of the life and photography of Mina Westbye is a particular gem in the book. Westbye was a Norwegian emigrant who homesteaded for a time just north of Fargo, west of the Red River. Her photographs of homesteading on the Great Plains are some of the most evocative I've seen. For example, Westbye with one of her cousins taking tea in front of a claim shanty demonstrates the jarring, sometimes disconcerting reality of the activity that brought so many of these immigrants to America.

Compellingly, Lien is Norwegian. A scholar in the Department of Linguistic, Literary, and Aesthetic Studies at the University of Bergen, she provides a striking departure from the type of regional boosterism that such books often represent and instead offers real insight into the process of emigration. For those who live in these Midwestern communities, Lien's book offers hours of photographic pleasure. The work is still compelling for those with a greater academic interest in history and photography, however, as she provides plenty of historical context with keen observations about the way in which historical photographs functioned for the people who made, bought, owned, collected, and archived them.

Rachel McLean Sailor is an associate professor of art history at the University of Wyoming. She researches and publishes on historical photography in the American West.



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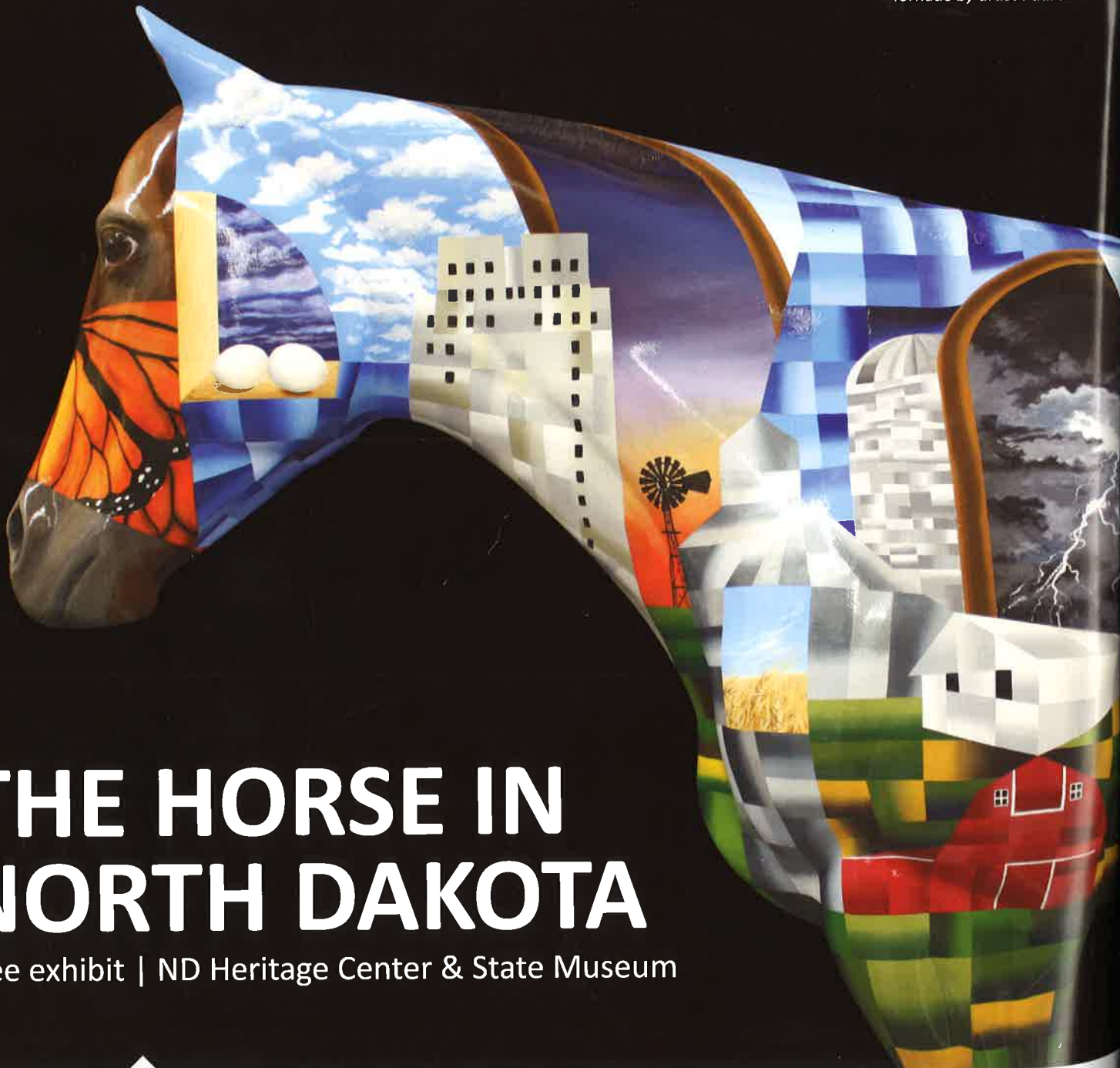
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