

World War II Comes to the Northern Plains Observing the 75th Anniversary of America's Entrance Into World War II (1941—2016)

**Papers of the Forty-Eighth Annual
DAKOTA CONFERENCE
A National Conference on the Northern Plains**

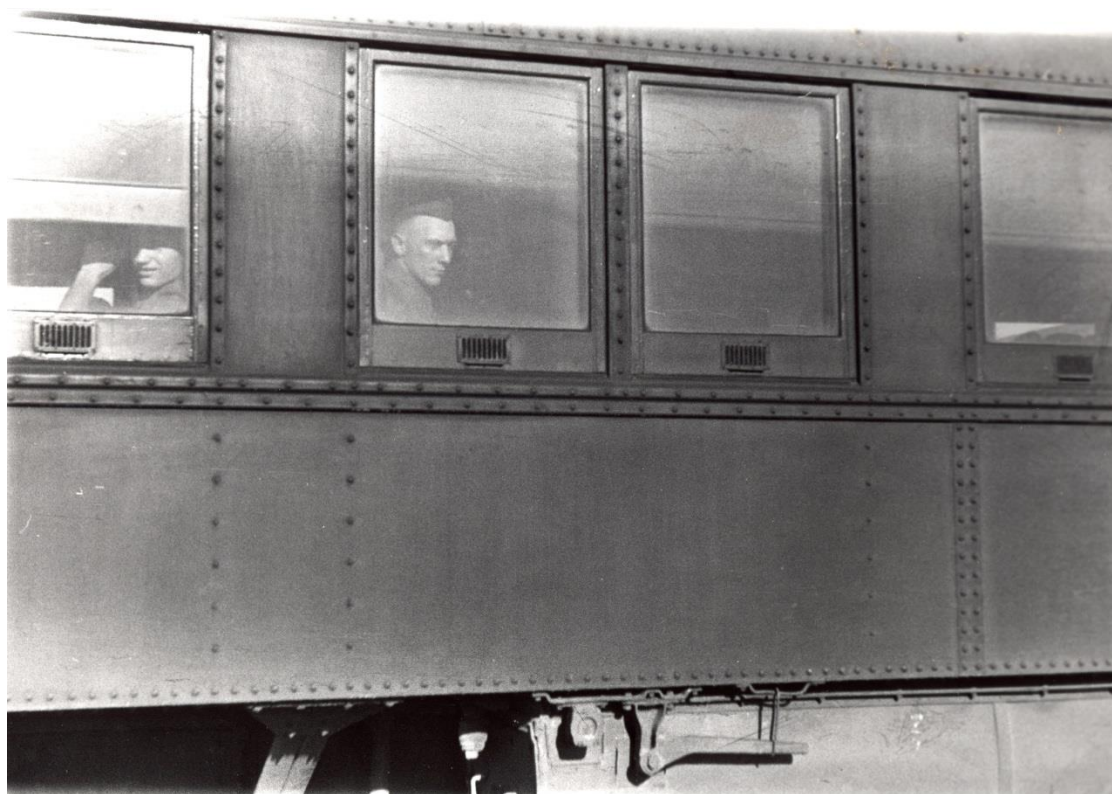


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THE CENTER FOR WESTERN STUDIES

**AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY
2016**

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Into World War II (1941—2016)**

**Papers of the Forty-Eighth Annual
Dakota Conference**

A National Conference on the Northern Plains

**The Center for Western Studies
Augustana University
Sioux Falls, South Dakota**

April 22-23, 2016

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PREFACE

On December 8, 1941, the U.S. Congress declared war on Japan, following its bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7. Within days, Italy and then Germany declared war on the United States. Sponsored by the Center for Western Studies, the 48th annual Dakota Conference, April 22-23, 2016, observed the approaching seventy-fifth anniversary of America's entrance into World War II.

The conference was dedicated to those American men and women who served their country and all humankind when freedom from oppression, genocide, and fascism weighed in the balance.

Eighty presenters from sixteen states—California to New York and Washington State to Florida—were scheduled to present papers and discuss the impact of the Second World War on South Dakota and the Northern Plains. A few presenters were unable to attend, and only about a quarter of those who presented submitted papers for this compilation.

The keynote speaker was the nation's leading historian of the war in the Great Plains, R. Douglas Hurt, head of the Department of History at Purdue University, Indiana, and author of *The Great Plains during World War II*. He spoke about the livestock industry that sustained soldiers and citizens during the war.

In conjunction with the conference theme, the Center for Western Studies commissioned John E. Miller, South Dakota State University (Emeritus), to conduct interviews with war veterans, which he discussed at the opening luncheon address. The closing luncheon featured Augustana Writer-in-Residence Patrick Hicks, who discussed his research on B-17 crews, many of whose radio operators were trained at the Sioux Falls Army Air Technical School.

The author of *Reveille for Sioux Falls*, Augustana Professor Emeritus Lynwood Oyos, discussed the history of the Army Air Forces Technical School at the Sioux Falls airbase and was one of sixteen authors at the conference's autograph party, held on Saturday, April 23.

Of the twenty-four sessions, thirteen addressed the war in the plains and two considered Native American topics, including a presentation by Marcella LeBeau of Eagle Butte, who served as an Army nurse. Two panels examined South Dakota politics during the 1970s, one panel discussed the life and times of George McGovern in the context of the new biography from Princeton University Press, and one evaluated Michael Lansing's recent book about the Non-Partisan League in the Dakotas.

Dedicated to examining contemporary issues in their historical and cultural contexts, the Dakota Conference is a signature event of the Center for Western Studies, whose programming focuses on the Northern Plains region of the American West.

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

World War II Comes to South Dakota—Preserving the Story

Dr. Marilyn Carlson Aronson

“The miserable truth is that world wars merely ‘settle’ who is to carry the burden of civilization—briefly, until the next barbarian revolt.” (Agar, 1967, Introduction, p. 3). This harsh lesson is known today, but it was not recognized by most people in 1941, when Americans entered World War II. In fact, World War II was the last time that the “American people could indulge in the innocent illusion of ‘winning’ a war.” (Agar, 1967, Introduction, p. 3). Even, the early years following World War II were not much better:

“1945-the Atomic bomb; 1946-1947 Total Disillusionment with Russia, the Truman Doctrine, and the Marshall Plan; 1948-1949 the Berlin airlift, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Communist victory in China; 1950-1953 the Korean War; 1952-1953 the American Hydrogen bomb, followed by the Russian Hydrogen bomb. . . .” (Agar, 1967, Introduction, p.6).

Today, we have enough science to destroy the entire human race, but not enough to feed and house the poor to prevent another world-wide barbarian revolt. If we put South Dakota’s entrance into World War II against this backdrop, we can better understand our state’s answer to the call to arms.

“World War II was different from previous wars because the Germans mechanized the battlefields with their swift armored divisions, spearheaded by tanks, and bound together by electronic communications. Gasoline became as critical in military calculations as bullets and soldiers. For the first time, infantry became secondary to armor.” (Wiltz, 1973, p. 570). In fact, America was woefully unprepared for Germany’s and Japan’s effective war machines.

American engineers “improved the navy’s torpedoes....and developed the jeep and aircraft carrier....Before the war ended, American technologies created the powerful *Pershing* and *Patton* tanks, the B29 *Superfortress*, the P47 *Thunderbolt* and P51

Mustang fighter planes, as well as the Proximity Fuse which would detonate an anti-aircraft shell if it passed close to a hostile plane.” (Wiltz, 1973, p. 570).

However, America had not been totally oblivious to the possibility of military involvement before it actually happened. Robert Karolevitz (1990) explains what happened:

On 16 September 1940, the Selective Service Act became law. On 16 October, more than sixteen million men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six registered for a year of military training and service....On 29 October, a blindfolded Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson reached into a giant glass bowl to draw out number 158, designating the first class draftees—‘winners’ in a national lottery. (pp. 392-393).

“On 25 November 1940, almost a year prior to Pearl Harbor, local commanders of the South Dakota National Guard received a telegram calling both active and inactive members of the 147th field artillery of the National Guard into active service. On 22 November 1941, after almost a year of training, the 147th boarded the United States Army transport *Willard A. Holbrook* enroute to the Philippines as the first American expeditionary force entering the Pacific arena in the prelude to World War II. On 27 November, the *Holbrook* stopped at Pearl Harbor for the men to enjoy shore leave. On 30 November they were at sea again, and on the fateful date, December 7, 1941, they were some fifteen hundred miles southwest of Hawaii, with new orders to proceed to the Fiji Islands and then on to Australia.” (Cropp, Richard. 1962).

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, changed everything for Americans. On December 8, 1941, President Roosevelt announced that the United States was at war with Japan. On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States, and America reciprocated by declaring war on both Germany and Italy.

America had a hurried mobilization, which affected South Dakota families, farms, schools, universities, towns, and cities dramatically.

“Insulated as they were in their mid-continental location, citizens of the state did not react as dramatically and as fanatically as did Americans on the potentially vulnerable

[east and west] coasts....The first priority on the South Dakota home front was to organize for the war effort....The state's sixty-seven three-man Selective Service boards had been functioning for more than a year prior to Pearl Harbor.... There were many requests for agricultural deferments, conscientious objector deferments, and alternative service....In all out of a population of 642,921 in 1940—a total of 196,675 men and women between the ages of eighteen and sixty-four signed up during the six registration periods from 1940 to the summer of 1945." (Karolevitz, 1990, pp. 396-397).

World War II occurred prior to the inventions of rockets, nuclear weapons, stealth bombers, and electronic surveillance that is common in 2016. However, the state had concerns of sabotage in certain areas.

One such place was "the railroad crossing at Mobridge on the transcontinental route, since the nation's rail system was critical to the war effort. At Pierre, Major John Griffin ordered guards to the city power plant for regular duty, a move that was repeated elsewhere at water, electrical, and telephone facilities. Civilian airplanes were grounded, except for those on scheduled runs." (Karolevitz, 1990, p 397).

As occurs in all wars, fear of dangers to the population occurred. Rumors ran rampant, and anti-German and anti-Japanese sentiment caused investigations of many innocent suspects.

"Sheriffs, police chiefs, and members of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars assumed key roles in establishing civilian defense units. First-aid training programs were set up, and air-raid wardens were appointed to scan the skies and to report violations of blackout drills." (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 398).

Many South Dakotans became involved in the all-out war effort. Total war in Europe and the Pacific jolted most Americans, because the values of western culture were at stake. As author, Gordon Wright has quoted, "modern war in itself is a revolution" (Wright, 1968, p. 234). Thus fearing the very worst, South Dakotans turned to very realistic activities to aid the war effort.

“War bond rallies; victory gardens; Red Cross drives; bandage wrapping; ditty-bag production; knitting of olive-drab and navy-blue scarves and sweaters; collection of scrap metal, fat, phonograph records, paper, rubber, tin cans, nylon stockings, and other materials....It became patriotic to gather milkweed pods along the road ditches to provide insulation for pilots’ jackets....School children in thirty-six counties east of the Missouri where the weed was prevalent collected fourteen thousand bags of floss. South Dakota farmers pledged themselves to ‘raising food to win the war and dictate the peace’.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 398).

South Dakota offered the United States Maritime Commission’s free courses which provided incentives for young people to acquire new civilian skills and potential jobs to help in the all-out war effort.

“Some 725 young people—mostly from rural backgrounds—learned machine and radio repair, welding, aviation mechanics, and other skills while manufacturing brass fittings, couplings, sheet-metal products, tool kits, and other items for the United States Arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 401).

The Rock Island arsenal contributed significant armaments to all subsequent U.S. wars and police actions. Civilian employees manufactured artillery, tanks, gun mounts, recoil mechanisms, small arms, and grenade launchers on Arsenal Island. “In fact, production of artillery cartridges reached 600 per month during the war, and some 85,000 M1917A1, M1917A4, and M1919A5 .30 caliber machine guns were produced there.” As production expanded, so did improvements in manufacturing technology and construction of new buildings and warehouses that were later reinforced by concrete. “Employment at the arsenal peaked at about 18,500 during World War II.” (Designing, Manufacturing and Refurbishing the Weapons. (n.d.) [www.atomictraveler.com/Rock Island](http://www.atomictraveler.com/Rock_Island)).

According to Robert F. Karolevitz (1990) in Life on the Home Front, South Dakota in World War II, the state became very active in several areas contributing to the United States’ war effort. These initiatives included the work of the Civil Air Patrol, the recruiting of the National Nursing Council, the change statewide to daylight savings time called “War Time”, the

placement of the Army Air Corps Radio School in Sioux Falls, the building of military installations at Rapid City (now called Ellsworth), Pierre, Mitchell, and Watertown.

“Early in 1942, the Civil Air Patrol expected to sign up 450 licensed pilots with almost 150 airplanes, in addition to first-aid providers, radio operators, and other specialists.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 401). The Civil Air Patrol’s work during World War II was recently rewarded, according to an interesting story published in the Rapid City Journal which says, “On December 7, 2014, three brave men from the Black Hills area were honored posthumously with the Congressional Gold Medal for their work in “Keeping America Safe” during World War II.” According to Tom Griffin (2014) of the Rapid City Journal, this story of the bravery of Earl Wilkinson, Vernon Jeffries, and Luverne Kraemer can make South Dakotans very proud.

Few people realize that the “Civil Air Patrol was founded December 1, 1941, just six days before the attack on Pear Harbor, according to Major Bruce Kipp, public affairs officer for the South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). From March 1942 to August 1943, members of CAP’s coastal patrols, flying their own or borrowed planes, flew 24 million miles, over the Atlantic and Gulf coasts to ward off German U-boat attacks against U.S. shipping. CAP pilots spotted 173 U-boats and attacked 57. They escorted more than 5,600 convoys, and 65 Civil Air Patrol pilots were killed on duty.” (Griffin, Rapid City Journal, “Serving a Nation,” 2014, December 7).

The story of Vern Kraemer is told by Tom Griffin who interviewed Norma Kraemer, Vern’s wife and an aviation historian. She said, “This man was Mr. Airplane....Vern spent his whole life in aviation. That’s all he thought about was aviation.” Kraemer was taught to fly by Clyde Ice, the iconic Spearfish pilot who was the first inductee into the South Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame, credited for training 2,000 pilots. Norma Kraemer, who wrote South Dakota’s First Century of Flight in 2010 explained:

“We really had undefended coasts. Germans would surface in their submarines at night and use their guns to strafe shipping. Eventually, Vern and his colleagues attached depth charges to the undersides of their aircraft to attack the U-boats. What Vern did was very dangerous. Flying conditions on the Atlantic were awful, and they would often

fly 150 miles out to sea. His closest scare was when he found himself upside down flying in his plane in a fog. Weather was the biggest enemy they had. Luckily, he had the proper instrumentation to get himself back upright.” (Griffin, Rapid City Journal, “Serving a Nation,” 2014, December 7).

The story of Vernon Jeffries, a lieutenant colonel in the South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, was told by his son, David Jeffries, a master sergeant in the Air Force. David explained his own feelings about his father’s posthumous honor:

“If he were still alive, he would be so proud of this honor. Dad was always upset that the Civil Air Patrol didn’t get recognition for what they did. They were actually combat war veterans....and as combat veterans they got little recognition and no VA benefits. [David said,] ‘I’m proud of the fact that he voluntarily set aside years of his life to do what he could in support of our country’.” (Griffin, Rapid City Journal, “Serving a Nation,” 2014, December 7).

Earl B. Wilkinson’s story was told by his grandson, Tom Senesac, of Rapid City. He explained that his grandfather mainly flew coastal missions with the 22nd Tow Target Squadron. Because Wilkinson died in December 1954, his grandson never met him, but Senesac did hours of research into the family stories and Wilkinson’s log books. Senesac has a profound sense of respect for his grandfather’s Civil Air Patrol service and explained the patriotism of his grandfather.

“He left his Chevrolet dealership to serve his country while at the same time his son was serving in the Navy. Flying was grandpa’s passion. He studied flying, stunt flying, and he was very proud to have flown in the Civil Air Patrol. He even had a thick sterling-silver bracelet made that says ‘Capt. Earl B. Wilkinson.’ [Senesac said,] I plan on putting the medal in a shadow box with mementos like his dog tags, photos of him flying, and things that are dear to the family....This will give him recognition that he answered the call, that he made a difference, that he served his country. Maybe someone will remember him.” (Griffin, Rapid City Journal, “Serving a Nation,” 2014, December 7).

In South Dakota, the National Nursing Council began a recruiting campaign. On 20 January 1942, seventy-two nurses shipped out to New York for overseas service, 'destination unknown'." (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 401). "There were fewer than seven thousand Army nurses on active duty when the United States entered World War II. Six months later, on 30 June 1942, there were 12,475 Army nurses on active duty." (Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps: Chronology. (n.d.). www.history.military/center.com). South Dakota nurses also accepted the call to serve in the face of World War II's threat.

In March 1942, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, was designated as the site for the Army Air Corps Radio School, subject to the city having "approximately eighteen hundred acres—including the municipal airport—in the hands of the War Department by 3 April. The requirement was met, and the construction—estimated at \$15,000,000 for barracks, classrooms, hospital, post exchange, and other facilities—was placed under the direction of Colonel Lewis A. Pick of the Omaha District of the Army Corps of Engineers." (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 402). According to R. Douglas Hurt's research in The Great Plains During World War II,

'The school was expected to handle 15,000 students.... and was planned in an effort to keep up with the expansion of the air corps to 2,000,000 men....The huge school would mean an increase of more than one-third in the city's population....The estimated cost of acquiring the property and the other war department requirements to the city of Sioux Falls was between \$200,000 and \$300,000....The city was permitted to operate the airport for scheduled runs of the Mid-Continent Airlines and for any other scheduled airline runs that might be added by commercial lines....The property was to be turned over to the government for the duration under a dollar-a-year lease. After the war, the city would own the site. (Hurt, 2008, pp 1-2).

A very interesting viewpoint of the recruits' education at the Army Air Corps Radio School occurs in the book by David E. Hennessy entitled Never Give Up On A Kid. This book chronicles the life and career of Emilio "Dee" DaBramo, Educator/Humanitarian extraordinaire, who attended Sioux Falls Army Air Corps Radio School. DaBramo describes the training as follows:

“When I arrived at the Radio School in Sioux Falls, I was given a proficiency test. The results of this test determined the length of training that would be required to reach the competency of a combat Radio Operator/Mechanic. The course was intense....we were in the classroom or at the workbench eight or more hours a day, five days a week. Extra hours were available for one-on-one training for those needing additional help. Looking back from the experience as an educator, I can only marvel at the teaching process that took place. The instructors took mostly raw recruits, with no experience in radio operation and maintenance and turned them into very competent operators and mechanics that would be responsible for the safety of a bomber crew in combat....Much of the credit for the course’s success could be attributed to the many civilian women instructors....(Hennessy, 2012, pp. 50-51).

“During World War II, The United States Army Forces (USAAF) established numerous airfields in South Dakota for training pilots and aircrews of USAAF fighters and bombers.” (South Dakota World War II Army Airfields, (modified 2016, January 16), <http://www.airfieldsdatabase.com>). Most airfields were commanded by the Second Air Force or the Army Air Forces Training Command (AAFTC). We can still find remnants of these wartime airfields because many were converted into municipal airports. For example, the Air Technical Service Command headed the Mitchell airport, now called the Mitchell Municipal Airport. The Pierre airport, under the Air Technical Service Command is now called Pierre Regional Airport. The Second Air Force commanded the Rapid City airport, now called Ellsworth Air Force Base (1953-present). The Sioux Falls airport commanded by the Second Air Force is now called Joe Foss Field Air National Guard Station. The Personnel Distribution Command was charged with the Watertown airport, now called Watertown Regional Airport. The Army Air Force Training Command headed the Aberdeen airport, which is now Aberdeen Regional Airport. So, the World War II airfields of South Dakota survive to this day as major transportation hubs for the state.

In retrospect, there was one phase of the South Dakota home front that most South Dakotans would not have been proud: racial prejudice. “In September 1942, some two hundred

black soldiers arrived, but they were socially segregated. These troops were denied service in restaurants and hotels. To offer them a place during off-duty hours, facilities were provided in the basement of the Saint John Baptist Church at 320 North Minnesota Avenue in Sioux Falls.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 418). In addition, “the Dakota Avenue USO opened...., as well as the Plamor Club, a private facility sponsored by the commandant of Squadron F of the Sioux Falls Air Base.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 418). Thus leisure time activities were given to the black soldiers although the United States armed services were still largely segregated. Author Eric Foner (2012) explains the World War II racial situation in his article “Give Me Liberty!”:

“During World War II, African-American enlistment was at an all time high, with more than 1 million serving in the armed forces. However, the U.S. military was still heavily segregated. The air force and the marines had no blacks enlisted in their ranks, and the navy only accepted blacks as cooks and waiters. The army had only five African-American officers. In addition, no African-American would receive the [Medal of Honor](#) during the war, and their tasks in the war were largely reserved to noncombat units. Black soldiers had to sometimes give up their seats in trains to the Nazi prisoners of war. It would take over 50 years and a presidential order before the U.S. Army reviewed their records in order to award any [Medals of Honor to black soldiers](#). This war marked the end of segregation in the U.S. military. In 1948 President Truman signed [Executive Order 9981](#), officially ending segregation and racial inequality in the military.” (Foner, (2012, February 1) “Give Me Liberty!” [An American History](#), 2013, (3 ed.), p. 696).

An estimated seven thousand South Dakotans were decorated for their gallantry and bravery during World War II. Some who were awarded medals for meritorious service during World War II included Major Joseph J. Foss, Senator George McGovern, Captain Arlo L Olson, Brigadier General LaVerne Sanders, PFC Vincent Hunts Horse, Corporal Calvin Flying Bye, Captain Delores C. Dilger, and Lieutenant Mary Harrington, to name only a few of the seven thousand who were decorated. According to Robert Karolevitz, “Joseph J. Foss won the Congressional Medal of Honor for shooting down twenty-six Japanese airplanes in the South Pacific. Captain Arlo L. Olson earned the cherished Medal of Honor, posthumously,....because

he sacrificed his life leading his company in the Italian campaign. Brigadier General LaVerne Sanders received the Navy's highest decoration (the Navy Cross), the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart with cluster. PFC Vincent Hunts Horse was awarded the Silver Star for valor....Captain Delores C. Dilger, a flight nurse from Yankton earned the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, while Mary Harrington of Elk Point was one of fourteen nurses decorated for meritorious service in the Phillipines, where she spent thirty-seven months in a Japanese prison camp." (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 421) "The Bronze Star Medal was awarded to Corporal Calvin Flying Bye, Sioux, of Little Eagle, South Dakota, 'for heroic achievement in Germany on 29 and 30 November 1944. . . . During these two days, when his division attacked a fortified enemy town, communication lines between the forward observer and his battalion were severed. In spite of heavy enemy fire which was falling not more than 15 yards from him, he checked the lines and constantly maintained them without getting any sleep for 48 hours. His courage and devotion to duty reflect great credit upon himself and the military service'." (Indians In The War 1941-1945, (1946, February 15), Navy Department Library, U.S. Dept. of Interior-Office of Indian Affairs, p. 5). "Senator George McGovern received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service as a B-24 pilot in World War II, [flying several missions over Europe, especially Germany]." (George McGovern-United States Senator, Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2012, www. Britannica.com).

Greg Latza and Jodi Holley Latza compiled selected stories from South Dakota's World War II veterans. The book is entitled Blue Stars, and it was published in 2004. In the book, 44 veterans were interviewed, photographed, and their personal experiences in World War II were recorded. The book is fascinating and a tribute to the over 196,000 South Dakotans who answered the call to mobilize and register for military service. I chose stories of veterans from seven South Dakota towns and cities: Beresford, Brookings, Custer, Huron, Madison, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls. I wanted to preserve their experiences as a cross-section of our state's heroism during World War II.

Oliver Carlson (August 10, 1919-February 10, 2014) of Beresford, SD, was my husband Paul Carlson's oldest brother. I knew his story well, because he talked about his World War II

combat experiences often. He landed at the Normandy Invasion on Utah Beach in June 1944 as part of a 105 mm Howitzer crew, and pushed his way toward Germany with the 90th Infantry Division. He credits his strong faith in God for his unlikely survival. In Corporal Oliver Carlson's words,

"There were 90 ships in our convoy, and every seven minutes the ship zig-zagged, because it took seven minutes for a German submarine to get lined up to fire on a ship. Twenty days from New York and the Statue of Liberty, we got to Liverpool....Next it was a trip to Wales. It wasn't long before we got on the ship to head out for (D-Day). They still didn't tell us where we were going, but we knew exactly what the story was. We sailed along the coast of England for six days; then the ship headed straight for France. It was the seventh morning after we got on that we were firing into the country of France. The morning of the invasion, the 101st and the 82nd Airborne landed ahead of us....A plane came over us and dropped a bomb into our ship, killing 26 doughboys in one shot....Then, it was our turn to get off the ship. (Soldiers climbed from larger ships into the smaller landing craft while still offshore). A shell exploded alongside the landing craft I was on.... I had to get off before my friend Joe Snead, who said, 'Ollie, if I don't see you here, I'll see you in heaven.' I replied, 'Joe, it may be soon.' The dead laid everywhere....We fought through hedgerows for quite a few days. For the first six weeks, I never slept outside a foxhole because of the terrible danger of getting hit by shrapnel....We fought the German panzer divisions all the way across Europe. There were thousands of German boys who surrendered to the 90th. Finally, the war was over, and both Joe and I came home without a scratch.... I said, 'It's a miracle, that's what it is.... I did this for my country....I never regretted doing the job I was assigned to do.... I was willing to give my life, if that's what it took'." (Latza, 2004, pp 29-31).

Cecil Sanderson (July 7, 1914-July 27, 2008) of Brookings, South Dakota was commander of Company L, 377th infantry, 95th Division. Captain Sanderson and his men were engaged in heavy fighting along the Moselle River, near Metz, France, in late 1944. He was approaching a concrete bunker when a German officer emerged from it with a pistol and killed a Free French

soldier nearby. Cecil Sanderson returned to civilian life after World War II as a county extension agent, serving in Hamlin and Roberts counties. He donated his pistol and his other World War II memorabilia to the Brookings County Historical Society Museum in Volga, SD, in 2000. Here is Cecil Sanderson's description of how he retrieved the German pistol:

“There was a cement (barrier) around the fort, and I was in back of that. I told this German officer to come out with his hands up. It was in the fall of the year, and there were a lot of leaves. I knew he had a pistol, because he shot a Frenchman there with it, but when he came to me, all he had on him was a holster. The pistol was gone. After the dust cleared away, I went kicking along in those leaves, and I found that pistol. The rumor was that if you were caught with a [pistol] as a prisoner, they'd put you out of your misery quick....I didn't intend to be a prisoner anyhow, at least taken alive. So I carried that P-38 most of the time. The last bullet that went out of [that gun] was the end of a Free Frenchman....I didn't know the man was a German officer at the time. When we were taking him back as a prisoner, the local people recognized him, and women came out with brooms and anything they had handy. (The officer had earlier taken some of the men from their village to be shot.)....I had to get a number of company men to go with me to protect him so we could take him out as a real prisoner....My first responsibility as a company commander was to safeguard—do the most damage you could do to the enemy and without any casualties to your own folks. One interesting thing happened. We had some of our men, in order to keep from being detected, upstairs in a particular building. There were some Germans lunching down below, and they didn't know our men were upstairs....Some of the boys wanted to retrieve their folks that were upstairs. They went into the building with the lead flying and took care of the German soldiers. So, there were dead Germans who didn't finish their lunch....World War II was a good experience, I guess. I only came out with a hearing loss, but I wouldn't want to have the experience a second time” (Latza, 2004, p. 44).

Tom McDill (October 14, 1921-April 28, 2015) of Custer, South Dakota was forced to endure the “legendary 65-mile Bataan Death March, which occurred when the United States surrendered to the Japanese on April 9, 1942, after the Battle of Bataan. He was imprisoned at Camp Cabanatuan, transported to Japan on ‘hell ships’ and forced to work in a copper mine. He spent three years as a POW. Tom McDill was liberated on September 13, 1945. Upon his recovery, he continued his career in the Air Force through the Korean and Vietnam wars. On April 2, 2013, Senator Tim Johnson presented Tom McDill with numerous medals, including the Good Conduct Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal, Phillippine Defense Medal, Honorable Service Medal, Purple Heart, Prisoner of War Medal, and Bronze Star. (Chamberlain McColley’s Funeral Home: Obituaries, 2015, April 28, www.mccolleyschapels.com). Tom McDill recounts his experience in Blue Stars:

“We surrendered. We were out of food, practically out of ammunition; we were out of everything. There wasn’t much choice. In fact, there wasn’t any choice. We had to walk down from where we were on the west side of Bataan, then up the Manila Bay side. We didn’t know where we were going, had no idea where we were headed for, or how long we were going to be walking there. Of course, the worst part was not getting fed. We didn’t get anything to eat, and you had to fight for anything to drink when you had a chance to get some. They beat on us whenever they took a notion to, and they shot some of us and bayoneted some of us along the way. Being killed would be the biggest fear. Some of them got unable to walk, and that’s the ones they usually shot. They could kill anyone they wanted, and they did. You had to keep moving. I was a farm boy; I was in pretty good health and pretty tough, and I’m glad that I was....When we got to the prison camp,...we were put in a 10-man group. The idea was that if anyone in that group escaped, the others got shot....We had malaria a lot of times. Malaria, dysentery—that was pretty common. We didn’t have medicine; it would just have to run its course...Oh, I’ve had nightmares once in a while, but it’s got to be where it’s so far back now, it seems like a bad dream, almost.” (Latz, 2004, p. 50).

Jack Hyde (July 28, 1924-November 5, 2015) of Huron, South Dakota was “drafted into the Army in 1943 and wounded by a sniper bullet near Cebu in the Philippines. He was honorably discharged in December, 1945. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for his military service.” (Kuhler Funeral Home: Obituaries, 2015, November 5, kuhlerfuneralhome.com). In May, 1943, one year after graduating from Onida High School, Jack Hyde began learning the finer points of high explosives and pontoon bridge building while training as a combat engineer. He enjoyed the work, but got a rude awakening upon his arrival at Bougainville in the South Pacific. He tells his story in [Blue Stars](#) and the fact that he kept the .25 caliber bullet that shattered his shoulder by hanging it on a watch chain. It was his most prized war souvenir:

“We made the initial landing on Cebu, and of course we had quite a battle there. Cebu was the whole island, and Cebu City was the second largest city in the Philippines....It rained every day. I got malaria, but I never came down with it until I got back to the United States. I had several attacks of malaria....You never knew when you would encounter Japanese soldiers. They were scattered all over.... At night, they’d shoot tracer bullets down on us from anti-aircraft guns....We had several guys killed right there....It was a shame....I don’t know how we ever survived. They had tunnels in the hills, and they stored their ammunition in them. The Americans drove one of our tanks up there and started shooting into one hill, and it was full of ammunition. Blew the whole hill up and buried a whole squad of our men going around the outside edge of it. Buried them alive!....The Japanese would come through the tunnels with TNT on their backs, suicide guys. Right through our lines, and they’d blow up. Can you imagine anyone doing something like that? They blew themselves up in the tunnels, too, when we had them surrounded....We could see the Japanese off in the distance, and they could see us. We were waiting for orders to move up on them, and all of a sudden, boom, the sniper got me. He must have been a long ways off; otherwise, that bullet would have gone right on through me. It just hit me and knocked me down. A medic was right there and put blood plasma in my arm. I felt fortunate, because I knew that I wasn’t dead...the doctor colonel came in and said, ‘Well, we’ll put a different cast on

you, and put you on the ship, and you can go home.’ That statement made me feel really good. I was in the hospital for eight months after I got back from overseas. My brother had gotten killed on March 14th, a day before his birthday, over in Mindanao in the Philippines. (Latzka, 2004, p. 37).

Richard Diede of Madison, SD served with the 10th armored Division for Normandy in September, 1944 as a chaplain. Later, he became a Division Chaplain, but not before several harrowing events in France and beyond. He shares his two years of experiences in Blue Stars:

Because I was young, I was assigned to a ‘hot outfit’ which was the 10th Armored Division....One of the first things we did was to clean the mine fields....You didn’t know whether your next step was going to be your last one. Here we were, the organist, my driver, and myself. What were we going to do? My driver said, “Chaplain, you go first and we’ll follow in your footsteps.” Perhaps, there was a guardian angel. We got through.... However, some of the men in our group got careless and they ran, and of course, stepped on a few of the mines and got killed....You don’t know why somebody was killed. You used to think as a clergyman that you knew all the answers. You found out that you knew very few of the answers to life and why things happen. You didn’t have a ready-made church as you contacted the soldiers and officers. You set up services; you went to different units....You got the word out to the men....That was our church. We had services in barns, services out in the open and in the mud, next to the tanks.... I worked with the Graves Registration Bureau when they came to gather up the dead....That was not a pleasant job. These were temporary burials, and the dead were later transferred to permanent burial grounds....They just dug a trench; I couldn’t even see the end of it. Here were the soldiers, minus arms, legs, holes in the back, etc. all along the side of the trench. I don’t know how many I buried or how many I had services for....Occasionally, I would go with the ambulance to pick up the wounded. Any chaplain could administer to Protestants, Jews, or Catholics. We had three different prayers that we could use for the last rites....None of the chaplains pushed their denomination. We

were inter-denominational, of course. We ministered to anybody and everybody in the services.” (Latza, 2004, p. 49).

Edna Basler of Rapid City (died November 3, 2006 at age 92). She served as a lieutenant with the U.S. Army Nurses from 1942-1946. She was buried with military honors at Black Hills National Cemetery near Sturgis, South Dakota. (Rapid City Journal: Obituaries, 2006, Nov. 3, www.rapidcityjournal.com). She grew up on a ranch near Hereford, South Dakota, and learned how to be tough at a young age. She served with the 116th Station Hospital first in New Guinea, then at Leyte in the Philippines, helping wounded and dying Marines as quickly as they were delivered to her from the front. She shared her World War II experiences in Blue Stars:

Christmas Eve (1944) the marines came in so fast. They were all muddy and bloody; it was really pathetic the things those men went through. You take boots off of them, and they didn't have any socks, and some of the skin would come off their feet because they were wet in the trenches so long. We couldn't feed them all in the mess hall, there were so many....There was a lot of water, a lot of floods. Water ran through our tents, sometimes 4 inches deep. They didn't have any floors. We slept on canvas cots....You just had to keep your feet above water. Everything molded—the jungle was all around us....It was hard to be a Marine....They fought like tigers. They were so cocky. They just knew what they could do, and they did it.....I was proud of myself for being there....I sometimes wonder how we ever did it. We had a lot bigger heart and a lot less machinery, but I don't think we lost any more patients than they do now with all the technology. It was exciting, interesting, and crazy....People say “How do you remember it?” I say, “How can you forget it?” (Latza, 2004, p. 121).

Bob Swift (September 27, 1916-February 24, 2009) of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, spent the first months of the war teaching bombardiers how to use the top secret Norden bomb sight. “Commissioned as a second lieutenant and quickly promoted to captain, he was one of four principle instructors in the use of that device....He was stationed in North Africa,....where he flew 56 missions over Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Greece, France, Austria, and Germany. From the nose of his B17, Bob led flight squadrons in several high precision, high altitude air

strikes which decisively crippled Axis powers and earned him a promotion to the rank of Major and commendations including the Distinguished Flying Cross, The Air Medal bearing nine Oak Leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart.” (Miller Funeral Home: Obituaries, 2009, February 24, www.millerfh.com). Bob Swift, as the group bombardier on all of his missions, flying in the 301st Bomb Group’s lead plane, shares his experiences in Blue Stars:

“The Norden bomb sight was very high secret, top secret stuff. You couldn’t take a bomb sight out of the vault without a .45 strapped onto your side, and you had to have at least two people to carry it out to the airplane. I wound up with 56 missions....The enemy would find your altitude, then throw flak up in a checkerboard pattern. The only way you could have any accuracy with your bombing was to fly straight and level, at a constant speed...We had a mission over Viterbo, Italy, and there was an anti-aircraft shell that went off under the plane, and the fragments came up through it. I had a backpack parachute on, which kept me from getting seriously hurt. It scared the hell out of me. I had to readjust the sight, because we hadn’t released our bombs yet....I suppose it took 30 seconds to reset. That seems like a day when you’re doing it. Yes, it was an experience. I’m glad I had it, but I wouldn’t do it again if I had any choice.” (Latzka, 2004, p. 95).

Finally, the ordeal of World War II ended. “South Dakotans celebrated victory in Europe on 8 May, 1945. They celebrated VJ Day on 15 August, 1945, as President Truman proclaimed an end to hostilities. There was dancing, hugging, and joyous imbibing as the last of the Axis powers surrendered, but there were many prayers, too, as parents, spouses, sweethearts gave thanks for the survival of their loved ones and looked forward to a ‘brighter tomorrow’.” (Karolevitz, 1990, p. 423).

Sad to say, 2,200 South Dakotans had made the supreme sacrifice. “Some of the strongest movement to record this history evolved as the World War II Memorial was being constructed in Pierre, South Dakota, in 2000-2001....Prior to the dedication ceremonies on September 15, 2001, 2,200 white crosses labeled with each soldier’s name, hometown, and date of death were arranged in orderly rows north of the Capitol. Families and friends of the

deceased were allowed to take the crosses home with them after the dedication.” (Latza, 2004, p. 8-11).

Freedom has never been free, so these brave men and women who fought and died in World War II to protect our American freedom and way of life must be remembered. Their stories must be preserved.

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Addie

Bob Benson

Adeline Echo Baukol Hines was born July 19, 1920, in Roslyn, South Dakota, the fifth child of Henry and Pauline Holten Baukol. **In her own words:**

I had three sisters and two brothers. My mother died from pneumonia when I was three years old. It was difficult growing up without a mother. Our father, who had a general store, had very little time for us. I graduated from Roslyn High School in 1937. I graduated from Sioux Valley Hospital School of Nursing with a RN degree in 1941. My nursing education was very complete; we worked on the hospital floors, besides attending classes. We also assisted in surgery and obstetrics. After graduating from Sioux Valley Hospital School of Nursing, I worked at Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis for several months.

World War II had begun, and recruiters were looking for new nurse graduates to go overseas. I joined the 26th General Hospital, which was a University of Minnesota unit, attached to the 15th Air Force. I joined the army as a Second Lieutenant and was sworn in at Fort Snelling in Minneapolis in 1942, with another Sioux Valley graduate.

Our unit then went to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, to get ready to go overseas. We were issued uniforms, gas masks, sleeping bags, canteens, mess kits, and helmets. The helmets could be used in so many different ways—we used them as wash basins and to wash clothes and, of course, for protection during air raids. Our social life was great at Fort Sill as there were so many officers who were going overseas there; we danced every night. We were given all of our many immunizations at Fort Sill to get us ready for our overseas assignment. I was given defective yellow fever serum and developed hepatitis and spent several weeks in the Army hospital. The doctor said I would have to weigh 115 lbs. before I could be discharged from the hospital. I found two large rocks outside the hospital and hid them in my robe pockets; I then could be released as I weighed the require amount.

At Fort Sill, we did close order drill for hours each day in the sun in full uniform with a back pack to get us ready for the rigors awaiting us at our overseas duty. In October of 1942, we left Ft. Sill and went to New York where we embarked on the SS Mariposa and arrived in England to be stationed in Birmingham, England for several months. We enjoyed trips to London and other places of interest. The British people made us feel very welcome. Air Raids were almost a nightly occurrence in England. When the siren sounded, we would grab our helmets and head for the shelter and stay there in the dark until the all clear sounded. England was in a total black out to guard against enemy raids. One day I was washing clothes in my helmet when the siren sounded for a raid—I grabbed my helmet liner (made of heavy paper) and went to the shelter; I was told not to do this again.

In 1943, we boarded the Strathnaver, a British ship, and left in a convoy for North Africa; many ships had been bombed by the enemy, so we were safer traveling in a convoy. There were many pilots on the ship, and I became engaged to a pilot from Tennessee. He was a fighter pilot who flew Spitfires and was later captured by the Germans and spent 18 months as a prisoner of war.

When we arrived in North Africa, our camp site was on a hill just outside of Constantine. The army engineers set up a large tent hospital. They put down a large block of cement, large enough for 16 beds, and a tent was put over it; this was a hospital ward. Two nurses lived in a tent. Our toilet was a tent with 12 seats in it. Our showers were in a tent, the water came down from tanks on an open roof. Pilots would fly low over the tent as we showered, causing some excitement.

We nurses wore coveralls while working in the tent hospital, and army boots. The days in Africa were very hot and the nights cold. When the rains came, we worked in mud. I was assigned to an orthopedic tent; the soldiers would have body casts that became very hot during the day. Mosquito bars were put over the beds, and nets lowered at night to guard against mosquitoes carrying malaria.

We were so happy when we could go by truck to swim in an olympic pool in Constantine or swim in the Mediterranean sea.

At one time, I was put in charge of two tents that held German and Italian prisoners of war; they were happy to be at our hospital. Armed guards surrounded these two tents.

After leaving the tent hospital in Africa, I and several other nurses were flown to Algiers to work at the 98th British hospital. Britain had been in the war for 5 years and their nurses needed a break.

In November, 1943, we arrived in Bari, Italy. It was wonderful to have a hospital in a building and to live in a building. The hospital had been an Italian military hospital.

Bari is a seaport city on the Adriatic Sea. It was used as an alternate harbor as Naples had been heavily bombed. We enjoyed being in Italy—we attended symphony concerts and operas. We enjoyed several trips to Rome, Florence, Venice, and Naples.

I spent many leaves on the Isle of Capri, a beautiful place.

We left Italy in 1945 for the states. It was wonderful to be home, but my time as an Army nurse changed me. I had seen so many young men with horrible injuries and so many had died, which was very sad.

More about Addie:

After the war, she was a TWA stewardess based in NYC. She returned to South Dakota and married George Hines in 1948 and moved to Loveland in 1951. She worked at the Loveland Community Hospital and nursing homes before she became the Nurse and Coordinator for the Loveland Head Start program, a position she held for 23 years. She helped many children and their families receive dental and medical care. She was instrumental in starting the hospice program (now Pathways Hospice) and was a volunteer hospice nurse for several years. She was chosen for Northern Colorado Florence Nightingale award in 2010.

Adeline also volunteered for her churches, Trinity Lutheran and Zion Lutheran, for the library at McKee Medical Center, and for the Habitat for Humanity Family Selection Committee. Adeline loved to play golf at The Olde Course where she won many tournaments, including the 9-hole Vy McDill. She especially loved spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Adeline E. Hines, 95, of Loveland, Colorado, passed away November 14, 2015.

The War Comes To 205 North Hawthorne

Miles A. Browne

Sunday, December 7, 1941, the Browne family was ready to sit down for dinner as a Philharmonic concert was about to begin. Suddenly the program was interrupted and CBS announced the attack on Pearl Harbor. It was life changing news! The Browne home at 205 North Hawthorne Avenue, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, would be the site of four emotionally filled years. The family staying at home was made up of mother Ida, her two daughters Norma and Barbara; and two sons Stan and me. Two sons had departed—Charles to Sioux City, Iowa, and Wesley to far away Portland, Oregon. The family was still feeling the effects of the Depression.

On Thursday, June 13, 1996, Iowa Senator Charles Grassley eulogized into the Senate Record, a tribute to my brother Stan. In part, he said, “Stan started from very humble roots, one of six children born to a school administrator and wife in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in 1923. His father, Walter, died when Stan was six years old. From that day on, he watched the determination and selfless dedication of not only his mother, Ida, as she cared for the family all day, then scrubbed floors and cleaned homes in the evening, but also his older brothers as they dropped out of school and sacrificed their futures—all to enable their family to stay together.”

At first, my young mind might have thought that war was to be a great adventure. But, in a short time I learned it was to be the most horrible, sorrowful thing ever created by man. The early returns of the war brought mostly bad news. It was depressing. However, when the Argus Leader delivered the news that the Army was going to establish a camp at the city’s edge it brought excitement and wonderment; we were going to take part in the nation’s war effort.

Max Malloy was a neighbor and although only a few years separated us, he was one of my heroes. During the football season he would come to our home to listen to the football games played by the mighty Minnesota Golden Gophers. Stan would always make popcorn and sometimes fudge for treats as we listened to games that led to the 1941 National Championship. Max became a starting guard for the Washington High School football team. He was the pride of North Hawthorne Avenue.

Soon after his gridiron exploits Max was on a troop ship heading for Iwo Jima. His ears were subjected to the thunder of the Navy's bombardment of that Pacific island. Like Max, most of his comrades were teenagers. When the boats dropped them off at the surf's edge, Max and his fellow Marines entered a world that should not have been meant for them. Instead of holding their first jobs, going to college, dating their first love or playing catch with a buddy, they were teenagers charging up those uninviting ashy, slippery beaches and into a storm filled with artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. Destruction surrounded them. Max survived the first day of the attack—he did not survive the second day. The first tears I shed during the war years, I shed for Max. Every once in a while I remember Max by thinking of him—it is the least I can do.

After the soldiers of the Army Air Forces Technical School in Sioux Falls had settled in, our house became a home for many of them. It all began with a telephone call from my sister Norma. She was working at the Lewis Drug Store and it was about to close for Christmas Eve. She had a wish, there were two young soldiers (they were all young) still in the store and seemed to be so downhearted and could she invite them to come home with her. Mother was pleased to say yes. Our plan for dinner would not be enough. My mother, with her German heritage, made her Blue Ribbon potato pancakes. We ate, we opened our few presents and sang Christmas carols. Thus began what was to become a steady stream of soldiers to 205 North Hawthorne. What attracted them? It certainly was not the house. It was small and bare boned furnished. A trap door in the dinky kitchen led to the basement and the bathroom facilities. The basement floor was half concrete, half dirt. The young men who entered our home were there not because of the house or its furnishings, it was the feeling of home provided by my mother. She made it clear to each soldier that the 205 North Hawthorne door would never be locked and that her home was their home away from home. Each year a National Mother of the Year was named. I always thought that my mother deserved that honor.

It was only a short walk from the base to our front door. No one at home? No problem. Walk right in. And they did. One day I walked in on a soldier seated at our out-of-tune piano playing a very classical number. He explained that his buddies, knowing of his desire

to spend hours, not minutes at a piano, directed him to Ma Browne's. For several weeks we were treated to the music of the masters.

From that stream of young men, I was especially attached to two— Chuck Cavanaugh and Warren Johnsrude. Chuck hailed from the Bronx, New York City; Warren called San Francisco, California, his home.

Chuck and I bonded partly because he was a baseball fan in general, and the New York Yankees, in particular. I was, and still am, a fan of the St. Louis Cardinals. Both teams dominated major league baseball and faced each other in two war-time World Series. We had friendly arguments regarding which team was best. The Cardinals were victorious in '42 and the Yankees got revenge in '43. My buddies and I created a "pick-up" softball team and Chuck volunteered to be our "manager". He would let us know when he would be able to go to the camp's fence. The fence was on the east side of the base and was adjacent to an area that was large enough for practice. Chuck would come to the fence and gave us encouragement and advice. Years later when I had a conversation with Norma, she informed me that Chuck had proposed marriage to her. It was news to me!

Warren was, without a doubt, the soldier that spent the most time in our home. I can, even now, vividly remember when we first met. From the first hello, I felt a brotherly attachment. Warren told me that I was about the age of his younger brother who had been stricken with polio and spent weeks in the hospital attached to a life preserving iron lung. Warren took out a sheet of a paper and told me that after the war he was going to invent a "stay-in-the-home" iron lung so that the ill would be able to be at home and comforted day and night by a supporting family. He drew an outline of his proposed invention. I wish I had kept that piece of paper!

From the time of his first visit I doubt if Warren had ever been any place else. He affectionately called my mother "Mother Browne" and that he had two mothers—one in San Francisco and one in Sioux Falls and that he had two homes and wasn't it ironic that both hometowns began with the letters S.F. In his last visit he embraced us, told us he loved us, and that he would write and visit us after the war. We received just one letter from him. We came to the sad understanding that he had probably given his last full measure. About a decade ago I

was watching a realistic documentary about the 8th Air Force. It showed actual footage of bombing raids including one of a B17 being shot down, diving head first toward the ground— out of nowhere the thought came to me that Warren was on that plane and I shed tears of grief— at last.

Historian Stephen Ambrose wrote, “...they died one by one. Of each of them, I wonder what life was cut off here? A genius? Is it possible to imagine what he might have invented; we do know that his loss was our loss. A budding politician? Where might he had led us? A builder? A teacher? A scholar? A novelist? A musician? I sometimes think the biggest price we pay for war is what might have been.” And for me, what Warren might have contributed—a stay-in-the-home iron lung comes to mind.

In our front window a small banner, with three stars, indicated that mother had three sons serving in the armed services. Charlie and Wes were in their early thirties while Stan was a teenager. Their experiences were very different. Charlie’s was valuable, but routine; Stan’s was filled with uncommon luck; Wesley’s was HELL!

The majority of Charlie’s service time was spent behind an Ordinance counter dealing out supplies. He made it to Europe as that theater was in its last weeks. Charlie’s company was ordered to the Pacific; the troop ship was almost to its destination when Japan surrendered. Continuing its eastward voyage gave him the opportunity to circle the globe.

Stan had to be one of the luckiest soldiers in the wartime army. First, he was sent to Camp Roberts, California, for infantry training. At Roberts Stan was administered a test that indicated that he had the potential to be an engineer. He was sent east to attend City College of New York. The curriculum was tough and eventually physics did him in and he was sent to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, where he joined the 13th Airborne Division, 326th Gilder Infantry. However, his stay in New York gave him the opportunity to attend a Broadway production of “The Student Prince”, attend a New York Yankee baseball game; enjoy a street vendor’s hot dog; walk the paths of Central Park; but most of all, he was given the opportunity to be part of the Chuck Cavanaugh family in their brownstone home. The brownstone and Stan’s humble home shared the honor of providing a caring atmosphere for sons far from home.

The 13th Division arrived in France in early 1945. Stan saw no action. However, a number of times the division was assigned an objective only to have Patton's 3rd Army overrun the location. Once the towing plane was warming up when a jeep came rushing up just in time for the mission to be scratched. Stan's luck did not end with the victory in Europe; elements of the 13th Division were flown home to take part in a New York City victory celebration parade, he was a member of that group. The Division was ready and prepared to go to the Pacific theater when Japan surrendered.

In Stan's letters home he often mentioned his thankfulness to his mother for her uncommon determination that kept the family together. He was offered a Christmas season leave to go home. His train ride home was remarkable. The train was overcrowded and he stood outside, in the cold, between cars from North Carolina to Pittsburgh— about 400 miles. The 460 miles of track from Pittsburgh to Chicago was spent inside—standing up. In Chicago Stan found a seat that carried him home. Each time I hear a Christmas time standard's words, I think of his journey. "I'm dreaming tonight of a place I love even more than I usually do. And although I know it's a long way back, I promise you, I'll be home for Christmas, you can count on me..."

Wesley enlisted in the Army and had either the bad luck or honor of being a member of the 45th "Thunderbird" division. It fought longest (day one Sicily—day 511 Munich, Germany) and hardest (62,907 casualties). The troops were often up against the most hardened German troops; when the battlefield odds were even and the fortunes of the Allies hung in balance—when the difference between defeat and victory was a matter of character, the Thunderbirds prevailed.

Wesley was over thirty years of age which caused the younger men of his platoon to affectionately call him "Pops". From the beaches of Sicily; through the mountains of Italy; the battlefield of Anzio; and the plains and valleys of France, "Pops" was there.

Anzio was hell on earth. Historian Allen Kershaw writes: (the soldiers) were a pitiful looking group, bleary-eyed, beards, covered in bloodstains and mud. Their gaunt faces blackened by grime and cold sweat...they were numbered and many were stupefied, all at the

very limit of their mental and physical endurance, sustained by the last reserves of adrenaline and determination to live.”

Wesley’s Honorable Discharge papers identifies him as a Rifleman in B Company. Thunderbird historian Flint Whitlock quotes it’s commanding officer Kenneth Stemmons, “Our riflemen felt they account for as many Germans as our artillery or machine gun fire..if a man fired, he fired an entire eight round clip and then reloaded...when your life is on the line, you couldn’t care less.” Stemmons recalled a very brutal day and night that soldiers had endured at Anzio. “B Company had been built back up to full strength—193 men...the first morning we didn’t do so well...then we went out at night and got into a mine field. The next morning there were only about thirty-eight of us left. We had a lot killed, wounded, missing and captured.” Was Wes one or the thirty-eight, or was this the time he earned a Purple Heart?

It was in France that “Pops” lower right leg was punctured with shrapnel. Thunderbird nurse Lt. Frances wrote a pleasing and praising letter to the soldier’s newspaper The Stars and Stripes. “You G.I.’s say we nurses rough it. We wade ankle deep in mud. You lie in it...the patience and determination they (the wounded) show; the courage and fortitude they have is sometimes awesome to behold. It is a privilege to receive you, and a great distinction to see you open your eyes with that swell American grin. say “Hi-ya Babe.”

Wesley’s wounds required state side care. A nurse in Seattle, Washington, was also a receiver of a smile from Wes. She was there to comfort him after his visiting wife, Kay, delivered the devastating news that she wanted a divorce. June, 1945, Wesley returned to the supporting warmth of his loving Sioux Falls home.

It took several years for the darkness of war to be lifted and replaced with the light of a new life turned on by the love of a new wife, Vivian, by his care and love for his daughter, Diane, and the captivating interest he found in the tranquility of fishing.

The story of World War II has been told and retold with respect and affection for the men who served the nation. One by one the veterans are being laid to rest. Each Memorial Day a small American flag marks their final resting places. Those terrible names out of history books—Pearl Harbor, Bataan, the Coral Sea, Omaha Beach, Midway, Anzio—are now

remembered by a declining few. I am fortunate to be able to remember them when they were young.

From Draftee to Soldier: The Educational Journey of a Montana Teenager, 1941-1946

Arthur Buntin

On Sunday afternoon December 7, 1941` as I returned from a movie my parents informed me that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. Congress declared war on Japan on September 8 and on September 9 President Roosevelt delivered his war message. On December 11 Germany and Italy declared war on the U.S., keeping their pact with Japan. I was a sixteen year-old junior in high school at the time. I turned 18 on September 6, 1943. Graduating from high school in May 1943, I worked the summer of 1943 as a doorman for Fox Theaters in Missoula and also in the fall enrolled as a freshman at Montana State University, hoping to finish that quarter before being drafted into the service.

On September 6, my birthday, I registered as required by the president's Selective Service Proclamation. On the back of the registration card these statistics characterized me as a registrant: 5'5" in height, approximate weight 125 lbs., eye color brown, complexion medium and white out of 4 other categories: Negro, oriental, Indian, Filipino. On 8 October I received notice to take a physical exam on 12 October 1943. Later, I appeared before the draft board in order to get permission to finish that quarter. I recall feeling anxious as I explained my situation to them. What a relief I felt when they informed me November 9 that I was placed in Class 2-A and would be called in January 1944, allowing me to complete that term.

On 13 January 1944 I was inducted into the army at Butte, Montana after an army exam which began an educational journey lasting for several years, learning about myself and the world. Initially I learned that I had 'B' type blood. During my quarter at MSU I took, along with other courses, a one credit class in military science, gaining some idea of drill and soldering. Before becoming a draftee I had no experience with group living other than attending classes—no dorm or fraternity group experience as I lived at home.

In February I departed by train to Fort Douglas, Utah. As I waved good bye to my parents I experienced contradictory feelings—a sad feeling about leaving familiar surroundings and people but also a sense of adventure and curiosity about future events. Parental letters and my letters to home supplement documents, letters of colleagues and my memory for forthcoming details.

After a two-week stay at Fort Douglas, Utah in Company B (barracks 14) where, while on pass, I visited The Mormon Tabernacle I was transferred to Fort McClellan, Alabama for 17 weeks of training. Soldiers received a “Fun in Route” booklet to pass the time. Organized for a few, the gang and for those alone, the 35-page booklet contained match games, deciphering codes, magic and card tricks, locational charts such as Battleship and memory games such as naming cities in alphabetical order. With soldiers scattered up and down train car aisles I don’t recall engaging in group activities but pondered the entries by myself. I was more interested in viewing new scenery through the train windows as the train passed through parts of the country I had not previously seen.

I am not sure where it was-- at Fort Douglas or at Fort McClellan—that I received a 1942 brochure —“Take Care of Yourselves,” depicting symptoms of social diseases and the danger of prostitutes .This was a new aspect of my educational journey which influenced me during my entire service years. It emphasized avoidance of all exposures which damaged self-respect and ideals instilled by parents and church. It suggested attendance at USO clubs and places of wholesome entertainment. The concluding sentences read: “Return home a better man, morally, mentally and physically, with nothing to regret or fear and with your duty well done.”

THE FORT MCCLELLAN EXPERIENCE

BASIC INFANTRY TRAINING PERCEPTIONS FEBRUARY –MID- APRIL 1944

After a brief time at Company B 14th Battalion I was transferred five or six blocks to the Fifth Regiment’s 17th Battalion, Company C, third platoon where occurred most of my training for eventual replacement of soldiers overseas. At Company B the ‘Sarge’ growled around all the time. At Company C they talked like civilized men as I recalled on February 24. Their “Sarge” was a soft-spoken, Georgian with commanding eyes, negating the need for swaggering and loud behavior. Upon arrival all received a 46 page information “Hand Book for the Soldier” which

contained a map of the site and its relation to nearby cities In four states as well as Birmingham, Alabama, sixty miles away and Anniston, Alabama about six miles from the base. The booklet detailed proper mailing procedures and the components of basic training—a speedy way to introduce the draftee to the army.

I was used to school and parental expectations and a freer life but military discipline seemed sterner and stricter. This more regulated army life and living in close quarters with others became a challenge. A trained soldier was to be one who obeyed officers and noncommissioned officers who monitored training. Military courtesy required saluting officers identified by their stars, bars or stripes. Personal appearance required special attention including wearing a tie, daily shaving, well-trimmed hair and an erect posture. Trainees were expected to adjust to group life and keep their barracks clean by daily sweeping and mopping. Class A and Class B uniforms were identified by seasons; OD and khaki summer season. A private's basic pay was \$50.00 a month which was to be signed for monthly. For entertainment post exchanges and theaters could be found.

Initial infantry training (at Company B) included housing in long barracks with bunk beds—one lower and one upper—with lockers at the foot of the bed. Each soldier was expected to make his bed using techniques to tighten sheets and blankets to eliminate wrinkles. Bed and locker inspections were implemented to assure compliance. I don't recall that I had much practice in making my bed at home and later compared this practice to that of hotel maids who knew how to produce a tight sheet and cover. With my transfer to Company C in a Specialist Training Regiment, I was housed in a hut with a central coal stove and fewer bunks, a contrast to the longer Company B barracks holding many men.

My army education had just begun. Early training in February included bayonetting dummy figures, a gas-masked entry into a chamber filled with gas, learning how to fire a rifle and cleaning it properly, long marches in Alabama rain to develop stamina and the return which included chocolate cake served in the mess hall. I wrote home about a five-mile hike followed by foot exams to see if we had blisters. One older fellow had foot trouble from such hikes. We experienced lectures on first aid, military courtesy, rolling a full field pack and a combat pack, learning to put up a tent, health and sanitation, map reading and use of the compass, hand

grenades, chemical warfare, tank and airplane identification and what to do when captured. My letter home of February 28 told about entry into the gas chamber: "One chamber was full of tear gas and one full of chlorine. We learned the smells and characteristics of other gases. We learned about various types of grenades. The rifle which I have is rather heavy and my arm gets tired after a long march but I always get there without any trouble." Traversing an obstacle course for the first time was a trying experience.

My army education continued as I learned terms describing the camp schedule and regulated activities: reveille at 6:00 A.M.; policing duties to clear the area of debris; drill formations; mail call; retreat at 5:25 P.M.; tattoo (lights out) in the barracks 9:00 P.M. ; bed check and taps at 11:00 P.M. Sunday was my one free day. Other days I rose at 6:50 A.M., at breakfast, cleaned my rifle which had to be cleaned every day to prevent rust in this rainy climate. I learned to take my rifle apart (M-15) ,washed my fatigues and served on KP Saturday 4;30 A.M TO 8:00 P.M. where I washed bowls and cups and helped peel potatoes.. At home mom washed the dishes and did the laundry. My education to be a more independent person continued.

BAYONET PRACTICE: In mid-March I commented on bayonet drill; "That sure is tough on you. Some of the officers say that bayonet drill is one of the hardest things in the army. It sure is tiring." One fellow In my hut was hospitalized because of a broken leg he received in bayonet drill. His example increased our carefulness in implementing that drill. I was excused one afternoon from that drill to recover from dental extractions about 2 P.M. After the injection of a pain killer twice in the lower gum and twice in the upper gum I groaned and the dentist responded: "let's have none of that!" That afternoon in the hut I cleaned my rifle. For a few days I ate slower and chewed more on one side of my mouth.

NIGHT CRAWL & COMPASS USE: One Friday in mid-March from eight to twelve P.M. after blackening our hands and faces with soot we crawled on the ground using the compass to get to a certain designation behind enemy lines. I had my rifle all cleaned that night but it got dirty. The next morning during inspection the sergeant reported me as having a dirty rifle and that some of the black soot remained on my body.

RIFLE PRACTICE ON THE RIFLE RANGE: Friday March 14 was the last day to go out to the range for rapid fire. In order to qualify one must have a score of 84. The previous Wednesday I had earned 90 points out of a possible 120 on slow fire. The Company Commander challenged us by promising a cigarette carton to those securing expert status and a dollar for all bull's-eyes. I qualified as sharpshooter with my M-1 rifle at 168 points out of a possible 210. My Dad had commented on March 1 "When you get to be a good shot with the army rifle we can call you Dead Eye Dick. You can do anything anyone else can do."

GUARD DUTY: Knowing General Orders was a requirement before securing a pass and for assuming guard duty. One type of such duty was Fire Guard; we had a week's service for that function. Fortunately, there were no fires during that time. My Platoon was assigned guard duty patrolling sites on Friday March 10 from six-to-eight P.M. and from 12 A.M. to 2 A.M. I manned post #4-walkng around the Post Exchange. In the process I had to salute many officers who had business at the Post Exchange. The Officer of the Day visited me, asking me to cite general and special orders required of every man on guard duty and later remarked that the platoon had pulled one of the best guards in a long time.

MARCHING AND STANDING IN THE RAIN: Alabama's "liquid sunshine" added to the hardships of long marches. On February 23 I wrote home; "We have had quite a lot of marching so far. Thursday evening we have to go out on an overnight trip. We have to sleep out in the field and eat out of our mess kits." On March 15 I wrote about marching several hours; "it was the hardest rain I have ever seen. " My letter of March 28 noted "rainy all day." To conclude the eight weeks of basic training in April we marched 13 miles for a week's bivouac at Morrisville; It started to rain when we were about half way there. Five minutes after our return it poured rain while we were eating cake in the mess hall. I recall one evening standing in the rain at retreat.

THE WEEK BIVOUAC AT MORRISVILLE APRIL 9-16: On Saturday morning April 8 prior to going to Morrisville our platoon crawled about fifty yards through barbed wire with machine gun bullets whining overhead and blasts of dynamite bursting once in a while. I moved through a dry place and it was easy for me contrasted to others who passed through dirty and wet sites. In preparation for this event we stored items to eat while at camp—crackers, candy, apples, apple butter. Starting at 3;00 P.M. in order to arrive at a time when we could see to pitch tents,

we carried full packs, gas masks and a rifle on this 12 or 13 mile hike. That week's activities included running a close combat course, a mine-field course, an artillery problem, a course covering the squad and platoon in attacks. Occasionally some half days were time off.

THE POSITIVES OF POST LIFE: PASSES TO ANNISTON & ELSEWHERE

By March 19 I informed my parents that I had made three trips to Anniston. Sunday passes were in force to 11 P.M. Many soldiers visited the USO rooms. On Sunday March 26 I received a pass to Anniston after passing Saturday inspection. I wrote Mom that "it gives one such a free feeling to be able to do out once in a while. I find movies relaxing. In town I gorged on three malted milks, a hamburger and a dish of strawberry ice cream. At times I bought items to take back to the base. Such visits occasionally triggered a homesick feeling. In Anniston I walked through a park where children were playing on the green grass and civilians were laying in the cool shade of trees—some of them eating a picnic lunch. This scene brought back memories of hometown experiences. Upon returning to my post hut I wrote emotional thoughts "that standing on the hut porch I saw greenery, nearby trees, moving clouds and patches of sky reminiscent of home and wondered what I would be doing at home. Appreciation of home grows when one has been away. "How I missed going to school and working at the theater and sitting down with plenty of time to read a book and the good food at home."

PAY CALL: Saturday was payday. I received \$25.00 after standing in line about two hours. In order to receive my pay I had to salute the pay officer and say; 'Sir, Pvt. Buntin reporting for pay.'" Standing in line was part of a soldier's life. One lined up for supplies, mess hall eating, inoculations, signing up for pay and receiving pay. Every three months I purchased a bond with \$6.25 taken out of my pay every month for that purpose.

MAIL CALL: Parents as well as soldiers looked forward to mail—letters and packages. Even at Morrisville while on bivouac we had mail call. I wrote home asking parents to save my letters and to save their letters which I eventually returned to them so when I came home I could read them. Now decades later they serve as reminders for these memoirs. Sweets dominated package contents. Once I requested clothes hangers and enders (one-edge) razor blades which apparently I could not find at the local post exchange. I must have just begun shaving prior to

entering the service. On April 1 I wrote that I was dissatisfied with a photo which a professional photographer took but I was sending it home . My advice was 'I would hide them in a drawer.' When the photographer asked me to smile, I could not get myself to smile. My dad replied "I am anxious to see your picture even if it was sober."

POST EXCHANGES AND THEATERS: The PX featured reasonable prices for desired items—a pint of ice cream for 15 cents. On a Saturday night I saw movies at the post theater and bought a bottle of cold milk at the PX for 12 cents. This was appreciated because chow time provided milk only for cereal and coffee. One strong memory to this day focuses on walks through the base to my hut upon my return from Anniston or from a post theater as I heard the sound of juke box music coming from an entertainment center-- the Beer Barrel Polka, a popular tune of that time.

THE CLERICAL TRAINING MONTHS: APRIL 17-MID- JUNE 1944

The transition to specialist training loomed ahead as the final eighth month of basic infantry training concluded. Those in Company C-17 included about 30 clerks while some 200 were referred to as pioneers, buglers, armor artificers, chauffeurs, mechanics and cooks. On April 23 I recorded my response to this new phase of Army life: "It seems just like old times to go to school—to type—to hear lectures on interesting subjects such as morning report forms, filling out service records, filing of discharges and other behind the scenes activity such as duty and guard rosters, payroll and sick report. I learned that the 3 in my serial number means that I entered the army through selective service. The 9 refers to the Service Command from which I came. In speed tests I progressed from 25 words a minute to 41 words which is the required standard for clerks. Hours devoted to this training included 32 additional hours of typing, thirty hours of practical work in military correspondence, twelve hours in stenciling and 12 hours of mimeographing, six hours on charts and filing systems.

With coming of May and June hot weather became one of my complaints. A daily change of clothes became necessary. On May 16 I wrote; "one of the hottest days I have ever seen. The sweat was just pouring off me when finished with the day's work. I didn't feel like doing anything. I didn't eat much for supper. On the tables now they have bottles of salt tablets

to replace salt sweated out." I refrained from taking them as quite a few became sick and threw up after they ate the tablets.

Lt Lindquist, head of the clerk school, called me his 'Little Champion' because of my youthful appearance, one of several nicknames given to me at Fort McClellan. People think of me as quite young when compared with other boys who are eighteen. One of my clerk friends overheard Lt. Lindquist say that I had the highest grades in the class. In my filing test I scored 92 out of 100, missing two questions. On the Sick Report test I earned 98 out of 100 and on filing 92 out of 100. I received 95 in my typing test, 50 words a minute with three errors.

At the conclusion of our twelfth week of clerical training we prepared for General Inspection. We positioned logs around walks and undertook general repairs. There were no free nights that week. We stayed up until 1:00 A.M. scrubbing and cleaning equipment. That Saturday we rose at 5:00 A.M., ate breakfast out of mess kits so as not to dirty the kitchen. At 8:15 came General Inspection. The General asked questions of some: What did you have for breakfast? What is your service number, your rifle number? Where did you come from? What is the purpose of your 'Dog Tags'? The only thing he said to me was; 'Could you pull your stomach in a little more?' and "you'r a young fellow aren't you?" We received a superior rating. A period of relaxation followed. Both Saturday and Sunday nights I went to Anniston for food and a movie. Sunday I served as table waiter for an hour at each meal with the rest of the day off. Photographs were taken of the platoon and whole Company C.

THE TALLADEGA BIVOUAC: The 15th and 16th week of our cycle featured two weeks of maneuvers beginning on May 29. This triggered my comment; "The snakes will be out in force and also all the other southern insects." When we first arrived at the bivouac area at Talladega National Forest Reserve we dug fox holes six feet long, two and one half feet- to three feet wide and four feet deep. Before moving to a better site we filled our first fox holes, digging new ones at the new site. I had to quit because I ran into many big roots. So the for the last time I dug another foxhole which had many rocks in it. I finished and camouflaged it. Due to digging with a shovel my hands were callused. We were supposed to sleep in these dugouts but instead we slept in tents.

The first event of consequence was capture of a four-foot snake. Later in the day we caught two timber rattlers. I observed 'this is a place to study nature and insects. I have seen three or four lizards of varied colors. They jump from tree to tree and eat insects. The whippoorwill calls are frequent and the mosquitoes were thick necessitating use of mosquito netting. We had to walk a half mile to get meals. Each man had to be about twenty yards apart when proceeding to chow. It took about two hours for the entire company to eat this way. At noon we ate sack lunches of four sandwiches, cookies and an orange. We were allowed no lights at night but I brought five candles." On June 1 at the conclusion of the first week of bivouac I wrote "I am sitting on a hillside in a clump of bushes watching a ravine for anyone who tries to pass through our lines. Our group of 26 clerks is divided into three squads-one works in the Command Post and doing guard at night; the next day the same squad would be on day security guard, and the next day the same squad would be on reserve (not much work is done when on reserve).' Our bivouac area was separated from the rest of the company by a one-half mile forest, giving us much freedom. Our spot had a cold, running stream where we could wash and bathe. All I had to do as a daytime guard was to sit in a concealed spot; I could read or write while doing so.

The second week we moved to a new location at three in the morning with Sunday as a day off. The clerks set up a command post and filled out forms. In our group of clerks there were about half a dozen 18 year olds. We had five typewriters to work with. We were starting our 16th week of training. We had mosquito netting with us. I observed on June 5 many swellings on my skin from mosquito bites. Writing home I recalled how orange aid hit the spot: "When I am so thirsty, as I always am these days, I think of those inviting and cool pitchers of lemon, orange and pineapple that you made for me."

On June 13 at 9:00 A.M we returned to home base starting out about 3:00 A.M. A letter home evaluated the two-week outing; "Our huts really looked good to us. Those beds certainly felt soft compared to the hard ground which we slept on out in the woods. Out of the whole two weeks I got only one day of actual clerical work; the rest of two weeks was spent in doing guard (2 hours on,6 hours off) or in laying around. This two-week period was actually a rest period; most of the time we laid under the cool shade trees, slept, talked and ate."

The 17th week was spent in practical work at the Intelligence School. On a Monday night we went through an infiltration course, returning at midnight. I wrote; "It was some job crawling in the darkness. I was dirty when finished." On Wednesday evening we attended a Company-hosted party and dance in the Anniston American Legion Hall. Girls from Jacksonville College acted as partners. Food was plentiful. On Thursday and Friday most of the company shipped out to Fort Meade. I received a completion certificate for specialized training 17 April to 17 June 1944.

LIFE AT HEADQUARTERS 27TH BATTALION 5TH REGIMENT JUNE 1944-FEBRUARY 1945

With my transfer within the 5th Regiment to the 27th Battalion I was three months from my 19th birthday after which overseas duty loomed as a probability. I wrote home on July 30 that I had acquired cadre status (a NCO honorary card) with certain privileges not previously enjoyed. Staff Sargent Max Mitchell at this headquarters attached a nickname to me which he used throughout my time there. Based on my lack of stripes designating noncom status even though I was a cadre, he called me "patch" as the only insignia I wore was an army patch identifying my unit. My Anniston visits continued and my movie going occupied leisure time. A vote had been taken at Fort McClellan in August to select a Bivouac Girl. Movie star Betty Grable was the top vote getter over seven other female movie stars. My previous months of service qualified me for a furlough from 17 August through 2 September, a total of 17 days. I went home in summer khaki uniform. While there I resumed relations with boyhood friends, theater persons and former school personnel. I visited my 7th-8th grade teacher's class room. Students seemed to be interested in a returning soldier.

I returned to Fort McClellan resuming my clerical duties at battalion headquarters and using my leisure weekend time going to Anniston and even travelling to Birmingham Alabama where I attended the state fair. One strong memory of that event is triggered by a photo taken in a fair booth. At the fair I encountered a girl who, like myself, seemed lonely and was receptive to conversation and viewing together various displays and attractions. She did not object to putting my arm around her during the photo shoot. She gave me her address. However, because of the difficulty of finding her location in that city or its suburbs and the

probability of shipping out in the near future I did not see her again. One of my friends advised me “it is so much more enjoyable sharing time with girls.”

PERCEPTIONS OF ALABAMA RACIAL SEGREGATION: By re-examining the Information Hand Book for the Soldier received upon arrival at Fort McClellan, I inferred racial bias when reading the section on Bowling Alleys. One such site was located near Service Club No. 2; that site was for “Negro” troops. The Anniston Office of Travelers Aid at Bus Station on 10th and Wilmer had two sites—one for Negroes and one for Whites. Buses serviced the route between the Post and Anniston. A special bus for “Negro” troops operated every 30 minutes between 4:30 P.M. and 12:30 A.M. for the First Regiment area to 15th and Pine Streets in Anniston. The Handbook also cited a prophylactic Station in Anniston “for white troops at 915 Wilmer Ave, across from the bus station and for “Negro” troops at 408 West 15th St.” These items did not initially register with me as it was not until I visited Anniston and later Birmingham that I saw visible evidence of segregation. Neither had I thought much of the fact that there were no blacks in my units while training.

When attending Anniston movie theaters I was surprised to see separate water fountains designated for “Negroes” and whites. Also balcony seats were for “Negroes” and downstairs seats for whites. The restaurants were so crowded with soldiers I did not notice any segregation although there must have been some restrictions. When going to Birmingham on the bus I sat at the back of the bus as those were the only seats available. One lady elsewhere said “ Sonny you can sit on the arm of my seat.” Thus, inferring I should not be sitting in the back apparently reserved for “Negroes. I cannot remember my response, whether I caved in to pressure or remained seated at the back of the bus. I asked myself: why should I take such a precarious position on a chair arm for the more comfortable space already occupied.

Southern folks revealed patriotism and concern for soldiers. In Birmingham I ate at a restaurant on Thanksgiving. When I went to the cashier to pay my bill, she said that had been taken care of by others. I suppose my youthful and uniformed appearance impacted those who paid for my meal and whom I never met. In Anniston locals occasionally showed compassion for soldiers. When I went into a store to buy some food for our bivouac, I saw a jar of delicious apple butter. I asked the lady in charge whether or not it took points to get it. She said it would

take 10 points. So I started to take peanut butter, but at that time a lady standing nearby offered me—a complete stranger-- 10 ration points to get the apple butter.

TEMPORARY DUTY AT MORRISVILLE BATTLE COURSES: DECEMBER 1944-JANUARY 1945

On 15 December I was scheduled for Temporary Duty with HQ Co. #2 S-3 duty until 16 March 1945 to assist with Battle Courses at Morrisville, a position with long hours and exposure to the weather. Looking back I assume that was a tactic to retain me at Fort McClellan until I was eligible for furlough prior to shipment overseas and to adhere to headquarters personnel ratios.

MEASLES AND THE INTERRUPTION OF EMPORARY DUTY: in early January I came down with the German measles, called the Victory measles at the time. While at Ward 8 in the Regional Hospital I received letters from personnel at the 27th Battalion headquarters. They missed going to the movies with me as I had failed to show up due to my illness. Using my nick name 'PATCH,' Staff Sargent Max Mitchell's letter of 5 January urged me to enjoy this little holiday, eat heartily and when my year was up he would put me up for a PFC stripe. "We all miss you loads, even Lt. Martin asked about you." My impending overseas departure made it impossible for me to receive that stripe. A colleague at 27th Battalion headquarters went on furlough, allowing me to return temporarily to clerical duties for a time at that site. I went home on a 'Delay in Route' 26 January to 10 February 1945, a sixteen-day furlough. During that furlough I met a high school girl who later wrote me letters and we exchanged photos when overseas helping my morale very much. I left Missoula 6 February 1945 for my overseas tour.

THE FORT MEADE REPLACEMENT DEPOT AND CAMP SHANKS EXPERIENCE

Having taken a bus from the Pennsylvania train station, I arrived at Fort Meade, Maryland prior to 9:00 A.M. This was Replacement Depot #1 where men were processed prior to embarkation. I received \$31.10 reimbursement for rations and mileage between Fort McClellan and Meade. The post is about 20 miles from Washington D.C. I was stationed in company A 224th Battalion of the 6th Regiment. The average stay was six days. Overseas duty entitled privates to an extra \$10.00. Out of my \$31.00 a month I made a class 'E' allotment designating my parents as first and second choice. The cost of a bond each month would be deducted from my pay. While at the post there would be no censorship of letters. Future letters required no stamps but we had

to write 'FREE' in lieu of a stamp. We did not have to do KP as this was for recruits only; however, we had to sweep and mop our barracks in the morning.

Holding a pass good to Monday morning I went to Washington D.C. on Sunday February 12. I walked through the Capitol Building noting its many underground passages and beautiful marble etchings. I visited the Library of Congress. Looking down from a balcony, I viewed an immense reading room and book stacks. In the parks the squirrels were so tame they came right up to a person to get something to eat. In Washington Park Square I met two young and beautiful Washingtonians-juniors in the eastern high school. They showed me around and later we went bowling.

One day we received gas masks and new equipment and marked our new clothes. Accountability for your equipment was a reality in the army. On February 15 I received a second Typhus vaccine. In 1944 I had received three tetanus shots, a smallpox shot and typhoid vaccine. On the morning of departure February 16, 1945 with packs and gas masks we left Fort Meade for the Port of Embarkation—Camp Shanks, New York. At Camp Shanks we must have stayed eight days. I was in Company H, 4TH Platoon and serving as a temporary mail clerk and company clerk with officers that I enjoyed working for.

Weekend passes were encouraged since this was the last time we would be on U.S. soil. On my third pass I went to New York City where I visited the public library, Grand Central Terminal, rode through the subways, visited Times Square and Broadway. I went to Macy's Department Store, at that time the largest in the world. There at the fountain I met a very charming and beautiful young lady who worked in the Book Department. She showed me through the store. I was really amazed at all the things there. I went to a Stage Door Canteen. One of the ladies got us into a Stage Show--'Follow the Girls'. The next night I went to a place where free tickets to movies and stages plays were given to servicemen. I received a ticket to a stage play with the noted actress Carol Channing but I was distracted by another theater where Agatha Christie's "Ten Little Indians" was playing. I usually got back to camp about 1:30 or 2:00 in the morning. I recall I was very cautious in walking New York with its tall buildings so I would not get lost. I even had to ask for directions at one time.

A notebook recording overseas events indicated that I left the states on February 24, 1945. A ferry boat took us to a British steamship—the Aquitania. We boarded along with an estimated 5000-7000 men. We were lodged in tiered bunks which made it awkward and messy if someone became seasick and vomited downward. Those who tended to seasickness found that in a long mess line by the time you were ready to receive your food you might have to leave the line to throw up. Initially I experienced some seasickness. As a clerk I had no special office quarters so I set up my typewriter on a board across a bathtub. Due to close quarters we had to go out for air every two hours or so. I was impressed by the immenseness of the ocean and its spray on the face. In my educational journey unknown adventures awaited me—viewing the landscapes of Scotland, France and Germany, witnessing the battered and surviving architecture of war areas, travelling the awesome German autobahn with several Field Artillery groups, standing guard watching for werewolf Nazi youth groups, occupying homes and schools as quarters, observing French and German people, their customs and conditions, visiting concentration camps, and encountering Germans fleeing Russians and administering displaced persons, administering service records and redeployment of troops, flying in army cargo planes, attending German operas and movies and the Nuremberg trials, visiting the French Riviera at Nice on furlough and attending administrative school near Paris and visiting Paris sites while increasing promotional and intellectual opportunities through books. Playing a role in the occupation of Germany was one of the future roles awaiting me.

The European War: Editorial Attitudes of the Aberdeen American News, 1939-1941

Arthur Buntin

SOURCES & SCOPE: The Aberdeen American News editorials reacting to the European War in its initial phases 1939-1941 revealed attitudes toward that war's twists and turns within U.S and South Dakota political circles as well as in the course of overseas events. Forty-seven front page Soapbox columns by J.A. Bailey and 135 interior editorial columns are the sources of this paper. Editorial thoughts changed somewhat over this time period as well as maintained some consistency. Events of that period have some similarities to current events in 2015-2016 involving presidential power, presidential election campaigns, the rivaling for predominance of foreign and domestic policy and security issues stemming from overseas events.

USE OF CONTRASTS: HOME AND ABROAD: Editorials relied on home and abroad contrasts to emphasize particular points—a technique which found its way into the editorial of September 14, 1940: "Shouldering of Arms in South Dakota". The hunting season loomed ahead on October 1. The editor compared pheasant hunters "shooting for sport instead of hunting for blood" associated with the European War: "Gun blasts will rival that of Europe but, except for accidents, the shots will not bring human death and sadness. Mobilization here is for recreation, laying in of supplies of ammunition will be for fun; provisions may be packed without thought of rationing; uniforms will be to deceive sharp-eyed ducks, geese and pheasants, not to aid in hiding from enemy bombers."

Seasonal celebrations provided the Soapbox an opportunity to contrast home conditions with those of Europe under Hitler. Soap Boxer Baily used Thanksgiving to write about thankfulness on November 28, 1940, contrasting peaceful American skies with messerschmidts in European skies and Aberdeen citizens eating turkey while Europeans stood in line for rations.

The Soapbox column for September 12, 1940 included thoughts of London suffering four days of Nazi hell at a time when Congress was still considering the peacetime draft bill. Hearing the mail plane rumbling overhead, Bailey thought “What if that drone were multiplied a thousand fold and what if it didn’t leave for hours and what if it was laying volatile ‘eggs’ all over our city—devastating our homes and business buildings and burying hundreds of citizens under the debris and demoralizing those lucky enough to escape the blasts?” Using these images, he lambasted Congress for political showmanship in delaying an important defense measure—the draft bill and asserted Hitler delighted in such delays.

MIDWESTERN CONSERVATISM AND ISOLATIONISM—GEOGRAPHY & THE SHADOW OF WORLD WAR I

In years 1939-1941 South Dakota was viewed as “the most Republican State in the nation” according to Aberdeen American News editorials. Fiscal conservatism was a strong belief and practice. Republicans held congressional and state offices. Conservative attitudes in foreign affairs may be attributed in part to the mid-west location of the Dakotas, so far from the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. This was often voiced by editors of the Aberdeen American News and companion front page feature, The Soapbox. An editorial of October 2, 1940 explained views on “War talk aimed at remaining out of Europe’s War.” Although South Dakota is located hundreds of miles from both oceans and thousands of miles from the battlefields of foreign wars South Dakotans had thoughts about war. J. A. Bailey of the Soapbox column on January 10, 1941 characterized interventionism: “That’s the seething issue which we don’t feel so strong out here in the Middle West. Thank heavens for that—it’s too wearing on the system.” On February 15, 1941 the editor indicated Aberdonians resided in almost the center of the nation and “are sometimes inclined to lean toward isolationist thinking.”

In response to Democrat Ed. Flynn’s Sioux Falls remarks ‘There must be something dramatic done in the Midwest to awaken people to the dangers that really exist,’ the editorial of June 12, 1941 responded about the state’s mental condition: “We’re not too dumb now; we just don’t realize and attributes some blame to the state’s representatives in Washington. Even as late as September 21, 1941 the editorial “War Reaches West” assessed past apathy: “Up to

this time people out here in the Middle West have had few visible reminders that the country is in the midst of an emergency. We have no defense industries to speak of; we see no troops marching; we hear no guns. The American Firsters leave us more or less alone. The interventionists apparently think we are too insignificant to bother with. As a result we South Dakotans have gone along just about in the normal way." From now on, he asserted, "we will feel the defense tax burden and must plan for it. In this way the war had come west."

Memories of World War I impacted not only the rise of Nazi Germany but also that memory created lasting images on American public opinion in the late 1930s when Europe's troubles mounted as Hitler occupied Poland and a Western Front emerged between Germany, France and England. For Americans issues of nonintervention, neutrality, embargoes and freedom of the seas emerged. Similar issues had arisen in the Great European War of 1914-1918 regarding what many Americans termed in 1939 as the "European Mess."

IRONY OF ARMISTICE DAY: Seasonal celebrations such as Armistice Day triggered commentary on post armistice thinking as well as the actual war of 1914-18. On November 10, 1939 the Soapbox column recalled the end of the war in 1918 twenty-one years previously: "Today, with the memories of the last bloodbath still fresh the major powers of the world are at each other's throats in the early stages of a conflict that may outmatch the last for wholesale slaughter." Using that thought as a springboard for support of non-intervention the writer highlighted the armistice remembrance of 1939 as one of "special significance to Americans." He recommended "calm reflection and deep study of the previous war's causes and results, which should "harden our resolve to confine our fighting to our own borders." He concluded with a Dupree resident's plea for peace, "Armistice 1939". That poem asked Christ to "Heed a Nation's cry,/Lest we too forget/And send men out to die."

The irony of Veterans Day 1940 appeared in the Soapbox of November 12 in a mocking tone as "thoughts born in a blizzard." In the midst of another world war it seems strange that 'a score of years ago we were just laying away our guns after having 'made the world safe for democracy' and now there is no democracy saved on this continent. What a mockery. I suggest now that we make Armistice Day part of Memorial Day and have both together. For all it means

now is a reunion for the boys of 1918.” The boys of 1918 were fresh in his mind as he had attended last summer the American Legion convention in Watertown, S.D. His July 31 description of the boys of 1918 focused on signs of aging and summarized the current war’s impact as “sobering” on the boys who fought to end wars; “they see the possibility of repetition of the things they went through a quarter of a century ago with the thought that their sons will have to wear the tin hats lends a more serious tone to these scenarios.”

SHADOW OF WORLD WAR I-PROPAGANDA PARANOIA 1939:The American News editorials in the fall of 1939 reminded readers about the role of foreign propaganda as one factor in luring America into war in 1917-18 and that in the late 1930s they should be cautious about such propaganda when various nations involved in conflict publicized their cause to the American public and government, justifying their cause and seeking trade and aid. Books published around the mid-1930s reinforced the brainwashing role of propaganda as well as other causes such as bankers and merchant’s leading to entry into war.

In response to German actions against Poland the editor wrote on September 1, 1939 “Beware of Propaganda.” Sort facts from propaganda when Germany suggests it is fighting a defensive war with the Poles. After England’s declaration of war on Germany September 3 an editorial of September 6, 1939 insisted “Americans must be able to see beyond their noses. They must judge current happenings with a view toward the future; they must not act hastily.’ Avoid actions of pre-World War I days. The editorial of September 19 labeled “Lindys for America” cited Col. Lindbergh’s view as “unselfish” when he cautioned against “falling for propaganda intended to make Americans believe they have frontiers in Europe.” Again, on October 23, 1939 an editorial-- entitled “We must not be fooled”-- praised the nation’s press for its stand against propaganda, reminding readers of “The foolishness of our last war experience” and cautioned against present involvement.

SHADOW OF WORLD WAR I—AVOID INDEBTEDNESS: American News editorials of October, November and December 1939 revealed concerns about the financial cost of intervention, including mounting debt of intervention as well as potential loss of youth in land battles and sea warfare. The pocketbook editorial of November 17, 1939 cited Washington statistics that

“war participants were spending \$100,000,000 a day, not counting property losses. Paying that price for sticking our nose into other nation’s business is unthinkable.” However, the editor admitted if we were ever invaded we would pay that price. Nevertheless, by a calm response the United States “may remain aloof and be in a position to direct the world along smooth social and economic paths. Pocketbook rationale for which Americans are noted will dictate Americans to steer clear of war on foreign soil.” On December 10, 1939 an editorial, labeled “We must heed the cost,” cited the protective role of two oceans as assurance “that it is not necessary for us to go hog wild on the matter of building great armies and navies and equipping them with billions of dollars of new equipment” resulting in a mounting national debt. Financial concerns extended into January 1940 when the editorial of January 7 urged a “pay as we go policy.” Hearing France had been invaded, the editor urged avoiding new taxes which contributed to additional debt.

Most of these cautions marked the first few months of the European War and appear less frequently in subsequent years of editorializing except for debate on the mandatory embargo authorized by the Neutrality Law of 1935 and later adjustments. As the European War expanded and perceived dangers to the United States and Western hemisphere surfaced, editorial attitudes were modified. Even views about Col. Lindbergh changed.

KEEPING THE U.S. OUT OF WAR—ISOLATIONISM: Aggressions prior to November, 1939 contributed to a growing isolationism in the United States even before the declaration of war between Germany, France and England on September 3. Ethiopia (1935-36); China (1937-38), and Spain’s civil war (1936-1939) became sites of conflict which were reflected in gum cards of 1937-1939 sold to school children depicting in color the horrors of war with slaughters by bomb, machine gun and sword—evidence of war’s horrors to promote isolationism and anti-war sentiment. Expansion of Hitler’s Germany between March 1938 and August 1939 and France and England’s declaration of war on Germany September 3, 1939 preceded President Roosevelt’s Labor Day speech in which he declared “I hate war. I hope the United States will keep out of the war...Every effort of your government will be directed to that end.” The idea surfaced that America must remain safe and strong so that it would be able to later

salvage a war-torn world. The Soapbox of September 22, 1939 focused on those who “claim that we have much to fight for in this European mess and who suffer from snap-judgementitis; they need a review of past aggression which reveal the hopelessness of resolving problems of the old world. What good will come for us to become again the chump Samaritan? What does it matter to us what kind of government they have over there? Our job is to safeguard the present American democracy.”

KEEPING THE U.S. OUT OF WAR: EMBARGO REPEAL AND CREATION OF DANGER OR WAR ZONES

With the outbreak of the European War the President proclaimed neutrality as provided by the act of 1935. While isolationists suggested a stronger law restricting arming of American merchant ships and forbidding American citizens to travel on belligerent ships, President Roosevelt on September 21, 1939 called for a special session to adjust the Neutrality Act of 1935 in less stringent ways: abandonment of a mandatory embargo on munitions to end distinctions between aggressor and victim, more hurtful to the French and English than to the Germans. Cash and Carry became a major issue in the ensuing public and Congressional debates.

“Shipping in War Zones” dominated the editorial of September 26, 1939 which felt such changes would invite trouble. Comparing public streets to sea travel lanes, the editor asserted “We have a right to sail the free seas. However, it is good sense to avoid trouble by not sailing into the line of fire” and as a means of self-protection “as we learned 25 years ago the complications of such actions may prove disastrous.” Not until early November 1939 did Congress finally repeal the arms Embargo by a vote of 55 to 21 in the Senate and 243 to 172 in the House. The editorial of November 6, 1939—“Watching Neutrality Laws”—assessed the results of six weeks of Congressional “squabbling” in which Congress followed the proposals of the President who proclaimed on November 4 the end of the ban on sale of small arms to belligerents and made it unlawful for U.S. ships to enter Danger Zones. The Congress had agreed this was the best plan to keep the United States out of war. The editorial concluded future events will prove whether the embargoists or the President had better foresight.

Two years later after passage of Lend-Lease new attitudes replaced those of September 26, 1939 when the editor felt it might be safer to avoid troubled areas (War Zones) even though we had the right to sail on open oceans. The editorial of September 26, 1941—"Convoys Accepted"—revived the word convoy which previously had been considered a dangerous concept by isolationists who "screamed and wailed that this escorting ships from the United States and Canada to allied ports would be the step thrusting us actively into war." The editor admitted convoys were a necessary step in the defense program: "What a laughing stock to have called our ships back within the 12 mile zone and permitted lend-lease goods to pile up on the wharves of the country after spending billions of dollars to manufacture them...we must make our industry felt on the firing line across the sea."

On November 19, 1941 the editor focused on "Fickle Congressmen" who resisted changing the Neutrality Act; 194 had voted against changes and 212 for changes. Many congressmen deserted the President in part for coddling labor. He blamed "the stampede toward retaining the last sorry vestiges of the outmoded Neutrality Act" in part to mob psychology. The pressure on the two-year boys was terrific. The America First Committee operating under the scarebreed cry of 'The Blood of our Boys is on your Backs' swamped congressmen during the last hours before the vote with warning telegrams and letters. It looked to the harassed congressman as if every constituent in the country was coming at him with blazing eyes, dilated nostrils and clawing talons. Pressure from only a noisy few can take on awesome proportions to a congressman even though he has known ever since the Lend-Lease bill was passed that it committed us to the consequences that our goods were delivered."

PREPAREDNESS THROUGH PEACETIME CONSCRIPTION: JULY-NOVEMBER 1940-1941: Eleven months in late 1939 and early 1940 elapsed before peacetime conscription arose as an issue in Congress and the public to debate and decide on its role as a preparedness effort or, as in the eyes of some, a step on the road to war. The Soapbox often addressing trivia about local and regional events, devoted seven partial columns to conscription and the main editorial column addressed the issue six or seven times In 1940. On July 29, 1940 "The Draft and Aberdeen" became the editorial subject. Those between 18 and 65 would register but the age group from

21 to 30 inclusive were the first to be called for training. It would not be until October that the Aberdeen American News would list in two issues several pages of those who had registered in the Aberdeen area.

On August 2, 1940 the cautious editorial “Conscription: Pro and Con” appeared as “a justly concerned Issue” and a “serious step” to be taken only after thorough review of its ramifications. The editor characterized Senate defenders and detractors as persons of good faith with one side believing it would discourage invasion and the other side considering it an invasion of freedoms and a route to war. Both differed on the method by which manpower was obtained. Opponents of conscription favored a voluntary force as sufficient if the service period was reduced to one year from a proposed three years while supporters felt such a solution would be too slow. The editor speculated that events in the ensuing two weeks on the British battle front could decide the issue.

How such a draft would impact business became the subject of an August 5, 1940 editorial. A proposed amendment on reemployment of persons drafted at the end of their service included reimbursing for difference between their service and company salaries. The economical- minded editor felt it better to have lower paying person drafted to make the problem of reimbursement less costly. On August 9, 1940 a headline in the American News ran: “Draft Called Tragic Necessity” and the editorial of that date—“Wild Talk in High Places’— testified to the bitterness of Senatorial debate with demagoguery over conscription as a bad example. He cited epithets such as “liar” and “slacker” hurled at each other. He urged “sound thinking.’ Editor Baily on August 20 continued with ‘No Time for By Play” commenting on legislative delay on some form of conscription. He exclaimed: “put an end to dilly-dallying at once.” the American News headline of August 23 read: “FDR opposes delay.”

The Soapbox of September 10, 1940 included “A Call to the Colors” referring to National Guard units as the headlines of the paper announced ‘Super Bombers Blast London; 600 are Killed.” Aberdeen’s National Guard units—14th Field Artillery and the 109th Quartermasters— needed 95 more enlistments to fill out peacetime mobilization quotas. The Aberdeen Armory had been set up as a recruiting office for enlistments with daily afternoon and evening hours as

well as Saturday afternoon hours. The Soapboxer remarked If he were younger “I would hop at this chance to get in a year of service before I was called up under the terms of the National Conscription Act.”

President Roosevelt made headlines in the Aberdeen paper on September 17, 1940— “FR Signs Draft Setup into Law.” In October over 16 million signed up for this draft. The event triggered several Soapbox comments. On October 11, 1940 the impact of that law on employment opportunities appeared in a heading: “Jobs are opening everywhere.” “As M-Day approaches for our young men, employers in South Dakota banks, stores, newspapers and other lines are casting about for bright youth to take over the posts to be vacated for a period by the fellows who will don uniforms.” On October 19 the soapbox expanded on impact of the conscription law: “Young men are not the only South Dakotans affected by the draft; many stenographers, clerks etc. are being called up from the civil service waiting list. Most of them will take jobs in Washington D.C.’s conscription headquarters. Attempting to ease any strains enlistment service may create, Soapboxer Baily gave these encouragements: “Boys when you get your new uniforms see how much easier it will be to attract feminine eyes. It makes me think of 1917.”

With National Guardsman leaving for Fort Ord the American News editorial of December 6, 1940 offered comfortable advice to those left behind; “There is no actual war line toward which our boys are headed. ‘I’ll see you in a year’ was the standard phrase of parting; heartening is the speculation that by mobilizing now we may become so strong and skillful at the business of soldiering that the war dogs will stay away from our doorstep.” Six months later on May 28, 1941 the editorial-“Draft and the Farmer” suggested that exemption for men to work in defense industries be extended to young men on the farm so they can produce food supplies so essential in an emergency.

“Education In the Army” was the editorial of October 25, 1941. Reception centers decided individual skills and men trained to be cooks, electricians, mechanics, radio experts and medical technicians. The Soapbox of November 21, 1941 commented on “The Girl I left Behind” and that hometown support was a crucial morale booster for servicemen. The idea and

image of Miss America is equally important as knitting for the Red Cross and buying defense bonds. He quotes an army person: "I've seen more pretty girls since joining the army than we've ever seen before."

DAKOTA LAMENT & FORECAST; FARM SURPLUS DISPOSAL—MINERAL & INDUSTRIAL

DEVELOPMENT: Off and on state resource development, as related to the farm problem of surplus disposal and mineral resources received editorial attention. With the fall of Paris imminent the editorial of June 14, 1940 entitled 'War and the Farm' declared Europe would be a poor market for American exports given current events and that surpluses accumulated in the United States would cause a drop in grain prices. "A Surplus of Wheat" editorial on August 16, 1940 stressed importance of exports to farmland production. Speculating as to what an early end of the European War would do for our exports, the editor envisioned increasing prices comparable to two dollars after the First World War. An open market would resolve the current farm program. On August 18, 1940 an editorial for 'Support the Food Stamp Plan" stated that the federal plan in operation over a year was the "most practical system for decreasing stocks of surplus foods which had resulted from closed overseas markets. Consumer cooperation with farmers would be helpful as they participated in the food stamp plan. War's impact on cattle rearing and sale price indicated economic concerns of the editor in his column of October 31, 1940 "Cattle Outlook Impressive." Higher prices for beef resulting from defense expenditures had increased public buying power for beef the last eight months. The editor seemed compelled to point out that South Dakota had been neglected in funding for industry and farm production but expenditures elsewhere had spilled over in demand for Dakota beef. The "Farm Outlook Improves" editorial of September 28, 1940 asserted that peace and preparedness involved purchase of surplus farm crops to be fed to persons whose good health depends on better rations. The editorial noted there are an estimated 24 million Americans living on an inadequate diet. Congress should appropriate funds to take care of participants of the preparedness program as a practical means to dispose of the farm surplus.

As late as August 21, 1941 farm surplus reduced one World War I shadow according to an editorial "No War Bread" which softened the trend of potential rising bread prices by

recalling a much worse trend in the past conflict—“the black and horrible war bread we had to wash down in 1917-18.” The availability of surplus wheat assured tastier bread.

Laments continued on February 12, 1941. “Give Us Defense Plants” cited the defense program’s neglect of the Dakotas and the Great Plains and justified more attention on the grounds that remote Dakota was less vulnerable to attack than seaboard states in case of invasion. Many workers who had fled the area during past droughts would return to work in defense plants. “This bread basket of the nation deserves consideration because civilians as well as our armed forces depend on vital food. The editorial of February 13, 1941 —“Develop the Missouri” —focused on resource development. Following Nebraska’s Senator Norris’s suggestions the editor urged action. The Dakotas and the nation need to harness power for mineral resource development: “A hydro-electric plant on the Missouri River would open the way for wide-scale development of rural electric facilities” and make possible extensive irrigation along the river, thus improving the breadbasket’s morale.

DAKOTA LAND AND SPACE AS A RESOURCE: Localized aviation activity and speculation on its future received focus in an editorial of August 29, 1941`--“Bombers over the Hub.” The Aberdeen Chamber in the past had attempted to have transcontinental airlines pass through Aberdeen as it is on the most direct route from Seattle to eastern industrial and military centers. In 1941 the U.S. Army had recognized this but commercial lines had not. Occasionally, as many as 17 huge army planes flew over Aberdeen at high altitudes guided by radio beams and in the editor’s opinion “the only arterial air highway in South Dakota.” Aberdeen was engaged in completion of airport improvements; Aberdonians should keep in step with aviation as “in the not far distant future the commercial line will realize what the U.S. Army is proving in daily flights as most direct and speediest.”

Potential use of South Dakota space for an air base and a bomb practice range was suggested in the Soapbox of November 3, 1941. Rumors had circulated that the air corps had been looking for such a base for advance flight training and surveys were in process. While Sioux Falls, Rapid City and Watertown were mentioned, the Soapbox felt Aberdeen could qualify as it would result in enhanced benefits for the city. On November 30, 1941 the editorial

“Airship—and Future” was triggered by recent South Dakota rail abandonments and the increased role of truck and automobiles to transport cargoes. The editor speculated that after the war is over aviation would increase in importance due to America’s defense programs: “Airliners and small planes freed from war service are likely to find them in peaceful pursuits in carrying freight, passengers and mail on short and long hauls.”

Another lament in the form of an editorial “Blessings in Disguise” appeared October 13, 1941. Assessing the state’s low OPM ranking as last on a list of 48 states for defense spending, the editorial contrasts that situation with the state’s shouldering increased taxes and living costs without wage increase. However, the state may have consolation by looking into a brighter future; when close down arrived the state would have a more gradual adjustment to the post war conditions. Until then “we must sit helplessly and watch the billions of dollars flow by with a minimum share for the state.”

In October 1939 South Dakota Democratic Senator Bulow in Sioux Falls had asserted that the U.S. must stay out of war: “Hitler isn’t going to conquer the world...let’s not get unduly excited. The U.S. owes it to itself to take care of its own problems and let Europe adjust its own affairs.” In an editorial of October 22, 1939 the writer indicated Bulow blamed the allies for false promises to Poland and the present mess, quoting Bulow “let them stew in their own juice as far as Uncle Sam is concerned.” The Soapbox column of November 3, 1939 quoted Karl Mundt as dubious about Roosevelt’s neutrality measure and indicated Mundt’s constituents had written him “we must keep out of the war.” The Soapboxer revealed that South Dakota Republican Chan Gurney supported Roosevelt’s neutrality bill keeping American shipping out of danger zones for which he received some letters of condemnation.

Disturbing war news preceded the July Democratic and Republican national and state conventions. British troops evacuated at Dunkirk from May 28-June 4, 1940. In June Italy entered the war and the French authorized Germany to occupy northern France on June 22.

SUMMER 1940; NATIONAL & STATE POLITICAL CONVENTIONS AND CAMPAIGNS: Aberdeen American News’ editorials took a stand regarding a split in the Republican Party, nationally and state-wide, during the presidential election campaign of 1940. Establishment_Republican

candidates such as Taft, Vanderbilt and Dewey had vied for nomination at the Philadelphia national convention in June but Wendell Willkie emerged as the nominee. As in the Republican campaign of 2015-2016 an anti-establishment vs establishment controversy arose. The American News editorial of July 1, entitled 'Willkie is a Wise Choice,' speculated that "many GOP old timers who place party above everything else will squirm at the selection of an ex-Democrat for president and who has an aura of liberalism about him." The editorial of July 3 justified Willkie's selection calling him 'no politician' and so 'old party wheel horses do not cheerfully give way to less experienced politicians. One free from political obligation is free to act on his own—a good thing if he has sound judgment and charts the right course." A Stop Willkie Movement emerged in Congress but did not prevail. Not until September 29 did the American News officially support Willkie even though the editor had been sympathetic to his candidacy since July. "The editorial declared "America is bigger than Roosevelt—bigger than the new Deal administration." Eight years had shown power centralized in one man and was sufficient reason to deny him a third term.

Editorials also commented on the Democratic Convention prior to and after the selection of a nominee. An editorial of July 14, 1940 characterizes Roosevelt's request for additional defense appropriations accompanied by a one-sentence promise "We will not send our men to take part in European Wars" as a masterful strategy." With Roosevelt accepting a Third term nomination the biased editorial of July 19 focused on that nomination. Based on press reports the editor felt there was not as much enthusiasm as previous conventions. Demonstrations appeared forced with 'We want Roosevelt' seeming rehearsed and non-inspired. He charged that the nomination was not democratic in that it carried out wishes of an inner circle and that Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace was chosen for Vice President "upon order from the 'BIG BOSS' rather than from promotions by the delegates."

On October 2, 10 and 24 three editorials praised Willkie prior to the November election focusing on the third term as a threat to liberty and that Willkie's business background and organizing ability countered the democratic argument about not changing horses in the middle of a stream. One praised Willkie's farm proposals noting that the New Deal had failed to build

an adequate market for farm products and stressed again the Willkie approach of prosperity through expansion rather than scarcity.

GOVERNORSHIP ELECTIONS & STATE PLATFORMS: The election of governor became a topic for editorials and Soapbox comments. Both parties held conventions in Pierre, the state capitol. The American News editorial of September 29, 1940 supported Webster's Lewis Bicknell for governor, a veteran of World War I and in the editor's opinion up against "the most formidable political machine ever known in South Dakota." On October 5 the Soapbox characterized Bicknell as a candidate of the 'Far north' which hadn't sent a chief executive to Pierre for many years. That portion of South Dakota had not secured a fair break for years. An editorial of July 25, 1940—"Another Good Platform"—complemented state Republicans for favoring increased efficiency and curtailing expenditures.

Both editorial and Soapbox columns revealed antipathy for the administration of Governor Bushfield. A September 4, 1940 editorial claimed the administration had too much centralization of power in Pierre. And on October 8 charged the administration's campaign financing had used taxpayer money by permitting state employees paid time off for participating in the campaign when they should have been at work in Pierre. Soapboxer Bailey on October 3, 1940 questioned Bushfield's "two-year reign at Pierre" as he spent more time "preaching on national issues." On October 9 he referred to Bushfield as "pussy footing on state issues as his opponent Bicknell of Webster challenged him to put his cards on the table regarding contract rigging for stockpile materials."

DAKOTA POLITICIANS 1040-1941:Occasionally impressions of South Dakota's politicians emerge and their stands on various national issues as well as their position in the election of 1940. Six focused on Republican congressman Karl Mundt; three on Republican Senator Chan Gurney; three on Democratic Senator Bulow and one on Republican congressman Francis Case.

KARL MUNDT: A July 9, 1940 editorial on "Mundt Does a Right Face' after speaking at the Republican Convention when he joined the 'Stop Willkie Movement' for President which the editor branded as a "mistake. Now after discovering how badly he missed the boat, he is making vigorous efforts to patch things up, joining thousands who jumped on the band wagon."

The editor stated Mundt had praised Willkie so many times “it would be hard to believe he was a ‘Stop Willkie Man’”. Mundt’s initial opposition had worked out to benefit Willkie because Mundt had become “a more vociferous supporter than he might have ordinarily been as Mundt’s enthusiasm and orating ability are something to reckon with.” The Soapbox of October 27, 1940 reflected on Karl Mundt: “even if he makes an occasional political mistake, you cannot dislike him personally. His breezy good nature and sincerity make you wonder why you ever got sore at him. People like to hear him because he is such a good speaker.”

Months later, on August 12, 1941 the editorial “Harmful Politics” asserted Karl Mundt, while affirming that Karl loved his country, the editor asserted that “Karl does like to play partisan politics.” The editor suggests that those who cheer Representative Mundt now may resent his position later.

A note of disillusionment appeared in the November 29, 1941 editorial--“Karl in New Lineup”— the American First Group-- to strengthen his role as an antiwar crusader. Believing that isolationists aimed to weaken national unity, the editor urged Karl : “ devote a little time to the affairs of his district.”

CHAN GURNEY: South Dakota republican senator Chan Gurney received editorial praise— “Gurney’s Status Grows’-- on September 10, 1940. Gurney had defended Willkie against Democratic charges that Willkie attached amendments to the conscription bill and that he was a capitalist willing to draft men but not money. The editor characterized most Republicans as “AWOL or silent in choosing the Republican nominee for President” and since the American News favored Willkie the editor found favorable words for Gurney. The “Chan Spurns Hokum” editorial of October 28, 1940 praised Senator Gurney for his statesmanship in foreign policy by supporting complete national defense and aid to the Allies without political drivel. He had supported repeal of the Neutrality Act In its entirety. Comparing him to fellow republicans from the state, the editor declared Gurney had made them look “more than a little wishy wash. Perhaps he is much a Roosevelt hater at heart as are his colleagues but he refused to permit this consideration to dominate his thoughts Chan may not be endearing himself to his party mates but he is speaking the language of thousands of independent thinkers in this state.”

WILLIAM J. BULOW: South Dakota' senior senator Bulow at the state Democratic convention asserted that despite dislike of a third term for Roosevelt "he is always a Democrat." The Soapbox of September 8, 1940 criticized Senator Bulow's opposition to the conscript bill: "The 71-year old Democrat believes his cause is just. He views certain dictatorship for the United States should the universal draft measure be enacted into law." Citing Bulow's remarks "there is no threatened emergency except an imaginary one," the Soapbox editor concluded "only history will prove the soundness or falsity of his stand."

As a result of the strong support for Roosevelt in the election of November 5 a slight reversal in tone is noted in the editorial of November 9, 1940 entitled "A better President." The President now could carry out common goals of a stronger America. That month the Gallup Poll had revealed more national unity for a strengthened defense as well as a strong desire to keep America out of war unless attacked. The editor at the end of 1940 was not certain who would emerge victorious in the European War but he was strong for security through self-defense and considered strikes a major threat to speedy production. On December 27, 1940 he urged readers not to blame labor but blame "hard-boiled labor leaders and recalcitrant employers." Government arbitration was a necessity

SPECULATION ON REELECTION OF ISOLATIONIST S.D. CONGRESSMEN: The Soapbox on February 13, 1941 questioned the isolationism of "our boys in Congress" and their stand against a pending Lend-lease bill: "will the isolationist stands of Case, Mundt and Bulow be borne out by history as the popular course or will the all-out aid to Britain route go down in the books as the salvation of the nation?" He cites that six out of ten voters back Roosevelt's lease-lend measure, an issue which split the Republican Party. On May 27, 1941 the Soapbox asserted that on international policy candidates for the senatorial election of 1942 Bulow (a Democrat), Bushfield, Mundt, and Case are just as alike as four pieces out of the isolationist pod and all hate Roosevelt equally and thoroughly but they face political danger as defense efforts grow, making them appear "like lost lambs in a thunderstorm."

CHANGING EDITORIAL ATTITUDES OF 1941: GROWING CRITICISM OF ISOLATIONISM AND OBSTRUCTIONISM

GROWING ACCEPTANCE OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER AND LEADERSHIP: One presidential unilateral action--a Proclamation of Unlimited National Emergency in May 1941--became a turning point, along with presidential signing of the Lend-Lease bill, in securing popular opinion about the European War. The Soapbox of May 28, 1941 asserted the President opposed foreign domination of North or South American bases, menacing U.S. security. The President also affirmed freedom of the seas, allowing the flag to fly anywhere where trade or military duty called our ships and called for an end to strikes which delayed defense. The editorial of June 14, 1941 on "President's Power" felt it had not been as controversial a subject since the unlimited emergency announcement. That power stemmed in part from the obstructionist efforts in Congress forcing such efforts which appeared to be dictatorial.

UNITY & SACRIFICE IN IMPLEMENTING LEND-LEASE: The American News editorial of March 14, 1941 on "The President's Speech" which had clearly stated that it is in the nation's interest to lend equipment in this war to save democracies. The editor believed unity political goals had been achieved with the President's signing of Lend-Lease. Supplementing the editorial, the Soapbox of March 14, 1941 focused on popular response to the national defense program once Lend-Lease had been legalized. South Dakota accepted the tax burden accompanying that action. He concluded "I am proud to be a South Dakotan—. It is our country first last and all the time .You have the go-ahead signal from us Mr. President." The Soapboxer added a final thought: If defense demands breaking the President's promise to avoid engagement in the European war, "we'll shoulder those guns just as we did in 1917."

The Soapbox chimed in June 4, 1941 with comments on "Strikes" citing that the President had decided to curb strikes and asked "how can we expect to win the battle of industry with the Axis powers if the key men are constantly airing grievances via the strike route?" His irritation is revealed when he compared soldiers who had forfeited pay raises when entering the service with workers demanding higher pay. In a judgmental tone the Soapboxer suggested "our soldiers should act with guns against these strikers." Strong views appeared in the editorial

'Selfish Minorities' of October 30, 1941. While addressing the barrier of labor strikes to defense efforts, he also focused on willful congressmen who resisted arming of American merchant ships so essential resources might reach friendly nations. The editorial labeled C.I.O labor leader John L. Lewis "the single malefactor" whose leadership labor should abandon. He also blamed "red agitators" for impeding our defense production.

SACRIFICE & SCARCITY: In August 1941 both editorials and the Soapbox commented on scarcity of silk for women's stockings and replacement by cotton stockings—a prelude to later sacrifices in 1942 and 1943 when shoes, tires, gasoline and sugar rationing began. An editorial of August 1 called silk stocking scarcity "one of the lesser evils of the war." The editor believed it would not be "a great hardship for women to wear hose made from natural American cotton which could show off shapely legs almost as well as silk." On August 9, 1941 the Soapbox interjected additional opinion about silk socks. As a part of the defense program a cut in the silk supply for stockings worried "Somebody's girlfriend. She doesn't know what she would do if she had to go back to the kidhood custom of wearing cotton pin covers" So gain comfort by thinking of past grandmas who did not worry about sleazy socks.... maybe there'll be a song written about them such as 'An Old Farmer Girl In Cotton Hose Has Stolen my Heart Away.'

DECLINE OF ISOLATIONISM: By mid-June 1941 Aberdeen editorials had developed a more critical tone toward supporters of the isolationist movement . The Soapbox of June 1 referred to 'defeatist invective' of Charles Lindbergh and others. Baily paraphrased their tune as 'Hitler can't lose. We should go back into our shell and let England fall. We should make a peace with the Nazis. The professional idealists are pushing us into war. Willkie is a bum. The President is a bum.' War's expansion to the Far East impacted even the isolationists. The Soapbox of November 9, 1941 observed that "events have proved how utterly dead is the theory of isolationism...The country stands behind the President."

ROLE OF JAPAN AND IMPACT ON ISOLATIONISM: The editorial of December 5, 1941 underestimated Japan as Japanese and U.S. talks resumed. In the light of events of December 7 the editor's estimate on Japan's role in the present conflict is ironic: "The Nipponese in any role are hardly likely to be a decisive factor In the final outcome because Japan has not the

economic or military resources to press forward as an Axis partner.” He referred to Japan as a “Jackal nation ...which must be extremely cautious...the Nipponese are a feeble match with the burden of China which she had invaded earlier.”

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941 and Hitler’s declaration of war on the U.S, the following day elicited final editorial remarks of December 10 on unity versus disunity. The “Fist of Democracy” focused on Congress’s declaration of war; “Gone was the bickering over petty politics... Gone was the line of demarcation between Republican and Democrats...Congressmen and senators who have been opposing by speech and vote ... forgot their grievances, at least for the time being.”

Sioux Falls in a Time of War: Reflections of Marie Christopherson

Stan A. Christopherson

July 24, 1942: "The war has come into my front yard. It has come into all of our yards. We are preparing for air raid drills... student nurses are marching in the street in front of my house on Lake Avenue... the soldier boys are using the nursing classrooms."

This is an excerpt from one of Marie Christopherson's weekly columns entitled "Driftwood" that appeared in the Sioux Falls *Argus Leader* newspaper from June 26, 1942 to July 30, 1944. Her columns are a treasure trove of images, activities, feelings, stories, anecdotes and opinions that paint a picture of a town, a state and a country at war. Marie was 43 years of age when she began her column writing. She was an experienced journalist beginning her career in 1918 with two Mitchell, SD newspapers and then to the Sioux Falls *Press* from 1923 to 1928 as a telegraph editor. She titled her column after a childhood memory of standing on driftwood along the Missouri River at Chamberlin watching the completion of the railroad bridge linking eastern and western South Dakota.

Marie described the transformation of the Sioux Falls area for 25 months in a relaxed and sometimes lyrical style. The following are some of her descriptions:

"I have driven beside the new long dirt dyke that separates the airport and radio air school from the flood waters of the Sioux... cars running on top of it, into the air school grounds... I have skirted the new city of tar-papered barracks, yellow frame, red roofed hospitals and low spired churches... I have seen a pile of sand that seemed almost as high as Harney Peak and learned that it is being used to lay wide runways at the airport that will accommodate large air-ships... new railroad tracks into the air school grounds over which troop trains run directly into camp... grocery store signs saying 'two Jello boxes to a customer' ... baby population has increased... helmeted soldiers on the streets... ration cards in our pockets... 35 mile per hour tire-saving

speed limit... first day of gasoline rationing (December 4, 1942 column) of four gallons a week... Christmas of 1942: the first-black out for the city.”

On January 1, 1943 Marie signed her column for the first time with her given name instead of Mrs. F.C. Christopherson because some of her friends objected to the use of her husband’s name instead of her own.

The Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps recruiting campaign began in January 1943 with the state’s quota between 400-500 women. A war tragedy was written about when Marie remembered Jim Cobb from the nearby town of Dell Rapids. He had been a lifeguard at Drake Springs in Sioux Falls. In January of 1943 he died somewhere in the Pacific. He was only 22 years of age.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek of China came to Chicago lobbying for land-lease money and Marie commented, “And the beggar came dressed in sables! Her sable coat would buy a bomber.”

The following are more of Marie’s observations found in her weekly columns:

“According to a measure recently passed by Congress, the right hand remains over the heart throughout the Pledge of Allegiance. Congressmen felt that extension of the hand during the pledge resembled the Hitler salute.”

Wendell Willkie spoke at a Mt. Rushmore event in May of 1943 and Marie commented on his speech. “Must we make our choice for President next year between a man who has misled us and one who has usurped too much power?”

Marie, during the summer of 1943 visited Washington, D.C. and attended many committee meetings of the 78th Congress. “The Dies committee of which South Dakota Congressman Mundt is a member took testimony on how to assure Americans of the loyalty of Japanese being released from the ten relocation centers which house over 100,000 people.”

A column entitled “Nourishment Equals Ammunition” ran July 16, 1943. In it she writes concerning types of food, distribution and storage of military rations. “Food, including bread, is as necessary as ammunition, ships and airplanes in winning a war. A starved soldier is of no more value than a gasless airplane.”

Another July column addressed the issue of loyalty and tolerance. "An American born Japanese girl, who is a student at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, gave a speech in the First Methodist Church of Sioux Falls recounting her experiences in a Japanese relocation center in this country. The tone of her comments, I am told, was critical of American treatment of Japanese residents. At the conclusion of her talk, she asked and received permission from a person in charge to sing the Japanese national anthem. And sing it she did!"

Marie wrote "Summer Storms, War Storms" on August 13, 1943. "Summer storms are like bombs exploding overhead. Each explosion lights up a nest of menacing clouds, as dark and mean looking as a nest of Japanese."

Marie's September 10, 1943 column responds in detail to the country's early post-war discussions. "It isn't going to be a whole lot different from the world of the last hundred years.

There are going to be negotiations over boundaries and territory, just as there were after the last war, and they aren't going to be much more fairly adjusted. Concessions are already being made in the case of Russia. There are going to be economic and political turmoil, similar to what there were after the last war, and an attempt to have America bear most of the burdens of the world."

In the Sunday column dated October 17, 1943 Marie writes, "Carrol Walters, Beresford, SD, joined the Marines when he was 15, and saw plenty of action in the southwest Pacific. When his superior officers learned his true age, he was honorably released from service. Now at 17 he is the youngest member of the American Legion in South Dakota."

"Mrs. Zelda Kruger, executive secretary of the Minnehaha County Red Cross, received a gift of 19,000 pennies from an old man who refused to leave his name." This is from a column in October 1943. The Minnehaha County Red Cross war fund drive goal for 1943 was \$47,300 and \$87,000 for 1944.

In December 1943 Marie writes, "Know who throws away the blue stamps? The farmer's wife, so the grocery boy says. Her storeroom is filled with home canned vegetables from her own Victory garden and she doesn't need many of her blue stamps."

Christmas 1943: “The Gray Ladies, a division of the Red Cross, shop and buy gifts for the soldiers in the Sioux Falls Army School Hospital to be sent home to their families.”

Marie’s entire column of March 5, 1944 describes the war’s realism for the Sioux Falls area. “The boys who are coming home from the fighting fronts – some are on furlough, some discharged from service because of disabilities and stationed here – are bringing the war closer to us. They are young but have lived years in their months overseas. They are not happy youths. Some speak of their experiences, some do not.” She concludes this column by writing, “You and I cannot change places with the men in the front lines. But we can –

Give to the Red Cross of Mercy and send our hearts Over There.”

She relates an amusing story March 12, 1944. “When the waitress in a downtown café set a dish of jello in front of Herbert Krause, Augustana professor and novelist, the jello jumped right out of the dish and settled firmly on the table. Without wasted motion or words, the waitress picked it up with her fingers and put it back on the dish. He ate the jello. This is war time.”

In April of 1944 Marie and Chris (Fred) picked up three soldiers at Tenth and Summit and delivered them to Gate 3 of the Army Radio School. One was from Tennessee, one from California and the other from Pennsylvania. They took two soldiers to the Chocolate Shop; one was from New York City and the other from San Francisco. Marie concluded, “Oh, the East is East and the West is West, but the Twain do meet in South Dakota during this war”.

Marie chastised a local wealthy businessman on April 16, 1944 who refused to donate to the Red Cross. He stated the Red Cross should be government funded through taxes even though she pointed out that he opposed government bureaucracy. She explained this person profits by community development without having paid his share of the costs. Marie extolled the virtue of a volunteer, non-political Red Cross as contributors give from their hearts as opposed to the way people pay their taxes.

It was noted in the June 4, 1944 column, “There were only two female delegates out of 186 at the Republican state convention in Watertown”. Marie continued to promote women’s rights and the very important role of women in the war effort.

Her column of June 11, 1944 was written about the importance of bandages especially right after D-Day. "One hundred million surgical dressings must be shipped overseas each month by the Red Cross. Of this number, Minnehaha County volunteers must complete 933,000 bandages by September 30." The bandages were cut out of 100 yards bolts of gauze at the Red Cross production room in Washington High School and at the History Club building. The folding of these bandages was done at the City Hall Red Cross work room. Some of the bandages were used at the Sioux Falls Army Air Field Hospital.

Marie's last "Driftwood" column on July 30, 1944 is a reflective experience about the driftwood she stood on along the banks of the Missouri River as a child. "I have been gathering Driftwood now for more than two years and offering it in this column once a week. It was fun writing a few paragraphs about this and that. The Driftwood we have on hand is enough. So, Goodbye now"!

Marie was not only a journalist but also a nationally recognized composer. In 1949 she composed *South Dakota Melody*. The beginning line of the song appeared in her first Driftwood column on June 26, 1942. The song was used in homecoming coronation ceremonies at the University of South Dakota over a span of 25 years. United States Senator Karl Mundt used the song to introduce his weekly broadcasts, "Your Washington and You," to the people of South Dakota. When United States Senator George McGovern was nominated at the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami, it was used as a theme song. The Sioux Falls American Legion Chorus performed the song while winning a national choral championship. It was also used as the official song at various state educational and athletic events.

For the rest of her life, Marie continued to take an active interest in civic affairs and the media. She made two trips around the world with Fred and accompanied him on many other U.S. and foreign trips. They knew the capitals of Western Europe well and also visited the Soviet Union and Poland during the Cold War days. During her trip to Japan in 1960, she wrote a "Mrs. Editor's Notebook" about her favorable impression of Japanese women. She wrote detailed journal records of their personal life. During their almost 63 years of married life, they were inseparable. Fred spoke often of his happy marriage to "the same charming helpmate". Marie

died in her sleep alongside Fred in their home on Lake Avenue on January 25, 1989. Marie was 90 years of age. Fred died June 15th of that same year at age 93.

Marie was my great aunt. This paper's source of information comes from personal conversations with Marie, review of her "Driftwood" columns and archival information from the Center for Western Studies, Augustana University.

I will conclude by sharing part of one of Marie's favorite columns entitled "Immortality" written July 24, 1942. When asked, she would happily recite, in a very expressive manner, a portion of this column. Fred wanted to have these words printed on the front of her funeral brochure.

Do I believe in immortality? I do. Several kinds of immortality... The immortality of living on in the lives of one's children... the immortality of memories... the immortality of accomplishment... the immortality of an idea, passed on, that may lie dormant for a time, as all things do, but then grows and produces in some other mind... The immortality of the soul or mind, whatever is preferred – words are merely man-made gadgets for photographing thought and are not too accurate... A sort of chemical immortality that gives back to the earth as the earth gives to the flowers and the wheat fields and the trees.

The Frontier in a Nutshell

Wayne Fanebust

When we think of the frontier, we tend to think of a place. For example, the Northern Plains was a part of the American frontier, most often referred to in the 19th century as the Great Northwest, never the Midwest. But the frontier is also a time, and the time frame that is generally most important to South Dakota historians begins in the middle 1850's and ends in 1890. After all, the historian Frederick Jackson Turner famously concluded that the frontier ended in 1890, and many historians still agree with the professor.

In the 19th century, the word "frontier" was used quite frequently in the press and in public discourse. It meant wilderness, raw, untamed and largely uncharted terrain that had yet to come under the dominance of the white, Euro-Americans. While the entire continent was a frontier when the Pilgrims arrived, it is the trans-Mississippi West that typically comes to mind when we think of the frontier or the Old West. When white Americans were preparing to cross the Mississippi, and take on the mighty challenge, they were looking at the domain of Native Americans who lived primarily nomadic lives in pursuit of wild game, especially the buffalo. These people lived on the land and with the land, taking what it offered, with no thought or intent to alter the scheme of things. For them it was an ideal world.

As seen by the Euro-Americans, the frontier was part of God's creation, turned over to the stewardship of the civilized white man. Believing that God had bestowed both a gift and a challenge, the white man turned to the western frontier, the great unknown, with a mixture of hope and hesitation. It was seen as a vast reservoir of land; a bottomless pit. Untrammelled and unplowed, it was just waiting to be placed under the yoke of civilization. People faced the wild frontier like anxious spectators standing at the edge of the world, looking out at the ultimate mystery. As always, when faced with the unknown or untried, there are some who are eager to move forward, and many who want to turn back.

People who were proud to bear the title "pioneers" or "frontiersmen," were those who moved forward into the great unknown. They were people who believed that hard work had its

rewards. They understood that in order to create a future one must not cling to the past. Except for memories of people and places that could never be forgotten, the frontiersman discarded the past and went West with a mixture of confidence and apprehension, and with some understanding of the risks involved.

In the wilderness, man could find beauty and riches, but he must invariably confront and overcome danger. While the mountains and prairies could feed the resourceful pioneer, nature could punish arbitrarily, and with a cruel hand. Resistance by Native Americans meant clashes were inevitable and deadly; the weak would be weeded out. The trails west were marked the wreckage of someone's dreams and by the graves of many unfortunate travelers.

The true frontiersman chose the danger—but why? For some the danger was insignificant owing to the smallness, misery and poverty of their lives in the eastern cities. A man who had failed at everything or had been repeatedly beaten down and made to feel powerless by the powerful, found it easy to succumb to the blandishments of the speculators and the beguiling influences of some far away place, free from oppression and exploitation. Besides, the federal government added to the temptation by offering free or cheap land on the public domain. Free land was an incentive powerful enough to overcome fear, and tilt the decision in favor of pulling up stakes and joining the westward march.

If anything else was needed to tip the balance in favor of the frontier, it was supplied by the vicissitudes of war and politics. The Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican War left America with countless millions of acres spread across the continent. As eastern cities and settlements east of the Mississippi River increased in population, there was pressure on Americans to move west, and build a life in the new land bonanza. It was logical but it was also slow, and there were those in the government that believed some other incentive was needed to encourage settlers to go where only the army and explorers had gone before.

The great American statesman, Daniel Webster, once famously called the trans-Mississippi West, "the Great American Desert," essentially a wasteland, not worthy of consideration by thoughtful, sophisticated men. Many others, however, knew better, for they had seen the land that Webster dismissed with a sneer. They couldn't help but notice that much of the "desert" was crossed by rivers and streams, and much of the land was covered

with tall, prairie grass, as high as a man's head. It didn't take a great deal of sophistication to infer that dirt that produced this ocean of grass, might also be good ground for growing wheat and other crops.

The "Great American Desert" concept was without longevity, and Webster's warning was never taken seriously by the people or the federal government. In 1841, Congress passed the Preemption Act, the first land act of its kind. A man, or woman who was a head of a family, could claim 160 acres of federal land and buy it for \$1.25 per acre. For those who moved to Oregon Territory, there was the Donation Land Act of 1850. It applied those who settled in the territory before 1850, offering 320 acres of land to single men and 640 to married men.

But it was the Homestead Act of 1862--strongly promoted by Abraham Lincoln--that encouraged mass migration onto the frontier. It was the prevailing idea that the American West would become the homeland for white America, especially Civil War veterans in the Union army.

Under the terms of this landmark law, a man or a woman could claim 160 acres of land on the public domain, and after living on it for five years while cultivating and improving the land, it was theirs in "fee simple." In other words, they owned it outright. A quarter section of land was like an empire to a family from Norway or Germany, or to one struggling to survive in New York or Philadelphia. The land available for settlement was, of course, territory to which the federal government had acquired title by way of treaties with the Indian tribes.

The people who went west can be divided into four groups: the mountain man, the homesteader, the speculator and the outlaw. Each group sensed the opportunity offered by the West and embraced the challenges and dangers of the frontier. For many, the adventure would be their last because entering into the wilderness was like stepping off the edge of the world.

The iconic image of the bold, fearless, "mountain man," is what often comes to mind when people think of the frontier. These openly anti-social men were the first to penetrate the wild land, without maps, using only their instincts and survival skills. They were solitary creatures who shunned civilization, preferring to live by themselves, taking whatever the land provided. "These mountains will feed you," was the refrain of the rugged, ragged tramp—a

being truly in love with solitude, with the wilderness and all its creatures. Of course they did not confine their activities to mountains, but roamed the plains and prairies as well. Fur trading posts such as Fort Pierre on the Missouri River served as markets for the mountain man's pelts.

The mountain man has been romanticized over and over again in books and in the movies, the most recent being *The Revenant* starring Leonardo Di Caprio. In this movie, Hugh Glass, who in 1823 was mauled by a grizzly bear near what later became the town of Lemmon, South Dakota, is a classic example of showcasing this type of frontiersman. Left for dead by his companions after the mauling, he somehow survived and crawled across the rugged plains to safety. His story, courageous and bold, is truly the stuff of legend. The larger-than-life Hugh Glass embodies those qualities of stamina, determination and fearlessness, all of which combine to make an ideal frontiersman.

The mountain man did something else. Responding to a strong demand in the U. S. and Europe for hats made out of beaver fur, beaver were trapped relentlessly until their population was diminished to a point that almost amounted to extermination. But killing off the beaver also killed off the mountain man for 1840 marks the end of this type of frontiersman.

In the homesteader, we see a class of people who were attracted to the frontier because of the availability of land—lots of land for farming. Within this group were both American easterners and immigrants from Western Europe, particularly the Scandinavian countries. The first wave of settlers to cross the Mississippi consisted of those who had previously farmed in eastern states, or perhaps came from states such as Illinois or Ohio. In the early 1850's, settlers peopled the prairies of western Iowa, eastern Nebraska and southern Minnesota. Proud of their success, they sent letters to their eastern or foreign relatives, describing the land and its promise.

Landmarks such as rivers, lakes and waterfalls were particularly attractive to the adventuresome pioneer. But while he or she was often amazed at the beauty of the landscape, the pioneers tended to see the utilitarian side of nature, meaning good soil on terrain suitable for planting. The land had to be tamed and controlled so as to produce the stuff of life, like an obedient servant. Wildlife was thought of as a resource to be harvested or a nuisance to be exterminated. Native Americans were also seen as obstacles to be removed and replaced by

the objects and institutions of familiar, civilized life. The challenges of the frontier were multi-faceted but the optimistic frontiersman, believed all could be conquered or controlled. Doing so was doing God's work. The pioneer believed absolutely, in the goodness of God, in the superiority of the white race, and it was these beliefs that sustained his efforts.

Encouraged, or even enchanted, thousands of families crossed the Atlantic, leaving behind small farms with worn out soil, looking forward to acquiring a farm under the Homestead Act, the stated purpose of which was to distribute public lands to "those who were without." Any "head of a household," including widows or single persons at least 21 years old who had never taken up arms against the United States, or had never given "aid and comfort" to enemies of the government, was eligible to claim 160 acres on the public domain. The first land office in Dakota was located in Vermillion March 2, 1861, the same day that Dakota Territory was created.

The Homestead Act went into effect January 1, 1863, at which time filing under the new began. According to SD historian Doane Robinson, Mahlon Gore filed the very first claim in Dakota Territory, in Vermillion, at the stroke of 12 a.m., in the morning of January 1, 1863. Gore would have a legion of followers. To accommodate them, throughout the 1860's and 1870's, federal land offices were opened in many of the major towns in the territory including Sioux Falls.

The Homestead Act was the easiest and least expensive way to claim land. The total fees amounted to \$18.00. But if a man had some cash, he could also take a Pre-emption claim, and by 1878, another 160 acres of land under the Timber Culture Act. Three quarters of a section of land was unheard of in the east or in the crowded homelands of the landless. Thus land was a powerful incentive that attracted homesteaders, a class of people that was usually law-abiding, persevering and church going--all in all, the building blocks of orderly and civilized towns and cities.

Good communities need good citizens and the homesteaders eagerly filled that role. An estimated 783,000 citizens or intended citizens became "patented land holders," out of approximately two million entries that were made under the Homestead Act, meaning that about 60 per cent of the filers failed to follow through with the requirements of the law, for

various reasons. Claims were made until 1917, but the law was not entirely abolished in 1976. About 285 million acres in the public domain were dispersed through homesteads.

The third group of frontiersmen, the speculators, were men who looked to the western domain as a place where they could make their fortune. Farmers, shopkeepers, preachers and teachers were essential to developing new communities, but the speculators saw their role as running the entire show, so to speak. They were after economic and political dominance. Sod busters needed a place to sell their produce and buy their provisions and speculators wanted to fill that role. They were quick to understand that commerce depended upon people, towns and institutions. In pursuit of their goals, the speculators too, had the federal government on their side, for in 1844, Congress passed a town site law. It enabled a town site company to claim 320 acres in the public domain for the purpose of platting and creating a town.

Armed with maps, charts, guidebooks and plat books, the enterprising speculators flowed into the public domain, staked out their towns, sold stock in their companies, and then boomed their spot of wild land so as to attract merchants, hotels, churches, railroads and other hallmarks of urbanity. If they were successful, the ringing of church bells, the train whistle, and the hum of machinery replaced the silence of the natural world. In the mid-1850's, from Minnesota to Kansas, a veritable "town site mania" swept across the west. Writer and humorist Mark Twain once remarked, rather coyly, "buy real estate; they aren't making any more of it." This advice was taken as gospel by the land hungry, cavalier speculators and their followers, all scrambling to find the most desirable sites.

In fact they had more sites than towns. It is one thing to place dots and names on a map and quite another to actually build a town. But that didn't interfere with the enthusiasm of the speculators, nor did it slow down their mad pursuit of new towns. The excited pace of development, both real and imagery, caused one wise acre to suggest that they set aside a few acres of land for crops.

Land was one form of speculation. Mineral wealth, especially gold, was quite another. The discovery of gold on the frontier often set off a frenzy of activity, a clarion call to all types of adventurers to pack up, cast aside all caution and engage in a mad rush for the riches. Gold! Indians noticed that it was the stuff that drove white men crazy. Gold! It was like someone had

unleashed some sweet ambrosia into the atmosphere, and every man's nose was sniffing out the scent of wealth. Heedless of the danger and acting in total disregard for Indian rights to the land, a legion of prospecting speculators flowed into places like the Black Hills of Dakota Territory in the mid-1870's, creating string towns with amazing speed. Normally, settlement of virgin land was done after the government made a treaty with the Indians. The Black Hills settlements were just the opposite and the federal government was forced to hurriedly pound out a treaty with the Indians to legitimize the takeover.

The town site speculator that sought an orderly, formulaic method of settling the frontier understood that the customary, landmark institutions and businesses came gradually and incrementally. A favorably located town site was one that attracted merchants and homesteaders, and later, churches, schools and a railroad. In gold country, none of the routine applied as communities were haphazardly strung out in the gulches and canyons, and with wealth flowing from the streams and mountains, people: good, bad and indifferent, settled in, as if delivering a noisy, death blow to the frontier. While the plodding, farming frontier took its time to develop, the gold rush contributed a veritable flash flood of non-indigenous people to the Black Hills, and to other mining experiments in the West.

Some people chose the danger freely and willingly, for the frontier, with its high mountains, deep ravines and other dark places provided a place to hide from the law. The outlaws, the fourth group of frontiersmen, liked the isolation, emptiness and solitude offered by the wilderness. Unlike the sod buster who wanted to tame the frontier and make it serve man, bad men liked it for the way it was, untamed and unaffected by the law. For these men a farmstead or a church meant that the civilizing influences of the law and society were reaching into the wilderness, threatening to expose and expel them. Their only interest in a town was maybe a bank to rob, or a saloon where they could drink and gamble.

The outlaw has been romanced by historians over the years, elevated to a pantheon of legendary status. While many still revere the bold, bad men of the west, they were in actuality, not the kind of people who deserve recognition or appreciation. They were takers who added nothing of value to any community. They lived self-indulgent lives of violence that featured all forms of criminal behavior much of it from the point of a gun.

The frontier gave guns to America, so it is impossible to talk or write about the frontier without bringing in the guns, but for the average settler, a gun was not something to idolize, rather it was a utilitarian instrument, like an axe or a plow. In a different way, of course, the gun was the tool of his trade for the outlaw, the desperado. And unfortunately, for many of us, the outlaw and his gun represents the Old West in all its glory.

The law provided guidance and protection, standards and morals for law abiding people. But for the outlaw, but the law was a constant, looming threat. The frontier was all about taking risks, and all frontiersmen took risks merely by coming to the West. For the outlaw risk had another dimension: it was the law---the law that would take his life to lock up him.

The Dakota frontier attracted its share of outlaws. Among the best known, of course, Jack McCall shot and killed Wild Bill Hickok in Deadwood, in 1876, when the town was essentially lawless. And of course, Frank and Jesse James made their remarkable escape through southeastern Dakota in 1876, following the botched bank robbery in Northfield, Minnesota. Although their goal was to get back to Missouri as soon as possible, their brief stay in Dakota was long enough to hatch out the legend about Jesse jumping across Devil's Gulch, near Garretson, but before Garretson became a town. And who can ever forget the gunfight at the OK corral in Tombstone in 1882? It lasted for about 40 seconds but that was long enough for it to make the history books and movies, over and over again.

There were wild and dangerous towns in Dakota that attracted outlaws. The most notorious Dakota towns were Bismarck, Pierre, Deadwood and Yankton. These frontier towns attracted the outlaw element because of the availability of horses to steal, liquor to drink, saloons for gambling and lax or poor law enforcement. One such malefactor was John W. Maxwell, a "somewhat notorious outlaw," with a criminal record in Dakota, Wyoming and other parts of the West. A Mitchell newspaper called him "Jesse James No. 2," a man as sharp as a steel trap.

In Yankton he was arrested for simple assault. But he was thought to have been a member of a gang that robbed a train on the Union Pacific Railroad and was alleged to have committed stagecoach robberies and "even murder." He was known throughout the West as a "road and mail robber, horse thief, and for taking his man when the business in hand required

it.” Maxwell had for several months prior to January of 1880, been living in Yankton making his headquarters at the “parlor cigar store” on Capital Street, with a girlfriend. The place was called by a Yankton newspaper, a “den of iniquity” Maxwell was arrested, locked up, escaped jail and was later caught in Iowa. He was tried in Yankton and convicted of simple assault and jail breaking and sentenced to two years in prison.

Men like Maxwell faded from history. The land frontier is gone. They are not making any more of it on the American continent, so we must look elsewhere to find a frontier. Long gone as well is the frontiersman of the Old West. But we are reminded of the impact that the frontier experience had on the American character every time we read a book or see a movie about the Old West, or when we drive through some remote part of the country and come upon a graveyard, and are greeted by visitors from the mysterious past.

Place-Name Study in South Dakota: Past, Present, and Future

Thomas J. Gasque

I never would have thought that I would be standing here in 2016 talking about a project that I first undertook more than thirty years ago and should have finished at least twenty years ago. But here I am, and I wanted to give an idea of what has happened in the last nearly eighty years in the study of place names in the state of South Dakota and what may continue to happen.

The study of names is called *onomastics*, from the Greek *onoma* 'name' and the term applies to all sorts of names. A more precise term for place-name study is toponymics, also from Greek words for "place" and "name." Onomastics is an interdisciplinary subject, combining linguistics, history, geography, psychology, folklore, and occasionally other disciplines.

The Past, Part 1 (1920-1980)

People all over the world have always been curious about where names come from, but a systematic study of place names really began in the early twentieth century. In England, the English Place-Name Society has published nearly 100 volumes since 1922, each dealing with a county or a part of a county (English Place-Name Society). Other European countries, especially in Scandinavia and Germany have had similar programs.

In the 1920s two important books were published in the U.S., one on the names in Minnesota and one on the names in Oregon. *Minnesota Geographic Names* (1920) was compiled by Warren Upham, a geologist who traveled the state and collected stories and history from all over Minnesota. It has been updated and is currently in its third edition (2001) with the title *Minnesota Place Names: A Geographical Encyclopedia*. *Oregon Geographic Names* appeared in 1928. It was compiled by Lewis A. McArthur and continued by his son Lewis L. McArthur; it is now in its seventh edition, issued in 2003, a monumental tome of 1,070 pages. Both McArthurs, father and son, were engineers and were very much part of the Oregon Historical Society. These are but two examples of state-based books toponymic studies.

Meanwhile, in academia, Robert L. Ramsay, a professor of English at the University of Missouri, had begun in the 1920s a systematic study of names in Missouri. He enlisted the help of graduate students in English and linguistics to go to their home counties, talk to old-timers, research records and books, and assemble their findings as MA theses. Ramsay had rigid standards for collecting and interpreting names. This material plus much more that Ramsay collected has not been published in full, but a selection appears in a volume titled *Our Storehouse of Missouri Place Names* (Ramsay).

There was also a growing national interest in names because of the works of the popular journalist H.L. Mencken, who over the years published several versions of his monumental *The American Language*, which first appeared in 1919. He wrote extensively about how the English language is used in America, how it evolved to be different from the mother tongue in Britain, how new words came about or changed their meanings. And he had chapters on surnames, given names, and place names, with a heavy emphasis on the unusual and humorous. Over the years, Mencken revised his work and added supplements in 1945 and 1948.

In South Dakota, professor of English Edward C. Ehrensperger, who held a Ph.D. from Harvard and had been at the University of South Dakota since 1932, had taken an interest in place names, mostly through his connection to the American Dialect Society. He knew Professor Ramsay and decided that MA theses on place names would be a good alternative for those students who were more interested in language than in literature. At that time a thesis was required of all MA students.

All of these theses follow a standard format, suggested by Professor Ramsay. All names are listed alphabetically, followed by sections classifying and discussing the data linguistically. Each

**Table 1. Sixteen South Dakota County Place-Name Studies
MA Theses directed by Prof. Edward Ehrensperger**

1938: Charles Mix , Anne Kleinsasser	1944: Spink , Dana Dorothy Harlow
1939: Beadle , Leta May James	1944: Davison , Floyd E. Hutcheson
1939: Clark , Joseph A. Molumby	1946: Hand , Gladys Nicholas Kuehl
1940: Kingsbury , Agnes J. Hanson	1952: Yankton , Evelyn Ruth Halla
1940: Turner , Mary Phoebe Snyder	1955: Lake , Winifred B. Christenson
1941: Meade , Marjorie Frybarger	1960: Lincoln , Kenneth L. Nicholas
1942: Sanborn , Ann Jeanette Holland	1961: Douglas , Winerva J. Van Roekel
1943: Mellette , Lucile Distad	1962: Clay : Janet J. Carlberg

thesis has a substantial bibliography, including the names and positions of people interviewed for information, and each entry in the alphabetical listing cites one or more of these sources. These sixteen theses are examples of excellent student scholarship. (Table 1)

The 1930s and 1940s were a good time to gather this information, since many pioneer settlers were still alive or just a generation or two removed from the first settlers and namers. Memories, of course, are not entirely reliable, and it's clear that some folklore has crept in, but that too should be recorded. Each of the theses balances these personal interviews with whatever written documentation could be found.

In 1976, the Clay County Historical Society published a 202-page book analyzing over 600 place names of that county. Many people contributed to this project, which was edited by Lloyd R. Moses. No other South Dakota counties have done anything similar to that.

I can't tell the story of the next stage of place-name study without first talking about another project, the development of the *South Dakota Guide*, a production of the Federal Writers' Project, which itself was a child of the Works Progress Administration, or WPA, which was part of President Roosevelt's New Deal.

The Writers' Project in South Dakota was headed by a young journalist named Lisle Reese, a graduate of the University of South Dakota, who was only twenty-five years old when he was given this position in 1935. Despite shifting standards and a shortage of professional writers, the *South Dakota Guide* was published just three years later, in 1938. Reese gives a first-hand account of his experience in the delightful introduction to the reprint of the *Guide*, published by South Dakota Historical Society Press in 2005.

One of his first jobs was to find anyone in the state on relief rolls who could qualify as a writer. Most he found were minimally qualified, but Reese did find one real writer, Archer Gilfillan, a University of Pennsylvania Phi Beta Kappa graduate turned sheepherder and the author of a book on his experience herding sheep in Harding County, S.D. The book, published in 1929, is called simply *Sheep*. The book sold well for a while, but by 1935 no more royalties came in, and Gilfillan was in a state of poverty. The job as assistant director of the state Writers' Project saved him, and to a great degree he saved the Project. Gilfillan had been suggested by Lawrence K. Fox, state historian and secretary of the State Historical Society

(successor to Doane Robinson). At the time, Gilfillan's income came from tips as a guide at Crystal Cave in the Black Hills, and he was delighted to accept the job as Reese's assistant. He was one of many who contributed to the project (Reese xxvi-xxvii).

Although the South Dakota Writers' Project issued several other publications, the charge was—as it was to all state projects—to produce a guide to the state, emphasizing its history, geography, and places of cultural interest. Teams of writers or researchers traveled all over the state collecting information and noting on the odometers of their cars the distances between places.

Big changes came to the Federal Writers' Project in 1939. There was no reduction in funding or staff, but more attention was given in the WPA to construction projects and less to programs like the arts. At this point Reese met with I.D. Weeks, president of the University of South Dakota, who agreed that the University would be willing to sponsor projects, utilizing faculty, staff, and facilities so long as there was no money involved. Weeks told Reese that Dr. Ehrensperger was eager to research and publish place names. This subject had piqued the curiosity of the writers as they gathered information about places around the state, and already there was a large collection of stories and facts about the names (Reese xli-xlii).

Dr. Ehrensperger remembered the first time he met Reese and Gilfillan, a memory he shared with me in the early 1980s. At his door appeared two men, one over six feet tall and very thin, the other hardly over five feet and nearly that big around. They all agreed that the next big project would be to collect and organize the place-name material and publish it under the auspices of the English Department. Ehrensperger was the sponsor, and Gilfillan was the editor. Typists set to work putting the information on 5 x 8 inch cards which were then typed onto wax stencils to be printed on mimeograph machines. The first publication was a series of six small volumes, each devoted to different types of names (towns and cities, lakes, rivers, mountains, etc.) The total number of pages is 418, printed on one side of each sheet. These volumes were issued in 1940, identifying the publisher as University of South Dakota and the sponsor as E. C. Ehrensperger, Ph.D. Lisle Reese provided a preface: “[I]t is hoped,” he says, “that a revised, printed volume can be published eventually.”

I had an opportunity to know Lisle Reese in his later years when he was living in Florida. After an exchange of letters, I told him that we were planning to take our daughter to Disney World, and he invited us to make his home our base for visiting that nearby park. So in 1988 we were guests of Lisle and Edith (“Hepzi”) Reese at their home in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Lisle died in 2005 at the age of 95. Hepzi had died a year before, in 2004 (Koupal xx).

The writers and typists continued to work, adding many more names and retyping all the stencils, so that in 1941 a second edition was issued. It has the title *South Dakota Place-Names* and is 688 pages long (compared to the total of 418 for the separate volumes). It keeps the same arrangement, by feature type. The arrangement is awkward, since you have to know whether a feature is a mountain, a peak, a butte, a hill, or something else in order to look up its name. A straight alphabetical order by name would have been much better. There are other problems. One is that almost every little pond created by the WPA is included as a lake. This swells the list of “lakes” by over 1,100, adding to the 257 natural lakes for a total of 1,400 lakes in the state. I suspect that none of these figures are valid today.

Despite its flaws, *South Dakota Place Names* was well respected. H.L. Mencken praised the book, comparing it to McArthur’s Oregon book, and that is “due to the enterprise of Dr. Edward C. Ehrensperger,” . . . the result was really a first-rate report. It is laid out upon a somewhat unhandy plan, with separate alphabets for towns, counties, rivers, mountains, etc., but the extraordinary richness of the data assembled makes the user forget this defect, and soon or late it will probably be remedied in a revision based upon a single alphabet” (Mencken, Supplement II, 568).

The coming of World War II brought to a close most of the WPA programs. The Writers’ Program published a few other pamphlets but nothing was done to maintain and update the place-name book.

Dr. Ehrensperger was aware of the many faults of the 1941 *South Dakota Place Names*, and he looked forward to his retirement so that he could devote his time to revising it. He retired as chair in 1962 after thirty years. But other duties called. He was a loyal member of the Congregational Church, and Yankton College, sponsored by that denomination, was in need of

an English Department chair. So at the age of 68 he and his wife moved to Yankton and he continued to teach and chair for another eight years.

In 1972 he finally retired once again and immediately got to work revising *South Dakota Place-Names*. His approach was to write to historical societies in each county and ask for verification or corrections to the material that he had. Some complied with new information; others did not respond. One wrote that everything you need to know can be found in a book published in 1941.

But in the next year came a big disappointment. *South Dakota Place-Names*, as a state-sponsored publication, was not copyrighted, and Brevet Press of Sioux Falls published a book titled *South Dakota Geographic Names*, under the editorship of Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. It is an attractive book and a more convenient size than the 1941 book. But whatever flaws the 1941 book had were carried over into the 1973 book: the arrangement of entries, the stories of name origins, and the vague locations of most of the natural features. With minor exceptions the book is the same as the 1941 publication. The population figures of towns and cities were updated to reflect the 1970 U.S. Census rather than the 1940 census. The book also adds a half page with the name origins of "The Great Lakes," those reservoirs created by the Pick-Sloan dams on the Missouri River. But there is no mention of the big Bureau of Reclamation project in Fall River County, completed in 1949: *Angostura Dam and Reservoir*.

Dr. Ehrensperger continued his work, though more slowly because he realized the interest in another book on South Dakota names would not be strong. He was also slowing down physically. He was 77 when he retired from Yankton College.

The Past, Part 2 (1980-1995)

In about 1980 he began to talk to me about taking over the task of creating a new or a more usable place-name book. I accepted the challenge. He also invited me to join the American Name Society, which I should have done years earlier, and I noticed that the quarterly journal, called simply *Names*, had from time to time published issues in honor of members who had made significant contributions to name study. I wrote to the editor and suggested that Dr. Ehrensperger would be a good candidate for the honor, and he wrote back saying it was a good idea, and he asked me to be the guest editor. Unfortunately, Ed did not live to see the product.

He died on April 18, 1984, a few weeks short of his 89th birthday. With the permission of his two sons, I kept the extensive files and many of the books that he had accumulated over the years.

Apparently my work as editor was satisfactory, and the executive committee of the American Name Society asked me to serve as the regular editor of *Names*, which I did for five years, 1988–1992, a time-consuming task.

Meanwhile, I started to work on the revisions and updating. One of my first ideas was to involve students in the research. I offered a special topics class in the spring of 1983 called “The Place Names of South Dakota.” Eighteen students signed up, and each was responsible for his or her home county. We studied the concepts of place names, how to locate features geographically, how to use maps and other documents, and other topics. They each agreed to spend their spring breaks at home doing field research. I came to understand that one semester was not enough to do everything that needed to be done, and while some good material came from the students, all of whom were undergraduates, none of it was of the caliber of the graduate theses that Dr. Ehrensperger directed in earlier years.¹ I did similar classes in the next few years but often broadened the approach to allow research in personal names as well as place names.

My hope was to finish the revision in two or three years. I talked to an editor from the University of Nebraska Press who was quite interested in publishing the book when it was done. I thought it might come out too soon for the 1989 South Dakota Centennial, and he suggested that a new edition might come out then. O vain hopes, stymied by many distractions: the editorship, a year in Germany as a Fulbright scholar, involvement in name organizations at the national and international level, frequent presentations (mostly on names), a new interest in Lewis and Clark, teaching, and—finally—retirement in 2003.

¹ The students were Gerald Boyer, Tom Buehner, Tom Burg, Lyle Christopherson, Tom Determan, Charlie Ewalt, John Haak, Steve Hockett, Linda Lambert, Todd Meierhenry, Kathy Merritt, Charlie Page, Julia Pullen, Kevin Reiner, Scott Roldstad, Dan Sahr, Jon Spangler, and Jeff Uecker. Some of my students from later years were Bronco Le Beau, Sheri Levisay, Bob Simpson, Brandy Sparks, Doyce Testerman, Eric Thompson, Mindy Glover, Jeff Navin, Renata Huwe, Justin Seim, and Brian Lipp.

Early in my work on names I became interested in the Western States Geographical Names Council, now called the Council of Geographic Names Authorities. It is closely allied to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, which is responsible for approving or disapproving proposals for new names and name changes. I attended most of the annual meetings from 1986 to 2014, and in 1994 I invited the group to South Dakota, meeting in Rapid City.

Many of the states had boards on geographical names whose purpose is to determine if requests for new names or name changes should be passed on to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. I had been acting as South Dakota liaison to the U.S. Board without any authority from the state. An attempt at the Rapid City meeting to organize a state board led nowhere, and I continued my self-appointed role as liaison until my retirement and leaving the state.

The Present

One issue that the U.S. Board faced in the 1990s was the number of place names that included the word “squaw.” It started in Minnesota when two Native American high school girls went to the state legislature with complaints about the many places in the state that bore that name. The word “squaw” comes from an Algonquian word meaning simply woman, but some Native Americans, seeing a similarity to a Mohawk (Iroquoian) word for female genitalia, claim that to be its meaning. This idea received great prominence in 1992 when Susan Harjo went on the Oprah show and made that claim. Regardless of the etymology, though, the word is widely considered to be derogatory when referring to Indian women (Bright 209).

In 1995, the Minnesota legislature created a law requiring all squaw names to be replaced, and all were by 1999. Other states followed Minnesota’s lead, including Montana in 1999. Nationally, the process is still ongoing.

In South Dakota there was some awareness of the names. There were twenty or so names with the squaw word, including the infamous Squaw Humper Table on Pine Ridge Reservation. There were several squaw-named features in West River and some in East River, including Squaw Creek in Moody County and Squaw Lake in Codington County. One of the people who was leading the effort to change the names in South Dakota was Betty Gross, a member of the Sisseton Tribe (Olson 3A). I met with her several times. There was not strong opposition to making the changes, but neither was there much support until Governor Bill Janklow proposed

to the legislature that all names with the words “squaw” should be changed and he added that all names with the word “Negro” should also be changed. That bill passed in 2001, and many names have been changed, but several so far have not (Carey). As one example, *Little Squaw Creek* was renamed *Badger Clark Creek*. It is a tributary of what was once called *Squaw Creek*, which flows by the Game Lodge in Custer State Park, but that name was changed to *Grace Coolidge Creek* in 1927, when President Calvin Coolidge made the Game Lodge his Summer White House.

In anticipation of my retirement in 2003, I convinced one of our graduate students, Ryan Berg, who had a strong interest in and knowledge of linguistics, to participate in the ongoing effort to revise *South Dakota Place Names*, the 1941 book reprinted in 1973. For two or three years he scoured the library for sources that might add to or correct the information we already had, and he sent these to me. But then he decided to get married to a woman whose native land is Taiwan. They moved there and are still there. Since then I have tried to organize the extensive material I have and to keep up with the changes that have been happening in South Dakota.

While a comprehensive study of all of the place names in South Dakota is still pending, there is activity in name changes, thanks to the effort of the South Dakota Board on Geographic Names, created in 2009. The Board consists of representatives from the State Historical Society, Tribal Relations, Transportation, Environment and Natural Resources, and Tourism. Changing names from “Squaw” and “Negro,” mentioned above, has occupied the attention of the Board, but more recently the issue has been the name *Harney Peak*. The peak was named in 1857 by Lt. G.K. Warren in honor of General William S. Harney (Ehrensperger 408). The negative feeling toward General Harney is widespread, mainly because of his role in the Battle of Ash Hollow in 1855, in which many women and children were killed. A number of proposals have been made over the years, most of them suggesting *Black Elk Peak*. Last year the South Dakota Board voted to change the name to *Hinhan Kaga*, which seems to mean “owl maker,” but then a month later voted to retain the name *Harney Peak*. The issue came before the U.S. Board just last week, with two suggested names: *Black Elk Peak* and *Thunder Peak*. At their meeting last Thursday, April 14, the U.S. Board voted to defer the decision, citing a lack of

consensus among the county commissioners, the SDBGN, the tribes, and the Forest Service. The Forest Service is a key factor since the mountain is in a National Forest; its representative was instructed to do more outreach in the tribal community, which she agreed to do, promising to get back with information in two months (Runyon).

That is where Harney Peak stands at present.

The Future

Names are troublesome. They can be divisive and offensive. There are many cases at home and abroad where names have created dissension, usually because of some real or imagined offense based on the knowledge of the history of the name. Would it be better not to know the origin of place names? That is a question I often ask myself

What the future holds for changes in names in South Dakota cannot be determined. Nationally, the U.S. Board remains busy with proposals, and the process takes a lot of time and research at the state and national levels. As for the study of place names, I will either bring my thirty-year project to a close, die before that can happen, or find a young scholarly person with a fascination for place names and a good knowledge of South Dakota history either to take over the project or to be the local co-author to work with me in bringing order to the vast amount of material already assembled and partly written. I welcome any interest, and I thank you for your attention.

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WWII Tragedy Touches Huron

Prairie Tracks Article

Robert E. Glanzer

At 12:49 pm on February 17, 1943 a B-17 bomber with a military crew of 9 officers and 3 civilian observers taxied off from the Rapid City Army Air Base on a routine training, gunnery and instrument flight.

As it left Rapid City, this late 1930's vintage aircraft was fitted with four 1200 horsepower engines, was mounted with twelve fully loaded machine guns, and was capable of carrying up to a 9,600 pound bomb load. In the Pacific, the planes earned a deadly reputation with the Japanese, who dubbed them "four-engine fighters." The "Flying Fortress" was legendary for their ability to stay in the air despite taking brutal poundings.

On that Wednesday afternoon the sky was clear, the winds were light and variable, with an unlimited visibility. Loaded with 1700 gallons of fuel and heading east across South Dakota the last communication with the air base was at 2:30 pm when the plane was south of Pierre and "there was no indication of any distress or that anything was out of order".

According to the Transcript of Testimony taken the next day at the Marvin Hughitt Hotel from 21 different eye witnesses; at 3:00 pm the B-17 was spotted about 35 miles southwest of Huron flying at only 50 to 100 feet above ground. The plane was then seen flying at a very low altitude about nine miles southwest of Huron heading in a northeasterly direction. Although some of the eye witness accounts differed in their recollection, it seems that the plane started to disintegrate about a mile southwest of Huron. As the aircraft crossed SD Hwy 37 about a quarter of a mile south of 21st street, several observers heard what sounded like a backfire and noticed an object falling from the plane in a trail of smoke which later was determined to be one of the left wing engines. The loss of the engine caused some further destruction of the left wing. After dropping the engine in the highway ditch, the plane took a sharp left turn to the

west and then immediately crashed in a fiery explosion in a farm pasture now known as 22nd Street and McClellan Drive SW.

Debris from the plane was scattered over an area from $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile southwest of Huron toward the highway and then parts of the plane continued to fall and were hurled up to a quarter of a mile west of the impact site. Before any emergency equipment could make its way to the accident site, the plane was totally engulfed in flames and declared a "complete wreck".

All 12 occupants of the bomber, including the pilot, 1st Lt. Oliver L. Walker, who had close to 200 hours flying the B-17, were killed in the crash. As the plane was immediately consumed in a fireball of fuel and flames, except for a couple of the occupants that were thrown from the plane, rescue or even retrieval of the bodies of the rest of the personnel on the plane was futile.

Among others, the eyewitnesses included three Huron city police officers who were providing traffic control for a funeral procession; Ephriam Anderson, Harry Morone, and J. L. Anderson. Working in the immediate vicinity where the motor landed was SD Highway employees Leo Best, Myron J. Demptster, and Lewis Steward. As there were two farm yards located along 21st street just north of the crash, several farmers and farm employees also witnessed the crash. George Crumb, a game warden patrolling by Woonsocket was the first eye witness to see the plane approaching from the southwest flying at only about 50 to 100 feet above the ground. Three youth, Dennis Classik, Don Wilson, and Don Hanley were also interviewed. Hanley was hunting down on the river bottom about 2 miles northeast of the crash site. He immediately got in his car and raced toward the flames. While he was driving he could still see pieces of the plane coming to the ground.

Max Hansen and his son, Mitchell, of Huron provided me with a copy of the official accident and testimony documentation. The Hansen's also did extensive metal detection in the debris area of the crash site where they found many scraps and parts of the wreckage. In 2008 the Hansen's mailed some pieces of the debris they found to Sharon Lepley of Steamwood, Michigan. Apparently Sharon's father was killed in the B-17 crash before she was born. In her thankyou letter to the Hansen's over 65 years after the fatal crash she said, "I will never be able

to thank you enough for the parts of the plane my father died in. It took me several days to look at them without crying...I still am choked up each time I touch them. That is as close as I've ever been to him... otherwise it was just looking at his headstone."

Nearly half of the bullets loaded in the machine guns were lying in the debris unexploded. A heavily armed military guard was placed on constant duty around the wreckage ordered "to shoot anyone who disobeys orders to keep away!"

“World War II Was Shortened by at Least Two Years“ (Bletchley Park)

Jacquelyn Jones Gunnarson

THE CALL

On May 7, 2014 an e-mail arrived from my cousin Jan (Bergman) Lochridge-Long of Rapid City. She had received a call from a woman in England asking for any memorabilia Jan may have from the WWII service of her dad, Pfc. John K. Bergman.

Jan thought I might have letters that her father may have written to his mother or his sister, my mother, while he was in England. Jan included the e-mail from Priscilla Macpherson, a researcher for Bexley Heritage Trust which oversees Hall Place along with another museum in the London borough of Bexley.

Macpherson explained that she was conducting research for a museum called Hall Place where possibly Jan’s father, John K. Bergman, had been among some 200 GI’s stationed there from 1943 to 1945, intercepting German code communications. These were being transmitted to Bletchley Park, the center of the joint Allied code breaking effort known as Project Ultra. Her message stated that effort was widely thought to have shortened the war by at least two years. The Collections Manager at Hall Place was preparing a six-month exhibition starting that September, and she hoped to tell some of the stories about those GI’s. She was contacting families for whom they had details to ask if they have any memorabilia or photographs which they might be willing to share with the museum for the exhibition. In addition, she said they would add the names of all these GI’s to the Bletchley Park Roll of Honor.

THE CHALLENGE

In early 2015 an Academy Award-nominated movie called *The Imitation Game* seemed as though it might reveal information about my uncle’s WWII service. I received better understanding after attending the movie and also reading Sinclair McKay’s book, *The Lost World of Bletchley Park*.

The 70th anniversary of V-E Day (Victory in Europe) on May 8, 2015, prompted me to compile some information about Private First Class John K. Bergman's service. The challenge was to gather information to submit for publication in Flandreau, SD, his hometown prior to WWII. The article could also be sent to the newspaper in Beresford, SD, where he lived and raised his family after WWII.

His father, Swedish immigrant John P. Bergman, named his youngest child after himself. When young John began to talk, he had difficulty saying the "J" in John and instead said "Don". From then on everyone called him "Don". To me, John K. Bergman was my "Uncle Don".

A photo my dad took of his brother-in-law, in Army dress uniform, shows Uncle Don standing beside a train car in Sioux Falls before he returned from furlough in 1943.

Notes written in 1995, after visiting my uncle in the Sioux Falls VA Hospital a few days prior to his death, filled in more of his story. During my last visit with Uncle Don, I prayed with him and he affirmed a sense of peace with Jesus. With all his experiences in life, he realized this was the most important one of all.

We talked about a photo of him with me as a young child, stroking his beard that he had grown for Hobo Day at South Dakota State College, where he enrolled after graduation from Flandreau High School in 1938.

He told me, sometime after beginning his study at South Dakota State, he went to Aberdeen, SD for Radio School. At the time I didn't ask further about the Radio School, but have since learned more from an article called "Life On The Home Front: South Dakota in WWII", by Robert Karolevitz and printed in Volume 19 of *South Dakota History*.

Karolevitz explained that "local employment offices in the state promoted free courses in radio telegraphy offered by the United States Maritime Commission leading to 'good jobs' paying from seventy to a couple hundred dollars a month. ... Some 725 young people learned machine and radio repair, welding, aviation mechanics, and other skills needed for manufacturing products at the United States Arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois. (By 1943 most young men went directly into defense industries, or the service, so Congress killed the program and South Dakota shops were closed.)"

Uncle Don explained that after being drafted he started his service in California before transferring to Washington DC, and later boarding the Queen Elizabeth which took soldiers to Europe. He spent two and a half years in England as part of the Signal Corp, charged with intercepting messages which were sent to the Allied headquarters north of London. My uncle told me he drove a jeep as a courier to deliver some of those messages. After V-E Day, he was shipped to Germany for six months, and then spent some time in France before returning home to the USA.

My uncle had never talked very much about his involvement during WWII. But as a result of situations he experienced, he probably had what would now be diagnosed as Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder from the various repressed pains which affected him for the rest of his life.

In August 1960, at age 40, while flying his private plane with a friend, they crashed sending my uncle's face through the windshield and permanently blinding him for the last 35 years he was alive.

During his rehabilitation at Hines VA in Chicago, he told his sister, my mother, that he received a perfect score in the Morse Code class. Now, as his secret involvement during WWII has been revealed, we realize that understanding Morse Code was an essential part of his service during WWII with Project Ultra.

THE CONTACT

I e-mailed my cousin Jan's contact from England, Priscilla Macpherson, on May 13, 2015, one year after her request for the Hall Place Exhibition, which by then had ended. Because I thought they may appreciate knowing more about Pfc. John K. Bergman, I sent them the published articles I'd written about my uncle for their archives at Hall Place, and received an acknowledgement of appreciation.

My parents, along with my brother and I, lived in the same hometown as John and his widowed mother. Before John left Flandreau for his service in the Army, to help with the rationing efforts for the war, he removed all four tires from his 1940 Ford convertible and put

the car on blocks in his mother's garage. My younger brother and I would often climb into that car to pretend like we were going for a ride.

After my uncle returned safely home from the war, he obtained a new set of tires and drove his convertible to Texas for a camping trip. Memories of that experience were preserved in a photo taken by a friend of his during the trip.

The Imitation Game movie gave reference to the "Official Secret's Act", which bound those working in code-breaking with Bletchley Park to keep their work secret for life. That may have answered why Uncle Don never talked about his military service to his wife, son, daughter, or anyone else, to his dying day.

I wondered how Macpherson located John Bergman's daughter, when for security reasons all records and machines at Bletchley Park were destroyed after the war. The researcher said help came from the group photos and names of GI's who worked at Hall Place, a nearby wireless station. From there she used the Internet to find enlistment and obituary records of U.S. military personnel, and found surviving relatives. An obituary for John K. Bergman's wife gave contact details for daughter Jan. Macpherson forwarded her e-mail, which she'd sent me, to their contact for the U.K., Bob Peterson, a U.S. military researcher.

THE CONVERSATION

From that beginning, I had communication with Peterson by phone and e-mail. Military researcher Peterson served 20 years in the United States Army Military Intelligence, focusing on signals intelligence. Some of those units traced their lineage to WWII Signal Radio Intelligence.

Peterson's research included interviews with a few surviving WWII intelligence veterans, or their family members, to help them better understand their important contributions to the Allied victory in WWII.

He shared his research with me about the U.S. 6811th Signal Security Detachment which he'd gathered for the 2014 presentation he gave at the opening of the Operation Ultra Exhibition in Hall Place, England.

Peterson e-mailed their group photo to me, with names that included Pfc. John K. Bergman. He also sent a photo which another courier, Tony Muroski, shared for that project. The photo shows 6811th couriers John in the trench coat, and Tony in the jacket, along with jeep mechanics in coveralls, standing in front of a jeep. 96-year old Muroski, now living in Florida, gave permission to use that photo.

THE CONNECTIONS

Today, thanks to advances in Internet technology, many WWII code-breaking efforts have now been made public.

WWII began the same year I started first grade. At that time, citizens were informed of war efforts through radio broadcasts, newspaper accounts, and newsreels shown prior to the start of movie picture shows. After receiving Peterson's information, I "Googled" Bletchley Park and Hall Place and found more information about the WWII secret code mission Ultra.

In August 1938, a secret team of codebreakers, mathematicians, and problem-solvers, from the British Government Code and Cypher School, took on the mission to crack Nazi coded messages. They met at Bletchley Park countryside mansion on the rail line between Oxford and Cambridge.

The Nazis believed their Enigma encrypted communications could not be broken, but the code-breaking group meeting at Bletchley Park was determined to prove the German military wrong.

The Enigma encrypting machine worked like a typewriter to code secret messages. It used a 26-letter alphabet based on Morse Code to send and receive messages. The Enigma had been invented by the Germans, using a Dutch idea, leaked to the French, and reconstructed by the Polish. Polish officials offered it to the British after Germans and Russians invaded Poland.

It is interesting to realize that in today's world of electronic computer-based technology much of the foundation probably began 75 years ago when intelligence relied on gifted minds using the Morse Code.

Bletchley's code-breaking system was first put to use in April 1940, when the Nazis invaded Norway. When my Norwegian immigrant grandmother, the mother of John K. Bergman, received a letter from relatives in Norway, they apologized for writing in pencil because Nazis had come into their homes taking many personal items, which also included their ink pens.

British and United States officials signed the British-United States-Agreement (BRUSA) on May 17, 1943, that enabled Americans to be embedded in the British Radio Intelligence operations. A June 1943 United States War Department document showed the British had 4,750 personnel involved in breaking, analyzing and reporting the German Enigma in the UK, in addition to others in wireless stations worldwide. Some estimated that number grew to 10,000. The US War Department listed 486 Americans as part of detachments in the United Kingdom working with Project Ultra.

John K. Bergman was assigned to the 6811th Signal Security Detachment that was formed in the summer of 1943 and located in Hall Place at Bexley, England. The upstairs floor was used as lodging for the 6811th. One section of the Hall Place manor was used for their radio intelligence. Inside the door of the center was a guard point to control entry. The great hall, further away, was used for intercept operations. Beyond that, cryptographers worked, and at the very end of the wing teletype operators sent communications to Bletchley Park. Hall Place has now been renovated into a museum and also used as a location to host special events.

Intercept operators worked in three round-the-clock shifts to monitor multiple target frequencies. Listening through static, operators tuned radio signals to find German stations and target frequencies. Once they found their target, they wrote down details to describe the stations communicating with one another.

Three times each day the cryptographers gathered paper intercept forms and sent them to London by a courier, like Pfc. John K. Bergman. Those in the 6811th were commended several times for the fine quality of their work by Station X, which was a code name for Bletchley Park, sometimes referred to by the initials "BP".

As more and more people arrived to join the code-breaking missions at Bletchley Park, the areas of operation began to move into large, pre-fabricated wooden huts set on the mansion grounds. For security reasons, the huts were known only by a number.

The Women's Royal Naval Service, or WRNS, were also stationed there and became skilled in keeping the machines working. They didn't live at the Bletchley Park mansion but were housed in nearby towns and villages.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill wrote a memorandum concerning the Bletchley Park code breakers with his order, "make sure they have all they want, an extreme priority, and report to me that this had been done."

Because of the wide expanse of UK Territories during that era, it was said, "the sun never set on the British Empire", and messages were received from every part of the world to Bletchley Park. There they were filtered twenty-four hours a day, decoded, and then sent to the War Office, before going to Prime Minister Churchill, and the Allied Commanders.

The process of breaking the German Enigma machine was aided considerably by a complex mechanical device called the Bombe, designed by British mathematician Alan Turing and team. This machine allowed the Allied Forces to react within hours instead of weeks. When the machine was switched on and each of three rotors moved at a rate mimicking the Enigma, it checked over 17,000 possible positions until it found a match. A code had to be changed each day because Nazis changed settings daily.

Over 200 bombe machines were built and ran round the clock. They were stationed at various locations across Britain to reduce the possibility of aerial bombings destroying these highly complex machines in one location.

Fully deciphered messages were translated from German into English before being passed on to British Intelligence. At its peak, the Bombe was able to crack three thousand German messages a day. By the end of the war an estimated two million messages had been given to the Allies, revealing Nazi positions and strategy.

Construction of the world's first electronic computer was developed by Tommy Flowers and his team. That machine was named "Colossus" because of its massive size. In February 1944, it began working at Bletchley Park to break German cipher communications. The German

Lorenz cipher machine was larger than the Enigma and used teleprinter code with the enciphered message fed into a radio transmitter which secretly communicated between Hitler and his officers. By the end of WWII, there were ten "Colossus" code-breaking machines working at Bletchley Park. After the war those machines were dismantled and any drawings burned, to keep "Colossus" a war secret.

In 1992, computer engineer Tony Sale led the construction of a "Colossus" replica. The task took fifteen years to rebuild, using scraps of diagrams, old photographs, and memories to prepare it for display at Bletchley Park, which had become a museum to reflect the significant WWII history performed there.

For all the successes of Bletchley Park to decode Nazi Enigma messages, they were dependent on the soldiers of the 6811th to intercept and report those secret Enigma messages. Bletchley code breakers made a vital contribution toward D-Day by breaking the cyphers of the German Secret Intelligence Service. Their efforts confused Hitler about where the Allies were to land. The Nazi commander's decision to divert troops away from the Normandy beaches ensured Allied victory in that June 6, 1944 invasion.

Military researcher Peterson documented that Hall Place was in the path of the German V-1 bomber. In one eight-hour shift, one hundred thirty-two V-1s were counted flying over Hall Place with bombs often hitting very close to Hall's barracks and operational quarters.

Peterson's personal interviews with some of the still living 6811th veterans recalled what happened on July 13, 1944. On that day, a German V-1 plane engine cut out and plunged into a school where a group of children were preparing to be evacuated. American soldiers from the 6811th, and others, responded to help recover bodies and rescuing those they could.

One of the few situations my uncle told my parents after returning home from the war was of that recovery process. He described that he carried the body of a young girl from the wreckage who looked like his niece, Jacque.

On May 8, 1945, when the war ended in Europe, the 6811th departed from Bexley. Some were assigned to other radio intelligence activities in Germany. Among items my mother saved from her brother's military involvement was a page listing one hundred fifty-eight names,

including Pfc. John K. Bergman. The top of the page was labeled "Signal Security Detachment 'D', Thanksgiving Day, Thurs. 22nd Nov. '45."

Peterson asked for a copy to confirm identities of some who had been sent from England to Germany after completing service with Project Ultra. Those men spent six months in Germany, and then some time in France before returning to the USA.

THE CONCLUSION

In the fall of 2015, John K. Bergman's daughter Jan sent photos of a visit she and her husband Randy made, arriving by train at Bletchley Park in England. They saw the Bletchley Park mansion, which has now become a museum with displays, including her father's name listed on the Bletchley Park Code of Honor.

The secret missions of Bletchley Park weren't made public until 1974, thirty years after the end of WWII, when an English veteran, F.W. Winterbotham, wrote a book he called *The Ultra Secret*. Because the Official Secrets Act required people to take an oath not to disclose classified or sensitive information, many who served with Project Ultra were dismayed by revelations in that book. By 1981, enough information had been exposed that a BBC play was written called "The Imitation Game", which told the story of a young woman in a WWII codebreaking center. The same title, but different story, was used for the recent Academy award-nominated movie of that name.

Neither the Bletchley Park Trust nor the Bexley Heritage Trust for Hall Place are funded by the British Government, so they rely on private donations for renovations and to establish museum collections.

The American Internet search engine Google gives support to Bletchley Park. Both Microsoft and Apple have also taken an interest. According to Sinclair McKay, the young generation of computer specialists in California's Silicon Valley revere Bletchley Park because of the breakthroughs in technology which occurred there.

McKay, and many others, including General Eisenhower, credit the work of Bletchley Park with having "shortened the war by two years."

A letter, written by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, was put on public display for the first time in March 2016, at Bletchley Park. It illustrates the importance the U.S. Government placed on the work of the code-breakers in helping defeat the Nazis. Eisenhower's letter was addressed to wartime Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service:

12 July 1945

Dear General Menzies,

I had hoped to be able to pay a visit to Bletchley Park in order to thank you and Sir Edward Travis, and the members of the staff personally for the magnificent services which have been rendered to the Allied cause. I am very well aware of the immense amount of work and effort which has been involved in the production of the material with which you have supplied us. I fully realize also the numerous setbacks and difficulties with which you have had to contend and how you have always, by your supreme efforts, overcome them. The intelligence which has emanated from you before and during this campaign has been of priceless value to me. It has simplified my task as a commander enormously. It has saved thousands of British and American lives, and in no small way, contributed to the speed with which the enemy was routed and eventually forced to surrender. I should be very grateful, therefore, if you would express to each and everyone of those engaged in this work from me personally my heartfelt admiration and sincere thanks for their very decisive contribution to the Allied war effort.

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Eisenhower was Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force when he wrote the letter. Five years later, he became Commanding General of NATO. Two years later, Eisenhower was President of the United States.

Because most of those involved with the Bletchley Park secret code missions are no longer living, the release of Eisenhower's letter of appreciation, now 75 years after the beginning of WWII, is a timely affirmation to the surviving family members including those in South Dakota, of how World War II came to the Northern Plains.

My *Dakota Conference* presentation concluded with a brief copyright video from the Computer History Museum called "Colossus: Breaking the Code."

<http://www.computerhistory.org/revolution/birth-of-the-computer/4/82/2218>



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The Women Who Flew In WWII: The Women's Airforce Service Pilots

Lillian Johnsson

In 1939 after Germany invaded Poland, England established the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA). The object was to free the RAF pilots for combat and defense. It was the first time women were hired to fly military aircraft. Not everyone approved. In the 1940's it was the prevailing idea that women were to be protected and were not strong enough to fly. They were to stay at home. In the first few years, Americans supplied 176 male pilots and 27 women pilots to the ATA.

In September, of 1940, an American pilot, Jackie Cockran wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt and General "Hap" Arnold suggesting the establishment of a woman's flying division of the Army Air Force. The suggestion was not well received by either party.

In June, 1941, flying for the ATA, Jackie Cockran became the first woman to ferry a bomber across the Atlantic Ocean. December, 1941, saw Pearl Harbor. Suddenly, America had a need for more pilots. But in early 1942, American women were still flying for ATA.

Two things happened in September, 1942, to change this. Pilot Nancy Harkness-Love formed the Women's Auxiliary Flying Squadron under the Ferry Command of the Army Air Force. These were the WAFS. Jackie Cockran established the Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD)) under Chief of the Army Air Force, General "Hap" Arnold. Eleanor Roosevelt changed her mind and had this to say:

"This is not a time for women to be patient. We are in a war, and we need to fight it with all our ability and every weapon possible. Women pilots, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used."

In February, 1943, the WFTD School closed and graduated its last class. In August of that year, the WAFS and Jackie Cockran's WFTD group merged to become the WASPS--the

Women's Airforce Service Pilots. Again, not everyone was in favor of women flying for the Air Force. TIME magazine ran an article titled "Unnecessary And Undesirable" which stated that the WASPS were expensive and men could have trained more quickly.

Perhaps, but what exactly were the women pilots doing? It is important to note that despite being non-military they were required to adhere to Army regulations.

Their day began at 6:00 AM with Reveille. After breakfast, there was physical training and ground school. They received 210 hours of military flight training. They had no flight suits, so were issued men's flight suits to wear when flying. These were many times too big and were nicknamed "Zoot Suits" by the WASPS. They began their flying in a Fairchild PT--19.

The WASPS were paid \$250 a month. That was \$50 a month below the lowest paid men in the Air Force.

Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, became the home air base of the WASPS. It was the only all-female air base in the United States. In the beginning that caused some problems. Over 100 planes reported mysterious engine problems and the all-male crews requested emergency landings. Those landings were soon outlawed by Jackie Cockran, who was the Director of the camp.

Over two years the women pilots operated from 110 facilities, flew more than Sixty million miles in 78 different types of aircraft. This included those from the smallest trainer to the fastest fighters and the largest bombers. They ferried over 80% of new aircraft from factory to training bases and embarkation points. They flew combat-weary planes to repair depots. Then they did the after-service checkout when male pilots would not. They towed targets for live ammunition anti-aircraft battery practice as well as air to air gunnery. They participated in smoke-laying missions during maneuvers.

The WASPS conducted weather reconnaissance. They were instructors and did everything from radio controlled and instrument test flying to thousands of engineering and utility tests. Of the more than 1,100 women pilots, 38 gave their lives in the service of their country.

For two years, 1943 and 1944, this is what the WASPS did. But times and the war were changing. The male pilots from Europe were now available. In December, 1944, General "Hap" Arnold disbanded the WASPS with no fanfare and simply sent them home. Because the WASPS were non-military, they received no discharge and no veteran benefits. If they died during duty, they paid for their own funeral and were not allowed to have a flag-draped coffin. They could not visit a V.A. hospital. They were not allowed to be buried in a national cemetery. It wasn't until 1979 that President Jimmy Carter signed a bill finally giving them veteran status.

Who were the WASPS? Some were wealthy. Some were seasoned pilots. A few had never seen a plane before. Some were poor. Some did not yet have a pilot's license. Here are some stories to give you an idea of how varied the WASPS were.

Jackie Cockran, Director of Women Pilots at Avenger Field, was a wealthy, seasoned pilot. In 1937 she set a new National Transcontinental record by flying from New York to Miami in four hours twelve minutes, beating Howard Hughes. In 1939 she broke the Woman's Altitude record by reaching 33,000 feet above sea level. In addition, she broke two Women's records, two National Speed records and an Intercity record between Burbank and San Francisco. She always flew with a fist full of lollipops for dry mouth and a half bottle of Coke. A full bottle would have exploded at high altitude.

AIR AND SPACE magazine, June, 2012, ran a story titled "The Girl With the B-29 Rating." While the story features Dora, it is actually the story of Dora Dougherty and DiDi Moorman. Dora and DiDi were being trained to fly the new Boeing B-29 Superfortress at Avenger Field. They received three days of training. They were checked out to fly the B-29 in spite of an engine fire during their first flight.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Tibbets, who was training male pilots to fly the B-29 was having some problems. The plane was desperately needed but it was considered a "Killer" by the male pilots. They were refusing to fly it due to its reputation for engine fires. Tibbets requested that the two WASPS fly the B-29 from Avenger Field to his base in Alamogordo, New Mexico, to show it was safe. I'm sure you can imagine the reaction of the male pilots when the B-29 landed and two women pilots emerged. Dora and DiDi were the only two WASPS to fly a B-29.

Tibbets, of course, eventually flew the Enola Gay.

The last paragraph of the magazine article said this: "68 years later Dora climbed into the cockpit of the Commemorative Air Force's B-29 'Fifi' at the Florida's Sun and Fun Fly-in. She said the last time she was in a Boeing B-29 Superfortress, 'God was a Boy.'"

Don't be misled by Dora's humor. She held a PhD with an emphasis on aviation psychology. She was employed by Bell Helicopters and was the Manager of Human Factors Engineering and Cockpit arrangements. She held several women's World Helicopter records and was a reserve Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force.

Norma J. Kraemer states in her book, "SD First Century of Flight" that the Sioux Falls Army Air Force Base was home to three WASPS. They were Bonnie Edmunds, Brooklyn NY; Katherine Dussa, Dayton, Washington; and Marjorie Ellfields, Kansas City, Missouri.

South Dakota had seven women who flew for the WASPS. They included Laurine Nielson, Violet Thurn Cowden, Maxine Nolz Wright, Lois Monk Mackenzie, Marjorie "Elaine" Redding Christiansen, Ola Mildred Rexroat, and Ann Rose Kary. There are many stories to tell about all of them. I have chosen the two who were still living back in 2000 when this research was started.

Violet Thurn Cowden was born in a sod house in 1916, in Bowdle, SD. She received a teaching certificate from the Spearfish Normal School and stayed to teach First Grade. While in Spearfish she rode her bicycle six miles each way to get her pilot's license. She had no driver's license. When she heard about the WASPS, she applied. Of the 25,000 women who did apply, Violet was one of the 1,830 accepted. She was barely five feet tall and was barely 100 pounds. She was issued a man's size 44 flight suit which she wore for the duration of her time as a WASPS. While she flew a variety of planes, her favorite was the P-15 Mustang. She once delivered one to the Tuskegee Airmen. By the way, Black women were denied admission to the WASPS.

Violet once had her plane catch fire. She managed to save her important papers-----and her makeup. Like most of the WASPS, Violet had wonderful stories to tell.

Because their work was so vital, the airlines were ordered to displace any passenger if a WASP needed to be shuttled to or from an assignment. One day a place was made for Violet on a flight to Memphis. Upon landing she faced a throng of women looking unaccountably disappointed. Violet Cowden had bumped Frank Sinatra.

Violet Thurn Cowden died at the age of 94 on April 10, 2011. It was just one year after she was the subject of a documentary, "Wings of Silver: The Violet Cowden Story".

Mildred Ola Rexroat, was another of South Dakota's WASPS. Millie was an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. She was the daughter of Julia Lost Horse. Millie spent her young years divided between the Osage Indians of Oklahoma and the reservation in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. She attended a one room schoolhouse on Pine Ridge. She enrolled and eventually graduated from the University of New Mexico. After college she worked as a secretary for the Army as they built bases and air fields. It was there she heard about the flying training program. She spent every spare penny on flying lessons. She finally earned her pilot's license, like violet, before she had a driver's license. She was accepted into the program and after seven months was graduated.

One of Millie's assignments as a WASPS was as an AT--6 pilot in Eagle Pass, Texas training male pilots how to successfully shoot down enemy aircraft. She towed targets for them to use in practice fights. Millie eventually earned a nickname. She was called "Sexy Rexy." From her early picture I can see why.

When the WASPS were disbanded she served in the Air Force Reserves for ten years as an air traffic controller. In 2007 she was inducted into the South Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame in Spearfish. Millie was also honored at the dedication of the Oglala War Memorial at the Oglala Lakota College in Kyle, South Dakota

The Journey Museum in Rapid City featured her as a speaker on April 3, 2011 at their presentation of SD First Century of Flight. She was 93 at that time. In her later years she lived in or near Hot Springs, South Dakota.

The Pacific Historic Parks newsletter "REMEMBRANCE" for the Spring of 2010, reported

that on March 10, 2010, the Women's Airforce Service Pilots finally received the Congressional Gold Medal. At that time only about 300 of the more than 1,100 WASPS were still living. They joined the Navaho Code Talkers who received their medals in the year 2000. The Tuskegee Airmen who received their medals in 2006.

If you are traveling near Sweetwater, Texas, you can visit the National WASP WWII Museum which is located near Avenger Field. It contains many of the pictures and momentos from the WASPS. You may also find many books which have been written by the individual WASPS. While I have read several of those books, I would suggest the one which was a combination by Anne Noggle's photographs and text by Dora Dougherty Strother called "FOR GOD, COUNTRY, and THE THRILL OF IT". The book idea came about when Noggle decided to make individual photos of the WASPS who attended a reunion in 1986. It is a wonderful well-written book and will give you a good look at "The Women Who Flew In WWII".

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The WASP Timeline

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Why Name It Harney's Peak?

David Kemp

In recent years while researching General Winfield Scott, who appears to be the source of the middle name, Scott in my Kemp family, I have encountered William Harney, the General Harney for whom the highest peak in the Black Hills of South Dakota is named after. You begin to ask why is this beautiful mountain in the Hills named after a nineteenth century military officer. Who was this William Harney?

I first encountered Harney in Michael Hogan's work, *Irish Soldiers of Mexico*, which deals with the San Patricios, or the Battalion of St. Patrick. Michael's essay on the San Patricios appeared in the May 2013 of the *Irish Gazette*.

The San Patricio's were American soldiers who chose to switch allegiance during the United States-Mexico War of 1846-1848. The San Patricios were led by an artilleryman, John Riley, who was a native of Galway, Ireland. They were made up of mostly native-born Irishmen.

Hogan noted that:

"At the Battle of Churubosco, holed up in a Catholic monastery and surrounded by a superior force of American cavalry, artillery, and infantry, the San Patricios withstood three major assaults and inflicted heavy losses on the Yanks. Eventually, however, a shell struck their stored gunpowder, the ammunition park blew up, and the San Patricios after a gallant counteroffensive with bayonets, were overwhelmed with sheer numbers.

In September, 1847 the Americans put the San Patricios soldiers captured at the Battle of Churubosco on trial. Forty-eight were sentenced to death by hanging. Those who had deserted before the declaration of war, like John Riley, were sentenced to whipping at the stake, branding, and hard labor.

The commander of the American forces at Churubosco was General William Harney. The most riveting aspect of the San Patricios' execution was the situation in which the soldiers were hung. The gallows were set up so that the prisoners stood looking up to the monastery. They were kept alive until they witnessed the surrender of the Mexican forces, the taking down

of the Mexican flag, and the subsequent raising of the American flag over the battle site. The American commander who directed these actions was William Harney.

William Harney was born in 1800 in Nashville, Tennessee. He was of Irish Protestant descent. He began his military service under General Andrew Jackson. He was involved in the conflict with the pirate, Jean Lafitte, and in the Seminole and Black Hawk Wars.

During the Black Hawk War he was in contact with Colonel Zachary Taylor, Captain Abraham Lincoln, and Lieutenant Jefferson Davis. During these times he began working with activities in what was then American Northwest. This included work with Jesuit missionary, Father DeSmet.

On January 17, 1833 Harney married Mary Mullanphy, daughter of John Mullanphy, who is described as an Irish philanthropist. I can't imagine what an Irish philanthropist did during famine times.

William Harney remained in the American army as a career soldier. When the Mexican-American War began he was appointed colonel and put in command of the Second Dragoons. During the siege of Veracruz, Mexico he served as a senior cavalry officer in the American army commanded by General Winfield Scott. After the Battle of Cerro Gordo he received a promotion to brevet Brigadier General. He was a commander of the cavalry at the Battles of Contreas, Churubusco, and the final battle for Mexico City.

Harney's marriage was not a happy one. During one of Harney's trip out West, his wife, Mary took their three children and moved to Paris, France. Mary would later die in Paris in August of 1861.

One of Harney's campaigns involved being called back from France in 1854 to head west to deal with Indian activities along the Platte River. One of Harney's biographers' states that he was involved in a precedent setting expedition in 1855. What was the precedent that Harney's campaign established?

Perhaps the most vivid description of Harney's expedition against the Lakota bands along the Blue Water River can be found in Mari Sandoz's classic historical novel, *Crazy Horse*, which appeared in 1942.

Sandoz's account is from the point of view of a young Lakota man, Curly, who would later take the name, Crazy Horse. The account describes Crazy Horse witnessing the killing of Brule leader, Conquering Bear. This attack by Harney's expedition was in retaliation for the killing of cow, belonging to a Mormon person traveling to Utah on the 'Oregon' trail. The people, who killed the cow were Minneconjou Lakota, who had moved quite a distance north after the incident. Conquering Bear was shot in the back while negotiating with members of the U. S. army. In subsequent skirmishes the American force attacked an encampment of Little Thunder's band, another Brule group, on the Blue Water River. This attack involved what became the precedent setting behavior by the U. S. Army. This was the first time that the tactic of massacring woman and children was carried out as a means of bringing about the "submission" of the Plains Indian population. As a result of the murdering of the Lakota people on the Blue Water the Lakota began calling Harney, the "Woman Killer".

After Harney's campaign on the Platte River in 1855 he became commander of American forces during the "Bleeding Kansas" activities which involved anti-slavery and pro-slavery militias. He was sent to Utah on an expedition against the Mormons in 1857-1858. By 1860 he had been named Commander of the Department of Oregon, and the Department of the West, located in St. Louis, Missouri.

He was removed from his command in 1861. It is stated that even President Abraham Lincoln was on record stating that Harney's removal was a grave mistake. He had developed a reputation for dealing "positively" with the Plains Indian tribes.

Harney retired from active duty in the military in September, 1863. His wife, Mary had died in Paris two years before. It is noted that he was later brought out of retirement to serve on government treaty commissions. It was the Peace Commission of 1868 that created the Laramie Treaty of 1868.

Harney would spend the rest of his life, living off of the inherited funds and property of his wife, Mary. He would later marry Mary E. Cromwell St. Cyr in St. Louis, Missouri in 1884. Mary had served as his nurse, housekeeper and administer of his affairs, prior to their marriage. Harney died in 1889. There was a long drawn out fight over Harney's wealth between Mary Cromwell St. Cyr Harney and heirs to Harney's first wife, over Mary's wealth and property.

The highest peak in the Black Hills must have been named during one of the many American expeditions into the Hills during the mid-1800s, perhaps when William Harney was Commander of the West.

As an Irish American historian who has concentrated on the Irish American activities in Dakota for the past three decades, I should probably be proud of the fact that the highest peak in South Dakota is named in honor of an Irish American soldier.

The Lakota people have had problems over the years with referring to the highest peak in the Black Hills as Harney's Peak, considering the horrible atrocities and suffering Harney's troops inflicted upon the Lakota people. Considering William S. Harney's military career, we can certainly not speak about him with pride, but rather with a definite sense of distain. After over one hundred and fifty years of calling the peak, Harney's should we, at long last, consider renaming the beautiful mountain?

**Tom McDill:
Survivor of Bataan during World War II**

Lt. Col. George A. Larson, USAF (Ret.)

The Japanese attack on the Philippine Islands on December 8, 1941, after the surprise attack against Pearl Harbor, grabbed newspaper headlines in the United States and around the world. Even though the Japanese had been on the same WWI alliance with the United States, war in the closing days of 1941 appeared to be not if, but when and where. The US created various war plans, designated by color, as did Germany. One of Germany's war plans was for the invasion of Poland, implemented on September 1, 1939, beginning WWII in Europe. For the United States, War Plan Orange-3 (WPO-3) was prepared to defend the western Pacific, including the Philippines.¹ Prior to the outbreak of war in the Pacific, the US War Department recognized that against a full scale Japanese amphibious landing, air and naval attack against the Philippines, the only area that realistically could be defended was Manila Bay and the Bataan Peninsula. However, US and Filipino troops were not expected to hold out for more than six months. During this time period, it was hoped the US Navy could force a relief convoy from Pearl Harbor to relieve the Philippines. Unfortunately, the lack of preparations by General MacArthur to set up supply depots (food, ammunition and medical supplies), prepare defensive lines on Bataan and disperse his vulnerable air force speeded Japanese subjugation of the Philippines. More significantly, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and other Empire Japanese Navy successful operations in the western Pacific made WPO-3's timeline impossible.

The American-British-Chinese (ABC-1) staff agreement, signed on March 27, 1941, in Washington, DC, set the future war effort to defeat Germany first (once the US entered the war), but the Pacific area of operations was not overlooked. ABC-1 stated:

1. The United States Fleet will:

A. Support Allied operations for the defense of the Malay Barrier by diverting enemy strength through attacks on the Marshall Island and raids sea communications and positions.

B. Support British naval forces south of the equator and west 155 degrees longitude east.

- C. Protect Allied territory and sea communications in the Pacific.
 - D. Prepare to capture the Marshall and Caroline Islands.
2. The United States Army, in conjunction with the Pacific Fleet and Army Air Forces will:
- A. Hold Oahu.
 - B. Defend the Panama Canal and the Pacific Coast of the United States and Canada, including Alaska.
 - C. Support the republics of the west coast of South America.²

The Orange War Plans were replaced by Rainbow War Plans (such as Rainbow V), which mandated the defense of the Western Hemisphere, the American continent above 10 degrees north, with the dispatch of American forces to Europe to first defeat Germany and Italy. If a two-ocean war broke out, the US would have to adopt a defensive position strategy against the Empire of Japanese; based on the defense of the Aleutian-Hawaii-Panama triangle area.³ Steps were implemented to improve Philippine defenses. General MacArthur was appointed commander of all US Army forces in the Far East and initiated a mobilization and training of the Philippine Army. It took time to move troops, equipment and supplies to the Philippines, especially under growing demands to provide England with materials to fight Germany and Italy. The transfer of equipment was made easier with the passage of Lend Lease by Congress, providing money for war material, shipped on British flag carriers to England and other US allies, especially China. Supplies were in the pipeline from the United States, which by July 1942, would have increased Philippine defenses against a possible Japanese attack.⁴ One US Army enlisted man assigned to the Philippines was Tom McDill (20046, lived north of Custer South, Dakota, (dying in 2015, 95 years old). McDill:

I was born in Lincoln, Nebraska on October 14, 1921, and in the summer of 1940, I was on the 'bum' with a close friend from Chadron, Nebraska, riding a freight train into Yakima, Washington. Along the way, we saw US Army requiring posters. My friends said, "We ought to join the US Army." So, we went to the local Army Recruitment Center in Yakima. The recruiter had two openings in the Philippines, US Army Air Corps (USAAC). This later became the US Army Air Forces (USAAF) on June 20, 1941. We were sent to nearby Fort Lawton, three miles northwest of downtown Seattle. I was only 18 years at the time, so I had to obtain signatures

from my parents. They preferred to let me enter the US Army rather than riding boxcars, doing nothing. We went by train to San Francisco, California, then to Fort McDowell on Angel Island. This was the US Military Embarkation Center for personnel transiting to Pacific duty locations. I boarded the US troops transport USS Cottle (APA 147) for the 21 day sea voyage to Manila, arriving September 1940. I was assigned to Nichols Field, located on the outskirts of Manila. I received little recruit (basic military instruction) training, so I was assigned to guard duty at the field's ammunition dump. The guard detail consisted of three men: me, another private and one Private First Class (PFC) (commander of the detail). The PFC took the day shift and the remaining two of us broke up the evening's duty into two equal time shifts, 1800 to 2400 and 2400 to 0600. I was on guard duty for almost one year. I managed to get off it by volunteering for the 409th Signal Company Aviation and got training to be a signal lineman. The 409th Signal Company Aviation Company was a service detachment, activated three months before the Japanese attack on the Philippines. This was good duty. We had Filipino bunk boys who made our beds, pulled mosquito netting over the beds and did other cleaning. We also had boys to do KP so we did not have to pull that duty either. We really didn't have any concerns about Japan attacking the Philippines, although a lot of military prevention activities were apparent, especially with the arrival of B-17 Flying Fortresses.⁵

On December 8, 1941, Clark Field was placed on alert to the possibility of a large-scale Japanese air attack from Formosa. Aircraft took off at 0830. The airborne force landed to refuel. At 1245, Japanese fighters and bombers attack Clark Field and other US airfields, including Nichols Field. The Japanese attack destroyed one third of US fighters and one-half of the bombers, stripping MacArthur's command of air defense against following Japanese air attacks and amphibious landings. Japanese troops landed on Luzon on 10 December. MacArthur's over-optimistic defensive operations plan was to holdout against the Japanese attacks for a maximum of six months.⁶

McDill:

I was at Nichols Field when the Japanese air attack occurred, hiding behind a truck. A bomb landed on the opposite of the truck, sending a piece of shrapnel through the vehicle, hitting me in the leg, slightly wounding me. We picked up our personal equipment and were

trucked to Manila, where we boarded a motor launch to Mariveles and into the Bataan Peninsula. We went by truck up the west side of Bataan on the China Sea side, north of Ciabobo Point. Our primary task was to string communications wire to front line positions, connecting artillery and field commanders together. We also patched broken sections when Japanese artillery or bombs cut the wires, which were usually strung along the edges of roads or trails. For those of us in the signal company, it was like we were out on maneuvers. When we were fixing breaks in the wire, we got very close to the fighting and our main camp was close to a field artillery position. Shells fired from these guns sounded like boxcars rumbling overhead.⁷

As the situation on Bataan worsened, President Roosevelt ordered General MacArthur to leave Philippines to prevent his being captured by the Japanese. On March 11, 1943, General MacArthur, his family and 15 staff members escaped from Corregidor by motor torpedo boats. They reached Macajalar Bay on the north coast of Mindanao. They went to a nearby airfield, boarded two B-17 Flying Fortresses for the flight to northern Australia. On 9 April, Major General Edward P. King surrendered all troops on Bataan to Japanese Colonel Nakayama, 14th Japanese Army Senior Operations Officer.⁸

McDill:

At the time of surrender, I was on the west side of Bataan, 20 miles north of Mariveles. Japanese troops searched us, taking weapons, personal items of value and equipment. Most of the US troops were not prepared for the harsh treatment handed out by the Japanese troops. Japanese soldiers were taught not to surrender and it was considered a dishonor to do so. The Japanese planned to use trucks to transport POWs out of Bataan to Camp O'Donnell, twelve miles northwest of Clark Field, but there were not enough trucks.

Camp O'Donnell was a military training base for the Philippine Army and it would prove inadequate as a POW camp, holding too many US and Filipino soldiers. The Japanese gathered US and Filipino troops, marching us north through a series of small towns. Most of the captured troops were weak from the effects of reduced rations and constant jungle fighting. Known as the Bataan Death March, Japanese troops clubbed, bayoneted and shot POWs along the hot march route north to San Fernando. The Japanese captured 12,000 US and 64,000 Filipino troops. During the 55 mile forced march, 2,330 US and 7,000 Filipino troops perished.

Thousands more died during the harsh period of captivity. We were forced to march along the sides of the road while Japanese trucks drove down the center, toward the tip of Bataan. Corregidor surrendered on May 7, 1943, ending organized resistance against the Japanese, although a guerrilla movement started, increasing throughout the war as time passed.

San Fernando was our first food stop on the long march. It was a railhead stop to load POWs into boxcars for the trip to Camp O'Donnell. Everyone was hungry and thirsty. I was fortunate that I still had iodine tablets, which Japanese troops searching me had not confiscated and my canteen. Without getting shot, I was able to fill my canteen with water along the road and drop in the iodine tablets, drink and not become sick. The guards were a rough lot, constantly keeping us moving. I saw one guard shoot and bayonet fellow POWs without reason. My signal company had been broken up on Bataan, so I lost track of nearly all of them.

At San Fernando, in groups of 100, we were loaded into metal boxcars for the eight hour train trip to Capras. The heat inside the boxcar soared to over 100 degrees, and 10 to 15 men per car didn't survive. Once at Capras, the survivors were unloaded and marched to Camp O'Donnell. Once at the camp, I was assigned to a barracks. Because crowding in the camp was severe and deaths averaged 40 to 60 a day, I decided to volunteer for work details outside the camp. It was worse at the Filipino camp across the road, where deaths averaged 200 to 300 a day. A friend and I got out of camp to work down at the river in the pump house, which supplied water to the camp's kitchen. We were able to contact guerrillas operating in the surrounding area and smuggle in food, cigarettes and occasionally, candy. The Japanese, because of Camp O'Donnell's over-crowding, decided to set up additional POW camps, established at Cabanatuan, 25 miles northeast of Capras. Camp Number One was located four miles away from Cabanatuan. Camp Number Two was located four miles east of Camp Number One. Camp Number Three was located six miles east of Camp Number Two. These three camps had been set up as Philippine Army camps before the Japanese invasion.

I was sent to Camp Number One and assigned to a 50 to 60 man barracks. We raised our own vegetables for food, which also fed the Japanese guards, who at this camp were primarily

from Formosa. In this camp, we had doctors and medics, but almost no medicine. Again, we were placed on short rations, usually rice and a watery soup. The Japanese used POWs for various work details, especially on the construction of airfields, transporting us back and forth by truck.

At Camp Number One, we did not have contact with guerillas as at Camp O'Donnell. There were no escapes from the camp because the Japanese assigned 10 men to what became known as a 'death squad.' If one POW escaped, the remaining nine POWs in the assigned squad would be immediately executed. Slowly, the Japanese began shipping American POWs out of the Philippines in what became known as 'Hell Ships,' a good description of their fate during the sea voyage. I tried to avoid this as long as possible, but I did not prevail.⁹

The Japanese began moving POWs to Japan, retaining them as slave labor, on what became known as "Hell Ships." This brief description of what happened to the POWs on these Hell Ships is not intended to be a complete listing but a sampling of what the Japanese did and how they moved the POWs to Japan. The Asaku Maru, on July 6, 1942, carried 60 male and 19 female POWs from Rabaul, New Britain to Yokohama, Japan. On October 3, 1942, the Tamahoko Maru transported 269 POWs from Camp Cassisang, Mindanao to Manila. On another trip, on June 13, 1944, the transport was carrying 772 POWs, sailing from Manila to Takao, Formosa. On its final sea leg to Japan, the transport was stalked, torpedoed and sunk by the US submarine Tang on June 24, 1944. The sinking and subsequent actions by the Japanese cost the lives of 560 out of the 772 POWs onboard. At this time in the war, the US had no intelligence the Japanese were moving POWs in unmarked transports, not properly designated with Red Cross or POW markings. In desperation, as the US submarine onslaught against Japanese transports increased, the Japanese Navy falsely marked transports with the Red Cross symbol in order to move high-priority cargoes to their destinations. Both Japanese actions violated Geneva Convention rules, which the Japanese repeatedly violated during the war. The Noto Maru on August 27, 1944, departed Manila with 1,035 POWs.¹⁰

McDill:

I was shipped to Japan on the Noto Maru. We were loaded into the forward hold of the Japanese transport, which carried no markings that it was a POW transport. We were fortunate in that our ship was not torpedoed by a US submarine. The cargo hold we were in was nine feet high, 90 feet long and 50 feet wide, divided into two wooden tiers, creating three spaces, three feet high. The hold was hot and the steel sides so hot you could not touch them. We were fed only two small handfuls of rice each day and if we got water, it was one small cup.

There were no lights inside the hold and the conditions were terrible. Sanitary facilities consisted of four or five wooden buckets and many POWs suffered from dysentery and sickness. Japanese guards were at the small, wooden hatch entrance at the top of the hold to prevent any POWs from attempting to escape. But once on deck, where could one go when at sea, no weapons and we were in very weak condition.¹¹

With so many POWs crammed into such a small area, there was not enough room for the prisoners, with most remaining in a sitting position for the entire trip. There were not enough buckets to provide sanitary facilities and hundreds of the POWs suffered severely from dysentery and many of those healthy quickly succumbed to sickness. Deprived of fresh air and water, exposed to the constant heat, many suffocated or went mad. These ships carried no markings and were legitimate targets of war for the stalking US submarines or aircraft.¹²

MacDill:

I found out after the war that two of my friends on the Arisan Maru were killed when torpedoed by a US submarine. My ship reached Moji on August 13, 1944.¹³

On September 5, 1944, the Shinyo Maru sailed from Davo, carrying 750 POWs. The transport was torpedoed by the US Fleet submarine Paddle (SS 263) on 7 September. The SS-263 Paddle was commissioned in 1943, a Gato Class US Fleet Submarine. It had a displacement of 1,525 tons, 311 feet 8-inches long, beam of 27 feet 4-inches, draft 16-feet 10-inches, six forward and four rear 21-inch torpedo tubes, one 3-inch gun, two 20 mm Oerlikons (AAA) and .50 caliber machine guns, with a complement of 80. The torpedo attack killed 667 POWs (from the sinking of the transport, gunfire from the onboard Japanese guards, drowned or died from their wounds). On September 7, 1944 the Shinyo Maru with 750 POWs was sunk, only 82 POWs

survived! The Hokusen Maru, also referred to as the Beju Maru, sailed from Manila on October 3, 1944 with 1,100 POWs, destination Hong Kong. On October 24, 1944, the POW transport sailed from Hong Kong to Formosa.

On October 11, 1944, the Arisan Mari, loaded with 1,782 POWs sailed from Manila to Palawan. The transport turned back, returning to Manila on October 20, 1944. After US air raids, the POW transport sailed out of Manila again on October 21, joining a convoy of Japanese transports. But, due to its slow speed, quickly left behind. On October 24, it was stalked by the US Fleet submarine Shark. The SS-314 Shark was commissioned in 1944, a Balao Class US Fleet submarine. It displaced 1,526 tons, length 311 feet 6-inches, beam 27 feet 4-inches, draft 16 feet 10-inches, one 3-inch gun, two 40 mm AAA, .50 caliber machine guns, six forward and four rear 21-inch torpedo tubes, with a complement of 80.¹⁴ On November 13, 1944, a dispatch from Commander, Naval Unit, Fourteenth Air Force, stated that a Japanese transport enroute from Manila to Japan with 1,800 American POWs had been sunk on October 24, 1944 by an American submarine during a torpedo attack. No other submarine reported the attack, and since the USS Shark had given the USS Seadragon a contact report only a few hours before the sinking, and could not be raised by radio after that, it can only be assumed that the USS Shark made the attack, and perished during or after the torpedo attack. Five prisoners who survived and subsequently reached China stated that conditions were so intolerable that prisoners prayed for deliverance from their misery by a torpedo or aircraft bombing. Because many prisoners of war being transported had been rescued from the water by US submarines, they had been instructed to conduct searches for Allied POW survivors in the vicinity of all sinkings of Japanese Home Islands bound transports. The USS Shark may well have itself been depth charged and sunk trying to rescue American POWs in the water. All attempts to contact the USS Shark by radio failed and on November 27, 1944, the submarine was presumed lost.¹⁵

The Oryoku Maru sailed on December 13, 1944 from Manila with 1,619 POWs. The unmarked transport was attacked by aircraft from the US carrier Hornet (CV-8, commissioned on October 20, 1941, able to carry a mix of 81 aircraft) on December 14, 1944. The transport was subsequently attacked the next day, Hornet's aircraft again, sinking the transport, killing 250 POWs. Surviving POWs were picked up by other Japanese ships, returning to a POW camp, San

Fernando at La Union, Lingayan Gulf on December 25, 1944. On December 26, 1944, the Awa Maru sailed from Singapore, arriving at Moji, Japan on January 13, 1945. The Enoura Maru on December 27, 1944, picked up surviving POWs from the Oryoku Maru, reaching Takao, Formosa on December 31, 1944, On January 9, 1945 the aircraft carrier USS Hornet attacked and sunk that transport in that harbor, killing 350 POWs. The Brazil Maru was used to collect the surviving POWs and departed Takao, reaching Moji, Japan. When that transport docked, only 425 POWS from the original 1,619 reached dry land. The Melbourne Maru departed Formosa on January 14, 1945, carrying over 500 POWs, picking up these prisoners who had been transported on the Hokusen Maru, along with four POWs who survived the sinking of the Arisan Maru, arriving Moji, Japan on January 23, 1945.¹⁶

The Japanese completed the transportation of the majority of Allied POWs to Japan prior to US Submarine and aircraft carrier attacks virtually cleared the shipping lanes around Japan of large merchant shipping. The movement of remaining Japanese transports was further hampered by US sea mines dropped by B-29s under "Operation Starvation." B-29s dropped 1,000 or 2,000 pound sea mines, lowered to the water by parachute. Once the mine landed in the water, the parachuted released, with the mine sinking to sea bottom: magnetic, acoustic or pressure sensitive. B-29s conducted the aerial mining operations against the Shimonoseki Strait and the harbors of the Inland Sea. Naval mines sank more Japanese shipping than any other Allied combat operations. One of the B-29 Bomb Groups (BG) conducting such aerial mining operations with the 504th BG, assigned to North Field, Tinian, Mariana Islands. The 540th BG conducted its first aerial mining mission on March 27, 1945, with the highest tempo of aerial mining during the month of July 1945. During WWII, one out of three POWs held by the Japanese were moved by the Hell Ships to Japan. After the Japanese surrendered, US military intelligence officers and personnel examined official records in Tokyo which revealed that of the 25,000 Allied POWs moved by Japanese transports, 10,800 died of various causes on 25 transports attacked by US submarines and aircraft.

Not all Allied POWs were brought by ship to Japan. As the B-29 air war increased in tempo against the Japanese home islands, those Superfortresses shot down over Japan, brought 20th Air Force airmen to Japanese control and torture. Fiske Hanley during WWII was assigned to the

504th BG as a flight engineer. The author's father, George W. Larson, assigned to the 135th United States Naval Construction Battalion (SEABEES) built the four runways on North Field, taxiways, parking aprons and facilities, including Quonset hut camp area. The author's father took a picture of the Hanley's B-29 on Tinian. In 1990, the author located Hanley, meeting at the Omaha Airport, discussing his WWII experiences and ties from 1945 to 1990. Hanley was shot down during a mining mission on March 27, 1945.

Fiske Hanley:

Now, after the war, I think I am a lucky guy because I survived after bailing out of my B-29 (only two escaped from the mortally damaged aircraft) by AAA. But while in prison, had a hard time. In the days after my capture, with my hands tied, blindfolded, I was sent to Kempei Thai Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan by train, at which time upon arriving, torture and interrogations were waiting for me. The interrogations were terrible. However, if I had not been captured by local Japanese soldiers, the civilians had been repeatedly told by authorities to kill any B-29 crewmen they located who had parachuted out of damaged Superfortress bombers. Eventually, I was taken to Omini Prison on August 15, 1945 (after the Japanese surrender). I knew the war was over when I was fed a small rice ball three times a day. I was so glad I survived while in prison. Out of all B-29 crewman lost over Japan, less than 200 survived to be repatriated back to the United States.¹⁷

McDill:

Moji, Japan was our point of entry on the Noto Maru. We were loaded onto a well-guarded ferry for the sea trip to Shimonoseki on 6 September and then loaded into a sealed passenger railroad car, with the window shades pulled down for the three day trip north to Hanawa. Once off the train, we were marched into a small POW camp, designated as Camp 6B, a copper mining operation. The mine was located two miles up a mountain, northwest from the POW camp, and this is where we worked from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The work was dangerous because the mine was very old and I often worked in cold standing water. We used steel sledgehammers to break lose the copper bearing ore, pulling back the loosened ore with a diamond shaped hoe, then shoveling the ore into an ore hopper car. A track led to an open hole in the mine where we dumped the copper ore, which went

down to a smelter plant at the base of the mountain. The Japanese civilian “Honchos” in the mine were brutal, constantly pushing us. Copper was a scarce mineral, critical to Japan’s limited high-tech war production.

After we were back in the hands of US military personnel, I found out that the Japanese were living on less than 2,000 calories per day. Since we were POWs, we were at the bottom of the available food chain. We constantly had to scavenge for food, eating what can best be described as garbage. We were fed millet, not rice, which was hard to digest and we all suffered. Sometimes, we were given soup, more colored water than an actual soybean soup.

There was a lot of snow at this camp during the winter. We shoveled narrow walkways bordered by snow up to the tops of the 30-foot high wood barracks. For heat, we had one small stove, but little or no wood to burn. Workers in the copper mine, myself included, smuggled any wood we could find back to the camp. We somehow managed to smuggle the wood past the guards into camp and then burn the wood in the stove. We also had a great problem with fleas and just could not get rid of them.

The Japanese guards never told us anything about the war, especially how badly it was going against Japan. I never saw any Boeing B-29 Superfortresses flying over the camp until after Japan surrendered. On August 19, 1945, finally, the Japanese guards told us that Japan had surrendered and the war was over. We were allowed to mark the camp with large letters, ‘PW’ visible from the air. The next day, a USN torpedo bomber flew low over the camp, dropping K-rations, which we eagerly picked up. This food was welcomed by all and quickly consumed.¹⁹

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki saved the lives of over 300,000 Allied POWs held by the Japanese. The Japanese Kempeitai Military Police received orders on August 14, 1945, to begin the execution of Allied POWs to be completed prior to the Allied invasion of Japan. The surrender of the Japanese saved these POWs from death. On August 17, 1945, the 20th Air Force was tasked to deliver emergency supplies by air to POW camps, set up by the Japanese prior to entry by Allied troops or movement out by the POWs to collection points. The B-29 was ideal for this operation because of its long range and large bomb bay, which could haul the supplies to be parachuted into POW camps. The first airdrops consisted of

essential supplies: clothing, medicines (along with detailed instructions for their use) and three days of food: soups, fruit, juices, extracts and vitamins. The second airdrops consisted of seven days of rations. Follow-on airdrops were scheduled as required until the POW camps were liberated or the prisoners moved to transfer points. The supplies were packed inside 55-gallon drums for protection, dropped by parachute. However, when the parachute failed to deploy and open, the drum smashed hard into the ground, spilling its contents over the ground, still rapidly picked up by POWs. Between August 29 and September 20, 1945, there were 1,066 POW supply flights, with 900 dropping their supplies into POW camps. B-29s delivered 4,470 tons of supplies to 63,500 POWs.

McDill:

We were in Hanawa for three weeks after Japan surrendered. As to be expected, the Japanese camp guards became very friendly, telling us that two large bombs had been dropped by B-29s, one on Hiroshima and the second on Nagasaki. I saw a B-29 for the first time when one dropped food and supplies into the camp. It was finally arranged for us to be taken into nearby Hanawa, moved by passenger train south to Shiogama Harbor. We were transferred to a USN LST, No. 252, with its ramp lowered so we could walk inside and then moved out beyond the harbor to a large hospital ship, the USS Rescue. The hospital ship sailed to Yokohama, arriving on September 15. Some of those onboard were taken off the ship, while others were brought on. Some, like myself, remained onboard. The hospital ship sailed across the Pacific, stopping at Pearl Harbor before sailing to San Francisco, from which I had sailed so many months previously in September 1940. I was bused to Letterman Army Medical Center for a stateside medical evaluation and treatment, and then by passenger train to Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center in Denver, Colorado. I remained at Fitzsimmons for one month, enjoying the mountain air, food and a chance to slowly transition from a POW to a human being. At this time, I made the decision to remain in the Army, while others elected to get out as quickly as possible. While at Fitzsimmons, I collected my back pay and then transferred to Fort Riley, Kansas. I was given 90 days leave and an additional 90 days temporary duty leave, which was six months of my own time with no work, but still being paid as a US soldier. This ended my WWII POW experience and began my transition from an enlisted soldier to that of an officer.

After the extended leave, I reported to Offutt Field, Nebraska and was given the rank of Staff Sergeant. While there, the change was made to the Air Force, transferring me from the USAAF to the USAF. I saw Pentagon Circular Number 101, which indicated that if you were an NCO during WWII, you could apply to be commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, USAF Reserve. I filled out the necessary forms and promptly forgot about them. A Staff Sergeant friend of mine also completed the forms and sent in the application. He was called to duty as a Second Lieutenant at the beginning of the Korean War, assigned to F.E. Warren Air Force Base at Cheyenne, Wyoming. By that time, I had been promoted to Technical Sergeant and assigned to Fort Benjamin Harrison at Indianapolis, Indiana. This was a location, which I did not like. I arranged for a transfer to Hill Air Force Base at Salt Lake City, Utah. I was only there for five months before being transferred to Seattle, Washington where I became Chief Clerk of the orderly room. I then went to F.E. Warren as an instructor at the Air Force Administrative School and promoted to Master Sergeant.

The Korean War was in full swing and there was a constant need for Company Grade officers. The Air Force found my Reserve Officer application, which I had sent but forgot about, and I became a Second Lieutenant, USAFR. I remained at F.E. Warren, moving up the officer ranks to that of a Captain. I spent three years in Spain and then back to F.E. Warren, retiring in June 1961, with 11 years as enlisted and 10 years as an officer.”²¹

Notes

¹ I.C.B. Dear, ed., *The Oxford Companion to World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 854.

² Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II*, Volume III, *The Rising Sun*

In the Pacific, 1931-April 1942 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988), 33, 51-52.

³ Joan Heffer, *The United States and the Pacific, History of a Frontier* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre

Dame Press, 2002), 257.

⁴ Louis Morton, *United States Army in World War II, The War in the Pacific, The Fall of the Philippines*

(Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1989), 14-50.

⁵ Tom McDill, Custer, South Dakota. During World War II assigned to the Philippines, captured by Japanese, POW in the Philippines and Japan. Interview, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Larson, USAF (Ret.), September 18, 2004 at McDill's home in rural Custer County, South Dakota.

⁶ Morison, 170-174.

⁷ McDill

⁸ Morison

⁹ McDill

¹⁰ Courtesy Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Foundation of New Mexico, Inc.

¹¹ McDill

¹² Courtesy Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Foundation of New Mexico, Inc.

¹³ McDill

¹⁴ Courtesy Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Foundation of New Mexico, Inc.

¹⁵ US Submarine losses NAVPERS 15,784, 1949 issue, WWII.

¹⁶ Courtesy Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Foundation of New Mexico, Inc.

¹⁷ Fiske Hanley, World War II assigned to the 504th Bombardment Group, Tinian Island, North Field. Interview Omaha Airport private plane service area, April 3, 1991.

¹⁸ McDill

¹⁹ Hanley

²⁰ Wesley Frank Craven and James Les Cate, ed., *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, Volume V, *The Pacific: Matterhorn to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 734-735.

²¹ McDill

The World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans at Heart Mountain, Wyoming

Brian A. Liesinger

One unintended ramification in the aftermath of the December 7, 1941, attack by the Japanese Imperial Army on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii was the mass injustice suffered by Americans of Japanese ancestry and Japanese resident aliens living on the West Coast. What this meant for them at the time was a process of being singled out, forcibly removed from their homes, and “relocated” to isolated concentration camps around the country. Approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans—two-thirds of them American-born citizens—were swept up in this act, initiated by the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942. This represented almost 90 percent of the entire population of Japanese Americans in the contiguous United States. Though they were loyal resident aliens and Americans, these people—because they shared a heritage with the enemy—were singled out for their ancestry and deemed a threat to national security. They were forced to abandon what lives they had built, pack their bags, and report for “evacuation.”

There were ten camps built to detain these men, women, and children, and one of them was located in Northwest Wyoming in the shadow of the prominent Heart Mountain. More than 14,000 Japanese were incarcerated there from 1942 to 1945, behind barbed wire fences and under armed guard. During this time, they suffered not only injustice and a denial of the right to due process of law, but also a harsh landscape and brutal extremes of environment. The affect of the “Heart Mountain Relocation Center” on the region could not be underestimated, as it became the third largest “city” in the state. Its impact extended far beyond the barbed-wire confines of camp.

This forced removal and incarceration of approximately 120,000 people has been firmly established as one of the nation’s greatest mistakes, declared by the Presidential Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1981 as:

not justified by military necessity, and the decisions that followed from it... were not founded upon military considerations. The broad historical causes that shaped these

decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. Widespread ignorance about Americans of Japanese descent contributed to a policy conceived in haste and executed in an atmosphere of fear and anger at Japan. A grave personal injustice was done to the American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without individual review or any probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II

(*Personal Justice Denied*, Part II: Recommendations 5).

The path to this mistake was paved through decades of prejudice against Asian Americans leading up to World War II—as evidenced by abuse through the acts of individual citizens and through official policy of local, state, and federal government agencies. Long before the Japanese arrived on the United States’ western shores, there existed an intense animosity toward Chinese immigrants, who were the first group of foreigners to be singled out for exclusion due to their national origin (Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882). They represented the “Yellow Peril,” a xenophobic theory that certain Asian populations were a danger to the western world. As historian John Dower said, “the vision of the menace from the East was always more racial rather than national. It derived not from concern with any one country or people in particular, but from a vague and ominous sense of the vast, faceless, nameless yellow horde: the rising tide, indeed, of color” (Dower, 285–86).

At the turn of the 20th Century, Japanese began arriving to the U.S. in greater numbers and were soon branded as a new wave of the “Yellow Peril.” The 1890 U.S. Census listed 24,326 Japanese living in the U.S. Their population increased to 72,157 in 1900 and by 1920, there were 111,000. They filled a gap left by the excluded Chinese as cheap labor for a rapidly modernizing nation. Like the Chinese before them, they were perceived as a threat (“scabs”) by labor organizations and labeled unfit for acculturation and assimilation into U.S. society (Hata 6).

On the other side of the Pacific, Japan was showing its might in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), and there were increasing concerns about the nation’s ability to attack the United States. In 1909, a publication called *The Valor of Ignorance* by Homer Lea garnered attention, particularly in military circles, for predicting a war with Japan. It exacerbated fears by criticizing America’s defense capabilities and asserting that Japanese immigrant spies had infiltrated the nation, paving the way for Japan to invade the Pacific Coast and march inland.

Anti-Japanese fervor did slow during World War I, with Japan siding with the U.S., Great Britain, and France in that conflict, and several Japanese Americans serving in the U.S. Army. Yet, after that war, the anti-immigration movement re-emerged as strong as ever. In a crucial 1922 decision from *Ozawa v. United States*, the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed that aliens of Japanese ancestry were “ineligible for citizenship.” They would remain “ineligible” until the Immigration Act of 1952.

In 1924, the National Origins Act passed in Congress, setting strict quotas on immigrants outside of Northwest Europe. Under that act, each nation listed was allowed a certain number of immigrants based on the number of immigrants already living in the U.S. By that measure, Japan would have been allowed 100 persons per year to enter the U.S. However, Congress amended the bill to bar “aliens ineligible for citizenship.” As a result, “Japan got her quota, but no Japanese person could use it!” (Daniels 15).

By 1924, a number of the Nisei—the American-born children of Japanese immigrants, or Issei—had assimilated well, despite facing widespread prejudice. They spoke English, few had ever visited Japan, and they attended public schools with diverse student bodies. Yet, anti-miscegenation laws and restrictive covenants—particularly in California where most Japanese Americans lived—limited their social mobility and ability to assimilate. The depression-plagued 1930s only made their situation worse, with nativist feelings growing more intense through the economic crisis. With work and opportunity in short supply, the struggle of people of color were often marginalized and seen as secondary to the strife of white Americans. All the while, Japan’s military prowess and occupation of China fueled an anti-Japanese sentiment that left many Americans unable to differentiate between the ruthless soldiers of Imperial Japan and their fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry. As patriotic as Japanese Americans may have acted or felt, they still *looked like the enemy* (Hata 10–12).

A MILITARY NECESSITY

In the immediate wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor came a rising wave of fear and hysteria. Declarations of “Japanese spies among us” from political leadership and high-ranking military leadership, along with rampant media coverage, fueled a push to single out and detain

West Coast Japanese Americans. There were arguments of “fifth column” activity—that is, Japanese American saboteurs acting from within the nation’s borders to conspire with Imperial Japan. Perhaps the worst example of a false assertion of conspiracy came from Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. After a quick survey of the damage at Pearl Harbor, Knox—who knew it was incompetence that opened the door to such an effective attack from Japan—instead blamed “treachery” and “the most effective fifth column work that’s come out of this war, except in Norway” (Daniels 28). Within 24 hours of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the FBI began rounding up “suspicious enemy aliens” using lists that had been compiled previously. Most were community, religious, or labor leaders. As early as Dec. 19, Lieutenant General John DeWitt, head of the Western Defense Command, proposed removing Japanese aliens aged 14 and older from all coastal areas. Several military leaders soon followed suit in asserting that the segregation of Japanese Americans was a “military necessity” for national defense. A crucial meeting took place in Washington D.C., on February 1, 1942, with the key architects of a “relocation” plan, including U.S. Attorney General Francis Biddle, U.S. Army Provost Marshal General Allen Guillion, Major Karl Bendetson (chief of Aliens Division in Guillion’s office), FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, and Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy. When a concern about evicting U.S. citizens was raised, McCloy replied, “if it is [a] question of the safety of the country [and] the Constitution... the Constitution is just a scrap of paper.” Less than a week later, Guillion wrote to McCloy that “from reliable reports from military and other sources, the danger of Japanese-inspired sabotage is great.” We now know the reports were merely conjectural, as no proof of sleeper cells had been found (nor would there be during the entirety of World War II). With Knox’s and Guillion’s reports, and pressure from members of the congressional delegations of California, Oregon and Washington, McCloy and Secretary of War Henry Stimson urged President Franklin D. Roosevelt to authorize the mass removal of Japanese aliens and citizens from restricted areas on the West Coast (Hata 13–16).

On February 19, 1942, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which gave the military sweeping power, allowing it to declare “military areas... from which any or all persons may be excluded.” What followed that order was a series of instructions handed down from the Western Defense Command to establish an “exclusion” zone on the West Coast and to control

the movement of Americans of Japanese ancestry within that zone. The “Exclusion Zone” (Fig. 1) from which aliens and citizens of Japanese ancestry would be forcibly removed included all of California, the western halves of Oregon and Washington and the southern edge of Arizona. Executive Order 9102 was signed on March 18, 1942, to establish the War Relocation Authority, which would oversee the construction and management of the gulag of ten concentration camps across the country. Two were built in California (Manzanar and Tule Lake); two in Arizona (Poston and Gila River); two in Arkansas (Rohwer and Jerome); and one each in Colorado (Granada), Idaho (Minidoka), Utah (Topaz), and Wyoming (Heart Mountain).

Public Proclamation #3, issued by DeWitt on March 27, 1942, was the first to violate the rights of Japanese Americans, by instituting curfews to restrict movement. Before it, Public Proclamation #1 had established the aforementioned exclusion zones and named German and Italian immigrants alongside, “any person of Japanese ancestry” for exclusion. (Public Proclamation #2 aimed to expand the exclusion zones to the entire states of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Utah but was not allowed by the War Department.) To enforce the EO9066 and the Proclamations, Congress passed Public Law 503, which made it a federal crime for *anyone* to leave the delineated “military area.” Public Law 503 was called by Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio) the “sloppiest” law he had ever seen, opening the door for the military to be able to order around any citizen in a “military area.” Yet, Congress was given assurances that it would only be enforced against the Japanese, and it passed through both houses unanimously (Daniels 53–54).

Next came a series of Civilian Exclusion Orders posted up and down the West Coast, in the 107 established evacuation districts. The Exclusion Orders provided the process for removal that included the public posting of the instructions in storefronts and on telephone poles, followed by a registration process, and finally the physical movement of Japanese Americans out of the districts (with only what they could carry with them). From the posting of the order to actual evacuation, Japanese Americans had about one week to determine how they would dispose of any property or possessions they could not carry with them, make arrangements for what was left behind, and pack what necessities they may need. Shipment of goods was not allowed—neither were pets, or any items deemed to be “contraband” (cameras or radios, for

example) or weaponry. A young Norman Mineta (later to serve in Congress and in Cabinet posts under President Bill Clinton and under President George W. Bush) was incarcerated with his family at Heart Mountain and recalls having to give up one of his most treasured possessions when boarding the train that would take him to his confinement. “A military police soldier stopped me and took my baseball bat away from me, saying it was a lethal weapon,” he said. (Anton and Nowlin 183).

The first stop for the evacuated Japanese Americans, beginning on March 30, 1942, with a group from Bainbridge Island, Washington, were hastily constructed “assembly centers” not far from the evacuation districts on the West Coast. Through the end of June, a steady stream of incarcerated went into these centers, built on former fairgrounds, racetracks, and livestock halls. In them, incarcerated were forced to live in horse stalls and shacks while the ten larger concentration camps were being constructed. The “assembly centers” had minimal facilities and were often over-crowded, leading to unsanitary conditions. Yet, many were stuck in them for months awaiting the move to the larger camps (Hata 18–20).

What became the “Relocation Centers,” was a far cry from what the War Relocation Authority, helmed by Milton Eisenhower, had initially envisioned. Eisenhower saw them as reception centers or “staging areas” from which most Japanese Americans would be dispersed and resettled in private work in various parts of the country. Raging public racism and the difficulty of setting up such a resettlement system aside, Eisenhower also ran into considerable opposition from the governors in the western states in which the camps would reside. On April 7, he met in Salt Lake City with governors from the western United States and other federal officials to discuss the matter of “evacuation.” Wyoming Governor Nels Smith was among the most vocal, stating, “People in [my] state have a dislike of Orientals, and simply will not stand for being California’s dumping ground.” He warned that if they were allowed to travel freely within the state, “there would be Japs hanging from every pine tree.” His conclusion, which proved to be the consensus among the group, was that the Japanese Americans “should be kept in concentration camps—not reception centers, should be worked under armed guard, and should be removed at the end of the emergency.” It was the input received from the western governors at this meeting that led to a concentration camp style of confinement, with

fences, guard towers, search lights, and armed guards on constant patrol (“Report on Meeting” 20).

As Wyoming prepared to do its part for the “Japanese problem,” its citizens reacted with concern, having been told, along with the rest of the country, that West Coast Japanese Americans posed a real threat to national security. What follows are only a few representative examples from the letters to the editor printed in February editions of the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*. One writer felt the army should “run them all into the ocean or make horses of them as they are doing with our Marines in Shanghai...” Yet another believed the “solution would be to herd every one of them into the pacific coast [sic], strap a pair of water wings on each one, and shove them off for Japan...” There were non-hostile and even expressions of acceptance of the incoming Japanese Americans, but they were among the minority. The most tolerant were those who would benefit economically from the cheap labor that the “evacuees” would provide, especially for area farmers and ranchers needing to harvest the fall crop. Furthermore, the \$5.5 million allocated for the construction of Heart Mountain and 3,000 men employed to build it provided a considerable boost to the local economy (Nelson 17).

ARRIVAL AND SURVIVAL:

According to the WRA’s official report on Heart Mountain, the first train of 292 incarceratedees arrived there on August 12, 1942. Over the next two months a steady stream of trains would arrive, depositing their human cargo until the peak population reached 10,676. (U.S. Department of Interior, 17). It became the third largest “city” by population in Wyoming, less than only Casper and Cheyenne. Heart Mountain was about 13 miles northeast of Cody, Wyo., located on a flat, treeless expanse of bench lands and sparsely covered by sage and buffalo grass. The outstanding feature of the terrain was the squared off peak of Heart Mountain itself. It had been selected, like the other nine camps, after fulfilling specific criteria, which included:

1. Being on public lands
2. Being large enough to accommodate a minimum population of 5,000
3. Providing for year-round employment, either on public works or agriculture (for Heart Mountain, this meant farm labor in the region, as well as work on the local irrigation districts)

4. Located a “safe distance from strategic points”
5. Having adequate transportation, water and power facilities.

(Nelson 11).

The “residents” of Heart Mountain were comprised of rough one-third Japanese-born Issei and the rest being the second generation, American-born Nisei. As one Heart Mountain incarcerated put it in the camp newspaper titled the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* (October 24, 1942 edition), sent to Heart Mountain were the “rich and the poor, the young and the old, the farmers and the city folks, the great and the meek, the well and the sick—all because God had given us yellow skin and black hair and slant eyes.” What they arrived to were dusty apartments in hastily built barracks furnished with little more than a pot-bellied stove and beds. Each barrack, measuring 120 feet long by 20 feet wide was separated with partitions to make six separate apartments.

Once in Wyoming, incarcerated found themselves subjected not only to a loss of freedom but also an insufficient diet, a harsh landscape, and brutal extremes of weather—quite a contrast to the coastal cuisine, setting and climate they were used to. The winter of 1942–43 was particularly harsh, with weather reaching -20 degrees Fahrenheit. Food shortages plagued the camp until January of 1943. An examination of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* newspaper throughout 1942–43 would reveal near-constant fire, plumbing, and dust problems as well. Despite the challenges, there was little more that they could do but endure. Alongside stories of the aforementioned challenges, the *Sentinel* published several stories typical of small-town weeklies across the country. A social column would review the births, weddings, and celebrations of the community—next to obituaries, of course. The activity of the community council, fundraisers, and sports were always well covered. And if one were able to overlook the barbed wire, guard towers, and striking uniformity of the camp, one would have found gardens being tended, men at work children off to school, a photography club or art club in an exercise, the observance of church services, or groups of women chatting on a doorstep. However, just below the surface, though well contained, was a psychological agony that accompanied camp life. As Douglas Nelson put it in his Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp*:

“The physical hardships of concentration camp life [was]... ultimately less damaging than its psychological and social stresses. The Japanese Americans who came to Heart Mountain found themselves living in an overlapping web of contradictions, ambiguities, and half-truths. Each day they faced countless, extraordinary pressures which often pulled them in opposite directions: to co-operate or to resist; to remain or to resettle; to assert oneself or to accept anonymity; and so on... Some were literally torn apart and left Heart Mountain with irreparably damaged lives and personalities. Others sought relief in an extreme response, either in the form of an almost complete accommodation with authority or else in an unreasoning and often fruitless hostility... As much as possible, they tried to concentration their energies and emotions on some primary or uncomplicated preoccupation (ranging from family down to gambling) which might free them from the ambiguities of larger life.”

(Nelson 29–30)

For as much as “Heart Mountaineers” created the appearances of a typical American community, there was an essential hollowness due to the realities of confinement, dependency, and powerlessness. Its “residents” were imprisoned in a setting that, by design and execution, was a concentration camp. A setting that could not be escaped, regardless of the amount of community building or social activity incarcerated occupied themselves with. They no doubt endured with an admirable stoicism, but they were also haunted by artificiality, injustice, and pain. The War Relocation Authority did its part to apply a veneer for public consumption, through guided “press tours” and propaganda videos airing across the nation. The Office of War Information films would show incarcerated hard at work, comfortable in their barracks “homes,” and occupied with the activities of “normal” American life. What they did not reveal was that wages earned were a joke: \$12 a month for unskilled labor, \$16 for semi-skilled, and \$19 for professional work. It did not reveal the resistance movements at work or the constant internal conflict. A system of self-government was also created, but it proved to be an ineffective pantomime. By the end of 1944, the *Sentinel* (August 5, 1944) reported only eight candidates volunteered for the 20 seats on the community council. As one incarcerated described the hollowness of Heart Mountain life:

“How can you teach democracy in a concentration camp? Or praise American labor standards where people get \$4 for a 44-hour work week, and nothing for overtime. Or talk about racial equality when the Caucasians on the WRA staff are setting up a whole Jim Crow system of their own. Look at these little boys. They used to worship football players... Now they follow the toughest gang leaders... Lookit that girl, most gregarious damn person I ever saw. But even she needs to be off alone sometimes—but she never

can. We're not individuals, but cogs that eat and sleep and work and live alike. Lookit that Mother—she used to be the core of her family, providing the meals, training her children, those little tings that build a family unity. Now other people throw food at us, the kids no longer eat with their parents...

I read in a paper how a minister said we oughta be satisfied because we are being well-fed and housed and given a chance to work. Is that all living means to that guy? Is life just getting your belly filled and a hoe put in your hands? Betcha that same fellow talks a lot about liberty and spiritual values when he's thinking about Hitler...

The people have learned to laugh at things that hurt them most. Whenever anyone mentions that they ay stay here permanently, 'like Indians on a reservation,' everyone always laughs. But they do not think the subject of Indian reservations is funny."

(McWilliams 208–09)

Some incarcerated found profound purpose in a vocation, a cause, or service. In a remarkable irony, approximately 800 from Heart Mountain, who had initially been classified "enemy aliens" went on to serve in World War II. The men who served went into a segregated unit (the 442nd Regimental Combat Team) that would go on to become the most highly decorated unit for its size and length of service in the history of the U.S. Army. Two 442nd men from Heart Mountain were awarded the Medal of Honor. Conversely, 85 young men resisted their draft orders in the most organized resistance exhibited in any of the ten camps. They formed what was called the

Fair Play Committee and asserted that they would obey their draft orders and report for induction physicals only if their families were released and their rights as citizens were restored.

Sixty-three of these resisters were tried in a mass trial in Cheyenne (the largest in the state's history), were found guilty, and were sentenced to three-year terms in federal penitentiaries

(*Wyoming State Tribune*, June 19, 1944).

Despite both the service by the men and women who served in the war and the Fair Play Committee members who fought injustice at home, a dominant historical stereotype has emerged over the years: of the peaceful, compliant Japanese Americans who wanted to prove their loyalty by acquiescing to every order of the government. There is hardly a half-truth in this representation. In part this impression has been perpetuated by the popular media coverage of wartime (much of the media outlets fed by propaganda) and the post-incarceration reports coming directly from offices of the federal government. In addition, the "Heart Mountain Information Bulletin," a daily newsheet; *Heart Mountain Echoes*, the high school newspaper;

and the *Heart Mountain Sentinel* all deliberately avoided or downplayed conflict (Nelson 79). Furthermore, we have the patriotism of the 442nd as the prime example of loyalty to and belief in the U.S. Government.

A closer examination of history reveals a truer picture of ongoing dissent. There was constant conflict from the day Heart Mountain opened (with protests over food shortages and poor medical services) until the day it closed (when the last “residents” had to be forced out of camp—not having a place to resettle nor the means to start over). There were strikes by the coal men, truck drivers, and hospital workers. There was public outcry and a petition against the fence erected around the camp. Adults and children alike constantly challenged the fence boundary by crossing over (usually for recreation), despite the order given to the Military Police to contain them. Some even went as far as requesting deportation or renouncing their citizenship. And yet the constant internal struggle of incarcerated and the manifestations of that struggle through various forms of resistance never fueled a violent uprising or riot (as it did in a few of the WRA camps).

AFTERMATH:

When Heart Mountain officially closed in November of 1945, there were no longer incarcerated; those who remained were squatters. The West Coast had been reopened, and many returned there. Others struck out to create new Japanese American communities in Chicago, Salt Lake City, Denver, or New York City (Daniels 81). Some simply could not face the enormity of the loss—in terms of both the economic loss and the time lost idling away at Heart Mountain. For elder incarcerated, the prospect of starting over seemed too daunting. Adding insult to injury, they discovered that, even though the war had ended, racism remained. This was despite the fact that not a single incident of espionage was committed by Japanese Americans against their nation, punctuating how unfounded the “military necessity” argument for their incarceration had been.

The cost of the forced relocation and incarceration of Japanese Americans in human terms cannot be calculated. In the end, they were freed and given \$25 along with a train ticket as the tools with which they would begin the next chapter of their lives. More than 40 years

later, the surviving former incarcerated would earn an apology from the government and redress checks of \$20,000 each.

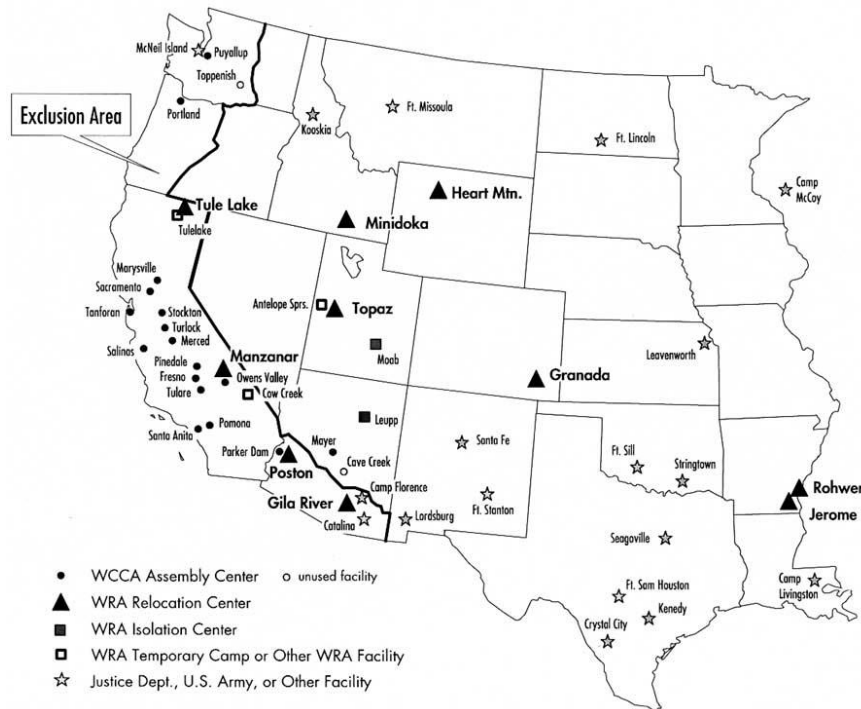
The episode represents one of the nation’s darkest moments, when fear of the other and war hysteria prevented the defense of the U.S. Constitution. But, in the words of Douglas Nelson:

“The Constitution was not the principal victim of relocation; the Japanese Americans were. Although there were no gas chambers, ovens, or S.S. at Heart Mountain, it was nonetheless a concentration camp. Its establishment and operation involved a thoroughgoing repudiation not only of legal guarantees, but also of the traditional Western values of liberty, privacy, individuality, and human dignity.”

(Nelson 171)

What remains at Heart Mountain today are a few hospital buildings, a war memorial built by incarcerated, a barracks building, a root cellar, and a museum built by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF), a collective of local leaders, former incarcerated, and their descendants. The site has been designated a National Historic Landmark by the federal government, and serves as a powerful reminder of a grave injustice committed by the U.S. government against its own people.

Figure 1: National Park Service Map



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Change on the Plains: How Depression and War Shaped a Region

Anthony Metzgar

On September 21, 1921, Gertrude O'Connor gave birth to Robert O'Connor in a small farmhouse near Lucas, South Dakota in Gregory County. Robert attended school in Burke, the county seat. His father, Vincent, was a traveling salesman and found that Gregory County was a place of declining opportunity, so he and his wife Gertrude moved with their three children to Pierre, South Dakota. After young Robert (Bob) finished grade school, moving again appeared to be the best option for the family. Vincent chose Sioux Falls for the family's next destination. South Dakota's largest city offered the best location for Vincent's sales occupation during the troubling economic times of the 1930s. Bob attended Cathedral High School and graduated in 1939. Jobs were scarce when he finished high school... "Unless you were the son of a Morrell worker," he notes in his memoir.¹ Fortunately, Bob found temporary work at a gas station and eventually secured a job at Dickey's Dinner on West Sixth Street.

Bob and a significant portion of the country focused their attention on securing employment, while simultaneously keeping one ear bent to the radio as tensions in Europe mounted in 1939. Then on September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. World War II had begun. In Sioux Falls, however, the leaves peacefully changed colors as the new school year commenced. Routines continued, but insecurity lingered, as Americans waited for their government's response to events in Europe.

With employment secured, Bob O'Connor's next decision was whether to attend college or not. He chose to enroll at Sioux Falls College in fall of 1939. There, a European history course taught him the implications of the past, describing how conflicts, dating back several decades, engendered current conditions in Europe and around the world. After finishing two years at Sioux Falls College, Bob moved a few blocks south to Augustana College for his last two years of undergraduate school.

¹ Robert O'Connor "Memories: 1939-1946" p. 1

While at Augustana, Bob played football, earning a partial scholarship that entailed cleaning the locker rooms, but he and his family were thankful for the reduced tuition expense. In 1942, Augustana finished its football season undefeated as co-champions of the North Central Conference.² However, the excitement of the season quickly subsided, as the United States' entry into WWII required ever-increasing sacrifice on the home front. With only one semester left to graduate, Bob put his studies at Augustana on hold, as he and the majority of the football team enlisted in the armed forces.³ The next several years of Bob's life were about to change dramatically.

Bob O'Connor's story is not unique. He was born in a rural area on the Great Plains. His family, like many other peripatetic families, relocated several times during the economic hardships of the 1920s and 1930s, eventually settling in an urban area. When the United States joined the Allies in World War II, he along with many other young men and women left the plains bound for either Europe or the Pacific. After the war, he returned to his hometown, continued his education and eventually began a career, providing for a family and serving his greater community at large. The story of Robert O'Connor is the story of the Great Plains in the 20th century; however, rarely is it the narrative depicted. His story directly challenges literary and scholarly accounts of the Great Plains and calls into question the approach writers use when they depict this period of history.

Literature has a great impact on the understanding of cultures and regions. For instance, when one thinks of the late 1800s and the Gilded Age, Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* often comes to mind. Likewise, when one considers the Roaring Twenties, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* often serves as a backdrop influencing notions of the era. Twentieth century Great Plains is no exception; literary writers have created narratives of the region that have shaped present understandings. Two iconic novels have greatly fashioned contemporary understandings of the Great Plains during the 1900s: Willa Cather's *My Ántonia* and John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.

My Ántonia portrays a fictional relationship between Jim, a ten-year-old orphan who moves west to Nebraska to live with his grandparents, and Ántonia, a young girl of about the

² Golly. "VIKINGS TIE FOR FIRST IN INITIAL N.C. SEASON." *The Mirror* [Augustana] 19 Nov. 1942: 4. Print.

³ O'Connor, 1-7

same age who moves with her family to farm. The two meet on a train on their way to the prairie, and as fate would have it, they become neighbors. *Ántonia* does not know much English because of her Bohemian origins, and Jim is happy to tutor her. They become close friends through their time on the prairie, moving from farm to town, similar to Vincent O'Connor. As characters, *Ántonia* and Jim continually develop and grow throughout the novel. Moreover, Cather's illustrations of the Nebraska plains develop and change with the harsh realities that both Jim and *Ántonia* undergo.

As the book opens, Cather describes the prairie as vast and full of possibility. "There was nothing but land; not a country at all, but the material out of which countries are made."⁴ Cather's famous description of the prairie speaks to the opportunity that the land presented. As they age, however, the harshness of the land becomes a major focus. The prairie is no longer the land of opportunity; rather, it is now the land of heartbreak and disappointment. By his second year of college, Jim needs a fresh start and transfers to the east coast to finish his schooling at Harvard University. *Ántonia*, meanwhile, is left at the altar by her husband, and must care for her illegitimate child on her own, living with the stigma that came from her community and family. The Great Plains no longer offered possibility. It had become the place to be from – a place to leave in order to find opportunity elsewhere. *Ántonia* and the anguish of her circumstances become the symbol of those who remain on the plains – a people caught between their ingenuous optimism and their demanding lifestyles. Jim Burden, on the other hand, leads a life of success and excitement in the legal field in New York. He becomes the symbol of reality – those who leave the plains achieve more success than those who stay.⁵

Similarly, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* tells the story of Oklahomans deserting the plains for a new Promised Land. The Dust Bowl of the 1930s devastated farmers throughout the Great Plains. Poor farming techniques, lack of precipitation, and high winds created a detrimental combination. After returning from four years in prison, Tom Joad returns to his family and farm to find that his neighbors had all migrated to California. The Joad family follows the migration trail on Route 66 to California. Even though Californians treat the migrators as second-class foreigners and as a threat to their own wellbeing, California is the

⁴ Cather, Willa. *My Ántonia*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954. p 11

⁵ Cather, Willa. *My Ántonia*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954.

new 'Promised Land' in which the Okies hope.⁶ Steinbeck's narrative reinforces Cather's message that the Great Plains is driving its residents away.

Literature is not unique in depicting the Great Plains as a dwindling, desolate land during the twentieth century. Other artistic movements have emphasized migration from the region. Dorothea Lange's photograph *Migrant Mother* (1936) captivated the nation immediately after its publication. To many people, it symbolized the hopelessness of the Great Depression and the illusory perception of the American Dream. The photograph epitomized the difficulties of migration and became a representation of the Great Plains for the 1930s. Not only was the photograph prominent at its conception, but it remains today one of the most influential pictures for historical purposes. It is a premier photograph on the Library of Congress's website, and teachers utilize it in classrooms around the world.⁷ *Migrant Mother* and many other photographs like it have formed a notion that the Great Plains is destitute, a place to flee from.

Writers and photographers are not the only ones telling stories of the plains. Historians also evaluate the region continually. Environmental, political, social, and economic histories make up only a fraction of Great Plains studies. Within each of these topics, many theories have arisen. Scholars have discussed The Great Plains as a frontier, as a region, and as a myth. Studying the area with a particular lens creates distinct theories, and each theory has had definite implications on our society's outlook regarding the region. Historians do not interpret the past in a vacuum. Perspectives and values shape interpretations; consequently, interpretations are simultaneously shaping society and being shaped by society.

Two recent books have contributed to the understanding of the 20th century Great Plains: R. Douglas Hurt's *The Big Empty* (2008) and Paula M. Nelson's *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own* (1996). Both works are important resources for anyone looking to research and gain perspective of the Great Plains. Hurt has a broad focus of the plains, as he provides a history of a large region stretching from Edmonton, Canada, to the Rio Grande. Nelson, on the other hand, provides a more narrow focus, concentrating on West River South Dakota during the interwar period. These books are only a small fraction of recent works concerning the plains.

⁶ Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Viking Press, 1939.

⁷ <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/>

Along with the two aforementioned books, scholars and the popular press have published numerous articles addressing a host of issues concerning the Great Plains. Specifically, a series of articles by *The Christian Science Monitor* have greatly influenced contemporary understandings of the Great Plains. A more complete analysis of these works follows, addressing their theses and their implications.

The Big Empty: The Great Plains in the Twentieth Century is about the environmental, social, economic, and political history of the Great Plains, a region that Hurt calls formless and undefinable.⁸ Hurt does not spend too much time defining what the region is; rather, he emphasizes the people's relationship with the environment, racial tensions, political diversity, and the agricultural economy. *The Big Empty* meanders its way through the 20th century complexities of the Great Plains, providing honest insight into the region. Hurt contends that economic greed and environmental stubbornness shaped the settlement of the Great Plains from 1900 to the end of the First World War. Hope and optimism were present throughout the settlement, but the hardships that the environment provided soon dismantled such positive feelings.⁹ As settlement expanded and populations became denser, racial and ethnic tensions began occurred throughout the plains. Poverty, violence, and desperation persisted for minority groups. The Great Plains, according to Hurt, presented a strong dichotomy between hope and despair, justice and disparity, and harmony and violence.¹⁰ The Great Plains was not the beacon of hope it once was. It was not the place to go to; rather, it was becoming the place to leave. Success was difficult to achieve on the Great Plains, so people began leaving.

In his chapter "The Inevitability of Change," Hurt emphasizes the population loss that the Great Plains experienced. While he does acknowledge that the plains experienced urban growth during the 20th century, his focus is primarily on why the farmlands suffered major population loss, highlighting small demand for farm labor, low opportunity for young people, and even the increase in the number of deaths. While all true, these points pervade the notion that the Great Plains is vacant and miserable (to the point of death). Hurt gives little attention

⁸ Hurt, R. Douglas. *The Big Empty: The Great Plains in the Twentieth Century*. Tucson. University of Arizona Press. 2011. p xi.

⁹ Hurt, 30-31

¹⁰ Hurt, 63

to the actual growth of cities within the region.¹¹ He leaves readers believing that the Great Plains is but a myth, a dream that the region could not sustain.

Paula M. Nelson's *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own* provides a similar narrative of the Great Plains, only with a more specified approach. Concentrating on West River South Dakota, she tells the story of "confident empire builders" turned struggling survivors.¹² Nelson focuses on small towns like Kadoka, South Dakota, explaining how its leaders shifted from the faulty assurances to the harsh realities of the prairie. Kadoka was not a young Chicago; a great sea of dust and dirt surrounded Kadoka, not a Great Lake. The people of West River South Dakota made huge efforts to remain faithful to both God and their land; droughts, blizzards, grasshoppers and dust storms frequently tested even the most reverent farmer. Throughout the book, Nelson emphasizes the scarcity of money and water. Though she reveals an accurate depiction of the depopulating areas of the plains, she spends little energy focusing on the growth that occurred in areas such as Pennington County.¹³

The arguments made in both *The Big Empty* and *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own* have made their way into the popular press, as well. *The Christian Science Monitor* published a series of articles regarding the plains titled "Little farms on the prairie bow to a Wal-Mart era...", "Town government... when there's not much town to govern...", and "Un-plain ways to reinvent the Plains...", all three of which emphasize population loss throughout the Great Plains and how the region is struggling for survival. In her article "Little farms...", Laurent Belsie highlights Nicodemus, Kansas, a town formed over a century ago when 350 freed slaves left Kentucky to pursue agrarian lifestyles on the plains. The town, like many other throughout the plains, showed promise initially but slowly began dwindling in population and economic diversity. Today, small farms are practically nonexistent around Nicodemus. Consolidation has created economic efficiency, but has drained local markets and populations in rural towns. Some local farmers are becoming economically innovative by selling new organic products, growing

¹¹ Hurt, 195-215

¹² Nelson, Paula. *The Prairie Winnows out Its Own: The West River Country of South Dakota in the Years of Depression and Dust*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996. xxiii

¹³ Nelson, 174-176, 202

renewable fuels and building wind turbines. According to Belsie, even with these new “farming” techniques, the area continues to struggle.¹⁴

Hurt, Nelson and Belsie portray representations of a Great Plains that is *winning* if not already *empty*. To a degree, these narratives are accurate, but they do not tell the whole story of the Great Plains. Over the 20th century, the Great Plains actually had population growth. While many rural counties suffered population loss, urban development continued. Therefore, the real story of the plains is not limited to notions within *The Grapes of Wrath*. It is instead the story of urban development and the story of the people who stayed. Using local histories of regional hubs along with interviews and primary documents of residents who stayed in the region throughout the 20th century, it is apparent that the Great Plains did not stop being a frontier by 1920. Instead, the plains remained a constant frontier throughout the 20th century and remains so even today. As Wendell Berge contended in 1945, the Great Plains (as a part of the West) “is once more the frontier on which the question of America’s economic expansion will be decided. All its trails have not been blazed. Even though its mountains have been mapped, its rivers charted and its elements classified, the full economic greatness... is undiscovered.”¹⁵

Many people understand the basic history of the Great Plains; however, their ideas come from *Little House on the Prairie* and *Grapes of Wrath*. These books pervade the notion that the Great Plains upon settlement was thrilling but no longer is. Today, many believe that the plains are homogenous, lacking diversity in culture, religion and ethnicity. Consequently, many view the region as a series of ‘flyover states’ between the east and west coast, bereft of culture and opportunity. Using an ‘urban development lens,’ however, one discovers the excitement of the plains throughout its history. Therefore, let us reexamine the Great Plains beginning with the settlement of American pioneers.

For the pioneers of the West, the Great Plains were a dream, and the land was the link that would take them from the struggles of the present to the blessings of the future. By the turn of the century, the groundwork for further westward settlement was in place: railroads

¹⁴ Laurent Belsie, “Little farms on the prairie bow to a Wal-Mart era; ‘Promised land’ struggles to diversify – and survive.” *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb 12, 2003, 1-3.

¹⁵ Nash, Gerald D. “The West as Frontier, 1945-1990.” In *Creating the West: Historical Interpretations, 1890-1990*, 60-61. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991.

stretched across the countryside, small towns dotted the land, government policies restricted Native Americans to reservations, and the Homestead Act incentivized free land. These conditions caused the population of the plains to burgeon. In the first decade of the twentieth century alone, South Dakota's population increased from 401,570 to 583,888.¹⁶ From 1900 to the onset World War I, over 100,000 additional people settled West River South Dakota, and 250,000 more called North Dakota their new home.¹⁷ The first fifteen years of the twentieth century was the pinnacle of homesteading in the United States, and the Dakotas were its epicenter.

"And though you think the world is at your feet, it can rise up and tread on you."¹⁸ With ambition and zeal, the homesteaders brought youth and inexperience to the Great Plains. In 1900, the median age was only 20.8 in South Dakota.¹⁹ Young men and women swarmed the prairie, working as carpenters, tinsmiths, and farmers. Homesteaders expected hardships, but national publications and railroad promotional literature often provided an illusory depiction of the plains. Very few came to the prairie actually understanding the environment. The Great Plains, with its extreme heat, bitter cold, harsh winds, and sporadic rainfall, proved to be an implacable foe for the settlers. The same land that offered so much optimism could capriciously double back to bring blizzards, hailstorms and tornados. A single storm could change everything, as Mary Dodge Woodward wrote in her diary, "One day about four o'clock the sky looked fearful, we heard a distant roar, and soon the storm was upon us. The hailstones were as large as nutmegs and oh, how they did kill things! I was frightened nearly out of my wits... Our wheat that looked so green has disappeared and the fields are bare."²⁰

Unpredictable weather was only a small fraction of unforeseen problems that arose on the prairie. Politicians and settlers knew little about the climate as a whole because data collection only began in 1890. The first thirty years of data proved to be deceptive, as rainfall was consistently above average when compared to a much broader context. For instance, from

¹⁶ Forstall, Richard L. *Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990*. US Bureau of the Census. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/cencounts/files/sd190090.txt>. March 27, 1995.

¹⁷ Hurt, 1

¹⁸ McEwan, Ian. *Atonement: A Novel*. Jonathan Cape, 2001.

¹⁹ *South Dakota Facts: An Abstract of Statistics and Graphics Concerning the People and Resources of South Dakota*. Governor: Richard F. Kneip. p. 65

²⁰ Tweton, D. Jerome. "An Interview with Mary Dodge Woodward: 1937." *North Dakota Studies*. Accessed November 10, 2015. http://www.ndstudies.org/articles/an_interview_with_mary_dodge_woodward.

1889 to 1903 in South Dakota, average annual precipitation rates were 20.16 inches, 23.05 inches, 22.76 inches, 19.92 inches, and 22.92 inches respectively. A few years later, the state saw numbers as high as 28 inches.²¹ These numbers were much higher than what the state would experience over the next three decades, yet many thought it to be the norm. The rain totals seemed to validate the idea that ‘the rain follows the plow.’ However, these totals were deceptively high, as evidenced by the modern slogan ‘dry years follow the wet ones.’

Still, during World War I, farmers used high wartime prices to purchase more land and equipment, often borrowing money at higher interest rates. High crop prices continued into the summer of 1920, and most farmers believed that their prosperity would continue to last. At this time, Vincent O’Connor found it easy to make sales to farmers around Burke, South Dakota, while the prices were high; however, soon the days of opulence began to fade.

European crop markets began to recover after the war. Eventually, foreign countries no longer depended on the Great Plains for food; consequently, crop commodities and prices fell in the United States. The quick change from high returns to low returns damaged the plains. Wheat prices dropped over fifty percent in some states. The agricultural economy as a whole plummeted nearly forty percent in other states. By 1921, farmers in the region had only two-thirds of their pre-war purchasing power. Bankruptcy, foreclosure and exodus became common themes throughout the Great Plains.²² The era known as the Roaring Twenties was nonexistent on the prairie; instead, the depression struck a decade early. Salesmen like Vincent O’Connor found it difficult to survive during the initial economic instability. He believed his business would fare better in a more populated area, so he and his family moved to Pierre, South Dakota.

During the latter half of the decade, farmers throughout the Great Plains hoped to make up for lower prices by planting more crops to supplement their income. Plows tore the grasslands apart - approximately 5.2 million acres between 1925 and the first dust storm in 1930. Increased plowing and planting sustained the plains for a short period, but these farmers were still enjoying slightly above average rainfall. Soon, precipitation numbers began falling, and before long, only half the number of drops fell from the sky. South Dakotans, accustomed

²¹ *South Dakota Facts*, 23

²² Hurt, 78-80

to over twenty inches of precipitation a year, began seeing only fourteen inches... twelve inches... and in 1936, only 10.91 inches.²³ The entire southern region of the Great Plains averaged less than twelve inches of precipitation from 1931 through 1936. The midsection of the United States had become a desert.²⁴

The Great Plains could no longer support an agricultural population tied to 19th century farming techniques, and so began the mass exodus. This exodus, however, was neither universal, that is it varied by region, nor was it one-directional, as many believe. Although an important social commentary on migration during the Great Depression, Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is misleading. While Oklahoma did suffer major population loss due to migration, most of the population exodus was not due to the Dust Bowl and low precipitation rates. Most Oklahoman migrants came from the eastern portion of the state and were cotton tenant farmers. These laborers did not own land and had to leave because of economic collapse in the cotton industry, not because of dry lands. Further east, in Arkansas and Missouri, cotton tenant farmers experienced higher unemployment rates (39% in Arkansas and 32% in Missouri) than their wheat farmer counterparts of the Dust Bowl region (27% in Kansas and 29% in Oklahoma).²⁵ In fact, of the 500,000 people who migrated from Oklahoma during the 1930s, only 2-3 percent came from the Dust Bowl region.²⁶

Steinbeck's novel poorly reflects the farmers of the Great Plains. Unlike the cotton tenant farmers who lived further east, wheat farmers owned their own land, as did the farmers and ranchers of the northern plains. These land owners hoped to make it through the difficult times. Phrases such as "There's always next year" and "If it rains..." became all too popular throughout the region. In West River South Dakota, wheat prices fell from \$1.26 per bushel to only \$0.16 per bushel.²⁷ Similarly, in Nebraska wheat prices dropped from \$1.00 per bushel to \$0.26 per bushel.²⁸ Often times, crops served as heat sources rather than monetary income because they were cheaper to burn than wood or coal. Many land-owning farmers reverted to

²³ *South Dakota Facts*, 23

²⁴ Hurt, 91

²⁵ Gregory, James N. *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California*. New York: Oxford UP, 1989. p 13.

²⁶ Hurt, 94-95

²⁷ Hurt, 96

²⁸ Larsen, Lawrence H., Barbara J. Cottrell, Harl A. Dalstrom, and Kay Calame Dalstrom. *Upstream Metropolis: An Urban Biography of Omaha and Council Bluffs*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. p 243.

the pioneer mentalities of the 1880s, deciding to make do without previous 'luxuries' and to simply survive.

Survival required aid during the most economically and environmentally devastating years on the Great Plains. In order to salvage its agricultural economy, the state of Nebraska received over \$200 million between 1933 and 1940 through New Deal Programs.²⁹ Many South Dakota farmers were able to remain in the state thanks to \$400 million that the federal government provided.³⁰ However, for many, federal relief was not enough of an incentive to stay in the Great Plains. During the decade of the 1930s, South Dakota had the highest percentage of population loss in the nation at 7.2%. West River South Dakota suffered the greatest, with over 20,000 people leaving that side of the state. North Dakota's population depleted the second most, losing 121,000 people throughout the decade. Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska also lost a significant number of residents.³¹ Converse to other programs, several federal incentives actually assuaged people who wanted to leave their land. Although he was still weary of causing mass exodus, Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 7028, which gave the federal government the power to buy back much of the land it had sold to homesteaders and created the Resettlement Administration, which gave loans to families seeking to start fresh outside the region. To many legislators on the plains, the executive order and administration appeared to be a push to depopulate the region – an attack on the states of the Great Plains.³²

Many people saw the government's actions as an attack on their lifestyle. They retaliated by staying put. John McCarty, an editor for the Dalhart, Texas newspaper took a public vow to resist the relocation movement. He created the Last Man Club, which he opened to anyone who agreed to stay put on the plains. Farmers, bankers, doctors, teachers, and many other professional signed a vow to stay "until hell freezes over."³³ Enrollment cards for the group read:

²⁹ Larsen et al, 243

³⁰ Hurt, 95

³¹ Hurt, 95-96

³² Egan, Timothy. *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. p 228-229

³³ Egan, 229

Barring Acts of God or unforeseen personal tragedy or family illness, I pledge myself to be the Last Man to leave this country, to always be loyal to it, and to do my best to cooperate with other members of the Last Man Club in the year ahead.³⁴

The Great Plains was more than a place for its residents; it was a way of life provided through the land that God granted. To abandon the land was to abandon God. Not surprisingly then, most people did not need to join a club to persuade them to remain in the region. For most residents of the Great Plains, the choice was to move from rural to urban, staying within a few hundred miles. This was particularly true for the northern plains.

From 1930 to 1940, North Dakota's farm population decreased by 17 percent. Forty-three of 53 counties lost population over the decade. At the same time, North Dakota's urban population increased by 17% and those counties with regional cities experienced overall growth.³⁵ Omaha, Nebraska gained about 10,000 residents during the same decade.³⁶ Similarly, in South Dakota counties with regional cities within their boundaries or nearby grew. Minnehaha County, home to South Dakota's largest city, Sioux Falls, gained 6,825 residents, a 13.42% increase. Pennington County, home to Rapid City – the state's second largest city gained 3,720 residents, an 18% increase. Lawrence County, which borders Pennington County on its northern side gained 5,173 residents, a 37% increase. Lastly, Union County – located at South Dakota's southeast tip and bordering Sioux City, Iowa – gained a modest 1.7%. All other counties in the state either had less than 1% population growth or had a decrease in population between 1930 and 1940.³⁷

These demographic trends indicate a migration pattern rarely discussed among scholarly and literary writers of the plains. Paula Nelson never mentions the growth of Rapid City in her book on Western South Dakota's depression era. The Depression did not spark mass exodus from the plains; in fact, most people did not leave – perhaps out of stupidity, lack of resources, or a hope for the region. Like the O'Connor family, most struggled to outlast the hard times, moving within the region and hoping for the land of opportunity to make its name known again.

³⁴ Eagan, 229

³⁵ Hurt, 95

³⁶ Larsen et al, 248

³⁷ *South Dakota Facts*, 48-49

Cities like Sioux Falls, Fargo and Omaha provided sustained relief for regional migrants, as transportation, wholesale, retail, and personal service occupations in the cities endured the depression with help from federal aid and employment. New Deal programs helped to construct bridges, parks, streets and sewers, improving the infrastructure of the cities, simultaneously providing work and future living space for migrants and their families. Consequently, these programs paved the way for further urbanization in such cities. In Omaha, flood control projects for the Missouri River and the building of the South Omaha Bridge linked Omaha with Council Bluffs, facilitating the movement of crops and livestock to elevators and stockyards around the region.³⁸ However, these remedial projects provided relief at a slow pace and only temporary work. Depression continued into 1938, and residents of the plains continued to pray for its end. Oddly enough, the answer to the many prayers across the Great Plains was Adolf Hitler.

After Germany invaded Poland, France and England joined the war, the United States' agricultural, manufacturing, banking, maritime, railroad, transportation, and shipbuilding industries could not find enough employees.³⁹ Nobody knew if the United States was going to join the war, but everybody knew England and France would utilize American resources. The engine of the Great Plains began churning once again. Cities and businesses began placing bids for war contracts immediately after the invasion. In Omaha, the S and L Neckware Company received a contract to produce ten thousand field caps; the Omaha Seat Cover Company supplied twenty-five thousand tents. The steel business won the best contracts – Omaha Steel Works produced artillery ammunition components for \$5.5 million.⁴⁰

Still, war contracts like those for steel only slightly ameliorated local economies. The most important military revenue sources came in the form of bases and manufacturing plants. Nebraska senator George W. Norris knew this and used his position to secure military facilities for the Omaha area. He contended that if Nebraska did not receive facilities it would be "injurious to this long-suffering part of the country." Norris wrote the head of the Advisory Commission to the Council on National Defense proposing a "power plant between Lincoln and Omaha, a military cantonment south of Hastings, and an aircraft engine research laboratory at

³⁸ Larsen et al, 248-250

³⁹ Anderson, Einer A. "It Was Adolf Hitler Who Solved Our Depression Problems." *The Dirty Thirties: Tales of the Nineteen Thirties during Which Occurred a Great Drought, a Lengthy Depression and the Era Commonly Called the Dust Bowl Years*. By William H. Hull. Edina, MN: W.H. Hull, 1989. Print. Xiv-vi.

⁴⁰ Larsen et al, 258

Omaha.” His persistence payed off after receiving a letter from President Roosevelt himself, who indicated that officials had recommended one of several large Midwestern aircraft plants for the Omaha area. This plant was the Martin Bomber Plant.⁴¹

Exactly one year prior to the attack at Pearl Harbor, residents in Omaha read in the newspapers that a massive aircraft plant would be built just south of the city. The Glenn L. Martin-Nebraska Company bomber plant would become the largest military establishment in the state. Based out of Baltimore, Maryland, the company was a leading producer of military aircraft for the United States military. The Martin Plant brought in thousands of workers and their families to the area. Suburbs surrounding Omaha adjusted rapidly expanding their infrastructure and zoning to accommodate for the proliferating population. At the plant’s highpoint in production, it employed 14,500 people – making it one of the country’s largest war plants. “It modified over 1,000 planes; made 1,585 B-26 Martin Marauders, two-engine medium attack bombers’ and 531 B-29 Superfortresses, four-engine planes that carried the air war to Japan. The two B-29s that dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were both made and modified at the plant, [as well].”⁴²

The building of planes built up the city’s economy. Because of the Martin Plant, Omaha construction companies such as Peter Kiewit Sons gained contracts for creating new buildings and roads. Housing markets began to grow again as smaller towns in the area, like Bellevue and Fort Crook, began to suburbanize. Federal subsidies aided the expansion. The PWA and WPA funded sewers, water treatment, schools and other improvements. The roads connecting the Martin Plant and the heart of Omaha became the busiest in Nebraska leading to the state’s first divided highway from Fort Crook to Omaha.⁴³

Modernization transformed the Omaha/Council Bluffs region not only economically but also socially. The increase in employment opportunities led to a division among races. Mexican Americans and African Americans suffered more than whites did during the depression and hoped to gain economic traction through the Martin Plant, railroad industry and stockyards. R. Douglas Hurt contends that discrimination on the plains was due to a largely homogenous,

⁴¹ Larsen et al, 259

⁴² Larsen et al, 259-260

⁴³ Larsen et al, 260-261

insular white population unwilling to welcome and accept changes. He states, “The Great Plains men and women accepted racism against African Americans, Latinos, and Indians.” He then cites evidence of racism and segregation in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.⁴⁴ However, Hurt neglects that much of the racist attitude in those states was reflective of Southern culture rather than the Great Plains culture. Northern portions of the Great Plains did not enact segregation laws and had much better race relations than the southern portions of the region. Although racial tensions existed in the northern portions of the Great Plains, they were more reflective of a broader national picture. As employment opportunities increased, whites throughout the country hoped to secure better paying jobs than minorities. Prejudice mindsets were not limited to the Great Plains. In fact, Omaha and other portions of the plains commonly offered more opportunity for minorities than their coastal counterparts did during World War II.

In 1945, Robert C. Weaver addressed African American employment during WWII in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. His article, “Negro Employment in the Aircraft Industry,” specifically analyzes aircraft plants throughout the country, noting their hiring practices towards minorities. Comparing the Omaha Martin plant to others located in Los Angeles, Buffalo, Hartford, Baltimore, Seattle, Dallas, Atlanta, and more, it is apparent that the Omaha Martin plant exhibited similar and occasionally superior employment records for minorities, especially African Americans.⁴⁵ In contrast to the Baltimore Martin plant, Weaver writes, “[T]he Omaha, Nebraska, Martin factory hires a significant percentage of Negroes. While the proportion of Negroes in Omaha is much smaller than that of Baltimore, the proportion of Negro workers in the local plant is almost as high as the figure for Baltimore.”⁴⁶ An even greater disparity between population and labor force for African Americans existed in Atlanta, Nashville, Dallas, and St. Louis, where laws brooking segregation provided a greater economic barrier for African Americans.

This is not to say that the Great Plains was immune to prejudice, but rather that the Great Plains reflected a nationwide prejudice towards minorities. When the United States

⁴⁴ Hurt, 97

⁴⁵ Weaver, Robert C.. 1945. “Negro Employment in the Aircraft Industry”. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 59 (4). Oxford University Press: 616-617. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1883298>.

⁴⁶ Weaver, 619

joined World War II, race relations challenged the entire country on multiple fronts. Minorities were risking their lives for the same goals as whites. The war also spurred urban migration throughout the country, relocating those who lived in homogenous communities into more diverse communities. Moreover, the military stationed minority soldiers all across the country, providing a unique amalgamation of the previous two notions. How would a white family from Tabor, South Dakota, react when encountering black soldiers in Sioux Falls, especially when this family had children of their own fighting in the same war?

Once Sioux Falls native Robert O'Connor enlisted, he was transferred from Minneapolis to Green Bay, Wisconsin and then again from St. Louis, Missouri to Louisiana. From there Bob migrated with fellow soldiers to Camp Breckinridge in Kentucky then to Camp Shanks in New York, his last home before deployment in Europe. During this period of migration, Bob and his comrades had downtime in which they sought entertainment. Urbanizing cities such as Evansville, Indiana, and Green Bay, Wisconsin, provided amusement for the soldiers through bars, theaters and sporting events.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Bob's hometown, Sioux Falls, provided similar entertainment for Georgia native Jack Armstrong and his comrades. On paper, Bob and Jack did not appear too different. Both were serving their country in the military and traveling across the nation in order to do so. The only major difference was that Bob was white and Jack was black. While Bob and his friends were welcomed in almost every establishment they ventured to, Jack and his friends faced prejudice. Most notably, in Sioux Falls, the African American soldiers faced prejudice because of their military superiors. Captain J.E. Shannon told the 300 African American soldiers who arrived on October 3, 1942 that they could only patronize two restaurants, the Canton Café and the Hamburger Inn. Military superiors also precluded African American soldiers from socializing in white drinking establishments from swimming in the same pools. Those who risked punishment in order to socialize with whites went across the state line to Minnesota.⁴⁸ At that time, the Army adhered to a strict segregation policy, creating black squadrons and white squadrons. The hope was to prevent feuds from breaking out both in the bases and in

⁴⁷ O'Connor, 11-19

⁴⁸ Oyos, Lynwood. *Reveille for Sioux Falls: A World War II Army Air Forces Technical School Changes a South Dakota City*. Augustana College: Center For Western Studies, 2014. 111-113

the communities. A major implication was a sense of inferiority for black soldiers. As Jack Armstrong said, “The only time you were treated like any other human being was when you were in the hospital.”⁴⁹

Jack Armstrong and about 5,000 of other soldiers attended the Army Air Forces Technical School (ATS) in Sioux Falls.⁵⁰ The soldiers began arriving in June of 1942, and their stay would have a lasting impact. Just as the Martin Bomber plant engendered modern transformations to the city of Omaha, Nebraska, the ATS stimulated both economic and social change in Sioux Falls. Once the military announced the blueprints for the school, over 1,200 carpenters came to Sioux Falls for its construction, stimulating restaurants and bars throughout the city.⁵¹ Their stay also bolstered the hotel industry in town, as visitors often complained of there being too few places to stay. Once the GIs arrived, Sioux Falls experienced prosperity it had not enjoyed for over a decade.

The Army Technical School provided 1,800 new civilian jobs. Federal dependency decreased dramatically; at the Great Depression’s zenith, the Works Progress Administration employed over 3,000 people in Minnehaha County. One year after contractors completed the school, the WPA employed only 88 people. From 1941 to 1942, the county’s direct relief fund decreased by 25%. After the school’s completion, most of the direct relief went to families without fathers or families whose fathers could not work.⁵² Men able to work could find work thanks to the ATS.

Another indication of the growing prosperity in Sioux Falls is in bank clearings. Bank clearings denote the flow of actual money in circulation rather than promised money; economists often consider them accurate indicators of prosperity. In 1941, the year before the ATS’s completion, total bank clearings equaled \$105,237,397.64. They increased by over \$30 million to \$136,345,024.88 in 1942, the year of the ATS’s completion. A monthly analysis of bank clearing shows an even more profound impact. In 1941, only one month (December) exceeded \$10 million in bank clearings. In 1942, nine of the twelve months had bank clearing

⁴⁹ Oyos, 113

⁵⁰ Oyos, 61

⁵¹ Oyos, 111

⁵² Oyos, 28

totals that exceeded \$10 million. Every month following the GI's arrival in June exceeded the \$10 million mark for the year of 1942.⁵³

Probably the most important indication of prosperity was the overall attitude of a community. The ATS rejuvenated Sioux Falls. Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington resonated throughout the Arkota Ballroom while servicemen and local women danced to the beat. Long lines formed outside of the city's movie theaters. Nightclub owners continually advertised for more help and better qualified musicians. Annual restaurant profits increased by 50% in 1942; steak became the meat of choice over the cheap hamburger patty. Personal income in the state rose from \$360 in 1940 to \$3,371 in 1947.⁵⁴ The new prosperity, propelled by the technical school and agricultural demands, continued into the future. Sioux Falls, an Aberdeen reporter predicted, "offers the most realistic picture... of South Dakota at war, and... she'll keep on the road ahead [when it's all over]."⁵⁵

Along with lasting economic changes, the Army Technical School prompted social change. Race was a hot topic among the civil leaders of Sioux Falls when 300 African American GI's came to the technical school. "The city had never had that many African Americans in their midst before."⁵⁶ Leaders consulted the very limited black community on how to avoid racial strife. Both groups expressed the need for African American soldiers, like the white soldiers, to unwind during their off-duty hours. Since African American soldiers were not allowed to attend 'white clubs' under Army segregation rules,⁵⁷ Maurice Coakley, a prominent voice in the black community, suggested that the Roseland nightclub be set aside for black soldiers. Charlie Woods, another prominent African American, operated the Roseland and fully supported the idea. He, however, did not segregate his club, so the black soldiers could bring their white friends to the club. There was no Army law proscribing whites from attending black nightclubs. The Roseland was one of a few spots where technical school GI's could interact, as long as the base continued being segregated.⁵⁸

⁵³ Oyos, 28-29

⁵⁴ Hurt, R. Douglas. *The Great Plains during World War II*. Lincoln. University of Nebraska Press, 2008. p 402

⁵⁵ Oyos, 26

⁵⁶ Oyos, 113

⁵⁷ See footnote 48

⁵⁸ Oyos, 113-114

Besides the Roseland, another area both races of soldier could interact was on the baseball field. Although the teams were segregated, the skill of the African American team gained the African American soldiers newfound respect. Their team, The Raiders, was better than their white counterparts were. Technical Sergeant Olin “Jelly” Taylor was the star of The Raiders; he had played professionally in the Negro League for the Pittsburg Crawfords, the Cleveland Stars, and the Cincinnati Tigers where he led the league in batting average and won the MVP in 1941. The competition between blacks and whites spread to the track, as ATS soldiers would race at Howard Field. Additionally, multiple soldiers of both races traveled together to Sioux City, Iowa, where they competed in the Golden Glove boxing tournament.⁵⁹ Sports and athletic competitions like baseball, track and boxing facilitated several friendships. For many in the ATS, the racial divide was becoming unnecessary and even ridiculous.

Those who wanted segregation to remain in the military disseminated false stories of racial tensions throughout the country. In a 1942 *Business Week* article, a journalist assessed Sioux Falls and other communities adjacent to army camps. The article stated:

Sioux Falls, South Dakota was a trouble center. There an Army Air Forces technical training field suffered numerous racial difficulties. Personnel consisted of thousands of white men, many from the South, and about 300 northern Negroes. Whites and blacks relaxed in the same saloons and fights became alarmingly frequent.⁶⁰

The Argus Leader immediately rebutted this erroneous article. The editor of the newspaper stated that the difficulties described in *Business Week* stemmed from the writer’s imagination and that they were simply not reflective of the city’s racial experience. In fact, Sioux Falls had zero reported instances of racial feuds of consequence. The writer’s statement that the African American soldiers came from the North is also false, further demonstrating a lack of credibility to the article.⁶¹ The majority of blacks stationed in Sioux Falls, including Jack Armstrong, were from the South, chiefly Alabama and Georgia. These men from the South cared deeply about the place they called home. For Christmas of 1942, the African American squadron raised over

⁵⁹ Oyos, 118-123

⁶⁰ Oyos, 121-122

⁶¹ Oyos, 122

\$1,200 to send to Tuskegee, Alabama, in order to ameliorate poor family conditions due to wartime family dislocation.⁶²

Race relations in Sioux Falls during World War II were by no means perfect, but they do not fit into R. Douglas Hurt's assumption that "the Great Plains men and women accepted racism against African Americans, Latinos, and Indians."⁶³ Prentiss L. Pemberton, a Sioux Falls resident during the war offered a more accurate depiction: "While we still encounter problems of discrimination, the intelligent leadership of public-spirited citizens has formulated here a colored policy generally progressive." He then continued to urge Sioux Falls to continue its progress towards total elimination of racial discrimination and concluded, "Appreciating the remarkable cultural advances already achieved by our colored people against almost insurmountable obstacles, let our intelligence and understanding speed that advance with the least possible tension and conflict."⁶⁴ Pemberton recognized the city leadership's move toward racial progress. According to Oyos, "There is no doubt that the African-American soldiers received better treatment in the Sioux Falls community than they experienced in the Army Technical School."⁶⁵ Racial discrimination was not a Sioux Falls problem but a military problem. The people and policies in Sioux Falls and throughout the Great Plains spread the notion that the military should integrate. Their work led to dramatic change when Harry Truman ordered the racial integration of the armed forces in 1948.

Sioux Falls provided such a hospitable stay for African American soldiers that many decided to stay, including Jack Armstrong. Armstrong operated his own paint and body shop where he could treat everyone as a human being. Despite the discriminatory treatment that they received at the ATS, Armstrong and other African Americans enjoyed life in their new hometown. Others left Sioux Falls but remained in the Midwest, moving to Sioux City, Waterloo, the Twin Cities and other urbanizing areas. Their decisions to stay in the Great Plains runs contrary to Hurt's contentions about race on the Plains and also that the region was empty. African Americans brought with them a new culture in music, dance, entertainment, and more. One could hardly say that the region was winnowing; rather, the Great Plains was

⁶² Oyos, 121

⁶³ See footnote 44

⁶⁴ Pemberton, Prentiss L. "Our Negro Policy." *Arugus Leader*. Feb 13, 1943.

⁶⁵ Oyos, 124

transforming much like the rest of the country into a more industrial, modern way of life. To many of the soldiers returning from overseas and from around the country, their hometowns were hardly recognizable.

Such was the case for Robert O'Connor, who after returning to the United States marched down 5th Street in New York for the Victory Parade. He then traveled to Camp McCoy in Wisconsin where the army discharged him. From there Bob took the first train to Sioux Falls and a taxi home. His mother and two sisters greeted him upon his arrival. Bob thanked them for their prayers. After a long journey, "it was great to be home safe, even after a little wear and tear."⁶⁶ Sioux Falls, however, was hardly the same home as when he left it. Bob notes in his memoir that among the things he waited so long to do was to "go downtown, walk up and down Phillips Avenue in Sioux Falls, to see the people [he] knew." When he reached Phillips Avenue, he did not see a single person he knew, or even thought he knew. "I was a stranger in my hometown," Bob remarked. Tired of his army garb, he purchased a new suit, shirt, tie and shoes with his discharge money. After a surreal time downtown, Bob found a phone and contacted a few of his "old cronies" who survived the war and returned to Sioux Falls, as well.⁶⁷

Bob O'Connor is just one example of hundreds of thousands of veterans who returned to their hometowns after WWII. His story runs contrary to many popular and historical narratives. For instance, the song "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Patee?)" highlights the concern that American soldiers from rural areas would not want to return to their homes after viewing the major cities of Europe. The chorus is as follows:

How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm
After they've seen Patee'
How ya gonna keep 'em away from Broadway
Jazzin around and paintin' the town
How ya gonna keep 'em away from harm, that's a mystery
Imagine Reuben when he meets his Pa
He'll pinch his cheek and holler "OO-LA-LA!
How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm
After they've seen Patee'?"⁶⁸

⁶⁶ O'Connor, 56

⁶⁷ O'Connor, 57

⁶⁸ Lewis, Sam M., Joe Young, and Walter Donaldson, writers. *How Ya Gonna Keep 'em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Patee)?* Jim Europe and the 369th Infantry Band. 1919, Vinyl recording.

Although this song was written during World War I, several arrangements reappeared during the Second World War, and the tune regained prominence during the 1940s.⁶⁹ As the song alludes, many believed that WWII soldiers would want to leave their past life behind them, only to travel to urban coastal cities. Citizens from rural areas feared that the skills that young men and women gained through the military would encourage them to strive for success away from the Great Plains. However, despite the popular perception, most soldiers returned to their hometowns and stayed for an extended period. Many returned and never left.

Like Bob O'Connor, Cecil Harold Simons was a WWII veteran. He, too, was from the Midwest; and after serving overseas, he returned to his hometown. While in the 25th Fighter Squadron of the United States Airforce, Cecil gained skills as an electronic technician. Upon returning to the United States, he worked for his family's Chevrolet garage, using his new skills to improve the business. Cecil Simons and Robert O'Connor both utilized the GI Bill to attain skills, as well. O'Connor earned a law degree, and Simons went to radio school. Again, they harnessed new skills granted through the military and employed these skills throughout the Great Plains. O'Connor served as a lawyer in Sioux Falls for over 50 years, and Simons moved to Wichita, Kansas, to work for a Boeing aircraft plant.⁷⁰

Wichita, Cecil Simons' new home, experienced similar economic and social changes to that of Sioux Falls and Omaha beginning at the onset of World War II. Between October 1, 1940, and September of 1941, Wichita's population increased 20% after 12,800 families moved into the city. Wichita attracted six times more migrants than Baltimore and twenty times more migrants than Philadelphia. All three cities had major aircraft and defense plants, but the difference between Wichita and the East Coast was major urban migration. Over 50% of Wichita's new residents came from towns with populations less than 2,500 people (just like Cecil's hometown of Lindi, Missouri). Another 38% came from towns ranging in population from 2,500 to 25,000 people.⁷¹ Similar changes occurred in Cheyenne, Rapid City, Lincoln, Omaha and other regional hubs across the Great Plains. The war and postwar era resulted in dramatic urbanization.

⁶⁹ True, William, and Deryck Tufts. True. *The Cow Spoke French: The Story of Sgt. William True, American Paratrooper in World War II*. Bennington, VT: Merriam Press, 2002. p. 255

⁷⁰ Simons, Cecil H. (WWII Veteran from Parkville, Kansas), in discussion with the author, October 26, 2015.

⁷¹ Hurt, *The Great Plains during World War II*. 386

These demographic trends, however, are often ignored in both popular and historic literature depicting 20th century Great Plains. Writers paint the region with themes of hardship, unsustainability, and desolation. They focus on what Michael P. Conzen calls “declining towns.”⁷² In his article, “Understanding Great Plains Urbanization...,” Conzen studies the history of South Dakota town landscapes. He describes the towns that formed during the Dakota Boom as experimental towns, startup towns with nowhere to go but up. Community members hoped to create the perfect model town in order to attract the railroad companies like the Milwaukee Road, North Western Railway and the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad. They believed that with the railroad, their towns could prosper and one day grow to become the hub of the region. Obviously, this was not the case for the majority of these towns. With the invention and spread of the automobile, many of these towns throughout South Dakota and the rest of the Great Plains reached their peak populations during the 1920s.⁷³ The automobile, Conzen states, “has rewritten the rules of distance relationships and urban balance, and many a small town has virtually sunk from view.”⁷⁴

Thanks to Hurt, Nelson, Belsie, and Conzen, we are able to understand the factors that created the vacant spaces of the Great Plains. Yet, declining population on the prairie is *only a portion* of the Great Plains history. As this paper has attempted to illustrate, the Great Plains contains a variety of townscapes. Conzen categorizes five other iconic South Dakota townscapes: Tourist Towns, County Seats, College Towns, Regional Centers, and Metropolises. Yet, he only provides a small paragraph for each of these categories.⁷⁵ These towns were able to survive and sometimes thrive during the 20th century because of their differing industries, whether it is tourism, government, education, or regional banking, shopping and other forms of commerce.

Tourist towns scatter the Great Plains. People come from all over the world to experience and witness historical interpretations of the plains thanks to books like *My Ántonia* and *The Little House on the Prairie* series. Red Cloud, Nebraska, Willa Cather’s hometown,

72 Conzen, Michael P. "Understanding Great Plains Urbanization Through the Lens of South Dakota Townscapes." *Journal of Geography* 109, no. 1 (2010): 3-17. doi:10.1080/00221340903478637.

73 Conzen, Figure 3. p. 6

74 Conzen, 13

75 Conzen, 14-16

where she based the setting *My Ántonia*, receives visitors from across the globe. Tourists numbering approximately six times the town's population come to visit the tourist sites.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, De Smet, South Dakota, hosts people from all around the globe. Japanese tourists are of the most common international visitors because of the television show's popularity in Japan. Still these visitors are only a small fraction compared to the Great Plains' largest attraction: Mount Rushmore. On average, Mount Rushmore hosts around three million visitors a year; they come from every corner of the United States and around the Globe.⁷⁷ That figure is over three times larger than the population of the state. Hotels, restaurants, gas stations, and smaller towns containing their own historic sights flourish during the tourist season. In fact, Tourism is South Dakota's fourth largest industry, accounting for \$1.99 billion of the state economy.⁷⁸ South Dakota's ability to draw people into the state seems very contrary to Nelson's assertion that it winnows out its own residents.

Similarly, towns with colleges have developed urban niches, as incoming students become a principle economic basis for the communities. College towns often boast above-average housing, consumer services, shopping and entertainment to support students, creating a centralized urban feel surrounded by miles of prairie. Vermillion, Brookings, Spearfish, Madison, and Mitchell, South Dakota, possess theaters and retail that would normally exceed their populations. Yet, the influx of students during the school year is able to support these urban amenities. This is not surprising because with students in session, Brookings' population increases from 22,591 to roughly 35,100. Vermillion's population actually doubles in size, jumping from 10,699 to 20,934. South Dakota colleges and universities are able to draw in students from all 50 states and over 100 countries.⁷⁹ A major reason for this is South Dakota's low tuition for both residents and nonresidents alike.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ The Willa Cather Foundation: 2014 Annual Report. p 3.

⁷⁷ <https://www.nps.gov/moru/learn/management/statistics.htm>

⁷⁸ "Tourism Industry Saw Solid Growth in 2014." South Dakota State News. Accessed April 13, 2016. <http://news.sd.gov/newsitem.aspx?id=17204>.

⁷⁹ "SDSU Facts 2015-2016." South Dakota State University. Accessed April 27, 2016. <https://www.sdstate.edu/about/facts/>.

⁸⁰ According to bestcolleges.com, six South Dakota schools fell in the nation's top 50 cheapest schools for out of state students. The website considers the cost of tuition, room and board, fees and even the cost of living in the surrounding area for each college. The site collects data from the National Center for Education Statistics; the data comes from the 2013-2014 school year.

According to Conzen, every region develops an urban hierarchy. Within that hierarchy, an urban center offers services over a proximate area. An illustration often used to depict this phenomenon is the spokes and wheel model; at the midpoint of the wheel lays the regional center that influences the surrounding area of the wheel. Citizens of towns within the regional center's influence often bank, shop, eat and entertain themselves at the regional center. The Great Plains offers dozens of examples of regional centers. In South Dakota, Aberdeen, Watertown, Pierre, and Yankton all act as a regional center and have developed urban features to accommodate for their own citizens and the surrounding areas.⁸¹

The last townscape Conzen discusses is the metropolis. Wichita, Omaha, Amarillo and Sioux Falls are a handful of the metropolises that exist within the Great Plains region. Sioux Falls is the largest city in South Dakota, and as discussed earlier, the city saw increased urbanization throughout the twentieth century, even during times of regional population loss. With a population of roughly 170,000 and a metropolitan population of 250,000, Sioux Falls serves as the primary commercial and industrial city of the state. Sioux Falls is driven by its banking and health services industries.

Citibank, Great Western Bank, and MetaBank all call Sioux Falls home. Citibank is the largest bank in Sioux Falls; their credit card and lending-only bank consolidated with several other Citigroup organizations. Citibank moved the its headquarters to Sioux Falls on July 1, 2011.⁸² Citi now employees 2,300 people in Sioux Falls.⁸³ Along with banking, the health care industry in Sioux Falls has proliferated thanks to Sanford Health which employees 8,571 people and Avera Health which employees 6,259 people. These are the two largest employers of the city and account for much of the state's increasing health care industry.⁸⁴ In fact, according to the South Dakota Department of Health, health care is the fastest growing industry in the state, adding more workers than any other industry from 2004-2014; health care added 8,500

"50 Colleges with the Lowest Out-Of-State Tuition." BestColleges.com. Accessed April 25, 2016.

<http://www.bestcolleges.com/features/lowest-out-of-state-tuition/>.

⁸¹ Conzen, 15

⁸² United States. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION. *FORM 8-K Current Report*. June 30, 2011. Accessed April 25, 2016. <http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/839947/000152261611000002/cbsd-8k.htm>.

⁸³ Sioux Falls Development Foundation "LABOR FORCE STATISTICS." Major Area Employers 2014. Accessed April 25, 2016. <http://www.siouxfallsdevelopment.com/laborforcestatistics.cfm>.

⁸⁴ Sioux Falls Development Foundation

workers during that period, growth of more than 19 percent.⁸⁵ The industry has increased over 75% since 1990.⁸⁶ The metropolis of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, through these industries and more, has become a regional symbol of success. Seemingly unharmed by the 2008 recession, the city has shown the strength of the region. Yet, few outside the region are aware of Sioux Falls' achievements.

However, James Fallows and his wife Deborah, both writers for *The Atlantic*, recognized the accomplishments of Sioux Falls and other cities. They took a road trip around the United States, hoping to examine what factors might have led to resiliency following the 2008 economic recession. While touring the country, the Fallows discovered some peculiarities about our country. "America," James Fallows writes, "is egalitarian, and snobbish.

The city looks down on the countryside, the north on the south, the coastal meccas on the flyover interior—and of course each object of disdain looks back with its own reverse snobbery. A version of today's hierarchical awareness is the concept of the "big sort." This is the idea that if you have first-rate abilities and more than middling ambitions, you'll need to end up in one of a handful of talent destinations. New York for finance; the San Francisco Bay Area or Seattle for tech; Washington, D.C., for politics and foreign policy.⁸⁷

Still, what the Fallows discovered is that talent around the United States is also moving to regional centers and metropolises away from the coast, that there is much more diversity in these areas than what might meet the eye, and that traditional notions of cityscapes are not accurate depictions of the interior United States.

Sioux Falls is a primary example within Fallows article. The banking and medical industries are ripe with talent, and diversity within the city is much greater than expected. The city leaders embrace the diversity; in fact, Fallows states that many are proud of the fact that "the safety and work-rules instructions are posted in 30 languages" at the John Morell

⁸⁵ South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation. "South Dakota Hot Trends In Healthcare." October 2015. Accessed April 25, 2016. https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/pdfs_and_other_files/career_hot_trends_in_healthcare.pdf. p. 1

⁸⁶ South Dakota Department of Health. "South Dakota Health Care Workforce Needs Assessment 2013." *2013 Healthcare Workforce Report*: 1-43. Accessed April 27, 2016. <https://doh.sd.gov/documents/Providers/RuralHealth/Workforce/2013WorkforceReport.pdf>. p. 2

⁸⁷ Fallows, James. "How America Is Putting Itself Back Together." *The Atlantic*. March 2016. Accessed April 27, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/03/how-america-is-putting-itself-back-together/426882/>.

meatpacking plant.⁸⁸ This again contradicts Hurt's racial narrative within *The Big Empty*. It also contradicts the overall narrative that the region is empty, as people from all over the world are finding their way to the prairie.

Sioux Falls, Brookings, Watertown, and even De Smet, South Dakota are all testaments to the fact that there is more to Great Plains than "declining towns." Tourist towns, college towns, regional centers and even a few metropolises dot the prairie. Many of these cities throughout the region are an amalgamation of the aforementioned townscapes. For instance, Rapid City is a popular tourist destination and a county seat; it contains a college; and it is the metropolis of West River, South Dakota, providing many services for the surrounding area. Still, few scholars address the development of these townscapes; instead, they along with literary writers remained fixated on "declining towns." Why might this be the case?

Perhaps we need to consider what we are studying when we study the Great Plains. Are we primarily studying land or people? If we focus on land, it is easy to see that much of the Great Plains is empty, void of people. Some scholars have concluded that the best (or inevitable) decision for this region would be to create a "Buffalo Commons," the world's largest historic preservation sight.⁸⁹

However, if the focus is on people, it becomes apparent that dramatic urbanization took place throughout the 20th century and into today. Scholars need to portray both the people and the land of the Great Plains. To omit either is to misrepresent the Great Plains. It is my contention that Hurt, Nelson and other scholars have distorted understandings of the region by exaggerating themes of misery, loss and desolation. After reading *The Big Empty* or *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own*, one would find it hard believe that over 30 languages are be spoken in a meat production plant on the prairie. One would hardly understand how Sioux Falls, Omaha, Wichita, and Rapid City have grown to become the cities they currently are. One would hardly

⁸⁸ Fallows, "How America Is Putting Itself Back Together."

⁸⁹ "The Great Plains: From Dust to Dust" was a controversial article by Deborah and Frank Popper in 1987. The article called the region anticlimactic after WWII. They asserted that the region's farm, ranch, energy, and mineral economies were in deep depression and that the environment was approaching another dustbowl. They claimed that the only solution to the forthcoming catastrophe was for the federal government to deprivatize much of the Great Plains and to create a "Buffalo Commons," returning the region to "pre-white" conditions through a historic preservation sight.

Popper, Deborah Epstein and Frank J. Popper. "The Great Plains: From Dust to Dust." *Planning* 53, no. 12 (12, 1987): 12-18.

understand the Great Plains as it actually is today. This is because Hurt, Nelson and others are not telling the right story.

Urban migration is the story of the Great Plains during the twentieth century. Simply put, the O'Connor family story is the story of the Great Plains. Most families throughout the twentieth century stayed and fashioned lives dependent on the environment, on rainfall and often on federal relief. Still these families persevered during one of the most transformative centuries in all of history. Robert O'Connor survived the depression, battled in war, finished his degree at Augustana and attended Law School at the University of South Dakota. He went on to become a lawyer in Sioux Falls, owning his own firm. An active member in politics, Bob also became the chair of the Democratic Party for Minnehaha County. Bob married Eileen Dolan in 1957 and raised five children, including my mother Kim. My grandfather's story is the history of the Great Plains. Hardly *empty*, his life was full of trying times and joyful triumph. Through it all, my grandfather would never *winnow* away; as he would always say, "One has to live with one's choices." A champion of the less fortunate, my grandfather continued to lead a remarkable life until his death in 2011.

My grandfather's decision to stay and make Sioux Falls home made the city a better place. His efforts helped Sioux Falls become "the best place to live in America" according to *Money Magazine* in 1992. We must remember that the real story of the Great Plains is not exodus, but the creation of cities such as Sioux Falls. The Prairie was not winnowed, it was reinvented. To misrepresent the Great Plains is to misrepresent my grandfather. It is my belief that we must tell the right story in hopes to honor those who have gone before us to make this world a better place.

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