

History

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St. Paul in celebration, 1924. This photo from the Gibson-Wright collection shows St. Paul during the years of labor turmoil that followed World War I. The 1880s city hall-county courthouse is on the left, with the St. Paul Athletic Club beyond it in this view looking east down Fourth Street. See W. Thomas White's account, beginning on page 4, of the 1922 Shopmen's Strike in the Northwest.

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A Message from the Editorial Board

The Spring issue of our magazine inaugurates a new feature that focuses on the personal experiences of individuals growing up in St. Paul or Ramsey County. Willard (Sandy) Boyd, who grew up in St. Anthony Park as the son of Dr. Willard Boyd, director of the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus, has written the first memoir that begins this new feature.

A graduate of the University of Minnesota Law School, Sandy Boyd was president of the University of Iowa from 1969 to 1981. He is now president of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

Boyd writes about his youth in Ramsey County during the Great Depression. We learn first hand, for example, what the great droughts of 1934 and 1936 meant to him and his friends. Editorial Board members hope that others will share their experiences with our readers.

—John M. Lindley, chairman, Editorial Board

A Matter of Time

1852 140 YEARS AGO

► The *Minnesota Pioneer* announced to its readers that one of the largest lakes in Minnesota lay far to the north of St. Paul. Its name: Mille Lacs. The land surrounding it, the newspaper reported, was owned by the Chippewa Indians; its shoreline was densely wooded, with evergreens and sugar maples. The area would remain lightly populated for most of the near future, the newspaper predicted.

► Edward Duffield Neill, superintendent of the common schools of Minnesota Territory, shared with teachers the difficulty of recommending a uniform system of textbooks. The problem no longer rested in a scarcity of books, he told the *Pioneer*, but in the "delicate" decision of choosing which books. He listed several textbooks he considered "unobjectionable" to the various citizens of St. Paul, and he strongly suggested that teachers "cannot be too careful" in choosing books without a sectarian basis, especially when it came to religious instruction.

► The ice-filled Mississippi once again prompted discussion of the need for a bridge across the river at St. Paul. Due to increasing travel west, ferry boats soon would be unable to provide adequate service, the *Pioneer* pointed out. It would be another seven years, however, before the St. Paul bridge (replaced in 1899 by the Wabasha Street bridge) would be built in 1859. In the meantime, a new horse boat ferry crossed the Mississippi from the Jackson Street Landing.

► The *Democrat* announced that R. C. Knox was "making efforts to get up a hook and ladder company. Let everybody help . . ." Until then, "Should a fire occur, let every citizen repair to it with a bucket of water."

► A railroad from Dubuque to Pembina, and passing through St. Paul, was proposed, with construction by George Madiera and a Colonel Hughes. Their plans, however, failed to materialize.

► The city was quiet, the *Minnesota Pioneer* reported, as its residents prepared to vote in early April on a series of temperance laws.

► Education for women was on the minds of St. Paul's people as plans to create a Minnesota Female Institution were in the works. The Reverend Benjamin Hoyt chaired a meeting of the Friends of Education. J. W. Bass was named secretary and Messrs. Oakes, Neill and Bass were appointed to supervise construction of a building.

► The *Pioneer* noted in March that divorce "is becoming a movement in married circles." The territorial Supreme Court in its current term, the paper reported, had "untied several hard knots by permitting the dissolution of marriage ties."

► An "eccentric old Englishman," who had served in the United States' war with Mexico in the 1840s, was found dead on his feet in his cabin near White Bear Lake. He evidently had been sick and unable to leave his isolated farm for help.

► The March 25, 1852, issue of the *Pioneer* published a long article, "Sketches by a Camp Fire, Or Rough Notes of a Trip to Pembina and the Selkirk Settlement on the Red River of the North." The article pronounced the Red River a "very uninteresting stream." Its waters "are liquid mud and have a disagreeable taste." Whether or not this was aimed at encouraging settlers wasn't indicated.

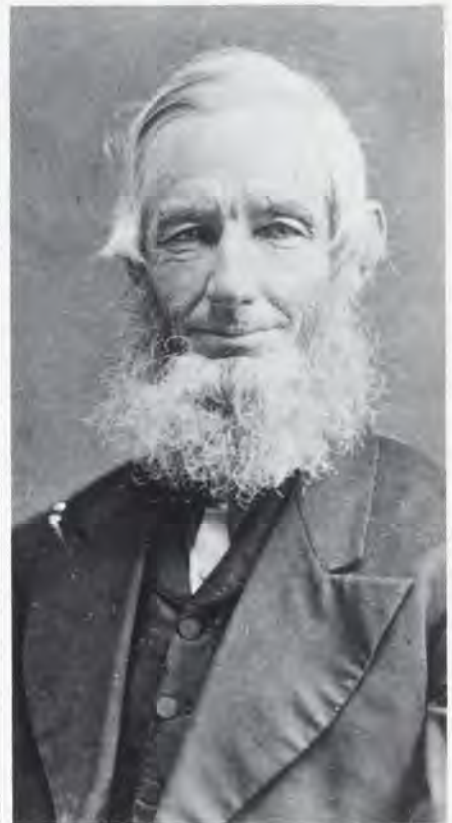
► Annual subscriptions to the *Pioneer Press* cost \$2. Advertising rates ranged from \$20 for a quarter column to \$50 for a full column. Fine calf boots sold for \$6 but the "best bargains" were \$4.

1892 100 Years Ago

► Two prominent Minnesota millers, Charles A. Pillsbury and W.H. Hinkle, launched the United States' first attempt to offer relief to Russian peasants suffering from famine. The two millers joined in asking all other flour producers in the nation to add to Minnesota's donation of 50,000 barrels of flour—valued at \$175,000—to the Russians.

► Archbishop John Ireland was expected to return to St. Paul from Rome with a cardinal's hat, but it was an honor that always would elude him.

► Twin Cities papers reported the loss of another link with Minnesota's past with the death early in December, 1891, of the



Samuel Pond



Samuel Pond's mill at Shakopee, as it looked around 1908, almost two decades after his death.

renowned missionary to the Dakota Indians, the Reverend Samuel W. Pond, at Shakopee. He was the state's oldest resident, the newspaper said.

Samuel Pond and his brother, Gideon, had arrived in Minnesota in 1834. Samuel was twenty-six at the time; his brother, twenty-four. Reared in a small Connecticut village where they received a good elementary education, both had been farmers. Gideon was a skilled carpenter and Samuel had taught school. They were prepossessing men, over six feet tall, stalwart and genial.

Seized with religious zeal, they planned to devote themselves to carrying the gospel to the frontier. The commandant at Fort Snelling welcomed them and at once sent Samuel to the Dakotas' village of Kaposia to teach Chief Big Thunder how to use a plow in planting corn.

The Ponds' appearance on the frontier

could not have been more opportune. Lawrence Taliaferro, the Indian agent at the fort, was nursing along a program to encourage the Dakota to grow corn, beans and other crops to store for the winter months. He had established an "infant colony of agriculturists" named Eatonville at Chief Cloudman's village between Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet in what is now south Minneapolis.

Taliaferro persuaded the Pond brothers to settle near Chief Cloudman's village where they were to "instruct the Indians in the art of [agriculture]" at the Ponds' own expense. The two brothers built a two-room cabin of oak logs, with a cellar underneath and a roof of bark lashed to tamarack poles by strings of basswood bark. It was located on the east bank of Lake Calhoun, somewhat north of today's Thirty-sixth Street—"a good snug little house, delightfully situat-

ed . . . with a good yoke of oxen to use as we please and possessed of the confidence of the Indians."

Here, during the long winter, the Ponds compiled their "Pond alphabet" of the Dakota language. The following spring they were joined by other missionaries—the Reverend Thomas S. Williamson, who also was a physician; Alexander G. Huggins, who was to teach farming methods to the Indians; and the Reverend Jedediah D. Stevens, who with Gideon Pond's help built a mission house on the northwest corner of Lake Harriet.

In the fall of 1839, Chief Cloudman moved his band to Oak Grove on the Minnesota River in present-day Bloomington. By 1843, both Gideon and Samuel Pond were living in a large log house Gideon had built near the chief's camp. Gideon Pond remained there and

in a house that replaced the log house, until his death in 1878.

In 1846 Chief Shakopee asked Samuel Pond to open a school and mission at his village, now established near today's city of Shakopee. Pond did so, building a home in the community, which he named Prairieville. He was living there when he died.

The Pond brothers were gifted scholars and linguists, as well as missionaries. They knew and spoke Dakota. They taught themselves French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Samuel Pond learned German and compiled a Hebrew-Dakota dictionary. In his final years, he made a comparative study of the Vulgate translation of the Bible and of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament.

1917 75 Years Ago

► Diphtheria antitoxin was being distributed through 100 stations established throughout Minnesota. And an investigation was underway by a Ramsey County grand jury into a substantial increase in the price of milk. Prices had risen to nine cents a gallon. Dairy men were blaming the price rise on a 50 percent increase in the cost of feed for their dairy cattle.

► In Europe, with the third year of World War I underway, there was anything but peace. Germany was retreating along the Somme in France where British and French forces had ripped open a sixty-mile front.

► War clouds were forming for the United States. There were reports in March, 1917, that Germany was attempting an alliance with Mexico and Japan that would precipitate an attack on the United States if America didn't remain neutral. President Woodrow Wilson was sworn in for his second term in a private ceremony, using as the Bible a family heirloom also used at his inauguration as governor of New Jersey and his first term as president. The capital was decked out in flags for the occasion, but some 1,000 members of the Congressional Union for Women Suffrage and the National Women's Party planned a march around the White House. However, the president's inaugural address on March 4 focused on the German crisis.

► The passage of the Flood Bill allow-

ing United States merchant ships to arm themselves while on the high seas caused an uproar in Germany. The *Pioneer Press* pointed out that the right of merchant ships to fire at any sighted periscopes would be interpreted as an act of war by Germany, and six months later, America was in fact at war.

► Back home, St. Paul's African Americans, along with others throughout the country, were preparing to set aside a day in May for fasting and prayer to forward their goal of achieving full rights as citizens "for the colored man." A special service was planned for Pilgrim Baptist Church in St. Paul.

► Minnesota's Republicans were organizing their state convention to be held in St. Paul in May. It had been delayed so farmers could finish their seeding. Four delegates to the national convention and several alternates were to be elected.

► St. Paul's "elite" college girls, including those attending the French School in New York City, planned to tour the East Coast during their week-long Easter break. University of Minnesota women were looking ahead to their annual field day in May. Sports would include field hockey, baseball, ice hockey and basketball.

► The combined efforts of businesses and Boy Scouts were being called on to decorate every grave of servicemen in St. Paul cemeteries with wild flowers for Memorial Day. Every school will have musical programs, patriotic exercises and speeches by old soldiers to honor the city's dead, the *Pioneer Press* reported.

► Carleton College defeated Hamline University 21 to 14 in a spring football match.

► Louis Mann was scheduled to open his play, "Some Warriors," at St. Paul's Orpheum theater in mid-March.

1942 50 Years Ago

► War news again dominated the headlines as the European conflict became world-wide after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7. For many Minnesota men and women, an undeclared war had been under way for better than a year. In September, 1940, Congress passed the Selective Service Act, which launched the draft. By early

December, 1941, Minnesota men assigned to the 194th Tank Battalion commanded by Colonel Ernest B. Miller of Brainerd were already in the Philippines. They would be caught in the surrender of Bataan on April 9 and the tragic "death march" that followed. (See article beginning on page 14.)

Members of the Minnesota National Guard, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) at the University of Minnesota were gradually called into service. In February, 1941, Minnesota National Guardsmen, along with their fellow guardsmen from North and South Dakota and Iowa, became part of the 34th Red Bull Division. They would fight together through North Africa, Sicily and Italy.

A Marine Reserve ground unit, the 18th Infantry Battalion, had been activated at St. Paul in the fall of 1939 and mobilized in November, 1940. By May of 1941, the battalion's eighteen officers and some 400 enlisted men had been deployed in the defense of Iceland as part of the Sixth Marine Regiment. Naval and Marine Reserve aviation squadrons training at Wold Chamberlain field departed for San Diego and, eventually, the Pacific. And in St. Paul, a new air raid siren was in position on top of the St. Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse.

► A partial blackout of store windows, signs and billboards was expected to be put into effect in St. Paul and Minneapolis as part of the civil defense of cities believed to be enemy targets.

► Headlines announced plans to ration meat throughout the nation, with two-and-half pounds per person per week. Hamburger cost 19½ cents a pound and peaches \$2.98 a bushel. Women's shoes sold for \$3.77 to \$5.77 and "high quality" fur coats for \$66.

► A heavy March snowfall caused seven traffic deaths throughout the state.

► Approximately 150 "enemy aliens" remained unregistered in Ramsey County and faced possible internment if they failed to register by week's end, the Sunday *Pioneer Press* reported on March 1. Already registered were 542 Germans,

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businessman of America's Gilded Age.

Augmenting the paperback edition of Martin's biography is an introductory essay by W. Thomas White, current curator of the Hill papers. White, a native of Montana and a railroad labor scholar, notes in his essay several related works that have appeared since the publication of the first edition. However, most intriguing in White's essay is the material he presents on Hill's relationship with Grover Cleveland over the railroad right of way across Montana, and Hill's relationship with organized and immigrant labor from the 1890s up to 1908. Some interesting research topics will suggest themselves to practitioners of the school of "new social history," whether they set out to fill important gaps, or rewrite history so it has maximum relevance to present-day dilemmas.

The reprint edition makes this biography available at an affordable price for the teacher, student, history buff and general reader. It has not excluded anything from the original edition, but could have been strengthened had Oxford provided a more complete index, and used the same cartographic artist they employed to produce the maps in Martin's new volume, *Railroads Triumphant—The Growth, Rejection & Rebirth of a Vital American Force*.

—Thomas C. Buckley

Watchdog of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I

Carl Chrislock
St. Paul: Minnesota Historical
Society Press, 1991.

In the first book to look at the famous Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, Carl Chrislock attempts to separate the reality of the actions of the commission from the propaganda it published about itself and from the myths that have grown up about it since the M.C.P.S. was disbanded at the end of World War I.

Formed out of the paranoia and patriotism of the opening days of the first World War, the commission, a commit-

tee consisting of merely seven men, was given near dictatorial powers by the legislature in order to deal with what was perceived to be threats to the state's and nation's security. The commission is infamous for its moves against one of these supposed threats, foreign born Minnesotans.

Chrislock makes the convincing argument, however, that the M.C.P.S. moved just as vigorously, although not as publicly, against Minnesota's fast growing labor movement, particularly the Non-Partisan League, which was becoming an important force in Minnesota politics before and during World War I.

Chrislock documents what exactly the powers of the M.C.P.S. were and examines how these powers were used. He shows how the commission's actions ranged from the legal and constitutional, such as requiring witnesses to give sworn testimony, to the questionably legal and possibly unconstitutional, such as requiring all non-native Minnesotans to register and employing secret agents to spy on suspected disloyal persons.

In some cases, he even shows that the commission acted unethically and illegally by doing nothing (although it was within their power and mission to do so) to prevent mob actions from intimidating suspected disloyal people as well as tarring and feathering and beating of these same people. In some cases, individual members even encouraged such action.

While the commission's greatest infamy resulted from its use of these powers against the foreign born population in Minnesota, the majority of its time, energy and resources were devoted to stopping the growing labor movement in Minnesota. The commissioners, most of whom had ties to big business, interpreted any threat to the status quo in labor-management relations as a threat to the nation in its struggle in Europe. The result was that the commission went after labor organizations and individual organizers with as much zeal as it did the perceived foreign threat.

A book like *Watchdog* . . . perhaps can bring us to terms with this shameful period in our history and stop us from repeating the mistakes of our ancestors.

—Alan Kaiser

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375 Italians, seven Japanese and sixty of other nationalities.

► On the lighter side of the news, water-color paintings depicting scenes from early Minnesota history were on display in the Round Tower at Fort Snelling. "The Man Who Came to Dinner," starring Bette Davis, was playing in the major movie houses throughout the Twin Cities. And the Edyth Bush Little Theater opened with its new comedy, "George Washington Slept Here."

► Despite the war, the University Club scheduled its annual spring party for June, with buffet, orchestra and outdoor dance floor. This was the first of many activities planned to help the war effort by saving rubber and gasoline. Just how much this might help was not explained.

1967 25 Years Ago

► The United Arab Republic called for a meeting of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the conflict that could arise from Egyptian-Israeli clashes over shipping rights in the Gulf of Aqaba.

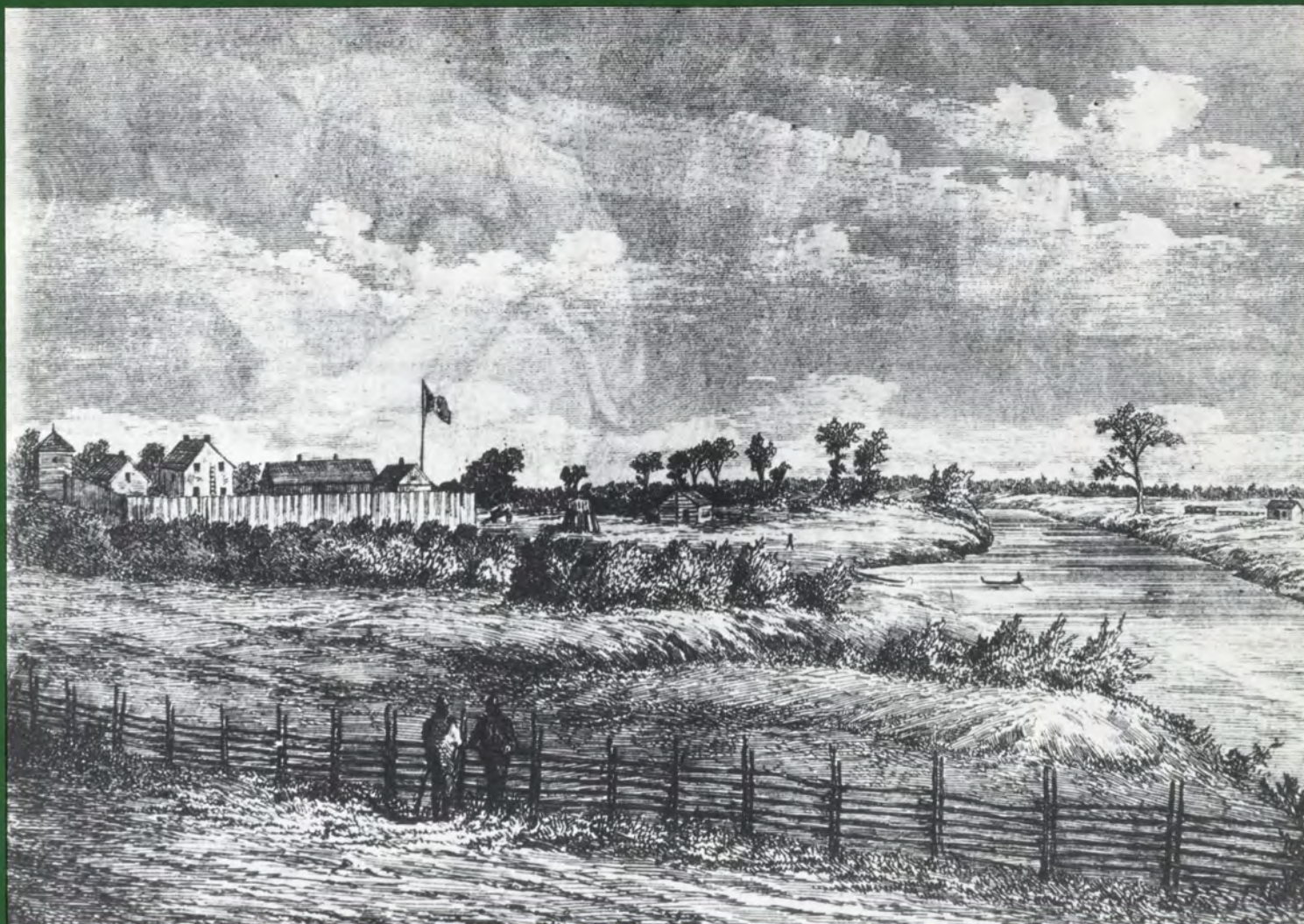
► As United States bombers attacked a North Vietnamese storage base, power plant and ammunition depot near Hanoi and Haiphong, President Lyndon Johnson planned to fly to Guam for a war conference with senior advisors.

► Boy Scouts held an exposition at the Minnesota state fairgrounds, based on the theme of "Scouting 'Round the World" and featuring 226 booths, along with demonstrations of cooking and log rolling.

► Contact lenses cost \$45 in 1967; color television sets \$449 and a snowmobile \$98.

► The St. Paul Civic Opera Company's production of the Leonard Bernstein musical, "West Side Story," opened March 6 for a week's run in the city auditorium theater. Anna Maria Alberghetti and Lester James starred in the production.

Adapted from research compiled by James Egan, Kevin Herras, Robb Larsen, John Young, Dean Severn, Nancy Farrell, James Lehtola, Theresa Beskar and Angela Williams, history students of Professor Thomas C. Buckley at the University of Minnesota.



The Hudson's Bay Company Fort at Pembina, now in North Dakota, from the Canadian Illustrated News, 1871. See the article on the Selkirk Colony, beginning on page 23.

R.C.H.S.
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