

IN PLACE OF the regular "The Editor's Page" feature in this issue, Minnesota History herewith presents in full the short speech given by Charles A. Lindbergh on a historic occasion — the dedication of the Lindbergh State Park Interpretive Center on September 30, 1973. Well over a thousand people turned out on a beautiful day to hear the famous aviator, author, scientist, and conservationist reminisce at the place where he grew up along the Mississippi River near Little Falls, Minnesota. He was introduced by Russell W. Fridley, director of the Minnesota Historical Society. — Ed.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I wonder if I can convey to you the pleasure I find in taking part in this ceremony — here in the state of Minnesota, where my grandparents immigrated over a hundred years ago. I am deeply appreciative of your coming to join in opening an interpretive center so closely related to my family, and especially to my father. I feel that I cannot sufficiently thank the Minnesota Historical Society for its part in establishing this center, and in maintaining so ably the historical integrity of the park and buildings.

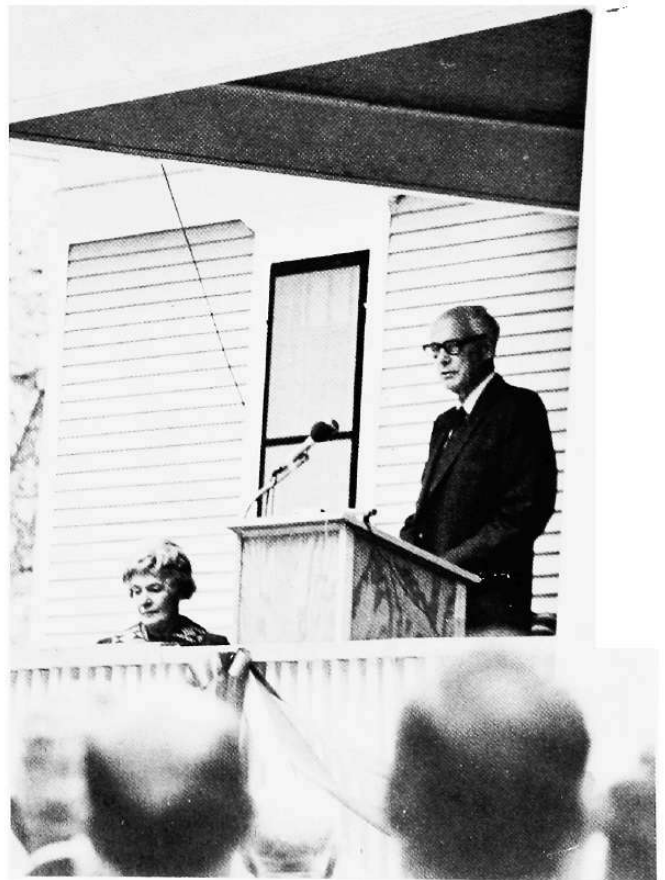
In a sense, this is a dual ceremony. Opening the Lindbergh State Park Interpretive Center coincides with the publication of a biography about my father by Professor Bruce Larson. The title is *Lindbergh of Minnesota*. It is a book of accuracy and perception to which Professor Larson has devoted many years of research, and which incorporates data my family has been assembling for well over half a century. Personally, I want to honor the book along with the center to which it is so closely related. [The second chapter of the book, which will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue, was published in the Spring, 1973, issue of *Minnesota History*. — Ed.]

Obviously, this park means a great deal to me because of associations extending back more than seventy years. As a boy, I spent wonderful days here with my father and mother. During World War I, while I was still below military age, I ran as a farm what is now the nucleus of the park. But the park means even more to me because of its preservation for future generations of the wildness and natural beauty I lived in as a child. With each year that passes I feel more convinced of the essential need of preserving man's natural environment. I find extraordinary satisfaction in knowing that my family has contributed to this preservation.

I wish my father could have known that the land he chose, largely because of its beauty, would eventually become a park, thereby implementing his vision and early interest in the conservation of nature and natural resources. He would have been delighted to see deer

Some Remarks at Dedication of Lindbergh State Park Interpretive Center

Charles A. Lindbergh



CHARLES A. LINDBERGH delivers his remarks from the porch of his former home at Little Falls. At left is his sister, Eva Lindbergh Christie Spaeth. Photo by Lila M. Johnson.

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

return to the woods, as they have under the park's protection. Nothing would have pleased him more than the knowledge that thousands of people each year are enjoying his old home.

To me, this park brings contact with a great span of American history. I think of the centuries that the river beside us carried a traffic of Indian canoes. At one time or another, tepees must have been pitched on every flat area of valley. Surely hunters with their bows and arrows killed game where we are assembled now. Not many yards from here, when I was a boy, I found a carnelian spearhead.

Early trappers carried their furs down this river, and I myself remember the wanigans and bateaux of the lumber companies. It is now hard to visualize the big log jams that were once held by the river's rocks and shoals. My father and I often walked out over them and swam at their outer edges.

I can even connect the Mississippi, here, with aviation. One day, before the first World War began, when I was playing upstairs in our house, I heard an unusually loud engine noise. I ran to the window and climbed out onto the roof. There was an airplane flying upriver, below the treetops on the banks. I learned that it was carrying passengers from a field near Little Falls. Of course I wanted to fly in it, but my mother said that would be much too expensive and dangerous.

I might end by saying that on this riverbank one can look upward in late evening and watch a satellite penetrate through stars, thereby spanning human progress from the primitive hunter with his canoe to the latest advance of our civilization. But in saying so, I would be stopping short of our latest advance. I believe our civilization's latest advance is symbolized by the park rather than by satellites and space travel. In establishing parks and nature reserves, man reaches beyond the material values of science and technology. He recognizes the essential value of life itself, of life's natural inheritance irreplaceably evolved through earthly epochs, of the miraculous spiritual awareness that only nature in balance can maintain.

As our civilization advances, if our follies permit it to advance, I feel sure we will realize that progress can be measured only by the quality of life — all life, not human life alone. The accumulation of knowledge, the discoveries of science, the products of technology, our ideals, our art, our social structures, all the achievements of mankind have value only to the extent that they preserve and improve the quality of life.

This is why I say that parks symbolize the greatest advance our civilization has yet made.



BOOK REVIEWS

Landlords and Tenants on the Prairie Frontier: Studies in American Land Policy. By Paul Wallace Gates. (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1973. vii, 333 p. \$12.50.)

PAUL WALLACE GATES has spent a lifetime working on the effects of American land policy. Together with his students, he has contributed a stream of books and articles on this foundation of American life. The present book deals with the disposition of land on a limited prairie frontier, which in this instance is mostly Indiana and Illinois, with occasional glances at Kentucky, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska. The period covered is roughly from 1830 to 1880. The emphasis is on what was wrong with our land policy.

A critic who discovers something wrong must have in mind an ideal that can be used as a measuring stick. Gates's ideal seems to be the Jeffersonian concept of a nation of independent yeomen farmers who operated family-sized farms. Thus, any policy was deficient and wrong that permitted absentee landlords and large holdings on the one hand and tenants and agricultural workers who had no chance of becoming yeomen farmers on the other. If, however, the yardstick used was productivity, or conservation, or to support the government in lieu of taxes, a different conclusion might be reached. The truth of the matter was that our land policy had not one but several goals.

Gates examines tenants, land speculators, and cattle kings in the Midwest and landlords, farm laborers, and Southern



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