



# The Indians and the Métis

## *Genealogical Sources on Minnesota's Earliest Settlers*

Virginia Rogers

### *Editor's Preface*

*GENEALOGISTS* have long hesitated to do research on Minnesota's Indian and métis or mixed-blood population. The fact that Indian and related métis peoples participated in a largely oral culture may have convinced them that few sources were available. Even historians, although aware of the existing sources, have shunned a study which appeared to them to have little value for the writing of general history. In spite of such common prejudices, institutions like the Minnesota Historical Society for a long time have been accumulating resources of real value in genealogical studies of Indians and métis.<sup>1</sup>

What written records are available on people who left

few written records of their own? What are the special problems involved in doing genealogical research on Indian and métis families? How can research on individual members of the Indian and métis communities aid in understanding the culture to which they belonged?

We hope that in examining the pages that follow, readers of *Minnesota History*, whatever their ethnic, cul-

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<sup>1</sup>The word métis, which means mixed blood in French, was formerly used in Minnesota to refer only to persons of French and Indian mixed blood in the Red River Valley area. Current usage among Minnesota mixed bloods, however, seems to favor the French word, in preference to the English, in referring to all persons of mixed European and Indian blood.

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MHS collections

*AN UNIDENTIFIED Ojibway family is pictured in this photo (opposite) taken along the St. Croix River in the late nineteenth century by Taylors Falls photographer S. C. Sargeant.*

natural, or professional background, will be stimulated to take an increasing interest in an area of genealogical research that has been ignored too long. In the process, perhaps they will become aware of the special value of genealogical research for all students of history.

THE STUDY of ordinary individuals of the past is a fairly new interest in the United States. Generalizations about how the individual farmer or farmwife or worker lived centuries ago may have long interested people, but the facts of the individual's life and the specifics of his family relationships, except in the case of the great or famous, was until recent years the province of the genealogist and the local historian.

Now, however, students of history have begun to see that if they do not seek out the facts of the individual life they cannot begin to test their own generalizations about how people were born, lived, and died. They have also come to realize that an understanding of the lives of ordinary individuals can often change the common understanding of important historical events. It was by using local and genealogical records that Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum in their extraordinary book *Salem Possessed* were able to put the Salem witch trials into a new context and, much to the reader's surprise, create a new sympathy for the witch "baiters" who have long been the villains in most portrayals of the events.<sup>2</sup>

If ordinary individuals who happened to be of white and European origin have often been ignored by researchers, Indians have probably been neglected to an even greater extent. The earliest recorders of Minnesota's history, though they may have had some sympathy for the way in which the Indian communities were being overrun by the oncoming tide of American westward expansion, were uninterested in Indians as individuals, except as picturesque reminders of Minnesota as it was before the arrival of "civilization." For these historians, Indians were a homogeneous group. Individuals were seen merely as examples of a culture about whom the authors already had certain preconceived notions. They were not interested in the ways in which the life-facts of individual Indians might fit their generalizations about Indian life.

Evidence of the attitudes of early historians and chroniclers can be seen in the audio-visual collections of the Minnesota Historical Society that relate to Indians. Although pioneer photographers left us with many remarkable portraits of Minnesota Dakota (Sioux) and Ojibway (Chippewa) as shown on the pages that follow, they seldom recorded much information about the people in the pictures. Their subjects are described as "an Indian," or "a Dakota duck hunter," or "a Dakota maiden," descriptions that suggest more questions than they answer. Only chiefs were usually identified by name. For these photographers Indians were a part of the fast disappearing wilderness. It was enough for them and the white audience that purchased copies of the photographs to have recorded the exotic Indian costume or gesture.

The attitude of these photographers and of many early recorders of Minnesota's history is evident in the following statement made by a Minneapolis newspaperman and collector of early photographs, Edward Bromley. In describing a photograph of Minnehaha Falls with several Indians in the foreground, he remarked:

In 1857, when this picture was made, Indian wigwams dotted the landscape over the vicinity of Fort Snelling and Minnehaha. The artist induced two of the dusky warriors who were numbered among the residents of the locality to sit within the scope of his camera and offer the contrast of their picturesque costumes to the living green in which the Falls of Minnehaha were framed.<sup>3</sup>

THE HISTORY-CONSCIOUS early white settlers who founded the Minnesota Historical Society, though they may have shared the prejudices of their time, created an institution which over the years has acquired a rich collection of sources for Indian genealogical research. On the pages that follow, in the text and with the illustrations, we offer many examples of books, articles, censuses, government documents, manuscript records, and other resources of the historical society which will be useful to the genealogist. Many other sources are listed in two MHS publications: *Chippewa and Dakota Indians: A Subject Catalog of Books, Pamphlets, Periodical Articles, and Manuscripts* in the Minnesota Historical Society, published in 1969, and *Michael Brook's Reference Guide to Minnesota History*, published in 1974 and now in the process of being updated.

In addition, the reader should be aware of several important sources. Especially useful for the Indian genealogist are the society's manuscript collections. Among them are records resulting from the efforts of various agents of white culture, each of whom had important reasons to seek out and document Minnesota's Indian peoples.

In many ways the most useful, though not necessarily

<sup>2</sup>Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974).

<sup>3</sup>Edward A. Bromley, comp., *Minneapolis Portrait of the Past*, page entitled "Laughing Water, Solemn Sioux" (Reprint edition, Minneapolis, 1973). The book was first published in 1890.



PHOTOS such as this one of a "Dakota Duck Hunter," taken in 1858, are typical of many less-than-fully identified Indian pictures in the MHS audio-visual library. They are handsome, though often puzzling, records of Minnesota's first settlers.

the most complete, are the records of Minnesota's first wave of white settlers, the fur traders. In the papers and account books of such traders as Alexis Bailly, Henry H. Sibley, and their colleagues and employees, there is a wealth of material for the genealogist.<sup>4</sup>

Fur traders had their own prejudices about Indians, but we should not forget that, more than any other group of white settlers, they came closest to participating in the Indian community and accepting it for what it was. Many fur traders had important and extensive family ties with the Indians, a fact which allowed them to function more efficiently as traders and served them well later on as diplomatic intermediaries between the Indians and the United States government. Fur traders and their métis descendants became a part of the Indian communities with which they traded and remained so long after the days of the fur trade were over.

Evidence of the importance of Indian-fur trader family relationships is shown in John Wozniak's recent pathbreaking study, *Contact, Negotiation, and Conflict:*

*An Ethnohistory of the Eastern Dakota, 1819-1839, which, using many genealogical sources, showed the kinship ties between certain fur trade families (including the Campbells and the Faribaults) and families of Dakota chiefs during the period and the role these ties played in historical events.*<sup>5</sup> (For a review of the book, see page 301.)

It should also be pointed out that, given these close ties, many of the sources that are useful for doing research on individual Indians are also useful for studying fur traders. And research on fur traders is subject to many of the same problems and limitations as research on Indians.

Another major group of manuscript records are the papers of various pleasure seekers, military officers, artists, and scientists who visited the Minnesota country before statehood. These early white travelers often had many encounters with Minnesota's Indian and métis peoples. Because such encounters were often superficial, the travelers' identifications of individuals are often distorted, but the information they supply is often very useful. In the last ten years the MHS Press has published a number of these travelers' narratives, including those of Jonathan Carver, Stephen H. Long, Joseph N. Nicollet, and George W. Featherstonhaugh. Nicollet, in particular, had an ethnographer's interest in both the Dakota and Ojibway, and his journals are full of information on Indian culture and on individual Indians and métis.<sup>6</sup>

Even richer than the records of these travelers are the papers of early missionaries. Unlike visitors who usually stayed in the area for only a short time and thus had little opportunity to get to know the various Indian bands, missionaries usually lived for extended periods of time at particular missions, often baptizing both Indians and métis. Their papers are especially useful for establishing family relationships and tracing them through a number of years and activities. Many of the society's

<sup>4</sup>The historical society's collection of fur trade records is described in detail in Bruce M. White, *The Fur Trade in Minnesota. An Introductory Guide to Manuscript Sources* (St. Paul, 1977). The papers of Henry H. Sibley are available on microfilm, either on interlibrary loan or by purchase from the society.

<sup>5</sup>John Wozniak, *Contact, Negotiation, and Conflict: An Ethnohistory of the Eastern Dakota, 1819-1839* (Washington, D. C., 1978). Wozniak's genealogical charts are found on p. 109-129.

<sup>6</sup>John Parker, ed., *The Journals of Jonathan Carver and Related Documents, 1766-1770* (St. Paul, 1976). Lucile M. Kane, June D. Holmquist, and Carolyn Gilman, eds., *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long* (St. Paul, 1978). Martha Coleman Bray, ed., *The Journals of Joseph N. Nicollet* (St. Paul, 1970). Edmund C. Bray and Martha Coleman Bray, ed., *Joseph N. Nicollet on the Plains and Prairies* (St. Paul, 1976). George W. Featherstonhaugh, *A Canoe Voyage up the Minnaw Sotor* (Reprint edition, St. Paul, 1970). All of these books are still in print and are available from the society.

missionary records have been transcribed and indexed in "Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions," compiled by Grace Lee Nute.<sup>7</sup>

A final valuable group of manuscripts are the records of Indian agents and agencies involved in the various government efforts to control, civilize, or dispossess Minnesota Indians and place them on allotments. On microfilm the society owns many of the records of the Office (later Bureau) of Indian Affairs, beginning with the very first microfilm edition ever produced by the National Archives—the records of the OIA's Michigan superintendency (which in its early years included parts of Minnesota). These records contain very specific information in various annuity rolls, petitions, and letters on individual Indians.<sup>8</sup>

One recent acquisition of government Indian records by the society promises to have great importance for researchers on Ojibway in Minnesota and northern Wisconsin. In 1977 the MHS commissioned the National Archives to microfilm the archives' collection of Chippewa (Ojibway) Annuity Rolls dating from the 1850–90 period. A similar though smaller group of Sioux (Dakota) Annuity Rolls in the archives is expected to be microfilmed in the near future. These records, which are described in more detail in the article by Virginia Rogers below, will be valuable not only to genealogists but also to ethnographers and historians seeking to learn more about the composition and historical patterns in the structure of Indians bands and families. Furthermore, such listings will often be useful to students of the fur trade, since annuity rolls list traders receiving money for their métis children and for themselves as members of particular bands. Thus, by using such records, one can explore more fully the important Indian-trader relationships.

READERS who are interested in doing Indian and métis genealogical research should also know about two invaluable books issued by the MHS. In 1885 the society published one of the best sources on Ojibway oral history and tradition: William Whipple Warren's *History of the Ojibways*. It can provide the researcher with a useful historical background and also information on individual Indians which can be found in no other source.

The other important work is Newton H. Winchell's *Aborigines of Minnesota*, published by the MHS in 1911. Winchell, using many of the sources cited above, con-

structed a twenty-five-page listing of "Ojibwa Personal Names." Winchell made no effort to consolidate the various name entries spelled in different ways, since he admitted that this would have entailed a thorough knowledge of the Ojibway language. But the information it contains is duplicated in no other published source and the work certainly makes an excellent start. If Winchell's example is followed by such projects as that of Virginia Rogers, below, and if similar projects are begun on the Dakota, the work of genealogists, ethnographers, geographers, and historians will be made much easier. As their work is pursued, Minnesotans will begin to understand better the contribution of Minnesota's earliest settlers to the state.<sup>9</sup>

TRACING white family history can be a relatively routine procedure. Numerous books on genealogy, and most librarians, can tell the beginning genealogist how to go about it. Information on early settlers in a region is available from many standard sources, including county histories, published state historical collections, genealogies, newspapers, public records, church records, and censuses. Many of these sources have been put into print with good indexes.

However, if the genealogist tries to use the same sources and procedures in researching Ojibway Indians he will be sadly disappointed. Few of the major sources for whites contain the same wealth of information on Indians. Sources on Indians are so fragmentary and widely scattered that a tremendous amount of organized research is necessary to put together a complete record on any one person.

For this reason, I began in 1976 to compile a biographical file on Ojibway Indians. I had been working at the Minnesota Historical Society in the reference library and in the publications division on the newspaper microfilming project and the Minnesota Biographies project. I had fielded many questions from researchers looking for information on particular Ojibway Indians. The compilation of this file, then, began as a hobby and a natural outgrowth of my interest in genealogy and history. Later on I received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities which enabled me to increase the number of hours spent in research by allowing me to take time off from my job at the historical society.

A biographical file is basically a research tool listing the name of a person and a reference to information on that person. Many biographical dictionaries based on this principle exist for specific occupational or ethnic groups, but none, as far as I know, for Indians. (Newton H. Winchell's "Ojibwa Personal Names," in his *Aborigines of Minnesota*, is an exception.)

Every state has its history, usually written by one of its early settlers. These histories give information on the

<sup>7</sup>The Northwest Missions records are described in more detail in White, *Fur Trade in Minnesota*, 18.

<sup>8</sup>Many of the Office of Indian Affairs records are described in more detail in White, *Fur Trade in Minnesota*, 22–23.

<sup>9</sup>William W. Warren, *History of the Ojibways Based Upon Traditions and Oral Statements* (Minnesota Historical Collections, vol. 5, St. Paul, 1885); Newton H. Winchell, *The Aborigines of Minnesota: A Report* (St. Paul, 1911). The Warren book is available in a reprint edition.



ANGELINE, an Ojibway woman, is pictured at her maple sugar camp on the White Earth Indian Reservation in the early 1900s. The picture was given to the MHS by onetime Minnesota congressman Darwin S. Hall, who later served as chairman of the federal government's Chippewa Indian Commission.

first inhabitants of the region. If these first inhabitants were Indians, they are mentioned as a tribe or band, occasionally with the names of particular chiefs, but with very little on ordinary individuals and families.

The role of the Indians as individuals in the development of our country has not been adequately covered. There are many studies and histories of Indian tribes. Most of these speak broadly of the Indians without mentioning specific people. The lack of specific reference works and the scattered and often unpublished nature of the records on Indians deter historians who could, and should, fill the large gap in our history.

At the beginning of my research I was not sure that there was enough information available to put together anything like a complete file. Two years of work have proved that there is. Although much work remains to be done, there is no question that it is possible to assemble enough information to trace the history and ancestry of many Ojibway Indian families in the Midwest, some as

far back as 1600. The need for this information is real. Interest in Indian genealogy is increasing, and, as incomplete as my files are at the present time, I receive several requests a week for information on specific Ojibways.

FOR INDIANS in the latter half of the nineteenth century, including other tribes as well as Ojibway, the main sources of information are treaties, annuity rolls, allotment records, Indian censuses, and missionary records. As will be seen, sources for earlier Indians are more scattered.

The first treaty which listed Ojibway Indian signers was ratified in 1789, and the last in 1867. Treaties, to be found in such sources as Charles J. Kappler's *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties*, give the Indian names of the signers and sometimes the name's English translation. Some treaties list the age of the signer and his status in the tribe (such as chief, warrior, or brave). A few list, besides the signers, people who received land or financial settlements under the treaty.<sup>10</sup>

Census rolls of Indians living on reservations were made by the federal government beginning in the 1880s. For Minnesota, the state censuses of 1895 and 1905 and the general federal census of 1900 listed Indians living on reservations, although not always with the same amount of information given for whites. Earlier state censuses did include Indians and métis, but only sporadically and apparently only if they lived in white communities. Before the 1880s federal government enumeration rolls were made only for specific purposes, such as annuity payments. An annuity roll is simply a list of the people of a band who received an annual payment of merchandise and money under the provisions of an Indian treaty. Annuity rolls before the 1880s list only the names of adult heads of families and single people, but later rolls include the names of all members of a family receiving annuities, including his or her English name, if known, age, sex, degree of Indian blood, and relationship to the head of the family.<sup>11</sup>

Land allotment records are also available in the National Archives, in tribal superintendencies, or in federal record centers. These contain the name of the allottee receiving land on a certain reservation, age, sex, relation to heirs to the allottee, and place of allotment.

Since the records mentioned above are fairly easy to locate and use, I concentrated my efforts on collecting information about Ojibway born before 1850. I felt that anyone seeking information on a person born after 1850 should be able to find it, providing enough time and

<sup>10</sup> Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C., 1904).

<sup>11</sup> The National Archives has published a pamphlet describing its microfilm edition of Indian censuses (M595), entitled *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940* (Washington, D.C., 1973).



ONE VERY USEFUL SOURCE in the MHS division of archives and manuscripts is the collection of the papers of Ransom J. Powell, a Minneapolis lawyer from the 1890s until his retirement in 1932. At one point in his career Powell was appointed to a federal commission which had been instructed to determine the genealogy of 200 Indian families at White Earth. In Powell's papers are the results of these investigations, including testimony taken from Ojibway at White Earth and detailed genealogical charts of the Fairbank, Beaulieu, and Roy families, among others. Pictured here is Powell with three unidentified women who may have been some of his informants at White Earth.

effort are spent on the research. The job will be time-consuming, but the records are available.

For anyone researching métis before 1850, the problems are different. There are two sets of books which are invaluable. These are Cyprien Tanguay's multi-volume genealogical dictionary of Canadian families (*Dictionnaire genealogique des Familles Canadiennes*), and the two-volume *Genealogy of French-Canadian Families in the Detroit River Region*. These books supply the background of many people who married into Ojibway families. Many of the traders and early settlers who married Ojibway were already of mixed blood, their ancestors having married into other Indian tribes in the east. A number of the marriages and descendants of these marriages are given in these two sets of books.<sup>12</sup>

Since Indians did not keep written records as we know them, the only possibility of finding them before 1850 is through their contact with white people who did keep written records. In the case of the Ojibway, these record keepers were French, English, and American fur traders, missionaries, and explorers. Missionaries were

active early in the Indian country, keeping records of the marriages and baptisms they performed and writing journals and diaries of their activities. Fur traders and explorers were also in contact with the Indians and kept journals recording their business transactions and their impressions. In my work I have mainly concentrated on the records of the missionaries.

Parish or missionary registers from the early periods are very useful. One of the registers I have used in my research is the one from the mission of St. Ignace de Michilimackinac, which has been published in the *Collections* of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The first baptism listed in the register is for September 27, 1712. Numerous Indian names are given in the register as well as the names of fur traders and early settlers in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Another, at a somewhat later period, is the La Pointe, Wisconsin, register of the mission of St. Joseph, which begins in 1835 and contains the descendants of many of the families found in the Michilimackinac register.<sup>13</sup>

These registers usually give the name of the child baptized, date and place of birth, father's name, mother's name, and the names of the child's godparents. For marriages, the registers give the names of the contracting parties and their parents, places of residence, and witnesses.

By using only the two sets of volumes and the parish registers listed above, one can trace Minnesota mixed-blood families to the early 1600s in Canada.

It must be mentioned in connection with the parish registers that there may be many more that have not

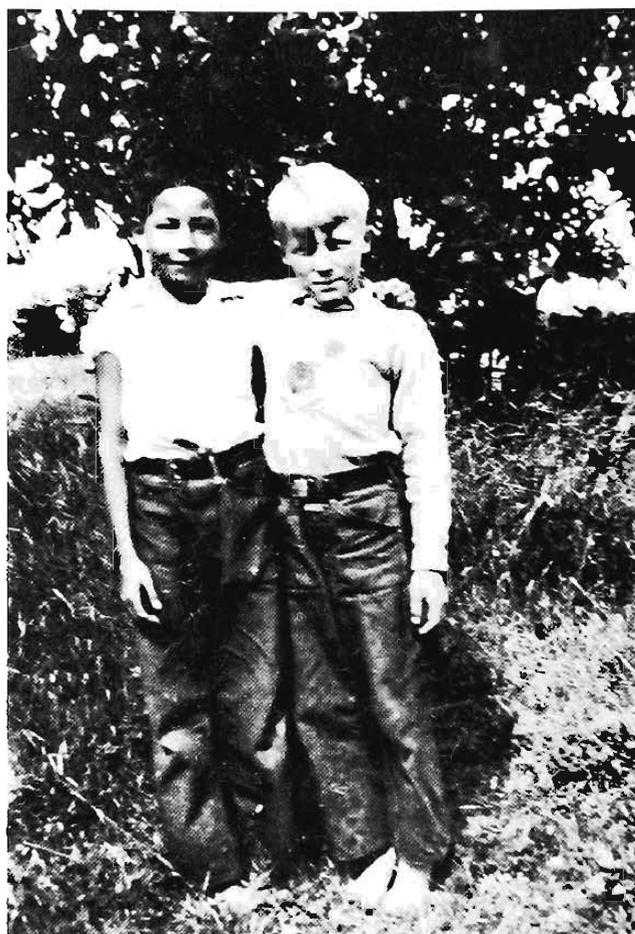
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<sup>12</sup>Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Genealogique des Familles Canadiennes depuis la Fondation de la Colonie jusqu'à nos Jours* (7 vols., reprint edition, 1978); Christian Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region, 1701-1911*, edited by Harold Frederic Powell (2 vols., Detroit, Mich., 1976).

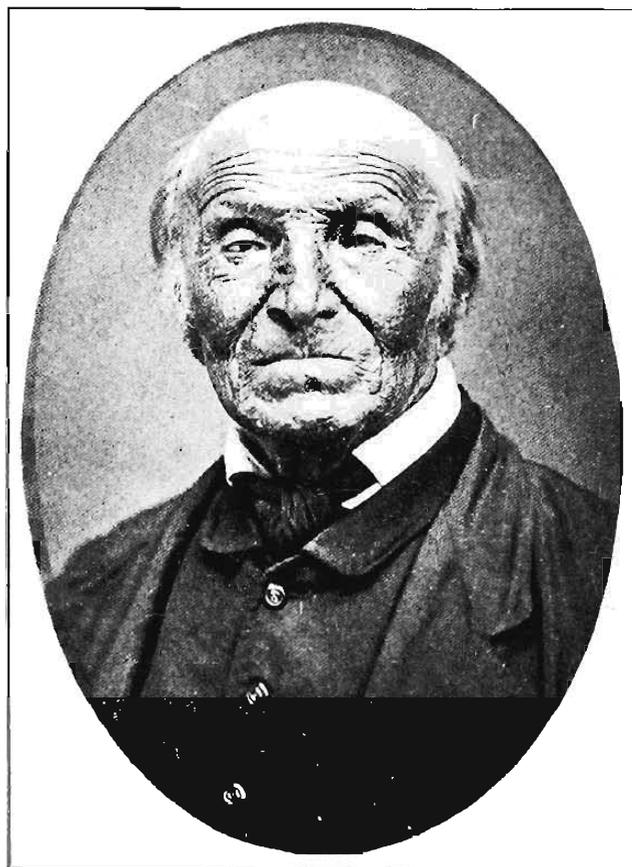
<sup>13</sup>"The Mackinac Register," in *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, 18:469-513, 19:1-162 (Madison, 1908, 1910). A microfilm copy of the Michilimackinac parish register and a photocopy of the La Pointe register are both in the MHS division of archives and manuscripts. Both are described in White, *Fur Trade*, 20.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS on these pages are from the MHS audio-visual library. References to sources for the information in the captions to these photographs, unless otherwise noted, may be found in the microfilm copy of Virginia Rogers' card file in the MHS reference library, Newton H. Winchell's *Aborigines of Minnesota*, and Bruce M. White's *The Fur Trade in Minnesota*, Appendix 2.

SHOWN at right are Franklin Fairbanks, left, and his friend Gordon Casper in a snapshot taken at Mille Lacs Indian Reservation in the early 1900s and given to the MHS by the estate of Harry D. Ayer, founder of the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. It is possible that Franklin Fairbanks is a descendant of John H. Fairbanks, a longtime American Fur Company trader in northern Minnesota. Fairbanks was born in Champlain, New York, on July 27, 1798, and died at White Earth on April 20, 1880. He was hired by the American Fur Company as a clerk in 1818 and worked for the company throughout the 1820s to 1840s. Soon after arriving in Minnesota he married Shagah-nash-e-quay (or Sa-ga-no-sho-qua), also known as Mary Sayer, who may have been the daughter of earlier Minnesota fur trader John Sayer. They had eleven children. The oldest daughter, Maria, born in 1821, married Paul H. Beaulieu, an American Fur Company trader of the period. The oldest son, Robert, born in 1825, married Catherine Beaulieu, Paul H. Beaulieu's sister. Robert's oldest child Margaret married John George Morrison, a son of Allan Morrison, who is mentioned elsewhere on these pages. There are numerous Fairbanks listed in later censuses of the White Earth Indian Reservation. See Lorenzo Sayles Fairbanks, *Genealogy of the Fairbanks Family in America, 1633-1897* (Boston, 1897.)



ALLAN MORRISON, pictured here late in life, was born in Terrebonne, Canada, on June 3, 1803, the son of Allan Morrison and Jane Wadin, daughter of Swiss fur trader Jean Etienne Wadin, who was killed in an altercation with Peter Pond at Lac La Ronge in Canada in the winter of 1781-82. Allan Morrison, Jr., arrived in Minnesota in 1822 as a clerk for the American Fur Company's Fond du Lac district, whose head trader was his older brother William Morrison. In 1825 Allan married Charlotte Louisa Chaboillez (Indian name Sha-bo-yay-quay) who was the daughter of Charles Chaboillez, a North West Company trader, by a Red Lake Indian woman named "Manitowidjewung." Sources indicate that Allan and Charlotte had at least twelve children born at various places in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin during the 1820s to 1840s. Many of them were baptized at the La Pointe, Wisconsin, Catholic mission. Morrison died at White Earth on November 28, 1877.





**NA-GA-NUB** (spelled in many ways), or *Foremost Sitter*, a chief of the Fond du Lac, Minnesota, band of Ojibway from the 1840s until the 1890s, is shown at left in a portrait taken by Joel E. Whitney of St. Paul in 1863. According to the printed caption on Whitney's picture, Na-ga-nub had recently gone with a group of Ojibway chiefs to Washington, D.C. On the way they encountered some Confederate prisoners in Chicago. Na-ga-nub scolded the group at length for their folly in fighting the Union. This is all that Whitney says about the chief. In fact Na-ga-nub's story is far more interesting than Whitney knew. According to a newspaper reporter who went to the La Pointe, Wisconsin, annuity payment in 1855, Na-ga-nub was what he called the "beau ideal of an Indian chief." He wore elegant American clothing, including white kid gloves, a suit of rich blue broadcloth, and a "neat blue cap." Na-ga-nub is quoted as saying that he had "been too long, too much Indian, [and] he was going to be more white man." Thirty-four years later, at hearings held to discuss the government's request that the Ojibway sign away their common land and take up allotments, Na-ga-nub, reportedly then in his nineties, said, "We think the time is past when we should take a hat and put it on our heads just to mimic the white man, to adopt his custom without being allowed any of the privileges that belong to him." Na-ga-nub's character as described in several sources makes it clear what qualities the Ojibway found important in a chief. He was a good orator, quick with apt, ironic retorts. He was also good at dealing with white government officials and is said to have always been strongly concerned with the welfare of his people. Na-ga-nub is said to have had four wives at least prior to 1855, but on his conversion to Catholicism early in the 1850s he married his favorite in a Catholic ceremony and divorced the other three. Two of Na-ga-nub's sons, "Sitawash" and "Mingogijigweb," both in their forties in 1889, took the names Antoine and Joseph Naganub, under which they are listed in the 1895 Minnesota census. At that date Joseph had a wife named Isabella and a son named Antoine.



**WAH-WE-YAY-CUMIG**, or *Round Earth*, a chief of the Mille Lacs band of Ojibway, is shown with members of his family in a picture taken on the White Earth Indian Reservation around 1910 by photographer A. F. Raymond. Wah-we-yay-cumig had in 1889 at the age of thirty-four signed the agreement with the U.S. government whereby the members of the Mille Lacs band gave up their land at Mille Lacs and took allotments at White Earth. The woman at center is his wife whom one source calls "Mandy Wah-we-yay-cumig" but who may be the woman listed in the 1905 Minnesota census of White Earth as "Nih wah zhe bik o quay." The woman and girl also shown here may be their daughter and granddaughter, whose names are not known.



*ONE OF MANY* of a mixed Indian-Black family living on the White Earth and Leech Lake Indian reservations. William Bonga, pictured above, was the son of noted American Fur Company trader and later government Indian agent in northern Minnesota, George Bonga. His grandfather, Pierre Bonga, was a trader in the same area for the North West Company as early as 1795. His great grandfather, Jean Bonga, was a slave brought to Michilimackinac by a British commandant of the post. William Bonga was born somewhere in northern Minnesota in May, 1853, and later lived on the White Earth Reservation. He was a farmer and served as an interpreter for the government in its dealings with the Ojibway. He is listed in the 1900 federal census of White Earth at the age of 46. He was married to an Indian woman named "Enimwayquay" and had three children named Mary, Simon, and Pauline.

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been found because they were removed from their place of origin. For instance, Bishop Mathias Loras visited St. Peter's (Mendota) in 1839, baptized several people, and took his records back with him to St. Raphael Cathedral in Dubuque, his home diocese. There were also periods when there were no missionaries in an area. During this time entire families traveled to centers such as Detroit, St. Louis, Prairie du Chien, and Canada, where baptisms or marriages were performed. Thus there may be records of families in these places, and much more research is needed to compile and correlate the information.<sup>14</sup>

The many volumes of published state historical collections (for the Ojibway, the collections of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and the similar volumes for Ontario, and Quebec) include much of the early history of the Indians in their areas. These collections include diaries and journals, frequently well-footnoted, and recollections of early settlers. They also contain much on the Indians as a whole, but I have found only one published genealogy on actual Indian families. This is a genealogy of some of the Saganing Ojibway of Michigan for the period 1760-1880. The introduction states that "the following genealogy is one of the most complete of any of the Indians anywhere in America." This "complete" genealogy contains a few hundred names only and very little information on the people themselves.<sup>15</sup>

IN COMPILING a biographical file, I recommend using a method I have found to be successful in working on my own family genealogy — a card file of three-by-five-inch index cards. For Indian genealogy, three separate card files are required. All are filed alphabetically and classified as follows: English names, Indian names, and translations of Indian names. Since working with Indian names involves some difficulties not found in ordinary genealogical research, I will go into the three types of files in more detail.

*English Names.* A card filed in the English name section should contain the surname of the person, his or her Indian name if known, any information found on that person, and the citation to the source of information.

*Indian Names.* The cards filed under the Indian name should have the same information for each person as the first file. If, however, the Indian also has an English name, the card should refer to the English name card which would carry all the information found. This is done because of the wide variation in the spelling of the Indian name, and the relative stability in the spelling of the English translation.

*English Translations of Indian Names.* Because of the many variations in spelling and the difficulty of identifying a person by his or her Indian name, I consider the cross reference filing provided in this third file the most important tool in compiling any Indian genealogy. When information is found on a person under a name that is obviously a translation of the Indian name (White Feather, Morning Star, and so on), a card is put in this third file listing all Indian names found with that translation. These variations in the spelling of Indian names are

<sup>14</sup> A transcript of the St. Raphael Cathedral register, containing a record of baptisms performed at Mendota, is in the MHS division of archives and manuscripts.

<sup>15</sup> Calvin Ennes, "The Great Heritage of the Saganing Indians: A 200 Year Genealogy of the Arenac County Ojibwas," in *Michigan Heritage*, 9:1-12 (Autumn, 1967).

a special problem. An Indian name written down by an English- or French-speaking person was written phonetically, as it sounded to that person. I have found a name spelled as many as fifteen different ways. Therefore, a card file listing the English translation of the Indian name can lead to information on that person under many different spellings. Theoretically, each Indian name encountered could be translated into English, thereby identifying names that might not be recognized. When dealing with French or English names, variations are found, but as a rule they are more easily recognized. (Stevens, Stephens, Stephen, Cotté, Cote, Cotay, and so on).

There are many fascinating derivations and variations in names. For instance, the French name Comptois, also spelled Contois and Countoise, seems to have been allied in some families with the family nickname Michaud (Comptois dit Michaud). The last part of this name became O-mis-shoes in Ojibway and later descendants in Wisconsin used the name Michaud and Countway.

Once enough information has been compiled, there are many uses for a biographical file. The file could be placed in a historical society or library so that the information it contains would be available to researchers. (My preliminary card file has been microfilmed and is available in the MHS reference library.) An actual family genealogy could be compiled from the cards and published. A biographical dictionary or finding guide could also be compiled from the cards giving names of people and where to find the information on them. A dictionary of Indian names with their translations and variations of the spelling could be compiled. This would be an invaluable tool for anyone researching Indians.

At the present time my card file is comprehensive enough (about 20,000 cards containing information on some 15,000 different people) to enable me to find references to most mixed-blood and Indian families in Minnesota. For instance, if a person is looking for information on a great-grandfather who married an Ojibway, the chances are good that I would have a reference to the

## Variations in Ojibway Names

*THERE ARE many variations in the ways in which the names of particular Indians were recorded phonetically by whites. It is therefore useful when doing Indian genealogical research to have an understanding of Indian languages and a knowledge of possible mistakes in the written records. Warren K. Moorhead, who was employed by the government to investigate problems at White Earth Reservation in Minnesota, notes in his book The American Indian in the United States (Andover, Mass., 1914) that some mistakes crept into government records of Indians at White Earth because of ignorance of the Ojibway language. Government records in 1909, for example, listed a number of Indian women named "E-quay-zince" (meaning young woman or girl) and "Min-de-moi-yen" (old woman, or lady). An examination of the 1895 Minnesota state census of White Earth also indicates a number of women of all ages with these names, including a four-year-old girl named "Minde Moyien" and a thirty-five-year-old woman named "Equay Zaince." It is not clear whether these examples represent mistakes on the part of the census takers, real though possibly incomplete examples of Indian names, or, perhaps, Ojibway humor at the expense of government agents. It is also possible that these are examples of the tendency among the Ojibway, as de-*

*scribed by Joseph N. Nicollet, to "never pronounce the name of a person in his own presence." Says Nicollet: "Calling a person by his or her name is disrespectful, it is what we call bad manners, sheer rudeness. When they are with white people on the occasion of a council nothing can cause more embarrassment than for the interpreter to find himself reduced to calling a name in order to make plainly understood the statements he is asked to translate." According to both Nicollet and Frances Densmore, in her book Chippewa Customs, first published in 1925 but recently reprinted by the Minnesota Historical Society, there were several different kinds of Ojibway personal names, such as names given ceremonially by a child's parents or by someone with a certain spiritual power. These names may have been an Ojibway's "real" name, but because of the taboo mentioned above, an individual was usually known throughout his life by a nickname acquired early in life as the result of a circumstance or some personal characteristic. Densmore mentions a woman who was known as "Gasigens" (Little Cat) because as a child "she scratched savagely." A child who took a long time in teething became known as "Without Teeth" and carried the name "to an advanced age." — Ed.*

great-grandfather and probably his wife's name. The chances are not good that I would have any background on the wife at this time. More research is needed into the full-blood Indians.

After collecting information for two years I feel that I have only begun. I have run across references to records that I have so far been unable to locate. Putting together the genealogy of a large group such as the Ojibway is a bit like reconstructing a large mosaic that has been scattered over an archaeological dig. Instead of shards you are working with bits of information, which eventually fit

together into a fascinating picture. In the case of the Ojibway, what is emerging is more than just data. It is the untold story of the upper Midwest, of the mixing and blending of two cultures under frontier conditions. The story is all there in the records of marriages and births from Montreal to St. Louis and in the accounts and journals of the early explorers, traders, and settlers. It will be a long time before historians and scholars have filled in the whole picture, but the outline is beginning to take shape in the biographical file.

# Clement Haupers

## CONVERSATIONS ON SIX DECADES OF PAINTING IN MINNESOTA

Edited by Nicholas Westbrook

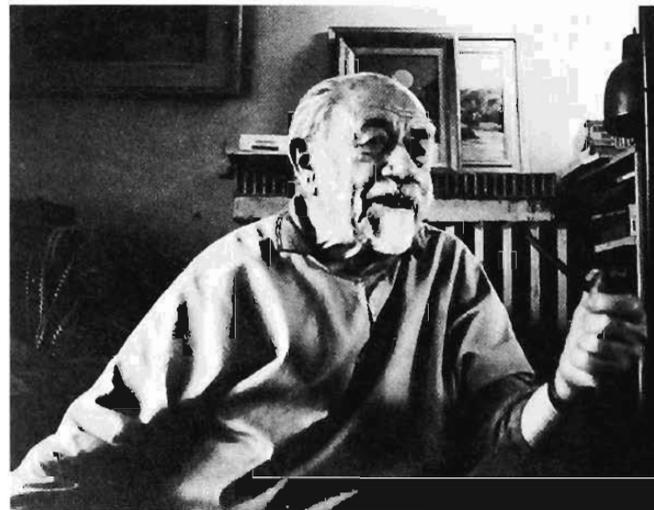
*AS AN ARTIST, teacher, and pioneering arts administrator, Clement Haupers has been a central figure in the history of art in Minnesota during the twentieth century. With the generous support of the General Service Foundation of St. Paul, the Minnesota Historical Society has organized a biographical exhibition reviewing six decades of Haupers' art. His paintings, prints, and etchings are seen in the personal and cultural contexts of their creation. Accompanying the exhibit is an illustrated catalog by guest curator Jane H. Hancock. The exhibit is being shown in the museum galleries at 690 Cedar Street from September 20, 1979, until February 14, 1980.*

*While an exhibition is being planned, new materials are frequently drawn into the society's collections. The Haupers' exhibit has proved to be no exception. The variety of materials assembled will be a significant resource for future students of Minnesota's twentieth-century art history. In addition to several works of art, the society has been fortunate to acquire photographs, scrapbooks, and personal papers from the artist. MHS staff photographer Elizabeth Hall has documented the artist's studio of forty years. And preserving an essential aspect of this vigorous and outspoken raconteur are hours of oral history tapes. These interviews have been conducted during the past five years by literary historian Lloyd Hackl; by George Reid, Nina Archabal, and Mary Harvey, working with the University Gallery; and by Jane Hancock and*

*Nicholas Westbrook, working with the society. The tapes and transcripts are held in the society's audio-visual library. Some of the extracts below appear through the courtesy of the University Gallery.*

*Haupers is a determined man — "mulish," he describes himself. His very determination to be an artist and to earn a living at it makes the study of his career paths a particularly illuminating key to understanding the evolution of art and its supporting institutions in Minnesota during this century. Our state's present na-*

*HAUPERS, in early 1979, in a photo by Elizabeth Hall*



*Mr. Westbrook is curator of exhibits in the Minnesota Historical Society's education division.*



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