

THE STATE HISTORICAL CONVENTION AT REDWOOD FALLS

On June 21, 1923, an expedition of Minnesotans interested in the history of the state set forth from Fort Snelling and Minneapolis on a tour up the picturesque valley of the Minnesota River. These modern explorers traveled, not in canoes or on horseback — as did Major Stephen H. Long of the United States Army and his followers who one hundred years ago left Fort Snelling on an exploratory journey through the same region — but in powerful motor cars over excellent roads. Whereas Major Long passed through a wilderness, the expedition of 1923 sped through a populous and cultivated region everywhere marked by the transforming hand of the white man's civilization. The destination of this comfortable exploring party was Redwood Falls, where on Friday and Saturday, June 22 and 23, there was held, upon the invitation of the Redwood Falls Commercial Club, the second state historical convention under the auspices of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Two committees were active in making preparations for the meeting. A general committee of the society was appointed to plan for the convention, with Mr. Frederick G. Ingersoll of St. Paul, second vice president of the society, as chairman, and Mr. Theodore C. Blegen, the assistant superintendent, as secretary. The other members of this committee were Mrs. Marshall H. Coolidge, Dr. Guy Stanton Ford, and Mr. N. N. Rønning, of Minneapolis; Miss Mary V. Carney, Mrs. Charles E. Furness, Mr. Gideon S. Ives, and Mr. James M. McConnell, of St. Paul; Mr. Julius H. Barnes, Mr. William E. Culkan, and Mr. William A. McGonagle, of Duluth; Mr. Elmer E. Adams of Fergus Falls; Mr. Herbert A. Baldwin, Dr. William A. Brand, and Mr. Hiram M. Hitchcock, of Redwood Falls; Mr. Thomas Hughes and Judge Lorin Cray

of Mankato; Mr. Fred S. Bell of Winona; Dr. Donald J. Cowling of Northfield; Dr. Oliver M. Dickerson of Moorhead; Mrs. Michael J. Dowling of Olivia; Mr. Burt W. Eaton of Rochester; Mr. Herbert C. Hotaling of Mapleton; Mr. Constant Larson of Alexandria; Mr. Victor E. Lawson of Willmar; Mr. Olai E. Lende of Canby; Mr. William B. Mitchell of St. Cloud; Mr. John J. Mooney of Granite Falls; Mr. J. Anton Ochs of New Ulm; Dr. Conrad Peterson of St. Peter; and Mr. Nathaniel F. Soderberg of Madison. Local arrangements at Redwood Falls were in charge of a committee of which Dr. Brand was chairman, and Mrs. Grace Philbrick, secretary; the other members being Mr. H. M. Aune, Mr. W. S. Brammer, Mrs. C. P. Collins, Mrs. M. A. Ebright, Dr. T. E. Flinn, Mr. Hitchcock, Mrs. H. O. Johnson, Judge A. R. A. Loudon, Mr. A. D. McRae, Mrs. Margaret McRae, and Mrs. Bess M. Wilson.

The arrangements for the tour preceding the convention were made in coöperation with the Sioux Historic Trail Association. The latter organization planned a centenary tour of the old Sioux trail from Fort Snelling to Brown's Valley, where an historical pageant was given on June 23 and 24, and agreed to make a joint tour with the Minnesota Historical Society to Redwood Falls. On the joint committee of the two organizations were Mr. Hitchcock, Miss Grace Kaercher of Ortonville, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Frank Hopkins of Fairfax, Mr. Samuel Y. Gordon of St. Paul, and Mr. Blegen.

The tour began at 8:00 A. M., Thursday, June 21, some cars starting from Fort Snelling and others, including a chartered motor bus which accommodated fifteen passengers, from Minneapolis. All the cars, carrying approximately sixty persons, assembled a short distance from Shakopee and were met by a welcoming delegation from that city. Each member of the party was presented with a copy of an interesting broadside entitled *Shakopee and a Bit of its History*, printed for the occasion by Mr. William F. Duffy, editor of the *Shakopee Argus*. This sheet contained pictures of Thomas A. Holmes,

the "father of Shakopee"; "Chief Shah-kpa-dan," after whom the city was named; the Reverend Samuel W. Pond, the Indian missionary; the first house in Shakopee, which was built by Oliver Faribault; and the Faribault Springs. The visitors were piloted to the Faribault house and springs and stopped for a brief inspection of these picturesque and historically interesting landmarks. As they left Shakopee they were met by the mayor of Jordan, who accompanied them to Jordan and Belle Plaine. A short stop was made at Le Sueur Center, where several places of historic interest were pointed out in an informal talk by Mr. Ora J. Parker.

A large number of people from St. Peter met the tourists at the Traverse des Sioux State Park, where "cold lemonade and a warm welcome," as a newspaper aptly put it, were provided through the courtesy of the St. Peter Association. A short speech of welcome was delivered by Judge Henry Moll of St. Peter and an historical address was given by the Honorable Henry N. Benson, a former state senator. Mr. Benson discussed the circumstances which led to the signing of the famous Indian treaty at Traverse des Sioux on July 23, 1851, and ascribed great significance to that transaction in connection with the advance of white settlement in Minnesota. At the conclusion of this address the visitors were escorted through the city of St. Peter, passing the former homes of seven Minnesota governors.

The visit to Mankato, which was reached shortly after noon, was made memorable by a complimentary luncheon served by the Mankato Society at Sibley Park, a beautiful and restful spot on the outskirts of the city. With Mr. George M. Palmer of Mankato acting as toastmaster, a short program followed, the first speaker being Judge Cray, who chose as his subject the hanging of the thirty-eight condemned Indian prisoners at Mankato on December 26, 1862. As a soldier on guard duty Judge Cray was an eyewitness of the tragic event of 1862, and he was able, therefore, to describe with vivid exactness the circumstances attending it. Mr. Thomas

Hughes then spoke briefly on the attitude of the Mankato community toward the Sioux Indians after 1862, pointing out that, sternly as the Indians were dealt with during the Sioux War, they were given every opportunity later to receive the benefits of the white man's civilization and that many of their descendants have won distinction as loyal and able citizens. Dr. Solon J. Buck, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society, then expressed on behalf of the visitors thanks for the enjoyable luncheon and the cordial reception given by the people of Mankato. He commented particularly upon the large amount of local historical interest which was evidenced by the people of the Minnesota Valley with whom the visitors had come in contact.

When the tourists reached New Ulm, at 4:00 P. M., they were met by the Pioneer Brass Band of that city. This organization headed a parade along the principal avenue, past the imposing monument to the defenders of New Ulm during the Sioux War, and up to Turner Hall Park, where the Junior Pioneers and other citizens awaited the visitors. Cooling refreshments were then served and an informal program, originally planned for the park, was held in the convention hall of the Turner Society building. The president of the local commercial club, Mr. T. O. Streissguth, introduced the mayor, Dr. Louis A. Fritsche, who extended a hearty welcome on behalf of the citizens of New Ulm. The city, he explained, was named after the ancient German city of Ulm, the native city of many of the German immigrants who in 1854 laid the foundations of New Ulm. The old German city was designated by the Romans as "Ultra Limitas Militares." The first letters of the Latin words were appropriate, said Dr. Fritsche, not only as applied to the old-world city but also for the city established by German pioneers on the frontier in Minnesota at the limit of military occupation. Responding on behalf of the tourists, Dean Ford of the University of Minnesota thanked the people of New Ulm for their generous welcome and pointed out the desirability of

keeping alive in our memories the deeds and qualities of the pioneers who laid the foundations for a fairer civilization. Dr. Ford suggested that one method of honoring the pioneers was to emulate their spirit as applied to the problems of the present age.

The party then started for the site of Fort Ridgely, the United States military post which was besieged during the Indian war of 1862. Situated on a bluff commanding the valley of the Minnesota River, the site — which since 1911 has been a state park — is one of the most interesting spots in Minnesota. A supper graciously provided by the people of the neighboring city of Fairfax was served at Fort Ridgely to the travelers. A brief talk was then made by Senator Benson, who had accompanied the party from Traverse des Sioux. Mr. Frank Hopkins of Fairfax then addressed the group on the subject of the Sioux War, dealing particularly with the genesis of the outbreak and also describing the most notable events of the war which centered about Fort Ridgely. Every member of the touring party was given a copy of a folder published in 1922 in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Indian wars, which contains a valuable statement of "Historic Facts Relating to Indian Outbreak of 1862" compiled by Mr. August Hummel with the assistance of Mr. Hugo Roos and Mr. Richard Pfefferle.

After the conclusion of this program the party set out on the last stage of the tour and arrived at Redwood Falls at about 9:00 P. M., where the good will of the community found expression in music by an excellent brass band. The local committee on arrangements, with headquarters at the commercial club, assigned the seventy or more visitors, as they arrived and registered, to various homes throughout the city. Thus the interesting tour, which had been made doubly enjoyable by the generous hospitality of the people throughout the entire valley from Fort Snelling to Redwood Falls, came to a pleasant close.

The sessions of the convention were held at the Redwood Falls Armory. The registration was 162, but it is estimated that at least 100 local people attended one or more of the sessions without registering. Of those who registered 48 were members of the society and 114 were nonmembers; 35 were from Redwood Falls, 33 from Minneapolis, 17 from St. Paul, and the other 77 represented 25 different places. But the popular interest in the tour and in the convention was much more widespread than the attendance indicates. For example, a Minneapolis newspaper sent a special correspondent to the convention whose daily dispatches, appearing on the first page of his newspaper, carried the story of the historical excursion into thousands of homes. It should be added that the traveling exhibit of the Minnesota Historical Society was set up at the armory and attracted considerable attention.

The opening session, which began at 10:00 A. M., on Friday, June 23, was presided over by Dr. Ford. The address of welcome was delivered by Dr. Brand, chairman of the local committee on arrangements, who called attention to the importance and value of history and particularly stressed the significance of the study of history as affording a rational basis for understanding the manifold problems of the present day. Great names occur on the pages of Minnesota history, but in honoring the builders and trail-blazers of the past people must not make of the writing and study of history a form of ancestor worship. The spirit of impartiality and of unswerving truth, he said, must ever motivate the true historian.

In responding to this address Dr. Ford commented on the general enthusiasm for Minnesota history which the people of the Minnesota Valley had shown and pointed out that the intelligent interest of the people as a whole is of the utmost importance for the success of the state historical society's work. This increasing popular interest in history is in part explained by the expanding scope of the historian's work. Wars and public affairs have indeed played important rôles in the past, but, said Dr. Ford, no student may neglect the many

aspects of ordinary life and development, for they are of first importance in helping one to understand the complexities of present-day civilization. An historical convention, by focusing popular interest upon the history of the state, by bringing together students of that history and its problems, and by permitting the reading of papers on various phases of local and state history, gives an impetus generally to historical work and therefore is of great value to the state.

The first paper on the program was presented by Dr. Lester Burrell Shippee of the University of Minnesota, who took as his subject "The Fisk Expeditions to the Gold Country." Dr. Shippee called attention to four expeditions from Minnesota to the present region of Montana which were undertaken during the sixties under the leadership of Captain James L. Fisk. Gold-hunters were eager to go to the newly discovered diggings in the West, and Congress, faced by the economic problems of war and anxious to stimulate the production of gold, agreed to furnish military escorts for the emigrant trains. Captain Fisk, who came to Minnesota in 1850, was instructed by the government to guide northwest emigrant trains in 1862, 1863, and 1864, to the diggings. The speaker pointed out that the Fisk expeditions doubtless are replicas of hundreds of trips made to the West during the period before the railroads penetrated the region and thus they are interesting as types. Many details of the first three expeditions, he said, may be gleaned from the journal kept by the physician of the expeditions, Dr. William D. Dibb, a copy of which is owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

The first expedition, which crossed the Wild Rice River four miles west of Fort Abercrombie on July 8, 1862, on its way to Fort Benton, was made up of about eighty emigrants and an armed escort of fifty men. The train was of considerable size, for there were 168 oxen, 8 mules, 27 horses, and 17 cows. Some of the emigrants had started from St. Paul or St. Cloud, but at least thirty teams were waiting at Fort Abercrombie when Fisk arrived there. Ignorant of the menace

of an impending Sioux Outbreak, the expedition set forth on what proved to be an uneventful journey. After guiding the train safely to Fort Benton Fisk pushed on to Walla Walla, Portland, and San Francisco, and returned to St. Paul by way of Panama and New York.

At the conclusion of the expedition of 1863 Fisk sold his equipment at Bannock City and Virginia and returned by way of a weekly "express" to Salt Lake, where a connection was made with Ben Holladay's Overland Stage Line. The rendezvous for 1864, said Dr. Shippee, was Minneapolis and the real starting point Fort Ridgely, Fisk's plan being to follow as nearly as possible the forty-fifth parallel and to pass through the Black Hills. Because of Indian difficulties the expedition got no farther than Fort Rice, a point some distance south of the site of the present city of Bismarck, North Dakota, and on October 21 Dr. Dibb made the following entry in his diary: "Members of the party begin to make their final preparations, some to remain, some to return by river, some with the 8th Iowa and Brackett's batallion by land. I go down the river in the flatboat with the 30th Wisconsin, as far as Sioux City, then cross over to Mankato by team, and home by stage." ¹

An attempt to organize an expedition in 1865 failed, but in 1866 a private expedition under the leadership of Captain Fisk was undertaken. The emigrants of 1866, unlike those of the previous years, said Dr. Shippee, were not gold-seekers or home-seekers, but men interested in the mining country as a field for commercial enterprise. As an illustration the speaker cited the case of two brothers who took five hundred sacks of flour with them to be sold in Helena.

Captain Fred A. Bill of St. Paul then presented a paper entitled "Navigation on the Red River of the North, 1858-1879." The speaker began with a somewhat detailed résumé of the history of transportation on Minnesota's north-

¹ For an explanation of the story of a lost "mountain of gold," to which the speaker referred, see *ante*, p. 225.

ernmost navigable stream. In making this survey Captain Bill harked back to the days of Lord Selkirk's Red River settlement — to the winter of 1819-20, when a little group of Canadian pioneers from Lower Fort Garry inaugurated traffic on the Red River. They made the long journey up the Red River and down the Minnesota and Mississippi to Prairie du Chien to purchase seed grain, and returned with their cargo over the same route in the spring.

Steamboat traffic on the Red River was not thought of seriously, said the speaker, until 1857, when Captain Russell Blakeley "made a tour of investigation of the river and returned with a report that steam navigation for several months in the year was practicable. The [*St. Paul*] Chamber of Commerce immediately offered a bonus of \$1,000 to any one who would put a boat on Red River ready for operation the following spring." Anson Northup agreed to do this if the sum were doubled, and his offer was accepted. In the dead of a severe winter he transported timber, machinery, men, and supplies to the banks of the river and within six weeks the boat, which was named the "Anson Northup," was completed. On May 17, 1858, the first steamboat on the Red River left Fort Abercrombie and on June 5 it arrived with a cargo at Fort Garry. The "Anson Northup" was used again in 1859 and 1860.

Captain Bill then went on to narrate the histories of other early steamboats on the Red River. Such important names in Minnesota history as those of Norman W. Kittson and James J. Hill figured prominently in his tale. Although the boats were a factor in transporting settlers to various parts of the Red River Valley, they were used for the most part in carrying freight to Winnipeg. Captain Bill explained that during the early years freight was hauled from St. Paul to various points on the river by team, but in the seventies the railroad replaced this primitive means of transportation. Finally in "1879 the Canadian Pacific completed its line between Winnipeg and St. Vincent and the death knell of steamboating

on Red River was rung." At this point the speaker appropriately presented a "List of Steamers on the Red River" and a partial roster of the captains, clerks, mates, pilots, engineers, and stewards who operated these boats.

The second portion of Captain Bill's paper was devoted to his personal observations of the Red River. His "first job away from home" and the Mississippi was that of clerk on the "Dakota" in 1872. The boat was new, the river was extremely low, and fuel was scarce; consequently, the maiden trip of the "Dakota," from Breckenridge to Moorhead, occupied eight days, a journey now easily covered by train in one and a half hours. Traveling at such a rate naturally gave time for minute observation of the settlements along the bank, and Captain Bill evidently did not allow the opportunity to pass, for he pictured in detail the tiny towns and stations, some of which are today mere names, which he saw on his first trip and later on more extensive journeys. McCauleyville, Ole Thompson's stage station, Holy Cross Post Office, Moorhead, Fargo, Georgetown, Frog Point, Grand Forks, Turtle River, Pembina on the international boundary, the Canadian parishes of St. Norbert, St. Vital, and St. Boniface, and finally Fort Garry and Winnipeg are among the pioneer communities described. Captain Bill told also of an "exploring expedition" up the Red Lake River from Grand Forks to the "then un-named place now the thriving city of Crookston," which was undertaken by the "Dakota" in September, 1872. The railroad had just been extended to the latter point and the speaker stated that his boat soon was "doing commercial business on that stream instead of using Red river above Grand Forks."

The last section of Captain Bill's paper was devoted to "Some Personal Recollections." These included stories of the speaker's experiences with customs officials, an account of the "Second Agricultural Exhibition of Manitoba" at Winnipeg, and a number of incidents illustrative of the "crookedness" of the Red and the Red Lake rivers. Fort

Garry was the northern destination of the "Dakota" and most of her cargo was bound for the warehouses of the Hudson's Bay Company at that place. After the season of 1872 Captain Bill left the Red River and he did not revisit its towns and cities again for thirty-eight years. He presented an interesting contrast between the "Canadian Chicago" of 1872 and that of 1910. The speaker concluded his narrative with an account of the "last boat to cross the international boundary" on the Red River — the "Grand Forks," which left the city of that name on June 6, 1909, arrived at Winnipeg the following evening, and three days later brought back the "prominent citizens and business men of Grand Forks" who had gone on the excursion.

After the morning session about 150 persons attended an informal luncheon which was served in the dining hall of the Church of St. Catharine. This luncheon was followed by a discussion of plans for the organization of a Redwood County Historical Society. The toastmaster, Mr. Baldwin of Redwood Falls, first introduced Dr. Buck, who pointed out the contrast between the eastern states, where the study of local history is cultivated intensively, and western states, such as Minnesota, where there has been as yet comparatively little organization of local history activity. The speaker asserted, however, that a new day is dawning in the West, and that Minnesotans in particular are becoming conscious of the fact that it is profoundly important for them to understand the past of their own local communities. They realize, moreover, he said, that if they are to care for their local historical interests in an adequate manner, they must organize. Attention was directed by the speaker to the recent organization of the St. Louis County Historical Society and the nature of its affiliation with the Minnesota Historical Society. In Dr. Buck's opinion a close connection between the local and central organizations would prove of great mutual benefit. That the chances for developing local history activity are excellent is indicated, he said, by the recent act of the legislature authorizing one

county to appropriate money for the support of a county historical society.² Dr. Buck closed his remarks by reading parts of a proposed constitution for a county historical society.³

The Redwood County agricultural agent, Mr. Lynn Sheldon, who spoke next, declared that the county farm bureau was greatly interested in the matter of organizing local history activity and that its members would welcome the draft of a constitution which the preceding speaker had presented. Among the farmers, said Mr. Sheldon, there is much interest in historic places and in the preservation of historic objects. A local museum, he indicated, would be appreciated by many farmers who had valuable historical objects in their possession. Mr. Sheldon closed by advocating a broader conception of history which will give a place of importance, for example, to the story of agricultural implements and their relation to the general history of the region.

Mrs. Dowling was then introduced and spoke briefly on the heritage of the pioneers and the value to be derived from studying the remains and documents which throw light upon their struggles and their hardships. In Mrs. Dowling's opinion branches of the Minnesota Historical Society should be organized in the counties and should coöperate actively in assembling the records of Minnesota's past. Mrs. Wilson, the editor of the *Redwood Gazette*, then voiced the welcome of the community to the visitors and heartily indorsed the idea of a Redwood County historical society.

Congressman Frank Clague of Redwood Falls, the last speaker at the conference, spoke of the enthusiasm and careful planning which resulted in the erection of the Minnesota Historical Building, and emphasized especially the importance both for the local community and for the state of gathering up historical materials for permanent preservation, pointing out that unique papers are easily lost and, once destroyed, can

² See *ante*, p. 158.

³ The draft of this constitution is printed *ante*, 4: 252-256.

never be replaced. The chairman, Mr. Baldwin, was then authorized by vote of the conference to appoint a committee to take under advisement the question of organization of history activity in Redwood County.

After the luncheon conference, the delegates returned to the armory for the afternoon session, which began at 2:30 P. M. Mrs. Dowling presided at this session and first introduced Mr. Franklin F. Holbrook, secretary of the Minnesota War Records Commission, who read a paper on "Minnesota's Contribution to the Spanish-American War." The outbreak of the Spanish War, which occurred twenty-five years ago in April, found Minnesota prepared to do her share, said Mr. Holbrook. The national guard had been recruited to war strength and volunteer companies had been organized in cities and towns throughout the state. In response to the president's call for volunteers the three infantry regiments of the Minnesota National Guard, soon to be known as the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Minnesota volunteer infantries, assembled at Camp Ramsey for examination, training, and muster. So promptly were these regiments mobilized that Minnesota achieved the distinction of being the first state in the Union to have its full quota of regiments under the first call mustered into the volunteer army. Later, in midsummer, a fourth regiment was organized and mustered in under the president's second call as the Fifteenth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry.

The speaker said that the history of three of the Minnesota regiments is a story of long weeks and months spent in various camps in the United States — of drills, parades, inspections, and sham battles; of the ravages of disease; of bouts with boredom; and of vain longing for active service at the front. The more fortunate Thirteenth won distinction in the Philippines at the battle of Manila and in the first campaigns against the insurgent Filipinos. A very considerable number of Minnesotans, the speaker stated, served in various outside organizations; in fact, whereas 5,300 served in the state's own

regiments, it appears that Minnesota furnished a total of approximately 8,500 men during the war and the insurrection, and of these 266 lost their lives in the service.

The people at home also contributed to the successful prosecution of the war, according to Mr. Holbrook. The payment of numerous special war taxes of course was not a matter of choice with the individual, but it was usually made without complaint. Large numbers of citizens undoubtedly subscribed to the so-called "popular loan," floated by the government in the summer of 1898. More conspicuously, the people of the state contributed to the welfare of their fighting men through such welfare organizations as the Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A.

Mr. Holbrook concluded by discussing the work of two Minnesotans who figured prominently in the diplomacy of the period. When it was still a question whether there should be war or peace with Spain, Cushman K. Davis, senior senator from Minnesota and chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, led the war party in Congress, and Archbishop Ireland, as an emissary of the Pope, labored at Washington in the interest of peace. When the war ended, Senator Davis was appointed one of the commissioners to negotiate the peace, and as such he was largely instrumental in securing the Philippines from Spain. Mr. Holbrook's paper was based upon his newly published *Minnesota in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection*, which was reviewed in the last number of the BULLETIN.

The second paper, by Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock, Jr., curator of the Minnesota Historical Society's museum, dealt with an important phase of early Minnesota history, "Lawrence Taliaferro and Indian Affairs at the St. Peter's Agency, 1820-1840." This paper was based upon a careful study of the valuable Taliaferro Papers in the manuscript division of the historical society, supplemented by other contemporary records. The speaker began by pointing out that the acquisition of Louisiana in 1803 and the War of 1812 brought for-

ward the problem of American military control of the Northwest with its savage Indians and scarcely less unruly fur-traders. This difficult problem the government attempted to solve by the establishment of Fort St. Anthony, later called Fort Snelling, in the fall of 1819 and by the appointment of Lawrence Taliaferro of Virginia to the newly created Indian agency for the upper Mississippi tribes at the mouth of the St. Peter's or Minnesota River.

Mr. Babcock said that Taliaferro's work for the next twenty years — he was reappointed for his sixth successive term in the spring of 1839 — presents two main aspects: that relating to the handling of intertribal relations and the maintenance of peace, and that concerning the relations between the Indians and the whites, both governmental and private. The laws regulating the relations between the Indians and the whites were strict and the agent had his hands full in forcing the traders to obey them. Even Colonel Leavenworth, who was in command of the Fifth United States Infantry at Camp Coldwater in the summer of 1820, had to be warned against the distribution of whisky, which "entails misery upon the Indians, and endangers their lives as well as those of their own people." There were lumbermen, said the speaker, who were too anxious to cut the timber in the virgin forests of the St. Croix Valley to wait until these lands were opened up by treaty, and fur-traders who used smuggled whisky as a means of driving good bargains with the natives. On several occasions, said Mr. Babcock, the troops at Fort Snelling had to be ordered out to drive these lawbreakers from the Indian country.

The treaties of 1837 created new problems for the agent, for the whites swarmed into the newly opened country and there were large payments of money and goods to be made as annuities. Furthermore, the government failed to recognize the necessity of delivering annuity goods on time to the Indians of this remote region and it was the unpleasant business of the agent to make excuses and new promises while the Indians

starved. One pitiful letter from Taliaferro notes the fact that 870 starving Sioux were waiting that day at the agency for their goods, long past due, and he had not even a single plug of tobacco to give them, not to speak of provisions.

Keeping the peace between Sioux and Chippewa was an almost impossible task and numerous encounters, some near Fort Snelling, disturbed the quiet of the district. Vigorous action by the agent and the commander of the fort on one occasion in 1827, however, when several Sioux murderers were handed over to the injured Chippewa for execution, impressed the Indians. Frequent peace councils, visits of composite delegations to Washington, and repressive measures on the part of the agent also played their part, said Mr. Babcock, in checking hostilities between the two inveterate enemies.

But the strain upon the agent finally became too great, and in the fall of 1839 Taliaferro retired, broken in health. "He had fought a good fight against heavy odds, with limited resources," said Mr. Babcock in conclusion. "He had wielded the vast powers intrusted to him justly and fearlessly, and he had exhibited a feeling for and an understanding of the Indian and his problems which few men have shown."

The final paper of the afternoon program was presented by Miss Livia Appel, research assistant of the Minnesota Historical Society, on the subject of "Territorial Encouragement of Immigration." Miss Appel's paper was a compact and interesting summary of the Minnesota activities to attract settlers which are described in the collection of documents printed, with an introduction and notes, in the last number of the *BULLETIN*.

Before the adjournment of this session, a telegram signed by the superintendent of the State Historical Society of Iowa, was placed before the convention:

Greetings from the State Historical Society of Iowa to the State Historical Convention at Redwood Falls, Minnesota. The cooperation of the state historical society and local communities

in the promotion of a wider interest in state and local history is worthy of emulation throughout the Mississippi Valley.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

At the conclusion of the session cars were placed at the disposal of the visitors for a tour of Ramsey State Park and other points of interest near Redwood Falls. The park, which is named in honor of Governor Alexander Ramsey, is located at the junction of Ramsey Creek and the Redwood River and has been described as "a Yellowstone in miniature with its winding streams, beautiful falls, deep gorges, glistening rapids, picturesque rock cliffs and pretty groves." Some of the delegates, after a trip through this charming park, returned to Redwood Falls; others, however, were piloted to some of the most interesting places connected with events of the Sioux Outbreak. Thus a number of the visitors were driven to see the splendid monument erected in commemoration of the bloody battle of Birch Coulie.

At 7:00 P. M. the annual meeting of the Sioux Historic Trail Association was held at the armory. The new officers elected by that organization were Mr. Gordon, president, Mr. Mooney, vice president, and Miss Kaercher, secretary and treasurer. The presiding officer at this meeting was Mr. Mooney, the retiring president, who spoke briefly on the meaning of the Sioux Historic Trail and emphasized the importance of perpetuating the trail. Dr. Warren Upham, archeologist of the Minnesota Historical Society, was called upon to discuss the "Scenery and Geology of the Sioux Historic Trail, and Proposed Monuments for Old Lac qui Parle and Brown's Valley." After describing briefly the trail, which covers about 450 miles from St. Paul to Pembina, Dr. Upham recommended the adequate marking of the site of the old Lac qui Parle mission and the erection of a monument at Brown's Valley in honor of Gabriel Renville, "whose counsels and influence, with others friendly to the white captives in the Sioux War of 1862, led to their being set free at Camp Release." A short talk also was made at this meeting by the

Reverend Maurice D. Edwards of St. Paul. In telling of the missionary activities of the Pond brothers, of Dr. Riggs, and of Dr. Williamson the speaker introduced the element of personal reminiscence, which made the speech one of especial interest to the audience.

The presiding officer for the last session of the day, which was held at 8:00 P. M., was Mr. John H. Riheldaffer of Minneapolis. He first introduced the Honorable Theodore Christianson of Dawson, whose paper on "The Long and Beltrami Explorations in Minnesota One Hundred Years Ago" awakened great interest among the auditors. Owing to the unavoidable absence of Dr. William W. Folwell, his paper on "The Causes of the Sioux War" was read by Dr. Buck. Dr. Folwell's paper began by rejecting the view of Senator Rice that the "machinations of secessionist emissaries" were responsible for the outbreak. Nor will the short explanation of the Reverend Stephen R. Riggs, namely that the Sioux were "instigated by the devil," satisfy the inquirer. In fact it is not necessary "to import any extraneous fundamental origin of the outbreak and its atrocities," for that may be found, according to Dr. Folwell, in that universal passion of human nature, anger. "The Dakota Indians were human beings who had never been subjected to a government of law and who found their remedy for injuries in rapine and murder." It was pointed out that more than twice as many murders were committed in the New York draft riots by infuriated white men than by the Indian savages during the frontier outbreak.

The various causes which led to the war were then enumerated and explained. Dr. Folwell first analyzed the traditional Indian policy of the United States government and asserted that it "was calculated to invite outbreaks of passion and revenge." He then discussed the question of the Indian land cessions and the rankling feeling of the Sioux that they had been cheated and deluded. Particular attention was given to the treaties of 1858 ceding nearly a million acres on the north bank of the Minnesota. After three years of waiting the

Sioux found their lands gone and the proceeds largely absorbed by traders. Dr. Folwell then described the scheme of Indian civilization of Joseph R. Brown who in October, 1857, assumed the duties of Sioux agent. The retirement of Major Brown in 1861, caused by "the exigencies of party politics," was characterized by Dr. Folwell as a calamity for the Sioux nation and for the United States.

Brown's successor, Thomas J. Galbraith, soon encountered difficulties. The blanket Indians ridiculed and tormented those who were adopting the white man's ways. The failure of the government to keep a strong force of cavalry at Yellow Medicine and to demonstrate the government's might to the Sioux tribes was a great mistake, in Dr. Folwell's opinion. The failure of the whites to capture and punish Inkpaduta after the massacre of 1857 greatly lowered the prestige of the government. The Sioux were a proud nation, possessing genuine *esprit de corps*. The concentration of Indians had long been the slogan of those who were friendly to the Indians, but Dr. Folwell pointed out that "the concentration of wild Indians could work nothing but mischief and ruin." Furthermore, the Minnesota reservations were not isolated. "An hour's walk brought the Indian to the edge of his country, to meet his deadliest foe, the white man and his whisky jug."

After thus dealing with the predisposing causes which aggravated the ancient hostility of the Sioux tribes, Dr. Folwell turned to "the immediate causes of exasperation," first explaining the difficulties connected with the distribution of annuity goods and cash annuities which led to an Indian demonstration on August 4, 1862, at Yellow Medicine. The Sioux had an additional ground for dissatisfaction, according to Dr. Folwell, in "the custom for deductions to be made from cash annuities to reimburse white people who had suffered losses of property by depredations of individual Indians." A particularly large reduction in 1861 had fanned ill feeling. The lower Sioux were kept waiting for payment and tried to

get on credit the food which they sorely needed. At the Redwood agency about the middle of August, 1862, the keepers of the stores refused credit and thus greatly antagonized Chief Little Crow and his friends.

Although Conferedate emissaries had nothing to do with the Outbreak, Dr. Folwell indicated that not a few of the traders were Copperheads and deluded the Indians with false reports regarding the war. He pointed out that the money payment was delayed owing to tardy Congressional action and the situation in the treasury. When, on August 18, a keg of gold reached Fort Ridgely, the Indian war already had begun. Dr. Folwell's paper concluded by telling of the Acton murders and of the probable Indian council at which the final decision of the aroused Sioux to go on the war path was reached. The paper is to be published as one chapter in the forthcoming second volume of the author's *History of Minnesota*.

The chairman of the committee on resolutions, Dr. Clarence W. Rife, Jr., of Hamline University, St. Paul, then presented the following resolutions, which were adopted by the unanimous vote of the convention :

WHEREAS, The people of Redwood Falls have opened wide the gates of their hospitality, have given to the visitors to the State Historical Convention unstintingly of their time and energies, and have done all in their power to make the convention a great success, — therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the participants in the convention extend their cordial appreciation and sincere thanks to the people of Redwood Falls for their generous hospitality; to the commercial club for its kind invitation to the Minnesota Historical Society to hold its summer meeting in this city; to Dr. Brand and the local committee on arrangements for the patient work and the fine enthusiasm with which they have planned for the entertainment of the visitors; to those who have put their cars at the service of the convention guests and made it possible for them to view the beauties of Ramsey State Park and to see the points of historic interest in the neighborhood, to the people who have opened their homes to accommodate the convention members; and finally

to all who have contributed, either as participants in the programs or as dispensers of hospitality, to make the convention an enjoyable and successful event long to be remembered.

On Saturday morning, June 23, the Sioux Historic Trail Association resumed the automobile tour to Brown's Valley, by way of Granite Falls, Montevideo, and Ortonville. A Saturday morning tour to a number of places of historic interest near Redwood Falls had been planned for the benefit of those who were unable to go on to Brown's Valley and who on the previous day had made only the short trip through Alexander Ramsey State Park. The inclemency of the weather, however, prevented the execution of this plan and, instead, the homeward journey was begun, the majority of the cars following the most direct route from Redwood Falls to Minneapolis.

Those who made the trip and participated in the sessions felt amply repaid for the effort. That the tour and the convention did much to stimulate historical interest, not only among the residents of the Minnesota Valley, but generally among the people of the state, is certain. Where the third state historical convention, in the summer of 1924, will be held is not yet known. But it is certain that the society, in view of the success of the Duluth and the Redwood Falls meetings, will fare forth again next summer to some part of the state, and that cordial interest will be shown in the cause represented by the institution, the preservation of the records of Minnesota history and the dissemination of knowledge of that history among the people.



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