

We Are Yet Alive

United Methodists
in
The History of North Dakota and South Dakota

by Stephen Perry

Draft of Chapter One

Anoka, Minnesota,
on the left bank of the Rum River near the place of the old mills
December 9, 2015

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All comments about this draft will be gratefully received, especially specific comments about historical accuracy.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations

Back East 5

The Road to Bristol, 1771 page 6

Château de Joux, April 7, 1803 page 14

Traverse des Sioux, Minnesota Territory, July 23, 1851 page 20

Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia, Confederate States of America, July 4, 1863 page 27

Evangelische Gemeinschaft,

Yellow Bank Township, Lac Qui Parle County, Minnesota, May 4-7, 1883 page 34

Albert College, Belleville, Ontario, Dominion of Canada, Spring Semester 1886 page 42

The Organized Frontier (1860-1890)

West River & The Second Frontier (1890-1920)

Exile (1920-1939)

A New Earth (1939-1968)

Centennial (1968-1993)

We Are Yet Alive (1993-2012)

Time Line

Index

Abbreviations

Footnotes help a reader to look at the same sources that the author studied, to verify the author's accuracy, to assess the validity of the author's interpretations, and to obtain more information on a topic of interest. In this draft of chapter one, abbreviation has been limited to a shorter, intuitive version of the original citation that should lead back easily to the original, complete citation.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 8:31 (New Revised Standard Version)

Chapter One

BACK EAST

It was a different time, but it was the beginning of our time. It was a time to die, but it was also a time to be born.

They left the place of their birth, but they came to the place of our birth. They turned their backs on the east in order to come west, but they remembered the cross behind them. They boarded no jet airplanes, but they traveled thousands of miles. They never texted anybody, but they pamphleted everybody. They sent e-mail to no one, but they wrote thousands of letters. Most of them did physical labor from sunup to sundown and into the night, but they hoped for a day of rest. They never measured energy in barrels of Bakken crude, but they consumed it—in horse power and then steam power. They did not have our medicines to relieve them when they suffered pain, but they held each other's hands. Many of them died young, and most of us will live long, but they wanted all their children to grow up. Their mothers bore more children and died sooner than our mothers, but they decided to have fewer children. They came from another world and did not intend for everything to happen that did happen, but they created our world. One by one until no one in their generations was left, they were buried in the dust, but they left us the earth, the wind, and the sky.

They have faded now from our view into the indistinct mass of “those who came before us,” but once, each of their faces was entirely recognizable, and each one of them had a name. We look upon them now, all their sins forgiven and all their love perfected, as those who shine in glory. But once they, too, feebly struggled.

The Road to Bristol, 1771

John Wesley, riding westward during Lent, came to Bristol on March 5, 1771. Behind him in London and four months before, he had preached the funeral of George Whitefield who died across the Atlantic Ocean in Massachusetts. They had known each other for decades ever since their days together in Oxford University, and Whitefield had made it clear to his executors that, when the time came, Wesley should preach.¹

¹*The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*, ed. Frank Baker, Richard P. Heitzenrater, and Randy Maddox, Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1976- , Journal 16, 22: 259-260, 264; Sermon 53, 2: 325-347; Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast; John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*, Second edition, Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1993, pp. 450-461. In addition to the evidence of the sermon itself, my reading of it below as a reflection of controversy over Christian perfection as well as Calvinism also depends on publications in *The Gospel Magazine* (London, 1766-), viewed at <http://www.gospelmagazine.org.uk/> on June 22, 2015, in the months following Whitefield's London funeral. The

So many people turned out for Whitefield's funeral on November 18, 1770, that Wesley preached his sermon twice at two different places in London. He began by recalling for these overflowing congregations Whitefield's life as the preacher of the Great Awakening in the British colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America.

From Georgia to New England, George Whitefield drew crowds of immense size who listened to him speak with rapturous eloquence about God's power to cover human selfishness and self-righteousness with the blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross. Every one of them deserved the worst. They were all incapable of doing the good things that God had long ago commanded, and no human good deed could redeem that now. But by sheer grace, on account of the suffering of Jesus, God promised to pardon those whom God already knew would respond with faith in this promise.

As he recalled Whitefield's striking message, Wesley emphasized the part of the message with which he himself agreed. "New birth" and "justification by faith"—God's pardon of a human being for sin—happened only because God had acted graciously in Jesus Christ to make it happen. No act on the part of any other human being but Jesus had contributed anything to God's offer of pardon.

But then, in front of congregations made up largely of Whitefield's own followers and admirers, Wesley went on to speak of the man and not his message. Since funeral congregations usually came to hear the praises of the deceased, giving in to their desire for a eulogy ran the danger of portraying a flawed and dead human being as some kind of a saint instead of preaching the gospel to the living.

December 1770 issue, pp. 637-640 reprinted Whitefield to Wesley, Boston, September 25, 1740, which testified "against the errors his friend Mr. Wesley had fallen into and embraced,...." Whitefield wrote that he himself was not free from "indwelling sin." "A sinless perfection is not attainable here below." The issue of January 1771, pp. 5-24, "The Life of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, late Chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon," quoted, pp. 20- 23, Wesley's funeral sermon for Whitefield and added, p. 23, the comment, "The revered person, whose departure is so universally regretted by the church, being no perfectionist, daily sighed under the sensibility of numberless inherent failures, necessarily interwoven with that body of sin and death which pressed down his soul; but had grace given him proportioned to his day, and was enabled to look through all to his dear Saviour, trusting in him as well for atonement and righteousness as for everlasting strength." The same issue, pp. 39-46, included a review of the published version of Wesley's funeral sermon and quoted Whitefield's definition of sanctification as caused by God. The reviewer, p. 45, approved of Wesley's description of Whitefield's "catholic spirit," but asked, "...how can it be expected this [catholic spirit] should prevail, when the opprobrious name of Antinomian is so liberally branded upon those, who hold the doctrines of an election of grace, and the final perseverance of the saints, and cannot swallow that unscriptural doctrine of perfection?...." Wesley believed this reviewer to have been William Romaine, an evangelical in the Church of England, Wesley to *Lloyd's Evening Post*, March 1, 1771, *The Letters of John Wesley*, ed. John Telford, London: Epworth Press, 1931, volume 5, viewed at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1771/> on September 19, 2015. *The Gospel Magazine*, June 1771, p. 271, denied that "Mr. R." was the reviewer or the editor of *The Gospel Magazine*.

Even so, Wesley did exactly that because, he believed, pointing out the holiness of George Whitefield's heart and life amounted to preaching the good news. Why, then, did some of Whitefield's followers and admirers, especially those versed in eighteenth-century Protestant theology, leave the funeral deeply offended?

They correctly understood that Wesley had ventured far beyond Whitefield's message and his cherished doctrine of justification by faith. Wesley made the development of a certain kind of character—not pardon for sins—the end and goal of Christian life. Pardon for sins was only the beginning of a salvation in which human works of love toward God and neighbor became increasingly visible.

Preaching this and recommending that his hearers actively seek the character of their departed friend for themselves, Wesley insinuated his own doctrine of perfection in love into Whitefield's funeral. This doctrine, which Whitefield most definitely opposed during his life, asserted that God would not only pardon but also sanctify a human being, and this sanctification would empower the individual to participate actively in a growing partnership of universal love. The individual's revived ability to choose the good would make doing the good increasingly possible. The sinner could become a saint in more than name only.

Actively seeking holiness of heart and life, which Wesley advocated because he believed God had provided the means to seek it, appeared to threaten the whole Protestant idea that salvation came from God's acts, not from human acts. To some of his hearers as they thought about his clever words, Wesley seemed to have said that the most popular and eloquent preacher of grace in the English-speaking world had proved to be theologically inarticulate about his own life or too humble to admit what he himself had accomplished under the persuasion of grace.

Look at the humility of Whitefield's emphasis on divine action in salvation—Wesley seemed to say—look at his compassion for orphans that led him to raise thousands of pounds to create a home for them in Georgia, look at his interest in people throughout his ministry, and look at the dedication he displayed when, exhausted and near death, he granted their request for another sermon. Look at how “the hearts of others were so strangely drawn and knit to him.”

“Can anything but love beget love?”

But the funeral of George Whitefield begot conflict in the Church of England. Or, more accurately, it reflected conflict that had already entangled Whitefield and Wesley and would continue in pamphlet wars and sermons and private conversations beyond

Wesley's own death in 1791.² In fact, conflict itself about one thing or another had characterized the life of the Church since the beginning of the Protestant Reformation if not since the time, long before, when Paul wrote to the Galatians and the Corinthians in the New Testament.

For Wesley and Whitefield, terrifying stories from the previous century about religious violence during the English Civil War may have goaded them into an alternative approach to religious conflict. Recollection of their own words about the character of God may have given them second thoughts about the way they pursued their differences with each other.

Neither one of them ever gave up his own theological position, and Wesley even held up Whitefield's "frankness" as another one of his admirable qualities, one that Wesley admired by practicing it himself. But, in the midst of conflict, both of them also displayed courage and character when Whitefield foreordained Wesley to preach and Wesley actively responded with words of affection and love.

The following March, the week after Wesley arrived in Bristol, the winter turned cold. But he continued north into Gloucestershire to preach at Stroud as he had for many years during Lent. Decades before, before he left for America, Whitefield had preached in the area, which he knew well because he had been born not very much farther north in the city of Gloucester.³

The inhabitants of Stroud and other small towns on the River Frome like Stonehouse and Stanley raised sheep and made cloth in much the same way that their ancestors had for centuries—small family operations in houses or buildings adjacent to houses. This cottage industry produced large amounts of high quality cloth, and the trade of Bristol sold it to the world. In 1771, steam engines that could run mills and textile factories had not been introduced, and the Industrial Revolution had not yet begun here.⁴

Toward the end of his life, Wesley walked east from Stroud up the valley of the Frome and through the Cotswold Hills to Cirencester. He could still describe it as "one of the loveliest valleys I ever saw, running, with a clear stream in the midst of it,

² An American sequel occurred in the 1830's in a controversy between Wilbur Fisk, President of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, and Nathaniel Taylor, Professor of Theology at Yale.

³ *Works of John Wesley*, Journal 16, 22: 264-265; *The Victoria History of the County of Gloucester*, London: Victoria County History, Oxford University Press for the Institute of Historical Research, 1907- , 10: 285-287 viewed at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol10/pp285-287> on June 25, 2015.

⁴ *Victoria County History—Gloucestershire*, 10: 261-263 (Leonard Stanley), 276-284 (Stonehouse), 11: 119-132 (Stroud), viewed at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol10> and <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol11> on June 25, 2015.

between two lofty and fruitful mountains, sprinkled all over with little white houses....”⁵

In 1771, however, Wesley continued north from Stroud because he was bound for Dublin. Near Liverpool, he boarded ship and spent nearly four months preaching and meeting with Methodist societies in Ireland. Retracing his steps, he arrived back in Bristol on Sunday, August 4, just in time for conference.⁶

This annual conference of Methodist preachers received a delegation from English Calvinistic Methodists who came to protest what the previous year’s conference had done. Connected to Whitefield and his former patron, Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, they wanted conference to withdraw a statement it had made in its minutes about God’s grace and human works during justification by faith. The conference of 1770 had directed its statement specifically against Calvinism, and Wesley’s funeral sermon for Whitefield a few months later had not helped.⁷

As a result of the protest, the conference of 1771 produced a statement that was much more clear and conciliatory toward Calvinists. “We abhor the doctrine of justification by works, as a most perilous and abominable doctrine.”⁸ But this would never end the matter because works of love—human effort, acts of worship toward God, acts of mercy toward fellow human beings—stood so high in Wesley’s estimation of the Christian life. They were not yet involved when Jesus suffered alone on the cross, nor perhaps at the point when an individual became aware of God’s pardon, but they very soon became the growing edge of Christian life, or else there was no Christian life worthy of the name. For the Calvinists, on the other hand, this talk of works threatened Protestant teaching on the sovereign grace of God in the salvation of an individual.

These unreconciled differences disguised a widely shared emphasis that Wesleyan Methodists, Calvinistic Methodists, and other evangelicals within the Church of England placed on personal experience in the process of bringing God and human beings together. From the time of the Puritans in the 17th century, many pastors and congregations came to expect personal testimony to God’s saving grace in one’s own life for admission to church membership, and ministers listened for a call to ministry in those who would become fellow pastors.

⁵ *Works of John Wesley*, Journal 21 (March 19, 1787), 24: 9. Earlier in the century, Daniel Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1974 (originally 1724-6), Letter VI, 2: 43, gave a similar, delighted description of the “vale” of “Stroud-water” and the wide geographical distribution of its clothiers.

⁶ *Works of John Wesley*, Journal 16, 22: 265-285.

⁷ *Works of John Wesley*, Annual Minutes of some late Conversations, 1770, 10: 392-394; Annual Minutes of some late Conversations, 1771, 10: 403; Journal 16 (August 6, 1771), 22: 285-286.

⁸ *Works of John Wesley*, 10: 403.

Emphasis on personal experience subtly shifted the purpose of Christian doctrine and doctrinal controversy. Wesley and his opponents continued to insist on applying the standard of the Bible to determine the validity of any individual's claim to Christian experience. But now, assent to creeds and catechisms was not enough, and doctrines themselves were coming to be evaluated by the consequences they were demonstrated or imagined to have for particular individuals.

Did the classic Calvinist doctrines of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints discourage people and encourage moral laxity as Wesley argued? Or did the Methodist doctrine of perfection in love promote pride and self-righteousness?

These pragmatic questions about the actual effects of doctrines on people resulted from focusing on individual experience. An individual's own experience—the path of one's life, the consciousness of others, the awareness of continuity from one moment to the next, the prick of a needle on the skin or the prick of conscience on the mind, the height of joy, the depth of despair—this was the most real aspect of any particular human life. When theology entered the world of individual reality, it entered a new and hurting world.

As we look back on the 18th century today, John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, one of Whitefield's American friends and a colleague in Calvinism, rank as two of the greatest English-speaking theologians of this new world. Today, Edwards is often called "America's greatest theologian."⁹ But, in an astonishing turn of events that could not have been foreseen in 1771, John Wesley, a priest in the Church of England and a Tory who opposed the American Revolution, would become the theologian for millions more Americans than Edwards.

This turn of events began in 1771 shortly after the Methodist conference in Bristol ended and the preachers went home or to new appointments. One of the preachers, one who would make an enormous contribution to establishing Wesley as a theologian for Americans, went home to say farewell to his parents and his friends and then quickly returned to Bristol. Bristol had served for a long time as England's largest port, second only to London. From the end of the fifteenth century, many voyages of western discovery, colonization, and slaving set sail from it. Never to

⁹ Many people today, if they know Edwards at all, know him only as the preacher of "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." He preached many other sermons, including "A Divine and Supernatural Light, Immediately Imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, Shown to be Both a Scriptural, and Rational Doctrine" and wrote prolifically. See <http://edwards.yale.edu/>.

return, Francis Asbury boarded ship there for Philadelphia. The conference minutes for 1771 recorded his appointment as “America.”¹⁰

In 1911 Walter Frederick Minty, a member of the Dakota Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, died and was buried in the small town of Woonsocket, South Dakota. His memoir in the conference minutes for that year stated, “Brother Minty’s Methodist ancestry is traceable to the days of the Wesleys. He was a Methodist of the old school, indeed.” The minutes recorded his birth in 1844 in the small town of Leonard Stanley, Gloucestershire, England.¹¹

Minty’s family had probably been living in or near the valley of the Frome River since about the time that Wesley preached at Stroud in 1771. From that time until Minty’s birth, the people of the valley endured revolutionary changes in their way of life. Wealth accumulated from the cloth trade acquired steam-powered machinery. Cloth production moved out of houses and concentrated in factories. Population increased. Railroads arrived from London and Bristol.¹²

We can only imagine how these changes felt and how they upended lives and pushed or pulled families in new directions to new places. In the early 1870’s Minty sailed for the United States. He supplied a pulpit in New Jersey for one year, which may mean that he had already become a “local preacher” in England. Then, the minutes of the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for 1874 showed that he was ordained a deacon and appointed in northern Illinois. In 1876 he married an American woman, Maria S. Remington, who had been born near Albany, New York, in 1851.¹³

¹⁰ *Works of John Wesley*, 10: 398.

¹¹ *Minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Dakota Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1911), pp. 63-64. The memoir’s general statement about Minty’s Methodist ancestry is consistent with the detailed post of Fred Minty of British Columbia, March 19, 2009, at <http://boards.ancestry.ca/surnames.minty/119.1.1/mb.ashx> viewed on June 26, 2015, that Thomas Minty moved to Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, after 1772 and that Samuel Minty, his son, was born in 1813 in Stonehouse, and that Samuel was the father of Walter F. Minty, later of Dakota Territory. The author of this post identified himself as the grandson of Fred W. Minty of Rapid City, South Dakota, but he did not say whether his sources were family traditions or genealogical research. Searching the National Archives of the United Kingdom on “Minty” at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> will return many hits associated with Wiltshire and Gloucestershire although none for a “Thomas” or a “Samuel” Minty of these counties. The 1871 England and Wales Census found a Walter F. Minty born at “Hanley [Stanley?], Gloucestershire” living in Kent with the Long family as an “assistant,” <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KD8S-Z9T> viewed on June 26, 2015.

¹² See the citations of *Victoria County History—Gloucestershire* in footnote 4 above and, more generally, David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus; Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, Second edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. See footnote 11 above on the possible location of Minty’s ancestors around 1771.

¹³ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1911), pp. 63-64; *Minutes of the Thirty-Fifth Session of the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*,..., Freeport, Illinois: Journal Steam Printing House and Bookbindery, 1874, pp. 16, 19, 59; *Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Rockford, Illinois: Abraham E. Smith, 1875, pp.16 (admitted on trial), 20, 56; *Minutes of the Thirty-Seventh Session of the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Rockford, Illinois: Abraham E. Smith, 1876, pp. 17, 21, 57; *Minutes of the*

They moved to Dakota Territory in 1883 during the large immigration of the 1880's that enabled the Territory to be divided and admitted into the Union in 1889 as North Dakota and South Dakota. Minty itinerated as a pastor until his retirement in 1909. After one year of retirement, he returned as a supply pastor and died, according to his words and wishes, "with the harness on."¹⁴ At the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Dakota Annual Conference in the midst of the Great Depression, the pastors and lay delegates looked back at the founding members of their conference and spoke of Minty as one of about a dozen who were "giants in those days" when the conference began.¹⁵

The Minty family tree illustrated another revolutionary aspect of the Industrial Revolution. In every succeeding generation, mothers bore fewer and fewer children. Walter and Marie raised five children. One of these children is known to have raised three children. These three children, Walter and Marie's grandchildren, together raised an average of fewer than two children per family.¹⁶

The children and grandchildren who made up the decreasing numbers per household also made an extraordinary impact on the Dakotas.

Walter and Marie Minty gave birth to Fred W. Minty, a physician and founding surgeon of the Black Hills Methodist Deaconess Hospital (a corporate ancestor of Rapid City Regional Hospital), member of conference boards, choir director at Rapid City First Methodist Episcopal Church, and investor in early 20th century irrigated

Thirty-Eighth Session of the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Rockford, Illinois: Abraham E. Smith, 1877, pp. 14 (admitted into full connection), 18, 52; *Minutes of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Rockford, Illinois: Abraham E. Smith, 1878, pp. 15, 19; *Minutes of the Fortieth Session of the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Rockford, Illinois: Abraham E. Smith, 1879, pp. 14 (ordained elder), 18, 49; *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1926) p. 346 (memoir of Maria S. (Remington) Minty). All of the Rock River Annual Conference journals were viewed in a bound volume at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112109597861> on September 20, 2015. It was also available at <https://books.google.com/books?id=5HMzAQAAMAAJ&dq> on the same date.

¹⁴ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1911), p. 64.

¹⁵ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1934), p. 326. In addition to Minty, John Paul Jenkins' list of "giants" included A. W. Adkinson, J. S. Akers, Lewis Bradford, Andrew R. Boggs, Francis A. Burdick, Charles Badger Clark, Clarence E. Hager, Lewis Hartsough, Ira N. Pardee, O. A. Phillips, Henry M. Springer, Oliver Hugh Sproul, A. D. Traveller, and Wilmot Whitfield.

¹⁶ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1911), pp. 63-64; George W. Kingsbury, *History of Dakota Territory*...., 5 vols., Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915, 5: 25-26; *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1926) p. 346; *Deadwood Pioneer-Times* (Deadwood, South Dakota), November 27, 1945, page 1 (obituary of Fred W. Minty), viewed on June 15, 2015, at <http://bhpioneer.newspapers.com/newspage/94151746/>, which must be handled with care because of errors in scanning or voice recognition; Membership Card File (under "Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth E. Sherman," joined 1948), First United Methodist Church, Evanston, Illinois, Archives; *The Evanston Review* (Evanston, Illinois), October 12, 2000, p. 155 (obituary of Marian (Minty) Sherman).

ranch lands in Montana.¹⁷ Fred W. Minty and Caroline (Crawford) Minty, who sang at conference in 1928,¹⁸ gave birth to Marian Minty, a pianist and a violinist. Marian Minty married Kenneth Sherman, a plastic surgeon. She and her husband gave over \$3,000,000 to build a university chapel, the Sherman Center of Dakota Wesleyan University, in Mitchell, South Dakota.

Their ashes were interred on campus in 2000,¹⁹ but, in 2011, a new congregation, Fusion United Methodist Church, began meeting at Sherman Center.²⁰

Château de Joux, April 7, 1803

The Château de Joux swells up from a mountain top near France's border with Switzerland as if someone had beaten it out of the rock. It is a medieval fortress known also as the Fort de Joux, and its sheer outer walls, melded with the cliffs that hold them up, dominate the trade routes and military roads that have passed thru the Jura Mountains since the time of the Roman Empire. Their emergence is formidable and frightening.

On April 7, 1803, in a stone prison cell deep inside these walls, the commandant of the fort found the body of a dead black man. His head was leaning against the fireplace that had provided his only source of warmth against freezing mountain air. The next day, during an autopsy, the fort surgeon and a local physician removed the head from the body and sawed off the top of the skull. The top of the skull ended up nearby in the city library of Pontarlier, the rest of the skull was left on the mantle of the fireplace, and the rest of the body was buried in an unmarked grave in the mountain. The surgeon and the physician certified that Toussaint Louverture died of apoplexy and pneumonia in the lungs.²¹

¹⁷ Kingsbury, 5: 25-26; *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (mentioned throughout from about 1920 to about 1945); *Deadwood Pioneer-Times* (Deadwood, South Dakota), November 27, 1945, page 1 (obituary of Fred W. Minty), viewed on June 15, 2015 at <http://bhpioneer.newspapers.com/newspage/94151746/>; J. William Kaye, Jr., "Conference Hospitals and Homes," *Circuit Riders of the Middle Border; A History of Methodism in South Dakota*, Midwest Beach, Inc., 1965, pp. 136-139.

¹⁸ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1928), p. 106.

¹⁹ <http://www.dwu.edu/visitcampus/campustour/shermancenter/> viewed on June 14, 2015.

²⁰ <http://mitchellfusion.com/#/about> viewed on June 24, 2015.

²¹ John R. Beard, *Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Biography and Autobiography*, Boston: James Redpath, 1863, pp. 352-354, viewed at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/beard63/beard63.html> and <https://archive.org/details/toussaintlouvert00bear> on September 18, 2015, included an account of an 1861 visit to the Château de Joux and inquiry into Louverture's death by John Bigelow, an American newspaperman and later United States consul in Italy. Bigelow found and translated the *procès verbal* of the surgeon and the physician which was published here.

Like his ancestors from West Africa but sailing in the opposite direction, Louverture had survived a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. Whoever they were, his ancestors became slaves on the French sugar plantations of Saint Domingue, what is now Haiti, on the island of Hispaniola, the landfall of Columbus. After he became a free man, Louverture led the Haitian Revolution during the 1790's. A French expeditionary force captured him by means of deception on May 5, 1802. They separated him from his wife and children whom they held hostage. They shipped the whole family across the ocean. They stripped Louverture of his army uniform and handed him over to be imprisoned in the Château de Joux where he lasted ten months.

During the fall of 1802, Louverture wrote from his prison cell a *mémoire* or report that defended his military record in Saint Domingue as service to the Republic of France. He addressed himself to the First Consul of the Republic, Napoleon Bonaparte. "First Consul," "father of all soldiers," "honest judge," "defender of the innocent," he called Bonaparte. He asked for a military trial and the right to confront the French general, Bonaparte's brother-in-law, Charles-Victor-Emmanuel Leclerc, who ordered his arrest in Saint Domingue. He referred to himself only as "commandant" of Saint Domingue.

Louverture protested that Leclerc had not notified him properly when he approached by sea and landed his troops. Many other acts of disrespect followed and cascaded into reasons for Louverture, as the duly appointed military officer in charge of France's colony, to offer resistance.²²

His acts of resistance to Leclerc are now widely understood as the opening of the final phase of the Haitian Revolution. Beginning as a struggle for civil liberty for white colonists and free men of mixed race after France had overthrown its king and established a republic, expanding to emancipation of slaves, the Revolution now became a war against France for the independence of Haiti. During this war, all sides committed atrocities. Leclerc imported large dogs from Cuba to eat black prisoners alive. Louverture's generals tortured and dismembered French soldiers and other white prisoners to obtain information.²³

His last pose, in his prison *mémoire* for the First Consul, as the legitimate "commandant" of Saint Domingue—the one who resisted Leclerc's disrespect and

²² *Mémoires du Général Toussaint-L'Ouverture...*, ed. Saint-Remy, Paris: Pagnerre, 1853, viewed at <https://archive.org/details/mmoiresdugn00tous> on September 18, 2015; Beard, *Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Biography and Autobiography*, pp. 293-328. Toussaint Louverture, *The Memoir of Toussaint Louverture*, trans. and ed. Philippe R. Girard, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, collated archival copies and presented texts in French and English.

²³ Memoir of Jean-Pierre Bechaud (a French army officer), in David Geggus (ed. and trans.), *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2014, pp. 178-179.

incompetent incitement of the people to violence and who tried to preserve order in France's colony—would surely have struck Bonaparte as dissimulation and dishonesty.²⁴ But Louverture had made a career of dissimulation, or hiding under a false identity. Slavery encouraged people to create one identity and set of behaviors for use in front of masters and superiors, another identity for family and fellow slaves, and a third identity as an individual with an inner life. Each of these was layered on top of the others and suppressed the ones beneath it as a fortress disfigured the mountain that had to uphold it.

Louverture had turned his multiple identities into a strategy to unite Saint Domingue's different racial groups and factions under his own rule, and now, at the last, he mobilized them again to save his life. He obediently addressed Bonaparte as his superior, but, out of the depths of the mountain, he still demanded respect. "*La couleur de mon corps nuit-elle à mon honneur et à ma bravoure?*" "Does the color of my body stain my honor and my bravery?"²⁵

If Bonaparte ever read the *mémoire* of Louverture, he would have taken personal offense quickly. On November 2, 1802, his brother-in-law, Leclerc, died. Like many French soldiers in Saint Domingue who survived combat, Leclerc died of yellow fever. Unknown to Louverture, in August of 1802, the war with Leclerc's army turned into a general uprising against the possibility that the French would force the black population back into slavery. As thousands of French soldiers perished because they could not fight the heat and the diseases of Hispaniola or the growing number of rebels, the time approached when the survivors would evacuate in late 1803 and Haiti would declare its independence at the beginning of 1804.

What had Napoleon Bonaparte tried to accomplish with Leclerc's invasion of Saint Domingue and the arrest and imprisonment of Toussaint Louverture?

Bonaparte's secret instructions to Leclerc prepared in advance of the 1802 invasion of Saint Domingue showed Bonaparte himself to have been a master of deception.²⁶ He directed Leclerc to seize the major cities and fortifications immediately after the island came in sight of his ships. Members of the local population who could be trusted

²⁴ Beard, *Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Biography and Autobiography*, pp. 354-355, quoting a French government document on the need to keep Toussaint isolated in prison.

²⁵ *Mémoires du Général Toussaint-L'Ouverture...*, ed. Saint-Remy, p. 85.

²⁶ Napoleon Bonaparte, "NOTES pour servir aux Instructions donner au Capitaine général Leclerc," October 31, 1801. Henry Adams tried to deduce the content of these instructions in *Historical Essays*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891, pp. 122-177. Gustav Roloff, *Die Kolonialpolitik Napoleons I.*, Munich and Leipzig: R. Oldenbourg, 1899, pp. 244-254, published the original document that he found in the Archives Nationales of France. Charles-Victor-Emmanuel Leclerc, *Lettres du général Leclerc, commandant en chef de l'armée de Saint-Domingue en 1802*, ed. Paul Roussier, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1937, appendix 1, published it as well. See also Napoleon Bonaparte, *Correspondance générale*, ed. Thierry Lentz and others, Paris: Fayard, 2006, tome 3.

would be armed, but, by means of persuasion, deception, or coercion, the army under Louverture would gradually be disarmed and its officers sent to France.

Bonaparte authorized one of Leclerc's subordinates to write to Louverture soon after seizure of Port au Prince saying that Leclerc should have communicated earlier and inviting Louverture to surrender his office. By treating him with respect and honor and asking him to swear fidelity to France, perhaps he would give himself up. Leclerc had authority to promise him anything early during the invasion in order to gain possession of essential locations. But, if Louverture failed to surrender within a few days, he must be declared a traitor. If he were arrested with arms in hand, he would be brought before a military commission and executed.

Otherwise, whether Leclerc accepted a surrender or made him captive, Louverture would be sent to France as soon as possible. Bonaparte intended to decapitate his army and put France in control of all Hispaniola.

Before the French Revolution began in 1789 and emancipation from slavery spread in French colonies, the sugar plantations of Saint Domingue and the slaves who labored on them had produced fabulous wealth. Emancipation had the very real consequence of halting sugar production. Both Louverture and Bonaparte wanted to start it up again and finance their governments from the wealth it would create. Although revoking emancipation may not have been practical, both looked for measures to bind former slaves to the plantations and make them raise sugar cane once more.²⁷

In other words, Bonaparte and Louverture locked themselves in a struggle for control of wealth. But they both lost. Leclerc deported Louverture to the Château de Joux. Yellow fever killed Leclerc. Mass rebellion in defense of emancipation forced Bonaparte to abandon Saint Domingue. He turned to dreams of Continental conquest that would soon lead him to invade German-speaking Europe and, among many other consequences, give thousands of farmers from south Germany reason to immigrate to the Russian steppes north of the Black Sea.²⁸

In pursuit of wealth and international standing, Louverture's successors would try to force the free people of Haiti back to the plantations. But the people decided instead to cultivate their own gardens and live by means of the small-scale agriculture that fed their ancestors in Africa.

²⁷ Constitution de la colonie française de Saint-Domingue (1801), 14-17, in Geggus (ed. and trans.), *The Haitian Revolution*, pp. 161-162; "NOTES pour servir aux Instructions donner au Capitaine général Leclerc," chapitre 4.

²⁸ See below, p. 39.

Europeans and European Americans of the eighteenth century tarred Africans as people of such primitive savagery that slavery could be defended on the ground that it delivered them into a new and better world. John Wesley knew different and said so in his pamphlet, *Thoughts upon Slavery* (1774). He developed a theology of slavery and emancipation informed by wide reading and actual conversations with Africans, African American slaves, slave traders, and slaveholders.²⁹ He died in 1791 just as the Haitian Revolution began, but his analysis of the causes and effects of slavery predicted the dynamic that played out between Toussaint Louverture and Napoleon Bonaparte.

Wesley understood African American slavery to be a product of modern history, not a continuation of ancient history. He noted that ancient slavery had died out in Europe with the rise of Christianity.³⁰ Modern slavery began, he believed, in 1508 when Portuguese slave traders first supplied Africans to the Spanish colony on Hispaniola, the part of the island that is now the Dominican Republic. The slave trade grew from then on and disrupted many societies on the Atlantic coast of Africa.

Wesley found much to praise in the traditional societies of West Africa, including the Islamic societies. He took specific notice of their obedience to the commandments against murder, stealing, and adultery.

But slave traders, financed by merchants in Europe who were stimulated by demand from America, intervened in these societies with offers of trading goods in return for slaves. They promoted warfare between African rulers to create supplies of prisoners who could be sold into slavery. They separated fathers and mothers from their children. They shipped human beings to America like animals. They sold them like property. Their customers could by law punish slaves unmercifully and often did. Their customers could with impunity torture slaves for entertainment, and they did.

Why was it necessary for slaveholders to whip slaves “for every petty offence, till they are all in a gore of blood? To take that opportunity, of rubbing pepper and salt into

²⁹ Frank Baker, "The Origins, Character, and Influence of John Wesley's *Thoughts upon Slavery*," *Methodist History*, 22 (1984): 75-86, who, among other insights, pointed out Wesley's use of the writings of the Pennsylvania Quaker, Anthony Benezet; Randy Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey*, Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2004. *The Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789) listed Wesley as one of its original subscribers, and he was reading it at the end of his life, *Works of John Wesley*, Manuscript Diaries, February 22 and 23, 1791, 24: 348, 426 (Olaudah Equiano was the same person as Gustavus Vasa or Vassa).

³⁰ John Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery*, Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1774, pp. 4-5 (1.3-1.4) viewed at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N10870.0001.001?rgn=main;view=fulltext> and <https://archive.org/details/thoughtsuponslav00wesl> on September 19, 2015. (This is the first American edition; the first edition bore the imprint of London: R. Hawes, 1774.) Wesley's generalization ignored medieval villenage and the serfdom that persisted east of the Elbe River. These forms of bondage differed considerably, however, from the racial slavery of America.

their raw flesh? To drop burning sealing wax upon their skin? To castrate them? To cut off half their foot with an axe? To hang them on gibbets, that they may die by inches, with heat, and hunger, and thirst? To pin them down to the ground, and then burn them by degrees, from the feet, to the head? To roast them alive?”

“When did a Turk or a Heathen find it necessary to use a fellow-creature thus?”³¹

Wesley attacked slavery as a gross violation of natural justice, the standards of fairness that all rational human beings would expect for themselves no matter what their religion or nation. “Where is the Justice of inflicting the severest evils on those that have done us no wrong?”³² And what could slaveholders expect in return but for their slaves to grow in wickedness?

Worst of all, the hardness of heart that slavery encouraged in slaves and slaveholders threatened their souls. What kind of a person would torture a slave for any reason or no reason? What kind of a person would see this happening on a public road and pass by on the other side? What kind of a person would rise up in anger against this and let anger have the final word?³³

Only emancipation offered hope for the humanity of slaves and slaveholders, and it could not come soon enough.

Wesley recognized the continuing spiritual damage that the enslavement of Africans and their descendants in America has inflicted on the modern world. Slavery destroyed trust and depersonalized human relationships, including, for example, the relationship between Louverture and Bonaparte. Wesley also saw that underneath the betrayals, the destruction of trust, and the depersonalization of human relationships lay a struggle for wealth by any means.

In a sobering challenge to modernity, Wesley asserted that wealth is not necessary to the glory of a nation.³⁴ Although the world since 1500 has accumulated wealth on a massive scale and great and undeniable benefits have resulted, slavery and its continuing consequences have produced a deep fault line under those benefits.

Far away in Paris, less than a month after Louverture was buried in the mountain, François, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, Intendant Générale of Saint Domingue when the Haitian Revolution began, completed negotiations for the sale of Louisiana to the

³¹ Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery*, p. 46 (4.8).

³² Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery*, p. 34 (4.2)

³³ Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery*, pp. 49-57 (5.1-5.7).

³⁴ Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery*, p. 44 (4.7)

United States. Since Bonaparte had decided to abandon Hispaniola, he no longer needed Louisiana and the Mississippi River Valley for crops and livestock to feed the population of Saint Domingue while it specialized in sugar cane.

By this strange sequence of events, the United States took possession of the Louisiana Purchase, including most of what Congress would organize in 1861 as Dakota Territory. The administration of Thomas Jefferson agreed to pay France \$15,000,000 for a magnificent possession, and Bonaparte soon used the payment to finance more war in Europe. But the sale could take place at all because the free people of Haiti and the dead black man in the Château de Joux had lived.³⁵

Traverse des Sioux, Minnesota Territory, July 23, 1851

Thomas Jefferson planned the Lewis and Clark Expedition to explore the Louisiana Purchase and what became Dakota Territory before Napoleon Bonaparte ever offered it for sale. On January 18, 1803, almost three months before Bonaparte's offer (and while Toussaint Louverture was still alive in the Château de Joux), Jefferson sent a confidential message to Congress to request authorization for the expedition.³⁶

Since the end of the American Revolution, the United States had been interested in the Mississippi River and New Orleans as an outlet for American grain produced west of the Appalachian Mountains. Recent events and Bonaparte's notion of using Louisiana to feed Saint Domingue seemed likely to cut off this western trade in favor of a French monopoly.

Jefferson wanted Lewis and Clark, under the guise of scientific exploration for the increase of human knowledge, to lay a foundation for American trade on the Missouri River. An American trade network would prevent France or any other European nation from ever gaining effective control. He also wanted to replace the Native American population on the eastern shore of the Mississippi River with white settlers loyal to the United States.

³⁵ Historians of the United States have recognized the connection between the Haitian Revolution and the Louisiana Purchase since at least the time of Henry Adams' *History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison* (1889-1891) and W. E. B. Dubois' *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870* (1896). On the Louisiana Purchase, see Junius P. Rodriguez (ed.), *The Louisiana Purchase; A Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia*, Santa Barbara, California, and other places: ABC-CLIO, 2002. The Anglo-American Convention of 1818 gave international recognition to the 49th parallel as the northern border of the United States from Lake of the Woods to the crest of the Rocky Mountains and brought much of what is now North Dakota under the sovereignty of the United States.

³⁶ Donald Jackson (ed.), *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, Second edition, 2 vols., Urbana, Chicago, and London: University of Illinois Press, 1978, I: 10-13. See also *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd and others, 41 vols. to date, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1950- , vol. 39.

Within the year, the urgency of the international situation that gave rise to the Lewis and Clark Expedition subsided. It became an exploration of territory that the United States regarded as its own. But trade, as well as science, remained the key to the value of this territory and the means to realize its value with the peoples who already inhabited it.

In his confidential message to Congress early in 1803 before Bonaparte offered to sell Louisiana, Jefferson tried to show how trade could initialize a process of social change among Native Americans and prevent warfare between them and white settlers. He and the citizens of his new nation lived in a world of war in Europe, in the Caribbean on the island of Hispaniola, and on the frontiers between Native American peoples and white settlers. The tiny military establishment of the United States and a philosophical commitment to low taxation made peace the best policy.

Pursuing peace, Jefferson would encourage Native American peoples to abandon hunting and take up agriculture. Hunting required a large geographical area to support a large animal population. Raising crops and small industry like making cloth required a much smaller area. Abandoning hunting and taking up agriculture would make claims to large amounts of land pointless and sale to the United States profitable. The United States could then sell the surplus land to future settlers.

Jefferson emphasized the importance of trade to this process. Goods manufactured by citizens of the United States to pursue agriculture and make life easier would create consumer demand among Native Americans once they could see their usefulness. Cash raised from selling useless land would purchase desirable goods, reinforce commitment to practice agriculture, and confirm the wisdom of sacrificing the hunting life along with the large amount of land it required for prey.

The President knew very well that private traders would try to become wealthy at the expense of Native Americans and corrupt his process of civilization. So, he asked Congress to continue authorization for the United States Indian Factory System, a government monopoly designed to guarantee honest trading.³⁷

³⁷ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father; The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols., Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, pp. 115-134. Compare Jefferson's January 18, 1803, message to Congress with Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, February 27, 1803, *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, ed. Clarence E. Carter and John P. Bloom, 28 vols., Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1934-1975, 7: 88-92; and his instructions to Meriwether Lewis, June 20, 1803, Jackson (ed.), *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 1: 61-66.

“In leading them to agriculture, to manufactures & civilization, in bringing together their & our settlements, & in preparing them ultimately to participate in the benefits of our government, I trust and believe we are acting for their greatest good.”

Jefferson’s reasoning on a common future for Native Americans and European Americans resembled the way people today think about innovation and business models. He thought in terms of a self-sustaining process that would disrupt traditional Native American societies, make a market, and establish a stable flow of mutual benefits—land, food, manufactured goods, and revenue—to all participants. All the blessings of peace would then rain down on a world at war.³⁸

Decades later, in the summer of 1851 at Traverse des Sioux on the Minnesota River, federal negotiators still echoed Jefferson’s message to Congress of 1803. They spoke there to Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of the Dakota people and told them that little or no game remained on most of their lands. “You have much more land than you need.” “You will not only be taught how to raise corn and potatoes, but we will have mills erected to grind into flour the grain that you may raise.”³⁹

The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux signed on July 23, 1851, began transfer of the Native American land that became North Dakota and South Dakota in 1889. Several thousand Native Americans—men, women, and children—slowly assembled in June and July for negotiations with the United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Governor of Minnesota Territory, interpreters, and Presbyterian missionaries.⁴⁰ They came from as far away as the upper Missouri River and Pembina on the Red River at the Canadian border, but most inhabited the Minnesota River Valley.⁴¹

Who were they?

³⁸ Jefferson thought of free trade among nations and peace as aspects of a natural order of things. See “Report on the Privileges and Restrictions on the Commerce of the United States in Foreign Countries,” December 16, 1793, *Papers of Jefferson*, 27: 532-580.

³⁹ *A Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux*, St. Peter, Minnesota: Captain Richard Somers Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, [1914?], pp. 19-20 (report of William G. LeDuc), viewed at <https://archive.org/stream/treatydesioux00somerich> on July 16, 2015. Two newspaper reporters, James M. Goodhue and William G. LeDuc, and an artist, Frank Barnwell Mayer, kept notes that have survived. At least three published forms of these notes exist in books: (1) LeDuc’s notes in *A Brief Sketch and History* cited here and below, (2) William G. LeDuc, *Minnesota Year Book for 1852*, St. Paul, Minnesota Territory: W. G. LeDuc[, 1852], and (3) Thomas Hughes, *Old Traverse des Sioux*, St. Peter, Minnesota: Herald Publishing Company, 1929. The texts in these books need to be collated with each other and with surviving manuscript diaries and contemporary newspaper versions by the same authors. See also William Lass, *The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux*, St. Peter, Minnesota: Nicollet County Historical Society Press, 2011, which reprinted the treaty. The secretary of the United States Treaty Commissioners, Thomas Foster, would probably have kept a journal of proceedings, but Lass did not find it.

⁴⁰ Presbyterian missionaries, notably, Stephen R. Riggs, had come to dominate Christian missions to the Dakota people by 1851. Alfred Brunson tried to establish a mission for the Methodist Episcopal Church during the 1830’s.

⁴¹ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 13, 33.

The newspapermen who wrote the surviving accounts of what happened from day to day at Traverse des Sioux described them as speakers of a mutually intelligible language.⁴² They divided themselves into “bands.” By “bands” the newspapermen meant small towns or villages of extended families, at most a few hundred people per band. A male “chief” led each band but had to pay attention to the views of younger men. The men from Wahpeton and Sisseton bands who signed the treaty on July 23 numbered thirty-five, which greatly exceeded the number of bands mentioned in the newspaper reports.⁴³

The federal negotiators wanted to treat the chiefs like military officers whose orders subordinates had to obey. Any delay in the proceedings that a chief requested in order to consult with others in his band brought accusations of indecisiveness and demands that he act like a man.⁴⁴

The “bands” grouped themselves into larger “divisions.” The newspaper reporters knew of the Mdewakanton, Wahpekute, Wahpeton, and Sisseton divisions. These four would come to be known collectively as the Santee.⁴⁵ But the traditional list of seven “divisions” also included people who lived farther west: Yankton, Yanktonai, and Teton.⁴⁶ The seven divisions referred to each other, depending on the dialect of their common language, as “Dakota” or “Lakota,” meaning “friends.”⁴⁷

At Traverse des Sioux, as the people who had already arrived waited for others, they played traditional ball games that pitted one or more bands against others. On one occasion, the game got out of hand and a fight started between the bands involved. It ended without gunfire, but this demonstrated the importance of the band for a sense of identity.⁴⁸

⁴² LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, p. 17.

⁴³ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, p. 7. European Americans did not always use the English word, *band*, with precision when describing Dakota society. The newspapermen at Traverse des Sioux did, however, and, in effect, it translated the Dakota word, *Ȟiyóšpaye*. See *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. William C. Sturtevant, 20 vols. planned, Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978- , 13: 734-735, 767.

⁴⁴ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 22, 25.

⁴⁵ “Santee” originally applied only to the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute divisions, *Handbook of North American Indians*, 13: 735.

⁴⁶ *Handbook of North American Indians*, 13: 735.

⁴⁷ The Santee divisions spoke one dialect, the Yankton and Yanktonai a second, and the Teton a third. “Dakota” names the dialect of the Santee as well as the people who spoke it and, similarly, “Lakota” names the dialect of the Teton and the people who spoke it. The term, “Nakota” is sometimes used to describe the dialect of the Yankton and the Yanktonai and to name them as one group of people, but, in the 19th century, the Assiniboine and Stoney peoples used this term to describe themselves. “Sioux,” more common among European Americans and in the names of tribal reservations in North Dakota and South Dakota, refers to people of all seven divisions but derives from an insulting Anishinaabe (Chippewa, Ojibwe) term. See *Handbook of North American Indians*, 13: 718, 749, 750.

⁴⁸ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 10-11.

Compared to the divisions, the bands played the more fundamental role in everyday life. At Traverse des Sioux, each one kept a camp separate from the others. These camps consisted of dwellings for the extended families of the band. The glimpses that the newspapermen got of living conditions inside the tepees or lodges disgusted them, but they added that the morals of the people were very high. They observed no stealing or violence.⁴⁹

In fact, each of these camps constituted a mobile small town that had, out of practical knowledge of the land acquired over centuries, developed a diversified economy of hunting, very small-scale agriculture, and trade.⁵⁰ The ability to move around the land reduced the possibility for overhunting and soil exhaustion and increased opportunities for trade. Since women did most of the gathering and cultivating,⁵¹ however, and men did most of the hunting, federal negotiators assumed along with Thomas Jefferson that the principal occupation of Indians must be hunting and that they had little knowledge of agriculture.

In spite of their traditional knowledge and experience with the land, the bands of the Wahpeton, Sisseton, and other divisions that assembled at Traverse des Sioux in the summer of 1851 came into camp hungry. Rain had started in the spring and not let up. Many of the women had not yet planted corn. The powder in the rifles of the young men would not burn because it was wet. “Our ribs may be counted through the poles of a lodge frame, through the skin,” said Walking Thunder.⁵²

If anyone saw the solution as learning an agriculture that required each family to settle permanently on one piece of land to the exclusion of other people, the newspapermen did not report it. Everyone agreed that stopping the rain required the help of God. Regardless of division or band, all joined together on July 12 in a sacred dance to break the wings of the Thunder Bird.

This dance took place inside a replica of the world. Aspen limbs driven into the ground formed a very large circle with arched openings at each of the four cardinal directions. A bark carving of the Thunder Bird hung from a tall pole in the center of

⁴⁹ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁰ University of Michigan–Dearborn, Native American Ethnobotany Database, <http://herb.umd.umich.edu>, and United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Plants Database, <http://plants.usda.gov>, give some idea of the extent of traditional Native American knowledge.

⁵¹ *Handbook of North American Indians*, 13: 764.

⁵² LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 4, 14. The identity of “Walking Thunder” is not clear. No such name appeared as a signer on the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux or the Treaty of Mendota, August 5, 1851. See Charles J. Kappler (comp. and ed.), *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 7 vols., 2: 588-593, viewed in edition at <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/index.htm> on September 17, 2015. Nor is Walking Thunder mentioned elsewhere in the accounts of LeDuc, Goodhue, or Mayer (see above footnote 39). He announced the Thunder Bird dance (see below footnote 53).

the circle. Smaller carvings of the Thunder Bird hung from poles at each of the four entrances to the circle. The leader of the ceremony sat in an arbor of aspen bushes near the central pole where he beat a drum or played a flute. Various items lay in front of him: a bark carving of a running buffalo, a pipe, a red stone.

First, young men danced in a circle around the arbor for fifteen or twenty minutes and, after a break, danced again. Then, a group of horsemen began to ride around the outside of the aspen-limb circle. Many more horsemen joined in. Boys and girls entered the circle and joined the dancers on the inside. Finally, in a single dramatic moment, riflemen shot the Thunder Bird carvings at each of the four cardinal directions, and they crashed to the earth.

The dance was over. It had involved many hundreds of participants and onlookers. Since the rain stopped for the rest of the treaty proceedings, they would all be able to eat.⁵³

At first glance, the way of thinking that led to the Thunder Bird Dance and the way of thinking that led Thomas Jefferson to propose the Lewis and Clark Expedition seem to be worlds apart. Jefferson's business model attempted to establish peace between white settlers and Native Americans, and it relied on market signals to elicit certain continuous and mutually beneficial behaviors. The Thunder Bird Dance attempted to restore harmony between the earth and the sky, and it relied on a replica of the world and enactment of the people's prayer within the replica.

On the other hand, both of these worlds felt like dangerous places to inhabit. By 1803, Jefferson had lived most of his life during international war. By 1851, hunger lurked at the edge of Dakota camps, not only because rain sometimes came too much or too late, but also because for decades, in an alliance that originally seemed to be sustainable, hunters and traders had taken too many animal skins from the forests and the plains. Both the Thunder Bird Dance and Jefferson's business model tried to gain control over unknown forces that threatened to overwhelm individuals and nations.

The two worlds came together for a few weeks of partial understanding and considerable misunderstanding at Traverse des Sioux in the summer of 1851.

For many years before, Traverse des Sioux had served as a place of trade, gifts, and other exchanges. The European and European American men who traded with the Dakota people often learned their language, married Dakota women, and became part

⁵³ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, pp. 14-15, 38; Mayer in Hughes, *Old Traverse des Sioux*, pp. 89-91, who noted that women participated in the dance.

of a band. But now, the traders were becoming increasingly indebted to their suppliers back east. They had extended credit to Dakota people for the goods they wanted even though the product of the hunt was diminishing.

As the traders looked up from their account books, they saw a new source of cash in the treaty negotiations. In return for the Dakota people's cession of most of their land to the United States, the treaty set up a trust fund to finance the transition to a fully agricultural society and guarantee a supply of food in the meantime. Some of the traders managed to deceive the signers of the treaty into signing another, private document that turned over a substantial portion of this trust fund to the traders to pay debt. The traders provided no accounting of the debt.⁵⁴

At least one of the chiefs at the time suspected deception,⁵⁵ and the whole transaction created enduring mistrust. Federal Indian funds became a mighty stream of revenue that flowed down on private traders from government contracts to supply Indian agencies and Indian reservations. This revenue stream would eventually help to initialize the economy of Dakota Territory.⁵⁶

Jefferson's model of trade, agriculture, and social transformation did not bring peace into his new world because he had not counted on the difficulty of excluding private traders from the frontier or their pursuit of wealth by any means. It did not bring peace because he had not counted on deliberate confusion of government and private interests. It did not bring peace because he had not counted on thousands and thousands of farmers who wanted the land of the Minnesota River Valley and whose large numbers would necessarily overwhelm the small towns and small numbers of the Dakota people.

Eleven years after the encounter at Traverse des Sioux, the Dakota people were hungry again. Congress had delayed authorizing their Indian agents to purchase food. Some of them rose up in anger and killed white farm families. But they had not counted on the unrelenting force that was then visited on them without distinguishing who had used violence and who had not. It drove most of them out of the valley forever. Congress abrogated all treaties with them. Those who survived the war became prisoners, refugees, or exiles and inaugurated tribal reservation life in Dakota Territory.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Lass, *Treaty of Traverse des Sioux*.

⁵⁵ LeDuc in *Brief Sketch and History of the Signing of the Treaty*, p. 29 (Eeshtahumba or "Sleepy Eye").

⁵⁶ Howard Lamar, *Dakota Territory, 1861-1889; A Study of Frontier Politics*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1956, who also noted that the economies of North Dakota and South Dakota have always had a large governmental sector.

⁵⁷ Kenneth Carley, *The Dakota War of 1862*, Second edition, St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2000; Gary Clayton Anderson and Alan R. Woolworth (eds.), *Through Dakota Eyes; Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota*

Jefferson's peace never did rain down on them. But, by 1862, peace was nowhere in the air.

Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia, Confederate States of America, July 4, 1863

On Independence Day 1863, Rebecca (Peters) McCabe had still not heard from her husband. Three years before, after graduating from the Wesleyan Female Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, she married him, and then, one-and-a-half years after her wedding, she bore their only son, Johnnie. According to a rule of the Ohio Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they should not have married until he had been a conference member for two years. He liked to explain that, because he was afraid of losing her, he married her first and read the rule later.⁵⁸

But now she did not know where he was or even if he were alive. He had been serving since the previous fall as chaplain of the 122nd Regiment of Ohio Volunteer Infantry, which he helped to recruit.⁵⁹ At last word in early June, the regiment was encamped around Winchester, Virginia, guarding the approaches to Maryland and Pennsylvania at the northeast end of the Shenandoah River Valley.

On July 14, after waiting more than a month in Jamestown, Ohio, and reading many astonishing newspaper stories about the Civil War, she received a letter dated June 16. He wrote to say that he was alive and well and asked her to communicate with several other Ohio women that their husbands were all right, too. He gave her no more specific information than to say, "The battle went against us." He promised to write again.

She next received his letter of June 19. The members of his regiment who were not killed, wounded, or captured had escaped to Harper's Ferry where the Shenandoah

Indian War of 1862, St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988; Clifford Canku and Michael Simon (eds. and trans.), *The Dakota Prisoner of War Letters; Dakota Kaškapi Okicizę Wowapi*, St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society, 2013. Survivors and their descendants ended up in Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Within North Dakota and South Dakota, some descendants are members of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, or the Spirit Lake Tribe Mni Wakan Oyate. See the maps presented by the Minnesota Historical Society at <http://www.usdakotawar.org/history/aftermath> and <http://www.usdakotawar.org/history/today> viewed on September 18, 2015.

⁵⁸ Frank M. Bristol, *The Life of Chaplain McCabe*, Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, New York: Eaton & Mains (copyright 1908 by Fleming H. Revell Company), pp. 66-68, viewed at <http://books.google.com> on September 11, 2015. (Other editions and printings are available at books.google.com and archive.com.) Bristol was elected a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1908.

⁵⁹ Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, p. 72.

River entered the Potomac River. But he was still in the valley at Winchester. He and the regimental surgeon had stayed behind to tend to the wounded. The Confederate commanding general had supplied them with ambulances to bring the wounded into town from the battlefield.

His letter of July 1 was dated far away from the valley at Richmond, Virginia. He wrote only that he did not know how long he would be there. On July 4, he assured her again of his good health and let her know that he was with a large number of Union officers. From his letter of July 10 she learned that the prisoner exchange “cartel” between the United States and the Confederacy was, for some unknown reason, not working. In all these letters, he intimated that he could not write at length or at liberty.

His letter dated July 17 came from Libby Prison in Richmond with instructions on how to write to him there. Not until August 4 would he receive her first letter, dated July 14, the same day she had received his first letter of June 16.⁶⁰

Ignorance has produced many wars, but every war produces ignorance. Not knowing what happened, waiting for news, dreading what the future might bring gave Chaplain Charles C. McCabe and his wife months of anguish during the summer of 1863. Today, we can read their correspondence without the agonizing intervals of time that they experienced between letters. We can know from the hundreds of volumes of the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* what happened in June at Winchester, Virginia, the decisive events that soon followed, and why McCabe, hungry, dirty, and barely recovered from typhoid, was not released from prison until October. We know or can find out why the first Methodist congregation to be founded in the capital city of North Dakota still call themselves “McCabe United Methodist Church.”

But which resembles God’s knowledge more—our historical knowledge of an entire sequence of events and its outcome or the McCabe’s anguished ignorance experienced from moment to moment?

Chaplain McCabe’s uncle, Lorenzo Dow McCabe, taught philosophy at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, and he took great interest in what kind of knowledge God really possessed. This was not an abstract or an unanswerable question for him. It related to human life as much as the resolution in favor of emancipation of slaves that he had introduced at the 1862 session of the Cincinnati

⁶⁰ Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 82-109, published long excerpts from Chaplain McCabe’s prison letters to Rebecca McCabe. In Washington, D. C., American University, which McCabe helped to found, has a collection of his papers and has published images of some of his letters to his wife at <http://auislandora.wrlc.org/>.

Annual Conference.⁶¹ It related to the students and others he had counseled thru a long career of teaching and who often experienced anxiety about their standing with God and their personal development of what Methodists called, “holiness.”

McCabe’s uncle began his reasoning from the classic Wesleyan doctrine that God had created a world of freedom and endowed human beings with freedom of choice as far as their relationships with God and each other were concerned. They could choose to love God or not to love God. They could choose to love their neighbors or not to love their neighbors. They could decide who their neighbors really were.

But this meant that salvation—the restoration of a lost soul to God—involved human choices at every point. God would not repossess the divine endowment of human beings with freedom. We could reject all attempts to convince us of our true moral condition. Once convinced of our true moral condition, we could decide against repenting of our sins. Once repenting, we could reject God’s pardon of our sins (justification). Once pardoned, we could resist God’s empowerment of our inner spiritual life (regeneration). Once strengthened in our power to resist evil, we could lose interest in the divine transformation of our souls from a will to sin, to a will to suppress sin, and finally to a will to love as God loves (sanctification).

Spiritual struggle would take place at every point. The outcome could not be foretold. Even a person whose soul God had transformed in the image of God would still be aware—acutely aware—of decisions that had to be made to stay in love with God and neighbors. Because of freedom, the whole of life became a test that gave each human being an opportunity at every point in time to be faithful or unfaithful, to trust that God would pardon or would not pardon, to trust that God would transform or would not transform, to trust that the shed blood of Jesus Christ would bring God and human beings together again or not bring them together.

God’s original decision to grant human beings freedom without conditions had another impact—an impact on divine knowledge itself. Human freedom meant that not even God knew what was going to happen in history. McCabe’s uncle called this “divine nescience” or divine ignorance.

In other words, God’s knowledge resembled the anguished ignorance of Charles C. McCabe and Rebecca McCabe during the summer of 1863 more than it did the historical knowledge we now have about their summer. For McCabe’s uncle whose thoughts and experiences included what happened that summer, this meant that God

⁶¹ Obituary of Lorenzo Dow McCabe, *Western Christian Advocate* (Cincinnati), June 23, 1897, 64: 770-772, viewed at <http://books.google.com> on September 10, 2015.

waited for news about every human decision. It meant that God was a personal being acquainted with suffering, responsive to prayer, and working by means of persuasion for human beings to make better use of their freedom than enslaving each other.⁶²

At the end of May and the beginning of June 1863, President Lincoln did not know how the Confederacy planned to follow up its victory at Chancellorsville. But he had intelligence that suggested the Army of Northern Virginia was reorganizing at the corps level and might move north from its positions on the Rappahannock River.⁶³

In a separate development, on May 30, the Congress of the Confederate States of America, meeting in Richmond, authorized its armies to enslave black prisoners of war or summarily execute them and their white officers. The Southern legislators were acting to oppose Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation which they saw as a cruel incitement to slaves to murder their masters. The War Department of the United States reacted within a few days by suspending the prisoner exchange cartel that had so far kept prison populations to a minimum on both sides.⁶⁴

By June 10, Lincoln had to consider the possibility that most of the Army of Northern Virginia was moving toward the upper Potomac River while keeping a show of force on the south side of the Rappahannock River.⁶⁵ The next day, the commanding general at Winchester in the northeast end of the Shenandoah Valley was ordered to prepare for an evacuation. After dark on June 12, the general telegraphed his superior that hostile forces were approaching. His superior replied with an order to fall back on Harper's Ferry, but it never arrived because the telegraph lines had been cut.⁶⁶

Two days later on June 14, Lincoln and the War Department were still trying to figure out what was going on. By midnight, he concluded that Union forces at Winchester

⁶² Lorenzo Dow McCabe's published his positions in *Light on the Pathways of Holiness* (1871); *The Foreknowledge of God, and Cognate Themes in Theology and Philosophy* (1878), and *Divine Nescience of Future Contingencies a Necessity* (1882). All of these books are available at archive.org or books.google.com. See also Randy L. Maddox, "Seeking a Response-able God: The Wesleyan Tradition and Process Theology," *Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love: Process and Wesleyan Theologies in Dialogue*, ed. Bryan Stone & Tom Oord, Nashville, Tennessee: Kingswood Books, 2001, pp. 111-42, viewed at http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10161/7938/Seeking_a_Response-able_God.pdf?sequence=1 on September 10, 2015; and William R. King, "Lorenzo Dow McCabe," *Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers*, ed. John R. Shook, 4 vols., Bristol, England: Thoemmes Continuum, 2005, 3: 1525.

⁶³ Abraham Lincoln to Joseph Hooker, May 27, 1863; Lincoln to Edwin M. Stanton and Henry W. Halleck, May 29, 1863; Lincoln to Hooker, June 5, 1863, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 8 vols. and index, ed. Roy P. Basler, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1953-1955, 6: 233, 238, 249-251.

⁶⁴ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom; The Civil War Era*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 566, 792. As McPherson pointed out, the implementation of these policies presented many problems.

⁶⁵ Hooker to Lincoln, June 10, 1863; Lincoln to Hooker, June 10, 1863, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 6: 257-258.

⁶⁶ Lincoln to Robert H. Milroy, June 29, 1863, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 6: 308-309. McCabe later gave a more positive assessment of his commanding general (Milroy) than Lincoln's account in this letter. See Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 121-123.

were surrounded. The next evening brought confirmation of this with the news that, after losses of about one-third, they had fought their way out to Harper's Ferry. Lincoln also had a report that the Confederate army was already crossing the Potomac at Williamsport, Maryland, upriver from Washington, D. C.⁶⁷

Invasion had begun. The President called for 100,000 more troops.⁶⁸

Chaplain McCabe wrote his first prisoner of war letter to Rebecca McCabe the next day, June 16, while he and the regimental surgeon, still at Winchester, were tending to the wounded. McCabe had preached to them during the previous weeks and led many to profess faith in a pardoning God. He had sung with them in tent meetings and taught them to sing a new song that began, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."⁶⁹

Within ten days and after being marched to Richmond, he and his wounded friends were incarcerated in Libby Prison or, if enlisted men, in another prison nearby. Before the war, Libby Prison had been used as a warehouse for tobacco, and it was infested with rats and insects. Now, the breakdown of the prisoner exchange cartel rapidly filled it up and overcrowded it. The water supply for the prisoners came from the same canal that they used to dispose of sewage.⁷⁰

McCabe did not know why he was in Richmond instead of being allowed to rejoin his regiment at Harper's Ferry. Although rumors circulated among the prisoners throughout the summer, he would not know until after his release that Lincoln had vowed to execute one rebel prisoner for every black prisoner that the Confederacy executed and to put one rebel prisoner at hard labor for every black prisoner that the Confederacy enslaved.⁷¹

During this summer of ignorance about loved ones and the outside world, McCabe and his fellow officers devoted themselves to education. They identified each other's abilities, formed a college, found a source of books, and offered classes to each other. McCabe learned French from another Methodist chaplain, Louis N. Beaudry.

⁶⁷ *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 6: 273-277 (telegraphic correspondence with Hooker, Benjamin F. Kelley, Robert C. Schenck, and Daniel Tyler).

⁶⁸ "Proclamation Calling for 100,000 Militia," June 15, 1863, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 6: 277-278

⁶⁹ Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 75-79, 194; William E. Ross, "The Singing Chaplain: Bishop Charles Cardwell McCabe and the Popularization of the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic,'" *Methodist History*, 28 (1989): 22-32.

⁷⁰ Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 90, 141-142.

⁷¹ Order of Retaliation (Adjutant General, General Orders No. 252), July 30, 1863, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 6: 357. McCabe probably welcomed what little news he had of this order while in prison. See McCabe, "The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison," in Bristol, p. 138; and *The Libby Chronicle, Devoted to Facts and Fun, A True Copy of the Libby Chronicle as Written by the Prisoners of Libby in 1863*, Albany, New York: Louis N. Beaudry, 1889, p. 35 (October 2, 1863).

Beaudry edited the prison's clandestine newspaper, which he published on whatever materials he could find in an edition of one copy circulated by means of one prisoner reading it aloud to others. He filled it with announcements about the college, whatever news from beyond the walls he could obtain, and dark humor about prison life. The chaplains held regular meetings for the prisoners on Sundays, and McCabe led them in singing.⁷²

On the Fourth of July, they had not yet heard the astonishing news that Rebecca McCabe, waiting in Jamestown, Ohio, surely knew by then. But they stitched together an American flag from fragments of their own clothing, suspended it from a beam in the ceiling of Libby Prison, and celebrated the birth of the United States until prison officials tore it down.⁷³

After the Civil War ended, McCabe remembered that they received the news two days later on July 6. Some question remains about the precise date when the news came because the Richmond newspapers, even if they had it, did not report it for several more days. In any event, an African American, known to the prisoners only as "Old Ben," sold newspapers to them. One day, possibly July 6, his papers reported the defeat of the Army of Northern Virginia at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on July 3 and its retreat back across the Potomac. As soon as the news spread, McCabe started the prisoners singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and they sang until ordered to stop.⁷⁴

Then, on July 8, a black prisoner, a Union soldier in a regiment from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, who had been made the prison janitor, told what he had just learned about July 4, the day they raised the American flag in Libby Prison. On that day, the Confederates surrendered Vicksburg, Mississippi, to General Grant and, along with it, the Mississippi River.⁷⁵

The prisoners sang again to praise God. They never forgot the day they raised the flag in Richmond.⁷⁶

In September, Chaplain McCabe became seriously ill with typhoid. He went to the prison hospital where a fellow prisoner, William H. Powell, a Presbyterian, nursed him. On October 3, he dictated to Powell what he believed would be his last letter to

⁷² Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 94-97, 101, 104; *The Libby Chronicle*, throughout.

⁷³ McCabe, "Bright Side," in Bristol, pp. 133-135.

⁷⁴ McCabe, "Bright Side," in Bristol, pp. 135-136. See McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 648, on the question of the date that Richmond received accurate news of Gettysburg.

⁷⁵ McCabe, "Bright Side," in Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 136-137.

⁷⁶ Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (1872), chapter 55, recorded another collective experience of what participants believed to be an apotheosis of the American flag at the time of Gettysburg and Vicksburg.

Rebecca McCabe. He had told her in previous letters that he was sick, but, even in this last letter from prison, he tried to reassure her and calm the increasing anxiety she had expressed in her letters. “The fever is almost gone.”⁷⁷

He did not know that this was true or that he would soon get well and go home to his wife and son in a general release of chaplains. Looking back on what he called his journey to “the gates of death,” he remembered that he received a letter from his conference about this time. The letter explained that, when the Ohio Annual Conference assembled in Lancaster on September 9 and Bishop Osman C. Baker called the roll, no answer came from Charles C. McCabe. Others responded, “he is in Libby Prison.” The bishop stopped the roll call, reminded some two hundred fifty preachers of the story of Paul and Silas in prison, and asked them to pray for McCabe’s release before the roll call continued.

McCabe connected receiving this letter with the moment of his recovery. “I was used to suffering; I could endure loneliness without tears, but I was not used to tenderness, and that tender letter broke me down. The tears rolled down my cheeks like rain. As soon as I could control myself, I began to sing.”⁷⁸

After his release, Chaplain McCabe continued to work for the health and spiritual welfare of Union soldiers and became an extraordinarily successful fundraiser for the United States Christian Commission. In 1865, at the end of the war, he turned his experiences in Libby Prison into a lecture, “The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison,” which he originally delivered to the children of First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, at the request of their pastor.⁷⁹

In 1868 he was elected Corresponding Secretary of the Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He served in this office until 1884, raising unprecedented sums of money for the church. He visited Dakota Territory several times in the early 1880’s and obtained financing to open many of today’s United Methodist congregations.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 108-109, 111.

⁷⁸ McCabe, “Bright Side,” in Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, pp. 142-143. *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1863*, New York: Carlton & Porter, [1863], p. 159. The story of Paul and Silas may be read at Acts 16:25-40 in the Bible.

⁷⁹ McCabe, “Bright Side,” in Bristol, *Life of Chaplain McCabe*, p. 119; Lemuel Moss, *Annals of the United States Christian Commission*, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1868. The United States Christian Commission provided medical, social, and religious services to Union soldiers.

⁸⁰ Ross, “The Singing Chaplain,” *Methodist History*, 28 (1989): 22-32; *Northwestern Christian Advocate* (Chicago), March 31, 1880, # 1418, p. 5, col. 5.; August 4, 1880, # 1436, p. 5, col. 5.; August 18, 1880, # 1438, p. 5, col. 4; October 6, 1880, # 1445, p. 5, col. 2; January 24, 1883, # 1565, p. 5, cols. 2-3; August 22, 1883, # 1595, p. 6, col. 3; John G. Palmer, *Palmer’s Directory of the Methodist Episcopal Church for Dakota Conference*, Huron, Dakota: Huronite Printing House, 1888, pp. 84, 135.

Toward the end of his life, he returned to North Dakota and South Dakota as the presiding bishop of their Methodist Episcopal conferences. Conference members thanked him for his work planting their churches, and they asked to hear “The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison” one more time.⁸¹

*Evangelische Gemeinschaft,
Yellow Bank Township, Lac Qui Parle County, Minnesota, May 4-7, 1883*

The seed came first, then the German farmers from Russia.

The details of how they came remain something of a mystery. At the end of the Civil War in 1865, the United States Department of Agriculture obtained a quantity of Odessa wheat, one of many varieties of hard winter wheat then grown on the Russian steppes north of the Black Sea. It planted some of the seed as part of its own experiments and sent some to a Minnesota congressman for distribution to farmers in the state.⁸²

In 1865, the United States did not grow a lot of hard winter wheat or hard spring wheat. Even though hard wheats produced higher yields and resisted drought, cold, pests, and disease better than the varieties of wheat grown in the Eastern states, the kernels turned into powder under traditional stone milling. So, bran, endosperm, and germ mixed inseparably and made flour that most Americans did not want.⁸³

Sometime in June of 1870, Friedrich Frankhauser (also known as Frederick Frankhouse), member of a Swiss family and a Union veteran of the Civil War, and his wife, Emma (Movius) Frankhauser, moved from Sauk Centre, Minnesota, and settled on Section 33 of Township 121 North, Range 45 West of the 5th Principal Meridian and Baseline. This section of the United States Rectangular Land Survey lay in the upper reaches of the Minnesota River Valley on the north side of the river in what is

⁸¹ *Minutes of the Dakota Annual Conference* (1898); *Minutes of the North Dakota Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1900); *Minutes of the North Dakota Annual Conference* (1906).

⁸² J. Allen Clark, John H. Martin, and Carleton R. Ball, "Classification of American Wheat Varieties," *United States Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 1074* (November 8, 1922), pp. 107-108 viewed at <https://archive.org/details/classificationof00clar> on September 21, 2015). The Minnesota congressman was Ignatius Donnelly. Additional references to experimentation with Russian wheat varieties during the 1860's appeared in the annual *Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture* for that decade.

⁸³ Mark Alfred Carleton, "Hard Wheats Winning Their Way," *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture 1914*, Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1915, pp. 391-420 viewed at <https://archive.org/details/yoa1914> on September 21, 2015.

now Big Stone County. As soon as more settlers arrived, the residents formed a board and named their township, “Odessa.”⁸⁴

County officials interviewed in the early 20th century stated that the township had been named after the city of Odessa in southern Russia where seed wheat planted in the township originated.⁸⁵

An early history of the Minnesota River Valley, published in 1882, recorded the first religious services held in the township. They took place in the home of Friedrich and Emma Frankhauser. August Schmidt from the Minnesota Conference of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* (Evangelical Association) conducted the services.⁸⁶

In other words, the Frankhausers began to practice European American agriculture in a township named for the new kind of wheat it (and possibly they) first raised, and they were deeply involved in a small Christian congregation. This pattern would show up again and again during major changes in the processes that enabled people to eat in the late 19th century. Experimentation with varieties of wheat and participation in religious communities converged during a transformation of agronomy and milling technology that extended wheat production onto the Great Plains and, by the First World War, made it a vast and successful enterprise.

Friedrich Frankhauser married into a family that helped to start up and manage the production of wheat in Dakota Territory and, later, North Dakota. Frankhauser’s wife, Emma Movius, was the daughter of Dr. John William Movius and Henriette (Bratz) Movius.⁸⁷ Dr. Movius grew up as a Lutheran in Prussia, and, by the time he and his family immigrated to Minnesota shortly after the Civil War, he seems to have

⁸⁴ Edward D. Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley*..., Minneapolis: North Star Publishing Company, 1882, p. 979 viewed at <https://archive.org/details/historyofminneso00nort> on September 21, 2015.

⁸⁵ Warren Upham, “Minnesota Geographic Names: Their Origin and Historic Significance,” *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 17 (1920): 53, 55 viewed at <https://archive.org/details/minnesotageogra00uphagoog> on September 21, 2015. It is not clear from this study whether the township board named the township for “Odessa wheat,” a particular variety of wheat, or for another variety of wheat that simply came from Odessa. In either case, the variety of wheat would have been a hard wheat because farmers on the Russian steppes grew hard wheat varieties.

⁸⁶ Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley*, p. 979. See also Albert H. Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association, 1856 to 1922*, Cleveland, Ohio: Evangelical Press, n.d., 1: 391-392. The *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* (Evangelical Association) was a corporate ancestor of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (1946) which participated in the merger that formed The United Methodist Church in 1968. At one point in the corporate descent, it was known as the *Evangelische Kirche* (Evangelical Church). This should not be confused with the *Evangelische Kirche* of contemporary Germany which is a federation of Lutheran and Reformed synods and congregations.

⁸⁷ *Memorial and biographical record; an illustrated compendium of biography, containing a compendium of local biography, including biographical sketches of prominent old settlers and representative citizens of South Dakota*..., Chicago: G. A. Ogle & Co., 1899, p. 260 viewed at <http://files.usgwarchives.net/sd/biography/memor99/frankhauser.txt> on September 1, 2015. Editions of this work published before 1899 do not include this biography of Emma Frankhauser’s son, William Frankhauser.

learned both medicine and milling.⁸⁸ When he settled with his family in 1870 in Big Stone County, Minnesota, they affiliated with a congregation of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* that was developing in Yellow Bank Township south of the Minnesota River in what is now Lac Qui Parle County.⁸⁹ By the end of 1874, he and his sons completed construction of a mill on the Whetstone River above its juncture with the Minnesota River as well as buildings that would become part of Big Stone City, Dakota Territory.⁹⁰

Dr. Movius' children began to build family wealth during the 1870's thru a combination of farming, retailing, and finance. Their multiple enterprises included the mill, farm machinery sales, and the Movius Land and Loan Company, which bought and sold land and made loans with land as security.⁹¹

These years proved to be a time of tremendous hard work and great physical danger. Two of Dr. Movius' sons, Emil and John, one barely twenty and the other still a teenager, had a government contract to deliver mail from Big Stone City to the Sisseton Indian Agency and Watertown, both in Dakota Territory. During the winter of 1877, a blizzard caught John on his way to Watertown, and he nearly froze to death.⁹² That fall, they lost their father who died during a trip to New Ulm, Minnesota.⁹³

Even so, by the end of the decade, the family was benefiting from the extension of the Hastings and Dakota Division of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway into Dakota Territory. The coming of the railroad attracted more inhabitants to the area in and around Big Stone City.⁹⁴

The small congregation of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in Yellow Bank Township across the border in Minnesota where the Movius family worshipped also prospered. It built its first church building in 1879 and a replacement in 1881.⁹⁵ Another of Dr. Movius' sons, Ernest F. Movius, became a pastor in the Minnesota Conference of the

⁸⁸ Clement A. Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People*, Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917, 3 vols., 2: 327 viewed at <https://archive.org/details/northdakotahisto02loun> on September 21, 2015.

⁸⁹ W. R. Movius became class leader at Yellow Bank in 1876, Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association*, 1: 391.

⁹⁰ Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley*, pp. 990, 992.

⁹¹ Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley*, pp. 990, 991, 992, 994.

⁹² Zena [Zdena] Irma Trinkka, *Out Where the West Begins Being the Early and Romantic History of North Dakota*, St. Paul: The Pioneer Company, 1920, pp. 288-290, viewed at archive.org on September 9, 2015. Trinkka, pp. vi-vii, indicated that she interviewed several members of the Movius family at Lidgerwood.

⁹³ Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People*, 2: 328

⁹⁴ Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley*, p. 990

⁹⁵ Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association*, p. 392.

Evangelische Gemeinschaft about this time. His first appointments included Pembina, Casselton, and Fargo up and down the Red River Valley.⁹⁶

In 1887, Emil A. Movius and John H. Movius moved their business operations to Lidgerwood in Richland County at the upper or south end of the Red River Valley. Their brother, William R. Movius, followed in 1890 and established the Lidgerwood Milling Company “in the heart of one of the best wheat producing regions in the world.”⁹⁷ In North Dakota, the family expanded into banking and lumber. By the First World War, the land and loan company had \$250,000 of capital, and the First National Bank of Lidgerwood had deposits of \$565,000. All of these businesses were connected and held within the extended family. Pastor Ernest F. Movius retired here for health reasons after serving as a presiding elder in the Dakota Conference of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*. He then worked on the family lumber business. When Emil died in 1916, his sister, Mary A. Movius, became President of First National Bank.⁹⁸

On the eve of the First World War, however, competitive pressure was building on the family. Minnesota’s early days of lumbering had produced enough wealth to finance investment not only in railroad expansion but also in new milling technology. Just as the Movius family arrived in Big Stone County, Minnesota, in 1870, a mill in Minneapolis installed a new purifier that could separate the parts of the wheat kernel more completely. Then, at the end of the decade, another milling company designed a rolling mill that it eventually constructed out of steel rolls. Milling with steel rolls instead of the traditional millstones resulted in “a crushing and flaking of the kernel instead of pulverization.” When separated from other parts of the seed by means of a purifier, the flour produced from hard wheat became acceptable to consumers.⁹⁹

These developments back east stimulated breeding and cultivation of hard wheats that were very adaptable to the environment of the Great Plains, including the durum varieties that made North Dakota a leading wheat producer. But milling soon became a large-scale enterprise that required correspondingly large investments in machinery.

⁹⁶ Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association*, 1: 89, 111, 116, 120. Trinkka, *Out Where the West Begins*, p. 187, stated that Movius was appointed to Fargo in 1879, but Utzinger, reading from conference journals, dated his first conference appointment as 1876 in Minnesota and his first appointment in Dakota Territory as 1881 in Fargo.

⁹⁷ Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People*, 2: 362

⁹⁸ Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People*, 2: 327, 328, 399. The amounts of money cited would appear closer to their great value if adjusted for inflation and expressed in today’s dollars.

⁹⁹ Carleton, "Hard Wheats Winning Their Way," *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture 1914*, p. 391; Charles Byron Kuhlmann, *The Development of the Flour Milling Industry in the United States with Special Reference to the Industry in Minneapolis*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929 (Kuhlmann examined *The Northwestern Miller*); Elwyn B. Robinson, *History of North Dakota*, Fargo: North Dakota State University Institute for Regional Studies, 1995 (reprinting University of Nebraska Press, 1966), pp. 135-136; Wayne G. Broehl, Jr., *Cargill: Trading the World's Grain*, Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1992, pp. 55-60; William Lass, *Minnesota: A History*, Second edition, New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1998, pp. 163-164.

Large investments at Minneapolis eventually created General Mills, Pillsbury, and Cargill whose operations and ability to control the flow of wheat from the farmer to the baker outmatched the Lidgerwood Milling Company.¹⁰⁰

The fortunes of the Movius family shed light on one path that 19th-century German-speaking Americans took into American society. Within two generations, from Dr. Movius to his sons and daughters, the family achieved wealth and high standing in their community. Emigrating from Prussia as Lutherans, they affiliated with the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in Yellow Bank Township. But in Lidgerwood, North Dakota, something more happened. William R. Movius joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Emil A. Movius joined the Protestant Episcopal Church. John H. Movius remained with the Evangelical Association, but he married a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Increasingly, the family spoke the English language.¹⁰¹

Their brother-in-law, Friedrich Frankhauser, followed another path. His wife, Emma Movius, died in 1885. He moved his family of five children to Eureka, South Dakota, in 1889. There, his eldest son, William, raised and shipped cattle and married Martha Saueressig who went to school with him in Big Stone City. William Frankhauser joined a congregation of the *Nordwest Deutsche Konferenz* of the Methodist Episcopal Church while his wife held membership in the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*.¹⁰²

Both, however, held their church membership in congregations that spoke the German language. In fact, unlike Lidgerwood, North Dakota, German could often be heard on the streets of Eureka. But the Frankhausers had to get used to the German usually spoken on the streets of Eureka because it was the kind that German farmers from Russia spoke. Many of the inhabitants of Eureka came from small towns near Odessa—not Odessa Township in Minnesota but the great Black Sea port of Odessa that shipped wheat to the world.

The northern shore of the Black Sea played a historic role in the expansion of Christianity into Ukraine and Russia. It lay midway between ancient Nicaea and Chalcedon where the Nicene Creed emerged and Kiev where the Russian Orthodox

¹⁰⁰ Robinson, *History of North Dakota*, pp. 248-250. The Lidgerwood Milling Company was purchased and became a cooperative, *The Operative Miller* (Chicago), 22 (1917): 54, 329 viewed at <https://books.google.com> on September 9, 2015. “The Movius Elevator, situated at Lidgerwood, N.D., has been purchased by the Osborne-McMillan Company,” *The American Elevator and Grain Trade* (Chicago), 39 (1920): 230 viewed at <https://archive.org/stream/CAT31053470331> on August 31, 2015. The Osborne-McMillan Company was a Cargill family holding, Broehl, *Cargill: Trading the World's Grain*, p. 58.

¹⁰¹ Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People*, 2: 327, 329, 365; Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association*, 1: 391.

¹⁰² *Memorial and biographical record of South Dakota* (1899), p. 260.

Church began. But, eventually, in the middle of the sixteenth century, it became part of the Ottoman Empire, and Russia took control away from the Muslims only after a series of conquests at the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁰³

Tsarina Catherine the Great founded Odessa in 1794 as the capital of “New Russia.” Her government invited German farmers to establish colonies north of the Black Sea. It valued their practical knowledge of agriculture, and it needed to develop a large population in southern Russia.

When Napoleon Bonaparte turned east from Haiti and invaded south Germany, many farmers suffering from the disruption of life in Baden, Wurttemberg, and the Upper Palatinate responded to renewed invitations. Both Catholics and Protestants emigrated. The Protestants included Lutherans and Reformed (Calvinists), and some came from parts of Germany where Pietism had affected universities and congregations. Pietism, similarly to Methodism in Britain, emphasized individual growth in love and the goal of sanctification and, to accomplish this, meeting in small groups for devotional reading of the Bible and prayer. Like Wesley and the early Methodists, they had difficult relations with state-sponsored churches.¹⁰⁴

Ludwig Bette, a German farmer born in Russia in 1821, worshipped under the leadership of a pastor who was both Reformed and Pietist. His pastor got in trouble with the *Fürsorgekomitee der Ausländischen Ansiedler in Süd-Russland* that the Russian government had authorized to license and regulate pastors for the German immigrants. Bette, his pastor, and several families in their congregation decided to move to the United States in 1849.¹⁰⁵

They left Russia by a very different way than their families had come after Napoleon invaded south Germany. They traveled by ship across the ocean. Bette and his family settled in Ohio where he worked first as a farm laborer. In 1854, he began purchasing

¹⁰³ *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan and others, 3 vols., New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, 1: 418-419 under “Cherson”; *The Cambridge History of Russia*, 3 vols., vol. 2 ed. Dominic Lieven, Cambridge, New York, and other places: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 2: 30; Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987.

¹⁰⁴ George Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, Freeman, South Dakota: Pine Hill Press, 1977, p. 4; Eric Lund (ed.), *Documents from the History of Lutheranism, 1517-1750*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002, pp. 279-280. Renate Bridenthal, “Germans from Russia: The Political Network of a Double Diaspora,” *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*, ed. Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin, University of Michigan Press, 2005, pp. 187-218, examined Rath, Richard Sallet, and other first-generation scholars of the German Russians.

¹⁰⁵ Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, pp. 30-51.

land on Kelley's Island in Lake Eire not far from Sandusky. There, as Lewis Beatty, he planted a vineyard and made wine for the rest of his life.¹⁰⁶

Beatty's pastor did not settle in Ohio with him. So, Beatty and his family joined a German Reformed congregation when it was established in 1855 in Sandusky with a mission on Kelley's Island. The *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* later took over responsibility for supplying a pastor to his congregation. He joined and remained an Evangelical.¹⁰⁷

The Evangelical Association had many congregations in Ohio. It expanded into Ohio from Pennsylvania where it originated in the first decade of the 19th century in Lancaster County. Jacob Albright, a Lutheran who began a ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church, brought together other German-speaking pastors and formed a denomination organized and governed like a Methodist conference but dedicated to reaching German-speaking people with the message and experience of sanctification.¹⁰⁸

So, the Evangelical Association could not be described accurately as an immigrant church. Instead, it should be described as an American denomination that spoke German and originated among the Pennsylvania Dutch. The Pennsylvania Dutch descended largely from early 18th-century Germans who left the Rhineland or Lower Palatinate, a different part of Germany than the region that supplied Russia with German farmers in the Napoleonic era.

The Evangelical Association appealed to Lewis Beatty even though it did not to most German Russians who immigrated to the United States. They preferred to remain Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, or Mennonite. However, because of Beatty, many of them found their way to Dakota Territory.

In 1872, Beatty returned to Johannestal, his German colony or small town near Odessa, for a visit to family members who had stayed there. He encouraged them and their neighbors to emigrate, and his news of life in the United States fell on listening ears. Tsar Alexander II had announced just the previous year that he would soon institute universal military conscription even though the German colonists had been specifically exempted from military service as an inducement to immigrate.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, pp. 45-47; Lewis Cass Aldrich (ed.), *History of Eire County, Ohio*, Syracuse, New York: D. Mason & Co., Publishers, 1889, p. 547, and see also pp. 627-628 on Beatty's in-law, August Schaedler (August Scheller).

¹⁰⁷ Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, pp. 47; Aldrich (ed.), *History of Eire County, Ohio*, pp. 358-361.

¹⁰⁸ J. Bruce Behney and Paul H. Eller, *The History of the Evangelical United Brethren Church*, ed. Kenneth W. Krueger, Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon, 1979, pp. 67-84.

¹⁰⁹ Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, pp. 54-60. Aldrich (ed.), *History of Eire County, Ohio*, p. 547, gave 1879 as the date of a trip that Beatty took to Odessa to bring back two of his sisters, but Rath offered evidence from passports

Three groups of German Russian farmers then immigrated to the United States. They boarded trains in Odessa and traveled to Berlin and then to Hamburg on the North Sea where they took ships for Britain. From Britain they sailed to New York City. They traveled again by rail to Sandusky, Ohio, near Beatty's American home while they sent scouts to look for good land west of the Mississippi River. After many disappointing trips, the scouts returned with good news about Dakota Territory. So, the immigrants boarded a train for Yankton where the James River flowed into the Missouri River, and they found good, unclaimed land to the north. Here, they settled and planted the Russian seed that they brought with them.¹¹⁰

Many more would follow especially after revolutionaries assassinated Alexander II in 1881 and Russia made Jews and foreigners unwelcome. On the Great Plains, the German farmers from Russia raised hard wheats from seed that agronomists in the Russian government had helped them to breed and to cultivate with moisture-conserving techniques like deep furrow ploughing. Scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture recognized the windfall that immigration was creating for the country's food supply and developed the agronomy further.¹¹¹

The German Russian farmers continued to come by the thousands until the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and Congress stopped the flow. Back in 1872, Lewis Beatty, a winemaker who lived on an island in Lake Eire, worshipped in the Evangelical Association, and never set foot on the Great Plains, noticed the cask and helped to open the spigot.

and other travel documents for the date of the 1872 trip. It is possible, of course, that he took more than one trip. For reconstructing the beginning of German Russian immigration to Dakota Territory, scholars have also used the memories of Friedrich Mutschelknaus, "Migration of the First German Russians to Dakota: Memories of the Years 1872-73," *Dakota Freie Presse* (Yankton, South Dakota), November 11, 1924, summarized at http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/history_culture/history/migration.html. See Richard Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States*, trans. LaVern J. Rippley and Armand Bauer, Fargo, North Dakota: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974, pp. 22-23, 126n9. The Germans from Russia Heritage Society, Bismarck, North Dakota, maintains an extensive historical database of individual German Russians in North Dakota and South Dakota, and Timothy J. Koberdanz, "Volksdeutsche: The Eastern European Germans," *Plains Folk; North Dakota's Ethnic History*, ed. William C. Sherman and Playford V. Thorson, Fargo, North Dakota: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, 1988, pp. 117-182, outlined their history. See *Cambridge History of Russia*, 2: 388, 544-546, on the universal military conscription begun in 1874.

¹¹⁰ Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas* pp. 67-73.

¹¹¹ *Cambridge History of Russia*, 2: 197-199, 317-318, 609, 638-639; David Moon, *The Plough that Broke the Steppes: Agriculture and Environment on Russia's Grasslands, 1700-1914*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode, *Creating Abundance: Biological Innovation and American Agricultural Development*, New York and other cities: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 17-63; Carleton, "Hard Wheats Winning Their Way," *Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture 1914*, pp. 399-400 (Carleton's tribute to the Russian Mennonites who introduced Turkey wheat into Kansas and helped to make hard winter wheat a major crop in the United States); Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States*, p. viii; K. S. Quisenberry and L. P. Reitz, "Turkey Wheat: The Cornerstone of an Empire," *Agricultural History*, 48 (1974): 98-110, viewed at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3741420> on September 18, 2015.

The Minnesota Conference of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* held its annual session for 1883 from May 4 thru May 7 in the new church building of Yellow Bank Township, Lac Qui Parle County.¹¹² Throughout the 1870's, an increasing number of conference pastors entering Dakota Territory had come here and headed north to Richland County and the Red River Valley or south and west to the James River Valley where they met German Russian farmers moving up from Yankton in search of new land.

To the east of the church, the Minnesota River, flowing out of Big Stone Lake, created large, forested marshes that hid the wildlife whose sounds broke the stillness of the lengthening spring days. To the west, a few miles away in Dakota Territory, tall grass rose up to the Coteau des Prairies and its hills and lakes. Many people were crossing over to the Territory, and more were on their way.

So, the Minnesota Conference voted to create the Dakota Conference of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* if General Conference approved. They divided the Minnesota Conference as a pastor would take bread, give thanks, break the bread, and give it to the people.

Albert College, Belleville, Ontario, Dominion of Canada, Spring Semester 1886

William Hyde was twenty-three years old and at the end of his senior year when the President of Albert College on the northeastern shore of Lake Ontario called him to the office. Hyde's work in philosophy, mathematics, and rhetoric had impressed the President, and he wanted to visit with the young man about his prospects.¹¹³

Had he ever thought of teaching? Not very seriously.

Was he still thinking of the ministry? He had decided on it.

¹¹² Utzinger, *History of the Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Association*, 1: 118-122, 392.

¹¹³ The sources of my account of William Hyde start with his autobiography, *Dig or Die, Brother Hyde*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954, written at the end of his life with the assistance of Harriet Harmon Dexter. Pp. 9-63 cover the period treated here. Autobiography presents considerable problems for a historian because an individual's memory and point of view intervene between the historian and events in a way that documents contemporaneous with events do not. At the same time, autobiography offers a window into the meaning of events for an individual that archives cannot. For example, the references to larks on pp. 33 and 253 make clear that these birds had personal symbolic importance for Hyde, and I have indicated this at the end of my account here. I have also verified Hyde's story and widened its context with the help of *Map of the Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways of Canada and Their Connections*, 1885, a timetable map viewed at <http://www.davidrumsey.com> (pub_list_no="5263.000") on September 6, 2015; *Map of the Railways and Extensions of the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company*, New York: G. W. & C. B. Colton and Co., 1881, viewed at <http://www.loc.gov/resource/g4061p.rr003780/> on September 4, 2015; Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism*, Montreal and Buffalo, New York, 1996; and the other sources cited below.

The President picked up a sheaf of letters requesting ministers and started leafing thru it.

What if they wanted a married man? Hyde thought he could arrange it.

What about a well-established church in a prosperous community, good finances, and good educational facilities?

For a moment, Hyde imagined this future. He and the young woman who loved him and whom he loved would marry during the coming summer. She would have friends and music. Money would not be a big worry. They could start a family.

But he hesitated.

The President looked quickly thru some more letters that asked for an older man or evidently expressed a bad feeling in the congregation or needed someone who spoke French.

What about going down to Toronto to become an assistant in a large congregation? Hyde said he wanted to start with a smaller church and work up.

Then the President came to the letter at the bottom of the pile. A former student at Albert College, Dr. A. D. Traveller, had sent it. The Bay of Quinte Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada admitted Traveller into full connection in 1862, the year before Hyde was born. Traveller served a number of years in Canada and then responded to a call for pastors to volunteer as missionaries to Dakota Territory. Soon, he became presiding elder of the Aberdeen District.¹¹⁴

When Traveller promptly replied to the letter Hyde wrote him, he offered Hyde the same terms that he himself had accepted when he volunteered: pay your own railroad fare and raise your own salary. If you turn out to be the wrong man, only your fare back to Canada would be paid.

What possessed Hyde to accept such terms and to move to a frontier region of another country, and why did the young woman who wanted to marry him agree to wait two years until he came back for her?

¹¹⁴ *Northwestern Christian Advocate* (Chicago), April 21, 1915, 63: 404. According to this report of Traveller's fiftieth wedding anniversary celebration in Los Angeles, California, he hosted an early, informal meeting in Morrisburg, Ontario, where he was pastor, about the union of Canada's various Methodist and Wesleyan churches. After his service in Dakota Territory, he became corresponding secretary of the Chicago Home Mission and Church Extension Society and helped to open some eighty-five churches.

“I wanted to work with people who were on the frontiers of life, both geographic and spiritual...,” he explained many years later. He wanted to work with people who themselves worked with rain and wind and sun and soil “for whom religion would be something basic and elemental, not a fringe around the edge of a multitude of other interests.”¹¹⁵

The summer before his senior year, Hyde and Minnie Grill, whom he later returned to Canada to marry and take to the frontier they had talked about, formed a music group with friends. One Sunday, the “Hallelujah Band” went out into the country to hold an evening worship service at a schoolhouse. The band sang and played. One of the men in the band preached for about fifteen minutes, and then, Hyde gave the “exhortation.”

In 19th-century Methodist revival worship, the exhorter made a practical application of the sermon and might include personal testimony. The exhortation was supposed to encourage people to face their own moral condition and repent of their own sin. Hyde recalled for the farm families that made up his Sunday evening congregation an earlier time in his own life when he was sitting with his family in the small Wesleyan Church they attended. The people were singing, “Just as I am without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me.” He got up and walked down to the altar during the singing. His father and his oldest sister came down to kneel with him and support him. He made a simple, one-sentence declaration that he accepted the promises of Jesus.

Hyde then described for the schoolhouse congregation the sense of peace that had, years ago, come over him. The experience had not involved any disturbing emotions or a need to express them in public, only this great peace.

Then he made the point of his exhortation. That very evening, a parent might come forward and kneel with a child, or a child might lead a parent. Everyone needed God’s help to live life. More will come of your life, he said, with God than without.

What happened next weighed on Hyde and the woman he later married and helped them to make a decision about their own lives. One of the meanest men in the community that lived around the schoolhouse, a man who always waited outside in his wagon while his wife and two daughters went to church, had been listening somewhere near the door. He walked in and put his hands on the back of one of the school benches.

¹¹⁵ *Dig or Die, Brother Hyde*, p. 21

No one knew what to expect. A kind word had not come out of his mouth for years, and his face gave a look to his voice. But then he confessed what he had done to everybody. He had a third daughter, Rose, who died, and ever since her death he cursed God and hated his wife, his other daughters, and his neighbors because no one did anything to save her. But in her dying, Rose had asked her father to come to Jesus with her. Now, he said, the memory of her words had brought him.

His wife and daughters came to him, and the congregation prayed for him.

The undeniability of this change for the better in another human being contributed to Hyde's sense of himself as someone whom God was using to help other people. He also understood that his ability to use words to affect people and all his education at Albert College had a greater purpose than accumulating wealth for himself and his family.

For many—perhaps most—United Methodists today as well as members of other Christian denominations and for many people who do not participate in any church, the rituals of revival make the 19th century a very different time. On the other hand, attempts to revive the revival and its language of sin and conversion can still, more than a century later, generate very emotional reactions ranging all the way from “that’s exactly what we need” to revulsion at the potential for psychological coercion and simplistic grouping of all human problems—like the grief of the mean man who repented at Hyde’s exhortation—under the category of “sin.”¹¹⁶

Even though the 19th century was a different time, it will not be over as long as the issues it raised are still contested in the emotional lives of living people.

Furthermore, the rhetoric of the call of God to ministry, which 19th-century Methodists expected to hear from those who wanted to preach, can be abused as much as the rituals of revival. A claim to have heard from God can hide from oneself and others ambition, self-righteousness, or the absence of any real sense of direction.

Many people today, some confessing Christian faith and others denying any religious aspect to their lives, would scoff at Hyde’s sense of being called by God either because they do not believe that God acts in such a personal way on individuals or because they find the notion of “God” to be baffling or preposterous. However, on the basis of the available evidence, Hyde’s own sense that he had been called to

¹¹⁶ As evidenced in *Dig or Die, Brother Hyde*, Hyde had the capacity to tell the difference between the mean man’s grief and what he did with his grief that hurt others.

preach cannot be reduced to some hidden project for material gain. Whatever it was that he experienced and labeled, “the call to preach,” mobilized his abilities, gave direction to his life, and integrated his personality. Decades of service, commitment to the woman who loved him, and willingness to forego material comforts, demonstrated the reality and the authenticity of what 19th-century Methodism signified as conversion and the call to preach.

Hyde had some appreciation for the issues that revivals still raise for people today because he was a member of the Methodist Church in Canada. The Methodist Church, founded in 1884, two years before he graduated from Albert College, united the Methodist Church of Canada and the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada. The Methodist Church of Canada traced its roots directly to Britain, but the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada developed as United Empire Loyalists migrated from the United States to Upper Canada (Ontario) after the American Revolution, which they had opposed.¹¹⁷ The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada had great numerical strength in the Bay of Quinte region on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, and it established Albert College there to educate its young men and women.

Although Hyde graduated from Albert College, he grew up and was converted in what he called a “Wesleyan Methodist Church.”¹¹⁸ The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada traced its roots to British Methodism, not to the United Empire Loyalists who started the Methodist Episcopal Church and insisted on church government by bishops. The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada participated in a merger that created the Methodist Church of Canada in 1874.¹¹⁹

Hyde showed his British Methodist roots when he described his own conversion as peaceful but not highly expressive. The tradition of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, on the other hand, encouraged greater expression of emotion as a necessary shock to the moral condition of human beings whom revivalists tried to redeem.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Barbara Heck and Philip Embury, German-speaking Irish Palatine Methodists in New York City, became United Empire Loyalists after the American Revolution and moved to Upper Canada (Ontario), Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, pp. 24, 42. A. T. Foster, Presiding Elder, Grand Forks District, *Minutes of the North Dakota Annual Conference* (1889), p. 25 (see also p. 40) reported that four lineal descendants of Philip Embury were converted at Walhalla during “one of the most extensive revivals ever known in the history of North Dakota Methodism.”

¹¹⁸ *Dig or Die, Brother Hyde*, pp. 13-14. Hyde's parents immigrated to Upper Canada (Ontario) from Britain, pp. 12, 24. The “Wesleyan Methodist Church” of Hyde's youth and conversion should not be confused with the “Wesleyan Church” of the 21st-century that began in a dispute with the Methodist Episcopal Church (U.S.A.) over slavery in the United States.

¹¹⁹ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, p. 5, gave a chart that traced all the mergers that led to the Methodist Church in 1884. A further merger with other Protestant denominations created the United Church of Canada in 1925.

¹²⁰ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, pp. 128-131.

William Hyde did not know how the ministry to which he had been called would turn out when he boarded a train in Belleville, Ontario, one day in June of 1886. The Grand Trunk and Great Western Railway of Canada got him to Toronto and then to Detroit where it stopped for a customs official of the United States to ask him his destination and inspect his hand trunk (cash gifts from Methodist churches in Belleville to establish a new church, clothes, books from Albert College classes, Bible, Methodist hymnal, tintype of a young woman). All he knew of the United States until that point came from books he had read in college and stories he had heard from escaped slaves who had followed the North Star to Canada and settled near the Bay of Quinte.¹²¹

Michigan and Indiana passed by the rest of the day until the train stopped in the heart of a vast network of rails and ties that fed the economy of Chicago. At Dearborn Station, he took a horse car to the Young Men's Christian Association and stayed the night. The next morning, he got on another train and traveled thru the forests of Wisconsin for most of the day. He crossed the Mississippi River and stayed that night in Minneapolis.

On the third day, he saw grain elevators and flour mills rising against the morning sky before he traveled the Hastings and Dakota Division of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway (the Milwaukee Road). Once it carried him across central Minnesota, the train turned up the northeast bank of the Minnesota River at the Upper Sioux Agency where a few Native Americans had been allowed to resettle after the war of 1862. Up into Lac Qui Parle County and Big Stone County beyond it, past a railway village named Odessa and Ortonville, then, the Minnesota River narrowing, the train crossed over into Dakota Territory.

After Millbank Junction, now riding westward, the passengers rose with the land and the tall grass to the summit of the Coteau des Prairies and Waubay and Webster and Bristol and Andover. The steam-powered engine of the locomotive overcame the distances between these small towns with speeds unknown before Hyde's birth. When the train started down the western slope of the hills and their glacial lakes, the land quickly ceased to know any limits as it stretched out and refused to keep company with the horizon. The vast expanse of the James River Valley enveloped the track, the engine, the cars, and the passengers in daylight. Hyde traveled the last hours of his three-day, 1500-mile journey from Lake Ontario over a billowing sea of grass on which immigrant farmers labored to mark fields and grow crops.

¹²¹ *Dig or Die, Brother Hyde*, pp. 24, 29

The train came to a stop in Aberdeen. Hyde picked up his hand trunk and stepped onto the platform. A man in a black Prince Albert frock coat touched him on the shoulder and told him his train was late. Dr. Traveller, born in Canada, now his presiding elder, rushed him to another train that took them both twenty miles back east to the small town of Groton. They visited during the short return trip. Traveller gave him the name of a Swedish ex-Methodist from Minnesota to contact in town about where to live and how to start a new congregation. They parted at the Groton station because Traveller needed to preach farther east the next day.¹²²

Hyde himself would preach in about a week in the rooms of a Union veterans' organization, the Grand Army of the Republic, above Dooley's Saloon. He did not know that yet because he still had to meet the people and make all the arrangements. After the train carrying Traveller to his next appointment sped beyond sight, Hyde looked down the tracks. He could see so far into the distance that the tracks came together at a single point on the horizon. He felt the immensity of the earth, the wind, and the sky.

Then, as he remembered much later in Chicago after he reached the age of ninety, he heard the descending call of a meadow lark. It reminded him that he was not alone or a stranger in the land or needing to envy someone else's position in life. Like a hymn at heaven's gate, the call tuned his voice to the wealth of love.

¹²² *Minutes of the Third Session of the Dakota Conference, Commencing Wednesday, October 19, 1887, at Aberdeen, Dakota*, Sioux Falls: Dakota Bell Publishing Co., 1887 (DakACJ (1887)), p. 145 ("Pastors' Record"), and similar tables in succeeding years, demonstrated the international and youthful character of the early Methodist Episcopal clergy in Dakota Territory. 12 members in full connection in 1887 had been born in Canada. Early journals of the North Dakota Annual Conference revealed a similar pattern.

Chapter Two

THE ORGANIZED FRONTIER

Chapter Three
WEST RIVER
&
THE SECOND FRONTIER

Chapter Four
EXILE

Chapter Five
A NEW EARTH

Chapter Six
CENTENNIAL

Chapter Seven
WE ARE YET ALIVE

Time Line

for Chapter One

- 1771 Methodist Conference Met at Bristol
Francis Asbury Appointed to America
- 1774 *Thoughts upon Slavery* by John Wesley Published
- 1791 John Wesley Died
Revolution Began on Saint Domingue (Haiti)
- 1794 Odessa Founded on the Black Sea
in Lands Recently Conquered by Russia from the Ottoman Empire
- 1802 Napoleon Sent a French Army to Suppress Revolt in Saint Domingue (Haiti)
and Arrest Toussaint Louverture
- 1803 Louisiana Purchase
- 1804 Haiti Declared Independence from France
- 1804-1806 Louis and Clark Expedition
- 1849 Ludwig Bette (Lewis Beatty) Immigrated to the United States from Russia
- 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in Minnesota Territory
- 1861 Dakota Territory Organized
- 1862 Dakota War in Minnesota
- 1863 Charles C. McCabe Incarcerated at Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia
- 1870 German Settlement Began in Odessa Township, Big Stone County, Minnesota
- 1871 *Light on the Pathways of Holiness* by Lorenzo Dow McCabe Published
- 1874 Tsar Alexander II Subjected German Russians to Military Conscription
- 1874 The Wesleyan Methodist Church Joined in a Merger
to Create the Methodist Church of Canada
- 1881 Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway (Milwaukee Road)
Reached Aberdeen, Dakota Territory, from Ortonville, Minnesota
- 1883 Walter Minty of Gloucestershire, England, Joined Dakota Mission Conference
of the Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1883 Minnesota Conference of *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* Met
at Yellow Bank Township, Lac Qui Parle County, Minnesota,
and Authorized Formation of Dakota Conference
- 1884 The Methodist Church of Canada and the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada
Merged as the Methodist Church
- 1886 William J. Hyde Arrived in Groton, Dakota Territory, from Bay of Quinte, Ontario
- 1887 Movius Family Began to Relocate from Big Stone City
to Lidgerwood (both in Dakota Territory)
- 1889 North Dakota and South Dakota Admitted as States

Index