

ABERCROMBIE, TOM (1930-2006)**Adventurer & Award-Winning Photographer for National Geographic**

One of the individuals most responsible for making millions of people more aware of geography was a prize-winning photographer who began his professional career with the Fargo Forum. Later, Tom Abercrombie frequently risked his safety and life as he photographed and gathered information for 43 National Geographic articles. Abercrombie was the first person to win both the Newspaper Photographer of the Year and the Magazine Photographer of the Year awards. The Abercrombie Crests in Antarctica are named in his honor.

BASS, MAX (1853-1909)**The Man Who Enticed Over 100,000 People to Move to North Dakota**

Only one North Dakota town can be confirmed to contain both the first and last name of the man it is named after. Maxbass, in western Bottineau County, received its name from Max Bass, an immigration agent who was responsible for thousands of people settling in North Dakota in the 1890s and the first decade of the 20th century. In 1902, a Fargo magazine wrote, "To him more than 100,000 people in North Dakota owe their first knowledge of the state, his labors having brought even more than that number to the state." It is without question that Max Bass was significantly instrumental in assisting the growth of what is now North Dakota from 150,000 people in 1885 to over 500,000 in 1910.

BLACKBURN, WILLIAM (1828-1898)**First President of UND and a Noted Theological Scholar**

The first president of the University of North Dakota was also a noted writer -- the author of over 30 books. William Blackburn's advanced education was at the Princeton Theological Seminary, and consequently, most of his writings involved religious reformers and church history, but he also wrote History of Dakota. Blackburn's most famous book was History of the Christian Church, considered "the most credible general history of the Christian church that has appeared on this side of the Atlantic," and was used as a text book at many seminaries.

BRUCE, ANDREW (1866-1934)
From Orphan to North Dakota Supreme Court Justice

A man born in India and orphaned in England as a teenager arrived alone in the U.S. at the age of 15. Andrew Bruce rose in the legal profession to become dean of the UND law school, serve seven years on the North Dakota Supreme Court, and become instrumental in establishing the nation's first juvenile court. When Bruce died in 1934, a law journal reported, "No one has been held in such deep and affectionate and unqualified esteem by his professional brethren."

CLARKE, BETTY ROSS (1896-1947)
Hollywood Leading Lady

One of the leading actresses of the 1920s was born and raised in North Dakota. Betty Ross Clarke was born in Langdon, and her family later moved to Bismarck. She started her career in vaudeville and then played in regional theaters before hitting Broadway in 1917. At a Los Angeles dinner party, she was told she should consider making movies, and by 1921, the press considered Clarke, "one of the most successful women of the screen."

DARROW, EDWARD (1855-1919)
Family Patriarch of Medicine, Women's Suffrage, Education, & the Arts

One family in Fargo, North Dakota, was influential in the state and the region in medicine, women's suffrage, education, and the arts. The patriarch of the family, Dr. Edward M. Darrow, was a pioneer doctor, Dakota Territory's first superintendent of public health, and founder of Fargo's first hospital. Dr. Darrow's wife, Clara, was an outspoken advocate of women's suffrage, along with her daughter, Mary. Mary was also a noted peace proponent leading up to World War I, founder of the state's first kindergarten, and an active patron of the arts in Fargo. Frank and Kent Darrow, two of the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Darrow, and Ralph Weible, the husband of Mary, founded Dakota Clinic in Fargo in 1926.

DERUDIO, CHARLES (1832-1910)
Custer's Officer Who Cheated Death on Two Occasions

A career soldier, stationed in what is now North Dakota, had his life spared on two different occasions because of a decision made by two different individuals. On March 14, 1858, Charles DeRudio stood next to a guillotine in France, waiting for the blade to be dropped on his neck, when a reprieve was received from Empress Eugenie. Nearly 20 years later, Lieutenant DeRudio was in command of Company E of the 7th Cavalry as it was about to proceed with Colonel George Custer to the Little Bighorn. Just before the expedition began, Custer replaced DeRudio with Lieutenant Algernon Smith and put DeRudio in as executive officer of Company A. As a result, Smith was killed at the battle and DeRudio lived.

FLINT, JOHN (1880-1976)
The Preacher Some People Wanted to Lynch

There was talk of lynching a pastor in western North Dakota because of his beliefs and sympathies. John Flint (born Johan Caspersen) was a Lutheran minister in Mott, North Dakota, who defended a group of local Germans from Russia with a 4th of July speech during World War I. This riled some zealous patriotic community members, and they reacted by smashing windows. When it appeared Flint's life may also be in danger, members of his congregation drove their horse rigs around his farm at night to protect him.

GRACE, DICK (1898-1965)
Greatest Stunt Pilot in Early Movies

One of the greatest stunt pilots in movie history grew up in North Dakota. Dick Grace performed many of the aviation stunts for the 1927 Academy Award winning movie Wings, and when the silent movie era was over, Time magazine reported, "Grace now makes more money than any other stunter. Before he attempts his stunts, spectators frequently bet that he will be killed." It also stated, "He shrewdly covers all bets himself."

GUNN, ISABEL (1780-1861)**Thought to be a Man, She was the Mother of the First White Child Born in North Dakota**

The first white child born in what is now North Dakota came into the world on December 29, 1807, in Pembina. This child, James Scarth, was born here despite the policy that no white women were allowed into the area. How could this be? The mother was known by everyone at the post as John Fubbister, an “Orkney lad.” The real identity of John Fubbister was Isabel Gunn. The alleged father of James was John Scarth, who was serving at a post at Grandes Fourches (Grand Forks) at the time of the birth.

HAMILTON, POLLY (1908-1969)**John Dillinger’s Girlfriend**

In 2009, a major motion picture was released where movie star Leelee Sobieski was featured as a woman born and raised in Fargo, North Dakota. Sobieski played the role of Polly Hamilton, the girlfriend of John Dillinger. Dillinger was played by Johnny Depp in the movie Public Enemies. In the 1979 movie The Lady in Red, the character Polly Franklin, played by Pamela Sue Martin, was a highly fictionalized depiction of Polly Hamilton.

HANCOCK, JOHN (1883-1956)**Co-author of Plan to Avert a National Depression Following World War II**

Sixty-five years ago, the U.S. was concerned about an “economic collapse, depression, and [high] unemployment” as a result of a costly war and the imminent return of countless soldiers into the civilian job market. To prevent an economic catastrophe from happening that occurred after World War I, two of the best economic minds in the country were contracted to prepare a report for Congress and President Franklin Roosevelt. These men were Bernard Baruch, a leading American industrialist, and John M. Hancock, a North Dakota farm boy who rose to become a partner in the New York banking house of Lehman Brothers.

HANNAH, TRUCK (1889-1982)
Major League Baseball Player and Movie Actor

Only a handful of individuals played professional organized baseball during five different decades, and one of those players was born in North Dakota. Truck Hannah began his career in 1909 with the Tacoma Tigers, and he got his last hit in 1940 with the Memphis Chicks. He was a baseball player, manager, coach, and he also acted in movies. Hannah was such a celebrity in Los Angeles that he was asked to catch the ceremonial first pitch when the Los Angeles Angels franchise played their first home game on April 27, 1961. Hannah caught the attention of at least one U.S. President. In a 1983 interview, former President Richard Nixon commented, "I remember Truck Hannah. He was a great catcher, and he could hit." As a youngster, Nixon watched him play for and manage the Los Angeles Angels of the Pacific Coast League. Nixon was also a classmate of Helen Hannah, the daughter of Truck, at Whittier High School.

HARDY, RED (1923-2003)
Pitcher for 1951 Pennant-Winning New York Giants

A professional baseball player born in Marmarth, North Dakota, flirted with three no-hitters in a span of one month, only to lose all three no-hit bids in the latter innings. Red Hardy, for awhile, was also a member of the 1951 New York Giants baseball team, which overcame a 13-game lead by the Brooklyn Dodgers to win the National League pennant.

HENDERSON, SKITCH (1918-2005)
Tonight Show Orchestra Leader Began Professional Career in North Dakota

The orchestra leader of the Tonight Show from 1953 to 1966 and founder of the New York Pops Orchestra began his professional musical career in North Dakota. Lyle "Skitch" Henderson played the piano at hotels and theaters in Bismarck before joining the Harry Turner Orchestra. This local band frequently played over KFYZ radio and toured the upper Midwest, with Henderson at the piano. What makes all of this fascinating is that almost all of the biographies of Henderson state

that he was living in Switzerland and studying under many of the musical giants of Europe, while he was actually entertaining the public in North Dakota.

HURLEY, JACK (1897-1972)
America's "Best Boxing Teacher"

The man considered one of the greatest boxing promoters of all time began his career in North Dakota. However, Jack Hurley did not just promote fights -- he was also a trainer and cornerman for many prominent boxers. In 1961, Sports Illustrated wrote that, "Experts have called him the best boxing teacher ever." He was a perfectionist with strong ideas, and when fighters followed his instructions, they usually won. Hurley demanded 50% of his fighters' purse, which was extremely high, but he never found any problem attracting good boxers. Once they signed with Hurley, they stayed with him. He always took care of his boxers and was honest. Damon Runyon once said he had known only two honest fight managers... "One is Jack Hurley, and I forgot the name of the other one."

HUTCHESON, JOHN (1905-1992)
America's Radar Master During World War II

A person who sent radio signals from the Hector Airport to downtown Fargo in the mid-1920s received national recognition a little over 20 years later for designing a system to send radio signals much further -- from the moon to the earth. Hutcheson, a master of radio technology, was the "key man in design and engineering of Westinghouse's vast radar program" during World War II and a founding member of the influential RAND Corporation, a non-profit institution organized to improve American policy and decision-making through research and analysis. Hutcheson also helped develop equipment for the second atomic bomb test at the Bikini Atoll.

LIEDTKE, VERNON (1912-1957)
Highly Acclaimed and "Fearless" Circus Performer

One of the most fearless circus performers was born and raised in North Dakota. Vernon Liedtke was billed as the "Sensational Orton," and his death-defying acts,

high in the air, caused those in the audience to gasp. Most of his later acclaim was for his “sway pole” act. According to circus lingo, this is defined as “an act in which the performer perches atop an extremely tall pole, then sways and rocks the pole giddily from side to side and, is very dangerous to perform.” While on top of this swaying pole, 100 feet in the air, Liedtke would do hand stands and other acrobatic feats. Besides performing at many local fairs, Liedtke also performed at the 1940 San Francisco World’s Fair, on national television, and before much of the European royalty. On December 1, 1957, while practicing at his home in Dallas for another European tour, one of the guy wires supporting the pole broke, and Liedtke plunged to his death.

LIGGETT, WALTER (1886-1935)

Newspaper Editor Murdered for Exposing Organized Crime

A former North Dakota newspaper editor was murdered -- gangland style. On December 9, 1935, Walter Liggett was shot in the alley behind his apartment shortly after emerging from his automobile. Even though his wife, who was a witness, positively identified the assassin as Kid Cann (the Al Capone of Minneapolis), he was not convicted of the crime. Liggett was the second newsman in Minnesota who was killed, in similar fashion, just as he was about to reveal damaging information about the administration of Minnesota Governor Floyd Olson. Adding to the intrigue, former North Dakota governor William Langer told authorities that he had a telephone conversation with Liggett the day he was murdered, and that he was planning to come to Bismarck the next day.

LOUNSBERRY, CLEMENT (1843-1926)

Civil War Hero Who Founded State’s Oldest Newspaper

The founder of the first major newspaper in what is now North Dakota had earlier planted the Union flag on the courthouse at Petersburg, the final and deciding battle site of the Civil War. Clement Lounsberry was orphaned at the age of six but, through his intelligence and courage, quickly rose through the Union ranks to become one of the youngest colonels in military history. He was a staunch Republican and, through his paper, the Bismarck Tribune, was able to greatly influence politics in the area.

MCCARTHY, EUGENE (1916-2005)
U. S. Senator and 1968 Presidential Candidate

Due to his strong showing in the New Hampshire primary, a former North Dakota school teacher caused an incumbent U.S. President to withdraw his nomination for a second term. In many aspects, Eugene McCarthy became the symbol and standard bearer of the peace movement, which picked up steam in 1968 when he entered the Democratic Party's primary.

MCLAUGHLIN, JAMES (1842-1923)
Indian Agent Whose Arrest Order Led to the Death of Sitting Bull

One of the prize patronage jobs of Dakota Territory was the position of Indian agent, and one of the biggest battles for that position took place at the Devils Lake Indian Agency in 1876. The person that some historians have called one of the best U.S. Indian Agents in American history, and who served for 52 years in the Indian service, almost had his career derailed just as it was beginning. James McLaughlin was trying to get the Devils Lake Agency back on its feet, following the death of William Forbes (Volume 3), the original agent, when he learned that another person had been appointed to that position. Later, the new agent tried to get McLaughlin removed by charging him with personal use of supplies that were meant to go to the Indians, a charge later proved to be untrue.

MEIER, BEN (1918-1995)
Mr. Secretary of State

One man served as North Dakota Secretary of State for 34 years, the second longest tenures in the nation's history. He was first elected as secretary in 1954, and he served continuously until December 31, 1988. After his first successful election, Meier was never again defeated, usually garnering over 55% of the votes. He had a serious challenge in the 1954 Republican primary, and of the 10 times Meier ran for reelection, only once was he challenged within the party.

MINER, HAZEL (1904-1920)**“Angel of the Prairies”**

On March 15, 1920, the worst blizzard in 30 years hit North Dakota and the surrounding area. When the storm subsided three days later, 34 people had lost their lives. One of the victims was Hazel Miner, the 15-year old daughter of Oliver County farmer William A. Miner and his wife, Blanche. What makes this incident noteworthy, nearly 90 years after the tragedy, is the incredible heroism and self-sacrifice this teenager displayed to save the lives of her younger brother and sister. Hazel literally gave her life so that her younger siblings might live.

MOTT, EMMA (1849-1941)**State’s Carrie Nation Who was also First Female College Instructor**

The first female college instructor in what is now North Dakota later led a crusade that got all 27 saloons in Grafton shut down. Emma Mott’s grandson described her as “strong, healthy, and domineering, she had her ideas, and that’s how things were.” She also taught school in five states as well as Dakota Territory, was a talented musician, and was an early suffragette in this state.

ORDWAY, NEHEMIAH (1828-1907)**Man Behind Capital Removal From Yankton to Bismarck**

A corrupt politician and former sergeant-at-arms of the U.S. House of Representatives later became the first territorial governor to serve in Bismarck. In fact, Nehemiah Ordway was instrumental in getting the capital moved from Yankton to Bismarck.

PETROLLE, BILLY (1905-1983)**“Fargo Express” Enshrined in Boxing Hall of Fame**

A very popular boxer of the 1920s and 30s was identified with North Dakota, even though he never lived here. Billy Petrolle trained and fought most of his early fights in Fargo and, consequently, was labeled the “Fargo Express.” He actually

lived in Dilworth and Duluth, Minnesota, but North Dakotans embraced him as one of their own. Petrolle was a tough crowd-pleaser who fought 10 current or past world champions and was victorious against 5 of them. He is considered as “one of the two greatest fighters to have never won a world championship.”

RENO, MARCUS (1834-1889)

Scapegoat for Custer’s Defeat at the Battle of the Little Big Horn

The military officer who oversaw the surveying of the boundary between North Dakota and Canada was later blamed by many for the defeat of Colonel George Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Major Marcus A. Reno had received numerous citations during the Civil War for “gallant and meritorious service” and had risen to the rank of brevet brigadier general. Yet, many accused Reno of cowardice for not coming to Custer’s rescue.

RETZLAFF, PETE (1931-

NFL Player of the Year in 1965

When a former North Dakota farm boy retired from the National Football League in 1966, he was the all-time leader in receptions for the Philadelphia Eagles. Yet, he had never caught a pass while in college. Pete Retzlaff broke many athletic records in high school, college, and the pros, and after retiring from playing football, he served as vice-president and general manager of the Eagles from 1969 to 1972. Retzlaff was named an All-Pro five times, won the Player of the Year Award in 1965, and his Eagle jersey, number 44, was retired. Mysteriously, he has not been inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame.

REYNOLDS, CHARLES (1842-1876)

Custer’s Chief Scout Who was Killed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn

One of the bravest and most respected American frontier scouts was killed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876. Charles Reynolds had been Colonel Custer’s chief scout, and during the 1870s, whenever an expedition needed a good reliable scout in the upper Midwest, Reynolds was the man the expedition leaders tried to hire. Unlike many scouts, Reynolds was modest, well-groomed, educated,

devotedly religious, and was unknown to use tobacco or alcohol while on the job. Because of his modesty and reluctance to be around large groups of people, Reynolds earned the nickname “Lonesome Charley.”

RICE, EDMUND (1842-1906)

Civil War Medal of Honor Winner, Inventor, and Fort Totten Officer

A Medal of Honor recipient in the Civil War’s Battle of Gettysburg later served as commander of the 5th Infantry at Fort Totten. Edmund Rice was a man of remarkable talents and abilities. He was an inventor, military strategist and commander, and an international diplomat. Because of the respect for Brigadier General Rice, his home state of Massachusetts honored him with a state funeral in 1906.

ROACH, WILLIAM (1840-1902)

Politician Who Outmaneuvered Alexander McKenzie

The likelihood of a Democrat being elected to the U.S. Senate in 19th century North Dakota was infinitesimal because the Senators were elected by the state legislators, who were overwhelmingly Republican. Yet, it happened in 1893 when William N. Roach, a Larimore farmer and land dealer, was elected on the 61st ballot.

ROBERTS, FLOYD (1900-1939)

Winner of Indy 500 Auto Race

The winner of the Indy 500 in 1938 was born and raised in North Dakota. At the time, Floyd Roberts was one of the best race car drivers, but he was killed trying to retain his crown at Indianapolis in 1939. In the race, Roberts, a master auto mechanic and Sunday school teacher, swerved to avoid hitting another racer who was thrown onto the track. Roberts’ car somersaulted over an outer wooden fence, and he received a fatal basal skull fracture when his car landed. Roberts had previously vowed to quit racing after this race.

SCHAUER, RUBE (1891-1957)

First North Dakotan to Play Major League Baseball

The pitching skills of a young man from North Dakota were so good that he made it all the way to the major leagues in his first year of professional baseball. In 1912, Al “Rube” Schauer was playing for a semi-pro team in his hometown of Garrison. By the end of the 1913 season, he was pitching for the pennant-winning New York Giants. Many who saw Schauer pitch compared him to the great Christy Mathewson. Giants’ manager John McGraw was so impressed with Schauer that he employed the highest paid scout in the major leagues to make sure he was signed by the Giants. When Schauer did sign, the team shelled out a record amount of money for a person playing in Class C baseball.

SHANLEY, JOHN (1852-1909)

First Catholic Bishop Who Got State’s Liberal Divorce Loopholes Closed

Shortly after statehood, Fargo, North Dakota, became the “divorce capital of America.” This reputation concerned a number of church officials, especially John Shanley, the first Catholic bishop of North Dakota. Largely through his efforts of rallying different groups within the state to put pressure on the legislators, the law was changed in 1899 to extend the residency requirements from 90 days to one year in order for people to get a divorce. Bishop Shanley “was widely recognized as the principle force behind the new law.” Because Shanley was so admired and loved, when he died in 1909, the Fargo Forum reported that his was the “largest funeral ever held in North Dakota.”

SHORTRIDGE, ELI (1830-1908)

Early North Dakota Governor Who Challenged Republican Establishment

The third governor of North Dakota was neither a Republican nor a Democrat, but an Independent. Eli Shortridge was the candidate put forward by the Farmers Alliance in 1892. The Alliance joined with the Prohibition Party in North Dakota, and this “fusion” was supported nationally by the Populist Party.

STAUDE, EDWIN (1876-1964)

North Dakota’s Most Prolific Inventor

One of America's most prolific inventors grew up in what is now eastern North Dakota. Edwin Staude received 143 patents (some sources list over 150 patents), and rarely does a day go by that most individuals are not affected by something Staude created. His inventions include: machines to mass produce envelopes and cereal boxes, farm machinery, a garage door opener, a coin operated vending machine, a phonograph, an adding machine, and many automobile accessories.

STEVENS, REUBEN (1858-1925)

North Dakotan Profiled in Five Motion Pictures

One of the most popular novels of the early 20th century, *The Spoilers*, was based on an episode that involved three people who had lived in North Dakota: Alexander McKenzie, Arthur H. Noyes, and Reuben N. Stevens. Hollywood made five movies based on *The Spoilers*, one starring Gary Cooper and another starring John Wayne. The "crafty lawyer" in the novel was patterned after Stevens, an opportunist who served five terms in the North Dakota legislature. He was also editor of the Bismarck Tribune and the Grand Forks Republican, assistant U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Commissioner in Alaska, and one of McKenzie's chief lieutenants in Dakota Territory, Alaska Territory, and North Dakota in the early years.

STOCKBRIDGE, HORACE (1857-1930)

First NDSU President Responsible For Saké Boom in Japan

The man who introduced fine hops to Japan, for making excellent saké, later became the first president of the North Dakota Agricultural College (NDAC), now NDSU. Horace Stockbridge was Japan's chief government scientist and professor of chemistry at the Imperial College of Agriculture in Sapporo, Japan in 1887. He discovered that the hops native to Japan were unfit for brewing purposes. Dr. Stockbridge artificially changed the composition of these hops so that they could be used in the brewing process. He was also the first person to obtain petroleum from deposits of bituminous shale through distillation. He also discovered muscarine -- the poisonous alkaloid in some mushrooms, perfected a technique for determining the sugar content in sugar beets, and found the cause and treatment of potato scab.

STUTSMAN, ENOS (1826-1874)**Women's Suffrage Pioneer Who Also Suffered Discrimination**

The legislature of Dakota Territory was the first in a state or territory to introduce a bill authorizing the vote for women. The man from Pembina who introduced the bill in 1868 was well-acquainted with discrimination because he, Enos Stutsman, was born without legs and only one arm. Through pure determination, he rose to become a successful lawyer, real estate agent, and powerful legislator. Stutsman later became very controversial when, as a government land agent, he tried to entice the Canadian provincial government under Métis leader, Louis Riel, to join the U.S.

THOMPSON, CLIFF (1906-1955)**America's Tallest Schoolteacher, Salesman, and Lawyer**

The fear of getting whacked across the side of the head by the blades of a large ceiling fan can be very real if you are 8'6" tall. Such was the concern of a man born near Silva in Ramsey County, North Dakota. Because of his enormous size and Scandinavian ancestry, Cliff Thompson became known as "Count Olaf, the Norwegian Viking Giant" during the dozen years he toured the country with carnivals, circuses, and vaudeville acts.

THOMPSON, WILLIAM (1813-1897)**First Farmer in Burleigh County had been a U.S. Congressman**

"The father of farming in Burleigh County" was a former U. S. Congressman, had risen to the rank of brigadier general during the Civil War, and as the oldest officer of the 7th Cavalry, served at Colonel Custer's side throughout most of Custer's military campaigns following the War. William Thompson had also been a lawyer and a newspaper publisher, was a candidate for governor of Iowa, and served as chief clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. After retiring from the military in December 1875, Thompson remained in Burleigh County and began a project of

planting over 1,000 trees. He established a homestead two-and-a-half miles northeast of Bismarck where he grew abundant crops of hay and was the first person in the area to plant crops of wheat.

WEIGEL, CHARLES (1869-1942)

Penniless Immigrant Established State's Oldest Manufacturing Company

North Dakota's oldest manufacturing company was established over 100 years ago by two men, a state legislator and the founder of one of the state's western cities. The Hebron Fire and Pressed Brick Company was incorporated on August 19, 1904, by Charles Weigel and Ferdinand Leutz. Leutz is attributed as being the founder of Hebron, North Dakota.