

Nathaniel Pryor (1772-1831)**Officer with Lewis & Clark & Noted Indian Peace Negotiator Riverboat & Stagecoach Entrepreneur who Pushed for Women's Suffrage**

A mountain chain in Montana and a city and river in Oklahoma are named for a man who spent the winter of 1804-05 at Fort Mandan. Nathaniel Pryor had joined the expedition led by William Clark and Meriwether Lewis because of his ability as an able frontiersman and Indian negotiator. After the expedition was over, Pryor became a highly respected trader and peace broker with the Osage Indians. In 1830, Sam Houston sent a letter to President Andrew Jackson that stated, "He has done more to tame and pacify the dispositions of the Osages to the whites, and surrounding tribes of Indians than all other men. Captain Pryor is a man of amiable character and disposition -- of fine sense, strict honor -- perfectly temperate in his habits -- and unremitting in his attention to business." A portrait of Pryor with Houston hangs in the Oklahoma capitol.

Russell Blakeley (1815-1901)**Riverboat & Stagecoach Entrepreneur Who Pushed for Women's Suffrage**

One of the people most responsible for bringing travelers and settlers to what is now North Dakota, prior to the coming of the railroad, was also one of the men most public in his support of women's suffrage during the later 1860s. Russell Blakeley developed stagecoach lines from St. Cloud to Fort Abercrombie, Breckenridge to Winnipeg, and Bismarck to the Black Hills. He also provided steamship service from Fort Abercrombie to Winnipeg.

Alanson Barnes (1817-1890)**Barnes County Named for Pioneer Supreme Court Justice of Northern Dakota Territory**

Barnes County was originally named Burbank County in honor of the man who served as governor of Dakota Territory from 1869 to 1874. John A. Burbank proved to be a corrupt governor, and when he threatened A. H. Barnes, an associate justice of the territorial supreme court, Barnes took action that forced the governor's resignation. Because of his action, the legislature renamed the county in Barnes' honor.

Martin Marty (1834-1896)**"Angel of the West"**

While Sitting Bull and his supporters lived in Canada following their victory over Colonel Custer, there was one white man Sitting Bull allowed into his camp. He was Father Martin Marty, the first permanent Catholic priest of northwestern Dakota Territory. In 1876, Marty had established a mission on the Standing Rock

Reservation and had prepared himself for this position by writing a Sioux dictionary and translating many church works into the Sioux language. For his compassion, dedication, and self-sacrifice, Marty has been called “The Apostle of the Sioux” and “Angel of the West.” In 1880, Pope Leo XIII named Marty the first bishop of Dakota Territory.

George Northrup (1837-1864)
“Kit Carson of the Northwest”

A man who died at the age of 27 lived a fuller, more adventurous life than almost any dozen other men who lived to a ripe old age. George Northrup, known as “the Kit Carson of the Northwest,” was a teacher, trapper, trader, guide, riverboat operator, mail carrier, newspaper correspondent, and Union spy. He worked at a general store, a trading post, a bookstore, and led hunting expeditions for British gentlemen across what is now North Dakota. He was a scholar with expertise in zoology, mathematics, astronomy, surveying, and ancient and medieval history. He understood the French, Chippewa, and Sioux languages and read Latin. Northrup was highly recognized for his bravery during the Civil War and the Indian Wars of northern Dakota. It was during the latter that he lost his life.

Pat Donan (1839-1902)

Confederate Officer Promoted Northern Dakota as “Red River Eden”

One of the biggest promoters of immigration to northern Dakota Territory in the 1880s was a former officer in the Confederate Army who counted Mark Twain and Jesse James among his former friends. Peter Donan Jr., better-known as “Pat,” wrote numerous articles in newspapers and magazines proclaiming the virtues of living on the northern Plains.

Myles Keogh (1840-1876)

Trivia Legend Killed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn

One man is directly related to two popular trivia questions: “Name the only survivor of Colonel Custer’s command at the Battle of the Little Big Horn” and “During the time of Custer, what was the name of the regimental song of the 7th Cavalry?” Comanche, the war horse, was the only survivor, and the regimental tune was *Garryowen*. Captain Myles Keogh owned Comanche, and he reportedly introduced *Garryowen* to Custer. However, there is much more about Keogh that is fascinating. Although born in Ireland, he was an active participant in the Papal wars in Italy, the Civil War in the U.S., and the Indian campaigns in the American West. Keogh was known for his bravery and was acknowledged for his courage by his military superiors and by his foes on the battlefield. Like Custer, Keogh also was killed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Joseph Colton (1840-1896)**Founder of Burlington & Lisbon, North Dakota**

One man, not associated with the railroad, founded two different North Dakota towns that are located over 300 miles apart. Initially, both towns were made county seats. Joseph L. Colton established the town of Lisbon in 1880 and the town of Burlington four years later. Colton had the persuasive ability to attract settlers to his communities and to encourage political leaders to work on his town's behalf. However, he was not always willing to live up to his part of the bargains he had made. As a result, Colton was not able to receive any long-term rewards in the communities he established.

Evan S. Tyler (1842-1923)**Fargo Mayor Missed Becoming North Dakota's First Governor by Four Votes**

A highly successful Fargo businessman was denied becoming the first governor of North Dakota by only four votes. Evan S. Tyler owned thousands of acres of Red River Valley land and businesses in Fargo and surrounding towns. He was the second mayor of Fargo and served two terms in the state legislature. One of the more touching stories about him was the deep and lasting love he had for his wife. Clara Barnes Tyler died one day short of their sixth anniversary and, for the remaining 40 years of his life, he never remarried. Prior to his death, he requested that he be buried next to her in Delavan, Wisconsin, even though he had never lived in that city.

Budd Reeve (1843-1933)**"The Sage of Buxton"**

A candidate for U.S. Congress predicted that North Dakota would soon become energy self-sufficient. The year that prediction was made was not in the 21st century, or even in the 20th century, but in the 1890s. Budd Reeve, the 1894 candidate of the Democrat Party for Congress, believed North Dakota generated sufficient wind power to provide electricity and heat for every home in the state. He was considered to be very astute, and because of his wisdom, was called the "Sage of Buxton." Reeve was a lawyer, real estate agent, farmer, grain dealer, author, inventor, and founder of the town of Buxton, 30 miles south of Grand Forks.

Adolphus Greely (1844-1935)
Medal of Honor Winner Connected Northern Dakota
with Outside World through the Telegraph

A founder of the National Geographic Society and a former resident of Bismarck was also the first person in the U.S. Army to have risen from the rank of private to major general, and the only person awarded the Medal of Honor for a lifetime of dedication and bravery. Adolphus Greely was a noted polar explorer, the first director of the Weather Bureau, administrator of the Signal Corps, and commander of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake relief operation. Fort Greely, the military installation in Alaska, was named in his honor.

George Walsh (1845-1913)
Man Who Obtained the University for Grand Forks

A county in northeastern North Dakota is named for the man most responsible for locating the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. George Walsh was also instrumental in getting the capital removed from Yankton, which was eventually relocated in Bismarck. He published the first newspaper in Grand Forks and was one of the largest landowners in northern Dakota.

Fingal Enger (1846-1913)
Penniless Norwegian Immigrant Became a Bonanza Farmer

The person reported to be “the largest single landowner in North Dakota,” with 20,000 acres, arrived in northern Dakota Territory penniless and lived in a hole dug into the bank of a river. Fingal Enger, through hard work, dedication, thrift, and shrewd business dealings, acquired land at a steady rate until his death in 1913. The *Winnipeg Free Press* reported that he was “the wealthiest Norwegian farmer in North Dakota.” He arrived from Norway in 1869, barely able to speak English, yet later served as board executive for a college, private school, hospital, and bank. He also owned major interests in three grain elevators and was elected to serve four sessions in the North Dakota Senate.

George E. Lord (1846-1876)
Cruel Fate Responsible for Surgeon’s Death at the Little Big Horn

Two individual decisions sealed the fate of an Army officer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Lieutenant George E. Lord, the chief surgeon, was the only member of the 6th Infantry assigned to accompany Colonel George Custer as they prepared for action at the Powder River camp on June 21, 1876. On June 23, Lord became very ill, and it appeared he would be unable to continue the 84-mile ride to the location where Sitting Bull’s Indians were camped. Through pure grit, he did the best he could to keep up with the other soldiers. When they arrived on June 25,

Custer summoned Dr. Henry Porter to have him replace Lord. Custer and Porter then went to inform Lord of their arrangement. Despite the fact that he was weak and ill, Dr. Lord told Custer “I am going with you.” Hours later, Custer, Lord, and 266 other U. S. soldiers and scouts were killed.

Roger Allin (1848-1936)

Governor’s Campaign Promise Nearly Destroyed North Dakota Colleges

A governor vetoed the appropriations for all of the state-owned colleges in North Dakota, fully expecting that most of them would be forced to close their doors. In each case, the communities rallied to support their institutions, which were able to survive the hardships of the 1890s. Governor Roger Allin was not a villain bent on destroying the colleges in the state. When you examine his character and the financial circumstances of the state at the time of his administration, his actions could have been predicted.

Red Tomahawk (1849-1931)

Lakota Indian Who Became Symbol of North Dakota Highway Department

The Native-American symbol of the North Dakota Highway Department is the profile of an actual Nakota Indian. Marcellus Red Tomahawk was a warrior who actively fought against the whites during the early years of Dakota Territory. He later settled on the Standing Rock Reservation, becoming a member of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) police force. He was part of several peace negotiations, served as a Nakota good-will ambassador, and met with U.S. Presidents. Red Tomahawk is most remembered as the man who shot and killed Sitting Bull.

Henry F. Douglas (early 1850s-1938)

Bismarck Pioneer Constructed Most Elegant Hotel in Yellowstone Park

The man who established the first hardware store in Bismarck was also a founder of Glendive, Montana; a bank president; and one of the largest grain dealers in Minneapolis. However, one of the most exciting opportunities that Henry F. Douglas had, eventually turned into his greatest disappointment. In 1882, he and his initial partner, Carroll T. Hobart from Fargo, were granted a 10-year lease from the Interior Department to develop 4,400 acres of the prime areas in Yellowstone Park. When word got out about this exclusive deal, Congress reduced the acreage allotted to 10 acres. Tragically for Douglas and Hobart, they borrowed heavily to build an elegant hotel there, but because they were severely limited in developing other areas, they suffered financial ruin.

Winfield S. Stambaugh (1852-1926)**Successor of Wild Bill Hickok Became a Noted Fargo Attorney**

One of the most prominent lawyers in North Dakota at the turn of the 20th century reportedly began his law career at an early age as marshal of Abilene, Kansas. Abilene had the reputation as “the toughest town in the United States” when W. S. Stambaugh arrived in 1870. The town’s first marshal, Tom Smith, was killed in a fight in November of that year. The second marshal, “Wild Bill” Hickok, lasted only eight months before he was given his walking papers. Finally, the town turned to the fearless young Stambaugh, hoping he could bring peace and stability. In 1898, Stambaugh moved to Fargo and became a law partner of Burleigh Spalding and Seth Newman. His highest profile case was the capital punishment appeal of John Rooney, who had been convicted of killing Harold Sweet near the railroad tracks on Fargo’s west side. Rooney ended up being the last person executed in North Dakota and the only person ever executed at the North Dakota State Penitentiary in Bismarck.

Martin Hector (1852-1938)**Man Behind North Dakota’s First International Airport**

During the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, the man most responsible for impressing fair-goers at the “North Dakota Exhibit” later had an international airport named after him. Martin Hector was a successful Fargo businessman who organized the Fargo Citizens Bank, now Bank of the West. He served as president of the bank for 41 years and, in 1931, donated land north of the city for the establishment of an airport.

Arthur Noyes (1853-1915)**Judge Helped Swindle Alaskan Prospectors of Their Gold**

A couple of people who had lived in North Dakota were deeply involved in a plot to swindle millions of dollars from prospectors near the city of Nome in Alaska Territory. The key member of the plot was Judge Arthur Noyes, a former Grand Forks attorney, who placed all disputed gold mine claims in the hands of Alexander McKenzie, his good friend. McKenzie’s men then looted the mines while Noyes used delaying tactics, thwarting every effort to get these disputes resolved.

Oscar Will (1855-1917)**Seed King of the Upper Great Plains**

The man who built a Bismarck seed business into “the largest of its kind west of Minneapolis,” developed hundreds of varieties of plants and seeds that thrived in the northern Plains. Oscar Will utilized crops harvested by Native Americans to

enrich the varieties of hardy grains and vegetables grown in the upper Great Plains. His work in education was rewarded by having a school named after him.

Charles Amidon (1856-1937)
Fargo's First High School Principal Became a
Confidant of President Theodore Roosevelt

The first high school principal in Fargo later became a highly-respected federal judge and the personal confidant of a U.S. President. In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt read and admired the contents of a speech given by Charles Amidon, and a lasting friendship began. Soon, the President began incorporating Amidon's ideas into his speeches and urging Congress to enact them into law. Roosevelt referred to Amidon as "one of the wisest judges now on the bench," and "one of the ablest jurists in the United States." In 1911, after Roosevelt had left his office, he lamented in a letter to Amidon, "How I wish you were on the Supreme Court."

John Wellcome (1857-1908)
Minot Pioneer Who Rigged Election for a U.S. Senator

A popular Minot legislator and lawyer later doled out hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy his primary client a seat in the U.S. Senate. Since paying bribes to state legislators for their votes was illegal, it caused John B. Wellcome to be disbarred. Wellcome spent only four years in Minot, but during that time, he served on the county board of supervisors, the Dakota Territorial Legislature, and as city attorney. He was also considered the driving force in getting the Ward County seat moved from Burlington to Minot. Wellcome was honored by having a Minot city street named after him.

Richard Mellon (1858-1933)
Bismarck Banker Became One of the Country's Most Wealthiest Men

During the first three decades of the 20th century, one of the wealthiest men in America made most of his money in the banking industry and through wise investments. Richard Mellon established his first bank in 1883 in Bismarck. After closing down his Bismarck enterprise in 1887, he joined Andrew, his brother, in Pittsburgh to help manage the family bank, T. Mellon & Sons. In 1899, Richard was named president of a large aluminum-making company that became Alcoa and, in 1921, became president of the Mellon bank when Andrew was named U. S. Secretary of Treasury. In 1913, Richard and Andrew established the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research, which later became part of Carnegie Mellon University.

Laura Eisenhuth (1859-1937)**First Woman in the U.S. Elected to a Statewide Administrative Office**

Voters in North Dakota elected the first woman in the nation as administrator of a statewide office. When Laura Eisenhuth was elected as North Dakota's superintendent of public instruction in 1892, all of the women in this country had very few voting privileges. In North Dakota, females could only vote on school matters. Therefore, the only statewide office for which they could cast their ballot was state school superintendent. Eisenhuth correctly reasoned that if the franchise was open to women for this office, why couldn't a woman be the state's chief education executive? In 1892, Eisenhuth was endorsed by both the Democratic and Populist parties and was elected with 53% of the votes. Many people feared that if a woman was elected to a high office, the world would never be the same. Consequently, the 1892 election in North Dakota for state superintendent received national coverage. After Eisenhuth was elected and took office and Armageddon did not occur, one national newspaper columnist wrote, "There was no convulsion of nature, neither did the sun stand still, nor was there silence in heaven for even half a minute, when Mrs. Laura J. Eisenhuth, the newly elected state superintendent of the public schools in North Dakota assumed the duties of her office. All goes well. . ."

John Knauf (1868-1952)**Campaign Smear Tactics Deprived Man from Being Elected to State Supreme Court**

One of the meanest and dirtiest campaigns in North Dakota politics took place in 1906 when Alexander McKenzie's powerful political machine set out to defeat a candidate for the North Dakota Supreme Court. John Knauf, a Republican lawyer, had committed the most unpardonable sin during the McKenzie era -- he represented clients who leveled grievances against the Northern Pacific Railroad (NP). The NP was making huge amounts of money off of North Dakota, and they handsomely rewarded McKenzie and his chief lieutenants to make certain that this bountiful climate would remain. At the time of the election, Knauf was defeated, his reputation was badly tarnished, and his business was almost destroyed when many of his clients deserted him. A lesser man would have given up and moved out of state. However, this experience appeared to have only stiffened Knauf's resolve in the cases he had against the NP. He returned to his law office in Jamestown and continued to practice law until his death in 1952.

Berta Baker (1875-1964)**State's Most Successful Office Seeker for Three Decades**

One of the most successful politicians in North Dakota history was a woman. If the number of votes received during elections is the barometer of popularity, Berta Baker was the most popular politician of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. She successfully ran for statewide offices 14 times between 1928 and 1954 and, during that time, averaged 93,000 more votes than her opponents. During two of those elections, Baker was the top vote-getter on the ballot, receiving more votes than the governor, members of Congress, or any of the other 10 to 11 statewide positions on the ballot. She never finished lower than fourth overall in vote totals and was the only candidate to receive over 200,000 votes in any of those elections. Baker was on the ballot five times with William Langer and, each time, received more votes than the man often called the most popular North Dakota politician of all time. Berta Baker was the first woman elected to two statewide offices.

Bob Unglaub (1881-1916)**State's First Star Professional Baseball Player Killed in a Tragic Train Mishap**

Bob Unglaub, the manager of the Fargo-Moorhead baseball team that won Northern League championships in 1915 and 1916, was killed by a train locomotive after the 1916 season. Ironically, Unglaub's father, years earlier, was credited with saving the life of a U.S. President in a train accident. Unglaub was not only a good ballplayer, but he had an intelligent, analytical mind about the strategy of the game. Because of this, he became a major league manager at the age of 25, in 1907, in his first full season in the major leagues.

Harold Bachman (1882-1972)**Man Behind the "Million Dollar Band"**

The creator and musical conductor of what was described as "the most famous concert band in the country" grew up in North Dakota. The Million Dollar Band was assembled by Harold B. Bachman, a protégé of Dr. C. S. Putnam, the band director at the North Dakota Agricultural College (now NDSU). Bachman became Putnam's "chief musician" and occasionally took over the baton while still a high school student in Fargo. Bachman's Million Dollar Band performed at concerts all over the world and was frequently featured on network radio. Following World War II, Bachman became band director at the University of Florida and built the Gator band into one of the premier college bands in the nation.

George Will (1884-1955)**Successful Businessman & Preeminent Scholar**

The president of one of North Dakota's most successful companies during the second quarter of the 20th century also found time to author over 100 scholarly articles. When George F. Will took over the Oscar H. Will Company in 1917, following the death of his father, the seed company was considered the "the largest of its kind west of Minneapolis." Harvard-educated George Will continued to grow the company at the same time he was making significant academic contributions in the areas of anthropology, history, archaeology, climatology, and botany.

Willis Bradley (1884-1954)**Medal of Honor Recipient, Governor, & U.S. Congressman**

The first Medal of Honor recipient for heroism during World War I was from North Dakota. On July 23, 1917, Lieutenant Willis W. Bradley undoubtedly saved his ship and crew when ammunition cases exploded as they were being loaded into the artillery enclosure of the ship. When the explosion occurred, Bradley was blown back and temporarily knocked unconscious. When he came to, he crawled back into the burning enclosure. Although he was still in a daze, Bradley bravely extinguished the burning materials located next to "a considerable amount of powder." His action prevented further explosions and likely saved the ship. While still in the U.S. Navy, Bradley served as governor of Guam, and after retiring from the military, he was elected to the U.S. Congress. On March 26, 1964, the 414-foot destroyer escort, the *USS Bradley*, was launched, which was named in honor of Willis W. Bradley.

Billy Fawcett (1885-1940)**"Captain Billy" Established a Publishing Empire**

One of the largest publishing companies in the country was started by an adventurous young man raised in North Dakota. The Fawcett Publishing Company began when Wilford Fawcett printed his first issue of *Captain Billy's Whiz Bang* in 1919. At one time, the company published 63 different magazines (*True Confessions, Family Circle, Women's Day*, etc.); had a comic book empire with sales of \$4,500,000 monthly (*Captain Marvel, Captain Midnight, Spysmasher*, etc.); distributed paperbacks for Mentor and Signet; and had their own popular paperback line: Gold Medal Books. Gold Medal launched the writing careers of Mickey Spillane, Louis L'Amour, MacKinlay Kantor, John D. MacDonald, Kurt Vonnegut, and many other popular writers.

Doc Hubbard (1885-1980)**Man Who Taught Millions of Americans to Appreciate Native-American Culture**

In 1983, a “minor planet” was named in honor of a North Dakotan who had died three years earlier in Medora. Ralph “Doc” Hubbard probably did more than anyone else to help young American boys understand and appreciate the culture and heritage of Native Americans. In the 1920s, he organized Indian dance troops that toured the U.S. and Europe and, in 1927, wrote the “American Indian Craft” section to the *Handbook for Boys* that was second to the Bible in book sales. Later, Hubbard built Indian museums at Wounded Knee in South Dakota and at Medora in North Dakota.

William Langer (1886-1959)**North Dakota’s Most Colorful Politician**

Few men in the U.S. have been as loved and hated by the voters in their home state as a former governor and U.S. Senator from North Dakota. The people who loved “Wild Bill” Langer elected him attorney general two times, governor two times, and U.S. Senator four times. Those who hated him had Langer removed from office as governor and almost had him removed from the U.S. Senate. Many of those who loved Langer continued to vote for him long after he died, and those who hated him helped convict Langer of illegally soliciting money for political purposes and conspiring to obstruct an act of Congress -- charges that resulted in an 18-month prison sentence.

Josephine Gates Kelly (1888-1976)**America’s First Female Tribal Chair**

The first female Native American to head a major tribe was at the Standing Rock Reservation. While she was tribal chair, Josephine Gates Kelly was a tenacious fighter for the rights of Indians, especially those living on her reservation. However, her fight began long before she became head of the tribal council and continued after she no longer served as chair. It is also believed that Josephine was the first Indian woman delegate to a Republican National Convention. Josephine was the granddaughter of the noble and intelligent Yanktonai Chief Two Bears (Mato Nunpa).

John Aasen (1890-1938)**Movie Giant from North Dakota**

A man billed as “the tallest man in the world” was raised in Eddy and Benson counties in North Dakota. Johan/John Aasen, who was reputed to have been 8’ 9” tall, found himself in big demand at circuses, fairs, carnivals, and promotional

events. However, he is most remembered for his appearances in movies starring Harold Lloyd, W.C. Fields, Laurel and Hardy, and the Our Gang ensemble. In his first motion picture, *Why Worry*, starring Harold Lloyd, Aasen received favorable reviews from most entertainment publications, including *Variety*, which reported, “The big hits are given over to Lloyd and the giant (Aasen).”

Lynn Stambaugh (1890-1971)
Hitler’s North Dakota Enemy

A man living in North Dakota was considered such a threat to the Third Reich of Nazi Germany that he was put on Hitler’s “purge list.” This meant that if Lynn Stambaugh was ever identified by Nazi soldiers, he was to be immediately arrested and sent to a concentration camp. Most of those who were arrested were later executed. Stambaugh was the national commander of the American Legion when the U.S. declared war on Japan and Germany, and he had an influential voice on policy decisions during the early stages of the war.

Leonard Larson (1898-1974)

North Dakota Doctor Who Defeated President Kennedy’s Medicare Proposal

The first practicing pathologist in North Dakota was also one of the founders of Bismarck Junior College (now Bismarck State). However, Dr. Leonard Larson is best known for the controversial fight he had with President John F. Kennedy over the proposal of Medicare, a feud that landed his picture on the cover of the July 7, 1961 edition of *Time* magazine. As president of the American Medical Association (AMA), Dr. Larson had steered the organization into the mind-frame that the medical establishment needed to do more to assist the poor and aged with medical costs. However, he believed Kennedy’s plan was leading this country towards “socialized medicine,” a term that horrified many Americans in the Cold War era.

Richard Black (1902-1992)

Arctic Explorer, War Hero, & Amelia Earhart’s Last Contact

The man in charge of the U.S. Antarctic Programs, following the death of Admiral Richard Byrd in 1957, was born and raised in North Dakota. Richard Black had accompanied Byrd on three Antarctic expeditions and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, earning the Bronze Star. Black was also the last person to communicate with Amelia Earhart on her ill-fated attempt to fly across the Pacific Ocean in 1937. He retired from the Navy Reserves in 1962, having attained the rank of Rear Admiral.

Charley Retzlaff (1904-1970)**Quest for Heavyweight Title Stopped by Joe Louis**

One of the top heavyweight boxing contenders of the early 1930s was born and raised in North Dakota. Famous sports writer Damon Runyon wrote that Charley Retzlaff was “the best looking heavy weight prospect that had bobbed up in a long time.” Retzlaff was undefeated in his first 21 professional fights, losing for the first time by disqualification. He avenged the loss to that opponent one month later and followed it up with 11 more victories before suffering another loss. When Retzlaff went undefeated in his next 10 bouts, his promoter was lining up a title fight with heavyweight champ Primo Carnera. In his tune-up match on August 9, 1932, Retzlaff was upset by Isidoro Gastanaga, and he didn’t get another legitimate crack at the title until over three years later. On January 17, 1936, he needed to get past the number one contender, but young Joe Louis was too fast for the older Retzlaff, knocking him out in the first round. After the defeat, Retzlaff retired to his farm in rural Cass County.

Lynn Nelson (1905-1955)**Undefeated Professional Boxer Set Record as a Major League Baseball Player**

One of the best all-around athletes in the U.S., of the 1920s and 30s, was born and raised in North Dakota. As a professional boxer, Lynn Nelson “had 21 fights and scored 21 early knockouts.” As a major league pitcher, he led his team in victories one season, and as a batter, he led the American League in pinch hits during another season.

Reuben Askanase (1908-1991)**Entrepreneur & Close Friend of Opposing Candidates in 1988 Presidential Election**

The 1988 U. S. Presidential election must have been very difficult for a man born and raised in Fargo. Two of the candidates on opposite sides of the ticket had been very close friends and/or business associates of Reuben Askanase. Lloyd Bentsen, the Vice-Presidential candidate on the Democratic ticket, had been a business partner, and George H. W. Bush, the Presidential candidate on the Republican ticket, had been a long-time friend whose political career Askanase had helped launch. Askanase was raised in poverty in Fargo but, because of his business genius, hard work, and dedication, became one of the entrepreneurial giants of the second half of the 20th century.

**Check brothers– Leonard(1911-1945),
Gilbert(1912-1987), Raymond(1917-1943)
Siblings Who Were War Heroes**

Three brothers, born and raised in North Dakota, were war heroes. The Check brothers, from the western part of the state, all served in World War II. Leonard, the oldest, was the only double-ace born in North Dakota. Raymond, the youngest, was described by Andy Rooney of *60 Minutes* as “one of the great heroes.” Gilbert, the middle brother, was an Army officer during World War II, but it was during the Korean Conflict that he deservedly received most of his awards and accolades. Both Leonard and Raymond Check were pilots during World War II, Leonard with the U.S. Navy and Raymond with the U.S. Air Force. Both also lost their life during the war. Raymond was killed while on his 25th and final bombing run over France on June 26, 1943, and Leonard was killed in a mid-air collision over the Philippine Islands on January 4, 1945.

**Eric Sevareid (1912-1992)
Voice of Reason on the CBS Evening News**

One of the most respected radio and television news journalists was born and raised in North Dakota. Eric Sevareid spent 38 years at CBS. On radio, during World War II, he covered both the European and Asian war theatres, often finding his safety in peril. On television, Sevareid became famous for his intellectual analysis of the news. For his work, Sevareid won numerous awards, including Emmy and Peabody awards. He was also honored in his home state in 1964 when he was granted the prestigious Theodore Roosevelt Rough Rider Award.

**Earl Bartholome (1913-2002) & Ken Bartholomew (1920-
Siblings Inducted into Halls of Fame in Two Different Sports**

Two brothers born in North Dakota were enshrined into major sports hall of fames in two different sports. Earl Barholome played professional hockey from 1933 to 1952. His brother, Ken Bartholomew, was considered one of the best speed skaters in the world. He was at his prime in the early 1940s and would have been a likely Olympic medal winner in 1940 and 1944 if World War II had not caused the cancellation of those gamed. In 1948, he won a silver medal in speed skating, becoming the first person born in North Dakota to win an Olympic medal.

**William Dunn (1916-1995)
First American Ace of World War II**

The first American pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft during World War II, who was also the first American ace during that war, had earlier lived in North Dakota. William Dunn was born in Minneapolis, but after the divorce of his

parents when he was seven, he bounced back and forth between his mom and dad. In order to get some stability in his life, he was sent to live with his grandparents on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation. Dunn attended school at Van Hook during the winter and joined his Native American friends rounding up wild horses in the Badlands during the summer. He first joined the military in 1934 as a buck private and was discharged in 1973 as a lieutenant colonel. During World War II, Dunn saw action in both the European and Asian campaigns and was still active when he was sent to Vietnam in 1967.

Nelson Preus (1918-1999)

Head of North Dakota Branch of Dynastic Lutheran Church Leaders

A man who was a pastor in eastern North Dakota for nearly 20 years later served as bishop of the Eastern North Dakota District of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and had come from a family that dominated Lutheran church politics in America. The great-grandfather of Nelson Preus was one of the founders of St. Olaf College and the Norwegian Lutheran Synod, which today is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, representing nearly 5,000,000 members. Nelson's grandfather and father both served as presidents of Luther College, and his brother was president of the ALC from 1973 to 1987. An uncle of Nelson founded the Lutheran Brotherhood Insurance Company (Thrivent Financial for Lutherans), a cousin was president of the Missouri Synod branch of the Lutheran Church in America from 1969 to 1981, and another cousin was president of the Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois. Many other relatives served as pastors and college professors.